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The Greek text is Murray, 1902. The translation is Murray, 1906.

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*vocabulary*

**αἶα** land ~geography  
**αἰσυνάω** rule over; be an official  
**ἀλγέω** suffer ~analgesic  
**ἀλγηδών** pain, grief  
**ἀμοιβή** requital, compensation  
 ~amoeba  
**ἀνακαλέω** call, summon, recall  
**ἀνδάνω** please ~hedonism  
**ἀνθάπτομαι** grapple, seize  
**ἀπαλλάσσω** free from, remove; be freed, depart  
**ἀποιμύζω** bewail loudly  
**ἄσιτος** (ι) not eating ~parasite  
**ἄτα** bewilderment, folly  
**ἀτιμάζω** (ι) insult, dishonor  
**ἀτιμάω** (ι) dishonor  
**ἄω** aor: to sate ~sate  
**βασιλικός** royal  
**βλώσκω** come, go  
**γένειον** chin; beard ~chin  
**γεραιός** old ~geriatric  
**γοάω** weep, mourn  
**γόος** crying, wailing  
**δακρύω** weep  
**δειμαίνω** be afraid  
**δέρη** neck, throat, mane  
**δέρω** skin, flay ~tear  
**δέσποινα** lady  
**δεσπότης** -ου (m, 1) master, despot  
**δεσπότης** lady  
**διαπέταμαι** fly across, through  
 ~petal  
**διχοστατέω** stand apart, disagree  
**δρασεῖω** (ᾱ) intend  
**δράω** do, accomplish  
**δυσθυμέω** (υῶ) be sad, angry  
**δύστηνος** unhappy, miserable  
**εἰσβαίνω** enter, board ~basis  
**ἐκβαίνω** come forth, disembark  
 ~basis  
**ἐκπλήσσω** panic, be knocked out

~plectrum  
**ἐνδίδωμι** hand over, lend, show, allow  
**ἐνδοθεν** from within  
**ἐννοέω** consider  
**ἐννυμι** (υ) clothe in (+2 acc) ~vest  
**ἐξανέχω** stick out from; (mp)  
 endure  
**ἐπαίρω** lift, raise ~heresy  
**ἐρετμόω** make to row  
**ἐρημία** wilderness, solitude  
**ἐρημώω** raze, bereave; desert, isolate  
**ἔρω** be able to move ~serpent  
**ἔρω** -τος (m) love, desire ~erotic  
**εὐνάζω** lay down; (mp) have sex  
**εὐφραίνω** gladden ~frenzy  
**ἔχθρη** hate  
**ζηλόω** emuluate, praise  
**ἥπαρ** -τος (n) liver ~hepatic  
**ἡσυχάζω** be quiet, rest  
**θαλάσσιος** marine, maritime  
**θάσσω** sit  
**θηκτός** sharpened  
**θρέομαι** scream, shriek  
**ἵμερος** (ι) desire, inclination (+gen)  
**ιός** arrow  
**ιώη** a rush, a sweep  
**καινέω** freshen, innovate, make strange  
**καινώω** freshen, innovate, make strange  
**καλλίνικος** (ι) gloriously triumphant  
**κατασκήπτω** fall upon  
**κέρδος** -ους (n, 3) advantage, cunning  
**κῆδευμα** connection by marriage  
**κλύδων** -ος (m, 3) wave, surge  
 ~cataclysm  
**κοίρανος** ruler, chief  
**κτημα** -τος (n, 3) possession  
**κυάνεος** dark ~cyan

**κυρέω** come upon, come up against;  
 obtain  
**λέχος** -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
**μαρτύρομαι** (ῑ) call to witness;  
 protest  
**μέλεος** vain, idle, useless  
**μεσώω** be in the middle  
**μεταγινώσκω** change one's mind  
 ~gnostic  
**μετέρχομαι** seek, visit  
**μίν** him, her, it  
**μολίσκω** come, go  
**νάπη** valley  
**νοσέω** be sick, be mad, suffer  
**νουθετέω** remind, warn  
**ὄζω** have a smell, waft  
**ὄμμα** -τος (n, 3) eye  
**ὀπηδός** member of an entourage,  
 bodyguard  
**οὐδέπω** not, not yet  
**οὐτάω** pierce, wound  
**ὀφείλω** owe, should, if only  
**πάλλευκος** all white  
**πατρώιος** of the father(s), ancestral  
 ~paternal  
**πατρῷος** of the father(s), ancestral  
**πελάζω** bring/come to, near, into  
 contact with  
**πέλας** near, close  
**πεσσός** pebble, game piece  
**πέτρος** rock ~petrified  
**πεύκη** pine  
**πήμια** -τος (n, 3) woe, bane ~penury  
**πίτνω** poetic for πίπτω  
**πότε** when?

**προδίδωμι** betray  
**πύργος** ramparts, tower; line of  
 troops  
**σάφα** with full understanding  
**σεμνός** revered, holy  
**σιγά** silence  
**σιγάω** (ῑ) be silent  
**σκάφος** (τό) hull, ship; (ό) digging  
**στείχω** go, march ~stair  
**στέργω** love; be content  
**στόρνυμι** (ῑ) smooth out  
**στρέφω** turn, veer ~atrophy  
**στυγέω** dread, shrink from ~Styx  
**συμβάλλω** pit against; compare;  
 mp: meet, fall in with ~ballistic  
**συμφορά** collecting; accident,  
 misfortune  
**σύνδουλος** fellow slave  
**συντήκω** fuse, weld; dissolve, waste  
 away  
**σωτηρία** saving, preservation  
**τάλας** wretched, miserable ~talent  
**ταυρόομαι** become a bull or like one  
**τροχάω** run, spin  
**τύραννος** tyrant  
**ὑπέρχομαι** go under  
**ὑφίημι** lower; admit; slack off ~jet  
**φάσγανον** sword  
**φθονέω** envy  
**φροντίς** -τος (f) thought, care  
**φυγή** flight, means of escape  
 ~fugitive  
**χόλος** gall, anger, wrath, bitterness  
 ~choler  
**χολόω** anger, provoke ~choler  
**ώθέω** push

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ. Εἴθ' ὥφελ' Ἀργοῦς μὴ διαπτάσθαι σκάφος

Κόλχων ἐς αἶαν κυανέας Συμπληγάδας,

μηδ' ἐν νάπαισι<sup>1</sup> Πηλίου πεσεῖν ποτε

τμηθεῖσα πεύκη,<sup>2</sup> μηδ' ἐρετμῶσαι<sup>3</sup> χέρας

ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων, οἳ τὸ πάγχρυσον δέρας

5

Πελία μετῆλθον. οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιον' ἐμὴ

Μήδεια πύργους γῆς ἔπλευσ' Ἰωλκίας

ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγείσ' Ἰάσονος·

οὐδ' ἂν κτανεῖν πείσασα Πελιάδας κόρας

πατέρα κατάρκει τήνδε γῆν Κορινθίαν

10

ξὺν ἀνδρὶ καὶ τέκνοισιν, ἀνδάνουσα μὲν

φυγῇ πολιτῶν ὧν ἀφίκετο χθόνα,

αὐτὴ τε πάντα ξυμφέρουσ' Ἰάσωνι·

ἥπερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία,

ὅταν γυνὴ πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ.<sup>4</sup>

15

νῦν δ' ἐχθρὰ πάντα, καὶ νοσεῖ<sup>5</sup> τὰ φίλτατα.

προδοὺς γὰρ αὐτοῦ τέκνα δεσπότην τ' ἐμὴν

γάμοις Ἰάσων βασιλικοῖς εὐνάζεται,<sup>6</sup>

γῆμας Κρέοντος παῖδ', ὃς αἰσύμνῃ<sup>7</sup> χθονός·

Μήδεια δ' ἡ δύστηνος ἡτιμασμένη

20

βοᾷ μὲν ὄρκους, ἀνακαλεῖ δὲ δεξιάς,

πίστω μεγίστην, καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρεται

οἷας ἀμοιβῆς ἐξ Ἰάσονος κυρεῖ.

κεῖται δ' ἄσιτος, σώμ' ὑφείσ' ἀλγηδόσι,

τὸν πάντα συντήκουσα δακρύοις χρόνον,

25

<sup>1</sup> valley   <sup>2</sup> pine   <sup>3</sup> make to row   <sup>4</sup> stand apart, disagree   <sup>5</sup> be sick, be mad, suffer   <sup>6</sup> lay down; (mp) have sex   <sup>7</sup> rule over; be an official

ἐπεὶ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἦσθετ' ἡδικημένη,  
 οὐτ' ὄμμι' ἐπαίρουσ' οὐτ' ἀπαλλάσσουσα γῆς  
 πρόσωπον· ὥς δὲ πέτρος<sup>8</sup> ἢ θαλάσσιος<sup>9</sup>  
 κλύδων ἀκούει νουθετουμένη<sup>10</sup> φίλων·  
 ἦν μὴ ποτε στρέψασα πάλλευκον<sup>11</sup> δέρην  
 αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτὴν πατέρ' ἀποιμώξῃ φίλον  
 καὶ γαῖαν οἴκους θ', οὓς προδοῦσ' ἀφίκετο  
 μετ' ἀνδρὸς ὅς σφε νῦν ἀτιμάσας ἔχει.  
 ἔγνωκε δ' ἡ τάλαινα συμφορᾶς ὕπο  
 οἶον πατρῶας μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι χθονός.  
 στυγεῖ δὲ παῖδας οὐδ' ὁρώσ' εὐφραίνεται.  
 δέδοικα δ' αὐτὴν μὴ τι βουλευσῇ νέον·  
 βαρεῖα γὰρ φρήν, οὐδ' ἀνέξεται κακῶς  
 πάσχουσ' ἐγῶδα τήνδε, δαιμαίνω<sup>12</sup> τέ νιν  
 μὴ θηκτὸν ὥση φάσγανον δι' ἥπατος,  
 σιγῇ δόμους εἰσβᾶσ', ὧν ἔστρωται λέχος,  
 ἦ καὶ τύραννον τόν τε γήμαντα κτάνη,  
 κᾶπειτα μείζω συμφορὰν λάβῃ τινά.  
 δεινὴ γάρ· οὗτοι ῥαδίως γε συμβαλὼν  
 ἔχθραν τις αὐτῇ καλλίνικον οἴσεται.  
 ἀλλ' οἶδε παῖδες ἐκ τρόχων πεπαυμένοι  
 στείχουσι, μητρὸς οὐδὲν ἐννοούμενοι  
 κακῶν· νέα γὰρ φροντὶς οὐκ ἀλγείν<sup>13</sup> φιλεῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. παλαιὸν οἴκων κτῆμα δεσποίνης ἐμῆς,

τί πρὸς πύλαισι τήνδ' ἄγουσ' ἐρημίαν<sup>14</sup>  
 ἔστηκας, αὐτὴ θροομένη<sup>15</sup> σαντῇ κακά;

<sup>8</sup> rock    <sup>9</sup> marine, maritime    <sup>10</sup> remind, warn    <sup>11</sup> all white    <sup>12</sup> be afraid  
<sup>13</sup> suffer    <sup>14</sup> wilderness, solitude    <sup>15</sup> scream, shriek

πῶς σοῦ μόνη Μήδεια λείπεσθαι θέλει;

ΤΡΟΦ. τέκνων ὅπαδὲ πρέσβυ τῶν Ἰάσονος,

χρηστοῖσι δούλοις ξυμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν

κακῶς πίτνοντα,<sup>16</sup> καὶ φρενῶν ἀνθάπτεται.

55

ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐς τοῦτ' ἐκβέβηκ' ἀλγηδόνας,

ὥσθ' ἥμερός μ' ὑπῆλθε γῇ τε κούρανῳ

λέξι μοιούση δεῦρο δεσποίνης τύχας.

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. οὔπω γὰρ ἡ τάλαινα παύεται γόων;

ΤΡΟΦ. ζηλῶ σ'· ἐν ἀρχῇ πῆμα κοῦδέπω<sup>17</sup> μεσοί.<sup>18</sup>

60

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. ὦ μῶρος— εἰ χρή δεσπότης εἰπεῖν τόδε·

ὥς οὐδὲν οἶδε τῶν νεωτέρων κακῶν.

ΤΡΟΦ. τί δ' ἔστιν, ὦ γεραῖε; μὴ φθόνει φράσαι.

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. οὐδέν· μετέγνων καὶ τὰ πρόσθ' εἰρημένα.

ΤΡΟΦ. μή, πρὸς γενείου,<sup>19</sup> κρύπτε σύνδουλον σέθεν·

65

σιγῇ<sup>20</sup> γάρ, εἰ χρή, τῶνδε θήσομαι πέρι.

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. ἤκουσά του λέγοντος, οὐ δοκῶν κλύειν,

πεσσοὺς προσελθῶν, ἔνθα δὴ παλαίτατοι

θάσσοι,<sup>21</sup> σεμνὸν ἀμφὶ Πειρήνης ὕδωρ,

ὡς τούσδε παῖδας γῆς ἐλᾶν Κορινθίας

70

σὺν μητρὶ μέλλοι τῇσδε κοίρανος<sup>22</sup> χθονὸς

Κρέων. ὁ μέντοι μῦθος εἰ σαφὴς ὅδε

οὐκ οἶδα· βουλοίμην δ' ἂν οὐκ εἶναι τόδε.

ΤΡΟΦ. καὶ ταῦτ' Ἰάσων παῖδας ἐξανέξεται

πάσχοντας, εἰ καὶ μητρὶ διαφορὰν ἔχει;

75

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. παλαιὰ καινῶν λείπεται κηδευμάτων,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>16</sup> poetic for πίπτω <sup>17</sup> not, not yet <sup>18</sup> be in the middle <sup>19</sup> chin; beard  
<sup>20</sup> silence <sup>21</sup> sit <sup>22</sup> ruler, chief <sup>23</sup> connection by marriage

κούκ ἔστ' ἐκείνος τοῖσδε δώμασιν φίλος.

ΤΡΟΦ. ἀπωλόμεσθ' ἄρ', εἰ κακὸν προσοίσομεν  
νέον παλαιῶ, πρὶν τόδ' ἐξηντληκέναι.

ΠΑΛΑΓΩΓΟΣ. ἀτὰρ σύ γ'— οὐ γὰρ καιρὸς εἰδέναι τόδε 80  
δέσποιναν— ἡσύχαζε καὶ σίγα λόγον.

ΤΡΟΦ. ὦ τέκν', ἀκούεθ' οἶος εἰς ὑμᾶς πατήρ;  
ὄλοιτο μὲν μή· δεσπότης γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός·  
ἀτὰρ κακός γ' ὢν ἐς φίλους ἀλίσκεται.

ΠΑΛΑΓΩΓΟΣ. τίς δ' οὐχὶ θνητῶν; ἄρτι γιγνώσκεις τόδε, 85  
ὥς πᾶς τις αὐτὸν τοῦ πέλας μᾶλλον φιλεῖ,  
οἱ μὲν δικαίως, οἱ δὲ καὶ κέρδους χάριν,  
εἰ τοῖσδε γ' εὐνῆς οὐνεκ' οὐ στέργει πατήρ.

ΤΡΟΦ. ἴτ'— εὖ γὰρ ἔσται— δωμάτων ἔσω, τέκνα.  
σὺ δ' ὥς μάλιστα τούσδ' ἐρημώσας<sup>24</sup> ἔχε 90  
καὶ μὴ πέλαζε μητρὶ δυσθυμουμένη.  
ἦδη γὰρ εἶδον ὄμμα νιν ταυρουμένην<sup>25</sup>  
τοῖσδ', ὥς τι δρασείουσαν·<sup>26</sup> οὐδὲ παύσεται  
χόλου, σάφ' οἶδα, πρὶν κατασκῆψαί τινα ...  
ἐχθρούς γε μέντοι, μὴ φίλους, δράσειέ τι. 95

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. ἔνδοθεν ἰώ, δύστανος ἐγὼ μελέα τε πόνων,  
ἰώ μοί μοι, πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμαν;

ΤΡΟΦ. τόδ' ἐκείνο, φίλοι παῖδες· μήτηρ  
κινεῖ κραδίαν, κινεῖ δὲ χόλον.  
σπεύσατε θᾶσσον δώματος εἴσω 100  
καὶ μὴ πελάσῃτ' ὄμματος ἐγγύς,  
μηδὲ προσέλθῃτ', ἀλλὰ φυλάσσεσθ'

<sup>24</sup> raze, bereave; desert, isolate    <sup>25</sup> become a bull or like one    <sup>26</sup> intend

NURSE. Would God no Argo e'er had winged the seas  
To Colchis through the blue Symplegades:  
No shaft of riven pine in Pelion's glen  
Shaped that first oar-blade in the hands of men  
Valiant, who won, to save King Pelias' vow,  
The fleece All-golden! Never then, I trow,  
Mine own princess, her spirit wounded sore  
With love of Jason, to the encastled shore  
Had sailed of old Iolcos: never wrought  
The daughters of King Pelias, knowing not,  
To spill their father's life: nor fled in fear,  
Hunted for that fierce sin, to Corinth here  
With Jason and her babes. This folk at need  
Stood friend to her, and she in word and deed  
Served alway Jason. Surely this doth bind,  
Through all ill days, the hurts of humankind,  
When man and woman in one music move.  
But now, the world is angry, and true love  
Sick as with poison. Jason doth forsake  
My mistress and his own two sons, to make  
His couch in a king's chamber. He must wed:  
Wed with this Creon's child, who now is head  
And chief of Corinth. Wherefore sore betrayed  
Medea calleth up the oath they made,  
They two, and wakes the clasped hands again,  
The troth surpassing speech, and cries amain  
On God in heaven to mark the end, and how  
Jason hath paid his debt.  
All fasting now  
And cold, her body yielded up to pain,  
Her days a waste of weeping, she hath lain,  
Since first she knew that he was false. Her eyes  
Are lifted not; and all her visage lies  
In the dust. If friends will speak, she hears no more  
Than some dead rock or wave that beats the shore:  
Only the white throat in a sudden shame  
May writhe, and all alone she moans the name  
Of father, and land, and home, forsook that day  
For this man's sake, who casteth her away.  
Not to be quite shut out from home... alas,  
She knoweth now how rare a thing that was!  
Methinks she hath a dread, not joy, to see

Her children near. 'Tis this that maketh me  
 Most tremble, lest she do I know not what.  
 Her heart is no light thing, and useth not  
 To brook much wrong. I know that woman, aye,  
 And dread her! Will she creep alone to die  
 Bleeding in that old room, where still is laid  
 Lord Jason's bed? She hath for that a blade  
 Made keen. Or slay the bridegroom and the king,  
 And win herself God knows what direr thing?'  
 'Tis a fell spirit. Few, I ween, shall stir  
 Her hate unscathed, or lightly humble her.  
 Ha! 'Tis the children from their games again,  
 Rested and gay; and all their mother's pain  
 Forgotten! Young lives ever turn from gloom!

The CHILDREN and their ATTENDANT come in.

ATTENDANT. Thou ancient treasure of my lady's room,  
 What mak'st thou here before the gates alone,  
 And alway turning on thy lips some moan  
 Of old mischances? Will our mistress be  
 Content, this long time to be left by thee?

NURSE. Grey guard of Jason's children, a good thrall  
 Hath his own grief, if any hurt befall  
 His masters. Aye, it holds one's heart! ...  
 Meseems

I have strayed out so deep in evil dreams,  
 I longed to rest me here alone, and cry  
 Medea's wrongs to this still Earth and Sky.

ATTENDANT. How? Are the tears yet running in her eyes?

NURSE. 'Twere good to be like thee!... Her sorrow lies  
 Scarce wakened yet, not half its perils wrought.

ATTENDANT. Mad spirit!... if a man may speak his thought  
 Of masters mad. — And nothing in her ears  
 Hath sounded yet of her last cause for tears!

He moves towards the house, but the NURSE checks him.

NURSE. What cause, old man?... Nay, grudge me not one word.

ATTENDANT. 'Tis nothing. Best forget what thou hast heard.

NURSE. Nay, housemate, by thy beard! Hold it not hid  
 From me... I will keep silence if thou bid.

ATTENDANT. I heard an old man talking, where he sate  
 At draughts in the sun, beside the fountain gate,  
 And never thought of me, there standing still  
 Beside him. And he said, 'Twas Creon's will,

Being lord of all this land, that she be sent,

And with her her two sons, to banishment.

Maybe 'tis all false. For myself, I know

No further, and I would it were not so.

NURSE. Jason will never bear it—his own sons

Banished,—however hot his anger runs

Against their mother!

ATTENDANT. Old love burneth low

When new love wakes, men say. He is not now

Husband nor father here, nor any kin.

NURSE. But this is ruin! New waves breaking in

To wreck us, ere we are righted from the old!

ATTENDANT. Well, hold thy peace. Our mistress will be told

All in good time. Speak thou no word hereof.

NURSE. My babes! What think ye of your father's love?

God curse him not, he is my master still:

But, oh, to them that loved him, 'tis an ill

Friend...

ATTENDANT. And what man on earth is different? How?

Hast thou lived all these years, and learned but now

That every man more loveth his own head

Than other men's? He dreameth of the bed

Of this new bride, and thinks not of his sons.

NURSE. Go: run into the house, my little ones:

All will end happily!... Keep them apart:

Let not their mother meet them while her heart

Is darkened. Yester night I saw a flame

Stand in her eye, as though she hated them,

And would I know not what. For sure her wrath

Will never turn nor slumber, till she hath ...

Go: and if some must suffer, may it be

Not we who love her, but some enemy!

VOICE (within).

Oh shame and pain: O woe is me!

Would I could die in my misery!

The CHILDREN and the ATTENDANT go in.

NURSE. Ah, children, hark! She moves again

Her frozen heart, her sleeping wrath.

In, quick! And never cross her path,



*vocabulary*

**ἄγριος** wild, savage ~agriculture  
**αἰαῖ** alas  
**αἰσχρός** shameful  
**αῖω** perceive, feel, hear; breathe out  
**ἄκέομαι** heal, fix  
**ἄκοή** hearing ~acoustic  
**ἄλλομαι** to jump ~sally  
**ἄλμυρός** salty  
**ἀμφίπυλος** with two entrances  
**ἀνάπτω** bind; blame; kindle  
 ~haptic  
**ἀντίπορος** on the other side, shore  
**ᾠοιδή** song  
**ἀποναίω** expel, exile ~nostalgia  
**ἄρδω** give water  
**ἄτα** bewilderment, folly  
**ἄτάω** (mp) suffer, be in distress  
**αὐθάδης** stubborn  
**βιόω** live; (mp) make a living  
 ~biology  
**βοά** din, a shout  
**γηραιός** old  
**γοάω** weep, mourn  
**γόος** crying, wailing  
**γοῦν** at least then  
**δαίμων** -ονος (m, 3) a god, fate, doom ~demon  
**δάκνω** bite  
**δέσποινα** lady  
**δμῶς** slave ~tame  
**δράω** do, accomplish  
**δύρομαι** (ῶ) lament  
**ἐθίζω** accustom  
**εἰλαπίνη** feast, banquet  
**εἰσεῖδω** look at, behold ~wit  
**εἰσοράω** look at, see; treat with respect ~panorama  
**ἐκλύω** rescue from ~loose  
**ἐνδέω** tie to, entangle; lack  
**ἐπιβοάω** call to for help  
**ἐπιδίδωμι** give, give with, give

reciprocally ~donate  
**ἔρος** love; appetite ~erotic  
**ἔρρω** go (neg. connotation) ~serve  
**ἔχθω** (mp) be hated ~external  
**ἦθος** ἥθεος (n, 3) habit, habitat  
 ~ethos  
**ἦπιος** kind (adj)  
**θάλαμος** bedchamber ~thalamus  
**θαλία** abundance, plenty ~thallium  
**ἰαχή** shout  
**ἰός** arrow  
**ἰωή** a rush, a sweep  
**καινός** new, fresh, strange  
**καίτοι** and yet; and in fact; although  
**κακόνυμφος** badly married  
**κακώω** harm, disfigure ~cacophony  
**κάσις** sibling  
**καταγηράσκω** age, pass one's days  
 ~geriatric  
**καταίρω** swoop; land  
**κατάπαυσις** -εως (f) putting down; rest  
**καταπαύω** stop, restrain ~pause  
**κατάρατος** (ααᾶ) accursed  
**κεράννυμι** (ῶ) mix ~crater  
**κέρδος** -ους (n, 3) advantage, cunning  
**κοίτη** rest, resting place, sleepiness  
**κραίνω** accomplish; (rare) rule  
**κρείσσων** more powerful; better  
**λέαινα** lioness  
**λέκτρον** bed ~lie  
**λεύσσω** see, look  
**λέχος** -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
**λήμα** will, desire, purpose; courage, insolence  
**λίαν** very  
**λιγυρός** clear, whistling  
**λίσσομαι** beg, beseech ~litany  
**λύπη** distress  
**μάταιος** vain, empty

**μάτην** in vain, randomly  
**μεθίημι** let go, cease; (mid) speed off  
 ~jet  
**μέλαθρον** roofbeam  
**μέλπω** celebrate in song  
**μεταβάλλω** alter, transform  
**μέτειμι** be among, go, follow ~ion  
**μετέχω** partake of  
**μέτριος** medium, moderate  
**μίν** him, her, it  
**μοῦσα** muse  
**μόχθος** toil  
**νέφος** -εος (n, 3) cloud ~nebula  
**νύμφα** nymph; bride  
**οἶμοι** woe is me  
**οἰμωγή** wailing  
**ὀμφή** supernatural voice  
**ὀργίζω** anger, provoke, annoy  
**οὐράνιος** heavenly  
**ὀχυρός** strong, secure  
**ὀχυρόω** fortify  
**ὄψις** ὄψεως (f) sight, view  
 ~thanatopsis  
**πέλας** near, close  
**πένθος** -εος (n, 3) grief, misfortune  
 ~Nepenthe  
**πλήρωμα** -τος (n, 3) fullness  
**πολύστονος** sorrowful, baneful  
**πότε** when?  
**πότνια** lady ~potent  
**προδότης** -ου (m, 1) traitor,  
 abandoner  
**προλείπω** abandon, withdraw  
 ~eclipse  
**προφέρω** bring forth ~bear  
**σεβίζω** worship, honor  
**σκαίος** left-hand

**σοφός** skilled, clever, wise  
**στυγερός** dreaded, feeling dread  
 ~Styx  
**συνήδομαι** rejoice, sympathize with  
**σφάλλω** overthrow, balk, stagger  
**ταμία** (ᾱα) housekeeper ~tonsure  
**ταμίας** -ως (m, 3) manager,  
 quartermaster  
**τάχος** -ους (n, 3) speed ~tachometer  
**τείνω** stretch, tend ~tense  
**τελευτή** conclusion, fulfilment  
 ~apostle  
**τερπνός** pleasant  
**τέρψις** -τος (f) pleasure  
**τλήμων** steadfast, enduring ~talent  
**τοκάς** -δος (f, 3) kept for breeding  
 ~oxytocin  
**τύραννος** tyrant  
**ὕμνος** song ~hymn  
**ὑπεραλγέω** grieve, feel pain for  
**ὑπερβάλλω** cause to go beyond;  
 delay ~ballistic  
**φάος** φῶς (n, 3) light; salvation; (pl)  
 eyes ~photon  
**φεῦ** exclamation of grief, anger,  
 surprise, admiration  
**φέως** bush used to make brooms  
**φλόξ** -γός (f) flame ~flame  
**φροῦδος** fled, vanished  
**φύσις** -εως (f) nature (of a thing)  
 ~physics  
**φύω** produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
**χόλος** gall, anger, wrath, bitterness  
 ~choler  
**χωρέω** withdraw, give way to (+dat)  
 ~heir

ἄγριον ἦθος στυγεράν τε φύσιν

φρενὸς αὐθάδους.—

ἴτε νῦν, χωρεῖθ' ὥς τάχος εἴσω.—

105

δῆλον δ' ἀρχῆς ἐξαιρόμενον

νέφος οἰμωγῆς<sup>1</sup> ὥς τάχ' ἀνάψει

μείζονι θυμῷ· τί ποτ' ἐργάζεται

μεγαλόσπλαγχνος δυσκατάπαυστος

ψυχὴ δηχθεῖσα κακοῖσιν;

110

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. αἰαῖ, ἔπαθον τλάμων ἔπαθον μεγάλων

ἄξι' ὀδυρμῶν· ὦ κατάρατοι

παῖδες ὅλοισθε στυγεράς ματρὸς

σὺν πατρί, καὶ πᾶς δόμος ἔρροι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ. ἰὼ μοί μοι, ἰὼ τλήμων.<sup>2</sup>

115

τί δέ σοι παῖδες πατρὸς ἀμπλακίας

μετέχουσι; τί τούσδ' ἔχθεις; οἴμοι,<sup>3</sup>

τέκνα, μή τι πάθηθ' ὥς ὑπεραλγῶ.

δεινὰ τυράννων λήματα καὶ πως

ὀλίγ' ἀρχόμενοι, πολλὰ κρατοῦντες

120

χαλεπῶς ὀργὰς μεταβάλλουσιν.

τὸ γὰρ εἰθίσθαι ζῆν ἐπ' ἴσοισιν

κρεῖσσον· ἐμοὶ γοῦν ἐν μὴ μεγάλοις

ὀχυρῶς γ' εἴη καταγηράσκειν.

τῶν γὰρ μετρίων πρῶτα μὲν εἰπεῖν

125

τοῦνομα νικᾶ, χρῆσθαι τε μακρῶ

λῶστα βροτοῖσιν· τὰ δ' ὑπερβάλλοντ'

οὐδένα καιρὸν δύναται θνητοῖς·

<sup>1</sup> wailing    <sup>2</sup> steadfast, enduring    <sup>3</sup> woe is me

μείζους δ' ἄτας, ὅταν ὀργισθῇ

δαίμων οἴκοις, ἀπέδωκεν.

130

ΧΟΡΟΣ. ἔκλυον φωνάν, ἔκλυον δὲ βοᾶν

τᾶς δυστάνου Κολχίδος, οὐδέ πω

ἦπιος· ἀλλ' ὦ γηραιά,<sup>4</sup>

λέξον· ἐπ' ἀμφιπύλου γὰρ ἔσω μελάθρου βοᾶν

ἔκλυον· οὐδὲ συνήδομαι, ὦ γύναι, ἄλγεσιν

135

δώματος· ἐπεὶ μοι φίλον κέκρανται.

ΤΡΟΦ. οὐκ εἰσὶ δόμοι· φρουῖδα τὰδ' ἤδη.

τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἔχει λέκτρα τυράννων,

140

ἃ δ' ἐν θαλάμοις τάκει βιοτὰν

δέσποινα, φίλων οὐδενὸς οὐδὲν

παραθαλπομένα φρένα μύθοις.

ΜΗΔ. αἰαί· ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ Γᾶ καὶ Φῶς· διὰ μου κεφαλᾶς φλόξ οὐρανία

βαίη· τί δέ μοι ζῆν ἔτι κέρδος;

145

φεῦ φεῦ· θανάτῳ καταλυσαίμαν

βιοτὰν στυγεράν προλιπούσα.[]

ΧΟ. —ἄιες· ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ γᾶ καὶ φῶς·

ἀχὰν οἶαν ἃ δύστανος μέλπει<sup>5</sup> νύμφα;—

τίς σοί ποτε τᾶς ἀπλάτου

150

κοίτας ἔρος, ὦ ματαία;

σπεύσει θανάτου τελευτά·

μηδὲν τόδε λίσσου.— εἰ δὲ σὸς πόσις

καινὰ λέχῃ σεβίζει,

155

κείνῳ τόδε· μὴ χαράσσου.—

Ζεὺς σοι τάδε συνδικήσει. μὴ λίαν

<sup>4</sup> old    <sup>5</sup> celebrate in song

τάκου δυρομένα σὸν εὐνάταν.

ΜΗΔ. ὦ μεγάλα Θέμι καὶ πότνι Ἄρτεμι 160

λεύσσεθ<sup>6</sup> ἃ πάσχω, μεγάλοις ὄρκοις

ἐνδησαμένα τὸν κατάρατον

πόσιν; ὅν ποτ' ἐγὼ νύμφαν τ' ἐσίδοιμ'

αὐτοῖς μελάθροισ<sup>7</sup> διακναιομένους,

οἷ' ἐμὲ πρόσθεν τολμῶσ' ἀδικεῖν. 165

ὦ πάτερ, ὦ πόλις, ὦν ἀπενάσθην

αἰσχρῶς τὸν ἐμὸν κτείνασα κάσιν.<sup>8</sup>

ΤΡΟΦ. κλύεθ' οἷα λέγει κἀπιβοᾶται

Θέμιν εὐκταίαν Ζῆνά θ', ὅς ὄρκων

θνητοῖς ταμίας νενόμισται; 170

οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως ἔν τινι μικρῷ

δέσποινα χόλον καταπαύσει.

ΧΟ. —πῶς ἂν ἐς ὄψιν τὰν ἀμετέραν

ἔλθοι μύθων τ' αὐδαθέντων δέξαιτ' ὁμφάν;<sup>9</sup>—

εἴ πως βαρύθυμον ὀργὰν 175

καὶ λῆμα φρενῶν μεθείη,

μήτοι τό γ' ἐμὸν πρόθυμον

φίλοισιν ἀπέστω.— ἀλλὰ βᾶσά νιν

δεῦρο πόρευσον οἴκων 180

ἔξω· φίλα καὶ τάδ' αὖδα.—

σπεύσον πρὶν τι κακῶσαι τοὺς εἴσω· πένθος γὰρ μεγάλως τόδ' ὀρμᾶται.

ΤΡΟΦ. δράσω τάδ'· ἀτὰρ φόβος εἰ πείσω

δέσποιναν ἐμήν· 185

<sup>6</sup> see, look    <sup>7</sup> roofbeam    <sup>8</sup> sibling    <sup>9</sup> supernatural voice

μόχθου δὲ χάριν τήνδ' ἐπιδώσω.  
 καίτοι τοκάδος<sup>10</sup> δέργμα λεαίνης<sup>11</sup>  
 ἀποταυροῦται δμωσίν, ὅταν τις  
 μῦθον προφέρων πέλας ὀρμηθῇ.  
 σκαιοὺς δὲ λέγων κοῦδέν τι σοφούς  
 τοὺς πρόσθε βροτοὺς οὐκ ἂν ἀμάρτοις,  
 οὔτινες ὕμνους ἐπὶ μὲν θαλίαις  
 ἐπὶ τ' εἰλαπίναις<sup>12</sup> καὶ παρὰ δείπνοις  
 ἠὔροντο βίου τερπνὰς<sup>13</sup> ἀκοάς·  
 στυγίους δὲ βροτῶν οὐδεὶς λύπας  
 ἠὔρετο μούσῃ καὶ πολυχόρδοις  
 ᾠδαῖς παύειν, ἐξ ὧν θάνατοι  
 δειναί τε τύχαι σφάλλουσι δόμους.  
 καίτοι τάδε μὲν κέρδος ἀκείσθαι  
 μολπαῖσι βροτούς· ἵνα δ' εὔδειπνοι  
 δαῖτες, τί μάτην τείνουσι βοήν;  
 τὸ παρὸν γὰρ ἔχει τέρψιν<sup>14</sup> ἀφ' αὐτοῦ  
 δαιτὸς πλήρωμα βροτοῖσιν.

190

195

200

Χ0. ἰαχὰν<sup>15</sup> αἶον πολύστονον γόων,  
 λιγυρά<sup>16</sup> δ' ἄχεα μογερά βοᾷ  
 τὸν ἐν λέχει προδόταν κακόνυμφον·<sup>17</sup>  
 θεοκλυτεῖ δ' ἄδικα παθοῦσα  
 τὰν Ζηνὸς ὀρκίαν Θέμιν, ἃ νῦν ἔβασεν  
 Ἑλλάδ' ἐς ἀντίπορον  
 δι' ἄλλα νύχιον ἐφ' ἀλμυρὰν<sup>18</sup>

205

<sup>10</sup> kept for breeding    <sup>11</sup> lioness    <sup>12</sup> feast, banquet    <sup>13</sup> pleasant    <sup>14</sup> pleasure  
<sup>15</sup> shout    <sup>16</sup> clear, whistling    <sup>17</sup> badly married    <sup>18</sup> salty

Nor rouse that dark eye in its pain;  
 That fell sea-spirit, and the dire  
 Spring of a will untaught, unbowed.  
 Quick, now! — Methinks this weeping cloud  
 Hath in its heart some thunder-fire,  
 Slow gathering, that must flash ere long.  
 I know not how, for ill or well,  
 It turns, this uncontrollable  
 Tempestuous spirit, blind with wrong.  
 VOICE (within).

Have I not suffered? Doth it call  
 No tears?... Ha, ye beside the wall  
 Unfathered children, God hate you  
 As I am hated, and him, too,  
 That gat you, and this house and all!  
 NURSE. For pity! What have they to do,  
 Babes, with their father's sin? Why call  
 Thy curse on these?... Ah, children, all  
 These days my bosom bleeds for you.  
 Rude are the wills of princes: yea,  
 Prevailing alway, seldom crossed,  
 On fitful winds their moods are tossed:  
 'Tis best men tread the equal way.  
 Aye, not with glory but with peace  
 May the long summers find me crowned:  
 For gentleness — her very sound  
 Is magic, and her usages.  
 All wholesome: but the fiercely great  
 Hath little music on his road,  
 And falleth, when the hand of God  
 Shall move, most deep and desolate.

During the last words the LEADER of the Chorus has entered. Other women follow her.

LEADER. I heard a voice and a moan,  
 A voice of the eastern seas:  
 Hath she found not yet her ease?  
 Speak, O aged one.  
 For I stood afar at the gate,  
 And there came from within a cry,  
 And wailing desolate.  
 Ah, no more joy have I,  
 For the griefs this house doth see,

And the love it hath wrought in me.

NURSE. There is no house! 'Tis gone. The lord  
Seeketh a prouder bed: and she  
Wastes in her chamber, not one word  
Will hear of care or charity.

VOICE (within).

O Zeus, O Earth, O Light,  
Will the fire not stab my brain?  
What profiteth living? Oh,  
Shall I not lift the slow  
Yoke, and let Life go,  
As a beast out in the night,  
To lie, and be rid of pain?

CHORUS. Some Women

A.

"O Zeus, O Earth, O Light:"  
The cry of a bride forlorn  
Heard ye, and wailing born  
Of lost delight?

B.

Why weariest thou this day,  
Wild heart, for the bed abhorred,  
The cold bed in the clay?  
Death cometh though no man pray,  
Ungarlanded, un-adored.  
Call him not thou.

C.

If another's arms be now  
Where thine have been,  
On his head be the sin:  
Rend not thy brow!

D.

All that thou sufferest,  
God seeth: Oh, not so sore  
Waste nor weep for the breast  
That was thine of yore.

VOICE (within).

Virgin of Righteousness,  
Virgin of hallowed Troth,  
Ye marked me when with an oath  
I bound him; mark no less  
That oath's end. Give me to see

Him and his bride, who sought  
 My grief when I wronged her not,  
 Broken in misery,  
 And all her house... O God,  
 My mother's home, and the dim  
 Shore that I left for him,  
 And the voice of my brother's blood...  
 NURSE. Oh, wild words! Did ye hear her cry  
 To them that guard man's faith forsworn,  
 Themis and Zeus?... This wrath new-born  
 Shall make mad workings ere it die.  
 CHORUS. Other Women.

A.  
 Would she but come to seek  
 Our faces, that love her well,  
 And take to her heart the spell  
 Of words that speak?

B.  
 Alas for the heavy hate  
 And anger that burneth ever!  
 Would it but now abate,  
 Ah God, I love her yet.  
 And surely my love's endeavour  
 Shall fail not here.

C.  
 Go: from that chamber drear  
 Forth to the day  
 Lead her, and say, Oh, say  
 That we love her dear.

D.  
 Go, lest her hand be hard  
 On the innocent: Ah, let be!  
 For her grief moves hitherward,  
 Like an angry sea.  
 NURSE. That will I: though what words of mine  
 Or love shall move her? Let them lie  
 With the old lost labours!... Yet her eye—  
 Know ye the eyes of the wild kine,  
 The lion flash that guards their brood?  
 So looks she now if any thrall  
 Speak comfort, or draw near at all  
 My mistress in her evil mood.

The NURSE goes into the house.

CHORUS. A Woman.

Alas, the bold blithe bards of old  
That all for joy their music made,  
For feasts and dancing manifold,  
That Life might listen and be glad.  
But all the darkness and the wrong,  
Quick deaths and dim heart-aching things,  
Would no man ease them with a song  
Or music of a thousand strings?

Then song had served us in our need.  
What profit, o'er the banquet's swell  
That lingering cry that none may heed?  
The feast hath filled them: all is well!

Others.

I heard a song, but it comes no more.

Where the tears ran over:

A keen cry but tired, tired:

A woman's cry for her heart's desired,

For a traitor's kiss and a lost lover.

But a prayer, methinks, yet riseth sore

To God, to Faith, God's ancient daughter —

The Faith that over sundering seas

Drew her to Hellas, and the breeze

Of midnight shivered, and the door

Closed of the salt unsounded water.

During the last

*vocabulary*

**ἄγα** (αᾶ) wonder  
**ἄγαμαι** wonder, admire; resent, begrudge  
**ἄγαν** very much  
**ἀέθλιος** prize ~athlete  
**ἄελπτος** not hoped for  
**ἄθλιος** wretched ~athlete  
**αἰαῖ** alas  
**αἰνέω** praise, assent, acquiesce in  
**ἀκίνδυνος** (ὁ) safe  
**ἄλγος** -εος (n, 3) woe, grief  
 ~analgesic  
**ἀλίζω** gather, assemble  
**ἀλφάνω** yield a price as a slave  
 ~arhat  
**ἄμαθία** ignorance  
**ἀναίνομαι** refuse, reject  
**ἀνήκεστος** not to be cured, soothed, appeased  
**ἀντιτίνω** be punished, repay; (mp) make retribution  
**ἀπαλλαγή** relief, escape  
**ἅπαξ** once  
**ἀπειλέω** vow, threaten, boast  
**ἄπεραντος** infinite  
**ἀπεχθάνομαι** become hated  
 ~external  
**ἄρτίφρων** sane, sensible ~frenzy  
**ἀστή** inhabitant  
**ἀστός** townsman; citizen  
**ἄτα** bewilderment, folly  
**αὐθάδης** stubborn  
**ἄχθομαι** be burdened with  
**ἄχρεῖος** serving no purpose  
 ~chresard  
**ἄω** aor: to sate ~sate  
**βιόω** live; (mp) make a living  
 ~biology  
**βλώσκω** come, go  
**βούλευμα** -τος (n, 3) resolution, purpose

**δεῖμα** -τος (n, 3) fear  
**δέρομαι** see, watch  
**δεσπότης** -ου (m, 1) master, despot  
**δισσός** double  
**δυσμενής** hostile, enemy  
**ἐκβασίς** -τος (f) way out ~basis  
**ἐκδιδάσκω** teach, explain  
**ἐκδίδωμι** hand over ~donate  
**ἐκμανθάνω** know by heart  
**ἐκτίθημι** place outside at a spot  
 ~thesis  
**ἐκτίνω** pay off; (mp) exact full payment  
**ἐμψυχος** (ὁ) animate, animated  
**ἐνδίδωμι** hand over, lend, show, allow  
**ἐνδικος** (persons, things) just  
**ἐνειμι** be in ~ion  
**ἐνίημι** put in; motivate ~jet  
**ἐνίστημι** install; threaten; block  
**ἐνστάζω** instill in  
**ἐντίθημι** load; mp: take to heart  
 ~thesis  
**ἐξαμαρτάνω** miss; err, do wrong  
**ἐξευρίσκω** find; discover ~eureka  
**ἐξίημι** send forth, allow forth ~jet  
**ἐπίφθονος** jealous  
**ἔρπω** be able to move ~serpent  
**εὐκλεής** honored ~Euclid  
**ζηλωτός** enviable  
**ζυγόν** yoke, a joined pair ~zygote  
**ζυγός** yoke, a joined pair ~zygote  
**ἥλιξ** -κος (m) of the same age  
**ἡσυχαῖος** quiet, gentle  
**ἡσυχος** quiet  
**θυμώ** (ὁ) anger  
**ἵδρις** skilled  
**καινέω** freshen, innovate, make strange  
**καινώω** freshen, innovate, make strange  
**κάλως** ship's thick rope

**κάρτα** very much ~κράτος  
**καταθνήσκω** die, be dead  
 ~euthanasia  
**κλείς** κληῖδος (f) bar, key ~clavicle  
**κοινωνέω** associate with  
**κρείσσω** more powerful; better  
**κτάομαι** acquire, possess  
**κυρέω** come upon, come up against;  
 obtain  
**λέκτρον** bed ~lie  
**ληίζομαι** plunder ~lucre  
**λυπέω** (ἴ) annoy, distress  
**λυπρός** worthless, wretched  
**μαλθακός** soft, timid  
**μάντις** -ος (m) seer ~mantis  
**μεθίημι** let go, cease; (mid) speed off  
 ~jet  
**μεθορμίζω** move anchorage  
**μέμφομαι** blame; reject  
**μηχανή** machine; mechanism, way  
**μιαϊφόνος** blood-stained ~miasma  
**μολίσκω** come, go  
**νυμφεύω** marry, give in marriage  
**ξύνειμι** be with; have sex  
**οἴκοθεν** from home, from one's own  
 resources ~economics  
**ὄμμα** -τος (n, 3) eye  
**ὄνησις** -ος (f) benefit  
**πενθέω** grieve ~Nepenthe  
**περάω** cross over, drive across; sell  
 as a slave ~pierce  
**περισσός** prodigious, superfluous  
**πικρός** sharp, bitter ~picric  
**πλημμελής** out of tune; incorrect;  
 wrongful  
**ποικίλος** ornamented; various  
**πόρος** way, bridge ~fare

**πρίαμαι** buy  
**προσάντης** uphill, steep  
**προσπίπτω** attack; befall; kow-tow  
**προσχωρέω** go to, join, support  
**ῥαθυμία** (ᾱυα) carelessness, ease  
**σεμνός** revered, holy  
**σιγάω** (ῑ) be silent  
**σκαιός** left-hand  
**σπλάγχνον** (pl) innards, (fig)  
 feelings  
**στείχω** go, march ~stair  
**στένω** groan ~stentorian  
**στερέω** steal, take  
**στυγέω** dread, shrink from ~Styx  
**συγγίγνομαι** associate with, meet,  
 have sex ~genus  
**συμφορά** collecting; accident,  
 misfortune  
**συνουσία** society, sex  
**σωφρονέω** be sane, moderate  
**τάλας** wretched, miserable ~talent  
**τέρμων** boundary  
**τρέω** flee in fear ~tremor  
**τύραννος** tyrant  
**ὕβριζω** insult, treat outrageously  
**ὕπερβολή** mountain pass; excess  
**φεῦ** exclamation of grief, anger,  
 surprise, admiration  
**φθονέω** envy  
**φθόνος** malice, envy  
**φυγάς** -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee  
 ~fugitive  
**φυτός** natural  
**χορῶζω** need ~chresard  
**χρηστός** useful; brave, worthy  
**ὠνέομαι** buy

πόντου κλῆδ' ἀπέραντον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. Κορίνθιαι γυναῖκες, ἐξῆλθον δόμων,

μή μοί τι μέμφησθ'· οἶδα γὰρ πολλοὺς βροτῶν 215

σεμνοὺς γεγῶτας, τοὺς μὲν ὀμμάτων ἄπο,

τοὺς δ' ἐν θυραίοις· οἱ δ' ἀφ' ἡσύχου ποδὸς

δύσκειαν ἐκτήσαντο καὶ ῥαθυμίαν.<sup>1</sup>

δίκη γὰρ οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς βροτῶν,

ὅστις πρὶν ἀνδρὸς σπλάγχνον ἐκμαθεῖν σαφῶς 220

στυγεί δεδορκῶς, οὐδὲν ἡδικημένος...

χρὴ δὲ ξένον μὲν κάρτα προσχωρεῖν πόλει ...

οὐδ' ἀστὸν<sup>2</sup> ἦνεσ' ὅστις αὐθάδης γεγῶς

πικρὸς πολίταις ἐστὶν ἀμαθίας<sup>3</sup> ὕπο.

ἐμοὶ δ' ἄελπτον<sup>4</sup> πρᾶγμα προσπεσὸν τόδε 225

ψυχὴν διέφθαρκ'· οἴχομαι δὲ καὶ βίου

χάριν μεθεῖσα κατθανεῖν χρήζω, φίλαι.

ἐν ᾧ γὰρ ἦν μοι πάντα γινώσκειν καλῶς,

κάκιστος ἀνδρῶν ἐκβέβηχ' οὐμὸς πόσις.

πάντων δ' ὅς' ἔστ' ἐμψυχα καὶ γνώμην ἔχει 230

γυναῖκές ἐσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν.<sup>5</sup>

ἄς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ

πόσιν πρίασθαι, δεσπότην τε σώματος

λαβεῖν· κακοῦ γὰρ τοῦτ' ἔτ' ἄλγιον κακόν.

κὰν τῷδ' ἀγὼν μέγιστος, ἢ κακὸν λαβεῖν 235

ἢ χρηστόν. οὐ γὰρ εὐκλεεῖς ἀπαλλαγαὶ

γυναιξίν, οὐδ' οἷόν τ' ἀνήνασθαι πόσιν.

ἐς καινὰ δ' ἦθη καὶ νόμους ἀφιγμένην

<sup>1</sup> carelessness, ease    <sup>2</sup> townsman; citizen    <sup>3</sup> ignorance    <sup>4</sup> not hoped for  
<sup>5</sup> natural

δεῖ μάντιν εἶναι, μὴ μαθοῦσαν οἴκοθεν,  
 ὅτῳ μάλιστα χρήσεται ξυνευνέτη. 240  
 καὶ μὲν τάδ' ἡμῖν ἐκπονουμέναισιν εὖ  
 πόσις ξυνουκῇ μὴ βία φέρων ζυγόν,  
 ζηλωτὸς<sup>6</sup> αἰών· εἰ δὲ μή, θανεῖν χρεών.  
 ἀνὴρ δ', ὅταν τοῖς ἔνδον ἄχθηται ξυνών,  
 ἔξω μολὼν ἔπαυσε καρδίαν ἄσης· 245  
 ἢ πρὸς φίλον τιν' ἢ πρὸς ἥλικα τραπεῖς·  
 ἡμῖν δ' ἀνάγκη πρὸς μίαν ψυχὴν βλέπειν.  
 λέγουσι δ' ἡμᾶς ὡς ἀκίνδυνον<sup>7</sup> βίον  
 ζῶμεν κατ' οἴκους, οἳ δὲ μάρνανται δορί·  
 κακῶς φρονοῦντες· ὥς τρις ἂν παρ' ἀσπίδα 250  
 στήναι θέλομ' ἂν μάλλον ἢ τεκεῖν ἅπαξ.  
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸς πρὸς σὲ ἄμ' ἥκει λόγος·  
 σοὶ μὲν πόλις θ' ἦδ' ἔστι καὶ πατρὸς δόμοι  
 βίου τ' ὄνησις καὶ φίλων συνουσία,  
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος ἄπολις οὗσ' ὑβρίζομαι 255  
 πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐκ γῆς βαρβάρου λελησμένη,<sup>8</sup>  
 οὐ μητέρ', οὐκ ἀδελφόν, οὐχὶ συγγενῇ  
 μεθορμίσασθαι τῇσδ' ἔχουσα συμφορᾶς.  
 τοσοῦτον οἶν σου τυγχάνειν βουλήσομαι,  
 ἣν μοι πόρος τις μηχανή τ' ἐξευρεθῇ 260  
 πόσιν δίκην τῶνδ' ἀντιτείσασθαι κακῶν,  
 τὸν δόντα τ' αὐτῷ θυγατέρ' ἢ τ' ἐγγήματο  
 σιγᾶν. γυνὴ γὰρ τᾶλλα μὲν φόβου πλέα  
 κακὴ τ' ἐς ἀλκὴν καὶ σίδηρον εἰσορᾶν·

<sup>6</sup> enviable    <sup>7</sup> safe    <sup>8</sup> plunder

ὅταν δ' ἐς εὐνὴν ἡδικομένη κυρῇ,  
οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη φρὴν μαιφονωτέρα.<sup>9</sup> 265

ΧΟΡΟΣ. δράσω τάδ'· ἐνδίκως γὰρ ἐκτείσει πόσιν,  
Μήδεια. πενθεῖν<sup>10</sup> δ' οὐ σε θαυμάζω τύχας.  
ὁρῶ δὲ καὶ Κρέοντα, τῆσδ' ἄνακτα γῆς,  
στείχοντα, καινῶν ἄγγελον βουλευμάτων. 270

ΚΡΕΩΝ. σὲ τὴν σκυθρωπὸν καὶ πόσει θυμουμένην,  
Μήδειαν, εἶπον τῆσδε γῆς ἔξω περᾶν  
φυγάδα, λαβοῦσαν δισσά<sup>11</sup> σὺν σαντῇ τέκνα·  
καὶ μή τι μέλλειν· ὥς ἐγὼ βραβεὺς λόγου  
τοῦδ' εἰμί, κοῦκ ἄπειμι πρὸς δόμους πάλιν,  
πρὶν ἄν σε γαίης τερμόνων ἔξω βάλω. 275

ΜΗΔ. αἰαί· πανώλης ἡ τάλαιν' ἀπόλλυμαι.  
ἐχθροὶ γὰρ ἐξιᾶσι πάντα δὴ κάλων,  
κοῦκ ἔστιν ἄτης εὐπρόσοιστος ἔκβασις.  
ἐρήσομαι δὲ καὶ κακῶς πάσχουσ' ὅμως· 280  
τίνος μ' ἔκατι γῆς ἀποστέλλεις, Κρέον;

ΚΡ. δέδοικά σ'— οὐδὲν δεῖ παραμπίσχειν λόγους—  
μή μοί τι δράσης παῖδ' ἀνήκεστον κακόν.  
συμβάλλεται δὲ πολλὰ τοῦδε δείματος.<sup>12</sup>  
σοφὴ πέφυκας καὶ κακῶν πολλῶν ἴδρις,<sup>13</sup> 285  
λυπῇ δὲ λέκτρων ἀνδρὸς ἐστερημένη.  
κλύω δ' ἀπειλεῖν σ', ὥς ἀπαγγέλλουσί μοι,  
τὸν δόντα καὶ γήμαντα καὶ γαμουμένην  
δράσειν τι. ταῦτ' οὖν πρὶν παθεῖν φυλάξομαι.  
κρείσσον δέ μοι νῦν πρὸς σ' ἀπεχθέσθαι, γύναι, 290

<sup>9</sup> blood-stained   <sup>10</sup> grieve   <sup>11</sup> double   <sup>12</sup> fear   <sup>13</sup> skilled

ἢ μαλθακισθένθ' ὕστερον μέγα στένειν.<sup>14</sup>

ΜΗΔ. φεῦ φεῦ. οὐ νῦν με πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις, Κρέον,

ἔβλαιψε δόξα μεγάλα τ' εἴργασται κακά.

χρὴ δ' οὐποθ' ὅστις ἀρτίφρων<sup>15</sup> πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ

παῖδας περισσῶς ἐκδιδάσκεισθαι σοφούς·

295

χωρὶς γὰρ ἄλλης ἥς ἔχουσιν ἀργίας

φθόνον πρὸς ἀστῶν ἀλφάνουσι<sup>16</sup> δυσμενῇ.

σκαιοῖσι μὲν γὰρ καινὰ προσφέρων σοφὰ

δόξεις ἀχρεῖος<sup>17</sup> κου' σοφὸς πεφυκέναι·

τῶν δ' αὖ δοκούντων εἰδέναι τι ποικίλον

300

κρείσσων νομισθεὶς ἐν πόλει λυπρὸς φανῇ.

ἐγὼ δὲ καὐτῇ τῇσδε κοινωνῶ τύχης.

σοφῇ γὰρ οὔσα, τοῖς μὲν εἰμ' ἐπίφθονος,

τοῖς δ' ἡσυχαία, τοῖς δὲ θατέρου τρόπου,

τοῖς δ' αὖ προσάντης· εἰμὶ δ' οὐκ ἄγαν σοφῇ.

305

σὺ δ' οὖν φοβῇ με· μὴ τί πλημμελὲς<sup>18</sup> πάθης;

οὐχ ᾧδ' ἔχει μοι— μὴ τρέσης ἡμᾶς, Κρέον—

ὥστ' ἐς τυράννους ἄνδρας ἐξαμαρτάνειν.

σὺ γὰρ τί μ' ἡδίκηκας; ἐξέδου κόρην

ὅτῳ σε θυμὸς ἦγεν. ἀλλ' ἐμὸν πόσιν

310

μισῶ· σὺ δ', οἶμαι, σωφρονῶν ἔδρας τάδε.

καὶ νῦν τὸ μὲν σὸν οὐ φθονῶ καλῶς ἔχειν·

νυμφεύετ', εὖ πράσσοιτε· τήνδε δὲ χθόνα

ἐατέ μ' οἰκεῖν. καὶ γὰρ ἡδικημένοι

σιγησόμεσθα, κρεισσόνων νικώμενοι.

315

ΚΡ. λέγεις ἀκοῦσαι μαλθάκ', ἀλλ' ἔσω φρενῶν

<sup>14</sup> groan    <sup>15</sup> sane, sensible    <sup>16</sup> yield a price as a slave    <sup>17</sup> serving no purpose    <sup>18</sup> out of tune; incorrect; wrongful

words MEDEA has come out from the house.  
 MEDEA. Women of Corinth, I am come to show  
 My face, lest ye despise me. For I know  
 Some heads stand high and fail not, even at night  
 Alone—far less like this, in all men's sight:  
 And we, who study not our wayfarings  
 But feel and cry—Oh we are drifting things,  
 And evil! For what truth is in men's eyes,  
 Which search no heart, but in a flash despise  
 A strange face, shuddering back from one that ne'er  
 Hath wronged them?... Sure, far-comers anywhere,  
 I know, must bow them and be gentle. Nay,  
 A Greek himself men praise not, who alway  
 Should seek his own will recking not... But I—  
 This thing undreamed of, sudden from on high,  
 Hath sapped my soul: I dazzle where I stand,  
 The cup of all life shattered in my hand,  
 Longing to die—O friends! He, even he,  
 Whom to know well was all the world to me,  
 The man I loved, hath proved most evil.—Oh,  
 Of all things upon earth that bleed and grow,  
 A herb most bruised is woman. We must pay  
 Our store of gold, hoarded for that one day,  
 To buy us some man's love; and lo, they bring  
 A master of our flesh! There comes the sting  
 Of the whole shame. And then the jeopardy,  
 For good or ill, what shall that master be;  
 Reject she cannot: and if he but stays  
 His suit, 'tis shame on all that woman's days.  
 So thrown amid new laws, new places, why,  
 'Tis magic she must have, or prophecy—  
 Home never taught her that—how best to guide  
 Toward peace this thing that sleepeth at her side.  
 And she who, labouring long, shall find some way  
 Whereby her lord may bear with her, nor fray  
 His yoke too fiercely, blessed is the breath  
 That woman draws! Else, let her pray for death.  
 Her lord, if he be wearied of the face  
 Withindoors, gets him forth; some merrier place  
 Will ease his heart: but she waits on, her whole  
 Vision enchained on a single soul.  
 And then, forsooth, 'tis they that face the call

Of war, while we sit sheltered, hid from all  
Peril! — False mocking! Sooner would I stand  
Three times to face their battles, shield in hand,  
Than bear one child.

But peace! There cannot be  
Ever the same tale told of thee and me.  
Thou hast this city, and thy father's home,  
And joy of friends, and hope in days to come:  
But I, being citiless, am cast aside  
By him that wedded me, a savage bride  
Won in far seas and left — no mother near,  
No brother, not one kinsman anywhere  
For harbour in this storm. Therefore of thee  
I ask one thing. If chance yet ope to me  
Some path, if even now my hand can win  
Strength to requite this Jason for his sin,  
Betray me not! Oh, in all things but this,  
I know how full of fears a woman is,  
And faint at need, and shrinking from the light  
Of battle: but once spoil her of her right  
In man's love, and there moves, I warn thee well,  
No bloodier spirit between heaven and hell.  
LEADER. I will betray thee not. It is but just,  
Thou smite him. — And that weeping in the dust  
And stormy tears, how should I blame them? ...  
Stay:'

Tis Creon, lord of Corinth, makes his way  
Hither, and bears, methinks, some word of weight.  
Enter from the right CREON, the King, with armed Attendants.  
CREON. Thou woman sullen-eyed and hot with hate  
Against thy lord, Medea, I here command  
That thou and thy two children from this land  
Go forth to banishment. Make no delay:  
Seeing ourselves, the King, are come this day  
To see our charge fulfilled; nor shall again  
Look homeward ere we have led thy children twain  
And thee beyond our realm's last boundary.  
MEDEA. Lost! Lost!

Mine haters at the helm with sail flung free  
Pursuing; and for us no beach nor shore  
In the endless waters!... Yet, though stricken sore,  
I still will ask thee, for what crime, what thing

Unlawful, wilt thou cast me out, O King?  
CREON. What crime? I fear thee, woman—little need  
To cloak my reasons—lest thou work some deed  
Of darkness on my child. And in that fear  
Reasons enough have part. Thou comest here  
A wise-woman confessed, and full of lore  
In unknown ways of evil. Thou art sore  
In heart, being parted from thy lover's arms.  
And more, thou hast made menace... so the alarms  
But now have reached mine ear... on bride and groom,  
And him who gave the bride, to work thy doom  
Of vengeance. Which, ere yet it be too late,  
I sweep aside. I choose to earn thine hate  
Of set will now, not palter with the mood  
Of mercy, and hereafter weep in blood.  
MEDEA. 'Tis not the first nor second time, O King,  
That fame hath hurt me, and come nigh to bring  
My ruin... How can any man, whose eyes  
Are wholesome, seek to rear his children wise  
Beyond men's wont? Much helplessness in arts  
Of common life, and in their townsmen's hearts  
Envy deep-set... so much their learning brings!  
Come unto fools with knowledge of new things,  
They deem it vanity, not knowledge. Aye,  
And men that erst for wisdom were held high,  
Feel thee a thorn to fret them, privily  
Held higher than they. So hath it been with me.  
A wise-woman I am; and for that sin  
To divers ill names men would pen me in;  
A seed of strife; an eastern dreamer; one  
Of brand not theirs; one hard to play upon ...  
Ah, I am not so wondrous wise!—And now,  
To thee, I am terrible! What fearest thou?  
What dire deed? Do I tread so proud a path—  
Fear me not thou!—that I should brave the wrath  
Of princes? Thou: what has thou ever done  
To wrong me? Granted thine own child to one  
Whom thy soul chose.—Ah, him out of my heart  
I hate; but thou, meseems, hast done thy part  
Not ill. And for thine houses' happiness  
I hold no grudge. Go: marry, and God bless



*vocabulary*

**αἰδέομαι** respect, be ashamed  
**ἀμήχανος** helpless, impossible  
 ~mechanism  
**ἀναλίσκω** (αᾶ) consume, spend on  
**ἀναλόω** (αᾶ) consume, spend on  
**ἀνταίρω** raise against  
**ἀνταίρω** raise against  
**ἀντιλέγω** contradict, oppose  
**ἄνω** (ᾱ) accomplish, pass, waste;  
 upwards, out to sea  
**ᾠοιδή** song  
**ᾠοιδός** (f) singer  
**ἀπαλλαξείω** wish to get rid of  
**ἀπαλλάσσω** free from, remove; be  
 freed, depart  
**ἀπιστοσύνη** disbelief, distrust  
**ἀπόρρυμι** (ὀ) set forth ~hormone  
**ἄπορος** impassable, difficult  
**ἄσυλος** (ὀ) safe, inviolate  
**αὐτως** just so, merely; in vain ~after  
**ἀφορμή** starting point; means  
**ἀψευδής** truthful  
**βιάζω** use force on, violate  
**βούλευμα** -τος (n, 3) resolution,  
 purpose  
**γελάω** laugh, smile, laugh at  
**γέλως** laughter  
**γυναικεῖος** of women ~queen  
**δαί** particle: emphasizes questions  
**δαῖς** δαδός (f) torch  
**δέμας** -ως (n) body; (+gen.) like  
**δέσποινα** lady  
**δῆτα** emphatic δῆ  
**δόλιος** tricky, guileful  
**δράω** do, accomplish  
**δυσκέλαδος** bad-sounding  
**δυσμενής** hostile, enemy  
**ἐγχειρέω** lay hands on, try, attack  
**εἶα** exclamation to urge someone on  
**εἰκός** likely  
**εἰσβαίνω** enter, board ~basis

**ἐξαμαρτάνω** miss; err, do wrong  
**ἔξιμι** go forth; is possible ~ion  
**ἐξελαύνω** drive out, exile ~elastic  
**ἐξευρίσκω** find; discover ~eureka  
**ἐξίημι** send forth, allow forth ~jet  
**ἔρω** be able to move ~serpent  
**ἔρω** -τος (m) love, desire ~erotic  
**ἑστία** hearth ~Hestia  
**ἑστιάω** give a feast  
**εὐκλεία** good repute ~Euclid  
**εὐνοία** good will, gift  
**εὐψυχία** (ὀ) courage, high spirits  
**ἥκιστος** least; above all  
**ἥπαρ** -τος (n) liver ~hepatic  
**θανάσιμος** fatal  
**θέσπις** -εως (m) divine, inspired  
**θηκτός** sharpened  
**θωπεύω** flatter, coax  
**ἵκετεύω** approach to beg  
**κάρτα** very much ~κράτος  
**καρτερός** strong, staunch  
**κερδαίνω** profit, take advantage  
**κηδεύω** attend to; become allied in  
 marriage  
**κῆδος** -εος (n, 3) sorrow ~heinous  
**κῆρ** heart ~cardiac  
**κλύδων** -ος (m, 3) wave, surge  
 ~cataclysm  
**λαγχάνω** be allotted; (esp. λελα-  
 forms) allot; receive  
**λαμπάς** -δος (f, 3) torch  
**λέχος** -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
**λήγω** cease, (+gen+ppl) cause to  
 cease ~lax  
**λήμα** will, desire, purpose; courage,  
 insolence  
**λιτή** prayer ~litany  
**λύρα** lyre  
**μάταιος** vain, empty  
**μέλεος** vain, idle, useless  
**μέτειμι** be among, go, follow ~ion

μηχανάομαι build, contrive  
 ~mechanism  
 μνεία reminder, memorial  
 μουσα muse  
 μυχός recess, nook  
 μωρία folly  
 νεόγαμος newlywed  
 νυμφικός bridal  
 νυμφίος bridegroom  
 ξενία hospitality ~xenophobe  
 ξένιος of hospitality ~xenophobe  
 ξίφος -εος (n, 3) sword  
 οἰκτείρω pity  
 ὁπαδέω follow, attend  
 ὁπαδός member of an entourage,  
 bodyguard  
 ὁπάζω send with, put in fealty to;  
 bestow; chase  
 ὀπηδός member of an entourage,  
 bodyguard  
 ὁποῖος whatever kind  
 ὀρρωδία terror  
 οὔτις nobody, nothing  
 ὀφλισκάνω lose; incur debt  
 παλαιγενής old ~paleo  
 πανταχῇ everywhere  
 πικρός sharp, bitter ~picric  
 ποῖ whither? how long?  
 πονέω work; be busy ~osteopenia  
 πότε when?  
 πότερος which, whichever of two  
 προσάντης uphill, steep  
 προσδοκάω expect  
 προτιμάω (i) prefer, pay attention to

πύργος ramparts, tower; line of  
 troops  
 σέβομαι feel shame, awe  
 σιγά silence  
 σιγάω (i) be silent  
 σοφός skilled, clever, wise  
 στόρνυμι (ō) smooth out  
 στρέφω turn, veer ~atrophy  
 συμπεραίνω accomplish together  
 συμφορά collecting; accident,  
 misfortune  
 σωτήρ -ος (m) savior  
 τάχος -ους (n, 3) speed ~tachometer  
 τέκτων (f) skilled worker  
 ~technician  
 τέρμων boundary  
 τεχνάομαι make, invent ~oxytocin  
 τόλμα courage  
 τόλμη courage  
 τυραννικός tyrannical  
 ὑφάπτω set on fire from underneath  
 φάρμακον drug, potion ~pharmacy  
 φάσγανον sword  
 φείδομαι spare, not use/harm  
 ~aphid  
 φεῦ exclamation of grief, anger,  
 surprise, admiration  
 φροντίς -τος (f) thought, care  
 φυγάς -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee  
 ~fugitive  
 φυγή flight, means of escape  
 ~fugitive  
 φύω produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
 ὠθέω push

ὀρρωδία<sup>1</sup> μοι μή τι βουλεύσης κακόν,  
 τόσῳ δέ γ' ἦσσαν ἢ πάρος πέποιθά σοι·  
 γυνή γὰρ ὀξύθυμος, ὡς δ' αὐτῶς ἀνὴρ,  
 ῥάων φυλάσσειν ἢ σιωπηλὸς σοφός. 320  
 ἀλλ' ἔξιθ' ὡς τάχιστα, μὴ λόγους λέγε·  
 ὡς ταῦτ' ἄραρε, κοῦκ ἔχεις τέχνην ὅπως  
 μενεῖς παρ' ἡμῖν οὔσα δυσμενὴς ἐμοί.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. μή, πρὸς σε γονάτων τῆς τε νεογάμου<sup>2</sup> κόρης.

ΚΡΕΩΝ. λόγους ἀναλοῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν πείσαις ποτέ. 325

ΜΗΔ. ἀλλ' ἐξελᾶς με κοῦδὲν αἰδέσῃ λιτάς;

ΚΡ. φιλῶ γὰρ οὐ σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ δόμους ἐμούς.

ΜΗΔ. ὦ πατρίς, ὥς σου κάρτα νῦν μνεῖαν ἔχω.

ΚΡ. πλὴν γὰρ τέκνων ἔμοιγε φίλτατον πολύ.

ΜΗΔ. φεῦ φεῦ, βροτοῖς ἔρωτες ὡς κακὸν μέγα. 330

ΚΡ. ὅπως ἄν, οἶμαι, καὶ παραστῶσιν τύχαι.

ΜΗΔ. Ζεῦ, μὴ λάθοι σε τῶνδ' ὅς αἴτιος κακῶν.

ΚΡ. ἔρπ', ὦ ματαία, καί μ' ἀπάλλαξον πόνων.

ΜΗΔ. πονοῦμεν ἡμεῖς κοῦ' πόνων κεχρήμεθα.

ΚΡ. τάχ' ἐξ ὁπαδῶν χειρὸς ὠσθήσῃ βία. 335

ΜΗΔ. μὴ δῆτα τοῦτό γ', ἀλλὰ σ' αἰτοῦμαι, Κρέον ...

ΚΡ. ὅχλον παρέξεις, ὡς ἔοικας, ὦ γύναι.

ΜΗΔ. φευξοῦμεθ'· οὐ τοῦθ' ἰκέτευσα σοῦ τυχεῖν.

ΚΡ. τί δαὶ βιάζῃ κοῦκ ἀπαλλάσσειν χερὸς;

ΜΗΔ. μίαν με μεῖναι τήνδ' ἔασον ἡμέραν 340

καὶ ξυμπερᾶναι φροντίδ' ἢ φευξοῦμεθα,  
 παισὶν τ' ἀφορμὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἐπεὶ πατήρ

<sup>1</sup> terror    <sup>2</sup> newlywed

οὐδὲν προτιμᾷ μηχανήσασθαι τέκνοις.  
οἴκτιρε δ' αὐτούς· καὶ σύ τοι παίδων πατὴρ  
πέφυκας· εἰκὸς δ' ἐστὶν εὐνοϊάν σ' ἔχειν.  
τοῦμοῦ γὰρ οὔ μοι φροντίς, εἰ φευξόμεθα,  
κείνους δὲ κλαίω συμφορᾷ κεχρημένους.

345

ΚΡ. ἤκιστα τοῦμὸν λῆμ' ἔφν τυραννικόν,  
αἰδούμενος δὲ πολλὰ δὴ διέφθορα·  
καὶ νῦν ὁρῶ μὲν ἐξαμαρτάνων, γύναι,  
ὅμως δὲ τεύξῃ τοῦδε· προυννέπω δέ σοι,  
εἰ σ' ἡ 'πιούσα λαμπὰς ὄψεται θεοῦ  
καὶ παῖδας ἐντὸς τῆσδε τερμόνων χθονός,  
θανῇ· λέλεκται μῦθος ἀψευδὴς<sup>3</sup> ὅδε.  
νῦν δ', εἰ μένειν δεῖ, μίμν' ἐφ' ἡμέραν μίαν·  
οὐ γάρ τι δράσεις δεινὸν ὧν φόβος μ' ἔχει.

350

355

ΧΟΡΟΣ. δύστανε γύναι,  
φεῦ φεῦ, μελέα τῶν σῶν ἀχέων.  
ποῖ ποτε τρέψῃ; τίνα πρὸς ξενίαν;  
ἦ δόμον ἢ χθόνα σωτήρα κακῶν  
ἐξευρήσεις;  
ὥς εἰς ἄπορόν σε κλύδωνα<sup>4</sup> θεός,  
Μήδεια, κακῶν ἐπόρευσε.

360

ΜΗΔ. κακῶς πέπρακται πανταχῇ<sup>5</sup>· τίς ἀντερεῖ;  
ἀλλ' οὔτι ταύτῃ ταῦτα, μὴ δοκεῖτέ πω.  
ἔτ' εἴσ' ἀγῶνες τοῖς νεωστὶ νυμφίοις  
καὶ τοῖσι κηδεύσασιν οὐ σμικροὶ πόνοι.  
δοκεῖς γὰρ ἂν με τόνδε θωπεῦσαι<sup>6</sup> ποτε,

365

<sup>3</sup> truthful    <sup>4</sup> wave, surge    <sup>5</sup> everywhere    <sup>6</sup> flatter, coax

εἰ μή τι κερδαίνουσιν ἢ τεχνωμένην;<sup>7</sup>  
 οὐδ' ἂν προσείπον οὐδ' ἂν ἠψάμην χεροῖν. 370  
 ὁ δ' ἐς τοσοῦτον μωρίας ἀφίκετο,  
 ὥστ' ἐξὸν αὐτῷ τᾶμ' ἐλεῖν βουλευέματα  
 γῆς ἐκβαλόντι, τήνδ' ἀφήκεν ἡμέραν  
 μεῖναι μ', ἐν ᾗ τρεῖς τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν νεκροὺς  
 θήσω, πατέρα τε καὶ κόρην πόσιν τ' ἐμόν. 375  
 πολλὰς δ' ἔχουσα θανασίμους αὐτοῖς ὁδοὺς,  
 οὐκ οἶδ' ὅποιά πρῶτον ἐγχειρῶ, φίλαι·  
 πότερον ὑφάψω δῶμα νυμφικὸν πυρί,  
 ἢ θηκτὸν ὥσω φάσγανον δι' ἡπάτος,  
 σιγῇ δόμους ἐσβᾶσ', ἣν ἔστρωται λέχος. 380  
 ἀλλ' ἐν τί μοι πρόσαντες· εἰ ληφθήσομαι  
 δόμους ὑπεσβαίνουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη,  
 θανοῦσα θήσω τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐχθροῖς γέλων.  
 κράτιστα τὴν εὐθείαν, ἣ πεφύκαμεν  
 σοφαὶ μάλιστα, φαρμάκοις αὐτοὺς ἐλεῖν. 385  
 εἶέν· καὶ δὴ τεθνᾶσι· τίς με δέξεται πόλις;  
 τίς γῆν ἄσυλον καὶ δόμους ἐχεγγύους  
 ξένος παρασχὼν ῥύσεται τοῦμὸν δέμας;  
 οὐκ ἔστι. μέϊνας' οὖν ἔτι σμικρὸν χρόνον,  
 ἣν μὲν τις ἡμῖν πύργος ἀσφαλῆς φανῇ, 390  
 δόλῳ μέτεμι τόνδε καὶ σιγῇ φόνον·  
 ἣν δ' ἐξελαύνῃ ξυμφορὰ μ' ἀμήχανος,  
 αὐτὴ ξίφος λαβοῦσα, κεῖ μέλλω θανεῖν,  
 κτενῶ σφε, τόλμης δ' εἴμι πρὸς τὸ καρτερόν.

<sup>7</sup> make, invent

οὐ γὰρ μὰ τὴν δέσπουναν ἦν ἐγὼ σέβω<sup>8</sup> 395  
 μάλιστα πάντων καὶ ξυνεργὸν εἰλόμην,  
 Ἐκάτην, μυχοῖς ναίουσαν ἐστίας ἐμῆς,  
 χαίρων τις αὐτῶν τοῦμὸν ἀλγυνεὶ κέαρ.  
 πικροὺς δ' ἐγὼ σφιν καὶ λυγροὺς θήσω γάμους,  
 πικρὸν δὲ κῆδος καὶ φυγὰς ἐμὰς χθονός. 400  
 ἀλλ' εἶα· φείδου μηδὲν ὧν ἐπίστασαι,  
 Μῆδεια, βουλευούσα καὶ τεχνωμένη·  
 ἔρπ' ἐς τὸ δεινόν· νῦν ἀγὼν εὐψυχίας.<sup>9</sup>  
 ὀρᾷς ἂ πάσχεις· οὐ γέλωτα δεῖ σ' ὀφλεῖν  
 τοῖς Σισυφείοις τοῖς τ' Ἰάσονος γάμοις, 405  
 γεγῶσαν ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς Ἥλιου τ' ἄπο.  
 ἐπίστασαι δέ· πρὸς δὲ καὶ πεφύκαμεν  
 γυναικες, ἐς μὲν ἔσθλ' ἀμηχανώταται,  
 κακῶν δὲ πάντων τέκτονες σοφώταται.

ΧΘ. ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί, 410  
 καὶ δίκαια πάντα πάλιν στρέφεται.  
 ἀνδράσι μὲν δόλιαι<sup>10</sup> βουλαί, θεῶν δ'  
 οὐκέτι πίστις ἄραρε·  
 τὰν δ' ἐμὰν εὐκλειαν<sup>11</sup> ἔχειν βιοτὰν στρέφουσι φᾶμαι· 415  
 ἔρχεται τιμὰ γυναικείῳ<sup>12</sup> γένει·  
 οὐκέτι δυσκέλαδος φάμα γυναικας ἔξει. 420

ΧΘ. μοῦσαι δὲ παλαιγενέων<sup>13</sup> λήξουσ' αἰοιδῶν  
 τὰν ἐμὰν ὑμνεῦσαι ἀπιστοσύναν.  
 οὐ γὰρ ἐν ἀμετέρῃ γνώμα λύρας<sup>14</sup>  
 ὥπασε θέσπιν<sup>15</sup> αἰοιδὰν

<sup>8</sup> feel shame, awe    <sup>9</sup> courage, high spirits    <sup>10</sup> tricky, guileful    <sup>11</sup> good  
 repute    <sup>12</sup> of women    <sup>13</sup> old    <sup>14</sup> lyre    <sup>15</sup> divine, inspired

Your issues. Only suffer me to rest  
Somewhere within this land. Though sore oppressed,  
I will be still, knowing mine own defeat.  
CREON. Thy words be gentle: but I fear me yet  
Lest even now there creep some wickedness  
Deep hid within thee. And for that the less  
I trust thee now than ere these words began.  
A woman quick of wrath, aye, or a man,  
Is easier watching than the cold and still.  
Up, straight, and find thy road! Mock not my will  
With words. This doom is passed beyond recall;  
Nor all thy crafts shall help thee, being withal  
My manifest foe, to linger at my side.  
MEDEA (suddenly throwing herself down  
and clinging to CREON).  
Oh, by thy knees! By that new-wedded bride ...  
CREON. 'Tis waste of words. Thou shalt not weaken me.  
MEDEA. Wilt hunt me? Spurn me when I kneel to thee?  
CREON. 'Tis mine own house that kneels to me, not thou.  
MEDEA. Home, my lost home, how I desire thee now!  
CREON. And I mine, and my child, beyond all things.  
MEDEA. O Loves of man, what curse is on your wings!  
CREON. Blessing or curse, 'tis as their chances flow.  
MEDEA. Remember, Zeus, the cause of all this woe!  
CREON. Oh, rid me of my pains! Up, get thee gone!  
MEDEA. What would I with thy pains? I have mine own.  
CREON. Up: or, 'fore God, my soldiers here shall fling ...  
MEDEA. Not that! Not that!... I do but pray, O King ...  
CREON. Thou wilt not? I must face the harsher task?  
MEDEA. I accept mine exile. 'Tis not that I ask.  
CREON. Why then so wild? Why clinging to mine hand?  
MEDEA (rising).  
For one day only leave me in thy land  
At peace, to find some counsel, ere the strain  
Of exile fall, some comfort for these twain,  
Mine innocents; since others take no thought,  
It seems, to save the babes that they begot.  
Ah! Thou wilt pity them! Thou also art  
A father: thou hast somewhere still a heart  
That feels... I reckon not of myself: 'tis they  
That break me, fallen upon so dire a day.  
CREON. Mine is no tyrant's mood. Aye, many a time

Ere this my tenderness hath marred the chime  
 Of wisest counsels. And I know that now  
 I do mere folly. But so be it! Thou  
 Shalt have this grace... But this I warn thee clear,  
 If once the morrow's sunlight find thee here  
 Within my borders, thee or child of thine,  
 Thou diest!... Of this judgment not a line  
 Shall waver nor abate. So linger on,  
 If thou needs must, till the next risen sun;  
 No further... In one day there scarce can be  
 Those perils wrought whose dread yet haunteth me.

Exit CREON with his suite.

CHORUS. O woman, woman of sorrow,  
 Where wilt thou turn and flee?  
 What town shall be thine to-morrow,  
 What land of all lands that be,  
 What door of a strange man's home?  
 Yea, God hath hunted thee,  
 Medea, forth to the foam  
 Of a trackless sea.

MEDEA. Defeat on every side; what else? — But Oh,  
 Not here the end is: think it not! I know  
 For bride and groom one battle yet untried,  
 And goodly pains for him that gave the bride.  
 Dost dream I would have grovelled to this man,  
 Save that I won mine end, and shaped my plan  
 For merry deeds? My lips had never deigned  
 Speak word with him: my flesh been never stained  
 With touching... Fool, Oh, triple fool! It lay  
 So plain for him to kill my whole essay  
 By exile swift: and, lo, he sets me free  
 This one long day: wherein mine haters three  
 Shall lie here dead, the father and the bride  
 And husband — mine, not hers! Oh, I have tried  
 So many thoughts of murder to my turn,  
 I know not which best likes me. Shall I burn  
 Their house with fire? Or stealing past unseen  
 To Jason's bed — I have a blade made keen  
 For that — stab, breast to breast, that wedded pair?  
 Good, but for one thing. When I am taken there,  
 And killed, they will laugh loud who hate me...  
 Nay,

I love the old way best, the simple way  
 Of poison, where we too are strong as men.  
 Ah me!  
 And they being dead — what place shall hold me then?  
 What friend shall rise, with land inviolate  
 And trusty doors, to shelter from their hate  
 This flesh?... None anywhere!... A little more  
 I needs must wait: and, if there ope some door  
 Of refuge, some strong tower to shield me, good:  
 In craft and darkness I will hunt this blood.  
 Else, if mine hour be come and no hope nigh,  
 Then sword in hand, full-willed and sure to die,  
 I yet will live to slay them. I will wend  
 Man-like, their road of daring to the end.  
 So help me She who of all Gods hath been  
 The best to me, of all my chosen queen  
 And helpmate, Hecate, who dwells apart,  
 The flame of flame, in my fire's inmost heart:  
 For all their strength, they shall not stab my soul  
 And laugh thereafter! Dark and full of dole  
 Their bridal feast shall be, most dark the day  
 They joined their hands, and hunted me away.  
 Awake thee now, Medea! Whatso plot  
 Thou hast, or cunning, strive and falter not.  
 On to the peril-point! Now comes the strain  
 Of daring. Shall they trample thee again?  
 How? And with Hellas laughing o'er thy fall  
 While this thief's daughter weds, and weds withal  
 Jason?... A true king was thy father, yea,  
 And born of the ancient Sun!... Thou know'st the way;  
 And God hath made thee woman, things most vain  
 For help, but wondrous in the paths of pain.

MEDEA goes into the House.

CHORUS. Back streams the wave on the ever running river:  
 Life, life is changed and the laws of it o'ertrud.  
 Man shall be the slave, the affrighted, the low-liver!  
 Man hath forgotten God.  
 And woman, yea, woman, shall be terrible in story:  
 The tales too, meseemeth, shall be other than of yore.  
 For a fear there is that cometh out of Woman and a glory,  
 And the hard hating voices shall encompass her no more!  
 The old bards shall cease, and their memory that lingers

Of frail brides and faithless, shall be shrivelled as with fire.  
For they loved us not, nor knew us: and our lips were dumb, our fingers  
Could wake not the secret of the lyre.  
Else, else, O God the Singer, I had sung amid their rages  
A long tale of Man and his deeds

*vocabulary*

αἰδώς awe, shame, respect; genitals  
 αἰθέριος in the air; heavenly  
 αἰσχρός shameful  
 ἀκριβής (ι) exact  
 ἄκρον crest, extremity ~acute  
 ἄκρος at the edge, extreme ~acute  
 ἀλάομαι wander, rove, roam ~Fr.  
 aller  
 ἀλέομαι escape, shun ~swelter  
 ἀμήχανος helpless, impossible  
 ~mechanism  
 ἀμπέχω cover ~ambient  
 ἀναίδεια shamelessness  
 ἀνανδρία lack of manliness  
 ἀνάνδρος without men; not manlike  
 ~androgynous  
 ἀναπέτομαι fly away  
 ἀνέχω raise; mid; endure, submit  
 ἀνίημι urge, impel; release ~jet  
 ἀνταχέω resound, sound back  
 ἄρσην male  
 ἄτιμος (ι) without honor  
 ἄυπνος sleepless  
 ἀφαιρέω take away ~heresy  
 ἄφυκτος inevitable; caught  
 βασίλεια noblewoman  
 βασιλείος kingly  
 βλώσχω come, go  
 βούλευμα -τος (n, 3) resolution,  
 purpose  
 γλῶσσα tongue, language ~glossary  
 γύης γύου (m, 1) plowshare  
 δέμας -ως (n) body; (+gen.) like  
 δέρη neck, throat, mane  
 δίδυμος twin, double  
 διέρχομαι pierce, traverse  
 δράκων -οντος (m, 3) serpent  
 δράω do, accomplish  
 ἐκπίνω (ι) drink up, consume  
 ἐκπίπτω fall out of ~petal  
 ἐκπίτνω fall out of

ἐκσώζω save from  
 Ἑλλήν Greek  
 ἐμφύω plant; cling ~physics  
 ἐνδεής inadequate  
 ἐξαιρέω pick, steal; dedicate;  
 destroy ~heresy  
 ἐπιστάζω dribble, instill  
 ἐπίσταμαι know how, understand  
 ~station  
 ἐπιστάτης -ου (m, 1) suppliant,  
 dependant ~station  
 ἐπίφθονος jealous  
 ἔραμαι love, aor. fall in love; long  
 for, covet ~erotic  
 ἐρήμιος empty  
 ἔρις -δος (f) strife  
 ἔρω be able to move ~serpent  
 εὐτολμία courage  
 ἐφέλω drag; (mid) influence  
 ζημιόω fine, punish  
 θανάσιμος fatal  
 θαυμαστός wonderful; admirable  
 θέσιμος fixed, settled, lawful  
 θράσος -ους (n, 3) boldness,  
 over-boldness  
 θυμός (ο) anger  
 καθοράω look down ~panorama  
 καινός new, fresh, strange  
 κατακτείνω kill, slay  
 κεδνός considerate, caring  
 κέρδος -ους (n, 3) advantage,  
 cunning  
 κίβδηλος bogus  
 κλύω hear, listen to ~Euclid  
 κοινώω make common; cooperate  
 κοίτη rest, resting place, sleepiness  
 κουφίζω lighten  
 κοῦφος light, nimble  
 κρείσσων more powerful; better  
 κτάομαι acquire, possess  
 λαῖφος -εος (n, 3) rags, sailcloth  
 λέκτρον bed ~lie

λεπτός thin  
 λέχος -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
 λίαν very  
 λυπέω (ὑ) annoy, distress  
 μακάριος blessed  
 μάταιος vain, empty  
 μάτην in vain, randomly  
 μεθορμίζω move anchorage  
 μέλεος vain, idle, useless  
 μέλος -ους (n, 3) limb; melody  
 μολίσκω come, go  
 μόχθος toil  
 μωρία folly  
 νόσος (f) plague, pestilence  
 ~noisome  
 νυμφίος bridegroom  
 οἴκοθεν from home, from one's own  
 resources ~economics  
 ὀνειδος -εος (n, 3) blame; insult  
 ὀπάζω send with, put in fealty to;  
 bestow; chase  
 ὀρίζω divide; ordain, define  
 ~horizon  
 οὐνεκα because  
 οὐτάω pierce, wound  
 πάτρα (αἶ) fatherland ~paternal  
 πάτριος of the father(s), ancestral  
 πέτρα rock, cliff, reef ~petrified  
 πιστός faithful; trustworthy  
 ποῖ whither? how long?  
 πόσις -ος (m) (m) husband, master;  
 (f) a drink ~potent  
 πότε when?  
 πότερος which, whichever of two  
 προδίδωμι betray

πρόθυμος (ὑ) willing, eager ~fume  
 πτωχός poor, beggarly ~pudendum  
 πυργόω wall, fortify  
 σκάφος (τό) hull, ship; (ό) digging  
 σοφός skilled, clever, wise  
 σπείρω sow ~diaspora  
 στυγέω dread, shrink from ~Styx  
 συγγιγνώσκω acknowledge; pardon  
 συμβάλλω pit against; compare;  
 mp: meet, fall in with ~ballistic  
 σύννοια know about someone;  
 think proper  
 σώτειρα savior (fem)  
 σωτήριος saving  
 τάλας wretched, miserable ~talent  
 ταῦρος bull ~steer  
 τεκμήριον sign; proof  
 τοιγάρ therefore  
 τραχύς (ἄ) rough ~trachea  
 τύραννος tyrant  
 ὕμνος song ~hymn  
 ὑπεκτρέχω run out from under,  
 escape  
 φάος φῶς (n, 3) light; salvation; (pl)  
 eyes ~photon  
 φεῦ exclamation of grief, anger,  
 surprise, admiration  
 φροῦδος fled, vanished  
 φυγᾶς -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee  
 ~fugitive  
 φυγή flight, means of escape  
 ~fugitive  
 φύω produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
 χαρακτήρ -ος (m) stamp;  
 characteristic

Φοῖβος, ἀγήτωρ μελέων· ἐπεὶ ἀντάχῃς' ἂν ὕμνον  
 ἀρσένων γέννα. μακρὸς δ' αἰὼν ἔχει  
 πολλὰ μὲν ἀμετέραν ἀνδρῶν τε μοῖραν εἰπεῖν.

430

ΧΟΡΟΣ. σὺ δ' ἐκ μὲν οἴκων πατρίων ἔπλευσας  
 μαινομένα κραδία, διδύμους<sup>1</sup> ὀρίσασα πόντου  
 πέτρας· ἐπὶ δὲ ξένα  
 ναίεις χθονί, τῆς ἀνάνδρου  
 κοίτας ὀλέσασα λέκτρον,  
 τάλαινα, φυγὰς δὲ χώρας  
 ἄτιμος ἐλαύνῃ.

435

ΧΟ. βέβακε δ' ὄρκων χάρις, οὐδ' ἔτ' αἰδῶς  
 Ἑλλάδι τῇ μεγάλη μένει, αἰθερία<sup>2</sup> δ' ἀνέπτα.  
 σοὶ δ' οὔτε πατρὸς δόμοι,  
 δύστανε, μεθορμίσασθαι  
 μόχθων πάρα, τῶν τε λέκτρων  
 ἄλλα βασιλεία κρείσσων  
 δόμοισιν ἐπέστα.

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ΙΑΣΩΝ. οὐ νῦν κατεῖδον πρῶτον ἀλλὰ πολλὰκίς  
 τραχεῖαν ὄργην ὡς ἀμήχανον κακόν.  
 σοὶ γὰρ παρὸν γῆν τήνδε καὶ δόμους ἔχειν  
 κούφως φερούσῃ κρείσσόνων βουλευήματα,  
 λόγων ματαίων οὐνεκ' ἐκπεσῇ χθονός.  
 κάμοι μὲν οὐδὲν πρᾶγμα· μὴ παύσῃ ποτὲ  
 λέγουσ' Ἴασον' ὡς κάκιστός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ·  
 ἂ δ' ἐς τυράννους ἐστὶ σοι λελεγμένα,  
 πᾶν κέρδος ἡγοῦ ζημιουμένη φυγῇ.

450

<sup>1</sup> twin, double    <sup>2</sup> in the air; heavenly

καγὼ μὲν αἰεὶ βασιλέων θυμουμένων  
 455 ὀργὰς ἀφήρουν καὶ σ' ἐβουλόμην μένειν·  
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνίεις μωρίας, λέγουσ' αἰεὶ  
 κακῶς τυράννους· τοιγὰρ ἐκπεσῇ χθονός.  
 ὅμως δὲ κακ τῶνδ' οὐκ ἀπειρηκῶς φίλοις  
 ἤκω, τὸ σὸν δὲ προσκοπούμενος, γύναι,  
 460 ὥς μήτ' ἀχρήμων σὺν τέκνοισιν ἐκπέσης  
 μήτ' ἐνδεής του· πόλλ' ἐφέλλεται φυγὴ  
 κακὰ ξὺν αὐτῇ. καὶ γὰρ εἰ σύ με στυγείς,  
 οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην σοὶ κακῶς φρονεῖν ποτε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. ὦ παγκάκιστε, τοῦτο γάρ σ' εἰπεῖν ἔχω,  
 465 γλώσση μέγιστον εἰς ἀνανδρίαν κακόν·  
 ἦλθες πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἦλθες ἔχθιστος γεγώς;  
 θεοῖς τε κάμοι παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένει;  
 οὔτοι θράσος τόδ' ἐστὶν οὐδ' εὐτολμία,<sup>3</sup>  
 φίλους κακῶς δράσαντ' ἐναντίον βλέπειν,  
 470 ἀλλ' ἡ μεγίστη τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις νόσων  
 πασῶν, ἀναίδει· εὐ δ' ἐποίησας μολών·  
 ἐγὼ τε γὰρ λέξασα κουφισθήσομαι<sup>4</sup>  
 ψυχὴν κακῶς σε καὶ σὺ λυπήσῃ κλύων.  
 ἐκ τῶν δὲ πρώτων πρῶτον ἄρξομαι λέγειν.  
 475 ἔσφασά σ', ὥς ἴσασιν Ἑλλήνων ὅσοι  
 ταὐτὸν συνεισέβησαν Ἀργῶν σκάφος,  
 πεμφθέντα ταύρων πυρπνόων ἐπιστάτην  
 ζεύγλῃσι καὶ σπεροῦντα θανάσιμον γύην·<sup>5</sup>  
 480 δράκοντά θ', ὅς πάγχρυσον ἀμπέχων δέρας

<sup>3</sup> courage    <sup>4</sup> lighten    <sup>5</sup> plowshare

σπείραις ἔσωζε πολυπλόκοις ἄπνους<sup>6</sup> ὦν,  
 κτείνας' ἀνέσχον σοὶ φάος σωτήριον.<sup>7</sup>  
 αὐτὴ δὲ πατέρα καὶ δόμους προδοῦς' ἐμούς  
 τὴν Πηλιῶτιν εἰς Ἰωλκὸν ἰκόμην  
 σὺν σοί, πρόθυμος μᾶλλον ἢ σοφωτέρα· 485  
 Περίαν τ' ἀπέκτειν', ὥσπερ ἄλγιστον θανεῖν,  
 παίδων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, πάντα τ' ἐξείλον δόμον.  
 καὶ ταῦθ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν, ὦ κάκιστ' ἀνδρῶν, παθῶν  
 προὔδωκας ἡμᾶς, καὶνὰ δ' ἐκτήσω λέχη—  
 παίδων γεγώτων· εἰ γὰρ ἦσθ' ἄπαις ἔτι, 490  
 συγγνώστ' ἂν ἦν σοι τοῦδ' ἐρασθῆναι λέχους.  
 ὄρκων δὲ φρούδη πίστις, οὐδ' ἔχω μαθεῖν  
 ἢ θεοὺς νομίζεις τοὺς τότ' οὐκ ἄρχειν ἔτι,  
 ἢ καὶνὰ κεῖσθαι θέσμι<sup>8</sup> ἀνθρώποις τὰ νῦν,  
 ἐπεὶ σύνοισθ' ἄ γ' εἰς ἔμ' οὐκ εὖορκος ὦν. 495  
 φεῦ δεξιὰ χεῖρ, ἣς σὺ πόλλ' ἐλαμβάνου,  
 καὶ τῶνδε γονάτων, ὡς μάτην κεχρώσμεθα  
 κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐλπιδῶν δ' ἡμάρτομεν.  
 ἄγ'· ὡς φίλω γὰρ ὄντι σοι κοινώσομαι—  
 δοκοῦσα μὲν τί πρὸς γε σοῦ πράξειν καλῶς; 500  
 ὁμῶς δ'· ἐρωτηθεὶς γὰρ αἰσχίων φανῇ—  
 νῦν ποῖ τράπωμαι; πότερα πρὸς πατρός δόμους,  
 οὗς σοὶ προδοῦσα καὶ πάτραν<sup>9</sup> ἀφικόμην;  
 ἢ πρὸς ταλαίνας Πελιάδας; καλῶς γ' ἂν οἶν  
 δέξαιντό μ' οἴκοις ὧν πατέρα κατέκτανον. 505  
 ἔχει γὰρ οὕτω· τοῖς μὲν οἴκοθεν φίλοις

<sup>6</sup> sleepless    <sup>7</sup> saving    <sup>8</sup> fixed, settled, lawful    <sup>9</sup> fatherland

ἔχθρὰ καθέστηχ', οὓς δέ μ' οὐκ ἔχρῃν κακῶς  
 δρᾶν, σοὶ χάριν φέρουσα πολεμίους ἔχω.  
 τοιγάρ με πολλαῖς μακαρίαν Ἑλληνίδων  
 ἔθηκας ἀντὶ τῶνδε· θαυμαστὸν δέ σε  
 ἔχω πόσιν καὶ πιστὸν ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ,  
 εἰ φεύξομαί γε γαῖαν ἐκβεβλημένη,  
 φίλων ἔρημος, σὺν τέκνοις μόνη μόνοις—  
 καλὸν γ' ὄνειδος τῷ νεωστὶ νυμφίῳ,  
 πτωχοὺς ἀλᾶσθαι παῖδας ἢ τ' ἔσωσά σε.  
 ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δὴ χρυσοῦ μὲν ὅς κίβδηλος<sup>10</sup> ἦ  
 τεκμήρι' ἀνθρώποισιν ὥπασας σαφῇ,  
 ἀνδρῶν δ' ὅτῳ χρὴ τὸν κακὸν διειδέναι,  
 οὐδεὶς χαρὰκτῆρ<sup>11</sup> ἐμπέφυκε σώματι;

510

515

ΧΟ. δευή τις ὀργή καὶ δυσίατος πέλει,  
 ὅταν φίλοι φίλοισι συμβάλωσ' ἔριν.

520

ΙΑΣ. δεῖ μ', ὥς ἔοικε, μὴ κακὸν φῦναι λέγειν,  
 ἀλλ' ὥστε ναὸς κεδνὸν οἰακοστροφόν  
 ἄκροισι λαίφους<sup>12</sup> κρασπέδοις ὑπεκδραμεῖν  
 τὴν σὴν στόμαργον, ὦ γύναι, γλωσσαλγίαν.  
 ἐγὼ δ', ἐπειδὴ καὶ λίαν πυργοῖς<sup>13</sup> χάριν,  
 Κύπριν νομίζω τῆς ἐμῆς ναυκληρίας  
 σώτειραν<sup>14</sup> εἶναι θεῶν τε κἀνθρώπων μόνην.  
 σοὶ δ' ἔστι μὲν νοῦς λεπτός— ἀλλ' ἐπίφθονος  
 λόγος διελθεῖν, ὥς Ἑρως σ' ἠνάγκασε  
 τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοῦμὸν ἐκσῶσαι δέμας.  
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀκριβῶς αὐτὸ θήσομαι λίαν·

525

530

<sup>10</sup> bogus    <sup>11</sup> stamp; characteristic    <sup>12</sup> rags, sailcloth

<sup>13</sup> wall, fortify

<sup>14</sup> savior (fem)

for good and ill.

But the old World knoweth — 'tis the speech of all his ages —  
Man's wrong and ours: he knoweth and is still.

Some Women.

Forth from thy father's home  
Thou camest, O heart of fire,  
To the Dark Blue Rocks, to the clashing foam,  
To the seas of thy desire:  
Till the Dark Blue Bar was crossed;  
And, lo, by an alien river  
Standing, thy lover lost,  
Void-armed for ever,  
Forth yet again, O lowest  
Of landless women, a ranger  
Of desolate ways, thou goest,  
From the walls of the stranger.

Others.

And the great Oath waxeth weak;  
And Ruth, as a thing outstriven,  
Is fled, fled, from the shores of the Greek,  
Away on the winds of heaven.  
Dark is the house afar,  
Where an old king called thee daughter;  
All that was once thy star  
In stormy water,  
Dark: and, lo, in the nearer  
House that was sworn to love thee,  
Another, queenlier, dearer,  
Is throned above thee.

Enter from the right JASON.

JASON. Oft have I seen, in other days than these,  
How a dark temper maketh maladies  
No friend can heal. 'Twas easy to have kept  
Both land and home. It needed but to accept  
Unstrivingly the pleasure of our lords.  
But thou, for mere delight in stormy words,  
Wilt lose all!... Now thy speech provokes not me.  
Rail on. Of all mankind let Jason be  
Most evil; none shall check thee. But for these  
Dark threats cast out against the majesties  
Of Corinth, count as veriest gain thy path  
Of exile. I myself, when princely wrath

Was hot against thee, strove with all good will  
 To appease the wrath, and wished to keep thee still  
 Beside me. But thy mouth would never stay  
 From vanity, blaspheming night and day  
 Our masters. Therefore thou shalt fly the land.  
 Yet, even so, I will not hold my hand  
 From succouring mine own people. Here am I  
 To help thee, woman, pondering heedfully  
 Thy new state. For I would not have thee flung  
 Provisionless away — aye, and the young  
 Children as well; nor lacking aught that will  
 Of mine can bring thee. Many a lesser ill  
 Hangs on the heels of exile... Aye, and though  
 Thou hate me, dream not that my heart can know  
 Or fashion aught of angry will to thee.  
 MEDEA. Evil, most evil!... since thou grantest me  
 That comfort, the worst weapon left me now  
 To smite a coward... Thou comest to me, thou,  
 Mine enemy! (Turning to the CHORUS.) Oh, say, how call ye this,  
 To face, and smile, the comrade whom his kiss  
 Betrayed? Scorn? Insult? Courage? None of these:  
 'Tis but of all man's inward sicknesses  
 The vilest, that he knoweth not of shame  
 Nor pity! Yet I praise him that he came ...  
 To me it shall bring comfort, once to clear  
 My heart on thee, and thou shalt wince to hear.  
 I will begin with that, 'twixt me and thee,  
 That first befell. I saved thee. I saved thee —  
 Let thine own Greeks be witness, every one  
 That sailed on Argo — saved thee, sent alone  
 To yoke with yokes the bulls of fiery breath,  
 And sow that Acre of the Lords of Death;  
 And mine own ancient Serpent, who did keep  
 The Golden Fleece, the eyes that knew not sleep,  
 And shining coils, him also did I smite  
 Dead for thy sake, and lifted up the light  
 That bade thee live. Myself, uncounselled,  
 Stole forth from father and from home, and fled  
 Where dark Iolcos under Pelion lies,  
 With thee — Oh, single-hearted more than wise!  
 I murdered Pelias, yea, in agony,  
 By his own daughters' hands, for sake of thee;

I swept their house like War. — And hast thou then  
 Accepted all — O evil yet again! —  
 And cast me off and taken thee for bride  
 Another? And with children at thy side!  
 One could forgive a childless man. But no:  
 I have borne thee children ...  
 Is sworn faith so low  
 And weak a thing? I understand it not.  
 Are the old gods dead? Are the old laws forgot,  
 And new laws made? Since not my passioning,  
 But thine own heart, doth cry thee for a thing  
 Forsworn.

She catches sight of her own hand which she has thrown out to denounce him.

Poor, poor right hand of mine, whom he  
 Did cling to, and these knees, so cravingly,  
 We are unclean, thou and I; we have caught the stain  
 Of bad men's flesh... and dreamed our dreams in vain.  
 Thou comest to befriend me? Give me, then,  
 Thy counsel. 'Tis not that I dream again  
 For good from thee: but, questioned, thou wilt show  
 The viler. Say: now whither shall I go?  
 Back to my father? Him I did betray,  
 And all his land, when we two fled away.  
 To those poor Peliad maids? For them 'twere good  
 To take me in, who spilled their father's blood...  
 Aye, so my whole life stands! There were at home  
 Who loved me well: to them I am become  
 A curse. And the first friends who sheltered me,  
 Whom most I should have spared, to pleasure thee  
 I have turned to foes. Oh, therefore hast thou laid  
 My crown upon me, blest of many a maid  
 In Hellas, now I have won what all did crave,  
 Thee, the world-wondered lover and the brave;  
 Who this day looks and sees me banished, thrown  
 Away with these two babes, all, all, alone ...  
 Oh, merry mocking when the lamps are red:  
 "Where go the bridegroom's babes to beg their bread  
 In exile, and the woman who gave all  
 To save him?"  
 O great God, shall gold withal  
 Bear thy clear mark, to sift the base and fine,

And o'er man's living visage runs no sign  
To show the lie within, ere all too late?  
LEADER. Dire and beyond all healing is the hate  
When hearts that loved are turned to enmity.  
JASON. In speech at least, meseemeth, I must be  
Not evil; but, as some old pilot goes  
Furled to his sail's last edge, when danger blows  
Too fiery, run before the wind and swell,  
Woman, of thy loud storms. — And thus I tell  
My tale. Since thou wilt build so wondrous high  
Thy deeds of service in my jeopardy,  
To all my crew and quest I know but one  
Saviour, of Gods or mortals one alone,  
The Cyprian. Oh, thou hast both brain and wit,  
Yet underneath... nay, all the tale of it  
Were graceless telling; how sheer love, a fire  
Of poison-shafts, compelled thee with desire  
To save me. But enough. I will not score

*vocabulary*

**ἄγα** (αἶ) wonder  
**ἄγαμαι** wonder, admire; resent,  
 begrudge  
**ἄγαν** very much  
**αἰτιάομαι** blame ~etiology  
**αἰτίζω** ask for, beg ~etiology  
**ἀκόρεστος** insatiate, unceasing  
**ἄλις** in plenty; enough ~helix  
**ἄλλοθεν** from elsewhere ~alien  
**ἀμήχανος** helpless, impossible  
 ~mechanism  
**ἄμιλλα** conflict  
**ἀμφίλογος** disputed; disputatious  
**ἀνόσιος** unholy  
**ἀποστροφή** turning back, away  
**ἄπωθέω** repel, reject  
**ἀρέσκω** please, satisfy; make  
 amends  
**ἄρη** bane, harm; prayer  
**ἀρνέομαι** deny, refuse, repudiate  
**αὐχέω** boast  
**ἄφθονος** ungrudging, plentiful  
**ἄφυκτος** inevitable; caught  
**βασιλικός** royal  
**γαμέω** marry, take as a lover  
 ~bigamy  
**γάμος** wedding, sex ~bigamy  
**γῆρας** -ος (n, 3) old age  
**γηράσκω** grow old ~geriatric  
**γλῶσσα** tongue, language ~glossary  
**δαίμων** -ονος (m, 3) a god, fate,  
 doom ~demon  
**δέσποινα** lady  
**δεῦρο** here, come here!  
**διάφορος** different; difference;  
 disagreeing; balance, bill  
**δράω** do, accomplish  
**δυστυχής** unlucky  
**δῶρημα** -τος (n, 3) gift  
**εἶπερ** if indeed  
**εἴτα** then, therefore, next

**ἐκβαίνω** come forth, disembark  
 ~basis  
**ἐκποδών** out of the way  
**ἐκτείνω** stretch out ~tend  
**Ἑλλήν** Greek  
**ἐπίσημος** marked, significant  
**ἐπίσταμαι** know how, understand  
 ~station  
**ἐρήμιος** empty  
**ἔρουμα** -τος (n, 3) protection ~serve  
**ἔρω** -τος (m) love, desire ~erotic  
**ἔσχατος** farthest, last  
**ἐτοῖμος** ready; fulfilled  
**εὐδαιμονέω** be lucky, happy  
**εὐδαίμων** blessed with a good  
 genius  
**εὐδοξία** good repute  
**εὐνή** bed; (pl) anchor stones  
**εὐσχήμων** dignified  
**εὐτυχέω** be lucky, prosper, succeed  
**εὐτυχής** fortunate  
**ἐφέλω** drag; (mid) influence  
**ἐφίημι** (ι) send at, let fly; mp: rush  
 at, spring upon ~jet  
**ἐχθαίρω** hate ~external  
**ζημία** loss, penalty ~zeal  
**ἥσυχος** quiet  
**θῆλος** female; (rare) abundant  
 ~female  
**ἵμερος** (ι) desire, inclination (+gen)  
**ἰσχύς** -ος (f) strength; body of troops  
**καινός** new, fresh, strange  
**κατεῖπον** denounce; report  
**κερδαίνω** profit, take advantage  
**κνίζω** scratch, gash; tickle  
**κοσμέω** marshal, array ~cosmos  
**λάσκω** cry, crack, ring  
**λέκτρον** bed ~lie  
**λέχος** -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
**λήγω** cease, (+gen+ppl) cause to  
 cease ~lax

λυπρός worthless, wretched  
 μαρτύρομαι (ἰ) call to witness;  
 protest  
 μεθίημι let go, cease; (mid) speed off  
 ~jet  
 μεθίστημι change, substitute;  
 withdraw; change sides; (mid) send  
 away ~station  
 μέλος -ους (n, 3) limb; melody  
 μέμφομαι blame; reject  
 μέτεμι be among, go, follow ~ion  
 μήποτε absolutely never  
 νεῖκος -εος (n, 3) quarrel, battle  
 νύμφα nymph; bride  
 νυμφεύω marry, give in marriage  
 οἰκέω inhabit ~economics  
 οἰστός bearable  
 ὄλβος happiness, wealth  
 ὀνειδίζω upbraid, reproach  
 ὀνησις -ος (f) benefit  
 ὀνίνημι help, please, be available  
 ὅπη wherever, however  
 ὀρθόω stand up  
 ὄρος boundary marker ~horizon  
 οὐνεκα because  
 ὀφλισκάνω lose; incur debt  
 πάρος before, in the past  
 πένης -τος (m) poor  
 πλήσσω hit ~plectrum  
 πόθεν from where?  
 πόθος longing, regret ~bid  
 προδίδωμι betray  
 προτίθημι prefer, set out ~thesis  
 σιγά silence  
 σιγάω (ἰ) be silent

σοφός skilled, clever, wise  
 σπείρω sow ~diaspora  
 σπουδή zeal; (dat) with difficulty,  
 hastily ~repudiate  
 στέργω love; be content  
 σύμβολον token, seal  
 σύμβολος token; omen  
 συμφορά collecting; accident,  
 misfortune  
 σωτηρία saving, preservation  
 σωφροσύνη discretion, moderation  
 σωφρόσυτος sensible, prudent  
 σώφρων sensible, prudent ~frenzy  
 τεκνών have/give children  
 τοιγάρ therefore  
 τύραννος tyrant  
 τύχη fortune, act of a god  
 ὑβρίζω insult, treat outrageously  
 ὑμνέω recite, commemorate  
 ὑπηρετέω serve  
 ὑπουργέω serve, help  
 φυγὰς -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee  
 ~fugitive  
 φυγή flight, means of escape  
 ~fugitive  
 φύσα bellows  
 φύω produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
 χόλος gall, anger, wrath, bitterness  
 ~choler  
 χρηστός useful; brave, worthy  
 χρίω (ἰ) anoint ~Christ  
 χρονίζω spend time  
 χρυσός (ἰ) gold  
 χωρέω withdraw, give way to (+dat)  
 ~heir

ὅπη γὰρ οὖν ὤνησας, οὐ κακῶς ἔχει.  
 μεῖζω γε μέντοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας  
 εἵληφας ἢ δέδωκας, ὡς ἐγὼ φράσω. 535  
 πρῶτον μὲν Ἑλλάδ' ἀντὶ βαρβάρου χθονὸς  
 γαῖαν κατοικεῖς καὶ δίκην ἐπίστασαι  
 νόμοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ πρὸς ἰσχύος χάριν·  
 πάντες δέ σ' ἤσθοντ' οὐδ' ἔσαν Ἑλληνες σοφὴν  
 καὶ δόξαν ἔσχε· εἰ δὲ γῆς ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις 540  
 ὄρουσιν<sup>1</sup> ὥκεις, οὐκ ἂν ἦν λόγος σέθεν.  
 εἴη δ' ἔμοιγε μήτε χρυσὸς ἐν δόμοις  
 μήτ' Ὀρφέως κάλλιον ὑμνῆσαι μέλος,  
 εἰ μὴ ἴσις ἢ τύχη γένοιτό μοι.  
 τοσαῦτα μὲν σοι τῶν ἐμῶν πόνων πέρι 545  
 ἔλεξ'. ἄμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προύθηκας λόγων.  
 ἂ δ' ἐς γάμους μοι βασιλικὸς ὠνεῖδισας,  
 ἐν τῷδε δείξω πρῶτα μὲν σοφὸς γεγώς,  
 ἔπειτα σὺ φίλων, εἴτα σοὶ μέγας φίλος  
 καὶ παισὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν— ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἥσυχος. 550  
 ἐπεὶ μετέστην δεῦρ' Ἰωλκίας χθονὸς  
 πολλὰς ἐφέλκων συμφορὰς ἀμηχάνους,  
 τί τοῦδ' ἂν εὖρημ' ἡἶρον εὐτυχέστερον  
 ἢ παῖδα γῆμαι βασιλέως φυγὰς γεγώς;  
 οὐχ, ἦ σὺ κνίζῃ, σὸν μὲν ἐχθαίρων λέχος, 555  
 καινῆς δὲ νύμφης ἱμέρω πεπληγμένος,  
 οὐδ' εἰς ἄμιλλαν πολύτεκνον σπουδὴν ἔχων·  
 ἄλῃς γὰρ οἱ γεγῶτες οὐδὲ μέμφομαι·  
 ἀλλ' ὥς, τὸ μὲν μέγιστον, οἰκοῖμεν καλῶς

<sup>1</sup> boundary marker

καὶ μὴ σπανιζοίμεσθα, γιγνώσκων ὅτι 560  
 πένητα φεύγει πᾶς τις ἐκποδὼν φίλος,  
 παῖδας δὲ θρέψαιμ' ἀξίως δόμων ἐμῶν  
 σπείρας τ' ἀδελφοὺς τοῖσιν ἐκ σέθεν τέκνοις  
 ἐς ταὐτὸ θεῖην, καὶ ξυναρτήσας γένος 565  
 εὐδαιμονοῖμεν. σοὶ τε γὰρ παίδων τί δεῖ;  
 ἐμοὶ τε λύει τοῖσι μέλλουσιν τέκνοις  
 τὰ ζῶντ' ὀνήσαι. μῶν βεβούλευμαι κακῶς;  
 οὐδ' ἂν σὺ φαίης, εἴ σε μὴ κνίζοι λέχος.  
 ἀλλ' ἐς τοσοῦτον ἦκεθ' ὥστ' ὀρθουμένης<sup>2</sup>  
 εὐνῆς γυναικες πάντ' ἔχειν νομίζετε, 570  
 ἣν δ' αὖ γένηται ξυμφορά τις ἐς λέχος,  
 τὰ λῶστα καὶ κάλλιστα πολεμιώτατα  
 τίθεσθε. χρῆν γὰρ ἄλλοθεν ποθεν βροτοὺς  
 παῖδας τεκνοῦσθαι,<sup>3</sup> θῆλυ δ' οὐκ εἶναι γένος·  
 χούτως ἂν οὐκ ἦν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις κακόν. 575

ΧΟΡΟΣ. Ἰᾶσον, εὖ μὲν τούσδ' ἐκόσμησας λόγους·  
 ὅμως δ' ἔμοιγε, κεῖ παρὰ γνώμην ἐρῶ,  
 δοκεῖς προδοὺς σὴν ἄλοχον οὐ δίκαια δρᾶν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. ἦ πολλὰ πολλοῖς εἰμι διάφορος βροτῶν.  
 ἐμοὶ γὰρ ὅστις ἄδικος ὦν σοφὸς λέγειν 580  
 πέφυκε, πλείστην ζημίαν ὀφλισκάνει·  
 γλώσση γὰρ αὐχῶν τᾷδικ' εὖ περιστελεῖν,  
 τολμᾷ πανουργεῖν· ἔστι δ' οὐκ ἄγαν σοφός.  
 ὥς καὶ σὺ μή νυν εἰς ἔμ' εὐσχήμων γένη  
 λέγειν τε δεινός. ἐν γὰρ ἔκτενεί σ' ἔπος· 585

<sup>2</sup> stand up    <sup>3</sup> have/give children

χρῆν σ', εἴπερ ἦσθα μὴ κακός, πείσαντά με  
γαμεῖν γάμον τόνδ', ἀλλὰ μὴ σιγῇ φίλων.

ΙΑΣΩΝ. καλῶς γ' ἄν, οἶμαι, τῷδ' ὑπηρέτεῖς λόγῳ,  
εἴ σοι γάμον κατεῖπον, ἥτις οὐδὲ νῦν  
τολμᾷς μεθεῖναι καρδίας μέγαν χόλον.

590

ΜΗΔ. οὐ τοῦτό σ' εἶχεν, ἀλλὰ βάρβαρον λέχος  
πρὸς γήρας οὐκ εὐδοξον ἐξέβανέ σοι.

ΙΑΣ. εὖ νῦν τόδ' ἴσθι, μὴ γυναικὸς οὐνεκα  
γῆμαί με λέκτρα βασιλέων ἂ νῦν ἔχω,  
ἀλλ', ὥσπερ εἶπον καὶ πάρος, σῶσαι θέλων  
σέ, καὶ τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὁμοσπόρους  
φῦσαι τυράννους παῖδας, ἔρυμα δώμασι.

595

ΜΗΔ. μή μοι γένοιτο λυπρὸς εὐδαίμων βίος  
μηδ' ὄλβος ὅστις τὴν ἐμὴν κνίζοι φρένα.

ΙΑΣ. οἶσθ' ὡς μέτευξαι, καὶ σοφώτερα φανῇ;  
τὰ χρηστὰ μή σοι λυπρὰ φαίνεσθαι ποτέ,  
μηδ' εὐτυχούσα δυστυχῆς εἶναι δοκεῖν.

600

ΜΗΔ. ὕβριζ', ἐπειδὴ σοὶ μὲν ἔστ' ἀποστροφή,  
ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος τήνδε φευξοῦμαι χθόνα.

ΙΑΣ. αὐτὴ τὰδ' εἴλου· μηδέν' ἄλλον αἰτιῶ.

605

ΜΗΔ. τί δρώσα; μὲν γαμοῦσα καὶ προδοῦσά σε;

ΙΑΣ. ἀρὰς τυράννοις ἀνοσίους ἀρωμένῃ.

ΜΗΔ. καὶ σοῖς ἀραία γ' οὔσα τυγχάνω δόμοις.

ΙΑΣ. ὥς οὐ κρινοῦμαι τῶνδέ σοι τὰ πλείονα.

ἀλλ', εἴ τι βούλῃ παισὶν ἢ σαυτῆς φυγῇ  
προσωφέλημα χρημάτων ἐμῶν λαβεῖν,  
λέγ'· ὥς ἔτοιμος ἀφθόνῳ δοῦναι χερὶ

610

ξένοις τε πέμπειν σύμβολ', οἳ δράσουσί σ' εὔ.

καὶ ταῦτα μὴ θέλουσα μωρανεῖς, γύναι·

λήξασα δ' ὀργῆς κερδανεῖς ἀμείνονα.

615

ΜΗΔ. οὔτ' ἂν ξένοισι τοῖσι σοῖς χρησαίμεθ' ἄν,

οὔτ' ἄν τι δεξαίμεσθα, μηδ' ἡμῶν δίδου·

κακοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δῶρ' ὄνησιν οὐκ ἔχει.

ΙΑΣ. ἀλλ' οὖν ἐγὼ μὲν δαίμονας μαρτύρομαι,

ὥς πάνθ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τε καὶ τέκνοις θέλω·

620

σοὶ δ' οὐκ ἀρέσκει τὰγάθ', ἀλλ' ἀνθαδία

φίλους ἀπωθῇ· τοιγὰρ ἀλγυνῇ πλέον.

ΜΗΔ. χώρει· πόθω γὰρ τῆς νεοδμήτου κόρης

αἰρῇ χρονίζων<sup>4</sup> δωμάτων ἐξώπιος.

νύμφευ' ἴσως γάρ— σὺν θεῷ δ' εἰρήσεται—

625

γαμεῖς τοιοῦτον ὥστε σ' ἀρνείσθαι γάμον.

ΧΟ. ἔρωτες ὑπὲρ μὲν ἄγαν

ἐλθόντες οὐκ εὐδοξίαν<sup>5</sup>

οὐδ' ἀρετὰν παρέδωκαν

ἀνδράσιν· εἰ δ' ἄλλος ἔλθοι

630

Κύπρις, οὐκ ἄλλα θεὸς εὐχαρις οὕτως.

μήποτ', ὦ δέσποινα, ἐπ' ἐμοὶ χρυσέων τόξων ἐφείης

ἰμέρω χρίσας ἀφυκτον οἰστόν.

ΧΟ. στέργοι δέ με σωφροσύνα,

635

δώρημα κάλλιστον θεῶν·

μηδέ ποτ' ἀμφιλόγους ὀργὰς

ἀκόρεστά<sup>6</sup> τε νείκη

<sup>4</sup> spend time    <sup>5</sup> good reputé    <sup>6</sup> insatiate, unceasing

That count too close. 'Twas good help: and therefor  
I give thee thanks, howe'er the help was wrought.  
Howbeit, in my deliverance, thou hast got  
Far more than given. A good Greek land hath been  
Thy lasting home, not barbary. Thou hast seen  
Our ordered life, and justice, and the long  
Still grasp of law not changing with the strong  
Man's pleasure. Then, all Hellas far and near  
Hath learned thy wisdom, and in every ear  
Thy fame is. Had thy days run by unseen  
On that last edge of the world, where then had been  
The story of great Medea? Thou and I ...  
What worth to us were treasures heaped high  
In rich kings' rooms; what worth a voice of gold  
More sweet than ever rang from Orpheus old,  
Unless our deeds have glory?  
Speak I so,  
Touching the Quest I wrought, thyself did throw  
The challenge down. Next for thy cavilling  
Of wrath at mine alliance with a king,  
Here thou shalt see I both was wise, and free  
From touch of passion, and a friend to thee  
Most potent, and my children... Nay, be still!  
When first I stood in Corinth, clogged with ill  
From many a desperate mischance, what bliss  
Could I that day have dreamed of, like to this,  
To wed with a king's daughter, I exiled  
And beggared? Not—what makes thy passion wild—  
From loathing of thy bed; not over-fraught  
With love for this new bride; not that I sought  
To upbuild mine house with offspring: 'tis enough,  
What thou hast borne: I make no word thereof:  
But, first and greatest, that we all might dwell  
In a fair house and want not, knowing well  
That poor men have no friends, but far and near  
Shunning and silence. Next, I sought to rear  
Our sons in nurture worthy of my race,  
And, raising brethren to them, in one place  
Join both my houses, and be all from now  
Prince-like and happy. What more need hast thou  
Of children? And for me, it serves my star  
To link in strength the children that now are

With those that shall be.  
Have I counselled ill?  
Not thine own self would say it, couldst thou still  
One hour thy jealous flesh. — 'Tis ever so!  
Who looks for more in women? When the flow  
Of love runs plain, why, all the world is fair:  
But, once there fall some ill chance anywhere  
To baulk that thirst, down in swift hate are trod  
Men's dearest aims and noblest. Would to God  
We mortals by some other seed could raise  
Our fruits, and no blind women block our ways!  
Then had there been no curse to wreck mankind.  
LEADER. Lord Jason, very subtly hast thou twined  
Thy speech: but yet, though all athwart thy will  
I speak, this is not well thou dost, but ill,  
Betraying her who loved thee and was true.  
MEDEA. Surely I have my thoughts, and not a few  
Have held me strange. To me it seemeth, when  
A crafty tongue is given to evil men'  
Tis like to wreck, not help them. Their own brain  
Tempts them with lies to dare and dare again,  
Till... no man hath enough of subtlety.  
As thou — be not so seeming-fair to me  
Nor deft of speech. One word will make thee fall.  
Wert thou not false, 'twas thine to tell me all,  
And charge me help thy marriage path, as I  
Did love thee; not befool me with a lie.  
JASON. An easy task had that been! Aye, and thou  
A loving aid, who canst not, even now,  
Still that loud heart that surges like the tide!  
MEDEA. That moved thee not. Thine old barbarian bride,  
The dog out of the east who loved thee sore,  
She grew grey-haired, she served thy pride no more.  
JASON. Now understand for once! The girl to me  
Is nothing, in this web of sovranty  
I hold. I do but seek to save, even yet,  
Thee: and for brethren to our sons beget  
Young kings, to prosper all our lives again.  
MEDEA. God shelter me from prosperous days of pain,  
And wealth that maketh wounds about my heart.  
JASON. Wilt change that prayer, and choose a wiser part?  
Pray not to hold true sense for pain, nor rate

Thyself unhappy, being too fortunate.

MEDEA. Aye, mock me; thou hast where to lay thine head,  
But I go naked to mine exile.

JASON. Tread

Thine own path! Thou hast made it all to be.

MEDEA. How? By seducing and forsaking thee?

JASON. By those vile curses on the royal halls  
Let loose...

MEDEA. On thy house also, as chance falls,  
I am a living curse.

JASON. Oh, peace! Enough

Of these vain wars: I will no more thereof.

If thou wilt take from all that I possess

Aid for these babes and thine own helplessness

Of exile, speak thy bidding. Here I stand

Full-willed to succour thee with stintless hand,

And send my signet to old friends that dwell

On foreign shores, who will entreat thee well.

Refuse, and thou shalt do a deed most vain.

But cast thy rage away, and thou shalt gain

Much, and lose little for thine anger's sake.

MEDEA. I will not seek thy friends. I will not take

Thy givings. Give them not. Fruits of a stem

Unholy bring no blessing after them.

JASON. Now God in heaven be witness, all my heart

Is willing, in all ways, to do its part

For thee and for thy babes. But nothing good

Can please thee. In sheer savageness of mood

Thou drivest from thee every friend. Wherefore

I warrant thee, thy pains shall be the more.

He goes slowly away.

MEDEA. Go: thou art weary for the new delight

Thou wooest, so long tarrying out of sight

Of her sweet chamber. Go, fulfil thy pride,

O bridegroom! For it may be, such a bride

Shall wait thee,—yea, God heareth me in this—

As thine own heart shall sicken ere it kiss.

CHORUS. Alas, the Love that falleth like a flood,

Strong-winged and transitory:

Why praise ye him? What beareth he of good

To man, or glory?

Yet Love there is that moves in gentleness,

Heart-filling, sweetest of all powers that bless.  
Loose not on me, O Holder of man's heart,  
Thy golden quiver,  
Nor steep in poison of desire the dart  
That heals not ever.  
The pent hate of the word that cavilleth,  
The strife that hath no fill,  
Where once was fondness; and the mad heart's breath  
For strange love panting still:  
O Cyprian, cast me not on these; but sift,

*vocabulary*

ἄζυξ unpaired, unmarried  
 αἰσχρός shameful  
 ἀμηχανία helplessness ~mechanism  
 ἀναίτιος blameless ~etiology  
 ἀνέζω put on, put back ~sit  
 ἄνειμι go up, inland, to, back ~ion  
 ἀνίημι urge, impel; release ~jet  
 ἄνοια folly  
 ἀντάω meet face to face  
 ἀνώμοτος not bound by oath  
 ἀπαγγέλλω announce, order,  
 promise ~angel  
 ἄπαις childless  
 ἀπαλλάσσω free from, remove; be  
 freed, depart  
 ἄπειρος untested; infinite  
 ἀπτόλεμος unwarlike  
 ἀραρίσκω join, fit, furnish ~arthritis  
 ἀσθενής weak  
 ἀσκέω work on  
 ἀσκός wine skin, leather bag  
 ἄσυλος (ῶ) safe, inviolate  
 ἄτιμος (ι) without honor  
 ἀχάριστος ungracious, unpleasant  
 ~eucharist  
 βίος life ~biology  
 βλώσχω come, go  
 γαμήλιος nuptial  
 γονή progeny ~genus  
 δαίμων -ονος (m, 3) a god, fate,  
 doom ~demon  
 δάμαρ wife ~domicile  
 δεσπότις lady  
 δεῦρο here, come here!  
 δῆτα emphatic δῆ  
 δράω do, accomplish  
 δυσδαίμων unlucky, unhappy  
 δυσχερής annoying, difficult  
 εἴπερ if indeed  
 εἰσοράω look at, see; treat with  
 respect ~panorama

ἐκλείπω leave out, pass over  
 ἐκπίπτω fall out of ~petal  
 ἐκπλήσσω panic, be knocked out  
 ~ppectrum  
 ἐξανύω bring to pass; slay  
 ἐξελαύνω drive out, exile ~elastic  
 ἐξηγέομαι lead forth; set out,  
 describe ~hegemony  
 ἐξικνέομαι arrive at  
 ἐπαινέω concur, praise, advise  
 ἐπιστροφάω visit, go among  
 ~atrophy  
 ἔραμαι love, aor. fall in love; long  
 for, covet ~erotic  
 ἐρευνάω hunt for  
 ἐρήμιος empty  
 ἔρω be able to move ~serpent  
 ἔρω -τος (m) love, desire ~erotic  
 ἐστία hearth ~Hestia  
 ἐστιάω give a feast  
 εὐνή bed; (pl) anchor stones  
 εὐρημα invention; windfall  
 εὐσεβής pious  
 εὐτυχέω be lucky, prosper, succeed  
 ἐφέςτιος hearthside  
 ἐχθαίρω hate ~external  
 ζεύγνυμι (ῶ) yoke, join ~zygote  
 θέμις -τος (f) custom, law  
 καινός new, fresh, strange  
 καρτερέω be patient  
 καταίρω swoop; land  
 καταράομαι (αἶα) curse  
 κῆδος -εος (n, 3) sorrow ~heinous  
 κλείς κληῖδος (f) bar, key ~clavicle  
 κλύω hear, listen to ~Euclid  
 κοινώω make common; cooperate  
 λέκτρον bed ~lie  
 λέχος -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
 λυπέω (ῶ) annoy, distress  
 μάντευμα -τος (n, 3) oracle  
 μεθίημι let go, cease; (mid) speed off

~jet

μέτεμι be among, go, follow ~ion

μολίσκω come, go

ναυστολέω to ship, sail

οἰκτεῖρω pity

οἰκτρὸς pitiable

ὄλβιος happy, wealthy

ὄλβος happiness, wealth

ὄμμα -τος (n, 3) eye

ὄμνυμι (ō) swear

ὀμφαλός navel, nub ~umbilicus

ὄρκιον oath ~orc

πάθος -ους (n, 3) an experience,  
passion, condition

παλαιός old ~paleo

πάρως before, in the past

πάτριος of the father(s), ancestral

πατρώιος of the father(s), ancestral  
~paternal

πατρῷος of the father(s), ancestral

πέδον ground ~pedal

περαίνω finish, accomplish

πιστός faithful; trustworthy

πόθεν from where?

πόσις -ος (m) (m) husband, master;  
(f) a drink ~potent

πότερος which, whichever of two

προέχω be ahead, jut forward; mid:  
have before one

πρόθυμος (ō) willing, eager ~fume

προξενέω protect, handle for

προοίμιον prelude, introduction

προσβάλλω hit, attack, approach;

attach, offer ~ballistic

προσημαίνω foretell; proclaim

προσφωνέω speak to

σάφα with full understanding

σαφής clear, understandable

σεβίζω worship, honor

σκήψις excuse

σοφός skilled, clever, wise

σπείρω sow ~diaspora

στέλλω prepare, send, furl ~apostle

στέρομαι lack, lose

συμβάλλω pit against; compare;

mp: meet, fall in with ~ballistic

συντίθμι hearken, mark ~thesis

τείνω stretch, tend ~tense

τελεσφόρος completion ~apostle

τιμάω (i) honor, exalt

τοιόσδε such

τρίβω (i) rub; (mid) be worn out  
~tribulation

τυραννικός tyrannical

τύραννος tyrant

ὑπερθεν from above

ὑπερτίθμι hand over; excel; defer

φάρμακον drug, potion ~pharmacy

φοῖβος pure, radiant

φροῦδος fled, vanished

φυγάς -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee  
~fugitive

φύω produce, beget; clasp ~physics

χρήζω need ~chresard

χρησμός oracular response

χρηστήριον oracle, response

θυμὸν ἐκπλήξας ἑτέροις ἐπὶ λέκτροις  
 προσβάλοι δεινὰ Κύπρις, ἀπολέμους δ' εὐνὰς σεβίζουσ' 640  
 ὀξύφρων κρίνοι λέχη γυναικῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ. ὦ πατρίς, ὦ δώματα, μὴ  
 δῆτ' ἄπολις γενοίμαν  
 τὸν ἀμηχανίας<sup>1</sup> ἔχουσα 645  
 δυσπέρατον αἰῶν', οἰκτροτάτων<sup>2</sup> ἀχέων.  
 θανάτῳ θανάτῳ πάρος δαμείην  
 ἀμέραν τάνδ' ἐξανύσασα· μοῖ  
 χθων δ' οὐκ ἄλλος ὕπερθεν ἦ 650  
 γὰς πατρίας στέρεσθαι.<sup>3</sup>

ΧΟ. εἶδομεν, οὐκ ἐξ ἑτέρων  
 μῦθον ἔχω φράσασθαι·  
 σὲ γὰρ οὐ πόλις, οὐ φίλων τις 655  
 ᾧ κτισεν παθοῦσαν δεινότατον παθέων.  
 ἀχάριστος<sup>4</sup> ὅλοιθ', ὅτῳ πάρεστιν  
 μὴ φίλους τιμᾶν καθαρᾶν ἀνοί' 660  
 ξαντα κλῆδα φρενῶν· ἐμοὶ  
 μὲν φίλος οὐ ποτ' ἔσται.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ. Μήδεια, χαίρε· τοῦδε γὰρ προοίμιον  
 κάλλιον οὐδεὶς οἶδε προσφωνεῖν φίλους.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. ὦ χαίρε καὶ σύ, παῖ σοφοῦ Πανδίου, 665

Αἰγεῦ. πόθεν γῆς τῆσδ' ἐπιστρωφᾷ πέδον;

ΑΙΓ. Φοίβου παλαιὸν ἐκλιπὼν χρηστήριον.

ΜΗΔ. τί δ' ὀμφαλὸν<sup>5</sup> γῆς θεσπιωδὸν ἐστάλης;

ΑΙΓ. παίδων ἐρευνῶν σπέρμ' ὅπως γένοιτό μοι.

<sup>1</sup> helplessness    <sup>2</sup> pitiable    <sup>3</sup> lack, lose    <sup>4</sup> ungracious, unpleasant    <sup>5</sup> navel, nub

- ΜΗΔ. πρὸς θεῶν— ἄπαις γὰρ δεῦρ' αἰὲν τείνεις βίον; 670
- ΑΙΓ. ἄπαιδές ἐσμεν δαίμονός τινος τύχη.
- ΜΗΔ. δάμαρτος οὔσης, ἣ λέχους ἄπειρος ὦν;
- ΑΙΓ. οὐκ ἐσμέν εὐνῆς ἄζυγες<sup>6</sup> γαμηλίου.
- ΜΗΔ. τί δῆτα Φοῖβος εἶπέ σοι παίδων πέρι;
- ΑΙΓ. σοφώτερ' ἢ κατ' ἄνδρα συμβαλεῖν ἔπη. 675
- ΜΗΔ. θέμις μὲν ἡμᾶς χρησμὸν<sup>7</sup> εἰδέναι θεοῦ;
- ΑΙΓ. μάλιστ', ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ σοφῆς δέιται φρενός.
- ΜΗΔ. τί δῆτ' ἔχρησε; λέξον, εἰ θέμις κλύειν.
- ΑΙΓ. ἀσκοῦ με τὸν προύχοντα μὴ λῦσαι πόδα—
- ΜΗΔ. πρὶν ἂν τί δράσης ἢ τίν' ἐξίκη χθόνα; 680
- ΑΙΓ. πρὶν ἂν πατρώαν αὔθις ἐστίαν μόλω.
- ΜΗΔ. σὺ δ' ὥς τί χρήζων τήνδε ναυστολεῖς<sup>8</sup> χθόνα;
- ΑΙΓ. Πιθεύς τις ἔστι, γῆς ἀναξ ροζηνίας...
- ΜΗΔ. παῖς, ὥς λέγουσι, Πέλοπος, εὖσεβέστατος.<sup>9</sup>
- ΑΙΓ. τούτῳ θεοῦ μάντευμα<sup>10</sup> κοινῶσαι θέλω. 685
- ΜΗΔ. σοφὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ καὶ τρίβων τὰ τοιάδε.
- ΑΙΓ. κάμοί γε πάντων φίλτατος δορυξένων.
- ΜΗΔ. ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης καὶ τύχοις ὅσων ἐρᾷς.
- ΑΙΓ. τί γὰρ σὸν ὄμμα χρώς τε συντέτηχ' ὅδε;
- ΜΗΔ. Αἰγεῦ, κάκιστός ἐστί μοι πάντων πόσις. 690
- ΑΙΓ. τί φῆς; σαφῶς μοι σὰς φράσον δυσθυμίας.
- ΜΗΔ. ἀδικεῖ μ' Ἰάσων οὐδὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ παθών.
- ΑΙΓ. τί χρέμα δράσας; φράζε μοι σαφέστερον.
- ΜΗΔ. γυναικ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν δεσπότην δόμων ἔχει.
- ΑΙΓ. οὐ πού τετόλμηκ' ἔργον αἰσχιστον τόδε; 695

<sup>6</sup> unpaired, unmarried<sup>7</sup> oracular response<sup>8</sup> to ship, sail<sup>9</sup> pious<sup>10</sup> oracle

ΜΗΔ. σάφ' ἴσθ'· ἄτιμοι δ' ἐσμέν οἱ πρὸ τοῦ φίλοι.

ΑΙΓ. πότερον ἐρασθεῖς ἢ σὸν ἐχθαίρων λέχος;

ΜΗΔ. μέγαν γ' ἔρωτα πιστὸς οὐκ ἔφυ φίλοις.

ΑΙΓ. ἴτω νυν, εἵπερ, ὥς λέγεις, ἐστὶν κακός.

ΜΗΔ. ἀνδρῶν τυράννων κήδος ἠράσθη λαβεῖν.

700

ΑΙΓ. δίδωσι δ' αὐτῷ τίς; πέραινέ μοι λόγον.

ΜΗΔ. Κρέων, ὃς ἄρχει τῇσδε γῆς Κορινθίας.

ΑΙΓ. συγγνωστὰ μέν τάρ' ἦν σε λυπεῖσθαι, γύναι.

ΜΗΔ. ὄλωλα· καὶ πρὸς γ' ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.

ΑΙΓ. πρὸς τοῦ; τόδ' ἄλλο καινὸν αὐ λέγεις κακόν.

705

ΜΗΔ. Κρέων μ' ἐλαύνει φυγάδα γῆς Κορινθίας.

ΑΙΓ. ἐᾷ δ' Ἰάσων; οὐδὲ ταῦτ' ἐπήνεσα.

ΜΗΔ. λόγῳ μὲν οὐχί, καρτερεῖν<sup>11</sup> δὲ βούλεται.

ἀλλ' ἄντομαί σε τῇσδε πρὸς γενειάδος

γονάτων τε τῶν σῶν ἱκεσία τε γίγνομαι,

710

οἴκτιρον οἴκτιρόν με τὴν δυσδαίμονα

καὶ μή μ' ἔρημον ἐκπεσοῦσαν εἰσίδης,

δέξαι δὲ χώρα καὶ δόμοις ἐφέστιον.

οὕτως ἔρω σοὶ πρὸς θεῶν τελεσφόρος<sup>12</sup>

γένοιτο παίδων, καὐτὸς ὄλβιος θάνοις.

715

εὔρημα<sup>13</sup> δ' οὐκ οἶσθ' οἶον ἠϋρηκας τόδε·

παύσω δέ σ' ὄντ' ἄπαιδα καὶ παίδων γονὰς

σπεῖραί σε θήσω· τοιάδ' οἶδα φάρμακα.

ΑΙΓ. πολλῶν ἕκατι τήνδε σοι δοῦναι χάριν,

γύναι, πρόθυμός εἰμι, πρῶτα μὲν θεῶν,

720

ἔπειτα παίδων ὧν ἐπαγγέλλη γονάς·

<sup>11</sup> be patient    <sup>12</sup> completion    <sup>13</sup> invention; windfall

ἐς τοῦτο γὰρ δὴ φροῦδός εἰμι πᾶς ἐγώ.  
 οὕτω δ' ἔχει μοι· σοῦ μὲν ἐλθούσης χθόνα,  
 πειράσομαί σου προξενεῖν δίκαιος ὢν.  
 τόσον γε μέντοι σοι προσημαίνω, γύναι·  
 ἐκ τῆσδε μὲν γῆς οὐ σ' ἄγειν βουλήσομαι,  
 αὐτὴ δ' ἐάνπερ εἰς ἐμοὺς ἔλθῃς δόμους,  
 μενεῖς ἄσυχλος κοῦ σε μὴ μεθῶ τι·  
 ἐκ τῆσδε δ' αὐτὴ γῆς ἀπαλλάσσου πόδα·  
 ἀναίτιος γὰρ καὶ ξένους εἶναι θέλω.

725

730

ΜΗΔ. ἔσται τάδ'· ἀλλὰ πίστις εἰ γένοιτό μοι  
 τούτων, ἔχοιμ' ἂν πάντα πρὸς σέθεν καλῶς.

ΑΙΓ. μῶν οὐ πέποιθας; ἢ τί σοι τὸ δυσχερές;

ΜΗΔ. πέποιθα· Πελίου δ' ἐχθρὸς ἐστί μοι δόμος

Κρέων τε. τούτοις δ' ὀρκίοισι μὲν ζυγεῖς  
 ἄγουσιν οὐ μεθεῖ ἂν ἐκ γαίας ἐμέ·  
 λόγοις δὲ συμβᾶς καὶ θεῶν ἀνώμοτος  
 φίλος γένοι' ἂν τὰ πικρυκεύματα·—  
 οὐκ ἂν πίθοιο· τὰ μὰ μὲν γὰρ ἀσθενῇ,  
 τοῖς δ' ὄλβος ἐστὶ καὶ δόμος τυραννικός.

735

740

ΑΙΓ. πολλὴν ἔλεξας ἐν λόγοις προμηθίαν·

ἀλλ', εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, δρᾶν τάδ' οὐκ ἀφίσταμαι.  
 ἐμοί τε γὰρ τάδ' ἐστὶν ἀσφαλέστατα,  
 σκῆψίν<sup>14</sup> τιν' ἐχθροῖς σοῖς ἔχοντα δεικνύναι,  
 τὸ σόν τ' ἄραρε μάλλον· ἐξηγοῦ θεούς.

745

ΜΗΔ. ὄμνυ πέδον Γῆς, πατέρα θ' Ἥλιον πατρός

τοῦμοῦ, θεῶν τε συντιθεῖς ἅπαν γένος.

ΑΙΓ. τί χρῆμα δράσειν ἢ τί μὴ δράσειν; λέγε.

<sup>14</sup> excuse

Keen-eyed, of love the good and evil gift.  
 Make Innocence my friend, God's fairest star,  
 Yea, and abate not  
 The rare sweet beat of bosoms without war,  
 That love, and hate not.  
 Others.  
 Home of my heart, land of my own,  
 Cast me not, nay, for pity,  
 Out on my ways, helpless, alone,  
 Where the feet fail in the mire and stone,  
 A woman without a city.  
 Ah, not that! Better the end:  
 The green grave cover me rather,  
 If a break must come in the days I know,  
 And the skies be changed and the earth below;  
 For the weariest road that man may wend  
 Is forth from the home of his father.  
 Lo, we have seen: 'tis not a song  
 Sung, nor learned of another.  
 For whom hast thou in thy direst wrong  
 For comfort? Never a city strong  
 To hide thee, never a brother.  
 Ah, but the man — cursed be he,  
 Cursed beyond recover,  
 Who openeth, shattering, seal by seal,  
 A friend's clean heart, then turns his heel,  
 Deaf unto love: never in me  
 Friend shall he know nor lover.

While MEDEA is waiting downcast, seated upon her door-step, there passes from the left a

traveller with followers. As he catches sight of MEDEA he stops.

AEGEUS. Have joy, Medea! 'Tis the homeliest  
 Word that old friends can greet with, and the best.

MEDEA (looking up, surprised).

Oh, joy on thee, too, Aegeus, gentle king  
 Of Athens! — But whence com'st thou journeying?

AEGEUS. From Delphi now and the old encaverned stair...

MEDEA. Where Earth's heart speaks in song? What mad'st thou there?

AEGEUS. Prayed heaven for children — the same search alway.

MEDEA. Children? Ah God! Art childless to this day?

AEGEUS. So God hath willed. Childless and desolate.

MEDEA. What word did Phoebus speak, to change thy fate?

AEGEUS. Riddles, too hard for mortal man to read.  
MEDEA. Which I may hear?  
AEGEUS. Assuredly: they need  
A rarer wit.  
MEDEA. How said he?  
AEGEUS. Not to spill  
Life's wine, nor seek for more...  
MEDEA. Until?  
AEGEUS. Until  
I tread the hearth-stone of my sires of yore.  
MEDEA. And what should bring thee here, by Creon's shore?  
AEGEUS. One Pittheus know'st thou, high lord of Trozen?  
MEDEA. Aye, Pelops' son, a man most pure of sin.  
AEGEUS. Him I would ask, touching Apollo's will.  
MEDEA. Much use in God's ways hath he, and much skill.  
AEGEUS. And, long years back he was my battle-friend,  
The truest e'er man had.  
MEDEA. Well, may God send  
Good hap to thee, and grant all thy desire.  
AEGEUS. But thou...? Thy frame is wasted, and the fire  
Dead in thine eyes.  
MEDEA. Aegeus, my husband is  
The falsest man in the world.  
AEGEUS. What word is this?  
Say clearly what thus makes thy visage dim?  
MEDEA. He is false to me, who never injured him.  
AEGEUS. What hath he done? Show all, that I may see.  
MEDEA. Ta'en him a wife; a wife, set over me  
To rule his house.  
AEGEUS. He hath not dared to do,  
Jason, a thing so shameful?  
MEDEA. Aye, 'tis true:  
And those he loved of yore have no place now.  
AEGEUS. Some passion sweepeth him? Or is it thou  
He turns from?  
MEDEA. Passion, passion to betray  
His dearest!  
AEGEUS. Shame be his, so fallen away  
From honour!  
MEDEA. Passion to be near a throne,  
A king's heir!  
AEGEUS. How, who gives the bride? Say on.

MEDEA. Creon, who o'er all Corinth standeth chief.  
AEGEUS. Woman, thou hast indeed much cause for grief.  
MEDEA. 'Tis ruin. — And they have cast me out as well.  
AEGEUS. Who? 'Tis a new wrong this, and terrible.  
MEDEA. Creon the king, from every land and shore...  
AEGEUS. And Jason suffers him? Oh, 'tis too sore!  
MEDEA. He loveth to bear bravely ills like these!  
But, Aegeus, by thy beard, oh, by thy knees,  
I pray thee, and I give me for thine own,  
Thy suppliant, pity me! Oh, pity one  
So miserable. Thou never wilt stand there  
And see me cast out friendless to despair.  
Give me a home in Athens... by the fire  
Of thine own hearth! Oh, so may thy desire  
Of children be fulfilled of God, and thou  
Die happy!... Thou canst know not; even now  
Thy prize is won! I, I will make of thee  
A childless man no more. The seed shall be,  
I swear it, sown. Such magic herbs I know.  
AEGEUS. Woman, indeed my heart goes forth to show  
This help to thee, first for religion's sake,  
Then for thy promised hope, to heal my ache  
Of childlessness. 'Tis this hath made mine whole  
Life as a shadow, and starved out my soul.  
But thus it stands with me. Once make thy way  
To Attic earth, I, as in law I may,  
Will keep thee and befriend. But in this land,  
Where Creon rules, I may not raise my hand  
To shelter thee. Move of thine own essay  
To seek my house, there thou shalt always stay,  
Inviolable, never to be seized again.  
But come thyself from Corinth. I would fain  
Even in foreign eyes be always just.  
MEDEA. 'Tis well. Give me an oath wherein to trust  
And all that man could ask thou hast granted me.  
AEGEUS. Dost trust me not? Or what thing troubleth thee?  
MEDEA. I trust thee. But so many, far and near,  
Do hate me — all King Pelias' house, and here  
Creon. Once bound by oaths and sanctities  
Thou canst not yield me up for such as these  
To drag from Athens. But a spoken word,  
No more, to bind thee, which no God hath heard...

The embassies, methinks, would come and go:

They all are friends to thee... Ah me, I know

Thou wilt not list to me! So weak am I,

And they full-filled with gold and majesty.

AEGEUS. Methinks 'tis a far foresight, this thine oath.

Still, if thou so wilt have it, nothing loath

Am I to serve thee. Mine own hand is so

The stronger, if I have this plea to show

Thy persecutors: and for thee withal

The bond more sure. —On what God shall I call?

MEDEA. Swear by the Earth thou treadest, by the Sun,

Sire of my sires, and all the gods as one...

AEGEUS. To do what thing or not do? Make all plain.

*vocabulary*

ἄβρός graceful, delicate, pretty  
 ἄδακρυς without tears  
 ἀέθλιος prize ~athlete  
 ἄθλιος wretched ~athlete  
 αἰθήρ ether, air, sky ~ether  
 ἀμφιτίθηνι put around, wrap  
 ἀνθέω sprout  
 ἄνθος flower  
 ἀνόσιος unholy  
 ἀπαλλάσσω free from, remove; be  
 freed, depart  
 ἀπόρθητος not pillaged  
 ἀποστροφή turning back, away  
 ἀρκέω satisfy; ward off, defend;  
 suffice  
 ἀσθενής weak  
 αὔρα breeze ~air  
 βαρύς heavy ~baritone  
 βίος life ~biology  
 βλώσκω come, go  
 βούλευμα -τος (n, 3) resolution,  
 purpose  
 γάμος wedding, sex ~bigamy  
 γελάω laugh, smile, laugh at  
 γενναῖος noble, sincere ~genesis  
 δάκνω bite  
 δεσπότης -ου (m, 1) master, despot  
 δόλος trick, bait  
 δράω do, accomplish  
 δυσσεβέω be impious  
 δώρημα -τος (n, 3) gift  
 εἶα exclamation to urge someone on  
 εἵπερ if indeed  
 ἐκλιμπάνω leave out, pass over  
 ἐκούσιος voluntary  
 Ἑλλην Greek  
 ἐμμένω stay put, be faithful, fixed  
 ἐννέα nine  
 ἐνταῦθα there, here  
 ἐντεῦθεν thence  
 ἔξιμι go forth; is possible ~ion

ἔρπω be able to move ~serpent  
 εὐκλεής honored ~Euclid  
 εὐμενής kind  
 εὐώδης fragrant  
 ἡδονή pleasure  
 ἡνίκα when  
 ἡσυχάιος quiet, gentle  
 θιγγάνω touch  
 θράσος -ους (n, 3) boldness,  
 over-boldness  
 ἱκετεύω approach to beg  
 καθυβρίζω insult  
 καλλίνικος (τι) gloriously  
 triumphant  
 κάλως ship's thick rope  
 κάμνω toil, be tired, acquire by toil;  
 be troubled; be sick  
 κατακτείνω kill, slay  
 καταπονέω subdue; damage  
 κέρδος -ους (n, 3) advantage,  
 cunning  
 κλεινός famous  
 κλύω hear, listen to ~Euclid  
 κοινώω make common; cooperate  
 λαμπρός brilliant ~lamp  
 λεπτός thin  
 λιμὴν -ένος (m, 3) harbor, refuge  
 ~limnic  
 μάκαρ fortunate ~macarism  
 μάκαρ fortunate ~macarism  
 μαλθακός soft, timid  
 μεθίηνι let go, cease; (mid) speed off  
 ~jet  
 μέτριος medium, moderate  
 μολίσκω come, go  
 νύμφα nymph; bride  
 ξανθός yellow  
 οἰκέτης -ου (m, 1) household; house  
 slave  
 οἰμῶζ wail  
 ὀλβιος happy, wealthy  
 ὄμμα -τος (n, 3) eye

ὄμνυμι (ὄ) swear  
 οὐτις nobody, nothing  
 ὄψις ὄψεως (f) sight, view  
 ~thanatopsis  
 παλαιός old ~paleo  
 πάντῃ everywhere  
 παντοῖος all kinds of  
 πάντως by all means  
 πάρεδρος assessor  
 πατρώιος of the father(s), ancestral  
 ~paternal  
 πατῶος of the father(s), ancestral  
 πελάζω bring/come to, near, into  
 contact with  
 πέπλος woman's dress, a folded  
 cylinder of cloth  
 περισσός prodigious, superfluous  
 πιστός faithful; trustworthy  
 πίτνω poetic for πίπτω  
 πλαγά a hit  
 πλόκος lock of hair; head-wreath  
 πόθεν from where?  
 πόλισμα buildings of a city  
 πόσις -ος (m) (m) husband, master;  
 (f) a drink ~potent  
 πότε when?  
 προδίδωμι betray  
 προσάγω bring to a place  
 ~demagogue  
 προσβάλλω hit, attack, approach;  
 attach, offer ~ballistic  
 ῥοά pl: waters of a river ~rheostat  
 ῥόδεος of roses  
 σέβας -ως (n) wonder, shame, awe  
 σκέπτομαι look, look at, watch

~skeptic  
 σοφία skill; wisdom ~sophistry  
 σπεύδω 'push on,' get going, hurry  
 ~repudiate  
 συγγνώμη sympathy, leniency  
 συγχέω entangle, destroy, confound  
 συλλαμβάνω seize, capture;  
 understand ~epilepsy  
 σύμφορος accompanying; suitable  
 τέγω moisten; soften  
 τεκνών have/give children  
 τέκος -εος (n, 3) child ~oxytocin  
 τίνω (ι) pay, atone for; (mp) punish  
 τλάω take upon oneself ~talent  
 τλητός steadfast, enduring  
 τοιόσδε such  
 τύραννος tyrant  
 φάος φῶς (n, 3) light; salvation; (pl)  
 eyes ~photon  
 φάρμακον drug, potion ~pharmacy  
 φαῦλος trifling  
 φέως bush used to make brooms  
 φοίνιος red  
 φονεύω kill  
 φόνος killing ~offend  
 φυτεύω plant, grow, cause, prepare  
 ~physics  
 φύω produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
 χαίτη lock of hair, mane  
 χρῆζω need ~chresard  
 χρίω (ι) anoint ~Christ  
 χρυσήλατος (ὄ) of beaten gold  
 χωρέω withdraw, give way to (+dat)  
 ~heir  
 ὠφελέω help, be useful

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐκ γῆς σῆς ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖν ποτε,

μήτ' ἄλλος ἤν τις τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄγειν

750

χρήζῃ, μεθήσειν ζῶν ἐκουσίῳ τρόπῳ.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ. ὅμνυμι Γαῖαν Ἥλιου θ' ἀγνὸν σέβας<sup>1</sup>

θεοὺς τε πάντας ἐμμενεῖν ἅ σου κλύω.

ΜΗΔ. ἀρκεῖ· τί δ' ὄρκῳ τῷδε μὴ ἰμμένων πάθοις;

ΑΙΓ. ἂ τοῖσι δυσσεβοῦσι γίγνεται βροτῶν.

755

ΜΗΔ. χαίρων πορεύου· πάντα γὰρ καλῶς ἔχει.

κἀγὼ πόλιν σὴν ὡς τάχιστ' ἀφίξομαι,

πράξας ἃ μέλλω καὶ τυχοῦσ' ἃ βούλομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ. ἀλλά σ' ὁ Μαίας πομπαῖος ἄναξ

πελάσειε δόμοις, ὧν τ' ἐπίνοιαν

760

σπεύδεις κατέχων πράξεας, ἐπεὶ

γενναῖος ἀνὴρ,

Αἰγεῦ, παρ' ἐμοὶ δεδόκησαι.

ΜΗΔ. ὦ Ζεῦ Δίκη τε Ζηνὸς Ἥλιου τε φῶς,

νῦν καλλίνικοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι,

765

γενησόμεσθα κεῖς ὁδὸν βεβήκαμεν·

νῦν δ' ἐλπίς ἐχθροὺς τοὺς ἐμοὺς τείσειν δίκην.

οὔτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἢ μάλιστ' ἐκάμνομεν

λιμὴν πέφανται τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων·

ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀναψόμεσθα πρυμνήτην κάλων,

770

μολόντες ἄστὶ καὶ πόλισμα<sup>2</sup> Παλλάδος.

ἤδη δὲ πάντα τὰμά σοι βουλευμάτα

λέξω· δέχου δὲ μὴ πρὸς ἡδονὴν λόγους.

πέμψας ἐμῶν τιν' οἰκετῶν Ἰάσονα

<sup>1</sup> wonder, shame, awe    <sup>2</sup> buildings of a city

ἐς ὄψιν ἔλθειν τὴν ἐμὴν αἰτήσομαι·  
 775  
 μολόντι δ' αὐτῷ μαλθακοὺς λέξω λόγους,  
 ὥς καὶ δοκεῖ μοι ταῦτά, καὶ καλῶς ἔχειν  
 γάμους τυράννων οὓς προδοὺς ἡμᾶς ἔχει·  
 καὶ ξύμφορ' εἶναι καὶ καλῶς ἐγνωσμένα.  
 παῖδας δὲ μείναι τοὺς ἐμοὺς αἰτήσομαι,  
 780  
 οὐχ ὥς λιποῦσ' ἂν πολεμίας ἐπὶ χθονὸς  
 ἐχθροῖσι παῖδας τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι,  
 ἀλλ' ὥς δόλοισι παῖδα βασιλέως κτάνω.  
 πέμψω γὰρ αὐτοὺς δῶρ' ἔχοντας ἐν χεροῖν,  
 νύμφη φέροντας, τήνδε μὴ φυγεῖν χθόνα,  
 785  
 λεπτόν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον·  
 κᾶνπερ λαβοῦσα κόσμον ἀμφιθῇ χροῖ,  
 κακῶς ὀλεῖται πᾶς θ' ὅς ἂν θίγῃ κόρης·  
 τοιοῖσδε κρίσω φαρμάκοις δωρήματα.  
 ἐνταῦθα μέντοι τόνδ' ἀπαλλάσσω λόγον·  
 790  
 ὦμωξά δ' οἶον ἔργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον  
 τοῦντεῦθεν ἡμῖν· τέκνα γὰρ κατακτενῶ  
 τᾶμ'· οὐτις ἔστιν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται·  
 δόμον τε πάντα συγχέασ' Ἰάσονος  
 795  
 ἔξειμι γαίης, φιλτάτων παίδων φόνον  
 φεύγουσα καὶ τλαῶσ' ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον.  
 οὐ γὰρ γελαῶσθαι τλητὸν<sup>3</sup> ἐξ ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι.  
 ἴτω· τί μοι ζῆν κέρδος; οὔτε μοι πατρὶς  
 οὔτ' οἶκος ἔστιν οὔτ' ἀποστροφὴ κακῶν.  
 800  
 ἡμάρτανον τόθ' ἡνίκ' ἐξελίμπανον

<sup>3</sup> steadfast, enduring

δόμους πατρώους, ἀνδρὸς Ἑλληνος λόγους  
 πεισθεῖς, ὃς ἡμῖν σὺν θεῷ τείσει δίκην.  
 οὐτ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ γὰρ παῖδας ὄψεται ποτε  
 ζῶντας τὸ λοιπὸν οὔτε τῆς νεοζύγου  
 νύμφης τεκνώσει παῖδ', ἐπεὶ κακῶς κακὴν  
 θανεῖν σφ' ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἐμοῖσι φαρμάκοις.  
 μηδεῖς με φαύλην κάσθενή νομιζέτω  
 μηδ' ἡσυχαιάν, ἀλλὰ θατέρου τρόπου,  
 βαρεῖαν ἐχθροῖς καὶ φίλοιςιν εὐμενῇ·  
 τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων εὐκλέεστατος βίος.

805

810

ΧΟ. ἐπεὶ περ ἡμῖν τόνδ' ἐκοίνωσας λόγον,  
 σέ τ' ὠφελεῖν θέλουσα, καὶ νόμοις βροτῶν  
 ξυλλαμβάνουσα, δρᾶν σ' ἀπεννέπω τάδε.

ΜΗΔ. οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως· σοὶ δὲ συγγνώμη λέγειν  
 τάδ' ἐστί, μὴ πάσχουσιν, ὡς ἐγώ, κακῶς.

815

ΧΟ. ἀλλὰ κτανεῖν σὸν σπέρμα τολμήσεις, γύναι;

ΜΗΔ. οὔτω γὰρ ἂν μάλιστα δηχθείη πόσις.

ΧΟ. σὺ δ' ἂν γένοιό γ' ἀθλιωτάτη γυνή.

ΜΗΔ. ἴτω· περισσοὶ πάντες οὖν μέσῳ λόγοι.

ἀλλ' εἴα χώρει καὶ κόμιζ' Ἰάσονα·  
 ἐς πάντα γὰρ δὴ σοὶ τὰ πιστὰ χρώμεθα.  
 λέξις δὲ μηδὲν τῶν ἐμοὶ δεδογμένων,  
 εἴπερ φρονεῖς εἰς δεσπόταις γυνή τ' ἔφης.

820

ΧΟ. Ἐρεχθεῖδαι τὸ παλαιὸν ὄλβιοι

καὶ θεῶν παῖδες μακάρων, ἱεράς

825

χώρας ἀπορθήτου τ' ἄπο, φερβόμενοι

κλεινοτάταν<sup>4</sup> σοφίαν, αἰεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου

<sup>4</sup> famous

βαίνοντες ἀβρῶς αἰθέρος, ἔνθα ποθ' ἀγνὰς 830  
 ἐννέα Πιερίδας Μούσας λέγουσι  
 ξανθὰν Ἀρμονίαν φυτεῦσαι·

Χ0. τοῦ καλλινάου τ' ἐπὶ Κηφισοῦ ῥοαῖς<sup>5</sup> 835  
 τὰν Κύπριν κλήζουσιν ἀφυσσαμέναν  
 χώραν καταπνεῦσαι μετρίας ἀνέμων  
 ἡδυνόους αὔρας·<sup>6</sup> αἰεὶ δ' ἐπιβαλλομέναν 840  
 χαίταισιν εὐώδη<sup>7</sup> ῥοδέων<sup>8</sup> πλόκον ἀνθέων  
 τᾷ Σοφίᾳ παρέδρους πέμπειν Ἑρωτας,  
 παντοίας ἀρετᾶς ξυνεργούς. 845

Χ0. πῶς οὖν ἱερῶν ποταμῶν  
 ἦ πόλις; ἦ φίλων πόμπιμός σε χώρα  
 τὰν παιδολέτειραν ἔξει,  
 τὰν οὐχ ὀσίαν μετ' ἄλλων; 850  
 σκέψαι τεκέων πλαγάν,  
 σκέψαι φόνον οἶον αἶρη.  
 μή, πρὸς γονάτων σε πάντα  
 πάντως ἱκετεύομεν, τέκνα φονεύσης.

Χ0. πόθεν θράσος ἦ φρενὸς ἦ 855  
 χειρὶ τέκνων σέθεν καρδίᾳ τε λήψῃ  
 δεινὰν προσάγουσα τόλμαν;  
 πῶς δ' ὄμματα προσβαλοῦσα 860  
 τέκνοις ἄδακρυν<sup>9</sup> μοῖραν  
 σχήσεις φόνου; οὐ δυνάσῃ,  
 παίδων ἱκετᾶν πιτνόντων,  
 τέγξαι χέρα φοινίαν τλάμονι θυμῷ.

<sup>5</sup> pl: waters of a river    <sup>6</sup> breeze    <sup>7</sup> fragrant    <sup>8</sup> of roses    <sup>9</sup> without tears

MEDEA. Never thyself to cast me out again.

Nor let another, whatsoe'er his plea,

Take me, while thou yet livest and art free.

AEGEUS. Never: so hear me, Earth, and the great star

Of daylight, and all other gods that are!

MEDEA. 'Tis well: and if thou falter from thy vow... ?

AEGEUS. God's judgment on the godless break my brow!

MEDEA. Go! Go thy ways rejoicing. — All is bright

And clear before me. Go: and ere the night

Myself will follow, when the deed is done

I purpose, and the end I thirst for won.

AEGEUS and his train depart.

CHORUS. Farewell: and Maia's guiding Son

Back lead thee to thy hearth and fire,

Aegeus; and all the long desire

That wasteth thee, at last be won:

Our eyes have seen thee as thou art,

A gentle and a righteous heart.

MEDEA. God, and God's Justice, and ye blinding Skies!

At last the victory dawneth! Yea, mine eyes

See, and my foot is on the mountain's brow.

Mine enemies! Mine enemies, oh, now

Atonement cometh! Here at my worst hour

A friend is found, a very port of power

To save my shipwreck. Here will I make fast

Mine anchor, and escape them at the last

In Athens' walled hill. — But ere the end'

'Tis meet I show thee all my counsel, friend:

Take it, no tale to make men laugh withal!

Straightway to Jason I will send some thrall

To entreat him to my presence. Comes he here,

Then with soft reasons will I feed his ear,

How his will now is my will, how all things

Are well, touching this marriage-bed of kings

For which I am betrayed — all wise and rare

And profitable! Yet will I make one prayer,

That my two children be no more exiled

But stay... Oh, not that I would leave a child

Here upon angry shores till those have laughed

Who hate me: 'tis that I will slay by craft

The king's daughter. With gifts they shall be sent,

Gifts to the bride to spare their banishment,

Fine robings and a carcanet of gold.  
 Which raiment let her once but take, and fold  
 About her, a foul death that girl shall die  
 And all who touch her in her agony.  
 Such poison shall they drink, my robe and wreath!  
 Howbeit, of that no more. I gnash my teeth  
 Thinking on what a path my feet must tread  
 Thereafter. I shall lay those children dead—  
 Mine, whom no hand shall steal from me away!  
 Then, leaving Jason childless, and the day  
 As night above him, I will go my road  
 To exile, flying, flying from the blood  
 Of these my best-beloved, and having wrought  
 All horror, so but one thing reach me not,  
 The laugh of them that hate us.  
 Let it come!

What profits life to me? I have no home,  
 No country now, nor shield from any wrong.  
 That was my evil hour, when down the long  
 Halls of my father out I stole, my will  
 Chained by a Greek man's voice, who still, oh, still,  
 If God yet live, shall all requited be.  
 For never child of mine shall Jason see  
 Hereafter living, never child beget  
 From his new bride, who this day, desolate  
 Even as she made me desolate, shall die  
 Shrieking amid my poisons... Names have I  
 Among your folk? One light? One weak of hand?  
 An eastern dreamer?—Nay, but with the brand  
 Of strange suns burnt, my hate, by God above,  
 A perilous thing, and passing sweet my love!  
 For these it is that make life glorious.

LEADER. Since thou has bared thy fell intent to us  
 I, loving thee, and helping in their need

Man's laws, adjure thee, dream not of this deed!

MEDEA. There is no other way.—I pardon thee  
 Thy littleness, who art not wronged like me.

LEADER. Thou canst not kill the fruit thy body bore!

MEDEA. Yes: if the man I hate be pained the more.

LEADER. And thou made miserable, most miserable?

MEDEA. Oh, let it come! All words of good or ill  
 Are wasted now.

She claps her hands: the NURSE comes out from the house.

Ho, woman; get thee gone

And lead lord Jason hither... There is none

Like thee, to work me these high services.

But speak no word of what my purpose is,

As thou art faithful, thou, and bold to try

All succours, and a woman even as I!

The NURSE departs.

CHORUS. The sons of Erechtheus, the olden,

Whom high gods planted of yore

In an old land of heaven upholden,

A proud land untrodden of war:

They are hungered, and, lo, their desire

With wisdom is fed as with meat:

In their skies is a shining of fire,

A joy in the fall of their feet:

And thither, with manifold dowers,

From the North, from the hills, from the morn,

The Muses did gather their powers,

That a child of the Nine should be born;

And Harmony, sown as the flowers,

Grew gold in the acres of corn.

And Cephisus, the fair-flowing river—

The Cyprian dipping her hand

Hath drawn of his dew, and the shiver

Of her touch is as joy in the land.

For her breathing in fragrance is written,

And in music her path as she goes,

And the cloud of her hair, it is litten

With stars of the wind-woven rose.

So fareth she ever and ever,

And forth of her bosom is blown,

As dews on the winds of the river,

An hunger of passions unknown.

Strong Loves of all godlike endeavour,

Whom Wisdom shall throne on her throne.

Some Women.

But Cephisus the fair-flowing,

Will he bear thee on his shore?

Shall the land that succours all, succour thee,

Who art foul among thy kind,

With the tears of children blind?

Dost thou see the red gash growing,  
Thine own burden dost thou see?  
Every side, Every way,  
Lo, we kneel to thee and pray:  
By thy knees, by thy soul, O woman wild!  
One at least thou canst not slay,  
Not thy child!  
Others.  
Hast thou ice that thou shalt bind it  
To thy breast, and make thee dead  
To thy children, to thine own spirit's pain?  
When the hand knows what it dares,  
When thine eyes look into theirs,  
Shalt thou keep by tears unblinded  
Thy dividing of the slain?  
These be deeds Not for thee:  
These be things that cannot be!  
Thy babes—though thine hardihood be fell,  
When they cling about thy knee,  
Twill be well!

*vocabulary*

ἄβουλία ill-advisedness  
 ἄημι blow  
 αἰνέω praise, assent, acquiesce in  
 ἀλλάσσω trade, transform  
 ἀλλοῖος of another kind ~alien  
 ἀντιτείνω resist  
 ἀπαίρω lift off ~aorta  
 ἀπαλλάσσω free from, remove; be freed, depart  
 ἀπιστέω disbelieve ~stand  
 ἀσπάζομαι greet, salute  
 αὐξάνω strengthen  
 αὔξις -εως (f) growth  
 ἄφρων senseless, unthinking  
 ~frenzy  
 ἄω aor: to sate ~sate  
 βασιλείως kingly  
 βλώσκω come, go  
 βούλευμα -τος (n, 3) resolution, purpose  
 γαμέω marry, take as a lover  
 ~bigamy  
 γάμος wedding, sex ~bigamy  
 δαίμων -ονος (m, 3) a god, fate, doom ~demon  
 δακρύω weep  
 δεσπότις lady  
 δεῦρο here, come here!  
 δεῦτε come on (pl.)  
 δῆτα emphatic δῆ  
 διαλλάσσω exchange; differ; reconcile  
 δοξάζω think, imagine; extol  
 δράω do, accomplish  
 δυσμενής hostile, enemy  
 εἰκός likely  
 εἴπερ if indeed  
 ἔχγονος offspring, descendant  
 ~genus  
 ἐκτρέπω turn aside  
 ἐκτρέφω raise, rear

ἔμπαλιν backwards, on the contrary  
 ἐμποδών getting in the way  
 ἐννοέω consider  
 ἐξαιρέω pick, steal; dedicate; destroy ~heresy  
 ἐξεργάζομαι accomplish; undo; destroy someone  
 ἐπαινέω concur, praise, advise  
 ἐπιλανθάνω mp: forget ~Lethe  
 ἐπιστένω groan under  
 ἔρπω be able to move ~serpent  
 εὐδαιμονέω be lucky, happy  
 εὐμενής kind  
 εὐτραφής well fed; nourishing  
 ἔχθρη hate  
 ἥβα youth ~Hebe  
 ἡδομαι be pleased, enjoy  
 ~hedonism  
 θαρσέω be of good heart  
 θάρσος boldness, over-boldness  
 θῆλυς female; (rare) abundant  
 ~female  
 θυμός (ō) anger  
 καινός new, fresh, strange  
 καλλιστεύω be the best  
 κασίγνητος brother, sister  
 κενός empty, vain  
 κενόω make empty  
 κηδεύω attend to; become allied in marriage  
 κῆδος -εος (n, 3) sorrow ~heinous  
 κῆρ heart ~cardiac  
 κοίρανος ruler, chief  
 κρείσσων more powerful; better  
 κρύπτω hide, cover ~cryptic  
 λεπτός thin  
 λέχος -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
 λίαν very  
 λοιδορέω abuse, revile  
 λωίων more desirable  
 μαίνομαι be berserk ~maenad

**μακάριος** blessed  
**μάταιος** vain, empty  
**μάτην** in vain, randomly  
**μεθίημι** let go, cease; (mid) speed off  
 ~jet  
**μεθίστημι** change, substitute;  
 withdraw; change sides; (mid) send  
 away ~station  
**μεμπτός** blameworthy  
**μέμφομαι** blame; reject  
**μέτειμι** be among, go, follow ~ion  
**μολίσκω** come, go  
**μυρίος** (ὑ) 10,000 ~myriad  
**νεῖκος** -εος (n, 3) quarrel, battle  
**νήπιος** foolish, childish, naive,  
 credulous  
**νύμφα** nymph; bride  
**οἶκτος** compassion  
**οἷμοι** woe is me  
**ὁμοιόω** assimilate, liken  
 ~homoerotic  
**ὀρέγω** hold out, offer, thrust ~reach  
**ὄσσε** eyes (dual)  
**ὄσσομαι** see with the mind's eye,  
 forebode  
**οὐχουν** certainly not  
**οὐνεκα** because  
**οὐτάω** pierce, wound  
**ὄψις** ὄψεως (f) sight, view  
 ~thanatopsis  
**παρήϊς** cheek  
**πέπλος** woman's dress, a folded  
 cylinder of cloth  
**πίμπλημι** fill (+gen.) ~plenum  
**πλόκος** lock of hair; head-wreath  
**πορίζω** bring about, provide  
**πόσις** -ος (m) (m) husband, master;  
 (f) a drink ~potent  
**προβαίνω** surpass, continue ~basis

**προθέω** run from, lead to the fray  
**προσλαμβάνω** add, borrow, take  
 hold, help  
**πρόσπολος** servant, attendant  
**προτίθημι** prefer, set out ~thesis  
**σάφα** with full understanding  
**σπανίζω** be scarce; lack; use up  
**σπονδή** libation, treaty  
 ~spontaneous  
**στέγη** roof, ceiling, chamber  
**στρέφω** turn, veer ~atrophy  
**συλλαμβάνω** seize, capture;  
 understand ~epilepsy  
**σύμφορος** accompanying; suitable  
**σχέτλιος** tough, sound, stubborn,  
 cruel ~ischemia  
**σωτηρία** saving, preservation  
**σωφρονέω** be sane, moderate  
**σώφρων** sensible, prudent ~frenzy  
**τάλας** wretched, miserable ~talent  
**τάχος** -ους (n, 3) speed ~tachometer  
**τέγγω** moisten; soften  
**τύραννος** tyrant  
**ὑπέρτερος** superior, victorious  
**φερνά** dowry  
**φυγάς** -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee  
 ~fugitive  
**φυγή** flight, means of escape  
 ~fugitive  
**φυτεύω** plant, grow, cause, prepare  
 ~physics  
**φύω** produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
**χλωρός** pale, green, yellow  
 ~chlorine  
**χόλος** gall, anger, wrath, bitterness  
 ~choler  
**χρυσήλατος** (ὑ) of beaten gold  
**χρυσός** (ὑ) gold  
**ὠλένη** elbow, lower arm

ΙΑΣΩΝ. ἤκω κελευσθείς· καὶ γὰρ οὔσα δυσμενῆς

οὐ τὰν ἀμάρτοισ τοῦδέ γ', ἀλλ' ἀκούσομαι

τί χρῆμα βούλη καινὸν ἐξ ἑμοῦ, γύναι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. Ἰᾶσον, αἰτοῦμαί σε τῶν εἰρημένων

συγγνώμον' εἶναι· τὰς δ' ἐμὰς ὀργὰς φέρειν 870

εἰκός σ', ἐπεὶ νῶν πόλλ' ὑπείργασται φίλα.

ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαυτῇ διὰ λόγων ἀφικόμην

κάλαιδ' ὀρησα· Σχετλία, τί μαίνομαι

καὶ δυσμεναίνω τοῖσι βουλευουσιν εὔ,

ἐχθρὰ δὲ γαίης κοιράνοισ καθίσταμαι 875

πόσει θ', ὅς ἡμῖν δρᾷ τὰ συμφορώτατα,

γῆμας τύραννον καὶ κασιγνήτους τέκνοισ

ἐμοῖς φυτεύων; οὐκ ἀπαλλαχθήσομαι

θυμοῦ— τί πάσχω;— θεῶν ποριζόντων<sup>1</sup> καλῶς;

οὐκ εἰσὶ μὲν μοι παῖδες, οἶδα δὲ χθόνα 880

φεύγοντας ἡμᾶς καὶ σπανίζοντας φίλων;

ταῦτ' ἐννοήσας ἥσθόμην ἀβουλίαν<sup>2</sup>

πολλὴν ἔχουσα καὶ μάτην θυμουμένη.

νῦν οὖν ἐπαινῶ· σωφρονεῖν τ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖς

κῆδος τόδ' ἡμῖν προσλαβών, ἐγὼ δ' ἄφρων, 885

ἢ χρῆν μετεῖναι τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων,

καὶ ξυγγαμῆν σοι, καὶ παρεστάναι λέχει

νύμφην τε κηδεύουσιν ἥδεσθαι σέθεν.

ἀλλ' ἐσμέν οἷόν ἐσμεν, οὐκ ἐρῶ κακόν,

γυναικες· οὐκουν<sup>3</sup> χρῆν σ' ὁμοιοῦσθαι<sup>4</sup> κακοῖς, 890

οὐδ' ἀντιτείνειν νήπι' ἀντὶ νηπίων.

<sup>1</sup> bring about, provide    <sup>2</sup> ill-advisedness    <sup>3</sup> certainly not    <sup>4</sup> assimilate, liken

παριέμεσθα, καί φαμεν κακῶς φρονεῖν  
 τότ', ἀλλ' ἄμεινον νῦν βεβούλευμαι τάδε·  
 ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦτε, λείπετε στέγας,  
 ἐξέλθετ', ἀσπάσασθε καὶ προσείπατε 895  
 πατέρα μεθ' ἡμῶν, καὶ διαλλάχθηθ' ἅμα  
 τῆς πρόσθεν ἔχθρας ἐς φίλους μητρὸς μέτα·  
 σπονδαὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν καὶ μεθέστηκεν χόλος.  
 λάβεσθε χειρὸς δεξιᾶς· οἶμοι, κακῶν  
 ὡς ἐννοοῦμαι δὴ τι τῶν κεκρυμμένων. 900  
 ἄρ', ὦ τέκν', οὕτω καὶ πολλὸν ζῶντες χρόνον  
 φίλην ὀρέξετ' ὠλένην;<sup>5</sup> τάλαιν' ἐγώ,  
 ὡς ἀρτίδακρὺς εἰμι καὶ φόβου πλέα.  
 χρόνῳ δὲ νεῖκος πατρὸς ἐξαιρουμένη  
 ὄψιν τέρειναν τήνδ' ἔπλησα δακρύνων. 905

ΧΟΡΟΣ. κάμοι κατ' ὅσων χλωρὸν ὠρμήθη δάκρυ·  
 καὶ μὴ προβαίῃ μείζον ἢ τὸ νῦν κακόν.

ΙΑΣ. αἰνῶ, γύναι, τάδ', οὐδ' ἐκείνα μέμφομαι·  
 εἰκὸς γὰρ ὀργὰς θῆλυ ποιεῖσθαι γένος  
 γάμου παρεμπολῶντος ἀλλοίου πόσει. 910  
 ἀλλ' ἐς τὸ λῶον<sup>6</sup> σὸν μεθέστηκεν κέαρ,  
 ἔγνωσ δὲ τὴν νικῶσαν, ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ,  
 βουλήν· γυναικὸς ἔργα ταῦτα σῶφρονος.  
 ὑμῖν δέ, παῖδες, οὐκ ἀφροντίστως πατὴρ  
 πολλὴν ἔθηκε σὺν θεοῖς σωτηρίαν· 915  
 οἶμαι γὰρ ὑμᾶς τῆσδε γῆς Κορινθίας  
 τὰ πρῶτ' ἔσεσθαι σὺν κασιγνήτοις ἔτι.

<sup>5</sup> elbow, lower arm    <sup>6</sup> more desirable

ἀλλ' αὐξάνεσθε· τὰλλα δ' ἐξεργάζεται  
πατήρ τε καὶ θεῶν ὅστις ἐστὶν εὐμενής·  
ἴδοιμι δ' ὑμᾶς εὐτραφεῖς ἥβης τέλος 920  
μολόντας, ἐχθρῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπερτέρους.  
αὕτη, τί χλωροῖς δακρύοις τέγγεις κόρας,  
στρέψασα λευκὴν ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα;  
κοῦκ ἀσμένη τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχῃ λόγον;

ΜΗΔ. οὐδέν. τέκνων τῶνδ' ἐννοουμένη πέρι. 925

ΙΑΣ. θάρσει νυν· εὖ γὰρ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ θήσω πέρι.

ΜΗΔ. δράσω τάδ'· οὗτοι σοῖς ἀπιστήσω λόγοις·  
γυνὴ δὲ θῆλυ καπὶ δακρύοις ἔφν.

ΙΑΣ. τί δῆτα λίαν τοῖσδ' ἐπιστένεις τέκνοις;

ΜΗΔ. ἔτικτον αὐτούς· ζῆν δ' ὅτ' ἐξηύχου τέκνα, 930  
ἐσῆλθέ μ' οἶκτος<sup>7</sup> εἰ γενήσεται τάδε.

ἀλλ' ὥνπερ οὔνεκ' εἰς ἐμοὺς ἦκεις λόγους,  
τὰ μὲν λέλεκται, τῶν δ' ἐγὼ μνησθήσομαι.  
ἐπεὶ τυράννοις γῆς μ' ἀποστεῖλαι δοκεῖ—  
κάμοι τάδ' ἐστὶ λῶστα, γιννώσκω καλῶς, 935

μήτ' ἐμποδῶν σοὶ μήτε κοιράνοις χθονὸς  
ναίειν· δοκῶ γὰρ δυσμενὲς εἶναι δόμοις—  
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐκ γῆς τῆσδ' ἀπαίρομεν φυγῇ,  
παῖδες δ' ὅπως ἂν ἐκτραφῶσι σῇ χερί,  
αἰτοῦ Κρέοντα τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα. 940

ΙΑΣ. οὐκ οἶδ' ἂν εἰ πείσαιμι, πειράσθαι δὲ χρῆ.

ΜΗΔ. σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ σὴν κέλευσον αἰτεῖσθαι πατρὸς  
γυναῖκα παῖδας τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα.

ΙΑΣ. μάλιστα, καὶ πείσειν γε δοξάζω σφ' ἐγώ.

<sup>7</sup> compassion

ΜΗΔ. εἴπερ γυναικῶν ἐστὶ τῶν ἄλλων μία.

945

συλλήψομαι δὲ τοῦδέ σοι καὶ γὰρ πόνον·  
 πέμψω γὰρ αὐτῇ δῶρ' ἃ καλλιστεύεται<sup>8</sup>  
 τῶν νῦν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, οἷδ' ἐγώ, πολύ,  
 λεπτὸν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον  
 παῖδας φέροντας. ἀλλ' ὅσον τάχος χρεῶν  
 κόσμον κομίζειν δεῦρο προσπόλων τινά.  
 εὐδαιμονήσει δ' οὐχ ἔν, ἀλλὰ μυρία,  
 ἀνδρός τ' ἀρίστου σοῦ τυχοῦς' ὁμεινέτου  
 κεκτημένη τε κόσμον ὃν ποθ' Ἥλιος  
 πατρὸς πατὴρ δίδωσιν ἐγγόνοισιν οἷς.  
 λάζυσθε φερνὰς<sup>9</sup> τάσδε, παῖδες, ἐς χέρας  
 καὶ τῇ τυράννῳ μακαρίᾳ νύμφῃ δότε  
 φέροντες· οὔτοι δῶρα μεμπτὰ<sup>10</sup> δέξεται.

950

955

ΙΑΣ. τί δ', ὦ ματαία, τῶνδε σὰς κενοῖς χέρας;

δοκεῖς σπανίζειν δῶμα βασιλείον πέπλων,  
 δοκεῖς δὲ χρυσοῦ; σῶζε, μὴ δίδου τάδε.  
 εἴπερ γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀξιοῖ λόγου τινὸς  
 γυνή, προθήσει χρημάτων, σάφ' οἷδ' ἐγώ.

960

ΜΗΔ. μή μοι σύ· πείθειν δῶρα καὶ θεοὺς λόγος·

χρυσὸς δὲ κρείσσων μυρίων λόγων βροτοῖς.  
 κείνης ὁ δαίμων, κεῖνα νῦν αὔξει θεός,  
 νέα τυραννεῖ· τῶν δ' ἐμῶν παίδων φυγὰς  
 ψυχῆς ἂν ἀλλαξαίμεθ', οὐ χρυσοῦ μόνον.  
 ἀλλ', ὦ τέκν', εἰσελθόντε πλουσίους δόμους  
 πατρὸς νέαν γυναιῖκα, δεσπότην δ' ἐμήν,

965

<sup>8</sup> be the best    <sup>9</sup> dowry    <sup>10</sup> blameworthy

Enter JASON.

JASON. I answer to thy call. Though full of hate  
Thou be, I yet will not so far abate

My kindness for thee, nor refuse mine ear.

Say in what new desire thou hast called me here.

MEDEA. Jason, I pray thee, for my words but now

Spoken, forgive me. My bad moods... Oh, thou

At least wilt strive to bear with them! There be

Many old deeds of love 'twixt me and thee.

Lo, I have reasoned with myself apart

And chidden: "Why must I be mad, O heart

Of mine: and raging against one whose word

Is wisdom: making me a thing abhorred

To them that rule the land, and to mine own

Husband, who doth but that which, being done,

Will help us all—to wed a queen, and get

Young kings for brethren to my sons? And yet

I rage alone, and cannot quit my rage—

What aileth me?—when God sends harbourage

So simple? Have I not my children? Know

I not we are but exiles, and must go

Beggared and friendless else?" Thought upon thought

So pressed me, till I knew myself full-fraught

With bitterness of heart and blinded eyes.

So now—I give thee thanks: and hold thee wise

To have caught this anchor for our aid. The fool

Was I; who should have been thy friend, thy tool;

Gone wooing with thee, stood at thy bed-side

Serving, and welcomed duteously thy bride.

But, as we are, we are—I will not say

Mere evil—women! Why must thou to-day

Turn strange, and make thee like some evil thing,

Childish, to meet my childish passioning?

See, I surrender: and confess that then

I had bad thoughts, but now have turned again

And found my wiser mind.

She claps her hands.

Ho, children! Run

Quickly! Come hither, out into the sun,

The CHILDREN come from the house, followed by their ATTENDANT.

And greet your father. Welcome him with us,

And throw quite, quite away, as mother does,

Your anger against one so dear. Our peace  
Is made, and all the old bad war shall cease  
For ever. — Go, and take his hand...

As the CHILDREN go to JASON, she suddenly bursts into tears. The CHILDREN quickly return to

her: she recovers herself, smiling amid her tears.

Ah me,

I am full of hidden horrors!... Shall it be  
A long time more, my children, that ye live  
To reach to me those dear, dear arms?... Forgive!  
I am so ready with my tears to-day,  
And full of dread... I sought to smooth away  
The long strife with your father, and, lo, now  
I have all drowned with tears this little brow!

She wipes the child's face.

LEADER. O'er mine eyes too there stealeth a pale tear:  
Let the evil rest, O God, let it rest here!

JASON. Woman, indeed I praise thee now, nor say  
Ill of thine other hour. 'Tis nature's way,  
A woman needs must stir herself to wrath,  
When work of marriage by so strange a path  
Crosseth her lord. But thou, thine heart doth wend  
The happier road. Thou hast seen, ere quite the end,  
What choice must needs be stronger: which to do  
Shows a wise-minded woman... And for you,  
Children; your father never has forgot  
Your needs. If God but help him, he hath wrought  
A strong deliverance for your weakness. Yea,  
I think you, with your brethren, yet one day  
Shall be the mightiest voices in this land.  
Do you grow tall and strong. Your father's hand  
Guideth all else, and whatso power divine  
Hath alway helped him... Ah, may it be mine  
To see you yet in manhood, stern of brow,  
Strong-armed, set high o'er those that hate me...  
How?

Woman, thy face is turned. Thy cheek is swept  
With pallor of strange tears. Dost not accept  
Gladly and of good will my benisons?

MEDEA. 'Tis nothing. Thinking of these little ones...

JASON. Take heart, then. I will guard them from all ill.

MEDEA. I do take heart. Thy word I never will

Mistrust. Alas, a woman's bosom bears  
 But woman's courage, a thing born for tears.  
 JASON. What ails thee? — All too sore thou weepest there.

MEDEA. I was their mother! When I heard thy prayer  
 Of long life for them, there swept over me  
 A horror, wondering how these things shall be.  
 But for the matter of my need that thou  
 Should speak with me, part I have said, and now  
 Will finish. — Seeing it is the king's behest  
 To cast me out from Corinth... aye, and best,  
 Far best, for me — I know it — not to stay  
 Longer to trouble thee and those who sway  
 The realm, being held to all their house a foe...  
 Behold, I spread my sails, and meekly go  
 To exile. But our children... Could this land  
 Be still their home awhile: could thine own hand  
 But guide their boyhood... Seek the king, and pray  
 His pity, that he bid thy children stay!

JASON. He is hard to move. Yet surely 'twere well done.

MEDEA. Bid her — for thy sake, for a daughters boon...

JASON. Well thought! Her I can fashion to my mind.

MEDEA. Surely. She is a woman like her kind...

Yet I will aid thee in thy labour; I  
 Will send her gifts, the fairest gifts that lie  
 In the hands of men, things of the days of old,  
 Fine robings and a carcanet of gold,  
 By the boys' hands. — Go, quick, some handmaiden,  
 And fetch the raiment.

A handmaid goes into the house.

Ah, her cup shall then  
 Be filled indeed! What more should woman crave,  
 Being wed with thee, the bravest of the brave,  
 And girt with raiment which of old the sire  
 Of all my house, the Sun, gave, steeped in fire,  
 To his own fiery race?

The handmaid has returned bearing the Gifts.

Come, children, lift

With heed these caskets. Bear them as your gift  
 To her, being bride and princess and of right  
 Blessed! — I think she will not hold them light.

JASON. Fond woman, why wilt empty thus thine hand  
 Of treasure? Doth King Creon's castle stand

In stint of raiment, or in stint of gold?  
Keep these, and make no gift. For if she hold  
Jason of any worth at all, I swear  
Chattels like these will not weigh more with her.  
MEDEA. Ah, chide me not! 'Tis written, gifts persuade  
The gods in heaven; and gold is stronger made  
Than words innumerable to bend men's ways.  
Fortune is hers. God maketh great her days:  
Young and a crowned queen! And banishment  
For those two babes... I would not gold were spent,  
But life's blood, ere that come.  
My children, go  
Forth into those rich halls, and, bowing low,

*vocabulary*

ᾶ ah!

ἀγάλλω exalt; mp: exult in

ἀγγέλλω carry a message, announce  
~angel

ἀέθλιος prize ~athlete

ἀζήμιος not paying, not punished

ἄημι blow

ἄθλιος wretched ~athlete

αἰαῖ alas

ἀλγεινός painful

ἀλγῆδών pain, grief

ἀμβρόσιος immortal, divine  
~ambrosia

ἀναδέσμη head-dress

ἄνομος lawless

ἄτα bewilderment, folly

ἀτάω (mp) suffer, be in distress

αὐγή light

ἀφοράω look away, at ~panorama

ἄω aor: to sate ~sate

βίोटος life; sustenance, chattels  
~biologyβιόω live; (mp) make a living  
~biologyβούλευμα -τος (n, 3) resolution,  
purpose

γαμήλιος nuptial

γελάω laugh, smile, laugh at

γέλως laughter

γλυκύς sweet, pleasant ~glycerine

δαί particle: emphasizes questions

δαῖς δαδός (f) torch

δέσποινα lady

δῆτα emphatic δῆ

διάγω lead through; pass a time  
~demagogue

δῖς twice

δράω do, accomplish

δύστηνος unhappy, miserable

ἐκτρέφω raise, rear

ἐκφεύγω flee from, escape ~fugitive

ἐκφύω spring from ~physics

ἐμπαλιν backwards, on the contrary

ἐξαγγέλλω bring news out ~angel

ἐξαιτέω demand ~etiology

ἐπιδέω fasten; lack

ἐρκος -εος (n, 3) bulwark ~oath

εὐάγγελος bringing good news

εὐγενής well born

εὐδαιμονέω be lucky, happy

εὐδαίμων blessed with a good  
genius

εὐτυχής fortunate

εὐφραίνω gladden ~frenzy

ἐφοράω look upon ~panorama

ζηλωτός enviable

ἡδέεω pleasantly ~hedonism

ἡδομαι be pleased, enjoy

~hedonism

ἡνίκα when

θάρσος boldness, over-boldness

θέμις -τος (f) custom, law

θῦμα -τος (n, 3) victim, sacrifice

ἰκετεύω approach to beg

καθυβρίζω insult

καίτοι and yet; and in fact; although

κακόνυμφος badly married

κατάγνυμι (ῶ) break up, shatter

κατάγω lead down/home; land

~demagogue

καταθνήσκω die, be dead

~euthanasia

καταξαίνω comb, tear, wear away

κατηφέω be dejected

κατηφής disgraced

κάτοιδα understand

κηδεμών -όνος (m, 3) mourner  
~heinous

κόμη hair ~comet

κοῦφος light, nimble

κράς -τός (f, 3) head

λαμπάς -δος (f, 3) torch

λέκτρον bed ~lie

λέχος -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier

~lie

λυπέω (ἴ) annoy, distress

λυπρός worthless, wretched

μαλθακός soft, timid

μεθίημι let go, cease; (mid) speed off

~jet

μέμφομαι blame; reject

μεταστένω lament afterward

~stentorian

μηχανάομαι build, contrive

~mechanism

μοχθέω be afflicted

νέρτερος lower, of Hades

νύμφα nymph; bride

ξανθός yellow

ὄλεθρος ruin, destruction, death

ὄμμα -τος (n, 3) eye

οὐτάω pierce, wound

ὀφλισκάνω lose; incur debt

πάντως by all means

πανύστατος last of all

παρηίς cheek

παρίημι dangle; pass over, allow

~jet

παροίχομαι pass, keep going

πέπλος woman's dress, a folded

cylinder of cloth

περιτίθημι put around, endow with

~thesis

πορσύνω (ἴ) prepare (the marital bed)

πόσις -ος (m) (m) husband, master; (f) a drink ~potent

προλείπω abandon, withdraw

~eclipse

προσάγω bring to a place

~demagogue

προσβλέπω look at

προσβολή application, attack

προσγελάω smile at

προσδέρκομαι look at

προσίημι be allowed near

σάφα with full understanding

στείχω go, march ~stair

στερέω steal, take

στερρός solid, firm ~stereo

στέφανος ring

στρέφω turn, veer ~atrophy

στυγερός dreaded, feeling dread

~Styx

συγχέω entangle, destroy, confound

συμφορά collecting; accident, misfortune

σφάλλω overthrow, balk, stagger

σχῆμα -τος (n, 3) form, figure

τάλας wretched, miserable ~talent

τευκτός wrought, perfect

τλήμων steadfast, enduring ~talent

τόκος childbirth ~oxytocin

τύραννος tyrant

τύχη fortune, act of a god

ὑπεκφεύγω stay, get away ~fugitive

φαιδρός beaming ~photon

φείδομαι spare, not use/harm

~aphid

φεῦ exclamation of grief, anger, surprise, admiration

φονεύω kill

φροντίς -τος (f) thought, care

φυγάς -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee

~fugitive

φυγή flight, means of escape

~fugitive

χωρέω withdraw, give way to (+dat)

~heir

ἵκετεύετ', ἐξαιτείσθε μὴ φυγεῖν χθόνα,  
κόσμον διδόντες— τοῦδε γὰρ μάλιστα δεῖ—  
ἐς χεῖρ' ἐκείνης δῶρα δέξασθαι τάδε.  
ἴθ' ὡς τάχιστα· μητρὶ δ' ὦν ἐρᾷ τυχεῖν  
εὐάγγελοι γένοισθε πράξαντες καλῶς.

975

ΧΟΡΟΣ. νῦν ἐλπίδες οὐκέτι μοι παίδων ζῴας,  
οὐκέτι· στείχουσι γὰρ ἐς φόνον ἤδη.  
δέξεται νύμφα χρυσέων ἀναδεσμών  
δέξεται δύστανος ἄταν·  
ξανθᾷ δ' ἀμφὶ κόμα θήσει τὸν Ἄϊδα  
κόσμον αὐτὰ χεροῖν. λαβοῦσα.

980

ΧΟ. πείσει χάρις ἀμβρόσιός τ' αὐγὰ πέπλων  
χρυσέων τευκτὸν<sup>1</sup> στέφανον περιθέσθαι·  
νερτέροις δ' ἤδη πάρα νυμφοκομήσει.  
τοῖον εἰς ἔρκος πεσεῖται  
καὶ μοῖραν θανάτου δύστανος· ἄταν δ'  
οὐχ ὑπεκφεύζεται.

985

ΧΟ. σὺ δ', ὦ τάλαν, ὦ κακόννυμφε<sup>2</sup> κηδεμῶν<sup>3</sup> τυράννων,  
παισὶν οὐ κατειδῶς  
ὄλεθρον βιοτᾷ προσάγεις ἀλόχῳ τε  
σᾷ στυγερὸν θάνατον.  
δύστανε μοίρας ὅσον παροίχῃ.

990

995

ΧΟ. μεταστένομαι δὲ σὸν ἄλγος, ὦ τάλαινα παῖδων  
μᾶτερ, ἃ φονεύσεις  
τέκνα νυμφιδίων ἔνεκεν λεχέων, ἃ  
σοι προλιπὼν ἀνόμως

1000

<sup>1</sup> wrought, perfect    <sup>2</sup> badly married    <sup>3</sup> mourner

ἄλλα ξυνοικεῖ πόσις συνεύνω.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. δέσποιν', ἀφείνται παῖδες οἶδε σοὶ φυγῆς,

καὶ δῶρα νύμφη βασιλῆς ἀσμένη χεροῖν

ἐδέξατ'· εἰρήνη δὲ τὰ κεῖθεν τέκνοις.

ΞΑ. τί συγχυθεῖς ἔστηκας ἡνίκ' εὐτυχεῖς;

1005

τί σὴν ἔστρεψας ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα

κοῦκ ἀσμένη τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχῃ λόγον;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. αἰαί. ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. τάδ' οὐ ξυνωδὰ τοῖσιν ἐξηγγελμένοις.

ΜΗΔ. αἰαί μάλ' αὔθις. ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ.. μῶν τιν' ἀγγέλλων τύχην

οὐκ οἶδα, δόξης δ' ἐσφάλην εὐαγγέλου;

1010

ΜΗΔ. ἡγγεῖλας οἶ' ἡγγεῖλας· οὐ σὲ μέμφομαι·

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. τί δαὶ κατηφεῖς ὄμμα καὶ δακρυρροεῖς;

ΜΗΔ. πολλή μ' ἀνάγκη, πρέσβυ· ταῦτα γὰρ θεοὶ

καὶ γὰρ κακῶς φρονουῖς ἐμηχανησάμην.

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. θάρσει· κάτει τοι καὶ σὺ πρὸς τέκνων ἔτι.

1015

ΜΗΔ. ἄλλους κατὰ ξω πρόσθεν ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

ΠΑΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ. οὗτοι μόνῃ σὺ σῶν ἀπεζύγης τέκνων·

κούφως φέρειν χρὴ θνητὸν ὄντα συμφοράς.

ΜΗΔ. δράσω τάδ'. ἀλλὰ βαῖνε δωμάτων ἔσω

καὶ παισὶ πόρουν<sup>4</sup> οἶα χρὴ καθ' ἡμέραν.

1020

ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, σφῶν μὲν ἔστι δὴ πόλις

καὶ δῶμ', ἐν ᾧ, λιπόντες ἀθλίαν ἐμέ,

οἰκήσετ' αἰεὶ μητρὸς ἐστερημένοι·

ἐγὼ δ' ἐς ἄλλην γαῖαν εἶμι δὴ φυγὰς,

πρὶν σφῶν ὀνάσθαι κάπιδεῖν εὐδαίμονας,

1025

πρὶν λέκτρα καὶ γυναιῖκα καὶ γαμηλίους

<sup>4</sup> prepare (the marital bed)

εὐνὰς ἀγῆλαι<sup>5</sup> λαμπάδας τ' ἀνασχεθεῖν.  
 ὦ δυστάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς αὐθαδίας.  
 ἄλλως ἄρ' ὑμᾶς, ὦ τέκν', ἐξεθρεψάμην,  
 ἄλλως δ' ἐμόχθουν καὶ κατεξάνθην πόνοις, 1030  
 στερρὰς<sup>6</sup> ἐνεγκοῦσ' ἐν τόκοις<sup>7</sup> ἀλγηδόνας.<sup>8</sup>  
 ἦ μήν ποθ' ἡ δύστηνος εἶχον ἐλπίδας  
 πολλὰς ἐν ὑμῖν, γηροβοσκήσειν τ' ἐμέ  
 καὶ κατθανοῦσαν χερσὶν εὖ περιστελεῖν,  
 ζῆλωτόν<sup>9</sup> ἀνθρώποισι· νῦν δ' ὅλωλε δὴ 1035  
 γλυκεῖα φροντίς. σφῶν γὰρ ἐστερημένη  
 λυπρὸν διάζω βίοτον ἀλγεινόν<sup>10</sup> τ' ἐμοί.  
 ὑμεῖς δὲ μητέρ' οὐκέτ' ὅμμασιν φίλοις  
 ὄψεσθ', ἐς ἄλλο σχῆμ' ἀποστάντες βίου.  
 φεῦ φεῦ· τί προσδέρκεσθ' ἐμ' ὅμμασιν, τέκνα; 1040  
 τί προσγελάτε τὸν πανύστατον<sup>11</sup> γέλων;  
 αἰαῖ· τί δράσω; καρδία γὰρ οἴχεται,  
 γυναῖκες, ὄμμα φαιδρὸν<sup>12</sup> ὥς εἶδον τέκνων.  
 οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην· χαιρέτω βουλευμάτα  
 τὰ πρόσθεν· ἄξω παῖδας ἐκ γαίας ἐμούς. 1045  
 τί δεῖ με πατέρα τῶνδε τοῖς τούτων κακοῖς  
 λυποῦσαν αὐτὴν δις τόσα κτᾶσθαι κακά;  
 οὐ δῆτ' ἔγωγε. χαιρέτω βουλευμάτα.  
 καίτοι τί πάσχω; βούλομαι γέλωτ' ὀφλεῖν  
 ἐχθροὺς μεθεῖσα τοὺς ἐμούς· ἀζημίους;<sup>13</sup> 1050  
 τολμητέον τάδ'. ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐμῆς κάκης,

<sup>5</sup> exalt; mp: exult in    <sup>6</sup> solid, firm    <sup>7</sup> childbirth    <sup>8</sup> pain, grief    <sup>9</sup> enviable  
<sup>10</sup> painful    <sup>11</sup> last of all    <sup>12</sup> beaming    <sup>13</sup> not paying, not punished

τὸ καὶ προσέσθαι μαλθακοὺς λόγους φρενί.  
 χωρεῖτε, παῖδες, εἰς δόμους. ὅτω δὲ μὴ  
 θέμις παρῆναι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι θύμασιν,<sup>14</sup>  
 αὐτῷ μελήσει· χεῖρα δ' οὐ διαφθερῶ. 1055  
 ᾄ<sup>15</sup> ᾄ. μὴ δῆτα, θυμέ, μὴ σύ γ' ἐργάσῃ τάδε·  
 ἕασον αὐτούς, ὦ τάλαν, φεῖσαι τέκνων·  
 ἐκεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν ζῶντες εὐφρανουσί σε.  
 μὰ τοὺς παρ' Ἄϊδη νερτέρους ἀλάστορας,  
 οὗτοι ποτ' ἔσται τοῦθ' ὅπως ἐχθροῖς ἐγὼ 1060  
 παῖδας παρήσω τοὺς ἐμούς καθυβρίσαι.  
 πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,  
 ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν οἷπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν.  
 πάντως πέπρακται ταῦτα κοῦκ ἐκφεύζεται.  
 καὶ δὴ 'πὶ κρατὶ στέφανος, ἐν πέπλοισι δὲ 1065  
 νύμφη τύραννος ὄλλυται, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγώ.  
 ἀλλ', εἴμι γὰρ δὴ τλημονεστάτην ὁδόν,  
 καὶ τούσδε πέμψω τλημονεστέραν ἔτι,  
 παῖδας προσειπεῖν βούλομαι.— δότ', ὦ τέκνα,  
 δότ' ἀσπάσασθαι μητρὶ δεξιὰν χέρα. 1070  
 ὦ φιλτάτη χεῖρ, φίλτατον δέ μοι στόμα  
 καὶ σχῆμα καὶ πρόσωπον εὐγενές<sup>16</sup> τέκνων,  
 εὐδαιμονοῖτον, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ· τὰ δ' ἐνθάδε  
 πατὴρ ἀφείλετ'. ὦ γλυκεῖα προσβολή,  
 ὦ μαλθακὸς χρῶς πνεῦμά θ' ἥδιστον τέκνων. 1075  
 χωρεῖτε χωρεῖτ'· οὐκέτ' εἴμι προσβλέπειν  
 οἷα τε πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀλλὰ νικῶμαι κακοῖς.

<sup>14</sup> victim, sacrifice    <sup>15</sup> ah!    <sup>16</sup> well born

Beseech your father's bride, whom I obey,  
 Ye be not, of her mercy, cast away  
 Exiled: and give the caskets—above all  
 Mark this!—to none but her, to hold withal  
 And keep... Go quick! And let your mother know  
 Soon the good tiding that she longs for... Go!

She goes quickly into the house. JASON and the CHILDREN with their ATTENDANT depart.

CHORUS. Now I have no hope more of the children's living;  
 No hope more. They are gone forth unto death.  
 The bride, she taketh the poison of their giving;  
 She taketh the bounden gold and openeth;  
 And the crown, the crown, she lifteth about her brow,  
 Where the light brown curls are clustering. No hope now!  
 O sweet and cloudy gleam of the garments golden!  
 The robe, it hath clasped her breast and the crown her head.  
 Then, then, she decketh the bride, as a bride of olden  
 Story, that goeth pale to the kiss of the dead.  
 For the ring hath closed, and the portion of death is there;  
 And she flieth not, but perisheth unaware.  
 Some Women.

O bridegroom, bridegroom of the kiss so cold,  
 Art thou wed with princes, art thou girt with gold,  
 Who know'st not, suing  
 For thy child's undoing,  
 And, on her thou lovest, for a doom untold?  
 How art thou fallen from thy place of old!  
 Others.

O Mother, Mother, what hast thou to reap,  
 When the harvest cometh, between wake and sleep?  
 For a heart unslaken,  
 For a troth forsaken,  
 Lo, babes that call thee from a bloody deep:  
 And thy love returns not. Get thee forth and weep!

Enter the ATTENDANT with the two CHILDREN: MEDEA comes out from the house.

ATTENDANT. Mistress, these children from their banishment  
 Are spared. The royal bride hath mildly bent  
 Her hand to accept thy gifts, and all is now  
 Peace for the children.—Ha, why standest thou  
 Confounded, when good fortune draweth near?  
 MEDEA. Ah God!

ATTENDANT. This chimes not with the news I bear.

MEDEA. O God, have mercy!

ATTENDANT. Is some word of wrath

Here hidden that I knew not of? And hath

My hope to give thee joy so cheated me?

MEDEA. Thou givest what thou givest: I blame not thee.

ATTENDANT. Thy brows are all o'ercast: thine eyes are filled...

MEDEA. For bitter need, Old Man! The gods have willed,

And my own evil mind, that this should come.

ATTENDANT. Take heart! Thy sons one day will bring thee home.

MEDEA. Home?... I have others to send home. Woe's me!

ATTENDANT. Be patient. Many a mother before thee

Hath parted from her children. We poor things

Of men must needs endure what fortune brings.

MEDEA. I will endure. — Go thou within, and lay

All ready that my sons may need to-day.

The ATTENDANT goes into the house.

O children, children mine: and you have found

A land and home, where, leaving me discrowned

And desolate, forever you will stay,

Motherless children! And I go my way

To other lands, an exile, ere you bring

Your fruits home, ere I see you prospering

Or know your brides, or deck the bridal bed,

All flowers, and lift your torches overhead.

Oh cursed be mine own hard heart! 'Twas all

In vain, then, that I reared you up, so tall

And fair; in vain I bore you, and was torn

With those long pitiless pains, when you were born.

Ah, wondrous hopes my poor heart had in you,

How you would tend me in mine age, and do

The shroud about me with your own dear hands,

When I lay cold, blessed in all the lands

That knew us. And that gentle thought is dead!

You go, and I live on, to eat the bread

Of long years, to myself most full of pain.

And never your dear eyes, never again,

Shall see your mother, far away being thrown

To other shapes of life... My babes, my own,

Why gaze ye so? — What is it that ye see? —

And laugh with that last laughter?... Woe is me,

What shall I do?

Women, my strength is gone,  
 Gone like a dream, since once I looked upon  
 Those shining faces... I can do it not.  
 Good-bye to all the thoughts that burned so hot  
 Aforetime! I will take and hide them far,  
 Far, from men's eyes. Why should I seek a war  
 So blind: by these babes' wounds to sting again  
 Their father's heart, and win myself a pain  
 Twice deeper? Never, never! I forget  
 Henceforward all I laboured for.

And yet,

What is it with me? Would I be a thing  
 Mocked at, and leave mine enemies to sting  
 Unsmitten? It must be. O coward heart,  
 Ever to harbour such soft words! — Depart  
 Out of my sight, ye twain.

The CHILDREN go in.

And they whose eyes  
 Shall hold it sin to share my sacrifice,  
 On their heads be it! My hand shall swerve not now.  
 Ah, Ah, thou Wrath within me! Do not thou,  
 Do not... Down, down, thou tortured thing, and spare  
 My children! They will dwell with us, aye, there  
 Far off, and give thee peace.

Too late, too late!

By all Hell's living agonies of hate,  
 They shall not take my little ones alive  
 To make their mock with! Howsoe'er I strive  
 The thing is doomed; it shall not escape now  
 From being. Aye, the crown is on the brow,  
 And the robe girt, and in the robe that high  
 Queen dying.

I know all. Yet... seeing that I  
 Must go so long a journey, and these twain  
 A longer yet and darker, I would fain  
 Speak with them, ere I go.

A handmaid brings the CHILDREN out again.

Come, children; stand

A little from me. There. Reach out your hand,  
 Your right hand — so — to mother: and good-bye!

She has kept them hitherto at arm's length: but at the touch of their hands,  
 her resolution

breaks down, and she gathers them passionately into her arms.  
Oh, darling hand! Oh, darling mouth, and eye,  
And royal mien, and bright brave faces clear,  
May you be blessed, but not here! What here  
Was yours, your father stole... Ah God, the glow  
Of cheek on cheek, the tender touch; and Oh,  
Sweet scent of childhood... Go! Go!... Am I blind? ...  
Mine eyes can see not, when I look to find  
Their places. I am broken by the wings

*vocabulary*

ἄβρός graceful, delicate, pretty  
 ἀγγέλλω carry a message, announce  
 ~angel  
 ἄδηλος invisible, unknown  
 αἰνέω praise, assent, acquiesce in  
 ἀκίζω disrespect, mutilate  
 ἄλις in plenty; enough ~helix  
 ἀλλάσσω trade, transform  
 ἄμιλλα conflict  
 ἀμπέχω cover ~ambient  
 ἀνιαρός (αἶ) troublesome, tiresome  
 ἀνολολύζω cry out  
 ἀντίμολπος sounding instead of  
 ἄπειρος untested; infinite  
 ἀπειροσύνη lack of skill  
 ἀπήνη wagon  
 ἀποστρέφω turn back, turn off  
 course ~atrophy  
 ἄρτιος suitable  
 ἀφρός foam  
 βίος life; sustenance, chattels  
 ~biology  
 βλάστημα shoot; offspring  
 βλώσκω come, go  
 βόστρυχος curl, lock  
 βούλευμα -τος (n, 3) resolution,  
 purpose  
 γεραιός old ~geriatric  
 γλυκερός sweet, pleasant ~glycerine  
 γονεύς -ος (m) parent  
 γονή progeny ~genus  
 δέρομαι see, watch  
 δέσποινα lady  
 δίπτυχος twice-folded  
 δῖς twice  
 δμῶς slave ~tame  
 δυσμενής hostile, enemy  
 εἰσείδω look at, behold ~wit  
 εἴσοδος (f) entrance ~odometer  
 εἰσπίπτω fall into, rush in  
 ἔμπαλιν backwards, on the contrary

ἐμπίπτω fall into; attack ~petal  
 ἔνιμι be in ~ion  
 ἐνός speechless, dumbfounded  
 ἐνθένδε hence  
 ἐρεθίζω annoy, excite ~Eris  
 ἐρευνάω hunt for  
 ἔρω be able to move ~serpent  
 ἐστία hearth ~Hestia  
 ἐστιάω give a feast  
 εὐεργέτης -ου (m, 1) benefactor  
 εὐτυχία good luck, success  
 ἧβα youth ~Hebe  
 ἡδομαι be pleased, enjoy  
 ~hedonism  
 ἡδονή pleasure  
 θέαμα -τος (ἄα, n, 3) sight, spectacle  
 κάμνω toil, be tired, acquire by toil;  
 be troubled; be sick  
 κάρ -ός (n) useless bit; form of κατά  
 καραδοκέω (ᾱ) wait for the  
 outcome of  
 καταίρω swoop; land  
 καταράομαι (αἶα) curse  
 κατατρύχω (ῶ) wear out, deplete  
 κάτοπτρον mirror  
 κόμη hair ~comet  
 κόρυς helmet  
 κρείσσων more powerful; better  
 κτυπέω crash  
 κύνεος doglike, shameless ~hound  
 κυνέω kiss  
 κυρέω come upon, come up against;  
 obtain  
 κωκυτός (ῶ) lamentation  
 κῶλον limb  
 λεπτός thin  
 λύπη distress  
 μαίνομαι be berserk ~maenad  
 μελέτη care; practice  
 μόλις with difficulty, barely  
 μολίσκω come, go  
 μουσα muse

μοχθέω be afflicted  
 μόθος toil  
 νεᾶνις -δος (f) young woman ~neon  
 νεῖκος -εος (n, 3) quarrel, battle  
 νύμφα nymph; bride  
 νυμφικός bridal  
 ξανθός yellow  
 ὀλολυγή (ῥ) women's ecstatic shout  
 ὄμμα -τος (n, 3) eye  
 ὀπαδέω follow, attend  
 ὀπαδός member of an entourage,  
 bodyguard  
 ὀπηδός member of an entourage,  
 bodyguard  
 ὀπόθεν whence  
 ὄχος pl: carrying thing, chariot,  
 holding place ~wagon  
 πάλη wrestling ~Pallas  
 πάλλευκος all white  
 πάλλω shake, brandish ~Pallas  
 πάμπαν completely  
 παραιτέομαι entreat; beg for;  
 decline  
 παράνομος lawless, unlawful  
 παρηίς cheek  
 παῦρος few ~paucity  
 πέπλος woman's dress, a folded  
 cylinder of cloth  
 ποικίλος ornamented; various  
 προβαίνω surpass, continue ~basis  
 προσγελάω smile at  
 προσμένω await, cleave to  
 πρόσπολος servant, attendant  
 προφέρω bring forth ~bear  
 σοφία skill; wisdom ~sophistry

σπένδω libate; (mid) make a treaty  
 ~spontaneous  
 σπέρχω set in rapid motion  
 στέγη roof, ceiling, chamber  
 στείχω go, march ~stair  
 στέφανος ring  
 στρέφω turn, veer ~atrophy  
 συμφορά collecting; accident,  
 misfortune  
 σχηματίζω pose, form, dress  
 τελέθω turn out, come around  
 ~apostle  
 τένων -οντος (m, 3) tendon, sinew  
 ~tendon  
 τρέμω tremble in fear ~tremble  
 τύραννος tyrant  
 ὑπερχαίρω rejoice greatly at  
 φαρμακεύς -ος (m) poisoner,  
 sorcerer  
 φάρμακον drug, potion ~pharmacy  
 φλαῦρος trifling  
 φροῦδος fled, vanished  
 φυγᾶς -δος (m, 3) exile, refugee  
 ~fugitive  
 φυγή flight, means of escape  
 ~fugitive  
 φῦσα bellows  
 φυσάω (ῥ) blow, puff, blow out  
 φυτεύω plant, grow, cause, prepare  
 ~physics  
 χαμαί on/near the ground  
 χόλος gall, anger, wrath, bitterness  
 ~choler  
 χρηστός useful; brave, worthy

καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἶα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά,  
 θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,  
 ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς. 1080

ΧΟΡΟΣ. πολλάκις ἤδη

διὰ λεπτοτέρων μύθων ἔμολον  
 καὶ πρὸς ἀμίλλας ἦλθον μείζους  
 ἢ χρὴ γενεὰν θῆλυν ἐρευνᾶν.<sup>1</sup>  
 ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔστιν μουσα καὶ ἡμῖν, 1085

ἢ προσομιλεῖ σοφίας ἔνεκεν·  
 πάσαισι μὲν οὐ· παῦρον δὲ δὴ  
 γένος ἐν πολλαῖς εὔροις ἂν ἴσως  
 κοῦκ ἀπόμουσον τὸ γυναικῶν.  
 καί φημι βροτῶν οὔτινές εἰσιν 1090  
 πάμπαν ἄπειροι μηδ' ἐφύτευσαν  
 παῖδας, προφέρειν εἰς εὐτυχίαν<sup>2</sup>  
 τῶν γειναμένων.

οἱ μὲν ἄτεκνοι δι' ἀπειροσύνην  
 εἴθ' ἡδὺ βροτοῖς εἴτ' ἀνιαρὸν 1095  
 παῖδες τελέθουσ'·<sup>3</sup> οὐχὶ τυχόντες  
 πολλῶν μόχθων ἀπέχονται·

οἷσι δὲ τέκνων ἔστιν ἐν οἴκοις  
 γλυκερὸν βλάστημ',<sup>4</sup> ὅρῳ μελέτῃ  
 κατατρυχομένους τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον, 1100  
 πρῶτον μὲν ὅπως θρέψουσι καλῶς  
 βίότον θ' ὁπόθεν<sup>5</sup> λείψουσι τέκνοις·  
 ἔτι δ' ἐκ τούτων εἴτ' ἐπὶ φλαύροις

<sup>1</sup> hunt for    <sup>2</sup> good luck, success    <sup>3</sup> turn out, come around    <sup>4</sup> shoot;  
 offspring    <sup>5</sup> whence

εἴτ' ἐπὶ χρηστοῖς μοχθοῦσι, τόδ' ἐστὶν ἄδηλον.

ἐν δὲ τὸ πάντων λοίσθιον ἤδη 1105

πᾶσιν κατερῶ θνητοῖσι κακόν·

καὶ δὴ γὰρ ἄλις βίότον θ' ἡῦρον

σώμά τ' ἐς ἥβην ἤλυθε τέκνων

χρηστοί τ' ἐγένοντ'· εἰ δὲ κυρήσαι<sup>6</sup>

δαίμων οὕτως, φροῦδος ἐς Ἄιδην 1110

θάνατος προφέρων σώματα τέκνων.

πῶς οὖν λύει πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις

τήνδ' ἔτι λύπην ἀνιαροτάτην

παίδων ἔνεκεν

θνητοῖσι θεοὺς ἐπιβάλλειν; 1115

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. φίλαι, πάλαι τοι προσμένουσα τὴν τύχην

καραδοκῶ<sup>7</sup> τὰ κεῖθεν οἷ προβήσεται.

καὶ δὴ δέδορκα τόνδε τῶν Ἰάσονος

στείχοντ' ὀπαδῶν· πνεῦμα δ' ἡρεθισμένον<sup>8</sup>

δείκνυσιν ὥς τι καινὸν ἀγγελεῖ κακόν. 1120

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ. ὦ δεινὸν ἔργον παρανόμως εἰργασμένη,

Μήδεια, φεῦγε φεῦγε, μήτε ναῖαν

λιποῦς ἀπήνην μήτ' ὄχον πεδοστιβῆ.

ΜΗΔ. τί δ' ἄξιόν μοι τῆσδε τυγχάνει φυγῆς;

ΑΓΓ. ὄλωλεν ἡ τύραννος ἀρτίως κόρη 1125

Κρέων θ' ὁ φύσας φαρμάκων τῶν σῶν ὕπο.

ΜΗΔ. κάλλιστον εἶπας μῦθον, ἐν δ' εὐεργέταις

τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη καὶ φίλοις ἐμοῖς ἔση.

ΑΓΓ. τί φῆς; φρονεῖς μὲν ὀρθὰ κου' μαΐνη, γύναι,

<sup>6</sup> come upon, come up against; obtain    <sup>7</sup> wait for the outcome of    <sup>8</sup> annoy, excite

ἥτις, τυράννων ἐστίαν ἡκισμένη,<sup>9</sup> 1130

χαίρεις κλύουσα κου' φοβῇ τὰ τοιάδε;

ΜΗΔ. ἔχω τι κἀγὼ τοῖς γε σοῖς ἐναντίον

λόγοισιν εἰπεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ σπέρχου,<sup>10</sup> φίλος,

λέξον δέ· πῶς ὤλοντο; δις τόσον γὰρ ἂν

τέρψειας ἡμᾶς, εἰ τεθνᾶσι παγκάκως. 1135

ΑΓΓ. ἐπεὶ τέκνων σὼν ἦλθε δίπτυχος<sup>11</sup> γονῇ

σὺν πατρί, καὶ παρῆλθε νυμφικοὺς δόμους,

ἥσθημεν οἷπερ σοῖς ἐκάμνομεν κακοῖς

δμῶες· δι' ὧτων δ' εὐθὺς ἦν πολὺς λόγος

σὲ καὶ πόσιν σὸν νεῖκος ἐσπεῖσθαι τὸ πρίν. 1140

κυνεῖ δ' ὁ μὲν τις χεῖρ', ὁ δὲ ξανθὸν κᾶρα

παίδων· ἐγὼ δὲ καὺτὸς ἡδονῆς ὕπο

στέγας γυναικῶν σὺν τέκνοις ἄμ' ἐσπόμην.

δέσποινα δ' ἦν νῦν ἀντὶ σοῦ θαυμάζομεν,

πρὶν μὲν τέκνων σὼν εἰσιδεῖν ξυνωρίδα, 1145

πρόθυμον εἶχ' ὀφθαλμὸν εἰς Ἰάσονα·

ἔπειτα μέντοι προῦκαλύψατ' ὄμματα

λευκὴν τ' ἀπέστρεψ' ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα,

παίδων μυσσυχθεῖσ' εἰσόδους· πόσις δὲ σὸς

ὀργάς τ' ἀφήρει καὶ χόλον νεάνιδος<sup>12</sup> 1150

λέγων τάδ'· Οὐ μὴ δυσμενῆς ἔσῃ φίλοις,

παύσῃ δὲ θυμοῦ καὶ πάλιν στρέψεις κᾶρα,

φίλους νομίζουσ' οὔσπερ ἂν πόσις σέθεν,

δέξῃ δὲ δῶρα καὶ παραιτήσῃ πατρὸς

φυγὰς ἀφείναι παισὶ τοῖσδ', ἐμὴν χάριν; 1155

<sup>9</sup> disrespect, mutilate    <sup>10</sup> set in rapid motion    <sup>11</sup> twice-folded    <sup>12</sup> young woman

ἦ δ' ὥς ἐσεῖδε κόσμον, οὐκ ἠνέσχετο,  
 ἀλλ' ἦνέσ' ἀνδρὶ πάντα, καὶ πρὶν ἐκ δόμων  
 μακρὰν ἀπείναι πατέρα καὶ παῖδας, σέθεν  
 λαβοῦσα πέπλους ποικίλους ἠμπέσχετο,  
 χρυσοῦν τε θεῖσα στέφανον ἀμφὶ βοστρύχους<sup>13</sup> 1160  
 λαμπρῷ κατόπτρῳ σχηματίζεται<sup>14</sup> κόμην,  
 ἄψυχον εἰκὼ προσγελῶσα σώματος.  
 κᾶπειτ' ἀναστᾶσ' ἐκ θρόνων διέρχεται  
 στέγας, ἀβρὸν βαίνουσα παλλεύκῳ<sup>15</sup> ποδί,  
 δώροις ὑπερχαίρουσα, πολλὰ πολλάκις 1165  
 τένοντ'<sup>16</sup> ἐς ὀρθὸν ὄμμασι σκοπουμένη.  
 τοῦνθένδε μέντοι δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἰδεῖν·  
 χροῖαν γὰρ ἀλλάξασα λεχρία πάλιν  
 χωρεῖ τρέμουσα<sup>17</sup> κῶλα<sup>18</sup> καὶ μόλις φθάνει  
 θρόνοισιν ἐμπεσοῦσα μὴ χαμαὶ πεσεῖν. 1170  
 καί τις γεραιὰ προσπόλων, δόξασά που  
 ἦ Πανὸς ὀργὰς ἦ τινὸς θεῶν μολεῖν,  
 ἀνωλόλυξε, πρίν γ' ὀρᾷ διὰ στόμα  
 χωροῦντα λευκὸν ἀφρόν,<sup>19</sup> ὀμμάτων τ' ἄπο  
 κόρας στρέφουσιν, αἰμά τ' οὐκ ἐνὸν χροῖ· 1175  
 εἶτ' ἀντίμολπον ἦκεν ὀλολυγῆς<sup>20</sup> μέγαν  
 κωκυτόν.<sup>21</sup> εὐθὺς δ' ἦ μὲν ἐς πατρός δόμους  
 ὤρμησεν, ἦ δὲ πρὸς τὸν ἀρτίως πόσιν  
 φράσουσα νύμφης συμφοράν· ἅπασα δὲ  
 στέγη πυκνοῖσιν ἐκτύπει δρομήμασιν.

<sup>13</sup> curl, lock    <sup>14</sup> pose, form, dress    <sup>15</sup> all white    <sup>16</sup> tendon, sinew  
<sup>17</sup> tremble in fear    <sup>18</sup> limb    <sup>19</sup> foam    <sup>20</sup> women's ecstatic shout  
<sup>21</sup> lamentation

Of evil... Yea, I know to what bad things  
I go, but louder than all thought doth cry  
Anger, which maketh man's worst misery.

She follows the CHILDREN into the house.

CHORUS. My thoughts have roamed a cloudy land,  
And heard a fierier music fall

Than woman's heart should stir withal:

And yet some Muse majesticall,

Unknown, hath hold of woman's hand,

Seeking for Wisdom — not in all:

A feeble seed, a scattered band,

Thou yet shalt find in lonely places,

Not dead amongst us, nor our faces

Turned away from the Muses' call.

And thus my thought would speak: that she

Who ne'er hath borne a child nor known

Is nearer to felicity:

Unlit she goeth and alone,

With little understanding what

A child's touch means of joy or woe,

And many toils she beareth not.

But they within whose garden fair

That gentle plant hath blown, they go

Deep-written all their days with care —

To rear the children, to make fast

Their hold, to win them wealth; and then

Much darkness, if the seed at last

Bear fruit in good or evil men!

And one thing at the end of all

Abideth, that which all men dread:

The wealth is won, the limbs are bred

To manhood, and the heart withal

Honest: and, lo, where Fortune smiled,

Some change, and what hath fallen? Hark!'

Tis death slow winging to the dark,

And in his arms what was thy child.

What therefore doth it bring of gain

To man, whose cup stood full before,

That God should send this one thing more

Of hunger and of dread, a door

Set wide to every wind of pain?

MEDEA comes out alone from the house.

MEDEA. Friends, this long hour I wait on Fortune's eyes,  
And strain my senses in a hot surmise  
What passeth on that hill. — Ha! even now  
There comes... 'tis one of Jason's men, I trow.  
His wild-perturbed breath doth warrant me  
The tidings of some strange calamity.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER. O dire and ghastly deed! Get thee away,  
Medea! Fly! Nor let behind thee stay

One chariot's wing, one keel that sweeps the seas...

MEDEA. And what hath chanced, to cause such flights as these?

MESSENGER. The maiden princess lieth — and her sire,  
The king — both murdered by thy poison-fire.

MEDEA. Most happy tiding! Which thy name prefers  
Henceforth among my friends and well-wishers.

MESSENGER. What say'st thou? Woman, is thy mind within  
Clear, and not raving? Thou art found in sin  
Most bloody wrought against the king's high head,  
And laughest at the tale, and hast no dread?

MEDEA. I have words also that could answer well  
Thy word. But take thine ease, good friend, and tell,  
How died they? Hath it been a very foul

Death, prithee? That were comfort to my soul.

MESSENGER. When thy two children, hand in hand entwined,  
Came with their father, and passed on to find  
The new-made bridal rooms, Oh, we were glad,  
We thralls, who ever loved thee well, and had  
Grief in thy grief. And straight there passed a word  
From ear to ear, that thou and thy false lord  
Had poured peace offering upon wrath foregone.

A right glad welcome gave we them, and one  
Kissed the small hand, and one the shining hair:  
Myself, for very joy, I followed where  
The women's rooms are. There our mistress... she  
Whom now we name so... thinking not to see  
Thy little pair, with glad and eager brow  
Sate waiting Jason. Then she saw, and slow  
Shrouded her eyes, and backward turned again,  
Sick that thy children should come near her. Then  
Thy husband quick went forward, to entreat  
The young maid's fitful wrath. "Thou wilt not meet  
Love's coming with unkindness? Nay, refrain

Thy suddenness, and turn thy face again,  
Holding as friends all that to me are dear,  
Thine husband. And accept these robes they bear  
As gifts: and beg thy father to unmake  
His doom of exile on them—for my sake.”  
When once she saw the raiment, she could still  
Her joy no more, but gave him all his will.  
And almost ere the father and the two  
Children were gone from out the room, she drew  
The flowered garments forth, and sate her down  
To her arraying: bound the golden crown  
Through her long curls, and in a mirror fair  
Arranged their separate clusters, smiling there  
At the dead self that faced her. Then aside  
She pushed her seat, and paced those chambers wide  
Alone, her white foot poising delicately—  
So passing joyful in those gifts was she!—  
And many a time would pause, straight-limbed, and wheel  
Her head to watch the long fold to her heel  
Sweeping. And then came something strange. Her cheek  
Seemed pale, and back with crooked steps and weak  
Groping of arms she walked, and scarcely found  
Her old seat, that she fell not to the ground.  
Among the handmaids was a woman old  
And grey, who deemed, I think, that Pan had hold  
Upon her, or some spirit, and raised a keen  
Awakening shout; till through her lips was seen  
A white foam crawling, and her eyeballs back  
Twisted, and all her face dead pale for lack  
Of life: and while that old dame called, the cry  
Turned strangely to its opposite, to die  
Sobbing. Oh, swiftly then one woman flew  
To seek her father’s rooms, one for the new  
Bridegroom, to tell the tale. And all the place  
Was loud with hurrying feet.  
So long a space



*vocabulary*

ἀγνωσία ignorance  
 ἄδηλος invisible, unknown  
 αἰαῖ alas  
 ἄκρον crest, extremity ~acute  
 ἄκτις -νος (f) ray, beam ~actinic  
 ἀλάστορος driven by an avenging daimon  
 ἄλλοσε elsewhere ~alien  
 ἀναμνηστικῶς (+2 acc) remind someone ~mnemonic  
 ἄναυδος unable to speak  
 ~Theravada  
 ἀνέλκω draw up, back  
 ἄξενος inhospitable  
 ἀπορρέω flow, fall off  
 ἀποσβέννυμι (ῥ) extinguish  
 ἀποστροφή turning back, away  
 ἀρήγω succor; prevent ~right  
 ἄρκυς net  
 ἄροτος plowed field ~arable  
 ἄτιμος (ι) without honor  
 αὐτόχειρ with one's own hand  
 ἄφνω suddenly, surprisingly  
 ἀφορμάω depart, depart from  
 ~hormone  
 βιόω live; (mp) make a living  
 ~biology  
 βλαστάνω bud, sprout  
 γναθμός lower jaw  
 γοάω weep, mourn  
 γονή progeny ~genus  
 δάπτω devour  
 δάφνη laurel  
 δείλαιος wretched  
 δέμας -ως (n) body; (+gen.) like  
 διογενής (ι) born of Zeus ~deity  
 διπλός double, overlapping  
 δῖς twice  
 δρόμος running, racing ground  
 ~hippodrome  
 δυσδαίμων unlucky, unhappy

δυσμαθής slow at learning; hard to learn  
 δυσμενής hostile, enemy  
 δύσμορος ill-fated  
 δύστηνος unhappy, miserable  
 δυστυχής unlucky  
 δώρημα -τος (n, 3) gift  
 εἶα exclamation to urge someone on  
 εἰσβολή -ωβόλης invasion, an entrance ~ballistic  
 ἐκδίδωμι hand over ~donate  
 ἐκποδών out of the way  
 ἐκφύω spring from ~physics  
 ἐνδικος (persons, things) just  
 ἐξάλλομαι break away from ~sally  
 ἐξανίστημι raise, bring/send out  
 ἐπιρρέω flow over ~rheostat  
 ἐπιστρατεύω march against  
 ἔρνος -εος (n, 3) sapling  
 ἔρπω be able to move ~serpent  
 ἔρρω go (neg. connotation) ~serve  
 εὐδαίμων blessed with a good genius  
 εὐτυχής fortunate  
 εὐφυής well-developed ~physics  
 θαυμαστός wonderful; admirable  
 θέαμα -τος (ᾱ, n, 3) sight, spectacle  
 θεόθεν at the hands of the gods  
 ~theology  
 θιγγάνω touch  
 θρηνέω sing a dirge ~threnody  
 θρήνος dirge ~threnody  
 θρήνυς footstool, gangway ~throne  
 ἰός arrow  
 ἰωή a rush, a sweep  
 καθοράω look down ~panorama  
 κακίζω be a coward ~cacophony  
 κάρτα very much ~κράτος  
 καταθνήσκω die, be dead  
 ~euthanasia  
 καταίρω swoop; land  
 καταπαύω stop, restrain ~pause

κατάστασις -εως (f) establishment  
 κισσός ivy  
 κόμη hair ~comet  
 κράς -τός (f, 3) head  
 κύνεος doglike, shameless ~hound  
 κυνέω kiss  
 κῶλον limb  
 λάμπω shine ~lamp  
 λεπτός thin  
 λυπηρός (ō) painful, causing pain,  
 sad  
 ματάω be ineffective, idle  
 μίν him, her, it  
 μόθος toil  
 μύω close  
 νᾶμα a flow  
 οἰκτείρω pity  
 οἶμοι woe is me  
 οἰμῶζω wail  
 ὄλβος happiness, wealth  
 ὄμμα -τος (n, 3) eye  
 ὁμογενής related  
 ὀρφανός orphan  
 οὐδας -εος (n, 3) ground, floor  
 ὀφλισκάνω lose; incur debt  
 πάλαισμα bout, struggle  
 πάντως by all means  
 πέλας near, close  
 πέπλος woman's dress, a folded  
 cylinder of cloth  
 περιπτύσσω enfold  
 πέτρος rock ~petrified

πίτνω poetic for πίπτω  
 πλόκος lock of hair; head-wreath  
 ποθεινός longed for  
 ποῖ whither? how long?  
 προσβάλλω hit, attack, approach;  
 attach, offer ~ballistic  
 πυρόω burn something  
 σείω shake ~seismic  
 σκιά shadow ~shadow  
 σπαράσσω tear, rend  
 στάζω dribble, infuse  
 στενάζω sigh, groan  
 στέφανος ring  
 συμφορά collecting; accident,  
 misfortune  
 συνθνήσκω die together  
 σχολή rest, leisure  
 τάλας wretched, miserable ~talent  
 τέρμων boundary  
 τλήμων steadfast, enduring ~talent  
 τρέω flee in fear ~tremor  
 τύμβος grave mound ~tomb  
 ὑπέρτερος superior, victorious  
 φαρμακεύς -ος (m) poisoner,  
 sorcerer  
 φάρμακον drug, potion ~pharmacy  
 φίλιος friendly  
 φοίνιος red  
 φονεύω kill  
 χαίτη lock of hair, mane  
 χρῆζω need ~chresard

ἤδη δ' ἀνέλκων κῶλον ἔκπλεθρον δρόμου  
 ταχὺς βαδιστῆς τερμόνων<sup>1</sup> ἂν ἥπτετο,  
 ἦ δ' ἐξ ἀναύδου καὶ μύσαντος<sup>2</sup> ὄμματος  
 δεινὸν στενάξας<sup>3</sup> ἢ τάλαιν' ἠγείρετο.  
 διπλοῦν γὰρ αὐτῇ πῆμ' ἐπεστρατεύετο· 1185  
 χρυσοῦς μὲν ἀμφὶ κρατὶ κείμενος πλόκος  
 θαυμαστὸν ἔει νᾶμα<sup>4</sup> παμφάγου πυρός,  
 πέπλοι δὲ λεπτοί, σῶν τέκνων δωρήματα,  
 λεπτήν ἔδαπτον<sup>5</sup> σάρκα τῆς δυσδαίμονος.  
 φεύγει δ' ἀναστᾶς<sup>6</sup> ἐκ θρόνων πυρουμένη,<sup>6</sup> 1190  
 σείουσα χαίτην κρᾶτά τ' ἄλλοι' ἄλλοσε,<sup>7</sup>  
 ῥῖψαι θέλουσα στέφανον· ἀλλ' ἀραρότως  
 σύνδεσμα χρυσὸς εἶχε, πῦρ δ', ἐπεὶ κόμην  
 ἔσεισε, μᾶλλον δις τόσως ἐλάμπετο.  
 πίννει δ' ἐς οὐδας συμφορᾷ νικωμένη, 1195  
 πλὴν τῷ τεκόντι κάρτα δυσμαθῆς ἰδεῖν·  
 οὐτ' ὀμμάτων γὰρ δῆλος ἦν κατάστασις  
 οὐτ' εὐφυνὲς πρόσωπον, αἶμα δ' ἐξ ἄκρου  
 ἔσταζε<sup>8</sup> κρατὸς συμπεφυρμένον πυρί,  
 σάρκες δ' ἀπ' ὀστέων ὥστε πεύκινον δάκρυ 1200  
 γναθμοῖς<sup>9</sup> ἀδήλοις φαρμάκων ἀπέρρεον,  
 δεινὸν θέαμα· πασι δ' ἦν φόβος θιγεῖν  
 νεκροῦ· τύχην γὰρ εἴχομεν διδάσκαλον.  
 πατήρ δ' ὁ τλήμων συμφορᾶς ἀγνωσίᾳ<sup>10</sup>  
 ἄφνω προσελθὼν δῶμα προσπίννει νεκρῶ· 1205

<sup>1</sup> boundary   <sup>2</sup> close   <sup>3</sup> sigh, groan   <sup>4</sup> a flow   <sup>5</sup> devour   <sup>6</sup> burn something  
<sup>7</sup> elsewhere   <sup>8</sup> dribble, infuse   <sup>9</sup> lower jaw   <sup>10</sup> ignorance

ὦμωξε δ' εὐθύς, καὶ περιπτύξας χέρας  
 κυνεί προσαυδῶν τοιάδ'· ὦ δύστηνε παῖ,  
 τίς σ' ὦδ' ἀτίμως δαιμόνων ἀπώλεσε;  
 τίς τὸν γέροντα τύμβον<sup>11</sup> ὀρφανὸν<sup>12</sup> σέθεν  
 τίθησιν; οἴμοι, συνθάνοιμί σοι, τέκνον. 1210  
 ἐπεὶ δὲ θρήνων<sup>13</sup> καὶ γόων ἐπαύσατο,  
 χρήζων γεραιὸν ἐξαναστήσαι δέμας  
 προσείχεθ' ὥστε κισσὸς<sup>14</sup> ἔρνεσιν<sup>15</sup> δάφνης<sup>16</sup>  
 λεπτοῖσι πέπλοις, δεινὰ δ' ἦν παλαιίσματα.<sup>17</sup>  
 ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἤθελ' ἐξαναστήσαι γόνυ, 1215  
 ἦ δ' ἀντελάζυτ'. εἰ δὲ πρὸς βίαν ἄγοι,  
 σάρκας γεραιὰς ἐσπάρασσ' ἀπ' ὀστέων.  
 χρόνῳ δ' ἀπέσβη καὶ μεθῆχ' ὁ δύσμορος  
 ψυχῇ· κακοῦ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἦν ὑπέρτερος.  
 κεῖνται δὲ νεκροὶ παῖς τε καὶ γέρον πατήρ 1220  
 πέλας, ποθεινῇ<sup>18</sup> δακρύοισι συμφορά.  
 καί μοι τὸ μὲν σὸν ἐκποδὼν ἔστω λόγου·  
 γνώσῃ γὰρ αὐτὴ ζημίας ἀποστροφῇν.  
 τὰ θνητὰ δ' οὐ νῦν πρῶτον ἡγοῦμαι σκιάν,<sup>19</sup>  
 οὐδ' ἂν τρέσας εἴπομι τοὺς σοφοὺς βροτῶν 1225  
 δοκοῦντας εἶναι καὶ μεριμνητὰς λόγων  
 τούτους μεγίστην ζημίαν ὀφλισκάνειν.  
 θνητῶν γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἐστὶν εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ·  
 ὄλβου δ' ἐπιρρύνεντος εὐτυχέστερος  
 ἄλλου γένοιτ' ἂν ἄλλος, εὐδαίμων δ' ἂν οὔ. 1230

ΧΟΡΟΣ. ἔοιχ' ὁ δαίμων πολλὰ τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ

<sup>11</sup> grave mound    <sup>12</sup> orphan    <sup>13</sup> dirge    <sup>14</sup> ivy    <sup>15</sup> sapling    <sup>16</sup> laurel  
<sup>17</sup> bout, struggle    <sup>18</sup> longed for    <sup>19</sup> shadow

κακὰ ξυνάπτειν ἐνδίκως Ἰάσωνι.

ὦ τλήμων, ὥς σου συμφορὰς οἰκτίρομεν,

κόρη Κρέοντος, ἥτις εἰς Ἴδου δόμους

οἴχῃ γάμων ἕκατι τῶν Ἰάσονος.

1235

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. φίλαι, δέδοκται τοῦργον ὥς τάχιστα μοι

παῖδας κτανούσῃ τῇσδ' ἀφορμᾶσθαι χθονός,

καὶ μὴ σχολήν<sup>20</sup> ἄγουσαν ἐκδοῦναι τέκνα

ἄλλῃ φονεῦσαι δυσμενεστέρα χερί.

πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,

1240

ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν, οἵπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν.

ἀλλ' εἴ ὀπλίζου, καρδία. τί μέλλομεν

τὰ δεινὰ κάναγκαῖα μὴ πράσσειν κακά;

ἄγ', ὦ τάλαινα χεῖρ ἐμή, λαβὲ ξίφος,

λάβ', ἔρπε<sup>21</sup> πρὸς βαλβίδα λυπηρὰν<sup>22</sup> βίου,

1245

καὶ μὴ κακισθῆς<sup>23</sup> μηδ' ἀναμνησθῆς τέκνων,

ὥς φίλταθ', ὥς ἔτικτες· ἀλλὰ τήνδε γε

λαθοῦ βραχεῖαν ἡμέραν παίδων σέθεν,

κάπειτα θρήνει· καὶ γὰρ εἰ κτενεῖς σφ', ὅμως

φίλοι γ' ἔφυσαν—δυστυχῆς δ' ἐγὼ γυνή.

1250

ΧΟ. ἰὼ Γᾶ τε καὶ παμφαῆς

ἀκτῖς<sup>24</sup> Ἀελίου, κατίδετ' ἴδετε τὰν

ὀλομένην γυναιῖκα, πρὶν φοινίαν

τέκνοις προσβαλεῖν χέρ' αὐτοκτόνον·

τεᾶς γὰρ ἀπὸ χρυσέας γονᾶς

1255

ἔβλασταν,<sup>25</sup> θεοῦ δ' αἰμά τι πίνειν

φόβος ὑπ' ἀνέρων.

<sup>20</sup> rest, leisure    <sup>21</sup> be able to move    <sup>22</sup> painful, causing pain, sad    <sup>23</sup> be a  
coward    <sup>24</sup> ray, beam    <sup>25</sup> bud, sprout

ἀλλά νιν, ὦ φάος διογενές, κάτειρ'  
 γε κατάπαυσον, ἔξελ' οἴκων φονίαν  
 τάλαιναν τ' Ἑρινὺν ὑπ' ἀλαστόρων. 1260

ΧΟ. μάταν μόχθος ἔρρει τέκνων,  
 ἄρα μάταν γένος φίλιον ἔτεκες, ὦ  
 κυανεῇν λιποῦσα Συμπληγάδων  
 πετρῶν ἀξενωτάταν<sup>26</sup> ἐσβολάν;  
 δειλαία,<sup>27</sup> τί σοι φρενῶν βαρὺς 1265  
 χόλος προσπίτνει καὶ δυσμενῆς  
 φόνος; ἀμείβεται  
 χαλεπὰ γὰρ βροτοῖς ὁμογενῇ<sup>28</sup> μᾶ'  
 σματα ἐπὶ γαῖαν αὐτοφόνταις ξυνῶ'  
 δὰ θεόθεν<sup>29</sup> πίνοντ' ἐπὶ δόμοις ἄχῃ. ΠΑΙΔΕΣ. αἰαῖ. 1270

ΧΟ. —ἀκούεις βοᾶν ἀκούεις τέκνων;—  
 ἰὼ τλᾶμον, ὦ κακοτυχές γύναι.

ΠΑΙ. —οἴμοι, τί δράσω; ποῖ φύγω μητρὸς χέρας;—  
 οὐκ οἶδ', ἄδελφε φίλτατ' ὀλλύμεσθα γάρ.

ΧΟ. παρέλθω δόμους; ἀρῆξαι φόνον 1275  
 δοκεῖ μοι τέκνοις.

ΠΑΙ. —ναί, πρὸς θεῶν, ἀρήξατ' ἐν δέοντι γάρ.—  
 ὥς ἐγγὺς ἦδη γ' ἐσμὲν ἀρκύων ξίφους.

ΧΟ. —τάλαιν', ὥς ἄρ' ἦσθα πέτρος<sup>30</sup> ἢ σῖδα'  
 ρος, ἅτις τέκνων 1280  
 ὦν ἔτεκες ἄροτον<sup>31</sup> αὐτόχειρι<sup>32</sup> μοίρα κτενεῖς.

ΧΟ. —μίαν δὲ κλύω μίαν τῶν πάρος  
 γυναικ' ἐν φίλοις χέρα βαλεῖν τέκνοις·

<sup>26</sup> inhospitable    <sup>27</sup> wretched    <sup>28</sup> related    <sup>29</sup> at the hands of the gods  
<sup>30</sup> rock    <sup>31</sup> plowed field    <sup>32</sup> with one's own hand

As a swift walker on a measured way  
Would pace a furlong's course in, there she lay  
Speechless, with veiled lids. Then wide her eyes  
She oped, and wildly, as she strove to rise,  
Shrieked: for two diverse waves upon her rolled  
Of stabbing death. The carcanet of gold  
That gripped her brow was molten in a dire  
And wondrous river of devouring fire.  
And those fine robes, the gift thy children gave—  
God's mercy!—everywhere did lap and lave  
The delicate flesh; till up she sprang, and fled,  
A fiery pillar, shaking locks and head  
This way and that, seeking to cast the crown  
Somewhere away. But like a thing nailed down  
The burning gold held fast the anadem,  
And through her locks, the more she scattered them,  
Came fire the fiercer, till to earth she fell  
A thing—save to her sire—scarce nameable,  
And strove no more. That cheek of royal mien,  
Where was it—or the place where eyes had been?  
Only from crown and temples came faint blood  
Shot through with fire. The very flesh, it stood  
Out from the bones, as from a wounded pine  
The gum starts, where those gnawing poisons fine  
Bit in the dark—a ghastly sight! And touch  
The dead we durst not. We had seen too much.  
But that poor father, knowing not, had sped,  
Swift to his daughter's room, and there the dead  
Lay at his feet. He knelt, and groaning low,  
Folded her in his arms, and kissed her: "Oh,  
Unhappy child, what thing unnatural hath  
So hideously undone thee? Or what wrath  
Of gods, to make this old grey sepulchre  
Childless of thee? Would God but lay me there  
To die with thee, my daughter!" So he cried.  
But after, when he stayed from tears, and tried  
To uplift his old bent frame, lo, in the folds  
Of those fine robes it held, as ivy holds  
Strangling among your laurel boughs. Oh, then  
A ghastly struggle came! Again, again,  
Up on his knee he writhed; but that dead breast  
Clung still to his: till, wild, like one possessed,

He dragged himself half free; and, lo, the live  
 Flesh parted; and he laid him down to strive  
 No more with death, but perish; for the deep  
 Had risen above his soul. And there they sleep,  
 At last, the old proud father and the bride,  
 Even as his tears had craved it, side by side.  
 For thee — Oh, no word more! Thyself will know  
 How best to baffle vengeance... Long ago  
 I looked upon man's days, and found a grey  
 Shadow. And this thing more I surely say,  
 That those of all men who are counted wise,  
 Strong wits, devisers of great policies,  
 Do pay the bitterest toll. Since life began,  
 Hath there in God's eye stood one happy man?  
 Fair days roll on, and bear more gifts or less  
 Of fortune, but to no man happiness.

Exit MESSENGER.

CHORUS. Some Women.

Wrath upon wrath, meseems, this day shall fall  
 From God on Jason! He hath earned it all.  
 Other Women.

O miserable maiden, all my heart  
 Is torn for thee, so sudden to depart  
 From thy king's chambers and the light above  
 To darkness, all for sake of Jason's love!  
 MEDEA. Women, my mind is clear. I go to slay  
 My children with all speed, and then, away  
 From hence; not wait yet longer till they stand  
 Beneath another and an angrier hand  
 To die. Yea, howsoe'er I shield them, die  
 They must. And, seeing that they must, 'tis I  
 Shall slay them, I their mother, touched of none  
 Beside. Oh, up and get thine armour on,  
 My heart! Why longer tarry we to win  
 Our crown of dire inevitable sin?

Take up thy sword, O poor right hand of mine,  
 Thy sword: then onward to the thin-drawn line  
 Where life turns agony. Let there be naught  
 Of softness now: and keep thee from that thought,  
 Born of thy flesh,' 'thine own beloved.' Now,  
 For one brief day, forget thy children: thou  
 Shalt weep hereafter. Though thou slay them, yet

Sweet were they... I am sore unfortunate.  
She goes into the house.

CHORUS. Some Women.

O Earth, our mother; and thou

All-seer, arrowy crown

Of Sunlight, manward now

Look down, Oh, look down!

Look upon one accurst,

Ere yet in blood she twine

Red hands—blood that is thine!

O Sun, save her first!

She is thy daughter still,

Of thine own golden line;

Save her! Or shall man spill

The life divine?

Give peace, O Fire that diest not! Send thy spell

To stay her yet, to lift her afar, afar—

A torture-changed spirit, a voice of Hell

Wrought of old wrongs and war!

Others.

Alas for the mother's pain

Wasted! Alas the dear

Life that was born in vain!

Woman, what mak'st thou here,

Thou from beyond the Gate

Where dim Symplegades

Clash in the dark blue seas,

The shores where death doth wait?

Why hast thou taken on thee,

To make us desolate,

This anger of misery

And guilt of hate?

For fierce are the smittings back of blood once shed

Where love hath been: God's wrath upon them that kill,

And an anguished earth, and the wonder of the dead

Haunting as music still...

A cry is heard within.

A Woman.

Hark! Did ye hear? Heard ye the children's cry?

Another.

O miserable woman! O abhorred!

A Child within.

What shall I do? What is it? Keep me fast  
From mother!

The Other Child.

I know nothing. Brother! Oh,  
I think she means to kill us.

A Woman.

Let me go!

I will — Help! Help! — and save them at the last.

A Child.

Yes, in God's name! Help quickly ere we die!

The Other Child.

She has almost caught me now. She has a sword.

Many of the Women are now beating at the barred door to get in. Others are standing apart.

Women at the door.

Thou stone, thou thing of iron! Wilt verily  
Spill with thine hand that life, the vintage stored  
Of thine own agony?

The Other Women.

A Mother slew her babes in days of yore,

*vocabulary*

ἄγριος wild, savage ~agriculture  
 ἄθῳς unpunished, blameless  
 αἰάζω wail, bewail  
 αἰθήρ ether, air, sky ~ether  
 αἰσχροποιός doing foul things  
 ἄκτῃ beach; cereal grain  
 ἀλάστορος driven by an avenging daimon  
 ἀλέομαι escape, shun ~swelter  
 ἄλλῃ wandering ~Fr. aller  
 ἀλίσκομαι be captured ~helix  
 ἄλμῃ brine, sea salt ~halogen  
 ἀναμοχλεύω pry up, force open  
 ἀνασπάω draw again ~spatula  
 ἀνθάπτομαι grapple, seize  
 ἀνοίγνυμι (ῶ) open  
 ἄπαις childless  
 ἀπαλλαγή relief, escape  
 ἄρδω give water  
 ἀτιμάζω (ι) insult, dishonor  
 ἀτιμάω (ι) dishonor  
 βάθος -ους (n, 3) depth, height  
 βίσιος life; sustenance, chattels  
 ~biology  
 γάμος wedding, sex ~bigamy  
 δαίμων -ονος (m, 3) a god, fate, doom ~demon  
 δάκνω bite  
 δάμαρ wife ~domicile  
 δῆτα emphatic δῆ  
 διάγω lead through; pass a time  
 ~demagogue  
 διπλός double, overlapping  
 δράω do, accomplish  
 δυσσεβέω be impious  
 δυσσεβής impious, profane  
 εἰκός likely  
 εἰσβαίνω enter, board ~basis  
 ἐκγελάω laugh out loud  
 ἐκλύω rescue from ~loose  
 ἐκτείνω stretch out ~tend

ἐκτρέφω raise, rear  
 Ἑλλῆν Greek  
 ἐμφύω plant; cling ~physics  
 ἐντός within  
 ἐξωθεν from outside  
 ἐορτή holiday, feast  
 ἔργω bound, fend off; do  
 ~ergonomics  
 ἔρδω do, perform ~ergonomics  
 ἐρέσσω to row ~row  
 ἐρευνάω hunt for  
 ἔρρω go (neg. connotation) ~serve  
 ἔρσα dew; lamb, kid  
 ἔρυμα -τος (n, 3) protection ~serve  
 εὐνή bed; (pl) anchor stones  
 ἐχθαίρω hate ~external  
 θάπτω bury ~epitaph  
 θράσος -ους (n, 3) boldness, over-boldness  
 καθυβρίζω insult  
 κάρ -ός (n) useless bit; form of κατά  
 κάρτα very much ~κράτος  
 κάσις sibling  
 καταθνήσκω die, be dead  
 ~euthanasia  
 κῆδος -εος (n, 3) sorrow ~heinous  
 κλείς κληῖδος (f) bar, key ~clavicle  
 κοινωνός partner  
 κοίρανος ruler, chief  
 κρύπτω hide, cover ~cryptic  
 κυρέω come upon, come up against; obtain  
 λέαινα lioness  
 λείψανον remnant  
 λέκτρον bed ~lie  
 λέχος -εος (n, 3) couch, bed, bier  
 ~lie  
 λυπέω (ῶ) annoy, distress  
 μαίνομαι be berserk ~maenad  
 μεθίστημι change, substitute; withdraw; change sides; (mid) send away ~station

μητρῷος maternal  
 μαιφόνος blood-stained ~miasma  
 μίν him, her, it  
 μῖσος -εος (n, 3) hate  
 μυρίος (ῶ) 10,000 ~myriad  
 νεόγαμος newlywed  
 νόσος (f) plague, pestilence  
 ~noisome  
 νυμφεύω marry, give in marriage  
 ξίφος -εος (n, 3) sword  
 οἶμοι woe is me  
 ὀλέθριος ruinous, deadly  
 ὄνειδος -εος (n, 3) blame; insult  
 ὀνίνημι help, please, be available  
 οὔνεκα because  
 οὐτάω pierce, wound  
 ὄχημα vehicle  
 πατρώιος of the father(s), ancestral  
 ~paternal  
 πατρῷος of the father(s), ancestral  
 πέδον ground ~pedal  
 πῆμα -τος (n, 3) woe, bane ~penury  
 πημονή woe, bane ~penury  
 πικρός sharp, bitter ~picric  
 πίτνω poetic for πίπτω  
 πλήσσω hit ~plectrum  
 πόντιος of the sea  
 ποῦ where?  
 προσάπτω attach to ~haptic  
 προσβλέπω look at  
 προσήκω belong to, it seems  
 πρόσπολος servant, attendant  
 ῥέζω do, make, perform sacrifices  
 ~ergonomics

σάφα with full understanding  
 σεμνός revered, holy  
 σκάφος (τό) hull, ship; (ό) digging  
 σκήπτω prop up; (mp) feign  
 ~scepter  
 στέγη roof, ceiling, chamber  
 στυγέω dread, shrink from ~Styx  
 συνθνήσκω die together  
 συνοικέω live together  
 σφρων sensible, prudent ~frenzy  
 τάλας wretched, miserable ~talent  
 τέμενος -εος (n, 3) non-common  
 land  
 τερπνός pleasant  
 τίνω (ι) pay, atone for; (mp) punish  
 τλάω take upon oneself ~talent  
 τλήμων steadfast, enduring ~talent  
 τοιόσδε such  
 τύμβος grave mound ~tomb  
 τύραννος tyrant  
 ὕβρις -εως (f) pride, insolence,  
 outrage  
 φθέγγομαι make a sound, utter  
 ~diphthong  
 φροντίζω consider, ponder  
 φροντίς -τος (f) thought, care  
 φυγή flight, means of escape  
 ~fugitive  
 φύσις -εως (f) nature (of a thing)  
 ~physics  
 φύω produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
 χαλάω let fall; become slack  
 ψάύω be closely touching

Ἴνῳ μανείσαν ἐκ θεῶν, ὅθ' ἡ Διὸς  
 δάμαρ νιν ἐξέπεμψε δωμάτων ἄλῃ· 1285  
 πίτνει δ' ἅ τάλαιν' ἐς ἄλμαν φόνῳ  
 τέκνων δυσσεβεί,  
 ἀκτῆς ὑπερτείνασα ποντίας<sup>1</sup> πόδα,  
 δυοῖν τε παῖδιν συνθανοῦσ' ἀπόλλυται.  
 τί δῆτ' οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἔτι δεινόν; ὦ 1290  
 γυναικῶν λέχος  
 πολύπονον, ὅσα βροτοῖς ἔρεξας ἤδη κακά.

ΙΑΣΩΝ. γυναῖκες, αἱ τῆσδ' ἐγγὺς ἔστατε στέγης,  
 ἄρ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἡ τὰ δεῖν' εἰργασμένη  
 Μήδεια τοῖσδ' ἔτ', ἣ μεθέστηκεν φυγῇ; 1295  
 δεῖ γάρ νιν ἥτοι γῆς γε κρυφθῆναι κάτω,  
 ἣ πτηνὸν ἄραι σῶμ' ἐς αἰθέρος βάθος,<sup>2</sup>  
 εἰ μὴ τυράννων δώμασιν δώσει δίκην·  
 πέποιθ' ἀποκτείνασα κοιράνους χθονὸς  
 ἀθῶος<sup>3</sup> αὐτὴ τῶνδε φεύγεσθαι δόμων; 1300  
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτῆς φροντίδ' ὥς τέκνων ἔχω·  
 κείνην μὲν οὖς ἔδρασεν ἔρξουσιν κακῶς,  
 ἐμῶν δὲ παίδων ἦλθον ἐκσώσων βίον,  
 μή μοί τι δράσωσ' οἱ προσήκοντες γένει,  
 μητρῶν<sup>4</sup> ἐκπράσσοντες ἀνόσιον φόνον. 1305

ΧΟΡΟΣ. ὦ τλήμον, οὐκ οἶσθ' οἱ κακῶν ἐλήλυθας,

Ἴασον· οὐ γὰρ τούσδ' ἂν ἐφθέγξω λόγους.

ΙΑΣ. τί δ' ἔστιν; ἣ που καὶ μ' ἀποκτεῖναι θέλει;

ΧΟ. παῖδες τεθνᾶσι χειρὶ μητρῶν σέθεν.

<sup>1</sup> of the sea    <sup>2</sup> depth, height    <sup>3</sup> unpunished, blameless    <sup>4</sup> maternal

ΙΑΣ. οἷμοι τί λέξεις; ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας, γύναι. 1310

ΧΟ. ὥς οὐκέτ' ὄντων σῶν τέκνων φρόντιζε δή.

ΙΑΣ. ποῦ γάρ νιν ἔκτειν'; ἐντὸς ἡ ἔξωθεν δόμων;

ΧΟ. πύλας ἀνοίξας σῶν τέκνων ὄψη φόνον.

ΙΑΣ. χαλᾶτε<sup>5</sup> κληῖδας ὥς τάχιστα, πρόσπολοι,  
ἐκλύεθ' ἀρμούς, ὥς ἴδω διπλοῦν κακόν, 1315  
τοὺς μὲν θανόντας— τὴν δὲ τείσωμαι δίκην.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. τί τάσδε κινεῖς κἀναμοχλεύεις πύλας,  
νεκρούς ἐρευνῶν κἀμὲ τὴν εἰργασμένην;  
παῦσαι πόνου τοῦδ'. εἰ δ' ἐμοῦ χρεῖαν ἔχεις,  
λέγ', εἴ τι βούλῃ, χειρὶ δ' οὐ ψεύσεις ποτέ. 1320  
τοιόνδ' ὄχημα<sup>6</sup> πατρὸς Ἥλιος πατὴρ  
δίδωσιν ἡμῖν, ἔρυμα πολεμίας χερός.

ΙΑΣ. ὦ μῦθος,<sup>7</sup> ὦ μέγιστον ἐχθίστη γύναι  
θεοῖς τε κἀμοὶ παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένει,  
ἥτις τέκνοισι σοῖσιν ἐμβαλεῖν ξίφος 1325  
ἔτλης τεκοῦσα, κᾶμ' ἄπαιδ' ἀπώλεσας·  
καὶ ταῦτα δράσας ἡλιόν τε προσβλέπεις  
καὶ γαῖαν, ἔργον τλᾶσα δυσσεβέστατον·  
ὅλοι· ἐγὼ δὲ νῦν φρονῶ, τότε οὐ φρονῶν,  
ὅτ' ἐκ δόμων σε βαρβάρου τ' ἀπὸ χθονὸς 1330  
Ἑλλήν' ἐς οἶκον ἡγόμην, κακὸν μέγα,  
πατρός τε καὶ γῆς προδότιν ἢ σ' ἐθρέψατο.  
τὸν σὸν δ' ἀλάστορ' εἰς ἔμ' ἔσκηψαν<sup>8</sup> θεοί·  
κτανοῦσα γὰρ δὴ σὸν κάσιν<sup>9</sup> παρέστιον  
τὸ καλλίπρωρον εἰσέβης Ἀργοῦς σκάφος. 1335

<sup>5</sup> let fall; become slack    <sup>6</sup> vehicle    <sup>7</sup> hate    <sup>8</sup> prop up; (mp) feign    <sup>9</sup> sibling

ἤρξω μὲν ἐκ τοιῶνδε· νυμφευθείσα δὲ  
 παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδε καὶ τεκοῦσά μοι τέκνα,  
 εὐνῆς ἕκατι καὶ λέχους σφ' ἀπώλεσας.  
 οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τοῦτ' ἂν Ἑλληνὶς γυνή  
 ἔτλη ποθ', ὧν γε πρόσθεν ἠξίουν ἐγὼ  
 γῆμαι σέ, κῆδος ἐχθρὸν ὀλέθριόν<sup>10</sup> τ' ἐμοί,  
 λείαναν, οὐ γυναιῖκα, τῆς Τυρσηνίδος  
 Σκύλλης ἔχουσαν ἀγριωτέραν φύσιν.  
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἄν σε μυρίοις ὀνειδέσι  
 δάκοιμι· τοιόνδ' ἐμπέφυκέ σοι θράσος·  
 ἔρρ', αἰσχροποιῇ<sup>11</sup> καὶ τέκνων μαιφόνε·<sup>12</sup>  
 ἐμοὶ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν δαίμον' αἰάζειν<sup>13</sup> πάρα,  
 ὅς οὔτε λέκτρων νεογάμων<sup>14</sup> ὀνήσομαι,  
 οὐ παῖδας οὖς ἔφυσα ἀξέθρεψάμην  
 ἔξω προσειπεῖν ζῶντας, ἀλλ' ἀπώλεσα.

1340

1345

1350

ΜΗΔ. μακρὰν ἂν ἐξέτεινα τοῖσδ' ἐναντίον

λόγοισιν, εἰ μὴ Ζεὺς πατὴρ ἠπίστατο  
 οἷ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ πέπονθας οἷά τ' εἰργάσω·  
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες τᾶμ' ἀτιμάσας λέχη  
 τερπνὸν<sup>15</sup> διάξειν βίοτον ἐγγελῶν ἐμοί·  
 οὐδ' ἢ τύραννος, οὐδ' ὁ σοὶ προσθεὶς γάμους  
 Κρέων ἀνατεῖ τῆσδέ μ' ἐκβαλεῖν χθονός.  
 πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ λείαναν, εἰ βούλῃ, κάλει  
 καὶ Σκύλλαν ἢ Τυρσηνὸν ὥκησεν πέδον·  
 τῆς σῆς γὰρ ὥς χρὴ καρδίας ἀνθηψάμην.

1355

1360

ΙΑΣ. καὐτή γε λυπῇ καὶ κακῶν κοινωνὸς<sup>16</sup> εἶ.

<sup>10</sup> ruinous, deadly    <sup>11</sup> doing foul things    <sup>12</sup> blood-stained    <sup>13</sup> wail, bewail  
<sup>14</sup> newlywed    <sup>15</sup> pleasant    <sup>16</sup> partner

ΜΗΔ. σάφ' ἴσθι· λύει δ' ἄλγος, ἣν σὺ μὴ ᾔγγελᾷς.

ΙΑΣ. ὦ τέκνα, μητρὸς ὡς κακῆς ἐκύρσατε.<sup>17</sup>

ΜΗΔ. ὦ παῖδες, ὡς ὠλεσθε πατρῶα νόσῳ.

ΙΑΣ. οὗτοι νυν ἡμὴ δεξιὰ σφ' ἀπώλεσεν. 1365

ΜΗΔ. ἀλλ' ὕβρις, οὔτε σοὶ νεοδμηῆτες γάμοι.

ΙΑΣ. λέχους σφε κηξίωσας οὔνεκα κτανεῖν.

ΜΗΔ. σμικρὸν γυναικὶ πῆμα τοῦτ' εἶναι δοκεῖς;

ΙΑΣ. ἥτις γε σώφρων· σοὶ δὲ πάντ' ἐστὶν κακά.

ΜΗΔ. οἶδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσὶ· τοῦτο γάρ σε δήξεται. 1370

ΙΑΣ. οἶδ' εἰσὶν, οἴμοι, σῶ κάρα μιάστορες.

ΜΗΔ. ἴσασι ὅστις ἤρξε πημονῆς θεοί.

ΙΑΣ. ἴσασι δῆτα σὴν γ' ἀπόπτυστον φρένα.

ΜΗΔ. στύγει· πικρὰν δὲ βάζιν ἐχθαίρω σέθεν.

ΙΑΣ. καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σὴν· ῥάδιον δ' ἀπαλλαγαί. 1375

ΜΗΔ. πῶς οὖν; τί δράσω; κάρτα γὰρ καγὼ θέλω.

ΙΑΣ. θάψαι νεκρούς μοι τούσδε καὶ κλαῦσαι πάρες.

ΜΗΔ. οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ σφας τῇδ' ἐγὼ θάψω χερί,

φέρουσ' ἐς Ἥρας τέμενος<sup>18</sup> Ἀκραίας θεοῦ,

ὡς μὴ τις αὐτοὺς πολεμίων καθυβρίσῃ, 1380

τύμβους ἀνασπῶν· γῇ δὲ τῇδε Σισύφου

σεμνὴν<sup>19</sup> ἑορτὴν καὶ τέλη προσάψομεν

τὸ λοιπὸν ἀντὶ τοῦδε δυσσεβοῦς φόνου.

αὐτῇ δὲ γαίαν εἴμι τὴν Ἐρεχθέως,

Αἰγεί συνοικήσουσα τῷ Πανδίδιονος. 1385

σὺ δ', ὥσπερ εἰκός, κατθανῇ κακὸς κακῶς,

Ἄργους κάρα σὸν λειψάνῳ<sup>20</sup> πεπληγμένος,

<sup>17</sup> come upon, come up against; obtain    <sup>18</sup> non-common land    <sup>19</sup> revered,  
holy    <sup>20</sup> remnant

One, only one, from dawn to eventide,  
 Ino, god-maddened, whom the Queen of Heaven  
 Set frenzied, flying to the dark: and she  
 Cast her for sorrow to the wide salt sea,  
 Forth from those rooms of murder unforgiven,  
 Wild-footed from a white crag of the shore,  
 And clasping still her children twain, she died.  
 O Love of Woman, charged with sorrow sore,  
 What hast thou wrought upon us? What beside  
 Resteth to tremble for?

Enter hurriedly JASON and Attendants.

JASON. Ye women by this doorway clustering  
 Speak, is the doer of the ghastly thing  
 Yet here, or fled? What hopeth she of flight?  
 Shall the deep yawn to shield her? Shall the height  
 Send wings, and hide her in the vaulted sky  
 To work red murder on her lords, and fly  
 Unrecompensed? But let her go! My care  
 Is but to save my children, not for her.  
 Let them she wronged requite her as they may.

I care not. 'Tis my sons I must some way  
 Save, ere the kinsmen of the dead can win  
 From them the payment of their mother's sin.

LEADER. Unhappy man, indeed thou knowest not  
 What dark place thou art come to! Else, God wot,  
 Jason, no word like these could fall from thee.

JASON. What is it? — Ha! The woman would kill me?

LEADER. Thy sons are dead, slain by their mother's hand.

JASON. How? Not the children... I scarce understand...

O God, thou hast broken me!

LEADER. Think of those twain

As things once fair, that ne'er shall bloom again.

JASON. Where did she murder them? In that old room?

LEADER. Open, and thou shalt see thy children's doom.

JASON. Ho, thralls! Unloose me yonder bars! Make more  
 Of speed! Wrench out the jointing of the door.

And show my two-edged curse, the children dead,  
 The woman... Oh, this sword upon her head...

While the Attendants are still battering at the door MEDEA appears on the  
 roof, standing on

a chariot of winged Dragons, in which are the children's bodies.

MEDEA. What make ye at my gates? Why batter ye

With brazen bars, seeking the dead and me  
Who slew them? Peace!... And thou, if aught of mine  
Thou needest, speak, though never touch of thine  
Shall scathe me more. Out of his firmament  
My fathers' father, the high Sun, hath sent  
This, that shall save me from mine enemies' rage.  
JASON. Thou living hate! Thou wife in every age  
Abhorred, blood-red mother, who didst kill  
My sons, and make me as the dead: and still  
Canst take the sunshine to thine eyes, and smell  
The green earth, reeking from thy deed of hell;  
I curse thee! Now, Oh, now mine eyes can see,  
That then were blinded, when from savagery  
Of eastern chambers, from a cruel land,  
To Greece and home I gathered in mine hand  
Thee, thou incarnate curse: one that betrayed  
Her home, her father, her... Oh, God hath laid  
Thy sins on me! — I knew, I knew, there lay  
A brother murdered on thy hearth that day  
When thy first footstep fell on Argo's hull...  
Argo, my own, my swift and beautiful  
That was her first beginning. Then a wife  
I made her in my house. She bore to life  
Children: and now for love, for chambering  
And men's arms, she hath murdered them! A thing  
Not one of all the maids of Greece, not one,  
Had dreamed of; whom I spurned, and for mine own  
Chose thee, a bride of hate to me and death,  
Tigress, not woman, beast of wilder breath  
Than Skylla shrieking o'er the Tuscan sea.  
Enough! No scorn of mine can reach to thee,  
Such iron is o'er thine eyes. Out from my road,  
Thou crime-begetter, blind with children's blood!  
And let me weep alone the bitter tide  
That sweepeth Jason's days, no gentle bride  
To speak with more, no child to look upon  
Whom once I reared... all, all for ever gone!  
MEDEA. An easy answer had I to this swell  
Of speech, but Zeus our father knoweth well,  
All I for thee have wrought, and thou for me.  
So let it rest. This thing was not to be,  
That thou shouldst live a merry life, my bed

Forgotten and my heart uncomforted,  
Thou nor thy princess: nor the king that planned  
Thy marriage drive Medea from his land,  
And suffer not. Call me what thing thou please,  
Tigress or Skylla from the Tuscan seas:  
My claws have gripped thine heart, and all things shine.  
JASON. Thou too hast grief. Thy pain is fierce as mine.  
MEDEA. I love the pain, so thou shalt laugh no more.  
JASON. Oh, what a womb of sin my children bore!  
MEDEA. Sons, did ye perish for your father's shame?  
JASON. How? It was not my hand that murdered them.  
MEDEA. 'Twas thy false wooings, 'twas thy trampling pride.  
JASON. Thou hast said it! For thy lust of love they died.  
MEDEA. And love to women a slight thing should be?  
JASON. To women pure! — All thy vile life to thee!  
MEDEA. Think of thy torment. They are dead, they are dead!  
JASON. No: quick, great God; quick curses round thy head!  
MEDEA. The Gods know who began this work of woe.  
JASON. Thy heart and all its loathliness they know.  
MEDEA. Loathe on... But, Oh, thy voice. It hurts me sore.  
JASON. Aye, and thine me. Wouldst hear me then no more?  
MEDEA. How? Show me but the way. 'Tis this I crave.  
JASON. Give me the dead to weep, and make their grave.  
MEDEA. Never! Myself will lay them in a still  
Green sepulchre, where Hera by the Hill  
Hath precinct holy, that no angry men  
May break their graves and cast them forth again  
To evil. So I lay on all this shore  
Of Corinth a high feast for evermore  
And rite, to purge them yearly of the stain  
Of this poor blood. And I, to Pallas' plain  
I go, to dwell beside Pandion's son,  
Aegeus. — For thee, behold, death draweth on,  
Evil and lonely, like thine heart: the hands



*vocabulary*

ἄελπτος not hoped for  
 ἄλοχος (f) wife ~lie  
 ἄμορος without a portion  
 ἀπελαύνω expel, exclude, ward off;  
 (intrans) ride away  
 ἀποβαίνω leave, get off; turn out  
 ~basis  
 ἀποκωλύω hinder from/from using  
 ἀπωθέω repel, reject  
 ἀσπάζομαι greet, salute  
 γάμος wedding, sex ~bigamy  
 γῆρας -ος (n, 3) old age  
 γηράσκω grow old ~geriatric  
 γοῦν at least then  
 δαίμων -ονος (m, 3) a god, fate,  
 doom ~demon  
 δισσός double  
 ἐξάνιμι send upward ~jet  
 ἐφοράω look upon ~panorama  
 θάπτω bury ~epitaph  
 θρηνέω sing a dirge ~threnody  
 καίνω kill  
 κλύω hear, listen to ~Euclid  
 κραίνω accomplish; (rare) rule  
 λέαινα lioness  
 μαλαχός soft  
 μαρτύρομαι (ὑ) call to witness;  
 protest  
 μάτην in vain, randomly  
 μήποτε absolutely never

μυσάρος unclean, defiled  
 ὅποσος as many as, how many, how  
 great  
 οὐπω no longer  
 ὀφείλω owe, should, if only  
 παιδοφόνος child killer  
 πημαίνω harm ~penury  
 πικρός sharp, bitter ~picric  
 πόρος way, bridge ~fare  
 πόρω aor. give, pf. be fated  
 προσπύσσω embrace, greet,  
 address  
 ῥίπτω hurl  
 στείχω go, march ~stair  
 τάλας wretched, miserable ~talent  
 ταμία (ἄα) housekeeper ~tonsure  
 ταμίας -ως (m, 3) manager,  
 quartermaster  
 τελευτή conclusion, fulfilment  
 ~apostle  
 τοιόσδε such  
 φεῦ exclamation of grief, anger,  
 surprise, admiration  
 φίλιος friendly  
 φῦσα bellows  
 φυσάω (ὑ) blow, puff, blow out  
 φύω produce, beget; clasp ~physics  
 χρῆζω need ~chresard  
 φαύω be closely touching  
 ψεύδορχος violating an oath



πικρὰς τελευτὰς τῶν ἐμῶν γάμων ἰδῶν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ. ἀλλὰ σ' Ἐρινὺς ὀλέσειε τέκνων

φονία τε Δίκη.

1390

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ. τίς δὲ κλύει σοῦ θεὸς ἢ δαίμων,

τοῦ ψευδόρκου<sup>1</sup> καὶ ξιναπάτου;

ΙΑΣ. φεῦ φεῦ, μυσαρὰ<sup>2</sup> καὶ παιδολέτορ.

ΜΗΔ. στείχε πρὸς οἶκους καὶ θάπτ' ἄλοχον.

ΙΑΣ. στείχω, δισσῶν<sup>3</sup> γ' ἄμορος<sup>4</sup> τέκνων.

1395

ΜΗΔ. οὐπω θρηνεῖς<sup>5</sup> μένε καὶ γῆρας.

ΙΑΣ. ὦ τέκνα φίλτατα. ΜΗΔ. μητρὶ γε, σοὶ δ' οὔ.

ΙΑΣ. κάπειτ' ἔκανες; ΜΗΔ. σέ γε πημαίνουσ'.<sup>6</sup>

ΙΑΣ. ὦμοι, φιλίου χρήζω στόματος

παίδων ὁ τάλας προσπτύξασθαι.

1400

ΜΗΔ. νῦν σφε προσαιδῶς, νῦν ἀσπάζῃ,

τότ' ἀπώσάμενος. ΙΑΣ. δός μοι πρὸς θεῶν

μαλακοῦ χρωτὸς ψαῦσαι<sup>7</sup> τέκνων.

ΜΗΔ. οὐκ ἔστι· μάτην ἔπος ἔρριπται.

ΙΑΣ. Ζεῦ, τὰδ' ἀκούεις ὥς ἀπελαννόμεθ',

1405

οἶά τε πάσχομεν ἐκ τῆς μυσαρᾶς

καὶ παιδοφόνου<sup>8</sup> τῆσδε λεαίνης;

ἀλλ' ὅποσον γοῦν πάρα καὶ δύναμαι

τάδε καὶ θρηνῶ κάπιθεάζω,

μαρτυρόμενος<sup>9</sup> δαίμονας ὧς μοι

1410

τέκνα κτείνας' ἀποκωλύεις

ψαῦσαί τε χεροῖν θάψαι τε νεκρούς,

<sup>1</sup> violating an oath    <sup>2</sup> unclean, defiled    <sup>3</sup> double    <sup>4</sup> without a portion  
<sup>5</sup> sing a dirge    <sup>6</sup> harm    <sup>7</sup> be closely touching    <sup>8</sup> child killer    <sup>9</sup> call to witness; protest

οὐς μήποτ' ἐγὼ φύσας ὄφελον

πρὸς σοῦ φθιμένους ἐπιδέσθαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ. πολλῶν ταμίας Ζεὺς ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ,

1415

πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως<sup>10</sup> κραίνουσι<sup>11</sup> θεοί·

καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,

τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον ἡῦρε θεός.

τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

<sup>10</sup> not hoped for    <sup>11</sup> accomplish; (rare) rule

Of thine old Argo, rotting where she stands,  
Shall smite thine head in twain, and bitter be  
To the last end thy memories of me.

She rises on the chariot and is slowly borne away.

JASON. May They that hear the weeping child  
Blast thee, and They that walk in blood!

MEDEA. Thy broken vows, thy friends beguiled  
Have shut for thee the ears of God.

JASON. Go, thou art wet with children's tears!

MEDEA. Go thou, and lay thy bride to sleep.

JASON. Childless, I go, to weep and weep.

MEDEA. Not yet! Age cometh and long years.

JASON. My sons, mine own!

MEDEA. Not thine, but mine ...

JASON... Who slew them!

MEDEA. Yes: to torture thee.

JASON. Once let me kiss their lips, once twine  
Mine arms and touch... Ah, woe is me!

MEDEA. Wouldst love them and entreat? But now  
They were as nothing.

JASON. At the last,

O God, to touch that tender brow!

MEDEA. Thy words upon the wind are cast.

JASON. Thou, Zeus, wilt hear me. All is said

For naught. I am but spurned away

And trampled by this tigress, red

With children's blood. Yet, come what may,

So far as thou hast granted, yea,

So far as yet my strength may stand,

I weep upon these dead, and say

Their last farewell, and raise my hand

To all the daemons of the air

In witness of these things; how she

Who slew them, will not suffer me

To gather up my babes, nor bear

To earth their bodies; whom, O stone

Of women, would I ne'er had known

Nor gotten, to be slain by thee!

He casts himself upon the earth.

CHORUS. Great treasure halls hath Zeus in heaven,

From whence to man strange dooms be given,

Past hope or fear.

And the end men looked for cometh not,  
And a path is there where no man thought:  
So hath it fallen here.