Bacchae

EURIPIDES

c. 480–406 BC

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Βάκχαι

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited

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Bacchae · Euripides (c. 480–406 BC)

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INTRODUCTION

The god Dionysus comes home to Thebes, the city of his mother Semele, disguised as a mortal stranger from the East. Thebes has denied that he is a god at all. To punish it he has driven its women mad and sent them to the mountains as his worshippers, and he has brought his own followers with him: the Bacchae, women from Asia who form the chorus.

The young king Pentheus, Dionysus' cousin, is determined to stamp out the new cult, which he sees as drunken disorder and a cover for sex. His grandfather Cadmus and the prophet Teiresias, two old men in fawn-skins, urge him to give way. He arrests the stranger instead. What follows is a contest between a man who wants to control everything and a god who cannot be controlled.

Written in Macedonia near the end of Euripides' life and staged in Athens after his death in 406 BC, the Bacchae is the only surviving tragedy about the god in whose honor tragedies were performed. Its choral songs of ecstasy and its terrible ending have fascinated readers from Nietzsche onward.

Bacchae

Before the royal palace at Thebes.
Dionysus returns to the city that has denied him.

PROLOGUE

Dionysus, disguised as a mortal stranger, comes to Thebes to punish the city for denying his divinity.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1	**DIONYSUS** Ἥκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίων χθόνα Διόνυσος, ὃν τίκτει ποθ' ἡ Κάδμου κόρη Σεμέλη λοχευθεῖσ' ἀστραπηφόρῳ πυρί· μορφὴν δ' ἀμείψας ἐκ θεοῦ βροτησίαν πάρειμι Δίρκης νάματ' Ἰσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ. ὁρῶ δὲ μητρὸς μνῆμα τῆς κεραυνίας τόδ' ἐγγὺς οἴκων καὶ δόμων ἐρείπια τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα, ἀθάνατον Ἥρας μητέρ' εἰς ἐμὴν ὕβριν. αἰνῶ δὲ Κάδμον, ἄβατον ὃς πέδον τόδε τίθησι θυγατρὸς σηκόν· ἀμπέλου δέ νιν πέριξ ἐγὼ 'κάλυψα βοτρυώδει χλόῃ.	**DIONYSUS** I have come to this land of the Thebans. I am the son of Zeus, Dionysus, whom Cadmus' daughter Semele once bore, delivered by the fire of the lightning. I have exchanged a god's form for a mortal's, and here I am at the streams of Dirce and the waters of Ismenus. I see my mother's tomb, the lightning-struck woman's, here near the palace, and the ruins of her house, smoldering with the still-living flame of Zeus' fire: Hera's undying outrage against my mother. I praise Cadmus, who has made this ground untrodden, a sanctuary for his daughter. And I have covered it all around with the green clusters of the vine.[1]
13	λιπὼν δὲ Λυδῶν τῶν πολυχρύσων γύας Φρυγῶν τε, Περσῶν θ' ἡλιοβλήτους πλάκας Βάκτριά τε τείχη τήν τε δύσχιμον χθόνα Μήδων ἐπελθὼν Ἀραβίαν τ' εὐδαίμονα Ἀσίαν τε πᾶσαν, ἣ παρ' ἁλμυρὰν ἅλα κεῖται μιγάσιν Ἕλλησι βαρβάροις θ' ὁμοῦ πλήρεις ἔχουσα καλλιπυργώτους πόλεις, εἰς τήνδε πρῶτον ἦλθον Ἑλλήνων πόλιν, κἀκεῖ χορεύσας καὶ καταστήσας ἐμὰς τελετάς, ἵν' εἴην ἐμφανὴς δαίμων βροτοῖς.	I have left the gold-rich fields of the Lydians and Phrygians and the sun-beaten plains of the Persians. I have passed through the walled towns of Bactria, the wintry land of the Medes, Arabia the Blest, and all of Asia that lies along the salt sea, whose fine-towered cities are full of Greeks and foreigners mixed together. Now I have come to this, the first Greek city, after setting up my dances and establishing my mysteries there, so that I might be a god made manifest to mortals.
23	πρώτας δὲ Θήβας τῆσδε γῆς Ἑλληνίδος ἀνωλόλυξα, νεβρίδ' ἐξάψας χροὸς θύρσον τε δοὺς εἰς χεῖρα, κίσσινον βέλος, ἐπεί μ' ἀδελφαὶ μητρός, ἃς ἥκιστ' ἐχρῆν, Διόνυσον οὐκ ἔφασκον ἐκφῦναι Διός, Σεμέλην δὲ νυμφευθεῖσαν ἐκ θνητοῦ τινος εἰς Ζῆν' ἀναφέρειν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν λέχους, Κάδμου σοφίσμαθ', ὧν νιν εἵνεκα κτανεῖν Ζῆν' ἐξεκαυχῶνθ', ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο. τοιγάρ νιν αὐτὰς ἐκ δόμων ὤστρησ' ἐγὼ μανίαις· ὄρος δ' οἰκοῦσι παράκοποι φρενῶν·	Thebes is the first city of this Greek land that I have roused to the ritual cry. I fastened the fawn-skin to their bodies and put the thyrsus into their hands, the ivy-shafted weapon. I did it because my mother's sisters, the last people who should have, kept saying that Dionysus was not the son of Zeus. Semele, they said, had been seduced by some mortal and pinned the blame for her bed on Zeus. It was a trick of Cadmus', and that, they crowed, was why Zeus killed her: because she lied about her marriage. So I have stung those very sisters out of

1 Hera, jealous of Zeus' affair, led Semele to ask Zeus to come to her in his full glory. His lightning killed her while she was pregnant with Dionysus.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		their homes with madness. They live on the mountain now, out of their minds.[2]
34	σκευήν τ' ἔχειν ἠνάγκασ' ὀργίων ἐμῶν, καὶ πᾶν τὸ θῆλυ σπέρμα Καδμείων ὅσαι γυναῖκες ἦσαν ἐξέμηνα δωμάτων· ὁμοῦ δὲ Κάδμου παισὶν ἀναμεμιγμέναι χλωραῖς ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀνορόφοις ἧνται πέτραις. δεῖ γὰρ πόλιν τήνδ' ἐκμαθεῖν, κεἰ μὴ θέλει, ἀτέλεστον οὖσαν τῶν ἐμῶν βακχευμάτων, Σεμέλης τε μητρὸς ἀπολογήσασθαί μ' ὕπερ φανέντα θνητοῖς δαίμον', ὃν τίκτει Διί. Κάδμος μὲν οὖν γέρας τε καὶ τυραννίδα Πενθεῖ δίδωσι θυγατρὸς ἐκπεφυκότι, ὃς θεομαχεῖ τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ καὶ σπονδῶν ἄπο ὠθεῖ μ' ἐν εὐχαῖς τ' οὐδαμῶς μνείαν ἔχει.	I have forced them to wear the gear of my rites. And every woman of Cadmus' people, the whole female seed of them, I have driven mad and out of their homes. Mingled with Cadmus' daughters, they sit under the green firs on roofless rocks. This city must learn, whether it wants to or not, that it is uninitiated in my Bacchic rites. And I must speak in defense of my mother Semele by appearing to mortals as the god she bore to Zeus. Now Cadmus has handed his honors and his power to Pentheus, his daughter's son, who fights against the god in me. He thrusts me away from the libations and never mentions me in his prayers.
47	ὧν εἵνεκ' αὐτῷ θεὸς γεγὼς ἐνδείξομαι πᾶσίν τε Θηβαίοισιν. εἰς δ' ἄλλην χθόνα, τἀνθένδε θέμενος εὖ, μεταστήσω πόδα, δεικνὺς ἐμαυτόν· ἢν δὲ Θηβαίων πόλις ὀργῇ σὺν ὅπλοις ἐξ ὄρους Βάκχας ἄγειν ζητῇ, συνάψω μαινάσι στρατηλατῶν. ὧν εἵνεκ' εἶδος θνητὸν ἀλλάξας ἔχω μορφήν τ' ἐμὴν μετέβαλον εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύσιν. ἀλλ' ὦ λιποῦσαι Τμῶλον ἔρυμα Λυδίας, θίασος ἐμὸς γυναῖκες, ἃς ἐκ βαρβάρων ἐκόμισα παρέδρους καὶ ξυνεμπόρους ἐμοί, αἴρεσθε τἀπιχώρι' ἐν πόλει Φρυγῶν τύπανα, Ῥέας τε μητρὸς ἐμά θ' εὑρήματα, βασίλειά τ' ἀμφὶ δώματ' ἐλθοῦσαι τάδε κτυπεῖτε Πενθέως, ὡς ὁρᾷ Κάδμου πόλις.	For that, I will show him and all the Thebans that I was born a god. Once I have set things right here, I will move on to another land and reveal myself there. But if the city of Thebes grows angry and tries to bring the Bacchae down from the mountain by force of arms, I will lead my maenads into battle against them. That is why I have changed my form for a mortal one and transformed my appearance into a man's. But you, women who left Tmolus, Lydia's bulwark, my band, whom I brought from foreign lands to sit beside me and travel with me: take up the drums that are native to the city of the Phrygians, the invention of Mother Rhea and myself. Come around this royal palace of Pentheus and beat them, so that the city of Cadmus can see.[3]
62	ἐγὼ δὲ Βάκχαις εἰς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχὰς / ἐλθών, ἵν' εἰσί, συμμετασχήσω χορῶν.	As for me, I will go to the Bacchae in the glens of Cithaeron, where they are, and join in their dances.

PARODOS

The chorus of Asian women sings of Dionysus' birth and the joys of his worship on the mountains.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
64	**CHORUS** Ἀσίας ἀπὸ γαίας ἱερὸν Τμῶλον ἀμείψασα θοάζω Βρομίῳ ... πόνον ἡδὺν κάματόν τ' εὐκάματον, Βάκχιον εὐαζομένα. τίς ὁδῷ τίς ὁδῷ; τίς μελάθροις; ἔκτοπος ἔστω, στόμα τ' εὔφημον	**CHORUS** From the land of Asia, leaving holy Tmolus behind, I rush on for Bromius ... sweet labor, toil that is easy toil, crying euhoi to Bacchus. Who is in the road? Who is in the road? Who

2 The thyrsus, carried by Dionysus' worshippers, is a fennel stalk tipped with ivy.
3 Tmolus is a mountain in Lydia, in western Asia Minor. Rhea, mother of Zeus, was identified with the Phrygian mother goddess Cybele.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἅπας ἐξοσιούσθω· τὰ νομισθέντα γὰρ ἀεὶ Διόνυσον ὑμνήσω. ὦ μάκαρ, ὅστις εὐδαίμων τελετὰς θεῶν εἰδὼς βιοτὰν ἁγιστεύει καὶ θιασεύεται ψυχάν, ἐν ὄρεσσι βακχεύων ὁσίοις καθαρμοῖσιν· τά τε ματρὸς μεγάλας ὄργια Κυβέλας θεμιτεύων ἀνὰ θύρσον τε τινάσσων κισσῷ τε στεφανωθεὶς Διόνυσον θεραπεύει.	is in the halls? Let him stand aside, and let every mouth be hushed and holy, for I will hymn Dionysus in the songs ordained of old. Blessed is he who, happy man, knowing the mysteries of the gods, keeps his life pure and joins his soul to the band, dancing for Bacchus in the mountains with holy purifications; who keeps, as is right, the rites of the Great Mother Cybele, shakes the thyrsus high, and, crowned with ivy, serves Dionysus.[4]
83	ἴτε Βάκχαι, ἴτε Βάκχαι, Βρόμιον παῖδα θεὸν θεοῦ Διόνυσον κατάγουσαι Φρυγίων ἐξ ὀρέων Ἑλλάδος εἰς εὐρυχόρους ἀγυιάς, τὸν Βρόμιον· ὅν ποτ᾽ ἔχουσ᾽ ἐν ὠδίνων λοχίαις ἀνάγκαισι πταμένας Διὸς βροντᾶς νηδύος ἔκβολον μάτηρ ἔτεκεν, λιποῦσ᾽ αἰῶνα κεραυνίᾳ πλαγᾷ· λοχίοις δ᾽ αὐτίκα νιν δέξατο θαλάμοις Κρονίδας Ζεύς· κατὰ μηρῷ δὲ καλύψας χρυσέαισιν συνερείδει περόναις κρυπτὸν ἀφ᾽ Ἥρας. ἔτεκεν δ᾽, ἀνίκα Μοῖραι τέλεσαν, ταυρόκερων θεὸν στεφάνωσέν τε δρακόντων στεφάνοις, ἔνθεν ἄγραν θυρσοφόροι Μαινάδες ἀμφιβάλλονται πλοκάμοις.	Go, Bacchae, go, Bacchae, bring Bromius, god and son of a god, Dionysus, home from the Phrygian mountains into the broad streets of Greece, bring Bromius! Once, in the forced pangs of labor, as Zeus' thunder flew, his mother cast him from her womb and bore him, and left her life at the lightning's stroke. At once Zeus, son of Cronus, took him into chambers of birth: he hid him in his thigh and fastened it shut with golden pins, concealed from Hera. And when the Fates had brought him to term, he bore the bull-horned god and crowned him with crowns of snakes. That is why the thyrsus-bearing maenads wind the snakes they catch around their hair.
105	ὦ Σεμέλας τροφοὶ Θῆβαι στεφανοῦσθε κισσῷ· βρύετε βρύετε χλοήρει μίλακι καλλικάρπῳ καὶ καταβακχιοῦσθε δρυὸς ἢ ἐλάτας κλάδοισι, στικτῶν τ᾽ ἐνδυτὰ νεβρίδων στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκάμων	Thebes, nurse of Semele, crown yourself with ivy! Burst out, burst out with green bryony and its lovely berries, and turn Bacchic with boughs of oak or fir! Fringe your robes of dappled fawnskin with tufts of white-haired wool,

4 Bromius, "the Roarer," is one of Dionysus' names.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	μαλλοῖς· ἀμφὶ δὲ νάρθηκας ὑβριστὰς ὁσιοῦσθ'· αὐτίκα γᾶ πᾶσα χορεύσει, Βρόμιος εὖτ' ἂν ἄγῃ θιάσους εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος, ἔνθα μένει θηλυγενὴς ὄχλος ἀφ' ἱστῶν παρὰ κερκίδων τ' οἰστρηθεὶς Διονύσῳ. ὦ θαλάμευμα Κουρήτων ζάθεοί τε Κρήτας Διογενέτορες ἔναυλοι, ἔνθα τρικόρυθες ἄντροις βυρσότονον κύκλωμα τόδε μοι Κορύβαντες ηὗρον·	and handle the violent fennel wands with holiness! Soon the whole land will dance, when Bromius leads his bands to the mountain, to the mountain, where there waits the crowd of women, driven from their looms and shuttles, stung to frenzy by Dionysus. Chamber of the Curetes, holy haunts of Crete where Zeus was born, where in the caves the triple-crested Corybantes invented for me this circle of stretched hide![5]
126	ἀνὰ δὲ βάκχια συντόνῳ κέρασαν ἁδυβόᾳ Φρυγίων αὐλῶν πνεύματι, ματρός τε Ῥέας εἰς χέρα θῆκαν, κτύπον εὐάσμασι Βακχᾶν· παρὰ δὲ μαινόμενοι Σάτυροι ματέρος ἐξανύσαντο θεᾶς, εἰς δὲ χορεύματα συνῆψαν τριετηρίδων, αἷς χαίρει Διόνυσος. ἡδὺς ἐν οὔρεσιν, εὖτ' ἂν ἐκ θιάσων δρομαίων σεύῃ πεδόσε, νεβρίδος ἔχων ἱερὸν ἐνδυτόν, ἀγρεύων αἷμα τραγοκτόνον, ὠμοφάγον χάριν, ἱέμενος εἰς ὄρεα Φρύγια, Λύδια.	And in their Bacchic frenzy they blended it with the high-strung, sweet-crying breath of Phrygian pipes, and placed it in Mother Rhea's hands, to beat time for the Bacchae's cries of euhoi. From the Mother goddess the raving Satyrs won it for themselves, and joined it to the dances of the festivals held every second year, in which Dionysus delights. He is sweet on the mountains, when out of the running bands he drops to the ground, wearing the holy garment of fawnskin, hunting the blood of the slaughtered goat, the joy of raw flesh, rushing to the mountains of Phrygia, of Lydia.
142	ὁ δ' ἔξαρχος Βρόμιος, εὐοῖ. ῥεῖ δὲ γάλακτι πέδον, ῥεῖ δ' οἴνῳ, ῥεῖ δὲ μελισσᾶν νέκταρι, Συρίας δ' ὡς λιβάνου καπνός. ὁ Βακχεὺς δ' ἔχων πυρσώδη φλόγα πεύκας ἐκ νάρθηκος ἀίσσει δρόμῳ καὶ χοροῖς ἐρεθίζων πλανάτας ἰαχαῖς τ' ἀναπάλλων, τρυφερὸν πλόκαμον εἰς αἰθέρα ῥίπτων.	Bromius leads the dance: euhoi! The ground flows with milk, flows with wine, flows with the nectar of bees, and there is smoke like Syrian frankincense. The Bacchic god, holding the pine torch's blazing flame on his fennel wand, darts out, with running and dancing rousing the stragglers, stirring them on with his cries, tossing his soft curls to the sky.
151	ἅμα δ' ἐπ' εὐάσμασιν ἐπιβρέμει τοιάδ'· ὦ ἴτε Βάκχαι, ὦ ἴτε Βάκχαι, Τμώλου χρυσορόου χλιδᾷ	And among the cries of euhoi he roars out these words: "Go, Bacchae, go, Bacchae, splendor of Tmolus that flows with gold,

5 The Curetes guarded the infant Zeus in a cave on Crete, drowning his cries with the clash of their arms. The Corybantes were similar dancing attendants of Cybele.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	μέλπετε τὸν Διόνυσον βαρυβρόμων ὑπὸ τυμπάνων, εὔια τὸν εὔιον ἀγαλλόμεναι θεὸν ἐν Φρυγίαισι βοαῖς ἐνοπαῖσί τε, λωτὸς ὅταν εὐκέλαδος ἱερὸς ἱερὰ παίγματα βρέμῃ, σύνοχα φοιτάσιν εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος· ἡδομένα δ' ἄρα, πῶλος ὅπως ἅμα ματέρι φορβάδι, κῶλον ἄγει ταχύπουν σκιρτήμασι Βάκχα.	sing Dionysus to the deep-roaring drums, glorying in the god of euhoi with euhoi in Phrygian shouts and cries, when the sweet-sounding holy pipe roars out its holy play, keeping time with those who roam to the mountain, to the mountain!" And then, in delight, like a foal beside its grazing mother, the Bacchant lifts her swift foot and leaps.

FIRST EPISODE

Cadmus and Teiresias prepare to dance for the god; Pentheus mocks them and orders the stranger's arrest.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
170	**TEIRESIAS** τίς ἐν πύλαισι; Κάδμον ἐκκάλει δόμων Ἀγήνορος παῖδ', ὃς πόλιν Σιδωνίαν λιπὼν ἐπύργωσ' ἄστυ Θηβαίων τόδε. ἴτω τις, εἰσάγγελλε Τειρεσίας ὅτι ζητεῖ νιν· οἶδε δ' αὐτὸς ὧν ἥκω πέρι ἅ τε ξυνεθέμην πρέσβυς ὢν γεραιτέρῳ, θύρσους ἀνάπτειν καὶ νεβρῶν δορὰς ἔχειν στεφανοῦν τε κρᾶτα κισσίνοις βλαστήμασιν.	**TEIRESIAS** Who's at the gates? Call Cadmus out of the house, Agenor's son, who left the city of Sidon and built the towers of this town of Thebes. Someone go in and tell him Teiresias is looking for him. He knows himself what I've come about, and what I agreed with him, an old man with a still older one: to fasten up our thyrsi, wear fawnskins, and crown our heads with shoots of ivy.[6]
178	**CADMUS** ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς σὴν γῆρυν ᾐσθόμην κλύων σοφὴν σοφοῦ παρ' ἀνδρός, ἐν δόμοισιν ὤν· ἥκω δ' ἕτοιμος τήνδ' ἔχων σκευὴν θεοῦ. δεῖ γάρ νιν ὄντα παῖδα θυγατρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς, Διόνυσον ὃς πέφηνεν ἀνθρώποις θεός, ὅσον καθ' ἡμᾶς δυνατὸν αὔξεσθαι μέγαν. ποῖ δεῖ χορεύειν, ποῖ καθιστάναι πόδα καὶ κρᾶτα σεῖσαι πολιόν; ἐξηγοῦ σύ μοι γέρων γέροντι, Τειρεσία· σὺ γὰρ σοφός. ὡς οὐ κάμοιμ' ἂν οὔτε νύκτ' οὔθ' ἡμέραν θύρσῳ κροτῶν γῆν· ἐπιλελήσμεθ' ἡδονῇ γέροντες ὄντες.	**CADMUS** My dearest friend, I was inside the house, and I knew your voice the moment I heard it, the wise voice of a wise man. Here I am, ready, wearing this gear of the god's. He is my own daughter's son, Dionysus, who has shown himself to men as a god, and we must make him great, as far as it's in our power. Where should we dance? Where should we plant our feet and shake our gray heads? Show me the way, Teiresias, old man to old man; you're the wise one. I could never tire, night or day, of beating the ground with the thyrsus. We've forgotten, happily, that we're old.
189	**TEIRESIAS** ταὔτ' ἐμοὶ πάσχεις ἄρα· / κἀγὼ γὰρ ἡβῶ κἀπιχειρήσω χοροῖς.	**TEIRESIAS** Then you feel the same way I do. I'm young again too, and I'll try my hand at dancing.
191	**CADMUS** οὐκοῦν ὄχοισιν εἰς ὄρος περάσομεν;	**CADMUS** Then shouldn't we take a carriage to the mountain?
192	**TEIRESIAS** ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως ἂν ὁ θεὸς τιμὴν ἔχοι.	**TEIRESIAS** But then the god wouldn't be honored in the same way.
193	**CADMUS** γέρων γέροντα παιδαγωγήσω σ' ἐγώ.	**CADMUS** I'll lead you like a child, then, old man leading old man.

6 Teiresias is the blind prophet of Thebes, a servant of Apollo.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
194	**TEIRESIAS** ὁ θεὸς ἀμοχθεὶ κεῖσε νῷν ἡγήσεται.	**TEIRESIAS** The god will guide the two of us there without any effort.
195	**CADMUS** μόνοι δὲ πόλεως Βακχίῳ χορεύσομεν;	**CADMUS** Will we be the only ones in the city dancing for Bacchus?
196	**TEIRESIAS** μόνοι γὰρ εὖ φρονοῦμεν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι κακῶς.	**TEIRESIAS** Yes, because we're the only ones thinking straight. The rest are not.
197	**CADMUS** μακρὸν τὸ μέλλειν· ἀλλ' ἐμῆς ἔχου χερός.	**CADMUS** We're taking too long. Here, hold on to my hand.
198	**TEIRESIAS** ἰδού, ξύναπτε καὶ ξυνωρίζου χέρα.	**TEIRESIAS** There. Take it, and link your hand with mine.
199	**CADMUS** οὐ καταφρονῶ 'γὼ τῶν θεῶν θνητὸς γεγώς.	**CADMUS** I don't look down on the gods. I was born a mortal.
200	**TEIRESIAS** οὐδὲν σοφιζόμεσθα τοῖσι δαίμοσι. πατρίους παραδοχὰς ἅς θ' ὁμήλικας χρόνῳ κεκτήμεθ', οὐδεὶς αὐτὰ καταβαλεῖ λόγος, οὐδ' εἰ δι' ἄκρων τὸ σοφὸν ηὕρηται φρενῶν. ἐρεῖ τις ὡς τὸ γῆρας οὐκ αἰσχύνομαι, μέλλων χορεύειν κρᾶτα κισσώσας ἐμόν. οὐ γὰρ διῄρηχ' ὁ θεὸς εἴτε τὸν νέον εἰ χρὴ χορεύειν εἴτε τὸν γεραίτερον, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἁπάντων βούλεται τιμὰς ἔχειν κοινάς, δι' ἀριθμῶν δ' οὐδὲν αὔξεσθαι θέλει.	**TEIRESIAS** We don't try to be clever with the gods. The traditions of our fathers, which we have held for as long as time itself, will never be overthrown by any argument, not even if cleverness has been devised by the sharpest minds. Someone will say I have no shame about my age, going off to dance with ivy on my head. But the god has made no distinction about whether the young should dance or the old. He wants honor from everyone alike, and to be exalted without anyone being singled out.
210	**CADMUS** ἐπεὶ σὺ φέγγος, Τειρεσία, τόδ' οὐχ ὁρᾷς, ἐγὼ προφήτης σοι λόγων γενήσομαι. Πενθεὺς πρὸς οἴκους ὅδε διὰ σπουδῆς περᾷ Ἐχίονος παῖς, ᾧ κράτος δίδωμι γῆς. ὡς ἐπτόηται· τί ποτ' ἐρεῖ νεώτερον;	**CADMUS** Since you can't see this daylight, Teiresias, I'll be your spokesman and tell you what's happening. Here's Pentheus, Echion's son, to whom I've given power over the land, hurrying toward the house. How agitated he is! What new thing will he tell us?[7]
215	**PENTHEUS** ἔκδημος ὢν μὲν τῆσδ' ἐτύγχανον χθονός, κλύω δὲ νεοχμὰ τήνδ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν κακά, γυναῖκας ἡμῖν δώματ' ἐκλελοιπέναι πλασταῖσι βακχείαισιν, ἐν δὲ δασκίοις ὄρεσι θοάζειν, τὸν νεωστὶ δαίμονα Διόνυσον ὅστις ἔστι τιμώσας χοροῖς· πλήρεις δὲ θιάσοις ἐν μέσοισιν ἑστάναι κρατῆρας, ἄλλην δ' ἄλλοσ' εἰς ἐρημίαν πτώσσουσαν εὐναῖς ἀρσένων ὑπηρετεῖν, πρόφασιν μὲν ὡς δὴ Μαινάδας θυοσκόους, τὴν δ' Ἀφροδίτην πρόσθ' ἄγειν τοῦ Βακχίου. ὅσας μὲν οὖν εἴληφα, δεσμίους χέρας σώζουσι πανδήμοισι πρόσπολοι στέγαις·	**PENTHEUS** I happened to be away from the country, and I hear about strange new troubles in the city. Our women have left their homes for sham Bacchic rites. They're rushing about the shadowy mountains, honoring this new god Dionysus, whoever he is, with dances. Full wine-bowls stand in the middle of their gatherings, and one here, one there, they slink off to lonely spots to serve the beds of men. The pretext, if you please, is that they're maenads making sacrifice, but they put Aphrodite ahead of Bacchus. The ones I've caught are being kept by servants in the public prison, their hands in chains.

7 Echion was one of the Sown Men, the warriors who sprang from the dragon's teeth that Cadmus sowed when he founded Thebes.

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228	ὅσαι δ' ἄπεισιν, ἐξ ὄρους θηράσομαι, Ἰνώ τ' Ἀγαύην θ' ἥ μ' ἔτικτ' Ἐχίονι, Ἀκταίονός τε μητέρ', Αὐτονόην λέγω. καὶ σφᾶς σιδηραῖς ἁρμόσας ἐν ἄρκυσι παύσω κακούργου τῆσδε βακχείας τάχα. λέγουσι δ' ὡς τις εἰσελήλυθε ξένος γόης ἐπῳδὸς Λυδίας ἀπὸ χθονός, ξανθοῖσι βοστρύχοισιν εὐόσμοις κομῶν, οἰνωπός, ὄσσοις χάριτας Ἀφροδίτης ἔχων, ὃς ἡμέρας τε κεὐφρόνας συγγίγνεται τελετὰς προτείνων εὐίους νεάνισιν. εἰ δ' αὐτὸν εἴσω τῆσδε λήψομαι στέγης, παύσω κτυποῦντα θύρσον ἀνασείοντά τε κόμας, τράχηλον σώματος χωρὶς τεμών.	The ones who are still out there I'll hunt down from the mountain: Ino, and Agave, who bore me to Echion, and Actaeon's mother, Autonoe, I mean. I'll fit them into iron nets and put a stop to this criminal frenzy soon enough. And they say some stranger has arrived, a sorcerer, a spell-singer from the land of Lydia, with fragrant golden curls and a wine-flushed face, the charms of Aphrodite in his eyes. He spends his days and nights with young women, dangling his mysteries of euhoi in front of them. If I catch him under this roof, I'll stop him beating his thyrsus and tossing his hair. I'll cut his head clean off his body.
242	ἐκεῖνος εἶναί φησι Διόνυσον θεόν, ἐκεῖνος ἐν μηρῷ ποτ' ἐρράφθαι Διός, ὃς ἐκπυροῦται λαμπάσιν κεραυνίαις σὺν μητρί, Δίους ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο. ταῦτ' οὐχὶ δεινῆς ἀγχόνης ἐπάξια, ὕβρεις ὑβρίζειν, ὅστις ἔστιν ὁ ξένος; ἀτὰρ τόδ' ἄλλο θαῦμα, τὸν τερασκόπον ἐν ποικίλαισι νεβρίσι Τειρεσίαν ὁρῶ πατέρα τε μητρὸς τῆς ἐμῆς, πολὺν γέλων, νάρθηκι βακχεύοντ'· ἀναίνομαι πάτερ τὸ γῆρας ὑμῶν εἰσορῶν νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον. οὐκ ἀποτινάξεις κισσόν; οὐκ ἐλευθέραν θύρσου μεθήσεις χεῖρ', ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάτερ;	He's the one who says Dionysus is a god. He's the one who says he was once sewn into Zeus' thigh, when in fact he was burnt to ashes by the blaze of the lightning, together with his mother, because she lied about a marriage with Zeus. Doesn't that deserve the terrible noose, such outrage on outrage, whoever this stranger is? But here's another marvel. I see Teiresias, the reader of portents, in dappled fawnskins, and my mother's father, what a joke, playing the Bacchant with a fennel wand. I'm ashamed, Father, to see the two of you so old and with no sense. Won't you shake off that ivy? Won't you let your hand go free of the thyrsus, my mother's father?
255	σὺ ταῦτ' ἔπεισας, Τειρεσία· τόνδ' αὖ θέλεις τὸν δαίμον' ἀνθρώποισιν εἰσφέρων νέον σκοπεῖν πτερωτοὺς κἀμπύρων μισθοὺς φέρειν. εἰ μή σε γῆρας πολιὸν ἐξερρύετο, καθῆσ' ἂν ἐν Βάκχαισι δέσμιος μέσαις, τελετὰς πονηρὰς εἰσάγων· γυναιξὶ γὰρ ὅπου βότρυος ἐν δαιτὶ γίγνεται γάνος, οὐχ ὑγιὲς οὐδὲν ἔτι λέγω τῶν ὀργίων.	You talked him into this, Teiresias. Once again you want to bring a new god in among men, so you can watch the birds and collect fees for burnt offerings. If your gray old age didn't protect you, you'd be sitting in chains among the Bacchae for introducing wicked rites. Where women get the gleam of the grape at a feast, I tell you, there's nothing healthy left in those rites.
263	**CHORUS** τῆς δυσσεβείας. ὦ ξέν', οὐκ αἰδεῖ θεοὺς Κάδμον τε τὸν σπείραντα γηγενῆ στάχυν; Ἐχίονος δ' ὢν παῖς καταισχύνεις γένος;	**CHORUS** What impiety! Stranger, have you no respect for the gods, or for Cadmus, who sowed the earth-born crop? You are Echion's son. Will you shame your own family?
266	**TEIRESIAS** ὅταν λάβῃ τις τῶν λόγων ἀνὴρ σοφὸς καλὰς ἀφορμάς, οὐ μέγ' ἔργον εὖ λέγειν· σὺ δ' εὔτροχον μὲν γλῶσσαν ὡς φρονῶν ἔχεις, ἐν τοῖς λόγοισι δ' οὐκ ἔνεισί σοι φρένες. θρασύς τε δυνατὸς καὶ λέγειν οἷός τ' ἀνὴρ κακὸς πολίτης γίγνεται νοῦν οὐκ ἔχων. οὗτος δ' ὁ δαίμων ὁ νέος ὃν σὺ διαγελᾷς, οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μέγεθος ἐξειπεῖν ὅσος	**TEIRESIAS** When a wise man has a good starting point for his argument, speaking well is no great task. You have a nimble tongue, as if you had sense, but there's no sense in what you say. A bold man with power and a gift for speaking makes a bad citizen if he has no sense. This new god you laugh at: I couldn't begin to describe how great he will be throughout Greece. For there are two

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καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἔσται. δύο γάρ, ὦ νεανία, τὰ πρῶτ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισι· Δημήτηρ θεά·	things, young man, that come first for humankind. One is the goddess Demeter.
γῆ δ' ἐστίν, ὄνομα δ' ὁπότερον βούλει κάλει· αὕτη μὲν ἐν ξηροῖσιν ἐκτρέφει βροτούς· ὃς δ' ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τἀντίπαλον ὁ Σεμέλης γόνος βότρυος ὑγρὸν πῶμ' ηὗρε κεἰσηνέγκατο θνητοῖς, ὃ παύει τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς λύπης, ὅταν πλησθῶσιν ἀμπέλου ῥοῆς, ὕπνον τε λήθην τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν κακῶν δίδωσιν, οὐδ' ἔστ' ἄλλο φάρμακον πόνων. οὗτος θεοῖσι σπένδεται θεὸς γεγώς, ὥστε διὰ τοῦτον τἀγάθ' ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν.	She is Earth; call her by whichever name you like. She nourishes mortals with dry food. But the one who came after, her counterpart, Semele's son, discovered the liquid drink of the grape and brought it to mortals. It frees miserable mortals from their grief when they're filled with the stream of the vine. It gives them sleep and forgetfulness of each day's troubles; there is no other cure for suffering. He is a god, and he himself is poured out to the gods in libation, so that through him humankind has its blessings.
καὶ καταγελᾷς νιν, ὡς ἐνερράφη Διὸς μηρῷ; διδάξω σ' ὡς καλῶς ἔχει τόδε. ἐπεί νιν ἥρπασ' ἐκ πυρὸς κεραυνίου Ζεύς, εἰς δ' Ὄλυμπον βρέφος ἀνήγαγεν, θεὸν Ἥρα νιν ἤθελ' ἐκβαλεῖν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ· Ζεὺς δ' ἀντεμηχανήσαθ' οἷα δὴ θεός. ῥήξας μέρος τι τοῦ χθόν' ἐγκυκλουμένου αἰθέρος, ἔθηκε τόνδ' ὅμηρον ἐκδιδοὺς Διόνυσον Ἥρας νεικέων· χρόνῳ δέ νιν βροτοὶ τραφῆναί φασιν ἐν μηρῷ Διός, ὄνομα μεταστήσαντες, ὅτι θεᾷ θεὸς Ἥρᾳ ποθ' ὡμήρευσε, συνθέντες λόγον.	And you laugh at him, at the story that he was sewn into Zeus' thigh? I'll teach you what a fine story it is. When Zeus snatched him out of the lightning's fire and brought the baby up to Olympus, Hera wanted to throw him, a god, out of heaven. But Zeus devised a countermove, as only a god could. He broke off a piece of the sky that encircles the earth, made it into a Dionysus, and handed it over as a hostage against Hera's quarrels. In time people came to say he was raised in Zeus' thigh. They changed the word, because once, a god, he served as hostage to the goddess Hera, and so they put the story together.[8]
μάντις δ' ὁ δαίμων ὅδε· τὸ γὰρ βακχεύσιμον καὶ τὸ μανιῶδες μαντικὴν πολλὴν ἔχει· ὅταν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸ σῶμ' ἔλθῃ πολύς, λέγειν τὸ μέλλον τοὺς μεμηνότας ποιεῖ. Ἄρεώς τε μοῖραν μεταλαβὼν ἔχει τινά· στρατὸν γὰρ ἐν ὅπλοις ὄντα κἀπὶ τάξεσι φόβος διεπτόησε πρὶν λόγχης θιγεῖν· μανία δὲ καὶ τοῦτ' ἐστὶ Διονύσου πάρα. ἔτ' αὐτὸν ὄψει κἀπὶ Δελφίσιν πέτραις πηδῶντα σὺν πεύκαισι δικόρυφον πλάκα, πάλλοντα καὶ σείοντα Βακχεῖον κλάδον, μέγαν τ' ἀν' Ἑλλάδ'. ἀλλ' ἐμοί, Πενθεῦ, πιθοῦ·	And this god is a prophet. Bacchic frenzy and madness carry great powers of prophecy: when the god enters the body in full force, he makes the frenzied tell the future. He has also taken over a share of Ares' domain. An army in arms and drawn up in its ranks can be scattered by panic before it touches a spear, and that too is a madness that comes from Dionysus. You will see him yet on the rocks of Delphi as well, leaping with pine torches over the twin-peaked plateau, brandishing and shaking the Bacchic branch, great throughout Greece. Come, Pentheus, listen to me.
μὴ τὸ κράτος αὔχει δύναμιν ἀνθρώποις ἔχειν, μηδ' ἢν δοκῇς μέν, ἡ δὲ δόξα σου νοσῇ, φρονεῖν δόκει τι· τὸν θεὸν δ' εἰς γῆν δέχου καὶ σπένδε καὶ βάκχευε καὶ στέφου κάρα. οὐχ ὁ Διόνυσος σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάσει γυναῖκας εἰς τὴν Κύπριν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἔνεστιν εἰς τὰ πάντ' ἀεί. τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή· καὶ γὰρ ἐν βακχεύμασιν οὖσ' ἥ γε σώφρων οὐ διαφθαρήσεται.	Don't be so sure that rule is what gives men power. And if you have an opinion, but your opinion is sick, don't imagine that you've any sense. Welcome the god into the land, pour him libations, dance for Bacchus, and crown your head. It isn't Dionysus who will force women to be chaste where love is concerned. Chastity is in their nature, always and in everything. That's what you

8 The explanation rests on a pun: in Greek, *mēros* means "thigh" and *homēros* means "hostage."

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		should be looking at: even in the Bacchic revels, a chaste woman won't be corrupted.
319	ὁρᾷς, σὺ χαίρεις, ὅταν ἐφεστῶσιν πύλαις πολλοί, τὸ Πενθέως δ' ὄνομα μεγαλύνῃ πόλις· κἀκεῖνος, οἶμαι, τέρπεται τιμώμενος. ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν καὶ Κάδμος, ὃν σὺ διαγελᾷς, κισσῷ τ' ἐρεψόμεσθα καὶ χορεύσομεν, πολιὰ ξυνωρίς, ἀλλ' ὅμως χορευτέον, κοὐ θεομαχήσω σῶν λόγων πεισθεὶς ὕπο. μαίνει γὰρ ὡς ἄλγιστα, κοὔτε φαρμάκοις ἄκη λάβοις ἄν, οὔτ' ἄνευ τούτων νοσεῖς.	You see? You're pleased when crowds stand at the gates and the city glorifies the name of Pentheus. He too, I think, enjoys being honored. So Cadmus, whom you laugh at, and I will crown ourselves with ivy and dance, a gray-haired pair, but dance we must, all the same. Your words won't persuade me to fight against the god. You are mad, most cruelly mad. No drug could ever cure you, and yet it's not without drugs that you're sick.
328	**CHORUS** ὦ πρέσβυ, Φοίβόν τ' οὐ καταισχύνεις λόγοις, / τιμῶν τε Βρόμιον σωφρονεῖς μέγαν θεόν.	**CHORUS** Old man, your words bring no shame on Phoebus, and in honoring Bromius, a great god, you show good sense.
330	**CADMUS** ὦ παῖ, καλῶς σοι Τειρεσίας παρῄνεσεν· οἴκει μεθ' ἡμῶν, μὴ θύραζε τῶν νόμων. νῦν γὰρ πέτει τε καὶ φρονῶν οὐδὲν φρονεῖς. κεἰ μὴ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς οὗτος, ὡς σὺ φῄς, παρὰ σοὶ λεγέσθω· καὶ καταψεύδου καλῶς ὡς ἔστι Σεμέλης, ἵνα δοκῇ θεὸν τεκεῖν, ἡμῖν τε τιμὴ παντὶ τῷ γένει προσῇ. ὁρᾷς τὸν Ἀκταίωνος ἄθλιον μόρον, ὃν ὠμόσιτοι σκύλακες ἃς ἐθρέψατο διεσπάσαντο, κρείσσον' ἐν κυναγίαις Ἀρτέμιδος εἶναι κομπάσαντ', ἐν ὀργάσιν. ὃ μὴ πάθῃς σύ, δεῦρό σου στέψω κάρα κισσῷ· μεθ' ἡμῶν τῷ θεῷ τιμὴν δίδου.	**CADMUS** My child, Teiresias has given you good advice. Live with us, not outside our customs. Right now you're flying about; you think, but your thinking is nothing. Even if this god isn't a god, as you say, call him one anyway. Tell a fine lie, that he's Semele's son, so she'll be thought to have borne a god, and honor will come to us and our whole family. You've seen the miserable fate of Actaeon: the flesh-eating hounds he had raised tore him apart in the meadows, because he boasted that he was a better hunter than Artemis. Don't let that happen to you. Come here, let me crown your head with ivy. Join us in honoring the god.
343	**PENTHEUS** οὐ μὴ προσοίσεις χεῖρα, βακχεύσεις δ' ἰών, μηδ' ἐξομόρξει μωρίαν τὴν σὴν ἐμοί; τῆς σῆς ἀνοίας τόνδε τὸν διδάσκαλον δίκην μέτειμι. στειχέτω τις ὡς τάχος, ἐλθὼν δὲ θάκους τοῦδ' ἵν' οἰωνοσκοπεῖ μοχλοῖς τριαίνου κἀνάτρεψον ἔμπαλιν, ἄνω κάτω τὰ πάντα συγχέας ὁμοῦ, καὶ στέμματ' ἀνέμοις καὶ θυέλλαισιν μέθες. μάλιστα γάρ νιν δήξομαι δράσας τάδε. οἳ δ' ἀνὰ πόλιν στείχοντες ἐξιχνεύσατε τὸν θηλύμορφον ξένον, ὃς εἰσφέρει νόσον καινὴν γυναιξὶ καὶ λέχη λυμαίνεται. κἄνπερ λάβητε, δέσμιον πορεύσατε δεῦρ' αὐτόν, ὡς ἂν λευσίμου δίκης τυχὼν θάνῃ πικρὰν βάκχευσιν ἐν Θήβαις ἰδών.	**PENTHEUS** Keep your hands off me! Go off and be a Bacchant, and don't wipe your foolishness off on me. But this teacher of your folly, him I'll make pay. Someone go, quickly, to the seat where he watches his birds. Heave it up with crowbars and turn it over, mix everything up, top to bottom, and throw his ribbons to the winds and storms. Doing that will sting him most. And the rest of you, go through the city and track down this stranger who looks like a woman who's bringing a new disease to our women and defiling their beds. If you catch him, bring him here in chains, so he can be stoned to death as he deserves, after seeing his Bacchic revels turn bitter in Thebes.
358	**TEIRESIAS** ὦ σχέτλι', ὡς οὐκ οἶσθα ποῦ ποτ' εἶ λόγων. μέμηνας ἤδη καὶ πρὶν ἐξέστης φρενῶν. στείχωμεν ἡμεῖς, Κάδμε, κἀξαιτώμεθα ὑπέρ τε τούτου καίπερ ὄντος ἀγρίου ὑπέρ τε πόλεως, τὸν θεὸν μηδὲν νέον	**TEIRESIAS** You poor fool, you don't know where your words have taken you. You're mad now; even before, you were out of your mind. Let's go, Cadmus, and pray, both for him, savage as he is, and for the city, that the god will do nothing drastic.

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	δρᾶν. ἀλλ’ ἕπου μοι κισσίνου βάκτρου μέτα· πειρῶ δ’ ἀνορθοῦν σῶμ’ ἐμόν, κἀγὼ τὸ σόν· γέροντε δ’ αἰσχρὸν δύο πεσεῖν· ἴτω δ’ ὅμως. τῷ Βακχίῳ γὰρ τῷ Διὸς δουλευτέον. Πενθεὺς δ’ ὅπως μὴ πένθος εἰσοίσει δόμοις τοῖς σοῖσι, Κάδμε· μαντικῇ μὲν οὐ λέγω, τοῖς πράγμασιν δέ· μῶρα γὰρ μῶρος λέγει.	Come, follow me with your ivy staff. Try to hold me up, and I’ll do the same for you. It would be shameful for two old men to fall. But never mind. We must serve Bacchus, the son of Zeus. And take care, Cadmus, that Pentheus doesn’t bring grief into your house. I don’t say this by prophecy, but from the facts: a fool speaks folly.[9]

FIRST STASIMON

The chorus condemns Pentheus’ outrage and praises the quiet life, the simple people, and the gift of wine.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
370	**CHORUS** Ὁσία πότνα θεῶν, Ὁσία δ’ ἃ κατὰ γᾶν χρυσέαν πτέρυγα φέρεις, τάδε Πενθέως ἀίεις; ἀίεις οὐχ ὁσίαν ὕβριν εἰς τὸν Βρόμιον, τὸν Σεμέλας τὸν παρὰ καλλιστεφάνοις εὐφροσύναις δαίμονα πρῶτον μακάρων; ὃς τάδ’ ἔχει, θιασεύειν τε χοροῖς μετά τ’ αὐλοῦ γελάσαι ἀποπαῦσαί τε μερίμνας, ὁπόταν βότρυος ἔλθῃ γάνος ἐν δαιτὶ θεῶν, κισσοφόροις δ’ ἐν θαλίαις ἀνδράσι κρατὴρ ὕπνον ἀμφιβάλλῃ.	**CHORUS** Holiness, queen of the gods, Holiness, you who over the earth bear your golden wing, do you hear what Pentheus says? Do you hear his unholy outrage against Bromius, Semele’s son, the god who is first of the blessed ones at feasts of lovely garlands? This is his domain: to join the dancing bands, to laugh to the pipe, to put an end to cares, whenever the gleam of the grape comes to the banquet of the gods, and at ivy-crowned festivals the wine-bowl wraps men in sleep.
386	ἀχαλίνων στομάτων ἀνόμου τ’ ἀφροσύνας τὸ τέλος δυστυχία· ὁ δὲ τᾶς ἡσυχίας βίοτος καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν ἀσάλευτόν τε μένει καὶ συνέχει δώματα· πόρσω γὰρ ὅμως αἰθέρα ναίοντες ὁρῶσιν τὰ βροτῶν οὐρανίδαι. τὸ σοφὸν δ’ οὐ σοφία τό τε μὴ θνητὰ φρονεῖν. βραχὺς αἰών· ἐπὶ τούτῳ δέ τις ἂν μεγάλα διώκων τὰ παρόντ’ οὐχὶ φέροι. μαινομένων δ’ οἵδε τρόποι καὶ κακοβούλων παρ’ ἔμοιγε φωτῶν.	Of unbridled mouths and lawless folly the end is disaster. But the life of quiet and of thinking straight stays unshaken and holds houses together. Far off though they are, dwelling in the upper air, the heavenly ones see what mortals do. Cleverness is not wisdom, nor is thinking thoughts too big for mortals. Life is short, and in that span whoever chases great things may lose what he has. These are the ways of madmen, to my mind, of men who plan badly.
402	ἱκοίμαν ποτὶ Κύπρον, νᾶσον τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας,	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἐν ᾗ θελξίφρονες νέμονται θνατοῖσιν Ἔρωτες, χθόνα θ' ἃν ἑκατόστομοι βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ῥοαὶ καρπίζουσιν ἄνομβρον. ποῦ δ' ἁ καλλιστευομένα Πιερία μούσειος ἕδρα, σεμνὰ κλιτὺς Ὀλύμπου; ἐκεῖσ' ἄγε με, Βρόμιε Βρόμιε, πρόβακχ' εὔιε δαῖμον. ἐκεῖ Χάριτες, ἐκεῖ δὲ Πόθος· ἐκεῖ δὲ Βάκχαις θέμις ὀργιάζειν. ὁ δαίμων ὁ Διὸς παῖς χαίρει μὲν θαλίαισιν, φιλεῖ δ' ὀλβοδότειραν Εἰρήναν, κουροτρόφον θεάν.	If only I could come to Cyprus, island of Aphrodite, where the Loves who charm the mind live among mortals, and to the rainless land made fruitful by the hundred-mouthed streams of the foreign river! And where is Pieria, fairest of all, seat of the Muses, the holy slope of Olympus? Take me there, Bromius, Bromius, god of euhoi who leads the Bacchic throng! There are the Graces, there is Desire, there it is right for the Bacchae to hold their rites. The god, the son of Zeus, delights in festivity, and loves Peace, the giver of wealth, the goddess who nurtures the young.[10]
421	ἴσα δ' εἴς τε τὸν ὄλβιον τόν τε χείρονα δῶκ' ἔχειν οἴνου τέρψιν ἄλυπον· μισεῖ δ' ᾧ μὴ ταῦτα μέλει, κατὰ φάος νύκτας τε φίλας εὐαίωνα διαζῆν· σοφὸν δ' ἀπέχειν πραπίδα φρένα τε περισσῶν παρὰ φωτῶν. τὸ πλῆθος ὅ τι τὸ φαυλότερον ἐνόμισε χρῆταί τε, τόδ' ἂν δεχοίμαν.	Equally to the rich and to the poorer man he has given the painless joy of wine. But he hates the man who does not care for this: by daylight and through the friendly nights to live out a happy life. It is wise to keep one's heart and mind away from men who go too far. Whatever the many, the simpler folk, believe and practice, that I would accept.

SECOND EPISODE

The captured stranger is brought before Pentheus, who questions him, cuts his hair, and locks him in the stables.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
434	**SERVANT** Πενθεῦ, πάρεσμεν τήνδ' ἄγραν ἠγρευκότες ἐφ' ἣν ἔπεμψας, οὐδ' ἄκρανθ' ὡρμήσαμεν. ὁ θὴρ δ' ὅδ' ἡμῖν πρᾶος οὐδ' ὑπέσπασε φυγῇ πόδ', ἀλλ' ἔδωκεν οὐκ ἄκων χέρας, οὐδ' ὠχρὸς οὐδ' ἤλλαξεν οἰνωπὸν γένυν, γελῶν δὲ καὶ δεῖν κἀπάγειν ἐφίετο ἔμενέ τε, τοὐμὸν εὐπετὲς ποιούμενος.	**SERVANT** Pentheus, here we are. We've caught the prey you sent us after, and we didn't set out for nothing. This beast was tame with us. He didn't try to run away; he held out his hands, quite willingly. He didn't turn pale or lose the wine-dark color of his cheeks. He laughed, and told us to tie him up and lead him off, and he waited, making my job easy.
441	κἀγὼ δι' αἰδοῦς εἶπον· ὦ ξέν', οὐχ ἑκὼν ἄγω σε, Πενθέως δ' ὅς μ' ἔπεμψ' ἐπιστολαῖς. ἃς δ' αὖ σὺ Βάκχας εἶρξας, ἃς συνήρπασας κἄδησας ἐν δεσμοῖσι πανδήμου στέγης, φροῦδαί γ' ἐκεῖναι λελυμέναι πρὸς ὀργάδας	I was embarrassed, and I said, "Stranger, I'm not taking you of my own free will. It's on the orders of Pentheus, who sent me." And the Bacchae you locked up, the ones you rounded up and put in chains in the public prison: they're gone, set loose,

9 Teiresias puns on the name Pentheus and *penthos,* "grief."
10 The "foreign river" is usually taken to be the Nile.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	σκιρτῶσι Βρόμιον ἀνακαλούμεναι θεόν· αὐτόματα δ' αὐταῖς δεσμὰ διελύθη πεδῶν, κλῆδές τ' ἀνῆκαν θύρετρ' ἄνευ θνητῆς χερός.	off to the meadows, leaping about and calling on Bromius as their god. The fetters on their feet came undone by themselves, and the bolts slid back from the doors without a mortal hand.
449	πολλῶν δ' ὅδ' ἀνὴρ θαυμάτων ἥκει πλέως / εἰς τάσδε Θήβας. σοὶ δὲ τἄλλα χρὴ μέλειν.	This man has come to Thebes full of wonders. The rest is up to you.
451	**PENTHEUS** μαίνεσθε χεῖρον τοῦδ'· ἐν ἄρκυσιν γὰρ ὢν οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως ὠκὺς ὥστε μ' ἐκφυγεῖν. ἀτὰρ τὸ μὲν σῶμ' οὐκ ἄμορφος εἶ, ξένε, ὡς εἰς γυναῖκας, ἐφ' ὅπερ εἰς Θήβας πάρει· πλόκαμός τε γάρ σου ταναὸς οὐ πάλης ὕπο, γένυν παρ' αὐτὴν κεχυμένος, πόθου πλέως· λευκὴν δὲ χροιὰν ἐκ παρασκευῆς ἔχεις, οὐχ ἡλίου βολαῖσιν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ σκιᾶς, τὴν Ἀφροδίτην καλλονῇ θηρώμενος. πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι λέξον ὅστις εἶ γένος.	**PENTHEUS** You're madder than he is! He's in the net; he isn't quick enough to get away from me. Well, stranger, your body isn't bad-looking, for women at least, which is what you've come to Thebes for. Your hair is long, so you're no wrestler, and it pours down beside your cheek, full of desire. And you keep your skin white on purpose, out of the sun's rays, in the shade, hunting Aphrodite with your beauty. First, then, tell me who you are and where you come from.
461	**DIONYSUS** οὐ κόμπος οὐδείς· ῥᾴδιον δ' εἰπεῖν τόδε. / τὸν ἀνθεμώδη Τμῶλον οἶσθά που κλύων.	**DIONYSUS** There's no boasting in it; that's easy to say. You've heard of flowery Tmolus, I suppose.
463	**PENTHEUS** οἶδ', ὃς τὸ Σάρδεων ἄστυ περιβάλλει κύκλῳ.	**PENTHEUS** I know it. It rings the city of Sardis.
464	**DIONYSUS** ἐντεῦθέν εἰμι, Λυδία δέ μοι πατρίς.	**DIONYSUS** That's where I come from. Lydia is my homeland.
465	**PENTHEUS** πόθεν δὲ τελετὰς τάσδ' ἄγεις ἐς Ἑλλάδα;	**PENTHEUS** And where do these rites come from that you're bringing into Greece?
466	**DIONYSUS** Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβησ' ὁ τοῦ Διός.	**DIONYSUS** Dionysus initiated me, the son of Zeus.
467	**PENTHEUS** Ζεὺς δ' ἔστ' ἐκεῖ τις, ὃς νέους τίκτει θεούς;	**PENTHEUS** Is there some Zeus over there who fathers new gods?
468	**DIONYSUS** οὔκ, ἀλλ' ὁ Σεμέλην ἐνθάδε ζεύξας γάμοις.	**DIONYSUS** No. The same one who joined Semele in marriage here.
469	**PENTHEUS** πότερα δὲ νύκτωρ σ' ἢ κατ' ὄμμ' ἠνάγκασεν;	**PENTHEUS** Did he compel you in the night, or face to face?
470	**DIONYSUS** ὁρῶν ὁρῶντα, καὶ δίδωσιν ὄργια.	**DIONYSUS** Face to face, seeing me as I saw him. And he gave me the rites.
471	**PENTHEUS** τὰ δ' ὄργι' ἐστὶ τίν' ἰδέαν ἔχοντά σοι;	**PENTHEUS** These rites of yours: what form do they take?
472	**DIONYSUS** ἄρρητ' ἀβακχεύτοισιν εἰδέναι βροτῶν.	**DIONYSUS** Mortals who aren't Bacchants may not know.
473	**PENTHEUS** ἔχει δ' ὄνησιν τοῖσι θύουσιν τίνα;	**PENTHEUS** And what good do they do the people who sacrifice?
474	**DIONYSUS** οὐ θέμις ἀκοῦσαί σ', ἔστι δ' ἄξι' εἰδέναι.	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		DIONYSUS It isn't lawful for you to hear. But they're worth knowing.
475	**PENTHEUS** εὖ τοῦτ' ἐκιβδήλευσας, ἵν' ἀκοῦσαι θέλω.	**PENTHEUS** You've faked that nicely, to make me want to hear.
476	**DIONYSUS** ἀσέβειαν ἀσκοῦντ' ὄργι' ἐχθαίρει θεοῦ.	**DIONYSUS** The god's rites hate anyone who practices impiety.
477	**PENTHEUS** τὸν θεὸν ὁρᾶν γὰρ φὴς σαφῶς, ποῖός τις ἦν;	**PENTHEUS** You say you saw the god clearly. What was he like?
478	**DIONYSUS** ὁποῖος ἤθελ'· οὐκ ἐγὼ 'τασσον τόδε.	**DIONYSUS** Whatever he wished. I had no say in that.
479	**PENTHEUS** τοῦτ' αὖ παρωχέτευσας εὖ, κοὐδὲν λέγων.	**PENTHEUS** Another neat dodge, and saying nothing at all.
480	**DIONYSUS** δόξει τις ἀμαθεῖ σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν.	**DIONYSUS** Speak wisely to an ignorant man, and you'll seem to have lost your wits.
481	**PENTHEUS** ἦλθες δὲ πρῶτα δεῦρ' ἄγων τὸν δαίμονα;	**PENTHEUS** Is this the first place you've come to, bringing the god?
482	**DIONYSUS** πᾶς ἀναχορεύει βαρβάρων τάδ' ὄργια.	**DIONYSUS** Every foreign people dances these rites.
483	**PENTHEUS** φρονοῦσι γὰρ κάκιον Ἑλλήνων πολύ.	**PENTHEUS** Yes, because they have far less sense than Greeks.
484	**DIONYSUS** τάδ' εὖ γε μᾶλλον· οἱ νόμοι δὲ διάφοροι.	**DIONYSUS** Better, in this respect at least. Their customs are just different.
485	**PENTHEUS** τὰ δ' ἱερὰ νύκτωρ ἢ μεθ' ἡμέραν τελεῖς;	**PENTHEUS** Do you perform your rites by night or by day?
486	**DIONYSUS** νύκτωρ τὰ πολλά· σεμνότητ' ἔχει σκότος.	**DIONYSUS** Mostly by night. Darkness has a kind of solemnity.
487	**PENTHEUS** τοῦτ' εἰς γυναῖκας δόλιόν ἐστι καὶ σαθρόν.	**PENTHEUS** Where women are concerned, that's treacherous and rotten.
488	**DIONYSUS** κἀν ἡμέρᾳ τό γ' αἰσχρὸν ἐξεύροι τις ἄν.	**DIONYSUS** Anyone who looks for shameful things can find them by day too.
489	**PENTHEUS** δίκην σε δοῦναι δεῖ σοφισμάτων κακῶν.	**PENTHEUS** You'll have to pay for your vicious sophistries.
490	**DIONYSUS** σὲ δ' ἀμαθίας γε κἀσεβοῦντ' εἰς τὸν θεόν.	**DIONYSUS** And you for your ignorance, and your impiety toward the god.
491	**PENTHEUS** ὡς θρασὺς ὁ Βάκχος κοὐκ ἀγύμναστος λόγων.	**PENTHEUS** How bold our Bacchus is! And he's had some practice at arguing.
492	**DIONYSUS** εἶφ' ὅ τι παθεῖν δεῖ· τί με τὸ δεινὸν ἐργάσει;	**DIONYSUS** Tell me what I'm to suffer. What terrible thing will you do to me?

	GREEK	ENGLISH
493	**PENTHEUS** πρῶτον μὲν ἁβρὸν βόστρυχον τεμῶ σέθεν.	**PENTHEUS** First, I'll cut off those pretty curls of yours.
494	**DIONYSUS** ἱερὸς ὁ πλόκαμος· τῷ θεῷ δ' αὐτὸν τρέφω.	**DIONYSUS** My hair is holy. I'm growing it for the god.
495	**PENTHEUS** ἔπειτα θύρσον τόνδε παράδος ἐκ χεροῖν.	**PENTHEUS** Next, hand over that thyrsus.
496	**DIONYSUS** αὐτός μ' ἀφαιροῦ· τόνδε Διονύσου φορῶ.	**DIONYSUS** Take it from me yourself. This is Dionysus' thyrsus I carry.
497	**PENTHEUS** εἱρκταῖσί τ' ἔνδον σῶμα σὸν φυλάξομεν.	**PENTHEUS** And we'll keep your body locked up indoors.
498	**DIONYSUS** λύσει μ' ὁ δαίμων αὐτός, ὅταν ἐγὼ θέλω.	**DIONYSUS** The god himself will set me free, whenever I want.
499	**PENTHEUS** ὅταν γε καλέσῃς αὐτὸν ἐν Βάκχαις σταθείς.	**PENTHEUS** Yes—when you stand among your Bacchae and call him.
500	**DIONYSUS** καὶ νῦν ἃ πάσχω πλησίον παρὼν ὁρᾷ.	**DIONYSUS** Even now he's close by, watching what's being done to me.
501	**PENTHEUS** καὶ ποῦ 'στιν; οὐ γὰρ φανερὸς ὄμμασίν γ' ἐμοῖς.	**PENTHEUS** Really? Where is he? My eyes can't see him.
502	**DIONYSUS** παρ' ἐμοί· σὺ δ' ἀσεβὴς αὐτὸς ὢν οὐκ εἰσορᾷς.	**DIONYSUS** Right here with me. You can't see him because you're impious yourself.
503	**PENTHEUS** λάζυσθε, καταφρονεῖ με καὶ Θήβας ὅδε.	**PENTHEUS** Seize him. He's treating me and Thebes with contempt.
504	**DIONYSUS** αὐδῶ με μὴ δεῖν σωφρονῶν οὐ σώφροσιν.	**DIONYSUS** I tell you not to bind me—a sane man speaking to men who aren't.
505	**PENTHEUS** ἐγὼ δὲ δεῖν γε κυριώτερος σέθεν.	**PENTHEUS** And I tell them to bind you. I have more authority than you.
506	**DIONYSUS** οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅ τι ζῇς οὐδ' ὁρᾷς ἔθ' ὅστις εἶ.	**DIONYSUS** You don't know what life you're living. You no longer see who you are.
507	**PENTHEUS** Πενθεὺς Ἀγαύης παῖς, πατρὸς δ' Ἐχίονος.	**PENTHEUS** Pentheus, son of Agave, and of Echion, my father.
508	**DIONYSUS** ἐνδυστυχῆσαι τοὔνομ' ἐπιτήδειος εἶ.	**DIONYSUS** You have just the name for misfortune.
509	**PENTHEUS** χώρει· καθείρξατ' αὐτὸν ἱππικαῖς πέλας φάτναισιν, ὡς ἂν σκότιον εἰσορᾷ κνέφας. ἐκεῖ χόρευε· τάσδε δ' ἃς ἄγων πάρει κακῶν συνεργοὺς ἢ διεμπολήσομεν ἢ χεῖρα δούπου τοῦδε καὶ βύρσης κτύπου παύσας, ἐφ' ἱστοῖς δμωίδας κεκτήσομαι.	**PENTHEUS** Go! Shut him up near the horses' stalls, so he can look at the gloomy dark. Dance there! As for these women you've brought with you, your accomplices in mischief, we'll either sell them off or stop their hands from this thudding and beating on hide and keep them as slaves at my looms.
515		

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	DIONYSUS στείχοιμ' ἄν· ὅ τι γὰρ μὴ χρεών, οὔτοι χρεὼν παθεῖν. ἀτάρ τοι τῶνδ' ἄποιν' ὑβρισμάτων μέτεισι Διόνυσός σ', ὃν οὐκ εἶναι λέγεις· ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἀδικῶν κεῖνον εἰς δεσμοὺς ἄγεις.	**DIONYSUS** I'll go. What isn't fated, I can't be made to suffer. But I promise you: Dionysus, the god you say doesn't exist, will come after you to make you pay for these outrages. In wronging us, it's him you're putting in chains.

SECOND STASIMON

The chorus recalls Dionysus' birth by Dirce, denounces Pentheus, and calls on the god to come.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
519	**CHORUS** ...	**CHORUS** ...
	Ἀχελῴου θύγατερ,	Daughter of Achelous,
	πότνι' εὐπάρθενε Δίρκα,	lady Dirce, lovely maiden,
	σὺ γὰρ ἐν σαῖς ποτε παγαῖς	once in your springs
	τὸ Διὸς βρέφος ἔλαβες,	you received the child of Zeus,
	ὅτε μηρῷ πυρὸς ἐξ ἀθανάτου	when Zeus his father snatched him
	Ζεὺς ὁ τεκὼν ἥρπασέ	out of the deathless fire
	νιν, τάδ' ἀναβοάσας·	into his thigh, and cried out:
	ἴθι, Διθύραμβ', ἐμὰν ἄρσενα	"Go, Dithyrambus,
	τάνδε βᾶθι νηδύν·	enter this male womb of mine.
	ἀναφαίνω σε τόδ', ὦ Βάκχιε,	I reveal you to Thebes, Bacchic one,
	Θήβαις ὀνομάζειν.	to be called by this name."
	σὺ δέ μ', ὦ μάκαιρα Δίρκα,	But you, blessed Dirce,
	στεφανηφόρους ἀπωθεῖ	push me away
	θιάσους ἔχουσαν ἐν σοί.	when I bring my garlanded bands
		to your banks.[11]
533	τί μ' ἀναίνει; τί με φεύγεις;	Why do you spurn me? Why run from me?
	ἔτι ναὶ τὰν βοτρυώδη	Yet—I swear by the clustered grapes,
	Διονύσου χάριν οἴνας	the gift of Dionysus' vine—
	ἔτι σοι τοῦ Βρομίου μελήσει.	yet you will come to care for Bromius.
	οἵαν οἵαν ὀργὰν	What rage, what rage
	ἀναφαίνει χθόνιον	he shows, earthborn,
	γένος ἐκφύς τε δράκοντος	sprung from the serpent's race,
	ποτε Πενθεύς, ὃν Ἐχίων	Pentheus, whom earthborn Echion
	ἐφύτευσε χθόνιος,	fathered long ago:
	ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, οὐ φῶτα	a wild-eyed monster, no mortal man,
	βρότειον, φόνιον δ' ὥστε	but murderous, like a giant
	γίγαντ' ἀντίπαλον θεοῖς·	pitted against the gods.
	ὃς ἐμὲ βρόχοισι τὰν τοῦ	Soon he'll bind me in nooses,
	Βρομίου τάχα ξυνάψει,	me, who belong to Bromius;
	τὸν ἐμὸν δ' ἐντὸς ἔχει δώματος	already he holds my fellow-worshipper
	ἤδη θιασώταν	inside his house,
	σκοτίαισι κρυπτὸν εἱρκταῖς.	hidden in a dark prison.
550	ἐσορᾷς τάδ', ὦ Διὸς παῖ	Do you see this, son of Zeus,
	Διόνυσε, σοὺς προφήτας	Dionysus—your spokeswomen
	ἐν ἀμίλλαισιν ἀνάγκας;	struggling in the grip of force?
	μόλε, χρυσῶπα τινάσσων,	Come, lord, down from Olympus,

11 Dirce is a spring at Thebes, here a nymph, daughter of the river-god Achelous; Dithyrambus is a title of Dionysus.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἄνα, θύρσον κατ' Ὄλυμπον, φονίου δ' ἀνδρὸς ὕβριν κατάσχες. πόθι Νύσας ἄρα τᾶς θηροτρόφου θυρσοφορεῖς θιάσους, ὦ Διόνυσ', ἢ κορυφαῖς Κωρυκίαις; τάχα δ' ἐν τοῖς πολυδένδρεσσιν Ὀλύμπου θαλάμοις, ἔνθα ποτ' Ὀρφεὺς κιθαρίζων σύναγεν δένδρεα μούσαις, σύναγεν θῆρας ἀγρώτας.	shaking your gold-gleaming thyrsus, and check the arrogance of this murderous man. Where are you now, Dionysus? On Nysa, nurse of wild beasts, leading your bands with the thyrsus? Or on the Corycian peaks? Perhaps in the thick-wooded recesses of Olympus, where Orpheus once, playing his lyre, drew the trees together with his songs, drew together the wild beasts.
565	μάκαρ ὦ Πιερία, σέβεταί σ' Εὔιος, ἥξει τε χορεύσων ἅμα βακχεύμασι, τόν τ' ὠκυρόαν διαβὰς Ἀξιὸν εἱλισσομένας Μαινάδας ἄξει, Λυδίαν τε, τὸν εὐδαιμονίας βροτοῖς ὀλβοδόταν πατέρα τε, τὸν ἔκλυον εὔιππον χώραν ὕδασιν καλλίστοισι λιπαίνειν.	Blessed Pieria, the god of euhoi honors you; he will come to dance with his Bacchic revels, and crossing the swift-flowing Axius he will lead his whirling maenads, crossing the river Lydias too, the giver of wealth and happiness to mortals, the father who, I've heard, enriches a land of fine horses with his loveliest waters.

THIRD EPISODE

Dionysus escapes the palace; a herdsman reports the maenads' wonders; Pentheus agrees to spy on them in women's clothes.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
576	**DIONYSUS** ἰώ, κλύετ' ἐμᾶς κλύετ' αὐδᾶς, ἰὼ Βάκχαι, ἰὼ Βάκχαι.	**DIONYSUS** Ho! Hear me, hear my voice, ho, Bacchae! Ho, Bacchae!
579	**CHORUS** τίς ὅδε, τίς πόθεν ὁ κέλαδος ἀνά μ' ἐκάλεσεν Εὐίου;	**CHORUS** Who is it, where does it come from, this cry of the god of euhoi that calls me?
580	**DIONYSUS** ἰὼ ἰώ, πάλιν αὐδῶ, / ὁ Σεμέλας, ὁ Διὸς παῖς.	**DIONYSUS** Ho! Ho! I call again, / I, Semele's son, the son of Zeus.
582	**CHORUS** ἰὼ ἰὼ δέσποτα δέσποτα, μόλε νυν ἡμέτερον εἰς θίασον, ὦ Βρόμιε Βρόμιε. πέδου χθονὸς ἔνοσι πότνια. ἆ ἆ, τάχα τὰ Πενθέως μέλαθρα διατινάξεται πεσήμασιν. ὁ Διόνυσος ἀνὰ μέλαθρα· σέβετέ νιν. σέβομεν ὤ. ἴδετε τὰ λάινα κίοσιν ἔμβολα διάδρομα τάδε· Βρόμιος ἀλαλάξεται στέγας ἔσω.	**CHORUS** Ho! Ho! Master, master, come now to our band, Bromius, Bromius! Lady Earthquake, shake the floor of the world! Ah! Ah! Soon Pentheus' palace will be shaken apart and fall. Dionysus is in the palace— worship him! We worship him, oh! Look, the stone lintels on the pillars are splitting apart. Bromius will raise his triumph cry inside these walls.

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594	**DIONYSUS** ἅπτε κεραύνιον αἴθοπα λαμπάδα· / σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέως.	**DIONYSUS** Kindle the blazing torch of the thunderbolt! / Burn, burn down Pentheus' house!
596	**CHORUS** ἆ ἆ, πῦρ οὐ λεύσσεις οὐδ' αὐγάζει Σεμέλας ἱερὸν ἀμφὶ τάφον, ἄν ποτε κεραυνόβολος ἔλιπε φλόγα Δίου βροντᾶς; δίκετε πεδόσε δίκετε τρομερὰ σώματα, Μαινάδες· ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἄνω κάτω τιθεὶς ἔπεισι μέλαθρα τάδε Διὸς γόνος.	**CHORUS** Ah! Ah! Don't you see the fire, don't you make it out, around Semele's holy tomb, the flame that Zeus' thunderbolt left there long ago? Throw yourselves to the ground, throw down your trembling bodies, maenads! For our lord, the son of Zeus, is coming at this house and turning it upside down.
604	**DIONYSUS** βάρβαροι γυναῖκες, οὕτως ἐκπεπληγμέναι φόβῳ πρὸς πέδῳ πεπτώκατ'; ᾔσθησθ', ὡς ἔοικε, Βακχίου διατινάξαντος δῶμα Πενθέως· ἀλλ' ἐξανίστατε σῶμα καὶ θαρσεῖτε σάρκας ἐξαμείψασαι τρόμον.	**DIONYSUS** Foreign women, are you so struck with terror that you've fallen to the ground? You felt Bacchus shaking Pentheus' house apart, it seems. Come, get up, take heart, and stop that trembling in your flesh.
608	**CHORUS** ὦ φάος μέγιστον ἡμῖν εὐίου βακχεύματος, / ὡς ἐσεῖδον ἀσμένη σε, μονάδ' ἔχουσ' ἐρημίαν.	**CHORUS** Oh, greatest light of our joyful Bacchic revels, how glad I am to see you! I was so alone, so forsaken.
610	**DIONYSUS** εἰς ἀθυμίαν ἀφίκεσθ', ἡνίκ' εἰσεπεμπόμην, / Πενθέως ὡς εἰς σκοτεινὰς ὁρκάνας πεσούμενος;	**DIONYSUS** Did you lose heart when I was being taken in, thinking I would fall into Pentheus' dark dungeon?
612	**CHORUS** πῶς γὰρ οὔ; τίς μοι φύλαξ ἦν, εἰ σὺ συμφορᾶς τύχοις; / ἀλλὰ πῶς ἠλευθερώθης ἀνδρὸς ἀνοσίου τυχών;	**CHORUS** How could I not? Who would protect me if anything happened to you? But how did you get free, when you'd fallen into the hands of an unholy man?
614	**DIONYSUS** αὐτὸς ἐξέσωσ' ἐμαυτὸν ῥᾳδίως ἄνευ πόνου.	**DIONYSUS** I rescued myself—easily, without any effort.
615	**CHORUS** οὐδέ σου συνῆψε χεῖρε δεσμίοισιν ἐν βρόχοις;	**CHORUS** Didn't he tie your hands with knotted ropes?
616	**DIONYSUS** ταῦτα καὶ καθύβρισ' αὐτόν, ὅτι με δεσμεύειν δοκῶν οὔτ' ἔθιγεν οὔθ' ἥψαθ' ἡμῶν, ἐλπίσιν δ' ἐβόσκετο. πρὸς φάτναις δὲ ταῦρον εὑρών, οὗ καθεῖρξ' ἡμᾶς ἄγων, τῷδε περὶ βρόχους ἔβαλλε γόνασι καὶ χηλαῖς ποδῶν, θυμὸν ἐκπνέων, ἱδρῶτα σώματος στάζων ἄπο, χείλεσιν διδοὺς ὀδόντας· πλησίον δ' ἐγὼ παρὼν ἥσυχος θάσσων ἔλευσσον. ἐν δὲ τῷδε τῷ χρόνῳ ἀνετίναξ' ἐλθὼν ὁ Βάκχος δῶμα καὶ μητρὸς τάφῳ πῦρ ἀνῆψ'· ὃ δ' ὡς ἐσεῖδε, δώματ' αἴθεσθαι δοκῶν ᾖσσ' ἐκεῖσε κᾆτ' ἐκεῖσε, δμωσὶν Ἀχελῷον φέρειν ἐννέπων, ἅπας δ' ἐν ἔργῳ δοῦλος ἦν μάτην πονῶν.	**DIONYSUS** That's just where I made a fool of him. He thought he was tying me up, but he never touched me or laid a hand on me; he was feeding on hopes. In the stable where he took me and shut me in, he found a bull, and he threw nooses around its knees and hooves, panting with rage, sweat dripping from his body, biting his lips, while I sat quietly close by and watched. Meanwhile Bacchus came and shook the house, and kindled fire on his mother's tomb. When Pentheus saw it, he thought the palace was burning and rushed this way and that, ordering his slaves to

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		bring water. Every slave was at work, laboring for nothing.
627	διαμεθεὶς δὲ τόνδε μόχθον, ὡς ἐμοῦ πεφευγότος, ἵεται ξίφος κελαινὸν ἁρπάσας δόμων ἔσω. κᾆθ' ὁ Βρόμιος, ὡς ἔμοιγε φαίνεται, δόξαν λέγω, φάσμ' ἐποίησεν κατ' αὐλήν· ὃ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦθ' ὡρμημένος ᾗσσε κἀκέντει φαεννὸν αἰθέρ', ὡς σφάζων ἐμέ. πρὸς δὲ τοῖσδ' αὐτῷ τάδ' ἄλλα Βάκχιος λυμαίνεται· δώματ' ἔρρηξεν χαμᾶζε· συντεθράνωται δ' ἅπαν πικροτάτους ἰδόντι δεσμοὺς τοὺς ἐμούς· κόπου δ' ὕπο διαμεθεὶς ξίφος παρεῖται. πρὸς θεὸν γὰρ ὢν ἀνὴρ εἰς μάχην ἐλθεῖν ἐτόλμησ'· ἥσυχος δ' ἐκβὰς ἐγὼ δωμάτων ἥκω πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Πενθέως οὐ φροντίσας.	Then he dropped this task, thinking I'd escaped, and rushed inside, snatching up a dark sword. And then Bromius—so it seems to me; I'm only giving you my impression—made a phantom in the courtyard. Pentheus charged at it, rushing and stabbing at the bright air, as if he were slaughtering me. On top of this, Bacchus does him further damage: he's smashed the house to the ground. It's all in ruins: he has seen my chains turn out very bitter for him. Worn out, he's dropped his sword and collapsed. A mere man, he dared to do battle with a god. I walked calmly out of the house and have come to you, without giving Pentheus a thought.
638	ὡς δέ μοι δοκεῖ, ψοφεῖ γοῦν ἀρβύλη δόμων ἔσω, εἰς προνώπι' αὐτίχ' ἥξει. τί ποτ' ἄρ' ἐκ τούτων ἐρεῖ; ῥᾳδίως γὰρ αὐτὸν οἴσω, κἂν πνέων ἔλθῃ μέγα. πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκεῖν σώφρον' εὐοργησίαν.	But it seems to me—at any rate there's a boot tramping indoors—he'll be out front any moment. What will he say after all this, I wonder? I'll handle him easily, even if he comes out breathing fury. A wise man should practice a sensible good temper.
642	**PENTHEUS** πέπονθα δεινά· διαπέφευγέ μ' ὁ ξένος, ὃς ἄρτι δεσμοῖς ἦν κατηναγκασμένος. ἔα ἔα· ὅδ' ἐστὶν ἀνήρ· τί τάδε; πῶς προνώπιος φαίνει πρὸς οἴκοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἔξω βεβώς;	**PENTHEUS** I've been terribly treated! The stranger has escaped me, the man who just now was held fast in chains. What's this? What's this? Here's the man! What is this? How do you come to be out here in front of my house, outside?
647	**DIONYSUS** στῆσον πόδ', ὀργῇ δ' ὑπόθες ἥσυχον πόδα.	**DIONYSUS** Stop where you are. Put a quieter foot beneath your anger.
648	**PENTHEUS** πόθεν σὺ δεσμὰ διαφυγὼν ἔξω περᾷς;	**PENTHEUS** How did you escape your chains and get out here?
649	**DIONYSUS** οὐκ εἶπον ἢ οὐκ ἤκουσας ὅτι λύσει μέ τις;	**DIONYSUS** Didn't I say—or didn't you hear—that someone would set me free?
650	**PENTHEUS** τίς; τοὺς λόγους γὰρ εἰσφέρεις καινοὺς ἀεί.	**PENTHEUS** Who? You're forever bringing in strange new stories.
651	**DIONYSUS** ὃς τὴν πολύβοτρυν ἄμπελον φύει βροτοῖς.	**DIONYSUS** The one who grows the clustering vine for mortals.
652	**PENTHEUS** ὠνείδισας δὴ τοῦτο Διονύσῳ καλόν.	**PENTHEUS** That's a fine thing to throw in Dionysus' face!
654	κλῄειν κελεύω πάντα πύργον ἐν κύκλῳ.	I order every tower all around the walls to be shut.
655	**DIONYSUS** τί δ'; οὐχ ὑπερβαίνουσι καὶ τείχη θεοί;	**DIONYSUS** Why? Don't gods get over walls too?
	PENTHEUS σοφὸς σοφὸς σύ, πλὴν ἃ δεῖ σ' εἶναι σοφόν.	**PENTHEUS** Wise, so wise—except where you ought to be wise.

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656	**DIONYSUS** ἃ δεῖ μάλιστα, ταῦτ' ἔγωγ' ἔφυν σοφός. κείνου δ' ἀκούσας πρῶτα τοὺς λόγους μάθε, ὃς ἐξ ὄρους πάρεστιν ἀγγελῶν τί σοι· ἡμεῖς δέ σοι μενοῦμεν, οὐ φευξούμεθα.	**DIONYSUS** Where it matters most, that's where I was born wise. But first listen to this man and learn what he has to say; he's come from the mountain with news for you. We'll wait for you here; we won't run away.
660	**MESSENGER** Πενθεῦ κρατύνων τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονός, ἥκω Κιθαιρῶν' ἐκλιπών, ἵν' οὔποτε λευκῆς ἀνεῖσαν χιόνος εὐαγεῖς βολαί.	**MESSENGER** Pentheus, ruler of this land of Thebes, I've come from Cithaeron, where the bright flurries of white snow never let up.
663	**PENTHEUS** ἥκεις δὲ ποίαν προστιθεὶς σπουδὴν λόγου;	**PENTHEUS** And what urgent news have you come to bring?
664	**MESSENGER** Βάκχας ποτνιάδας εἰσιδών, αἳ τῆσδε γῆς οἴστροισι λευκὸν κῶλον ἐξηκόντισαν, ἥκω φράσαι σοὶ καὶ πόλει χρῄζων, ἄναξ, ὡς δεινὰ δρῶσι θαυμάτων τε κρείσσονα. θέλω δ' ἀκοῦσαι, πότερά σοι παρρησίᾳ φράσω τὰ κεῖθεν ἢ λόγον στειλώμεθα· τὸ γὰρ τάχος σου τῶν φρενῶν δέδοικ', ἄναξ, καὶ τοὐξύθυμον καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν λίαν.	**MESSENGER** I've seen the frenzied Bacchae, who were stung to frenzy and went darting out of this land on their white legs, and I've come to tell you and the city, my lord, what terrible things they're doing, things beyond any wonder. But first I want to hear whether I should tell you frankly what's going on there, or trim my words. I'm afraid of how quick your temper is, my lord, how sharp your anger, how all too royal your nature.
672	**PENTHEUS** λέγ', ὡς ἀθῷος ἐξ ἐμοῦ πάντως ἔσει· τοῖς γὰρ δικαίοις οὐχὶ θυμοῦσθαι χρεών. ὅσῳ δ' ἂν εἴπῃς δεινότερα Βακχῶν πέρι, τοσῷδε μᾶλλον τὸν ὑποθέντα τὰς τέχνας γυναιξὶ τόνδε τῇ δίκῃ προσθήσομεν.	**PENTHEUS** Speak. You won't be punished by me, whatever you say. One shouldn't be angry with people who are doing what's right. The more terrible the things you tell me about the Bacchae, the heavier the punishment we'll lay on this man, who taught the women their tricks.
677	**MESSENGER** ἀγελαῖα μὲν βοσκήματ' ἄρτι πρὸς λέπας μόσχων ὑπεξήκριζον, ἡνίχ' ἥλιος ἀκτῖνας ἐξίησι θερμαίνων χθόνα. ὁρῶ δὲ θιάσους τρεῖς γυναικείων χορῶν, ὧν ἦρχ' ἑνὸς μὲν Αὐτονόη, τοῦ δευτέρου μήτηρ Ἀγαύη σή, τρίτου δ' Ἰνὼ χοροῦ. ηὗδον δὲ πᾶσαι σώμασιν παρειμέναι, αἳ μὲν πρὸς ἐλάτης νῶτ' ἐρείσασαι φόβην, αἳ δ' ἐν δρυὸς φύλλοισι πρὸς πέδῳ κάρα εἰκῇ βαλοῦσαι σωφρόνως, οὐχ ὡς σὺ φῂς ὠνωμένας κρατῆρι καὶ λωτοῦ ψόφῳ θηρᾶν καθ' ὕλην Κύπριν ἠνεμωμένας.	**MESSENGER** Our grazing herds of cattle were just climbing up toward the ridge, at the hour when the sun sends out its rays to warm the earth. And I see three bands of women dancers. Autonoe led one, your mother Agave the second, and Ino the third. They were all asleep, their bodies relaxed. Some leaned their backs against the foliage of a fir; others rested their heads on oak leaves on the ground, lying where they'd happened to fall—modestly, not as you say, drunk from the mixing bowl and the sound of the pipe, giddily hunting Aphrodite through the woods.
689	ἡ σὴ δὲ μήτηρ ὠλόλυξεν ἐν μέσαις σταθεῖσα Βάκχαις, ἐξ ὕπνου κινεῖν δέμας, μυκήμαθ' ὡς ἤκουσε κεροφόρων βοῶν. αἳ δ' ἀποβαλοῦσαι θαλερὸν ὀμμάτων ὕπνον ἀνῇξαν ὀρθαί, θαῦμ' ἰδεῖν εὐκοσμίας, νέαι παλαιαὶ παρθένοι τ' ἔτ' ἄζυγες. καὶ πρῶτα μὲν καθεῖσαν εἰς ὤμους κόμας νεβρίδας τ' ἀνεστείλανθ' ὅσαισιν ἀμμάτων σύνδεσμ' ἐλέλυτο, καὶ καταστίκτους δορὰς	Your mother stood up in the middle of the Bacchae and raised the sacred cry to rouse their bodies from sleep, when she heard the lowing of our horned cattle. They threw off the fresh sleep from their eyes and sprang upright, a marvel of good order to see, young women and old, and girls still unmarried. First they let their hair fall loose over their shoulders, and those whose knots had come

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ὄφεσι κατεζώσαντο λιχμῶσιν γένυν.
αἳ δ' ἀγκάλαισι δορκάδ' ἢ σκύμνους λύκων
ἀγρίους ἔχουσαι λευκὸν ἐδίδοσαν γάλα,
ὅσαις νεοτόκοις μαστὸς ἦν σπαργῶν ἔτι
βρέφη λιπούσαις· ἐπὶ δ' ἔθεντο κισσίνους
στεφάνους δρυός τε μίλακός τ' ἀνθεσφόρου.

θύρσον δέ τις λαβοῦσ' ἔπαισεν εἰς πέτραν,
ὅθεν δροσώδης ὕδατος ἐκπηδᾷ νοτίς·
ἄλλη δὲ νάρθηκ' εἰς πέδον καθῆκε γῆς,
καὶ τῇδε κρήνην ἐξανῆκ' οἴνου θεός·
ὅσαις δὲ λευκοῦ πώματος πόθος παρῆν,
ἄκροισι δακτύλοισι διαμῶσαι χθόνα
γάλακτος ἑσμοὺς εἶχον· ἐκ δὲ κισσίνων
θύρσων γλυκεῖαι μέλιτος ἔσταζον ῥοαί.
ὥστ' εἰ παρῆσθα, τὸν θεὸν τὸν νῦν ψέγεις
εὐχαῖσιν ἂν μετῆλθες εἰσιδὼν τάδε.
ξυνήλθομεν δὲ βουκόλοι καὶ ποιμένες,
κοινῶν λόγων δώσοντες ἀλλήλοις ἔριν,
ὡς δεινὰ δρῶσι θαυμάτων τ' ἐπάξια·

καί τις πλάνης κατ' ἄστυ καὶ τρίβων λόγων
ἔλεξεν εἰς ἅπαντας· ὦ σεμνὰς πλάκας
ναίοντες ὀρέων, θέλετε θηρασώμεθα
Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐκ βακχευμάτων
χάριν τ' ἄνακτι θῶμεν; εὖ δ' ἡμῖν λέγειν
ἔδοξε, θάμνων δ' ἐλλοχίζομεν φόβαις
κρύψαντες αὑτούς· αἳ δὲ τὴν τεταγμένην
ὥραν ἐκίνουν θύρσον εἰς βακχεύματα,
Ἴακχον ἀθρόῳ στόματι τὸν Διὸς γόνον
Βρόμιον καλοῦσαι· πᾶν δὲ συνεβάκχευ' ὄρος
καὶ θῆρες, οὐδὲν δ' ἦν ἀκίνητον δρόμῳ.

κυρεῖ δ' Ἀγαύη πλησίον θρώσκουσά μου·
κἀγὼ 'ξεπήδησ' ὡς συναρπάσαι θέλων,
λόχμην κενώσας ἔνθ' ἐκρύπτομεν δέμας.
ἣ δ' ἀνεβόησεν· ὦ δρομάδες ἐμαὶ κύνες,
θηρώμεθ' ἀνδρῶν τῶνδ' ὕπ'· ἀλλ' ἕπεσθέ μοι,
ἕπεσθε θύρσοις διὰ χερῶν ὡπλισμέναι.
ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν φεύγοντες ἐξηλύξαμεν
Βακχῶν σπαραγμόν, αἳ δὲ νεμομέναις χλόην
μόσχοις ἐπῆλθον χειρὸς ἀσιδήρου μέτα.
καὶ τὴν μὲν ἂν προσεῖδες εὔθηλον πόριν
μυκωμένην ἔχουσαν ἐν χεροῖν ἀκμαῖς,
ἄλλαι δὲ δαμάλας διεφόρουν σπαράγμασιν.

εἶδες δ' ἂν ἢ πλεύρ' ἢ δίχηλον ἔμβασιν
ῥιπτόμεν' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω· κρεμαστὰ δὲ
ἔσταζ' ὑπ' ἐλάταις ἀναπεφυρμέν' αἵματι.
ταῦροι δ' ὑβρισταὶ κεἰς κέρας θυμούμενοι
τὸ πρόσθεν ἐσφάλλοντο πρὸς γαῖαν δέμας,

undone pulled up their fawnskins, and they belted the dappled hides with snakes that licked their cheeks. Some held a gazelle in their arms, or wild wolf cubs, and gave them white milk—the new mothers who had left their babies behind and whose breasts were still swollen. And they put on garlands of ivy, of oak, and of flowering bindweed.

One took a thyrsus and struck it against a rock, and out of it leaps a dewy stream of water. Another drove her fennel wand into the ground, and there the god sent up a spring of wine. Those who wanted the white drink scratched the earth with their fingertips and had streams of milk, and from their ivy-twined thyrsi dripped sweet streams of honey. So if you'd been there and seen this, you'd have approached with prayers the god you now condemn. We cowherds and shepherds gathered together, arguing with each other, comparing our accounts of the terrible, wondrous things they were doing.

Then someone who'd knocked around town and had a way with words said to us all, "You who live on the holy mountain slopes, shall we hunt down Pentheus' mother Agave, bring her back from her Bacchic revels, and do our king a favor?" We thought he had a point, and we hid ourselves in ambush among the leafy bushes. At the appointed hour the women began to wave their thyrsi for the revels, calling with one voice on Iacchus, the son of Zeus, Bromius. The whole mountain joined in the frenzy, the wild beasts too, and nothing stood still as they ran.

Agave happens to come leaping near me, and I jumped out, wanting to grab her, leaving the thicket where we'd been hiding. She shouted, "My running hounds, these men are hunting us! Follow me, follow, armed with your thyrsi in your hands!" So we ran and escaped being torn apart by the Bacchae. But they went for our heifers grazing on the grass, with no iron in their hands. You'd have seen one woman holding a young calf with full udders, bellowing, in her two hands, while others tore heifers to pieces.

You'd have seen ribs or a cloven hoof hurled up and down, and pieces hanging from the firs, dripping, smeared with blood. Bulls that had been arrogant, their rage gathering in their horns, were tripped up and their bodies brought crashing to

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	μυριάσι χειρῶν ἀγόμενοι νεανίδων. θᾶσσον δὲ διεφοροῦντο σαρκὸς ἐνδυτὰ ἢ σὲ ξυνάψαι βλέφαρα βασιλείοις κόραις.	the ground, dragged down by countless young women's hands. Their coats of flesh were stripped off faster than you could close your royal eyelids.
748	χωροῦσι δ' ὥστ' ὄρνιθες ἀρθεῖσαι δρόμῳ πεδίων ὑποτάσεις, αἳ παρ' Ἀσωποῦ ῥοαῖς εὔκαρπον ἐκβάλλουσι Θηβαίων στάχυν, Ὑσιάς τ' Ἐρυθράς θ', αἳ Κιθαιρῶνος λέπας νέρθεν κατῳκήκασιν, ὥστε πολέμιοι ἐπεισπεσοῦσαι πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω διέφερον· ἥρπαζον μὲν ἐκ δόμων τέκνα, ὁπόσα δ' ἐπ' ὤμοις ἔθεσαν, οὐ δεσμῶν ὕπο προσείχετ' οὐδ' ἔπιπτεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον, οὐ χαλκός, οὐ σίδηρος· ἐπὶ δὲ βοστρύχοις πῦρ ἔφερον, οὐδ' ἔκαιεν. οἳ δ' ὀργῆς ὕπο εἰς ὅπλ' ἐχώρουν φερόμενοι Βακχῶν ὕπο·	They sweep off like birds rising in flight over the plains stretched out below, along the streams of the Asopus, which yield the Thebans their rich crop of grain. And Hysiae and Erythrae, which lie beneath Cithaeron's ridge, they fell on like an enemy army and turned everything upside down. They snatched children from the houses. Whatever they put on their shoulders stayed on without being tied and didn't fall to the dark ground—not bronze, not iron. On their hair they carried fire, and it didn't burn them. The villagers, furious at being plundered by the Bacchae, ran for their weapons.
760	οὗπερ τὸ δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἰδεῖν, ἄναξ. τοῖς μὲν γὰρ οὐχ ἥμασσε λογχωτὸν βέλος, κεῖναι δὲ θύρσους ἐξανιεῖσαι χερῶν ἐτραυμάτιζον κἀπενώτιζον φυγῇ γυναῖκες ἄνδρας, οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν τινος. πάλιν δ' ἐχώρουν ὅθεν ἐκίνησαν πόδα, κρήνας ἐπ' αὐτὰς ἃς ἀνῆκ' αὐταῖς θεός. νίψαντο δ' αἷμα, σταγόνα δ' ἐκ παρηίδων γλώσσῃ δράκοντες ἐξεφαίδρυνον χροός. τὸν δαίμον' οὖν τόνδ' ὅστις ἔστ', ὦ δέσποτα, δέχου πόλει τῇδ', ὡς τά τ' ἄλλ' ἐστὶν μέγας, κἀκεῖνό φασιν αὐτόν, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω, τὴν παυσίλυπον ἄμπελον δοῦναι βροτοῖς.	And then came the terrible sight, my lord. The men's pointed spears drew no blood, but the women hurled their thyrsi from their hands and wounded them and put them to flight—women routing men, not without some god's help. Then they went back to where they'd started, to the very springs the god had sent up for them. They washed off the blood, and the snakes licked the drops from their cheeks and cleaned their skin. So, master, receive this god, whoever he is, into this city. He is great in other ways, and they also say of him, so I hear, that he gave mortals the vine that puts an end to grief.
773	οἴνου δὲ μηκέτ' ὄντος οὐκ ἔστιν Κύπρις / οὐδ' ἄλλο τερπνὸν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔτι.	And without wine there's no more Aphrodite, or any other pleasure left for people.
775	**CHORUS** ταρβῶ μὲν εἰπεῖν τοὺς λόγους ἐλευθέρους εἰς τὸν τύραννον, ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰρήσεται Διόνυσος ἥσσων οὐδενὸς θεῶν ἔφυ.	**CHORUS** I'm afraid to speak freely to the king, but it shall be said all the same: Dionysus is second to none of the gods.
778	**PENTHEUS** ἤδη τόδ' ἐγγὺς ὥστε πῦρ ὑφάπτεται ὕβρισμα Βακχῶν, ψόγος ἐς Ἕλληνας μέγας. ἀλλ' οὐκ ὀκνεῖν δεῖ· στεῖχ' ἐπ' Ἠλέκτρας ἰὼν πύλας· κέλευε πάντας ἀσπιδηφόρους ἵππων τ' ἀπαντᾶν ταχυπόδων ἐπεμβάτας πέλτας θ' ὅσοι πάλλουσι καὶ τόξων χερὶ ψάλλουσι νευράς, ὡς ἐπιστρατεύσομεν Βάκχαισιν· οὐ γὰρ ἀλλ' ὑπερβάλλει τάδε, εἰ πρὸς γυναικῶν πεισόμεσθ' ἃ πάσχομεν.	**PENTHEUS** This outrage of the Bacchae is already blazing up close at hand like a fire, a great disgrace in the eyes of the Greeks. We mustn't hesitate. Go to the Electran Gates. Order all the shield-bearers to muster, and the riders of swift-footed horses, and all who brandish light shields and pluck bowstrings with their hands. We're going to march against the Bacchae. This is past all bearing, if we're to suffer what we're suffering at the hands of women.
787	**DIONYSUS** πείθει μὲν οὐδέν, τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων κλύων, Πενθεῦ· κακῶς δὲ πρὸς σέθεν πάσχων ὅμως οὔ φημι χρῆναί σ' ὅπλ' ἐπαίρεσθαι θεῷ,	**DIONYSUS** You hear what I say, Pentheus, and still you won't listen. Though you've treated me badly, all the same I tell you: you shouldn't take up arms

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἀλλ' ἡσυχάζειν· Βρόμιος οὐκ ἀνέξεται κινοῦντα Βάκχας εὐίων ὀρῶν ἄπο.	against a god. Keep quiet. Bromius won't put up with you driving the Bacchae from mountains that ring with their cries.
792	**PENTHEUS** οὐ μὴ φρενώσεις μ', ἀλλὰ δέσμιος φυγὼν / σώσει τόδ'; ἢ σοὶ πάλιν ἀναστρέψω δίκην.	**PENTHEUS** Don't lecture me! You've escaped from your chains—won't you be content with that? Or shall I turn punishment back on you?
794	**DIONYSUS** θύοιμ' ἂν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον ἢ θυμούμενος / πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζοιμι θνητὸς ὢν θεῷ.	**DIONYSUS** I'd sooner sacrifice to him than rage and kick against the goads, a mortal against a god.
796	**PENTHEUS** θύσω, φόνον γε θῆλυν, ὥσπερ ἄξιαι, / πολὺν ταράξας ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.	**PENTHEUS** I'll sacrifice, all right—women's blood, as they deserve, plenty of it, spilled in the glens of Cithaeron.
798	**DIONYSUS** φευξεῖσθε πάντες· καὶ τόδ' αἰσχρόν, ἀσπίδας / θύρσοισι Βακχῶν ἐκτρέπειν χαλκηλάτους.	**DIONYSUS** You'll all run away. And what a disgrace, turning your hammered bronze shields away from the Bacchae's thyrsi.
800	**PENTHEUS** ἀπόρῳ γε τῷδε συμπεπλέγμεθα ξένῳ, / ὃς οὔτε πάσχων οὔτε δρῶν σιγήσεται.	**PENTHEUS** I'm tangled up with an impossible stranger. Whatever's done to him, whatever he does, he won't keep quiet.
802	**DIONYSUS** ὦ τᾶν, ἔτ' ἔστιν εὖ καταστῆσαι τάδε.	**DIONYSUS** My good man, it's still possible to set this right.
803	**PENTHEUS** τί δρῶντα; δουλεύοντα δουλείαις ἐμαῖς;	**PENTHEUS** By doing what? Being a slave to my own slaves?
804	**DIONYSUS** ἐγὼ γυναῖκας δεῦρ' ὅπλων ἄξω δίχα.	**DIONYSUS** I'll bring the women here, without weapons.
805	**PENTHEUS** οἴμοι· τόδ' ἤδη δόλιον εἴς με μηχανᾷ.	**PENTHEUS** Oh no. Now you're plotting some trick against me.
806	**DIONYSUS** ποῖόν τι, σῶσαί σ' εἰ θέλω τέχναις ἐμαῖς;	**DIONYSUS** What sort of trick, if I want to save you by my arts?
807	**PENTHEUS** ξυνέθεσθε κοινῇ τάδ', ἵνα βακχεύητ' ἀεί.	**PENTHEUS** You've all agreed on this together, so you can dance for Bacchus forever.
808	**DIONYSUS** καὶ μὴν ξυνεθέμην τοῦτό γ', ἴσθι, τῷ θεῷ.	**DIONYSUS** Yes, I did make an agreement—with the god, you can be sure of that.
809	**PENTHEUS** ἐκφέρετέ μοι δεῦρ' ὅπλα· σὺ δὲ παῦσαι λέγων.	**PENTHEUS** Bring my armor out here! And you, stop talking.
810	**DIONYSUS** ἆ· / βούλει σφ' ἐν ὄρεσι συγκαθημένας ἰδεῖν;	**DIONYSUS** Ah! Would you like to see them sitting together on the mountain?
812	**PENTHEUS** μάλιστα, μυρίον γε δοὺς χρυσοῦ σταθμόν.	**PENTHEUS** Very much. I'd pay a vast weight of gold for that.
813	**DIONYSUS** τί δ' εἰς ἔρωτα τοῦδε πέπτωκας μέγαν;	**DIONYSUS** Why? How did you fall into such a great desire for this?

	GREEK	ENGLISH
814	**PENTHEUS** λυπρῶς νιν εἰσίδοιμ’ ἂν ἐξῳνωμένας.	**PENTHEUS** It would pain me to see them drunk.
815	**DIONYSUS** ὅμως δ’ ἴδοις ἂν ἡδέως ἅ σοι πικρά;	**DIONYSUS** And yet you’d enjoy seeing what pains you?
816	**PENTHEUS** σάφ’ ἴσθι, σιγῇ γ’ ὑπ’ ἐλάταις καθήμενος.	**PENTHEUS** Yes, believe me—sitting quietly under the firs.
817	**DIONYSUS** ἀλλ’ ἐξιχνεύσουσίν σε, κἂν ἔλθῃς λάθρᾳ.	**DIONYSUS** But they’ll track you down, even if you go in secret.
818	**PENTHEUS** ἀλλ’ ἐμφανῶς· καλῶς γὰρ ἐξεῖπας τάδε.	**PENTHEUS** Openly, then. You’re right about that.
819	**DIONYSUS** ἄγωμεν οὖν σε κἀπιχειρήσεις ὁδῷ;	**DIONYSUS** So shall I lead you? Will you set out on the road?
820	**PENTHEUS** ἄγ’ ὡς τάχιστα, τοῦ χρόνου δέ σοι φθονῶ.	**PENTHEUS** Lead me as fast as you can. I begrudge you every moment.
821	**DIONYSUS** στεῖλαί νυν ἀμφὶ χρωτὶ βυσσίνους πέπλους.	**DIONYSUS** Then put on a dress of fine linen.
822	**PENTHEUS** τί δὴ τόδ’; εἰς γυναῖκας ἐξ ἀνδρὸς τελῶ;	**PENTHEUS** What’s this? Am I to stop being a man and join the women?
823	**DIONYSUS** μή σε κτάνωσιν, ἢν ἀνὴρ ὀφθῇς ἐκεῖ.	**DIONYSUS** So they don’t kill you, if you’re seen there as a man.
824	**PENTHEUS** εὖ γ’ εἶπας αὐτὸ καί τις εἶ πάλαι σοφός.	**PENTHEUS** Well said. You’re a wise one, and have been all along.
825	**DIONYSUS** Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ἐξεμούσωσεν τάδε.	**DIONYSUS** Dionysus taught me this.
826	**PENTHEUS** πῶς οὖν γένοιτ’ ἂν ἃ σύ με νουθετεῖς καλῶς;	**PENTHEUS** Then how can your advice best be carried out?
827	**DIONYSUS** ἐγὼ στελῶ σε δωμάτων εἴσω μολών.	**DIONYSUS** I’ll go into the house and dress you myself.
828	**PENTHEUS** τίνα στολήν; ἢ θῆλυν; ἀλλ’ αἰδώς μ’ ἔχει.	**PENTHEUS** Dress me how? Like a woman? But I’d be ashamed.
829	**DIONYSUS** οὐκέτι θεατὴς Μαινάδων πρόθυμος εἶ;	**DIONYSUS** Aren’t you eager to watch the maenads anymore?
830	**PENTHEUS** στολὴν δὲ τίνα φῂς ἀμφὶ χρῶτ’ ἐμὸν βαλεῖν;	**PENTHEUS** And what costume do you say you’ll put on me?
831	**DIONYSUS** κόμην μὲν ἐπὶ σῷ κρατὶ ταναὸν ἐκτενῶ.	**DIONYSUS** First I’ll let long hair stream down from your head.
832	**PENTHEUS** τὸ δεύτερον δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τί μοι;	**PENTHEUS** And the second item of my outfit—what’s that?
833	**DIONYSUS** πέπλοι ποδήρεις· ἐπὶ κάρᾳ δ’ ἔσται μίτρα.	**DIONYSUS** A dress down to your feet. And on your head there’ll be a headband.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
834	**PENTHEUS** ἦ καί τι πρὸς τοῖσδ' ἄλλο προσθήσεις ἐμοί;	**PENTHEUS** And will you add anything else for me besides?
835	**DIONYSUS** θύρσον γε χειρὶ καὶ νεβροῦ στικτὸν δέρας.	**DIONYSUS** A thyrsus in your hand, yes, and a dappled fawnskin.
836	**PENTHEUS** οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην θῆλυν ἐνδῦναι στολήν.	**PENTHEUS** I couldn't put on women's clothes.
837	**DIONYSUS** ἀλλ' αἷμα θήσεις συμβαλὼν Βάκχαις μάχην.	**DIONYSUS** But you'll shed blood if you go to war with the Bacchae.
838	**PENTHEUS** ὀρθῶς· μολεῖν χρὴ πρῶτον εἰς κατασκοπήν.	**PENTHEUS** True. I should go and scout first.
839	**DIONYSUS** σοφώτερον γοῦν ἢ κακοῖς θηρᾶν κακά.	**DIONYSUS** Wiser, anyway, than hunting down trouble with trouble.
840	**PENTHEUS** καὶ πῶς δι' ἄστεως εἶμι Καδμείους λαθών;	**PENTHEUS** And how will I get through town without Cadmus' people seeing me?
841	**DIONYSUS** ὁδοὺς ἐρήμους ἴμεν· ἐγὼ δ' ἡγήσομαι.	**DIONYSUS** We'll take empty streets. I'll lead the way.
842	**PENTHEUS** πᾶν κρεῖσσον ὥστε μὴ 'γγελᾶν Βάκχας ἐμοί. / ἐλθὼν ἐς οἴκους ἂν δοκῇ βουλεύσομαι.	**PENTHEUS** Anything's better than letting the Bacchae laugh at me. I'll go into the house and decide what's best.
844	**DIONYSUS** ἔξεστι· πάντῃ τό γ' ἐμὸν εὐτρεπὲς πάρα.	**DIONYSUS** As you like. On my side, everything's ready.
845	**PENTHEUS** στείχοιμ' ἄν· ἢ γὰρ ὅπλ' ἔχων πορεύσομαι / ἢ τοῖσι σοῖσι πείθομαι βουλεύμασιν.	**PENTHEUS** I'll go in. Either I'll march out under arms, or I'll follow your advice.
848	**DIONYSUS** γυναῖκες, ἀνὴρ εἰς βόλον καθίσταται· ἥξει δὲ Βάκχας, οὗ θανὼν δώσει δίκην. Διόνυσε, νῦν σὸν ἔργον, οὐ γὰρ εἶ πρόσω, τισώμεθ' αὐτόν. πρῶτα δ' ἔκστησον φρενῶν, ἐνεὶς ἐλαφρὰν λύσσαν· ὡς φρονῶν μὲν εὖ οὐ μὴ θελήσῃ θῆλυν ἐνδῦναι στολήν, ἔξω δ' ἐλαύνων τοῦ φρονεῖν ἐνδύσεται.	**DIONYSUS** Women, the man is walking into the net. He'll come to the Bacchae, and there he'll pay the penalty with his death. Dionysus, now it's your work—you're not far off. Let's punish him. First, drive him out of his wits; fill him with a giddy madness. In his right mind he'll never be willing to put on women's clothes, but driven out of his senses he'll put them on.
854	χρῄζω δέ νιν γέλωτα Θηβαίοις ὀφλεῖν γυναικόμορφον ἀγόμενον δι' ἄστεως ἐκ τῶν ἀπειλῶν τῶν πρίν, αἷσι δεινὸς ἦν. ἀλλ' εἶμι κόσμον ὅνπερ εἰς Ἅιδου λαβὼν ἄπεισι μητρὸς ἐκ χεροῖν κατασφαγείς, Πενθεῖ προσάψων· γνώσεται δὲ τὸν Διὸς Διόνυσον, ὃς πέφυκεν ἐν τέλει θεὸς δεινότατος, ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἠπιώτατος.	I want him to be the laughingstock of Thebes, led through town dressed as a woman, after all those threats that made him so fearsome. Now I'll go and fit Pentheus with the finery he'll take with him to Hades, slaughtered by his mother's hands. He'll come to know Dionysus, son of Zeus, who is, in the end, a god most terrible—and to mortals most gentle.

THIRD STASIMON

The chorus sings of a fawn escaping the hunt and of the slow but sure justice of the gods.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
862	**CHORUS** ἆρ’ ἐν παννυχίοις χοροῖς θήσω ποτὲ λευκὸν πόδ’ ἀναβακχεύουσα, δέραν εἰς αἰθέρα δροσερὸν ῥίπτουσ’, ὡς νεβρὸς χλοεραῖς ἐμπαίζουσα λείμακος ἡδοναῖς, ἡνίκ’ ἂν φοβερὰν φύγῃ θήραν ἔξω φυλακᾶς εὐπλέκτων ὑπὲρ ἀρκύων, θωΰσσων δὲ κυναγέτας συντείνῃ δρόμημα κυνῶν· μόχθοις τ’ ὠκυδρόμοις τ’ ἀέλλαις θρώσκει πεδίον παραποτάμιον, ἡδομένα βροτῶν ἐρημίαις σκιαροκόμου τ’ ἐν ἔρνεσιν ὕλας. τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς ἢ χεῖρ’ ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν;	**CHORUS** Shall I ever, in the all-night dances, set my white foot down in Bacchic frenzy, tossing my head back into the dewy air, like a fawn at play in the green delights of a meadow, when she has escaped the fearful hunt, slipped past the watchers and over the well-woven nets, while the huntsman with his shouts urges on his racing hounds, and straining, swift as a storm wind, she bounds over the plain along the river, delighting in places empty of men and in the young shoots of the shadowy wood? What is the clever thing? What gift from the gods is finer among mortals than to hold a stronger hand over the heads of one’s enemies?
881	ὅ τι καλὸν φίλον ἀεί. ὁρμᾶται μόλις, ἀλλ’ ὅμως πιστόν τι τὸ θεῖον σθένος· ἀπευθύνει δὲ βροτῶν τούς τ’ ἀγνωμοσύναν τιμῶντας καὶ μὴ τὰ θεῶν αὔξοντας σὺν μαινομένᾳ δόξᾳ. κρυπτεύουσι δὲ ποικίλως δαρὸν χρόνου πόδα καὶ θηρῶσιν τὸν ἄσεπτον. οὐ γὰρ κρεῖσσόν ποτε τῶν νόμων γιγνώσκειν χρὴ καὶ μελετᾶν. κούφα γὰρ δαπάνα νομίζειν ἰσχὺν τόδ’ ἔχειν, ὅ τι ποτ’ ἄρα τὸ δαιμόνιον, τό τ’ ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ νόμιμον ἀεὶ φύσει τε πεφυκός.	What is fine is always dear. It moves slowly, but all the same the power of the gods is sure. It sets straight those mortals who honor senselessness and, in their mad conceit, do not exalt the gods’ ways. Cunningly the gods conceal the long stride of time and hunt down the unholy man. For one must never think or practice anything above the laws. It costs little to believe that this has power: whatever the divine may be, and what over long ages has always been lawful, and is so by nature.
897	τί τὸ σοφὸν ἢ τί τὸ κάλλιον παρὰ θεῶν γέρας ἐν βροτοῖς ἢ χεῖρ’ ὑπὲρ κορυφᾶς τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρείσσω κατέχειν; ὅ τι καλὸν φίλον ἀεί. εὐδαίμων μὲν ὃς ἐκ θαλάσσας ἔφυγε χεῖμα, λιμένα δ’ ἔκιχεν· εὐδαίμων δ’ ὃς ὕπερθε μόχθων	What is the clever thing? What gift from the gods is finer among mortals than to hold a stronger hand over the heads of one’s enemies? What is fine is always dear. Happy the man who has escaped a storm at sea and reached harbor; happy the man who has risen above his troubles.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἐγένεθ'· ἕτερα δ' ἕτερος ἕτερον ὄλβῳ καὶ δυνάμει παρῆλθεν. μυρίαι δὲ μυρίοισιν ἔτ' εἴσ' ἐλπίδες· αἳ μὲν τελευτῶσιν ἐν ὄλβῳ βροτοῖς, αἳ δ' ἀπέβησαν·	In one way or another, one man outstrips another in wealth and power. Countless are the hopes still held by countless people: some end in prosperity for mortals, others come to nothing.
910	τὸ δὲ κατ' ἦμαρ ὅτῳ βίοτος / εὐδαίμων, μακαρίζω.	But the one whose life is happy / day by day—him I call blessed.

FOURTH EPISODE

Pentheus, now deranged, appears dressed as a maenad and is led off to the mountain.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
912	**DIONYSUS** σὲ τὸν πρόθυμον ὄνθ' ἃ μὴ χρεὼν ὁρᾶν σπεύδοντά τ' ἀσπούδαστα, Πενθέα λέγω, ἔξιθι πάροιθε δωμάτων, ὄφθητί μοι σκευὴν γυναικὸς μαινάδος Βάκχης ἔχων, μητρός τε τῆς σῆς καὶ λόχου κατάσκοπος· πρέπεις δὲ Κάδμου θυγατέρων μορφὴν μιᾷ.	**DIONYSUS** You there, so eager to see what you shouldn't, so keen on what no one should be keen on: Pentheus, I mean you. Come out in front of the house and let me see you dressed as a woman, a raving Bacchant, ready to spy on your mother and her company. You look just like one of Cadmus' daughters.
918	**PENTHEUS** καὶ μὴν ὁρᾶν μοι δύο μὲν ἡλίους δοκῶ, δισσὰς δὲ Θήβας καὶ πόλισμ' ἑπτάστομον· καὶ ταῦρος ἡμῖν πρόσθεν ἡγεῖσθαι δοκεῖς καὶ σῷ κέρατα κρατὶ προσπεφυκέναι. ἀλλ' ἦ ποτ' ἦσθα θήρ; τεταύρωσαι γὰρ οὖν.	**PENTHEUS** Look, I seem to see two suns, and two Thebes, the seven-gated city twice over. And you seem to be a bull walking ahead of me, with horns grown out of your head. Were you an animal all along? You've certainly turned into a bull.
923	**DIONYSUS** ὁ θεὸς ὁμαρτεῖ, πρόσθεν ὢν οὐκ εὐμενής, / ἔνσπονδος ἡμῖν· νῦν δ' ὁρᾷς ἃ χρή σ' ὁρᾶν.	**DIONYSUS** The god is walking with us. He wasn't kindly before, but he's made his peace with us. Now you see what you ought to see.
925	**PENTHEUS** τί φαίνομαι δῆτ'; οὐχὶ τὴν Ἰνοῦς στάσιν / ἢ τὴν Ἀγαύης ἑστάναι μητρός γ' ἐμῆς;	**PENTHEUS** So what do I look like? Don't I stand just the way Ino stands, or Agave, my own mother?
927	**DIONYSUS** αὐτὰς ἐκείνας εἰσορᾶν δοκῶ σ' ὁρῶν. ἀλλ' ἐξ ἕδρας σοι πλόκαμος ἐξέστηχ' ὅδε, οὐχ ὡς ἐγώ νιν ὑπὸ μίτρᾳ καθήρμοσα.	**DIONYSUS** Looking at you, I seem to see them in person. But this curl has slipped out of place. It's not the way I tucked it under your headband.
930	**PENTHEUS** ἔνδον προσείων αὐτὸν ἀνασείων τ' ἐγὼ / καὶ βακχιάζων ἐξ ἕδρας μεθώρμισα.	**PENTHEUS** I was tossing my head forward and back indoors, dancing like a Bacchant, and I shook it loose.
932	**DIONYSUS** ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἡμεῖς, οἷς σε θεραπεύειν μέλει, / πάλιν καταστελοῦμεν· ἀλλ' ὄρθου κάρα.	**DIONYSUS** Well, I'm the one whose job it is to look after you, so I'll put it back in place. Come, hold your head up.
934	**PENTHEUS** ἰδού, σὺ κόσμει· σοὶ γὰρ ἀνακείμεσθα δή.	**PENTHEUS** There. You arrange me. I'm all yours now.
935	**DIONYSUS** ζῶναί τέ σοι χαλῶσι κοὐχ ἑξῆς πέπλων / στολίδες ὑπὸ σφυροῖσι τείνουσιν σέθεν.	**DIONYSUS** And your girdle's loose, and the pleats of your dress don't hang evenly below your ankles.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
937	**PENTHEUS** κἀμοὶ δοκοῦσι παρά γε δεξιὸν πόδα· / τἀνθένδε δ' ὀρθῶς παρὰ τένοντ' ἔχει πέπλος.	**PENTHEUS** I think so too, by the right foot at least. On this side, though, the dress hangs straight down to the heel.
939	**DIONYSUS** ἦ πού με τῶν σῶν πρῶτον ἡγήσει φίλων, / ὅταν παρὰ λόγον σώφρονας Βάκχας ἴδῃς;	**DIONYSUS** I expect you'll count me first among your friends when you see the Bacchae, against all your expectations, behaving chastely.
941	**PENTHEUS** πότερα δὲ θύρσον δεξιᾷ λαβὼν χερὶ / ἢ τῇδε, Βάκχῃ μᾶλλον εἰκασθήσομαι;	**PENTHEUS** Shall I look more like a Bacchant if I hold the thyrsus in my right hand, or in this one?
943	**DIONYSUS** ἐν δεξιᾷ χρὴ χἅμα δεξιῷ ποδὶ / αἴρειν νιν· αἰνῶ δ' ὅτι μεθέστηκας φρενῶν.	**DIONYSUS** In the right, and you must raise it in time with your right foot. I commend you for leaving your old mind behind.
945	**PENTHEUS** ἆρ' ἂν δυναίμην τὰς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχὰς / αὐταῖσι Βάκχαις τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὤμοις φέρειν;	**PENTHEUS** Do you think I could carry the glens of Cithaeron on my shoulders, Bacchae and all?
947	**DIONYSUS** δύναι' ἄν, εἰ βούλοιο· τὰς δὲ πρὶν φρένας / οὐκ εἶχες ὑγιεῖς, νῦν δ' ἔχεις οἵας σε δεῖ.	**DIONYSUS** You could if you wanted to. Your mind wasn't healthy before, but now it's exactly as it should be.
949	**PENTHEUS** μοχλοὺς φέρωμεν ἢ χεροῖν ἀνασπάσω / κορυφαῖς ὑποβαλὼν ὦμον ἢ βραχίονα;	**PENTHEUS** Should we bring crowbars? Or shall I tear it up with my bare hands, putting my shoulder or my arm under the peaks?
951	**DIONYSUS** μὴ σύ γε τὰ Νυμφῶν διολέσῃς ἱδρύματα / καὶ Πανὸς ἕδρας, ἔνθ' ἔχει συρίγματα.	**DIONYSUS** Don't you go destroying the shrines of the Nymphs and the haunts of Pan, where he plays his pipes.
953	**PENTHEUS** καλῶς ἔλεξας· οὐ σθένει νικητέον / γυναῖκας, ἐλάταισιν δ' ἐμὸν κρύψω δέμας.	**PENTHEUS** You're right. Women aren't to be beaten by force. I'll hide myself among the pines.
955	**DIONYSUS** κρύψει σὺ κρύψιν ἥν σε κρυφθῆναι χρεὼν / ἐλθόντα δόλιον Μαινάδων κατάσκοπον.	**DIONYSUS** You'll be hidden in just the hiding place where you ought to be hidden, coming as a cunning spy on the maenads.
957	**PENTHEUS** καὶ μὴν δοκῶ σφᾶς ἐν λόχμαις ὄρνιθας ὡς / λέκτρων ἔχεσθαι φιλτάτοις ἐν ἕρκεσιν.	**PENTHEUS** You know, I can picture them in the thickets like birds, caught in the sweetest snares of lovemaking.
959	**DIONYSUS** οὔκουν ἐπ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποστέλλει φύλαξ; / λήψει δ' ἴσως σφᾶς, ἢν σὺ μὴ ληφθῇς πάρος.	**DIONYSUS** Isn't that the very thing you're being sent to watch for? Maybe you'll catch them, unless you're caught first.
961	**PENTHEUS** κόμιζε διὰ μέσης με Θηβαίας πόλεως· / μόνος γάρ εἰμ' αὐτῶν ἀνὴρ τολμῶν τόδε.	**PENTHEUS** Take me right through the middle of Thebes. I'm the only man among them who dares to do this.
963	**DIONYSUS** μόνος σὺ πόλεως τῆσδ' ὑπερκάμνεις, μόνος· τοιγάρ σ' ἀγῶνες ἀναμένουσιν οὓς ἐχρῆν. ἕπου δέ· πομπὸς δ' εἶμ' ἐγὼ σωτήριος, κεῖθεν δ' ἀπάξει σ' ἄλλος	**DIONYSUS** You alone carry the burden for this city, you alone. And so the trials that had to come are waiting for you. Follow me. I'll be your escort and see you safely there. Someone else will bring you back from there—

	GREEK	ENGLISH
966	**PENTHEUS** ἡ τεκοῦσά γε.	**PENTHEUS** Yes, the one who bore me.
967	**DIONYSUS** ἐπίσημον ὄντα πᾶσιν.	**DIONYSUS** —for everyone to see.
	PENTHEUS ἐπὶ τόδ' ἔρχομαι.	**PENTHEUS** That's what I'm going for.
968	**DIONYSUS** φερόμενος ἥξεις	**DIONYSUS** You'll come back carried—
	PENTHEUS ἁβρότητ' ἐμὴν λέγεις.	**PENTHEUS** In luxury, you mean.
969	**DIONYSUS** ἐν χερσὶ μητρός.	**DIONYSUS** —in your mother's arms.
	PENTHEUS καὶ τρυφᾶν μ' ἀναγκάσεις.	**PENTHEUS** You'll make me soft and spoiled.
970	**DIONYSUS** τρυφάς γε τοιάσδ'.	**DIONYSUS** Spoiled, yes, in a certain way.
	PENTHEUS ἀξίων μὲν ἅπτομαι.	**PENTHEUS** Well, I'm only getting what I deserve.
971	**DIONYSUS** δεινὸς σὺ δεινὸς κἀπὶ δείν' ἔρχει πάθη, ὥστ' οὐρανῷ στηρίζον εὐρήσεις κλέος. ἔκτειν', Ἀγαύη, χεῖρας αἵ θ' ὁμόσποροι Κάδμου θυγατέρες· τὸν νεανίαν ἄγω τόνδ' εἰς ἀγῶνα μέγαν, ὁ νικήσων δ' ἐγὼ καὶ Βρόμιος ἔσται. τἄλλα δ' αὐτὸ σημανεῖ.	**DIONYSUS** You're a fearsome man, fearsome, and it's a fearsome ordeal you're going to, so you'll find a glory that towers up to heaven. Stretch out your hands, Agave, and you, her sisters, daughters of Cadmus! I'm bringing this young man to a great contest, and the victors will be Bromius and I. The rest the event itself will show.

FOURTH STASIMON

The chorus calls on the hounds of Madness and on justice to strike Pentheus down.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
977	**CHORUS** ἴτε θοαὶ Λύσσας κύνες ἴτ' εἰς ὄρος, θίασον ἔνθ' ἔχουσι Κάδμου κόραι, ἀνοιστρήσατέ νιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐν γυναικομίμῳ στολᾷ Μαινάδων ... κατάσκοπον λυσσώδη. μάτηρ πρῶτά νιν λευρᾶς ἀπὸ πέτρας ἢ σκόλοπος ὄψεται δοκεύοντα, Μαινάσιν δ' ἀπύσει· τίς ὅδε Καδμείων μαστὴρ ὀρειδρόμων ἐς ὄρος ἐς ὄρος ἔμολεν ἔμολεν, ὦ Βάκχαι;	**CHORUS** Go, swift hounds of Madness, go to the mountain, where Cadmus' daughters keep their band, and sting them into fury against the man in women's mimicking dress, the maenads' ... raving spy. His mother will be the first to see him from a smooth rock or a crag lying in wait, and she'll cry out to the maenads: "Who is this man of Cadmus' people who comes hunting the mountain-runners, to the mountain, to the mountain he has come, he has come, you Bacchae?"
988	τίς ἄρα νιν ἔτεκεν; οὐ γὰρ ἐξ αἵματος γυναικῶν ἔφυ, λεαίνας δέ τινος ὅδ' ἢ Γοργόνων Λιβυσσᾶν γένος. ἴτω δίκα φανερός, ἴτω ξιφηφόρος φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπὰξ τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος τόκον γηγενῆ. ὃς ἀδίκῳ γνώμᾳ παρανόμῳ τ' ὀργᾷ	"Who gave him birth? He was not born of women's blood; he is the offspring of some lioness, or of the Libyan Gorgons." Let justice come for all to see, let her come with a sword, slaying, piercing through the throat the godless, lawless, unjust earthborn son of Echion!

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	περὶ τὰ Βάκχι' ὄργια ματρός τε σᾶς μανείσᾳ πραπίδι παρακόπῳ τε λήματι στέλλεται, τὰν ἀνίκατον ὡς κρατήσων βίᾳ.	With unjust judgment and lawless rage against your rites, Bacchus, and your mother's, with maddened heart and frantic spirit he sets out to conquer by force the unconquerable.
1002	γνώμαν σώφρον', ἃ θνατοῖς ἀπροφάσιστος εἰς τὰ θεῶν ἔφυ, βροτείαν τ' ἔχειν ἄλυπος βίος. τὸ σοφὸν οὐ φθονῶ· χαίρω θηρεύουσ' ἕτερα μεγάλα φανερά τ' ὄντ' ἀεί, ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ βίον ἦμαρ εἰς νύκτα τ' εὐαγοῦντ' εὐσεβεῖν, τὰ δ' ἔξω νόμιμα δίκας ἐκβαλόντα τιμᾶν θεούς. ἴτω δίκα φανερός, ἴτω ξιφηφόρος φονεύουσα λαιμῶν διαμπὰξ τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος τόκον γηγενῆ.	A sensible mind that offers mortals no excuses in matters that concern the gods, a mind that knows it is mortal: that makes a life without grief. Cleverness I don't begrudge; my joy is in hunting other things, great and always plain to see, that guide life toward what is fine: from day into night to be pure and reverent, and, casting out customs that stray beyond justice, to honor the gods. Let justice come for all to see, let her come with a sword, slaying, piercing through the throat the godless, lawless, unjust earthborn son of Echion!
1017	φάνηθι ταῦρος ἢ πολύκρανος ἰδεῖν δράκων ἢ πυριφλέγων ὁρᾶσθαι λέων. ἴθ', ὦ Βάκχε, θηραγρευτᾷ Βακχᾶν γελῶντι προσώπῳ περίβαλε βρόχον ἐπὶ θανάσιμον ἀγέλαν πεσόντι τὰν Μαινάδων.	Show yourself as a bull, or a many-headed serpent to behold, or a lion blazing with fire to see! Come, Bacchus, with laughing face throw your noose around the hunter of the Bacchae as he falls beneath the deadly herd of maenads.

FIFTH EPISODE

A second messenger tells how the maenads, led by Agave, tore Pentheus apart.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1024	**SECOND MESSENGER** ὦ δῶμ' ὃ πρίν ποτ' ηὐτύχεις ἀν' Ἑλλάδα, Σιδωνίου γέροντος, ὃς τὸ γηγενὲς δράκοντος ἔσπειρ' ὄφεος ἐν γαίᾳ θέρος, ὥς σε στενάζω, δοῦλος ὢν μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως. χρηστοῖσι δούλοις συμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν.	**SECOND MESSENGER** House that was once so fortunate throughout Greece, house of the old man from Sidon who sowed the earthborn crop of the serpent-dragon in the soil: how I grieve for you! I'm only a slave, but still. Good slaves feel their masters' misfortunes as their own.[12]
1029	**CHORUS** τί δ' ἔστιν; ἐκ Βακχῶν τι μηνύεις νέον;	**CHORUS** What is it? Have you news from the Bacchae?
1030	**SECOND MESSENGER** Πενθεὺς ὄλωλε, παῖς Ἐχίονος πατρός.	**SECOND MESSENGER** Pentheus is dead, the son of Echion.
1031	**CHORUS** ὦναξ Βρόμιε· θεὸς φαίνει μέγας.	

12 Cadmus came to Thebes from Sidon, in Phoenicia.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		CHORUS Lord Bromius! You show yourself a great god!
1032	**SECOND MESSENGER** πῶς φής; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; ἦ 'πὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς / χαίρεις κακῶς πράσσουσι δεσπόταις, γύναι;	**SECOND MESSENGER** What are you saying? What was that? Are you glad, lady, that my masters have met with disaster?
1034	**CHORUS** εὐάζω ξένα μέλεσι βαρβάροις· / οὐκέτι γὰρ δεσμῶν ὑπὸ φόβῳ πτήσσω.	**CHORUS** A stranger, I cry euhoi in foreign songs; no longer do I cower in fear of chains.
1036	**SECOND MESSENGER** Θήβας δ' ἀνάνδρους ὧδ' ἄγεις ...;	**SECOND MESSENGER** Do you take Thebes to be so short of men ...?
1037	**CHORUS** ὁ Διόνυσος ὁ Διόνυσος, οὐ Θῆβαι / κράτος ἔχουσ' ἐμόν.	**CHORUS** Dionysus, Dionysus, not Thebes, / has power over me.
1039	**SECOND MESSENGER** συγγνωστὰ μέν σοι, πλὴν ἐπ' ἐξειργασμένοις / κακοῖσι χαίρειν, ὦ γυναῖκες, οὐ καλόν.	**SECOND MESSENGER** It's forgivable in you. Still, ladies, it isn't right to rejoice over horrors once they've been done.
1041	**CHORUS** ἔννεπέ μοι, φράσον, τίνι μόρῳ θνήσκει / ἄδικος ἄδικά τ' ἐκπορίζων ἀνήρ;	**CHORUS** Tell me, say it: what was the fate he died by, / the unjust man who contrived injustice?
1043	**SECOND MESSENGER** ἐπεὶ θεράπνας τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονὸς λιπόντες ἐξέβημεν Ἀσωποῦ ῥοάς, λέπας Κιθαιρώνειον εἰσεβάλλομεν Πενθεύς τε κἀγώ, δεσπότῃ γὰρ εἰπόμην, ξένος θ' ὃς ἡμῖν πομπὸς ἦν θεωρίας. πρῶτον μὲν οὖν ποιηρὸν ἵζομεν νάπος, τά τ' ἐκ ποδῶν σιγηλὰ καὶ γλώσσης ἄπο σώζοντες, ὡς ὁρῷμεν οὐχ ὁρώμενοι. ἦν δ' ἄγκος ἀμφίκρημνον, ὕδασι διάβροχον, πεύκαισι συσκιάζον, ἔνθα Μαινάδες καθῆντ' ἔχουσαι χεῖρας ἐν τερπνοῖς πόνοις.	**SECOND MESSENGER** When we had left behind the farmsteads of this Theban land and crossed the streams of the Asopus, we began climbing into the rocky heights of Cithaeron: Pentheus and I (I was following my master), and the stranger who was guiding us to the spectacle. First we settled in a grassy glade, keeping our feet and our tongues silent, so that we could see without being seen. There was a ravine with cliffs all around, soaked with streams and shaded by pines, and there the maenads were sitting, their hands busy with pleasant tasks.
1054	αἳ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν θύρσον ἐκλελοιπότα κισσῷ κομήτην αὖθις ἐξανέστεφον, αἳ δ' ἐκλιποῦσαι ποικίλ' ὡς πῶλοι ζυγὰ βακχεῖον ἀντέκλαζον ἀλλήλαις μέλος. Πενθεὺς δ' ὁ τλήμων θῆλυν οὐχ ὁρῶν ὄχλον ἔλεξε τοιάδ'· ὦ ξέν', οὗ μὲν ἕσταμεν, οὐκ ἐξικνοῦμαι Μαινάδων ὅσον ποθῶ· ὄχθον δ' ἐπεμβὰς ἢ ἐλάτην ὑψαύχενα ἴδοιμ' ἂν ὀρθῶς Μαινάδων αἰσχρουργίαν. τοὐντεῦθεν ἤδη τοῦ ξένου θαυμάσθ' ὁρῶ· λαβὼν γὰρ ἐλάτης οὐράνιον ἄκρον κλάδον κατῆγεν, ἦγεν, ἦγεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον·	Some of them were crowning a thyrsus that had lost its ivy, making it leafy again. Others, like fillies let loose from their painted yokes, were singing a Bacchic song back and forth to one another. But poor Pentheus, who couldn't see the crowd of women, said this: "Stranger, from where we're standing my eyes can't reach the maenads as I'd like. But if I climbed a mound, or a pine tree with a tall neck, I could get a proper view of the maenads' shameful doings." Then and there I saw the stranger do something marvelous. He took hold of the sky-high top branch of a pine and pulled it down, down, down to the black earth.
1066	κυκλοῦτο δ' ὥστε τόξον ἢ κυρτὸς τροχὸς τόρνῳ γραφόμενος περιφοράν, ἑλικοδρόμον· ὡς κλῶν' ὄρειον ὁ ξένος χεροῖν ἄγων	It curved like a bow, or like a rounded wheel when its rim is traced out by a compass sweeping around. So the stranger drew the mountain bough

GREEK	ENGLISH
ἔκαμπτεν εἰς γῆν, ἔργματ' οὐχὶ θνητὰ δρῶν. Πενθέα δ' ἱδρύσας ἐλατίνων ὄζων ἔπι, ὀρθὸν μεθίει διὰ χερῶν βλάστημ' ἄνω ἀτρέμα, φυλάσσων μὴ ἀναχαιτίσειέ νιν. ὀρθὴ δ' ἐς ὀρθὸν αἰθέρ' ἐστηρίζετο ἔχουσα νώτοις δεσπότην ἐφήμενον. ὤφθη δὲ μᾶλλον ἢ κατεῖδε Μαινάδας·	down with his hands and bent it to the earth, doing work no mortal could do. He set Pentheus on the pine branches and let the trunk slide up straight through his hands, gently, taking care it wouldn't throw him off. Up it towered, straight into the open sky, with my master sitting on its back. He was seen by the maenads more than he saw them.
1076 ὅσον γὰρ οὔπω δῆλος ἦν θάσσων ἄνω, καὶ τὸν ξένον μὲν οὐκέτ' εἰσορᾶν παρῆν, ἐκ δ' αἰθέρος φωνή τις, ὡς μὲν εἰκάσαι Διόνυσος, ἀνεβόησεν· ὦ νεάνιδες, ἄγω τὸν ὑμᾶς κἀμὲ τἀμά τ' ὄργια γέλων τιθέμενον· ἀλλὰ τιμωρεῖσθέ νιν. καὶ ταῦθ' ἅμ' ἠγόρευε καὶ πρὸς οὐρανὸν καὶ γαῖαν ἐστήριξε φῶς σεμνοῦ πυρός. σίγησε δ' αἰθήρ, σῖγα δ' εὔλειμος νάπη φύλλ' εἶχε, θηρῶν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἤκουσας βοήν.	No sooner was he visible, perched up there, than the stranger could no longer be seen, and out of the sky a voice (Dionysus, one would guess) cried out: "Young women, I bring you the man who makes a mockery of you and me and my rites. Now take your revenge on him!" And as he spoke these words, a light of awesome fire was fixed between heaven and earth. The sky fell silent; the leaves of the grassy glade were silent; you would not have heard a single animal cry.
1086 αἳ δ' ὡσὶν ἠχὴν οὐ σαφῶς δεδεγμέναι ἔστησαν ὀρθαὶ καὶ διήνεγκαν κόρας. ὃ δ' αὖθις ἐπεκέλευσεν· ὡς δ' ἐγνώρισαν σαφῆ κελευσμὸν Βακχίου Κάδμου κόραι, ᾔξαν πελείας ὠκύτητ' οὐχ ἧσσονες ποδῶν ἔχουσαι συντόνοις δρομήμασι, μήτηρ Ἀγαύη σύγγονοί θ' ὁμόσποροι πᾶσαί τε Βάκχαι· διὰ δὲ χειμάρρου νάπης ἀγμῶν τ' ἐπήδων θεοῦ πνοαῖσιν ἐμμανεῖς. ὡς δ' εἶδον ἐλάτῃ δεσπότην ἐφήμενον, πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ χερμάδας κραταιβόλους ἔρριπτον, ἀντίπυργον ἐπιβᾶσαι πέτραν, ὄζοισί τ' ἐλατίνοισιν ἠκοντίζετο·	The women, who hadn't clearly caught the sound, stood up straight and looked all around. He called again. And when Cadmus' daughters recognized the clear command of Bacchus, they rushed off, as fast on their feet as doves, running at full stretch: his mother Agave, and her sisters, and all the Bacchae. Through the torrent-filled glen and over the crags they leapt, maddened by the breath of the god. When they saw my master sitting in the pine, they first climbed a rock that rose opposite like a tower and hurled stones at him with all their strength, and he was pelted with pine branches.
1099 ἄλλαι δὲ θύρσους ἵεσαν δι' αἰθέρος Πενθέως, στόχον δύστηνον· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἤνυτον. κρεῖσσον γὰρ ὕψος τῆς προθυμίας ἔχων καθῆστο τλήμων, ἀπορίᾳ λελημμένος. τέλος δὲ δρυΐνους συγκεραυνοῦσαι κλάδους, ῥίζας ἀνεσπάρασσον ἀσιδήροις μοχλοῖς. ἐπεὶ δὲ μόχθων τέρματ' οὐκ ἐξήνυτον, ἔλεξ' Ἀγαύη· φέρε, περιστᾶσαι κύκλῳ πτόρθου λάβεσθε, Μαινάδες, τὸν ἀμβάτην θῆρ' ὡς ἔλωμεν, μηδ' ἀπαγγείλῃ θεοῦ χοροὺς κρυφαίους. αἳ δὲ μυρίαν χέρα προσέθεσαν ἐλάτῃ κἀξανέσπασαν χθονός·	Others hurled their thyrsi through the air at Pentheus, a pitiful target, but they couldn't reach him. The poor man sat higher than their eagerness could reach, trapped and helpless. At last they splintered off oak branches, smashing them down as a thunderbolt would, and tried to tear up the roots with these levers that had no iron in them. When they couldn't bring their efforts to an end, Agave said: "Come, maenads, stand in a circle and take hold of the trunk, so we can catch the climbing beast and stop him from reporting the god's secret dances." And they set countless hands to the pine and tore it out of the earth.
1111 ὑψοῦ δὲ θάσσων ὑψόθεν χαμαιπετὴς πίπτει πρὸς οὖδας μυρίοις οἰμώγμασι Πενθεύς· κακοῦ γὰρ ἐγγὺς ὢν ἐμάνθανε. πρώτη δὲ μήτηρ ἦρξεν ἱερία φόνου καὶ προσπίτνει νιν· ὃ δὲ μίτραν κόμης ἄπο	From his seat high up, Pentheus came crashing down from the heights to the ground, with endless cries of pain; he knew he was close to disaster. His mother began the slaughter first, as its priestess, and fell on him. He tore the headband from his

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἔρριψεν, ὡς νιν γνωρίσασα μὴ κτάνοι τλήμων Ἀγαύη, καὶ λέγει παρηίδος ψαύων· ἐγώ τοι, μῆτερ, εἰμὶ παῖς σέθεν Πενθεύς, ὃν ἔτεκες ἐν δόμοις Ἐχίονος· οἴκτειρε δ' ὦ μῆτέρ με μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἁμαρτίαισι παῖδα σὸν κατακτάνῃς.	hair so that poor Agave would recognize him and not kill him, and touching her cheek he said, "Mother, it's me, your son Pentheus, whom you bore in Echion's house! Pity me, Mother, and don't kill your son for my mistakes!"
1122	ἡ δ' ἀφρὸν ἐξιεῖσα καὶ διαστρόφους κόρας ἑλίσσουσ', οὐ φρονοῦσ' ἃ χρὴ φρονεῖν, ἐκ Βακχίου κατείχετ', οὐδ' ἔπειθέ νιν. λαβοῦσα δ' ὠλέναις ἀριστερὰν χέρα, πλευραῖσιν ἀντιβᾶσα τοῦ δυσδαίμονος ἀπεσπάραξεν ὦμον, οὐχ ὑπὸ σθένους, ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς εὐμάρειαν ἐπεδίδου χεροῖν. Ἰνὼ δὲ τἀπὶ θάτερ' ἐξειργάζετο ῥηγνῦσα σάρκας, Αὐτονόη τ' ὄχλος τε πᾶς ἐπεῖχε Βακχῶν· ἦν δὲ πᾶσ' ὁμοῦ βοή, ὃ μὲν στενάζων ὅσον ἐτύγχανεν πνέων, αἳ δ' ἠλάλαζον. ἔφερε δ' ἡ μὲν ὠλένην, ἡ δ' ἴχνος αὐταῖς ἀρβύλαις· γυμνοῦντο δὲ πλευραὶ σπαραγμοῖς· πᾶσα δ' ἡματωμένη χεῖρας, διεσφαίριζε σάρκα Πενθέως.	But she was foaming at the mouth and rolling her eyes all around, not thinking as she ought to think. She was in the grip of Bacchus, and he couldn't persuade her. She seized his left arm in both of hers, set her foot against the poor wretch's ribs, and tore his shoulder out. It wasn't her own strength: the god made it easy for her hands. Ino set to work on the other side, ripping his flesh, and Autonoe and the whole crowd of Bacchae pressed in. It was all one cry together: he groaning with all the breath he had left, and they shrieking in triumph. One carried off an arm, another a foot, boot and all. His ribs were stripped bare by their tearing, and every one of them, her hands bloodied, was tossing Pentheus' flesh about like a ball.
1137	κεῖται δὲ χωρὶς σῶμα, τὸ μὲν ὑπὸ στύφλοις πέτραις, τὸ δ' ὕλης ἐν βαθυξύλῳ φόβῃ, οὐ ῥᾴδιον ζήτημα· κρᾶτα δ' ἄθλιον, ὅπερ λαβοῦσα τυγχάνει μήτηρ χεροῖν, πήξασ' ἐπ' ἄκρον θύρσον ὡς ὀρεστέρου φέρει λέοντος διὰ Κιθαιρῶνος μέσου, λιποῦσ' ἀδελφὰς ἐν χοροῖσι Μαινάδων. χωρεῖ δὲ θήρᾳ δυσπότμῳ γαυρουμένη τειχέων ἔσω τῶνδ', ἀνακαλοῦσα Βάκχιον τὸν ξυγκύναγον, τὸν ξυνεργάτην ἄγρας τὸν καλλίνικον, ᾗ δάκρυα νικηφορεῖ.	His body lies scattered, part under rugged rocks, part in the deep foliage of the woods: no easy thing to search out. And his wretched head, which his mother happened to get into her hands, she has fixed on the tip of her thyrsus, and she carries it like a mountain lion's through the middle of Cithaeron, leaving her sisters among the maenads' dances. She's coming inside these walls, exulting in her ill-fated catch, calling on Bacchus, her fellow huntsman, her partner in the hunt, the glorious victor. The victory she wins is tears.
1148	ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τῇδ' ἐκποδὼν τῇ ξυμφορᾷ ἅπειμ', Ἀγαύην πρὶν μολεῖν πρὸς δώματα. τὸ σωφρονεῖν δὲ καὶ σέβειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν κάλλιστον· οἶμαι δ' αὐτὸ καὶ σοφώτατον θνητοῖσιν εἶναι κτῆμα τοῖσι χρωμένοις.	As for me, I'll get myself out of the way of this disaster before Agave reaches the house. Self-control and reverence for what belongs to the gods are the finest things; and I think that for mortals who make use of them, they are also the wisest possession.

FIFTH STASIMON

The chorus celebrates Pentheus' death and the bloody victory of his mother.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1153	**CHORUS** ἀναχορεύσωμεν Βάκχιον, ἀναβοάσωμεν ξυμφορὰν τὰν τοῦ δράκοντος ἐκγενέτα Πενθέως, ὃς τὰν θηλυγενῆ στολὰν νάρθηκά τε πιστὸν Ἄιδαν ἔλαβεν εὔθυρσον,	**CHORUS** Let us dance for Bacchus, let us cry aloud the disaster of Pentheus, the serpent's offspring, who put on women's clothing and took the fennel wand, Hades' sure pledge, the fine thyrsus,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ταῦρον προηγητῆρα συμφορᾶς ἔχων.	with a bull to lead him into disaster.
	Βάκχαι Καδμεῖαι,	Bacchae of Cadmus' city,
	τὸν καλλίνικον κλεινὸν ἐξεπράξατε	you have turned your glorious song of victory
	εἰς γόον, εἰς δάκρυα.	into lament, into tears.
	καλὸς ἀγών, ἐν αἵματι στάζουσαν	A fine contest: to throw around your child
	χέρα περιβαλεῖν τέκνου.	a hand dripping with his blood.

EXODOS

Agave returns with her son's head, comes to her senses, and Dionysus sends the family into exile.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1165	**CHORUS** ἀλλ' εἰσορῶ γὰρ εἰς δόμους ὁρμωμένην	**CHORUS** But here I see Pentheus' mother, Agave,
	Πενθέως Ἀγαύην μητέρ' ἐν διαστρόφοις	rushing toward the house with wildly rolling eyes.
	ὄσσοις, δέχεσθε κῶμον εὐίου θεοῦ.	Welcome the revel band of the god of euhoi!
1168	**AGAVE** Ἀσιάδες Βάκχαι.	**AGAVE** Bacchae of Asia!
	CHORUS ... τί μ' ὀρθοῖς ὦ;	**CHORUS** ... Why are you rousing me? Oh!
1169	**AGAVE** φέρομεν ἐξ ὄρεος	**AGAVE** We bring from the mountain
	ἔλικα νεότομον ἐπὶ μέλαθρα,	a fresh-cut tendril to the house,
	μακάριον θήραν.	a blessed catch.
1172	**CHORUS** ὁρῶ καί σε δέξομαι σύγκωμον.	**CHORUS** I see, and I'll welcome you as a fellow reveler.
1173	**AGAVE** ἔμαρψα τόνδ' ἄνευ βρόχων	**AGAVE** I caught this one without a noose,
	... νέον λίν,	... a young lion,
	ὡς ὁρᾶν πάρα.	as you can see.
1176	**CHORUS** πόθεν ἐρημίας;	**CHORUS** Where in the wilds?
1177	**AGAVE** Κιθαιρὼν	**AGAVE** Cithaeron—
	CHORUS τί Κιθαιρών;	**CHORUS** Cithaeron what?
1178	**AGAVE** κατεφόνευσέν νιν.	**AGAVE** —killed him.
1179	**CHORUS** τίς ἁ βαλοῦσα πρώτα;	**CHORUS** Who struck him first?
	AGAVE ἐμὸν τὸ γέρας.	**AGAVE** The prize is mine.
1180	**CHORUS** μάκαιρ' Ἀγαύη	**CHORUS** Blessed Agave—
	AGAVE κληζόμεθ' ἐν θιάσοις.	**AGAVE** that's what they call me in the bands.
1181	**CHORUS** τίς ἄλλα;	**CHORUS** Who else?
	AGAVE τὰ Κάδμου	**AGAVE** Cadmus'—
	CHORUS τί Κάδμου;	**CHORUS** Cadmus' what?
	AGAVE γένεθλα	**AGAVE** —daughters,
	μετ' ἐμὲ μετ' ἐμὲ τοῦδ'	after me, after me,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἔθιγε θηρός. εὐτυχής γ' ἆδ' ἄγρα. μέτεχέ νυν θοίνας.	laid hands on this beast. A lucky hunt! Come now, share the feast.
1184	**CHORUS** τί μετέχω τλάμων;	**CHORUS** Share what, poor wretch that I am?
1185	**AGAVE** νέος ὁ μόσχος ἄρτι γένυν ὑπὸ κόρυθ' ἁπαλότριχα κατάκομον θάλλει.	**AGAVE** He's a young bullock: just now his cheek, under his crest of soft, thick hair, is coming into bloom.
1188	**CHORUS** πρέπει γὰρ ὥστε θηρὸς ἀγραύλου φόβη.	**CHORUS** Yes, with that mane he looks like a wild beast of the fields.
1189	**AGAVE** ὁ Βάκχιος κυναγέτας σοφὸς σοφῶς ἀνέπηλεν ἐπὶ θήρᾳ τοῦδε Μαινάδας.	**AGAVE** Bacchus the huntsman, clever, cleverly launched the maenads at this beast.
1192	**CHORUS** ὁ γὰρ ἄναξ ἀγρεύς.	**CHORUS** Yes, our lord is a hunter.
1193	**AGAVE** ἐπαινεῖς;	**AGAVE** Do you praise me?
	CHORUS τί δ' ἐπαινῶ;	**CHORUS** Praise what?
1194	**AGAVE** τάχα δὲ Καδμεῖοι	**AGAVE** Soon Cadmus' people—
1195	**CHORUS** καὶ παῖς γε Πενθεὺς ματέρ'	**CHORUS** and your son Pentheus, his mother—
	AGAVE ἐπαινέσεται,	**AGAVE** will praise,
1196	**CHORUS** λαβοῦσαν ἄγραν	**CHORUS** for taking this catch—
	AGAVE τάνδε λεοντοφυῆ	**AGAVE** this lion of a catch,
1197	**CHORUS** περισσὰν	**CHORUS** extraordinary—
	AGAVE περισσῶς.	**AGAVE** extraordinarily.
	CHORUS ἀγάλλει;	**CHORUS** Are you proud?
	AGAVE γέγηθα μεγάλα μεγάλα καὶ φανερὰ τᾷδ' ἄγρᾳ κατειργασμένα.	**AGAVE** I rejoice in great things, great things, plain to see, achieved in this hunt.
1200	**CHORUS** δεῖξόν νυν, ὦ τάλαινα, σὴν νικηφόρον / ἀστοῖσιν ἄγραν ἣν φέρουσ' ἐλήλυθας.	**CHORUS** Then show the citizens, poor woman, your victorious catch, the one you've brought back with you.
1202	**AGAVE** ὦ καλλίπυργον ἄστυ Θηβαίας χθονὸς ναίοντες, ἔλθεθ' ὡς ἴδητε τήνδ' ἄγραν, Κάδμου θυγατέρες θηρὸς ἣν ἠγρεύσαμεν οὐκ ἀγκυλητοῖς Θεσσαλῶν στοχάσμασιν, οὐ δικτύοισιν, ἀλλὰ λευκοπήχεσι χειρῶν ἀκμαῖσι. κᾆτα κομπάζειν μάτην καὶ λογχοποιῶν ὄργανα κτᾶσθαι χρεών; ἡμεῖς δέ γ' αὐτῇ χειρὶ τόνδε θ' εἵλομεν χωρίς τε θηρὸς ἄρθρα διεφορήσαμεν. ποῦ μοι πατὴρ ὁ πρέσβυς; ἐλθέτω πέλας.	**AGAVE** You who live in this city of fine towers in the land of Thebes, come and see this catch, the beast we daughters of Cadmus hunted down: not with the thonged javelins of the Thessalians, not with nets, but with the fingertips of our white arms. After this, should men go on boasting for nothing and buying weapons from the spear-makers? We caught this one with our bare hands, and we tore the beast limb from limb. Where's my father, the old man? Let him come here. And my

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	Πενθεύς τ' ἐμὸς παῖς ποῦ 'στιν; αἰρέσθω λαβὼν πηκτῶν πρὸς οἴκους κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις, ὡς πασσαλεύσῃ κρᾶτα τριγλύφοις τόδε λέοντος ὃν πάρειμι θηράσας' ἐγώ.	son Pentheus, where is he? Let him take a sturdy ladder and set it against the house, so he can nail up on the triglyphs this head of the lion I've hunted and brought home.[13]
1216	**CADMUS** ἕπεσθέ μοι φέροντες ἄθλιον βάρος Πενθέως, ἕπεσθε, πρόσπολοι, δόμων πάρος, οὗ σῶμα μοχθῶν μυρίοις ζητήμασι φέρω τόδ' εὑρὼν ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς διασπαρακτόν, κοὐδὲν ἐν ταὐτῷ πέδῳ λαβών, ἐν ὕλῃ κείμενον δυσευρέτῳ. ἤκουσα γάρ του θυγατέρων τολμήματα, ἤδη κατ' ἄστυ τειχέων ἔσω βεβὼς σὺν τῷ γέροντι Τειρεσίᾳ Βακχῶν πάρα·	**CADMUS** Follow me, servants, carrying the wretched weight of Pentheus. Follow me to the front of the house. Here is his body; I bring it after endless searching and hard toil. I found it in the glens of Cithaeron, torn to pieces, no two parts lying in the same place, scattered through woods where it was hard to find. Someone told me about my daughters' dreadful deeds when I had already come back inside the walls into the city, with old Teiresias, from the Bacchae.
1225	πάλιν δὲ κάμψας εἰς ὄρος κομίζομαι τὸν κατθανόντα παῖδα Μαινάδων ὕπο. καὶ τὴν μὲν Ἀκταίων' Ἀρισταίῳ ποτὲ τεκοῦσαν εἶδον Αὐτονόην Ἰνώ θ' ἅμα ἔτ' ἀμφὶ δρυμοῖς οἰστροπλῆγας ἀθλίας, τὴν δ' εἶπέ τίς μοι δεῦρο βακχείῳ ποδὶ στείχειν Ἀγαύην, οὐδ' ἄκραντ' ἠκούσαμεν·	So I turned back to the mountain, and I'm bringing home the boy the maenads killed. I saw Autonoe, who bore Actaeon to Aristaeus long ago, and Ino with her, still in the oak thickets, the poor women, stung by frenzy. But someone told me that Agave was coming here with dancing Bacchic steps, and what I heard was true.
1232	λεύσσω γὰρ αὐτήν, ὄψιν οὐκ εὐδαίμονα.	For I see her there, and it's no happy sight.
1233	**AGAVE** πάτερ, μέγιστον κομπάσαι πάρεστί σοι, πάντων ἀρίστας θυγατέρας σπεῖραι μακρῷ θνητῶν· ἁπάσας εἶπον, ἐξόχως δ' ἐμέ, ἣ τὰς παρ' ἱστοῖς ἐκλιποῦσα κερκίδας εἰς μεῖζον ἦκω, θῆρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν. φέρω δ' ἐν ὠλέναισιν, ὡς ὁρᾷς, τάδε λαβοῦσα τἀριστεῖα, σοῖσι πρὸς δόμοις ὡς ἂν κρεμασθῇ· σὺ δὲ πάτερ δέξαι χεροῖν· γαυρούμενος δὲ τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀγρεύμασι κάλει φίλους εἰς δαῖτα· μακάριος γὰρ εἶ, μακάριος, ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἐξειργασμένων.	**AGAVE** Father, you can make the greatest boast there is: you fathered by far the finest daughters of all mortals. All of us, I mean, but me above all. I left my shuttle at the loom and have gone on to greater things: hunting wild beasts with my bare hands. And I'm carrying in my arms, as you see, this prize of valor I've won, to hang on your house. Here, Father, take it in your hands. Be proud of my catch and invite your friends to a feast. You're blessed, blessed, now that we've done such things.
1244	**CADMUS** ὦ πένθος οὐ μετρητὸν οὐδ' οἷόν τ' ἰδεῖν, φόνον ταλαίναις χερσὶν ἐξειργασμένων. καλὸν τὸ θῦμα καταβαλοῦσα δαίμοσιν ἐπὶ δαῖτα Θήβας τάσδε κἀμὲ παρακαλεῖς. οἴμοι κακῶν μὲν πρῶτα σῶν, ἔπειτ' ἐμῶν· ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς ἐνδίκως μέν, ἀλλ' ἄγαν Βρόμιος ἄναξ ἀπώλεσ' οἰκεῖος γεγώς.	**CADMUS** Grief beyond measure, grief no eye can bear: murder done by your wretched hands! A fine victim you've struck down for the gods, and now you invite Thebes and me to the feast. Oh, no, for your misery first, and then for mine! The god, lord Bromius, has destroyed us justly, yes, but too far, and he was born of our own house.
1251	**AGAVE** ὡς δύσκολον τὸ γῆρας ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ ἔν τ' ὄμμασι σκυθρωπόν. εἴθε παῖς ἐμὸς εὔθηρος εἴη, μητρὸς εἰκασθεὶς τρόποις, ὅτ' ἐν νεανίαισι Θηβαίοις ἅμα θηρῶν ὀριγνῶτ'. ἀλλὰ θεομαχεῖν μόνον	**AGAVE** How crabby old age makes people, how sullen-eyed! I wish my son were a good hunter and took after his mother's ways when he goes out with the young men of Thebes to hunt wild beasts. But all he's good for is fighting against the god. He

13 Triglyphs are the carved blocks in the frieze above a building's columns, where hunters hung their trophies.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	οἷός τ' ἐκεῖνος. νουθετητέος, πάτερ, σοὐστίν. τίς αὐτὸν δεῦρ' ἂν ὄψιν εἰς ἐμὴν καλέσειεν, ὡς ἴδῃ με τὴν εὐδαίμονα;	needs a talking-to, Father, and you're the one to give it. Will someone call him here into my sight, so he can see me in my happiness?
1259	**CADMUS** φεῦ φεῦ· φρονήσασαι μὲν οἷ' ἐδράσατε, ἀλγήσετ' ἄλγος δεινόν· εἰ δὲ διὰ τέλους ἐν τῷδ' ἀεὶ μενεῖτ' ἐν ᾧ καθέστατε, οὐκ εὐτυχοῦσαι δόξετ' οὐχὶ δυστυχεῖν.	**CADMUS** Ah, ah. When you understand what you've done, you will suffer terrible pain. But if you stay to the very end in the state you're in now, you won't be fortunate, but you won't feel unfortunate.
1263	**AGAVE** τί δ' οὐ καλῶς τῶνδ' ἢ τί λυπηρῶς ἔχει;	**AGAVE** What isn't right here? What's painful?
1264	**CADMUS** πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τόνδ' αἰθέρ' ὄμμα σὸν μέθες.	**CADMUS** First, turn your eyes up to the sky here.
1265	**AGAVE** ἰδού· τί μοι τόνδ' ἐξυπεῖπας εἰσορᾶν;	**AGAVE** There. Why did you tell me to look at it?
1266	**CADMUS** ἔθ' αὐτὸς ἢ σοι μεταβολὰς ἔχειν δοκεῖ;	**CADMUS** Is it still the same, or does it look changed to you?
1267	**AGAVE** λαμπρότερος ἢ πρὶν καὶ διιπετέστερος.	**AGAVE** Brighter than before, and clearer.
1268	**CADMUS** τὸ δὲ πτοηθὲν τόδ' ἔτι σῇ ψυχῇ πάρα;	**CADMUS** And this fluttering excitement: is it still in your soul?
1269	**AGAVE** οὐκ οἶδα τοὔπος τοῦτο, γίγνομαι δέ πως / ἔννους μετασταθεῖσα τῶν πάρος φρενῶν.	**AGAVE** I don't know what you mean by that. But somehow I'm coming to my senses, turned away from my former mind.
1271	**CADMUS** κλύοις ἂν οὖν τι κἀποκρίναι' ἂν σαφῶς;	**CADMUS** Could you listen to me, then, and answer clearly?
1272	**AGAVE** ὡς ἐκλέλησμαί γ' ἃ πάρος εἴπομεν, πάτερ.	**AGAVE** Yes. I've forgotten what we were saying before, Father.
1273	**CADMUS** εἰς ποῖον ἦλθες οἶκον ὑμεναίων μέτα;	**CADMUS** What house did you go to when you married?
1274	**AGAVE** σπαρτῷ μ' ἔδωκας, ὡς λέγουσ', Ἐχίονι.	**AGAVE** You gave me to Echion, one of the Sown Men, as they call them.
1275	**CADMUS** τίς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις παῖς ἐγένετο σῷ πόσει;	**CADMUS** And what son was born to your husband in that house?
1276	**AGAVE** Πενθεύς, ἐμῆ τε καὶ πατρὸς κοινωνίᾳ.	**AGAVE** Pentheus, born of my union with his father.
1277	**CADMUS** τίνος πρόσωπον δῆτ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις ἔχεις;	**CADMUS** Then whose face is that you're holding in your arms?
1278	**AGAVE** λέοντος, ὥς γ' ἔφασκον αἱ θηρώμεναι.	**AGAVE** A lion's, or so the women hunting with me said.
1279	**CADMUS** σκέψαι νυν ὀρθῶς, βραχὺς ὁ μόχθος εἰσιδεῖν.	**CADMUS** Now look at it properly. It takes only a moment to look.
1280	**AGAVE** ἔα, τί λεύσσω; τί φέρομαι τόδ' ἐν χεροῖν;	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		AGAVE What? What am I looking at? What is this I'm carrying in my hands?
1281	**CADMUS** ἄθρησον αὐτὸ καὶ σαφέστερον μάθε.	**CADMUS** Look at it closely and understand it more clearly.
1282	**AGAVE** ὁρῶ μέγιστον ἄλγος ἡ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.	**AGAVE** I see the greatest grief, oh, I'm so wretched.
1283	**CADMUS** μῶν σοι λέοντι φαίνεται προσεικέναι;	**CADMUS** It doesn't look like a lion to you, does it?
1284	**AGAVE** οὔκ· ἀλλὰ Πενθέως ἡ τάλαιν' ἔχω κάρα.	**AGAVE** No. It's Pentheus' head I'm holding, wretch that I am.
1285	**CADMUS** ἡμαγμένον γε πρόσθεν ἢ σὲ γνωρίσαι.	**CADMUS** Yes, drenched in blood before you knew him.
1286	**AGAVE** τίς ἔκτανέν νιν; πῶς ἐμὰς ἦλθεν χέρας;	**AGAVE** Who killed him? How did he come into my hands?
1287	**CADMUS** δύστην' ἀλήθει', ὡς ἐν οὐ καιρῷ πάρει.	**CADMUS** Cruel truth, how ill-timed your coming!
1288	**AGAVE** λέγ', ὡς τὸ μέλλον καρδία πήδημ' ἔχει.	**AGAVE** Tell me. My heart is leaping at what's coming.
1289	**CADMUS** σύ νιν κατέκτας καὶ κασίγνηται σέθεν.	**CADMUS** You killed him, you and your sisters.
1290	**AGAVE** ποῦ δ' ὤλετ'; ἦ κατ' οἶκον; ἢ ποίοις τόποις;	**AGAVE** Where did he die? At home? Or where?
1291	**CADMUS** οὗπερ πρὶν Ἀκταίωνα διέλαχον κύνες.	**CADMUS** Where the hounds once tore Actaeon apart.
1292	**AGAVE** τί δ' εἰς Κιθαιρῶν' ἦλθε δυσδαίμων ὅδε;	**AGAVE** But why did he go to Cithaeron, poor wretch?
1293	**CADMUS** ἐκερτόμει θεὸν σάς τε βακχείας μολών.	**CADMUS** He went there to mock the god and your Bacchic rites.
1294	**AGAVE** ἡμεῖς δ' ἐκεῖσε τίνι τρόπῳ κατήραμεν;	**AGAVE** And we—how did we end up there?
1295	**CADMUS** ἐμάνητε, πᾶσά τ' ἐξεβακχεύθη πόλις.	**CADMUS** You were mad. The whole city was possessed by Bacchus.
1296	**AGAVE** Διόνυσος ἡμᾶς ὤλεσ', ἄρτι μανθάνω.	**AGAVE** Dionysus destroyed us. Now I understand.
1297	**CADMUS** ὑμῖν ὑβρισθείς· θεὸν γὰρ οὐχ ἡγεῖσθέ νιν.	**CADMUS** Yes, because you insulted him. You wouldn't believe he was a god.
1298	**AGAVE** τὸ φίλτατον δὲ σῶμα ποῦ παιδός, πάτερ;	**AGAVE** And my son's beloved body, Father, where is it?
1299	**CADMUS** ἐγὼ μόλις τόδ' ἐξερευνήσας φέρω.	**CADMUS** Here. I'm bringing it, and it wasn't easy to search out.
1300	**AGAVE** ἦ πᾶν ἐν ἄρθροις συγκεκλημένον καλῶς; / ...	**AGAVE** Is it all fitted together properly, limb to limb? ...

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1302	Πενθεῖ δὲ τί μέρος ἀφροσύνης προσῆκ' ἐμῆς;	But what share did Pentheus have in my folly?
1303	**CADMUS** ὑμῖν ἐγένεθ' ὅμοιος, οὐ σέβων θεόν. τοιγὰρ συνῆψε πάντας εἰς μίαν βλάβην, ὑμᾶς τε τόνδε θ', ὥστε διολέσαι δόμους κἄμ', ὅστις ἄτεκνος ἀρσένων παίδων γεγὼς τῆς σῆς τόδ' ἔρνος, ὦ τάλαινα, νηδύος αἴσχιστα καὶ κάκιστα κατθανόνθ' ὁρῶ, ᾧ δῶμ' ἀνέβλεφ', ὃς συνεῖχες, ὦ τέκνον, τοὐμὸν μέλαθρον, παιδὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς γεγώς, πόλει τε τάρβος ἦσθα· τὸν γέροντα δὲ οὐδεὶς ὑβρίζειν ἤθελ' εἰσορῶν τὸ σὸν κάρα· δίκην γὰρ ἀξίαν ἐλάμβανεν.	**CADMUS** He became like you: he didn't revere the god. So the god bound you all together in one ruin, you and him, to destroy the house, and me. I have no sons of my own, and now I see this young shoot of your womb, poor woman, dead in the most shameful, most horrible way. You, my child, were the one through whom the house looked up again; you held my palace together, my daughter's son, and you were a terror to the city. No one would dare insult the old man once he saw you, for you made them pay what they deserved.
1313	νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων ἄτιμος ἐκβεβλήσομαι ὁ Κάδμος ὁ μέγας, ὃς τὸ Θηβαίων γένος ἔσπειρα κἀξήμησα κάλλιστον θέρος. ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν, καὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ὢν ὅμως τῶν φιλτάτων ἔμοιγ' ἀριθμήσει, τέκνον, οὐκέτι γενείου τοῦδε θιγγάνων χερί, τὸν μητρὸς αὐδῶν πατέρα προσπτύξει, τέκνον, λέγων· τίς ἀδικεῖ, τίς σ' ἀτιμάζει, γέρον; τίς σὴν ταράσσει καρδίαν λυπηρὸς ὤν; λέγ', ὡς κολάζω τὸν ἀδικοῦντά σ', ὦ πάτερ.	Now I'll be thrown out of my house in disgrace, I, Cadmus the great, who sowed the Theban race and reaped that finest of harvests. Dearest of men (for even though you're gone, you'll still be counted among those dearest to me, child), you'll never again touch this beard with your hand, never again put your arms around me, calling me your mother's father, child, and saying: "Who's wronging you, who's dishonoring you, old man? Who's troubling your heart and causing you pain? Tell me, so I can punish whoever wrongs you, Father."
1323	νῦν δ' ἄθλιος μέν εἰμ' ἐγώ, τλήμων δὲ σύ, οἰκτρὰ δὲ μήτηρ, τλήμονες δὲ σύγγονοι. εἰ δ' ἔστιν ὅστις δαιμόνων ὑπερφρονεῖ, εἰς τοῦδ' ἀθρήσας θάνατον ἡγείσθω θεούς.	But now I'm miserable, and you are wretched, your mother is pitiful, and her sisters are wretched. If there is anyone who looks down on the gods, let him look at this man's death and believe in the gods.
1327	**CHORUS** τὸ μὲν σὸν ἀλγῶ, Κάδμε· σὸς δ' ἔχει δίκην / παῖς παιδὸς ἀξίαν μέν, ἀλγεινὴν δὲ σοί.	**CHORUS** I grieve for you, Cadmus. Your daughter's son has his punishment: deserved, but painful for you.
1329	**AGAVE** ὦ πάτερ, ὁρᾷς γὰρ τἄμ' ὅσῳ μετεστράφη	**AGAVE** Father, you see how completely my life has been overturned ... ...
1330	**DIONYSUS** ... ... δράκων γενήσει μεταβαλών, δάμαρ τε σὴ ἐκθηριωθεῖσ' ὄφεος ἀλλάξει τύπον, ἣν Ἄρεος ἔσχες Ἁρμονίαν θνητὸς γεγώς. ὄχον δὲ μόσχων, χρησμὸς ὡς λέγει Διός, ἐλᾷς μετ' ἀλόχου, βαρβάρων ἡγούμενος. πολλὰς δὲ πέρσεις ἀναρίθμῳ στρατεύματι πόλεις· ὅταν δὲ Λοξίου χρηστήριον διαρπάσωσι, νόστον ἄθλιον πάλιν σχήσουσι· σὲ δ' Ἄρης Ἁρμονίαν τε ῥύσεται μακάρων τ' ἐς αἶαν σὸν καθιδρύσει βίον.	**DIONYSUS** ... ... You will be changed into a serpent, and your wife will be turned into a beast and take on the shape of a snake: Harmonia, Ares' daughter, whom you married though you were mortal. As Zeus' oracle says, you will drive an ox-cart with your wife, at the head of foreign peoples. With an army beyond counting you will sack many cities; but when they plunder the oracle of Loxias, they will have a miserable journey home. Ares, though, will rescue you and Harmonia and settle you to live in the land of the blessed. I tell you this as the son not of a mortal father but of

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ταῦτ' οὐχὶ θνητοῦ πατρὸς ἐκγεγὼς λέγω Διόνυσος, ἀλλὰ Ζηνός· εἰ δὲ σωφρονεῖν ἔγνωθ', ὅτ' οὐκ ἠθέλετε, τὸν Διὸς γόνον ηὐδαιμονεῖτ' ἂν σύμμαχον κεκτημένοι.	Zeus: I, Dionysus. If you had learned self-control back when you refused it, you would be happy now, with the son of Zeus as your ally.[14]
1344	**AGAVE** Διόνυσε, λισσόμεσθά σ', ἠδικήκαμεν.	**AGAVE** Dionysus, we beg you: we have done wrong.
1345	**DIONYSUS** ὄψ' ἐμάθεθ' ἡμᾶς, ὅτε δ' ἐχρῆν, οὐκ ᾔδετε.	**DIONYSUS** You've come to know me too late. When you should have, you didn't.
1346	**AGAVE** ἐγνώκαμεν ταῦτ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεξέρχει λίαν.	**AGAVE** We've realized that. But you're pursuing us too far.
1347	**DIONYSUS** καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ὑμῶν θεὸς γεγὼς ὑβριζόμην.	**DIONYSUS** Yes, because I, a god, was insulted by you.
1348	**AGAVE** ὀργὰς πρέπει θεοὺς οὐχ ὁμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς.	**AGAVE** Gods ought not to be like mortals in their anger.
1349	**DIONYSUS** πάλαι τάδε Ζεὺς οὑμὸς ἐπένευσεν πατήρ.	**DIONYSUS** Zeus my father decreed all this long ago.
1350	**AGAVE** αἰαῖ, δέδοκται, πρέσβυ, τλήμονες φυγαί.	**AGAVE** Oh, no. It's decided, old man: miserable exile.
1351	**DIONYSUS** τί δῆτα μέλλεθ' ἅπερ ἀναγκαίως ἔχει;	**DIONYSUS** Then why do you delay what has to be?
1352	**CADMUS** ὦ τέκνον, ὡς εἰς δεινὸν ἤλθομεν κακόν, σύ θ' ἡ τάλαινα σύγγονοί τε παῖς τε σός, ἐγώ θ' ὁ τλήμων βαρβάρους ἀφίξομαι γέρων μέτοικος· ἔτι δέ μοὐστὶ θέσφατον εἰς Ἑλλάδ' ἀγαγεῖν μιγάδα βάρβαρον στρατόν. καὶ τὴν Ἄρεως παῖδ' Ἁρμονίαν δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν δράκων δρακαίνης σχῆμ' ἔχουσαν ἀγρίας ἄξω 'πὶ βωμοὺς καὶ τάφους Ἑλληνικούς, ἡγούμενος λόγχαισιν· οὐδὲ παύσομαι κακῶν ὁ τλήμων, οὐδὲ τὸν καταιβάτην Ἀχέροντα πλεύσας ἥσυχος γενήσομαι.	**CADMUS** Child, what a terrible disaster we've come to: you, poor woman, and your sisters, and your son, and I, wretched me! I'll go to live among foreign peoples, an old man in a strange land. And there's still an oracle that I'll lead a mixed foreign army against Greece. And my wife, Harmonia, Ares' daughter, I'll lead, a serpent leading her in the form of a savage serpent, against the altars and tombs of Greece, at the head of spearmen. I, wretched man, will never rest from troubles; not even when I've sailed down the Acheron will I find peace.[15]
1363	**AGAVE** ὦ πάτερ, ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ στερεῖσα φεύξομαι.	**AGAVE** Father, and I'll be parted from you and go into exile.
1364	**CADMUS** τί μ' ἀμφιβάλλεις χερσίν, ὦ τάλαινα παῖ, / ὄρνιν ὅπως κηφῆνα πολιόχρων κύκνον;	**CADMUS** Why do you throw your arms around me, my poor child, like a young bird clinging to an old gray swan, a useless drone?
1366	**AGAVE** ποῖ γὰρ τράπωμαι πατρίδος ἐκβεβλημένη;	**AGAVE** Where can I turn, driven out of my homeland?
1367	**CADMUS** οὐκ οἶδα, τέκνον· μικρὸς ἐπίκουρος πατήρ.	

14 Loxias is a title of Apollo, whose oracle was at Delphi. Harmonia, daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, was Cadmus' wife.
15 The Acheron is a river of the underworld, crossed by the dead.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		CADMUS I don't know, child. Your father is a poor helper now.
1368	**AGAVE** χαῖρ', ὦ μέλαθρον, χαῖρ', ὦ πατρία πόλις· ἐκλείπω σ' ἐπὶ δυστυχίᾳ φυγὰς ἐκ θαλάμων.	**AGAVE** Farewell, my home; farewell, city of my fathers. I leave you in misfortune, an exile from my chamber.
1371	**CADMUS** στεῖχέ νυν, ὦ παῖ, τὸν Ἀρισταίου	**CADMUS** Go now, my child, to Aristaeus'—
1373	**AGAVE** στέρομαί σε, πάτερ.	**AGAVE** I'm losing you, Father.
	CADMUS κἀγὼ σέ, τέκνον, / καὶ σὰς ἐδάκρυσα κασιγνήτας.	**CADMUS** And I you, child, / and I have wept for your sisters.
1375	**AGAVE** δεινῶς γὰρ τάνδ' αἰκίαν Διόνυσος ἄναξ τοὺς σοὺς εἰς οἴκους ἔφερεν.	**AGAVE** Terrible is the outrage that lord Dionysus has brought upon your house.
1377	**DIONYSUS** καὶ γὰρ ἔπασχον δεινὰ πρὸς ὑμῶν, / ἀγέρατον ὄνομ' ἔχων ἐν Θήβαις.	**DIONYSUS** Yes, for I suffered terribly at your hands, / my name left unhonored in Thebes.
1379	**AGAVE** χαῖρε, πάτερ μοι.	**AGAVE** Fare well, my father.
	CADMUS χαῖρ', ὦ μελέα / θύγατερ. χαλεπῶς εἰς τόδ' ἂν ἥκοις.	**CADMUS** Fare well, my poor / daughter, though faring well will come hard to you.
1381	**AGAVE** ἄγετ' ὦ πομποί με, κασιγνήτας ἵνα συμφυγάδας ληψόμεθ' οἰκτράς. ἔλθοιμι δ' ὅπου μήτε Κιθαιρὼν μιαρός μ' ἐσίδοι μήτε Κιθαιρῶν' ὅσσοισιν ἐγώ, μήθ' ὅθι θύρσου μνῆμ' ἀνάκειται· Βάκχαις δ' ἄλλαισι μέλοιεν.	**AGAVE** Take me, escorts, to where I'll find my sisters, my pitiful companions in exile. May I go where foul Cithaeron will never see me, nor I set eyes on Cithaeron, nor anywhere a thyrsus is dedicated to remind me. Let other Bacchae care for such things.
1388	**CHORUS** πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων, πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί· καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη, τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον ηὗρε θεός. τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.	**CHORUS** Many are the shapes of what the gods send, and many things the gods bring about beyond hope. What was expected was not fulfilled, and for the unexpected the god found a way. So this matter has turned out.