Agamemnon

AESCHYLUS

c. 525–456 BC

Agamemnon

Ἀγαμέμνων

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited



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Agamemnon · Aeschylus (c. 525–456 BC)

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INTRODUCTION

Ten years after the Greek fleet sailed for Troy, a watchman on the palace roof at Argos sees the beacon fire that means the city has fallen. King Agamemnon is coming home. Waiting for him is his wife Clytemnestra, who has not forgiven him for sacrificing their daughter Iphigenia to get the fleet its wind.

Aeschylus builds dread slowly: the old men of the chorus brood on guilt inherited down the house of Atreus; Clytemnestra welcomes her husband with a purple carpet; and the captive Trojan princess Cassandra, cursed to prophesy truly and never be believed, sees what is about to happen inside the palace.

Agamemnon is the first play of the *Oresteia* (458 BC), the only Greek tragic trilogy that survives complete: *Agamemnon*, then *Libation Bearers*, then *Eumenides*. Together they follow one family's chain of killings to its end in a court of law.

Agamemnon

Argos, before the palace of the sons of Atreus, as the Trojan War ends.

PROLOGUE

A watchman on the palace roof sees the beacon fire announcing that Troy has fallen.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1	**WATCHMAN** θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαγὴν πόνων φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος, ἣν κοιμώμενος στέγαις Ἀτρειδῶν ἄγκαθεν, κυνὸς δίκην, ἄστρων κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὁμήγυριν, καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χεῖμα καὶ θέρος βροτοῖς λαμπροὺς δυνάστας, ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι.	**WATCHMAN** I keep asking the gods to release me from this toil, a watch a whole year long. All that time I've lain on the roof of the house of Atreus, propped on my elbows like a dog, and I've come to know the nightly gathering of the stars, and those bright lords that bring winter and summer to mortals as they blaze out in the sky.
8	καὶ νῦν φυλάσσω λαμπάδος τό σύμβολον, αὐγὴν πυρὸς φέρουσαν ἐκ Τροίας φάτιν ἁλώσιμόν τε βάξιν· ὧδε γὰρ κρατεῖ γυναικὸς ἀνδρόβουλον ἐλπίζον κέαρ. εὖτ' ἂν δὲ νυκτίπλαγκτον ἔνδροσόν τ' ἔχω εὐνὴν ὀνείροις οὐκ ἐπισκοπουμένην ἐμήν· φόβος γὰρ ἀνθ' ὕπνου παραστατεῖ, τὸ μὴ βεβαίως βλέφαρα συμβαλεῖν ὕπνῳ· ὅταν δ' ἀείδειν ἢ μινύρεσθαι δοκῶ, ὕπνου τόδ' ἀντίμολπον ἐντέμνων ἄκος, κλαίω τότ' οἶκου τοῦδε συμφορὰν στένων οὐχ ὡς τὰ πρόσθ' ἄριστα διαπονουμένου. νῦν δ' εὐτυχὴς γένοιτ' ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων εὐαγγέλου φανέντος ὀρφναίου πυρός.	And now I'm watching for the signal of the torch, the gleam of fire that will bring word from Troy, the news that it's been taken. That's how she rules here: a woman with a heart that hopes and plans like a man. Whenever I take to this bed of mine, tossed about at night and wet with dew, never visited by dreams, because instead of sleep there's fear standing over me, so that I can't shut my eyelids tight in sleep; whenever I think I'll sing or hum a tune, cutting myself a song as a cure for sleepiness, then I weep instead and groan over the misfortune of this house, which isn't managed the fine way it used to be. But now may there come a happy release from toil, when the fire that brings good news shines out of the dark.
22	ὦ χαῖρε λαμπτὴρ νυκτός, ἡμερήσιον φάος πιφαύσκων καὶ χορῶν κατάστασιν πολλῶν ἐν Ἄργει, τῆσδε συμφορᾶς χάριν. ἰοὺ ἰού.	Oh, welcome, light in the night, showing us daylight in the dark, and the start of many dances in Argos in thanks for this good luck! Hurrah! Hurrah!
26	Ἀγαμέμνονος γυναικὶ σημαίνω τορῶς εὐνῆς ἐπαντείλασαν ὡς τάχος δόμοις ὀλολυγμὸν εὐφημοῦντα τῇδε λαμπάδι ἐπορθιάζειν, εἴπερ Ἰλίου πόλις ἑάλωκεν, ὡς ὁ φρυκτὸς ἀγγέλλων πρέπει· αὐτός τ' ἔγωγε φροίμιον χορεύσομαι. τὰ δεσποτῶν γὰρ εὖ πεσόντα θήσομαι τρὶς ἓξ βαλούσης τῆσδέ μοι φρυκτωρίας.	I'm signaling loud and clear to Agamemnon's wife to get up from her bed as fast as she can and raise through the house the women's cry of triumph to greet this beacon, if the city of Troy really is taken, as the signal fire plainly announces. And I'll dance the prelude myself. I'll score my masters' throw as a lucky one, now that this beacon has rolled me a triple six.
34	γένοιτο δ' οὖν μολόντος εὐφιλῆ χέρα ἄνακτος οἴκων τῇδε βαστάσαι χερί.	Well, may it fall to me, when the lord of the house comes home, to hold his dear hand in this hand of

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	τὰ δ' ἄλλα σιγῶ· βοῦς ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ μέγας βέβηκεν· οἶκος δ' αὐτός, εἰ φθογγὴν λάβοι, σαφέστατ' ἂν λέξειεν· ὡς ἑκὼν ἐγὼ μαθοῦσιν αὐδῶ κοὐ μαθοῦσι λήθομαι.	mine. The rest I keep quiet about: a great ox has stepped on my tongue. The house itself, if it could find a voice, would tell it plainly enough. As for me, I'm happy to speak to those who know, and for those who don't, I've forgotten.[1]

PARODOS

The old men recall the omen at Aulis and Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter Iphigenia.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
40	**CHORUS** δέκατον μὲν ἔτος τόδ' ἐπεὶ Πριάμου μέγας ἀντίδικος, Μενέλαος ἄναξ ἠδ' Ἀγαμέμνων, διθρόνου Διόθεν καὶ δισκήπτρου τιμῆς ὀχυρὸν ζεῦγος Ἀτρειδᾶν στόλον Ἀργείων χιλιοναύτην, τῆσδ' ἀπὸ χώρας	**CHORUS** It's the tenth year now since Priam's mighty opponent at law, lord Menelaus, and Agamemnon too, the strong yoked pair of the sons of Atreus, honored by Zeus with twin thrones and twin scepters, took an Argive fleet a thousand ships strong out from this land
47	ἦραν, στρατιῶτιν ἀρωγάν, μέγαν ἐκ θυμοῦ κλάζοντες Ἄρη τρόπον αἰγυπιῶν, οἵτ' ἐκπατίοις ἄλγεσι παίδων ὕπατοι λεχέων στροφοδινοῦνται πτερύγων ἐρετμοῖσιν ἐρεσσόμενοι, δεμνιοτήρη πόνον ὀρταλίχων ὀλέσαντες· ὕπατος δ' ἀίων ἤ τις Ἀπόλλων ἢ Πὰν ἢ Ζεὺς οἰωνόθροον γόον ὀξυβόαν τῶνδε μετοίκων ὑστερόποινον	and put to sea, an army to fight for their cause, shouting a great cry of war from their hearts, like vultures that, wild with grief for their young, wheel round and round high above their nests, rowing with the oars of their wings, since they've lost the labor of watching over the nestlings' bed; and someone on high hears—Apollo, maybe, or Pan, or Zeus—the shrill wailing cry of the birds, these settlers in his sky, and for vengeance, though late,
59	πέμπει παραβᾶσιν Ἐρινύν. οὕτω δ' Ἀτρέως παῖδας ὁ κρείσσων ἐπ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ πέμπει ξένιος Ζεὺς πολυάνορος ἀμφὶ γυναικὸς πολλὰ παλαίσματα καὶ γυιοβαρῆ γόνατος κονίαισιν ἐρειδομένου διακναιομένης τ' ἐν προτελείοις κάμακος θήσων Δαναοῖσι Τρωσί θ' ὁμοίως. ἔστι δ' ὅπη νῦν	sends a Fury on those who transgressed. Just so Zeus the mighty, god of guests and hosts, sends the sons of Atreus against Paris for a woman of many husbands, to bring many wrestling bouts that weigh down the limbs, the knee pressed hard into the dust, the spear-shaft splintered in the rites before the wedding, to Danaans and Trojans alike. Things now stand
68	ἔστι· τελεῖται δ' ἐς τὸ πεπρωμένον· οὔθ' ὑποκαίων οὔθ' ὑπολείβων οὔτε δακρύων ἀπύρων ἱερῶν	as they stand; all moves to its fated end. Not by kindling fire under offerings, not by pouring libations, not by tears, over rites that knew no fire,
71		

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ὀργὰς ἀτενεῖς παραθέλξει. ἡμεῖς δ' ἀτίται σαρκὶ παλαιᾷ τῆς τότ' ἀρωγῆς ὑπολειφθέντες μίμνομεν ἰσχὺν ἰσόπαιδα νέμοντες ἐπὶ σκήπτροις. ὅ τε γὰρ νεαρὸς μυελὸς στέρνων ἐντὸς ἀνάσσων ἰσόπρεσβυς, Ἄρης δ' οὐκ ἔνι χώρᾳ, τό θ' ὑπέργηρων φυλλάδος ἤδη κατακαρφομένης τρίποδας μὲν ὁδοὺς στείχει, παιδὸς δ' οὐδὲν ἀρείων	will anyone charm away that unbending anger. And we, of no account, with our old flesh, left behind from that expedition, stay here, leaning a strength no better than a child's on our staffs. For the young marrow that springs up in the breast is no better than an old man's—Ares isn't at his post there; and extreme old age, its leaves already withering, walks its three-footed way, and, no stronger than a child,
82	ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει. σὺ δέ, Τυνδάρεω θύγατερ, βασίλεια Κλυταιμήστρα, τί χρέος; τί νέον; τί δ' ἐπαισθομένη, τίνος ἀγγελίας	wanders, a dream that appears by day. But you, daughter of Tyndareus, Queen Clytemnestra, what's happening? What's new? What have you learned, what message has persuaded you[2]
87	πειθοῖ περίπεμπτα θυοσκεῖς; πάντων δὲ θεῶν τῶν ἀστυνόμων, ὑπάτων, χθονίων, τῶν τ' οὐρανίων τῶν τ' ἀγοραίων, βωμοὶ δώροισι φλέγονται· ἄλλη δ' ἄλλοθεν οὐρανομήκης λαμπὰς ἀνίσχει, φαρμασσομένη χρίματος ἁγνοῦ μαλακαῖς ἀδόλοισι παρηγορίαις, πελάνῳ μυχόθεν βασιλείῳ. τούτων λέξασ' ὅ τι καὶ δυνατὸν καὶ θέμις αἰνεῖν, παιών τε γενοῦ τῆσδε μερίμνης, ἢ νῦν τοτὲ μὲν κακόφρων τελέθει, τοτὲ δ' ἐκ θυσιῶν ἀγανὴ φαίνουσ' ἐλπὶς ἀμύνει φροντίδ' ἄπληστον	to send round your orders for sacrifice? The altars of all the gods who guard the city, gods on high and gods beneath the earth, gods of the sky and gods of the marketplace, are blazing with gifts. On every side a torch rises sky-high, drugged with the soft, guileless coaxing of pure holy oil, the royal unguent from the inner stores. Tell us whatever you can, whatever it's right to tell, and be the healer of this anxiety that at times turns my thoughts dark, and at times hope, shining kindly from the sacrifices, keeps insatiable care away
103	τῆς θυμοβόρου φρένα λύπης.	from my mind, the grief that eats the heart.
104	κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν ὅδιον κράτος αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν ἐκτελέων· ἔτι γὰρ θεόθεν καταπνεύει πειθὼ μολπᾶν ἀλκὰν σύμφυτος αἰών· ὅπως Ἀχαι- ῶν δίθρονον κράτος, Ἑλλάδος ἥβας ξύμφρονα ταγάν,	It is mine to proclaim the omen, seen on the road, that blessed the power of men in command—for still, by the gods' gift, the life that grew with me breathes into me persuasion, the strength of song— how the two-throned power of the Achaeans, the like-minded leaders of the youth of Greece,

1 "An ox on the tongue" was a proverbial expression for being forced to keep silent.
2 Tyndareus, king of Sparta, was the father of Clytemnestra; Helen was her sister.

GREEK	ENGLISH
πέμπει σὺν δορὶ καὶ χερὶ πράκτορι θούριος ὄρνις Τευκρίδ' ἐπ' αἶαν, οἰωνῶν βασιλεὺς βασιλεῦσι νε- ῶν ὁ κελαινός, ὅ τ' ἐξόπιν ἀργᾶς, φανέντες ἴ- κταρ μελάθρων χερὸς ἐκ δοριπάλτου παμπρέπτοις ἐν ἕδραισιν, βοσκόμενοι λαγίναν, ἐρικύμονα φέρματι γένναν, βλαβέντα λοισθίων δρόμων. αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.	were sent with spear and avenging hand against the Trojan land by a bird of war: the king of birds to the kings of the ships, one black, and one white behind, appearing near the palace on the side of the spear hand, on perches seen by all, feeding on a hare, a creature big with young, caught before she could run her last race. Cry *ailinon*, *ailinon*, but let the good prevail.[3]
122 κεδνὸς δὲ στρατόμαντις ἰδὼν δύο λήμασι δισσοὺς Ἀτρεΐδας μαχίμους ἐδάη λαγοδαίτας πομπούς τ' ἀρχάς· οὕτω δ' εἶπε τεράζων· "χρόνῳ μὲν ἀγρεῖ Πριάμου πόλιν ἄδε κέλευθος, πάντα δὲ πύργων κτήνη πρόσθε τὰ δημιοπληθῆ Μοῖρ' ἀλαπάξει πρὸς τὸ βίαιον· οἷον μή τις ἄγα θεόθεν κνεφά- σῃ προτυπὲν στόμιον μέγα Τροίας στρατωθέν. οἰκτῳ γὰρ ἐπί- φθονος Ἄρτεμις ἁγνὰ πτανοῖσιν κυσὶ πατρὸς αὐτότοκον πρὸ λόχου μογερὰν πτάκα θυομένοισιν στυγεῖ δὲ δεῖπνον αἰετῶν." αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.	And the army's trusty prophet, seeing the two sons of Atreus, two men of two tempers, knew the warlike eaters of the hare for the leaders of the expedition, and reading the portent he spoke like this: "In time this expedition takes Priam's city, and all the herds before its towers, the people's abundant wealth, Fate will violently plunder. Only may no grudge from the gods cloud over and strike down beforehand the great bit forged for Troy, the army in camp. For holy Artemis in pity bears a grudge against her father's winged hounds, who sacrifice the wretched cowering hare, her young and all, before she gives birth; she loathes the eagles' feast." Cry *ailinon*, *ailinon*, but let the good prevail.
140 "τόσον περ εὔφρων, καλά, δρόσοισι λεπτοῖς μαλερῶν λεόντων πάντων τ' ἀγρονόμων φιλομάστοις θηρῶν ὀβρικάλοισι τερπνά, τούτων αἴνει ξύμβολα κρᾶναι, δεξιὰ μέν, κατάμομφα δὲ φάσματα. ἰήιον δὲ καλέω Παιᾶνα, μή τινας ἀντιπνόους Δανα- οῖς χρονίας ἐχενῆδας ἀ- πλοίας τεύξῃ, σπευδομένα θυσίαν ἑτέραν ἄνομόν τιν', ἄδαιτον νεικέων τέκτονα σύμφυτον, οὐ δεισήνορα. μίμνει γὰρ φοβερὰ παλίνορτος οἰκονόμος δολία μνάμων μῆνις τεκνόποινος." τοιάδε Κάλχας ξὺν μεγάλοις ἀγαθοῖς ἀπέκλαγξεν μόρσιμ' ἀπ' ὀρνίθων ὁδίων οἴκοις βασιλείοις·	"Kind as she is, the lovely one, to the tender dewy cubs of ravening lions, and taking delight in the suckling young of all the beasts that roam the wild, she bids the signs of these things be fulfilled, the visions favorable, yet full of blame. And I call on Paean, god of healing, not to let her bring the Danaans contrary winds that hold the ships fast long, and keep them from sailing, pressing for another sacrifice, lawless, no meal for anyone, a builder of quarrels born in the family, that fears no husband. For there waits, rising up again, fearsome,

3 *Ailinon* is a traditional cry of mourning.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	τοῖς δ' ὁμόφωνον αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.	a treacherous keeper of the house, an anger that remembers, and avenges a child." Such things Calchas cried out, along with great blessings, as fated for the royal house from the birds on the road; and in harmony with them cry *ailinon*, *ailinon*, but let the good prevail.
160	Ζεύς, ὅστις ποτ' ἐστίν, εἰ τόδ' αὐ- τῷ φίλον κεκλημένῳ, τοῦτό νιν προσεννέπω. οὐκ ἔχω προσεικάσαι πάντ' ἐπισταθμώμενος πλὴν Διός, εἰ τὸ μάταν ἀπὸ φροντίδος ἄχθος χρὴ βαλεῖν ἐτητύμως.	Zeus, whoever he may be—if this is the name he is pleased to be called by, by this I address him. I can find nothing to compare, though I weigh everything in the balance, except Zeus, if I am truly to cast the vain burden from my mind.
167	οὐδ' ὅστις πάροιθεν ἦν μέγας, παμμάχῳ θράσει βρύων, οὐδὲ λέξεται πρὶν ὤν· ὃς δ' ἔπειτ' ἔφυ, τρια- κτῆρος οἴχεται τυχών. Ζῆνα δέ τις προφρόνως ἐπινίκια κλάζων τεύξεται φρενῶν τὸ πᾶν·	He who once was great, bursting with boldness for every fight, won't even be spoken of: he is past. And he who came after has met the one who threw him three falls, and is gone. But whoever gladly shouts the victory song of Zeus will hit the mark of understanding whole:
176	τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδώ- σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν. στάζει δ' ἔν θ' ὕπνῳ πρὸ καρδίας μνησιπήμων πόνος· καὶ παρ' ἄ- κοντας ἦλθε σωφρονεῖν. δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων.	Zeus, who set mortals on the road to understanding, who laid it down that learning through suffering holds sway. In sleep, before the heart, there drips the pain that remembers its wound; and sound sense comes even to the unwilling. And the grace of the gods who sit at the holy helm comes, it seems, by force.
184	καὶ τόθ' ἡγεμὼν ὁ πρέ- σβυς νεῶν Ἀχαιικῶν, μάντιν οὔτινα ψέγων, ἐμπαίοις τύχαισι συμπνέων, εὖτ' ἀπλοίᾳ κεναγγεῖ βαρύ- νοντ' Ἀχαιικὸς λεώς, Χαλκίδος πέραν ἔχων παλιρρόχ- θοις ἐν Αὐλίδος τόποις·	And so it was then: the elder leader of the Achaean ships, finding no fault with any prophet, bending with the blasts of fortune that struck him, when the Achaean host was weighed down by the calm that kept them in port and emptied their jars, as they held the shore across from Chalcis, at Aulis, where the tides roar back and forth;
192	πνοαὶ δ' ἀπὸ Στρυμόνος μολοῦσαι κακόσχολοι νήστιδες δύσορμοι, βροτῶν ἄλαι, ναῶν τε καὶ πεισμάτων ἀφειδεῖς, παλιμμήκη χρόνον τιθεῖσαι	and winds that came down from the Strymon, bringing harmful idleness, hunger, cruel anchorage, driving men to wander, sparing neither ships nor cables,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	τρίβῳ κατέξαινον ἄν- θος Ἀργείων· ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ πικροῦ χείματος ἄλλο μῆχαρ βριθύτερον πρόμοισιν μάντις ἔκλαγξεν προφέρων Ἄρτεμιν, ὥστε χθόνα βάκ- τροις ἐπικρούσαντας Ἀτρεί- δας δάκρυ μὴ κατασχεῖν·	stretching the time out twice as long, wore down and carded away the flower of the Argives; and when, against the bitter storm, the prophet cried out to the chiefs another remedy, more grievous still, naming Artemis, so that the sons of Atreus struck the ground with their staffs and could not hold back their tears —
205	ἄναξ δ' ὁ πρέσβυς τότ' εἶπε φωνῶν· "βαρεῖα μὲν κὴρ τὸ μὴ πιθέσθαι, βαρεῖα δ', εἰ τέκνον δαΐ- ξω, δόμων ἄγαλμα, μιαίνων παρθενοσφάγοισιν ῥείθροις πατρῴους χέρας πέλας βωμοῦ· τί τῶνδ' ἄνευ κακῶν, πῶς λιπόναυς γένωμαι ξυμμαχίας ἁμαρτών; παυσανέμου γὰρ θυσίας παρθενίου θ' αἵματος ὀρ- γᾷ περιόργως ἐπιθυ- μεῖν θέμις. εὖ γὰρ εἴη."	then the elder king spoke out and said: "A heavy doom if I disobey, and heavy if I must butcher my child, the jewel of my house, staining a father's hands with streams of a slaughtered girl's blood beside the altar. Which of these is free of evil? How can I desert the fleet and fail my allies? For them to long, with passion beyond passion, for a sacrifice to stop the winds, for a virgin's blood—that is their right. May all be well."[4]
218	ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνάγκας ἔδυ λέπαδνον φρενὸς πνέων δυσσεβῆ τροπαίαν ἄναγνον ἀνίερον, τόθεν τὸ παντότολμον φρονεῖν μετέγνω. βροτοὺς θρασύνει γὰρ αἰσχρόμητις τάλαινα παρακοπὰ πρωτοπήμων. ἔτλα δ' οὖν θυτὴρ γενέσθαι θυγατρός, γυναικοποίνων πολέμων ἀρωγὰν καὶ προτέλεια ναῶν.	And when he put on the yoke-strap of necessity, the wind of his mind veering, impious, impure, unholy, from that moment he changed, and set his mind on the deed that dares all. For mortals are made bold by wretched derangement, shameful in its counsels, the first source of grief. So he dared to become the sacrificer of his daughter, to help a war to avenge a woman, a first rite for the fleet.
228	λιτὰς δὲ καὶ κληδόνας πατρῴους παρ' οὐδὲν αἰῶ τε παρθένειον ἔθεντο φιλόμαχοι βραβῆς. φράσεν δ' ἀόζοις πατὴρ μετ' εὐχὰν δίκαν χιμαίρας ὕπερθε βωμοῦ πέπλοισι περιπετῆ παντὶ θυμῷ προνωπῆ λαβεῖν ἀέρδην, στόματός τε καλλιπρῴρου φυλακᾷ κατασχεῖν φθόγγον ἀραῖον οἴκοις,	Her prayers, her cries to her father, her young girl's life, the war-loving chiefs counted as nothing. After the prayer her father told the attendants to take her up above the altar like a young goat, as she lay fallen forward, wrapped in her robes, to lift her high with all their strength, and with a guard on her lovely mouth to hold back a cry that would curse the house,
238	βίᾳ χαλινῶν τ' ἀναύδῳ μένει. κρόκου βαφὰς δ' ἐς πέδον χέουσα ἔβαλλ' ἕκαστον θυτήρ-	by force, by the bridle's silencing strength. And as she let her saffron-dyed robe stream to the ground,

4 The child is Iphigenia, whom Agamemnon sacrificed to Artemis at Aulis so that the fleet could sail.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ων ἀπ' ὄμματος βέλει φιλοίκτῳ, πρέπουσά θ' ὡς ἐν γραφαῖς, προσεννέπειν θέλουσ', ἐπεὶ πολλάκις πατρὸς κατ' ἀνδρῶνας εὐτραπέζους ἔμελψεν, ἀγνᾷ δ' ἀταύρωτος αὐδᾷ πατρὸς φίλου τριτόσπονδον εὖ- ποτμον παιῶνα φίλως ἐτίμα—	she struck each of the sacrificers with a glance from her eyes, an arrow asking for pity, standing out as in a painting, wanting to speak to them by name, since often in her father's hall, at the rich banquets, she had sung, and with her pure voice, still unwed, lovingly honored her dear father's paean of good fortune at the third libation —[5]
248	τὰ δ' ἔνθεν οὔτ' εἶδον οὔτ' ἐννέπω· τέχναι δὲ Κάλχαντος οὐκ ἄκραντοι. Δίκα δὲ τοῖς μὲν παθοῦσ- ιν μαθεῖν ἐπιρρέπει· τὸ μέλλον δ', ἐπεὶ γένοιτ', ἂν κλύοις· πρὸ χαιρέτω· ἴσον δὲ τῷ προστένειν. τορὸν γὰρ ἥξει σύνορθρον αὐγαῖς. πέλοιτο δ' οὖν τἀπὶ τούτοισιν εὖ πρᾶξις, ὡς θέλει τόδ' ἄγχιστον Ἀ- πίας γαίας μονόφρουρον ἔρκος.	What happened next I didn't see, and I won't tell. But the arts of Calchas do not go unfulfilled. Justice tips the scale, so that those who suffer learn. The future you'll hear when it comes; before then, let it go: that's the same as grieving in advance. It will come clear, rising with the light of dawn. Well, may what follows turn out well, as she wishes, she who stands nearest, the lone guarding bulwark of this Apian land.[6]

FIRST EPISODE

Clytemnestra announces Troy's fall and describes the chain of beacons that carried the news.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
258	**CHORUS** ἥκω σεβίζων σόν, Κλυταιμήστρα, κράτος· δίκη γάρ ἐστι φωτὸς ἀρχηγοῦ τίειν γυναῖκ' ἐρημωθέντος ἄρσενος θρόνου. σὺ δ' εἴ τι κεδνὸν εἴτε μὴ πεπυσμένη εὐαγγέλοισιν ἐλπίσιν θυηπολεῖς, κλύοιμ' ἂν εὔφρων· οὐδὲ σιγώσῃ φθόνος.	**CHORUS** I've come, Clytemnestra, in reverence for your power. It's just to honor the wife of the ruling man when the male throne is left empty. Whether you've heard some good news or not, and are sacrificing in hope of good news, I'd be glad to hear; but if you keep silent, I won't hold it against you.
264	**CLYTEMNESTRA** εὐάγγελος μέν, ὥσπερ ἡ παροιμία, ἕως γένοιτο μητρὸς εὐφρόνης πάρα. πεύσῃ δὲ χάρμα μεῖζον ἐλπίδος κλύειν· Πριάμου γὰρ ᾑρήκασιν Ἀργεῖοι πόλιν.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** May the dawn, as the proverb goes, be a bearer of good news, born of her mother, Night. You'll hear a joy greater than anything you hoped for: the Argives have taken Priam's city.
268	**CHORUS** πῶς φής; πέφευγε τοὔπος ἐξ ἀπιστίας.	**CHORUS** What did you say? The words escaped me, I couldn't believe them.
269	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Τροίαν Ἀχαιῶν οὖσαν· ἦ τορῶς λέγω;	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Troy belongs to the Achaeans. Am I speaking clearly?

5 At a banquet the third libation was poured to Zeus the Savior, with a song of thanksgiving (paean).
6 "Apian land" is an old name for the Peloponnese, here meaning Argos.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
270	**CHORUS** χαρά μ' ὑφέρπει δάκρυον ἐκκαλουμένη.	**CHORUS** Joy steals over me, and calls up tears.
271	**CLYTEMNESTRA** εὖ γὰρ φρονοῦντος ὄμμα σοῦ κατηγορεῖ.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Yes, your eyes give away your loyal heart.
272	**CHORUS** τί γὰρ τὸ πιστόν; ἔστι τῶνδέ σοι τέκμαρ;	**CHORUS** But what makes it certain? Do you have any proof of this?
273	**CLYTEMNESTRA** ἔστιν· τί δ' οὐχί; μὴ δολώσαντος θεοῦ.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** I do—how could I not?—unless a god has tricked me.
274	**CHORUS** πότερα δ' ὀνείρων φάσματ' εὐπιθῆ σέβεις;	**CHORUS** Is it the persuasive visions of dreams you put your faith in?
275	**CLYTEMNESTRA** οὐ δόξαν ἂν λάβοιμι βριζούσης φρενός.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** I wouldn't accept the fancies of a drowsing mind.
276	**CHORUS** ἀλλ' ἦ σ' ἐπίανέν τις ἄπτερος φάτις;	**CHORUS** Then has some wingless rumor fattened you up?
277	**CLYTEMNESTRA** παιδὸς νέας ὡς κάρτ' ἐμωμήσω φρένας.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** You sneer at my mind as if I were a young girl.
278	**CHORUS** ποίου χρόνου δὲ καὶ πεπόρθηται πόλις;	**CHORUS** And how long ago was the city sacked?
279	**CLYTEMNESTRA** τῆς νῦν τεκούσης φῶς τόδ' εὐφρόνης λέγω.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** In the night, I tell you, that has just given birth to this daylight.
280	**CHORUS** καὶ τίς τόδ' ἐξίκοιτ' ἂν ἀγγέλων τάχος;	**CHORUS** And what messenger could get here that fast?
281	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Ἥφαιστος Ἴδης λαμπρὸν ἐκπέμπων σέλας. φρυκτὸς δὲ φρυκτὸν δεῦρ' ἀπ' ἀγγάρου πυρὸς ἔπεμπεν· Ἴδη μὲν πρὸς Ἑρμαῖον λέπας Λήμνου· μέγαν δὲ πανὸν ἐκ νήσου τρίτον Ἄθῳον αἶπος Ζηνὸς ἐξεδέξατο, ὑπερτελής τε, πόντον ὥστε νωτίσαι, ἰσχὺς πορευτοῦ λαμπάδος πρὸς ἡδονὴν ... πεύκη τὸ χρυσοφεγγές, ὥς τις ἥλιος, σέλας παραγγείλασα Μακίστου σκοπαῖς· ὁ δ' οὔτι μέλλων οὐδ' ἀφρασμόνως ὕπνῳ νικώμενος παρῆκεν ἀγγέλου μέρος· ἑκὰς δὲ φρυκτοῦ φῶς ἐπ' Εὐρίπου ῥοὰς Μεσσαπίου φύλαξι σημαίνει μολόν. οἱ δ' ἀντέλαμψαν καὶ παρήγγειλαν πρόσω γραίας ἐρείκης θωμὸν ἅψαντες πυρί.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Hephaestus, sending out a bright blaze from Ida. Beacon sent beacon on to here, a courier of fire. Ida sent it to Hermes' crag on Lemnos; and third, the steep height of Athos, Zeus's mountain, took up the great torch from the island. Towering up so as to skim across the back of the sea, the strength of the traveling torch, rejoicing ... the pine-torch, gleaming gold like a sun, passed the blaze on to the watchtowers of Macistus. And he, not dawdling, not carelessly overcome by sleep, didn't neglect his part as messenger. Far off, over the streams of the Euripus, the beacon's light came and signaled to the watchmen on Messapion. They lit an answering fire and sent the message onward, setting a heap of dry old heather ablaze.[7]
296	σθένουσα λαμπὰς δ' οὐδέπω μαυρουμένη, ὑπερθοροῦσα πεδίον Ἀσωποῦ, δίκην φαιδρᾶς σελήνης, πρὸς Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας	The torch, strong and not yet dimming, leapt across the plain of the Asopus like a bright moon to the crag of Cithaeron, and roused another relay

7 The chain of beacons runs from Mount Ida near Troy across the Aegean by way of Lemnos, Mount Athos and Euboea (Macistus, the Euripus strait) to mainland Greece and on to Argos.

GREEK

ENGLISH

ἤγειρεν ἄλλην ἐκδοχὴν πομποῦ πυρός.
φάος δὲ τηλέπομπον οὐκ ἠναίνετο
φρουρὰ πλέον καίουσα τῶν εἰρημένων·
λίμνην δ' ὑπὲρ Γοργῶπιν ἔσκηψεν φάος·
ὄρος τ' ἐπ' Αἰγίπλαγκτον ἐξικνούμενον
ὥτρυνε θεσμὸν μὴ χρονίζεσθαι πυρός.
πέμπουσι δ' ἀνδαίοντες ἀφθόνῳ μένει
φλογὸς μέγαν πώγωνα, καὶ Σαρωνικοῦ
πορθμοῦ κάτοπτον πρῶν' ὑπερβάλλειν πρόσω
φλέγουσαν· ἔστ' ἔσκηψεν εὖτ' ἀφίκετο
Ἀραχναῖον αἶπος, ἀστυγείτονας σκοπάς·
κἄπειτ' Ἀτρειδῶν ἐς τόδε σκήπτει στέγος
φάος τόδ' οὐκ ἄπαπτον Ἰδαίου πυρός.

312 τοιοίδε τοί μοι λαμπαδηφόρων νόμοι,
ἄλλος παρ' ἄλλου διαδοχαῖς πληρούμενοι·
νικᾷ δ' ὁ πρῶτος καὶ τελευταῖος δραμών.
τέκμαρ τοιοῦτον σύμβολόν τέ σοι λέγω
ἀνδρὸς παραγγείλαντος ἐκ Τροίας ἐμοί.

317 **CHORUS** θεοῖς μὲν αὖθις, ὦ γύναι, προσεύξομαι.
λόγους δ' ἀκοῦσαι τούσδε κἀποθαυμάσαι
διηνεκῶς θέλοιμ' ἂν ὡς λέγοις πάλιν.

320 **CLYTEMNESTRA** Τροίαν Ἀχαιοὶ τῇδ' ἔχουσ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.
οἶμαι βοὴν ἄμεικτον ἐν πόλει πρέπειν.
ὄξος τ' ἄλειφά τ' ἐγχέας ταὐτῷ κύτει
διχοστατοῦντ' ἄν, οὐ φίλω, προσεννέποις.
καὶ τῶν ἁλόντων καὶ κρατησάντων δίχα
φθογγὰς ἀκούειν ἔστι συμφορᾶς διπλῆς.
οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀμφὶ σώμασιν πεπτωκότες
ἀνδρῶν κασιγνήτων τε καὶ φυταλμίων
παῖδες γερόντων οὐκέτ' ἐξ ἐλευθέρου
δέρης ἀποιμώζουσι φιλτάτων μόρον·
τοὺς δ' αὖτε νυκτίπλαγκτος ἐκ μάχης πόνος
νήστεις πρὸς ἀρίστοισιν ὧν ἔχει πόλις
τάσσει, πρὸς οὐδὲν ἐν μέρει τεκμήριον,
ἀλλ' ὡς ἕκαστος ἔσπασεν τύχης πάλον.
ἐν δ' αἰχμαλώτοις Τρωικοῖς οἰκήμασιν
ναίουσιν ἤδη, τῶν ὑπαιθρίων πάγων
δρόσων τ' ἀπαλλαγέντες, ὡς δ' εὐδαίμονες
ἀφύλακτον εὑδήσουσι πᾶσαν εὐφρόνην.

338 εἰ δ' εὖ σέβουσι τοὺς πολισσούχους θεοὺς
τούς τῆς ἁλούσης γῆς θεῶν θ' ἱδρύματα,
οὔ τἂν ἑλόντες αὖθις ἀνθαλοῖεν ἄν.
ἔρως δὲ μή τις πρότερον ἐμπίπτῃ στρατῷ
πορθεῖν ἃ μὴ χρή, κέρδεσιν νικωμένους.
δεῖ γὰρ πρὸς οἴκους νοστίμου σωτηρίας
κάμψαι διαύλου θάτερον κῶλον πάλιν·
θεοῖς δ' ἀναμπλάκητος εἰ μόλοι στρατός,
ἐγρηγορὸς τὸ πῆμα τῶν ὀλωλότων

of the traveling fire. The watch there didn't refuse the light sent from afar, but burned a bigger fire than they'd been told. The light swooped down over the lake of Gorgopis, and reaching Mount Aegiplanctus, urged them not to be slow with the ordinance of fire. Kindling it with unstinting strength, they send up a great beard of flame, blazing so as to pass beyond the headland that looks down on the Saronic strait; till it swooped down when it reached the height of Arachnaeus, the watchpost next to our city. And then it strikes down on this house of the sons of Atreus, this light, true grandchild of the fire on Ida.

Those, I tell you, are the rules for my torchbearers, one after another, completing the course in relays; and the winner is the one who runs first and last. That's the proof, the token I give you: my husband passed the word to me from Troy.

CHORUS Lady, I'll offer my prayers to the gods later. But I'd like to hear this story again from start to finish, and marvel at it, just as you tell it.

CLYTEMNESTRA Troy is in the Achaeans' hands this day. I imagine the cries ringing out in the city don't mix. Pour vinegar and oil into the same jar and you'd call them quarrelers, not friends: they keep apart. So too you can hear the voices of the captured and the conquerors separately, from their two different fortunes. The ones, fallen on the bodies of husbands and brothers, children on the bodies of the old men who gave them life, wail for the death of those they loved best from throats that are no longer free. The others, worn out by a night of roaming after the battle, sit down hungry to breakfast on whatever the city has—not by any order of rank, but as each has drawn his lot of fortune. Already they're living in the captured Trojan houses, free of the frosts and dews of the open sky; and like lucky men, they'll sleep the whole night through without posting a guard.

If they show proper reverence to the gods who guard the city, the gods of the conquered land, and to the shrines of the gods, then the captors won't be captured in their turn. But may no lust first fall upon the army to plunder what they shouldn't, overcome by greed. They still have to get safely home and round the turn, to run back the other leg of the double course. And even if the army

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	γένοιτ' ἄν, εἰ πρόσπαια μὴ τύχοι κακά. τοιαῦτά τοι γυναικὸς ἐξ ἐμοῦ κλύεις· τὸ δ' εὖ κρατοίη μὴ διχορρόπως ἰδεῖν. πολλῶν γὰρ ἐσθλῶν τήνδ' ὄνησιν εἰλόμην.	came home with no offense against the gods, the wrong done to the dead might still wake, even if no sudden disaster struck. That's what you hear from me, a woman. But may the good prevail, clear to see, with nothing tipping it either way. That's the benefit I've chosen above many blessings.
351	**CHORUS** γύναι, κατ' ἄνδρα σώφρον' εὐφρόνως λέγεις. ἐγὼ δ' ἀκούσας πιστά σου τεκμήρια θεοὺς προσειπεῖν εὖ παρασκευάζομαι. χάρις γὰρ οὐκ ἄτιμος εἴργασται πόνων.	**CHORUS** Lady, you speak kindly and sensibly, like a prudent man. Now that I've heard your sure proofs, I'm ready to address the gods properly; for a joy has been won that well repays our troubles.

FIRST STASIMON

The chorus sings of Zeus punishing Paris, of Helen's flight, and of the people's anger over the war dead.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
355	**CHORUS** ὦ Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ καὶ νὺξ φιλία μεγάλων κόσμων κτεάτειρα, ἥτ' ἐπὶ Τροίας πύργοις ἔβαλες στεγανὸν δίκτυον, ὡς μήτε μέγαν μήτ' οὖν νεαρῶν τιν' ὑπερτελέσαι μέγα δουλείας γάγγαμον, ἄτης παναλώτου. Δία τοι ξένιον μέγαν αἰδοῦμαι τὸν τάδε πράξαντ' ἐπ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τείνοντα πάλαι τόξον, ὅπως ἂν μήτε πρὸ καιροῦ μήθ' ὑπὲρ ἄστρων	**CHORUS** Zeus our king, and Night, our friend, who have won us great glories, you who cast over the towers of Troy a net that covered all, so that neither grown man nor any of the young could leap clear of the great dragnet of slavery, of ruin that catches all! Great Zeus of guests and hosts I revere, who brought this about, who long ago bent his bow against Paris, so that his shaft would neither fall short nor fly above the stars
366	βέλος ἠλίθιον σκήψειεν.	and strike in vain.
367	Διὸς πλαγὰν ἔχουσιν εἰπεῖν, πάρεστιν τοῦτό γ' ἐξιχνεῦσαι. ἔπραξεν ὡς ἔκρανεν. οὐκ ἔφα τις θεοὺς βροτῶν ἀξιοῦσθαι μέλειν ὅσοις ἀθίκτων χάρις πατοῖθ'· ὁ δ' οὐκ εὐσεβής. πέφανται δ' ἐκτίνουσ' ἀτολμήτων ἀρὴ πνεόντων μεῖζον ἢ δικαίως, φλεόντων δωμάτων ὑπέρφευ ὑπὲρ τὸ βέλτιστον. ἔστω δ' ἀπή- μαντον, ὥστ' ἀπαρκεῖν εὖ πραπίδων λαχόντα. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἔπαλξις πλούτου πρὸς κόρον ἀνδρὶ λακτίσαντι μέγαν Δίκας βωμὸν εἰς ἀφάνειαν.	The stroke of Zeus—they can call it that; this much, at least, can be traced. He did as he decreed. Someone has said the gods don't deign to care about mortals who trample on the grace of things not to be touched; but that man was impious. Now it stands revealed: ruin pays back the reckless, who breathe more arrogance than is just, when their houses teem beyond measure, past what is best. Let there be wealth free from harm, enough to content a man blessed with good sense. For wealth is no rampart for a man who, in his surfeit, has kicked the great altar of Justice out of sight.
385		

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	βιᾶται δ' ἀ τάλαινα πειθώ, προβούλου παῖς ἄφερτος ἄτας. ἄκος δὲ πᾶν μάταιον. οὐκ ἐκρύφθη, πρέπει δέ, φῶς αἰνολαμπές, σίνος· κακοῦ δὲ χαλκοῦ τρόπον τρίβῳ τε καὶ προσβολαῖς μελαμπαγὴς πέλει δικαιωθείς, ἐπεὶ διώκει παῖς ποτανὸν ὄρνιν, πόλει πρόστριμμ' ἄφερτον ἐνθείς. λιτᾶν δ' ἀκούει μὲν οὔτις θεῶν· τὸν δ' ἐπίστροφον τῶν φῶτ' ἄδικον καθαιρεῖ. οἷος καὶ Πάρις ἐλθὼν ἐς δόμον τὸν Ἀτρειδᾶν ᾐσχυνε ξενίαν τράπε- ζαν κλοπαῖσι γυναικός.	Wretched Persuasion drives him on by force, unbearable child of scheming Ruin. Every remedy is in vain. The harm isn't hidden; it shines out, a light with a dreadful gleam. Like bad bronze under rubbing and blows, he turns black and blotched when put to the test, since he is a boy chasing a bird on the wing, bringing on his city a stain past bearing. None of the gods hears his prayers; the unjust man who deals in such things one of them brings down. Such was Paris, who came to the house of the sons of Atreus and shamed the table of hospitality by stealing a wife.
403	λιποῦσα δ' ἀστοῖσιν ἀσπίστορᾶς τε καὶ κλόνους λογχίμους ναυβάτας θ' ὁπλισμούς, ἄγουσά τ' ἀντίφερνον Ἰλίῳ φθορὰν βέβακεν ῥίμφα διὰ πυλᾶν ἄτλητα τλᾶσα· πολλὰ δ' ἔστενον τόδ' ἐννέποντες δόμων προφῆται· "ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι, ἰὼ λέχος καὶ στίβοι φιλάνορες. πάρεστι σιγὰς ἀτίμους ἀλοιδόρους ἄλγιστ' ἀφημένων ἰδεῖν. πόθῳ δ' ὑπερποντίας φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν. εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσῶν ἔχθεται χάρις ἀνδρί· ὀμμάτων δ' ἐν ἀχηνίαις ἔρρει πᾶσ' Ἀφροδίτα."	She left her people the clash of shields and spears, the arming of ships, and bringing Troy destruction for a dowry she passed lightly through the gates, daring what should never be dared. And many a groan the prophets of the house let out, saying: "Oh, oh, the house, the house, and its princes! Oh, the bed, and the traces of a wife who loved her husband! Here you can see him sitting apart, silent, dishonored, not reproaching, in bitterest grief. In longing for her who is over the sea, a phantom will seem to rule the house. The grace of shapely statues is hateful to the husband; in the emptiness of the eyes all Aphrodite is gone."
420	"ὀνειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες πάρεισι δόξαι φέρου- σαι χάριν ματαίαν. μάταν γάρ, εὖτ' ἂν ἐσθλά τις δοκῶν ὁρᾷ, παραλλάξασα διὰ χερῶν βέβακεν ὄψις οὐ μεθύστερον πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ' ὕπνου κελεύθοις." τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους ἐφ' ἑστίας ἄχη τάδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τῶνδ' ὑπερβατώτερα. τὸ πᾶν δ' ἀφ' Ἕλλανος αἴας συνορμένοις πένθει' ἀτλησικάρδιος δόμων ἑκάστου πρέπει.	"And dream-shapes come, full of mourning, bringing a joy that is empty. Empty, for when a man thinks he sees good things, the vision slips away through his hands and is gone, never after following on its wings the paths of sleep." These are the griefs in the house, at the hearth, and others worse than these. But everywhere, for those who set out together from the land of Greece,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	πολλὰ γοῦν θιγγάνει πρὸς ἦπαρ· οὓς μὲν γάρ τις ἔπεμψεν οἶδεν, ἀντὶ δὲ φωτῶν τεύχη καὶ σποδὸς εἰς ἑκά- στου δόμους ἀφικνεῖται.	grief that the heart must endure is seen in every house. Much there is that cuts to the heart: each knows the men he sent away; but instead of men, urns and ashes come home to each one's house.
437	ὁ χρυσαμοιβὸς δ' Ἄρης σωμάτων καὶ ταλαντοῦχος ἐν μάχῃ δορὸς πυρωθὲν ἐξ Ἰλίου φίλοισι πέμπει βαρὺ ψῆγμα δυσδάκρυτον ἀν- τήνορος σποδοῦ γεμί- ζων λέβητας εὐθέτους. στένουσι δ' εὖ λέγοντες ἄν- δρα τὸν μὲν ὡς μάχης ἴδρις, τὸν δ' ἐν φοναῖς καλῶς πεσόντ'— ἀλλοτρίας διαὶ γυναι- κός· τάδε σῖγά τις βαΰ- ζει, φθονερὸν δ' ὑπ' ἄλγος ἕρ- πει προδίκοις Ἀτρείδαις. οἱ δ' αὐτοῦ περὶ τεῖχος θήκας Ἰλιάδος γᾶς εὔμορφοι κατέχουσιν· ἐχ- θρὰ δ' ἔχοντας ἔκρυψεν.	Ares, money-changer of bodies, holding his scales in the battle of spears, sends home from Troy to their loved ones heavy gold dust, refined in the fire, bitterly wept, filling the urns, neatly stowed, with ash in place of men. And they mourn, praising this man as skilled in battle, that one as fallen nobly in the slaughter— for another man's wife. This someone growls in silence, and grief and resentment creep against the sons of Atreus who pressed the suit. And there, around the wall, the beautiful young hold graves in the land of Troy; the hated earth has hidden those who won it.
456	βαρεῖα δ' ἀστῶν φάτις ξὺν κότῳ· δημοκράντου δ' ἀρᾶς τίνει χρέος. μένει δ' ἀκοῦσαί τί μου μέριμνα νυκτηρεφές. τῶν πολυκτόνων γὰρ οὐκ ἄσκοποι θεοί. κελαι- ναὶ δ' Ἐρινύες χρόνῳ τυχηρὸν ὄντ' ἄνευ δίκας παλιντυχεῖ τριβᾷ βίου τιθεῖσ' ἀμαυρόν, ἐν δ' ἀί- στοις τελέθοντος οὔτις ἀλ- κά· τὸ δ' ὑπερκόπως κλύειν εὖ βαρύ· βάλλεται γὰρ ὅσ- σοις Διόθεν κάρανα. κρίνω δ' ἄφθονον ὄλβον· μήτ' εἴην πτολιπόρθης μήτ' οὖν αὐτὸς ἁλοὺς ὑπ' ἄλ- λων βίον κατίδοιμι.	The talk of the citizens, laden with anger, is heavy; he pays the debt of a curse the people have ratified. My anxiety waits to hear something wrapped in night. For the gods do not lose sight of those who kill many. The black Furies, in time, reverse the fortune of a man who prospers without justice, wear his life away and turn him to darkness; and once he's among the vanished, there is no help. To be praised beyond measure is heavy; for the lofty heads are struck by bolts from the eyes of Zeus. I choose a prosperity that wakes no envy. May I never be a sacker of cities, nor be captured myself and see my life spent under others.
475	πυρὸς δ' ὑπ' εὐαγγέλου πόλιν διήκει θοὰ βάξις· εἰ δ' ἐτήτυμος, τίς οἶδεν, ἤ τι θεῖόν ἐστί πῃ ψύθος.—	Sent by the fire of good news, a swift report runs through the city; but whether it's true, who knows, or some deception from the gods?—

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	τίς ὧδε παιδνὸς ἢ φρενῶν κεκομμένος, φλογὸς παραγγέλμασιν νέοις πυρωθέντα καρδίαν ἔπειτ' ἀλλαγᾷ λόγου καμεῖν;— γυναικὸς αἰχμᾷ πρέπει πρὸ τοῦ φανέντος χάριν ξυναινέσαι.— πιθανὸς ἄγαν ὁ θῆλυς ὅρος ἐπινέμεται ταχύπορος· ἀλλὰ ταχύμορον γυναικογήρυτον ὄλλυται κλέος.—	Who's so childish, or so knocked out of his wits, as to let his heart be fired by new messages of flame, and then, when the story changes, sicken?— It's just like a woman's temper to give thanks before the thing is clear.— Too credulous, a woman's mind, its boundary is quickly trespassed; but quick to die, a rumor spread by a woman perishes. —

SECOND EPISODE

A herald arrives and tells of the army's hardships and the storm that scattered the fleet.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
488	**CHORUS** τάχ' εἰσόμεσθα λαμπάδων φαεσφόρων φρυκτωριῶν τε καὶ πυρὸς παραλλαγάς, εἴτ' οὖν ἀληθεῖς εἴτ' ὀνειράτων δίκην τερπνὸν τόδ' ἐλθὸν φῶς ἐφήλωσεν φρένας. κήρυκ' ἀπ' ἀκτῆς τόνδ' ὁρῶ κατάσκιον κλάδοις ἐλαίας· μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι κάσις πηλοῦ ξύνουρος διψία κόνις τάδε, ὡς οὔτ' ἄναυδος οὔτε σοι δαίων φλόγα ὕλης ὀρείας σημανεῖ καπνῷ πυρός, ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ χαίρειν μᾶλλον ἐκβάξει λέγων— τὸν ἀντίον δὲ τοῖσδ' ἀποστέργω λόγον· εὖ γὰρ πρὸς εὖ φανεῖσι προσθήκη πέλοι.— ὅστις τάδ' ἄλλως τῇδ' ἐπεύχεται πόλει, αὐτὸς φρενῶν καρποῖτο τὴν ἁμαρτίαν.	**CHORUS** We'll soon know about these relays of light-bearing torches, these beacons and hand-ings-on of fire—whether they're true, or whether, like a dream, this light came bringing joy and fooled our minds. I see a herald coming from the shore, shaded with sprigs of olive. The thirsty dust, sister and neighbor of the mud, tells me this: he won't signal to you without a voice, or by kindling a flame of mountain wood with the smoke of fire. Either he'll speak out and give us more cause to rejoice, or—but I want no part of the opposite. May good be added to the good that's appeared.—Whoever prays for anything else for this city, may he reap the fruit of his mind's error himself.
503	**HERALD** ἰὼ πατρῷον οὖδας Ἀργείας χθονός, δεκάτου σε φέγγει τῷδ' ἀφικόμην ἔτους. πολλῶν ῥαγεισῶν ἐλπίδων μιᾶς τυχών. οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἠύχουν τῇδ' ἐν Ἀργείᾳ χθονὶ θανὼν μεθέξειν φιλτάτου τάφου μέρος. νῦν χαῖρε μὲν χθών, χαῖρε δ' ἡλίου φάος, ὕπατός τε χώρας Ζεύς, ὁ Πύθιός τ' ἄναξ, τόξοις ἰάπτων μηκέτ' εἰς ἡμᾶς βέλη· ἅλις παρὰ Σκάμανδρον ἦσθ' ἀνάρσιος· νῦν δ' αὖτε σωτὴρ ἴσθι καὶ παιώνιος, ἄναξ Ἄπολλον. τούς τ' ἀγωνίους θεοὺς πάντας προσαυδῶ, τόν τ' ἐμὸν τιμάορον Ἑρμῆν, φίλον κήρυκα, κηρύκων σέβας, ἥρως τε τοὺς πέμψαντας, εὐμενεῖς πάλιν στρατὸν δέχεσθαι τὸν λελειμμένον δορός.	**HERALD** Oh, soil of my fathers, land of Argos! I've come back to you in the light of this tenth year. Many hopes were shattered, but one I've won: I never dared pray that I'd die here in this Argive land and have my share of a grave in the soil I love best. Now greetings, land! Greetings, light of the sun, and Zeus, highest lord of the land, and the Pythian lord—may you shoot your arrows at us no longer. You were our enemy long enough beside the Scamander; now be our savior instead, and our healer, lord Apollo. And all the gods gathered here I greet, and my protector Hermes, beloved herald, whom heralds revere, and the heroes who sent us out: receive back kindly the army the spear has left.[8]
518	ἰὼ μέλαθρα βασιλέων, φίλαι στέγαι, σεμνοί τε θᾶκοι, δαίμονές τ' ἀντήλιοι,	Oh, palace of kings, dear house, holy seats, you gods who face the rising sun: if ever before, now

8 In the *Iliad*, Apollo, the Pythian god, sends a plague on the Greek camp at Troy with his arrows.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	εἴ που πάλαι, φαιδροῖσι τοισίδ' ὄμμασι δέξασθε κόσμῳ βασιλέα πολλῷ χρόνῳ. ἥκει γὰρ ὑμῖν φῶς ἐν εὐφρόνῃ φέρων καὶ τοῖσδ' ἅπασι κοινὸν Ἀγαμέμνων ἄναξ. ἀλλ' εὖ νιν ἀσπάσασθε, καὶ γὰρ οὖν πρέπει Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα τοῦ δικηφόρου Διὸς μακέλλῃ, τῇ κατείργασται πέδον. βωμοὶ δ' ἄιστοι καὶ θεῶν ἱδρύματα, καὶ σπέρμα πάσης ἐξαπόλλυται χθονός.	with these bright eyes welcome your king after so long. For he has come, bringing light in the darkness to you and to everyone here alike—lord Agamemnon. Give him a good welcome; it's only fitting, now that he has dug up Troy with the mattock of Zeus who brings justice, the tool that has worked her ground. The altars and the shrines of the gods are gone, and the seed of the whole land is being wiped out.
529	τοιόνδε Τροίᾳ περιβαλὼν ζευκτήριον ἄναξ Ἀτρείδης πρέσβυς εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ ἥκει, τίεσθαι δ' ἀξιώτατος βροτῶν τῶν νῦν· Πάρις γὰρ οὔτε συντελὴς πόλις ἐξεύχεται τὸ δρᾶμα τοῦ πάθους πλέον. ὀφλὼν γὰρ ἁρπαγῆς τε καὶ κλοπῆς δίκην τοῦ ῥυσίου θ' ἥμαρτε καὶ πανώλεθρον αὐτόχθονον πατρῷον ἔθρισεν δόμον. διπλᾶ δ' ἔτεισαν Πριαμίδαι θἀμάρτια.	That's the yoke he's thrown round Troy's neck, the lord, the elder son of Atreus, a fortunate man, and he has come home, the most worthy of honor of all mortals now living. For neither Paris nor the city that shared his guilt can boast that the deed outweighed what they've suffered. Convicted of abduction and theft, he lost what he'd seized, and mowed down his father's house, land and all, to utter ruin. The sons of Priam have paid twice over for their sins.
538	**CHORUS** κῆρυξ Ἀχαιῶν χαῖρε τῶν ἀπὸ στρατοῦ.	**CHORUS** Joy to you, herald of the Achaean army!
539	**HERALD** χαίρω γε· τεθνάναι δ' οὐκέτ' ἀντερῶ θεοῖς.	**HERALD** Joy I have! I wouldn't say no to the gods now, if they wanted me dead.
540	**CHORUS** ἔρως πατρῴας τῆσδε γῆς σ' ἐγύμνασεν;	**CHORUS** Did longing for this land of your fathers wear you out?
541	**HERALD** ὥστ' ἐνδακρύειν γ' ὄμμασιν χαρᾶς ὕπο.	**HERALD** So much that my eyes are wet with tears of joy.
542	**CHORUS** τερπνῆς ἄρ' ἦτε τῆσδ' ἐπήβολοι νόσου.	**CHORUS** Then it was a sweet sickness you'd all caught.
543	**HERALD** πῶς δή; διδαχθεὶς τοῦδε δεσπόσω λόγου.	**HERALD** How do you mean? Explain, and I'll get a grip on what you're saying.
544	**CHORUS** τῶν ἀντερώντων ἱμέρῳ πεπληγμένοι.	**CHORUS** You were struck with desire for those who desired you back.
545	**HERALD** ποθεῖν ποθοῦντα τήνδε γῆν στρατὸν λέγεις;	**HERALD** You mean this land longed for the army as the army longed for it?
546	**CHORUS** ὡς πόλλ' ἀμαυρᾶς ἐκ φρενός μ' ἀναστένειν	**CHORUS** So much that I often groaned from a darkened heart.
547	**HERALD** πόθεν τὸ δύσφρον τοῦτ' ἐπῆν θυμῷ στύγος;	**HERALD** Where did this gloomy dread come from that sat on your heart?
548	**CHORUS** πάλαι τὸ σιγᾶν φάρμακον βλάβης ἔχω.	**CHORUS** Long ago I found that silence is the cure for harm.
549	**HERALD** καὶ πῶς; ἀπόντων κοιράνων ἔτρεις τινάς;	**HERALD** What? With our masters away, were you afraid of someone?

	GREEK	ENGLISH
550	**CHORUS** ὡς νῦν, τὸ σὸν δή, καὶ θανεῖν πολλὴ χάρις.	**CHORUS** So much that now, to use your words, even dying would be a great joy.
551	**HERALD** εὖ γὰρ πέπρακται. ταῦτα δ' ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ τὰ μέν τις ἂν λέξειεν εὐπετῶς ἔχειν, τὰ δ' αὖτε κἀπίμομφα. τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν ἅπαντ' ἀπήμων τὸν δι' αἰῶνος χρόνον; μόχθους γὰρ εἰ λέγοιμι καὶ δυσαυλίας, σπαρνὰς παρήξεις καὶ κακοστρώτους, τί δ' οὐ στένοντες, οὐ λαχόντες ἥματος μέρος; τὰ δ' αὖτε χέρσῳ καὶ προσῆν πλέον στύγος· εὐναὶ γὰρ ἦσαν δηΐων πρὸς τείχεσιν· ἐξ οὐρανοῦ δὲ κἀπὸ γῆς λειμώνιαι δρόσοι κατεψάκαζον, ἔμπεδον σίνος ἐσθημάτων, τιθέντες ἔνθηρον τρίχα.	**HERALD** Yes, it's ended well. As for all that, over so long a time, some of it you might say turned out smoothly, and some of it again you could complain about. Who but the gods goes free of pain for all his life? If I told you of our toils and our rough lodgings, the cramped gangways and bad berths—what didn't we groan over, what day went by without its share? And then on land it was even more hateful. Our beds were right under the enemy's walls, and from the sky and up from the ground the meadow dews kept drizzling down on us, a constant ruin of our clothes, filling our hair with vermin.
563	χειμῶνα δ' εἰ λέγοι τις οἰωνοκτόνον, οἷον παρεῖχ' ἄφερτον Ἰδαία χιών, ἢ θάλπος, εὖτε πόντος ἐν μεσημβριναῖς κοίταις ἀκύμων νηνέμοις εὕδοι πεσών τί ταῦτα πενθεῖν δεῖ; παροίχεται πόνος· παροίχεται δέ, τοῖσι μὲν τεθνηκόσιν τὸ μήποτ' αὖθις μηδ' ἀναστῆναι μέλειν. τί τοὺς ἀναλωθέντας ἐν ψήφῳ λέγειν, τὸν ζῶντα δ' ἀλγεῖν χρὴ τύχης παλιγκότου; καὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν ξυμφορὰς καταξιῶ.	And if you told of the winter that killed the birds, the unbearable cold the snows of Ida sent, or the heat, when the sea sank, waveless and windless, into its noonday sleep—but why mourn all that? The toil is past. Past it is for the dead too, so that they'll never care to rise up again. Why count up the ones who were spent, and why should the living grieve at fortune's spite? I say to misfortunes: a long goodbye.
573	ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖσιν Ἀργείων στρατοῦ νικᾷ τὸ κέρδος, πῆμα δ' οὐκ ἀντιρρέπει· ὡς κομπάσαι τῷδ' εἰκὸς ἡλίου φάει ὑπὲρ θαλάσσης καὶ χθονὸς ποτωμένοις· "Τροίαν ἑλόντες δή ποτ' Ἀργείων στόλος θεοῖς λάφυρα ταῦτα τοῖς καθ' Ἑλλάδα δόμοις ἐπασσάλευσαν ἀρχαῖον γάνος." τοιαῦτα χρὴ κλύοντας εὐλογεῖν πόλιν καὶ τοὺς στρατηγούς· καὶ χάρις τιμήσεται Διὸς τόδ' ἐκπράξασα.πάντ' ἔχεις λόγον.	For those of us who are left of the Argive army, the gain wins out, and the pain doesn't weigh as much against it. So it's fitting to make this boast under the light of the sun, as our fame flies over sea and land: "The Argive force, having taken Troy at last, nailed up these spoils for the gods in their houses throughout Greece, a glory for ages to come." Those who hear it must praise the city and its generals; and the grace of Zeus that brought it about will be honored. There, you have the whole story.
583	**CHORUS** νικώμενος λόγοισιν οὐκ ἀναίνομαι· ἀεὶ γὰρ ἥβη τοῖς γέρουσιν εὖ μαθεῖν. δόμοις δὲ ταῦτα καὶ Κλυταιμήστρᾳ μέλειν εἰκὸς μάλιστα, σὺν δὲ πλουτίζειν ἐμέ.	**CHORUS** I'm won over by what you say, and I don't deny it; the old are always young enough to learn. But it's the house and Clytemnestra who should care about this most—though I share in the riches too.
587	**CLYTEMNESTRA** ἀνωλόλυξα μὲν πάλαι χαρᾶς ὕπο, ὅτ' ἦλθ' ὁ πρῶτος νύχιος ἄγγελος πυρός, φράζων ἅλωσιν Ἰλίου τ' ἀνάστασιν. καί τίς μ' ἐνίπτων εἶπε, "φρυκτωρῶν δία πεισθεῖσα Τροίαν νῦν πεπορθῆσθαι δοκεῖς; ἦ κάρτα πρὸς γυναικὸς αἴρεσθαι κέαρ." λόγοις τοιούτοις πλαγκτὸς οὖσ' ἐφαινόμην.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** I raised my cry of triumph long ago, for joy, when the first fiery messenger came in the night to announce that Troy was taken and overthrown. And someone scolded me: "So you trust beacon-fires and think Troy has fallen now? How like a woman, to let her heart get carried away." Talk like that made me look as if I'd lost my

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ὅμως δ' ἔθυον, καὶ γυναικείῳ νόμῳ ὀλολυγμὸν ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν κατὰ πτόλιν ἔλασκον εὐφημοῦντες ἐν θεῶν ἕδραις θυηφάγον κοιμῶντες εὐώδη φλόγα.	wits. Still, I went on sacrificing, and all through the city, here and there, following the women's custom, people raised the cry of triumph, with words of good omen, in the shrines of the gods, soothing the fragrant flame that feeds on incense.[9]
598	καὶ νῦν τὰ μάσσω μὲν τί δεῖ σέ μοι λέγειν; ἄνακτος αὐτοῦ πάντα πεύσομαι λόγον. ὅπως δ' ἄριστα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰδοῖον πόσιν σπεύσω πάλιν μολόντα δέξασθαι·—τί γὰρ γυναικὶ τούτου φέγγος ἥδιον δρακεῖν, ἀπὸ στρατείας ἀνδρὶ σώσαντος θεοῦ πύλας ἀνοῖξαι;—ταῦτ' ἀπάγγειλον πόσει· ἥκειν ὅπως τάχιστ' ἐράσμιον πόλει· γυναῖκα πιστὴν δ' ἐν δόμοις εὕροι μολὼν οἵαν περ οὖν ἔλειπε, δωμάτων κύνα ἐσθλὴν ἐκείνῳ, πολεμίαν τοῖς δύσφροσιν, καὶ τἄλλ' ὁμοίαν πάντα, σημαντήριον οὐδὲν διαφθείρασαν ἐν μήκει χρόνου. οὐδ' οἶδα τέρψιν οὐδ' ἐπίψογον φάτιν ἄλλου πρὸς ἀνδρὸς μᾶλλον ἢ χαλκοῦ βαφάς.	And now, what need is there for you to tell me the rest? I'll hear the whole story from the king himself. But I'll hurry to give my honored husband the best welcome on his return. For what day is sweeter for a woman to see than this, when she opens the gates to her husband and a god has brought him safe home from the war? Take this message to my husband: let him come as quickly as he can, the city's darling. And when he comes, may he find in his house a faithful wife, just as he left her, a watchdog of the house, loyal to him and hostile to those who wish him harm, the same in every other way, one who has broken no seal in all this length of time. I know no more of pleasure from another man, or of scandalous talk, than I know of dipping bronze.
613	**HERALD** τοιόσδ' ὁ κόμπος τῆς ἀληθείας γέμων / οὐκ αἰσχρὸς ὡς γυναικὶ γενναίᾳ λακεῖν.	**HERALD** A boast like that, so full of truth, is no shame for a noble woman to utter.
615	**CHORUS** αὕτη μὲν οὕτως εἶπε μανθάνοντί σοι τοροῖσιν ἑρμηνεῦσιν εὐπρεπῶς λόγον. σὺ δ' εἰπέ, κῆρυξ, Μενέλεων δὲ πεύθομαι. εἰ νόστιμός τε καὶ σεσωσμένος πάλιν ἥκει σὺν ὑμῖν, τῆσδε γῆς φίλον κράτος.	**CHORUS** That's how she has spoken to you, for your instruction: a fine-sounding speech, to anyone who can read it clearly. But you, herald, tell me—I'm asking about Menelaus—has he come back with you, safe and home again, this land's beloved power?
620	**HERALD** οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως λέξαιμι τὰ ψευδῆ καλὰ / ἐς τὸν πολὺν φίλοισι καρποῦσθαι χρόνον.	**HERALD** I can't tell lies that sound fine and have my friends enjoy them for long.
622	**CHORUS** πῶς δῆτ' ἂν εἰπὼν κεδνὰ τἀληθῆ τύχοις; / σχισθέντα δ' οὐκ εὔκρυπτα γίγνεται τάδε.	**CHORUS** Then how can you hit on news that's both good and true? When those two are split apart, it's hard to hide.
624	**HERALD** ἀνὴρ ἄφαντος ἐξ Ἀχαιικοῦ στρατοῦ, / αὐτός τε καὶ τὸ πλοῖον. οὐ ψευδῆ λέγω.	**HERALD** The man has vanished from the Achaean army, he and his ship with him. I'm not lying.
626	**CHORUS** πότερον ἀναχθεὶς ἐμφανῶς ἐξ Ἰλίου, / ἢ χεῖμα, κοινὸν ἄχθος, ἥρπασε στρατοῦ;	**CHORUS** Did he put out from Troy in plain sight, or did a storm, a trouble that struck everyone, snatch him away from the fleet?
628	**HERALD** ἔκυρσας ὥστε τοξότης ἄκρος σκοποῦ· / μακρὸν δὲ πῆμα συντόμως ἐφημίσω.	**HERALD** You've hit the target like a master archer, and put a long misery in a few words.
630		

9 The cry of triumph (the *ololygmos*) was a shrill ritual cry raised by women at sacrifices and moments of rejoicing.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	CHORUS πότερα γὰρ αὐτοῦ ζῶντος ἢ τεθνηκότος / φάτις πρὸς ἄλλων ναυτίλων ἐκλήζετο;	**CHORUS** And what did the other sailors say about him? Was he alive or dead?
632	**HERALD** οὐκ οἶδεν οὐδεὶς ὥστ' ἀπαγγεῖλαι τορῶς, / πλὴν τοῦ τρέφοντος Ἡλίου χθονὸς φύσιν.	**HERALD** No one knows enough to report it clearly, except the Sun, who nourishes the life of the earth.
634	**CHORUS** πῶς γὰρ λέγεις χειμῶνα ναυτικῷ στρατῷ / ἐλθεῖν τελευτῆσαί τε δαιμόνων κότῳ;	**CHORUS** Then tell me, how did the storm come on the fleet, and how did it end, by the anger of the gods?
636	**HERALD** εὔφημον ἦμαρ οὐ πρέπει κακαγγέλῳ γλώσσῃ μιαίνειν· χωρὶς ἡ τιμὴ θεῶν. ὅταν δ' ἀπευκτὰ πήματ' ἄγγελος πόλει στυγνῷ προσώπῳ πτωσίμου στρατοῦ φέρῃ, πόλει μὲν ἕλκος ἓν τὸ δήμιον τυχεῖν, πολλοὺς δὲ πολλῶν ἐξαγισθέντας δόμων ἄνδρας διπλῇ μάστιγι, τὴν Ἄρης φιλεῖ, δίλογχον ἄτην, φοινίαν ξυνωρίδα· τοιῶνδε μέντοι πημάτων σεσαγμένον πρέπει λέγειν παιᾶνα τόνδ' Ἐρινύων. σωτηρίων δὲ πραγμάτων εὐάγγελον ἥκοντα πρὸς χαίρουσαν εὐεστοῖ πόλιν, πῶς κεδνὰ τοῖς κακοῖσι συμμείξω, λέγων χειμῶν' Ἀχαιοῖς οὐκ ἀμήνιτον θεῶν; ξυνώμοσαν γάρ, ὄντες ἔχθιστοι τὸ πρίν, πῦρ καὶ θάλασσα, καὶ τὰ πίστ' ἐδειξάτην φθείροντε τὸν δύστηνον Ἀργείων στρατόν. ἐν νυκτὶ δυσκύμαντα δ' ὠρώρει κακά.	**HERALD** It isn't right to stain a day of good omen with a tongue that brings bad news. The honor we owe the gods belongs apart from that. When a messenger with a grim face brings a city the disaster it prayed never to hear, an army fallen, one wound to the city, a wound to the whole people, and many men from many homes offered up as victims to the double lash that Ares loves, ruin with two spears, a bloody pair in harness—a man loaded down with sorrows like those should sing this paean of the Furies. But when I come with good news of deliverance to a city rejoicing in its good fortune, how can I mix the good with the bad, and tell of a storm that struck the Achaeans, not without the anger of the gods? For fire and sea, the bitterest of enemies before, swore an alliance and proved their good faith by destroying the wretched army of the Argives. In the night, disaster rose with the heaving waves.
654	ναῦς γὰρ πρὸς ἀλλήλαισι Θρῃκιαι πνοαὶ ἤρεικον· αἱ δὲ κεροτυπούμεναι βίᾳ χειμῶνι τυφῶ σὺν ζάλῃ τ' ὀμβροκτύπῳ ᾤχοντ' ἄφαντοι ποιμένος κακοῦ στρόβῳ. ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνῆλθε λαμπρὸν ἡλίου φάος, ὁρῶμεν ἀνθοῦν πέλαγος Αἰγαῖον νεκροῖς ἀνδρῶν Ἀχαιῶν ναυτικοῖς τ' ἐρειπίοις. ἡμᾶς γε μὲν δὴ ναῦν τ' ἀκήρατον σκάφος ἤτοι τις ἐξέκλεψεν ἢ 'ξῃτήσατο θεός τις, οὐκ ἄνθρωπος, οἴακος θιγών. τύχη δὲ σωτὴρ ναῦν θέλουσ' ἐφέζετο, ὡς μήτ' ἐν ὅρμῳ κύματος ζάλην ἔχειν μήτ' ἐξοκεῖλαι πρὸς κραταίλεων χθόνα. ἔπειτα δ' Ἅιδην πόντιον πεφευγότες, λευκὸν κατ' ἦμαρ, οὐ πεποιθότες τύχῃ, ἐβουκολοῦμεν φροντίσιν νέον πάθος, στρατοῦ καμόντος καὶ κακῶς σποδουμένου.	Winds from Thrace smashed the ships against one another. Gored by each other's horns in the violence of the hurricane and the rain-lashed surf, they vanished from sight, sent spinning by an evil shepherd. When the bright light of the sun came up, we saw the Aegean sea blossoming with the bodies of Achaean men and the wreckage of ships. As for us, our ship, with its hull unharmed, was stolen away or begged off by someone—some god, not a man, with his hand on the tiller. And Fortune the savior chose to sit on our ship, so that it neither took the surge at anchor nor ran aground on the rocky coast. Then, having escaped the Hades of the sea, in the white light of day, not trusting our luck, we herded our new sorrow in our thoughts, the fleet battered and cruelly ground down.
671	καὶ νῦν ἐκείνων εἴ τίς ἐστιν ἐμπνέων, λέγουσιν ἡμᾶς ὡς ὀλωλότας, τί μή; ἡμεῖς τ' ἐκείνους ταὔτ' ἔχειν δοξάζομεν.	And now, if any of them is still breathing, they speak of us as dead—why wouldn't they? And we imagine the same about them. May it turn out for

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	γένοιτο δ' ὡς ἄριστα. Μενέλεων γὰρ οὖν πρῶτόν τε καὶ μάλιστα προσδόκα μολεῖν. εἰ γοῦν τις ἀκτὶς ἡλίου νιν ἱστορεῖ καὶ ζῶντα καὶ βλέποντα, μηχαναῖς Διός, οὔπω θέλοντος ἐξαναλῶσαι γένος, ἐλπίς τις αὐτὸν πρὸς δόμους ἥξειν πάλιν. τοσαῦτ' ἀκούσας ἴσθι τἀληθῆ κλύων.	the best. As for Menelaus, expect him first and above all to come. At any rate, if some ray of the sun finds him alive and looking on the light, by the devising of Zeus, who doesn't yet mean to wipe out the family, there's some hope he'll come home again. You've heard this much; know that what you've heard is the truth.

SECOND STASIMON

The chorus sings of Helen as ruin, of a lion cub reared in the house, and of inherited arrogance.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
681	**CHORUS** τίς ποτ' ὠνόμαζεν ὧδ' ἐς τὸ πᾶν ἐτητύμως— μή τις ὄντιν' οὐχ ὁρῶμεν προνοί- αισι τοῦ πεπρωμένου γλῶσσαν ἐν τύχᾳ νέμων;— τὰν δορίγαμβρον ἀμφινει- κῆ θ' Ἑλέναν; ἐπεὶ πρεπόντως ἑλένας, ἕλανδρος, ἑλέ- πτολις, ἐκ τῶν ἁβροτίμων προκαλυμμάτων ἔπλευσε ζεφύρου γίγαντος αὔρᾳ, πολύανδροί τε φεράσπιδες κυναγοὶ κατ' ἴχνος πλατᾶν ἄφαντον κελσάντων Σιμόεντος ἀ- κτὰς ἐπ' ἀεξιφύλλους δι' ἔριν αἱματόεσσαν.	**CHORUS** Who was it who named her so utterly true— some power we cannot see, guiding his tongue to the mark by foreknowledge of what was fated?— the spear-won bride, fought over on both sides, Helen? For true to her name, taker of ships, taker of men, taker of cities, she sailed out from her delicate, costly curtains on the breath of the giant West Wind, and a host of shield-bearing huntsmen followed the vanished track of oars of those who had beached their ships on the leafy banks of Simois, for the sake of bloody strife.[10]
699	Ἰλίῳ δὲ κῆδος ὀρθ- ώνυμον τελεσσίφρων μῆνις ἤλασεν, τραπέζας ἀτί- μωσιν ὑστέρῳ χρόνῳ καὶ ξυνεστίου Διὸς πρασσομένα τὸ νυμφότι- μον μέλος ἐκφάτως τίοντας, ὑμέναιον, ὃς τότ' ἐπέρ- ρεπεν γαμβροῖσιν ἀείδειν· μεταμανθάνουσα δ' ὕμνον Πριάμου πόλις γεραιὰ πολύθρηνον μέγα που στένει κικλήσκου- σα Πάριν τὸν αἰνόλεκτρον, παμπορθῆ πολύθρηνον αἰῶνα διαὶ πολιτᾶν μέλεον αἶμ' ἀνατλᾶσα.	And on Troy the Wrath that works its purpose drove a marriage-bond rightly named for grief, exacting payment in later time for the dishonor done to the table and to Zeus who guards the hearth from those who loudly honored the bride's song, the wedding hymn that fell that day to the bridegroom's kin to sing. But Priam's ancient city, learning a different hymn, one full of lament, groans loud, I think, calling Paris the man of the fatal marriage-bed, for she has endured a life of lament and utter ruin for the pitiful blood of her citizens.[11]
716	ἔθρεψεν δὲ λέοντος ἶ- νιν δόμοις ἀγάλακτον οὔ-	Just so a man reared in his house a lion's cub, robbed of its milk,

10 The chorus puns on Helen's name and the Greek root *hel-*, "take, destroy."
11 The Greek word *kēdos* means both "marriage-tie" and "grief."

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	τως ἀνὴρ φιλόμαστον, ἐν βιότου προτελείοις ἄμερον, εὐφιλόπαιδα καὶ γεραροῖς ἐπίχαρτον. πολέα δ' ἔσχ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις νεοτρόφου τέκνου δίκαν, φαιδρωπὸς ποτὶ χεῖρα σαί- νων τε γαστρὸς ἀνάγκαις.	still wanting the breast. In the first rites of its life it was gentle, fond of the children, a delight to the old. Often he held it in his arms like a newborn baby, its eyes shining toward his hand, fawning when its belly drove it.
727	χρονισθεὶς δ' ἀπέδειξεν ἦ- θος τὸ πρὸς τοκέων· χάριν γὰρ τροφεῦσιν ἀμείβων μηλοφόνοισιν ἐν ἄταις δαῖτ' ἀκέλευστος ἔτευξεν· αἵματι δ' οἶκος ἐφύρθη, ἄμαχον ἄλγος οἰκέταις μέγα σίνος πολυκτόνον. ἐκ θεοῦ δ' ἱερεύς τις ἄ- τας δόμοις προσεθρέφθη.	But in time it showed the nature it had from its parents. Repaying its fosterers with ruinous slaughter of their flocks, it made a feast unbidden; the house was fouled with blood, a grief past fighting for the household, a great havoc of many deaths. By a god's will a priest of ruin was reared in the house.
737	πάραυτα δ' ἐλθεῖν ἐς Ἰλίου πόλιν λέγοιμ' ἂν φρόνημα μὲν νηνέμου γαλάνας, ἀκασκαῖον δ' ἄγαλμα πλούτου, μαλθακὸν ὀμμάτων βέλος, δηξίθυμον ἔρωτος ἄνθος. παρακλίνασ' ἐπέκρανεν δὲ γάμου πικρὰς τελευτάς, δύσεδρος καὶ δυσόμιλος συμένα Πριαμίδαισιν, πομπᾷ Διὸς ξενίου, νυμφόκλαυτος Ἐρινύς.	So, I would say, there came at first to the city of Troy a spirit of windless calm, a gentle ornament of wealth, a soft arrow of the eyes, a flower of desire that stings the heart. But she swerved aside and brought her marriage to a bitter end, a ruinous guest, a ruinous companion, rushing on the sons of Priam under escort of Zeus, god of guests: a Fury, bringing tears to brides.
750	παλαίφατος δ' ἐν βροτοῖς γέρων λόγος τέτυκται, μέγαν τελε- σθέντα φωτὸς ὄλβον τεκνοῦσθαι μηδ' ἄπαιδα θνήσκειν, ἐκ δ' ἀγαθᾶς τύχας γένει βλαστάνειν ἀκόρεστον οἰζύν. δίχα δ' ἄλλων μονόφρων εἰ- μί· τὸ δυσσεβὲς γὰρ ἔργον μετὰ μὲν πλείονα τίκτει, σφετέρᾳ δ' εἰκότα γέννᾳ. οἴκων δ' ἄρ' εὐθυδίκων καλλίπαις πότμος αἰεί.	There is an old saying, spoken long ago among mortals: that a man's great prosperity, once full-grown, has children and does not die childless, and from good fortune there springs for his family insatiable misery. But I hold my own mind, apart from others. It is the impious deed that breeds more after it, like its own stock; but a house that keeps justice straight has a fate blessed in its children always.
763	φιλεῖ δὲ τίκτειν Ὕβρις μὲν παλαιὰ νεά- ζουσαν ἐν κακοῖς βροτῶν ὕβριν τότ' ἢ τόθ', ὅτε τὸ κύρ-	Old Arrogance is apt to breed a young arrogance, running riot in the miseries of mortals, sooner or later, when the appointed

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ιον μόλῃ φάος τόκου, δαίμονά τε τὰν ἄμαχον ἀπόλεμ- ον, ἀνίερον Θράσος, μελαί- νας μελάθροισιν Ἄτας, εἰδομένας τοκεῦσιν.	day of its birth arrives, and with it the spirit no one can fight or war against, unholy Daring, black Ruin for the house, both like the parents that bore them.
772	Δίκα δὲ λάμπει μὲν ἐν δυσκάπνοις δώμασιν, τὸν δ' ἐναίσιμον τίει. τὰ χρυσόπαστα δ' ἔδεθλα σὺν πίνῳ χερῶν παλιντρόποις ὄμμασι λιποῦσ', ὅσια προσέμολ- ε, δύναμιν οὐ σέβουσα πλού- του παράσημον αἴνῳ· πᾶν δ' ἐπὶ τέρμα νωμᾷ.	But Justice shines in smoke-blackened dwellings and honors the righteous life. Gold-spangled mansions where hands are filthy she leaves with averted eyes, and goes to what is pure, paying no reverence to the power of wealth stamped false with praise. And she steers all things to their end.

THIRD EPISODE

Agamemnon returns with Cassandra; Clytemnestra persuades him to walk into the palace on purple cloths.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
782	**CHORUS** ἄγε δή, βασιλεῦ, Τροίας πτολίπορθ', Ἀτρέως γένεθλον, πῶς σε προσείπω; πῶς σε σεβίζω μήθ' ὑπεράρας μήθ' ὑποκάμψας καιρὸν χάριτος; πολλοὶ δὲ βροτῶν τὸ δοκεῖν εἶναι	**CHORUS** Come then, my king, sacker of Troy, offspring of Atreus, how shall I greet you? How shall I honor you without overshooting or falling short of the right measure of welcome? Many mortals prize the look of things
789	προτίουσι δίκην παραβάντες. τῷ δυσπραγοῦντι δ' ἐπιστενάχειν πᾶς τις ἕτοιμος· δῆγμα δὲ λύπης οὐδὲν ἐφ' ἧπαρ προσικνεῖται· καὶ ξυγχαίρουσιν ὁμοιοπρεπεῖς ἀγέλαστα πρόσωπα βιαζόμενοι. ὅστις δ' ἀγαθὸς προβατογνώμων, οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν ὄμματα φωτός, τὰ δοκοῦντ' εὔφρονος ἐκ διανοίας ὑδαρεῖ σαίνειν φιλότητι. σὺ δέ μοι τότε μὲν στέλλων στρατιὰν Ἑλένης ἕνεκ', οὐ γάρ σ' ἐπικεύσω, κάρτ' ἀπομούσως ἦσθα γεγραμμένος, οὐδ' εὖ πραπίδων οἴακα νέμων θράσος ἐκ θυσιῶν ἀνδράσι θνήσκουσι κομίζων. νῦν δ' οὐκ ἀπ' ἄκρας φρενὸς οὐδ' ἀφίλως … εὔφρων πόνος εὖ τελέσασιν. γνώσῃ δὲ χρόνῳ διαπευθόμενος	above the truth, and overstep justice. Everyone is ready to groan along with the man in misfortune, but no sting of grief gets through to the heart. And they share in his joy, putting on a look to match, forcing unsmiling faces into smiles. But a man who is a good judge of his flock cannot be fooled by the eyes of someone who seems to be loyal at heart but fawns with watery friendship. You, back then, when you were mustering the army for Helen's sake—I won't hide it from you— were pictured in my mind in ugly colors, not steering the tiller of your wits well, seeking through sacrifice to bring back courage to men who were dying. But now, not from the surface of my heart, nor un-

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	τόν τε δικαίως καὶ τὸν ἀκαίρως πόλιν οἰκουροῦντα πολιτῶν.	kindly, ... the toil is a joy to those who have finished it well. In time, by asking, you will come to know which of the citizens has kept house in the city justly, and which unfittingly.
810	**AGAMEMNON** πρῶτον μὲν Ἄργος καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχωρίους δίκη προσειπεῖν, τοὺς ἐμοὶ μεταιτίους νόστου δικαίων θ' ὧν ἐπραξάμην πόλιν Πριάμου· δίκας γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γλώσσης θεοὶ κλύοντες ἀνδροθνῆτας Ἰλίου φθορὰς ἐς αἱματηρὸν τεῦχος οὐ διχορρόπως ψήφους ἔθεντο· τῷ δ' ἐναντίῳ κύτει ἐλπὶς προσῄει χειρὸς οὐ πληρουμένῳ. καπνῷ δ' ἁλοῦσα νῦν ἔτ' εὔσημος πόλις. ἄτης θύελλαι ζῶσι· συνθνῄσκουσα δὲ σποδὸς προπέμπει πίονας πλούτου πνοάς. τούτων θεοῖσι χρὴ πολύμνηστον χάριν τίνειν, ἐπείπερ καὶ πάγας ὑπερκότους ἐφραξάμεσθα καὶ γυναικὸς οὕνεκα πόλιν διημάθυνεν Ἀργεῖον δάκος, ἵππου νεοσσός, ἀσπιδηφόρος λεώς, πήδημ' ὀρούσας ἀμφὶ Πλειάδων δύσιν· ὑπερθορὼν δὲ πύργον ὠμηστὴς λέων ἄδην ἔλειξεν αἵματος τυραννικοῦ.	**AGAMEMNON** First it is right that I greet Argos and the gods of the land, who share with me the credit for my homecoming and for the justice I exacted from Priam's city. For the gods heard the case—not from anyone's tongue—and without wavering cast their votes into the urn of blood for the death of men and the destruction of Troy. To the opposite vessel only the hope of a hand drew near, and it was never filled. Even now the captured city is marked by its smoke. The storm-blasts of ruin are alive, and the ash, dying along with it, sends up rich gusts of wealth. For this we must pay the gods thanks that will be long remembered, since we have hemmed the city in with savage snares, and for a woman's sake the Argive beast ground it to dust, the brood of the horse, the shield-bearing host, launching its leap about the setting of the Pleiades. Vaulting over the wall, a ravening lion licked its fill of royal blood.[12]
829	θεοῖς μὲν ἐξέτεινα φροίμιον τόδε· τὰ δ' ἐς τὸ σὸν φρόνημα, μέμνημαι κλύων, καὶ φημὶ ταὐτὰ καὶ συνήγορόν μ' ἔχεις. παύροις γὰρ ἀνδρῶν ἐστι συγγενὲς τόδε, φίλον τὸν εὐτυχοῦντ' ἄνευ φθόνου σέβειν. δύσφρων γὰρ ἰὸς καρδίαν προσήμενος ἄχθος διπλοίζει τῷ πεπαμένῳ νόσον, τοῖς τ' αὐτὸς αὑτοῦ πήμασιν βαρύνεται καὶ τὸν θυραῖον ὄλβον εἰσορῶν στένει. εἰδὼς λέγοιμ' ἄν, εὖ γὰρ ἐξεπίσταμαι ὁμιλίας κάτοπτρον, εἴδωλον σκιᾶς δοκοῦντας εἶναι κάρτα πρευμενεῖς ἐμοί. μόνος δ' Ὀδυσσεύς, ὅσπερ οὐχ ἑκὼν ἔπλει, ζευχθεὶς ἕτοιμος ἦν ἐμοὶ σειραφόρος· εἴτ' οὖν θανόντος εἴτε καὶ ζῶντος πέρι λέγω.	That is the prelude I've spun out for the gods. As for what you think, I heard it and I remember, and I say the same; you have me on your side. Few men have it in their nature to honor, without envy, a friend who prospers. The poison of ill will settles on the heart and doubles the burden of the man who has the sickness: he's weighed down by his own sorrows, and groans when he sees another man's good fortune. I can speak from experience, for I know very well that those who seemed most loyal to me are a mirror of companionship, the ghost of a shadow. Only Odysseus, the one who sailed against his will, once he was yoked, was a ready trace-horse for me—whether I'm speaking of a man who is dead or alive.[13]
844	τὰ δ' ἄλλα πρὸς πόλιν τε καὶ θεοὺς κοινοὺς ἀγῶνας θέντες ἐν πανηγύρει βουλευσόμεσθα. καὶ τὸ μὲν καλῶς ἔχον ὅπως χρονίζον εὖ μενεῖ βουλευτέον·	For the rest, matters concerning the city and the gods, we will call public assemblies and deliberate with everyone gathered. What is in good shape, we must plan how to keep that way for a long time.

12 The "brood of the horse" is the Greek warriors who hid inside the wooden horse to get into Troy.
13 Odysseus had tried to avoid joining the expedition to Troy by pretending to be mad.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ὅτῳ δὲ καὶ δεῖ φαρμάκων παιωνίων, ἤτοι κέαντες ἢ τεμόντες εὐφρόνως πειρασόμεσθα πῆμ' ἀποστρέψαι νόσου.	And wherever there is need of healing remedies, we will try, by burning or by cutting with kind intent, to turn back the harm of the disease.
851	νῦν δ' ἐς μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐφεστίους ἐλθὼν θεοῖσι πρῶτα δεξιώσομαι, οἵπερ πρόσω πέμψαντες ἤγαγον πάλιν. νίκη δ' ἐπείπερ ἕσπετ', ἐμπέδως μένοι.	Now I will go into my palace and to my hearth, and first greet the gods who sent me out and have brought me back again. Victory has followed me; may it stay with me firmly.
855	CLYTEMNESTRA ἄνδρες πολῖται, πρέσβος Ἀργείων τόδε, οὐκ αἰσχυνοῦμαι τοὺς φιλάνορας τρόπους λέξαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐν χρόνῳ δ' ἀποφθίνει τὸ τάρβος ἀνθρώποισιν. οὐκ ἄλλων πάρα μαθοῦσ', ἐμαυτῆς δύσφορον λέξω βίον τοσόνδ' ὅσον περ οὗτος ἦν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ. τὸ μὲν γυναῖκα πρῶτον ἄρσενος δίχα ἧσθαι δόμοις ἔρημον ἔκπαγλον κακόν, πολλὰς κλύουσαν κληδόνας παλιγκότους· καὶ τὸν μὲν ἥκειν, τὸν δ' ἐπεσφέρειν κακοῦ κάκιον ἄλλο πῆμα, λάσκοντας δόμοις. καὶ τραυμάτων μὲν εἰ τόσων ἐτύγχανεν ἀνὴρ ὅδ', ὡς πρὸς οἶκον ὠχετεύετο φάτις, τέτρηται δικτύου πλέον λέγειν.	CLYTEMNESTRA Citizens, elders of Argos gathered here, I won't be ashamed to tell you of my love for my husband. With time, people lose their fear. I didn't learn this from others: I'll tell you of my own unbearable life all the while this man was under the walls of Troy. First, for a woman to sit at home alone, without her man, is a terrible misery, hearing one cruel rumor after another, one man arriving, and then another bringing in worse news on top of bad, shouting it to the house. And if this man had received as many wounds as the rumors channeled to his house, he'd be riddled with more holes than a net.
869	εἰ δ' ἦν τεθνηκώς, ὡς ἐπλήθυον λόγοι, τρισώματός τἂν Γηρυὼν ὁ δεύτερος χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξηύχει λαβεῖν, ἅπαξ ἑκάστῳ κατθανὼν μορφώματι. τοιῶνδ' ἕκατι κληδόνων παλιγκότων πολλὰς ἄνωθεν ἀρτάνας ἐμῆς δέρης ἔλυσαν ἄλλοι πρὸς βίαν λελημμένης. ἐκ τῶνδέ τοι παῖς ἐνθάδ' οὐ παραστατεῖ, ἐμῶν τε καὶ σῶν κύριος πιστωμάτων, ὡς χρῆν, Ὀρέστης· μηδὲ θαυμάσῃς τόδε. τρέφει γὰρ αὐτὸν εὐμενὴς δορύξενος Στρόφιος ὁ Φωκεύς, ἀμφίλεκτα πήματα ἐμοὶ προφωνῶν, τόν θ' ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ σέθεν κίνδυνον, εἴ τε δημόθρους ἀναρχία βουλὴν καταρρίψειεν, ὥστε σύγγονον βροτοῖσι τὸν πεσόντα λακτίσαι πλέον. τοιάδε μέντοι σκῆψις οὐ δόλον φέρει.	If he had died as often as the stories multiplied, he'd have been a second Geryon with three bodies, boasting that he'd taken a triple cloak of earth, dying once in each of his forms. Because of these cruel rumors, others have often loosened the noose hung high around my neck, held fast as I was. That is why our son isn't standing here, as he should be—the pledge of my faith and yours—Orestes. Don't be surprised at this. A kind friend and ally of ours is raising him, Strophius of Phocis, who warned me of trouble on two sides: your danger under the walls of Troy, and the chance that the clamor of the people, with no one ruling, might overthrow the council, since it's in men's nature to kick the man who is down even harder. An excuse like this, believe me, carries no deceit.[14]
887	ἔμοιγε μὲν δὴ κλαυμάτων ἐπίσσυτοι πηγαὶ κατεσβήκασιν, οὐδ' ἔνι σταγών. ἐν ὀψικοίτοις δ' ὄμμασιν βλάβας ἔχω τὰς ἀμφί σοι κλαίουσα λαμπτηρουχίας ἀτημελήτους αἰέν. ἐν δ' ὀνείρασιν λεπταῖς ὑπαὶ κώνωπος ἐξηγειρόμην ῥιπαῖσι θωύσσοντος, ἀμφί σοι πάθη ὁρῶσα πλείω τοῦ ξυνεύδοντος χρόνου.	As for me, the rushing springs of my tears have run dry; there isn't a drop left in them. My eyes are damaged from late nights, weeping for the beacons meant for you, always neglected. And in my dreams I'd be woken by the faint whir of a buzzing gnat, seeing more sufferings happen to you than the time that slept beside me could hold.

14 Geryon was a three-bodied monster killed by Heracles; the "cloak of earth" is a grave.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
895	νῦν ταῦτα πάντα τλᾶσ' ἀπενθήτῳ φρενὶ λέγοιμ' ἂν ἄνδρα τόνδε τῶν σταθμῶν κύνα, σωτῆρα ναὸς πρότονον, ὑψηλῆς στέγης στῦλον ποδήρη, μονογενὲς τέκνον πατρί, καὶ γῆν φανεῖσαν ναυτίλοις παρ' ἐλπίδα, κάλλιστον ἦμαρ εἰσιδεῖν ἐκ χείματος, ὁδοιπόρῳ διψῶντι πηγαῖον ῥέος· τερπνὸν δὲ τἀναγκαῖον ἐκφυγεῖν ἅπαν. τοιοῖσδέ τοί νιν ἀξιῶ προσφθέγμασιν. φθόνος δ' ἀπέστω· πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ πρὶν κακὰ ἠνειχόμεσθα. νῦν δέ μοι, φίλον κάρα, ἔκβαιν' ἀπήνης τῆσδε, μὴ χαμαὶ τιθεὶς τὸν σὸν πόδ', ὦναξ, Ἰλίου πορθήτορα.	Now, having endured all this, with a heart free of grief, I would call this man the watchdog of the farmstead, the forestay that saves the ship, the firm-planted pillar of a lofty roof, a father's only child, land sighted by sailors beyond all hope, the loveliest day to see after a storm, a flowing spring to a thirsty traveler. It is sweet to escape every constraint. These are the greetings I think he deserves. And let envy keep away, for we've borne many sorrows before. Now, my dearest, step down from this carriage—but don't set on the ground, my lord, that foot of yours that trampled Troy.
908	δμῳαί, τί μέλλεθ', αἷς ἐπέσταλται τέλος πέδον κελεύθου στρωννύναι πετάσμασιν; εὐθὺς γενέσθω πορφυρόστρωτος πόρος ἐς δῶμ' ἄελπτον ὡς ἂν ἡγῆται δίκη. τὰ δ' ἄλλα φροντὶς οὐχ ὕπνῳ νικωμένη θήσει δικαίως σὺν θεοῖς εἱμαρμένα.	Serving women, why are you waiting? You've been given the task of spreading tapestries over the ground of his path. At once let his way be strewn with purple, so that Justice may lead him into a home he never hoped to see. The rest my care, which sleep does not overcome, will set right, with the gods' help, as fate has ordained.
914	AGAMEMNON Λήδας γένεθλον, δωμάτων ἐμῶν φύλαξ, ἀπουσίᾳ μὲν εἶπας εἰκότως ἐμῇ· μακρὰν γὰρ ἐξέτεινας· ἀλλ' ἐναισίμως αἰνεῖν, παρ' ἄλλων χρὴ τόδ' ἔρχεσθαι γέρας· καὶ τἆλλα μὴ γυναικὸς ἐν τρόποις ἐμὲ ἄβρυνε, μηδὲ βαρβάρου φωτὸς δίκην χαμαιπετὲς βόαμα προσχάνῃς ἐμοί, μηδ' εἵμασι στρώσασ' ἐπίφθονον πόρον τίθει· θεούς τοι τοῖσδε τιμαλφεῖν χρεών· ἐν ποικίλοις δὲ θνητὸν ὄντα κάλλεσιν βαίνειν ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐδαμῶς ἄνευ φόβου. λέγω κατ' ἄνδρα, μὴ θεόν, σέβειν ἐμέ. χωρὶς ποδοψήστρων τε καὶ τῶν ποικίλων κληδὼν αὐτεῖ· καὶ τὸ μὴ κακῶς φρονεῖν θεοῦ μέγιστον δῶρον. ὀλβίσαι δὲ χρὴ βίον τελευτήσαντ' ἐν εὐεστοῖ φίλῃ. εἰ πάντα δ' ὡς πράσσοιμ' ἄν, εὐθαρσὴς ἐγώ.	AGAMEMNON Daughter of Leda, guardian of my house, you've made a speech to suit my absence: you stretched it out long. But praise as it should be given—that honor ought to come from others. And for the rest, don't pamper me in a woman's way, and don't grovel and gape your cries at me the way a foreigner would, and don't strew my path with cloths and draw down envy on it. It's the gods we should honor with these things. For me, a mortal, to walk on embroidered beauties is not possible without fear. I tell you, revere me as a man, not as a god. My fame cries out without any doormats and embroideries, and not to think foolishly is a god's greatest gift. Call a man happy only when he has ended his life in the prosperity he loves. If I could act like this in everything, I'd have nothing to fear.
931	CLYTEMNESTRA καὶ μὴν τόδ' εἰπὲ μὴ παρὰ γνώμην ἐμοί.	CLYTEMNESTRA Now tell me this, and tell me what you really think.
932	AGAMEMNON γνώμην μὲν ἴσθι μὴ διαφθεροῦντ' ἐμέ.	AGAMEMNON What I really think, believe me, I won't corrupt.
933	CLYTEMNESTRA ηὔξω θεοῖς δείσας ἂν ὧδ' ἔρδειν τάδε.	CLYTEMNESTRA Might you have vowed to the gods, in some moment of fear, to do this?
934	AGAMEMNON εἴπερ τις, εἰδώς γ' εὖ τόδ' ἐξεῖπον τέλος.	AGAMEMNON Yes, if someone who really knew had prescribed it, I'd have declared this rite.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
935	**CLYTEMNESTRA** τί δ' ἂν δοκεῖ σοι Πρίαμος, εἰ τάδ' ἤνυσεν;	**CLYTEMNESTRA** And what do you think Priam would have done, if he'd won what you have?
936	**AGAMEMNON** ἐν ποικίλοις ἂν κάρτα μοι βῆναι δοκεῖ.	**AGAMEMNON** He'd have walked on embroideries, I'm quite sure.
937	**CLYTEMNESTRA** μή νυν τὸν ἀνθρώπειον αἰδεσθῇς ψόγον.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Then don't be ashamed of what men may say against you.
938	**AGAMEMNON** φήμη γε μέντοι δημόθρους μέγα σθένει.	**AGAMEMNON** And yet what the people say has great power.
939	**CLYTEMNESTRA** ὁ δ' ἀφθόνητός γ' οὐκ ἐπίζηλος πέλει.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** But no one envies a man who isn't worth envying.
940	**AGAMEMNON** οὔτοι γυναικός ἐστιν ἱμείρειν μάχης.	**AGAMEMNON** It isn't a woman's part to be eager for a fight.
941	**CLYTEMNESTRA** τοῖς δ' ὀλβίοις γε καὶ τὸ νικᾶσθαι πρέπει.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** But for the fortunate, even being beaten is becoming.
942	**AGAMEMNON** ἦ καὶ σὺ νίκην τήνδε δήριος τίεις;	**AGAMEMNON** Do you really value winning this contest so much?
943	**CLYTEMNESTRA** πιθοῦ· κράτος μέντοι πάρες γ' ἑκὼν ἐμοί.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Do as I say. Yield the victory to me—of your own free will.
944	**AGAMEMNON** ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι ταῦθ', ὑπαί τις ἀρβύλας λύοι τάχος, πρόδουλον ἔμβασιν ποδός. καὶ τοῖσδέ μ' ἐμβαίνονθ' ἁλουργέσιν θεῶν μή τις πρόσωθεν ὄμματος βάλοι φθόνος. πολλὴ γὰρ αἰδὼς δωματοφθορεῖν ποσὶν φθείροντα πλοῦτον ἀργυρωνήτους θ' ὑφάς.	**AGAMEMNON** Well, if you're set on it, let someone quickly untie my shoes, the slaves my feet tread in. And as I walk on these sea-purple fabrics, may no envy strike me from the eye of the gods far off. I feel deep shame at ruining the house beneath my feet, wasting its wealth and its weavings bought with silver.
950	τούτων μὲν οὕτω· τὴν ξένην δὲ πρευμενῶς τήνδ' ἐσκόμιζε· τὸν κρατοῦντα μαλθακῶς θεὸς πρόσωθεν εὐμενῶς προσδέρκεται. ἑκὼν γὰρ οὐδεὶς δουλίῳ χρῆται ζυγῷ. αὕτη δὲ πολλῶν χρημάτων ἐξαίρετον ἄνθος, στρατοῦ δώρημ', ἐμοὶ ξυνέσπετο.	So much for that. This foreign woman—take her inside kindly. The god looks from afar with favor on the one who uses his power gently. No one wears the yoke of slavery willingly. She is the choice flower of all our treasure, the army's gift to me, and she has come with me.
956	ἐπεὶ δ' ἀκούειν σοῦ κατέστραμμαι τάδε, / εἶμ' ἐς δόμων μέλαθρα πορφύρας πατῶν.	And since I've been brought around to listen to you in this, I'll go into the halls of my house, treading on purple.
958	**CLYTEMNESTRA** ἔστιν θάλασσα, τίς δέ νιν κατασβέσει; τρέφουσα πολλῆς πορφύρας ἰσάργυρον κηκῖδα παγκαίνιστον, εἱμάτων βαφάς. οἶκος δ' ὑπάρχει τῶνδε σὺν θεοῖς ἅλις ἔχειν· πένεσθαι δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται δόμος. πολλῶν πατησμὸν δ' εἱμάτων ἂν ηὐξάμην,	**CLYTEMNESTRA** There is the sea—and who will ever drain it dry?—breeding the ever-renewed ooze of so much purple, worth its weight in silver, to dye our garments. And our house, thanks to the gods, has plenty of these. This house doesn't know what it is to be poor. I would have vowed to trample many garments, had it been prescribed

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	δόμοισι προυνεχθέντος ἐν χρηστηρίοις, ψυχῆς κόμιστρα τῆσδε μηχανωμένῃ. ῥίζης γὰρ οὔσης φυλλὰς ἵκετ' ἐς δόμους, σκιὰν ὑπερτείνασα σειρίου κυνός. καὶ σοῦ μολόντος δωματῖτιν ἑστίαν, θάλπος μὲν ἐν χειμῶνι σημαίνεις μολόν· ὅταν δὲ τεύχῃ Ζεὺς ἀπ' ὄμφακος πικρᾶς οἶνον, τότ' ἤδη ψῦχος ἐν δόμοις πέλει, ἀνδρὸς τελείου δῶμ' ἐπιστρωφωμένου. Ζεῦ, Ζεῦ τέλειε, τὰς ἐμὰς εὐχὰς τέλει· μέλοι δέ τοι σοὶ τῶν περ ἂν μέλλῃς τελεῖν.	for the house by oracles, when I was contriving a ransom for this life. For while the root lives, the foliage comes back to the house, spreading its shade over it against the Dog Star. And now that you've come to the hearth of your home, you signal warmth come in winter; and when Zeus makes wine from the bitter grape, then there is coolness in the house at last, when the man who brings fulfillment walks his home. Zeus, Zeus, Fulfiller, fulfill my prayers! And take thought for what you mean to fulfill.

THIRD STASIMON

The chorus cannot shake off a foreboding of disaster.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
975	**CHORUS** τίπτε μοι τόδ' ἐμπέδως δεῖμα προστατήριον καρδίας τερασκόπου ποτᾶται, μαντιπολεῖ δ' ἀκέλευστος ἄμισθος ἀοιδά, οὐδ' ἀποπτύσαι δίκαν δυσκρίτων ὀνειράτων θάρσος εὐπειθὲς ἴ- ζει φρενὸς φίλον θρόνον; χρόνος δ' ἐπὶ πρυμνησίων ξυνεμβολαῖς ψαμμί' ἀκτᾶς παρή- μησεν, εὖθ' ὑπ' Ἴλιον ὦρτο ναυβάτας στρατός.	**CHORUS** Why does this fear keep hovering so steadily before my heart that reads the signs? Why does my song, unbidden and unpaid, play the prophet? Why does no confidence that I can trust take its seat on my mind's dear throne, to spit it away like dreams hard to read? Time has grown old since the stern-cables were hauled in and the sand of the shore flew up, when the seafaring army set out for Troy.
988	πεύθομαι δ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων νόστον, αὐτόμαρτυς ὤν· τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὅμως ὑμνῳδεῖ θρῆνον Ἐρινύος αὐτοδίδακτος ἔσωθεν θυμός, οὐ τὸ πᾶν ἔχων ἐλπίδος φίλον θράσος. σπλάγχνα δ' οὔτοι ματᾴ- ζει πρὸς ἐνδίκοις φρεσὶν τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκώμενον κέαρ. εὔχομαι δ' ἐξ ἐμᾶς ἐλπίδος ψύθη πεσεῖν ἐς τὸ μὴ τελεσφόρον.	With my own eyes I learn of his homecoming, my own witness; and still, without the lyre, my heart within me, self-taught, chants the dirge of the Fury, with none at all of hope's dear courage. My inward parts do not babble idly: my heart beside my righteous mind whirls in eddies that bring things to fulfillment. But I pray that, against my expectation, it may all prove false and fall into nothing fulfilled.
1001	μάλα γέ τοι τὸ μεγάλας ὑγιείας ἀκόρεστον τέρμα· νόσος γάρ γείτων ὁμότοιχος ἐρείδει. καὶ πότμος εὐθυπορῶν	Too true: great health never rests content at its limit, for disease, its neighbor sharing the same wall, presses against it.

GREEK	ENGLISH
…	And a man's destiny, holding a straight course,
ἀνδρὸς ἔπαισεν ἄφαντον ἔρμα.	…
καὶ πρὸ μέν τι χρημάτων	strikes on a hidden reef.
κτησίων ὄκνος βαλὼν	But if caution beforehand
σφενδόνας ἀπ' εὐμέτρου,	throws overboard part of the stored-up wealth
οὐκ ἔδυ πρόπας δόμος	with a well-measured sling,
πημονᾶς γέμων ἄγαν,	the whole house does not sink,
οὐδ' ἐπόντισε σκάφος.	laden with too much misery,
πολλά τοι δόσις ἐκ Διὸς ἀμφιλα-	nor does the hull go under.
φής τε καὶ ἐξ ἀλόκων ἐπετειᾶν	Truly the gift from Zeus, abundant,
νῆστιν ὤλεσεν νόσον.	from the furrows of each year,
	has put an end to the plague of famine.
1017 τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὸν ἅπαξ θανάσιμον	But once a man's dark blood
πρόπαρ ἀνδρὸς μέλαν αἷμα τίς ἂν	has fallen to the ground in death,
πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ' ἐπαείδων;	who can call it back again by singing spells?
οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῆ	Did not Zeus, to keep us cautious,
τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν	put a stop even to the one who knew rightly
Ζεὺς ἀπέπαυσεν ἐπ' εὐλαβείᾳ;	how to bring the dead back up?
εἰ δὲ μὴ τεταγμένα	If one fate ordained by the gods
μοῖρα μοῖραν ἐκ θεῶν	did not keep another fate
εἶργε μὴ πλέον φέρειν,	from winning more,
προφθάσασα καρδία	my heart would outrun my tongue
γλῶσσαν ἂν τάδ' ἐξέχει.	and pour all this out.
νῦν δ' ὑπὸ σκότῳ βρέμει	But now it mutters in the dark,
θυμαλγής τε καὶ οὐδὲν ἐπελπομέν-	aching, with no hope
α ποτὲ καίριον ἐκτολυπεύσειν	of ever unwinding anything to good purpose
ζωπυρουμένας φρενός.	from a mind on fire.[15]

FOURTH EPISODE

Cassandra foresees her own and Agamemnon's murders, recalls the house's old crimes, and goes in to die.

GREEK	ENGLISH
1035 **CLYTEMNESTRA** εἴσω κομίζου καὶ σύ, Κασάνδραν	**CLYTEMNESTRA** You get inside too—I mean you,
λέγω,	Cassandra—since Zeus, in no anger, has made you
ἐπεί σ' ἔθηκε Ζεὺς ἀμηνίτως δόμοις	a sharer in the holy water of this house, standing
κοινωνὸν εἶναι χερνίβων, πολλῶν μέτα	among many slaves near the altar of the god who
δούλων σταθεῖσαν κτησίου βωμοῦ πέλας·	guards our property. Step down from this car-
ἔκβαιν' ἀπήνης τῆσδε, μηδ' ὑπερφρόνει.	riage, and don't be proud. They say that even the
καὶ παῖδα γάρ τοί φασιν Ἀλκμήνης ποτὲ	son of Alcmene was once sold and had to put up
πραθέντα τλῆναι δουλίας μάζης τυχεῖν.	with eating a slave's bread. And if necessity brings
εἰ δ' οὖν ἀνάγκη τῆσδ' ἐπιρρέποι τύχης,	someone to this fortune, there's much to be grate-
ἀρχαιοπλούτων δεσποτῶν πολλὴ χάρις.	ful for in masters whose wealth is old. Those who
οἳ δ' οὔποτ' ἐλπίσαντες ἤμησαν καλῶς,	have reaped a fine harvest they never hoped for
ὠμοί τε δούλοις πάντα καὶ παρὰ στάθμην.	are harsh to their slaves in everything, beyond
ἔχεις παρ' ἡμῶν οἷά περ νομίζεται.	what's right. You'll have from us what is custom-
	ary.[16]

15 The healer who raised the dead is Asclepius, whom Zeus struck down with a thunderbolt for it.
16 The son of Alcmene is Heracles, who was once sold as a slave to the Lydian queen Omphale.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1047	**CHORUS** σοί τοι λέγουσα παύεται σαφῆ λόγον. ἐντός δ' ἂν οὖσα μορσίμων ἀγρευμάτων πείθοι' ἄν, εἰ πείθοι'· ἀπειθοίης δ' ἴσως.	**CHORUS** It's you she's speaking to; she's finished, and spoken plainly. Caught as you are in the nets of fate, you should obey, if you're going to obey. But perhaps you won't.
1050	**CLYTEMNESTRA** ἀλλ' εἴπερ ἐστι μὴ χελιδόνος δίκην ἀγνῶτα φωνὴν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη, ἔσω φρενῶν λέγουσα πείθω νιν λόγῳ.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Well, unless she has some unknown foreign speech, like a swallow, I'll speak to her understanding and persuade her with words.
1053	**CHORUS** ἔπου. τὰ λῷστα τῶν παρεστώτων λέγει. / πιθοῦ λιποῦσα τόνδ' ἁμαξήρη θρόνον.	**CHORUS** Go with her. As things stand, what she says is best. Do as she says: leave this seat in the wagon.
1055	**CLYTEMNESTRA** οὔτοι θυραίᾳ τῇδ' ἐμοὶ σχολὴ πάρα τρίβειν· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἑστίας μεσομφάλου ἕστηκεν ἤδη μῆλα πρὸς σφαγὰς πάρος, ὡς οὔποτ' ἐλπίσασι τήνδ' ἕξειν χάριν. σὺ δ' εἴ τι δράσεις τῶνδε, μὴ σχολὴν τίθει. εἰ δ' ἀξυνήμων οὖσα μὴ δέχῃ λόγον, σὺ δ' ἀντὶ φωνῆς φράζε καρβάνῳ χερί.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** I don't have time to waste out here at the door. The sheep are standing already at the hearth in the heart of the house, ready for slaughter—we never hoped we'd have this joy. If you mean to do any of what I say, don't delay. But if you don't understand and can't take in what I'm saying, then make signs with your foreign hand instead of speaking.
1062	**CHORUS** ἑρμηνέως ἔοικεν ἡ ξένη τοροῦ / δεῖσθαι· τρόπος δὲ θηρὸς ὡς νεαιρέτου.	**CHORUS** The stranger seems to need a clear interpreter. She behaves like a wild animal newly caught.
1064	**CLYTEMNESTRA** ἦ μαίνεταί γε καὶ κακῶν κλύει φρενῶν, ἥτις λιποῦσα μὲν πόλιν νεαίρετον ἥκει, χαλινὸν δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται φέρειν, πρὶν αἱματηρὸν ἐξαφρίζεσθαι μένος. οὐ μὴν πλέω ῥίψασ' ἀτιμασθήσομαι.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** She's mad, that's what it is, and she listens to her own wicked thoughts. She's come here from a city newly captured, and she doesn't know how to take the bit until she's foamed out her rage in blood. I won't waste more words on her and be insulted.
1069	**CHORUS** ἐγὼ δ', ἐποικτίρω γάρ, οὐ θυμώσομαι. ἴθ', ὦ τάλαινα, τόνδ' ἐρημώσασ' ὄχον, εἴκουσ' ἀνάγκῃ τῇδε καίνισον ζυγόν.	**CHORUS** But I pity her, and I won't be angry. Come, poor woman, leave the wagon empty. Give way to this necessity, and take up your new yoke.
1072	**CASSANDRA** ὀτοτοτοῖ πόποι δᾶ. / Ἄπολλον Ἄπολλον.	**CASSANDRA** *Otototoi, popoi, da!* / Apollo! Apollo!
1074	**CHORUS** τί ταῦτ' ἀνωτότυξας ἀμφὶ Λοξίου; / οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὥστε θρηνητοῦ τυχεῖν.	**CHORUS** Why do you cry out these *ototoi*s to Loxias? He isn't a god who has any business with mourners.[17]
1076	**CASSANDRA** ὀτοτοτοῖ πόποι δᾶ. / Ἄπολλον Ἄπολλον.	**CASSANDRA** *Otototoi, popoi, da!* / Apollo! Apollo!
1078	**CHORUS** ἡ δ' αὖτε δυσφημοῦσα τὸν θεὸν καλεῖ / οὐδὲν προσήκοντ' ἐν γόοις παραστατεῖν.	**CHORUS** There she goes again, calling with ill-omened cries on the god who has no place standing by at a lament.
1080		**CASSANDRA** Apollo, Apollo, god of the roads, my Apollo—my destroyer!

17 Loxias is Apollo's name as god of oracles; Apollo, god of the healing paean, was thought to shun lamentation.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	CASSANDRA Ἄπολλον Ἄπολλον ἀγυιᾶτ', ἀπόλλων ἐμός. ἀπώλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον.	For you have destroyed me, and thoroughly, a second time.[18]
1083	**CHORUS** χρήσειν ἔοικεν ἀμφὶ τῶν αὑτῆς κακῶν. / μένει τὸ θεῖον δουλίᾳ περ ἐν φρενί.	**CHORUS** It seems she's about to prophesy her own troubles. The gift of the god stays with her, even in the mind of a slave.
1085	**CASSANDRA** Ἄπολλον Ἄπολλον ἀγυιᾶτ', ἀπόλλων ἐμός. ἆ ποῖ ποτ' ἤγαγές με; πρὸς ποίαν στέγην;	**CASSANDRA** Apollo, Apollo, god of the roads, my Apollo—my destroyer! Ah, where have you brought me? To what kind of house?
1088	**CHORUS** πρὸς τὴν Ἀτρειδῶν· εἰ σὺ μὴ τόδ' ἐννοεῖς, / ἐγὼ λέγω σοι· καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἐρεῖς ψύθη.	**CHORUS** To the house of the sons of Atreus. If you don't understand that, I'm telling you, and you won't call it a lie.
1090	**CASSANDRA** μισόθεον μὲν οὖν, πολλὰ συνίστορα αὐτόφονα κακὰ καρατόμα, ἀνδροσφαγεῖον καὶ πεδορραντήριον.	**CASSANDRA** No—to a house the gods hate, that knows of so much murder of kin, of heads hewn off, a slaughterhouse of men, a floor spattered with blood.
1093	**CHORUS** ἔοικεν εὔρις ἡ ξένη κυνὸς δίκην / εἶναι, ματεύει δ' ὧν ἀνευρήσει φόνον.	**CHORUS** The stranger seems to have a keen nose, like a hound; she's tracking down those whose murder she'll uncover.
1095	**CASSANDRA** μαρτυρίοισι γὰρ τοῖσδ' ἐπιπείθομαι· κλαιόμενα τάδε βρέφη σφαγάς, ὀπτάς τε σάρκας πρὸς πατρὸς βεβρωμένας.	**CASSANDRA** Here is the evidence I trust: these babies weeping for their slaughter, and their roasted flesh, eaten by their father.[19]
1098	**CHORUS** τὸ μὲν κλέος σοῦ μαντικὸν πεπυσμένοι / ἦμεν· προφήτας δ' οὔτινας ματεύομεν.	**CHORUS** We had heard of your fame as a prophet, but we aren't looking for any prophets.
1100	**CASSANDRA** ἰὼ πόποι, τί ποτε μήδεται; τί τόδε νέον ἄχος μέγα μέγ' ἐν δόμοισι τοῖσδε μήδεται κακὸν ἄφερτον φίλοισιν, δυσίατον; ἀλκὰ δ' ἑκὰς ἀποστατεῖ.	**CASSANDRA** Oh, *popoi*! What is she plotting? What is this new grief, this great, great evil she is plotting in this house, unbearable for those she should love, past curing? And help stands far away.
1105	**CHORUS** τούτων ἄιδρίς εἰμι τῶν μαντευμάτων. / ἐκεῖνα δ' ἔγνων· πᾶσα γὰρ πόλις βοᾷ.	**CHORUS** I know nothing of these prophecies. But the others I recognized: the whole city is crying them aloud.
1107	**CASSANDRA** ἰὼ τάλαινα, τόδε γὰρ τελεῖς, τὸν ὁμοδέμνιον πόσιν λουτροῖσι φαιδρύνασα—πῶς φράσω τέλος; τάχος γὰρ τόδ' ἔσται· προτείνει δὲ χεὶρ ἐκ χερὸς ὀρέγματα.	**CASSANDRA** Oh, wretched woman, will you really do this? Your husband, who shares your bed— you make him bright in the bath—how can I tell the end?

18 Cassandra puns on Apollo's name and *apollōn*, "destroying"; Apollo "of the roads" was worshiped at a pillar by house doors.
19 Atreus killed the children of his brother Thyestes and served their flesh to him at a banquet.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		It will come quickly: a hand reaches out, and hand after hand stretches forth.
1112	**CHORUS** οὔπω ξυνῆκα· νῦν γὰρ ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων / ἐπαργέμοισι θεσφάτοις ἀμηχανῶ.	**CHORUS** I don't understand yet. First riddles, and now I'm baffled by dim oracles.
1114	**CASSANDRA** ἔ ἔ, παπαῖ παπαῖ, τί τόδε φαίνεται; ἦ δίκτυόν τί γ' Ἅιδου; ἀλλ' ἄρκυς ἡ ξύνευνος, ἡ ξυναιτία φόνου. στάσις δ' ἀκόρετος γένει κατολολυξάτω θύματος λευσίμου.	**CASSANDRA** Ah, ah! Oh, oh! What is this I see? Is it some net of Hades? No, the snare is she who shares his bed, who shares in his murder. Let the band never sated with this family raise its cry of triumph over a sacrifice that calls for stoning.
1119	**CHORUS** ποίαν Ἐρινὺν τήνδε δώμασιν κέλῃ ἐπορθιάζειν; οὔ με φαιδρύνει λόγος. ἐπὶ δὲ καρδίαν ἔδραμε κροκοβαφὴς σταγών, ἅτε καιρία πτώσιμος ξυνανύτει βίου δύντος αὐγαῖς· ταχεῖα δ' ἄτα πέλει.	**CHORUS** What Fury is this you call on to raise its cry over the house? Your words bring me no brightness. To my heart has run the drop of saffron hue, as when, for a man fallen by a mortal wound, it ebbs away with the last rays of setting life. Ruin comes swiftly.
1125	**CASSANDRA** ἆ ἆ, ἰδοὺ ἰδού· ἄπεχε τῆς βοὸς τὸν ταῦρον· ἐν πέπλοισι μελαγκέρῳ λαβοῦσα μηχανήματι τύπτει· πίτνει δ' ἐν ἐνύδρῳ τεύχει. δολοφόνου λέβητος τύχαν σοι λέγω.	**CASSANDRA** Ah, ah! Look, look! Keep the bull away from the cow! She has caught him in robes, with the black-horned contrivance, and she strikes. He falls in the vessel of water. It's a treacherous, murderous bath I'm telling you of.
1130	**CHORUS** οὐ κομπάσαιμ' ἂν θεσφάτων γνώμων ἄκρος εἶναι, κακῷ δέ τῳ προσεικάζω τάδε. ἀπὸ δὲ θεσφάτων τίς ἀγαθὰ φάτις βροτοῖς τέλλεται; κακῶν γὰρ διαὶ πολυεπεῖς τέχναι θεσπιῳδὸν φόβον φέρουσιν μαθεῖν.	**CHORUS** I wouldn't boast of being a fine judge of oracles, but I take these to point to something bad. Yet what good word from oracles ever comes to mortals? It's through evils that their wordy arts bring men to learn the fear that prophets sing.
1136	**CASSANDRA** ἰὼ ἰὼ ταλαίνας κακόποτμοι τύχαι· τὸ γὰρ ἐμὸν θροῶ πάθος ἐπεγχύδαν. ποῖ δή με δεῦρο τὴν τάλαιναν ἤγαγες; οὐδέν ποτ' εἰ μὴ ξυνθανουμένην. τί γάρ;	**CASSANDRA** Oh, oh, the ill-starred fortunes of a wretched woman! For it's my own suffering I cry out, pouring it in on top of his. Why have you brought me here, wretched as I am? For nothing but to die with him. What else?
1140	**CHORUS** φρενομανής τις εἶ θεοφόρητος, ἀμ- φὶ δ' αὐτᾶς θροεῖς νόμον ἄνομον, οἷά τις ξουθὰ ἀκόρετος βοᾶς, φεῦ, ταλαίναις φρεσίν Ἴτυν Ἴτυν στένουσ' ἀμφιθαλῆ κακοῖς ἀηδὼν βίον.	**CHORUS** You are frenzied in mind, carried away by a god, and over yourself you cry a song that is no song, like the tawny bird that never has its fill of crying—ah!—from its sorrowing heart,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		moaning “Itys, Itys,” all through a life that blooms with sorrows: the nightingale.[20]
1146	**CASSANDRA** ἰὼ ἰὼ λιγείας μόρον ἀηδόνος· περέβαλον γάρ οἱ πτεροφόρον δέμας θεοὶ γλυκύν τ’ αἰῶνα κλαυμάτων ἄτερ· ἐμοὶ δὲ μίμνει σχισμὸς ἀμφήκει δορί.	**CASSANDRA** Oh, oh, the fate of the clear-voiced nightingale! The gods clothed her in a winged body and gave her a sweet life, free of weeping. But what waits for me is the cleaving of the two-edged blade.
1150	**CHORUS** πόθεν ἐπισσύτους θεοφόρους ἔχεις ματαίους δύας, τὰ δ’ ἐπίφοβα δυσφάτῳ κλαγγᾷ μελοτυπεῖς ὁμοῦ τ’ ὀρθίοις ἐν νόμοις; πόθεν ὅρους ἔχεις θεσπεσίας ὁδοῦ κακορρήμονας;	**CHORUS** Where do they come from, these rushing, god-sent, futile pains of yours? Why do you shape your terrors into song with ill-sounding cries and shrill strains at once? Where do you get the bounds of your prophetic path, so full of evil words?
1156	**CASSANDRA** ἰὼ γάμοι γάμοι Πάριδος ὀλέθριοι φίλων. ἰὼ Σκαμάνδρου πάτριον ποτόν. τότε μὲν ἀμφὶ σὰς ἀϊόνας τάλαιν’ ἠνυτόμαν τροφαῖς· νῦν δ’ ἀμφὶ Κωκυτόν τε κἀχερουσίους ὄχθας ἔοικα θεσπιῳδήσειν τάχα.	**CASSANDRA** Oh, the marriage, the marriage of Paris, death to his own people! Oh, Scamander, water my fathers drank! Once, by your banks, poor girl, I was nursed and grew; but now by Cocytus and the banks of Acheron it seems I’ll soon be chanting my prophecies.[21]
1162	**CHORUS** τί τόδε τορὸν ἄγαν ἔπος ἐφημίσω; νεόγονος ἂν ἀΐων μάθοι. πέπληγμαι δ’ ὑπαὶ δάκει φοινίῳ δυσαλγεῖ τύχᾳ μινυρὰ θρεομένας, θραύματ’ ἐμοὶ κλύειν.	**CHORUS** What is this word you’ve uttered, all too plain? A newborn child could hear it and understand. I am struck as if by a deadly bite as you wail shrilly over your painful fortune: it shatters me to hear.
1167	**CASSANDRA** ἰὼ πόνοι πόνοι πόλεος ὀλομένας τὸ πᾶν. ἰὼ πρόπυργοι θυσίαι πατρὸς πολυκανεῖς βοτῶν ποιονόμων· ἄκος δ’ οὐδὲν ἐπήρκεσαν τὸ μὴ πόλιν μὲν ὥσπερ οὖν ἔχει παθεῖν. ἐγὼ δὲ θερμόνους τάχ’ ἐν πέδῳ βαλῶ.	**CASSANDRA** Oh, the toils, the toils of a city utterly destroyed! Oh, my father’s sacrifices before the towers, so many grazing cattle slaughtered! Yet they brought no remedy at all to save the city from suffering as it has. And I, my mind on fire, will soon dash myself to the ground.
1173	**CHORUS** ἑπόμενα προτέροισι τάδ’ ἐφημίσω. καί τίς σε κακοφρονῶν τίθη- σι δαίμων ὑπερβαρὴς ἐμπίτνων μελίζειν πάθη γοερὰ θανατοφόρα. τέρμα δ’ ἀμηχανῶ.	**CHORUS** This follows what you said before. Some malevolent spirit, falling on you with crushing weight, makes you sing of sufferings, mournful, bringing death. But how it ends, I cannot tell.

20 In myth Procne killed her son Itys and was turned into a nightingale, forever mourning him.
21 Cocytus and Acheron are rivers of the underworld.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1178	**CASSANDRA** καὶ μὴν ὁ χρησμὸς οὐκέτ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων ἔσται δεδορκὼς νεογάμου νύμφης δίκην· λαμπρὸς δ' ἔοικεν ἡλίου πρὸς ἀντολὰς πνέων ἐσᾴξειν, ὥστε κύματος δίκην κλύζειν πρὸς αὐγὰς τοῦδε πήματος πολὺ μεῖζον· φρενώσω δ' οὐκέτ' ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων. καὶ μαρτυρεῖτε συνδρόμως ἴχνος κακῶν ῥινηλατούσῃ τῶν πάλαι πεπραγμένων. τὴν γὰρ στέγην τήνδ' οὔποτ' ἐκλείπει χορὸς ξύμφθογγος οὐκ εὔφωνος· οὐ γὰρ εὖ λέγει. καὶ μὴν πεπωκώς γ', ὡς θρασύνεσθαι πλέον, βρότειον αἷμα κῶμος ἐν δόμοις μένει, δύσπεμπτος ἔξω, συγγόνων Ἐρινύων.	**CASSANDRA** All right, then. My prophecy will no longer peer out from behind veils like a newly married bride. It will come rushing in bright and clear, blowing toward the sunrise, so that like a wave it washes up against the light a woe far greater than this. I'll stop instructing you in riddles. Bear me witness, keep pace with me, as I sniff out the trail of crimes done long ago. This house is never left by a chorus that sings in unison but not in harmony, for what it sings is not good. And yes, it has drunk human blood to make itself bolder, and now it stays in the house, a revel band hard to send away: the kindred Furies.
1191	ὑμνοῦσι δ' ὕμνον δώμασιν προσήμεναι πρώταρχον ἄτην· ἐν μέρει δ' ἀπέπτυσαν εὐνὰς ἀδελφοῦ τῷ πατοῦντι δυσμενεῖς. ἥμαρτον, ἢ θηρῶ τι τοξότης τις ὡς; ἢ ψευδόμαντίς εἰμι θυροκόπος φλέδων; ἐκμαρτύρησον προυμόσας τό μ' εἰδέναι λόγῳ παλαιὰς τῶνδ' ἁμαρτίας δόμων.	They sit close to the house and sing their song of the ruin that began it all; and in turn they spit in disgust at a brother's bed, hostile to the man who trampled it. Have I missed, or do I hit my quarry like an archer? Or am I a lying prophet, a babbler knocking on doors? Swear first, and bear witness that I know the story of this house's ancient crimes.[22]
1198	**CHORUS** καὶ πῶς ἂν ὅρκος, πῆγμα γενναίως παγέν, παιώνιον γένοιτο; θαυμάζω δέ σου, πόντου πέραν τραφεῖσαν ἀλλόθρουν πόλιν κυρεῖν λέγουσαν, ὥσπερ εἰ παρεστάτεις.	**CHORUS** And how could an oath, a bond however nobly made fast, bring any cure? But I'm amazed at you. You were raised beyond the sea, and yet you speak about a foreign city as accurately as if you had been standing here.
1202	**CASSANDRA** μάντις μ' Ἀπόλλων τῷδ' ἐπέστησεν τέλει.	**CASSANDRA** The prophet Apollo appointed me to this office.
1204	**CHORUS** μῶν καὶ θεός περ ἱμέρῳ πεπληγμένος;	**CHORUS** Surely not—the god too, struck with desire?
1203	**CASSANDRA** προτοῦ μὲν αἰδὼς ἦν ἐμοὶ λέγειν τάδε.	**CASSANDRA** Before now I was ashamed to speak of this.
1205	**CHORUS** ἁβρύνεται γὰρ πᾶς τις εὖ πράσσων πλέον.	**CHORUS** Yes, anyone who prospers grows more delicate.
1206	**CASSANDRA** ἀλλ' ἦν παλαιστὴς κάρτ' ἐμοὶ πνέων χάριν.	**CASSANDRA** He was a strong wrestler, panting with desire for me.
1207	**CHORUS** ἦ καὶ τέκνων εἰς ἔργον ἦλθετον νόμῳ;	**CHORUS** And did the two of you come to the making of children, as is the custom?
1208	**CASSANDRA** ξυναινέσασα Λοξίαν ἐψευσάμην.	**CASSANDRA** I agreed to Loxias, and then I cheated him.
1209	**CHORUS** ἤδη τέχναισιν ἐνθέοις ᾐρημένη;	

22 The brother's bed: Thyestes seduced the wife of his brother Atreus.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		CHORUS When you were already possessed by the god-given art?
1210	**CASSANDRA** ἤδη πολίταις πάντ' ἐθέσπιζον πάθη.	**CASSANDRA** Already I was prophesying all my countrymen's sufferings.
1211	**CHORUS** πῶς δῆτ' ἄνατος ἦσθα Λοξίου κότῳ;	**CHORUS** Then how did you go unharmed by Loxias' anger?
1212	**CASSANDRA** ἔπειθον οὐδέν' οὐδέν, ὡς τάδ' ἤμπλακον.	**CASSANDRA** Ever since I wronged him in this, I could persuade no one of anything.
1213	**CHORUS** ἡμῖν γε μὲν δὴ πιστὰ θεσπίζειν δοκεῖς.	**CHORUS** Well, to us at least your prophecies seem believable.
1214	**CASSANDRA** ἰοὺ ἰού, ὦ ὦ κακά. ὑπ' αὖ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος στροβεῖ ταράσσων φροιμίοις δυσφροιμίοις. ὁρᾶτε τούσδε τοὺς δόμοις ἐφημένους νέους, ὀνείρων προσφερεῖς μορφώμασιν; παῖδες θανόντες ὡσπερεὶ πρὸς τῶν φίλων, χεῖρας κρεῶν πλήθοντες οἰκείας βορᾶς, σὺν ἐντέροις τε σπλάγχν', ἐποίκτιστον γέμος, πρέπουσ' ἔχοντες, ὧν πατὴρ ἐγεύσατο. ἐκ τῶνδε ποινὰς φημὶ βουλεύειν τινὰ λέοντ' ἄναλκιν ἐν λέχει στρωφώμενον οἰκουρόν, οἴμοι, τῷ μολόντι δεσπότῃ ἐμῷ· φέρειν γὰρ χρὴ τὸ δούλιον ζυγόν· νεῶν τ' ἄπαρχος Ἰλίου τ' ἀναστάτης οὐκ οἶδεν οἷα γλῶσσα μισητῆς κυνὸς λείξασα κἀκτείνασα φαιδρὸν οὖς, δίκην Ἄτης λαθραίου, τεύξεται κακῇ τύχῃ.	**CASSANDRA** Ah, ah! Oh, oh, the horror! Again the terrible labor of true prophecy whirls me round and throws me into turmoil with its ominous preludes. Do you see them, sitting there by the house, those young ones, like shapes in dreams? Children, killed as if by their own kin, their hands full of meat, their own flesh for food. I see them plainly, holding guts and innards, a pitiful load, which their father tasted. For this, I tell you, someone is plotting vengeance: a cowardly lion who rolls about in the bed, keeping house—oh!—for the master who has come home, my master, since I must bear the yoke of slavery. And the commander of the ships, the destroyer of Troy, doesn't know what the tongue of that hateful hound, after it has licked him and pricked up its ear in glad welcome, will accomplish with evil luck, like Ruin lying in ambush.
1231	τοιάδε τόλμα· θῆλυς ἄρσενος φονεὺς ἔστιν. τί νιν καλοῦσα δυσφιλὲς δάκος τύχοιμ' ἄν; ἀμφίσβαιναν, ἢ Σκύλλαν τινὰ οἰκοῦσαν ἐν πέτραισι, ναυτίλων βλάβην, θύουσαν Ἅιδου μητέρ' ἄσπονδόν τ' Ἄρη φίλοις πνέουσαν; ὡς δ' ἐπωλολύξατο ἡ παντότολμος, ὥσπερ ἐν μάχης τροπῇ, δοκεῖ δὲ χαίρειν νοστίμῳ σωτηρίᾳ. καὶ τῶνδ' ὅμοιον εἴ τι μὴ πείθω· τί γάρ; τὸ μέλλον ἥξει. καὶ σύ μ' ἐν τάχει παρὼν ἄγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτίρας ἐρεῖς.	Such is her daring: the female is the male's murderer. What loathsome beast could I call her and hit the mark? A serpent with a head at either end? Or some Scylla living among the rocks, the ruin of sailors, a raging mother out of Hades, breathing truceless war against her own? And how she raised her ritual cry of triumph, this woman who will dare anything, as if at the rout of a battle! And she pretends to rejoice at his safe homecoming. If you don't believe any of this, it's all the same—what does it matter? What's coming will come. And soon you'll stand here and, pitying me, call me a prophet all too true.
1242	**CHORUS** τὴν μὲν Θυέστου δαῖτα παιδείων κρεῶν ξυνῆκα καὶ πέφρικα, καὶ φόβος μ' ἔχει κλύοντ' ἀληθῶς οὐδὲν ἐξῃκασμένα. τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἀκούσας ἐκ δρόμου πεσὼν τρέχω.	**CHORUS** Thyestes' feast on his children's flesh I understood, and I shudder; terror grips me to hear it truly told, nothing made up. But as for the rest I

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		heard, I've fallen off the course and I'm running wide.
1246	**CASSANDRA** Ἀγαμέμνονός σέ φημ' ἐπόψεσθαι μόρον.	**CASSANDRA** I tell you, you will look upon Agamemnon's death.
1247	**CHORUS** εὔφημον, ὦ τάλαινα, κοίμησον στόμα.	**CHORUS** Hush, poor woman! Speak words of good omen, or let your mouth sleep.
1248	**CASSANDRA** ἀλλ' οὔτι παιὼν τῷδ' ἐπιστατεῖ λόγῳ.	**CASSANDRA** But no Healer stands over what I say.
1249	**CHORUS** οὔκ, εἴπερ ἔσται γ'· ἀλλὰ μὴ γένοιτό πως.	**CHORUS** No, not if it's going to happen. But may it somehow not happen!
1250	**CASSANDRA** σὺ μὲν κατεύχῃ, τοῖς δ' ἀποκτείνειν μέλει.	**CASSANDRA** You pray, while they are busy with killing.
1251	**CHORUS** τίνος πρὸς ἀνδρὸς τοῦτ' ἄγος πορσύνεται;	**CHORUS** What man is preparing this abomination?
1252	**CASSANDRA** ἦ κάρτα τἄρ' ἂν παρεκόπης χρησμῶν ἐμῶν	**CASSANDRA** Then you've been thrown far off the track of my prophecies.
1253	**CHORUS** τοῦ γὰρ τελοῦντος οὐ ξυνῆκα μηχανήν.	**CHORUS** Yes, because I didn't grasp the scheme of the one who's going to do it.
1254	**CASSANDRA** καὶ μὴν ἄγαν γ' Ἕλλην' ἐπίσταμαι φάτιν.	**CASSANDRA** And yet I know the Greek language all too well.
1255	**CHORUS** καὶ γὰρ τὰ πυθόκραντα· δυσμαθῆ δ' ὅμως.	**CHORUS** So do the Pythian oracles, and they're hard to understand all the same.
1256	**CASSANDRA** παπαῖ, οἷον τὸ πῦρ· ἐπέρχεται δέ μοι. ὀτοτοῖ, Λύκει' Ἄπολλον, οἳ ἐγὼ ἐγώ. αὕτη δίπους λέαινα συγκοιμωμένη λύκῳ, λέοντος εὐγενοῦς ἀπουσίᾳ, κτενεῖ με τὴν τάλαιναν· ὡς δὲ φάρμακον τεύχουσα κἀμοῦ μισθὸν ἐνθήσειν κότῳ ἐπεύχεται, θήγουσα φωτὶ φάσγανον ἐμῆς ἀγωγῆς ἀντιτείσασθαι φόνον. τί δῆτ' ἐμαυτῆς καταγέλωτ' ἔχω τάδε, καὶ σκῆπτρα καὶ μαντεῖα περὶ δέρῃ στέφη; σὲ μὲν πρὸ μοίρας τῆς ἐμῆς διαφθερῶ. ἴτ' ἐς φθόρον· πεσόντα γ' ὧδ' ἀμείβομαι. ἄλλην τιν' ἄτης ἀντ' ἐμοῦ πλουτίζετε. ἰδοὺ δ' Ἀπόλλων αὐτὸς ἐκδύων ἐμὲ χρηστηρίαν ἐσθῆτ', ἐποπτεύσας δέ με κἀν τοῖσδε κόσμοις καταγελωμένην μέγα φίλων ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν οὐ διχορρόπως, μάτην—	**CASSANDRA** Ah! What fire this is! It's coming over me. *Ototoi*, Lycean Apollo! Oh, me, me! This two-footed lioness, who lies in bed with a wolf while the noble lion is away, will kill me, wretch that I am. Like someone brewing a poison, she vows she'll mix my wages too into her rage, as she sharpens a sword for the man, to make him pay with murder for bringing me here. Then why do I wear these things that make a mockery of me, this staff and these prophet's wreaths around my neck? You, at least, I'll destroy before my own death. Go to ruin! There you lie, and that's how I pay you back. Make some other woman rich in ruin instead of me. Look—Apollo himself is stripping me of my prophet's robe. He watched me, even in this finery, mocked to the full by friends turned enemies, all with one voice, for nothing—
1273	καλουμένη δὲ φοιτὰς ὡς ἀγύρτρια πτωχὸς τάλαινα λιμοθνὴς ἠνεσχόμην— καὶ νῦν ὁ μάντις μάντιν ἐκπράξας ἐμὲ ἀπήγαγ' ἐς τοιάσδε θανασίμους τύχας.	and I put up with being called a vagabond, like a begging priestess, a wretched, starving beggar— and now the prophet, having finished with me, his prophet, has led me off to this deadly fate. Instead

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	βωμοῦ πατρῴου δ' ἀντ' ἐπίξηνον μένει, θερμῷ κοπείσης φοινίῳ προσφάγματι. οὐ μὴν ἄτιμοί γ' ἐκ θεῶν τεθνήξομεν. ἥξει γὰρ ἡμῶν ἄλλος αὖ τιμάορος, μητροκτόνον φίτυμα, ποινάτωρ πατρός· φυγὰς δ' ἀλήτης τῆσδε γῆς ἀπόξενος κάτεισιν, ἄτας τάσδε θριγκώσων φίλοις· ὀμώμοται γὰρ ὅρκος ἐκ θεῶν μέγας, ἄξειν νιν ὑπτίασμα κειμένου πατρός. τί δῆτ' ἐγὼ κάτοικτος ὧδ' ἀναστένω;	of my father's altar, a chopping block awaits me, red with the hot blood of my slaughter, a first offering. Yet we won't die unregarded by the gods. Another will come in turn to avenge us, a son who will kill his mother, avenger of his father. An exile, a wanderer, banished from this land, he will come home to set the coping-stone on these ruins for his family. For the gods have sworn a mighty oath that his father, lying face up in death, will bring him back. Why then do I lament like this, so piteously?
1287	ἐπεὶ τὸ πρῶτον εἶδον Ἰλίου πόλιν πράξασαν ὡς ἔπραξεν, οἳ δ' εἷλον πόλιν οὕτως ἀπαλλάσσουσιν ἐν θεῶν κρίσει, ἰοῦσα πράξω· τλήσομαι τὸ κατθανεῖν. Ἅιδου πύλας δὲ τάσδ' ἐγὼ προσεννέπω· ἐπεύχομαι δὲ καιρίας πληγῆς τυχεῖν, ὡς ἀσφάδαστος, αἱμάτων εὐθνησίμων ἀπορρυέντων, ὄμμα συμβάλω τόδε.	Since I first saw the city of Troy fare as it fared, and those who took the city are now coming to this end by the gods' judgment, I too will go and fare as I must. I'll endure death. These doors I greet as the gates of Hades. And I pray for a deadly blow, so that without a struggle, as my blood flows out in an easy death, I may close these eyes.
1295	**CHORUS** ὦ πολλὰ μὲν τάλαινα, πολλὰ δ' αὖ σοφὴ γύναι, μακρὰν ἔτεινας. εἰ δ' ἐτητύμως μόρον τὸν αὑτῆς οἶσθα, πῶς θεηλάτου βοὸς δίκην πρὸς βωμὸν εὐτόλμως πατεῖς;	**CHORUS** Woman, so very wretched and so very wise, you've spoken at length. But if you truly know your own death, how can you walk so bravely to the altar, like an ox driven by a god?
1299	**CASSANDRA** οὐκ ἔστ' ἄλυξις, οὔ, ξένοι, χρόνον πλέω.	**CASSANDRA** There's no escape, strangers, none, not with more time.
1300	**CHORUS** ὁ δ' ὕστατός γε τοῦ χρόνου πρεσβεύεται,	**CHORUS** Yet the last moment of time is the one most prized.
1301	**CASSANDRA** ἥκει τόδ' ἦμαρ· σμικρὰ κερδανῶ φυγῇ.	**CASSANDRA** The day has come. I'll gain little by running.
1302	**CHORUS** ἀλλ' ἴσθι τλήμων οὖσ' ἀπ' εὐτόλμου φρενός.	**CHORUS** Well, know this: you endure it with a brave heart.
1303	**CASSANDRA** οὐδεὶς ἀκούει ταῦτα τῶν εὐδαιμόνων.	**CASSANDRA** No one who is happy hears that said of them.
1304	**CHORUS** ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοι κατθανεῖν χάρις βροτῷ.	**CHORUS** But to die with glory is a grace for a mortal.
1305	**CASSANDRA** ἰὼ πάτερ σοῦ σῶν τε γενναίων τέκνων.	**CASSANDRA** Oh, father, for you and for your noble children!
1306	**CHORUS** τί δ' ἐστὶ χρῆμα; τίς σ' ἀποστρέφει φόβος;	**CHORUS** What is it? What fear is turning you back?
1307	**CASSANDRA** φεῦ φεῦ.	**CASSANDRA** Ah, ah!
1308	**CHORUS** τί τοῦτ' ἔφευξας; εἴ τι μὴ φρενῶν στύγος.	**CHORUS** Why that cry? Unless it's some horror in your mind.
1309	**CASSANDRA** φόνον δόμοι πνέουσιν αἱματοσταγῆ,	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		CASSANDRA The house breathes murder, dripping blood—
1310	**CHORUS** καί πῶς;τόδ’ ὄζει θυμάτων ἐφεστίων.	**CHORUS** What? That’s the smell of victims at the hearth.
1311	**CASSANDRA** ὅμοιος ἀτμὸς ὥσπερ ἐκ τάφου πρέπει,	**CASSANDRA** It’s the same kind of vapor you see rising from a tomb—
1312	**CHORUS** οὐ Σύριον ἀγλάισμα δώμασιν λέγεις.	**CHORUS** That’s no Syrian incense you’re describing for the house.
1313	**CASSANDRA** ἀλλ’ εἶμι κἀν δόμοισι κωκύσουσ’ ἐμὴν Ἀγαμέμνονός τε μοῖραν. ἀρκείτω βίος. ἰὼ ξένοι, οὔτοι δυσοίζω θάμνον ὡς ὄρνις φόβῳ ἄλλως· θανούσῃ μαρτυρεῖτέ μοι τόδε, ὅταν γυνὴ γυναικὸς ἀντ’ ἐμοῦ θάνῃ, ἀνήρ τε δυσδάμαρτος ἀντ’ ἀνδρὸς πέσῃ. ἐπιξενοῦμαι ταῦτα δ’ ὡς θανουμένη.	**CASSANDRA** Well, I’ll go and wail inside the house for my own fate and Agamemnon’s. Enough of life! Oh, strangers, I’m not crying out for nothing, like a bird afraid of a bush. Bear me witness to this when I’m dead, when a woman dies in return for me, a woman, and a man falls in return for a man ill-wed. This is the favor I ask of you as a guest, as one about to die.
1321	**CHORUS** ὦ τλῆμον, οἰκτίρω σε θεσφάτου μόρου.	**CHORUS** Poor woman, I pity you for the death the god foretold.
1322	**CASSANDRA** ἅπαξ ἔτ’ εἰπεῖν ῥῆσιν οὐ θρῆνον θέλω ἐμὸν τὸν αὐτῆς. ἡλίῳ δ’ ἐπεύχομαι πρὸς ὕστατον φῶς τοῖς ἐμοῖς τιμαόροις ἐχθροῖς φονεῦσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς τίνειν ὁμοῦ, δούλης θανούσης, εὐμαροῦς χειρώματος. ἰὼ βρότεια πράγματ’· εὐτυχοῦντα μὲν σκιά τις ἂν τρέψειεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχῇ, βολαῖς ὑγρώσσων σπόγγος ὥλεσεν γραφήν. καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτίρω πολύ.	**CASSANDRA** Once more I want to make a speech, not a dirge, my own, for myself. I pray to the sun, facing its last light, that my avengers make my enemies, my murderers, pay as well for me, a slave woman killed, an easy conquest. Oh, human affairs! When they go well, a shadow could overturn them; and if they go badly, a wet sponge with a few strokes wipes the picture out. And this I pity far more than that.

FOURTH STASIMON

The chorus reflects that no mortal’s good fortune is safe from ruin.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1331	**CHORUS** τὸ μὲν εὖ πράσσειν ἀκόρεστον ἔφυ πᾶσι βροτοῖσιν· δακτυλοδείκτων δ’ οὔτις ἀπειπὼν εἴργει μελάθρων, μηκέτ’ ἐσέλθῃς, τάδε φωνῶν. καὶ τῷδε πόλιν μὲν ἐλεῖν ἔδοσαν μάκαρες Πριάμου· θεοτίμητος δ’ οἴκαδ’ ἱκάνει. νῦν δ’ εἰ προτέρων αἶμ’ ἀποτείσῃ καὶ τοῖσι θανοῦσι θανὼν ἄλλων ποινὰς θανάτων ἐπικράνῃ, τίς ἂν ἐξεύξαιτο βροτῶν ἀσινεῖ δαίμονι φῦναι τάδ’ ἀκούων;	**CHORUS** Faring well is something no mortal ever has enough of. From halls that fingers point to in envy no one bars it, turning it away with the words, “Come in no more.” To this man the blessed gods granted the taking of Priam’s city, and he comes home honored by the gods. But now if he must pay for the blood of those before him, and, dying for the dead, bring to fulfillment vengeance for other deaths,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		what mortal, hearing this, could boast that he was born with a fate free of harm?

EXODOS

Agamemnon is killed; Clytemnestra defends the deed, Aegisthus claims his revenge, and the chorus defies him.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1343	**AGAMEMNON** ὤμοι, πέπληγμαι καιρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω.	**AGAMEMNON** Oh! I'm struck—a deadly blow, deep inside!
1344	**CHORUS** σῖγα· τίς πληγὴν ἀυτεῖ καιρίως οὐτασμένος;	**CHORUS** Quiet! Who is crying out that he's struck, wounded to the death?
1345	**AGAMEMNON** ὤμοι μάλ' αὖθις, δευτέραν πεπληγμένος.	**AGAMEMNON** Oh, again! I'm struck a second time!
1346	**CHORUS** τοὔργον εἰργάσθαι δοκεῖ μοι βασιλέως οἰμώγμασιν. / ἀλλὰ κοινωσώμεθ' ἤν πως ἀσφαλῆ βουλεύματα.	**CHORUS** The deed is done, I think, judging by the king's groans. Come, let's consult together, in case there's some safe plan.
1348	—ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῖν τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην λέγω, πρὸς δῶμα δεῦρ' ἀστοῖσι κηρύσσειν βοήν.— —ἐμοὶ δ' ὅπως τάχιστά γ' ἐμπεσεῖν δοκεῖ καὶ πρᾶγμ' ἐλέγχειν σὺν νεορρύτῳ ξίφει.— —κἀγὼ τοιούτου γνώματος κοινωνὸς ὢν ψηφίζομαί τι δρᾶν· τὸ μὴ μέλλειν δ' ἀκμή.— —ὁρᾶν πάρεστι· φροιμιάζονται γὰρ ὡς τυραννίδος σημεῖα πράσσοντες πόλει.— —χρονίζομεν γάρ. οἱ δὲ τῆς μελλοῦς κλέος πέδοι πατοῦντες οὐ καθεύδουσιν χερί.— —οὐκ οἶδα βουλῆς ἥστινος τυχὼν λέγω. τοῦ δρῶντός ἐστι καὶ τὸ βουλεῦσαι πέρι.— —κἀγὼ τοιοῦτός εἰμ', ἐπεὶ δυσμηχανῶ λόγοισι τὸν θανόντ' ἀνιστάναι πάλιν.— —ἦ καὶ βίον τείνοντες ὧδ' ὑπείξομεν δόμων καταισχυντῆρσι τοῖσδ' ἡγουμένοις;—	—I'll tell you my view: summon the citizens here to the palace with a shout.— —I think we should burst in as fast as we can and catch them in the act, with the blood still running on the sword.— —And I share that view; I vote for doing something. This is no moment for delay.— —It's plain to see: they're making a start like men setting up a tyranny over the city.— —Yes, because we're wasting time. They trample the glory of delay into the ground, and their hands don't sleep.— —I don't know what plan to hit on and propose. It's for the one who acts to do the planning too.— —I feel the same, since I don't see how words can raise the dead to life again.— —What, will we drag out our lives like this and give way to these defilers of the house as our rulers?—
1364	—ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀνεκτόν,ἀλλὰ κατθανεῖν κρατεῖ· πεπαιτέρα γὰρ μοῖρα τῆς τυραννίδος.— —ἦ γὰρ τεκμηρίοισιν ἐξ οἰμωγμάτων μαντευσόμεσθα τἀνδρὸς ὡς ὀλωλότος;— —σάφ' εἰδότας χρὴ τῶνδε θυμοῦσθαι πέρι· τὸ γὰρ τοπάζειν τοῦ σάφ' εἰδέναι δίχα.— —ταύτην ἐπαινεῖν πάντοθεν πληθύνομαι, τρανῶς Ἀτρείδην εἰδέναι κυροῦνθ' ὅπως.	—No, it's unbearable. Better to die: death is a gentler fate than tyranny.— —What, are we going to take groans as evidence and divine that the man is dead?— —We should only be angry about this when we know for sure. Guessing is one thing, knowing for sure another.— —That's the view I approve, and so do the rest on every side: first find out clearly how it stands with the son of Atreus.
1372	**CLYTEMNESTRA** πολλῶν πάροιθεν καιρίως εἰρημένων τἀναντί' εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαισχυνθήσομαι. πῶς γάρ τις ἐχθροῖς ἐχθρὰ πορσύνων, φίλοις δοκοῦσιν εἶναι, πημονῆς ἀρκύστατ' ἂν φράξειεν, ὕψος κρεῖσσον ἐκπηδήματος;	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Much of what I said before suited the moment; I won't be ashamed now to say the opposite. How else could anyone, plotting hostility against enemies who seem to be friends, fence up the nets of ruin to a height too great to leap over? This contest of an old quarrel has long

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἐμοὶ δ' ἀγὼν ὅδ' οὐκ ἀφρόντιστος πάλαι νείκης παλαιᾶς ἦλθε, σὺν χρόνῳ γε μήν· ἕστηκα δ' ἔνθ' ἔπαισ' ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις. οὕτω δ' ἔπραξα, καὶ τάδ' οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι· ὡς μήτε φεύγειν μήτ' ἀμύνεσθαι μόρον, ἄπειρον ἀμφίβληστρον, ὥσπερ ἰχθύων, περιστιχίζω, πλοῦτον εἵματος κακόν. παίω δέ νιν δίς· κἀν δυοῖν οἰμωγμάτοιν μεθῆκεν αὑτοῦ κῶλα· καὶ πεπτωκότι τρίτην ἐπενδίδωμι, τοῦ κατὰ χθονὸς Διὸς νεκρῶν σωτῆρος εὐκταίαν χάριν.	been in my thoughts, and it has come at last, in time. I stand where I struck, over the work accomplished. This is how I did it—I won't deny it: so that he could neither flee nor ward off his doom, I cast around him an endless net, as for fish, an evil wealth of robe. I strike him twice; and with two groans his limbs went slack. And when he had fallen I gave him a third, a votive offering to the Zeus beneath the earth, the savior of the dead.[23]
1388	οὕτω τὸν αὑτοῦ θυμὸν ὁρμαίνει πεσών· κἀκφυσιῶν ὀξεῖαν αἵματος σφαγὴν βάλλει μ' ἐρεμνῇ ψακάδι φοινίας δρόσου, χαίρουσαν οὐδὲν ἧσσον ἢ διοσδότῳ γάνει σπορητὸς κάλυκος ἐν λοχεύμασιν.	So he fell and gasped away his life, and blowing out a sharp spurt of blood he strikes me with a dark shower of bloody dew—and I rejoice in it no less than the sown grain rejoices in the bright, god-given rain when the bud is giving birth.
1393	ὡς ὧδ' ἐχόντων, πρέσβος Ἀργείων τόδε, χαίροιτ' ἄν, εἰ χαίροιτ', ἐγὼ δ' ἐπεύχομαι. εἰ δ' ἦν πρεπόντων ὥστ' ἐπισπένδειν νεκρῷ, τῷδ' ἂν δικαίως ἦν, ὑπερδίκως μὲν οὖν. τοσῶνδε κρατῆρ' ἐν δόμοις κακῶν ὅδε πλήσας ἀραίων αὐτὸς ἐκπίνει μολών.	Since that is how things stand, you elders of Argos here, rejoice, if you want to rejoice; I glory in it. If it were fitting to pour a libation over a corpse, it would be just to pour it over this one—more than just. Such a bowl of cursed evils he filled in the house, and now he has come home and drains it himself.
1399	**CHORUS** θαυμάζομέν σου γλῶσσαν, ὡς θρασύστομος, / ἥτις τοιόνδ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ κομπάζεις λόγον.	**CHORUS** We're amazed at your tongue, how bold your mouth is, that you can boast such words over your husband.
1401	**CLYTEMNESTRA** πειρᾶσθέ μου γυναικὸς ὡς ἀφράσμονος· ἐγὼ δ' ἀτρέστῳ καρδίᾳ πρὸς εἰδότας λέγω· σὺ δ' αἰνεῖν εἴτε με ψέγειν θέλεις ὅμοιον. οὗτός ἐστιν Ἀγαμέμνων, ἐμὸς πόσις, νεκρὸς δέ, τῆσδε δεξιᾶς χερὸς ἔργον, δικαίας τέκτονος. τάδ' ὧδ' ἔχει.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** You're testing me as if I were a thoughtless woman. But I speak with a fearless heart to men who know, and whether you choose to praise me or blame me, it's all the same. This is Agamemnon, my husband—and a corpse, the work of this right hand, a just craftsman. That's how things stand.
1407	**CHORUS** τί κακόν, ὦ γύναι, χθονοτρεφὲς ἐδανὸν ἢ ποτὸν πασαμένα ῥυτᾶς ἐξ ἁλὸς ὀρόμενον τόδ' ἐπέθου θύος, δημοθρόους τ' ἀράς; ἀπέδικες ἀπέταμες· ἀπόπολις δ' ἔσῃ μῖσος ὄβριμον ἀστοῖς.	**CHORUS** What evil, woman, what food grown from the earth, or drink drawn up from the flowing sea, have you tasted, that you've taken on this sacrifice, and the curses the people cry aloud? You have cast him off, cut him off; and cast out of the city you will be, a heavy hatred to the citizens.
1412	**CLYTEMNESTRA** νῦν μὲν δικάζεις ἐκ πόλεως φυγὴν ἐμοὶ καὶ μῖσος ἀστῶν δημόθρους τ' ἔχειν ἀράς,	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Now you sentence me to exile from the city, to the citizens' hatred and the curses the people cry aloud, though back then you raised

23 She makes her third blow a mock offering to Zeus of the underworld (Hades), as the third libation at a feast went to Zeus the Savior.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	οὐδὲν τότ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἐναντίον φέρων· ὃς οὐ προτιμῶν, ὡσπερεὶ βοτοῦ μόρον, μήλων φλεόντων εὐπόκοις νομεύμασιν, ἔθυσεν αὑτοῦ παῖδα, φιλτάτην ἐμοὶ ὠδῖν', ἐπῳδὸν Θρῃκίων ἀημάτων. οὐ τοῦτον ἐκ γῆς τῆσδε χρῆν σ' ἀνδρηλατεῖν, μιασμάτων ἄποιν'; ἐπήκοος δ' ἐμῶν ἔργων δικαστὴς τραχὺς εἶ. λέγω δέ σοι τοιαῦτ' ἀπειλεῖν, ὡς παρεσκευασμένης ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων χειρὶ νικήσαντ' ἐμοῦ ἄρχειν· ἐὰν δὲ τοὔμπαλιν κραίνῃ θεός, γνώσῃ διδαχθεὶς ὀψὲ γοῦν τὸ σωφρονεῖν.	no objection at all to this man. He thought no more of it than the death of a beast, though sheep abounded in his fleecy flocks: he sacrificed his own child, the dearest fruit of my labor, as a spell to charm the Thracian winds. Shouldn't you have driven him out of this land, in payment for his pollution? But when you hear of what I've done, you're a harsh judge. I tell you, make your threats knowing that I'm ready on equal terms: whoever beats me by force may rule me. But if the god decrees the opposite, you'll learn some sense, though you learn it late.
1426	**CHORUS** μεγαλόμητις εἶ, περίφρονα δ' ἔλακες. ὥσπερ οὖν φονολιβεῖ τύχᾳ φρὴν ἐπιμαίνεται, λίπος ἐπ' ὀμμάτων αἵματος εὖ πρέπει· ἀτίετον ἔτι σὲ χρὴ στερομέναν φίλων τύμμα τύμματι τεῖσαι.	**CHORUS** You are proud in your scheming, and your words are arrogant. Just as your mind is maddened by this blood-dripping fortune, so a smear of blood stands out plain upon your eyes. Still you must, dishonored, robbed of friends, pay stroke for stroke.
1431	**CLYTEMNESTRA** καὶ τήνδ' ἀκούεις ὁρκίων ἐμῶν θέμιν· μὰ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην, Ἄτην Ἐρινύν θ', αἷσι τόνδ' ἔσφαξ' ἐγώ, οὔ μοι φόβου μέλαθρον ἐλπὶς ἐμπατεῖ, ἕως ἂν αἴθῃ πῦρ ἐφ' ἑστίας ἐμῆς Αἴγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονῶν ἐμοί. οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀσπὶς οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους. κεῖται γυναικὸς τῆσδε λυμαντήριος, Χρυσηίδων μείλιγμα τῶν ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ· ἥ τ' αἰχμάλωτος ἥδε καὶ τερασκόπος καὶ κοινόλεκτρος τοῦδε, θεσφατηλόγος πιστὴ ξύνευνος, ναυτίλων δὲ σελμάτων ἰσοτριβής. ἄτιμα δ' οὐκ ἐπραξάτην. ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὕτως, ἡ δέ τοι κύκνου δίκην τὸν ὕστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόον κεῖται, φιλήτωρ τοῦδ'· ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπήγαγεν εὐνῆς παροψώνημα τῆς ἐμῆς χλιδῆς.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Then hear this too, the solemn sanction of my oath. By Justice, fulfilled for my child, by Ruin and the Fury, to whom I slaughtered this man, no expectation of fear sets foot in my hall so long as Aegisthus kindles the fire on my hearth, loyal to me as before. He is no small shield of confidence for us. Here lies the man who outraged this woman, his wife, the darling of every Chryseis under Troy; and here lies this captive, this reader of signs, who shared his bed, this teller of prophecies, his faithful bedmate, and just as familiar with the sailors' benches. They haven't fared without their due. He lies like this; and she, like a swan, having sung her last dying lament, lies here, his lover. And she has brought me a delicacy to spice the luxury of my bed.[24]
1448	**CHORUS** φεῦ, τίς ἂν ἐν τάχει, μὴ περιώδυνος, μηδὲ δεμνιοτήρης, μόλοι τὸν αἰεὶ φέρουσ' ἐν ἡμῖν Μοῖρ' ἀτέλευτον ὕπνον, δαμέντος φύλακος εὐμενεστάτου πολλὰ τλάντος γυναικὸς διαί· πρὸς γυναικὸς δ' ἀπέφθισεν βίον.	**CHORUS** Ah, if only some Fate would come quickly, without great pain, without long keeping to a sickbed, and bring us the sleep that lasts forever, now that our kindliest guardian is laid low,

24 Chryseis was Agamemnon's captive concubine at Troy in the *Iliad*; the plural mocks his many such women.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		who suffered much for a woman's sake and at a woman's hands has lost his life.
1455	ἰὼ ἰὼ παράνους Ἑλένα μία τὰς πολλάς, τάς πάνυ πολλὰς ψυχὰς ὀλέσασ' ὑπὸ Τροίᾳ. νῦν τελέαν πολύμναστον ἐπηνθίσω δι' αἶμ' ἄνιπτον. ἦ τις ἦν τότ' ἐν δόμοις ἔρις ἐρίδματος ἀνδρὸς οἰζύς.	Oh, oh, Helen, out of your mind, you alone destroyed the many, the very many lives beneath Troy. Now you have crowned yourself with a last flower, long remembered, through blood that can't be washed away. Truly there was in the house back then a Strife, strongly built, a husband's misery.
1462	CLYTEMNESTRA μηδὲν θανάτου μοῖραν ἐπεύχου τοῖσδε βαρυνθείς· μηδ' εἰς Ἑλένην κότον ἐκτρέψῃς, ὡς ἀνδρολέτειρ', ὡς μία πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ψυχὰς Δαναῶν ὀλέσασ' ἀξύστατον ἄλγος ἔπραξεν.	CLYTEMNESTRA Don't pray for the lot of death, weighed down by these things; and don't turn your anger on Helen, as a killer of men, as one woman who destroyed the lives of many Danaan men and brought about a grief past healing.
1468	CHORUS δαῖμον, ὃς ἐμπίτνεις δώμασι καὶ διφυί- οισι Τανταλίδαισιν, κράτος τ' ἰσόψυχον ἐκ γυναικῶν καρδιόδηκτον ἐμοὶ κρατύνεις. ἐπὶ δὲ σώματος δίκαν κόρακος ἐχθροῦ σταθεῖσ' ἐκνόμως ὕμνον ὑμνεῖν ἐπεύχεται …	CHORUS Spirit, you who fall upon the house and on the two descendants of Tantalus, you wield through women a power equal in dar- ing, and it bites my heart. Standing over the body like a hateful raven, she boasts, against all law, of singing her song …[25]
1475	CLYTEMNESTRA νῦν δ' ὤρθωσας στόματος γνώμην, τὸν τριπάχυντον δαίμονα γέννης τῆσδε κικλήσκων. ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἔρως αἱματολοιχὸς νείρᾳ τρέφεται, πρὶν καταλῆξαι τὸ παλαιὸν ἄχος, νέος ἰχώρ.	CLYTEMNESTRA Now you have set your judg- ment right when you call on the spirit of this family, thrice-gorged. From him comes the lust for licking blood, nourished in the belly; before the old pain has ceased, fresh gore is flowing.
1481	CHORUS ἦ μέγαν οἰκονόμον δαίμονα καὶ βαρύμηνιν αἰνεῖς, φεῦ φεῦ, κακὸν αἶνον ἀτη- ρᾶς τύχας ἀκορέστου· ἰὴ ἰή, διαὶ Διὸς παναιτίου πανεργέτα· τί γὰρ βροτοῖς ἄνευ Διὸς τελεῖται; τί τῶνδ' οὐ θεόκραντόν ἐστιν;	CHORUS Truly a mighty spirit, ruling the house, heavy in wrath, is the one you praise— ah, ah!—an evil praise of ruinous fortune never sated. Oh, oh, it comes through Zeus, cause of all, doer of all. What is accomplished for mortals without Zeus? Which of these things is not ordained by the gods?
1489	ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ, πῶς σε δακρύσω; φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ' εἴπω;	Oh, oh, my king, my king, how shall I weep for you? From a loving heart, what can I say?

25 Tantalus was the grandfather of Atreus; his descendants are the royal house of Argos.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	κεῖσαι δ' ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῷδ' ἀσεβεῖ θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων. ὤμοι μοι κοίταν τάνδ' ἀνελεύθερον δολίῳ μόρῳ δαμεὶς δάμαρτος ἐκ χερὸς ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνῳ.	You lie in this spider's web, breathing out your life in an impious death. Oh, oh, this bed unworthy of a free man, struck down by a treacherous death with a two-edged weapon from your wife's hand.
1497	**CLYTEMNESTRA** αὐχεῖς εἶναι τόδε τοὔργον ἐμόν; μηδ' ἐπιλεχθῇς Ἀγαμεμνονίαν εἶναί μ' ἄλοχον. φανταζόμενος δὲ γυναικὶ νεκροῦ τοῦδ' ὁ παλαιὸς δριμὺς ἀλάστωρ Ἀτρέως χαλεποῦ θοινατῆρος τόνδ' ἀπέτεισεν, τέλεον νεαροῖς ἐπιθύσας.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** You claim this deed is mine? Don't reckon that I am Agamemnon's wife. No—taking the form of this dead man's wife, the ancient, bitter avenging spirit of Atreus, that cruel host of the banquet, has paid him back, sacrificing a full-grown man on top of the young.
1505	**CHORUS** ὡς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ τοῦδε φόνου τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσων; πῶς πῶς; πατρόθεν δὲ συλλή- πτωρ γένοιτ' ἂν ἀλάστωρ. βιάζεται δ' ὁμοσπόροις ἐπιρροαῖσιν αἱμάτων μέλας Ἄρης, ὅποι δίκαν προβαίνων πάχνᾳ κουροβόρῳ παρέξει.	**CHORUS** That you are guiltless of this murder—who will bear witness? How, how? But the avenging spirit, from his father, could be your accomplice. Black Ares forces his way through floods of kindred blood to the place where, advancing, he will grant justice for the clotted gore of children eaten.
1513	ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ, πῶς σε δακρύσω; φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ' εἴπω; κεῖσαι δ' ἀράχνης ἐν ὑφάσματι τῷδ' ἀσεβεῖ θανάτῳ βίον ἐκπνέων. ὤμοι μοι κοίταν τάνδ' ἀνελεύθερον δολίῳ μόρῳ δαμεὶς ἐκ χερὸς ἀμφιτόμῳ βελέμνῳ.	Oh, oh, my king, my king, how shall I weep for you? From a loving heart, what can I say? You lie in this spider's web, breathing out your life in an impious death. Oh, oh, this bed unworthy of a free man, struck down by a treacherous death with a two-edged weapon, by a hand.
1523	**CLYTEMNESTRA** οὐδὲ γὰρ οὗτος δολίαν ἄτην οἴκοισιν ἔθηκ'; ἀλλ' ἐμὸν ἐκ τοῦδ' ἔρνος ἀερθέν. τὴν πολυκλαύτην Ἰφιγενείαν, ἄξια δράσας ἄξια πάσχων μηδὲν ἐν Ἅιδου μεγαλαυχείτω, ξιφοδηλήτῳ, θανάτῳ τείσας ἅπερ ἦρξεν.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Didn't he himself bring treacherous ruin into the house? Yes—my shoot by him, raised up, Iphigenia, so much wept for: he did as he deserved and suffers as he deserves. Let him make no great boasts in Hades, now that by death from the sword he has paid for what he began.
1530	**CHORUS** ἀμηχανῶ φροντίδος στερηθεὶς εὐπάλαμον μέριμναν ὅπα τράπωμαι, πίτνοντος οἴκου. δέδοικα δ' ὄμβρου κτύπον δομοσφαλῆ τὸν αἱματηρόν· ψακὰς δὲ λήγει. δίκην δ' ἐπ' ἄλλο πρᾶγμα θηγάνει βλάβης πρὸς ἄλλαις θηγάναισι μοῖρα.	**CHORUS** I am at a loss, robbed of any resourceful thought, which way to turn, as the house falls. I fear the beating storm of blood that brings the house down; the drizzle is ending. And Fate is whetting justice for another deed of

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		harm on other whetstones.
1537	ἰὼ γᾶ γᾶ, εἴθ' ἔμ' ἐδέξω, πρὶν τόνδ' ἐπιδεῖν ἀργυροτοίχου δροίτης κατέχοντα χάμευναν. τίς ὁ θάψων νιν; τίς ὁ θρηνήσων; ἦ σὺ τόδ' ἔρξαι τλήσῃ, κτείνασ' ἄνδρα τὸν αὑτῆς ἀποκωκῦσαι ψυχῇ τ' ἄχαριν χάριν ἀντ' ἔργων μεγάλων ἀδίκως ἐπικρᾶναι; τίς δ' ἐπιτύμβιον αἶνον ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ θείῳ σὺν δακρύοις ἰάπτων ἀληθείᾳ φρενῶν πονήσει;	Oh earth, earth, if only you had taken me before I saw him lying on the low bed of a silver-walled bath! Who will bury him? Who will sing his dirge? Will you dare to do this—having killed your own husband, to wail for him and, for his great deeds, unjustly pay his soul a graceless grace? And who, sending forth the praise at the tomb over this godlike man with tears, will labor at it in truth of heart?
1551	**CLYTEMNESTRA** οὐ σὲ προσήκει τὸ μέλημ' ἀλέγειν τοῦτο· πρὸς ἡμῶν κάππεσε, κάτθανε, καὶ καταθάψομεν, οὐχ ὑπὸ κλαυθμῶν τῶν ἐξ οἴκων, ἀλλ' Ἰφιγένειά νιν ἀσπασίως θυγάτηρ, ὡς χρή, πατέρ' ἀντιάσασα πρὸς ὠκύπορον πόρθμευμ' ἀχέων περὶ χεῖρε βαλοῦσα φιλήσει.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** It's not your place to concern yourself with this care. At our hands he fell, he died, and we will bury him, not with weeping from those of his house; but Iphigenia, his daughter, gladly, as is right, will meet her father by the swift-flowing ferry of sorrows, throw her arms around him, and kiss him.
1560	**CHORUS** ὄνειδος ἥκει τόδ' ἀντ' ὀνείδους. δύσμαχα δ' ἔστι κρῖναι. φέρει φέροντ', ἐκτίνει δ' ὁ καίνων. μίμνει δὲ μίμνοντος ἐν θρόνῳ Διὸς παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα· θέσμιον γάρ. τίς ἂν γονὰν ἀραῖον ἐκβάλοι δόμων; κεκόλληται γένος πρὸς ἄτᾳ.	**CHORUS** Reproach comes to meet reproach. It's a hard fight to judge between them. The plunderer is plundered, the killer pays. It remains, while Zeus remains on his throne, that the doer suffers: that is law. Who could cast the seed of the curse out of the house? The family is glued fast to ruin.
1567	**CLYTEMNESTRA** ἐς τόνδ' ἐνέβης ξὺν ἀληθείᾳ χρησμόν. ἐγὼ δ' οὖν ἐθέλω δαίμονι τῷ Πλεισθενιδῶν ὅρκους θεμένη τάδε μὲν στέργειν, δύστλητά περ ὄνθ'· ὃ δὲ λοιπόν, ἰόντ' ἐκ τῶνδε δόμων ἄλλην γενεὰν τρίβειν θανάτοις αὐθένταισι. κτεάνων τε μέρος βαιὸν ἐχούσῃ πᾶν ἀπόχρη μοι μανίας μελάθρων ἀλληλοφόνους ἀφελούσῃ.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** You have come to this oracle with truth. But I, for my part, am willing to swear a pact with the spirit of the sons of Pleisthenes: to accept these things, hard to bear as they are; and for the rest, that he leave this house and wear down another family with murders by kin. Keeping a small share of the wealth, I'll be fully content, if only I've rid these halls of the madness of killing one another.[26]
1577		

26 Pleisthenes: an ancestor in the house of Atreus; his "sons" here are the whole family.

GREEK

ENGLISH

AEGISTHUS ὦ φέγγος εὔφρον ἡμέρας δικηφόρου.
φαίην ἂν ἤδη νῦν βροτῶν τιμαόρους
θεοὺς ἄνωθεν γῆς ἐποπτεύειν ἄχη,
ἰδὼν ὑφαντοῖς ἐν πέπλοις, Ἐρινύων
τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε κείμενον φίλως ἐμοί,
χερὸς πατρῴας ἐκτίνοντα μηχανάς.

AEGISTHUS Kindly light of the day that brings justice! Now at last I can say that the gods who avenge mortals look down from above on the woes of earth, now that I see this man lying in a woven robe of the Furies—a welcome sight to me—paying for the schemes of his father's hand.

1583 Ἀτρεὺς γὰρ ἄρχων τῆσδε γῆς, τούτου πατήρ,
πατέρα Θυέστην τὸν ἐμόν, ὡς τορῶς φράσαι,
αὐτοῦ δ' ἀδελφόν, ἀμφίλεκτος ὢν κράτει,
ἠνδρηλάτησεν ἐκ πόλεώς τε καὶ δόμων.
καὶ προστρόπαιος ἑστίας μολὼν πάλιν
τλήμων Θυέστης μοῖραν ηὗρετ' ἀσφαλῆ,
τὸ μὴ θανὼν πατρῷον αἱμάξαι πέδον,
αὐτός· ξένια δὲ τοῦδε δύσθεος πατὴρ
Ἀτρεύς, προθύμως μᾶλλον ἢ φίλως, πατρὶ
τῷμῷ, κρεουργὸν ἦμαρ εὐθύμως ἄγειν
δοκῶν, παρέσχε δαῖτα παιδείων κρεῶν.
τὰ μὲν ποδήρη καὶ χερῶν ἄκρους κτένας
ἔθρυπτ', ἄνωθεν ...
...
... ἀνδρακὰς καθήμενος.
ἄσημα δ' αὐτῶν αὐτίκ' ἀγνοίᾳ λαβὼν
ἔσθει βορὰν ἄσωτον, ὡς ὁρᾷς, γένει.

For Atreus, this man's father, when he ruled this land and his power was disputed, drove out of the city and out of his home my father Thyestes—to put it plainly—his own brother. And poor Thyestes came back as a suppliant to the hearth and found his lot was safe: he would not be killed and stain his ancestral soil with his blood, not he himself. But this man's godless father, Atreus, more eager than friendly, pretending to celebrate a happy day of butchering meat, served my father, as a gift of hospitality, a feast of his own children's flesh. The feet and the combs of the fingers he broke up small, above ... ... sitting apart. And my father at once, not knowing, took the parts that couldn't be recognized and ate a meal that, as you see, has proved ruinous to the family.

1598 κἄπειτ' ἐπιγνοὺς ἔργον οὐ καταίσιον
ὤμωξεν, ἀμπίπτει δ' ἀπὸ σφαγὴν ἐρῶν,
μόρον δ' ἄφερτον Πελοπίδαις ἐπεύχεται,
λάκτισμα δείπνου ξυνδίκως τιθεὶς ἀρᾷ,
οὕτως ὀλέσθαι πᾶν τὸ Πλεισθένους γένος.
ἐκ τῶνδέ σοι πεσόντα τόνδ' ἰδεῖν πάρα.
κἀγὼ δίκαιος τοῦδε τοῦ φόνου ῥαφεύς.
τρίτον γὰρ ὄντα μ' ἐπὶ δυσαθλίῳ πατρὶ
συνεξελαύνει τυτθὸν ὄντ' ἐν σπαργάνοις·
τραφέντα δ' αὖθις ἡ δίκη κατήγαγεν.
καὶ τοῦδε τἀνδρὸς ἡψάμην θυραῖος ὤν,
πᾶσαν συνάψας μηχανὴν δυσβουλίας.
οὕτω καλὸν δὴ καὶ τὸ κατθανεῖν ἐμοί,
ἰδόντα τοῦτον τῆς δίκης ἐν ἕρκεσιν.

And then, when he recognized the monstrous deed, he cried out, fell back vomiting up the slaughtered flesh, and called down on the descendants of Pelops a doom unbearable, kicking over the table to match his curse: so may the whole race of Pleisthenes perish. That is why you can see this man fallen here. And I am the one who justly stitched this murder together. I was the third son, and Atreus drove me out with my unhappy father, a baby still in swaddling clothes; but when I had grown up, justice brought me home again. And I laid hands on this man though I wasn't even here, fitting together every device of the evil plan. So now even death would be fine for me, since I have seen him in the nets of justice.

1612 **CHORUS** Αἴγισθ', ὑβρίζειν ἐν κακοῖσιν οὐ σέβω.
σὺ δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε φῂς ἑκὼν κατακτανεῖν,
μόνος δ' ἔποικτον τόνδε βουλεῦσαι φόνον·
οὔ φημ' ἀλύξειν ἐν δίκῃ τὸ σὸν κάρα
δημορριφεῖς, σάφ' ἴσθι, λευσίμους ἀράς.

CHORUS Aegisthus, I have no respect for gloating over evil. You say you killed this man deliberately, and that you alone planned this pitiful murder. I tell you, when justice comes, your head won't escape the people's curses, and the stones that come with them—be sure of it.

1617 **AEGISTHUS** σὺ ταῦτα φωνεῖς νερτέρᾳ προσήμενος
κώπῃ, κρατούντων τῶν ἐπὶ ζυγῷ δορός;
γνώσῃ γέρων ὢν ὡς διδάσκεσθαι βαρὺ
τῷ τηλικούτῳ, σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον.

AEGISTHUS You talk like this, sitting at the lower oar, while those on the upper bench command the ship? Old as you are, you'll learn how hard it is at your age to be taught, when you're told to show

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	δεσμὸς δὲ καὶ τὸ γῆρας αἵ τε νήστιδες δύαι διδάσκειν ἐξοχώταται φρενῶν ἰατρομάντεις. οὐχ ὁρᾷς ὁρῶν τάδε; πρὸς κέντρα μὴ λάκτιζε, μὴ παίσας μογῇς.	some sense. Chains and old age and the pangs of hunger are the finest doctor-prophets there are for teaching the mind. Don't you see it, though you have eyes to see? Don't kick against the goads, or you'll strike and hurt yourself.
1625	**CHORUS** γύναι, σὺ τοὺς ἥκοντας ἐκ μάχης μένων οἰκουρὸς εὐνὴν ἀνδρὸς αἰσχύνων ἅμα ἀνδρὶ στρατηγῷ τόνδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον;	**CHORUS** You woman! You stayed home waiting for the men to come back from battle, and all the while you shamed a husband's bed—did you plan this death for a man, a general?
1628	**AEGISTHUS** καὶ ταῦτα τἄπη κλαυμάτων ἀρχηγενῆ. Ὀρφεῖ δὲ γλῶσσαν τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔχεις. ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἧγε πάντ' ἀπὸ φθογγῆς χαρᾷ, σὺ δ' ἐξορίνας νηπίοις ὑλάγμασιν ἄξῃ· κρατηθεὶς δ' ἡμερώτερος φανῇ.	**AEGISTHUS** These words too will be the start of tears. Your tongue is the opposite of Orpheus'. He led all things after him with the joy of his voice; you, provoking us with your silly yapping, will be the one led away. Once you're mastered, you'll prove tamer.
1633	**CHORUS** ὡς δὴ σύ μοι τύραννος Ἀργείων ἔσῃ, ὃς οὐκ, ἐπειδὴ τῷδ' ἐβούλευσας μόρον, δρᾶσαι τόδ' ἔργον οὐκ ἔτλης αὐτοκτόνως.	**CHORUS** As if you'll be my tyrant over the Argives—you, who plotted this man's death and then didn't dare do the deed with your own hand!
1636	**AEGISTHUS** τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἦν σαφῶς· ἐγὼ δ' ὕποπτος ἐχθρὸς ἦ παλαιγενής. ἐκ τῶν δὲ τοῦδε χρημάτων πειράσομαι ἄρχειν πολιτῶν· τὸν δὲ μὴ πειθάνορα ζεύξω βαρείαις οὔτι μοι σειραφόρον κριθῶντα πῶλον· ἀλλ' ὁ δυσφιλὴς σκότῳ λιμὸς ξύνοικος μαλθακόν σφ' ἐπόψεται.	**AEGISTHUS** Because the deceiving was clearly the woman's part; I was suspect, an enemy from of old. With this man's wealth I'll try to rule the citizens. Anyone who won't obey, I'll yoke in heavy harness—he'll be no barley-fed trace-horse, I promise you. No, hunger, that hateful companion in the dark, will see him grow gentle.
1643	**CHORUS** τί δὴ τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ' ἀπὸ ψυχῆς κακῆς οὐκ αὐτὸς ἠνάριζες, ἀλλά νιν γυνὴ χώρας μίασμα καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων ἔκτειν';Ὀρέστης ἆρά που βλέπει φάος, ὅπως κατελθὼν δεῦρο πρευμενεῖ τύχῃ ἀμφοῖν γένηται τοῖνδε παγκρατὴς φονεύς;	**CHORUS** Then why, with your cowardly soul, didn't you kill this man yourself? Why did a woman, the pollution of the land and of its native gods, kill him? Does Orestes still see the light somewhere, so that he may come home here with kindly fortune and kill these two, victorious over both?
1649	**AEGISTHUS** ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ δοκεῖς τάδ' ἔρδειν καὶ λέγειν, γνώσῃ τάχα / εἶα δή, φίλοι λοχῖται, τοὔργον οὐχ ἑκὰς τόδε.	**AEGISTHUS** Well, since you mean to act and talk like this, you'll soon find out. Come on, my comrades of the guard, the work is close at hand!
1651	**CHORUS** εἶα δή, ξίφος πρόκωπον πᾶς τις εὐτρεπιζέτω.	**CHORUS** Come on, then, every man get his sword ready, hilt in hand!
1652	**AEGISTHUS** ἀλλὰ κἀγὼ μὴν πρόκωπος οὐκ ἀναίνομαι θανεῖν.	**AEGISTHUS** Well, I too have my hand on my sword, and I don't refuse to die.
1653	**CHORUS** δεχομένοις λέγεις θανεῖν σε· τὴν τύχην δ' αἱρούμεθα.	**CHORUS** You talk of dying—we accept the omen. We'll take what fortune brings.
1654	**CLYTEMNESTRA** μηδαμῶς, ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, ἄλλα δράσωμεν κακά.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** No, no, dearest of men, let's do no more harm. Even this is a great deal to reap, a

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	ἀλλὰ καὶ τάδ’ ἐξαμῆσαι πολλά, δύστηνον θέρος. πημονῆς δ’ ἅλις γ’ ὑπάρχει· μηδὲν αἱματώμεθα. στείχετ’ αἰδοῖοι γέροντες πρὸς δόμους, πεπρωμένοις πρὶν παθεῖν εἴξαντες ὥρᾳ· χρῆν τάδ’ ὡς ἐπράξαμεν. εἰ δέ τοι μόχθων γένοιτο τῶνδ’ ἅλις, δεχοίμεθ’ ἄν, δαίμονος χηλῇ βαρείᾳ δυστυχῶς πεπληγμένοι. ὧδ’ ἔχει λόγος γυναικός, εἴ τις ἀξιοῖ μαθεῖν.	miserable harvest. There’s misery enough already; let’s shed no blood. Go, honored elders, to your homes, yielding to what is fated before you come to harm. What we have done had to be done. If there should be enough of these troubles, we would accept it, struck so wretchedly as we have been by the heavy hoof of the spirit. That is a woman’s word, if anyone thinks it worth learning.
1662	**AEGISTHUS** ἀλλὰ τούσδ’ ἐμοὶ ματαίαν γλῶσσαν ὧδ’ ἀπανθίσαι κἀκβαλεῖν ἔπη τοιαῦτα δαίμονος πειρωμένους, σώφρονος γνώμης θ’ ἁμαρτεῖν τὸν κρατοῦντά θ’ ὑβρίσαι.	**AEGISTHUS** But that these men should let their idle tongues blossom against me like this, and fling out such words, tempting fate, and miss the mark of good sense, and insult their master!
1665	**CHORUS** οὐκ ἂν Ἀργείων τόδ’ εἴη, φῶτα προσσαίνειν κακόν.	**CHORUS** It wouldn’t be like Argives to fawn on a villain.
1666	**AEGISTHUS** ἀλλ’ ἐγώ σ’ ἐν ὑστέραισιν ἡμέραις μέτειμ’ ἔτι.	**AEGISTHUS** Well, I’ll come after you yet, in days to come.
1667	**CHORUS** οὔκ, ἐὰν δαίμων, Ὀρέστην δεῦρ’ ἀπευθύνῃ μολεῖν.	**CHORUS** Not if some god guides Orestes home to come here.
1668	**AEGISTHUS** οἶδ’ ἐγὼ φεύγοντας ἄνδρας ἐλπίδας σιτουμένους.	**AEGISTHUS** I know how exiles feed on hopes.
1669	**CHORUS** πρᾶσσε, πιαίνου, μιαίνων τὴν δίκην, ἐπεὶ πάρα.	**CHORUS** Go on, fatten yourself and foul justice, since you can.
1670	**AEGISTHUS** ἴσθι μοι δώσων ἄποινα τῆσδε μωρίας χάριν.	**AEGISTHUS** Be sure you’ll pay me a penalty for this folly.
1671	**CHORUS** κόμπασον θαρσῶν, ἀλέκτωρ ὥστε θηλείας πέλας.	**CHORUS** Brag away, bold as a rooster beside his hen.
1672	**CLYTEMNESTRA** μὴ προτιμήσῃς ματαίων τῶνδ’ ὑλαγμάτων· ἐγὼ / καὶ σὺ θήσομεν κρατοῦντε τῶνδε δωμάτων καλῶς.	**CLYTEMNESTRA** Don’t pay any mind to their idle yapping. You and I, the masters of this house, will put things in good order.