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EURIPIDES

II

ARISTOPHANES

AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES AT ATHENS

BY

MAURICE CROISSET

Translated by JAMES LOEB, A.B.
in one Volume. Demy 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

EURIPIDES

AND THE SPIRIT OF HIS DRAMAS

BY

PROFESSOR PAUL DECHARME

Translated by JAMES LOEB, A.B.
In one Volume. 12s. 6d. net.

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN.

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EURIPIDES

II

EURIPIDES

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

IN FOUR VOLUMES

II

ELECTRA ORESTES
IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA
ANDROMACHE CYCLOPS



LONDON : WILLIAM HEINEMANN
NEW YORK : G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

MCMXVI

EUCLID'S

THE FIRST SIX BOOKS
WITH ORIGINAL EXERCISES

BY HEWITT

REVISED EDITION

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MCMXXI

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ELECTRA

ARGUMENT

WHEN Agamemnon returned home from the taking of Troy, his adulterous wife Clytemnestra, with help of her paramour Aegisthus, murdered him as he entered the silver bath in his palace. They sought also to slay his young son Orestes, that no avenger might be left alive; but an old servant stole him away, and took him out of the land, unto Phocis. There was he nurtured by king Strophius, and Pylades the king's son loved him as a brother. So Aegisthus dwelt with Clytemnestra, reigning in Argos, where remained now of Agamemnon's seed Electra his daughter only. And these twain marked how Electra grew up in hate and scorn of them, indignant for her father's murder, and fain to avenge him. Wherefore, lest she should wed a prince, and persuade husband or son to accomplish her heart's desire, they bethought them how they should forestall this peril. Aegisthus indeed would have slain her, yet by the queen's counsel forbore, and gave her in marriage to a poor yeoman, who dwelt far from the city, as thinking that from peasant husband and peasant children there should be nought to fear. Howbeit this man, being full of loyalty to the mighty dead and reverence for blood royal, behaved himself to her as to a queen, so that she continued virgin in his house all the days of her adversity. Now when Orestes was grown to man, he journeyed with Pylades his friend to Argos, to seek out his sister, and to devise how he might avenge his father, since by the oracle of Apollo he was commanded so to do.

And herein is told the story of his coming, and how brother and sister were made known to each other, and how they fulfilled the oracle in taking vengeance on tyrant and adulteress.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΤΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ ΜΤΚΗΝΑΙΟΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ΔΙΟΣΚΟΤΡΟΙ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

PEASANT, *wedded in name to Electra.*

ELECTRA, *daughter of Agamemnon.*

ORESTES, *son of Agamemnon.*

PYLADES, *son of Strophius, king of Phocis.*

CLYTEMNESTRA, *murderess of her husband Agamemnon.*

OLD MAN, *once servant of Agamemnon.*

MESSENGER, *servant of Orestes.*

THE TWIN BRETHERN, *Castor and Pollux, Sons of Zeus.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Argive women.*

Attendants of Orestes and Pylades; handmaids of Clytemnestra.

SCENE:—Before the Peasant's cottage on the borders of Argolis.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΑΥΤΟΤΡΓΟΣ

ὦ γῆς παλαιὸν Ἄργος, Ἰνάχου ῥοαί,
 ὅθεν ποτ' ἄρας ναυσὶ χιλίαις Ἄρη
 εἰς γῆν ἔπλευσε Τρωῶδ' Ἀγαμέμνων ἄναξ.
 κτείνας δὲ τὸν κρατοῦντ' ἐν Ἰλίου χθονὶ
 Πρίαμον, ἐλὼν τε Δαρδάνου κλεινὴν πόλιν,
 ἀφίκετ' εἰς τόδ' Ἄργος, ὑψηλῶν δ' ἐπὶ
 ναῶν τέθεικε σκῦλα πλείστα βαρβάρων.
 κακῆ μὲν ἠτύχησεν ἐν δὲ δώμασι
 10 θνήσκει γυναικὸς πρὸς Κλυταιμνήστρας δόλῳ
 καὶ τοῦ Θυέστου παιδὸς Αἰγίσθου χερί.
 χῶ μὲν παλαιὰ σκῆπτρα Ταντάλου λιπῶν
 ὄλωλεν, Αἰγισθος δὲ βασιλεύει χθονός,
 ἄλοχον ἐκείνου Τυνδαρίδα κόρην ἔχων.
 οὓς δ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἔλιφ', ὅτ' εἰς Τροίαν ἔπλει,
 ἄρσενά τ' Ὀρέστην θῆλύ τ' Ἠλέκτρας θάλος,
 τὸν μὲν πατρὸς γεραιὸς ἐκκλέπτει τροφεὺς
 μέλλοντ' Ὀρέστην χερὸς ὑπ' Αἰγίσθου θανεῖν,
 Στροφίῳ τ' ἔδωκε Φωκέων εἰς γῆν τρέφειν
 20 ἢ δ' ἐν δόμοις ἔμεινε Ἠλέκτρα πατρός,
 ταύτην ἐπειδὴ θαλερὸς εἶχ' ἥβης χρόνος,
 μνηστῆρες ἦτουν Ἑλλάδος πρῶτοι χθονός.

ELECTRA

Enter PEASANT from the cottage.

PEASANT

Hail, ancient Argos, streams of Inachus,
Whence, with a thousand galleys battle-bound,
To Troyland's shore King Agamemnon sailed,
And, having slain the lord of Ilian land,
Priam, and taken Dardanus' burg renowned,
Came to this Argos, and on her high fanes
Hung up unnumbered spoils barbarian.
In far lands prospered he ; but in his home
Died by his own wife Clytemnestra's guile,
And by Aegisthus' hand, Thyestes' son. 10
So, leaving Tantalus' ancient sceptre, he
Is gone, and o'er the realm Aegisthus reigns,
Having to wife that king's wife, Tyndareus'
child.

Of those whom Troyward-bound he left at home,
The boy Orestes, and the maid Electra,
His father's fosterer stole the son away,
Orestes, doomed to die by Aegisthus' hand,
And Phocis-ward to Strophius sent, to rear :
But in her father's halls Electra stayed,
Till o'er her mantled womanhood's first flush, 20
And Hellas' princes wooing asked her hand.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δείσας δὲ μὴ τῷ παιῖδ' ἀριστέων τέκοι
 Ἄγαμέμνονος ποινάτορ, εἶχεν ἐν δόμοις
 Αἰγισθος, οὐδ' ἤρμοξε νυμφίῳ τινί.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ τοῦτ' ἦν φόβου πολλοῦ πλέων,
 μὴ τῷ λαθραίως τέκνα γενναίῳ τέκοι,
 κτανεῖν σφε βουλευσάντος ὠμόφρων ὄμως
 μήτηρ νιν ἐξέσωσεν Αἰγίσθου χερός.
 εἰς μὲν γὰρ ἄνδρα σκῆψιν εἶχ' ὀλωλότα,
 30 παίδων δ' ἔδεισε μὴ φθονηθείη φόνῳ.
 ἐκ τῶνδε δὴ τοιούδ' ἐμηχανήσατο
 Αἰγισθος· ὃς μὲν γῆς ἀπηλλάχθη φυγὰς
 Ἄγαμέμνονος παῖς, χρυσὸν εἶφ' ὃς ἂν κτάνη,
 ἡμῖν δὲ δὴ δίδωσιν Ἥλέκτραν ἔχειν
 δάμαρτα, πατέρων μὲν Μυκηναίων ἀπο
 γεγῶσιν· οὐ δὴ τοῦτό γ' ἐξελέγχομαι·
 λαμπροὶ γὰρ εἰς γένος γε, χρημάτων γε μὴν
 πένητες, ἔνθεν ἠύγέει' ἀπόλλυται·
 ὡς ἀσθενεῖ δούς ἀσθενῆ λάβοι φόβον.
 εἰ γὰρ νιν ἔσχευ ἀξίωμ' ἔχων ἀνὴρ,
 40 εὐδοντ' ἂν ἐξήγειρε τὸν Ἄγαμέμνονος
 φόνον, δίκη τ' ἂν ἦλθεν Αἰγίσθῳ τότε.
 ἦν οὐποθ' ἀνὴρ ὄδε, σύνοιδέ μοι Κύπρις,
 ἦσχυεν εὐνή· παρθένος δ' ἔτ' ἐστὶ δὴ.
 αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ ὀλβίων ἀνδρῶν τέκνα
 λαβῶν ὑβρίζειν, οὐ κατάξιος γεγῶς.
 στένω δὲ τὸν λόγοισι κηδεύοντ' ἐμοὶ
 ἄθλιον Ὀρέστην, εἴ ποτ' εἰς Ἄργος μολῶν
 γάμους ἀδελφῆς δυστυχεῖς ἐσόψεται.
 50 ὅστις δέ μ' εἰναί φησι μῶρον, εἰ λαβῶν
 νέαν ἐς οἴκους παρθένον μὴ θιγγάνω,
 γνώμης πονηροῖς κανόσιν ἀναμετρούμενος
 τὸ σῶφρον ἴστω, καὐτὸς αὖ τοιοῦτος ὢν.

ELECTRA

Aegisthus then, in fear lest she should bear
 To a prince a son, avenger of Agamemnon,
 Kept her at home, betrothed her unto none.
 But, since this too with haunting dread was
 fraught,
 Lest she should bear some noble a child of
 stealth,
 He would have slain her; yet, how cruel soe'er,
 Her mother saved her from Aegisthus' hand;—
 A plea she had for murder of her lord,
 But feared to be abhorred for children's blood:— 30
 Wherefore Aegisthus found out this device:
 On Agamemnon's son, who had fled the land,
 He set a price, even gold to whoso slew;
 But to me gives Electra, her to have
 To wife,—from Mycenaean fathers sprung
 Am I, herein I may not be contemned;
 Noble my blood is, but in this world's goods
 I am poor, whereby men's high descent is marred,—
 To make his fear naught by this spouse of naught.
 For, had she wed a man of high repute, 40
 Agamemnon's slumbering blood-feud had he waked;
 Then on Aegisthus vengeance might have fallen.
 But never I—Cypris my witness is—
 Have shamed her couch: a virgin is she yet.
 Myself think shame to take a prince's child
 And outrage—I, in birth unmeet for her!
 Yea, and for him I sigh, in name my kin,
 Hapless Orestes, if to Argos e'er
 He come, and see his sister's wretched marriage.
 If any name me fool, that I should take 50
 A young maid to mine home, and touch her not,
 Let him know that he meteth chastity
 By his own soul's base measure—base as he.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ νύξ μέλαινα, χρυσέων ἄστρον τροφέ,
 ἐν ἧ τὸδ' ἄγγος τῶδ' ἐφεδρεῦον κἀρα
 φέρουσα πηγὰς ποταμίας μετέρχομαι,
 οὐ δὴ τι χρείας εἰς τοσόνδ' ἀφυγμένη,
 ἀλλ' ὡς ὕβριν δείξωμεν Αἰγίσθου θεοῖς,
 γόους τ' ἀφήμ' αἰθέρ' εἰς μέγαν πατρί.
 60 ἢ γὰρ πανώλης Τυνδαρίς μήτηρ ἐμῇ
 ἐξέβαλέ μ' οἴκων, χάριτα τιθεμένη πόσει
 τεκουῖσα δ' ἄλλους παῖδας Αἰγίσθῳ πάρα
 πάρεργ' Ὀρέστην κἀμὲ ποιεῖται δόμων.

ΑΥΤΟΤΡΓΟΣ

τί γὰρ τὰδ', ὦ δύστην', ἐμὴν μοχθεῖς χάριν
 πόνους ἔχουσα, πρόσθεν εὖ τετραμμένη,
 καὶ ταῦτ' ἐμοῦ λέγοντος οὐκ ἀφίστασαι ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγὼ σ' ἴσον θεοῖσιν ἠγοῦμαι φίλον·
 ἐν τοῖς ἐμοῖς γὰρ οὐκ ἐνύβρισας κακοῖς.
 70 μεγάλη δὲ θνητοῖς μοῖρα συμφορᾶς κακῆς
 ἰατρὸν εὐρεῖν, ὡς ἐγὼ σὲ λαμβάνω.
 δεῖ δὴ με κἀκέλευστον εἰς ὅσον σθένω
 μόχθου ἴπικουφίζουσαν, ὡς ῥᾶον φέρης,
 συνεκκομίζειν σοὶ πόνους· ἄλις δ' ἔχεις
 τᾶξωθεν ἔργα· τὰν δόμοις δ' ἡμᾶς χρεῶν
 ἐξευτρεπίζειν. εἰσιόντι δ' ἐργάτη
 θύραθεν ἠδὲ τᾶνδον εὐρίσκειν καλῶς.

ΑΥΤΟΤΡΓΟΣ

εἴ τοι δοκεῖ σοι, στείχε· καὶ γὰρ οὐ πρόσω
 πηγαὶ μελάθρων τῶνδ'. ἐγὼ δ' ἄμ' ἡμέρα
 80 βούς εἰς ἀρούρας εἰσβαλὼν σπερῶ γύας.
 ἀργὸς γὰρ οὐδεὶς θεοὺς ἔχων ἀνὰ στόμα
 βίον δύναται ἂν ξυλλέγειν ἄνευ πόνου.

ELECTRA.

Enter ELECTRA, with a water-jar upon her head.

ELECTRA

Hail, black-winged Night, nurse of the golden stars,
 Wherein I bear this pitcher on mine head
 Poised, as I fare to river-cradling springs,—
 Not that I do this of pure need constrained,
 But to show Heaven Aegisthus' tyranny,—
 And wail to the broad welkin for my sire.
 For mine own mother, Tyndareus' baleful child, 60
 Thrust me from home, to pleasure this her spouse,
 And, having borne Aegisthus other sons,
 Thrusteth aside Orestes' rights and mine.

PEASANT

Why wilt thou toil, O hapless, for my sake,
 Thus, nor refrain from labour,—thou of old
 Royally nurtured,—though I bid thee so?

ELECTRA

Kind I account thee even as the Gods,
 Who in mine ills hast not insulted me.
 High fortune this, when men for sore mischance
 Find such physician as I find in thee. 70
 I ought, as strength shall serve, yea, though forbid,
 To ease thy toil, that lighter be thy load,
 And share thy burdens. Work enow afield
 Hast thou: beseems that I should keep the house
 In order. When the toiler cometh home,
 'Tis sweet to find the household fair-arrayed.

PEASANT

If such thy mind, pass on: in sooth not far
 The springs are from yon cot. I at the dawn
 Will drive my team afield and sow the glebe.
 None idle—though his lips aye prate of Gods— 80
 Can gather without toil a livelihood.

[*Exeunt* PEASANT and ELECTRA.]

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Πυλάδη, σὲ γὰρ δὴ πρῶτον ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ
 πιστὸν νομίζω καὶ φίλου ξένου τ' ἐμοί·
 μόνος δ' Ὀρέστην τόνδ' ἐθαύμαζες φίλων
 πρᾶσσοιθ' ἅπρᾶσσω δεῖν ὑπ' Αἰγίσθου παθῶν,
 ὃς μου κατέκτα πατέρα χῆ πανώλεθρος
 μήτηρ. ἀφίγμαι δ' ἐκ θεοῦ χρηστηρίων¹
 Ἀργεῖον οὐδας, οὐδενὸς ξυνειδότης,
 φόνον φονεῦσι πατρὸς ἀλλάξων ἐμοῦ.
 90 νυκτὸς δὲ τῆσδε πρὸς τάφον μολῶν πατρὸς
 δάκρυστά τ' ἔδωκα καὶ κόμης ἀπηρξάμην
 πυρᾷ τ' ἐπέσφαξ' αἷμα μηλείου φόνου,
 λαθῶν τυράννους οἱ κρατοῦσι τῆσδε γῆς.
 καὶ τειχέων μὲν ἐντὸς οὐ βαίνω πόδα,
 δυοῖν δ' ἄμιλλαν ξυντιθεὶς ἀφικόμην
 πρὸς τέρμονας γῆς τῆσδ', ἵν' ἐκβάλω ποδὶ
 ἄλλην ἐπ' αἶαν, εἴ μὲ τις γνοίῃ σκοπῶν,
 ζητῶν τ' ἀδελφῆν, φασὶ γάρ νιν ἐν γάμοις
 100 ζευχθεῖσαν οἰκεῖν, οὐδὲ παρθένον μένειν,
 ὡς συγγένωμαι καὶ φόνου συνεργάτιν
 λαβῶν τά γ' εἴσω τειχέων σαφῶς μάθω.
 νῦν οὖν, "Ἐως γὰρ λευκὸν ὄμμ' ἀναίρεται,
 ἔξω τρίβου τοῦδ' ἵχνος ἀλλαξώμεθα.
 ἢ γὰρ τις ἀροτῆρ ἢ τις οἰκέτις γυνὴ
 φανήσεται νῶν, ἣντιν' ἱστορήσομεν
 εἰ τοῦσδε ναίει σύγγονος τόπους ἐμή.
 ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ τήνδε προσπόλων τινά,
 πηγαῖον ἄχθος ἐν κεκαρμένῳ κάρᾳ
 φέρουσιν· ἐζώμεσθα κάκπυθώμεθα
 110 δούλης γυναικός, ἣν τι δεξώμεσθ' ἔπος
 ἐφ' οἴσι, Πυλάδη, τήνδ' ἀφίγμεθα χθόνα.

¹ Barnes: for MSS. μυστηρίων: "from Phoebus' mystic shrine."

ELECTRA

Enter ORESTES and PYLADES.

ORESTES

Pylades, foremost thee of men I count
 In loyalty, love, and friendship unto me.
 Sole of Orestes' friends, thou hast honoured me
 In this my plight, wronged foully by Aegisthus,
 Who, with my utter-baneful mother, slew
 My sire. At Phoebus' oracle-hest I come
 To Argos' soil, none privy thereunto,
 To pay my father's murderers murder-wage.
 This night o'erpast to my sire's tomb I went; 90
 There tears I gave and offerings of shorn hair,
 And a slain sheep's blood poured upon the grave,
 Unmarked of despot-rulers of this land.
 And now I set not foot within their walls,
 But blending two assays in one I come
 To this land's border,—that to another soil
 Forth I may flee, if any watch and know me;
 To seek withal my sister,—for she dwells
 In wedlock yoked, men say, nor bides a maid,—
 To meet her, for the vengeance win her help, 100
 And that which passeth in the city learn.
 Now—for the Dawn uplifteth eyelids white—
 Step we a little from this path aside.
 Haply shall some hind or some bondwoman
 Appear to us, of whom we shall inquire
 If in some spot hereby my sister dwell.
 Lo, yonder I discern a serving-maid
 Who on shorn head her burden from the spring
 Bears: crouch we low, then of this bondmaid ask,
 If tidings haply we may win of that 110
 For which we came to this land, Pylades.

[ORESTES and PYLADES retire to rear.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σύντειν', ὦρα, ποδὸς ὄρμάν· στρ. α'
 ὦ ἔμβα ἔμβα κατακλαίουσα.
 ἰὼ μοί μοι.

ἔγενόμαν Ἀγαμέμνονος
 κούρα, καί μ' ἔτεκε Κλυταιμνήστρα,
 σττυγνὰ Τυνδάρεω κόρα·
 κικλήσκουσι δέ μ' ἀθλίαν
 Ἥλέκτραν πολιῆται.

120 φεῦ φεῦ τῶν σχετλίων πόνων
 καὶ σττυγεράς ζῴας.

ὦ πάτερ, σὺ δ' ἐν Ἀΐδα
 κείσαι, σᾶς ἀλόχον σφαγαῖς
 Αἰγίσθου τ', Ἀγάμεμνον.

ἴθι τὸν αὐτὸν ἔγειρε γόον, μεσφδ.
 ἄναγε πολῦδακρυν ἄδονάν.

σύντειν', ὦρα, ποδὸς ὄρμάν· ἀντ. α'
 ὦ ἔμβα ἔμβα κατακλαίουσα.
 ἰὼ μοί μοι.

130 τίνα πόλιν, τίνα δ' οἶκον, ὦ
 τλᾶμον σύγγονε, λατρεύεις
 οἰκτρὰν ἐν θαλάμοις λιπῶν
 πατρώοις ἐπὶ συμφοραῖς
 ἀλγίσταισιν ἀδελφάν ;
 ἔλθοις τῶνδε πόνων ἐμοὶ
 τᾶ μελέα λυτήρ,

ὦ Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, πατρί θ' αἱμάτων
 ἐχθίστων ἐπίκουρος, Ἄρ-
 γει κέλσας πόδ' ἀλάταν.

140 θές τόδε τεῦχος ἐμᾶς ἀπὸ κρατὸς ἐ- στρ. β'

ELECTRA

Re-enter ELECTRA.

ELECTRA

Bestir thou, for time presses, thy foot's speed; (*Str.* 1)

Haste onward weeping bitterly.

I am his child, am Agamemnon's seed,—

Alas for me, for me!—

And I the daughter Clytemnestra bore,

Tyndareus' child, abhorred of all;

And me the city-dwellers evermore

Hapless Electra call.

Woe and alas for this my lot of sighing,

My life from consolation banned!

120

O father Agamemnon, thou art lying

In Hades, thou whose wife devised thy dying—

Her heart, Aegisthus' hand.

(*Mesode*)

On, wake once more the selfsame note of grieving:

Upraise the dirge of tears that bring relieving.

Bestir thou, for time presses, thy foot's speed; (*Ant.* 1)

Haste onward weeping bitterly.

Ah me, what city sees thee in thy need,

Brother?—alas for thee!

130

In what proud house hast thou a bondman's place,

Leaving thy woeful sister lone

Here in the halls ancestral of our race

In sore distress to moan?

Come, a Redeemer from this anguish, heeding

My desolation and my pain:

Come Zeus, come Zeus, the champion of a bleeding

Father most foully killed—to Argos leading

The wanderer's feet again.

(*Str.* 2)

Set down this pitcher from thine head:

140

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λουῖσ', ἵνα πατρὶ γόους νυχίους
 ἐπορθρεύσω,
 ἰαχὰν μέλος Ἀΐδα,
 Ἀΐδα, πάτερ,
 σοὶ κατὰ γᾶς ἐννέπω γόους,
 οἷς αἰεὶ τὸ κατ' ἄμαρ
 διέπομαι, κατὰ μὲν φίλαν
 ὄνυχι τεμνομένα δέραν,
 χέρα δὲ κρᾶτ' ἐπὶ κούριμον
 τιθεμένα θανάτῳ σῶ.

150

ἔ ἔ, δρῦπτε κάρᾳ
 οἷα δέ τις κύκνος ἀχέτας
 ποταμίους παρὰ χευμασιν
 πατέρα φίλτατον ἀγκαλεῖ,
 ὀλόμενον δολίοις βρόχων
 ἔρκεσιν, ὡς σὲ τὸν ἄθλιον
 πατέρ' ἐγὼ κατακλαίωμαι,

μεσφδ.

λουτρὰ πανύσταθ' ὑδρανάμενον χροῖ, ἀντ. β'
 κοίτα ἐν οἰκτροτάτῳ θανάτου.
 ἰὼ μοί μοι

160

πικρᾶς μὲν πελέκεως τομᾶς
 σᾶς, πάτερ, πικρᾶς δ'
 ἐκ Τροίας ὀδίου βουλᾶς.
 οὐ μίτραισι γυνή σε
 δέξατ' οὐδ' ἐπὶ στεφάνοις.
 ξίφεσι δ' ἀμφιτόμοις λυγρὰν
 Αἰγίσθου λῶβαν θεμένα
 δόλιον ἔσχεν ἀκοίταν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἀγαμέμνωνος ὦ κόρα,
 ἤλυθον, Ἡλέκτρα, ποτὶ σὰν ἀγρότειραν αὐλάν. στρ. γ'

ELECTRA

Let me prevent the morn
 With wailings for a father dead,
 Shrieks down to Hades borne,
 Through the grave's gloom, O father, ringing :
 Through Hades' hall to thee I call,
 Day after day my cries outflinging ;
 And aye my cheeks are furrowed red
 With blood by rending fingers shed.
 Mine hands on mine head smiting fall—
 Mine head for thy death shorn.

(*Mesode*)

Rend the hair grief-defiled !
 As swan's note, ringing wild
 Where some broad stream still-stealeth,
 O'er its dear sire outpealeth,
 Mid guileful nets who lies
 Dead—so o'er thee the cries
 Wail, father, of thy child,

150

Thee, on that piteous death-bed laid (*Ant. 2*)
 When that last bath was o'er !
 Woe for the bitter axe-edge swayed,
 Father, adrip with gore !
 Woe for the dread resolve, prevailing
 From Ilion to draw thee on
 To her that waited thee—not hailing
 With chaplets !—nor with wreaths arrayed
 Wast thou ; but with the falchion's blade
 She made thee Aegisthus' sport, and won
 That treacherous paramour.

160

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS

Atreides' child, Electra, I have come (*Str. 3*)
 Unto thy rustic home.

17

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

170 ἔμολε τις ἔμολε γαλακτοπότας ἀνὴρ
 Μυκηναῖος ὀρειβάτας·
 ἀγγέλλει δ' ὅτι νῦν τριταί-
 αν καρύσσουσιν θυσίαν
 Ἄργεῖοι, πᾶσαι δὲ παρ' Ἡ-
 ραν μέλλουσιν παρθενικαὶ στείχειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἐπ' ἀγλαΐαις, φίλαι,
 θυμὸν οὐδ' ἐπὶ χρυσέοις
 ὄρμοισιν πεπόταμαι
 τάλαιν', οὐδ' ἰστᾶσα χοροῦς
 Ἄργείαις ἅμα νύμφαις
 180 εἰλικτὸν κρούσω πόδ' ἐμόν.
 δάκρυσι νυχεύω, δακρύων δέ μοι μέλει
 δειλαία τὸ κατ' ἅμαρ.
 σκέψαι μου πιναρὰν κόμαν
 καὶ τρύχη τάδ' ἐμῶν πέπλων,
 εἰ πρέποντ' Ἀγαμέμνονος
 κούρα τᾶ βασιλείᾳ
 Τροία θ', ἃ τοῦμοῦ πατέρος
 μένναται ποθ' ἀλοῦσα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

190 μεγάλη θεός· ἀλλ' ἴθι, ἀντ. γ
 καὶ παρ' ἐμοῦ χρῆσαι πολύπηνα φάρεα δύναι,
 χρύσεά τε χάρισι προσθήματ' ἀγλαΐας.
 δοκεῖς τοῖσι σοῖς δακρύοις,
 μὴ τιμῶσα θεούς, κρατή-
 σειν ἐχθρῶν; οὔτοι στοναχαῖς,
 ἀλλ' εὐχαῖσι θεοὺς σεβί-
 ζουσ' ἔξεις εὐαμερίαν, ὦ παῖ.

ELECTRA

One from Mycenae sped this day is here,
 A milk-fed mountaineer. 170
 Argos proclaims, saith he, a festival
 The third day hence to fall ;
 And unto Hera's fane must every maid
 Pass, in long pomp arrayed.

ELECTRA

Friends, not for thought of festal tide,
 Nor carcanet's gold-gleaming pride
 The pulses of my breast are leaping ;
 Nor with the brides of Argos keeping
 The measure of the dance, my feet
 The wreathèd maze's time shall beat : 180
 Nay, but with tears the night I greet,
 And wear the woeful day with weeping.
 Look on mine hair, its glory shorn,
 The disarray of mine attire :
 Say, if a princess this beseemeth,
 Daughter to Agamemnon born,
 Or Troy, that, smitten by my sire,
 Of him in nightmare memories dreameth ?

CHORUS

Great is the Goddess :¹ borrow then of me (*Ant.* 3) 190
 Robes woven cunningly,
 And jewels whereby shall beauty fairer shine.
 Dost think these tears of thine,
 If thou give honour not to Gods, shall bring
 Thy foes low ?—reverencing
 The Gods with prayers, not groans, shalt thou*
 obtain
 Clear shining after rain.

¹ Therefore her festival is not lightly to be neglected.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

200 οὐδείς θεῶν ἐνοπὰς κλύει
 τᾶς δυσδαίμονος, οὐ παλαι-
 ῶν πατρὸς σφαγιασμῶν.
 οἴμοι τοῦ καταφθιμένου
 τοῦ τε ζῶντος ἀλάτα,
 ὅς που γὰν ἄλλαν κατέχει
 μέλεος ἀλαίνων ποτὶ θῆσσαν ἐστίαν,
 τοῦ κλεινοῦ πατρὸς ἐκφύς.
 αὐτὰ δ' ἐν χερνῆσι δόμοις
 ναίω ψυχὰν τακομένα
 210 δωμάτων πατρίων φυγάς,
 οὐρείας ἀν' ἐρίπνας.
 μάτηρ δ' ἐν λέκτροις φονίους
 ἄλλῳ σύγγαμος οἰκεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλῶν κακῶν Ἑλλησιν αἰτίαν ἔχει
 σῆς μητρὸς Ἑλένη σύγγονος δόμοις τε σοῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἴμοι, γυναῖκες, ἐξέβην θρηνημάτων.
 ξένοι τινὲς παρ' οἶκον οἷδ' ἐφεστίους
 εὐνὰς ἔχοντες ἐξανίστανται λόχον·
 φυγῆ, σὺ μὲν κατ' οἶμον, εἰς δόμους δ' ἐγώ,
 φῶτας κακούργους ἐξαλύξωμεν ποδί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

220 μὲν, ὦ τάλαινα· μὴ τρέσης ἐμὴν χέρα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ Φοῖβ' Ἀπολλον, προσπίτνω σε μὴ θανεῖν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄλλους κτάνοιμι μᾶλλον ἐχθίους σέθεν·

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄπελθε, μὴ ψαῦ' ὦν σε μὴ ψαύειν χρεῶν.

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

No God regards a wretch's cries,
Nor heeds old flames of sacrifice
Once on my father's altars burning. 200
Woe for the dead, the unreturning!
Woe for the living, homeless now,
In alien land constrained, I trow
To serfdom's board in grief to bow—
That hero's son afar sojourning!
In a poor hovel I abide,
An exile from my father's door,
Wasting my soul with tears outwelling,
Mid scours of yon wild mountain-side :— 210
My mother with her paramour
In murder-bond the while is dwelling!

CHORUS

Of many an ill to Hellas and thine house
Was Helen, sister of thy mother, cause.

ORESTES and PYLADES approach.

ELECTRA

Woe's me, friends!—needs must I break off my moan!
Lo, yonder, strangers ambushed nigh the house
Out of their hiding-place are rising up!
With flying feet—thou down the path, and I
Into the house,—flee we from evil men!

ORESTES (intercepting her)

Tarry, thou hapless one: fear not mine hand. 220

ELECTRA

Phoebus, I pray thee that I be not slain!

ORESTES (extending his hand to hers)

God grant I slay some more my foes than thee!

ELECTRA

Hence!—touch not whom beseems thee not to touch!

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅτου θίγοιμ' ἂν ἐνδικώτερον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ πῶς ξιφήρης πρὸς δόμοις λοχᾶς ἐμοῖς ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μείνας' ἄκουσον, καὶ τάχ' οὐκ ἄλλως ἐρεῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔστηκα πάντως δ' εἰμὶ σή· κρείσσω γὰρ εἶ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἤκω φέρων σοι σοῦ κασιγνήτου λόγους.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἄρα ζῶντος ἢ τεθνηκότος ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

230

ζῆ· πρῶτα γάρ σοι τὰγάθ' ἀγγέλλειν θέλω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εὐδαιμονοίης, μισθὸν ἠδίστων λόγων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κοινῇ δίδωμι τοῦτο νῶν ἀμφοῖν ἔχειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποῦ γῆς ὁ τλήμων τλήμονας φυγὰς ἔχων ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐχ ἓνα νομίζων φθείρεται πόλεως νόμον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὗ που σπανίζων τοῦ καθ' ἡμέραν βίου ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔχει μέν, ἀσθενῆς δὲ δὴ φεύγων ἀνὴρ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λόγον δὲ δὴ τίν' ἤλθες ἐκ κείνου φέρων ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ ζῆς, ὅπως τε ζῶσα συμφορᾶς ἔχεις.

ELECTRA

ORESTES

None is there whom with better right I touch.

ELECTRA

Why sword in hand waylay me by mine house?

ORESTES

Tarry and hear: my words shall soon be thine.

ELECTRA

I stand, as in thy power;—the stronger thou.

ORESTES

I come to bring thee tidings of thy brother.

ELECTRA

Friend—friend!—and liveth he, or is he dead?

ORESTES

He liveth: first the good news would I tell.

230

ELECTRA

Blessings on thee, thy meed for words most sweet!

ORESTES

This blessing to us twain I give to share.

ELECTRA

What land hath he for weary exile's home?

ORESTES

Outcast, he claims no city's citizenship.

ELECTRA

Not—surely not in straits for daily bread?

ORESTES

That hath he: yet the exile helpless is.

ELECTRA

And what the message thou hast brought from him?

ORESTES

Liv'st thou?—he asks; and, living, what thy state?

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ οὐκ ὄρα̃ς μου πρῶτον ὡς ξηρὸν δέμας ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

240

λύπαις γε συντετηκός, ὥστε με στένειν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ κρᾶτα πλόκαμόν τ' ἐσκυθισμένον ξυρῶ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δάκνει σ' ἀδελφὸς ὃ τε θανὼν ἴσως πατήρ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἶμοι, τί γάρ μοι τῶνδ' ἔστι φίλτερον ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τί δ' αὖ σὺ σῶ κασιγνήτῳ δοκεῖς ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀπῶν ἐκείνος, οὐ παρῶν ἡμῖν φίλος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐκ τοῦ δὲ ναίεις ἐνθάδ' ἄστεως ἐκάς ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγημάμεσθ', ὦ ξεῖνε, θανάσιμον γάμον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ᾧμωξ' ἀδελφὸν σόν. Μυκηναίων τινί ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐχ ᾧ πατήρ μ' ἤλπιζεν ἐκδώσειν ποτέ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

250

εἶφ', ὡς ἀκούσας σῶ κασιγνήτῳ λέγω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐν τοῖσδ' ἐκείνου τηλορὸς ναίω δόμοις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σκαφεύς τις ἢ βουφορβὸς ἄξιος δόμων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πένης ἀνὴρ γενναῖος εἷς τ' ἔμ' εὐσεβής.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἢ δ' εὐσέβεια τίς πρόσεστι σῶ πόσει ;

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Seest thou not how wasted is my form?—

ORESTES

So sorrow-broken that myself could sigh,

240

ELECTRA

Mine head withal—my tresses closely shorn,

ORESTES

Heart-wrung by a brother's fate, a father's death?

ELECTRA

Ah me, what is to me than these more dear?

ORESTES

Alas! art thou not to thy brother dear?

ELECTRA

Far off he stays, nor comes to prove his love.

ORESTES

Why dost thou dwell here, from the city far?

ELECTRA

I am wedded, stranger—as in bonds of death.

ORESTES

A Mycenaean lord? Alas thy brother!

ELECTRA

Not one to whom my sire once hoped to wed me.

ORESTES

Tell me, that hearing I may tell thy brother.

250

ELECTRA

In this his house from Argos far I live.

ORESTES

Delver or neatherd should but match such house!

ELECTRA

Poor, yet well-born, and reverencing me.

ORESTES

Now what this reverence rendered of thy spouse?

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐπώποτ' εὐνήσ τῆς ἐμῆς ἔτλη θιγεῖν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄγνευμ' ἔχων τι θεῖον ἢ σ' ἀπαξιῶν ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

γονέας ὑβρίζειν τοὺς ἐμοὺς οὐκ ἤξιον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ πῶς γάμον τοιοῦτον οὐχ ἤσθη λαβῶν ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐ κύριον τὸν δόντα μ' ἠγείται, ξένε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

260 ξυνῆκ' Ὀρέστη μὴ ποτ' ἐκτίση δίκην.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ταρβῶν, πρὸς δὲ καὶ σῶφρων ἔφυ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ.

γενναῖον ἄνδρ' ἔλεξας, εὖ τε δραστήον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εἰ δὴ ποθ' ἤξει γ' εἰς δόμους ὁ νῦν ἀπών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μήτηρ δέ σ' ἠ τεκοῦσα ταῦτ' ἠνέσχετο ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

γυναῖκες ἀνδρῶν, ὦ ξέν', οὐ παίδων φίλαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τίνος δέ σ' εἶνεχ' ὑβρισ' Αἴγισθος τάδε ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τεκεῖν μ' ἐβούλετ' ἀσθενῆ, τοιῶδε δούς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς δῆθε παῖδας μὴ τέκοις ποινάτορας ;

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Never hath he presumed to touch my couch.

ORESTES

A vow of chastity, or scorn of thee?

ELECTRA

He took not on him to insult my sires.

ORESTES

How? did he not exult to win such bride?

ELECTRA

He deems that who betrothed me had not right.

ORESTES

I understand:—and feared Orestes' vengeance? 260

ELECTRA

Yea, this: yet virtuous is he therewithal.

ORESTES

A noble soul this, worthy of reward!

ELECTRA

Yea, if the absent to his home return.

ORESTES

But did the mother who bare thee suffer this?

ELECTRA

Wives be their husbands', not their children's
friends.

ORESTES

Why did Aegisthus this despite to thee?

ELECTRA

That weaklings¹ of weak sire my sons might prove.

ORESTES

Ay, lest thou bear sons to avenge the wrong?

¹ i.e. Politically and socially.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τοιαῦτ' ἐβούλευσ'· ὦν ἐμοὶ δοίη δίκην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

270

οἶδεν δέ σ' οὔσαν παρθένον μητρὸς πόσις ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ οἶδε· σιγῇ τοῦθ' ὑφαιρουμεσθά νιν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αἶδ' οὖν φίλαι σοι τούσδ' ἀκούουσιν λόγους ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ᾧστε στέγειν γε τὰμὰ καὶ σ' ἔπη καλῶς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δῆτ' Ὀρέστης πρὸς τὰδ', Ἄργος ἦν μόλη ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἦρου τόδ' ; αἰσχρὸν γ' εἶπας· οὐ γὰρ νῦν ἀκμή ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐλθὼν δὲ δὴ πῶς φονέας ἂν κτάνοι πατρός ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τολμῶν ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν οἷ' ἐτολμήθη πατήρ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἦ καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ μητέρ' ἂν τλαίης κτανεῖν ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ταύτῳ γε πελέκει τῷ πατήρ ἀπόλετο.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

280

λέγω τὰδ' αὐτῷ, καὶ βέβαια τὰπὸ σοῦ ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θάνοιμι μητρὸς αἰμ' ἐπισφάξασ' ἐμῆς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ·
εἶθ' ἦν Ὀρέστης πλησίον κλύων τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄλλ', ὦ ξέν', οὐ γνοίην ἂν εἰσιδοῦσά νιν.

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

So schemed he—God grant I requite him yet!

ORESTES

Knows he, thy mother's spouse, thou art maiden still? 270

ELECTRA

Nay, for by silence this we hide from him.

ORESTES

Friends, then, are these which hearken these thy words?

ELECTRA

Yea, true to keep thy counsel close and mine.

ORESTES

What help, if Argos-ward Orestes came?

ELECTRA

Thou ask!—out on thee!—is it not full time?

ORESTES

How slay his father's murderers, if he came?

ELECTRA

Daring what foes against his father dared.

ORESTES

And with him wouldst thou, couldst thou, slay thy mother?

ELECTRA

Ay!—with that axe whereby my father died!

ORESTES

This shall I tell him for thy firm resolve? 280

ELECTRA

My mother's blood for *his*—then welcome death!

ORESTES

Ah, were Orestes nigh to hear that word!

ELECTRA

But, stranger, though I saw, I should not know him.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

νέα γάρ, οὐδὲν θαῦμ', ἀπεξεύχθης νέου.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

εἰς ἄν μόνος νιν τῶν ἐμῶν γνοίῃ φίλων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄρ' ὄν λέγουσιν αὐτὸν ἐκκλέψαι φόνου ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πατρός γε παιδαγωγὸς ἀρχαῖος γέρων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὁ κατθανὼν δὲ σὸς πατὴρ τύμβου κυρεῖ ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔκυρσεν ὡς ἔκυρσεν, ἐκβληθεὶς δόμων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

290

οἴμοι, τόδ' οἶον εἶπας· αἰσθησις γὰρ οὖν
 κάκ τῶν θυραίων πημάτων δάκνει βροτούς.
 λέξον δ', ἴν' εἰδὼς σῶ κασιγνήτῳ φέρω
 λόγους ἀτερπεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίους κλύειν.
 ἔνεστι δ' οἶκτος, ἀμαθία μὲν οὐδαμοῦ,
 σοφοῖσι δ' ἀνδρῶν· καὶ γὰρ οὐδ' ἀζήμιον
 γνώμην ἐνεῖναι τοῖς σοφοῖς λίαν σοφὴν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἀγὼ τὸν αὐτὸν τῷδ' ἔρον ψυχῆς ἔχω.
 πρόσω γὰρ ἄστεως οὔσα τὰν πόλει κακὰ
 οὐκ οἶδα, νῦν δὲ βούλομαι κἀγὼ μαθεῖν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

300

λέγοιμ' ἄν, εἰ χρή· χρή δὲ πρὸς φίλον λέγειν
 τύχας βαρείας τὰς ἐμὰς κάμου πατρός.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ κινεῖς μῦθον, ἰκετεύω, ξένε,
 ἄγγελλ' Ὀρέστη τὰμὰ καὶ κείνου κακά,
 πρῶτον μὲν οἷοις ἐν πέπλοις αὐλίζομαι,¹

¹ So MSS. Weil reads ἀθαίνομαι, "wastes my life away." Tucker suggests ἀγλάζομαι (ironical): "I am fair-arrayed."

ELECTRA

ORESTES

No marvel—a child parted from a child.

ELECTRA

One only of my friends would know him now,—

ORESTES

Who stole him out of murder's clutch, men say?

ELECTRA

That old man, once the child-ward of my sire.

ORESTES

And thy dead father—hath he found a tomb?

ELECTRA

Such tomb as he hath found, flung forth his halls!

ORESTES

Ah me, what tale is this!—Yea, sympathy
Even for strangers' pain wrings human hearts.
Tell on, that, knowing, to thy brother I
May bear the joyless tale that must be heard.
Yea, pity dwells, albeit ne'er in churls,
Yet in the wise:—this is the penalty
Laid on the wise for souls too finely wrought.

290

CHORUS

His heart's desire, the same is also mine:
For, from the town far dwelling, naught know I
The city's sins: now fain would I too hear.

ELECTRA

Tell will I—if I may. Sure I may tell
A friend my grievous fortune and my sire's.
Since thou dost wake the tale, I pray thee, stranger,
Report to Orestes all mine ills and his.
Tell in what raiment I am hovel-housed,

300

πίνω θ' ὄσω βέβριθ', ὑπὸ στέγαισί τε
 οἴαισι ναίω βασιλικῶν ἐκ δωμαίων,
 αὐτὴ μὲν ἐκμοχθοῦσα κερκίσιν πέπλους,
 ἢ γυμνὸν ἔξω σῶμα καὶ στερήσομαι,
 310 αὐτὴ δὲ πηγὰς ποταμίους φορουμένη,
 ἀνέορτος ἱερῶν καὶ χορῶν τητωμένη,
 ἀναίνομαι γυναῖκας, οὔσα παρθένος,
 ἀναίνομαι δὲ Κάστορ', ὦ, πρὶν εἰς θεοὺς
 ἐλθεῖν ἔμ' ἐμνήστευον, οὔσαν ἐγγενῆ.
 μήτηρ δ' ἐμὴ Φρυγίοισιν ἐν σκυλεύμασι
 θρόνῳ κάθηται, πρὸς δ' ἔδραισιν Ἀσίδες
 δμῶαί στατίζουσ', ἅς ἔπερσ' ἐμὸς πατήρ,
 Ἰδαία φάρη χρυσέαις ἐξευγμέναι
 πόρπαισιν. αἷμα δ' ἔτι πατρὸς κατὰ στέγας
 μέλαν σέσηπεν· ὃς δ' ἐκείνου ἔκτανεν,
 320 εἰς ταῦτ' αἰνῶν ἄρματ' ἐκφοιτᾷ πατρί,
 καὶ σκῆπτρ' ἐν οἷς Ἑλλησιν ἐστρατηλάτει
 μαιφόνουσι χερσὶ γαυροῦται λαβῶν.
 Ἀγαμέμνονος δὲ τύμβος ἠτιμασμένος
 οὔπω χροῖς ποτ' οὐδὲ κλῶνα μυρσίνης
 ἔλαβε, πυρὰ δὲ χέρσος ἀγλαῖσμάτων.
 μέθη δὲ βρεχθεὶς τῆς ἐμῆς μητρὸς πόσις
 ὁ κλεινός, ὡς λέγουσιν, ἐνθρόσκει τάφῳ
 πέτροις τε λεύει μνήμα λαῖνον πατρός,
 καὶ τοῦτο τολμᾷ τοῦπος εἰς ἡμᾶς λέγειν·
 330 ποῦ παῖς Ὀρέστης; ἄρά σοι τύμβῳ καλῶς
 παρὼν ἀμύνει; ταῦτ' ἀπὼν ὑβρίζεται.
 ἀλλ', ὦ ξέν', ἰκετεύω σ', ἀπάγγειλον τάδε·
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιστέλλουσιν, ἐρμηνεὺς δ' ἐγώ,
 αἱ χεῖρες, ἢ γλῶσσ' ἢ ταλαίπωρός τε φρῆν
 κἀρα τ' ἐμὸν ξυρήκες ὅ τ' ἐκείνου τεκῶν.
 αἰσχρὸν γάρ, εἰ πατήρ μὲν ἐξεῖλεν Φρύγας,

ELECTRA

Under what squalor I am crushed, and dwell
 Under what roof, after a palace home ;
 How mine own shuttle weaves with pain my robes,—
 Else must I want, all vestureless my frame ;—
 How from the stream myself the water bear ;
 Banned from the festal rite, denied the dance, 310
 No part have I with wives, who am a maid,
 No part in Castor, though they plighted me
 To him, my kinsman, ere to heaven he passed.
 Mid Phrygian spoils upon a throne the while
 Sitteth my mother : at her footstool stand
 Bondmaids of Asia, captives of my sire,
 Their robes Idaean with the brooches clasped
 Of gold :—and yet my sire's blood 'neath the
 roofs,
 A dark clot, festers ! He that murdered him
 Mounteth his very car, rides forth in state ; 320
 The sceptre that he marshalled Greeks withal
 Flaunting he graspeth in his blood-stained hand.
 And Agamemnon's tomb is set at naught :
 Drink-offerings never yet nor myrtle-spray
 Had it, a grave all bare of ornament.
 Yea, with wine drunken, he, my mother's spouse—
 Named of men "glorious" !—leaps upon the grave,
 And pelts with stones my father's monument ;
 And against us he dares to speak this taunt :
 "Where is thy son Orestes ?—bravely nigh 330
 To shield thy tomb !" So is the absent mocked.
 But, stranger, I beseech thee, tell him this :
 Many are summoning him,—their mouthpiece I,—
 These hands, this tongue, this stricken heart of
 mine,
 My shorn head, his own father therewithal.
 Shame, that the sire destroyed all Phrygia's race,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὁ δ' ἄνδρ' ἐν εἰς ὣν οὐ δυνήσεται κτανεῖν
νέος πεφυκῶς καὶ ἄμεινονος πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

340 καὶ μὴν δέδορκα τόνδε, σὸν λέγω πόσι,
λήξαντα μόχθου πρὸς δόμους ὠρμημένον.

ΑἴΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

ἔα· τίνας τούσδ' ἐν πύλαις ὀρῶ ξένους ;
τίνος δ' ἕκατι τάσδ' ἐπ' ἀγραύλους πύλας
προσηλθον ; ἢ 'μοῦ δεόμενοι ; γυναικί τοι
αἰσχρὸν μετ' ἀνδρῶν ἐστάναι νεανιῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατ', εἰς ὑποπτα μὴ μόλης ἐμοί·
τὸν ὄντα δ' εἴσει μῦθον· οἶδε γὰρ ξένοι
ἤκουσ' Ὀρέστου πρὸς με κήρυκες λόγων.
ἀλλ', ὦ ξένοι, σύγγνωτε τοῖς εἰρημένοις.

ΑἴΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

τί φασίν ; ἀνὴρ ἔστι καὶ λεύσσει φάος ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

350 ἔστιν λόγῳ γοῦν· φασὶ δ' οὐκ ἄπιστ' ἐμοί.

ΑἴΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

ἢ καί τι πατρὸς σῶν τε μέμνηται κακῶν ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐν ἐλπίσιν ταῦτ'· ἀσθενὴς φεύγων ἀνὴρ.

ΑἴΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

ἦλθον δ' Ὀρέστου τίν' ἀγορεύοντες λόγον ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σκοποὺς ἔπεμψε τούσδε τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΑἴΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

οὐκουν τὰ μὲν λεύσσουσι, τὰ δὲ σύ που λέγεις

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἴσασιν, οὐδὲν τῶνδ' ἔχουσιν ἐνδεες.

ELECTRA

And the son singly cannot slay one man,
Young though he be, and of a nobler sire!

CHORUS

But lo, yon man—thy spouse it is I name—
Hath ceased from toil, and homeward hasteneth. 340

Enter PEASANT.

PEASANT

How now? What strangers these about my doors?
For what cause unto these my rustic gates
Come they?—or seek they me? Beseemeth not
That with young men a wife should stand in talk.

ELECTRA

O kindest heart, do not suspect me thou,
And thou shalt hear the truth. These strangers come
Heralds to me of tidings of Orestes.
And, O ye strangers, pardon these his words.

PEASANT

What say they? Liveth he, and seeth light?

ELECTRA

Yea, by their tale—and I mistrust it not. 350

PEASANT

Ha!—and remembereth thy sire's wrongs and thine?

ELECTRA

Hope is as yet all: weak the exile is.

PEASANT

And what word from Orestes have they brought?

ELECTRA

These hath he sent, his spies, to mark my wrongs.

PEASANT

They see but part: thou haply tell'st the rest?

ELECTRA

They know: hereof nought lacketh unto them.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΑΤΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

οὐκοῦν πάλαι χρῆν τοῖσδ' ἀνεπτύχθαι πύλας,
 χωρεῖτ' ἐς οἴκους· ἀντὶ γὰρ χρηστῶν λόγων
 360 ξενίων κυρήσεθ', οἳ ἐμὸς κεύθει δόμος.
 αἴρεσθ', ὀπαδοί, τῶνδ' ἔσω τεύχη δόμων·
 καὶ μηδὲν ἀντείπητε, παρὰ φίλου φίλοι
 μολόντες ἀνδρός· καὶ γὰρ εἰ πένης ἔφυν,
 οὔτοι τό γ' ἦθος δυσγενὲς παρέξομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πρὸς θεῶν, ὅδ' ἀνὴρ ὃς συνεκκλέπτει γάμους
 τοὺς σούς, Ὀρέστην οὐ καταισχύνει θέλων;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὔτος κέκληται πόσις ἐμὸς τῆς ἀθλίας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ·
 οὐκ ἔστ' ἀκριβὲς οὐδὲν εἰς εὐανδρίαν·
 ἔχουσι γὰρ ταραγμὸν αἰ φύσεις βροτῶν.
 ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον παῖδα γενναίου πατρὸς
 370 τὸ μηδὲν ὄντα, χρηστὰ δ' ἐκ κακῶν τέκνα,
 λιμὸν τ' ἐν ἀνδρὸς πλουσίου φρονήματι,
 γνώμην δὲ μεγάλην ἐν πένητι σώματι.
 πῶς οὖν τις αὐτὰ διαλαβὼν ὀρθῶς κρινεῖ;
 πλούτῳ; πονηρῷ τάρᾳ χρήσεται κριτῆ;
 ἢ τοῖς ἔχουσι μηδέν; ἀλλ' ἔχει νόσον
 πενία, διδάσκει δ' ἀνδρα τῆ χρεῖα κακόν.
 ἀλλ' εἰς ὅπλ' ἔλθω; τίς δὲ πρὸς λόγχην βλέπων
 μάρτυς γένοιτ' ἂν ὅστις ἐστὶν ἀγαθός;
 380 κράτιστον εἰκῆ ταῦτ' ἔαν ἀφειμένα.
 οὔτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ οὔτ' ἐν Ἀργείοις μέγας
 οὔτ' αὖ δοκῆσει δωμάτων ὠγκωμένος,
 ἐν τοῖς δὲ πολλοῖς ὢν, ἄριστος ἠνρέθη.
 οὐ μὴ ἀφρονήσεθ', οἳ κενῶν δοξασμάτων

ELECTRA

PEASANT

Then should our doors ere this have been flung
wide.

Pass ye within : for your fair tidings' sake
Receive such guest-cheer as mine house contains.
Ye henchmen, take their gear these doors within. 360
Say me not nay—friends are ye from a friend
Which come to me : for, what though I be poor,
Yet will I nowise show a low-born soul. [*Goes to rear.*]

ORESTES

'Fore heaven, is this the man who keepeth close
Thy wedlock-secret, not to shame Orestes ?

ELECTRA

Even he, named spouse of me the hapless one.

ORESTES

Lo, there is no sure test for manhood's worth :
For mortal natures are confusion-fraught.
I have seen ere now a noble father's son
Proved nothing-worth, seen good sons of ill sires, 370
Starved leanness in a rich man's very soul,
And in a poor man's body a great heart.
How then shall one discern 'twixt these and
judge ?

By wealth ?—a sorry test were this to use.
Or by the lack of all ?—nay, poverty
Is plague-struck, schooling men to sin through need.
To prowess shall I turn me ?—who, that looks
On spears, can swear which spearman's heart is
brave ?

Leave Fortune's gifts to fall out as they will !
Lo, this man is not among Argives great, 380
Nor by a noble house's name exalted,
But one of the many—proved a king of men !
Learn wisdom, ye which wander aimless, swoln

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πλήρεις πλανᾶσθε, τῇ δ' ὀμιλία βροτούς
 κρινεῖτε καὶ τοῖς ἠθεσιν τοὺς εὐγενεῖς ;
 οἱ γὰρ τοιοῖδε τὰς πόλεις οἰκοῦσιν εὖ
 καὶ δώμαθ', αἱ δὲ σάρκες αἱ κεναὶ φρενῶν
 ἀγάλματ' ἀγορᾶς εἰσιν. οὐδὲ γὰρ δόρυ
 μᾶλλον βραχίων σθεναρὸς ἀσθενοῦς μένει·
 390 ἐν τῇ φύσει δὲ τοῦτο καὶ εὐψυχία.
 ἀλλ' ἄξιός γάρ ὃ τε παρῶν ὃ τ' οὐ παρῶν
 Ἄγαμέμνονος παῖς, οὐπὲρ εἶνεχ' ἤκομεν,
 δεξώμεθ' οἴκων καταλύσεις· χωρεῖν χρεῶν,
 δμῶες, δόμων τῶνδ' ἐντός. ὡς ἐμοὶ πένης
 εἶη πρόθυμος πλουσίου μᾶλλον ξένος.
 αἰνῶ μὲν οὖν τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς εἰσδοχὰς δόμων
 ἐβουλόμην δ' ἄν, εἰ κασίγνητός με σὸς
 εἰς εὐτυχούντας ἦγεν εὐτυχῶν δόμους.
 ἴσως δ' ἄν ἔλθοι· Λοξίου γὰρ ἔμπεδοι
 400 χρησμοί, βροτῶν δὲ μαντικὴν χαίρειν ἐῶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νῦν ἢ πάροιθεν μᾶλλον, Ἥλεκτρα, χαρᾶ
 θερμαινόμεσθα καρδίαν· ἴσως γὰρ ἄν
 μόλις προβαίνουσ' ἢ τύχη σταίη καλῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ τλήμων, εἰδὼς δωμάτων χρεῖαν σέθεν
 τί τούσδ' ἐδέξω μείζονας σαυτοῦ ξένους ;

ΑΥΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

τί δ' ; εἶπερ εἰσὶν ὡς δοκοῦσιν εὐγενεῖς,
 οὐκ ἔν τε μικροῖς ἔν τε μὴ στέρξουσ' ὁμῶς ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐπεὶ νυν ἐξήμαρτες ἐν σμικροῖσιν ὦν,
 ἔλθ' ὡς παλαιὸν τροφὸν ἐμοῦ φίλον πατρός·
 410 ὃς ἀμφὶ ποταμὸν Ἰαναὸν Ἀργείας ὄρους
 τέμνοντα γαίας Σπαρτιάτιδος τε γῆς

ELECTRA

With vain imaginings: by converse judge
 Men, even the noble by their daily walk.
 For such be they which govern states aright
 And homes: but fleshly bulks devoid of wit
 Are statues in the market-place. Nor bides
 The strong arm staunchlier than the weak in fight;
 But this of nature's inborn courage springs. 390
 But—seeing worthy is Agamemnon's son,
 Present or absent, for whose sake we come,—
 Accept we shelter of this roof. Ho, thralls,
 Enter this house. For me the host whose heart
 Leaps out in welcome, rather than the rich!
 Thanks for the welcome into this man's house;
 Yet fain would I it were thy brother now
 That prospering led me into prosperous halls.
 Yet may he come; for Loxias' oracles
 Fail not. Of men's soothsaying will I none. 400

[ORESTES and PYLADES enter cottage.]

CHORUS

Now, more than heretofore, Electra, glows
 Mine heart with joy. Thy fortune now, though late
 Advancing, haply shall be stablished fair.

ELECTRA

Poor man, thou know'st thine house's poverty.
 Wherefore receive these guests too great for thee?

PEASANT

How?—an they be of high birth, as they seem,
 Will they content them not with little or much?

ELECTRA

Since then thou so hast erred, and thou so poor,
 Go to the ancient fosterer of my sire,
 Who on the banks of Tanaüs, which parts 410
 The Argive marches from the Spartan land,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποιμναις ὀμαρτεῖ πόλεος ἐκβεβλημένος·
 κέλευε δ' αὐτὸν εἰς δόμους ἀφιγμένον
 ἔλθειν, ξένων τ' εἰς δαῖτα πορσύναί τινα.
 ἦσθήσεται τοι καὶ προσεύξεται θεοῖς,
 ζῶντ' εἰσακούσας παῖδ' ὃν ἐκσῶζει ποτέ.
 οὐ γὰρ πατρώων ἐκ δόμων μητρὸς πάρα
 λάβοιμεν ἄν τι· πικρὰ δ' ἀγγείλαιμεν ἄν,
 εἰ ζῶντ' Ὀρέστην ἢ τάλαιν' αἰσθοῖτ' ἔτι.

ΑΥΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ

420 ἄλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, τούσδ' ἀπαγγελῶ λόγους
 γέροντι· χῶρει δ' εἰς δόμους ὅσον τάχος
 καὶ τάνδον ἐξάρτυε. πολλά τοι γυνὴ
 χρήζουσ' ἄν εὖροι δαιτὶ προσφορήματα.
 ἔστιν δὲ δὴ τοσαῦτά γ' ἐν δόμοις ἔτι,
 ὥσθ' ἔν γ' ἐπ' ἡμαρ τούσδε πληρῶσαι βορᾶς.
 ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις δ' ἠνίκ' ἄν γνώμη πέσῃ,
 σκοπῶ τὰ χρήμαθ' ὡς ἔχει μέγα σθένος,
 ξένοις τε δοῦναι σῶμά τ' εἰς νόσον πεσόν
 430 δαπάναισι σῶσαι· τῆς δ' ἐφ' ἡμέραν βορᾶς
 εἰς μικρὸν ἤκει· πᾶς γὰρ ἐμπλησθεὶς ἀνὴρ
 ὁ πλούσιός τε χῶ πένης ἴσον φέρει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κλειναὶ νᾶες, αἴ ποτ' ἔμβατε Τροίαν στρ. α'
 τοῖς ἀμετρήτοις ἑρετμοῖς
 πέμπουσαι χορούς μετὰ Νηρήδων,
 ἵν' ὁ φίλαυλος ἔπαλλε δελ-
 φὶς πρόραις κυανεμβόλοις
 εἰλισσόμενος,
 πορεύων τὸν τᾶς Θέτιδος
 440 κούφον ἄλμα ποδῶν Ἀχιλῆ
 σὺν Ἀγαμέμνονι Τρωίας
 ἐπὶ Σιμωνντίδας ἀκτάς.

ELECTRA

An outcast from our city, tends his flocks.
 Bid him to wend home straightway, and to come
 And furnish somewhat for the strangers' meat.
 He shall rejoice, yea, render thanks to heaven,
 To hear how lives the child whom once he saved.
 For of my mother from my father's halls
 Nought should we gain : our tidings should we rue
 If that wretch heard that yet Orestes lives.

PEASANT

If thus thou wilt, thy message will I bear 420
 To yon grey sire : but pass thou in with speed,
 And there make ready. Woman's will can find
 Many a thing shall eke the feasting out.
 Yea, and within the house is store enough
 To satisfy for one day these with meat.
 In such things, when my thoughts turn thitherward,
 I mark what mighty vantage is in wealth,
 To give to guests, to medicine the body
 In sickness ; but for needs of daily food
 Not far it reacheth. Each man, rich and poor, 430
 Can be but filled, when hunger is appeased.

[*Exit* PEASANT. ELECTRA enters the cottage.

CHORUS

O galleys renowned, by your myriad-sweeping (*Str.* 1)
 Oars hurled high on the Trojan strand,
 Whom the Sea-maids followed, with dances
 surrounding [ing
 Your dusky prows, when the dolphin was bound-
 Around them, bewitched by your music, and leaping
 In sinuous rapture on every hand,
 Escorting Achilles, the fleetfoot son
 Of Thetis, with King Agamemnon on
 Unto where broad Simois, seaward-creeping 440
 Rippled and glittered o'er Trojan sand.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Νηρηΐδες δ' Εὐβοΐδας ἀκτὰς λιπούσαι ἀντ. α
 Ἡφαίστου χρυσεῶν ἀκμόνων
 μόχθους ἀσπιστὰς ἔφερον τευχέων,
 ἀνά τε Πήλιον ἀνά τε πρύ-
 μνας Ὀσσας ἱερὰς νάπας,
 Νυμφαΐας σκοπιάς,
 ἐμάστευον, ἔνθα πατήρ
 ἰππότας τρέφεν Ἑλλάδι φῶς,
 450 Θέτιδος εἰνάλιον γόνου,
 ταχύπορον πόδ' Ἀτρείδαις.

Ἴλιόθεν δ' ἔκλυόν τινος ἐν λιμέσιν στρ. β
 Ναυπλίοισι βεβῶτος
 τὰς σᾶς, ὦ Θέτιδος παῖ,
 κλεινᾶς ἀσπίδος ἐν κύκλῳ
 τοιάδε σήματα, δείματα
 Φρύγια, τετύχθαι
 περιδρόμῳ μὲν ἴτνος ἔδρα
 Περσέα λαιμοτόμον ὑπὲρ
 460 ἄλος ποτανοῖσι πεδίλοι-
 σι φυὰν Γοργόνος ἴσχειν,
 Διὸς ἀγγέλῳ σὺν Ἑρμῇ
 τῷ Μαΐας ἀγροτῆρι κούρῳ·

ἐν δὲ μέσῳ κατέλαμπε σάκει φαέθων ἀντ. β
 κύκλος ἀελίοιο
 ἵπποις ἄμ πτεροέσσαις
 ἄστρον τ' αἰθέριοι χοροί,
 Πλειάδες, Ὑάδες, Ἔκτορος
 ὄμμασι τροπαῖοι·
 470 ἐπὶ δὲ χρυσοτύπῳ κράνει
 Σφίγγες ὄνυξιν ἀοίδιμον

ELECTRA

And the Sea-maids fled by shores Euboean (*Ant.* 1)
 From the depths where the golden anvils are
 Of the Fire-god, a hero's harness bearing—
 Over Pelion, over the wild spurs faring
 Of Ossa, over the glens Nymphaean;
 From the watchtower-crag's outgazing afar
 They sought where his father, the chariot-lord,
 Fostered for Thetis a sea-born ward,
 A light for Hellas, a victory-pæan, 450
 The fleetfoot help to the Atreïds' war.

Of a farer from Ilium heard I the story, (*Str.* 2)
 Who had stepped to the strand in the Nauplian
 haven,

Heard, O Thetis' son, of thy buckler of glory,
 Of the blazonry midst of the round of it graven
 Whose god-fashioned tokens of terror made craven
 The hearts of the Trojans in battle adread,—
 How gleamed on the border that compassed its
 splendour

Perseus, on sandals swift-winged as he fled 460
 Bearing throat-severed the Gorgon-fiend's head,
 While Maia's son, Prince of the Fields, for defender,
 Herald of Zeus, at his side ever sped.

(*Ant.* 2)

And flamed in the midst of the buckler outblazing
 The orb of the Sun-god, his heaven-track riding
 On the car after coursers wing-wafted on-racing.
 And therein were the stars in their sky-dance
 gliding,

The Pleiads and Hyades, evil-betiding
 To Hector, for death in his eyes did they fling. [ing
 On the golden-forged helmet were Sphinxes, bear- 470
 In their talons the victim that minstrels sing.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄγραν φέρουσαι· περιπλεύρω
 δὲ κύτει πύρπνοος ἔσπεν-
 δε δρόμφ λέαινα χαλαῖς
 Πειρηναῖον ὄρωσα πῶλον.

ἐπφδ.

ἄορι δ' ἐν φονίῳ¹ τετραβάμονες ἵπποι ἔπαλλον,
 κελαινὰ δ' ἀμφὶ νῶθ' ἴετο κόνις.
 τοιῶνδ' ἄνακτα δοριπόνων
 480 ἔκανες ἀνδρῶν, Τυνδαρί,
 σὰ λέχεια, κακόφρων κόρα.
 τοιγάρ σέ ποτ' οὐρανίδαί
 πέμψουσιν θανάτοις· ἦ σὰν
 ἔτ' ἐτι φόνιον ὑπὸ δέραν
 ὄψομαι αἷμα χυθὲν σιδάρῳ.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ποῦ ποῦ νεᾶνις πότνι' ἐμῇ δέσποινά τε,
 Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖς, ὅν ποτ' ἐξέθρεψ' ἐγώ;
 ὡς πρόσβασιν τῶνδ' ὀρθίαν οἴκων ἔχει
 490 ῥυσῶ γέροντι τῷδε προσβῆναι ποδί.
 ὅμως δὲ πρὸς γε τοὺς φίλους ἐξελκτέον
 διπλῆν ἄκανθαν καὶ παλίρροπον γόνυ.
 ὦ θύγατερ, ἄρτι γάρ σε πρὸς δόμοις ὄρῳ,
 ἦκω φέρων σοι τῶν ἐμῶν βοσκημάτων
 ποιίμνης νεογνὸν θρέμμ' ὑποσπάσας τόδε,
 στεφάνους τε τευχέων τ' ἐξελῶν τυρεύματα,
 παλαιὸν τε θησαύρισμα Διονύσου τόδε
 ὀσμῇ κατῆρες, μικρόν, ἀλλ' ἐπεισβαλεῖν
 500 ἠδὲ σκύφον τοῦδ' ἀσθενεστέρῳ ποτῶ.
 ἴτω φέρων τις τοῖς ξένοις τὰδ' εἰς δόμους·
 ἐγὼ δὲ τρύχει τῷδ' ἐμῶν πέπλων κόρας
 δακρύοισι τέγξας ἐξομόρξασθαι θέλω.

¹ Hartung: for ἐν δὲ δόρει of MSS.

ELECTRA

On the corslet his bosom encompassing
 The fire-breathing lioness rushed, up-glaring
 At the winged steed trapped by Peirene's spring.¹

(*Epode.*)

And battle-steeds pranced on his falchion of slaughter;
 O'er their shoulders was floating the dark dust-
 cloud :—

And thou slewest the chieftain, O Tyndareus' daughter, 480
 That captained such heroes, so godlike and proud !
 Thine adultery slew him, O thou false-hearted !

Therefore the Dwellers in Heaven shall repay
 Death unto thee in the on-coming day.

I shall see it—shall see when the life-blood hath started
 From thy neck at the kiss of the steel that shall slay !

Enter OLD MAN.

OLD MAN

Where shall the princess, my young mistress, be,
 Child of the great king fostered once of me ?
 How steep ascent hath she to this her home
 For mine eld-wrinkled feet to attain thereto ! 490
 Howbeit to those I love must I drag on
 Mine age-cramped spine, must drag my bowing knees.

Enter ELECTRA.

Daughter,—for now I see thee at thy door,—
 Lo, I am come : I bring thee from my flocks
 A suckling lamb, yea, taken from the ewe,
 Garlands, and cheeses from the presses drawn,
 And this old treasure-drop of the Wine-god's boon,
 Rich-odoured—little enow ; yet weaker draughts
 Are turned to nectar, blent with a cup of this.
 Let one bear these unto thy guests within. 500
 Lo, with this tattered vesture am I fain
 To wipe away the tears that dim mine eyes.

¹ Bellerophon, mounted on Pegasus, attacking the Chimaera.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ', ὦ γεραιέ, διάβροχον τόδ' ὄμμ' ἔχεις ;
 μῶν τὰμὰ διὰ χρόνου σ' ἀνέμνησεν κακά ;
 ἦ τὰς Ὀρέστου τλήμονας φυγὰς στένεις
 καὶ πατέρα τὸν ἐμόν, ὃν ποτ' ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων
 ἀνόνητ' ἔθρεψάς σοί τε καὶ τοῖς σοῖς φίλοις ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

510 ἀνόνηθ'. ὅμως δ' οὖν τοῦτό γ' οὐκ ἠνεσχόμην.
 ἦλθον γὰρ αὐτοῦ πρὸς τάφον πάρεργ' ὁδοῦ,
 καὶ προσπεσὼν ἔκλαυσ', ἐρημίας τυχῶν,
 σπονδάς τε, λύσας ἀσκὸν ὃν φέρω ξένοις,
 ἔσπεισα, τύμβῳ δ' ἀμφέθηκα μυρσίνας.
 πυρᾶς δ' ἐπ' αὐτῆς οἶν μελάγχιμον πόκῳ
 σφάγιον ἐσεῖδον αἷμά τ' οὐ πάλαι χυθὲν
 ξανθῆς τε χαίτης βοστρύχους κεκαρμένους.
 καθάυμασ', ὦ παῖ, τίς ποτ' ἀνθρώπων ἔτλη
 πρὸς τύμβον ἐλθεῖν· οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων γέ τις·
 ἀλλ' ἦλθ' ἴσως που σὸς κασίγνητος λάθρα,
 520 μολῶν δ' ἐθαύμασ' ἄθλιον τύμβον πατρός.
 σκέψαι δὲ χαίτην προστιθεῖσα σῆ κόμη,
 εἰ χρῶμα ταῦτὸν κουρίμης ἔσται τριχός·
 φιλεῖ γάρ, αἷμα ταῦτὸν οἷς ἂν ἦ πατρός
 τὰ πόλλ' ὅμοια σώματος πεφυκένοι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἄξι' ἀνδρός, ὦ γέρον, σοφοῦ λέγεις,
 εἰ κρυπτόν εἰς γῆν τήνδ' ἂν Αἰγίσθου φόβῳ
 δοκεῖς ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἐμόν εὐθαρσῆ μολεῖν.
 ἔπειτα χαίτης πῶς συνοίσεται πλόκος,
 ὁ μὲν παλαιστραῖς ἀνδρὸς εὐγενοῦς τραφεῖς,
 ὁ δὲ κτενισμοῖς θῆλυς ; ἀλλ' ἀμήχανον.
 530 πολλοῖς δ' ἂν εὖροις βοστρύχους ὁμοπτέρους

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Whence to thine eyes, grey sire, this sorrow-rain?
Have mine ills wakened memories long asleep?
Or for Orestes' exile groanest thou,
And for my sire, whom in thine arms of old
Thou fosteredst?—all in vain for thee and thine!

OLD MAN

In vain! Yet this despair could I not brook.
I turned, in coming, to his tomb aside,
There kneeling, for its desolation wept, 510
Poured a drink-offering from the skin I bare
Thy guests, and crowned the tomb with myrtle-
sprays.
But—on the grave a black-fleeced ewe I saw
New-slain, and blood but short time since out-
poured,
And severed locks thereby of golden hair!
I marvelled, daughter, who of men had dared
Draw nigh the tomb: no Argive he, I wot.
Haply thy brother hath in secret come,
And honoured so his father's grave forlorn.
Look on the tress; yea, lay it to thine hair; 520
Mark if the shorn lock's colour be the same:
For they which share one father's blood shall oft
By many a bodily likeness kinship show.

ELECTRA

Not worthy a wise man, ancient, be thy words—
To think mine aweless brother would have come,
Fearing Aegisthus, hither secretly.
Then, how should tress be matched with tress of
hair—
That, a young noble's trained in athlete-strife,
This, womanlike comb-sleeked? It cannot be.
Sooth, many shouldst thou find of hair like-hued, 530

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴ γεγῶσιν αἵματος ταυτοῦ, γέρον.
 ἀλλ' ἢ τις αὐτοῦ τάφον ἐποικτεῖρας ξένος¹
 ἐκείρατ', ἢ τῆσδε σκοπὸς λαθὼν χθονός.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

σὺ δ' εἰς ἵχνος βᾶσ' ἀρβύλης σκέψαι βάσιν,
 εἰ σύμμετρος σῶ ποδὶ γενήσεται, τέκνον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς δ' ἂν γένοιτ' ἂν ἐν κραταιλέῳ πέδῳ
 γαίας ποδῶν ἔκμακτρον ; εἰ δ' ἔστιν τόδε,
 δυοῖν ἀδελφοῖν πούς ἂν οὐ γένοιτ' ἴσος
 ἀνδρός τε καὶ γυναικός, ἀλλ' ἄρσην κρατεῖ.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

540 οὐκ ἔστιν, εἰ καὶ γῆν κασίγνητος μόλοι,
 κερκίδος ὄτῳ γνοίης ἂν ἐξύφασμα σῆς,
 ἐν ᾧ ποτ' αὐτὸν ἐξέκλεψα μὴ θανεῖν ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ οἶσθ', Ὀρέστης ἠνίκ' ἐκπίπτει χθονός,
 νέαν μ' ἔτ' οὔσαν ; εἰ δὲ κᾶκρεκον πέπλους,
 πῶς ἂν τότ' ὦν παῖς ταῦτὰ νῦν ἔχοι φάρη,
 εἰ μὴ ξυναύξοιθ' οἱ πέπλοι τῷ σώματι ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

οἱ δὲ ξένοι ποῦ ; βούλομαι γὰρ εἰσιδῶν
 αὐτούς ἐρέσθαι σοῦ κασιγνήτου πέρι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἶδ' ἐκ δόμων βαίνουσι λαιψηρῶ ποδί.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

550 ἀλλ' εὐγενεῖς μέν, ἐν δὲ κιβδήλῳ τόδε·
 πολλοὶ γὰρ ὄντες εὐγενεῖς εἰσιν κακοί.
 ὅμως δὲ χαίρειν τοὺς ξένους προσευνέπω.

¹ This line and the next are transferred by Paley from their old place after 544.

ELECTRA

Though of the same blood, ancient, never born.
Nay, pitying his tomb, some stranger shore it,
Or Argive friend, my brother's secret spy.

OLD MAN

A sandal's print is there : go, look thereon,
Child ; mark if that foot's contour match with thine.

ELECTRA

How on a stony plain should there be made
Impress of feet ? Yea, if such print be there,
Brother's and sister's foot should never match—
A man's and woman's : greater is the male.

OLD MAN

Is there no weft of thine own loom—whereby
To know thy brother, if he should return—
Wherein I stole him, years ago, from death ?

540

ELECTRA

Know'st thou not, when Orestes fled the land,
I was a child ? Yea, had I woven vests,
How should that lad the same cloak wear to-day,
Except, as waxed the body, vestures grew ?

OLD MAN

Where be the strangers ? I would fain behold
And of thine absent brother question them.

ELECTRA

Lo, here with light foot step they forth the house.
Re-enter ORESTES and PYLADES.

OLD MAN (*aside*)

High-born of mien :—yet false the coin may be ;
For many nobly born be knaves in grain.
Yet—(*aloud*) to the strangers greeting fair I give.

550

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ γεραιέ. τοῦ ποτ', Ἡλέκτρα, τόδε
παλαιὸν ἀνδρὸς λείψανον φίλων κυρεῖ ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὔτος τὸν ἀμὸν πατέρ' ἔθρεψεν, ὦ ξένε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί φῆς ; ὄδ' ὄς σὸν ἐξέκλεψε σύγγονον ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὄδ' ἔσθ' ὁ σώσας κείνου, εἶπερ ἔστ' ἔτι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔα·
τί μ' εἰσδέδορκεν ὥσπερ ἀργύρου σκοπῶν
λαμπρὸν χαρακτῆρ' ; ἢ προσεικάζει μέ τω ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

560 ἴσως Ὀρέστου σ' ἤλιχ' ἤδεται βλέπων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φίλου γε φωτός. τί δὲ κυκλεῖ πέριξ πόδα ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καυτὴ τόδ' εἰσορῶσα θαυμάζω, ξένε.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ὦ πότνι', εὔχου, θύγατερ Ἡλέκτρα, θεοῖς—

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί τῶν ἀπόντων ἢ τί τῶν ὄντων πέρι ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

λαβεῖν φίλον θησαυρόν, ὃν φαίνει θεός.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰδού, καλῶ θεούς. ἢ τί δὴ λέγεις, γέρον ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

βλέψον νυν εἰς τόνδ', ὦ τέκνον, τὸν φίλτατον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πάλαι δέδοικα, μὴ σύ γ' οὐκέτ' εὖ φρονῆς.

ELECTRA

ORESTES

Greeting, grey sire! Electra, of thy friends
Who hath this time-worn wreck of man to thrall?

ELECTRA

This, stranger, was my father's fosterer.

ORESTES

How say'st thou?—this, who stole thy brother
hence?

ELECTRA

Even he who saved him, if he liveth yet.

ORESTES

Why looks he on me, as who eyes the stamp
On silver?—likening me to any man?

ELECTRA

Joying perchance to see Orestes' friend.

560

ORESTES

Yea, dear he is:—yet wherefore pace me round?

ELECTRA

I also marvel, stranger, seeing this.

OLD MAN

Daughter Electra—princess!—pray the Gods—

ELECTRA

For what—of things that are or are not ours?

OLD MAN

To win the precious treasure God reveals!

ELECTRA

Lo, I invoke them. What dost mean, old sire?

OLD MAN

Look on him now, child,—on thy best-beloved!

ELECTRA

Long have I dreaded lest thy wits be crazed.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

οὐκ εὖ φρονῶ ἄγῳ σὸν κασίγνητον βλέπων ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

570 πῶς εἶπας, ὦ γεραῖ', ἀνέλπιστον λόγον ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ὄρῶν Ὀρέστην τόνδε τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ποῖον χαρακτῆρ' εἰσιδών, ὦ πείσομαι ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

οὐλήν παρ' ὀφρύν, ἣν ποτ' ἐν πατρὸς δόμοις
νεβρὸν διώκων σοῦ μέθ' ἡμάχθη πεσών.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πῶς φῆς ; ὀρῶ μὲν πτώματος τεκμήριον.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ἔπειτα μέλλεις προσπίτνειν τοῖς φιλτάτοις ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' οὐκέτ', ὦ γεραῖέ· συμβόλοισι γὰρ
τοῖς σοῖς πέπεισμαι θυμόν. ὦ χρόνῳ φανεί
ἔχω σ' ἀέλπτως

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κάξ ἐμοῦ γ' ἔχει χρόνῳ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδέποτε δόξασ'.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

580 οὐδ' ἐγὼ γὰρ ἤλπισα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐκεῖνος εἶ σύ ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σύμμαχός γέ σοι μόνος,
ἦν ἐκσπάσωμαί γ' ὄν μετέρχομαι βόλον.
πέποιθα δ' ἢ χρῆ μηκέθ' ἡγεῖσθαι θεούς,
εἰ τᾶδ' ἔσται τῆς δίκης ὑπέρτερα.

ELECTRA

OLD MAN

I, crazed!—who look upon thy brother,—there!

ELECTRA

What mean'st thou, ancient, by a word past hope? 570

OLD MAN

I see Orestes, Agamemnon's son.

ELECTRA

What token hast thou marked, that I may trust?

OLD MAN

A scar along his brow: in his father's halls
Chasing with thee a fawn, he fell and gashed it.

ELECTRA

How say'st thou? Yea, I see the mark thereof!

OLD MAN

Now, art thou slow to embrace thy best-beloved?

ELECTRA

No, ancient, no! By all thy signs convinced
Mine heart is. Thou who hast at last appeared,
Unhoped I clasp thee!

ORESTES

Clasped at last of me!

ELECTRA

Never I looked for this!

ORESTES

Nor dared I hope. 580

ELECTRA

And art thou he?

ORESTES

Yea, thy one champion I,—

If I draw in the net-cast that I seek:
And sure I shall! We must believe no more
In Gods, if wrong shall triumph over right.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔμολες, ἔμολες, ὦ χρόνιος ἀμέρα,
κατέλαμψας, ἔδειξας ἐμφανῆ
πόλει πυρσόν, ὃς παλαιᾷ φυγᾷ
πατρίων ἀπὸ δωμάτων τάλας
ἀλαίνων ἔβα. θεὸς αὖ θεὸς
590 ἀμετέραν τις ἄγει
νίκαν, ὦ φίλα.
ἄνεχε χέρας, ἄνεχε
λόγον, ἴει λιτὰς εἰς τοὺς θεούς,
τύχα σοι τύχα
κασίγνητον ἐμβατεῦσαι πόλιν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἶεν· φίλας μὲν ἠδονὰς ἀσπασμάτων
ἔχω, χρόνῳ δὲ καὐθις αὐτὰ δώσομεν.
σὺ δ', ὦ γεραιέ, καίριος γὰρ ἤλυθες,
600 λέξον, τί δρῶν ἂν φονέα τισαίμην πατρὸς
μητέρα τε τὴν κοινωνὸν ἀνοσίων γάμων ;
ἔστιν τί μοι κατ' Ἄργος εὐμενὲς φίλων ;
ἢ πάντ' ἀνεσκευάσμεθ', ὥσπερ αἱ τύχαι ;
τῷ συγγένωμαι ; νύχιος ἢ καθ' ἡμέραν ;
ποίαν ὁδὸν τραπώμεθ' εἰς ἐχθροὺς ἐμούς ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ὦ τέκνον, οὐδεὶς δυστυχοῦντί σοι φίλος.
εὖρημα γὰρ τὸ χρῆμα γίγνεται τόδε,
κοινῇ μετασχεῖν τὰγαθοῦ καὶ τοῦ κακοῦ.
σὺ δ', ἐκ βάθρων γὰρ πᾶς ἀνήρησαι φίλοις
οὐδ' ἐλλέλοιπας ἐλπίδ', ἴσθι μου κλύων,
610 ἐν χειρὶ τῇ σῇ πάντ' ἔχεις καὶ τῇ τύχῃ
πατρῶον οἶκον καὶ πόλιν λαβεῖν σέθεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δῆτα δρῶντες τοῦδ' ἂν ἐξικοίμεθα ;

ELECTRA

CHORUS

Thou hast come, thou hast come, dawn long delayed!
Thou hast flashed from the sky, thou hast lifted
on high
O'er the land as a beacon the exile that strayed
From his father's halls, while the years dragged by
In misery.

Victory! God unto us is bringing 590
Victory, O my friend!
Lift up thine hands and thy voice uprising
In prayers to the Gods, that, with Fortune flinging
Her shield round about him, thy brother through
Argos' gates may wend!

ORESTES

Hold—the sweet bliss of greeting I receive
Of thee, hereafter must I render back.
But, ancient—for in season hast thou come,—
Say, how shall I requite my father's slayer,
And her that shares his guilty couch, my mother? 600
Have I in Argos any loyal friend,
Or, like my fortunes, am I bankrupt all?
With whom to league me?—best were night, or
day?
What path shall I essay to assault my foes?

OLD MAN

Ah son, no friend hast thou in thy misfortune.
Nay, but this thing as treasure-trove is rare,
That one should share thine evil as thy good.
Since thou art wholly, as touching friends, bereft,—
Art even hope-forlorn,—be assured of me,
In thine own hand and fortune is thine all 610
For winning father's house and city again.

ORESTES

What shall I do then, to attain thereto?

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

κτανὼν Θυέστου παῖδα σὴν τε μητέρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἤκω 'πὶ τόνδε στέφανον· ἀλλὰ πῶς λάβω ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

τειχέων μὲν ἔλθων ἐντὸς οὐδ' ἂν εἰ θέλοις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φρουραῖς κέκασται δεξιαῖς τε δορυφόρων ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

ἔγνωσ'· φοβεῖται γάρ σε κούχ εὔδει σαφῶς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἶεν· σὺ δὴ τούνθενδε βούλευσον, γέρον.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

κάμοῦ γ' ἄκουσον· ἄρτι γάρ μ' ἐσῆλθέ τι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

620

ἐσθλὸν τι μηνύσειας, αἰσθοίμην δ' ἐγώ.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

Αἴγισθον εἶδον, ἠνίχ' εἶρπον ἐνθάδε,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

προσηκάμην τὸ ῥηθέν. ἐν ποίοις τόποις ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

ἀγρῶν πέλας τῶνδ' ἵπποφορβίων ἔπι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δρῶνθ ; ὀρῶ γὰρ ἐλπίδ' ἐξ ἀμηχάνων.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

Νύμφαις ἐπόρσυν' ἔροτιν, ὡς ἔδοξέ μοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τροφεῖα παίδων, ἢ πρὸ μέλλοντος τόκου ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν· βουσφαγεῖν ὠπλίζετο.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πόσων μετ' ἀνδρῶν ; ἢ μόνος δμῶων μέτα ;

ELECTRA

OLD MAN

Thyestes' son and thine own mother slay.

ORESTES

To win this prize I come. How shall I grasp it?

OLD MAN

Through yon gates, never, how good soe'er thy will.

ORESTES

With guards beset is he, and spearmen's hands?

OLD MAN

Thou sayest: he fears thee, that he cannot sleep.

ORESTES

Ay so:—what followeth, ancient, counsel thou.

OLD MAN

Hear me—even now a thought hath come to me.

ORESTES

Be thy device good, keen to follow I!

620

OLD MAN

Aegisthus saw I, hither as I toiled,—

ORESTES

Now welcome be the word! Thou saw'st him—where?

OLD MAN

Nigh to these fields, by pastures of his steeds.

ORESTES

What doth he? From despair I look on hope!

OLD MAN

A feast would he prepare the Nymphs, meseemed.

ORESTES

For nursing-dues of babes, or birth at hand?

OLD MAN

Nought know I, save his purposed sacrifice.

ORESTES

With guards how many?—or alone with thralls?

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

οὔδεις παρῆν Ἀργεῖος, οἰκεία δὲ χεῖρ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

630

οὐ πού τις ὅστις γνωριεῖ μ' ἰδών, γέρον ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

δμῶες μὲν εἰσιν, οἷ σέ γ' οὐκ εἰδόν ποτε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἡμῖν ἂν εἶεν, εἰ κρατοῖμεν, εὐμενεῖς ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

δούλων γὰρ ἴδιον τοῦτο, σοὶ δὲ σύμφορον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἂν αὐτῷ πλησιασθεῖην ποτέ ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

στειχων ὄθεν σε βουθυτῶν ἐσόψεται.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὁδὸν παρ' αὐτήν, ὡς ἔοικ', ἀγροὺς ἔχει.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

ὄθεν γ' ἰδών σε δαιτὶ κοινωνὸν καλεῖ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πικρὸν γε συνθοινάτορ', ἦν θεὸς θέλη.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

τοῦνθένδε πρὸς τὸ πῖπτον αὐτὸς ἐννόει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

640

καλῶς ἔλεξας. ἡ τεκοῦσα δ' ἐστὶ ποῦ ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

Ἄργει· παρέσται δ' ἐν τάχει θοῖνην ἔπι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δ' οὐχ ἄμ' ἐξωρμάτ' ἐμῇ μήτηρ πόσει ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΣ

ψόγον τρέμουσα δημοτῶν ἐλείπετο.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ξυνήχ'· ὑποπτος οὔσα γιγνώσκει πόλει.

ELECTRA

OLD MAN

They only of his household ; Argives none.

ORESTES

None, ancient, who might look on me, and know ? 630

OLD MAN

Thralls are they who looked never on thy face.

ORESTES

Haply my partisans, if I prevail ?

OLD MAN

The bondman's wont, by happy chance for thee.

ORESTES

How then shall I make shift to approach to him ?

OLD MAN

Pass full in view at hour of sacrifice.

ORESTES

Hard by the highway be his lands, I trow.

OLD MAN

Thence shall he see, and bid thee to the feast.

ORESTES

A bitter fellow-feaster, heaven to help !

OLD MAN

Thereafter thou take thought, as fortune falls.

ORESTES

Well hast thou said. My mother—where is she ? 640

OLD MAN

In Argos, yet shall soon attend the feast.

ORESTES

Why went not forth my mother with her lord ?

OLD MAN

Fearing the people's taunts there tarried she.

ORESTES

Yea—knowing how men look askance on her.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

τοιαῦτα· μισεῖται γὰρ ἀνόσιος γυνή.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἐκείνην τόνδε τ' ἐν ταυτῷ κτενῶ ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγὼ φόνον γε μητρὸς ἐξαρτύσομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐκεῖνά γ' ἢ τύχη θήσει καλῶς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὑπηρετείτω μὲν δυοῖν ὄντοιν ὄδε.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

650

ἔσται τάδ'· εὐρίσκεις δὲ μητρὶ πῶς φονον ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λέγ', ὦ γεραιέ, τάδε Κλυταιμνήστρα μολῶν
λεχῶ μ' ἀπάγγελλ' οὔσαν ἄρσενος τόκου.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

πότερα πάλαι τεκοῦσαν ἢ νεωστὶ δῆ ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δέχ' ἡλίους, ἐν οἷσιν ἀγνεύει λεχῶ.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

καὶ δὴ τί τοῦτο μητρὶ προσβάλλει φόνον ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἤξει κλύουσα λόχι' ἐμοῦ νοσήματα.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

πόθεν ; τί δ' αὐτῇ σοῦ μέλειν δοκεῖς, τέκνον ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ναί· καὶ δακρύσει γ' ἀξίωμ' ἐμῶν τόκων.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ἴσως· πάλιν τοι μῦθον εἰς καμπὴν ἄγε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

660

ἐλθοῦσα μέντοι δῆλον ὡς ἀπόλλυται.

ELECTRA

OLD MAN

Even so ; a woman for her crimes abhorred.

ORESTES

How shall I slay together him and her ?

ELECTRA

Even I my mother's slaying will prepare.

ORESTES

Good sooth, for *his* shall Fortune smooth the path.

ELECTRA

Herein shall twain be served of this one man.

OLD MAN

Yea. How wilt thou contrive thy mother's death ? 650

ELECTRA

Go, ancient, say to Clytemnestra this—
Report me mother of a child, a male.

OLD MAN

Long since delivered, or but as of late ?

ELECTRA

Within these ten days—purifying's space.

OLD MAN

Yet—to thy mother how doth this bring death ?

ELECTRA

At tidings of my travail will she come.

OLD MAN

How ?—deem'st thou, child, she careth aught for thee ?

ELECTRA

Yea—even to weeping for my babes' high birth !

OLD MAN

Haply : yet toward thy goal turn thou thy speech.

ELECTRA

Let her but come, and surely is she dead.

660

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

καὶ μὴν ἐπ' αὐτάς γ' εἰσίτω δόμων πύλας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ οὖν τραπέσθαι σμικρὸν εἰς Ἄιδου τόδε ;

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

εἰ γὰρ θάνοιμι τοῦτ' ἰδὼν ἐγὼ ποτε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πρώτιστα μὲν νῦν τῶδ' ὑφήγησαι, γέρον.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

Ἀΐγισθος ἔνθα νῦν θυηπολεῖ θεοῖς ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔπειτ' ἀπαντῶν μητρὶ τὰπ' ἐμοῦ φράσον.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ὥστ' αὐτά γ' ἐκ σοῦ στόματος εἰρήσθαι δοκεῖν

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σὸν ἔργον ἤδη· πρόσθεν εἴληχας φόνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στείχοιμ' ἄν, εἴ τις ἠγεμὼν γίγνοιθ' ὁδοῦ.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

670 καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ πέμποιμ' ἄν οὐκ ἀκουσίως.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ πατρῶε καὶ τροπαῖ' ἐχθρῶν ἐμῶν,¹

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἴκτειρέ θ' ἡμᾶς, οἴκτρα γὰρ πεπόνθαμεν,

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

οἴκτειρε δῆτα σούς γε φύντας ἐκγόνους.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἦρα τε, βωμῶν ἢ Μυκηναίων κρατεῖς,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

νίκην δὸς ἡμῖν, εἰ δίκαι' αἰτούμεθα.

¹ Lines 671-682 have been variously arranged and assigned. Murray's arrangement is here adopted, as most dramatic.

ELECTRA

OLD MAN

Nay then, to the very house-door let her come.

ELECTRA

Is not the bypath thence to Hades' short ?

OLD MAN

Oh but to see this hour, then welcome death !

ELECTRA

First, ancient, then, be guide unto this man.

OLD MAN

To where Aegisthus doeth sacrifice ?

ELECTRA

Then seek my mother, and my message tell.

OLD MAN

Yea, it shall seem the utterance of thy lips.

ELECTRA (*to Orestes*)

Now to thy work. Thou drewest first blood-lot.

ORESTES

I will set forth if any guide appear.

OLD MAN

Even I will speed thee thither nothing loth.

670

ORESTES

My fathers' God, Zeus, smiter of my foes,

ELECTRA

Pity us : pitiful our wrongs have been.

OLD MAN

Yea, pity those whose lineage is of thee !

ELECTRA

Queen of Mycenae's altars, Hera, help !

ORESTES

Grant to us victory, if we claim the right.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

δὸς δῆτα πατρὸς τοῖσδε τιμωρὸν δίκην.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ Γαῖ' ἀνασσα, χεῖρας ἧ δίδωμ' ἐμάς,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σύ τ', ὦ κάτω γῆς ἀνοσίως οἰκῶν πάτερ,

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

ἄμνυ' ἄμυνε τοῖσδε φιλτάτοις τέκνοις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

680 νῦν πάντα νεκρὸν ἔλθ' ἐσύμμαχον λαβών,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἵπερ γε σὺν σοὶ Φρύγας ἀνήλωσαν δορί,

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ

χῶσοι στυγούσιν ἀνοσίους μιάστορας·

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἤκουσας, ὦ δειν' ἐξ ἐμῆς μητρὸς παθῶν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πάντ', οἶδ', ἀκούει τάδε πατήρ· στείχειν δ' ἀκμ

καί σοι προφωνῶ πρὸς τὰδ' Αἴγισθον θανεῖν

ὡς, εἰ παλαισθεῖς πτώμα θανάσιμον πεσεῖ,

τέθνηκα καὶ γῶ, μηδέ με ζῶσαν λέγε.

παίσω γὰρ ἦπαρ¹ τοῦμόν ἀμφήκει ξίφει.

δόμων δ' ἔσω βᾶσ' εὐτρεπὲς ποιήσομαι,

690 ὡς, ἦν μὲν ἔλθῃ πίστις εὐτυχῆς σέθεν,

ὀλολύξεται πᾶν δῶμα· θνήσκοντος δὲ σοῦ

τάναντί' ἔσται τῶνδε· ταῦτά σοι λέγω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πάντ' οἶδα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πρὸς τὰδ' ἄνδρα γίγνεσθαί σε χρή·

ὑμεῖς δέ μοι, γυναῖκες, εὖ πυρσεύετε

¹ Geel: for κάρα γάρ of MS.

ELECTRA

OLD MAN

Grant for their father vengeance unto these!

ELECTRA

O Earth, O Queen, on whom I lay mine hands,

ORESTES

Father, by foul wrong dweller 'neath the earth,

OLD MAN

Help, help them, these thy children best-beloved.

ORESTES

Come! bring all those thy battle-helpers slain, 680

ELECTRA

All them whose spears with thee laid Phrygians low,

OLD MAN

Yea, all which hate defilers impious!

ORESTES

Hear'st thou, O foully-entreated of my mother?

ELECTRA

Our sire hears all, I know:—but time bids forth.

Therefore I warn thee, Aegisthus needs must die.

If thou, o'er-mastered, fall a deadly fall,

I die too; count me then no more alive:

For I with sword twin-edged will pierce mine heart.

Now pass I in, to set in order all,

For, if there come fair tidings touching thee, 690

The house shall shout its joy; but, if thou die,

Far other shall betide. Thus charge I thee.

ORESTES

All know I.

ELECTRA

Wherefore must thou play the man.

And ye, girls, beacon-like raise signal cry

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κραυγὴν ἀγῶνος τοῦδε. φρουρήσω δ' ἐγὼ
 πρόχειρον ἔγχος χειρὶ βαστάζουσ' ἐμῇ.
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἐχθροῖς τοῖς ἐμοῖς νικωμένη
 δίκην ὑφέξω σῶμ' ἐμὸν καθυβρίσαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

700 ἀταλᾶς ὑπὸ ματρὸς στρ. α'
 Ἀργείων ὀρέων ποτὲ κληδῶν
 ἐν πολιαῖσι μένει φάμαις
 εὐαρμόστοις ἐν καλάμοις
 Πᾶνα μούσαν ἀδύθροον
 πνέοντ', ἀγρῶν ταμίαν,
 χρυσέαν ἄρνα καλλίποκου πορευῆσαι·
 πετρίνοις δ' ἐπιστὰς
 κᾶρυξ ἴαχεν βάθροις·
 710 ἀγορὰν ἀγορὰν, Μυκηναῖοι,
 στείχετε μακαρίων ὀψόμενοι τυράννων
 φάσματα, † δείματα.
 χοροὶ δ' Ἀτρειδᾶν † ἐγέραιρον † οἴκους.¹

θυμέλαι δ' ἐπίτναντο ἀντ. α'
 χρυσήλατοι, σελαγεῖτο δ' ἀν' ἄστν
 πῦρ ἐπιβώμιον Ἀργείων·
 λωτὸς δὲ φθόγγον κελάδει

¹ The text of ll. 711, 712 is corrupt, and scholars are not agreed as to the sense.

ELECTRA

Of this strife's issue. I will keep good watch,
 Holding the sword aye ready in my grasp :
 For never, overmastered, to my foes
 Will I for vengeance-outrage yield me up.

[Retires within cottage. Exeunt OR., PYL. and O. M.]

CHORUS

In ancient song is the tale yet told¹ (Str. 1)
 How Pan, the Master of forest and mead, 700
 Unearthly sweet while the melody rolled
 From his pipes of cunningly-linked reed,
 Did of yore from the mountains of Argos lead,
 From the midst of the tender ewes of the fold,
 A lamb bright-fleeced with the splendour of gold.
 From the steps of marble the herald then
 Cried all the folk to the market-place—
 "To the gathering away, O Argive men!
 On the awesome portent press to gaze 710
 Of the lords of the heaven-favoured race!"
 And with blithe acclaim the dancers came, and with
 songs of praise.

(Ant. 1.)

And the gold-laid pavements in glorious wise
 Were tapestry-spread : through street on street
 Flashed flames of the Argives' sacrifice ;
 And the voices were ringing of flutes most sweet,
 Which render the Muses service meet :

¹ When Atreus and Thyestes both claimed the throne, it was decided that whichever of them should display a divine portent should be king. A lamb with golden fleece appeared amongst the flocks of Atreus; but Aerope, his wife, conveyed it to her paramour Thyestes. Atreus, in revenge, threw Aerope into the sea, murdered Thyestes' sons, and served their flesh up at a feast to their father. Euripides omits the details of this vengeance, and passes on directly to its consequences in the judgment of Heaven.

720 κάλλιστον, Μουσᾶν θεράπων
 μολπαὶ δ' ἠϋξοντ' ἔραται
 χρυσέας ἀρνός, ὡς ἐστὶ λάχος¹ Θυέστου·
 κρυφίαις γὰρ εὐναῖς
 πείσας ἄλοχον φίλαν
 Ἄτρείως, τέρας ἐκκομίζει πρὸς
 δώματα· νεόμενος δ' εἰς ἀγόρους αὐτεὶ
 τὰν κερέεσσαν ἔ-
 χειν χρυσόμαλλον κατὰ δῶμα ποίμναν.

730 τότε δὴ τότε φαεννὰς στρ. β
 ἄστρον μετέβασ' ὁδοῦς
 Ζεὺς καὶ φέγγος ἀελίου
 λευκόν τε πρόσωπον αὐοῦς,
 τὰ δ' ἔσπερα νῶτ' ἐλαύνει
 θερμᾶ φλογὶ θεοπύρῳ,
 νεφέλαι δ' ἔνυδροι πρὸς ἄρκτον,
 ξηραὶ τ' Ἀμμωνίδες ἔδραι
 φθίνουσ' ἀπειρόδροσοι,
 καλλίστων ὄμβρων Διόθεν στερεῖσαι.

740 λέγεται, τάδε δὲ πίστιν αντ. β
 σμικρὰν παρ' ἔμοιγ' ἔχει,
 στρέψαι θερμὰν ἀέλιον
 χρυσωπὸν ἔδραν ἀλλάξαν-
 τα δυστυχία βροτείῳ
 θνατᾶς ἔνεκεν δίκας.
 φοβεροὶ δὲ βροτοῖσι μῦθοι
 κέρδος πρὸς θεῶν θεραπείας.
 ὧν οὐ μνασθεῖσα πόσιν
 κτείνεις, κλεινῶν συγγενέτειρ' ἀδελφῶν.

¹ Paley : for (corrupt) ἐπίλογοι of MSS.

ELECTRA

But with triumph-swell did a strange chant rise—
 “Lo, the Golden Lamb is Thyestes’ prize!”

For the nets of a love with dark guile fraught
 O’er the soul of Atreus’ bride did he fling; 720
 And the marvel so to his halls hath he brought,
 And hath sped to the thronged folk, publishing
 How his palace had gotten that strange horned
 thing, [they hailed him king.
 The golden-fleeced:—and the strife so ceased, and

Then, then, in his anger arose Zeus, turning (Str. 2)

The stars’ feet back on the fire-fretted way;
 Yea, and the Sun’s car splendour-burning,
 And the misty eyes of the morning grey. 730

And with flash of his chariot-wheels back-flying
 Flushed crimson the face of the fading day:
 To the north fled the clouds with their burden
 sighing;

And for rains withheld, and for dews fast-drying
 The dwellings of Ammon in faintness were yearning,
 For sweet showers crying to heavens denying.

(Ant. 2)

It is told of the singers—scant credence such story,
 Touching secrets of Gods, of my spirit hath won—
 That the Sun from that vision turned backward the
 glory

Of the gold of the face of his flaming throne, [ing
 With the scourge of his wrath in affliction repay- 740
 Mortals for deeds in their mad feuds done.

Yet it may be the tale liveth, soul-affraying,
 To bow us to Godward in lowly obeying.
 O mother of princes, it rose not before thee [slaying!
 Mid thy lord’s moan, staying thine hand from the

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔα ἔα·

φίλαι, βοῆς ἤκούσατ', ἥ δοκῶ κενὴ
 ὑπῆλθέ μ', ὥστε νερτέρη βροντὴ Διός ;
 ἰδού, τάδ' οὐκ ἄσημα πνεύματ' αἴρεται·
 750 δέσποιν', ἄμειψον δώματ', Ἡλέκτρα, τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φίλαι, τί χρῆμα ; πῶς ἀγῶνος ἤκομεν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν· φόνιον οἰμωγὴν κλύω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἤκουσα κἀγώ, τηλόθεν μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μακρὰν γὰρ ἔρπει γῆρυς, ἐμφανὴς γε μὴν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἄργεῖος ὁ στεναγμὸς ἢ φίλων ἐμῶν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα· πᾶν γὰρ μίγνυται μέλος βοῆς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σφαγὴν ἀντεῖς τήνδε μοι· τί μέλλομεν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔπισχε, τρανῶς ὡς μάθης τύχας σέθεν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἔστι· νικώμεσθα· ποῦ γὰρ ἄγγελοι ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

760 ἤξουσιν· οὗτοι βασιλέα φαῦλον κτανεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ καλλίνικοι παρθένοι Μυκηνίδες,
 νικῶντ' Ὀρέστην πᾶσιν ἀγγέλλω φίλοις,
 Ἄγαμέμνονος δὲ φονέα κείμενον πέδῳ
 Αἴγισθον· ἀλλὰ θεοῖσιν εὐχεσθαι χρεῶν.

ELECTRA

Ha, friends!

Heard ye a great voice—or am I beguiled
Of fancy?—like earth-muffled thunder of Zeus?
Lo there, the gale is swelling all too plain!
Princess, come forth thine house!—Electra, come! 750

Enter ELECTRA.

ELECTRA

Friends, what befalls? How doth our conflict speed?

CHORUS

I know but this, I hear a cry of death.

ELECTRA

I also hear—far off—yet oh, I hear!

CHORUS

Faint from the distance stole the cry, yet clear.

ELECTRA

A shriek of Argives?—or of them I love?

CHORUS

I know not: all confused rang out the strain.

ELECTRA

Thine answer is my death!—why linger I?

CHORUS

Stay, till in certainty thou learn thy fate.

ELECTRA

No—vanquished!—where be they, his messengers?

CHORUS

They yet shall come; not lightly slain are kings. 760

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Victory! victory, Mycenaean maids!
To all friends, tidings of Orestes' triumph!
Low lieth Agamemnon's murderer
Aegisthus: render thanks unto the Gods.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίς δ' εἶ σύ ; πῶς μοι πιστὰ σημαίνεις τάδε ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ οἶσθ' ἀδελφοῦ μ' εἰσορῶσα πρόσπολον ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἔκ τοι δείματος δυσγνωσίαν
εἶχον προσώπου· νῦν δὲ γιγνώσκω σε δή.
τί φῆς ; τέθνηκε πατρὸς ἐμοῦ στυγνὸς φονεὺς ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

770 τέθνηκε· δῖς σοι ταῦθ', ἃ γ' οὖν βούλει, λέγω.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ θεοί, Δίκη τε πάνθ' ὀρώσ', ἦλθές ποτε.
ποίῳ τρόπῳ δὲ καὶ τίνι ῥυθμῷ φόνου
κτείνει Θυέστου παῖδα, βούλομαι μαθεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

780 ἐπεὶ μελάθρων τῶνδ' ἀπήραμεν πόδα,
εἰσβάντες ἡμεν δίκροτον εἰς ἀμαξιτόν,
ἐνθ' ἦν ὁ κλεινὸς τῶν Μυκηναίων ἀναξ.
κυρεῖ δὲ κήποις ἐν καταρρύτοις βεβῶς,
δρέπων τερείνης μυρσίνης κάρα πλόκους·
ιδῶν τ' αὐτεῖ· χαίрет', ὦ ξένοι· τίνες ;
πόθεν πορεύεσθ' ; ἔστε τ' ἐκ ποίας χθονός ;
ὁ δ' εἶπ' Ὀρέστης· Θεσσαλοί· πρὸς δ' Ἀλφεὸν
θύσοντες ἐρχόμεσθ' Ὀλυμπίῳ Δί.
κλύων δὲ ταῦτ' Αἴγισθος ἐννέπει τάδε·
νῦν μὲν παρ' ἡμῖν χρῆ συνεστίους ἐμοὶ
θοίνῃ γενέσθαι· τυγχάνω δὲ βουθυτῶν
Νύμφαις· ἐῷοι δ' ἐξαναστάντες λέχους
εἰς ταῦτόν ἤξेत'. ἀλλ' ἴωμεν εἰς δόμους—
καὶ ταῦθ' ἄμ' ἠγόρευε καὶ χερὸς λαβῶν
παρήγεν ἡμᾶς—οὐδ' ἀπαρνεῖσθαι χρεῶν.
790 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐν οἴκοις ἡμεν, ἐννέπει τάδε·

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Who art thou?—what attests thy tidings' truth?

MESSENGER

Look,—dost thou know me not,—thy brother's
henchman?

ELECTRA

O friend, I knew not, out of very fear,
Thy face; but now in very sooth I know.
How say'st thou?—is my sire's foul murderer dead?

MESSENGER

Dead. Twice I say it, since thou will'st it so. 770

ELECTRA

Gods! All-seeing Justice, thou hast come at last!
In what wise, and by what device of death,
Slew he Thyestes' son? I fain would know.

MESSENGER

Soon as our feet from thine abode had passed,
The highway chariot-rutted entered we:
There was this Mycenaean king renowned,
Into his watered garden had he turned,
Plucking soft myrtle-sprays to bind his brows.
He saw, and cried, "Hail strangers, who be ye?
Whence journeying, and children of what land?" 780
"Thessalians we," Orestes spake, "who seek
Alpheus, to sacrifice to Olympian Zeus."
Now when Aegisthus heard this, answered he:
"Nay, at this altar-feast ye needs must be
My guests: I sacrifice unto the Nymphs.
With morning shall ye rise from sleep, and speed
No less. Come, let us go into the house,"—
So speaking, did he take us by the hand,
And led us in,—"ye may not say me nay."
And, when we stood within his doors, he spake: 790

λούτρ' ὡς τάχιστα τοῖς ξένοις τις αἰρέτω,
 ὡς ἀμφὶ βωμὸν στῶσι χερνίβων πέλας.
 ἀλλ' εἰπ' Ὀρέστης· ἀρτίως ἠγνίσμεθα
 λουτροῖσι καθαροῖς ποταμίων ρείθρων ἄπο.
 εἰ δὲ ξένους ἀστοῖσι συνθύειν χρεῶν,
 Αἴγισθ', ἔτοιμοι κοῦκ ἀπαρνούμεσθ', ἀναξ.
 τοῦτον μὲν οὖν μεθείσαν ἐκ μέσου λόγον·
 λόγχας δὲ θέντες δεσπότην φρουρήματα
 800 δμῶες πρὸς ἔργον πάντες ἴεσαν χέρας.
 οἱ μὲν σφαγεῖον ἔφερον, οἱ δ' ἦρον κανᾶ,
 ἄλλοι δὲ πῦρ ἀνήπτον ἀμφὶ τ' ἔσχάρας
 λέβητας ὄρθουν· πᾶσα δ' ἐκτύπει στέγη.
 λαβὼν δὲ προχύτας μητρὸς εὐνέτης σέθεν
 ἔβαλλε βωμούς, τοιάδ' ἐννέπων ἔπη·
 Νύμφαι πετραῖαι, πολλάκις με βουθυτεῖν
 καὶ τὴν κατ' οἴκους Τυνδαρίδα δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν
 πρᾶσσοντας ὡς νῦν, τοὺς δ' ἐμοὺς ἐχθροὺς
 κακῶς·

λέγων Ὀρέστην καὶ σέ. δεσπότης δ' ἐμὸς
 τάναντί ηὔχετ', οὐ γεγωνίσκων λόγους,
 810 λαβεῖν πατρῶα δώματ'. ἐκ κανοῦ δ' ἔλων
 Αἴγισθος ὄρθῆν σφαγίδα, μοσχείαν τρίχα
 τεμών, ἐφ' ἀγνὸν πῦρ ἔθηκε δεξιᾶ,
 κᾶσφαξ' ἐπ' ὤμων μόσχον ὡς ἦραν χεροῖν
 δμῶες, λέγει δὲ σῶ κασιγνήτῳ τάδε·
 ἐκ τῶν καλῶν κομποῦσι τοῖσι Θεσσαλοῖς
 εἶναι τόδ', ὅστις ταῦρον ἀρταμεί καλῶς
 ἵππους τ' ὀχμάζει. λαβὲ σίδηρον, ὦ ξένε,
 δεῖξόν τε φήμην ἔτυμον ἀμφὶ Θεσσαλῶν.
 820 ὁ δ' εὐκρότητον Δωρίδ' ἀρπάσας χεροῖν,
 ρίψας ἀπ' ὤμων εὐπρεπῆ πορπάματα
 Πυλάδην μὲν εἴλετ' ἐν πόνοις ὑπηρέτην,

ELECTRA

“ Let one with speed bring water for the guests,
That they may compass with cleansed hands the
altar.”

But spake Orestes, “ In pure river-streams
It was but now we purified ourselves.
If strangers may with citizens sacrifice,
Ready we are, nor say thee nay, O King.”
Such words they spake in hearing of us all.
Then, laying down their spears, the tyrant’s guards,
His thralls, all set their hands unto the work.
Some brought the bowl of slaughter, some the
maunds :

800

The fire some kindled, and the caldrons set
Over the hearths : with tumult rang the roofs.
Then took thy mother’s paramour the meal,
And thus spake, on the altars casting it :
“ Nymphs of the Rocks, vouchsafe me oft, with her,
Mine home-mate Tyndareus’ child, to sacrifice,
As now, blest, and my foes in like ill case.”

Thee and Orestes meant he ; but my lord
Reversed the prayer, low-murmuring, even to win
Ancestral halls. Aegisthus from the maund
Took the straight blade, the calf’s hair shore there-
with,

810

And on the pure flame with his right hand cast ;
Then, when his thralls heaved shoulder-high the calf,
Severed the throat, and to thy brother spake :
“ Herein, men boast, Thessalians take their pride,
In deftly quartering the slaughtered bull,
And taming steeds. Take thou the steel, O guest,
And prove the fame of the Thessalians true.”
He grasped a fair-wrought Dorian blade in hand,
And from his shoulder cast his graceful cloak,
Took Pylades for helper in his task,

820

- δμῶας δ' ἀπῶθει· καὶ λαβῶν μόςχου πόδα,
 λευκὰς ἐγύμνου σάρκας ἐκτείνων χέρα·
 θᾶσσον δὲ βύρσαν ἐξέδειρεν ἢ δρομεὺς
 δισσοὺς διαύλους ἰππίους διήνυσε,
 κἀνεῖτο λαγόνας. ἰερά δ' εἰς χεῖρας λαβῶν
 Αἴγισθος ἤθρει. καὶ λοβὸς μὲν οὐ προσῆν
 σπλάγχχοις, πύλαι δὲ καὶ δοχαὶ χολῆς πέλας
 κακὰς ἔφαινον τῷ σκοποῦντι προσβολάς.
 830 χῶ μὲν σκυθράζει, δεσπότης δ' ἀμιστορεῖ·
 τί χρῆμ' ἀθυμεῖς, ὦ ξέν'; ὀρρωδῶ τινα
 δόλον θυραῖον. ἔστι δ' ἔχθιστος βροτῶν
 Ἄγαμέμνωνος παῖς πολέμιός τ' ἐμοῖς δόμοις.
 ὁ δ' εἶπε· φυγάδος δῆτα δειμαίνεις δόλον,
 πόλεως ἀνάσσων; οὐχ, ὅπως παστήρια
 θοινασόμεσθα, Φθιάδ' ἀντὶ Δωρικῆς
 οἴσει τις ἡμῖν κοπίδ'; ἀπορρήξω χέλυν.
 λαβῶν δὲ κόπτει. σπλάγχχνα δ' Αἴγισθος λαβῶν
 ἤθρει διαιρῶν· τοῦ δὲ νεύοντος κάτω
 840 ὄνυχας ἐπ' ἄκρους στας κασίγητος σέθεν
 εἰς σφονδύλους ἔπαισε, νωτιαῖα δὲ
 ἔρρηξεν ἄρθρα· πᾶν δὲ σῶμ' ἄνω κάτω
 ἤσπαιρεν, ἐσφάδαζε δυσθνήσκον φόνῳ.
 δμῶες δ' ἰδόντες εὐθύς ἤξαν εἰς δόρυ,
 πολλοὶ μάχεσθαι πρὸς δύ'· ἀνδρείας δ' ὕπο
 ἔστησαν ἀντίπρῳρα σείοντες βέλη
 Πυλάδης Ὀρέστης τ'· εἶπε δ', οὐχὶ δυσμενῆς
 ἦκω πόλει τῆδ' οὐδ' ἐμοῖς ὀπάοσι,
 φονέα δὲ πατρὸς ἀντετιμωρησάμην
 850 τλήμων Ὀρέστης· ἀλλὰ μὴ με καίνετε,
 πατρὸς παλαιοὶ δμῶες· οἱ δ', ἐπεὶ λόγων

ELECTRA

And put the thralls back; seized the calf's foot
then,

Bared the white flesh, with free sweep of his arm,
And quicker flayed the hide than runner's feet
Twice round the turnings of the horse-course speed:
So opened it. Aegisthus grasped the inwards,
And gazed thereon. No lobe the liver had:
The gate-vein, the gall-bladder nigh thereto,
Portended perilous scathe to him that looked.

Scowling he stared; but straight my master asks: 830
"Why cast down, O mine host?" "A stranger's
guile

I dread. Of all men hatefullest to me,
And foe to mine, is Agamemnon's son."
But he, "Go to: *thou* fear an exile's guile—
The King! That we on flesh of sacrifice
May feast, let one for this of Doris bring
A Phthian knife:¹ the breast-bone let me cleave."
So took, and cleft. Aegisthus grasped the inwards,
Parted, and gazed. Even as he bowed his head,
Thy brother strained himself full height, and smote 840
Down on his spine, and through his backbone's joints
Crashed. Shuddered all his frame from head to foot,
Convulsed in throes of agony dying hard.
Straightway the thralls beholding sprang to arms,—
A host to fight with two,—but unafraid
Pylades and Orestes, brandishing
Their weapons, faced them: "Not a foe," he cried,
"To Argos, nor my servants, am I come!
I have avenged me on my father's slayer,—
Orestes I, the hapless! Slay me not, 850
My father's ancient thralls!" They, when they heard

¹ A heavy cleaver, better adapted both for his ostensible
and for his real purpose.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἤκουσαν, ἔσχον κάμακας· ἐγνώσθη δ' ὑπὸ
 γέροντος ἐν δόμοισιν ἀρχαίου τινός.
 στέφουσι δ' εὐθὺς σοῦ κασιγνήτου κἀρα
 χαίροντες ἀλαλάζοντες. ἔρχεται δὲ σοὶ
 κἀρα ἄπιδείξων, οὐχὶ Γοργόνος φέρων,
 ἀλλ' ὄν στυγεῖς Αἴγισθον· αἶμα δ' αἵματος
 πικρὸς δανεισμός ἦλθε τῷ θανόντι νῦν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

860 θῆς εἰς χορόν, ὦ φίλα, ἴχνος, στρ.
 ὡς νεβρός οὐράνιον
 πῆδημα κουφίζουσα σὺν ἀγλαΐᾳ·
 νικᾷ στεφαναφορίαν
 οἴαν παρ' Ἀλφειοῦ ῥεέθροις τελέσας
 κασίγνητος σέθεν· ἀλλ' ἐπάειδε
 καλλίνικον ᾠδὴν ἐμῷ χορῷ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

870 ὦ φέγγος, ὦ τέθριππον ἡλίου σέλας,
 ὦ γαῖα καὶ νύξ ἦν ἔδερκόμην πάρος,
 νῦν ὄμμα τοῦμὸν ἀμπτυχαί τ' ἐλεύθεροι,
 ἐπεὶ πατὴρ πέπτωκεν Αἴγισθος φονεύς.
 φέρ', οἶα δὴ ἔχω καὶ δόμοι κεύθουσί μου
 κόμης ἀγάλματ' ἐξενέγκωμαι, φίλαι,
 στέψω τ' ἀδελφοῦ κράτα τοῦ νικηφόρου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ μὲν νῦν ἀγάλματ' ἄειρε ἀντ.
 κρατί· τὸ δ' ἀμέτερον
 χωρήσεται Μούσαισι χόρευμα φίλον.
 νῦν οἱ πάρος ἀμέτεροι
 γαίας τυραννεύσουσι φίλοι βασιλῆς,
 δικαίως τοῦσδ' ἀδίκους καθελόντες.
 ἀλλ' ἴτω ξύναυλος βοὰ χαρᾶ.

ELECTRA

His words, stayed spear; and recognised was he
 Of an old servant, long time of the house.
 Straightway a wreath upon thy brother's brow
 They set, with shouts rejoicing. And he comes
 To show the head to thee—no Gorgon's this,
 But whom thou hat'st, Aegisthus. Blood for
 blood,
 Bitter repayment, to the slain hath come.

CHORUS

Forth to the dance, O belovèd, with feet (Str.)
 That rapture is winging! 860
 Bounding from earth, as a fawn's, let them fleet!
 Lo, thy brother comes bringing
 Victory-garlands more fair than they gain
 By Alpheus' flow! As I dance, be thy strain
 Of triumph outringing!

ELECTRA

O light, O splendour of the Sun-god's steeds,
 O Earth, and Night that filled my gaze till now,
 Free are mine eyes now: dawn's wings open
 free!
 My father's slayer Aegisthus is laid low!
 Come, such things as I have, my dwelling's store, 870
 Let me bring forth to grace his hair, O friends,
 To crown my conquering brother's head withal.

CHORUS

Crown him, the conqueror!—garlands upraise, (Ant.)
 Thy thanksgiving-oblation!
 To the dance that the Muses love forth will we pace.
 Now shall rule o'er our nation
 Her kings well-beloved whom of old she hath
 known;
 For the right is triumphant, the tyrant o'erthrown.
 Ring, joy's exultation!

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

880

ὦ καλλίνικε, πατρὸς ἐκ νικηφόρου
 γεγώς, Ὀρέστα, τῆς ὑπ' Ἰλίου μάχης,
 δέξαι κόμης σῆς βοστρύχων ἀνδήματα.
 ἦκεις γὰρ οὐκ ἀχρεῖον ἔκπλεθρον δραμῶν
 ἀγῶν' ἐς οἴκους, ἀλλὰ πολέμιον κτανῶν
 Αἴγισθον, ὃς σὸν πατέρα κάμὸν ὤλεσε.
 σύ τ', ὦ παρασπίστ', ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβεστάτου
 παιδεύμα, Πυλάδῃ, στέφανον ἐξ ἐμῆς χερὸς
 δέχου· φέρει γὰρ καὶ σύ τῶδ' ἴσον μέρος
 ἀγῶνος· αἰεὶ δ' εὐτυχεῖς φαίνοισθέ μοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

890

θεοὺς μὲν ἠγοῦ πρώτου, Ἥλέκτρα, τύχης
 ἀρχηγέτας τῆσδ', εἶτα καμ' ἐπαίνεσον
 τὸν τῶν θεῶν τε τῆς τύχης θ' ὑπηρέτην.
 ἦκω γὰρ οὐ λόγοισιν ἀλλ' ἔργοις κτανῶν
 Αἴγισθον· ὡς δέ τω σάφ' εἰδέναι τάδε
 προθῶμεν, αὐτὸν τὸν θανόντα σοι φέρω,
 ὄν, εἴτε χρήζεις, θηρσὶν ἀρπαγὴν πρόθες,
 ἢ σκυῶλον οἰωνοῖσιν αἰθέρος τέκνοις
 πήξασ' ἔρεισον σκόλοπι· σὸς γάρ ἐστι νῦν
 δοῦλος, πάροιθε δεσπότης κεκλημένος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

900

αἰσχύνομαι μὲν, βούλομαι δ' εἰπεῖν ὅμως,
 τί χρῆμα; λέξον, ὡς φόβου γ' ἔξωθεν εἶ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

νεκροὺς ὑβρίζειν, μή μέ τις φθόνῳ βάλῃ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεὶς ὅστις ἂν μέμφαιτό σε.

ELECTRA

*Enter ORESTES and PYLADES, with attendants bearing
Aegisthus' body.*

ELECTRA

Hail, glorious conqueror, Orestes sprung 880
Of father triumph-crowned in Ilium's war !
Receive this wreath to bind thy clustering hair.
Thou hast come home, who hast run no profitless
course

In athlete-race, but who hast slain thy foe
Aegisthus, murderer of thy sire and mine.
And thou, his battle-helper, Pylades,
A good man's nursling, from mine hand accept
A wreath ; for in this conflict was thy part
As his : in my sight ever prosper ye !

ORESTES

The Gods account thou first, Electra, authors 890
Of this day's fortune : praise thereafter me,
Whom am but minister of heaven and fate.
I come, who not in word, but deed, have slain
Aegisthus, and for proof for whoso will
To know, the dead man's self I bring to thee ;
Whom, if thou wilt, for ravin of beasts cast forth,
Or for the children of the air to rend
Impale him on a stake : thy bondman now
Is he, who heretofore was called thy lord.

ELECTRA

I take shame—none the less I fain would speak— 900

ORESTES

What is it ? Speak : thou hast left fear's prison-house.

ELECTRA

To mock the dead, lest ill-will light on me.

ORESTES

There is no man can blame thee for such cause.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δυσάρεστος ἡμῶν καὶ φιλόψογος πόλις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λέγ', εἴ τι χρήξεις, σύγγον'· ἀσπύδοισι γὰρ
νόμοισιν ἔχθραν τῷδε συμβεβλήκαμεν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

- 910 εἶεν· τίς ἀρχὴν πρῶτά σ' ἐξείπω κακῶν;
ποίας τελευτάς; τίνα μέσον τάξω λόγον;
καὶ μὴν δι' ὄρθρων γ' οὔ ποτ' ἐξελίμπανον
θρυλοῦσ' ἅ γ' εἰπεῖν ἤθελον κατ' ὄμμα σόν,
εἰ δὴ γενοίμην δειμάτων ἐλευθέρα
τῶν πρόσθε· νῦν οὖν ἐσμεν· ἀποδώσω δέ σοι
ἐκεῖν' ἃ σε ζῶντ' ἤθελον λέξαι κακά.
ἀπώλεσάς με κῶρφανὴν φίλου πατρὸς
καὶ τόνδ' ἔθηκας, οὐδὲν ἠδίκημένος,
κᾶγματος αἰσχρῶς μητέρ' ἄνδρα τ' ἔκτανες
στρατηλατοῦνθ' Ἑλλησιν, οὐκ ἐλθὼν Φρύγας.
920 εἰς τοῦτο δ' ἦλθες ἀμαθίας ὥστ' ἠλπισας
ὡς ἐς σέ μὲν δὴ μητέρ' οὐχ ἔξεις κακὴν
γήμας, ἐμοῦ δὲ πατρὸς ἠδίκεις λέχη.
ἴστω δ', ὅταν τις διολέσας δάμαρτά του
κρυπταῖσιν εὐναῖς εἴτ' ἀναγκασθῆ λαβεῖν,
δύστηνός ἐστιν, εἰ δοκεῖ τὸ σωφρονεῖν
ἐκεῖ μὲν αὐτὴν οὐκ ἔχειν, παρ' οἷ δ' ἔχειν.
ἄλγιστα δ' ᾠκεις, οὐ δοκῶν οἰκεῖν κακῶς·
ἤδησθα γὰρ δῆτ' ἀνόσιον γήμας γάμον,
μήτηρ δὲ σ' ἄνδρα δυσσεβῆ κεκτημένη.
930 ἄμφω πονηρῶ δ' ὄντ' ἀφαιρεῖσθον τύχην,
κείνη τε τὴν σὴν καὶ σὺ τοῦκείνης κακόν.
πᾶσιν δ' ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἤκουες τάδε·
ὁ τῆς γυναικός, οὐχὶ τάνδρὸς ἢ γυνή.
καίτοι τόδ' αἰσχρὸν, προστατεῖν γε δωμάτων

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Our folk be ill to please, and censure-prone.

ORESTES

Speak, sister, what thou wilt. No terms of truce
Be in the feud betwixt us and this man.

ELECTRA (*to the corpse*)

So be it. Where shall my reproach begin?
Where end? Where shall the arraignment find its
midst?

Yet, morn by morn, I never wont to cease
Conning what I would tell thee to thy face, 910
If ever from past terrors disenthralled
I stood. Now am I; and I pay the debt
Of taunts I fain had hurled at thee alive.

Thou wast my ruin, of a sire beloved
Didst orphan me and him, who wronged thee never,
Didst foully wed my mother, slew'st her lord,
Hellas' war-chief,—thou who ne'er sawest Troy!
Such was thy folly's depth that thou didst dream
Thou hadst wedded in my mother a true wife,
With whom thou didst defile my father's couch! 920

Let whoso draggeth down his neighbour's wife
To folly, and then must take her for his own,
Know himself dupe, who deemeth that to him
She shall be true, who to her lord was false.
Wretched thy life was, which thou thoughtest
blest:

Thou knewest thine a marriage impious,
And she, that she had ta'en for lord a villain.
Transgressors both, each other's lot ye took;
She took thy baseness, thou didst take her curse.
And through all Argos this was still thy name— 930
"That woman's husband": none said "That man's wife."
Yet shame is this, when foremost in the home

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

γυναῖκα, μὴ τὸν ἄνδρα· κακείνους στυγῶ
 τοὺς παῖδας, ὅστις τοῦ μὲν ἄρσενος πατρὸς
 οὐκ ὠνόμασται, τῆς δὲ μητρὸς ἐν πόλει.
 ἐπίσημα γὰρ γήμαντι καὶ μείζω λέχη
 τὰνδρὸς μὲν οὐδεῖς, τῶν δὲ θηλειῶν λόγος.
 ὃ δ' ἠπάτα σε πλείστον οὐκ ἐγνωκότα,
 940 ἤνχεις τις εἶναι τοῖσι χρήμασι σθένων·
 τὰ δ' οὐδὲν εἰ μὴ βραχὺν ὀμιλῆσαι χρόνον.
 ἢ γὰρ φύσις βέβαιος, οὐ τὰ χρήματα.
 ἢ μὲν γὰρ αἰὲ παραμένουσ' αἶρει κᾶρα.¹
 ὃ δ' ὄλβος ἄδικος καὶ μετὰ σκαιῶν ξυνῶν
 ἐξέπτατ' οἴκων, σμικρὸν ἀνθήσας χρόνον.
 ἃ δ' εἰς γυναῖκας, παρθένω γὰρ οὐ καλὸν
 λέγειν, σιωπῶ, γνωρίμως δ' αἰνίξομαι.
 ὕβριζες, ὡς δὴ βασιλικοὺς ἔχων δόμους
 κάλλει τ' ἀραρώς. ἀλλ' ἔμοιγ' εἴη πόσις
 μὴ παρθενωπός, ἀλλὰ τὰνδρείου τρόπου.
 950 τὰ γὰρ τέκν' αὐτῶν Ἄρεος ἐκκρεμάννυται,
 τὰ δ' εὐπρεπῆ δὴ κόσμος ἐν χοροῖς μόνον,
 ἔρρ', οὐδὲν εἰδὼς ὧν ἐφευρεθεῖς χρόνῳ
 δίκην δέδωκας, ὧδέ τις κακοῦργος ὧν.
 μή μοι, τὸ πρῶτον βῆμ' εἰάν δράμη καλῶς,
 νικᾶν δοκέιτω τὴν δίκην, πρὶν ἂν πέρας
 γραμμῆς ἵκηται καὶ τέλος κάμψῃ βίου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔπραξε δεινά, δεινὰ δ' ἀντέδωκε σοὶ
 καὶ τῶδ'· ἔχει γὰρ ἡ Δίκη μέγα σθένος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

960 εἶεν· κομίζειν τοῦδε σῶμ' εἴσω χρεῶν
 σκότῳ τε δοῦναι, δμῶες, ὡς ὅταν μόλη
 μήτηρ, σφαγῆς πάροιθε μὴ εἰσίδῃ νεκρὸν.

¹ Tyrwhitt: for κακά, "maketh end of ills."

ELECTRA

Is wife, not husband. Out upon the sons
 That not the man's, their father's, sons are called,
 Nay, but the mother's, all the city through !
 For, when the ignoble weddeth high-born bride,
 None take account of him, but all of her.
 This was thy strong delusion, blind of heart,
 Through pride of wealth to boast thee some great
 one !

Nought wealth is, save for fleeting fellowship. 940

'Tis character abideth, not possessions :

This, ever-staying, lifteth up the head ;

But wealth by vanity gotten, held of fools,

Takes to it wings ; as a flower it fadeth soon.

For those thy sins of the flesh—for maid unmeet

To name—I speak them not : suffice the hint !

Thou waxedst wanton, with thy royal halls,

Thy pride of goodlihead ! Be mine a spouse

Not girl-faced, but a man in mien and port.

The sons of these to warrior-prowess cleave ; 950

Those, the fair-seeming, but in dances shine.

Perish, O blind to all for which at last,

Felon convict, thou'rt punished, caitiff thou !

Let none dream, though at starting he run well,

That he outrunneth Justice, ere he touch

The very goal and reach the bourn of life.

CHORUS

Dread were his deeds ; dread payment hath he made
 To thee and this man. Great is Justice' might.

ORESTES

Enough : now must ye bear his corpse within,
 And hide in shadow, thralls, that, when she comes, 960
 My mother ere she die see not the dead.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐπίσχεσ' ἐμβάλωμεν εἰς ἄλλον λόγον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δ' ; ἐκ Μυκηνηῶν μῶν βοηδρόμους ὀράς ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ, ἀλλὰ τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἦ μ' ἐγείνατο.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καλῶς ἄρ' ἄρκυν εἰς μέσῃν πορεύεται.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ὄχοις γε καὶ στολῇ λαμπρύνεται.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δῆτα δρῶμεν; μητέρ' ἦ φονεύσομεν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μῶν σ' οἶκτος εἶλε, μητρὸς ὡς εἶδες δέμας;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ.

πῶς γὰρ κτάνω νιν, ἦ μ' ἔθρεψε κᾶτεκεν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

970

ὥσπερ πατέρα σὸν ἦδε κἀμὸν ὤλεσεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ Φοῖβε, πολλὴν γ' ἀμαθίαν ἐθέσπισας,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὅπου δ' Ἀπόλλων σκαιὸς ἦ, τίνες σοφοί;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὅστις μ' ἔχρησας μητέρ', ἦν οὐ χρῆν, κτανεῖν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

βλάπτει δὲ δὴ τί πατρὶ τιμωρῶν σέθεν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μητροκτόνος νῦν φεύξομαι, τόθ' ἀγνὸς ὢν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μή γ' ἀμύνων πατρὶ δυσσεβῆς ἔσει.

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Hold! Turn we now to our story's second part.

ORESTES

How, from Mycenae seest thou rescue come?

ELECTRA

Nay, but my mother, her that gave me birth,

ORESTES

Ha! fair and full into the toils she runs.

ELECTRA

O flaunting pomp of chariots and attire!

ORESTES

What shall we do? Our mother—murder her?

ELECTRA

How? Hath ruth seized thee, seeing thy mother's form?

ORESTES

Woe!

How can I slay her?—her that nursed, that bare me?

ELECTRA

Even as she thy father slew and mine.

970

ORESTES

O Phoebus, folly exceeding was thine hest—

ELECTRA

Nay, where Apollo erreth, who is wise?

ORESTES

Who against nature bad'st me slay my mother!

ELECTRA

How art thou harmed, avenging thine own sire?

ORESTES

Arraigned for a mother's murder—pure ere this

ELECTRA

Yet impious, if thou succour not thy sire,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ μητρὶ τοῦ φόνου δώσω δίκας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τῷ δ', ἣν πατρώαν διαμεθῆς τιμωρίαν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄρ' αὐτ' ἀλάστωρ εἶπ' ἀπεικασθεὶς θεῶ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

980

ἱερὸν καθίζων τρίποδ'; ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ δοκῶ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν πιθοίμην εὖ μεμαντεῦσθαι τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐ μὴ κακισθεὶς εἰς ἀνανδρίαν πεσεῖ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἢ τὸν αὐτὸν τῆδ' ὑποστήσω δολον;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ῶ καὶ πόσιν καθεῖλες Αἴγισθον κτανών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἴσειμι· δεινοῦ δ' ἄρχομαι προβλήματος,
καὶ δεινὰ δράσω γ'· εἰ θεοῖς δοκεῖ τάδε,
ἔστω· πικρὸν δὲ χῆδὺ τὰ γώνισμά μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰώ,

βασίλεια γύναι χθονὸς Ἀργείας,

παῖ Τυνδάρεω,

990

καὶ τοῖν ἀγαθοῖν ξύγγονε κούροι

Διός, οἱ φλογερὰν αἰθέρ' ἐν ἄστροις

ναίουσι, βροτῶν ἐν ἀλὸς ῥοθίοις

τιμὰς σωτῆρας ἔχοντες·

χαῖρε, σεβίζω σ' ἴσα καὶ μάκαρας

ELECTRA

ORESTES

Her blood-price to my mother must I pay.¹

ELECTRA

And *Him!*—if thou forbear to avenge a father.

ORESTES

Ha!—spake a fiend in likeness of the God?

ELECTRA

Throned on the holy tripod!—I trow not.

980

ORESTES

I dare not trust this oracle's utter faith!

ELECTRA

Wilt thou turn craven—be no more a man?

ORESTES

How? must I lay the selfsame snare for her?

ELECTRA

Ay! that which trapped and slew the adulterer!

ORESTES

I will go in. A horror I essay!—

Yea, will achieve! If 'tis Heaven's will, so be it.

Oh bitter strife, which I must needs hold sweet!

[*Enters. hut.*

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA *in chariot, with attendants, captive maids of Troy.*

CHORUS

Hail, Queen of the Argive land!

All hail, O Tyndareus' daughter!

Hail, sister of Zeus' sons, heroes twain

990

In the glittering heavens mid stars who stand,

And their proud right this, to deliver from bane

Men tossed on the storm-vest water.

Hail! As to the Blest, do I yield thee thine own,

¹ *i.e.* Her avenging Furies will exact satisfaction from me.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πλούτου μεγάλης τ' εὐδαιμονίας.
τὰς σὰς δὲ τύχας θεραπεύεσθαι
καιρός. χαῖρ', ὦ βασίλεια.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

1000 ἔκβητ' ἀπήνης, Τρωάδες, χειρὸς δ' ἐμῆς
λάβεσθ', ἵν' ἔξω τοῦδ' ὄχου στήσω πόδα.
σκύλοισι μὲν γὰρ θεῶν κεκόσμηται δόμοι
Φρυγίοις, ἐγὼ δὲ τάσδε, Τρωάδος χθονὸς
ἐξαίρετ', ἀντὶ παιδὸς ἣν ἀπόλεσα,
σμικρὸν γέρας, καλὸν δὲ κέκτημαι δόμοις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὔκου ἐγὼ, δούλη γὰρ ἐκβεβλημένη
δόμων πατρώων δυστυχεῖς οἰκῶ δόμους
μητρ, λάβωμαι μακαρίας τῆς σῆς χερὸς;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

δοῦλαι πάρεισιν αἶδε, μὴ σύ μοι πόνει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1010 τί δ'; αἰχμάλωτόν τοί μ' ἀπόκισας δόμων,
ἡρημένων δὲ δωμάτων ἡρήμεθα,
ὡς αἶδε, πατὴρ ὀρφαναὶ λελειμμένοι.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

τοιαῦτα μέντοι σὸς πατήρ βουλευματα
εἰς οὓς ἐχρῆν ἤκιστ' ἐβούλευσεν φίλων.
λέξω δέ· καίτοι δόξ' ὅταν λάβῃ κακὴ
γυναῖκα, γλώσση πικρότης ἔνεστί τις·
ὡς μὲν παρ' ἡμῖν, οὐ καλῶς· τὸ πρᾶγμα δὲ
μαθόντας, ἦν μὲν ἀξίως μισεῖν ἔχη,
στρυγεῖν δίκαιον· εἰ δὲ μή, τί δεῖ στρυγεῖν;
ἡμᾶς δ' ἔδωκε Τυνδάρεως τῷ σῷ πατρί,
οὐχ ὥστε θήνσκειν, οὐδ' ἄ γειναίμην ἐγώ.

ELECTRA

Mine homage, for awe of thy wealth and thy bliss.
With watchful service to compass thy throne
This, Queen, is the hour, even this!

CLYTEMNESTRA

Step from the wain, Troy's daughters; take mine hand,
That from this chariot-floor I may light down.
As the Gods' temples are with spoils adorned
Of Troy, so these, the chosen of Phrygian land,
Have I, to countervail my daughter lost:¹—
Scant guerdon, yet fair honour for mine house.

1000

ELECTRA

May I not then,—the slave, the outcast I
From my sire's halls, whose wretched home is here,—
Mother, may I not take that heaven-blest hand?

CLYTEMNESTRA

Here be these bondmaids: trouble not thyself.

ELECTRA

How?—me thou mad'st thy spear-thrall, haled from
home:

Captive mine house was led, and captive I,
Even as these, unfathered and forlorn.

1010

CLYTEMNESTRA

Such fruit thy father's plottings had, contrived
Against his dearest, all unmerited.
Yea, I will speak; albeit, when ill fame
Compasseth woman, every tongue drops gall—
As touching me, unjustly: let men learn
The truth, and if the hate be proved my due,
'Tis just they loathe me; if not, wherefore loathe?
Of Tyndareus was I given to thy sire—
Not to be slain, nor I, nor those I bare.

¹ Iphigeneia, sacrificed for the Greeks' sake, who have therefore given these as some compensation.

- 1020 κείνος δὲ παῖδα τὴν ἐμήν, Ἀχιλλέως
λέκτροισι πείσας, ὄχετ' ἐκ δόμων ἄγων
πρυμνοῦχον Αὐλιν· ἐνθ' ὑπερτείνας πυρᾶς
λευκὴν διήμησ' Ἰφιγόνης παρηίδα.
κεῖ μὲν πόλεως ἄλωσιν ἐξιώμενος
ἢ δῶμ' οὐνήσων τάλλα τ' ἐκσώσων τέκνα
ἔκτεινε πολλῶν μίαν ὕπερ, συγγνώστ' ἂν ἦν·
νῦν δ', οὐνεχ' Ἐλένη μάργος ἦν, ὃ τ' αὐ λαβῶν
ἄλοχον κολάζειν προδότιν οὐκ ἠπίστατο,
τούτων ἕκατι παῖδ' ἐμήν διώλεσεν.
- 1030 ἐπὶ τοῖσδε τοίνυν, καίπερ ἠδικημένη
οὐκ ἠγριώμην οὐδ' ἂν ἔκτανον πόσιν·
ἄλλ' ἦλθ' ἔχων μοι μαινάδ' ἐνθεον κόρην
λέκτροις τ' ἐπεισέφρηκε, καὶ νύμφα δύο
ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖς δώμασιν κατεῖχ' ὁμοῦ.
μῶρον μὲν οὖν γυναῖκες, οὐκ ἄλλως λέγω·
ὅταν δ', ὑπόντος τοῦδ', ἀμαρτάνη πόσις
τᾶνδον παρώσας λέκτρα, μιμείσθαι θέλει
γυνὴ τὸν ἄνδρα χᾶτερον κτᾶσθαι φίλον·
κᾶπειτ' ἐν ἡμῖν ὁ ψόγος λαμπρύνεται,
- 1040 οἱ δ' αἴτιοι τῶνδ' οὐ κλύουσ' ἄνδρες κακῶς.
εἰ δ' ἐκ δόμων ἤρπαστο Μενέλεως λάθρα,
κτανεῖν μ' Ὀρέστην χρῆν, κασιγνήτης πόσιν
Μενέλαον ὡς σῶσαιμι; σὸς δὲ πῶς πατῆρ
ἠνέσχετ' ἂν ταῦτ'; εἶτα τὸν μὲν οὐ θανεῖν
κτείνοντα χρῆν τᾶμ', ἐμὲ δὲ πρὸς κείνου
παθεῖν;
ἔκτειν', ἐτρέφθην ἦνπερ ἦν πορευσίμου
πρὸς τοὺς ἐκείνω πολεμίους. φίλων γὰρ ἂν
τίς ἂν πατὴρ σου φόνου ἐκοινώνησέ μοι;
λέγ', εἴ τι χρήζεις, κἀντίθες παρρησίᾳ,
ὅπως τέθνηκε σὸς πατῆρ οὐκ ἐνδίκως.
- 1050

ELECTRA

He took my child—drawn by this lie from me, 1020
 That she should wed Achilles,—far from home
 To that fleet's prison, laid her on the pyre,
 And shore through Iphigeneia's snowy throat!
 Had he, to avert Mycenæ's overthrow,—
 To exalt his house,—to save the children left,—
 Slain one for many, 'twere not past forgiving.
 But, for that Helen was a wanton, he
 That wed the traitress impotent for vengeance,
 Even for such cause murdered he my child.
 Howbeit for this wrong, how wronged soe'er, 1030
 I had not raged, nor had I slain my lord;
 But to me with that prophet-maid he came,
 Made her usurp my couch, and fain would keep
 Two brides together in the selfsame halls.
 Women be frail: sooth, I deny it not.
 But when, this granted, 'tis the husband errs,
 Slighting his own true bride, and fain the wife
 Would copy him, and find another love,
 Ah then, fierce light of scandal beats on us;
 But them which show the way, the men, none
 blame! 1040
 Now had Menelaus from his home been stoln,
 Ought I have slain Orestes, so to save
 My sister's lord? How had thy sire endured
 Such deed? Should he 'scape killing then, who
 slew
 My child, who had slain me, had I touched his
 son?
 I slew him; turned me—'twas the only way—
 Unto his foes; for who of thy sire's friends
 Had been partaker with me in his blood?
 Speak all thou wilt: boldly set forth thy plea
 To prove thy father did not justly die. 1050

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δίκτην ἔλεξας· σὴ δίκη δ' αἰσχρῶς ἔχει·
 γυναιῖκα γὰρ χρὴ πάντα συγχωρεῖν πόσει,
 ἧτις φρενήρης· ἧ δὲ μὴ δοκεῖ τάδε,
 οὐδ' εἰς ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἐμῶν ἦκει λόγων.
 μέμνησο, μήτηρ, οὓς ἔλεξας ὑστάτους
 λόγους, διδοῦσα πρὸς σέ μοι παρρησίαν.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

καὶ νῦν δέ φημι κοῦκ ἀπαρνούμαι τὸ μή.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄρα κλύουσα, μήτηρ, εἴτ' ἔρξεις κακῶς ;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἔστι, τῇ σῇ δ' ἠδὺ προσθήσω φρενί.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1060

λέγοιμ' ἄν· ἀρχὴ δ' ἦδε μοι προοιμίου.
 εἴθ' εἶχες, ὦ τεκοῦσα, βελτίους φρένας.
 τὸ μὲν γὰρ εἶδος αἶνον ἄξιον φέρει
 Ἐλένης τε καὶ σοῦ, δύο δ' ἔφυτε συγγόνω,
 ἄμφω ματαίω Κάστορός τ' οὐκ ἀξίω.
 ἢ μὲν γὰρ ἀρπασθεῖς ἐκούσ' ἀπώλετο,
 σὺ δ' ἄνδρ' ἄριστον Ἑλλάδος διώλεσας,
 σκῆψιν προτείνουσ', ὡς ὑπὲρ τέκνου πόσιν
 ἔκτεινας· οὐ γάρ, ὡς ἔγωγ', ἴσασι σ' εὖ·
 ἧτις θυγατρὸς πρὶν κεκυρῶσθαι σφαγὰς

1070

νέον τ' ἀπ' οἴκων ἀνδρὸς ἐξωρμημένου
 ξανθὸν κατόπτρω πλόκαμον ἐξήσκεις κόμης.
 ἧτις δ' ἀπόντος ἀνδρὸς ἐκ δόμων γυνὴ
 εἰς κάλλος ἀσκεῖ, διάγραφ' ὡς οὔσαν κακῆν.
 οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτὴν δεῖ θύρασιν εὐπρεπές
 φαίνειν πρόσωπον, ἣν τι μὴ ζητῆ κακόν.
 μόνην δὲ πασῶν οἶδ' ἐγὼ σ' Ἑλληνίδων,
 εἰ μὲν τὰ Τρώων εὐτυχοῖ, κεχαρμένην,

ELECTRA

ELECTRA

Justice thy plea!—thy “justice” were our shame!
The wife should yield in all things to her lord,
So she be wise. If any think not so,
With her mine argument hath nought to do.
Bethink thee, mother, of thy latest words,
Vouchsafing me free speech to answer thee.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Again I say it; and I draw not back.

ELECTRA

Yea, mother, but wilt hear—and punish then?

CLYTEMNESTRA

Nay: I grant grace of license to thy mood.

ELECTRA

Then will I speak. My prelude this shall be:— 1060
O mother, that thou hadst a better heart!
This beauty wins you worthy meed of praise,
Helen's and thine: true sisters twain were ye!—
Ay, wantons both, unworthy Castor's name!—
She, torn from home, yet fain to be undone;
Thou, murderess of Hellas' noblest son,
Pleading that for a daughter's sake thou slew'st
A husband!—ah, men know thee not as I,
Thee, who, before thy daughter's death was doomed,
When from thine home thy lord had newly passed, 1070
Wert sleeking at the mirror thy bright hair!
The woman who, her husband far from home,
Bedecks herself, blot out her name as vile!
She needeth not to flaunt abroad a face
Made fair, except she be on mischief bent.
Of Hellas' daughters none save thee I know,
Who, when the might of Troy prevailed, was
glad,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1080 εἰ δ' ἦσσαν' εἶη, συννεφούσαν ὄμματα
 Ἀγαμέμνον' οὐ χρήζουσαν ἐκ Τροίας μολεῖν.
 καίτοι καλῶς γε σωφρονεῖν παρεῖχέ σοι
 ἄνδρ' εἶχες οὐ κακίον' Αἰγίσθου πόσιν,
 ὃν Ἑλλάς αὐτῆς εἴλετο στρατηλάτην.
 Ἐλένης δ' ἀδελφῆς τοιαῶν ἐξειργασμένης
 ἐξῆν κλέος σοι μέγα λαβεῖν· τὰ γὰρ κακὰ
 παράδειγμα τοῖς ἐσθλοῖσιν εἴσοψίν τ' ἔχει.
 εἰ δ', ὡς λέγεις, σὴν θυγατέρ' ἔκτεινεν πατήρ,
 ἐγὼ τί σ' ἠδίκησ' ἐμός τε σύγγονος;
 πῶς οὐ πόσιν κτείνασα πατρώους δόμους
 1090 ἡμῖν προσῆψας, ἀλλ' ἐπηνέγκω λέχη
 τὰλλότρια, μισθοῦ τοὺς γάμους ὠνουμένη;
 κοῦτ' ἀντιφεύγει παιδὸς ἀντὶ σοῦ πόσις,
 οὔτ' ἀντ' ἐμοῦ τέθνηκε, δις τόσως ἐμὲ
 κτείνας ἀδελφῆς ζῶσαν. εἰ δ' ἀμείψεται
 φόνον δικάζων φόνος, ἀποκτενῶ σ' ἐγὼ
 καὶ παῖς Ὀρέστης πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι·
 εἰ γὰρ δίκαι' ἐκείνα, καὶ τὰδ' ἔνδिका.
 [ὅστις δὲ πλούτον ἢ εὐγένειαν εἰσιδὼν
 γαμεῖ πονηράν, μῶρός ἐστι· μικρὰ γὰρ
 μεγάλων ἀμείνω σῶφρον' ἐν δόμοις λέχη.]

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1100 τύχη γυναικῶν εἰς γάμους. τὰ μὲν γὰρ εὖ,
 τὰ δ' οὐ καλῶς πίπτοντα δέρκομαι βροτῶν.]

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ὦ παῖ, πέφυκας πατέρα σὸν στέργειν αἰεὶ.
 ἔστιν δὲ καὶ τόδ'· οἱ μὲν εἰσιν ἀρσένων,
 οἱ δ' αὖ φιλοῦσι μητέρας μᾶλλον πατρός.
 συγγνώσομαί σοι· καὶ γὰρ οὐχ οὕτως ἄγαν

¹ Nauck brackets these lines, as of doubtful genuineness. They certainly weaken the dramatic effect.

ELECTRA

Whose eyes were clouded when her fortunes
 sank,
 Who wished not Agamemnon home from Troy
 Yet reason fair thou hadst to be true wife : 1080
 Not meaner than Aegisthus was thy lord,
 Whom Hellas chose to lead her war-array.
 And, when thy sister Helen so had sinned,
 High praise was thine to win ; for sinners' deeds
 Lift up the good for ensamples in men's sight.
 If, as thou say'st, my father slew thy daughter,
 How did I wrong thee, and my brother how ?
 Why, having slain thy lord, didst thou on us
 Bestow not our sire's halls, but buy therewith
 An alien couch, and pay a price for shame ? 1090
 Nor is thy paramour exiled for thy son,
 Nor for me slain, who hath dealt me living
 death
 Twice crueller than my sister's : yea, if blood
 'Gainst blood in judgment rise, I and thy son,
 Orestes, must slay thee to avenge our sire :
 For, if thy claim was just, this too is just.
 [Whoso, regarding wealth, or birth, shall wed
 A wanton, is a fool : the lowly chaste
 Are better in men's homes than high-born wives.

CHORUS

Chance ordereth women's bridals. Some I mark 1100
 Fair, and some foul of issue among men.]

CLYTEMNESTRA

Child, still thy nature bids thee love thy sire.
 'Tis ever thus : some cleave unto their father,
 Some more the mothers than the father love.
 I pardon thee. In sooth, not all so glad

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

χαίρω τι, τέκνον, τοῖς δεδραμένοις ἔμοί.
 σὺ δ' ὦδ' ἄλουτος καὶ δυσείματος χροῶ
 λεχῶ νεογνῶν ἐκ τόκων πεπαυμένη;
 οἴμοι τάλαινα τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων
 1110 ὡς μάλλον ἢ χρῆν ἤλασ' εἰς ὀργὴν πόσιν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὄψ' ἐ στενάξεις, ἠνίκ' οὐκ ἔχεις ἄκη.
 πατήρ μὲν οὖν τέθνηκε. τὸν δ' ἔξω χθονὸς
 πῶς οὐ κομίζει παιῖδ' ἀλητεύοντα σόν;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

δέδοικα· τοῦμόν δ', οὐχὶ τοῦκείνου, σκοπῶ.
 πατὴρ γάρ, ὡς λέγουσι, θυμοῦται φόνῳ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δαὶ πόσιν σὸν ἄγριον εἰς ἡμᾶς ἔχεις;

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

τρόποι τοιοῦτοι· καὶ σὺ δ' αὐθάδης ἔφυσ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀλγῶ γάρ· ἀλλὰ παύσομαι θυμουμένη.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν ἐκείνος οὐκέτ' ἔσται σοι βαρὺς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1120 φρονεῖ μέγ'· ἐν γὰρ τοῖς ἔμοις ναίει δόμοις.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ὀρᾶς, ἀν' αὐτὸν σὺ ζωπυρεῖς νείκη νέα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σιγῶ· δέδοικα γάρ νιν ὡς δέδοικ' ἐγώ.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

παῦσαι λόγων τῶνδ'· ἀλλὰ τί μ' ἐκάλεις, τέκνον;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἤκουσας, οἴμαι, τῶν ἐμῶν λοχευμάτων
 τούτων ὑπερ μοι θύσον, οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἐγώ,
 δεκάτη σελήνη παιδὸς ὡς νομίζεται
 τρίβων γὰρ οὐκ εἶμ', ἄτοκος οὖσ' ἐν τῷ πάρος.

ELECTRA

Am I, my child, for deeds that I have done.
But thou, why thus unwashed and meanly clad,
Seeing thy travail-sickness now is past?
Woe and alas for my devisings!—more
I spurred my spouse to anger than was need. 1110

ELECTRA

Too late thou sighest, since thou canst not heal
My sire is dead: but him, the banished one,
Why dost thou not bring back, thine homeless son?

CLYTEMNESTRA

I fear: mine own good I regard, not his.
Wroth for his father's blood he is, men say.

ELECTRA

Why tarre thy spouse on ever against me?

CLYTEMNESTRA

Nay, tis his mood: stiff-necked thou also art,

ELECTRA

For grief am I; yet will I cease from wrath.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Yea?—then he too shall cease from troubling thee.

ELECTRA

He is haughty, seeing he dwelleth in mine home. 1120

CLYTEMNESTRA

Lo there,—thou kindlest fires of strife anew.

ELECTRA

I am dumb: I fear him—even as I fear.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Cease from this talk. Why didst thou summon me?

ELECTRA

Touching my travailing thou hast heard, I wot.
Thou sacrifice for me—I know not how—
The wonted tenth-moon offerings for the babe.
Skillless am I, who have borne no child ere this.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἄλλης τόδ' ἔργον, ἢ σ' ἔλυσεν ἐκ τόκων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αὐτὴ ἴλοχευον κᾶτεκον μονη βρεφος.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

1130 οὕτως ἀγείτον' οἶκον ἴδρυσαι φίλων;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

πένητας οὐδεὶς βούλεται κτᾶσθαι φίλους.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἀλλ' εἶμι, παιδὸς ἀριθμὸν ὡς τελεσφόρον
θύσω θεοῖσι· σοὶ δ' ὅταν πράξω χάριν
τήνδ', εἴμ' ἐπ' ἀγρόν, οὐ πόσις θυηπολεῖ
Νύμφαισιν. ἀλλὰ τούσδ' ὄχους, ὁπάονες,
φάτναις ἄγοντες πρόσθεθ'· ἠνίκ' ἂν δέ με
δοκῆτε θυσίας τῆσδ' ἀπηλλάχθαι θεοῖς,
πάρεστε· δεῖ γὰρ καὶ πόσει δοῦναι χάριν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1140

χώρει πένητας εἰς δόμους· φρούρει δέ μοι
μή σ' αἰθαλώση πολύκαπνον στέγος πέπλους.
θύσεις γὰρ οἶα χρῆ σε δαίμοσιν θύειν.
κανοῦν δ' ἐνήρκται καὶ τεθηγμένη σφαγίς,
ἤπερ καθεῖλε ταῦρον, οὐ πέλας πεσεῖ
πληγεῖσα· νυμφεύσει δὲ κἂν Ἄιδου δόμοις
ᾧπερ ξυνηῦδες ἐν φάει. τοσήνδ' ἐγὼ
δώσω χάριν σοι, σὺ δὲ δίκην ἐμοὶ πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1150

ἄμοιβαὶ κακῶν· μετὰτροποι πνέου- στρ.
σιν αὔραι δόμων. τότε μὲν ἐν λουτροῖς
ἔπεσεν ἐμὸς ἐμὸς ἀρχέτας,
ἰάχησε δὲ στέγα λαίνοί

ELECTRA

CLYTEMNESTRA

This were her task, who in thy travail helped.

ELECTRA

Unhelped I travailed, bore alone my babe.

CLYTEMNESTRA

Dwell'st thou from friends and neighbours so remote? 1130

ELECTRA

The poor—none careth to win these for friends!

CLYTEMNESTRA

I enter, to the Gods to pay the dues
For a son's time accomplished. Having shown thee
That grace, I pass afield, to where my lord
Worships the Nymphs. This chariot ye my maids
Lead hence, and stall my steeds. Soon as ye deem
That this my service to the Gods is done,
Attend. My spouse too must my presence grace.

ELECTRA

Pass in to my poor house; and have a care
The smoke-grimed beams besmirch not thine attire.
The Gods' due sacrifice there shalt thou offer. 1140

[CLYTEMNESTRA enters hut.

The maund is dight, and whetted is the knife
Which slew the bull by whose side thou shalt lie
Stricken. Thou shalt in Hades be his bride
Whose love thou wast in life. So great the grace
I grant thee: thine to me—to avenge my sire!

[Enters hut.

CHORUS

Vengeance for wrong! The stormy winds, long
lashing (Str.)
The house, have veered! There was an hour saw fall
My chief, with blood the laver's silver dashing,
When shrieked the roof,—yea, topstones of the wall 1150

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τε θριγκοὶ δόμων, τὰδ' ἐνέποντος· ὦ
 σχετλία, τί με, γύναι, φονεύεις φίλαν
 πατρίδα δεκέτεσι
 σποραῖσιν ἐλθόντ' ἐμάν;

παλῖρρους δὲ τάνδ' ὑπάγεται δίκαι ἀντ.
 διαδρομον λέχους, μέλεον ἅ πόσιν
 χρονιον ἰκόμενον εἰς οἴκους
 Κυκλώπειά τ' οὐράνια τείχε' ὀ-
 ξυθήκτω βέλει κατέκαν' αὐτόχειρ,
 1160 πέλεκυν ἐν χεροῖν λαβοῦσα. τλάμων
 πόσις, ὃ τί ποτε τὰν
 τάλαιναν ἔσχεν κακόν.

ὀρεία τις ὡς λείαν' ὀργάδων ἐπωδ.
 δρύοχα νεμομένα, τάδε κατήνυσεν.

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ὦ τέκνα, πρὸς θεῶν μὴ κτάνητε μητέρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κλύεις ὑπώροφον βοάν;

ΚΑΤΤΑΙΜΝΗΣΤΡΑ

ἰὼ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ᾄμωξα κἀγὼ πρὸς τέκνων χειρουμένης.
 νέμει τοι δίκαι θεός, ὅταν τύχη·
 1170 σχέτλια μὲν ἔπαθες, ἀνόσια δ' εἰργάσω,
 τάλαιν', εὐνέταν.
 ἀλλ' οἶδε μητρὸς νεοφόνοισιν αἵμασι
 πεφυρμένοι βαίνουσιν ἐξ οἴκων πόδα,
 τροπαῖα δείγματ' ἀθλίων προσφθεγμάτων.
 οὐκ ἔστιν οὔδεις οἶκος ἀθλιώτερος
 τῶν Τανταλείων οὐδ' ἔφυ ποτ' ἐγγόνων.

ELECTRA

Shrieked back his cry, "Fiend-wife, and art thou
tearing
My life from me, who in the tenth year's earing
Come to my dear land, mine ancestral hall?"

(*Ant.*)

The tide of justice whelmeth, reflux-roaring,
The wanton wife who met her hapless lord,
When to the towers Titanic heavenward-soaring
He came,—with welcome met him of the sword,
Who grasped in hand the axe keen-edged to sever
Life's thread:—O hapless spouse, what wrong soever 1160
Stung to the deed the murderess abhorred!

(*Epode*)

Ruthless as mountain lioness roaming through
Green glades, she wrought the deed she had set her
hands to do.

CLYTEMNESTRA (*within*)

O children, in God's name slay not your mother!

CHORUS

Dost thou hear how thrills 'neath the roof a cry?

CLYTEMNESTRA (*within*)

Woe! wretched I!

CHORUS

I too could wail one by her children slain.
God meteth justice out in justice' day.
Ghastly thy sufferings; foully didst thou slay 1170
Thy lord for thine own bane!
They come, they come! Lo, forth the house they set
Their feet, besprent with gouts of mother's blood,
Trophies that witness to her piteous cries.
There is no house more whelmed in misery,
Nor hath been, than the line of Tantalus.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στρ. α'

1180

ἰὼ Γᾶ καὶ Ζεῦ πανδερκέτα
βροτῶν, ἴδετε τὰδ' ἔργα φόνι-
α μυσάρα, δίγωνα σώματ' ἐν
χθονὶ κείμενα, πλαγαῖ
χερὸς ὑπ' ἐμᾶς, ἄποιν' ἐμῶν πημάτων,

* * * * *
* * * * *

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δακρύτ' ἄγαν, ὦ σύγγον', αἰτία δ' ἐγώ.
διὰ πυρὸς ἔμολον ἅ τάλαινα ματρὶ τᾶδ',
ἄ μ' ἔτικτε κούραν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ τύχας, τᾶς σᾶς τύχας, μάτερ τεκοῦσ',
ἄλαστα μέλεα καὶ πέρα
παθοῦσα σῶν τέκνων ὑπαί.
πατρὸς δ' ἔτισας φόνον δικαίως.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1190

ἀντ. α'

ἰὼ Φοῖβ', ἀνύμνησας δίκαν,
ἄφαντα φανερὰ δ' ἐξέπρα-
ξας ἄχρα, φόνια δ' ὄπασας
λέχε' ἀπὸ γᾶς Ἑλλανίδος.
τίνα δ' ἑτέραν μὸλω πόλιν; τίς ξένος.
τίς εὐσεβῆς ἐμὸν κᾶρα
προσόψεται ματέρα κτανόντος;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1200

ἰὼ ἰώ μοι. ποῖ δ' ἐγώ; τίν' εἰς χορόν,
τίνα γάμον εἶμι; τίς πόσις με δέξεται
νυμφικὰς ἐς εὐνάς;

¹ The gap in the metre indicates that two lines have been lost here.

ELECTRA

Enter ORESTES with ELECTRA.

ORESTES

Earth, Zeus, whose all-beholding eye (Str. 1)

Is over men, behold this deed

Of blood, of horror—these that lie

Twinned corpses on the earth, that bleed

For my wrongs, and by mine hand die.

1180

[Woe and alas! I weep to know

My mother by mine hand laid low!]¹

ELECTRA

Well may we weep!—it was my sin, brother!

My fury was kindled as flame against her from whose
womb I came.

Woe's me, a daughter!—and *this*, my mother!

CHORUS

Alas for thy lot! Their mother wast thou,

And horrors and anguish no words may tell

At thy children's hands thou hast suffered now!

Yet justly the blow for their sire's blood fell.

ORESTES

Phoebus, the deed didst thou commend, (Ant. 1) 1190

Aye whispering "*Justice*." Thou hast bared

The deeds of darkness, and made end,

Through Greece, of lust that murder dared.

But me what land shall shield? What friend,

What righteous man shall bear to see

The slayer of his mother—me?

ELECTRA

Woe's me! What refuge shall what land give me?

O feet from the dance aye banned! O spousal-
hopeless hand!

What lord to a bridal-bower shall receive me?

1200

¹ Conjecturally supplied to fill lacuna.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πάλιν, πάλιν φρόνημα σὸν μετεστάθη πρὸς αὔραν
 φρονεῖς γὰρ ὅσια νῦν, τότε οὐ
 φρονοῦσα, δεῖνα δ' εἰργάσω,
 φίλα, κασίγνητον οὐ θέλοντα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κατείδες, οἶον ἂ τάλαιν' ἐμῶν πέπλων στρ. β
 ἐλάβετ', ἔδειξε μαστὸν ἐν φοναῖσιν,
 ἰώ μοι, πρὸς πέδῳ
 τιθεῖσα γόνιμα μέλεα; τὰν κόμαν δ' ἐγώ—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1210 σάφ' οἶδα δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας, ἰήμιον
 κλύων γόον ματρός, ἃ σ' ἔτικτεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

βοᾶν δ' ἔλασκε τάνδε, πρὸς γένυν ἐμὰν ἀντ. β
 τιθεῖσα χεῖρα· τέκος ἐμόν, λιταίνω·
 παρήδων τ' ἐξ ἐμᾶν
 ἐκρήμναθ', ὥστε χέρας ἐμὰς λιπεῖν βέλος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1220 τάλαινα, πῶς ἔτλας φόνον δι' ὀμμάτων
 ἰδεῖν σέθεν ματρός ἐκπνεούσας;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐγὼ μὲν ἐπιβαλὼν φάρη κόραις ἐμαῖς στρ. γ
 φασγάνῳ κατηρξάμαν
 ματέρος ἔσω δέρας μεθείς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγὼ δ' ἐπεγκέλευσά σοι
 ξίφους τ' ἐφηψάμαν ἅμα.
 δεινότατον παθέων ἔρεξα.

ELECTRA

CHORUS

Again have thy thoughts veered round, yet again!
Now right is thine heart, which was then not right
When to deeds of horror didst thou constrain
Thy brother, O friend, in his heart's despite.

ORESTES

Didst thou mark, how the hapless, clinging,
claspings (Str. 2)
My mantle, bared her bosom in dying—
Woe's me!—and even to the earth bowed low
A mother's limbs?—and her hair was I grasping—

CHORUS

I know thine agōny, hearing the crying 1210
Of the mother that bare thee, her wail of woe.

ORESTES

Her hand on my cheek did she lay, and her
calling (Ant. 2)
Rang in mine ears—"My child! I implore thee!"
And she hung, she hung on my neck, to stay
The sword, from my palsied hand-grasp falling.

CHORUS (to Electra)

Wretch, how couldst thou bear to behold before thee 1220
Thy mother, gasping her life away?

ORESTES

I cast my mantle before mine eyes, (Str. 3)
And my sword began that sacrifice,
Through the throat of my mother cleaving,
cleaving!

ELECTRA

Yea, and I urged thee with instant word,
And I set with thee mine hand to the sword.
I have done things horrible past believing!

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λαβοῦ, κάλυπτε μέλεα ματέρος πέπλοις, ἄντ.
καὶ καθάρμοσον σφαγᾶς.
φονέας ἔτικτες ἄρά σοι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1230 ἰδοῦ, φίλα τε κοῦ φίλα,
φάρεα σέ γ' ἀμφιβάλλομεν.
τέρμα κακῶν μεγάλων δόμοισιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' οἶδε δόμων ὑπὲρ ἀκροτάτων
φαίνουσί τινες δαίμονες ἢ θεῶν
τῶν οὐρανίων; οὐ γὰρ θνητῶν γ'
ἦδε κέλευθος· τί ποτ' εἰς φανεράν
ὄψιν βαίνουσι βροτοῖσιν;

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

Ἀγαμέμνωνος παῖ, κλύθι· δίπτυχοι δέ σε
καλοῦσι μητρὸς σύγγονοι Διόσκοροι,
1240 Κάστωρ κασίγνητός τε Πολυδεύκης ὄδε.
δεινὸν δὲ ναὸς ἀρτίως πόντου σάλου
παύσαντ' ἀφίγμεθ' Ἄργος, ὡς ἐσείδομεν
σφαγᾶς ἀδελφῆς τῆσδε, μητέρος δὲ σῆς.
δίκαια μὲν νῦν ἦδ' ἔχει, σὺ δ' οὐχὶ δρᾶς·
Φοῖβός τε Φοῖβος—ἀλλ' ἄναξ γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός,
σιγῶ· σοφὸς δ' ὢν οὐκ ἔχρησέ σοι σοφά.
αἰνεῖν δ' ἀνάγκη ταῦτα· τάντεῦθεν δὲ χρῆ
πράσσειν ἃ μοῖρα Ζεὺς τ' ἔκρανε σοῦ πέρι.
Πυλάδῃ μὲν Ἠλέκτραν δὸς ἄλοχον εἰς δόμους,
1250 σὺ δ' Ἄργος ἔκλιπ'· οὐ γὰρ ἔστι σοι πόλις
τήνδ' ἐμβατεύειν, μητέρα κτείναντα σὴν.
δειναὶ δὲ Κῆρές σ' αἰ κυνώπιδες θεαὶ

ELECTRA

ORESTES

Take, take, with her vesture the limbs shroud
round (Ant. 3)

Of my mother: O close her wide death-wound.

Thou barest them, thou, these hands death-
dealing!

ELECTRA

Lo, thou that wast dear and yet not dear, 1230
With the mantle I veil thee over: here

May the curse of the house have end and healing!

CASTOR and POLLUX appear in mid air above the stage.

CHORUS

Lo, lo, where over the roof-ridge high
Demigods gleam;—or from thrones in the sky
Stoop Gods?—it is not vouchsafed unto men
To tread yon path: why draw these nigh
Unto mortal ken?

CASTOR

Hear, child of Agamemnon: Sons of Zeus,
Twin brothers of thy mother, call to thee;
I Castor, this my brother Polydeuces. 1240

Even now the sea's shipwrecking surge have we
Assuaged, and come to Argos, having seen
The slaying of our sister, of thy mother.

She hath but justice; yet thou, thou hast sinned;
And Phoebus—Phoebus—since he is my king,
I am dumb. He is wise:—not wise his hest for thee!
We must needs say "Tis well." Henceforth must thou
Perform what Fate and Zeus ordain for thee.

To Pylades Electra give to wife:
But thou, leave Argos; for thou mayst not tread 1250
Her streets, since thou hast wrought thy mother's
death.

The dread Weird Sisters, hound-eyed Goddesses,

- τροχηλατήσουσ' ἔμμανῆ πλανώμενον.
 ἔλθων δ' Ἀθήνας, Παλλάδος σεμνὸν βρέτας
 πρόσπτυξον· εἶρξει γάρ νιν ἐπτοημένας
 δεινοῖς δράκουσιν ὥστε μὴ ψαύειν σέθεν,
 γοργῶφ' ὑπερτείνουσά σου κάρα κύκλον.
 ἔστιν δ' Ἀρεώς τις ὄχθος, οὐ πρῶτον θεοὶ
 ἔζοντ' ἐπὶ ψήφοισιν αἵματος πέρι,
 1260 Ἀλιρρόθιον ὅτ' ἔκταν' ὠμόφρων Ἄρης,
 μῆνιν θυγατρὸς ἀνοσίων νυμφευμάτων,
 πόντου κρέοντος παῖδ', ἵν' εὐσεβεστάτη
 ψῆφος βεβαία τ' ἔστιν ἔκ γε τοῦ θεοῖς.
 ἐνταῦθα καὶ σὲ δεῖ δραμεῖν φόνου πέρι.
 ἴσαι δέ σ' ἐκσώζουσι μὴ θανεῖν δίκη
 ψῆφοι τεθεῖσαι· Λοξίας γὰρ αἰτίαν
 εἰς αὐτὸν οἴσει, μητέρος χρήσας φόνον.
 καὶ τοῖσι λοιποῖς ὅδε νόμος τεθήσεται
 νικᾶν ἴσαις ψήφοισι τὸν φεύγοντ' ἀεὶ.
 1270 δειναὶ μὲν οὖν θεαὶ τῶδ' ἄχει πεπληγμένοι
 πάγον παρ' αὐτὸν χάσμα δύσονται χθονός,
 σεμνὸν βροτοῖσιν εὐσεβὲς χρηστήριον.
 σὲ δ' Ἀρκάδων χρὴ πόλιν ἐπ' Ἀλφειοῦ ῥοαῖ
 οἰκεῖν Λυκαίου πλησίον σηκώματος·
 ἐπώνυμος δὲ σοῦ πόλις κεκλήσεται.
 σοὶ μὲν τὰδ' εἶπον· τόνδε δ' Αἰγίσθου νέκυν
 Ἄργους πολίται γῆς καλύψουσιν τάφω.
 μητέρα δὲ τὴν σὴν ἄρτι Ναυπλίαν παρῶν
 Μενέλαος, ἐξ οὗ Τρωικὴν εἶλε χθόνα,
 1280 Ἐλένη τε θάψει· Πρωτέως γὰρ ἐκ δόμων
 ἦκει λιποῦσ' Αἴγυπτον οὐδ' ἦλθεν Φρύγας.
 Ζεὺς δ', ὡς ἔρις γένοιτο καὶ φόνος βροτῶν,
 εἶδωλον Ἐλένης ἐξέπεμψ' ἐς Ἴλιον.
 Πυλάδης μὲν οὖν κόρην τε καὶ δάμαρτ' ἔχουσι

ELECTRA

Shall drive thee mad, and dog thy wanderings.
 To Athens go : the awful image clasp
 Of Pallas ; for their serpent-frenzied rage
 Shall she refrain, that they may touch thee not,
 Outstretching o'er thine head her Gorgon shield.
 There is a Hill of Ares, where first sat
 Gods to give judgment touching blood-shedding,
 When fierce-souled Ares Halirrothius slew, 1260
 The Sea-king's son, in wrath for outrage done
 His daughter. That tribunal since that hour
 Sacred and stablished stands in sight of Gods.
 There must thou for this murder be arraigned.
 And, in the judgment, equal votes cast down
 From death shall save thee : for the blame
 thereof
 Shall Loxias take, who bade thee slay thy mother.
 And this for after times shall rest the law,
 That equal votes shall still acquit the accused.
 Yet shall the Dread Ones, anguish-stricken for
 this, 1270
 Hard by that hill sink into earth's deep cleft
 Revered by men, a sacred oracle.
 Thou by Alpheius' streams must found a city
 Arcadian, near Lycaean Zeus's shrine ;
 And by thy name the city shall be called.
 This to thee : touching yon Aegisthus' corse,
 The Argive folk shall hide it in the tomb.
 Thy mother—Menelaus, now first come
 To Nauplia, since he won the land of Troy,
 Shall bury her, he and Helen : for she comes, 1280
 Who ne'er saw Troy, from Proteus' halls in Egypt.
 But Zeus, to stir up strife and slaughter of men,
 A phantom Helen unto Ilium sent.
 And Pylades shall take his virgin wife,

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἄχαιΐδος γῆς οἴκαδ' εἰσπορευέτω,
καὶ τὸν λόγῳ σὸν πενθερὸν κομιζέτω
Φωκέων ἐς αἶαν, καὶ δότῳ πλούτου βάρους·
σὺ δ' Ἰσθμίας γῆς αὐχέν' ἐμβαίνων ποδὶ
χώραι πρὸς οἶκον Κεκροπίας εὐδαίμονα.
πεπρωμένην γὰρ μοῖραν ἐκπλήσας φόνου
εὐδαιμονήσεις τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαχθεὶς πόνων.

1290

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ παῖδε Διός, θέμις εἰς φθογγὰς
τὰς ὑμετέρας ἡμῖν πελάθειν;

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

θέμις, οὐ μυσαραοῖς τοῖσδε σφαγίοις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κάμοι μύθου μέτα, Τυνδαρίδαι;

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

καὶ σοί· Φοῖβῳ τήνδ' ἀναθήσω
πρᾶξιν φονίαν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς ὄντε θεῷ τῆσδέ τ' ἀδελφῷ
τῆς καταφθιμένης
οὐκ ἠρέεσατον κῆρας μελάθροις;

1300

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

μοῖραν ἀνάγκης ἦγεν τὸ χρεῶν,
Φοῖβου τ' ἄσοφοι γλώσσης ἐνοπαί.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τίς δ' ἔμ' Ἀπόλλων, ποῖοι χρησμοὶ
φονίαν ἔδοσαν μητρὶ γενέσθαι;

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

κοινὰ πράξεις, κοινὸν δὲ πότμοι,
μία δ' ἀμφοτέρους
ἄτη πατέρων διέκναισεν.

ELECTRA

And from the land Achaean lead her home ;
And him, thy kinsman by repute,¹ shall bring
To Phocis, and shall give him store of wealth.
Thou, journey round the neck of Isthmian land,
Till thou reach Athens, Cecrops' blissful home.
For, when thou hast fulfilled this murder's doom, 1290
Thou shalt be happy, freed from all these toils.

CHORUS

O children of Zeus, may we draw nigh
Unto speech of your Godhead lawfully ?

CASTOR

Yea : stainless are ye of the murderous deed.

ELECTRA

I too, may I speak to you, Tyndareus' seed ?

CASTOR

Thou too : for on Phoebus I lay the guilt
Of the blood thou hast spilt.

CHORUS

How fell it, that ye Gods, brethren twain
Of her that is slain,
Kept not from her halls those Powers of Bane ? 1300

CASTOR

By resistless fate was her doom on-driven,
And by Phoebus' response, in unwisdom given.

ELECTRA

Yet why hath Apollo by bodings ordained
That I with a mother's blood be stained ?

CASTOR

In the deed ye shared, as the doom ye shared :
The curse of your sires was for twain prepared,
And it hath not spared.

¹ Thy nominal brother-in-law, the peasant.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1310

ὦ σύγγονέ μοι, χρονίαν σ' ἐσιδὼν
τῶν σῶν εὐθύς φίλτρων στέρομαι,
καὶ σ' ἀπολείψω σοῦ λειπόμενος.

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

πόσις ἔστ' αὐτῇ καὶ δόμος· οὐχ ἦδ'
οἴκτρα πέπονθεν, πλὴν ὅτι λείπει
πόλιν Ἀργείων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ τίνες ἄλλαι στοναχαὶ μείζους
ἢ γῆς πατρίας ὄρον ἐκλείπεις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄλλ' ἐγὼ οἴκων ἔξειμι πατρός,
καὶ ἐπ' ἄλλοτρίαις ψήφοισι φόνον
μητρὸς ὑφέξω.

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

1320

θάρσει· Παλλάδος
όσίαν ἤξεις πόλιν· ἀλλ' ἀνέχου.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

περὶ μοι στέρνοις στέρνα πρόσαψον,
σύγγονε φίλτατε·
διὰ γὰρ ζευγνῦσ' ἡμᾶς πατρίων
μελάθρων μητρὸς φόνιοι κατάραι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

βάλε, πρόσπτυξον σῶμα· θανόντος δ'
ὡς ἐπὶ τύμβῳ καταθρήνησον.

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

1330

φεῦ φεῦ. δεινὸν τόδ' ἐγηρύσω
καὶ θεοῖσι κλύειν.
ἐνὶ γὰρ κάμοι τοῖς τ' οὐρανίδαις
οἴκτοι θνητῶν πολυμόχθων.

ELECTRA

ORESTES

Ah, sister mine, after long, long space of weary
waiting, to see thy face,
And lo, from thy love to be straightway torn,
To forsake thee, be left of thee forlorn!

1310

CASTOR

A husband is hers and a home: this pain
Alone must she know, no more to remain
Here, ne'er know Argos again.

ELECTRA

What drearier lot than this, to be banned
For aye from the borders of fatherland?

ORESTES

But I flee from the halls of my father afar;
For a mother's blood at the alien's bar
Arraigned must I stand!

CASTOR

Fear not: to the sacred town shalt thou fare
Of Pallas all safely: be strong to bear.

1320

ELECTRA

Fold me around, breast close to breast,
O brother, O loved!—of all loved best!
For the curse of a mother's blood must sever
From our sire's halls us, for ever—for ever!

ORESTES

Fling thee on me! Cling close, mine own!
As over the grave of the dead make moan.

CASTOR

Alas and alas!—for thy pitiful wail
Even Gods' hearts fail;
For with me and with all the Abiders on High
Is compassion for mortals' misery.

1330

115

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκέτι σ' ὄψομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδ' ἐγὼ εἰς σὸν βλέφαρον πελάσω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τάδε λοίσθιά μοι προσφθέγματά σου.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ χαῖρε, πόλις·
χαίρετε δ' ὑμεῖς πολλά, πολίτιδες.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ πιστοτάτη, στείχεις ἤδη;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

στείχω βλέφαρον τέγγουσ' ἀπαλόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1340

Πυλάδη, χαίρων ἴθι, νυμφεύου
δέμας Ἡλέκτρας.

ΚΑΣΤΩΡ

τοῖσδε μελήσει γάμος· ἀλλὰ κύνας
τᾶσδ' ὑποφεύγων στείχ' ἐπ' Ἀθηνῶν·
δεινὸν γὰρ ἶχνος βάλλουσ' ἐπὶ σοὶ
χειροδράκοντες χρώτα κελαιναί,
δεινῶν ὀδυνῶν καρπὸν ἔχουσαι·
νὼ δ' ἐπὶ πόντον Σικελὸν σπουδῇ
σώσοντε νεῶν πρόφρας ἐνάλους.
διὰ δ' αἰθερίας στείχοντε πλακὸς
1350 τοῖς μὲν μυσταροῖς οὐκ ἐπαρήγομεν,
οἷσιν δ' ὅσιον καὶ τὸ δίκαιον
φίλον ἐν βιότῳ, τούτους χαλεπῶν
ἐκλύοντες μόχθων σφύζομεν.
οὕτως ἀδικεῖν μηδεὶς θελέτω,

ELECTRA

ORESTES

I shall look upon thee not again—not again!

ELECTRA

Nor my yearning eyes upon thee shall I strain!

ORESTES

The last words these we may speak, we twain!

ELECTRA

O city, farewell;
Farewell, ye maidens therein that dwell!

ORESTES

O faithful and true, must we part, part so?

ELECTRA

We part;—my welling eyes overflow.

ORESTES

Pylades, go; fair fortune betide:
Take thou Electra for bride.

1340

CASTOR

These shall find spousal-solace:—up, be doing;
Yon hell-hounds flee, till thou to Athens win.

Their fearful feet pad on thy track pursuing,
Demons of dragon talon, swart of skin,
Who batten on mortal agonies their malice.

We speed to seas Sicilian, from their wrath
To save the prows of surge-imperilled galleys:

Yet, as we pace along the cloudland path,
We help not them that work abomination;

But, whoso loveth faith and righteousness
All his life long, to such we bring salvation,
Bring them deliverance out of all distress.

Let none dare then in wrong to be partaker,

1350

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μηδ' ἐπιόρκων μέτα συμπλείτω·
θεὸς ὦν θνητοῖς ἀγορεύω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χαίρετε· χαιρεῖν δ' ὅστις δύναται
καὶ ξυντυχία μὴ τιμὴ κάμνει
θνητῶν, εὐδαίμονα πράσσει.

ELECTRA

Neither to voyage with the doomed oath-breaker.
I am a God : to men I publish this.

CHORUS

Farewell ! Ah, whosoe'er may know this blessing,
To *fare well*, never crushed 'neath ills oppressing,
Alone of mortals tastes abiding bliss.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.]

ORESTES

ARGUMENT

ORESTES

ORSTES

ARGUMENT

WHEN Orestes had avenged his father by slaying his mother Clytemnestra and Aegisthus her paramour, as is told in the Tragedy called "*Electra*," he was straightway haunted by the Erinyes, the avengers of parricide, and by them made mad; and in the torment thereof he continued six days, till he was brought to death's door.

And herein is told how his sister *Electra* ministered to him, and how by the Argive people they were condemned to death, while their own kin stood far from their help, and how they strove against their doom.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

ΠΤΑΛΑΔΗΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ΦΡΥΞ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

- ELECTRA, *daughter of Agamemnon.*
HELEN, *wife of Menelaus.*
ORESTES, *son of Agamemnon.*
MENELAUS, *brother of Agamemnon.*
PYLADES, *friend of Orestes.*
TYNDAREUS, *father of Clytemnestra.*
HERMIONE, *daughter of Helen.*
MESSENGER, *an old servant of Agamemnon.*
A PHRYGIAN, *attendant-slave of Helen.*
APOLLO.
CHORUS, *consisting of Argive women.*
Attendants of Helen, Menelaus, and Tyndareus.

SCENE : At the Palace in Argos.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν δεινὸν ὧδ' εἰπεῖν ἔπος,
οὐδὲ πάθος, οὐδὲ συμφορὰ θεήλατος,
ἧς οὐκ ἂν ἄραιτ' ἄχθος ἀνθρώπου φύσις.
ὁ γὰρ μακάριος, κοῦκ ὀνειδίζω τύχας,
Διὸς πεφυκώς, ὡς λέγουσι, Τάνταλος
κορυφῆς ὑπερτέλλοντα δειμαίνων πέτρον
ἀέρι ποτᾶται καὶ τίνει ταύτην δίκην,
ὡς μὲν λέγουσιν, ὅτι θεοῖς ἀνθρωπος ὦν
κοινῆς τραπέζης ἀξίωμ' ἔχων ἴσον,
10 ἀκόλαστον ἔσχε γλώσσαν, αἰσχίστην νόσον.
οὗτος φυτεύει Πέλοπα, τοῦ δ' Ἀτρεὺς ἔφνυ,
ὧ στέμματα ξήνας' ἐπέκλωσεν θεὰ
ἔριν, Θυέστη πόλεμον ὄντι συγγόνῳ
θέσθαι· τί τάρρητ' ἀναμετρήσασθαί με δεῖ;
ἔδαισε δ' οὖν νιν τέκν' ἀποκτείνας Ἀτρεὺς.
'Ατρέως δέ, τὰς γὰρ ἐν μέσῳ σιγῶ τύχας,
ὁ κλεινός, εἰ δὴ κλεινός, Ἀγαμέμνων ἔφνυ
Μενέλεώς τε Κρήσσης μητρὸς Ἀερόπης ἀπο-
γαμεί δ' ὁ μὲν δὴ τὴν θεοῖς στυγουμένην
20 Μενέλαος Ἑλένην, ὁ δὲ Κλυταιμνήστρας λέχος
ἐπίσημον εἰς Ἑλληνας Ἀγαμέμνων ἀναξ·
ὧ παρθένοι μὲν τρεῖς ἔφνυμεν ἐκ μιᾶς,

ORESTES

ORESTES *asleep on his bed, ELECTRA watching beside it.*

ELECTRA

NOTHING there is so terrible to tell,
Nor fleshly pang, nor visitation of God,
But poor humanity may have to bear it,
He, the once blest,—I mock not at his doom—
Begotten of Zeus, as men say, Tantalus,
Dreading the crag which topples o'er his head,
Now hangs mid air; and pays this penalty,
As the tale telleth, for that he, a man,
Honoured to sit god-like at meat with Gods,
Yet bridled not his tongue—O shameful madness! 10
He begat Pelops; born to him was Atreus,
For whom Fate twined with her doom-threads a
strand
Of strife against Thyestes, yea, his brother;—
Why must I tell o'er things unspeakable?
Atreus for their sire's feasting slew his sons.
Of Atreus—what befell between I tell not—
Famed Agamemnon sprang,—if *this* be fame,—
And Menelaus, of Cretan Aerope.
And Menelaus wedded Helen, loathed 20
Of heaven, the while King Agamemnon won
Clytemnestra's couch, to Hellenes memorable.
To him were daughters three, Chrysothemis,

Χρυσόθεμις Ἴφιγένειά τ' Ἡλέκτρα τ' ἐγώ,
 ἄρσην δ' Ὀρέστης, μητρὸς ἀνοσιωτάτης,
 ἢ πόσιν ἀπείρω περιβαλοῦσ' ὑφάσματι
 ἔκτεινεν· ὦν δ' ἕκατι, παρθένω λέγειν
 οὐ καλόν· ἐὼ τοῦτ' ἀσαφὲς ἐν κοινῷ σκοπεῖν.
 Φοίβου δ' ἀδικίαν μὲν τί δεῖ κατηγορεῖν;
 30 πείθει δ' Ὀρέστην μητέρ' ἢ σφ' ἐγείνατο
 κτεῖναι, πρὸς οὐχ ἅπαντας εὐκλείαν φέρου.
 ὅμως δ' ἀπέκτειν' οὐκ ἀπειθήσας θεῶ·
 κἀγὼ μετέσχον, οἶα δὴ γυνή, φόνου,
 Πυλάδης θ', ὃς ἡμῖν συγκατείργασται τάδε.
 ἐντεῦθεν ἀγρία συντακεῖς νόσῳ δέμας
 τλήμων Ὀρέστης ὅδε πεσὼν ἐν δεμνίοις
 κείται, τὸ μητρὸς δ' αἷμά νιν τροχηλατέ
 μανίαισιν· ὀνομάζειν γὰρ αἰδοῦμαι θεᾶς
 Εὐμενίδας, αἱ τόνδ' ἔξαμιλλῶνται φόβῳ.
 40 ἔκτου δὲ δὴ τόδ' ἡμαρ ἐξ ὅτου σφαγαῖς
 θανούσα μήτηρ πυρὶ καθήγνισται δέμας,
 ὦν οὔτε σῖτα διὰ δέρης ἐδέξατο,
 οὐ λούτρ' ἔδωκε χρωτί· χλανιδίων δ' ἔσω
 κρυφθεῖς, ὅταν μὲν σῶμα κουφισθῆ νόσου,
 ἔμφρων δακρῦει, ποτὲ δὲ δεμνίων ἄπο
 πηδᾶ δρομαῖος, πῶλος ὡς ἀπὸ ζυγοῦ.
 ἔδοξε δ' Ἄργει τῶδε μήθ' ἡμᾶς στέγαις,
 μὴ πυρὶ δέχεσθαι, μήτε προσφωνεῖν τινα
 μητροκτονούντας· κυρία δ' ἦδ' ἡμέρα,
 50 ἐν ἧ διοίσει ψῆφον Ἀργείων πόλις,
 εἰ χρὴ θανεῖν νῶ λευσίμῳ πετρώματι,
 ἢ φάσγανον θήξαντ' ἐπ' αὐχένος βαλεῖν.
 ἐλπίδα δὲ δὴ τιν' ἔχομεν ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν·
 ἦκει γὰρ εἰς γῆν Μενέλεως Τροίας ἄπο,
 λιμένα δὲ Ναυπλίου ἐκπληρῶν πλάτη

ORESTES

Iphigeneia, Electra, and a son
 Orestes, of one impious mother born,
 Who trapped in tangling toils her lord, and slew :
 Wherefore she slew,—a shame for maid to speak !—
 I leave untold, for whoso will to guess.
 What boots it to lay wrong to Phoebus' charge,
 Who thrust Orestes on to slay the mother
 That bare him ?—few but cry shame on the deed, 30
 Though in obedience to the God he slew.
 I in the deed shared,—far as woman might,—
 And Pylades, who helped to compass it.
 Thereafter, wasted with fierce malady,
 Hapless Orestes, fallen on his couch,
 Lieth : his mother's blood aye scourgeth him
 With madness. Scarce for awe I name their
 names
 Whose terrors rack him, the Eumenides.
 And to this day, the sixth since cleansing fire
 Enwrapped the murdered form, his mother's corse, 40
 Morsel of food his lips have not received,
 Nor hath he bathed his flesh ; but in his cloak
 Now palled, when he from torment respite hath,
 With brain unclouded weeps, now from his couch
 Frenzied with wild feet bounds like steed unyoked.
 And Argos hath decreed that none with roof
 Or fire receive us, none speak word to us,
 The matricides. The appointed day is this,
 Whereon the Argive state shall cast the vote,
 Whether we twain must die, by stoning die, 50
 Or through our own necks plunge the whetted
 steel.
 Yet one hope have we of escape from death ;
 For Menelaus from Troy hath reached the land.
 Thronging the Nauplian haven with his fleet

ἀκταῖσιν ὄρμει, δαρὸν ἐκ Τροίας χρόνον
 ἄλαισι πλαγχθείς· τὴν δὲ δὴ πολύστονον
 Ἑλένην, φυλάξας νύκτα, μή τις εἰσιδὼν
 μεθ' ἡμέραν στείχουσαν, ὦν ὑπ' Ἴλιῳ
 60 παῖδες τεθνᾶσιν, εἰς πέτρων ἔλθη βολάς,
 προὔπεμψεν εἰς δῶμ' ἡμέτερον· ἔστιν δ' ἔσω
 κλαίουσ' ἀδελφὴν συμφοράς τε δωμάτων.
 ἔχει δὲ δὴ τιν' ἀλγέων παραψυχὴν·
 ἦν γὰρ κατ' οἴκους ἔλιφ', ὅτ' ἐς Τροίαν ἔπλει,
 παρθένον ἐμῇ τε μητρὶ παρέδωκεν τρέφειν
 Μενέλαος ἀγαγὼν Ἑρμιόνην Σπάρτης ἄπο,
 ταύτῃ γέγηθε κάπιλήθεται κακῶν.
 βλέπω δὲ πᾶσαν εἰς ὁδόν, πότε ὄψομαι
 Μενέλαον ἤκουθ'· ὡς τά γ' ἄλλ' ἐπ' ἀσθενοῦς
 70 ῥώμης ὀχούμεθ', ἦν τι μὴ κείνου πάρα
 σωθῶμεν. ἄπορον χρῆμα δυστυχῶν δόμος.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ὦ παῖ Κλυταιμνήστρας τε κάγαμέμνονος,
 παρθένε μακρὸν δὴ μῆκος, Ἥλέκτρα, χρόνον,
 πῶς, ὦ τάλαινα, σύ τε κασίγνητός τε σὸς
 τλήμων Ὀρέστης μητρὸς ὄδε φονεὺς ἔφυ;
 προσφθέγμασιν γὰρ οὐ μαινομαι σέθεν,
 εἰς Φοῖβον ἀναφέρουσα τὴν ἀμαρτίαν.
 καίτοι στένω γε τὸν Κλυταιμνήστρας μόρον
 ἐμῆς ἀδελφῆς, ἦν, ἐπεὶ πρὸς Ἴλιον
 80 ἔπλευσ' ὅπως ἔπλευσα θεομανεῖ πότμῳ,
 οὐκ εἶδον, ἀπολειφθεῖσα δ' αἰιάζω τύχας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἑλένη, τί σοι λέγοιμ' ἂν ἃ γε παροῦσ' ὀράς,
 ἐν συμφοραῖσι τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος γόνον;
 ἐγὼ μὲν ἄπνους, πάρεδρος ἀθλίῳ νεκρῷ,
 νεκρὸς γὰρ οὗτος εἴνεκα σμικρᾶς πνοῆς,

ORESTES

Off-shore he anchors, who hath wandered long
 Homeless from Troy. But Helen—yea, that cause
 Of countless woes,—'neath screen of night he sent
 Before, unto our house, lest some, whose sons
 At Ilium fell, if she by daylight came,
 Should see, and stone her. Now within she weeps 60
 Her sister and her house's misery.
 And yet hath she some solace in her griefs :
 The child whom, sailing unto Troy, she left,
 Hermione, whom Menelaus brought
 From Sparta to my mother's fostering,
 In her she joys, and can forget her woes.
 I gaze far down the highway, strain to see
 Menelaus come. Frail anchor of hope is ours
 To ride on, if we be not saved of him.
 In desperate plight is an ill-fated house. 70

Enter HELEN.

HELEN

Clytemnestra's daughter, Agamemnon's child,
 Electra, maid a weary while unwed,
 Hapless, how could ye, thou and the stricken one,
 Thy brother Orestes, slay a mother thus ?
 I come, as unpolluted by thy speech,
 Since upon Phoebus all thy sin I lay.
 Yet do I moan for Clytemnestra's fate,
 My sister, whom, since unto Ilium
 I sailed,—as heaven-frenzied I did sail,—
 I have seen not : now left lorn I wail our lot. 80

ELECTRA

Helen, why tell thee what thyself mayst see—
 The piteous plight of Agamemnon's son ?
 Sleepless I sit beside a wretched corpse ;
 For, but for faintest breath, a corpse he is.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θάσσω· τὰ τούτου δ' οὐκ ὄνειδίζω κακά·
 σὺ δ' ἢ μακαρία μακάριός θ' ὁ σὸς πόσις
 ἦκετον ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἀθλίως πεπραγότας.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πόσον χρόνον δὲ δεμνίους πέπτωχ' ὄδε ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔξ οὐπερ αἶμα γενέθλιον κατήνυσεν.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

90 ὦ μέλεος, ἢ τεκοῦσά θ', ὡς διώλετο.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὕτως ἔχει τάδ', ὥστ' ἀπείρηκεν κακοῖς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

πρὸς θεῶν, πίθοι' ἂν δῆτά μοι τι, παρθένε ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὡς ἄσυχολός γε συγγόνου προσεδρία.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

βούλει τάφον μοι πρὸς κασιγνήτης μολεῖν ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μητρὸς κελεύεις τῆς ἐμῆς ; τίνοσ χάριν ;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

κόμης ἀπαρχὰς καὶ χοὰς φέρουσ' ἐμάς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σοὶ δ' οὐ θεμιστὸν πρὸς φίλων στειχεῖν τάφον ;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

δεῖξαι γὰρ Ἀργείοισι σῶμ' αἰσχύνομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὄψέ γε φρονεῖς εὖ, τότε λιποῦσ' αἰσχροῦσ δόμους.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

100 ὀρθῶσ ἔλεξασ, οὐ φίλωσ δέ μοι λέγεις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αἰδῶσ δὲ δῆ τίς σ' εἰσ Μυκηναίους ἔχει ;

ORESTES

His evils—none do I reproach with them ;
But prosperous thou art come, and prosperous comes
Thy lord, to us the misery-stricken ones.

HELEN

How long hath he so lain upon his couch ?

ELECTRA

Even since he spilt the blood of her that bare him.

HELEN

Alas for him, for her !—what death she died ! 90

ELECTRA

Such is his plight that he is crushed of ills.

HELEN

In heaven's name, maiden, do to me a grace.

ELECTRA

So far as this my tendance suffereth me.

HELEN

Wilt go for me unto my sister's tomb ?

ELECTRA

My mother's ?—canst thou ask me ?—for what cause ?

HELEN

Shorn locks bear from me and drink-offerings.

ELECTRA

What sin, if *thou* draw nigh a dear one's tomb ?

HELEN

I shame to show me to the Argive folk.

ELECTRA

Late virtue in who basely fled her home !

HELEN

Thou speakest truly—speakest cruelly. 100

ELECTRA

What shame is thine of Mycenaean eyes ?

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΕΛΕΝΗ

δέδοικα πατέρας τῶν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ νεκρῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δεινὸν γάρ· Ἄργει γ' ἀναβοᾷ διὰ στόμα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

σύ νυν χάριν μοι τὸν φόβον λύσασα δός.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μητρὸς εἰσβλέψαι τάφον.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

αἰσχρὸν γε μέντοι προσπόλους φέρειν τάδε.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ' οὐχὶ θυγατρὸς Ἑρμιόνης πέμπεις δέμας;

ΕΛΕΝΗ

εἰς ὄχλον ἔρπειν παρθένοισιν οὐ καλόν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ μὴν τῖνοι γ' ἂν τῇ τεθνηκυῖα τροφάς.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

110

καλῶς ἔλεξας, πείθομαι τέ σοι, κόρη,
καὶ πέμψομέν 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 Κλυταιμνήστρας τάφον
μελίκρατ' ἄφες γάλακτος οἰνωπὸν τ' ἄχνην,
καὶ στᾶσ' ἐπ' ἄκρου χώματος λέξον τάδε·
Ἑλένη σ' ἀδελφὴ ταῖσδε δωρεῖται χοαῖς,
φόβῳ προσελθεῖν μνήμα σόν, ταρβοῦσά τε
Ἄργεῖον ὄχλον. εὐμενῇ δ' ἄνωγέ νιν
ἐμοί τε καὶ σοὶ καὶ πόσει γνώμην ἔχειν
120 τοῖν τ' ἀθλίῳιν τοῖνδ', οὓς ἀπώλεσεν θεός.
ἂ δ' εἰς ἀδελφὴν καιρὸς ἐκπονεῖν ἐμέ,

ORESTES

HELEN

I fear the sires of those at Ilium dead.

ELECTRA

Well mayst thou fear : all Argos cries on thee.

HELEN

Grant me this grace and break my chain of fear.

ELECTRA

I cannot look upon my mother's tomb.

HELEN

Yet shame it were should handmaids bear these gifts.

ELECTRA

Wherefore send not thy child Hermione ?

HELEN

To pass mid throngs beseemeth maidens not.

ELECTRA

She should pay nurture's debt unto the dead.

HELEN

Sooth hast thou said : I hearken to thee, maid. 110
Yea, I will send my daughter : thou say'st well.
Child, come, Hermione, without the doors :

Enter HERMIONE.

Take these drink-offerings, this mine hair, in hand,
And go thou, and round Clytemnestra's tomb
Shed mingled honey, milk, and foam of wine ;
And, standing on the grave-mound's height, say this :
" Thy sister Helen these drink-offerings gives,
Fearing to approach thy tomb, and dreading sore
The Argive rabble." Bid her bear a mood 120
Kindly to me, to thee, and to my lord,
And to these hapless twain, whom God hath stricken.
All gifts unto the dead which duty bids

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄπανθ' ὑπισχνοῦ νερτέρων δωρήματα.
 ἴθ', ὦ τέκνον μοι, σπεῦδε καὶ χοὰς τάφω
 δοῦσ' ὡς τάχιστα τῆς πάλιν μέμνησ' ὁδοῦ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

130 ὦ φύσις, ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ὡς μέγ' εἶ κακόν,
 σωτήριόν τε τοῖς καλῶς κεκτημένοις.
 εἶδετε παρ' ἄκρας ὡς ἀπέθρισεν τρίχας,
 σφύζουσα κάλλος; ἔστι δ' ἡ πάλαι γυνή.
 θεοί σε μισήσειαν, ὡς μ' ἀπώλεσας
 καὶ τόνδε πᾶσάν θ' Ἑλλάδ'. ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ,
 αἶδ' αὖ πάρειςι τοῖς ἐμοῖς θρηνήμασι
 φίλαι ξυνωδοί· τάχα μεταστήσουσ' ὕπνου
 τόνδ' ἠσυχάζοντ', ὄμμα δ' ἐκτήξουσ' ἐμὸν
 δακρύοις, ἀδελφὸν ὅταν ὀρῶ μεμνηότα.
 ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ἠσύχῳ ποδὶ
 χωρεῖτε, μὴ ψοφεῖτε, μηδ' ἔστω κτύπος.
 φιλία γὰρ ἡ σὴ πρευμενῆς μέν, ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ
 τόνδ' ἐξεγεῖραι συμφορὰ γενήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

140 σίγα, σίγα, λεπτὸν ἴχνος ἀρβύλης στρ.δ
 τίθετε, μὴ ψοφεῖτε, μὴ ἴστω κτύπος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀποπρὸ βᾶτ' ἐκεῖσ', ἀποπρὸ μοι κοίτας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰδού, πείθομαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ᾶ ᾶ, σύριγγος ὅπως πνοὰ λεπτοῦ
 δόνακος, ὦ φίλα, φώνει μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴδ', ἀτρεμαῖον ὡς ὑπόροφον φέρω
 βοάν.

ORESTES

I render to my sister, promise thou.
Go, daughter, haste : and, soon as thou hast paid
The tomb its offerings, with all speed return.

[*Exeunt* HELEN and HERMIONE.]

ELECTRA

Ah inbred Nature, cankering curse to men,
Yet blessing to thy virtuous heritors !
Mark, she but trimmed off at the tips her hair,
Sparing its beauty—still the Helen of old !
God's hate be on thee, who hast ruined me, 130
My brother, and all Hellas ! Woe is me !
Lo, hither come my friends who wail with me
My dirges ! Soon shall they uprouse from sleep
Him who hath peace now, and shall drown mine eyes
In tears, when I behold my brother rave.

Enter CHORUS.

Ah friends, dear friends, with soundless footfall tread ;
Make ye no murmur, neither be there jar.
Kindly is this your friendship, yet to me,
If ye but rouse him, misery shall befall.

CHORUS

Hush ye, O hush ye ! light be the tread (*Str.* 1) 140
Of the sandal ; nor murmur nor jar let there be.

ELECTRA

Afar step ye thitherward, far from his bed !

CHORUS

Lo, I hearken to thee.

ELECTRA

Ha, be thy voice as the light breath blown
Through the pipe of the reed, O friend, I pray !

CHORUS

Lo, softly in murmured undertone
I am sighing.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

150 ναὶ οὕτως,
 κάταγε, κάταγε, πρόσιθ' ἀτρέμας, ἀτρέμας ἴθι·
 λόγον ἀπόδος ἐφ' ὃ τι χρέος ἐμόλετέ ποτε.
 χρόνια γὰρ πεσῶν ὄδ' εὐνάζεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς ἔχει; λόγου μετάδος, ὦ φίλα. αὐτ. α
 τίνα τύχαν εἶπω; τίνα δὲ συμφοράν;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔτι μὲν ἐμπνέει, βραχὺ δ' ἀναστένει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί φῆς; ὦ τάλας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὄλεις, εἰ βλέφαρα κινήσεις ὕπνου
 γλυκυτάταν φερομένῳ χάριν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

160 μέλεος ἐχθίστων θεόθεν ἐργμάτων,
 τάλας. φεῦ μόχθων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄδικος ἄδικα τότ' ἄρ' ἔλακεν ἔλακεν, ἀπό-
 φονον ὅτ' ἐπὶ τρίποδι Θέμιδος ἄρ' ἐδίκασε
 φόνον ὁ Δοξίας ἐμᾶς ματέρος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀρᾶς; ἐν πέπλοισι κινεῖ δέμας. στρ. β

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σὺ γάρ νιν, ὦ τάλαινα,
 θωύξασ' ἔβαλες ἐξ ὕπνου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὔδειν μὲν οὖν ἔδοξα.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

Yea—

Lower—yet lower!—ah softly, ah softly draw nigh!
Make answer, ah why have ye hitherward wended,
ah why?—

150

So long is it since he hath stilled him in sleep to lie.

CHORUS

How is it with him? Dear friend, speak. (*Ant.* 1)
What tidings for me? What hath come to pass?

ELECTRA

Yet doth he breathe, but his moans wax weak.

CHORUS

How say'st thou?—alas!

ELECTRA

Thou wilt slay him, if once from his eyes thou
have driven

The sweetness of slumber that o'er them flows.

CHORUS

Alas for the deeds of the malice of heaven!

160

Alas for his throes!

ELECTRA

Wrongful was he who uttered that wrongful rede
When Loxias, throned on the tripod of Themis, decreed
The death of my mother, a foul unnatural deed!

CHORUS

See'st thou?—he stirreth beneath his cloak! (*Str.* 2)

ELECTRA

Woe unto thee! it was thy voice broke
The bands of his sleep by thy wild outcry.

CHORUS

Nay, but I deemed that he yet slept on.

139

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

170 οὐκ ἀφ' ἡμῶν, οὐκ ἀπ' οἴκων
πάλιν ἀνὰ πόδα σὸν εἰλίξεις
μεθεμένα κτύπου ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὑπνώσσει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

λέγεις εὔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

180 πόντια, πόντια νύξ,
ὑπνοδότειρα τῶν πολυπόνων βροτῶν,
ἐρεβόθεν ἴθι, μόλε μόλε κατάπτερος
τὸν Ἀγαμεμνόσιον ἐπὶ δόμον.
ὑπὸ γὰρ ἀλγέων ὑπὸ τε συμφορᾶς
διοιχόμεθ', οἰχόμεθα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

κτύπον ἠγάγετ'· οὐχὶ σίγα
σίγα φυλασσομένα
στόματος ἀνακέλαδον ἄπο λέχεος ἠ-
συχον ὕπνου χάριν παρέξεις, φίλα ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θρόει, τίς κακῶν τελευτὰ μένει ; ἀντ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θανεῖν· τί δ' ἄλλο ;
οὐδὲ γὰρ πόθον ἔχει βορᾶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

190 πρόδηλος ἄρ' ὁ πότημος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔξέθυσεν Φοῖβος ἡμᾶς
μέλεον ἀπόφονον αἷμα δούς
πατροφόνου ματρός.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

Wilt thou not hence, from the house to be gone? 170

Ah, turn thee again, and backward hie
With the sound of thy voice, with the jar of thy
tread!

CHORUS

Yet doth he slumber on.

ELECTRA

Sooth said.

CHORUS (*singing low*)

Queen, Majesty of Night,

To travail-burdened mortals giver of sleep,
Float up from Erebus! With wide wings' sweep
Come, come, on Agamemnon's mansion light!
Fardone with anguish, whelmed in woeful plight, 180
We are sinking, sinking deep.

ELECTRA

With jarring strain have ye broken in!
Ah hush! ah hush! refrain ye the din
Of chanting lips, and vouchsafe the grace
Of the peace of sleep to his resting-place.

CHORUS

Tell, what end waiteth his misery? (*Ant. 2*)

ELECTRA

Even to die,—what else should be?
For he knoweth not even craving for food.

CHORUS

Ah, then is his doom plain—all too plain! 190

ELECTRA

Phoebus for victims hath sealed us twain,
Who decreed that we spill a mother's blood
For a father's—a deed without a name!

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δίκη μέν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καλῶς δ' οὔ.

ἔκανες ἔθανες, ὦ

τεκομένα με μᾶτερ, ἀπὸ δ' ὤλεσας

πατέρα τέκνα τε τάδε σέθεν ἀφ' αἵματος·

200 ὀλόμεθ' ἰσονέκυες, ὀλόμεθα.

σύ τε γὰρ ἐν νεκροῖς, τό τ' ἐμὸν οἴχεται

βίου τὸ πλέον μέρος ἐν στοναχαῖσίν τε

γόοισι

δάκρυσί τ' ἐννυχίοις·

ἄγαμος, ἔπιδ', ἄτεκνος ἄτε βίοτον ἄ

μέλεος εἰς τὸν αἰὲν ἔλκω χρόνον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄρα παροῦσα, 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 ἠδύ μοι προσῆλθες ἐν δέοντί γε.

ὦ πότνια λήθη τῶν κακῶν, ὡς εἰ σοφὴ

καὶ τοῖσι δυστυχοῦσιν εὐκταία θεός.

πόθεν ποτ' ἦλθον δεῦρο; πῶς δ' ἀφικόμην;

ἀμνημονῶ γάρ, τῶν πρὶν ἀπολειφθεὶς φρενῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς μ' ἠψφρανας εἰς ὕπνου πεσών.

βούλει θίγω σου κἀνακουφίσω δέμας;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λαβοῦ λαβοῦ δῆτ', ἐκ δ' ὄμορξον ἀθλίου

220 στόματος ἀφρώδη πέλανον ὀμμάτων τ' ἐμῶν.

ORESTES

CHORUS

'Twas a deed of justice—

ELECTRA

A deed of shame !
 Thou slewest, and art dead,
 Mother that bare me—thrustedst to the tomb
 Our father and these children of thy womb.
 For corpse-like are we gone, our life is fled. 200
 Thou art in Hades : of my days hath sped
 The half amidst a doom
 Of lamentation and weary sighs,
 And of tears through the long nights poured
 from mine eyes.
 Spouseless,—behold me !—and childless aye,
 Am I wasting a desolate life away.

CHORUS

Look, maid Electra, who art at his side,
 Lest this thy brother unawares have died.
 So utter-nerveless, stirless, likes me not. 210

ORESTES (*waking*)

Dear spell of sleep, assuager of disease,
 How sweet thou cam'st to me in sorest need !
 O sovereign pain-oblivion, ah, how wise
 A Goddess !—by the woe-worn how invoked !
 Whence came I hitherward ?—how found this place ?
 For I forget : past thoughts are blotted out.

ELECTRA

Belovèd, how thy sleeping made me glad !
 Wouldst have me clasp thee, and uplift thy frame ?

ORESTES

Take, O yea, take me : from mine anguished lips
 Wipe thou the clotted foam, and from mine eyes. 220

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰδού· τὸ δούλευμ' ἠδύ, κοῦκ ἀναίνομαι
ἀδέλφ' ἀδελφῆ χειρὶ θεραπεύειν μέλη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὑπόβαλε πλευροῖς πλευρά, καὺχμῶδη κόμην
ἄφελε προσώπου· λεπτὰ γὰρ λεύσσω κόραις.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ βοστρύχων πινῶδες ἄθλιον καρα,
ὡς ἠγρίωσαι διὰ μακρᾶς ἀλουσίας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κλῖνόν μ' ἐς εὐνήν αὐθίς· ὅταν ἀνῆ νόσος
μανιάς, ἀναρθρός εἰμι κάσθενῶ μέλη.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἰδού. φίλον τοι τῷ νοσοῦντι δέμνιον,
ἀνιαρόν ὄν τὸ κτήμ', ἀναγκαῖον δ' ὅμως.

230

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὐθίς μ' ἐς ὀρθὸν στῆσον, ἀνακύκλει δέμας·
δυσάρεστον οἱ νοσοῦντες ἀπορίας ὑπο.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἦ καπὶ γαίας ἀρμόσαι πόδας θέλεις,
χρόνιον ἴχνος θεῖς; μεταβολὴ πάντων γλυκί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μάλιστα· δόξαν γὰρ τόδ' ὑγείας ἔχει.
κρεῖσσον δὲ τὸ δοκεῖν, κὰν ἀληθείας ἀπῆ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄκουε δὴ νῦν, ὦ κασίγνητον κἀρα,
ἕως ἐῶσί σ' εὖ φρονεῖν Ἐρινύες.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λέξεις τι καινόν ; κεῖ μὲν εὖ, χάριν φέρεις·
εἰ δ' εἰς βλάβην τιν', ἄλις ἔχω τοῦ δυστυχέω.

240

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Μενέλαος ἦκει, σοῦ κασίγνητος πατρός,
ἐν Ναυπλίᾳ δὲ σέλμαθ' ὤρμισται νεῶν.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

Lo!—sweet the service is: nor I think scorn
With sister's hand to tend a brother's limbs.

ORESTES

Put 'neath my side thy side: the matted hair
Brush from my brow, for dimly see mine eyes.

ELECTRA

Ah hapless head of tresses all befouled,
How wildly tossed art thou, unwashen long!

ORESTES

Lay me again down. When the frenzy-throes
Leave me, unstrung am I, strengthless of limb.

ELECTRA (*lays him down*)

Lo there. To sick ones welcome is the couch,
A place pain-haunted, and yet necessary.

230

ORESTES

Raise me once more upright: turn me about.
Hard are the sick to please, for helplessness.

ELECTRA

Wilt set thy feet upon the earth, and take
One step at last? Change is in all things sweet.

ORESTES

Yea, surely: this the semblance hath of health.
Better than nought is seeming, though unreal.

ELECTRA

Give ear unto me now, O brother mine,
While yet the Fiends unclouded leave thy brain.

ORESTES

News hast thou? Welcome this, so it be fair:
If to mine hurt, sorrow have I enow.

240

ELECTRA

Menelaus, thy sire's brother, home hath come:
In Nauplia his galleys anchored lie.

145

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς εἶπας; ἦκει φῶς ἐμοῖς καὶ σοῖς κακοῖς
ἀνὴρ ὁμογενῆς καὶ χάριτας ἔχων πατρός;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἦκει, τὸ πιστὸν τόδε λόγων ἐμῶν δέχου,
Ἐλένην ἀγόμενος Τρωικῶν ἐκ τειχέων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ μόνος ἐσώθη, μᾶλλον ἂν ζηλωτὸς ἦν
εἰ δ' ἄλοχον ἄγεται, κακὸν ἔχων ἦκει 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.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ μῆτερ, ἱκετεύω σε, μὴ πίσειέ μοι
τὰς αἵματωπούς καὶ δρακοντώδεις κόρας.
αὐταὶ γὰρ αὐταὶ πλησίον θρώσκουσί μου.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

μέν', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀτρέμα σοῖς ἐν δεμνίοις
ὀρᾶς γὰρ οὐδὲν ὦν δοκεῖς σάφ' εἶδέναι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

260

ὦ Φοῖβ', ἀποκτενοῦσί μ' αἰ κυνώπιδες
γοργῶπες ἐνέρων ἱερίαι, δειναὶ θεαί.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὔτοι μεθήσω· χεῖρα δ' ἐμπλέξασ' ἐμήν
σχήσω σε πηδᾶν δυστυχῆ πηδήματα.

ORESTES

ORESTES

How say'st? Comes he a light on thy woes risen
And mine, our kinsman, and our father's debtor?

ELECTRA

He comes. Receive for surety of my words
This—he brings Helen from the walls of Troy.

ORESTES

More blest he were had he escaped alone:
Sore bane he bringeth, if he bring his wife.

ELECTRA

As beacons of reproach and infamy
Through Hellas, were the daughters Tyndareus gat. 250

ORESTES (*with sudden fury*)

Be thou not like the vile ones!—this thou mayst—
Not in word only, but in inmost thought!

ELECTRA

Woe's me, my brother! Wildly rolls thine eye:
Swift changest thou to madness, sane but now!

ORESTES

Mother!—'beseech thee, hark not thou on me
Yon maidens gory-eyed and snaky-haired!
Lo there!—lo there! They are nigh; they leap on me!

ELECTRA

Stay, hapless one, unshuddering on thy couch:
Nought of thy vivid vision seest thou.

ORESTES

Ah, Phoebus!—they shall slay me—hound-faced
fiends, 260
Goddesses dread, hell's gorgon-priestesses!

ELECTRA

I will not let thee go! My clasping arms
Shall hold thee from thy leap of misery.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μέθες· μί' οὔσα τῶν ἐμῶν Ἐρινύων
μέσον μ' ὀχμάζεις, ὡς βάλης εἰς Τάρταρον.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἶ' γὰρ τάλαινα, τίν' ἐπικουρίαν λάβω,
ἐπεὶ τὸ θεῖον δυσμενὲς κεκτήμεθα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

270 δὸς τόξα μοι κερουλκά, δῶρα Λοξίου,
οἷς μ' εἶπ' Ἀπόλλων ἐξαμύνασθαι θεάς,
εἷ μ' ἐκφοβοῖεν μανιάσιν λυσσήμασιν.
βεβλήσεται τις θεῶν βροτησίᾳ χερσί,
εἰ μὴ ἔξαρμείψει χωρὶς ὀμμάτων ἐμῶν.
οὐκ εἰσακούετ'; οὐχ ὀράθ' ἐκηβόλων
τόξων πτερωτὰς γλυφίδας ἐξορμωμένας;
ᾄ ᾄ·

τί δῆτα μέλλετ'; ἐξακρίζετ' αἰθέρα
πτεροῖς· τὰ Φοίβου δ' αἰτιᾶσθε θέσφατα.
ἔα.

τί χρῆμ' ἀλύω, πνεῦμ' ἀνεῖς ἐκ πνευμόνων;
ποῖ ποῖ ποθ' ἠλάμεσθα δεμνίων ἄπο;
ἐκ κυμάτων γὰρ αὐθις αὐ γαλήν' ὀρώ.

280 σύγγονε, τί κλαίεις κρᾶτα θεῖσ' εἴσω πέπλων;
αἰσχύνομαί σοι μεταδιδούς πόνων ἐμῶν,
ὄχλον τε παρέχων παρθένῳ νόσοις ἐμαῖς.

μητρῶν ἐμῶν ἕκατι συντήκου κακῶν·
σὺ μὲν γὰρ ἐπένευσας τάδ', εἴργασται δ' ἐμοῖ
μητρῶν αἷμα· Λοξία δὲ μέμφομαι,
ὅστις μ' ἐπάρας ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον,
τοῖς μὲν λόγοις ἠΰφρανε, τοῖς δ' ἔργοισιν οὐ.
οἶμαι δὲ πατέρα τὸν ἐμόν, εἰ κατ' ὄμματα
290 ἐξιστόρουν νιν, μητέρ' εἰ κτεῖναί με χρή,
πολλὰς γενεῖου τοῦδ' ἂν ἐκτεῖναι λιτὰς

ORESTES

ORESTES

Unhand me!—of mine Haunting Fiends thou art—
Dost grip my waist to hurl me into hell!

ELECTRA

Ah hapless I! What succour can I win
Now we have gotten godhead to our foe?

ORESTES

Give me mine horn-tipped bow, even Loxias' gift,
Wherewith Apollo bade drive back the fiends,
If with their frenzy of madness they should fright
me.

270

A Goddess shall be smitten of mortal hand,
Except she vanish from before mine eyes.
Do ye not hear?—not see the feathered shafts
At point to leap from my far-smiting bow?

Ha! ha!—

Why tarry ye? Soar to the welkin's height
On wings! There rail on Phoebus' oracles!

Ah!

Why do I rave, hard-panting from my lungs?
Whither have I leapt, whither, from my couch?
For after storm once more a calm I see.

Sister, why weep'st thou, muffling o'er thine head? 280

Asbamed am I to make thee share my woes,
To afflict a maiden with my malady.

For mine affliction's sake break not, dear heart.

Thou didst consent thereto, yet spilt of me
My mother's blood was. Loxias I blame,

Who to a deed accursèd thrust me on,

And cheered me still with words, but not with
deeds.

I trow, my father, had I face to face

Questioned him if I must my mother slay,

Had earnestly besought me by this beard

290

μηποτε τεκούσης εἰς σφαγὰς ὄσαι ξίφος,
 εἰ μήτ' ἐκείνος ἀναλαβεῖν ἔμελλε φῶς,
 ἐγὼ θ' ὁ τλήμων τοιάδ' ἐκπλήσειν κακά,
 καὶ νῦν ἀνακάλυπτ', ὦ κασίγνητου κἀρα,
 ἐκ δακρύων τ' ἄπελθε, κεῖ μάλ' ἀθλίως
 ἔχομεν· ὅταν δὲ τᾶμ' ἀθυμήσαντ' ἴδης,
 σύ μου τὸ δεινὸν καὶ διαφθαρὲν φρενῶν
 ἴσχναινε παραμυθοῦ θ'. ὅταν δὲ σὺ στένης,
 300 ἡμᾶς παρόντας χρῆ σε νουθετεῖν φίλα·
 ἐπικουρίαὶ γὰρ αἶδε τοῖς φίλοις καλαί.
 ἀλλ', ὦ τάλαινα, βᾶσα δωμάτων ἔσω
 ὕπνω τ' ἄυπνον βλέφαρον ἐκταθεῖσα δός,
 σίτόν τ' ὄρεξαι λουτρά τ' ἐπιβαλοῦ χροῖ.
 εἰ γὰρ προλείψεις μ', ἢ προσεδρία νόσον
 κτήσει τιν', οἰχόμεσθα· σὲ γὰρ ἔχω μόνην
 ἐπῖκουρον, ἄλλων ὡς ὄρᾳς ἔρημος ὢν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐκ ἔστι· σὺν σοὶ καὶ θανεῖν αἰρήσομαι
 καὶ ζῆν· ἔχει γὰρ ταυτόν· ἦν σὺ κατθάνης,
 310 γυνὴ τί δράσω ; πῶς μόνη σωθήσομαι,
 ἀνάδελφος ἀπάτωρ ἄφιλος ; εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκεῖ,
 δρᾶν χρῆ τάδ'. ἀλλὰ κλῖνον εἰς εὐνήν δέμας,
 καὶ μὴ τὸ ταρβοῦν κἀκφοβοῦν σ' ἐκ δεμνίων
 ἄγαν ἀποδέχου, μένε δ' ἐπὶ στρωτοῦ λέχους,
 κἂν μὴ νοσηῖς γάρ, ἀλλὰ δοξάζης νοσεῖν
 κάματος βροτοῖσιν ἀπορία τε γίγνεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ,
 δρομάδες ὦ πτεροφόροι
 ποτνιαδες θεαί,
 320 ἀβάκχευτον αἰ θίασον ἐλάχετ' ἐν
 δῦκρυσι καὶ γόοις,

ORESTES

Never to thrust sword through my mother's heart,
 Since he should not win so to light again,
 And I, woe's me ! should drain this cup of ills !
 Even now unveil thee, sister well-beloved ;
 From tears refrain, how miserable soe'er
 We be ; and, when thou seest me despair,
 Mine horror and the fainting of mine heart
 Assuage and comfort ; and, when thou shalt moan,
 Must I be nigh thee, chiding lovingly ;
 For friendship's glory is such helpfulness. 300
 Now, sorrow-stricken, pass within the house :
 Lay thee down, give thy sleepless eyelids sleep :
 Put to thy lips food, and thy body bathe.
 For if thou fail me, or of tireless watch
 Fall sick, I am lost, in thee alone have I
 Mine help, of others, as thou seest, forlorn.

ELECTRA

Never ! With thee will I make choice of death
 Or life : it is all one ; for, if thou die,
 What shall a woman do ? how 'scape alone, 310
 Without friend, father, brother ? Yet, if thou
 Wilt have it so, I must. But lay thee down,
 And heed not terrors overmuch, that scare
 Thee from thy couch, but on thy bed abide.
 For, though thy sickness be but of the brain,
 This is affliction, this despair, to men. [Exit.

CHORUS

Terrible Ones of the on-rushing feet, (Str.)
 Of the pinions far-sailing,
 Through whose dance-revel, held where no Baccha-
 nals meet,
 Ringeth weeping and wailing,

μελάγχρωτες Εὐμενίδες, αἶτε τὸν
 ταναὸν αἰθέρ' ἀμπάλλεσθ', αἵματος
 τινύμεναι δίκαν, τινύμεναι φόνον,
 καθικετεύομαι καθικετεύομαι,
 τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος
 γόνον ἐάσατ' ἐκλαθέσθαι λύσσας
 μανιάδος φοιταλέου. φεῦ μόχθων,
 οἶων, ὦ τάλας, ὄρεχθεῖς ἔρρεις,
 τρίποδος ἄπο φάτιν, ἂν ὁ Φοῖβος
 ἔλακεν ἔλακε, δεξάμενος ἀνὰ δάπεδον
 ἵνα μεσόμφαλοι λέγονται μυχοί.

330

ὦ Ζεῦ,
 τίς ἔλεος, τίς ὄδ' ἀγὼν
 φόνιος ἔρχεται,
 θοάζων σε τὸν μέλεον, ᾧ δάκρυα
 δάκρυσι συμβάλλει
 πορεύων τις εἰς δόμον ἀλαστόρων
 ματέρος αἷμα σᾶς, ὃ σ' ἀναβακχεύει ;
 κατολοφύρομαι κατολοφύρομαι.
 ὁ μέγας ὄλβος οὐ μόνιμος ἐν βροτοῖς·
 ἀνὰ δὲ λαῖφος ὧς
 τις ἀκάτου θοᾶς τινάξας δαίμων
 κατέκλυσεν δεινῶν πόνων, ὡς πόντου
 λάβροις ὀλεθρίοισιν ἐν κύμασιν.
 τίνα γὰρ ἔτι πάρος οἶκον ἄλλον
 ἕτερον ἢ τὸν ἀπὸ θεογόνων γάμων
 τὸν ἀπὸ Ταντάλου σέβεσθαί με χρή ;

340

καὶ μὴν βασιλεὺς ὅδε δὴ στείχει,
 Μενέλαος ἄναξ, πολὺ δ' ἀβροσύνη
 δῆλος ὀρᾶσθαι
 τῶν Τανταλιδῶν ἐξ αἵματος ὦν.

350

ORESTES

- Swart-hued Eumenides, wide 'neath the dome 320
 Of the firmament soaring,
 Avenging, avenging blood-guilt,—lo, I come,
 Imploring, imploring !
 To the son of Atreides vouchsafe to forget
 His frenzy of raving.
 Ah for the task to the woe-stricken set !
 Ah ruinous craving
 To accomplish the hest of the Tripod, the word
 That of Phoebus was uttered
 At the navel of earth as thou stoodest, when stirred 330
 The dim crypt as it muttered !
- O Zeus, is there mercy ? What struggle of doom (*Ant.*)
 Cometh fraught with death-danger,
 Thrusting thee onward, the wretched, on whom
 The Erinnys-avenger
 Heapeth tears upon tears, and the blood hath she
 brought
 Of thy mother upon thee [traught !
 And thine house, that it driveth thee frenzy-dis-
 I bemoan thee, bemoan thee !
 Not among men doth fair fortune abide, 340
 But, as sail tempest-riven,
 Is it whelmed in affliction's death-ravening tide
 By the malice of heaven,—
 Nay, abides not, for where shall I find me a line
 Of more honour in story
 Than Tantalus' house, from espousals divine
 That traceth its glory ?
- But lo, hither cometh a prince, meseems—
 Menelaus the king ! for his vesture, that gleams 350
 In splendour exceeding,
 The blood of the Tantalid House reveals.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ χιλίοναυν στρατὸν ὀρμήσας
εἰς γῆν Ἀσίαν,
χαῖρ', εὐτυχία δ' αὐτὸς ὀμιλεῖς,
θεόθεν πράξας ἄπερ ἠΰχου.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ δῶμα, τῇ μὲν σ' ἠδεως προσδέρκομαι
Τροίαθεν ἔλθῶν, τῇ δ' ἰδὼν καταστένω·
κύκλω γὰρ εἰλιχθεῖσαν ἀθλίους κακοῖς
οὐπώποτ' ἄλλην μάλλον εἶδον ἔστíαν.
360 Ἄγαμέμνονος μὲν γὰρ τύχας ἠπιστάμην
καὶ θάνατον, οἷφ' πρὸς δάμαρτος ὄλετο,
Μαλέα προσίσχων πρῶραν· ἐκ δὲ κυμάτων
ὁ ναυτίλοισι μάντις ἐξήγγειλέ μοι
Νηρέως προφήτης Γλαῦκος ἀψευδῆς θεός,
ὅς μοι τόδ' εἶπεν ἐμφανῶς κατασταθείς·
Μενέλαε, κεῖται σὸς κασίγνητος θανών,
λουτροῖσιν ἀλόχου περιπεσὼν ἀρκυστάτοις.¹
δακρύων δ' ἔπλησεν ἐμέ τε καὶ ναύτας ἐμοῦς
πολλῶν. ἐπεὶ δὲ Ναυπλίας ψαύω χθονός,
370 ἤδη δάμαρτος ἐνθάδ' ἐξορμωμένης,
δοκῶν Ὀρέστην παῖδα τὸν Ἄγαμέμνονος
φίλαισι χερσὶ περιβαλεῖν καὶ μητέρα,
ὡς εὐτυχοῦντας, ἔκλυον ἀλιτύπων τινὸς
τῆς Τυνδαρείας θυγατρὸς ἀνόσιον φόνον.
καὶ νῦν ὅπου ἔστιν εἶπατ', ὦ νεάνιδες,
Ἄγαμέμνονος παῖς, ὃς τὰ δεῖν' ἔτλη κακά.
βρέφος γὰρ ἦν τότ' ἐν Κλυταιμνήστρας χερσίν·
ὅτ' ἐξέλειπον μέλαθρον εἰς Τροίαν ἰών,
ὥστ' οὐκ ἂν αὐτὸν γνωρίσαιμ' ἂν εἰσιδών.

¹ Nauck : for πανυστάτοις of MSS.

ORESTES

Hail, thou who didst sail with a thousand keels
 Unto Asia speeding!
 Hail to thee, dweller with fortune fair,
 Who hast gained of the Gods' grace all thy prayer!

Enter MENELAUS, with attendants.

MENELAUS

All hail, mine home! I see thee half with joy,
 From Troy returned, and half with grief behold:
 For never saw I other house ere this
 So compassed round with toils of woeful ills. 360
 For touching Agamemnon's fate I knew,
 And by what death at his wife's hands he died,
 When my prow touched at Malea: from the waves
 The shipman's seer, the unerring God, the son
 Of Nereus, Glaucus, made it known to me.
 For full in view he rose, and cried to me:
 "Thy brother, Menelaus, lieth dead,
 Fall'n in the bath, the death-snare of his wife!"—
 So filled me and my mariners with tears
 Full many. As I touched the Nauplian land, 370
 Even as my wife was hasting hitherward,
 And looked to clasp dead Agamemnon's son
 Orestes, and his mother, in loving arms,
 As prospering yet, I heard a fisher tell
 Of Tyndareus' daughter's murder heaven-accurst.
 Now tell to me, ye damsels, where is he,
 Agamemnon's son, who dared that awful deed?
 A babe was he in Clytemnestra's arms,
 When Troyward bound I went from mine halls
 forth:
 Wherefore I should not know him, if I saw.

380

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄδ' εἴμ' Ὀρέστης, Μενέλεως, ὃν ἱστορεῖς.
 ἐκὼν ἐγὼ σοι τὰμὰ σημανῶ κακά.
 τῶν σῶν δὲ γονάτων πρωτόλεια θιγγάνω
 ἰκέτης, ἀφύλλους στόματος ἐξάπτων λιτάς·
 σῶσόν μ' ἀφίξει δ' αὐτὸν εἰς καιρὸν κακῶν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, τί λεύσσω ; τίνα δέδορκα νερτέρων ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὖ γ' εἶπας · οὐ γὰρ ζῶ κακοῖς, φάος δ' ὀρώ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὡς ἠγρίωσαι πλόκαμον αὐχμηρόν, τάλας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐχ ἢ πρόσοψίς μ', ἀλλὰ τάργ' αἰκίζεται.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

δεινὸν δὲ λεύσσεις ὀμμάτων ξηραῖς κόραις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

390

τὸ σῶμα φρουῶν · τὸ δ' ὄνομ' οὐ λέλοιπέ με.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παρὰ λόγον μοι σὴ φανείσ' ἀμορφία.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄδ' εἰμὶ μητρὸς τῆς ταλαιπώρου φονεύς.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἤκουσα · φείδου δ' ὀλιγάκις λέγειν κακά.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φειδόμεθ' · ὁ δαίμων δ' εἰς με πλούσιος κακῶν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί χρῆμα πάσχεις ; τίς σ' ἀπόλλυσιν νόσος ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἢ σύνεσις, ὅτι σύννοϊδα δεῖν' εἰργασμένος.

ORESTES

ORESTES

I am Orestes! This is he thou seekest. 380
 Free-willed shall I declare to thee my woes :
 Yet suppliant first for prelude clasp thy knees,
 Linking to thee the leafless prayers of lips.¹
 Save me : thou comest in my sorest need.

MENELAUS

Gods!—what see I? What ghost do I behold?

ORESTES

A ghost indeed—through woes a death-in-life!

MENELAUS

How wild thy matted locks are, hapless one!

ORESTES

Stern fact, not outward seeming, tortures me.

MENELAUS

Fearfully glarest thou with stony eyes!

ORESTES

My life is gone : my name alone is left. 390

MENELAUS

Ah visage marred past all imagining!

ORESTES

A hapless mother's murderer am I.

MENELAUS

I heard :—its horrors spare : thy words be few

ORESTES

I spare. No horrors heaven spares to me!

MENELAUS

What aileth thee? What sickness ruineth thee?

ORESTES

Conscience!—to know I have wrought a fearful deed.

¹ Suppliants to a God brought leafy boughs, which they laid on his altar, linking themselves thereto by woollen fillets.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πῶς φῆς ; σοφόν τοι τὸ σαφές, οὐ τὸ μὴ σαφές.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λύπη μάλιστά γ' ἢ διαφθείρουσά με,

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

δεινὴ γὰρ ἢ θεός, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἰάσιμος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

400 μανίαι τε, μητρὸς αἵματος τιμωρίαι.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἦρξω δὲ λύσσης πότε; τίς ἡμέρα τὸτ' ἦν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐν ἧ τάλαιναν μητέρ' ἐξώγκουν τάφῳ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πότερα κατ' οἴκους ἢ προσεδρεύων πυρᾷ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

νυκτὸς φυλάσσων ὀστέων ἀναίρεσιν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

παρῆν τις ἄλλος, ὃς σὸν ὄρθενεν δέμας;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Πυλάδης, ὁ συνδρῶν αἶμα καὶ μητρὸς φόνον.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

φαντασμάτων δὲ τάδε νοσεῖς ποίων ὑπο;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔδοξ' ἰδεῖν τρεῖς νυκτὶ προσφερεῖς κόρας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ' ἄς ἔλεξας, ὀνομάσαι δ' οὐ βούλομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

410 σεμναὶ γάρ· εὐπαίδευτα δ' ἀποτρέπει λέγειν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

αὐταί σε βακχεύουσι συγγενεῖ φόνῳ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἴμοι διωγμῶν, οἷς ἐλαύνομαι τάλας.

ORESTES

MENELAUS

How mean'st thou? Clear is wisdom, not obscure.

ORESTES

Grief most of all is that which wasteth me,—

MENELAUS

Dread Goddess she : yet is there cure for her.

ORESTES

And Madness, vengeance for a mother's blood.

400

MENELAUS

And when began thy madness? What the day?

ORESTES

Whereon I heaped my wretched mother's grave.

MENELAUS

At home, or as thou watchedst by the pyre?

ORESTES

In that night-watch for gathering of the bones.

MENELAUS

Was any by, to raise thy body up?

ORESTES

Pylades, sharer in my mother's blood.

MENELAUS

And by what phantom-shapes thus art thou plagued?

ORESTES

Methought I saw three maidens like to night.

MENELAUS

I know of whom thou speak'st, but will not name.

ORESTES

They are Dread Ones : wise art thou to name them not.

410

MENELAUS

Do these by blood of kindred madden thee?

ORESTES

Woe for their haunting feet that dog me aye

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐ δεινὰ πάσχειν δεινὰ τοὺς εἰργασμένους.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄλλ' ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἀναφορὰ τῆς ξυμφορᾶς—

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

μὴ θάνατον εἶπης· τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ οὐ σοφόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Φοῖβος, κελεύσας μητρὸς ἐκπρᾶξαι 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;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἕκτον τόδ' ἡμαρ· ἔτι πυρὰ θερμὴ τάφου.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὡς ταχὺ μετῆλθόν σ' αἶμα μητέρος θεαί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ σοφός, ἀληθῆς δ' εἰς φίλους ἔφυν φίλος.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πατρὸς δὲ δῆ τί σ' ὠφελεί τιμωρία;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔπω· τὸ μέλλον δ' ἴσον ἀπραξία λέγω.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τὰ πρὸς πόλιν δὲ πῶς ἔχεις δράσας τάδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μισούμεθ' οὕτως ὅστε μὴ προσεννέπειν.

ORESTES

MENELAUS

For dread deeds sufferings dread—not strange is this.

ORESTES

Yet can I cast my burden of affliction—

MENELAUS

Nay, speak not thou of death!—not wise were this.

ORESTES

On Phoebus, who bade spill my mother's blood.

MENELAUS

Sore lack was his of justice and of right!

ORESTES

The God's thralls are we—whatso'er gods be.

MENELAUS

And doth not Loxias shield thee in thine ills?

ORESTES

He tarrieth long—such is the Gods' wont still.

420

MENELAUS

How long since passed thy mother's breath away.

ORESTES

The sixth day this: the death-pyre yet is warm.

MENELAUS

"Gods tarry long!"—not long they tarried, these.

ORESTES

Not subtle am I, but loyal friend to friend.

MENELAUS

Thy sire's avenging—doth it aught avail thee?

ORESTES

Naught yet:—delay I count as deedlessness.

MENELAUS

And Argos—how on thy deed looketh she?

ORESTES

I am hated so, that none will speak to me.

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ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐδ' ἤγνισαι σὸν αἶμα κατὰ νόμον χεροῖν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

430

ἐκκλήομαι γὰρ δωμάτων ὄπη μόλω.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τίνες πολιτῶν ἐξαμιλλῶνταί σε γῆς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Οἶαξ, τὸ Τροίας μῖσος ἀναφέρων πατρί.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ξυνήκα· Παλαμήδους σε τιμωρεῖ φόνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ γ' οὐ μετῆν μοι· διὰ τριῶν δ' ἀπόλλυμαι.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τίς δ' ἄλλος; ἢ που τῶν ἀπ' Αἰγίσθου φίλων;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔτοί μ' ὑβρίζουσ', ὧν πόλις τανῦν κλύει.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

'Αγαμέμνονος δὲ σκῆπτρ' ἐὰ σ' ἔχειν πόλις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς, οἵτινες ζῆν οὐκ ἐῶσ' ἡμᾶς ἔτι;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί δρῶντες ὅ τι καὶ σαφὲς ἔχεις εἰπεῖν ἐμοί;

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 ὑπερβαλὼν ὄρους;

ORESTES

MENELAUS

Cleansed are thine hands, as bids the law, from blood?

ORESTES

Nay: barred are all doors whereto I draw nigh.¹ 430

MENELAUS

Who of the citizens would banish thee?

ORESTES

Oiax, for Troy-born hate against my sire.

MENELAUS

Ay so—to avenge Palamedes' blood on thee.

ORESTES

Not shed by me. I am trebly overmatched.

MENELAUS

What other foe? Some of Aegisthus' friends?

ORESTES

Yea, these insult me: Argos hears them now.

MENELAUS

Doth Argos let thee keep thy father's sceptre?

ORESTES

How should they, who no more would let me live?

MENELAUS

What do they which thou canst for certain tell?

ORESTES

This day shall they pass sentence on my fate. 440

MENELAUS

For exile, death, or other doom than death?

ORESTES

To die by stoning at the people's hands.

MENELAUS

Why flee not o'er the confines of the land?

¹ Purification must be performed in some unpolluted house

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κύκλω γὰρ εἰλισσόμεθα παγχάλκοις ὄπλοις.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἰδίᾳ πρὸς ἐχθρῶν ἢ πρὸς Ἀργείας χερός;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πάντων πρὸς ἀστῶν, ὡς θάνω· βραχὺς λόγος.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ μέλεος, ἦκεις ξυμφορᾶς εἰς τοῦσχατον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

450 εἰς σ' ἐλπίς ἢ μὴ καταφυγὰς ἔχει κακῶν.
ἀλλ' ἀθλίως πράσσουσιν εὐτυχῆς μολῶν
μετάδος φίλοισι σοῖσι σῆς εὐπραξίας,
καὶ μὴ μόνος τὸ χρηστὸν ἀπολαβὼν ἔχε,
ἀλλ' ἀντιλάζου καὶ πόνων ἐν τῷ μέρει,
χάριτας πατρῶας ἐκτίνων ἐς οὓς σε δεῖ.
ὄνομα γάρ, ἔργον δ' οὐκ ἔχουσιν οἱ φίλοι
οἱ μὴ πὶ ταῖσι συμφοραῖς ὄντες φίλοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν γέροντι δεῦρ' ἀμιλλᾶται ποδὶ
ὁ Σπαρτιάτης Τυνδάρεως, μελάμπεπλος
κουρᾶ τε θυγατρὸς πενθίμῳ κεκαρμένος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

460 ἀπωλόμην, Μενέλαε· Τυνδάρεως ὄδε
στείχει πρὸς ἡμᾶς, οὗ μάλιστ' αἰδώς μ' ἔχει
εἰς ὄμματ' ἐλθεῖν τοῖσιν ἐξειργασμένοις.
καὶ γάρ μ' ἔθρεψε μικρὸν ὄντα, πολλὰ δὲ
φιλήματ' ἐξέπλησε, τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος
παῖδ' ἀγκάλαισι περιφέρων, Λήδα θ' ἄμα,
τιμῶντέ μ' οὐδὲν ἤσσον ἢ Διοσκόρω·
οἷς, ὦ τάλαινα καρδία ψυχὴ τ' ἐμή,

ORESTES

ORESTES

I am in the toils, ringed round by brazen arms.

MENELAUS

Of private foes, or of all Argos' power?

ORESTES

Of all the folk, that I may die;—soon said.

MENELAUS

Hapless! Misfortune's deepest depth thou hast
reached!

ORESTES

In thee mine hope hath refuge yet from ills.
Thou com'st to folk in misery, prosperous thou:
Give thy friends share of thy prosperity, 450
And not for self keep back thine happiness,
But bear a part in suffering in thy turn:
Requite, to whom thou ow'st, my father's boon.
The name of friendship have they, not the truth,
The friends that in misfortune are not friends.

CHORUS

Lo, hither straineth on with aged feet
The Spartan Tyndareus, in vesture black,
His hair, in mourning for his daughter, shorn.

ORESTES

Undone, Menelaus!—hither Tyndareus
Draws nigh me, whose eye most of all I shun 460
To meet, by reason of the deed I wrought.
He fostered me a babe, and many a kiss
Lavished upon me, dandling in his arms
Agamemnon's son, with Leda at his side,
No less than those Twin Brethren honouring me.
To them—O wretched heart and soul of mine!—

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀπέδωκ' ἀμοιβὰς οὐ καλὰς. τίνα σκοτον
 λάβω προσώπῳ; ποῖον ἐπίπροσθεν νέφος
 θῶμαι, γέροντος ὀμμάτων φεύγων κόρας;

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

470 ποῦ ποῦ θυγατρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ἴδω πόσιν,
 Μενέλαον; ἐπὶ γὰρ τῷ Κλυταιμνήστρας τάφῳ
 χοὰς χεόμενος ἔκλυον ὡς εἰς Ναυπλίαν
 ἦκοι σὺν ἀλόχῳ πολυετῆς σεσωσμένος.
 ἄγετέ με· πρὸς γὰρ δεξιὰν αὐτοῦ θέλω
 σταῖς ἀσπίσασθαι, χρόνιος εἰσιδὼν φίλον.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, χαῖρε, Ζηνὸς ὀμόλεκτρον κᾶρα.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ, Μενέλεως, κῆδευμ' ἐμόν.
 ἔα· τὸ μέλλον ὡς κακὸν τὸ μὴ εἰδέναί.
 ὁ μητροφόντης ὄδε πρὸ δωμάτων δράκων
 480 στίλβει νοσώδεις ἀστραπάς, στύγημ' ἐμόν.
 Μενέλαε, προσφθέγγει νιν ἀνόσιον κᾶρα;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί γαρ; φίλου μοι πατρός ἐστίν ἔκγονος.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

κείνου γὰρ ὄδε πέφυκε, τοιοῦτος γεγώς;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πέφυκεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχεῖ, τιμητέος.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

βεβαρβάρωσαι, χρόνιος ὦν ἐν βαρβάρους.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Ἑλληνικόν τοι τὸν ὀμόθεν τιμᾶν αἰεί.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

καὶ τῶν νόμων γε μὴ πρότερον εἶναι θέλειν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πᾶν τοῦξ ἀνάγκης δοῦλόν ἐστ' ἐν τοῖς σοφοῖς.

ORESTES

I have rendered foul return ! What veil of gloom
Can I take for my face ?—before me spread
What cloud, to shun the old man's searching eye ?

Enter TYNDAREUS.

TYNDAREUS

Where, where shall I behold my daughter's lord
Menelaus ? Upon Clytemnestra's tomb
Pouring libations, heard I he had won
After long years to Nauplia with his wife.
Lead me : at his right hand I fain would stand,
And greet a loved one after long space seen.

470

MENELAUS

Hail, ancient, sharer in the couch of Zeus !

TYNDAREUS

Hail thou too, Menelaus, kinsman mine !—
Ha, what a curse is blindness to the future !
You serpent matricide before the halls
Gleams venom-lightnings, he whom I abhor !
Menelaus, speakest thou to the accurst ?

480

MENELAUS

Why not ? He is son to one beloved of me.

TYNDAREUS

That hero's son he !—such a wretch as he !

MENELAUS

His son. If hapless, worthy honour still.

TYNDAREUS

Thou hast grown barbarian, midst barbarians long.

MENELAUS

Greek is it still to honour kindred blood.

TYNDAREUS

Yea, and to wish not to o'erride the laws.

MENELAUS

Fate's victims are Fate's thralls in wise men's eyes.

167

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

κέκτησόν νυν σὺ τοῦτ', ἐγὼ δ' οὐ κτήσομαι.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

490 ὀργὴ γὰρ ἄμα σου καὶ τὸ γῆρας οὐ σοφόν.

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

πρὸς τόνδ' ἀγὼν ἂν τί σοφίας εἶη πέρι;
 εἰ τὰ καλὰ πᾶσι φανερὰ καὶ τὰ μὴ καλὰ,
 τούτου τίς ἀνδρῶν ἐγένετ' ἀσυνετώτερος,
 ὅστις τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐκ ἐσκέψατο,
 οὐδ' ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τὸν κοινὸν Ἑλλήνων νόμον;
 ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐξέπνευσεν Ἀγαμέμνων βίον
 πληγεῖς θυγατρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς ὑπὲρ κάρα,
 αἰσχιστον ἔργον, οὐ γὰρ αἰνέσω ποτέ,
 500 χρῆν αὐτὸν ἐπιθεῖναι μὲν αἵματος δίκην
 ὀσίαν διώκοντ', ἐκβαλεῖν τε δωμάτων
 μητέρα· τὸ σῶφρόν τ' ἔλαβεν ἀντὶ συμφορᾶς,
 καὶ τοῦ νόμου τ' ἂν εἶχετ' εὐσεβῆς τ' ἂν ἦν.
 νῦν δ' εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν δαίμον' ἦλθε μητέρι·
 κακὴν γὰρ αὐτὴν ἐνδίκως ἠγοῦμενος,
 αὐτὸς κακίων γέγονε μητέρα κτανών.
 ἐρήσομαι δέ, Μενέλεως, τοσόunde σε·
 εἰ τόνδ' ἀποκτείνειεν ὁμόλεκτρος γυνή,
 χῶ τοῦδε παῖς αὖ μητέρ' ἀνταποκτενεῖ,
 510 κᾶπειθ' ὁ κείνου γενόμενος φόνω φόνου
 λύσει, πέρας δὴ ποῖ κακῶν προβήσεται;
 καλῶς ἔθεντο ταῦτα πατέρες οἱ πάλαι·
 εἰς ὀμμάτων μὲν ὄψιν οὐκ εἶων περᾶν,
 οὐδ' εἰς ἀπάντημ', ὅστις αἶμ' ἔχων κυρεῖ,
 φυγαῖσι δ' ὀσιῶν, ἀνταποκτείνειν δὲ μή.
 αἰεὶ γὰρ εἰς ἔμελλ' ἐνέξεσθαι φόνω,
 τὸ λοίσθιον μίασμα λαμβάνων χεροῖν.
 ἐγὼ δὲ μισῶ μὲν γυναῖκας ἀνοσίους,

ORESTES

TYNDAREUS

Hold *thou* by that: not I will hold thereby.

MENELAUS

Thy rage with grey hairs joined makes not for wisdom. 490

TYNDAREUS

Debate of wisdom—what is that to *him*?
If right and wrong be manifest to all,
What man was ever more unwise than this,
He who on justice never turned an eye,
Nor to the common law of Greeks appealed?
When Agamemnon yielded up the ghost,
His head in sunder by my daughter cleft,—
A deed most foul, which ne'er will I commend,—
He ought to have impleaded her for blood 500
In lawful vengeance, and cast forth the home,
So from disaster had won wisdom's fame,
Had held by law, and by the fear of God.
But now, he but partakes his mother's curse;
For, rightfully accounting her as vile,
Viler himself is made by matricide.

But this, Menelaus, will I ask of thee:—
If of his wedded wife this man were slain,
And his son in revenge his mother slay,
And his son blood with blood requite thereafter, 510
Where shall the limit of the horror lie?
Well did our ancient fathers thus ordain:
Whoso was stained with blood, they suffered not
To come before their eyes, to cross their path—
"By exile justify, not blood for blood."
Else one had aye been liable to death
Still taking the last blood-guilt on his hands.

For me, sooth, wicked women I abhor,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 520 πρώτην δὲ θυγατέρ', ἣ πόσιν κατέκτανεν
 Ἑλένην τε τὴν σὴν ἄλοχον οὔποτ' αἰνέσω
 οὐδ' ἂν προσείποιμ'. οὐδὲ σὲ ζηλῶ, κακῆς
 γυναικὸς ἔλθόνθ' εἵνεκ' εἰς Τροίας πέδον.
 ἄμυνῶ δ' ὅσονπερ δυνατός εἰμι τῷ νόμῳ,
 τὸ θηριῶδες τοῦτο καὶ μαιφόνου
 παύων, ὃ καὶ γῆν καὶ πόλεις ὄλλυσ' αἰεί.
 ἐπεὶ τίν' εἶχες, ὦ τάλας, ψυχὴν τότε
 ὅτ' ἐξέβαλλε μαστὸν ἰκετεύουσά σε
 μήτηρ; ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἰδὼν τάκεϊ κακα,
 δακρύοις γέροντ' ὀφθαλμὸν ἐκθήκω τάλας.
 530 ἐν δ' οὖν λόγοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὁμορροθεῖ
 μισεῖ 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
 μὴ πράσσω' ἐναντί', ὠφελεῖν τοῦτον θέλων,
 ἕα δ' ὑπ' ἀστῶν καταφονευθῆναι πέτροις,
 ἢ μὴ' πίβαινε Σπαρτιάτιδος χθονός.
 θυγάτηρ δ' ἐμὴ θανοῦσ' ἔπραξεν ἔνδικα
 ἀλλ' οὐχὶ πρὸς τοῦδ' εἰκὸς ἦν αὐτὴν θανεῖν.
 540 ἐγὼ δὲ τᾶλλα μακάριος πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ,
 πλὴν εἰς θυγατέρας· τοῦτο δ' οὐκ εὐδαιμονοῦμαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ζηλωτὸς ὅστις ἠτύχησεν εἰς τέκνα
 καὶ μὴ' πισήμους συμφορὰς ἐκθήσατο.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 548 ὦ γέρον, ἐγὼ τοι πρὸς σὲ δειμαίνω λέγειν,
 ὅπου γε μέλλω σὴν τι λυπήσειν φρένα.
 549 ἀπελθέτω δὴ τοῖς λόγοισιν ἐκποδῶν
 550 τὸ γῆρας ἡμῖν τὸ σόν, ὃ μ' ἐκπλήσσει λόγῳ
 καὶ καθ' ὁδὸν εἶμι· νῦν δὲ σὴν ταρβῶ τριχῶ

ORESTES

My daughter most of all, who slew her lord.
 Helen thy wife shall have no praise of mine : 520
 I will not speak to her ; nor envy thee
 Thy journeying unto Troy for such vile wife.
 But, all I can, will I stand up for Law,
 To quell this brute in man, this murder-thirst,
 Which evermore destroyeth lands and towns.

What heart hadst thou, O miscreant, in that hour
 When suppliant unto thee thy mother bared
 Her breast? I, who saw not the horrors there,
 Yet down, ah me ! mine aged eyes with tears.
 One thing, in any wise, attests my words — 530
 Thou art loathed of Gods, punished for matricide
 By terrors and mad ravings. Where is need
 For other witness of things plain to see?
 Be warned then, Menelaus : strive not thou
 Against the Gods, being fain to help this man.
 Leave him to die by stoning of the folk,
 Or never set thou foot on Spartan ground.
 Dying, my daughter paid but justice' debt ;
 Yet it beseeemed not *him* to deal her death.
 I in all else have been a happy man 540
 Save in my daughters : herein most ill-starred.

CHORUS

Well fares he who is in his children blest,
 And hath not won misfortune world-renowned.

ORESTES

Ancient, I fear to make defence to thee,
 Wherein I cannot but offend thy soul.
 Let thine old age, which overawes my tongue,
 Untrammelled leave the path of my defence,
 And I will on, who fear thy grey hairs now.

- 546 ἐγὼ δ', ἀνόσιός εἰμι μητέρα κτανῶν,
 547 ὅσιος δέ γ' ἕτερον ὄνομα, τιμωρῶν πατρί.
 551 τί χρῆν με δρᾶσαι; δύο γὰρ ἀντίθεσ λόγῳ·
 πατήρ μὲν ἐφύτευσέν με, σὴ δ' ἔτικτε παῖς,
 τὸ σπέρμ' ἄρουρα παραλαβοῦσ' ἄλλου πάρα·
 ἄνευ δὲ πατρὸς τέκνον οὐκ εἴη ποτ' ἄν.
 ἐλογισάμην οὖν τῷ γένους ἀρχηγέτη
 μᾶλλον μ' ἀμύναι τῆς ὑποστάσεως τροφάς·
 ἢ σὴ δὲ θυγάτηρ, μητέρ' αἰδοῦμαι λέγειν,
 ἰδίοισιν ὑμεναίοισι κούχῃ σῶφροσιν
 εἰς ἀνδρὸς ἦει λέκτρ'· ἐμαυτόν, ἦν λέγω
 560 κακῶς ἐκείνην, ἐξερῶ· λέξω δ' ὅμως.
 Αἰγισθος ἦν ὁ κρυπτὸς ἐν δόμοις πόσις.
 τοῦτον κατέκτειν', ἐπὶ δ' ἔθυσα μητέρα,
 ἀνόσια μὲν δρῶν, ἀλλὰ τιμωρῶν πατρί.
 ἐφ' οἷς δ' ἀπειλεῖς ὡς πετρωθῆναί με χρή,
 ἄκουσον ὡς ἅπασαν Ἑλλάδ' ὠφελῶ.
 εἰ γὰρ γυναῖκες εἰς τόδ' ἤξουσιν θράσους,
 ἄνδρας φονεύειν, καταφυγὰς ποιούμεναι
 εἰς τέκνα, μαστοῖς τὸν ἔλεον θηρώμεναι,
 παρ' οὐδὲν αὐταῖς ἦν ἄν ὀλλύναι πόσεις
 570 ἐπὶ κλημ' ἐχούσαις ὅ τι τύχοι. δράσας δ' ἐγὼ
 δεῖν', ὡς σὺ κομπεῖς, τόνδ' ἔπαυσα τὸν νόμον.
 μισῶν δὲ μητέρ' ἐνδίκως ἀπώλεσα,
 ἣτις μεθ' ὅπλων ἀνδρ' ἀπόντ' ἐκ δωμάτων
 πάσης ὑπὲρ γῆς Ἑλλάδος στρατηλάτην
 προὔδωκε κούκ ἔσωσ' ἀκήρατον λέχος·
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἀμαρτοῦσ' ἦσθετ', οὐχ αὐτῇ δίκην
 ἐπέθηκεν, ἀλλ' ὡς μὴ δίκην δοίῃ πόσει,
 ἐζημίωσε πατέρα καπέκτειν' ἐμόν.
 πρὸς θεῶν, ἐν οὐ καλῶ μὲν ἐμνήσθην θεῶν,
 580 φόνον δικάζων, εἰ δὲ δὴ τὰ μητέρος

ORESTES

I know me guilt-stained with a mother's death,
 Yet pure herein, that I avenged my sire. 550
 What ought I to have done? Let plea face plea:
 My sire begat, thy child but gave me birth—
 The field that from the sower received the seed;
 Without the father, might no offspring be.
 I reasoned then—better defend my source
 Of life, than her that did but foster me.
 Thy daughter—I take shame to call her mother—
 In lawless and in wanton dalliance
 Sought to a lover;—mine own shame I speak
 In telling hers, yet will I utter it:— 560
 Aegisthus was that secret paramour.
 I slew him and my mother on one altar—
 Sinning, yet taking vengeance for my sire.
 Hear how, in that for which thou threatenest
 doom
 Of stoning, I to all Greece rendered service:
 If wives to this bold recklessness shall come,
 To slay their husbands, and find refuge then
 With sons, entrapping pity with bared breasts,
 Then shall they count it nought to slay their
 lords,
 On whatso plea may chance. By deeds of horror— 570
 As thy large utterance is—I abolished Law:
 No, but in lawful hate I slew my mother,
 Who, when her lord was warring far from home,
 Chief of our armies, for all Hellas' sake,
 Betrayed him, kept his couch not undefiled.
 When her sin found her out, she punished not
 Herself, but, lest her lord should punish her,
 Wreaked on my father chastisement, and slew.
 By Heaven!—ill time, I grant, to call on Heaven,
 Defending murder,—had I justified 580

σιγῶν ἐπήνουν, τί μ' ἂν ἔδρασ' ὁ κατθανών;
 οὐκ ἂν με μισῶν ἀνεχόρευ' Ἐρινύσιν;
 ἢ μητρὶ μὲν πάρεισι σύμμαχοι θεαί,
 τῷ δ' οὐ πάρεισι μᾶλλον ἡδίκημένῳ;
 σύ τοι φυτεύσας θυγατέρ', ὦ γέρον, κακὴν
 ἀπώλεσάς με· διὰ τὸ γὰρ κείνης θράσος
 πατρὸς στερηθείς, ἐγενόμην μητροκτόνος.
 ὄρᾳς; Ὀδυσσέως ἄλοχον οὐ κατέκτανε
 590 Τηλέμαχος· οὐ γὰρ ἐπεγάμει πόσει πόσιν,
 μένει δ' ἐν οἴκοις ὑγιὲς εὐνατήριον.
 ὄρᾳς; Ἀπόλλων ὃς μεσομφάλους ἔδρας
 ναίων βροτοῖσι στόμα νέμει σαφέστατον,
 ὧ πειθόμεσθα πάνθ' ὅσ' ἂν κείνος λέγῃ,
 τούτῳ πιθόμενος τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἔκτανον.
 ἐκείνον ἠγείσθ' ἀνόσιον καὶ κτείνετε·
 ἐκείνος ἦμαρτ', οὐκ ἐγώ· τί χρῆν με δρᾶν;
 ἢ οὐκ ἀξιόχρεως ὁ θεὸς ἀναφέροντί μοι
 μίασμα λῦσαι; ποῖ τις οὖν ἔτ' ἂν φύγοι,
 εἰ μὴ ὁ κελεύσας ῥύσεται με μὴ θανεῖν;
 600 ἀλλ' ὡς μὲν οὐκ εὖ μὴ λέγ' εἴργασται τάδε
 ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς δράσασιν οὐκ εὐδαιμόνως.
 γάμοι δ' ὅσοις μὲν εὖ καθεστᾶσιν βροτῶν,
 μακάριος αἰών· οἷς δὲ μὴ πίπτουσιν εὖ,
 τά τ' ἔνδον εἰσὶ τά τε θύραζε δυστυχεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰεὶ γυναῖκες ἐμποδῶν ταῖς συμφοραῖς
 ἔφυσαν ἀνδρῶν πρὸς τὸ δυστυχέστερον.

ΤΤΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

ἐπεὶ θρασύνει κοῦχ ὑποστέλλει λόγῳ,
 οὕτω δ' ἀμείβει μ' ὥστε μ' ἀλγῆσαι φρένα,
 μᾶλλον μ' ἀνάψεις ἐπὶ σὸν ἐξελθεῖν φόνον·
 610 καλὸν πάρεργον δ' αὐτὸ θήσομαι πόνων

ORESTES

Her deeds by silence, what had the dead done?
 Had not his hate's Erinyes haunted me?
 Or on the mother's side fight Goddesses,
 And none on his who suffered deeper wrong?
 Thou, ancient, in begetting a vile daughter,
 Didst ruin me; for, through her recklessness
 Unfathered, I became a matricide.
 Mark this—Odysseus' wife Telemachus
 Slew not; she took no spouse while lived her
 lord,

But pure her couch abideth in her halls. 590

Mark this—Apollo at earth's navel-throne
 Gives most true revelation unto men,
 Whom we obey in whatsoe'er he saith.
 Obeying him, my mother did I slay.
 Account ye *him* unholy: yea, slay him!
 He sinned, not I. What ought I to have done?
 Or hath the God no power to absolve the guilt
 I lay on him? Whither should one flee then,
 If he which bade me shall not save from death?
 Nay, say not thou that this was not well done,
 Albeit untowardly for me, the doer. 600
 Happy the life of men whose marriages
 Are blest; but they for whom they ill betide,
 At home, abroad, are they unfortunate.

CHORUS

Women were born to mar the lives of men
 Ever, unto their surer overthrow.

TYNDAREUS

Since thou art unabashed, and round of speech,
 Making such answer as to vex my soul,
 Thou shalt inflame me more to urge thy death—
 A fair addition to the purposed work 610

ὦν εἶνεκ' ἦλθον θυγατρὶ κοσμήσων τάφου.
 μολῶν γὰρ εἰς ἔκκλητον Ἀργείων ὄχλον
 ἐκούσαν οὐκ ἄκουσαν ἐπισείσω πόλιν
 σοὶ σῆ τ' ἀδελφῆ, λεύσιμον δοῦναι δίκην.
 μᾶλλον δ' ἐκείνη σοῦ θανεῖν ἐπαξία,
 ἢ τῆ τεκούσῃ σ' ἠγρίωσ', ἐς οὓς αἰὲ
 πέμπουσα μύθους ἐπὶ τὸ δυσμενέστερον,
 ὀνειράτ' ἀγγέλλουσα τὰ γαμέμνονος,
 καὶ τοῦθ' ὁ μισήσειαν Αἰγίσθου λέχος
 οἱ νέρτεροι θεοί, καὶ γὰρ ἐνθάδ' ἦν πικρόν,
 ἕως ὑφήψε δῶμ' ἀνηφαίστω πυρί.
 Μενέλαε, σοὶ δὲ τάδε λέγω δράσω τε πρὸς·
 εἰ τοῦμὸν ἔχθος ἐναριθμεῖ κῆδός τ' ἐμόν,
 μὴ τῶδ' ἀμύνειν φόνον ἐναντίον θεοῖς·
 ἕα δ' ὑπ' ἀστῶν καταφουευθῆναι πέτροις,
 ἢ μὴ πῖβαινε Σπαρτιάτιδος χθονός.
 τοσαῦτ' ἀκούσας ἴσθι, μηδὲ δυσσεβεῖς
 ἔλη παρώσας εὐσεβεστέρους φίλους·
 ἡμᾶς δ' ἀπ' οἴκων ἄγετε τῶνδε, πρόσπολοι.

620

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

στεῖχ', ὡς ἀθορύβως οὐπιῶν ἡμῖν λόγος
 πρὸς τόνδ' ἵκηται, γῆρας ἀποφυγῶν τὸ σόν.
 Μενέλαε, ποῖ σὸν πόδ' ἐπὶ συννοία κυκλεῖς,
 διπλῆς μερίμνης διπτύχους ἰὼν ὁδοῦς;

630

MENEΛΑΟΣ

ἕασον· ἐν ἐμαντῷ τι συννοούμενος,
 ὅποι τράπωμαι τῆς τύχης ἀμηχανῶ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μή νυν πέραινε τὴν δόκησιν, ἀλλ' ἐμοὺς
 λόγους ἀκούσας πρόσθε, βουλευού τότε.

ORESTES

For which I came, to deck my daughter's tomb!
 To Argos' council-gathering will I go
 And thrust the folk on—little thrusting need they!—
 That with thy sister thou be stoned to death:—
 Yea, worthier of death than thou is she,
 Who egged thee on against thy mother, aye
 Sending to thine ear venomous messages,
 Telling of dreams from Agamemnon sent,
 Telling how Gods of the Underworld abhorred
 Aegisthus' couch,—hateful enough on earth,—
 Till the house blazed with fire unnatural. 620
 Menelaus, this I warn thee—yea, will do:
 If thou regard mine hate, our tie of kin,
 Shield not this man from death in heaven's despite.
 Leave him to die by stoning of the folk,
 Or never set thou foot in Spartan land!
 Thou hast heard—remember! Choose the impious
 not,
 To thrust aside the friends that reverence God.
 My servants, lead me from this dwelling hence.

[Exit.

ORESTES

Go, that unharassed what I yet would say
 May reach his ears, escaped thine hindering age.
 Menelaus, why pace to and fro in thought,
 Treading the mazes of perplexity?

630

MENE LAUS

Let be: somewhat I muse within myself:
 I know not whither in this strait to turn.

ORESTES

End not in haste thy pondering: hearken first
 Unto my pleading, and resolve thee then.

177

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

λέγ᾽· εὐ γὰρ εἶπας. ἔστι δ' οὐ σιγὴ λόγου
κρείσσων γένοιτ' ἄν, ἔστι δ' οὐ σιγῆς λόγος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- 640 λέγοιμ' ἂν ἤδη. τὰ μακρὰ τῶν σμικρῶν λόγων
ἐπίπροσθέν ἐστι καὶ σαφῆ μάλλον κλύειν.
ἐμοὶ σὺ τῶν σῶν, Μενέλεως, μηδὲν δίδου,
ἃ δ' ἔλαβες ἀπόδος, πατρὸς ἐμοῦ λαβὼν πάρα.
οὐ χρήματ' εἶπον· χρήματ', ἣν ψυχὴν ἐμὴν
σώσης, ἅπερ μοι φίλτατ' ἐστὶ τῶν ἐμῶν.
ἀδικῶ λαβεῖν χρή μ' ἀντὶ τοῦδε τοῦ κακοῦ
ἀδικόν τι παρὰ σοῦ· καὶ γὰρ Ἀγαμέμνων πατὴρ
ἀδίκως ἀθροίσας Ἑλλάδ' ἦλθ' ὑπ' Ἴλιον,
οὐκ ἔξαμαρτῶν αὐτός, ἀλλ' ἀμαρτίαν
- 650 τῆς σῆς γυναικὸς ἀδικίαν τ' ἰώμενος.
ἐν μὲν τόδ' ἡμῖν ἀνθ' ἐνὸς δοῦναί σε χρή.
ἀπέδοτο δ', ὡς χρή τοῖς φίλοισι τοὺς φίλους,
τὸ σῶμ' ἀληθῶς, σοὶ παρ' ἀσπίδ' ἐκπονῶν,
ὅπως σὺ τὴν σὴν ἀπολάβοις ξυνάορον.
ἀπότισον οὖν μοι ταῦτ' οὗτ' ἐκεῖ λαβῶν,
μίαν πονήσας ἡμέραν ἡμῶν ὕπερ
σωτήριος στάς, μὴ δέκ' ἐκπλήσας ἔτη.
ἃ δ' Αὐλῆς ἔλαβε σφάγι' ἐμῆς ὀμοσπόρου,
ἐὼ σ' ἔχειν ταῦθ'· Ἐρμιόνην μὴ κτεῖνε σύ.
- 660 δεῖ γάρ σ' ἐμοῦ πράσσοντος ὡς πράσσω τανῦν
πλέον φέρεσθαι, καμὲ συγγνώμην ἔχειν.
ψυχὴν δ' ἐμὴν δὸς τῷ ταλαιπώρῳ πατρὶ
καμῆς ἀδελφῆς, παρθένου μακρὸν χρόνον·
θανῶν γὰρ οἶκον ὀρφανὸν λείψω πατρός.
ἐρεῖς, ἀδύνατον· αὐτὸ τοῦτο· τοὺς φίλους
ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς χρή τοῖς φίλοισιν ὠφελεῖν·
ὅταν δ' ὁ δαίμων εὐ δίδῃ, τί δεῖ φίλων;

ORESTES

MENELAUS

Speak ; thou hast well said. Silence is sometimes
Better than speech, and speech sometimes than
silence.

ORESTES

Now will I speak. Better are many words 640
Than few, and clearer to be understood.
Menelaus, give me nothing of thine own :
That thou receivedst from my sire repay.
I mean not treasure : if thou save my life,
Treasure, of all I have most dear, is this.
Grant I do wrong : I ought, for a wrong's sake,
To win of thee a wrong ; for Agamemnon
Wrongly to Ilium led the hosts of Greece :—
Not that himself had sinned, but sought to heal 650
The sin and the wrong-doing of thy wife.
This boon for boon thou oughtest render me.
He verily sold his life for thee, as friends
Should do for friends, hard-toiling under shield,
That so thou mightest win thy wife again.
This hadst thou there : to me requite the same.
Toil one day's space for my sake : for my life
Stand up. I ask thee not, wear out ten years.
Aulis received my sister's blood : I spare
Thee this ; I bid not slay Hermione.
Thou needs must, when I fare as now I fare, 660
Have vantage, and the debt must I forgive.
But to my hapless father give our lives,
Mine, and my long unwedded sister's life :
For heirless, if I die, I leave his house.
*'Tis hopeless, wilt thou say ?—*thine hour is this.
In desperate need ought friends to help their
friends.
When Fortune gives her boons, what need of friends .

179

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

670 ἀρκεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς ὠφελεῖν θέλων.
 φιλεῖν δάμαρτα πᾶσιν Ἑλλησιν δοκεῖς.
 κούχ ὑποτρέχων σε τοῦτο θωπέια λέγω.
 ταύτης ἰκνοῦμαί σ'—ὦ μέλεος ἐμῶν κακῶν,
 εἰς οἶον ἤκω. τί δὲ ταλαιπωρεῖν με δεῖ;
 ὑπὲρ γὰρ οἴκου παντὸς ἰκετεύω τάδε.
 ὦ πατρὸς ὄμαιμε θεῖε, τὸν κατὰ χθονὸς
 θανόντ' ἀκούειν τάδε δόκει, ποτωμένην
 ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ σοῦ, καὶ λέγειν ἀγῶ λέγω.
 ταῦτ' εἰς τε δάκρυα καὶ γόους καὶ συμφορὰς
 εἶρηκα, κἀπήτηκα τὴν σωτηρίαν,
 θηρῶν ὃ πάντες κούκ ἐγὼ ζητῶ μόνος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

680 κἀγὼ σ' ἰκνοῦμαι καὶ γυνή περ οὔσ' ὅμως
 τοῖς δεομένοισιν ὠφελεῖν· οἴός τε δ' εἶ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἽΟρέστ', ἐγὼ τοι σὸν καταιδούμαι κᾶρα
 καὶ ξυμπονήσαι σοῖς κακοῖσι βούλομαι
 καὶ χρῆ γὰρ οὔτω τῶν ὄμαιμόνων κακὰ
 συνεκκομίζειν, δύναμιν ἣν διδῶ θεός,
 θνήσκοντα καὶ κτείνοντα τοὺς ἐναντίους·
 τὸ δ' αὖ δύνασθαι πρὸς θεῶν χρῆζω τυχεῖν.
 ἤκω γὰρ ἀνδρῶν συμμάχων κενὸν δόρυ
 ἔχων, πόνοισι μυρίοις ἀλώμενος,
 690 σμικρᾶ σὺν ἀλκῇ τῶν λελειμμένων φίλων.
 μάχη μὲν οὖν ἂν οὐχ ὑπερβαλοίμεθα
 Πελασγὸν Ἄργος· εἰ δὲ μαλθακοῖς λόγοις
 δυναίμεθ', ἐνταῦθ' ἐλπίδος προσήκομεν.
 σμικροῖσι γὰρ τὰ μεγάλα πῶς ἔλοι τις ἂν
 πόνοισιν; ἀμαθὲς καὶ τὸ βούλεσθαι τάδε.
 ὅταν γὰρ ἠβᾶ δῆμος εἰς ὀργὴν πεσῶν,
 ὅμοιον ὥστε πῦρ κατασβέσαι λάβρον·

ORESTES

Her help sufficeth, when she wills to help.
 All Greece believeth that thou lov'st thy wife,—
 Not cozening thee with soft words say I this;— 670
 By her I pray thee! . . . (*aside*) woe for mine
 affliction!

To what pass am I come! Why grovel thus?
 Yet,—'tis for our whole house I make appeal! . . .
 O brother of my father, deem that *he*
 Hears this, who lies 'neath earth, that over thee
 His spirit hovers: what I say he saith.
 This, urged with tears, moans, pleas of misery,
 Have I said, and have claimed my life of thee,
 Seeking what all men seek, not I alone.

CHORUS

I too beseech thee, woman though I am, 680
 To succour those in need: thou hast the power.

MENE LAUS

Orestes, verily I reverence thee,
 And fain would help thee bear thy load of ills.
 Yea, duty bids that, where God gives the power,
 Kinsmen should one another's burdens bear,
 Even unto death, or slaying of their foes:
 But the power—would the Gods might give it me!
 I come, a single spear, with none ally,
 Long wandering with travail manifold, 690
 With feeble help of friends yet left to me.
 In battle could we never overcome
 Pelasgian Argos. If we might prevail
 By soft words, this is our hope's utmost bound.
 For with faint means how should a man achieve
 Great things? 'Twere witless even to wish for
 this.
 For, in the first rush of a people's rage,
 'Twere even as one would quench a ravening fire.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- εἰ δ' ἡσύχως τις αὐτὸν ἐντείνοντι μὲν
 χαλῶν ὑπέικοι καιρὸν εὐλαβουμένος,
 700 ἴσως ἂν ἐκπνεύσει· ὅταν δ' ἀνῆ πνοάς,
 τύχοις ἂν αὐτοῦ ῥαδίως ὅσον θέλεις.
 ἔνεστι δ' οἶκτος, ἐνὶ δὲ καὶ θυμὸς μέγας,
 караδοκοῦντι κτῆμα τιμιώτατον.
 ἔλθων δὲ Τυνδάρεών τέ σοι πειράσομαι
 πόλιν τε πείσαι τῷ λίαν χρῆσθαι καλῶς.
 καὶ ναῦς γὰρ ἐνταθείσα πρὸς βίαν ποδὶ
 ἔβαψεν, ἔστη δ' αὐθις, ἦν χαλᾶ πόδα.
 μισεῖ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰς ἄγαν προθυμίας,
 μισοῦσι δ' ἄστοί· δεῖ δέ μ', οὐκ ἄλλως λέγω,
 710 σφάζειν σε σοφία, μὴ βία τῶν κρεισσόνων.
 ἀλκῇ δέ σ' οὐκ ἄν, ἧ σὺ δοξάζεις ἴσως,
 σώσαιμ' ἄν· οὐ γὰρ ῥάδιον λόγῃ μιᾷ
 στῆσαι τροπαῖα τῶν κακῶν ἅ σοι πάρα,
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' Ἄργους γαίαν εἰς τὸ μαλθακὸν
 προσηγόμεσθ' ἄν¹· νῦν δ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει
 δούλοισιν εἶναι τοῖς σοφοῖσι τῆς τύχης.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

- ὦ πλὴν γυναικὸς εἵνεκα στρατηλατεῖν
 τᾶλλ' οὐδέν, ὦ κάκιστε τιμωρεῖν φίλοις·
 720 φεύγεις ἀποστραφεῖς με, τὰ δ' Ἀγαμέμνονος
 φροῦδ' ; ἄφιλος ἦσθ' ἄρ', ὦ πάτερ, πρᾶσσω
 κακῶς.
 οἶμοι, προδέδομαι, κούκέτ' εἰσὶν ἐλπίδες,
 ὅποι τραπόμενος θάνατον Ἀργείων φύγω·
 οὗτος γὰρ ἦν μοι καταφυγὴ σωτηρίας.
 ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ τόνδε φίλτατον βροτῶν
 Πυλάδην δρόμῳ στείχοντα Φωκέων ἄπο,

¹ Schaefer: for προσηγόμεσθα of MSS.

ORESTES

But if one gently yield him to their stress,
Slacken the sheet, and watch the season due,
Their storm might spend its force. When lulls the
blast, 700

Lightly thou mightest win thy will of them.
In them is ruth, high spirit is in them—
A precious thing to whoso bides his time.
Now Tyndareus and the city will I seek
To sway to temperance in their stormy mood.
A ship, if one have strained the mainsheet taut,
Dips deep; but rights again, the mainsheet eased,
For Heaven hateth over-vehemence,
And citizens hate. I ought, I grant, to save thee—
By wisdom, not defiance of the strong. 710
I cannot—as thou haply dream'st—by force
Save thee. Hard were it with my single spear
To triumph o'er the ills that compass thee;
Else not by suasion would I try to move
Argos to mercy: but of sore need now
Must prudent men be bondmen unto fate.

[Exit.]

ORESTES

O nothing-worth—save in a woman's cause
To lead a host!—craven in friends' defence!
Turn'st from me?—fleest?—are Agamemnon's
deeds 720
Forgot? Ah father, friendless in affliction!
Woe's me, I am betrayed: hope lives no more
Of refuge from the Argives' doom of death!
For my one haven of safety was this man.
But lo, I see my best-beloved of men,
Yon Pylades, from Phocis hastening.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἠδεῖαν ὄψιν· πιστὸς ἐν κακοῖς ἀνὴρ
κρείσσων γαλήνης ναυτίλοισιν εἴσορᾶν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

730 θᾶσσον ἢ με χρῆν προβαίνων ἰκόμην δι' ἄστεως,
σύλλογον πόλεως ἀκούσας, τὸν δ' ἰδὼν αὐτὸν
σαφῶς,
ἐπὶ σὲ 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 τὰ μὰ δηλώσω κακά.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

συγκατασκάπτοις ἂν ἡμᾶς· κοινὰ γὰρ τὰ τῶν
φίλων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Μενέλεως κάκιστος εἰς με καὶ κασιγνήτην ἐμην.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

εἰκότως, κακῆς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα γίγνεσθαι κακόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὥσπερ οὐκ ἐλθὼν ἔμοιγε ταῦτόν ἀπέδωκεν μολῶν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἢ γὰρ ἐστὶν ὡς ἀληθῶς τήνδ' ἀφιγμένος χθόνα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

740 χρόνιος· ἀλλ' ὅμως τάχιστα κακὸς ἐφωράθη
φίλοις.

ORESTES

Glad sight! A loyal friend in trouble's hour
Shows welcomer than calm to mariners.

Enter PYLADES.

PYLADES

Down the city's streets with haste unwonted unto thee
I came ;

For I heard of Argos' council—yea, mine eyes beheld
the same—

For thy doom and for thy sister's, as to slay you even
now.

What means this?—how fares thine health, thy state?
—of age-mates dearest thou,

Yea, of friends and kinsfolk ; each and all of these thou
art to me.

ORESTES

Ruined are we!—in a word to tell thee all my misery.

PYLADES

Mine o'erthrowing shall thy fall be : one are friends in
woe and bliss.

ORESTES

Traitor foul to me and to my sister Menelaus is.

PYLADES

Small the marvel—by the traitor wife the husband
traitor made !

ORESTES

Even as he had come not, so his debt to me hath he
repaid.

PYLADES

How then?—hath he set his foot in very deed this
land within ?

ORESTES

Late he came ; but early stood convicted traitor to
his kin.

730

740

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

καὶ δάμαρτα τὴν κακίστην ναυστολῶν ἐλήλυθεν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἐκεῖνος, ἀλλ' ἐκείνη κείνον ἐνθάδ' ἤγαγεν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ποῦ 'στιν ἢ πλείστους Ἀχαιῶν ὤλεσεν γυνὴ μία;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐν δόμοις ἐμοῖσιν, εἰ δὴ τούσδ' ἐμούς καλεῖν
χρεῶν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

σὺ δὲ τίνας λόγους ἔλεξας σοῦ κασιγνήτη
πατρός;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μή μ' ἰδεῖν θανόνθ' ὑπ' ἀστῶν καὶ κασιγνητην
ἐμήν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

πρὸς θεῶν, τί πρὸς τὰδ' εἶπε; τόδε γὰρ εἶδέναι
θέλω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἠὺλαβεῖθ', ὃ τοῖς φίλοισι δρῶσιν οἱ κακοὶ φίλοι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

σκῆψιν εἰς ποίαν προβαίνων; τοῦτο πάντ' ἔχω
μαθῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

750 οὗτος ἦλθ' ὁ τὰς ἀρίστας θυγατέρας σπείρας
πατήρ.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

Τυνδάρεων λέγεις· ἴσως σοι θυγατέρος θυμού-
μενος.

ORESTES

PYLADES

And his wife, arch-traitress, hath he brought her,
sailing hitherward?

ORESTES

'Tis not he hath brought her, nay, 'twas she that
hither brought her lord.

PYLADES

Where is she, who hath slain Achaians more than any
woman else?

ORESTES

In mine house—if yonder palace mine may now be
called—she dwells.

PYLADES

Thou, what wouldst thou of thy father's brother by
thy pleadings gain?

ORESTES

That he would not see me and my sister by the
people slain.

PYLADES

By the Gods, to this what said he?—fain would I
know this of thee.

ORESTES

Cautious was he—as the false friend still to friends is
wont to be.

PYLADES

Fleeing to what plea for refuge?—all I know when
this I hear.

ORESTES

He had come, the father who begat the daughters
without peer.

PYLADES

Tyndareus thou meanest,—for his daughter haply
filled with ire.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αἰσθάνει. τὸ τοῦδε κῆδος μᾶλλον εἴλετ' ἢ πα-
τρός.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

κούκ ἐτόλμησεν πόνων σῶν ἀντιλάζυσθαι παρών;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ γὰρ αἰχμητῆς πέφυκεν, ἐν γυναιξὶ δ' ἄλκιμος.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἐν κακοῖς ἄρ' εἶ μεγίστοις, καί σ' ἀναγκαῖον
θανεῖν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ψῆφον ἀμφ' ἡμῶν πολίτας ἐπὶ φόνοφ θέσθαι
χρεῶν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἦ κρινεῖ τί χρεῖμα; λέξον· διὰ φόβου γὰρ ἔρ-
χομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἦ θανεῖν ἢ ζῆν· ὁ μῦθος οὐ μακρὸς μακρῶν πέρι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

φεῦγέ νυν λιπὼν μέλαθρα σὺν κασιγνήτῃ σέθεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

760 οὐχ ὀράς; φυλασσόμεσθα φρουρίοισι πανταχῆ.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

εἶδον ἄστεως ἀγυῖας τεύχεσιν πεφραγμένας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡσπερὲι πόλις πρὸς ἐχθρῶν σῶμα πυργηρούμεθα.

ORESTES

ORESTES

Rightly guessed: such kinsman Menelaus chose
before my sire.

PYLADES

Dared he not lay hand unto thy burden, not when
here he stood?

ORESTES

Hero is, there none in him!—mid women valiant he
of mood.

PYLADES

Then art thou in depth of evil: death for thee must
needs abide.

ORESTES

Touching this our murder must the vote of Argos'
folk decide.

PYLADES

What shall this determine? Tell me, for mine heart
is full of dread.

ORESTES

Death or life. The word that names the dateless
doom is quickly said.

PYLADES

Flee then: yonder palace-halls forsake thou: with
thy sister flee.

ORESTES

Dost thou see not?—warded round on every hand by
guards are we.

PYLADES

Lines of spears and shields I marked: the pass of
every street they close.

ORESTES

Yea, beleaguered are we, even as a city by her foes.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

κἀμέ νυν ἔροῦ τί πάσχω· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς οἶχομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πρὸς τίνος; τοῦτ' ἂν προσείη τοῖς ἔμοῖς κακοῖς
κακόν.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

Στρόφιός ἤλασέν μ' ἀπ' οἴκων φυγάδα θυμωθεὶς
πατήρ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἴδιον, ἢ κοινὸν πολίταις ἐπιφέρων ἔγκλημά τι;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ὅτι συνηράμην φόνον σοι μητρός, ἀνόσιον λέγων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ τάλας, ἔοικε καὶ σὲ τὰμὰ λυπήσειν κακά.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

οὐχὶ Μενέλεω τρόποισι χρώμεθ'· οἷστέον τάδε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

770 οὐ φοβεῖ μή σ' Ἄργος ὥσπερ κᾶμ' ἀποκτεῖναι
θέλη;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

οὐ προσήκομεν κολάζειν τοῖσδε, Φωκέων δὲ γῆ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δεινὸν οἱ πολλοί, πανούργους ὅταν ἔχωσι προ-
στάτας.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ἀλλ' ὅταν χρηστοὺς λάβωσι, χρηστὰ βουλευούσ'
αἰεί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἶεν. εἰς κοινὸν λέγειν χρή.

ORESTES

PYLADES

Ask me also of my plight; for, like to thee, undone
am I.

ORESTES

Yea?—of whom? This shall be evil heaped on my
calamity.

PYLADES

Strophius banished me mine home: my father's
wrath hath thrust me thence.

ORESTES

What the charge? 'Twixt thee and him?—or hath
the nation found offence?

PYLADES

That I helped thee slay thy mother, this he names
an impious thing.

ORESTES

Woe is me! the anguish of mine anguish unto thee
must cling!

PYLADES

I am not a Menelaus: these afflictions must I bear.

ORESTES

Fear'st thou not lest Argos doom thee with my deed
my death to share?

770

PYLADES

I belong not unto them to punish, but to Phocis-land.

ORESTES

Fearful is the people's rage, when evil men its course
command.

PYLADES

Nay, but when they take them honest chiefs, they
counsel honest rede.

ORESTES

Come, let thou and I commune—

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

τίνος ἀναγκαίου πέρι;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ λέγοιμ' ἀστοῖσιν ἔλθων

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ὡς ἔδρασας ἔνδικα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πατρὶ τιμωρῶν ἑμαυτοῦ;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

μὴ λάβωσί σ' ἄσμενοι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄλλ' ὑποπτήξας σιωπῇ καθάνω;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

δειλὸν τόδε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς ἂν οὖν δρώην;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ἔχεις τιν', ἣν μένης, σωτηρίαν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔχω.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

μολόντι δ' ἐλπίς ἐστὶ σωθῆναι κακῶν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ τύχοι, γένοιτ' ἄν.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

780 οὐκ οὖν τοῦτο κρεῖσσον ἢ μένειν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλὰ δῆτ' ἔλθω;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

θανῶν γοῦν ὧδε κάλλιον θανεῖ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὖ λέγεις· φεύγω τὸ δειλὸν τῆδε.

ORESTES

PYLADES

As touching what imperious need?

ORESTES

Should I go and tell the people—

PYLADES

That thou wroughtest righteously?

ORESTES

Taking vengeance for my father?

PYLADES

Glad might they lay hold on thee.

ORESTES

How then, cower and die in silence?

PYLADES

This in craven sort were done.

ORESTES

What then do?

PYLADES

Hast any hope of life, if here thou linger on?

ORESTES

None.

PYLADES

But is there hope, in going, of deliverance
from the ill?

ORESTES

Haply might there be.

PYLADES

Were this not better, then, than sitting still? 780

ORESTES

Shall I go then?

PYLADES

Yea; for, dying, hero-like thou shalt have died.

ORESTES

Good: I 'scape the brand of "craven."

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

μᾶλλον ἢ μένων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα γ' ἔνδικόν μοι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τῷ δοκεῖν εὐχου μόνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καί τις ἄν γέ μ' οἰκτίσειε

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

μέγα γὰρ ἠϋγένειά σου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θάνατον ἀσχάλλων πατρῶον.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

πάντα ταῦτ' ἐν ὄμμασιν

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ιτέον, ὡς ἄνανδρον ἀκλεῶς κατθανεῖν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

αἰνῶ τάδε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἦ λέγωμεν οὖν ἀδελφῇ ταῦτ' ἐμῇ ;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δάκρυα γοῦν γένοιτ' ἄν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

οὐκοῦν οὗτος οἰωνὸς μέγας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δηλαδὴ συγᾶν ἄμεινον.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τῷ χρόνῳ δε κερδανεῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κεῖνό μοι μόνου πρόσαντες,

ORESTES

PYLADES

More than if thou here abide.

ORESTES

And the right is mine.

PYLADES

Pray only all men so may view the deed.

ORESTES

Haply some might pity—

PYLADES

Yea, thy princely birth shall strongly plead.

ORESTES

At my father's death indignant.

PYLADES

Full in view are all these things.

ORESTES

On! unmanly is inglorious death!

PYLADES

Thy saying bravely rings.

ORESTES

Shall we then unto my sister tell our purpose?

PYLADES

Nay, by heaven!

ORESTES

Sooth, she might break into weeping.

PYLADES

So were evil omen given.

ORESTES

Surely then were silence better.

PYLADES

Lesser hindrance shouldst thou find.

ORESTES

Yet, one stumblingblock confronts me—

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

790

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τί τόδε καινὸν αὖ λέγεις;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μὴ θεαί μ' οἴστρω κατάσχωσ'.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἄλλὰ κηδεύσω σ' ἐγώ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δυσχερὲς ψαύειν νοσοῦντος ἀνδρός.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

οὐκ ἔμοιγε σοῦ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὐλαβοῦ λύσσης μετασχεῖν τῆς ἐμῆς.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τόδ' οὖν ἴτω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἄρ' ὀκνήσεις;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὄκνος γὰρ τοῖς φίλοις κακὸν μέγα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔρπε νυν οἶαξ ποδός μοι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

φίλα γ' ἔχων κηδεύματα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καί με πρὸς τύμβον πορευσον πατρός.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὡς τί δὴ τόδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὣς νιν ἱκετεύσω με σῶσαι.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τό γε δίκαιον ὧδ' ἔχει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μητέρος δὲ μηδ' ἴδοιμι μνήμα.

ORESTES

PYLADES

What new thing is in thy mind ? 790

ORESTES

Lest the Fiends by madness stay me.

PYLADES

Nay, thy weakness I will tend.

ORESTES

Loathly task to touch the sick !

PYLADES

Ah, not to me for thee, O friend.

ORESTES

Yet beware the taint of this my madness.

PYLADES

Base misgivings, hence !

ORESTES

Can it be thou wilt not shrink ?

PYLADES

For friends to shrink were foul offence.

ORESTES

On then, pilot of my footsteps.

PYLADES

Sweet is this my loving care.

ORESTES

Even to my father's grave-mound guide me on.

PYLADES

What wouldst thou there ?

ORESTES

I would pray him to deliver.

PYLADES

Yea, 'twere just it should be so.

ORESTES

But my mother's tomb, I would not see it—

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

πολεμία γὰρ ἦν.

ἀλλ' ἔπειγ', ὡς μὴ σε πρόσθε ψῆφος Ἀργείων
ἔλη,

800 περιβαλὼν πλευροῖς ἐμοῖσι πλευρὰ νωχελῆ νόσῳ,
ὡς ἐγὼ δι' ἄστεώς σε σμικρὰ φροντίζων ὄχλου
οὐδὲν αἰσχυθεῖς ὀχῆσω. ποῦ γὰρ ὦν δεῖξω
φίλος,

εἴ σε μὴ ἔνδραϊσιν ὄντα συμφοραῖς ἐπαρκέσω;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τοῦτ' ἐκεῖνο, κτᾶσθ' ἐταίρους, μὴ τὸ συγγενές
μόνον·

ὡς ἀνὴρ ὅστις τροποῖσι συντακῆ, θυραῖος ὦν,
μυρίων κρείστων ὁμαίμων ἀνδρὶ κεκτῆσθαι φίλος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὁ μέγας ὄλβος ἄτ' ἀρετὰ στρ.
μέγα φρονούσ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδα καὶ
παρὰ Σιμωντίοις ὀχετοῖς

810 πάλιν ἀνήλθ' ἐξ εὐτυχίας Ἀτρείδαις
πάλαι παλαιᾶς ἀπὸ συμφορᾶς δόμων,
ὅποτε χρυσέας ἦλθ' ἔρις ἀρνὸς
ἐπάγουσα Τανταλίδαις¹
οἰκτρότατα θοινάματα καὶ
σφάγια γενναίων τεκέων·
ὄθεν φόνω φόνος ἐξαμεί-
βων δι' αἵματος οὐ προλεί-
πει δισσοῖσιν Ἀτρείδαις.

τὸ καλὸν οὐ καλόν, τοκέων ἀντ.

820 πυριγενεῖ τεμεῖν παλάμα
χρῶα, μελάνδετον δὲ φόνω

¹ Dindorf's reading, which secures strophic correspondence.

ORESTES

PYLADES

Haste then, lest the Argive vote have doomed thee
 ere thou reach the place, [mine embrace.
 Yielding up thy frame with sickness wasted unto 800
 Through the streets unshamed, and taking of the
 rabble little heed, [friend indeed,
 I will bear thee onward. Wherein shall I show me
 If mine helpfulness in terrible affliction be not shown?

ORESTES

Herein true is that old saying—"Get thee friends, not
 kin alone." [of thy kin,
 He whose soul to thy soul cleaveth, though he be not
 Better than a thousand kinsfolk this is for thy friend
 to win. [Exeunt ORESTES and PYLADES.

CHORUS

The stately fortune, the prowess exceeding, (Str.)
 Whose glorying rang through the land of Greece,
 Yea, rang where Simois' waters flow,
 For Atreus' sons was its weal made woe 810
 For the fruit of the curse sown long ago,
 When on Tantalus' sons came, misery-breeding,
 The strife for the lamb of the golden fleece,—
 Breeding a banquet, with horrors spread,
 For the which was the blood of a king's babes
 shed,
 Whence murder, tracking the footsteps red
 Of murder, haunts with the wound aye bleeding
 The Atreides twain without surcease.
 O deed fair-seeming, O deed unholy!— (Ant.)
 With hand steel-armed through the throat to shear 820
 Of a mother, to lift in the Sun-god's sight

ξίφος ἐς αὐγὰς ἀελίοιο δεῖξαι
 τὸ δ' εὖ¹ κακουργεῖν ἀσέβεια ποικίλα
 κακοφρόνων τ' ἀνδρῶν παράνοια.
 θανάτου γὰρ ἀμφὶ φόβῳ
 Τυνδαρίς ἰάχησε τάλαι-
 να· τέκνον, οὐ τολμᾶς ὅσια
 κτείνων σὰν ματέρα· μὴ πατρώ-
 αν τιμῶν χάριν ἐξανά-
 ψη δύσκληϊαν ἐς αἰί.

830

τίς νόσος ἢ τίνα δάκρυα καὶ
 τίς ἔλεος μείζων κατὰ γᾶν
 ἢ ματροκτόνον αἷμα χειρὶ θέσθαι;
 οἶον οἶον ἔργον τελέσας
 βεβάκχενται μανίαις,
 Εὐμενίσιν θήραμα φόνῳ
 δρομάσι δινεύων βλεφάροις
 Ἄγαμεμόνιος παῖς.
 ὦ μέλεος, ματρὸς ὅτε
 χρυσεοπηνήτων φαρέων
 μαστὸν ὑπερτέλλοντ' ἐσιδὼν
 σφάγιον ἔθετο ματέρα, πατρώ-
 ων παθέων ἀμοιβάν.

ἐπὶ δ.

840

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

γυναῖκες, ἢ 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.

¹ Bothe: for αὖ of MSS.

ORESTES

Death-crimsoned the dark steel—O, 'tis the sleight
 Of impious sophistry putteth for right
 The wrong, 'tis the sinners' infatuate folly!
 Ah, Tyndareus' daughter, in frenzied fear
 Of death, shrieked, shrieked in her anguish dread,
 "Son, slaying thy mother, the right does thou tread
 Under foot! O beware lest thy grace to the dead,
 Thy sire, in dishonour enwrap thee wholly,
 As a fire that for ever thy name shall sear!"

830

(*Epode*)

What affliction were greater, what cause of weeping,
 What pitiful sorrow in any land,
 Than a son in the blood of a mother steeping
 His hand? How in madness's bacchanal leaping
 He is whirled, for the deed that was wrought of
 his hand, [sweeping,
 With the hell-hounds' wings on his track swift—
 With eyes wild-rolling in terror unsleeping—
 Agamemnon's scion, a matricide banned!
 Ah wretch, that his heart should fail not nor falter,
 When, over her vesture's broideries golden,
 The mother's breast of his eyes was beholden!
 But he slaughtered her like to a beast at the altar,
 For the wrongs of a father had whetted the brand.

840

Enter ELECTRA.

ELECTRA

Dames, sure woe-worn Orestes hath not fled
 These halls o'erborne by madness heaven-sent?

CHORUS

Nay, nay, to Argos' people hath he gone
 To stand the appointed trial for his life,
 Whereon your doom rests, or to live or die.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἴμοι· τί χρῆμ' ἔδρασε; τίς δ' ἔπεισέ νιν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

850 Πυλάδης· ἔοικε δ' οὐ μακρὰν ὄδ' ἄγγελος
λέξειν τὰ κείθεν σοῦ κασιγνήτου πέρι.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ τλήμον, ὦ δύστηνε τοῦ στρατηλάτου
'Αγαμέμνονος παῖ, πότνι' Ἥλέκτρα, λόγους
ἄκουσον οὓς σοι δυστυχεῖς ἦκω φέρων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αἰαί, διοιχόμεσθα· δῆλος εἶ λόγῳ.
κακῶν γάρ ἦκεις, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἄγγελος.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ψήφῳ Πελασγῶν σὸν κασίγνητον θανεῖν
καὶ σ', ὦ τάλαιν', ἔδοξε τῆδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

860 οἴμοι· προσῆλθεν ἐλπίς, ἣν φοβουμένη
πάλαι τὸ μέλλον ἐξετηκόμην γόοις.
ἀτὰρ τίς ἀγών, τίνες ἐν Ἀργείοις λόγοι
καθεῖλον ἡμᾶς κάπεκύρωσαν θανεῖν;
λέγ', ὦ γεραῖέ· πότερα λευσίμῳ χερὶ
ἢ διὰ σιδήρου πνεῦμ' ἀπορρηξαί με δεῖ,
κοινὰς ἀδελφῶ συμφορὰς κεκτημένην;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

870 ἐτύγχανον μὲν ἀγρόθεν πυλῶν ἔσω
βαίνων, πυθέσθαι δεόμενος τὰ τ' ἀμφὶ σοῦ
τά τ' ἀμφ' Ὀρέστου· σῶ γὰρ εὐνοίαν πατρὶ
αἰεί ποτ' εἶχον, καὶ μ' ἔφερβε σὸς δόμος
πένητα μὲν, χρῆσθαι δὲ γενναῖον φίλοις.
ὀρῶ δ' ὄχλον στείχοντα καὶ θύσσουντ' ἄκραν.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

Ah me ! what hath he done ? Who so misled him ?

CHORUS

Pylades. Lo, yon messenger full soon
Shall tell, meseems, how fared thy brother there.

850

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Child of our war-chief, hapless, woe-worn one,
Agamemnon's daughter, lady Electra, hear
The woeful tale, wherewith I come to thee.

ELECTRA

Alas ! we are undone : thy speech is plain.
Thou com'st, meseems, a messenger of ill.

MESSENGER

Pelasia's vote this day hath doomed that thou,
O hapless, and thy brother, are to die.

ELECTRA

Woe ! that I looked for cometh, which long since
I feared, and pined with wailings for our fate !
How went the trial ? Before Argos' folk
What pleadings ruined us, and doomed to die ?
Tell, ancient, must I under stoning hands,
Or by the steel, gasp out my dying breath,
I, who am sharer in my brother's woes ?

860

MESSENGER

It chanced that I was entering the gates
Out of the country, fain to learn thy state,
And of Orestes ; for unto thy sire
Aye was I loyal : thine house fostered me,
A poor man, yet true-hearted to his friends.
Then throngs I saw to seats on yon height climb

870

οὐ φασι πρῶτον Δαναὸν Αἰγύπτῳ δίκας
 διδόντ' ἄθροισαι λαὸν εἰς κοινὰς ἔδρας.
 ἀστῶν δὲ δὴ τιν' ἠρόμην ἄθροισμ' ἰδῶν·
 τί καινὸν Ἄργει; μῶν τι πολεμίων πάρα
 ἄγγελμ' ἀνεπτέρωκε Δαναϊδῶν πόλιν;
 ὁ δ' εἶπ'· Ὀρέστην κείνον οὐχ ὀράς πέλας
 στείχοντ', ἀγῶνα θανάσιμον δραμούμενον;
 ὀρῶ δ' ἄελπτον φάσμ', ὃ μήποτ' ὄφελον,
 880 Πυλάδην τε καὶ σὸν σύγγονον στείχονθ' ὁμοῦ,
 τὸν μὲν κατηφῆ καὶ παρειμένον νόσῳ,
 τὸν δ' ὥστ' ἀδελφὸν ἴσα φίλῳ λυπούμενον,
 νόσημα κηδεύοντα παιδαγωγία.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ πλήρης ἐγένετ' Ἄργείων ὄχλος,
 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 ὦν αἰὲ
 890 διχόμυθα, πατέρα μὲν σὸν ἐκπαγλούμενος,
 σὸν δ' οὐκ ἐπαινῶν σύγγονον, καλοῖς κακοῖς
 λόγους ἐλίσσω, ὅτι καθισταίῃ νόμους
 εἰς τοὺς τεκόντας οὐ καλοῦς· τὸ δ' ὅμμ' αἰὲ
 φαιδρωπὸν ἐδίδου τοῖσιν Αἰγίσθου φίλοις.
 τὸ γὰρ γένος τοιοῦτον· ἐπὶ τὸν εὐτυχή
 πηδῶσ' αἰὲ κήρυκες· ὅδε δ' αὐτοῖς φίλος,
 ὃς ἂν δύνηται πόλεος ἔν τ' ἀρχαῖσιν ἦ.
 ἐπὶ τῷδε δ' ἠγόρευε Διομήδης ἀναξ.
 οὔτος κτανεῖν μὲν οὔτε σ' οὔτε σύγγονον
 900 εἶα, φυγῇ δὲ ζημιοῦντας εὖσεβεῖν.
 ἐπερρόθησαν δ' οἱ μὲν ὡς καλῶς λέγοι,
 οἱ δ' οὐκ ἐπήμουν. καπὶ τῷδ' ἀνίσταται
 ἀνὴρ τις ἀθυρόγλωστος, ἰσχύων θράσει,

ORESTES

Where first, as men say, Danaus, by Aegyptus
 Impeached, in general session gathered us.
 Marking the crowd, I asked a citizen :
 " What news in Argos ? Hath a bruit of foes
 Startled the city of the Danaïds ?"
 But he, " Dost thou not mark Orestes there
 Draw near to run the race whose goal is death ?"
 Would I had ne'er seen that unlooked-for sight—
 Pylades with thy brother moving on ; 880
 This, sickness-palsied, with down-drooping head ;
 That, as a brother, in his friend's affliction
 Afflicted, tending like a nurse the sick.

When now the Argive gathering was full,
 A herald rose and cried : " Who fain would speak
 Whether Orestes ought to live or die
 For matricide ?" Talthybius thereupon
 Rose, helper of thy sire when Troy was sacked.
 He spake—subservient ever to the strong—
 Half-heartedly, extolling high thy sire, 890
 But praising not thy brother ; intertwined
 Fair words and foul—that he laid down a law
 Right ill for parents : so was glancing still
 With flattering eye upon Aegisthus' friends.
 Such is the herald tribe : lightly they skip
 To fortune's minions' side : their friend is he
 Who in a state hath power and beareth rule.

Next after him prince Diomedes spake.
 Thee nor thy brother would he have them slay,
 But exile you, of reverence to the Gods. 900
 Then murmured some that good his counsel was ;
 Some praised it not. Thereafter rose up one
 Of tongue unbridled, stout in impudence,

Ἄργεῖος οὐκ Ἄργεῖος, ἠναγκασμένος,
 θορύβῳ τε πίσυνος κάμαθει παρρησία,
 πιθανὸς ἔτ' ἄστους περιβαλεῖν κακῶ τιτι.
 [ὅταν γὰρ ἡδὺς τοῖς λόγοις φρονῶν κακῶς
 πείθη τὸ πλῆθος, τῇ πόλει κακὸν μέγα·
 ὅσοι δὲ σὺν νῶ χρηστὰ βουλευούσ' αἰεί,
 910 κἂν μὴ παραντικ', αὐθὶς εἰσι χρήσιμοι
 πόλει. θεᾶσθαι δ' ὧδε χρὴ τὸν προστάτην
 ἰδόνθ'. ὅμοιον γὰρ τὸ χρῆμα γίγνεται
 τῶ τούς λόγους λέγοντι καὶ τιμωμένῳ.]
 ὃς εἶπ' Ὀρέστην καὶ σ' ἀποκτεῖναι πέτροις
 βάλλοντας· ὑπὸ δ' ἔτεινε Τυνδάρεως λόγους
 τῶ σφῶ κατακτείνοντι τοιούτους λέγειν.
 ἄλλος δ' ἀναστὰς ἔλεγε τῷδ' ἐναντία,
 μορφῇ μὲν οὐκ εὐωπός, ἀνδρείος δ' ἀνήρ,
 920 ὀλιγάκις ἄστῳ κἀγορᾶς χραίνων κύκλον,
 αὐτουργός, οἵπερ καὶ μόνοι σῶζουσι γῆν,
 ξυνετός δὲ χωρεῖν ὁμόσε τοῖς λόγοις θέλων,
 ἀκέραιος, ἀνεπίληπτον ἡσκηκῶς βίον·
 ὃς εἶπ' Ὀρέστην παῖδα τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος
 στεφανοῦν, ὃς ἠθέλησε τιμωρεῖν πατρί,
 κακὴν γυναῖκα κᾶθεον κατακτανῶν,
 ἢ κεῖν' ἀφήρει, μήθ' ὀπλίζεσθαι χέρα
 μήτε στρατεύειν ἐκλιπόντα δώματα,
 εἰ τᾶνδον οἰκουρήμαθ' οἱ λελειμμένοι
 930 φθείρουσιν, ἀνδρῶν εὐνιδας λωβώμενοι.
 καὶ τοῖς γε χρηστοῖς εὖ λέγειν ἐφαίνετο,
 κούδεις ἔτ' εἶπε. σὸς δ' ἐπήλθε σύγγονος,
 ἔλεξε δ' ὦ γῆν Ἰνάχου κεκτημένοι,
 [πάλαι Πελασγοί, Δαναΐδαι δὲ δεύτερον,]

ORESTES

An Argive, yet no Argive, thrust on us,¹
 In bluster and coarse-grained fluency confident,
 Still plausible to trap the folk in mischief:
 For when an evil heart with winning tongue
 Persuades the crowd, ill is it for the state:
 Whoso with understanding counsel well
 Profit the state—ere long, if not straightway. 910
 Thus ought we on each leader of men to look,
 And so esteem: for both be in like case,
 The orator, and the man in office set.
 Thee and Orestes he bade stone to death.
 But Tyndareus still prompted him the words
 That best told, as he laboured for your doom.
 To plead against him then another rose,
 No dainty presence, but a manful man,
 In town and market-circle seldom found,
 A yeoman—such as are the land's one stay,— 920
 Yet shrewd in grapple of words, when this he
 would;
 A stainless man, who lived a blameless life.
 He moved that they should crown Agamemnon's son
 Orestes, since he dared avenge his sire,
 Slaying the wicked and the godless wife
 Who sapped our strength:—none would take shield on
 arm,
 Or would forsake his home to march to war,
 If men's house-warders be seduced the while
 By stayers at home, and couches be defiled.
 To honest men he seemed to speak right well; 930
 And none spake after. Then thy brother rose,
 And said, "Lords of the land of Inachus,—
 Of old Pelasgians, later Danaus' sons,—

¹ One who had obtained the citizenship by means repugnant to decent citizens.

ὑμῖν ἀμύνων οὐδὲν ἦσσον ἢ πατρὶ
 ἔκτεινα μητέρ'· εἰ γὰρ ἀρσένων φόνος
 ἔσται γυναιξίν ὅσιος, οὐ φθάνοιτ' ἔτ' ἂν
 θνήσκοντες, ἢ γυναιξὶ δουλεύειν χρεῶν·
 τοῦναντίον δὲ δράσετ' ἢ δρᾶσαι χρεῶν.
 νῦν μὲν γὰρ ἡ προδοῦσα λέκτρ' ἐμοῦ πατρὸς
 940 τέθνηκεν· εἰ δὲ δὴ κατακτενεῖτέ με,
 ὁ νόμος ἀνεῖται, κοῦ φθάνοι θνήσκων τις ἂν,
 ὡς τῆς γε τόλμης οὐ σπάνις γενήσεται.
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔπειθ' ὄμιλον, εὐδοκῶν λέγειν.
 νικᾷ δ' ἐκείνος ὁ κακὸς ἐν πλήθει λέγων,
 ὃς ἡγόρευε σύγγονον σέ τε κτανεῖν.
 μόλις δ' ἔπεισε μὴ πετρούμενος θανεῖν
 τλήμων Ὀρέστης· αὐτόχειρι δὲ σφαγῆ
 ὑπέσχετ' ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ λείψειν βίον
 σὺν σοί. πορεύει δ' αὐτὸν ἐκκλήτων ἄπο
 950 Πυλάδης δακρύων· σὺν δ' ὀμαρτοῦσιν φίλοι
 κλαίοντες, οἰκτείροντες· ἔρχεται δέ σοι
 πικρὸν θέαμα καὶ πρόσοψις ἀθλία.
 ἀλλ' εὐτρέπιζε φάσγαν' ἢ βρόχον δέρη,
 ὡς δεῖ λιπεῖν σε φέγγος· ἠυγένεια δὲ
 οὐδέν σ' ἐπωφέλησεν, οὐδ' ὁ Πύθιος
 τρίποδα καθίζων Φοῖβος, ἀλλ' ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ δυστάλαινα παρθέν', ὡς ξυνηρεφὲς
 πρόσωπον εἰς γῆν σὸν βαλοῦσ' ἄφθογγος εἶ,
 ὡς εἰς στεναγμοὺς καὶ γόους δραμουμένη.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

960 κατάρχομαι στεναγμόν, ὦ Πελασγία, στρ
 τιθεῖσα λευκὸν ὄνυχα διὰ παρηίδων,
 αἱματηρὸν ἄταν,
 κτύπον τε κρατός, ὃν ἔλαχ' ἡ κατὰ χθονὸς

ORESTES

'Twas in your cause, no less than in my sire's,
 I slew my mother; for, if their lords' blood
 Shall bring no guilt on wives, make haste to die;
 Else must ye live in thralldom to your wives,
 And so transgress against all rightfulness.
 For now the traitress to my father's couch
 Is dead: but if ye shall indeed slay me,
 Law is annulled: better men died straightway;
 Since for no crime shall wives lack daring now."
 They would not hear, though well he spake, me-
 seemed.

940

That knave prevailed, who to the mob appealed,
 Who called on them to slay thy brother and thee.
 Hapless Orestes scarce could gain the boon
 By stoning not to die. By his own hand
 He pledged him to leave life on this same day
 With thee. Now from the gathering Pylades
 Bringeth him weeping; and his friends attend
 Lamenting with strong crying. So he comes
 To thee, sight bitter and woeful to behold.
 Prepare the sword, or halter for thy neck;
 For thou must leave the light. Thy princely birth
 Nought hath availed thee, nor the Pythian King
 Apollo tripod-throned; nay, ruined thee. [Exit.

950

CHORUS

O misery-burdened maiden, how art thou
 Speechless, with veiled head bowed unto the earth,
 As who shall run her course of moans and wails!

ELECTRA

Land of Pelasgia, I waken the wailing, (Str.) 960
 Scoring red furrows with fingers white
 In my cheeks, as with blood-streaks I mar them, and
 hailing [right,
 On the head of me blows, which she claims as her

209

νερτέρων καλλίπαις ἄνασσα,
 ἰαχείτω δὲ γὰ Κυκλωπία,
 σίδαρρον ἐπὶ κᾶρα τιθεῖσα κούριμον,
 πῆματ' οἴκων.
 ἔλεος ἔλεος ὄδ' ἔρχεται
 τῶν θανουμένων ὑπερ,
 970 στρατηλατᾶν Ἑλλάδος ποτ' ὄντων.

Βέβακε γὰρ βέβακεν, οἷχεται τέκνων ἄντ.
 πρόπασα γέιννα Πέλοπος ὃ τ' ἐπὶ μακαρίοις
 ζῆλος ὦν ποτ' οἴκοις·
 φθόνος νιν εἶλε θεόθεν, ἅ τε δυσμενῆς
 φοινία ψῆφος ἐν πολίταις.
 ἰὼ ἰώ, πανδάκρυτ' ἐφ' ἀμέρων
 ἔθνη πολύπουνα, λεύσσεθ', ὡς παρ' ἐλπίδας
 μοῖρα βαίνει.
 ἕτερα δ' ἕτερος ἀμείβεται
 980 πῆματ' ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῶ·
 βροτῶν δ' ὁ πᾶς ἀστάθμητος αἰών.

μόλοιμι τὰν οὐρανοῦ
 μέσον χθονός τε τεταμέναν αἰωρήμασι
 πέτραν ἀλύσεσι χρυσέαισι φερομένην
 δίναισι βῶλον ἐξ Ὀλύμπου,
 ἵν' ἐν θρήνοισιν ἀναβοάσω
 γέροντι πατρὶ Ταντάλῳ
 ὃς ἔτεκεν ἔτεκε γενέτορας ἐμέθεν δόμων,
 οἱ κατεῖδον ἄτας,

ORESTES

The fair Queen of the dead 'neath the earth that
are lying.

On thy locks let the steel of the shearing light,
Land Cyclopean ; break forth into crying,
For the woes of the house of thy princes sighing.

Ah pity upwelling, ah tears unavailing
For those in this hour that go forth to their dying,
Erst chieftains of Hellas's battle-might.

970

(Ant.)

Gone—gone ! Lo, the lineage of Pelops hath fled
Into nothingness wholly ; and passed away
Is the pride of a house in bliss high-seated,
By Heaven's jealousy blasted ; and hungry to slay
Is the doom that the citizens spake death-dealing.

Ah, travail-worn tribes that endure but a day
Amid weeping, behold how the morrow, revealing
The death of your hopes, cometh destiny-sealing ;
And to each man his several sorrows are meted,
Unto each in his turn, through the years on-
stealing,

980

Nor ever abide we at one stay.

O might I win to the rock 'twixt heaven¹
And earth suspended in circles swinging,
Upborne by the golden chains scarce-clinging,
The shard from Olympus riven ;
That to Tantalus, father of ancient time,
I might shriek with laments wild-ringing :
For of his loins came those sires of our name
Who looked upon that infatuate crime

¹ Tantalus lay in Tartarus beneath a rock, which at every moment seemed about to fall and crush him. Here Euripides seems to identify this rock with the sun, which Anaxagoras described as a red-hot mass of stone hung in heaven.

990

ποτανὸν μὲν δίωγμα πῶλων
 τεθριπποβάμονι στόλῳ Πέλοψ ὅτε
 πελάγεσι διεδίφρευσε, Μυρτίλου φόνου
 δικῶν ἐς οἶδμα πόντου,
 λευκοκύμοσιν
 πρὸς Γεραιστίαις
 ποντίων σάλων
 ἦόσιν ἄρματεύσας.

1000

ὄθεν δόμοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
 ἦλθ' ἀρὰ πολύστονος,
 λόχευμα ποιμνίοισι Μαιίδος τόκου,
 τὸ χρυσόμαλλον ἄρνὸς ὀπότη'
 ἐγένετο τέρας ὀλοὸν ὀλοὸν
 Ἄτρεος ἵπποβότα·

ὄθεν Ἔρις τό τε πτερωτὸν
 ἀλίου μετέβαλεν ἄρμα,
 τὰν πρὸς ἐσπέραν κέλευθον
 οὐρανοῦ προσαρμόσασα
 μονόπωλον ἐς Ἄω,

1010

ἐπταπόρου τε δρόμημα Πελειάδος
 εἰς ὁδὸν ἄλλαν Ζεὺς μεταβάλλει,
 τῶνδ' ἑτ' ἀμείβει ἀεὶ θανάτους θανά-
 των τά τ' ἐπώνυμα δεῖπνα Θυέστου
 λέκτρα τε Κρήσας Ἀερόπας δολί-
 ας δολίοισι γάμοις· τὰ πανύστατα δ'
 εἰς ἐμὲ καὶ γενέταν ἐμὸν ἦλυθε
 δόμων πολυπόνοις ἀνάγκαις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὄδε σὸς σύγγονος ἔρπει
 ψήφῳ θανάτου κατακυρωθείς,
 ὅ τε πιστότατος πάντων Πυλάδης

ORESTES

- Wrought when the car-steeds' winged feet chased,
 When the four-horsed chariot of Pelops raced 990
 By the strand, and his hand dashed Myrtilus
 down
 Unto hell, in the swell of the sea to drown,
 When the race was o'er
 Of the wheels that sped
 By the white foam-fringe of the surf-lashed shore
 Of Geraestus' head.
- For a curse heavy-burdened with mourning
 Fell on mine house for the deed,
 When Maia's son from his fold
 Brought the lamb of the fleece of gold,
 A portent whence ruin was rolled
 Upon Atreus, a king's overturning : 1000
 And the sun-car's wingèd speed
 From the ghastly strife turned back,
 Changing his westering track
 Through the heavens unto where, blush-burning,
 Dawn rose with her single steed.
 Lo, Zeus to another star-highway bending
 The course of the sailing Pleiads seven !
 Lo, death after death in succession unending
 By the banquet, named of Thyestes, given,
 And by Cretan Aerope's couch of shame
 And treason !—the consummation came 1010
 Of all, upon me and my father descending
 In our house's affliction foredoomed in heaven.

CHORUS

- Lo, where thy brother hitherward comes faring,
 Doomed by the vote of Argos' folk to die ;
 Yea, also Pylades, above all other

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἰσάδελφος ἀνὴρ,
ἔξιθύνων νοσερὸν κῶλον,
ποδὶ κηδοσύνῳ παράσειρος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οἱ γὰρ πρὸ τύμβου γάρ σ' ὀρώσ' ἀναστένω,
ἀδελφέ, καὶ πάροιθε νερτέρων πυρᾶς.
1020 οἱ γὰρ μάλ' αὐθις ὡς σ' ἰδοῦσ' ἐν ὄμμασι
πανυστάτην πρόσοψιν ἐξέστην φρενῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ σὶγ' ἀφείσα τοὺς γυναικείους γόους
στέρξεις τὰ κρανθέντ' ; οἰκτρὰ μὲν τάδ', ἀλλ' ὅμως
[φέρειν ἀνάγκη τὰς παρεστώσας τύχας.]

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ πῶς σιωπῶ, φέγγος εἰσορᾶν θεοῦ
τόδ' οὐκέθ' ἡμῖν τοῖς ταλαιπώροις μέτα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σὺ μὴ μ' ἀπόκτειν'· ἄλις ἀπ' Ἀργείας χερὸς
τέθηγχ' ὁ τλήμων· τὰ δὲ παρόντ' ἔα κακά.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ μέλεος ἥβης σῆς, Ὀρέστα, καὶ πότμου
1030 θανάτου τ' ἀώρου. ζῆν ἐχρῆν σ', ὅτ' οὐκέτ' εἶ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν μοι περιβάλης ἀνανδρίαν,
εἰς δάκρυα πορθμεύουσ' ὑπομνήσει κακῶν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θανούμεθ'· οὐχ οἶόν τε μὴ στένειν κακά.
πᾶσιν γὰρ οἰκτρὸν ἢ φίλη ψυχὴ βροτοῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τόδ' ἡμαρ ἡμῖν κύριον· δεῖ δ' ἢ βρόχους
ἄπτειν κρεμαστοὺς ἢ ξίφος θήγειν χερί.

ORESTES

Truest of friends, close-cleaving as a brother,
Cometh, Orestes' fainting steps upbearing,
Ever with heedful feet a yokemate nigh.

Enter ORESTES and PYLADES.

ELECTRA

Woe's me! I mourn to see thee, brother, stand
Before the tomb, before the pyre of death.

Woe's me again! As gaze mine eyes on thee
With this last look, my spirit faileth me.

1020

ORESTES

Nay, hush; from wailings womanlike forbear.
Bow to thy fate: 'tis piteous; none the less
Needs must we bear the doom that stands hard by.

ELECTRA

Nay, how be hushed? To see yon Sun-god's light
No more is given to us unhappy ones.

ORESTES

Ah, slay me not! Enough that Argive hands
Have slain a wretch: let be the imminent ills.

ELECTRA

Woe for thy youth, for thine untimely death,
Orestes! Life, not death, had been thy due.

1030

ORESTES

Ah, by the Gods, I pray, unman me not,
Nor move to tears by mention of our woes.

ELECTRA

We die! I cannot but bemoan our fate.
All mortals grieve for precious life forgone.

ORESTES

This is our day of doom: the noose must coil
About our necks, or our hands grasp the sword.

215

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

σύ νύν μ', ἀδελφέ, μή τις Ἀργείων κτάνη
ὑβρισμα θέμενος τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος γόνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1040

ἄλις τὸ μητρὸς αἶμ' ἔχω· σέ δ' οὐ κτεινῶ,
ἀλλ' αὐτόχειρι θνήσχ' ὅτῳ βούλει τρόπῳ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔσται τάδ'· οὐδὲν σοῦ ξίφους λελείψομαι
ἀλλ' ἀμφιθεῖναι σῆ δέρη θέλω χέρας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τέρπου κενὴν ὄνησιν, εἰ τερπνὸν τόδε
θαιάτου πέλας βεβῶσι, περιβαλεῖν χέρας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατ', ὦ ποθεινὸν ἠδιστόν τ' ἔχων
τῆς σῆς ἀδελφῆς ὄνομα καὶ ψυχὴν μίαν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1050

ἔκ τοί με τήξεις· καί σ' ἀμείψασθαι θέλω
φιλότητι χειρῶν. τί γὰρ ἔτ' αἰδοῦμαι τάλας;
ὦ στέρν' ἀδελφῆς, ὦ φίλον πρόσπτυγμ' ἐμοί,
τάδ' ἀντὶ παίδων καὶ γαμηλίου λέχους
προσφθέγματ' ἀμφὶ τοῖς ταλαιπώροις πάρα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φεῦ·
πῶς ἂν ξίφος νῶ ταυτόν, εἰ θέμις, κτάνοι
καὶ μνήμα δέξαιθ' ἓν, κέδρου τεχνάσματα;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἠδιστ' ἂν εἴη ταῦθ'· ὀρᾶς δὲ δὴ φίλων
ὡς ἐσπανίσμεθ', ὥστε κοινωνεῖν τάφου.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδ' εἴφ' ὑπὲρ σοῦ, μὴ θάνοις σπουδὴν ἔχων,
Μενέλαος ὁ κακός, ὁ προδότης τοῦμοῦ πατρός;

ORESTES

ELECTRA

Brother, thou slay me, that no Argive slay,
With outrage foul to Agamemnon's child.

ORESTES

Suffice the mother's blood : I will not slay thee.
Die in what wise thou wilt by thine own hand.

1040

ELECTRA

O yea : I will not lag behind thy sword.
But oh to lay mine arms about thy neck !

ORESTES

Enjoy that vain delight, if joy it be
For those that stand at death's door to embrace.

ELECTRA

Dearest, who bear'st a name desirable
And sweet on sister's lips !—one soul with mine !

ORESTES

Ah, thou wilt melt me ! Fain would I reply
With arms of love ! Ah, why still shrink in shame ?
O sister-bosom, dear embrace to me !
In children's stead, instead of wedded arms,
This farewell to the hapless is vouchsafed.

1050

ELECTRA (*sighs*)

Oh might the selfsame sword, if this may be,
Slay us, one coffin cedar-wrought receive !

ORESTES

Most sweet were this : yet, how forlorn of friends
Thou seest are we, who cannot claim one tomb !

ELECTRA

Spake Menelaus not for thee, to plead
Against thy death—base traitor to my sire ?

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1060 οὐδ' ὄμμ' ἔδειξεν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ σκήπτροις ἔχων
 τὴν ἐλπίδ', ἠὺλαβεῖτο μὴ σώζειν φίλους.
 ἀλλ' εἶ', ὅπως γενναῖα κάγαμέμονος
 δράσαντε κατθανούμεθ' ἀξιώτατα.
 καὶ γὼ μὲν εὐγένειαν ἀποδείξω πόλει,
 παίσας πρὸς ἦπαρ φασγάνῳ· σὲ δ' αὖ χρεῶν
 ὅμοια πράσσειν τοῖς ἐμοῖς τολμήμασι.
 Πυλάδῃ, σὺ δ' ἡμῖν τοῦ φόνου γενοῦ βραβεύς,
 καὶ κατθανόντων εὖ περιστείλον δέμας,
 θάψον τε κοινῇ πρὸς πατρός τύμβον φέρων.
 καὶ χαῖρ'· ἐπ' ἔργον δ', ὡς ὄρας, πορεύομαι.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

1070 ἐπίσχεσ. ἐν μὲν πρῶτά σοι μομφὴν ἔχω,
 εἰ ζῆν με χρήζειν σοῦ θανόντος ἠλπισας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί γὰρ προσήκει κατθανεῖν σ' ἐμοῦ μέτα :

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ἦρου ; τί δὲ ζῆν σῆς ἐταιρίας ἄτερ ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔκτανες σὴν μητέρ', ὡς ἐγὼ τάλας.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

σὺν σοί γε κοινῇ· ταῦτ' αἰ καὶ πάσχειν με δεῖ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1080 ἀπόδος τὸ σῶμα πατρί, μὴ σύνθνησκέ μοι.
 σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἔστι πόλις, ἐμοὶ δ' οὐκ ἔστι δῆ,
 καὶ δῶμα πατρός καὶ μέγας πλούτου λιμὴν.
 γάμων δὲ τῆς μὲν δυσπότημου τῆσδ' ἐσφάλης,
 ἦν σοι κατηγγύισ', ἐταιρίαν σέβων
 σὺ δ' ἄλλο λέκτρον παιδοποίησαι λαβών,
 κῆδος δὲ τοῦμὸν καὶ σὸν οὐκέτ' ἐστὶ δῆ.
 ἀλλ' ὦ ποθεινὸν ὄνομ' ὀμιλίας ἐμῆς,

ORESTES

ORESTES

His face he showed not—fixed upon the throne
His hope, with good heed not to save his friends !
Come, prove we by our deeds our high-born strain, 1060
And worthily of Ágamemnon die.

Yea, I will show all men my royal blood,
Plunging the sword into mine heart : but thou
Must match with thine the unflinching deed I do.
Sit thou as umpire, Pylades, to our death.
Meetly lay out the bodies of the dead :
Bear to our sire's grave, and with him entomb.
Farewell : I go, thou seest, to do the deed. [*Going.*

PYLADES

Tarry :—first, one reproach have I for thee :
Thou didst expect that I would live, thou dead ! 1070

ORESTES

How, what hast thou to do to die with me ?

PYLADES

Dost ask ? Without thy friendship what were life ?

ORESTES

Thy mother *thou* slew'st not, as I—woe's me ?

PYLADES

I shared thy deed, thy sufferings must I share.

ORESTES

Restore thee to thy sire ; die not with me.
Thou hast a city,—none to me is left,—
A father's home, a haven wide of wealth.
Thou canst not wed this maiden evil-starred
Whom I for friendship's sake betrothed to thee.
Yet take thee another bride and rear thee sons : 1080
The looked-for tie 'twixt thee and me is not.
Now, O dear name of my companionship,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

χαῖρ'· οὐ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἔστι τοῦτο, σοί γε μὴν·
οἱ γὰρ θανόντες χαρμάτων τητώμεθα.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ἢ πολὺ λέλειψαι τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,
μήθ' αἰμά μου δέξαιτο κάρπιμον πέδον,
μὴ λαμπρὸς αἰθήρ, εἴ σ' ἐγὼ προδοῦς ποτε
ἐλευθερώσας τοῦμὸν ἀπολίποιμί σε.

1090

καὶ συγκατέκτανον γάρ, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι,
καὶ πάντ' ἐβούλευσ' ὧν σὺ νῦν τίνεις δίκας·
καὶ ξυνθανεῖν οὖν δεῖ με σοὶ καὶ τῆδ' ὁμοῦ.
ἐμὴν γὰρ αὐτήν, ἧς λέχος κατήνεσας,
κρίνω δάμαρτα· τί γὰρ ἐρῶ καλόν ποτε
γῆν Δελφίδ' ἐλθὼν Φωκέων ἀκρόπτολιν,
ὃς πρὶν μὲν ὑμᾶς δυστυχεῖν φίλος παρή,
νῦν δ' οὐκέτ' εἰμὶ δυστυχοῦντί σοι φίλος·
οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν κάμοι μέλει.
ἐπεὶ δὲ κατθανούμεθ', εἰς κοινούς λόγους
ἔλθωμεν, ὡς ἂν Μενέλεως ξυνδυστυχῆ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1100

ὦ φίλτατ', εἰ γὰρ τοῦτο κατθάνοιμ' ἰδῶν.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

πιθοῦ νυν, ἀνάμεινον δὲ φασγάνου τομάς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μενῶ, τὸν ἐχθρὸν εἴ τι τιμωρήσομαι.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

σίγα νυν· ὡς γυναιξὶ πιστεύω βραχύ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μηδὲν τρέσης τάσδ'· ὡς πάρισ' ἡμῖν φίλαι.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

Ἐλένην κτάνωμεν, Μενέλεω λύπην πικράν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πῶς ; τὸ γὰρ ἔτοιμον ἔστιν, εἴ γ' ἔσται καλῶς.

ORESTES

Farewell!—not *this* for us, perchance for thee:
For us, the dead, is no glad *faring-well*!

PYLADES

Far dost thou fail of hitting mine intent.
May neither fruitful earth receive my blood,
Nor sunlit sky, if I forsake thee ever,
Deliver mine own soul, and fall from thee!
I shared the murder, I disown it not;
All did I plan for which thou sufferest now;
Therefore I needs must die with thee, with her. 1090
For I account her pledged of thee to me,
My wife. What tale fair-seeming shall I tell,
Coming to Delphi, to the Phocians' burg,
Who was your close friend ere your fortunes fell,
Now, in calamity, no more thy friend?
Nay, nay, this task is mine no less than thine.
But, since we needs must die, debate we now
How Menelaus too may share our woe.

ORESTES

Dear friend, would I could look on this, and die! 1100

PYLADES

Hearken to me, and that sword-stroke defer.

ORESTES

I wait, if so I avenge me on my foe.

PYLADES (*pointing to Chorus*)

Speak low!—I put in women little trust.

ORESTES

Fear not for these: all here be friends to us.

PYLADES

Slay Helen—Menelaus' bitter grief!

ORESTES

How? Ready am I, if this may well befall.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

σφάξαντες. ἐν δόμοις δὲ κρύπτεται σέθεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μάλιστα· καὶ δὴ πάντ' ἀποσφραγίζεται.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐκέθ', "Αἰδην νυμφίον κεκτημένη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1110 καὶ πῶς ; ἔχει γὰρ βαρβάρους ὀπάουνας.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τίνας ; Φρυγῶν γὰρ οὐδέν' ἂν τρέσαιμ' ἐγώ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἴους ἐνόπτρων καὶ μύρων ἐπιστάτας.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τρυφὰς γὰρ ἤκει δεῦρ' ἔχουσα Τρωικὰς ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὥσθ' Ἑλλάς αὐτῇ σμικρὸν οἰκητήριον.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

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

γούους πρὸς αὐτὴν θησόμεσθ' ἂ πάσχομεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὥστ' ἐκδακρῦσαί γ' ἔνδοθεν κεχαρμένην.

ORESTES

PYLADES

With sword-thrust : in thine halls she hideth now.

ORESTES

Even so—and setteth now her seal on all.

PYLADES

She seals no more, when Hades hails her bride.

ORESTES

Nay, how? She hath barbarian serving-men. 1110

PYLADES

Whom? Phrygians!—'tis not I would quail for such.

ORESTES

Ay,—chiefs of mirrors and of odours they.

PYLADES

So? Hath she come with Trojan luxury hither?

ORESTES

Ay; for her mansion Hellas is too strait.

PYLADES

Naught is the slave against the freeborn man.

ORESTES

This deed but done, I dread not twice to die.

PYLADES

Nay, neither I, so I avenge but thee.

ORESTES

Declare the thing; unfold what thou wouldst say.

PYLADES

We will into the house, as deathward-bound.

ORESTES

Thus much I grasp, but grasp not yet the rest. 1120

PYLADES

We will make moan unto her of our plight.

ORESTES

That she may weep—rejoicing in her heart!

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

καὶ νῶν παρέσται ταῦθ' ἄπερ κείνη τότε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔπειτ' ἀγῶνα πῶς ἀγωνιούμεθα;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

κρύπτ' ἐν πέπλοισι τοισίδ' ἔξομεν ξίφη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πρόσθεν δ' ὀπαδῶν τίς ὄλεθρος γενήσεται;

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ἐκκλήσομεν σφᾶς ἄλλον ἄλλοσε στέγης.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ τόν γε μὴ σιγῶντ' ἀποκτείνειν χρεών.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

εἴτ' αὐτὸ δηλοῖ τοῦργου οἷ τεινεῖν χρεών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1130 Ἐλένην φονεύειν· μαυθάνω τὸ σύμβολον.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

ἔγνωσ' ἄκουσον δ' ὡς καλῶς βουλευόμαι.
εἰ μὲν γὰρ εἰς γυναῖκα σωφρονεστέραν
ξίφος μεθεῖμεν, δυσκλεῆς ἂν ἦν φόνος·
νῦν δ' ὑπὲρ ἀπάσης Ἑλλάδος δώσει δίκην,
ὦν πατέρας ἔκτειν', ὦν τ' ἀπώλεσεν τέκνα,
νύμφας τ' ἔθηκεν ὀρφανὰς ξυναόρων.
ὄλολυγμὸς ἔσται, πῦρ τ' ἀνάψουσι θεοῖς,
σοὶ πολλὰ κἄμοι κέδν' ἀρώμενοι τυχεῖν,
κακῆς γυναικὸς οὔνεχ' αἰμ' ἐπράξαμεν.

1140

ὁ μητροφόντης δ' οὐ καλεῖ ταύτην κτανῶν,
ἀλλ' ἀπολιπὼν τοῦτ' ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον πεσεῖ,
Ἐλένης λεγόμενος τῆς πολυκτόνου φονεύς.
οὐ δεῖ ποτ' οὐ δεῖ Μενέλεων μὲν εὐτυχεῖν,

ORESTES

PYLADES

Ah! we shall be in like case then with her!¹

ORESTES

Thereafter, how shall we strive out the strife?

PYLADES

Hidden beneath these cloaks will we have swords.

ORESTES

But in her thralls' sight how shall she be slain?

PYLADES

In several chambers will we bar them out.

ORESTES

And whoso keeps not silence must we slay.

PYLADES

Thenceforth the deed's self points the path to us,—

ORESTES

To Helen's death: the watchword know I well. 1130

PYLADES

Thou say'st: and honourable my counsel is;
For, if we loosed the sword against a dame
More virtuous, were that slaying infamous.
But *she* shall for all Hellas' sake be punished,
Whose sires she slew, whose children she destroyed,
Whose brides she widowed of their yokefellows.
There shall be shouting, fires to heaven shall blaze,
With blessings many invoked on thee and me,
For that we shed a wicked woman's blood.
Slay her, thou shalt not *matricide* be called: 1140
This cast aside, thou shalt find fairer lot,
Styled Slayer of Helen, a nation's murderess.
It must not be that Menelaus thrive,

¹ i.e. Pretending to sorrow, but inwardly exulting, as having her in our power.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1150 τὸν σὸν δὲ πατέρα καὶ σὲ κάδελφὴν θανεῖν,
μητέρα τ', ἐὼ τοῦτ', οὐ γὰρ εὐπρεπὲς λέγειν,
δόμους τ' ἔχειν σούς, δι' Ἀγαμέμνονος δόρυ
λαβόντα νύμφην· μὴ γὰρ οὖν ζῶν ἔτι,
ἦν μὴ 'π' ἐκείνη φάσγανον σπασώμεθα.
ἦν δ' οὖν τὸν Ἑλένης μὴ κατάσχωμεν φόνον,
πρήσαντες οἴκους τοῦσδε κατθανούμεθα.
ἐνὸς γὰρ οὐ σφαλέντες ἔξομεν κλέος,
καλῶς θανόντες ἢ καλῶς σεσσωσμένοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πάσαις γυναιξίν ἀξία στυγεῖν ἔφυ
ἢ Τυνδαρίσ παις, ἢ κατήσχυεν γένος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ·
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν κρεῖσσον ἢ φίλος σαφής,
οὐ πλοῦτος, οὐ τυραννίς· ἀλόγιστον δέ τι
τὸ πλῆθος ἀντάλλαγμα γενναίου φίλου.
1160 σὺ γὰρ τά τ' εἰς Αἴγισθον ἐξηῦρες κακά,
καὶ πλησίον παρήσθα κινδύνων ἐμοί,
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,
ἵν' ἀνταναλώσω μὲν οἳ με προὔδοσαν,
στένωσι δ' οἵπερ κἀμ' ἔθηκαν ἄθλιον.
1170 Ἀγαμέμνονός τοι παῖς πέφυχ', ὃς Ἑλλάδος
ἦρξ' ἀξιωθείς, οὐ τύραννος ἀλλ' ὄμως
ῥώμην θεοῦ τιν' ἔσχ'. ὃν οὐ καταισχυνῶ
δοῦλον παρασχῶν θάνατον, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως
ψυχὴν ἀφήσω, Μενέλεων δὲ τίσομαι.
ἐνὸς γὰρ εἰ λαβοίμεθ', εὐτυχοῖμεν ἄν,

ORESTES

The while thy sire, thou, and thy sister die,
 Thy mother—*that* I pass, unmeet to say,—
 And that he hold thine halls who won his bride
 By Agamemnon's spear! May I not live
 If we shall not against her draw the sword!
 If haply we achieve not Helen's death,
 Yon palace will we fire, and so will die. 1150
 For, of two glories, one we will not miss,
 To die with honour, or with honour 'scape.

CHORUS

This child of Tyndareus, who hath brought shame
 On womankind, deserves all women's hate.

ORESTES

Ha! nought is better than a loyal friend—
 Nor wealth, nor lordship! Sure, of none account
 The crowd is, weighed against one noble friend.
 Aegisthus' punishment didst thou devise;
 On peril's brink thou stoodest at my side;
 And profferest now avenging on my foes, 1160
 Nor stand'st aloof;—but I will cease from praise,
 For weariness cometh even of overpraise.
 I must in any wise give up the ghost,
 Yet fain would sting mine enemies ere I die,
 That my betrayers I may so requite,
 And they which made me miserable may groan.
 Agamemnon's son am I, the son of one
 Held worthy to rule Greece—no despot, yet
 A god's might had he. Him I will not shame,
 Brooking a slave's death; but as a free man 1170
 Mid vengeance on Menelaus breathe out life.
 Might we gain one thing, fortunate were we

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἴ ποθεν ἄελπτος παραπέσοι σωτηρία
κτανούσι μὴ θανούσιν· εὐχομαι τάδε,
ὃ βούλομαι γάρ, ἠδὺ καὶ διὰ στόμα,
πτηνοῖσι μύθοις ἀδαπάνως τέρψαι φρένα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγώ, κασίγνητ', αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἔχειν δοκῶ,
σωτηρίαν σοὶ τῷδέ τ' ἐκ τρίτων τ' ἐμοί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1180

θεοῦ λέγεις πρόνοιαν. ἀλλὰ ποῦ τόδε ;
εἴπει τὸ συνετόν γ' οἶδα σῆ ψυχῇ παρόν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν· καὶ σὺ δεῦρο νοῦν ἔχε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λέγ'· ὡς τὸ μέλλειν ἀγάθ' ἔχει τιν' ἠδονήν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἐλένης κάτοισθα θυγατέρ' ; εἰδότη ἠρόμην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἶδ', ἣν ἔθρεψεν Ἐρμιόνην μήτηρ ἐμή.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

αὕτη βέβηκε πρὸς Κλυταιμνήστρας τάφου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί χρῆμα δράσους ; ὑποτίθης τίν' ἐλπίδα ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

χοὰς κατασπείσους ὑπὲρ μητρὸς τάφου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ δὴ τί μοι τοῦτ' εἶπας εἰς σωτηρίαν ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

συλλάβεθ' ὄμηρον τήνδ', ὅταν στείχη πάλιν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1190

τίνος τόδ' εἶπας φάρμακον τρισσοῖς φίλοις ;

ORESTES

If, past hope, unto us deliverance chanced,
To slay and not be slain. For this I pray:
For sweet the wish is—sweet through sighing lips
To cheer the heart with winged words costing naught.

ELECTRA

I, brother, have this same thing found, meseems,—
Deliverance for thee, for him, for me.

ORESTES

God's foresight claim'st thou!—yet why say I this,
Since I know wisdom dwelleth in thine heart? 1180

ELECTRA

Hearken then: give thou also (*to PVL.*) heed hereto.

ORESTES

Speak: there is pleasure even in hope of good.

ELECTRA

Thou knowest Helen's daughter?—wherefore ask?

ORESTES

I know—my mother nursed Hermione.

ELECTRA

Even she hath gone to Clytemnestra's tomb.

ORESTES

With what intent?—now what hope whisperest thou?

ELECTRA

To pour drink-offerings o'er our mother's tomb.

ORESTES

Wherein to safety tendeth this thou nam'st?

ELECTRA

Seize her, our hostage, when she cometh back.

ORESTES

What peril-salve for us three friends were this? 1190

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Ἐλενης θανούσης, ἣν τι Μενέλεως σὲ δρᾶ
 ἦ τόνδε κάμει, πᾶν γὰρ ἐν φίλον τόδε,
 λέγ' ὡς φονεύσεις Ἑρμιόνην· ξίφος δὲ χρῆ
 δέρη πρὸς αὐτῇ παρθένου σπάσαντ' ἔχειν.
 κἂν μὲν σε σώζῃ μὴ θανεῖν χρῆζων κόρη
 Μενέλαος, Ἑλένης πτώμ' ἰδὼν ἐν αἵματι,
 μέθες πεπᾶσθαι πατρὶ παρθένου δέμας·
 ἦν δ' ὄξυθύμου μὴ κρατῶν φρονήματος
 κτείνει σε, καὶ σὺ σφάζε παρθένου δέρην.
 καὶ νιν δοκῶ, τὸ πρῶτον ἦν πολὺς παρῆ,
 χρόνῳ μαλάξειν σπλάγχχνον· οὔτε γὰρ θρασίς
 οὔτ' ἄλκιμος πέφυκε. τήνδ' ἡμῖν ἔχω
 σωτηρίας ἔπαλξιν. εἴρηται λόγος.

1200

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ τὰς φρένας μὲν ἄρσενας κεκτημένη,
 τὸ σῶμα δ' ἐν γυναιξὶ θηλείαις πρέπον,
 ὡς ἀξία ζῆν μᾶλλον ἢ θανεῖν ἔφυς.
 Πυλάδην, τοιαύτης ἄρ' ἀμαρτήσῃ τάλας
 γυναικὸς ἢ ζῶν μακάριον κτήσῃ λέχος.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

εἰ γὰρ γένοιτο, Φωκέων δ' ἔλθοι πόλιν
 καλοῖσιν ὑμεναίοισιν ἀξιουμένη.

1210

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἦξει δ' ἐς οἶκους Ἑρμιόνη τίνος χρόνου ;
 ὡς τᾶλλα γ' εἶπας, εἵπερ εὐτυχῆσομεν,
 κάλλισθ', ἐλόντες σκύμνον ἀνοσίου πατρός.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

καὶ δὴ πέλας νιν δωμάτων εἶναι δοκῶ·
 τοῦ γὰρ χρόνου τὸ μῆκος αὐτὸ συντρέχει.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

If, Helen slain, Menelaus seek to harm
Thee, him, or me,—this bond of friends is one,—
Cry, thou wilt slay Hermione : the sword
Drawn must thou hold hard at the maiden's neck.
Then, if Menelaus, lest his daughter die,
Will save thee, seeing Helen fallen in blood,
Yield to her sire's embrace the maiden's form.
But if, controlling not his furious mood,
He seek to slay thee, pierce the maid's neck through.
I ween, though swelling be his port at first, 1200
His wrath at last shall cool. Nor brave nor stout
By nature is he. This I find for us
The bulwark of deliverance. I have said.

ORESTES

O thou who hast the spirit of a man,
Albeit in body woman manifest,
How worthier far art thou to live than die !
Such woman, Pylades, shalt thou, alas !
Forfeit, or living win in wedlock blest.

PYLADES

God grant it so, that to the Phocians' burg
She come, for honour meet of spousals proud ! 1210

ORESTES

But to the house when comes Hermione ?
For all that thou hast said is passing well,
So we may trap this impious father's whelp.

ELECTRA

In sooth, I ween, she is nigh the palace now,
For the time's lapse runs consonant thereto.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καλῶς· σὺ μὲν νῦν, σύγγον' Ἡλέκτρα, δόμου
 πάρος μένουσα παρθένου δέχου πόδα·
 φύλασσε δ' ἦν τις, πρὶν τελευτηθῆ φόνος,
 ἢ ξύμμαχός τις ἢ κασίγνητος πατρὸς
 1220 ἐλθὼν ἐς οἴκους φθῆ, γέγωνέ τ' εἰς 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,
 ὦ δῶμα ναίων νυκτὸς ὀρφναίας πάτερ,
 καλεῖ σ' Ὀρέστης παῖς σὸς ἐπίκουρον μολεῖν
 τοῖς δεομένοισι. διὰ σὲ γὰρ πάσχω τάλας
 ἀδίκως· προδέδομαι δ' ὑπὸ κασιγνήτου σέθεν,
 1230 δίκαια πράξας· οὐ θέλω δάμαρθ' ἔλων
 κτεῖναι· σὺ δ' ἡμῖν τοῦδε συλλήπτωρ γενοῦ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ πάτερ, ἰκοῦ δῆτ', εἰ κλύεις εἴσω χθονὸς
 τέκνων καλούντων, οὐ σέθεν θνήσκουσ' ὑπερ.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὦ συγγένεια πατρὸς ἐμοῦ, κάμας λιτάς,
 Ἄγαμέμνον, εἰσάκουσον, ἔκσωσον τέκνα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔκτεινα μητέρ',

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἠψάμην δ' ἐγὼ ξίφους.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγὼ δ' ἐπενεκέλευσα κάπελυσ' ὄκνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σοί, πάτερ, ἀρήγων.

ORESTES

ORESTES

'Tis well. Sister Electra, tarry thou
 Before the halls to meet the maiden's steps.
 Keep watch lest any,—brother of our sire,
 Or ally—ere this deed be wrought, draw near
 The house, forestalling us. Give token thou— 1220
 Smite on the door, or send a cry within.
 Now pass we in, and for this latest strife
 Arm we our hands with falchions, Pylades :
 For thou art fellow-toiler in my toil.
 Father, who dwellest in dark halls of night,
 Thy son Orestes bids thee come to help
 Those in sore need. For thy sake suffer I
 Wrongfully—by thy brother am betrayed,
 Though I wrought righteousness. I fain would
 seize
 His wife, and slay : be thou our help herein ! 1230

ELECTRA

Come, father, come, if thou in earth's embrace
 Hearest thy children cry, who die for thee !

PYLADES

My father's kinsman,¹ to my prayers withal,
 Agamemnon, hearken ; save thy children thou.

ORESTES

I slew my mother—

PYLADES

I too grasped the sword !

ELECTRA

I cheered thee on, snapped trammels of delay

ORESTES

Sire, for thine help !

¹ Pylades' mother was Agamemnon's sister.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

οὐδ' ἐγὼ προὔδωκά σε.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

οὐκουν ὀνειδή τάδε κλύων ῥύσει τέκνα ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δακρύοις κατασπένδω σ'.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐγὼ δ' οἴκτοισί γε.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

1240

παύσασθε, καὶ πρὸς ἔργον ἐξορμώμεθα.
εἵπερ γὰρ εἴσω γῆς ἀκοντίζουσ' ἀραί,
κλύει. σὺ δ', ὦ Ζεῦ πρόγονε καὶ Δίκης σέβας,
δότη' εὐτυχῆσαι τῶδ' ἐμοί τε τῆδέ τε·
τρισοῖς φίλοις γὰρ εἰς ἀγών, δίκη μία,
ἢ ζῆν ἅπασιν ἢ θανεῖν ὀφείλεται.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

Μυκηνίδες ὦ φίλιαι,
τὰ πρῶτα κατὰ Πελασγὸν ἔδος Ἀργείων. στρ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1250

τίνα θροεῖς αὐδάν, πότνια; παραμένει
γὰρ ἔτι σοι τόδ' ἐν Δαναϊδῶν πόλει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

στήθ' αἰ μὲν ὑμῶν τόνδ' ἀμαξήρη τρίβον,
αἰ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἄλλον οἶμον εἰς φρουρὰν δόμων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δέ με τόδε χρέος ἀπύεις,
ἔννεπέ μοι, φίλα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φόβος ἔχει με μή τις ἐπὶ δώμασι
σταθεὶς ἐπὶ φοίνιον αἶμα
πήματα πῆμασιν ἐξεύρη.

ORESTES

ELECTRA

Nor I abandoned thee!

PYLADES

Wilt thou not hear this challenge—save thine own?

ORESTES

I pour thee tears for offerings!

ELECTRA

Wailings I!

PYLADES

Cease ye, and let us haste unto the deed; 1240
For if prayers, javelin-like, pierce earth, he hears.
Forefather Zeus, and Justice' majesty,
To him, to me, to her, grant happy speed!
Three friends—their venture one, the forfeit one,—
Owe all the selfsame debt, to live or die.

[*ORESTES and PYLADES enter the palace.*]

ELECTRA

Dames of Mycenae, beloved of me, (*Str.*)
In the Argives' Pelasgian dwelling the noblest ye—

CHORUS

What wouldst thou say unto us, O Princess?—for thine
This name is yet in the city of Danaus' line. 1250

ELECTRA

Set ye yourselves—along the highway some,
And on yon bypath some—to watch the house.

CHORUS

But tell to me, friend, why wouldst thou win
This service of me for thy need?

ELECTRA

I fear lest one yon palace within,
Who hath set him to work a bloody deed,
May earn him but murder for murder's meed.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α

χωρεῖτ', ἐπειγώμεσθ'· ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τρίβον
τόνδ' ἐκφυλάξω, τὸν πρὸς ἡλίου βολάς.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β

1260

καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ τόνδ', ὃς πρὸς ἑσπέραν φέρει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

δόχμιά νυν κόρας διάφερ' ὀμμάτων
ἐκείθεν ἐνθάδ', εἶτα παλινσκοπιάν.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α

ἔχομεν ὡς θροεῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἐλίσσετέ νυν βλέφαρον,
κόρας διάδοτε διὰ βοστρύχων πάντη.

ἀντ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β

1270

ᾧδε τίς ἐν τρίβῳ; πρόσεχε, τίς ᾧδ' ἄρ' ἀμ-
φὶ μέλαθρον πολεῖ σὸν ἀγρότας ἀνήρ;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἀπωλόμεσθ' ἄρ', ᾧ φίλαι· κεκρυμμένους
θῆρας ξιφήρεις αὐτίκ' ἐχθροῖσιν φανεῖ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β

ἄφοβος ἔχε· κενός, ᾧ φίλα,
στίβος ὃν οὐ δοκεῖς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δέ; τὸ σὸν βέβαιον ἔτι μοι μένει;
δὸς ἀγγελίαν ἀγαθάν τιν',
εἰ τάδ' ἔρημα τὰ πρόσθ' αὐλάς.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α

καλῶς τά γ' ἐνθένδ'· ἀλλὰ τὰπὶ σοῦ σκόπει
ὡς οὔτις ἡμῖν Δαναίδων πελάζεται.

ORESTES

CHORUS *breaks into two parties.*

SEMICHORUS 1

On, hasten we : for me, upon this path
Will I keep watch that toward the sunrise looks.

SEMICHORUS 2

And I on this, that trendeth to the west. 1260

ELECTRA

Sideward glance ye—O rightward and leftward aye
Turn ye your eyes : then gaze on the rearward way.

SEMICHORUS 1

Even as thou bid'st, we obey.

ELECTRA

Now cast ye around you your eyes: yea, wide (*Ant.*)
Through the veil of your tresses flash them on every
side.

SEMICHORUS 2

Who is this on the path?—take heed!—what peasant
is here
That strayeth with haunting feet to thine halls anear? 1270

ELECTRA

Undone, friends!—to our foes shall he reveal
Straightway the armed lions lurking there!

SEMICHORUS 2

Nay, untrodden the path is—have no fear,
O friend—for the which was thy doubt.

ELECTRA

And thou—doth thine highway abide yet clear?
If thou hast good tidings, ah, tell it out
If void be the space yon forecourt about.

SEMICHORUS 1

All here is well. Look thou unto thy side :
To us draws nigh no man of Danaus' sons.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β

1280

εἰς ταῦτόν ἤκει· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ τῆδ' ὄχλος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φέρε νυν ἐν πύλαισιν ἀκοὰν βάλω·
τί μέλλεθ' οἱ κατ' οἶκον ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ
σφάγια φοινίσσειν;
οὐκ εἰσακούουσ'· ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ κακῶν.
ἄρ' εἰς τὸ κάλλος ἐκκεκώφηται ξίφη;
τάχα τις Ἀργείων ἔνοπλος ὀρμήσας
ποδὶ βοηδρόμῳ μέλαθρα προσμίξει.
σκέψασθέ νυν ἄμεινον· οὐχ ἔδρας ἀκμή·
ἄλλ' αἱ μὲν ἐνθάδ', αἱ δ' ἐκεῖσ' ἐλίσσετε.

1290

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀμείβω κέλευθον σκοποῦσα πάντα.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ἰὼ Πελασγὸν Ἄργος, ὄλλυμαι κακῶς.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α

ἠκούσαθ'; ἄνδρες χεῖρ' ἔχουσιν ἐν φόνῳ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β

Ἐλένης τὸ κώκυμ' ἐστίν, ὡς ἀπεικάσαι.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1300

ὦ Διός, ὦ Διὸς ἀέναον κράτος,
ἔλθ' ἐπίκουρον ἐμοῖσι φίλοισι πάντως.

ΕΛΕΝΗ

Μενέλαε, θνήσκω· σὺ δὲ παρών μ' οὐκ ὠφέλει.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

φονεύετε καίνετε ὄλλυτε,
δίπτυχα δίστομα φάσγανα πέμπετε
ἐκ χερσὸς ἰέμενοι
τὰν λιποπάτορα λιπόγαμόν θ', ἃ πλείστους
ἔκανε Ἑλλάνων
δορὶ παρὰ ποταμὸν ὀλομένους, ὅθι

ORESTES

SEMICHORUS 2

Thy tale is one with mine : no stir is here. 1280

ELECTRA

Go to, through the gates as a shaft let me speed my
cry :—

Within, ho !—why do ye tarry, and no foe nigh,
Your hands with the slaughter to dye ?

They hear me not !—woe for my miseries !

Ha, at her beauty are the swords struck dumb ?

Soon will some Argive mailed, with racing feet

That rush to rescue, burst into the halls ! 1290

Watch with more heed,—no time to sit still this !

Bestir ye, hither these, those thitherward.

CHORUS

I scan the diverse ways—on every hand I gaze—

HELEN (*within*)

Pelasgian Argos, ho !—I am foully slain !

SEMICHORUS 1

Heard ye ?—the men imbrue their hands in blood '

SEMICHORUS 2

Helen's the wild shriek is, to guess thereat.

ELECTRA

O power of Zeus, of Zeus—eternal power,
Come, aid my friends in this supremest hour ! 1300

HELEN (*within*)

Husband, I die ! So near, yet help'st thou not !

ELECTRA

Stab ye her—slay her—destroy !
Let them leap, the double-edged falchions twain,
From your grasp with a furious joy
Upon her who left husband and sire, who hath slain
Beside that river of Troy
Many a Greek by the spear who died,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1310

δάκρυα δάκρυσι συνέπεσε σιδαρεοῖς
βέλεσιν ἀμφὶ τὰς Σκαμάνδρου δίνας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σιγᾶτε σιγᾶτ'· ἤσθόμην κτύπου τινὸς
κέλευθον εἰσπεσόντος ἀμφὶ δώματα.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, εἰς μέσον φόνου
ἦδ' Ἑρμιόνη πάρεστι· παύσωμεν βοήν.
στείχει γὰρ εἰσπεσοῦσα δικτύων βρόχους.
καλὸν τὸ θήραμ', ἦν ἀλῶ, γενήσεται.
πάλιν κατάστηθ' ἡσύχῳ μὲν ὄμματι,
χρῶα δ' ἀδήλω τῶν δεδραμένων πέρι·
κἀγὼ σκυθρωποὺς ὀμμάτων ἔξω κόρας,
ὡς δῆθεν οὐκ εἰδυῖα τάχειργασμένα.

1320

ὦ παρθέν', ἦκεις τὸν Κλυταιμνήστρας τάφον
στέψασα καὶ σπείσασα νερτέροις χοάς;

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ἦκω, λαβοῦσα πρευμένειαν. ἀλλὰ μοι
φόβος τις εἰσελήλυθ', ἦντιν' ἐν δόμοις
τηλουργὸς οὔσα δωμάτων κλύω βοήν.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τί δ'· ἄξι' ἡμῖν τυγχάνει στεναγμάτων.

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

εὐφημος ἴσθι· τί δὲ νεώτερον λέγεις;

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

θανεῖν Ὀρέστην κἀμ' ἔδοξε τῆδε γῆ.

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

μὴ δῆτ', ἐμούς γε συγγενεῖς πεφυκότας.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

1330

ἄραρ'· ἀνάγκης εἰς ζυγὸν καθέσταμεν.

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ἦ τοῦδ' ἕκατι καὶ βοή κατὰ στέγας;

ORESTES

When the tears fell fast for the iron rain
That flashed Scamander's eddies beside !

CHORUS

Hush ye, O hush : I hear a footfall pass
But now into the path that skirts the house.

1310

ELECTRA

Belovèd dames, into the jaws of death
Hermione cometh ! Let our outcry cease :
For into the net's meshes, lo, she falls.
Fair quarry this shall be, so she be trapped.
Back to your stations step with quiet look,
With hue that gives no token of deeds done :
And I will wear a trouble-clouded eye,
As who of deeds accomplished knoweth nought.

1320

Enter HERMIONE.

Maiden, from wreathing Clytemnestra's grave,
From pouring offerings to the dead, art come ?

HERMIONE

I come, her favour won. But on mine ears
Hath smitten strange dismay touching a cry
Heard from the house when I was yet afar.

ELECTRA

Why not ?—to us things worthy groans befall.

HERMIONE

Ah, say not so ! What ill news tellest thou ?

ELECTRA

Argos decrees Orestes' death and mine.

HERMIONE

Ah, never !—you who are by blood my kin !

ELECTRA

'Tis fixed : beneath the yoke of doom we stand.

1330

HERMIONE

For this cause was the cry beneath the roof ?

241

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ικέτης γὰρ Ἑλένης γόνασι προσπεσὼν βοᾷ—

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

τίς; οὐδὲν οἶδα μᾶλλον, ἦν σὺ μὴ λέγῃς.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

τλήμων Ὀρέστης μὴ θανεῖν, ἐμοῦ θ' ὕπερ.

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ἐπ' ἀξίοισί τ' ἄρ' ἀνευφημεί δόμος.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

περὶ τοῦ γὰρ ἄλλου μᾶλλον ἂν φθέγγαιτό τις;

ἄλλ' ἐλθὲ καὶ μετάσχεσθε ἰκεσίας φίλοις,

σῆ μητρὶ προσπεσοῦσα τῇ μέγ' ὀλβία,

Μενέλαον ἡμᾶς μὴ θανόντας εἰσιδεῖν.

ἄλλ' ὦ τραφεῖσα μητρὸς ἐν χεροῖν ἐμῆς,

οἴκτειρον ἡμᾶς κἀπικούφισον κακῶν.

ἴθ' εἰς ἀγῶνα δεῦρ', ἐγὼ δ' ἠγήσομαι·

σωτηρίας γὰρ τέρμ' ἔχεις ἡμῖν μόνη.

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ἰδοῦ, διώκω τὸν ἐμὸν εἰς δόμους πόδα.

σώθηθ' ὅσον γε τοῦπ' ἔμ'.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ὦ κατὰ στέγας
φίλοι ξιφήρεις, οὐχὶ συλλήψεσθ' ἄγραν;

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

οἱ γὰρ τίνας τοῦσδ' εἰσορῶ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἡμῖν γὰρ ἦκεισθε, οὐχὶ σοί, σωτηρία.
σιγᾶν χρεῶν·

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ

ἔχεσθ' ἔχεσθε· φάσγανον δὲ πρὸς δέρη
βαλόντες ἠσυχάζεσθ', ὡς εἰδῆ τόδε

Μενέλαος, οὐνεκ' ἄνδρας, οὐ Φρύγας κακοῦς,
εὐρῶν ἔπραξεν οἷα χρὴ πράσσειν κακοῦς.

1340

1350

ORESTES

ELECTRA

The suppliant crying fell at Helen's knees,—

HERMIONE

Who?—nought the more I know, except thou tell.

ELECTRA

Orestes, pleading for his life, and mine.

HERMIONE

With reason then the dwelling rings with cries.

ELECTRA

For what cause rather should one lift his voice?
But come thou, and in supplicance join thy friends,
Falling before thy mother, the all-blest,
That Menelaus may not see us die.

O thou that in my mother's arms wast nursed, 1340

Have pity on us, of our woes relieve!

Come hither, meet the peril: I will lead.

With thee alone our safety's issue lies.

HERMIONE

Behold, into the house I speed my feet.

So far as in me lies, ye are saved. [*Enters the palace.*]

ELECTRA

Ho ye,
Armed friends within, will ye not seize the prey?

HERMIONE (*within*)

Alas for me! Whom see I?

ORESTES (*within*)

Hold thy peace.

Thou com'st for our deliverance, not for thine.

ELECTRA

Hold ye her—hold! Set to her throat the sword,

And silent wait, till Menelaus learn 1350

That men, not Phrygian cowards, hath he found,

And fares now as 'tis meet that cowards fare. [*Exit.*]

ORESTES

CHORUS

What ho ! friends, ho ! awake (Str.)[•]
 A din by the halls ; let your clamour outbreak,
 That the blood that therein hath been shed
 Thrill not the souls of the people of Argos with dread,
 And unto the mansion of kings to the rescue they haste,
 Ere I look on the carcase of Helen beyond doubt cast
 Blood-besprent mid the palace-hall,
 Or hear the tale by the mouth of a thrall ;
 For I know of the havoc in part, but I know not all. 1360
 By the hand of Justice the vengeance-doom
 Of the Gods upon Helen's head hath come ;
 For she filled with tears all Hellas-land
 For the sake of Paris, the traitor banned,
 Who drew the array of Hellas away unto Ilium's strand.
 But lo, the bars clash of the royal halls !
 Hush ye ;—there comes forth of her Phrygians one
 Of whom we shall learn what befell within.

Enter PHRYGIAN.

PHRYGIAN

From the death by the Argive swords have I fled !
 In my shoon barbaric I sped ; 1370
 O'er the colonnade's rafters of cedar I clomb ;
 'Twixt the Dorian triglyphs I slid ; and I come,
 Fleeing like panic-struck Asian array—
 O earth, O earth !—away and away.
 Ah, me, strange dames, whitherward can I flee,
 Through the cloud-dappled welkin my flight up-
 winging,
 Or over the sea
 Which the hornèd Ocean with arms enringing
 Coileth around earth endlessly ?

CHORUS

What is it, Helen's servant, Ida's son ? 1380

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΦΡΤΞ

Ἴλιον Ἴλιον, ὦμοι μοι, Φρύγιον
 ἄστυ καὶ καλλίβωλον Ἴ-
 δας ὄρος ἱερόν, ὥς σ' ὀλόμενον στένω,
 ἀρμάτειον ἀρμάτειον
 μέλος βαρβύρω βοᾶ, διὰ τὸ τᾶς
 ὀρνιθόγονου ὄμμα κυκνόπτερον
 καλλοσύνας, Λήδας σκύμνου, δυσελένας,
 ξεστῶν περγάμων Ἀπολλωνίων
 ἐρινύν· ὀτοτοῖ·
 1390 ἰαλέμων ἰαλέμων
 Δαρδανία τλάμων Γανυμήδεος
 ἵπποσύνα, Διὸς εὐνέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σαφῶς λέγ' ἡμῖν αὐθ' ἕκαστα τὰν δόμοις.
 τὰ γὰρ πρὶν οὐκ εὐγνωστα συμβαλοῦσ' ἔχω.

ΦΡΤΞ

αἴλινον αἴλινον ἀρχὰν θανάτου
 βάρβαροι λέγουσιν, αἰαῖ,
 Ἀσιάδι φωνᾶ,
 βασιλέων ὅταν αἶμα χυθῆ κατὰ γᾶν ξίφεσιν
 σιδαρέοισιν Ἄιδα.
 1400 ἦλθον δόμους, ἴν' αὐθ' ἕκαστά σοι λέγω,
 λέοντες Ἑλλανες δύο διδύμων·
 τῷ μὲν ὁ στρατηλάτας πατὴρ ἐκλήζετο,
 ὁ δὲ παῖς Στροφίου, κακόμητις ἀνὴρ,
 οἶος Ὀδυσσεύς, σιγᾶ δόλιος,
 πιστὸς δὲ φίλοις, θρασὺς εἰς ἀλκάν,
 ξυνητὸς πολέμου, φόνιός τε δράκων.
 ἔρροι τᾶς ἡσύχου προνοί-
 ας κακοῦργος ὢν.
 οἱ δὲ πρὸς θρόνους ἔσω

ORESTES

PHRYGIAN

Ilion, Ilion, woe is me !
Phrygian city, and mount Idæan
Holy and fertile, I wail for thee
In the chariot-pæan, the chariot-pæan,
With cry barbaric !—thy ruin came
Of the bird-born beauty, the swan-plumed dame,
Curst Helen the lovely, Leda's child,
A vengeance-fiend to the towers upiled
By Apollo of carven stone.
Alas for thy moan, thy moan,
Dardania !—the steeds that Zeus gave erst
For his minion Ganymede, made thee accurst !

1390

CHORUS

Tell clearly all that in the house befell :
For thy first words be vague : I can but guess.

PHRYGIAN

The Linus-lay—O the Linus-lay !—
Death's prelude chanted, well-a-day,
Of barbarian folk in their Asian tongue
When the blood of their kings is poured on the earth,
when the iron sword

Clangs Hades' song !

There came—that I tell thee the whole tale
through—

1400

Into the halls Greek lions two :
This was the son of the chieftain of Hellas' might ;
That, Strophius' scion, an evil-devising wight,
An Odysseus, silent and subtle of mood,
Staunch to his friends, and valiant in fight,
Cunning in war, a dragon of blood.
Ruin seize him, the felon knave,
For his crafty plotting still as the grave !
So came they in, and beside the throne

1410

μολόντες ἄς ἔγημ' ὁ τοξότας Πάρις
 γυναικός, ὄμμα δακρύοις
 πεφυρμένοι, ταπεινοὶ
 ἔζονθ', ὁ μὲν τὸ κεῖθεν, ὁ δὲ
 τὸ κεῖθεν, ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν πεφραγμένοι.
 περὶ δὲ γόνυ χέρας ἱκεσίους
 ἔβαλον ἔβαλον Ἑλένας ἄμφω.
 ἀνὰ δὲ δρομάδες ἔθορον ἔθορον
 ἀμφίπολοι Φρύγες·
 προσεῖπε δ' ἄλλος ἄλλον πεσὼν ἐν φόβῳ,
 μή τις εἴη δόλος.

1420

κἀδόκει τοῖς μὲν οὐ,
 τοῖς δ' ἐς ἀρκυστάταν
 μηχανὰν ἐμπλέκειν
 παῖδα τὰν Τυνδαρίδ' ὁ
 μητροφόντας δράκων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ δ' ἦσθα ποῦ τότ'; ἦ πάλαι φεύγεις φόβῳ;

ΦΡΥΞ

1430

Φρυγίοις ἔτυχον Φρυγίοισι νόμοις
 παρὰ βόστρυχον αὔραν αὔραν
 Ἑλένας Ἑλένας εὐπᾶγι κύκλω
 πτερίνω πρὸ παρηίδος ἄσσω
 βαρβάροις νόμοισιν.
 ἂ δὲ λίνον ἠλακάτα
 δακτύλοις ἔλισσε,
 νῆμά θ' ἴετο πέδῳ,
 σκύλων Φρυγίων ἐπὶ τύμβον ἀγάλματα
 συστολίσαι χρήζουσα λίνῳ,
 φάρεα πορφύρεα, δῶρα Κλυταιμνήστρα.
 προσεῖπεν δ' Ὀρέστας
 Λάκαιναν κόραν' ὦ

ORESTES

Of the lady whom Archer Paris won,
 With eyes tear-streaming all humbly sat, 1410
 On this side one, and the one on that,
 Yet beset by her servants to left and to right.
 Then, bending low to Helen, these
 Cast suppliant hands about her knees.
 But her Phrygian bondmen in panic affright
 Upstarted, upstarted ;
 And this unto that cried fearful-hearted,
 “ Ha, treachery—beware !”
 Yet no peril did some trace there : 1420
 But to some did it seem that a snare
 Of guile was coiled round Tyndareus' child
 By the serpent with blood of a mother defiled.

CHORUS

Where then wast thou?—long since in terror fled?

PHRYGIAN

In the Phrygian fashion, it chanced, was I swaying
 Beside Queen Helen the rounded fan :
 On the cheeks of Helen its plumes were playing,
 Through the tresses of Helen the breeze was straying,
 As I chanted a strain barbarian. 1430
 And the flax from her distaff twining
 Her fingers wrought evermore,
 And ever her threads trailed down to the floor :
 For her mind was to broider the purple-shining
 Vesture of Phrygian spoils with her thread,
 For a gift unto Clytemnestra the dead.
 Then Orestes unto the daughter
 Of Sparta spake, and besought her :

- Διὸς παῖ, θεὸς ἵχνος
 1440 πέδῳ δευρ' ἀποστᾶσα κλισμοῦ,
 Πέλοπος ἐπὶ προπάτορος
 ἔδραν παλαιᾶς ἐστίας,
 ἴν' εἰδῆς λόγους ἐμούς.
 ἄγει δ' ἄγει νιν· ἅ δ' ἐφείπετ',
 οὐ πρόμαντις ὦν ἔμελλεν·
 ὁ δὲ συνεργὸς ἄλλ' ἔπρασσ'
 ἰὼν κακὸς Φωκεύς·
 οὐκ ἐκποδὼν ἴτ', ἀλλ' αἰὲ κακοὶ Φρύγες;
 ἔκλησε δ' ἄλλον ἄλλοσ' ἐν στέγαις·
 τοὺς μὲν ἐν σταθμοῖσιν ἵππικοῖσι,
 1450 τοὺς δ' ἐν ἐξέδραισι, τοὺς δ' ἐκεῖσ' ἐκείθεν
 ἄλλον ἄλλοσε διαρμόσας ἀποπρὸ δεσποίνας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί τοῦπὶ τῷδε συμφορᾶς ἐγίγνετο;

ΦΡΥΞ

- Ἰδαία μᾶτερ μᾶτερ
 ὀβρίμα ὀβρίμα, αἰαῖ,
 φονίων παθέων ἀνόμων τε κακῶν
 ἄπερ ἔδρακον ἔδρακον ἐν δόμοις τυράννων.
 ἀμφὶ πορφυρέων πέπλων ὑπὸ σκότου
 ξίφη σπάσαντες ἐν χεροῖν,
 ἄλλος ἄλλοσε
 δίνασεν ὄμμα, μή τις παρὼν τύχοι.
 1460 ὡς κάπροι δ' ὀρέστεροι γυναικὸς ἀντῆοι στῶ
 θέντες
 ἐννέπουσι· κατθανεῖ
 κατθανεῖ, κακὸς σ' ἀποκτείνει πόσις,
 κασιγνήτου προδοῦς
 ἐν Ἄργει θανεῖν γόνον.
 ἅ δ' ἀνίαχεν ἴαχεν, ὦμοι μοι

ORESTES

"O child of Zeus, arise from thy seat,
 And hitherward set on the floor thy feet, 1440
 To the ancient hearthstone-altar pace
 Of Pelops, our father of olden days,
 To hearken my words in the holy place."
 On, on he led her, and followed she
 With no foreboding of things to be.
 But his brother-plotter betook him the while
 Unto other deeds, that Phocian vile,—
 "Hence!—dastards ever the Phrygians were."
 Here, there, he bolted them, penned in the halls:
 Some prisoned he in the chariot-stalls,
 In the closets some, some here, some there, 1450
 Sundered and severed afar from the queen in the
 snare.

CHORUS

Now what disaster after this befell?

PHRYGIAN

O Mother Idæan, Mother sublime!
 What desperate, desperate deeds, alas,
 Of murderous outrage, of lawless crime,
 Were they which I saw in the king's halls brought to
 pass!
 From under the gloom of their mantles of purple they
 drew [threw
 Swords in their hands, and to this side and that side
 A swift glance, heeding that none stood nigh:
 Then as boars of the mountains before my lady up-
 towering high, 1460
 They shout, "Thou shalt die, thou shalt die!
 Thee doth thy craven husband slay,
 The traitor that would unto death betray
 In Argos his brother's son this day!"
 Then wild she shrieked, she shrieked, ah me!

λευκὸν δ' ἔμβαλούσα πῆχυν στέρνοις,
 κτύπησε κράτα μέλεον πλαγᾶ·
 φυγᾶ δὲ ποδὶ τὸ χρυσεοσάνδαλον
 ἴχνος ἔφευγεν ἔφευγεν·
 1470 ἔς κόμας δὲ δακτύλους δικῶν Ὀρέστας,
 Μυκηνίδ' ἀρβύλαν προβάς,
 ὦμοις ἀριστεροῖσιν ἀνακλάσας δέρην,
 παίειν λαιμῶν ἔμελλεν
 ἔσω μέλαν ξίφος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτ' ἀμύνειν οἱ κατὰ στέγας Φρύγες;

ΦΡΥΞ

ἰαχᾶ δόμων θύρετρα καὶ σταθμοὺς
 μοχλοῖσιν ἐβαλόντες, ἔνθ' ἐμίνομεν,
 βοηδρομοῦμεν ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν στέγης,
 ὁ μὲν πέτρους, ὁ δ' ἀγκύλας,
 ὁ δὲ ξίφος πρόκωπον ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων.
 ἔναντα δ' ἦλθεν

1480 Πυλάδης ἀλίαςτος, οἶος οἶος
 Ἔκτωρ ὁ Φρύγιος ἢ τρικόρυθος Αἴας,
 ὃν εἶδον εἶδον ἐν πύλαισι Πριαμίσιν·
 φασγάνων δ' ἀκμὰς συνήψαμεν.
 τότε δὴ τότε διαπρεπεῖς ἐγένοντο Φρύγες,
 ὅσον Ἄρεος ἀλκὰν ἤσσοιες Ἑλλάδος
 ἐγενόμεσθ' αἰχμᾶς.
 ὁ μὲν οἰχόμενος φυγᾶς, ὁ δὲ νέκυς ὢν,
 ὁ δὲ τραῦμα φέρων, ὁ δὲ λισσόμενος,
 θανάτου προβολάν·
 ὑπὸ σκότον δ' ἐφεύγομεν·
 νεκροὶ δ' ἐπιπτον, οἱ δ' ἔμελλον, οἱ δ' ἔκειντ'·
 1490 ἔμολε δ' ἅ τάλαιν' Ἑρμίονα δόμους.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐπὶ φόνῳ χαμαιπετεῖ ματρός, ἃ νιν ἔτεκεν
τλάμων.

ἄθυρσοι δ' οἶά νιν δραμόντε Βάκχαι
σκύμνον ἐν χεροῖν ὀρείαν
ξυνήρπασαν· πάλιν δὲ τὰν Διὸς κόραν
ἐπὶ σφαγὰν ἔτεινον· ἃ δ' ἐκ θαλάμων
ἐγένετο διαπρὸς δωμαίων ἄφαντος,
ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ γᾶ καὶ φῶς καὶ νύξ,
ἦτοι φαρμάκοισιν ἢ μάγων
τέχναισιν ἢ θεῶν κλοπαῖς.
τὰ δ' ὕστερ οὐκέτ' οἶδα· δρα-
πέτην γὰρ ἐξέκλεπτον ἐκ δόμων πόδα.
1500 πολύπονα δὲ πολύπονα πάθεα
Μενέλαος ἀνασχόμενος ἀνόνητον ἀπὸ
Τροίας ἔλαβε τὸν Ἑλένας γάμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ἀμείβει καινὸν ἐκ καινῶν τόδε·
ξιφηφόρον γὰρ εἰσορῶ πρὸς δωμαίων
βαίνοντ' Ὀρέστην ἐπτοημένῳ ποδί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ποῦ ἔστιν οὗτος ὃς πέφενγεν ἐκ δόμων τούμων
ξίφος;

ΦΡΤΞ

προσκυνῶ σ', ἄναξ, νόμοισι βαρβάροισι προσ-
πίτνων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἐν Ἰλίῳ τάδ' ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονί.

ΦΡΤΞ

πανταχοῦ ζῆν ἠδὲ μᾶλλον ἢ θανεῖν τοῖς σὺν
φροσιν.

ORESTES

As fell for her death the wretched mother who gave
her birth.

But as Bacchanals dropping the thyrsus to seize
A wolf's whelp over the hills that flees,
They rushed on her—grasped—turned back to
the slaughter

Of Helen—but vanished was Zeus's daughter !
From the bowers, through the house, gone
wholly from sight !

O Zeus, O Earth, O Sun, O Night !
Whether by charms or by wizardry,
Or stolen by Gods—not there was she !
What chanced thereafter I know not, I ;
For with stealthy feet from the halls did I fly.
Ah, with manifold travail and weary pain
Menelaus hath won from Troy again
Helen his bride—in vain ' 1500

CHORUS

But unto strange things, lo, strange things succeed ;
For sword in hand before the halls I see
Orestes come with passion-fevered feet.

Enter ORESTES.

ORESTES

Where is he that fleeing from the palace hath escaped
my sword ?

PHRYGIAN

Crouching to thee in barbaric wise I grovel, O my lord !

ORESTES

Out! No Ilium this is, but the land of Argos spreads
hereby.

PHRYGIAN

Everywhere shall wise men better love to cling to life
than die.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

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', εἴ γε λαιμοὺς εἶχε τριπτύχους θανεῖν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δειλία γλώσση χαρίζει, τᾶνδον οὐχ οὔτω φρονῶν.

ΦΡΥΞ

οὐ γάρ, ἥτις Ἑλλάδ' αὐτοῖς Φρυξὶ διελυμήνατο;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄμοσον, εἰ δὲ μή, κτενῶ σε, μὴ λέγειν ἐμὴν χάριν.

ΦΡΥΞ

τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν κατώμοσ', ἣν ἂν εὐορκοῖμ' ἐγώ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦδε κὰν Τροία σίδηρος πᾶσι Φρυξὶν ἦν φόβος;

ΦΡΥΞ

ἄπεχε φάσγανον· πέλας γὰρ δεινὸν ἀνταγμὴ
φόνον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1520 μὴ πέτρος γένη δέδοικας, ὥστε Γοργόν' εἰσιδῶν;

ORESTES

ORESTES

Didst thou not to Menelaus shout the rescue-cry but now?

1510

PHRYGIAN

Nay, O nay!—but for thine helping cried I:—worthier art thou.

ORESTES

Answer—did the child of Tyndareus by righteous sentence fall?

PHRYGIAN

Righteous—wholly righteous—though she had three throats to die withal.

ORESTES

Dastard, 'tis thy tongue but truckles: in thine heart thou think'st not so.

PHRYGIAN

Should she not, who Hellas laid, and Phrygia's folk, in ruin low?

ORESTES

Swear—or I will slay thee,—that thou speakest not to pleasure me.

PHRYGIAN

By my life I swear—an oath I sure should honour sacredly.

ORESTES

Like to thee at Troy did steel fill all the Trojan folk with fear?

PHRYGIAN

Take, take hence thy sword! It glareth ghastly murder, held so near!

ORESTES

Fear'st thou lest thou turn to stone, as who hath seen the Gorgon nigh?

1520

257

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΦΡΥΞ

μὴ μὲν οὖν νεκρός· τὸ Γοργούς δ' οὐ κάτοιδ' ἐγὼ
κῆρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δοῦλος ὦν φοβεῖ τὸν Ἄιδην, ὅς σ' ἀπαλλάξει
κακῶν;

ΦΡΥΞ

πάς ἀνὴρ, κὰν δοῦλος ἦ τις, ἦδεται τὸ φῶς ὀρών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὖ λέγεις, σφῆζει σε σύνεσις· ἀλλὰ βαῖν' εἰς
δόμων.

ΦΡΥΞ

οὐκ ἄρα κτενεῖς μ' ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀφεῖσαι.

ΦΡΥΞ

καλὸν ἔπος λέγεις τόδε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀλλὰ μεταβουλευσόμεσθα.

ΦΡΥΞ

τοῦτο δ' οὐ καλῶς λέγεις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μῶρος, εἰ δοκεῖς με τλῆναι σὴν καθαιμάξαι δέρην
οὔτε γὰρ γυνὴ πέφυκας οὔτ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν σύ γ' εἶ
τοῦ δὲ μὴ στησαί σε κραυγὴν εἴνεκ' ἐξῆλθαι
δόμων·

1530 ὄξυ γὰρ βοῆς ἀκούσαν Ἄργος ἐξεγείρεται.

Μενέλεων δ' οὐ τάρβος ἡμῖν ἀναλαβεῖν εἰς
ξίφους·

ἀλλ' ἴτω ξανθοῖς ἐπ' ὄμων βοστρύχοις γαρ
ρούμενος·

ORESTES

PHRYGIAN

Nay, but rather to a corpse; of head of Gorgon
nought know I.

ORESTES

Thou a slave, and fearest Death, who shall from
misery set thee free!

PHRYGIAN

Every man, though ne'er so much a thrall, yet joys
the light to see.

ORESTES

Well thou say'st: thy wit hath saved thee. Hence
within the house—away!

PHRYGIAN

Then thou wilt not slay me?

ORESTES

Pardoned art thou,

PHRYGIAN

Kindly dost thou say.

ORESTES

Varlet, mine intent may change!—

PHRYGIAN

Thou utterest now an evil note!

[*Exit.*]

ORESTES

Fool! to think that I would brook with blood to
stain me from thy throat, [men among!

Who art neither woman, neither found the ranks of
Forth the palace I but came to curb the clamour of

thy tongue, [hear.

For that swiftly roused is Argos if the rescue-cry she 1530
Menelaus—set him once at sword-length—nothing

do I fear. [his shoulders falls!

Let him come, with golden locks whose pride about

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ γὰρ Ἀργείους ἐπάξει τοῖσδε δώμασιν λαβών,
 τὸν Ἑλένης φόνον διώκων, καμὲ μὴ σφύζειν θέλη
 σύγγονόν τ' ἐμὴν Πυλάδην τε τὸν τάδε ξυ-
 δρῶντά μοι,
 παρθένον τε καὶ δάμαρτα δύο νεκρῶ κατόψεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰὼ τύχα,
 ἕτερον εἰς ἀγῶν', ἕτερον αὖ δόμος
 φοβερὸν ἀμφὶ τοὺς Ἀτρείδας πίτνει.
 τί δρῶμεν; ἀγγέλλωμεν εἰς πόλιν τάδε;
 1540 ἢ σίγ' ἔχωμεν; ἀσφαλέστερον, φίλαι.
 ἴδε πρὸ δωμαίων ἴδε προκηρύσσει
 θοάζων ὄδ' αἰθέρος ἄνω καπνός.
 ἄπτουσι πεύκας ὡς πυρώσοντες δόμους
 τοὺς Τανταλείους, οὐδ' ἀφίστανται φόνου.
 τέλος ἔχει δαίμων βροτοῖς,
 τέλος ὅπα θέλει.
 μεγάλα δέ τις ἂ δύναμις· δι' ἀλάστορ'
 ἔπεσ' ἔπεσε μέλαθρα τάδε δι' αἱμάτων
 διὰ τὸ Μυρτίλου πέσημ' ἐκ δίφρου.

ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ τόνδε λεύσσω Μενέλεων δόμοι
 πέλας
 1550 ὀξύπουν, ἦσθημένοι που τὴν τύχην ἢ νῦν πάρα.
 οὐκέτ' ἂν φθάνοιτε κληῖθρα συμπεραίνοντε
 μοχλοῖς,
 ὦ κατὰ στέγας Ἀτρεΐδαι. δεινὸν εὐτυχῶν ἀνὴρ
 πρὸς κακῶς πράσσοντας, ὡς σὺ νῦν, Ὀρέστα
 δυστυχεῖς.

ORESTES

For, if he shall gather Argives, lead them on against
 these halls, [will set me free—
 Claiming blood-revenge for Helen, nor from death
 Me, my sister too, and Pylades who wrought herein
 with me,—
 Corpses twain, his maiden daughter and his wife, his
 eyes shall see. [Exit.

CHORUS

(*Ant. to 1353-1365*)

Ho, fortune, ho!—again, again,
 The house into terrible conflict-strain
 Breaks forth for the Atreids' sake!
 What shall we do?—to the city the tidings take?
 Or keep we silence? Safer were this, O friends. 1540
 Lo there, lo there, where the smoke upleaping sends
 Its token afront of the halls through air!
 They will fire the palace of Tantalus!—glare
 Already the brands, nor the deeds of murder they
 spare.
 Yet God overruleth the issue still,
 To mete unto men what issue he will:
 Great is his power! By a curse-fiend led
 This house on a track of blood hath been sped
 Since Myrtilus, dashed from the chariot, plashed in
 the sea-surge, dead.

Ha, I see unto the palace Menelaus draweth near
 Hasty-footed, having heard the deeds but now
 accomplished here. 1550
 Ye within the mansion—Atreus' children!—bar the
 bolted gate! [fortunate
 Haste! oh haste! A formidable foeman is the
 Unto such as be, Orestes, even as thou, in evil
 strait.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἤκω κλύων τὰ δεινὰ καὶ δραστήρια
 δισσοῖν λεόντοιν· οὐ γὰρ ἄνδρ' αὐτῷ καλῷ.
 ἤκουσα γὰρ δὴ τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον
 ὡς οὐ τέθνηκεν, ἀλλ' ἄφαντος οὔχεται,
 κενὴν ἀκούσας βάξιν, ἣν φόβῳ σφαλεῖς
 ἤγγειλέ μοί τις. ἀλλὰ τοῦ μητροκτόνου
 1560 τεχνάσματ' ἐστὶ ταῦτα καὶ πολὺς γέλωσ.
 ἀνοιγέτω τις δῶμα· προσπόλοις λέγω
 ὠθεῖν πύλας τάσδ', ὡς ἂν ἀλλὰ παῖδ' ἐμὴν
 ῥυσώμεθ' ἀνδρῶν ἐκ χερῶν μαιφόνων,
 καὶ τὴν τάλαιναν ἀθλίαν δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν
 λάβωμεν, ἣ δεῖ ξυθανεῖν ἐμῇ χερὶ
 τοὺς διολέσαντας τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔτος σύ, κλήθρων τῶνδε μὴ ψαύσης χερὶ,
 Μενέλαον εἶπον, ὃς πεπύργωσαι θράσει·
 ἢ τῶδε θριγκῶ κρᾶτα συνθραύσω σέθεν,
 1570 ῥήξας παλαιὰ γεῖσα, τεκτόνων πόνον.
 μοχλοῖς δ' ἄραρε κλήθρα, σῆς βοηδρόμου
 σπουδῆς ἅ σ' εἶρξει, μὴ δόμων εἴσω περᾶν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἔα, τί χρῆμα; λαμπάδων ὀρῶ σέλας,
 δόμων δ' ἐπ' ἄκρων τοῦσδε πυργηρουμένους,
 ξίφος δ' ἐμῆς θυγατρὸς ἐπίφρουρον δέρη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πότερον ἐρωτᾶν ἢ κλύειν ἐμοῦ θέλεις;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐδέτερ'· ἀνάγκη δ', ὡς ἔοικε, σοῦ κλύειν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μέλλω κτανεῖν σου θυγατέρ', εἰ βούλει μαθεῖν.

ORESTES

*Enter MENELAUS, below ; ORESTES and PYLADES above,
with HERMIONE.*

MENELAUS

I come at news of strange and violent deeds
Wrought by two tigers ; men I call them not.
In sooth I heard a rumour that my wife
Is slain not, but hath vanished from the earth :
An idle tale I count it, brought by one
Distraught with fear. Nay, some device is this
Of yonder matricide—a thing to mock ! 1560
Open the door !—within there !—serving-men !
Thrust wide the gates, that I may save at least
My child from hands of blood-stained murderers,
And take mine hapless miserable wife,
Even mine helpmeet, whose destroyers now
Shall surely perish with her by mine hand.

ORESTES (*above*)

Ho there !—lay not thine hand unto these bolts,
Thou Menelaus, tower of impudence ;
Else with this coping will I crush thine head,
Rending the ancient parapet's masonry. 1570
Fast be the doors with bars, to shut out thence
Thy rescuing haste, that thou force not the house.

MENELAUS

Ha, what is this ?—torches agleam I see,
And on the house-roof yonder men at bay—
My daughter guarded—at her throat a sword !

ORESTES

Wouldest thou question, or give ear to me ?

MENELAUS

Neither : yet needs must I, meseems, hear thee.

ORESTES

I am bent to slay thy child—if thou wouldst know.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

Ἐλένην φονεύσας ἐπὶ φόνῳ πράσσεις φόνου;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1580

εἰ γὰρ κατέσχον μὴ θεῶν κλεφθεῖς ὑπο.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἄρνεϊ κατακτὰς κάφ' ὕβρει λέγεις τάδε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λυπρὰν γε τὴν ἄρησι· εἰ γὰρ ὄφελον—

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δρᾶσαι; παρακαλεῖς γὰρ εἰς φόβον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὴν Ἑλλάδος μιάστορ' εἰς Ἄιδου βαλεῖν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀπόδος δάμαρτος νέκυν, ὅπως χώσω τάφῳ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θεοὺς ἀπαίτει· παῖδα δὲ κτενῶ σέθεν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὁ μητροφόντης ἐπὶ φόνῳ πράσσει φόνου.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὁ πατρὸς ἀμύντωρ, ὃν σὺ προὔδωκας θανεῖν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἤρκεσέν σοι τὸ παρὸν αἷμα μητέρος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1590

οὐκ ἂν κάμοιμι τὰς κακὰς κτείνων αἰεὶ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἦ καὶ σὺ, Πυλάδη, τοῦδε κοινωνεῖς φόνου;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φησὶν σιωπῶν· ἀρκέσω δ' ἐγὼ λέγων.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἄλλ' οὔτι χαίρων, ἣν γε μὴ φύγῃς πτεροῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ φευξόμεσθα· πυρὶ δ' ἀνάψομεν δόμους.

ORESTES

MENELAUS

How? Helen slain, wouldst thou add blood to blood?

ORESTES

Would I had done that, ere Gods baffled me! 1580

MENELAUS

Thou slew'st her!—and for insult dost deny!

ORESTES

Bitter denial 'tis to me: would God—

MENELAUS

Thou hadst done—what? Thou thrill'st me with fear!

ORESTES

I had hurled the curse of Hellas down to hell!

MENELAUS

Yield up my wife's corpse: let me bury her!

ORESTES

Ask of the Gods. But I will slay thy child.

MENELAUS

He would add blood to blood—this matricide!

ORESTES

His father's champion, death-betrayed by thee!

MENELAUS

Sufficed thee not thy stain of mother's blood?

ORESTES

Ne'er should I weary of slaying wicked wives! 1590

MENELAUS

Shar'st thou too in this murder, Pylades?

ORESTES

His silence saith it: let my word suffice.

MENELAUS

Nay, thou shalt rue, except thou flee on wings.

ORESTES

Flee will we not, but we will fire the halls.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

• ἦ γὰρ πατρῶον δῶμα πορθήσεις τόδε ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς μή γ' ἔχῃς σύ, τήνδ' ἐπισφάξας πυρί.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

κτεῖν'· ὡς κτανών γε τῶνδέ μοι δώσεις δίκην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔσται τάδ'.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἂ ἂ, μηδαμῶς δράσης τάδε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σίγα νύν, ἀνέχου δ' ἐνδίκως πράσσων κακῶς.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἦ γὰρ δίκαιον ζῆν σε ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ κρατεῖν γε γῆς.

1600

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ποιίας ;

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

ἀγνὸς γάρ εἰμι χεῖρας.

ORESTES

MENELAUS

How? this thy fathers' home wilt thou destroy?

ORESTES

Lest thou possess it—and slay her o'er its flames.

MENELAUS

Slay on,—and taste my vengeance for her death!

ORESTES

So be it (*raises sword*).

MENELAUS

Ah! in no wise do the deed!

ORESTES

Peace!—and endure ill-fortune, thy just due.

MENELAUS

How?—just that thou shouldst live?

1600

ORESTES

Yea—rule withal.

MENELAUS

What land?

ORESTES

Pelagian Argos, even this.

MENELAUS

Thou touch the sacred lavers!—¹

ORESTES

Wherefore not?

MENELAUS

And slay ere battle victims!—

ORESTES

Well mayst *thou!*

MENELAUS

Yea, for mine hands are clean.

¹ The king, as commander-in-chief, sacrificed for the army before battle.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄλλ' οὐ τὰς φρενας.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

τίς δ' ἂν προσείποι σ' ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὅστις ἐστὶ φιλοπάτωρ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὅστις δὲ τιμῆ μητέρ' ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὐδαίμων ἔφυ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

οὐκουν σύ γ'.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ γὰρ ἀνδάνουσιν αἱ κακαί.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἄπαιρε θυγατρὸς φάσγανον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ψευδῆς ἔφυσ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλὰ κτενεῖς μου θυγατέρ' ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐ ψευδῆς ἔτ' εἶ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὄμοι, τί δράσω ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πεῖθ' ἐς Ἀργείους μολών—

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πειθὸν τίν' ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἡμᾶς μὴ θανεῖν αἰτοῦ πόλιν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ἢ παῖδά μου φονεύσεθ' ;

ORESTES

ORESTES

But not thine heart !

MENELAUS

Who would speak to thee ?

ORESTES

Whoso loveth father.

MENELAUS

And honoureth mother ?

ORESTES

Happy he who may !

MENELAUS

Not such art thou !

ORESTES

Vile women please me not.

MENELAUS

Take from my child thy sword !

ORESTES

Born liar—no !

MENELAUS

Wilt slay my child ?

ORESTES

Ay—now thou liest not.

MENELAUS

What shall I do ?

ORESTES

To the Argives go ; persuade— 1610

MENELAUS

What suasion ?

ORESTES

Of the city beg our lives.

MENELAUS

Else will ye slay my daughter ?

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦδ' ἔχει τάδε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τλῆμον Ἑλένη,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τάμα δ' οὐχὶ τλήμονα;

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

σὲ σφάγιον ἐκόμισ' ἐκ Φρυγῶν,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰ γὰρ τόδ' ἦν.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

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' εἴ, ὕφαπτε δώματ', Ἥλέκτρα, τάδε.
σύ τ', ὦ φίλων μοι τῶν ἐμῶν σαφέστατε,
Πυλάδη, κάταιθε γείσα τειχέων τάδε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ γαῖα Δαναῶν ἱππίου τ' Ἄργους κτίται,
οὐκ εἴ ἐνόπλω ποδὶ βοηδρομήσετε;
πᾶσαν γὰρ ὑμῶν ὄδε βιάζεται πόλιν
ζῆ δ',¹ αἷμα μητρὸς μυσαρὸν ἐξειργασμένος.

¹ Nauck: for ζῆν of MSS., "defieth your state so as to live."

ORESTES

ORESTES

Even so.

MENELAUS

O hapless Helen!—

ORESTES

And not hapless I?

MENELAUS

From Troy to death I brought thee—

ORESTES

Would 'twere so!

MENELAUS

From toils untold endured!

ORESTES

Yet none for me.

MENELAUS

I am foully wronged!

ORESTES

No help hadst thou for me.

MENELAUS

Thou hast trapped me!

ORESTES

Villain, thou hast trapped thyself!

What ho! Electra, fire the halls below!

And thou, O truest of my friends to me,

Pylades, kindle yonder parapets.

1620

MENELAUS

O land of Danaans, folk of knightly Argos,

Up, gird on harness!—unto rescue run!

For lo, this man defieth all your state,

Yet lives, polluted with a mother's blood.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

- Μενέλαε, παῦσαι λῆμ' ἔχων τεθηγμένον,
 Φοῖβός σ' ὁ Λητοῦς παῖς ὄδ' ἐγγὺς ὦν καλῶ,
 σύ θ' ὃς ξιφήρης τῆδ' ἐφεδρεύεις κόρη,
 Ὅρέσθ', ἴν' εἰδῆς οὓς φέρων ἤκω λογους.
 Ἐλένην μὲν ἦν σὺ διολέσαι πρόθυμος ὦν
 1630 ἤμαρτες, ὀργὴν Μενέλεω ποιούμενος,
 ἣδ' ἐστίν, ἣν ὀράτ' ἐν αἰθέρος πτυχαῖς,
 σεσωσμένη τε κοῦ θανοῦσα πρὸς σέθεν.
 ἐγὼ νιν ἐξέσωσα καπὸ φασγάνου
 τοῦ σοῦ κελευσθεὶς ἤρπασ' ἐκ Διὸς πατρός.
 Ζητὸς γὰρ οὔσαν ζῆν νιν ἄφθιτον χρεῶν,
 Καστορί τε Πολυδεύκει τ' ἐν αἰθέρος πτυχαῖς
 σύνθακος ἔσται, ναυτίλοις σωτήριος.
 ἄλλην δὲ νύμφην εἰς δόμους κτῆσαι λαβῶν,
 ἐπεὶ θεοὶ τῷ τῆσδε καλλιστεύματι
 1640 Ἕλληνας εἰς ἐν καὶ Φρύγας ξυνήγαγον,
 θανάτους τ' ἔθηκαν, ὡς ἀπαντλοῖεν χθονὸς
 ὕβρισμα θνητῶν ἀφθόνου πληρώματος.
 τὰ μὲν καθ' Ἐλένην ὧδ' ἔχει· σὲ δ' αὖ χρεῶν.
 Ὅρέστα, γαίης τῆσδ' ὑπερβαλόνθ' ὄρους
 Παρράσιον οἰκεῖν δάπεδον ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον.
 κεκλήσεται δὲ σῆς φυγῆς ἐπώνυμον
 Ἄζᾶσιν Ἀρκάσιν τ' Ὅρέστειον [καλεῖν].
 ἐνθένδε δ' ἐλθὼν τὴν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν
 δίκην ὑπόσχεσ ἀίματος μητροκτόνου
 1650 Εὐμενίσι τρισσαῖς· θεοὶ δέ σοι δίκης βραβῆς
 πάγοισιν ἐν Ἀρείοισιν εὐσεβεστάτην
 ψῆφον διοίσουσ', ἐνθα νικῆσαι σε χρή.
 ἐφ' ἧς δ' ἔχεις, Ὅρέστα, φάσγανον δέρη,
 γῆμαι πέπρωταί σ' Ἐρμιόνην· ὃς δ' οἶεται
 Νεοπτόλεμος γαμεῖν νιν, οὐ γαμεῖ ποτε.

ORESTES

APOLLO appears above in the clouds with HELEN.

APOLLO

Menelaus, peace to thine infuriate mood :
 I Phoebus, Leto's son, here call on thee.
 Peace thou, Orestes, too, whose sword doth guard
 Yon maid, that thou mayst hear the words I bear.
 Helen, whose death thou hast essayed, to sting
 The heart of Menelaus, yet hast missed, 1630
 Is here,—whom wrapped in folds of air ye see,—
 From death delivered, and not slain of thee.
 'Twas I that rescued her, and from thy sword
 Snatched her away by Father Zeus' behest ;
 For, as Zeus' daughter, deathless must she live,
 And shall by Castor and Polydeuces sit
 In folds of air, the mariners' saviour she.
 Take thee a new bride to thine halls, and wed ;
 Seeing the high Gods by her beauty's lure
 Hellenes and Phrygians into conflict drew, 1640
 And brought to pass deaths, so to lighten earth
 Oppressed with over-increase of her sons.
 Thus far for Helen : 'tis thy doom to pass,
 Orestes, o'er the borders of this land,
 And dwell a year's round on Parrhasian soil,
 Which lips Azanian and Arcadian
 Shall from thine exile call "Orestes' Land."
 Thence shalt thou fare to the Athenians' burg,
 And stand thy trial for thy mother's blood
 Against the Avengers Three. The Gods shall 1650
 there
 Sit judges, and on Ares' Holy Hill
 Pass righteous sentence : thou shalt win thy cause.
 Hermione, at whose throat is thy sword,
 Orestes, is thy destined bride : who thinks
 To wed her, shall not—Neoptolemus ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θανεῖν γὰρ αὐτῷ μοῖρα Δελφικῷ ξίφει,
 δίκας Ἀχιλλέως πατρὸς ἐξαιτοῦντά με.
 Πυλάδῃ δ' ἀδελφῆς λέκτρον, ὡς κατήνεσας,
 δός· ὁ δ' ἐπιών νιν βίσιος εὐδαίμων μένει.
 1660 Ἄργους δ' Ὀρέστην, Μενέλεως, ἔα κρατεῖν,
 ἔλθων δ' ἄνασσε Σπαρτιάτιδος χθονός,
 φερνάς ἔχων δάμαρτος, ἧ σε μυρίοις
 πόνοις διδοῦσα δεῦρ' αἰεὶ διήνυσε.
 τὰ πρὸς πόλιν δὲ τῷδ' ἐγὼ θήσω καλῶς,
 ὅς νιν φονεῦσαι μητέρ' ἐξηνάγκασα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ Λοξία μαντεῖε σῶν θεσπισμάτων
 οὐ ψευδόμαντις ἦσθ' ἄρ', ἀλλ' ἐτήτυμος.
 καίτοι μ' ἐσῆει δεῖμα μή τινος κλύων
 ἀλαστόρων δόξαιμι σὴν κλύειν ὅπα.
 1670 ἀλλ' εὖ τελεῖται, πείσομαι δὲ σοῖς λόγοις.
 ἰδοῦ μεθίημ' Ἑρμιόνην ἀπὸ σφαγῆς,
 καὶ λέκτρ' ἐπήνεσ' ἠνίκ' ἂν διδῶ πατῆρ.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

ὦ Ζηνὸς Ἑλένη χαῖρε παῖ· ζηλῶ δέ σε
 θεῶν κατοικήσασαν ὄλβιον δόμον.
 Ὀρέστα, σοὶ δὲ παιῖδ' ἐγὼ κατεγγυῶ,
 Φοίβου λέγοντος· εὐγενῆς δ' ἀπ' εὐγενοῦς
 γήμας ὄναιο καὶ σὺ χῶ διδοὺς ἐγώ.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

χωρεῖτέ νυν ἕκαστος οἱ προστάσσομεν,
 νείκας τε διαλύεσθε.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ

πείθεσθαι χρεῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

1680 καὶ γὰρ τοιοῦτος· σπένδομαι δὲ συμφοραῖς,
 Μενέλαε, καὶ σοῖς, Λοξία, θεσπίσμασιν.

ORESTES

For doomed is he to die by Delphian swords,
 When for his sire he claims redress of me.
 On Pylades thy sister's plighted hand
 Bestow : a life of bliss awaiteth him.
 Menelaus, leave Orestes Argos' throne. 1660
 Go, hold the sceptre of the Spartan land,
 As thy wife's dower, since she laid on thee
 Travail untold to this day evermore.
 I will to Argos reconcile this man
 Whom I constrained to shed his mother's blood.

ORESTES

Hail, Prophet Loxias, to thine oracles !
 No lying prophet wert thou then, but true.
 And yet a fear crept o'er me, lest I heard,
 Seeming to hear thy voice, a Fury-fiend.
 Yet well ends all : thy words will I obey. 1670
 Lo, from the sword Hermione I release,
 And pledge me, when her sire bestows, to wed.

MENELAUS

Hail, Helen, Child of Zeus ! I count thee blest,
 Thou dweller in the happy home of Gods.
 Orestes, I betroth to thee my child
 At Phoebus' hest. Fair fall thy bridal, prince
 To princess wed : well may it fall for me !

APOLLO

Depart now, each as I appoint to you,
 And your feuds reconcile.

MENELAUS

Obey we must.

ORESTES

I am as he, to my fate reconciled, 1680
 To Menelaus, and thine oracles.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἴτε νυν καθ' ὁδόν, τὴν καλλίστην
θεῶν Εἰρήνην τιμῶντες· ἐγὼ δ'
Ἑλένην Δίοις μελάθροισ πελάσω,
λαμπρῶν ἄστρων πόλον ἐξανύσας,
ἔνθα παρ' Ἡρα τῇ θ' Ἡρακλέους
Ἡβη πάρεδρος θεὸς ἀνθρώποις
ἔσται σπονδαῖς ἔντιμος αἰεί,
σὺν Τυνδαρίδαις τοῖς Διὸς υἱοῖς,
ναύταις μεδέουσα θαλάσσης.

1690

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ μέγα σεμνή Νίκη, τὸν ἐμὸν
βίοτον κατέχοις
καὶ μὴ λήγῃσι στεφανούσα.

ORESTES

APOLLO

Pass on your way: and to Peace, of the Gods most fair,
Render ye praise.
Helen will I unto Zeus's mansion bear,
Soon as I win to the height of the firmament, where
Flash the star-rays.
Throned beside Hera, and Hebe, and Hercules, there
Aye shall she be [darid pair,
With drink-offerings honoured by men, with the Tyn-
Scions of Zeus, by mariners worshipped with prayer,
Queen of the Sea.

1690

CHORUS

Hail, reverèd Victory:
Rest upon my life, and me
Crown, and crown eternally!

[*Exeunt* OMNES.

CHAPTER

... your way, and in the heart of the mountain...

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IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ARGENTINA IN TAURICA

ARGUMENT

WHEN *Iphigeneia*, daughter of *Agamemnon*, lay on the altar of sacrifice at *Aulis*, *Artemis* snatched her away, and bare her to the *Tauric* land, which lieth in *Thrace* to north of the *Black Sea*. Here she was made priestess of the Goddess's temple, and in this office was constrained to consecrate men for death upon the altar; for what Greeks soever came to that coast were seized and sacrificed to *Artemis*.

And herein is told how her own brother *Orestes* came thither, and by what means they were made known to each other, and of the plot that they framed for their escape.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΒΟΤΚΟΛΟΣ

ΘΟΑΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

IPHIGENEIA, *daughter of Agamemnon, and Priestess of Artemis.*

ORESTES, *brother of Iphigeneia.*

PYLADES, *friend of Orestes.*

HERDMAN, *a Thracian.*

THOAS, *king of Thrace.*

MESSENGER, *servant of Thoas.*

ATHENA, *a Goddess.*

CHORUS, *consisting of captive Greek maidens, attendants of Iphigeneia.*

SCENE : In front of the temple of Artemis in Taurica.*

* The modern Crimea.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

Πέλοψ ὁ Ταυτάλειος εἰς Πῖσαν μολὼν
 θοαῖσιν ἵπποις Οἰνομάου γαμῆ κόρην,
 ἐξ ἧς Ἀτρεὺς ἔβλασθεν Ἀτρέως δ' ἄπο
 Μενέλαος Ἀγαμέμνων τε· τοῦ δ' ἔφυν ἐγώ,
 τῆς Τυνδαρείας θυγατρὸς Ἰφιγένεια παῖς,
 ἦν ἀμφὶ δίναις ἅς θάμ' Εὐριπος πυκναῖς
 αὖραις ἐλίσσω κνανέαν ἄλα στρέφει,
 ἔσφαξεν Ἐλένης εἶνεχ', ὡς δοκεῖ, πατῆρ
 Ἀρτέμιδι κλειναῖς ἐν πτυχαῖσιν Ἀυλίδος.
 10 ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ χιλίων ναῶν στόλον
 Ἑλληνικὸν συνήγαγ' Ἀγαμέμνων ἄναξ,
 τὸν καλλίνικον στέφανον Ἰλίου θέλων
 λαβεῖν Ἀχαιοὺς, τοὺς θ' ὑβρισθέντας γάμους
 Ἐλένης μετελθεῖν, Μενέλεω χάριν φέρων.
 δεινῆς δ' ἀπλοίας πνευμάτων τε τυγχάνων,¹
 εἰς ἔμπυρ' ἦλθε, καὶ λέγει Κάλχας τάδε·
 ὦ τῆσδ' ἀνάσσω Ἑλλάδος στρατηγίας,
 Ἀγάμεμνον, οὐ μὴ ναῦς ἀφορμίση χθονός,
 20 πρὶν ἂν κόρην σὴν Ἰφιγένειαν Ἀρτεμις
 λάβῃ σφαγεῖσαν· ὃ τι γὰρ ἐνιαυτὸς τέκοι
 κάλλιστον, ἠὔξω φωσφόρῳ θύσειν θεᾶ.

¹ Barnes and Witzschel : for τ'ἀπλοίας and τ'οὐ of MSS.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Enter from temple IPHIGENEIA.

IPHIGENEIA

PELOPS, the son of Tantalus, with fleet steeds
To Pisa came, and won Oenomaus' child :
Atreus she bare ; of him Menelaus sprang
And Agamemnon, born of whom was I,
Iphigeneia, Tyndareus' daughter's babe.
Me, by the eddies that with ceaseless gusts
Euripus shifteth, rolling his dark surge,
My sire slew—as he thinks—for Helen's sake
To Artemis, in Aulis' clefts renowned.
For king Agamemnon drew together there 10
The Hellenic armament, a thousand ships,
Fain that Achaea should from Ilium win
Fair victory's crown, and Helen's outraged bed
Avenge—all this for Menelaus' sake.
But, faced with winds that grimly barred the
 seas,
To divination he sought, and Calchas spake :
" Thou captain of this battle-host of Greece,
Agamemnon, thou shalt sail not from the land
Ere Artemis receive thy daughter slain,
Iphigeneia : for, of one year's fruit, 20
Thou vowedst the fairest to the Queen of Light.

παῖδ' οὖν ἐν οἴκοις σὴ Κλυταιμνήστρα δάμαρ
 τίκτει, τὸ καλλιστεῖον εἰς ἔμ' ἀναφέρων,
 ἦν χρὴ σε θῦσαι. καί μ' Ὀδυσσέως τέχναις
 μητρὸς παρείλουτ' ἐπὶ γάμοις Ἀχιλλέως.
 ἐλθοῦσα δ' Αὐλίδ' ἠΐ τάλαιν' ὑπὲρ πυρᾶς
 μεταρσία ληφθεῖσ' ἐκαινόμην ξίφει·
 ἀλλ' ἐξέκλεψεν ἔλαφον ἀντιδοῦσά μου
 30 Ἄρτεμις Ἀχαιοῖς, διὰ δὲ λαμπρὸν αἰθέρα
 πέμψασά μ' εἰς τήνδ' ὤκισεν Ταύρων χθόνα,
 οὗ γῆς ἀνάσσει βαρβάροισι βάρβαρος
 Θόας, ὃς ὠκὺν πόδα τιθεὶς ἴσον πτεροῖς
 εἰς τοῦνομ' ἦλθε τόδε ποδωκείας χάριν.
 ναοῖσι δ' ἐν τοῖσδ' ἱερίαν τίθησί με·
 ὅθεν νόμοισι τοῖσιν ἦδεται θεὰ
 Ἄρτεμις ἑορτῆς — τοῦνομ' ἧς καλὸν μόνου,
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα σιγῶ, τὴν θεὸν φοβουμένη—
 θύω γάρ, ὄντος τοῦ νόμου καὶ πρὶν πόλει,
 ὃς ἂν κατέλθῃ τήνδε γῆν Ἑλλην ἀνὴρ.
 40 κατάρχομαι μὲν, σφάγια δ' ἄλλοισιν μέλει
 ἄρρητ' ἔσωθεν τῶνδ' ἀνακτόρων θεᾶς.
 ἂ καὶνὰ δ' ἦκει νύξ φέρουσα φάσματα,
 λέξω πρὸς αἰθέρ', εἴ τι δὴ τόδ' ἔστ' ἄκος.
 ἔδοξ' ἐν ὕπνῳ τῆσδ' ἀπαλλαχθεῖσα γῆς
 οἰκεῖν ἐν Ἀργεῖ, παρθενῶσι δ' ἐν μέσοις
 εὔδειν, χθονὸς δὲ νῶτα σεισθῆναι σάλῳ,
 φεύγειν δὲ κάξω στᾶσα θριγκὸν εἰσιδεῖν
 δόμων πίτνοντα, πᾶν δ' ἐρείψιμον στέγος
 50 βεβλημένον πρὸς οὐδας ἐξ ἄκρων σταθμῶν.
 μόνος δ' ἐλείφθη στῦλος, ὡς ἔδοξέ μοι,
 δόμων πατρώων, ἐκ δ' ἐπικράνων κόμας
 ξανθὰς καθεῖναι, φθέγμα δ' ἀνθρώπου λαβεῖν.
 κἀγὼ τέχνην τήνδ' ἦν ἔχω ξενοκτόνον

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Lo, thy wife Clytemnestra in thine halls
 Bare thee a child"—so naming me most fair,—
 "Whom thou must offer." By Odysseus' wiles
 From her they drew me, as to wed Achilles.
 I came to Aulis: o'er the pyre,—ah me!—
 High raised was I, the sword in act to slay,—
 When Artemis stole me, for the Achaeans set
 There in my place a hind, and through clear air
 Wafted me, in this Taurian land to dwell, 30
 Where a barbarian rules barbarians,
 Thoas, who, since his feet be swift as wings
 Of birds, hath of his fleetness won his name.
 And in this fane her priestess made she me:
 Therefore in rites of that dark cult wherein
 Artemis joys,—fair is its name alone;
 But, for its deeds, her fear strikes dumb my lips,—
 I sacrifice—'twas this land's ancient wont—
 What Greek soever cometh to this shore.
 I consecrate the victim; in the shrine 40
 The unspeakable slaughter is for others' hands.
 Now the strange visions that the night hath
 brought
 To heaven I tell—if aught of help be there.
 In sleep methought I had escaped this land,
 And dwelt in Argos. In my maiden-bower
 I slept: then with an earthquake shook the ground.
 I fled, I stood without, the cornice saw
 Of the roof falling,—then, all crashing down,
 Turret and basement, hurled was the house to
 earth.
 The central pillar alone, meseemed, was left 50
 Of my sires' halls; this from its capital
 Streamed golden hair, and spake with human voice.
 Then I, my wonted stranger-slaughtering rite

τιμῶσ' ὑδραίνειν αὐτὸν ὡς θανούμενον,
 κλαίουσα. τοῦναρ δ' ὦδε συμβάλλω τόδε·
 τέθνηκ' Ὀρέστης, οὐ κατηρξάμην ἐγώ.
 στῦλοι γὰρ οἴκων εἰσὶ παῖδες ἄρσενες·
 θνήσκουσι δ' οὐς ἂν χέρνιβες βάλωσ' ἐμαί.
 οὐδ' αὖ συνάψαι τοῦναρ εἰς φίλους ἔχω·
 60 Στροφίῳ γὰρ οὐκ ἦν παῖς, ὅτ' ὠλλύμην ἐγώ.
 νῦν οὖν ἀδελφῶ βούλομαι δοῦναι χοᾶς
 ἀποῦσ' ἀπόντι, ταῦτα γὰρ δυναίμεθ' ἄν,
 σὺν προσπόλοισιν, ἅς ἔδωχ' ἡμῖν ἄναξ
 Ἑλληνίδας γυναῖκας. ἀλλ' ἐξ αἰτίας
 οὐπω τινὸς πάρειςιν· εἴμ' εἴσω δόμων
 ἐν οἴσι ναίω τῶνδ' ἀνακτόρων θεᾶς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄρα, φυλάσσου μή τις ἐν στίβῳ βροτῶν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὀρῶ, σκοποῦμαι δ' ὄμμα πανταχοῦ στρέφω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

70 Πυλάδη, δοκεῖ σοι μέλαθρα ταῦτ' εἶναι θεᾶς;
 ἐνθ' Ἀργόθεν ναῦν ποντίαν ἐστείλαμεν;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἔμοιγ', Ὀρέστα· σοὶ δὲ συνδοκεῖν χρεῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ βωμός, Ἕλληνας οὐ καταστάζει φόνοσ;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἐξ αἱμάτων γοῦν ξάνθ' ἔχει θριγκώματα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θριγκοῖσ δ' ὑπ' αὐτοῖσ σκῦλ' ὀράσ ἠρτημένα;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τῶν κατθανόντων γ' ἀκροθίνια ξένων.
 ἀλλ' ἐγκυκλοῦντ' ὀφθαλμὸν εὖ σκοπεῖν χρεῶν.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Observing, sprinkled it, as doomed to death,
 Weeping. Now thus I read this dream of mine :
 Dead is Orestes—him I sacrificed ;—
 Seeing the pillars of a house be sons,
 And they die upon whom my sprinklings fall.
 None other friend can I match with my dream ;
 For on my death-day Strophius had no son.
 Now will I pour drink-offerings, far from him,
 To a brother far from me,—'tis all I can,—
 I with mine handmaids, given me of the king,
 Greek damsels. But for some cause are they here
 Not yet : within the portals will I pass
 Of this, the Goddess' shrine, wherein I dwell.

60

[*Re-enters temple.*]

Enter ORESTES and PYLADES.

ORESTES

Look thou—take heed that none be in the path.

PYLADES

I look, I watch, all ways I turn mine eyes.

ORESTES

Pylades, deem'st thou this the Goddess' fane
 Whither from Argos we steered oversea ?

70

PYLADES

I deem it is, Orestes, as must thou.

ORESTES

And the altar, overdripped with Hellene blood ?

PYLADES

Blood-russet are its rims in any wise.

ORESTES

And 'neath them seest thou hung the spoils arow ?

PYLADES

Yea, trophies of the strangers who have died.
 But needs must we glance round with heedful eyes.

289

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

80 ὦ Φοῖβε, ποῖ μ' αὖ τήνδ' ἐς ἄρκυν ἤγαγες
 χρήσας, ἐπειδὴ πατρός αἰμ' ἐτίσάμην,
 μητέρα κατακτάς ; διαδοχαῖς δ' Ἐρινύων
 ἤλαννόμεσθα φυγάδες, ἔξεδροι χθονός,
 δρόμους τε πολλοὺς ἐξέπλησα καμπίμους.
 ἐλθὼν δὲ σ' ἠρώτησα πῶς τροχηλάτου
 μανίας ἂν ἔλθοιμ' εἰς τέλος πόνων τ' ἐμῶν,
 οὓς ἐξεμόχθουν περιπολῶν καθ' Ἑλλάδα.
 σὺ δ' εἶπας ἐλθεῖν Ταυρικῆς μ' ὄρους χθονός,
 ἔνθ' Ἄρτεμῖς σοι σύγγονος βωμοὺς ἔχοι,
 λαβεῖν τ' ἄγαλμα θεᾶς, ὃ φασιν ἐνθάδε
 εἰς τούσδε ναοὺς οὐρανοῦ πεσεῖν ἄπο·
 90 λαβόντα δ' ἢ τέχναισιν ἢ τύχῃ τινί,
 κίνδυνον ἐκπλήσαντ', Ἀθηναίων χθονὶ
 δοῦναι· τὸ δ' ἐνθένδ' οὐδὲν ἐρρήθη πέρα·
 καὶ ταῦτα δράσαντ' ἀμπνοᾶς ἔξιεν πόνων.
 ἦκω δὲ πεισθεῖς σοῖς λόγοισιν ἐνθάδε
 ἄγνωστον εἰς γῆν, ἄξενον. σὲ δ' ἱστορῶ,
 Πυλάδη, σὺ γάρ μοι τοῦδε συλλήπτωρ πόνου,
 τί δρῶμεν ; ἀμφίβληστρα γὰρ τοίχων ὄρας
 ὑψηλά· πότερα δωμάτων προσαμβάσεις
 ἐκβησόμεσθα ; πῶς ἂν οὖν μάθοιμεν¹ ἂν,
 100 μὴ χαλκότευκτα κληῖθρα λύσαντες μοχλοῖς,
 ὧν οὐδὲν ἴσμεν ; ἦν δ' ἀνοίγοντες πύλας
 ληφθῶμεν εἰσβάσεις τε μηχανώμενοι,
 θανούμεθ'. ἀλλὰ πρὶν θανεῖν, νεὼς ἐπι
 φεύγωμεν, ἦπερ δεῦρ' ἐναυστολήσαμεν.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

φεύγειν μὲν οὐκ ἀνεκτὸν οὐδ' εἰώθαμεν·
 τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ δὲ χρῆσμον οὐ κακιστέον.

¹ μάθοιμεν MSS. ; λάθοιμεν, Sallier and many others.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ORESTES

Phoebus, why is thy word again my snare,
 When I have slain my mother, and avenged
 My sire? From tired Fiends Fiends take up the
 chase,
 And exiled drive me, outcast from my land, 80
 In many a wild race doubling to and fro.
 To thee I came and asked how might I win
 My whirling madness' goal, my troubles' end,
 Wherein I travailed, roving Hellas through.
 Thou bad'st me go unto the Taurian coasts
 Where Artemis thy sister hath her altars,
 And take the Goddess' image, which, men say,
 Here fell into this temple out of heaven,
 And, winning it by craft or happy chance,
 All danger braved, to the Athenians' land 90
 To give it—nought beyond was bidden me;—
 This done, should I have respite from my toils
 Hither I come, obedient to thy words,
 To a strange land and cheerless. Thee I ask,
 Pylades, thee mine helper in this toil,—
 What shall we do? Thou seest the engirdling walls,
 How high they be. Up yonder temple-steps
 Shall we ascend? How then could we learn more,
 Except our levers force the brazen bolts
 Whereof we know nought? If we be surprised 100
 Opening gates, and plotting entrance here,
 Die shall we. Nay, ere dying, let us flee
 Back to the ship wherein we hither sailed.

PYLADES

Flee?—'twere intolerable!—'twas ne'er our wont:
 Nor craven may we be to the oracle.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

110 ναοῦ δ' ἀπαλλαχθέντε κρύψωμεν δέμας
κατ' ἄντρ' ἅ πόντος νοτίδι διακλύζει μέλας,
νεὸς ἄπωθεν, μή τις εἰσιδὼν σκάφος
βασιλευσιν εἶπη, κατὰ ληφθῶμεν βία.
ὅταν δὲ νυκτὸς ὄμμα λυγαίας μόλη,
τολμητέον τοι ξεστὸν ἐκ ναοῦ λαβεῖν
ἄγαλμα πάσας προσφέρουτε μηχανάς.
ὄρα δέ γ' εἴσω τριγλύφων ὅποι κενὸν
δέμας καθεῖναι· τοὺς πόνους γὰρ ἀγαθοὶ
τολμῶσι, δειλοὶ δ' εἰσὶν οὐδὲν οὐδαμοῦ.
οὔτοι μακρὸν μὲν ἤλθομεν κώπη πόρον,
ἐκ τερμάτων δὲ νόστον ἀροῦμεν πάλιν·

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

120 ἄλλ' εὖ γὰρ εἶπας, πειστέον· χωρεῖν χρεῶν
ὅποι χθονὸς κρύψαντε λήσομεν δέμας.
οὐ γὰρ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ γ' αἴτιον γενήσεται
πεσεῖν ἄκραντον θέσφατον· τολμητέον·
μόχθος γὰρ οὐδεὶς τοῖς νέοις σκῆψιν φέρει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

130 εὐφαιμεῖτ', ὦ
πόντου δισσὰς συγχωρούσας
πέτρας Εὐξείνου ναίοντες.
ὦ παῖ τᾶς Λατοῦς,
Δίκτυν' οὐρεία,
πρὸς σὰν αὐλάν, εὐστύλων
ναῶν χρυσήρεις θριγκούς,
πόδα παρθένιον ὄσιον ὀσίας
κληδούχου δούλα πέμπω,
Ἑλλάδος εὐίππου πύργους
καὶ τείχη χόρτων τ' εὐδένδρων
ἐξαλλάξασ' Εὐρώταν,
πατρῶων οἴκων ἔδρας.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Withdraw we from the temple ; let us hide
 In caves by the dark sea-wash oversprayed,
 Far from our ship, lest some one spy her hull,
 And tell the chiefs, and we be seized by force.
 But when the eye of murky night is come, 110
 That carven image must we dare to take
 Out of the shrine with all the craft we may.
 Mark thou betwixt yon triglyphs a void space
 Whereby to climb down. Brave men on all toils
 Adventure ; nought are cowards anywhere.
 Have we come with the oar a weary way,
 And from the goal shall we turn back again ?

ORESTES

Good : I must heed thee. Best withdraw ourselves
 Unto a place where we shall lurk unseen.
 For, if his oracle fall unto the ground, 120
 The God's fault shall it not be. We must dare,
 Since for young men toil knoweth no excuse.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter CHORUS *and* IPHIGENEIA.

CHORUS

Keep reverent silence, ye
 Beside the Euxine Sea
 Who dwell, anigh the clashing rock-towers twain.
 Maid of the mountain-wild,
 Dictynna, Leto's child,
 Unto thy court, thy lovely-pillared fane,
 Whose roofs with red gold burn,
 Pure maiden feet I turn, 130
 Who serve the hallowed Bearer of the Key,
 Banished from Hellas' towers,
 Trees, gardens, meadow-flowers
 That fringe Eurotas by mine home o'ersea.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ἔμολον· τί νέου ; τίνα φροντίδ' ἔχεις ;
 τί με πρὸς ναοὺς ἄγαγες ἄγαγες,
 ὦ παῖ τοῦ τᾶς Τροίας πύργου
 140 ἐλθόντος κλεινᾶ σὺν κώπα
 χιλιοναῦτα μυριοστευχεῖ
 τῶν Ἀτρειδᾶν τῶν κλεινῶν ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἰὼ δμωαί,
 δυσθρηνήτοις ὡς θρήνοις
 ἔγκειμαι, τᾶς οὐκ εὐμούσου
 μολπαῖσι βοᾶς ἀλύροις ἐλέγοις,
 αἰαῖ, κηδείοις οἴκοις,
 αἶ μοι συμβαίνουσ' ἄται,
 150 σύγγονον ἀμὸν κατακλαιομένα
 ζωᾶς, οἴαν ἰδόμαν ὄψιν ὀνείρων
 νυκτός, τᾶς ἐξῆλθ' ὄρφνα.
 ὀλόμαν ὀλόμαν·
 οὐκ εἶσ' οἴκοι πατρῶοι
 οἶμοι φροῦδος γέννα.
 φεῦ φεῦ τῶν Ἄργει μόχθων.
 ἰὼ ἰὼ δαίμων, ὃς τὸν
 μούνόν με κασίγητον συλᾶς
 160 Ἄϊδα πέμψας, ᾧ τάσδε χοᾶς
 μέλλω κρατῆρά τε τὸν φθιμένω
 ὑδραίνειν γαίας ἐν νότοις,
 πηγᾶς τ' οὐρείων ἐκ μόσχων
 Βάκχου τ' οἴνηρὰς λοιβᾶς
 ξουθᾶν τε πόνημα μελισσᾶν,
 ἅ νεκροῖς θελκτήρια κεῖται.

ἄλλ' ἔνδος μοι πάγχρυσον
 τεῦχος καὶ λοιβᾶν Ἄϊδα.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

170

ὦ κατὰ γαίας Ἀγαμεμόνιον
θάλος, ὡς φθιμένῳ τάδε σοι πέμπω·
δέξαι δ'· οὐ γὰρ πρὸς τύμβον σοι
ξανθὰν χαίταν, οὐ δάκρυ' οἶσω.
τηλόσε γὰρ δὴ σᾶς ἀπενάσθην
πατρίδος καὶ ἐμᾶς, ἔνθα δοκήμασι
κεῖμαι σφαχθεῖς ἅ τλάμων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

180

ἀντιψάλμους ᾠδὰς ὕμνον τ'
Ἀσιήταν σοι βάρβαρον ἀχὰν
δεσποίνα γ' ἐξαυδάσω,
τὰν ἐν θρήνοισιν μούσαν,
νέκυσι μελομέναν τὰν ἐν μολπαῖς
Ἄιδας ὕμνῃ δίχα παιάνων.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

190

οἴμοι, τῶν Ἀτρειδᾶν οἴκων
ἔρρει φῶς σκήπτρων, ἔρρει.¹
οἴμοι πατρώων οἴκων.
τίνος ἐκ τῶν εὐόλβων Ἄργει
βασιλέων ἀρχά;
μόχθος δ' ἐκ μόχθων ἄσσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δινευούσαις ἵπποις πταναῖς²
ἀλλάξας ἐξ ἔδρας
ἱερὸν μετέβασ' ὄμμ' ἀνγᾶς

¹ Text of 187-190 much disputed.

² Text of 192-197 quite uncertain. England's readings adopted, except ἄλλαις for ἄλλοις.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Thee, whom earth's arms enfold,
 Atreides' scion, 170

These things I give thee now ;
 Dear dead, accept them thou,
 Bright tresses from my brow
 Shall never lie on

Thy grave, nor tears. Our land —
 Thine—mine—to me is banned.

Far off the altars stand
 Men saw me die on.

CHORUS

Lo, I will peal on high 180
 To echo thine, O queen,

My dirge, the Asian hymn, and that weird cry,

The wild barbaric keen,

The litany of death,

Song-tribute that we bring

To perished ones, where moaneth Hades' breath,

Where no glad pæans ring.

IPHIGENEIA

Woe for the kingly sway

From Atreus' house that falls!

Passed is their sceptre's glory, passed away—

Woe for my fathers' halls! 190

Where are the heaven-blest kings

Throned erstwhile in their might

O'er Argos? Trouble out of trouble springs

In ceaseless arrowy flight.

CHORUS

O day when from his place

The Sun his winged steeds wheeled,

Turning the splendour of his holy face

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

200 ἄλιος. ἄλλαις δ' ἄλλα προσέβα
 χρυσέας ἄρνὸς μελάθροις ὀδύνα,
 φόνος ἐπὶ φόνω, ἄχεά τ' ἄχεςιν·
 ἔνθεν τῶν πρόσθεν δμαθέντων
 Ἐνταλιδᾶν ἐκβαίνει ποινά γ'
 εἰς οἴκους· σπεύδει δ' ἀσπούδαστ'
 ἐπὶ σοὶ δαίμων.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

209 ἐξ ἀρχᾶς μοι δυσδαίμων
 208 δαίμων τᾶς ματρὸς ζώνας
 210 καὶ νυκτὸς κείνας· ἐξ ἀρχᾶς
 λόχαι στερρὰν παιδείαν
 Μοῖραι συντείνουσιν θεαί,
 ἂν πρωτόγονον θάλος ἐν θαλάμοις
 ἂ μναστευθεῖς' ἐξ Ἑλλάνων,
 Λήδας ἂ τλάμων κούρα,
 σφάγιον πατρῶα λῶβα
 καὶ θῦμ' οὐκ εὐγάθητον
 ἔτεκεν, ἔτρεφεν, εὐκταίαν
 ἰππείοις ἐν δίφροισιν
 ψαμάθων Αὐλίδος ἐπιβᾶσαν
 νύμφαν, οἴμοι, δύσνυμφον
 τῷ τᾶς Νηρέως κούρας, αἰαῖ.

220 νῦν δ' ἀξείνου πόντου ξείνα
 δυσχόρτους οἴκους ναίω
 ἄγαμος, ἄτεκνος, ἄπολις, ἄφιλος,
 οὐ τὰν Ἄργει μέλπουσ' Ἥραν
 οὐδ' ἱστοῖς ἐν καλλιφθόγγοις
 κερκίδι Παλλάδος Ἀτθίδος εἰκὼ
 καὶ Τιτάνων ποικίλλουσ', ἀλλ'

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

From horrors there revealed!
 That golden lamb¹ hath brought
 Woe added unto woe,
 Pang upon pang, murder on murder wrought:
 All these thy line must know.
 Vengeance thine house must feel
 For sons thereof long dead: 200
 Their sins Fate, zealous with an evil zeal,
 Visiteth on thine head.

IPHIGENEIA

From the beginning was to me accurst
 My mother's spousal-fate:
 The Queens of Birth with hardship from the first
 Crushed down my childhood-state.
 I, the first blossom of the bridal-bower
 Of Leda's hapless daughter 210
 By princes wooed, was nursed for that dark hour
 Of sacrificial slaughter,
 For vows that stained with sin my father's hands
 When I was chariot-borne
 Unto the Nereid's son on Aulis' sands—
 Ah me, a bride forlorn!

Lone by a stern sea's desert shores I live
 Loveless, no children clinging
 To me; the homeless, friendless, cannot give 220
 To Hera praise of singing
 In Argos; nor to music of my loom
 Shall Pallas' image grow
 Splendid in strife Titanic:—in my doom

¹ See note to *Electra*, l. 699.

αϊμόρραντον δυσφόρμιγγα
 ξείνων αϊμάσσουσ' ἄταν βωμούς,
 οἰκτρὰν τ' αἰαζόντων αὐδάν,
 οἰκτρὸν τ' ἐκβαλλόντων δάκρυον.

230

καὶ νῦν κείνων μὲν μοι λάθα,
 τὸν δ' Ἄργει δμαθέντα κλαίω
 σύγγονου, ὃν ἔλιπον ἐπιμαστίδιον
 ἔτι βρέφος, ἔτι νέον, ἔτι θάλος
 ἐν χερσὶν ματρὸς πρὸς στέρνοισι τ'
 Ἄργει σκηπτοῦχον Ὀρέσταν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὄδ' ἀκτὰς ἐκλιπῶν θαλασσίους
 βουφορβὸς ἤκει, σημανῶν τί σοι νέον.

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

Ἄγαμέμνονός τε καὶ Κλυταιμνήστρας τέκνον,
 ἄκουε καινῶν ἐξ ἐμοῦ κηρυγμάτων.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

240

τί δ' ἔστι τοῦ παρόντος ἐκπλήσσον λόγου;

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

ἤκουσιν εἰς γῆν, κυανέαν Συμπληγάδα
 πλάτη φυγόντες, δίπτυχοι νεανίαι,
 θεᾶ φίλον πρόσφαγμα καὶ θυτήριον
 Ἄρτέμιδι. χέρνιβας δὲ καὶ κατάργματα
 οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις ἂν εὐτρεπῆ ποιουμένη.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ποδαποί; τίνος γῆς ὄνομ' ¹ ἔχουσιν οἱ ξένοι;

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

Ἕλληνες· ἐν τούτ' οἶδα κοῦ περαιτέρω.

¹ So the MSS. Monk reads σχῆμ', "what land's garb do the strangers wear?"

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Blood-streams mid groanings flow,
The ghastly music made of strangers laid
On altars, piteous-weeping!

Yet from these horrors now my thoughts have strayed,
Afar to Argos leaping 230
To wail Orestes dead—a kingdom's heir!
Ah, hands of my lost mother
Clasped thee; her breast, at my departing, bare
Thy babe-face, O my brother!

CHORUS

Lo, yonder from the sea-shore one hath come,
A herdman bearing tidings unto thee.

Enter HERDMAN.

HERDMAN

Agamemnon's daughter, Clytemnestra's child,
Hear the strange story that I bring to thee!

IPHIGENEIA

What cause is in thy tale for this amaze? 240

HERDMAN

Unto the land, through those blue Clashing Rocks
Sped by the oar-blades, two young men be come,
A welcome offering and sacrifice
To Artemis. Prepare thee with all speed
The lustral streams, the consecrating rites.

IPHIGENEIA

Whence come?—what land's name do the strangers
bear?

HERDMAN

Hellenes: this one thing know I; nought beside.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

οὐδ' ὄνομ' ἀκούσας οἶσθα τῶν ξένων φράσαι ;

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

Πυλάδης ἐκλήζεθ' ἄτερος πρὸς θατέρου.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

250

τοῦ ξυζύγου δὲ τοῦ ξένου τί τοῦνομ' ἦν ;

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

οὐδεὶς τόδ' οἶδεν· οὐ γὰρ εἰσηκούσαμεν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ποῦ δ' εἶδες' αὐτοὺς κἀντυχόντες εἴλετε ;

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

ἄκραις ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖσιν ἀξένου πόρου.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

καὶ τίς θαλάσσης βουκόλοις κοινωνία ;

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

βουῦς ἦλθομεν νίψοντες ἐναλία δρόσῳ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἐκέισε δὴ 'πάνελθε, ποῦ νιν εἴλετε
τρόπῳ θ' ὁποίῳ· τοῦτο γὰρ μαθεῖν θέλω.
χρόνιοι γὰρ ἤκουσ', ἐξ ὅτου βωμὸς θεᾶς
Ἑλληνικαῖσιν ἐξεφοινίχθη ῥοαῖς.

ΒΟΥΚΟΛΟΣ

260

ἐπεὶ τὸν εἰσρέοντα διὰ Συμπληγάδων
βουῦς ὑλοφορβοὺς πόντον εἰσεβάλλομεν,
ἦν τις διαρρῶξ κυμάτων πολλῶ σάλῳ
κοιλωπὸς ἀγμός, πορφυρευτικαὶ στέγαι.
ἐνταῦθα δισσοὺς εἶδέ τις νεανίας
βουφορβὸς ἡμῶν, κἀνεχώρησεν πάλιν
ἄκροισι δακτύλοισι πορθμεύων ἴχνος.
ἔλεξε δ' οὐχ ὀράτε; δαίμονές τινες
θάσσουσιν οἶδε. θεοσεβῆς δ' ἡμῶν τις ὦν
ἀνέσχε χεῖρε καὶ προσηύξατ' εἰσιδῶν·

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

IPHIGENEIA

Nor heardest thou their name, to tell it me?

HERDMAN

Pylades one was of his fellow named.

IPHIGENEIA

And of the stranger's comrade what the name?

250

HERDMAN

This no man knoweth, for we heard it not

IPHIGENEIA

Where saw ye—came upon them—captured them?

HERDMAN

Upon the breakers' verge of yon drear sea.

IPHIGENEIA

Now what have herdmen with the sea to do?

HERDMAN

We went to wash our cattle in sea-brine.

IPHIGENEIA

To this return—where laid ye hold on them,
And in what manner? This I fain would learn.
For late they come: the Goddess' altar long
Hath been with streams of Hellene blood undyed.

HERDMAN

Even as we drave our woodland-pasturing kine
Down to the sea that parts the Clashing Rocks,—
There was a cliff-chine, by the ceaseless dash
Of waves grooved out, a purple-fishers' haunt;—
Even there a herdman of our company
Beheld two youths, and backward turned again,
With tiptoe stealth his footsteps piloting,
And spake, "Do ye not see them?—yonder sit
Gods!" One of us, a god-revering man,
Lifted his hands, and looked on them, and prayed:

260

- 270 ὦ ποντίας παῖ Λευκοθέας, νεῶν φύλαξ,
 δέσποτα Παλαῖμον, ἴλεως ἡμῖν γενοῦ,
 εἴτ' οὖν ἐπ' ἀκταῖς θάσσετον Διοσκόρω,
 ἦ Νηρέως ἀγάλμαθ', ὅς τὸν εὐγενῆ
 ἔτικτε πεντήκοντα Νηρήδων χορόν.
 ἄλλος δέ τις μάταιος, ἀνομία θρασύς,
 ἐγέλασεν εὐχαῖς, ναυτίλους δ' ἐφθαρμένους
 θάσσειν φάραγγ' ἔφασκε τοῦ νόμου φόβῳ,
 κλύοντας ὡς θύοιμεν ἐνθάδε ξένους.
 ἔδοξε δ' ἡμῶν εὖ λέγειν τοῖς πλείοσι,
 280 θηρᾶν τε τῇ θεῷ σφάγια τὰπιχώρια.
 κὰν τῷδε πέτραν ἄτερος λιπῶν ξένοι
 ἔστη κάρα τε διετίναξ' ἄνω κάτω
 κὰπεστέναξεν ὠλένας τρέμων ἄκρας,
 μαρίαις ἀλαίνων, καὶ βοᾷ κυναγός ὡς
 Πυλάδη, δέδορκας τήνδε; τήνδε δ' οὐχ ὄρας
 "Αἰδου δράκαιναν, ὡς με βούλεται κτανεῖν
 δειναῖς ἐχίδναις εἰς ἔμ' ἐστομωμένη;
 ἦ δ' ἐκ χιτώνων πῦρ πνέουσα καὶ φόνον
 πτεροῖς ἐρέσσει, μητέρ' ἀγκάλαις ἐμὴν
 290 ἔχουσα, πέτρινον ὄχθον, ὡς ἐπεμβάλη.
 οἶμοι κτενεῖ με· ποῖ φύγω; παρῆν δ' ὄραν
 οὐ ταῦτα μορφῆς σχήματ', ἀλλ' ἠλλάσσετο
 φθογγὰς τε μόσχων καὶ κυνῶν ὑλάγματα,
 ἀ' φασκ'¹ Ἐρινῦς ἰέναι μυκῆματα.²
 ἡμεῖς δὲ συσταλέντες, ὡς θανούμενοι,
 σιγῇ καθήμεθ'. ὁ δὲ χερὶ σπάσας ξίφος,
 μόσχους ὀρούσας εἰς μέσας λέων ὅπως,
 παίει σιδήρῳ λαγόνας εἰς πλευρὰς ἰεῖς,
 δοκῶν Ἐρινῦς θεᾶς ἀμύνεσθαι τάδε,
 300 ὡς αἵματηρὸν πέλαγος ἐξανθεῖν ἀλός.

¹ Badham: for MSS. ἄς φᾶσ'. ² Nauck: for MSS. μιμήματα.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

" Guardian of ships, Sea-queen Leucothea's son
 O Lord Palaemon, gracious be to us ;
 Or ye, Twin Brethren, if ye yonder sit ;
 Or Nereus' darlings, born to him of whom
 That company of fifty Nereids sprang."
 But one, a scorner, bold in lawlessness,
 Mocked at his prayers : for shipwrecked mariners
 Dreading our law, said he, sat in the cleft,
 Who had heard how strangers here be sacrificed,
 And now the more part said, " He speaketh well :
 Let us then hunt the Goddess' victims due." 270
 One of the strangers left meantime the cave,
 Stood forth, and up and down he swayed his head,
 And groaned and groaned again with quivering
 hands,
 Frenzy-distraught, and shouted hunter-like :
 " Pylades, seest thou her ?—dost mark not her,
 Yon Hades-dragon, lusting for my death,
 Her hideous vipers gaping upon me ?
 And this, whose robes waft fire and slaughter forth,
 Flaps wings—my mother in her arms she holds—
 Ha, now to a rock-mass changed !—to hurl on me ! 290
 Ah ! she will slay me ! Whither can I fly ?"
 We could not see these shapes : his fancy changed
 Lowing of kine and barking of the dogs
 To howlings which the Fiends sent forth, he said.
 We cowering low, as men that looked to die,
 Sat hushed. With sudden hand he drew his sword,
 And like a lion rushed amidst the kine,
 Smote with the steel their flanks, pierced through
 their ribs,—
 Deeming that thus he beat the Erinyes back,—
 So that the sea-brine blossomed with blood-foam. 300

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

310 κὰν τῷδε πᾶς τις, ὡς ὄρᾳ βουφόρβια
 πίπτοντα καὶ πορθούμεν', ἐξωπλίζετο,
 κόχλους τε φυσῶν συλλέγων τ' ἐγχωρίους
 πρὸς εὐτραφεῖς γὰρ καὶ νεανίας ξένους
 φαύλους μάχεσθαι βουκόλους ἠγούμεθα.
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπληρώθημεν οὐ μακρῷ χρόνῳ.
 πίπτει δὲ μανίας πίτυλον ὁ ξένος μεθείς,
 στάζων ἀφρῶ γένειον· ὡς δ' ἐσείδομεν
 προὔργου πεσόντα, πᾶς ἀνὴρ ἔσχεν πόνου
 βάλλον ἀράσων· ἄτερος δὲ τοῖν ξένοι
 ἀφρόν τ' ἀπέψη σώματός τ' ἐτημέλει
 πέπλων τε προκάλυπτεν εὐπήνους ὑφάς,
 καρδοκῶν μὲν τὰπιόντα τραύματα,
 φίλον δὲ θεραπείαισιν ἀνδρ' εὐεργετῶν.
 ἔμφρων δ' ἀνάξας ὁ ξένος πεσήματος
 ἔγνω κλύδωνα πολεμίων προσκείμενον
 καὶ τὴν παρούσαν συμφορὰν αὐτοῖν πέλας,
 ὄμοξέ θ'· ἡμεῖς δ' οὐκ ἀνίεμεν πέτρους
 320 βάλλοντες, ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν προσκείμενοι.
 οὐδὲ τὸ δεινὸν παρακέλευσ' ἠκούσαμεν
 Πυλάδῃ, θανούμεθ', ἀλλ' ὅπως θανούμεθα
 κάλλισθ'· ἔπον μοι, φάσγανον σπάσας χερσὶ
 ὡς δ' εἶδομεν δίπαλτα πολεμίων ξίφη,
 φυγῇ λεπαίας ἐξεπίμπλαμεν νάπας.
 ἀλλ', εἰ φύγοι τις, ἄτεροι προσκείμενοι
 ἔβαλλον αὐτούς· εἰ δὲ τοῦσδ' ὡσαίατο,
 αὐθις τὸ νῦν ὑπέικον ἤρασσον πέτροις.
 ἀλλ' ἦν ἄπιστον· μυρίων γὰρ ἐκ χερῶν
 οὐδεὶς τὰ τῆς θεοῦ θύματ' ἠτύχει βαλῶν.
 330 μόλις δὲ νιν τόλμῃ μὲν οὐ χειρούμεθα,
 κύκλῳ δὲ περιβαλόντες ἐξεκλέψαμεν
 πέτροισι χερῶν φάσγαν', εἰς δὲ γῆν γόνυ

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Thereat each man, soon as he marked the herds
 Harried and falling slain, 'gan arm himself,
 Blowing on conchs and gathering dwellers-round ;
 For we accounted herdmen all too weak
 To fight with strangers young and lusty-grown.
 So in short time were many mustered there.
 Now ceased the stranger's madness-fit : he falls,
 Foam spraying o'er his beard. We, marking him
 So timely fallen, wrought each man his part,
 Hurling with battering stones. His fellow still 310
 Wiped off the foam, and tended still his frame,
 And screened it with his cloak's fair-woven folds,
 Watching against the ever-hailing blows,
 With loving service ministering to his friend.

He came to himself—he leapt from where he lay—
 He marked the surge of foes that rolled on him,
 He marked the deadly mischief imminent,
 And groaned : but we ceased not from hurling
 stones,

Hard pressing them from this side and from that.

Thereat we heard this terrible onset-shout :

“Pylades, we shall die : see to it we die
 With honour ! Draw thy sword, and follow me.”

But when we saw our two foes' brandished blades,
 In flight we filled the copses of the cliffs.

Yet, if these fled, would those press on again,
 And cast at them ; and if they drave those back,
 They that first yielded hurled again the stones.

Yet past belief it was—of all those hands,
 To smite the Goddess' victims none prevailed.

At last we overbore them,—not by courage, 330
 But, compassing them, smote the swords unwares
 Out of their hands with stones. To earth they
 bowed

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

καμάτω καθείσαν. πρὸς δ' ἄνακτα τῆσδε γῆς
κομίζομέν νιν. ὁ δ' ἐσιδὼν ὅσον τάχος
εἰς χέρνιβας τε καὶ σφαγαί' ἔπεμπέ σοι.
εὐχου δὲ τοιάδ', ὦ νεᾶνί, σοι ξένων
σφάγια παρῆναι· κἂν ἀναλίσκῃς ξένους
τοιούσδε, τὸν σὸν Ἑλλὰς ἀποτίσει φόνου
δίκας τίνουσα τῆς ἐν Αὐλίδι σφαγῆς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

340

θαυμάστ' ἔλεξας τὸν φανένθ', ὅστις ποτὲ
Ἑλληνας ἐκ γῆς πόντου ἦλθεν ἄξενου.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

εἶεν. σὺ μὲν κόμιζε τοὺς ξένους μολῶν·
τὰ δ' ἐνθάδ' ἡμεῖς φροντιοῦμεν οἷα χρή.¹

350

ὦ καρδία τάλαινα, πρὶν μὲν εἰς ξένους
γαληνὸς ἦσθα καὶ φιλοικτίρμων αἰεὶ,
εἰς θοῦμόφυλον ἀναμετρομένη δάκρυ,
Ἑλληνας ἄνδρας ἠνίκ' εἰς χέρας λάβοις.
νῦν δ' ἐξ ὀνείρων οἷσιν ἠγριώμεθα,
δοκοῦσ' Ὀρέστην μηκέθ' ἥλιον βλέπειν,
δύσνου με λήψεσθ', οὔτινές ποθ' ἦκετε.
καὶ τοῦτ' ἄρ' ἦν ἀληθές, ἦσθόμην, φίλαι·
οἱ δυστυχεῖς γὰρ τοῖσιν εὐτυχεστέροις
αὐτοὶ καλῶς πράξαντες οὐ φρονοῦσιν εἶ.
ἀλλ' οὔτε πνεῦμα Διόθεν ἦλθε πώποτε,
οὐ πορθμῖς, ἦτις διὰ πέτρας Συμπληγάδας
Ἑλένην ἀπήγαγ' ἐνθάδ', ἢ μ' ἀπώλεσε,
Μενελέων θ', ἵν' αὐτοὺς ἀντετιμωρησάμην,
τὴν ἐνθάδ' Αὐλιν ἀντιθεῖσα τῆς ἐκεῖ,
οὐ μ' ὥστε μόνον Δαναΐδαι χειρούμενοι

¹ Badham : for οἷα φροντιοῦμεθα of MSS.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Their toil-spent knees. We brought them to the king.
 He looked on them, and sent them with all speed
 To thee, for sprinkling waters and blood-bowls.
 Pray, maiden, that such strangers aye be given
 For victims. If thou still destroy such men,
 Hellas shall make atonement for thy death,
 Yea, shall requite thy blood in Aulis spilt.

CHORUS

Strange tale thou tellest of one newly come, 340
 Whoe'er from Hellas yon drear sea hath reached.

IPHIGENEIA

Enough: go thou, the strangers hither bring:
 I will take thought for all that needeth here.

[Exit HERDMAN.]

O stricken heart, to strangers in time past
 Gentle wast thou and ever pitiful,
 To kinship meting out its due of tears,
 When Greeks soever fell into thine hands.
 But now, from dreams whereby mine heart is
 steeled,—

Who deem Orestes seeth light no more,—
 Stern shall ye find me, who ye be soe'er. 350

Ah, friends, true saw was this, I prove it now:—
*The hapless, which have known fair fortune once,
 Are bitter-thoughted unto happier folk.*

Ah, never yet a breeze from Zeus hath come,
 Nor ship, that through the Clashing Rocks hath
 brought

Hitherward Helen, her which ruined me,
 And Menelaus, that I might requite
 An Aulis here on them for that afar,
 Where, like a calf, the sons of Danaus seized

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

- 360 ἔσφαζον, ἱερεὺς δ' ἦν ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ.
οἴμοι· κακῶν γὰρ τῶν τότ' οὐκ ἀμνημονῶ,
ὄσας γενεῖου χεῖρας ἐξηκόντισα
γονάτων τε τοῦ τεκόντος ἐξαρτωμένη,
λέγουσα τοιάδ'· ὦ πάτερ, νυμφεύομαι
νυμφεύματ' αἰσχρὰ πρὸς σέθεν· μήτηρ δ' ἐμὲ
σέθεν κατακτείνουτος Ἀργεῖαί τε νῦν
ὑμνοῦσιν ὑμεναίοισιν, αὐλεῖται δὲ πᾶν
μέλαθρον· ἡμεῖς δ' ὀλλύμεσθα πρὸς σέθεν.
370 "Αἰδῆς Ἀχιλλεὺς ἦν ἄρ', οὐχ ὁ Πηλέως,
ὄν μοι προτείνας¹ πόσιν, ἐν ἀρμάτων μ' ὄχοις
εἰς αἵματηρὸν γάμον ἐπόρθμευσας δόλω.
ἐγὼ δὲ λεπτῶν ὄμμα διὰ καλυμμάτων
ἔχουσ', ἀδελφόν τ' οὐκ ἀνειλόμην χεροῖν,
ὃς νῦν ὄλωλεν, οὐ κασιγνήτη στόμα
συνῆψ' ὑπ' αἰδοῦς, ὡς ἰοῦσ' εἰς Πηλέως
μέλαθρα· πολλὰ δ' ἀπεθέμην ἀσπᾶσματα
εἰσαῦθις, ὡς ἤξουσ' ἐς Ἀργος αὖ πάλιν.

- 380 ὦ τλήμων, εἰ τέθνηκας, ἐξ οἴων καλῶν
ἔρρεις, Ὀρέστα, καὶ πατρὸς ζηλωμάτων.
τὰ τῆς θεοῦ δὲ μέμφομαι σοφίσματα,
ἣτις βροτῶν μὲν ἦν τις ἄψηται φόνου,
ἣ καὶ λοχείας ἣ νεκροῦ θίγη χεροῖν,
βωμῶν ἀπείργει, μυσαρὸν ὡς ἠγουμένη,
αὐτὴ δὲ θυσίαις ἠδεταὶ βροτοκτόνοις.
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως ἔτικτεν ἢ Διὸς δάμαρ
Λητὼ τοσαύτην ἀμαθίαν. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν
τὰ Ταντάλου θεοῖσιν ἐστιάματα
ἄπιστα κρίνω, παιδὸς ἠσθῆναι βορᾶ,
τούς δ' ἐνθάδ', αὐτοὺς ὄντας ἀνθρωποκτόνους.

¹ Badham : for MSS. προσεῖπας.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

And would have slain me—mine own sire the
priest!

360

Ah me! that hour's woe cannot I forget—
How oft unto my father's beard I strained
Mine hands, and clung unto my father's knees,
Crying, "O father, in a shameful bridal
I am joined of thee! My mother, in this hour
When thou art slaying me, with Argive dames
Chanteth my marriage-hymn: through all the
house

Flutes ring!—and I am dying by thine hand!
Hades the Achilles was, no Peleus' son,
Thou profferedst me for spouse; thou broughtest me 370
By guile with chariot-pomp to bloody spousals."
But I—the fine-spun veil fell o'er mine eyes,
That I took not my brother in mine arms,
Who now is dead, nor kissed my sister's lips
For shame, as unto halls of Peleus bound.
Yea, many a loving greeting I deferred,
As who should come to Argos yet again.

Hapless Orestes!—from what goodly lot
By death thou art banished, what high heritage!
Out on this Goddess's false subtleties, 380
Who, if one stain his hands with blood of men,
Or touch a wife new-travailed, or a corpse,
Bars him her altars, holding him defiled,
Yet joys herself in human sacrifice!
It cannot be that Zeus' bride Leto bare
Such folly. Nay, I hold unworthy credence
The banquet given of Tantalus to the Gods,—
As though the Gods could savour a child's flesh!
Even so, this folk, themselves man-murderers,

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

390

εἰς τὴν θεὸν τὸ φαῦλον ἀναφέρειν δοκῶ·
οὐδένα γὰρ οἶμαι δαιμόνων εἶναι κακόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

400

κῦάνεαι κῦάνεαι σύνοδοι θαλάσσας, στρ. α
ἴν' οἶστρος ὁ ποτώμενος Ἀργόθεν
ἄξενον ἐπ' οἶδμα διεπέρασεν Ἰούς
Ἀσιήτιδα γαῖαν
Εὐρώπας διαμείψας,
τίνες ποτ' ἄρα τὸν εὐνδρον δονακόχλοον
λιπόντες Εὐρώταν
ἢ ρεύματα σεμνὰ Δίρκας
ἔβασαν ἔβασαν ἄμικτον αἶαν, ἔνθα κούρα
δία τέγγει
βῶμούς καὶ περικίονας
ναοὺς αἶμα βρότειον;

410

ἢ ῥοθίοις εἰλατίλαις δικρότοισι κώπαις ἀντ. α
ἔπεμψαν¹ ἐπὶ πόντια κύματα
νάιον ὄχημα λινοπόροισι τ' αὔραις,
φιλόπλουτον ἄμιλλαν
αὔξοντες μελάθροισιν;
φίλα γὰρ ἐλπίς ἐγένετ' ἐπὶ πήμασι βροτῶν
ἄπληστος ἀνθρώποις,
ὄλβον βάρος οὐ φέρονται
πλάνητες ἐπ' οἶδμα πόλεις τε βαρβάρους περῶντες
κοινᾷ δόξᾳ.
γνώμα δ' οἷς μὲν ἄκαιρος ὄλ-
βου, τοῖς δ' εἰς μέσον ἤκει.

420

πῶς πέτρας τὰς συνδρομάδας, στρ. β
πῶς Φινείδας ἀύπνου

¹ Köchly: for ἐπλευσαν

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Charge on their Goddess their own sin, I ween ; 390
 For I believe that none of Gods is vile.

[*Exit.*

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Dark cliffs, dark cliffs of the Twin Seas' meeting,
 Where the gadfly of Io, from Argos fleeting,
 Passed o'er the heave of the havenless surge
 From the Asian land unto Europe's verge,
 Who are these, that from waters lovely-gleaming
 By Eurotas' reeds, or from fountains streaming 400
 Of Dirce the hallowed have come, have come,
 To the shore where the stranger may find no
 home,

Where crimson from human veins that raineth
 The altars of Zeus's Daughter staineth,
 And her pillared dome?

(*Ant.* 1)

With pine-oars rightward and leftward flinging
 The surf, and the breeze in the tackle singing,
 That sea-wain over the surge did they sweep, 410
 Sore-coveted wealth in their halls to heap?—
 For winsome is hope unto men's undoing,
 And unsatisfied ever they be with pursuing
 The treasure up-piled for the which they roam
 Unto alien cities o'er ridges of foam,
 By the same hope lured :—but one ne'er taketh
 Fortune at flood, while her full tide breaketh
 Unsought over some. 420

How twixt the Death-crags' swing, (*Str.* 2)
 And by Phineus' beaches that ring

ἀκτὰς ἐπέρασαν
 παρ' ἄλιον αἰγιαλὸν ἐπ' Ἀμφιτρίτας
 ῥοθίῳ δραμόντες,
 ὅπου πεντήκοντα κορᾶν
 Νηρηίδων χοροὶ
 μέλπουσιν ἐγκύκλιοι,
 430 πλησιιστίοισι πνοαῖς,
 συριζόντων κατὰ πρύμναν
 εὐναίων πηδαλίων
 αὔραισιν νοτίαις
 ἧ πνεύμασι Ζεφύρου,
 τὰν πολυόρνιθον ἐπ' αἶαν,
 λευκὰν ἀκτάν, Ἀχιλῆος
 δρόμους καλλισταδίους,
 ἄξεινον κατὰ πόντον ;

εἶθ' εὐχαΐσιν δεσποσύνοις ἀντ. β
 440 Λήδας Ἑλένα φίλα παῖς
 ἐλθοῦσα τύχοι τὰν
 Τρωάδα λιποῦσα πόλιν, ἴν' ἀμφὶ χαίτα
 δρόσον αἵματηρὰν
 εἰλιχθεῖσα λαιμοτόμῳ
 δεσποίνας χερὶ θάνη
 ποιὰς δοῦσ' ἀντιπάλους.
 ἄδιστ' ἂν τήνδ' ἀγγελίαν
 δεξαίμεσθ', Ἑλλάδος ἐκ γᾶς
 450 πλωτήρων εἴ τις ἔβα,
 δουλείας ἐμέθεν
 δειλαίας παυσίπυρος·
 κὰν γὰρ ὀνειράσι συνείην
 δόμοις πόλει τε πατρώα,
 τερπνῶν ὕμνων ἀπόλαυ-
 σιν, κοινὰν χάριν ὄλβω.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

With voices of seas unsleeping,
 Won they, by breakers leaping
 O'er the Sea-queen's strand, as they passed
 Through the crash of the surge flying fast,
 And saw where in dance-rings sweeping
 The fifty Nereids sing,—
 When strained in the breeze the sail, 430
 When hissed, as the keel ran free,
 The rudder astern, and before the gale
 Of the south did the good ship flee,
 Or by breath of the west was fanned
 Past that bird-haunted strand,
 The long white reach of Achilles' Beach,
 Where his ghost-feet skim the sand
 By the cheerless sea ?

But O had Helen but strayed (*Ant.* 2)
 Hither from Troy, as prayed 440
 My lady,—that Leda's daughter,
 Her darling, with spray of the water
 Of death on her head as a wreath,
 Were but laid with her throat beneath
 The hand of my mistress for slaughter !
 Fit penalty so should be paid.
 How gladly the word would I hail,
 If there came from the Hellene shore,
 One hitherward wafted by wing of the sail,
 Who should bid that my bondage be o'er, 450
 My bondage of travail and pain !
 O but in dreams yet again
 Mid the homes to stand of my fatherland,
 In the bliss of a rapturous strain
 My soul to outpour !

460 ἄλλ' οἶδε χέρας δεσμοῖς δίδυμοι
 συνερεισθέντες χωροῦσι, νέον
 πρόσφαγμα θεᾶς· σιγᾶτε, φίλαι.
 τὰ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων ἀκροθίνα δὴ
 ναοῖσι πέλας τάδε βαίνει·
 οὐδ' ἀγγελίας ψευδεῖς ἔλακεν
 βουφορβὸς ἀνήρ.
 ὦ πότνι, εἴ σοι τὰδ' ἀρεσκόντως
 πόλις ἦδε τελεῖ, δέξαι θυσίας,
 ἃς ὁ παρ' ἡμῖν νόμος οὐχ ὀσίας
 Ἑλλησι διδοὺς ἀναφαίνει.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

εἶεν·
 470 τὰ τῆς θεοῦ μὲν πρῶτον ὡς καλῶς ἔχη
 φροντιστέον μοι. μέθετε τῶν ξένων χέρας,
 ὡς ὄντες ἱεροὶ μηκέτ' ὦσι δέσμοιοι.
 ναοῦ δ' ἔσω στείχοντες εὐτρεπίζετε
 ἅ χρῆ' πὶ τοῖς παροῦσι καὶ νομίζεται.
 φεῦ·
 τίς ἄρα μήτηρ ἢ τεκοῦσ' ὑμᾶς ποτε
 πατήρ τ'; ἀδελφή τ', εἰ γεγῶσα τυγχάνει,
 οἴων στερεῖσα διπτύχων νεανιῶν
 ἀνάδελφος ἔσται. τὰς τύχας τίς οἶδ' ὄτω
 τοιαῖδ' ἔσονται; πάντα γὰρ τὰ τῶν θεῶν
 εἰς ἀφανὲς ἔρπει, κούδέν οἶδ' οὐδεὶς κακόν.
 ἢ γὰρ τύχη παρήγαγ' εἰς τὸ δυσμαθές.
 480 πόθεν ποθ' ἦκετ', ὦ ταλαίπωροι ξένοι;
 ὡς διὰ μακροῦ μὲν τήνδ' ἐπλεύσατε χθόνα,
 μακρὰν δ' ἀπ' οἴκων χθονὸς ἔσεσθ' αἰεὶ κάτω

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί ταῦτ' ὀδύρει, κάπὶ τοῖς μέλλουσι νῶ
 κακοῖσι λυπεῖς, ἦτις εἰ ποτ', ὦ γυναῖ;

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Enter attendants with ORESTES and PYLADES.

Lo, hither with pinioned arms come twain,
Victims fresh for the Goddess's fane :—

Friends, hold ye your peace.

No lying message the herdman spoke : 460

To the temple be coming the pride of the folk
Of the land of Greece !

Dread Goddess, if well-pleasing unto thee

Are this land's deeds, accept the sacrifice

Her laws give openly, although it be

Accurst in Hellene eyes.

Enter IPHIGENEIA.

IPHIGENEIA

First, that the Goddess' rites be duly done

Must I take heed. Unbind the strangers' hands,

That, being hallowed, they be chained no more ;

Then, pass within the temple, and prepare 470

What needs for present use, what custom bids.

Sighs. [*Exeunt attendants.*

Who was your mother, she which gave you birth ?—

Your sire ?—your sister who ?—if such there be,

Of what fair brethren shall she be bereaved,

Brotherless now ! Who knoweth upon whom

Such fates shall fall ? Heaven's dealings follow

ways

Past finding out, and none foreseeeth ill.

Fate draws us ever on to the unknown !

Whence, O whence come ye, strangers evil-starred ?

Far have ye sailed—only to reach this land, 480

To lie in Hades far from home for aye !

ORESTES

Why make this moan, and with the ills to come

Afflict us, woman, whosoe'er thou art ?

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

οὔτοι νομίζω σοφόν, ὃς ἂν μέλλων θανεῖν
οἶκτῳ τὸ δεῖμα τοῦλέθρου νικᾶν θέλῃ,
οὐδ' ὅστις Ἄιδην ἐγγύς ὄντ' οἰκτίζεται,
σωτηρίας ἄνελπις· ὡς δὲ ἔξ ἑνὸς
κακῶ συνάπτει, μωρίαν τ' ὀφλισκάνει
θνήσκει θ' ὁμοίως· τὴν τύχην δ' ἔαν χρεῶν.
ἡμᾶς δὲ μὴ θρήνει σύ· τὰς γὰρ ἐνθάδε
θυσίας ἐπιστάμεσθα καὶ γιγνώσκομεν.

490

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

πότερος ἄρ' ὑμῶν ἐνθάδ' ὠνομασμένος
Πυλάδης κέκληται ; τόδε μαθεῖν πρῶτον θέλω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄδ', εἴ τι δὴ σοι τοῦτ' ἐν ἡδονῇ μαθεῖν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ποίας πολίτης πατρίδος Ἕλληνας γεγώς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δ' ἂν μαθοῦσα τόδε πλέον λάβοις, γύναι;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

πότερον ἀδελφῶ μητρός ἐστων ἐκ μιᾶς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φιλότητί γ'· ἐσμὲν δ' οὐ κασιγνήτω γένει.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

σοὶ δ' ὄνομα ποῖον ἔθεθ' ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

500

τὸ μὲν δίκαιον δυστυχεῖς καλοῖμεθ' ἄν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

οὐ τοῦτ' ἐρωτῶ· τοῦτο μὲν δὸς τῇ τύχῃ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀνώνυμοι θανόντες οὐ γελώμεθ' ἄν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τί δὲ φθονεῖς τοῦτ' ; ἢ φρονεῖς οὕτω μέγα;

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Not wise I count him, who, when doomed to
death,

By lamentation would its terrors quell,
Nor him who wails for Hades looming nigh,
Hopeless of help. He maketh evils twain
Of one : he stands of foolishness convict,
And dies no less. E'en let fate take her course.
For us make thou no moan : the altar-rites
Which this land useth have we learnt, and know.

490

IPHIGENEIA

Whether of you twain here was called by name
Pylades?—this thing first I fain would learn.

ORESTES

He—if to learn this pleasure thee at all.

IPHIGENEIA

And of what Hellene state born citizen?

ORESTES

How should the knowledge, lady, advantage thee?

IPHIGENEIA

Say, of one mother be ye brethren twain?

ORESTES

In love we are brethren, lady, not in birth.

IPHIGENEIA

And what name gave thy father unto thee?

ORESTES

Rightly might I be called "Unfortunate."

500

IPHIGENEIA

Not this I ask : lay this to fortune's door.

ORESTES

If I die nameless, I shall not be mocked.

IPHIGENEIA

Now wherefore grudge me this? So proud art thou?

319

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὸ σῶμα θύσεις τοῦμόν, οὐχὶ τοῦνομα.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

οὐδ' ἂν πόλιν φράσειας ἦτις ἐστί σοι;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ζητεῖς γὰρ οὐδὲν κέρδος, ὡς θανουμένῳ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

χάριν δὲ δοῦναι τήνδε κωλύει τί σε;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὸ κλεινὸν Ἄργος πατρίδ' ἐμὴν ἐπεύχομαι.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

πρὸς θεῶν ἀληθῶς, ὦ ξέν', εἴ κείθεν γεγώς;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

510 ἐκ τῶν Μυκηνηῶν γ', αἴ ποτ' ἦσαν ὄλβιοι.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

φυγὰς δ' ἀπήρας πατρίδος, ἣ ποία τύχη;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεύγω τρόπον γε δὴ τιν' οὐχ ἐκὼν ἐκῶν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

καὶ μὴν ποθεινός γ' ἦλθες ἐξ Ἄργους μολών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔκουν ἐμαυτῷ γ'· εἰ δὲ σοί, σὺ τοῦθ' ὄρα.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἄρ' ἂν τί μοι φράσειας ὧν ἐγὼ θέλω;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς γ' ἐν παρέργῳ τῆς ἐμῆς δυσπραξίας.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

Τροίαν ἴσως οἴσθ', ἣς ἀπανταχοῦ λόγος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς μήποτ' ὄφελόν γε μηδ' ἰδὼν ὄναρ.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ORESTES

My body shalt thou slaughter, not my name.

IPHIGENEIA

Not even thy city wilt thou name to me?

ORESTES

Thou seekest to no profit: I must die.

IPHIGENEIA

Yet, as a grace to me, why grant not this?

ORESTES

Argos the glorious boast I for my land.

IPHIGENEIA

'Fore Heaven, stranger, art indeed her son?

ORESTES

Yea—of Mycenæ, prosperous in time past.

510

IPHIGENEIA

Exiled didst quit thy land, or by what hap?

ORESTES

In a sort exiled—willing, and yet loth.

IPHIGENEIA

Yet long-desired from Argos hast thou come.

ORESTES

Of me, not: if of thee, see thou to that.

IPHIGENEIA

Now wouldst thou tell a thing I fain would know?

ORESTES

Ay—a straw added to my trouble's weight.

IPHIGENEIA

Troy haply know'st thou, famed the wide world
through?

ORESTES

Would I did not,—not even seen in dreams!

321

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

φασίν νιν οὐκέτ' οὔσαν οἴχεσθαι δορί.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

520

ἔστιν γὰρ οὕτως οὐδ' ἄκραντ' ἠκούσατε.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

Ἐλένη δ' ἀφίκται δῶμα Μενέλεω πάλιν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἦκει, κακῶς γ' ἐλθοῦσα τῶν ἐμῶν τι.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

καὶ ποῦ 'στι; κἀμοὶ γάρ τι προῦφείλει κακόν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Σπάρτη ξυνοικεῖ τῷ πάρος ξυνευνέτη.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὦ μῖσος εἰς Ἑλληνας, οὐκ ἐμοὶ μόνη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἀπέλαυσα κἀγὼ δὴ τι τῶν κείνης γάμων.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

νόστος δ' Ἀχαιῶν ἐγένεθ', ὡς κηρύσσεται;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὡς πάνθ' ἅπαξ με συλλαβοῦσ' ἀνιστορεῖς.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

πρὶν γὰρ θανεῖν σε, τοῦδ' ἐπαυρέσθαι θέλω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

530 ἔλεγχ', ἐπειδὴ τοῦδ' ἐρᾶς· λέξω δ' ἐγώ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

Κάλχας τις ἦλθε μάντις ἐκ Τροίας πάλιν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄλωλεν, ὡς ἦν ἐν Μυκηναίοις λόγος.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὦ πότνι', ὡς εὔ. τί γὰρ ὁ Λαέρτου γόνος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὔπω νερόστηκ' οἶκον, ἔστι δ', ὡς λόγος.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

IPHIGENEIA

They say she is no more, by spears o'erthrown.

ORESTES

So is it: things not unfulfilled ye heard.

520

IPHIGENEIA

Came Helen back to Menelaus' home?

ORESTES

She came—for evil unto kin of mine.

IPHIGENEIA

Where is she? Evil debt she oweth me.

ORESTES

In Sparta dwelling with her sometime lord.

IPHIGENEIA

Thing loathed of Hellenes, not of me alone!

ORESTES

I too have tasted of her bridal's fruit.

IPHIGENEIA

And came the Achaeans home, as rumour saith?

ORESTES

Thou in one question comprehendest all.

IPHIGENEIA

Ah, ere thou die, this boon I fain would win.

ORESTES

Ask on, since this thou cravest. I will speak.

530

IPHIGENEIA

Calchas, a prophet—came he back from Troy?

ORESTES

Dead—as the rumour in Mycenae ran.

IPHIGENEIA (*turning to Artemis' temple*)

O Queen, how justly! And Laertes' son?

ORESTES

He hath won not home, but liveth, rumour tells.

323

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὄλοιτο, νόστου μήποτ' εἰς πάτραν τυχών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

μηδὲν κατεύχου· πάντα τὰκείνου νοσεῖ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

Θέτιδος δὲ τῆς Νηρηίδος ἔστι παῖς ἔτι;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν· ἄλλως λέκτρ' ἔγημ' ἐν Αὐλίδι.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

δόλια γάρ, ὡς ἴσασιν οἱ πεπονθότες.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

540 τίς εἶ ποθ'; ὡς εὖ πυνθάνει τὰφ' Ἑλλάδος.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἐκεῖθὲν εἰμι· παῖς ἔτ' οὐσ' ἀπωλόμην.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὀρθῶς ποθεῖς ἄρ' εἰδέναι τὰκεῖ, γύναι.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τί δ' ὁ στρατηγός, ὃν λέγουσ' εὐδαιμονεῖν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τίς; οὐ γὰρ ὃν γ' ἐγῶδα τῶν εὐδαιμόνων.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

Ἄτρεως ἐλέγετο δὴ τις Ἀγαμέμνων ἄναξ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδ'· ἄπελθε τοῦ λόγου τούτου, γύναι.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν, ἀλλ' εἴφ', ἵν' εὐφρανθῶ, ξένη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τέθνηχ' ὁ τλήμων, πρὸς δ' ἀπώλεσέν τινα.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τέθνηκε; ποία συμφορᾶ; τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

550 τί δ' ἐστὲναξας τοῦτο; μῶν προσῆκέ σοι;

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

IPHIGENEIA

Now ruin seize him! Never win he home!

ORESTES

No need to curse. His lot is misery all.

IPHIGENEIA

Liveth the son of Nereid Thetis yet?

ORESTES

Lives not. In Aulis vain his bridal was.

IPHIGENEIA

A treacherous bridal!—they which suffered know.

ORESTES

Who art thou—thou apt questioner touching Greece? 540

IPHIGENEIA

Thence am I, in my childhood lost to her.

ORESTES

Well mayst thou, lady, long for word of her.

IPHIGENEIA

What of her war-chief, named the prosperous?

ORESTES

Who? Of the prosperous is not he I know.

IPHIGENEIA

One King Agamemnon, Atreus' scion named.

ORESTES

I know not. Lady, let his story be.

IPHIGENEIA

Nay, tell, by Heaven, that I be gladdened, friend.

ORESTES

Dead, hapless king!—and perished not alone.

IPHIGENEIA

Dead is he? By what fate?—ah, woe is me!

ORESTES

Why dost thou sigh thus? Is he kin to thee? 550

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τὸν ὄλβον αὐτοῦ τὸν πάροισ' ἀναστένω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δεινῶς γὰρ ἐκ γυναικὸς οἴχεται σφαγεῖς.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὦ πανδάκρυτος ἢ κτανούσα χῶ θανών.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

παῦσαί νυν ἤδη μηδ' ἐρωτήσης πέρα.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τοσόνδε γ', εἰ ζῆ τοῦ ταλαιπώρου δαμαρ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστι παῖς νιν ὃν ἔτεχ', οὔτος ὤλεσεν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὦ συνταραχθεῖς οἶκος. ὡς τί δὴ θέλων;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

πατρὸς θανόντος αἷμα τιμωρούμενος.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

φεῦ·

ὡς εὖ κακὸν δίκαιον εἰσεπράξατο.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

560 ἀλλ' οὐ τὰ πρὸς θεῶν εὐτυχεῖ δίκαιος ὢν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

λείπει δ' ἐν οἴκοις ἄλλον Ἀγαμέμνων γόνον;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λέλοιπεν Ἡλέκτραν γε παρθένον μίαν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τί δέ; σφαγείσης θυγατρὸς ἔστι τις λόγος;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐδεῖς γε, πλὴν θανούσαν οὐχ ὀρᾶν φάος.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τάλαιν' ἐκείνη χῶ κτανὼν αὐτὴν πατήρ.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

IPHIGENEIA

His happiness of old days I bemoan.

ORESTES

Yea, and his awful death—slain by his wife!

IPHIGENEIA

O all-bewailed, the murderess and the dead!

ORESTES

Refrain thee even now, and ask no more.

IPHIGENEIA

This only—lives the hapless hero's wife?

ORESTES

Lives not. Her son—ay, whom herself bare—slew
her.

IPHIGENEIA

O house distraught! Slew her!—with what intent?

ORESTES

To avenge on her his murdered father's blood.

IPHIGENEIA

Alas!—ill justice, wrought how righteously!

ORESTES

Not blest of heaven is he, how just soe'er.

560

IPHIGENEIA

Left the king other issue in his halls?

ORESTES

One maiden child, Electra, hath he left.

IPHIGENEIA

How, is nought said of her they sacrificed?

ORESTES

Nought—save, being dead, she seeth not the light.

IPHIGENEIA

Ah, hapless she, and hapless sire that slew!

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κακῆς γυναικὸς χάριν ἄχαριν ἀπώλετο.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὁ τοῦ θανόντος δ' ἔστι παῖς Ἄργει πατρός;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔστ', ἄθλιός γε, κούδαμου καὶ πανταχοῦ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ψευδεῖς ὄνειροι, χαίρετ'· οὐδὲν ἦτ' ἄρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

570 οὐδ' οἱ σοφοί γε δαίμονες κεκλημένοι
 πτηνῶν ὀνείρων εἰσὶν ἀψευδέστεροι.
 πολὺς παραγμὸς ἔν τε τοῖς θείοις ἐνι
 κὰν τοῖς βροτέοις· ἐν δὲ λυπεῖται μόνου,
 ὅτ' οὐκ ἄφρων ὢν μάντεων πεισθεὶς λόγοις
 ὄλωλεν ὡς ὄλωλε τοῖσιν εἰδόσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τί δ' ἡμεῖς οἵ τ' ἐμοὶ γεννήτορες;
 ἄρ' εἰσὶν; ἄρ' οὐκ εἰσὶ; τίς φράσειεν ἄν;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

580 ἀκούσατ'· εἰς γὰρ δὴ τιν' ἤκομεν λογον,
 ὑμῖν τ' ὄνησιν, ὧ ξένοι, σπεύδουσ' ἄμα
 κἀμοί. τὸ δ' εὖ μάλιστα τῆδε γίνεται,
 εἰ πᾶσι ταῦτ' ὀνείρων ἀρεσκόντως ἔχει.
 θέλοις ἄν, εἰ σώσαιμί σ', ἀγγεῖλαι τί μοι
 πρὸς Ἄργος ἐλθὼν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐκεῖ φίλοις,
 δέλτον τ' ἐνεγκεῖν, ἣν τις οἰκτεῖρας ἐμὲ
 ἔγραψεν αἰχμάλωτος, οὐχὶ τὴν ἐμὴν
 φονέα νομίζων χεῖρα, τοῦ νόμου δ' ὑπο
 θνήσκειν σφε, τῆς θεοῦ τάδε δίκαι' ἡγουμένης;
 οὐδένα γὰρ εἶχον ὅστις ἀγγεῖλαι μολὼν
 εἰς Ἄργος αὐθις, τὰς τ' ἐμὰς ἐπιστολὰς
 590 πέμψειε σωθεὶς τῶν ἐμῶν φίλων τινί.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ORESTES

Slain for an evil woman—graceless grace!

IPHIGENEIA

And lives the dead king's son in Argos yet?

ORESTES

He lives, unhappy, nowhere, everywhere.

IPHIGENEIA

False dreams, avaunt! So then ye were but nought.

ORESTES

Ay, and not even Gods, whom men call wise, 570
Are less deceitful than be fleeting dreams.
Utter confusion is in things divine
And human. Wise men grieve at this alone
When—rashness?—no, but faith in oracles
Brings ruin—how deep, they that prove it know.

CHORUS

Alas, alas! Of me—*my* parents—what?
Live they, or live they not? Ah, who can tell?

IPHIGENEIA

Hearken, for I have found us a device,
Strangers, shall do you service, and withal 580
To me; and thus is fair speed best attained,
If the same end be pleasing unto all.
Wouldst thou, if I would save thee, take for me
To Argos tidings to my kindred there,
And bear a letter, which a captive wrote
Of pity for me, counting not mine hand
His murderer, but that he died by law
Of this land, since the Goddess holds it just?
For I had none to be my messenger
Hence, saved alive, to Argos, and to bear 590
My letter to a certain friend of mine.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

σὺ δ', εἴ γάρ, ὡς ἔοικας, οὔτε δυσγενῆς
καὶ τὰς Μυκῆνας οἶσθα χοῦς κἀγὼ θέλω,
σώθητι, καὶ σὺ μισθὸν οὐκ αἰσχρὸν λαβὼν
κούφων ἕκατι γραμμάτων σωτηρίαν.
οὔτος δ', ἐπεὶ περ πόλις ἀναγκάζει τάδε,
θεᾷ γενέσθω θῦμα χωρισθεὶς σέθεν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας τᾶλλα πλὴν ἔν, ὦ ξένη·
τὸ γὰρ σφαγῆναι τόνδ' ἐμοὶ βάρος μέγα.
ὁ ναυστολῶν γάρ εἰμ' ἐγὼ τὰς ξυμφοράς·
600 οὔτος δὲ συμπλεῖ τῶν ἐμῶν μόχθων χάριν.
οὔκουν δίκαιον ἐπ' ὀλέθρῳ τῷ τοῦδ' ἐμὲ
χάριν τίθεσθαι καὐτὸν ἐκδύναι κακῶν.
ἀλλ' ὡς γενέσθω· τῷδε μὲν δέλτον δίδου,
πέμψει γὰρ Ἄργος, ὥστε σοι καλῶς ἔχειν
ἡμᾶς δ' ὁ χρήζων κτεινέτω. τὰ τῶν φίλων
αἰσχιστον ὅστις καταβαλὼν εἰς ξυμφορὰς
αὐτὸς σέσωσται. τυγχάνει δ' ὄδ' ὦν φίλος,
ὄν οὐδὲν ἤσσον ἢ 'μὲ φῶς ὀράν θέλω.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὦ λῆμ' ἄριστον, ὡς ἀπ' εὐγενοῦς τινος
610 ῥίζης πέφυκας τοῖς φίλοις τ' ὀρθῶς φίλος.
τοιούτος εἶη τῶν ἐμῶν ὁμοσπόρων
ὅσπερ λέλειπται. καὶ γὰρ οὐδ' ἐγὼ, ξένοι,
ἀνάδελφός εἰμι, πλὴν ὅσ' οὐχ ὀρώσά νιν.
ἐπεὶ δὲ βούλει ταῦτα, τόνδε πέμψομεν
δέλτον φέροντα, σὺ δὲ θανεῖ· πολλὴ δέ τις
προθυμία σε τοῦδ' ἔχουσα τυγχάνει.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

θύσει δὲ τίς με καὶ τὰ δεινὰ τλήσεται;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἐγὼ· θεᾶς γὰρ τήνδε προστροπὴν ἔχω.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

But thou, if thou art nobly-born, as seems,
 And know'st Mycenae, and the folk I mean,
 Receive thy life : accept no base reward,
 Deliverance, for a little letter's sake.
 But this man, since the state constraineth so,
 Torn from thee, be the Goddess' sacrifice.

ORESTES

Well say'st thou, save for one thing, stranger
 maid :—

That he be slain were heavy on my soul.
 I was his pilot to calamity,
 He sails with me for mine affliction's sake. 600
 Unjust it were that I, in pleasuring thee,
 Should seal his doom, and 'scape myself from ills.
 Nay, be it thus,—the letter give to him
 To bear to Argos ; so art thou content :
 But me let who will slay. Most base it is
 That one should in misfortune whelm his friends,
 Himself escaping. This man is my friend,
 Whose life I tender even as my own.

IPHIGENEIA

O noble spirit ! from what princely stock
 Hast thou sprung, thou so loyal to thy friends ! 610
 Even such be he that of my father's house
 Is left alive ! For, stranger, brotherless
 I too am not, save that I see him not.
 Since thou wilt have it so, him will I send
 Bearing the letter : thou wilt die. Ah, deep
 This thy strange yearning unto death must be !

ORESTES

Whose shall be that dread deed, my sacrifice ?

IPHIGENEIA

Mine ; for this office hold I of the Goddess.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἄζηλά γ', ὦ νεᾶνι, κοῦκ εὐδαίμονα.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

620

ἄλλ' εἰς ἀνάγκην κείμεθ', ἣν φυλακτέον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

αὐτὴ ξίφει θύουσα θῆλυς ἄρσενας ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

οὔκ' ἀλλὰ χαίτην ἀμφὶ σὴν χερνύψομαι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὁ δὲ σφαγεὺς τίς; εἰ τὰδ' ἱστορεῖν με χρή.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

εἴσω δόμων τῶνδ' εἰσὶν οἷς μέλει τάδε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τάφος δὲ ποῖος δέξεταί μ', ὅταν θάνω;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

πῦρ ἱερὸν ἔνδον χάσμα τ' εὐρωπὸν πέτρας.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

φεῦ·

πῶς ἂν μ' ἀδελφῆς χεῖρ περιστείλειεν ἄν;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

μάταιον εὐχὴν, ὦ τάλας, ὅστις ποτ' εἶ,
 ἠὔξω· μακρὰν γὰρ βαρβάρου ναίει χθονός.
 οὐ μὴν, ἐπειδὴ τυγχάνεις Ἀργεῖος ὄν,
 ἀλλ' ὄν γε δυνατὸν οὐδ' ἐγὼ ἄλλείψω χάριν.
 πολὺν τε γάρ σοι κόσμον ἐνθήσω τάφῳ,
 ξανθῶ τ' ἐλαίῳ σῶμα σὸν κατασβέσω,
 καὶ τῆς ὀρείας ἀνθεμόρρυτον γάνος
 ξουθῆς μελίσσης εἰς πυρὰν βαλῶ σέθεν.
 ἀλλ' εἶμι, δέλτον τ' ἐκ θεᾶς ἀνακτόρων
 οἴσω· τὸ μέντοι δυσμενὲς μὴ μοι λάβης.
 φυλάσσετ' αὐτούς, πρόσπολοι, δεσμῶν ἄτερ·
 ἴσως ἄελπτα τῶν ἐμῶν φίλων τινὶ

630

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ORESTES

A task, O maid, of horror, all unblest!

IPHIGENEIA

Bowed 'neath necessity, I must submit.

620

ORESTES

A woman, with the priest's knife slay'st thou men?

IPHIGENEIA

Nay, on thine hair I shed but lustral spray.

ORESTES

The slayer, who?—if I may ask thee this.

IPHIGENEIA

Within the fane be men whose part is this.

ORESTES

And what tomb shall receive me, being dead?

IPHIGENEIA

A wide rock-rift within, and holy fire.

ORESTES

Would that a sister's hand might lay me out!

IPHIGENEIA

Vain prayer, unhappy, whosoe'er thou be,
Thou prayest. Far she dwells from this wild
land.

630

Yet, forasmuch as thou an Argive art,
Of all I can, no service will I spare.
Much ornament will I lay on thy grave:
With golden oil thine ashes will I quench;
The tawny hill-bee's amber-lucent dews,
That well from flowers, I'll shed upon thy pyre.
I go, the letter from the Goddess' shrine
To bring. Ah, think not bitterly of me!
Ward them, ye guards, but with no manacles.
Perchance to a friend in Argos shall I send

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

640 πέμψω πρὸς Ἄργος, ὃν μάλιστ' ἐγὼ φιλῶ,
καὶ δέλτος αὐτῷ ζῶντας οὓς δοκεῖ θανεῖν
λέγουσα πιστὰς ἡδονὰς ἀπαγγελεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κατολοφυρόμεθα σὲ τὸν χερνίβων στρ.
ῥανίσι βαρβάρων¹
μελόμενον αἵμακταῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἶκτος γὰρ οὐ ταῦτ', ἀλλὰ χαίрет', ὦ ξένοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὲ δὲ τύχας μάκαρος, ἰὼ νεανία, ἀντ.
σεβόμεθ', εἰς πάτραν
ὅτι πόδ' ἐπεμβάσει.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

650 ἄζηλά τοι φίλοισι, θνησκόντων φίλων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ σχέτλιοι πομπαί.
φεῦ φεῦ, διόλλυσαι.
αἰαῖ αἰαῖ.
πότερος ὁ μέλεος μάλλον ὢν ;²
ἔτι γὰρ ἀμφίλογα δίδυμα μέμονε φρήν,
σὲ πάρος ἢ σ' ἀναστενάξω γόοις.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Πυλάδη, πέπονθας ταῦτὰ πρὸς θεῶν ἐμοί ;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ἐρωτᾶς οὐ λέγειν ἔχοντά με.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

660 τίς ἐστὶν ἡ νεανίς ; ὡς Ἑλληνικῶς
ἀνῆρεθ' ἡμᾶς τοὺς τ' ἐν Ἰλίῳ πόνους

¹ Elmsley's conjecture, to complete strophic correspondence.

² Wecklein : for ὁ μέλων of MSS.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Tidings unhopèd—the friend whom most I love :— 640
 The letter, telling that she lives whom dead
 He deems, shall seal the happy tidings' faith. [*Exit.*]

CHORUS

To ORESTES. (Str.)

I wail for thee, for whom there wait
 The drops barbaric, on thy brow
 To fall, to doom thee to be slain.

ORESTES

This asks not pity. Stranger maids, farewell.

CHORUS

To PYLADES. (Ant.)

Thee count I blessèd for thy fate,
 Thine happy fate, fair youth, that thou
 Shalt tread thy native shore again.

PYLADES

Small cause to envy friends, when die their friends. 650

CHORUS

Ah, cruel journeying for thee!
 Woe! thou art ruined utterly!
 Alas! woe worth the day!

Whether of you is deeper whelmed in woe?
 For yet my soul in doubt sways to and fro—
 Thee shall I chiefly wail, or thee? How shall I say?

ORESTES

'Fore Heaven, Pylades, is thy thought mine?—

PYLADES

I know not: this thy question baffles me.

ORESTES

Who is the maiden? With how Greek a heart 660
 She asked us of the toils in Ilium,

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

νόστον τ' Ἀχαιῶν τόν τ' ἐν οἰωνοῖς σοφὸν
 Κάλχαντ' Ἀχιλλέως τ' ὄνομα, καὶ τὸν ἄθλιον
 Ἀγαμέμνον' ὡς ὄκτειρ' ἀνηρώτα τέ με
 γυναῖκα παίδας τ'. ἔστιν ἢ ξένη γένος
 ἐκεῖθεν Ἀργεῖα τις· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ποτε
 δέλτον τ' ἔπεμπε καὶ τάδ' ἐξεμάνθανεν,
 ὡς κοινὰ πρᾶσσουσ', Ἄργος εἰ πρᾶσσοι καλῶς.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

670 ἔφθης με μικρόν· ταῦτά δὲ φθάσας λέγεις,
 πλὴν ἔν· τὰ γάρ τοι βασιλέων παθήματα
 ἴσασι πάντες, ὧν ἐπιστροφή τις ἦν.
 ἀτὰρ διήλθον χᾶτερον λόγον τινά.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τίν' ; εἰς τὸ κοινὸν δούς ἄμεινον ἂν μάθοις.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

680 αἰσχρὸν θανόντος σοῦ βλέπειν ἡμᾶς φάος,
 κοινῇ τ' ἔπλευσα, δεῖ με καὶ κοινῇ θανεῖν.
 καὶ δειλίαν γὰρ καὶ κάκην κεκτῆσομαι
 Ἄργει τε Φωκέων τ' ἐν πολυπτύχῳ χθονί,
 δόξω δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖσι, πολλοὶ γὰρ κακοί,
 προδούς σε, σωθεῖς δ' αὐτὸς εἰς οἴκους μόνος,
 ἢ καὶ φονεύσας ἐπὶ νοσοῦσι δώμασι,
 ῥάψαι μόρον σοι σῆς τυραννίδος χάριν,
 ἔγκληρον ὡς δὴ σὴν κασιγνήτην γαμῶν.
 ταῦτ' οὖν φοβοῦμαι καὶ δι' αἰσχύνης ἔχω,
 κοῦκ ἔσθ' ὅπως οὐ χρὴ συνεκπνεῦσαί μέ σοι
 καὶ συσφαγῆναι καὶ πυρωθῆναι δέμας,
 φίλον γεγῶτα καὶ φοβούμενον ψόγον.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εὐφήμα φώνει· τὰ μὰ δεῖ φέρειν ἐμέ.¹
 ἀπλᾶς δὲ λύπας ἐξόν, οὐκ οἶσω διπλᾶς.

¹ Porson, Nauck, and Wecklein : for MSS. κακά.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

The host's home-coming, Calchas the wise seer
 Of birds, Achilles' name! How pitied she
 Agamemnon's wretched fate, and questioned me
 Touching his wife, his children! Sure her birth
 Is thence, of Argos; else she ne'er would send
 A letter thither, nor would question thus,
 As one whose welfare hung on Argos' weal.

PYLADES

Mine own thought but a little thou forestallest,
 Save this—that the calamities of kings
 All know, who have had converse with the world.
 But my mind runneth on another theme.

670

ORESTES

What? Share it, and thou better shalt conclude.

PYLADES

'Twere base that I live on, when thou art dead:
 With thee I voyaged, and with thee should die.
 A coward's and a knave's name shall I earn
 In Argos and in Phocis' thousand glens.
 Most men will think—seeing most men be knaves—
 That I forsook thee, escaping home alone,—
 Yea, slew thee, mid the afflictions of thine house
 Devising, for thy throne's sake, doom for thee,
 As being to thine heiress sister wed.

680

For these things, then I take both shame and
 fear:

It cannot be but I must die with thee,
 With thee be slaughtered and with thee be burned,
 Seeing I am thy friend, and dread reproach.

ORESTES

Ah, speak not so! My burden must I bear;
 Nor, when but one grief needs, will I bear twain.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

- 690 ὃ γὰρ σὺ λυπρὸν κάπονείδιστον λέγεις,
 ταῦτ' ἔστιν ἡμῖν, εἴ σε συμμοχθοῦντ' ἔμοι
 κτενῶ· τὸ μὲν γὰρ εἰς ἔμ' οὐ κακῶς ἔχει,
 πράσσονθ' ἅ πράσσω πρὸς θεῶν, λιπεῖν βίον.
 σὺ δ' ὄλβιός τ' εἶ, καθαρὰ τ' οὐ νοσοῦντ' ἔχεις
 μέλαθρ', ἐγὼ δὲ δυσσεβῆ καὶ δυστυχῆ.
 σωθεὶς δὲ παῖδας ἐξ ἐμῆς ὁμοσπόρου
 κτησάμενος, ἦν ἔδωκά σοι δάμαρτ' ἔχειν,
 ὄνομά τ' ἐμοῦ γένοιτ' ἄν, οὐδ' ἄπαις δόμος
 πατρῶος οὐμὸς ἐξαλειφθείη ποτ' ἄν.
 700 ἀλλ' ἔρπε καὶ ζῆ καὶ δόμους οἶκει πατρός.
 ὅταν δ' ἐς Ἑλλάδ' ἵππιόν τ' Ἄργος μόλῃς,
 πρὸς δεξιᾶς σε τῆσδ' ἐπισκῆπτω τάδε·
 τύμβον τε χῶσον κἀπίθες μνημεῖά μοι,
 καὶ δάκρυ' ἀδελφῆ καὶ κόμας δότω τάφῳ.
 ἄγγελλε δ' ὡς ὄλωλ' ὑπ' Ἀργείας τινὸς
 γυναικός, ἀμφὶ βωμὸν ἀγνισθεὶς φόνῳ·
 καὶ μὴ προδοῦς μου τὴν κασιγνήτην ποτέ,
 ἔρημα κήδη καὶ δόμους ὀρώων πατρός.
 καὶ χαῖρ' ἐμῶν γὰρ φίλτατον σ' ἠῦρον φίλων,
 ὦ συγκυναγὲ καὶ συνεκτραφεὶς ἐμοί,
 710 ὦ πόλλ' ἐνεγκῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ἄχθη κακῶν.
 ἡμᾶς δ' ὁ Φοῖβος μάντις ὦν ἐψεύσατο·
 τέχνην δὲ θέμενος ὡς προσώταθ' Ἑλλάδος
 ἀπήλασ' αἰδοῖ τῶν πάρος μαντευμάτων,
 ᾧ πάντ' ἐγὼ δούς τὰμὰ καὶ πεισθεὶς λόγοις,
 μητέρα κατακτὰς αὐτὸς ἀνταπόλλυμαι.

ΠΥΛΛΑΔΗΣ

ἔσται τάφος σοι, καὶ κασιγνήτης λέχος
 οὐκ ἂν προδοίην, ὦ τάλας, ἐπεὶ σ' ἐγὼ
 θανόντα μᾶλλον ἢ βλέπονθ' ἔξω φίλον.
 ἀτὰρ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σ' οὐ διέφθορέν γέ πο

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

For that reproach and grief which thou dost name
 Is mine, if thee, the sharer of my toil, 690
 I slay. For my lot is not evil all,—
 Being thus tormented by the Gods,—to die.
 But thou art prosperous: taintless are thine
 halls,

Unstricken; mine accurst and fortune-crook.
 If thou be saved, and get thee sons of her,
 My sister, whom I gave thee to thy wife,
 Then should my name live, nor my father's house
 Ever, for lack of heirs, be blotted out.
 Pass hence, and live: dwell in my father's halls.
 And when to Greece and Argos' war-steed land 700
 Thou com'st,—by this right hand do I charge
 thee—

Heap me a tomb: memorials lay of me
 There; tears and shorn hair let my sister give,
 And tell how by an Argive woman's hand
 Hallowed for death by altar-dews, I died.
 Never forsake my sister, though thou see
 Thy marriage-kin, my sire's house, desolate.
 Farewell. Of friends I have found thee kindest,
 O fellow-hunter, foster-brother mine,
 Bearer of many a burden of mine ills! 710
 Me Phoebus, prophet though he be, deceived,
 And by a cunning shift from Argos drave
 Afar, for shame of those his prophecies.
 I gave up all to him, obeyed his words,
 My mother slew—and perish now myself!

PYLADES

Thine shall a tomb be: ne'er will I betray
 Thy sister's bed, O hapless: I shall still
 Hold thee a dearer friend in death than life.
 Yet thee hath the God's oracle not yet

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

720

μάντευμα, καίτοι γ' ἔγγυς ἔστηκας φόνου.
ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἔστιν ἢ λίαν δυσπραξία
λίαν διδοῦσα μεταβολάς, ὅταν τύχη.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

σίγα· τὰ Φοίβου δ' οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ μ' ἔπη
γυνὴ γὰρ ἦδε δωμάτων ἔξω περᾶ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἀπέλθεθ' ὑμεῖς καὶ παρεντρεπίζετε
τᾶνδον μολόντες τοῖς ἐφeskτῶσι σφαγῇ.
δέλτου μὲν αἶδε πολύθυροι διαπτυχαί,
ξένοι, πάρεισιν· ἂ δ' ἐπὶ τοῖσδε βούλομαι,
ἀκούσατ'· οὐδεὶς αὐτὸς ἐν πόνοις τ' ἀνήρ
ὅταν τε πρὸς τὸ θάρσος ἐκ φόβου πέση.
ἐγὼ δὲ ταρβῶ μὴ ἀπονοστήσας χθονὸς
θῆται παρ' οὐδὲν τὰς ἐμὰς ἐπιστολὰς
ὅ τήνδε μέλλων δέλτου εἰς Ἄργος φέρειν.

730

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τί δῆτα βούλει; τίνος ἀμηχανεῖς πέρι;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὄρκον δότω μοι τάσδε πορθμεύσειν γραφὰς
πρὸς Ἄργος, οἷσι βούλομαι πέμψαι φίλων.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἢ κἀντιδώσεις τῷδε τοὺς αὐτοὺς λόγους;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τί χρῆμα δράσειν ἢ τί μὴ δράσειν; λέγε.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἐκ γῆς ἀφήσειν μὴ θανόντα βαρβάρου.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

740

δίκαιον εἶπας· πῶς γὰρ ἀγγεῖλειεν ἄν;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἢ καὶ τύραννος ταῦτα συγχωρήσεται;

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

Destroyed, albeit thou standest hard by death. 720
 Nay, misery's blackest night may chance, may chance,
 By fortune's turn, to unfold a sudden dawn.

ORESTES

Peace! Phoebus' words avail me nothing now;
 For yonder forth the temple comes the maid.

Enter IPHIGENEIA.

IPHIGENEIA (*to guards*)

Depart ye, and within make ready all
 For them whose office is the sacrifice. [*Exeunt* GUARDS.
 Strangers, my letter's many-leavèd folds
 Are here: but that which therebeside I wish
 Hear:—in affliction is no man the same
 As when he hath passed from fear to confidence. 730
 I dread lest, having gotten from this land,
 He who to Argos should my tablet bear
 Shall set my letter utterly at nought.

ORESTES

What wouldst thou then? Why thus disquieted?

IPHIGENEIA

Let him make oath to bear to Argos this
 To friends to whom I fain would send the same.

ORESTES

Wilt thou in turn give him the selfsame pledge?

IPHIGENEIA

To do what thing, or leave undone? Say on.

ORESTES

To send him forth this barbarous land unslain?

IPHIGENEIA

A fair claim thine! How should he bear it else? 740

ORESTES

But will the king withal consent hereto?

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

πέισω σφε, καυτή ναὸς εἰσβήσω σκάφος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὄμνυ· σὺ δ' ἔξαρχ' ὄρκον ὅστις εὐσεβής.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

δώσεις, λέγειν χρή, τήνδε τοῖς ἐμοῖς φίλοις.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τοῖς σοῖς φίλοισι γράμματ' ἀποδώσω τάδε.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

καγὼ σὲ σώσω κυανέας ἔξω πέτρας.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

τίν' οὖν ἐπόμνυς τοισίδ' ὄρκιον θεῶν ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

"Ἄρτεμιν, ἐν ἧσπερ δώμασιν τιμὰς ἔχω.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἐγὼ δ' ἀνακτά γ' οὐρανοῦ, σεμνὸν Δία.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

750

εἰ δ' ἐκλιπὼν τὸν ὄρκον ἀδικοίης ἐμέ ;

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἄνοστος εἶην· τί δὲ σύ, μὴ σώσασά με ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

μήποτε κατ' Ἄργος ζῶσ' ἵχνος θείην ποδός.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν ὃν παρήλθομεν λόγον.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἄλλ' οὔτις ἔστ' ἄκαιρος, ἣν καλῶς ἔχη.

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ἐξαίρετόν μοι δὸς τόδ', ἣν τι ναῦς πάθη,
 χῆ δέλτος ἐν κλύδωνι χρημάτων μέτα
 ἀφανῆς γένηται, σῶμα δ' ἐκσώσω μόνον,
 τὸν ὄρκον εἶναι τόνδε μηκέτ' ἔμπεδον.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

IPHIGENEIA

I will persuade him, yea, embark thy friend.

ORESTES (*to PYLADES*)

Swear thou :—and thou a sacred oath dictate.

IPHIGENEIA

Say thou wilt give this tablet to my friends.

PYLADES

I to thy friends will render up this script.

IPHIGENEIA

And through the Dark Rocks will I send thee safe.

PYLADES

What God dost take to witness this thine oath ?

IPHIGENEIA

Artemis, in whose fane I hold mine office.

PYLADES

And I by Heaven's King, reverèd Zeus.

IPHIGENEIA

What if thou fail thine oath, and do me wrong ? 750

PYLADES

May I return not. If *thou* save me not ?—

IPHIGENEIA

Alive in Argos may I ne'er set foot.

PYLADES

Hear now a matter overlooked of us.

IPHIGENEIA

Not yet is this too late, so it be fair.

PYLADES

This clearance grant me—if the ship be wrecked,
And in the sea-surge with the lading sink
The letter, and my life alone I save,
That then of this mine oath shall I be clear.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

760 ἄλλ' οἶσθ' ὃ δράσω ; πολλὰ γὰρ πολλῶν κυρεῖ
 τάνόντα κάγγεγραμμέν' ἐν δέλτου πτυχαῖς
 λόγῳ φράσω σοι πάντ' ἀναγγεῖλαι φίλοις.
 ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ γάρ· ἦν μὲν ἐκσώσης γραφήν,
 αὐτὴ φράσει σιγῶσα τὰγγεγραμμένα·
 ἦν δ' ἐν θαλάσῃ γράμματ' ἀφανισθῆ τάδε,
 τὸ σῶμα σώσας τοὺς λόγους σώσεις ἐμοί.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας τῶν τε σῶν ἐμοῦ θ' ὕπερ.
 σήμαινε δ' ᾧ χρῆ τάσδ' ἐπιστολὰς φέρειν
 πρὸς Ἄργος, ὅ τι τε χρῆ κλύοντά σου λέγειν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

770 ἄγγελλ' Ὀρέστη, παιδὶ τὰγαμέμνονος·
 ἢ ἔν Αὐλίδι σφαγεῖς' ἐπιστέλλει τάδε
 ζῶσ' Ἰφιγένεια, τοῖς ἐκεῖ δ' οὐ ζῶσ' ἔτι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ποῦ δ' ἔστ' ἐκείνη ; κατθανοῦσ' ἦκει πάλιν ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἦδ' ἦν ὄρᾳς σύ· μὴ λόγοις ἔκπλησσέ με.
 κόμισαί μ' ἐς Ἄργος, ᾧ σύναιμε, πρὶν θανεῖν.
 ἐκ βαρβάρου γῆς καὶ μετάστησον θεᾶς
 σφαγίων, ἐφ' οἷσι ξινοφόνους τιμὰς ἔχω.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Πυλάδη, τί λέξω ; ποῦ ποτ' ὄνθ' ἠύρήμεθα ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἢ σοῖς ἀραία δώμασιν γενήσομαι,
 Ὀρέσθ', ἵν' αὐθις ὄνομα δις κλύων μάθης.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ὦ θεοί.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

780 τί τοὺς θεοὺς ἀνακαλεῖς ἐν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ;

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

IPHIGENEIA

“For every chance have some device”—hear mine:—
 All that is written in the letter’s folds
 My tongue shall say, that thou mayst tell my friends. 760
 So is all safe: if thou lose not the script,
 Itself shall voiceless tell its written tale:
 But if this writing in the sea be lost,
 Then thy life saved shall save my words for me.

PYLADES

Well hast thou said, both for thy need, and me.
 Now say to whom this letter I must bear
 To Argos, and from thee what message speak.

IPHIGENEIA

Say to Orestes, Agamemnon’s son—
 “*This Iphigeneia, slain in Aulis, sends,*
Who liveth, yet for those at home lives not—” 770

ORESTES

Where is she? Hath she risen from the dead?

IPHIGENEIA

She whom thou seest—confuse me not with speech:—
 “*Bear me to Argos, brother, ere I die:*
From this wild land, these sacrifices, save,
Wherein mine office is to slay the stranger;—”

ORESTES

What shall I say?—Now dream we, Pylades?

IPHIGENEIA

“*Else to thine house will I become a curse,*
Orestes”—so, twice heard, hold fast the name.

ORESTES

Gods!

IPHIGENEIA

Why in *mine* affairs invoke the Gods? 780

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐδέν· πέραινε δ'· ἐξέβην γὰρ ἄλλοσε.
τάχ' οὖν ἐρωτῶν σ' εἰς ἄπιστ' ἀφίξομαι.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

λέγ' οὐνεκ' ἔλαφον ἀντιδοῦσά μου θεὰ
Ἄρτεμις ἔσωσέ μ', ἦν ἔθυσ' ἐμὸς πατήρ,
δοκῶν ἐς ἡμᾶς ὄξυ φάσγανον βαλεῖν,
εἰς τήνδε δ' ᾤκισ' αἶαν. αἶδ' ἐπιστολαι,
τάδ' ἐστὶ τῶν δέλτοισιν ἐγγεγραμμένα.

ΠΤΛΑΔΗΣ

790 ὦ ραδίοις ὄρκοισι περιβαλοῦσά με,
κάλλιστα δ' ὀμόσασ', οὐ πολὺν σχήσω χρόνον,
τὸν δ' ὄρκον ὃν κατώμοσ' ἐμπεδώσομεν.
ἰδού, φέρω σοι δέλτον ἀποδίδωμί τε,
Ὅρεστα, τῆσδε σῆς κασιγνήτης πάρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

δέχομαι παρῆς δὲ γραμμάτων διαπτυχάς,
τὴν ἡδονὴν πρῶτ' οὐ λόγοις αἰρήσομαι.
ὦ φιλτάτη μοι σύγγον', ἐκπεπληγμένος
ὄμως σ' ἀπίστῳ περιβαλὼν βραχίονι
εἰς τέρψιν εἶμι, πυθόμενος θαυμάστ' ἐμοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ξεῖν', οὐ δικαίως τῆς θεοῦ τὴν πρόσπολον
χραίνεις ἀθίκοις περιβαλὼν πέπλοις χέρα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

800 ὦ συγκασιγνήτη τε καὶ ταύτου πατρὸς
Ἀγαμέμνονος γεγῶσα, μή μ' ἀποστρέφου,
ἔχουσ' ἀδελφόν, οὐ δοκοῦσ' ἔξειν ποτέ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἐγὼ σ' ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἐμόν; οὐ παύσει λέγων;
τὸ δ' Ἄργος αὐτοῦ μεστὸν ἦ τε Ναυπλία.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ORESTES

'Tis nought: say on: my thoughts had wandered far.
(*Aside*) One question may resolve this miracle.

IPHIGENEIA

Say—"Artemis in my place laid a hind,
And saved me,—this my father sacrificed,
Deeming he plunged the keen blade into me,—
And made me dwell here." This the letter is,
And in the tablets this is what is writ.

PYLADES

O thou who hast bound me by an easy oath—
Hast fairly sworn!—I will not tarry long
To ratify the oath that I have sworn.
This tablet, lo, to thee I bear, and give,
Orestes, from thy sister, yonder maid.

790

ORESTES

This I receive:—I let its folds abide—
First will I seize a rapture not in words:—
Dear sister mine, albeit wonder-struck,
With scarce-believing arm I fold thee round,
And taste delight, who hear things marvellous!

[*Embraces* IPHIGENEIA.]

CHORUS

Stranger, thou sinn'st, polluting Artemis' priestess,
Casting about her sacred robes thine arm!

ORESTES

O sister mine, of Agamemnon sprung,
One sire with me, turn not away from me,
Who hast thy brother, past expectancy!

800

IPHIGENEIA

I?—thee?—my brother?—wilt not hold thy peace?
In Argos and in Nauplia great is he.

347

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἐκεῖ σός, ὦ τάλαινα, σύγγονος.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἀλλ' ἢ Λάκαινα Τυνδαρίς σ' ἐγείνατο ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

Πέλοπός γε παιδὶ παιδός, οὐ' κπέφυκ' ἐγώ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τί φῆς ; ἔχεις τι τῶνδέ μοι τεκμήριον ;

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἔχω· πατρώων ἐκ δόμων τι πυνθάνου.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

810

οὐκοῦν λέγειν μὲν χρῆ σέ, μαυθάνειν δ' ἐμέ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

λέγοιμ' ἂν ἀκοῇ πρῶτον Ἡλέκτρας τάδε.

Ἄτρεως Θυέστου τ' οἶσθα γενομένην ἔριν ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἤκουσα, χρυσῆς ἀρνὸς οὐνεκ' ἦν πέρι.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ταῦτ' οὖν ὑφήμασ' οἶσθ' ἐν εὐπήνοισ ὑφαῖς ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὦ φίλτατ', ἐγγὺς τῶν ἐμῶν κάμπτεις φρενῶν.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

εἰκώ τ' ἐν ἰστοῖς ἡλίου μετάστασιν ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὑφήνα καὶ τόδ' εἶδος εὐμίτοις πλοκαῖς.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

καὶ λούτρ' ἐς Αὔλιν μητρὸς ἀνεδέξω πάρα ;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

οἶδ'· οὐ γὰρ ὁ γάμος ἐσθλὸς ὧν μ' ἀφείλετο.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ORESTES

Not there, unhappy one, thy brother is.

IPHIGENEIA

Did Tyndareus' Spartan daughter bear thee then?

ORESTES

To Pelops' son's son, of whose loins I sprang.

IPHIGENEIA

What say'st thou?—hast thou proof hereof for me?

ORESTES

I have. Ask somewhat of our father's home.

IPHIGENEIA

Now nay; 'tis thou must speak, 'tis I must learn. 810

ORESTES

First will I name this—from Electra heard:—
Know'st thou of Atreus' and Thyestes' feud?

IPHIGENEIA

I heard, how of a golden lamb it came.

ORESTES

This broidered in thy web rememberest thou?

IPHIGENEIA

Dearest, thy chariot-wheels roll nigh my heart!

ORESTES

And pictured in thy loom, the sun turned back?

IPHIGENEIA

This too I wrought with fine-spun broidery-threads.

ORESTES

Bath-water at Aulis hadst thou from thy mother?¹—

IPHIGENEIA

I know—that bridal's bliss stole not remembrance.

¹ Ritual required the bride to bathe on her wedding morning in water from the sacred spring of her native town.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

820 τί γάρ; κόμας σὰς μητρὶ δοῦσα σῆ φέρειν;

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

μνημεῖά γ' ἀντὶ σώματος τοῦμοῦ τάφῳ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ἂ δ' εἶδον αὐτός, τάδε φράσω τεκμήρια·
Πέλοπος παλαιὰν ἐν δόμοις λόγχην πατρός,
ἦν χερσὶ πάλλων παρθένον Πισάτιδα
ἐκτήσαθ' Ἴπποδάμειαν, Οἰνόμαον κτανών,
ἐν παρθενώσι τοῖσι σοῖς κεκρυμμένην.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ὦ φίλτατ', οὐδὲν ἄλλο, φίλτατος γὰρ εἶ,
ἔχω σ', Ὀρέστα, τηλύγετον
χθονὸς ἀπὸ πατρίδος
830 Ἀργόθεν, ὦ φίλος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

κἀγὼ σε τὴν θανοῦσαν, ὡς δοξάζεται.
κατὰ δὲ δάκρυ' ἀδάκρυα, κατὰ δὲ γόος ἅμα χαρὰ
τὸ σὸν νοτίζει βλέφαρον, ὡσαύτως δ' ἐμὸν.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

τότ' ἔτι βρέφος ἔλιπον ἔλιπον ἀγκάλαις
σὲ νεαρὸν τροφοῦ νεαρὸν ἐν δόμοις.
ὦ κρεῖσσον ἢ λόγοισιν εὐτυχοῦσά μου.
840 ψυχά· τί φῶ; θαυμάτων πέρα καὶ λόγου
πρόσω τάδ' ἐπέβα.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῖμεν ἀλλήλων μέτα.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἄτοπον ἠδονὰν ἔλαβον, ὦ φίλαι·
δέδοικα δ' ἐκ χερῶν με μὴ πρὸς αἴθερα
ἀμπτάμενος φύγη·

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

ORESTES

Again—thine hair unto thy mother sent?

820

IPHIGENEIA

Yea, a grave-token in my body's stead.

ORESTES

What myself saw, these will I name for proofs:
In our sire's halls was Pelops' ancient spear,
Swayed in his hands when Pisa's maid he won,
Hippodameia, and slew Oenomaus:
Hidden it was within thy maiden bower.

IPHIGENEIA

Dearest!—nought else, for thou art passing dear!—
Orestes, best-beloved, I clasp thee now,
Far from thy fatherland, from Argos, here,
O love, art thou!

830

ORESTES

And thee I clasp—the dead, as all men thought!
Tears—that are no tears,—ecstasy blent with moan,
Make happy mist in thine eyes as in mine.

IPHIGENEIA

That day in the arms of thy nurse did I leave thee a
babe, did I leave thee, [wast thou.
A little one—ah, such a little one then in our palace
O, a fortune too blissful for words doth receive thee,
my soul, doth receive thee!
What can I say?—for, transcending all marvels, of
speech they bereave me,
The things that have come on us now!

840

ORESTES

Hereafter side by side may we be blest!

IPHIGENEIA

O friends, I am thrilled with a strange delight:
Yet I fear lest out of mine arms to the height
Of the heaven he may wing his flight.

351

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ὦ Κυκλωπίδες ἐστίαι, ὦ πατρίς,
Μυκίνα φίλα,
χάριν ἔχω ζῴας, χάριν ἔχω τροφᾶς,
ὅτι μοι συνομαίμονα
τόνδε δόμοισιν ἐξεθρέψω φάος.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

850 γένει μὲν εὐτυχοῦμεν, εἰς δὲ συμφοράς,
ὦ σύγγον', ἡμῶν δυστυχῆς ἔφυ βίος.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἐγὼ μέλεος οἶδ', ὅτε φάσγανον
δέρα θῆκέ μοι μελεόφρων πατήρ,

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

οἴμοι. δοκῶ γὰρ οὐ παρών σ' ὄραν ἐκεῖ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἀνυμέναιος, ὦ σύγγον', Ἀχιλλέως
εἰς κλισίαν λέκτρων
δόλι' ὅτ' ἀγόμαν

860 παρὰ δὲ βωμὸν ἦν δάκρυα καὶ γόοι.
φεῦ φεῦ χερνίβων τῶν ἐκεῖ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

ᾧμωξα καὶ γὰρ τόλμαν ἦν ἔτλη πατήρ.

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ἀπάτορ' ἀπάτορα πότμον ἔλαχον.
ἄλλα δ' ἐξ ἄλλων κυρεῖ
δαίμονος τύχα τινός.¹

867

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ

866 εἰ σὸν γ' ἀδελφόν, ὦ τάλαιν', ἀπόλεσας.

¹ Monk's arrangement adopted.

IPHIGENEIA IN TAURICA

O hearths Cyclopean, O fatherland
 Mycenæ the dear,
 For the gift of his life thanks, thanks for thy fostering
 hand,
 For that erst thou didst rear
 My brother, a light of defence in our halls to stand.

ORESTES

Touching our birth blest are we, but our life,
 My sister, in its fortunes was unblest.

850

IPHIGENEIA

I know it, alas ! who remember the blade
 To my throat by my wretched father laid—

ORESTES

Woe's me ! though far, I seem to see thee there !

IPHIGENEIA

When by guile I was thitherward drawn, the bride,
 As they feigned, whom Hero Achilles should wed !
 But the marriage-chant rang not the altar beside,
 But tears streamed, voices of wailing cried ;
 Woe, woe for the lustral-drops there shed !

860

ORESTES

I wail, I too, the deed my father dared.

IPHIGENEIA

An unfatherly father by doom was allotted to me ;
 And ills out of ills rise ceaselessly
 By a God's decree !

ORESTES

Ah, hadst thou slain thy brother, hapless one !

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ Η ΕΝ ΤΑΥΡΟΙΣ

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

- 870 ὦ μελέα δεινᾶς τόλμας. δεῖν' ἔτλαν
 δεῖν' ἔτλαν, ὦμοι σύγγονε. παρὰ δ' ὀλίγον
 ἀπέφυγες ὄλεθρον ἀνόσιον ἐξ ἐμᾶν
 δαιχθεῖς χερῶν.
 ἅ δ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς τίς τελευτά;
 τίς τύχα μοι συγκυρήσει;
 τίνα σοι πόρον εὐρομένα
 πάλιν ἀπὸ πόλεως, ἀπὸ φόνου πέμψω
 πατρίδ' ἐς Ἀργείαν,
 880 πρὶν ἐπὶ ξίφος αἷματι σῶ
 πελάσαι; τόδε σόν, ὦ μελέα ψυχά,
 χρέος ἀνευρίσκειν.
 πότερον κατὰ χέρσον, οὐχὶ ναί,
 ἀλλὰ ποδῶν ῥιπᾶ
 θανάτῳ πελάσεις ἀνὰ βάρβαρα φῦλα
 καὶ δι' ὁδοὺς ἀνόδους στείχων; διὰ κυανέας μὴν
 890 στενοπόρου πέτρας μακρὰ κέλευθα να-
 τοῖσιν δρασμοῖς.
 τάλαινα, τάλαινα.
 τίς ἄρ' οὔν, τάλαν, ἢ θεὸς ἢ βροτὸς ἢ
 τί τῶν ἀδοκῆτων
 πόρον εὐπορον¹ ἐξανύσει,
 δυοῖν τοῖν μόνοιιν Ἀτρεΐδαιιν
 κακῶν ἔκλυσιν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 900 ἐν τοῖσι θαυμαστοῖσι καὶ μύθων πέρα
 τάδ' εἶδον αὐτὴ κοῦ κλύουσ' ἀπ' ἀγγελῶν.²

¹ Hermann: for MSS. ἄπορον. ² Hermann: for MSS. ἀπαγγελά.