Clouds

ARISTOPHANES

c. 446–386 BC

Clouds

Νεφέλαι

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited

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Clouds · Aristophanes (c. 446–386 BC)

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INTRODUCTION

Strepsiades, an old farmer who married into a grand city family, is drowning in debts run up by his horse-mad son, Pheidippides. His way out: enroll at the Thinkery, the school next door, where Socrates and his pale students measure how far a flea can jump and teach how to make the weaker argument beat the stronger. With that skill, he reasons, he can talk his way out of paying anyone.

Aristophanes staged the play at the Dionysia of 423 BC, where it came third; the text we have is a partial revision that was never performed. Its Socrates—hanging in a basket to study the sky, worshiping the Clouds, denying Zeus—is a cartoon, but a lasting one. Twenty-four years later, in Plato's Apology, Socrates names this play as a source of the prejudice that brought him to trial.

At its center is a debate between the Stronger and the Weaker Argument: old-fashioned discipline against slick modern cleverness. The comedy is fast, filthy and sharp, and Strepsiades learns, too late, what such an education can do.

Clouds

Athens, outside Strepsiades' house and Socrates' Thinkery next door.

PROLOGUE

Strepsiades, sleepless over debts from his son's horses, decides to send him to Socrates' Thinkery.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1	**STREPSIADES** ἰοὺ ἰού· ὦ Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ τὸ χρῆμα τῶν νυκτῶν ὅσον· ἀπέραντον. οὐδέποθ' ἡμέρα γενήσεται; καὶ μὴν πάλαι γ' ἀλεκτρυόνος ἤκουσ' ἐγώ· οἱ δ' οἰκέται ῥέγκουσιν· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν πρὸ τοῦ. ἀπόλοιο δῆτ' ὦ πόλεμε πολλῶν οὕνεκα, ὅτ' οὐδὲ κολάσ' ἔξεστί μοι τοὺς οἰκέτας. ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὁ χρηστὸς οὑτοσὶ νεανίας ἐγείρεται τῆς νυκτός, ἀλλὰ πέρδεται ἐν πέντε σισύραις ἐγκεκορδυλημένος. ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ ῥέγκωμεν ἐγκεκαλυμμένοι. ἀλλ' οὐ δύναμαι δείλαιος εὕδειν δακνόμενος ὑπὸ τῆς δαπάνης καὶ τῆς φάτνης καὶ τῶν χρεῶν διὰ τουτονὶ τὸν υἱόν.	**STREPSIADES** Oh no, oh no! Zeus almighty, how long these nights are! Endless. Is it never going to be day? I heard the rooster ages ago, and the slaves are still snoring. They wouldn't have, in the old days. Damn you, war, for plenty of reasons, and not least because now I can't even punish my own slaves. And this fine young man here doesn't wake up during the night either. No, he lies there farting, rolled up in five blankets. Well, if that's how it is, let's cover our heads and snore. But I can't sleep, poor me. I'm being bitten by the expenses and the stable bills and the debts, all because of this son of mine.[1]
14	ὁ δὲ κόμην ἔχων ἱππάζεταί τε καὶ ξυνωρικεύεται ὀνειροπολεῖ θ' ἵππους· ἐγὼ δ' ἀπόλλυμαι ὁρῶν ἄγουσαν τὴν σελήνην εἰκάδας· οἱ γὰρ τόκοι χωροῦσιν. ἅπτε παῖ λύχνον, κἄκφερε τὸ γραμματεῖον, ἵν' ἀναγνῶ λαβὼν ὁπόσοις ὀφείλω καὶ λογίσωμαι τοὺς τόκους. φέρ' ἴδω τί ὀφείλω; δώδεκα μνᾶς Πασίᾳ. τοῦ δώδεκα μνᾶς Πασίᾳ; τί ἐχρησάμην; ὅτ' ἐπριάμην τὸν κοππατίαν. οἴμοι τάλας, εἴθ' ἐξεκόπην πρότερον τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν λίθῳ.	He wears his hair long, he rides, he drives a two-horse chariot, he dreams about horses. And I'm being ruined, watching the moon bring round the twentieth of the month, because the interest keeps mounting. Boy, light a lamp and bring out the ledger, so I can read through how many people I owe and work out the interest. Let's see, what do I owe? "Twelve minas to Pasias." Twelve minas to Pasias, what for? What did I spend it on? When I bought that koppa-branded horse. Oh, poor me! I wish I'd had my eye knocked out with a stone first![2]
25	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Φίλων ἀδικεῖς· ἔλαυνε τὸν σαυτοῦ δρόμον.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Philon, you're cheating! Keep to your own lane!
26	**STREPSIADES** τοῦτ' ἔστι τουτὶ τὸ κακὸν ὅ μ' ἀπολώλεκεν· / ὀνειροπολεῖ γὰρ καὶ καθεύδων ἱππικήν.	**STREPSIADES** That's it, that's the very trouble that's ruined me. Even in his sleep he dreams about horses.
28	**PHEIDIPPIDES** πόσους δρόμους ἐλᾷ τὰ πολεμιστήρια;	

1 During the Peloponnesian War, slaves who were badly treated could run away to the Spartan forces in Attica, so masters were wary of punishing them.
2 A koppatias was a thoroughbred branded with the old letter koppa. Strepsiades puns on it with exekopēn, "I had (my eye) knocked out."

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		PHEIDIPPIDES How many laps will the war chariots run?
29	**STREPSIADES** ἐμὲ μὲν σὺ πολλοὺς τὸν πατέρ' ἐλαύνεις δρόμους. ἀτὰρ τί χρέος ἔβα με μετὰ τὸν Πασίαν; τρεῖς μναῖ διφρίσκου καὶ τροχοῖν Ἀμυνίᾳ.	**STREPSIADES** You're running your father plenty of laps! But what debt has come upon me next, after Pasias? "Three minas to Amynias, for a chariot board and a pair of wheels."[3]
32	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἄπαγε τὸν ἵππον ἐξαλίσας οἴκαδε.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Give the horse a roll in the dust and take him home.
33	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' ὦ μέλ' ἐξήλικας ἐμέ γ' ἐκ τῶν ἐμῶν, ὅτε καὶ δίκας ὤφληκα χἄτεροι τόκου ἐνεχυράσεσθαί φασιν.	**STREPSIADES** My friend, it's me you've rolled—right out of house and home! I've already lost lawsuits, and other creditors say they'll seize my property for the interest.
35	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἐτεὸν ὦ πάτερ / τί δυσκολαίνεις καὶ στρέφει τὴν νύχθ' ὅλην;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Honestly, Father, why are you so grumpy, tossing and turning all night?
37	**STREPSIADES** δάκνει μὲ δήμαρχός τις ἐκ τῶν στρωμάτων.	**STREPSIADES** There's some bailiff biting me from the bedclothes.[4]
38	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἔασον ὦ δαιμόνιε καταδαρθεῖν τί με.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Good grief, man, let me get a little sleep.
39	**STREPSIADES** σὺ δ' οὖν κάθευδε· τὰ δὲ χρέα ταῦτ' ἴσθ' ὅτι ἐς τὴν κεφαλὴν ἅπαντα τὴν σὴν τρέψεται. φεῦ. εἴθ' ὤφελ' ἡ προμνήστρι' ἀπολέσθαι κακῶς, ἥτις με γῆμ' ἐπῆρε τὴν σὴν μητέρα· ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἦν ἄγροικος ἥδιστος βίος εὐρωτιῶν, ἀκόρητος, εἰκῇ κείμενος, βρύων μελίτταις καὶ προβάτοις καὶ στεμφύλοις. ἔπειτ' ἔγημα Μεγακλέους τοῦ Μεγακλέους ἀδελφιδῆν ἄγροικος ὢν ἐξ ἄστεως, σεμνὴν τρυφῶσαν ἐγκεκοισυρωμένην. ταύτην ὅτ' ἐγάμουν, συγκατεκλινόμην ἐγὼ ὄζων τρυγὸς τρασιᾶς ἐρίων περιουσίας, ἡ δ' αὖ μύρου κρόκου καταγλωττισμάτων, δαπάνης λαφυγμοῦ Κωλιάδος Γενετυλλίδος. οὐ μὴν ἐρῶ γ' ὡς ἀργὸς ἦν, ἀλλ' ἐσπάθα.	**STREPSIADES** All right, sleep then. But these debts, believe me, are all going to come down on your head. Ugh. I wish that matchmaker had come to a miserable end, the one who talked me into marrying your mother. I had the sweetest life in the country: unwashed, unswept, lying around any old way, swarming with bees and sheep and olive pressings. Then I married the niece of Megacles, son of Megacles. I was a farmer and she was from the city: haughty, pampered, a regular Coesyra. When I married her and climbed into bed with her, I smelled of new wine, drying figs, fleeces, plenty. She smelled of perfume, saffron, tongue-kissing, spending, gorging, Colias and Genetyllis. Mind you, I won't say she was lazy. Oh no, she really ran through the thread.[5]
54	ἐγὼ δ' ἂν αὐτῇ θοἰμάτιον δεικνὺς τοδὶ / πρόφασιν ἔφασκον, ὦ γύναι λίαν σπαθᾷς.	And I'd show her this cloak here as my excuse and say, "Wife, you run through far too much."[6]
56	**SERVANT** ἔλαιον ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἐν τῷ λύχνῳ.	**SERVANT** We've got no oil in the lamp.
57		

3 Amynias, a real Athenian whom Aristophanes mocks elsewhere, appears here as one of Strepsiades' creditors.
4 Literally "a demarch," the local official who could seize a debtor's property. Strepsiades means the bedbugs.
5 Megacles and Coesyra belong to the grand Alcmaeonid family, and Coesyra was proverbial for luxury. Colias and Genetyllis were goddesses of sex and childbirth worshipped by women.
6 The Greek verb spathan means to beat the weft tight on the loom (using up wool) and also, figuratively, to squander.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STREPSIADES οἴμοι· τί γάρ μοι τὸν πότην ἥπτες λύχνον; / δεῦρ' ἔλθ' ἵνα κλάῃς.	**STREPSIADES** Damn! Why did you light me the thirsty lamp? Come over here, I'll give you something to cry about.
58	**SERVANT** διὰ τί δῆτα κλαύσομαι;	**SERVANT** Why should I cry?
59	**STREPSIADES** ὅτι τῶν παχειῶν ἐνετίθεις θρυαλλίδων. μετὰ ταῦθ', ὅπως νῷν ἐγένεθ' υἱὸς οὑτοσί, ἐμοί τε δὴ καὶ τῇ γυναικὶ τἀγαθῇ, περὶ τοὐνόματος δὴ 'ντεῦθεν ἐλοιδορούμεθα· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἵππον προσετίθει πρὸς τοὔνομα, Ξάνθιππον ἢ Χαριππον ἢ Καλλιππίδην, ἐγὼ δὲ τοῦ πάππου 'τιθέμην Φειδωνίδην. τέως μὲν οὖν ἐκρινόμεθ'· εἶτα τῷ χρόνῳ κοινῇ ξυνέβημεν κἀθέμεθα Φειδιππίδην. τοῦτον τὸν υἱὸν λαμβάνουσ' ἐκορίζετο, "ὅταν σὺ μέγας ὢν ἅρμ' ἐλαύνῃς πρὸς πόλιν," "ὥσπερ Μεγακλέης, ξυστίδ' ἔχων." ἐγὼ δ' ἔφην, "ὅταν μὲν οὖν τὰς αἶγας ἐκ τοῦ φελλέως," "ὥσπερ ὁ πατήρ σου, διφθέραν ἐνημμένος."	**STREPSIADES** Because you put in one of the fat wicks. After that, when this son here was born to us, to me and to my fine lady wife, we started squabbling about his name. She wanted to add "horse" to it, Xanthippus or Charippus or Callippides, and I wanted to give him his grandfather's name, Pheidonides. For a while we fought it out, and then eventually we came to an agreement and named him Pheidippides. She used to take this son of hers and coo over him: "When you're big and you drive your chariot to the city like Megacles, wearing your long robe…" And I'd say: "No, when you drive the goats home from the rocky hills like your father, wearing a leather jerkin."[7]
73	ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπίθετο τοῖς ἐμοῖς οὐδὲν λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἵππερόν μου κατέχεεν τῶν χρημάτων. νῦν οὖν ὅλην τὴν νύκτα φροντίζων ὁδοῦ μίαν ηὗρον ἀτραπὸν δαιμονίως ὑπερφυᾶ, ἣν ἢν ἀναπείσω τουτονί, σωθήσομαι. ἀλλ' ἐξεγεῖραι πρῶτον αὐτὸν βούλομαι. πῶς δῆτ' ἂν ἥδιστ' αὐτὸν ἐπεγείραιμι; πῶς; Φειδιππίδη Φειδιππίδιον.	But he never listened to a word I said. He's poured a galloping horse fever all over my finances. So now, after spending the whole night thinking about a way out, I've found a single path, a miraculously brilliant one. If I can talk him into it, I'm saved. But first I want to wake him up. How could I wake him up most sweetly? How? Pheidippides. Pheidippidikins.
80	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τί ὦ πάτερ;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** What is it, Father?
81	**STREPSIADES** κύσον με καὶ τὴν χεῖρα δὸς τὴν δεξιάν.	**STREPSIADES** Kiss me, and give me your right hand.
82	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἰδού. τί ἔστιν;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** There. What is it?
	STREPSIADES εἰπέ μοι, φιλεῖς ἐμέ;	**STREPSIADES** Tell me, do you love me?
83	**PHEIDIPPIDES** νὴ τὸν Ποσειδῶ τουτονὶ τὸν ἵππιον.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Yes, by Poseidon here, the god of horses.
84	**STREPSIADES** μὴ 'μοί γε τοῦτον μηδαμῶς τὸν ἵππιον· οὗτος γὰρ ὁ θεὸς αἴτιός μοι τῶν κακῶν. ἀλλ' εἴπερ ἐκ τῆς καρδίας μ' ὄντως φιλεῖς, ὦ παῖ πιθοῦ.	**STREPSIADES** No, no, not him, please, not the horse god! That god's the cause of all my troubles. But if you really love me from the bottom of your heart, son, do as I say.
87	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τί οὖν πίθωμαι δῆτά σοι;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** All right, so what am I supposed to do?
88		

7 Greek hippos means "horse" (the aristocratic touch), while Pheidōn suggests pheidō, "thrift": Pheidippides is roughly "Spare-the-Horses."

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STREPSIADES ἔκστρεψον ὡς τάχιστα τοὺς σαυτοῦ τρόπους, / καὶ μάνθαν' ἐλθὼν ἃν ἐγὼ παραινέσω.	**STREPSIADES** Turn your ways inside out, as fast as you can, and go and learn what I advise.
90	**PHEIDIPPIDES** λέγε δή, τί κελεύεις;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Go on then, tell me, what are your orders?
	STREPSIADES καί τι πείσει;	**STREPSIADES** And you'll do it?
	PHEIDIPPIDES πείσομαι / νὴ τὸν Διόνυσον.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I'll do it, by Dionysus.
91	**STREPSIADES** δεῦρό νυν ἀπόβλεπε. / ὁρᾷς τὸ θύριον τοῦτο καὶ τ�ᾠκίδιον;	**STREPSIADES** Look over here, then. See that little door, and the little house?
93	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ὁρῶ. τί οὖν τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐτεὸν ὦ πάτερ;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I see it. So what is it, really, Father?
94	**STREPSIADES** ψυχῶν σοφῶν τοῦτ' ἐστὶ φροντιστήριον. ἐνταῦθ' ἐνοικοῦσ' ἄνδρες, οἳ τὸν οὐρανὸν λέγοντες ἀναπείθουσιν ὡς ἔστιν πνιγεύς, κἄστιν περὶ ἡμᾶς οὗτος, ἡμεῖς δ' ἄνθρακες. οὗτοι διδάσκουσ', ἀργύριον ἤν τις διδῷ, λέγοντα νικᾶν καὶ δίκαια κἄδικα.	**STREPSIADES** That is the Thinkery of clever souls. Men live in there who argue that the sky is a baking lid, and it's all around us, and we're the charcoal, and they make people believe it. These men teach you, if you pay them, how to win any argument, just or unjust.
100	**PHEIDIPPIDES** εἰσὶν δὲ τίνες;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Who are they?
	STREPSIADES οὐκ οἶδ' ἀκριβῶς τοὔνομα· / μεριμνοφροντισταὶ καλοί τε κἀγαθοί.	**STREPSIADES** I don't know exactly what they're called. Deep-pondering thinkers. Fine, upstanding gentlemen.
103	**PHEIDIPPIDES** αἰβοῖ πονηροί γ', οἶδα. τοὺς ἀλαζόνας τοὺς ὠχριῶντας τοὺς ἀνυποδήτους λέγεις, ὧν ὁ κακοδαίμων Σωκράτης καὶ Χαιρεφῶν.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Ugh, scum, I know them. You mean those frauds, the pasty-faced, barefoot ones, like that miserable Socrates and Chaerephon.[8]
105	**STREPSIADES** ἢ ἢ σιώπα· μηδὲν εἴπῃς νήπιον. ἀλλ' εἴ τι κήδει τῶν πατρῴων ἀλφίτων, τούτων γενοῦ μοι σχασάμενος τὴν ἱππικήν.	**STREPSIADES** Hey, hey, shut up! Don't talk like a baby. If you care at all about your father's bread, then join them, for my sake, and drop the horses.
108	**PHEIDIPPIDES** οὐκ ἄν μὰ τὸν Διόνυσον, εἰ δοίης γέ μοι / τοὺς φασιανοὺς οὓς τρέφει Λεωγόρας.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** No, by Dionysus, I won't, not even if you gave me the pheasants Leogoras breeds.[9]
110	**STREPSIADES** ἴθ' ἀντιβολῶ σ' ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ / ἐλθὼν διδάσκου.	**STREPSIADES** Go on, I'm begging you, dearest boy in the world, go and be taught.
111	**PHEIDIPPIDES** καὶ τί σοι μαθήσομαι;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** And what do you want me to learn?
112	**STREPSIADES** εἶναι παρ' αὐτοῖς φασιν ἄμφω τὼ λόγω, τὸν κρείττον', ὅστις ἐστί, καὶ τὸν ἥττονα. τούτοιν τὸν ἕτερον τοῖν λόγοιν, τὸν ἥττονα, νικᾶν λέγοντά φασι τἀδικώτερα.	**STREPSIADES** They say they keep both Arguments in there, the Stronger, whatever that is, and the Weaker. And one of these two Arguments, the Weaker, wins, they say, even when it argues the

8 Chaerephon was Socrates' devoted, famously gaunt friend, who (according to Plato) asked the Delphic oracle whether anyone was wiser than Socrates.
9 Leogoras, a rich Athenian known for high living, was the father of the orator Andocides.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἢν οὖν μάθῃς μοι τὸν ἄδικον τοῦτον λόγον, ἃ νῦν ὀφείλω διὰ σέ, τούτων τῶν χρεῶν οὐκ ἂν ἀποδοίην οὐδ' ἂν ὀβολὸν οὐδενί.	more unjust case. So if you learn this unjust Argument for me, then of all the debts I owe now because of you, I wouldn't pay back a single obol to anybody.
119	**PHEIDIPPIDES** οὐκ ἂν πιθοίμην· οὐ γὰρ ἂν τλαίην ἰδεῖν / τοὺς ἱππέας τὸ χρῶμα διακεκναισμένος.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I won't do it. I couldn't bear to face the cavalrymen with all the color scraped off my face.
121	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ ἄρα μὰ τὴν Δήμητρα τῶν γ' ἐμῶν ἔδει, οὔτ' αὐτὸς οὔθ' ὁ ζύγιος οὔθ' ὁ σαμφόρας· ἀλλ' ἐξελῶ σ' ἐς κόρακας ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας.	**STREPSIADES** Then by Demeter, you'll eat none of my food, not you, not your yoke horse, not your branded thoroughbred. I'll throw you out of the house. Go to hell!
124	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀλλ' οὐ περιόψεταί μ' ὁ θεῖος Μεγακλέης / ἄνιππον. ἀλλ' εἴσειμι, σοῦ δ' οὐ φροντιῶ.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Well, my uncle Megacles won't let me go horseless. I'm going in, and I won't give you a thought.
126	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐγὼ μέντοι πεσών γε κείσομαι, ἀλλ' εὐξάμενος τοῖσιν θεοῖς διδάξομαι αὐτὸς βαδίζων ἐς τὸ φροντιστήριον. πῶς οὖν γέρων ὢν κἀπιλήσμων καὶ βραδὺς λόγων ἀκριβῶν σχινδαλάμους μαθήσομαι; ἰτητέον. τί ταῦτ' ἔχων στραγγεύομαι, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ κόπτω τὴν θύραν; παῖ παιδίον.	**STREPSIADES** Well, I'm not going to just lie there where I've fallen, either. I'll pray to the gods and go to the Thinkery myself, and get taught. But how am I, old and forgetful and slow as I am, going to learn the hair-splitting slivers of precise arguments? I've got to go. Why am I dithering like this, instead of knocking on the door? Boy! Hey, boy!
133	**STUDENT** βάλλ' ἐς κόρακας· τίς ἐσθ' ὁ κόψας τὴν θύραν;	**STUDENT** Go to hell! Who's that knocking on the door?
134	**STREPSIADES** Φείδωνος υἱὸς Στρεψιάδης Κικυννόθεν.	**STREPSIADES** Strepsiades, son of Pheidon, from Cicynna.
135	**STUDENT** ἀμαθής γε νὴ Δί' ὅστις οὑτωσὶ σφόδρα ἀπεριμερίμνως τὴν θύραν λελάκτικας καὶ φροντίδ' ἐξήμβλωκας ἐξηυρημένην.	**STUDENT** Well, by Zeus, you're an ignoramus, whoever you are, kicking the door so hard, so utterly unthinkingly. You've made a freshly found thought miscarry!
138	**STREPSIADES** σύγγνωθί μοι· τηλοῦ γὰρ οἰκῶ τῶν ἀγρῶν. / ἀλλ' εἰπέ μοι τὸ πρᾶγμα τοὐξημβλωμένον.	**STREPSIADES** Forgive me, I live way out in the country. But tell me, what was the thing that miscarried?
140	**STUDENT** ἀλλ' οὐ θέμις πλὴν τοῖς μαθηταῖσιν λέγειν.	**STUDENT** It's forbidden to tell anyone but the students.
141	**STREPSIADES** λέγε νυν ἐμοὶ θαρρῶν· ἐγὼ γὰρ οὑτοσὶ / ἥκω μαθητὴς ἐς τὸ φροντιστήριον.	**STREPSIADES** Then you can tell me, don't worry. I'm here, as you see, to be a student at the Thinkery.
143	**STUDENT** λέξω. νομίσαι δὲ ταῦτα χρὴ μυστήρια. ἀνήρετ' ἄρτι Χαιρεφῶντα Σωκράτης ψύλλαν ὁπόσους ἄλλοιτο τοὺς αὑτῆς πόδας· δακοῦσα γὰρ τοῦ Χαιρεφῶντος τὴν ὀφρῦν ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν τὴν Σωκράτους ἀφήλατο.	**STUDENT** I'll tell you. But you must treat this as a sacred mystery. Socrates just asked Chaerephon how many of its own feet a flea can jump. You see, it had bitten Chaerephon on the eyebrow and jumped off onto Socrates' head.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
148	**STREPSIADES** πῶς δῆτα διεμέτρησε;	**STREPSIADES** So how did he measure it?
	STUDENT δεξιώτατα. κηρὸν διατήξας, εἶτα τὴν ψύλλαν λαβὼν ἐνέβαψεν ἐς τὸν κηρὸν αὐτῆς τὼ πόδε, κᾆτα ψυχείσῃ περιέφυσαν Περσικαί. ταύτας ὑπολύσας ἀνεμέτρει τὸ χωρίον.	**STUDENT** Very ingeniously. He melted some wax, then picked up the flea and dipped its two feet in the wax, and when it cooled, a pair of little Persian slippers had formed around them. He took those off and used them to measure the distance.
153	**STREPSIADES** ὦ Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ τῆς λεπτότητος τῶν φρενῶν.	**STREPSIADES** Zeus almighty, what subtlety of mind!
154	**STUDENT** τί δῆτ' ἂν ἕτερον εἰ πύθοιο Σωκράτους / φρόντισμα;	**STUDENT** Then what would you say if you heard another of Socrates' thoughts?
155	**STREPSIADES** ποῖον; ἀντιβολῶ κάτειπέ μοι.	**STREPSIADES** Which one? Please, tell me.
156	**STUDENT** ἀνήρετ' αὐτὸν Χαιρεφῶν ὁ Σφήττιος ὁπότερα τὴν γνώμην ἔχοι, τὰς ἐμπίδας κατὰ τὸ στόμ' ᾄδειν ἢ κατὰ τοὐρροπύγιον.	**STUDENT** Chaerephon of Sphettus asked him which view he held: do gnats hum through the mouth, or through the rump?
159	**STREPSIADES** τί δῆτ' ἐκεῖνος εἶπε περὶ τῆς ἐμπίδος;	**STREPSIADES** So what did he say about the gnat?
160	**STUDENT** ἔφασκεν εἶναι τοὔντερον τῆς ἐμπίδος στενόν· διὰ λεπτοῦ δ' ὄντος αὐτοῦ τὴν πνοὴν βίᾳ βαδίζειν εὐθὺ τοὐρροπυγίου· ἔπειτα κοῖλον πρὸς στενῷ προσκείμενον τὸν πρωκτὸν ἠχεῖν ὑπὸ βίας τοῦ πνεύματος.	**STUDENT** He said the gnat's gut is narrow, and because it's so slender, the breath goes forcefully straight through to the rump. And then the asshole, being a hollow attached to a narrow passage, booms from the force of the wind.
165	**STREPSIADES** σάλπιγξ ὁ πρωκτός ἐστιν ἄρα τῶν ἐμπίδων. ὦ τρισμακάριος τοῦ διεντερεύματος. ἦ ῥᾳδίως φεύγων ἂν ἀποφύγοι δίκην ὅστις δίοιδε τοὔντερον τῆς ἐμπίδος.	**STREPSIADES** So the gnat's asshole is a trumpet! Oh, what a lucky, lucky man, with his in-depth gut research! A man who knows the ins and outs of a gnat's gut would have no trouble getting off when he's sued.
169	**STUDENT** πρώην δέ γε γνώμην μεγάλην ἀφῃρέθη / ὑπ' ἀσκαλαβώτου.	**STUDENT** And the other day he was robbed of a great idea by a gecko.
170	**STREPSIADES** τίνα τρόπον; κάτειπέ μοι.	**STREPSIADES** How? Tell me.
171	**STUDENT** ζητοῦντος αὐτοῦ τῆς σελήνης τὰς ὁδοὺς καὶ τὰς περιφορὰς εἶτ' ἄνω κεχηνότος ἀπὸ τῆς ὀροφῆς νύκτωρ γαλεώτης κατέχεσεν.	**STUDENT** He was investigating the paths and orbits of the moon, and while he was gaping up at the sky at night, a gecko shat on him from the roof.
174	**STREPSIADES** ἥσθην γαλεώτῃ καταχέσαντι Σωκράτους.	**STREPSIADES** I like that. A gecko shitting on Socrates.
175	**STUDENT** ἐχθὲς δέ γ' ἡμῖν δεῖπνον οὐκ ἦν ἑσπέρας.	**STUDENT** And yesterday evening we had no dinner.
176	**STREPSIADES** εἶεν· τί οὖν πρὸς τἄλφιτ' ἐπαλαμήσατο;	**STREPSIADES** Well, then? How did he scheme up some grub?
177		

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STUDENT κατὰ τῆς τραπέζης καταπάσας λεπτὴν τέφραν κάμψας ὀβελίσκον εἶτα διαβήτην λαβὼν ἐκ τῆς παλαίστρας θοἰμάτιον ὑφείλετο.	**STUDENT** He sprinkled fine ash over the table, bent a skewer, and then, taking it as a compass, swiped a cloak from the wrestling school.[10]
180	**STREPSIADES** τί δῆτ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν Θαλῆν θαυμάζομεν; ἄνοιγ' ἄνοιγ' ἀνύσας τὸ φροντιστήριον, καὶ δεῖξον ὡς τάχιστά μοι τὸν Σωκράτη. μαθητιῶ γάρ· ἀλλ' ἄνοιγε τὴν θύραν. ὦ Ἡράκλεις ταυτὶ ποδαπὰ τὰ θηρία;	**STREPSIADES** Why do we still go on admiring that Thales? Open up, open up the Thinkery, quick, and show me Socrates as fast as you can. I've got student fever! Come on, open the door! Heracles! Where on earth do these creatures come from?[11]
185	**STUDENT** τί ἐθαύμασας; τῷ σοι δοκοῦσιν εἰκέναι;	**STUDENT** Why so amazed? What do they look like to you?
186	**STREPSIADES** τοῖς ἐκ Πύλου ληφθεῖσι τοῖς Λακωνικοῖς. / ἀτὰρ τί ποτ' ἐς τὴν γῆν βλέπουσιν οὑτοιί;	**STREPSIADES** Like the Spartans who were captured at Pylos. But why on earth are these ones staring at the ground?[12]
188	**STUDENT** ζητοῦσιν οὗτοι τὰ κατὰ γῆς.	**STUDENT** These are investigating what's under the earth.
	STREPSIADES βολβοὺς ἄρα ζητοῦσι. μή νυν τουτογὶ φροντίζετε· ἐγὼ γὰρ οἶδ' ἵν' εἰσὶ μεγάλοι καὶ καλοί. τί γὰρ οἵδε δρῶσιν οἱ σφόδρ' ἐγκεκυφότες;	**STREPSIADES** Oh, they're looking for bulbs, then. Well, don't give that another thought. I know where there are big, beautiful ones. And what are these ones doing, bent right over?
192	**STUDENT** οὗτοι δ' ἐρεβοδιφῶσιν ὑπὸ τὸν Τάρταρον.	**STUDENT** These are probing the darkness of Erebus, down beneath Tartarus.
193	**STREPSIADES** τί δῆθ' ὁ πρωκτὸς ἐς τὸν οὐρανὸν βλέπει;	**STREPSIADES** Then why is their ass looking up at the sky?
194	**STUDENT** αὐτὸς καθ' αὑτὸν ἀστρονομεῖν διδάσκεται. / ἀλλ' εἴσιθ', ἵνα μὴ 'κεῖνος ὑμῖν ἐπιτύχῃ.	**STUDENT** It's taking a course in astronomy on its own. But get inside, you lot, so he doesn't catch you out here.
196	**STREPSIADES** μήπω γε μήπω γ'· ἀλλ' ἐπιμεινάντων, ἵνα / αὐτοῖσι κοινώσω τι πραγμάτιον ἐμόν.	**STREPSIADES** Not yet, not yet! Let them stay, so I can share a little problem of mine with them.
198	**STUDENT** ἀλλ' οὐχ οἷόν τ' αὐτοῖσι πρὸς τὸν ἀέρα / ἔξω διατρίβειν πολὺν ἄγαν ἐστὶν χρόνον.	**STUDENT** But they can't spend too long outside in the open air.
200	**STREPSIADES** πρὸς τῶν θεῶν τί γὰρ τάδ' ἐστίν; εἰπέ μοι.	**STREPSIADES** For gods' sake, what are these things? Tell me.
201	**STUDENT** ἀστρονομία μὲν αὑτηί.	**STUDENT** This is astronomy.
	STREPSIADES τουτὶ δὲ τί;	**STREPSIADES** And what's this?
202	**STUDENT** γεωμετρία.	**STUDENT** Geometry.

10 The joke: the "geometry lesson" is a cover, and the bent skewer serves as a hook for fishing out the cloak.
11 Thales of Miletus, counted the first Greek philosopher, was proverbial for cleverness.
12 Spartan soldiers taken prisoner at Pylos in 425 BC were held in Athens, half-starved after their long siege.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STREPSIADES τοῦτ’ οὖν τί ἐστι χρήσιμον;	**STREPSIADES** So what’s that useful for?
203	**STUDENT** γῆν ἀναμετρῆσαι.	**STUDENT** Measuring land.
	STREPSIADES πότερα τὴν κληρουχικήν;	**STREPSIADES** What, land for settlers?[13]
204	**STUDENT** οὔκ, ἀλλὰ τὴν σύμπασαν.	**STUDENT** No, all the land there is.
	STREPSIADES ἀστεῖον λέγεις. / τὸ γὰρ σόφισμα δημοτικὸν καὶ χρήσιμον.	**STREPSIADES** That’s smart! A democratic and useful bit of cleverness.
206	**STUDENT** αὕτη δέ σοι γῆς περίοδος πάσης. ὁρᾷς; / αἵδε μὲν Ἀθῆναι.	**STUDENT** And here is a map of the whole earth. See? This here is Athens.
207	**STREPSIADES** τί σὺ λέγεις; οὐ πείθομαι, / ἐπεὶ δικαστὰς οὐχ ὁρῶ καθημένους.	**STREPSIADES** What are you talking about? I don’t believe you. I don’t see any jurors sitting.
209	**STUDENT** ὡς τοῦτ’ ἀληθῶς Ἀττικὸν τὸ χωρίον.	**STUDENT** I’m telling you, this area really is Attica.
210	**STREPSIADES** καὶ ποῦ Κικυννῆς εἰσὶν οὐμοὶ δημόται;	**STREPSIADES** And where are my fellow demesmen from Cicynna?
211	**STUDENT** ἐνταῦθ’ ἔνεισιν. ἡ δέ γ’ Εὔβοι, ὡς ὁρᾷς, / ἥδὶ παρατέταται μακρὰ πόρρω πάνυ.	**STUDENT** They’re in here. And Euboea, as you see, is this, stretched out long and far.
213	**STREPSIADES** οἶδ’· ὑπὸ γὰρ ἡμῶν παρετάθη καὶ Περικλέους. / ἀλλ’ ἡ Λακεδαίμων ποῦ ’σθ’;	**STREPSIADES** I know. We stretched it out, all right, us and Pericles. But where’s Sparta?[14]
214	**STUDENT** ὅπου ’στίν; αὐτηί.	**STUDENT** Where is it? Right here.
215	**STREPSIADES** ὡς ἐγγὺς ἡμῶν. τοῦτο πάνυ φροντίζετε, / ταύτην ἀφ’ ἡμῶν ἀπαγαγεῖν πόρρω πάνυ.	**STREPSIADES** So close to us! Give this some really serious thought: move it a long, long way away from us.
217	**STUDENT** ἀλλ’ οὐχ οἷόν τε.	**STUDENT** But that can’t be done.
	STREPSIADES νὴ Δί’ οἰμώξεσθ’ ἄρα. / φέρε τίς γὰρ οὗτος οὑπὶ τῆς κρεμάθρας ἀνήρ;	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, then you’ll be sorry. Hey, who’s that man up in the basket?
219	**STUDENT** αὐτός.	**STUDENT** Himself.
	STREPSIADES τίς αὐτός;	**STREPSIADES** Who’s himself?
	STUDENT Σωκράτης.	**STUDENT** Socrates.
	STREPSIADES ὦ Σώκρατες. / ἴθ’ οὗτος, ἀναβόησον αὐτόν μοι μέγα.	**STREPSIADES** Socrates! Go on, you, give him a good loud shout for me.
220	**STUDENT** αὐτὸς μὲν οὖν σὺ κάλεσον· οὐ γάρ μοι σχολή.	**STUDENT** Call him yourself. I haven’t got time.
221	**STREPSIADES** ὦ Σώκρατες, / ὦ Σωκρατίδιον.	**STREPSIADES** Socrates! Socratikins!
223	**SOCRATES** τί με καλεῖς ὤφημερε;	**SOCRATES** Why do you call me, creature of a day?[15]

13 Athens seized land from rebellious allies and shared it out by lot among its own citizens as settlers (cleruchs).
14 Pericles crushed a revolt of Euboea in 446 BC; the Greek verb for “stretch out” could also mean to put on the rack.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
224	**STREPSIADES** πρῶτον μὲν ὅ τι δρᾷς ἀντιβολῶ κάτειπέ μοι.	**STREPSIADES** First of all, please, tell me what you're doing.
225	**SOCRATES** ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον.	**SOCRATES** I walk on air and look down on the sun.
226	**STREPSIADES** ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ ταρροῦ τοὺς θεοὺς ὑπερφρονεῖς, / ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, εἴπερ;	**STREPSIADES** So you look down on the gods from a basket, and not from the ground, if that's what you're doing?
227	**SOCRATES** οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε ἐξηῦρον ὀρθῶς τὰ μετέωρα πράγματα, εἰ μὴ κρεμάσας τὸ νόημα καὶ τὴν φροντίδα λεπτὴν καταμείξας ἐς τὸν ὅμοιον ἀέρα. εἰ δ' ὢν χαμαὶ τἄνω κάτωθεν ἐσκόπουν, οὐκ ἄν ποθ' ηὗρον· οὐ γὰρ ἀλλ' ἡ γῆ βίᾳ ἕλκει πρὸς αὑτὴν τὴν ἰκμάδα τῆς φροντίδος. πάσχει δὲ ταὐτὸ τοῦτο καὶ τὰ κάρδαμα.	**SOCRATES** Yes, because I could never have rightly discovered things aloft unless I'd suspended my mind and mingled my subtle thought with the air it resembles. If I'd stayed on the ground and examined from below what's up above, I'd never have found anything. You see, the earth forcibly draws the moisture of thought to itself. The very same thing happens to cress.
235	**STREPSIADES** τί φῄς; ἡ φροντὶς ἕλκει τὴν ἰκμάδ' ἐς τὰ κάρδαμα; ἴθι νυν κατάβηθ' ὦ Σωκρατίδιον ὡς ἐμέ, ἵνα με διδάξῃς ὧνπερ οὕνεκ' ἐλήλυθα.	**STREPSIADES** What are you saying? Thought draws the moisture into cress? Come on, come down to me, Socratikins, so you can teach me what I came for.
239	**SOCRATES** ἦλθες δὲ κατὰ τί;	**SOCRATES** And what did you come for?
	STREPSIADES βουλόμενος μαθεῖν λέγειν. ὑπὸ γὰρ τόκων χρήστων τε δυσκολωτάτων ἄγομαι φέρομαι, τὰ χρήματ' ἐνεχυράζομαι.	**STREPSIADES** I want to learn to speak. I'm being plundered and pillaged by interest and the nastiest creditors, and my goods are being seized.
242	**SOCRATES** πόθεν δ' ὑπόχρεως σαυτὸν ἔλαθες γενόμενος;	**SOCRATES** How did you get into debt without noticing?
243	**STREPSIADES** νόσος μ' ἐπέτριψεν ἱππικὴ δεινὴ φαγεῖν. ἀλλά με δίδαξον τὸν ἕτερον τοῖν σοῖν λόγοιν, τὸν μηδὲν ἀποδιδόντα. μισθὸν δ' ὅντιν' ἂν πράττῃ μ' ὀμοῦμαί σοι καταθήσειν τοὺς θεούς.	**STREPSIADES** A horse disease ate me up—the kind with a terrible appetite. But teach me one of your two Arguments, the one that pays nothing back. Whatever fee you charge me, I swear by the gods I'll pay it.
247	**SOCRATES** ποίους θεοὺς ὀμεῖ σύ; πρῶτον γὰρ θεοὶ / ἡμῖν νόμισμ' οὐκ ἔστι.	**SOCRATES** What gods are you going to swear by? For a start, gods aren't current coin with us.
248	**STREPSIADES** τῷ γὰρ ὄμνυτ'; ἢ / σιδαρέοισιν ὥσπερ ἐν Βυζαντίῳ;	**STREPSIADES** Then what do you swear by? Iron bars, like in Byzantium?[16]
250	**SOCRATES** βούλει τὰ θεῖα πράγματ' εἰδέναι σαφῶς / ἄττ' ἐστὶν ὀρθῶς;	**SOCRATES** Do you want to know divine matters clearly, what they truly are?
251	**STREPSIADES** νὴ Δί' εἴπερ ἔστι γε.	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, yes, if it can be done.

15 Plato's *Apology* has Socrates blame this caricature for the prejudice against him: "a Socrates swinging about, claiming he walks on air."
16 Socrates' word nomisma means both "custom" and "currency"; Byzantium was known for using iron coins.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
252	**SOCRATES** καὶ ξυγγενέσθαι ταῖς Νεφέλαισιν ἐς λόγους, / ταῖς ἡμετέραισι δαίμοσιν;	**SOCRATES** And to meet the Clouds, our deities, and talk with them?
253	**STREPSIADES** μάλιστά γε.	**STREPSIADES** Very much so.
254	**SOCRATES** κάθιζε τοίνυν ἐπὶ τὸν ἱερὸν σκίμποδα.	**SOCRATES** Then sit down on the sacred cot.
255	**STREPSIADES** ἰδοὺ κάθημαι.	**STREPSIADES** There, I'm sitting.
	SOCRATES τουτονὶ τοίνυν λαβὲ / τὸν στέφανον.	**SOCRATES** Now take this wreath.
256	**STREPSIADES** ἐπὶ τί στέφανον; οἴμοι Σώκρατες / ὥσπερ με τὸν Ἀθάμανθ' ὅπως μὴ θύσετε.	**STREPSIADES** What's the wreath for? Oh no, Socrates, please don't sacrifice me, like Athamas![17]
258	**SOCRATES** οὔκ, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα πάντα τοὺς τελουμένους / ἡμεῖς ποιοῦμεν.	**SOCRATES** No, no. We do all this to everyone being initiated.
259	**STREPSIADES** εἶτα δὴ τί κερδανῶ;	**STREPSIADES** And what do I get out of it?
260	**SOCRATES** λέγειν γενήσει τρῖμμα κρόταλον παιπάλη. / ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἀτρεμί.	**SOCRATES** You'll become a slick talker, a rattle, the finest of fine flour. Now hold still.

PARODOS

Socrates initiates Strepsiades and calls on the Clouds, who arrive singing.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
261	**STREPSIADES** μὰ τὸν Δί' οὐ ψεύσει γέ με· / καταπαττόμενος γὰρ παιπάλη γενήσομαι.	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, you're not lying to me. With all this sprinkling, I'll turn into fine flour.[18]
263	**SOCRATES** εὐφημεῖν χρὴ τὸν πρεσβύτην καὶ τῆς εὐχῆς ἐπακούειν. ὦ δέσποτ' ἄναξ ἀμέτρητ' Ἀήρ, ὃς ἔχεις τὴν γῆν μετέωρον, λαμπρός τ' Αἰθὴρ σεμναί τε θεαὶ Νεφέλαι βροντησικέραυνοι, ἄρθητε φάνητ' ὦ δέσποιναι τῷ φροντιστῇ μετέωροι.	**SOCRATES** The old man must keep holy silence and listen to the prayer. Lord and master, measureless Air, who hold the earth aloft, and shining Aether, and you, august goddesses, Clouds of thunder and lightning: arise, appear, my ladies, aloft to your thinker!
267	**STREPSIADES** μήπω μήπω γε πρὶν ἂν τουτὶ πτύξωμαι, μὴ καταβρεχθῶ. / τὸ δὲ μηδὲ κυνῆν οἴκοθεν ἐλθεῖν ἐμὲ τὸν κακοδαίμον' ἔχοντα.	**STREPSIADES** Not yet, not yet, not until I've wrapped this around me, so I don't get soaked. To think I came out of the house without even a cap, worse luck!
269	**SOCRATES** ἔλθετε δῆτ' ὦ πολυτίμητοι Νεφέλαι τῷδ' εἰς ἐπίδειξιν· εἴτ' ἐπ' Ὀλύμπου κορυφαῖς ἱεραῖς χιονοβλήτοισι κάθησθε, εἴτ' Ὠκεανοῦ πατρὸς ἐν κήποις ἱερὸν χορὸν ἵστατε Νύμφαις, εἴτ' ἄρα Νείλου προχοαῖς ὑδάτων χρυσέαις ἀρύτεσθε πρόχοισιν,	**SOCRATES** Come, then, most honored Clouds, show yourselves to this man, whether you sit on the holy snow-beaten peaks of Olympus, or set up a holy dance for the Nymphs in the gardens of father Ocean, or draw the waters at the mouths of the Nile in golden pitchers, or dwell by Lake Maeotis or on the snowy crag of Mimas. Hear me, accept the sacrifice, and take delight in the rites.[19]

17 In a lost play by Sophocles, King Athamas was crowned with a wreath and led to the altar to be sacrificed.
18 Socrates is sprinkling him with flour, as initiates were sprinkled in some rites; "fine flour" was slang for a smooth, slippery talker.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἢ Μαιῶτιν λίμνην ἔχετ' ἢ σκόπελον νιφόεντα Μίμαντος· ὑπακούσατε δεξάμεναι θυσίαν καὶ τοῖς ἱεροῖσι χαρεῖσαι.	
275	**CHORUS** ἀέναοι Νεφέλαι ἀρθῶμεν φανεραὶ δροσερὰν φύσιν εὐάγητον, πατρὸς ἀπ' Ὠκεανοῦ βαρυαχέος ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων κορυφὰς ἐπὶ δενδροκόμους, ἵνα τηλεφανεῖς σκοπιὰς ἀφορώμεθα, καρπούς τ' ἀρδομέναν ἱερὰν χθόνα, καὶ ποταμῶν ζαθέων κελαδήματα, καὶ πόντον κελάδοντα βαρύβρομον· ὄμμα γὰρ αἰθέρος ἀκάματον σελαγεῖται μαρμαρέαις ἐν αὐγαῖς. ἀλλ' ἀποσεισάμεναι νέφος ὄμβριον ἀθανάτας ἰδέας ἐπιδώμεθα τηλεσκόπῳ ὄμματι γαῖαν.	**CHORUS** Ever-flowing Clouds, let us rise, our dewy nature shining clear, from father Ocean, deep-roaring, to the peaks of lofty mountains crowned with trees, so that we may gaze on far-seen lookouts, and on the crops and the holy earth we water, and on the rushing of sacred rivers, and on the sea, resounding, deep-thundering. For the tireless eye of the Aether blazes with gleaming rays. Come, let us shake off the rainy haze from our immortal form and look upon the earth with far-seeing eye.
291	**SOCRATES** ὦ μέγα σεμναὶ Νεφέλαι φανερῶς ἠκούσατέ μου καλέσαντος. / ἦσθου φωνῆς ἅμα καὶ βροντῆς μυκησαμένης θεοσέπτου;	**SOCRATES** Most august Clouds, you've clearly heard my call. Did you hear their voice, and the thunder bellowing with it, awe-inspiring?
293	**STREPSIADES** καὶ σέβομαί γ' ὦ πολυτίμητοι καὶ βούλομαι ἀνταποπαρδεῖν πρὸς τὰς βροντάς· οὕτως αὐτὰς τετρεμαίνω καὶ πεφόβημαι· κεἰ θέμις ἐστίν, νυνί γ' ἤδη, κεἰ μὴ θέμις ἐστί, χεσείω.	**STREPSIADES** Yes, and I revere you, most honored ones, and I want to fart back in answer to the thunder, that's how much it makes me shake and quake. And whether it's allowed or not, I need to shit right now.
296	**SOCRATES** οὐ μὴ σκώψει μηδὲ ποιήσεις ἅπερ οἱ τρυγοδαίμονες οὗτοι, / ἀλλ' εὐφήμει· μέγα γάρ τι θεῶν κινεῖται σμῆνος ἀοιδαῖς.	**SOCRATES** Stop your clowning, and don't act like those wretched comedians. Keep holy silence. A great swarm of goddesses is on the move, singing.
298	**CHORUS** παρθένοι ὀμβροφόροι ἔλθωμεν λιπαρὰν χθόνα Παλλάδος, εὔανδρον γᾶν Κέκροπος ὀψόμεναι πολυήρατον· οὗ σέβας ἀρρήτων ἱερῶν, ἵνα μυστοδόκος δόμος ἐν τελεταῖς ἁγίαις ἀναδείκνυται, οὐρανίοις τε θεοῖς δωρήματα, ναοί θ' ὑψερεφεῖς καὶ ἀγάλματα, καὶ πρόσοδοι μακάρων ἱερώταται, εὐστέφανοί τε θεῶν θυσίαι θαλίαι τε, παντοδαπαῖς ἐν ὥραις, ἦρί τ' ἐπερχομένῳ Βρομία χάρις, εὐκελάδων τε χορῶν ἐρεθίσματα, καὶ μοῦσα βαρύβρομος αὐλῶν.	**CHORUS** Rain-bearing maidens, let us go to the gleaming land of Pallas, land of brave men, Cecrops' land, much beloved, to behold it, where there is awe for unspeakable rites, where the hall that receives the initiates is thrown open in holy mysteries; and gifts for the gods of heaven, high-roofed temples and statues, most holy processions for the blessed ones, garlanded sacrifices and feasts for the gods in every season; and with spring's coming, the joy of Bromius, the rousing rivalry of sweet-voiced choruses, and the deep-thundering music of the pipes.[20]

19 Lake Maeotis is the Sea of Azov; Mimas is a mountain on the coast of Asia Minor.
20 Cecrops was the legendary first king of Athens, and the hall of initiates is the one at Eleusis. Bromius is Dionysus, whose spring festival featured choral contests.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
314	**STREPSIADES** πρὸς τοῦ Διὸς ἀντιβολῶ σε φράσον, τίνες εἴσ' ὦ Σώκρατες αὗται / αἱ φθεγξάμεναι τοῦτο τὸ σεμνόν; μῶν ἡρῷναί τινές εἰσιν;	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, I beg you, tell me, Socrates, who are these women who sang out that solemn song? They aren't some sort of heroines, are they?
316	**SOCRATES** ἥκιστ' ἀλλ' οὐράνιαι Νεφέλαι μεγάλαι θεαὶ ἀνδράσιν ἀργοῖς· αἵπερ γνώμην καὶ διάλεξιν καὶ νοῦν ἡμῖν παρέχουσιν καὶ τερατείαν καὶ περίλεξιν καὶ κροῦσιν καὶ κατάληψιν.	**SOCRATES** Not in the least. They are the heavenly Clouds, great goddesses for idle men. They're the ones who give us judgment and dialectic and intellect, and marvel-mongering and circumlocution, and the knockout blow and the clinch.
319	**STREPSIADES** ταῦτ' ἄρ' ἀκούσασ' αὐτῶν τὸ φθέγμ' ἡ ψυχή μου πεπότηται, καὶ λεπτολογεῖν ἤδη ζητεῖ καὶ περὶ καπνοῦ στενολεσχεῖν, καὶ γνωμιδίῳ γνώμην νύξασ' ἑτέρῳ λόγῳ ἀντιλογῆσαι· ὥστ' εἴ πως ἔστιν ἰδεῖν αὐτὰς ἤδη φανερῶς ἐπιθυμῶ.	**STREPSIADES** So that's why, when I heard their voice, my soul took wing. Now it's eager to split hairs and quibble narrowly about smoke, and to puncture an opinion with a little opinion and counter one argument with another. So if it's at all possible, I want to see them clearly, right now.
323	**SOCRATES** βλέπε νυν δευρὶ πρὸς τὴν Πάρνηθ'· ἤδη γὰρ ὁρῶ κατιούσας / ἡσυχῇ αὐτάς.	**SOCRATES** Look over here, then, toward Parnes. I can see them coming down now, quietly.[21]
324	**STREPSIADES** φέρε ποῦ; δεῖξον.	**STREPSIADES** Where? Show me!
	SOCRATES χωροῦσ' αὖται πάνυ πολλαὶ / διὰ τῶν κοίλων καὶ τῶν δασέων, αὖται πλάγιαι.	**SOCRATES** Here they come, lots and lots of them, through the hollows and the thickets, there, off to the side.
325	**STREPSIADES** τί τὸ χρῆμα; / ὡς οὐ καθορῶ.	**STREPSIADES** What's going on? I can't see them.
326	**SOCRATES** παρὰ τὴν εἴσοδον.	**SOCRATES** By the entrance.
	STREPSIADES ἤδη νυνὶ μόλις οὕτως.	**STREPSIADES** Now I do. Just barely.
327	**SOCRATES** νῦν γέ τοι ἤδη καθορᾷς αὐτάς, εἰ μὴ λημᾷς κολοκύνταις.	**SOCRATES** Well, now you certainly see them, unless you've got sleep in your eyes the size of pumpkins.
328	**STREPSIADES** νὴ Δί' ἔγωγ', ὦ πολυτίμητοι· πάντα γὰρ ἤδη κατέχουσιν.	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, I do, most honored ones! They're filling up the whole place.
329	**SOCRATES** ταύτας μέντοι σὺ θεὰς οὔσας οὐκ ᾔδησθ' οὐδ' ἐνόμιζες;	**SOCRATES** And you didn't know they were goddesses? You didn't believe in them?
330	**STREPSIADES** μὰ Δί' ἀλλ' ὁμίχλην καὶ δρόσον αὐτὰς ἡγούμην καὶ καπνὸν εἶναι.	**STREPSIADES** No, by Zeus. I thought they were mist and dew and smoke.
331	**SOCRATES** οὐ γὰρ μὰ Δί' οἶσθ' ὁτιὴ πλείστους αὖται βόσκουσι σοφιστάς, Θουριομάντεις ἰατροτέχνας σφραγιδονυχαργοκομήτας, κυκλίων τε χορῶν ᾀσματοκάμπτας ἄνδρας μετεωροφένακας,	**SOCRATES** Because, by Zeus, you didn't know that they feed a whole host of sophists: Thurian seers, medical artisans, signet-ringed, nail-buffed, long-haired layabouts, song-twisters for the circular choruses, sky-swindlers. They feed these idle do-nothings because they write poetry about them.[22]

21 Parnes is the mountain range north of Athens.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	οὐδὲν δρῶντας βόσκουσ' ἀργούς, ὅτι ταύτας μουσοποιοῦσιν.	
335	**STREPSIADES** ταῦτ' ἄρ' ἐποίουν ὑγρᾶν Νεφελᾶν στρεπταιγλᾶν δάιον ὁρμάν, πλοκάμους θ' ἑκατογκεφάλα Τυφῶ πρημαινούσας τε θυέλλας, εἶτ' ἀερίας διεράς, γαμψοὺς οἰωνοὺς ἀερονηχεῖς, ὄμβρους θ' ὑδάτων δροσερᾶν Νεφελᾶν· εἶτ' ἀντ' αὐτῶν κατέπινον κεστρᾶν τεμάχη μεγαλᾶν ἀγαθᾶν κρέα τ' ὀρνίθεια κιχηλᾶν.	**STREPSIADES** So that's why they wrote about "the moist Clouds' dread onrush, twister of light," and "the tresses of hundred-headed Typhon," and "the blasting gales," and then "airy, liquid," and "crook-taloned birds that swim the air," and "the rains of waters of the dewy Clouds." And in return they gulped down slices of great, fine mullets and the bird-flesh of thrushes.
340	**SOCRATES** διὰ μέντοι τάσδ' οὐχὶ δικαίως;	**SOCRATES** And isn't that only fair, since it's thanks to them?
	STREPSIADES λέξον δή μοι, τί παθοῦσαι, εἴπερ νεφέλαι γ' εἰσὶν ἀληθῶς, θνηταῖς εἴξασι γυναιξίν; οὐ γὰρ ἐκεῖναί γ' εἰσὶ τοιαῦται.	**STREPSIADES** So tell me, what's happened to them, if they really are clouds, that they look like mortal women? The ones up there aren't like that.
342	**SOCRATES** φέρε ποῖαι γάρ τινές εἰσιν;	**SOCRATES** Well, what are they like?
343	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ οἶδα σαφῶς· εἴξασιν γοῦν ἐρίοισιν πεπταμένοισιν, / κοὐχὶ γυναιξὶν μὰ Δί' οὐδ' ὁτιοῦν· αὗται δὲ ῥῖνας ἔχουσιν.	**STREPSIADES** I don't know exactly. They look like fluffed-out wool, anyway, and not like women, by Zeus, not one bit. And these ones have noses.
345	**SOCRATES** ἀπόκριναί νυν ἅττ' ἂν ἔρωμαι.	**SOCRATES** Now answer whatever I ask you.
	STREPSIADES λέγε νυν ταχέως ὅ τι βούλει.	**STREPSIADES** Go on then, quick, ask whatever you like.
346	**SOCRATES** ἤδη ποτ' ἀναβλέψας εἶδες νεφέλην κενταύρῳ ὁμοίαν, / ἢ παρδάλει ἢ λύκῳ ἢ ταύρῳ;	**SOCRATES** Have you ever looked up and seen a cloud that looked like a centaur, or a leopard, or a wolf, or a bull?
347	**STREPSIADES** νὴ Δί' ἔγωγ'. εἶτα τί τοῦτο;	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, I have. So what?
348	**SOCRATES** γίγνονται πάνθ' ὅ τι βούλονται· κᾆτ' ἢν μὲν ἴδωσι κομήτην ἄγριόν τινα τῶν λασίων τούτων, οἷόνπερ τὸν Ξενοφάντου, σκώπτουσαι τὴν μανίαν αὐτοῦ κενταύροις ᾔκασαν αὐτάς.	**SOCRATES** They turn into anything they like. So if they see some long-haired savage, one of these shaggy types, like Xenophantus' son, they mock his madness by making themselves look like centaurs.[23]
351	**STREPSIADES** τί γὰρ ἢν ἅρπαγα τῶν δημοσίων κατίδωσι Σίμωνα, τί δρῶσιν;	**STREPSIADES** And what if they spot Simon, the embezzler of public funds? What do they do?[24]
352	**SOCRATES** ἀποφαίνουσαι τὴν φύσιν αὐτοῦ λύκοι ἐξαίφνης ἐγένοντο.	**SOCRATES** They expose his true nature: all of a sudden they turn into wolves.
353		**STREPSIADES** So that's why, when they saw Cleonymus the shield-thrower yesterday, because

22 Thurii, a new Athenian-led colony in southern Italy, was founded under the seer Lampon. The "circular choruses" sang dithyrambs, whose poets loved airy cloud imagery.
23 Xenophantus' son Hieronymus was a long-haired poet who wrote dithyrambs and tragedy.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STREPSIADES ταῦτ’ ἄρα ταῦτα Κλεώνυμον αὗται τὸν ῥίψασπιν χθὲς ἰδοῦσαι, / ὅτι δειλότατον τοῦτον ἑώρων, ἔλαφοι διὰ τοῦτ’ ἐγένοντο.	they could see what a total coward he was, they turned into deer.[25]
355	**SOCRATES** καὶ νῦν γ’ ὅτι Κλεισθένη εἶδον, ὁρᾷς, διὰ τοῦτ’ ἐγένοντο γυναῖκες.	**SOCRATES** And now, you see, because they’ve seen Cleisthenes, they’ve turned into women.[26]

FIRST CHORAL SONG

The Clouds greet the pair; Socrates denies that Zeus exists and explains rain, thunder and lightning.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
356	**STREPSIADES** χαίρετε τοίνυν ὦ δέσποιναι· καὶ νῦν, εἴπερ τινὶ κἄλλῳ, / οὐρανομήκη ῥήξατε κἀμοὶ φωνήν, ὦ παμβασίλειαι.	**STREPSIADES** Greetings, then, my ladies! And now, if you ever did it for anyone, burst out with a sky-high voice for me too, you queens of all.
358	**CHORUS** χαῖρ’ ὦ πρεσβῦτα παλαιογενὲς θηρατὰ λόγων φιλομούσων, σύ τε λεπτοτάτων λήρων ἱερεῦ, φράζε πρὸς ἡμᾶς ὅ τι χρῄζεις· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἄλλῳ γ’ ὑπακούσαιμεν τῶν νῦν μετεωροσοφιστῶν πλὴν ἢ Προδίκῳ, τῷ μὲν σοφίας καὶ γνώμης οὕνεκα, σοὶ δέ, ὅτι βρενθύει τ’ ἐν ταῖσιν ὁδοῖς καὶ τὠφθαλμὼ παραβάλλεις, κἀνυπόδητος κακὰ πόλλ’ ἀνέχει κἀφ’ ἡμῖν σεμνοπροσωπεῖς.	**CHORUS** Greetings, old-timer, born in ages past, hunter of Muse-loving words! And you, priest of the subtlest drivel, tell us what you want. We wouldn’t listen to any other of today’s sky-sophists except Prodicus: to him for his cleverness and judgment, and to you because you swagger through the streets rolling your eyes from side to side, go barefoot, put up with plenty of hardship, and put on a solemn face for our sake.[27]
364	**STREPSIADES** ὦ γῆ τοῦ φθέγματος, ὡς ἱερὸν καὶ σεμνὸν καὶ τερατῶδες.	**STREPSIADES** Earth, what a sound! How holy, how solemn, how prodigious!
365	**SOCRATES** αὗται γάρ τοι μόναι εἰσὶ θεαί, τἄλλα δὲ πάντ’ ἐστὶ φλύαρος.	**SOCRATES** That’s because these are the only goddesses. All the rest is rubbish.
366	**STREPSIADES** ὁ Ζεὺς δ’ ἡμῖν, φέρε πρὸς τῆς γῆς, οὐλύμπιος οὐ θεός ἐστιν;	**STREPSIADES** But come on, by Earth, isn’t Zeus on Olympus a god to us?
367	**SOCRATES** ποῖος Ζεύς; οὐ μὴ ληρήσεις· οὐδ’ ἔστι Ζεύς.	**SOCRATES** Zeus? What Zeus? Stop talking nonsense. There’s no such thing as Zeus.
	STREPSIADES τί λέγεις σύ; / ἀλλὰ τίς ὕει; τουτὶ γὰρ ἔμοιγ’ ἀπόφηναι πρῶτον ἁπάντων.	**STREPSIADES** What are you saying? Then who makes it rain? Explain that to me before anything else.
369	**SOCRATES** αὗται δήπου· μεγάλοις δέ σ’ ἐγὼ σημείοις αὐτὸ διδάξω. φέρε ποῦ γὰρ πώποτ’ ἄνευ Νεφελῶν ὕοντ’ ἤδη τεθέασαι; καίτοι χρῆν αἰθρίας ὕειν αὐτόν, ταύτας δ’ ἀποδημεῖν.	**SOCRATES** These do, obviously. And I’ll prove it to you with strong evidence. Come on, then: where have you ever seen it rain without Clouds? Yet if it

24 Simon, an Athenian politician, is accused here of plundering public money.
25 Cleonymus, a politician mocked for throwing away his shield in battle.
26 Cleisthenes, an Athenian Aristophanes constantly mocks for being beardless and soft.
27 Prodicus of Ceos, a famous sophist known for his fine distinctions between words.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		were him, he ought to make it rain from a clear sky while these are away from home.
372	**STREPSIADES** νὴ τὸν Ἀπόλλω τοῦτό γέ τοι δὴ τῷ νῦν λόγῳ εὖ προσέφυσας· καίτοι πρότερον τὸν Δί' ἀληθῶς ᾠμην διὰ κοσκίνου οὐρεῖν. ἀλλ' ὅστις ὁ βροντῶν ἐστι φράσον· τοῦτό με ποιεῖ τετρεμαίνειν.	**STREPSIADES** By Apollo, you've grafted that neatly onto what you were just saying! And to think I used to believe it really was Zeus pissing through a sieve. But tell me who does the thundering. That's what gives me the shakes.
375	**SOCRATES** αὗται βροντῶσι κυλινδόμεναι.	**SOCRATES** These do the thundering, as they roll about.
	STREPSIADES τῷ τρόπῳ ὦ πάντα σὺ τολμῶν;	**STREPSIADES** How, you man who'll stop at nothing?
376	**SOCRATES** ὅταν ἐμπλησθῶσ' ὕδατος πολλοῦ κἀναγκασθῶσι φέρεσθαι, κατακρημνάμεναι πλήρεις ὄμβρου δι' ἀνάγκην, εἶτα βαρεῖαι εἰς ἀλλήλας ἐμπίπτουσαι ῥήγνυνται καὶ παταγοῦσιν.	**SOCRATES** When they're filled up with lots of water and forced to drift along, hanging low, full of rain, by necessity, then they get heavy, crash into one another, burst, and boom.
379	**STREPSIADES** ὁ δ' ἀναγκάζων ἐστὶ τίς αὐτάς, οὐχ ὁ Ζεύς, ὥστε φέρεσθαι;	**STREPSIADES** And who's doing the forcing, to make them drift? Isn't that Zeus?
380	**SOCRATES** ἥκιστ' ἀλλ' αἰθέριος Δῖνος.	**SOCRATES** Not at all. It's the ethereal Whirl.
	STREPSIADES Δῖνος; τουτί μ' ἐλελήθειν, ὁ Ζεὺς οὐκ ὤν, ἀλλ' ἀντ' αὐτοῦ Δῖνος νυνὶ βασιλεύων. ἀτὰρ οὐδέν πω περὶ τοῦ πατάγου καὶ τῆς βροντῆς μ' ἐδίδαξας.	**STREPSIADES** Whirl? I hadn't realized that: Zeus doesn't exist, and now Whirl is king in his place. But you still haven't taught me anything about the crashing and the thunder.
383	**SOCRATES** οὐκ ἤκουσάς μου τὰς Νεφέλας ὕδατος μεστὰς ὅτι φημὶ / ἐμπιπτούσας εἰς ἀλλήλας παταγεῖν διὰ τὴν πυκνότητα;	**SOCRATES** Didn't you hear me? I said that the Clouds, full of water, crash into one another and boom because of their density.
385	**STREPSIADES** φέρε τουτὶ τῷ χρὴ πιστεύειν;	**STREPSIADES** Come on, why should anyone believe that?
	SOCRATES ἀπὸ σαυτοῦ 'γώ σε διδάξω. ἤδη ζωμοῦ Παναθηναίοις ἐμπλησθεὶς εἶτ' ἐταράχθης τὴν γαστέρα, καὶ κλόνος ἐξαίφνης αὐτὴν διεκορκορύγησεν;	**SOCRATES** I'll teach you from your own body. Have you ever stuffed yourself with stew at the Panathenaea, then had an upset stomach, and suddenly a commotion went gurgling right through it? [28]
388	**STREPSIADES** νὴ τὸν Ἀπόλλω καὶ δεινὰ ποιεῖ γ' εὐθύς μοι, καὶ τετάρακται χὥσπερ βροντὴ τὸ ζωμίδιον παταγεῖ καὶ δεινὰ κέκραγεν· ἀτρέμας πρῶτον παππὰξ παππάξ, κἄπειτ' ἐπάγει παπαπαππάξ, χὥταν χέζω, κομιδῇ βροντᾷ παπαπαππὰξ ὥσπερ ἐκεῖναι.	**STREPSIADES** By Apollo, yes! It gives me hell right away, it gets all churned up, and that little bit of stew booms like thunder and makes a terrible racket. Softly at first, pappax pappax, then it builds up, papapappax, and when I shit it really thunders, papapappax, just like they do.

28 The Panathenaea was Athens' great festival of Athena, with public sacrifices that fed the whole city.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
392	**SOCRATES** σκέψαι τοίνυν ἀπὸ γαστριδίου τυννουτουὶ οἷα πέπορδας· / τὸν δ' Ἀέρα τόνδ' ὄντ' ἀπέραντον πῶς οὐκ εἰκὸς μέγα βροντᾶν;	**SOCRATES** Well, then, think what farts you've let off from a little tummy this size. Isn't it only natural that this Air here, which is boundless, should thunder mightily?
394	**STREPSIADES** ταῦτ' ἄρα καὶ τὠνόματ' ἀλλήλοιν βροντὴ καὶ πορδὴ ὁμοίω. ἀλλ' ὁ κεραυνὸς πόθεν αὖ φέρεται λάμπων πυρί, τοῦτο δίδαξον, καὶ καταφρύγει βάλλων ἡμᾶς, τοὺς δὲ ζῶντας περιφλύει; τοῦτον γὰρ δὴ φανερῶς ὁ Ζεὺς ἵησ' ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐπιόρκους.	**STREPSIADES** So that's why the words for thunder and fart sound so alike! But now teach me this: where does the thunderbolt come from, blazing with fire, that strikes us and burns us to a crisp, and singes the ones it leaves alive? Because it's obvious Zeus hurls it at perjurers.[29]
398	**SOCRATES** καὶ πῶς ὦ μῶρε σὺ καὶ Κρονίων ὄζων καὶ βεκκεσέληνε, εἴπερ βάλλει τοὺς ἐπιόρκους, δῆτ' οὐχὶ Σίμων' ἐνέπρησεν οὐδὲ Κλεώνυμον οὐδὲ Θέωρον; καίτοι σφόδρα γ' εἶσ' ἐπίορκοι· ἀλλὰ τὸν αὑτοῦ γε νεὼν βάλλει καὶ Σούνιον ἄκρον Ἀθηνέων καὶ τὰς δρῦς τὰς μεγάλας· τί μαθών; οὐ γὰρ δὴ δρῦς γ' ἐπιορκεῖ.	**SOCRATES** And how, you idiot, you reeking relic of Cronus, you fossil older than the moon, if he strikes perjurers, has he never burned up Simon, or Cleonymus, or Theorus? And they're perjurers, all right, through and through. No, he strikes his own temple, and "Sunium, headland of Athens," and the great oak trees. What's the idea? An oak tree certainly doesn't commit perjury.[30]
403	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ οἶδ'· ἀτὰρ εὖ σὺ λέγειν φαίνει. τί γάρ ἐστιν δῆθ' ὁ κεραυνός;	**STREPSIADES** I don't know. But you seem to have a point. So what is the thunderbolt, then?
404	**SOCRATES** ὅταν ἐς ταύτας ἄνεμος ξηρὸς μετεωρισθεὶς κατακληισθῇ, ἔνδοθεν αὐτὰς ὥσπερ κύστιν φυσᾷ, κἄπειθ' ὑπ' ἀνάγκης ῥήξας αὐτὰς ἔξω φέρεται σοβαρὸς διὰ τὴν πυκνότητα, ὑπὸ τοῦ ῥοίβδου καὶ τῆς ῥύμης αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν κατακάων.	**SOCRATES** When a dry wind rises up and gets shut inside these, it blows them up from within like a bladder, and then by necessity it bursts them and rushes out violently because of the density, and with the whoosh and the force of it, it sets itself on fire.
408	**STREPSIADES** νὴ Δί' ἐγὼ γοῦν ἀτεχνῶς ἔπαθον τουτί ποτε Διασίοισιν ὀπτῶν γαστέρα τοῖς συγγενέσιν, κᾆτ' οὐκ ἔσχων ἀμελήσας· ἡ δ' ἄρ' ἐφυσᾶτ', εἶτ' ἐξαίφνης διαλακήσασα πρὸς αὐτὼ τὼφθαλμώ μου προσετίλησεν καὶ κατέκαυσεν τὸ πρόσωπον.	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, that's exactly what happened to me once at the Diasia. I was roasting a stuffed sausage for my relatives and forgot to slit it. So it swelled up, and then suddenly it burst, splattered right into my eyes, and scorched my face.[31]
412	**CHORUS** ὦ τῆς μεγάλης ἐπιθυμήσας σοφίας ἄνθρωπε παρ' ἡμῶν, ὡς εὐδαίμων ἐν Ἀθηναίοις καὶ τοῖς Ἕλλησι γενήσει, εἰ μνήμων εἶ καὶ φροντιστὴς καὶ τὸ ταλαίπωρον ἔνεστιν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, καὶ μὴ κάμνεις μήθ' ἑστὼς μήτε βαδίζων, μήτε ῥιγῶν ἄχθει λίαν μήτ' ἀριστᾶν ἐπιθυμεῖς, οἴνου τ' ἀπέχει καὶ γυμνασίων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνοήτων,	**CHORUS** You who have longed for great cleverness from us, how happy you will be among the Athenians and the Greeks, if you have a good memory and are a thinker, with endurance in your soul; if you don't get tired standing or walking, aren't too bothered by the cold, and have no craving for breakfast; if you keep away from wine

29 In Greek, brontē, "thunder," and pordē, "fart."
30 Simon and Theorus, Athenian politicians accused of embezzlement and false oaths. "Sunium, headland of Athens" is a quotation from Homer's *Odyssey*.
31 The Diasia was a festival of Zeus celebrated with family feasts.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	καὶ βέλτιστον τοῦτο νομίζεις, ὅπερ εἰκὸς δεξιὸν ἄνδρα, νικᾶν πράττων καὶ βουλεύων καὶ τῇ γλώττῃ πολεμίζων.	and the gymnasium and all the other foolishness; and if you consider best what a clever man naturally does: to win by action and by counsel and by waging war with your tongue.
420	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' οὕνεκά γε ψυχῆς στερρᾶς δυσκολοκοίτου τε μερίμνης καὶ φειδωλοῦ καὶ τρυσιβίου γαστρὸς καὶ θυμβρεπιδείπνου, ἀμέλει θαρρῶν οὕνεκα τούτων ἐπιχαλκεύειν παρέχοιμ' ἄν.	**STREPSIADES** Well, if it's a tough soul you need, and worry that keeps a man tossing in bed, and a stomach that's stingy and penny-pinching and makes do with herbs for supper, don't worry, have no fear: for all that, I'd offer myself up to be hammered on the anvil.
423	**SOCRATES** ἄλλο τι δῆτ' οὖν νομιεῖς ἤδη θεὸν οὐδένα πλὴν ἅπερ ἡμεῖς, / τὸ Χάος τουτὶ καὶ τὰς Νεφέλας καὶ τὴν γλῶτταν, τρία ταυτί;	**SOCRATES** So from now on you won't believe in any god but ours, will you? This Chaos, the Clouds, and the Tongue, these three?
425	**STREPSIADES** οὐδ' ἂν διαλεχθείην γ' ἀτεχνῶς τοῖς ἄλλοις οὐδ' ἂν ἁπάντων· / οὐδ' ἂν θύσαιμ', οὐδ' ἂν σπείσαιμ', οὐδ' ἐπιθείην λιβανωτόν.	**STREPSIADES** I wouldn't even speak to the others, not if I bumped into them. I wouldn't sacrifice to them, or pour them libations, or offer them incense.
427	**CHORUS** λέγε νυν ἡμῖν ὅ τι σοι δρῶμεν θαρρῶν, ὡς οὐκ ἀτυχήσεις / ἡμᾶς τιμῶν καὶ θαυμάζων καὶ ζητῶν δεξιὸς εἶναι.	**CHORUS** Then tell us boldly what we can do for you. You won't be disappointed, as long as you honor and admire us and try to be clever.
429	**STREPSIADES** ὦ δέσποιναι δέομαι τοίνυν ὑμῶν τουτὶ πάνυ μικρόν, / τῶν Ἑλλήνων εἶναί με λέγειν ἑκατὸν σταδίοισιν ἄριστον.	**STREPSIADES** My ladies, I ask just this one tiny thing of you: that I be the best speaker in Greece by a hundred furlongs.
431	**CHORUS** ἀλλ' ἔσται σοι τοῦτο παρ' ἡμῶν· ὥστε τὸ λοιπόν γ' ἀπὸ τουδὶ / ἐν τῷ δήμῳ γνώμας οὐδεὶς νικήσει πλείονας ἢ σύ.	**CHORUS** Well, you'll have that from us. From now on, no one in the Assembly will carry more motions than you.
433	**STREPSIADES** μὴ 'μοί γε λέγειν γνώμας μεγάλας· οὐ γὰρ τούτων ἐπιθυμῶ, / ἀλλ' ὅσ' ἐμαυτῷ στρεψοδικῆσαι καὶ τοὺς χρήστας διολισθεῖν.	**STREPSIADES** Don't give me big motions! That's not what I want. Just enough to twist the law my way and slip past my creditors.[32]
435	**CHORUS** τεύξει τοίνυν ὧν ἱμείρεις· οὐ γὰρ μεγάλων ἐπιθυμεῖς. / ἀλλὰ σεαυτὸν θαρρῶν παράδος τοῖς ἡμετέροις προπόλοισιν.	**CHORUS** Then you'll get what you long for, since it's nothing great you want. Just hand yourself over boldly to our ministers.
437	**STREPSIADES** δράσω ταῦθ' ὑμῖν πιστεύσας· ἡ γὰρ ἀνάγκη με πιέζει / διὰ τοὺς ἵππους τοὺς κοππατίας καὶ τὸν γάμον ὅς μ' ἐπέτριψεν.	**STREPSIADES** I'll do it, I'm trusting you. Necessity is squeezing me, thanks to the horses with the koppa brand and the marriage that wrecked me.
439	νῦν οὖν ἀτεχνῶς ὅ τι βούλονται τουτὶ τοὐμὸν σῶμ' αὐτοῖσιν παρέχω, τύπτειν πεινῆν διψῆν αὐχμεῖν ῥιγῶν ἀσκὸν δείρειν, εἴπερ τὰ χρέα διαφευξοῦμαι, τοῖς τ' ἀνθρώποις εἶναι δόξω θρασὺς εὔγλωττος τολμηρὸς ἵτης	So now I simply hand over this body of mine for them to do with as they like: beat it, starve it, parch it with thirst, leave it filthy and frozen, flay it into a wineskin, if only I escape my debts and get people to think I'm brazen, smooth-tongued, shameless, pushy, disgusting, a stitcher-together of lies, an inventor of phrases, a courtroom veter-

32 The verb, "twist justice," puns on Strepsiades' name, which suggests "Twister."

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	βδελυρὸς ψευδῶν συγκολλητὴς εὑρησιεπὴς περίτριμμα δικῶν κύρβις κρόταλον κίναδος τρύμη μάσθλης εἴρων γλοιὸς ἀλαζὼν κέντρων μιαρὸς στρόφις ἀργαλέος ματιολοιχός· ταῦτ' εἴ με καλοῦσ' ἁπαντῶντες, δρώντων ἀτεχνῶς ὅ τι χρῄζουσιν, κεἰ βούλονται νὴ τὴν Δήμητρ' ἔκ μου χορδὴν τοῖς φροντισταῖς παραθέντων.	an, a walking statute book, a rattle, a fox, a drill, a slippery strap, a con man, a greaseball, a braggart, a jailbird, a scumbag, a weasel, a pain in the neck, a pot-licker. If that's what people call me when they meet me, they can do absolutely whatever they want with me, and if they want, by Demeter, let them make sausage out of me and serve it to the thinkers.
457	**CHORUS** λῆμα μὲν πάρεστι τῷδέ γ' οὐκ ἄτολμον ἀλλ' ἕτοιμον. ἴσθι δ' ὡς ταῦτα μαθὼν παρ' ἐμοῦ κλέος οὐρανόμηκες ἐν βροτοῖσιν ἕξεις.	**CHORUS** This man has a spirit not timid but ready. And know this: learn these things from me, and you'll have fame sky-high among mortals.
461	**STREPSIADES** τί πείσομαι;	**STREPSIADES** What will happen to me?
462	**CHORUS** τὸν πάντα χρόνον μετ' ἐμοῦ / ζηλωτότατον βίον ἀνθρώπων διάξεις.	**CHORUS** For all time, with me, / you will lead the most envied life of all mankind.
465	**STREPSIADES** ἆρά γε τοῦτ' ἄρ' ἐγώ ποτ' / ὄψομαι;	**STREPSIADES** Will I really ever / get to see that?
467	**CHORUS** ὥστε γέ σου πολλοὺς ἐπὶ ταῖσι θύραις ἀεὶ καθῆσθαι, βουλομένους ἀνακοινοῦσθαί τε καὶ ἐς λόγον ἐλθεῖν πράγματα κἀντιγραφὰς πολλῶν ταλάντων, ἄξια σῇ φρενὶ συμβουλευσομένους μετὰ σοῦ.	**CHORUS** Yes, so that crowds will always be sitting at your doors, wanting to consult you and talk things over, suits and counter-pleas worth many talents, matters worthy of your mind, to plan with you.
476	ἀλλ' ἐγχείρει τὸν πρεσβύτην ὅ τι περ μέλλεις προδιδάσκειν, / καὶ διακίνει τὸν νοῦν αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς γνώμης ἀποπειρῶ.	Now go to work on the old man with whatever you mean to teach him first. Stir up his mind and test out his wits.

FIRST EPISODE

Socrates questions Strepsiades about his memory and character, then takes him inside.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
478	**SOCRATES** ἄγε δὴ κάτειπέ μοι σὺ τὸν σαυτοῦ τρόπον, ἵν' αὐτὸν εἰδὼς ὅστις ἐστὶ μηχανὰς ἤδη 'πὶ τούτοις πρὸς σὲ καινὰς προσφέρω.	**SOCRATES** Come on, then, describe your own character to me, so that once I know what sort you are, I can bring my newest siege engines to bear on you.
481	**STREPSIADES** τί δέ; τειχομαχεῖν μοι διανοεῖ πρὸς τῶν θεῶν;	**STREPSIADES** What? Are you planning to besiege me, for the gods' sake?
482	**SOCRATES** οὔκ, ἀλλὰ βραχέα σου πυθέσθαι βούλομαι. / ἦ μνημονικὸς εἶ;	**SOCRATES** No, I just want to ask you a few short questions. Do you have a good memory?
483	**STREPSIADES** δύο τρόπω νὴ τὸν Δία· ἢν μὲν γὰρ ὀφείληταί τί μοι, μνήμων πάνυ· ἐὰν δ' ὀφείλω, σχέτλιος, ἐπιλήσμων πάνυ.	**STREPSIADES** Two kinds, by Zeus. If somebody owes me something, a terrific memory. If I owe, poor me, a terrible one.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
486	**SOCRATES** ἔνεστι δῆτα μανθάνειν ἐν τῇ φύσει;	**SOCRATES** Well, do you have a natural gift for learning?
487	**STREPSIADES** λέγειν μὲν οὐκ ἔνεστ', ἀποστερεῖν δ' ἔνι.	**STREPSIADES** For speaking, no. For swindling, yes.
488	**SOCRATES** πῶς οὖν δυνήσει μανθάνειν;	**SOCRATES** Then how will you be able to learn?
	STREPSIADES ἀμέλει καλῶς.	**STREPSIADES** Just fine, don't worry.
489	**SOCRATES** ἄγε νυν ὅπως, ὅταν τι προβάλλω σοι σοφὸν / περὶ τῶν μετεώρων, εὐθέως ὑφαρπάσει.	**SOCRATES** Come on, then: whenever I toss you some clever point about the heavens, make sure you snap it up right away.
491	**STREPSIADES** τί δαί; κυνηδὸν τὴν σοφίαν σιτήσομαι;	**STREPSIADES** What? Am I supposed to gobble up my cleverness like a dog?
492	**SOCRATES** ἄνθρωπος ἀμαθὴς οὑτοσὶ καὶ βάρβαρος. δέδοικά σ' ὦ πρεσβῦτα μὴ πληγῶν δέει. φέρ' ἴδω τί δρᾷς, ἤν τίς σε τύπτῃ;	**SOCRATES** This fellow's an ignoramus, a regular foreigner. I'm afraid, old man, you're going to need a beating. Come on, let me see what you do if someone hits you.
494	**STREPSIADES** τύπτομαι, ἔπειτ' ἐπισχὼν ὀλίγον ἐπιμαρτύρομαι, εἶτ' αὖθις ἀκαρῆ διαλιπὼν δικάζομαι.	**STREPSIADES** I take the hit. Then I wait a little and call witnesses. Then, after a split second, I sue.
497	**SOCRATES** ἴθι νυν κατάθου θοἰμάτιον.	**SOCRATES** Go on, then, take off your cloak.
	STREPSIADES ἠδίκηκά τι;	**STREPSIADES** Have I done something wrong?
498	**SOCRATES** οὔκ, ἀλλὰ γυμνοὺς εἰσιέναι νομίζεται.	**SOCRATES** No, it's the custom to go in naked.
499	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' οὐχὶ φωράσων ἔγωγ' εἰσέρχομαι.	**STREPSIADES** But I'm not going in to search for stolen goods![33]
500	**SOCRATES** κατάθου. τί λῃρεῖς;	**SOCRATES** Take it off. What's this nonsense?
	STREPSIADES εἰπὲ δή νύν μοι·	**STREPSIADES** Now just tell me this—
	SOCRATES τὸ τί;	**SOCRATES** What?
501	**STREPSIADES** ἢν ἐπιμελὴς ὦ καὶ προθύμως μανθάνω, / τῷ τῶν μαθητῶν ἐμφερὴς γενήσομαι;	**STREPSIADES** If I work hard and learn eagerly, which of your students will I turn out like?
503	**SOCRATES** οὐδὲν διοίσεις Χαιρεφῶντος τὴν φύσιν.	**SOCRATES** You'll turn out exactly like Chaerephon.
504	**STREPSIADES** οἴμοι κακοδαίμων ἡμιθνὴς γενήσομαι.	**STREPSIADES** Oh no, poor me! I'll be half dead!
505	**SOCRATES** οὐ μὴ λαλήσεις, ἀλλ' ἀκολουθήσεις ἐμοὶ / ἀνύσας τι δευρὶ θᾶττον;	**SOCRATES** Stop your chatter and follow me in here, quickly, won't you?
506		

33 Under Athenian law, a man searching another's house for stolen property had to go in stripped, so that he couldn't plant anything.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STREPSIADES ἐς τὼ χεῖρέ νυν δός μοι μελιτοῦτταν πρότερον· ὡς δέδοικ’ ἐγὼ εἴσω καταβαίνων ὥσπερ ἐς Τροφωνίου.	**STREPSIADES** Then put a honey cake in my hands first. I’m scared, going down in there, like going down into Trophonius’ cave.[34]
509	**SOCRATES** χώρει· τί κυπτάζεις ἔχων περὶ τὴν θύραν;	**SOCRATES** Get moving! Why are you dithering around the door?

FIRST PARABASIS

The chorus speaks for the poet about the play’s defeat, then scolds Athens over Cleon and the calendar.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
510	**CHORUS** ἀλλ’ ἴθι χαίρων τῆς ἀνδρείας οὕνεκα ταύτης. εὐτυχία γένοιτο τἀνθρώπῳ, ὅτι προήκων ἐς βαθὺ τῆς ἡλικίας νεωτέροις τὴν φύσιν αὐτοῦ πράγμασιν χρωτίζεται καὶ σοφίαν ἐπασκεῖ.	**CHORUS** Go, then, and good luck to you for this courage of yours. May good fortune come to the man, because, though he has come deep into his years, he dyes his nature in newer matters and works at cleverness.
518	ὦ θεώμενοι κατερῶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθέρως τἀληθῆ νὴ τὸν Διόνυσον τὸν ἐκθρέψαντά με. οὕτω νικήσαιμί τ’ ἐγὼ καὶ νομιζοίμην σοφός, ὡς ὑμᾶς ἡγούμενος εἶναι θεατὰς δεξιοὺς καὶ ταύτην σοφώτατ’ ἔχειν τῶν ἐμῶν κωμῳδιῶν, πρώτους ἠξίωσ’ ἀναγεῦσ’ ὑμᾶς, ἣ παρέσχε μοι ἔργον πλεῖστον· εἶτ’ ἀνεχώρουν ὑπ’ ἀνδρῶν φορτικῶν ἡττηθεὶς οὐκ ἄξιος ὤν· ταῦτ’ οὖν ὑμῖν μέμφομαι τοῖς σοφοῖς, ὧν οὕνεκ’ ἐγὼ ταῦτ’ ἐπραγματευόμην. ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ ὡς ὑμῶν ποθ’ ἑκὼν προδώσω τοὺς δεξιούς.	Spectators, I’ll tell you the truth, freely, by Dionysus who raised me. As surely as I hope to win and be thought clever: it was because I believed you were sharp spectators, and that this was the cleverest of my comedies, that I thought you deserved to be the first to taste it, the play that cost me the most work. And then I withdrew, beaten by vulgar men, which I didn’t deserve. So this is what I hold against you clever ones, for whose sake I took all that trouble. But even so, I’ll never willingly betray the sharp ones among you.[35]
528	ἐξ ὅτου γὰρ ἐνθάδ’ ὑπ’ ἀνδρῶν, οἷς ἡδὺ καὶ λέγειν, ὁ σώφρων τε χὠ καταπύγων ἄριστ’ ἠκουσάτην, κἀγώ, παρθένος γὰρ ἔτ’ ἦν, κοὐκ ἐξῆν πώ μοι τεκεῖν, ἐξέθηκα, παῖς δ’ ἑτέρα τις λαβοῦσ’ ἀνείλετο, ὑμεῖς δ’ ἐξεθρέψατε γενναίως κἀπαιδεύσατε· ἐκ τούτου μοι πιστὰ παρ’ ὑμῖν γνώμης ἔσθ’ ὅρκια. νῦν οὖν Ἠλέκτραν κατ’ ἐκείνην ἥδ’ ἡ κωμῳδία ζητοῦσ’ ἦλθ’, ἤν που ’πιτύχῃ θεαταῖς οὕτω σοφοῖς· γνώσεται γάρ, ἥνπερ ἴδῃ, τἀδελφοῦ τὸν βόστρυχον.	Because ever since, here in this place, my Moderate Man and my Degenerate were praised to the skies by men it’s a pleasure even to mention, and I (still a maiden then, not yet allowed to give birth) exposed my child, and another girl picked it up and took it in, and you raised it and educated it nobly—ever since then I’ve had firm pledges of your good judgment. So now this comedy has come, like Electra in the old play, searching to see if she can somewhere find spectators as clever as that. She’ll recognize her brother’s lock of hair if she sees it.[36]
537	ὡς δὲ σώφρων ἐστὶ φύσει σκέψασθ’· ἥτις πρῶτα μὲν οὐδὲν ἦλθε ῥαψαμένη σκυτίον καθειμένον	Just look how decent she is by nature. First of all, she hasn’t come with a leather dick stitched on and dangling, red at the tip and thick, to make the

34 The oracle of Trophonius in Boeotia was consulted by descending into an underground chamber, carrying honey cakes for the snakes.

35 This parabasis belongs to Aristophanes’ revised version; the original *Clouds* came third at the Dionysia of 423 BC.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἐρυθρὸν ἐξ ἄκρου παχύ, τοῖς παιδίοις ἵν' ᾖ γέλως· οὐδ' ἔσκωψε τοὺς φαλακρούς, οὐδὲ κόρδαχ' εἵλκυσεν, οὐδὲ πρεσβύτης ὁ λέγων τἄπη τῇ βακτηρίᾳ τύπτει τὸν παρόντ' ἀφανίζων πονηρὰ σκώμματα, οὐδ' εἰσῇξε δᾷδας ἔχουσ', οὐδ' ἰοὺ ἰού βοᾷ, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ καὶ τοῖς ἔπεσιν πιστεύουσ' ἐλήλυθεν.	boys laugh. She hasn't made fun of bald men or danced the lewd cordax. There's no old man speaking the lines who whacks whoever's nearby with his stick to cover up lousy jokes. She hasn't rushed in with torches or yelled "iou, iou!" No, she's come trusting in herself and her lines.
545	κἀγὼ μὲν τοιοῦτος ἀνὴρ ὢν ποιητὴς οὐ κομῶ, οὐδ' ὑμᾶς ζητῶ 'ξαπατᾶν δὶς καὶ τρὶς ταὔτ' εἰσάγων, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ καινὰς ἰδέας ἐσφέρων σοφίζομαι, οὐδὲν ἀλλήλαισιν ὁμοίας καὶ πάσας δεξιάς· ὃς μέγιστον ὄντα Κλέων' ἔπαισ' ἐς τὴν γαστέρα, κοὐκ ἐτόλμησ' αὖθις ἐπεμπηδῆσ' αὐτῷ κειμένῳ. οὗτοι δ', ὡς ἅπαξ παρέδωκεν λαβὴν Ὑπέρβολος, τοῦτον δείλαιον κολετρῶσ' ἀεὶ καὶ τὴν μητέρα. Εὔπολις μὲν τὸν Μαρικᾶν πρώτιστον παρείλκυσεν ἐκστρέψας τοὺς ἡμετέρους Ἱππέας κακὸς κακῶς, προσθεὶς αὐτῷ γραῦν μεθύσην τοῦ κόρδακος οὕνεχ', ἣν Φρύνιχος πάλαι πεποίηχ', ἣν τὸ κῆτος ἤσθιεν.	And I, being that kind of man as a poet, don't put on airs, and I don't try to fool you by bringing on the same stuff two and three times. I always show my cleverness by introducing new ideas, not at all like one another and every one of them smart. I'm the one who punched Cleon in the belly when he was at his most powerful, and I didn't have the nerve to jump on him again once he was down. But these others, once Hyperbolus gave them a handhold, keep trampling the poor wretch, and his mother too. Eupolis, first of all, dragged on his *Maricas*, a lousy hack job, our *Knights* turned inside out, and added a drunken old woman for the sake of the cordax, the very one Phrynichus created long ago, the one the sea monster was eating.[37]
557	εἶθ' Ἕρμιππος αὖθις ἐποίησεν εἰς Ὑπέρβολον, ἄλλοι τ' ἤδη πάντες ἐρείδουσιν εἰς Ὑπέρβολον, τὰς εἰκοὺς τῶν ἐγχέλεων τὰς ἐμὰς μιμούμενοι. ὅστις οὖν τούτοισι γελᾷ, τοῖς ἐμοῖς μὴ χαιρέτω· ἢν δ' ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖσιν ἐμοῖς εὐφραίνησθ' εὑρήμασιν, ἐς τὰς ὥρας τὰς ἑτέρας εὖ φρονεῖν δοκήσετε.	Then Hermippus did a play on Hyperbolus too, and now all the rest are laying into Hyperbolus, copying my eel similes. So whoever laughs at those people, I hope he gets no pleasure from my work. But if you enjoy me and my inventions, you'll be thought wise in seasons to come.[38]
563	ὑψιμέδοντα μὲν θεῶν Ζῆνα τύραννον ἐς χορὸν πρῶτα μέγαν κικλήσκω· τόν τε μεγασθενῆ τριαίνης ταμίαν, γῆς τε καὶ ἁλμυρᾶς θαλάσσης ἄγριον μοχλευτήν· καὶ μεγαλώνυμον ἡμέτερον πατέρ' Αἰθέρα σεμνότατον βιοθρέμμονα πάντων· τόν θ' ἱπποπόμαν, ὃς ὑπερλάμπροις ἀκτῖσιν κατέχει γῆς πέδον μέγας ἐν θεοῖς ἐν θνητοῖσί τε δαίμων.	High ruler of the gods, Zeus, great monarch, to our dance I call first; and the mighty steward of the trident, fierce heaver of earth and salty sea; and our father of great name, most holy Aether, who nourishes the life of all; and the driver of horses, who with his dazzling rays fills the plain of earth, great among gods and among mortals a power.
575	ὦ σοφώτατοι θεαταὶ δεῦρο τὸν νοῦν προσέχετε. ἠδικημέναι γὰρ ὑμῖν μεμφόμεσθ' ἐναντίον· πλεῖστα γὰρ θεῶν ἁπάντων ὠφελούσαις τὴν πόλιν, δαιμόνων ἡμῖν μόναις οὐ θύετ' οὐδὲ σπένδετε,	You cleverest of spectators, pay attention here. We've been wronged, and we're going to tell you so to your faces. We help the city more than all the other gods, and yet we're the only deities you don't

36 He means his first play, *Banqueters* (427 BC), staged under another man's name, which contrasted a decent son and a depraved one. In Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* Electra recognizes her brother Orestes by a lock of his hair.
37 Cleon, the leading popular politician, was Aristophanes' target in *Knights* (424 BC); Hyperbolus, a lamp-maker turned popular politician, took his place after his death in 422 BC. Eupolis and Phrynichus were rival comic poets.
38 Hermippus was another comic poet; in *Knights* Cleon is compared to eel fishermen, who catch more by stirring up the mud.

GREEK	ENGLISH
αἵτινες τηροῦμεν ὑμᾶς. ἢν γὰρ ᾖ τις ἔξοδος μηδενὶ ξὺν νῷ, τότ' ἢ βροντῶμεν ἢ ψακάζομεν. εἶτα τὸν θεοῖσιν ἐχθρὸν βυρσοδέψην Παφλαγόνα ἡνίχ' ἡρεῖσθε στρατηγόν, τὰς ὀφρῦς συνήγομεν κἀποιοῦμεν δεινά, βροντὴ δ' ἐρράγη δι' ἀστραπῆς· ἡ σελήνη δ' ἐξέλειπε τὰς ὁδούς, ὁ δ' ἥλιος τὴν θρυαλλίδ' εἰς ἑαυτὸν εὐθέως ξυνελκύσας οὐ φανεῖν ἔφασκεν ὑμῖν, εἰ στρατηγήσει Κλέων. ἀλλ' ὅμως εἵλεσθε τοῦτον.	sacrifice to or pour libations for, we who watch over you. Whenever there's some expedition that makes no sense at all, we either thunder or drizzle. And then, when you were electing that god-hated Paphlagonian tanner as general, we knit our brows and raged, and thunder broke out with lightning; the moon left her course, and the sun drew his wick straight back into himself and said he wouldn't shine for you if Cleon was going to be general. But you elected him all the same.[39]
587 φασὶ γὰρ δυσβουλίαν τῇδε τῇ πόλει προσεῖναι, ταῦτα μέντοι τοὺς θεοὺς ἅττ' ἂν ὑμεῖς ἐξαμάρτητ' ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον τρέπειν. ὡς δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ξυνοίσει ῥᾳδίως διδάξομεν· ἢν Κλέωνα τὸν λάρον δώρων ἑλόντες καὶ κλοπῆς εἶτα φιμώσητε τούτου τῷ ξύλῳ τὸν αὐχένα, αὖθις ἐς τἀρχαῖον ὑμῖν, εἴ τι κἀξημάρτετε, ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον τὸ πρᾶγμα τῇ πόλει συνοίσεται.	They say bad decisions are native to this city, but that the gods turn whatever mistakes you make to the good. And we'll easily show you how this one, too, will turn out well. If you convict that greedy gull Cleon of bribery and theft and then clamp his neck in the stocks, things will go back to how they used to be, and even if you did make a mistake, the business will turn out for the city's good.
595 ἀμφί μοι αὖτε Φοῖβ' ἄναξ Δήλιε Κυνθίαν ἔχων ὑψικέρατα πέτραν, ἥ τ' Ἐφέσου μάκαιρα πάγχρυσον ἔχεις οἶκον ἐν ᾧ κόραι σε Λυδῶν μεγάλως σέβουσιν, ἥ τ' ἐπιχώριος ἡμετέρα θεὸς αἰγίδος ἡνίοχος πολιοῦχος Ἀθάνα, Παρνασσίαν θ' ὃς κατέχων πέτραν σὺν πεύκαις σελαγεῖ Βάκχαις Δελφίσιν ἐμπρέπων, κωμαστὴς Διόνυσος.	Be near me again, Lord Phoebus, Delian, who hold the Cynthian rock with its high peak; and you, blessed lady, who hold Ephesus' house all of gold, where Lydian girls give you great worship; and our own goddess of this land, driver of the aegis, guardian of the city, Athena; and you who hold the Parnassian rock and blaze with pine torches, standing out among the Delphic Bacchants, reveler Dionysus.
607 ἡνίχ' ἡμεῖς δεῦρ' ἀφορμᾶσθαι παρεσκευάσμεθα, ἡ σελήνη συντυχοῦσ' ἡμῖν ἐπέστειλεν φράσαι, πρῶτα μὲν χαίρειν Ἀθηναίοισι καὶ τοῖς ξυμμάχοις· εἶτα θυμαίνειν ἔφασκε· δεινὰ γὰρ πεπονθέναι ὠφελοῦσ' ὑμᾶς ἅπαντας οὐ λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐμφανῶς. πρῶτα μὲν τοῦ μηνὸς ἐς δᾷδ' οὐκ ἔλαττον ἢ δραχμήν, ὥστε καὶ λέγειν ἅπαντας ἐξιόντας ἑσπέρας, "μὴ πρίῃ παῖ δᾷδ', ἐπειδὴ φῶς σεληναίας καλόν."	When we were getting ready to set out for this place, the Moon happened to meet us and told us to say, first, that she sends greetings to the Athenians and their allies. Then she said she's furious, because she's been treated terribly, though she helps every one of you, not with words but plainly to see. First of all, she saves you no less than a drachma a month on torches, so that everyone going out in the evening says, "Don't buy a torch, boy, the moonlight's lovely."
615 ἄλλα τ' εὖ δρᾶν φησιν, ὑμᾶς δ' οὐκ ἄγειν τὰς ἡμέρας οὐδὲν ὀρθῶς, ἀλλ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω κυδοιδοπᾶν· ὥστ' ἀπειλεῖν φησιν αὐτῇ τοὺς θεοὺς ἑκάστοτε ἡνίκ' ἂν ψευσθῶσι δείπνου κἀπίωσιν οἴκαδε, τῆς ἑορτῆς μὴ τυχόντες κατὰ λόγον τῶν ἡμερῶν.	She says she does you other good turns too, but you don't keep the days properly at all; you jumble them up, up and down. So she says the gods threaten her every time they're cheated of a din-

39 Cleon's family owned a tannery, and in *Knights* he appears as a slave called "the Paphlagonian"; he was elected general in 424 BC, the year of an eclipse.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		ner and have to go home, having missed the festival the count of days entitled them to.
620	κᾆθ' ὅταν θύειν δέῃ, στρεβλοῦτε καὶ δικάζετε· πολλάκις δ' ἡμῶν ἀγόντων τῶν θεῶν ἀπαστίαν, ἡνίκ' ἂν πενθῶμεν ἢ τὸν Μέμνον' ἢ Σαρπηδόνα, σπένδεθ' ὑμεῖς καὶ γελᾶτ'· ἀνθ' ὧν λαχὼν Ὑπέρβολος τῆτες ἱερομνημονεῖν, κἄπειθ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν τῶν θεῶν τὸν στέφανον ἀφῃρέθη· μᾶλλον γὰρ οὕτως εἴσεται κατὰ σελήνην ὡς ἄγειν χρὴ τοῦ βίου τὰς ἡμέρας.	And then, when you ought to be sacrificing, you're torturing witnesses and judging cases. And often, when we gods are keeping a fast, mourning Memnon or Sarpedon, you're pouring libations and laughing. That's why Hyperbolus, chosen by lot this year as sacred delegate, had his garland taken away by us gods: that way he'll understand better that the days of one's life should be kept by the moon.[40]

FIRST LYRIC SCENE

Strepsiades fails Socrates' lessons and is dismissed, so he brings his reluctant son instead.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
627	**SOCRATES** μὰ τὴν Ἀναπνοὴν μὰ τὸ Χάος μὰ τὸν Ἀέρα οὐκ εἶδον οὕτως ἄνδρ' ἄγροικον οὐδένα οὐδ' ἄπορον οὐδὲ σκαιὸν οὐδ' ἐπιλήσμονα· ὅστις σκαλαθυρμάτι' ἅττα μικρὰ μανθάνων ταῦτ' ἐπιλέλησται πρὶν μαθεῖν· ὅμως γε μὴν αὐτὸν καλῶ θύραζε δευρὶ πρὸς τὸ φῶς. ποῦ Στρεψιάδης; ἔξει τὸν ἀσκάντην λαβών;	**SOCRATES** By Respiration, by Chaos, by Air, I've never seen such a yokel anywhere, so helpless, so dim, so forgetful. He learns a few little scraps of trivia and forgets them before he's even learned them. Still, I'll call him out here into the light. Where's Strepsiades? Come out, and bring your cot!
634	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐῶσί μ' ἐξενεγκεῖν οἱ κόρεις.	**STREPSIADES** But the bedbugs won't let me carry it out.
635	**SOCRATES** ἀνύσας τι κατάθου καὶ πρόσεχε τὸν νοῦν.	**SOCRATES** Hurry up, put it down and pay attention.
	STREPSIADES ἰδού.	**STREPSIADES** There.
636	**SOCRATES** ἄγε δὴ τί βούλει πρῶτα νυνὶ μανθάνειν ὧν οὐκ ἐδιδάχθης πώποτ' οὐδέν; εἰπέ μοι. πότερα περὶ μέτρων ἢ περὶ ἐπῶν ἢ ῥυθμῶν;	**SOCRATES** Come on, then, what do you want to learn first, of the things you've never been taught? Tell me. Measures, or verses, or rhythms?
639	**STREPSIADES** περὶ τῶν μέτρων ἔγωγ'· ἔναγχος γάρ ποτε / ὑπ' ἀλφιταμοιβοῦ παρεκόπην διχοινίκῳ.	**STREPSIADES** Measures, for me. Just the other day a barley dealer cheated me out of two quarts.
641	**SOCRATES** οὐ τοῦτ' ἐρωτῶ σ', ἀλλ' ὅ τι κάλλιστον μέτρον / ἡγεῖ· πότερα τὸ τρίμετρον ἢ τὸ τετράμετρον;	**SOCRATES** That's not what I'm asking you. Which measure do you think is finest: the trimeter or the tetrameter?
643	**STREPSIADES** ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδὲν πρότερον ἡμιεκτέου.	**STREPSIADES** As far as I'm concerned, nothing beats the four-quart measure.
644	**SOCRATES** οὐδὲν λέγεις ὦνθρωπε.	**SOCRATES** You're talking nonsense, man.

40 Memnon and Sarpedon were sons of gods killed at Troy. The sacred delegate represented Athens on the religious council at Delphi; how Hyperbolus lost his garland is unknown.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STREPSIADES περίδου νυν ἐμοί, / εἰ μὴ τετράμετρόν ἐστιν ἡμιεκτέον.	**STREPSIADES** Then bet me the four-quart measure isn't a tetrameter.
646	**SOCRATES** ἐς κόρακας, ὡς ἄγροικος εἶ καὶ δυσμαθής. / ταχύ γ' ἂν δύναιο μανθάνειν περὶ ῥυθμῶν.	**SOCRATES** Go to hell! What a bumpkin you are, and how slow to learn! I suppose you'd be quick to learn about rhythms.
648	**STREPSIADES** τί δέ μ' ὠφελήσουσ' οἱ ῥυθμοὶ πρὸς τἄλφιτα;	**STREPSIADES** And how will rhythms help me with my barley?
649	**SOCRATES** πρῶτον μὲν εἶναι κομψὸν ἐν συνουσίᾳ, ἐπαΐονθ' ὁποῖός ἐστι τῶν ῥυθμῶν κατ' ἐνόπλιον, χὠποῖος αὖ κατὰ δάκτυλον.	**SOCRATES** First of all, they'll make you sophisticated in company, able to tell which rhythm is enoplian, and which in turn goes by the dactyl, by the finger.
652	**STREPSIADES** κατὰ δάκτυλον; νὴ τὸν Δί', ἀλλ' οἶδ'.	**STREPSIADES** By the finger? By Zeus, I know that one!
	SOCRATES εἰπὲ δή.	**SOCRATES** Tell me, then.
653	**STREPSIADES** τίς ἄλλος ἀντὶ τουτουὶ τοῦ δακτύλου; / πρὸ τοῦ μέν, ἔτ' ἐμοῦ παιδὸς ὄντος, οὑτοσί.	**STREPSIADES** What else but this finger here? Though before, when I was still a boy, it was this one.[41]
655	**SOCRATES** ἀγρεῖος εἶ καὶ σκαιός.	**SOCRATES** You're a boor and a dolt.
	STREPSIADES οὐ γὰρ ᾠζυρὲ / τούτων ἐπιθυμῶ μανθάνειν οὐδέν.	**STREPSIADES** Well, you miserable man, I don't want to learn any of this.
656	**SOCRATES** τί δαί;	**SOCRATES** Then what?
657	**STREPSIADES** ἐκεῖν' ἐκεῖνο, τὸν ἀδικώτατον λόγον.	**STREPSIADES** That one, that one: the most unjust argument.
658	**SOCRATES** ἀλλ' ἕτερα δεῖ σε πρότερα τούτου μανθάνειν, / τῶν τετραπόδων ἅττ' ἐστὶν ὀρθῶς ἄρρενα.	**SOCRATES** But you have to learn other things before that: which four-footed animals are properly masculine.
660	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' οἶδ' ἔγωγε τἄρρεν', εἰ μὴ μαίνομαι· / κριὸς τράγος ταῦρος κύων ἀλεκτρυών.	**STREPSIADES** But I know the masculine ones, unless I'm crazy: ram, billy goat, bull, dog, rooster.
662	**SOCRATES** ὁρᾷς ὃ πάσχεις; τήν τε θήλειαν καλεῖς / ἀλεκτρυόνα κατὰ ταὐτὸ καὶ τὸν ἄρρενα.	**SOCRATES** See what's happening to you? You call the hen "rooster," just the same as the male.
664	**STREPSIADES** πῶς δὴ φέρ';	**STREPSIADES** How's that, then?
	SOCRATES ὅπως; ἀλεκτρυὼν κἀλεκτρυών.	**SOCRATES** How? "Rooster" and "rooster."
665	**STREPSIADES** νὴ τὸν Ποσειδῶ. νῦν δὲ πῶς με χρὴ καλεῖν;	**STREPSIADES** By Poseidon, you're right. So what am I supposed to call them now?
666	**SOCRATES** ἀλεκτρύαιναν, τὸν δ' ἕτερον ἀλέκτορα.	**SOCRATES** A "roostress," and the other one a "cock."[42]

41 "Dactyl" means "finger" in Greek. Strepsiades gives the obscene middle-finger gesture, then points to his penis.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
667	**STREPSIADES** ἀλεκτρύαιναν; εὖ γε νὴ τὸν Ἀέρα· ὥστ' ἀντὶ τούτου τοῦ διδάγματος μόνου διαλφιτώσω σου κύκλῳ τὴν κάρδοπον.	**STREPSIADES** A "roostress"? Bravo, by Air! For that lesson alone I'll fill your kneading-trough with barley right to the brim, every inch of him.
670	**SOCRATES** ἰδοὺ μάλ' αὖθις τοῦθ' ἕτερον· τὴν κάρδοπον / ἄρρενα καλεῖς θήλειαν οὖσαν.	**SOCRATES** There, you've done it again, another one. You call the kneading-trough "him" when it's a "her."
671	**STREPSIADES** τῷ τρόπῳ / ἄρρενα καλῶ 'γὼ κάρδοπον;	**STREPSIADES** How do I call the kneading-trough "him"?
672	**SOCRATES** μάλιστά γε, / ὥσπερ γε καὶ Κλεώνυμον.	**SOCRATES** You certainly do, just as you do Cleonymus.
673	**STREPSIADES** πῶς δή; φράσον.	**STREPSIADES** How so? Explain.
674	**SOCRATES** ταὐτὸν δύναταί σοι κάρδοπος Κλεωνύμῳ.	**SOCRATES** For you, "kneading-trough" works exactly like "Cleonymus."
675	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' ὦγάθ' οὐδ' ἦν κάρδοπος Κλεωνύμῳ, ἀλλ' ἐν θυείᾳ στρογγύλῃ γ' ἂν ἐμάττετο. ἀτὰρ τὸ λοιπὸν πῶς με χρὴ καλεῖν;	**STREPSIADES** But my good man, Cleonymus didn't even have a kneading-trough. He did his kneading in a round mortar. Anyway, what should I call it from now on?[43]
677	**SOCRATES** ὅπως; / τὴν καρδόπην, ὥσπερ καλεῖς τὴν Σωστράτην.	**SOCRATES** What? A "kneading-troughette," the way you say "Sostrate."
679	**STREPSIADES** τὴν καρδόπην θήλειαν;	**STREPSIADES** "Kneading-troughette," feminine?
	SOCRATES ὀρθῶς γὰρ λέγεις.	**SOCRATES** Now you've got it right.
680	**STREPSIADES** ἐκεῖνο δ' ἦν ἄν, καρδόπη, Κλεωνύμη.	**STREPSIADES** So that would make it "troughette," "Cleonymette."
681	**SOCRATES** ἔτι δή γε περὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων μαθεῖν σε δεῖ, / ἅττ' ἄρρεν' ἐστίν, ἅττα δ' αὐτῶν θήλεα.	**SOCRATES** You still have to learn about names: which of them are masculine and which are feminine.
683	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' οἶδ' ἔγωγ' ἃ θήλε' ἐστίν.	**STREPSIADES** But I know which ones are feminine.
	SOCRATES εἰπὲ δή.	**SOCRATES** Tell me, then.
684	**STREPSIADES** Λύσιλλα Φίλιννα Κλειταγόρα Δημητρία.	**STREPSIADES** Lysilla, Philinna, Clitagora, Demetria.
685	**SOCRATES** ἄρρενα δὲ ποῖα τῶν ὀνομάτων;	**SOCRATES** And which names are masculine?
	STREPSIADES μυρία. / Φιλόξενος Μελησίας Ἀμυνίας.	**STREPSIADES** Thousands. Philoxenus, Melesias, Amynias.
687	**SOCRATES** ἀλλ' ὦ πόνηρε ταῦτά γ' ἐστ' οὐκ ἄρρενα.	**SOCRATES** But you rogue, those aren't masculine.

42 In Greek one word, alektryōn, served for both cock and hen; Socrates coins alektryaina. Next he "corrects" kardopos, "kneading-trough," a feminine noun with a masculine-looking ending, to kardopē.
43 "Kneading in a mortar" was slang for masturbating.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
688	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ ἄρρεν' ὑμῖν ἐστιν;	**STREPSIADES** They're not masculine to you people?
	SOCRATES οὐδαμῶς γ', ἐπεὶ / πῶς ἂν καλέσειας ἐντυχὼν Ἀμυνίᾳ;	**SOCRATES** Not in the least. How would you call out if you ran into Amynias?
690	**STREPSIADES** ὅπως ἄν; ὠδί, δεῦρο δεῦρ' Ἀμυνία.	**STREPSIADES** How? Like this: "Over here, over here, Amynia!"
691	**SOCRATES** ὁρᾷς; γυναῖκα τὴν Ἀμυνίαν καλεῖς.	**SOCRATES** See? You're calling Amynias a woman.
692	**STREPSIADES** οὔκουν δικαίως ἥτις οὐ στρατεύεται; / ἀτὰρ τί ταῦθ' ἃ πάντες ἴσμεν μανθάνω;	**STREPSIADES** Well, isn't that only fair, since she doesn't do military service? But why am I learning things we all know?[44]
694	**SOCRATES** οὐδὲν μὰ Δί' ἀλλὰ κατακλινεὶς δευρὶ —	**SOCRATES** Nothing, by Zeus. But lie down here—
	STREPSIADES τί δρῶ;	**STREPSIADES** And do what?
695	**SOCRATES** ἐκφρόντισόν τι τῶν σεαυτοῦ πραγμάτων.	**SOCRATES** Think out something about your own affairs.
696	**STREPSIADES** μὴ δῆθ' ἱκετεύω σ' ἐνγεταῦθ'· ἀλλ' εἴ γε χρή, / χαμαί μ' ἔασον αὐτὰ ταῦτ' ἐκφροντίσαι.	**STREPSIADES** Please, I beg you, not there! If I have to, let me think them out right here on the ground.
698	**SOCRATES** οὐκ ἔστι παρὰ ταῦτ' ἄλλα.	**SOCRATES** There's no other way.
	STREPSIADES κακοδαίμων ἐγώ, / οἵαν δίκην τοῖς κόρεσι δώσω τήμερον.	**STREPSIADES** Poor me! What a price I'll pay the bedbugs today!
700	**CHORUS** φρόντιζε δὴ καὶ διάθρει πάντα τρόπον τε σαυτὸν στρόβει πυκνώσας. ταχὺς δ', ὅταν εἰς ἄπορον πέσῃς, ἐπ' ἄλλο πήδα νόημα φρενός· ὕπνος δ' ἀπέστω γλυκύθυμος ὀμμάτων. ...	**CHORUS** Think now, and scrutinize, and spin yourself every which way, packing yourself tight. And quick, when you fall into a dead end, jump to another thought of the mind; and let sweet-hearted sleep stay far from your eyes. ...
707	**STREPSIADES** ἀτταταῖ ἀτταταῖ.	**STREPSIADES** Ouch, ouch! Ouch, ouch!
708	**CHORUS** τί πάσχεις; τί κάμνεις;	**CHORUS** What's the matter? What's hurting you?
709	**STREPSIADES** ἀπόλλυμαι δείλαιος· ἐκ τοῦ σκίμποδος δάκνουσί μ' ἐξέρποντες οἱ Κορίνθιοι, καὶ τὰς πλευρὰς δαρδάπτουσιν καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐκπίνουσιν καὶ τοὺς ὄρχεις ἐξέλκουσιν καὶ τὸν πρωκτὸν διορύττουσιν, καί μ' ἀπολοῦσιν.	**STREPSIADES** I'm dying, poor me! Out of the cot the Corinthians come crawling and biting me, and they're gobbling up my ribs, and sucking out my soul, and dragging out my balls, and digging through my asshole, and they'll be the death of me![45]

44 Addressed directly, Amynias becomes "Amynia," which sounds like a woman's name; Amynias was mocked as a draft dodger.
45 A pun on koreis, "bedbugs," and Korinthioi, the Corinthians, Athens' enemies in the war.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
716	**CHORUS** μή νυν βαρέως ἄλγει λίαν.	**CHORUS** Now, don't take it too hard.
717	**STREPSIADES** καὶ πῶς; ὅτε μου φροῦδα τὰ χρήματα, φρούδη χροιά, φρούδη ψυχή, φρούδη δ' ἐμβάς· καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἔτι τοῖσι κακοῖς φρουρᾶς ᾄδων ὀλίγου φροῦδος γεγένημαι.	**STREPSIADES** How can I not, when my money's gone, my color's gone, my soul's gone, my shoe's gone, and on top of all these troubles, singing the sentry's song, I'm very nearly gone myself?
723	**SOCRATES** οὗτος τί ποιεῖς; οὐχὶ φροντίζεις;	**SOCRATES** Hey, you, what are you doing? Aren't you thinking?
	STREPSIADES ἐγώ; / νὴ τὸν Ποσειδῶ.	**STREPSIADES** Me? By Poseidon, yes.
724	**SOCRATES** καὶ τί δῆτ' ἐφρόντισας;	**SOCRATES** And what have you thought?
725	**STREPSIADES** ὑπὸ τῶν κόρεων εἴ μού τι περιλειφθήσεται.	**STREPSIADES** Whether the bedbugs are going to leave anything of me.
726	**SOCRATES** ἀπολεῖ κάκιστ'.	**SOCRATES** Drop dead, damn you!
	STREPSIADES ἀλλ' ὦγάθ' ἀπόλωλ' ἀρτίως.	**STREPSIADES** But my good man, I just did.
727	**SOCRATES** οὐ μαλθακιστέ' ἀλλὰ περικαλυπτέα. ἐξευρετέος γὰρ νοῦς ἀποστερητικὸς κἀπαιόλημ'.	**SOCRATES** No going soft: get under the covers. You've got to come up with an idea for swindling, a real con.
729	**STREPSIADES** οἴμοι τίς ἂν δῆτ' ἐπιβάλοι / ἐξ ἀρνακίδων γνώμην ἀποστερητρίδα;	**STREPSIADES** Oh no! Who's going to throw a swindling notion over me, out of these sheepskins?
731	**SOCRATES** φέρε νυν ἀθρήσω πρῶτον ὅ τι δρᾷ τουτονί. / οὗτος καθεύδεις;	**SOCRATES** Come on, let me first take a look at what this fellow's doing. Hey, you, are you asleep?
732	**STREPSIADES** μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω 'γὼ μὲν οὔ.	**STREPSIADES** No, by Apollo, not me.
733	**SOCRATES** ἔχεις τι;	**SOCRATES** Got hold of anything?
	STREPSIADES μὰ Δί' οὐ δῆτ' ἔγωγ'.	**STREPSIADES** No, by Zeus, I don't.
	SOCRATES οὐδὲν πάνυ;	**SOCRATES** Nothing at all?
734	**STREPSIADES** οὐδέν γε πλὴν ἢ τὸ πέος ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ.	**STREPSIADES** Nothing, except my cock in my right hand.
735	**SOCRATES** οὐκ ἐγκαλυψάμενος ταχέως τι φροντιεῖς;	**SOCRATES** Won't you cover yourself up, quick, and think something?
736	**STREPSIADES** περὶ τοῦ; σὺ γάρ μοι τοῦτο φράσον ὦ Σώκρατες.	**STREPSIADES** About what? You tell me that, Socrates.
737	**SOCRATES** αὐτὸς ὅ τι βούλει πρῶτος ἐξευρὼν λέγε.	**SOCRATES** Find whatever you want for yourself first, and then say it.
738	**STREPSIADES** ἀκήκοας μυριάκις ἀγὼ βούλομαι, / περὶ τῶν τόκων, ὅπως ἂν ἀποδῶ μηδενί.	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		STREPSIADES You've heard ten thousand times what I want: the interest, how I can get out of paying it back to anybody.
740	**SOCRATES** ἴθι νῦν καλύπτου καὶ σχάσας τὴν φροντίδα λεπτὴν κατὰ μικρὸν περιφρόνει τὰ πράγματα, ὀρθῶς διαιρῶν καὶ σκοπῶν.	**SOCRATES** Go on, then, cover up, let your subtle thought off the leash, and think your way around your affairs little by little, dividing and examining them correctly.
742	**STREPSIADES** οἴμοι τάλας.	**STREPSIADES** Oh, poor me.
743	**SOCRATES** ἔχ' ἀτρέμα· κἂν ἀπορῇς τι τῶν νοημάτων, ἀφεὶς ἄπελθε, κατὰ τὴν γνώμην πάλιν κίνησον αὖθις αὐτὸ καὶ ζυγώθρισον.	**SOCRATES** Keep still. And if you get stuck on one of your ideas, let it go and walk away; then set it moving in your mind again and weigh it up.
746	**STREPSIADES** ὦ Σωκρατίδιον φίλτατον.	**STREPSIADES** Socrates, my dearest little Socrates!
	SOCRATES τί ὦ γέρον;	**SOCRATES** What is it, old man?
747	**STREPSIADES** ἔχω τόκου γνώμην ἀποστερητικήν.	**STREPSIADES** I've got an idea for swindling my way out of the interest.
748	**SOCRATES** ἐπίδειξον αὐτήν.	**SOCRATES** Let's see it.
	STREPSIADES εἰπὲ δή νύν μοι —	**STREPSIADES** Tell me, then—
	SOCRATES τὸ τί;	**SOCRATES** Tell you what?
749	**STREPSIADES** γυναῖκα φαρμακίδ' εἰ πριάμενος Θετταλὴν καθέλοιμι νύκτωρ τὴν σελήνην, εἶτα δὴ αὐτὴν καθείρξαιμ' ἐς λοφεῖον στρογγύλον, ὥσπερ κάτοπτρον, κἄτα τηροίην ἔχων —	**STREPSIADES** What if I bought a Thessalian witch and had her pull the moon down one night, and then shut it up in a round case, like a mirror, and kept it under guard—[46]
753	**SOCRATES** τί δῆτα τοῦτ' ἂν ὠφελήσειέν σ';	**SOCRATES** And what good would that do you?
	STREPSIADES ὅ τι; εἰ μηκέτ' ἀνατέλλοι σελήνη μηδαμοῦ, οὐκ ἂν ἀποδοίην τοὺς τόκους.	**STREPSIADES** What good? If the moon never rose again anywhere, I wouldn't pay my interest.
755	**SOCRATES** ὁτιὴ τί δή;	**SOCRATES** Why on earth not?
756	**STREPSIADES** ὁτιὴ κατὰ μῆνα τἀγύριον δανείζεται.	**STREPSIADES** Because money's lent by the month.
757	**SOCRATES** εὖ γ'· ἀλλ' ἕτερον αὖ σοι προβαλῶ τι δεξιόν. εἴ σοι γράφοιτο πεντετάλαντός τις δίκη, ὅπως ἂν αὐτὴν ἀφανίσειας εἰπέ μοι.	**SOCRATES** Good. Now I'll set you another tricky one. Suppose someone filed a lawsuit against you for five talents. Tell me how you'd make it vanish.
761	**STREPSIADES** ὅπως; ὅπως; οὐκ οἶδ'· ἀτὰρ ζητητέον.	**STREPSIADES** How? How? I don't know. But I'll have to look into it.
762		**SOCRATES** Then don't keep your mind wound up around yourself all the time. Let your thought out

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	SOCRATES μή νυν περὶ σαυτὸν εἶλλε τὴν γνώμην ἀεί, ἀλλ' ἀποχάλα τὴν φροντίδ' ἐς τὸν ἀέρα λινόδετον ὥσπερ μηλολόνθην τοῦ ποδός.	into the air on a string, like a beetle tied by the foot.
765	**STREPSIADES** ηὕρηκ' ἀφάνισιν τῆς δίκης σοφωτάτην, / ὥστ' αὐτὸν ὁμολογεῖν σ' ἐμοί.	**STREPSIADES** I've found a really clever way to make the lawsuit vanish. You'll admit it yourself!
766	**SOCRATES** ποίαν τινά;	**SOCRATES** What sort of way?
767	**STREPSIADES** ἦδη παρὰ τοῖσι φαρμακοπώλαις τὴν λίθον ταύτην ἑόρακας τὴν καλήν, τὴν διαφανῆ, ἀφ' ἧς τὸ πῦρ ἅπτουσι;	**STREPSIADES** You've seen that stone at the drug-sellers', haven't you? The pretty one, the see-through one, that they light fires with?
769	**SOCRATES** τὴν ὕαλον λέγεις;	**SOCRATES** You mean the glass?
770	**STREPSIADES** ἔγωγε. φέρε τί δῆτ' ἄν, εἰ ταύτην λαβών, ὁπότε γράφοιτο τὴν δίκην ὁ γραμματεύς, ἀπωτέρω στὰς ὧδε πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον τὰ γράμματ' ἐκτήξαιμι τῆς ἐμῆς δίκης;	**STREPSIADES** That's the one. Well, what if I took it, and while the clerk was writing up my case, I stood off a bit, like this, facing the sun, and melted away the letters of my case?[47]
773	**SOCRATES** σοφῶς γε νὴ τὰς Χάριτας.	**SOCRATES** Clever, by the Graces!
	STREPSIADES οἴμ' ὡς ἥδομαι / ὅτι πεντετάλαντος διαγέγραπταί μοι δίκη.	**STREPSIADES** Oh, how happy I am to have a five-talent lawsuit crossed out!
775	**SOCRATES** ἄγε δὴ ταχέως τουτὶ ξυνάρπασον.	**SOCRATES** Come on now, quick, snatch up this one.
	STREPSIADES τὸ τί;	**STREPSIADES** What?
776	**SOCRATES** ὅπως ἀποστρέψαι' ἂν ἀντιδικῶν δίκην / μέλλων ὀφλήσειν μὴ παρόντων μαρτύρων.	**SOCRATES** How you'd fend off a lawsuit when you're in court, about to lose, and you've got no witnesses.
778	**STREPSIADES** φαυλότατα καὶ ῥᾷστ'.	**STREPSIADES** Nothing to it. Easiest thing in the world.
	SOCRATES εἰπὲ δή.	**SOCRATES** Tell me, then.
	STREPSIADES καὶ δὴ λέγω. εἰ πρόσθεν ἔτι μιᾶς ἐνεστώσης δίκης, πρὶν τὴν ἐμὴν καλεῖσθ', ἀπαγξαίμην τρέχων.	**STREPSIADES** All right, I'm telling you. If there was still one case to be heard ahead of mine, I'd run off and hang myself before mine got called.
781	**SOCRATES** οὐδὲν λέγεις.	**SOCRATES** That's nonsense.
	STREPSIADES νὴ τοὺς θεοὺς ἔγωγ', ἐπεὶ / οὐδεὶς κατ' ἐμοῦ τεθνεῶτος εἰσάξει δίκην.	**STREPSIADES** It is not, by the gods! Nobody's going to bring a case against me when I'm dead.
783	**SOCRATES** ὑθλεῖς· ἄπερρ', οὐκ ἂν διδάξαιμ' ἄν σ' ἔτι.	**SOCRATES** Drivel. Get lost. I won't teach you any more.
784		

46 Thessaly was notorious for its witches, who were said to be able to draw down the moon.
47 Charges were written on wax-coated tablets, which a burning-glass could melt.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STREPSIADES ὁτιὴ τί; ναὶ πρὸς τῶν θεῶν ὦ Σώκρατες.	**STREPSIADES** Why not? Oh please, by the gods, Socrates!
785	**SOCRATES** ἀλλ' εὐθὺς ἐπιλήθει σύ γ' ἅττ' ἂν καὶ μάθῃς· / ἐπεὶ τί νυνὶ πρῶτον ἐδιδάχθης; λέγε.	**SOCRATES** Because you forget whatever you learn the moment you've learned it. Look: what was the first thing you were taught just now? Tell me.
787	**STREPSIADES** φέρ' ἴδω τί μέντοι πρῶτον ἦν; τί πρῶτον ἦν; τίς ἦν ἐν ᾗ 'ματτόμεθα μέντοι τἄλφιτα; οἴμοι τίς ἦν;	**STREPSIADES** Let me see, what *was* the first thing? What was the first thing? What was that thing we knead our barley in? Oh no, what was it?
789	**SOCRATES** οὐκ ἐς κόρακας ἀποφθερεῖ, / ἐπιλησμότατον καὶ σκαιότατον γερόντιον;	**SOCRATES** Go to hell and rot, you forgetful, moronic little old man!
791	**STREPSIADES** οἴμοι τί οὖν δῆθ' ὁ κακοδαίμων πείσομαι; ἀπὸ γὰρ ὀλοῦμαι μὴ μαθὼν γλωττοστροφεῖν. ἀλλ' ὦ Νεφέλαι χρηστόν τι συμβουλεύσατε.	**STREPSIADES** Oh no, what's going to become of me now, poor devil? I'm ruined if I don't learn tongue-twisting. Clouds, please, give me some good advice.
794	**CHORUS** ἡμεῖς μὲν ὦ πρεσβῦτα συμβουλεύομεν, εἴ σοί τις υἱός ἐστιν ἐκτεθραμμένος, πέμπειν ἐκεῖνον ἀντὶ σαυτοῦ μανθάνειν.	**CHORUS** Our advice, old man, is this: if you've got a grown-up son, send him to study in your place.
797	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' ἔστ' ἔμοιγ' υἱὸς καλός τε κἀγαθός· / ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐθέλει γὰρ μανθάνειν. τί ἐγὼ πάθω;	**STREPSIADES** Well, I do have a son, a fine young gentleman. But he doesn't want to learn. What am I supposed to do?
799	**CHORUS** σὺ δ' ἐπιτρέπεις;	**CHORUS** And you let him get away with it?
	STREPSIADES εὐσωματεῖ γὰρ καὶ σφριγᾷ, κἄστ' ἐκ γυναικῶν εὐπτέρων τῶν Κοισύρας. ἀτὰρ μέτειμί γ' αὐτόν· ἢν δὲ μὴ 'θέλῃ, οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως οὐκ ἐξελῶ κ' τῆς οἰκίας. ἀλλ' ἐπανάμεινόν μ' ὀλίγον εἰσελθὼν χρόνον.	**STREPSIADES** Well, he's big and strapping, and he comes from fine-feathered women, Coesyra's lot. But I'll go and get him, and if he won't come, there's no way I'm not throwing him out of the house. Go inside and wait for me a little while.
804	**CHORUS** ἆρ' αἰσθάνει πλεῖστα δι' ἡμᾶς ἀγάθ' αὐτίχ' ἕξων μόνας θεῶν; ὡς ἕτοιμος ὅδ' ἐστὶν ἅπαντα δρᾶν ὅσ' ἂν κελεύῃς. σὺ δ' ἀνδρὸς ἐκπεπληγμένου καὶ φανερῶς ἐπηρμένου γνοὺς ἀπολάψεις ὅ τι πλεῖστον δύνασαι, ταχέως· φιλεῖ γάρ πως τὰ τοιαῦθ' ἑτέρᾳ τρέπεσθαι.	**CHORUS** Do you see what blessings you'll soon have thanks to us alone of the gods? Here he is, ready to do anything you tell him. And you, seeing the man's dazzled and plainly carried away, will lap up all you can from him, and fast: things like this have a way of turning around.
814	**STREPSIADES** οὔτοι μὰ τὴν Ὁμίχλην ἔτ' ἐνταυθοῖ μενεῖς· / ἀλλ' ἔσθι' ἐλθὼν τοὺς Μεγακλέους κίονας.	**STREPSIADES** No, by Mist, you are not staying here a moment longer! Go and eat Megacles' columns![48]
816		

48 Megacles: his mother's rich, aristocratic uncle. Strepsiades tells his son to go and eat him out of house and home, pillars and all.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	PHEIDIPPIDES ὦ δαιμόνιε, τί χρῆμα πάσχεις ὦ πάτερ; / οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖς μὰ τὸν Δία τὸν Ὀλύμπιον.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Father, what on earth's got into you? You're not in your right mind, by Olympian Zeus!
818	**STREPSIADES** ἰδού γ' ἰδού, Δί' Ὀλύμπιον· τῆς μωρίας, / τὸν Δία νομίζειν ὄντα τηλικουτονί.	**STREPSIADES** Listen to that, just listen! "Olympian Zeus"! How stupid, believing in Zeus at your age!
820	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τί δὲ τοῦτ' ἐγέλασας ἐτεόν;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Seriously, what are you laughing at?
	STREPSIADES ἐνθυμούμενος ὅτι παιδάριον εἶ καὶ φρονεῖς ἀρχαιϊκά. ὅμως γε μὴν πρόσελθ', ἵν' εἰδῇς πλείονα, καί σοι φράσω τι πρᾶγμ' ὃ μαθὼν ἀνὴρ ἔσει. ὅπως δὲ τοῦτο μὴ διδάξεις μηδένα.	**STREPSIADES** At the thought that you're a little kid with antiquated ideas. Still, come over here so you can know more, and I'll tell you something that'll make a man of you once you've learned it. But make sure you don't teach it to anyone.
825	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἰδού· τί ἔστιν;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Here I am. What is it?
	STREPSIADES ὤμοσας νυνὶ Δία.	**STREPSIADES** You swore by Zeus just now.
826	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἔγωγ'.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I did.
	STREPSIADES ὁρᾷς οὖν ὡς ἀγαθὸν τὸ μανθάνειν; / οὐκ ἔστιν ὦ Φειδιππίδη Ζεύς.	**STREPSIADES** So you see what a good thing learning is? There is no Zeus, Pheidippides.
827	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀλλὰ τίς;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Then who is there?
828	**STREPSIADES** Δῖνος βασιλεύει τὸν Δί' ἐξεληλακώς.	**STREPSIADES** Whirl is king. He's driven Zeus out.
829	**PHEIDIPPIDES** αἰβοῖ τί ληρεῖς;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Ugh! What drivel is this?
	STREPSIADES ἴσθι τοῦθ' οὕτως ἔχον.	**STREPSIADES** Take it from me, that's how it is.
830	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τίς φησι ταῦτα;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Who says so?
	STREPSIADES Σωκράτης ὁ Μήλιος / καὶ Χαιρεφῶν, ὃς οἶδε τὰ ψυλλῶν ἴχνη.	**STREPSIADES** Socrates the Melian, and Chaerephon, who knows the footprints of fleas.[49]
832	**PHEIDIPPIDES** σὺ δ' ἐς τοσοῦτον τῶν μανιῶν ἐλήλυθας / ὥστ' ἀνδράσιν πείθει χολῶσιν;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** And you've gone so far round the bend that you believe a pack of lunatics?
833	**STREPSIADES** εὐστόμει καὶ μηδὲν εἴπῃς φλαῦρον ἄνδρας δεξιοὺς καὶ νοῦν ἔχοντας· ὧν ὑπὸ τῆς φειδωλίας ἀπεκείρατ' οὐδεὶς πώποτ' οὐδ' ἠλείψατο, οὐδ' ἐς βαλανεῖον ἦλθε λουσόμενος· σὺ δὲ ὥσπερ τεθνεῶτος καταλόει μου τὸν βίον. ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστ' ἐλθὼν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ μάνθανε.	**STREPSIADES** Watch your tongue! Don't say a bad word about clever men with good sense. They're so thrifty that not one of them has ever had a haircut or oiled himself or gone to the baths for a wash. But you're washing my livelihood down the drain as if I were already a corpse. Now go as fast as you can and learn in my place.
840	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τί δ' ἂν παρ' ἐκείνων καὶ μάθοι χρηστόν τις ἄν;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** And what could anyone learn from those people that's any use?
841	**STREPSIADES** ἆληθες; ὅσαπερ ἔστ' ἐν ἀνθρώποις σοφά·	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	γνώσει δὲ σαυτὸν ὡς ἀμαθὴς εἶ καὶ παχύς. ἀλλ' ἐπανάμεινόν μ' ὀλίγον ἐνταυθοῖ χρόνον.	**STREPSIADES** Really? Everything clever there is in the world! You'll find out how ignorant and thick you are. But wait here for me a little while.
844	**PHEIDIPPIDES** οἴμοι τί δράσω παραφρονοῦντος τοῦ πατρός; πότερον παρανοίας αὐτὸν εἰσαγαγὼν ἕλω, ἢ τοῖς σοροπηγοῖς τὴν μανίαν αὐτοῦ φράσω;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Oh no, what do I do? My father's out of his mind. Do I take him to court and have him convicted of insanity, or tell the coffin-makers he's gone mad?
847	**STREPSIADES** φέρ' ἴδω, σὺ τοῦτον τί ὀνομάζεις; εἰπέ μοι.	**STREPSIADES** Let's see, now. What do you call this? Tell me.
848	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀλεκτρυόνα.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** A rooster.
	STREPSIADES καλῶς γε. ταυτηνὶ δὲ τί;	**STREPSIADES** Good. And what about this one?
849	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀλεκτρυόν'.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** A rooster.
	STREPSIADES ἄμφω ταὐτό; καταγέλαστος εἶ. μή νυν τὸ λοιπόν, ἀλλὰ τήνδε μὲν καλεῖν ἀλεκτρύαιναν τουτονὶ δ' ἀλέκτορα.	**STREPSIADES** Both the same? You're a joke. Don't do that from now on: call this one a "roostress" and this one a "cock."
852	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀλεκτρύαιναν; ταῦτ' ἔμαθες τὰ δεξιὰ / εἴσω παρελθὼν ἄρτι παρὰ τοὺς γηγενεῖς;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** "Roostress"? Is that the clever stuff you learned just now, when you went in there among those Earthborn giants?
854	**STREPSIADES** χἄτερά γε πόλλ'· ἀλλ' ὅ τι μάθοιμ' ἑκάστοτε, / ἐπελανθανόμην ἂν εὐθὺς ὑπὸ πλήθους ἐτῶν.	**STREPSIADES** That and lots more. But whatever I learned, I'd forget it straight away, every time, because I'm so old.
856	**PHEIDIPPIDES** διὰ ταῦτα δὴ καὶ θοἰμάτιον ἀπώλεσας;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Is that why you lost your cloak too?
857	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπολώλεκ', ἀλλὰ καταπεφρόντικα.	**STREPSIADES** I haven't lost it. I've thought it away.
858	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τὰς δ' ἐμβάδας ποῖ τέτροφας ὦνόητε σύ;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** And where have you put your shoes, you idiot?
859	**STREPSIADES** ὥσπερ Περικλέης ἐς τὸ δέον ἀπώλεσα. ἀλλ' ἴθι βάδιζ', ἴωμεν· εἶτα τῷ πατρὶ πιθόμενος ἐξάμαρτε· κἀγώ τοί ποτε, οἶδ', ἐξέτει σοι τραυλίσαντι πιθόμενος, ὃν πρῶτον ὀβολὸν ἔλαβον ἡλιαστικόν, τούτου 'πριάμην σοι Διασίοις ἁμαξίδα.	**STREPSIADES** Like Pericles, I lost them "for necessary purposes." Come on now, walk, let's go. Do what your father tells you, and go wrong. I did what you wanted once, you know, when you were six and lisping: the very first juror's obol I got, I spent on a little toy cart for you at the Diasia.[50]
865	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἦ μὴν σὺ τούτοις τῷ χρόνῳ ποτ' ἀχθέσει.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I swear, you'll be sorry for all this someday.
866	**STREPSIADES** εὖ γ' ὅτι ἐπείσθης. δεῦρο δεῦρ' ὦ Σώκρατες,	**STREPSIADES** Good, you did as you were told. Here, Socrates, over here, come out! I've brought

49 Calling Socrates "the Melian" links him with Diagoras of Melos, the notorious atheist.
50 In 445 BC Pericles accounted for a large sum, reputedly a bribe to the Spartans, simply as spent "for necessary purposes."

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἔξελθ'· ἄγω γάρ σοι τὸν υἱὸν τουτονὶ ἄκοντ' ἀναπείσας.	you my son here. I talked him into it against his will.
868	**SOCRATES** νηπύτιος γάρ ἐστ' ἔτι, / καὶ τῶν κρεμαθρῶν οὔπω τρίβων τῶν ἐνθάδε.	**SOCRATES** Yes, he's still a baby, and not yet seasoned in our hanging baskets here.
870	**PHEIDIPPIDES** αὐτὸς τρίβων εἴης ἄν, εἰ κρέμαιό γε.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** You'd be well seasoned yourself, if you were strung up.
871	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ ἐς κόρακας; καταρᾷ σὺ τῷ διδασκάλῳ;	**STREPSIADES** Go to hell! Are you cursing your teacher?
872	**SOCRATES** ἰδοὺ κρέμαι', ὡς ἠλίθιον ἐφθέγξατο καὶ τοῖσι χείλεσιν διερρυηκόσιν. πῶς ἂν μάθοι ποθ' οὗτος ἀπόφυξιν δίκης ἢ κλῆσιν ἢ χαύνωσιν ἀναπειστηρίαν; καίτοι γε ταλάντου τοῦτ' ἔμαθεν Ὑπέρβολος.	**SOCRATES** Listen to him: "strung up"! What a dim way to say it, and with his lips hanging open! How could this one ever learn to get off in a lawsuit, or serve a summons, or puff up a persuasive case? And yet Hyperbolus learned it, for a talent.
877	**STREPSIADES** ἀμέλει δίδασκε· θυμόσοφός ἐστιν φύσει· εὐθύς γέ τοι παιδάριον ὂν τυννουτονὶ ἔπλαττεν ἔνδον οἰκίας ναῦς τ' ἔγλυφεν, ἁμαξίδας τε σκυτίνας ἠργάζετο, κἀκ τῶν σιδίων βατράχους ἐποίει πῶς δοκεῖς. ὅπως δ' ἐκείνω τὼ λόγω μαθήσεται, τὸν κρείττον' ὅστις ἐστὶ καὶ τὸν ἥττονα, ὃς τἄδικα λέγων ἀνατρέπει τὸν κρείττονα· ἐὰν δὲ μή, τὸν γοῦν ἄδικον πάσῃ τέχνῃ.	**STREPSIADES** Don't worry, teach him. He's clever by nature. Why, when he was just a little boy this big, he was building houses indoors, and carving boats, and making little carts out of leather, and making frogs out of pomegranate peel—you wouldn't believe how well. Just make sure he learns those two Arguments: the Stronger, whatever that is, and the Weaker, the one that argues the unjust side and overturns the Stronger. If not both, then at least the unjust one, by every trick there is.
886	**SOCRATES** αὐτὸς μαθήσεται παρ' αὐτοῖν τοῖν λόγοιν. / ἐγὼ δ' ἀπέσομαι.	**SOCRATES** He'll learn it himself, from the two Arguments in person. I'll be off.
887	**STREPSIADES** τοῦτό νυν μέμνησ', ὅπως / πρὸς πάντα τὰ δίκαι' ἀντιλέγειν δυνήσεται.	**STREPSIADES** Now remember this: he's got to be able to argue against everything that's just.
888	**CHORUS** ...	**CHORUS** ...[51]

FIRST AGON

The Stronger and Weaker Arguments debate the old education against the new, and the Weaker wins.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
889	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** χώρει δευρί, δεῖξον σαυτὸν / τοῖσι θεαταῖς, καίπερ θρασὺς ὤν.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Come out here, show yourself to the audience, brazen as you are.[52]
891	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** ἴθ' ὅποι χρῄζεις. πολὺ γὰρ μᾶλλόν 'ς / ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖσι λέγων ἀπολῶ.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Go wherever you like. I'll destroy you all the more easily with a crowd listening.

51 A choral song seems to have stood here, but it is lost from the text.
52 The manuscripts label the two characters the Just and the Unjust Argument; the play calls them the Stronger and the Weaker, after the sophists' boast of "making the weaker argument the stronger."

	GREEK	ENGLISH
893	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ἀπολεῖς σύ; τίς ὤν;	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** You'll destroy me? Who do you think you are?
	WEAKER ARGUMENT λόγος.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** An Argument.
	STRONGER ARGUMENT ἥττων γ' ὤν.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** The Weaker one.
894	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** ἀλλά σε νικῶ τὸν ἐμοῦ κρείττω / φάσκοντ' εἶναι.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** But I'll beat you, for all your claims to be stronger than me.
895	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** τί σοφὸν ποιῶν;	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** With what clever trick?
896	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** γνώμας καινὰς ἐξευρίσκων.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** By inventing new ideas.
897	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ταῦτα γὰρ ἀνθεῖ διὰ τουτουσὶ / τοὺς ἀνοήτους.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Yes, that stuff's all the rage, thanks to these idiots here.
899	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** οὔκ, ἀλλὰ σοφούς.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** No, these clever people.
	STRONGER ARGUMENT ἀπολῶ σε κακῶς.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** I'll destroy you, and nastily.
900	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** εἰπὲ τί ποιῶν;	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Tell me how.
	STRONGER ARGUMENT τὰ δίκαια λέγων.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** By saying what's just.
901	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** ἀλλ' ἀνατρέψω γ' αὖτ' ἀντιλέγων· / οὐδὲ γὰρ εἶναι πάνυ φημὶ δίκην.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Then I'll argue back and overturn it. I say justice doesn't even exist.
903	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** οὐκ εἶναι φῄς;	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** You say it doesn't exist?
	WEAKER ARGUMENT φέρε γὰρ ποῦ 'στιν;	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Well, where is it, then?
904	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** παρὰ τοῖσι θεοῖς.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** With the gods.
	WEAKER ARGUMENT πῶς δῆτα δίκης οὔσης ὁ Ζεὺς οὐκ ἀπόλωλεν τὸν πατέρ' αὐτοῦ δήσας;	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Then if justice exists, how come Zeus wasn't destroyed for tying up his own father?
906	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** αἰβοῖ τουτὶ καὶ δὴ / χωρεῖ τὸ κακόν· δότε μοι λεκάνην.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Ugh! Now the sickness is spreading. Get me a bowl to puke in.
908	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** τυφογέρων εἶ κἀνάρμοστος.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** You're a senile old fogey, and out of tune.
909	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** καταπύγων εἶ κἀναίσχυντος.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** You're a degenerate, and shameless.
910	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** ῥόδα μ' εἴρηκας.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** You're showering me with roses.
	STRONGER ARGUMENT καὶ βωμολόχος.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** And a cheap clown.
911	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** κρίνεσι στεφανοῖς.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** You're crowning me with lilies.
	STRONGER ARGUMENT καὶ πατραλοίας.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** And a father-beater.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
912	WEAKER ARGUMENT χρυσῷ πάττων μ' οὐ γιγνώσκεις.	WEAKER ARGUMENT You don't realize you're sprinkling me with gold.
913	STRONGER ARGUMENT οὐ δῆτα πρὸ τοῦ γ', ἀλλὰ μολύβδῳ.	STRONGER ARGUMENT Not in the old days. Then it was lead.
914	WEAKER ARGUMENT νῦν δέ γε κόσμος τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐμοί.	WEAKER ARGUMENT Well, now it's an ornament to me.
915	STRONGER ARGUMENT θρασὺς εἶ πολλοῦ.	STRONGER ARGUMENT You're far too brazen.
	WEAKER ARGUMENT σὺ δέ γ' ἀρχαῖος.	WEAKER ARGUMENT And you're an antique.
916	STRONGER ARGUMENT διὰ σὲ δὲ φοιτᾶν οὐδεὶς ἐθέλει τῶν μειρακίων· καὶ γνωσθήσει ποτ' Ἀθηναίοις οἷα διδάσκεις τοὺς ἀνοήτους.	STRONGER ARGUMENT It's thanks to you that none of the boys wants to go to school. One day the Athenians will find out what sort of things you teach the fools.
920	WEAKER ARGUMENT αὐχμεῖς αἰσχρῶς.	WEAKER ARGUMENT You're disgustingly filthy.
	STRONGER ARGUMENT σὺ δέ γ' εὖ πράττεις. καίτοι πρότερόν γ' ἐπτώχευες, Τήλεφος εἶναι Μυσὸς φάσκων, ἐκ πηριδίου γνώμας τρώγων Πανδελετείους.	STRONGER ARGUMENT And you're doing very nicely. Yet once you were a beggar, claiming to be Telephus the Mysian, munching Pandeletus-style maxims out of your little pouch.[53]
925	WEAKER ARGUMENT ὤμοι σοφίας —	WEAKER ARGUMENT Oh, what cleverness—
	STRONGER ARGUMENT ὤμοι μανίας —	STRONGER ARGUMENT Oh, what madness—
926	WEAKER ARGUMENT ἧς ἐμνήσθης —	WEAKER ARGUMENT you've mentioned—
927	STRONGER ARGUMENT τῆς σῆς, πόλεώς θ' ἥτις σε τρέφει / λυμαινόμενον τοῖς μειρακίοις.	STRONGER ARGUMENT Yours, and the city's, for feeding you while you corrupt the boys.
929	WEAKER ARGUMENT οὐχὶ διδάξεις τοῦτον Κρόνος ὤν.	WEAKER ARGUMENT You're not going to teach this one, you old Cronus.[54]
930	STRONGER ARGUMENT εἴπερ γ' αὐτὸν σωθῆναι χρὴ / καὶ μὴ λαλιὰν μόνον ἀσκῆσαι.	STRONGER ARGUMENT I am, if he's to be saved and not just practice chatter.
932	WEAKER ARGUMENT δεῦρ' ἴθι, τοῦτον δ' ἔα μαίνεσθαι.	WEAKER ARGUMENT Come over here, and let him rave.
933	STRONGER ARGUMENT κλαύσει, τὴν χεῖρ' ἢν ἐπιβάλλῃς.	STRONGER ARGUMENT Lay a hand on him and you'll be sorry.
934	CHORUS παύσασθε μάχης καὶ λοιδορίας. ἀλλ' ἐπίδειξαι σύ τε τοὺς προτέρους ἅττ' ἐδίδασκες, σύ τε τὴν καινὴν παίδευσιν, ὅπως ἂν ἀκούσας σφῷν ἀντιλεγόντοιν κρίνας φοιτᾷ.	CHORUS Stop your fighting and name-calling. Instead, you show us what you used to teach the men of the past, and you, the new education, so that he can hear the two of you argue it out, and decide, and go to school.

53 Telephus: the Mysian king whom Euripides brought on stage disguised as a beggar. Pandeletus: a notorious litigant.
54 Cronus, Zeus' deposed father, was a byword for anything hopelessly old-fashioned.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
939	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** δρᾶν ταῦτ' ἐθέλω.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** I'm willing to do that.
	WEAKER ARGUMENT κἄγωγ' ἐθέλω.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** So am I.
940	**CHORUS** φέρε δὴ πότερος λέξει πρότερος;	**CHORUS** Come on, then: which of you will speak first?
941	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** τούτῳ δώσω· κᾆτ' ἐκ τούτων ὧν ἂν λέξῃ ῥηματίοισιν καινοῖς αὐτὸν καὶ διανοίαις κατατοξεύσω. τὸ τελευταῖον δ', ἢν ἀναγρύζῃ, τὸ πρόσωπον ἅπαν καὶ τὼφθαλμὼ κεντούμενος ὥσπερ ὑπ' ἀνθρηνῶν ὑπὸ τῶν γνωμῶν ἀπολεῖται.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** I'll let him. Then, out of whatever he says, I'll shoot him full of newfangled little phrases and notions. And in the end, if he so much as grunts, he'll be stung all over his face and both his eyes by my maxims, as if by hornets, and die.
949	**CHORUS** νῦν δείξετον τὼ πισύνω τοῖς περιδεξίοισι λόγοισι καὶ φροντίσι καὶ γνωμοτύποις μερίμναις, ὁπότερος αὐτοῖν λέγων ἀμείνων φανήσεται. νῦν γὰρ ἅπας ἐνθάδε κίνδυνος ἀνεῖται σοφίας, ἧς πέρι τοῖς ἐμοῖς φίλοις ἐστὶν ἀγὼν μέγιστος.	**CHORUS** Now these two, relying on their nimble words and thoughts and maxim-minting musings, will show which of them will prove the better speaker. For now the whole gamble of cleverness is let loose here, and over it my friends face their greatest contest.
959	ἀλλ' ὦ πολλοῖς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους ἤθεσι χρηστοῖς στεφανώσας, / ῥῆξον φωνὴν ἥτινι χαίρεις, καὶ τὴν σαυτοῦ φύσιν εἰπέ.	Come, you who crowned the older generation with so many good habits: burst out in whatever voice you like, and tell us what you are.
961	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** λέξω τοίνυν τὴν ἀρχαίαν παιδείαν ὡς διέκειτο, ὅτ' ἐγὼ τὰ δίκαια λέγων ἤνθουν καὶ σωφροσύνη 'νενόμιστο. πρῶτον μὲν ἔδει παιδὸς φωνὴν γρύξαντος μηδὲν ἀκοῦσαι· εἶτα βαδίζειν ἐν ταῖσιν ὁδοῖς εὐτάκτως ἐς κιθαριστοῦ τοὺς κωμήτας γυμνοὺς ἀθρόους, κεἰ κριμνώδη κατανείφοι. εἶτ' αὖ προμαθεῖν ᾄσμ' ἐδίδασκεν τὼ μηρὼ μὴ ξυνέχοντας, ἢ "Παλλάδα περσέπολιν δεινὰν" ἢ "τηλέπορόν τι βόαμα," ἐντειναμένους τὴν ἁρμονίαν, ἣν οἱ πατέρες παρέδωκαν. εἰ δέ τις αὐτῶν βωμολοχεύσαιτ' ἢ κάμψειέν τινα καμπήν, οἵας οἱ νῦν τὰς κατὰ Φρῦνιν ταύτας τὰς δυσκολοκάμπτους, ἐπετρίβετο τυπτόμενος πολλὰς ὡς τὰς Μούσας ἀφανίζων.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Then I'll describe the old education as it used to be, back when I flourished, speaking what's just, and self-control was the custom. First, you weren't to hear a boy make so much as a peep. Then the boys from each neighborhood had to walk through the streets to the music teacher's, in good order and all together, without cloaks, even if the snow came down thick as barley meal. Then he'd teach them to learn a song by heart, with their thighs kept apart: "Pallas, dread sacker of cities" or "A cry that carries far," pitched in the mode their fathers handed down. And if any of them played the clown or put in some twiddle, like those hard-to-bend twists in the style of Phrynis that they do nowadays, he got a sound thrashing for wiping out the Muses.[55]
972	ἐν παιδοτρίβου δὲ καθίζοντας τὸν μηρὸν ἔδει προβαλέσθαι τοὺς παῖδας, ὅπως τοῖς ἔξωθεν μηδὲν δείξειαν ἀπηνές· εἶτ' αὖ πάλιν αὖθις ἀνιστάμενον συμψῆσαι, καὶ προνοεῖσθαι	At the trainer's, when the boys sat down they had to keep a thigh forward, so as to show the people outside nothing to torment them. Then, when they stood up again, they had to smooth the sand over and take care not to leave an imprint of their

55 Phrynis: a musician of the later fifth century BC, famous for elaborate innovations.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	εἴδωλον τοῖσιν ἐρασταῖσιν τῆς ἥβης μὴ καταλείπειν. ἠλείψατο δ' ἂν τοὐμφαλοῦ οὐδεὶς παῖς ὑπένερθεν τότ' ἄν, ὥστε τοῖς αἰδοίοισι δρόσος καὶ χνοῦς ὥσπερ μήλοισιν ἐπήνθει· οὐδ' ἂν μαλακὴν φυρασάμενος τὴν φωνὴν πρὸς τὸν ἐραστὴν αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν προαγωγεύων τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐβάδιζεν, οὐδ' ἀνελέσθαι δειπνοῦντ' ἐξῆν καὶ κεφάλαιον ῥαφανῖδος, οὐδ' ἄννηθον τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἁρπάζειν οὐδὲ σέλινον, οὐδ' ὀψοφαγεῖν οὐδὲ κιχλίζειν οὐδ' ἴσχειν τὼ πόδ' ἐναλλάξ.	youth behind for their lovers. And in those days no boy would oil himself below the navel, so the dew and down bloomed on his privates like on quinces. Nor would he soften his voice to go simpering up to his lover, pimping himself with his eyes. Nor was he allowed at dinner to grab even a radish head, or snatch dill or celery from his elders, or gorge on fancy food, or giggle, or sit with his legs crossed.
984	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** ἀρχαῖά γε καὶ Διιπολιώδη καὶ τεττίγων ἀνάμεστα / καὶ Κηκείδου καὶ Βουφονίων.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Antiquated stuff, smacking of the Dipolieia, crawling with cicadas, Cecides and the Ox-Slaying![56]
985	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ἀλλ' οὖν ταῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνα, ἐξ ὧν ἄνδρας Μαραθωνομάχας ἡμὴ παίδευσις ἔθρεψεν. σὺ δὲ τοὺς νῦν εὐθὺς ἐν ἱματίοισι διδάσκεις ἐντετυλίχθαι· ὥστε μ' ἀπάγχεσθ', ὅταν ὀρχεῖσθαι Παναθηναίοις δέον αὐτοὺς τὴν ἀσπίδα τῆς κωλῆς προέχων ἀμελῇ τῆς Τριτογενείας.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** But this is exactly how my education raised the men who fought at Marathon. You, though, teach today's boys to go wrapped up in cloaks from the start. It makes me want to hang myself when they have to dance in armor at the Panathenaea, and one of them holds his shield in front of his ham and doesn't give a damn for Trito-born Athena.
990	πρὸς ταῦτ' ὦ μειράκιον θαρρῶν ἐμὲ τὸν κρείττω λόγον αἱροῦ· κἀπιστήσει μισεῖν ἀγορὰν καὶ βαλανείων ἀπέχεσθαι, καὶ τοῖς αἰσχροῖς αἰσχύνεσθαι, κἂν σκώπτῃ τίς σε φλέγεσθαι· καὶ τῶν θάκων τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις ὑπανίστασθαι προσιοῦσιν, καὶ μὴ περὶ τοὺς σαυτοῦ γονέας σκαιουργεῖν, ἄλλο τε μηδὲν αἰσχρὸν ποιεῖν, ὅτι τῆς αἰδοῦς μέλλεις τἄγαλμ' ἀναπλάττειν· μηδ' εἰς ὀρχηστρίδος εἰσᾴττειν, ἵνα μὴ πρὸς ταῦτα κεχηνὼς μήλῳ βληθεὶς ὑπὸ πορνιδίου τῆς εὐκλείας ἀποθραυσθῇς· μηδ' ἀντειπεῖν τῷ πατρὶ μηδέν, μηδ' Ἰαπετὸν καλέσαντα μνησικακῆσαι τὴν ἡλικίαν ἐξ ἧς ἐνεοττοτροφήθης.	So, young man, take heart and choose me, the Stronger Argument. You'll learn to hate the marketplace and stay away from the baths; to be ashamed of what's shameful, and to blush if anyone mocks you; to get up from your seat for your elders when they come along; not to be boorish toward your own parents, or do anything else shameful, since you're to fashion in yourself the image of Modesty; not to dash into a dancing girl's house, in case, while you're gaping in there, some little prostitute hits you with an apple and your good name is smashed; not to talk back to your father at all, or call him Iapetus and throw his age in his face, the age that nursed you as a nestling.[57]
1000	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** εἰ ταῦτ' ὦ μειράκιον πείσει τούτῳ, νὴ τὸν Διόνυσον / τοῖς Ἱπποκράτους υἱέσιν εἴξεις καὶ σε καλοῦσι βλιτομάμμαν.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** If you take his advice on this, young man, by Dionysus, you'll turn out like Hippocrates' sons, and they'll call you a mama's little turnip.[58]

56 The Dipolieia and its ox-sacrifice were archaic Athenian festivals; cicada brooches were an old-time hair ornament; Cecides was an old-time poet.
57 Iapetus: a Titan, brother of Cronus, and so a byword for an old dodderer.
58 Hippocrates' sons, nephews of Pericles, were mocked as dim and boorish.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1002	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ἀλλ' οὖν λιπαρός γε καὶ εὐανθὴς ἐν γυμνασίοις διατρίψεις, οὐ στωμύλλων κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν τριβολεκτράπελ' οἷάπερ οἱ νῦν, οὐδ' ἑλκόμενος περὶ πραγματίου γλισχραντιλογεξεπιτρίπτου· ἀλλ' εἰς Ἀκαδήμειαν κατιὼν ὑπὸ ταῖς μορίαις ἀποθρέξει στεφανωσάμενος καλάμῳ λευκῷ μετὰ σώφρονος ἡλικιώτου, μίλακος ὄζων καὶ ἀπραγμοσύνης καὶ λεύκης φυλλοβολούσης, ἥρος ἐν ὥρᾳ χαίρων, ὁπόταν πλάτανος πτελέᾳ ψιθυρίζῃ.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Not at all: you'll spend your days in the gymnasiums, sleek and blooming, not chattering in the agora with thorny-witty wisecracks like boys today, or getting dragged into court over some petty, sticky-picky, quibble-squabble-damnable little case. No, you'll go down to the Academy and run under the sacred olives, crowned with white reed, with a modest friend your own age, smelling of bindweed and leisure and the white poplar shedding its leaves, delighting in the spring, when the plane tree whispers to the elm.[59]
1009	ἢν ταῦτα ποιῇς ἀγὼ φράζω, καὶ πρὸς τούτοις προσέχῃς τὸν νοῦν, ἕξεις ἀεὶ στῆθος λιπαρόν, χροιὰν λαμπράν, ὤμους μεγάλους, γλῶτταν βαιάν, πυγὴν μεγάλην, πόσθην μικράν. ἢν δ' ἅπερ οἱ νῦν ἐπιτηδεύῃς, πρῶτα μὲν ἕξεις χροιὰν ὠχράν, ὤμους μικρούς, στῆθος λεπτόν, γλῶτταν μεγάλην, πυγὴν μικράν, κωλῆν μεγάλην, ψήφισμα μακρόν, καὶ σ' ἀναπείσει τὸ μὲν αἰσχρὸν ἅπαν καλὸν ἡγεῖσθαι, τὸ καλὸν δ' αἰσχρόν· καὶ πρὸς τούτοις τῆς Ἀντιμάχου καταπυγοσύνης ἀναπλήσει.	If you do what I tell you and keep your mind on it, you'll always have a gleaming chest, a glowing complexion, big shoulders, a small tongue, a big butt, and a small prick. But if you take up what boys do today, first of all you'll have a pale complexion, small shoulders, a skinny chest, a big tongue, a small butt, a big dick, and long-winded decrees. And he'll talk you into thinking everything shameful is fine, and the fine shameful; and on top of that he'll stuff you full of Antimachus' degeneracy.[60]
1024	**CHORUS** ὦ καλλίπυργον σοφίαν κλεινοτάτην ἐπασκῶν, ὡς ἡδύ σου τοῖσι λόγοις σῶφρον ἔπεστιν ἄνθος. †εὐδαίμονες δ' ἦσαν ἄρ' οἱ ζῶντες τότ' ἐπὶ τῶν προτέρων†· πρὸς τάδε σ' ὦ κομψοπρεπῆ μοῦσαν ἔχων, δεῖ σε λέγειν τι καινόν, ὡς ηὐδοκίμηκεν ἀνήρ.	**CHORUS** You who practice a glorious cleverness, towering and fair, how sweet the bloom of self-control upon your words! How happy, then, were those who lived back then, in the days of old! Against this, you with your elegant, pretty Muse, must say something new, since the man has won such praise.
1034	δεινῶν δέ σοι βουλευμάτων ἔοικε δεῖν πρὸς αὐτόν, / εἴπερ τὸν ἄνδρ' ὑπερβαλεῖ καὶ μὴ γέλωτ' ὀφλήσεις.	It looks as if you'll need some formidable schemes against him, if you're going to beat the man and not get laughed off the stage.
1036	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** καὶ μὴν πάλαι γ' ἐπνιγόμην τὰ σπλάγχνα κἀπεθύμουν ἅπαντα ταῦτ' ἐναντίαις γνώμαισι συνταράξαι. ἐγὼ γὰρ ἥττων μὲν λόγος δι' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἐκλήθην	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Well, I've been choking in my guts for ages, itching to throw all this into confusion with counter-arguments. That's exactly why the thinkers call me the Weaker Argument: be-

59 The Academy: a park and gymnasium outside Athens with sacred olive trees, later the site of Plato's school.
60 Antimachus: an Athenian otherwise little known, evidently notorious for his sexual habits.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἐν τοῖσι φροντισταῖσιν, ὅτι πρώτιστος ἐπενόησα τοῖσιν νόμοις καὶ ταῖς δίκαις τἀναντί' ἀντιλέξαι. καὶ τοῦτο πλεῖν ἢ μυρίων ἔστ' ἄξιον στατήρων, αἱρούμενον τοὺς ἥττονας λόγους ἔπειτα νικᾶν. σκέψαι δὲ τὴν παίδευσιν ᾗ πέποιθεν ὡς ἐλέγξω, ὅστις σε θερμῷ φησι λοῦσθαι πρῶτον οὐκ ἐάσειν. καίτοι τίνα γνώμην ἔχων ψέγεις τὰ θερμὰ λουτρά;	cause I was the very first to think of arguing the opposite of the laws and the lawsuits. And that's worth more than ten thousand staters: to take up the weaker arguments and still win. Now watch how I'll refute this education he trusts in. First, he says he won't let you wash in hot water. Tell me, what's your thinking when you condemn hot baths?
1046	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ὁτιὴ κάκιστόν ἐστι καὶ δειλὸν ποιεῖ τὸν ἄνδρα.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** That they're thoroughly bad, and make a man a coward.
1047	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** ἐπίσχες· εὐθὺς γάρ σ' ἔχω μέσον λαβὼν ἄφυκτον. καί μοι φράσον, τῶν τοῦ Διὸς παίδων τίν' ἄνδρ' ἄριστον ψυχὴν νομίζεις, εἰπέ, καὶ πλείστους πόνους πονῆσαι.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Hold it! I've got you round the waist already, no escape. Tell me: of the sons of Zeus, which man do you consider the bravest soul? Which one labored the most labors?
1050	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδέν' Ἡρακλέους βελτίον' ἄνδρα κρίνω.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** As far as I'm concerned, no man was ever better than Heracles.
1051	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** ποῦ ψυχρὰ δῆτα πώποτ' εἶδες Ἡράκλεια λουτρά; / καίτοι τίς ἀνδρειότερος ἦν;	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Well, where have you ever seen cold Baths of Heracles? And who was braver than he was?[61]
1052	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ταῦτ' ἐστὶ ταῦτ' ἐκεῖνα, ἃ τῶν νεανίσκων ἀεὶ δι' ἡμέρας λαλούντων πλῆρες τὸ βαλανεῖον ποιεῖ, κενὰς δὲ τὰς παλαίστρας.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** That's it, that's exactly the kind of thing that fills the bathhouse with young men chattering all day long, and empties the wrestling schools.
1055	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** εἶτ' ἐν ἀγορᾷ τὴν διατριβὴν ψέγεις· ἐγὼ δ' ἐπαινῶ. εἰ γὰρ πονηρὸν ἦν, Ὅμηρος οὐδέποτ' ἂν ἐποίει τὸν Νέστορ' ἀγορητὴν ἂν οὐδὲ τοὺς σοφοὺς ἅπαντας. ἄνειμι δῆτ' ἐντεῦθεν ἐς τὴν γλῶτταν, ἣν ὁδὶ μὲν οὔ φησι χρῆναι τοὺς νέους ἀσκεῖν, ἐγὼ δέ φημι. καὶ σωφρονεῖν αὖ φησι χρῆναι· δύο κακὼ μεγίστω. ἐπεὶ σὺ διὰ τὸ σωφρονεῖν τῷ πώποτ' εἶδες ἤδη ἀγαθάν τι γενόμενον, φράσον, καί μ' ἐξέλεγξον εἰπών.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Next, you condemn spending time in the agora; I recommend it. If it were bad, Homer would never have called Nestor and all his wise men speakers in the agora. From there I'll move on to the tongue, which this fellow says the young shouldn't train, and I say they should. And he says they should be self-controlled: two of the greatest evils there are. Tell me, have you ever seen anyone get any good out of self-control? Name him, and refute me.
1063	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** πολλοῖς. ὁ γοῦν Πηλεὺς ἔλαβε διὰ τοῦτο τὴν μάχαιραν.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Plenty of people. Peleus, for one, got his knife because of it.[62]
1064	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** μάχαιραν; ἀστεῖόν γε κέρδος ἔλαβεν ὁ κακοδαίμων. Ὑπέρβολος δ' οὐκ τῶν λύχνων πλεῖν ἢ τάλαντα πολλὰ εἴληφε διὰ πονηρίαν, ἀλλ' οὐ μὰ Δί' οὐ μάχαιραν.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** His knife? What a charming bit of profit the poor devil got! Hyperbolus from the lamp market has made more talents than you can count through sheer wickedness—but no, by Zeus, not a knife!
1067		

61 Hot springs were known as "Baths of Heracles."
62 Peleus refused the advances of his host's wife, and the gods rewarded him with a magic knife.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STRONGER ARGUMENT καὶ τὴν Θέτιν γ' ἔγημε διὰ τὸ σωφρονεῖν ὁ Πηλεύς.	STRONGER ARGUMENT And it was because of his self-control that Peleus married Thetis.
1068	WEAKER ARGUMENT κᾆτ' ἀπολιποῦσά γ' αὐτὸν ᾤχετ'· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ὑβριστὴς οὐδ' ἡδὺς ἐν τοῖς στρώμασιν τὴν νύκτα παννυχίζειν· γυνὴ δὲ σιναμωρουμένη χαίρει· σὺ δ' εἶ Κρόνιππος. σκέψαι γὰρ ὦ μειράκιον ἐν τῷ σωφρονεῖν ἅπαντα ἄνεστιν, ἡδονῶν θ' ὅσων μέλλεις ἀποστερεῖσθαι, παίδων γυναικῶν κοττάβων ὄψων πότων κιχλισμῶν. καίτοι τί σοι ζῆν ἄξιον, τούτων ἐὰν στερηθῇς; εἶεν. πάρειμ' ἐντεῦθεν ἐς τὰς τῆς φύσεως ἀνάγκας. ἥμαρτες, ἠράσθης, ἐμοίχευσάς τι, κᾆτ' ἐλήφθης· ἀπόλωλας· ἀδύνατος γὰρ εἶ λέγειν. ἐμοὶ δ' ὁμιλῶν χρῶ τῇ φύσει, σκίρτα, γέλα, νόμιζε μηδὲν αἰσχρόν.	WEAKER ARGUMENT Yes, and then she walked out on him, because he wasn't rough, or any fun spending the whole night between the sheets. A woman likes being handled roughly. But you're an old Cronus-nag. Just think, young man, of everything self-control involves, and all the pleasures you're going to miss out on: boys, women, cottabus, fancy food, drinking, laughing. And what's life worth to you if you're robbed of all that? Well then. From there I'll move on to the necessities of nature. You've slipped, fallen in love, had a bit of an affair, and then got caught. You're done for, because you can't argue. But stick with me, and indulge your nature, kick up your heels, laugh, think nothing shameful.[63]
1079	μοιχὸς γὰρ ἢν τύχῃς ἁλούς, τάδ' ἀντερεῖς πρὸς αὐτόν, ὡς οὐδὲν ἠδίκηκας· εἶτ' ἐς τὸν Δί' ἐπανενεγκεῖν, κἀκεῖνος ὡς ἥττων ἔρωτός ἐστι καὶ γυναικῶν· καίτοι σὺ θνητὸς ὢν θεοῦ πῶς μεῖζον ἂν δύναιο;	If you happen to get caught as an adulterer, here's what you'll say back to the husband: that you've done nothing wrong. Then pass the blame to Zeus: how he too was weaker than love and women. And how could you, a mere mortal, be stronger than a god?
1083	STRONGER ARGUMENT τί δ' ἢν ῥαφανιδωθῇ πιθόμενός σοι τέφρᾳ τε τιλθῇ, / ἕξει τινὰ γνώμην λέγειν τὸ μὴ εὐρύπρωκτος εἶναι;	STRONGER ARGUMENT But what if he takes your advice and gets a radish shoved up him and his hair plucked out with hot ash? What argument will he have to show he isn't a wide-ass?[64]
1085	WEAKER ARGUMENT ἢν δ' εὐρύπρωκτος ᾖ, τί πείσεται κακόν;	WEAKER ARGUMENT And if he is a wide-ass, what harm will it do him?
1086	STRONGER ARGUMENT τί μὲν οὖν ἂν ἔτι μεῖζον πάθοι τούτου ποτέ;	STRONGER ARGUMENT What could ever happen to him that's worse than that?
1087	WEAKER ARGUMENT τί δῆτ' ἐρεῖς, ἢν τοῦτο νικηθῇς ἐμοῦ;	WEAKER ARGUMENT So what will you say if I beat you on this point?
1088	STRONGER ARGUMENT σιγήσομαι. τί δ' ἄλλο;	STRONGER ARGUMENT I'll shut up. What else?
	WEAKER ARGUMENT φέρε δή μοι φράσον· / συνηγοροῦσιν ἐκ τίνων;	WEAKER ARGUMENT Come on, then, tell me: what are our advocates in court?
1090	STRONGER ARGUMENT ἐξ εὐρυπρώκτων.	STRONGER ARGUMENT Wide-asses.
	WEAKER ARGUMENT πείθομαι. / τί δαί; τραγῳδοῦσ' ἐκ τίνων;	WEAKER ARGUMENT I believe you. And what about tragic poets? What are they?
1092		

63 Cottabus: a drinking-party game of flicking the last drops of wine at a target.
64 An adulterer caught in the act could be punished by having a radish rammed up his anus and his pubic hair singed off with hot ash.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	STRONGER ARGUMENT ἐξ εὐρυπρώκτων.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Wide-asses.
	WEAKER ARGUMENT εὖ λέγεις. / δημηγοροῦσι δ' ἐκ τίνων;	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** Well said. And the politicians who address the people?
1094	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ἐξ εὐρυπρώκτων.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** Wide-asses.
	WEAKER ARGUMENT ἆρα δῆτ' ἔγνωκας ὡς οὐδὲν λέγεις; καὶ τῶν θεατῶν ὁπότεροι πλείους σκόπει.	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** So now do you see you're talking nonsense? And look at the audience: which kind is there more of?
1097	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** καὶ δὴ σκοπῶ.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** All right, I'm looking.
1098	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** τί δῆθ' ὁρᾷς;	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** So what do you see?
	STRONGER ARGUMENT πολὺ πλείονας νὴ τοὺς θεοὺς τοὺς εὐρυπρώκτους· τουτονὶ γοῦν οἶδ' ἐγὼ κἀκεινονὶ καὶ τὸν κομήτην τουτονί.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** By the gods, the wide-asses, by a mile! That one there, I know for a fact, and that one, and that long-haired one there.
1101	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** τί δῆτ' ἐρεῖς;	**WEAKER ARGUMENT** So what do you say?
1102	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** ἡττήμεθ'· ὦ κινούμενοι πρὸς τῶν θεῶν δέξασθέ μου θοἰμάτιον, ὡς ἐξαυτομολῶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς.	**STRONGER ARGUMENT** We're beaten! You who get fucked, for the gods' sake, take my cloak: I'm deserting to your side!

SECOND EPISODE

Strepsiades leaves Pheidippides with Socrates to be taught.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1105	**SOCRATES** τί δῆτα; πότερα τοῦτον ἀπάγεσθαι λαβὼν / βούλει τὸν υἱόν, ἢ διδάσκω σοι λέγειν;	**SOCRATES** Well then? Do you want to take your son here away with you, or shall I teach him to speak for you?
1107	**STREPSIADES** δίδασκε καὶ κόλαζε καὶ μέμνησ' ὅπως εὖ μοι στομώσεις αὐτόν, ἐπὶ μὲν θάτερα οἷον δικιδίοις, τὴν δ' ἑτέραν αὐτοῦ γνάθον στόμωσον οἵαν ἐς τὰ μείζω πράγματα.	**STREPSIADES** Teach him and discipline him, and remember to give him a good sharp edge: whet one side of his jaw for petty lawsuits, and hone the other side for the bigger business.
1111	**SOCRATES** ἀμέλει κομιεῖ τοῦτον σοφιστὴν δεξιόν.	**SOCRATES** Don't worry, you'll get him back a clever sophist.
1112	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ὠχρὸν μὲν οὖν οἶμαί γε καὶ κακοδαίμονα.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** A pale wretch, more like, I think.

SECOND PARABASIS

The Clouds tell the judges what rewards or punishments a vote will bring them.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1113	**CHORUS** χωρεῖτέ νυν. οἶμαι δέ σοι ταῦτα μεταμελήσειν.	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		CHORUS Off you go, then. But I think you're going to regret this.
1115	τοὺς κριτὰς ἃ κερδανοῦσιν, ἤν τι τόνδε τὸν χορὸν ὠφελῶσ' ἐκ τῶν δικαίων, βουλόμεσθ' ἡμεῖς φράσαι. πρῶτα μὲν γάρ, ἢν νεᾶν βούλησθ' ἐν ὥρᾳ τοὺς ἀγρούς, ὕσομεν πρώτοισιν ὑμῖν, τοῖσι δ' ἄλλοις ὕστερον. εἶτα τὸν καρπὸν τεκούσας ἀμπέλους φυλάξομεν, ὥστε μήτ' αὐχμὸν πιέζειν μήτ' ἄγαν ἐπομβρίαν. ἢν δ' ἀτιμάσῃ τις ἡμᾶς θνητὸς ὢν οὔσας θεάς, προσεχέτω τὸν νοῦν, πρὸς ἡμῶν οἷα πείσεται κακά, λαμβάνων οὔτ' οἶνον οὔτ' ἄλλ' οὐδὲν ἐκ τοῦ χωρίου. ἡνίκ' ἂν γὰρ αἵ τ' ἐλαῖαι βλαστάνωσ' αἵ τ' ἄμπελοι, ἀποκεκόψονται· τοιαύταις σφενδόναις παιήσομεν.	We want to tell the judges what they'll gain if they help this chorus, as they justly should. First, if you want to plow your fallow fields in season, we'll rain on you first, and on everyone else later. Then we'll guard your vines once they've set fruit, so they're neither parched by drought nor drowned by too much rain. But if any mortal dishonors us, who are goddesses, let him mark what misery he'll suffer at our hands: he'll get neither wine nor anything else from his land. For whenever his olives and his vines are sprouting, they'll be beaten down: that's the kind of slingshot we'll pelt them with.
1126	ἢν δὲ πλινθεύοντ' ἴδωμεν, ὕσομεν καὶ τοῦ τέγους τὸν κέραμον αὐτοῦ χαλάζαις στρογγύλαις συντρίψομεν. κἂν γαμῇ ποτ' αὐτὸς ἢ τῶν ξυγγενῶν ἢ τῶν φίλων, ὕσομεν τὴν νύκτα πᾶσαν· ὥστ' ἴσως βουλήσεται κἂν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ τυχεῖν ὢν μᾶλλον ἢ κρῖναι κακῶς.	And if we see him making bricks, we'll rain, and smash the tiles of his roof with round hailstones. And if he ever gets married himself, or any of his relatives or friends, we'll rain all night long. He'll probably wish he were even in Egypt, rather than have judged badly.

SECOND LYRIC SCENE

Strepsiades collects his transformed son and drives off two creditors with clever quibbles.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1131	**STREPSIADES** πέμπτη, τετράς, τρίτη, μετὰ ταύτην δευτέρα, εἶθ' ἣν ἐγὼ μάλιστα πασῶν ἡμερῶν δέδοικα καὶ πέφρικα καὶ βδελύττομαι, εὐθὺς μετὰ ταύτην ἔσθ' ἕνη τε καὶ νέα. πᾶς γάρ τις ὀμνὺς οἷς ὀφείλων τυγχάνω, θείς μοι πρυτανεῖ' ἀπολεῖν μέ φησι κἀξολεῖν, κἀμοῦ μέτριά τε καὶ δίκαι' αἰτουμένου, "ὦ δαιμόνιε τὸ μέν τι νυνὶ μὴ λάβῃς," "τὸ δ' ἀναβαλοῦ μοι, τὸ δ' ἄφες", οὔ φασίν ποτε οὕτως ἀπολήψεσθ', ἀλλὰ λοιδοροῦσί με ὡς ἄδικός εἰμι, καὶ δικάσεσθαί φασί μοι. νῦν οὖν δικαζέσθων· ὀλίγον γάρ μοι μέλει, εἴπερ μεμάθηκεν εὖ λέγειν Φειδιππίδης.	**STREPSIADES** The fifth, the fourth, the third, then after that the second, and then the day I fear and dread and loathe more than any other day: right after that comes the Old-and-New. Every last one of the people I happen to owe money to swears he'll put down his court deposit against me and ruin me and wipe me out. And when I ask for something modest and fair ("My dear fellow, don't take this part of it just now," "put this part off for me," "let this part go"), they say they'll never get their money back that way. They call me a crook and say they'll take me to court. Well, let them sue! I don't much care, if Pheidippides really has learned to speak well.[65]
1144	τάχα δ' εἴσομαι κόψας τὸ φροντιστήριον. / παῖ, ἠμί, παῖ παῖ.	I'll find out soon enough by knocking at the Thinkery. Boy! Hey, boy! Boy, boy!
1145	**SOCRATES** Στρεψιάδην ἀσπάζομαι.	**SOCRATES** Strepsiades, I bid you welcome.
1146	**STREPSIADES** κἄγωγέ σ'· ἀλλὰ τουτονὶ πρῶτον λαβέ· χρὴ γὰρ ἐπιθαυμάζειν τι τὸν διδάσκαλον.	**STREPSIADES** Same to you. But first take this. A man ought to show his son's teacher a little appreciation. And tell me whether my son has learned

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	καί μοι τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μεμάθηκε τὸν λόγον ἐκεῖνον εἴφ' ὃν ἀρτίως εἰσήγαγες.	that argument, the one you brought onstage just now.
1150	**SOCRATES** μεμάθηκεν.	**SOCRATES** He has.
	STREPSIADES εὖ γ' ὦ παμβασίλει' Ἀπαιόλη.	**STREPSIADES** Bravo, Fraud, almighty queen!
1151	**SOCRATES** ὥστ' ἀποφύγοις ἂν ἥντιν' ἂν βούλῃ δίκην.	**SOCRATES** So you can get off in any lawsuit you like.
1152	**STREPSIADES** κεἰ μάρτυρες παρῆσαν, ὅτ' ἐδανειζόμην;	**STREPSIADES** Even if there were witnesses there when I borrowed the money?
1153	**SOCRATES** πολλῷ γε μᾶλλον, κἂν παρῶσι χίλιοι.	**SOCRATES** All the more so, even if there are a thousand of them.
1154	**STREPSIADES** βοάσομαί τἄρα τὰν ὑπέρτονον βοάν. ἰὼ κλάετ' ὦ 'βολοστάται αὐτοί τε καὶ τἀρχαῖα καὶ τόκοι τόκων· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄν με φλαῦρον ἐργάσαισθ' ἔτι, οἷος ἐμοὶ τρέφεται τοῖσδ' ἐνὶ δώμασι παῖς, ἀμφήκει γλώττῃ λάμπων, πρόβολος ἐμός, σωτὴρ δόμοις, ἐχθροῖς βλάβη, λυσανίας πατρῴων μεγάλων κακῶν· ὃν κάλεσον τρέχων ἔνδοθεν ὡς ἐμέ.	**STREPSIADES** Then I'll shout out a shout at the top of my lungs. Weep and wail, you money-grubbers, you, your principal, and your interest on interest! You can't do me any harm now, such a son is being raised for me here in these halls, gleaming with a two-edged tongue, my bulwark, savior of my house, bane of my foes, releaser from his father's mighty woes! Run inside and call him out to me.
1165	**SOCRATES** ὦ τέκνον ὦ παῖ ἔξελθ' οἴκων, ἄιε σοῦ πατρός. ὅδ' ἐκεῖνος ἀνήρ.	**SOCRATES** My child, my boy, come out of the house, hear your father. Here's the man.
1168	**STREPSIADES** ὦ φίλος ὦ φίλος.	**STREPSIADES** My dear, my dear!
1169	**SOCRATES** ἄπιθι συλλαβών.	**SOCRATES** Take him and go.
1170	**STREPSIADES** ἰὼ ἰὼ τέκνον, ἰὼ ἰοῦ ἰοῦ. ὡς ἥδομαί σου πρῶτα τὴν χρόαν ἰδών. νῦν μέν γ' ἰδεῖν εἶ πρῶτον ἐξαρνητικὸς κἀντιλογικός, καὶ τοῦτο τοὐπιχώριον ἀτεχνῶς ἐπανθεῖ, τὸ "τί λέγεις σύ;" καὶ δοκεῖν ἀδικοῦντ' ἀδικεῖσθαι καὶ κακουργοῦντ' οἶδ' ὅτι· ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου τ' ἐστὶν Ἀττικὸν βλέπος. νῦν οὖν ὅπως σώσεις μ', ἐπεὶ κἀπώλεσας.	**STREPSIADES** Oh, oh, my child! Hurray, hurray! How happy I am, first of all, just to see your complexion! Now, for a start, you look like a denier and a contradicter. That local Athenian bloom is all over you: the "What do you mean?", and the look of being the injured party when you're the one doing wrong and up to no good, I'm sure of it. You've got that Attic look on your face. So now see that you save me, since you're the one who ruined me.
1178	**PHEIDIPPIDES** φοβεῖ δὲ δὴ τί;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** So what is it you're afraid of?
	STREPSIADES τὴν ἕνην τε καὶ νέαν.	**STREPSIADES** The Old-and-New Day.

65 The Old-and-New Day was the last day of the month, when debts fell due and creditors filed lawsuits, paying a deposit to the court.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1179	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἔνη γάρ ἐστι καὶ νέα τις ἡμέρα;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** You mean there's a day that's old and new?
1180	**STREPSIADES** εἰς ἥν γε θήσειν τὰ πρυτανεῖά φασί μοι.	**STREPSIADES** Yes, the day they say they'll lodge their deposits against me.
1181	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀπολοῦσ' ἄρ' αὖθ' οἱ θέντες· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπως / μί' ἡμέρα γένοιτ' ἂν ἡμέρα δύο.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Then the people who lodge them will lose them. There's no way one day could turn into two days.
1183	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο;	**STREPSIADES** It couldn't?
	PHEIDIPPIDES πῶς γάρ; εἰ μή πέρ γ' ἅμα / αὐτὴ γένοιτ' ἂν γραῦς τε καὶ νέα γυνή.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** How could it? Not unless the same woman could be old and new at the same time.
1185	**STREPSIADES** καὶ μὴν νενόμισταί γ'.	**STREPSIADES** But that's the law.
	PHEIDIPPIDES οὐ γάρ, οἶμαι, τὸν νόμον / ἴσασιν ὀρθῶς ὅ τι νοεῖ.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** That's because, I think, they don't properly understand what the law means.
1186	**STREPSIADES** νοεῖ δὲ τί;	**STREPSIADES** And what does it mean?
1187	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ὁ Σόλων ὁ παλαιὸς ἦν φιλόδημος τὴν φύσιν.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Solon of old was by nature a friend of the people.[66]
1188	**STREPSIADES** τουτὶ μὲν οὐδέν πω πρὸς ἔνην τε καὶ νέαν.	**STREPSIADES** That has nothing to do with the Old-and-New, not yet.
1189	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἐκεῖνος οὖν τὴν κλῆσιν ἐς δύ' ἡμέρας ἔθηκεν, ἔς γε τὴν ἔνην τε καὶ νέαν, ἵν' αἱ θέσεις γίγνοιντο τῇ νουμηνίᾳ.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** So he set the summons for two days, the Old and the New, so that the deposits would be lodged on the first of the month.
1192	**STREPSIADES** ἵνα δὴ τί τὴν ἔνην προσέθηχ';	**STREPSIADES** So why did he tack on the Old day?
	PHEIDIPPIDES ἵν' ὦ μέλε παρόντες οἱ φεύγοντες ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ πρότερον ἀπαλλάττοινθ' ἑκόντες, εἰ δὲ μή, ἔωθεν ὑπανιῷντο τῇ νουμηνίᾳ.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** So that, my dear fellow, the defendants could turn up a day early and settle out of court of their own accord. And if they didn't, they could squirm first thing on the morning of the first.
1196	**STREPSIADES** πῶς οὐ δέχονται δῆτα τῇ νουμηνίᾳ / ἀρχαὶ τὰ πρυτανεῖ', ἀλλ' ἔνῃ τε καὶ νέᾳ;	**STREPSIADES** Then why don't the magistrates accept the deposits on the first of the month, instead of on the Old-and-New?
1198	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ὅπερ οἱ προτένθαι γὰρ δοκοῦσί μοι ποιεῖν· ὅπως τάχιστα τὰ πρυτανεῖ' ὑφελοίατο, διὰ τοῦτο προὐτένθευσαν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** They seem to me to be doing what the Foretasters do. They want to snatch up the deposits as fast as they can, and so they do their tasting a day early.[67]
1201	**STREPSIADES** εὖ γ'· ὦ κακοδαίμονες, τί κάθησθ' ἀβέλτεροι, ἡμέτερα κέρδη τῶν σοφῶν ὄντες, λίθοι,	**STREPSIADES** Bravo! You poor fools, why do you sit there like idiots, easy pickings for us clever men? You're stones, a headcount, sheep and noth-

66 Solon was the Athenian statesman and lawgiver of the early sixth century BC.
67 The Foretasters (*protenthai*) were officials who sampled the festival food a day before a feast.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἀριθμός, πρόβατ’ ἄλλως, ἀμφορῆς νενησμένοι; ὥστ’ εἰς ἐμαυτὸν καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τουτονὶ ἐπ’ εὐτυχίαισιν ᾀστέον μοὐγκώμιον.	ing more, a stack of wine jars! So I must sing a song in praise of myself and my son here, for our good luck.
1206	“μάκαρ ὦ Στρεψίαδες,” “αὐτός τ’ ἔφυς ὡς σοφὸς” “χοἷον τὸν υἱὸν τρέφεις”, φήσουσι δή μ’ οἱ φίλοι χοὐ δημόται ζηλοῦντες ἡνίκ’ ἂν σὺ νικᾷς λέγων τὰς δίκας. ἀλλ’ εἰσάγων σε βούλομαι πρῶτον ἑστιᾶσαι.	“Lucky Strepsiades! How clever you were born, and what a son you’re raising!” my friends will say and my fellow demesmen, envying me when you win your cases by talking. But first I want to take you inside and give you a feast.
1214	**PASIAS** εἶτ’ ἄνδρα τῶν αὑτοῦ τι χρὴ προϊέναι; οὐδέποτέ γ’, ἀλλὰ κρεῖττον εὐθὺς ἦν τότε ἀπερυθριᾶσαι μᾶλλον ἢ σχεῖν πράγματα, ὅτε τῶν ἐμαυτοῦ γ’ ἕνεκα νυνὶ χρημάτων ἕλκω σε κλητεύσοντα, καὶ γενήσομαι ἐχθρὸς ἔτι πρὸς τούτοισιν ἀνδρὶ δημότῃ. ἀτὰρ οὐδέποτέ γε τὴν πατρίδα καταισχυνῶ ζῶν, ἀλλὰ καλοῦμαι Στρεψιάδην —	**PASIAS** So a man ought to throw away any of his own property? Never! But it would have been better back then to put a brazen face on it and refuse, rather than have this trouble now, when for the sake of my own money I’m dragging you along as a witness to the summons, and on top of that I’ll make an enemy of a fellow demesman. Still, as long as I live I’ll never disgrace my country. I summon Strepsiades—
1221	**STREPSIADES** τίς οὑτοσί;	**STREPSIADES** Who’s this?
1222	**PASIAS** ἐς τὴν ἕνην τε καὶ νέαν.	**PASIAS** —for the Old-and-New Day.
	STREPSIADES μαρτύρομαι, / ὅτι ἐς δύ’ εἶπεν ἡμέρας. τοῦ χρήματος;	**STREPSIADES** I call you to witness: he said two days! And what’s it for?
1224	**PASIAS** τῶν δώδεκα μνῶν, ἃς ἔλαβες ὠνούμενος / τὸν ψαρὸν ἵππον.	**PASIAS** The twelve minas you got when you were buying the dapple-gray horse.
1225	**STREPSIADES** ἵππον; οὐκ ἀκούετε; / ὃν πάντες ὑμεῖς ἴστε μισοῦνθ’ ἱππικήν.	**STREPSIADES** A horse? Do you hear that? You all know how I hate everything to do with horses.
1227	**PASIAS** καὶ νὴ Δί’ ἀποδώσειν γ’ ἐπώμνυς τοὺς θεούς.	**PASIAS** And by Zeus, you swore by the gods you’d pay it back.
1228	**STREPSIADES** μὰ τὸν Δί’ οὐ γάρ πω τότ’ ἐξηπίστατο / Φειδιππίδης μοι τὸν ἀκατάβλητον λόγον.	**STREPSIADES** No, by Zeus, because back then my Pheidippides didn’t yet know the unbeatable argument.
1230	**PASIAS** νῦν δὲ διὰ τοῦτ’ ἔξαρνος εἶναι διανοεῖ;	**PASIAS** And now, because of that, you mean to deny the debt?
1231	**STREPSIADES** τί γὰρ ἄλλ’ ἂν ἀπολαύσαιμι τοῦ μαθήματος;	**STREPSIADES** Well, what else would I get out of his lessons?
1232	**PASIAS** καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐθελήσεις ἀπομόσαι μοι τοὺς θεοὺς / ἵν’ ἂν κελεύσω ’γώ σε;	**PASIAS** And you’ll be willing to swear to me by the gods that you don’t owe it, at whatever place I tell you to?
1233	**STREPSIADES** τοὺς ποίους θεούς;	**STREPSIADES** Which gods?

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1234	**PASIAS** τὸν Δία, τὸν Ἑρμῆν, τὸν Ποσειδῶ.	**PASIAS** Zeus, Hermes, Poseidon.
	STREPSIADES νὴ Δία / κἂν προσκαταθείην γ' ὥστ' ὀμόσαι τριώβολον.	**STREPSIADES** By Zeus, I'd even pay three obols on top for the chance to swear.
1236	**PASIAS** ἀπόλοιο τοίνυν ἕνεκ' ἀναιδείας ἔτι.	**PASIAS** Then damn you, for your shamelessness on top of everything else!
1237	**STREPSIADES** ἁλσὶν διασμηχθεὶς ὄναιτ' ἂν οὑτοσί.	**STREPSIADES** This one would come in handy with a good scrub of salt.[68]
1238	**PASIAS** οἴμ' ὡς καταγελᾷς.	**PASIAS** Ugh, how you mock me!
	STREPSIADES ἓξ χοᾶς χωρήσεται.	**STREPSIADES** He'll hold a good six jugs.
1239	**PASIAS** οὔ τοι μὰ τὸν Δία τὸν μέγαν καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς / ἐμοῦ καταπροίξει.	**PASIAS** By great Zeus and the gods, you won't get away with this at my expense!
1240	**STREPSIADES** θαυμασίως ἥσθην θεοῖς, / καὶ Ζεὺς γέλοιος ὀμνύμενος τοῖς εἰδόσιν.	**STREPSIADES** The gods! What a kick I got out of that! And Zeus, sworn by, is a joke to those of us in the know.
1242	**PASIAS** ἦ μὴν σὺ τούτων τῷ χρόνῳ δώσεις δίκην. ἀλλ' εἴτ' ἀποδώσεις μοι τὰ χρήματ' εἴτε μή, ἀπόπεμψον ἀποκρινάμενος.	**PASIAS** Believe me, you'll pay for this in time. But whether you'll give me my money back or not, give me an answer and send me on my way.
1244	**STREPSIADES** ἔχε νυν ἥσυχος. / ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτίκ' ἀποκρινοῦμαί σοι σαφῶς.	**STREPSIADES** Just wait quietly, then. I'll give you a clear answer in a moment.
1246	**PASIAS** τί σοι δοκεῖ δράσειν;	**PASIAS** What do you think he'll do?
	WITNESS ἀποδώσειν μοι δοκεῖ.	**WITNESS** I think he'll pay you.
1247	**STREPSIADES** ποῦ 'σθ' οὗτος ἀπαιτῶν με τἀργύριον; λέγε / τουτὶ τί ἔστι;	**STREPSIADES** Where's this man who's demanding money from me? Tell me, what's this?
1248	**PASIAS** τοῦθ' ὅ τι ἐστί; κάρδοπος.	**PASIAS** What it is? A kneading-trough.
1249	**STREPSIADES** ἔπειτ' ἀπαιτεῖς τἀργύριον τοιοῦτος ὤν; οὐκ ἂν ἀποδοίην οὐδ' ἂν ὀβολὸν οὐδενί, ὅστις καλέσειε κάρδοπον τὴν καρδόπην.	**STREPSIADES** And you, a man like that, demand money? I wouldn't pay a single obol to anybody who called a kneading-troughette a kneading-trough.
1252	**PASIAS** οὐκ ἄρ' ἀποδώσεις;	**PASIAS** So you won't pay?
	STREPSIADES οὐχ ὅσον γέ μ' εἰδέναι. οὔκουν ἀνύσας τι θᾶττον ἀπολιταργιεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας;	**STREPSIADES** Not as far as I know. Now hurry up and scram from my door, double-quick, won't you?
1254	**PASIAS** ἄπειμι, καὶ τοῦτ' ἴσθ' ὅτι / θήσω πρυτανεῖ' ἢ μηκέτι ζῴην ἐγώ.	**PASIAS** I'm going. And know this: I'll lodge my deposit against you, or may I not live another day.
1256	**STREPSIADES** καὶ προσαπολεῖς ἄρ' αὐτὰ πρὸς ταῖς δώδεκα.	**STREPSIADES** Then you'll lose that too, on top of the twelve. And yet I don't want that to happen to

68 Strepsiades sizes up the paunchy creditor like a hide to be salted and cured into a wineskin.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	καίτοι σε τοῦτό γ' οὐχὶ βούλομαι παθεῖν, ὁτιὴ 'κάλεσας εὐηθικῶς τὴν κάρδοπον.	you, just because you foolishly called her a kneading-trough.
1259	**AMYNIAS** ἰώ μοί μοι.	**AMYNIAS** Oh, misery, misery!
1260	**STREPSIADES** ἔα. τίς οὑτοσί ποτ' ἔσθ' ὁ θρηνῶν; οὔτι που τῶν Καρκίνου τις δαιμόνων ἐφθέγξατο;	**STREPSIADES** Hey! Who's this wailing? Surely that wasn't one of Carcinus' gods speaking?[69]
1262	**AMYNIAS** τί δ' ὅστις εἰμὶ τοῦτο βούλεσθ' εἰδέναι; / ἀνὴρ κακοδαίμων.	**AMYNIAS** Why do you want to know who I am? An unhappy man.
1263	**STREPSIADES** κατὰ σεαυτόν νυν τρέπου.	**STREPSIADES** Then go be unhappy by yourself.
1264	**AMYNIAS** ὦ σκληρὲ δαῖμον, ὦ τύχαι θραυσάντυγες / ἵππων ἐμῶν, ὦ Παλλὰς ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας.	**AMYNIAS** Cruel fate! Chance that smashed the rails of my horses' chariot! Pallas, how you have destroyed me!
1266	**STREPSIADES** τί δαί σε Τληπόλεμός ποτ' εἴργασται κακόν;	**STREPSIADES** Why, what harm has Tlepolemus ever done you?[70]
1267	**AMYNIAS** μὴ σκῶπτέ μ' ὦ τᾶν, ἀλλά μοι τὰ χρήματα τὸν υἱὸν ἀποδοῦναι κέλευσον ἅλαβεν, ἄλλως τε μέντοι καὶ κακῶς πεπραγότι.	**AMYNIAS** Don't make fun of me, sir. Just tell your son to pay me back the money he got, especially since I've fared so badly.
1270	**STREPSIADES** τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα χρήμαθ';	**STREPSIADES** What money's this?
	AMYNIAS ἀδανείσατο.	**AMYNIAS** The money he borrowed.
1271	**STREPSIADES** κακῶς ἄρ' ὄντως εἶχες, ὥς γ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖς.	**STREPSIADES** Then you really are in a bad way, by the look of you.
1272	**AMYNIAS** ἵππους ἐλαύνων ἐξέπεσον νὴ τοὺς θεούς.	**AMYNIAS** I was driving my horses and fell out of the chariot, by the gods.
1273	**STREPSIADES** τί δῆτα ληρεῖς ὥσπερ ἀπ' ὄνου καταπεσών;	**STREPSIADES** Then why are you talking such rot, like a man who's fallen off his rocker?[71]
1274	**AMYNIAS** ληρῶ, τὰ χρήματ' ἀπολαβεῖν εἰ βούλομαι;	**AMYNIAS** Talking rot, am I, if I want my money back?
1275	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως σύ γ' αὐτὸς ὑγιαίνεις.	**STREPSIADES** There's no way you're in your right mind.
	AMYNIAS τί δαί;	**AMYNIAS** Why's that?
1276	**STREPSIADES** τὸν ἐγκέφαλον ὥσπερ σεσεῖσθαί μοι δοκεῖς.	**STREPSIADES** You look to me like you've had your brain shaken loose.
1277	**AMYNIAS** σὺ δὲ νὴ τὸν Ἑρμῆν προσκεκλήσεσθαί γέ μοι, / εἰ μὴ 'ποδώσεις τἀργύριον.	

69 Carcinus was a tragic poet mocked for his laments; the gods may be the divine characters of his plays, or his sons, who danced in them.
70 Amynias is quoting a tragedy, Xenocles' *Licymnius*, in which Tlepolemus killed Licymnius; Strepsiades pretends to take the lament as a scene from the play.
71 The Greek pun: *ap' onou*, "off a donkey," sounds like *apo nou*, "out of one's mind."

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		AMYNIAS And you, by Hermes, look to me like a man I'm going to summons, if you don't pay back the money.
1278	**STREPSIADES** κάτειπέ νυν, πότερα νομίζεις καινὸν ἀεὶ τὸν Δία ὕειν ὕδωρ ἑκάστοτ', ἢ τὸν ἥλιον ἕλκειν κάτωθεν ταὐτὸ τοῦθ' ὕδωρ πάλιν;	**STREPSIADES** Tell me, then: do you think Zeus rains fresh new water every time, or that the sun draws the same water back up from below?
1282	**AMYNIAS** οὐκ οἶδ' ἔγωγ' ὁπότερον, οὐδέ μοι μέλει.	**AMYNIAS** I don't know which, and I don't care.
1283	**STREPSIADES** πῶς οὖν ἀπολαβεῖν τἀργύριον δίκαιος εἶ, / εἰ μηδὲν οἶσθα τῶν μετεώρων πραγμάτων;	**STREPSIADES** Then how have you got any right to get your money back, if you know nothing about the things up in the sky?
1285	**AMYNIAS** ἀλλ' εἰ σπανίζεις, τἀργυρίου μοι τὸν τόκον / ἀπόδοτε·	**AMYNIAS** Well, if you're short, pay me back the interest on the money, at least.
1286	**STREPSIADES** τοῦτο δ' ἔσθ' ὁ τόκος τί θηρίον;	**STREPSIADES** This interest, what sort of beast is that?
1287	**AMYNIAS** τί δ' ἄλλο γ' ἢ κατὰ μῆνα καὶ καθ' ἡμέραν πλέον πλέον τἀργύριον ἀεὶ γίγνεται ὑπορρέοντος τοῦ χρόνου;	**AMYNIAS** What else but the money getting bigger and bigger, month by month and day by day, as time flows on?
1289	**STREPSIADES** καλῶς λέγεις. τί δῆτα; τὴν θάλατταν ἔσθ' ὅτι πλείονα νυνὶ νομίζεις ἢ πρὸ τοῦ;	**STREPSIADES** Well said. Now then: do you think the sea is any bigger now than it was before?
1291	**AMYNIAS** μὰ Δί' ἀλλ' ἴσην. / οὐ γὰρ δίκαιον πλείον' εἶναι.	**AMYNIAS** No, by Zeus, it's the same size. It wouldn't be right for it to be bigger.
1292	**STREPSIADES** κᾆτα πῶς αὕτη μὲν ὦ κακόδαιμον οὐδὲν γίγνεται ἐπιρρεόντων τῶν ποταμῶν πλείων, σὺ δὲ ζητεῖς ποιῆσαι τἀργύριον πλεῖον τὸ σόν; οὐκ ἀποδιώξει σαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας; φέρε μοι τὸ κέντρον.	**STREPSIADES** Then how come, you poor wretch, the sea gets no bigger with all the rivers flowing into it, while you're out to make your money bigger? Chase yourself off my property, won't you? Bring me the goad!
1297	**AMYNIAS** ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτύρομαι.	**AMYNIAS** I call witnesses to this!
1298	**STREPSIADES** ὕπαγε. τί μέλλεις; οὐκ ἐλᾷς ὦ σαμφόρα;	**STREPSIADES** Get moving! What are you waiting for? Giddy-up, you branded nag!
1299	**AMYNIAS** ταῦτ' οὐχ ὕβρις δῆτ' ἐστίν;	**AMYNIAS** Isn't this outright assault?
	STREPSIADES ἄξεις; ἐπιαλῶ κεντῶν ὑπὸ τὸν πρωκτόν σε τὸν σειραφόρον. φεύγεις; ἔμελλόν σ' ἆρα κινήσειν ἐγὼ αὐτοῖς τροχοῖς τοῖς σοῖσι καὶ ξυνωρίσιν.	**STREPSIADES** Will you get going? I'll jab you with the goad right up the ass, you trace-horse! Running away, are you? I knew I'd get you moving, you and your wheels and your chariot-pairs.

SECOND CHORAL SONG

The Clouds predict that Strepsiades' scheming will soon turn against him.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1303	**CHORUS** οἷον τὸ πραγμάτων ἐρᾶν φλαύρων· ὁ γὰρ γέρων ὅδ' ἐρασθεὶς ἀποστερῆσαι βούλεται τὰ χρήμαθ' ἁδανείσατο· κοὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως οὐ τήμερον λήψεταί τι πρᾶγμ', ὃ τοῦτον ποιήσει τὸν σοφιστὴν ἀνθ' ὧν πανουργεῖν ἤρξατ', ἐξαίφνης λαβεῖν κακόν τι.	**CHORUS** What a thing it is, to love shady dealings! This old man, smitten with them, wants to cheat his lenders of the money he borrowed. And there's no way that today something won't hit him that will make this sophist, for the villainy he's begun, suddenly come to grief.
1311	οἶμαι γὰρ αὐτὸν αὐτίχ' εὑρήσειν ὅπερ πάλαι ποτ' †ἐπεζήτει† εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν δεινόν οἱ γνώμας ἐναντίας λέγειν τοῖσιν δικαίοις, ὥστε νικᾶν ἅπαντας οἵσπερ ἂν ξυγγένηται, κἂν λέγῃ παμπόνηρ'. ἴσως δ' ἴσως βουλήσεται κἄφωνον αὐτὸν εἶναι.	For I think he'll soon find what he's long been looking for: that his son is clever at arguing views opposed to justice, so as to beat everyone he comes up against, even when what he says is utterly rotten. But maybe, maybe he'll wish his son were mute as well.

THIRD EPISODE

Pheidippides beats his father and offers to prove that it was just.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1321	**STREPSIADES** ἰοὺ ἰού. ὦ γείτονες καὶ ξυγγενεῖς καὶ δημόται, ἀμυνάθετέ μοι τυπτομένῳ πάσῃ τέχνῃ. οἴμοι κακοδαίμων τῆς κεφαλῆς καὶ τῆς γνάθου. ὦ μιαρὲ τύπτεις τὸν πατέρα;	**STREPSIADES** Ow! Ow! Neighbors, kinsmen, demesmen, help me any way you can, I'm being beaten! Oh no, my poor head! My jaw! You scum, you hit your father?
1325	**PHEIDIPPIDES** φήμ' ὦ πάτερ.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I do, Father.
1326	**STREPSIADES** ὁρᾶθ' ὁμολογοῦνθ' ὅτι με τύπτει.	**STREPSIADES** You see? He admits he hits me.
	PHEIDIPPIDES καὶ μάλα.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Absolutely.
1327	**STREPSIADES** ὦ μιαρὲ καὶ πατραλοῖα καὶ τοιχωρύχε.	**STREPSIADES** You scum! You father-beater! You housebreaker!
1328	**PHEIDIPPIDES** αὖθίς με ταὐτὰ ταῦτα καὶ πλείω λέγε. / ἆρ' οἶσθ' ὅτι χαίρω πόλλ' ἀκούων καὶ κακά;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Call me all that again, and more. Don't you know I love being called lots of nasty names?
1330	**STREPSIADES** ὦ λακκόπρωκτε.	**STREPSIADES** You gaping asshole!
	PHEIDIPPIDES πάττε πολλοῖς τοῖς ῥόδοις.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Shower me with roses, plenty of them!
1331	**STREPSIADES** τὸν πατέρα τύπτεις;	**STREPSIADES** You hit your father?

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	PHEIDIPPIDES κἀποφανῶ γε νὴ Δία / ὡς ἐν δίκῃ σ' ἔτυπτον.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Yes, and by Zeus I'll show I was right to hit you.
1332	**STREPSIADES** ὦ μιαρώτατε, / καὶ πῶς γένοιτ' ἂν πατέρα τύπτειν ἐν δίκῃ;	**STREPSIADES** You utter scum, how can it ever be right to hit your father?
1334	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἔγωγ' ἀποδείξω καί σε νικήσω λέγων.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I'll prove it, and I'll win the argument against you.
1335	**STREPSIADES** τουτὶ σὺ νικήσεις;	**STREPSIADES** You'll win on this?
	PHEIDIPPIDES πολύ γε καὶ ῥᾳδίως. / ἑλοῦ δ' ὁπότερον τοῖν λόγοιν βούλει λέγειν.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** By a mile, and easily. Choose which of the two Arguments you want.
1337	**STREPSIADES** ποίοιν λόγοιν;	**STREPSIADES** What two Arguments?
	PHEIDIPPIDES τὸν κρείττον' ἢ τὸν ἥττονα.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** The Stronger or the Weaker.
1338	**STREPSIADES** ἐδιδαξάμην μέντοι σε νὴ Δί' ὦ μέλε τοῖσιν δικαίοις ἀντιλέγειν, εἰ ταῦτά γε μέλλεις ἀναπείσειν, ὡς δίκαιον καὶ καλὸν τὸν πατέρα τύπτεσθ' ἐστὶν ὑπὸ τῶν υἱέων.	**STREPSIADES** Well, by Zeus, my friend, I really did get you taught to argue against what's just, if you're going to persuade me of this: that it's just and fine for a father to be beaten by his sons.
1342	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀλλ' οἶομαι μέντοι σ' ἀναπείσειν, ὥστε γε / οὐδ' αὐτὸς ἀκροασάμενος οὐδὲν ἀντερεῖς.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Oh, I do think I'll persuade you, so that once you've heard me out even you won't have a word to say against it.
1344	**STREPSIADES** καὶ μὴν ὅ τι καὶ λέξεις ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι.	**STREPSIADES** All right, I'd like to hear what you could possibly say.

SECOND AGON

Father and son argue over the beating, and Pheidippides threatens to beat his mother too.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1345	**CHORUS** σὸν ἔργον ὦ πρεσβῦτα φροντίζειν ὅπῃ τὸν ἄνδρα κρατήσεις, ὡς οὗτος, εἰ μή τῳ 'πεποίθειν, οὐκ ἂν ἦν οὕτως ἀκόλαστος. ἀλλ' ἔσθ' ὅτῳ θρασύνεται· δῆλόν γε τἀνθρώπου 'σ'τὶ τὸ λῆμα.	**CHORUS** Your job, old man, is to think how you'll get the better of him, since if he weren't relying on something he wouldn't be so unruly. He's got something to make him bold; the fellow's nerve is plain to see.
1351	ἀλλ' ἐξ ὅτου τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαθ' ἡ μάχη γενέσθαι, / ἤδη λέγειν χρὴ πρὸς χορόν· πάντως δὲ τοῦτο δράσεις.	But now you must tell the chorus how the fight first got started. You'll have to do it one way or another.
1353	**STREPSIADES** καὶ μὴν ὅθεν γε πρῶτον ἠρξάμεσθα λοιδορεῖσθαι ἐγὼ φράσω· 'πειδὴ γὰρ εἰστιώμεθ', ὥσπερ ἴστε, πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸν τὴν λύραν λαβόντ' ἐγὼ 'κέλευσα ᾄσαι Σιμωνίδου μέλος, τὸν Κριὸν ὡς ἐπέχθη. ὁ δ' εὐθέως ἀρχαῖον εἶν' ἔφασκε τὸ κιθαρίζειν ᾄδειν τε πίνονθ' ὡσπερεὶ κάχρυς γυναῖκ' ἀλοῦσαν.	**STREPSIADES** All right, I'll tell you how we first started quarreling. We were having dinner, as you know, and first I told him to take his lyre and sing a song of Simonides, the one about how the Ram got shorn. And right away he said playing the lyre

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		and singing over the wine was old-fashioned, like a woman singing while she grinds barley.[72]
1359	**PHEIDIPPIDES** οὐ γὰρ τότ' εὐθὺς χρῆν σ' ἄρα τύπτεσθαί τε καὶ πατεῖσθαι, / ᾄδειν κελεύονθ' ὡσπερεὶ τέττιγας ἑστιῶντα;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Well, shouldn't you have been beaten and trampled right then and there, ordering me to sing as if you were throwing a dinner for cicadas?
1361	**STREPSIADES** τοιαῦτα μέντοι καὶ τότ' ἔλεγεν ἔνδον οἷάπερ νῦν, καὶ τὸν Σιμωνίδην ἔφασκ' εἶναι κακὸν ποιητήν. κἀγὼ μόλις μὲν ἀλλ' ὅμως ἠνεσχόμην τὸ πρῶτον· ἔπειτα δ' ἐκέλευσ' αὐτὸν ἀλλὰ μυρρίνην λαβόντα τῶν Αἰσχύλου λέξαι τί μοι· κᾆθ' οὗτος εὐθὺς εἶπεν· "ἐγὼ γὰρ Αἰσχύλον νομίζω πρῶτον ἐν ποιηταῖς," "ψόφου πλέων ἀξύστατον στόμφακα κρημνοποιόν;" κἀνταῦθα πῶς οἴεσθέ μου τὴν καρδίαν ὀρεχθεῖν; ὅμως δὲ τὸν θυμὸν δακὼν ἔφην, "σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τούτων" "λέξον τι τῶν νεωτέρων, ἅττ' ἐστὶ τὰ σοφὰ ταῦτα."	**STREPSIADES** That's exactly the kind of thing he was saying in there then, just like now. He said Simonides was a bad poet. I could barely stand it, but at first I put up with it all the same. Then I told him to take a sprig of myrtle, at least, and recite me something from Aeschylus. And right away he says, "Oh sure, Aeschylus. I rate him first among poets: so full of noise, incoherent, a windbag, a maker of crags!" And how do you think my heart heaved at that? Still, I bit back my temper and said, "Well then, recite something by these newer poets, whatever those clever things of theirs are."[73]
1371	ὁ δ' εὐθὺς ᾇσ' Εὐριπίδου ῥῆσίν τιν', ὡς ἐκίνει ἀδελφὸς ὤλεξίκακε τὴν ὁμομητρίαν ἀδελφήν. κἀγὼ οὐκέτ' ἐξηνεσχόμην, ἀλλ' εὐθέως ἀράττω πολλοῖς κακοῖς καἰσχροῖσι· κᾆτ' ἐντεῦθεν, οἷον εἰκός, ἔπος πρὸς ἔπος ἠρειδόμεσθ'· εἶθ' οὗτος ἐπαναπηδᾶ, κἄπειτ' ἔφλα με κἀσπόδει κἄπνιγε κἀπέθλιβεν.	And right away he sang some speech of Euripides, about how a brother (Heracles save us!) was screwing his sister, from the same mother! And I couldn't stand it anymore. I laid into him right away with plenty of foul abuse. And then, naturally, we went at it, word for word, until he jumps up and starts thrashing me and pounding me and choking me and crushing me.[74]
1377	**PHEIDIPPIDES** οὔκουν δικαίως, ὅστις οὐκ Εὐριπίδην ἐπαινεῖς / σοφώτατον;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Well, wasn't I right to, when you won't praise Euripides, the cleverest of them all?
1379	**STREPSIADES** σοφώτατόν γ' ἐκεῖνον·ὦ — τί σ' εἴπω; / ἀλλ' αὖθις αὖ τυπτήσομαι.	**STREPSIADES** Cleverest, him! You— what should I call you? But I'll just get beaten again.
	PHEIDIPPIDES νὴ τὸν Δί' ἐν δίκῃ γ' ἄν.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** By Zeus, and rightly so.
1380	**STREPSIADES** καὶ πῶς δικαίως; ὅστις ὦ 'ναίσχυντέ σ' ἐξέθρεψα, αἰσθανόμενός σου πάντα τραυλίζοντος, ὅ τι νοοίης. εἰ μέν γε βρῦν εἴποις, ἐγὼ γνοὺς ἂν πιεῖν ἐπέσχον· μαμμᾶν δ' ἂν αἰτήσαντος ἦκόν σοι φέρων ἂν ἄρτον· κακκᾶν δ' ἂν οὐκ ἔφθης φράσας, κἀγὼ λαβὼν θύραζε ἐξέφερον ἂν καὶ προὐσχόμην σε· σὺ δ' ἐμὲ νῦν ἀπάγχων	**STREPSIADES** Rightly how? I brought you up, you shameless thing! I understood everything you meant when you were still lisping. If you said "wawa," I'd know what you meant and give you a drink. When you asked for "num-num," I'd come bringing you bread. And you'd hardly have said "caca" before I'd pick you up, carry you outdoors,

72 Simonides was a great lyric poet (c. 556–468 BC); the song mocked a wrestler named Krios ("Ram") for being "shorn," that is, beaten.
73 At drinking parties, a guest who recited without the lyre held a sprig of myrtle.
74 The speech came from Euripides' *Aeolus*, in which Macareus sleeps with his sister Canace; Athenian law allowed marriage to a half-sister by the same father, but not by the same mother.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		and hold you out. But now you, when you were strangling me
1386	βοῶντα καὶ κεκραγόθ' ὅτι χεζητιῴην, οὐκ ἔτλης ἔξω 'ξενεγκεῖν ὦ μιαρὲ θύραζέ μ', ἀλλὰ πνιγόμενος αὐτοῦ 'ποίησα κακκᾶν.	and I was hollering and shouting that I needed to shit, you didn't have the heart, you scum, to carry me outdoors. No, I was choking, and I made caca right there.
1391	**CHORUS** οἶμαί γε τῶν νεωτέρων τὰς καρδίας πηδᾶν ὅ τι λέξει. εἰ γὰρ τοιαῦτά γ' οὗτος ἐξειργασμένος λαλῶν ἀναπείσει, τὸ δέρμα τῶν γεραιτέρων λάβοιμεν ἄν ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐρεβίνθου.	**CHORUS** I think the young men's hearts are leaping to hear what he'll say. For if he's done things like this and talks his way round us, we wouldn't give a single chickpea for the hides of old men.
1397	σὸν ἔργον ὦ καινῶν ἐπῶν κινητὰ καὶ μοχλευτὰ / πειθώ τινα ζητεῖν, ὅπως δόξεις λέγειν δίκαια.	Your job, you heaver and lever of newfangled words, is to find some way of persuading, so that you'll seem to be saying what's just.
1399	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ὡς ἡδὺ καινοῖς πράγμασιν καὶ δεξιοῖς ὁμιλεῖν, καὶ τῶν καθεστώτων νόμων ὑπερφρονεῖν δύνασθαι. ἐγὼ γὰρ ὅτε μὲν ἱππικῇ τὸν νοῦν μόνῃ προσεῖχον, οὐδ' ἂν τρί' εἰπεῖν ῥήμαθ' οἷός τ' ἦν πρὶν ἐξαμαρτεῖν· νυνὶ δ' ἐπειδή μ' οὑτοσὶ τούτων ἔπαυσεν αὐτός, γνώμαις δὲ λεπταῖς καὶ λόγοις ξύνειμι καὶ μερίμναις, οἶμαι διδάξειν ὡς δίκαιον τὸν πατέρα κολάζειν.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** How sweet it is to keep company with new and clever things, and to be able to look down on the established laws! When I had my mind on horses alone, I couldn't say three words without slipping up. But now that this man himself has put a stop to all that, and I spend my time with subtle ideas and arguments and deep thoughts, I think I'll show that it's just to punish one's father.
1406	**STREPSIADES** ἵππευε τοίνυν νὴ Δί', ὡς ἔμοιγε κρεῖττόν ἐστιν / ἵππων τρέφειν τέθριππον ἢ τυπτόμενον ἐπιτριβῆναι.	**STREPSIADES** Then by Zeus, go back to your horses! For me it's better to keep a four-horse team than to be beaten to a pulp.
1408	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἐκεῖσε δ' ὅθεν ἀπέσχισάς με τοῦ λόγου μέτειμι, / καὶ πρῶτ' ἐρήσομαί σε τουτί· παῖδά μ' ὄντ' ἔτυπτες;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I'll go back to the point in my argument where you cut me off. And first I'll ask you this: did you hit me when I was a boy?
1410	**STREPSIADES** ἔγωγέ σ' εὐνοῶν τε καὶ κηδόμενος.	**STREPSIADES** I did, because I loved you and cared about you.
	PHEIDIPPIDES εἰπὲ δή μοι, οὐ κἀμέ σοι δίκαιόν ἐστιν εὐνοεῖν ὁμοίως τύπτειν τ', ἐπειδήπερ γε τοῦτ' ἐστ' εὐνοεῖν τὸ τύπτειν; πῶς γὰρ τὸ μὲν σὸν σῶμα χρὴ πληγῶν ἀθῷον εἶναι, τοὐμὸν δὲ μή; καὶ μὴν ἔφυν ἐλεύθερός γε κἀγώ. κλάουσι παῖδες, πατέρα δ' οὐ κλάειν δοκεῖς; ... φήσεις νομίζεσθαι σὺ παιδὸς τοῦτο τοὔργον εἶναι· ἐγὼ δέ γ' ἀντείποιμ' ἂν ὡς δὶς παῖδες οἱ γέροντες· εἰκὸς δὲ μᾶλλον τοὺς γέροντας ἢ νέους τι κλάειν, ὅσῳπερ ἐξαμαρτάνειν ἧττον δίκαιον αὐτούς.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Then tell me: isn't it just for me, too, to love you the same way and hit you, since loving means hitting? Why should your body be exempt from blows, and mine not? I was born free too, after all. "The children howl; you think the father shouldn't howl?" You'll say the custom is that this is a child's lot. But I'd reply that old men are children twice over. And it's more fitting for old men to howl than young ones, since there's less excuse for them when they do wrong.[75]

75 A parody of Euripides' *Alcestis* (691): "You love the daylight; do you think your father doesn't?"

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1420	**STREPSIADES** ἀλλ’ οὐδαμοῦ νομίζεται τὸν πατέρα τοῦτο πάσχειν.	**STREPSIADES** But nowhere is it the custom for a father to be treated like that.
1421	**PHEIDIPPIDES** οὔκουν ἀνὴρ ὁ τὸν νόμον θεὶς τοῦτον ἦν τὸ πρῶτον ὥσπερ σὺ κἀγώ, καὶ λέγων ἔπειθε τοὺς παλαιούς; ἦττόν τι δῆτ’ ἔξεστι κἀμοὶ καινὸν αὖ τὸ λοιπὸν θεῖναι νόμον τοῖς υἱέσιν, τοὺς πατέρας ἀντιτύπτειν; ὅσας δὲ πληγὰς εἴχομεν πρὶν τὸν νόμον τεθῆναι, ἀφίεμεν, καὶ δίδομεν αὐτοῖς προῖκα συγκεκόφθαι. σκέψαι δὲ τοὺς ἀλεκτρυόνας καὶ τἄλλα τὰ βοτὰ ταυτί, ὡς τοὺς πατέρας ἀμύνεται· καίτοι τί διαφέρουσιν ἡμῶν ἐκεῖνοι, πλήν γ’ ὅτι ψηφίσματ’ οὐ γράφουσιν;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Well, wasn’t the man who first made that law a man just like you and me, who persuaded the people of old by talking? So am I any less entitled to make a new law in my turn for sons in the future, that they hit their fathers back? All the blows we took before the law was made, we write off. We’ll let them have the beatings they gave us for free. Look at roosters and other animals like that, how they fight back against their fathers. And yet how are they any different from us, except that they don’t draft decrees?
1430	**STREPSIADES** τί δῆτ’, ἐπειδὴ τοὺς ἀλεκτρυόνας ἅπαντα μιμεῖ, / οὐκ ἐσθίεις καὶ τὴν κόπρον κἀπὶ ξύλου καθεύδεις;	**STREPSIADES** Then since you imitate roosters in everything, why don’t you eat shit and sleep on a perch?
1432	**PHEIDIPPIDES** οὐ ταὐτὸν ὦ τᾶν ἐστίν, οὐδ’ ἂν Σωκράτει δοκοίη.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** It’s not the same thing, my dear sir, and Socrates wouldn’t think so either.
1433	**STREPSIADES** πρὸς ταῦτα μὴ τύπτ’· εἰ δὲ μή, σαυτόν ποτ’ αἰτιάσει.	**STREPSIADES** Then don’t hit me. Otherwise you’ll have only yourself to blame someday.
1434	**PHEIDIPPIDES** καὶ πῶς;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** How so?
	STREPSIADES ἐπεὶ σὲ μὲν δίκαιός εἰμ’ ἐγὼ κολάζειν, / σὺ δ’, ἢν γένηταί σοι, τὸν υἱόν.	**STREPSIADES** Because I’m entitled to punish you, and you’re entitled to punish your son, if you have one.
1435	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἢν δὲ μὴ γένηται, / μάτην ἐμοὶ κεκλαύσεται, σὺ δ’ ἐγχανὼν τεθνήξεις.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** And if I don’t have one, I’ll have howled for nothing, and you’ll die with the last laugh on me.
1437	**STREPSIADES** ἐμοὶ μὲν ὦνδρες ἥλικες δοκεῖ λέγειν δίκαια· κἄμοιγε συγχωρεῖν δοκεῖ τούτοισι τἀπιεικῆ. κλάειν γὰρ ἡμᾶς εἰκός ἐστ’, ἢν μὴ δίκαια δρῶμεν.	**STREPSIADES** Gentlemen of my own age, I think he’s saying what’s just. And I think we ought to grant these youngsters what’s fair. It’s only right that we should howl if we don’t do what’s just.
1440	**PHEIDIPPIDES** σκέψαι δὲ χἀτέραν ἔτι γνώμην.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Now consider yet another point.
	STREPSIADES ἀπὸ γὰρ	**STREPSIADES** No, because it’ll finish me—
1441	**PHEIDIPPIDES** καὶ μὴν ἴσως γ’ οὐκ ἀχθέσει παθὼν ἃ νῦν πέπονθας.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** And yet maybe you won’t mind what you’ve just been through.
1442	**STREPSIADES** πῶς δή; δίδαξον γὰρ τί μ’ ἐκ τούτων ἐπωφελήσεις.	**STREPSIADES** How so? Go on, teach me what good you’ll do me out of all this.
1443	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τὴν μητέρ’ ὥσπερ καὶ σὲ τυπτήσω.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** I’ll beat my mother, just like you.
	STREPSIADES τί φῄς, τί φῂς σύ; / τοῦθ’ ἕτερον αὖ μεῖζον κακόν.	**STREPSIADES** What’s that? What are you saying? That’s another evil, and even worse!

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1444	**PHEIDIPPIDES** τί δ' ἢν ἔχων τὸν ἥττω	**PHEIDIPPIDES** And what if I take the Weaker
1445	λόγον σε νικήσω λέγων / τὴν μητέρ' ὡς τύπτειν χρεών;	Argument and win against you, proving that one ought to beat one's mother?
1447	**STREPSIADES** τί δ' ἄλλο γ' ἢν ταυτὶ ποιῇς, οὐδέν σε κωλύσει σεαυτὸν ἐμβαλεῖν ἐς τὸ βάραθρον μετὰ Σωκράτους καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν ἥττω.	**STREPSIADES** What then? If you do that, nothing will stop you from throwing yourself into the Pit along with Socrates and the Weaker Argument.[76]

FOURTH EPISODE

The Clouds reveal their purpose, and Strepsiades sets fire to the Thinkery.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1452	**STREPSIADES** ταυτὶ δι' ὑμᾶς ὦ Νεθέλαι πέπονθ' ἐγώ, / ὑμῖν ἀναθεὶς ἅπαντα τἀμὰ πράγματα.	**STREPSIADES** This is what I've suffered because of you, Clouds, after I put all my affairs in your hands.
1454	**CHORUS** αὐτὸς μὲν οὖν σαυτῷ σὺ τούτων αἴτιος, / στρέψας σεαυτὸν ἐς πονηρὰ πράγματα.	**CHORUS** No, you're to blame for this yourself, for twisting yourself into shady dealings.
1456	**STREPSIADES** τί δῆτα ταῦτ' οὔ μοι τότ' ἠγορεύετε, / ἀλλ' ἄνδρ' ἄγροικον καὶ γέροντ' ἐπήρετε;	**STREPSIADES** Then why didn't you tell me this back then, instead of egging on an old man from the country?
1458	**CHORUS** ἡμεῖς ποιοῦμεν ταῦθ' ἑκάστοθ' ὅταν τινὰ γνῶμεν πονηρῶν ὄντ' ἐραστὴν πραγμάτων, ἕως ἂν αὐτὸν ἐμβάλωμεν ἐς κακόν, ὅπως ἂν εἰδῇ τοὺς θεοὺς δεδοικέναι.	**CHORUS** This is what we do every time we see someone in love with shady dealings: we drop him into trouble, so that he'll learn to fear the gods.
1462	**STREPSIADES** ὤμοι πονηρά γ' ὦ Νεφέλαι, δίκαια δέ. οὐ γάρ μ' ἐχρῆν τὰ χρήματ' ἀδανεισάμην ἀποστερεῖν. νῦν οὖν ὅπως ὦ φίλτατε τὸν Χαιρεφῶντα τὸν μιαρὸν καὶ Σωκράτη ἀπολεῖς μετ' ἐμοῦ 'λθών, οἳ σὲ κἄμ' ἐξηπάτων.	**STREPSIADES** Ugh, Clouds, that's harsh, but it's just. I shouldn't have tried to cheat on the money I borrowed. So now, my dearest boy, come with me and destroy that scum Chaerephon, and Socrates, the men who deceived you and me.
1467	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν ἀδικήσαιμι τοὺς διδασκάλους.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** No, I wouldn't do my teachers wrong.
1468	**STREPSIADES** ναὶ ναὶ καταιδέσθητι πατρῷον Δία.	**STREPSIADES** Yes, yes! Respect Zeus, the god of our fathers!
1469	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἰδού γε Δία πατρῷον· ὡς ἀρχαῖος εἶ. / Ζεὺς γάρ τις ἔστιν;	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Listen to him: "Zeus, the god of our fathers"! How old-fashioned you are. Is there any such thing as Zeus?
1470	**STREPSIADES** ἔστιν.	**STREPSIADES** There is.
	PHEIDIPPIDES οὐκ ἔστ', οὔκ, ἐπεὶ / Δῖνος βασιλεύει τὸν Δί' ἐξεληλακώς.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** There isn't, no, because Whirl is king now. He's driven Zeus out.

76 The Pit (*barathron*) was a ravine outside Athens into which the bodies of executed criminals were thrown.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1472	**STREPSIADES** οὐκ ἐξελήλακ', ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τοῦτ' ᾠόμην διὰ τουτονὶ τὸν δῖνον. οἴμοι δείλαιος ὅτε καὶ σὲ χυτρεοῦν ὄντα θεὸν ἡγησάμην.	**STREPSIADES** He hasn't driven him out. I only thought so because of this whirl-pot here. Oh, poor me, to think I took even you, a bit of pottery, for a god![77]
1475	**PHEIDIPPIDES** ἐνταῦθα σαυτῷ παραφρόνει καὶ φληνάφα.	**PHEIDIPPIDES** Stay here and rave and babble to yourself.
1476	**STREPSIADES** οἴμοι παρανοίας· ὡς ἐμαινόμην ἄρα, ὅτ' ἐξέβαλλον τοὺς θεοὺς διὰ Σωκράτη. ἀλλ' ὦ φίλ' Ἑρμῆ μηδαμῶς θύμαινέ μοι μηδέ μ' ἐπιτρίψῃς, ἀλλὰ συγγνώμην ἔχε ἐμοῦ παρανοήσαντος ἀδολεσχίᾳ· καί μοι γενοῦ ξύμβουλος, εἴτ' αὐτοὺς γραφὴν διωκάθω γραψάμενος εἴθ' ὅ τι σοι δοκεῖ. ὀρθῶς παραινεῖς οὐκ ἐῶν δικορραφεῖν, ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστ' ἐμπιμπράναι τὴν οἰκίαν τῶν ἀδολεσχῶν.	**STREPSIADES** Oh, what madness! How out of my mind I was, throwing out the gods because of Socrates! But dear Hermes, please don't be angry with me, and don't crush me. Forgive me for losing my wits over all their hot-air talk. And be my adviser: should I bring a lawsuit against them and prosecute, or do whatever you think best? … You're right to advise me not to stitch together a lawsuit, but to burn down the windbags' house as fast as I can.
1485	δεῦρο δεῦρ' ὦ Ξανθία, κλίμακα λαβὼν ἔξελθε καὶ σμινύην φέρων, κἄπειτ' ἐπαναβὰς ἐπὶ τὸ φροντιστήριον τὸ τέγος κατάσκαπτ', εἰ φιλεῖς τὸν δεσπότην, ἕως ἂν αὐτοῖς ἐμβάλῃς τὴν οἰκίαν· ἐμοὶ δὲ δᾷδ' ἐνεγκάτω τις ἡμμένην, κἀγώ τιν' αὐτῶν τήμερον δοῦναι δίκην ἐμοὶ ποιήσω, κεἰ σφόδρ' εἶσ' ἀλαζόνες.	Here, here, Xanthias! Come out and bring a ladder and a mattock. Then climb up onto the Thinkery and dig away the roof, if you love your master, until you bring the house down on top of them. And somebody bring me a lit torch. I'll make one of them pay me back today, however big frauds they are.
1493	**FIRST STUDENT** ἰοὺ ἰού.	**FIRST STUDENT** Oh no! Oh no!
1494	**STREPSIADES** σὸν ἔργον ὦ δᾳὰς ἰέναι πολλὴν φλόγα.	**STREPSIADES** Your job, torch, is to send up lots of flame.
1495	**FIRST STUDENT** ἄνθρωπε, τί ποιεῖς;	**FIRST STUDENT** You there, what are you doing?
	STREPSIADES ὅ τι ποιῶ; τί δ' ἄλλο γ' ἢ / διαλεπτολογοῦμαι ταῖς δοκοῖς τῆς οἰκίας;	**STREPSIADES** What am I doing? What else but chopping logic with the rafters of your house?
1497	**SECOND STUDENT** οἴμοι τίς ἡμῶν πυρπολεῖ τὴν οἰκίαν;	**SECOND STUDENT** Oh no, who's setting fire to our house?
1498	**STREPSIADES** ἐκεῖνος οὗπερ θοἰμάτιον εἰλήφατε.	**STREPSIADES** The man whose cloak you took.
1499	**THIRD STUDENT** ἀπολεῖς ἀπολεῖς.	**THIRD STUDENT** You'll kill us! You'll kill us!
	STREPSIADES τοῦτ' αὐτὸ γὰρ καὶ βούλομαι, ἢν ἡ σμινύη μοι μὴ προδῷ τὰς ἐλπίδας, ἢ 'γὼ πρότερόν πως ἐκτραχηλισθῶ πεσών.	**STREPSIADES** That's exactly what I want, provided my mattock doesn't betray my hopes, or I don't somehow fall first and break my neck.
1502	**SOCRATES** οὗτος τί ποιεῖς ἐτεὸν οὐπὶ τοῦ τέγους;	**SOCRATES** You there, what on earth are you doing up on the roof?

77 Greek *dinos* means both "whirl" (Socrates' cosmic vortex) and a kind of large pot; Strepsiades points to one standing outside the Thinkery.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1503	**STREPSIADES** ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον.	**STREPSIADES** I walk on air and look down on the sun.[78]
1504	**SOCRATES** οἴμοι τάλας δείλαιος ἀποπνιγήσομαι.	**SOCRATES** Oh no, poor wretched me, I'll suffocate!
1505	**CHAEREPHON** ἐγὼ δὲ κακοδαίμων γε κατακαυθήσομαι.	**CHAEREPHON** And poor miserable me, I'll burn to death!
1506	**STREPSIADES** τί γὰρ μαθόντες τοὺς θεοὺς ὑβρίζετε, / καὶ τῆς σελήνης ἐσκοπεῖσθε τὴν ἕδραν;	**STREPSIADES** What possessed you to insult the gods and peer up at the moon's seat?
1508	**HERMES** δίωκε βάλλε παῖε, πολλῶν οὕνεκα, / μάλιστα δ' εἰδὼς τοὺς θεοὺς ὡς ἠδίκουν.	**HERMES** Chase them, pelt them, hit them! They've earned it many times over, but above all because I know how they wronged the gods.

EXODOS

The chorus leaves the stage.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1510	**CHORUS** ἡγεῖσθ' ἔξω· κεχόρευται γὰρ / μετρίως τό γε τήμερον ἡμῖν.	**CHORUS** Lead the way out. We've danced enough for today.

78 Strepsiades throws back the words Socrates spoke at his first entrance; *periphronō* means both "think about" and "look down on".