LATIN SERIES · VOLUME 44

The Tragedies of Seneca

Seneca

Tragoediae

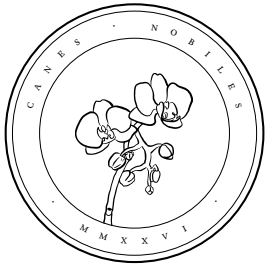
The Tragedies of Seneca

Part Two: Agamemnon, Thyestes, Oedipus, and the Phoenician Women

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with a word-for-word interlinear English translation

preserving the original word order

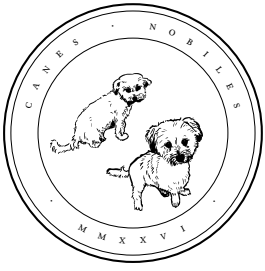


CANES NOBILES · MMXXVI

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Volume 44 of the Canes Nobiles Latin interlinear texts

The Latin text follows Peiper and Richter's text, Leipzig, 1902

Set from the Perseus Digital Library's canonical Latin corpus, with corrections

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Artwork by Esther Steves

Every section and English title is this press's.

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SENECA

Agamemnon

AGAMEMNON

I · THE GHOST OF THYESTES

Sent up from Tartarus, the ghost of Thyestes shudders before the house of Pelops; he would rather be among the punished below, whom his crimes outdo, for he ate his sons and, at Fortune's bidding, fathered Aegisthus on his own daughter. Now Agamemnon comes home from Troy to give his throat to his wife, and the house will swim with blood. He urges Aegisthus on and bids the slow night yield to day.

THYESTES Opaca linquens Ditis inferni loca
Dark leaving of-Dis infernal places
adsum profundo Tartari emissus specu,
I-am-here from-the-deep of-Tartarus sent-forth cave,
incertus utras oderim sedes magis:
uncertain which I-should-hate seats more:
fugio Thyestes inferos, superos fugo.
I-flee Thyestes the-dead, the-living I-put-to-flight.
en horret animus et pavor membra excutit:
look shudders the-mind and terror the-limbs shakes:
video paternos, immo fraternos lares.
I-see paternal, nay fraternal household-gods.
hoc est vetustum Pelopiae limen domus;
this is the-ancient of-the-Pelopian threshold house;
hinc auspicari regium capiti decus
from-here to-take-the-auspices royal for-the-head glory
mos est Pelasgis, hoc sedent alti toro
custom is for-the-Pelasgians, on-this sit high seat
quibus superba sceptra gestantur manu,
by-whom proud scepters are-borne in-hand,

locus hic habendae curiae — hic epulis locus.
the-place here of-holding council here for-feasts the-place.
libet reverti. nonne vel tristes lacus
it-pleases to-return. is-it-not even grim lakes
incolere satius, nonne custodem Stygis
to-inhabit better, is-it-not the-guardian of-the-Styx
trigemina nigris colla iactantem iubis?
triple with-black necks tossing manes?
ubi ille celeri corpus evinctus rotae
where he to-swift body bound wheel
in se refertur, ubi per adversum irritus
on himself is-carried-back, where up the-slope vain
redeunte totiens luditur saxo labor,
with-returning so-often is-mocked rock labor,
ubi tondet ales avida fecundum iecur,
where crops a-bird greedy fertile liver,
et inter undas fervida exustus siti
and among waves by-burning parched thirst
aquas fugaces ore decepto appetit
waters fleeting with-mouth deceived seeks
poenas daturus caelitum dapibus graves —
penalties going-to-pay of-the-gods for-the-feasts heavy
sed ille nostrae pars quota est culpae senex?
but that of-our part how-small is guilt old-man?
reputemus omnes quos ob infandas manus
let-us-reckon all whom for unspeakable hands
quaesitor urna Gnosius versat reos,
the-inquisitor in-urn Cnossian turns defendants,
vincam Thyestes sceleribus cunctos meis.
I-shall-surpass Thyestes in-crimes all my.

a fratre vincar? liberis plenus tribus
by a-brother shall-I-be-surpassed? with-children full three
in me sepultis? viscera exedi mea.
in me buried? entrails I-ate my.
nec hactenus Fortuna maculavit patrem,
nor thus-far Fortune stained the-father,
sed maius aliud ausa commisso scelus
but greater another having-dared than-the-committed crime
gnatae nefandos petere concubitus iubet.
of-my-daughter unspeakable to-seek embraces orders.
non pavidus hausi dicta, sed cepi nefas.
not afraid I-drank the-words, but I-took-up the-crime.
ergo ut per omnis liberos irem parens,
so that through all children I-might-go a-parent,
coacta fatis gnata fert uterum gravem,
compelled by-the-fates my-daughter bears a-womb heavy,
me patre dignum. versa natura est retro:
of-me as-father worthy. turned nature is backward:
avo parentem, pro nefas, patri virum,
with-grandfather father, O horror, with-father husband,
gnatis nepotes miscui — nocti diem.
with-sons grandsons I-mixed with-night day.
Sed sera tandem respicit fessos malis
But late at-last regards the-weary with-evils
post fata demum sortis incertae fides:
after death only of-lot uncertain the-promise:
rex ille regum, ductor Agamemnon ducum,
king that of-kings, leader Agamemnon of-leaders,
cuius secutae mille vexillum rates
whose having-followed thousand banner ships

Iliaca velis maria texerunt suis,
Trojan with-sails seas covered their,
post decima Phoebi lustra devicto Ilio
after tenth of-Phoebus circuits with-conquered Ilium
adest — daturus coniugi iugulum suae.
is-here going-to-give to-wife throat his.
iam iam natabit sanguine alterno domus:
now now will-swim with-blood alternate the-house:
enses secures tela, divisum gravi
swords axes weapons, split by-heavy
ictu bipennis regium video caput,
blow of-the-double-axe royal I-see head,
iam scelera prope sunt, iam dolus caedes cruor —
now crimes near are, now deceit slaughter blood
parantur epulae, causa natalis tui,
are-prepared feasts, the-cause of-birth your,
Aegisthe, venit. quid pudor vultus gravat?
Aegisthus, has-come. why shame face weighs-down?
quid dextra dubio trepida consilio labat?
why hand in-doubtful trembling counsel wavers?
quid ipse temet consulis torques rogas,
why you-yourself yourself consult torment ask,
an deceat hoc te? respice ad matrem: decet.
whether befits this you? look-back to the-mother: it-befits.
Sed cur repente noctis aestivae vices
But why suddenly of-night summer the-turns
hiberna longa spatia producunt mora,
wintry long spaces prolong with-delay,

aut quid cadentes detinet stellas polo?
or what setting holds-back stars in-the-sky?
Phoebum moramur? redde iam mundo diem.
Phoebus do-we-delay? give-back now to-the-world day.

II · THE CHORUS ON FORTUNE

The chorus sings Fortune's treachery to kings: no sea rages as she whirls the great headlong. Kings wish to be feared and fear; no night brings them rest, crime and the Fury haunt their palaces, and great things sink under their own weight, like swollen sails, the tallest tower, and the old oak. Whatever Fortune raises she raises to fall; happy the man of modest lot who keeps his skiff near shore.

CHORUS O regnorum magnis fallax
O of-kingdoms to-great deceitful
Fortuna bonis, in praecipiti
Fortune goods, on the-steep
dubioque locas nimis excelsos;
and-doubtful you-place too lofty;
numquam placidam sceptra quietem
never peaceful scepters rest
certumve sui tenuere diem;
or-sure of-themselves held day;
alia ex aliis cura fatigat
one from another care wearies
vexatque animos nova tempestas.
and-vexes minds new storm.
Non sic Libycis syrtibus aequor
Not so in-Libyan shoals the-sea
furit alternos volvere fluctus,
rages alternate to-roll waves,

non Euxini turget ab imis
not of-the-Euxine swells from lowest
commota vadis
stirred shallows
unda nivali vicina polo,
the-wave to-snowy near pole,
ubi caeruleis immunis aquis
where from-dark-blue exempt waters
lucida versat plaustra Bootes,
bright turns wagon Bootes,
ut praecipites regum casus
as headlong of-kings falls
Fortuna rotat.
Fortune whirls.
Metui cupiunt metuique timent,
To-be-feared they-desire and-to-be-feared they-fear,
non nox illis alma recessus
not night to-them kindly retreats
praebet tutos, non curarum
offers safe, not of-cares
somnus domitor pectora solvit.
sleep tamer breasts releases.
Quas non arces scelus alternum
What not citadels crime alternate
dedit in praeceps? impia quas non
has-given into headlong? impious which not
arma fatigant? iura pudorque
arms weary? laws and-shame
et coniugii sacrata fides
and of-marriage sacred faith

fugiunt aulas; sequitur tristis
flee palaces; follows grim
sanguinolenta Bellona manu
with-bloody Bellona hand
quaeque superbos urit Erinys,
and-who the-proud burns Erinys,
nimias semper comitata domos,
excessive always accompanying houses,
quas in planum quaelibet hora
which into level any hour
tulit ex alto.
has-brought from high.
Licet arma vacent cessentque doli,
Though arms be-idle and-cease tricks,
sidunt ipso pondere magna
sink by-very weight great-things
ceditque oneri Fortuna suo.
and-yields to-burden Fortune her-own.
vela secundis inflata notis
sails by-favorable swollen south-winds
ventos nimium timuere suos,
winds too-much have-feared their-own,
nubibus ipsis inserta caput
into-clouds very thrust in-its-head
turris pluvio vapulat Austro,
the-tower by-rainy is-beaten Auster,
densasque nemus spargens umbras
and-dense grove scattering shades
annosa videt robora frangi;
aged sees oaks to-be-broken;

feriunt celsos fulmina colles,
strike lofty thunderbolts hills,
corpora morbis maiora patent,
bodies to-diseases larger lie-open,
et cum in pastus armenta vagos
and when into pastures herds wandering
vilia currant,
cheap run,
placet in vulnus maxima cervix.
pleases for wound the-greatest neck.
Quicquid in altum Fortuna tulit,
Whatever into high Fortune has-borne,
ruitura levat. modicis rebus
going-to-fall she-raises. to-moderate things
longius aevum est: felix mediae
longer life is: happy of-middle
quisquis turbae sorte quietus
whoever crowd with-lot quiet
aura stringit litora tuta
with-breeze grazes shores safe
timidusque mari credere cumbam
and-timid to-the-sea to-trust a-skiff
remo terras propiore legit.
with-oar lands nearer coasts.

III · CLYTEMESTRA AND THE NURSE

Clytemestra goads herself to a crime greater than her sister's flight, since only crime makes crime safe. The Nurse urges delay; in quick exchange the queen answers that the headlong way must be taken. She recalls her daughter sacrificed at Aulis, the spoils Agamemnon kept from Phoebus' old man, the Lyrnesian girl taken from Achilles, and now his passion for the Phrygian prophetess, and resolves to strike first. The Nurse warns of the victor whom neither Achilles, Ajax, nor Hector could harm, and whom Greece would avenge.

CLYTEMESTRA Quid, segnis anime, tuta consilia expetis?
Why, sluggish soul, safe counsels do-you-seek?
quid fluctuaris? clausa iam melior via est:
why do-you-waver? closed now the-better way is:
licuit pudicos coniugis quondam toros
it-was-allowed chaste of-a-husband once bed
et sceptra casta vidua tutari fide —
and scepter with-chaste widowed to-guard faith
periere mores ius decus pietas fides
have-perished morals right honor dutifulness faith
et qui redire cum perit nescit pudor;
and which to-return when it-perishes knows-not shame;
da frena et omnem prona nequitiam incita:
give reins and all headlong wickedness spur-on:
per scelera semper sceleribus tutum est iter.
through crimes always for-crimes safe is the-path.
tecum ipsa nunc evolve femineos dolos,
with-yourself yourself now unroll womanly tricks,
quod ulla coniunx perfida atque impos sui
what any wife faithless and not-mistress of-herself

amore caeco, quod novercales manus
with-love blind, what stepmotherly hands
ausae, quod ardens impia virgo face,
have-dared, what burning impious maiden with-torch,
Phasiaca fugiens regna Thessalica trabe:
Phasian fleeing realms on-a-Thessalian ship:
ferrum, venena; vel Mycenaeas domos
iron, poisons; or Mycenaean homes
coniuncta socio profuge furtiva rate —
joined to-a-partner flee in-stealthy ship
quid timida loqueris furta et exilium et fugas?
why timid do-you-speak-of thefts and exile and flights?
soror ista fecit; te decet maius nefas.
sister that did; you befits a-greater crime.
NUTRIX Regina Danaum et inclitum Ledae genus,
Queen of-the-Danaans and famous of-Leda offspring,
quid tacita versas quidve consilii impotens
what silent do-you-turn-over or-why of-counsel powerless
tumido feroces impetus animo geris?
in-swollen fierce impulses spirit do-you-bear?
licet ipsa sileas, totus in vultu est dolor.
though yourself you-be-silent, whole in the-face is grief.
proin quicquid est, da tempus ac spatium tibi:
therefore whatever it-is, give time and space to-yourself:
quod ratio non quit saepe sanavit mora.
what reason not can often has-healed delay.
CLYTEMESTRA Maiora cruciant quam ut moras possim pati;
Greater-things torment than that delays I-can to-endure;
flammae medullas et cor exurunt meum,
flames the-marrow and heart burn-out my,

mixtus dolori subdidit stimulos timor,
mixed with-grief has-applied goads fear,
invidia pulsat pectus; hinc animum iugo
envy beats the-breast; on-this-side the-spirit with-yoke
premit cupido turpis et vinci vetat:
presses desire base and to-be-conquered forbids:
et inter istas mentis obsessae faces,
and among those of-the-mind besieged torches,
fessus quidem et devinctus et pessumdatus,
weary indeed and bound and ruined,
pudor rebellat. fluctibus variis agor,
shame rebels. by-waves various I-am-driven,
ut cum hinc profundum ventus, hinc aestus rapit,
as when here the-deep wind, there the-tide sweeps,
incerta dubitat unda cui cedat malo.
uncertain hesitates the-wave to-which it-should-yield evil.
proinde omisi regimen e manibus meis:
so I-have-let-go the-helm from hands my:
quocumque me ira, qua dolor, quo spes feret,
wherever me anger, where grief, where hope will-carry,
hoc ire pergam; fluctibus dedimus ratem:
thither to-go I-shall-proceed; to-the-waves we-have-given the-ship:
ubi animus errat, optimum est casum sequi.
where the-mind wanders, best it-is chance to-follow.

NUTRIX Caeca est temeritas quae petit casum ducem.
Blind is rashness which seeks chance as-leader.

CLYTEMESTRA Cui ultima est fortuna, quid dubiam timet?
For-whom extreme is fortune, why a-doubtful does-she-fear?

NUTRIX Tuta est latetque culpa, si pateris, tua.
Safe is and-lies-hidden guilt, if you-allow, your.

CLYTEMESTRA Perlucet omne regiae vitium domus.
Shines-through every of-the-royal vice house.

NUTRIX Piget prioris et novum crimen struis?
It-irks of-the-former and a-new crime do-you-build?

CLYTEMESTRA Res est profecto stulta nequitiae modus.
A-thing is surely foolish in-wickedness a-measure.

NUTRIX Quod metuit auget qui scelus scelere obruit.
What he-fears he-increases who crime with-crime buries.

CLYTEMESTRA Et ferrum et ignis saepe medicinae loco est.
Both iron and fire often of-medicine in-place is.

NUTRIX Extrema primo nemo temptavit loco.
Extremes in-first no-one has-tried place.

CLYTEMESTRA Rapienda rebus in malis praeceps via est.
To-be-seized affairs in bad headlong way is.

NUTRIX At te reflectat coniugi nomen sacrum.
But you let-turn-back to-a-spouse the-name sacred.

CLYTEMESTRA Decem per annos vidua respiciam virum?
Ten through years widowed shall-I-regard my-husband?

NUTRIX Meminisse debes sobolis ex illo tuae.
To-remember you-ought the-offspring from him your.

CLYTEMESTRA Equidem et iugales filiae memini faces
Indeed also the-nuptial of-my-daughter I-remember torches
et generum Achillem: praestitit matri fidem.
and son-in-law Achilles: he-kept to-the-mother faith.

NUTRIX Redemit illa classis immotae moras
Redeemed she of-the-fleet motionless delays
et maria pigro fixa languore impulit.
and seas with-sluggish fixed languor stirred.

CLYTEMESTRA Pudet doletque — Tyndaris, caeli genus,
It-shames and-pains Tyndareus'-daughter, of-heaven offspring,
lustrale classi Doricae peperi caput!
purifying for-the-fleet Dorian I-bore a-head!
revolvit animus virginis thalamos meae
turns-over the-mind of-the-maiden marriage my
quos ille dignos Pelopia fecit domo,
which he worthy of-the-Pelopian made house,
cum stetit ad aras ore sacrifico pater
when stood at the-altars with-face sacrificial the-father
quam nuptialis! horruit Calchas suae
how nuptial! shuddered Calchas of-his-own
responsa vocis et recedentes focos.
responses voice and retreating hearths.
o scelera semper sceleribus vincens domus,
o crimes always by-crimes surpassing house,
cruore ventos emimus, bellum nece!
with-blood winds we-bought, war with-death!
sed vela pariter mille fecerunt rates?
but sails together thousand made ships?
non est soluta prospero classis deo:
not was loosed with-favorable the-fleet god:
eiecit Aulis impias portu rates.
cast-out Aulis impious from-harbor ships.
sic auspicatus bella non melius gerit.
thus having-taken-the-auspices wars not better he-wages.
amore captae captus, immotus prece
by-love of-a-captive captured, unmoved by-prayer
Zminthea tenuit spolia Phoebei senis,
Sminthian he-held spoils of-the-Phoebean old-man,

ardore sacrae virginis iam tum furens.
with-passion of-the-sacred maiden already then raging.
non illum Achilles flexit indomitus minis,
not him Achilles bent untamed with-threats,
non ille solus fata qui mundi videt,
not he alone the-fates who of-the-world sees,
in nos fidelis augur, in captas levis,
toward us faithful augur, toward captives light,
non populus aeger et relucentes rogi:
not the-people sick and gleaming pyres:
inter ruentis Graeciae stragem ultimam
amid of-falling Greece slaughter last
sine hoste victus marcet ac Veneri vacat
without enemy conquered he-languishes and for-Venus is-free
reparatque amores; neve desertus foret
and-renews loves; and-lest deserted be
a paelice umquam barbara caelebs torus,
by a-concubine ever barbarian single the-bed,
ablatam Achilli diligit Lyrnesida,
taken-from Achilles he-loves the-Lyrnesian,
nec rapere puduit e sinu avulsam viri —
nor to-snatch it-shamed from the-bosom torn of-her-husband
en Paridis hostem. nunc novum vulnus gerens
look of-Paris the-enemy. now a-new wound bearing
amore Phrygiae vatis incensus furit,
with-love of-the-Phrygian prophetess inflamed he-rages,
et post tropaea Troica ac versum Ilium
and after trophies Trojan and overturned Ilium
captae maritus remeat et Priami gener.
of-a-captive husband returns and of-Priam son-in-law.

Accingere, anime: bella non levia apparas.
Gird-yourself, soul: wars not light you-prepare.
scelus occupandum est. pigra, quem expectas diem?
crime to-be-seized-first is. sluggish, what do-you-await day?
Pelopia Phrygiae sceptra dum teneant nurus?
Pelopian Phrygian scepters until hold daughters-in-law?
an te morantur virgines viduae domi
or you delay virgins unwed at-home
patrique Orestes similis? horum te mala
and-to-his-father Orestes like? of-these you evils
ventura moveant, turbo quis rerum imminet:
going-to-come let-move, whirlwind which of-things threatens:
quid, misera, cessas? en adest gnatis tuis
why, wretched, do-you-delay? look is-at-hand for-children your
furens noverca. per tuum, si aliter nequit,
raging a-stepmother. through your, if otherwise it-cannot,
latus exigatur ensis et perimat duos.
side let-be-driven the-sword and let-it-kill two.
misce cruorem, perde pereundo virum:
mix blood, destroy by-perishing your-husband:
mors misera non est commori cum quo velis.
death wretched not is to-die-together with whom you-would-wish.
NUTRIX Regina, frena temet et siste impetus
Queen, rein yourself and check impulses
et quanta temptes cogita: victor venit
and how-great-things you-attempt consider: victor comes
Asiae ferocis, ultor Europae, trahit
of-Asia fierce, avenger of-Europe, he-drags
captiva Pergama et diu victos Phrygas;
captive Pergamum and long conquered Phrygians;

hunc fraude nunc conaris et furto aggredi,
him by-fraud now you-try and by-stealth to-attack,
quem non Achilles ense violavit fero,
whom not Achilles with-sword violated fierce,
quamvis procacem torvus armasset manum,
although insolent grim he-had-armed hand,
non melior Aiax morte decreta furens,
not better Ajax with-death decided raging,
non sola Danais Hector et bello mora,
not sole to-the-Danaans Hector and to-war delay,
non tela Paridis certa, non Memnon niger,
not the-shafts of-Paris sure, not Memnon black,
non Xanthus armis corpora immixta aggerens
not Xanthus with-arms bodies mingled heaping
fluctusque Simois caede purpureos agens,
and-waves Simois with-slaughter purple driving,
non nivea proles Cycnus aequorei dei,
not snowy offspring Cycnus of-the-sea god,
non bellicoso Thressa cum Rheso phalanx,
not warlike Thracian with Rhesus phalanx,
non picta pharetras et securigera manu
not painted in-quivers and with-ax-bearing hand
peltata Amazon? hunc domi reducem paras
shield-bearing Amazon? him at-home returned you-prepare
mactare et aras caede maculare impia?
to-slaughter and altars with-slaughter to-stain impious?
victrix inultum Graecia hoc facinus feret?
victorious unavenged Greece this deed will-bear?
equos et arma classibusque horrens fretum
horses and arms and-with-fleets bristling strait

propone et alto sanguine exundans solum
set-before-you and with-deep blood overflowing soil
et tota captae fata Dardaniae domus
and all of-captured the-fates Dardanian house
regesta Danais. comprime affectus truces
turned-back on-the-Danaans. suppress passions fierce
mentemque tibimet ipsa pacifica tuam. 225
and-mind for-yourself yourself pacify your.

IV · CLYTEMESTRA AND AEGISTHUS

Aegisthus steels himself and finds the queen wavering, her love for her husband turning her back toward faith. He warns that Agamemnon will come home a tyrant amid a crowd of concubines, the truthful god's handmaid to share her bed, and will seek grounds to put her away. She turns on him, Thyestes' son and grandson, and orders him off; when he offers to die at her word, she relents and draws him aside to take counsel together.

AEGISTHUS Quod tempus animo semper ac mente horrui
What time in-spirit always and in-mind I-dreaded
adest profecto, rebus extremum meis.
is-here surely, for-affairs final my.
quid terga vertis, anime? quid primo impetu
why your-back do-you-turn, soul? why at-the-first onset
deponis arma? crede perniciem tibi
do-you-lay-down arms? believe ruin for-you
et dira saevos fata moliri deos: 230
and dire savage fates to-contrive gods:
oppone cunctis vile suppliciis caput,
set-against all cheap punishments head,

ferrumque et ignes pectore adverso excipe,
and-iron and fires with-breast facing receive,
Aegisthe: non est poena sic nato mori.
Aegisthus: not is a-penalty thus to-one-born to-die.
tu nos pericli socia, tu, Leda sata,
you us of-danger partner, you, from-Leda sprung,
comitare tantum: sanguinem reddet tibi
accompany only: blood will-repay to-you
ignavus iste ductor ac fortis pater.
cowardly that leader and brave father.
sed quid trementes circuit pallor genas
but why trembling surrounds pallor cheeks
iacensque vultu languido optutus stupet?
and-drooping in-face languid gaze is-numb?
CLYTEMESTRA Amor iugalis vincit ac flectit retro:
Love conjugal conquers and bends back:
referamur illuc, unde non decuit prius
let-us-be-carried-back thither, whence not it-befitted before
abire; sed nunc casta repetatur fides,
to-depart; but now chaste let-be-sought-again faith,
nam sera numquam est ad bonos mores via:
for late never is to good morals the-way:
quem paenitet peccasse paene est innocens.
whom it-repents to-have-sinned almost is innocent.
AEGISTHUS Quo raperis amens? credis aut speras tibi
Whither are-you-swept mad? do-you-believe or hope for-yourself
Agamemnonis fidele coniugium? ut nihil
of-Agamemnon faithful marriage? though nothing
subesset animo quod graves faceret metus:
lay-beneath in-his-mind which heavy would-make fears:

tamen superba et impotens flatu nimis
yet proud and unbridled with-blast too
Fortuna magno spiritus tumidos daret.
Fortune great spirits swollen would-give.
gravis ille sociis stante adhuc Troia fuit:
harsh he to-allies with-standing still Troy was:
quid rere ad animum suapte natura trucem
what do-you-think to a-spirit by-its-own nature fierce
Troiam addidisse? rex Mycenarum fuit,
Troy to-have-added? king of-Mycenae he-was,
veniet tyrannus: prospera animos efferant.
he-will-come a-tyrant: prosperities spirits exalt.
effusa circa paelicum quanto venit
spread-out around of-concubines with-how-great comes
turba apparatu! sola sed turba eminet
a-crowd array! alone but from-the-crowd stands-out
tenetque regem famula veridici dei:
and-holds the-king the-handmaid of-the-truth-telling god:
feresne thalami victa consortem tui?
will-you-bear of-the-marriage conquered the-sharer your?
at illa nolet. ultimum est nuptae malum
but she will-not-wish. last is to-a-bride evil
palam mariti possidens paelex domum.
openly of-her-husband possessing a-concubine house.
nec regna socium ferre nec taedae sciunt.
nor thrones a-partner to-bear nor marriages know.
CLYTEMESTRA Aegisthe, quid me rursus in praeceps agis
Aegisthus, why me again into headlong do-you-drive
iramque flammis iam residentem incitas?
and-anger with-flames now subsiding do-you-stir-up?

permisit aliquid victor in captam sibi:
has-allowed something the-victor against a-captive to-himself:
nec coniugem hoc respicere nec dominam decet.
neither wife this to-regard nor mistress befits.
lex alia solio est, alia privato in toro.
law one for-throne is, another private in bed.
quid quod severas ferre me leges viro
what that severe to-bring me laws to-husband
non patitur animus turpis admissi memor?
not allows spirit of-a-base deed mindful?
dat ille veniam facile cui venia est opus.
gives he pardon easily to-whom pardon is need.
AEGISTHUS Itane est? pacisci mutuam veniam licet?
So is-it? to-bargain mutual pardon is-it-allowed?
ignota tibi sunt iura regnorum aut nova?
unknown to-you are the-laws of-kingdoms or new?
nobis maligni iudices, aequi sibi
to-us spiteful judges, fair to-themselves
id esse regni maximum pignus putant,
that to-be of-rule greatest pledge they-think,
si quicquid aliis non licet solis licet.
if whatever to-others not is-allowed to-them-alone is-allowed.
CLYTEMESTRA Ignovit Helenae: iuncta Menelao redit
He-pardoned Helen: joined to-Menelaus returns
quae Europam et Asiam paribus afflixit malis.
she-who Europe and Asia with-equal afflicted evils.
AEGISTHUS Sed nulla Atriden Venere furtiva abstulit
But no-woman the-Atrides by-love stealthy took-away
nec cepit animum coniugi obstrictum suae.
nor captured mind to-wife bound his.

iam crimen ille quaerit et causas parat.
already a-charge he seeks and grounds prepares.
nil esse crede turpe commissum tibi:
nothing to-be believe base committed by-you:
quid honesta prodest vita, flagitio vacans?
what honorable profits life, from-disgrace free?
ubi dominus odit fit nocens, non quaeritur.
where the-master hates one-becomes guilty, not is-sought.
Spartamne repetes spreta et Eurotan tuum
Sparta will-you-seek-again scorned and Eurotas your
patriasque sedes profuga? non dant exitum
and-ancestral seats a-fugitive? not give exit
repudia regum. spe metus falsa levas.
divorces of-kings. with-hope fears false you-lighten.
CLYTEMESTRA Delicta novit nemo nisi fidus mea.
Faults knows no-one except faithful my.
AEGISTHUS Non intrat umquam regium limen fides.
Not enters ever royal threshold faith.
CLYTEMESTRA Opibus merebor, ut fidem pretio obligem.
With-wealth I-shall-earn, that faith with-price I-may-bind.
AEGISTHUS Pretio parata vincitur pretio fides.
By-price procured is-conquered by-price faith.
CLYTEMESTRA Surgit residuus pristinae mentis pudor —
Rises remaining of-former mind shame
quid obstrepis? quid voce blandiloqua mala
why do-you-clamor? why with-voice smooth-talking evil
consilia dictas? scilicet nubet tibi,
counsels do-you-dictate? surely will-marry you,
regum relicto rege, generosa exuli?
of-kings with-left the-king, noble to-an-exile?

AEGISTHUS Et cur Atrida videor inferior tibi,
And why than-the-Atrides do-I-seem inferior to-you,
gnatus Thyestae?
son of-Thyestes?
CLYTEMESTRA Si parum est, adde et nepos.
If too-little it-is, add also grandson.
AEGISTHUS Auctore Phoebo gignor: haud generis pudet.
With-author Phoebus I-am-begotten: not of-birth I-am-ashamed.
CLYTEMESTRA Phoebum nefandae stirpis auctorem vocas,
Phoebus of-unspeakable stock the-author do-you-call,
quem nocte subita frena revocantem sua
whom with-night sudden reins recalling his
caelo expulistis? quid deos probro addimus?
from-heaven you-drove? why gods to-disgrace do-we-add?
subripere doctus fraude genialis toros,
to-steal taught by-fraud nuptial beds,
quem Venere tantum scimus inlicita virum,
whom by-love only we-know illicit a-man,
facesse propere ac dedecus nostrae domus
be-off quickly and the-disgrace of-our house
asporta ab oculis: haec vacat regi ac viro.
carry-away from eyes: this is-free for-king and husband.
AEGISTHUS Exilia mihi sunt haud nova, assuevi malis.
Exiles to-me are not new, I-have-grown-used to-evils.
si tu imperas, regina, non tantum domo
if you command, queen, not only from-house
Argisve cedo: nil moror iussu tuo
or-from-Argos I-withdraw: nothing I-delay at-command your
aperire ferro pectus aerumnis grave.
to-open with-sword breast with-troubles heavy.

CLYTEMESTRA Siquidem hoc cruenta Tyndaris
If-indeed this bloody Tyndareus'-daughter
fieri sinam.
to-happen I-should-allow.
quae iuncta peccat debet et culpae fidem.
she-who joined sins owes also to-guilt faith.
secede mecum potius, ut rerum statum
withdraw with-me rather, that of-affairs the-state
dubium ac minacem iuncta consilia explicent.
doubtful and threatening joined counsels may-unfold.

V · THE CHORUS HAILS THE GODS

The chorus of Argive maidens, joined by the women of Ismenus whom Manto bade honor Latona's children, gives thanks: to Phoebus, asked to unstring his bow and play the lyre; to Juno, guardian of Argos, who receives Agamemnon's laurels; to Pallas, who so often struck at Troy; to Trivia, who made Delos stand for her mother and counts the Tantalid mother's dead; and to Jupiter, father of their race. Then Eurybates comes hurrying with a spear wreathed in laurel.

CHORUS Canite, o pubes inclita, Phoebum! 310
Sing, o youth famous, Phoebus!
tibi festa caput
for-you festive head
turba coronat, tibi virgineas,
the-throng crowns, for-you virgin,
laurum quatiens,
laurel shaking,
de more comas innuba fudit
by custom locks unwed has-let-down

stirps Inachia;
the-stock Inachian;
tu quoque nostros, Thespias hospes,
you also our, Thespian guest,
comitare choros,
accompany dances,
quaeque Erasini gelidos fontes,
and-you-who of-Erasinus icy springs,
quaeque Eurotan,
and-who Eurotas,
quaeque virenti tacitum ripa
and-who with-green silent bank
bibis Ismenon:
drink Ismenus:
quam fatorum praescia Manto,
whom of-the-fates foreknowing Manto,
sata Tiresia,
born of-Tiresias,
Latonigenas monuit sacris
Latona-born admonished with-rites
celebrare deos.
to-celebrate gods.
arcus, victor, pace relata,
bows, victor, with-peace brought-back,
Phoebe, relaxa
Phoebus, unstring
umeroque graves levibus telis
and-from-your-shoulder heavy with-light shafts
pone pharetras
lay-down quivers

resonetque manu pulsa citata
and-let-resound with-hand struck quick
vocale chelys:
vocal the-lyre:
nil acre velim magnumque modis
nothing sharp I-would-wish and-great in-measures
intonet altis,
let-it-thunder lofty,
sed quale soles leviore lyra
but such-as you-are-wont on-lighter lyre
flectere carmen
to-modulate a-song
simplex, lusus cum docta tuos
simple, sports when learned your
Musa recenset;
the-Muse recounts;
licet et chorda graviore sones,
you-may also on-string heavier sound,
quale canebas
such-as you-sang
cum Titanas fulmine victos
when the-Titans by-thunderbolt conquered
videre dei,
saw the-gods,
vel cum montes montibus altis
or when mountains on-mountains high
super impositi
above placed
struxere gradus trucibus monstris,
built steps for-fierce monsters,

stetit imposita
stood placed-on
Pelion Ossa, pinifer ambos
Pelion Ossa, pine-bearing both
pressit Olympus.
pressed Olympus.
ades, o magni, soror et coniunx,
be-present, o of-the-great, sister and wife,
consors sceptri,
sharer of-the-scepter,
regia Iuno: tua te colimus
royal Juno: your you we-worship
turba Mycenae.
throng Mycenae.
tu sollicitum supplexque tui
you anxious and-suppliant of-your
numinis Argos
divinity Argos
sola tueris, tu bella manu
alone guard, you wars with-hand
pacemque regis;
and-peace rule;
tu nunc laurus Agamemnonias
you now laurels Agamemnonian
accipe victrix.
accept victorious.
tibi multifora tibia buxo
for-you many-holed the-pipe of-boxwood
solemne canit,
solemn plays,

tibi fila movent docta puellae
for-you strings move skilled girls
carmine molli,
with-song soft,
tibi votivam matres Graiae
for-you votive mothers Greek
lampada iactant:
torch wave:
ad tua coniunx candida tauri
at your the-mate white of-a-bull
delubra cadet,
shrines will-fall,
nescia aratri, nullo collum
ignorant of-the-plow, by-no neck
signata iugo.
marked yoke.
tuque, o magni gnata Tonantis,
and-you, o of-the-great daughter Thunderer,
incluta Pallas,
famous Pallas,
quae Dardanias cuspide turres
who Dardanian with-spear towers
saepe petisti,
often attacked,
te permixto matrona minor
you in-mingled matron younger
maiorque choro
and-older chorus
colit et reserat veniente dea
worships and unlocks with-coming goddess

templa sacerdos:
temples the-priest:
tibi nexilibus turba coronis
for-you with-woven the-throng garlands
redimita venit,
wreathed comes,
tibi grandaevi lassique senes
to-you aged and-weary old-men
compote voto
with-granted prayer
reddunt grates libantque manu
render thanks and-pour with-hand
vina trementi.
wine trembling.
et te Triviam nota memores
and you Trivia with-known mindful
voce precamur:
voice we-pray:
tu maternam sistere Delon,
you maternal to-stand Delos,
Lucina, iubes,
Lucina, order,
huc atque illuc prius errantem
hither and thither before wandering
Cyclada ventis;
Cyclad with-winds;
nunc iam stabilis fixa terras
now already stable with-fixed lands
radice tenet,
root holds,

respuit auras religatque rates
spurns breezes and-ties-up ships
assueta sequi.
accustomed to-follow.
tu Tantalidos funera matris
you of-the-Tantalid the-deaths mother
victrix numeras:
victorious count:
stat nunc Sipyli vertice summo
stands now of-Sipylus on-peak highest
flebile saxum,
tearful a-rock,
et adhuc lacrimas marmora fundunt
and still tears marbles pour
antiqua novas.
ancient new.
colit impense femina virque
worships lavishly woman and-man
numen geminum.
divinity twin.
tuque ante omnis, pater ac rector
and-you before all, father and ruler
fulmine pollens,
with-thunderbolt powerful,
cuius nutu simul extremi
whose at-nod together farthest
tremuere poli,
trembled poles,
generis nostri, Iuppiter, auctor,
of-race our, Jupiter, author,

cape dona libens
take gifts gladly
abavusque tuam non degenerem
and-as-ancestor your not degenerate
respice prolem.
regard offspring.
Sed ecce, vasto concitus miles gradu
But behold, with-vast hurried soldier stride
manifesta properat signa laetitiae ferens
manifest hastens signs of-joy bearing
(namque hasta summo lauream ferro gerit)
(for spear on-topmost laurel iron bears)
fidusque regi semper Eurybates adest.
and-faithful to-the-king always Eurybates is-here.

VI · THE STORM AT SEA

Eurybates announces Agamemnon's return but cannot say what became of her husband's brother. He describes the glad departure from Troy, fish playing about the ships, a murky cloud at sunset, and a night storm in which every wind fought and ship struck ship, so that the sailors envied the dead of Troy. Pallas struck the defiant Ajax with her father's thunderbolt, Neptune buried him under a crag, and at Caphereus Palamedes' father lured the rest onto the rocks with a false torch. The queen orders thanksgiving as the Trojan captives arrive.

EURYBATES Delubra et aras caelitum et patrios lares
The-shrines and altars of-the-heavenly-ones and ancestral household-gods
post longa fessus spatia, vix credens mihi,
after long weary spaces, scarcely believing myself,
supplex adoro. vota superis solvite:
suppliant I-adore. vows to-the-gods-above pay:

telluris altum remeat Argolicae decus
of-the-land lofty returns Argive glory
tandem ad penates victor Agamemnon suos.
at-last to household-gods victor Agamemnon his.
CLYTEMESTRA Felix ad aures nuntius venit meas.
Happy to ears news comes my.
ubinam petitus per decem coniunx mihi
where sought through ten husband by-me
annos moratur? pelagus an terras premit?
years delays-he? sea or lands treads-he?
EURYBATES Incolumis, auctus gloria, laude inclitus
Unharmed, increased in-glory, by-praise famous
reducem expetito litori impressit pedem.
returning on-the-longed-for shore has-pressed foot.
CLYTEMESTRA Sacris colamus prosperum tandem diem
With-rites let-us-honor prosperous at-last day
et si propitios attamen lentos deos.
and if propitious yet slow gods.
tu pande vivat coniugis frater mei
you disclose whether-he-lives of-husband the-brother my
et pande teneat quas soror sedes mea.
and disclose holds what sister seats my.
EURYBATES Meliora votis posco et obtestor deos:
Better-things with-prayers I-ask and I-implore gods:
nam certa fari sors maris dubii vetat.
for certain-things to-speak the-lot of-sea doubtful forbids.
ut sparsa tumidum classis excepit mare,
when scattered swollen the-fleet received sea,
ratis videre socia non potuit ratem.
ship to-see partner not could ship.

quin ipse Atrides aequore immenso vagus
indeed himself Atrides on-sea immense wandering
graviora pelago damna quam bello tulit
heavier on-the-sea losses than in-war bore
remeatque victo similis, exiguas trahens
and-returns to-a-conquered-one like, few dragging
lacerasque victor classe de tanta rates.
and-torn victor fleet from so-great ships.
CLYTEMESTRA Effare casus quis rates hausit meas?
Speak mishap what ships swallowed my?
aut quae maris fortuna dispulerit duces.
or what of-the-sea fortune has-scattered leaders.
EURYBATES Acerba fatu poscis, infaustum iubes
Bitter-things to-tell you-demand, ill-omened you-bid
miscere laeto nuntium. refugit loqui
to-mix with-glad news. shrinks to-speak
mens aegra tantis atque inhorrescit malis.
mind sick at-so-great and shudders evils.
CLYTEMESTRA Exprome: clades scire qui refugit suas
Speak-out: disasters to-know who shrinks his-own
gravat timorem; dubia plus torquent mala.
increases fear; doubtful more torment evils.
EURYBATES Ut Pergamum omne Dorica cecidit face,
When Pergamum all by-Doric fell torch,
divisa praeda est, maria properantes petunt.
divided the-booty is, the-seas hurrying they-seek.
iamque ense fessum miles exonerat latus,
and-now of-sword weary the-soldier unburdens side,
neglecta summas scuta per puppes iacent;
neglected topmost shields over sterns lie;

ad militares remus aptatur manus
to soldierly oar is-fitted hands
omnisque nimium longa properanti mora est.
and-every too long to-the-hurrying delay is.
signum recursus regia ut fulsit rate
the-signal of-return from-royal when shone ship
et clara laetum remigem monuit tuba,
and clear glad rower warned trumpet,
aurata primas prora designat vias
gilded first prow marks-out ways
aperitque cursus, mille quos puppes secent.
and-opens courses, thousand which sterns may-cut.
hinc aura primo lenis impellit rates
then breeze at-first gentle drives ships
adlapsa velis; unda vix actu levi
gliding-onto sails; wave scarcely with-motion light
tranquilla Zephyri mollis afflatu tremit.
calm of-Zephyr soft at-breath trembles.
splendetque classe pelagus et pariter latet.
and-shines with-fleet sea and equally lies-hidden.
iuvat videre nuda Troiae litora,
it-delights to-see bare of-Troy shores,
iuvat relicti sola Sigei loca.
it-delights of-forsaken lonely Sigeum places.
properat iuventus omnis adductos simul
hastens youth all drawn-in together
lentare remos, adiuvat ventos manu
to-bend oars, aids winds with-hand
et valida nisu bracchia alterno movet.
and strong with-effort arms alternate moves.

sulcata vibrant aequora et latera increpant
furrowed quiver seas and sides resound
dirimuntque canae caerulum spumae mare.
and-part white dark-blue foams sea.
ut aura plenos fortior tendit sinus,
when breeze full stronger stretches folds,
posuere tonsas, credita est vento ratis
they-laid-down oars, entrusted was to-wind ship
fususque transtris miles aut terras procul,
and-sprawled on-benches soldier either lands far,
quantum recedunt vela, fugientes notat,
as-much-as recede sails, fleeing notes,
aut bella narrat: Hectoris fortis minas
or wars tells: of-Hector brave threats
currusque et empto redditum corpus rogo,
and-chariot and for-bought returned body pyre,
sparsum cruore regis Herceum Iovem.
sprinkled with-blood of-the-king Hercean Jove.
tunc qui iacente reciprocus ludit salo
then who on-calm back-and-forth plays sea
tumidumque pando transilit dorso mare
and-swollen with-curved leaps-over back sea
Tyrrhenus omni piscis exultat freto
Tyrrhenian in-every fish leaps strait
agitatque gyros et comes lateri adnatat,
and-drives circles and companion to-side swims-up,
anteire naves laetus et rursus sequi;
to-go-before ships glad and again to-follow;
nunc prima tangens rostra lascivit chorus,
now first touching beaks frolics the-troop,

millesimam nunc ambit et lustrat ratem.
the-thousandth now circles and surveys ship.
iam litus omne tegitur et campi latent
now shore all is-hidden and plains lie-hid
et dubia parent montis Idaei iuga;
and doubtful appear of-mountain Idaean ridges;
et iam, quod unum pervicax acies videt,
and now, what alone persistent sight sees,
Iliacus atra fumus apparet nota.
Ilian with-black smoke appears mark.
iam lassa Titan colla relevabat iugo,
now weary Titan necks was-relieving from-yoke,
in astra iam lux prona, iam praeceps dies.
toward stars now light sloping, now headlong day.
exigua nubes sordido crescens globo
small cloud with-dirty growing mass
nitidum cadentis inquinat Phoebi iubar;
shining of-setting stains of-Phoebus radiance;
suspecta varius occidens fecit freta.
suspect varied setting made straits.
nox prima caelum sparserat stellis, iacent
night first sky had-sprinkled with-stars, lie
deserta vento vela. tum murmur grave,
deserted by-wind sails. then rumble heavy,
maiora minitans, collibus summis cadit
greater-things threatening, from-hills highest falls
tractuque longo litus ac petrae gemunt:
and-in-stretch long shore and rocks groan:
agitata ventis unda venturis tumet:
stirred by-winds wave coming swells:

cum subito luna conditur, stellae latent,
when suddenly moon is-hidden, stars lie-hid,
in astra pontus tollitur, caelum perit.
to stars sea is-raised, sky perishes.
nec una nox est: densa tenebras obruit
nor one night is: dense darkness overwhelms
caligo et omni luce subducta fretum
gloom and with-all light withdrawn sea
caelumque miscet. undique incumbunt simul
and-sky mixes. from-everywhere press together
rapiuntque pelagus infimo eversum solo
and-snatch sea from-lowest overturned bed
adversus Euro Zephyrus et Boreae Notus:
opposed to-Eurus Zephyr and to-Boreas Notus:
sua quisque mittit tela et infesti fretum
their-own each sends shafts and hostile sea
emoliuntur, turbo convolvit mare:
heave-up, whirlwind rolls sea:
Strymonius altas Aquilo contorquet nives
Strymonian deep Aquilo whirls snows
Libycusque harenas Auster ac Syrtes agit;
and-Libyan sands Auster and Syrtes drives;
imbre auget undas, Eurus orientem movet
with-rain increases waves, Eurus the-east moves
Nabataea quatiens regna et Eoos sinus.
Nabataean shaking realms and eastern gulfs.
quid rabidus ora Corus oceano exerens?
what raging face Corus from-ocean thrusting?
mundum revelli sedibus totum suis
the-world to-be-torn from-seats whole its

ipsosque rupto crederes caelo deos
and-themselves with-burst you-would-think sky gods
decidere et atrum rebus induci chaos.
to-fall and black on-things to-be-brought chaos.
vento resistit aestus et ventus retro
to-wind resists tide and wind back
aestum revolvit; non capit sese mare
tide rolls; not holds itself sea
undasque miscent imber et fluctus suas.
and-waters mix rain and flood their.
nec hoc levamen denique aerumnis datur,
nor this relief finally to-troubles is-given,
videre saltem et nosse quo pereant malo:
to-see at-least and to-know by-what they-perish evil:
premunt tenebrae lumina et dirae Stygis
press darkness eyes and of-dire Styx
inferna nox est. excidunt ignes tamen
infernal night it-is. fall fires yet
et nube dirum fulmen elisa micat,
and from-cloud dire thunderbolt struck-out flashes,
miserisque lucis tanta dulcedo est malae:
and-to-the-wretched of-light so-great sweetness is evil:
hoc lumen optant. ipsa se classis premit
this light they-wish. itself itself fleet presses
et prora prorae nocuit et lateri latus.
and prow to-prow harmed and to-side side.
illam dehiscens pontus in praeceps rapit
that-one gaping sea into headlong snatches
hauritque et alto redditam revomit mari;
and-swallows and to-the-deep returned vomits-back sea;

haec onere sidit, illa convulsum latus
this with-load sinks, that wrenched side
submittit undis, fluctus hanc decimus tegit;
lowers to-waves, wave this tenth covers;
haec lacera et omni decore populato levis
this torn and with-all beauty plundered light
fluitat nec illi vela nec tonsae manent
floats nor to-it sails nor oars remain
nec rectus altas malus antemnas ferens,
nor upright high mast yards bearing,
sed trunca toto puppis Icario natat.
but maimed on-whole stern Icarian swims.
nil ratio et usus audet: ars cessit malis;
nothing reason and practice dare: art has-yielded to-evils;
tenet horror artus, omnis officio stupet
holds horror limbs, every with-duty is-stunned
navita relicto, remus effugit manus.
sailor abandoned, oar escapes hands.
in vota miseros ultimus cogit timor
into prayers the-wretched final drives fear
eademque superos Troes et Danai rogant.
and-the-same-things the-gods-above Trojans and Danaans ask.
quid fata possunt! invidet Pyrrhus patri,
what the-fates can-do! envies Pyrrhus his-father,
Aiaci Ulixes, Hectori Atrides minor,
Ajax Ulysses, Hector Atrides younger,
Agamemno Priamo; quisquis ad Troiam iacet
Agamemnon Priam; whoever at Troy lies
felix vocatur, cadere qui meruit gradu,
happy is-called, to-fall who deserved at-post,

quem fama servat, victa quem tellus tegit.
whom fame keeps, conquered whom land covers.
'nil nobile ausos pontus atque undae ferunt?
'nothing noble having-dared sea and waves carry-off?
ignava fortes fata consument viros?
cowardly brave fates will-consume men?
perdenda mors est? quisquis es nondum malis
to-be-wasted death is? whoever you-are not-yet with-evils
satiate tantis caelitum, tandem tuum
sated so-great of-heavenly-ones, at-last your
numen serena: cladibus nostris daret
divinity calm: to-disasters our would-give
vel Troia lacrimas. odia si durant tua
even Troy tears. hatreds if endure your
placetque mitti Doricum exitio genus,
and-it-pleases to-be-sent Doric to-destruction race,
quid hos simul perire nobiscum iuvat,
why these together to-perish with-us it-delights,
quibus perimus? sistito infestum mare:
through-whom we-perish? stay hostile sea:
vehit ista Danaos classis, et Troas vehit.'
carries this Danaans fleet, also Trojans carries.'
nec plura possunt: occupat vocem mare.
nor more they-can: seizes voice sea.
Ecce alia clades, fulmine irati Iovis
Behold another disaster, with-thunderbolt of-angry Jove
armata Pallas quicquid haut hasta minax,
armed Pallas whatever not with-spear threatening,
haut aegide, haut furore Gorgoneo potest,
not with-aegis, not with-madness Gorgon can,

at igne patrio temptat, et caelo novae
but with-fire paternal tries, and in-sky new
spirant procellae. solus invictus malis
blow storms. alone unconquered by-evils
luctatur Aiax. vela cogentem hunc sua
struggles Ajax. sails furling him his
tento rudente flamma praestrinxit cadens.
with-stretched rope flame grazed falling.
libratur aliud fulmen: hoc toto impetu
is-poised another thunderbolt: this with-whole force
certum reducta Pallas excussit manu,
sure with-drawn-back Pallas hurled hand,
imitata patrem. transit Aiacem et ratem
imitating her-father. passes-through Ajax and ship
ratisque partem secum et Aiacem tulit.
and-of-the-ship part with-itself and Ajax carried.
nil ille motus, ardua ut cautes, salo
nothing he moved, lofty as a-crag, from-the-sea
ambustus extat, dirimit insanum mare
scorched stands-out, parts mad sea
fluctusque rumpit pectore et navem manu
and-waves breaks with-breast and ship with-hand
complexus ignes traxit et caeco mari
having-grasped fires drew and on-blind sea
conlucet Aiax, omne resplendet fretum.
shines Ajax, all gleams strait.
tandem occupata rupe furibundum intonat:
at-last with-seized rock furiously thunders:
'superasse cuncta, pelagus atque ignes iuvat,
'to-have-overcome all, sea and fires it-delights,

vicisse caelum Palladem fulmen mare.
to-have-conquered sky Pallas thunderbolt sea.
non me fugavit bellici terror dei
not me put-to-flight of-warlike terror god
Phoebea nec me tela pepulerunt gradu:
Phoebean nor me shafts drove from-post:
cum Phrygibus istos vicimus — tene horream? 550
with Phrygians those we-conquered you shall-I-fear?
aliena inerti tela mittis dextera.
another's with-idle shafts you-send right-hand.
quid si ipse mittat?' plura cum auderet furens,
what if himself should-send?' more when he-dared raging,
tridente rupem subruit pulsam pater
with-trident rock undermined struck father
Neptunus imis exerens undis caput
Neptune from-lowest thrusting waves head
solvitque montem; quem cadens secum tulit 555
and-loosened the-mountain; which falling with-itself bore
terraque et igne victus et pelago iacet.
and-by-earth and fire conquered and sea he-lies.
Nos alia maior naufragos pestis vocat.
Us another greater shipwrecked plague calls.
est humilis unda, scrupeis mendax vadis,
there-is low water, with-rocky deceitful shallows,
ubi saxa rapidis clausa verticibus tegit
where rocks by-swift enclosed whirlpools covers
fallax Caphereus; aestuat scopulis fretum 560
deceitful Caphereus; seethes on-crags sea
fervetque semper fluctus alterna vice.
and-boils always wave in-alternate turn.

arx imminet praerupta quae spectat mare
a-height overhangs steep which looks-at sea
utrimque geminum: Pelopis hinc oras tui
on-both-sides twin: of-Pelops here shores your
et Isthmon, arto qui recurvatus solo
and Isthmus, with-narrow which curved ground
Ionia iungi maria Phrixeis vetat,
Ionian to-be-joined seas with-Phrixean forbids,
hinc scelere Lemnon nobilem et Calchedona
there for-crime Lemnos famous and Chalcedon
tardamque ratibus Aulida: hanc arcem occupat
and-slow for-ships Aulis: this height occupies
Palamedis ille genitor et clarum manu
of-Palamedes that father and bright in-hand
lumen nefanda vertice e summo efferens
light unspeakable top from highest raising
in saxa ducit perfida classem face.
onto rocks leads with-treacherous the-fleet torch.
haerent acutis rupibus fixae rates;
stick on-sharp cliffs fixed ships;
has inopis undae brevia comminuunt vada,
these of-scant water shallow crush fords,
pars vehitur huius prima, pars scopulo sedet;
part is-carried of-this front, part on-a-crag sits;
hanc alia retro spatia relegentem ferit
this another back spaces retracing strikes
et fracta frangit. iam timent terram rates
and broken breaks. now fear land ships
et maria malunt. cecidit in lucem furor:
and seas prefer. fell toward light the-madness:

postquam litatum est Ilio, Phoebus redit
after atonement-made is to-Ilium, Phoebus returns
et damna noctis tristis ostendit dies.
and losses of-night grim shows day.
CLYTEMESTRA Utrumne doleam laeter an reducem virum?
Whether should-I-grieve should-I-rejoice or returned husband?
remeasse laetor vulnus et regni grave
to-have-returned I-rejoice wound and of-the-realm heavy
lugere cogor. redde iam Grais, pater
to-mourn I-am-forced. give-back now to-the-Greeks, father
altisona quatiens regna, placatos deos.
high-sounding shaking realms, appeased gods.
nunc omne laeta fronde veletur caput,
now every with-glad leafage let-be-veiled head,
sacrifica dulces tibia effundat modos
sacrificial sweet pipe let-pour-out measures
et nivea magnas victima ante aras cadat.
and snowy great victim before altars let-fall.
Sed ecce, turba tristis incomptae comas
But behold, a-throng sad unkempt in-hair
Iliades adsunt, quas super celso gradu
Trojan-women are-here, whom above with-lofty step
effrena Phoebas entheas laurus quatit.
unbridled Phoebus'-priestess inspired laurels shakes.

The chorus of Trojan captives sings that love of life is a sweet evil when death is a harbor: whoever dares to end his life is free, equal to kings and gods. They saw Troy fall in one night, not to war but to a theft: the horse they drew in, the arms that clashed inside it, the festival and Hecuba's gladness, and Pyrrhus' weapon in the old man's throat. Cassandra bids them keep their tears; she is enough for her own griefs.

CHORUS Heu quam dulce malum mortalibus additum
Alas how sweet an-evil to-mortals added
vitae dirus amor, cum pateat malis
of-life dire love, when lies-open from-evils
effugium et miseros libera mors vocet
an-escape and the-wretched free death calls
portus aeterna placidus quiete,
harbor with-eternal calm quiet,
nullus hunc terror nec impotentia
no him terror nor unbridled
procella Fortunae movet aut iniqui
storm of-Fortune moves or of-unjust
flamma Tonantis.
flame Thunderer.
Perrumpet omne servitium
Will-break-through all servitude
contemptor levium deorum,
the-despiser of-fickle gods,
qui vultus Acherontis atri,
who the-face of-Acheron black,
qui Styga tristem non tristis videt
who the-Styx grim not grim sees

audetque vitae ponere finem.
and-dares to-life to-set an-end.
Alta pax ∗∗∗ nullos
Deep peace (lacuna) no
civium coetus timet aut minaces
of-citizens gatherings fears or threatening
victoris iras, non maria asperis
of-the-victor angers, not seas by-harsh
insana coris, non acies feras
mad northwest-winds, not battle-lines fierce
pulvereamve nubem
or-dusty cloud
motam barbaricis equitum catervis;
stirred by-barbarian of-horsemen troops;
non urbe cum tota populos cadentes,
not city with whole peoples falling,
hostica muros populante flamma,
with-hostile walls ravaging flame,
indomitumve bellum:
or-untamed war:
par ille regi, par superis erit.
equal he to-a-king, equal to-the-gods-above will-be.
o quam miserum est nescire mori!
o how wretched it-is not-to-know to-die!
Vidimus patriam ruentem nocte funesta,
We-saw our-fatherland falling on-night deadly,
cum Dardana tecta Dorici raperetis ignes.
when Dardan roofs Doric you-were-seizing fires.
non illa bello victa, non armis,
not it by-war conquered, not by-arms,

ut quondam, Herculea cecidit pharetra.
as once, by-Herculean it-fell quiver.
quam non Pelei Thetidisque natus
which not of-Peleus and-of-Thetis son
carusque Pelidae nimium feroci
and-dear to-the-son-of-Peleus too fierce
vicit, acceptis cum fulsit armis
conquered, with-received when he-shone arms
fuditque Troas falsus Achilles,
and-routed Trojans false Achilles,
aut cum ipse Pelides animos feroces
or when himself the-son-of-Peleus spirits fierce
sustulit luctu celeremque saltu
raised in-grief and-swift in-leap
Troades summis timuere muris,
Trojan-women on-highest feared walls,
perdidit in malis
lost in evils
extremum decus fortiter vinci:
last glory bravely to-be-conquered:
restitit quinis bis annis
it-withstood for-five twice years
unius noctis peritura furto.
of-one night going-to-perish by-theft.
Vidimus simulata dona
We-saw feigned gifts
molis immensae Danaumque
of-mass immense and-of-the-Danaans
fatale munus duximus nostra
fatal gift we-drew with-our

creduli dextra tremuitque saepe
credulous right-hand and-trembled often
limine in primo sonipes, cavernis
threshold on first the-steed, in-caverns
conditos reges bellumque gestans;
hidden kings and-war carrying;
et licuit dolos versare ut ipsi
and it-was-allowed tricks to-turn that themselves
fraude sua caderent Pelasgi.
by-fraud their-own might-fall the-Pelasgians.
saepe commotae sonuere parmae
often shaken resounded shields
tacitumque murmur percussit aures,
and-silent murmur struck ears,
ut fremuit male subdolo
when growled badly to-crafty
parens Pyrrhus Ulixi.
obeying Pyrrhus Ulysses.
Secura metus Troica pubes
Free of-fear Trojan youth
sacros gaudet tangere funes,
sacred rejoices to-touch ropes,
hinc aequaevi gregis Astyanax,
here of-same-aged flock Astyanax,
hinc Haemonio desponsa rogo
there to-Haemonian betrothed pyre
ducunt turmas,
lead troops,
haec femineas, ille viriles.
she female, he male.

festae matres votiva ferunt
festive mothers votive bring
munera divis:
gifts to-the-gods:
festi patres adeunt aras,
festive fathers approach altars,
unus tota est vultus in urbe;
one whole is look in city;
et, quod numquam post Hectoreos
and, what never after Hectorean
vidimus ignes, laeta est Hecuba.
we-saw fires, glad is Hecuba.
quid nunc primum, dolor infelix,
what now first, grief unhappy,
quidve extremum deflere paras?
or-what last to-bewail do-you-prepare?
moenia, divum fabricata manu,
walls, of-gods built by-hand,
diruta nostra?
demolished our?
an templa deos super usta suos?
or temples gods over burned their?
non vacat istis lacrimare malis:
not there-is-leisure for-those to-weep evils:
te, magne parens, flent Iliades.
you, great father, weep Trojan-women.
vidi, vidi
I-saw, I-saw
senis in iugulo telum Pyrrhi
of-the-old-man in throat the-weapon of-Pyrrhus

vix exiguo sanguine tingui.
scarcely with-scant blood to-be-dyed.

CASSANDRA Cohibete lacrimas omne quas tempus petet,
Restrain tears all which time will-seek,

Troades, et ipsae vestra lamentabili
Trojan-women, and yourselves your with-lamentable

lugete gemitu funera: aerumnae meae
mourn groan deaths: troubles my

socium recusant. cladibus questus meis
a-partner refuse. from-disasters laments my

removete. nostris ipsa sufficiam malis.
remove. for-our myself I-shall-suffice evils.

VIII · CASSANDRA SEIZED BY THE GOD

The chorus would mingle its tears with Cassandra's: neither the nightingale, the swan, the halcyon, nor the Phrygian mourners of Attis could lament her house worthily. Why does she tear off her fillets? She has passed beyond fear: Fortune is spent, no father, sister, or brothers are left, and Hecuba has taken a savage shape and barks over her ruins. Then the god seizes her: she pales, trembles, rolls her eyes, and strains to speak.

CHORUS Lacrimas lacrimis miscere iuvat:
Tears with-tears to-mingle it-delights:

magis exurunt quos secretae
more burn whom secret

lacerant curae, iuvat in medium
tear cares, it-delights into the-open

deflere suos; nec tu, quamvis
to-bewail one's-own; nor you, although

dura virago patiensque mali,
hard heroine and-enduring of-evil,
poteris tantas flere ruinas.
will-be-able so-great to-weep ruins.
non quae verno mobile carmen
not she-who on-spring changeable song
ramo cantat tristis aedon
bough sings sad nightingale
Ityn in varios modulata sonos,
Itys in varied modulating sounds,
non quae tectis Bistonis ales
not who on-roofs Bistonian bird
residens summis impia diri
sitting highest impious of-dire
furta mariti garrula narrat,
thefts husband chattering tells,
lugere tuam poterit digne
to-mourn your will-be-able worthily
conquesta domum. licet ipse velit
lamenting house. though himself may-wish
clarus niveos inter olores
bright snowy among swans
Histrum cycnus Tanainque colens
Hister swan and-Tanais dwelling-by
extrema loqui, licet alcyones
last-words to-speak, though halcyons
Ceyca suum fluctu leviter
Ceyx their with-wave lightly
plangente sonent, cum tranquillo
beating may-sound, when to-calm

male confisae credunt iterum
badly trusting they-trust again
pelago audaces fetusque suos
sea bold and-young their
nido pavidae titubante fovent;
in-nest fearful tottering cherish;
non si molles comitata viros
not if soft accompanying men
tristis laceret bracchia tecum
grim should-tear arms with-you
quae turritae turba parenti
which to-turreted the-throng mother
pectora, rauco concita buxo,
breasts, by-hoarse stirred boxwood,
ferit ut Phrygium lugeat Attin,
strikes that Phrygian it-may-mourn Attis,
non est lacrimis, Cassandra, modus,
not is to-tears, Cassandra, a-measure,
quia quae patimur vicere modum.
because what we-suffer have-surpassed measure.
Sed cur sacratas deripis capiti infulas?
But why consecrated do-you-tear from-head fillets?
miseris colendos maxime superos putem.
by-the-wretched to-be-worshiped most the-gods-above I-would-think.
CASSANDRA Vicere nostra iam metus omnis mala.
Have-surpassed our now fear all evils.
equidem nec ulla caelites placo prece
indeed neither with-any heavenly-ones I-appease prayer
nec, si velint saevire, quo noceant habent.
nor, if they-should-wish to-rage, wherewith they-may-harm they-have.

Fortuna vires ipsa consumpsit suas.
Fortune strength herself has-used-up her.
quae patria restat, quis pater, quae iam soror?
what fatherland remains, what father, what now sister?
bibere tumuli sanguinem atque arae meum.
have-drunk tombs blood and altars my.
quid illa felix turba fraterni gregis?
what that happy throng of-brotherly flock?
exhausta nempe: regia miseri senes
exhausted surely: in-palace wretched old-men
vacua relicti, totque per thalamos vident
empty left, and-so-many through chambers see
praeter Lacaenam ceteras viduas nurus.
except the-Laconian the-other widowed daughters-in-law.
tot illa regum mater et regimen Phrygum,
of-so-many that kings mother and guide of-Phrygians,
fecunda in ignes Hecuba fatorum novas
fertile for fires Hecuba of-fates new
experta leges induit vultus feros:
having-tried laws has-put-on features savage:
circa ruinas rabida latravit suas,
around ruins rabid she-barked her-own,
Troiae superstes, Hectori, Priamo, sibi.
to-Troy surviving, to-Hector, to-Priam, to-herself.
CHORUS Silet repente Phoebas et pallor genas
Is-silent suddenly Phoebus'-priestess and pallor cheeks
creberque totum possidet corpus tremor;
and-frequent whole possesses body trembling;
stetere vittae, mollis horrescit coma,
stood-up fillets, soft bristles hair,

anhela corda murmure incluso fremunt,
panting heart with-murmur shut-in roars,
incerta nutant lumina et versi retro
uncertain waver eyes and turned back
torquentur oculi, rursus immoti rigent.
are-rolled eyes, again unmoved stiffen.
nunc levat in auras altior solito caput
now she-lifts into air higher than-usual head
graditurque celsa, nunc reluctantis parat
and-walks lofty, now of-reluctant she-prepares
reserare fauces, verba nunc clauso male
to-unlock jaws, words now with-shut badly
custodit ore maenas impatiens dei.
guards mouth maenad impatient of-the-god.

IX · CASSANDRA'S VISION

Possessed against her will, Cassandra asks Phoebus to quench his fire now that Troy has fallen. She sees a double sun and a double Argos, the shepherd judging the goddesses on Ida, a mad woman in Spartan dress with drawn Amazon steel, and a lion brought down by a lioness. The shades of her father, her brother, Troilus, and Deiphobus call her; she sees the squalid sisters with lashes and torches and Dardanus exulting, and falls as Agamemnon arrives with his wife.

CASSANDRA Quid me furoris incitam stimulis novi
Why me of-madness roused by-goads new
quid mentis inopem, sacra Parnasi iuga,
why of-mind bereft, sacred of-Parnassus ridges,
rapitis? recede, Phoebe, iam non sum tua,
do-you-snatch? withdraw, Phoebus, now not I-am yours,

extingue flammas pectori infixas meo.
quench the-flames in-breast fixed my.
cui nunc vagor vaesana? cui bacchor furens?
for-whom now do-I-wander mad? for-whom do-I-rave raging?
iam Troia cecidit — falsa quid vates ago?
now Troy has-fallen false why prophetess do-I-act?
Ubi sum? fugit lux alma et obscurat genas
Where am-I? flees light kindly and darkens cheeks
nox alta et aether abditus tenebris latet.
night deep and the-ether hidden in-darkness lies-hid.
sed ecce gemino sole praefulget dies
but behold with-twin sun shines day
geminumque duplices Argos attollit domus.
and-twin double Argos raises houses.
Idaea cerno nemora: fatalis sedet
Idaean I-see groves: fateful sits
inter potentes arbiter pastor deas.
among powerful judge shepherd goddesses.
timete reges, moneo, furtivum genus:
fear kings, I-warn, stealthy offspring:
agrestis iste alumnus evertet domum.
rustic that nursling will-overturn the-house.
quid ista vaecors tela feminea manu
why that mad weapons in-womanly hand
destricta praefert? quem petit dextra virum
drawn holds-forth? what attacks with-right-hand man
Lacaena cultu, ferrum Amazonium gerens?
Laconian in-dress, iron Amazonian bearing?
quae versat oculos alia nunc facies meos?
what turns eyes other now sight my?

victor ferarum colla sublimis iacet
victor of-beasts neck lofty lies
ignobili sub dente Marmaricus leo,
ignoble under tooth Marmarican lion,
morsus cruentos passus audacis leae.
bites bloody having-suffered of-bold lioness.
quid me vocatis sospitem solam e meis,
why me do-you-call safe alone of mine,
umbrae meorum? te sequor testis, pater,
shades of-my-own? you I-follow witness, father,
Troiae sepultae; frater, auxilium Phrygum
of-Troy buried; brother, help of-Phrygians
terrorque Danaum, non ego antiquum decus
and-terror of-Danaans, not I ancient glory
video aut calentes ratibus exustis manus,
see or hot with-ships burned hands,
sed lacera membra et saucios vinclo gravi
but torn limbs and wounded by-chain heavy
illos lacertos; te sequor, nimium cito
those arms; you I-follow, too quickly
congresse Achilli Troile; incertos geris,
having-met with-Achilles Troilus; uncertain you-bear,
Deiphobe, vultus, coniugis munus novae.
Deiphobus, features, of-wife the-gift new.
iuvat per ipsos ingredi Stygios lacus,
it-delights through the-very to-enter Stygian lakes,
iuvat videre Tartari saevum canem
it-delights to-see of-Tartarus savage hound
avidique regna Ditis! haec hodie ratis
and-of-greedy realms Dis! this today ship

Phlegethontis atri regias animas vehet,
of-Phlegethon black royal souls will-carry,
victamque victricemque. vos, umbrae, precor,
and-conquered and-conquering. you, shades, I-pray,
iurata superis unda, te pariter precor:
sworn by-the-gods-above water, you likewise I-pray:
reserate paulum terga nigrantis poli,
unlock a-little the-back of-black sky,
levis ut Mycenas turba prospiciat Phrygum.
light that Mycenae throng may-look-out of-Phrygians.
spectate, miseri: fata se vertunt retro.
watch, wretched-ones: fates themselves turn back.
Instant sorores squalidae
Press-on sisters squalid
sanguinea iactant verbera,
bloody they-brandish lashes,
fert laeva semustas faces
bears left half-burned torches
turgentque pallentes genae
and-swell pale cheeks
et vestis atri funeris
and garment of-black funeral
exesa cingit ilia,
gaunt girds loins,
strepuntque nocturni metus
and-rattle nocturnal fears
et ossa vasti corporis
and bones of-vast body
corrupta longinquo situ
decayed by-long neglect

palude limosa iacent.
in-swamp muddy lie.
et ecce, defessus senex
and behold, weary old-man
ad ora ludentes aquas
at mouth mocking waters
non captat oblitus sitim,
not catches forgetful of-thirst,
maestus futuro funere:
sad at-coming death:
exultat et ponit gradus
exults and sets steps
pater decoros Dardanus.
father graceful Dardanus.
CHORUS Iam pervagatus ipse se fregit furor,
Now having-wandered itself itself has-broken madness,
caditque flexo qualis ante aras genu
and-she-falls with-bent as before altars knee
cervice taurus vulnus incertum gerens.
on-neck a-bull wound uncertain bearing.
relevemus artus. en deos tandem suos
let-us-lift limbs. look gods at-last his
victrice lauru cinctus Agamemnon adit,
with-victorious laurel girt Agamemnon approaches,
et festa coniunx obvios illi tulit
and festive wife to-meet him bore
gressus reditque iuncta concordi gradu.
steps and-returns joined with-harmonious step.

Agamemnon greets his land, to which Troy has bowed, and has the fallen prophetess revived. In quick exchange she answers each of his words with Troy's fall: the festive day was Troy's too, her father fell at an altar, Troy is where Helen is, freedom is near, death is her safety, and the danger is great for him. He orders her held until the god leaves her, and prays to Jupiter and Juno.

AGAMEMNO Tandem revertor sospes ad patrios lares;
At-last I-return safe to ancestral household-gods;
o cara salve terra. tibi tot barbarae
o dear hail land. to-you so-many barbarian
dedere gentes spolia, tibi felix diu
have-given nations spoils, to-you happy long
potentis Asiae Troia summisit manus.
of-powerful Asia Troy has-lowered hands.
quid ista vates corpus effusa ac tremens
why that prophetess body sprawled and trembling
dubia labat cervice? famuli, attollite,
with-uncertain totters neck? servants, lift,
refovete gelido latice. iam recipit diem
revive with-cold water. now she-takes-back day
marcente visu. suscita sensus tuos:
with-drooping sight. rouse senses your:
optatus ille portus aerumnis adest.
longed-for that harbor for-troubles is-here.
festus dies est.
festive day it-is.
CASSANDRA Festus et Troiae fuit.
Festive also for-Troy it-was.

AGAMEMNO Veneremur aras.
Let-us-revere altars.

CASSANDRA Cecidit ante aras pater.
Fell before altars my-father.

AGAMEMNO Iovem precemur pariter.
Jove let-us-pray-to together.

CASSANDRA Herceum Iovem?
Hercean Jove?

AGAMEMNO Credis videre te Ilium?
Do-you-believe to-see you Ilium?

CASSANDRA Et Priamum simul.
And Priam also.

AGAMEMNO Hic Troia non est. 795
Here Troy not is.

CASSANDRA Helena ubi est Troiam puto.
Helen where is Troy I-think.

AGAMEMNO Ne metue dominam famula.
Do-not fear mistress as-handmaid.

CASSANDRA Libertas adest.
Freedom is-near.

AGAMEMNO Secura vive.
Carefree live.

CASSANDRA Mihi mori est securitas.
For-me to-die is security.

AGAMEMNO Nullum est periclum tibimet.
No is danger for-yourself.

CASSANDRA At magnum tibi.
But great for-you.

AGAMEMNO Victor timere quid potest?
A-victor to-fear what can?

CASSANDRA Quod non timet.
What not he-fears.

AGAMEMNO Hanc fida famuli turba, dum excutiat deum,
Her faithful of-servants throng, until she-shake-off the-god,
retinete ne quid impotens peccet furor.
hold-back lest anything unbridled may-sin madness.
at te, pater, qui saeva torques fulmina
but you, father, who savage hurl thunderbolts
pellisque nubes, sidera et terras regis,
and-drive clouds, stars and lands rule,
ad quem triumphi spolia victores ferunt,
to whom of-triumph spoils victors bring,
et te sororem cuncta pollentis viri,
and you sister in-all of-powerful husband,
Argolica Iuno, pecore votivo libens
Argive Juno, with-flock votive gladly
Arabumque donis supplice et fibra colam.
and-of-Arabs with-gifts suppliant and entrails I-will-worship.

The chorus hails Argos for Alcides, whose twelve labors won him heaven: the Nemean lion, the hind, the Cretan bull, the serpent fertile in death, Geryon's herd, the Thracian herd fed on guests' blood, the spoil snatched from Hippolyte's breast, the Stymphalian birds, the golden fruit, and the hound of the dead. With him leading, Troy fell in as many days as later years.

CHORUS Argos nobilibus nobile civibus,
Argos for-noble noble citizens,
Argos iratae carum novercae,
Argos to-the-angry dear stepmother,
semper ingentes alumnos
always mighty nurslings
educas, numerum deorum
you-rear, the-number of-the-gods
imparem aequasti: tuus ille
uneven you-have-evened: your that
bis seno meruit labore
by-twice sixfold earned labor
adlegi caelo
to-be-enrolled in-heaven
magnus Alcides, cui lege mundi
great Alcides, for-whom with-the-law of-the-world
Iuppiter rupta geminavit horas
Jupiter broken doubled the-hours
roscidae noctis iussitque Phoebum
of-dewy night and-ordered Phoebus
tardius celeres agitare currus
more-slowly swift to-drive chariot

et tuas lente remeare bigas,
and your slowly to-return team,
pallida Phoebe;
pale Phoebe;
rettulit pedem
drew-back foot
nomen alternis stella quae mutat
name in-alternation the-star which changes
seque mirata est Hesperum dici;
and-herself marveled has Hesperus to-be-called;
Aurora movit ad solitas vices
Aurora moved at accustomed turns
caput et relabens imposuit seni
head and sinking-back placed on-old
collum marito.
neck husband.
sensit ortus, sensit occasus
felt the-east, felt the-west
Herculem nasci: violentus ille
Hercules to-be-born: violent he
nocte non una poterat creari.
in-night not one could to-be-begotten.
tibi concitatus substitit mundus,
for-you swift stood-still the-world,
o puer subiture caelum.
o boy going-to-go-under heaven.
te sensit Nemeaeus arto
you felt Nemean with-tight
pressus lacerto fulmineus leo
squeezed arm thundering lion

cervaque Parrhasis,
and-bind Parrhasian,
sensit Arcadii populator agri,
felt of-Arcadian ravager field,
gemuitque taurus Dictaea linquens
and-groaned the-bull Dictaean leaving
horridus arva.
bristling fields.
morte fecundum domuit draconem
in-death fertile he-tamed serpent
vetuitque collo pereunte nasci,
and-forbade with-neck perishing to-be-born,
geminosque fratres
and-twin brothers
pectore ex uno tria monstra natos
breast from one three monsters born
stipite incusso fregit insultans,
with-club struck he-broke leaping,
duxitque ad ortus Hesperium pecus,
and-led to the-east Hesperian herd,
Geryonae spolium triformis.
of-Geryon spoil triple-formed.
egit Threicium gregem,
he-drove Thracian herd,
quem non Strymonii gramine fluminis
which not of-Strymon with-grass river
Hebrive ripis pavit tyrannus:
or-of-Hebrus on-banks fed the-tyrant:
hospitum dirus stabulis cruorem
of-guests dire to-stables blood

praebuit saevis tinxitque crudos
offered savage and-dyed raw
ultimus rictus sanguis aurigae.
last jaws blood of-the-driver.
vidit Hippolyte ferox
saw Hippolyte fierce
pectore e medio rapi
breast from middle to-be-snatched
spolium, et sagittis
the-spoil, and by-arrows
nube percussa Stymphalis alto
from-cloud struck Stymphalian from-high
decidit caelo;
fell sky;
arborque pomis fertilis aureis
and-the-tree with-fruits fertile golden
extimuit manus insueta carpi
feared hands unaccustomed to-be-plucked
fugitque in auras leviore ramo.
and-fled into air with-lighter bough.
audivit sonitum crepitante lamna
heard sound with-rattling plate
frigidus custos nescius somni,
cold guard ignorant of-sleep,
linqueret cum iam nemus omne fulvo
was-leaving when already grove all of-tawny
plenus Alcides vacuum metallo.
full Alcides empty metal.
tractus ad caelum canis inferorum
dragged to sky the-hound of-the-dead

triplici catena tacuit nec ullo
with-triple chain was-silent nor from-any
latravit ore,
barked mouth,
lucis ignotae metuens colorem.
of-light unknown fearing color.
te duce succidit
with-you leader sank
mendax Dardanidae domus
lying of-Dardanus house
et sensit arcus iterum timendos;
and felt bows again to-be-feared;
te duce concidit
with-you leader fell
totidem diebus Troia quot annis.
in-as-many days Troy as years.

XII · THE MURDER WITHIN

Cassandra tells what is done within: a feast laid like Troy's last, the king in Priam's spoils, the robe his wife bids him put on that has no exit for hands or head, the weak thrust of the half-man, Thyestes' son, and the queen's axe nearly severing the head, while the two still mangle the body. The sun stands doubtful. Electra sends her brother Orestes away and sees a friend coming.

CASSANDRA Res agitur intus magna, par annis decem.
A-thing is-done within great, equal to-years ten.
eheu quid hoc est? anime, consurge et cape
alas what this is? soul, rise-up and take
pretium furoris: vicimus victi Phryges.
the-prize of-madness: we-have-conquered conquered Phrygians.

bene est, resurgit Troia; traxisti iacens,
well it-is, rises-again Troy; you-have-dragged lying,
parens, Mycenas, terga dat victor tuus!
father, Mycenae, back gives victor your!
tam clara numquam providae mentis furor
so clear never of-foreseeing mind madness
ostendit oculis: video et intersum et fruor:
has-shown to-eyes: I-see and am-present and enjoy:
imago visus dubia non fallit meos:
image sight doubtful not deceives my:
spectemus. epulae regia instructae domo,
let-us-watch. feasts in-royal laid-out house,
quales fuerunt ultimae Phrygibus dapes,
such-as were last for-the-Phrygians banquets,
celebrantur: ostro lectus Iliaco nitet
are-celebrated: with-purple couch Ilian shines
merumque in auro veteris Assaraci trahunt.
and-wine in gold of-old Assaracus they-draw.
en ipse picta veste sublimis iacet,
look himself in-embroidered robe lofty lies,
Priami superbas corpore exuvias gerens.
of-Priam proud on-body spoils wearing.
detrahere cultus uxor hostiles iubet,
to-take-off garments wife hostile bids,
induere potius coniugis fidae manu
to-put-on rather of-wife faithful by-hand
textos amictus — horreo atque animo tremo:
woven robes I-shudder and in-mind tremble:
regemne perimet exul et adulter virum?
a-king will-kill an-exile and adulterer husband?

venere fata. sanguinem extremae dapes
have-come the-fates. blood last feasts
domini videbunt et cruor Baccho incidet.
of-the-master will-see and blood into-wine will-fall.
mortifera vinctum perfide tradit neci
deadly bound treacherously hands-over to-death
induta vestis: exitum manibus negant
put-on robe: exit to-hands deny
caputque laxi et invii claudunt sinus.
and-head loose and pathless enclose folds.
haurit trementi semivir dextra latus,
drains with-trembling the-half-man hand side,
nec penitus egit: vulnere in medio stupet.
nor deeply drove: wound in middle is-stunned.
at ille, ut altis hispidus silvis aper
but he, as in-deep bristly woods boar
cum casse vinctus temptat egressus tamen
when by-net bound tries ways-out yet
artatque motu vincla et in cassum furit,
and-tightens by-motion bonds and in vain rages,
cupit fluentes undique et caecos sinus
desires flowing everywhere and blind folds
dissicere et hostem quaerit implicitus suum.
to-tear-apart and enemy seeks entangled his.
armat bipenni Tyndaris dextram furens,
arms with-double-axe Tyndareus'-daughter right-hand raging,
qualisque ad aras colla taurorum popa
and-as at altars necks of-bulls the-attendant
designat oculis antequam ferro petat,
marks with-eyes before with-iron he-attacks,

sic huc et illuc impiam librat manum.
so hither and thither impious she-poises hand.
habet, peractum est. pendet exigua male
he-has-it, done it-is. hangs by-small badly
caput amputatum parte et hinc trunco cruor
head cut-off part and here from-trunk blood
exundat, illic ora cum fremitu iacent.
gushes, there face with roaring lies.
nondum recedunt: ille iam exanimem petit
not-yet they-withdraw: he now lifeless attacks
laceratque corpus, illa fodientem adiuvat.
and-mangles body, she the-stabbing-one helps.
uterque tanto scelere respondet suis:
each by-so-great crime answers to-his-own:
est hic Thyeste gnatus, haec Helenae soror.
is this-one of-Thyestes son, this-one of-Helen sister.
stat ecce Titan dubius emerito die,
stands behold Titan doubtful with-finished day,
suane currat an Thyestea via.
by-his-own should-he-run or Thyestean way.
ELECTRA Fuge, o paternae mortis auxilium unicum,
Flee, o of-paternal death help only,
fuge et scelestas hostium vita manus.
flee and wicked of-enemies avoid hands.
eversa domus est funditus, regna occidunt.
overturned the-house is utterly, realms fall.
hospes quis iste concitos currus agit?
a-stranger who that swift chariot drives?
germane, vultus veste furabor tuos.
brother, face with-robe I-shall-steal your.

quid, anime demens, refugis? externos times?
why, soul mad, do-you-shrink? strangers do-you-fear?
domus timenda est. pone iam trepidos metus,
the-house to-be-feared is. lay-aside now anxious fears,
Oresta: amici fida praesidia intuor.
Orestes: of-a-friend faithful protection I-see.

XIII · STROPHIUS SAVES ORESTES

Strophius, leaving Phocis with his Elean victor's palm, comes to congratulate Agamemnon and finds Electra weeping: her father is slain, Aegisthus holds the citadel, and Orestes is sought. He takes the boy, crowns him with the victor's leaves as a disguise and an omen, bids his own son Pylades learn faithfulness, and drives off. As Clytemestra comes, blood still on her hands, Electra withdraws to the altar beside Cassandra.

STROPHIUS Phocide relicta Strophius Elea inclutus
With-Phocis left Strophius by-Elean famous
palma revertor. causa veniendi fuit
palm I-return. the-cause of-coming was
gratari amico, cuius impulsum manu
to-congratulate a-friend, whose struck by-hand
cecidit decenni Marte concussum Ilium.
fell by-ten-year war shaken Ilium.
quaenam ista lacrimis lugubrem vultum rigat
who that-woman with-tears mournful face wets
pavetque maesta? regium agnosco genus.
and-trembles sad? royal I-recognize offspring.
Electra, fletus causa quae laeta in domo est?
Electra, of-weeping cause what glad in house is?

ELECTRA Pater peremptus scelere materno iacet,
My-father slain by-crime maternal lies,
comes paternae quaeritur natus neci,
as-companion to-paternal is-sought the-son death,
Aegisthus arces Venere quaesitas tenet.
Aegisthus citadels by-Venus gained holds.
STROPHIUS O nulla longi temporis felicitas!
O no of-long time happiness!
ELECTRA Per te parentis memoriam obtestor mei,
By you of-father memory I-implore my,
per sceptra terris nota, per dubios deos:
by scepters to-lands known, by doubtful gods:
recipe hunc Oresten ac pium furtum occule.
receive this Orestes and dutiful theft hide.
STROPHIUS Etsi timendum caesus Agamemnon docet,
Although to-be-feared slain Agamemnon teaches,
aggrediar et te, Oresta, furabor libens.
I-shall-undertake and you, Orestes, I-shall-steal gladly.
cape hoc decorum ludicri certaminis,
take this ornament of-sporting contest,
insigne frontis; laeva victricem tenens
badge of-brow; left victorious holding
frondem virenti protegat ramo caput,
leafage with-green let-protect bough head,
et ista donum palma Pisaei Iovis
and that gift palm of-Pisaean Jove
velamen eadem praestet atque omen tibi.
covering same let-afford and omen to-you.
tuque o paternis assidens frenis comes,
and-you o at-paternal sitting reins companion,

condisce, Pylade, patris exemplo fidem.
learn, Pylades, of-father by-example faith.
vos Graecia nunc teste veloces equi
you with-Greece now witness swift horses
infida cursu fugite praecipiti loca.
faithless in-course flee headlong places.
ELECTRA Excessit, abiit, currus effreno impetu
He-has-gone-out, gone, the-chariot with-unbridled onrush
effugit aciem. tuta iam opperiar meos
has-escaped sight. safe now I-shall-await my
hostes et ultro vulneri opponam caput.
enemies and of-my-own-accord to-a-wound I-shall-set head.
Adest cruenta coniugis victrix sui
Is-here bloody of-husband conqueror her
et signa caedis veste maculata gerit.
and signs of-slaughter on-robe stained bears.
manus recenti sanguine etiamnunc madent
hands with-fresh blood still drip
vultusque prae se scelera truculenti ferunt.
and-face before itself crimes savage bears.
concedam ad aras. patere me vittis tuis,
I-shall-withdraw to altars. allow me to-fillets your,
Cassandra, iungi paria metuentem tibi.
Cassandra, to-be-joined equal-things fearing with-you.

Clytemestra demands where Orestes is; Electra, giving taunt for taunt, says only that he is safe outside Mycenae, and offers her throat. Aegisthus, reviled as his own sister's son and his father's grandson, condemns her to a cave at the kingdom's edge, since death would be a mercy. Clytemestra sends Cassandra to die; the prophetess goes gladly to tell the Trojans of Agamemnon's fall, and warns her killers that madness will come to them as well.

CLYTEMESTRA Hostis parentis, impium atque audax caput,
Enemy of-your-parent, impious and bold head,
quo more coetus publicos virgo petis?
by-what custom gatherings public maiden do-you-seek?
ELECTRA Adulterarum virgo deserui domum.
Of-adulteresses maiden I-have-left the-house.
CLYTEMESTRA Quis esse credat virginem?
Who to-be would-believe a-virgin?
ELECTRA Natam tuam?
Daughter your?
CLYTEMESTRA Modestius cum matre.
More-modestly with a-mother.
ELECTRA Pietatem doces?
Dutifulness do-you-teach?
CLYTEMESTRA Animos viriles corde tumefacto geris;
Spirits manly in-heart swollen you-bear;
sed agere domita feminam disces malo.
but to-play tamed the-woman you-will-learn by-evil.
ELECTRA Nisi forte fallor, feminas ferrum decet.
Unless perhaps I-am-mistaken, women iron befits.
CLYTEMESTRA Et esse demens te parem nobis putas?
And to-be mad you equal to-us do-you-think?

ELECTRA Vobis? quis iste est alter Agamemnon tuus?
To-you? who that is second Agamemnon your?
ut vidua loquere: vir caret vita tuus.
as widow speak: husband lacks life your.
CLYTEMESTRA Indomita posthac virginis verba impiae
Untamed hereafter of-girl words impious
regina frangam; citius interea mihi
queen I-shall-break; quickly meanwhile to-me
edissere ubi sit natus, ubi frater tuus.
declare where is son, where brother your.
ELECTRA Extra Mycenas.
Outside Mycenae.
CLYTEMESTRA Redde nunc natum mihi.
Give-back now son to-me.
ELECTRA Et tu parentem redde.
And you father give-back.
CLYTEMESTRA Quo latitat loco?
In-what lurks-he place?
ELECTRA Tuto quietus, regna non metuens nova:
Safely quiet, reign not fearing new:
iustae parenti satis.
for-a-just parent enough.
CLYTEMESTRA At iratae parum.
But for-an-angry too-little.
morieris hodie.
you-will-die today.
ELECTRA Dummodo hac moriar manu.
Provided-that by-this I-die hand.
recedo ab aris. sive te iugulo iuvat
I-withdraw from altars. whether you in-throat it-delights

mersisse ferrum, praebeo iugulum tibi;
to-have-plunged sword, I-offer throat to-you;
seu more pecudum colla resecari placet,
or in-manner of-cattle neck to-be-cut pleases,
intenta cervix vulnus expectat tuum.
stretched neck wound awaits your.
scelus paratum est: caede respersam viri
crime prepared is: with-slaughter sprinkled of-husband
atque obsoletam sanguine hoc dextram ablue.
and defiled with-blood this right-hand wash.
CLYTEMESTRA Consors pericli pariter ac regni mei,
Sharer of-danger alike and of-realm my,
Aegisthe, gradere. gnata genetricem impie
Aegisthus, step-forth. daughter mother impiously
probris lacessit, occulit fratrem abditum.
with-insults provokes, hides brother concealed.
AEGISTHUS Furibunda virgo, vocis infandae sonum
Raging girl, of-voice unspeakable sound
et aure verba indigna materna opprime.
and in-ear words unworthy maternal suppress.
ELECTRA Etiam monebit sceleris infandi artifex,
Even will-advise of-crime unspeakable craftsman,
per scelera gnatus, nomen ambiguum suis,
through crimes born, name ambiguous to-his-own,
idem sororis gnatus et patris nepos?
same of-sister son and of-father grandson?
CLYTEMESTRA Aegisthe, cessas impium ferro caput
Aegisthus, do-you-delay impious with-sword head
demetere? fratrem reddat aut animam statim.
to-cut-off? brother let-her-give-back or life at-once.

AEGISTHUS Abstrusa caeco carcere et saxo exigat
Shut-away in-blind prison and rock let-her-spend
aevum, et per omnes torta poenarum modos
life, and through all tortured of-punishments modes
referre quem nunc occulit forsan volet
to-give-back whom now she-hides perhaps she-will-wish
inops egens inclusa, paedore obruta,
helpless needy shut-in, with-filth overwhelmed,
vidua ante thalamos, exul, invisa omnibus
widowed before marriage, exile, hated by-all
aethere negato sero subcumbet malis.
with-sky denied late will-succumb to-evils.
ELECTRA Concede mortem.
Grant death.
AEGISTHUS Si recusares, darem.
If you-refused, I-would-give.
rudis est tyrannus morte qui poenam exigit.
unskilled is the-tyrant by-death who punishment exacts.
ELECTRA Mortem aliquid ultra est?
Death anything beyond is?
AEGISTHUS Vita, si cupias mori.
Life, if you-should-desire to-die.
abripite, famuli, monstrum et avectam procul
drag-away, servants, the-monster and carried far
ultra Mycenas ultimo in regni angulo
beyond Mycenae farthest in of-the-realm corner
vincite saeptam nocte tenebrosi specus,
bind enclosed in-night of-dark cave,
ut inquietam virginem carcer domet.
that restless girl prison may-tame.

CLYTEMESTRA At ista poenas capite persolvet suo
But that-one penalty with-head will-pay her-own
captiva coniunx, regii paelex tori.
captive wife, of-royal concubine bed.
trahite, ut sequatur coniugem ereptum mihi.
drag, that she-may-follow husband snatched from-me.
CASSANDRA Ne trahite, vestros ipsa praecedam gradus.
Do-not drag, your myself I-shall-precede steps.
perferre prima nuntium Phrygibus meis
to-carry first the-news to-Phrygians my
propero: repletum ratibus eversis mare,
I-hasten: filled with-ships overturned sea,
captas Mycenas, mille ductorem ducum,
captured Mycenae, of-thousand leader leaders,
ut paria fata Troicis lueret malis,
that equal fates to-Trojan he-might-pay evils,
perisse dono feminae: stupro, dolo.
to-have-perished by-gift of-a-woman: by-adultery, by-guile.
nihil moramur, rapite, quin grates ago.
nothing we-delay, snatch, rather thanks I-give.
iam, iam iuvat vixisse post Troiam, iuvat.
now, now it-delights to-have-lived after Troy, it-delights.
CLYTEMESTRA Furiosa, morere.
Mad-woman, die.
CASSANDRA Veniet et vobis furor.
Will-come also to-you madness.

SENECA

Thyestes

THYESTES

I · THE GHOST OF TANTALUS

Dragged up from his hunger and thirst, Tantalus wonders what worse punishment awaits him; his line will breed crimes that make him innocent. A Fury drives him to fill the house of Pelops with madness: brothers shall fight for the throne, crime breed crime, and the uncle prepare a feast of children for Thyestes. Tantalus would rather return to his pools and warns against slaughter, but under her lash he yields; springs dry and the Sun doubts whether to drive on.

TANTALUS Quis inferorum sede ab infausta extrahit
Who of-the-dead seat from ill-starred drags-out
avido fugaces ore captantem cibos,
with-greedy fleeing mouth snatching-at food,
quis male deorum Tantalo visas domos
who wrongly of-gods by-Tantalus seen homes
ostendit iterum? peius inventum est siti
shows again? worse found has-been than-thirst
arente in undis aliquid et peius fame
parching in waves something and worse than-hunger
hiante semper? Sisyphi numquid lapis
gaping always? of-Sisyphus perhaps the-stone
gestandus umeris lubricus nostris venit
to-be-carried on-shoulders slippery our comes
aut membra celeri differens cursu rota,
or limbs in-swift tearing-apart course the-wheel,
aut poena Tityi qui specu vasto patens
or the-punishment of-Tityus who in-cave vast lying-open
visceribus atras pascit effossis aves
with-entrails black feeds dug-out birds

et nocte reparans quicquid amisit die
and by-night restoring whatever he-lost by-day
plenum recenti pabulum monstro iacet?
full for-new food monster lies?
in quod malum transcribor? o quisquis nova
into what evil am-I-transferred? o whoever new
supplicia functis durus umbrarum arbiter
punishments to-the-dead harsh of-shades judge
disponis, addi si quid ad poenas potest
you-assign, to-be-added if anything to punishments can
quod ipse custos carceris diri horreat,
which himself the-guard of-prison dire may-dread,
quod maestus Acheron paveat, ad cuius metum
which sad Acheron may-fear, at whose fear
nos quoque tremamus, quaere: iam nostra subit
we also may-tremble, seek: now our comes-up
e stirpe turba quae suum vincat genus
from stock a-throng which its-own may-surpass race
ac me innocentem faciat et inausa audeat.
and me innocent may-make and undared-things may-dare.
regione quicquid impia cessat loci
in-region whatever impious is-idle of-place
complebo — numquam stante Pelopea domo
I-shall-fill never with-standing Pelopian house
Minos vacabit.
Minos will-be-idle.

FURIA Perge, detestabilis
Go-on, detestable
umbra, et penates impios furiis age.
shade, and household-gods impious with-furies drive.

certetur omni scelere et alterna vice
let-it-be-contested with-every crime and in-alternate turn
stringatur ensis; ne sit irarum modus
let-be-drawn the-sword; not let-there-be of-angers limit
pudorve, mentes caecus instiget furor,
or-shame, minds blind let-goad madness,
rabies parentum duret et longum nefas
the-rage of-parents let-endure and long crime
eat in nepotes; nec vacet cuiquam vetus
let-go to grandsons; nor let-there-be-leisure for-anyone old
odisse crimen: semper oriatur novum,
to-hate crime: always let-arise new,
nec unum in uno, dumque punitur scelus,
nor one in one, and-while is-punished a-crime,
crescat. superbis fratribus regna excidant
let-it-grow. from-proud brothers kingdoms let-fall
repetantque profugos; dubia violentae domus
and-let-seek-again the-exiles; doubtful of-violent house
fortuna reges inter incertos labet:
fortune kings among uncertain let-totter:
miser ex potente fiat, ex misero potens
wretched from powerful let-become, from wretched powerful
fluctuque regnum casus assiduo ferat.
and-on-wave the-kingdom chance constant let-bear.
ob scelera pulsi, cum dabit patriam deus
for crimes driven-out, when will-give fatherland god
in scelera redeant, sintque tam invisi omnibus,
to crimes let-them-return, and-let-them-be as hated to-all,
quam sibi; nihil sit ira quod vetitum putet:
as to-themselves; nothing let-there-be anger which forbidden may-think:

fratrem expavescat frater et gnatum parens
brother let-dread brother and son father
gnatusque patrem, liberi pereant male,
and-son father, children let-perish badly,
peius tamen nascantur; immineat viro
worse yet let-be-born; let-threaten husband
infesta coniunx, bella trans pontum vehant,
hostile wife, wars across sea let-them-carry,
effusus omnis irriget terras cruor,
poured-out all let-water lands blood,
supraque magnos gentium exultet duces
and-over great of-nations let-exult leaders
Libido victrix: impia stuprum in domo
Lust victorious: impious adultery in house
levissimum sit facinus; et fas et fides
lightest let-be deed; both right and faith
iusque omne pereat. non sit a vestris malis
and-law all let-perish. not let-be from your evils
immune caelum. cur micant stellae polo
exempt heaven. why gleam stars in-sky
flammaeque servant debitum mundo decus?
and-flames keep owed to-world beauty?
nox alia fiat, excidat caelo dies.
night other let-be, let-fall from-sky day.
misce penates, odia caedes funera
mix household-gods, hatreds slaughters deaths
accerse et imple Tantalo totam domum.
summon and fill with-Tantalus whole house.
ornetur altum columen et lauro fores
let-be-adorned high column and with-laurel doors

laetae virescant, dignus adventu tuo
glad let-grow-green, worthy of-coming your
splendescat ignis — Thracium fiat nefas
let-shine fire Thracian let-be crime
maiore numero. dextra cur patrui vacat?
in-greater number. right-hand why of-uncle is-idle?
nondum Thyestes liberos deflet suos —
not-yet Thyestes children bewails his
et quando tollet? ignibus iam subditis
and when will-be-lift? with-fires now set-under
spument aena, membra per partes eant
let-foam cauldrons, limbs through parts let-go
discerpta, patruos polluat sanguis focos,
torn, of-the-uncle let-pollute blood hearths,
epulae instruantur — non novi sceleris tibi
feasts let-be-laid not of-new crime to-you
conviva venies. liberum dedimus diem
a-guest you-will-come. free we-have-given day
tuamque ad istas solvimus mensas famem:
and-your at those we-have-loosed tables hunger:
ieiunia exple, mixtus in Bacchum cruor
fasts fill, mixed into Bacchus blood
spectante te potetur; inveni dapes
with-watching you let-be-drunk; I-have-found feasts
quas ipse fugeres — siste, quo praeceps ruis?
which yourself you-would-flee stop, whither headlong do-you-rush?
TANTALUS Ad stagna et amnes et recedentes aquas
To pools and rivers and receding waters
labrisque ab ipsis arboris plenae fugas.
and-lips from very of-tree full flights.

abire in atrum carceris liceat mei
to-go-away into black of-prison may-it-be-allowed my
cubile, liceat, si parum videor miser,
couch, may-it-be-allowed, if too-little I-seem wretched,
mutare ripas: alveo medius tuo,
to-change banks: in-channel mid your,
Phlegethon, relinquar igneo cinctus freto.
Phlegethon, may-I-be-left with-fiery girt flood.
quicumque poenas lege fatorum datas
whoever punishments by-law of-fates given
pati iuberis, quisquis exeso iaces
to-suffer are-ordered, whoever hollowed lie
pavidus sub antro iamque venturi times
fearful under cave and-now of-coming fear
montis ruinam, quisquis avidorum feros
of-mountain the-fall, whoever of-greedy fierce
rictus leonum et dira Furiarum agmina
jaws lions and dire of-Furies troops
implicitus horres, quisquis immissas faces
entangled dread, whoever thrown torches
semiustus abigis, Tantali vocem excipe
half-burned drive-off, of-Tantalus voice receive
properantis ad vos: credite experto mihi,
hastening to you: believe experienced me,
amate poenas. quando continget mihi
love punishments. when will-it-befall me
effugere superos?
to-escape the-upper-world?

FURIA Ante perturba domum
First throw-into-confusion the-house
inferque tecum proelia et ferri malum
and-bring with-you battles and of-iron evil
regibus amorem, concute insano ferum
to-kings love, shake with-insane fierce
pectus tumultu.
breast tumult.
TANTALUS Me pati poenas decet,
Me to-suffer punishments befits,
non esse poenam. mittor ut dirus vapor
not to-be a-punishment. I-am-sent as dire vapor
tellure rupta vel gravem populis luem
with-earth burst or heavy to-peoples plague
sparsura pestis, ducam in horrendum nefas
going-to-scatter pestilence, I-shall-lead into dreadful crime
avus nepotes — magne divorum parens
grandfather grandsons great of-gods father
nosterque, quamvis pudeat, ingenti licet
and-ours, although it-shames, with-huge though
taxata poena lingua crucietur loquax,
assessed punishment tongue be-tortured talkative,
nec hoc tacebo: moneo, ne sacras manus
not-even this I-shall-keep-silent: I-warn, not sacred hands
violate caede neve furiali malo
violate with-slaughter nor with-furious evil
aspergite aras. stabo et arcebo scelus —
sprinkle altars. I-shall-stand and I-shall-ward-off crime
quid ora terres verbere et tortos ferox
why face do-you-frighten with-lash and twisted fierce

minaris angues? quid famem infixam intimis
threaten snakes? why hunger fixed in-inmost
agitas medullis? flagrat incensum siti
stir marrow? blazes kindled with-thirst
cor et perustis flamma visceribus micat —
heart and in-scorched flame entrails flickers
FURIA Hunc, hunc furorem divide in totam domum!
This, this madness divide into whole house!
sic, sic ferantur et suum infensi invicem
so, so let-them-be-borne and their-own hostile in-turn
sitiant cruorem. sentit introitus tuos
thirst-for blood. feels entrances your
domus et nefando tota contactu horruit.
the-house and at-unspeakable whole touch shuddered.
actum est abunde. gradere ad infernos specus
done it-is abundantly. step to infernal caves
amnemque notum; iam tuum maestae pedem
and-river known; now your sad foot
terrae gravantur: cernis ut fontis liquor
lands are-weighed-down: you-see how of-spring water
introrsus actus linquat, ut ripae vacent
inward driven departs, how banks are-empty
ventusque raras igneus nubes ferat?
and-wind scattered fiery clouds carries?
pallescit omnis arbor ac nudus sitit
grows-pale every tree and bare thirsts
fugiente pomo ramus, et qui fluctibus
with-fleeing fruit the-bough, and which with-waves
illinc propinquis Isthmos atque illinc fremit
there near Isthmus and there roars

vicina gracili dividens terra vada,
neighboring with-slender dividing land shallows,
longe remotos tutus exaudit sonos.
far removed safe hears sounds.
iam Lerna retro cessit et Phoronides
now Lerna back has-yielded and Phoronean
latuere venae nec suas profert sacer
have-hidden springs nor its brings-forth sacred
Alpheos undas et Cithaeronis iuga
Alpheus waves and of-Cithaeron ridges
stant parte nulla cana deposita nive
stand in-part no white with-laid-down snow
timentque veterem nobiles Argi sitim.
and-fear old noble Argos thirst.
en ipse Titan dubitat an iubeat sequi
look himself Titan doubts whether he-should-order to-follow
cogatque habenis ire periturum diem.
and-should-compel with-reins to-go going-to-perish day.

The chorus prays to any god who loves Argos, Pisa, or Corinth to end the cycle of crime in Tantalus' line: betrayed Myrtilus gave his name to a sea, and Tantalus cut up his own son to set a feast before the gods. For that he stands beneath fruit that lifts away when he reaches and in water that sinks when he stoops, and drinks only dust.

CHORUS Argos de superis si quis Achaicum
Argos of the-gods-above if any Achaean
Pisaeasque domos curribus inclitas,
and-Pisaean homes for-chariots famous,
Isthmi si quis amat regna Corinthii
of-Isthmus if any loves realms Corinthian
et portus geminos et mare dissidens,
and harbors twin and sea divided,
si quis Taygeti conspicuas nives,
if any of-Taygetus conspicuous snows,
quas cum Sarmaticus tempore frigido
which when Sarmatian in-time cold
in summis Boreas composuit iugis,
on highest Boreas has-laid ridges,
aestas veliferis solvit Etesiis,
summer with-sail-bearing melts Etesians,
quem tangit gelido flumine lucidus
whom touches with-icy stream clear
Alpheos, stadio notus Olympico,
Alpheus, for-racecourse known Olympic,
advertat placidum numen et arceat,
let-him-turn calm divinity and ward-off,
alternae scelerum ne redeant vices
alternate of-crimes lest return turns

nec succedat avo deterior nepos
nor succeed to-grandfather worse grandson
et maior placeat culpa minoribus.
and greater please guilt to-descendants.
tandem lassa feros exuat impetus
at-last weary fierce let-put-off impulses
sicci progenies impia Tantali.
of-thirsty offspring impious Tantalus.
Peccatum satis est; fas valuit nihil
Sinned enough it-is; right availed nothing
aut commune nefas. proditus occidit
or common wrong. betrayed fell
deceptor domini Myrtilus, et fide
deceiver of-his-master Myrtilus, and by-faith
vectus qua fuerat nobile reddidit
carried by-which he-had-been famous made
mutato pelagus nomine: notior
with-changed sea name: better-known
nulla est Ioniis fabula navibus.
no is to-Ionian tale ships.
exceptus gladio parvulus impio
caught by-sword little-one impious
dum currit patrium natus ad osculum,
while runs paternal son to kiss,
immatura focis victima concidit
untimely at-hearths victim fell
divisusque tua est, Tantale, dextera,
and-divided by-your was, Tantalus, right-hand,
mensas ut strueres hospitibus deis.
tables that you-might-lay for-guest gods.

hos aeterna fames persequitur cibos,
these eternal hunger pursues foods,
hos aeterna sitis; nec dapibus feris
these eternal thirst; nor for-feasts savage
decerni potuit poena decentior.
to-be-decreed could punishment fitter.
Stat lassus vacuo gutture Tantalus:
Stands weary with-empty throat Tantalus:
impendet capiti plurima noxio
hangs-over head abundant guilty
Phineis avibus praeda fugacior;
than-Phinean birds prey more-fleeting;
hinc illinc gravidis frondibus incubat
here there with-heavy leaves broods
et curvata suis fetibus ac tremens
and bent by-its fruits and trembling
alludit patulis arbor hiatibus.
plays to-wide the-tree gapings.
haec, quamvis avidus nec patiens morae,
these, although greedy nor patient of-delay,
deceptus totiens tangere neglegit
deceived so-often to-touch neglects
obliquatque oculos oraque comprimit
and-slants eyes and-mouth presses-shut
inclusisque famem dentibus alligat.
and-with-shut hunger teeth binds.
sed tunc divitias omne nemus suas
but then riches all grove its
demittit propius pomaque desuper
lowers nearer and-fruits from-above

insultant foliis mitia languidis
leap with-leaves ripe drooping
accenduntque famem, quae iubet irritas
and-kindle hunger, which orders vain
exercere manus — has ubi protulit
to-exercise hands these when he-stretched-out
et falli libuit, totus in arduum
and to-be-deceived it-pleased, whole into the-height
autumnus rapitur silvaque mobilis.
autumn is-snatched and-wood mobile.
instat deinde sitis non levior fame;
presses then thirst not lighter than-hunger;
qua cum percaluit sanguis et igneis
by-which when has-heated blood and fiery
exarsit facibus, stat miser obvios
has-blazed with-torches, stands wretched meeting
fluctus ore petens, quos profugus latex
waves with-mouth seeking, which fleeing water
avertit sterili deficiens vado
turns-away in-sterile failing ford
conantemque sequi deserit; hic bibit
and-the-trying to-follow deserts; he drinks
altum de rapido gurgite pulverem.
deep from swift whirlpool dust.

Atreus rebukes himself for leaving his brother's crimes unavenged and resolves to surpass them before Thyestes strikes first. To his attendant's warnings he answers that kings make their people bear and praise their deeds, and recounts the theft of the golden ram and of his wife. Sword and fire are too little: like the Thracian feast, the father shall eat his children. His sons will carry a false offer of shared rule; he thinks to make Agamemnon and Menelaus knowing accomplices, a test of their doubtful birth, then resolves they shall not know, and the attendant promises silence.

ATREUS Ignave, iners, enervis et (quod maximum
Coward, inert, nerveless and (what greatest
probrum tyranno rebus in summis reor)
disgrace for-a-tyrant affairs in highest I-think)
inulte, post tot scelera, post fratris dolos
unavenged, after so-many crimes, after of-a-brother tricks
fasque omne ruptum questibus vanis agis
and-right all broken with-complaints vain do-you-pursue
iratus Atreus? fremere iam totus tuis
angry Atreus? to-roar now whole with-your
debebat armis orbis et geminum mare
ought arms the-world and twin sea
utrimque classes agere, iam flammis agros
on-both-sides fleets to-drive, now with-flames fields
lucere et urbes decuit ac strictum undique
to-shine and cities it-befitted and drawn everywhere
micare ferrum. tota sub nostro sonet
to-flash steel. whole under our let-resound
Argolica tellus equite; non silvae tegant
Argive land cavalry; not woods let-cover

hostem nec altis montium structae iugis
the-enemy nor on-lofty of-mountains built ridges
arces; relictis bellicum totus canat
citadels; with-left warlike whole let-sing
populus Mycenis, quisquis invisum caput
people Mycenae, whoever hated head
tegit ac tuetur, clade funesta occidat,
covers and protects, by-disaster deadly let-him-fall,
haec ipsa pollens incliti Pelopis domus
this very powerful of-famous Pelops house
ruat vel in me, dummodo in fratrem ruat.
let-fall even on me, provided-that on my-brother it-fall.
age, anime, fac quod nulla posteritas probet,
come, soul, do what no posterity may-approve,
sed nulla taceat. aliquod audendum est nefas
but none may-keep-silent. some to-be-dared is crime
atrox, cruentum, tale quod frater meus
atrocious, bloody, such which brother my
suum esse mallet — scelera non ulcisceris,
his-own to-be would-prefer crimes not you-avenge,
nisi vincis. et quid esse tam saevum potest
unless you-surpass. and what to-be so savage can
quod superet illum? numquid abiectus iacet?
which may-surpass him? surely-not cast-down does-he-lie?
numquid secundis patitur in rebus modum,
surely-not favorable does-he-endure in affairs restraint,
fessis quietem? novi ego ingenium viri
in-weary rest? I-know I the-nature of-the-man
indocile: flecti non potest — frangi potest.
unteachable: to-be-bent not he-can to-be-broken he-can.

proinde antequam se firmat aut vires parat,
therefore before himself he-strengthens or forces prepares,
petatur ultro, ne quiescentem petat.
let-him-be-attacked first, lest the-resting-one he-attack.
aut perdet aut peribit: in medio est scelus
either he-will-destroy or he-will-perish: in the-middle is crime
positum occupanti.
placed for-the-one-seizing.
SATELLES Fama te populi nihil
The-talk you of-the-people not-at-all
adversa terret?
hostile frightens?
ATREUS Maximum hoc regni bonum est,
Greatest this of-kingship good is,
quod facta domini cogitur populus sui
that the-deeds of-master is-forced people its
tam ferre quam laudare.
as-much to-bear as to-praise.
SATELLES Quos cogit metus
Whom forces fear
laudare, eosdem reddit inimicos metus.
to-praise, the-same renders enemies fear.
at qui favoris gloriam veri petit,
but who of-favor the-glory true seeks,
animo magis quam voce laudari volet.
in-heart more than in-voice to-be-praised will-wish.
ATREUS Laus vera et humili saepe contingit viro,
Praise true even to-a-lowly often falls man,
non nisi potenti falsa. quod nolunt velint.
not except to-the-powerful false. what they-do-not-want let-them-want.

SATELLES Rex velit honesta: nemo non eadem volet.
A-king let-want honorable-things: no-one not the-same will-want.
ATREUS Ubicumque tantum honesta dominanti licent,
Wherever only honorable-things to-the-ruler are-allowed,
precario regnatur.
on-sufferance one-reigns.
SATELLES Ubi non est pudor
Where not is shame
nec cura iuris sanctitas pietas fides,
nor care of-law sanctity dutifulness faith,
instabile regnum est.
unstable a-reign is.
ATREUS Sanctitas pietas fides
Sanctity dutifulness faith
privata bona sunt, qua iuvat reges eant.
private goods are, where it-delights kings let-go.
SATELLES Nefas nocere vel malo fratri puta.
Wrong to-harm even an-evil brother think.
ATREUS Fas est in illo quicquid in fratre est nefas.
Right is against him whatever against a-brother is wrong.
quid enim reliquit crimine intactum aut ubi
what indeed has-he-left by-crime untouched or where
sceleri pepercit? coniugem stupro abstulit
from-crime did-he-refrain? my-wife by-adultery he-took
regnumque furto: specimen antiquum imperi
and-realm by-theft: token ancient of-rule
fraude est adeptus, fraude turbavit domum.
by-fraud he-has obtained, by-fraud disturbed the-house.
est Pelopis altis nobile in stabulis pecus,
there-is of-Pelops high noble in stalls a-beast,

arcanus aries, ductor opulenti gregis,
secret ram, leader of-rich flock,
huius per omne corpus effuso coma
of-this over whole body with-poured fleece
dependet auro, cuius e tergo novi
hangs gold, whose from back new
aurata reges sceptra Tantalici gerunt;
gilded kings scepters Tantalid bear;
possessor huius regnat, hunc tantae domus
the-possessor of-this reigns, this of-so-great house
fortuna sequitur. tuta seposita sacer
fortune follows. safe set-apart sacred
in parte carpit prata, quae cludit lapis
in part crops meadows, which encloses stone
fatale saxeo pascuum muro tegens.
fateful with-stony pasture wall shielding.
hunc facinus ingens ausus assumpta in scelus
him deed huge having-dared with-taken into crime
consorte nostri perfidus thalami avehit.
partner of-our faithless bed carries-off.
hinc omne cladis mutuae fluxit malum:
from-here all of-disaster mutual flowed evil:
per regna trepidus exul erravi mea,
through realms anxious exile I-wandered my,
pars nulla generis tuta ab insidiis vacat,
part no of-family safe from plots is-free,
corrupta coniunx, imperi quassa est fides,
corrupted wife, of-rule shaken is loyalty,
domus aegra, dubius sanguis est — certi nihil
house sick, doubtful blood is of-certain nothing

nisi frater hostis. quid stupes? tandem incipe
except brother enemy. why are-you-stunned? at-last begin
animosque sume: Tantalum et Pelopem aspice;
and-spirit take: Tantalus and Pelops look-at;
ad haec manus exempla poscuntur meae.
to these hands examples are-summoned my.
profare, dirum qua caput mactem via.
speak-out, dire by-what head I-may-slay way.
SATELLES Ferro peremptus spiritum inimicum expuat.
By-sword slain breath hostile let-him-spit-out.
ATREUS De fine poenae loqueris; ego poenam volo.
Of the-end of-punishment you-speak; I punishment want.
perimat tyrannus lenis: in regno meo
let-kill tyrant mild: in realm my
mors impetratur.
death is-obtained-by-prayer.
SATELLES Nulla te pietas movet?
No you dutifulness moves?
ATREUS Excede, Pietas, si modo in nostra domo
Depart, Dutifulness, if only in our house
umquam fuisti. dira Furiarum cohors
ever you-were. dire of-Furies band
discorsque Erinys veniat et geminas faces
and-discordant Erinys let-come and twin torches
Megaera quatiens: non satis magno meum
Megaera shaking: not enough with-great my
ardet furore pectus, impleri iuvat
burns madness breast, to-be-filled it-delights
maiore monstro.
with-greater monster.

SATELLES Quid novi rabidus struis?
What of-new raging do-you-build?

ATREUS Nil quod doloris capiat assueti modus;
Nothing which of-grief may-contain accustomed measure;

nullum relinquam facinus et nullum est satis.
no I-shall-leave deed and none is enough.

SATELLES Ferrum?
Sword?

ATREUS Parum est.
Too-little it-is.

SATELLES Quid ignis?
What fire?

ATREUS Etiamnunc parum est.
Still too-little it-is.

SATELLES Quonam ergo telo tantus utetur dolor?
With-what then weapon so-great will-use grief?

ATREUS Ipso Thyeste.
With-very Thyestes.

SATELLES Maius hoc ira est malum.
Greater this than-anger is evil.

ATREUS Fateor. tumultus pectora attonitus quatit
I-confess. tumult breast stunned shakes

penitusque volvit; rapior et quo nescio,
and-deep rolls; I-am-swept and whither I-know-not,

sed rapior. imo mugit e fundo solum,
but I-am-swept. lowest bellows from depth the-ground,

tonat dies serenus ac totis domus
thunders day clear and in-whole the-house

ut fracta tectis crepuit et moti lares
as-if broken roofs crashed and moved household-gods

vertere vultum: fiat hoc, fiat nefas
turned face: let-be this, let-be the-crime
quod, di, timetis.
which, gods, you-fear.
SATELLES Facere quid tandem paras?
To-do what at-last do-you-prepare?
ATREUS Nescio quid animo maius et solito amplius
I-know-not what in-mind greater and than-usual ampler
supraque fines moris humani tumet
and-above bounds of-custom human swells
instatque pigris manibus — haud quid sit scio,
and-presses-on idle hands not what it-is I-know,
sed grande quiddam est. ita sit. hoc, anime, occupa.
but great something it-is. so be-it. this, soul, seize.
dignum est Thyeste facinus et dignum Atreo:
worthy is of-Thyestes the-deed and worthy of-Atreus:
quod uterque faciat, vidit infandae domus
which each may-do, saw of-unspeakable house
Odrysia mensas — fateor, immane est scelus,
Odrysian tables I-confess, monstrous is the-crime,
sed occupatum: maius hoc aliquid dolor
but taken-already: greater than-this something grief
inveniat. animum Daulis inspira parens
let-find. spirit Daulian breathe-in mother
sororque; causa est similis: assiste et manum
and-sister; the-cause is similar: stand-by and hand
impelle nostram. liberos avidus pater
drive our. children greedy father
gaudensque laceret et suos artus edat.
and-rejoicing may-tear and his-own limbs may-eat.

bene est, abunde est. hic placet poenae modus
well it-is, abundantly it-is. this pleases of-punishment measure
tantisper. ubinam est? tam diu cur innocens
for-now. where is-he? so long why innocent
versatur Atreus? tota iam ante oculos meos
lives Atreus? whole now before eyes my
imago caedis errat, ingesta orbitas
image of-slaughter wanders, heaped bereavement
in ora patris — anime, quid rursus times
into mouth of-the-father soul, why again do-you-fear
et ante rem subsidis? audendum est, age:
and before the-thing sink? to-be-dared it-is, come:
quod est in isto scelere praecipuum nefas,
what is in that crime chief wrong,
hoc ipse faciet.
this himself will-do.
SATELLES Sed quibus captus dolis
But by-what caught tricks
nostros dabit perductus in laqueos pedem?
our will-he-put led into snares foot?
inimica credit cuncta.
hostile he-believes all.
ATREUS Non poterat capi,
Not he-could to-be-caught,
nisi capere vellet. regna nunc sperat mea:
unless to-catch he-wished. realm now he-hopes my:
hac spe minanti fulmen occurret Iovi,
with-this hope threatening thunderbolt he-will-meet Jove,
hac spe subibit gurgitis tumidi minas
with-this hope will-undergo of-flood swollen threats

dubiumque Libycae Syrtis intrabit fretum,
and-doubtful of-Libyan Syrtis will-enter strait,
hac spe, quod esse maximum retur malum,
with-this hope, what to-be greatest he-thinks evil,
fratrem videbit.
his-brother he-will-see.
SATELLES Quis fidem pacis dabit?
Who pledge of-peace will-give?
cui tanta credet?
to-whom so-great will-he-trust?
ATREUS Credula est spes improba.
Credulous is hope wicked.
gnatis tamen mandata quae patruo ferant
to-sons yet messages which to-uncle they-may-carry
dabimus: relictis exul hospitiis vagus
we-shall-give: with-left exile lodgings wandering
regno ut miserias mutet atque Argos regat
for-kingship that miseries he-may-exchange and Argos rule
ex parte dominus. si nimis durus preces
in part as-lord. if too hard prayers
spernet Thyestes, liberos eius rudes
will-spurn Thyestes, children his raw
malisque fessos gravibus et faciles capi
and-by-evils weary heavy and easy to-be-caught
prece commovebunt: hinc vetus regni furor,
by-prayer will-move: here old of-kingship madness,
illinc egestas tristis ac durus labor
there poverty grim and hard toil
quamvis rigentem tot malis subigent virum.
however stiff by-so-many evils will-subdue man.

SATELLES Iam tempus illi fecit aerumnas leves.
Now time to-him has-made troubles light.
ATREUS Erras: malorum sensus accrescit die.
You-err: of-evils the-sense grows day-by-day.
leve est miserias ferre, perferre est grave.
light it-is miseries to-bear, to-bear-through is heavy.
SATELLES Alios ministros consili tristis lege.
Other ministers of-counsel grim choose.
ATREUS Peiora iuvenes facile praecepta audiunt.
Worse young-men easily lessons hear.
SATELLES In patre facient quicquid in patruo doces:
On father they-will-do whatever on uncle you-teach:
saepe in magistrum scelera redierunt sua.
often onto teacher crimes have-returned his-own.
ATREUS Ut nemo doceat fraudis et sceleris vias,
Though no-one teach of-fraud and of-crime ways,
regnum docebit. ne mali fiant times?
kingship will-teach. lest wicked they-become do-you-fear?
nascuntur. istud quod vocas saevum asperum
they-are-born. that which you-call savage harsh
agique dure credis et nimium impie,
and-to-be-done harshly you-think and too impiously,
fortasse et illic agitur.
perhaps also there is-done.
SATELLES Hanc fraudem scient
This fraud will-know
nati parari?
the-sons to-be-prepared?

ATREUS Tacita tam rudibus fides
Silent so raw faith
non est in annis; detegent forsan dolos:
not is in years; they-will-uncover perhaps tricks:
tacere multis discitur vitae malis.
to-keep-silent by-many is-learned of-life evils.
SATELLES Ipsosque per quos fallere alium cogitas
And-themselves through whom to-deceive another you-plan
falles?
will-you-deceive?
ATREUS Ut ipsi crimine et culpa vacent.
That they-themselves of-crime and blame may-be-free.
quid enim necesse est liberos sceleri meos
why indeed necessary is-it children in-crime my
inserere? per nos odia se nostra explicent. —
to-involve? through us hatreds themselves our let-unfold.
male agis, recedis, anime: si parcis tuis,
badly you-act, you-draw-back, soul: if you-spare your,
parces et illis. consili Agamemnon mei
you-will-spare also those. of-counsel Agamemnon my
sciens minister fiat et fratri sciens
knowing minister let-be and to-brother knowing
Menelaus adsit. prolis incertae fides
Menelaus let-assist. of-offspring uncertain the-proof
ex hoc petatur scelere: si bella abnuunt
from this let-be-sought crime: if wars they-refuse
et gerere nolunt odia, si patruum vocant,
and to-wage not-wish hatreds, if uncle they-call,
pater est. eatur. — multa sed trepidus solet
father he-is. let-it-go. many-things but anxious is-wont

detegere vultus, magna nolentem quoque
to-reveal face, great the-unwilling even
consilia produnt: nesciant quantae rei
counsels betray: let-them-not-know of-how-great a-thing
fiant ministri. nostra tu coepta occules.
they-become ministers. our you plans will-hide.
SATELLES Haud sum monendus: ista nostro in pectore
Not I-am to-be-warned: those our in breast
335 fides timorque, sed magis claudet fides.
faith and-fear, but more will-lock faith.

IV · TRUE KINGSHIP

The chorus asks what madness drives brothers to bloodshed for a throne, not knowing where kingship lies. It is not wealth, purple, crown, or gilded beams: a king is one who has put off fear, whom neither ambition, the mob's favor, gold, thunderbolt, storm, nor sword can shake, and who meets death gladly. He needs no horses, arms, or siege engines; kingship is a good mind, which each gives himself. The chorus would live and die in quiet obscurity, for death lies heavy on one known to all but unknown to himself.

CHORUS Quis vos exagitat furor,
What you drives madness,
340 alternis dare sanguinem
in-turns to-give blood
et sceptrum scelere aggredi?
and the-scepter by-crime to-attack?
nescitis, cupidi arcium,
you-do-not-know, desirous of-citadels,
regnum quo iaceat loco.
kingship in-what may-lie place.

regem non faciunt opes,
a-king not make riches,
non vestis Tyriae color,
not of-robe Tyrian the-color,
non frontis nota regiae,
not of-brow mark royal,
non auro nitidae trabes:
not with-gold shining beams:
rex est qui posuit metus
a-king is who has-laid-aside fears
et diri mala pectoris,
and of-dire evils breast,
quem non ambitio inpotens
whom not ambition unbridled
et numquam stabilis favor
and never stable favor
vulgi praecipitis movet,
of-the-mob headlong moves,
non quicquid fodit Occidens
not whatever digs the-West
aut unda Tagus aurea
or with-wave Tagus golden
claro devehit alveo,
in-bright carries-down channel,
non quicquid Libycis terit
not whatever from-Libyan threshes
fervens area messibus,
glowing threshing-floor harvests,
quem non concutiet cadens
whom not will-shake falling

obliqui via fulminis,
of-slanting the-path thunderbolt,
non Eurus rapiens mare
not Eurus snatching sea
aut saevo rabidus freto
or with-savage raging flood
ventosi tumor Hadriae,
of-windy swell Adriatic,
quem non lancea militis,
whom not the-lance of-a-soldier,
non strictus domuit chalybs,
not drawn has-tamed steel,
qui tuto positus loco
who in-safe placed place
infra se videt omnia
below himself sees all
occurritque suo libens
and-goes-to-meet his gladly
fato nec queritur mori.
fate nor complains to-die.
Reges conveniant licet
Kings may-gather though
qui sparsos agitant Dahas,
who scattered drive Dahae,
qui rubri vada litoris
who of-red shallows shore
et gemmis mare lucidis
and with-gems sea bright
late sanguineum tenent,
widely blood-red hold,

aut qui Caspia fortibus
or who Caspian to-strong
recludunt iuga Sarmatis,
open ridges Sarmatians,
certet Danuvii vadum
let-contend of-Danube the-ford
audet qui pedes ingredi
dares who on-foot to-enter
et (quocumque loco iacent)
and (in-whatever place they-lie)
Seres vellere nobiles:
Seres for-fleece famous:
nil ullis opus est equis,
nothing of-any need is horses,
nil armis et inertibus
nothing of-arms and idle
telis quae procul ingerit
weapons which from-afar hurls
Parthus, cum simulat fugas,
the-Parthian, when he-feigns flights,
admotis nihil est opus
with-brought-up nothing is need
urbes sternere machinis,
cities to-lay-low engines,
longe saxa rotantibus.
far rocks whirling.
mens regnum bona possidet.
a-mind kingship good possesses.
hoc regnum sibi quisque dat.
this kingship to-himself each gives.

Stet quicumque volet potens
Let-stand whoever will-wish powerful
aulae culmine lubrico:
of-a-court on-summit slippery:
me dulcis saturet quies;
me sweet let-fill rest;
obscuro positus loco
in-obscure placed place
leni perfruar otio,
gentle may-I-enjoy leisure,
nullis nota Quiritibus
to-no known citizens
aetas per tacitum fluat.
life through silence let-flow.
sic cum transierint mei
thus when have-passed my
nullo cum strepitu dies,
no with noise days,
plebeius moriar senex.
plebeian may-I-die old.
illi mors gravis incubat
on-him death heavy lies
qui, notus nimis omnibus,
who, known too to-all,
ignotus moritur sibi.
unknown dies to-himself.

Thyestes sees his country, the Cyclopean towers, and the racecourse of his victories, but fears to meet Atreus and would rather go back to the woods. His son Tantalus urges him on, since his brother offers him a share of the throne. Thyestes cannot name his fear; he praises the safety of a poor man's hut against the poisoned cup of kings, and believes his brother's love less than the sea drowning the stars. Yet he follows his son.

THYESTES Optata patriae tecta et Argolicas opes
Longed-for of-fatherland roofs and Argive wealth
miserisque summum ac maxime exulibus bonum,
and-to-the-wretched highest and most to-exiles good,
tractum soli natalis et patrios deos
tract of-soil native and ancestral gods
(si sunt tamen di) cerno, Cyclopum sacras
(if there-are yet gods) I-see, of-the-Cyclopes sacred
turres, labore maius humano decus,
towers, than-labor greater human glory,
celebrata iuveni stadia, per quae nobilis
thronged by-young racecourses, through which famous
palmam paterno non semel curru tuli.
palm in-paternal not once chariot I-bore.
occurret Argos, populus occurret frequens —
will-meet Argos, the-people will-meet thronging
sed nempe et Atreus. repete silvestres fugas
but surely also Atreus. seek-again woodland flights
saltusque densos potius et mixtam feris
and-glades dense rather and mixed with-beasts
similemque vitam; clarus hic regni nitor
and-like life; bright this of-kingship splendor

fulgore non est quod oculos falso auferat:
with-gleam not there-is why eyes false may-carry-off:
cum quod datur spectabis, et dantem aspice.
when what is-given you-will-look-at, also the-giver look-at.
modo inter illa, quae putant cuncti aspera,
lately among those-things, which think all harsh,
fortis fui laetusque; nunc contra in metus
brave I-was and-glad; now on-the-contrary into fears
revolvor: animus haeret ac retro cupit
I-roll-back: the-mind sticks and back desires
corpus referre, moveo nolentem gradum.
the-body to-carry, I-move unwilling step.

TANTALUS Pigro (quid hoc est?) genitor incessu stupet
With-sluggish (what this is?) my-father gait is-stunned
vultumque versat seque in incerto tenet.
and-face turns and-himself in uncertainty holds.

THYESTES Quid, anime, pendes quidve consilium diu
Why, soul, do-you-hang or-why counsel long
tam facile torques? rebus incertissimis,
so easy do-you-twist? to-things most-uncertain,
fratri atque regno, credis ac metuis mala
to-a-brother and kingship, you-trust and fear evils
iam victa, iam mansueta et aerumnas fugis
now conquered, now tamed and troubles flee
bene collocatas? esse iam miserum iuvat.
well placed? to-be now wretched it-delights.
reflecte gressum, dum licet, teque eripe.
turn-back step, while it-is-allowed, and-yourself snatch-away.

TANTALUS Quae causa cogit, genitor, a patria gradum
What cause forces, father, from fatherland step
referre visa? cur bonis tantis sinum
to-carry-back seen? why from-goods so-great bosom
subducis? ira frater abiecta redit
do-you-withdraw? with-anger brother cast-off returns
partemque regni reddit et lacerae domus
and-part of-kingship gives-back and of-torn house
componit artus teque restituit tibi.
sets limbs and-you restores to-yourself.
THYESTES Causam timoris ipse quam ignoro exigis.
The-cause of-fear myself which I-do-not-know you-demand.
nihil timendum video, sed timeo tamen.
nothing to-be-feared I-see, but I-fear yet.
placet ire, pigris membra sed genibus labant
it-pleases to-go, with-sluggish limbs but knees totter
alioque quam quo nitor abductus feror.
and-elsewhere than where I-strive led-away I-am-borne.
sic concitatam remige et velo ratem
thus driven by-oarsman and sail ship
aestus resistens remigi et velo refert.
tide resisting to-oarsman and sail carries-back.
TANTALUS Evince quicquid obstat et mentem impedit
Overcome whatever opposes and mind hinders
reducemque quanta praemia expectent vide.
and-returned how-great rewards await see.
pater, potes regnare.
father, you-can to-reign.
THYESTES Cum possim mori.
Since I-can to-die.

TANTALUS Summa est potestas —
Highest is power
THYESTES Nulla: si cupias nihil.
None: if you-desire nothing.
TANTALUS Gnatis relinques,
To-sons you-will-leave,
THYESTES Non capit regnum duos.
Not holds kingdom two.
TANTALUS Miser esse mavult esse qui felix potest?
Wretched to-be prefers to-be who happy can?
THYESTES Mihi crede, falsis magna nominibus placent,
Me believe, by-false great-things names please,
frustra timentur dura. dum excelsus steti,
in-vain are-feared hard-things. while lofty I-stood,
numquam pavere destiti atque ipsum mei
never to-fear I-ceased and itself of-my
ferrum timere lateris. o quantum bonum est
steel to-fear side. o how-great good it-is
obstare nulli, capere securas dapes
to-oppose no-one, to-take carefree feasts
humi iacentem! scelera non intrant casas,
on-ground lying! crimes not enter huts,
totusque mensa capitur angusta cibus;
and-whole at-table is-taken narrow food;
venenum in auro bibitur — expertus loquor:
poison in gold is-drunk experienced I-speak:
malam bonae praeferre fortunam licet.
bad to-good to-prefer fortune is-allowed.
non vertice alti montis impositam domum
not on-peak of-high mountain placed house

et eminentem civitas humilis tremit
and towering city humble trembles
nec fulget altis splendidum tectis ebur
nor gleams on-lofty splendid ceilings ivory
somnosque non defendit excubitor meos;
and-sleeps not defends sentry my;
non classibus piscamur et retro mare
not with-fleets we-fish and back the-sea
iacta fugamus mole nec ventrem improbum
with-thrown we-drive mole nor belly shameless
alimus tributo gentium, nullus mihi
we-feed with-tribute of-nations, no for-me
ultra Getas metatur et Parthos ager;
beyond Getae is-measured and Parthians field;
non ture colimur nec meae excluso Iove
not with-incense we-are-worshiped nor my with-excluded Jove
ornantur arae; nulla culminibus meis
are-adorned altars; no on-roofs my
imposita nutat silva nec fumant manu
placed nods wood nor steam by-hand
succensa multa stagna nec somno dies
heated many pools nor to-sleep day
Bacchoque nox iungenda pervigili datur:
and-to-Bacchus night to-be-joined sleepless is-given:
sed non timemur, tuta sine telo est domus
but not we-are-feared, safe without weapon is the-house
rebusque parvis magna praestatur quies —
and-to-things small great is-afforded rest
immane regnum est posse sine regno pati.
vast kingship it-is to-be-able without kingship to-endure.

TANTALUS Nec abnuendum, si dat imperium deus,
Neither to-be-refused, if gives rule a-god,
nec appetendum est: frater ut regnes rogat.
nor to-be-sought it-is: your-brother that you-reign asks.
THYESTES Rogat? timendum est. errat hic aliquis dolus.
Asks? to-be-feared it-is. wanders here some trick.
TANTALUS Redire pietas unde submota est solet
To-return dutifulness whence removed it-was is-wont
reparatque vires iustus amissas amor.
and-restores strength just lost love.
THYESTES Amat Thyesten frater? aetherias prius
Loves Thyestes his-brother? the-heavenly sooner
perfundet Arctos pontus et Siculi rapax
will-drench Bears sea and of-Sicilian rapacious
consistet aestus unda et Ionio seges
will-stand tide the-wave and on-Ionian crop
matura pelago surget et lucem dabit
ripe sea will-rise and light will-give
nox atra terris, ante cum flammis aquae,
night black to-lands, sooner with flames waters,
cum morte vita, cum mari ventus fidem
with death life, with sea wind faith
foedusque iungent.
and-treaty will-join.
TANTALUS Quam tamen fraudem times?
What yet fraud do-you-fear?
THYESTES Omnem: timori quem meo statuam modum?
Every: for-fear what my shall-I-set limit?
tantum potest quantum odit.
as-much he-can as he-hates.

TANTALUS In te quid potest?
Against you what can-be?

THYESTES Pro me nihil iam metuo: vos facitis mihi
For me nothing now I-fear: you make for-me

Atrea timendum.
Atreus to-be-feared.

TANTALUS Decipi cautus times?
To-be-deceived cautious do-you-fear?

THYESTES Serum est cavendi tempus in mediis malis:
Late is of-caution the-time in middle evils:

eatur. unum genitor hoc testor tamen:
let-it-be-gone. one father this I-attest yet:

ego vos sequor, non duco.
I you follow, not lead.

TANTALUS Respiciet deus
Will-regard god

bene cogitata, perge non dubio gradu.
well intended-things, go-on with-not doubtful step.

Seeing his brother and the sons in his net, Atreus likens himself to an Umbrian hound straining at the leash, and hides his anger in an embrace. Thyestes confesses, kneels, and offers his sons as hostages. Atreus bids him put off his squalid robe and presses a share of the kingdom on him; Thyestes accepts the name of king while Atreus goes to offer the victims.

ATREUS Plagis tenetur clausa dispositis fera:
In-nets is-held enclosed set the-beast:
et ipsum et una generis invisi indolem
both himself and together of-race hated the-breed
iunctam parenti cerno. iam tuto in loco
joined to-the-father I-see. now safe in place
versantur odia. venit in nostras manus
are-turned hatreds. has-come into our hands
tandem Thyestes, venit, et totus quidem.
at-last Thyestes, has-come, and whole indeed.
vix tempero animo, vix dolor frenos capit.
scarcely I-restrain my-spirit, scarcely grief reins takes.
sic, cum feras vestigat et longo sagax
so, when beasts tracks and on-long keen
loro tenetur Umber ac presso vias
leash is-held the-Umbrian and with-pressed ways
scrutatur ore, dum procul lento suem
searches muzzle, while far-off with-faint boar
odore sentit, paret et tacito locum
scent he-perceives, he-obeys and with-silent the-place
rostro pererrat; praeda cum propior fuit,
snout ranges-over; prey when nearer has-been,

cervice tota pugnat et gemitu vocat
with-neck whole he-fights and with-whine calls
dominum morantem seque retinenti eripit:
master delaying and-himself from-the-restraining snatches:
cum sperat ira sanguinem, nescit tegi;
when hopes anger blood, it-knows-not to-be-hidden;
tamen tegatur. aspice, ut multo gravis
yet let-it-be-hidden. look, how with-much heavy
squalore vultus obruat maestos coma,
squalor face overwhelms sad hair,
quam foeda iaceat barba. praestetur fides —
how foul lies beard. let-be-shown faith
fratrem iuvat videre. complexus mihi
my-brother it-delights to-see. embraces to-me
redde expetitos. quicquid irarum fuit
give-back longed-for. whatever of-angers was
transierit; ex hoc sanguis ac pietas die
let-have-passed; from this blood and dutifulness day
colantur, animis odia damnata excidant.
let-be-cherished, from-minds hatreds condemned let-fall.
THYESTES Diluere possem cuncta, nisi talis fores.
To-wash-away I-could all, unless such you-were.
sed fateor, Atreu, fateor, admisi omnia
but I-confess, Atreus, I-confess, I-committed all
quae credidisti. pessimam causam meam
which you-believed. worst cause my
hodierna pietas fecit. est prorsus nocens
today's dutifulness has-made. is utterly guilty
quicumque visus tam bono fratri est nocens.
whoever seemed so to-good a-brother has guilty.

lacrimis agendum est: supplicem primus vides;
with-tears to-be-acted is: a-suppliant first you-see;
hae te precantur pedibus intactae manus:
these you entreat at-feet untouched hands:
ponatur omnis ira et ex animo tumor
let-be-laid-down all anger and from mind swelling
erasus abeat. obsides fidei accipe
erased let-depart. hostages of-faith receive
hos innocentes, frater.
these innocent, brother.
ATREUS A genibus manum
From knees hand
aufer meosque potius amplexus pete.
take-away and-my rather embraces seek.
vos quoque, senum praesidia, tot iuvenes, meo
you also, of-old-men protection, so-many youths, from-my
pendete collo. squalidam vestem exue
hang neck. squalid robe put-off
oculisque nostris parce et ornatus cape
and-eyes our spare and ornaments take
pares meis. laetusque fraterni imperi
equal to-mine. and-glad of-brotherly rule
capesse partem. maior haec laus est mea,
take-up part. greater this glory is mine,
fratri paternum reddere incolumi decus:
to-brother paternal to-restore unharmed glory:
habere regnum casus est, virtus dare.
to-have kingship chance is, virtue to-give.

THYESTES Di paria, frater, pretia pro tantis tibi
Gods equal, brother, rewards for so-great to-you
meritis rependant. regiam capitis notam
merits may-repay. royal of-head mark
squalor recusat noster et sceptrum manus
squalor refuses our and scepter hand
infausta refugit. liceat in media mihi
ill-starred shrinks-from. may-it-be-allowed in middle to-me
latere turba.
to-hide crowd.
ATREUS Recipit hoc regnum duos.
Admits this kingdom two.
THYESTES Meum esse credo quicquid est, frater, tuum.
Mine to-be I-believe whatever is, brother, yours.
ATREUS Quis influentis dona fortunae abnuit?
Who of-inflowing gifts fortune refuses?
THYESTES Expertus est quicumque quam facile effluant.
Experienced has whoever how easily they-flow-away.
ATREUS Fratrem potiri gloria ingenti vetas?
Brother to-gain glory huge do-you-forbid?
THYESTES Tua iam peracta gloria est, restat mea:
Your now completed glory is, remains mine:
respuere certum est regna consilium mihi.
to-reject fixed is kingship plan for-me.
ATREUS Meam relinquam, nisi tuam partem accipis.
Mine I-shall-abandon, unless your part you-accept.
THYESTES Accipio: regni nomen impositi feram,
I-accept: of-kingship the-name imposed I-shall-bear,
sed iura et arma servient mecum tibi.
but laws and arms will-serve with-me to-you.

ATREUS Imposita capiti vincla venerando gere;
Placed on-head bonds venerable wear;
ego destinatas victimas superis dabo.
I destined victims to-the-gods-above shall-give.

VII · THE CHORUS ON PEACE AND FORTUNE

The chorus marvels that savage Atreus stopped at the sight of his brother: no force is greater than true dutifulness. Lately Mycenae shook with civil war, and fear of war was worse than war; now peace has returned, as the sea near Scylla, Charybdis, and Etna lies calm after a storm. But no lot lasts: the king whom nations fear fears in turn. Let no one trust good fortune or despair in bad.

CHORUS Credat hoc quisquam? ferus ille et acer
Would-believe this anyone? fierce that and keen
nec potens mentis truculentus Atreus
nor master of-mind savage Atreus
fratris aspectu stupefactus haesit.
of-his-brother at-sight stunned stopped.
nulla vis maior pietate vera est:
no force greater than-dutifulness true is:
iurgia externis inimica durant,
quarrels with-strangers hostile last,
quos amor verus tenuit, tenebit.
whom love true has-held, will-hold.
ira cum magnis agitata causis
anger when by-great stirred causes
gratiam rupit cecinitque bellum,
favor has-broken and-sounded war,
cum leves frenis sonuere turmae,
when light with-reins have-resounded squadrons,

fulsit hinc illinc agitatus ensis
flashed here there brandished sword
quem movet crebro furibundus ictu
which moves with-frequent raging blow
sanguinem Mavors cupiens recentem:
blood Mars desiring fresh:
opprimit ferrum manibusque iunctis
suppresses steel and-with-hands joined
ducit ad pacem Pietas negantes.
leads to peace Dutifulness the-refusing.
Otium tanto subitum e tumultu
Leisure so-great sudden from tumult
quis deus fecit? modo per Mycenas
what god made? lately through Mycenae
arma civilis crepuere belli:
arms of-civil clashed war:
pallidae natos tenuere matres;
pale sons held mothers;
uxor armato timuit marito,
wife for-armed feared husband,
cum manum invitus sequeretur ensis,
when hand unwilling followed sword,
sordidus pacis vitio quietae;
dirty of-peace by-fault quiet;
ille labentes renovare muros,
that-one falling to-renew walls,
hic situ quassas stabilire turres,
this-one with-neglect shaken to-steady towers,
ferreis portas cohibere claustris
with-iron gates to-confine bars

ille certabat, pavidusque pinnis
that-one strove, and-fearful on-battlements
anxiae noctis vigil incubabat:
of-anxious night watchman brooded:
peior est bello timor ipse belli.
worse is than-war fear itself of-war.
Iam minae saevi cecidere ferri,
Now threats of-savage have-fallen steel,
iam silet murmur grave classicorum,
now is-silent murmur heavy of-trumpets,
iam tacet stridor litui strepentis:
now is-quiet shriek of-horn blaring:
alta pax urbi revocata laetae est.
deep peace to-city recalled glad is.
sic, ubi ex alto tumuere fluctus
so, when from deep have-swelled waves
Bruttium Coro feriente pontum,
Bruttian with-Corus striking sea,
Scylla pulsatis resonat cavernis
Scylla in-beaten resounds caverns
ac mare in portu timuere nautae
and sea in harbor have-feared sailors
quod rapax haustum revomit Charybdis,
which rapacious swallowed vomits-back Charybdis,
et ferus Cyclops metuit parentem
and fierce Cyclops fears his-father
rupe ferventis residens in Aetnae,
rock of-glowing sitting on Etna,
ne superfusis violetur undis
lest by-overflowing be-violated waves

ignis aeternis resonans caminis,
fire in-eternal resounding furnaces,
et putat mergi sua posse pauper
and thinks to-be-sunk his to-be-able poor
regna Laertes Ithaca tremente:
realms Laertes with-Ithaca trembling:
si suae ventis cecidere vires,
if their to-winds have-fallen strength,
mitius stagno pelagus recumbit;
more-gently than-pool sea lies-back;
alta, quae navis timuit secare,
deep, which a-ship feared to-cut,
hinc et hinc fusis speciosa velis
here and there with-spread beautiful sails
strata ludenti patuere cumbae,
smoothed for-playing have-lain-open skiff,
et vacat mersos numerare pisces
and there-is-leisure sunk to-count fish
hic ubi ingenti modo sub procella
here where huge just under storm
Cyclades pontum timuere motae.
Cyclades the-sea feared shaken.
Nulla sors longa est: dolor ac voluptas
No lot long is: grief and pleasure
invicem cedunt; brevior voluptas.
in-turn yield; shorter pleasure.
ima permutat levis hora summis:
lowest exchanges light hour with-highest:
ille qui donat diadema fronti,
he who gives diadem to-brow,

quem genu nixae tremuere gentes,
whom on-knee leaning trembled-at nations,
cuius ad nutum posuere bella
whose at nod laid-down wars
Medus et Phoebi propioris Indus
Mede and of-Phoebus nearer Indian
et Dahae Parthis equitem minati,
and Dahae to-Parthians cavalry threatening,
anxius sceptrum tenet et moventes
anxious scepter holds and moving
cuncta divinat metuitque casus
all divines and-fears chances
mobiles rerum dubiumque tempus.
fickle of-things and-doubtful time.
Vos quibus rector maris atque terrae
You to-whom ruler of-sea and of-land
ius dedit magnum necis atque vitae,
right has-given great of-death and of-life,
ponite inflatos tumidosque vultus:
lay-down puffed and-swollen faces:
quicquid a vobis minor expavescit,
whatever from you lesser dreads,
maior hoc vobis dominus minatur;
greater this to-you master threatens;
omne sub regno graviore regnum est.
every under realm heavier realm is.
quem dies vidit veniens superbum,
whom day saw coming proud,
hunc dies vidit fugiens iacentem.
him day saw fleeing prostrate.

Nemo confidat nimium secundis,
No-one let-trust too-much favorable,
nemo desperet meliora lassis:
no-one let-despair-of better for-weary:
miscet haec illis prohibetque Clotho
mixes these with-those and-forbids Clotho
stare Fortunam, rotat omne fatum.
to-stand Fortune, whirls every fate.
nemo tam divos habuit faventes,
no-one so gods has-had favoring,
crastinum ut posset sibi polliceri:
the-morrow that he-could to-himself to-promise:
res deus nostras celeri citatas
affairs god our with-swift hurried
turbine versat.
whirlwind turns.

A messenger tells the chorus of the grove at the heart of the palace, where yew and cypress shade a black spring, trophies hang, and the dead walk. There Atreus, as priest, sacrificed his brother's sons with every rite while the omens wept: Tantalus first, then Plisthenes, then the boy. He read their entrails, cut up the bodies, and boiled and roasted them, keeping only heads and hands; the sun turned back. Now Thyestes feasts, not knowing his evils.

NUNTIUS Quis me per auras turbo praecipitem vehet
What me through air whirlwind headlong will-carry
atraque nube involvet, ut tantum nefas
and-in-black cloud wrap, that so-great a-horror
eripiat oculis? o domus Pelopi quoque
it-may-snatch from-eyes? o house to-Pelops even
et Tantalo pudenda!
and to-Tantalus shameful!
CHORUS Quid portas novi?
What do-you-bring of-new?
NUNTIUS Quaenam ista regio est? Argos et Sparte, pios
What that region is? Argos and Sparta, dutiful
sortita fratres, et maris gemini premens
having-received brothers, and of-sea twin pressing
fauces Corinthos, an feris Hister fugam
jaws Corinth, or to-fierce Hister flight
praebens Alanis, an sub aeterna nive
offering Alans, or under eternal snow
Hyrcana tellus an vagi passim Scythae?
Hyrcanian land or wandering everywhere Scythians?
quis hic nefandi est conscius monstri locus?
what this of-unspeakable is witness monster place?

CHORUS Effare et istud pande, quodcumque est, malum.
Speak and that disclose, whatever it-is, evil.
NUNTIUS Si steterit animus, si metu corpus rigens
If shall-have-stood mind, if with-fear body stiffening
remittet artus. haeret in vultu trucis
will-release limbs. clings in face of-grim
imago facti. ferte me insanae procul,
the-image deed. carry me mad far,
illo, procellae, ferte quo fertur dies
thither, storms, carry where is-carried day
hinc raptus.
from-here snatched.
CHORUS Animos gravius incertos tenes.
Spirits more-heavily uncertain you-hold.
quid sit quod horres ede et auctorem indica:
what it-is that you-shudder-at tell and the-author point-out:
non quaero quis sit, sed uter. effare ocius.
not I-ask who he-is, but which-of-two. speak quicker.
NUNTIUS In arce summa Pelopiae pars est domus
In citadel highest of-Pelopian a-part is house
conversa ad austros, cuius extremum latus
turned to south-winds, whose farthest side
aequale monti crescit atque urbem premit
equal to-a-mountain grows and city presses
et contumacem regibus populum suis
and defiant to-kings people its
habet sub ictu; fulget hic turbae capax
holds under blow; gleams here of-crowd capacious
immane tectum, cuius auratas trabes
huge hall, whose gilded beams

variis columnae nobiles maculis ferunt.
with-varied columns noble spots bear.
post ista vulgo nota, quae populi colunt,
behind those to-the-crowd known, which peoples frequent,
in multa dives spatia discedit domus;
into many rich spaces divides the-house;
arcana in imo regio secessu iacet,
secret in deepest region recess lies,
alta vetustum valle compescens nemus,
in-deep ancient valley confining grove,
penetrale regni, nulla qua laetos solet
the-inner-sanctum of-kingship, no where glad is-wont
praebere ramos arbor aut ferro coli,
to-offer branches tree or by-iron to-be-tended,
sed taxus et cupressus et nigra ilice
but yew and cypress and with-black holm-oak
obscura nutat silva, quam supra eminens
dark nods wood, which above towering
despectat alte quercus et vincit nemus.
looks-down on-high oak and surpasses grove.
hinc auspicari regna Tantalidae solent,
from-here to-take-the-auspices reigns Tantalids are-wont,
hinc petere lassis rebus ac dubiis opem.
from-here to-seek in-weary affairs and doubtful help.
affixa inhaerent dona: vocales tubae
fastened cling gifts: vocal trumpets
victaeque falsis axibus pendent rotae
and-conquered with-false axles hang wheels
fractique currus, spolia Myrtoi maris
and-broken chariots, spoils of-Myrtoan sea

et omne gentis facinus; hoc Phrygius loco
and every of-the-race deed; in-this Phrygian place
fixus tiaras Pelopis, hic praeda hostium
fixed turban of-Pelops, here booty of-enemies
et de triumpho picta barbarico chlamys.
and from triumph embroidered barbarian cloak.
fons stat sub umbra tristis et nigra piger
a-spring stands under shade grim and in-black sluggish
haeret palude: talis est dirae Stygis
sticks swamp: such is of-dire Styx
deformis unda quae facit caelo fidem.
ugly wave which makes to-heaven faith.
hinc nocte caeca gemere feralis deos
from-here in-night blind to-groan deathly gods
fama est, catenis lucus excussis sonat
report is, with-chains the-grove shaken sounds
ululantque manes. quicquid audire est metus
and-howl shades. whatever to-hear is fear
illic videtur: errat antiquis vetus
there is-seen: wanders from-ancient old
emissa bustis turba et insultant loco
released tombs crowd and leap in-the-place
maiora notis monstra; quin tecta solet
greater than-known monsters; indeed covered is-wont
micare silva flamma, et excelsae trabes
to-flicker wood with-flame, and lofty beams
ardent sine igne. saepe latratu nemus
burn without fire. often with-barking grove
trino remugit, saepe simulacris domus
triple bellows, often by-phantoms the-house

attonita magnis, nec dies sedat metum:
stunned great, nor day settles fear:
nox propria luco est et superstitio inferum
night own to-the-grove is and superstition of-the-dead
in luce media regnat, hinc orantibus
in light middle reigns, from-here to-praying
680 responsa dantur certa, cum ingenti sono
responses are-given sure, when with-huge sound
laxantur adyto fata et inmugit specus
are-loosed from-shrine fates and bellows cave
vocem deo solvente. quo postquam furens
voice with-god releasing. where after raging
intravit Atreus liberos fratris trahens,
entered Atreus children of-brother dragging,
ornantur arae — quis queat digne eloqui?
are-adorned altars who could worthily to-speak?
685 post terga iuvenum nobiles religat manus
behind backs of-youths noble ties hands
et maesta vitta capita purpurea ligat;
and sad with-fillet heads purple binds;
non tura desunt, non sacer Bacchi liquor
not incense lacks, not sacred of-Bacchus liquid
tangensque salsa victimam culter mola.
and-touching with-salted victim knife meal.
servatur omnis ordo, ne tantum nefas
is-kept all order, lest so-great crime
690 non rite fiat.
not duly be-done.
CHORUS Quis manum ferro admovet?
Who hand to-steel applies?

NUNTIUS Ipse est sacerdos, ipse funesta prece
Himself is priest, himself with-deadly prayer
letale carmen ore violento canit,
lethal chant with-mouth violent sings,
stat ipse ad aras, ipse devotos neci
stands himself at altars, himself devoted to-death
contrectat et componit et † ferro admovet;
handles and arranges and (corrupt) to-steel applies;
attendit ipse: nulla pars sacri perit.
attends himself: no part of-the-rite perishes.
lucus tremescit, tota succusso solo
grove trembles, whole with-shaken ground
nutavit aula, dubia quo pondus daret
nodded palace, doubtful where weight it-should-give
ac fluctuanti similis; e laevo aethere
and to-wavering like; from left sky
atrum cucurrit limitem sidus trahens.
black ran track star dragging.
libata in ignes vina mutato fluunt
poured into fires wines with-changed flow
cruenta Baccho, regium capiti decus
bloody Bacchus, royal from-head ornament
bis terque lapsum est, flevit in templis ebur.
twice and-thrice fallen has, wept in temples ivory.
movere cunctos monstra, sed solus sibi
moved all portents, but alone to-himself
immotus Atreus constat atque ultro deos
unmoved Atreus stays-firm and moreover gods
terret minantes. iamque dimissa mora
frightens threatening. and-now with-dismissed delay

adsistit aris, torvum et obliquum intuens.
stands-by altars, grimly and sidelong looking.
ieiuna silvis qualis in Gangeticis
hungry woods as in Gangetic
inter iuvencos tigris erravit duos,
between bullocks tigress wandered two,
utriusque praedae cupida quo primum ferat
of-each prey desirous where first she-may-bring
incerta morsus (flectit hoc rictus suos,
uncertain bites (she-bends here jaws her,
illo reflectit et famem dubiam tenet),
there bends-back and hunger doubtful holds),
sic dirus Atreus capita devota impiae
so dire Atreus heads devoted to-impious
speculatur irae: quem prius mactet sibi
watches anger: whom first he-should-slay for-himself
dubitat, secunda deinde quem caede immolet.
he-doubts, with-second next whom slaughter he-should-sacrifice.
nec interest, sed dubitat et saevum scelus
nor it-matters, but he-doubts and savage crime
iuvat ordinare.
it-delights to-arrange.

CHORUS Quem tamen ferro occupat?
Whom yet with-steel does-he-seize-first?

NUNTIUS Primus locus (ne desse pietatem putes)
First place (lest to-be-lacking dutifulness you-think)
avo dicatur: Tantalus prima hostia est.
to-grandfather let-it-be-dedicated: Tantalus first victim is.

CHORUS Quo iuvenis animo, quo tulit vultu necem?
With-what youth spirit, with-what bore face death?

NUNTIUS Stetit sui securus et non est preces
He-stood of-himself carefree and not has prayers
perire frustra passus; ast illi ferus
to-perish in-vain allowed; but in-him fierce
in vulnere ensem abscondit et penitus premens
in wound sword hid and deep pressing
iugulo manum commisit: educto stetit
to-throat hand joined: with-drawn-out stood
ferro cadaver, cumque dubitasset diu,
steel the-corpse, and-when it-had-doubted long,
hac parte an illa caderet, in patruum cadit.
on-this side or that it-should-fall, onto uncle falls.
tunc ille ad aras Plisthenem saevus trahit
then he to altars Plisthenes savage drags
adicitque fratri; colla percussa amputat;
and-adds to-brother; neck struck cuts-off;
cervice caesa truncus in pronum ruit,
with-neck cut trunk into prone falls,
querulum cucurrit murmure incerto caput.
plaintive ran with-murmur uncertain head.
CHORUS Quid deinde gemina caede perfunctus facit?
What then with-double slaughter finished does-he-do?
puerone parcit an scelus sceleri ingerit?
the-boy spares-he or crime on-crime heaps?
NUNTIUS Silva iubatus qualis Armenia leo
In-wood maned as Armenian lion
in caede multa victor armento incubat
in slaughter much victor over-herd broods
(cruore rictus madidus et pulsa fame
(with-blood jaws wet and with-driven-off hunger

non ponit iras: hinc et hinc tauros premens
not lays-down angers: here and there bulls pressing
vitulis minatur dente iam lasso piger),
calves threatens with-tooth now weary sluggish),
non aliter Atreus saevit atque ira tumet,
not otherwise Atreus rages and with-anger swells,
ferrumque gemina caede perfusum tenens,
and-steel with-double slaughter drenched holding,
oblitus in quem fureret, infesta manu
forgetful against whom he-raged, with-hostile hand
exegit ultra corpus — ut pueri statim
drove beyond body as of-the-boy at-once
pectore receptus ensis in tergo extitit;
in-breast received sword in back stood-out;
cadit ille et aras sanguine extinguens suo
falls he and altars with-blood quenching his-own
per utrumque vulnus moritur.
through each wound dies.

CHORUS O saevum scelus!
O savage crime!

NUNTIUS Exhorruistis? hactenus si stat nefas,
Have-you-shuddered? thus-far if stands crime,
pius est.
dutiful it-is.

CHORUS An ultra maius aut atrocius
Or beyond greater or more-atrocious
natura recipit?
nature admits?

NUNTIUS Sceleris hunc finem putas?
Of-crime this the-end do-you-think?
gradus est.
a-step it-is.
CHORUS Quid ultra potuit? obiecit feris
What beyond could-he? did-he-throw to-beasts
lanianda forsan corpora atque igne arcuit?
to-be-mangled perhaps bodies and from-fire keep?
NUNTIUS Utinam arcuisset! ne tegat functos humus
Would-that he-had-kept! may-not cover the-dead earth
nec solvat ignis! avibus epulandos licet
nor dissolve fire! to-birds to-be-feasted-on although
ferisque triste pabulum saevis trahat —
and-to-beasts grim food savage he-may-drag
votum est sub hoc quod esse supplicium solet:
a-prayer it-is under this what to-be punishment is-wont:
pater insepultos spectet! o nullo scelus
the-father unburied may-watch! o no crime
credibile in aevo quodque posteritas neget —
believable in age and-which posterity may-deny
erepta vivis exta pectoribus tremunt
torn from-living entrails breasts tremble
spirantque venae corque adhuc pavidum salit;
and-breathe veins and-heart still fearful leaps;
at ille fibras tractat ac fata inspicit
but he entrails handles and fates inspects
et adhuc calentes viscerum venas notat.
and still hot of-innards veins notes.
postquam hostiae placuere, securus vacat
after the-victims pleased, carefree he-is-free

iam fratris epulis: ipse divisum secat
now for-brother's feasts: himself divided cuts
in membra corpus, amputat trunco tenus
into limbs body, cuts-off trunk as-far-as
umeros patentis et lacertorum moras,
shoulders broad and of-arms the-delays,
denudat artus durus atque ossa amputat;
strips joints hard and bones cuts-off;
tantum ora servat et datas fidei manus.
only faces he-keeps and given in-faith hands.
haec veribus haerent viscera et lentis data
these on-spits stick entrails and to-slow given
stillant caminis, illa flammatus latex
drip fires, those inflamed liquid
querente aeno iactat. impositas dapes
with-complaining cauldron tosses. placed-on feasts
transiluit ignis inque trepidantes focos
leaped-over fire and-onto trembling hearths
bis ter regestus et pati iussus moram
twice thrice heaped-back and to-endure ordered delay
invitus ardet. stridet in veribus iecur;
unwilling burns. sizzles on spits liver;
nec facile dicam, corpora an flammae magis
nor easily I-could-say, bodies or flames more
gemuere. piceos ignis in fumos abit;
groaned. pitchy fire into smoke goes;
et ipse fumus, tristis ac nebula gravis,
and itself smoke, grim and as-cloud heavy,
non rectus exit seque in excelsum levat:
not straight goes-out and-itself into the-height raises:

ipsos penates nube deformi obsidet.
very household-gods with-cloud ugly besets.
O Phoebe patiens, fugeris retro licet
O Phoebus patient, you-have-fled back though
medioque ruptum merseris caelo diem,
and-in-mid broken you-have-sunk sky day,
sero occidisti. lancinat gnatos pater
late you-have-set. mangles sons the-father
artusque mandit ore funesto suos;
and-limbs chews with-mouth deadly his-own;
nitet fluente madidus unguento comam
gleams with-flowing wet ointment in-hair
gravisque vino; saepe praeclusae cibum
and-heavy with-wine; often closed food
tenuere fauces — in malis unum hoc tuis
held-back jaws in evils one this your
bonum est, Thyesta, quod mala ignoras tua.
good is, Thyestes, that evils you-do-not-know your.
sed et hoc peribit. verterit currus licet
but even this will-perish. may-have-turned chariot though
sibi ipse Titan obvium ducens iter
to-himself himself Titan opposite leading path
tenebrisque facinus obruat tetrum novis
and-with-darkness deed may-overwhelm foul new
nox missa ab ortu tempore alieno gravis,
night sent from east at-time strange heavy,
tamen videndum est. tota patefient mala.
yet to-be-seen it-is. whole will-be-revealed evils.

The chorus asks why the Sun turns back at midday, before Vesper calls and while the plowman's oxen are still fresh. Have the Giants broken out, or Typhoeus? Dawn sees him set at her own threshold. They fear the world's order is ending and chaos returns: the zodiac will fall, Ram, Bull, Twins, and the rest down to the Fishes, and the northern Wagons and Serpent with them. Greedy of life is he who will not die with the world.

CHORUS Quo terrarum superumque parens,
Whither of-lands and-of-the-gods-above father,
cuius ad ortus noctis opacae
whose at rising of-night dark
decus omne fugit, quo vertis iter
glory all flees, whither do-you-turn path
medioque diem perdis Olympo?
and-in-mid day do-you-lose Olympus?
cur, Phoebe, tuos rapis aspectus?
why, Phoebus, your do-you-snatch looks?
nondum serae nuntius horae
not-yet of-late herald hour
nocturna vocat lumina Vesper;
nocturnal calls lights Vesper;
nondum Hesperiae flexura rotae
not-yet of-western the-turning wheel
iubet emeritos solvere currus;
orders having-served to-loose chariot;
nondum in noctem vergente die
not-yet into night with-sloping day
tertia misit bucina signum:
third has-sent trumpet signal:

stupet ad subitae tempora cenae
is-stunned at of-sudden times supper
nondum fessis bubus arator.
not-yet with-weary oxen the-plowman.
quid te aetherio pepulit cursu?
what you from-heavenly drove course?
quae causa tuos
what cause your
limite certo deiecit equos?
from-path fixed threw-down horses?
numquid aperto carcere Ditis
perhaps with-opened prison of-Dis
victi temptant bella Gigantes?
conquered try wars Giants?
numquid Tityos pectore fesso
perhaps Tityos in-breast weary
renovat veteres saucius iras?
renews old wounded angers?
num reiecto
perhaps with-thrown-off
latus explicuit monte Typhoeus?
side has-freed mountain Typhoeus?
numquid struitur via Phlegraeos
perhaps is-built a-way Phlegraean
alta per hostes et Thessalicum
high through enemies and Thessalian
Thressa premitur Pelion Ossa?
by-Thracian is-pressed Pelion Ossa?
solitae mundi periere vices?
accustomed of-the-world have-perished turns?

nihil occasus, nihil ortus erit?
nothing setting, nothing rising will-be?
stupet Eoos
is-stunned Eastern
assueta deo tradere frenos
accustomed to-the-god to-hand-over reins
genetrix primae roscida lucis
mother of-first dewy light
perversa sui limina regni;
turned-around of-her thresholds realm;
nescit fessos
she-knows-not weary
tinguere currus nec fumantes
to-dip chariot nor steaming
sudore iubas mergere ponto.
with-sweat manes to-plunge in-sea.
ipse insueto novus hospitio
himself in-unaccustomed new hospitality
Sol Auroram videt occiduus,
the-Sun Aurora sees setting,
tenebrasque iubet surgere nondum
and-darkness orders to-rise not-yet
nocte parata: non succedunt
with-night prepared: not succeed
astra nec ullo micat igne polus,
stars nor with-any gleams fire the-sky,
non Luna gravis digerit umbras.
not Moon heavy disperses shadows.
Sed quicquid id est, utinam nox sit!
But whatever it is, would-that night it-be!

trepidant, trepidant
tremble, tremble
pectora magno percussa metu:
breasts by-great struck fear:
ne fatali cuncta ruina
lest by-fatal all ruin
quassata labent iterumque deos
shaken may-totter and-again gods
hominesque premat deforme chaos,
and-men may-press ugly chaos,
iterum terras et mare cingens
again lands and sea surrounding
et vaga picti sidera mundi
and wandering of-painted stars sky
natura tegat.
nature may-cover.
non aeternae facis exortu
not of-eternal torch with-rising
dux astrorum saecula ducens
leader of-stars ages leading
dabit aestatis brumaeque notas,
will-give of-summer and-of-winter marks,
non Phoebeis obvia flammis
not to-Phoebean meeting flames
dement nocti Luna timores
will-remove from-night the-Moon fears
vincetque sui fratris habenas,
and-will-surpass of-her brother reins,
curvo brevius limite currens;
on-curved shorter track running;

ibit in unum
will-go into one
congesta sinum turba deorum.
heaped gulf throng of-gods.
hic qui sacris pervius astris
this which for-sacred passable stars
845 secat obliquo tramite zonas
cuts with-slanting path zones
flectens longos signifer annos,
turning long sign-bearer years,
lapsa videbit sidera labens;
fallen will-see stars falling;
hic qui nondum vere benigno
this-one who not-yet with-spring kindly
reddit Zephyro vela tepenti,
restores to-Zephyr sails warm,
850 Aries praeceps ibit in undas,
the-Ram headlong will-go into waves,
per quas pavidam vexerat Hellen;
through which fearful he-had-carried Helle;
hic qui nitido Taurus cornu
this-one who with-shining Bull horn
praefert Hyadas, secum Geminos
carries-before Hyades, with-himself Twins
trahet et curvi bracchia Cancri;
will-drag and of-curved arms Crab;
855 Leo flammiferis aestibus ardens
Lion with-flame-bearing heats burning
iterum e caelo cadet Herculeus,
again from sky will-fall Herculean,

cadet in terras Virgo relictas
will-fall to lands Virgin abandoned
iustaeque cadent pondera Librae
and-of-just will-fall weights Scales
secumque trahent Scorpion acrem;
and-with-them will-drag Scorpion sharp;
et qui nervo tenet Haemonio
and who on-string holds Haemonian
pinnata senex spicula Chiron,
feathered old-man arrows Chiron,
rupto perdet spicula nervo;
with-broken will-lose arrows string;
pigram referens hiemem gelidus
sluggish bringing-back winter icy
cadet Aegoceros frangetque tuam,
will-fall Capricorn and-will-break your,
quisquis es, urnam; tecum excedent
whoever you-are, urn; with-you will-depart
ultima caeli sidera Pisces,
last of-heaven stars Fishes,
Plostraque numquam perfusa mari
and-the-Wagons never drenched by-sea
merget condens omnia gurges;
will-sink hiding all abyss;
et qui medias dividit Ursas,
and who middle divides Bears,
fluminis instar lubricus Anguis
of-river like slippery Serpent
magnoque minor iuncta Draconi
and-to-great lesser joined Dragon

frigida duro Cynosura gelu,
cold with-hard Cynosura frost,
custosque sui tardus plaustri
and-guard of-his slow wagon
iam non stabilis ruet Arctophylax.
now not stable will-fall Arctophylax.
Nos e tanto visi populo
We from so-great seemed people
digni premeret quos everso
worthy should-press whom with-overturned
cardine mundus?
axis the-world?
in nos aetas ultima venit?
on us age last has-come?
o nos dura sorte creatos,
o us by-hard lot created,
seu perdidimus solem miseri,
whether we-have-lost sun wretched,
sive expulimus!
or we-have-driven-out!
abeant questus, discede, timor:
let-depart laments, depart, fear:
vitae est avidus quisquis non vult
of-life is greedy whoever not wishes
mundo secum pereunte mori.
with-world with-himself perishing to-die.

X · THE FEAST REVEALED

Atreus exults, equal to the stars, and opens the hall to watch his brother, full of wine, learn what he has eaten. Thyestes tries to put off his griefs, but tears come unbidden; the cup will not reach his lips, and the sky darkens. He asks for his sons, and Atreus shows him their heads and hands. Thyestes calls on Earth and on the ruler of heaven's thunderbolt; Atreus gloats that now he believes his sons his own and his marriage bed chaste, and when Thyestes invokes the avenging gods, hands him over to his sons for punishment.

ATREUS Aequalis astris gradior et cunctos super
Equal to-the-stars I-walk and all above
altum superbo vertice attingens polum.
high with-proud head touching pole.
nunc decora regni teneo, nunc solium patris.
now the-honors of-kingship I-hold, now the-throne of-my-father.
dimitto superos: summa votorum attigi.
I-dismiss the-gods-above: the-height of-prayers I-have-reached.
bene est, abunde est, iam sat est etiam mihi.
well it-is, abundantly it-is, now enough is even for-me.
sed cur satis sit? pergam et impleto patre
but why enough should-it-be? I-shall-proceed and with-filled father
funere suorum. ne quid obstaret pudor,
with-death of-his-own. lest at-all hinder shame,
dies recessit: perge dum caelum vacat.
day has-withdrawn: go-on while heaven is-empty.
utinam quidem tenere fugientes deos
would-that indeed to-hold fleeing gods
possem et coactos trahere, ut ultricem dapem
I-could and forced to-drag, that avenging feast

omnes viderent — quod sat est, videat pater.
all might-see what enough is, let-see the-father.
etiam die nolente discutiam tibi
even with-day unwilling I-shall-scatter for-you
tenebras, miseriae sub quibus latitant tuae.
darkness, miseries under which lurk your.
nimis diu conviva securo iaces
too long as-guest with-carefree you-lie
hilarique vultu, iam satis mensis datum est
and-cheerful face, now enough to-tables given is
satisque Baccho: sobrio tanta ad mala
and-enough to-Bacchus: of-sober so-great for evils
opus est Thyeste. turba famularis, fores
need is Thyestes. throng of-servants, doors
templi relaxa, festa patefiat domus.
of-the-temple open, festive let-be-opened house.
libet videre, capita natorum intuens
it-pleases to-see, heads of-sons beholding
quos det colores, verba quae primus dolor
what he-may-give colors, words which first grief
effundat aut ut spiritu expulso stupens
may-pour-out or how with-breath driven-out stunned
corpus rigescat. fructus hic operis mei est.
body may-stiffen. fruit this of-work my is.
miserum videre nolo, sed dum fit miser.
wretched to-see I-do-not-want, but while he-becomes wretched.
aperta multa tecta conlucent face.
opened with-many-a halls shine torch.
resupinus ipse purpurae atque auro incubat,
lying-back himself on-purple and gold reclines,

vino gravatum fulciens laeva caput.
with-wine weighed-down propping with-left head.
eructat. o me caelitum excelsissimum,
he-belches. o me of-heavenly-ones the-loftiest,
regumque regem! vota transcendi mea.
and-of-kings king! prayers I-have-surpassed my.
satur est, capaci ducit argento merum —
full he-is, from-capacious draws silver wine
ne parce potu: restat etiamnunc cruor
do-not spare the-drink: remains still blood
tot hostiarum; veteris hunc Bacchi color
of-so-many victims; of-old this Bacchus color
abscondet — hoc, hoc mensa cludatur scypho
will-hide with-this, with-this the-table let-be-closed cup
mixtum suorum sanguinem genitor bibat:
mixed of-his-own blood the-father let-drink:
meum bibisset. ecce, iam cantus ciet
mine he-would-have-drunk. behold, now songs he-raises
festasque voces nec satis menti imperat.
and-festive voices nor enough mind commands.
THYESTES Pectora longis hebetata malis,
Breasts by-long dulled evils,
iam sollicitas ponite curas.
now anxious lay-down cares.
fugiat maeror fugiatque pavor,
let-flee grief and-let-flee dread,
fugiat trepidi comes exilii
let-flee of-anxious companion exile
tristis egestas
grim poverty

925 rebusque gravis pudor afflictis:
and-to-affairs heavy shame afflicted:
magis unde cadas quam quo refert.
more whence you-fall than whither matters.
Magnum, ex alto culmine lapsum
Great-thing, from high summit fallen
stabilem in plano figere gressum;
stable on level to-fix step;
magnum, ingenti strage malorum
great-thing, by-huge slaughter of-evils
930 pressum fracti pondera regni
pressed of-broken weights kingship
non inflexa cervice pati
with-not bent neck to-endure
nec degenerem victumque malis
nor degenerate and-conquered by-evils
rectum impositas ferre ruinas.
upright imposed to-bear ruins.
Sed iam saevi nubila fati
But now of-savage clouds fate
pelle ac miseri
drive-away and of-wretched
935 temporis omnis dimitte notas;
time all dismiss marks;
redeant vultus ad laeta boni,
let-return looks to glad good,
veterem ex animo mitte Thyesten.
old from mind send-away Thyestes.
Proprium hoc miseros sequitur vitium,
Peculiar this the-wretched follows fault,

numquam rebus credere laetis:
never to-things to-trust glad:
redeat felix fortuna licet,
may-return happy fortune though,
tamen afflictos gaudere piget.
yet the-afflicted to-rejoice it-irks.
quid me revocas festumque vetas
why me do-you-call-back and-festive forbid
celebrare diem, quid flere iubes,
to-celebrate day, why to-weep do-you-bid,
nulla surgens dolor ex causa?
no rising grief from cause?
quid me prohibes flore decenti
why me do-you-prevent with-flower comely
vincire comam? prohibet, prohibet!
to-bind hair? it-prevents, it-prevents!
Vernae capiti fluxere rosae,
Spring from-head have-flowed roses,
pingui madidus crinis amomo
with-rich wet hair amomum
inter subitos stetit horrores,
amid sudden has-stood-up shudders,
imber vultu nolente cadit,
a-shower with-face unwilling falls,
venit in medias voces gemitus.
comes into middle words a-groan.
maeror lacrimas amat assuetas,
grief tears loves accustomed,
flendi miseris dira cupido est.
of-weeping to-the-wretched dire desire is.

libet infaustos mittere questus,
it-pleases ill-omened to-send-out laments,
libet et Tyrio saturas ostro
it-pleases also with-Tyrian soaked purple
rumpere vestes, ululare libet.
to-tear robes, to-howl it-pleases.
Mittit luctus signa futuri
Sends of-grief signs coming
mens, ante sui praesaga mali:
the-mind, beforehand of-its foreboding evil:
instat nautis fera tempestas,
threatens sailors fierce storm,
cum sine vento tranquilla tument.
when without wind calm-waters swell.
Quos tibi luctus quosve tumultus
What for-yourself griefs or-what tumults
fingis, demens? credula praesta
do-you-fashion, madman? trusting show
pectora fratri: iam, quicquid id est,
breast to-your-brother: now, whatever it is,
vel sine causa vel sero times.
either without cause or late you-fear.
Nolo infelix, sed vagus intra
I-do-not-wish unhappy, but wandering within
terror oberrat, subitos fundunt
terror roams, sudden pour
oculi fletus, nec causa subest.
eyes tears, nor cause underlies.
dolor an metus est?
grief or fear is-it?

an habet lacrimas magna voluptas?
or has tears great pleasure?

ATREUS Festum diem, germane, consensu pari
Festive day, brother, with-agreement equal

celebremus: hic est, sceptra qui firmet mea
let-us-celebrate: this is, scepters which may-strengthen my

solidamque pacis alliget certae fidem.
and-solid of-peace may-bind sure faith.

THYESTES Satias dapis me nec minus Bacchi tenet.
Satiety of-feast me nor less of-Bacchus holds.

augere cumulus hic voluptatem potest,
to-increase crowning this pleasure can,

si cum meis gaudere felici datur.
if with mine to-rejoice to-the-happy is-given.

ATREUS Hic esse natos crede in amplexu patris.
Here to-be the-sons believe in embrace of-the-father.

hic sunt eruntque; nulla pars prolis tuae
here they-are and-will-be; no part of-offspring your

tibi subtrahetur. ora quae exoptas dabo
from-you will-be-withdrawn. faces which you-long-for I-shall-give

totumque turba iam sua implebo patrem.
and-whole with-throng now his I-shall-fill father.

satiaberis, ne metue. nunc mixti meis
you-will-be-sated, do-not fear. now mixed with-mine

iucunda mensae sacra iuvenilis colunt;
pleasant of-table rites youthful observe;

sed accientur. poculum infuso cape
but they-will-be-summoned. cup with-poured take

gentile Baccho.
ancestral Bacchus.

THYESTES Capio fraternae dapis
I-take of-brotherly feast
donum, paternis vina libentur deis,
the-gift, to-paternal wines let-be-poured gods,
tunc hauriantur. sed quid hoc? nolunt manus
then let-them-be-drained. but what this? refuse hands
parere, crescit pondus et dextram gravat;
to-obey, grows weight and right-hand weighs-down;
admotus ipsis Bacchus a labris fugit
brought-to very Bacchus from lips flees
circaque rictus ore decepto fluit
and-around jaws from-mouth deceived flows
et ipsa trepido mensa subsiluit solo.
and itself on-trembling the-table leaped ground.
vix lucet ignis; ipse quin aether gravis
scarcely shines fire; itself indeed sky heavy
inter diem noctemque desertus stupet,
between day and-night deserted is-stunned,
quid hoc? magis magisque concussi labant
what this? more and-more shaken totter
convexa caeli; spissior densis coit
vaults of-heaven; thicker with-dense gathers
caligo tenebris noxque se in noctem abdidit;
gloom darkness and-night itself into night has-hidden;
fugit omne sidus. quicquid est, fratri precor
flees every star. whatever it-is, brother I-pray
gnatisque parcat, omnis in vile hoc caput
and-sons may-it-spare, all onto worthless this head
abeat procella. redde iam gnatos mihi!
let-go storm. give-back now sons to-me!

ATREUS Reddam, et tibi illos nullus eripiet dies.
I-shall-give-back, and from-you them no will-snatch day.
THYESTES Quis hic tumultus viscera exagitat mea?
What this tumult entrails stirs my?
quid tremuit intus? sentio impatiens onus
what trembled within? I-feel impatient burden
meumque gemitu non meo pectus gemit.
and-my with-groan not mine breast groans.
adeste, nati, genitor infelix vocat,
be-present, sons, father unhappy calls,
adeste. visis fugiet hic vobis dolor —
be-present. with-seen will-flee this you grief
unde obloquuntur?
whence do-they-speak-against?
ATREUS Expedi amplexus pater:
Ready embraces father:
venere. gnatos ecquid agnoscis tuos?
they-have-come. sons at-all do-you-recognize your?
THYESTES Agnosco fratrem. sustines tantum nefas
I-recognize my-brother. do-you-endure so-great a-crime
gestare, Tellus? non ad infernam Styga
to-carry, Earth? not to infernal Styx
tenebrasque mergis rupta et ingenti via
and-darkness do-you-plunge broken and by-huge way
ad chaos inane regna cum rege abripis?
to chaos empty realm with king do-you-snatch?
non tota ab imo tecta convellens solo
not whole from lowest roofs tearing-up ground
vertis Mycenas? stare circa Tantalum
do-you-overturn Mycenae? to-stand around Tantalus

uterque iam debuimus: hinc compagibus
each now we-ought: here with-joints
et hinc revulsis, si quid infra Tartara est
and here torn, if anything below Tartarus is
avosque nostros, hoc tuam inmani sinu
and-ancestors our, hither your with-huge bosom
demitte vallem nosque defossos tege
send-down valley and-us buried cover
Acheronte toto. noxiae supra caput
with-Acheron whole. guilty above head
animae vagentur nostrum et ardenti freto
souls let-wander our and with-burning flood
Phlegethon harenas igneus totas agens
Phlegethon sands fiery whole driving
exilia supra nostra violentus fluat —
exile above our violent let-flow
immota tellus pondus ignavum iaces?
unmoved earth weight sluggish do-you-lie?
fugere superi.
have-fled the-gods-above.
ATREUS Iam accipe hos potius libens
Now receive these rather gladly
diu expetitos — nulla per fratrem est mora:
long longed-for no through brother is delay:
fruere, osculare, divide amplexus tribus.
enjoy, kiss, divide embraces among-three.
THYESTES Hoc foedus? haec est gratia, haec fratris fides?
This the-treaty? this is the-favor, this of-brother faith?
sic odia ponis? non peto, incolumis pater
thus hatreds do-you-lay-aside? not I-ask, unharmed father

natos ut habeam; scelere quod salvo dari
sons that I-may-have; with-crime what safe to-be-given
odioque possit, frater hoc fratrem rogo:
and-with-hatred may-be-able, brother this brother I-ask:
sepelire liceat, redde quod cernas statim
to-bury let-it-be-allowed, give-back what you-may-see at-once
uri; nihil te genitor habiturus rogo.
to-be-burned; nothing you father going-to-keep I-ask.
sed perditurus.
but going-to-lose.

ATREUS Quicquid e natis tuis
Whatever of sons your
superest habes, quodcumque non superest habes.
remains you-have, whatever not remains you-have.
THYESTES Utrumne saevis pabulum alitibus iacent,
Whether for-savage food birds do-they-lie,
an beluis servantur, an pascunt feras?
or for-beasts are-they-kept, or feed wild-animals?
ATREUS Epulatus ipse es impia natos dape.
Feasted yourself have on-impious sons feast.
THYESTES Hoc est deos quod puduit, hoc egit diem
This is the-gods what shamed, this drove day
aversum in ortus. quas miser voces dabo
turned-back to the-east. what wretched words shall-I-give
questusque quos? quae verba sufficient mihi?
and-laments what? what words will-suffice me?
abscisa cerno capita et avulsas manus
cut-off I-see heads and torn-off hands
et rupta fractis cruribus vestigia —
and broken from-shattered legs feet

hoc est quod avidus capere non potuit pater.
this is what greedy to-take not could father.
volvuntur intus viscera et clusum nefas
roll within entrails and shut-in crime
sine exitu luctatur et quaerit fugam.
without exit struggles and seeks flight.
da, frater, ensem (sanguinis multum mei
give, brother, sword (of-blood much my
habet ille): ferro liberis detur via.
has it): by-sword for-children let-be-given a-way.
negatur ensis? pectora inliso sonent
is-refused sword? breasts with-dashed let-sound
contusa planctu — sustine, infelix, manum,
bruised beating hold-back, unhappy, hand,
parcamus umbris. tale quis vidit nefas?
let-us-spare shades. such who saw crime?
quis inhospitalis Caucasi rupem asperam
what of-inhospitable Caucasus rock rough
Heniochus habitans quisve Cecropiis metus
Heniochan dwelling or-what to-Cecropian terror
terris Procrustes? genitor en natos premo
lands Procrustes? father look sons I-press
premorque natis — sceleris est aliquis modus.
and-am-pressed by-sons of-crime is some limit.
ATREUS Sceleri modus debetur ubi facias scelus,
To-crime limit is-owed when you-do crime,
non ubi reponas. hoc quoque exiguum est mihi.
not when you-repay. this also small is to-me.
ex vulnere ipso sanguinem calidum in tua
from wound itself blood hot into your

defundere ora debui, ut viventium
to-pour mouth I-ought, that of-the-living
biberes cruorem — verba sunt irae data
you-might-drink blood words are to-anger given
dum propero. ferro vulnera impresso dedi,
while I-hasten. with-sword wounds pressed I-gave,
cecidi ad aras, caede votiva focos
I-slew at altars, with-slaughter votive hearths
placavi et artus, corpora exanima amputans,
I-appeased and limbs, bodies lifeless cutting-off,
in parva carpsi frusta et haec ferventibus
into small I-tore pieces and these into-boiling
demersi aenis, illa lentis ignibus
I-plunged cauldrons, those at-slow fires
stillare iussi; membra nervosque abscidi
to-drip I-ordered; limbs and-sinews I-cut-off
viventibus, gracilique traiectas veru
from-the-living, and-on-slender pierced spit
mugire fibras vidi et aggessi manu
to-bellow entrails I-saw and I-heaped with-hand
mea ipse flammas — omnia haec melius pater
my myself flames all these better father
fecisse potuit, cecidit in cassum dolor:
to-have-done could, fell in vain grief:
scidit ore natos impio, sed nesciens,
tore with-mouth sons impious, but not-knowing,
sed nescientes.
but not-knowing.

THYESTES Clausa litoribus vagis
Enclosed by-shores wandering
audite maria, vos quoque audite hoc scelus,
hear seas, you also hear this crime,
quocumque, di, fugistis. audite inferi,
wherever, gods, you-have-fled. hear dead,
audite terrae, Noxque Tartarea gravis
hear lands, and-Night Tartarean heavy
et atra nube, vocibus nostris vaca
and black with-cloud, for-words our be-free
(tibi sum relictus, sola tu miserum vides,
(to-you I-am left, alone you the-wretched see,
tu quoque sine astris), vota non faciam improba,
you also without stars), prayers not I-shall-make wicked,
pro me nihil precabor — et quid iam potest
for me nothing I-shall-pray and what now can
pro me esse? vobis vota prospicient mea.
for me to-be? for-you prayers will-provide my.
tu, summe caeli rector, aetheriae potens
you, highest of-heaven ruler, of-ethereal powerful
dominator aulae, nubibus totum horridis
lord court, with-clouds whole bristling
convolve mundum, bella ventorum undique
wrap world, wars of-winds everywhere
committe et omni parte violentum intona,
join and on-every side violent thunder,
manuque non qua tecta et immeritas domos
and-with-hand not with-which roofs and undeserving homes
telo petis minore, sed qua montium
with-weapon you-attack lesser, but with-which of-mountains

tergemina moles cecidit et qui montibus
triple mass fell and who to-mountains
stabant pares Gigantes, hac arma expedi
stood equal Giants, with-this arms ready
ignesque torque. vindica amissum diem,
and-fires hurl. avenge lost day,
iaculare flammas, lumen ereptum polo
hurl flames, light snatched from-sky
fulminibus exple. causa, ne dubites diu,
with-thunderbolts fill. the-cause, lest you-doubt long,
utriusque mala sit; si minus, mala sit mea:
of-each evil let-be; if not, evil let-be mine:
me pete, trisulco flammeam telo facem
me attack, with-three-forked flaming weapon torch
per pectus hoc transmitte — si gnatos pater
through breast this send if sons a-father
humare et igni tradere extremo volo,
to-bury and to-fire to-hand-over last I-wish,
ego sum cremandus. si nihil superos movet
I am to-be-cremated. if nothing the-gods-above moves
nullumque telis impios numen petit,
and-no with-weapons impious divinity attacks,
aeterna nox permaneat et tenebris tegat
eternal night let-remain and with-darkness cover
inmensa longis scelera. nil, Titan, queror,
immense long crimes. nothing, Titan, I-complain,
si perseveras.
if you-persist.

ATREUS Nunc meas laudo manus,
Now my I-praise hands,
nunc parta vera est palma. perdideram scelus,
now won true is the-palm. I-had-wasted crime,
nisi sic doleres. liberos nasci mihi
unless thus you-grieved. children to-be-born to-me
nunc credo, castis nunc fidem reddi toris.
now I-believe, to-chaste now faith to-be-restored bed.
THYESTES Quid liberi meruere?
What children deserved?
ATREUS Quod fuerant tui.
That they-had-been yours.
THYESTES Natos parenti —
Sons to-father
ATREUS Fateor et, quod me iuvat,
I-confess and, what me it-delights,
certos.
sure.
THYESTES Piorum praesides testor deos.
Of-the-dutiful guardians I-call-to-witness gods.
ATREUS Quin coniugales?
Why-not marital?
THYESTES Scelere quis pensat scelus?
With-crime who repays crime?
ATREUS Scio quid queraris: scelere praerepto doles,
I-know what you-complain: with-crime forestalled you-grieve,
nec quod nefandas hauseris angit dapes —
nor that unspeakable you-drained distresses feasts
quod non pararis! fuerat hic animus tibi
that not you-prepared! had-been this intent to-you

instruere similes inscio fratri cibos
to-lay-out similar for-unknowing brother foods
et adiuvante liberos matre aggredi
and with-helping children mother to-attack
similique leto sternere — hoc unum obstitit:
and-with-similar death to-lay-low this one hindered:
tuos putasti. 1110
yours you-thought-them.
THYESTES Vindices aderunt dei;
Avengers will-be-present gods;
his puniendum vota te tradunt mea.
to-these to-be-punished prayers you hand-over my.
ATREUS Te puniendum liberis trado tuis.
You to-be-punished to-children I-hand-over your.

SENECA

Oedipus

OEDIPUS

I · THE PLAGUE AT THEBES

At a sullen dawn Oedipus surveys Thebes wasted by plague. Kingship is a deceitful good: he fled Polybus' kingdom because Delphi warned that he would kill his father and marry his mother, and now fears he alone is spared for some evil. He describes the parched rivers, the dying crops, and the pyres without wood, and wishes to die first. Jocasta bids him bear adversity like a king; he recalls facing the Sphinx, whose ash now wars on Thebes, and rests his one hope on Phoebus.

OEDIPUS Iam nocte Titan dubius expulsa redit
Now with-night Titan doubtful driven-out returns
et nube maestus squalida exoritur iubar,
and from-cloud sad squalid rises radiance,
lumenque flamma triste luctifica gerens
and-light with-flame grim baleful bearing
prospiciet avida peste solatas domos,
will-look-out-on by-greedy plague desolated homes,
stragemque quam nox fecit ostendet dies.
and-slaughter which night made will-show day.
Quisquamne regno gaudet? O fallax bonum,
Does-anyone in-kingship rejoice? O deceitful good,
quantum malorum fronte quam blanda tegis!
how-much of-evils with-brow how alluring you-cover!
ut alta ventos semper excipiunt iuga
as high winds always receive ridges
rupemque saxis vasta dirimentem freta
and-crag with-rocks vast parting straits
quamvis quieti verberat fluctus maris,
however of-calm beats the-wave sea,

imperia sic excelsa Fortunae obiacent.
empires so lofty to-Fortune lie-exposed.
quam bene parentis sceptra Polybi fugeram!
how well of-my-father scepter Polybus I-had-fled!
curis solutus exul, intrepidus, vagans
from-cares freed exile, fearless, wandering
(caelum deosque testor) in regnum incidi;
(heaven and-gods I-call-to-witness) into kingship I-fell;
infanda timeo: ne mea genitor manu
unspeakable-things I-fear: lest by-my father hand
perimatur; hoc me Delphicae laurus monent,
be-slain; this me Delphic laurels warn,
aliudque nobis maius indicunt scelus.
and-another to-us greater they-announce crime.
est maius aliquod patre mactato nefas?
is greater any than-father slain crime?
pro misera pietas (eloqui fatum pudet),
O wretched dutifulness (to-speak-out the-fate shames),
thalamos parentis Phoebus et diros toros
marriage of-parent Phoebus and dire bed
gnato minatur impia incestos face;
to-son threatens with-impious incestuous torch;
hic me paternis expulit regnis timor.
this me from-paternal drove kingdom fear.
non ego penates profugus excessi meos:
not I household-gods fugitive left my:
parum ipse fidens mihimet in tuto tua,
too-little myself trusting to-myself in safety your,
natura, posui iura. cum magna horreas,
nature, I-placed laws. when great-things you-dread,

quod posse fieri non putes metuas tamen:
what to-be-able to-happen not you-think you-fear yet:
cuncta expavesco meque non credo mihi.
all I-dread and-myself not I-trust to-myself.
Iam iam aliquid in nos fata moliri parant.
Now now something against us fates to-contrive prepare.
nam quid rear quod ista Cadmeae lues
for what should-I-think that this to-Cadmean plague
infesta genti strage tam late edita
hostile race with-slaughter so widely produced
mihi parcit uni? cui reservamur malo?
me spares alone? for-what am-I-reserved evil?
inter ruinas urbis et semper novis
amid ruins of-the-city and always with-new
deflenda lacrimis funera ac populi struem
to-be-bewailed tears deaths and of-the-people heap
incolumis asto — scilicet Phoebi reus.
unharmed I-stand surely of-Phoebus defendant.
sperare poteras sceleribus tantis dari
to-hope could-you for-crimes so-great to-be-given
regnum salubre? fecimus caelum nocens.
kingship healthy? we-made sky harmful.
Non aura gelido lenis afflatu fovet
Not breeze with-cool gentle breath cherishes
anhela flammis corda, non Zephyri leves
panting with-flames hearts, not Zephyrs light
spirant, sed ignes auget aestiferi canis
blow, but fires increases of-heat-bringing dog
Titan, leonis terga Nemeaei premens.
Titan, of-the-lion back Nemean pressing.

deseruit amnes umor atque herbas color
has-deserted rivers moisture and grasses color
aretque Dirce, tenuis Ismenos fluit
and-is-dry Dirce, thin Ismenus flows
et tinguit inopi nuda vix unda vada.
and wets with-scant bare scarcely wave shallows.
obscura caelo labitur Phoebi soror,
dim in-sky glides of-Phoebus sister,
tristisque mundus nubilo pallet die.
and-grim world with-cloudy pales day.
nullum serenis noctibus sidus micat,
no on-clear nights star gleams,
sed gravis et ater incubat terris vapor:
but heavy and black broods on-lands vapor:
obtexit arces caelitum ac summas domos
has-veiled citadels of-the-heavenly-ones and highest homes
inferna facies. denegat fructum Ceres
infernal face. denies fruit Ceres
adulta, et altis flava cum spicis tremat,
grown, and with-tall golden though ears it-trembles,
arente culmo sterilis emoritur seges.
with-parching stalk barren dies crop.
nec ulla pars immunis exitio vacat,
nor any part exempt from-destruction is-free,
sed omnis aetas pariter et sexus ruit,
but every age alike and sex falls,
iuvenesque senibus iungit et gnatis patres
and-young to-old joins and to-sons fathers
funesta pestis, una fax thalamos cremat
deadly plague, one torch spouses burns

fletuque acerbo funera et questu carent.
and-weeping bitter deaths and lament lack.
quin ipsa tanti pervicax clades mali
indeed itself of-so-great persistent disaster evil
siccavit oculos, quodque in extremis solet
has-dried eyes, and-what in extremes is-wont
periere lacrimae: portat hunc aeger parens
have-perished tears: carries this-one sick father
supremum ad ignem, mater hunc amens gerit
last to fire, mother this-one mad bears
properatque ut alium repetat in eundem rogum.
and-hastens that another she-may-fetch to same pyre.
quin luctu in ipso luctus exoritur novus
indeed grief in very grief arises new
novaeque circa funus exsequiae cadunt.
and-new around funeral mourners fall.
tum propria flammis corpora alienis cremant;
then own with-flames bodies of-others they-burn;
diripitur ignis: nullus est miseris pudor.
is-plundered fire: no is to-the-wretched shame.
non ossa tumuli sancta discreti tegunt:
not bones tombs holy separate cover:
arsisse satis est — pars quota in cineres abit?
to-have-burned enough is part how-small into ashes goes?
dest terra tumulis, iam rogos silvae negant.
is-lacking earth for-tombs, now pyres woods deny.
non vota, non ars ulla correptos levant:
not prayers, not art any the-seized relieve:
cadunt medentes, morbus auxilium trahit.
fall healers, disease help drags-down.

Adfusus aris supplices tendo manus
Prostrate at-altars suppliant I-stretch hands
matura poscens fata, praecurram ut prior
early demanding fates, I-may-run-ahead that first
patriam ruentem neve post omnis cadam
fatherland falling and-not after all may-fall
fiamque regni funus extremum mei.
and-become of-kingdom death last my.
o saeva nimium numina, o fatum grave!
o savage too divinities, o fate heavy!
negatur uni nempe in hoc populo mihi
is-denied alone surely in this people to-me
mors tam parata? sperne letali manu
death so ready? scorn with-lethal hand
contacta regna, linque lacrimas, funera,
touched realm, leave tears, deaths,
tabifica caeli vitia quae tecum invehis
wasting of-sky corruptions which with-you you-bring-in
infaustus hospes, profuge iamdudum ocius —
ill-starred stranger, flee long-since quicker
vel ad parentes.
even to parents.

IOCASTA Quid iuvat, coniunx, mala
What avails-it, husband, evils
gravare questu? regium hoc ipsum reor:
to-weigh-down with-lament? royal this itself I-think:
adversa capere, quoque sit dubius magis
adversities to-take, and-by-how-much be doubtful more
status et cadentis imperi moles labet,
the-state and of-falling rule mass totter,

hoc stare certo pressius fortem gradu;
by-this to-stand with-sure firmer brave step;
haud est virile terga Fortunae dare.
not is manly back to-Fortune to-give.
OEDIPUS Abest pavoris crimen ac probrum procul,
Is-absent of-fear charge and disgrace far,
virtusque nostra nescit ignavos metus:
and-valor our knows-not cowardly fears:
si tela contra stricta, si vis horrida
if weapons against drawn, if force dreadful
Mavortis in me rueret — adversus feros
of-Mars against me should-rush against fierce
audax Gigantas obvias ferrem manus.
bold Giants opposing I-would-bring hands.
nec Sphinga caecis verba nectentem modis
nor the-Sphinx in-blind words weaving measures
fugi: cruentos vatis infandae tuli
I-fled: bloody of-prophetess unspeakable I-bore
rictus et albens ossibus sparsis solum;
jaws and white with-bones scattered ground;
cumque e superna rupe iam praedae imminens
and-when from lofty rock now over-prey looming
aptaret alas verbera et caudae movens
she-fitted wings lashes and of-tail moving
saevi leonis more conciperet minas,
of-savage lion in-manner conceived threats,
carmen poposci: sonuit horrendum insuper,
the-riddle I-demanded: she-sounded dreadfully overhead,
crepuere malae, saxaque impatiens morae
clattered jaws, and-rocks impatient of-delay

revulsit ungui viscera expectans mea;
tore with-claw entrails awaiting my;
nodosa sortis verba et implexos dolos
knotty of-oracle words and entwined tricks
ac triste carmen alitis solvi ferae.
and grim riddle of-winged I-solved beast.
IOCASTA Quid sera mortis vota nunc demens facis?
Why late of-death prayers now mad do-you-make?
licuit perire. laudis hoc pretium tibi
it-was-allowed to-perish. of-praise this price to-you
sceptrum et peremptae Sphingis haec merces datur.
scepter and of-slain Sphinx this reward is-given.
OEDIPUS Ille, ille dirus callidi monstri cinis
That, that dire of-cunning monster ash
in nos rebellat, illa nunc Thebas lues
against us rebels, that now Thebes plague
perempta perdit. una iam superest salus,
slain destroys. one now remains salvation,
si quam salutis Phoebus ostendit viam.
if any of-salvation Phoebus shows way.

The chorus mourns Thebes, offspring of Cadmus, whose men followed Bacchus as his soldiers to India and the Arabs. An endless column is led to Death, too long for the seven gates. The sacrificial bull falls before the blow, the horse collapses under its rider, flocks, herds, and wild beasts sicken, groves and vines wither, and the underworld seems burst open. They describe the fever, the bleeding, and the thirst; the sick lie at the altars praying only to die.

CHORUS Occidis, Cadmi generosa proles,
You-fall, of-Cadmus noble offspring,
urbe cum tota; viduas colonis
city with whole; bereft of-settlers
respicis terras, miseranda Thebe.
you-behold lands, pitiable Thebes.
carpitur leto tuus ille, Bacche,
is-plucked by-death your that, Bacchus,
miles, extremos comes usque ad Indos,
soldier, farthest companion right to Indians,
ausus Eois equitare campis
having-dared on-Eastern to-ride plains
figere et mundo tua signa primo:
to-fix and in-world your standards first:
cinnami silvis Arabas beatos
of-cinnamon in-woods Arabs blessed
vidit et versos equites, sagittis
saw and turned horsemen, for-arrows
terga fallacis metuenda Parthi;
backs of-deceitful to-be-feared Parthian;
litus intravit pelagi rubentis:
shore entered of-sea reddening:

promit hinc ortus aperitque lucem
brings-out hence rising and-opens light
Phoebus et flamma propiore nudos
Phoebus and with-flame nearer naked
inficit Indos.
stains Indians.
Stirpis invictae genus interimus,
Of-stock unconquered race we-perish,
labimur saevo rapiente fato;
we-slide with-savage snatching fate;
ducitur semper nova pompa Morti:
is-led always new procession to-Death:
longus ad manes properatur ordo
long to shades hastens line
agminis maesti, seriesque tristis
of-column sad, and-series grim
haeret et turbae tumulos petenti
sticks and to-throng tombs seeking
non satis septem patuere portae.
not enough seven lay-open gates.
stat gravis strages premiturque iuncto
stands heavy slaughter and-is-pressed with-joined
funere funus.
death death.
Colla tacturus steterat sacerdos:
Neck going-to-touch had-stood the-priest:
dum manus certum parat alta vulnus,
while hand sure prepares high wound,
aureo taurus rutilante cornu
with-golden bull gleaming horn

labitur segnis; patuit sub ictu
slips sluggish; lay-open under blow
ponderis vasti resoluta cervix;
of-weight vast loosened neck;
nec cruor ferrum maculavit: alta
nor blood steel stained: from-deep
turpis est plaga sanies profusa.
foul is wound gore poured.
segnior cursu sonipes in ipso
more-sluggish in-course steed in very
concidit gyro dominumque prono
fell circuit and-master with-forward
prodidit armo.
betrayed shoulder.
Prima vis tardas tetigit bidentes:
First force slow touched sheep:
laniger pingues male carpsit herbas;
wool-bearer rich badly cropped grasses;
taurus armento pereunte marcet:
bull with-herd perishing languishes:
deficit pastor grege deminuto
fails herdsman with-flock diminished
tabidos inter moriens iuvencos.
wasting among dying bullocks.
incubant agris pecudes relictae;
lie-on fields cattle abandoned;
non lupos cervi metuunt rapaces,
not wolves stags fear rapacious,
cessat irati fremitus leonis,
ceases of-angry roaring lion,

nulla villosis feritas in ursis;
no shaggy fierceness in bears;
perdidit pestem latebrosa serpens:
has-lost its-bane lurking serpent:
aret et sicco moritur veneno.
is-dry and with-dried dies venom.
Non silva sua decorata coma
Not wood with-its adorned foliage
fundit opacas montibus umbras,
pours dark on-mountains shades,
non rura virent ubere glebae,
not fields grow-green with-richness of-soil,
non plena suo vitis Baccho
not full with-its vine Bacchus
bracchia curvat:
arms bends:
omnia nostrum sensere malum.
all our have-felt evil.
Rupere Erebi claustra profundi
Have-burst of-Erebus bars deep
turba sororum face Tartarea
throng of-sisters with-torch Tartarean
Phlegethonque suam mutat ripam:
and-Phlegethon its changes bank:
miscuit undis Styga Sidoniis.
has-mixed with-waters Styx Sidonian.
Mors atra avidos oris hiatus
Death black greedy of-mouth gapings
pandit et omnis explicat alas;
spreads and all unfolds wings;

quique capaci turbida cumba
and-who in-capacious turbid skiff
flumina servat durus senio
rivers guards hard with-age
navita crudo vix assiduo
boatman raw scarcely with-constant
bracchia conto lassata refert,
arms pole wearied draws-back,
fessus turbam vectare novam.
weary throng to-ferry new.
quin Taenarii vincula ferri
indeed of-Taenarian bonds iron
rupisse canem fama et nostris
to-have-broken the-hound report and in-our
errare locis, mugisse solum,
to-wander places, to-have-bellowed ground,
vaga per lucos simulacra virum
wandering through groves phantoms of-men
* * *
(lacuna)
maiora viris, bis Cadmeum
greater than-men, twice Cadmean
nive discussa tremuisse nemus,
with-snow shaken-off to-have-trembled grove,
bis turbatam sanguine Dircen,
twice troubled with-blood Dirce,
nocte silenti
in-night silent
Amphionios ululasse canes.
Amphion's to-have-howled dogs.

O dira novi facies leti,
O dire of-new face death,
gravior leto:
heavier than-death:
piger ignavos alligat artus
sluggish idle binds limbs
languor, et aegro rubor in vultu,
languor, and sick redness in face,
maculaeque cutem sparsere leves;
and-spots skin have-sprinkled light;
tum vapor ipsam
then vapor very
corporis arcem flammeus urit
of-body citadel fiery burns
multoque genas sanguine tendit,
and-with-much cheeks blood stretches,
oculique rigent, resonant aures
and-eyes stiffen, ring ears
stillatque niger naris aduncae
and-drips black of-nose hooked
cruor et venas rumpit hiantes;
blood and veins bursts gaping;
intima creber viscera quassat
inmost frequent entrails shakes
gemitus stridens, et sacer ignis
groan shrill, and sacred fire
pascitur artus iamque amplexu
feeds-on limbs and-now with-embrace
frigida presso saxa fatigant;
cold pressed rocks they-weary;

quos liberior domus elato
whom freer house with-carried-out
custode sinit, petunt fontes
guardian allows, they-seek springs
aliturque sitis latice ingesto.
and-is-fed thirst with-water poured-in.
prostrata iacet turba per aras
prostrate lies throng among altars
oratque mori: solum hoc faciles
and-prays to-die: alone this easy
tribuere dei; delubra petunt,
have-granted gods; shrines they-seek,
haut ut voto numina placent,
not that with-prayer divinities they-may-appease,
sed iuvat ipsos satiare deos.
but it-delights themselves to-glut gods.

Creon brings Delphi's answer: the plague will end when Thebes drives out Laius' killer. Oedipus curses the killer, and Creon tells how Laius was ambushed where three roads meet. Blind Tiresias comes with his daughter Manto, who reports the sacrifice: a flame split in two, a bull that shies from the sun, entrails with two heads, a calf in an unmated heifer. The seer must call up the dead, and Oedipus entrusts the rite to Creon.

OEDIPUS Quisnam ille propero regiam gressu petit?
Who that with-hurried the-palace step seeks?
adestne clarus sanguine ac factis Creo
is-here famous in-blood and deeds Creon
an aeger animus falsa pro veris videt?
or sick mind false-things for true sees?
CHORUS Adest petitus omnibus votis Creo.
Is-here sought with-all prayers Creon.
OEDIPUS Horrore quatior, fata quo vergant timens,
With-horror I-am-shaken, the-fates where may-incline fearing,
trepidumque gemino pectus affectu labat:
and-trembling with-twin breast feeling totters:
ubi laeta duris mixta in ambiguo iacent,
when glad-things with-hard mixed in doubt lie,
incertus animus scire cum cupiat timet.
uncertain mind to-know though it-desires fears.
Germane nostrae coniugis, fessis opem
Brother of-our wife, to-the-weary help
si quam reportas, voce properata edoce.
if any you-bring-back, with-voice hurried inform.
CREO Responsa dubia sorte perplexa iacent.
The-responses with-doubtful lot entangled lie.

OEDIPUS Dubiam salutem qui dat adflictis negat.
Doubtful safety who gives to-the-afflicted denies.
CREO Ambage flexa Delphico mos est deo
With-riddle twisted for-Delphic custom is god
arcana tegere.
secrets to-cover.
OEDIPUS Fare, sit dubium licet:
Speak, let-it-be doubtful though:
ambigua soli noscere Oedipodae datur.
ambiguous-things alone to-know to-Oedipus is-given.
CREO Caedem expiari regiam exilio deus,
The-murder to-be-expiated royal by-exile the-god,
et interemptum Laium ulcisci iubet:
and slain Laius to-avenge orders:
non ante caelo lucidus curret dies
not sooner in-sky bright will-run day
haustusque tutos aetheris puri dabit.
and-drafts safe of-air pure will-give.
OEDIPUS Et quis peremptor incluti regis fuit?
And who the-slayer of-famous king was?
quem memoret ede Phoebus, ut poenas luat.
whom he-names tell Phoebus, that penalties he-may-pay.
CREO Sit precor dixisse tutum visu et auditu horrida;
Let-it-be I-pray to-have-said safe to-see and to-hear dreadful-things;
torpor insedit per artus, frigidus sanguis coit.
numbness has-settled through limbs, cold blood congeals.
ut sacrata templa Phoebi supplici intravi pede
when sacred temples of-Phoebus with-suppliant I-entered foot
et pias numen precatus rite summisi manus,
and dutiful the-god having-prayed duly lowered hands,

gemina Parnasi nivalis arx trucem fremitum dedit;
twin of-Parnassus snowy height fierce roar gave;
imminens Phoebea laurus tremuit et movit comam
overhanging Phoebean laurel trembled and moved foliage
ac repente sancta fontis lympha Castalii stetit.
and suddenly holy of-spring water Castalian stood.
incipit Letoa vates spargere horrentes comas
begins Leto's prophetess to-scatter bristling locks
et pati commota Phoebum; contigit nondum specum,
and to-suffer stirred Phoebus; she-had-touched not-yet cave,
emicat vasto fragore maior humano sonus:
bursts-forth with-vast crash greater than-human sound:
mitia Cadmeis remeabunt sidera Thebis,
mild to-Cadmean will-return stars Thebes,
si profugus Dircen Ismenida liqueris hospes
if fugitive Dirce Ismenian you-leave stranger
regis caede nocens, Phoebo iam notus et infans.
of-king with-slaughter guilty, to-Phoebus already known even infant.
nec tibi longa manent sceleratae gaudia caedis:
nor for-you long remain of-wicked joys slaughter:
tecum bella geres, natis quoque bella relinquens
with-yourself wars you-will-wage, to-sons also wars leaving
turpia, maternos iterum revolutus in ortus.
shameful, maternal again rolled-back into birth.
OEDIPUS Quod facere monitu caelitum iussus paro,
What to-do by-warning of-heavenly-ones ordered I-prepare,
functi cineribus regis hoc decuit dari,
of-the-dead to-the-ashes king this befitted to-be-given,
ne sancta quisquam sceptra violaret dolo.
lest holy anyone scepters violate by-guile.

regi tuenda maxime regum est salus:
by-a-king to-be-guarded most of-kings is safety:
curat peremptum nemo quem incolumem timet.
cares-for slain no-one whom unharmed he-fears.
CREO Curam perempti maior excussit timor.
Care of-the-slain greater shook-off fear.
OEDIPUS Pium prohibuit ullus officium metus?
Dutiful prevented any duty fear?
CREO Sphinx et nefandi carminis tristes minae.
The-Sphinx and of-unspeakable song grim threats.
OEDIPUS Nunc expietur numinum imperio scelus.
Now let-be-expiated of-divinities by-command crime.
Quisquis deorum regna placatus vides:
Whoever of-gods realms appeased you-see:
tu, tu penes quem iura praecipitis poli
you, you with whom the-laws of-headlong sky
tuque, o sereni maximum mundi decus,
and-you, o of-clear greatest sky glory,
bis sena cursu signa qui vario legis,
twice six in-course signs who varied traverse,
qui tarda celeri saecula evolvis rota,
who slow with-swift ages unroll wheel,
sororque fratri semper occurrens tuo,
and-sister to-brother always meeting your,
noctivaga Phoebe, quique ventorum potens
night-wandering Phoebe, and-who of-winds powerful
aequor per altum caerulos currus agis,
sea over deep dark-blue chariot drive,
et qui carentis luce disponis domos,
and who lacking light assign homes,

adeste: cuius Laius dextra occidit,
be-present: whose Laius by-right-hand fell,
hunc non quieta tecta, non fidi lares,
him not quiet roofs, not faithful hearths,
non hospitalis exulem tellus ferat;
not hospitable exile land may-bear;
thalamis pudendis doleat et prole impia;
in-marriage shameful may-be-grieve and offspring impious;
hic et parentem dextera perimat sua,
he also father with-right-hand may-kill his-own,
faciatque (num quid gravius optari potest?)
and-may-do (surely-not anything heavier to-be-wished can?)
quicquid ego fugi — non erit veniae locus:
whatever I fled not will-be of-pardon place:
per regna iuro quaeque nunc hospes gero
by realms I-swear and-which now stranger I-hold
et quae reliqui perque penetrales deos,
and which I-left and-by household gods,
per te, pater Neptune, qui fluctu brevi
by you, father Neptune, who with-wave short
utrimque nostro geminus alludis solo;
on-both-sides our twin play-against soil;
et ipse nostris vocibus testis veni,
and yourself to-our words witness come,
fatidica vatis ora Cirrhaeae movens:
prophetic of-prophetess mouth Cirrhaean moving:
ita molle senium ducat et summum diem
so soft old-age may-lead and last day
securus alto reddat in solio parens
carefree high may-give-back on throne my-father

solasque Merope noverit Polybi faces,
and-only Merope may-know of-Polybus torches,
ut nulla sontem gratia eripiet mihi.
as no guilty-one favor will-snatch from-me.
Sed quo nefandum facinus admissum loco est,
But in-what unspeakable deed committed place was,
memorate: aperto Marte an insidiis iacet?
tell: in-open battle or by-ambush lies-he?
CREO Frondifera sanctae nemora Castaliae petens
Leafy of-holy groves Castalia seeking
calcavit artis obsitum dumis iter,
he-trod with-tight beset thorns path,
trigemina qua se spargit in campos via.
triple where itself spreads into plains road.
secat una gratum Phocidos Baccho solum,
cuts one pleasing of-Phocis to-Bacchus soil,
unde altus arva deserit, caelum petens,
whence high fields leaves, sky seeking,
clementer acto colle Parnasos biceps;
gently with-raised hill Parnassus two-peaked;
at una bimaris Sisyphi terras adit;
but one of-two-seas of-Sisyphus lands approaches;
Olenia in arva tertius trames cava
Olenian into fields third path in-hollow
convalle serpens tangit errantes aquas
valley creeping touches wandering waters
gelidumque dirimit amnis † Elei vadum:
and-cold parts of-river (corrupt) Elean ford:
hic pace fretum subita praedonum manus
here in-peace trusting sudden of-robbers band

aggressa ferro facinus occultum tulit.
having-attacked with-sword deed hidden bore.
In tempore ipso sorte Phoebea excitus
At time very by-lot Phoebean roused
Tiresia tremulo tardus accelerat genu
Tiresias with-trembling slow hastens knee
comesque Manto luce viduatum trahens.
and-companion Manto of-light bereft drawing.
OEDIPUS Sacrate divis, proximum Phoebo caput,
Consecrated to-gods, nearest to-Phoebus head,
responsa solve; fare, quem poenae petant.
responses loose; speak, whom penalties may-seek.
TIRESIAS Quod tarda fatu est lingua, quod quaerit moras
That slow in-speaking is tongue, that seeks delays
haut te quidem, magnanime, mirari addecet:
not you indeed, great-souled, to-wonder befits:
visu carenti magna pars veri latet.
sight to-one-lacking great part of-truth lies-hid.
sed quo vocat me patria, quo Phoebus, sequar:
but where calls me fatherland, where Phoebus, I-shall-follow:
fata eruantur; si foret viridis mihi
fates let-be-dug-out; if were green to-me
calidusque sanguis, pectore exciperem deum.
and-hot blood, in-breast I-would-receive the-god.
appellite aris candidum tergo bovem
drive to-altars white on-back ox
curvoque numquam colla depressam iugo.
and-by-curved never neck pressed yoke.
tu lucis inopem, gnata, genitorem regens
you of-light bereft, daughter, father guiding

manifesta sacri signa fatidici refer.
plain of-rite signs prophetic report.

MANTO Opima sanctas victima ante aras stetit.
Rich holy victim before altars stood.

TIRESIAS In vota superos voce sollemni voca
To prayers the-gods-above with-voice solemn call

arasque dono turis Eoi extrue.
and-altars with-gift of-incense Eastern heap.

MANTO Iam tura sacris caelitum ingessi focis.
Now incense on-sacred of-heavenly-ones I-have-heaped hearths.

TIRESIAS Quid flamma? largas iamne comprendit dapes?
What the-flame? lavish already has-it-caught feasts?

MANTO Subito refulsit lumine et subito occidit.
Suddenly it-flashed with-light and suddenly died.

TIRESIAS Utrumne clarus ignis et nitidus stetit
Whether bright the-fire and shining stood

rectusque purum verticem caelo tulit
and-straight pure peak to-sky bore

et summam in auras fusus explicuit comam?
and top into air spread unfolded crest?

an latera circa serpit incertus viae
or sides around creeps uncertain of-way

et fluctuante turbidus fumo labat?
and with-wavering murky smoke totters?

MANTO Non una facies mobilis flammae fuit:
Not one face of-mobile flame was:

imbrifera qualis implicat varios sibi
rain-bringing as entwines varied for-herself

Iris colores, parte quae magna poli
Iris colors, in-part who great of-sky

curvata picto nuntiat nimbos sinu
curved with-painted announces rains bosom
(quis desit illi quive sit dubites color),
(which may-be-lacking to-her or-which may-be you-would-doubt color),
caerulea fulvis mixta oberravit notis,
dark-blue with-tawny mixed it-wandered marks,
sanguinea rursus; ultima in tenebras abit.
blood-red again; last into darkness goes.
sed ecce pugnax ignis in partes duas
but behold quarrelsome fire into parts two
discedit et se scindit unius sacri
divides and itself splits of-one rite
discors favilla — genitor, horresco intuens:
discordant ash father, I-shudder looking:
libata Bacchi dona permutat cruor
poured of-Bacchus gifts changes blood
ambitque densus regium fumus caput
and-surrounds dense royal smoke head
ipsosque circa spissior vultus sedet
and-very around thicker face settles
et nube densa sordidam lucem abdidit.
and with-cloud dense dirty light has-hidden.
quid sit, parens, effare.
what it-is, father, speak.
TIRESIAS Quid fari queam
What to-speak could-I
inter tumultus mentis attonitae vagus?
amid tumults of-mind stunned wandering?
quidnam loquar? sunt dira, sed in alto mala;
what shall-I-say? they-are dire, but in depth evils;

solet ira certis numinum ostendi notis:
is-wont anger by-sure of-divinities to-be-shown signs:
quid istud est quod esse prolatum volunt
what that is which to-be brought-forth they-wish
iterumque nolunt et truces iras tegunt?
and-again do-not-wish and fierce angers cover?
pudet deos nescio quid. huc propere admove
shames the-gods I-know-not what. hither quickly bring
et sparge salsa colla taurorum mola.
and sprinkle with-salted necks of-bulls meal.
placidone vultu sacra et admotas manus
with-calm face rites and brought-near hands
patiuntur?
do-they-endure?
MANTO Altum taurus attollens caput
High the-bull raising head
primos ad ortus positus expavit diem
first toward risings placed dreaded day
trepidusque vultum obliquat et radios fugit.
and-trembling face turns-aside and rays flees.
TIRESIAS Unone terram vulnere afflicti petunt?
With-one ground wound struck do-they-seek?
MANTO Iuvenca ferro semet imposito induit
The-heifer on-steel herself placed impales
et vulnere uno cecidit, at taurus duos
and with-wound one fell, but the-bull two
perpessus ictus huc et huc dubius ruit
having-suffered blows hither and thither doubtful rushes
animamque fessus vix reluctantem exprimit.
and-life weary scarcely resisting squeezes-out.

TIRESIAS Utrum citatus vulnere angusto micat
Whether swift from-wound narrow spurts
an lentus altas irrigat plagas cruor?
or slow deep waters wounds blood?
MANTO Huius per ipsam qua patet pectus viam
Of-this through very where lies-open breast way
effusus amnis, huius exiguo graves
poured a-river, of-this with-scant heavy
maculantur ictus imbre; sed versus retro
are-stained blows shower; but turned back
per ora multus sanguis atque oculos redit.
through mouth much blood and eyes returns.
TIRESIAS Infausta magnos sacra terrores cient.
Ill-omened great rites terrors arouse.
sed ede certas viscerum nobis notas.
but tell sure of-entrails to-us signs.
MANTO Genitor, quid hoc est? non levi motu, ut solent,
Father, what this is? not with-light motion, as they-are-wont,
agitata trepidant exta, sed totas manus
stirred quiver entrails, but whole hands
quatiunt novusque prosilit venis cruor.
they-shake and-new leaps from-veins blood.
cor marcet aegrum penitus ac mersum latet
heart withers sick deep and sunk lies-hid
liventque venae; magna pars fibris abest
and-are-livid veins; great part from-entrails is-missing
et felle nigro tabidum spumat iecur,
and with-gall black wasting foams liver,
ac (semper omen unico imperio grave)
and (always omen to-single rule heavy)

en capita paribus bina consurgunt toris;
look heads with-equal two rise-up swellings;
sed utrumque caesum tenuis abscondit caput
but each cut thin hides head
membrana: latebram rebus occultis negans
membrane: hiding-place to-things hidden denying
hostile valido robore insurgit latus
hostile with-strong strength rises side
septemque venas tendit; has omnis retro
and-seven veins stretches; these all back
prohibens reverti limes oblicus secat.
preventing to-return line slanting cuts.
mutatus ordo est, sede nil propria iacet,
changed the-order is, in-seat nothing proper lies,
sed acta retro cuncta: non animae capax
but driven back all: not of-breath holding
in parte dextra pulmo sanguineus iacet,
in part right lung blood-red lies,
non laeva cordi regio, non molli ambitu
not left for-heart region, not with-soft circuit
omenta pingues visceri obtendunt sinus:
caul rich for-innards stretch folds:
natura versa est, nulla lex utero manet.
nature turned is, no law for-womb remains.
scrutemur, unde tantus hic extis rigor.
let-us-search, whence so-great this in-entrails stiffness.
quod hoc nefas? conceptus innuptae bovis,
what this horror? fetus of-unwed heifer,
nec more solito positus alieno in loco,
nor in-manner usual placed strange in place,

implet parentem; membra cum gemitu movet,
fills mother; limbs with groan moves,
rigore tremulo debiles artus micant;
with-stiffness trembling weak limbs twitch;
infecit atras lividus fibras cruor
has-stained black livid entrails blood
temptantque turpes mobilem trunci gradum,
and-try foul mobile trunks step,
et inane surgit corpus ac sacros petit
and empty rises body and sacred attacks
cornu ministros; viscera effugiunt manum.
with-horn attendants; entrails escape hand.
neque ista, quae te pepulit, armenti gravis
nor that, which you has-struck, of-herd heavy
vox est nec usquam territi resonant greges:
voice is nor anywhere terrified resound flocks:
immugit aris ignis et trepidant foci.
bellows on-altars fire and tremble hearths.

OEDIPUS Quid ista sacri signa terrifici ferant
What those of-rite signs terrifying may-bring
exprome: voces aure non timida hauriam.
speak-out: words with-ear not timid I-shall-drink.

TIRESIAS His invidebis quibus opem quaeris malis.
These you-will-envy for-which help you-seek evils.

OEDIPUS Memora quod unum scire caelicolae volunt,
Tell what one to-know heaven-dwellers wish,
contaminarit rege quis caeso manus.
has-polluted with-king who slain hands.

TIRESIAS Nec alta caeli quae levi pinna secant
Neither the-heights of-heaven who with-light wing cut
nec fibra vivis rapta pectoribus potest
nor entrail from-living snatched breasts can
ciere nomen; alia temptanda est via:
to-call-up the-name; another to-be-tried is way:
ipse evocandus noctis aeternae plagis,
himself to-be-called-forth of-night eternal from-regions,
emissus Erebo ut caedis auctorem indicet.
released from-Erebus that of-slaughter the-author he-may-point-out.
reseranda tellus, Ditis inplacabile
to-be-unlocked earth, of-Dis implacable
numen precandum, populus infernae Stygis
divinity to-be-prayed-to, people of-infernal Styx
huc extrahendus: ede cui mandes sacrum;
hither to-be-dragged: say to-whom you-entrust rite;
nam te, penes quem summa regnorum, nefas
for you, with whom the-supremacy of-realms, wrong
invisere umbras.
to-visit shades.
OEDIPUS Te, Creo, hic poscit labor,
You, Creon, this demands labor,
ad quem secundum regna respiciunt mea.
to whom second realms look my.
TIRESIAS Dum nos profundae claustra laxamus Stygis,
While we of-deep bars loosen Styx,
populare Bacchi laudibus carmen sonet.
popular of-Bacchus with-praises song let-sound.

The chorus calls Bacchus, glory of heaven, to scatter the clouds over Thebes, and sings his flowing hair and maiden's dress, his lion chariot through the East, old Silenus on his donkey, his maenads on Pangaeus and Pindus, and the Theban mothers who tore Pentheus; Ino and Palaemon in the sea, the Tyrrhenian pirates turned to dolphins, Lycurgus, the warrior girls of the Thermodon, Proetus' daughters, and the maiden abandoned on Naxos and wed in heaven. They will worship him while the stars run.

CHORUS Effusam redimite comam nutante corymbo,
Loosed wreathe hair with-nodding ivy-cluster,
mollia Nysaeis armati bracchia thyrsis!
soft with-Nysaean armed arms thyrsi!
Lucidum caeli decus, huc ades
Bright of-heaven glory, hither be-present
votis quae tibi nobiles
to-prayers which to-you noble
Thebae, Bacche, tuae
Thebes, Bacchus, your
palmis supplicibus ferunt.
with-palms suppliant bring.
Huc adverte favens virgineum caput,
Hither turn favoring maidenly head,
vultu sidereo discute nubila
with-face starry scatter clouds
et tristes Erebi minas
and grim of-Erebus threats
avidumque fatum.
and-greedy fate.

Te decet cingi comam floribus vernis,
You befits to-be-girt in-hair with-flowers spring,
te caput Tyria cohibere mitra
you head with-Tyrian to-confine turban
hederave mollem
or-with-ivy soft
bacifera religare frontem.
berry-bearing to-bind brow.
Spargere effusos sine lege crines,
To-scatter loosed without law locks,
rursus adducto revocare nodo;
again with-drawn to-recall knot;
qualis iratam metuens novercam
as angry fearing stepmother
creveras falsos imitatus artus,
you-had-grown false imitating limbs,
crine flaventi simulata virgo,
with-hair golden feigned maiden,
lutea vestem retinente zona:
with-saffron robe holding girdle:
inde tam molles placuere cultus
thence so soft pleased garments
et sinus laxi fluidumque syrma.
and folds loose and-flowing train.
Vidit aurato residere curru,
Saw on-gilded to-sit chariot,
veste cum longa tegeres leones,
with-robe when long you-covered lions,
omnis Eoae plaga vasta terrae,
all of-Eastern region vast land,

qui bibit Gangen niveumque quisquis
who drinks Ganges and-snowy whoever
frangit Araxen.
breaks Araxes.
Te senior turpi sequitur Silenus asello,
You old on-ugly follows Silenus donkey,
turgida pampineis redimitus tempora sertis;
swollen with-vine wreathed temples garlands;
condita lascivi deducunt orgia mystae.
hidden playful lead orgies initiates.
Te Bassaridum comitata cohors
You of-Bassarids accompanying band
nunc Edono pede pulsavit
now with-Edonian foot has-struck
sola Pangaeo, nunc Threicio
ground on-Pangaeus, now on-Thracian
vertice Pindi; nunc Cadmeas
peak of-Pindus; now Cadmean
inter matres impia maenas
among mothers impious maenad
comes Ogygio venit Iaccho,
companion to-Ogygian came Iacchus,
nebride sacra praecincta latus
with-fawnskin sacred girt side
thyrsumque levem vibrante manu,
and-thyrsus light with-brandishing hand,
tibi commotae pectora matres
for-you stirred in-breasts mothers
fudere comam.
have-loosed hair.

iam post laceros Pentheos artus
now after torn of-Pentheus limbs
thyades, oestro membra remissae,
thyiads, from-frenzy limbs released,
velut ignotum videre nefas.
as-if unknown saw crime.
Ponti regna tenet nitidi matertera Bacchi
Of-the-sea realms holds of-shining aunt Bacchus
Nereidumque choris Cadmeia cingitur Ino;
and-of-the-Nereids dances Cadmean is-surrounded Ino;
ius habet in fluctus magni puer advena ponti,
right has over waves of-great boy newcomer sea,
cognatus Bacchi, numen non vile Palaemon.
kinsman of-Bacchus, divinity not cheap Palaemon.
Te Tyrrhena, puer, rapuit manus,
You Tyrrhenian, boy, snatched band,
at tumidum Nereus posuit mare,
but swollen Nereus calmed sea,
caerula cum pratis mutat freta:
dark-blue with meadows he-changes straits:
hinc verno platanus folio viret
here with-spring plane with-leaf grows-green
et Phoebo laurus carum nemus;
and to-Phoebus laurel dear grove;
garrula per ramos avis obstrepit;
chattering through branches bird resounds;
vivaces hederas remus tenet,
lively ivies oar holds,
summa ligat vitis carchesia.
highest binds vine mast-heads.

Idaeus prora fremuit leo,
Idaean on-prow roared lion,
tigris puppe sedet Gangetica.
tigress on-stern sits Gangetic.
Tum pirata freto pavidus natat,
Then the-pirate in-sea fearful swims,
et nova demersos facies habet:
and new the-sunk face holds:
bracchia prima cadunt praedonibus
arms first fall from-robbers
inlisumque utero pectus coit,
and-crushed with-belly breast joins,
parvula dependet lateri manus
tiny hangs from-side hand
et dorso fluctum curvo subit,
and with-back wave curved goes-under,
lunata scindit cauda mare:
crescent cuts tail sea:
et sequitur curvus fugientia
and follows curved fleeing
carbasa delphin.
sails dolphin.
Divite Pactolos vexit te Lydius unda,
With-rich Pactolus carried you Lydian wave,
aurea torrenti deducens flumina ripa;
golden by-torrential leading-down streams bank;
laxavit victos arcus Geticasque sagittas
unstrung conquered bows and-Getic arrows
lactea Massagetes qui pocula sanguine miscet;
milky Massagetan who cups with-blood mixes;

regna securigeri Bacchum sensere Lycurgi;
realms of-axe-bearing Bacchus felt Lycurgus;
sensere terrae † Zalacum feroces
felt the-lands (corrupt) of-Zalaces fierce
et quos vicinus Boreas ferit
and whom neighboring Boreas strikes
arva mutantes quasque Maeotis
fields changing and-which Maeotis
alluit gentes frigido fluctu
washes nations with-cold wave
quasque despectat
and-which looks-down-on
vertice summo
from-peak highest
sidus Arcadium geminumque plaustrum.
constellation Arcadian and-twin Wagon.
Ille dispersos domuit Gelonos.
He scattered tamed Geloni.
arma detraxit trucibus puellis:
arms stripped from-fierce girls:
ore deiecto petiere terram
with-face cast-down sought the-earth
Thermodontiacae catervae,
Thermodontian troops,
positisque tandem levibus sagittis
and-with-laid-down at-last light arrows
Maenades factae.
Maenads became.
sacer Cithaeron sanguine undavit
sacred Cithaeron with-blood flowed

Ophioniaque caede;
and-with-Ophionian slaughter;
Proetides silvas petiere, et Argos
Proetus'-daughters woods sought, and Argos
praesente Bacchum coluit noverca.
with-present Bacchus worshiped stepmother.
Naxos Aegaeo redimita ponto
Naxos by-Aegean wreathed sea
tradidit thalamis relictam
handed-over to-marriage abandoned
virginem, meliore pensans
maiden, with-better compensating
damnum marito:
loss husband:
pumice ex sicco ***
pumice from dry (lacuna)
fluxit Nyctelius latex;
flowed Nyctelian liquid;
garruli gramen secuere rivi,
chattering grass cut streams,
conbibit dulces humus alta sucos
drank-up sweet earth deep juices
niveique lactis candidos fontes
and-of-snowy milk white springs
et mixta odoro Lesbia cum thymo.
and mixed fragrant Lesbian with thyme.
Ducitur magno nova nupta caelo:
Is-led in-great new bride heaven:
solemne Phoebus carmen
solemn Phoebus song

infusis humero capillis
with-poured on-shoulder hair
cantat et geminus Cupido
sings and twin Cupid
concutit taedas.
shakes torches.
telum deposuit Iuppiter igneum
weapon laid-down Jupiter fiery
oditque Baccho veniente fulmen.
and-hates with-Bacchus coming thunderbolt.
Lucida dum current annosi sidera mundi,
Bright while will-run of-aged stars sky,
Oceanus clausum dum fluctibus ambiet orbem
Ocean enclosed while with-waves will-surround world
Lunaque dimissos dum plena recolliget ignes,
and-Moon lost while full will-gather-again fires,
dum matutinos praedicet Lucifer ortus
while morning shall-proclaim Lucifer risings
altaque caeruleum dum Nerea nesciet Arctos,
and-high dark-blue while Nereus will-not-know Bear,
candida formonsi venerabimur ora Lyaei.
bright of-beautiful we-shall-revere face Lyaeus.

Creon, forced to speak, tells of the rite in a black grove beyond the city: Tiresias dug a pit, burned black victims, poured blood, milk, and wine, and chanted until the earth opened. The Sown Men, the Fury, Madness, Plague, and their train, and countless shades came up, Zethus, Amphion, Tantalus' daughter, Agave, Pentheus, and last Laius, bloody, who denounced the king who killed his father and married his mother, and demanded his exile. Oedipus, sure Merope and Polybus clear him, accuses Creon and Tiresias of plotting and has Creon imprisoned.

OEDIPUS Etsi ipse vultus flebiles praefert notas,
Although itself your-face tearful displays marks,
exprome cuius capite placemus deos.
tell whose by-head we-may-appease the-gods.
CREO Fari iubes tacere quae suadet metus.
To-speak you-bid to-keep-silent what urges fear.
OEDIPUS Si te luentes non satis Thebae movent,
If you paying-penalty not enough Thebes moves,
at sceptra moveant lapsa cognatae domus.
yet scepters let-move fallen of-kindred house.
CREO Nescisse cupies nosse quae nimium expetis.
To-have-not-known you-will-desire to-know what too-much you-seek.
OEDIPUS Iners malorum remedium ignorantia est.
Idle for-evils remedy ignorance is.
itane et salutis publicae indicium obrues?
so even of-safety public disclosure will-you-bury?
CREO Ubi turpis est medicina, sanari piget.
Where foul is the-medicine, to-be-healed irks.

OEDIPUS Audita fare, vel malo domitus gravi
Heard-things tell, or by-evil tamed heavy
quid arma possint regis irati scies.
what arms can of-a-king angry you-will-know.
CREO Odere reges dicta quae dici iubent.
Hate kings words which to-be-said they-order.
OEDIPUS Mitteris Erebo vile pro cunctis caput,
You-will-be-sent to-Erebus cheap for all head,
arcana sacri voce ni retegis tua.
secrets of-the-rite with-voice unless you-uncover your.
CREO Tacere liceat. ulla libertas minor
To-keep-silent let-it-be-allowed. any freedom smaller
a rege petitur?
from a-king is-sought?
OEDIPUS Saepe vel lingua magis
Often even than-tongue more
regi atque regno muta libertas obest.
to-king and kingdom mute freedom harms.
CREO Ubi non licet tacere, quid cuiquam licet?
Where not is-allowed to-keep-silent, what to-anyone is-allowed?
OEDIPUS Imperia solvit qui tacet iussus loqui.
Commands loosens who keeps-silent ordered to-speak.
CREO Coacta verba placidus accipias precor.
Forced words calm may-you-receive I-pray.
OEDIPUS Ulline poena vocis expressae fuit?
To-anyone penalty for-voice forced-out was?
CREO Est procul ab urbe lucus ilicibus niger,
There-is far from the-city a-grove with-holm-oaks black,
Dircaea circa vallis inriguae loca.
Dircaean around of-valley well-watered places.

cupressus altis exerens silvis caput
cypress from-high thrusting woods head
virente semper alligat trunco nemus,
with-green always binds trunk grove,
curvosque tendit quercus et putres situ
and-curved stretches oak and rotten with-neglect
annosa ramos: huius abrupit latus
aged branches: of-this has-torn-off side
edax vetustas; illa, iam fessa cadens
devouring age; that, now weary falling
radice, fulta pendet aliena trabe.
at-root, propped hangs on-another's beam.
amara bacas laurus et tiliae leves
bitter in-berries laurel and lindens smooth
et Paphia myrtus et per immensum mare
and Paphian myrtle and over immense sea
motura remos alnus et Phoebo obvia
going-to-move oars alder and to-Phoebus facing
enode Zephyris pinus opponens latus:
knotless to-Zephyrs pine opposing side:
medio stat ingens arbor atque umbra gravi
in-the-middle stands huge tree and with-shade heavy
silvas minores urguet et magno ambitu
woods lesser presses and with-great circuit
diffusa ramos una defendit nemus.
spread branches alone defends grove.
tristis sub illa, lucis et Phoebi inscius,
grim under it, of-light and of-Phoebus ignorant,
restagnat umor frigore aeterno rigens;
stagnates water with-cold eternal stiffening;

limosa pigrum circumit fontem palus.
muddy sluggish surrounds spring swamp.
Huc ut sacerdos intulit senior gradum,
Hither when the-priest brought aged step,
haut est moratus: praestitit noctem locus.
not has delayed: provided night the-place.
tum effossa tellus, et super rapti rogis
then dug-up earth, and above snatched from-pyres
iaciuntur ignes. ipse funesto integit
are-thrown fires. himself in-deathly covers
vates amictu corpus et frondem quatit.
seer cloak body and foliage shakes.
lugubris imos palla perfundit pedes,
mournful lowest robe drenches feet,
squalente cultu maestus ingreditur senex,
with-squalid dress sad walks old-man,
mortifera canam taxus adstringit comam.
deadly white yew binds hair.
nigro bidentes vellere atque atrae boves
with-black sheep fleece and black cows
intro trahuntur. flamma praedatur dapes,
inside are-dragged. flame plunders feasts,
vivumque trepidat igne ferali pecus.
and-alive trembles in-fire deathly beast.
vocat inde manes teque qui manes regis
he-calls then shades and-you who shades rule
et obsidentem claustra Lethaei lacus,
and besieging bars of-Lethean lake,
carmenque magicum volvit et rabido minax
and-spell magic rolls and with-rabid threatening

decantat ore quicquid aut placat leves
chants mouth whatever either appeases light
aut cogit umbras; sanguinem libat focis
or compels shades; blood he-pours on-hearths
solidasque pecudes urit et multo specum
and-whole cattle burns and with-much cave
saturat cruore; libat et niveum insuper
saturates blood; pours also snowy moreover
lactis liquorem, fundit et Bacchum manu
of-milk liquid, pours also Bacchus with-hand
laeva canitque rursus ac terram intuens
left and-chants again and earth looking-at
graviore manes voce et attonita citat.
with-heavier shades voice and frenzied summons.
latravit Hecates turba; ter valles cavae
barked of-Hecate pack; thrice valleys hollow
sonuere maestum, tota succusso solo
resounded sadly, whole with-shaken ground
pulsata tellus. 'audior' vates ait,
struck the-earth. 'I-am-heard' the-seer says,
'rata verba fudi: rumpitur caecum chaos
'valid words I-have-poured: is-burst blind chaos
iterque populis Ditis ad superos datur.'
and-path to-peoples of-Dis to upper-world is-given.'
subsedit omnis silva et erexit comas,
sank all wood and raised foliage,
duxere rimas robora et totum nemus
drew cracks oaks and whole grove
concussit horror, terra se retro dedit
shook horror, earth itself back gave

gemuitque penitus: sive temptari abditum
and-groaned deep: whether to-be-tried hidden
Acheron profundum mente non aequa tulit,
Acheron depth with-mind not calm bore,
sive ipsa tellus, ut daret functis viam,
or itself the-earth, that it-might-give to-the-dead way,
compage rupta sonuit; aut ira furens
with-frame burst sounded; or with-anger raging
triceps catenas Cerberus movit graves.
three-headed chains Cerberus moved heavy.
subito dehiscit terra et immenso sinu
suddenly gapes earth and with-immense bosom
laxata patuit — ipse torpentes lacus
loosened lay-open myself sluggish lakes
vidi inter umbras, ipse pallentes deos
I-saw among shades, myself pale gods
noctemque veram; gelidus in venis stetit
and-night true; cold in veins stood
haesitque sanguis. saeva prosiluit cohors
and-stuck blood. savage leaped-forth band
et stetit in armis omne vipereum genus,
and stood in arms all viperous race,
fratrum catervae dente Dircaeo satae.
of-brothers troops from-tooth Dircaean sown.
tum torva Erinys sonuit et caecus Furor
then grim Erinys sounded and blind Madness
Horrorque et una quicquid aeternae creant
and-Horror and together whatever eternal create
celantque tenebrae: Luctus avellens comam
and-hide darkness: Grief tearing hair

aegreque lassum sustinens Morbus caput,
and-with-difficulty weary sustaining Disease head,
gravis Senectus sibimet et pendens Metus
heavy Old-Age to-itself and hanging Fear
avidumque populi Pestis Ogygii malum.
and-greedy of-people Plague Ogygian evil.
nos liquit animus. ipse quae ritus senis
us left spirit. herself who rites of-old-man
artesque norat stupuit. intrepidus parens
and-arts knew was-stunned. fearless the-father
audaxque damno convocat Ditis feri
and-bold from-loss summons of-Dis fierce
exangue vulgus. ilico ut nebulae leves
bloodless crowd. at-once like clouds light
volitant et auras libero caelo trahunt.
they-flit and air with-free sky draw.
non tot caducas educat frondes Eryx
not so-many falling brings-forth leaves Eryx
nec vere flores Hybla tot medio creat,
nor in-spring flowers Hybla so-many mid creates,
cum examen arto nectitur densum globo,
when swarm in-tight is-knotted dense ball,
fluctusque non tot frangit Ionium mare,
and-waves not so-many breaks Ionian sea,
nec tanta gelidi Strymonis fugiens minas
nor so-great of-icy Strymon fleeing threats
permutat hiemes ales et caelum secans
exchanges winters bird and sky cutting
tepente Nilo pensat Arctoas nives
with-warm Nile compensates Arctic snows

quot ille populos vatis eduxit sonus.
as-many-as that peoples of-the-seer brought-forth sound.
avide latebras nemoris umbrosi petunt
eagerly hiding-places of-grove shady seek
animae trementes; primus emergit solo,
souls trembling; first emerges from-ground,
dextra ferocem cornibus taurum premens,
with-right-hand fierce by-horns bull pressing,
Zethus, manuque sustinens laeva chelyn
Zethus, and-with-hand holding left lyre
qui saxa dulci traxit Amphion sono;
who rocks with-sweet drew Amphion sound;
interque natos Tantalis tandem suos
and-among children Tantalus'-daughter at-last her-own
tuto superba fert caput fastu grave
safely proud carries head with-pride heavy
et numerat umbras. peior hac genetrix adest
and counts shades. worse than-her mother is-present
furibunda Agaue, tota quam sequitur manus
raging Agave, whole whom follows band
partita regem: sequitur et Bacchas lacer
having-divided king: follows also Bacchants torn
Pentheus tenetque saevus etiam nunc minas,
Pentheus and-holds savage even now threats,
tandem vocatus saepe pudibundum extulit
at-last called often shamefaced raised
caput atque ab omni dissidet turba procul
head and from all stands-apart crowd far
celatque semet (instat et Stygias preces
and-hides himself (presses and Stygian prayers

geminat sacerdos, donec in apertum efferat
doubles the-priest, until into open he-bring
vultus opertos) Laius — fari horreo:
face covered) Laius to-speak I-shudder:
stetit per artus sanguine effuso horridus,
stood through limbs with-blood poured dreadful,
paedore foedo squalidam obtectus comam,
with-filth foul squalid covered hair,
et ore rabido fatur: 'O Cadmi effera,
and with-mouth rabid speaks: 'O of-Cadmus savage,
cruore semper laeta cognato domus,
in-blood always glad kindred house,
vibrate thyrsos, enthea gnatos manu
brandish thyrsi, with-inspired sons hand
lacerate potius — maximum Thebis scelus
tear rather greatest at-Thebes crime
maternus amor est. patria, non ira deum
maternal love is. fatherland, not by-anger of-gods
sed scelere raperis: non gravi flatu tibi
but by-crime you-are-snatched: not with-heavy blast to-you
luctificus Auster nec parum pluvio aethere
baleful Auster nor too-little with-rainy sky
satiata tellus halitu sicco nocet,
sated earth with-breath dry harms,
sed rex cruentus, pretia qui saevae necis
but king bloody, as-reward who of-savage murder
sceptra et nefandos occupat thalamos patris
scepter and unspeakable seizes bed of-father
egitque in ortus semet et matri impios
and-drove into birth himself and to-mother impious

fetus regessit, quique, vix mos est feris,
offspring heaped-back, and-who, scarcely custom is for-beasts,
fratres sibi ipse genuit — implicitum malum
brothers to-himself himself begot entangled evil
magisque monstrum Sphinge perplexum sua.
and-more monster than-Sphinx perplexing his.
invisa proles: sed tamen peior parens
hated offspring: but yet worse parent
quam gnatus, utero rursus infausto gravis.
than son, with-womb again ill-starred heavy.
te, te cruenta sceptra qui dextra geris,
you, you bloody scepters who in-right-hand bear,
te pater inultus urbe cum tota petam
you father unavenged city with whole I-shall-seek
et mecum Erinyn pronubam thalami traham,
and with-me Erinys bridesmaid of-marriage I-shall-drag,
traham sonantis verbera, incestam domum
I-shall-drag sounding lashes, incestuous house
vertam et penates impio Marte obteram.
I-shall-overturn and household-gods with-impious war crush.
proinde pulsum finibus regem ocius
therefore driven from-borders king quickly
agite exulem quocumque funesto gradu;
drive exile wherever with-deathly step;
solum relinquat: vere florifero virens
the-soil let-him-leave: in-spring flower-bearing growing-green
reparabit herbas, spiritus puros dabit
will-renew grasses, breaths pure will-give
vitalis aura, veniet et silvis decor;
life-giving air, will-come and to-woods beauty;

Letum Luesque, Mors Labor Tabes Dolor,
Destruction and-Pestilence, Death Toil Decay Pain,
comitatus illo dignus, excedent simul;
retinue of-him worthy, will-depart together;
et ipse rapidis gressibus sedes volet
and himself with-swift steps seats will-wish
effugere nostras, sed graves pedibus moras
to-escape our, but heavy to-feet delays
addam et tenebo: reptet incertus viae,
I-shall-add and hold: let-him-crawl uncertain of-way,
baculo senili triste praetemptans iter:
with-staff aged grim feeling-ahead path:
eripite terras, auferam caelum pater.'
snatch-away lands, I-shall-take-away sky the-father.'
OEDIPUS Et ossa et artus gelidus invasit tremor;
Both bones and limbs cold has-invaded trembling;
quicquid timebam facere fecisse arguor —
whatever I-feared to-do to-have-done I-am-charged
tori iugalis abnuit Merope nefas,
of-bed nuptial denies Merope crime,
sociata Polybo; sospes absolvit manus
joined to-Polybus; safe acquits hands
Polybus meas: uterque defendit parens
Polybus my: each defends parent
caedem stuprumque. quis locus culpae est super?
slaughter and-incest. what place for-guilt is left?
multo ante Thebae Laium amissum gemunt,
by-much before Thebes Laius lost bewail,
Boeota gressu quam meo tetigi loca.
Boeotian with-step than my I-touched places.

falsusne senior an deus Thebis gravis? —
false the-old-man or a-god to-Thebes heavy?
iam iam tenemus callidi socios doli:
now now we-hold of-cunning partners trick:
mentitur ista praeferens fraudi deos
lies those-things putting-before to-fraud gods
vates, tibique sceptra despondet mea.
seer, and-to-you scepter promises my.
CREO Egone ut sororem regia expelli velim?
I that sister from-palace to-be-expelled should-wish?
si me fides sacrata cognati laris
if me faith sacred of-kindred hearth
non contineret in meo certum statu:
not held in my fixed status:
tamen ipsa me fortuna terreret nimis
yet itself me fortune would-frighten too-much
sollicita semper. liceat hoc tuto tibi
anxious always. may-it-be-allowed this safely to-you
exuere pondus nec recedentem opprimat:
to-put-off weight nor withdrawing may-it-crush:
iam te minore tutior pones loco.
now you in-lesser safer will-place position.
OEDIPUS Hortaris etiam, sponte deponam ut mea
Do-you-urge even, of-will I-may-lay-down that my
tam gravia regna?
so heavy realm?
CREO Suadeam hoc illis ego,
I-would-urge this to-those I,
in utrumque quis est liber etiamnum status:
to either for-whom is free still status:

tibi iam necesse est ferre fortunam tuam.
for-you now necessary is to-bear fortune your.
OEDIPUS Certissima est regnare cupienti via
Surest is to-reign to-one-desiring way
laudare modica et otium ac somnum loqui;
to-praise moderate-things and leisure and sleep to-talk-of;
ab inquieto saepe simulatur quies.
by restless often is-feigned rest.
CREO Parumne me tam longa defendit fides?
Too-little me so long defends loyalty?
OEDIPUS Aditum nocendi perfido praestat fides.
Access of-harming to-the-faithless affords loyalty.
CREO Solutus onere regio regni bonis
Freed from-burden royal of-kingship goods
fruor domusque civium coetu viget,
I-enjoy and-house of-citizens with-gathering thrives,
nec ulla vicibus surgit alternis dies
nor any in-turns rises alternate day
qua non propinqui munera ad nostros lares
on-which not of-near gifts to our hearths
sceptri redundent; cultus, opulentae dapes,
scepter overflow; dress, rich feasts,
donata multis gratia nostra salus:
given to-many by-favor our safety:
quid tam beatae desse fortunae rear?
what so to-blessed to-be-lacking fortune should-I-think?
OEDIPUS Quod dest: secunda non habent umquam modum.
What is-lacking: favorable not have ever limit.
CREO Incognita igitur ut nocens causa cadam?
With-unheard then that guilty case I-may-fall?

OEDIPUS Num ratio vobis reddita est vitae meae?
Surely-not account to-you rendered was of-life my?
num audita causa est nostra Tiresiae? tamen
surely-not heard case was our by-Tiresias? yet
sontes videmur. facitis exemplum: sequor.
guilty we-seem. you-make an-example: I-follow.
CREO Quid si innocens sum?
What if innocent I-am?
OEDIPUS Dubia pro certis solent
Doubtful-things for sure are-wont
timere reges.
to-fear kings.
CREO Qui pavet vanos metus,
Who dreads vain fears,
veros meretur.
true deserves.
OEDIPUS Quisquis in culpa fuit,
Whoever in guilt was,
dimissus odit: omne quod dubium est cadat.
released hates: all which doubtful is let-fall.
CREO Sic odia fiunt.
So hatreds are-made.
OEDIPUS Odia qui nimium timet
Hatreds who too-much fears
regnare nescit: regna custodit metus.
to-reign knows-not: realms guards fear.
CREO Qui sceptra duro saevus imperio regit,
Who scepters with-hard savage rule wields,
timet timentes: metus in auctorem redit.
fears the-fearing: fear onto author returns.

OEDIPUS Servate sontem saxeo inclusum specu.
Keep the-guilty in-rocky shut-in cave.
ipse ad penates regios referam gradum.
myself to household-gods royal I-shall-carry-back step.

VI · THE CHORUS ON THEBES' OLD CURSE

The chorus says the danger is not Oedipus' doing but the gods' old anger. Agenor's son, following a heifer at Phoebus' word, ended his wandering there and named the race from the cow, and since then the earth has brought forth monsters: the great serpent, and the armed men sprung from the sown seed, who fell within a day of their birth; may the city's civil crime end with them. Then Actaeon, Cadmus' grandson, crowned with a stag's horns and driven by his own hounds, fled until he saw his horns in the spring where the goddess had bathed.

CHORUS Non tu tantis causa periclis,
Not you for-so-great the-cause dangers,
non hinc Labdacidos petunt
not from-here Labdacids seek
fata, sed veteres deum
fates, but old of-gods
irae secuntur: Castalium nemus
angers pursue: Castalian grove
umbram Sidonio praebuit hospiti
shade to-Sidonian offered stranger
lavitque Dirce Tyrios colonos,
and-washed Dirce Tyrian settlers,
ut primum magni natus Agenoris
when first of-great son Agenor
fessus per orbem furta sequi Iovis,
weary through world thefts to-follow of-Jove,

sub nostra pavidus constitit arbore
under our fearful stopped tree
praedonem venerans suum
the-robber venerating his
monituque Phoebi
and-by-warning of-Phoebus
iussus erranti comes ire vaccae,
ordered to-wandering companion to-go cow,
quam non flexerat
which not had-bent
vomer aut tardi iuga curva plaustri,
plowshare or of-slow yoke curved wagon,
deseruit fugas nomenque genti
abandoned flights and-name to-race
inauspicata de bove tradidit.
ill-omened from cow handed-down.
Tempore ex illo nova monstra semper protulit tellus:
Time from that new monsters always brought-forth earth:
aut anguis imis vallibus editus
either snake from-lowest valleys produced
annosa supra robora sibilat
aged above oaks hisses
superatque pinus:
and-surpasses pines:
supra Chaonias celsior arbores
above Chaonian loftier trees
erexit caeruleum caput,
raised dark-blue head,
cum maiore sui parte recumberet;
when with-greater of-itself part it-lay;

aut feta tellus impio partu
or pregnant earth with-impious birth
effudit arma: sonuit reflexo
poured-out arms: sounded with-bent
classicum cornu lituusque adunco
trumpet horn and-clarion with-hooked
stridulos cantus elisit aere,
shrill notes struck-out bronze,
* * *
(lacuna)
ante non linguas agiles et ora
before not tongues nimble and mouths
vocis ignotae clamore primum
of-voice unknown with-shout first
hostico experti:
hostile having-tried:
Agmina campos cognata tenent,
Columns plains kindred hold,
dignaque iacto semine proles,
and-worthy of-thrown seed offspring,
uno aetatem permensa die,
in-one life having-measured day,
post Luciferi nata meatus
after of-Lucifer born courses
ante Hesperios occidit ortus.
before western fell risings.
horret tantis advena monstris
shudders at-so-great the-newcomer monsters
populique timet bella recentis,
and-of-people fears wars new,

donec cecidit saeva iuventus
until fell savage youth
genetrixque suo reddi gremio
and-mother to-her to-be-returned bosom
modo productos vidit alumnos.
just brought-forth saw nurslings.
hac transierit civile nefas!
thus may-have-passed civil crime!
illa Herculeae norint Thebae
those Herculean may-know Thebes
proelia fratrum.
battles of-brothers.
Quid Cadmei fata nepotis,
What of-Cadmean the-fates grandson,
cum vivacis cornua cervi
when of-long-lived horns stag
frontem ramis texere novis
brow with-branches covered new
dominumque canes egere suum?
and-master hounds drove their?
praeceps silvas montesque fugit
headlong woods and-mountains fled
citus Actaeon agilique magis
swift Actaeon and-with-nimble more
pede per saltus ac saxa vagus
foot through glades and rocks wandering
metuit motas zephyris plumas
feared moved by-zephyrs feathers
et quae posuit retia vitat:
and which he-set nets avoids:

donec placidi fontis in unda
until of-calm spring in water
cornua vidit vultusque feros;
horns saw and-face wild;
ibi virgineos foverat artus
there maidenly had-bathed limbs
nimium saevi diva pudoris.
too of-savage goddess modesty.

VII · THE OLD MAN FROM CORINTH

Oedipus remembers an old man he struck down where three roads part, and Jocasta's answers fit: Laius was near old age, few attended him, one companion fell with him, and it was ten harvests ago. An old man from Corinth brings word that Polybus has died peacefully; but Oedipus still fears his mother. The old man reveals that Merope was not his mother: he received the infant, his feet pierced, from a royal shepherd on Cithaeron. Oedipus sends for the chief herdsmen, and despite the old man's warning presses on until Phorbas comes.

OEDIPUS Curas revolvit animus et repetit metus.
Cares turns-over mind and seeks-again fears.
obisse nostro Laium scelere autumant
to-have-died by-our Laius crime they-assert
superi inferique, sed animus contra innocens
those-above and-below, but mind on-contrary innocent
sibique melius quam deis notus negat.
and-to-itself better than to-gods known denies.
redit memoria tenue per vestigium,
returns memory slender through track,
cecidisse nostri stipitis pulsu obvium
to-have-fallen of-our staff by-stroke one-met

datumque Diti cum prior iuvenem senex,
and-given to-Dis when first the-young-man old,
curru superbus, pelleret, Thebis procul
in-chariot proud, he-was-thrusting, from-Thebes far
Phocaea trifidas regio qua scindit vias.
Phocian three-fold region where splits ways.
unanima coniunx, explica errores precor:
of-one-mind wife, unfold wanderings I-pray:
quae spatia moriens Laius vitae tulit?
what spans dying Laius of-life bore?
primone in aevo viridis an fracto occidit?
first in age green or in-broken did-he-fall?

IOCASTA Inter senem iuvenemque, sed propior seni.
Between old and-young, but nearer to-old.

OEDIPUS Frequensne turba regium cinxit latus?
Thronging crowd royal surrounded side?

IOCASTA Plures fefellit error ancipitis viae,
More deceived the-wandering of-double way,
paucos fidelis curribus iunxit labor.
few faithful to-chariot joined toil.

OEDIPUS Aliquisne cecidit regio fato comes?
Did-anyone fall in-royal fate companion?

IOCASTA Unum fides virtusque consortem addidit.
One faith and-valor partner added.

OEDIPUS Teneo nocentem. convenit numerus, locus:
I-hold the-guilty. agrees number, place:
sed tempus adde.
but time add.

IOCASTA Decima iam metitur seges.
Tenth now is-reaped harvest.

SENEX Corinthius te populus in regnum vocat
Corinthian you people to kingship calls
patrium: quietem Polybus aeternam obtinet.
paternal: rest Polybus eternal holds.
OEDIPUS Ut undique in me saeva Fortuna irruit!
How from-everywhere on me savage Fortune rushes!
edissere agedum, quo cadat fato parens.
declare come-now, by-what falls fate my-father.
SENEX Animam senilem mollis exsolvit sopor.
Soul aged soft released sleep.
OEDIPUS Genitor sine ulla caede defunctus iacet.
My-father without any slaughter dead lies.
testor, licet iam tollere ad caelum pie
I-testify, it-is-allowed now to-raise to heaven dutifully
puras nec ulla scelera metuentes manus.
pure nor any crimes fearing hands.
sed pars magis metuenda fatorum manet.
but part more to-be-feared of-fates remains.
SENEX Omnem paterna regna discutient metum.
All paternal realms will-dispel fear.
OEDIPUS Repetam paterna regna; sed matrem horreo.
I-shall-seek-again paternal realms; but my-mother I-dread.
SENEX Metuis parentem, quae tuum reditum expetens
Do-you-fear parent, who your return longing-for
sollicita pendet?
anxious hangs?
OEDIPUS Ipsa me pietas fugat.
Itself me dutifulness puts-to-flight.
SENEX Viduam relinques?
Widowed will-you-leave?

OEDIPUS Tangis en ipsos metus. —
You-touch look very fears.
SENEX Effare mersus quis premat mentem timor;
Speak sunk what presses mind fear;
praestare tacitam regibus soleo fidem.
to-show silent to-kings I-am-wont faith.
OEDIPUS Conubia matris Delphico admonitu tremo.
Marriage of-mother by-Delphic warning I-tremble-at.
SENEX Timere vana desine et turpes metus
To-fear vain-things cease and base fears
depone: Merope vera non fuerat parens.
lay-down: Merope true not had-been mother.
OEDIPUS Quod subditivi praemium gnati petit?
What of-substituted reward son seeks-she?
SENEX Regum superbam liberi astringunt fidem.
Of-kings proud children bind loyalty.
OEDIPUS Secreta thalami fare quo excipias modo.
Secrets of-marriage tell in-what you-learn way.
SENEX Hae te parenti parvulum tradunt manus.
These you to-parent tiny hand hands.
OEDIPUS Tu me parenti tradis; at quis me tibi?
You me to-parent hand; but who me to-you?
SENEX Pastor nivoso sub Cithaeronis iugo.
A-shepherd snowy under of-Cithaeron ridge.
OEDIPUS In illa temet nemora quis casus tulit?
Into those yourself groves what chance bore?
SENEX Illo sequebar monte cornigeros greges.
On-that I-followed mountain horned flocks.
OEDIPUS Nunc adice certas corporis nostri notas.
Now add sure of-body our marks.

SENEX Forata ferro gesseras vestigia,
Pierced with-iron you-had-borne feet,
tumore nactus nomen ac vitio pedum.
from-swelling having-got name and from-defect of-feet.
OEDIPUS Quis fuerit ille qui meum dono dedit
Who was that-one who my as-gift gave
815 corpus requiro.
body I-ask.
SENEX Regios pavit greges;
Royal he-fed flocks;
minor sub illo turba pastorum fuit.
lesser under him crowd of-shepherds was.
OEDIPUS Eloquere nomen.
Speak-out name.
SENEX Prima languescit senum
First grows-faint of-old-men
memoria longo lassa sublabens situ.
memory with-long weary slipping disuse.
OEDIPUS Potesne facie noscere ac vultu virum?
Can-you by-face to-know and features man?
820 SENEX Fortasse noscam: saepe iam spatio obrutam
Perhaps I-may-know: often now by-time buried
levis exoletam memoriam revocat nota.
light faded memory recalls mark.
OEDIPUS Ad sacra et aras omne compulsum pecus
To rites and altars all driven cattle
duces sequantur; ite, propere accersite,
leaders let-follow; go, quickly summon,
famuli, penes quos summa consistit gregum.
servants, with whom the-chief rests of-flocks.

SENEX Sive ista ratio sive fortuna occulit,
Whether that reason or fortune hides,
latere semper patere quod latuit diu:
to-lie-hid always allow what has-lain-hid long:
saepe eruentis veritas patuit malo.
often of-one-digging truth lay-open to-harm.
OEDIPUS Malum timeri maius bis aliquod potest?
Evil to-be-feared greater twice any can?
SENEX Magnum esse magna mole quod petitur scias.
Great to-be with-great effort what is-sought know.
concurrit illinc publica, hinc regis salus:
clashes there public, here of-the-king safety:
utrimque paria; contine medias manus,
on-both-sides equal; restrain middle hands,
nihil lacessas, ipsa se fata explicent.
nothing provoke, themselves themselves fates let-unfold.
OEDIPUS Non expedit concutere felicem statum:
Not it-is-expedient to-shake happy state:
tuto movetur quicquid extremo in loco est.
safely is-moved whatever farthest in place is.
SENEX Nobilius aliquid genere regali appetis?
Nobler anything than-birth royal do-you-seek?
ne te parentis pigeat inventi vide.
lest you of-parent irk found see.
OEDIPUS Vel paenitendi sanguinis quaeram fidem,
Even of-to-be-repented blood I-shall-seek proof,
si nosse certum est. ecce grandaevus senex,
if to-know resolved it-is. behold aged old-man,
arbitria sub quo regii fuerant gregis,
control under whom of-royal had-been flock,

840 Phorbas. refersne nomen aut vultum senis?
Phorbas. do-you-recall name or face of-the-old-man?
SENEX Adridet animo forma; nec notus satis,
Smiles to-mind form; nor known enough,
nec rursus iste vultus ignotus mihi.
nor again that face unknown to-me.
OEDIPUS Regnum optinente Laio famulus greges
Kingdom with-holding Laius servant flocks
agitasti opimos sub Cithaeronis plaga?
did-you-drive rich under of-Cithaeron region?

VIII · PHORBAS CONFESSES

Phorbas, half recalling the old man, hesitates: the infant he gave away could not have lived, with its feet pierced and swollen. Threatened with fire, he names the mother: the child was born of the king's own wife. Oedipus calls on the earth to swallow him and the citizens to stone him, the reproach of the age and the hatred of the gods, and bids himself hurry into the palace and congratulate his mother on a house increased with children.

845 PHORBAS Laetus Cithaeron pabulo semper novo
Glad Cithaeron with-fodder always new
aestiva nostro prata summittit gregi.
summer for-our meadows sends-up flock.
SENEX Noscisne memet?
Do-you-know me?
PHORBAS Dubitat anceps memoria.
Doubts uncertain memory.

OEDIPUS Huic aliquis a te traditur quondam puer?
To-him some by you is-handed once boy?
effare. dubitas? cur genas mutat color?
speak. do-you-doubt? why cheeks changes color?
quid verba quaeris? veritas odit moras.
why words do-you-seek? truth hates delays.
PHORBAS Obducta longo temporum tractu moves.
Covered-over by-long of-times stretch you-stir.
OEDIPUS Fatere, ne te cogat ad verum dolor.
Confess, lest you force to truth pain.
PHORBAS Inutile isti munus infantis dedi:
Useless to-that-man gift of-infant I-gave:
non potuit ille luce, non caelo frui.
not could he light, not sky to-enjoy.
SENEX Procul sit omen. vivit et vivat precor.
Far be omen. he-lives and may-be-live I-pray.
OEDIPUS Superesse quare traditum infantem negas?
To-survive why handed-over infant do-you-deny?
PHORBAS Ferrum per ambos tenue transactum pedes
Iron through both thin driven feet
ligabat artus, vulneri innatus tumor
bound limbs, in-wound grown swelling
puerile foeda corpus urebat lue.
boyish with-foul body was-burning pestilence.
OEDIPUS Quid quaeris ultra? fata iam accedunt prope.
What do-you-ask further? fates now approach near.
quis fuerit infans edoce.
who was the-infant inform.
PHORBAS Prohibet fides.
Forbids loyalty.

OEDIPUS Huc aliquis ignem! flamma iam excutiet fidem.
Hither someone fire! flame now will-shake-out loyalty.
PHORBAS Per tam cruentas vera quaerentur vias?
Through such bloody true-things will-be-sought ways?
ignosce quaeso.
pardon I-beg.
OEDIPUS Si ferus videor tibi
If fierce I-seem to-you
et impotens, parata vindicta in manu est:
and unbridled, ready vengeance in hand is:
dic vera: quisnam? quove generatus patre?
say true-things: who? or-from-what begotten father?
qua matre genitus?
from-what mother born?
PHORBAS coniuge est genitus tua.
from-wife he-was born your.
OEDIPUS Dehisce, tellus, tuque tenebrarum potens,
Gape, earth, and-you of-darkness powerful,
in Tartara ima, rector umbrarum, rape
to Tartarus lowest, ruler of-shades, snatch
retro reversas generis ac stirpis vices.
back reversed of-race and of-stock turns.
congerite, cives, saxa in infandum caput,
heap, citizens, rocks on unspeakable head,
mactate telis: me petat ferro parens,
slay with-weapons: me let-attack with-steel father,
me gnatus, in me coniuges arment manus
me son, against me spouses let-arm hands
fratresque, et aeger populus ereptos rogis
and-brothers, and sick people snatched from-pyres

iaculetur ignes. saeculi crimen vagor,
let-hurl fires. of-the-age the-reproach I-wander,
odium deorum, iuris exitium sacri,
hatred of-gods, of-law the-ruin sacred,
qua luce primum spiritus hausi rudes
on-what light first breaths I-drew raw
iam morte dignus. redde nunc animos † acres,
already of-death worthy. render now spirits (corrupt) keen,
nunc aliquid aude sceleribus dignum tuis.
now something dare to-crimes worthy your.
i, perge, propero regiam gressu pete:
go, go-on, with-hurried palace step seek:
gratare matri liberis auctam domum.
congratulate mother with-children increased house.

IX · THE MIDDLE WAY

The chorus would steer its life by gentle breezes on the middle way. Fearing the Cretan king, the boy sought the stars on new wings, tried to outdo the birds, and gave his name to the sea, while Daedalus kept a middle course beneath the clouds, waiting for him, until the boy fell. Whatever exceeds the measure hangs insecure. The palace doors sound, and a servant comes, beating his head.

CHORUS Fata si liceat mihi
Fates if it-were-allowed to-me
fingere arbitrio meo,
to-shape by-judgment my,
temperem zephyro levi
I-would-temper with-zephyr light
vela, ne pressae gravi
sails, lest pressed with-heavy

spiritu antennae tremant:
breath yards tremble:
lenis et modice fluens
gentle and moderately flowing
aura nec vergens latus
breeze nor leaning side
ducat intrepidam ratem;
may-lead fearless ship;
tuta me media vehat
safe me by-middle may-carry
vita decurrens via.
life running-down way.
Gnosium regem timens
The-Cnossian king fearing
astra dum demens petit
stars while mad seeks
artibus fisus novis,
on-arts trusting new,
certat et veras aves
strives and true birds
vincere ac falsis nimis
to-surpass and with-false too
imperat pinnis puer,
commands wings the-boy,
nomen eripuit freto;
name he-snatched from-the-sea;
callidus medium senex
clever middle old-man
Daedalus librans iter
Daedalus balancing path

nube sub media stetit,
cloud under middle stood,
alitem expectans suum
winged-one awaiting his
(qualis accipitris minas
(as of-hawk threats
fugit et sparsos metu
flees and scattered with-fear
conligit fetus avis),
gathers young bird),
donec in ponto manus
until in sea hands
movit implicitas puer
moved entangled the-boy
compede audacis viae.
with-fetter of-bold journey.
quicquid excessit modum
whatever has-exceeded measure
pendet instabili loco.
hangs in-unstable place.
Sed quid hoc? postes sonant;
But what this? doorposts sound;
maestus en famulus manu
sad look servant with-hand
regius quassat caput.
royal beats head.
ede quid portes novi.
tell what you-bring of-new.

X · OEDIPUS BLINDS HIMSELF

A messenger tells how Oedipus, condemning himself, raged through the palace like a lion. He drew a sword but judged one death too little for his crimes against father, mother, children, and country, and sought a death that would keep him from both the living and the dead. Weeping, he tore out his eyes with hooked fingers, tested the darkness, and called on the gods to spare his country. The chorus sings that fate rules all and no prayer moves it; then the doors sound, and Oedipus comes out blind, without a guide.

NUNTIUS Praedicta postquam fata et infandum genus
Foretold after fates and unspeakable birth
deprendit ac se scelere convictum Oedipus
he-discovered and himself of-crime convicted Oedipus
damnavit ipse, regiam infestus petens
condemned himself, palace hostile seeking
invisa propero tecta penetravit gradu
hated with-hurried roofs entered step
qualis per arva Libycus insanit leo,
as through fields Libyan raves lion,
fulvam minaci fronte concutiens iubam;
tawny with-threatening brow shaking mane;
vultus furore torvus atque oculi truces,
face with-madness grim and eyes fierce,
gemitus et altum murmur, et gelidus fluit
groans and deep murmur, and cold flows
sudor per artus, spumat et volvit minas
sweat through limbs, he-foams and rolls threats
ac mersus alte magnus exundat dolor.
and sunk deep great overflows grief.

secum ipse saevus grande nescio quid parat
with-himself himself savage great I-know-not what prepares
suisque fatis simile, 'quid poenas moror?'
and-to-his fates like, 'why penalties do-I-delay?'
ait 'hoc scelestum pectus aut ferro petat,
he-says 'this wicked breast either with-sword let-someone-attack,
aut fervido aliquis igne vel saxo domet.
or with-burning someone fire or rock let-crush.
quae tigris aut quae saeva visceribus meis
what tigress or what savage on-entrails my
incurret ales? ipse tu scelerum capax,
will-rush bird? yourself you of-crimes holder,
sacer Cithaeron, vel feras in me tuas
sacred Cithaeron, either beasts against me your
emitte silvis, mitte vel rabidos canes —
send-out from-woods, send or rabid hounds
nunc redde Agauen. anime, quid mortem times?
now give-back Agave. soul, why death do-you-fear?
mors innocentem sola Fortunae eripit.'
death the-innocent alone from-Fortune snatches.'
haec fatus aptat impiam capulo manum
these-things having-spoken he-fits impious to-hilt hand
ensemque ducit. 'itane? tam magnis breves
and-sword draws. 'so? so for-great brief
poenas sceleribus solvis atque uno omnia
penalties crimes you-pay and with-one all
pensabis ictu? moreris: hoc patri sat est;
you-will-weigh-out blow? you-die: this for-father enough is;
quid deinde matri, quid male in lucem editis
what then to-mother, what badly into light brought-forth

gnatis, quid ipsi, quae tuum magna luit
to-children, what to-herself, who your with-great paid
scelus ruina, flebili patriae dabis?
crime ruin, to-tearful fatherland will-you-give?
solvendo non es: illa quae leges ratas
for-paying not you-are: she who laws fixed
Natura in uno vertit Oedipoda, novos
Nature in one has-reversed Oedipus, new
commenta partus, supplicis eadem meis
having-devised births, of-punishment same my
novetur. iterum vivere atque iterum mori
let-be-renewed. again to-live and again to-die
liceat, renasci semper ut totiens nova
let-it-be-allowed, to-be-reborn always that so-often new
supplicia pendas — utere ingenio, miser:
punishments you-may-pay use wit, wretch:
quod saepe fieri non potest fiat diu;
what often to-happen not can let-happen long;
mors eligatur longa. quaeratur via
death let-be-chosen long. let-be-sought a-way
qua nec sepultis mixtus et vivis tamen
by-which neither with-buried mingled and from-living yet
exemptus erres: morere, sed citra patrem.
removed you-may-wander: die, but short-of father.
cunctaris, anime?' subitus en vultus gravat
do-you-hesitate, soul?' sudden look face weighs-down
profusus imber ac rigat fletu genas.
poured shower and wets with-weeping cheeks.
'et flere satis est? hactenus fundent levem
'and to-weep enough is? thus-far will-pour light

oculi liquorem? sedibus pulsi suis
eyes liquid? from-seats driven their
lacrimas sequantur: di maritales, satin?
tears let-them-follow: gods marital, enough?
fodiantur oculi!' dixit atque ira furit:
let-be-dug-out eyes!' he-said and with-anger rages:
ardent minaces igne truculento genae
burn threatening with-fire savage cheeks
oculique vix se sedibus retinent suis;
and-eyes scarcely themselves in-seats hold their;
violentus audax vultus, iratus ferox,
violent bold face, angry fierce,
tantum furentis; gemuit et dirum fremens
only of-one-raging; he-groaned and dreadfully roaring
manus in ora torsit. at contra truces
hands into face twisted. but on-the-other-side fierce
oculi steterunt et suam intenti manum
eyes stood and their intent hand
ultro insecuntur, vulneri occurrunt suo.
of-themselves pursue, to-wound run-to their.
scrutatur avidus manibus uncis lumina,
searches greedy with-hands hooked eyes,
radice ab ima funditus vulsos simul
root from lowest utterly torn together
evolvit orbes; haeret in vacuo manus
rolls-out orbs; sticks in empty hand
et fixa penitus unguibus lacerat cavos
and fixed deep with-nails tears hollow
alte recessus luminum et inanes sinus,
deep recesses of-eyes and empty sockets,

saevitque frustra plusque quam satis est furit.
and-rages in-vain and-more than enough is raves.
Factum est periclum lucis; attollit caput
Made is the-trial of-light; he-raises head
cavisque lustrans orbibus caeli plagas
and-with-hollow surveying orbs of-sky regions
noctem experitur. quicquid effossis male
night he-tests. whatever from-dug-out badly
dependet oculis rumpit, et victor deos
hangs eyes he-breaks, and victor gods
conclamat omnis: 'parcite, en, patriae precor:
calls-upon all: 'spare, look, fatherland I-pray:
iam iusta feci, debitas poenas tuli;
now just-things I-have-done, owed penalties I-have-paid;
inventa thalamis digna nox tandem meis.'
found for-marriage worthy night at-last my.'
rigat ora foedus imber et lacerum caput
wets face foul shower and torn head
largum revulsis sanguinem venis vomit.
abundant from-torn blood veins vomits.
CHORUS Fatis agimur: cedite fatis;
By-fates we-are-driven: yield to-fates;
non sollicitae possunt curae
not anxious can cares
mutare rati stamina fusi.
to-change of-fixed threads spindle.
quicquid patimur mortale genus,
whatever we-suffer mortal race,
quicquid facimus venit ex alto,
whatever we-do comes from on-high,

servatque suae decreta colus
and-keeps of-her decrees distaff
Lachesis nulla revoluta manu.
Lachesis by-no turned-back hand.
omnia secto tramite vadunt
all on-cut path go
primusque dies dedit extremum:
and-first day gave the-last:
non illa deo vertisse licet
not those to-a-god to-have-turned is-allowed
quae nexa suis currunt causis.
which bound with-their run causes.
it cuique ratus prece non ulla
goes for-each fixed by-prayer not any
mobilis ordo: multis ipsum
movable order: to-many itself
metuisse nocet, multi ad fatum
to-have-feared harms, many to fate
venere suum dum fata timent.
have-come their while fates they-fear.
Sonuere fores atque ipse suum
Have-sounded doors and himself his
duce non ullo molitur iter
with-guide not any labors-on path
luminis orbus.
of-light bereft.

Blind, Oedipus welcomes his darkness. Jocasta rushes in and, after hesitating, calls him son; he wishes a whole world parted them, and when she blames fate he begs her to spare his ears. Holding herself his partner in crime, she seizes the sword that killed her husband and drives it into the womb that bore husband and sons. Oedipus, twice a parricide, reproaches lying Phoebus and gropes his way out, calling the plague and its companions to follow him.

OEDIPUS Bene habet, peractum est: iusta persolvi patri.
Well it-is, done it-is: due-things I-have-paid to-my-father.
iuvant tenebrae. quis deus tandem mihi
delight darkness. what god at-last to-me
placatus atra nube perfundit caput?
appeased with-black cloud drenches head?
quis scelera donat? conscium evasi diem.
who crimes forgives? witnessing I-have-escaped day.
nil, parricida, dexterae debes tuae:
nothing, parricide, to-right-hand you-owe your:
lux te refugit. vultus Oedipodam hic decet.
light you has-fled. face Oedipus this befits.
CHORUS En ecce, rapido saeva prosiluit gradu
Look behold, with-swift savage has-leaped-forth step
Iocasta vaecors, qualis attonita et furens
Jocasta frantic, as frenzied and raging
Cadmea mater abstulit gnato caput
Cadmean mother took from-son head
sensitque raptum. dubitat afflictum alloqui,
and-perceived it-taken. she-hesitates the-afflicted to-address,
cupit pavetque. iam malis cessit pudor.
desires and-dreads. now to-evils has-yielded shame.

set haeret ore prima vox.
but sticks in-mouth first word.
IOCASTA Quid te vocem?
What you shall-I-call?
gnatumne? dubitas? gnatus es: gnatum pudet? 1010
son? do-you-doubt? son you-are: of-son it-shames?
invite loquere gnate — quo avertis caput
unwilling speak son where do-you-turn-away head
vacuosque vultus?
and-empty face?
OEDIPUS Quis frui tenebris vetat?
Who to-enjoy darkness forbids?
quis reddit oculos? matris, en matris sonus!
who restores eyes? of-mother, look of-mother sound!
perdidimus operam. congredi fas amplius
we-have-lost the-labor. to-meet right further
haut est. nefandos dividat vastum mare 1015
not is. unspeakable let-divide vast sea
dirimatque tellus abdita et quisquis sub hoc
and-let-separate land remote and whatever under this
in alia versus sidera ac solem avium
toward other turned stars and sun pathless
dependet orbis alterum ex nobis ferat.
hangs world one of us let-bear.
IOCASTA Fati ista culpa est: nemo fit fato nocens.
Of-fate that the-fault is: no-one becomes by-fate guilty.
OEDIPUS Iam parce verbis, mater, et parce auribus: 1020
Now spare words, mother, and spare ears:
per has reliquias corporis trunci peto,
by these remains of-body maimed I-beg,

per inauspicatum sanguinis pignus mei,
by ill-omened of-blood pledge my,
per omne nostri nominis fas ac nefas.
by all of-our name right and wrong.
IOCASTA Quid, anime, torpes? socia cur scelerum dare
Why, soul, are-you-numb? partner why of-crimes to-give
poenas recusas? omne confusum perit,
penalties do-you-refuse? all confounded perishes,
incesta, per te iuris humani decus:
incestuous-one, through you of-law human the-glory:
morere et nefastum spiritum ferro exige.
die and unholy breath with-sword drive-out.
non si ipse mundum concitans divum sator
not if himself world stirring of-gods begetter
corusca saeva tela iaculetur manu,
flashing with-savage weapons should-hurl hand,
umquam rependam sceleribus poenas pares
ever I-could-pay to-crimes penalties equal
mater nefanda. mors placet: mortis via
mother unspeakable. death pleases: of-death the-way
quaeratur. agedum, commoda matri manum,
let-be-sought. come-now, lend to-mother hand,
si parricida es. restat hoc operae ultimum:
if parricide you-are. remains this of-work last:
rapiatur ensis; hoc iacet ferro meus
let-be-snatched the-sword; by-this lies steel my
coniunx — quid illum nomine haud vero vocas?
husband why him by-name not true do-you-call?
socer est. utrumne pectori infigam meo
father-in-law he-is. whether in-breast shall-I-fix my

telum an patenti conditum iugulo inprimam?
weapon or into-open buried throat press?
eligere nescis vulnus: hunc, dextra, hunc pete
to-choose you-know-not wound: this, right-hand, this attack
uterum capacem, qui virum et gnatos tulit.
womb capacious, which husband and sons bore.
CHORUS Iacet perempta. vulneri immoritur manus
She-lies slain. on-wound dies hand
ferrumque secum nimius eiecit cruor.
and-sword with-itself excessive ejected blood.
OEDIPUS Fatidice te, te praesidem et veri deum
Prophetic you, you guardian and of-truth god
compello: solum debui fatis patrem;
I-address: only I-owed to-fates father;
bis parricida plusque quam timui nocens
twice parricide and-more than I-feared guilty
matrem peremi: scelere confecta est meo.
mother I-have-slain: by-crime destroyed is my.
O Phoebe mendax, fata superavi impia.
O Phoebus lying, fates I-have-surpassed impious.
Pavitante gressu sequere pallentes vias;
With-trembling step follow pale ways;
suspensa plantis efferens vestigia
lifted with-soles carrying-out tracks
caecam tremente dextera noctem rege.
blind with-trembling right-hand night guide.
ingredere praeceps, lubricos ponens gradus,
step-in headlong, slippery placing steps,
i profuge vade — siste, ne in matrem incidas.
go flee go stop, lest onto mother you-fall.

quicumque fessi corpore et morbo graves
whoever weary in-body and with-disease heavy
semanima trahitis pectora, en fugio exeo:
half-alive drag breasts, look I-flee I-go-out:
relevate colla. mitior caeli status
lift necks. milder of-sky state
posterga sequitur: quisquis exilem iacens
behind follows: whoever thin lying
animam retentat, vividos haustus levis
breath holds, lively drafts light
concipiat. ite, ferte depositis opem:
let-take. go, bring to-the-dying help:
mortifera mecum vitia terrarum extraho.
deadly with-me corruptions of-lands I-drag-out.
violenta Fata et horridus Morbi tremor,
violent Fates and dreadful of-Disease trembling,
Maciesque et atra Pestis et rabidus Dolor,
and-Wasting and black Plague and rabid Pain,
mecum ite, mecum. ducibus his uti libet.
with-me go, with-me. guides these to-use it-pleases.

SENECA

Phoenissae

The Phoenician Women

I · OEDIPUS AND ANTIGONE

Blind Oedipus begs Antigone to let him go: he will find his way to Cithaeron, where Actaeon fell and the mountain should have killed him as an infant; Laius' ghost is calling him. Antigone will not loose his hand and will follow him over any cliff, but asks him to conquer his sorrows. He marvels at a dutiful child from his house, demands his sword, would sit on the Sphinx's rock to pose his own riddle, and longs to finish the death he began.

OEDIPUS Caeci parentis regimen et fessi unicum
of-blind parent guide and of-weary sole
lateris levamen, gnata, quam tanti est mihi
side relief, daughter, whom of-such-worth it-is to-me
genuisse vel sic, desere infaustum patrem.
to-have-begotten even thus, abandon ill-starred father.
in recta quid deflectis errantem gradum?
into straight-paths why do-you-turn-aside wandering step?
permitte labi; melius inveniam viam,
allow to-fall; better I-shall-find way,
quam quaero solus, quae me ab hac vita extrahat
which I-seek alone, which me from this life may-draw-out
et hoc nefandi capitis aspectu levet
and from-this of-unspeakable head sight may-relieve
caelum atque terras. quantulum hac egi manu?
heaven and lands. how-little with-this have-I-done hand?
non video noxae conscium nostrae diem,
not I-see of-guilt witness our day,
sed videor. hinc iam solve inhaerentem manum
but I-am-seen. hence now loose clinging hand

et patere caecum qua volet ferri pedem.
and allow blind where it-will to-be-borne foot.
ibo, ibo qua praerupta protendit iuga
I-shall-go, I-shall-go where sheer stretches-forth ridges
meus Cithaeron, qua peragrato celer
my Cithaeron, where with-traversed swift
per saxa monte iacuit Actaeon suis
through rocks mountain lay Actaeon for-his-own
nova praeda canibus, qua per obscurum nemus
new prey hounds, where through dark grove
silvamque opacae vallis instinctas deo
and-wood of-shady valley inspired by-god
egit sorores mater et gaudens malo
drove sisters mother and rejoicing in-evil
vibrante fixum praetulit thyrso caput;
on-brandished fixed carried-before thyrsus head;
vel qua cucurrit, corpus inlisum trahens,
or where ran, body dashed dragging,
Zethi iuvencus, qua per horrentes rubos
of-Zethus bullock, where through bristling brambles
tauri ferocis sanguis ostentat fugas;
of-bull fierce blood shows flights;
vel qua alta maria vertice inmenso premit
or where deep seas with-summit huge presses
Inoa rupes, qua scelus fugiens novum
of-Ino rock, where crime fleeing new
novumque faciens mater insiluit freto
and-new committing mother leapt-into strait
mersura natum seque — felices quibus
going-to-drown son and-herself happy to-whom

fortuna melior tam bonas matres dedit.
fortune better so good mothers has-given.
est alius istis noster in silvis locus,
is another these our in woods place,
qui me reposcit, hunc petam cursu incito;
which me demands-back, this I-shall-seek with-pace swift;
non haesitabit gressus, huc omni duce
not will-hesitate step, hither of-every guide
spoliatus ibo. quid moror sedes meas?
stripped I-shall-go. why do-I-delay seat my?
mortem, Cithaeron, redde et hospitium mihi
death, Cithaeron, give-back and lodging to-me
illud meum restitue, ut expirem senex
that my restore, that I-may-expire old-man
ubi debui infans. recipe supplicium vetus.
where I-ought as-infant. take-back punishment old.
semper cruente saeve crudelis ferox,
ever bloody savage cruel fierce,
cum occidis et cum parcis, olim iam tuum
when you-kill and when you-spare, long now yours
est hoc cadaver: perage mandatum patris,
is this corpse: carry-out command of-father,
iam et matris. animus gestit antiqua exsequi
now also of-mother. mind longs ancient to-carry-out
supplicia. quid me, nata, pestifero tenes
punishments. why me, daughter, with-baneful do-you-hold
amore vinctum? quid tenes? genitor vocat.
love bound? why do-you-hold? father calls.
sequor, sequor, iam parce. sanguineum gerens
I-follow, I-follow, now spare. bloody wearing

insigne regni Laius rapti furit;
emblem of-kingdom Laius stolen rages;
en ecce, inanes manibus infestis petit
look behold, empty with-hands hostile he-attacks
foditque vultus. nata, genitorem vides?
and-digs face. daughter, father do-you-see?
ego video. tandem spiritum inimicum expue,
I see. at-last breath hostile spit-out,
desertor anime, fortis in partem tui.
deserter soul, brave in part of-yourself.
omitte poenae languidas longae moras
give-up of-penalty languid long delays
mortemque totam admitte; quid segnis traho
and-death whole admit; why sluggish do-I-drag-out
quod vivo? nullum facere iam possum scelus?
what I-live? no to-commit now can-I crime?
possum miser, praedico — discede a patre,
I-can wretched, I-foretell depart from father,
discede, virgo. timeo post matrem omnia.
depart, maiden. I-fear after mother everything.
ANTIGONA Vis nulla, genitor, a tuo nostram manum
Force no, father, from your our hand
corpore resolvet, nemo me comitem tibi
body will-loose, no-one me companion from-you
eripiet umquam. Labdaci claram domum,
will-snatch ever. of-Labdacus famous house,
opulenta ferro regna germani petant —
wealthy with-sword kingdoms brothers let-seek
pars summa magno patris e regno mea est,
part highest great of-father from kingdom mine is,

pater ipse. non hunc auferet frater mihi
father himself. not him will-take-away brother from-me
Thebana rapto sceptra qui regno tenet,
Theban with-seized scepter who kingdom holds,
non hunc catervas alter Argolicas agens;
not him troops other Argive driving;
non si revulso Iuppiter mundo tonet
not if with-torn-up Jupiter world should-thunder
mediumque nostros fulmen in nexus cadat,
and-middle our thunderbolt into embrace should-fall,
manum hanc remittam. prohibeas, genitor, licet:
hand this I-shall-let-go. you-may-forbid, father, granted:
regam abnuentem, dirigam inviti gradum.
I-shall-guide refusing, I-shall-direct of-unwilling step.
in plana tendis? vado; praerupta appetis?
to level-ground do-you-head? I-go; sheer-places do-you-seek?
non obsto, sed praecedo; quo vis utere
not I-oppose, but I-go-before; where you-wish use
duce me, duobus omnis eligitur via:
as-guide me, by-two every is-chosen road:
perire sine me non potes, mecum potes.
to-perish without me not you-can, with-me you-can.
hic alta rupes arduo surgit iugo
here high cliff with-steep rises ridge
spectatque longe spatia subiecti maris:
and-looks-on far expanses of-underlying sea:
vis hanc petamus? nudus hic pendet silex,
do-you-wish this we-should-seek? bare here hangs flint,
hic scissa tellus faucibus ruptis hiat:
here split earth with-jaws burst gapes:

vis hanc petamus? hic rapax torrens cadit
do-you-wish this we-should-seek? here greedy torrent falls
partesque lapsi montis exesas rotat:
and-parts of-fallen mountain eaten-away rolls:
in hunc ruamus? dum prior, quo vis eo.
into this should-we-rush? provided first, where you-wish I-go.
non deprecor, non hortor. extingui cupis
not I-plead-against, not I-urge. to-be-extinguished you-desire
votumque, genitor, maximum mors est tibi?
and-wish, father, greatest death is to-you?
si moreris, antecedo: si vivis, sequor.
if you-die, I-go-before: if you-live, I-follow.
sed flecte mentem, pectus antiquum advoca
but bend mind, heart ancient summon
victasque magno robore aerumnas doma;
and-conquered with-great strength toils subdue;
resiste: tantis in malis vinci mori est.
resist: such in ills to-be-conquered to-die is.
OEDIPUS Unde in nefanda specimen egregium domo?
Whence in unspeakable model outstanding house?
unde ista generi virgo dissimilis suo?
whence this to-race maiden unlike her-own?
Fortuna, credis? aliquis est ex me pius?
Fortune, do-you-believe? someone is from me dutiful?
non esset umquam, fata bene novi mea,
not would-be ever, fates well I-know my,
nisi ut noceret. ipsa se in leges novas
unless that it-might-harm. herself herself into laws new
natura vertit: regeret in fontem citas
nature turns: would-carry-back to source swift

revolutus undas amnis et noctem afferet
rolled-back waves river and night will-bring
Phoebea lampas, Hesperus faciet diem;
Phoebean lamp, Hesperus will-make day;
ut ad miserias aliquid accedat meas,
that to miseries something may-be-added my,
pii quoque erimus. unica Oedipodae est salus,
dutiful also we-shall-be. sole for-Oedipus is safety,
non esse salvum. liceat ulcisci patrem
not to-be safe. let-it-be-allowed to-avenge father
adhuc inultum. dextra quid cessas iners
still unavenged. right-hand why do-you-idle sluggish
exigere poenas? quicquid exactum est adhuc,
to-exact penalties? whatever exacted is so-far,
matri dedisti. mitte genitoris manum,
to-mother you-have-given. let-go of-father hand,
animosa virgo: funus extendis meum
spirited maiden: funeral you-prolong my
longasque vivi ducis exequias patris.
and-long of-living you-lead obsequies father.
aliquando terra corpus invisum tege;
at-last with-earth body hated cover;
peccas honesta mente, pietatem vocas
you-sin with-honorable mind, dutifulness you-call
patrem insepultum trahere. qui cogit mori
father unburied to-drag. who forces to-die
nolentem in aequo est quique properantem impedit;
unwilling in equal is and-who hastening hinders;
nec tamen in aequo est: alterum gravius reor:
nor yet in equal is: the-other heavier I-think:

occidere est vetare cupientem mori
to-kill is to-forbid desiring to-die
malo imperari quam eripi mortem mihi.
I-prefer to-be-commanded than to-be-snatched death from-me.
desiste coepto, virgo: ius vitae ac necis
desist from-undertaking, maiden: right of-life and death
meae penes me est. regna deserui libens,
my in-power-of me is. kingdoms I-abandoned gladly,
regnum mei retineo. si fida es comes,
rule of-myself I-retain. if faithful you-are companion,
ensem parenti trade, sed notum nece
sword to-parent hand-over, but known by-slaughter
ensem paterna. tradis? an gnati tenent
sword paternal. do-you-hand-over? or sons hold
cum regno et illum? facinore ubicumque est opus,
with kingdom also it? for-crime wherever is need,
ibi sit; relinquo. natus hunc habeat meus,
there let-it-be; I-leave-it. son it let-have my,
sed uterque. flammas potius et vastum aggerem
but each. flames rather and vast pile
compone; in altos ipse me immittam rogos,
build; into high myself me I-shall-throw pyres,
pectusque solvam durum et in cinerem dabo
and-breast I-shall-dissolve hard and into ash I-shall-give
hoc quicquid in me vivit. ubi saevum est mare?
this whatever in me lives. where savage is sea?
duc ubi sit altis prorutum saxis iugum,
lead where may-be with-high overthrown rocks ridge,
ubi torva rapidus ducat Ismenos vada,
where grim swift may-draw Ismenos shallows,

si dux es: illuc ire morituro placet,
if guide you-are: thither to-go for-one-going-to-die it-pleases,
ubi sedit alta rupe semifero dolos
where sat on-high cliff with-half-beast wiles
Sphinx ore nectens. dirige huc gressus pedum,
Sphinx mouth weaving. direct hither steps of-feet,
hic siste patrem. dira ne sedes vacet,
here set father. dire lest seat be-empty,
monstrum repone maius. hoc saxum insidens
monster replace greater. this rock sitting-on
obscura nostrae verba fortunae loquar,
dark of-our words fortune I-shall-speak,
quae nemo solvat: quisquis Assyrio loca
which no-one may-solve: whoever by-Assyrian places
possessa regi scindis et Cadmi nemus
possessed king you-plow and of-Cadmus grove
serpente notum, sacra quo Dirce latet,
for-serpent known, sacred where Dirce lies-hidden,
supplex adoras, quisquis Eurotan bibis
suppliant you-worship, whoever Eurotas you-drink
Spartamque fratre nobilem gemino colis,
and-Sparta for-brother famous twin you-inhabit,
quique Elin et Parnason et Boeotios
and-who Elis and Parnassus and Boeotian
colonus agros uberis tondes soli:
farmer fields of-rich you-crop soil:
adverte mentem. saeva Thebarum lues
turn mind. savage of-Thebes plague
luctifica caecis verba committens modis
grief-bringing in-blind words joining measures

quid simile posuit? quid tam inextricabile?
what like set-forth? what so inextricable?
avi gener patrisque rivalis sui,
of-grandfather son-in-law and-of-father rival his-own,
frater suorum liberum et fratrum parens;
brother of-his-own children and of-brothers parent;
uno avia partu liberos peperit viro,
in-one grandmother birth children bore for-husband,
sibi et nepotes. monstra quis tanta explicat?
for-herself also grandchildren. monsters who such unfolds?
ego ipse, victae spolia qui Sphingis tuli,
I myself, of-conquered spoils who Sphinx bore,
haerebo fati tardus interpres mei.
I-shall-stick of-fate slow interpreter my.
* * *
(lacuna)
quid perdis ultra verba? quid pectus ferum
why do-you-waste further words? why heart fierce
mollire temptas precibus? hoc animo sedet
to-soften do-you-try with-prayers? this in-mind is-settled
effundere hanc cum morte luctantem diu
to-pour-out this with death struggling long
animam et tenebras petere: nam sceleri haec meo
soul and darkness to-seek: for for-crime this my
parum alta nox est: Tartaro condi iuvat,
too-little deep night is: in-Tartarus to-be-buried it-delights,
et si quid ultra Tartarum est; tandem libet
and if anything beyond Tartarus is; at-last it-pleases
quod olim oportet. morte prohiberi haud queo.
what long-since is-fitting. from-death to-be-kept not I-can.

ferrum negabis? noxias lapsu vias
sword will-you-deny? harmful by-fall ways
cludes et artis colla laqueis inseri
will-you-close and in-tight neck nooses to-be-put
prohibebis? herbas quae ferunt letum auferes?
will-you-forbid? herbs which bring death will-you-take-away?
quid ista tandem cura proficiet tua?
what this at-last care will-achieve your?
ubique mors est. optume hoc cavit deus:
everywhere death is. best this has-provided god:
eripere vitam nemo non homini potest,
to-snatch life no-one not from-man can,
at nemo mortem; mille ad hanc aditus patent.
but no-one death; thousand to this approaches lie-open.
nil quaero: dextra noster et nuda solet
nothing I-seek: right-hand our even bare is-accustomed
bene animus uti — dextra, nunc toto impetu,
well mind to-use right-hand, now with-whole onset,
toto dolore, viribus totis veni.
with-whole pain, with-strength whole come.
non destino unum vulneri nostro locum:
not I-appoint one for-wound our place:
totus nocens sum: qua voles mortem exige.
whole guilty I-am: where you-will death exact.
effringe pectus corque tot scelerum capax
break-open breast and-heart of-so-many crimes capable
evelle, totos viscerum nuda sinus.
pluck-out, whole of-entrails bare recesses.
fractum incitatis ictibus guttur sonet
broken with-driven blows throat let-sound

laceraeque fixis unguibus venae fluant.
and-torn with-fixed nails veins let-flow.
aut dirige iras quo soles: haec vulnera
or direct angers where you-are-wont: these wounds
rescissa multo sanguine ac tabe inriga,
torn-open with-much blood and gore water,
hac extrahe animam duram, inexpugnabilem.
this-way draw-out soul hard, unconquerable.
et tu, parens, ubicumque poenarum arbiter
and you, parent, wherever of-penalties judge
adstas mearum; non ego hoc tantum scelus
you-stand-by my; not I this so-great crime
ulla expiari credidi poena satis
by-any to-be-expiated believed penalty enough
umquam, nec ista morte contentus fui,
ever, nor with-this death content I-was,
nec me redemi parte: membratim tibi
nor myself I-redeemed by-part: limb-by-limb for-you
perire volui — debitum tandem exige.
to-perish I-wished debt at-last exact.
nunc solvo poenas, tunc tibi inferias dedi.
now I-pay penalties, then to-you offerings I-gave.
ades atque inertem dexteram introrsus preme
be-present and sluggish right-hand inward press
magisque merge: timida tunc parvo caput
and-more plunge: timid then with-small head
libavit haustu vixque cupientes sequi
tasted draft and-scarcely desiring to-follow
eduxit oculos. haeret etiam nunc mihi
drew-out eyes. clings even now to-me

ille animus, haeret, cum recusantem manum
that spirit, clings, when refusing hand
pressere vultus. audies verum, Oedipus:
pressed face. you-will-hear truth, Oedipus:
minus eruisti lumina audacter tua,
less you-tore-out eyes boldly your,
quam praestitisti. nunc manum cerebro indue:
than you-promised. now hand into-brain thrust:
hac parte mortem perage qua coepi mori.
by-this part death complete by-which I-began to-die.

II · ANTIGONE PLEADS AND OEDIPUS CURSES

Antigone argues that true courage does not fear life and that Oedipus, innocent even against the gods' will, has suffered enough. He answers that he flees himself, and recounts his crimes from birth to the war his sons now wage. Antigone begs him to live to restrain them; he calls his sons wicked, yet yields to her tears: at her command he will even live. A messenger asks him to stop the war; instead Oedipus urges his sons to crimes worthy of their father, and will hide in the woods to hear of them.

ANTIGONA Pauca, o parens magnanime, miserandae precor
A-few-things, o parent great-souled, of-pitiable I-pray
ut verba natae mente placata audias.
that words daughter with-mind calmed you-may-hear.
non te ut reducam veteris ad speciem domus
not you that I-may-lead-back of-old to appearance house
habitumque regni flore pollentem inclito
and-state of-kingdom with-bloom strong glorious
peto aut ut iras, temporum haut ipsa mora
I-seek or that angers, of-times not by-the-very delay

fractas, remisso pectore ac placido feras:
broken, with-relaxed heart and calm you-may-bear:
at hoc decebat roboris tanti virum,
but this befitted of-strength so-great man,
non esse sub dolore nec victum malis
not to-be under pain nor conquered by-ills
dare terga; non est, ut putas, virtus, pater,
to-give backs; not is, as you-think, courage, father,
timere vitam, sed malis ingentibus
to-fear life, but ills huge
obstare nec se vertere ac retro dare.
to-withstand nor oneself to-turn and backward to-give.
qui fata proculcavit ac vitae bona
who fates has-trampled and of-life goods
proiecit atque abscidit et casus suos
has-thrown-away and cut-off and misfortunes his-own
oneravit ipse, cui deo nullo est opus,
has-burdened himself, for-whom of-god no is need,
quare ille mortem cupiat aut quare petat?
why he death should-desire or why should-seek?
utrumque timidi est: nemo contempsit mori
each of-coward is: no-one has-despised to-die
qui concupivit. cuius haut ultra mala
who has-longed. whose not further ills
exire possunt, in loco tuto est situs.
to-go-out can, in place safe is placed.
quis iam deorum, velle fac, quicquam potest
who now of-gods, to-will suppose, anything can
malis tuis adicere? iam nec tu potes
to-ills your to-add? now not-even you can

nisi hoc, ut esse te putes dignum nece —
except this, that to-be yourself you-think worthy of-death
non es nec ulla pectus hoc culpa attigit.
not you-are nor any breast this guilt has-touched.
et hoc magis te, genitor, insontem voca,
and by-this more yourself, father, innocent call,
quod innocens es dis quoque invitis. quid est
that innocent you-are with-gods even unwilling. what is-it
quod te efferarit, quod novos suffixerit
which you has-made-savage, which new has-fixed
stimulos dolori? quid te in infernas agit
goads to-pain? what you to infernal drives
sedes, quid ex his pellit? ut careas die?
seats, what from these expels? that you-may-lack day?
cares; ut altis nobilem muris domum
you-lack; that for-high famous walls house
patriamque fugias? patria tibi vivo perit;
and-fatherland you-may-flee? fatherland to-you living perishes;
natos fugis matremque? ab aspectu omnium
sons do-you-flee and-mother? from sight of-all
fortuna te summovit, et quicquid potest
fortune you has-removed, and whatever can
auferre cuiquam mors, tibi hoc vita abstulit;
to-take-away from-anyone death, from-you this life has-taken;
regni tumultus? turba fortunae prior
of-kingdom tumults? crowd of-fortune former
abscessit a te iussa. quem, genitor, fugis?
has-departed from you ordered. whom, father, do-you-flee?

OEDIPUS Me fugio, fugio conscium scelerum omnium
Myself I-flee, I-flee conscious of-crimes all
pectus, manumque hanc fugio et hoc caelum et deos.
heart, and-hand this I-flee and this heaven and gods.
ego hoc solum, frugifera quo surgit Ceres,
I this soil, fruitful where rises Ceres,
premo? has ego auras ore pestifero traho?
do-I-tread? these I airs with-mouth baneful draw?
ego laticis haustu satior aut ullo fruor
I of-liquid with-draft am-sated or any enjoy
almae parentis munere? ego castam manum
of-nourishing parent gift? I chaste hand
nefandus incestificus exsecrabilis
unspeakable incest-making accursed
attrecto? ego ullos aure concipio sonos,
do-I-handle? I any with-ear take-in sounds,
per quos parentis nomen aut nati audiam?
through which of-parent name or of-son I-may-hear?
utinam quidem rescindere has quirem vias
would-that indeed to-tear-open these I-could passages
manibusque adactis omne qua voces meant
and-with-hands driven-in all where voices pass
aditusque verbis tramite angusto patet
and-access to-words by-path narrow lies-open
eruere possem: nata, iam sensum tui,
to-dig-out I-could: daughter, now sense of-you,
quae pars meorum es criminum, infelix pater
who part of-my are crimes, unhappy father
fugissem. inhaeret ac recrudescit nefas
I-would-have-fled. clings and breaks-open-again crime

subinde, et aures ingerunt quicquid mihi
repeatedly, and ears thrust-on whatever to-me
donastis, oculi. cur caput tenebris grave
you-granted, eyes. why head with-darkness heavy
non mitto ad umbras Ditis aeternas? quid hic
not do-I-send to shades of-Dis eternal? why here
manes meos detineo? quid terram gravo
shades my do-I-detain? why earth do-I-burden
mixtusque superis erro? quid restat mali?
and-mingled with-the-living wander? what remains of-evil?
regnum parentes liberi, virtus quoque
kingdom parents children, courage also
et ingeni sollertis eximium decus
and of-wit skilled exceptional glory
periere, cuncta sors mihi infesta abstulit:
have-perished, all lot from-me hostile has-taken:
lacrimae supererant: has quoque eripui mihi.
tears remained: these also I-snatched from-myself.
absiste. nullas animus admittit preces
stand-off. no mind admits prayers
novamque poenam sceleribus quaerit parem.
and-new penalty to-crimes seeks equal.
et esse par quae poterit? infanti quoque
and to-be equal what will-be-able? for-infant also
decreta mors est. — fata quis tam tristia
decreed death was. fates who so sad
sortitus umquam? videram nondum diem
has-drawn ever? I-had-seen not-yet day
uterique nondum solveram clausi moras,
and-of-womb not-yet I-had-loosed closed delays,

et iam timebar. protinus quosdam editos
and already I-was-feared. at-once some born
nox occupavit et novae luci abstulit:
night has-seized and from-new light has-taken:
mors me antecessit; aliquis intra viscera
death me preceded; someone within womb
materna letum praecoquis fati tulit:
maternal death of-premature fate has-borne:
sed numquid et peccavit? abstrusum, abditum
but surely-not also has-he-sinned? concealed, hidden
dubiumque an essem sceleris infandi reum
and-doubtful whether I-would-be of-crime unspeakable defendant
deus egit; illo teste damnavit parens
god made; with-him witness condemned parent
calidoque teneros transuit ferro pedes
and-with-hot tender pierced iron feet
et in alta nemora pabulum misit feris
and into deep groves food sent for-beasts
avibusque saevis quas Cithaeron noxius
and-for-birds savage which Cithaeron baneful
cruore saepe regio tinctas alit.
with-blood often royal stained nourishes.
sed quem deus damnavit, abiecit pater,
but whom god condemned, cast-off father,
mors quoque refugit. praestiti Delphis fidem:
death also fled-from. I-made-good to-Delphi faith:
genitorem adortus impia stravi nece.
father having-attacked with-impious I-laid-low slaughter.
hoc alia pietas redimet: occidi patrem,
this other dutifulness will-redeem: I-killed father,

sed matrem amavi. proloqui hymenaeum pudet
but mother I-loved. to-speak-out wedding it-shames
taedasque nostras. has quoque invitum pati
and-torches our. these also unwilling to-suffer
te coge poenas: facinus ignotum efferum
yourself force penalties: deed unknown savage
inusitatum effare quod populi horreant,
unheard-of utter which peoples may-shudder-at,
quod esse factum nulla non aetas neget,
which to-have-been done no not age may-deny,
quod parricidam pudeat: in patrios toros
which parricide may-shame: into paternal beds
tuli paterno sanguine aspersas manus
I-brought with-paternal blood sprinkled hands
scelerisque pretium maius accepi scelus.
and-of-crime reward greater I-received crime.
leve est paternum facinus: in thalamos meos
light is paternal deed: into chambers my
deducta mater, ne parum sceleris foret,
led mother, lest too-little of-crime there-should-be,
fecunda: nullum crimen hoc maius potest
fruitful: no crime than-this greater can
natura ferre. si quod etiamnum est tamen,
nature to-bear. if any still is yet,
qui facere possent dedimus. abieci necis
who to-do could we-have-given. I-cast-away of-slaughter
pretium paternae sceptrum et hoc iterum manus
reward paternal scepter and this again hands
armavit alias; optime regni mei
has-armed other; best of-kingdom my

fatum ipse novi: nemo sine sacro feret
fate myself I-know: no-one without sacred will-bear
illud cruore. magna praesagit mala
it blood. great foresees ills
paternus animus. iacta iam sunt semina
paternal mind. thrown already are seeds
cladis futurae: spernitur pacti fides;
of-disaster future: is-spurned of-pact faith;
hic occupato cedere imperio negat,
this-one from-seized to-yield power refuses,
ius ille et icti foederis testes deos
right that-one and of-struck treaty witnesses gods
invocat et Argos exul atque urbes movet
invokes and Argos exile and cities moves
Graias in arma: non levis fessis venit
Greek to arms: not light to-weary comes
ruina Thebis; tela flammae vulnera
ruin Thebes; weapons flames wounds
instant et istis si quod est maius malum,
press and than-these if any is greater evil,
ut esse genitos nemo non ex me sciat.
that to-be begotten no-one not from me may-know.
ANTIGONA Si nulla, genitor, causa vivendi tibi est,
If no, father, cause of-living to-you is,
haec una abunde est, ut pater natos regas
this one abundantly is, that as-father sons you-may-rule
graviter furentes. tu impii belli minas
violently raging. you of-impious war threats
avertere unus tuque vaecordes potes
to-turn-aside alone and-you frenzied can

inhibere iuvenes, civibus pacem dare,
to-restrain youths, to-citizens peace to-give,
patriae quietem, foederi laeso fidem.
to-fatherland quiet, to-treaty injured faith.
vitam tibi ipse si negas, multis negas.
life to-yourself yourself if you-deny, to-many you-deny.
OEDIPUS Illis parentis ullus aut aequi est amor,
To-them of-parent any or of-right is love,
avidis cruoris imperi armorum doli,
greedy of-blood of-power of-arms of-guile,
diris, scelestis, breviter ut dicam meis?
dire, wicked, briefly that I-may-say mine?
certant in omne facinus et pensi nihil
they-vie in every crime and of-weighed nothing
ducunt, ubi illos ira praecipites agit,
they-reckon, when them anger headlong drives,
nefasque nullum per nefas nati putant.
and-sin no through sin born they-think.
non patris illos tangit afflicti pudor,
not of-father them touches afflicted shame,
non patria: regno pectus attonitum furit.
not fatherland: for-kingdom heart frenzied rages.
scio quo ferantur, quanta moliri parent,
I-know where they-are-borne, how-great to-attempt they-prepare,
ideoque leti quaero maturi viam
and-therefore of-death I-seek early way
morique propero, dum in domo nemo est mea
and-to-die I-hasten, while in house no-one is my
nocentior me. nata, quid genibus meis
guiltier than-me. daughter, why at-knees my

fles advoluta? quid prece indomitum domas?
do-you-weep rolled-down? why with-prayer untamed do-you-tame?
unum hoc habet fortuna quo possim capi,
one this has fortune by-which I-can to-be-caught,
invictus aliis: sola tu affectus potes
unconquered by-others: alone you feelings can
mollire duros, sola pietatem in domo
to-soften hard, alone dutifulness in house
docere nostra. nil grave aut miserum est mihi
to-teach our. nothing heavy or wretched is to-me
quod te sciam voluisse; tu tantum impera:
which you I-may-know to-have-wished; you only command:
hic Oedipus Aegaea transnabit freta
this Oedipus Aegean will-swim-across straits
iubente te, flammasque quas Siculo vomit
with-commanding you, and-flames which Sicilian vomits
de monte tellus igneos volvens globos,
from mountain earth fiery rolling balls,
excipiet ore seque serpenti offeret,
will-catch with-mouth and-himself to-serpent will-offer,
quae saeva furto nemoris Herculeo furit;
which savage at-theft of-grove Herculean rages;
iubente te praebebit alitibus iecur —
with-commanding you will-offer to-birds liver
iubente te vel vivet.
with-commanding you even will-live.
NUNTIUS Exemplum in ingens regia stirpe editum
Example into huge from-royal stock produced
Thebae paventes arma fraterna invocant
Thebes fearing arms brotherly invoke

rogantque tectis arceas patriis faces.
and-ask from-roofs you-may-ward-off paternal torches.
non sunt minae, iam propius accessit malum.
not they-are threats, now nearer has-approached evil.
nam regna repetens frater et pactas vices
for kingdom reclaiming brother and agreed turns
in bella cunctos Graeciae populos agit;
into wars all of-Greece peoples drives;
septena muros castra Thebanos premunt.
sevenfold walls camps Theban press.
succurre, prohibe pariter et bellum et scelus.
help, prevent alike both war and crime.
OEDIPUS Ego ille sum qui scelera committi vetem
I that-one am who crimes to-be-committed should-forbid
et abstineri sanguine e caro manus
and to-be-kept-off blood from dear hands
doceam? magister iuris et amoris pii
should-teach? master of-right and of-love dutiful
ego sum? meorum facinorum exempla appetunt,
I am? of-my deeds examples they-seek,
me nunc secuntur; laudo et agnosco libens,
me now they-follow; I-praise and I-recognize gladly,
exhortor, aliquid ut patre hoc dignum gerant.
I-urge, something that of-father this worthy they-may-do.
agite, o propago cara, generosam indolem
come, o offspring dear, noble nature
probate factis, gloriam ac laudes meas
prove by-deeds, glory and praises my
superate et aliquid facite propter quod patrem
surpass and something do on-account-of which father

adhuc iuvet vixisse. facietis, scio:
still it-may-delight to-have-lived. you-will-do, I-know:
sic estis orti. scelere defungi haut levi,
so you-were born. with-crime to-acquit-itself not light,
haut usitato tanta nobilitas potest.
not usual such nobility can.
ferte arma, facibus petite penetrales deos
bring arms, with-torches attack household gods
frugemque flamma metite natalis soli,
and-crop with-flame reap of-native soil,
miscete cuncta, rapite in exitium omnia,
confound everything, snatch into destruction all,
disicite passim moenia, in planum date,
scatter everywhere walls, to level give,
templis deos obruite, maculatos lares
with-temples gods overwhelm, stained hearths
conflate, ab imo tota considat domus;
melt-down, from bottom whole let-settle house;
urbs concremetur — primus a thalamis meis
city let-be-burned first from chambers my
incipiat ignis.
let-begin fire.
NUNTIUS Mitte violentum impetum
Let-go violent onset
doloris ac te publica exorent mala
of-pain and you public let-prevail-upon ills
auctorque placidae liberis pacis veni.
and-author of-calm to-children peace come.

OEDIPUS Vides modestae deditum menti senem
Do-you-see to-modest devoted mind old-man
placidaeque amantem pacis ad partes vocas?
and-of-calm loving peace to roles you-call?
tumet animus ira, fervet immensus dolor,
swells mind with-anger, boils immense pain,
maiusque quam quod casus et iuvenum furor
and-greater than what chance and of-youths madness
conatur aliquid cupio. non satis est adhuc
attempts something I-desire. not enough is yet
civile bellum: frater in fratrem ruat;
civil war: brother against brother let-rush;
nec hoc sat est: quod debet, ut fiat nefas
nor this enough is: what it-ought, that may-be-done crime
de more nostro, quod meos deceat toros:
after custom our, what my may-befit beds:
date arma matri. nemo me ex his eruat
give arms to-mother. no-one me from these let-dig-out
silvis: latebo rupis exesae cavo
woods: I-shall-hide of-rock eaten-out in-hollow
aut sepe densa corpus abstrusum tegam.
or with-hedge dense body concealed I-shall-cover.
hinc aucupabor verba rumoris vagi
hence I-shall-chase words of-rumor wandering
et saeva fratrum bella, quod possum, audiam.
and savage of-brothers wars, as-much-as I-can, I-shall-hear.

Jocasta envies Agave, who did not run to her crime of her own will. For three winters her son has wandered in exile, and now Adrastus, whose son-in-law he is, brings his peoples and seven kingdoms to his aid. His cause is good, his way of seeking it bad; she can pray for neither son without harming the other, though her heart leans to the weaker. An attendant tells her the armies stand ready and bids her go between them.

IOCASTA Felix Agaue: facinus horrendum manu,
Happy Agave: deed horrible with-hand,
qua fecerat, gestavit et spolium tulit
with-which she-had-done-it, carried and spoil bore
cruenta nati maenas in partes dati;
bloody of-son maenad into pieces given;
fecit scelus, sed misera non ultro suo
she-did crime, but wretched not of-her-own-accord to-her-own
sceleri occucurrit. hoc leve est quod sum nocens:
crime ran-to-meet. this light is that I-am guilty:
feci nocentes. hoc quoque etiamnunc leve est:
I-made guilty-ones. this also still light is:
peperi nocentes. derat aerumnis meis,
I-bore guilty-ones. was-lacking to-toils my,
ut et hostem amarem. bruma ter posuit nives
that even enemy I-should-love. winter thrice has-laid-down snows
et tertia iam falce decubuit Ceres,
and third now by-sickle has-lain-down Ceres,
ut exul errat natus et patria caret
since exile wanders son and fatherland lacks
profugusque regum auxilia Graiorum rogat.
and-fugitive of-kings aid Greek asks.

gener est Adrasti, cuius imperio mare
son-in-law he-is of-Adrastus, whose by-command sea
quod scindit Isthmos regitur; hic gentes suas
which cleaves Isthmus is-ruled; he peoples his
septemque secum regna ad auxilium trahit
and-seven with-himself kingdoms to aid drags
genero. quid optem quidve decernam haut scio.
for-son-in-law. what I-should-wish or-what I-should-decide not I-know.
regnum reposcit: causa repetentis bona est,
kingdom he-demands-back: cause of-reclaiming good is,
mala sic petentis. vota quae faciam parens?
bad thus of-seeking. vows what shall-I-make parent?
utrimque natum video: nil possum pie
on-both-sides son I-see: nothing I-can dutifully
pietate salva facere: quodcumque alteri
with-dutifulness safe to-do: whatever for-one
optabo nato fiet alterius malo.
I-shall-wish son will-happen of-other to-harm.
sed utrumque quamvis diligam affectu pari,
but each although I-love with-feeling equal,
quo causa melior sorsque deterior trahit
where cause better and-lot worse draws
inclinat animus semper infirmo favens:
leans mind always to-weaker favoring:
miseros magis fortuna conciliat suis.
wretched more fortune endears to-their-own.
SATELLES Regina, dum tu flebiles questus cies
Queen, while you tearful complaints raise
terisque tempus, saeva nudatis adest
and-wear-away time, savage bared is-here

acies in armis; aera iam bellum cient
battle-line in arms; bronzes now war stir
aquilaque pugnam signifer mota vocat.
and-eagle fight standard-bearing moved calls.
septena reges bella dispositi parant,
sevenfold kings wars arranged prepare,
animo pari Cadmea progenies subit,
with-spirit equal Cadmean offspring advances,
cursu citato miles hinc atque hinc ruit.
with-pace driven soldier hence and hence rushes.
vide ut atra nubes pulvere abscondat diem
see how black cloud with-dust hides day
fumoque similes campus in caelum erigat
and-to-smoke like plain into sky raises
nebulas, equestri fracta quas tellus pede
mists, by-equestrian broken which earth foot
summittit et, si vera metuentes vident,
sends-up and, if true fearing-ones see,
infesta fulgent signa, subrectis adest
hostile gleam standards, with-raised is-here
frons prima telis, aurea clarum nota
front first weapons, golden famous with-mark
nomen ducum vexilla praescriptum ferunt.
name of-leaders banners written-in-front bear.
i, redde amorem fratribus, pacem omnibus,
go, restore love to-brothers, peace to-all,
et impia arma matris oppositu impedi.
and impious arms of-mother by-opposition hinder.

Antigone urges her mother on. Jocasta will stand between the weapons: whoever would strike his brother must strike his mother first. As the lines close, she longs for a wind, the Sphinx, or a Harpy to carry her there. The attendant tells how she ran like a Parthian arrow or a falling star between the armies, which halted at her prayer; all swords are sheathed but the brothers', and she, her gray hair torn, weeps and pleads with the two who refuse.

ANTIGONA Perge, o parens, et concita celerem gradum,
Go-on, o parent, and urge swift step,
compesce tela, fratribus ferrum excute,
check weapons, from-brothers sword shake-out,
nudum inter enses pectus infestos tene:
bare between swords breast hostile hold:
aut solve bellum, mater, aut prima excipe.
either end war, mother, or first receive-it.
IOCASTA Ibo ibo et armis obvium opponam caput,
I-shall-go I-shall-go and to-arms facing I-shall-set head,
stabo inter arma; petere qui fratrem volet,
I-shall-stand between arms; to-attack who brother will-wish,
petat ante matrem. tela, qui fuerit pius,
let-him-attack first mother. weapons, who shall-be dutiful,
rogante ponat matre; qui non est pius
with-asking let-lay-down mother; who not is dutiful
incipiat a me. fervidos iuvenes anus
let-begin from me. hot youths old-woman
tenebo, nullum teste me fiet nefas;
I-shall-hold, no with-witness me will-be-done crime;
aut si aliquod et me teste committi potest,
or if any even with-me witness to-be-committed can,

non fiet unum.
not will-be-done one.

ANTIGONA Signa collatis micant
Standards with-joined flash

vicina signis, clamor hostilis fremit;
near standards, shout hostile roars;

scelus in propinquo est: occupa, mater, preces.
crime in near is: seize, mother, prayers.

et ecce motos fletibus credas meis,
and behold moved by-tears you-would-believe my,

sic agmen armis segne compositis venit.
so column with-arms sluggish laid-down comes.

SATELLES Procedit acies tarda, sed properant duces.
Advances line slow, but hasten leaders.

IOCASTA Quis me procellae turbine insano vehens
What me of-storm with-whirlwind mad carrying

volucer per auras ventus aetherias aget?
winged through airs wind ethereal will-drive?

quae Sphinx vel atra nube subtexens diem
what Sphinx or with-black cloud veiling day

Stymphalis avidis praepetem pinnis feret?
Stymphalian-bird with-greedy swift wings will-carry?

aut quae per altas aeris rapiet vias
or what through high of-air will-snatch ways

Harpyia saevi regis observans famem
Harpy of-savage king watching hunger

et inter acies proiciet raptam duas?
and between lines will-throw snatched two?

SATELLES Vadit furenti similis aut etiam furit.
She-goes to-raving-one like or even raves.
sagitta qualis Parthica velox manu
arrow as Parthian swift by-hand
excussa fertur, qualis insano ratis
shot is-borne, as with-mad ship
premente vento rapitur aut qualis cadit
pressing wind is-snatched or as falls
delapsa caelo stella, cum stringens polum
slipped from-sky star, when grazing heaven
rectam citatis ignibus rumpit viam,
straight with-driven fires breaks way,
attonita cursu fugit et binas statim
frenzied in-course she-flies and two at-once
diduxit acies. victa materna prece
has-drawn-apart lines. conquered by-maternal prayer
haesere bella, iamque in alternam necem
stuck wars, and-already to mutual death
illinc et hinc miscere cupientes manus
thence and hence to-join desiring hands
librata dextra tela suspensa tenent.
poised with-right-hand weapons suspended they-hold.
paci favetur, omnium ferrum iacet
peace is-favored, of-all sword lies
cessatve tectum; vibrat in fratrum manu.
or-rests sheathed; quivers in of-brothers hand.
laniata canas mater ostendit comas,
having-torn gray mother shows hair,

rogat abnuentes, irrigat fletu genas.
asks refusing-ones, waters with-weeping cheeks.
negare matri qui diu dubitat, potest.
to-refuse mother who long hesitates, can.

V · JOCASTA, POLYNICES, AND ETEOCLES

Jocasta bids her sons turn their arms on the womb that bore them. Polynices fears to disarm, trusting not even his mother; once one brother has hidden his sword, she turns to the exile, laments the wedding no mother attended, and asks whether he will burn the city he would rule and see his mother led in triumph. Polynices asks whether he must wander while his brother reigns; she offers him the rich lands of Tmolus, the Pactolus, and Lycia instead, and says kingship will punish Eteocles. Eteocles would reign though hated, at any price.

IOCASTA In me arma et ignes vertite, in me omnis ruat
Against me arms and fires turn, against me all let-rush
unam iuventus quaeque ab Inachio venit
one youth and-which from Inachian has-come
445 animosa muro quaeque Thebana ferox
spirited wall and-which from-Theban fierce
descendit arce; civis atque hostis simul
comes-down citadel; citizen and enemy together
hunc petite ventrem, qui dedit fratres viro.
this attack womb, which gave brothers to-husband.
haec membra passim spargite ac divellite:
these limbs everywhere scatter and tear-apart:
ego utrumque peperi — ponitis ferrum ocius?
I each bore do-you-lay-down sword more-quickly?
450 an dico et ex quo? dexteras matri date,
or do-I-say also from whom? right-hands to-mother give,

date dum piae sunt. error invitos adhuc
give while dutiful they-are. error unwilling so-far
fecit nocentes, omne Fortunae fuit
has-made guilty, all of-Fortune was
peccantis in nos crimen: hoc primum nefas
sinning against us guilt: this first crime
inter scientes geritur. in vestra manu est,
between knowing-ones is-waged. in your hand it-is,
utrum velitis: sancta si pietas placet,
which you-may-wish: holy if dutifulness pleases,
† donate matri pacem, si placuit scelus,
(corrupt) grant to-mother peace, if has-pleased crime,
maius paratum est: media se opponit parens.
greater prepared is: in-the-middle herself sets-against parent.
proinde bellum tollite aut belli moram.
therefore war remove or of-war delay.
sollicita cui nunc mater alterna prece
anxious to-whom now mother with-alternate prayer
verba admovebo? misera quem amplectar prius?
words shall-I-apply? wretched whom shall-I-embrace first?
in utramque partem ducor affectu pari.
to either side I-am-drawn with-feeling equal.
hic afuit; sed pacta si fratrum valent,
this-one was-away; but pacts if of-brothers hold,
nunc alter aberit. ergo iam numquam duos
now the-other will-be-away. so now never two
nisi sic videbo? iunge complexus prior,
except thus shall-I-see? join embraces first,
qui tot labores totque perpessus mala
who so-many labors and-so-many having-endured ills

longo parentem fessus exilio vides.
with-long parent weary exile you-see.
accede propius, clude vagina impium
come nearer, shut in-sheath impious
ensem et trementem iamque cupientem excuti
sword and trembling and-already desiring to-be-shaken-out
hastam solo defige; maternum tuo
spear in-ground fix; maternal with-your
coire pectus pectori clipeus vetat:
to-meet breast breast shield forbids:
hunc quoque repone. vinculo frontem exue
this also put-away. from-band brow free
tegumenque capitis triste belligeri leva
and-covering of-head grim warlike lift
et ora matri redde. quo vultus refers
and face to-mother restore. whither face do-you-turn-back
acieque pavida fratris observas manum?
and-with-gaze fearful of-brother do-you-watch hand?
affusa totum corpus amplexu tegam,
poured-around whole body with-embrace I-shall-cover,
tuo cruori per meum fiet via.
to-your blood through mine will-be way.
quid dubius haeres? an times matris fidem?
why doubtful do-you-hesitate? or do-you-fear of-mother faith?
POLYNICES Timeo; nihil iam iura naturae valent.
I-fear; nothing now laws of-nature avail.
post ista fratrum exempla ne matri quidem
after these of-brothers examples not in-mother even
fides habenda est.
trust to-be-had is.

IOCASTA Redde iam capulo manum,
Return now to-hilt hand,
astringe galeam, laeva se clipeo inserat;
tighten helmet, left-hand itself into-shield let-insert;
dum frater exarmatur, armatus mane.
while brother is-disarmed, armed remain.
tu pone ferrum, causa qui ferri es prior.
you lay-down sword, cause who of-sword are first.
si pacis odium est, furere si bello placet:
if of-peace hatred is, to-rage if in-war it-pleases:
inducias te mater exiguas rogat, 485
truce you mother brief asks,
ferat ut reverso post fugam nato oscula
may-bring that to-returned after flight son kisses
vel prima vel suprema. dum pacem peto,
either first or last. while peace I-seek,
audite inermes. ille te, tu illum times?
hear unarmed. he you, you him fear?
ego utrumque, sed pro utroque. quid strictum abnuis
I each, but for each. why drawn do-you-refuse
recondere ensem? qualibet gaude mora: 490
to-sheathe sword? in-any rejoice delay:
id gerere bellum cupitis, in quo est optimum
that to-wage war you-desire, in which is best
vinci. vereris fratris infesti dolos?
to-be-conquered. do-you-fear of-brother hostile wiles?
quotiens necesse est fallere aut falli a suis,
whenever necessary it-is to-deceive or to-be-deceived by one's-own,
patiare potius ipse quam facias scelus.
you-should-suffer rather yourself than you-should-do crime.

sed ne verere: mater insidias et hinc
but do-not fear: mother ambushes both hence
et rursus illinc abiget. exoro? an patri
and again thence will-drive-off. do-I-prevail? or father
invideo vestro? veni ut arcerem nefas
do-I-envy your? I-came that I-might-ward-off crime
an ut viderem propius? hic ferrum abdidit,
or that I-might-see nearer? this-one sword has-hidden,
reclinis hasta est, arma defixa incubant.
leaning spear is, arms fixed rest.
ad te preces nunc, nate, maternas feram,
to you prayers now, son, maternal I-shall-bring,
sed ante lacrimas. teneo longo tempore
but before tears. I-hold for-long time
petita votis ora. te profugum solo
sought by-vows face. you fugitive from-soil
patrio penates regis externi tegunt.
paternal household-gods of-king foreign shelter.
te maria tot diversa, tot casus vagum
you seas so-many diverse, so-many chances wandering
egere, non te duxit in thalamos parens
drove, not you led into chambers parent
comitata primos nec sua festas manu
accompanying first nor with-her-own festive hand
ornavit aedes nec sacra laetas faces
adorned house nor with-sacred glad torches
vitta revinxit; dona non auro graves
ribbon bound; gifts not with-gold heavy
gazas socer, non arva, non urbes dedit:
treasures father-in-law, not fields, not cities gave:

dotale bellum est. hostium es factus gener,
of-dowry war is. of-enemies you-are made son-in-law,
patria remotus hospes alieni laris,
from-fatherland removed guest of-another hearth,
externa consecutus, expulsus tuis,
foreign-things having-gained, expelled from-yours,
sine crimine exul. ne quid e fatis tibi
without crime exile. lest anything from fates to-you
desset paternis, hoc quoque ex illis habes,
should-be-lacking paternal, this also from them you-have,
errasse thalamis. nate post multos mihi
to-have-erred in-marriage. son after many to-me
remisse soles, nate suspensae metus
sent-back suns, son of-anxious fear
et spes parentis, cuius aspectum deos
and hope parent, whose sight gods
semper rogavi, cum tuus reditus mihi
always I-asked, though your return from-me
tantum esset erepturus, adventu tuo
as-much would-be going-to-snatch, by-arrival your
quantum daturus: 'quando pro te desinam'
as-much going-to-give: 'when for you shall-I-cease'
dixi 'timere?' dixit inridens deus:
I-said 'to-fear?' said mocking god:
'ipsum timebis.' nempe nisi bellum foret,
'him-himself you-will-fear.' surely unless war there-were,
ego te carerem; nempe si tu non fores,
I you would-lack; surely if you not were,
bello carerem. a, triste conspectus datur
war I-would-lack. ah, sad of-sight is-given

pretium tui durumque, sed matri placet.
price of-you and-hard, but to-mother it-pleases.
hinc modo recedant arma, dum nullum nefas
hence only let-withdraw arms, while no crime
Mars saevus audet: hoc quoque est magnum nefas,
Mars savage dares: this also is great crime,
tam prope fuisse. stupeo et exsanguis tremo,
so near to-have-been. I-am-stunned and bloodless I-tremble,
cum stare fratres hinc et hinc video duos
when to-stand brothers hence and hence I-see two
sceleris sub ictu. membra quassantur metu:
of-crime under stroke. limbs are-shaken with-fear:
quam paene mater maius aspexi nefas,
how nearly mother greater I-beheld crime,
quam quod miser videre non potuit pater.
than what wretched to-see not could father.
licet timore facinoris tanti vacem
although from-fear of-deed so-great I-be-free
videamque iam nil tale, sum infelix tamen
and-I-see now nothing such, I-am unhappy yet
quod paene vidi. per decem mensum graves
that nearly I-saw. by ten of-months heavy
uteri labores perque pietatem inclitae
of-womb labors and-by dutifulness of-renowned
precor sororis et per irati sibi
I-pray sister and by angry at-himself
genas parentis, scelere quas nullo nocens,
cheeks parent, with-crime which no guilty,
erroris a se dira supplicia exigens,
of-error from himself dire punishments exacting,

hausit: nefandas moenibus patriis faces
he-drained: unspeakable from-walls paternal torches
averte, signa bellici retro agminis
turn-away, standards of-warlike back column
flecte — ut recedas, magna pars sceleris tamen
turn though you-withdraw, great part of-crime yet
vestri peracta est: vidit hostili grege
your accomplished is: saw with-hostile herd
campos repleri patria, fulgentes procul
plains to-be-filled fatherland, gleaming afar
armis catervas vidit, equitatu levi
with-arms troops saw, by-cavalry light
Cadmea frangi prata et excelsos rotis
Cadmean to-be-broken meadows and lofty on-wheels
volitare proceres, igne flagrantes trabes
to-fly-about chiefs, with-fire blazing beams
fumare, cineri quae petunt nostras domos,
to-smoke, for-ash which seek our houses,
fratresque (facinus quod novum et Thebis fuit)
and-brothers (deed which new even for-Thebes was)
in se ruentes: totus hoc exercitus,
against each-other rushing: whole this army,
hoc populus omnis, utraque hoc vidit soror
this people all, each this saw sister
genetrixque vidi: nam pater debet sibi
and-mother I-saw: for father owes to-himself
quod ista non spectavit. occurrat tibi
that these-things not he-watched. let-meet you
nunc Oedipus, quo iudice erroris quoque
now Oedipus, with-whom judge of-error even

poenae petuntur. ne, precor, ferro erue
penalties are-sought. do-not, I-pray, with-sword overturn
patriam ac penates neve, quas regere expetis,
fatherland and household-gods and-do-not, which to-rule you-seek,
everte Thebas. quis tenet mentem furor?
overthrow Thebes. what holds mind madness?
petendo patriam perdis? ut fiat tua,
by-seeking fatherland do-you-destroy? that it-may-become yours,
vis esse nullam? quin tuae causae nocet
do-you-wish to-be none? indeed to-your cause harms
ipsum hoc quod armis uris infestis solum
itself this that with-arms you-burn hostile soil
segetesque adultas sternis et totos fugam
and-crops grown you-lay-low and whole flight
edis per agros: nemo sic vastat sua;
you-spread through fields: no-one thus lays-waste his-own;
quae corripi igne, quae meti gladio iubes
what to-be-seized by-fire, what to-be-reaped by-sword you-order
aliena credis. rex sit ex vobis uter,
another's you-believe. king let-be of you which,
manente regno quaerite. haec telis petis
with-remaining kingdom seek. these with-weapons do-you-attack
flammisque tecta? poteris has Amphionis
and-with-flames roofs? will-you-be-able these of-Amphion
quassare moles? nulla quas struxit manus
to-shake masses? no which built hand
stridente tardum machina ducens onus,
with-creaking slow machine drawing burden,
sed convocatus vocis et citharae sono
but summoned of-voice and of-lyre by-sound

per se ipse summas venit in turres lapis:
by itself itself highest came into towers stone:
haec saxa franges? victor hinc spolia auferes
these rocks will-you-break? victor hence spoils will-you-carry-off
vinctosque duces patris aequales tui,
and-bound leaders of-father coevals your,
matresque ab ipso coniugum raptas sinu
and-mothers from very of-husbands snatched lap
saevus catena miles imposita trahet?
savage with-chain soldier imposed will-drag?
adulta virgo, mixta captivo gregi,
grown maiden, mixed with-captive herd,
Thebana nuribus munus Argolicis eat?
Theban to-brides gift Argive shall-go?
an et ipsa, palmas vincta postergum datas,
or also myself, palms bound behind-back given,
mater triumphi praeda fraterni vehar?
mother of-triumph booty fraternal shall-I-be-carried?
potesne cives leto et exilio datos
can-you citizens to-death and exile given
videre passim? moenibus caris potes
to-see everywhere? to-walls dear can-you
hostem admovere, sanguine et flamma potes
enemy to-move-up, with-blood and flame can-you
implere Thebas? tam ferus durum geris
to-fill Thebes? so fierce hard do-you-bear
saevumque in iras pectus? et nondum imperas.
and-savage toward angers heart? and not-yet you-rule.
quid sceptra facient? pone vaesanos, precor,
what scepters will-do? lay-down mad, I-pray,

animi tumores teque pietati refer.
of-mind swellings and-yourself to-dutifulness restore.

POLYNICES Ut profugus errem? semper ut patria arcear
That fugitive I-should-wander? always that from-fatherland I-be-kept
opemque gentis hospes externae sequar?
and-help of-nation guest foreign I-should-seek?
quid paterer aliud, si fefellissem fidem?
what would-I-suffer else, if I-had-broken faith?
si peierassem? fraudis alienae dabo
if I-had-forsworn? of-fraud another's shall-I-pay
poenas, at ille praemium scelerum feret?
penalties, but he reward of-crimes will-bear?
iubes abire: matris imperio obsequor —
you-bid to-go-away: of-mother to-command I-yield
da quo revertar. regia frater meus
give where I-may-return. in-palace brother my
habitat superba: parva me abscondat casa?
dwells proud: little me let-hide hut?
hanc date repulso; liceat exiguo lare
this give to-rejected; let-it-be-allowed with-scant hearth
pensare regnum? coniugi donum datus
to-weigh-against kingdom? to-wife gift given
arbitria thalami dura felicis feram
decisions of-marriage harsh fortunate shall-I-bear
humilisque socerum lixa dominantem sequar?
and-humble father-in-law camp-follower lording shall-I-follow?
in servitutem cadere de regno grave est.
into slavery to-fall from kingdom heavy is.

IOCASTA Si regna quaeris nec potest sceptro manus
If kingdoms you-seek nor can from-scepter hand
vacare saevo, multa quae possunt peti
to-be-free savage, many which can to-be-sought
in orbe toto quaelibet tellus dabit.
in world whole any-you-like land will-give.
hinc nota Baccho Tmolus attollit iuga,
here known to-Bacchus Tmolus raises ridges,
qua lata terris spatia frugiferis iacent
where broad with-lands expanses fruitful lie
et qua trahens opulenta Pactolus vada
and where drawing rich Pactolus shallows
inundat auro rura; nec laetis minus
floods with-gold countryside; nor in-glad less
Maeandros arvis flectit errantis aquas
Maeander fields bends wandering waters
rapidusque campos fertiles Hermus secat;
and-swift plains fertile Hermus cuts;
hinc grata Cereri Gargara et dives solum
here pleasing to-Ceres Gargara and rich soil
quod Xanthus ambit nivibus Idaeis tumens;
which Xanthus goes-round with-snows Idaean swelling;
hinc qua relinquit nomen Ionii mare
here where leaves name of-Ionian sea
faucesque Abydo Sestos opposita premit,
and-straits to-Abydos Sestos opposite presses,
aut quae latus iam propior orienti dedit
or which side now nearer to-east has-given
tutamque crebris portibus Lyciam videt:
and-safe with-frequent harbors Lycia sees:

haec regna ferro quaere, in hos populos ferat
these kingdoms with-sword seek, against these peoples let-carry
socer arma fortis, has tuo sceptro paret
father-in-law arms brave, these to-your scepter let-prepare
tradatque gentes. hoc adhuc regnum puta
and-let-hand-over nations. this still kingdom suppose
tenere patrem. melius exilium est tibi
to-hold father. better exile is for-you
quam reditus iste: crimine alieno exulas,
than return that: by-crime another's you-are-exiled,
tuo redibis. melius istis viribus
by-your you-will-return. better with-those forces
nova regna nullo scelere maculata appetes.
new kingdoms by-no crime stained you-will-seek.
quin ipse frater arma comitatus tua
indeed himself brother arms having-accompanied your
tibi militabit. vade et id bellum gere
for-you will-serve. go and that war wage
in quo pater materque pugnanti tibi
in which father and-mother fighting to-you
favere possint. regna cum scelere omnibus
to-favor can. kingdoms with crime to-all
sunt exilis graviora. nunc belli mala
are than-exiles heavier. now of-war ills
propone, dubias Martis incerti vices:
set-before-you, doubtful of-Mars uncertain turns:
licet omne tecum Graeciae robur trahas,
granted all with-you of-Greece strength you-drag,
licet arma longe miles ac late explicet,
granted arms far soldier and wide may-unfold,

fortuna belli semper ancipiti in loco est.
fortune of-war always doubtful in place is.
quodcumque Mars decernit; exaequat duos,
whatever Mars decides; makes-equal two,
licet impares sint, gladius; et spes et metus
though unequal they-be, sword; and hope and fear
Fors caeca versat. praemium incertum petis,
Chance blind turns. reward uncertain you-seek,
certum scelus. favisse fac votis deos
certain crime. to-have-favored suppose to-vows gods
omnes tuis: cessere et aversi fugam
all your: have-yielded and turned-away flight
petiere cives, clade funesta iacens
have-sought citizens, by-slaughter deadly lying
obtexit agros miles — exultes licet
has-covered fields soldier you-may-exult granted
victorque fratris spolia deiecti geras:
and-victor of-brother spoils thrown-down you-may-wear:
frangenda palma est. quale tu hoc bellum putas,
to-be-broken palm is. of-what-kind you this war think,
in quo execrandum victor admittit nefas,
in which accursed victor commits crime,
si gaudet? hunc quem vincere infelix cupis,
if he-rejoices? this-one whom to-conquer unhappy you-desire,
cum viceris, lugebis. infaustas age
when you-have-conquered, you-will-mourn. ill-omened come
dimitte pugnas, libera patriam metu,
dismiss battles, free fatherland from-fear,
luctu parentes.
from-grief parents.

POLYNICES Sceleris et fraudis suae
Of-crime and of-fraud his-own
poenas nefandus frater ut nullas ferat?
penalties unspeakable brother that no should-bear?
IOCASTA Ne metue. poenas et quidem solvet graves:
Do-not fear. penalties and indeed he-will-pay heavy:
regnabit. est haec poena. si dubitas, avo
he-will-reign. is this penalty. if you-doubt, grandfather
patrique crede: Cadmus hoc dicet tibi
and-father believe: Cadmus this will-tell you
Cadmique proles. sceptra Thebano fuit
and-of-Cadmus offspring. scepters for-Theban it-was
impune nulli gerere, nec quisquam fide
with-impunity no to-wield, nor anyone with-faith
rupta tenebit illa: iam numeres licet
broken will-hold them: now you-may-count granted
fratrem inter istos.
brother among those.
ETEOCLES Numeret, est tanti mihi
Let-her-count, it-is of-such-worth to-me
cum regibus iacere. te turbae exulum
with kings to-lie. you to-crowd of-exiles
ascribo.
I-enroll.
POLYNICES Regna, dummodo invisus tuis.
Reign, provided hated by-yours.
ETEOCLES Regnare non vult esse qui invisus timet:
To-reign not wishes to-be who hated fears:
simul ista mundi conditor posuit deus,
together these of-world founder set god,

odium atque regnum: regis hoc magni reor,
hatred and kingship: of-king this great I-think,
odia ipsa premere. multa dominantem vetat
hatreds themselves to-suppress. many-things ruling forbids
amor suorum; plus in iratos licet.
love of-his-own; more over angry is-allowed.
qui vult amari, languida regnat manu.
who wishes to-be-loved, with-languid reigns hand.
IOCASTA Invisa numquam imperia retinentur diu. 660
Hated never powers are-retained long.
ETEOCLES Praecepta melius imperi reges dabunt;
Precepts better of-rule kings will-give;
exilia tu dispone. pro regno velim —
exiles you arrange. for kingdom I-would-wish
IOCASTA Patriam penates coniugem flammis dare?
Fatherland household-gods wife to-flames to-give?
ETEOCLES Imperia pretio quolibet constant bene.
Powers at-price any cost well.