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EURIPIDES

III



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

EURIPIDES

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

IN FOUR VOLUMES

III

BACCHANALS
MADNESS OF HERCULES
CHILDREN OF HERCULES
PHOENICIAN MAIDENS
SUPPLIANTS



LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN CO.

MCMXII

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THE BACCHANALS

ARGUMENT

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

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

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΒΑΚΧΩΝ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

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

TEIRESIAS, *a prophet, old and blind.*

CADMUS, *formerly king of Thebes.*

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

SERVANT of Pentheus.

HERDMAN.

MESSSENGER, *servant of Pentheus.*

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

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

Guards, attendants.

SCENE : before the royal palace of Thebes.

Β Α Κ Χ Α Ι

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

Enter DIONYSUS.

DIONYSUS

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

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

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

60 θίασος ἐμός, γυναῖκες, ἅς ἐκ βαρβάρων
 ἐκόμισα παρέδρους καὶ ξυνεμπόρους ἐμοί,
 αἴρεσθε τὰπιχώρι' ἐν πόλει Φρυγῶν
 τύμπανα, ῥέας τε μητρὸς ἐμά θ' εὐρήματα,
 βασιλείά τ' ἀμφὶ δῶματ' ἐλθούσαι τάδε
 κτυπεῖτε Πενθέως, ὡς ὀρᾷ Κάδμου πόλις.
 ἐγὼ δὲ Βάκχαις, εἰς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχὰς
 ἐλθὼν, ἴν' εἰσί, συµμετασχῆσω χορῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

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

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

CHORUS

From Asian soil (Str. 1)
 Far over the hallowed ridges of Tmolus fleeting,
 To the task that I love do I speed, to my painless
 toil [with greeting.
 For the Clamour-king, hailing the Bacchanals' God
(Ant. 1)
 Who is there in the way? [one, sealing
 At his doors who is standing? Avoid!—and let each
 His lips from irreverence, hallow them. Now, in
 the lay [pealing. 70
 Dionysus ordains, will I chant him, his hymn out-

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

Revel goes sweeping!
 Made meet by the sacred purifying
 For the Bacchanal rout o'er the mountains flying,
 For the orgies of Cybele mystery-folden,
 Of the Mother olden,

Wreathed with the ivy sprays, 80
 The thyrsus on high doth he raise,

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

- ὄν ποτ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ὠδίνων ἀντ. β'
 λοχίαις ἀνάγκαισι
 90 πταμένας Διὸς βροντᾶς
 νηδύος ἔκβολον μάτηρ
 ἔτεκεν, λιποῦσ' αἰῶ-
 να κεραυνία πλαγᾶ·
 λοχίοις δ' αὐτίκα νιν δέ-
 ξατο θαλάμοις Κρονίδας Ζεὺς·
 κατὰ μηρῶ δὲ καλίνψας
 χρυσέαισιν συνερείδει
 περόναις κρυπτὸν ἀφ' Ἥρας.
 100 ἔτεκεν δ', ἀνίκα Μοῖραι
 τέλεσαν, ταυρόκερων θεὸν
 στεφάνωσέν τε δρακόντων
 στεφάνοις, ἔνθεν ἄγραν θυρσοφόροι
 Μαινάδες ἀμφιβάλλονται πλοκάμοις.
- ὦ Σεμέλας τροφοὶ Θῆ- στρ. γ'
 βαι στεφανοῦσθε κισσῶ·
 βρύετε βρύετε χλοήρει
 μίλακι καλλικάρπω
 καὶ καταβακχιούσθε
 110 δρυὸς ἢ ἐλάτας κλάδοισι,
 στικτῶν τ' ἐνδυνὰ νεβρίδων
 στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκίμων

THE BACCHANALS

Singing the Vine-god's praise—

Come, Bacchanals, come!

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

Bring him home, bring him home!—

(*Ant.* 2)

The God whom his mother,—when anguish tore
her

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

Brought forth at her dying,

An untimely birth, as her spirit departed
Stricken from life by the flame down-darted:
But in birth-bowers new did Zeus Cronion

Receive his scion;

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

Till the Fates' day came;

Then a God bull-horned Zeus bare, 100
And with serpents entwined his hair:
And for this do his Maenads wear

In their tresses the same.

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

With the ivy thy brows, and be
All bloom, embowered in the starry-flowered
Lush green of the briony,

While the oak and pine thy tresses entwine 110
In thy bacchanal-ecstasy.

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

Of wool white-glistening

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

- 120 ὦ θαλάμευμα Κουρή-
 των ζάθεοί τε Κρήτας
 Διογενέτορες ἔναυλοι,
 ἔνθα τρικόρυθες ἄντροις
 βυρσότονον κύκλωμα
 τόδε μοι Κορύβαντες ἠῦρον·
 ἀνὰ δὲ βάκχια συντόνω
 κέρασαν ἀδυβόα Φρυγίων
 αὐλῶν πνεύματι, ματρός τε Ῥέας εἰς
 χέρα θῆκαν, κτύπον εὐάσμασι Βακχᾶν·
 130 παρὰ δὲ μαινόμενοι Σάτυροι
 ματέρος ἐξανύσαντο θεᾶς,
 εἰς δὲ χορεύματα
 συνῆψαν τριετηρίδων,
 αἷς χαίρει Διόνυσος.
 ἠδὺς ἐν οὔρεσιν, εὐτ' ἂν
 ἐκ θιάσων δρομαίων
 πέσῃ πεδόσε, νεβρίδος ἔχων
 ἱερὸν ἐνδυτόν, ἀγρεύων
 140 αἶμα τραγοκτόνον, ὠμοφάγον χάριν,

ἀντ. γ'

ἐπωδ.

THE BACCHANALS

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

(*Ant.* 3)

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

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

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

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

νέκταρι, Συρίας δ' ὡς λιβάνου καπνός·

ὁ Βακχεὺς δ' ἔχων

πυρσώδη φλόγα πεύκας

ἐκ νάρθηκος αἴσσει

δρόμω καὶ χοροῖς ἐρεθίζων πλανάτας

ἰαχαῖς τ' ἀναπάλλων,

150

τρυφερὸν πλόκαμον εἰς αἰθέρα ρίπτων.

ἄμα δ' ἐπ' εὐάσμασιν ἐπιβρέμει

τοιιάδ' ὧ ἴτε Βάκχαι,

ὧ ἴτε Βάκχαι,

Τμώλου χρυσορόου χλιδά,

μέλπετε τὸν Διόνυσον

βαρυνβρόμων ὑπὸ τυμπάνων,

εὔια τὸν εὔιον ἀγαλλόμεναι θεὸν

ἐν Φρυγίαισι βοαῖς ἐνοπαῖσί τε,

160

λωτὸς ὅταν εὐκέλαδος

ἱερὸς ἱερὰ παίγματα

βρέμη, σύνοχα φοιτάσιν

εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος· ἠδομένα δ' ἄρα,

πῶλος ὅπως ἄμα ματέρι φορβαδί,

κῶλον ἄγει ταχύπουν σκιρτήμασι Βάκχα.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

170

τίς ἐν πύλαισι; Κάδμον ἐκκάλει δόμων

Ἀγήνορος παῖδ', ὃς πόλιν Σιδωνίαν

λιπὼν ἐπύργωσ' ἄστνυ Θηβαίων τόδε.

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

Enter TEIRESIAS.

TEIRESIAS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκοῦν ὄχοισιν εἰς ὄρος περάσομεν;

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως ἂν ὁ θεὸς τιμὴν ἔχοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

γέρων γέροντα παιδαγωγήσω σ' ἐγώ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ὁ θεὸς ἀμοχθὶ κείσε νῶν ἠγήσεται.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μόνοι δὲ πόλεως Βακχίῳ χορεύσομεν;

THE BACCHANALS

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

Enter CADMUS.

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

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

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

Nay, riding should we honour less the God.

CADMUS

Age ushering age, I will escort thee on.

TEIRESIAS

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

CADMUS

Shall we alone of Thebes to Bacchus dance ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

μόνοι γὰρ εὐ φρονοῦμεν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι κακῶς.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μακρὸν τὸ μέλλειν· ἀλλ' ἐμῆς ἔχου χερός.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

ἰδοῦ, ξύναπτε καὶ ξυνωρίζου χέρα.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐ καταφρονῶ ἄγῳ τῶν θεῶν θνητὸς γεγώς.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

200

οὐδὲν σοφιζόμεσθα τοῖσι δαίμοσι.
πατρίους παραδοχὰς ἄς θ' ὀμήλικας χρόνω
κεκτῆμεθ', οὐδεὶς αὐτὰ καταβαλεῖ λόγος,
οὐδ' εἰ δι' ἄκρων τὸ σοφὸν ἠῦρηται φρενῶν.
ἐρεῖ τις ὡς τὸ γῆρας οὐκ αἰσχύνομαι,
μέλλων χορεύειν κρᾶτα κισσώσας ἐμόν.
οὐ γὰρ διήρηχ' ὁ θεὸς εἶτε τὸν νέον
ἐχρῆν χορεύειν εἶτε τὸν γεραίτερον,
ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀπάντων βούλεται τιμὰς ἔχειν
κοινὰς, δι' ἀριθμῶν δ' οὐδὲν αὔξεσθαι θέλει.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

210

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἐκδημος ὦν μὲν τῆσδ' ἐτύγχανον χθονός,
κλύω δὲ νεοχμὰ τήνδ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν κακά,
γυναῖκας ἡμῖν δώματ' ἐκλελοιπένας
πλασταῖσι βακχεῖαισιν, ἐν δὲ δασκίοις
ὄρεσι θοάζειν, τὸν νεωστὶ δαίμονα
220 Διώνησον, ὅστις ἔστι, τιμώσας χοροῖς·

THE BACCHANALS

TEIRESIAS

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

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

Lo there : clasp close the interlinking hand.

CADMUS

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

TEIRESIAS

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

CADMUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πλήρεις δὲ θιάσοις ἐν μέσοισιν ἐστάναι
 κρατῆρας, ἄλλην δ' ἄλλοσ' εἰς ἐρημίαν
 πτώσσουσαν εὐναῖς ἀρσένων ὑπηρετεῖν,
 πρόφασιν μὲν ὡς δὴ Μαινάδας θυοσκοοὺς,
 τὴν δ' Ἀφροδίτην πρόσθ' ἄγειν τοῦ Βακχίου.
 ὄσας μὲν οὖν εἶληφα, δεσμούςσιν χέρας
 σφάζουσι πανδήμοισι πρόσπολοι στέγαισ'
 ὄσαι δ' ἄπεισιν, ἐξ ὄρουσ θηράσομαι,
 Ἰνώ τ' Ἀγαύην θ' ἢ μ' ἔτικτ' Ἐχίονι,
 230 Ἄκταίονός τε μητέρ', Αὐτονόην λέγω.
 καὶ σφᾶς σιδηραῖς ἀρμόσας ἐν ἄρκυσι
 παύσω κακούργου τῆσδε βακχείας τάχα.
 λέγουσι δ' ὡς τις εἰσελήλυθε ξένος
 γόης ἐπώδὸς Λυδίας ἀπὸ χθονός,
 ξανθοῖσι βοστρύχοισιν εὐοσμῶν κομῶν,
 οἰνωπός, ὄσσοις χάριτας Ἀφροδίτης ἔχων,
 ὃς ἡμέρας τε κεύφρονας συγγίγνεται
 τελετὰς προτείνων εὐίουσ νεάνισιν.
 εἰ δ' αὐτὸν εἶσω τῆσδε λήψομαι στέγης,
 240 παύσω κτυποῦντα θύρσον ἀνασείοντά τε
 κόμας, τράχηλον σώματος χωρὶς τεμών.
 ἐκεῖνος εἶναι φησι Διόνυσου θεόν,
 ἐκεῖνος ἐν μηρῷ ποτ' ἐρράφθαι Διός,
 ὃς ἐκπυροῦται λαμπάσιν κεραυνίαισιν
 σὺν μητρὶ, Δίους ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο.
 ταῦτ' οὐχὶ δεινῆς ἀγχόνης ἐπάξια,
 ὕβρεις ὑβρίζειν, ὅστις ἔστιν ὁ ξένος ;

ἀτὰρ τόδ' ἄλλο θαῦμα, τὸν τερασκόπον
 ἐν ποικίλαισι νεβρίσι Τειρεσίαν ὄρω
 250 πατέρα τε μητρός τῆς ἐμῆς, πολλὸν γέλων,
 νόσθηκι βακχεύοντ' ἀναίνομαι, πατερ,

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

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

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

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

Ino, Agave, who bare me to Echion,

Autonoe withal, Actaeon's mother.

230

In toils of iron trapped, full soon shall they

Cease from this pestilent Bacchic revelling.

Men say a stranger to the land hath come,

A juggling sorcerer from Lydia-land,

With essenced hair in golden tresses tossed,

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

Who with the damsels day and night consorts,

Making pretence of Evian mysteries.

If I within these walls but prison him,

Farewell to thyrsus-taboring, and to locks

240

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

He saith that Dionysus is a God !

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

Who, with his mother, was by lightning-flames

Blasted, because she lied of Zeus's love.

Is not this worthy hanging's ruthless doom,

Thus to blaspheme, who'er the stranger be ?

But lo, another marvel this—the seer

Teiresias, in dappled fawnskins clad !

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

Tossing the reed-wand ! Father, I take shame

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

CHORUS

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

TEIRESIAS

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

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

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

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

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

¹ i.e. Gave this counterfeit Dionysus to Hera, as a hostage against his investing her rival's child with the honours of divinity. The argument is based on the similarity of μέρος, "fragment"; μηρός, "thigh"; ὄμηρος, "hostage."²⁵

310

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

320

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, Φοῖβόν τ' οὐ καταισχύρεις λόγοις,
 τιμῶν τε Βρόμιον σωφρονεῖς μέγαν θεόν.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

330

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

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

CHORUS

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

CADMUS

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

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

340 Ἄρτεμιδος εἶναι κομπάσαντ', ἐν ὀργάσιν.
ὃ μὴ πάθῃς σύ, δευρὸ σου στέψω κᾶρα
κισσῶ· μεθ' ἡμῶν τῷ θεῷ τιμὴν δίδου.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

PENTHEUS

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

Neither besmirch me with thy folly's stain.

This seer, thy monitor in senselessness,

Will I chastise. Let someone go with speed—

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

Upheave with levers, hurl it to the ground ;

All in confusion turn it upside down ;

His holy fillets fling to wind and storm :

350

For, doing so, I most shall wring his heart

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

That girl-faced stranger, who upon our wives

Bringeth strange madness, and defiles our beds.

And if ye catch him, hale him bound with chains

Hither, that death by stoning be his meed,

And so he rue his revelry in Thebes.

TEIRESIAS

Ah wretch, thou knowest not what thou hast said !

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

Let us go, Cadmus, and make intercession

360

Both for this man, brute savage though he be,

And Thebes, that no strange vengeance of the God

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

Essay to upbear my frame, as I do thine.

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

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

Cadmus, beware lest *Pentheus* bring his echo,

Repentance, to thine house :—not prophecy here

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

[*Exeunt.*

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

370

Ἄσσια πότνα θεῶν,
 Ἄσσια δ' ἄ κατὰ γὰν
 χρυσεῶν πτέρυγα φέρεις,
 τάδε Πενθέως αἰεὶς ;
 αἰεὶς οὐχ ὄσιαν
 ὕβριν εἰς τὸν Βρόμιον,
 τὸν Σεμέλας, τὸν παρὰ καλλιστεφάνοις
 εὐφροσύναις δαίμονα πρῶ-
 του μακάρων ; ὃς τὰδ' ἔχει,
 θιασεύειν τε χοροῖς
 380 μετὰ τ' αὐλοῦ γελᾶσαι
 ἀποπαῦσαι τε μερίμνας,
 ὅπότεν βότρνος ἔλθη
 γάνος ἐν δαιτὶ θεῶν,
 κισσοφόροις δ' ἐν θαλίαις
 ἀνδράσι κρατῆρ ὕπνον ἀμφιβάλλη.

στρ. α'

380

390

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

ἀντ. α'

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

O Sanctity, thou who dost bear dominion (Str. 1) 370

Over Gods, yet low as this earthly ground,
 Unto usward, stoopest thy golden pinion,—
 Hear'st thou the words of the king, and the sound
 Of his blast of defiance, of Pentheus assailing
 The Clamour-king?—hear'st thou his blasphemous
 railing

On Semele's son, who is foremost found
 Of the Blest in the festival beauty-crowned?—
 Who hath for his own prerogative taken
 To summon forth feet through his dances to
 leap,

When blent with the flutes light laughters awaken, 380

And the children of care have forgotten to weep,
 Whensoever revealed is the cluster's splendour
 In the banquet that men to the high Gods tender,
 And o'er ivy-wreathed revellers drinking deep
 The wine-bowl droppeth the mantle of sleep.

Of the reinless lips that will own no master, (Ant. 1)

Of the folly o'er law's pale stubborn to stray—
 One is the end of them, even disaster ;
 But the calm life, still as a summer day,
 But the foot whose faring discretion guideth, 390
 Their steadfast state unshaken abideth,

And the home still findeth in such its stay.
 Ah, the Heavenly Ones dwell far away,
 Yet look they on men from their cloudy portals.

O, not with knowledge is Wisdom bought ;
 And the spirit that soareth too high for mortals
 Shall see few days : whosoever hath caught
 At the things too great for a man's attaining,
 Even blessings assured shall he lose in the gaining.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

400 μαινομένων δ' οἶδε τρόποι
καὶ κακοβούλων παρ' ἔμοιγε φωτῶν.

ἰκοίμαν ποτὶ Κύπρον, στρ. β'
νᾶσον τὰς Ἀφροδίτας,
ἐν ᾗ θελξίφρονες νέμον-
ται θνατοῖσιν Ἑρωτες,
χθόνα¹ θ' ἂν ἐκατόστομοι
βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ῥοαὶ
καρπίζουσιν ἄνομβρον.
ποῦ δ' ἄ καλλιστευομένα
410 Πιερία μούσειος ἔδρα,
σεμνὰ κλιτὺς Ὀλύμπου;
ἐκεῖσ' ἄγε με, Βρόμιε Βρόμιε,
πρόβακχ' εὔιε δαίμων.
ἐκεῖ Χάριτες, ἐκεῖ δὲ Πόθος·
ἐκεῖ δὲ Βάκχαις θέμις ὀργιάζειν.

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

¹ Meineke and Nauck : for MSS. Πάφον.

THE BACCHANALS

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

(*Str.* 2)

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

Whereon rain never fell!

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

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

(*Ant.* 2)

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

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

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

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

Wisely shalt thou from the over-wise

¹ Macedonia; where Euripides composed this play.

430 περισσῶν παρὰ φωτῶν.
τὸ πλήθος ὅ τι τὸ φαυλότερον
ἐνόμισε χρῆταί τε, τόδ' ἂν δεχοίμαν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

SERVANT

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

PENTHEUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

οὐ κόμπος οὐδεὶς· ῥάδιον δ' εἰπεῖν τόδε.
τὸν ἀνθεμόδη Γμῶλον οἶσθά που κλύων.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οἶδ', ἦς τὸ Σάρδεων ἄστῳ περιβάλλει κύκλω.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐντεῦθέν εἰμι, Λυδία δέ μοι πατρίς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν δὲ τελετὰς τάσδ' ἄγεις ἐς Ἑλλάδα ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβησ', ὁ τοῦ Διός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

οὐκ, ἀλλ' ὁ Σεμέλην ἐνθάδε ζεύξας γάμοις.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

470 ὀρών ὀρώντα, καὶ δίδωσιν ὄργια.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἄρρητ' ἀβακχεύτοισιν εἰδέναί βροτῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἔχει δ' ὄνησιν τοῖσι θύουσιν τίνα ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εὖ τοῦτ' ἐκιβδήλευσας, ἵν' ἀκοῦσαι θέλω.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἀσέβειαν ἀσκούντ' ὄργι' ἐχθαίρει θεοῦ.

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

I know : it compasseth the Sardians' town.

DIONYSUS

Thence am I : Lydia is my fatherland.

PENTHEUS

Wherefore to Hellas bringest thou these rites ?

DIONYSUS

Dionysus, Zeus' son, made me initiate.

PENTHEUS

Lives a Zeus there, who doth beget new gods ?

DIONYSUS

Nay, the same Zeus who wedded Semele here.

PENTHEUS

Dreaming or waking wast thou made his thrall ?

DIONYSUS

Nay, eye to eye his mysteries he bestowed.

470

PENTHEUS

Ay, of what fashion be these mysteries ?

DIONYSUS

'Tis secret, save to the initiate.

PENTHEUS

What profit bring they to his votaries ?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Shrewd counterfeiting, to whet lust to hear !

DIONYSUS

His rites loathe him that worketh godlessness.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

τὸν θεὸν ὄρᾶν γὰρ φῆς σαφῶς, ποιός τις ἦν;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὅποῖος ἤθελ'. οὐκ ἐγὼ τασσον τόδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

τοῦτ' αὖ παρωχέτευσας εὖ κούδεν λέγων.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

480 δόξει τις ἀμαθεῖ σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἦλθες δὲ πρῶτα δεῦρ' ἄγων τὸν δαίμονα ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

πᾶς ἀναχορεύει βαρβάρων τάδ' ὄργια.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

φρονοῦσι γὰρ κάκιον Ἑλλήνων πολὺ.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

τάδ' εὖ γε μᾶλλον· οἱ νόμοι δὲ διάφοροι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

τά δ' ἱερὰ νύκτωρ ἢ μεθ' ἡμέραν τελεῖς ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

νύκτωρ τὰ πολλὰ· σεμνότητ' ἔχει σκότος.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

τοῦτ' εἰς γυναῖκας δόλιόν ἐστι καὶ σαθρόν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

κἂν ἡμέρα τό γ' αἰσχρὸν ἐξεύροι τις ἄν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

δίκην σε δοῦναι δεῖ σοφισμάτων κακῶν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ὡς θρασὺς ὁ Βάκχος κοῦκ ἀγύμναστος λόγων.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

As seemed him good: that did not I enjoin.

PENTHEUS

This too thou hast shrewdly parried, telling naught.

DIONYSUS

Wise answers seem but folly to a fool.

480

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

All Asians through these mystic dances tread.

PENTHEUS

Ay, far less wise be they than Hellene men.

DIONYSUS

Herein far wiser. Diverse wont is theirs.

PENTHEUS

By night or day dost thou perform his rites?

DIONYSUS

Chiefly by night: gloom lends solemnity.

PENTHEUS

Ay—and for women snares of lewdness too.

DIONYSUS

In the day too may lewdness be devised.

PENTHEUS

Now punished must thy vile evasions be.

DIONYSUS

Ay, and thy folly and impiety.

490

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

What is my doom? What vengeance wilt thou wreak?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ἄβρὸν βόστρυχον τεμῶ σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἱερός ὁ πλόκαμος· τῷ θεῷ δ' αὐτὸν τρέφω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἔπειτα θύρσον τόνδε παράδος ἐκ χεροῖν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

αὐτός μ' ἀφαιροῦ· τόνδε Διονύσου φορῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

εἴρκταισί τ' ἔνδον σῶμα σὸν φυλάξομεν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

λύσει μ' ὁ δαίμων αὐτός, ὅταν ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ὅταν γε καλέσης αὐτὸν ἐν Βάκχαις σταθείς.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

500 καὶ νῦν ἂ πάσχω πλησίον παρῶν ὀρά.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

παρ' ἐμοί· σὺ δ' ἄσεβής αὐτὸς ὦν οὐκ εἰσορᾷς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

λάζυσθε· καταφρονεῖ με καὶ Θήβας ὄδε.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

αὐδῶ με μὴ δεῖν σωφρονῶν οὐ σῶφροσιν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ δεῖν γε κυριώτερος σέθεν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

Πενθεὺς Ἀγαύης παῖς, πατὴρ δ' Ἐχίονος.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Thy dainty tresses first will I cut off.

DIONYSUS

Hallowed my locks are, fostered for the God.

PENTHEUS

Next, yield me up this thyrsus from thine hands.

DIONYSUS

Take it thyself. 'Tis Dionysus' wand.

PENTHEUS

Thy body in my dungeon will I ward.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Yea, he is now near, marking this despite.

500

PENTHEUS

Ay, where?—not unto mine eyes manifest.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Seize him! This fellow mocketh me and Thebes.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Pentheus—Agave's and Echion's son.

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐνδυστυχήσαι τούνομ' ἐπιτήδειος εἶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

510

χώρει καθείρξαι τὸν ἵππικαῖς πέλας
 φάτναισιν, ὡς ἂν σκότιον εἰσορᾶ κνέφας.
 ἐκεῖ χόρευε· τάσδε δ' ἄς ἄγων πάρει
 κακῶν συνεργούς ἢ διεμπολήσομεν
 ἢ χεῖρα δούπου τούδε καὶ βύρσης κτύπου
 παύσας, ἐφ' ἰστοῖς δμωίδας κεκτήσομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

520

Ἀχελῷου θύγατερ,
 πότιν' εὐπάρθενε Δίρκα,
 σὺ γὰρ ἐν σαῖς ποτε παγαῖς
 τὸ Διὸς βρέφος ἔλαβες,
 ὅτε μηρῷ πυρὸς ἐξ ἀ-
 θανάτου Ζεὺς ὁ τεκῶν ἦρ-
 πασέ νιν, τὰδ' ἀναβοούσας·
 ἴθι, Διθύραμβ', ἐμὰν ἄρ-
 σενα τάνδε βᾶθι νηδύν·
 ἀναφαίνω σε τόδ', ὦ Βάκ-
 χιε, Θήβαις ὀνομάζειν.

στρ.

530

σὺ δέ μ', ὦ μάκαιρα Δίρκα,
 στεφανηφόρους ἀπωθεῖ
 θιάσους ἔχουσιν ἐν σοί.
 τί μ' ἀναίει; τί με φεύγεις;

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Yea, fitly named to be in misery pent.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

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

CHORUS

All hail, Acheloüs' Daughter,¹ (Str.)

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

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

ἔτι ναὶ τὰν βοτρυώδη
 Διονύσου χάριν οἶνας
 ἔτι σοι τοῦ Βρομίον μελήσει.

[οἶαν οἶαν ὄργαν] ἀντ.
 ἀναφαίνει χθόνιον

540 γένος ἐκφύς τε δράκοντός
 ποτε Πενθεύς, ὃν Ἐχίων
 ἐφύτευσε χθόνιος,
 ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, οὐ φῶ-
 τα βρότειον, φόνιον δ' ὄσ-

τε γίγαντ' ἀντίπαλον θεοῖς·
 ὃς ἐμὲ βρόχοισι τὰν τοῦ
 Βρομίον τάχα ξυνάψει,
 τὸν ἐμὸν δ' ἐντὸς ἔχει δώ-
 ματος ἤδη θιασώταν
 σκοτίαισι κρυπτὸν ἐν εἴρκταις.

550 ἐσορᾶς τάδ', ὦ Διὸς παῖ
 Διονύσε, σοὺς προφήτας
 ἐν ἀμίλλαισιν ἀνάγκας;
 μόλε, χρυσῶπα τινάσσων,
 ἄνα, θύρσον κατ' Ὀλυμπον,
 φονίου δ' ἀνδρὸς ὕβριν κατάσχεσ.

πόθι Νύσας ἄρα τὰς θη- ἐπωδ.
 ροτρόφου θυρσοφορεῖς
 θιάσους, ὦ Διόνυσ', ἢ
 κορυφαῖς Κωρυκίαις;

560 τάχα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολυδένδρεσ-
 σιν Ὀλύμπου θαλάμαις, ἐν-
 θα ποτ' Ὀρφεὺς κιθαρίζων
 σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις,
 σύναγεν θήρας ἀγρώτας.

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

570 μάκαρ ὦ Πιερία,
 σέβεταιί σ' Εὔιος, ἤξει
 τε χορεύσων ἅμα βακχεύ-
 μασι, τόν τ' ὠκυρόαν
 διαβὰς Ἄξιόν εἰλισ-
 σομένας Μαινάδας ἄξει,
 Λυδῖαν τε, τὸν εὐδαιμονίας
 βροτοῖς ὀλβοδόταν
 πατέρα τε, τὸν ἔκλυον
 εὐιππον χώραν ὕδασιν
 καλλίστοισι λιπαίνειν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σεῖε πέδον χθονὸς ἔνοσι πότνια.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ᾶ ᾶ,
 τάχα τὰ Πενθέως
 μέλαθρα διατινάξεται πεσήμασιν.

THE BACCHANALS

Thrice blessèd Pieria-land,
 Evius honoureth thee!—lo, he cometh, he cometh,
 on-leading
 His dances with Bacchanal chants, over Axius' flood
 swift-speeding
 He shall pass, he shall marshal the leaping feet in
 the dance-rings sweeping,
 The feet of his Maenad-band. 570
 On shall he haste over Lydias the river,
 O'er the father of streams, the blessing-giver,
 Whose waters fair, as the tale hath told,
 O'er the land of the gallant war-steed rolled,
 Spread fatness on every hand.

DIONYSUS (*within*).

What ho! Give heed to my voice, give heed!

Ho, Bacchanal-train, my Bacchanal-train!

(*Members of CHORUS answer severally.*)

CHORUS 1

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

DIONYSUS (*within*)

What ho! What ho! I call yet again,

I, Semele's offspring, Zeus's seed. 580

CHORUS 2

What ho! Our Lord, our Lord! What ho!

Come to our revel-band thou,

Clamour-king, Clamour-king, now!

DIONYSUS (*within*)

Earth-floor, sway to and fro in mighty earthquake-throe!

(*Earthquake*).

CHORUS 3

Ha, swiftly shall Pentheus' hall,

Sore shaken, crash to its fall!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ὁ Διόνυσος ἀνὰ μέλαθρα·
σέβετε νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἄπτε κεραύνιον αἶθοπα λαμπάδα·
σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέως.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

¹ Musgrave : for MSS. δῶμα Πενθέως.

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS 4

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

CHORUS 5

We bow us before him.

590

(*Earthquake*).

Lo, how the lintels of stone over yonder pillars are
reeling! [the halls go pealing.

Now doth the Clamour-king's triumph-shout through

DIONYSUS (*within*).

Kindle the torch of the levin lurid-red: [spread.

Let the compassing flames round the palace of Pentheus

(*A great blaze of light enwraps the palace and the
monument of Semele.*)

CHORUS 6

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

Lo, dost thou mark it not well?—

Which Semele thunder-blasted bequeathed,
Her memorial of doom

By the lightning from Zeus that fell?

Fling to the earth, ye Maenads, fling

Your bodies that tremble with sore dismay!

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

Yon halls to confusion and disarray.

600

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

DIONYSUS

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

That ye thus to earth be fallen? Ye beheld,

When the house of Pentheus reeled as Bacchus
shook it. Nay, upraise

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

51

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

610 εἰς ἀθυμίαν ἀφίκεσθ', ἠνίκ' εἰσεπεμπόμην.
Πενθέως ὡς εἰς σκοτεινὰς ὄρκίνας πεσούμενος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὸς ἐξέσωσ' ἐμαυτὸν ῥαδίως ἄνευ πόνου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδέ σου συνῆψε χεῖρε δεσμίοισιν ἐν βρόχοις;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ταῦτα καὶ καθύβρισ' αὐτόν, ὅτι με δεσμεύειν
δοκῶν
οὐτ' ἔθιγεν οὐθ' ἤψαθ' ἡμῶν, ἐλπίσιν δ'
ἐβόσκετο.
πρὸς φάτναις δὲ ταῦρον εὐρών, οὐ καθεῖρξ' ἡμᾶς
ἄγων,
τῷδε περὶ βρόχους ἔβαλλε γόνασι καὶ χηλαῖς
ποδῶν,
620 θυμὸν ἐκπνέων, ἰδρώτα σώματος στάζων ἄπο,
χείλεσιν διδοῦς ὀδόντας· πλησίον δ' ἐγὼ παρῶν
ἦσυχος θάσσων ἔλευσσον. ἐν δὲ τῷδε τῷ
χρόνῳ
ἀνετίναξ' ἐλθὼν ὁ Βάκχος δῶμα, καὶ μητρὸς
τάφῳ
πῦρ ἀνήψ'. ὁ δ' ὡς ἐσεῖδε, δώματ' αἴθεσθαι
δοκῶν

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

CHORUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

CHORUS

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

DIONYSUS

My derision there I made him, that he deemed he
fettered me, [empty phantasy.
Yet nor touched me, neither grasped me, fed on
Nay, a bull beside the stalls he found where he
would pen me fast:

Round the knees and round the hoofs of this he 'gan
his cords to cast,

Breathing fury out, the while the sweat-gouts poured
from every limb, [watching him 620

While he gnawed upon his lips—and I beside him
Calmly at mine ease was sitting. Even then our
Bacchus came,

And as with an earthquake shook the house, and lit
a sudden flame [he saw his halls

On his mother's tomb. The king beholding thought

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ἦσσ' ἐκεῖσε κατ' ἐκεῖσε, δμωσὶν Ἀχελῶον φέρειν
ἐννέπων, ἅπας δ' ἐν ἔργῳ δούλος ἦν, μάτην
πονῶν.

διαμεθεῖς δὲ τόνδε μόχθον, ὡς ἐμοῦ πεφευγόςτος,
ἵεται ξίφος κελαινὸν ἀρπάσας δόμων ἔσω.

630 καὶθ' ὁ Βρόμιος, ὡς ἔμοιγε φαίνεται, δόξαν λέγω,
φάσμ' ἐποίησεν κατ' αὐλήν· ὁ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦθ'
ὠρμημένος

ἦσσε κἀκέντει φαεινὸν αἰθέρ', ὡς σφάζων ἐμέ.

πρὸς δὲ τοῖσδ' αὐτῶ τάδ' ἄλλα Βάκχιος
λυμαίνεται·

δῶματ' ἔρρηξεν χαμᾶζε· συντεθράνωται δ' ἅπαν
πικροτάτους ἰδόντι δεσμούςσ τοὺς ἐμούςσ· κόπου
δ' ὕπο

διαμεθεῖς ξίφος παρείται. πρὸς θεὸν γὰρ ὦν
ἀνὴρ

εἰς μάχην ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ'· ἦσυχος δ' ἐκβὰς ἐγὼ
δωμάτων ἦκω πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Πενθέως οὐ φροντίσας.

ὡς δέ μοι δοκεῖ, ψοφεῖ γοῦν ἀρβύλη δόμων ἔσω,
εἰς προνώπι' αὐτίχ' ἤξει. τί ποτ' ἄρ' ἐκ τούτων
ἔρεῖ;

640 ῥαδίως γὰρ αὐτὸν οἶσω, κἂν πνέων ἔλθῃ μέγα.

πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκεῖν σῶφρον' εὐοργη-
σίαν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πέπονθα δεινά· διαπέφευγέ μ' ὁ ξένος,

ὃς ἄρτι δεσμοῖς ἦν κατηναγκασμένος.

ἔα ἔα·

ὃδ' ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ· τί τάδε; πῶς προνώπιος

φαίνει πρὸς οἴκοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἔξω βεβῶς;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

στῆσον πόδ', ὀργῇ δ' ὑπόθεσ ἦσυχον πόδα.

THE BACCHANALS

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

Enter PENTHEUS. PENTHEUS

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

Ha !

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

DIONYSUS

Stay there, and let thy fury softly tread.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πόθεν σὺ δεσμὰ διαφυγὼν ἔξω περᾶς ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

650

τίς ; τοὺς λόγους γὰρ εἰσφέρεις καινοὺς ἀεί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὅς τὴν πολύβοτρυν ἄμπελον φύει βροτοῖς.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

* * * * *

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὠνείδισας δὴ τοῦτο Διούσῳ καλόν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

κλήειν κελεύω πάντα πύργον ἐν κύκλῳ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δ' ; οὐχ ὑπερβαίνουσι καὶ τείχη θεοί ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

σοφὸς σοφὸς σὺ, πλὴν ἂ δεῖ σ' εἶναι σοφόν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἂ δεῖ μάλιστα, ταῦτ' ἔγωγ' ἔφυν σοφός.

κείνου δ' ἀκούσας πρῶτα τοὺς λόγους μάθε,

ὅς ἐξ ὄρους πάρεστιν ἀγγελῶν τί σοι

ἡμεῖς δέ σοι μενοῦμεν, οὐ φευξοῦμεθα.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

660

Πενθεῦ κρατύνων τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονός,

ἦκω Κιθαιρῶν' ἐκλιπών, ἴν' οὔποτε

λευκῆς ἀνεῖσαν χιόνος εὐαγεῖς βολαί.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἦκεις δὲ ποίαν προστιθεῖς σπουδὴν λόγου ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Βάκχας ποτνιαῖδας εἰσιδών, αἰ τῆσδε γῆς

οἴστροισι λευκὸν κῶλον ἐξηκόντισαν,

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

How hast thou 'scaped thy bonds and comest forth ?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Who? Strange and ever strange thine answers are. 650

DIONYSUS

He who makes grow for men the clustered vine.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

'Tis Dionysus' glory, this thy scoff.

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

I bid ye bar all towers round about.

DIONYSUS

Why? Cannot Gods pass even over walls?

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Where most needs wisdom, therein am I wise.

But listen first to yon man, hear his tale

Who with some tidings from the mountains comes.

I will await thee: fear not lest I fly.

Enter HERDMAN.

HERDMAN

Pentheus, thou ruler of this Theban land,

I from Cithaeron come, whence never fail

The glistening silver arrows of the snow.

660

PENTHEUS

Bringing what weighty tidings comest thou?

HERDMAN

I have seen wild Bacchanals, who from this land

Have darted forth with white feet, frenzy-stung.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἀγελαῖα μὲν βοσκήματ' ἄρτι πρὸς λέπας
 μόσχων ὑπεξήκριζον, ἠνίχ' ἥλιος
 ἀκτῖνας ἐξίησι θερμαίνων χθόνα.
 680 ὀρῶ δὲ θιάσους τρεῖς γυναικείων χορῶν,
 ὧν ἦρχ' ἐνὸς μὲν Αὐτονόη, τοῦ δευτέρου
 μήτηρ Ἀγαύη σή, τρίτου δ' Ἴνῶ χοροῦ.
 ἠῦδον δὲ πᾶσαι σώμασιν παρειμέναι,
 αἰ μὲν πρὸς ἐλάτης νῶτ' ἐρεῖσασαι φόβην,
 αἰ δ' ἐν ὀρυγῶν φύλλοισι πρὸς πέδῳ κᾶρα
 εἰκῆ βαλοῦσαι σωφρόνως, οὐχ ὡς σὺ φῆς
 ὠνωμένας κρατῆρι καὶ λωτοῦ ψόφῳ
 θηρᾶν καθ' ὕλην Κύπριν ἠρημωμένας.
 ἢ σὴ δὲ μήτηρ ὠλόλυξεν ἐν μέσαις
 690 σταθεῖσα Βάκχαις, ἐξ ὕπνου κινεῖν δέμας,
 μυκῆμαθ' ὡς ἤκουσε κεροφόρων βοῶν.
 αἰ δ' ἀποβαλοῦσαι θαλερὸν ὀμμάτων ὕπνου
 ἀνῆξαν ὀρθαί, θαῦμ' ἰδεῖν εὐκοσμίας,
 νέαι παλαιαὶ παρθένοι τ' ἔτ' ἄζυγες.
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν καθεῖσαν εἰς ὄμους κόμας

THE BACCHANALS

I come, King, fain to tell to thee and Thebes
What strange, what passing wondrous deeds they do.
Yet would I hear if freely I may tell
Things there beheld, or reef my story's sail.
For, King, I fear thy spirit's hasty mood, 670
Thy passion and thine over-royal wrath.

PENTHEUS

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

HERDMAN

Thine herds of pasturing kine were even now
Scaling the steep hillside, what time the sun
First darted forth his rays to warm the earth,
When lo, I see three Bacchant women-bands,— 680
Autonoë chief of one, of one thy mother
Agave, and the third band Ino led.
All sleeping lay, with bodies restful-strown ;
Some backward leaned on leafy sprays of pine,
Some, with oak-leaves for pillows, on the ground
Flung careless ;—modestly, not, as thou say'st,
Drunken with wine, amid the sighing of flutes
Hunting desire through woodland shades alone.
Then to her feet sprang in the Bacchanals' midst
Thy mother, crying aloud, " Shake from you
sleep ! " 690

When fell our horned kine's lowing on her ear.
They, dashing from their eyelids rosy sleep,
Sprang up,—strange, fair array of ordered ranks,—
Young wives, old matrons, maidens yet unwed.
First down their shoulders let they stream their hair :

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

ὥστ', εἰ παρήσθα, τὸν θεὸν τὸν νῦν ψέγεις
 εὐχαΐσιν ἂν μετῆλθες εἰσιδὼν τάδε.
 ξυνήλθομεν δὲ βουκόλοι καὶ ποιμένες,
 κοινῶν λόγων δώσοντες ἀλλήλοις ἔριν,
 ὡς δεινὰ δρῶσι θαυμάτων τ' ἐπάξια·
 καὶ τις πλάνης κατ' ἄστυ καὶ τρίβων λόγων
 ἔλεξεν εἰς ἅπαντας· ὦ σεμνὰς πλάκας
 ναίοντες ὀρέων, θέλετε θηρασώμεθα
 720 Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐκ βακχευμάτων
 χάριν τ' ἄνακτι θώμεθ' ; εὐ δ' ἡμῖν λέγειν
 ἔδοξε, θάμνων δ' ἐλλοχίζομεν φόβαις
 κρύψαντες αὐτούς· αἱ δὲ τὴν τεταγμένην
 ὦραν ἐκίνουν θύρσον εἰς βακχεύματα,
 Ἴακχον ἀθρόφ' στόματι τὸν Διὸς γόνον
 Βρόμιον καλοῦσαι· πᾶν δὲ συνεβάκχεν' ὄρος

THE BACCHANALS

Then looped they up their fawnskins,—they whose
 bands
 Had fallen loose,—and girt the dappled fells [while.
 Round them with snakes that licked their cheeks the
 Some, cradling fawns or wolf-cubs in their arms,
 Gave to the wild things of their own white milk,— 700
 Young mothers they, who had left their babes, that
 still [heads
 Their breasts were full. Then did they wreath their
 With ivy, oak, and flower-starred briony.
 One grasped her thyrsus-staff, and smote the rock,
 And forth upleapt a fountain's showery spray :
 One in earth's bosom planted her reed-wand,
 And up therethrough the God a wine-fount sent :
 And whoso fain would drink white-foaming draughts
 Scarred with their finger-tips the breast of earth,
 And milk gushed forth unstinted : dripped the while 710
 Sweet streams of honey from their ivy-staves.

Hadst thou been there, thou hadst, beholding this,
 With prayer approached the God whom now thou
 spurnest.
 Then we, thine herdmen and thy shepherds, drew
 Together, each with each to hold dispute
 Touching their awful deeds and marvellous.
 And one, a townward truant, ready of speech,
 To all cried, "Dwellers on the terraces
 Of hallowed mountains, will ye that we chase
 From Bacchus' revel Agave, Pentheus' mother, 720
 And do our lord a kindness?" Well, thought we,
 He spake, and we in ambush hid ourselves
 Mid leaves of copses. At the appointed time
 They waved the thyrsus for the revel-rites,
 With one voice calling Iacchus, Clamour-king,
 Zeus' seed. The hills, the wild things all, were thrilled

καὶ θῆρες, οὐδὲν δ' ἦν ἀκίνητον δρόμῳ.
 κυρεῖ δ' Ἀγαυή πλησίον θρώσκουσά μου·
 730 καγὼ ἔξεπήδησ' ὡς συναρπάσαι θέλων,
 λόχμην κενώσας ἐνθ' ἐκρυπτόμην δέμας.
 ἢ δ' ἀνεβόησεν· ὦ δρομάδες ἐμαὶ κύνες,
 θηρώμεθ' ἀνδρῶν τῶνδ' ὑπ'· ἀλλ' ἔπεσθέ μοι,
 ἔπεσθε θύρσοις διὰ χερῶν ὠπλισμένοι.
 ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν φεύγοντες ἐξηλύξαμεν
 Βακχῶν σπαραγμόν, αἱ δὲ νεμομέναις χλόην
 μόσχοις ἐπῆλθον χειρὸς ἀσιδήρου μέτα.
 καὶ τὴν μὲν ἂν προσεῖδες εὐθῆλον πόριν
 μυκωμένην ἔλκουσαν ἐν χεροῖν δίχα,¹
 740 ἄλλαι δὲ δαμάλας διεφόρουν σπαραγάμασιν.
 εἶδες δ' ἂν ἢ πλεύρ' ἢ δίχηλον ἔμβασιν
 ῥιπτόμεν' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω· κρεμαστὰ δὲ
 ἔσταζ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀναπεφυρμέν' αἵματι.
 ταῦροι δ' ὑβρισταὶ κεῖς κέρας θυμούμενοι
 τὸ πρόσθεν ἐσφάλλοντο πρὸς γαίαν δέμας,
 μυριάσι χερῶν ἀγόμενοι νεανίδων.
 θᾶσσον δὲ διεφοροῦντο σαρκὸς ἐνδυτὰ
 ἢ σὲ ξυνάψαι βλέφαρα βασιλείοις κόραις.
 χωροῦσι δ' ὡστ' ὄρνιθες ἀρθεῖσαι δρόμῳ
 750 πεδίων ὑποτάσεις, αἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥοαῖς
 εὐκαρπον ἐκβάλλουσι Θηβαίων στάχυν·
 Ὑσιὰς τ' Ἐρυθράς θ', αἱ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας
 νέρθεν κατωκῆκασιν, ὥστε πολέμιοι
 ἐπεισπεσοῦσαι πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω
 διέφερον· ἦρπαζον μὲν ἐκ δόμων τέκνα·
 ὅποσα δ' ἐπ' ὤμοις ἔθεσαν, οὐ δεσμῶν ὑπο
 προσείχετ' οὐδ' ἐπιπτεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον,
 οὐ χαλκός, οὐ σίδηρος· ἐπὶ δὲ βοστρύχοις

¹ Reiske : for MSS ἔχουσαν . . . δίκα.

THE BACCHANALS

With ecstasy : naught but shook as on they rushed.
Now nigh to me Agave chanced to leap,
And forth I sprang as who would seize on her,
Leaving the thicket of mine ambush void. 730

Then shouted she, " What ho, my fleetfoot hounds,
We are chased by these men ! Ho ye, follow me—
Follow, the thyrsus-javelins in your hands !"
O then we fled, and fleeing scantly 'scaped
The Bacchanals' rending grasp. Down swooped they
then

Upon our pasturing kine with swordless hand.
Then hadst thou seen thy mother with her hands
Rend a deep-uddered heifer bellowing loud :
And others tore the calves in crimson shreds.

Ribs hadst thou seen and cloven hoofs far hurled 740
This way and that, and flakes of flesh that hung
And dripped all blood-bedabbled 'neath the pines.

Bulls chafing, lowering fiercely along the horn
Erewhile, were tripped and hurled unto the earth,
Dragged down by countless-clutching maiden hands.
More swiftly was the flesh that lapped their bones
Stripped, than thou couldst have closed thy kingly
eyes.

On swept they, racing like to soaring birds,
To lowland plains which by Asopus' streams
Bear the rich harvests of the Theban folk : 750

Hysiae, Erythrae, 'neath Cithaeron's scour
Low-nestling,—swooping on them like to foes,
This way and that way hurled they all their goods,
Yea, from the houses caught they up the babes :
These, and all things laid on their shoulders, clung
Unfastened ; nothing to the dark earth fell,
Nor brass nor iron ; and upon their hair

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

760

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

770

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταρβῶ μὲν εἰπεῖν τοὺς λόγους ἐλευθέρους
 εἰς τὸν τύραννον, ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται·
 Διόνυσος ἦσσων οὐδενὸς θεῶν ἔφν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

780

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

Were licking with their tongues the blood-gouts
 clean.

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

CHORUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

θύσω, φόνον γε θῆλυν, ὥσπερ ἄξιαί,
πολὺν ταραξας ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

800 ἀπόρῳ γε τῷδε συμπεπλέγμεθα ξένῳ,
ὃς οὔτε πάσχων οὔτε δρῶν σιγήσεται.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὦ τᾶν, ἔτ' ἔστιν εὖ καταστήσαι τάδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί δρῶντα; δουλεύοντα δουλείαις ἐμαῖς;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐγὼ γυναικας δεῦρ' ὄπλων ἄξω δίχα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οἴμοι τόδ' ἤδη δόλιον εἰς με μηχανᾶ.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ποιόν τι, σῶσαί σ' εἰ θέλω τέχναις ἐμαῖς;

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Friend, yet this evil may be turned to good.

PENTHEUS

How?—by becoming my bondwomen's thrall?

DIONYSUS

I without arms will bring the women hither.

PENTHEUS

Ha! here for me thou plottest treachery!

DIONYSUS

Treachery?—I would save thee by mine art!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ξυνέθεσθε κοινῇ τάδ', ἵνα βακχεύητ' αἰεί.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἐκφέρετέ μοι δεῦρ' ὄπλα· σὺ δὲ παῦσαι λέγων.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

810

ἄ·

βούλει σφ' ἐν ὄρεσι συγκαθημένας ἰδεῖν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

μάλιστα, μυρίον γε δούς χρυσοῦ σταθμόν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

τί δ' εἰς ἔρωτα τοῦδε πέπτωκας μέγαν;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

λυπρῶς νιν εἰσίδοιμ' ἂν ἐξωνωμένας.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὅμως δ' ἴδοις ἂν ἠδέως ἅ σοι πικρά;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄλλ' ἐξιχνεύσουσίν σε, κἂν ἔλθῃς λάθρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἄλλ' ἐμφανῶς· καλῶς γὰρ ἐξεῖπας τάδε.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἄγωμεν οὖν σε κἀπιχειρήσεις ὀδῷ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

820

ἄγ' ὡς τάχιστα, τοῦ χρόνου δέ σοι φθουῶ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

στεῖλαί νυν ἀμφὶ χρωτὶ βυσσίνους πέπλους.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Ye have made this covenant, so to revel aye.

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS (*to attendants*)

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

DIONYSUS

Ho thou !

810

Wouldst thou behold them camped upon the hills ?

PENTHEUS¹

Ay—though with sumless gold I bought the sight.

DIONYSUS

Why on this mighty longing hast thou fallen ?

PENTHEUS

To see them drunk with wine—a bitter sight !

DIONYSUS

Yet wouldst thou gladly see a bitter sight ?

PENTHEUS

Yea, sooth, in silence crouched beneath the pines.

DIONYSUS

Yet will they track thee, stealthily though thou come.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Shall I then guide thee ? Wilt essay the path ?

PENTHEUS

Lead on with speed : I grudge thee all delay !

820

DIONYSUS

Array thee now in robes of linen fine.

¹ From this time Pentheus speaks as one hypnotized.

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τί δὴ τόδ' ; εἰς γυναῖκας ἐξ ἀνδρὸς τελῶ ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

μή σε κτάνωσιν, ἦν ἀνὴρ ὀφθῆς ἐκεῖ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

εὖ γ' εἶπας αὐτό, καί τις εἶ πάλαι σοφός.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ἐξεμούσωσεν τάδε.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πῶς οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἂ σύ με νουθετεῖς καλῶς ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἐγὼ στελῶ σε δωμάτων εἴσω μολῶν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

οὐκέτι θεατῆς Μαινάδων πρόθυμος εἶ ;

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

830

στολήν δὲ τίνα φῆς ἀμφὶ χρωτ' ἐμὸν βαλεῖν ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

κόμην μὲν ἐπὶ σῶ κρατὶ ταναὸν ἐκτενῶ.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

τὸ δεύτερον δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τί μοι ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

πέπλοι ποδήρεις· ἐπὶ κᾶρα δ' ἔσται μίτρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἢ καί τι πρὸς τοῖσδ' ἄλλο προσθήσεις ἐμοί ;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

θύρσον γε χειρὶ καὶ νεβροῦ στικτὸν δέρας.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην θῆλυν ἐνδύναι στολήν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' αἶμα θήσεις συμβαλὼν Βάκχαις μάχην.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

Wherefore? From man shall I to woman turn?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Well said—yea, shrewd hast thou been heretofore.

DIONYSUS

Such science Dionysus taught to me.

PENTHEUS

How then shall thy fair rede become mine act?

DIONYSUS

I will into thine halls, and robe thee there.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Is thy desire to watch the Maenads dead?

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Thine head with flowing tresses will I tire.

PENTHEUS

And the next fashion of my vesture—what?

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

Naught else but these wouldst thou add unto me?

DIONYSUS

Thyrsus in hand, and dappled fell of fawn.

PENTHEUS

I cannot drape me in a woman's robe!

DIONYSUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ὀρθῶς· μολεῖν χρῆ πρῶτον εἰς κατασκοπήν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

σοφώτερον γοῦν ἢ κακοῖς θηρᾶν κακά.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

840 καὶ πῶς δι' ἄστεως εἶμι Καδμείους λαθῶν;

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁδοὺς ἐρήμους ἴμεν· ἐγὼ δ' ἠγήσομαι.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πᾶν κρεῖσσον ὥστε μὴ ἔγγελᾶν Βάκχας ἐμοί.
ἐλθόντ' ἐς οἴκους ἂν δοκῆ βουλευόμεν.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἔξεστι· πάντη τό γ' ἐμὸν εὐτρεπὲς πάρα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Sooth, wiser so than hunt thee ills with ills.

PENTHEUS

Yet, how through Cadmus' city pass unseen? 840

DIONYSUS

By lone paths will we go. Myself will guide.

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

Women, the man sets foot within the toils.
The Bacchant's—and death's penalty—shall he find.
Dionysus, play thy part now ; thou art near :
Let us take vengeance. Craze thou first his brain, 850
Indarting sudden madness. Whole of wit,
Ne'er will he yield to don the woman's robe :
Yet shall he don, driven wide of reason's course
I long withal to make him Thebes' derision,
In woman-semblance led the city through,
After the erstwhile terrors of his threats.

I go, to lay on Pentheus the attire
Which he shall take with him to Hades, slain
By a mother's hands. And he shall know Zeus'

son

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

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

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

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

890

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

900

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

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

ἐπῶδ.

910

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

Quests as a sleuth-hound till it shall have tracked 890

The godless down in that relentless hunt.

We may not, in the heart's thought or the act,

Set us above the law of use and wont.

Little it costs, faith's precious heritage,

To trust that whatsoe'er from Heaven is sent

Hath sovereign sway, whate'er through age on age

Hath gathered sanction by our nature's bent.

What wisdom's crown, what guerdon, shines more
glorious

That Gods can give the sons of men, than this—

O'er crests of foes to stretch the hand victorious? 900

Glory is crown and sum of human bliss!

Blest who from ravening seas (*Epode*)

Hath 'scaped to haven-peace,

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

Some men to higher height

Attain, of wealth, of might, [glow :

Than others; myriad hopes in myriad hearts still

To fair fruition brought

Are some, some come to naught: 910

Happy is he whose bliss from day to day doth grow.

Enter DIONYSUS.

DIONYSUS

Thou who dost burn to see forfended things,

Pentheus, O zealous with an evil zeal,

Come forth before thine halls: be seen of me

Womanlike clothed in frenzied Bacchant's garb,

To spy upon thy mother and her troop.

Enter PENTHEUS.

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

920

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ὁ θεὸς ὀμαρτεῖ, πρόσθεν ὧν οὐκ εὐμενής,
 ἔνσπονδος ἡμῖν· νῦν δ' ὀράς ἅ χρῆ σ' ὀράν.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

αὐτὰς ἐκείνας εἰσοράν δοκῶ σ' ὀρών.
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ἔδρας σοι πλόκαμος ἐξέστηχ' ὄδε,
 οὐχ ὡς ἐγὼ νιν ὑπὸ μίτρα καθήρμισα.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

930

ἔνδον προσείων αὐτὸν ἀνασείων τ' ἐγὼ
 καὶ βακχιάζων ἐξ ἔδρας μεθώρμισα.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς, οἷς σε θεραπεύειν μέλει,
 πάλιν καταστελοῦμεν· ἀλλ' ὄρθου κára.

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

ἰδοῦ, σὺ κόσμει· σοὶ γὰρ ἀνακείμεσθα δῆ.

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

940

ἦ πού με τῶν σῶν πρῶτον ἡγήσει φίλων,
 ὅταν παρὰ λόγον σῶφρονας Βάκχας ἴδῃς.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

πότ' ἐρα δὲ θύρσον δεξιᾷ λαβὼν χερὶ
ἢ τῆδε, Βάκχῃ μᾶλλον εἰκασθήσομαι ;

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΤΣ

καὶ μὴν δοκῶ σφᾶς ἐν λόχμαῖς ὄριθας ὡς
λέκτρων ἔχασθαι φιλτάτοις ἐν ἔρκεσιν.

THE BACCHANALS

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

950

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

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

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

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

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἢ τεκοῦσά γε.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐπίσημον ὄντα πᾶσι —

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἐπὶ τόδ' ἔρχομαι.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

φερόμενος ἤξεις —

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἀβρότητ' ἐμὴν λέγεις.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ἐν χερσὶ μητρός.

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

καὶ τρυφᾶν μ' ἀναγκάσεις.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

τρυφάς γε τοιάσδ' —

ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ

ἀξίων μὲν ἄπτομαι.

970

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

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

PENTHEUS

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

DIONYSUS

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

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

PENTHEUS

Ay, my mother !

DIONYSUS

To all men manifest—

PENTHEUS

For this I come.

DIONYSUS

High-borne shalt thou return—

PENTHEUS

Soft ease for me ?

DIONYSUS

On a mother's hands.

PENTHEUS

Thou wouldst thrust pomp on me !

DIONYSUS

Nay, 'tis but such pomp—

PENTHEUS

As is my desert. 970

THE BACCHANALS

DIONYSUS

Strange, strange man! Strange shall thine experience
be.

So shalt thou win renown that soars to heaven.

[*Exit* PENTHEUS.

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

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

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

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

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

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

990

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

δεινὸς σὺ δεινὸς κἀπὶ δειν' ἔρχει πάθη,
ὥστ' οὐρανῷ στηρίζον εὐρήσεις κλέος.

ἔκτειν', Ἀγαυή, χεῖρας αἴ θ' ὁμόσποροι
Κάδμου θυγατέρες· τὸν νεανίαν ἄγω
τόνδ' εἰς ἀγῶνα μέγαν, ὃ νικήσων δ' ἐγὼ
καὶ Βρόμιος ἔσται. τᾶλλα δ' αὐτὸ σημαίνει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴτε θοαὶ Λύσσας κύνες ἴτ' εἰς ὄρος, στρ.
θίασον ἔνθ' ἔχουσι Κάδμου κόραι,
ἀνοιστρήσατέ νιν
980 ἐπὶ τὸν ἐν γυναικομίμῳ στολᾷ
λυσσώδη κατάσκοπον Μαινάδων.

μάτηρ πρῶτά νιν λευρᾶς ἀπὸ πέτρας
ἧ σκόλοπος ὄψεται
δοκεύοντα, Μαινάσιν δ' ἀπύσει·
τίς ὄδε Καδμείων
μαστήρ ὀρειδρόμων
ἐς ὄρος ἐς ὄρος ἔμολεν, ὦ Βάκχαι;
τίς ἄρα νιν ἔτεκεν;
οὐ γὰρ ἐξ αἵματος γυναικῶν ἔφνυ,
λεαίνας δέ τινος ὄδ' ἧ Γοργόνων
990 Λιβυσσᾶν γένος.

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

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

1000 παρακόπῳ τε λήματι στέλλεται,
 τὰνίκατον ὡς κρατήσων βία.'

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

βροτείαν τ' ἔχειν, ἄλυπος βίος.

τὸ σοφὸν οὐ φθόνῳ

χαίρω θηρεύουσα,

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

ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ βίον

ἦμαρ εἰς νύκτα τ' εὐαγοῦντ' εὐσεβεῖν,

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

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

(*Ant.*)

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

1000

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

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

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

1010

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

87

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

1020

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ δῶμ' ὃ πρὶν ποτ' ἠντύχεις ἀν' Ἑλλάδα,
 Σιδωνίου γέροντος, ὃς τὸ γηγενές
 δράκοντος ἔσπειρ' ὄφεος ἐν γαίᾳ θέρος,
 ὡς σε στενάζω, δοῦλος ὦν μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 χρηστοῖσι δούλοις συμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν ; ἐκ Βακχῶν τι μηνύεις νέον ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1030

Πενθεὺς ὄλωλε, παῖς Ἐχίονος πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦναξ Βρόμιε· θεὸς φαίνει μέγας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πῶς φῆς ; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας ; ἢ πλὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς
 χαίρεις κακῶς πρᾶσσουσι δεσπόταις, γύναι ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θήβας δ' ἀνάνδρους ὦδ' ἄγεις* * * *

* * * * * ;

THE BACCHANALS

O Dionysus, reveal thee!—appear as a bull to behold,
Or be thou seen as a dragon, a monster of heads
 manifold, [of him rolled.
Or as a lion with splendours of flame round the limbs

Come to us, Bacchus, and smiling in mockery com- 1020
 pass him round [hunter be bound,
Now with the toils of destruction, and so shall the
Trapped mid the throng of the Maenads, the quarry
 his questing hath found.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

O house of old through Hellas prosperous
Of that Sidonian patriarch, who sowed
The earth-born serpent's dragon-teeth in earth,
How I bemoan thee! Though a thrall I be,
Their lords' calamities touch loyal thralls.

CHORUS

What now?—hast tidings of the Bacchanals?

MESSENGER

Pentheus is dead: Echion's son is dead. 1030

CHORUS

Bromius my King! thou hast made thy godhead plain!

MESSENGER

How, what is this thou say'st? Dost thou exult,
Woman, upon my lord's calamities?

CHORUS

An alien I, I chant glad outland strain,
Who cower no more in terror of the chain.

MESSENGER

Deemest thou Thebes so void of men, [that ills
Have left her powerless to punish thee?]

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

CHORUS

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

MESSENGER

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

CHORUS

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

MESSENGER

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

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

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

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

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

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

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

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

- 1130 Ἴνῳ δὲ τὰπὶ θάτερ' ἐξειργάζετο
 ῥηγνῦσα σάρκας, Αὐτονοή τ' ὄχλος τε πᾶς
 ἐπέιχε Βακχῶν· ἦν δὲ πᾶσ' ὁμοῦ βοή,
 ὁ μὲν στενάζων ὅσον ἐτύγχανεν πνέων,
 αἱ δ' ἠλάλαζον. ἔφερε δ' ἡ μὲν ὠλένην,
 ἡ δ' ἶχνος αὐταῖς ἀρβύλαις· γυμνοῦντο δὲ
 πλευραὶ σπαραγμοῖς· πᾶσα δ' ἡματωμένη
 χεῖρας διεσφαίριζε σάρκα Πενθέως.
 κεῖται δὲ χωρὶς σῶμα, τὸ μὲν ὑπὸ στύφλοις
 πέτραις, τὸ δ' ὕλης ἐν βαθυξύλω φόβη,
 οὐ ῥάδιον ζήτημα· κράτα δ' ἄθλιον,
 1140 ὅπερ λαβοῦσα τυγχάνει μήτηρ χεροῖν,
 πήξασ' ἐπ' ἄκρον θύρσον ὡς ὄρεστέρου
 φέρει λέοντος διὰ Κιθαιρῶνος μέσου,
 λιπούσ' ἀδελφὰς ἐν χοροῖσι Μαινάδων.
 χωρεῖ δὲ θήρα δυσπότμῳ γαυρουμένη
 τειχέων ἔσω τῶνδ', ἀνακαλοῦσα Βάκχιον
 τὸν ξυγκυναγόν, τὸν ξυνεργάτην ἄγρας
 τὸν καλλίνικον, ἣ δάκρυα νικηφορεῖ.
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τῆδ' ἐκποδῶν τῆ ξυμφορᾷ
 ἀπειμ', Ἀγαύην πρὶν μολεῖν πρὸς δώματα.
 1150 τὸ σωφρονεῖν δὲ καὶ σέβειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν
 κάλλιστον· οἶμαι δ' αὐτὸ καὶ σοφώτατον
 θνητοῖσιν εἶναι κτῆμα τοῖσι χρωμένοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

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

CHORUS

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

1160

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

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Ἄσιίδες Βάκχαι.

στρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί μ' ὀροθύνεις, ὦ ;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

1170

φέρομεν ἐξ ὀρέων
ἔλικα νεότομον ἐπὶ μέλαθρα,
μακάριον θήραν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀρῶ καὶ σε δέξομαι σύγκωμον.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πόθεν ἐρημίας ;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Κιθαιρῶν—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί Κιθαιρῶν ;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

κατεφόνευσέν νιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίς ἄ βαλοῦσα πρώτα ;

THE BACCHANALS

1160

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

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

Enter AGAVE, carrying the head of Pentheus.

AGAVE

Asian Bacchanals ! (Str.)

CHORUS

Why dost thou challenge me ?—say.

AGAVE

Lo, from the mountain-side I bear
 A newly-severed ivy-spray 1170
 Unto our halls, a goodly prey.

CHORUS

I see—to our revels I welcome thee.

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

Where in the wilderness, where ?

AGAVE

Cithaeron—

CHORUS

What hath Cithaeron wrought ?

AGAVE

Him hath Cithaeron to slaughter brought.

CHORUS

Who was it smote him first ?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

1180

ΑΓΑΘΗ
ἔμὸν τὸ γέρας.
μάκαιρ' Ἀγαυή κληζόμεθ' ἐν θιάσοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τίς ἄλλα;

ΑΓΑΘΗ
τὰ Κάδμου—

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί Κάδμου;

ΑΓΑΘΗ
γένεθλα
μετ' ἐμὲ μετ' ἐμὲ τοῦδ'
ἔθιγε θηρός. εὐτυχῆς γ' ἄδ' ἄγρα.
μέτεχέ νυν θοίνας. ἀντ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί μετέχω τλάμων;

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ
πρέπει γ' ὥστε θῆρ ἄγραυλος φόβη.

1190

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ
ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἀγρεύς.

ΑΓΑΘΗ
ἐπαινεῖς;

ΧΟΡΟΣ
τί δ'; ἐπαινῶ.

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

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

1180

CHORUS

Who then?

AGAVE

Of Cadmus—

CHORUS

Of Cadmus what wilt thou tell?

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

Alas! wherein shall I share?

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

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

AGAVE

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

1190

CHORUS

Yea, a hunter is Bacchus our King.

AGAVE

Dost thou praise me?

CHORUS

How can I choose but praise?

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΘΗ

τάχα δὲ Καδμείοι—

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ παῖς γε Πενθεύς—

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ματέρ' ἐπαινέσεται,

λαβοῦσαν ἄγρην τάνδε λεοντοφυή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

περισσάν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

περισσῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀγάλλει:

ΑΓΑΘΗ

γέγηθα

μεγάλα μεγάλα καὶ

φανερὰ τᾶδ' ἄγρᾳ κατειργασμένα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1200

δεῖξόν νυν, ὦ τάλαινα, σὴν νικηφόρον
ἀστοῖσιν ἄγρην ἣν φέρουσ' ἐλήλυθας.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ καλλίπυργον ἄστνυ Θηβαίας χθονὸς
ναῖοντες, ἔλθεθ' ὡς ἴδητε τήνδ' ἄγρην,
Κάδμου θυγατέρες θηρὸς ἣν ἠγρεύσαμεν
οὐκ ἀγκυλητοῖς Θεσσαλῶν στοχάσμασιν,
οὐ δικτύοισιν, ἀλλὰ λευκοπήχεσι

χειρῶν ἀκμαῖσι. κατὰ κομπάζειν χρεῶν
καὶ λογχοποιῶν ὄργανα κτᾶσθαι μάτην;

1210

ἡμεῖς δέ γ' αὐτῇ χειρὶ τόνδε θ' εἵλομεν

χωρὶς τε θηρὸς ἄρθρα διεφορήσαμεν.

ποῦ μοι πατὴρ ὁ πρέσβυς; ἐλθέτω πέλας.

Πενθεύς τ' ἐμὸς παῖς ποῦ ἔστιν; αἰρέσθω λαβῶν

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Ay, and full soon shall Cadmus' race—

CHORUS

And Pentheus thy son—

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

Strange quarry!—

AGAVE

And strangely taken.

CHORUS

Art glad?

AGAVE

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

CHORUS

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

1200

AGAVE

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

1210

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

πηκτῶν πρὸς οἴκους κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις,
ὡς πασσαλεύση κράτα τριγλύφοις τόδε
λέοντος ὃν πάρεμι θηράσασ' ἐγώ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

THE BACCHANALS

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

Enter CADMUS, with attendants carrying a bier.

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὦ πένθος οὐ μετρητὸν οὐδ' οἶόν τ' ἰδεῖν,
φόνου ταλαίνοις χερσὶν ἐξειργασμένων.
καλὸν τὸ θῦμα καταβαλοῦσα δαίμοσιν
ἐπὶ δαῖτα Θήβας τάσδε καμὲ παρακαλεῖς.
οἴμοι κακῶν μὲν πρῶτα σῶν, ἔπειτ' ἐμῶν·
ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς ἐνδίκως μὲν, ἀλλ' ἄγαν
1250 Βρόμιος ἄναξ ἀπόλεσ' οἰκεῖος γεγώς.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὡς δύσκολον τὸ γῆρας ἀνθρώποις ἔφην
ἐν τ' ὄμμασι σκυθρωπόν. εἴθε παῖς ἐμὸς
εὐθῆρος εἶη, μητρὸς εἰκασθεὶς τρόποις,
ὄτ' ἐν νεανίαισι Θηβαίοις ἅμα
θηρῶν ὀριγνῶτ'. ἀλλὰ θεομαχεῖν μόνου
οἴος τ' ἐκείνος. νοθητητέος, πάτερ,
σοῦστίη. τίς αὐτὸν δεῦρ' ἂν ὄψιν εἰς ἐμὴν
καλέσειεν, ὡς ἴδῃ με τὴν εὐδαίμονα;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τόνδ' αἰθέρ' ὄμμα σὸν μέθες.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἰδού· τί μοι τόνδ' ἐξυπεῖπας εἰσορᾶν;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἔθ' αὐτὸς ἢ σοι μεταβολὰς ἔχειν δοκεῖ;

THE BACCHANALS

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

First cast thou up thine eye to yonder heaven.

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λαμπρότερος ἢ πρὶν καὶ διυπετέστερος.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τὸ δὲ πτοηθὲν τόδ' ἔτι σῆ ψυχῇ πάρα ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

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

1270

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

κλύοις ἂν οὖν τι κάποκρίναι' ἂν σαφῶς ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὡς ἐκλέλησμάι γ' ἂ πάρος εἶπομεν, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

εἰς ποῖον ἦλθες οἶκον ὑμεναίων μέτα ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

σπαρτῶ μ' ἔδωκας, ὡς λέγουσ', Ἐχίονι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις παῖς ἐγένετο σῶ πόσει ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

Πενθεύς, ἐμῇ τε καὶ πατρὸς κοινωνία.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

τίνος πρόσωπον δῆτ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις ἔχεις ;

ΑΓΑΤΗ

λέοντος, ὡς γ' ἔφασκον αἱ θηρώμεναι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σκέψαι νυν ὀρθῶς, βραχὺς ὁ μόχθος εἰσιδεῖν.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

1280

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἄθρησον αὐτὸ καὶ σαφέστερον μάθε.

ΑΓΑΤΗ

ὀρῶ μέγιστον ἄλγος ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Brighter—more limpid-lucent than erewhile.

CADMUS

Is this delirium tossing yet thy soul?

AGAVE

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

1270

CADMUS

Canst hearken aught then? Clearly canst reply?

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

To what house camest thou with bridal-hymns?

AGAVE

Echion's—of the Dragon-seed, men say.

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

Pentheus—born of my union with his sire.

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

Gaze, gaze on it, and be thou certified.

AGAVE

I see—mine uttermost anguish! Woe is me!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

μῶν σοι λέοντι φαίνεται προσεικέναι ;

ΑΓΑΘΗ

οὐκ· ἀλλὰ Πενθέως ἢ τάλαιν' ἔχω κára.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὠμωγμένον γε πρόσθεν ἢ σὲ γνωρίσαι.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

τίς ἔκτανέν νιν ; πῶς ἐμὰς ἦλθεν χέρας ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

δύστην' ἀλήθει', ὡς ἐν οὐ καιρῷ πάρει.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

λέγ', ὡς τὸ μέλλον καρδία πήδημ' ἔχει.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

σύ νιν κατέκτας καὶ κασίγηται σέθεν.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

1290

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐπερ πρὶν Ἀκταίωνα διέλαχον κύνες.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

τί δ' εἰς Κιθαιρῶν' ἦλθε δυσδαίμων ὄδε ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐκερτόμει θεὸν σὰς τε βακχείας μολών.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἡμεῖς δ' ἐκεῖσε τίνι τρόπῳ κατήραμεν ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐμάνητε, πᾶσά τ' ἐξεβακχεύθη πόλις.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὄλεσ', ἄρτι μανθάνω.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὑβριν γ' ὑβρισθείς· θεὸν γὰρ οὐχ ἠγείσθῃ νιν.

• ΑΓΑΘΗ

τὸ φίλτατον δὲ σῶμα ποῦ παιδός, πάτερ ;

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

Of me bewailed ere recognised of thee.

AGAVE

Who murdered him? How came he to mine hands?

CADMUS

O piteous truth that so untimely dawns!

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

There, where Actaeon erst by hounds was torn.

AGAVE

How to Cithaeron went this hapless one?

CADMUS

To mock the God and thy wild rites he went.

AGAVE

But we—for what cause thither journeyed we?

CADMUS

Ye were distraught: all Thebes went Bacchant-wild.

AGAVE

Dionysus ruined us! I see it now.

CADMUS

Ye flouted him, would not believe him God.

AGAVE

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

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ἐγὼ μόλις τόδ' ἐξερευνήσας φέρω.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

1300

ἦ πᾶν ἐν ἄρθροισι συγκεκλημένον καλῶς ;

* * * * *

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Πενθεῖ δὲ τί μέρος ἀφροσύνης προσῆκ' ἐμῆς ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

ὑμῖν ἐγένεθ' ὅμοιος, οὐ σέβων θεόν.
 τοιγὰρ συνῆψε πάντας εἰς μίαν βλάβην,
 ὑμᾶς τε τόνδε θ', ὥστε διολέσαι δόμους
 καῖμ', ὅστις ἄτεκνος ἀρσένων παίδων γεγώς,
 τῆς σῆς τόδ' ἔρνος, ὦ τάλαινα, νηδύος
 αἰσχιστα καὶ κάκιστα κατθανόνθ' ὀρώ,
 ὦ δῶμ' ἀνέβλεφ', ὅς συνείχες, ὦ τέκνον,
 τοῦμόν μέλαθρον, παιδὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς γεγώς,
 1310 πόλει τε τάρβος ἦσθα· τὸν γέροντα δὲ
 οὐδεὶς ὑβρίζειν ἤθελ' εἰσορῶν τὸ σὸν
 κᾶρα· δίκην γὰρ ἀξίαν ἐλάμβανες.

νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων ἄτιμος ἐκβεβλήσομαι
 ὁ Κάδμος ὁ μέγας, ὃς τὸ Θηβαίων γένος
 ἔσπειρα καὶ ξήμησα κάλλιστον θέρος.
 ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, καὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ὦν ὅμως
 τῶν φιλτάτων ἔμοιγ' ἀριθμήσει, τέκνον,
 οὐκέτι γενείου τοῦδε θιγγάνων χερί,
 1320 τὸν μητρὸς αὐδῶν πατέρα προσπτύξει, τέκνον,
 λέγων· τίς ἀδικεῖ, τίς σ' ἀτιμάζει, γέρον ;
 τίς σὴν ταράσσει καρδίαν λυπηρὸς ὦν ;
 λέγ', ὡς κολάζω τὸν ἀδικοῦντά σ', ὦ πάτερ.
 νῦν δ' ἄθλιος μὲν εἰμ' ἐγώ, τλήμων δὲ σύ,
 οἰκτρὰ δὲ μήτηρ, τλήμιονες δὲ σύγγονοι.

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

Here do I bear it, by hard searching found.

AGAVE

Is it all meetly fitted limb to limb?

1300

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

But—in my folly what was Pentheus' part?

CADMUS

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

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

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

113

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ὀρᾶς γὰρ τὰμ' ὅσῳ μετεστράφη

* * * * *
* * * * *

ΔΙΟΝΤΣΟΣ

* * * * *
* * * * *

1330

δράκων γενήσει μεταβαλὼν, δάμαρ τε σὴ
ἐκθηριωθείς ὄφεος ἀλλάξει τύπον,
ἦν Ἄρεος ἔσχεσ Ἄρμονίαν θνητὸς γεγώς.
ὄχον δὲ μόσχων, χρησμὸς ὡς λέγει Διός,
ἐλᾶς μετ' ἀλόχου, βαρβάρων ἠγούμενος.
πολλὰς δὲ πέρσεισ ἀναρίθμῳ στρατεύματι
πόλεις· ὅταν δὲ Λοξίου χρηστήριον
διαρπάσῃσι, νόστον ἄθλιον πάλιν
στήσουσι· σὲ δ' Ἄρης Ἄρμονίαν τε ῥύσεται
μακάρων τ' ἐς αἶαν σὸν καθιδρύσει βίον.
1340 ταῦτ' οὐχὶ θνητοῦ πατρὸς ἐκγεγὼς λέγω
Διόνυσος, ἀλλὰ Ζηνός· εἰ δὲ σωφρονεῖν
ἔγνωθ', ὅτ' οὐκ ἠθέλετέ, τὸν Διὸς γόνον
ἠὲ δαιμονεῖτ' ἂν σύμμαχον κεκτημένοι.

THE BACCHANALS

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

CHORUS

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

AGAVE

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

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

DIONYSUS

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

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

Διόνυσε, λισσόμεσθά σ', ἠδικήκαμεν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

ὄψ' ἐμάθεθ' ἡμᾶς, ὅτε δ' ἐχρήν, οὐκ ἤδετε.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ἐγνώκαμεν ταῦτ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεξέρχει λίαν.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ὑμῶν θεὸς γεγὼς ὑβρίζομην.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὄργας πρέπει θεοὺς οὐχ ὁμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

πάλαι τάδε Ζεὺς οὐμὸς ἐπένευσεν πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

1350 αἰαῖ, δέδοκται, πρέσβυ, τλήμονες φυγαί.

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ

τί δῆτα μέλλεθ' ἄπερ ἀναγκαίως ἔχει ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ὦ πάτερ, ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ στερεῖσα φεύξομαι.

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

Dionysus, we beseech thee!—we have sinned.

DIONYSUS

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

AGAVE

We know it: but thy vengeance passeth bounds.

DIONYSUS

I am a God: ye did despite to me.

AGAVE

It fits not that in wrath Gods be as men.

DIONYSUS

Long since my father Zeus ordained this so.

AGAVE

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

DIONYSUS

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

Robbed of thee, father, exiled shall I be!

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

ποῖ γὰρ τράπωμαι πατρίδος ἐκβεβλημένη ;

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα, τέκνον· μικρὸς ἐπίκουρος πατήρ.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

1370

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

στεῖχέ νυν, ὦ παῖ, τὸν Ἄρισταίου

* * * * *

ΑΓΑΘΗ

στένομαί σε, πάτερ.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

καὶ γὰρ σέ, τέκνον,
καὶ σὰς ἐδάκρυσα κασιγνήτας.

ΑΓΑΘΗ

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

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

ΑΓΑΘΗ

χαῖρε, πάτερ μοι.

ΚΑΔΜΟΣ

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

1380

THE BACCHANALS

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

Whither can I turn, outcast from my land?

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

1370

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

I mourn thee, father!

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

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

CADMUS

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

AGAVE

Farewell, my father.

CADMUS

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

1380

ΒΑΚΧΑΙ

ΑΓΑΥΗ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

1390

THE BACCHANALS

AGAVE

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

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

CHORUS

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

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

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

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

So fell this marvellous thing.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.]

1390

APPENDIX TO THE "BACCHANALS."

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

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

A. To find a doom of rending midst the rocks¹

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

For, had mine hands received not mine own curse²

To rend to utter fragments every limb

Kissing the shreds of flesh which once I nursed

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

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

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

APPENDIX

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

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

All this hath yon man suffered righteously.

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

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

All woes thou too must suffer will I tell.

THE
MADNESS OF HERCULES

ARGUMENT

Hercules was banished from his birth-place Thebes, and by the order of his uncle, King Amphion, he was sent to the court of King Eurystheus, at Mycenæ, where he performed the great Twelve Labours, which he has done in that order, being by Hercules the Hero of Heroes, first by Eurystheus. For he defeated the enormous Hydra, the golden Hind, and the Nemean Lion, and by force of his strength he killed the Centaurs, and the Boar of Eubœa, and he was always with the King of Mycenæ, who was his master.

THE

MADNESS OF HERCULES

Proclus was banished from his birth-place Thebes, and by the order of his uncle, King Amphion, he was sent to the court of King Eurystheus, at Mycenæ, where he performed the great Twelve Labours, which he has done in that order, being by Hercules the Hero of Heroes, first by Eurystheus. For he defeated the enormous Hydra, the golden Hind, and the Nemean Lion, and by force of his strength he killed the Centaurs, and the Boar of Eubœa, and he was always with the King of Mycenæ, who was his master.

ARGUMENT

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

ΑΡΧΟΜΕΝΟΙ

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ ΓΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ΙΡΙΣ

ΛΥΣΣΑ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

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

MEGARA, *wife of Hercules.*

LYCUS, *a usurper, king of Thebes.*

HERCULES, *son of Zeus and Alcmena.*

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

MADNESS, *a demon.*

SERVANT of *Hercules.*

THESEUS, *king of Athens.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Theban Elders.*

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

Τίς τὸν Διὸς σύλλεκτρον οὐκ οἶδεν βροτῶν,
 Ἄργεῖον Ἀμφιτρυῶν', ὃν Ἀλκαῖός ποτε
 ἔτιχθ' ὁ Περσέως, πατέρα τόνδ' Ἡρακλέους ;
 ὃς τάσδε Θήβας ἔσχευ, ἔνθ' ὁ γηγενῆς
 σπαρτῶν στάχυς ἔβλασται, ὧν γένους Ἄρης
 ἔσωσ' ἀριθμὸν ὀλίγον, οἱ Κάδμου πόλιν
 τεκνοῦσι παίδων παισίν. ἔνθεν ἐξέφυ
 Κρέων Μειοικέως παῖς, ἀναξ τῆσδε χθονός.
 10 Κρέων δὲ Μεγάρης τῆσδε γίγνεται πατήρ,
 ἦν πάντες ὑμεναίοισι Καδμειοί ποτε
 λωτῶ συηλάλαξαν, ἠνίκ' εἰς ἔμοις
 δόμοις ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς νιν ἤγετο.
 λιπῶν δὲ Θήβας, οὐ κατωκίσθην ἐγώ,
 Μεγάρην τε τήνδε πειθερούς τε παῖς ἔμοις
 Ἄργεῖα τεῖχη καὶ Κυκλωπίαν πόλιν
 ὠρέξατ' οἰκεῖν, ἦν ἐγὼ φεύγω κτανῶν
 Ἡλεκτρυῶνα· συμφορὰς δὲ τὰς ἐμὰς
 ἐξευμαρίζων καὶ πάτραν οἰκεῖν θέλων,
 20 καθόδου δίδωσι μισθὸν Εὐρυσθεῖ μέγαν,
 ἐξημερῶσαι γαῖαν, εἴθ' Ἡρας ὑπο
 κέντροις δαμασθεῖς εἴτε τοῦ χρεῶν μέτα.
 καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐξεμόχθησεν πόνους,

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

Who knows not Zeus's couch-mate, who of men,
Argive Amphitryon, sprung from Perseus' son
Alcaeus, father of great Hercules?
Here in Thebes dwelt he, whence the earth-born
crop

Of Sown Men rose, scant remnant of whose race
The War-god spared to people Cadmus' town
With children of their children. Sprang from these
Creon, Menoeceus' son, king of this land,

Creon, the father of this Megara,
Whose spousals all the sons of Cadmus once
Acclaimed with flutes, what time unto mine halls
Glorious Hercules brought home his bride.

But Thebes, wherein I dwelt, and Megara,
And all his marriage-kin, my son forsook,
Yearning for Argos' giant-built burg
Mycenae, whence I am outlawed, since I slew

Electryon: he, to lighten mine affliction,
And fain to dwell in his own fatherland,
Proffered Eurystheus for our home-return—
Or spurred by Hera's goads, or drawn by fate—

A great price, even to rid the earth of pests.
And, all the other labours now achieved,

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

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

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

- 60 ὦ πρέσβυ, Ταφίων ὅς ποτ' ἐξεῖλες πόλιν
στρατηλατήσας κλεινὰ Καδμείων δορός,
ὡς οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποισι τῶν θείων σαφές.
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐτ' εἰς πατέρ' ἀπηλάθην τύχης,
ὃς εἶνεκ' ὄλβου μέγας ἐκομπάσθη ποτέ,
ἔχων τυραννίδ', ἧς μακρὰι λόγχοι πέρι
πηδῶσ' ἔρωτι σώματ' εἰς εὐδαίμονα,
ἔχων δὲ τέκνα· κάμ' ἔδωκε παιδὶ σῶ
ἐπίσημον εὐνήν Ἡρακλεῖ συνοικίσας·
καὶ νῦν ἐκεῖνα μὲν θανόντ' ἀνέπτατο·
- 70 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ σὺ μέλλομεν θνήσκειν, γέρον,
οἷ θ' Ἡράκλειοι παῖδες, οὓς ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
σώξω νεοσσούς ὄρνις ὡς ὑφειμένους.
οἱ δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν πίτνων,
ὦ μήτερ, αὐδᾶ, ποῖ πατὴρ ἄπεστι γῆς;
τί δρᾶ, πόθ' ἤξει; τῷ νέῳ δ' ἐσφαλμένοι
ζητοῦσι τὸν τεκόντ'. ἐγὼ δὲ διαφέρω
λόγοισι μυθεύουσα· θαυμάζω δ', ὅταν
πύλαι ψοφῶσι, πᾶς τ' ἀνίστησιν πόδα,
ὡς πρὸς πατρῶον προσπεσούμενοι γόνυ.
80 νῦν οὖν τίν' ἐλπίδ' ἢ πόρον σωτηρίας
ἔξευμαρίζει, πρέσβυ; πρὸς σέ γὰρ βλέπω.
ὡς οὔτε γαίης ὄρι' ἂν ἐκβαίμεν λάθρα·
φυλακαὶ γὰρ ἡμῶν κρείσσονες κατ' ἐξόδους·
οὐτ' ἐν φίλοισιν ἐλπίδες σωτηρίας
ἔτ' εἰσὶν ἡμῖν. ἦντιν' οὖν γνώμην ἔχεις

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

MEGARA

Ancient, who once didst smite the Taphians' burg, 60
Captaining gloriously the Theban spears,
How are God's ways with men past finding out !
Not Fortune's outcast was I through my sire :
So prospered he, all men acclaimed him great :
Kingship he had—that thing for lust whereof
Long lances leap against men fortune-throned :
Children had he ; me to thy son he gave,
In glorious spousal joined with Hercules.
Now is all dead—on vanished pinions flown !
Now, ancient, thou and I are marked for death, 70
With Hercules' children, whom, as 'neath her
wings

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

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

90 λύπης τι προσδεῖς ἢ φιλεῖς οὔτω φάος ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καὶ τῷδε χαίρω καὶ φιλῶ τὰς ἐλπίδας.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κἀγὼ δοκεῖν δὲ τὰδόκητ' οὐ χρή, γέρον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐν ταῖς ἀναβολαῖς τῶν κακῶν ἔνεστ' ἄκη.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὁ δ' ἐν μέσῳ με λυπρὸς ὧν δάκνει χρόνος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὑψόροφα μέλαθρα
καὶ γεραιὰ δέμνι', ἀμφὶ βάκτροις

στρ.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

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

MEGARA

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

AMPHITRYON

In this life I rejoice : I love its hopes.

MEGARA

And I : yet for things hopeless none may look.

AMPHITRYON

Even in delay is salve for evils found.

MEGARA

But ah the gnawing anguish of suspense !

AMPHITRYON

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

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

CHORUS

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

110 ἔρεισμα θέμενος, ἐστάλην ἰαλέμων
 γόων ἀοιδὸς ὥστε πολιδὸς ὄρνις,
 ἔπεα μόνον καὶ δόκημα νυκτερωπὸν
 ἐννύχων ὀνείρων,
 τρομερὰ μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως πρόθυμα.

ὦ τέκεα πατρὸς ἀπάτορ', ὦ
 γεραιὲ σύ τε τάλαινα μᾶ-
 τερ, ἂ τὸν Ἄϊδα δόμοις
 πόσιν ἀναστενάζεις.

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

130 ἴδετε, πατρὸς ὡς ἐπ' ὀδ.
 γοργῶπες αἶδε προσφερεῖς
 ὀμμάτων ἀνγαί,
 τὸ δὲ δὴ κακοτυχὲς οὐ λέλοιπεν ἐκ τέκνων,
 οὐδ' ἀποίχεται χάρις.

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ἐλλὰς ὦ ξυμμάχους
οἴους οἴους ὀλέσασα
τούσδ' ἀποστερήσει.

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

ΛΥΚΟΣ

- 140 τὸν Ἡράκλειον πατέρα καὶ ξυνάορον,
εἰ χρὴ μ', ἐρωτῶ· χρὴ δ', ἐπεὶ γε δεσπότης
ὑμῶν καθέστηχ', ἱστορεῖν ἂ βούλομαι·
τίν' εἰς χρόνον ζητεῖτε μηκῦναι βίον ;
τίν' ἐλπίδ' ἀλκὴν τ' εἰσοράτε μὴ θανεῖν ;
ἢ τὸν παρ' Ἄιδῃ πατέρα τῶνδε κείμενον
πιστεύεθ' ἤξειν ; ὡς ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀξίαν
τὸ πένθος αἴρεσθ', εἰ θανεῖν ὑμᾶς χρεῶν,
σὺ μὲν καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἐκβαλὼν κόμπους κενούς,²
150 σὺ δ' ὡς ἀρίστου φωτὸς ἐκλήθης δάμαρ.
τί δὴ τὸ σεμνὸν σῶ κατείργασται πόσει,
ὔδραν ἔλειον εἰ διώλεσε κτανὼν
ἢ τὸν Νέμειον θῆρ' ; ὃν ἐν βρόχοις ἐλὼν
βραχίονός φησ' ἀγχόναισιν ἐξελεῖν.
τοῖσδ' ἐξαγωνίζεσθε ; τῶνδ' ἄρ' εἵνεκεν
τούς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας οὐ θνήσκειν χρεῶν ;
ὃς ἔσχε δόξαν οὐδὲν ὦν εὐψυχίας
θηρῶν ἐν αἰχμῇ, τᾶλλα δ' οὐδὲν ἄλκιμος,
ὃς οὐποτ' ἀσπίδ' ἔσχε πρὸς λαιᾶ χερὶ
160 οὐδ' ἦλθε λόγχης ἐγγύς, ἀλλὰ τόξ' ἔχων,
κάκιστον ὄπλον, τῇ φυγῇ πρόχειρος ἦν.
ἀνδρὸς δ' ἐλεγχος οὐχὶ τόξ' εὐψυχίας,

² Heath : for MSS. τέκοι νέον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

Enter LYCUS.

LYCUS

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

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

ἄλλ' ὅς μένων βλέπει τε κἀντιδέρεται
 ὀροὸς ταχεΐαν ἄλοκα τάξιν ἐμβεβώς.
 ἔχει δὲ τοῦμόν οὐκ ἀναΐδειαν, γέρον,
 ἄλλ' εὐλάβειαν· οἶδα γὰρ κατακτανὸν
 Κρέοντα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ θρόνους ἔχων.
 οὐκουν τραφέντων τῶνδε τιμωροὺς ἐμοὶ
 χρήζω λιπέσθαι τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

For Zeus's part—his own son's birth let Zeus 170
Defend: but, Hercules, to me it falls
Pleading thy cause to show this fellow's folly:
I may not suffer thee to be defamed.
First, of that slander—for a slanderous lie,
Hercules, count I cowardice charged on thee,—
By the Gods' witness thee I clear of this:
To Zeus's thunder I appeal, to the car
That bare the Hero against the earth-born brood,
The Giants, planting winged shafts in their ribs,
When with the Gods he sang the victory-chant. 180
Or thou to Pholoë go, most base of kings,
The four-foot monsters ask, the Centaur tribe,
Ask them whom they would count the bravest man.
Whom but my son?—by thee named “hollow
show”!
Ask Dirphys, Abas' land, which fostered thee;
It should not praise thee:—place is none wherein
Thy land could witness to brave deed of thine!

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

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΛΥΚΟΣ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

Repayment for his purging seas and lands.

Ah boys, such aid to you the Thebans' town
Nor Hellas brings! To me, a strengthless friend,

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

For vanished is the might I had of old, 230

Palsied with eld my limbs are, gone my strength.

Were I but young yet, master of my thews,

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

I had dashed with blood, and so before my spear

Far beyond Atlas' bounds the craven had fled!

CHORUS

Lo, cannot brave men find occasion still

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

LYCUS

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

I will for words requite on thee ill deeds.

(*To attendant*) Ho! bid my woodmen go—to Helicon
these, 240

Those to Parnassus' folds, and hew them logs

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

On either side the altar billets pile,

And kindle; so the bodies of all these

Roast ye, that they may know that not the dead

Ruleth the land, but now am I king here.

And ye old men which set yourselves against

My purpose, not for Hercules' sons alone

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

Fast as blows fall, and so shall not forget 250

That ye are bondslaves of my princely power.

CHORUS

O brood of Earth, whom Ares sowed of yore,

What time he stripped the dragon's ravening jaws,

οὐ σκῆπτρα, χειρὸς δεξιᾶς ἐρείσματα,
 ἀρεῖτε καὶ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἀνόσιον κέρα
 καθαιματώσεθ', ὅστις οὐ Καδμείος ὢν
 ἄρχει κάκιστος τῶν νέων ἔπηλυσ ὢν ;
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐμοῦ γε δεσπώσεις χαίρων ποτε,
 οὐδ' ἀπόνησα πόλλ' ἐγὼ καμῶν χερὶ
 260 ἔξεισι· ἀπέρρων δ' ἔνθεν ἦλθες ἐνθάδε,
 ὕβριζ'. ἐμοῦ γὰρ ζῶντος οὐ κτενεῖς ποτε
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας· οὐ τοσόνδε γῆς
 ἔνερθ' ἐκείνος κρύπτεται λιπῶν τέκνα.
 ἐπεὶ σὺ μὲν γῆν τήνδε διολέσας ἔχεις,
 ὁ δ' ὠφελήσας ἀξίων οὐ τυγχάνει·
 κᾶπειτα πρᾶσσω πόλλ' ἐγὼ, φίλους ἐμοῦς
 θανόντας εὖ δρῶν οὐ φίλων μάλιστα δεῖ ;
 ὦ δεξιὰ χεῖρ, ὡς ποθεῖς λαβεῖν δόρυ,
 ἐν δ' ἀσθενείᾳ τὸν πόθον διώλεσας.
 270 ἐπεὶ σ' ἔπανσ' ἂν δοῦλον ἐννέποντά με
 καὶ τάσδε Θήβας εὐκλεῶς ὠκήσαμεν,
 ἐν αἷς σὺ χαίρεις. οὐ γὰρ εὖ φρονεῖ πόλις
 στάσει νοσοῦσα καὶ κακοῖς βουλευμασιν·
 οὐ γὰρ ποτ' ἂν σὲ δεσπότην ἐκτήσατο.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

260

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

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

270

MEGARA

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

280

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

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Who strives, I hold him but a foolish man.
Since we must needs die, better 'tis to die
Not with fire roasted, yielding laughter-scoff
To foes, an evil worse than death to me.
Great is our debt of honour to our house :—
Thou hast been crowned with glorious battle-fame ;
Thou canst not, must not, die a coward's death :
Nor any witness needs my glorious spouse 290
That he would not consent to save these sons
Stained with ill-fame : for fathers gently born
Are crushed beneath the load of children's shame.
My lord's example I cannot thrust from me.
Thine own hope—mark how lightly I esteem it :
Dost think, from the underworld thy son shall
come ?

Ah, of the dead, who hath returned from Hades ?
Dost dream we might with words appease this
wretch ?

Never !—of all foes, still beware the churl !
Yield, if thou must, to wise and high-bred foes ; 300
So thy submission may find chivalrous grace.
Even now methought, " What if we asked for these
The boon of exile ? "—nay, 'twere misery
To give them life with wretched penury linked.
For upon exile-friends the eyes of hosts
Look kindly, say they, one day and no more.
Face death with us : it waits thee in any wise.
Thy noble blood I challenge, ancient friend.
Whoso with eager struggling would writhe out
From fate's net, folly is his eagerness. 310
For doom's decree shall no man disannul.

CHORUS

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

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

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἔσται τὰδ'· οἴγειν κλῆθρα προσπόλοις λέγω.
κοσμεῖσθ' ἔσω μολόντες· οὐ φθονῶ πέπλων.
ὅταν δὲ κόσμον περιβάλησθε σώμασιν,
ἤξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς νερτέρα δώσων χθονί.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

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

MEGARA

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

LYCUS

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

MEGARA

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΩΝ

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

360 πρῶτον μὲν Διὸς ἄλσος
 ἠρήμωσε λέοντος,
 πύρσῳ δ' ἀμφεκαλύφθη
 ξανθὸν κρατ' ἐπινωτίσας
 δεινῷ χάσματι θηρός·

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

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

CHORUS

*The Lay of the Labours of Hercules*¹

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

I. *The Nemean Lion*

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

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

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

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

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

II. *The Centaurs*

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

III. *The Golden-horned Hind*

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

IV. *The Horses of Diomede*

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

ἀργυρορρύταν Εβρον

ἐξέπρασσε μόχθον,¹

Μυκηναίῳ πονῶν τυράννῳ

τάν τε Μηλιάδ' ἀκτάν

390

Ἄναύρου παρὰ πηγάς·

Κύκνον δὲ ξενοδαίκταν

τόξοις ὄλεσεν, Ἄμφαναί-

ας οἰκήτορ' ἄμικτον

ὑμνοδοὺς τε κόρας

ἀντ. β

ἤλυθεν, Ἑσπερίαν ἐς αὐλάν,

χρύσειον πετάλων ἀπὸ μηλοφόρων

χερὶ καρπὸν ἀμέρξων,

δράκοντα πυρσύνωτον, ὅς σφ' ἄπλατον

ἀμφελικτὸς ἔλικ' ἐφρούρει, κτανῶν

400

ποντίας θ' ἀλὸς μυχοὺς

εἰσέβαινε, θνατοῖς

γαλανείας τιθεὶς ἐρετμοῖς·

οὐρανοῦ θ' ὑπὸ μέσσαν

ἐλαύνει χέρας ἔδραν,

Ἄτλαντος δόμον ἐλθῶν·

ἀστροπούς τε κατέσχευ οἴ-

κούς εὐανορία θεῶν

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

V. *Cygnus the Robber*

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

VI. *The Golden Apples*

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

VII. *Extirpation of Pirates*

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

VIII. *The Pillars of Heaven*

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

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

420 τὰν τε μυριόκρανον
 πολύφονον κύνα Λέρνας
 ὕδραν ἐξεπύρωσεν,

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

δρόμων τ' ἄλλων ἀγάλματ' εὐτυχή *ἀντ. γ'*
 διήλθε· τὸν τε πολυδάκρνον
 ἔπλευσ' ἐς Ἄιδαν, πόνων τελευτάν,
 ἵν' ἐκπεραίνει τάλας

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

² Wecklein: for MSS. ἀμφέβαλε τὸν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IX. *The Amazon's Girdle*

(*Str.* 3)

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

X. *The Hydra*

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

XI. *The Three-bodied Giant Geryon*

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

XII. *Cerberus*

(*Ant.* 3)

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

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

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

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

εἶεν· τίς ἱερεύς, τίς σφαγεὺς τῶν δυσπότην
 ἢ τῆς ταλαίνης τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς φονεύς ;
 ἔτοιμ' ἄγειν τὰ θύματ' εἰς Ἰλίδου τάδε.
 ὦ τέκν', ἀγόμεθα ζεῦγος οὐ καλὸν νεκρῶν,
 ὁμοῦ γέροντες καὶ νέοι καὶ μητέρες.
 ὦ μοῖρα δυστάλαιν' ἐμή τε καὶ τέκνων
 τῶνδ', οὓς πανύστατ' ὄμμασιν προσδέρκομαι.
 ἔτεκον μὲν ὑμᾶς, πολεμίοις δ' ἐθρεψάμην

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

Enter MEGARA, AMPHITRYON, and children.

MEGARA

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

ὑβρισμα κάπιχαρμα καὶ διαφθοράν.
φεῦ·

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

Woe and alas !

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

Argos to thee¹ thy dead sire would allot :

Thou in Eurystheus' palace wast to dwell

In fair and rich Pelasgia's sceptred sway :

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

The lion's skin wherein himself went clad.

Thou² shouldst be king of chariot-loving Thebes,

And hold the champagnes of mine heritage ;

Thy prayer won this of him that gave thee life ;

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

A feignèd gift, his carven battle-stay.

To thee³ the land, by his far-smiting bow

Once wasted, promised he, Oechalia.

So with three pryncedoms would your sire exalt

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

And I chose out the choice of Hellas' brides,

Linking to ours by marriage Athens' land,

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

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

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

And given to you the Maids of Doom for brides,

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

And now your grandsire makes the spousal-feast

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

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

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

¹ The eldest son, Therimachus.

² The second son, Creontidas.

³ The third son, Deïcoön.

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἔα·

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

¹ Wilamowitz: for MSS. ἰκανὸν ἂν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

AMPHITRYON

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

MEGARA

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα, θύγατερ· ἀφασία δὲ καὶ ἔχει.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὄδ' ἐστὶν ὃν γῆς νέρθεν εἰσηκούομεν,
εἰ μὴ γ' ὄνειρον ἐν φάει τι λεύσσομεν.
τί φημί; ποῖ ὄνειρα κηραίνουσ' ὀρῶ;
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὄδ' ἄλλος ἀντὶ σοῦ παιδός, γέρον.
520 δεῦρ', ὦ τέκν', ἐκκρήμασθε πατρῶων πέπλων,
ἵτ' ἐγκονεῖτε, μὴ μεθῆτ', ἐπεὶ Διὸς
σωτήρος ὑμῖν οὐδέν ἔσθ' ὄδ' ὕστερος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ χαῖρε, μέλαθρον πρόφυλά θ' ἐστίας ἐμῆς,
ὡς ἄσμενός σ' ἐσεῖδον ἐς φάος μολῶν.
ἔα· τί χρῆμα; τέκν' ὀρῶ πρὸ δωμαίων
στολμοῖσι νεκρῶν κρᾶτας ἐξεστεμμένα,
ὄχλω τ' ἐν ἀνδρῶν τὴν ἐμὴν ξυνάορον
πατέρα τε δακρύνοντα συμφορὰς τινὰς;
530 τί καινὸν ἦλθε, γύναι, δώμασιν χρέος;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ φάος μολῶν πατρί—

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἤκεις, ἐσώθης εἰς ἀκμὴν ἐλθὼν φίλοις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς; τί ν' εἰς ταραγμὸν ἤκομεν, πάτερ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

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

MEGARA

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

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES

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

MEGARA

O best-beloved!—

AMPHITRYON

To thy sire light of life!—

MEGARA

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

HERCULES

How?—father, what confusion find I here?

MEGARA

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Ἄπολλον, οἷοις φροιμίοις ἄρχει λόγου.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

τεθναῖσ' ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατὴρ οὐμὸς γέρον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

540

πῶς φῆς ; τί δράσας ἢ δορὸς ποίου τυχών ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Λύκος σφ' ὁ καινὸς γῆς ἀναξ διώλεσεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὄπλοις ἀπαντῶν ἢ νοσησάσης χθονός ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

στάσει τὸ Κάδμου δ' ἐπτάπυλον ἔχει κράτος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δῆτα πρὸς σέ καὶ γέροντ' ἦλθεν φόβος ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

κτείνειν ἔμελλε πατέρα καμὲ καὶ τέκνα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς ; τί ταρβῶν ὀρφάνεμ' ἐμῶν τέκνων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

μή ποτε Κρέοντος θάνατον ἐκτισαίατο.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κόσμος δὲ παίδων τίς ὄδε νερτέροις πρέπων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

θανάτου τάδ' ἤδη περιβόλαι' ἐνήμμεθα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

550

καὶ πρὸς βίαν ἐθνήσκειτ' ; ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ.

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

φίλων ἔρημοι, σέ δὲ θανόντ' ἠκούομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πόθεν δ' ἐς ὑμᾶς ἦδ' ἐσῆλθ' ἀθυμία ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

Εὐρυσθέως κήρυκες ἠγγελλον τάδε.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Apollo!—what strange prelude to thy speech!

MEGARA

Dead are my brethren and my grey-haired sire.

HERCULES

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

MEGARA

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

HERCULES

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

MEGARA

By faction stricken. He rules seven-gated Thebes.

HERCULES

Why fell on thee and on the old man dread?

MEGARA

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

HERCULES

How?—of my fatherless children what feared he?

MEGARA

Lest Creon's death one day they might avenge.

HERCULES

This vesture meet for dead folk, what means it?

MEGARA

In this attire we shrouded us for death.

HERCULES

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

MEGARA

Forlorn of friends, we heard that thou hadst died.

HERCULES

Wherefore came on you this despair of me?

MEGARA

The heralds of Eurystheus published this.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἐξελείπεται οἶκον ἐστίαν τ' ἐμήν ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

βία, πατήρ μὲν ἐκπεσῶν στρωτοῦ λέχους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

κούκ ἔσχεν αἰδῶ τὸν γέροντ' ἀτιμάσαι ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

αἰδῶ γ' ; ἀποικεῖ τῆσδε τῆς θεοῦ πρόσω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔτω δ' ἀπόντες ἐσπανίζομεν φίλων ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

φίλοι γάρ εἰσιν ἀνδρὶ δυστυχεῖ τίνες ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

560 μάχας δὲ Μινυῶν ἄς ἔτλην, ἀπέπτυσαν ;

ΜΕΓΑΡΑ

ἄφιλον, ἴν' αὐθίς σοι λέγω, τὸ δυστυχές.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

But why did ye forsake mine home and hearth?

MEGARA

By force: thy father from his bed was flung.

HERCULES

Had he no shame to outrage these grey hairs?

MEGARA

Shame?—from that Goddess far his dwelling is!

HERCULES

So poor of friends was I when far away!

MEGARA

Friends!—what friends hath a man unfortunate?

HERCULES

Scorned they the fights with Minyans I endured? 560

MEGARA

Friendless, I tell thee again, misfortune is.

HERCULES

Fling from your hair these cerements of the grave:
Look up to the light, beholding with your eyes
Exchange right welcome from the nether-gloom.
And I—for now work lieth to mine hand—
Will first go, and will raze to earth the house
Of this new king, his impious head smite off
And cast to dogs to rend. Of Thebans, all
Found traitors after my good deeds to them,
Some will I slay with this victorious mace, 570
And the rest scatter with my feathered shafts,
With slaughter of corpses all Ismenus fill,
And Dirce's pure stream red with blood shall run.
For whom should I defend above my wife
And sons and aged sire? Great toils, farewell!
Vainly I wrought them, leaving these unhelped!

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

καὶ δεῖ μ' ὑπὲρ τῶνδ', εἴπερ οἶδ' ὑπὲρ πατρός,
 θνήσκειν ἀμύνοντ'· ἢ τί φήσομεν καλὸν
 580 ὕδρα μὲν ἐλθεῖν εἰς μάχην λέοντί τε
 Εὐρύσθέως πομπαῖσι, τῶν δ' ἐμῶν τέκνων·
 οὐκ ἐκπονήσω θάνατον; οὐκ ἄρ' Ἡρακλῆς
 ὁ καλλίνικος ὡς πάροιθε λέξομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἐστὶ τῶνδε θᾶσσον ἢ χρεῶν, πάτερ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

I ought defending these to die, if these
Die for their father :—else, what honour comes
Of hydra and of lion faced in fight
At King Eurystheus' hests, and from my sons
Death not averted? How shall I be called
Hercules the Victorious, as of old? 580

CHORUS

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

AMPHITRYON

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

HERCULES

Father, what haste unmeet is found in this?

AMPHITRYON

The king hath many an ally, lackland knaves,
Fellows that have a name that they are rich,
Who sowed sedition, ruining the land, 590
To plunder neighbours, since their own estates,
Squandered by wasteful idleness, were gone.
Thou wast seen entering Thebes : since thou wast seen,
Let not foes gather, and thou fall unwares.

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

Good : go thou now, and thine hearth-gods salute,
And show thy face to thine ancestral halls. 600
Himself, yon king, shall come to hale thy wife
And sons for murder, and to slaughter me.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

610

ἦλθες γὰρ ὄντως δώματ' εἰς Ἄιδου, τέκνον;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ θῆρά γ' εἰς φῶς τὸν τρίκρανον ἤγαγον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μάχη κρατήσας ἢ θεᾶς δωρήμασιν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἦ καὶ κατ' οἴκους ἐστὶν Εὐρυσθέως ὁ θῆρ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Χθονίας νιν ἄλσος Ἐρμιῶν τ' ἔχει πόλις.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐδ' οἶδεν Εὐρυσθεύς σε γῆς ἤκουτ' ἄνω;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ οἶδεν· ἦλθον τὰνθάδ' εἰδέναί πάρος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

χρόνον δὲ πῶς τοσοῦτον ἦσθ' ὑπὸ χθονί;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησέα κομίζων ἐχρόνισ' ἐξ Ἄιδου, πάτερ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

620

καὶ ποῦ ἔστιν; ἢ γῆς πατρίδος οἴχεται πέδον;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

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

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

Vanquished in fight, or by the Goddess given?

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

How? is the monster in Eurystheus' halls?

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

Nor knows Eurystheus thou art risen to day?

HERCULES

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

AMPHITRYON

How wast thou so long time beneath the earth?

HERCULES

From Hades rescuing Theseus, tarried I.

AMPHITRYON

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

¹ Persephone, whose name it was perilous to utter.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

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

οἶδ' οὐκ ἀφίᾱσ', ἀλλ' ἀνάπτουται πέπλων
 630 τοςῶδε μᾶλλον· ὦδ' ἔβητ' ἐπὶ ξυροῦ;
 ἄξω λαβῶν γε τούσδ' ἐφολκίδας χεροῖν,
 ναῦς δ' ὡς ἐφέλξω· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀναίνομαι
 θεράπευμα τέκνων. πάντα τὰνθρώπων ἴσα.
 φιλοῦσι παῖδας οἳ τ' ἀμείνονες βροτῶν
 οἳ τ' οὐδὲν ὄντες· χρήμασιν δὲ διάφοροι·
 ἔχουσιν, οἳ δ' οὔ· πᾶν δὲ φιλότεκνον γένος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄ νεότας μοι φίλον· ἄχθος δὲ τὸ γῆρας αἰεὶ στρ. ἄ
 βαρύτερον Αἴτινας σκοπέλων
 640 ἐπὶ κρατὶ κεῖται,
 βλεφάρων σκοτεινὸν
 φάρος ἐπικαλύψαν.
 μῆ μοι μῆτ' Ἀσιήτιδος
 τυραννίδος ὄλβος εἶη,
 μῆ χρυσοῦ δώματα πλήρη
 τᾶς ἤβας ἀντιλαβεῖν,
 ἄ καλλίστα μὲν ἐν ὄλβῳ,
 καλλίστα δ' ἐν πενίᾳ.
 τὸ δὲ λυγρὸν φόβιόν τε γῆ-

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

To Athens, glad to have 'scaped the underworld.
Come, children, follow to the house your sire ;
For fairer to you is your entering-in
Than your outgoing. Nay then, pluck up heart,
And shed the tear-floods from your eyes no more ;
And rally thou, my wife, thy fainting spirit ;
From trembling cease ; and ye, let go my cloak :
I am no winged thing, ner would I fly my friends.
Ha !

These let not go, but hang upon my cloak
Only the more ! Was doom so imminent then ? 630
E'en must I lead them clinging to mine hands,
As ship that tows her boats. Not I reject
Care of my sons. Men's hearts be all like-framed :
They love their babes, as well the nobler sort,
As they that are but naught. In wealth they differ ;
These have, those lack : their children all men love.
[*Exeunt* HERCULES, AMPHITRYON, MEGARA, and children.

CHORUS

Ah, sweet is youth !—but always eld, (Str. 1)
On mine head weighing, downward drags,
A heavier load than lay the crags
Of Etna on the Titan quelled, 640

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

στρ. β

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

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

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

(Str. 2)

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

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

No life be mine of songless clown,

But, where for singers shines the crown,

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

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

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

ΛΥΚΟΣ

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

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἀναξ, διώκεις μ' ἀθλίως πεπραγότα
 ὕβριν θ' ὑβρίζεις ἐπὶ θανούσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς·

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

(*Ant.* 2)

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

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

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

LYCUS

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

AMPHITRYON

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

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

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ποῦ δῆτα Μεγάρᾳ ; ποῦ τέκν' Ἀλκμήνης γόνου ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

δοκῶ μὲν αὐτήν, ὡς θύραθεν εἰκάσαι,

ΛΥΚΟΣ

τί χρῆμα δόξης ; τοῦ δ'¹ ἔχεις τεκμήριον ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἰκέτιν πρὸς ἀγνοῖς Ἑστίας θάσσειν βάθροισι,

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ἀνόνητά γ' ἰκετεύουσιν ἐκσῶσαι βίον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καὶ τὸν θανόντα γ' ἀνακαλεῖν μάτην πόσιν.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ὁ δ' οὐ πάρεστιν οὐδὲ μὴ μόλη ποτέ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ, εἴ γε μὴ τις θεῶν ἀναστήσειέ νιν.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

720 χῶρει πρὸς αὐτὴν κᾶκκόμιζ' ἐκ δωμάτων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μέτοχος ἂν εἶην τοῦ φόνου δράσας τόδε.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

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

¹ Murray : for MSS. δόξης τῆσδ'.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

So strong and so impatient fits not thee.
But, since of force thou doomest me to die, 710
Of force must I content me and do thy will.

LYCUS

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

AMPHITRYON

I think that she—if one without may guess—

LYCUS

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

AMPHITRYON

At the Hearth-goddess' altar suppliant sits,—

LYCUS

With bootless prayer to heaven to save her life!

AMPHITRYON

And vainly calleth on a husband dead.

LYCUS

Not here is he; nor shall he ever come.

AMPHITRYON

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

LYCUS

Go thou to her, and bring her forth the halls. 720

AMPHITRYON

So doing were I partaker in her blood!

LYCUS

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

ΗΡΑΗΚΛΑΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

730

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

ΧΟΡΟΣ

α. μεταβολὰ κακῶν· μέγας ὁ πρόσθ' ἄναξ στρ. α
 πάλιν ὑποστρέφει βίοτον εἰς Ἄιδαν.

β. ἰὼ δίκαια καὶ θεῶν παλίρρους πότμος.

740 γ. ἦλθες χρόνῳ μὲν οὐ δίκην· δώσεις θανάων,

δ. ὕβρεις ὑβρίζων εἰς ἀμείνονας σέθεν.

ε. χαρμοναὶ δακρύων ἔδοσαν ἐκβολάς·

στ'. πάλιν ἔμολεν ἅ πάρος οὐποτε διὰ φρενὸς
 ἦλπισεν παθεῖν γὰρ ἄναξ.

ζ. ἄλλ', ὦ γεραιοί, καὶ τὰ δωμάτων ἔσω
 σκοπῶμεν, εἰ πράσσει τις ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

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

CHORUS 1

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

CHORUS 2

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

CHORUS 3

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

CHORUS 4

For outrage done to better men than thee.

CHORUS 5

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

CHORUS 6

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

CHORUS 7

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ὦ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

θ'. βοᾷ φόνου φροῖμιον στενάζων ἄναξ.

ΛΥΚΟΣ

ὦ πάσα Κάδμου γαῖ', ἀπόλλυμαι δόλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

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

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

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

LYCUS (*within*)

Ah me! Woe's me!

CHORUS 8 (*Ant. 1*)

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

CHORUS 9

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

LYCUS (*within*)

Oh Cadmus' land, by treachery am I slain!

CHORUS 10

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

CHORUS 11

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

CHORUS 12

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

CHORUS

(*Str. 2*)

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

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

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

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

(*Ant.* 2)

The Gods, O the Gods now are sealing unrighteous-
 ness' doom, and revealing
 The right, their eternal design. [victorious
 But Gold and Fair-fortune, with Power the
 Harnessed beside them, in folly vainglorious
 Hurry man to his doom :—
 Law he outpaceth, and Lawlessness lasheth
 To speed ; nor his heart doth incline
 To take heed to the end—lo, his car sudden-
 crasheth
 Shattered in gloom !¹ 780

Deck thee with garlands, Ismenus, and ye (*Str.* 3)
 Break forth into dancing,
 Streets stately with Thebes' fair masonry,
 And Dirce bright-glancing :

Come, Maids of Asopus, to us, from the spring
 Come ye of your father ;
 Of Hercules' glorious triumph to sing,
 Nymph-chorus, O gather

Pythian forest-peak, Helicon's steep 790
 Of the Song-queens haunted,
 To my town, to my walls, let the song-echoes leap
 Of the strains loud-chanted—

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

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

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

ἔα ἔα·
ἀρ' εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν πίτυλον ἤκομεν φόβου,
γέροντες, οἶον φάσμ' ὑπὲρ δόμων ὀρῶ ;
φυγῇ φυγῇ
νωθὲς πέδαιρε κῶλον, ἐκποδῶν ἔλα.
820 ὄναξ Παιάν,
ἀπότροπος γένοιό μοι πημάτων.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

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

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

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

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

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

The forms of IRIS and MADNESS appear above the palace.

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΙΡΙΣ

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

ΛΥΣΣΑ

ἐξ εὐγενούς μὲν πατρὸς ἔκ τε μητέρος
 πέφυκα, Νυκτὸς Οὐρανοῦ τ' ἀφ' αἵματος·
 τιμᾶς δ' ἔχω τάσδ', οὐκ ἀγασθῆναι φίλοις,
 οὐδ' ἡδομαι φοιτῶσ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων φόνους.¹
 παραινέσαι δέ, πρὶν σφαλεῖσαν εἰσιδεῖν,
 Ἦρα θέλω σοί τ', ἦν πίθησθ' ἐμοῖς λόγοις.
 ἀνῆρ ὄδ' οὐκ ἄσημος οὔτ' ἐπὶ χθονί

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

IRIS

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

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

MADNESS

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

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

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

ΙΡΙΣ

μὴ σὺ νουθέτει τά θ' Ἡρας καμὰ μηχανήματα.

ΛΥΣΣΑ

εἰς τὸ λῶστον ἐμβιβάζω σ' ἵχνος ἀντὶ τοῦ
 κακοῦ.

ΙΡΙΣ

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

ΛΥΣΣΑ

"Ἡλιον μαρτυρόμεσθα δρώσ' ἂ δρᾶν οὐ βούλομαι.
 εἰ δὲ δὴ μ' Ἡρα θ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τ' ἀναγκαῖος
 ἔχει

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

πνέων,

οἷ ἐγὼ στάδια δραμοῦμαι στέρνον εἰς Ἡρα-
 κλέους·

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

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

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

¹ Musgrave: for MSS. σοί τ'.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Nor on the earth is fameless, nor in heaven. 850
 The pathless land, the wild sea, hath he tamed,
 And the God's honours hath alone restored,
 When these by impious men were overthrown.
 Therefore I plead, devise no monstrous wrong.

IRIS

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

MADNESS

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

IRIS

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

MADNESS

Witness, Sun, that I am doing that which I would
 fain refuse: [not choose,
 Yet, if I must work thy will and Hera's—if I may
 But with skirr of rushing footfalls follow you like 860
 huntsman's pack, [ruin-wrack,
 On will I; nor sea nor moaning surges hurl such
 No, nor earthquake, no, nor madding thunder's gasp-
 ing agonies,

As the fury of mine onrush to the breast of Hercules.

I will rive his roofs, will swoop adown his halls:—his
 children first [his murder-thirst

I will slay; nor shall the murderer know he slakes
 On the children of his body, till my madness' course
 is run. [begun!

See him—lo, his head he tosses in the fearful race

See his gorgon-glaring eyeballs all in silence wildly
 rolled! [controlled

Like a bull in act to charge, with fiery pantings un-

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

- 870 δεινὰ μυκάται δὲ Κῆρας ἀνακαλῶν τὰς Ταρ-
 τάρου. [φόβῳ.
 τάχα σ' ἐγὼ μᾶλλον χορεύσω καὶ καταυλήσω
 στεῖχ' ἐς Οὐλύμπου πεδαίρουσ', Ἴρι, γενναῖον
 πόδα. [κλέους.
 εἰς δόμους δ' ἡμεῖς ἄφαντοι δυσόμεσθ' Ἴρα-

ΧΟΡΟΣ

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

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

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

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

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

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

Wilder yet shall be thy dance, as peals my pipe's
—Ay, unto Olympus soaring, Iris, tread thy path
serene! [unseen.

Mine the task into the halls of Hercules to plunge
[IRIS ascends, and MADNESS enters the palace.

CHORUS

Alas and alas! cry out, O town,
For thy goodliest flower, Zeus' son, mowndown!
Thy champion shall slip from thine hands, to thy
bitter cost,
Hellas; in frenzied dances of madness tossed
Where the flute sounds not, he is lost to thee,
lost!

She hath mounted her car, groans throng in her
train;

She is goading her horses on mission of bane; 880
Night's daughter, a Gorgon with hundred-headed hiss
Of her serpents, Madness the glittering-eyed is this.

Swiftly hath fortune o'erthrown him who sat on high:
Swiftly the sons by the father's hand shall die.

Ah misery! Zeus, mad vengeance ravenous-wild
Straightway, athirst for requital, with evils on evils
piled, [not thy child.
Shall trample thy son unto dust, as though he were

Woe for the palace-dome!

Her dance is beginning, but not with the cymbals
clashing, 890
Not with the pine-wand uptossed amid loud accla-
mation,—

ἰὼ δόμοι,
πρὸς αἵματ', οὐχὶ τὰς Διονυσιάδος
βοτρυῶν ἐπὶ χεύμασι λειβᾶς.

φυγῆ, τέκν', ἐξορμάτε· δάιον τόδε
δάιον μέλος ἐπαυλείται.
κυναγετεῖ τέκνων διωγμόν·
οὔποτ' ἄκραντα δόμοισι Λύσσα βακχεύσει.

900 αἰαῖ κακῶν

αἰαῖ δῆτα τὸν γεραιὸν ὡς στένω
πατέρα, τὰν τε παιδοτρόφον, ἃ μάταν
τέκεα γεννᾶται.

ἰδοὺ ἰδού,
θύελλα σείει δῶμα, συμπίπτει στέγη·
ἦ ἦ, τί δράς, ὦ Διὸς παῖ; μελάθρων
τάραγμα ταρτάρειον, ὡς
ἐπ' Ἐγκελάδῳ ποτὲ Παλλάς, εἰς δόμους πέμπεις.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ λευκὰ γήρα σώματ',

ΧΟΡΟΣ

910 ἀνακαλεῖς τίνα με τίνα βοάν;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄλαστα τὰν δόμοισι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μάντιν οὐχ ἕτερον ἄξομαι.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Woe for a hero's home!—

But for shedding of blood, not the blood of the grape
glad-plashing [oblation.
As the banqueters pour it forth for the Wine-god's

Away, O ye children, in flight, for death,
Death shrieks through her pipe by the blast of
her breath!

[*Cries and sound of rushing within.*]

Like a hound is he holding the children in chase!—
Never shall Madness keep revel for naught through
his dwelling-place.

Woe, anguish and pain!

Woe and alas for the silver hair

Of his father!—woe for the mother who bare

His babes in vain!

900

[*Sound of battering and rending within.*]

Lo you, lo you!

A whirlwind is shaking the house—its roofs fall
crashing—

Ah what, ah what, Zeus' Son, wouldst thou do?

Down on thy palace the turmoil of hell art thou
dashing, [Enceladus flashing.

As the levin from Pallas's hand to the heart of

Enter SERVANT from within.

SERVANT

O reverend presences hoary-white—

CHORUS

What meaneth thy cry unto me—thy cry of fear? 910

SERVANT

Within yon halls is a fearful sight!

CHORUS

No need, to attest thy tale, that we seek to a seer.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

τεθνᾶσι παῖδες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαί.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

στενάζεθ', ὡς στενακτά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δαίοι φόνιοι,

δαίοι δὲ τοκέων χεῖρες.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οὐκ ἄν τις εἴποι μᾶλλον ἢ πεπόνθαμεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς παισὶ στενακτὰν ἄταν ἄταν

πατέρος ἀμφαίνεις;

λέγε τίνα τρόπον ἔστυο θεόθεν ἐπὶ

920

μέλαθρα κακὰ τάδε

τλήμονάς τε παίδων τύχας.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἱερά μὲν ἦν πάροιθεν ἐσχάρας Διὸς

καθάρσι' οἴκων, γῆς ἄνακτ' ἐπεὶ κτανῶν

ἐξέβαλε τῶνδε δωμάτων Ἡρακλῆς·

χορὸς δὲ καλλίμορφος εἰστήκει τέκνων

πατήρ τε Μεγάρα τ' ἐν κύκλῳ δ' ἤδη κανοῦν

εἴλικτο βωμοῦ, φθέγμα δ' ὄσιον εἶχομεν.

μέλλων δὲ δαλὸν χειρὶ δεξιᾷ φέρειν,

εἰς χέρνιβ' ὡς βάψειεν, Ἀλκμήνης τόκος

930

ἔστυ σιωπῇ. καὶ χρονίζοντος πατρὸς

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

SERVANT

Dead are the children !

CHORUS

Woe is me !

SERVANT

Wail ! well may ye wail !

CHORUS

Slain ruthlessly !

Oh that the hands of a father their murder should
wreak !

SERVANT

Things have we suffered more awful than tongue may
speak.

CHORUS

How ? of the woeful doom by a father wrought

On his sons, canst thou tell ?

Say, say in what fashion the malice of Gods hath
brought [fraught

These ills on the house, and the fate with misery 920

On the children that fell.

SERVANT

Victims were set before the hearth of Zeus

To cleanse the house, since, having slain the king,

Forth of these halls had Hercules flung the corpse.

And there his children stood in fair array,

His sire, and Megara. Round the altar now [husb.

The maund¹ had passed ; and we kept hallowed

Then, even in act to bear the torch in hand²

And plunge in lustral water, silent stood

Alcmena's son : and, as their sire delayed, 930

¹ A basket containing the sacrificial knife and barley was carried round the altar before the slaying of the victim.

² A brand from the altar was quenched in water, with which the bystanders were then sprinkled.

- παῖδες προσέσχον ὄμμ'· ὁ δ' οὐκέθ' αὐτὸς ἦν,
 ἀλλ' ἐν στροφαῖσιν ὀμμάτων ἐφθαρμένος
 ῥίζας τ' ἐν ὄσσοις αἱματώπας ἐκβαλὼν,
 ἀφρὸν κατέσταζ' εὐτρίχου γενειάδος.
 ἔλεξε δ' ἄμα γέλῳτι παραπεπληγμένῳ
 πάτερ, τί θύῳ πρὶν κτανεῖν Εὐρυσθέα
 καθάρσιον πῦρ, καὶ πόνους διπλοῦς ἔχω
 ἐξὸν μιᾶς μ' ἐκ χειρὸς εὖ θέσθαι τάδε;
 940 ὅταν δ' ἐνέγκω δεῦρο κρᾶτ' Εὐρυσθέως,
 ἐπὶ τοῖσι νῦν θανοῦσιν ἀγνῶ χέρας.
 ἐκχεῖτε πηγᾶς, ῥίπτειτ' ἐκ χειρῶν κανᾶ.
 τίς μοι δίδωσι τόξα; τίς δ' ὄπλον χερὸς;
 πρὸς τὰς Μυκῆνας εἶμι· λάζυσθαι χρεῶν
 μοχλοῦς δικέλλας θ', ὡς τὰ Κυκλώπων βᾶθρα
 φοῖνικι κανόνι καὶ τύκοις ἡρμοσμένα
 στρεπτῶ σιδήρῳ συντριαινῶσω πάλιν.
 ἐκ τοῦδε βαίνων ἄρματ' οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν
 ἔφασκε, δίφρου δ' εἰσέβαινεν ἄντυγα
 κᾶθαινε, κέντρον δῆθεν ὡς ἔχων χερί.
 950 διπλοῦς δ' ὀπαδοῖς ἦν γέλῳς φόβος θ' ὁμοῦ·
 καὶ τις τόδ' εἶπεν, ἄλλος εἰς ἄλλον δρακῶν
 παίζει πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεσπότης ἢ μαίνεται;
 ὁ δ' εἶρπ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω κατὰ στέγας,
 μέσον δ' ἐς ἀνδρῶν' εἰσπεσῶν Νίσου πόλιν
 ἤκειν ἔφασκε, δωμάτων εἴσω βεβῶς.
 κλιθεὶς δ' ἐς οὐδας ὡς ἔχει σκευάζεται
 θοίνην. διελθὼν δ' ὡς βραχὺν χρόνον μονῆς,
 Ἴσθμοῦ ναπαίας ἔλεγε προσβαίνειν πλάκας.
 960 κᾶνταῦθα γυμνὸν σῶμα· θεὸς πορπαμάτων,
 πρὸς οὐδέν' ἡμιλλᾶτο κάκηρύσσετο

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

His sons looked—lo, he seemed no more the same,
 But wholly marred, with rolling eyes distraught,
 With bloodshot eye-roots starting from his head,
 While dripped the slaver down his bearded cheek.

Suddenly with a maniac laugh he spake :

“ Why, ere I slay Eurystheus, sacrifice,
 Father—have cleansing fire and toil twice o'er,
 When all in one act I may compass well?
 When hither I have brought Eurystheus' head,
 For him, with these now slain, I'll purge my hands. 940
 Spill ye the water, cast the maunds away!
 Ho there—my bow!—the mace of my right hand!
 I march against Mycenæ:—I must take
 Crowbars and mattocks, that yon Cyclop town,
 Yon walls with red line and with gavel squared,
 May by my bended lever be upheaved.”
 Then set forth, speaking of his car the while,
 Who car had none, sprang to the chariot-rail,
 And thrust, as who held in his hand a goad.

His henchmen, half in mirth and half in fear, 950
 Were glancing each at other, and one spake :
 “ Doth our lord make us sport, or is he mad ? ”
 Still was he pacing up and down the house ;
 Then, to the men's hall rushing, cried, “ I have
 come
 To Nisus' town ! ”¹—who stood in his own halls.
 He casts him on the bare floor, and prepares
 To feast : yet, tarrying there but little space,
 He cried, “ I go to Isthmus' woodland plains ! ”
 Then from his body cast his mantle's folds,
 And wrestled with—*no man* !—proclaimed himself 960

¹ Megara, half way on his imaginary journey, on the Isthmus of Corinth ; this suggested the Isthmian games.

- αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ καλλίνικος, οὐδενὸς
 ἀκοὴν ὑπειπὼν. δεινὰ δ' Εὐρυσθεὶ βρέμων
 ἦν ἐν Μυκῆναις τῷ λόγῳ. πατὴρ δέ νιν
 θιγῶν κραταιᾶς χειρὸς ἐννέπει τάδε·
 ὦ παῖ, τί πάσχεις; τίς ὁ τρόπος ξενώσεως
 τῆσδ'; οὐ τί πού φόνος σ' ἐβάκχευσε νεκρῶν,
 οὐς ἄρτι καίνεις; ὁ δέ νιν Εὐρυσθέως δοκῶν
 πατέρα προταρβοῦνθ' ἰκέσιον ψαύειν χερὸς,
 ὠθεῖ, φαρέτραν δ' εὐτρεπῆ σκευάζεται
 970 καὶ τόξ' ἑαυτοῦ παισί, τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως
 δοκῶν φονεύειν. οἱ δὲ ταρβοῦντες φόβῳ
 ὄρουον ἄλλος ἄλλοσ', εἰς πέπλους ὁ μὲν
 μητρὸς ταλαίνης, ὁ δ' ὑπὸ κίονος σκιάν,
 ἄλλος δὲ βωμὸν ὄρνις ὡς ἔπτηξ' ὑπο.
 βοᾷ δὲ μήτηρ· ὦ τεκῶν, τί δράς; τέκνα
 κτείνεις; βοᾷ δὲ πρέσβυς οἰκετῶν τ' ὄχλος.
 ὁ δ' ἐξελίσσων παῖδα κίονος κύκλω
 τόρευμα δεινὸν ποδός, ἐναντίον σταθεῖς
 980 βάλλει πρὸς ἦπαρ· ὑπτίος δὲ λαίνοιο
 ὀρθοστάτας ἔδευσε ἐκπνέων βίον.
 ὁ δ' ἠλάλαξε κάπεκόμπασεν τάδε·
 εἰς μὲν νεοσσὸς ὅδε θανὼν Εὐρυσθέως
 ἔχθραν πατρῶαν ἐκτίνων πέπτωκέ μοι.
 ἄλλῳ δ' ἐπείχε τόξ', ὃς ἀμφὶ βωμίαν
 ἔπτηξε κρηπίδ' ὡς λεληθέναι δοκῶν.
 φθάνει δ' ὁ τλήμων γόνασι προσπεσὼν πατρὸς
 καὶ πρὸς γένειον χεῖρα καὶ δέρην βαλῶν·
 ὦ φίλτατ', αὐδᾶ, μὴ μ' ἀποκτείνης, πάτερ·
 σὸς εἰμι, σὸς παῖς· οὐ τὸν Εὐρυσθέως ὀλεῖς.
 990 ὁ δ' ἀγριωπὸν ὄμμα Γοργόνοιο στρέφων,
 ὡς ἐντὸς ἔστη παῖς λυγροῦ τοξεύματος,
 μυδροκτύπον μίμημ' ὑπὲρ κᾶρα βαλῶν

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To himself the victor, cried, "Ye people, hear!"—
To none! In fancy at Mycenae then
He stormed against Eurystheus. But his sire
Clung to his brawny hand, and cried to him,
"What ails thee? What mad change of mood is this?
Surely thou art not driven distraught by blood
Of these late slain!" He deemed Eurystheus' sire,
A trembling suppliant, hung upon his hand,
And spurned him back; prepared his quiver and bow
Against his own sons then, thinking to slay 970
Eurystheus' sons. They, quaking with affright,
Rushed hither, thither: his hapless mother's skirts
This sought, that to a pillar's shadow fled;
A third cowered 'neath the altar like a bird

Then shrieked the mother, "Father, what dost thou?
Wouldst slay thy sons?" The thralls, the ancient,
cried.

He, winding round the pillar as wound his son
In fearful circlings, met him face to face
And shot him to the heart. Back as he fell,
His death-gasps dashed the column with red spray. 980
Then shouted Hercules, and vaunted thus.
"One of Eurystheus' fledglings here is slain,
Dead at my feet, hath paid for his sire's hate!"
Against the next then aimed his bow, who crouched
At the altar's base, in hope to be unseen.
But, ere he shot, the poor child clasped his knees,
And stretching to his beard and neck a hand,
"Ah, dearest father," cried he, "slay not me!
I am thy boy—thine!—'Tis not Eurystheus' son!"
He rolling savage gorgon-glaring eyes, 990
Since the boy stood too near for that fell bow,
Swung back overhead his club, like forging-sledge,

- ξύλον καθήκε παιδὸς εἰς ξανθὸν κᾶρα,
 ἔρρηξε δ' ὄστα. δεῦτερον δὲ παῖδ' ἑλών,
 χωρεῖ τρίτον θῦμ' ὡς ἐπισφάξων δυοῖν.
 ἀλλὰ φθάνει νιν ἢ τάλαιν' εἴσω δόμων
 μήτηρ ὑπεκλαβοῦσα, καὶ κλήει πύλας.
 1000 ὁ δ' ὡς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς δὴ Κυκλωπίοισιν ὦν
 σκάπτει μοχλεῦει θύρετρα, κάκβαλὼν σταθμὰ
 δάμαρτα καὶ παῖδ' ἐνὶ κατέστρωσεν βέλει.
 κἀνθένδε πρὸς γέροντος ἵππευει φόνον·
 ἀλλ' ἦλθεν εἰκῶν, ὡς ὄραν ἐφαίνετο
 Παλλὰς κραδαίνουσ' ἔγχος ἐπιλόφω κᾶρα¹
 κᾶρριψε πέτρον στέρνον εἰς Ἑρακλέους,
 ὅς νιν φόνου μαργῶντος ἔσχε, κεῖς ὕπνου
 καθήκε· πίτνει δ' εἰς πέδον, πρὸς κίονα
 νῶτον πατάξας, ὃς πεσήμασι στέγης
 διχορραγῆς ἔκειτο κρηπίδων ἐπι·
 1010 ἡμεῖς δ' ἐλευθεροῦντες ἐκ δρασμῶν πόδα
 σὺν τῷ γέροντι δεσμὰ σειραίων βρόχων
 ἀνήπτομεν πρὸς κίον', ὡς λήξας ὕπνου
 μηδὲν προσεργάσαιτο τοῖς δεδραμένοις.
 εὔδει δ' ὁ τλήμων ὕπνον οὐκ εὐδαίμονα,
 παῖδας φονεύσας καὶ δάμαρτ'· ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν
 οὐκ οἶδα θνητῶν ὅστις ἀθλιώτερος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 1020 ὁ φόνος ἦν ὃν Ἀργολὶς ἔχει πέτρα
 τότε μὲν περισαμότατος καὶ ἄπιστος
 Ἑλλάδι τῶν Δαναοῦ παίδων
 τὰ δ' ὑπερέβαλε, παρέδραμε τὰ τότε κακά.
 τάλανι διογενεῖ κόρω.²

¹ Wakefield: for MSS. ἐπι λόφω κᾶρα.

² Tyrwhitt's punctuation: no stop in MS.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Down dashed it on his own son's golden head,
 And shattered all the bones. This second slain,
 He speeds to add to victims twain a third.
 But first the wretched mother snatched the child,
 And bare within, and barred the chamber-door.
 But he, as though at siege of Cyclop walls,¹
 Mines, heaves up doors, and hurls the door-posts down,
 And with one arrow laid low wife and child : 1000
 Then charges down to spill his own sire's blood.
 But a Shape came,—as seemed unto our eyes,
 Pallas with plumed helm, brandishing a spear ;—
 And against Hercules' breast she hurled a rock
 Which stayed him from his murder-frenzy, and cast
 Into deep sleep. To earth he fell, and dashed
 His back against a pillar, cleft in twain
 By the roof's ruin, on the pavement thrown.
 Then we, from flight of panic breathing free,
 Wrought with the old man, binding him with cords 1010
 Unto the pillar, that, awaked from sleep,
 He might not add ill deeds to ill deeds done.
 There sleeps he, wretched man, a sleep unblest,
 Who hath slaughtered sons and wife. For me, I know
 not
 Of mortals any man more fortune-crost.

CHORUS

That murder which Argos remembereth
 Was aforetime through Hellas most famous, the
 strange tale told
 Of Danaus' daughters, the workers of death :—
 But this hath surpassed, hath outrun, that horror of 1020
 old— [the sacrifice done
 This horror that blasts Zeus' Son! I might tell of

¹ *i.e.* Eurystheus' city, Mycenae.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

μονοτέκνου Πρόκνης
 φόνον ἔχω λέξαι θυόμενον Μούσαις·
 σὺ δὲ τέκνα τρίγωνα τεκόμενος, ὦ δαίε,
 λυσσάδι συγκατειργάσω μοίρα.
 τίνα στεναγμὸν
 ἢ γόου ἢ φθιτῶν
 ᾤδάν, ἢ τίν' "Αἶδα χορὸν ἀχήσω ;
 φεῦ φεῦ·
 ἴδεσθε, διάνδιχα κλήθρα
 κλίνεται ὑψιπύλων δόμων.

1030

ἰὼ μοι·
 ἴδεσθε τάδε τέκνα πρὸ πατρὸς
 ἄθλια κείμενα δυστάνου,
 εὐδοντος ὕπνου δεινὸν ἐκ παίδων φόνου.
 περὶ δὲ δεσμὰ καὶ πολύβροχ' ἀμμάτων
 ἐρείσμαθ' Ἡράκλειον
 ἀμφὶ δέμας τάδε λαίνοις
 ἀνημμένα κίσιν οἴκων.
 ὁ δ' ὡς τις ὄρνις ἄπτερον καταστένων
 ὠδίνα τέκνων, πρέσβυς ὑστέρω ποδὶ
 πικρὰν διώκων ἤλυσιν πάρεσθ' ὄδε.

1040

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

Καδμείοι γέροντες, οὐ σίγα σί-
 γα τὸν ὕπνῳ παρειμένον ἐάσετ' ἐκ-
 λαθέσθαι κακῶν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κατὰ σὲ δακρύοις στένω, πρέσβυ, καὶ
 τέκεα καὶ τὸ καλλίνικον κάρα.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

To the Muses,¹ of Procne who slaughtered the only
child of her womb :—

But thou, who art father of children three, O un-
happiest one, [madness's doom !
Together hast murdered them all, driven on by thy
With what cry shall I wail thee, what sighing,
What chant as for dead that are lying in Hades, what
dirge of the tomb ?

Alas ! O see

How the bolts slide back, and asunder fall
The stately doors of the palace-hall.

1030

The palace is thrown open, and the scene within disclosed.

Ah me ! ah me !

Lo there the children—ah misery !

At the feet of their wretched father they lie :
And from murder of sons he is resting in awful sleep ;
And around him the bonds with manifold fastenings
keep

The body of Hercules in ward,
And lashed to the palace's pillars of stone are the
coils of the cord.

And that old sire, as bird that maketh moan
O'er fledgling brood, with footsteps eld-fordone
Treading a bitter pathway, cometh on.

1040

AMPHITRYON

Ah peace, Cadmean fathers, peace !

Let his woes in oblivion a moment cease

By slumber's release.

CHORUS

With tears I bemoan thee, and these babes dead,
O ancient, and that victorious head.

¹ The legend of Procne's murder of Itys has, in becoming
a theme of song, been consecrated to the Muses.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1050

ἐκαστέρω πρόβατε, μὴ
κτυπέιτε, μὴ βοῶτε, μὴ
τὸν εὖ τ' ἰαύονθ'
ὑπνώδεά τ' εὐνάς ἐγείρετε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι.
φόνος ὅσος ὄδ'—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ᾶ ᾶ,

διά μ' ὀλεῖτε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κεχυμένος ἐπαντέλλει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ ἀτρεμαῖα θρήνον αἰΐξεν', ὦ γέροντες;
ἢ δέσμ' ἀνεγειρόμενος χαλάσας ἀπολεῖ πόλιν,
ἀπὸ δὲ πατέρα, μέλαθρά τε καταρρήξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀδύνατ' ἀδύνατά μοι.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

σῖγα, πνοὰς μάθω· φέρε πρὸς οὖς βάλω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὔδει;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1060

ναί, εὔδει

ὑπνον ὑπνον ὀλόμενον,
ὅς ἔκαν' ἄλοχον, ἔκανε δὲ τέκεα, τοξήρει
ψαλμῶ τοξεύσας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στέναζέ νυν

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

στενάζω.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Withdraw you farther, beat not the breast,
Neither cry, neither break ye his slumbrous rest
Of calm-drawn breath.

CHORUS

1050

Woe's me for the river of blood he hath spilt!—

AMPHITRYON

Ah, your words be my death!

CHORUS

It is rising against him, a witness of guilt!

AMPHITRYON

Let the wail of your dirge, ye ancients, softlier fall,
Else will he wake, will rend his bonds, and in ruin lay
Thebes, will slay his father, and shatter his palace-hall.

CHORUS

I cannot—my crying I cannot forbear!

AMPHITRYON

Hush! let me hearken his breathing—bend low mine
ear—

CHORUS

Sleepeth he?

AMPHITRYON

Yea—in a slumber of bane,
Who hath slain his wife, hath his children slain
With the string that sang them the bow's death-
strain!

1060

CHORUS

Wail therefore—

AMPHITRYON

I wail with thee.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τέκνων ὄλεθρον—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦμοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σέθεν τε παιδός.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

αἰαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ—

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

σίγα σίγα·

1070

παλίντροπος ἐξεγειρόμενος στρέφεται· φέρ'
ἀπόκρυφον δέμας ὑπὸ μέλαθρον κρύψω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· νύξ ἔχει βλέφαρα παιδὶ σῶ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὄρᾱθ' ὄρᾱτε.

τὸ φάος ἐκλιπεῖν ἐπὶ κακοῖσιν οὐ
φεύγω τάλας, ἀλλ' εἴ με κανεῖ πατέρ' ὄντα,
πρὸς δὲ κακοῖς κακὰ μήσεται
πρὸς Ἐρινύσι θ' αἷμα σύγγονον ἔξει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1080

τότε θανεῖν σ' ἐχρήν, ὅτε δάμαρτι σᾶ
φόνον ὀμοσπόρων
ἔμολες ἐκπράξειν
Ταφίων περίκλυστον ἄστυ πέρσας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

φυγᾶ φυγᾶ, γέροντες, ἀποπρὸ δωμάτων
διώκετε· φεύγετε μάργον
ἄνδρ' ἐπεγειρόμενον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

CHORUS

His babes' death,—

AMPHITRYON

Woe is me!

CHORUS

And thy son's doom!

AMPHITRYON

Well-a-day!

CHORUS

Ah ancient—

AMPHITRYON

O hush ye! stay!

He is writhing—is turning—is waking! Away!
Under yon roof let me hide me out of his sight!

1070

CHORUS

Fear not: on the eyes of thy son yet broodeth the
night.

AMPHITRYON

Beware—O beware!

Not death do I shun, for a crown of the ills that I bear—
Wretch that I am!—but if me, if his father, he kill,
To his load of ill shall he add fresh ill,
And to heap up his debt to the Furies the blood of a
kinsman shall spill.

CHORUS

Then shouldst thou have died, when thou wentest
forth to requite [smite
The blood of the kin of thy wife on the Taphians, to
Their city enringed with the surf-crests white.

1080

AMPHITRYON

Flee, ancients! Afar from the dwelling flee!
From his frenzy of fury O hasten ye,
For he waketh from sleep!

215

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

τάχα φόνον ἕτερον ἐπὶ φόνῳ βαλὼν
ἀν' αὐτὴν βακχεύσει Καδμείων πόλιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί παιδ' ἤχθηρας ὦδ' ὑπερκότως
τὸν σόν, κακῶν δὲ πέλαγος εἰς τόδ' ἤγαγες;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔα·

1090 ἔμπνους μὲν εἰμι καὶ δέδορχ' ἄπερ με δεῖ,
αἰθέρα τε καὶ γῆν τόξα θ' Ἥλιου τάδε·
ὡς δ' ἐν κλύδωνι καὶ φρενῶν ταράγματι
πέπτωκα δεινῶ καὶ πνοᾶς θερμᾶς πνέω
μετάρσι', οὐ βέβαια, πνευμόνων ἄπο.
ἰδού, τί δεσμοῖς ναῦς ὅπως ὠρμισμένους
νεανίαν θώρακα καὶ βραχίονα,
πρὸς ἡμιθραύστῳ λαΐνῳ τυκίσματι
ἤμαι νεκροῖσι γείτονας θάκους ἔχων;
πτερωτὶ τ' ἔγχη τόξα τ' ἔσπαρται πέδῳ,
1100 ἂ πρὶν παρασπίζοντ' ἐμοῖς βραχίουσιν
ἔσφριζε πλευρὰς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τ' ἔσφριζέτο.
οὐ πού ποτε κατήλθον αὐθις εἰς Ἄιδου πάλιν,
Εὐρυσθέως διάυλον ἐξ Ἄιδου μολών;
ἀλλ' οὔτι Σισύφειον εἰσορῶ πέτρον
Πλούτωνά τ', οὐδὲ σκῆπτρα Δήμητρος κόρης.
ἔκ τοι πέπληγμαι· ποῦ ποτ' ὦν ἀμνημονῶ;
ὦή, τίς ἐγγὺς ἢ πρόσω φίλων ἐμῶν,
δύσγνωιαν ὅστις τὴν ἐμὴν ἰάσεται;
σαφῶς γὰρ οὐδὲν οἶδα τῶν εἰωθότων.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

γέροντες, ἔλθω τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν πέλας;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1110 κάγωγε σὺν σοί, μὴ προδοὺς τὰς συμφοράς.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Full soon on the deaths he hath wrought fresh deaths
 shall he heap,
 Through the city of Cadmus storming in awful revelry.

CHORUS

Ah Zeus, why this stern hate against thy son?
 Why hast thou brought him to this sea of ills?

HERCULES (*waking and stirring*)

Ha!
 Breathing I am—all I should see I see,
 The sky, the earth, the shafts of yonder sun: 1090
 Yet as in surge and storm of turmoiled soul
 Am whelmed, and fiery-fervent breath I breathe
 Hard-panted from my lungs, not tempered calm.
 Ha!—wherefore like a ship by hawsers moored,
 Ropes compassing my strong chest and mine arms,
 Bound to half-shattered masonry of stone
 Sit I?—lo, corpses neighbours to my seat!
 Winged shafts and bow are strawn about the floor,
 Which once, like armour-bearers to mine arms,
 Warded my side, were kept of me in ward: 1100
 Sure, not to Hades have I again gone down,
 Who have passed, repassed, Eurystheus' Hades-course?
 Nay, I see not the stone of Sisyphus,
 Pluto, nor sceptre of Demeter's Child.
 I am distraught. Know I not where I am?
 Ho there! who of my friends is near or far
 To be physician to my 'wilderment?
 For strange to me seem all familiar things.

AMPHITRYON

Old friends, shall I draw near unto my grief?

CHORUS

I too with thee, forsaking not thy woe.

1110

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πάτερ, τί κλαίεις καὶ συναμπίσχει κόρας,
τοῦ φιλτάτου σοι τηλόθεν παιδὸς βεβώς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον· εἶ γὰρ καὶ κακῶς πρᾶσσω ἐμός.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πρᾶσσω δ' ἐγὼ τί λυπρόν, οὐ δακρυρροεῖς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἂ καὶν θεῶν τις, εἰ πάθοι, καταστένοι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέγας γ' ὁ κόμπος, τὴν τύχην δ' οὐπω λέγεις.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὄρα's γὰρ αὐτός, εἰ φρονῶν ἤδη κυρεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἶπ' εἶ τι καινὸν ὑπογράφει τῶμῳ βίῳ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

εἰ μηκέθ' "Αἰδου βᾶκχος εἶ, φράσαιμεν ἄν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1120

παπαῖ, τόδ' ὡς ὑποπτον ἠνίξω πάλιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καί σ' εἰ βεβαίως εὖ φρονεῖς ἤδη σκοπῶ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ γάρ τι βακχεύσας γε μέμνημαι φρένας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

λύσω, γέροντες, δεσμὰ παιδὸς ἢ τί δρῶ ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ τόν γε δήσαντ' εἶπ'· ἀναινόμεσθα γάρ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

τοσοῦτον ἴσθι τῶν κακῶν· τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄρκει σιωπὴ γὰρ μαθεῖν ὃ βούλομαι ;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Father, why dost thou weep and veil thine eyes,
Shrinking afar from thy beloved son?

AMPHITRYON

Oh my son!—mine, though ne'er so ill thy plight!

HERCULES

Am I in grievous plight, that thou shouldst weep?

AMPHITRYON

Plight whereat Gods might groan, were God so
stricken!

HERCULES

Great words!—but what hath chanced thou say'st
not yet.

AMPHITRYON

Thyself mayst see, if now thy wit be sound.

HERCULES

Speak, if thou shadowest forth strange ills for me.

AMPHITRYON

I will say—so thy frenzy of hell be past.

HERCULES

Again that word!—ha, what dark riddle this?

1120

AMPHITRYON

Yea, if thy mind be sober yet I doubt—

HERCULES

Naught I remember of a frenzied mind.

AMPHITRYON

Fathers, shall I unbind my son, or no?

HERCULES

Who bound me? Him I account no friend of mine!

AMPHITRYON

Know thou so far thine ills:—the rest let be.

HERCULES

Is silence all? With *that* must I content me?

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ Ζεῦ, παρ' Ἡρας ἄρ' ὀράς θρόνων τάδε ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ τι κεῖθεν πολέμιον πεπόνθαμεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

τὴν θεὸν εἶσας τὰ σὰ περιστέλλου κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1130

ἀπωλόμεσθα· συμφορὰν λέξεις τίνα ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἰδοὺ θέασαι τάδε τέκνων πεσήματα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἴμοι· τίν' ὄψιν τήνδε δέρκομαι τάλας ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἀπόλεμον, ὦ παῖ, πόλεμον ἔσπευσας τέκνοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί πόλεμον εἶπας ; τοῦσδε τίς διώλεσεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

σὺ καὶ σὰ τόξα καὶ θεῶν ὄς αἴτιος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς ; τί δράσας ; ὦ κάκ' ἀγγέλλων πάτερ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μανεῖς· ἐρωτᾷς δ' ἄθλι' ἐρμηνεύματα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἦ καὶ δάμαρτός εἰμ' ἐγὼ φονεὺς ἐμῆς ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

μῆς ἅπαντα χειρὸς ἔργα σῆς τάδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1140

αἰαῖ· στεναγμῶν γάρ με περιβάλλει νέφος.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

τούτων ἕκατι σὰς καταστένω τύχας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON (*unbinding him*)

Zeus, seest thou this bolt from Hera's throne?

HERCULES

Ha! have I suffered mischief of her hate?

AMPHITRYON

Let be the Goddess: thine own miseries heed.

HERCULES

I am undone! What ruin wilt thou tell?

1130

AMPHITRYON

Lo, mark these fallen wrecks,—wrecks of thy sons!

HERCULES

Woe's me! ah wretch, what sight do I behold?

AMPHITRYON

Unnatural war, son, waged against thy babes.

HERCULES

What war mean'st thou? Who hath done these to death?

AMPHITRYON

Thou, and thy bow—and whatso God was cause.

HERCULES

How?—what did I?—O ill-reporting sire!

AMPHITRYON

In madness. Heavy enlightening cravest thou!

HERCULES

Ha! am I murderer of my wife withal?

AMPHITRYON

Yea: all these deeds are work of one hand—thine.

HERCULES

Alas! a cloud of groaning shrouds me round!

1140

AMPHITRYON

For this cause heavily mourn I thy mischance.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἢ γὰρ συνήραξ' οἶκον, ἢ 'βάκχευσ', ἐμόν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν' πάντα δυστυχῆ τὰ σά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποῦ δ' οἶστρος ἡμᾶς ἔλαβε ; ποῦ διώλεσεν ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ὄτ' ἀμφὶ βωμὸν χεῖρας ἠγνίζου πυρί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶμοι· τί δῆτα φείδομαι ψυχῆς ἐμῆς
 τῶν φιλτάτων μοι γενόμενος παίδων φονεύς,
 κούκ εἶμι πέτρας λισσάδος πρὸς ἄλματα
 ἢ φάσγανον πρὸς ἠπαρ ἑξακοντίσας
 1150 τέκνοις δικαστῆς αἵματος γενήσομαι ;
 ἢ σάρκα τήνδε τὴν ἐμὴν πρήσας πυρί,
 δύσκλειαν ἢ μένει μ' ἀπόσομαι βίου ;
 ἀλλ' ἐμποδῶν μοι θανασίμων βουλευμάτων
 Θησεὺς ὄδ' ἔρπει συγγενῆς φίλος τ' ἐμός.
 ὀφθησόμεσθα, καὶ τεκνοκτόνον μύσος
 εἰς ὄμμαθ' ἤξει φιλτάτῳ ξένων ἐμῶν.
 οἶμοι, τί δράσω ; ποῖ κακῶν ἐρημίαν
 εὔρω, πτερωτός, ἢ κατὰ χθονὸς μολῶν ;
 1160 φέρ' [ὦ μέλαν] τι¹ κρατὶ περιβάλω σκότος.
 αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ τοῖς δεδραμένοις κακοῖς,
 καὶ τῷδε προστρόπαιον αἶμα προσβαλὼν
 οὐδὲν κακῶσαι τοὺς ἀναιτίους θέλω.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἦκω σὺν ἄλλοις οἱ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥοὰς
 μένουσιν, ἔνοπλοι γῆς Ἀθηναίων κόροι,
 σῶ παιδί, πρέσβυ, σύμμαχον φέρων δόρυ.
 κληδὼν γὰρ ἦλθεν εἰς Ἐρεχθειδῶν πόλιν

¹ Translator's suggestion : for MSS. φερ' ἔν τι. Cf. l. 1216.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I wrecked mine house, or loosed wild rioters there?

AMPHITRYON

One thing I know—thy state is ruin all.

HERCULES

Where did my frenzy seize me?—where destroy?

AMPHITRYON

As thine hand touched the altar's cleansing fire.

HERCULES

Woe's me! Ah wherefore spare I mine own life,
Who am found the murderer of my dear, dear sons,
And rush not to plunge headlong from a cliff,
Or dash a dagger down into mine heart,
And make me avenger of my children's blood, 1150
Or with consuming fire burn this my flesh,
To avert the imminent life-long infamy?
But lo, to thwart my purposes of death,
Theseus draws nigh, my kinsman and my friend.
I shall be seen!—this curse of children's blood
Shall meet a friend's eyes, dearest of my friends!
Woe! What shall I do?—where find solitude
In ills?—take wings, or plunge beneath the ground?
Oh let me in black darkness pall mine head;
For I take shame for evils wrought of me, 1160
Nor would I taint him with bloodguiltiness—¹
Nay, nowise would I harm the innocent.

Enter THESEUS, with attendants.

THESEUS

I come, with them that by Asopus' stream
In arms are tarrying, Athens' warrior sons,
Ancient, to bring thy son my battle-aid.
For rumour came to the Erechtheids' town

¹ The mere sight of a murderer conveyed contamination.

1170 ὡς σκῆπτρα χώρας τῆσδ' ἀναρπάσας Λύκος
 εἰς πόλεμον ὑμῖν καὶ μάχην καθίσταται.
 τίνων δ' ἀμοιβὰς ὧν ὑπῆρξεν Ἡρακλῆς
 σῶσας με νέρθεν, ἦλθον, εἴ τι δεῖ, γέρον,
 ἢ χειρὸς ὑμᾶς τῆς ἐμῆς ἢ συμμάχων.
 ἕα· τί νεκρῶν τῶνδε πληθύει πέδον;
 οὐ πού λείμμαι καὶ νεωτέρων κακῶν
 ὕστερος ἀφίγμαι; τίς τὰδ' ἐκτεινεν τέκνα;
 τίνος γεγῶσαν τήνδ' ὀρῶ συνάορον;
 οὐ γὰρ δορός γε παῖδες ἴστανται πέλας,
 ἀλλ' ἄλλο τοῖ που καινὸν εὐρίσκω κακόν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ τὸν ἐλαιοφόρον ὄχθον ἔχων ἄναξ—

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί χρῆμά μ' οἰκτροῖς ἐκάλεσας προσιμίους;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1180 ἐπάθομεν πάθεα μέλεα πρὸς θεῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἱ παῖδες οἶδε τίνες, ἐφ' οἷς δακρυρροεῖς;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἔτεκε μὲν νιν οὐμὸς ἱνις τάλας·
 τεκόμενος δ' ἔκτανε, φόνιον αἶμα τλῆς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐφήμα φώνει.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

βουλομένοισιν ἐπαγγέλλει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ δεινὰ λέξας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οἰχόμεθ' οἰχομεθα πτανοί.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί φῆς; τί δράσας;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

That Lycus, this land's scepter'd sway usurped,
For war had risen against you, and for fight.
And to requite the service done of him
Who out of Hades saved me, come I, ancient, 1170
If aught ye need mine hand or mine allies.
—Ha! wherefore bears the earth this load of dead?
Have I been laggard?—have I come too late
To stay fell mischief? Who could slay these boys?
Whose wife is she, this woman that I see?
Not boys, good sooth, are ranged to face the spear!
Sure, some unheard-of outrage here I find!

AMPHITRYON

King, lord of the mount with the olives crowned—

THESEUS

Why in thy first words wails a voice of woe?

AMPHITRYON

Sore ills at the hands of the Gods have we found. 1180

THESEUS

What lads be these, o'er whom thou weepest so?

AMPHITRYON

My son was their father—alas and alas for him—
Their father—and slew them!—who dared that
murder grim!

THESEUS

Hush! Speak not horrors thou!

AMPHITRYON

Ah, would that I could but obey thy word!

THESEUS

Dread things thou sayest now!

AMPHITRYON

Fled is our bliss, as on wings of a bird.

THESEUS

What sayest thou?—how wrought he deed so dread?

225

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1190 μαινομένῳ πιτύλῳ πλαγχθεῖς
 ἑκατογκεφάλου βαφαῖς ὕδρας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

Ἦρας ὄδ' ἀγών· τίς δ' ὄδ' οὖν νεκροῖς, γέρον;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐμὸς ἐμὸς ὅδε γόνος ὁ πολύπονος, ὃς ἐπὶ
 δόρυ γιγαντοφόνου ἦλθεν σὺν θεοῖ-
 σι Φλεγραίου εἰς πεδίον ἀσπιστάς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τίς ἀνδρῶν ὧδε δυσδαίμων ἔφυ;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

οὐκ ἂν εἰδείης ἕτερον
 πολυμοχθότερον πολυπλαγκτότερόν τε θνατῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ πέπλοισιν ἄθλιον κρύπτει κῆρα;

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

1200 αἰδόμενος τὸ σὸν ὄμμα
 καὶ φιλίαν ὁμόφυλον
 αἰμᾶ τε παιδοφόνου.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἀλλ' ὡς συναλγῶν γ' ἦλθον· ἐκκάλυπτέ νιν.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ὦ τέκνον,
 πάρες ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
 πέπλον, ἀπόδικε, ρέθος ἀελίῳ δεῖξον·
 βάρος ἀντίπαλον δακρύοισιν ἀμιλλᾶται.
 ἰκετεύομεν ἀμφὶ σὰν
 γενειάδα καὶ γόνυ καὶ χέρα προσπίτνων
 πολίον τε δάκρυν ἐκβαλῶν.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

AMPHITRYON

Upon madness's surge was his soul tossed wide,
And his shafts in the blood of the hydra of hundred
heads were dyed.

1190

THESEUS

Lo, Hera's work! Who croucheth midst yon dead?

AMPHITRYON

My son is it—mine—of the thousand toils, who stood
In the ranks of the Gods, stood slaying the giant-brood
On the Plain of Phlegra, a warrior good.

THESEUS

Woe! when was man by fate so ill-bestead!

AMPHITRYON

None other of mortal men shalt thou see
Who hath burden of heavier griefs, was more dreadly
misguided than he.

THESEUS

Why doth he overpall his hapless head?

AMPHITRYON

For shame that thine eyes such sight should win,
Shame for the pitying love of kin,
For his sons' blood shame—for the madness, the sin!

1200

THESEUS

Unveil him—me hath sympathy hither led.

AMPHITRYON

Son, cast from thine eyes thy mantle's veil;
Fling it hence; thy face to the sun forth show.
Lo, a weight that outweigheth thy tears bears down
grief's scale!¹

I bow me in suppliance low [hear:
At thy beard, at thy knee, at thine hand, till thou
And mine old eyes drop the tear.

¹ The claims of friendship outweigh those of grief.

1210

ἰὼ παῖ, κατά-
σχεθε λέοντος ἀγρίον θυμόν, ὡς
δρόμον¹ ἐπὶ φόνιον ἀνόσιον ἐξάγει,
κακὰ θέλων κακοῖς συνάψαι, τέκνον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1220

εἶεν· σὲ τὸν θάσσοντα δυστήνους ἔδρας
αὐδῶ, φίλοισιν ὄμμα δεικνύναι τὸ σόν.
οὔδεις σκότος γὰρ ὧδ' ἔχει μέλαν νέφος,
ὅστις κακῶν σῶν συμφορὰν κρύψειεν ἄν.
τί μοι προσείων χεῖρα σημαίνεις φόνου;
ὡς μὴ μύσος με σῶν βάλῃ προσφθεγμάτων;
οὔδεν μέλει μοι σὺν γε σοὶ πράσσειν κακῶς·
καὶ γὰρ ποτ' ἠϋτύχησ'· ἐκεῖσ' ἀνοιστέον,
ὅτ' ἐξέσωσάς μ' εἰς φάος νεκρῶν πάρα.
χάριν δὲ γηράσκουσαν ἐχθαίρω φίλων,
καὶ τῶν καλῶν μὲν ὅστις ἀπολαύειν θέλει,
συμπλεῖν δὲ τοῖς φίλοισι δυστυχοῦσιν οὔ.
ἀνίστασ', ἐκκάλυψον ἄθλιον κἄρα.
βλέψον πρὸς ἡμᾶς. ὅστις εὐγενῆς βροτῶν,
φέρει τὰ θεῶν γε πτώματ' οὔδ' ἀναίνεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησεῦ, δέδορκας τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ἐμῶν τέκνων;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1230

ἤκουσα, καὶ βλέποντι σημαίνεις κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δητά μου κρᾶτ' ἀνεκάλυψας ἠλίω;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί δ' ; οὐ μαίνεις θνητὸς ὦν τὰ τῶν θεῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦγ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀνόσιον μίασμ' ἐμόν.

¹ Reiske: for MSS. βρόμον.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

O son, refrain thou the furious lion's mood! 1210
Thou wouldst speed on a race unhallowed, a path of
blood,
Who art bent on self-slaughter, on swelling with evil
evil's flood.

THESEUS

Ho! thee in spirit-broken session crouched
I hail—reveal unto thy friends thy face.
There is no darkness hath a pall so black
That it should hide the misery of thy woes.
Why wave me back with hand that warns of blood?
Lest some pollution of thy speech taint me?
Naught reck I of misfortune, shared with thee. 1220
Fair lot hath found me—I date it from that hour
When safe to day thou brought'st me from the dead.
Friends' gratitude that waxeth old I hate,
Hate him who would enjoy friends' sunshine-tide,
But will not in misfortune sail with them.
Stand up, unmuffle thou thine hapless head:
Look on me: who of men is royal-souled
Beareth the blows of heaven, and flincheth not.

[*Unveils* HERCULES.]

HERCULES

Theseus, hast seen mine onslaught on mine babes?

THESEUS

I have heard: the ills thou namest I behold. 1230

HERCULES

Why then unveil mine head unto the sun?

THESEUS

Why?—mortal, thou canst not pollute the heavens.

HERCULES

Flee, hapless, my pollution god-accurst!

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

οὐδεὶς ἀλάστωρ τοῖς φίλοις ἐκ τῶν φίλων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐπήνεσ'· εὖ δράσας δέ σ' οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ πάσχων εὖ τότ' οἰκτείρω σε νῦν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἰκτρὸς γάρ εἰμι τὰμ' ἀποκτείνας τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

κλαίω χάριν σὴν ἐφ' ἑτέροισι συμφοραῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἡῦρες δ' ἔτ' ἄλλους ἐν κακοῖσι μείζουσιν;

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

1240

ἄπτει κάτωθεν οὐρανοῦ δυσπραξία.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τοιγὰρ παρεσκευάσμεθ' ὥστε κατθανεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

δοκεῖς ἀπειλῶν σῶν μέλειν τι δαίμοσιν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αὐθαδὲς ὁ θεός, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς ἐγώ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

ἴσχε στόμ', ὡς μὴ μέγα λέγων μείζον πάθης.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γέμω κακῶν δῆ, κούκέτ' ἔσθ' ὅπη τεθῆ.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

δράσεις δὲ δῆ τί; ποῖ φέρει θυμούμενος;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θανών, ὅθενπερ ἦλθον, εἰμι γῆς ὑπο.

ΘΗΣΕΤΣ

εἴρηκας ἐπιτυχόντος ἀνθρώπου λόγους.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

THESEUS

No haunting curse can pass from friend to friend.

HERCULES

Now nay!—yet thanks. I helped thee, nor repent.

THESEUS

I for that kindness now compassionate thee.

HERCULES

Compassion-worthy am I, who slew my sons!

THESEUS

I weep for thy sake, for thy fortune changed.

HERCULES

Hast thou known any whelmed in deeper woes?

THESEUS

From earth to heaven reach thy calamities.

1240

HERCULES

Therefore have I prepared my soul to die.

THESEUS

Deem'st thou that Heaven recks aught of threats of
thine?

HERCULES

For me God cares not, nor care I for God!

THESEUS

Refrain lips, lest high words bring deeper woes!

HERCULES

Full-fraught am I with woes—no space for more.

THESEUS

What wilt thou do?—whither art passion-hurled?

HERCULES

To death. I pass to Hades, whence I came.

THESEUS

No hero's words be these that thou hast said.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ δ' ἐκτὸς ὧν γε συμφορᾶς με νουθετεῖς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1250 ὁ πολλὰ δὴ τλὰς Ἡρακλῆς λέγει τάδε ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔκουν τοσαῦτά γ' ἐν μέτρῳ¹ μοχθητέον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εὐεργέτης βροτοῖσι καὶ μέγας φίλος ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶδ' οὐδὲν ὠφελούσί μ', ἀλλ' Ἡρα κρατεῖ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἂν σ' ἀνάσχοιθ' Ἑλλὰς ἀμαθία θανεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄκουε δὴ νυν, ὡς ἀμιλληθῶ λόγοις
 πρὸς νουθετήσεις σάς· ἀναπτύξω δέ σοι
 ἀβίωτον ἡμῖν νῦν τε καὶ πάροιθεν ὄν.
 πρῶτον μὲν ἐκ τοῦδ' ἐγενόμην ὅστις κτανὼν
 μητρὸς γεραιὸν πατέρα προστρόπαιος ὧν
 1260 ἔγηνε τὴν τεκοῦσαν Ἀλκμήνην ἐμέ.
 ὅταν δὲ κρηπὶς μὴ καταβληθῆ γένους
 ὀρθῶς, ἀνάγκη δυστυχεῖν τοὺς ἐγγόνους.
 Ζεὺς δ'—ὅστις ὁ Ζεὺς—πολέμιόν μ' ἐγείνατο
 Ἡρα· σὺ μέντοι μηδὲν ἀχθεσθῆς, γέρον·
 πατέρα γὰρ ἀντὶ Ζηνὸς ἠγοῦμαί σ' ἐγώ.
 ἔτ' ἐν γάλακτί τ' ὄντι γοργωποὺς ὄφεις
 ἐπεισέφρησε σπαργάνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς
 ἢ τοῦ Διὸς σύλλεκτρος, ὡς ὑλοίμεθα.
 1270 ἐπεὶ δὲ σαρκὸς περιβόλαι' ἐκτησάμην
 ἠβῶντα, μόχθους οὖς ἔτλην τί δεῖ λέγειν ;
 ποίους ποτ' ἢ λέοντας ἢ τρισωμάτους

¹ Hermann ; for MSS. γ', εἰ μέτρῳ.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

Thou dost rebuke me—clear of misery thou!

THESEUS

Speaks Hercules, who hath endured so much,— 1250

HERCULES

Never so much!—its bounds endurance hath.

THESEUS

Men's benefactor and their mighty friend?

HERCULES

They cannot help, for Hera's might prevails.

THESEUS

Hellas will brook not this fool's death for thee.

HERCULES

Hearken, that I may wrestle in argument
With thine admonishings. I will unfold
Why now, as heretofore, boots not to live.
First, I am his son, who, with blood-guilt stained
From murder of my mother's aged sire,
Wedded Alcmena who gave birth to me. 1260
When the foundation of the race is laid
In sin, needs must the issue be ill-starred.

And Zeus—whoe'er Zeus be—begat me foe
To Hera,—nay but, ancient, be not chafed,
For truer father thee I count than Zeus.
When I was yet a suckling, Zeus's bride
Sent gorgon-glaring serpents secretly
Against my cradle, that I might be slain.
Soon as I gathered vesture of brawny flesh,
What boots to tell what labours I endured? 1270
What lions, what three-bodied Geryon-fiends,

- Γηρυόνας¹ ἢ Γίγαντας ἢ τετρασκελῆ
 κενταυροπληθῆ πόλεμον οὐκ ἐξήνυσσα ;
 τήν τ' ἀμφίκρανον καὶ παλιμβλαστῆ κύνα
 ὕδραν φονεύσας, μυρίων τ' ἄλλων πόνων
 διήλθον ἀγέλας κείς νεκρούς ἀφικόμην,
 Αἰδου πυλωρὸν κύνα τρίκρανον εἰς φάος
 ὅπως πορεύσαιμ' ἐντολαῖς Εὐρυσθέως.
 τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ τόνδ' ἔτλην τάλας φόνον,
 1280 παιδοκτονήσας δῶμα θριγκῶσαι κακοῖς.
 ἦκω δ' ἀνάγκης εἰς τόδ'· οὐτ' ἐμαῖς φίλαις
 Θήβαις ἐνοικεῖν ὅσιον· ἦν δὲ καὶ μένω,
 εἰς ποῖον ἱερὸν ἢ πανήγυριν φίλων
 εἶμ' ; οὐ γὰρ ἄτας εὐπροσηγόρους ἔχω.
 ἀλλ' Ἄργος ἔλθω ; πῶς, ἐπεὶ φεύγω πάτραν ;
 φέρ' ἀλλ' ἐς ἄλλην δὴ τιν' ὀρμήσω πόλιν·
 κάπειθ' ὑποβλεπώμεθ' ὡς ἐγνωσμένοι,
 γλώσσης πικροῖς κέντροισι κληδουχούμενοι·
 οὐχ οὗτος ὁ Διός, ὃς τέκν' ἐκτεινέν ποτε
 1290 δάμαρτά τ' ; οὐ γῆς τῆσδ' ἀποφθαρῆσεται ;
 κεκλημένω δὲ φωτὶ μακαρίω ποτὲ
 αἰ μεταβολαὶ λυπηρόν· ᾧ δ' αἰεὶ κακῶς
 ἔστ', οὐδὲν ἀλγεῖ συγγενῶς δύστηνος ὢν.
 εἰς τοῦτο δ' ἤξειν συμφορᾶς οἰμαί ποτε·
 φωνὴν γὰρ ἤσει χθὼν ἀπεινέπουσά με
 μὴ θιγγάνειν γῆς καὶ θάλασσα μὴ περᾶν
 πηγαί τε ποταμῶν, καὶ τὸν ἄρματήλατον
 Ἰξίον' ἐν δεσμοῖσιν ἐκμιμήσομαι.
 πρὸς ταῦτ' ἄριστα μηδέν' Ἑλλήνων μ' ὀράν,
 1300 ἐν οἷσιν εὐτυχοῦντες ἤμεν ὄλβιοι.
 τί δῆτά με ζῆν δεῖ ; τί κέρδος ἔξομεν
 βίοτον ἀχρεῖον ἀνόσιον κεκτημένοι ;

¹ Elmsley : for MSS. Τυφῶνας.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Or giants, slew I not?—or with what host
 Of fourfoot Centaurs fought not out the war?
 The hound o'erswarmed with heads that severed grew,
 The Hydra, killed I: throngs of toils beside
 Untold I wrought: I passed unto the dead
 To bring forth at Eurystheus' hest to light
 The hound three-headed, warder of Hell-gate.
 And this—woe's me!—my latest desperate deed,
 Murder of sons—mine home's topstone of ills! 1280

I am come to this strait—in my dear-loved Thebes
 I cannot dwell uncursed. Though I should stay,
 To what fane can I go?—what gathering
 Of friends?—the Accurst, to whom no man may
 speak!

Shall I to Argos?—I, an outlawed man!
 Nay then, to another city let me go—
 And there be eyed askance, a branded man,
 My jailers there the scorpions of the tongue—
 “Lo there Zeus' son, who murdered babes and wife!
 Shall he not hence?—perdition go with him!” 1290
 Now to the man called happy in time past
 Reverse is torture: he whose days were dark
 Always, grieves not, being cradled in distress.

To this curse shall I come at last, I ween,
 That earth shall find a voice forbidding me
 To touch her, and the sea, that I cross not,
 And river-springs: so, like Ixion whirled
 In chains upon his wheel shall I become.
 Best so—that none set eyes on me in Greece,
 The land where once I prospered and was blest. 1300
 Why need I live? What profit shall I have
 Owning a useless life, a life accurst?

- 1310 χορευέτω δὴ Ζηνὸς ἢ κλεινὴ δάμαρ
 κρούουσ' Ὀλύμπου δῖον ἀρβύλη πέδον
 ἔπραξε γὰρ βούλησιν ἦν ἐβούλετο,
 ἄνδρ' Ἑλλάδος τὸν πρῶτον αὐτοῖσιν βάθροις
 ἄνω κάτω στρέψασα. τοιαύτη θεῶ
 τίς ἂν προσεύχοιθ'; ἢ γυναικὸς εἴνεκα
 λέκτρων φθονούσα Ζηνὶ τοὺς εὐεργέτας
 Ἑλλάδος ἀπώλεσ' οὐδὲν ὄντας αἰτίους.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

- οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου δαιμόνων ἀγῶν ὅδε
 ἢ τῆς Διὸς δάμαρτος· [οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν]¹
 παραινέσαιμ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ πάσχειν κακῶς.
 οὐδεὶς δὲ θνητῶν ταῖς τύχαις ἀκήρατος,
 οὐ θεῶν, ἀοιδῶν εἶπερ οὐ ψευδεῖς λόγοι.
 οὐ λέκτρα τ' ἀλλήλοισιν, ὧν οὐδεὶς νόμος,
 συνῆψαν; οὐ δεσμοῖσι διὰ τυραννίδας
 πατέρας ἐκηλίδωσαν; ἀλλ' οἰκοῦσ' ὅμως
 Ὀλυμπον ἠνέσχοντό θ' ἡμαρτηκότες.
 1320 καίτοι τί φήσεις, εἰ σὺ μὲν θνητὸς γεγῶς
 φέρεις ὑπέρφεν τὰς τύχας, θεοὶ δὲ μῆ;
 Θήβας μὲν οὖν ἔκλειπε τοῦ νόμου χάριν,
 ἔπου δ' ἄμ' ἡμῖν πρὸς πόλισμα Παλλάδος.
 ἐκεῖ χέρας σὰς ἀγνίσας μιάσματος,
 δόμους τε δώσω χρημάτων τ' ἐμῶν μέρος.
 ἂ δ' ἐκ πολιτῶν δῶρ' ἔχω σώσας κόρους
 δις ἑπτὰ, ταῦρον Κνώσιον κατακτανῶν,
 σοὶ ταῦτα δώσω. πανταχοῦ δέ μοι χθονὸς
 1330 τεμένη δέδασται· ταῦτ' ἐπωνομασμένα
 σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκλήσεται

¹ Following MSS. in assigning 1311-2 to Theseus, and reading (translator's conjecture) οὐδὲ σοὶ θανεῖν for εὖ τόδ' αἰσθάνει.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Now let her dance, that glorious bride of Zeus,
Beating with sandalled foot Olympus' floor!
She hath compassed her desire that she desired,
Down with his pedestal hurling in utter wreck
The foremost man of Greece! To such a Goddess
Who shall pray now?—who, for a woman's sake
Jealous of Zeus, from Hellas hath cut off
Her benefactors, guiltless though they were! 1310

THESEUS

This is the assault of none of deities
Save Zeus's Queen; yet thee I counsel not
Rather to die than suffer and be strong.
No mortal hath escaped misfortune's taint,
Nor God—if minstrel-legends be not false.
Have they not linked them in unlawful bonds
Of wedlock, and with chains, to win them thrones,
Outraged their fathers? In Olympus still
They dwell, by their transgressions unabashed.
What wilt thou plead, if, mortal as thou art, 1320
Thou chafe against thy fate, and Gods do not?

Nay then, leave Thebes, submissive to the law,
And unto Pallas' fortress come with me.
There will I cleanse thine hands from taint of blood,
Give thee a home, and of my substance half.
The gifts my people gave for children saved
Twice seven, when I slew the Cnossian bull,
These will I give thee. All throughout the land
Have I demesnes assigned me: these shall bear
Thy name henceforth with men while thou shalt live. 1330

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ζῶντος· θανόντα δ', εὐτ' ἂν εἰς Ἄιδου μόλης,
 θυσίοισι λαίνοισι τ' ἐξογκώμασιν
 τίμιον ἀνάξει πᾶσ' Ἀθηναίων πόλις.
 καλὸς γὰρ ἀστοῖς στέφανος Ἑλλήνων ὑπο
 ἄνδρ' ἐσθλὸν ὠφελούντας εὐκλείας τυχεῖν.
 κἀγὼ χάριν σοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας
 τήνδ' ἀντιδώσω· νῦν γὰρ εἰ χρεῖος φίλων.
 θεοὶ δ' ὅταν τιμῶσιν, οὐδὲν δεῖ φίλων·
 ἄλις γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὠφελῶν, ὅταν θέλῃ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

- 1340 οἶμοι· πάρεργά τοι τάδ' ἔστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν.
 ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς οὔτε λέκτρ' ἂ μὴ θέμις
 στέργειν νομίζω, δεσμά τ' ἐξάπτειν χεροῖν
 οὔτ' ἠξιώσα πώποτ' οὔτε πείσομαι,
 οὐδ' ἄλλον ἄλλου δεσπότην πεφυκέναι.
 δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεός, εἴπερ ἔστ' ὀρθῶς θεός,
 οὐδενός· αἰοιδῶν οἶδε δύστηνοι λόγοι.
 ἐσκεψάμην δὲ καίπερ ἐν κακοῖσιν ὦν,
 μὴ δειλίαν ὄφλω τιν' ἐκλιπὼν φάος.
 ταῖς συμφοραῖς γὰρ ὅστις οὐχ ὑφίσταται,
 1350 οὐδ' ἀνδρὸς ἂν δύναιθ' ὑποστήναι βέλος.
 ἐγκαρτερήσω θάνατον· εἶμι δ' εἰς πόλιν
 τὴν σὴν χάριν τε μυρίαν δώρων ἔχω.
 ἀτὰρ πόνων δὴ μυρίων ἐγενεσάμην·
 ὦν οὔτ' ἀπείπον οὐδὲν οὔτ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
 ἔσταξα πηγᾶς, οὐδ' ἂν ὠόμην ποτέ
 εἰς τοῦθ' ἰκέσθαι, δάκρυ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων βαλεῖν.
 νῦν δ', ὡς ἔοικε, τῇ τύχῃ δουλευτέον,
 εἶεν· γεραιέ, τὰς ἐμὰς φυγὰς ὀρᾶς,
 ὀρᾶς δὲ παίδων ὄντα μ' αὐθέντην ἐμῶν.
 1360 δὸς τοῦσδε τύμβῳ καὶ περίστειλον νεκροὺς
 δακρύοισι τιμῶν—ἐμὲ γὰρ οὐκ ἐᾷ νόμος—

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

And, when in death thou goest to Hades' halls,
 With sacrifice and monuments of stone
 Shall all the Athenians' Town exalt thy name :
 For a fair crown to win from Greeks is this
 For us, the glory of a hero helped.
 Yea, this requital will I render thee
 For saving me ; for now thou lackest friends.
 When the Gods honour us, we need not friends :
 God's help sufficeth, when he wills it so.

HERCULES

Ah, all this hath no pertinence to mine ills ! 1340
 I deem not that the Gods for spousals crave
 Unhallowed : tales of Gods' hands manacled
 Ever I scorned, nor ever will believe,
 Nor that one God is born another's lord.
 For God hath need, if God indeed he be,
 Of naught : these be the minstrels' sorry tales.

Yet thus I have mused—how deep soe'er in ills—
 “*Shall I quit life, and haply prove me craven ?*”
 For he who flincheth from misfortune's blows,
 He even from a mere man's spear would flinch. 1350
 I will be strong to await death. To thy town
 I go. For thy gifts thanks a thousandfold.
 Ah, I have tasted travail measureless,
 Nor ever shrank from any, never shed
 Tear from mine eyes, no, nor had ever thought
 That I should come to this, to weep the tear !
 But now, meseems, I must be thrall to fate.

Ay so !—thou seest, O ancient, mine exile ;
 Thou seest me a murderer of my sons.
 Give these a tomb, and shroud the dead, with tears 1360
 For honour,—me the law withholds therefrom,—

- πρὸς στέρν' ἐρείσας μητρὶ δούς τ' ἐς ἀγκάλας,
 κοινωνίαν δύστηνον, ἦν ἐγὼ τάλας
 διώλεσ' ἄκων. γῆ δ' ἐπὴν κρύψης νεκρούς,
 οἶκει πόλιν τήνδ', ἀθλίως μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 ψυχὴν βιάζου τὰμὰ συμφέρειν κακά.
 ὦ τέκν', ὁ φύσας χῶ τεκῶν ὑμᾶς πατὴρ
 ἀπώλεσ', οὐδ' ὄνασθε τῶν ἐμῶν καλῶν,
 ἀγὰ παρεσκεύαζον ἐκμοχθῶν βία
 1370 εὐκλειαν ὑμῖν, πατρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν καλήν.
 σέ τ' οὐχ ὁμοίως, ὦ τάλαιν', ἀπώλεσα
 ὥσπερ σὺ τὰμὰ λέκτρ' ἔσφιζες ἀσφαλῶς,
 μακρὰς διαντλοῦσ' ἐν δόμοις οἰκουρίας.
 οἶμοι δάμαρτος καὶ τέκνων, οἶμοι δ' ἐμοῦ·
 ὡς ἀθλίως πέπραγα κάποζεύγνυμαι
 τέκνων γυναικός τ' ὦ λυγραὶ φιλημάτων
 τέρψεις, λυγραὶ δὲ τῶνδ' ὅπλων κοινωναίαι.
 ἀμηχανῶ γὰρ πότερ' ἔχω τὰδ' ἢ μεθῶ,
 ἀ πλευρὰ τὰμὰ προσπίτνοντ' ἐρεῖ τάδε·
 1380 ἡμῖν τέκν' εἶλες καὶ δάμαρθ' ἡμᾶς ἔχεις
 παιδοκτόνους σούς. εἴτ' ἐγὼ τὰδ' ὠλέναις
 οἴσω; τί φάσκων; ἀλλὰ γυμνωθεὶς ὅπλων,
 ξὺν οἷς τὰ κάλλιστ' ἐξέπραξ' ἐν Ἑλλάδι,
 ἐχθροῖς ἐμαντὸν ὑποβαλὼν αἰσχροῦς θάνω;
 οὐ λειπτέον τὰδ', ἀθλίως δὲ σωστέον.
 ἐν μοί τι, Θεσεῦ, σύγκαμ' ἀθλίῳ κυνὸς
 κόμιστρ' ἐς Ἄργος συγκατάστησον μολῶν,
 λύπη τι παίδων μὴ πάθω μονούμενος.
 ὦ γαῖα Κάδμου πᾶς τε Θηβαῖος λεῶς,
 1390 κείρασθε, συμπευθήσατ', ἔλθετ' εἰς τάφον

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Laid on the mother's breast, clasped in her arms,
 Sad fellowship, which I—O wretch!—destroyed
 Unknowing. When thou hast hid them in the
 tomb,

Live on in Thebes,—in misery, yet still
 Constrain thy soul to share my load of woe.
 Ah children, your begetter and your sire
 Slew you!—ye had no profit of my glory,
 Of all my travail and strenuous toil to win
 Renown for you—a sire's best legacy. 1370

And thee, lost love, not in such wise I slew
 As thou didst save, didst keep mine honour safe
 Through all that weary warding of mine house!
 Woe for my wife and children! woe for me!
 How mournful is my plight, who am disyoked
 From babes, from bride! Ah bitter joy of kisses!
 Ah bitter fellowship of these mine arms!
 Keep—cast them from me—I know not which to do.
 Hanging athwart my side thus will they say:
 “*With us thou slewest babes and wife—yet keep'st* 1380
Thy children's slayers!” Shall mine hand bear
 these?

What can I plead? Yet, naked of mine arms¹
 Wherewith I wrought most glorious deeds in Greece,
 'Neath foes' feet shall I cast me?—fouly die?
 Leave them I may not, to my grief must keep.
 In one thing help me, Theseus: come to Argos
 To back my claim of hire for Cerberus brought,
 Lest grief for children slay me faring lone.
 O Land of Cadmus, all ye Theban folk,
 With shorn hair grieve with me: to my sons' tomb 1390

¹ He could not replace them by others as good; for they were gifts of Gods—the bow of Apollo, and the club of Hephaestus.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

παιδῶν, ἅπαντας δ' ἐνὶ λόγῳ πενήθησατε
νεκρούς τε καμὲ πάντες ἐξολώλαμεν
"Ηρας μιᾷ πληγέντες ἄθλιοι τύχη.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἀνίστασ', ὦ δύστηνε· δακρύων δ' ἄλις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην· ἄρθρα γὰρ πέπηγέ μου.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

καὶ τοὺς σθένοντας γὰρ καθαιροῦσιν τύχαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦ·
αὐτοῦ γενοίμην πέτρος ἀμνήμων κακῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

παῦσαι· δίδου δὲ χεῖρ' ὑπηρέτη φίλῳ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄλλ' αἷμα μὴ σοῖς ἐξομόρξωμαι πέπλοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1400 ἔκμασσε, φείδου μηδέν· οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

παιδῶν στερηθεὶς παῖδ' ὅπως ἔχω σ' ἐμόν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δίδου δέρη σὴν χεῖρ', ὀδηγήσω δ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ζευγός γε φίλιον· ἄτερος δὲ δυστυχής.
ὦ πρέσβυ, τοιούδ' ἄνδρα χρὴ κτᾶσθαι φίλον.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΤΩΝ

ἢ γὰρ τεκοῦσα τόνδε πατὴρς εὐτεκνος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θησεῦ, πάλιν με στρέψον, ὡς ἴδω τέκνα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὡς δὴ τί; φίλτρον τοῦτ' ἔχων ῥάων ἔσει;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

Pass, and in one wail make ye moan for all—
The dead and me : we have wholly perished all,
Smitten by one sore doom from Hera's hand.

THESEUS

Rise, sorrow-stricken : let these tears suffice.

HERCULES

I cannot : lo, my limbs are palsy-chained.

THESEUS

O yea, misfortune breaketh down the strong.

HERCULES

Woe worth the day !

Ah to be turned to stone, my woes forgot !

THESEUS

No more ! To a friend, a helper, reach thine hand.

HERCULES

With this blood let me not besmirch thy robes !

THESEUS

On me wipe all off ! Spare not : I refuse not !

1400

HERCULES

Of sons bereaved, thee have I, like a son.

THESEUS

Cast o'er my neck thine arm ; I lead thee on.

HERCULES

A yoke of love !—but one, a stricken man.

Father, well may one gain such friend as this.

AMPHITRYON

The land that bare him breedeth noble sons !

HERCULES

Theseus, let me turn back, to see my babes.

THESEUS

What spell to ease thy pain hath this for thee ?

243

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ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ποθῶ, πατρός τε στέρνα προσθέσθαι θέλω.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἰδοὺ τάδ', ὦ παῖ· τὰμὰ γὰρ σπεύδεις φίλα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1410 οὕτω πόνων σῶν οὐκέτι μνήμην ἔχεις;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἅπαντ' ἐλάσσω κείνα τῶνδ' ἔτλην κακά.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εἴ σ' ὄψεταιί τις θῆλυν ὄντ', οὐκ αἰνέσει.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ζῶ σοὶ ταπεινός; ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν οὐ δοκῶ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἄγαν γ'· ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς ποῦ κείνος ὢν;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

σὺ ποῖος ἦσθα νέρθεν ἐν κακοῖσιν ὢν;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὡς εἰς τὸ λῆμα παντὸς ἦν ἡσσω ἀνῆρ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἂν εἴποις ὅτι συνέσταλμαι κακοῖς;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πρόβαινε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ πρέσβυ.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

καὶ σύ μοι, τέκνον.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θάφθ' ὥσπερ εἶπον παῖδας.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐμὲ δὲ τίς, τέκνον;

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I yearn—and on my father's breast would fall.

AMPHITRYON

Lo here, my son : mine heart as thine is fain.

THESEUS

Art thou so all-forgetful of thy toils? ¹

1410

HERCULES

All toils endured of old were light by these.

THESEUS

Who sees thee play the woman thus shall scorn.

HERCULES

Live I, thy scorn? Once was I not, I trow!

THESEUS

Alas, yes! Where is glorious Hercules?

HERCULES

What manner of man wast thou mid Hades' woes?

THESEUS

My strength of soul was utter weakness then.

HERCULES

Shouldst *thou*, then, name me a man by suffering
cowed?

THESEUS

On then!

HERCULES

Farewell, old sire.

AMPHITRYON

Farewell thou, son.

HERCULES

Bury the lads.

AMPHITRYON

Who burieth me, my child?

¹ The Twelve Labours, of which this weakness is unworthy.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

πότ' ἐλθών;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἤνικ' ἂν θάψῃς τέκνα.

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

πῶς;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰς Ἀθήνας πέμψομαι Θηβῶν ἄπο.
 ἀλλ' εἰσκόμιζε τέκνα δυσκόμιστα γῆ·
 ἡμεῖς δ' ἀναλώσαντες αἰσχύναις δόμον,
 Θησεῖ πανώλεις ἐψόμεσθ' ἐφολκίδες.
 ὅστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἢ σθένος μᾶλλον φίλων
 ἀγαθῶν πεπᾶσθαι βούλεται, κακῶς φρονεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

στείχομεν οἰκτροὶ καὶ πολύκλαυτοι,
 τὰ μέγιστα φίλων ὀλέσαντες.

THE MADNESS OF HERCULES

HERCULES

I.

AMPHITRYON

When com'st thou?

HERCULES

When thou hast buried them.

1420

AMPHITRYON

How?

HERCULES

I from Thebes to Athens will bring thee.
Bear in my babes—earth groans to bear such burden!
I, who have wasted by my shame mine house,
Like wreck in tow will trail in Theseus' wake.
Whoso would fain possess or wealth or strength
Rather than loyal friends, is sense-bereft.

CHORUS

With mourning and weeping sore do we pass away,
Who have lost the chiefest of all our friends this day.

[*Exeunt OMNES.*]

ARGUMENT

ERICHONIA, King of Argos, hated Hercules all his life through, and sought to destroy him by throwing on him many and desperate labours: And when Hercules had been caught up to Olympus from the ignominious he was descended on Mount Ossa, Erichonia persecuted the new children, and sought to destroy them. Whence his wife, his friends, and subjects fled with them. They were wandering all the day, till they came to the island of Sicily, where Erichonia, who was the cause, and descended

THE

CHILDREN OF HERCULES

and there took sanctuary at the house of Iphigeneia. Thence came the fall of the King, accompanied here, and Erichonia's death regarding their recovery, and the king of Argos, Thersites, who to have their eyes. And hence would the tale of the war then come of an attempt to give them up, of the purchase of a white bull which the Gods required as the price of victory, of several wonders by which the gods were, and of the conquest of Sicily.

ARGUMENT

EURYSTHEUS, king of Argos, hated Hercules all his life through, and sought to destroy him by thrusting on him many and desperate labours. And when Hercules had been caught up to Olympus from the pyre whereon he was consumed on Mount Oeta, Eurystheus persecuted the hero's children, and sought to slay them. Wherefore Iolaus, their father's friend and helper, fled with them. But in whatsoever city they sought refuge, thence were they driven; for Eurystheus ever made search for them, and demanded them with threats of war. So fleeing from land to land, they came at last to Marathon which belongeth to Athens, and there took sanctuary at the temple of Zeus. Thither came the folk of the land compassionating them, and Eurystheus' herald requiring their surrender, and the king of Athens, Theseus' son, to hear their cause. And herein is told the tale of the war that came of his refusal to yield them up, of the sacrifice of a noble maiden which the Gods required as the price of victory, of an old warrior by miracle made young, and of the vengeance of Alcmena.

ARGUMENT

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΙΟΥΛΑΟΣ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΕΥΡΥΣΘΕΥΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

IOLAUS, *an old man, formerly friend of Hercules.*

COPREUS, *herald of Eurystheus.*

DEMOPHON, *king of Athens, son of Theseus.*

MACARIA, *daughter of Hercules.*

HENCHMAN of Hyllus, *Hercules' eldest son.*

ALCMENA, *mother of Hercules.*

SERVANT of Alcmena.

MESSANGER, *a captain from the army.*

EURYSTHEUS, *king of Argos.*

CHORUS of old men of Marathon.

Young sons of Hercules, guards, and attendants.

SCENE: At Marathon, in the forecourt of the temple of Zeus. The great altar stands in the midst.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

- Πάλαι ποτ' ἐστὶ τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ δεδογμένον·
 ὁ μὲν δίκαιος τοῖς πέλας πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ,
 ὁ δ' εἰς τὸ κέρδος λῆμ' ἔχων ἀνειμένον
 πόλει τ' ἄχρηστος καὶ συναλλάσσειν βαρὺς,
 αὐτῷ δ' ἄριστος· οἶδα δ' οὐ λόγῳ μαθῶν.
 ἐγὼ γὰρ αἰδοῖ καὶ τὸ συγγενὲς σέβων,
 ἐξὸν κατ' Ἄργος ἡσύχως ναίειν, πόνων
 πλείστων μετέσχον εἰς ἀνὴρ Ἡρακλέει,
 ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν· νῦν δ', ἐπεὶ κατ' οὐρανὸν
 10 ναίει, τὰ κείνου τέκν' ἔχων ὑπὸ πτεροῖς
 σφῶζω τάδ' αὐτὸς δεόμενος σωτηρίας.
 ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτῶν γῆς ἀπηλλάχθη πατὴρ,
 πρῶτον μὲν ἡμᾶς ἤθελ' Εὐρυσθεὺς κτανεῖν·
 ἀλλ' ἐξέδραμεν· καὶ πόλις μὲν οἴχεται,
 ψυχὴ δ' ἐσώθη. φεύγομεν δ' ἀλώμενοι
 ἄλλην ἀπ' ἄλλης ἐξορίζοντες πόλιν.
 πρὸς τοῖς γὰρ ἄλλοις καὶ τόδ' Εὐρυσθεὺς κακοῖς
 ὕβρισμ' ἐς ἡμᾶς ἠξίωσεν ὑβρίσαι·
 πέμπων ὅπου γῆς πυνθάνοιθ' ἰδρυμένους
 20 κήρυκας ἐξαιτεῖ τε κάξειργει χθονός,
 πόλιν προτείνων Ἄργος οὐ σμικρὰν φίλην
 ἐχθράν τε θέσθαι, χαυτὸν εὐτυχοῦνθ' ἅμα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS *with* HERCULES' CHILDREN, *discovered sitting on
the altar-steps.*

IOLAUS

I HOLD it truth, and long have held :—the just
Lives for his brother men ; but he whose soul
Uncurbed hunts gain alone, unto the state
Useless, in dealings hard, is but to himself
A friend—nor know this by report alone ;
Since I, who might in Argos peacefully
Have dwelt, for honour's sake and kinship's bond
Bore chief share in the toils of Hercules
When he was with us : now, when in the heaven
He dwells, his babes I shelter 'neath my wings 10
Defending, who myself sore need defence.

For, soon as from the earth their sire had passed,
Us would Eurystheus at the first have slain,
But we fled. Now our city, our home is lost,
Life only saved. We are exiled wanderers
From city unto city moving on.
For on our other wrongs this coping-stone
Of outrage hath Eurystheus dared to set,—
Heralds to each land where we bide he sends,
Demandeth us, and biddeth drive us forth, 20
Warning them that no weakling friend or foe
Is Argos, and himself a mighty king.

- οὐ δ' ἀσθενῆ μὲν τὰ π' ἐμοῦ δεδορκότες,
 σμικροὺς δὲ τούσδε καὶ πατρὸς τητωμένους,
 τοὺς κρείσσονας σέβοντες ἐξεύρουσι γῆς.
 ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν φεύγουσι συμφεύγω τέκνοις
 καὶ σὺν κακῶς πράσσουσι συμπράσσω κακῶς,
 ὀκνῶν προδοῦναι, μή τις ὧδ' εἶπη βροτῶν·
 ἴδεσθ', ἐπειδὴ παισὶν οὐκ ἔστιν πατήρ,
 30 Ἰόλαος οὐκ ἤμυνε συγγενῆς γεγώς.
 πάσης δὲ χώρας Ἑλλάδος τητῶμενοι,
 Μαραθῶνα καὶ σύγκληρον ἐλθόντες χθόνα
 ἰκέται καθεζόμεσθα βώμιοι θεῶν,
 προσωφελῆσαι· πεδία γὰρ τῆσδε χθονὸς
 δισσοὺς κατοικεῖν Θησέως παῖδας λόγος
 κλήρῳ λαχόντας, ἐκ γένους Πανδίοιο,
 τοῖσδ' ἐγγυς ὄντας· ὧν ἕκατι τέρμονας
 κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν τήνδ' ἀφικόμεσθ' ὁδόν.
 δυοῖν γερόντοι δὲ στρατηγεῖται φυγή·
 40 ἐγὼ μὲν ἀμφὶ τοῖσδε καλχαίνων τέκνοις,
 ἢ δ' αὖ τὸ θῆλυ παιδὸς Ἀλκμήνη γένος
 ἔσωθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὑπηγκαλισμένη
 σῶζει· νέας γὰρ παρθένους αἰδούμεθα
 ὄχλῳ πελάζειν κάπιβωμισστατεῖν.
 Ἄλλος δ' ἀδελφοί θ' οἷσι πρεσβεύει γένος
 ζητοῦσ' ὅπου γῆς πύργον οἰκιοῦμεθα,
 ἣν τῆσδ' ἀπωθώμεσθα πρὸς βίαν χθονός.
 ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦρο, λαμβάνεσθ' ἐμῶν
 πέπλων· ὀρῶ κήρυκα τόνδ' Εὐρυσθέως
 50 στείχοντ' ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, οὐ διωκόμεσθ' ὑπο
 πάσης ἀλῆται γῆς ἀπεστερημένοι.
 ὦ μῖσος, εἶθ' ὄλοιο χῶ πέμψας σ' ἀνὴρ·
 ὃς πολλὰ δὴ καὶ τῶνδε γενναίῳ πατρὶ
 ἐκ τοῦδε ταύτου στόματος ἤγγειλας κακά.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And they, discerning that my cause is weak,
 These but young children orphaned of their sire,
 Bow to the strong, and drive us from their land.
 I with his banished babes share banishment,
 And with their ill plight am in evil plight.
 Forsake them I dare not, lest men should say :
 " See, now the children's father is no more,
 Iolaus wards them not,—their kinsman he ! " 30
 And so, from all the soil of Hellas banned,
 To Marathon and the federate land we come,
 At the Gods' altars sitting suppliant,
 That they may help ; for Theseus' scions twain,
 Saith rumour, in the plains of this land dwell,
 By lot their heritage, Pandion's seed,
 And kin to these ; for which cause have we come
 This journey unto glorious Athens' bounds,
 Old captains we that lead this exile-march,—
 I, for these lads heart-full of troubled thought ; 40
 And she, Alcmena, in yon temple folds
 Her arms about the daughters of her son,
 And guards : for we think shame to let young girls
 Stand, a crowd's gazing-stock, on altar-steps.
 Now Hyllus and his brethren elder-born
 Seek some land for our refuge and our home,
 If from this soil we be with violence thrust.
 O children, children, hither !—seize my robes !
 Yonder I see Eurystheus' herald come
 Against us, him of whom we are pursued, 50
 The homeless wanderers barred from every land.

Enter COPREUS.

Loathed wretch ! Now ruin seize thee and him that
 sent,
 Who oft-times to the noble sire of these
 From that same mouth hast published evil hests.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

ἢ που καθῆσθαι τήνδ' ἔδραν καλήν δοκεῖς
 πόλιν τ' ἀφίχθαι σύμμαχον; κακῶς φρονῶν
 οὐ γάρ τις ἔστιν ὃς πάροιθ' αἰρήσεται
 τὴν σὴν ἀχρεῖον δύναμιν ἀντ' Εὐρυσθέως·
 60 χῶρει· τί μοχθεῖς ταῦτ'; ἀνίστασθαί σε χρὴ
 εἰς Ἄργος, οὐ σε λεύσιμος μένει δίκη.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ μοι βωμὸς ἀρκέσει θεοῦ
 ἐλευθέρα τε γαῖ' ἐν ἧ βεβήκαμεν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

βούλει πόνον μοι τῆδε προσθεῖναι χερί;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὔτοι βία γέ μ' οὐδὲ τούσδ' ἄξεις λαβῶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

γνώσει σύ· μάντις δ' ἦσθ' ἄρ' οὐ καλὸς τάδε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο τοῦτ' ἐμοῦ ζῶντός ποτε.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

ἄπαιρ'· ἐγὼ δὲ τούσδε, κἂν σὺ μὴ θέλῃς,
 ἄξω κομίζων, οὐπὲρ εἰς', Εὐρυσθέως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τὰς Ἀθήνας δαρὸν οἰκοῦντες χρόνον,
 70 ἀμύνεθ'· ἰκέται δ' ὄντες ἀγοραίου Διὸς
 βιαζόμεσθα καὶ στέφη μαινεται,
 πόλει τ' ὄνειδος καὶ θεῶν ἀτιμία.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔα ἔα· τίς ἢ βοῇ βωμοῦ πέλας
 ἔστηκε; ποίαν συμφορὰν δείξει τάχα;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Ha, deem'st thou this thy session bravely chosen,
This state thou hast reached thine ally? O thou fool!
There is no man shall choose that impotence
Of thy poor strength before Eurystheus' power.
Away! Why make this coil? Thou must depart
To Argos, where the doom of stoning waits thee. 60

IOLAUS

Never: for the God's altar shall avail,
And the free land whereunto we have come.

COPREUS

Ha! wouldst thou find some work for this mine hand?

IOLAUS

Nor me nor these by force shalt thou hale hence.

COPREUS

That shalt thou prove: ill seer thou art in this.

[Seizes CHILDREN.

IOLAUS (*resisting*)

This shall not be! no, never while I live!

COPREUS

Hands off! these will I hale, though thou say nay,
Accounting them Eurystheus': his they are.

[Hurls IOLAUS to the ground.

IOLAUS

O ye, in Athens dwellers from of old,
Help! Suppliants we of Zeus of the Market-stead 70
Are evil-entreated, holy wreaths defiled,
To Athens' shame and to your God's dishonour!
Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS

What ho! what outcry by the altar wakes?
Now what calamity shall this reveal?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἴδετε τὸν γέροντ' ἀμαλὸν ἐπὶ πέδῳ
 χύμενον ὦ τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ποτ' ἐν γῆ πτώμα δύστηνον πίτνεις ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ', ὦ ξένοι, με σοὺς ἀτιμάζων θεοὺς
 ἔλκει βιαίως Ζηνὸς ἐκ προβωμίων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

80 σὺ δ' ἐκ τίνος γῆς, ὦ γέρον, τετράπτολιν
 ξύνοικον ἤλθες λαόν ; ἢ πέρα-
 θεν ἀλίῳ πλάτα
 κατέχετ' ἐκλιπόντες Εὐβοῖδ' ἀκτάν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ νησιώτην, ὦ ξένοι, τρίβω βίον,
 ἀλλ' ἐκ Μυκηνηῶν σὴν ἀφίγμεθα χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄνομα τί σε, γέρον,
 Μυκηναῖος ὠνόμαζεν λεώς ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τὸν Ἡράκλειον ἴστε που παραστάτην
 Ἴόλαον· οὐ γὰρ ὄνομ' ἀκήρυκτον τόδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

90 οἶδ' εἰσακούσας καὶ πρὶν· ἀλλὰ τοῦ
 ποτ' ἐν χειρὶ σᾶ κομίζεις κόρους
 νεοτρεφεῖς ; φράσον.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

Ἡρακλέους οἶδ' εἰσὶ παῖδες, ὦ ξένοι,
 ἰκέται σέθεν τε καὶ πόλεως ἀφιγμένοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί χρέος ; ἢ λόγων πόλεος, ἔνεπέ μοι,
 μελόμενοι τυχεῖν ;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Behold ye!—the eld-stricken see
In his feebleness hurled to the ground, woe's me!

CHORUS

Of whom thus pitiably wast thou dashed down?

IOLAUS

This man, O strangers, sets thy Gods at naught,
And drags me from the altar-floor of Zeus.

CHORUS

But from what land, O ancient, hast thou come 80
To the folk of the Four Burgs' federal home?
Were ye sped overseas by the brine-dipt oar
To our land from Euboea's craggy shore?

IOLAUS

Strangers, no island-dweller's life is mine;
From proud Mycenae come we to thy land.

CHORUS

And by what name, ancient of days, did they call
Thee, they which be fenced with Mycenae's wall?

IOLAUS

Hercules' helper haply do ye know,
Iolaus, for not fameless was my name.

CHORUS

I know; long since I heard: but whose are they, 90
The fosterling lads that thine hand leadeth hither-
ward?—say.

IOLAUS

Strangers, the sons they are of Hercules,
Which have to thee and Athens suppliant come.

CHORUS

Say, what is your need that here ye are?
Would ye plead your cause at the nation's bar?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μήτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μήτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν
τῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες εἰς Ἄργος μολεῖν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

100 ἄλλ' οὔτι τοῖς σοῖς δεσπόταις τάδ' ἀρκέσει,
οἱ σοῦ κρατοῦντες ἐνθάδ' εὐρίσκουσί σε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰκὸς θεῶν ἰκτῆρας αἰδεῖσθαι, ξένε,
καὶ μὴ βιαίῳ χειρὶ δαιμόνων
ἀπολιπεῖν ἔδη·
πότνια γὰρ Δίκη τάδ' οὐ πείσεται.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

ἔκπεμπέ νυν γῆς τούσδε τοὺς Εὐρυσθέως,
κούδεν βιαίῳ τῆδε χρήσομαι χειρὶ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄθεον ἰκεσίαν
μεθεῖναι πόλει ξένων προστροπᾶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

110 καλὸν δέ γ' ἔξω πραγμάτων ἔχειν πόδα,
εὐβουλίας τυχόντα τῆς ἀμείνονος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὔκουν τυράνῳ τῆσδε γῆς φράσαντά σε
χρῆν ταῦτα τολμᾶν, ἀλλὰ μὴ βία ξένους
θεῶν ἀφέλκειν, γῆν σέβοντ' ἐλευθέραν ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

τίς δ' ἐστὶ χώρας τῆσδε καὶ πόλεως ἄναξ ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖς Δημοφῶν ὁ Θησέως.

ΚΟΠΡΕΥΣ

πρὸς τοῦτον ἀγὼν ἄρα τοῦδε τοῦ λόγου
μάλιστα ἂν εἴη· τᾶλλα δ' εἴρηται μάτην.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

Given up we would not be, nor torn away
Hence, in thy Gods' despite, and sent to Argos.

COPREUS

Ay, but this shall not satisfy thy masters
Whose lordship o'er thee holds, who find thee here. 100

CHORUS

God's suppliants, stranger, must we reverence,
And not with hands of violence tear them hence
From this place where the Holy Presence is:
The majesty of Justice shall not suffer this.

COPREUS

Then from your land send these, Eurystheus' thralls,
And this mine hand shall do no violence.

CHORUS

Now nay, 'twere an impious thing
To cast off suppliant hands to the knees of our city
that cling!

COPREUS

'Tis well to keep thy foot from trouble's snare,
And in good counsel find the better part. 110

CHORUS

Thou shouldst have shown respect to this free land,
And told her King, ere thy presumption tore
Therefrom the strangers in her Gods' despite.

COPREUS

And who is of this land and city king?

CHORUS

Demophon, Theseus' child, a brave sire's son.

COPREUS

With him then must all strife of this dispute
Be held alone: all else is idle talk.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὄδ' αὐτὸς ἔρχεται σπουδὴν ἔχων
'Ακάμας τ' ἀδελφός, τῶνδ' ἐπήκοοι λογῶν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

120 ἐπεὶπερ ἔφθης πρέσβυς ὦν νεωτέρους
βοηδρομήσας τήνδ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραν Διός,
λέξον, τίς ὄχλον τόνδ' ἀθροίζεται τύχη;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ικέται κάθηνται παῖδες οἷδ' Ἡρακλέους
βωμὸν καταστέψαντες ὡς ὀράς, ἄναξ,
πατρός τε πιστὸς Ἰόλεως παραστάτης.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

τί δῆτ' ἰνυγῶν ἦδ' ἐδεῖτο συμφορά;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βία νιν οὔτος τῆσδ' ἀπ' ἐσχάρας ἄγειν
ζητῶν βοὴν ἔστησε κάσφηλεν γόνυ
γέροντος, ὥστε μ' ἐκβαλεῖν οἶκτῳ δάκρυ.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

130 καὶ μὴν στολήν γ' Ἑλληνα καὶ ῥυθμὸν πέπλων
ἔχει, τὰ δ' ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε.
σὸν δὴ τὸ φράζειν ἐστί, μὴ μέλλειν τ', ἐμοί
ποίας ἀφίξαι δεῦρο γῆς ὄρους λιπῶν;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

'Αργεῖός εἰμι, τοῦτο γὰρ θέλεις μαθεῖν
ἐφ' οἷσι δ' ἦκω καὶ παρ' οὗ λέγειν θέλω.
πέμπει Μυκηνηῶν δεῦρό μ' Εὐρυσθεὺς ἄναξ
ἄξοντα τούσδε· πολλὰ δ' ἦλθον, ὦ ξένε,
δίκαι' ὀμαρτῆ δρᾶν τε καὶ λέγειν ἔχων.
140 'Αργεῖός ὦν γὰρ αὐτὸς 'Αργεῖους ἄγω
ἐκ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ τούσδε δραπέτας ἐλών,
νόμοισι τοῖς ἐκεῖθεν ἐψηφισμένους
θανεῖν· δίκαιοι δ' ἐσμέν οἰκοῦντες πόλιν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

Lo, hitherward himself in haste draws nigh,
And Acamas his brother, to hear thy claim.

Enter DEMOPHON, ACAMAS, and attendants.

DEMOPHON

Since thou, the old, preventedst younger men 120
In rescue-rush to Zeus's altar-hearth,
Tell thou what chance hath gathered all this throng.

CHORUS

Here suppliant sit the sons of Hercules,
Who have wreathed the altar, as thou seest, O king,
And Iolaus, leal helper of their sire.

DEMOPHON

What need herein for lamentable cries?

CHORUS

Yon man essayed to drag them from the hearth
By force; raised outcry so, and earthward hurled
The ancient, that for ruth burst forth my tears.

DEMOPHON

Yet is the fashion of his vesture Greek; 130
But deeds of a barbarian hand are these.
Man, thine it is to tell me, tarrying not,
From what land's marches hither thou hast come.

COPREUS

An Argive I, since this thou wouldest know.
Wherefore I come, and from whom, will I tell:
Mycenae's king Eurystheus sends me hither
To lead these hence. Stranger, I bring with me
Just pleas in plenty, both for act and speech.
Myself an Argive would lead Argives hence, 140
Who find them runaways from mine own land,
By statutes of that land condemned to die;
For, dwellers in a state subject to none,

αὐτοὶ καθ' αὐτῶν κυρίουσ κραίνειν δίκας.
 πολλῶν δὲ κᾶλλον ἐστίας ἀφιγμένων,
 ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖσ τοισίδ' ἔσταμεν λόγοισ,
 κούδεις ἐτόλμησ' ἴδια προσθέσθαι κακά.
 ἀλλ' ἢ τιν' εἰς σὲ μωρίαν ἐσκεμμένοι
 δεῦρ' ἦλθον ἢ κίνδυνον ἐξ ἀμηχάνων
 ῥίπτουτες, εἴτ' οὖν εἴτε μὴ γενήσεται·
 150 οὐ γὰρ φρενήρη γ' ὄντα σ' ἐλπίζουσί που
 μόνον τοσαύτης ἦν ἐπῆλθον Ἑλλάδος
 τὰς τῶνδ' ἀβούλους συμφορὰς κατοικτιεῖν·
 φέρ' ἀντίθεσ γάρ, τούσδε τ' εἰς γαίαν παρεῖς
 ἡμᾶσ τ' ἐάσασ ἐξάγειν, τί κερδανεῖς ;
 τὰ μὲν παρ' ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἔστι σοι λαβεῖν,
 Ἄργουσ τοσῆνδε χεῖρα τήν τ' Εὐρυσθέωσ
 ἰσχὺν ἄπασαν τῆδε προσθέσθαι πόλει.
 ἦν δ' εἰς λόγουσ τε καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' οἰκτίσματα
 βλέψασ πεπανθῆσ, εἰσ πάλην καθίσταται
 160 δορὸσ τὸ πρᾶγμα· μὴ γὰρ ὡσ μεθήσομεν
 δόξης ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἄτερ χαλυβδικού.
 τί δῆτα φήσεισ, ποῖα πεδί' ἀφαιρεθεῖσ,
 Τιρυνθίοισ θεῖσ πόλεμον Ἀργείοισ ἔχειν ;
 ποίοισ δ' ἀμύνων συμμάχοισ ; τίνοσ δ' ὕπερ
 θάψεισ νεκρούσ πεσόντασ ; ἢ κακὸν λόγον
 κτήσει πρὸσ ἀστῶν, εἰ γέροντοσ εἵνεκα,
 τύμβου, τὸ μηδὲν ὄντοσ, ὡσ εἰπεῖν ἔποσ,
 παίδων τε τῶνδ', εἰσ ἀντλον ἐμβήσει πόδα.
 ἐρεῖσ τὸ λῶστου ἐλπίδ' εὐρήσειν μόνον.
 170 καὶ τοῦτο πολλῶ τοῦ παρόντοσ ἐνδεέσ·
 κακῶσ γὰρ Ἀργείοισιν οἶδ' ὡπλισμένοισ
 μάχοιντ' ἂν ἠβήσαντεσ, εἴ τι τοῦτό σε
 ψυχῆν ἐπαίρει, χούν μέσφ πολλὺσ χρόνοσ,
 ἐν ᾧ διεργασθεῖτ' ἄν. ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πιθηῶ·

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

The right is ours to ratify her decrees.
And, though they have come to hearths of many folk,
Still on the same plea did we take our stand,
And ruin on his own head none dared bring.
But these came hither, haply spying folly
In thee, or staking on one desperate throw
Their venture, or to win or lose it all :—
For sure they deem not thou, if sound of wit, 150
Alone in all this Hellas they have traversed,
Wilt have compassion on their hopeless plight.

Weigh this and that :—if thou grant these a home,
Or if thou let us hale them hence—what gain
Were thine? From us these boons thou mayest win :
Argos' strong hand and all Eurystheus' might
Thou mayest range upon this city's side.
If thou regard their pleadings, by their whinings
Be softened, to the grapple of the spear
The matter cometh. Never think that we 160
Will yield this strife but by the sword's award.
What canst thou plead? Of what lands art thou
robbed,

That with Tirynthian Argives thou wouldst war?
What allies art defending? In whose cause
Shall those thou buriest fall? Ill fame were thine
With thine Athenians, if for yon old man,
That sepulchre,—mere naught, as men might say,—
And these boys, in deep waters thou wilt sink.

Thy plea at best is hope for days to come.
Scant satisfaction for the present this! 170
For against Argos these, armed, grown to man,
Should make but feeble stand,—if haply this
Uplift thine heart :—and long years lie between,
Wherein ye may be ruined. Nay heed me :

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

δούς μηδέν, ἀλλὰ τᾶμ' ἑὼν ἄγειν ἐμέ
κτῆσαι Μυκῆνας, μηδ' ὅπερ φιλεῖτε δρᾶν
πάθης σὺ τοῦτο, τοὺς ἀμείνονας παρὸν
φίλους ἐλέσθαι, τοὺς κακίονας λάβης.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

180 τίς ἂν δίκην κρίνειεν ἢ γνοιή λόγον,
πρὶν ἂν παρ' ἀμφοῖν μῦθον ἐκμάθῃ σαφῶς ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἄναξ, ὑπάρχει μὲν τόδ' ἐν τῇ σῆι χθονί,
εἰπεῖν ἀκουσαί τ' ἐν μέρει πάρεστί μοι,
κούδεις μ' ἀπόσει πρόσθεν, ὥσπερ ἄλλοθεν.
ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ τῶδ' οὐδέν ἐστιν ἐν μέσῳ.¹
ἐπεὶ γὰρ Ἄργους οὐ μέτεσθ' ἡμῖν ἔτι,
ψήφῳ δοκῆσαν, ἀλλὰ φεύγομεν πάτραν,
πῶς ἂν δικαίως ὡς Μυκηναίους ἄγοι
ᾧδ' ὄντας ἡμᾶς, οὓς ἀπήλασαν χθονός ;
ξένοι γὰρ ἐσμεν. ἢ τὸν Ἑλλήνων ὄρον
190 φεύγειν δικαιοῦθ' ὅστις ἂν τᾶργος φύγῃ ;
οὐκουν Ἀθήνας γ' οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων φόβῳ
τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας ἐξελῶσι γῆς.
οὐ γάρ τι Τραχίς ἐστιν οὐδ' Ἀχαικὸν
πόλισμ', ὅθεν σὺ τούσδε τῇ δίκῃ μὲν οὐ,
τὸ δ' Ἄργος ὀγκῶν, οἷάπερ καὶ νῦν λέγεις,
ἤλαινες ἰκέτας βωμίους καθημένους.
εἰ γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται καὶ λόγους κρανοῦσι² σοῦς,
οὐ φῆμ' Ἀθήνας τάσδ' ἐλευθέρας ἔτι.
ἄλλ' οἷδ' ἐγὼ τὸ τῶνδε λῆμα καὶ φύσιν
200 θνήσκειν θελήσουσ' ἢ γὰρ αἰσχύνη πάρος
τοῦ ζῆν παρ' ἐσθλοῖς ἀνδράσιν νομίζεται.
πόλιν μὲν ἀρκεῖ· καὶ γὰρ οὖν ἐπίφθονον

¹ Valckenaer : for MSS. ἐν μέρει.

² Elmsley : for MSS. κρινοῦσι.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Give naught, but suffer me to take mine own ;
So gain Mycenæ's friendship. Do not err,
As oft ye do, taking the weaker side
When ye might choose for friend the stronger cause.

CHORUS

Who can give judgment, who grasp arguments,
Ere from both sides he clearly learn their pleas? 180

IOLAUS

King, this advantage have I in your land,
I am free to speak and in my turn to hear ;
None, as from other lands, will first expel me.
We and this man have naught in common now ;
We have naught to do with Argos any more
Since that decree : we are exiled from her soil.
What right hath he to hale us, whom they banished,
As we were burghers of Mycenæ yet ?
Aliens we are :—or from all Hellas banned
Are men whom Argos exiles?—claim ye this ? 190
Sooth, not from Athens : she shall drive not forth,
For fear of Argives, sons of Hercules.
She is no Trachis, no Achaean burg,
As that whence thou didst drive these—not of
right,
But, even as now, by vaunting Argos' power,—
These, suppliant at the altar as they sat !
If this shall be, if she but ratify
Thine hests, free Athens then no more I know.
Nay, her sons' nature know I, know their mood :
They will die sooner ; for in brave men's eyes 200
The honour that fears shame is more than life.
Suffice for Athens this ; for over-praise

- λίαν ἐπαινεῖν ἐστὶ, πολλάκις δὲ δὴ
 καὐτὸς βαρυνθεὶς οἶδ' ἄγαν αἰνούμενος·
 σοὶ δ' ὡς ἀνάγκη τοῦσδε βούλομαι φράσαι
 σῶζειν, ἐπεὶπερ τῆσδε προστατεῖς χθονός.
 Πιτθεὺς μὲν ἐστὶ Πέλοπος, ἐκ δὲ Πιτθέως
 Αἴθρα, πατὴρ δ' ἐκ τῆσδε γεννᾶται σέθεν
 Θησεύς. πάλιν δὲ τῶνδ' ἄνειμί σοι γένος.
- 210 Ἴρακλέης ἦν Ζηνὸς Ἄλκμῆνης τε παῖς,
 κείνη δὲ Πέλοπος θυγατρός· αὐτανεψίων
 πατὴρ ἂν εἴη σὸς τε χῶ τούτων γεγώς.
 γένους μὲν ἦκεις ὧδε τοῖσδε, Δημοφῶν·
 ἂ δ' ἐκτὸς ἤδη τοῦ προσήκοντός σε δεῖ
 τίσαι λέγω σοι παισί· φημί γάρ ποτε
 σύμπλους γενέσθαι τῶνδ' ὑπασπίζων πατρὶ
 ζωστήρα Θησεῖ τὸν πολυκτόνον μέτα,
 Ἴλιδου τ' ἐρεμνῶν ἔξανήγαγεν μυχῶν
 πατέρα σόν· Ἑλλὰς πᾶσα τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ.
- 220 [ὧν ἀντιδοῦναί σ' οἶδ' ἀπαιτοῦσιν χάριν,
 μῆτ' ἐκδοθῆναι μῆτε πρὸς βίαν θεῶν
 τῶν σῶν ἀποσπασθέντες ἐκπεσεῖν χθονός.
 σοὶ γὰρ τόδ' αἰσχρόν† χωρίς, ἔν τε πόλει κακόν,†
 ἰκέτας ἀλήτας συγγενεῖς, οἴμοι κακῶν,
 βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον, ἔλκεσθαι βία.]
 ἀλλ' ἄντομαί σε καὶ καταστέφω χεροῖν,
 μὴ πρὸς γενείου, μηδαμῶς ἀτιμίας
 τοὺς Ἴρακλειοὺς παῖδας εἰς χέρας λαβῶν.
 γενοῦ δὲ τοῖσδε συγγενῆς, γενοῦ φίλος
- 230 πατὴρ ἀδελφὸς δεσπότης· ἅπαντα γὰρ
 ταῦτ' ἐστὶ κρείσσω πλὴν ὑπ' Ἀργείοις πεσεῖν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Is odious : yea, myself have oftentimes,
 Praised above measure, been but galled thereby.
 But that thou canst not choose but save these boys
 I would show thee, who rulest o'er this land.
 Pittheus was Pelops' son : of Pittheus sprang
 Aethra ; of her was thy sire Theseus born.
 Again, the lineage of these lads I trace :
 Zeus' and Alcmena's son was Hercules : 210
 She, child of Pelops' daughter : cousins' sons
 Shall be thy father and the sire of these.
 So their near kinsman art thou, Demophon ;
 But what requital—ties of blood apart—
 Thou owest to these lads, I tell thee :—once
 Shield-bearer to their sire, I sailed with him
 To win for Theseus that Belt slaughter-fraught ;¹
 And from black gulfs of Hades he brought up
 Thy sire : all Hellas witnesseth to this.

This to requite, one boon they crave of thee,— 220
 Not to be given up, nor torn by force
 From thy Gods' fanes, and banished from thy land :
 This were thine own shame, Athens' bane withal,
 That homeless suppliants, kinsmen,—ah, their woes !
 Look on them, look !—be dragged away by force.
 I pray thee—these clasped hands are suppliant-
 boughs,—

By thy beard I implore, set not at naught
 Hercules' sons, who hast them in thine hands.
 Prove thee to these true kinsman, prove thee
 friend, 230
 Their father, brother, master—better that
 Than into hands of Argive men to fall !

¹ The belt of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, the winning of which cost many lives.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄκτειρ' ἀκούσας τούσδε συμφορᾶς, ἀναξ.
 τὴν δ' εὐγένειαν τῆς τύχης νικωμένην
 νῦν δὴ μάλιστ' εἰσείδον· οἶδε γὰρ πατρός
 ἐσθλοῦ γεγῶτες δυστυχούσ' ἀναξίως.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

240 τρισαί μ' ἀναγκάζουσι συμφορᾶς ὁδοί,
 Ἰόλαε, τοὺς σοὺς μὴ παρώσασθαι λόγους·
 τὸ μὲν μέγιστον Ζεὺς ἐφ' οὐ σὺ βώμιος
 θακεῖς νεοσσῶν τήνδ' ἔχων ὀμήγυριν,
 240 τὸ συγγενές τε καὶ τὸ προὔφειλεν καλῶς
 πράσσειν παρ' ἡμῶν τούσδε πατρώαν χάριν·
 τό τ' αἰσχρόν, οὐπερ δεῖ μάλιστα φροντίσαι·
 εἰ γὰρ παρήσω τόνδε συλᾶσθαι βία
 ξένου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς βωμόν, οὐκ ἐλευθέραν
 οἰκεῖν δοκήσω γαῖαν, Ἀργείοις δ' ὄκνη
 ἰκέτας προδοῦναι· καὶ τὰδ' ἀγχόνης πέλας.
 ἀλλ' ὄφελος μὲν εὐτυχέστερος μολεῖν·
 ὅμως δὲ καὶ νῦν μὴ τρέσης ὅπως σέ τις
 σὺν παισὶ βωμοῦ τοῦδ' ἀποσπάσει βία.
 250 σὺ δ' Ἄργος ἐλθὼν ταῦτά τ' Εὐρυσθεῖ φράσον,
 πρὸς τοῖσδέ τ', εἴ τι τοισίδ' ἐγκαλεῖ ξένοις,
 δίκης κυρήσειν· τούσδε δ' οὐκ ἄξεις ποτέ.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐδ' ἦν δίκαιον ἢ τι καὶ νικῶ λόγῳ ;

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

καὶ πῶς δίκαιον τὸν ἰκέτην ἄγειν βία ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐκοῦν ἐμοὶ τόδ' αἰσχρόν, ἀλλ' οὐ σοὶ βλάβος.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

ἐμοί γ', ἐάν σοι τούσδ' ἐφέλκεσθαι μεθῶ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

I pity these in their affliction, king.
High birth by fortune crushed I now behold
As ne'er before : born of a noble sire
Are these, yet suffer woes unmerited.

DEMOPHON

Three influences, that meet in one, constrain me,
Iolaus, not to thrust hence these my guests :
The chiefest, Zeus, upon whose altar thou
Art sitting with these nestlings compassed round ;
Then, kinship, and the debt of old, that these 240
Should for their sire's sake fare well at mine hands ;
Third, dread of shame,—this most I must regard :
For if I let this altar be despoiled
By alien force, I shall be held to dwell
In no free land, but cowed by fear of Argos
To yield up suppliants :—hanging were not worse !
I would that thou hadst come in happier plight ;
Yet, even so, fear not that any man
Shall from this altar tear thee with these boys.
Thou (*to the HERALD*), go to Argos ; tell Eurystheus
this ; 250
And, if he implead these strangers in our courts,
He shall have right. These shalt thou hale hence
never.

COPREUS

Not if my cause be just, my plea prevail ?

DEMOPHON

Just ?—to hale hence by force the suppliant ?

COPREUS

Then mine the shame : no harm befalleth thee.

DEMOPHON

My shame too, if I let thee drag these hence.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

σὺ δ' ἐξόριζε, κατ' ἐκείθεν ἄξομεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σκαίος πέφυκας τοῦ θεοῦ πλείω φρονῶν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

δεῦρ', ὡς ἔοικε, τοῖς κακοῖσι φευκτέον.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

260

ἅπασι κοινὸν ῥῦμα δαιμόνων ἔδρα.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ταῦτ' οὐ δοκήσει τοῖς Μυκηναίοις ἴσως.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὐκουν ἐγὼ τῶν ἐνθάδ' εἰμὶ κύριος ;

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

βλάπτων γ' ἐκείνους μηδέν, ἦν σὺ σωφρονῆς.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

βλάπτεσθ', ἐμοῦ γε μὴ μαιίνοντος θεοῦς.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

οὐ βούλομαί σε πόλεμον Ἄργείοις ἔχειν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

κάγὼ τοιοῦτος· τῶνδε δ' οὐ μεθήσομαι.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

ἄξω γε μέντοι τοὺς ἐμούς ἐγὼ λαβών.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

οὐκ ἄρ' ἐς Ἄργος ῥαδίως ἄπει πάλιν.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

πειρώμενος δὴ τοῦτό γ' αὐτίκ' εἶσομαι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

270

κλαίων ἄρ' ἄψει τῶνδε κοῦκ ἐς ἀμβολάς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μὴ πρὸς θεῶν κήρυκα τολμήσης θενεῖν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

COPREUS

Banish them thou : then I will lead them thence.

DEMOPHON

O born a fool, who wouldst outwit the God !

COPREUS

So hither felons must for refuge flee !

DEMOPHON

The God's house gives to all men sanctuary.

260.

COPREUS

Haply not so shall think Mycenæ's folk.

DEMOPHON

Am I not master then in mine own land ?

COPREUS

Not unto Argos' hurt,—so thou be wise.

DEMOPHON

The hurt be yours, so I flout not the Gods.

COPREUS

I would not thou with Argos shouldst have war.

DEMOPHON

I too : yet will I not abandon these.

COPREUS

Yet will I take mine own and hale them hence.

DEMOPHON

Not lightly shalt thou win to Argos back.

COPREUS

That will I now try, and be certified.

[Attempts to seize them.

DEMOPHON *(raising his staff)*

Touch these, and thou shalt rue, and that right soon. 270

CHORUS

Dare not to strike a herald, for heaven's sake !

275

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

εἰ μὴ γ' ὁ κήρυξ σωφρονεῖν μαθήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄπελθε· καὶ σὺ τοῦδε μὴ θίγῃς, ἄναξ.

ΚΟΠΡΕΤΣ

στείχω· μίᾱς γὰρ χειρὸς ἀσθενῆς μάχη.
ἤξω δὲ πολλὴν Ἄρεος Ἀργείου λαβῶν
πάγχαλκον αἰχμὴν δεῦρο. μυριοὶ δέ με
μένουσιν ἀσπιστῆρες Εὐρυσθεύς τ' ἄναξ
αὐτὸς στρατηγῶν· Ἀλκάθου δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις
καραδοκῶν τὰνθένδε τέρμασιν μένει.

280

λαμπρὸς δ' ἀκούσας σὴν ὕβριν φανήσεται
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις γῆ τε τῆδε καὶ φυτοῖς·
μάτην γὰρ ἤβην ὧδέ γ' ἂν κεκτώμεθα
πολλὴν ἐν Ἀργεῖ, μὴ σε τιμωρούμενοι.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

φθείρον· τὸ σὸν γὰρ Ἄργος οὐ δέδοικ' ἐγώ.
ἐνθένδε δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες αἰσχύνας ἐμὲ
ἄξειν βία τούσδ'· οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων πόλει
ὑπήκοον τήνδ', ἀλλ' ἐλευθέραν ἔχω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄρα προνοεῖν, πρὶν ὄροις πελάσαι
στρατὸν Ἀργείων·
μάλα δ' ὀξύς Ἄρης ὁ Μυκηναίων,
ἐπὶ τοῖσι δὲ δὴ μᾶλλον ἔτ' ἢ πρὶν.
πᾶσι γὰρ οὗτος κήρυξι νόμος,
δὶς τόσα πυργοῦν τῶν γιγνομένων.
πόσα νιν λέξειν βασιλεῦσι δοκεῖς,
ὡς δεῖν' ἔπαθεν καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν
ψυχὴν ἤλθεν διακναῖσαι ;

290

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

DEMOPHON

That will I, if the herald learn not wisdom.

CHORUS

[*To* HERALD] Depart thou :—touch thou not this man,
O king.

COPREUS

I go ; for feeble fight one hand may make.
But I will hither come with brazen mail
And spears of Argos' war : warriors untold
Await me ; and Eurystheus' self, our king,
Their chief, expecting what shall come from hence,
Waits on the marches of Alcathous.¹
He shall flash forth, being told thine insolence,
On thee, thy folk, this land, and all her fruits.
For all this warrior youth were ours for naught
In Argos, if we avenge us not on thee.

280

DEMOPHON

Begone ! I fear not that thine Argos, I !
'Twas not for thee to shame me and to drag
These hence by force. This city which I hold
Is not to Argives subject : she is free.

[*Exit* COPREUS.]

CHORUS

It is time to prepare, ere the Argive array
Over our marches on-sweepeth ;
For Mycenæ's war-spirit is keen for the fray,
And more hot for these tidings upleapeth.
Yea, and after his kind will yon herald be swelling
His wrongs—such aye double a tale in the telling :—
In the ears of his lords, think ye, how will he cry
On the foulness of outrage “ that brought him this day
Unto death well nigh ! ”

290

¹ *i. e.* in Megara, of which Alcathous had shortly before been king.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῦδε παισὶ κάλλιον γέρας
 ἢ πατρός ἐσθλοῦ κάγαθοῦ πεφυκέναι
 [γαμῆν τ' ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν· ὃς δὲ νικηθεὶς πόθῳ
 300 κακοῖς ἐκοινωνήσεν, οὐκ ἐπαινέσω,
 τέκνοις ὄνειδος εἶνεχ' ἡδονῆς λιπεῖν.]¹
 τὸ δυστυχὲς γὰρ ἠυγένει' ἀμύνεται
 τῆς δυσγενείας μάλλον· ἡμεῖς γὰρ κακῶν
 εἰς τοῦσχατον πεσόντες ἠϋρομεν φίλους
 καὶ ξυγγενεῖς τοῦσδ', οἱ τοσῆσδ' οἰκουμένης
 Ἑλληνίδος γῆς τῶνδε προὔστησαν μόνοι.
 δότ', ὦ τέκν', αὐτοῖς χεῖρα δεξιάν, δότε·
 ὑμεῖς τε παισί, καὶ πέλας προσέλθετε.
 ὦ παῖδες, εἰς μὲν πείραν ἦλθομεν φίλων
 310 ἦν δ' οὖν ποθ' ὑμῖν νόστος εἰς πάτραν φανῆ,
 καὶ δώματ' οἰκήσητε καὶ τιμὰς πατρός,
 σωτήρας αἰεὶ καὶ φίλους νομίζετε,
 καὶ μήποτ' εἰς γῆν ἐχθρὸν αἵρεσθαι δόρυ,
 μεμνημένοι τῶνδ', ἀλλὰ φιλτάτην πόλιν
 πασῶν νομίζετ'. ἄξιοι δ' ὑμῖν σέβειν
 οἱ γῆν τοσῆνδε καὶ Πελασγικὸν λεῶν
 ἡμῶν ἀπηλλάξαντο πολεμίους ἔχειν,
 πτωχοὺς ἀλήτας εἰσορῶντες· ἀλλ' ὅμως
 οὐκ ἐξέδωκαν οὐδ' ἀπήλασαν χθονός.
 320 ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ζῶν καὶ θανών, ὅταν θάνω,
 πολλῶ σ' ἐπαίνῳ Θησεώς, ὦ τᾶν, πέλας
 ὑψηλὸν ἀρῶ καὶ λέγων τὰδ' εὐφρανῶ,
 ὡς εὖ τ' ἐδέξω καὶ τέκνοισιν ἤρκεσας
 τοῖς Ἡρακλείοις, εὐγενῆς δ' ἂν Ἑλλάδα
 σώζεις πατρώαν δόξαν, ἐξ ἐσθλῶν δὲ φύς
 οὐδὲν κακίων τυγχάνεις γεγὼς πατρός,

¹ 299-301 are of doubtful genuineness.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

IOLAUS

No fairer honour-guerdon may sons win
Than this, to spring from noble sires and good,
[And so wed noble wives. Who, passion's thrall,
Links him with base folk, ne'er shall have my
praise,

300

Who, for his lust's sake, stamps his seed with shame.]
For noble birth stands in the evil day
Better than base blood. We, to deepest depths
Of evil fallen, yet have found us friends
And kin in these : in all the peopled breadth
Of Hellas these alone have championed us.
Give, children, unto these the right hand give,
And to the children ye ; draw near to them.

Boys, we have put our friends unto the test :—
If home-return shall ever dawn for you,
And your sires' halls and honours ye inherit,
Saviours and friends account them evermore,
And never against their land lift hostile spear,
Remembering this, but hold them of all states
Most dear. They are worthy of your reverence,
Who have ta'en our burden on them, enmity
Of that great land, that folk Pelasgian.

310

Beggars they saw us, homeless : for all this
They gave not up nor chased us from their land.
And I, in life,—in death, when death shall come,
With high laud will extol thee, good my lord,
At Theseus' side ; and this shall make him glad,
My tale how thou didst welcome, didst defend
Hercules' sons, how nobly Hellas through
Thou guard'st thy sire's renown : thy father's son
Shames not the noble line wherefrom he sprang.

320

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

παύρων μετ' ἄλλων· ἓνα γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖς ἴσως
εὔροις ἂν ὅστις ἐστὶ μὴ χείρων πατρός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

330 αἰεί ποθ' ἦδε γαῖα τοῖς ἀμηχάνοις
σὺν τῷ δικαίῳ βούλεται προσωφελεῖν.
τοιγὰρ πόνους δὴ μυρίους ὑπὲρ φίλων
ἤνεγκε, καὶ νῦν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ὀρώ πέλας.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

σοί τ' εὖ λέλεκται, καὶ τὰ τῶνδ' ἀυχῶ, γέρον,
τοιαῦτ' ἔσεσθαι μνημονεύσεται χάρις.
κἀγὼ μὲν ἀστῶν σύλλογον ποιήσομαι,
τάξω δ', ὅπως ἂν τὸν Μυκηναίων στρατὸν
πολλῇ δέχωμαι χειρί· πρῶτα μὲν σκοποὺς
πέμψω πρὸς αὐτόν, μὴ λάθῃ με προσπεσῶν·
340 ταχύς γὰρ Ἄργει πᾶς ἀνὴρ βοηδρόμος·
μάντις δ' ἀθροίσας θύσομαι· σὺ δ' εἰς δόμους
σὺν παισὶ χώρει, Ζηνὸς ἐσχάραν λιπῶν.
εἰσὶν γὰρ οἱ σου, κὰν ἐγὼ θυραῖος ὦ,
μέριμναν ἔξουσ'. ἀλλ' ἴθ' εἰς δόμους, γέρον.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν λίποιμι βωμόν, ἐξώμεσθα δὲ
ικέται μένοντες ἐνθάδ' εὖ πρᾶξαι πόλιν·
ὅταν δ' ἀγῶνος τοῦδ' ἀπαλλαχθῆς καλῶς,
ἴμεν πρὸς οἴκους. θεοῖσι δ' οὐ κακίοσι
χρώμεσθα συμμάχοισιν Ἀργείων, ἄναξ·
350 τῶν μὲν γὰρ Ἥρα προστατεῖ, Διὸς δάμαρ,
ἡμῶν δ' Ἀθάνα. φημί δ' εἰς εὐπραξίαν
καὶ τοῦθ' ὑπάρχειν, θεῶν ἀμεινόνων τυχεῖν·
νικωμένη γὰρ Παλλὰς οὐκ ἀνέξεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἰ σὺ μέγ' ἀυχεῖς, ἕτεροι
σου πλέον οὐ μέλονται, στρ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Few such there be : amid a thousand, one
Thou shouldst find undegenerate from his sire.

CHORUS

Ever of old she chooseth, this our land,
To help the helpless ones in justice' cause. 330
So hath she borne for friends unnumbered toils.
Now see I this new struggle looming nigh.

DEMOPHON

Well said of thee ; and sure am I that these
Shall so prove ; unforgot shall be our boon.
Now will I muster for the war my folk,
And marshal, that a goodly band may greet
Mycenae's host. Scouts first will I send forth
To meet it, lest unwares it fall on me ;
For swift the Argives throng to the gathering-cry.
Seers will I bring, and sacrifice. Thou, leave 340
Zeus' hearth, and enter with the boys mine halls :
Therein be they which, though I be afar,
Shall care for thee. Pass, ancient, to mine halls.

IOLAUS

I will not leave the altar. Let us sit,
Abiding Athens' triumph, suppliant here.
And, when thou hast brought this strife to glorious end,
Then will we enter. Champion-gods have we
Not weaker than the Argive Gods, O king.
Though Hera, bride of Zeus, before them go,
Ours is Athena ; and this tells, say I, 350
For triumph, to have gotten mightier Gods ;
For Pallas never shall brook overthrow.

[*Exit* DEMOPHON.]

CHORUS

Ay, vaunt as thou wilt, yet uncaring (Str.)
Will we swerve none the more from the right,

ὦ ξεῖν' Ἀργόθεν ἔλθῶν·
 μεγαληγορίαισι δ' ἐμὰς
 φρένας οὐ φοβήσεις.
 μήπω ταῖς μεγάλαισιν οὔτω
 καὶ καλλιχόροις Ἀθάναις
 εἶη. σὺ δ' ἀφρων ὅ τ' Ἀργεῖ
 Σθενέλου τύραννος·

360

ὅς πόλιν ἔλθῶν ἑτέραν
 οὐδὲν ἐλάσσον' Ἀργους,
 θεῶν ἰκτῆρας ἀλάτας
 καὶ ἐμὰς χθονὸς ἀντομένους
 ξένος ὦν βιαίως
 ἔλκεις, οὐ βασιλεῦσιν εἶξας,
 οὐκ ἄλλο δίκαιον εἰπῶν·
 ποῦ ταῦτα καλῶς ἂν εἶη
 παρά γ' εὖ φρονούσιν;

370

εἰρήνα μὲν ἔμοιγ' ἀρέσκει·
 σοὶ δ', ὦ κακόφρων ἄναξ,
 λέγω· εἰ πόλιν ἤξεις,
 οὐχ οὔτως ἂ δοκεῖς κυρήσεις.
 οὐ σοὶ μόνῳ ἔγχος οὐδ'
 ἰτέα κατάχαλκος ἔστιν.
 ἀλλ' οὐ, πολέμων ἐραστά,
 μή μοι δορὶ συνταράξης
 τὰν εὖ χαρίτων ἔχουσαν
 πόλιν, ἀλλ' ἀνάσχοι.

380

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί μοι σύννοιαν ὄμμασιν φέρων
 ἤκεις; νέον τι πολεμίῳν λέγεις πέρι;
 μέλλουσιν ἢ πάρειςιν ἢ τί πυνθάνει;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

O thou stranger from Argolis faring
 To Athens, thou shalt not affright
 Our souls by thy bluster high-swelling.
 Not yet such dishonour be done
 To the land great and fair beyond telling !
 Fools—thou and thy despot-lord dwelling 360
 In Argos, this Sthenelus' son !

Thou who com'st to a city no lesser (Ant.)
 Than Argos, essaying to seize—
 And thou alien, O violent oppressor !—
 The suppliants that cling to her knees,
 The homeless that cry from her altars !
 Thou hast not respect to our king,
 And with justice thy false tongue palters :—
 Who, except from truth's pathway he falters,
 But shall count it an infamous thing ? 370

Peace love I well, but I warn thee, (Epode)
 O tyrant, O treacherous-souled,
 Though thou march to the gates of our hold,
 Not the crown of thy hopes shall adorn thee.
 Not for thine hand the war-spear alone
 Nor the brass on the buckler hath shone !
 O thou that in battle delightest,
 Trouble not, trouble not with thy spear
 The burg that the Graces make brightest
 Of cities :—dread thou and forbear. 380

Re-enter DEMOPHON.

IOLAUS

My son, why com'st thou with care-clouded eyes ?
 Tellest thou evil tidings of the foe ?
 Tarry they ?—are they on us ?—what hast heard ?

οὐ γάρ τι μὴ ψεύσῃ γε κήρυκος λόγος·
 ὁ γὰρ στρατηγὸς εὐτυχῆς τὰ πρόσθεν ὦν¹
 εἶσιν, σάφ' οἶδα, καὶ μάλ' οὐ σμικρὸν φρονῶν
 εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας. ἀλλὰ τῶν φρονημάτων
 ὁ Ζεὺς κολαστὴς τῶν ἄγαν ὑπερφρόνων.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

390 ἦκει στράτευμ' Ἀργεῖον Εὐρυσθεὺς τ' ἀναξ·
 ἐγὼ νιν αὐτὸς εἶδον. ἄνδρα γὰρ χρεῶν,
 ὅστις στρατηγεῖν φησ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς,
 οὐκ ἀγγέλοισι τοὺς ἐναντίους ὄραν.
 πεδία μὲν οὖν γῆς εἰς τὰδ' οὐκ ἐφήκέ πω
 στρατόν, λεπαίαν δ' ὀφρῦν καθήμενος
 σκοπεῖ, δόκησιν δὴ τόδ' ἂν λέγοιμί σοι,
 ποία προσάξει στρατόπεδόν τ' ἄνευ δορὸς
 ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ τε τῆσδ' ἰδρύσεται χθονός.
 καὶ τὰμὰ μέντοι πάντ' ἄραρ' ἤδη καλῶς·
 400 πόλις τ' ἐν ὄπλοις, σφάγιά θ' ἠτοιμασμένα
 ἔστηκεν οἷς χρῆ ταῦτα τέμνεσθαι θεῶν,
 θνηπολεῖται δ' ἄστνυ μάντεων ὕπο,
 τροπαῖά τ' ἐχθρῶν καὶ πόλει σωτήρια.
 χρησμῶν δ' ἀοιδοὺς πάντας εἰς ἐν ἀλίσας
 ἤλεγξα καὶ βέβηλα καὶ κεκρυμμένα
 λόγια παλαιά, τῆδε γῆ σωτήρια.
 καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων διάφορ' ἐστὶ θεσφάτων
 πόλλ'. ἐν δὲ πᾶσι γινῶμα ταῦτόν ἐμπρέπει
 σφάξαι κελεύουσίν με παρθένον κόρη
 410 Δῆμητρος, ἣτις ἐστὶ πατὴρ εὐγενοῦς.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔχω μὲν, ὡς ὄρας, προθυμίαν
 τοσήνδ' ἐς ὑμᾶς· παῖδα δ' οὔτ' ἐμὴν κτενῶ
 οὔτ' ἄλλον ἀστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναγκάσω

¹ Tyrwhitt: for MSS. πρὸς θεῶν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

No empty promise was yon herald's threat.
Their captain, aye triumphant heretofore,
Shall march, I know, with heart uplifted high,
Against our Athens. Notwithstanding Zeus
Chastiseth overweening arrogance.

DEMOPHON

They are come, the Argive host and king Eurystheus.
Myself beheld them; for behoves the man, 390
Whoso makes claim to know good generalship,
To see—nor that with eyes of scouts—his foes.
But to the plains not yet hath he marched down
His bands, but, couched upon the rocky brow,
Watcheth—I but make guess of that I tell thee—
Where without conflict to push on his host,
And in the land's heart camp him safety-girt.

Yet all my preparations well are laid :
Athens is all in arms, the victims ready
Stand for the Gods to whom they must be slain : 400
By seers the city is filled with sacrifice
For the foes' rout and saving of the state.
All prophecy-chanters have I caused to meet,
Into old public oracles have searched,
And secret, for salvation of this land.
And, mid their manifold diversities,
In one thing glares the sense of all the same :—
They bid me to Demeter's Daughter slay
A maiden of a high-born father sprung.

Full am I, as thou seest, of good will 410
To you; yet neither will I slay my child,
Nor force thereto another of my folk;

ἄκονθ'· ἐκὼν δὲ τίς κακῶς οὕτω φρονεῖ,
 ὅστις τὰ φίλτατ' ἐκ χερῶν δώσει τέκνα ;
 καὶ νῦν πικρὰς ἂν συστάσεις ἂν εἰσίδοις,
 τῶν μὲν λεγόντων ὡς δίκαιον ἦν ξένοις
 ἰκέταις ἀρήγειν, τῶν δὲ μωρίαν ἐμοῦ
 κατηγορούντων· εἰ δὲ δὴ δράσω τόδε,
 οἰκεῖος ἤδη πόλεμος ἐξαρτύεται.

420

ταῦτ' οὖν ὄρα σὺ καὶ συνεξεύρισχ' ὅπως
 αὐτοί τε σωθήσεσθε καὶ πέδον τόδε,
 κἀγὼ πολίταις μὴ διαβληθήσομαι.
 οὐ γὰρ τυραννίδ' ὥστε βαρβάρων ἔχω
 ἀλλ' ἦν δίκαια δρῶ, δίκαια πείσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ πρόθυμον οὔσαν οὐκ ἐᾷ θεὸς
 ξένοις ἀρήγειν τήνδε χρήζουσαν πόλιν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τέκν', ἔοιγμεν ναυτίλοισιν, οὔτινες
 χειμῶνος ἐκφυγόντες ἄγριον μένος
 εἰς χεῖρα γῆ συνῆψαν, εἶτα χερσόθεν
 πνοαῖσιν ἠλάθησαν εἰς πόντον πάλιν.
 οὕτω δὲ χῆμεις τῆσδ' ἀπωθούμεσθα γῆς
 ἤδη πρὸς ἀκταῖς ὄντες ὡς σεσωσμένοι.
 οἴμοι· τί δῆτ' ἔτερψας ὦ τάλαινά με
 ἐλπίς τότ', οὐ μέλλουσα διατελεῖν χάριν ;
 συγγνωστὰ γάρ τοι καὶ τὰ τοῦδ', εἰ μὴ θέλει
 κτείνειν πολιτῶν παῖδας, αἰνέσαι δ' ἔχω
 καὶ τὰνθάδ'. εἰ θεοῖσι δὴ δοκεῖ τάδε
 πράσσειν ἔμ', οὔτοι σοί γ' ἀπόλλυται χάρις.
 ὦ παῖδες, ὑμῖν δ' οὐκ ἔχω τί χρήσομαι.
 ποῖ τρεψόμεσθα ; τίς γὰρ ἄστεπτος θεῶν ;
 ποῖον δὲ γαίας ἔρκος οὐκ ἀφίγμεθα ;
 οἴλούμεθ', ὦ τέκν', ἐκδοθησόμεσθα δῆ.

430

440

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And of his own will who hath heart so hard
As from his hands to yield a most dear child ?
Now gatherings mayst thou see of angry mood,
Where some say, right it is to render help
To suppliant strangers, some cry out upon
My folly :—yea, and if I do this thing,
Even this day is civil war afoot.

See thou to this then : help me find a way
Whereby yourselves and Athens shall be saved, 420
And I shall not be of my folk reproached.
For mine is no barbarian despot's sway,
But by just dealing my just dues I win.

CHORUS

How ? do the Gods forbid that Athens help
The stranger, though she yearn with eager will ?

IOLAUS

O children, we are like to shipmen, who,
Escaped the madding fury of the storm,
And now in act to grasp the land, have yet
By blasts been driven from shore to sea again. 430
Even so are we from this land thrust away,
When, as men saved, even now we touched the
strand.

Ah, me why didst thou cheer me, cruel hope,
Erst, when thy mind was not to crown thy boon ?
The king I cannot blame, who will not slay
His people's daughters : yea, I am content
With Athens' dealings with us : if my plight
Please Heaven, my gratitude to thee dies not.
Ah boys, for you I know not what to do !
Whitherward flee ?—what Gods rest unimplored ? 440
What refuge upon earth have we not sought ?
Die shall we, children, yielded up to foes.

κάμου μὲν οὐδὲν εἶ με χρὴ θανεῖν μέλει,
 πλὴν εἴ τι τέρψω τοὺς ἐμούς ἐχθροὺς θανών·
 ὑμᾶς δὲ κλαίω καὶ κατοικτεῖρω, τέκνα,
 καὶ τὴν γεραιὰν μητέρ' Ἀλκμήνην πατρός.
 ὦ δυστάλαινα τοῦ μακροῦ βίου σέθεν,
 τλήμων δὲ κάγῳ πολλὰ μοχθήσας μάτην.
 450 χρῆν χρῆν ἄρ' ἡμᾶς ἀνδρὸς εἰς ἐχθροῦ χέρας
 πεσόντας αἰσχροῦς καὶ κακῶς λιπεῖν βίον.
 ἀλλ' οἴσθ' ὅ μοι σύμπραξον; οὐχ ἅπασα γὰρ
 πέφευγεν ἐλπίς τῶνδ' ἐμοὶ σωτηρίας.
 ἔμ' ἔκδος Ἀργείοισιν ἀντὶ τῶνδ', ἄναξ,
 καὶ μήτε κινδύνευε, σωθήτω τέ μοι
 τέκν'. οὐ φιλεῖν δεῖ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἴτω.
 μάλιστα δ' Εὐρυσθεὺς με βούλοισι' ἀν λαβὼν
 τὸν Ἡράκλειον σύμμαχον καθυβρίσαι·
 σκαιὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ τοῖς σοφοῖς δ' εὐκτὸν σοφῷ
 460 ἔχθραν συνάπτει, μὴ ἀμαθεῖ φρονήματι.
 πολλῆς γὰρ αἰδοῦς καὶ δίκης τις ἀν τύχοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πρέσβυ, μή νυν τήνδ' ἐπαιτιῶ πόλιν·
 τάχ' ἀν γὰρ ἡμῖν ψευδὲς ἀλλ' ὅμως κακὸν
 γένοιτ' ὄνειδος ὡς ξένους προὔδωκαμεν.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

γενναῖα μὲν τὰδ' εἶπας, ἀλλ' ἀμήχανα.
 οὐ σοῦ χατίζων δεῦρ' ἄναξ στρατηλατεῖ.
 τί γὰρ γέροντος ἀνδρὸς Εὐρυσθεῖ πλέον
 θανόντος; ἀλλὰ τοῦσδε βούλεται κτανεῖν.
 δεινὸν γὰρ ἐχθροῖς βλαστάνοντες εὐγενεῖς,
 νεανῖαι τε καὶ πατρὸς μεμνημένοι
 470 λύμης· ἂ κείνον πάντα προσκοπεῖν χρεῶν.
 ἀλλ' εἴ τιν' ἄλλην οἴσθα καιριωτέραν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

I reek not of myself, if I must die,—
 Except that o'er my death yon foes shall gloat ;
 But for you, babes, I weep in utter ruth,
 And for your sire's grey mother, even Alcmena,
 O lady, hapless in thy length of days !
 And hapless I, who have greatly toiled in vain !
 Doomed were we, doomed into a foeman's hands
 To fall, and die in shame and agony ! 450
 King, help me!—wouldst know how?—not every
 hope

Of their deliverance hath fled my soul :—
 Me to the Argives yield up in their stead.
 So be unperilled thou, the lads be saved.
 No right have I to love life : let it go !
 Me would Eurystheus most rejoice to seize,—
 Hercules' ally, me,—and evil-entreat ;
 For churl he is. Let wise men pray to strive
 With wise men, not with graceless arrogance.
 So, if one fall, he stoops to chivalrous foe. 460

CHORUS

O ancient, upon Athens cast not blame !
 Haply 'twere false, yet foul reproach were this
 That we abandoned stranger-suppliants.

DEMOPHON

Noble thine offer ; yet it cannot be,
 Not craving thee doth this king hither march ;
 For of what profit to Eurystheus were
 An old man's death ? Nay, these he lusts to slay.
 For dangerous to foes are high-born youths
 Growing to man, and brooding on sires' wrongs ;
 And all this he foresees, he needs must so. 470
 If any rede thou knowest more than this

βουλήν, ετοίμαζ', ὡς ἔγωγ' ἀμήχανος
 χρησμῶν ἀκούσας εἰμὶ καὶ φόβου πλέως.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ξένοι, θράσος μοι μηδὲν ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς
 προσθήτε· πρῶτον γὰρ τόδ' ἐξαιτήσομαι·
 γυναικὶ γὰρ σιγῇ τε καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν
 κάλλιστον, εἴσω θ' ἥσυχον μένειν δόμων.
 τῶν σῶν δ' ἀκούσας, Ἴολεως, στεναγμάτων
 ἐξῆλθον, οὐ ταχθείσα πρεσβεύειν γένους.
 480 ἀλλ' εἰμὶ γάρ πως πρόσφορος, μέλει δέ μοι
 μάλιστ' ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε, κάμαντῆς πέρι
 θέλω πυθέσθαι, μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς πάλαι κακοῖς
 προσκείμενόν τι πῆμα σὴν δάκνει φρένα.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, μάλιστα σ' οὐ νεωστὶ δὴ τέκνων
 τῶν Ἡρακλείων ἐνδίκως αἰνεῖν ἔχω.
 ἡμῖν δὲ δόξας εὖ προχωρήσαι δόμος
 πάλιν μεθέστηκε· αὐθις εἰς τὰμήχανον·
 χρησμῶν γὰρ ᾠδοὺς φησι σημαίνειν ὄδε,
 οὐ ταῦρον οὐδὲ μόσχον, ἀλλὰ παρθένον
 490 σφάξαι κόρη Δήμητρος ἥτις εὐγενής,
 εἰ χρὴ μὲν ἡμᾶς, χρὴ δὲ τήνδ' εἶναι πόλιν.
 ταῦτ' οὖν ἀμηχανοῦμεν· οὔτε γὰρ τέκνα
 σφάξειν ὄδ' αὐτοῦ φησιν οὔτ' ἄλλου τινός,
 κάμοι λέγει μὲν οὐ σαφῶς, λέγει δέ πως,
 εἰ μὴ τι τούτων ἐξαμηχανήσομεν,
 ἡμᾶς μὲν ἄλλην γαίαν εὐρίσκειν τινά,
 αὐτὸς δὲ σῶσαι τήνδε βούλεται χθόνα.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

ἐν τῷδε κἀχόμεσθα σωθῆναι λόγῳ·

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἐν τῷδε, τᾶλλα γ' εὐτυχῶς πεπραγότες.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

In season, set it forth : I am desperate,
Hearing these oracles, and full of fear.

Enter MACARIA from the temple.

MACARIA

Strangers, impute not for my coming forth
Boldness to me : this is my first request ;
Since for a woman silence and discretion
Be fairest, and still tarrying in the home.
But, Iolaus, I heard thy moans, and came,—
Though I be not ordained mine house's head :
Yet in some sort it fits me, for I love
These brethren more than all : yea, mine own fate
Fain would I learn,—lest to the former ills
Some new pang added now torments thy soul.

480

IOLAUS

Daughter, long since have I had righteous cause
To praise thee chiefiest of Hercules' seed.
Our house, that seemed but now to prosper well,
Once more hath fallen into desperate case.
For oracle-chanters, saith this king, proclaim
That he must bid to slay nor bull nor calf,
But a maid, daughter of a high-born sire,
If we, if Athens, must not cease to be.
This then is our despair : the king refuseth
To slay his own or any other's child,
And saith to me,—albeit not in words,—
Except we find for this some remedy,
We must needs forth and seek another land ;
But his own land he cannot chose but save.

490

MACARIA

On these terms hangeth our deliverance ?

IOLAUS

On these,—if in all else our fortune speed.

291

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

- 500 μή νυν τρέσης ἔτ' ἐχθρὸν Ἀργεῖον δόρυ·
 ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτὴ πρὶν κελευσθῆναι, γέρον,
 θνήσκειν ἐτοίμη καὶ παρίστασθαι σφαγῇ.
 τί φήσομεν γάρ, εἰ πόλις μὲν ἀξιοῖ
 κίνδυνον ἡμῶν εἴνεκ' αἵρεσθαι μέγαν,
 αὐτοὶ δὲ προστιθέντες ἄλλοισιν πόνους,
 παρὸν σφε σῶσαι, φευξόμεσθα μὴ θανείν;
 οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια,
 στένειν μὲν ἰκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,
 πατὴρ δ' ἐκείνου φύντας οὐ πεφύκαμεν,
 510 κακοὺς ὀραῖσθαι· ποῦ τὰδ' ἐν χρηστοῖς πρέπει;
 κάλλιον, οἶμαι, τῆσδ' ἂ μὴ τύχοι ποτέ,
 πόλεως ἀλούσης, χεῖρας εἰς ἐχθρῶν πεσεῖν,
 κἄπειτα δεινά, πατὴρ οὖσαν εὐγενοῦς,
 παθοῦσαν Ἄϊδην μηδὲν ἦσσον εἰσιδεῖν.
 ἀλλ' ἐκπεσοῦσα τῆσδ' ἀλητεύσω χθονός,
 κοῦκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι δῆτ', ἐὰν δὴ τις λέγῃ·
 τί δεῦρ' ἀφίκεσθ' ἰκεσίοισι σὺν κλάδοις
 αὐτοὶ φιλοψυχοῦντες; ἔξιτε χθονός·
 κακοὺς γὰρ ἡμεῖς οὐ προσωφελήσομεν.
 520 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μέντοι, τῶνδε μὲν τεθνηκότων,
 αὐτὴ δὲ σωθεῖσ', ἐλπίδ' εὐπράξειν ἔχω·
 πολλοὶ γὰρ ἤδη τῆδε προὔδοσαν φίλους·
 τίς γὰρ κόρην ἔρημον ἢ δάμαρτ' ἔχει
 ἢ παιδοποιεῖν ἐξ ἐμοῦ βουλήσεται;
 οὐκουν θανεῖν ἄμεινον ἢ τούτων τυχεῖν
 ἀναξίαν; ἄλλη δὲ καὶ πρέπει τινὶ
 μᾶλλον τὰδ', ἦτις μὴ πίσημος ὡς ἐγώ.
 ἠγγεῖσθ' ὅπου δεῖ σῶμα κατθανεῖν τάδε,
 καὶ στεμματοῦτε καὶ κατάρχεσθ', εἰ δοκεῖ·
 530 νικᾶτε δ' ἐχθρούς· ἦδε γὰρ ψυχὴ πάρα

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

Then dread no more the Argive foeman's spear. 500

Myself—I wait no bidding, ancient—am

Ready to die, and yield me to be slain.

What can we say, if Athens count it meet

To brave a mighty peril for our sake,

And we to others pass the struggle on,

And flee death, when that way deliverance lies ?

Never!—a scoffing to us this should be,

To sit and moan on, suppliant to their Gods,

And—born of that sire of whose loins we sprang—

To show us craven ! Is this like the brave ? 510

Better, forsooth, this town—which God forbid !—

Were ta'en, that into hands of foes I fell,

And suffered—I, from hero-father sprung—

Horrors, and looked on Hades none the less !

Or, banished, shall I wander from this land,

And not be utterly shamed, if one should say,

“ Wherefore come hither with your suppliant boughs,

O ye that so love life ?—hence from our land !

For we to cravens will not render help ? ”

Nay, and not even if all these were slain 520

And I saved, have I hope of happy days ;—

Many, so tempted, have betrayed their friends ;—

For who would stoop to take a friendless girl

To wife, or care to raise up seed of me ?

Better to die than light on such a doom

Unworthy ! Haply this might well beseem

Another maid who hath not my renown.

Lead on to where this body needs must die :

Wreathe me, begin the rite, if this seem good. 530

Vanquish your foes ; for ready is this life,

έκουσα κούκ ἄκουσα· κάξαγγέλλομαι
 θνήσκειν ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε κάμαυτῆς ὕπερ.
 εὔρημα γάρ τοι μῆ φιλοψυχούσ' ἐγὼ
 κάλλιστον ἠύρηκ', εὐκλεῶς λιπεῖν βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, τί λέξω παρθένου μέγαν λόγον
 κλύων, ἀδελφῶν ἢ πάροσ θέλει θανεῖν ;
 τούτων τίς ἂν λέξειε γενναίους λόγους
 μᾶλλον, τίς ἂν δράσειεν ἀνθρώπων ἔτι ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλλοθεν τὸ σὸν κάρα,
 540 ἄλλ' ἐξ ἐκείνου σπέρμα τῆς θείας φρενὸς
 πέφυκας Ἡράκλειος· οὐδ' αἰσχύνομαι
 τοῖς σοῖς λόγοισι, τῇ τύχῃ δ' ἀλγύνομαι.
 ἄλλ' ἢ γένοιτ' ἂν ἐνδίκωτέρως φράσω·
 πάσας ἀδελφὰς τῆσδε δεῦρο χρῆ κάλεῖν,
 κᾶθ' ἢ λαχοῦσα θνησκέτω γένους ὕπερ·
 σέ δ' οὐ δίκαιον κατθανεῖν ἄνευ πάλου.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

οὐκ ἂν θάνοιμι τῇ τύχῃ λαχοῦσ' ἐγὼ·
 χάρις γάρ οὐ πρόσεστι· μῆ λέξης, γέρον.
 ἄλλ' εἰ μὲν ἐνδέχεσθε καὶ βούλεσθέ μοι
 550 χρῆσθαι προθύμω, τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐγὼ
 δίδωμ' ἐκούσα τοῖσδ', ἀναγκασθεῖσα δ' οὔ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ.

ὄδ' αὖ λόγος σοι τοῦ πρὶν εὐγενέστερος·
 κάκεινος ἦν ἄριστος, ἄλλ' ὕπερφέρεις
 τόλμη τε τόλμαν καὶ λόγῳ χρηστῶ λόγον.
 οὐ μὴν κελεύω γ' οὐδ' ἀπεννέπω, τέκνον,
 θνήσκειν· σ'· ἀδελφούς δ' ὠφελεῖς θανοῦσα σοῦς.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Willing, ungrudging. Yea, I pledge me now
For these my brothers' sake, and mine, to die.
For treasure-trove most fair, by loving not
Life, have I found,—with glory to quit life.

CHORUS

What shall I say, who hear this maid's high words
Consenting for her brethren's sake to die?
What man could utter nobler words than these,
Or who do nobler deed henceforth for ever?

IOLAUS

O child, thine heart is of none other sire—
Thou art his own seed, of that godlike soul, 540
Hercules, sprung! Exceeding proud am I
For these thy words, but grieve for this hard fate.
Yet how 'twere done more justly will I tell:
Hither be all this maiden's sisters called;
Then for her house let whom the lot dooms die;
But that thou die without lot is not just.

MACARIA

I will not perish by the lot's doom, I;
For then is no free grace: thou, name it not.
But if ye will accept me, and consent
To take an eager victim, willingly 550
I give my life for these, nowise constrained.

IOLAUS

Ah, marvellous one!
Nobler thy latter speech is than thy first.
Perfect was that, but thou o'erpass'est now.
Courage with courage, word with noble word!
Yet, daughter, thee I bid not, nor forbid
To die:—thy brethren dost thou, dying, help.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

560 σοφῶς κελεύεις· μὴ τρέσης μιάσματος
 τρούμου μετασχεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως θάνω.
 ἔπου δέ, πρέσβυ· σῆ γὰρ ἐνθανεῖν χερὶ
 θέλω· πέπλοις δὲ σῶμ' ἐμὸν κρύψον παρών·
 ἐπεὶ σφαγῆς γε πρὸς τὸ δεινὸν εἶμ' ἐγώ,
 εἴπερ πέφυκα πατρὸς οὐπερ εὔχομαι.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην σῶ παρεστάμαι μόρφ.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τοῦδε χρῆζε, μή μ' ἐν ἀρσένων,
 ἀλλ' ἐν γυναικῶν χερσὶν ἐκπνεῦσαι βίου.

ΔΗΜΟΦΩΝ

570 ἔσται τάδ', ὦ τάλαινα παρθένων· ἐπεὶ
 κἀμοὶ τόδ' αἰσχρόν, μή σε κοσμεῖσθαι καλῶς,
 πολλῶν ἕκατι, τῆς τε σῆς εὐψυχίας
 καὶ τοῦ δικαίου· τλημονεστάτην δὲ σὲ
 πασῶν γυναικῶν εἶδον ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐγώ.
 ἀλλ' εἴ τι βούλει τούσδε τὸν γέροντά τε,
 χώρει προσειποῦς' ὑστάτοις προσφθέγμασιν.

ΜΑΚΑΡΙΑ

580 ὦ χαῖρε, πρέσβυ· χαῖρε καὶ δίδασκέ μοι
 τοιούσδε τούσδε παῖδας εἰς τὸ πᾶν σοφοὺς
 ὥσπερ σύ, μηδὲν μᾶλλον· ἀρκέσουσι γάρ.
 πειρῶ δὲ σῶσαι μὴ θανεῖν, πρόθυμος ὢν·
 σοὶ παῖδές ἐσμεν· σαῖν χεροῖν τεθράμμεθα.
 ὀρᾶς δὲ κἀμὲ τὴν ἐμὴν ὥραν γάμου
 διδοῦσαν ἀντὶ τῶνδε καθθανουμένην.
 ὑμεῖς δ' ἀδελφῶν ἢ παροῦς' ὀμιλία,
 εὐδαιμονοῖτε, καὶ γένοιθ' ὑμῖν ὅσων
 ἡμὴ πάροιθε καρδία σφαγήσεται.
 καὶ τὸν γέροντα τὴν τ' ἔσω γραῖαν δόμων

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

MACARIA

Thou dost bid—wisely. Fear not thou to take
Guilt-stain of me ; but let me die—die free.
Come with me, ancient : in thine arms to die 560
I ask. Be near me ; veil my corse with robes,
Since to the horror of the knife I pass—
If I be of the sire that I boast mine.

IOLAUS

I cannot stand and look upon thy doom.

MACARIA

At least ask thou the king that I may breathe
My last breath not in men's but women's hands.

DEMOPHON

This shall be, hapless among maidens : shame
Were mine to grace thee not with honour meet,
For causes manifold ; for thy great heart,
For justice' sake, and for that thou art brave 570
Above all women that mine eyes have seen.
Wouldst thou say aught to these, or this grey sire,
Speak thy last word, or ever thou depart. [*Exit.*]

MACARIA

Farewell, old sire, farewell, and teach, O teach
These boys to be like thee, in all things wise
As thou art—no whit more : that shall suffice.
And strive from death to save them, loyal soul :
Thy children are we, fostered by thine hands.
Thou seest how my bloom of spousal-tide 580
I yield up in the stead of these to die.
And ye, O band of brethren at my side,
Blessings on you ! May all be yours, for which
The cleaving of mine heart shall pay the price.
This old man, and the grey queen therewithin,

σοφῶς κελεύε
τοῦ μοῦ μετασ
ἔπον δέ, πρὸς
θέλω πέπλοι
ἐπεὶ σφαγῆς
εἵπερ πέφυκα

οὐκ ἂν δυναί,

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τ
ἀλλ' ἐν γυναι

ἔσται τὰ δ', ε
καὶ μοὶ τόδ' α
πολλῶν ἕκα
καὶ τοῦ δικε
πασῶν γυνε
ἀλλ' εἴ τι β
χάροι προσ

ὦ χαίρε, πι
τοιούσδε το
ὡσπερ σύ,
πειρῶ δέ σ
σοὶ παῖδες
ὄρας δέ κά
διδούσαν ἀ
580 ὑμεῖς δ' ἀδ
εὐδαιμονοῖ
ἤμῃ πάροι
καὶ τὸν γέ

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΩ

τὸν μὲν ἀφ' ὑψηλῶν βραχίονα
τὸν δ' ἀτίταν' εὐδαιμονα θέμι
μόρσιμα δ' οὔτι φονγεῖν θέμι
οὐ σοφία τις ἀπώσεται
ἀλλὰ μάταν ὁ πρόθυμος αἰετῶν

ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ προπίτνω τὰ θεῶν
ἀλγει

620 φροντίδα λυπα
εὐδόκιμον γὰρ ἔχει θανάτου μέρος
ἄμελέα πρό τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γυναικῶν
οὐδ' ἀκλεῆς γυν
δόξα πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ὑποδέχεται
ἄδ' ἀρετὰ βαίνει δια μόχθου
ἄξια μὲν πατρός, ἄξια δ'
εὐγενείας τὰδε γίνετα
εἰ δὲ σέβεις θανάτους ἀγαθῶν, μὴ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

630 ὦ τέκνα, χαίρετ'. Ἴολεως δὲ πατρὸς
μήτηρ τε πατρός τῆσδ' ἔδρος ἀπαιτῶ

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πίερεσμεν, οἷα δὴ γ' ἐμοῦ παρουσίας

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί χρήμα κείσαι καὶ κατηχῆς ὄψεαι

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φροντίς τις ἦλθ' οἰκείος, ἢ στυγερῆς

¹ Lobeck: for MSS. ἀπαιτῶ

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And him that was highly exalted it comes to abase,
And him that was nothing accounted it setteth on
high.

may flee not your doom, nor repel, though the
buckler of wisdom ye borrow,
And whoso essayeth hath vain toil endlessly.

(Ant.)

cast thee not down, but endure heaven's stroke,
nor thy spirit surrender

Unto anguished despair.

620

She hath won her a portion in death that the world
shall praise. [Athens' defender;

who hath out of her agony risen, her brethren's, our
And a crown shall she wear

Of renown that the worship of men on her brows
shall place; [ing fare.

For through tangle of trouble doth virtue unflatter-
f her sire is it worthily done, of her line's heroic
splendour. [share.

In thine homage to noble death mine heart hath
enter HENCHMAN OF HYLLUS.

HENCHMAN

630 tail, children! Where stay ancient Iolaus
and your sire's mother from their session here?

630

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

Here am I—such as my poor presence is.

HENCHMAN

Why dost thou lie thus? Why these down-drooped
eyes?

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

My sorrow of this house is come to oppress me.

τὸν μὲν ἀφ' ὑψηλῶν βραχὺν ᾤκισε,
 τὸν δ' ἀτίταν¹ εὐδαίμονα τεύχει.
 μόρσιμα δ' οὔτι φυγεῖν θέμις,
 οὐ σοφία τις ἀπόσεται·
 ἀλλὰ μάταν ὁ πρόθυμος αἰὲ πόνον ἔξει.

ἀντ.
 ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ προπίτνων τὰ θεῶν φέρε μηδ' ὑπερ-
 ἄλγει

620 φροντίδα λύπα·
 εὐδόκιμον γὰρ ἔχει θανάτου μέρος
 ἅ μελέα πρό τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γᾶς·
 οὐδ' ἀκλεῆς νιν
 δόξα πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ὑποδέξεται·
 ἅ δ' ἀρετὰ βαίνει διὰ μόχθων.
 ἄξια μὲν πατρός, ἄξια δ'
 εὐγενίας τάδε γίγνεται·
 εἰ δὲ σέβεις θανάτους ἀγαθῶν, μετέχω σοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

630 ὦ τέκνα, χαίρετ'· Ἰόλεως δὲ ποῦ γέρων
 μήτηρ τε πατρὸς τῆσδ' ἔδρας ἀποστατεῖ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

παύρεσμεν, οἷα δὴ γ' ἐμοῦ παρουσία.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί χρῆμα κείσαι καὶ κατηχῆς ὄμμ' ἔχεις;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φροντίς τις ἦλθ' οἰκείος, ἧ συνειχόμην.

¹ Lobeck: for MSS. ἀλήταν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And him that was highly exalted it comes to abase,
 And him that was nothing accounted it setteth on
 high.
 Ye may flee not your doom, nor repel, though the
 buckler of wisdom ye borrow,
 And whoso essayeth hath vain toil endlessly.

(Ant.)

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 nor thy spirit surrender

620

Unto anguished despair.

She hath won her a portion in death that the world
 shall praise, [Athens' defender ;
 Who hath out of her agony risen, her brethren's, our
 And a crown shall she wear

Of renown that the worship of men on her brows
 shall place ; [ing fare.
 For through tangle of trouble doth virtue unfalter-
 Of her sire is it worthily done, of her line's heroic
 splendour. [share.

In thine homage to noble death mine heart hath

Enter HENCHMAN OF HYLUS.

HENCHMAN

Hail, children ! Where stay ancient Iolaus
 And your sire's mother from their session here ?

630

IOLAUS

Here am I—such as my poor presence is.

HENCHMAN

Why dost thou lie thus ? Why these down-drooped
 eyes ?

IOLAUS

A sorrow of this house is come to oppress me.

τὸν μὲν ὑψὺ ἕψηλά
τὸν δ' ἀτίταν¹ εὐδα
μόρσιμα δ' οὔτι φι
οὐ σοφία τις ἀπώε
ἀλλὰ μάταν ὁ πρό

ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ προτ
ἀλγει

620 φροντίδα λύπα·
εὐδόκιμον γὰρ ἔχ,
ἀ μελέα πρό τ' αἰ
οὐδ' ἀκλεῆς νιν
δόξα πρὸς ἀνθρώ
ἀ δ' ἀρετὰ βαινε
ἄξια μὲν πατρός,
εὐγενίας τάδε γύ
εἰ δὲ σέβεις θαν

630 ὦ τέκνα, χαίρετ
μήτηρ τε πατρὸ

πάρεσμεν, οἶα ε

τί χρῆμα κεῖσα

φροντίς τις ἦλ

300

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑ

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

τί γὰρ βοῆν ἔστησαν ὄψε

σὺ πρόσθε ναοῦ τοῦ ἱεροῦ

οὐκ ἦσμεν ἡμεῖς ταῦτα τῶν

ἦκοντα παῖδα παῖδος σπέρ

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σὺ τοῖσδε πῶς

ἄταρ τί χώρα τῆδε προσηύχ

ποῦ νῦν ἀπεσι; τίς νῦν ἀπέ

σὺν σοὶ φανέντα δεῖρ ἔπει

στρατὸν καθίζει τάσσοισι

τοῦδ' οὐκέθ' ἡμῖν τοῦ λόγου

μέτεστιν ἡμῶν δ' ἔργον ἴσ

τί δῆτα βούλει τῶν περὶ

πόσον τι πλήθος συμμάχων

πολλούς· ἀριθμὸν δ' ἄλλο

ἴσασιν, οἶμαι, ταῦτ' Ἀθηναῖ

ἴσασιν καὶ δὴ λαῖον ἔστη

ἦδη γὰρ ὡς εἰς ἔργον ὄπλι

304

ALCMENA

y then didst raise a cry in-ushering fear?

IOLAUS

t thou before this temple might'st draw nigh.

ALCMENA

s was not in my thought:—now who is this?

IOLAUS

bringeth tidings. Thy son's son is here.

ALCMENA

il also thou for this thine heralding!

660

wherefore absent, if he hath set foot

this land?—where?—what hap hath hindered him

am coming with thee to make glad mine heart?

HENCHMAN

he host he hath brought he camps, and marshals it.

ALCMENA

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670

HENCHMAN

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IOLAUS

t, is the host already armed for fight?

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ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί γὰρ βοὴν ἔστησας ἄγγελον φόβου ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

σὺ πρόσθε ναοῦ τοῦδ' ὅπως βαίης πέλας.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οὐκ ἦσμεν ἡμεῖς ταῦτα· τίς γὰρ ἐσθ' ὄδε ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἦκοντα παῖδα παιδὸς ἀγγέλλει σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

660 ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σὺ τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλμασιν.
ἀτὰρ τί χῶρα τῆδε προσβαλὼν πόδα
ποῦ νῦν ἄπεστι ; τίς νιν εἶργε συμφορὰ
σὺν σοὶ φανέντα δεῦρ' ἐμὴν τέρψαι φρένα ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

στρατὸν καθίζει τάσσεταί θ' ὃν ἦλθ' ἔχων.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοῦδ' οὐκέθ' ἡμῖν τοῦ λόγου μέτεστι δῆ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

μέτεστιν· ἡμῶν δ' ἔργον ἱστορεῖν τάδε.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δῆτα βούλει τῶν πεπραγμένων μαθεῖν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πόσον τι πλῆθος συμμάχων πάρεστ' ἔχων ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πολλούς· ἀριθμὸν δ' ἄλλον οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

670 ἴσασιν, οἶμαι, ταῦτ' Ἀθηναίων πρόμοι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἴσασι καὶ δὴ λαιὸν ἔστηκεν κέρας.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἤδη γὰρ ὡς εἰς ἔργον ὤπλισται στρατός ;

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

Why then didst raise a cry in-ushering fear ?

IOLAUS

That thou before this temple might'st draw nigh.

ALCMENA

This was not in my thought :—now who is this ?

IOLAUS

He bringeth tidings. Thy son's son is here.

ALCMENA

Hail also thou for this thine heralding ! 660

But wherefore absent, if he hath set foot
In this land ?—where ?—what hap hath hindered him
From coming with thee to make glad mine heart ?

HENCHMAN

The host he hath brought he camps, and marshals it.

ALCMENA

Such matter appertaineth not to me.

IOLAUS

It doth—though my part be to inquire thereof.

HENCHMAN

What wouldst thou know concerning things achieved ?

IOLAUS

How great a host of allies hath he brought ?

HENCHMAN

Many : their tale I cannot tell save thus.

IOLAUS

All this, I trow, the chiefs Athenian know ? 670

HENCHMAN

They know : yea, on their left he stands arrayed.

IOLAUS

Ha, is the host already armed for fight ?

305

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

καὶ δὴ παρήκται σφάγια τάξεων ἐκάς.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

πόσον τι δ' ἔστ' ἄπωθεν Ἀργεῖον δόρυ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὥστ' ἐξορᾶσθαι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἐμφανῶς.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δρῶντα; μὼν τάσσοντα πολεμίῳν στίχας;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἠκάζομεν ταῦτ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐξηκούομεν.

ἀλλ' εἴμ' ἐρήμους δεσπότης τοῦμὸν μέρος
οὐκ ἂν θέλοιμι πολεμίῳσι συμβαλεῖν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

680 κᾶγωγε σὺν σοί· ταῦτὰ γὰρ φροντίζομεν,
φίλοις παρόντες, ὡς εἰοίμεν, ὠφελεῖν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἠκιστα πρὸς σοῦ μῶρον ἦν εἰπεῖν ἔπος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ μὴ μετασχεῖν γ' ἀλκίμου μάχης φίλοις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἐν ὄψει τραῦμα μὴ δρώσης χερός.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

τί δ'; οὐ θένοιμι κἂν ἐγὼ δι' ἀσπίδος;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

θένοις ἂν, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν αὐτὸς ἂν πέσοις.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐδεὶς ἔμ' ἐχθρῶν προσβλέπων ἀνέξεται.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦ τᾶν, ἢ ποτ' ἦν ῥώμη σέθεν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὖν μαχοῦμαί γ' ἀριθμὸν οὐκ ἐλάσσοσι.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Yea, and the victims brought without the ranks.

IOLAUS

And distant how far is the Argive spear?

HENCHMAN

So that thou plainly mayst discern their chief.

IOLAUS

What doth he?—marshals he the foemen's lines?

HENCHMAN

So made we guess: not plainly could we hear.
But I must go: I would not that without me,
Through fault of mine, my lords should clash with
foes.

IOLAUS

And I with thee: my purpose is as thine,—
As meet is,—to be there and help my friends.

680

HENCHMAN

Nay, nowise worthy thee were idle talk!

IOLAUS

Nor worthy of me to help not friends in fight!

HENCHMAN

The glance can deal no wound, if hand strike not.

IOLAUS

How? Cannot I withal smite through a shield?

HENCHMAN

Smite?—yea, but thou thyself ere then mightst fall.

IOLAUS

There is no foe shall dare to meet mine eyes.

HENCHMAN

Thou hast not, good my lord, thine olden strength.

IOLAUS

Yet foes by tale not fewer will I fight.

690 ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
σμικρὸν τὸ σὺν σήκωμα προστίθης φίλοις.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
μή τοί μ' ἔρυκε δρᾶν παρεσκευασμένον.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
δρᾶν μὲν σύ γ' οὐχ οἴός τε, βούλεσθαι δ' ἴσω.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ὡς μὴ μενούντα τᾶλλα σοι λέγειν πάρα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
πῶς οὖν ὀπλίτης τευχέων ἄτερ φανεῖ;

700 ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ἔστ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἔνδον αἰχμάλωθ' ὄπλα
τοῖσδ', οἷσι χρησόμεσθα κάποδώσομεν
ζῶντες· θανόντας δ' οὐκ ἀπαιτήσει θεός.
ἀλλ' εἴσιθ' εἴσω κάπο πασσάλων ἐλὼν
ἔνεγχ' ὀπλίτην κόσμον ὡς τάχιστα μοι.
αἰσχροὺν γὰρ οἰκούρημα γίγνεται τόδε,
τοὺς μὲν μάχεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ δειλία μένειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
λῆμα μὲν οὐπω στόρνυσι χρόνος
τὸ σόν, ἀλλ' ἠβᾶ· σῶμα δὲ φρούδον.
τί πονεῖς ἄλλως ἂ σέ μὲν βλάψει,
σμικρὰ δ' ὀνήσει πόλιν ἡμετέραν;
χρῆν γνωσιμαχεῖν σὴν ἡλικίαν,
τὰ δ' ἀμήχαν' εἶν· οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως
ἠβην κτήσει πάλιν αὐθις.

710 ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ
τί χρῆμα μέλλεις σῶν φρενῶν οὐκ ἔνδον ὦν
λιπεῖν μ' ἔρημον σὺν τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ
ἀνδρῶν γὰρ ἀλκή· σοὶ δὲ χρῆ τούτων μέλει.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Scant weight into thy friends' scale wilt thou cast. 690

IOLAUS

Hinder me not. I am wrought up for the deed.

HENCHMAN

For deeds no power thou hast ;—hast will, perchance.

IOLAUS

Talk as thou wilt, so I bide not behind.

HENCHMAN

With mailed men how shalt thou unarmed appear ?

IOLAUS

There hang within yon fane arms battle-won.

These will I use, and, if I live, restore ;—

The God will not require them of the slain.

Pass thou within, and from the nails take down,

And bring with speed to me, that warrior-gear.

[*Exit* HENCHMAN.

Shameful it is—this loitering at home, 700

That some should fight, some, craven souls, hang back !

CHORUS

Not yet may the years quell thy spirit,

Young in heart, though thy strength be no more !

Why toil to thine hurt but in vain ?

Small help of thee Athens should gain.

Let thine eld yet be wise, and refrain

From things hopeless : thou canst not inherit

Yet again the lost prowess of yore.

ALCMENA

Art thou beside thyself?—what, meanest thou

To leave me and my children thus forlorn ? 710

IOLAUS

Yea, men must fight. For these must thou take
thought.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ' ; ἦν θάνης σύ, πῶς ἐγὼ σωθήσομαι ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

παιδὸς μελήσει παισὶ τοῖς λελειμμένοις.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἦν δ' οὖν, ὃ μὴ γένοιτο, χρήσονται τύχη ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οἶδ' οὐ προδώσουσίν σε, μὴ τρέσης, ξένοι.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τοσόνδε γάρ τοι θάρσος, οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἔχω.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καὶ Ζηνὶ τῶν σῶν, οἶδ' ἐγὼ, μέλει πόνων.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

φεῦ.

Ζεὺς ἐξ ἐμοῦ μὲν οὐκ ἀκούσεται κακῶς·
εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ὅσιος αὐτὸς οἶδεν εἰς ἐμέ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

720

πλων μὲν ἤδη τήνδ' ὀράς παντευχίαν.
φθάνοις δ' ἂν οὐκ ἂν τοῖσδε συγκρύπτων δέμας
ὡς ἐγγὺς ἀγών, καὶ μάλιστ' Ἄρης στυγεῖ
μέλλοντας· εἰ δὲ τευχέων φοβεῖ βάρος,
νῦν μὲν πορεύου γυμνός, ἐν δὲ τάξεσιν
κόσμῳ πυκάζου τῷδ'· ἐγὼ δ' οἶσω τέως.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πρόχειρ' ἔχων
τεύχη κόμιζε, χειρὶ δ' ἔνθεσ ὀξύην,
λαιὸν τ' ἔπαιρε πῆχυν, εὐθύνων πόδα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἢ παιδαγωγεῖν γὰρ τὸν ὀπλίτην χρεῶν ;

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

730

ὄρνηθος εἶνεκ' ἀσφαλῶς πορευτέον.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

But, if thou perish, how shall I be saved?

IOLAUS

Thy son's sons which are left shall care for thee.

ALCMENA

But if—which God forbid—aught hap to them?

IOLAUS

Our hosts shall not forsake thee. Fear not thou.

ALCMENA

Mine heart's last stay are these: none else have I.

IOLAUS

Nay, Zeus, I know, remembereth thy griefs.

ALCMENA

Ah! (*sighs heavily.*)

Never of me shall ill be said of Zeus;

But is he just to me-ward? Himself knows!

[*Retires within temple.*]

Re-enter HENCHMAN.

HENCHMAN

Lo, here thou seest a warrior's gear complete:
Make all speed to encase in these thy frame.
The fight is nigh, and most the War-god loathes
Loiterers. If thou fear the armour's weight,
Go mailless now, and lap thee mid the ranks
In this array: till then will I bear all.

IOLAUS

Well hast thou said: yet ready to mine hand
Bring on the arms: set in mine hand a spear:
Bear up my left arm, ordering my steps.

HENCHMAN

How, lead as a little child the man-at-arms!

IOLAUS

For the omen's sake unstumbling must I go.

720

730

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΪΔΑΙ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἴθ' ἦσθα δυνατὸς δρᾶν ὅσον πρόθυμος εἶ.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

ἔπειγε· λειφθεὶς δεινὰ πείσομαι μάχης.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

σύ τοι βραδύνεις, οὐκ ἐγώ, δοκῶν τι δρᾶν.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐκουν ὀράς μου κῶλον ὡς ἐπείγεται ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὀρῶ δοκοῦντα μᾶλλον ἢ σπεύδοντά σε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

οὐ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἡνίκ' ἂν λεύσσης μ' ἐκεῖ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί δρῶντα ; βουλοίμην δ' ἂν εὐτυχοῦντά γε.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

δι' ἀσπίδος θείοντα πολεμίων τινά.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἰ δὴ ποθ' ἤξομέν γε· τοῦτο γὰρ φόβος.

ΙΟΛΑΟΣ

φεῦ·

740

εἴθ', ὦ βραχίων, οἶον ἠβήσαντά σε
 μεμνήμεθ' ἡμεῖς, ἡνίκα ξὺν Ἡρακλεῖ
 Σπάρτην ἐπόρθεις, σύμμαχος γένοιοί μοι
 τοιοῦτος· οἶος ἂν τροπὴν Εὐρυσθέως
 θείμην· ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ κακὸς μένειν δόρυ.
 ἔστιν δ' ἐν ὄλβῳ καὶ τόδ' οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἔχον,
 εὐψυχίας δόκησις· οἴομεσθα γὰρ
 τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα πάντ' ἐπίστασθαι καλῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γᾶ καὶ παννύχιος σελάνα

στρ. α'

καὶ λαμπρόταται θεοῦ

750

φαεσίμβροτοι ἀυγαί,
 ἀγγελίαν μοι ἐνέγκαιτ'.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

HENCHMAN

Would thou wert strong to do, as thou art fain!

IOLAUS

On!—woe, if I be laggard for the fray!

HENCHMAN

Not I, but thou art slow, who dream'st performance.

IOLAUS

Seest thou not how onward speed my limbs?

HENCHMAN

More thine imagining see I than thy speed.

IOLAUS

Thou shalt not say so when thou seest me there—

HENCHMAN

Achieving what?—I fain would see thy triumph!

IOLAUS

Smiting some foeman, yea, clear through the shield.

HENCHMAN

If we win ever thither,—this I doubt.

IOLAUS

Would, O mine arm, that, as I call to mind 740
Thy young strength, when thou didst with Hercules
Smite Sparta, such a helper unto me
Thou wouldst become! How mightily would I rout
Eurystheus—craven he to abide the spear!
With high estate is this delusion linked,
Repute for courage high: for still we deem
That he who prospereth knoweth all things well.

[*Exeunt.*]

CHORUS

(*Str. 1*)

Earth!—Moon, which reign'st the livelong night!—

O glorious radiancy
Of Him who giveth mortals light,
Flash tidings unto me!

750

ἰαχῆσατε δ' οὐρανῷ
 καὶ παρὰ θρόνον ἀρχέταν,
 γλαυκᾶς τ' ἐν Ἀθάνας.
 μέλλω τᾶς πατριώτιδος γᾶς,
 μέλλω καὶ ὑπὲρ δόμων,
 ἰκέτας ὑποδεχθεῖς,
 κίνδυνον πολιῷ τεμεῖν σιδάρφ.

760 δεινὸν μὲν πόλιν ὡς Μυκῆνας ἀντ. α'
 εὐδαίμονα καὶ δορὸς
 πολυαίνετον ἀλκᾶ
 μῆνιν ἐμᾶ χθονὶ κεύθειν·
 κακὸν δ', ὦ πόλις, εἰ ξένους
 ἰκτῆρας παραδώσομεν
 κελεύσμασιν Ἄργους.
 Ζεὺς μοι σύμμαχος, οὐ φοβοῦμαι,
 Ζεὺς μοι χάριν ἐνδίκως
 ἔχει· οὔποτε θνατῶν
 ἦσσομες παρ' ἐμοὶ θεοὶ¹ φανοῦνται.

770 ἄλλ', ὦ πότνια, σὸν γὰρ οὐδας στρ. β'
 γᾶς, σὸν καὶ πόλις, ἄς σὺ μάτηρ
 δέσποινά τε καὶ φύλαξ,
 πόρευσον ἄλλα τὸν οὐ δικαίως
 τᾶδ' ἐπάγοντα δορυσσοῦν
 στρατὸν Ἀργόθεν· οὐ γὰρ ἐμᾶ γ' ἀρετᾶ
 δίκαιός εἰμ' ἐκπεσεῖν μελάθρων.

780 ἐπεὶ σοι πολύθυστος αἰεὶ ἀντ. β'
 τιμὰ κραίνεται, οὐδὲ λάθει
 μηνῶν φθινὰς ἀμέρα,
 νέων τ' ἀοιδαὶ χορῶν τε μολπαί.

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. ποτ' ἂν εἴτ' ἐμοῦ.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Shout triumph up through heaven's expansion,
 Up to the throne of all men's Lord,
 Up to grey-eyed Athena's mansion!
 I for my land am battle-dight,
 Arrayed for hearth and home to fight,
 To shear through danger with the sword,
 For right of sanctuary.

Dread peril, that Mycenae-town— (Ant. 1)
 The mighty burg, whose hand 760
 The wide world through hath spear-renown,—
 Nurse wrath against my land!
 Yet shame, O shame, were thine, my city,
 If we must yield to Argos' hest
 Suppliants,—if fear must cast out pity!
 Zeus champions me; I tread fear down:
 Zeus' favour is my right, my crown:
 In mine esteem above the Blest
 Never shall mortals stand.

(Str. 2)

But, O Queen,—for our soil, for our city is thine, 770
 And to thee be we given—
 O our Mother, our Mistress, O Warder Divine,
 Yon despiser of heaven,
 Who from Argos brings storm-rush of spearmen
 upon me, [won me
 Chase afar!—no such guerdon hath righteousness
 As from home to be driven!

(Ant. 2)

For the sacrifice-homage is rendered thee aye
 When the month waneth, bringing
 The day when young voices to thee chant the lay,
 When the dancers are singing, 780

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ἀνεμόεντι δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳ
ὀλολύγματα παννυχίοις ὑπὸ παρ-
θένων ἰαχεῖ ποδῶν κρότοισιν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

δέσποινα, μύθους σοί τε συντομωτάτους
κλύειν ἐμοί τε τῷδε καλλίστους φέρω.
νικῶμεν ἐχθρούς καὶ τροπαῖ' ἰδρύεται
παντευχίαν ἔχοντα πολεμίων σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὦ φίλταθ', ἦδε σ' ἡμέρα διήλασεν
ἠλευθερῶσθαι τοῖσδε τοῖς ἀγγέλμασιν.
790 μῆς δέ μ' οὐπω συμφορᾶς ἔλευθεροῖς·
φόβος γὰρ εἶ μοι ζῶσιν οὐς ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ζῶσιν μέγιστόν γ' εὐκλεεῖς κατὰ στρατόν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὁ μὲν γέρων οὖν ἔστιν Ἰόλεως ἔτι ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μάλιστα· πράξας δ' ἐκ θεῶν κάλλιστα δή.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δ' ἔστι ; μῶν τι κεδνὸν ἠγωνίζετο ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

νέος μεθέστηκ' ἐκ γέροντος αὐθις αὐ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

θαυμάστ' ἔλεξας· ἀλλά σ' εὐτυχῆ φίλων
μάχης ἀγῶνα πρῶτον ἀγγεῖλαι θέλω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εἰς μου λόγος σοι πάντα σημανεῖ τάδε.
800 ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἀλλήλοισιν ὀπλίτην στρατόν
κατὰ στόμ' ἐκτείνοντες ἀντετάξαμεν,
ἐκβὰς τεθρίππων ἄλλος ἀρμάτων πόδα

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

When the wind-haunted hill with the beat of the
glancing [dancing
White feet of fair girls through the night-season
And with glad cries, is ringing.

ALCMENA comes again out of the temple. Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT

Mistress, I bring thee tidings passing brief
To hear, and passing fair for me to tell.
Our foes are smitten : trophies now are reared
Hung with war-harness of thine enemies.

ALCMENA

Dear friend, this day hath wrought thy severance
From bondage, for the tidings thou hast brought.
Yet from one ill not yet thou freest me—
Fear touching those I love, if yet they live.

790

SERVANT

They live, in all the host most high-renowned.

ALCMENA

The old man Iolaus—lives he yet?

SERVANT

Yea, and by Heaven's help hath done gloriously.

ALCMENA

What is it?—hath he wrought some knightly deed?

SERVANT

He from an old man hath become a youth.

ALCMENA

Marvels thou speakest : yet I pray thee tell
First how the fight was victory for our friends.

SERVANT

One speech of mine shall set forth all to thee.
When host against host we had ranged the array
Of men-at-arms far-stretching face to face,
Then from his chariot Hyllus lighted down,

800

ἔστη μέσοισιν ἐν μεταιχμίοις δορός.
 κάπειτ' ἔλεξεν ὦ στρατήγ' ὃς Ἀργόθεν
 ἦκεις, τί τήνδε γαίαν οὐκ εἰάσαμεν ;
 καὶ τὰς Μυκῆνας οὐδὲν ἐργάσει κακὸν
 ἄνδρὸς στερήσας· ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ μόνος μόνῳ
 μάχην συνάψας, ἢ κτανῶν ἄγον λαβῶν
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας, ἢ θανῶν ἐμοὶ
 810 τιμὰς πατρώους καὶ δόμους ἔχειν ἄφες.
 στρατὸς δ' ἐπήνεσ', εἷς τ' ἀπαλλαγὰς πόνων
 καλῶς λελέχθαι μῦθον εἷς τ' εὐψυχίαν.
 ὁ δ' οὔτε τοὺς κλύοντας αἰδεσθεῖς λόγων
 οὔτ' αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ δειλίαν στρατηγὸς ὢν,
 ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ' ἐγγὺς ἀλκίμου δορός,
 ἀλλ' ἦν κάκιστος· εἶτα τοιοῦτος γεγῶς
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους ἦλθε δουλώσων γόνους.
 Ἄλλος μὲν οὖν ἀπόχεται εἰς ταξιν πάλιν
 μάντεις δ', ἐπειδὴ μονομάχου δι' ἀσπίδος
 820 διαλλαγὰς ἔγνωσαν οὐ τελουμένας,
 ἔσφαζον, οὐκ ἔμελλον, ἀλλ' ἀφίεσαν
 λαιμῶν † βροτείων¹ εὐθύς οὔριον φόνον·
 οἱ δ' ἄρματ' εἰσέβαινον, οἱ δ' ὑπ' ἀσπίδων
 πλευροῖς ἔκρυπτον πλευρ'. Ἀθηναίων δ' ἀναξ
 στρατῷ παρήγγειλ' οἷα χρὴ τὸν εὐγενῆ·
 ὦ ξυμπολίται, τῇ τε βοσκούσῃ χθονὶ
 καὶ τῇ τεκούσῃ νῦν τιν' ἀρκέσαι χρεῶν.
 ὁ δ' αὖ τό τ' Ἄργος μὴ καταισχύναι θέλει
 καὶ τὰς Μυκῆνας συμμάχους ἐλίσσεται.
 830 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐσήμην' ὄρθιον Τυρσηνικῇ
 σάλπιγγι καὶ συνῆψαν ἀλλήλοις μάχην,
 πόσον τιν' ἀνχεῖς πάταγον ἀσπίδων βρέμειν,

¹ An unlikely word here. Paley suggests *βοτείων*.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

And midway stood between the spearmen-lines,
And cried, "O captain of the host, who hast come
From Argos, wherefore spare we not this land?
Lo, if thou rob Mycenæ of one man,
Naught shalt thou hurt her:—come now, man to man
Fight thou with me: so, slaying, lead away
Hercules' sons; or, falling, leave to me
My father's honour and halls to have and hold." 810

"Yea!" the host shouted, counting this well said
For valour and for rest from battle-toil:
Yet he, unshamed for them that heard the challenge,
And his own cowardice, war-chief though he were,
Dared not draw nigh the essay of valour's spear,
But was sheer craven. And this dastard wretch
Came to enslave the sons of Hercules!
So to the ranks again went Hyllus back:
And the priests, knowing now that end of strife
Should not by clash of champion shields be attained, 820
Did sacrifice, nor tarried, but straightway
Spilled from the victims' throats the auspicious blood.

Then mounted these their cars: their shield-rims
those

Before their bodies cast. But Athens' king
Cried to his host, as high-born chieftain should:
"Countrymen, now must each one play the man
For this land that hath borne and nurtured him!"
The while that other prayed his battle-aid
To brook not shame to Argos and Mycenæ.
But when the Tuscan trumpet gave the sign 830
High-shrilling, and the war-hosts clashed in fight,
How mighty a crash of bucklers thundered then—

πόσον τινὰ στεναγμὸν οἰμωγὴν θ' ὁμοῦ ;
 τὰ πρῶτα μὲν νυν πίτυλος Ἀργείου δορὸς
 ἐρρήξαθ' ἡμᾶς· εἴτ' ἐχώρησαν πάλιν.
 τὸ δεύτερον δὲ πούς ἐπαλλαχθεὶς ποδί,
 ἀνὴρ δ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ στὰς ἐκαρτέρει μάχῃ·
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιπτον, ἦν δὲ δύο κελεύσματα.¹
 ὦ τὰς Ἀθήνας—ὦ τὸν Ἀργείων γῆνη
 σπείροντες—οὐκ ἀρήξειτ' αἰσχύνῃν πόλει ;
 μόλις δὲ πάντα δρῶντες οὐκ ἄτερ πόνων
 ἐτρεψάμεσθ' Ἀργεῖον εἰς φυγὴν δόρυ.
 κἀνταῦθ' ὁ πρέσβυς Ὕλλον ἐξορμώμενον
 ἰδὼν, ὀρέξας ἰκέτευσε δεξιᾶν
 Ἰόλαος ἐμβῆσαί νιν ἵππειον δίφρον.
 λαβὼν δὲ χερσὶν ἠνίας Εὐρυσθέως
 πῶλοις ἐπεῖχε. τὰπὸ τοῦδ' ἤδη κλύων
 λέγοιμ' ἂν ἄλλων, δεῦρο δ' αὐτὸς εἰσιδὼν.
 Παλληνίδος γὰρ σεμνὸν ἐκπερῶν πάγον
 δίας Ἀθάνας, ἄρμ' ἰδὼν Εὐρυσθέως,
 ἠράσαθ' Ἦβῃ Ζηνί θ', ἡμέραν μίαν
 νέος γενέσθαι κἀποτίσασθαι δίκην
 ἐχθρούς· κλύειν δὴ θαύματος πάρεστί σοι.
 δισσὼ γὰρ ἄστέρ' ἵππικοῖς ἐπὶ ζυγοῖς
 σταθέντ' ἔκρυψαν ἄρμα λυγαίῳ νέφει·
 σὸν δὲ λέγουσι παῖδά γ' οἱ σοφώτεροι
 Ἦβην θ'· ὁ δ' ὄρφνης ἐκ δυσαιθρίου νέων
 βραχιόνων ἔδειξεν ἠβητὴν τύπον.
 αἰρεῖ δ' ὁ κλεινὸς Ἰόλεως Εὐρυσθέως
 τέτρωρον ἄρμα πρὸς πέτραις Σκειρωνίσι.
 δεσμοῖς τε δήσας χεῖρας ἀκροθίνιον
 κάλλιστον ἤκει τὸν στρατηλάτην ἄγων

¹ Dindorf: for MSS. τοῦ κελεύματος.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Think'st thou?—what multitudinous groan and shriek!

At first the onset of the Argive spear
Burst through our ranks: then gave they back again.
Anon foot stood in grapple locked with foot,
Man fronting man, hard-wrestling in the fray:
Fast, fast they fell. Cheers ever answered cheers—
“Dwellers in Athens!”—“Tillers of the land
Of Argos!”—“from dishonour save your town!” 840
With uttermost endeavour and strong strain
Scarce turned we unto flight the Argive spear.

Thereat old Iolaus, marking where
Hyllus charged on, with outstretched hand besought
That he would set him on a courser-car.
Then the reins grasped he, then the steeds he sped
After Eurystheus. All the rest I tell
From others' lips: the former things I saw.
For, as he passed beyond Pallene's Hill 850
Sacred to Pallas, spying Eurystheus' car
He prayed to Zeus and Hebe, for one day
To be made young, and wreak the vengeance due
On foes:—now shalt thou hear a miracle.
For two stars rested on the chariot-yoke,
And into gloom of shadow threw the car;
And these, diviners say, were thy great son
And Hebe. Then from out that murky gloom
He flashed—a youth, with mighty-moulded arms!

And glorious Iolaus overtook
By the Scironian Rocks Eurystheus' car. 860
He hath bound his hands with gyves, and hath returned
Bringing the crown of victory, that chief

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

τὸν ὄλβιον πάροιθε· τῇ δὲ νῦν τύχη
βροτοῖς ἅπασι λαμπρὰ κηρύσσει μαθεῖν,
τὸν εὐτυχεῖν δοκοῦντα μὴ ζηλοῦν, πρὶν ἂν
θανόντ' ἴδῃ τις· ὡς ἐφήμεροι τύχαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ τροπαίε, νῦν ἐμοὶ δεινοῦ φόβου
ελευθερον πάρεστιν ἡμαρ εἰσιδεῖν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

870 ὦ Ζεῦ, χρόνῳ μὲν τᾶμ' ἐπεσκέψω κακά,
χάριν δ' ὅμως σοι τῶν πεπραγμένων ἔχω·
καὶ παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν πρόσθεν οὐ δοκοῦσ' ἐγὼ
θεοῖς ὀμιλεῖν νῦν ἐπίσταμαι σαφῶς.
ὦ τέκνα, νῦν δὴ νῦν ἐλεύθεροι πόνων,
ελευθεροὶ δὲ τοῦ κακῶς ὄλουμένου
Εὐρυσθέως ἔσεσθε καὶ πόλιν πατρὸς
ὄψεσθε, κλήρους δ' ἐμβατεύσετε χθονός,
καὶ θεοῖς πατρώοις θύσεθ', ὧν ἀπειργμένοι
ξένοι πλανήτην εἶχετ' ἄθλιον βίον.
880 ἀτὰρ τί κεύθων Ἰόλεως σοφὸν ποτε
Εὐρυσθέως ἐφείσαθ' ὥστε μὴ κτανεῖν ;
λέξον· παρ' ἡμῖν μὲν γὰρ οὐ σοφὸν τόδε,
ἐχθροὺς λαβόντα μὴ ἀποτίσασθαι δίκην.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τὸ σὸν προτιμῶν, ὡς νιν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἴδοις
ἀλόντα¹ καὶ σῆ δεσποτούμενον χερί.
οὐ μὴν ἐκόντα γ' αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βίαν
ἔξευξ' ἀνάγκη· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐβούλετο
ζῶν εἰς σὸν ἐλθεῖν ὄμμα καὶ δοῦναι δίκην.
ἀλλ', ὦ γεραιά, χαῖρε καὶ μέμνησό μοι
ὁ πρῶτον εἶπας, ἠνίκ' ἤρχόμην λόγου,

¹ Heimsoeth : for MSS. κρατοῦντα. Reiske, κρατοῦσα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

So prosperous once ; but by his fate this day
Clear warning to all men he publisheth
To envy not the seeming-fortunate, ere
He die, since fortune dureth but a day.

CHORUS

O Victory-wafter Zeus; now is it mine
To see a day from dark fear disenthralled !

ALCMENA

Zeus, late on mine affliction hast thou looked ;
Yet thank I thee for all that thou hast wrought. 870
Now know I of a surety that my son
Dwelleth with Gods :—ere this I thought not so.
O children, now, yea now from trouble free,
And from Eurystheus, doomed to a dastard's death,
Free shall ye be, shall see your father's city,
And tread the lot of your inheritance,
And sacrifice to your fathers' Gods, from whom
Banned ye have known a wretched homeless life.
But for what veiled wise purpose Iolaus
Hath spared Eurystheus, that he slew him not, 880
Tell ; for in our sight nothing wise is this
To capture foes and not requite their wrong.

SERVANT

Of thought for thee, that him thine eyes might see
Held in thy power, and subject to thine hand.
He bowed him 'neath the yoke of strong constraint
Sore loth to come, for nowise he desired
Living to meet thine eye and taste thy vengeance.
Farewell, grey queen : forget not that which erst
Thou saidst to me when I began my tale.

890

ἐλευθερώσειν μ'· ἐν δὲ τοῖς τοιοῖσδε χρῆ
ἀψευδὲς εἶναι τοῖσι γενναίοις στόμα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔμοι χορὸς μὲν ἠδύς, εἰ λίγεια στρ. α'
λωτοῦ χάρις ἐνὶ δαιτί,
εἶη δ' εὐχαρις Ἀφροδίτα·
τερπνὸν δέ τι καὶ φίλων ἄρ'
εὐτυχίαν ιδέσθαι
τῶν πάρος οὐ δοκούντων.
πολλὰ γὰρ τίκτει
Μοῖρα τελεσιδῶτερ'
900 Λιῶν τε Κρόνου παῖς.

900

ἔχεις ὀδὸν τιν', ὧ πόλις, δίκαιον· ἀντ. α'
οὐ χρῆ ποτε τοῦδ' ἀφέσθαι,
τιμᾶν θεούς· ὁ δὲ μὴ σε φάσκων
ἐγγυὲς μανιῶν ἐλαύνει,
δεικνυμένων ἐλέγχων
τῶνδ'· ἐπίσημα γάρ τοι
θεὸς παραγγέλλει,
τῶν ἀδίκων παραιρῶν
φρονήματος ἀεὶ.

910

ἔστιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βεβακῶς στρ. β'
τεὸς γόνος, ὧ γεραία·
φεύγω λόγον ὡς τὸν Ἄιδα
δόμον κατέβα, πυρὸς
δεινᾶ φλογὶ σῶμα δαισθεῖς·
Ἦβας τ' ἐρατὸν χροῖζει
λέχος χρυσέαν κατ' αὐλάν.
ὧ Ἰμέναιε, δισσοὺς
παῖδας Διὸς ἠξίωσας.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Make me free man ; for, touching suchlike boons, 890
 The lips that lie not best beseem the noble. [*Exit.*]

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Sweet to me is the dance, when clear-pealing
 Ring the flutes o'er the wine,
 And when Love cometh sweetly in-stealing
 Yea, and gladness is mine
 To look on my dear ones well-faring
 Which aforetime were whelmed in despairing.
 Many blessings fate cometh on-bearing,
 With whom Time paceth on, bringing healing,
 Cronos' offspring divine. 900

In justice, my land, thy path lieth : (*Ant.* 1)
 This thy crown yield to none,
 That thou fearest the Gods : who denieth,
 Into madness hath run.
 Lo, what sign is revealed for a token,
 How the pride of wrong-doers is broken
 Evermore, how to-day hath God spoken,
 How the voice of Omnipotence crieth
 In the deeds he hath done !

He hath died not !—to heaven hath risen (*Str.* 2) 910
 Thy scion, grey queen.
 Tell me never that Hades' dim prison
 His long home hath been !
 Nay, he soared through the flames leaping round
 him ;
 And with honour the Spousal-god crowned him,
 And to Hebe with love-links he bound him,—
 Zeus' son to Zeus' daughter,—where glisten
 Heaven's halls with gold-sheen.

920 συμφέρεται τὰ πολλὰ πολλοῖς· ἀντ. β'
 καὶ γὰρ πατρὶ τῶνδ' Ἀθάναν
 λέγουσ' ἐπικούρου εἶναι,
 καὶ τοῦσδε θεᾶς πόλις
 καὶ λαὸς ἔσωσε κείνας,
 ἔσχευεν δ' ὕβριν ἀνδρός, ᾧ θυ-
 μὸς ἦν πρὸ δίκας βίαιος.
 μήποτ' ἐμοὶ φρόνημα
 ψυχὰ τ' ἀκόρεστος εἶη.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

930 δέσποιν', ὄρας μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται,
 Εὐρυσθέα σοι τόνδ' ἄγοντες ἤκομεν,
 ἄελπτον ὄψιν, τῷδέ τ' οὐχ ἤσσον τύχην·
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἠΰχει χεῖρας ἴξεσθαι σέθεν,
 ὅτ' ἐκ Μυκηνῶν πολυπόνῳ σὺν ἀσπίδι
 ἔστειχε μείζον τῆς δίκης φρονῶν, πόλιν
 πέρσων Ἀθίνας. ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐναντίαν
 δαίμων ἔθηκε καὶ μετέστησεν τύχην.
 Ἔλλος μὲν οὖν ὃ τ' ἐσθλὸς Ἰόλεως βρέτας
 Διὸς τροπαίου καλλίνικον ἴστασαν·
 ἐμοὶ δὲ πρὸς σὲ τόνδ' ἐπιστέλλουσ' ἄγειν,
 940 τέρψαι θέλοντες σὴν φρέν'. ἐκ γὰρ εὐτυχοῦς
 ἠδιστον ἐχθρὸν ἄνδρα δυστυχοῦνθ' ὄραν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ὦ μῖσος, ἤκεις; εἰλέ σ' ἡ Δίκη χρόνῳ;
 πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι δεῦρ' ἐπίστρεψον κᾶρα
 καὶ τλήθι τοὺς σοὺς προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον
 ἐχθρούς· κρατεῖ γὰρ νῦν γε κού κρατεῖς ἔτι.
 ἐκείνος εἰ σύ, βούλομαι γὰρ εἰδέναί,
 ὅς πολλὰ μὲν τὸν ὄνθ' ὅπου ἔστι νῦν ἐμὸν

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

How oft be life's strands interwisted! (*Ant.* 2)
 Of Athena, men say, 920
 Was their sire in hard emprise assisted;
 And the city this day,
 And the folk of that Goddess hath saved them,
 And hath curbed him whose blood-lust had craved
 them,
 Whose tyranny fain had enslaved them.
 In my cause never pride be enlisted
 Insatiate for prey.

Enter MESSENGER with guards leading EURYSTHEUS in chains.

MESSENGER

O queen, thou seest,—yet shall it be told,—
 Leading Eurystheus unto thee we come,
 A sight unhop'd, which ne'er he looked should hap, 930
 Who ne'er had thought to fall into thine hands,
 When from Mycenae with vast shield-essay
 He marched, his pride o'er justice soaring high,
 To smite our Athens. But our destinies
 Fortune reversed, and changed them, his for ours.
 Hyllus I left and valiant Iolaus
 Raising the victory-trophy unto Zeus;
 But me they charge to bring this man to thee,
 Being fain to glad thine heart; for 'tis most sweet
 To see a foe triumphant once brought low. 940

ALCMENA

Loathed wretch, art come? Justice at last hath
 trapped thee!
 Nay then, first turn thou hitherward thine head,
 And dare to look thine enemies in the face.
 No more art thou the master, but the thrall!
 Art thou he—for I would be certified—
 Who didst presume to load thine outrages,

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

950 παῖδ' ἠξίωσας, ὦ πανούργ', ἐφυβρίσαι;
 τί γὰρ σὺ κείνον οὐκ ἔτλης καθυβρίσαι;
 ὃς καὶ παρ' Ἄιδην ζῶντά νιν κατήγαγες,
 ὕδρας λέοντάς τ' ἕξαπολλύναι λέγων
 ἔπεμπες. ἄλλα δ' οἷ' ἐμηχανῶ κακὰ
 σιγῶ· μακρὸς γὰρ μῦθος ἂν γένοιτό μοι.
 κούκ ἤρκεσέν σοι ταῦτα τολμῆσαι μόνον,
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀπάσης καμὲ καὶ τέκν' Ἑλλάδος
 ἤλαυνες ἰκέτας δαιμόνων καθημένους,
 τοὺς μὲν γέροντας, τοὺς δὲ νηπίους ἔτι.
 ἀλλ' ἠῦρες ἄνδρας καὶ πόλισμ' ἐλεύθερον,
 οἷ' σ' οὐκ ἔδεισαν. δεῖ σε κατθανεῖν κακῶς,
 καὶ κερδανεῖς ἅπαντα· χρῆν γὰρ οὐχ ἅπαξ
 960 θνήσκειν σὲ πολλὰ πῆματ' ἐξειργασμένον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἀνυστὸν τόνδε σοι κατακτανεῖν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ἄλλως ἄρ' αὐτὸν αἰχμάλωτον εἴλομεν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

εἶργει δὲ δὴ τίς τόνδε μὴ θανεῖν νόμος;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοῖς τῆσδε χώρας προστάταισιν οὐ δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δὴ τόδ'; ἐχθροὺς τοισίδ' οὐ καλὸν κτανεῖν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐχ ὄντιν' ἂν γε ζῶνθ' ἔλωσιν ἐν μάχῃ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

καὶ ταῦτα δόξανθ' Ἔλλος ἐξηνέσχετο;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χρῆν δ' αὐτόν, οἶμαι, τῆδ' ἀπιστῆσαι χθονί;

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

χρῆν τόνδε μὴ ζῆν μηδ' ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν φάος.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Caitiff, on my son—whereso now he be ?
 For wherein didst thou fear to outrage him,
 Who didst to Hades speed him living down,
 Didst send him, bidding him destroy thee Hydras 950
 And lions ? All the ills thou didst devise
 I name not, for the tale were all too long.
 Nor yet sufficed thee this alone to dare ;
 But from all Hellas me and mine didst thou
 Still hunt, though suppliant to the Gods we sat,
 These stricken in years, those little children yet.
 But men, and a free city, hast thou found,
 Which feared thee not. Now die the dastard's death.
 Yet is thy death all gain : thou ought'st to die
 Not one death, who hast wrought ills manifold. 960

CHORUS

It may not be that thou shouldst slay this man !

MESSENGER

Captive in vain then have we taken him !

ALCMENA

Prithee what law withholdeth him from death ?

CHORUS

It pleaseth not the rulers of this land.

ALCMENA

How ?—do these count it shame to slay their foes ?

CHORUS

Yea, such as they have ta'en in fight unslain.

ALCMENA

Ay so ?—and this their doom hath Hyllus brooked ?

CHORUS

Should he, forsooth, defy this nation's will ?

ALCMENA

He should no more have lived, nor seen the light.

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

970

τότ' ἠδικήθη πρῶτον οὐ θανῶν ὄδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

οὐκουν ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἐν καλῷ δοῦναι δίκην;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῦτον ὅστις ἂν κατακτάνοι.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἔγωγε· καίτοι φημί κάμ' εἶναί τινα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλὴν ἄρ' ἔξεις μέμψιν, εἰ δράσεις τόδε.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

φιλῶ πόλιν τήνδ'· οὐδὲν ἀντιλεκτέον.
τοῦτον δ', ἐπεὶπερ χεῖρας ἦλθεν εἰς ἐμάς,
οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται.
πρὸς ταῦτα τὴν θρασεῖαν ὅστις ἂν θέλη
καὶ τὴν φρονοῦσαν μεῖζον ἢ γυναῖκα χρῆ
λέξει· τὸ δ' ἔργον τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ πεπράζεται.

980

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δεινόν τι καὶ συγγνωστόν, ὦ γύναι, σ' ἔχει
μῖσος πρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε, γιγνώσκω καλῶς.

ΕΤΡΥΣΘΕΥΣ

γύναι, σάφ' ἴσθι μὴ με θωπεύσουντά σε,
μηδ' ἄλλο μηδὲν τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι
λέξονθ' ὅθεν χρῆ δειλίαν ὀφλεῖν τινα.
ἐγὼ δὲ νεῖκος οὐχ ἐκῶν τόδ' ἠράμην·
ἤδη γε σοὶ μὲν αὐτανέψιος γεγώς,
τῷ σῷ δὲ παιδί συγγενῆς Ἡρακλέει.
ἀλλ' εἴτ' ἔχρηζον εἴτε μὴ, θεὸς γὰρ ἦν,
Ἦρα με κάμνειν τήνδ' ἔθηκε τὴν νόσον.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἐκείνῳ δυσμένειαν ἠράμην
κάγων ἀγῶνα τόνδ' ἀγωνιούμενος,
πολλῶν σοφιστῆς πημάτων ἐγιγνόμην

990

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

CHORUS

Then was he wronged—to die not at the first. 970

ALCMENA

So then 'twere just he suffered vengeance yet.

CHORUS

None is there, none, would put him now to death.

ALCMENA

That will I—some one I account myself.

CHORUS

Thou shalt have bitter blame, if this thou do.

ALCMENA

I love this city; let no man gainsay:—
But, since this wretch hath come into mine hands,
There is of mortals none shall pluck him thence.
Wherefore who will shall rail on the overbold,
On her that nursed for woman thoughts too high;
Yet shall this deed by me be brought to pass. 980

CHORUS

A fearful hatred, yet a righteous, queen,
Thou hast against this man, I know full well.

EURYSTHEUS

Woman, be sure I will not cringe to thee,
Nor utter any word beside, to save
My life, whence cowardice might stain my name.
Yet of my will this feud I took not up.
I knew myself born cousin unto thee,
And kinsman unto Hercules thy son.
But, would I or no, 'twas Heaven that thrust me on:
Hera with this affliction burdened me. 990
But when I had made him once mine enemy,
And knew that I must wrestle out this strife,
Deviser I became of many pains,

καὶ πόλλ' ἔτικτον, νυκτὶ συνθακῶν αἰεὶ,
 ὅπως διώσας καὶ κατακτείνας ἐμοὺς
 ἐχθροὺς τὸ λοιπὸν μὴ συνοικοίην φόβῳ,
 εἰδὼς μὲν οὐκ ἀριθμὸν ἀλλ' ἔτητύμως
 1000 ἀνδρ' ὄντα τὸν σὸν παῖδα· καὶ γὰρ ἐχθρὸς ὢν
 ἀκούσεται τά γ' ἐσθλὰ χρηστὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ.
 κείνου δ' ἀπαλλαχθέντος οὐκ ἐχρῆν μ' ἄρα
 μισούμενον πρὸς τῶνδε καὶ ξυνειδότα
 ἐχθραν πατρώαν, πάντα κινήσαι πέτρον,
 κτείνοντα κακβάλλοντα καὶ τεχνώμενον;
 τοιαῦτα δρῶντι τᾶμ' ἐγίγνετ' ἀσφαλῆ.
 οὐκ οὐν σύ γ' ἂν λαχοῦσα¹ τὰς ἐμὰς τύχας
 ἐχθροῦ λέοντος δυσμενῆ βλαστήματα
 ἤλαυνες ἂν κακοῖσιν, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως
 εἴσασας οἰκεῖν Ἄργος; οὐτιν' ἂν πίθοις.
 1010 νῦν οὖν ἐπειδὴ μ' οὐ διώλεσαν τότε
 πρόθυμοι ὄντα, τοῖσιν Ἑλλήνων νόμοις
 οὐχ ἄγνός εἰμι τῷ κτανόντι κατθανών·
 πόλις δ' ἀφῆκε σωφρονοῦσα, τὸν θεὸν
 μείζον τίουσα τῆς ἐμῆς ἐχθρας πολύ.
 ἃ γ' εἶπας ἀντήκουσας· ἐντεῦθεν δὲ χρῆ
 τὸν προστρόπαιον τόν τε γενναῖον καλεῖν.
 οὐτῷ γε μέντοι τᾶμ' ἔχει· θανεῖν μὲν οὐ
 χρήζω, λιπὼν δ' ἂν οὐδὲν ἀχθοίμην βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παραινέσαι σοι σμικρόν, Ἄλκμήμη, θέλω,
 τὸν ἀνδρ' ἀφείναι τόνδ', ἐπεὶ πόλει δοκεῖ.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

1020 τί δ', ἦν θάνη τε καὶ πόλει πιθώμεθα;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰ λῶστ' ἂν εἴη· πῶς τὰδ' οὖν γενήσεται;

¹ Wecklein: for MSS. ἀναλαβοῦσα.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Aye scheming—Night sat by, and counselled me—
 How I might scatter and destroy my foes,
 And have thenceforth for housemate fear no more,
 Knowing thy son no cipher, but a man
 In very deed ; for, though he be my foe,
 Praise shall he have, a very hero he.

But, rid of him, was I not even constrained— 1000
 Abhorred of these, ware of that heritage
 Of hate—to move each scorpion-hiding stone,
 By slaying, banishing, and plotting still ?
 While this I did, my safety was assured.
 But thou, forsooth, had but my lot been thine,
 Hadst spared to persecute the infuriate whelps
 Left of thy foe the lion,—wisely rather
 Hadst let them dwell in Argos ? I trow not

Now therefore since, when I was fain to die,
 They slew me not, by all the Hellene laws 1010
 My death pollution brings on whoso slays.
 Wisely did Athens spare me, honouring more
 God, far above all enmity of me.
 Thou art answered. I must be hereafter named
 The Haunting Vengeance, and the Heroic Dead.
 Thus is it with me—I long not for death,
 Yet to forsake life nowise shall I grieve.

CHORUS

Suffer one word of exhortation, queen.
 Let this man go ; for so the city wills.

ALCMENA

But—if he die, and I obey her still ? 1020

CHORUS

This should be best ; yet how can this thing be ?

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΑΙ

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

ἐγὼ διδάξω ῥαδίως· κτανούσα γὰρ
τόνδ' εἶτα νεκρὸν τοῖς μετελθοῦσιν φίλων
δώσω· τὸ γὰρ σῶμ' οὐκ ἀπιστήσω χθονί,
οὗτος δὲ δώσει τὴν δίκην θανῶν ἐμοί.

ΕΤΡΥΣΘΕΤΣ

1030 κτεῖν', οὐ παραιτοῦμαί σε· τήνδε δὲ πτόλιν,
ἐπεὶ μ' ἀφῆκε καὶ κατηδέσθη κτανεῖν,
χρησμῶ παλαιῶ Λοξίου δωρήσομαι,
ὅς ὠφελήσει μείζον' ἢ δοκεῖν χρόνῳ.
θανόντα γὰρ με θάψεθ' οὐ τὸ μόρσιμον,
1040 δίας πάροιθε παρθένου Παλληνίδος·
καὶ σοὶ μὲν εὔνοους καὶ πόλει σωτήριος
μέτοικος αἰεὶ κείσομαι κατὰ χθονός,
τοῖς τῶνδε δ' ἐγγόνοισι πολεμιώτατος,
ὅταν μὴ λωσι δεῦρο σὺν πολλῇ χειρὶ
χάριν προδόντες τήνδε· τοιούτων ξένων
προὔστητε. πῶς οὖν ταῦτ' ἐγὼ πεπυσμένος
δεῦρ' ἦλθον, ἀλλ' οὐ χρησμὸν ἠδούμην¹ θεοῦ;
"Ἦραν νομίζων θεσφάτων κρείσσω πολὺ,
1040 κούκ ἂν προδοῦναί μ'. ἀλλὰ μήτε μοι χοὰς
μήθ' αἶμ' ἐάσης εἰς ἐμὸν στάξαι τάφον.
κακὸν γὰρ αὐτοῖς νόστον ἀντὶ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ
δώσω· διπλοῦν δὲ κέρδος ἔξετ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
ὑμᾶς τ' ὀνήσω τούσδε τε βλάψω θανῶν.

ΑΛΚΜΗΝΗ

τί δῆτα μέλλετ', εἰ πόλει σωτηρίαν
κατεργάσασθαι τοῖσί τ' ἐξ ὑμῶν χρεῶν,
κτείνειν τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ', ἀκούοντες τάδε;
δείκνυσι γὰρ κέλευθον ἀσφαλεστάτην.
ἐχθρὸς μὲν ἀνήρ, ὠφελεῖ δὲ κατθανῶν.

¹ Musgrave: for MSS. ἠρόμην.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

ALCMENA

This will I lightly teach thee :—I will slay,
Then yield him dead to friends that come for him.
Touching his corpse I will not cheat the state ;
But die he shall, and do me right for wrong.

EURYSTHEUS

Slay : I ask not thy grace. But I bestow
On Athens, who hath spared, who shamed to
slay me,
An ancient oracle of Loxias,
Which in far days shall bless her more than seems.
Me shall ye bury where 'tis fate-ordained, 1030
Before the Virgin's shrine Pallenian ;
So I, thy friend and Athens' saviour aye,
A sojourner shall lie beneath your soil,
But to these and their children sternest foe
What time they march with war-hosts hitherward,
Traitors to this your kindness :—such the guests
Ye championed ! Wherefore then, if this I knew,
Came I, and feared not the God's oracles ?
Hera, methought, was mightier far than these,
And would not so forsake me. Shed not thou 1040
Drink-offerings nor blood upon my tomb !
Ill home-return will I give thy sons' sons
For this ! Of me shall ye have double gain,—
My death shall be your blessing and their curse.

ALCMENA

Why linger then—if so ye must achieve
Your city's safety and your children's weal—
To slay this man, who hear this prophecy ?
Himself the path of perfect safety points.
Your foe he is, yet is his death your gain.

1050

κομίζετ' αὐτόν, δμῶες, εἶτα χρὴ κυσὶ
 δοῦναι κτανόντας· μὴ γὰρ ἐλπίσης ὅπως
 αὐθις πατρώας ζῶν ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖς χθονός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ταῦτὰ δοκεῖ μοι. στείχετ', ὄπαδοί.
 τὰ γὰρ ἐξ ἡμῶν
 καθαρῶς ἔσται βασιλευσιν.

THE CHILDREN OF HERCULES

Hence with him, thralls. When ye have slain him,
then
To dogs 'twere good to cast him. Hope not thou
To live, and drive me again from fatherland.

1050

[*Exeunt* GUARDS *with* EURYSTHEUS.

CHORUS

I also consent. On, henchman-train,
March on with the doomed. No blood-guilt
stain,
Proceeding of us, on our kings shall remain.

[*Exeunt* OMNES.

THE
PHENICIAN MAIDENS

ARGUMENT

When Cadmus, King of Thebes, was told that he had
perished, the oracle directed him to sow bones, as that he
had slain his father, King Lyncus, and sowed the bones
around, he planted, and his sons grew to his plow and
sowing, and he caused to be long, and continued to his
law, was rendered to his father, but the oracle he
replied that with this power, "that they should strike their
ancestors with the sword." But they contrived to escape
the curse by immolation.

THE

PHOENICIAN MAIDENS

In my narrative of events should arise, the war
between Cadmus and his sons, the oracle directed to sow
to him the bones. Then came he to Antiochus, King of
Syria, who gave him his daughter in wife, and his sons
and of whom he was slain against Thebes.

And Cadmus is told how the brothers met in various
places, by what strange accidents Thebes was saved, of
the Argives with himself, and how the brothers also
and other in single combat.

ARGUMENT

WHEN Oedipus, king of Thebes, was ware that he had fulfilled the oracle uttered ere he was born, in that he had slain his father, king Laïus, and wedded his mother Jocasta, he plucked out his own eyes in his shame and misery. So he ceased to be king; but, inasmuch as his two sons rendered to him neither love nor worship, he cursed them with this curse, "that they should divide their inheritance with the sword." But they essayed to escape this doom by covenanting to rule in turn, year by year. So Eteocles, being the elder, became king for the first year, and Polyneices his brother departed from the land, lest any occasion of offence should arise. But when after a year's space he returned, Eteocles refused to yield to him the kingdom. Then went he to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter to wife, and led forth a host of war under seven chiefs against Thebes.

And herein is told how the brothers met in useless parley; by what strange sacrifice Thebes was saved; of the Argives' vain assault; and how the brothers slew each other in single combat.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

- ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
- ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
- ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
- ΧΟΡΟΣ
- ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
- ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ
- ΚΡΕΩΝ
- ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
- ΜΕΝΟΙΚΕΤΣ
- ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
- ΕΤΕΡΟΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
- ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

JOCASTA, *wife of Oedipus.*

OLD SERVANT, *attendant on Antigone.*

ANTIGONE, *daughter of Oedipus.*

POLYNEICES, *exiled son of Oedipus.*

ETEOCLES, *son of Oedipus, and king of Thebes.*

CREON, *brother of Jocasta.*

TEIRESIAS, *a blind prophet.*

MENOECEUS, *son of Creon.*

MESSENGER, *armour-bearer of Eteocles.*

OEDIPUS, *father of Eteocles and Polynices.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Phoenician Maidens, dedicated by the Tyrians to the service of Apollo at Delphi, who, resting at Thebes on their journey, have been detained there by the siege.*

Daughter of Teiresias, guards of Eteocles, attendants of Jocasta and of Creon.

SCENE: *In front of the Royal Palace at Thebes.*