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ALCESTIS

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

The notes in this edition have been carefully revised, and in some cases re-written, upon reconsideration of the points involved, or from the suggestions of several friends and correspondents who have favoured me with their communications. With respect to the present note on l. 52, I agree with Mr. Sidgwick in regarding the use of the optative for the subjunctive, and not the omission of ēv, as the proper subject of enquiry. I may state however that this had occurred to me independently of his note on Agamemnon, l. 20; but I am glad to have the opportunity of expressing my entire concurrence with the view which he there maintains.

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Woodcote House School, Windlesham,
August, 1883.
INTRODUCTION.

Early career of Euripides.—Plot of the Alcestis.—Tragedy and the ‘Satyric’ Drama.—The Alcestis a ‘pro-satyric’ play.—Forms of the original myth, and Euripides’ treatment of it.—Arrangement of scenes.—The characters of the play: Alcestis, Admetus, Pheres, Heracles.—The concluding scene.—Criticism of the play.—Euripides compared with his predecessors; his religious and political opinions.—Alcestis by other authors.—Text of this edition and MSS. of Euripides.

Euripides, the son of Mnesarchus or Mnesarchides, was born B.C. 480, the year of the battle of Salamis. He was thus a younger contemporary of Aeschylus, about fifteen years junior to Sophocles, and eleven or twelve years older than Socrates, who afterwards became his friend and one of his chief supporters. He appears to have devoted himself in early life to the pursuit of literature and the fine arts, and to have been the pupil of Anaxagoras, Protagoras, and Prodicus. In 455 B.C. (the year Aeschylus died) Euripides produced his first tragedy, the Peliades, no longer extant; and in 441 he gained the first tragic prize for a ‘trilogy,’ or group of three plays, the names of which have not been preserved. Two years later (B.C. 439) came the group containing the Alcestis and three others; for these Euripides gained only the second prize, the first being awarded to Sophocles. From this it is clear that although Alcestis is the earliest play that has survived (except the doubtful Rhesus), it is by no means a youthful effort, since it was produced when the author was over forty years of age, and in the maturity of his powers. It may be well to bear this in mind, when we come to examine the criticism, favourable or adverse, that has been passed upon the play itself.
INTRODUCTION.

The plot is briefly as follows. Admetus, king of Pherae, being destined to die, Apollo, grateful to him for past kindness during an enforced term of servitude, obtains leave of the Fates for the king to provide a substitute. After all his friends and relatives, even his aged parents, have declined to grant him the favour of dying in his stead, his wife Alcestis alone is found willing to undertake such a sacrifice; she accordingly dies, after taking an affectionate farewell of her husband and children. In the midst of their mourning Heracles arrives on his road to Thrace, where he has a certain 'labour' to perform at the bidding of his master Eurystheus. Admetus welcomes him as an old friend, and without mentioning his great sorrow presses him to accept hospitality, but excuses himself from joining his guest in the banquet-hall. During the meal Heracles scandalises the attendant by his boisterous behaviour in a house of mourning; but learning from him the true state of the case, he abandons in a moment his ill-timed levity, and rushes forth to the tomb, resolved to do battle with Death for his victim. After a severe struggle he rescues Alcestis from the grasp of her destroyer, brings her back to the palace veiled, and places her in the arms of her husband. This done, the hero goes on his way, promising to visit Admetus again on his return from the Thracian land.

It was the custom at Athens, during the greater Dionysiac festival, to present three tragedies in succession, usually but not always on kindred subjects; these were followed by a short after-piece of a lighter kind, known as a 'Satyric' play, and the whole formed a 'tetralogy' or series of four plays. Now, since the Alcestis was the last of such a series, it has been thought to be either a genuine satyr piece, or at least to partake of the satyric character. This is not a mere question about a name, and the answer to it must be sought in the origin of the Athenian drama. That drama took its rise from the dithyramb (διθύραμβος), a name given to lyric odes (afterwards developed into regular choruses) expressing the 'sufferings' (πάθη) of Dionysus. Herein, under the figure of varying fortunes undergone by the god himself, the natural changes of the seasons were portrayed. These odes constituted acts of worship, and the worshippers identified themselves with Dionysus, and imagined themselves to
be similarly affected. The actors¹ (as we may now call them) wore the costume of Satyrs, the traditional companions of Bacchus, and thus the Satyric disguise was an integral element in Tragedy² from the very first. But soon, by a process of refinement of which we have no exact account, the choruses were transferred from subjects connected with Dionysus to the other gods and heroes of Greek mythology, and then of course the costume and dances of Satyrs became inappropriate. This gave rise to the 'Satyric drama' as distinct from tragedy proper; a sportive piece, though not a comedy, in which Satyrs and such-like creatures still played a prominent part. The separation of this kind of drama from tragedy is supposed to have taken place about 520 B.C. or perhaps a little later; and it explains the custom we have noted, of introducing a 'Satyric' farce as an after-piece to the series of three tragedies, known as a 'trilogy.' The only extant specimen is the Cyclops of Euripides, in which we have a Chorus of Satyrs introduced as servants of Polyphemus, and finally delivered from their bondage by Ulysses and his companions. A comparison of the plot of this play with that of the Alcestis will show that the latter is not one of the true 'Satyric' kind; though we have seen that it occupied the place of one in the tetralogy above referred to. The connexion is not difficult to trace. The old Satyric drama was formed of tragic materials; its constituents were firstly Satyrs, that is beings far removed from civilisation, immodest and uncouth, but comparatively harmless to mankind; nay even beneficent sometimes, in a clumsy sort of way, as representing the jovial side of human nature. Secondly, there were brutal monsters, half divine and half human, who spurn all laws, and whose vast strength and powers of mischief render them positive nuisances to society. Hence it is the function of heroes, especially of Hercules, to rid the earth of such pests; and thus the subjugation of savage

¹ The addition of an actor (ὄποκριτής) answering the chorus, and thus giving rise to a regular dialogue, came much later. We are now speaking only of the members of the chorus itself, which was the germ of the whole.

² There is little doubt that the name Τραγωδία arose from the 'goat-like' appearance of the actors in their Satyr dress.
monsters by superior force became the staple of a Satyric play. Neither of these elements is wanting in the Alcestis. Its plot turns upon the subjugation of Thanatos, or Death, a most injurious monster, who excites terror from the first scene onwards, until he is forced by Heracles to surrender his victim. Again, in the banquet-scene the hero exhibits that jovial satyr-like side of his character, which enabled him in intervals of relaxation to give full vent to mirth and jollity, and made him the traditional companion of Satyrs on all festive occasions. The Alcestis therefore, in virtue of such scenes as these, was no un-}

fitting substitute for the conventional Satyric after-piece.

In its main situations it is a tragedy of the most pathetic kind, and this notwithstanding its happy termination, although Aristotle asserts that this is fatal to the essence of a true tragic plot. We do not think that Euripides would have accepted this dictum, since so many of his plays either have a distinctly fortunate end, or at least provide something by way of compensation for the previous misfortunes of the hero. And if, as Aristotle implies, the proper design of Tragedy be to excite and afterwards allay the emotions by means of pity and fear¹, there are few plays better calculated to produce the desired effect than the one we are considering. It has been called a 'tragi-comedy'; but this, in our opinion, is a mistake. Of the three scenes usually cited in support of this view, that between Admetus and his father is too real, too terribly earnest, to be in any sense comic; while Apollo’s dialogue with Death and the banquet scene of Heracles have been referred to their proper place in the Satyrlic drama, which had no connexion with comedy. At the same time it may be admitted, that the Alcestis never reaches the summit of tragic terror, as compared with other plays, for instance the Medea.

¹ He speaks of 'the purgation (καθαρσis) of the emotions through pity and fear.' Whatever may be the exact meaning of this much disputed phrase, the metaphor is obviously a medical one, and describes the calming and moderation of these emotions after a sort of feverish excitement previously aroused. By learning to keep his 'pity and fear' within due bounds, and to direct them upon right objects, a man will attain the true pleasure derivable from tragedy.
The whole plot is so managed as to call forth the softer emotions, and is, as Hartung describes it, 'idyllic' rather than 'tragic' in the most exact sense of the term.

The original myth on which the plot rests is told by different writers with certain variations. Its earliest form appears to be this. Apollo, being forced to serve Admetus because he had slain the Cyclopes, and having been well treated by his master, helped him to get Alcestis in marriage from her father Pelias, king of Iolcos, the condition being that the intended husband should yoke together a boar and a lion in one chariot. Next Admetus incurred the anger of Artemis by neglecting to sacrifice to her at the marriage feast; and being in danger of his life he was saved by Apollo’s intercession and the substitution of Alcestis in his room. Euripides takes up the story at this point, and alleges the slaughter of the Cyclopes, ‘forgers of the divine fire,’ as the reason of Apollo’s servitude. Another version made this servitude an act of expiation on the part of the god for having slain the Python, which obliged him to purify himself from the stain of bloodshed. Pherae was the place of this purification, and the whole scene was enacted every eighth year in a *theoria*, or sacred procession, between that town and Delphi. Now whereas the Python represented a demon power and was associated with the old Chthonian or Earth-worship, it has been supposed that Apollo’s master was none other than Hades himself, who was often designated by the title of Αἴδημητος, or the ‘Invincible.’ This seems to be confirmed by the fact that Hecate, a goddess of the under-world, was worshipped at Pherae under the title of Θεά Φεραία. Hermann sees in the whole account a mythical representation of actual events in connexion with the Delphian Apollo. He supposes that when an attempt was first made to substitute his purer worship for the old Chthonian rites (symbolised by the Python, as the guardian of the Earth’s oracle at Delphi), the votaries of the god were driven to take refuge at

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1 Hence Wilken, in his dissertation *De Alcestide Euripidea* (1868), proposes a fourth division of the drama, to which he would give the distinctive name of ‘pathetic.’

2 See *Alcestis*, ll. 5–7. Another version of the story is given further on.
Pherae, where they were hospitably received and allowed to build a temple. Afterwards the inhabitants of the neighbouring Iolcos were admitted, in consideration of their superior resources, to a share in their solemnities, and the ritual of Apollo was celebrated with increased splendour by both states conjointly. This is thought to be symbolised in the marriage of the Pheraean Admetus with the Iolcian Alcestis, whose name (derived from ἀλκή) indicates wealth and power. Some dissensions having arisen, the new cultus soon began to decline, and was only saved from perishing by the voluntary surrender of the temple treasures, which however were afterwards recovered by the aid of a superior foreign force. It is unnecessary to point out the bearing of these latter incidents upon the traditional story of Admetus, and it is far from improbable that some real events, such as Hermann suggests, may have determined the form in which it appears. Lastly, the legend has been referred to that ever-recurring series of old-world myths, which the sun in his yearly course, the alternations of light and darkness, and all the varying phenomena of Nature are supposed to have suggested. In these the bondage of Apollo in the house of Admetus and the subjection of Heracles to Eurystheus alike represent the Sun, toiling in his unwearied round for the benefit of mortal men; and in the tale of Alcestis Heracles appears 'as the kindly benefactor, who goes down into the dark land, and there wrests from the grasp of death the fair twilight, which dies away at sundown, to be brought back again in the morning.'

But however interesting it may be to speculate upon the probable sources of the myth, what we have chiefly to consider is the use made of it by Euripides as a dramatist. He of course took the story as he found it, selecting such incidents as suited his purpose, and treated it simply as a domestic drama of modern Athenian life, the supernatural element being assumed as perfectly familiar in what must have been to most of the spectators a 'nursery tale' of their childhood. But since, as Aristotle observes in his Poetics, there are some to whom even the best known stories are unknown, the poet, following the fashion of

1 Cox, Tales of Ancient Greece, Introduction, p. xxxiii.
2 Also for an opposite reason. The very fact that these legendary
his time, introduces his plot by a short explanatory prologue, spoken in the person of Apollo, and afterwards passing into a dialogue between him and Death. This latter portion has been censured by some critics; unjustly as we think. If there seems to be anything repulsive \textit{per se} in the notion of a barter of lives with Death, we must remember that this is an integral part of the legend; moreover the failure of Apollo to establish a commercial transaction with his adversary is quite in keeping with the character of one who 'alone of all deities regardeth not bribes.' That Phœbus should appear in direct conflict with the monster from whose power he had already delivered Admetus is natural enough, and the colloquial style of their encounter is sufficiently excused, at least in a 'pro-satyric' play, by the well-known fondness of the Athenians for disputations of this kind. We may be sure that Euripides purposely so arranged his opening scenes, that from the outset he might arouse the interest and amuse the fancy of his audience. As to the exquisite art with which the first Act is managed, there can be no question. The radiant Archer-god, 'a stationed glory' at the portal, the black-robed demon Death, the chorus distraught with fears for the royal house, and hoping even against hope—all this appeals most powerfully to the feelings, and marks the poet as a consummate master of his art. As a dramatic personage, Thanatos may be put by the side of Cratos and Bia (Strength and Force) in the \textit{Prometheus}, Lyssa (Madness) in the \textit{Hercules Furens}, and the Lar Familiaris in the \textit{Aulularia} of Plautus. Similarly in the old stories \textit{were} so well known may have made the poet less careful about 'spoiling the plot' (as we should say) by giving a sketch of it beforehand.

1 The Quarterly Review, for instance, characterises the dialogue between Apollo and Death as 'only fit for a couple of higglers at a pig-fair.' \textit{Q. R.} on Monk's \textit{Alcestis}, vol. xv. p. 115 (1816).

2 See pp. viii, ix.

3 Browning, \textit{Balaustion}, p. 25. The whole of this passage should be read in illustration of the text.

4 \textit{i.e.} not merely personified in narrations or addresses, as in \textit{Hom. II.} iv. 231; Soph. \textit{Aias}, 864, &c.
English ‘Morality plays’ Death and the Fool are pitted against each other, the latter trying various shifts to elude his adversary, but always being beaten by him in the end. Milton also, in the *Paradise Lost*, introduces Sin and Death as persons, who were intended to appear as characters in his drama, according to the original design of the poem.

The character of *Alcestis*, in whom the chief interest of the play is centred, presents less difficulty than those of Admetus and his father Pheres. She is a model of female heroism and wifely devotion, unrivalled in history or fiction; and her self-sacrifice is due, not to any depreciation of her own life—\[\text{ψυχής γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐστὶ τιμητέρου (l. 301)}\]—but to a high sense of duty combined with pure unselfishness. Even her love for Admetus, though unquestionably real, is not represented as the ruling motive of her action. Her last address to him is rather dignified than tender. She speaks of her voluntary death as an act prompted by ‘reverence’ toward himself; one moreover that she was in no way bound to perform, had not his parents failed in what was clearly their duty. But since ‘the gods had so ordered it,’ her life must needs be sacrificed for the life of him, upon whom the fortunes of the royal house depended. All her expressions of love and tenderness are reserved for her children, the future ‘rulers of my house¹,’ and all her thoughts, till the moment of her departure, are occupied with anxiety about their welfare. The conception of a heroine so noble, even if it stood alone in his plays, would be sufficient to show that Euripides was not the persistent ‘woman-hater’ he is commonly supposed to have been². The recognition of unselfish patriotism as the ruling motive in the case of Alcestis may help us to understand the conduct of Admetus, both as regards his wife, and as regards his father

¹ Τούτους ἀνάσχου δεσπότας ἐμὼν δόμων, l. 304.
² This epithet (μυσογύνης), so far as it describes his hatred of female profligacy prevalent in his day, is amply justified by numerous passages in his plays. Yet we may appeal to his conception of heroines like Alcestis, Iphigenia, Macaria, and others, to show that he could appreciate the virtues of the other sex wherever he found them.
Pheres. At first sight he is simply a craven, and all his professions of conjugal affection seem mere hypocrisy, because after all he might have resigned himself to his fate, and neither sought nor accepted any substitute. Hence various alterations of the plot have been suggested; that of Hermann, for instance, who thinks Alcestis might have been made to devote herself without the knowledge of Admetus, who should have discovered the truth only when too late to save her life\(^1\). But this would be to rewrite, not only the play, but the legend on which it is founded. The story required that somehow Admetus should save his own life at another's expense, and Euripides had to deal with this requirement as he best could. This he does very cleverly; for by concentrating our attention upon the crowning virtues of Admetus, his piety and his hospitality to strangers, and by describing his sorrow for the lost one in language that seems to assure us of its reality, he contrives to make us forget that the queen's life might have been saved, and that no 'inevitable bond of necessity'\(^2\); but the free will of a loving wife, fulfilling her husband's desire, was the occasion of her doom. But in fact the conduct of Admetus needed little excuse to an Athenian audience. From the Greek point of view the life of one man was better than that of ten thousand women\(^3\), and the life of a king, ruling for his subjects' good, was the most valuable of all. This patriotic consideration is taken for granted, and is implied rather than distinctly urged even in the altercation between Admetus and Pheres, where the value of their respective lives is the principal point in question. That scene is outrageously repulsive to modern feeling; not so, we presume, to the minds of the original spectators, to whom it would be only too real. The extreme contempt for old age prevalent in Athens during the fifth century B.C. is remarkable even in that enterprising time, when, as we can easily understand, the feebleness of declining years must have been an unmitigated

\(^1\) This device is adopted by Wieland, also (with variations) in the lately published play of Alcestis by Mr. Todhunter, who works out his plot from this starting-point with considerable skill.

\(^2\) Chorus, l. 984 καὶ ο’ ἐν ἀφύκτοισι χερῶν εἶλε θεὰ δεσμοῖς.

\(^3\) εἰς γ’ ἄνηρ κρείσσων γυναικῶν μυρίων ἀραν φάος. Ἰφ. in Aulide, 1394.
misfortune\(^1\). Yet the fact is patent to every student of the Athenian dramatists, and the language of Admetus to his father by no means exaggerates it. Pheres perhaps excites more of our sympathy than Euripides might have thought justifiable, and may appear to us to get rather the best of the argument; but no Athenian of that time would for one moment hesitate to condemn the deplorable selfishness of an old man, who preferred dragging out an ignominious existence to the glory of dying for his son\(^2\), who was the king of the land. The culminating point of baseness is reached in his avowal—κακῶς ἀκούειν ὑπὲρ μέλει θανώτει μοι, which Admetus, true to Greek ideas about ‘reputation after death,’ stigmatises as a ‘shameless sentiment’\(^3\). When besides all this we consider the amusement which this smart wordy encounter would afford to a repartee-loving Athenian audience, we may safely conclude that the scene in question was one of the most popular in the play.

We must not then, if we would understand the Alcestis aright, allow our modern ideas either of gallantry or of reverence to old age to warp the judgment, when dealing with those of another people and of other times, however revolting to our imagination such views of conduct may be\(^4\). Nevertheless, although Euripides has done the best for Admetus under the circumstances,

\(^1\) See Mahaffy’s Euripides, p. 108, and the passage he quotes from the Supplices, l. 1080, beginning ὡς δυσπόλαιστον γῆρας, ὡς μισῶ σ’ ἔχων.

\(^2\) Contrast the sentiment of Andromache (l. 410 of the play), when, called to choose between her own life and that of her son, she exclaims—ἐμοὶ δ’ ὄνειδος μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ τέκνου.

\(^3\) Joddrell compares the prayer of Maecenas in Seneca, who calls it ‘a base begging for life’—

‘Debilem facito manu,  
Debilem pede, coxa;  
Tuber adstrue gibberum;  
Lubricos quate dentes.  
Vita dum superest, bene est.’

\(^4\) As was the case with Ovid, writing thus to his wife from exile—

‘Si mea mors redimenda tua, quod abominor, esset,  
Admeti conjunx, quam sequereris, erat.’

Epist. ex Ponto, iii. i, 105.
he has hardly succeeded in making his character interesting. He is pious, liberal, hospitable even to a fault,—the whole plot indeed turns upon the reward of piety—he will do nothing that he considers base, he loves the company of the good; but he lacks the active manly virtues of stoutheartedness, resolute defiance of danger, even of fortitude under misfortune. Euripides himself seems to have had some misgivings on this point, since he makes Admetus deprecate the probable reproach of 'an enemy' (he says nothing about its justice) for his cowardly fear of death and want of filial affection. And though his life was spared, he was left so hopelessly wretched, as to make the remainder of it useless to himself and his people. Hence, to avert a public misfortune, some means of restoring Alcestis must be found; and what so welcome to an age that was shortly to produce the Phaedo, as a sequel which told of a triumph over the powers of the infernal world?

The character of Heracles will be best understood from our previous observations on the Satyric drama. The banquet scene, in which he plays so boisterous a part, would indeed have been out of place in a pure tragedy, but is quite in keeping with the requirements of a piece, such as we believe the Alcestis to be. In this play Heracles appears to great advantage in comparison with his true 'Satyric' character, so far as we can judge from the fragments that have come down to us. The dramatists generally take strange liberties with the redoubtable Tirynthian hero, representing him as a voracious glutton, whom no amount of meat and drink can satisfy. 'If you could but see him eat!' says Epicharmus in the Busiris. 'How he clashes his jaws, gnashes his grinders, snorts through his nostrils and lifts his ears! and hark, what a blast of wind comes roaring through his gullet!' In the Alcestis there is just enough of this element (taking the servant's report as literal fact) to give a flavour to the scene. But in the main Heracles appears as an intrepid generous soul, enjoying the good things of life while he may, and accepting its rough side with cheerfulness, even death itself, if needful. He is not drunk, but 'filled with food and gladness;' he esteems the present hour alone as worth enjoying, and invites the
servant to join in his mirth, because he cannot bear to see a fellow-creature in melancholy mood, when he believes there is no occasion for it. But mark the sudden change when he learns the truth about Alcestis. The knowledge of it sobers him in a moment; he is instantly ready for action and rushes to the rescue. Now, as Mr. Browning finely expresses it—

'In a spasm and splendour of resolve
All at once did the god surmount the man';

and Heracles appears in his true character as the 'helper of mankind.' So regardless is he of good cheer merely for its own sake and at the wrong time, that even after his fierce struggle with the demon king he will not stay and share the rejoicings of Admetus for the recovery of Alcestis, but starts at once upon a new enterprise. The heroism of Heracles has been profitably contrasted with that of Alcestis. If he had been required to perish by some lingering malady to save the life of his friend, he would never have consented; for by such an act no meed of valour, no manly fame was to be won, nor was there anything to counterbalance the sacrifice of a noble and most valuable life. Even for Admetus to contend with his wife on this ground would, as we have seen, according to Greek notions have been inexcusable.

With respect to the alleged 'stupidity of Heracles, in not conjecturing the cause of the mourning in the house of Admetus,' we do not think the allegation is well founded. As a wild adventurous rover, little accustomed to scenes of domestic life, he would hardly be expected to know the precise amount of sorrow the death of a 'stranger woman' might cause in the royal household, especially after the assurance of his host that the deceased had been a dear friend of the family. Moreover (as Hermann justly observes), had Heracles guessed the truth at once, and insisted on his apprehensions being satisfied, so impulsive a creature must have rushed instantly to the rescue, and thus have

1 Balaustion, p. 119. Mr. Browning's delineation of the character of Heracles is perhaps his most successful effort.
2 Hartung, Euripides Restitutus.
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precipitated the catastrophe of the play. It was far better to make the deliverance of Alcestis an act of expiation for abused hospitality, though the fault were committed unwillingly and in ignorance. It has been judged an unnecessary aggravation of his dulness of understanding to make Heracles aware of the queen's undertaking to save her husband's life. There is some justice in this criticism, although it is not unreasonable to suppose that Heracles might have been informed of a fact well known in the surrounding district. All we can say is that Euripides could not have managed otherwise, taking the scene as it stands, since Admetus had no other way of justifying the double entente—ἔστιν τε κοιμέτ' ἔστιν—than by reference to the undertaking which made her 'as good as dead' to him. He could not have related the circumstances here, without interrupting the dialogue, as well as repeating what had been previously told in the opening scene of the play; hence it was simpler to suppose his guest to be already aware of the facts. On the whole, Heracles is a fine noble character, second to none, save that of the heroine herself. 'The contrast of his homely practical force with the luxurious effusiveness of Admetus is one of the happiest features in the play. His victory moreover is greatly enhanced by the powerlessness of Apollo, the friend of the house, to obtain more than an exchange of victims: and the grim dialogue of Apollo and Death is clearly intended to show the miraculous powers of the mighty hero.'

The last scene (from l. 1006 onwards) is admirably contrived. A sudden formal restoration of Alcestis to her husband would have made but a tame conclusion; but the sustained mystery

1 βία δὲ θυμοὶ τάσιν ὑπερβαλὸν πόλας
      ἐπινοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐν φιλοξένου δόμοις. Il. 829, 830.
2 Wilken, de Alcestide, p. 25, commenting on l. 524—
      οἶδ' ἀντὶ σοῦ ἕκασθαι ἀφετεῖν ὑφειμένην.
3 The maid-servant tells the Chorus, l. 156—
      καὶ σάτα μὲν δὴ πᾶσ' ἐπισταταὶ πόλις.
This certainly includes the township of Pherae, even if it has no wider application. See note on l. 156.
4 Mahaffy, Euripides, p. 106.
about the veiled lady raises the excitement of the spectators to the highest pitch. More than once does Admetus seem in danger of losing his wife for ever by his persistent refusal to receive the stranger, and only when she is actually placed in his arms and the veil removed do we feel sure that the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice is not about to be reproduced with variations. The turn of the dialogue gives Heracles an opportunity of retaliating upon his host in a friendly way for the previous mystification as to the cause of his sorrow, while Admetus is enabled to prove his constancy to the departed by asserting his resolve to comply with her dying request that he would never marry again. Moreover, the generosity of his nature is a second time put to the test, when he is required to receive a strange woman (as he believes) into his house under such trying circumstances. Yet even this trial, though he shrinks at first, he will not forego; all for the love of his friend.

The silence of Alcestis is at first sight strange, especially as an opportunity would otherwise have been afforded for introducing pathetic addresses, in the composition of which Euripides excelled. But first there was the difficulty about employing a third actor, and secondly there was a real belief in the necessity of silence before purification in cases of ceremonial uncleanness. Also by representing Alcestis as not even yet entirely emancipated from the power of Hades, the fact of her having really died, which might otherwise have been doubted, is clearly enforced. The combat with Death might indeed have been described by a messenger, or by Heracles himself. This however would only have prolonged the action of the play unnecessarily, and would not have been an original idea, for we learn from a fragment of the earlier Alcestis of Phrynichus that some such combat was there described. There are, it must be admitted, signs of hurry in the conclusion. The short speech

1 Compare the request of Alcestis, l. 305—

καὶ μὴ 'πιγῆμη τοῖοδε μητριῶν τέκνων—

with ll. 1087, etc.

2 See note on l. 1143.

3 Hermann, Dissertatio de Alcestide, p. xiii (Monk).
INTRODUCTION.

of Admetus especially, ending with the bare statement οὗ γὰρ εὐτυχῶν ἀμνήστομαι, seems inadequate to the joy of the occasion. But in his bewilderment at such an unexpected change of fortune, few words were perhaps best for him, and Euripides probably felt that the play was already long enough for its purpose, as the fourth of a tetralogy, and that its main interest was over by this time.

Although the Alcestis cannot, from its exceptional character, be fairly taken as a representative play, it is not lacking in suggestive materials for the student of Euripides as a dramatist. To assign this poet his true place in tragedy has always been a difficult task, and from his own time to the present he has been praised or censured alternately, as the legitimate improver or the vulgar degrader of tragic art. Lately a reaction has arisen in his favour, and there is danger lest his merits should even be overrated; but modern critics are at any rate alive to the fact, that any estimate of Euripides must be one-sided which fails to take into account the exceptional circumstances of the times. That was a period of transition, of free thought and enquiry, and our poet had become deeply imbued with the sceptical spirit, which pervaded Athenian society towards the close of the fifth century B.C. Hence he is necessarily inconsistent, and often self-contradictory in dealing with questions of religion, politics, social order, and public or private morality. Now inasmuch as the drama had long been recognised at Athens as a legitimate vehicle of instruction, it follows that the mental attitude of the poet towards all these questions will be found reflected in his plays. What this means in the case of Euripides is best seen by comparing him with his two great predecessors.

Aeschylus, with his earnest reverent faith in the reality of divine government, made Nemesis, or the law of divine retribution, the predominant motive of his tragedies. So absorbed was he in this one great religious idea, that he concentrates the

1 See Paley's Preface to vol. i of his Euripides; Symonds' Greek Poets, 1st Series, chap. vii; Mahaffy's Euripides, p. 30.

2 The Greek drama has been regarded as combining the functions of the modern pulpit and of the daily press. It did all this, and more.
whole attention upon its working, and introduces his heroes less as individual characters than as living illustrations of the law. Sophocles, while he upholds the law in all its rigour, bids us mark the characters of those under its influence; we are shown the *men*, Oedipus, Aias, and the rest; and their sins and consequent suffering are viewed as a discipline or ‘school of affliction.’ The ancestral curse of the legend is there, but in the back-ground, and the moral law reigns supreme. With Euripides all this is so greatly changed, that some have denied his belief in tragic destiny or in any ‘moral order’ of things whatever. This is untrue. Euripides takes humanity just as he finds it; only he does not dogmatise upon the causes of human misfortune, ascribing it either to the anger of an avenging deity or to breaches of the ‘unwritten laws divine.’ He was a thinker, and lived, as we have said, in a thinking age, which was subjecting the old foundations of belief to a most rigorous scrutiny. Hence he varies in his assertions, at one time referring the conduct of human affairs to Chance (τύχη), at another time to Necessity (ἀνάγκη). He could not honestly uphold the popular creed as a whole, seeing that much of it was degrading and immoral; yet he hesitates to adopt the conclusion that no religion is best for man. His desire was for a system of practical morality, freed from the element of superstition; and though he sometimes despairs, he seems on the whole to have believed that such a system was attainable. But since the popular creed was a deep-seated fact, he could not ignore its existence, nor banish the gods entirely from his stage. The time-honoured constituents of tragedy might not be altered or set aside, but often, it must be confessed, the poet is at war with his materials. The *Alcestis* is a good instance of such a conflict; the more so, because it exhibits no overt signs of rebellion against orthodox beliefs. It is founded upon an ancient sacerdotal legend; its moral is the reward of piety—not in the abstract, but to a god as a god; the continued prosperity of Admetus being the result of his good

1 Bunsen, *God in History*; Schlegel, *Dramatic Literature*; Donaldson, *Greek Theatre*.
services first to Apollo, secondly to Heracles. Still there is an amount of 'free handling' of sacred subjects, that might well have shocked the sensibilities of a devout old-fashioned Athenian. The human element of deity, in its least creditable aspect, is emphasised, not to say exaggerated, in the record of the mutual jealousies of Zeus and Apollo, with which the play opens, and in the unseemly wrangle of the latter with Death about their respective 'prerogatives.' Here certainly, and to some extent in the 'banquet scene' also, we feel that Euripides is taking full advantage of the licence which a 'pro-satyric' piece allowed him, of saying in effect to his audience—'These be the gods ye worship!' Again, the irresistible power of destiny, so strongly manifested throughout the play and in the fine ode to Necessity (ll. 964, &c.), is overcome at last by mere physical force, in the rescue of one of Death's victims without any compensation to the infernal powers. Lastly, the heroine herself is actuated rather by a sense of practical piety than of religion. Her attitude towards the gods is one of resignation, nor does she neglect the customary acts of devotion, prayer and the decoration of altars when the fatal day has come. Still on her death-bed she seems hardly to recognise the deities, save as adverse powers that vex her, calling not upon them, but upon the clear light of day, the fleeting clouds and the halls of her loved Iolcos, in spite of her husband's solicitation—λίσσον δὲ τοὺς κρατοῦντας οἰκτέιραι θεοὺς.

Compared with some of our author's later plays, the Alcestis is not altogether an extreme specimen of innovation upon earlier dramatic traditions. Its emotional and pathetic character, the predominant interest of its plot, its scenic effects, exhibitions of repartee and other accessories—all mark it as distinctively

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1 ὀσίοις γὰρ ἀνδρὶς ὤν ἐν ἐν τῷ γανω, I. 10.
2 θεοσεβὴ φωτα κεδνα πράειεν, I. 605.
3 ll. 162-172.
4 'Sun and thou light of day, and heavenly dance
O' the fleet cloud-figure . . . nuptial chamber
In that Iolkos of my ancestors.'—Browning.
5 See Mahaffy, Euripides, pp. 45, 46, for the distinction between dramas of 'plot' and those of 'character' and 'situation.'
'Euripidean.' On the other hand, the complications of the plot do not excite our curiosity so far as to draw off our attention from the separate characters of the play, two of whom, Admetus and Heracles, have always been a fertile subject for discussion. We miss also the later devices of the deus ex machina, or arbitrary interference of a god at the conclusion, and of the long explanatory prologue; that in the *Alcestis* being merely a brief summary of the previous circumstances, but not (save by a bare hint at ll. 65, &c.), anticipating the catastrophe. The Chorus especially retains the functions assigned to it in the older drama. Originally it performed its part alone; after one or more actors were introduced, it still spoke or sang in sympathy with them, and as one deeply interested in the action. But in proportion to the development of the dialogue, this function of the Chorus decreased in importance; soon the Chorus itself became a mere accessory, and finally ceased to appear at all. The religious element of the drama, in connexion with the worship of Dionysus, was giving way to the purely theatrical; and this was a sign of the times which no poet, even had he wished, could have effectually resisted. But in the *Alcestis*, as in *Hecuba* and some other plays, the Choral odes are all in harmony with the successive scenes of the action. The interest felt by the old men of Pherae in the fortunes of the royal house is intense; they mourn or rejoice in concert with their king, 'as friend with friend;' in accordance with the rule afterwards laid down by the Roman critic—

> 'Actoris partes chorus officiumque virile
> Defendat, neu quid medios intercinat actus
> Quod non proposito conducat et haereat apte.'

The story of *Alcestis* has been dramatised by other poets besides Euripides. A verse, apparently from a satyric play, by Sophocles, describing the servitude of Apollo, is quoted by

1 As in the *Hippolytus, Supplices, Ion, Helena, Electra, Orestes*, and probably in both the *Iphigenias*.
2 ὁς φίλος φίλῳ, l. 369.
3 Horace, *Ars Poet.* 193. See the sequel of this citation in the note on l. 674.
Plutarch. Phrynichus we have already mentioned (p. xx), and Athenaeus has preserved some lines of an *Alcestis* by the comic poet Antiphanes. In Latin, Naevius, Accius, and possibly Ennius, treated the same subject, but it is doubtful whether the work of Accius was an original effort of genius, or merely a translation from Euripides. Passing to modern times, we find an Italian *Alcestis* by Martello (1715), in which great liberties are taken with the old plot; and towards the end of the same century Alfieri translated and afterwards imitated the Euripidean play. On the French stage a revival of the Greek drama by means of translations and adaptations began about the sixteenth century. Euripides was especially popular, and *Alcestis* was a favourite theme. An opera with this title by Quinault and Lully was performed in 1674; Grange-Chancel wrote an *Alcestis* in 1703, (in which the heroine, on her return from Hades, utters the single word ‘Admète’); in 1727 appeared Boissy’s play entitled *Admète et Alcestes*. It is said also that Racine, struck by the beauty of the legend, designed an *Alcestes* to follow his *Andromaque* (1668), but changed his mind shortly before his death. Mr. Todhunter’s *Alcestis* (1879) has been mentioned above (p. xv). Previously no English poet seems to have chosen this theme (Mr. Browning’s *Balaustion* being professedly a ‘transcript from Euripides’ with comments between); but Shakespeare had made use of the conclusion of the story in the last scene of his *Winter’s Tale*.

The text of this edition follows the readings of the best MSS. so far as possible. It therefore fairly represents the text of Kirchhoff (8vo. edition). Emendations are marked with an asterisk, and passages retained on the authority of the MSS., but obviously corrupt, are marked with an obelus.

It may be well to state briefly that the most trustworthy MSS. of Euripides, containing the *Alcestis*, are the Codex Vaticanus of the twelfth century, and the Codex Havniensis of a later date, marked by Kirchhoff as B and C respectively. Those of fair

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1 See note to l. 1121.
repute are the Harleian (from l. 1031 to end of play), the Palatine, No. 287, in the Vatican library, and the Florentine, No. 2, marked A, B, and C; four others (one Parisian and three Florentines), marked a, b, c, d, by the same editor, are of quite secondary importance.

A small treatise entitled Euripidea, by Siegfried Mekler, has lately been published at Vienna. One at least of his suggestions deserves notice. In ll. 673, 674 the chorus interposes with the distich—

$$\text{ταύσασθε} \: \\: \text{άλις γὰρ ἡ παροῦσα συμφορὰ,}$$

$$\text{ω παι} \: \text{πατρὸς δὲ μὴ παροξύνῃς φρένας.}$$

Here the words ω παι were reasonably suspected by more than one editor, as unsuitable in the mouth of courtiers addressing their king, and as probably repeated by mistake from the following line—δε παι, τίν’ αἰχεῖς, &c. Also the plural ταύσασθε seemed inappropriate, when only one of the parties had as yet spoken. Mekler, therefore, noticing that elsewhere the chorus always addresses Admetus by his name, has proposed to read 'Αδμηθ' αλις γαρ, &c., and ταυσα for ω παι in the next line. He endeavours to show, by a comparison of the two readings when written in capitals, how the mistake might have arisen. In l. 795 he suspects an interpolation from ll. 829, 832 of the words τάσσει υπερβαλὼν πύλας (τύχας), στεφάνοις πυκασθείς, and a similar interpolation in l. 817 of καὶ κουρᾶν ... στολμοῦσ τε, proposing to read ὑμῖν for ἡμῖν and assigning the whole line (with καὶ κουρᾶν, &c., omitted) to Heracles. We leave these last conjectures to the judgment of competent critics, but have thought it worth while to record them, as among the latest contributions to text criticism upon this play.

1 Euripidea, Textkritische Studien, von Siegfried Mekler, Wien, 1879.
2 The MSS. reading: the present text has αναξ.
DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Apollo
Alcestis
Pheres
Heracles
Thanatos
Admetus
Maid-Servant
Man-Servant
Eumelus, a Muta Persona (l. 394).

Chorus of Pheraean Old Men.
ΕΥΡΙΠΙΔΟΥ ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ.

'Ω δώματ' 'Αδμήτει', ἐν οἷς ἔτην ἔγω θέεσαν τραπεζὰν αἰνέσαι, θεὸς περ ὁν. Ζεὺς γὰρ κατακτᾶσ παιδὰ τὸν ἐμὸν αἰτίος 'Ἀσκληπιὸν, στέρνουσιν ἐμβαλὼν φλόγαν ὡδὴ χολωθεὶς τέκτονας ὅλου πυρὸς κτείνω Κύκλωπας καὶ μὲ θητεύειν πατήρ θυτὶ παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῶν ἀποῦ ἡμάγκασεν. ἐλθὼν δὲ γαίαν τὴν ἐβουφόρβου ξένον, καὶ τὸν ἐσωζὸν οἶκον ἐς τὸ ἡμέρας. ὅσιον γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ὅσιοι ὅν ἐτύγχανον, παιδὸς Φέρητος, ὃν θανεῖν ἐρρυσάμην Μοίρας δολῶσας· ἥμεσαν δὲ μοι θεαὶ 'Αδμητον ζῷν τὸν παρατίκ' ἐκφυγεῖν, ἄλλου διαλλάξατα τοῖς κἀτω νεκρόν. πάντας δὲ ἐλέγξας καὶ διεξέλθων φίλους, πατέρα γεραιῶν θ' ἥ σφ' ἔτικτε μητέρα, ὦχε εὔρε πλὴν γυναικῶς ἦτις ἦθελε θανεῖν πρὸ κείνου μηδ' ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν φάος, ἥ νῦν κατ' οὐκοῦσ ἐν χεροῖν βαστάζεται ψυχορραγοῦσα· τηδε γὰρ σφ' ἐν ἡμέρα θανεῖν πέπρωται καὶ μεταστήναι βίου.
ἔγω δέ, μὴ μίασμά μ’ ἐν δόμοις κίνη, λείπω μελάθρων τώνδε φιλτάτην στέγην. ἡδη δέ τὸνδε Θάνατον εἰσορᾶ πέλας, ἱερὴ θανόντων, ὃς νῦν εἰς "Αιδοΰ δόμους μέλλει κατάξειν" συμμέτρως δ’ ἀφίκετο φρουρῶν τὸδ’ ἡμαρ, ὃ θανεῖν αὐτὴν χρεῶν.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ.

ἄἄ.
tί σὺ πρὸς μελάθροις; τί σὺ τῆδε πολείς, Φοίβ; ἀδίκεις αὖ τιμᾶς ἐνέρων ἀφοριζόμενοι καὶ καταπαύων. οὐκ ἤρκεσέ σοι μόρον Ἄμβητον διακωλύσαι, Μοῖρας δολίῳ σφήλαντι τέχνη; νῦν ο’ ἐπὶ τῆδ’ αὖ χέρα τοξήρη φρουρεῖς ὀπλίσας, ἢ τόδ’ ὕπεστὶ πόσιν ἐκλύσασ’ αὐτὴ προθανεῖν Πελίου παῖς.

ΑΠ. θάρσει; άλκην τοι καὶ λόγους κεδυνοὺς ἕχω. ΘΑ. τί δήτα τόξων ἐργοῦ, εἰ δίκην ἔχεις; ΑΠ. σύνηθες ἄει ταῦτα βαστάζειν ἐμοί.

ΘΑ. καὶ τοῦσδέ γ’ οἶκοις ἐκδίκως προσῳφελεῖν. ΑΠ. φίλοι γὰρ ἀνδρὸς συμφοραὶς βαρύνομαι.

ΘΑ. καὶ νοσφεῖς με τοῦδε δευτέρου νεκροῦ; ΑΠ. ἀλλ’ οὕτ’ ἐκεῖνον πρὸς βίαν σ’ ἀφειλόμην.

ΘΑ. πῶς οὖν ὑπὲρ γῆς ἐστί κοῦ κάτω χθονός; ΑΠ. δάμαρτ’ ἀμείβας, ἢν σὺ νῦν ἤκεις μέτα.

ΘΑ. κατάξομαι γε νερτέραν ὑπὸ χθόνα.

ΑΠ. λαβὼν ἦθ’ οὐ γὰρ οἶδ’ ἄν εἰ πείσαμι σε.

ΘΑ. κτείνειν ὅν ἄν χρῆ; τοῦτο γὰρ τετάγμεθα.

ΑΠ. οὖκ, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μέλλονσι θάνατον ἐμβαλεῖν.

ΘΑ. ἐχὼ λόγον ὅτι καὶ προθυμίαν σέθεν.
ΑΠ. ἐστ' οὖν ὅπως Ἀλκηντίς ἐς γῆρας μόλοι; ΘΑ. οὐκ ἔστιν τιμαῖς κἀμὲ τέρπεσθαι ὀδόκει. ΑΠ. οὔτοι πλέον γ' ἂν ἢ μίαν ψυχήν λάβοις. ΘΑ. νέων φθινόντων μείζον ἄρισται γέρας. ΑΠ. κἀν γραῦς ὀληται, πλουσίως ταφήσεται. ΘΑ. πρὸς τῶν ἐχόντων, Φοῖβε, τὸν νόμον τίθης. ΑΠ. πῶς εἶπας; ἀλλ' ἢ καὶ σοφὸς λέληθας ὁν; ΘΑ. ἀφόντ' ἂν οἷς πάρεστι γηραιώς θανεῖν. ΑΠ. οὐκοιν δοκεὶ σοι τίνυδε μοι δοῦναι χάριν; ΘΑ. οὐ δήτ' ἐπίστασαι δὲ τοὺς ἐμοὺς τρόποις. ΑΠ. ἔχθροὺς γε θυτοῖς καὶ θεοῖς στυγουμένους. ΘΑ. οὐκ ἄν δύναιον πάντ' ἔχειν ἢ μή σε δεῖ. ΑΠ. ἡ μήν οὖ παύσει καίπερ ὁμὸς ἢν ἀγαν' τοῖος Φέρητος ἔστι πρὸς δόμους ἀνήρ, Εὐρυσθέως πέμψαντος ἦπειοι καὶ δὲ 

ΘΑ. πόλλ' ἂν σὺ λέξας οὐδὲν ἂν πλέον λάβοις; ἡ δ' οὖν γυνὴ κάτεισιν εἰς Ἀιδοῦ δόμους. στεῖχω δ' ἐπ' αὐτήν, ὡς κατάρξωμαι ἔιφει' ἱερὸς γὰρ οὕτοι τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς θεῶν ὅτου τὸδ' ἐγχος κρατῶς ἀγνίσῃ τρίχα.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ.

τὸ ποθ' ἴσχυς πρόσθε μελάθρων; τὸ σεσφυται δόμος Ἀδρήτου;

ΗΜ. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ φίλων πέλας οὐδεις, ὡστὶς ἂν εἴποι πότερον φθυμένην 

Βασίλειαν χρή πειθεῖν, ἡ ζωσ'
ἐτὶ φῶς [τόδε] λεύσσει Πελίου παῖς
"Αλκηντις, ἐμοὶ πᾶσι τ’ ἀρίστη
δόξασα γυνῇ
πόσιν εἰς αὐτῆς γεγενήσθαι.

HM. κλύει τις ἡ στεναγμὸν ἡ
χερῶν κτύπου κατὰ στέγας
ἡ γόνων ὡς πεπραγμένων;
οὐ μᾶν οὖδε τις ἀμφιπόλων
στατίζεται ἀμφὶ πύλαις.

HM. εἰ γὰρ μετακύμιος ἀτας,
ὡ Παιὰν, φανεῖς.

HM. οὐ τὰν φθιμένης γ’ ἐσιώπων.
HM. οὐ γὰρ δὴ φροίδος γ’ ἐξ οἴκων.
HM. πόθεν; οὐκ αὐχώ. τί σε θαρσύνει;
HM. πῶς ἄν ἔρημον τάφον Ἀθηνητος
κεδυῆς ἄν ἔπραξε γυναικός:
HM. πυλῶν πάροιθε δ’ οὐχ ὅρῳ
πηγαίον ὡς νομίζεται
χέρνιβ’ ἐπὶ φθιτῶν πύλαις,
χαίτα τ’ οὔτις ἐπὶ προθύροις
tομαῖος, ἃ δή νεκύων
πένθει πίτυν, οὐ νεολαίᾳ
δουπεὶ χείρ γυναικῶν.

HM. καὶ μὴν τόδε κύριον ἥμαρ,
HM. τι τόδ’ αὐθός;
HM. φ’ χρῆν σφε μολεῖν κατὰ γαίας.
HM. ἔθιγες ψυχῆς, ἔθιγες δὲ φρενῶν.
HM. χρῆ τῶν ἀγαθῶν διακανιμένων
πενθεῖν ὡστὶς
χρηστός ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς νενόμισται.
ΧΟΡΟΣ.

ἀλλ' οὗδε ναυκληρίαν ἐσθ' ὅποι τις αἰας
στείλας ἡ Λυκίας
εἰτ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἀνύδρους
'Αμμωνίδας ἐδρας
dυστάνον παραλύσαι
ψυχάν' μόρος γὰρ ἀπότομοις
πλάθειν θεῶν δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραις
οὐκ ἐξω ἐπὶ τίνα
μηλοθύταιν πορευθῶ.
μόνος δ' ἂν εἰ φῶς τόδ' ἦν
οἴμασιν δεδορκῶς
Φοίβου παῖς προλιποῦσ'
ἡλθεν ἐδρας σκοτίους
"Αἰδαὸ τε πῦλας"
ἰμαθέντας γὰρ ἀνίστη,
πρὶν αὐτόν εἰλε διόβολον
πλῆκτρον πυρὸς κεραυνίου.
νῦν δὲ τίν' ἐτι βίον
ἐλπίδα προσδέχομαι;
πάντα γὰρ ἡδη τετέλεσται βασιλεύσιν,
pάντων δὲ θεῶν ἐπὶ βωμοῖς
ἀιμάρραντοι θυσίαι πλήρεις,
οὐδ' ἐστὶ κακῶν ἄκος οὐδέν.

ἀλλ' ἦδ' ὅπαδῶν ἐκ δόμων τις ἐρχεται
dακρυφροοῦσα· τίνα τόχην ἀκούσομαι;
pενθεῖν μὲν, εἰ τι δεσπόταισι τυγχάνει,
συγγινωστόν' εἰ δ' ἐτ' ἐστίν ἐμψυχός γυν' ἠτ' ὅν ὀλωλεν εἰδέναι βουλομέθ' ἂν.
ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ.

καὶ ζώσαν εἰπεῖν καὶ θανούσαν ἔστι σοι.

ΧΟ. καὶ πῶς ἂν αὐτὸς κατθάνοι τε καὶ βλέποι;

ΘΕ. ὢν ἑρωτήματι ἔστι καὶ ψυχορραγεῖ.

ΧΟ. ὥ τλῆμον, οἴας οἶος ἂν ἀμαρτάνεις.

ΘΕ. οὔπω τὸδ’ οἴδε δεσπότης, πρὶν ἂν πάθη.

ΧΟ. ἐλπὶς μὲν οὐκέτ’ ἔστι σώζεσθαι βίον;

ΘΕ. πεπρωμένη γὰρ ἣμέρα βιάζεται.

ΧΟ. οὐκοῦν ἐπ’ αὐτῇ πράσσεται τὰ πρόσφορα;

ΘΕ. κόσμοι γ’ ἔτοιμοι, ὃ σφε συναθάψει πόσις.

ΧΟ. ἵστω νυν εὐκλείης γε κατθανομένη

γυνὴ τ’ ἀρίστη τῶν υφ’ ἥλιῳ μακρῷ.

ΘΕ. πῶς δ’ οὐκ ἀρίστη; τίς δ’ ἐναντίωσεται;

τὶ χρὴ γενέσθαι τὴν ὑπερβεβλημένην

γυναῖκα; πῶς δ’ ἂν μᾶλλον ἐνδεξαῖτό τις

πόσιν προτιμῶσ’ ἡ θέλουσ’ ὑπερθανεῖν;

καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὅτι πᾶσ’ ἐπίσταται πόλις;

ἀ δ’ ἐν δόμοις ἐδρασε θαυμάσει κλύων.

ἐπει γὰρ ἡσθεθ’ ἡμέραν τὴν κυρίαν

ἡκουσαν, ὑδασὶ ποταμῖοι λευκὸν χρόα

ἐλοῦσατ’, ἐκ δ’ ἐλοῦσα κέδρίνων δόμων

ἐσβήτα κόσμον τ’ εὐπρεπῶς ἡσκήσατο,

καὶ στᾶσα πρόσθεν ἐστίας κατηφύσατο.

‘δέσποιν’, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔρχομαι κατὰ χθονὸς,

πανόστατον σε προσπίνους’ αἰτήσομαι,

τέκν’ ὑρφανείσαι τάμα, καὶ τῷ μὲν φίλῃ

σύζευξοι ἄλοχον, τῇ δὲ γενναίον πόσιν.

μηδ’ ὠσπέρ αὐτῶν ἢ τεκοῦσ’ ἀπολλυμαι

θανεῖν ἀφῶς παιδας, ἀλλ’ εὐδαίμονας

ἐν γῇ πατρῴᾳ περπατοῦν ἐκπλήσσαι βίον.’

πάντας δὲ βωμοὺς οἱ κατ’ Ἀδμήτου δόμους
προσήλθε καξέστεψε καὶ προσηύξατο, πτόρθων ἀποστίζουσα μυρσίνης φόβην, ἀκλαυστὸς, ἀστενακτὸς, οὐδὲ τούπιον κακοῦ μεθίστη χρωτὸς εὐειδῆ φύσιν. καπεῖτα θάλαμον εἰςπεσοῦσα καὶ λέχος, ἐνταῦθα ὃ ἥδακρυσε καὶ λέγει τάδε. ʼὯ λέκτρον, ἐνθα παρθενεὶ ἐλυο' ἐγὼ κορεύματ' ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς, οὐ θυνήσκω πέρι, χαῖρ': οὐ γὰρ ἐχθαίρῳ σ'. ἀπάλεσας δὲ μὲ μόνην' προδούναι γὰρ σ' ὁκνοῦσα καὶ πόσων 180 θυνήσκω. σὲ δ' ἀλλή τις γυνὴ κεκτήσεται, σώφρων μὲν ὁκ ἀν μᾶλλον, εὐτυχῆς δ' ὅσως.' κυνεὶ δὲ προσπίτνουσα, πᾶν δὲ δέμνιον ὄφθαλμοτέγκτῳ δεύεται πλημμυρίδι. ἔπει δὲ πολλῶν δακρύων εἰχεν κόρον, 185 στείχει προωντῆς ἐκπεσοῦσα δεμνίων, καὶ πολλὰ θάλαμον ἐξίουσ' ἐπεστράφη, κάρρυψεν αὐτῆν αὖθις ἐς κοίτην πάλιν. παῖδες δὲ πέπλων μητρὸς ἕξηρτημένου ἐκλαιον' ἢ δὲ λαμβάνουσ' ἐς ἀγκάλας ἡπάξετ' ἀλλοι' ἀλλον, ὡς θανομένη. πάντες δ' ἐκλαιον οἰκέται κατὰ στέγας δεσπούναν οἰκτείρουτες. ἢ δὲ δεξιῶν προοίμων' ἐκάστῳ, κοῦτις ἢν οὕτω κακὸς ὅν οὐ προσεῖπε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν. 195 τοιαύτ' ἐν οἷοισ ἐστὶν Ἀδμητῶν κακά. καὶ καθανῶν τ' ἀν ὀλετ', ἐκφυγὼν δ' ἔχει τοσοῦτον ἄλγος, οὐποθ' οὔ λελήσεται. Χ. ᾗ ποιον στενάξει τοιοῦτ' Ἀδμητῶς κακοῖς, ἐσθλῆς γυνακός ξει στερηθήμεναὶ σφε χρῆ; 200 Θ. κλαίει γ', ἀκουστίν ἐν χεροῖν φίλην ἔχων, καὶ μῆ προδοῦναι λίσσεται, τὰμήχανα
ζητῶν· φθίνει γὰρ καὶ μαραίνεται νους· παρειμένη δὲ, χειρὸς ἄθλιον βάρος,
όμοις δὲ καίτερ σμικρὸν ἐμπνέουσ᾿ ετί· 205
βλέψαι πρὸς αὐγάς βούλεται τὰς ἥλιον,
ὡς οὐποτ᾽ αὕθες, ἀλλὰ νῦν πανύστατον
ἀκτίνα κύκλον θ᾽ ἥλιον προσόψεται.
ἀλλ᾽ εἴμι καὶ σὴν ἀγγελὸν παρουσίαν·
oὐ γάρ τι πάντες εὖ φρονοῦσι κοιράνοις,
ὥστε ἐν κακοῖσιν εὐμενεῖς παρεστάναι.
σὺ δ᾽ εἰ παλαιὸς δεσπότας ἐμοῖς φίλος.

ΗΜ. ἰῶ Ζεῦ, τίς πῶς πά πόρος κακῶν στΡ. α．
γένοιτο καὶ λύσις τόχας ἃ πάρεστι κοιράνοις;
ΗΜ. ἐξεισὶ τις; ἢ τέμοι τρίχα, 215
καὶ μέλανα στολμῶν πέπλων ἀμφιβαλώμεθ᾽ ἤδη;
ΗΜ. δὴ λα μὲν, φίλοι,
δὴ λά γ᾽, ἀλλ᾽ ὁμος
θεοῖσιν εὐχώμεσθα· θεῶν [γὰρ] δύναμις μεγίστα.
ΗΜ. ὁ ναξ̄ Παίαν,
ἐξευρέ μηχανάν τιν᾽ Ἀδημήτῳ κακῶν,
pορίζε ὃς πορίζε· καὶ πάρος γὰρ
tοῦτο ἐφεύρε τούτο, καὶ νῦν
λυτήριος ἐκ θανάτου γενοῦ,
φονιών τ᾽ ἀπόπαυσον Ἀιδαν. 220
ΗΜ. παπαῖ, φεῦ, παπαῖ, φεῦ· ἰῶ, ἰῶ.
ἀντ. α．
ὁ παῖ Φέρντος, οἳ ἐπραξάς δάμαρτος σᾶς στερεῖς.
ΗΜ. ἃρ᾽ ἄξια καὶ σφαγᾶς τάδε,
καὶ πλέον ἢ βρόχῳ δέρην ouseranίων πελάσσαι; 230
ΗΜ. τῶν γὰρ οὐ φίλαν,
ἀλλὰ φιλτάταν
γυναῖκα κατθανοῦσαν ἐν ἀματί τῶ ἐπόγει.
ΗΜ. ἰδον ἰδον,
ἡδ᾽ ἐκ δόμων δὴ καὶ πόσις πορεύεται.
βόασον ὂ, στέναξον ὡ Φεραία
χθὼν, τὰν ἀρίσταν
γυναῖκα μαραινομέναν νόσῳ
κατὰ γὰς χθόνιον παρ’ ἂνδαν.

ΧΟ.
οὔποτε φήσω γάμον εὐφραίνειν
πλέων ἢ λυπεῖν, τοῖς τε πάροιθεν
τεκμαιρόμενος καὶ τάσδε τύχας
λεύσων βασιλέως, ὡστις ἀρίστης
ἀπλακῶν ἀλόχον τῆς ἀβίωτον
τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον βιοτεύσει.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ.

"Αλκε καὶ φάος ἀμέρας,
οὐράνιαὶ τε δῖναι νεφέλας δρομαῖον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ.

ὄρῳ σε κάμε, ὅυο κακῶς πεπραγότας,
οὐδὲν θεοὺς ὑράσαντας ἀνὰ ὅτον θανεῖ.

ΑΛ. γαλά τε καὶ μελάδρων στέγαι

νυμφίδιοι τε κοίται πατρὰς Ἰωλκοῦ.

ΑΔ. ἔπαιρε σαντήν, ὡ τάλαινα, μὴ προδός.

λίσσον δὲ τοὺς κρατοῦντας οἰκτείραι θεοὺς.

ΑΛ. ὁρῷ δίκωπον ὁρῷ σκάφος,

νεκῶν δὲ πορθμεὺς

ἐξὼν χέρ’ ἔπι κοντῷ Χάρων μ’ ἤδη καλεῖ: 'τί μέλλεις;

ἐπείγουν σὺ κατείργεις.' τάδε τοῖ με σπερχόμενος τα-

χύνει.

ΑΔ. οὐμοὶ πικρὰν γε τίμιδε μοι ναυκληρίαν

ἐλέγας. ὡ δύσδαμον, οἷα πάσχομεν.

ΑΛ. ἰγεὶ μ’ ἰγεὶ μὲ τις, οὐχ ὀρῆσ; ἀντ. γ’.

νεκῶν ἐς αὐλὰν
υπ’ ὀφφύσι κυαναγέσι βλέπων πτερωτὸς Ἀιδας. τί βέεις; ἂφες. οἶναν ὅδον ἄ δειλαιοτάτα προβαίνω.
ΑΔ. οικτρὰν φίλουσιν, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μάλιστ’ ἐμοὶ καὶ παισίν, οἰς δὴ πένθος ἐν κοινῷ τόδε. 265
ΑΛ. μέθετε μέθετε μ’ ὑδη.
κλίνατ’, οὐ σθένω ποσὶ.
πλησίον Ἀιδας’
σκοτία δ’ ἐπ’ ὄσοις υψε ἐφέρπει.
τέκνα τέκν’, οὐκέτι ὑδη
οὐκέτι μάτηρ σφῶν ἔστιν.
χαροντες, ὁ τέκνα, τόδε φάος ὅρδον.
ΑΔ. οἴμοι τὸδ’ ἔπος λυπρὸν ἄκοιω
καὶ παντὸς ἐμοὶ θανάτου μείζων.
μὴ πρὸς σε θεῶν τλῆς με προδοῦναι,
μὴ πρὸς παῖδων, οὐς ὀρφανεῖς,
ἀλλ’ ἀνὰ τόλμα:
σοῦ γὰρ φθιμένης οὐκέτ’ ἄν εἰη
ἐν σοι δ’ ἐσμὲν καὶ ζῆν καὶ μὴ
σήν γὰρ φιλίαν σεβόμεσθα.
ἌΔ. Ἐδμηθ’, ὅρασ γὰρ τὰμὰ πράγμαθ’ ὡς ἔχει,
λέξαι θέλω σοι πρὶν θανεῖν ἄ βούλομαι.
ἐγὼ σε πρεσβεύουσα καντὶ τῆς ἐμῆς
ψυχῆς κατασκήνασα φῶς τὸδ’ εἰσοράν,
θυῆσκω, παρόν μου μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ σέθεν,
ἀλλ’ ἀνδρα τε σχεῖν Θεσσαλῶν ὅν ἦθελον,
καὶ δῶμα ναίειν ὀλβιόν τυραννίδι,
οὐκ ἦθελησα ζῆν ἀποσπασθεῖσα σου
ἔν παισίν ὀρφανοῖσιν οὖδ’ ἐφεισάμην
ἡβης ἔχουσα δῶρ’, ἐν οἷς ἐτερπόμην.
καίτοι σ’ ὁ φύσας χῇ τεκοῦσα προῦδοσαν,
280
καλῶς μὲν αὐτοῖς καθανεῖν ἥκον βίον,
καλῶς δὲ σώσαι παῖδα κεύκλεος θανεῖν.
μόνος γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦσθα, κοῦτις ἐλπὶς ἢ
σοὺ καθαρώντος ἀλλὰ φιτόσειν τέκνα.
καγώ τ' ἂν ἔξων καὶ σὺ τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον,
κούν ἂν μονωθεῖς σῆς δάμαρτος ἐστενες,
καὶ παῖδας ὀρφάνενες. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
θεῶν τις ἔξεπραξεν ὡσθ’ οὕτως ἔχειν.
εἰεν’ σὺ νῦν μοι τῶν ἀπόμισαι χάριν,
αἰτήσομαι γὰρ σ’ αξίαν μὲν οὕποτε;

ψυχῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστι τιμωτέρον
δίκαια ὅ’, ὡς φήσεις σὺ τούσδε γὰρ φιλεῖς
οὐχ ἠσον ἢ ’γω παῖδας, εἶπερ εὖ φρονεῖς;
τούτους ἀνάσχου δεσπότας ἐμῶν ὁμῶν,
καὶ μὴ ’προφήτης τοῦσδε μητρυῖαν τέκνοις,

ἡτις κακίων ὁδ’ ἐμῶν γυνὴ φθόνῳ
τοῖς σοίσι κάμοις παισὶ χείρα προσβάλει.
μὴ ἡτα δράσης ταῦτά γ’, αἰτοῦμαι σ’ ἐγώ.
ἐχθρά γὰρ ἢ ’πιοῦσα μητρυῖα τέκνοις
τοῖς πρόσθ’ ἐχίδνης οὐδέν ἥπιωτέρα.

καὶ παῖς μὲν ἅρσην πατέρ’ ἔχει πῦργον μέγαν;
σὺ ὅ’, ὡ τέκνον μοι, πῶς κορευθῆσει καλῶς;
ποῖας τυχοῦσα συζύγου ὃ σῷς πατρί;

μὴ σοὶ τῷ αἰσχρὰν προσβαλοῦσα κληδόνα

ἡβῆς ἐν ἀκμῇ σοὺς διαφθείρῃ γάμους.
οὗ γάρ σε μήτηρ οὔτε νυμφεῦσει ποτὲ

οὔτ’ ἐν τόκοισι τοῖς σοῖς διαφθείρῃ,
παροῦσ’, ἤν’ οὐδέν μητρὸς εὐμενέστερον.

δει γὰρ θανεῖν με’ καὶ τὸδ’ οὖκ εἰς αὐριον

οὔ’ ἐσ τρίτην μοι μηνὸς ἔρχεται κακὸν,
ἀλλ’ αὐτίκ’ ἐν τοῖς μηκέτ’ οὖσι λέξομαι.
χαίροντες εὐφραίνοντες καὶ σοὶ μὲν, πόσι,
γυμνὰκ’ ἄριστην ἔστι κομπάσαι λαβεῖν,

ὅν καὶ προσεῖπτε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ.
ύμιν δὲ, παῖδες, μητρὸς ἐκπεφυκέναι.


ΑΔ. ἔσται τάδ’, ἔσται, μὴ τρέσης: ἔπει σ’ ἐγὼ καὶ ζῶσαι έἴχον καὶ θανοῦσ’ ἐμὴ γυνὴ μόνη κεκλήσει, κούτις ἀντὶ σοῦ ποτὲ τόπῳ ἄνδρα νῦμφη Θεσσαλίς προσφέγγεσται: οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως οὔτε πατρὸς εὐγενοῦς οὔτε εἴδος ἄλλως ἐκπρεπεστάτη γυνή. ἀλλὰ δὲ παῖδων τῶν ὄνησιν εὐχομαι θεοῖς γενέσθαι: σοῦ γὰρ οὐκ ἤντιμεθα. οὖσα δὲ πένθος οὐκ ἔτησιον τὸ σοῦν, ἀλλ’ ἐσ’ τ’ ἂν αἰὼν οὐμὸς ἀντέχῃ, γῦναι, στυγών μὲν ἢ μ’ ἔτικτεν, ἐχθαίρων δ’ ἐμὸν πατέρα: λόγῳ γὰρ ἦσαν οὐκ ἔργῳ φίλου. σύ δ’ ἀντιδοῦσα τῆς ἐμῆς τὰ φίλτατα ψυχῆς ἐσωσάς. ἀρά μοι στένειν πάρα τοιῶσ’ ἀμαρτάνοτι συζύγου σέθεν; παύσω δὲ κόμους συμπτωτῶν θ’ ὀμιλίας στεφάνους τε μοῦσαν θ’, ἣ κατείχ’ ἐμοὺς δόμους. οὐ γὰρ ποτ’ οὔτ’ ἂν βαρβίτου βίγοιμ’ ἔτι, οὔτ’ ἂν φρέν’ ἔξαιρομι πρὸς Λίβυν λακεῖν αὐλῶν: σύ γὰρ μου τέρψιν ἐξείλου βίου. σοφὴ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σοῦν εἰκασθέν ἐν λέκτροισιν ἐκταθήσεται, ὁ προσπεσοῦμαι καὶ περιπτύσσομαι χέρας ὄνομα καλῶν σὸν τὴν φίλην ἐν ἀγκάλαις δόξῳ γυναίκα καίπερ οὐκ ἔχων ἐχείν, ψυχρὰν μὲν, οὕμαι, τέρψιν, ἀλλ’ οὕμως βάρος ψυχῆς ἀπαντλοίην ἄν’ ἐν ο’ ὄνειρασι φοιτῶσα μ’ ἐυφραίνοις ἄν. ἥδυ γὰρ φίλους κἂν νυκτὶ λεύστειν, ὄντω’ ἂν παρῇ χρόνον.
εἰ δ' Ὄρφεῶς μοι γλῶσσα καὶ μέλος παρῆν, ὥστ' ἡ κόρην Δήμητρος ἡ κείνης πόσων ὑμνοις κηλήσαντά σ' εξ "Αδου λαβεῖν, κατήλθον ἃν, καὶ μ' οὐθ' ὁ Πλούτωνος κύων 360 οὐθ' οὐπλ κάτη ψυχοπομπὸς ἃν Χάρων ἔσχον, πρὶν ἐς φῶς σὸν καταστῆσαι βίον. ἀλλ' οὖν ἐκεῖσε προσδόκα μ', ὅταν θάνω, καὶ δῶμ' ἐτοίμαζ', ὡς συνοικῆσουσά μοι.

ἐν ταῖσιν αὐταῖς γὰρ μ' ἐπισκήψω κέδροις 365 σοί τούσδε θείαι πλευρά τ' ἐκτείναι πέλας πλευρῶσι τοῖς σοῖς: μηδὲ γὰρ θανῶν ποτὲ σοῦ χωρίς ἔην τῆς μόνης πιστῆς ἐμοί.

ΧΟ. καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σοι πένθος ὡς φίλος φίλω
λυπρὸν συνολῶ τῇσδε' καὶ γὰρ ἄξια. 370

ΑΛ. ὁ παῖδες, αὐτοὶ δὴ τάδ' εἰσηκούσατε
πατρὸς λέγουστοι μὴ γαμεῖν ἀλλην ποτὲ
gυναίκ' ἐφ' ὑμῖν μηδ' ἀτιμάσειν ἐμέ.

ΑΔ. καὶ νῦν γέ φημι, καὶ τελευτήσω τάδε.

ΑΛ. ἐπὶ τούσδε παῖδας χειρὸς εξ' ἐμῆς δέχου. 375

ΑΔ. δέχομαι, φίλον γε δώρον ἐκ φίλης χερὸς.

ΑΛ. σὺ νῦν γενοῦ τούσδ' ἀντ' ἐμοὶ μὴτρη τέκνοις.

ΑΔ. πολλὴ γ' ἀνάγκη σοῦ γ' ἀπεστηρημένοις.

ΑΛ. ὁ τέκν', ὅτε ζῆν χρῆν μ', ἀπέρχομαι κάτω.

ΑΔ. οἴμοι, τί δρᾶσω δήτα σοῦ μονούμενος;

ΑΛ. χρόνος μαλάξει σ' οὐδὲν ἐσθ' ὁ καθανάν.

ΑΔ. ἄγου με σὺν σοι πρὸς θεῶν ἄγου κάτω.

ΑΛ. ἁρκοῦμεν ἥμεις οἱ προθυήσκουτε σέθεν.

ΑΔ. ὁ δαίμον, οίας συζύγου μ' ἀποστερεῖς.

ΑΛ. καὶ μὴν σκοτεινῶν ὁμμα μου βαρύνεται. 380

ΑΔ. ἀπωλολημν ἀρ', εἴ με δῆ λείψεις, γὐναί.

ΑΛ. ὡς οὐκέτ' οὖσαν οὐδὲν ἄν λέγοις ἐμέ.

ΑΔ. ὡς οὐκέτ' οὖσαν οὐδὲν ἄν λέγοις ἐμέ.
ΑΔ. οὐ δῆθ᾿ ἐκοῦσα γ', ἀλλὰ χαίρετ', ὥ τέκνα. 389
ΑΔ. βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον. ΑΔ. οὐδὲν εἶμ' ἐτι.
ΑΔ. τί ὅρας; προπείπεις; ΑΔ. χαίρ'.
ΑΔ. ἀπωλόμην τάλας.
ΧΟ. βέβηκεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν Ἀδμήτου γυνή.

ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ.

ιὸ μοι τύχας. μαῖα δὴ κάτω
βέβακεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὥ πάτερ, ὕφ' ἀλίῳ.
προποιοῦσα δ' ἀμὸν βίον
ἀρφάνυσεν τλάμων.

ἵδε γὰρ ἰδε βλέφαρον
καὶ παρατόνους χέρας.

ὑπάκουσον, ἄκουσον, ὥ μάτερ, ἀντιάζω σ' ἐγὼ,
μάτερ ἐγὼ
..... καλοῦμαι ὁ

σὸς ποτὶ σοις πίνων στόμασιν νεοσσός.

ΑΔ. τὴν οὐ κλύουσαν οὖδ' ὁρῶσαν ῥόστ' ἐγὼ
καὶ σφῶ βαρεία συμφορᾶ πεπλήγμεθα.

ΕΥ. νεός ἐγὼ, πάτερ, λείποιμαι φίλας

μονόστολος τε ματρός; ὥ σχέτλια ὁ θ' παθῶν
ἐγὼ ἐργα . . . . σο' τε,

σύγκασι μοι κοῦρα,

..... συνέτλας'

..... ὥ πάτερ,

ἀνόνατ' ἀνόνατ' ἐνύμφευσας, οὐδὲ γῆρως
ἐβας τέλος σοίν τὰς'.

ἐφθίτο γὰρ πάρος,

οἰχομένας δὲ σοῦ, μάτερ, ὀλωλὲν οἰκὸς.

ΧΟ. Ἀδμήτ', ἀνάγκη τάσιθε συμφοράς φέρεν'

οὐ γὰρ τι πρῶτος οὐδὲ λοιðθίος βροτῶν

γυναίκος ἑσθλῆς ἢμπλάκες' γάγνωσκε δὲ
δός πᾶσιν ἡμῖν καταθανεῖν οφείλεται.

ΑΔ. ἔπισταμαι τε κοῦκ ἀφιων κακὸν τόδε προσέπτατ' εἰδὼς ὦ αὐτ' ἑτεροῦ ἡμῶν πάλαι. ἀλλ' ἐκφορὰν γὰρ τοῦδε θῆσομαι νεκροῦ, πάρεστε καὶ μένουτε ἀντηχήσατε παῖανα τῷ κἀτωθεν ἀσπόνδῳθ' θεῷ.

πᾶσιν δὴ Θεσσαλοῖσιν ὃν ἐγὼ κρατῶ πένθουσι γνωαίκοις τῆσδε κοινοῦσθαί λέγοντας κουρά ξυρίκει καὶ μελαγχήμωις πέπλοις· τεθριππάμεθα θ' οἱ ξεύγυνσθε καὶ μονάμπυκας πώλουσι, σιδήρῳ τέμνετ' αὐχένων φόβην. αὐλῶν δὲ μὴ κατ' ἀστυ, μὴ λύρας κτύπος ἐστὼ σελήνας δῶδε' ἐκπληρουμένας· οὐ γάρ τιν' ἄλλον φίλτρον θάψω νεκρὸν τοῦτ' οὐδ' ἀμείνου' εἰς ἐμ' ἀξία δὲ μοι τιμᾶν, ἔπει τέθυκεν ἀντ' ἐμοὶ μόνη.

ΧΟ. ὁ Πελίου θύγατερ, στρ. α'.

χαίρονσά μοι εἰν Ἁίδα δόμοισιν τὸν ἀνάλιον οἴκουν οἰκετεύοισιν.

ἴστω δ' Ἁίδας ὁ μελαγχαῖτας θεὸς, ὃς τ' ἐπὶ κόπα πηδαλίῳ τε γέρων νεκροπομπὸς ἤζει, πολὺ δὴ πολὺ δὴ γυναίκ' ἀρίσταν λίμναν Ἀχεροντίαν πορεύσας ἐλάτα δικότιψ. 444 πολλά σε μούσσοπόλιοι ἀντ. α'. μέλψονσι καθ' ἐπτάτονοι τ' ὅρειαν χέλυν ἐν τ' ἄλυροις κλείοντες ύμνους, Σπάρτα κύκλας ἀνίκα Καρνείου περινύσσεται ὥρα μηνὸς ἀειρομένας 450 πανυόχου σελάνας, λιπαραίσι τ' ἐν ὀλβίαις Ἀθάναις.

τοιαν ἐλιπτες θανοῦσα μολτὰν μελέων ἄοιδοῖς. 454
εἴθ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἐμοὶ μὲν εἶη, στρ. β′.
δυναίμαν δὲ σὲ πέμψαι
φάος ἐξ Ἦ' Αἴδα τερέμνων
Κωκυτοῦ τε ἰεθρῶν
ποταμία νερτέρα τε κόπα.
σὺ γὰρ, ὦ μόνα, ὦ φίλα γυναικών,
σὺ τὸν αὐτὸς
ἐτλας πόσιν ἀντὶ σάς ἀμείψαι
ψυχὰς ἐξ Ἦ' 'Αἴδα. κούφα σοι
χθῶν ἀπάνωθε πέσοι, γύναι. εἰ δὲ τι
καίνυν ἔλοιπο λέχος πόσις, ἦ μάλ' ἄν ἐμοὶ γ᾽ ἄν εἶη
στυγηθεὶς τέκνοις τε τοῖς σοῖς.
ματέρος οὐ θελούσας
πρὸ παιδὸς χθονὶ κρύψαι
dέμας, οὐδὲ πατρὸς γεραιοῦ,
*
*
*

ὁν ἐτεκὸν ὑ', οὐκ ἐτλαν ῥύεσθαι
σχετλίω, πολιαν ἔχοντε χαίταν.
οὐ ὑ' ἐν ἦβα
νέα προθανοῦσα φωτὸς οὐχεῖ.
τοιαῦτας εἰη μοι κύρσαι
συνδύαδος φιλίας ἀλόχου τὸ γὰρ
ἐν βιοτῷ σπάνιον μέρος. ἦ γὰρ ἄν ἐμοὶ γ᾽ ἄλυπος
ὁ αἰῶνος ἄν εἰνείη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ.

ξένοι, Φεραῖας τῆσδε κωμήται χθονὸς,
'Αδμητοῦν ἐν δῷμοισιν ἄρα κιγχάνω;
ΧΟ. ἔστ᾽ ἐν δῷμοισι παῖς Φέρητος, 'Ηράκλεις.
ἀλλ' εἰπὲ χρεία τὸς σε Θεσσαλῶν χθόνα
pέμπει, Φεραιῶν ἀστυν προσβήμας τὸδε.
ΗΡ. Τευνολίφ̣ πράσσω τιν' Ἐυρυσθεῖ πόνου.
ΧΟ. καὶ ποι ἀπροετεὶ; τῷ προσεξευξαὶ πλάνῳ;
ΗΡ. Ὁρηκὸς τέτρωρον Ἅμα Διομήδος μέτα.
ΧΟ. πῶς οὖν δυνήσει; μῶν ἀπειρος εἰ ἔλευν;
ΗΡ. ἀπειρος οὕτως Βιστόων ἡλθον χόνα.
ΧΟ. οὐκ ἔστω ἵππων δεσπόσαι σ᾽ ἀνευ μάχης.
ΗΡ. ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἀπειπεῖν τοῖς πόνοις οἰον τὲ μοι.
ΧΟ. κτανῶν ἄρ᾽ ἦςεις ἡ θανῶν αὐτοῦ μενεῖς.
ΗΡ. οὐ τόνῳ ἁγώνα πρῶτον ἀν οράμωμ᾽ ἐγώ.
ΧΟ. τι δ᾽ ἄν κρατῆσαι δεσπότην πλέον λάβοις;
ΗΡ. πόλους ἀπάξοι κοιράνῳ Τιρυνθίῳ.
ΧΟ. οὐκ ἐγραφέ σαλιν ἐμβαλεῖν γνάθοις.
ΗΡ. εἰ μή γε πῦρ πυνεόουι μυκτήρων ἂπο.
ΧΟ. ἀλλ᾽ ἄνθρως ἀρταμοῦσι λαυφραῖς γνάθοις.
ΗΡ. θηρῶν ῥεῖων χορτόν, οὐχ ἵππων, λέγεις.
ΧΟ. φάτνας ίδοις ἄν αἴμασιν πεφυμένας.
ΗΡ. τίνος δ᾽ ὁ θρέψας παῖς πατρὸς κομπάζεται;
ΧΟ. Ἄρεως, ξαρύσου Θερκλᾶς πέλτης ἀναξ;
ΗΡ. καὶ τόνδε τοῦμοι δαίμονος πόνον λέγεις,
σκληρὸς γὰρ ἄει καὶ πρὸς αἵτων ἔρχεται,
εἰ χρῆ με παισίων οὔς 'Αρῆς ἐγεῖνατο
μάχην ἐνυάσαι, πρῶτα μὲν Λυκᾶοι,
αὕτες δὲ Κύκνῳ, τόνδε δ᾽ ἐρχομαι τρίτον
ἀγώνα πόλοις δεσπότη τε συμβαλῶν.
ἀλλ᾽ οὕτως ἔστω ὅς τὸν 'Αλκμῆνης γόνου
τρέσαντα χείρα πολεμίων ποτ᾽ ὑφεται.
ΧΟ. καὶ μὴν οὗτος τῇσδε κοίρανοι χθονὸς
'Αδμητὸς ἔξω δωμάτων πορεύεται.
ΑΔ. χαῖρ', ὁ Διὸς παῖ Περσέως ἀφ' αἵματος.
ΗΡ. 'Αδμητε, καὶ σὺ χαῖρε, Θεσσαλῶν ἀναξ.
ΑΔ. θέλωμ' ἄν εὖνουν δ᾽ ὄντα σ᾽ ἔξεπισταμαι.
ΗΡ. τί χρῆμα κουρά τῇδε πενθῆμφ πρέπεις;
ΑΔ. θάπτειν τιν' ἐν τῇδ᾽ ἡμέρα μέλλω νεκροῦ.
ΕΥΡΙΠΙΔΟΥ

ΗΡ. ἀπ’ οὖν τέκνων σῶν πημονήν εἴργοι θεός.
ΑΔ. ζωσιν κατ’ οἴκους παϊδέες οὖς ἐφυσ’ ἐγώ. 515
ΗΡ. πατήρ γε μὴν ὁραῖος, εἴπερ οἴχεται.
ΑΔ. κάκεινος ἐστὶ χή τεκοῦσά μ’, Ἦρακλεις.
ΗΡ. οὐ μὴν γυνή γ’ ὀλωλευ Ἀλκηστίς σέθεν;
ΑΔ. διπλοῦς ἐπ’ αὐτῇ μῦθος ἐστὶ μοι λέγειν.
ΗΡ. πότερα θανοῦσας εἶπας ἡ ζωσὶς ἐτί;
ΑΔ. ἐστιν τε κοῦκέτ’ ἐστιν, ἀλγύνει δὲ με.
ΗΡ. οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον οἴο’ ἁσημα γὰρ λέγεις.
ΑΔ. οὐκ οἴσθα μοῖρας ἡς τυχεῖν αὐτὴν χρεῶν;
ΗΡ. οἴο’ ἀντὶ σοῦ γε καθανεῖν ὑφειμένην.
ΑΔ. πῶς οὖν ἐτ’ ἐστίν, εἴπερ ἥψεσεν τάδε;
ΗΡ. ἃ, μὴ πρόκλαθ’ ἁκοίτην, ἐς τὸδ’ ἀναβαλοῦ.
ΑΔ. τέθηκχ’ ὁ μέλλων, κοῦκέτ’ ἐσθ’ ὁ καθανῶν.
ΗΡ. χωρίς τὸ τ’ εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ νομίζειται.
ΑΔ. σὺ τῇδε κρίνεις, Ἦρακλεις, κελὺ δ’ ἐγώ.
ΗΡ. τὶ δήτα κλαίεις; τῖς φίλων ὁ καθανῶν;
ΑΔ. γυνὴ’ γυναικὸς ἀρτίως μεμνήμεθα.
ΗΡ. ὅθενειος, ἥ σοι συγγενῆς γεγώσα τις;
ΑΔ. ὅθενειος, ἄλλωσ δ’ ἢν ἀναγκαὶα δόμοι.
ΗΡ. πῶς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις σοῦσιν ὀλεσεν βίον;
ΑΔ. πατρὸς θανόντος ἐνθάδ’ ὀρφανεύετο. 530
ΗΡ. φεῦ.

εἰδ’ ἕφρομεν σ’, Ἀδριάτε, μη λυπουμενον.
ΑΔ. ὡς δὴ τὶ δράσων τόνδ’ ὑπορράπτεις λόγον;
ΗΡ. ξένων πρὸς ἄλλων ἐστίαν πορεύσομαι.
ΑΔ. οὐκ ἐστίν, ὤναξ’ μη τοσόνδ’ ἐλθοι κακῶν.
ΗΡ. λυπουμένους ὀχληρῶς, εἰ μόλοι, ξένοις. 540
ΑΔ. τεθυάσων οἱ θανόντες’ ἄλλ’ ἵδ’ ἐς δόμους.
ΗΡ. αἰσχρῶν παρὰ κλαίοντι θοινάσθαι φίλοις.
ΑΔ. χωρίς ξενωνέσ εἰσιν οἱ σ’ ἐσάξομεν.
ΗΡ. μέθες με, καὶ σοι μυρίαν ἐξῳ χάριν.
ΑΔ. οὐκ ἐστὶν ἄλλου σ’ ἄνδρὸς ἑστίαν μολεῖν. 545
ήγου σὺ, τῶν δωμάτων ἐξωπίους
ζενώνας οἶξας, τοῖς τ’ ἐφεστῶσιν φράσον
σίτων παρεῖναι πλήθος· ἐν δὲ κλήσατε
θύρας μεσαύλους· οὐ πρέπει θοινωμένους
κλείειν στεναγμῶν οὐδὲ λυπεῖσθαι ξένους.

ΧΩ. τί δρᾶς; τουιάνθης ἔσυμφορᾶς προκειμένης,
"Αδμητε, τολμᾶς ξενοδοχείν; τί µῶρος εἶ;

ΑΔ. ἀλλ’ εἰ δόμων σφε καὶ πόλεως ἀπήλασα
ξένου μολόντα, μᾶλλον ἂν µ’ ἐπήνεσας;
οὐ δὴ, ἐπεὶ μοι ἔσυμφορὰ µὲν οὐδὲν ἂν
μείων ἐγίγνετ’, ἀξενώτερος δ’ εὐγ. 555
καὶ πρὸς κακοίσιν ἄλλο τοῦτ’ ἂν ἴν κακὸν,
δόμους καλεῖσθαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς κακοξένους.
αὐτὸς δ’ ἀρίστου τοῦτε τυγχάνω ξένου,
ὅταν ποτ’ Ἀργοὺς διψίαν ἐλθὼ χθόνα. 560

ΧΩ. πῶς οὖν ἔκρυπτες τὸν παρόντα δαίμονα,
φίλου μολόντος ἄνδρός, ὡς αὐτὸς λέγεις;

ΑΔ. οὐκ ἂν ποτ’ ἠθέλησεν εἰσελθεῖν δόμους,
eἰ τῶν ἐµῶν τι πημάτων ἐγνώρισε.
καὶ τῷ µὲν, οἶμαι, ὅρων τάδ’ οὐ φρονεῖν δοκῶ, 565
οὐδ’ αἰνέσει µε’ τὰµὰ δ’ οὐκ ἐπίσταται
µέλαθρ’ ἀπωθεῖν οὖδ’ ἀτιμάζειν ξένους. [στρ. α’.
ΧΩ. ὃ πολύζεινος καὶ ἐλεύθερος ἄνδρός ἂει ποτ’ οἰκός,
σὲ τοι καὶ ὁ Πύθιος εὐλύρας Ἀπόλλων 570
ἡξίωσε ναίειν,
ἐτλα δὲ σοίσι µηλονόµας
ἐν δόµοις γενέσθαι,
δοχµαν διὰ κλιτὼν
βοσκήµασι σοίσι συρίζων
ποιµνῖτας ὑµεναῖον. [ἀντ. α’.
σὺν δ’ ἐποιµαίνοντο χαρᾶ µελέων βαλιαὶ τε λύκεσ
εβα δε λιποῦν ’Οθρνος νάπαν λεόντων
ά δαφούνος ἦλα.
χόρευσε δ’ ἀμφὶ σάν κιθάραν,
Φοίβε, ποικιλόθριξ
νεβρὸς υψικόμων πέραν
βαίνοντ’ ἐλατὰν σφυρὸ κούφῳ,
χαίροντ’ εὔφρονι μολπῇ.
τοιγάρ πολυμηλοτάταν στρ. β’.
ἐστίαν οἰκεὶ παρὰ καλλίναυν
Βολβίαν λίμνας ἀρότοις δὲ γυνὰς
καὶ πεδίων δαπέδους ὄρον ἀμφὶ μὲν ἁέλιον κυνεφαῖαν
 ἰππόστασιν αἴθέρα τὰν Μολοσσῶν τίθεται,
ποιμίνον τ’ Ἀλγαίων’ ἐπ’ ἀκτὰν
ἀλίμενον Πηλίου κρατύνει.
καὶ νῦν δόμον ἀμπετάσας
ἀντ. β’.
δέξατο ἕξινον νοτέρῳ βλεφάρῳ,
tὰς φίλας κλαίσων ἀλόχον νέκνυ ἐν
ἀλίμασιν ἀρτιθανὴτ’ τὸ γὰρ εὐγενές ἐκφέρεται πρὸς
ἐν τοῖς ἁγαθοῖς δὲ πάντ’ ἐνεστὶν σοφίας.
[ἀγαμαὶ’] πρὸς δ’ ἐμὰ ψυχὰ θάρσος ἦσται
θεοσεβῆ φῶτα κεδνά πράξεων.
ΑΔ. ἀνδρῶν Φεραιῶν εὐμενής παρουσία,
νέκνυ μὲν ἢδη πάντ’ ἔχοντα πρόσπολοι
φέρουσιν ἀρδὴν πρὸς τάφουν τε καὶ πυράν
ὑμεῖς δὲ τὴν θανώσαν, ὡς νομίζεται,
προσείπατ’ ἐξιοῦσαν ὑστάτην ὄδον.
ΧΩ. καὶ μὴν ὅρῳ σὸν πατέρα γηραιῷ πολὶ
στείχοντ’ ὁπαδοὺς τ’ ἐν χερῶν δάμαρτι σῇ
κόσμου φέρουτας, νερτέρων ἀγάλματα.
ΦΕΡΗΣ.

ηκω κακοίσι σοίσι συγκάμων, τέκνου
ἐσθλῆς γὰρ, οὖθεις ἀντερεί, καὶ σώφρονος
γυναικὸς ἡμάρτηκας. ἄλλα ταῦτα μὲν
φέρειν ἀνάγκη, καίτερ οὖντα δυσμενή.
δεχον δὲ κόσμου τόνδε, καὶ κατὰ χθονὸς
ἳτω τὸ ταύτης σῶμα τιμᾶσθαι χρεῶν,
ήτις γε τῆς σῆς προόθανε ψυχῆς, τέκνου,
καὶ μ’ οὖκ ἀπαιδ’ ἔθηκεν, οὐδ’ εἰσε ἐκεῖν
στερέντα γῆρα πενθίμῳ καταφθάνειν,
πάσας δ’ ἔθηκεν εὐκλεέστερον βίον
γυναιξίν, ἔργον τλάσα γενναίον τόδε.
ὅ τόνδε μὲν σώσατ’, ἀναστήσασα δὲ
ἡμᾶς πένυντας, χαίρε, καὶ “Αἰδοῦ δόμοις
ἐν σοὶ γένοιτο. φημὶ τοιούτους γάμους
λύειν βροτοῖς, ἢ γαμεῖν οὖκ ἀξίων.

ΛΔ. οὔτ’ ἠλθες ἐς τὸν’ ἐξ ἐμοῦ κληθεῖς τάφον
οὔτ’ ἐν φίλοισι σήμ’ παρουσίαν λέγω.
κόσμου δὲ τὸν σὸν οὔποθ’ ἤδ’ ἐνδύσεται
οὐ γάρ τι τῶν σῶν ἐνδεῖς ταφήσεται.
τότε ἐνυαλγεῖν χρῆν σ’ ὅτ’ ἁλλύμην ἐγώ.
οὐ δ’ ἐκποδῶν στὰς καὶ παρεῖς ἀλλῳ θανεῖν
νέῳ γέρων ὧν, τόνδ’ ἀπομοίεις νεκρόν;
οὐκ ἤσθ’ ἃρ’ ὀρθῶς τοῦτο σώματος πατὴρ,
οὐδ’ ἢ τεκεῖν φάσκουσα καὶ κεκλημένη
μῆτηρ μ’ ἔτικτε’ δουλίου δ’ ἀθ’ αἰματος
μαστῷ γυναικὸς σῆς ὑπεβλήθην λάθρα.
ἐδείξας εἰς ἐλεγχὸν ἐξελθὼν ὅσ’ εἰ,
καί μ’ οὐ νομίζω παιδὰ σοῦν πεφυκέναι.
ἡ τάρα πάντων διαπρέπεις ἀψυχία,
ὡς τηλίκοσθ’ ὧν καπὶ τέρμ’ ἦκών βίον
οὐκ ἥθελησας, οὐδ’ ἐτόλμησας θανεῖν
tοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδὸς, ἀλλὰ τίνιδ’ εἶδατε
gυναῖκ’ θυμίων, ἦν ἐγὼ καὶ μητέρα
pατέρα τ’ ἄν ἐνδίκως ἂν ἡγούμην ἐμοί.
καίτοι καλῶν γ’ ἄν τόνδ’ ἀγὼν’ ἡγούμης,
tοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδὸς καθαίρων, βραχύς δὲ σοι
πάντως ὅ λοιπὸς ἦν βιώσιμος χρόνος.
κἀγὼ τ’ ἄν εἷςν χῆδε τῶν λοιπῶν χρόνων,
κοῦκ ἄν μονωθεῖς ἐστενοὺ κακοῖς ἐμοῖς.
καὶ μήν ὅσ’ ἄνδρα χρὴ παθεῖν εὐδαιμονα
πέπονθας’ ἥβηςας μὲν ἐν τυραννίδι,
pαῖς ὅ’ ἦν ἐγὼ σοι τῶν διάδοχος δόμων,
ωστ’ οὐκ ἀπεκνος καθαίρων ἀλλοις δόμων
λείψεων ἐμελλές ὀρφανὸν διαρπάσαι.
οὐ μήν ἐρεῖς γε μ’ ὡς ἀτιμᾶσων τὸ σὸν
γῆρας θανεῖν προῦδωκά σ’, ὡστε ἀιδόφρων
πρὸς σ’ ἦν μάλιστα, ἀκαὶ τῶν ἰοῦ χάριν
tοιάνδε καὶ σὺ χῇ τεκοῦσ’ ἠλλαξάτην.
τουγάρ φυτεύων παῖδας οὐκέτ’ ἄν φθάνοις,
ὅι γηροβοσκήσουσι καὶ θαυόντα σε
περιστελοῦσι καὶ προθήσουσι νεκρόν.
οὐ γάρ σ’ ἐγγοντι τῇ’ ἐμῆ θάψω χερί.
tέβνηκα γάρ ὅτι τοῦτ’ σ’ εἰ ὅ’ ἀλλον τυχῶν
σωτῆρος αὐγὰς εἰσορῶ, κείνου λέγω
cαὶ παῖδα μ’ εἶναι καὶ φίλον γηροτρόφον.
μάτην ἄρ’ οἱ γέροντες εὖχονται θανεῖν,
γῆρας ψέγουντες καὶ μακρὸν χρόνων βίον.
ἡν’ ὅ’ ἐγγος ἐλθῇ θάνατος, οὐδεῖς βούλεται
θυμίσκειν, τὸ γῆρας ὅ’ ὀφείτ’ ἐστ’ αὐτοῖς βαρύ.
ΧΟ. παύσασθ’ ἀλίκ γὰρ ἦ παροῦσα συμφορὰ,
ὁ παῖ πατρὸς δὲ μὴ παροξύνῃς φρένας.
ΦΕ. ὃ παῖ, τίν’ αὐχεῖς, πότερα Λυδὸν ἦ Φρύγα.
κακοῖς ἐλαύνειν ἄργυρόν ὑπον σέθεν;
οὐκ οἴσθα Θεσσαλών με κἀπὸ Θεσσαλῶν
πατρὸς γεγώτα, γυνησίως ἐλεύθερον;
ἀγαν ὑβρίζεις, καὶ νεανίας λόγους
ῥίπτων ἐσ ἡμᾶς ὦ βαλὼν οὕτως ἀπει. 680
ἐγὼ δὲ σ’ οἴκων δεσπότην ἐγευνάμην
καθρεψ’, ὀφείλω δ’ ὦν ὑπερθυνήσκειν σέθενν
ὅλως προθυμησκεῖν πατέρας, οὐδ’ Ἑλληνικόν.
σαυτῷ γὰρ, εἴτε δυστυχίς εἶτ’ εὐτυχίς, 685
ἐφύστ’ ἢ ὦ ἡμῶν χρήν σε τυγχάνειν, ἔχεις.
πολλῶν μὲν ἄρχεις, πολυπλέθρους δὲ σοι γίνας
λείψω: πατρὸς γὰρ ταῦτ’ ἐδεξάμην πάρα.
τι δὴτὰ σ’ ἡδίκηκα; τοῦ σ’ ἀποστερῶ;
μὴ θυνήχ’ ὑπὲρ τοῦδ’ ἀνδρός, οὐδ’ ἐγὼ πρὸ σοῦ. 690
χαίρεις ὄρνῳ φῶς, πατέρα δ’ ὦν χαίρειν δοκεῖς;
ἤ μὴν πολὺν γε τὸν κάτω λογίζομαι
χρόνον, τὸ δὲ ζην σμικρὸν, ἀλλ’ ὁμοὶ γλυκύ.
οὐ γοῦν ἀναιδῶς διεμάχον τὸ μὴ θανεῖν,
καὶ ζῆσι παρελθὼν τὴν πεπρωμένην τύχην, 695
ταύτην κατακτάς’ εἶτ’ ἐμῆν ἄψυχίαν
λέγεις, γυναικὸς, ὃ κάκισθ’ ἡσσημένος,
ἡ τοῦ καλοῦ σοῦ προθυμανεῖ νεανίου;
σοφῶς δ’ ἐφηύρεσ ὡστε μὴ θανεῖν ποτὲ,
εἰ τὴν παροῦσαν καταθυμαίνει πείσεις ἅει 700
γυναῖχ’ ὑπὲρ σοῦ κατ’ ὀνειδίζεις φίλοις
τοῖς μὴ θέλουσι οἶμαι τὰδ’, αὐτοῦ ὅν κακὸς;
σίγα νόμιζε δ’, εἰ σὺ τὴν σαυτοῦ φιλεῖς
ψυχήν, φιλεῖν ἀπαντᾶς’ εἰ δ’ ἡμᾶς κακῶς
ἐρεῖς, ἀκούσει πολλὰ κοῦ ψευδὴ κακά. 705
Χ.Ο. πλεῖω λέλεκται νῦν τε καὶ τὰ πρὶν κακά:
παῦσαι δὲ, πρέσβυ, παίδα σοῦν κακορροδῶν.
ΑΔ. λέγ', ὡς ἐμοὶ λέξαντος' εἰ δ' ἀλγεῖς κλῖνῳ τὰληθὲς, οὐ χρῆν σ' εἰς ἐμ' ἐξαιμαρτάνειν.

ΦΕ. σοῦ δ' ἄν προθυμίᾳκων μᾶλλον ἐξημάρτανον. 710

ΑΔ. ταύτων γὰρ ἡβὰντ' ἀνδρὰ καὶ πρέσβειν θανεῖν;

ΦΕ. ψυχῇ μιᾷ ζην', οὐ δυοῖν, ὄφειλομεν.

ΑΔ. καὶ μὴν Διός γε μεῖζον' ἄν ξάφης χρόνον.

ΦΕ. ἀρὰ γονεύσων, οὐδὲν ἐκδικον παθῶν;

ΑΔ. μακροῦ βίου γὰρ ἥσθόμην ἐρωτᾶ σε. 715

ΦΕ. ἀλλ' οὐ σὺ νεκρῶν ἀντὶ σοῦ τόνδ' ἐκφέρεις;

ΑΔ. σημεία τῆς σῆς, ὅ κάκιστ', ἀγνυχία.

ΦΕ. οὔτοι πρὸς ἥμῶν γ' ὀλετ'· οὐκ ἐρεῖς τὸδε.

ΑΔ. φεῦ.

εἰδ' ἀνδρῶς ἐλθοίς τοῦδ' γ' ἐς χρειαν ποτέ.

ΦΕ. μυκόστευε πολλὰς, ὡς θανωσί πλείονες. 720

ΑΔ. σοὶ τοῦτ' οὖνείδος' οὐ γὰρ ἦθελες θανεῖν.

ΦΕ. φίλου τὸ φέγγος τούτο τοῦ θεοῦ, φίλου.

ΑΔ. κακὸν τὸ λῆμα κοῦ ἐν ἀνδράσιν τὸ σῶν.

ΦΕ. οὐκ ἐγγελάς γέροντα βαστάζων νεκρῶν.

ΑΔ. θανεῖ γε μέντοι δυσκλῆς, ὅταν θάνης. 725

ΦΕ. κακῶς ἅκουειν οὐ μέλει θανόντι μοι.

ΑΔ. φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ γῆρας ὡς ἀναδείας πλέων.

ΦΕ. ἦδ' οὐκ ἀναδής· τήρῳ ἐφηύρες ἄφρονα.

ΑΔ. ἀπελθε, κάμε τόδ' ἐκ θάψαι νεκρῶν.

ΦΕ. ἀπειμι: θάψεις δ' αὐτὸς ὡν αὐτῆς φονεύς. 730

δῖκας τε δῶσεις σοῖς κηδεσταῖς ἐτι.

ἡ τάρ' 'Ακαστόσ καὶ ὁμήσατ' ἐστ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν,

εἰ μή σ' ἀδελφῆς αἰμα τιμωρήσεται.

ΑΔ. ἐρροις νυν αὐτὸς χὴ ἡμνοκήσασα σοι' ἀπαίτε παιδὸς ὄντος, ὡσπερ ἄξιοι,

γνηράσκετ· οὐ γὰρ τὸδ' γ' ἐς ταύτων στέγος

νεῖσθ'· εἰ δ' ἀπειπεῖν χρῆν με κηρύκων ὕπο

την σὴν πατρίων εὐστίαν, ἀπείπον ἄν.
ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ.

ήμείς δὲ, τούν ποσίν γὰρ οἰστέον κακὸν, στείχωμεν, ὡς ἂν ἐν πυρᾷ θῶμεν νεκρών. 742

ΧΟ. ἱὸν ἱόν. σχετλία τόλμης,

ὡ γενναία καὶ μέγ' ἀριστή,

χαίρε' πρόφρων σε χθόνιος θ' Ἐρμῆς

"Αἰδης τε δέχοιτ'· εἰ δὲ τι κάκει

πλέον ἔστ' ἀγαθοῖς, τούτων μετέχουσ'. 745

"Αἰδοὺ νύμφη παρεδρεύοισ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ.

πολλούς μὲν ἥδη κάποι παντοίας χθόνιος

ξένον μολούτας οὖν' εὶς Ἀδμήτου δόμους,

οῖς δείπνα προῒθηκ'· ἀλλὰ τοῦδ' οὕτω ξένου

κακίου' ἐς τὴν' ἑστίαν ἐδεξάμην. 750

ὁς πρῶτα μὲν πενθοῦντα δεσπότην ὅρων

εἰσῆλθε κάτολμης' ἀμείβασθαι πύλας.

ἐπεκτα ο' οὕτι σωβρόνως ἐδέξατο

τὰ προστυχόντα ξένια, συμφορὰν μαθὼν,

ἀλλ' εἰ τι μὴ φέρομεν, ὄτρυνεν φέρειν.

ποτήρα δ' ἐν χείρεσσι κίσσινον λαβὼν

πίνει μελαίνης μητρὸς εὔξωρον μέθυ,

ἔως ἕθερμην' αὐτὸν ἀμφιβάζει φλὸξ

οἶνον' στέφει δὲ κράτα μυρσίνοις κλάδοις,

ἀμουσ' ὀλακτῶν, δισσὰ δ' ἢν μέλη κλύειν.

ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἤδε, τῶν ἐν Ἀδμήτου κακῶν

ὁ δ' οὕτω ἀρτικώμων, οἰκεῖται δ' ἐκλαίομεν

δέσποιναν' ὄμμα δ' οὐκ ἐδείκνυμεν ξένῳ

τέγγουσ' Ἀδμητος γὰρ οὖν' ἐφιέτο.

καὶ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν ἐν δόμοισιν ἑστίῳ

ξένον, πανοῦργον κλώπα καὶ ληστήν τινα,

ἡ δ' ἐκ δόμων βέβηκεν, οὐδ' ἐφεστόμην,

οὖν ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ', ἀποιμὼζων ἐμὴν.
δέσποινα, ἦ μοι πᾶσι τ' οἰκέταισιν ἣν μήτηρ· κακῶν γὰρ μυρίων ἔρρευτο,
dοργᾶς μαλάσσου' ἀνδρός. ἀρα τὸν ξένον
στυγῶ δικαίως, ἐν κακοῖς ἀφιγμένου;

ΠΡ. οὖσας, τί σεμνόν καὶ πεφροντικὸς βλέπεις;
οὐ χρή σκυθρωτὸν τοῖς ξένοις τὸν πρόσπολον
εἶναι, δέχεσθαι δ' εὐπροσηγόρφ φρενί.
οὐ δ' ἄνδρ' ἔταρχον δεσπότον παρόνθ' ὅρων,
στυγῳ προσώπῳ καὶ συνωφρυωμένῳ
δέχει, θυραιόν πήματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.
δεύρ' ἔλθ', ὅπως ἂν καὶ σοφώτερος γένη.
tὰ θυντᾶ πράγματ' οἴδας ἢν ξέει φύσιν;
οἴμαι μὲν οὐ πόθεν γὰρ; ἀλλ' ἀκούε μου.
βροτοῖς ἀπασι καθανεῖν ὕφειλται,
κοῦκ ἐστὶ θυντῶν ὅστις ἔξεπισταταί
tὴν αὐριον μέλλουσαν εἰ βιώσεται:
tὸ τῆς τύχης γὰρ ἄφανές οἱ προβῆσται,
καστ' οὐ διδακτῶν, οὐδ' ἀλίσκεται τέχνη.
tαύτ' σὺν ἀκούσας καὶ μαθῶν ἐμοῦ πάρα,
ἐὐφραϊνε σαυτῶν, πίνε, τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν
βίον λογίζου σοιν, τὰ δ' ἀλλα τῆς τύχης.
tίμα δὲ καὶ τὴν πλείστον ἡδόστην θεῶν
Κύπριον βροτοίσιν εὐμενής γὰρ ἡ θεός.
tὰ δ' ἀλλ' ἐσον ταῦτα, καὶ πείθου λόγοις
ἐμοίσων, εἶπερ ὅρθα σοι δοκῶ λέγειν
οἴμαι μὲν. οὐκον τὴν ἄγαν λύπην ἀφεῖς
πίει μεθ' ἡμῶν τάσδ' ὑπερβαλῶν τύχας,
στεφάνοις πυκασθεῖς; καὶ σάφ' οἰδὼ ὅθονεκα
τοῦ νῦν σκυθρωποῦ καὶ ἔννεπτῶτος φρενῶν
μεθορμεῖ σε πίτυλος ἐμπεσῶν σκύφου.
ὀντας δὲ θυντοὺς θυντᾶ καὶ φρονείν χρεῶν,
ὡς τοῖς γε σεμνοῖς καὶ συνωφρυωμένοις
ἄπασιν ἐστιν, ὡς γ' ἐμοὶ χρήσθαι κρίτη,
οὐ βίος ἀληθῶς ὁ βίος, ἀλλὰ συμφορά.

ΘΕ. ἐπιστάμεσθα ταῦτα; νῦν δὲ πράσσομεν
οὐχ οίκα κώμου καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια.

ΗΡ. γυνὴ θυραῖος ἡ θανοῦσα; μὴ λιαν
πένθει δόμων γὰρ ζωὴς τῶν δεσπότων.

ΘΕ. τι ζῶσιν; οὐ κάτοικος τὰν δόμοις κακά.

ΗΡ. εἰ μὴ τι σός με δεσπότης ἐψεύσατο.

ΘΕ. ἀγαν ἐκείνος ἔστ' ἀγαν φιλόξενος.

ΗΡ. οὗ χρὴν μ' θνεῖον γ' ούνεκ' εὖ πάσχειν νεκροῦ; 810
ΘΕ. ἡ κάρτα μέντοι καὶ λιαν οἰκεῖος ἦν.

ΗΡ. μῶν Ξυμφόραν τι' οὖσαν οὐκ ἐφραζὲ μοι.

ΘΕ. χαίρων ἵθ· ἡμῖν δεσποτῶν μέλει κακά.

ΗΡ. ὅ' οὐθεραίων πημάτων ἀρχεῖ λόγος.

ΘΕ. οὗ γάρ τι κωμάζουτ' ἄν ἡχόμην κ' ὀρῶν.

ΗΡ. ἀλλ' ἡ πέπονθα δεῖν' ὑπὸ ξένων ἐμῶν;

ΘΕ. οὐκ ἥλθες ἐν δέοντι δέξασθαι δόμοις
πένθος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἔστι· καὶ κουράν βλέπεις
μελαμπέλους στολμοὺς τε.

ΗΡ.  

τίς δ' ὁ καθαρῶν; 820

μῶν ἡ τέκνων τι φρούδου ἡ πατὴρ γέρων;

ΘΕ. γυνὴ μὲν οὖν ὁλωλεῖν Ἀδμήτου, ξένε.

ΗΡ. τί φής; ἐπείτα ὑὴτά μ' ἐξενύζετε;

ΘΕ. ήδείτο γάρ σε τῶν' ἀπόκεισθαι δόμων.

ΗΡ. ὁ σχέτλι, οἶλας ἡμπλακες ἐυναύρου.

ΘΕ. ἀπωλόμεσθα πάντες, οὐ κείμη μόνη.

ΗΡ. ἀλλ' ἡθόμην μὲν, ὀμμ' ἵδων δακρυρροοῦν
κουράν τε καὶ πρόσωπον' ἀλλ' ἐπειθε με
λέγων θυραίων κήδος ἐς τάφον φέρειν.

βία δὲ θυμοῦ τάσο' ὑπερβαλῶν πῦλας
ἐπιράων ἄνδρος ἐν φιλοξένου δόμοις,

830

πράσσοντος οὕτω. κάτα κωμάζω κάρα

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ.
στεφάνοις πυκασθείς; ἀλλὰ σοῦ τὸ μὴ φράσαι, κακοῦ τοσοῦτον δόματος προκειμένου, ποῦ καὶ σφε θάπτει; ποῦ νῦν εὑρήσω μολὼν;

ΘΕ. ὅρθην παρ’ οἴμον, ἢ ’πι Λάρισσαν φέρει, τύμβον κατόψει εὔστοιν ἐκ προαστίων.

ΗΡ. δὸ πολλὰ τλάσα καρδία ψυχή τ’ ἐμή, νῦν δεῖξον οἶον παῖδα σ’ ἡ Τιμυθία Ἡλεκτρώνος ἐγείνατ’ Ἀλκμήνη Δι. δεὶ γάρ με σώσαι τὴν θανοῦσαν ἄρτιως γυναῖκα κείς τόνθ’ ἀνθίσε ἱδρύσαι δόμον Ἀλκηστιν, Ἀδμήτῳ θ’ ὑπούργησαι χάριν. ἐλθὼν δ’ ἀνακτὰ τὸν μελάμπηπλον νεκρῶν Θάνατον φυλάξω, καὶ νῦν εὑρήσειν δοκῶ, πινοῦτα τύμβον πλησίον προσφαγμάτων. καύντερ λοχήσας αὐτὸν εξ ἐδρας συθεῖς μάρψω, κύκλον δὲ περιβάλω χερῶν ἐμαῖν, οὐκ ἔστων ὅστις αὐτὸν ἐξαιρήσεται μογοῦντα πλευρὰ, πρὶν γυναῖκ’ ἐμοὶ μεθῆ. ἦν δ’ οὖν ἀμάρτω τῆσθ’ ἄγρας, καὶ μὴ μόλη πρὸς αἰματηρὸν πέλανον, εἶμι τῶν κάτω Κόρης ἀνακτὸς τ’ εἰς ἀνηλίους δόμους, αἰτήσομαι τε’ καὶ πέποιθ’ ἄξειν ἄνω Ἀλκηστιν, ὥστε χερῶν ἐνθείναι ἔστοι, ὅσ μ’ ἐσ δόμους ἐδέξατ’ οὐδ’ ἀπῆλασε, καύντερ βαρεὶα συμφορᾶ πεπληγμένος, ἕκρυπτε δ’, ὅν γενναίος, αἰδεσθεὶς ἐμὲ. τίς τοῦδε μᾶλλον Θεσσαλῶν φιλόξενος; τίς Ἐλλάδ’ οἰκῶν; τογάρ οὐκ ἔρει κακὸν εὐεργετῆσαι φῶτα γενναίος γεγώς.

ΑΔ. ἰὼ ἰὼ. στυγναὶ πρόσοδοι, στυγναὶ δ’ ὄψεις χιρῶν μελάθρων. ἰὼ μοί μοι, αἰαὶ.
ποί βδέ; πᾶ στῶ; τί λέγω; τί δὲ μὴ; πῶς ἄν ὀλοίμαν.

ἡ βαρυδαίμωνα μήτηρ μ' ἐτεκεν.
ζηλῶ φθιμένου, κείνων ἔραμαι,
κεῖν' ἐπιθυμῶ δόματα ναείων.
οὔτε γὰρ ἄγας χαῖρω πρὸσορῶν,
οὔτ' ἐπὶ γαίας πόδα πεζεῦων
τοῖν ὄμηρόν μ' ἀποσυλήσας
"Αἴδη Θάνατος παρέδωκεν.

ΧΩ. πρόβα πρόβα: βάθι κεῦδος οἴκων, στρ. α'.
ΑΔ. αἰαί.

ΧΩ. πεπονθῶς ἄξι' αἰαγμάτων.
ΑΔ. ἐε.

ΧΩ. οἱ ὀδύνας ἔβας,
σάφ' οἶδα. ΑΔ. φεῦ φεῦ.

ΧΩ. τὰν νέρθεν οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖσ.
ΑΔ. ἰῶ μοι μοι.

ΧΩ. τὸ μήποτ' εἰσιδεῖν φιλίας ἀλόχου πρόσωπον ἀντα λυπρόν.

ΑΔ. ἐμνήσας ὦ μου φρένας ἡλκώσεν'
τί γὰρ ἀνδρὶ κακὸν μεῖζον ἀμαρτεῖν πιστῆς ἀλόχου; μή ποτε γήμας ὠφελον οἰκεῖν μετὰ τῆςδε ὀόμουν.
ζηλῶ δ' ἀγάμους ἀτέκνους τε βροτῶν.
μία γὰρ ψυχή' τῆς ὑπεραλγεῖν μέτριον ἅχθος'

παῖδων δὲ νόσους καὶ νυμφιδίους εῦνας θανάτοις κεραίζομένας

οὐ τλητοῦ ὀρᾶν, ἐξὸν ἀτέκνους ἀγάμους τ' εἶναι διὰ παντὸς.

ΧΩ. τύχα τύχα δυσπάλαιστος ἥκει. ἀντ. α'.
ΑΔ. αἰαῖ.
ΧΩ. πέρας δ' οὐδέν τίθη αλγέων.
ΑΔ. ἐκ.
ΧΩ. βαρέᾳ μὲν φέρειν,
οἷμως δὲ ἈΔ. φεῦ φεῦ.
ΧΩ. τλαθ'· οὐ σὺ πρῶτος ἢλεσας
ΑΔ. ὦ μοι μοι.
ΧΩ. γυναίκα· συμφορὰ δ' ἔτέρους ἔτερα
πιέζει φανείσα θνατῶν.
ΑΔ. ὦ μακρὰ πένθη λύπαι τε φίλων
τῶν ὑπὸ γαίαν.
τί μ' ἐκώλυσας βίψαι τὺμβου
τάφρον ἐς κοίλην, καὶ μετ' ἐκείνης
τῆς μεγ' ἄριστης κείσθαι φθίμενον;
ὅυο δ' ἀντὶ μιᾶς Ἄιδης ψυχᾶς
τὰς πιστοτάτας σὺν ἄν ἐσχε, ὅμω
χθονίαν λίμνην διαβάντε.
ΧΩ. ἐμοί τις ἡν ἐν γένει, ὦ κόρος ἀξιόθρηνος
ὁλετ' ἐν δόμοισιν
μονόταις· ἄλλῳ ἐμπάς
ἐφερε κακὸν ἀλίσι, ἀτεκνὸς δ' ὄν,
πολιάς ἐπὶ χαίτας
ηδὴ προπετής ὄν
βιότου τε πόρσοι.
ΑΔ. ὦ σχῆμα δόμων, πῶς εἰσέλθω;
πῶς δ' οἰκήσω, μεταπίπτοντος
δαίμονος; οἶμοι. πολὺ γὰρ τὸ μέσον
tότε μὲν πεύκαις σὺν Πηλίασιν
σὺν θ' ύμεναιοις ἐστείχον ἔσω,
φιλίας ἀλόχου χέρα βαστάζων.
πολυάχητος δ' εἴπετο κόμος
tὴν τε θανοῦσαν καὶ' ὀλβίζων,
ὡς εὐπατρίδαι καὶ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων.
όντες ἀριστέων σύζυγες ἐξευ.
νῦν δ’ ὑμεναὶων γόος ἀντίπαλος
λευκῶν τε πέπλων μέλανες στολμοὶ
πέμποι μ’ ἕσω
λέκτρων κοίτας ἐς ἐρήμους.

ΧΩ. παρ’ εὐτυχῇ σοι πότμον ἦλθεν ἀπειροκάκῳ τόδ’ ἄλγος· ἄλλ’ ἔσωσας
βίοτον καὶ ψυχάν.
ἐθανε δάμαρ, ἐλιπε φιλλαν’
tί νέου τόδε; πολλοὺς
ἡδη παρέλυσεν
θάνατος δάμαρτος.

ΑΔ. φίλοι, γυναικὸς δαίμον’ εὐτυχέστερον
tούμοι νομίζω, καίτερ οὐ δοκοῦνθ’ ὁμως·
tῆς μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἂμεταί ποτε,
pολλῶν δὲ μόχθοιο εὐκλεῆς ἐπαύσατο.
ἐγὼ δ’, ὅν οὐ χρῆν ξην, παρεῖς τὸ μόρσιμον,
λυπρὸν διάξω βίοτον’ ἀρτι μανθάνω.

πῶς γὰρ δόμων τῶν’ εἰσόδους ἀνέξομαι;
tίν’ ἄν προσεπῶν, τὸ ὃ’ ἐπερηθεῖς ὑπο,
tερπνῆς τύχοιμ’ ἂν εἰσόδου; ποὶ τρέψομαι;
ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐνδον ἐξελὰ μ’ ἐρημία,
γυναικὸς εὐνάς εὕτ’ ἂν εἰσίδω κενᾶς
θρόνους τ’ ἐν οἴσων ἱξε, καὶ κατὰ στέγας
αὐχμηρὸν οὐδός, τέκνα δ’ ἁμφὶ γούνατι
πιπτοῦτα κλαίῃ μητέρ’, οἱ δὲ δεσποτῖν
στένωσιν οἶλαν ἐκ δόμων ἀπώλεσαν.

τὰ μὲν κατ’ οἴκους τοιάδ’ εἶσθεν δ’ ἔμε
γάμου τ’ ἐλώσι Θεσσαλῶν καὶ ἕνωσον
γυναικομπληθεῖσ’ οὐ γὰρ ἐξανέξομαι
λεύσον γὰρ δάμαρτος τῆς έμῆς ὁμήλικας.
ἐρεῖ δέ μ’ ὅστις ἐχθρὸς ἂν κυρεῖ τάδε’.
'ιδοὺ τὸν αἰσχρὸς ζῶνθ', ὅς οὐκ ἔτηλθ θανεῖν, 955 ἀλλ' ἦν ἔγημεν αὐτιδοὺς ἀψυχὰ πέφευγεν "Αἰδήν· κἂν ἄνηρ εἶναι δοκεῖ; στυγεῖ δὲ τοὺς τεκόντας, αὐτὸς οὐ θέλων θανεῖν.' τοιαῦτα πρὸς κακοῖς κληρόνα ἔξω. τί μοι ζην δῆτα κύδιον, φίλοι, 960 κακῶς κλύσατε καὶ κακῶς πεπραγότε; 

ΧΩ. ἔγω καὶ διὰ μούςας ἡπὶ. 
καὶ μετάρσιος ἥξα, καὶ 
πλεῖστῶν ἄψαμενος λόγων 
κρέσσον οὖδέν Ἀνάγκας 
ηὺρον, οὐδὲ τι φάρμακον 
Θυρήσσασ εἰν σανίσιν, τὰς 
'Ορφεία κατέγραψεν 
γῆρυς. οὐδ' ὤσα Φοῖβος Ἀσκληπιάδαις ἔδωκε 970 
φάρμακα πολυπόνοι αὐτιτεμὼν βροτοῖσιν. 
μόνας δ' οὐτ' ἐπὶ βωμοὺς 
ἔλθεῖν οὔτε βρέτας θεᾶς 
ἐστιν, οὐ σφαγίων κλύει. 975 
μή μοι, πότνια, μελζὼν 
ἔλθοις ἣ τὸ πρὶν ἐν βίῳ. 
καὶ γὰρ Ζεὺς ὁ τι νεῦσῃ, 
σὺν σοι τούτο τελευτᾷ. 
καὶ τὸν ἐν Χαλύβοις δαμάξεις οὐ βίῳ σῖδαρον, 980 
οὐδὲ τις ἀποτόμου λήματος ἐστιν αἰδῶς. 
καὶ σ' ἐν ἀφύκτοισι χερῶν εἴλε θεὰ δεσμοῖς 
τόλμα δ' οὐ γὰρ ἀνάξεις ποτ' ἐνερθεὶ [ὑπὸ]. 
κλαίων τοὺς φθιμένους ἄνω. 
καὶ θεῶν σκότιοι φθίνουσι 
παῖδες ἐν θανάτῳ. 990 
φίλα μὲν ὄτ' ἢν μεθ' ἡμῶν, 
φίλα δ' ἔτι καὶ θανόνσα.
γενναστάτασι δὲ πασάν
ἔξευξέω κλισίας ἀκοίτων.

μηδὲ νεκρῶν ὡς φθιμένων χῶμα νομίζεσθω ἀντ. β’.
tύμβος σὰς ἀλόχου, θεοίσι δ’ ὁμοίως
tιμᾶσθω, σέβας ἐμπόρων.
καὶ τις δοχὴν κέλευθον
ἐμβαΐνων τὸδ’ ἐρεί:
aύτα ποτὲ προθαρ’ ἀνδρὸς,
vūν δ’ ἔστι μάκαιρα δαίμων,
χαίρ’, ὡ πότυν’, εὐ δὲ δοῖς.
tοιαὶ οὖν προσεροῦσι φάμαι.
καὶ μὴν ὤδ’, ὡς ἐσείκεν, Ἀλκμήνης γόνος,
Ἀδμήτε, πρὸς σὴν ἔστιαν πορεῦεται.

ΗΡ. φίλον πρὸς ἀνδρὰ χρῆ λέγειν ἐλευθέρως,
Ἀδμήτε, μομφᾶς δ’ οὐχ ὑπὸ σπλάγχνοις ἔχειν
σιγῶντ’ ἐγὼ δὲ σοῖς κακοίσων ἥξιόν 1010
ἐγγὺς παρεστῶ ἐξετάζεσθαι φίλος:
οὐ δ’ οὐκ ἐφραζες σῆς προκείμενον νέκων
gυναίκος, ἀλλὰ μ’ ἔζευγζες ἐν ὁμοίως,
ὡς οἱ θυραῖον πῆματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.
kάστεψα κράτα καὶ θεοῖς ἐλευψάμην
σπουδᾶς ἐν οὐκοις δυστυχοῦσι τοῖσι σοῖς.
καὶ μέμφομαι μὲν μέμφομαι παθῶν τάδε,
οὐ μήν σε λυπεῖν ἐν κακοῖσι βούλομαι.
ἂν δ’ οὐνεξ’ ἕκω δεῖρ’ ὑποστρέψας πάλιν
λέξω. γυναίκα τὴνδε μοι σάζον λαβῶν,
ἔως ἂν ἵππους δεῖρο Θρηκίας ἁγῶν
ἐλθώ, τύραννον Βιστόνων κατακτανών.
πράξας δ’ ὑ μή τύχοιμι, νοστήσαμι γὰρ,
δίδωμι τὴνδε σοῖσι προσπολεῖν ὁμοίως.
πολλῷ δὲ μόχθῳ χεῖρας ἤλθεν εἰς ἐμάς’
ἀγώνα γὰρ πάνθημον εὔρίσκω τινὰs

D 2
τιθέντας ἀθληταίσιν, ἄξιον πόνου,
οθεν κομίζω τήνει νικητῆρια
λαβὼν τὰ μὲν γὰρ κούφα τοῖς νικῶσιν ἢν
ἐποποὺς ἀγεσθαί, τοῦτο δ' αὕτα τὰ μείζονα
νικᾶσι, πυγμὴν καὶ πάλην, βουφόρβια
γυνὴ δ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἐπιτετ' ἐντυχόντι δὲ
αἴσχρου παρείναι κέρδος ἢν τοῦ εὐκλεέσ.
ἀλλ', ἀσπερ ἐπον, σοὶ μέλειν γυναῖκα χρή
οὐ γὰρ κλοπαίαν, ἀλλὰ σὺν πὸνι λαβῶν
ηκὼ χρόνῳ δὲ καὶ σὺ μ' αἰνέσεις ἵσως.

ἈΔ. οὕτων σ' ἀτίξων οὐδ' ἐν ἑξθροίσσων τιθεὶς
ἐκρυψ' ἐμῆς γυναικὸς ἄθλιου τύχας
ἀλλ' ἄλγος ἀλγεῖ τοῦτ' ἂν ἢν προσκείμενον,
εἰ τοῦ πρὸς ἀλλου δόμαθ' ὀρμήθῃς ξένου
ἀλις δὲ κλαίειν τούμων ἢν ἐμοὶ κακὸν.
γυναίκα δ', εἰ πως ἑστιν, αἰτούμαι σ', ἀναξ,
ἀλλου τιν' ὡστε μὴ πέπονθεν οὗ ἐγὼ
σάξων ἀνωχθὲ Θεσσαλῶν' πολλοὶ δὲ σοι
ξένοι Φεραίων' μὴ μ' ἀναμνήσῃς κακῶν.
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην τήνοι ὀρῶν ἐν δόμασιν
ἀδακρός εἶναι' μὴ νοσούτη μοι νόσουν
προσθῆς' ἀλις γὰρ συμφορᾷ καρπούμαι.
ποῦ καὶ τρέφοιτ' ἂν δωμάτων νέα γυνή;
νέα γὰρ, ὡς ἔσθητι καὶ κόσμῳ πρέπει.

πότερα κατ' ἀνδρῶν δῆτ' ἐνοικήσει στέγην;
καὶ πῶς ἀκραυφήσῃ, ἐν νεοῖς στρωφωμένη,
ἐσται; τὸν ἦβων', 'Ηράκλεις, οὐ βάδιον
εἰργει' ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ προμηθέαν ἔχω.
ἡ τῆς θανούσης θάλαμον εἰσβήσος τρέφω;
καὶ πῶς ἐπεισφρῶ τήνδε τῷ κεῖνης λέχει;
διπλῆν φοβοῦμαι μέμψιν, ἐκ τε δημοτῶν,
μὴ τίς μ' ἐλέγξῃ τὴν ἐμὴν εὐεργέτων
προδότην ἐν ἄλλοις δεμύλοις πίνειν νέας, καὶ τῆς θανόντος, ἄξια δὲ μοι σέβειν, 1060
πολλὴν πρόνοιαν δεῖ μ’ ἔχειν. σὺ δ’, ὃ γύναι, ἢτις ποτ’ εἰ σὺ, ταύτ’ ἐξουσί’ Ἀλκήστιδι
μορφῆς μέτρ’ ἵσθι, καὶ προσήξαί δέμας.
οὐμοι. κόμιζε πρὸς θεῶν ἀπ’ ὀμμάτων
γυναικα τῇνδε, μὴ μ’ ἐλής ἦρημένου.
1065
dοκῶ γὰρ αὐτῆν εἰσορῶν γυναῖχ’ ὀρᾶν ἐμῆν’ θολοὶ δὲ καρδίαν, ἐκ δ’ ὀμμάτων
πηγὰλ κατερράγασιν ὁ τλῆμων ἐγὼ ὃς ἄρτι πένθους τοῦθε γενόμαι πικροῦ.

ΧΟ. ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἔχουμ’ ἀν εὐ λέγειν τύχην’ 1070
χρῆ δ’, ὡστις εἰ σὺ, καρτερεῖν θεοῦ δόσιν.

ἩΡ. εἰ γὰρ τοσαῦτην δύναμιν εἶχον ὡστε σήν ἐσ φῶς πορεύςαι νερτέρων ἐκ δωμάτων
γυναικα, καὶ σοι τῇνδε πορεύναι χάριν.

ΑΔ. σάφ’ οἶδα βούλεσθαι σ’ ἀν. ἀλλὰ ποῦ τῶδε; 1075
οὐκ ἔστι τοὺς θανόντας ὡς φάος μολεῖν.

ἩΡ. μὴ νυν ὑπέρβαιν’, ἀλλ’ ἐναίσιμως φέρε.

ΑΔ. ῥᾶν παρασεῖν ἡ παθόντα καρτερεῖν.

ἩΡ. τὶ δ’ ἀν προκόπτοις, εἰ θέλεις ἄει στένειν;

ΑΔ. ἔγνωκα καύτος, ἀλλ’ ἔρως τῆς μ’ ἔξαγει. 1080

ἩΡ. τὸ γὰρ φιλησαί τὸν θανόντ’ ἄγει δάκρυ.

ΑΔ. ἀπώλεσέν με, κἀτ’ μᾶλλον ἡ λέγω.

ἩΡ. γυναικὸς ἄσθλης ἰμπλακές’ τisify ἀντερεῖ;

ΑΔ. ὡστ’ ἀνδρα τόνδε μηκέθ’ ἱδέσθαι βίω.

ἩΡ. χρόνος μαλάξει, νῦν δ’ ἐδ’ ἦβάσκει κακόν. 1085

ΑΔ. χρόνου λέγοις ἂν, εἰ χρόνος τὸ κατθανεῖν.

ΗΡ. γυνὴ σε παύσει καὶ νέου γάμου πόθοι.

ΑΔ. σύγησον οἰον εἴπας. οὐκ ἂν ψόμην—

ΗΡ. τὶ δ’; οὐ γαμεῖς γὰρ, ἀλλὰ χηρεύσει λέχος;

ΑΔ. οὐκ ἔστιν ἤτις τῷθε συγκληθησεται. 1090
ΗΡ. μῶν τὴν θανοῦσαν ὄφελεῖν τι προσδοκᾶς; ἈΔ. κείμην ὑποπέρ ἐστὶ τιμᾶσθαι χρεῶν. ΗΡ. αἰνῶ μὲν αἰνῶ· μωρίαν ὦ ὀφλισκάνεις. ἈΔ. ὦς μῆπος' ἀνδρα τόνδε νυμφίου καλῶν. ΗΡ. ἐπήνεο' ἀλόχῳ πιστὸς οὖνεκ' εἰ φίλος. 1095 ἈΔ. θάνουμι' ἐκείμην καίπερ οὐκ οὖσαν προδοῦς. ΗΡ. δέχου νυν εἰσω τῆνδε γενναίων δόμων. ἈΔ. μὴ, πρὸς σε τοὺ σπείραντος ἀντομαὶ Δίως. ΗΡ. καὶ μὴν ἀμαρτήσει γε μὴ ὅρασας τάδε. ἈΔ. καὶ δρῶν γε λύπη καρδίαν δηχθῆσομαι. 1100 ΗΡ. πιθοῦ· τάχ' ἀν γὰρ ἐσ δέον πέσοι χάρις. ἈΔ. φεῦ.

εἰθ' εἴς ἀγῶνος τῆνδε μὴ ἱλαβὲς ποτε. ΗΡ. νικῶντι μέντοι καὶ σὺ συννικᾶς ἐμοὶ. ἈΔ. καλῶς ἔλεξας' ἡ γυνὴ ὦ ἀπελθέτω. ΗΡ. ἀπεισω, εἰ χρῆ' πρῶτα δ' εἰ χρεῶν ἄθρει. 1105 ἈΔ. χρῆ, σοῦ γε μὴ μέλλουσόν ὅργαίειν ἐμοί. ΗΡ. εἰδῶς τι κάγω τῆνδ' ἔχω προθυμίαν. ἈΔ. νίκα ἑων. οὐ μὴν ἀνδάνοντά μοι ποιεῖς. ΗΡ. ἀλλ' ἐσθ' ὦ' ἡμᾶς αἴνεσεις' πιθοῦ μόνον. ἈΔ. κομίζετ', εἰ χρῆ τῆνδε δέξασθαι δόμοις. 1110 ΗΡ. οὐκ ἄν μεθείην τὴν γυναῖκα προσπόλοις. ἈΔ. σοῦ δ' αὐτὸς αὐτῆν εἶσαγ', εἰ δοκεῖ, δόμοις. ΗΡ. ἦς σας μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε θήσομαι χέρας. ἈΔ. οὐκ ἄν θέγομι, δῶμα δ' εἰσελθεῖν πάρα. ΗΡ. τῇ σῇ πέπουθα χειρὶ δέξιᾳ μόνῃ. 1115 ἈΔ. ἀναξ', βιάζει μ' οὐ θέλοντα δρῶν τάδε. ΗΡ. τόλμα προτείναι χείρα καὶ θυγείν ξένης. ἈΔ. καὶ δὴ προτείνω, Γοργὸν' ὦς καρατόμω. ΗΡ. ἐχεῖς; ἈΔ. ἐχὼ.

ΗΡ. να, σωζε νυν, καὶ τὸν Δίως φήσεις ποτ' εἶναι παῖδα γενναίον ξένου. 1120
βλέψων ὃ' ἐσ' αὐτῇν, εἰ τί σοι δοκεῖ πρέπειν γυναῖκι, λύπης ὃ' εὐτυχῶν μεθίστασο.
ΑΔ. ὁ θεοί, τὶ λέξω; θαύμ' ἀνέλπιστον τόδε
gυναίκα λεύσσω τήν' ἐμὴν ἐπητύμως,
ἡ κέρτομός με θεοὺς τις ἐκπλήσσει χαρά; 1125
ΗΡ. οὖν ἔστω, ἀλλὰ τήν' ὅρας δάμαρτα σήν.
ΑΔ. ὅρα γε μὴ τι φάσμα νερτέρων τόδ' ἦ.
ΗΡ. οὐ ψυχαγωγὸν τόνδ' ἐπουήσω ξένῳν.
ΑΔ. ἀλλ' ἦν ἐθαπτον εἰσορῷ δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν;
ΗΡ. σάφ' ἵσθ. ἀπίστειν ὃ' οὐ σε θαυμάζω τύχην. 1130
ΑΔ. θίγω, προσείπω χώσαν ὡς δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν;
ΗΡ. πρόσειπ'. ἔχεις γὰρ πᾶν ὁσονπερ ἥθελες.
ΑΔ. ὃ φιλτάτης γυναῖκος ὀμμα καὶ δέμας,
ἔχω σ' ἀέλπτος, οὔποτ' ὑψεσθαι δοκῶν.
ΗΡ. ἔχεις' φθόνος δὲ μὴ γένοιτό τις θεῶν. 1135
ΑΔ. ὃ τοῦ μεγίστου Ζηνὸς εὐγενές τέκνον,
eὐδαμονοῖς, καὶ σ' ὃ φιτύσας πατὴρ
σῶζον σὺ γὰρ ὄσί τὰς ἀνάρθωσας μόνος.
πῶς τήν' ἐπεμψας νέρθεν ἐς φάος τόδε;
ΗΡ. μάχην ἔννάψας δαμόνων τῷ κοιράνῳ. 1140
ΑΔ. ποῦ τόνδε Ὁματώ φῆς ἀγώνα συμβαλείν;
ΗΡ. τήμβου παρ' αὐτὸν ἐκ λόχου μάρψας χεροῖν.
ΑΔ. τὶ γὰρ ποθ' ἦδ' ἀναυδὸς ἐστηκέν γυνὴ;
ΗΡ. οὔποι θέμις σοι τῆςδε προσφωνήματον
κλύειν, πρὶν ἄν θεοὶς τοῖς νερτέροις 1145
ἀφαγνισταί καὶ τρίτον μόλῃ φάος.
ἀλλ' εἰσαγ' εἰσω τῇμν' καὶ δικαίος ὃν
τὸ λοιπὸν, Ἀδμητ', εὑσέβει περὶ ξένους.
καὶ χαίρ': ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν προκείμενον πόνον
Σθενέλου τυράννῳ παιδὶ πορσυνῶ μολῶν. 1150
ΑΔ. μείνων παρ' ἦμιν καὶ ξυνέστιος γενοῦ.
ΗΡ. αὖθις τὸδ' ἔσται, νῦν ὃ' ἐπείγεσθαι με δεῖ.
ΑΔ. ἄλλῃ εὐτυχοῖς, νόστιμον δ’ ἔλθοις ὅδόν.
ἀστοῖς δὲ πάσῃ τ’ ἐννέπω τετραρχίᾳ
χοροῦς ἐπ’ ἐσθλαῖς συμφοραῖσιν ἵσταναι
βωμοὺς τε κυσάν βουθύτοις προστροπαῖς.
νῦν γὰρ μεθημοσμεσθα βελτίω βίον
τοῦ πρόσθεν· οὐ γὰρ εὐτυχῶν ἀρνήσομαι.

ΧΩ. πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαμονίων,
πολλὰ δ’ ἄελπτως κραίνουσι θεοὶ.
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ’ οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ’ ἀδοκήτων πόρον ἤπερ θεοῦ.
τοιὸνδ’ ἀπέβη τόδε πράγμα.
NOTES.

Prologue, ll. 1–27. This is an introductory monologue, explaining the circumstances of the play; first brought into regular use by Euripides, though occasionally employed by Aeschylus and Sophocles (as in the Eumenides and Trachiniae). At l. 28 it passes into a dialogue between Apollo and Thanatos, the whole forming the Prologue properly so called, which Aristotle defines as ‘all that part of a tragedy which precedes the first entrance of the Chorus’ (l. 77).

Scene. A portion of the town of Pherae, with the palace of Admetus in the background. Enter Apollo from the interior with his bow and quiver. ‘House of Admetus, scene of my grateful service, farewell! God though I be, I have been thrall to a mortal man; so Zeus ordained. For his piety hath my master been blest through me; and now I have saved him from death, the Fates granting me this, should he find a substitute. But only his wife would make this sacrifice, who is even now breathing her last, for the fatal day is come. But I must depart, ere pollution reach me from the corpse; and lo! here is Death, waiting to seize his prey.’

1. 1. ο δόματι Αδμήτεια. This is an exclamation rather than an address. Cp. l. 569 n. The ‘house of Admetus’ is barely mentioned again in l. 23, where Apollo gives his reason for leaving it. The object of this appeal is to fix the scene and define the circumstances of the action. So in the Electra the first speaker apostrophises the Argive land, his home, and the Andromache opens with the line—

‘Ασιράθος γῆς σχῆμα, Θηβαία πόλις.

έτλην, ‘submitted,’ as in l. 572. The root is the same as in tollo, tuli, (t)latum, τολμᾶ, &c. Its primary sense is ‘bear up’ or ‘endure;’ cp. l. 837 ὃ πολλὰ τλᾶσα καρδία. Often the notion of cruelty is involved, as in l. 275 μὴ τλῆς με προδούναι, i.e. ‘have the heart to,’ &c. The English ‘bear’ in its various senses exactly corresponds.

1. 2. θήροςα, ‘menial,’ cp. θήροςαν ἐστὶν Elect. 204. Θήρα is the fem. of θή, and the Thetes were the lowest class in Solon’s division of the Athenian citizens. The derivation is uncertain.
aiveσαι, 'to acquiesce in;' properly 'to praise,' as when a man makes the most of his condition in words, when he cannot better it. Hence aivein and laudare were colloquially used as a polite form of declining a thing, i.e. praising it in words to avoid giving offence. Cp. l. 525.

1. 3. Asclepius (Aesculapius) was the son of Phoebus by the nymph Coronis, and was taught the healing art by Chiron. Zeus was jealous of his power, which could even restore the dead (l. 128), as in the case of Hippolytus. Virgil refers to this in Aen. vii. 770—

'Tum pater omnipotens aliquem indignatus ab umbris
Mortalem infernis ad lumina surgere vitae,
Ipse repertorem medicinae tali et artis
Fulmine Phoebigenam Stygias detrusit in undas.'

1. 5. oυ, 'whereat,' the gen. of cause. Cp. ὑπλαν χολαθείς Pindar, Nem. viii. 25.

δη, 'of course,' as a natural result of such treatment.

τέκτωναι, &c. Cp. Cic. de Divin. ii. 19 'non enim te puto esse eum, qui Jovi fulmen fabricatos esse Cyclopes in Aetna putes.' These were the three original Cyclopes, the sons of Heaven and Earth, Βρόντην τε Στερόπην τε καὶ Ἀργην ὀβριμόθυμον (Hesiod. Theog. 140). Later tradition added to their number and made them the servants of Hephaestus.

1. 7. ἀποινα. Cp. Iph. in Tauris 1458 δταν ἐορτάζη λεώς, τῆς σῆς σφαγῆς ἀποινα. These accusatives are said to be 'in apposition to the sentence,' i.e. to a noun implied in the verb, which might be expressed. Thus θητείων implies θητείων, ἐορτάζων implies ἐορτήν. Cp. Orest. 1105 'Ελένην κτάνωμεν, Μενέλαω λύπην πικράν, Soph. Αἰας 559 νέαν ψυχῆν ἀτάλλων, μητρὶ τῷ χαρμόνην.

1. 8. ἔσμορφοβοιν. Cp. l. 572, Tibull. ii. 3. 11 'Pavit et Admeti taurus formosus Apollo.' The imperfects denote continuance. 'Ever since I came here, I have been keeping the herds and preserving my master.'

1. 9. ἐς τοῦ ἡμέρας, also in Phoenissae 425. 'Hμέρας is the partitive gen., lit. 'to this point of time,' like the Latin ad hoc temporis.

1. 10. ἐτύγχανον implies 'I had the luck to secure.' Cf. Aesch. Suppl. 151 μὴ τυχόσατι θεών, i.e. 'not securing their favour.' Also in a bad sense, as ἄνδρος ἄνοσιον τυχῶν Bacchae 613.

1. 11. θανεῖν = τοῦ θανεῖν, a substantival infinitive. Spenser has imitated this construction in the lines,

'For not to have been dipped in Lethe lake
Could save the sonne of Thetis from to die.'

But he was probably not aware that dying is an infinitive as well as a participle, and the proper equivalent of τοῦ θανεῖν.
NOTES. LINES 2-25.

1. 12. Μοῖρας δολῶσας. Cp. 1. 33. Aeschylus alludes to this in Eumenides 693, where the Furies charge Apollo with the deed—

Θοιάντις ἐδρασας καὶ Φέργητος ἐν δόμωι,
Μοῖρας ἐπειδὴς ἀφιτοὺς θείναι βρότους ... σὺ τοι παλαιάς διανομᾶς καταφθίσας ὁὶν παρηπάτησας ἀρχαίας θέας.

ἡνεσαν, 'promised,' lit. 'allowed me (this favour),' from the sense of 'acquiesce.' See 1. 2, n. and cp. l. 525, Med. 1157 ἄλλ' ἥνεσ' ἀνδρὶ πάντα. So κατήνεσεν in Soph. Oed. Col. 432.


1. 15. ἐλέγξας, 'questioning.' Cp. oυδ' ἡλέγξας Hippol. 1322. Ἐλέγχειν is 'to put to the proof,' especially by questions to make a man contradict himself; hence the Socratic cross-questioning was called ἐλέγχοι.

1. 17. δόσις, 'anyone who.' [The MSS. reading is 'ήτις.]

1. 18. κείνω, instead of αὐτῶ, though it refers to the subject of ηῶρ. When ἐκεῖνοι is thus used it invests the person referred to with a special importance. So in 1. 357 κείνης πόσων refers to κόρην just mentioned. Cp. Xen. Anab. i. 8. 26 βασιλέα καὶ τὸ ἄμφ' ἐκεῖνον στῦφος, ib. iv. 3. 20 Χείρισόφος καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐκεῖνῳ.

1. 19. ἐν χεροίν, inter manus. The dual brings out the idea of several pairs of hands employed.

1. 21. θανεῖν καὶ μεταστῆναι βίον, a common tautology. Aristophanes, Ranae 1124, makes Euripides blame Aeschylus for a similar expression—

ἡκο γὰρ εἰς γῆν τὴν καὶ κατέρχομαι (Choe. 3),
since ἡκο and κατέρχομαι mean the same thing.

1. 22. The general belief in pollution caused by contact with the dead was shared by the Greeks with other ancient nations. (See the Mosaic enactments in Numbers xix. 11, &c.) The superstitious man in Theophrastus will not come near a corpse, saying τὸ μὴ μαίνεσθαι συμφέρων αὐτῷ εἶναι. But in the case of the bright and pure deities, Phoebus and Artemis, such contact was especially to be avoided. Apollo might not even be invoked under circumstances of sorrow; hence in the Agamemnon, 1. 1041, the Chorus upbraids Cassandra for so doing, οὐ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ὀστε θρηνήτων τυχεῖν. In the Hippolytus, 1425, Artemis addresses the dying hero thus—

Καὶ χαῖρ', ἐμὸλ γὰρ οὐθὲν ἰδεῖν φθινότος ὁρῶν,
οὐδ' ὑμα λαῖεὶς θανασίμωσιν ἐκπνοαίς.

1. 25. ἱερὴ θανάτων. See 1. 74, where Thanatos appears as a sacrificing priest. The spirits of the dead were considered as malignant deities, who required propitiation by sacrifice. Cp. l. 613 n.
1. 26. συμμετρως = ευκαίρως, ‘punctual to his time,’ lit. ‘measuring’ the time of his arrival so as to suit the day of her doom. Compare the use of συμμετρεῖν by Thucydides, ii. 44, οἷς ἐνευδαιμονῆσαι τε ὁ βίος καὶ ἑντελευθῆσαι ξυνεμετρήθη, i.e. ‘the duration of their happiness is commensurate with the end of their lives.’

Enter Thanatos, clad in black and with a drawn sword. He has probably come up by the χαρώνειον κλίμακες (a flight of steps leading up from a vault to the stage, to represent an ascent from Hades), and is now waiting near the door of the palace.

Thanatos (with a yell). ‘Ha! what dost thou here, Phoebus? Wilt rob me of my due this second time?’ Apollo. ‘Twas not by force I got thy other victim from thee, whose wife even now takes his place—she whom thou seekest?’ Th. ‘Aye, and I will have her too!’ Ap. ‘Will you not take one of riper age?’ Th. ‘No, a youthful victim is a fairer prize.’ Ap. ‘But if she dies old, think of the gorgeous funeral!’ Th. ‘That were a law for the rich, Phoebus, who would buy long life if they could.’ Ap. ‘You won’t oblige me then?’ Th. ‘Not I; you know my ways.’ Ap. ‘Yes, detested by gods and men. But there is one coming who will tame you yet, and rob you of your prey; he is even now on his way hither.’ Th. ‘Talk away! I go to begin my sacrifice.’

1. 29. πολείς. Cp. Orest. 1268 τίς οὖν ἄρ’ ἄμφι μέλαθρον πολεῖς; Πολεῖν (cp. πέλω, πέλομαι) denotes regular motion in and about a place, Lat. versari. So πόλος is ‘a turning-point’ or ‘axis.’ [The root is probably the same as in col-ere, in-col-a, &c. Some have suggested a connection with πολύς, i.e. to be much in a place, but that is from a different root, πλε- ‘full,’ which appears in πλέ-ων, πλῆθος, πλε-νυς, πλε-βς, &c.]


1. 31. ἀφοριζόμενος = circumscribens, lit. ‘marking off’ as one’s own; not (as some explain it) ‘carrying out of bounds,’ i.e. ‘carrying off.’

1. 33. Μοίρας, &c. Cp. l. 12 note.


II. 38–63. The following dialogue is a specimen of ‘word-fencing’ and repartee, which an Athenian audience, accustomed to the daily wrangle of the law-courts, would thoroughly appreciate, however trifling and undignified it may appear to us. See Introduction, p. xiii.

1. 38. θάρσει, &c. = ‘don’t be alarmed;’ ‘be sure (του) I have justice and sound reason on my side.’ Cp. the French avoir raison.
NOTES. LINES 26–52.

1. 39. ἐργον, 'need,' exactly = the Latin opus est.
1. 40. σύννθες, &c. Cp. Hor. Od. iii. 4. 6 (of Apollo) 'nunquam humero positurus arcum,' also Hom. Il. i. 45 τὸ φοίνικι δεσπόζων ἔχων, ἁμφη-ρεφέα τε φαρέτρην.
1. 41. προσωφήλειν, sc. σύννθες. As Apollo is making a second attempt to rob Death of his prey, such interference is justly regarded as his 'custom.'
1. 42. γάρ, 'yes, for, &c.,' referring to προσωφήλειν, but of course not admitting the ἐκδίκος. For γάρ in answers, requiring 'yes' or 'no' to be supplied from the context, cp. ll. 147, 823, 1081.
1. 46. ἀμείψας, 'having given in exchange,' 'substituted.' 'Ἀμέλβειν means either 'to give' or 'take in exchange.' See note on l. 462.

ἡν μὲτα, anastrophe for μεθ' ἦν (hence the accent goes back a syllable on μέτα), 'after whom,' i.e. 'in quest of whom.' Cp. ll. 66, 483.
1. 48. ou γάρ οἴδας ἄν, &c. (also in Med. 941) = οὐκ οἴδα οἰ πείσαμι ἄν, the ἄν being out of its proper place. Εἰ ἄν with the opt. marks a second implied condition, besides the one expressed by the dependent clause; thus in Plato, Protag. ch. 17 εἴπερ ἄλλω τῷ πειθομένῳ ἄν, 'if I were to believe anyone else (supposing he were to say so).' So here οὐκ οἴδα, &c. = 'I am not sure whether I could persuade you (if I tried).'

1. 49. ὅν ἄν χρῆ, i.e. 'the proper person.' Death is purposely ambiguous; in the next line Apollo declares his own views as to who are Death's 'proper' victims.

τοῦτο, a cognate accus. = ταύτην τὴν τάξιν.
1. 50. τοῖς μέλλουσι = those who will die in the natural course of things, i.e. the old. Cp. ὄ μέλλων l. 527. Or 'those who linger on' to old age. Death personified is said ἄνατον ἐμβαλαίει, as at once the cause and the effect. Cp. Ἰφ. in Aul. 775 Ἁρης . . . κυκλώσας ἄρει φωνία, Aesch. Choepl. 32 φόβος . . . ἔλακτε περί φόβῳ. So Milton, Nativity Hymn, 51, has 'Peace . . . strikes a universal peace through sea and land,' and in P. L. x. 269, Death is said to 'draw . . . the savour of death' from all living things.
1. 51. ἔχω, 'I understand,' just as we say 'I have it.' Cp. Orest. 1120 ἔχω τοσοῦτον. So in Ter. Heaut. iv. 3. 22 'τενες quod dicam?' In l. 1107 ἔχω προθυμίαν has its usual sense = πρόθυμος εἴμι.

1. 52. For μόλοι, the opt., we should expect μόλη, the subj., after the primary tense οὐκ ἔστι. But the opt. is used to express something farther removed from possibility. 'Is there absolutely no chance, &c.?'
Cp. l. 117 οὐκ ἐσθ' ὅποι ... παραλύσαι, Aesch. Agam. 620 οὐκ ἐσθ' ὅπως λέξαιμ τὰ ψευδή καλά, on which see Mr. Sidgwick’s note, Appendix I.


>ἐνεστὶ γὰρ δὴ κἂν θεῶν γένει τόδε τιμώμενοι χαῖρονσιν ἀνθρώπων ὑπὸ.

The whole theory of sacrifice proceeds upon this assumption.

1. 55. μεῖζον, i.e. ‘more valuable’ than in the case of one who must soon die in the course of nature (l. 50). In the next few lines both disputants purposely misunderstand each other. Apollo says that if Alcestis lives to be old, she will still have a rich funeral (as befits her station), as if this were the ‘prize’ that Death desired. Death retorts by professing to understand him to refer to rich people generally, whereas Phoebus had spoken only of Alcestis. Hence he is twitted with ‘captiousness’ by his opponent for misinterpreting him. At l. 60 Apollo abruptly returns to the point in dispute.

1. 57. πρὸς τῶν ἔχοντων, ‘in the interest of the rich.’ Πρὸς is literally ‘from the point of view of,’ i.e. ‘on the side of.’ For οἱ ἔχοντες = πλοῦσιοι, cp. Soph. Ajax 157 πρὸς τῶν ἔχονθ’ ὁ φθόνος ἔρπει.

1. 58. λέληθας, &c., i.e. ‘I did not think you were such a sophist,’ i.e. ‘so clever.’ See above on l. 55. For σοφός in this sense cp. Med. 296 παῖδας περίσσως ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι σοφοῦς. Euripides is very fond of this word and its cognates σοφία, &c.; he uses them on all occasions in every shade of meaning, from wisdom to mere cunning. Aristophanes often applies the epithet σοφός to Euripides himself, of course depreciatingly or ironically—e.g. in Nubes 1377, Ranae 1413, Lysist. 368.

1. 59. ὁνοντ’ ἄν, &c., ‘they who had the means would purchase length of days.’ Another reading, of good authority, is ὅνοντ’ ἄν, ‘they would be benefited (or have the best of it), who could afford to purchase delay’ (Paley). Either will make good sense. With the former cp. Cardinal Beaufort’s dying exclamation, Shaksp. Hen. VI. 2nd Part, iii. 3:

>‘If thou be’st death, I’ll give thee England’s treasure,

So thou wilt let me live and feel no pain.’

[For γηραιούσ some read γηραιοι. The former means that they would buy it for their friends, the latter for themselves (the subject of the sentence).]

1. 63. ἄ μή = ‘whatever,’ i.e. ‘you can’t have everything that you have no right to,’ implying that he does manage to get a great deal.

1. 64. ἦ μήν, ‘be sure however.’ Μήν is lengthened from μέν, hence ἦ μήν is a strong form of asseveration, used in oaths, &c.

παύσει, here almost passive, ‘you will have’ or ‘be made to stop.’ See l. 322 n.
NOTES. LINES 53-77.

1. 65. τοῖος, i.e., 'so strong a man.' Cp. ὁ ὦς τῇ εἰμ, 'I am able' or equal to the task.

1. 66. μέτα. Cp. l. 46 note. For the object of Heracles' expedition see l. 431, &c.

1. 70. ἡ χάρις, 'the thanks' you would get from me if you gave up Alcestis now.

1. 71. δράσεις διόλως, 'you will have to do it all the same,' i.e. surrender your victim. Euripides avails himself of Apollo's prophetic insight to give his audience a hint of what is coming.

1. 72. ἀν λέξας = ei λέξεις, 'if you talk ever so much.' Cp. the phrase πάλλεις ἀν ἔχων εἰπεῖν, 'though I could say much.' [In l. 490 τί ὥν ἐκτητάς δεσπότην πλέον λάβοις; the single ἀν belongs to λάβωις, but reflects its conditional force upon κρατήσας also.]

1. 73. οὔ, ὁ δὲ [ἐν], 'the lady I say.' Ὁν, said to be from ἐν, part. of εἰπι (but Ionic ἀν is against this derivation), means 'as a matter of fact,' 'really,' often 'of course,' as in Plat. Phaedr. xx. ei δὲ ἐστιν ὡσπερ οὖν ἔστι. Its common meaning 'therefore' is derived from this.

1. 74. Here Death appears as a sacrificing priest. See on l. 25. A tuft of hair was cut from the victim's head, and thrown into the fire as firstfruits (primitiae) of the sacrifice. Hence the technical term κατάρχεσθαι, as in Aristoph. Aves 959 μὴ κατάρχῃ τοῦ τράγου. Cp. Virg. Aen. vi. 243:

Et summas carpen media inter cornua setas
Ignibus imponit sacris, libamina prima.'

In Aen. iv. 698 Proserpine performs the same function:

'Nondum illi flavum Proserpina vertice crinem
Abstulerat, Stygioque caput sacraverat Orco.'

1. 75. ἱερὸς, 'devoted to,' with possessive gen. as in Soph. Philoct. 943 ἱερὰ τοῦ Ζήνος. Cp. Cic. in Verrem ii. 18 'insula eorum Deorum sacra putatur.'

1. 76. ἐποῦ ... ἐγνίσθη. It has been said, by way of distinction, that the omission of ἀν makes the statement rather less indefinite than it would otherwise be,—that man is sacred ... whose head, &c. But as a general statement (which the subjunctive implies) must be more or less indefinite, the practical difference is very slight, if not altogether imaginary. The ἀν is commonly omitted in Homer, often in tragedy, as in l. 978 ζέως ὥ τι νέοφη, Med. 516 ὡς κυβηνὸς ἤ. In Attic prose this omission is confined to a few doubtful instances.

Exeunt Apollo and Thanatos.

II. 77-111. This is the Parodos or 'entrance-song' of the Chorus, sung while advancing to their places in the orchestra. The metre is anaapaest, suited to a slow and solemn march. At ll. 93, 105 they divide into two sections (ἡμιχώρια) and again, at l. 112, join in an ode of lamentation (to l. 136).
CHORUS. 'What means this silence? Is our lady still alive? At least there is no sign or sound of mourning; all may not be over; — is there yet hope? Ah no! the fatal day is surely come; let us mourn with our king. No power can save her now; prayers and sacrifice alike are vain. Phoebus' son alone could rescue her, but he, alas! is dead, slain by the bolt of Zeus; there is no remedy.

But here comes one of the handmaidens of the house; I would fain learn the truth from her.'

1. 80. φθυμένη, emphatic, 'to mourn as dead.'

[1. 82. Many editions insert τόδε, probably an interpolation to complete the metre. Placed after φῶς it violates the rule (which however has its exceptions, as in Hippol. 1360, Phoen. 816, &c.) that the second foot in an anapaestic dimer should end a word. Hence Kirchhoff puts τόδε after Πελίου.]

1. 88. ὡς πεπραγμένων, 'as if all were over.' Cp. Hippol. 680 φεῦ, φεῦ, πέπραγμα, Lat. actuō est.

1. 89. οὐ μᾶν οὔδε, 'yet on the other hand,' &c. The Chorus waver between hope and fear, and interpret the doubtful signs accordingly. 'There is no sound or voice of woe,' so far well; 'but neither is any attendant stationed at the gates,' which seems to indicate that some great sorrow keeps them within.

1. 91. εἰ φανεῖς, equivalent to a wish. Cp. l. 1072 εἰ γὰρ εἰχών, Aristoph. Equites 662 αἰ τρίχιδες εἰ γενοίαθ' ἐκατὸν τοῦβολοῦ. So in Latin o sī = utinam, as in Persius Sat. ii. 10 'O si ebulliat patr. us, praeclarum funus.' The γὰρ indicates a reason why the wish may not be hopeless, since on the whole the signs are favourable.

μετακύμιος ἀτῆς, 'between the waves of our distress,' to save us from being overwhelmed by them. Cp. μεταίχμιον, 'the space between two armies.'

1. 92. Παίαν, an attribute of Apollo as the Healer or averter of evil (l. 220, &c.), but originally, as in Homer, a distinct deity. For the meanings of Παίαν see l. 424 n.

1. 94. οὐ δῆ, &c. 'At any rate (γε) she has not been carried out' for burial. The former speaker had adduced the silence in the house as a proof that Alcestis was not dead, the answer accepts the evidence as valid; since, if the funeral procession had left, the house would of course be deserted. [The words νέκυς ἡμη, usually placed after οἰκῶν, have been suspected as a gloss to supply a noun with φροῦδος. The Scholiast explains the line οὐ γὰρ ἐλαθεν ἡμᾶς προκομισθέασα. But the objection that νέκυς ἡμη would be a false quantity will not hold, for the -us is sometimes short, as in l. 599 νέκυν ἐν δόμασιν. The difficulty is removed by making νέκυς ἡμη precede this line.]

1. 95. τόθεν, &c. 'Why so? I am not so sure of it. What makes
you confident?' But some assign each sentence to a separate semi-chorus, in which case πόθεν will mean ‘certainly not’ (minime) and oνκ αύχω will express hesitation on the part of the first speaker, ‘I do not say so positively.’ See note on αὐχεῖσ l. 675. [There is some uncertainty about the arrangement of the whole passage, since the number of lines in the strophe (86-97) and antistrophe (98-111) is not equal. But perhaps, as Paley observes, the anapaestic lines (93-97 and 105-111) are not included in the antithetical arrangement.]

1. 96. πῶς ἄν = a negative, i.e. ‘Admetus would never have made,’ &c. Cp. the colloquial phrases πῶς γὰρ; πῶς γὰρ ὄν; For the double ἄν cp. 464, 474, Soph. Oed. Tyr. 772 πῶς ἄν ποτ’ ἀφικοίμην ἄν; and see note on l. 647.

ἐρημον, i.e. without mourners. So δίκη ἐρήμη was a suit in which one of the parties failed to appear.

1. 99. πηγαῖον, &c. A vessel of spring water (ὀστρακον or ὀρδαῖον) fetched from another house, was placed at the door, for those who entered to sprinkle themselves, to avoid pollution from the corpse (l. 22 n.). Cp. Aristoph. Eccles. 1033 ὅδατος δὲ κατάθον τούστρακον πρὸ τῆς θύρας.

1. 101. χαίτα ... τομαῖος, &c., should mean ‘no clipped hair before the doors,’ but there seems to be no evidence of such a custom beyond the present passage. In the Supplices 972 (παιδὸς δ’ ἐν οἴκοις κεῖται μνάματα πένθιμοι κουραί καὶ στέφανοι κόμας) the hair is kept simply as a ‘memorial’ of the departed, and the line quoted by Monk from Aesch. Choeph. 166 ὄρῳ τομαίον τόνδε βόστρυχον τάφῳ illustrates the well-known custom of placing a lock of hair upon the tomb. [Another reading is χαίτας τομαῖος, i.e. ‘no one with shorn hair,’ a common sign of mourning. Cp. ll. 215, 427.]

1. 103. πᾶτε, ‘happens,’ accidit. So ‘fall’ in English = ‘befal,’ ‘as it fell upon a day.’

νεολαία χείρ γυναικῶν = χείρ νέων γυναικῶν, by an inversion of the adj. See l. 1059 n. and cp. γραίας ὀσσων πηγάς Herc. Fur. 450, λευκότηται χεῖς κτίσων χερων Phoen. 1351. νεολαία is here an adjective, though elsewhere a substantive, as in Theocr. Idyll. xviii. 24 θῆλυς νεολαία. But the reading is uncertain.


1. 105. καὶ μὴν, &c., ‘and yet this is the appointed day.’ See l. 26. Herodotus v. 50 has ἡ κυρίη ἡμέρα. [Some editions interpolate δ’ after τόδε and καὶ before τι in the next line to complete the metre.]

1. 107. For χρην others read χρῆ. But the impf. refers back to the time when the decree went forth; ‘on which she was to have gone,’ &c.
I. 109. διακναίομένων, ‘wearing away,’ i.e. either with sorrow, referring to Admetus and the family, or with disease, referring to Alcestis. Probably the latter, cp. I. 203. Aeschylus, Prom. 94, has αἰνίαισιν διακναίομενος. The primary sense of κναίω (κνάω, κνάττω, &c.) is ‘to scrape,’ hence ‘wear away’ as by a lingering malady. Prof. Paley understands it of life suddenly cut short, quoting Aesch. Agam. 65 διακναίομένης ἐν προσελείοις κάμακος. But this need not literally mean ‘snapt short,’ but ‘shivered’ or ‘splintered,’ from the original sense of the word.

II. 112–135. The Chorus having now taken their places combine to chant the stasimon or ‘stationary ode.’ The burden of it is the utter hopelessness of saving the queen’s life now.

1. 113. ὅποι αἰας = quō terrarum. Λυκίας is in the same construction, though Euripides does not mean ‘to what part of Lycia,’ but ‘to what part of the world, whether Lycia or Libya.’

[Hence Monk reads Λυκίαν, without MS. authority. Some take Λυκίας as an adj. with ἐδρας, the prep. ἐπὶ being put with the second noun; cp. Phoen. 291 μαντεῖα σεμνά λοξίον τ’ ἐπ’ ἐσχάρας. This is a possible construction, but the former is to be preferred.]

The Lycian shrine of Apollo was at Patara (Hor. Od. iii. 4. 61), where he was said to dwell in winter, hence ‘hibernam Lyciam,’ Virg. Aen. iv. 143.

1. 115. ἦ... ἔτε instead of ἦ... ἦ. Cp. Soph. Aias 176 ἦ ὑδα κλυτῶν ἐνάρων ψευθείοι, ἁδώρως ἔτ’ ἐλαφρολίαις; also, with the order reversed, Iph. in Tauris 272 ἔτ’ οὖν ἐπ’ ἀκταῖς θάσσετον Διοσκόρω, ἦ Νηρέας ἀγάλματα.

ἀνώδροσος... ἐδρας. Cp. Electra 732 ἐποιεὶ τ’ Άμμωνίδος ἐδρα... ἀπειρώδροσοι. The temple of Jupiter Ammon was on an oasis in the Libyan desert. Arrian describes the surrounding district as πάντα ἐρήμα καὶ ἀνύδρα, but ‘a small spot in the midst is full of trees, and a fountain springs from it, which is cold at midday, but gets hotter as the sun goes down.’ Cp. Lucan, Pharsalia ix. 527—

‘Solus nemus extulit Ammon.
Silvarum fons causa loco, qui putria terrae
Alligat, et domitas unda connectit arenas.’

1. 117. παραλύσαι. The opt. after a verb in a primary tense (ἔστι) implies absolute impossibility. See note on I. 52, and add reference to Aesch. Prom. 292 οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτα μείζων μοῖραν νείμαιμ’ ἦ σοι.

1. 118. ἀπότομος, ‘inexorable’ (cp. I. 982), lit. ‘precipitous,’ Lat. abruptus, like the Homeric αἰνών ὄλεθρον, ‘sheer destruction.’

1. 119. ἐπ’ ἐσχάρας, after μηλοβύταν.

1. 120. The hiatus in ἐξω ἔπι is an Epic licence admissible in choral odes. Cp. Soph. Aias 349 μόνοι ἐμῶν φίλων.
NOTES. LINES 109-135.

1. 122. ἴν δεδορκὼς = ἐδεδόρκη, but lays greater stress on the predicate = 'had been alive and seen.' Cp. Iph. in Taur. 133 ἴμεν ἴμενοι, Soph. Alas 1320 κλύοντες ἐσμέν, Hdt. iii. 76 στείχοντες ἐγένοντο. This 'analytic' form is specially used in the pluperf., a comparatively rare tense in Greek.

1. 125. ἧλθεν. Observe the change of subject from Asclepius to Alcestis, 'she would have come,' instead of 'he would have fetched her.'

[l. 126. The MSS. reading 'Αίδα τε πύλας, does not correspond with the strophic line 117. Dindorf adds καί and Hermann substituted πυλώνας. Many adopt Monk's reading 'Αίδαο, with Ἀμμανίδας in the strophe, l. 116. The Epic genitive occurs in Electra 468 ἄλιθον, Troades 844 Πριάμου, and elsewhere. 'Gates of Hades' is also a regular Homeric phrase (II. xxiii. 71, &c.). Cp. Med. 1231, and σκότων πύλας Hec. 1.]

1. 127. δμαθένας, sc. θανάτω. Cp. Troad. 175 καὶ ζώντες καὶ δμαθέντες. Mr. Browning in Balanustion translates 'Death's subdued ones.'

1. 131. προσδέκων, the 'deliberative' subj. 'am I to expect.' Cp. ll. 215, 864. The singular verb shows that the leader of the Chorus is speaking. So ἐμοὶ l. 83.

1. 132. τετέλεσται, i.e. 'all due rites have been performed,' from τέλος = 'religious ceremony.' βασιλεύσων refers to Admetus alone; the plural indicates dignity, and is part of the 'royal style' (like we, our, &c., in addresses from the throne). Cp. δεσποτασίον l. 138, κοιράνως l. 216. Aristotle, Rhet. iii. 6, says εἰς ἄγκον τῆς λέξεως συμβάλλεται τὸ ἐν πολλὰ ποιεῖν.

1. 134. αἰμόρραντοι for αἰματόρραντοι, formed from the original root, instead of from the noun stem of αἴμα (as in αἴματο-σταγής, &c.). Cp. κυμοδέγμονος Hippol. 1173.

πληρεῖς, &c. Not perhaps an inversion for βῶμοι βυσίων πληρεῖς, but in the sense of 'complete' or 'abundant,' like Homer's τεληθόσσα ἐκατόμβος. So in Helena 1411 χάριν πληρή λαβεῖν. Cp. the expression in our Prayer Book 'a full, perfect sacrifice.'

1. 135. From this line to l. 434 is the first Episode (ἐπείσοδος), the name given to all that portion of a play which comes between two Choral odes.

Enter Handmaid. Ll. 138-212. Chorus. 'Is your mistress still living?' Maid. 'She is hovering between life and death, and there is no hope; her funeral attire is ready.' Cho. 'A glorious death will be hers, the best of woman-kind!' Maid. 'Ay, the best indeed! But hear how she prepared to meet her doom. Having bathed herself in pure water, she put on festal attire, and prayed for her children, first before
the hearth, then at each household altar; all without tear or groan. At last, entering the nuptial chamber, she gave full vent to her grief, watering the couch with a flood of tears. Her children clung to her weeping; the servants also wept, while to each one she gave her hand and spoke a kind farewell. Such a woe, worse than death, has Admetus to bear. Even now he clasps her in his arms, beseeching her not to leave him; but she is fast wearing away, and with wistful eye is taking farewell of the sun. But I will announce thy friendly coming to my master.'

1. 138. πενθεῖν, &c., addressed to the servant. εἰ τι τυγχάνει, an euphemism for some great calamity. Cp. Latin ‘si quid acciderit,’ just as we say ‘if anything happens.’ δεσπόταισι, cp. l. 132 n.

1. 140. οὖν marks an anticipated event, ‘as we fear’ (Major).

1. 141. Cp. l. 521 ἔστιν τε κούκετ’ ἔστιν, also Phoenissae 357 φρονῶν εὕ κού φρονῶν ἀφικόμεν. Euripides was fond of these verbal paradoxes (ἀντιλόγια), and his audience could appreciate them. Aristophanes ridicules them in a famous scene of the Acharnians 396 &c., where Dicaeopolis enquiring at the door whether Euripides is at home, gets the answer οὐκ ἐνδον ἐνδον ἔστιν, meaning that his mind was abroad, though his body was indoors.

1. 142. καὶ πῶς, ‘but how,’ or ‘and pray how,’ &c., indicating surprise or objection. Καὶ marks a continuation of thought, which now breaks forth in words. When the καὶ stands second, it merely introduces a further question, and means ‘also,’ as ποῦ καὶ l. 832. [This distinction does not always hold good; e.g. in l. 482 καὶ ποῖ simply continues the conversation, so καὶ ποῖ in Aesch. Choeph. 528, and καὶ πότε in l. 524 of the same play.]

1. 143. προνωτής, ‘sinking,’ prona, i.e. moribunda. For its literal meaning see l. 186.

1. 144. οἶας οἷς ὄν, &c. = οἶος εἰ καὶ οἶας, &c., a condensed expression, the force of which can only be given by a paraphrase; e.g.—‘What a fate for one so noble to lose so precious a wife!’ Cp. Soph. Aias 557 οἶος εἷς οἷον ἀράφης = ‘the character of thy sire reflected in thine own.’

1. 145. πάθη. The subjunctive is the regular construction after the pres. οὖς. ‘He knows not her worth before the blow comes.’ [But there is good MS. authority for the opt. πάθοι. This would refer back to the thought as conceived in the speaker’s mind, ‘he knows it not, nor could he be expected to know it, before the blow came.’]

1. 146. ἡλπίς μὲν, &c., ‘hope then there is none,’ &c., ‘spes, ut videtur, nulla est.’ Cp. Med. 674 θεῖς μὲν ἡμᾶς χρησμὸν εἰδέναι θεοῦ; = ‘I take it for granted we may learn,’ &c. Lit. ‘one thing at least is certain.’ See on l. 64.
1. 149. κόσμος. Cp. I. 161, 613; Herc. Fur. 442, 703; Ion 26 ἂλλ’ ἢν ἤδεν παρθένοις χλιδήν, τέκνω προσάφας ἔλπεν, ὡς θανομένης. By κόσμος is meant not only an article of dress (ἐσθήτα l. 161) but especially gold ornaments, of which many specimens have been found in ancient tombs. The phrase ἀναβηματα νεκροῖς, Suppl. 983, points to the origin of this custom, i.e. the desire of propitiating the θεόν νερτέρου (l. 25). For the whole ceremony see Dict. of Antiquities, under Funus.

1. 150. ἵστω, &c., ‘let her know that she,’ &c. Cp. ἵστω πορεύον l. 438. Verbs denoting knowledge, perception, &c., are regularly followed by a participle instead of the infinit. as in Latin. If the part. refers to the subject of the sentence, it stands in the nom. case by ‘attraction,’ otherwise in the accus., as οἴδα ἣν but οἴδα σε ὄντα. Virgil has imitated this construction in Aen. ii. 377 ‘Sensit medios delapsus in hostes.’ So with other verbs, as φαίνομαι, δείκνυμαι, &c. Cp. l. 154 below.

1. 151. μακρῷ, ‘by far,’ with ἄριστη, but put at the end of the sentence for emphasis. Cp. Bacchae 1234 πάντων ἄριστας θυγατέρας σπείραι μακρῷ.

1. 152. ὅσοι οὐκ, &c. = ‘of course she is,’ &c. Cp. I. 92 n. These quick interrogative forms of expression were well suited to the liveliness of the Greek temperament.

1. 153. ὑπερβήβηλημένη, ‘who has surpassed her,’ metaphor from an arrow shot beyond the mark (Paley). The force of the perfect is ‘who has been found to surpass her,’ quae superaverit?

1. 154. ἐνδείξατο προτιμῶσα. Cp. Bacch. 45 θεός γεγός ἐνδείξομαι, Med. 548 δείξω πρῶτα μὲν σοφὸς γεγός. For the participial construction see l. 150 n.

With the sentiment of these lines cp. St. John xv. 13.

1. 156. ταῦτα, i.e. the general fact, as distinguished from the details about to be related.

πᾶσα πόλις (without the article) should mean ‘every city’ according to rule, and would imply that the fame of Alcestis had travelled beyond Pherae. But it probably means ‘the whole city,’ πόλις being considered as a sort of proper noun, which would not take the art., e.g. πᾶσας Φεροῖ. So πᾶσα γῆ = ‘the whole earth.’ Otherwise πᾶς for πᾶσ ὁ is confessedly rare. Even in the New Testament πᾶσα οἰκοδομή, ‘the whole building,’ is perhaps a solitary instance. δῆ, ‘of course,’ cp. I. 68 n.

1. 158. κυρίαν. Cp. κύριον ἃμα l. 105.

II. 160, 161. ἐλούσατο. So Socrates washed himself before drinking the hemlock. (Plato Phaedo ch. lxv.) Cp. Soph. Oed. Col. 1597, &c., where Oedipus preparing for death ‘put off his travel-stained garments, and bade his daughters bring water from the flowing stream...’ This done they bathed him therein, and arrayed him in fresh apparel, as is
the custom’ (ib. 1602). The washing was of course part of the usual ceremony of purification; for the ‘robes and ornaments’ see l. 149 n. According to Lucian, De Luctu, one reason for the latter practice was that the body might not be cold on its passage to Hades. So in the strange story told by Herodotus v. 92, the spirit of Melissa, wife of Periander, complains that she was cold, because the garments buried with her had not first been burnt, and therefore were of no use to her.

δόμων, ‘chests’ or ‘wardrobes,’ made of cedar to keep out moths and damp. Cp. Hom. II. xxiv. 191—

αιτός δ' εἰς θάλαμον κατεβήσατο κηφέντα
κέδρινον ύψοροφον, δις γυλήνεα πολλὰ κεκάνθει.

[Δόμος, from δέμ-ω = anything built or constructed; Lat. ‘dom-us,’ Eng. ‘tim-ber.’ In Hesiod Works and Days 96 δόμοισιν means ‘a jar.’]

1. 163. δεσποινα. This may have been either Hestia (Vesta), whose altar stood in the innermost part (μυχοί) of the house, or Artemis, who was both the patron goddess of Pherae (Callimachus Hymn. ad Dianam 259), and, in the character of Ilithyia (Hor. Carm. Sec. 14), presided over marriage (l. 166). The words πρόσθεν ἐστίας prove nothing, since the altars of patron deities stood near the hearth; thus in Med. 306 we find Medea addressing Hecate as μυχοῖς ναοῦσαν ἐστίας ἐμῆς. The title δεσποινα was especially given to Persephone, but her authority appears to have been confined to the nether world.

1. 165. τέκνα. Their names were Eumelus (l. 394) and Perimele. The former commanded his father’s forces before Troy (Herm. II. ii. 712), and was one of those who bore the distinctive title Ἄναξ ἄνδρων (ib. xxiii. 288).

1. 166. σύξευξον. The imperat. is thrown in, as it were, between the two infinitives ὄφανεύσαι and θανεῖν, which depend upon αἰτήσομαι. The interchange of these two moods is not uncommon. Cp. Aristoph. Ranae 385 συμπαραστάται, καὶ σωζεῖ τὸν σαντῆς χόρον... παίσαι τε καὶ χορεύαι.

1. 167. ἡ τεκοῦσα is here a substantive = pārens, hence followed by the gen. αὐτῶν. Cp. Elect. 333 ὁ κείνον τεκὼν.

1. 170. οἷ, κ.κ., sc. εἰσὶ. Cp. Hom. Od. xx. 298 αἳ κατὰ δῶματ' Ὀδυσσάχος θείοιο. The verb is not regularly omitted in relative clauses, and the more usual construction would be τούς, with ὅντας expressed or understood.


1. 172. μυρσίνθης φόβην. Cp. Ion 120 μυρσίνας ἵερων φόβαν. [Others read μυραῖνων or μυρσίνων (adj.), but μυρσίνης has best authority.] The myrtle was used at funerals as well as at banquets (l. 759). Cp. Elect. 512 τύμβῳ ἀμφέθηκα μυρσίνας. So Milton, Lycidas 2,
speaks of plucking the 'myrtles brown' in memory of his deceased friend.

_άποσχίζουσα_ (pres.) 'plucking all the while.'

1. 173. _άκλαυστος, ἀστένακτος_, transitive as in Hom. _Od._ iv. 493 _οὐδὲ σε φημι δὴν ἀκλαυστον ἐσεθαί_. So _ἄδάκρυτος_, &c. [In Soph. _Antig._ 847 _φίλων ἀκλαυστός_ means 'unwept by friends. ']

1. 175. _θάλαμον_, &c., 'bursting into the chamber and falling _upon_ the couch,' from the double sense of _εἰσπίπτειν_. Monk cites Virg. _Aen._ iv. 650 'incubuitque toro dixitque novissima _A-erba._'

1. 176. _ἐνταῦθα δή, tum demum, 'then at last,' or 'then' (with emphasis).

1. 177. Cp. the dying address of Deianira to the bed of Heracles, _Soph. Trach._ 920—

_δέ λέξη τε καὶ νυμφεῖ ἐμά, τοῦ λοιπόν ἡδὴ χαίρει, ὡς ἐμ' οὐποτε δέεσθ' ἐτ' ἐν κοίταις ταῖσθ' εὐνητριαν._

1. 178. _κορέματα_, &c. = 'I resigned my maidenhood,' but _ἐλυσα_ refers to the removal of the virgin zone after marriage. Cp. Hom. _Od._ xi. 245 _άυσε δε παρθενίν ζώνην. _ἐκ, 'at the hands of,' i.e. 'by marriage with.' For the use of _ἐκ_ to denote the agent, instead of _ὑπάρχει_, cp. Soph. _Oed._ _Tyr._ 1454 _ἐν ἐκείνων, οἱ μ' ἀπωλλυτὴν, θάνω._ It is common in Herodotus.

_πέρι_, for the more usual _ὑπέρ_ (l. 284), or _πρό_ (l. 18), 'for whose sake.' So _ἀμώνεσθαι_ _περὶ_ _πάτρης_, &c., in Homer.

1. 179. _ἀπώλεσας_, &c., i.e. 'you have destroyed me, but you will destroy no other woman,' for no one will do for a husband what I have done for him. Her marriage with Admetus, symbolised by the nuptial couch, had cost Alcestis her life. [Others translate _ἀπώλεσας_, 'you have lost,' understanding _μόνην_ to mean 'me and not Admetus as well,' because he might retrieve the nuptial couch by a second marriage, whereas Alcestis would never have married again had Admetus died. But the clause which suggests this, _σε ὅλη_, &c., is not in immediate connexion with the present one, and the explanatory clause _προδούναι γάρ_, &c., favours the former interpretation.]

1. 183. _σώφρων_, &c., 'one more fortunate perhaps, but none more true.' For _σώφρων_ in its distinctive sense as denoting conjugal fidelity cp. _Med._ 912 _γυναικὸς έργα σώφρωνοι_, _Elect._ 1099 _σώφρωνα λέχη._

_οὐκ ἂν ἦτις οὐκ ἂν εἶν. _' _Almost without a verb gives the sense of likelihood. Cp. Plato, _Rep._ ix. ch. 4 _τῶν δύνατῶν ἂν γρίναι, 'those who are likely to be good judges.' This line is parodied by Aristophanes _Equites_ 125 Κλέπτης μὲν οὐκ ἂν μᾶλλον, εὐνυχῆς δ' ἕσως._

1. 184. _πλημμυρίδι_, properly the 'flood tide.' Aeschylus uses it of a gush of tears in _Choeph._ 186—
εξ ὁμμάτων δὲ δίψου πίπτονσι μοι
σταγνές ἀφαρκτοὶ δυσχίμου πλημμυρίδος.

1.186. προνωπῆς, 'bending forward.' Cp. l. 143 for the word in a derived sense.

1.187. πόλλ' ἐπεστράφη, 'often returned to.' Cp. Hel. 83 πέθεν γῆς
τῆς ἐπεστράφης πέδων, also Ion 352 πόλλ' ἐπεστράφη πέδων, unless the
meaning there be 'roamed o'er the plain.'

1.194. κακὸς, 'vile,' in station, as in Shaksp. Hen. V. iv. 3 'be he ne'er so vile, this day shall gentle his condition.' Cp. Hom. Od. vi. 119
ἐὐθλοῖς ἦδε κακοῖοιν = 'high and low.' Originally these terms denoted
warlike excellence or the reverse, without any reference to morals, or
even to birth and station, except in so far as 'goodness' of every kind
was presumed to accompany nobility (cp. l. 601). This is one of the
passages in which Euripides shews his sympathy with slaves, and a
desire to improve their despised condition. Cp. Med. 54, Orest. 870,
Ion 854–856.

1.195. προσερρῆθη, sc. ὑφ' ὕβ from ὅν preceding. 'She spake not to,
nor had an answer from' (Browning).

1.197. The meaning is, 'if he had died, he would have perished
outright, but now that he has escaped death, he will have a lifelong
sorrow.' It is uncertain whether we should read τ' ἄν (=τε ἄν) or
τάν (=τοι ἄν). Δὲ following τε marks the latter statement as more
important by contrast with the former, 'whereas now he has,' &c. Τε...
τε merely connect two parallel clauses, 'both ... and.'

1.198. οὗ ποτ' οὗ, &c. 'which he will never forget.' The inversion
for οὗ ποτε is seemingly without parallel. Hence Nauck reads οὗ ποθ'
οὗ, which involves an equally awkward transposition of the relative
pronoun. Monk takes οὗ λέλησται = μεμνησται, = 'will ever remember,'
but ποτέ cannot mean 'ever' in the sense of 'always.' See on οὗποτε
φήσω l. 238.

1.199. ἥ πον, 'surely,' or 'I presume' (often ironical). Πον is 'some-
where,' hence ἥ πον = 'surely I have some grounds for what I say.'

1.200. εἰ, with indic., instead of the direct ὅτι, 'if' (as is the case) =
'since.'

1.203. προδοῦνα, 'to abandon him,' deserere, as in ll. 250, 275.

1.204. παρεμένη, 'paralysed' or 'fainting.' The γε is doubtful.
Elmsley suggested a lost line after this one; others put a colon after
νόσφ, and read δέ for γε: 'And paralysed ... still, though with little
breath left in her, she tries to gaze upon the sun's rays.'

χειρὸς ἀθλιον βάρος is best referred to Alcestis herself, as 'a wretched
burden in the hands' of her supporters. [Others understand χειρὸς of
the hand or arm of Alcestis, which is now a useless dead weight to her,
—taking βάρος as the acc. of respect after παρεμένη.]
NOTES.  LINES 186-229.

[After l. 206 these two lines are inserted:—
\[\text{ύς οὐποί \ άθις, άλλα \ νόν πανύστατον}
\text{άκτινα κύκλον \ θ' \ ἡλίου προσφύεται.}]

They are considered to be an interpolation from Hecuba 112, where they recur; and are, at all events, not necessary to complete the sense of this passage. The sentiment however is natural, especially from a Greek point of view, a last appeal to the sun as the source of light being regarded as a solemn religious act. Cp. l. 243. Thus Polyxena in the Hecuba, 412, addresses the sun in the passage above referred to, so does Iphigenia in her parting words Iph. in Aul. 1505 \(\text{ιῳ λαμπαδόνχος \ áμέρα,}
\text{Δίως \ τε \ φέγγος,} \& \text{c.}; \) also Ajax before taking the fatal leap (Soph. Aias 856), exclaims \(\text{σὲ δ' \ ὧ φαεννῆς \ ἡμέρας τὸ \ νόν σέλας, καὶ \ τὸν \ διφρεύτη \ Ἡλίουν \ προσεννέτοα.}
\]

l. 209. \(\sigma\'\), addressed to the leader of the Chorus.  Cp. l. 131.
Exit HANDMAID. The Chorus now divides as before, l. 77. [Hermann distributes the following Strophe among five Choreutae, making a similar division in the Antistrophe, l. 226.]

ll. 213-243. Chorus. 'Is there yet no deliverance? I fear there is none, but let us not cease our prayer. Great Paean, if thou canst, hear and save! But see! yonder comes Alcestis, with her husband. Mourn, cry aloud, Phereean land! the best of women is departing. Never more will I praise wedded life; such sorrow hath it brought upon my king.'

l. 213. \(\tau\'\;\text{πῶς, a double interrogative (some MSS. insert πâ).} \)
\text{Cp. Helena 873} \(\tau\;\text{τάμα πῶς} \;\text{ἐχει} \;\text{θεοπάματα;} \;\text{τίς} \;\text{ἄν=νιναμ.} \)
\text{Cp. Soph. Oed. Col. 1100} \(\tau\;\text{ἄν} \;\text{θεών} \;\text{ςοι} \;\text{τὸν} \;\text{ἄριστον} \;\text{ἀνδρ} \;\text{ιδείν} \;\text{δοίχ;} \)
\text{Compare \(\text{πῶς \ ἄν} \;\text{όλοίμαι} \;\text{l. 865.} \)

\(\text{πόρος κακών, 'way out of our troubles,' like μηχανάν κακών \;l. 222.} \)

l. 215. \(\text{τέμω, the 'deliberative' subj.} \)
\text{Cp. l. 131 n.}  The sense is, 'Is any one coming who will tell us if all is over, or shall we take it for granted, and begin the ceremonies of woe at once (\(\eta\;\deltaη\))? ' Observe the change of number in \(\text{ἀμφιβαλόμεθα.} \)

l. 219. \(\text{θεών, a monosyllable, unless we omit the} \;\gammaρ \;\text{with some editions.} \)
\text{But the reading is uncertain; see note on the antistrophic line 233.}  

l. 220. \(\text{Παιάν.} \)
\text{Cp. l. 91 n.}  

l. 222. \(\text{πάρος τοῦ} \;\text{τοῦ} \;\text{τίμω, 'before now.'} \)
\text{Cp. ll. 11, 32.}  \text{Πάρος as a preposition is oftener used of place than of time, but in Androm. 1207} \text{we have} \;\text{θανεῖν} \;\text{οὲ} \;\text{χρῆν \ πάρος} \;\text{τέκνων.} \) [Hermann reads \(\tau\;\text{δ' \ ἐφεύρες} \;\text{τοῦτο} \;\text{τότο} \;\text{(i.e. for Admetus), and repeats} \;\text{στέναξο} \;\text{in the antistrophe, l. 236.}] 

l. 229. \(\text{άρα} \;\text{nonne (cp. ll. 341, 771), sometimes} \;\text{num (as in l. 477).} \)
\text{It is not in itself interrogative, being merely a strengthened form of} \;\text{άρα.} \)
ALCESTIS.

This extract from a page of a document discusses the play Alcestis by Aeschylus. It includes notes on the text, its structure, and historical context. Here is a simplified version of the text:

1. 230. ὑψανίμω, 'high in air.' Cp. Troad. 1088 τείχη οὐράνια. So 'aeriae palumbes' Virg. Ec. iii. 69. The double σ in πελάσσαν is another instance of Epic licence in Choral odes (cp. ll. 126, 127 n.). This one occurs even in iambic lines, as χείρεσθι l. 756, μέσσων ἐγχως Soph. Antig. 1236.

1. 237. μαρανομέναν παρ' Ἀιδαν, i.e. 'wasting away (and going) to Hades,' the so-called 'pregnant' construction of a preposition of motion with a verb denoting rest; as in the well-known lines 'I am wearing away to the Land of the Leal.' Cp. l. 363 ἐκεῖσε προσδόκα, Soph. Oed. Col. 1552 κρύψαν παρ' Ἀιδαν.

1. 238. οὕστοτε φήσω, 'I will never maintain,' not, as Monk and others take it = semper negabo. This would give ποτέ a sense which it cannot bear (see note on l. 198). So Prof. Jebb on Soph. Aias 194, ὅπου στηρίζει ποτέ, rightly joins ποτέ with ὅπου, because it cannot by itself = ἀεὶ ποτέ. For the sentiment cp. ll. 879 &c., also Medea 1081 &c., where the Chorus recount the advantages of a single life. In the Ion 488 the contrary opinion is expressed, τὸν ἀπαίδα δ' ἀποστυγὼ βίον, φ' τε δοκεῖ, ψέγω. In each case Euripides is only making his characters say what is appropriate to the occasion, and not necessarily giving his own opinion.

1. 240. ὅστις = quippe qui, 'since having lost,' &c.

1. 241. ἀπλακῶν, instead of the more usual form ἀμπλακῶν with the euphonic μ (as in ἀμβροτος, πιμπλημυ, &c.). Cp. ἄμπλακες l. 418. But ἀπλακεῖν, ἀπλακῶν, &c. are used when the first syllable is required to be short, as here.

ἀβίωτον βιοτεύσει is an instance of oxymoron, a verbal paradox produced by the combination of two opposite ideas. Cp. βίος ἀβίωτος, 'life that is no life,' Hippol. 821, γάμος ἀγάμος Soph. Oed. Tyr. 1214.

ll. 243–279. Alcestis is borne upon the stage by her attendants in a dying state, accompanied by Admetus and her two children. Her
ejaculations, uttered in the near prospect of death, are broken by pathetic appeals from her husband not to desert him.

1. 243. Ἀλιε, &c. For addresses of dying people to the sun see note on l. 207.

1. 244. δίναι. Cp. Phoen. 164 ἀνεμώκεος ὄρμον νεφέλας. Euripides is supposed to be alluding to the theory of his master Anaxagoras concerning the revolution or 'rotation' of the heavens (περιχώρησις), which he elsewhere calls αἰθέριος ρύμβος. The term δίνη however appears to have been first used by Democritus to describe the whirling motion (vortex) of atoms in the process of creation. This theory is ridiculed by Aristophanes in the Clouds 878, where Zeus is said to have been superseded by one 'Dinus,' as king of the universe. But surely an appeal to the common phenomena of drifting or eddying clouds—the 'heavenly dance o' the fleet cloud-figure,' as Mr. Browning renders it—does not necessarily involve any such philosophical allusion; though the words of Admetus (l. 251) λίσσον θεούς seem to be meant as a remonstrance against the invocation of natural objects only.

1. 245. The agitation of Alcestis is aptly expressed in lyric verse; the calmer iambics of Admetus have a soothing effect. Cp. Hel. 632, Ion 1441. The train of thought is—'Yes, the sun sees our calamity, though the gods deal thus hardly with us.'

1. 249. πατρῴας, as in Troades 164. Cp. πατρῴων Med. 430, γεραῖας Hec. 62, all according to regular practice. Some have unnecessarily substituted πατρίας, πατρίαν, &c. in these passages. Hermann's distinction between πάτριος, 'paternal,' and πατρῴος, 'hereditary,' does not always hold good. Here, for instance, Alcestis regards Iolcos rather as her father's home than as an hereditary possession.


1. 252. δίκωπτων σκάφος. Cp. l. 433, Lucian Charon ch. 1 ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν δικώπτων ἑρέτω μόνος. Σκάφος is the Lat. scapha (Hor. Od. iii. 29, 6), our 'skiff.' For a description of Charon's office see Virg. Aen. vi. 302, &c. [The MS. addition of ἐν λίμνᾳ (sc. Ἀχέροντία) at the end of this line is a gloss to explain the allusion in σκάφος. It does not suit the antistrophic line 258, unless the equally needless repetition of ἄγει τις before ἄγει μὲ τις be there adopted, and even then the ἐν in λίμνᾳ cannot be shortened so as to correspond with ὄχ ὀρᾶσ.]

1. 254. Perhaps Aristophanes has parodied this line in Lysistrata 605, where an old man is taunted with the words ὁ Χάρων ὑπὲ καλεῖ' σὺ δὲ κολύεις ἀνάγεσθαι.

1. 255. τάδε τοι με, &c. 'these are the words with which he urges me, in his hurry to be gone.' ταχύνει τάδε = τάδε λέγει ταχύνων. Cp. Soph. Aias 1107 τὰ σέμν' ἑπὶ κόλας' ἐκείνως, = λέγε κολάζων. Dante, Inferno iii. 110, represents Charon as striking the loiterers with his oar, ' batte
col remo qualunque s'adagia.' [Another reading is σὺ κατείργεις τάδ' ἐτοιμα σπερχομένοις: τάχυνε, i.e. 'you are delaying the preparations for those in a hurry; be quick!' This has less authority than the other, and destroys the telling pause after κατείργεις.]

II. 260, 261. τις with 'Αιδας (οὐχ ὄρας being parenthetical), 'some phantom like Hades,' nescio quod simulacrum Orchi. Cp. Virg. Aen. i. 181 'Anthea si quem,' i.e. 'any one such as Antheus.'

1. 262. ἀφες, 'unhand me,' said to the supposed phantom. Then finding resistance useless she exclaims οίαν δδόν, &c.

1. 264. έκ δέ τῶν = έκ τοῦτων sc. φίλων. Cp. l. 883, where τῆς = ταύτης, Soph. Oed. Col. 742 έκ δέ τῶν μάλιστ' ἐγώ. [Others make έκ τῶν = έκ τῶν δε, 'next to these,' like έκ δέ τῆς Θέμων Aesch. Eumen. 2. But μάλιστα seems to imply that Admetus speaks of himself as chiefest among her mourning relatives.]

1. 272. χαίροντες ὑπότον = 'farewell and live on,' vivite et valete (Monk). Cp. ll. 325, 437, though in the latter passage χαίροντα has the additional sense of 'rejoicing.'

1. 273. τόδ' ἐπός, i.e. the word 'farewell.'

1. 275. πρός σε θεών. Cp. l. 1098, Hippiol. 607 ὤ πρός σε γονάτων, Soph. Phil. 468 πρός νῦν σε πατρός, &c. The language of emotion puts the pronoun σε first, but not before the preposition, as this would imply a contrast between σε and θεών, &c. which is not intended. This construction was imitated by Latin poets, as 'per ego te deos oro' Ter. Andria iii. 3, 'per vos et fortia facta,' Virg. Aen. x. 369.

τῆς (also τόλμα l. 277). See on ἐτλήν l. 2.


1. 279. ἐν σοι ἐσμέν, &c. = ἐν σοι ἐστίν ἡμᾶς καὶ ζῆν καὶ μη ζῆν, i.e. 'our life or death depends upon thee.'

II. 280–368. Alcestis. 'Hear, O Admetus, my last wishes. I have given my life for you; grant me this one favour in return, and let no stepmother come between these children and their lawful rights. I fear me much, my daughter, you will have to mourn a mother's loss, when you most need her aid. But my time draws near; farewell, and forget me not, the best of wives and the best of mothers!' Admetus. 'This will I do; fear not. Children I have enough, and these shall be my solace when thou art gone. All my life long will I mourn thy loss; no sound of mirth or revelry shall again be heard in my halls. Thy image shall be laid upon my couch; this I will embrace, cold comfort though it be. Visit me, if thou canst, in my dreams! Had I the tongue of Orpheus, I would surely descend to Hades and bear thee thence. But there await my coming, since not even in death may we be disunited.'
1. 280. τὰμα πράγματα is the accus. after ὅρις (not the subject of ἔχει) according to the usual Greek idiom, occasionally found also in English, as 'I know thee, who thou art,' οἶδα ὅσ τις εἶ, Luke iv. 34.

2. 281. λέξει θελῶ σοι, &c. 'I wish to tell you what I desire (to have done).' Θέλω implies power to effect one's purpose, βούλομαι states a desire which it may or may not be in one's power to accomplish. Alcestis could state her wishes, but it would devolve upon Admetus to carry them out. Thus in l. 285 ὅν ἱθέλων is 'whom I chose' to wed, in l. 287 οὐκ ἱθέλησα, 'I did not choose,' but cp. Hom. II. xxiv. 226 εἰ δὲ μοι αἴαν τεθνάμεναι ... βούλομαι, 'if it is my fate to die, I am ready to submit.' Hence the colloquial phrases βούλει φράσω; &c. 'would you like me to tell?' [This distinction is not always observed; the seemingly exceptional cases in Homer, where βούλομαι is said of the will of the gods, are however not really so, since with them the power to act always accompanies the will.]

II. 282–287. This sentence is complicated by the insertion of a second principal verb βνήσκω after ἱθέλησα. Hence some have proposed to simplify it by beginning a fresh clause at παρὼν, or by reading κοῦκ or οὐδὲ for οὖκ in l. 287. But the passage appears to be quite genuine as it stands; though it may be well in translating to repeat παρὼν before σκεῖν, 'but, though I might have had any husband of the Thessalians whom I chose, yet I preferred not to live,' &c.

1. 282. σὲ πρεσβεύουσα = προτιμῶσα, l. 155. Πρεσβεύεων properly denotes the respect due to old age. Cp. Hippol. 5 τοὺς μὲν σέβοντας τὰμα πρεσβεύων κράτη. Similarly in Latin cp. Cic. ad Atticum vii. 3 'quod honestius, id mihi est antiquius,' i.e. 'of more value.'

1. 283. καταστήσασα, probably = σοι ἱστασασα, sc. σὲ, lit. 'having caused you to see the light instead of living myself.' But καθιστάναι with infin. in this sense is rare. It is possible to take (σὲ) φῶς τὸδ' εἰσορᾶν ἐστίν οὖν ἐπὶ τὸν σιων βίον, i.e. 'having secured your life in exchange for mine.' Or 'reckoned your life as an equivalent for mine.'

1. 288. ἐφεισάμην, sc. δώρων ἤμης.

1. 291. καλῶς μὲν, &c. 'though they had reached a fit time of life for dying gloriously,' or 'with credit to themselves.' ἵκον αὐτοῖς = ἵκοντων αὐτῶν, and ἵκον is the so-called 'accus. absolute,' like παρὼν l. 284. ἓξιν, δόξαν, τυχόν, &c. ἤκειν is lit. 'to have arrived at' a certain point, hence 'to be situated' in it, so that καλῶς ἤκειν βίον is 'to be well situated in respect of age.' Cp. Hdt. i. 30 τοῦ βίου ἐβ ἢκοντι, v. 62 χρημάτων ἐβ ἢκοντες, Electra 751 πῶς ἐγών ἥκομεν; For the sentiment respecting old age cp. ll. 643, &c. (where however Admetus adds an argument based upon the comparative worthless of his father's life), also Cic. de Senect. ch. 19 'Quid est tam secundum naturam, quam senibus emori?'
1. 295. ἔξων, imperf., ‘I should now be living.’ Alcestis speaks as though she were already dead. [Some wrongly read ἔξην, which is a later 2 aor. form arising from ἔξης, ἔξη of the imperf., whence also come the imperat. ζηθι. But the 3rd pl. is always ἔξων.]

1. 299. εἶεν (a form of εἶο, cp. ἐπείτεν for ἑπείτα), ‘well then,’ a formula of resignation. Alcestis passes from the ungrateful thought of the parents’ conduct to what she had most at heart, the welfare of her children.

1. 300. ἀξιαν μὲν οὕτοτε, ‘no due equivalent.’ Cp. Hom. II. ix. 401 οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ ψυχῆς ἀντάξιον οὐδ᾽ ὡσα φασίν Ἰλιον ἐκτήσθαι, &c.


1. 304. ἀνάσχοι δεσπότας sc. ὄντες, ‘allow them to be (lit. ‘submit to their being’) rulers.’ Cp. Med. 74 καὶ ταῦτ᾽ Ἱάσων παῖδας ξανέξεται πᾶσχοντας.

1. 305. ἐπιγήμης, &c. ‘marry over the heads of these children’ (as we say). Cp. I. 373. Ἐπιγήμειν is to take a second wife, like the Lat. inducere, as in Pliny Epist. 33 ‘novercam filiae induxerat.’ This is one of the many passages in the classics dealing with the subject of stepmothers, whose cruelty has at all times been proverbial. Cp. Ion 1025 φθονεῖν γὰρ φασὶ μητρυναί τέκνοις. Hesiod, Works and Days 823, speaks of lucky and unlucky days as μῆτερες and μητρυαί respectively, and Aeschylus, Prom. V. 727 calls the dangerous rocky coast of Salmydessus a μητρυαί νεῶν. In an epigram of Callimachus we are told how a boy went to place a garland on his stepmother’s tomb, which fell upon him and crushed him, out of pure spite as the verses suggest! A law of Charondas of Thurium enacted that none should be members of the senate who had brought a stepmother into their families. In Latin we have such passages as Hor. Epod. v. 9, 1 ‘Quid ut noverca me intueris?’ and the expressions ‘novercales stimuli,’ ‘novercalia odia’ in Tacitus; also the Virgilian epithets ‘injusta,’ ‘saeva,’ ‘mala’ applied to a stepmother. On the other side it is but fair to quote the words which Propertius, v. 11. 85, &c., puts into the mouth of the dying Cornelia—

‘Seu tamen adversum mutarit janua lectum,
Sederit et nostro cauta noverca toro,
Conjugium, pueri, laudate et ferte paternum;
Capta dabit vestris moribus illa manus.
Nec matrem laudate nimis; collata priori
Vertet in offensas libera verba suas.’

1. 311. πύργον μέγαν, ‘a strong tower of defence,’ a common and obvious metaphor often used in Scripture. Cp. Soph. Oed. Tyr. 1200 θανάτων ὃ ἐμὰ χώρα πύργος ἀνέστη. So arx in Latin, as in Livy vii. 29 ‘arcem finitimorum Campanos adorti.’
[The line ὁν καὶ προσείπε καὶ προσέρρηθη πάλιν, inserted in old editions after l. 311 is an obvious repetition of l. 195. It has been defended as showing how the father might protect his son; but such explanation is superfluous, nor would the line, if retained, be adequate for that purpose. Moreover the verb should rather be in the subjunctive than in the indicative—'whom he may address,' &c.]

1. 314. τοιας after πῶς is another instance of double interrogation (see l. 213 n.). 'How wilt thou prosper in thy maidenhood, and what sort of a consort to thy father wilt thou find?' πατρί goes closely with σὺ, 'father's-consort' = 'stepmother.' [Reiske's proposed alteration to τοιας ... ἡ σοῦ is therefore unnecessary.]

σοῦγρυν. In l. 921 the other form σύςζε occurs. So ἄζους and ἄζεντος, γὁργαψ and γὁργασσ, ἀδίπης and ἀδίμητος, &c. were used indiscriminately.

1. 315. μὴ = 'I fear lest,' &c. In these phrases there is no real ellipse of δέωσα; rather it may be said that 'the Greek language formed through this μὴ with the subjunctive, and a certain emphasis of utterance, sentences expressive of care or admonition, just as there are sentences expressive of a wish, request, or interrogation' (Buttmann).

1. 316. Διαφθέιρη, i.e. 'spoil your chances of making a good match,' in order to make way for one of her own daughters.

1. 317. The stress is on μὴτηρ, 'you will have no mother to arrange your marriage.' Νυμφεύειν is here transitive as in Iph. in Aul. 885 Ἀχιλλει παῖδα νυμφεύσοσα σήν. Cp. ὄρφανεύσαι l. 165. Like other verbs in -εω (as δουλεύω, &c.) it is usually intransitive; cp. Soph. Antig. 816 Ἀχροντι νυμφεύσω.

1. 321. οὔδ' ἐς τρίτην, &c. Alcestis means to say, 'I shall die, not to-morrow, nor the day after, but on this very day.' So far is plain, but there is a difficulty about μνήσ. Some refer it to the known custom of demanding payment of debts on the first day of the month, and suppose that indulgent creditors may have allowed three 'days of grace;' but there is no further evidence of this. Others refer to a supposed law obliging condemned criminals to drink the hemlock within three days after their sentence. Whether such a law ever existed it is needless to enquire, since μνήσ will still remain unexplained. No satisfactory solution has as yet been proposed, and the word μνήσ may not be genuine.

1. 322. λέξομαι, in a passive sense, 'I shall be reckoned.' Cp. στε-ρθήσεσθε Ηιππολ. 1460, ὑπὸ τῶν ἵππεων οὐ βλάψονται Thuc. vi. 64. In some instances a reflexive force is possible, as in Plato Crito ch. 54 παιδεύσονται 'they will get an education,' but not always. Originally the distinction between the forms in -σομαι and -θσομαι seems to have been less strongly marked; hence the shorter form was often used for convenience.
ALCESTIS.

1. 323. Χαίροντες εὐφραίνουσθε. See on l. 272.

1. 325. μητρός, sc. ἀδίσττρης from the preceding line.

1. 326. πρὸ τούτου, &c. 'I am not afraid to vouch for his doing it.' Cp. Hom. II. v. 830 μῆδ' ἀξίον θεόν 'Αρη, Orest. 1116 οὐκ ἄξωμαι. ["Αξωμαί is probably another form of ἄγαμαι (cp. ἔργων and ἐξω), the radical meaning being that of astonishment and awe.]

1. 327. The readings vary between ἐίπερ ἀμαρτάνει and ἣν περ ἀμαρτάνη. The first means 'since he is not (as a fact) wanting in sense,' (cp. l. 303 n.); the second 'if he be not (at some future time) wanting, &c.'

1. 331. προστήθεγέπται, 'shall have anything to say to me as a husband' (Paley). τόνθ' ἄνδρα should probably be taken together in the usual sense = ἐμέ. Cp. ll. 690, 1084. In the Hippolytus 860 Theseus says of his deceased wife Phaedra, λέκτρα γὰρ τὰ Θησέως οὐκ ἔστιν δῶμά θ' Ἡτις εἰσείσιν γυνή.

1. 333. ἄλλως, 'besides,' i.e. be she beautiful as well as noble. Cp. l. 533. So ἄλλος in such sentences as ἄνθρωποι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα πρόβατα, 'men and cattle besides,' οὐκ ἦν χῶρτος ὁ ὄλος ἐνέκιον Xen. Anab. i. 5. ἐκπρεπεστάτη, 'of such surpassing beauty,' instead of simply saying οὔτως ἐκπρεπῆς in continuation of the preceding line. [Perhaps the right reading is ἐκπρεπεστάτη.]

1. 334. ἄλις δὲ παίδων, &c. 'I have children enough already; in these I pray that I may be blest,' (pointing to them as they stood by).

1. 336. ἐπτήσιον, the period fixed by Admetus for the public mourning (l. 431). The usual time at Athens seems to have been thirty days. Ovid, Fasti iii. 134, mentions a year as the time at Rome for a wife's mourning after the death of her husband. πένθος τὸ σὸν = 'mourning for thee' answering to the 'objective' genitive (l. 426). Cp. Aesch. Persae 699 τὴν ἐμὴν αἰθῶ μεθεῖσ = 'reverence toward me,' Hom. Od. xi. 202 σύς τε πλῦος σά τε μήδεα.

1. 339. λόγῳ . . . ἔργῳ, a common rhetorical antithesis, much affected by Thucydides. Cp. Phoen. 526 οὐκ εἴδε λέγειν χρῆ μη̊ τι τοῖς ἔργοις καλοῖς. Admetus urges this complaint with great force against his father, l. 614, &c. Plato. Symposium ch. 7, says that Alcestis 'so far surpassed the parents of Admetus in affection for him, as to make them appear strangers in comparison, and relatives only in name.'


1. 343. κάμους, 'carousals,' properly 'bands of revellers,' as in Aesch. Agam. 1188, where Cassandra speaks of the Furies in Agamemnon's house as a κάμους δύσπεμπτος ἔξω.

1. 344. κατείχε, 'used to fill,' of sound, as in Soph. Philoct. 10 κατείχ' ἀεὶ παῦ σπαράπεδον δυαφημίας.

1. 346. Λίβνυν αὐλόν, called Λίβες λωτὸς in Helena 170, Troades 543.
Flutes were made from the wood of the lotus, an African tree. λακεῖν here = ἄσαι, 'to sing,' as in Hippol. 55 κῶμος λέλακεν. It is a primitive word of sound, used of the ringing of metal in Hom. II. xiv. 25 λάκε χαλκός, and of speech (but in a mock heroic strain) in Aristoph. Aeh. 410 τί λέλακας; = 'what did you say?'

1. 348. δέμας τὸ σῶν, &c. This peculiar method of consolation may seem strange to us, and has been severely criticised. But, as Professor Paley observes, 'the Greeks had a deeper feeling for sculptured forms than we can pretend to realise;' and Euripides here, as elsewhere, transfers the ideas and manners of his own time to that in which his scene is laid. Aeschylus, Agam. 406, represents Menelaus as so overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his Helen, that not even the grace of εὐμορφοι κολοσσοί could console him; and in Propertius v. 11. 83 the shade of Cornelia addresses Paullus thus—

'Atque ubi secreto nostra ad simulacra loqueris, Ut responsurae singula verba jace.'

[Jodrell quotes an epitaph at Naples by one Bernardino Rota on his wife—'Infelix ille, qui mortua Portia cum ea sepeliit debutit. En! hic fingi pertulit, ut quando aliter nequit, marmorea conjuge frui licet.]

1. 352. Cp. Helena 35 καὶ δοκεῖ μ' ἔχειν, κενήν δὐκησιν, οὐκ ἔχων. For τέρψιν, the accus. in apposition to the sentence, see l. 7 n.

1. 353. οἶμαι, 'to be sure,' 'no doubt,' Lat. same. Cp. l. 565. It is often ironical (credo and ut puto) as in Med. 311 σὺ δ', οἶμαι, σωφρονῶν ἔδρας τάδε, 'of course you did all this discreetly.'

1. 354. ἀπαντλούν, 'lighten,' properly said of pumping water out of a ship's hold. Cp. Aesch. Prom. 84 τῶντι ἀπαντλήσαι πῦναν. Similarly in Hippol. 767 a man is said to be ὑπέραντλος συμφορᾶ, lit. 'water-logged.'

1. 355. φίλους ... παρῇ, possibly a change from plural to singular, as in Androm. 421 οἰκτρὸς γὰρ τὰ δυστυχίᾳ βροτοῖς ἀπασί, καὶ θυραίος ὄν κυρίῇ, but more likely παρῇ is impersonal, 'it may be allowed' to see them. [Others read φίλος, i.e. 'a friend is a pleasant thing to see;' cp. Kύπρος οὗ φορητόν Hippol. 445, 'triste lupus stabulis' Virg. Ecl. iii. 80, &c.]

1. 357. Cp. Iph. in Aul. 1211 &c., where the maiden, pleading for her life, exclaims, εἰ μὲν τὸν Ὀρφέας εἴχον, δὲ πατέρ, λόγον ... ἐπναῦθ' ἄν ἤλθον. Also Moschus, iii. 122, on the death of Bion, εἰ δύναμαι δὲ, ὡς Ὀρφέως καταβᾶς ... κῆργῳ τάχ' ἄν ἐς δύμον ἦλθον Πλούτεος.

1. 358. ὡστ' ἦ, corrected from ὡς τὴν. Κόρη was used without the article as a title of Persephone (like βασιλεύς for the king of Persia). For κεῖνης referring to the nearest noun cp. l. 8 n.

1. 359. κηλήσαντα. Cp. Hor. Od. iii. 11. 15 'Cessit immanis tibi blandientes janitor aulac.'
l. 361. οὐπλί κύπνη. Cp. l. 428 ὧς τ' ἐπὶ κύπνα... ζητ.
l. 362. ἐσχαῖν = κατεσχαῖν, 'should hold me back.' The pres. is commonly ἐσχαῖν in this sense. For the plural verb after ἦ... ἦ cp. Hec. 87 'Ἐλένου ψυχὴν ἦ Κασάνδρας, ὡς μοι κρίνωσιν δεξίους. Here the idea is suggested of Charon and Cerberus combining their strength.

σὸν βίον = τε vivam, as in Bacch. 1339 σὸν καθιδρύσει βίον.

l. 363. ἐκεῖς, 'yonder,' a vague euphemism for the other world. For the adverb of motion, 'expect me when I come thither,' see l. 237 n.

l. 364. This points to a definite belief in the possibility of reunion after death, depending (as the γὰρ in the next line implies) in some measure upon the bodies being buried in one tomb. In the Orestes 1053 Electra prays that one coffin may receive her brother's corpse and her own, and in Homer Od. xxiv. 76 the bones of Patroclus are laid with those of Achilles. An epitaph by Boethius Torquatus, in the 8th century A.D., concludes thus—

'Ut thalami cumulique comes, nec morte revellar,
Eōt sociis vitae nectat uterque cinis.'

l. 365. κέδρους. Cp. l. 160. Pliny, Nat. Hist. xxiv. 5 says, 'Cedrus defuncta corpora incorrupta aevi servat.' The Egyptians used cedar oil in embalming (Hdt. ii. 87). Sandys, Travels, book ii., speaks of the 'juice of cedars, which, by the extreme bitterness and siccative faculty, hath preserved [the bodies] uncorrupted.'

l. 366. σοί, after τάρων αὕτας, 'the same coffin with thee.' Cp. Elect. 320 ἐς ταύτα βαίνων ἀρματ' ἐκφοιτά τατρί. The expression πλευρὰ ἐκτείναι would be inaccurate if the corpse of Alcestis was to be burnt, as is implied in πρὸς τάραν τε καὶ πυρὰν l. 608. The bodies of the dead were sometimes buried and sometimes burnt; in the latter case the ashes were collected and entombed. The verbs βάπτειν and sepelire denoted either process.

l. 368. This line also (cp. ll. 182, 253) is parodied in the Acharnians 895, where Dicaceopolis addresses a fine eel μὴ δὲ γὰρ θανῶν ποτε σοι χωρὶς εἶνυ ἐντετεύλανωμένης—'dressed with beet-root!' Aristophanes, we should think, might well have spared such a passage as this.

Ll. 369-434. Chorus. 'I too, as a friend, will share thy sorrow' ALC. 'Hear now, my children, your father's promise! (to ADMETUS) Receive these children from my hands.' ADM. 'I do receive them, and what I have said I will perform—Take me with thee, I pray, to the world below!' ALC. 'It cannot be; my death suffices—But my eye grows dim. Farewell, my children! farewell!' ADM. 'Ah me! I am undone.' CHO. 'The wife of Admetus is no more.' EUMELUS. 'My mother is gone; she has left me desolate. Hear, mother, thine own child who calls thee!' ADM. 'She hears not, nor sees thee; a hard fate is ours!' EUM. 'Sad indeed is my lot;
and thine too, my sister! In vain, father, didst thou wed, since she has

gone before thee.’ Cho. ‘Admetus, thou must bear thy fate, which comes

not on thee alone.’ Adm. ‘I know it too well. But I go to make ready

for the burial. Stay ye here, and raise the dirge. Let there be a whole

year’s mourning throughout my realm, since she is worthy of all honour

from me, who has given her life for mine.’

1. 369. καὶ μὴν, ‘be sure that.’ Cp. l. 64 n.

πένθος τίσε. See note on l. 336.

1. 372. μὴ γαμέων, ‘that he will not wed.’ Γαμέων is the fut. from

the primitive stem γαμ- of the verb. Cp. l. 1089. Homer uses the

intermediate uncontracted form, as in Ι. ix. 391 οὖδέ μν ὃς γαμέω.

Afterwards γαμήσαμεν was formed from γαμέω, the pres. in use.

1. 373. ἐφ’ ὑμῖν. See on ἐπιγήμης l. 305.

1. 375. ἐπὶ τοῦτο, ‘on these conditions.’ Cp. Phoen. 1240 ἐπὶ τοῦτον

δ’ ἐσπεισάντο. So ἐπὶ τοῦτον, ἐφ’ ἀδε, &c. The anapaest in the first

foot of an iambic line is freely employed by Euripides, but never by

Aeschylus or Sophocles, except when the foot consists of a single

word.

1. 377. So the dying Cornelia entreats Paullus for her children,

‘Fungere maternis vicibus, pater’ (Propert. v. 11. 75). Cp. the old

ballad of the Babes in the Wood (Norfolk Tragedy):

‘You must be father and mother both,

And uncle all in one.’

1. 378. Each γε in this line has its own force. ‘Sore need they will

have, when they have lost you.’ Cp. Phoen. 554 τά γε ὑμοῖν’ ἵκαι ἄ

tοις γε σώπροσιν.

1. 381. χρόνος μαλέξει, repeated at l. 1085. Thus Dido, in her trans-

port of grief, exclaims, ‘Tempus inane peto, requiem spatiumque furori’


οὐδὲν, i.e. non-existent, and therefore incapable of grieving you.

1. 382. This is a practical comment upon Admetus’ words ἀριτὶ μαυ-

θάνω l. 940. In the bitterness of parting he asks for what, if granted,

would have made his wife’s self-sacrifice futile. There is a quiet dignity

in her reply, which is almost as much as to say, ‘One life is enough,

and that life might have been your own, but now, by your act, it is

mine.’

1. 383. οἱ προθνήσκοντες. When a woman speaks of herself in the


εἰ χρη, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι. [She may however use a plural verb only,

and proceed with a participle in the fem. sing., as in Ιπ. in Tauris 349

ἡγρίωμεθα, δοκοῦν’ ὀρέστην μηκέθ’ ἡλιον βλέπειν.]

1. 384. ὁ δαίμον, &c. In accusing destiny Admetus ignores the fact

that it was all his own doing. Cp. l. 382 n.
1. 385. σκότεινον is 'proleptic,' i.e. expresses the effect of βαρίνεται, 'My eye is weighed down in darkness.' Cp. l. 35 n.

1. 387. Ὑς οὐκέτ' οὖναν οὐδέν, 'as a thing of nought now.' Cp. l. 381 n.

1. 389. Here Alcestis in her turn is forced by the agony of the moment to say what was not strictly true, since her act had been voluntary. Cp. l. 17. But how true to nature is the whole scene!

1. 391. προλείπεις, 'abandon me,' like προδοῦναι in ll. 207, 250. So προλιποῦσα l. 396. [Some render the πρό, 'prematurely,' but προλείπειν means rather 'to go forth and leave.]

With the word χαίρε Alcestis breathes her last, so that 'we have death literally acted on the stage' (Paley). This is also the case in the Hippolytus 1457, where however the hero veils his face, that the moment of death may not be apparent. [Horace, Ars Poet. 185, lays down the rule, 'ne pueros coram Medea trucidet,' but there is a wide difference between such harrowing exhibitions and a quiet death-scene like this.]

1. 394. The part of Eumelus was recited by one of the Chorus from behind the scenes, while the child acted it on the stage. Hence such a part was called παρασκηνον or παραχορήγημα. Thus in the Andromache 1. 504 the child Molossus laments in concert with his mother. Usually children had no speaking part assigned them, e.g. in Iph. in Aul. 1241 Iphigenia begs her infant brother to intercede for her life, exclaiming ἐδοκεῖ μικρὸς, κινεῖται ηὐστεταί σ' ὡς, ὡς πάτερ. In Soph. Ajax 550 Ajax addresses his son Euryssaces at some length, but the boy does not reply. The children of Medea (Med. 1271) are heard crying out behind the scenes, but do not appear. Müller, Literature of Greece, p. 360, observes that 'Euripides brings children on the stage more frequently than his predecessors, perhaps for the same reason that made people produce their children to the judges, in order to touch their hearts by the sight of their innocence and helplessness.'

μαία, here 'mother,' usually 'nurse' = τρόφος, as in Hippol. 243, Hom. Od. ii. 372, xix. 500, where Telemachus and Odysseus respectively address Euryclea by this venerable title. [The root in μαί- = 'great,' being softened from that of μεγ-ας, mag-nus, &c., as in mai-or and in our own migh-t, H. G. mach-t. Hence Maia, the 'great mother,' was identified with Δι-μήτηρ, or Mother Earth; cp. Aesch. Choep. 45 & γαία μαία.]


διόν βίον is something like σῶν βίον l. 362 n., only here βίον is more strongly emphasised,—'having abandoned the substance of my life,' i.e. 'having abandoned me when I most needed her support.' Cp. the words of Alcestis, l. 379, ὅτε χρήν χρῆν μ', ἀπέρχομαι κάτω.
NOTES. LINES 385-422.

1. 397. τλάμον, 'cruel,' lit. 'one who can bear' to do cruel things. See note on 'έτλην l. 1.

1. 403. νεοσσός, 'chick,' used of a young child, as in Androm. 442, Heracl. 240, Troad. 746, and elsewhere. So pullus in Latin; cp. Hor. Sat. 1. 3. 45 'appellat pullum, . . . male parvus si cui filius est.'

1. 407. μονόστολος, 'desolate,' properly used of a ship without convoy.

ματρός depends on άείποιαι; cp. Ion 680 λελειμπένη τέκναν.

1. 412. ἀνόνατα, ἐνυφευσάς, 'a bootless marriage was thine.' So Admetus had said, 1. 335, σοῦ γὰρ οὐκ ἀνήμεθα. 'Ανόνατα is adverbial; cp. Hippol. 1145 έτέκες ἀνόνατα. Νυμφευσάν = both uxorem ducere and nubere, but the latter is commonly νυμφευσάνα. It also means 'to give in marriage,' as Μήτηρ σε νυμφεύετε l. 317.

1. 413. γήρως τέλος, 'the full time,' or 'completion of age.' Τέλος signifies perfection, not termination. So ἦβης τέλος Med. 920, 'the full flower of youth.'

1. 417. Cp. Hippol. 834—
οὐ σοι τάδ', ἁναξ, ἑλθε δὴ μόνῳ κακά,
πολλών μετ' ἄλλων δ' ἀλεξας κεδνῶν λέχος.

The same strain of consolation:—'the commonplace and vacant chaff well-meant for grain' (Tennyson, In Mem. vi.)—is repeated ll. 892, 932.

So the queen to Hamlet. i. 2. 7—

'Tis common; all that lives must die.'

Cp. Cic. Tusc. Disp. iii. 33 'Ne illa quidem firmissima consolatio est, quamquam usitata est, non tibi hoc soli. Prodest haec quidem, sed nec semper nec omnibus.'

1. 421. προσέπτατο, 'lighted on me,' as a bird swoops down upon its prey. Cp. Soph. Aias 282 τίς γὰρ ποτ' ἀρχῇ τοῦ κακοῦ προσέπτατο;

1. 422. ἄλαλα goes with πάρεστε, the clause ἐκφοράν γὰρ . . . νεκροῦ being parenthetical, so that γὰρ practically = ἐπει. Often the verb with ἄλαλα has to be supplied from the context, e.g. in Soph. Antig. 155 the Chorus breaks off exclaining ἄλλα' ὄδε γὰρ δὴ βασιλεῖς . . . χωρεῖ, 'but (we must pause) for here comes the king.' Thus ἄλαλα γὰρ (like sed enim or at enim) became a mere colloquial phrase = 'but however,' marking a sudden transition of thought, or introducing an imaginary objection.

ἐκφοράν, 'burial.' Cp. Aesch. Sept. c. Thebas 1024 ἄτιμον ἐκφοράς, So ἐκφέρειν and ἐκκομίζειν = θάπτειν, because of the sanitary law, which
forbade interment within the walls of a town. *Efferre* has the same meaning, as in Hor. *Sat.* iv. 5. 84 ‘anus est elata,’ Juv. *Sat.* i. 72 ‘nigros efferre maritos,’ and even metaphorically, as ‘elata respublica’ Livy xxviii. 28.

1. 423. ἀντηχήσατε. The ἀντι refers to the antistrophē of the following chorus, l. 445.

1. 424. παιάνα here = ‘a dirge,’ and is therefore properly addressed to Hades. Cp. Aesch. *Sept.* c. *Theb.* 869 ‘Αἰδη γ' ἑχθρῶν παιάν’ ἐπιμέλεπον. Otherwise the mention of a *paean* so addressed would be remarkable, as we are distinctly told that Hades (or Thanatos) was not honoured with the *paean*, μόνος θεών γὰρ θάνατος οὐ παιονίζεται (Aesch. *Niobe* Fragment). Cp. *Iph.* in *Tauris* 185 μοῦσαν τὰν ἐν μολητᾶς Αἴδης ὑμεῖ δίχα παιάνων.

Usually the *paean*, or hymn of victory, was distinguished from the *'Linus-song'* or ‘dirge,’ which it was said to have superseded, as was symbolised in the myth of Linus overcome and slain by Apollo. = «, an adverb of motion for one of rest. Cp. l. 237, 363 n., also Soph. *Trach.* 601 ἐὼς σοὶ ταῖς ἐσωθεὶ ἡγορῶ εἶναι.

ἀσπόνδῳ, ‘inexorable,’ whom no libations can appease.

1. 426. For πένθους, some read πένθος. Either construction is possible after κοινοθήκα, the gen. meaning ‘to make oneself a partaker of’ a thing, the accus. ‘to have it in common’ with another.

γυναικός, ‘for my wife.’ Cp. l. 336 n.

1. 427. κουράξ εὐρήκει, the usual sign of mourning. Cp. l. 215.

[Koupal (κεῖρειν) and εὐρὸν are variations of the same word, thus: the stem κερ- (κυρ-, κουρ-) came by loss of an original ο from σκερ-(σκυρ-, &c.), and this transposed becomes κουρ-, &c., i.e. ξυρ-]

*μελαγχύμους πέπλους.* Another reading is *μελαμπτέπλω ςτολῆ.* Nearly the same line as in the text occurs in *Phoenissae* 372.


1. 429. σιδήρω, &c. So the Persians mourned for Masistins. σφέασ τε αὐτῶν κείροντες καὶ τοὺς ἵππους (Hdt. ix. 24). According to Plutarch the Thebans clipped their horses’ manes at the funeral of Pelopidas, and Alexander did the same at that of Hephaestion. Orders were also given that music should cease throughout the camp.

1. 430. ἐκπληρουμένας, (pres. part.) lit. ‘while twelve moons are ful-
filling their course,' i.e. for a whole twelvemonth. For the usual period of mourning see l. 336 n.

1. 434. τιμᾶν. Two inferior MSS. read τιμῆς. Compare l. 229 ἵππα σφαγᾶς with l. 1060 ἄξια μοι σέβειν, but the personal construction with ἄξιος or ἄξια usually takes the passive infin. as ἄξια ἔστι τιμᾶσθαι = tigna est quae honoretur.

The corpse of Alcestis is now carried into the house, Admetus following with the children.

Ll. 435-475. Chorus. 'Daughter of Pelias, all joyous be thy dwelling in Hades! the noblest that ever crossed the stream of the underworld. Oft in Athens and Lacedaemon shall the minstrels celebrate thy fame with lyre and song. O that I could bring thee back to life! for thou alone, in the flower of thy youth, wast found to redeem thy spouse from the grave. Light fall the mould of thy tomb, and woe to him, if he take another wife in thy stead! Rare indeed is his lot, who finds a consort like thee.'

1. 436. χαίρουσα combines the meanings of 'farewell,' and 'may'st thou have joy in thy dwelling.'

μοι is the so-called dat. ethicus = 'I pray thou mayest,' &c.

This line is almost a quotation from Homer II. xxiii. 179 χαίρε μοι, ὥς Πάτροκλε, καὶ εἶν 'Αἰδών δύμωσιν. Cp. l. 233 n.


οἰκετεῖοι = οἰκοῖς, from οἰκέτης, properly 'an inmate of the house,' but generally 'a servant.' The verb οἰκετεῖειν seems not to occur elsewhere.

1. 438. ἵστω πορεύειν. Cp. l. 150 n. For Charon's office see l. 361 n.

1. 443. For the two accusatives, one of the direct object, the other of the space travelled over, cp. Soph. Trach. 560 ὃς τὸν βαβύρρουν ποταμὸν ... βροτοῦς μισθῶν 'πόρευε. So trajicere, as in Caesar B. G. i. 55 'equitum magnam partem flumen transjicit.'

πορεύειν would strictly apply to Charon alone, as the ferryman of the dead, but he acts under the command of Hades.


1. 446. μουσοπόλοι, 'minstrels,' lit. 'versed in song.' For πολεῖν and its cognates see l. 29 n.

A song on the subject of Admetus and Alcestis, sung as a 'scolion' at banquets, is alluded to by Aristophanes, Vespae 1238, and is also mentioned by Athenaeus. It began, 'Ἀδριτόου λύγον μαθῶν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς φίλες.

1. 447. χέλων, the tortoishell, of which Hermes is said to have made the first lyre. Cp. Hor. Od. iii. 11. 5 'testudo resonare septem callida nervis.'
\[ \text{alcestis} \]

\[ \text{vexipia} \]

\[ \text{(^} \]

\[ \text{though} \]

\[ \text{(^} \]

\[ \text{represented} \]

\[ \text{equally} \]

\[ \text{after} \]

\[ \text{that} \]

\[ \text{the} \]

\[ \text{brated} \]

\[ \text{four} \]

\[ \text{[Aristophanes,} \]

\[ \text{loss} \]

\[ \text{written} \]

\[ \text{Milton} \]

\[ \text{sense} \]

\[ \text{Tyr.} \]

\[ \text{1.} \]

\[ \text{449.} \]

\[ \text{The Carneia was the great Spartan} \]

\[ \text{celebrated} \]

\[ \text{at the neighbouring town of Amyclae.} \]

\[ \text{It lasted nine days, from} \]

\[ \text{the} \]

\[ \text{7th} \]

\[ \text{of the Carneian month} \]

\[ \text{(nearly corresponding with our August).} \]

\[ \text{In connexion with the praises of Apollo the story of Admetus would} \]

\[ \text{hold a prominent place.} \]

\[ \text{Callimachus in his Hymn to Apollo traces the} \]

\[ \text{progress} \]

\[ \text{of this festival from Sparta to the isle of Thera, and thence to} \]

\[ \text{the Greek colony of Cyrene on the coast of Africa.} \]

\[ \text{It was the Carneia} \]

\[ \text{that hindered the Lacedaemonians both at Marathon and Thermopylae} \]

\[ \text{(Hdt. vi. 106, vii. 266).} \]

\[ \text{kuclus, a probable emendation for kwnlos,} ' \text{the circling season comes} \]

\[ \text{round.'} \]

\[ \text{[With the reading kwnlos, ώρας is probably the acc. pl. after} \]

\[ \text{peirniosetai,} ' \text{goes round the seasons,' though some take it as a gen.} \]

\[ \text{after μηρός.]} \]

\[ \text{1. 452. λιπαραῖς, a favourite epithet of Athens, whose inhabitants} \]

\[ \text{prided} \]

\[ \text{themselves on the sunny} \]

\[ \text{splendour of their city and their joyous} \]

\[ \text{happy life—δὲl διὰ λαμπροπατῶν βαίνοντες ἄβρως αἰθέρος (Med. 830).} \]

\[ \text{Aristophanes, Equites 1329. has ὅ ταί λιπαραί καὶ οἰστέφανοι καὶ ἁριζή-} \]

\[ \text{λωτοὶ Ἀθήναι, but in the Achareians 1. 640 he rallies his fellow-citizens} \]

\[ \text{on their fondness for the epithet λιπαρός, which he says would} \]

\[ \text{apply equally well to anchovies or sardines!} \]

\[ \text{1. 457. τεράμνων. Cp. Hippol. 536 Πυθίους τεράμνως. The word} \]

\[ \text{also} \]

\[ \text{written τέρεμνον} \]

\[ \text{is said to denote a solid edifice, from στέρεος with} \]

\[ \text{the loss of the initial σ.} \]

\[ \text{Cp. στέγος and tegere, seatum and κύτος, στορ-ένυμι} \]

\[ \text{and torus.} \]

\[ \text{But this etymology lacks proof.} \]

\[ \text{1. 459. ποταμία νερτέρα τε κῶτα = κάτη ποταμοῦ νερτέρου,} ' \text{the oar} \]

\[ \text{that dips in the stream of the under-world,' so that νερτέρα agrees in} \]

\[ \text{sense with the gen. implied in ποταμία.} \]

\[ \text{Cp. Soph. Elect. 857 ἐλπίδων} \]

\[ \text{κοινωτύκων εὐπατρίδων} \]

\[ \text{τ' ἄραγε} = ἐλπίδων κοινοῦ τόκου εὐπατρίδου,} \]

\[ \text{hopes from a noble brother.'} \]

\[ \text{1. 460. φίλα γυναικῶν (like Homer's δίὰ γυναικῶν, πότνα θεάων, &c.),} \]

\[ \text{'dear among women.'} \]

\[ \text{Cp. Virg. Aen. iv. 576} \]

\[ \text{'sancite deorum.'} \]

\[ \text{This construction has been imitated in English, e.g.} \]

\[ \text{precious of all trees,'} \]

\[ \text{Milton P. L. ix. 795.} \]

\[ \text{1. 461. αὐτάς} = σεαυτάς.} \]

\[ \text{So with the first person, as in Soph. Oed.} \]

\[ \text{Tyr. 138 αὐτοὺς} \]

\[ \text{αὐτοῦ (= ἐμαυτοῦ) τοῦτ' ἀποσκέδω μύσος, and in the} \]
NOTES. LINES 448-474.

plural, as in Plato, *Phaedo* xxv. ἰδὲ ἡμᾶς ἀνερέσθαι εὐρωύς. The pronoun is simply reflexive, the person being indicated by the verb or some other word in the sentence; but it generally represents the third person.

ἀμείψατι, &c., i.e. 'rescue your husband from death by taking his place.' In l. 46 δάμαρτ ἀμεῖπα mean 'putting his wife into his own place.' Ἀμείβεν means both 'to give' and 'to take in exchange,' but the middle is oftener used in the latter sense. See note on ἀμεῖψατι πίλας l. 752.

1. 463. κοῦφα κοι, &c. Cp. Tibullus ii. 4. 28 'terraque secura sit super ossa levis.' So in one of Byron's *Occasional Pieces*, the wish is expressed, 'Light be the turf of thy tomb,' and in another—

'O snatched away in beauty's bloom
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb.'

In the *Helena* 852 Menelaus says that 'the gods make light the mould over the brave man's tomb.' This feeling, natural at all times, had a stronger significance when the departed spirit was believed to share the fortunes of the body. Lucian ridicules this belief, when he represents the shade of Mausolus as burdened by the weight of his marble monument.

1. 468. Here a line has been lost, containing the principal verb, and answering to l. 458 in the *strophe*. It may have repeated the statement that Alcestis died for her husband, or that Admetus was doomed to die.

1. 469. σχέτλιω, 'hard-hearted.' Cp. l. 407. In l. 741 it means 'stout-hearted,' in l. 824 'miserable.' All these meanings spring from the original sense of 'bearing' and 'enduring,' implied in σχείν (ἐχειν).

1. 473. τοιαύτης εἶπ μοι, &c. A general sentiment, not suited to the persons of the Chorus, who are old men. Prof. Paley would render it, 'give me such a partner.'

συνδυάδος, adj. with ἀδύχοι, 'such a dear wedded wife as this.'

[τό, corrected from the MS. reading τοῦτο to match εὶ δὲ τι in the strophic line 463. See note on εἰ δὲ τῶν l. 264, and cp. ll. 767, 937.]

1. 474. ἀλυπος, transitive, 'causing no sorrow,' as in Bacchae 432 οὖν τέρψιν ἀλυπον. The passive sense 'unpained' is more common.

From l. 476 to l. 568 is the second 'episode' of the play. See note on l. 135. Enter HERACLES with his club and robe of lion-skin. He accosts the Chorus. The sudden change of scene at this moment is very effective.

Ll. 476-508. HERACLES. 'Is my lord Admetus within?' CHORUS. 'He is; but what quest brings thee hither?' HER. 'Eurystheus hath sent me to Thrace to fetch the horses of Diomed.' CHO. 'Twill be a struggle of life
or death for thee; these steeds rend the flesh of men." Her. 'I shun no toil, nor is this conflict my first. But their master—whose son is he?' Cho. 'The son of Ares.' Her. 'How persistent is my fate, always to fight with the children of Ares! But Alcmena's son never trembles at a foe.' Cho. 'Here is Admetus himself, the lord of this land.'

1. 476. κωμήται, 'villagers,' = γεῖτονες, i.e. dwellers in the district round Pherae. From very early times Thessaly comprised a number of separate communities (πόλεις), of which Pherae, Pharsalus, and Larissa were among the most important, each having its cluster of dependent villages.

1. 477. For the force of ἀρα in questions cp. ll. 229, 341 n. κυισάνω, prob. the subj. mood, 'may I (expect to) find;' but it may be the indicative, just as we say 'do I?' for 'shall I?'

προσβήναι = ὁστε προσβήναι, but the Greek infin., like the English, can express a result, very nearly equivalent to a purpose. This is imitated by Latin poets, as in Virg. Aen. i. 527 'Libycos populare Penates venimus.'

1. 481. Τίμουδη. Eurystheus was king of Mycenae, but both Tiryns and Mycenae were in the territory of Argos. Hence the epithets 'Argive,' 'Tirynthian,' and 'Mycenaean' were promiscuously applied to Heracles and Eurystheus.

1. 482. καὶ πόλ. See latter part of note on καὶ πόσ l. 142.

1. 483. τέτρωρον ἄρμα. Cp. l. 66. For μέτα, 'in quest of,' cp. l. 46 n. 'Arma is the chariot and horses, or perhaps the horses alone; cp. Hippol. l. 229 τέτρωρον ἐκμαίνων ὄχον. So in Virg. Georg. iii. 91 'currens Achillei' = 'equi.'

1. 484. μῶν, originally from μὴ ὁδόν, indicates surprise,—'Are you then ignorant?' implying 'surely you must be.'

1. 487. ἀπεπείθεν, lit. 'to say no to' anything, hence 'decline' or 'faint at,' from the idea of saying that one can do no more. Cp. l. 737 n. In the latter sense it usually takes the dative, and some MSS. read τοῖς πόνοις here. [But in Andromache 87 ἀπανάς ἐν κακοῖς φίλοισι σοὶς means 'you renounce' or 'fail your friends in trouble.]

1. 489. πρῶτον, in apposition with ἄγωνα, = 'this would not be the first contest I have undertaken.' Cp. l. 648 καλὸν γ' ἀν τόνδ' ἄγων' ἡγώνισον, Soph. Alas l. 1121 οὗ γὰρ βάναυσον τὸν τέναν ἑκταπάμην, 'it was no vulgar art I acquired.' This is called the 'Tertiary Predicate.'

1. 490. ἀν κρατήσας, &c., cp. l. 72 n.

1. 493. εἰ μὴ γε, &c., = nisi forte, '(easy enough) unless indeed, &c.' Cp. Heracl. 272, where Demophoon, being forbidden to strike a herald, answers εἰ μὴ γ' ὃ κήρυξ σφιρονείν μαθήσεται, ' (but I will) at least if he do not learn discretion.'
1. 494. ἀλυφηράις, ‘ravenous,’ properly ‘quick-moving,’ since λαυφηρός by loss of ι becomes αἰψηρός. CP. λείβειν and εἶβειν and perhaps λα- φύσειν and ἀφύσειν.

1. 496. CP. Herc. Fur. 381 πῶλους Διομήδεος, αἰ φωναὶσι φάντων ἀχάλιν’ ἑβδακὸν κάθαμα σίτα γένουσι, χαρμοναίσιν ὄνδροβρῶσι δυστράπεζοι, also Ovid, Met. ix. 194—

‘Quid quod Thracas equos humano sanguine pingues,

Plenaque corporibus laceris praesepia vidī.’

This story was afterwards explained away, as meaning that Diomedes spent all his substance in breeding horses; hence they were called ‘devourers of men.’


1. 498. ξαρύσου πέλτης. CP. Rhesus 370 τὴν ζαχρυσον πέλταν. [The intensive prefix ζα- in ζαχρυσος, ζα-θεος, ζα-μενης, &c., is the same as δα- in δα-φωνιος, &c., and probably = δια, i.e. ‘thorough.’] The gold-mines of Thrace were in the Pangaean mountains between Scapte Hyle and the Strymon. (Thuc. iv. 104.)

πέλτης may = πελταστάνω, as in Rhes. 410 ἔρρητα πέλτην. So χιλιη ἵππος Hdt. vii. 41, ‘a thousand horse,’ ἀστις μυρία = ὀπλίται, and in Latin arma often = armati. But it is perhaps simpler to take it here in its literal sense. CP. ἱππης ἄναξ Aesch. Pers. 380.

1. 499. τόνδε, &c., ‘this labour you speak of (cp. l. 489 n.) is of a piece with my destiny,’ i.e. to be always fighting with the sons of Ares.

1. 500. πρὸς αἴνος, ‘uphill,’ i.e. ‘arduous.’ CP. Hell. 1443 ἐλκονοι δ’ ἡμῖν πρὸς λέπας τὰς συμφορᾶς, ‘as we drag our fortunes uphill.’

1. 501. εἶ χρή,’ since I must,’ stating a fact. CP. l. 327 n.

1. 502. Lycaon the son of Ares is not mentioned elsewhere, but Heracles is said to have slain a Lycaon, the son of Peleus king of Pylos, at the siege of that town. The combat with Cycnus is alluded to in Herc. Fur. 391, and related at length in the Shield of Heracles, ascribed to Hesiod.

1. 507. καὶ μὴν marks the entrance of a new character on the stage. CP. ll. 611, 1006.

Enter Admetus. ll. 509-567. ADM. ‘Hail, thou son of Zeus!’ HER. ‘Admetus, all hail! But why this garb of mourning? Is any one dead? thy children or thy sire?’ ADM. ‘These are alive and well; it is my wife’s state that troubles me.’ HER. ‘Speakest thou of her as alive or as dead?’ ADM. ‘Knowest thou not her destiny? how lives she then?’ HER. ‘Never grieve before the time; but tell me, who is dead?’ ADM. ‘I was of a
woman I spoke.—an alien, yet most dear.’ Her. ‘Alas that I should find thee sorrowing! I will even go elsewhere.’ Adm. ‘That must not, that shall not be, Heracles! the guest-rooms are ready, and thou shalt have good cheer.’ (Exit Heracles.) Adm. ‘Could I refuse the man who came to me as a guest? Or tell the truth, and so drive him from my doors? That were a blot upon my hospitable name, a calamity worse than all beside.’

1. 509. Alcmena, the mother of Heracles, was the daughter of Electryon, the son of Perseus, who claimed descent from Zeus.

1. 511. θέλουμεν, ón, sc. χαίρειν, in the sense of ‘rejoice,’ though Heracles had used it in the ordinary way of greeting. So in Hec. 426 Polyxena exclaims χαίρετε, δε τεκύσα, to which Hecuba replies χαίρουσιν ἀλλοι, μητρὶ δ’ οὐκ ἐστιν τόδε. [Cp. Livy i. 28 (story of Lucretia) ‘quaerenti viro “Satin salvaes?” “Minime,” inquit, “quid enim salvi est mulieris amissa pudicitia?”’]

1. 512. τί χρήμα πρέπειν; ‘why dost thou appear?’ Πρέπειν is ‘to be conspicuous,’ ‘to show oneself,’ &c. Cp. i. 1050. Hel. 1204 ὑς ἐσθητὶ δυνάμορφον πρέπει, Aesch. Agam. 30 δ φρυτὸς πρέπει, ‘the beacon is clear.’ [The radical meaning of πρέπειν seems to be that of coming close to or pressing close upon the senses, generally of sight, but sometimes of hearing, as βοῦν πρέπειν Aesch. Agam. 312. Hence Conington in his note on Agam. 30 supposes it to be akin to prope, proprius, &c.]

1. 514. ώς φτόν τεκνών. A preposition is often separated from its case by a participle such as οὖν, μέν, τοι, &c. Sometimes two or more words are interposed, as in Plato, Crit. xii. πρὸς μὲν ἀρα σοι τὸν πατέρα. So in Demosthenes, περὶ μὲν τοίνυν, ἕφην ἐγὼ, τούτου.


1. 518. οὖ μήν, &c., ‘surely your wife Alcestis is not dead?’

1. 520. This question was too direct really to admit of evasion. The answer ἐστίν τε κοικεῖτ’ ἐστίν is not, like that of the maidservant, 1. 141, admissible under the circumstances, since Alcestis could not now in any possible sense be said to be alive.

1. 523. μοίρας, for μοῖραν, by attraction into the case of the relative ἦς. Cp. Soph. Trach. 151 τόστ’ ἄν τις εἰλαθέτο. . . . κακοίσιν οίς βαρύνομαι. This kind of attraction rarely occurs. except when the antecedent would otherwise have been in the accusative.

1. 524. ὑφεμένην, ‘submitted.’ Euripides has been blamed for an oversight here in making Heracles aware of the self-sacrifice of Alcestis. See answer to this objection in the Introduction, p. xviii.
1. 525. ἤνεσθαι, ‘promised,’ as in 1. 12. See also 1. 2 n.
1. 526. ἐστὶν τάδε, lit. ‘till the fact,’ i.e. ‘till the time comes.’ [Some read τότε, without authority.]
1. 527. ‘He who is doomed is (as one) dead, and he who is dead is no more.’ The continuation of the argument would be ‘but Alcestis is doomed, and therefore dead; hence I was right in saying οὐκέτι ἑστὶν of her.’ But see note on 1. 520.
1. 528. A blunt remark, going straight to the point,—‘being and not being are generally considered different things.’ χωρίς νομίζεται, lit. ‘are thought of apart.’ Cp. Soph. Oed. Col. 808 χωρίς τὸ τέ εἶπείν πολλὰ καὶ τὰ καλὰ. So ἄμφις in Hom. II. ii. 13 οὐ γὰρ ἐτ’ ἄμφις ἄδανατοι φράζονται, lit. ‘do not think on two sides,’ i.e. ‘are not divided in opinion.’
1. 529. Admetus replies in effect—‘I choose to regard a thing, when fated, as accomplished; you refuse to allow this, and each has a right to his own opinion.’
1. 530. Heracles, assuming that some one was really dead (and thus showing that he was not satisfied with Admetus’ quibble, l. 521, and its pretended solution), asks τίς φίλων ὁ καθαρῶν; Admetus now enters on a new line of deception, turning upon the acceptance of the word θνεῖος. Hence arises the natural mistake, by which Heracles afterwards excuses his behaviour (Il. 810, 828, 1014). It is not till he announces his intention of going elsewhere (l. 538) that Admetus drops his equivocal language, and devotes himself to the task of detaining his guest at all hazards.
1. 531. γυναικός, &c., ‘it was a woman I meant just now,’ i.e. ‘when I spoke of burying a corpse.’
μεμνήσται = memorare, ‘to mention.’
1. 532. θνεῖος, probably from θνοῦ, i.e. one of the same tribe or nation, but not a kinsman (συγγενής). The inhabitants of Iolcos (l. 249) and Pherae would belong to the same θνοῦ. [Some derive θνεῖος by transposition from νοθεῖος (νόθος), i.e. ‘a foreigner,’ but the two words appear to be from different roots.]
1. 537. ὑπορράπτεις, ‘subjoin,’ but also implying some hidden design. Both parts of the compound suggest this; ὑπό denotes crafty or ‘underhand dealing (as ὑπήγετο, ‘led him on craftily,’ Xen. Anab. ii. 1. 18), and ῥάπτειν with its compounds (as μηχανορράφως, &c.) has the same force, from the notion of ‘patching’ or ‘stitching.’
[This is illustrated in Artaphernes’ remark to Histiaeus about the Ionic revolt (Hdt. vi. 1), τότε τὸ ὑπόθημα ἐρράψας σὺ, ἐκεῖνος δὲ ὑπεὶθησατο, ‘this shoe was of your stitching, but he put his foot into
it.' So suere in Latin, as in Terence, Phorm. iii. 2 'ne quid suo seu capiti,' whence sutela, 'a cunning trick.'

1. 538. With ξίνων ἄλλην ἱστίαν (constituting the figure called Hypallage) cp. Soph. Aias 860 πατρῶν ἱστίας βαθρον, Trach. 994 Κηναία κρητίς βαθρῶν, &c. In such expressions the two substantives form one notion, with which the adjective agrees. [Another reading, of good authority, is ἄλλων for ἄλλην.]

1. 540. εἰ μόλοι, 'if he were to come,' sc. ἄν εἶ with ἄχληρωσ. Cp. Soph. Aias 921 ὡς ἄκμαῖος, εἰ βαθή, μόλοι, 'how timely would his coming be, if he were to arrive.'

1. 542. A short final vowel is not usually lengthened before a mute and a liquid, unless the mute consonant be β, γ, or δ. Cp. ἄρα κλῆσονσα Elect. 1058. Here the close connexion between the preposition and its case softens the effect. Before ρ a short a seems to be uniformly lengthened by Euripides, except in Bacchae 1338.

1. 546. σῦ, to the attendant. Royal personages were usually attended on the stage by slaves. So in Aesch. Choeph. 712, Clytaemnestra, breaking off her conversation with Orestes, directs the servant ἀγ' αὐτῶν ἐλς ἀνδρῶν εἴς εἰσεῖνος δόμοιν. [For τῶνδε some read τῶδε, in reference to Heracles.]

ἐξοπτεύουσα, with δωματῶν, 'out of sight of these rooms.' Cp. 1. 543. In a large house there would be special εἰνῶνες for the guests; otherwise some of the regular ἀνδρῶνες were used for the purpose. [From the street-door a vestibule led into a court (ἀυλή), round which were the men's apartments, called Andronitis; opposite was another passage, closed by doors (θύραι μέσαιλοι: 1. 549), and leading to the αὐλή of the Gynaeconis, or women's apartments. For a full description of a Greek house see Becker's Charicles, and the article Domus in Smith's Dict. of Antiquities.]

1. 548. ἐγκλῆσατε, to the other servants, 'shut to' the doors. For the tmesis in a compound verb cp. II. 579 σὺν δ' ἐποιμαινοτα, 901 σὺν ἄν ἐσχεν, Hec. 1172 ἐκ δὲ πηθήσας ἐγώ. It is a remnant of ancient usage, when prepositions were still recognised as local adverbs, and is common enough in Homer, but not in tragic dialogue. [Others translate εὖ, 'also,' a sense it sometimes bears, as in Soph. Aias 675 εὖ δ' ὁ παγκρατίς ύπνος λύει.]

1. 551. προσκεμένης, 'pressing upon you.' [Others read προκειμένης.]

II. 553, &c. In the Choephoroi Orestes, planning to get admission into the house of Aegisthus, says—

καὶ δὴ θυραμοῖν ὡτις ἀν φαινάρα φρενὲ
δέχαιτ', ἐπειδή δαμοῦν δόμοις κακώσ,

and expects, as a matter of course, to be refused. This is in harmony
with the views of the Chorus here, and represents the normal state of Greek feeling on the subject. But Admetus exaggerates the duty of a host, nor does he take into account the feelings of his guest, who (as he presently admits, l. 565) would not have entered the house had he known the truth.

1. 557. Cp. ll. 1039, 1049, where the same sentiment is repeated to Heracles.

1. 559. τυγχάνω. Cp. l. 10 note. So in Homer II. vi. 224, Diomedes says to Glaucus—

τῷ νῦν σοι μὲν ἐγὼ ἔσως φίλος Ἄργει πέσσω 
εἰμί, σὺ δ᾽ ἐν Δυνίη, ὅτε κεν τῶν ὃμοι ἱκώμαι.

1. 560. δυσίαν. Wordsworth, Hist. of Greece, observes of the district between Nauplia and Mycenae, 'The plain over which we pass is dry and dusty, and has few objects to relieve its bare level... The higher parts of this plain suffer from want of water, whence the epithet applied to it by Homer (πολυδύσιον), indicative of the thirstiness of the soil.'

1. 561. πῶς = τι; 'how came you to hide?' &c.

1. 565. τῷ, i.e. to Heracles. He does actually make this remonstrance, ll. 1008, &c.

1. 566. οὐκ ἐπισταταῖ (with infin. only), 'does not understand,' i.e. 'cannot.' Cp. Soph. Trach. 543 ἐγὼ δὲ θυμόνοθαί μὲν οὐκ ἐπισταταί νοσοῦντι.

Ll. 568-575. CHORUS. 'O house ever large and free! in thee Phoebus once deigned to dwell, piping to the flocks upon thy downs. At whose glad music the wild creatures of the grove stood entranced, and came tripping to the sound of the lyre. Wherefore thy master hath flocks and herds in abundance, and broad lands beside the Boebian mere. And now in nobleness of soul hath he taken into his house a guest, though his eye is moist with weeping. Surely in the good all wisdom dwells, and the pious man shall prosper in his days.'

1. 569. ὡ, with the nom. admirantis est potius quam compellantis. Cp. l. 1 n., but here the address is continued in σὲ τοῖ, &c.

1. 570. τοι emphasises σὲ, 'thee' beyond all others. εὐλύρας, in contrast to συρίζων (l. 576).

1. 572. ἔτλα. See on ἔτλην l. 1. In σοῖ there seems to be a transition from the house to Admetus, who is the real object of the address. [Or δῶμος may be the separate parts, 'halls' or 'chambers' of the ὀἶκος.] From this legend Apollo had the title of νόμος, according to Callimachus, Hymn to Apollo 46. Cp. Theocr. Id. xxv. 22 'Ἀπόλλωνος νομίοιο.

1. 575. δοχμᾶν, 'sloping,' the opposite of ὀρθός. See on δοχμιὰν κέλευθον l. 1000.

1. 578. ποιμνίτας ὑμεναίους, 'pastoral strains;' properly 'marriage songs;' love being the shepherd's favourite theme.

1. 579. σὺν, i.e. with the flocks. So Ovid, Fasti ii. 88, represents
the hind consorting with the lioness to hear Arion’s music. For the
*imesis* of preposition and verb cp. I. 548 n.

*λυν.* 222 πῶλος λευκοστίητας τριχὶ βαλιός. So βαλιῶν ἐλαφόν *Hec.* 90, 
*βαλιὰις πῶλος* Rhesus 356. [In the last two passages it is sometimes 
rendered ‘swift,’ a sense which it must bear in the phrase *πυγαὶ βαλιῶν* 
ἐνέμων. The primary idea (from βάλλειν) seems to be that of spots 
cast or dashed upon a ground colour, hence the varying play of light 
upon a coloured surface (cp. ‘shot’ silk). The transition to ‘swift’ is 
easy. So αὐλὸς means both ‘quick-moving’ and ‘variegated.’]

1. 580. *λεύντων.* This is no poetical exaggeration. Aristotle, *Hist.
*Animal.* vi. 31, says there are no lions in Europe, except between the 
Achelous and the Nestus; this would include Thessaly.

δαφούνος, xi. 474 δαφοῦνοι ὥθες, Aesch. *Prom.* 1022 δαφοῦνος ἄετός.
[Some translate it ‘murderous,’ but it is doubtful whether δαφούνος 
ever has properly this meaning. ‘Blood-stained,’ or ‘bloody,’ appears 
to be its primary sense, and this passed into the more general one 
of ‘dark-coloured,’ ‘tawny,’ or ‘black.’] The prefix δα- is the same 
as ἄ- in ἄ-χρυσος, &c. See 1. 498 n.

1. 582. In *χορευσε* the augment is omitted, as in *δέκατο* 1. 598. *δικε,
*τέκτων* *Phoen.* 641 and elsewhere in choral odes. This licence is not 
used in iambic lines, except in the narratives of messengers, as *νικλοῦτο,
σῖγγισε,* γυμνοῦντο *Bacch.* 1066, 1084, 1134. Such instances must not be 
confounded with those where the augment is elided after a long 
vowel, as ἐνταῦθα δὴ *ἐάκρυσε* 1. 176.

1. 585. *πέραν βαλινουσα,* &c., ‘stepping out beyond the pine-forests’ 
into the open lawns between.

1. 588. *τοίγαρ,* i.e. because Apollo had blessed the land with his 
presence.

1. 589. *οἰκεῖ,* sc. Admetus, the real subject of the ode. The address 
to Phoebus (from 1. 582) is parenthetical.

1. 590. Homer, *Il.* ii. 270, places the home of Admetus παρὰ 
Βοιωνίδα λίμνην.

*ἀρότως γυνὰς γυάις ἀροσίμοις,* ‘plough-lands’ as distinguished from 
*πεῖλαν δαπέδους,* ‘pasture-lands.’

1. 591. *ἐρων,* in apposition to *αἰθέρα,* ‘he sets as a limit . . . the clime 
of the Molossi.’

*ἀδείου,* &c., ‘the dusky stable of the sun,’ i.e. ‘where the sun stables 
his steeds at dusk,’ meaning ‘the west.’

always has it masculine; also Sophocles, except in *Oed.* *Tyr.* 865. 
The dominion of Admetus can hardly have extended as far as the
Molossi, who occupied the central region of Epirus. But it may have reached to the eastern side of the Pindus range, which bounds Thessaly on the west.

1. 595. Αἴγαλων (for the old reading Αἴγαῖον), the name of the sea-god for the sea itself. Some take it as an adj. with ἀκτάν, 'the harbourless Aegean sea-coast of Pelion,' others make πόντιον Αἴγαιών ἀκτάν, 'he sways the Aegean main as far as the harbourless coast of Pelion.' [Aegacon was the same as Briaecus (Hom. II. i. 403); he was the personification of storms and earthquakes, and his name probably means 'violent' or 'rushing,' from δίσσω.]

1. 601. έκφερται, &c. 'is self-impelled towards,' i.e. 'tends to produce a sense of honour.' Aἴσως is that self-respect (verecundia) that causes a man to regard the feelings of others; and this is an especial mark of good breeding (εὐγενεία) —τὸ γὰρ τραφήναι μὴ κακῶς αἴσω τΡέφει Suppl. 913. Compare the maxim noblesse oblige.

[1. 603. All the MSS. insert ἀγαμαί after σοφίας extra metrum, but it is doubtless interpolated.]


1. 605. κεδνὰ πράξειν, 'will fare well.' Cp. Troad. 679 πράξειν τε κεδνῶν, also (for adverbal neut, pl.) ll. 412, 445. Orest. 531 ἐπράξει ἐνδίκω.

From l. 606 to l. 961 constitutes the third Episode of the play. See on l. 136. Meanwhile Admetus has been making preparations for the funeral. He re-enters, inviting the Chorus to join in the obsequies. The procession is stopped by the sudden entrance of Pheres (l. 614).


1. 607. πάντα, i.e. τὰ πρόσφορα l. 148. See note on κόσμος l. 149.

1. 608. ἀρδην (from αἴρω with adv. suffix -δην, as in κρύβ-δην, &c.), 'aloft,' i.e. on their shoulders. Cp. λαβεῖν ἀέρδην Aesch. Agam. 226.

In τάφον καὶ πυράν the order of proceeding is reversed. See note on Greek burial rites, l. 366.

1. 609. οὐς νομίζεται, referring to the usual χαῖρε at funerals (l. 625). So the Romans repeated Vale three times. The Chorus obeys this injunction at l. 743, after the dispute with Pheres.

1. 610. οὐστάτην δδών, i.e. the journey to Hades, not the procession to the grave. Cp. Soph. Antig. 807 τὰν νεάταν δδών στείχουσαν.

1. 611. For καὶ μήν introducing a fresh speaker see l. 507 n.

1. 613. κόσμον, &c. Cp. l. 149 n. The νέρτεροι were not only the gods of the lower world, but the spirits of the dead also, who were regarded as δαίμονες (l. 1140) requiring propitiation (l. 25 n.). Hence in Aesch. Persae 609 the offerings Atossa brings to the tomb of Darius are called πρεμενείς χοάι and νεκροὶς μειλικτήρια.
Enter Pheres, with a train of attendants, 614-746. Pheres. 'I come to share thy mourning. Take these ornaments for the dead; since she is worthy of all respect, the saviour of our house.' Admetus. 'Who bade thee hither? I will take nought from thee, who didst desert thy son in his distress, old though thou art, and she so young! Sure I am no child of thine, nor shall this hand inter thy corpse. 'Tis the way of old men; they murmur at long life, yet shrink from death when he comes.' Pheres. 'Am I thy slave, that thou revilest me thus? Hear this in return. I owe thee not my life, nor do I claim thine. A father die for his son? 'tis not in nature nor in custom. Life is as sweet to me as to thee. Thou art the coward, not I, thou less than woman! Cease, lest thou hear truths not to thy liking.' Adm. 'Say on; take thy fill of life, since thou wouldst not save hers or mine.' Pher. 'Lay not her death at my door, the blame is thine own.' Adm. 'And thine the disgrace: coward, thou will die inglorious!' Pher. 'What then?' Adm. 'Hast thou no shame? depart, and let me be.' Pher. 'I go; but thou shalt smart for it yet.' Adm. 'Take thy wife and begone! this house is no home for you. (Exit Pheres.) Perform we the last rites.' Exit Admetus.

Chorus. 'Farewell, noblest one; Hermes speed thee on thy way, and may all happiness in Hades' realms be thine!'

1. 615. Cp. ll. 418, 1083 γυναικὸς ἠσθήτης ἵμπλακες.
[1. 617. For δύσφορα some read δυσμενή, which is rarely used of things. Cp. however Soph. Elect. 440 δυσμενεῖς χόας.]
1. 618. κατὰ χθονὸς ἠτώ. The trinkets, &c., when burnt or buried with the corpse, were supposed to accompany the spirit to Hades.
1. 620. ητίς, quippe quae, 'because she, &c.' Cp. l. 659.
1. 621. σοῦκ with ἀπαίδα, not with the verb, 'prevented my becoming childless.'
1. 623. εὐκλείστατον, 'of highest repute.' The reputation of women at Athens was not high in the time of Euripides. [Another reading is εὐκλείστερον.]
1. 625. ἥμᾶς, i.e. the whole family, of which Admetus was the hope and stay.
1. 628. λύει = λυσιτελει, 'profits.' The full phrase is λυεῖν τέλη, 'to pay dues,' and so clear oneself of liabilities. Cp. Soph. Oed. Tyr. 316 ἐνθα μὴ τέλη λύει φρονεώτη. η, 'or else,' aliquuin. The Greeks had a proverb, η τοιαύτην χρή γαμεῖν ἢ μὴ γαμεῖν.
1. 630. ἐν φίλωσι, lit. 'among the things I love,' i.e. 'nor do I love thy presence.'
1. 632. τῶν σῶν ἐνδέης, 'needing anything of thine,' i.e. 'beholden to thee for anything.'
1. 633. ὀλλύμην (imperf.), 'I was in danger of perishing.' Cp. Iph.
in Tauris 27 ἐκαινόμην ἔφει, ‘I was on the point of being sacrificed,’ ib. 60 ὅ’ ἡλιομήν ἔγω.

1. 634. ἄλλο, masculine, because the general idea of a substitute is more prominent than that of the actual person, Alcestis. So ἄλλου σωτῆρος 1. 666.

1. 636. τοῦτο σώματος, ‘this body of mine,’ more emphatic than ἵμου. So in Heracl. 528 Macaria says, ἡγεῖσθ᾽ ὅπου δεῖ σῶμα καθαμεῖν τόδε. ἀρα marks an inference from Pheres’ conduct, ‘so then you were not,’ or ‘after all.’ Cp. Soph. Philoct. 978, where Philoctetes, discovering Odysseus, exclaims, ὃν ἐκ ἀρα, ‘so it was he after all!’ So ergo in Latin, as in Hor. Od. i. 24, 5 ‘Ergo Quinctilium perpetuus sopor urget?’

1. 639. ὑπεβλήθην. Hence the terms τέκνα ὑποβολμαία for ‘supposi-
sitious,’ or substituted children, as in Hdt. i. 137 and elsewhere.

1. 640. εἰς ἔλεγχον, ‘to the test,’ said of persons coming forth to be examined in court. Cp. l. 15 n.

δε εἰ, qui sis, = oios εἰ, ‘your true character.’

1. 643. τηλικόδε, ‘old as you are.’ So in Soph. Antig. 726 Creon says in answer to his son’s remonstrance, ‘Shall I at my age (οἱ τηλι-
κόδε) be taught my duty by a mere stripling (πρὸς τηλικοῦδε) ?’

1. 644. οὐκ ἴθέλησας, ‘you did not choose’ (though you had the power). Cp. l. 281 n.

1. 645. εἰάσατε. By using the plural verb Admetus includes his mother in his censure.

1. 646. θνειαν. See l. 532 n.

1. 647. πατέρα τ’ ἄν, a correction of the old reading πατέρα τε γε. The first ἄν gives warning that the sentence is going to be conditional, and also emphasises πατέρα. Cp. Hippol. 480 ἐ τάρ’ ἄν ὄψε γ’ ἄνδρες εἰςφορεῖν ἄν. In Aristoph. Acharn. 212 this usage is ludicrously ex-
aggerated, where the Chorus, enraged with Dicaeopolis, exclaim οὐχ ἄν ἐν ἐμής γε νεότητος . . . ὄδε φαῦλως ἄν οὕτω . . . ἐξέφυγεν, οὐδ’ ἄν ἐλαφρῶς ἄν ἀπεπλίζατο.

1. 648. The position of καλὼν makes it emphatic; ‘fair strife had been thine to strive’ (Browning). Cp. l. 489 n. Pheres answers this at l. 683.

1. 650. πάντως with βραχύς, ‘short in any case.’

1. 653. καὶ μήν, ‘and indeed,’ or ‘and yet’ you have had prosperity enough to satisfy any man. Cp. l. 1099. Admetus here passes on to answer a possible objection (which Pheres actually does make at l. 691), that an old man might well wish to enjoy his short remnant of life.

1. 657. διαρπάσα, ad diripium. The Greek infin. is more elastic than the Latin, and more like the English. It may even express a purpose, as in Hom. II. vii. 351 Ἀργεῖν Ἐλένην . . . δώσομεν Ἀτρεΐδη-
σιν ἄγειν. Cp. l. 480 n. The verb διαρπάσα well describes the rush
of needy relatives upon the unprotected house, which they make their prey. Cp. Ovid’s picture of the suitors rioting in the house of Ulysses during his absence (Heroides i. 89)—

‘Inque tua regnant, nullis prohibentibus, aula;
Viscera nostra, tuae dilaniuntur opes.’

1. 658. οὐ μὴν ἔρεις, &c., ‘you surely will not say that from disrespect to your old age I gave you up to death.’ This Admetus had done in intent by making the request (ll. 15, 16). [Others read ἀτιμάξοντα and προφάνωκας, ‘that you abandoned me to my fate, because I did not respect your age.’]

1. 659. ὀστίς, ‘since I have always been,’ &c. See note on ητίς l. 620. 
aiδάφρον, ‘respectful.’ For aiδῶς see l. 601 n.

1. 661. ἡλλαξάτην, ‘paid in return.’ For ἀλλάσσειν, ἀμείβειν, &c., words denoting exchange, cp. ll. 14, 461 n.

1. 662. οὐκείτ ἀν φθάνους, ‘you cannot now be too soon,’ i.e. ‘lose no time about getting.’ Cp. Aristoph. Plutus 1133 ἀποτρέχων οὐκ ἀν φθάνους.

ll. 663, 664. Cp. Medea 1032–1034—

ἡ μὴν ποθ’ ἡ δύστηνος εἰχον ἐλπίδαισ
πολλάς ἐν ὑμῖν γηροβοσκήσεων τ’ ἐμὲ,

καὶ κατανοοῦσαν χεροῖν εῦ περιστελεῖν.

There was a law at Athens εἰν τις μὴ τρέφῃ τοὺς γονέας, ἀτίμος ἔστω.

The technical term for ‘dressing’ the corpse before burial (see on l. 149) was περιστέλλειν (ornare). This was done by the women of the family. Then the body was ‘laid out’ (προτίθεομαι) to certify the fact of death. See Funus in Dict. of Antiquities.

1. 666. τοῦτι σέ (το ἐνι σέ), quantum in te fuit, i.e. ‘it is no thanks to you that I am alive.’ Cp. Hec. 514 ἡμεῖς δ’ ἀτεκνοῦ τοῦτι σέ.

For the masc. ἄλλοι (and κείνου next line) see l. 634 n. He means to say, ‘You have forfeited all claim to my regard; the duty I once owed to you I now transfer to another.’

ll. 669–672. These lines (only with πολῶν for μακρῶν) recur in a fragment of Menander. There is an evident allusion to the fable of the Old Man and Death.

1. 671. οὐδ | εἰς βοῦ | λεταί. This violates the rule that a spondee in the fifth foot must consist of one word, or of two words closely connected (as ἀκοῦ | σῶν μοῦ | πάτερ), unless the first half of the spondee be a monosyllable. [Hence Porson proposed οὐδ’ | εἰς βοῦ | λεταί.] But this rule is not always observed. Cp. Ion 1, Heracl. 530. [The MS. reading ἀ παῖ (for ἀναί) may have come in by error from ἀ παῖ in next line.]

1. 674. παροξυνης, ‘exasperate,’ whence our word paroxysm. The Chorus performs its proper function, according to Horace, A. P. 196—

‘Ille bonis faveatque et consilietur amice,

Et regat iratos et amet pacare tumentes.’
NOTES. LINES 658–694.

1. 675. αὐχεῖς with ἔλαιλεν, ‘whom do you presume you are assailning?’ For ἀχεῖν, ‘to assert confidently,’ ‘boast,’ &c., see l. 95 n.

Αυδόν ἡ Φρύγα. Asia Minor was the great slave-mart of Greece and Rome. In Xen. Anab. iii. 1, 31 one Apollonides is taunted with having his ears bored, like a Lydian slave. There was a Latin proverb, ‘Phrygian plagiis fieri solere meliorem.’


σέθεν may be the possess. gen. ‘slave of yours,’ or with ἀργυρώντων, ‘bought with your money.’ The gen. of the agent usually takes a preposition, but there are several instances like πατρὸς τραφέω Soph. Philoct. 3, πληγεις ὑματρός Orest. 497.

1. 678. γνησίως, ‘free-born,’ not enfranchised or having purchased liberty. See Acts xxii. 28.

1. 679. νεανίας, ‘headstrong,’ ‘insolent.’ This use of the word would be familiar at Athens, where the fashionable young men of the day were in the habit of committing assaults upon respectable citizens. A gross case is recorded by Demosthenes, in which the defendant belonged to a regular set, called the Triballi, like the ‘Mohocks’ of the last century.

1. 680. With βαλών, probably supply λύγους; but βάλλειν may be used absolutely, ‘to assault,’ as in Plato, Symposium, βαλών γε οὗ εἰς εἰκεφεύξεσθαι. οὖτως, ‘as you are,’ i. e. ‘with impunity.’ Cp. Heracl. 375 οὐκ οὖτως ἄ δοκεῖς κυρίσεστι, ‘you shan’t get just what you expect.’

1. 682. οὖκ, with οἷς, but transposed for emphasis, ‘bound I am not.’ Cp. Hippol. 407 χρήν μὲν οὗ σ’ ἀμαρτάνειν, Bacch. 1348 ὄργαν πρέπει θεοῦ οὐχ ὄμοιοῦσθαι βροτοῖς.


Ελληνικόν, i. e. not like barbarians, who kill the old and infirm when they become useless. Yet the principle of rating men’s lives according to their usefulness to the state was fully recognized in Greece, and to be ἀχρεως, ‘unserviceable,’ was a great reproach. See Introduction, p. xvi.

1. 685. σαυτῷ, i. e. to shift for yourself, and not be dependent on me.

1. 687. For the extent of Admetus’ domains see ll. 588, &c.

1. 690. τοῦτ’ ἄνδρος, common in tragedy for ἐμοῦ. Cp. ll. 331, 719, 1084. So in Hor. Sat. i. 9, 47 ‘hunc hominem=me.

1. 691. Quoted by Aristophanes against Euripides in Thesmoph. 194, and parodied in the Clouds 1415, where a son justifies himself for beating his father by pleading κλαίουσι παιδες. πατέρα δ’ οὐ κλαίειν δοκεῖς; 1. 692. η μην, ‘I can assure you.’ Cp. l. 64 n.

1. 694. οὐ γοῦν, &c., ‘you at least (ought to admit this since) you fought so shamelessly for your life.’
is literally 'you fought hard not to die.'

1. 697. γυναίκος, the gen., because ἡσσημένος virtually = the compar. ἡσσων, 'worstéd by' or 'inferior to' a woman. Cp. Hec. 1252 ἡσση-

méνος δούλης.

1. 698. τοῦ, expressing scorn, 'fine manly youth that you are!' Or perhaps (as Mr. Browning translates) 'her handsome spark,' referring to Alcestis.

1. 700. ἄεί, 'for the time being,' a frequent sense of the word. Cp. Aesch. Prom. 937 τὸν κρατῶντ' ἄεί. [Livy in his Preface has 'novi semper scriptores,' meaning 'successive historians.]

1. 702. τοῖς μὴ θέλουν, 'if they do not choose,' i.e. anyone who does not. Où would point to some particular friends as instances. 'Ο μὴ δρῶν = si quis non faciat, ο ὦ δρῶν = is qui non facit.

1. 705. κακά, 'reproaches,' as in 1. 676.

11. 706, 707. See note on 1. 673. πλείω, 'too many,' a common force of the comparative. The standard of comparison (here τοῦ δέοντος) is understood.

1. 708. ὃς ἐμοῦ λέγαντος, 'since I have had my say' (Paley). He does not mean to speak any more at length; only a few sentences are spoken on each side before they part. [Others read λέγοντος, 'since I shall say what I choose.]

1. 710. ἄν belongs to the verb, but reflects its force on the participle also. Cp. l. 490 n.

1. 712. ψυχὴ μιᾷ, &c., i.e. our own natural lives, and not another's in addition.

1. 713. καὶ μὴν, &c. 'you however would live (if you could) longer than Zeus,' in spite of your protest about being content with 'one life.'

1. 714. ἄρα. The curse consists in the tone, and the implied misery of old age (1. 715). Thus Tithonus, in the old legend, found immortality a curse. Compare what Swift says in Gulliver's Travels about the Struldbrugs in the kingdom of Luggnagg.


1. 717. σημεία, in apposition to the general notion of the sentence, τὸ ἐμὲ τὸν ἐμὲ νεκρὸν ἐκφέρειν, rather than with νεκρὸν only. For the plural see l. 1028 n.

1. 722. θεοῦ, the Sun-god, as the source of light, and the visible representative of deity. See l. 207 n.

1. 723. κοῦκ ἐν ἄνδράσιν = 'unmanly.' 'Ευ denotes likeness or uniformity. Compare the French 'voyager en prince,' 'to travel in a princely style.' Cp. l. 732.
NOTES. LINES 694-741.

1. 724. Pheres means that Admetus is baulked of the pleasure he had expected to enjoy in burying his poor old father.

1. 726. κακῶς ἀκούειν, male audire, 'to be in evil repute.' This disregard of fame after death Admetus calls 'effrontery' (ἀναιδεία).

1. 728. ἀφρονα, 'weak' or 'simple,' in dying for you.

1. 731. te, a better reading than δέ, = 'and what is more.'

κηδεστάις, relations by marriage (κῆδος). The duty of avenging his sister's death would devolve on Acastus. This was a sacred duty, and stringently enforced; no one but a kinsman might perform it.

1. 732. εὖ ἀνδράσιν. Pheres retorts upon Admetus in his own words (1. 723): 'Acastus surely is not worthy the name of a man, unless,' &c.

1. 733. τιμωρεῖσθαι usually takes an acc. of the thing for which vengeance is taken, as well as of the personal object. But sometimes the former is put in the gen., as ἐγὼ σφεας τιμωρήσομαι τής ἐνθάδε ἄπιθος Hdt. iii. 145.

1. 734. ἐρροις, = abi in malam rem, a sort of imprecation. Admetus does not say ἥ μήτηρ, having already repudiated both his parents, 11. 636, 666.

1. 735. παιδὸς ἄντος, prob. the gen. absolute, 'childless, though your son lives.' [It may be governed by ἀπαίδε, like παίδων ἀπαίδας Androm. 612. Cp. ἀπεπλος φαρέων Phoen. 324, ἀψφοῖτος κωκυμάτων Soph. Aias 321.]

1. 736. τοῦδε = ἐμοί, as in 1. 690, to be taken after ταῦτων, 'the same roof with me.' So idem takes the dat. as in Hor. A. P. 567 'invitum qui servat idem facit accidenti.'

1. 737. νείσθε = ibitis, νείσθαι, like λέναι, having a future sense.

ἀπεπείν, 'to disown.' See on l. 487.

κηρύκων ὑπό, i.e. like a formal declaration of war. The technical term for disinheriting was ἀποκηρύσαι.

1. 739. ἥμεις δέ, to the Chorus and attendants.


1. 740. ὡς ἄν expresses a purpose with some implied condition, generally the consent of the person addressed, = 'that (so please you) we may place.' Hence the difference between ὡς and ὡς ἄν is often very slight. For the funeral ceremonies see l. 366 n.

1. 741. σχετλία, 'unflinching.' For the meanings of σχετλία see on l. 470, and cp. ἐληνυ l. 1.

τόλμης, gen. of respect. Cp. σχετλίας παθέων Androm. 1179, τλήμων τόλμης Ion 260, &c. So with interjections, as οἴμοι τῶν κακῶν, &c. Latin writers imitate this construction, as infelix animi, laeta laborum, &c.
1. 743. ἵθόνιος, the title of Hermes as conductor of souls to Hades (ὄψαγαγός) as distinguished from οὐράνιος, his title in heaven. So Plutarch says, τῶν μὲν ἵθόνιος ὁ Ἐρμής τῶν δὲ οὐράνιος. Cp. Hor. Od. i. 10, 17 'τ’ πιας λατεῖς ἀνίμας ῥεπόνις σεδίμβου.


1. 745. ἀγαθοῖς, &c. Compare the splendid apostrophe of Tacitus to the dead Agricola, Agric. 46, 'si quis πιορομ manibus locus, si... non cum corpore extinguuntur magnae animae, placide quiescas,' &c. Euripides here places Alcestis on a level with the heroes, for whom special honours were reserved; that of being co-assessor (πάρεσδρος) with Hades and Persephone being the highest of all.

As the Chorus sing this farewell ode, they move slowly off the stage. The Chorus rarely went off in the course of a play; it does so however in the Helena 386, and in Soph. Aias 814.

Enter Serving-man (one of the ἐφεστώτες mentioned in 1. 547), to Heracles sitting at his meal.

LL. 747-860. Servant. 'A ruder guest than this Heracles have I never seen! entering my master's house in spite of our sorrow; then falling to at the feast and the wine, with uncouth songs, and a garland on his brow—we mourning for our mistress all the while, who was a mother to us all. How I hate him! and justly too—the villain!' HERACLES. 'Ho, there! why those doleful looks, that frowning brow? all for a stranger too! Come hither and be wise. All men (thou know'st) must die; and fortune is fickle. Drink then with me and be merry; put off thy gloom, while thou mayest; else life is not worth the living.' SERV. 'This is no time for mirth; knowest thou not our trouble?' HER. 'A stranger (so he told me) died here but now.' SERV. 'A home friend rather.—But leave us to our mourning.' HER. (aside) 'Am I deceived? (To the Servant,) Who is dead here? the truth, I pray.' SERV. 'Tis my lord's wife, Alcestis, that is gone.' HER. 'How sayest thou?—And then to make me your guest?' SERV. 'Nay, he would have it so.' HER. 'What a tale hath he put upon me! else would I never——. (He dashes the chaplet on the ground.) Where is the tomb, the tomb, I say?' SERV. 'Yonder, up the hill, Larissa-wards.' Exit Servant. HER. 'Courage, heart of mine; now show thy progeny! I will seek Death at the tomb and deliver her from his hands: strong though he be, he shall not hold his prey. All this and more for his sake, who is my best friend, my most noble host?'

1. 747. παντοίας, 'every sort of land,' barbarian as well as Greek.

1. 752. ἀμέθασθαι, 'to pass,' lit. 'to change' one's position from outside to inside, or vice versa. Thus in Elect. 750 ἀμεθὺν δῶρα means 'leave the house,' but in Aesch. Choeph. 573 ἀμεθυ βαλόν is 'I will cross the threshold.' See on ἀμέθα I. 461.
1. 754. τὰ προστυχόντα, 'what was set before him.' Admetus had ordered σίτων παρείναι πλῆθος (l. 548), but it seems this was not enough. The voracity attributed to Heracles is quite a common-place with the comic poets, the titles ἀδηφάγος, βουφάγος, &c. being freely applied to him. Aristophanes has an amusing scene in the Frogs, 549, &c., and Epicharmus in his Busiris describes the gluttony of Heracles and his bestial manner of eating. Lucian represents him as a god who does not care for 'smokeless offerings,' but likes plenty of good meat. All this is part of his character as an athlete, according to Greek ideas of training-diet, which ran decidedly in the direction of over-feeding.

1. 755. εἰ, with opt. = si quando, 'whenever we did not bring anything, he would urge us (imperf.) to do so.'

1. 756. χειρεσσί. This Epic form also occurs in Soph. Antig. r297. Such forms are rare in iambic lines; here it suits the mock heroic tone the servant is made to assume in this and the following lines, which have been thought to be borrowed from some scolium, or drinking song.

κύσσον, probably 'made of ivy-wood,' since Euripides speaks of a σκύφος κύσσον in Cyclops 392. It is called κύσσύμβολον in Hom. Od. ix. 346, and Theocr. Id. i. 27. [Potter renders it 'wreathed with ivy,' which is possible.]

1. 757. μητρός, i.e. the grape, dark wine being reputed strongest; or it may be the vine. Anacreon calls wine γόνον ἀμπέλου. Cp. Aesch. Persae 620 ἀκρατῶν τε μητρός ἄγρια ἀπο ποτῶν, παλαιᾶς ἀμπέλου γάνων τόδε. So in Plautus, Amphitryon i. 1, 174 'cam ego (hirneam), ut matre fuerat natum, eduxi meri.'

εὐξωρον, prob. from ζοερός, 'lively;' hence = ἀκρατος, 'unmixed,' i.e. 'strong' wine. A drunkard was said ζωρότερον πίνειν.

1. 758. ἑθερμηνε, past tense in connexion with the historical pres. πίνει (l. 757).

ἀμφιβάσα, 'getting round him,' like a flame encircling a caldron. This, and ll. 760 &c., may be compared with Cyclops 424 ἐγὼ δὲ . . . σπλάγχνει ἑθερμαίνον ποτακὲ δὲ παρὰ κλαίοντι συννάυταις ἐμοῖς ἄρουσα.

1. 759. μυρσίνης. Cp. l. 172 n. Here the myrtle is festive, being sacred to Venus. See Hor. Od. i. 38, 6; ii. 7, 23, &c.

1. 762. προτιμῶν, 'caring for.' Cp. l. 155 n.

1. 764. τέγγυντες. For the participle after δεικνύναι and similar verbs see ll. 150, 155, 439 n.

ἐφίετο (imperf.), 'repeatedly enjoined us.'

1. 767. πανουργον, 'rascally.' For derivation see Lexicon. Aristotle, Ethics vi. 12, defines πανουργία thus:—'There is a faculty called cleverness (δεινότης), which can avail itself of every possible means towards a given object. If the object be good, the faculty is praiseworthy; but if bad, it becomes rascality (πανουργία).'

1. 771. ὀργάς, 'angry moods.' So irae, as 'temperat iras' Virg. Aen. i. 57. Cp. 'the furious winter's rages' in Cymbeline. For the mutual affection between Alcestis and her servants see ll. 192, &c.

ἀρα = nonne, as in ll. 229, 341.


1. 773. οὖτος, 'you there!' used in familiar addresses; cp. Hec. 1127 οὖτος, τί πᾶςχεις; Soph. Oed. Col. 1627 ὃ οὖτος οὖτος, Οἶδότους, &c. It thus refers to the 2nd person (Lat. iste), as οὗτε does to the 1st, and denotes some one near, that is familiar; whereas ἐκεῖνος (ille) implies distant respect.

σεμνόν, 'solemn' (as in l. 800), in a reproachful sense. Cp. Hipp. 93 τὶς δ' οὖ σεμνὸς ἀρχεύνως βρῶν; where it is contrasted (as here l. 775) with εὐπροσήγορος, 'affable.' It denotes a gloomy, reserved, unsocial temper. [Σεμνός is for σεβ-νός, from σέβ-ω, lit. = reverendus.]

πεφροντικός, 'thought-absorbed' (Browning). The perf. part. implies a settled state of mind. So βλέπειν σεσαρός, ἐγρηγορός, &c.

1. 774. τὸν πρόσπολον, as we say, 'a servant,' the article denoting a class, not an individual. To receive guests with a sullen look was not only wrong from a social point of view, but was regarded as an ill omen. Prof. Paley notes how in Aesch. Agam. 503 the statues of the gods are bidden to greet the king on his return with cheerful countenances (φαιδροίσιν ὀμμαστ)

1. 777. συνωφρυμενόν. Cp. l. 800, also Hor. Sat. ii. 2, 125 'contractae seria frontis.'

1. 778. θυραίον πήματος. Admetus had told Heracles that he was in mourning for a 'stranger' (ἐθνεῖος), l. 533.

1. 779. ὅπως ἄν, &c. = 'so shall you become (if you listen to me).' For ἃν marking an implied condition see l. 740 n.

καὶ is slightly ironical, 'that you may e'en become wiser,' implying that a little more wisdom would do him no harm.

1. 780. οἶδας. This Ionic form for οἶδα is very rare in Attic Greek, but there is no reason to suspect its genuineness. The plurals οἴδαμεν, &c. also occur, but seldom.

1. 781. πόθεν = 'of course not.' Cp. l. 95 n.

1. 782. Cp. l. 419, Soph. Elect. 1173 (of death) πᾶσιν γὰρ ἡμῖν τοῦτ' ὄφελεται παθεῖν. So Phaedrus Fab. xxv. 19 'mors vicina flagitabit debitum.'

1. 783. Cp. Anacreontica xv. 9—

Τὸ σήμερον μέλει μοι,
Τὸ δ' αὔριον τὸσ οἴδεν;

also Hor. Od. iv. 7, 17.
NOTES. LINES 768-810.

1. 785. τὸ τῆς τύχης, ‘the course of fortune,’ not a mere periphrasis for τύχη. Cp. τὰ τῆς ἐμπειρίας (Thuc. vii. 49), ‘the results of their experience,’ and similar phrases.

οἱ προβηγγέται, ‘whither it will tend,’ i.e. ‘the issue.’ Cp. Med. 1117 καραδοκῶ τάκειθεν οἱ προβηγγέται.

1. 786. Ἀλίσκεται, ‘is attained’ or ‘discovered.’ Cp. Soph. Oed. Tyr. 110 τὸ ζητούμενον ἀλάτον, ‘is discoverable.’

τέχνη, the soothsayer’s art, often ridiculed by Euripides, e.g. in Elect. 400 μαντικὴν χαῖρεν ἐώς, and elsewhere.

1. 790. For the double superlatives cp. μέγιστον ἔχεισθη Med. 1323, μάλιστα φίλτατος Hippol. 1421. So ‘most Highest,’ ‘most principal,’ &c. in the Bible. In the Hippolytus, l. 6, Aphrodite threatens ruin to those who neglect her worship.


[1. 795. Some editors adopt the Aldine reading τύχας, rendering ὑπερβαλῶν, ‘having surmounted,’ and supposing the Servant to have stepped forward at the words δεῦρ’ ἐλθέ (l. 779) towards the table, at which Heracles was seated. But πῦλας (though an unusual word for the door of a room) has good MSS. authority. The words τάσσ’ ὑπερβαλῶν πῦλας recur at l. 829.]

1. 797. ἕνεστῶτος, ‘sullenness,’ = εὔστασις φρενῶν Hippol. 983. Cp. Cic. Tusc. Disp. iv. 31 ‘animi contractio.’ The metaphor is either from gathering clouds, or from the general idea of solidity, sternness, or rigour of mind.


πῖτυλος, ‘the splash’ of the wine in the goblet. So δακρύων πῖτυλος Hippol. 1464. The derivation is doubtful.

1. 799. Cp. the maxim of Sardanapalus, quoted in the Anthologia—εὖ εἰδῶ ὅτι θυητός ἑφυ τῶν θυμῶν ἄεξε, τερπόμενοι βαλίσας θανώτι σοι οὕτως ὄνησις. [But πρᾶσσομεν may = ‘we fare,’ if οἷα be taken adverbially, like κεκλά πρᾶξειν l. 605.]


1. 803. πρᾶσσομεν, &c. i.e. ‘our present business is not one of mirth,’ &c. [But πρᾶσσομεν may = ‘we fare,’ if οἷα be taken adverbially, like κεκλά πρᾶξειν l. 605.]

1. 807. τῷ ᾿Ζώσῳ; ‘how (say you) they live?’ Cp. Phoen. 1726, where Oedipus exclaims δεῖν’ ἐγὼ τὰς, and Antigone answers τί τὰς; So in Terence, Andria v. 3, Simo replies to his son Pamphilus ‘Quid mi pater?’

1. 810. οὐ χρῆν, &c. ‘ought I not to be well treated?’ i.e. ‘ought I to lose good cheer, just because of a stranger’s death?’
oũveka, 'for the sake of,' i.e. 'notwithstanding.' Cp. Soph. Elect. 787 τὸν τῆς ἀπειλῶν oũveκʰ ἡμερεύσομεν, 'we will rest at peace for all her threatenings.'

1.811. όικεῖος, 'a home friend.' [There is little doubt as to the right reading, but many read θυραῖος, supposing it to be ironical—'very much of a stranger she was to be sure!'] The use of όικεῖος, 'one of the family,' does not actually let out the secret, though it arouses Heracles' suspicions.

1.812. Heracles tries to think whether Admetus might not have mentioned some greater calamity.

1.813. χαίρων ἵθι, lit. 'go with a blessing,' a formula of getting rid of a person. So in Phoen. 921 Creon says to Teiresias χαίρων ἵθι, οὗ γὰρ σῶν μὲ δεῖ μαντευματῶν.

1.816. ἄλλα ἦ, &c. 'have I really?' or 'can it be that I have been served so ill?' &c.

1.817. Cp. Hippol. 923 οὗ γὰρ ἐν δεόντι λεπτονργεῖς, πάτερ, = intempestive. δεξασθαι, ut te exciperent. For the Greek infinitive see l. 657 n.

1.819. Heracles interrupts the Servant with the crucial question 'Who is dead?' thus forcing him to tell. He forgot, or perhaps ignored, what Admetus had told him about his parents and children (li. 515, 517).

[1.820. τὰ φροοῦδον, the reading of the best MSS. Others have τὶς φροοῦδος, which would be correct in spite of the neuter τέκνων. Cp. Soph. Oed. Tyr. i167 Δαυὸ τὶς ἦν γεννηματῶν.]

1.821. μὲν οὖν, 'nay rather,' immo, correcting the last speaker. Cp. Plato, Gorgias, ἐγὼ οὗ φημί; φημὶ μὲν οὖν ἐγὼγε, 'I deny it? nay rather, I assert it.'

1.822. ἐπεῖτα, 'after that,' i.e. 'notwithstanding this.' In Medea 1398 Jason exclaims κάπετε ἐκτὰς; 'didst thou nevertheless slay (thy children),' in spite of thy professed love for them?

1.824. For σχέτλικ see l. 470 n.; for ἡμπλάκες l. 242 n.

1.827. ἐπέθε (imperf.), 'urged his persuasions.'


1.831. κάτα. See note on ἐπεῖτα 1.822. At these words he tears the garland from his head.

1.832. ἄλλα σοῦ, &c. 'but it was your fault,' &c. or the gen. of exclamation, 'to think of your not telling me!' like τῆς ἐμῆς κάκης, 'to think of my weakness!' Med. 1051 (Paley).

1.833. δώματος after κακοῦ. [For προσκειμένου another reading is προκειμένου = παρόντος. Cp. l. 551 note.]

1.834. ποῦ καί; 'where?' (with emphasis), or 'but tell me, where.'
NOTES. LINES 810-859.

See l. 142 n. on the difference made by the position of καὶ in καὶ πῶς, πῶς καὶ, &c.

1. 835. πάρ’ οἴμον (accus.), ‘as you go along the road,’ secundum viam. The custom of building tombs along the wayside is well known. In Rhesus 881 Hector orders the dead to be buried λευκόροους πρὸς ἐκτροπᾶς, ‘at the turning-off from the public road.’ The wayside tomb of one Brasilia is mentioned by Theocritus, Idyll. vii. 11, imitated by Virgil, Ecl. ix. 60. Burial within the city walls was forbidden from early times both in Greece and at Rome. One of the Laws of the XII Tables was Hominem mortuum in urbe ne sepelito neve urito.

1. 836. έκ = έξω, ‘outside of.’

The Servant having left the stage, Heracles utters the following soliloquy, ll. 837-860.

1. 837. καρδία, &c. So Odysseus (Hom. Od. xx. 18) summons up courage, addressing his φίλον ἦτορ thus, τέτλαθ᾽ δή, κραδίν, καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ’ ἔτλης.

1. 839. For the pedigree of Heracles see l. 599 n. Alcmena is called Τίρυνθία because of her marriage with Amphitryon, king of Tiryns.

1. 843. Here, as elsewhere, Thanatos is identified with Hades as ‘king of the dead.’ Cp. l. 1140. In l. 25 he is simply the ‘sacrificer.’


1. 845. προσφαγμάτων, gen. after πινοντα, ‘drinking of the offerings.’ These are probably blood-offerings (l. 851) preceding the customary ones of milk, honey, and wine (Aesch. Persae 616, &c.). But in Hom. Od. xi. 25, &c. the sacrifice of a victim seems to follow these other offerings (τὰ δὲ μῆλα λαβὼν ἀπεδειρτόμενα, &c.).

1. 849. πρὶν, for πρὶν ἄν, with subj., as πρὶν μάθης Soph. Philoctet. 917. The ἄν is often omitted by the poets, sometimes also in prose, as Thuc. viii. 9 πρὶν τι καὶ ἱσχυρὸν λάβασι. Πρὶν (ἄν) with subj. always follows a negative clause or its equivalent, as οὐ ποιήσω πρὶν (ἄν) ἔλθης.

1. 850. ἦν δ’ οὖν, &c. ‘but if I should miss.’ οὖν = ‘really’ (l. 73 n.), is best rendered by an emphasis on the verb.

1. 851. αἰματηρὸν πέλανον, ‘clotted blood.’ See l. 845 n. Cp. πέλανοι αἰματοσταγίας Aesch. Persae 812. In the Choeophori 89 πέλανοι is a liquid. Pausanias says that Cecrops, thinking it wrong to sacrifice animals, substituted cakes, called πέλανοι.

τῶν κάτω, after δόμους, with Κόρης, &c. in apposition.

1. 852. For Κόρη as a title of Persephone see l. 358 n. ἀνηλίους. Cp. l. 437 n.

1. 857. αἰδεσθεῖς. For the meaning of αἰδῶ cp. l. 601 n.

1. 859. κακόν here = ἀγνώμονα, ‘ungrateful.’
11. 861–934. Heracles sallies forth in quest of Thanatos at the tomb. Admetus, returning from the funeral, stops at the palace-doors, which he dares not enter, and vents his grief in lyric verse, the Chorus responding. This kind of lament, sung by an actor and the Chorus alternately, was called a Commos (κομμός). How Heracles managed to avoid meeting Admetus on his way from the tomb does not appear. This may be an oversight on the part of Euripides.

1. 865. πώς ἄν here = utinam. The same expression occurs in Med.

97.

1. 867. κείνων ἔραμαι, 'I long for their state,' i.e. of the dead. Cp. ἐκεῖ 1. 744. Perhaps Aristophanes parodied this in the Vesææ 751, where the law-loving Philocteon says, κείνων ἔραμαι, κείθι γενοίμαν, ὅ δ' θνήσκε φραί: 'τίς ἄψηφιστος; ἄνιστάςω.'

1. 869. πόδα, often added after verbs of motion, as ἐκβάς πόδα Heracl. 802. Cp. προβάς κάλον δεξαίων Φηόν. 1412.

1. 870. ζημπρον, a 'hostage' for his life, because she died for him.

1. 874. δ' ὀδύνας ἔβας, also in Elect. 1210. Cp. Ἡππολ. 1164 δ' ἐχθρας ἀφιγμένος, Xen. Anab. iii. 2, 8 ἀδιά φιλιας λέναι.

1. 875. οὔδεν ὠφελεῖς. A story is told of Solon lamenting his son's death, that when one said ἀλλ' οὔδεν ἀνύττεις, he replied δ' αὐτὸ τὸ τούτο δακρύν, ὃτι οὔδεν ἀνύττω.

1. 877. The antistrophic line 894 shows that a syllable is wanting here. [Paley proposes to read κάταντα.]

1. 878. ἡλκωσεν. Cp. Suppl. 222 ἡλκωσας οἰκοῦσ. The metaphor is from a festering wound (ἐλκος).

1. 879. Perhaps η is to be supplied before ἀμαρτεῖν, or ἀμαρτεῖν = τοῦ ἀμαρτεῖν, but this latter construction is rare. It may be better to take it thus—'What loss (τι ἀμαρτεῖν) is a worse evil than (the loss of) a faithful wife?' condensed for τοῦ ἀμαρτείν πιστῆς ἀλόχου.

1. 880. μὴ ᾧφελον οἰκεῖν, = ὧφελον μὴ οἰκεῖν, since ᾧφελον literally means 'I ought,' i.e. 'would that I,' &c. Cp. Soph. Philoct. 969 μηποτ' ὧφελον λειπέιν.


1. 883. There is a similar passage in Ἡππολ. 258 τὸ δ' ὑπὲρ δισσῶν μίαν ὀδύνεις ψυχήν χαλεπῶν βαρῶς ὡς κάγῳ τῆδ' ὑπεραλγώ, i.e. it is enough for each soul to bear its own bitterness, without having to bear another's also.

τῆς = ἐκεῖνης. See on l. 264.

1. 886. Cp. Hom. Π. x. 63 θαλάμους κεραίζομένους. [The derivation from κέρας, as if referring to the attack of horned animals, is doubtful. It is more probably from κεφ, the stem of κερεῖν, 'to shear' or 'cut,' i.e. 'to ravage,' like τέμνειν γῆν.]
NOTES. LINES 861-915.

1. 890. πέρας, &c. said in reference to Admetus' incessant exclamations of woe.

1. 892. See on l. 417, &c.


1. 896. ὑπὸ γαῖαν (accus. of motion), 'who have gone below.' Cp. l. 238 n.

1. 897. ρύπαι, 'throw myself,' as in Cyclops 166 ῥύπει τ' ἐσ ἄλμην λευκάδος πέτρας ἄπο. Many active verbs are thus used intransitively, as κρύπτειν, πάλλειν, ἐγέρειν, βάλλειν, τρέπειν, φέρειν, &c. With ρύπειν cp. Milton, L’Allegro 113, 'out of doors he flings.'

1. 901. σὺν ἄν ἐσχέν, another instance of tmesis; cp. ll. 548, 579 n. Here it is less observable, because σὺν has the adverbial force of simul, instead of forming the compound συνέχεον = cohibere.

1. 902. διαβάντε, masc., though in apposition with ζυχάς, which is in sense masculine, or at least common. Cp. Hom. II. viii. 455, where two goddesses are said to be πληγέντες κεραύνω. In Soph. Oed. Col. 1676 Antigone speaks of herself and sister as ἦσσεν καὶ παθόσσα. There was probably only one original form for the dual in adjectives. In the article especially τῷ and τοῖν are used with feminine nouns, as τῷ γυναῖκε, &c.

1. 903. ἐν γένει, 'a relative.' Cp. Soph. Oed. Tyr. 1016 ἦ οὐρ Πόλυμβος οὐδὲν ἐν γένει. Some suppose an allusion to Pericles, but he had two sons, who died nearly at the same time; others to Anaxagoras, who is said to have exclaimed, on hearing of his son's death, 'I knew I had begotten a mortal child.' But the case is very likely an imaginary one.

1. 907. ἄλισ, 'moderately,' lit. 'enough and no more.' Cp. Med. 629 εἰ δ' ἄλισ ἔθαυ Κύπρις, ο ArrayBuffer εὔχαρις οὕτω.

1. 910. βιότου πόρσω = longe proiectus aetate. So πόρρω τοῦ βίου Plato, Apol. Socr. ch. 29, πρύσω ἄρετῆς Hdt. vii. 237. These are genitives of respect. See on ἣν θλιν Bern l. 291.

1. 911. σχήμα δόμοι, not a mere periphrasis for δόμοι, but giving a picture of the old familiar form of the house, as it strikes his eye. Cp. σχήματι οἴκων Hec. 619, 'Ασιάτιδος γῆς σχήμα Androm. i.

1. 912. μεταπίπτοντος, 'changing,' perhaps a metaphor from the fall of the dice. Cp. ἰὸν 412 μεταπέσου βελτίων, 'may there be a change for the better.'

1. 914. τὸ μέσον, 'the difference.' So in Hdt. i. 126 the Persians, comparing a day of toil with one of festivity, say πολλῶν εἶναι τὸ μέσον.

1. 915. πεύκαις, i.e. nuptial torches (taedae). Mount Pelion, which overlooked Iolcos the home of Alcestis (l. 249), was famed for its pine-groves. The 'Pelian pine' is mentioned in Medea 3, 4, as furnishing materials for the ship Argo.
1. 920. ἀν' ἀμφότεροι, ‘by parents on both sides.’ Admetus’ parents were Pheres and Clymene, those of Alcestis were Pelias and Anaxibia.

1. 921. εἶμεν, a less common, but a genuine Attic form of εἶημεν. Plato also has εἶημι and εἶέν.


1. 925. λέκτρων κοίτας, for λέκτρα, a common pleonasm (not quite like σχήμα δόμων l. 911). So θρήνων ὀδυρμοί, πέπλων φάρος, &c. Cp. μελάδρων στέγαι l. 248.

1. 926. παρά implies contrast with former prosperity, making the present loss more bitter. With the accus. after ἥλθεν it means ‘following close upon.’ Paley quotes Heracl, 611 παρά δ' ἄλλαν ἄλλα μοῖρα διώκει. [Similarly secundum, as in Livy xxi. 45 ‘secundum precatonem caput pecudis saxo elisit,’ i.e. ‘directly after the prayer.’] For the sense cp. Hel. 418, Troad. 634.


1. 934. δαίμονα with παρέλυσεν, ‘has parted from a wife.’ [If παρέλυσεν contains a metaphor from unyoking one ox of a pair (Paley), we are reminded of Virgil’s description of the plague-stricken ox in Georg. iii. 517 ‘It tristis arator, maerentem abjungens fratema morte juvenum.’ The old reading was πολλοίς in l. 932, i.e. ‘the death of a wife has loosed the bond of love (φιλίαν supplied) to many.’]

11. 935—961. ADMETUS. ‘Surely her lot is more blest than mine; for she is freed from pain and sorrow. But how shall I bear the desolation within these walls and the maiden throngs without? My enemies too will point at me and say—“See the man who dared not die!” Better far is death than such a life.’


1. 936. ὁμος, ‘still (it is so).’ ὁμος is often attached to a participle, though it belongs to the principal clause. Cp. Med. 282 ἐρήσομαι δε, καλ κακῶς πάχουσ' ὁμοσ.


1. 938. εὐκλεῖς, ‘glorified,’ in contrast with his own inglorious state (1. 961). 1. 939. οὖ χρῆν (imperf.), ‘ought not to be alive’ (l. 955 n.). Cp. l. 379. Admetus almost repeats his father’s words, now feeling the force of them, παρελθὼν τὴν πεπρωμένην τύχην (l. 695).

1. 940. ἀρτὶ μανθάνω, ‘now (at last) I know it.’ The foreboding of the maidservant, l. 146, is realised, for the blow has come. See note there, also on l. 332.
NOTES. LINES 920-967.

1. 942. For the double ἄν see l. 72 n.

1. 944. ἔξελα, the Attic contracted future (ἔλασω, -ᾶω, -ῶ). Cp. ἔλωσι

1. 951. Only a few verbs in -ῶ, -ῶ have this future; mostly those in

-άνυμι, and several in -άσω, as βιβάζω, &c.

1. 948. ὅ, i.e. the servants, as shown by δεσποτιν following.

1. 951. γάμοι, 'nuptials' or 'nuptial-feasts,' a common meaning of

γάμος in the plural.

1. ἔλωσι (see l. 944 n.), 'will drive me away,' or perhaps 'drive me
distracted,' Lat. agitare.


1. 955. τῶν ἀσχρῶν ζώντα, 'who to his shame yet lives,' = ὄν οὐ χρήν ζῆν l. 939. ζῆν is simply 'to be alive,' the manner or course of life is expressed by βιοτεύειν.

1. 957. δοκεῖ, 'wishes to be thought' or 'pretends to be.' Cp. Aristoph. Equit. 392 κατ' ἀνὴρ ἐδοξέεν ἔιναι. For ἔιναι see ll. 822, 831 n.


1. 960. κύδιον, often = κρείσσον simply, but is here 'more glorious,' by contrast with ἀσχρῶν, κακῶς, &c.

11. 962-1005. Chorus. 'Nothing is stronger than Necessity; neither
drug nor magic spell. She heeds not prayer or sacrifice, and nought may
soften her relentless breast. Even Zeus worketh his will by her aid. Thou,
Admetus, art in her grasp; for thou canst not restore thy lost one—dear in
death as in life. Yet mourn her not as dead, but worship her, for she is
a spirit blest.'

1. 962. A Chorus in the Medea, l. 1081, opens in a similar way—
πολλάκις ἦδε διὰ λεπτοτέρων μῦθων ἐμολον, &c. Here the poet is
doubtless alluding to his own knowledge of natural science, acquired
chiefly from Anaxagoras. The mention however of Orphic doctrines
derived from the neighbouring Thrace (l. 967) is suited to the character
of his Pheraean chorus.

μούσας = literature generally, but especially verse, as distinguished
from λόγων, the maxims of philosophers and the arguments of sophists.

1. 963. μετάρροσος, 'soaring aloft' in the highest regions of philosophy
and literature; but there is a special reference to Euripides' favourite
study of astronomy. Devotion to the study of μετέωρα was a special
(though utterly unfounded) charge against Socrates, and is made much
of by Aristophanes in the Clouds.

1. 965. τ' Ἄναγκας, &c. Cp. Hel. 514 δεῖνς Ἰάναγκης ὀοῖεν ἰσχύειν πλέον, and the passage in Horace, Od. i. 35, 17 beginning 'Τε sem-
per antei saeva Necessitas.' In reply to the question 'What is
strongest?' Thales is said to have answered ἰσχυρότατων 'Ἀνάγκης,
κρατεῖ γὰρ πάντων.

1. 967. The so-called 'Orphic' mysteries were rites (τελεται) of
purification, but Orpheus was also credited with medical lore, possibly from being confounded with Musaeus his alleged disciple. Aristophanes distinguishes between them, _Ranae_ 1032. The ἑανίδες are tablets containing prescriptions; these were kept in a temple of Dionysus on Mount Haemus in Thrace.

1. 967. τὰς = ἀς. This ancient use of ὅ, ἡ, τὸ occurs even in an iambic line, Aesch. _Agam._ 507 Δῶς μακέλλη, τῇ κατειργασταί πέδον. Only once do we find it in the nominative, ἔρως ὀ κατ’ ὄμματον στάσεις πέδον, _Hippol._ 52; and there the reading is doubtful.


1. 970. For Aesculapius, the son of Phoebus, see 1. 4 n. Here the Greek 'medical schools' are alluded to, whose members claimed descent from him. Of these Hippocrates of Cos was the most famous.


1. 973. μόνας, i.e. Hades (or Thanatos) excepted. Cp. l. 424 n.

1. 976. μεῖς, 'with greater force.' Cp. _Med._ 627 ἐρωτεῖ ἄγαν ἐλθόντες, the opposite of ἐν ὑλὲς ἐλθοί (quoted on l. 907).

1. 978. ὅ τι νεῦσῃ. For the omission of ὅν see note on ὅν τοῦ ἀνυφαγά, l. 76. The will of Zeus was represented by his 'nod' (hence the word _numen_). Cp. Hom. _Il._ i. 526 οὐδ' ἀτελεύτητον, ὅ τι κεν κεφαλὴ κατανεύσω.

1. 979. σὺν σοί, because even Zeus 'cannot evade his destiny' (Aesch. _Prom._ 526), and is therefore powerless without the aid of Necessity.

1. 980. δαμάξεις, 'you subdue,' i.e. 'soften' or 'melt,' or perhaps 'reduce' the iron from the ore (as Paley explains it). The Chalybes were iron-workers of Pontus in Asia Minor, mentioned by Herodotus i. 28, and by Xenophon, _Anab._ v. 5. The usual form of the name is Χαλύβες, from Χαλυψ, but the nom. sing. Χαλυβὸς occurs in Aesch. _Sept._ c. _Thebas_ 725.

1. 981. ἀποτόμον, 'harsh,' 'relentless.' Cp. l. 118 n. So 'animo praeruptus' Tac. _Ann._ xvi. 17.

αιδός, 'compunction,' from the idea of 'respect,' as explained on l. 601.

1. 982. καλ σέ, 'thee too,' addressing Admetus.

1. 989. σκότιοι φιλίνουσι, 'perish darkling,' i.e. in the darkness of death. [Others make σκότιον = νόθοι, as in Hom. _Il._ vi. 24 σκότιον δὲ ἐ γείνατο μῆτηρ, in allusion to the secret amours of the gods with mortal women, whence _heroes_ sprung.]
1. 995. Φθιμένων νεκυών, a common pleonasm, from Homer's νεκυών καταθημώταν, νεκυέσσι καταφθιμένωι, &c.

2. 996, &c. I. e. 'let not her tomb be a mere mound of earth, but a shrine to worship at.'

3. δειμων, a shortened form of comparison for θεών ναοῖς ὀμοῖως. Cp. Hom. II. xvii. 51 κοινὰ Χαρίεσσιν ὀμοία, 'hair like (that of) the Graces.'

4. 1000. δοξμιαν, 'winding,' to get up the hill (ὑρθὺν διμον l. 885).

5. 1004. εὖ δὲ δολῆς. The δαίμονες, or spirits of the dead, were believed to have the power of conferring blessings on men. Hence in Aesch. Persae 224 the spirit of Darius is invoked ἔσθλὰ πέμπειν γῆς ἐνερθέν εἰς φῶς.


Enter Heracles, supporting a woman with her face veiled.

7. ll. 1008-1158. Heracles. 'I would speak, Admetus, as a friend to a friend, Why didst thou conceal thy loss, and feast me in thy house of mourning? For this I cannot but blame thee. But to my errand. Take this woman, whom I have just won as a prize in a great contest, and keep her for me against my return.' Admetus. 'It cannot be; this would add sorrow to sorrow. How can I keep her here free from harm? I fear the report of men. Surely she is like Alcestis! Take her away; the sight troubles my soul.' Her. 'Would that I could restore thy wife! Cease thy vain grieving; time will do much.' Adm. 'Ay, if time and death be one; but now—' Her. 'Wilt thou not wed again? A new spouse might cheer thee.' Adm. 'Perish the thought! 'twere an insult to the dead.' Her. 'Receive now this woman.' Adm. 'Urge me not, I pray.' Her. 'I have good reasons; trust me. (Admetus consents.) Nay, to thy hands alone I commit her. Hold her fast; look now upon her!' Adm. 'Alcestis?' Her. 'Tis even she; thou hast thy wife again.' Adm. 'The blessing of Zeus be upon thee! But why stands she mute?' Her. 'The spell of death is on her, and three days must pass. But I go to my task.' Adm. 'Stay here on thy return, and fare thee well. Keep we now high festival, since blest is my lot indeed!'

8. 1009. μομφάς, 'ground of complaint.' Cp. l. 1017.

упό σπλάγχνοις ἐχειν, 'to hide within one's breast,' i.e. say nothing about them.

9. l. 1010. ἡεῖον, 'claimed the right,' 'expected.'

10. l. 1011. ἐκειάξεοθα, 'to be treated;' lit. 'to be proved after examination (ἐκειασίς). So Demosthenes, de Corona, speaks of himself as ἐκειαξόμενος, 'tried and proved' in his policy. Cp. the Latin spectatus amicus.'

11. l. 1014. ὡς δὴ, 'as if sooth.' The δὴ, emphasising ὡς, gives the notion of pretence.
1. 1015. ἐλευψάμην, usually active; but cp. χοῦς χέασθαι Aesch. Persae 221.

1. 1021. ἵππους Ὀρκίας. See II. 68, 483.

1. 1023. τύχομι, νοστήσαμι, both real optatives, 'what I trust I may not meet with, for I hope I may return.' Tuχείν takes the accus. as well as the gen.; cp. Aesch. Choeph. 698 τυχείν τὰ πρόσφορα, Soph. Aniig. 1168 τοῦτο τυχείν.

1. 1024. προσπολεῖν δόμου, 'to serve your house' as a handmaiden (πρόσπολος), not 'in your house.' Cp. Troad. 264 τύμβω τροπελεῖν Ἀχιλλέως.

[l. 1027. Another reading of good authority is ἄξιον πόνου.]


1. 1029. τὰ κούφα, after νικῶσι, combines the ideas of 'smaller contests' (opp. τὰ μείζονα) and of 'feats of agility,' such as foot-racing. The woman was part of the larger prize for boxing and wrestling. [In Homer, II. xxiii. 262, &c. the first prize is a woman and a tripod, the second a mare in foal, and the third a caldron.]

1. 1033. παρείναι (παρῆμι), 'to let slip,' praetemittere.

1. 1039. καί, after νικῶσι, combines the ideas of 'smaller contests' (opp. τὰ μείζονα) and of 'feats of agility,' such as foot-racing. The woman was part of the larger prize for boxing and wrestling. [In Homer, II. xxiii. 262, &c. the first prize is a woman and a tripod, the second a mare in foal, and the third a caldron.]

1. 1037. ἐν ἐχθροίσιν τιθεῖσ, 'counting you as an enemy;' lit. 'placing you among' or 'in the class of enemies.' Cp. Plato, Rep. v. ch. 19 ὡς γ' ἐν φιλοσόφοις τιθεναι. This is in answer to Heracles' remonstrance, l. 1011.


1. 1042. ἔστιν, emphatic (as the accent shows), 'it is possible.'

1. 1045. ἅμα ἀναμνήσισι. This is the reading of some MSS. of fair repute, but some editions have μμάμῃσι (corrected from μμάμησις) with a comma after Φεραίων. The latter would mean '(I fear) lest you should remind me of my misfortunes,' not 'do not remind me,' which would require the aorist subj., as in the text.

1. 1049. ποῦ καλ., 'where too' or 'besides, where.' Cp. II. 482, 834 n, also l. 1056.

1. 1050. πρέπει, 'she clearly shows,' not impersonal. Cp. I. 512 n.

1. 1051. ἀνδρῶν after στέγην which is governed by κατά. [Some take κατ' ἀνδρῶν = 'among the men,' and make στέγην the acc. after ἐνοικῆσει, but this would seem to require μετά.] For the 'men's apartments' (ἀνδρῶν) see I. 546 n.
NOTES. LINES 1015–1077.

1. 1052. στρωφομένη, ‘moving freely,’ Lat. versari.
1. 1054. σού, emphatic, ‘for your credit’ as well as my own; because Heracles had brought her there.
1. 1055. εἰσβήσας. Cp. Bacchae 466 Δίωνυσος ἡμᾶς εἰσέβησε. This transitive aor. is not common in Attic Greek, but βήσε is frequent in Homer.
1. 1056. καὶ πῶς=‘pray, how.’ See references given on l. 1049 n. επεισφρό, subj. ‘am I to introduce her?’ Cp. Elect. 1032 λέκτρος επείσφρος. Εἰσφρεῖν is a distinctive Attic word = εἰσάγειν. So διαφρεῖν Thuc. vii. 32. The simple verb is not used.
1. 1058. ἐλέγξη, ‘should reproach me,’ followed by πίνειν. The sense of ‘accusation’ comes from that of ‘questioning’ suspected criminals. Cp. l. 15 n.
1. 1059. ἀλλος = ἀλλῆς (with νέας), which some read. The adj. is often thus transposed; cp. Orest. 988 ποτανὸν διώγμα πῶλον = ‘pursuit of winged steeds,’ lit. ‘winged steed-pursuit.’ See l. 103 n.
1. 1060. τῆς θανούσης. This should strictly be καὶ ἐκ τῆς θανούσης to correspond with ἐκ τε δημόταν l. 1057. But the word μέμψιν would not properly apply to Alcestis, who was dead.
1. 1062. ἔχουσα. For the participle with ἵσθι see ll. 150, 438 n.; and for ταύτα with dative, ‘the same as,’ l. 736 n.
1. 1063. προσήξασαι, a perf. mid. form from the stem of ἐκνυ, found also in the Homeric pluperf. ἐκνυστο or ἐκνυτο, and in the active ἐκνυτον for ἐκνατον. Cp. Hom. Od. iv. 796 δέμασ δ’ ἐκνυτο γυναικί.
1. 1065. μὴ μ’ ἔλημηρμένον, a sort of proverb, ‘do not slay the slain,’ meaning much the same as τὸν θανόντ’ ἐπικτανεῖν Soph. Antig. 1030.
1. 1067. θολοί, ‘troubles,’ turbat. So θολερός, turbidus, is often used of grief and misfortune. Θόλος is the black fluid emitted by the cuttle-fish, which discolours the water.
1. 1069. ἄρτι γεύσαι. Cp. l. 940 n.
1. 1071. δόστις εἰσι, quisquis veniet, ‘whatever god shall visit us.’ [Εἰσι is Hermann’s correction for ἐi σύ, which some editors retain, i.e. ‘in whatever state thou art,’ qualiscunque es, in reference to τύχην.]
1. 1072. ei yap = ‘would that I, &c. Cp. l. 91 n. Ei or elde with imperf. = ‘I wish it were so now;’ with aor. ‘I wish it had been’ (l. 1102); with opt. ‘I wish it might be hereafter,’ as ei φανεῖν l 91.
1. 1075. ποῦ τόδε; ‘to what purpose is this?’ i.e. what is the good of saying this? Lat. quorsum haec?
1. 1076. οὐκ ἐστι. Cp. l. 1042 n.
1. 1077. μὴ νυν ὑπέρβαινε, ‘do not then (igitur) give way to excess
(of grief"). [Some read ἐπέρβαλλε, which means much the same, but the other word (besides having better authority) suits ἐναυίσμως best, since ἐπέρβαίνειν is especially used of transgressing laws. See next note.]

ἐναυισίμως, 'moderately,' lit. 'with due regard to the decrees of fate (αἰσόα). Cp. the Homeric κατ' αἰσαν = 'duly,' 'rightly.'

1. 1078. A sentiment as common as it is true. Cp. Aesch. Prom. 27: ἐλαφρῶν ὅστις πημάτων ἔξω πόδα ἔχει παραίνειν, &c., and Ter. Andria ii. 1 'facile omnes, quum valemus, recta consilia aegerotis damus.'


eἰ θέλεις (indic.), 'if (as a fact) you wish,' i.e. 'since you wish,' or 'it being your pleasure.' Cp. ll. 200, 327 n.

1. 1080. ἐρως probably means 'desire of grief,' in reference to the natural relief one finds in giving vent to sorrow. Cp. Suppl. 79 ἀπλησίατο ἀδε μ' ἐξαγεί χάρις γάρων. So in Hom. Od. iv. 102 Menelaus says γώς φρένα τέρποικαι, and Lucan, Pharsalia ix. 111, says of Cornelia mourning for her husband 'perfruitur lacrimis, et amat pro conjuge luctum.' Cp. also Constance's reply to Philip, in Shakspere King John iii. 4 'Then have I reason to be fond of grief.' Heracles (l. 1081) understands Admetus to mean his love for Alcestis.

ἐξάγει, 'carries me away,' said of strong excitement.

1. 1082. ἀπώλεσεν, sc. Ἀλκεστίς, or perhaps τὸ φιλῆσαι, which comes to the same thing. See on ἀπώλεσας, l. 179.

1. 1084. ὡςτε, &c. refers to preceding line, = 'my loss is such that,' &c. Ὄνδρα τόνδε = ἐμέ, as in ll. 331, 690.

1. 1085. χρόνος μαλάζει. The very words of Alcestis when dying, l. 381.

ἡβάσκει, 'is in its prime,' lit. 'is reaching maturity,' properly said of youths coming to manhood (ἡβη).

1. 1086. εἰ χρόνος, &c. 'if time means my death-time,' i.e. 'death alone can end my grief.'


1. 1092. διωπτέρ ἐστι refers not so much to her place (i.e. whether here or in Hades) as to her state in the other world, and especially to the question whether she could know what was passing on earth. So Alcmena in Heracl. 946 speaks of her dead son as τὸν ὄνομα καλοὺ 'στί. 

1. 1093. See ὄδησάυω in Lexicon, and cp. γέλωτα ὄφλειν Med. 403, ἀμαθίαν ὄφλησομεν Hec. 327. The full phrase 'to owe the penalty (δίκην) for a crime' was shortened into 'owe the crime' itself.

1. 1094. ὡς, &c. sc. αἴνει με from previous line; ' (praise me, but) on
NOTES. LINES 1077-1125. 103

condition that,' &c. Or perhaps supply ἵσθι, 'be sure that,' &c. Καλῶν is the Attic future from καλέ(σ)ῶν. See on ἔξελα l. 944.

l. 1095. ἐπινέσα = 'you have my promise.' The aorist marks the simple action of the verb, without reference to time past or present. In English this idea is expressed by the present tense. So in Med. 708 οὔτι ἐπινέσα = 'I do not approve,' ib. 791 ὄμωξα, 'I mourn for;' in Aristoph. Equit. 695 ἡροθν ἡπείλασ, ἐγέλασα = 'I like your threats, I laugh at them.'

l. 1098. μὴ, i.e. 'don't force me.' For πρὸς σε, &c. cp. l. 275 n. σπείραντος. Cp. the Latin 'satus Anchisa,' &c.

l. 1099. καί μὴν, 'and yet;' see on l. 653.

l. 1101. ἐς δέον; 'opportune.' Cp. ἐν δέοντι l. 817.

l. 1102. ἐθέ εἰλασε. See l. 1072 n.

l. 1103. He means that his host will also gain a prize in getting back his wife; but Admetus understands it of sharing the joy of victory with his friend.

l. 1104. καλῶς εἶλασ = 'thank you;' a polite form of assent. Lat. benigne (dicis).

l. 1106. χρῆ. &c. = 'she really must go, at least if you will not be angry' at my insisting upon it. Here Admetus first shows signs of yielding; this prepares us for his next words νίκα νῦν, &c.

l. 1109. ἐσθ' ὅτε, 'some day,' aliquando. So ἐσθ' ὦπου, ἐσθ' ὅπως, &c.

l. 1110. καμίζετε, said to the attendants.

l. 1111. For μεθείην τὴν some read μεθείμην σοῖς. But the construction of μεθέσθαι with an accus. is at least doubtful, and Heracles means 'to mere attendants,' not 'your attendants' in particular.

l. 1118. καὶ δὴ, &c. 'well, I do stretch it forth, as to the severed Gorgon's head;' i.e. with averted eyes, because the Gorgon's head turned the beholder to stone. For the story of Medusa see Hesiod, Theog. 280. The elision of the i in the dative Πόργει τόου is rare, but there is an instance of it in Soph. Oed. Col. 1436 θανόντ', ἐπεὶ οὗ μοι ζωντι γ' αὐθίς ἔετον.

l. 1121. βλέψον, &c. Here he removes the veil from the face of Alcestis.

πρέπειν, 'to resemble,' as in Bacch. 915 πρέπει δέ Κάδμου θυγατέρων μορφῆ μιᾷ. Lit. 'to strike' one as being like; see on l. 512. With what follows compare the last scene of the Winter's Tale.

[l. 1123. For λέξω some good MSS. have λεύσω. This may be an error caused by λεύσω in the next line, or it may be the right word altered to λέξω to avoid repetition.]

l. 1125. κέρτομος, 'delusive;' perhaps = 'heart-cutting,' i.e. 'taunting.' Cp. Soph. Philoct. 1235 πότερα κέρτομών λέγεις τάδε, i.e. 'in mockery.' [Though κέρτομος is said to be from κέραπ and τέμνειν, it is probably a deri-
vative from the root κερ in κελπ-ειν, 'to shear' with added τ (t) as in cur-t-us, &c., and in Sanscrit karı = 'cut.' Cp. l. 886 n., Hel. 619.]

θεός, 'from heaven,' = θεός τυνων χάρα. θεός is a monosyllable.

1. ΙΙ.27. ὅρα μη ἐστιν, 'beware lest it be;' ὅρα μη ἐστιν would mean 'see whether it be not,—an enquiry.

1. ΙΙ.28. οὐ ψυχαγωγόν, &c. 'he whom you made your guest is to necromancer, or 'raiser of spirits.' Cp. l. 489 n. In Thessaly there were professed 'spiritualists,' and Euripides may have had in his mind similar impostors at Athens. The Chorus in the Persae invokes the infernal powers to send up the ghost of Darius; and in Herodotus v. 92 Periander sends to a νεκυομαντείον in Epirus to raise the spirit of his wife Melissa.

1. ΙΙ.30. ἄπιστείν τύχη, 'mistrust fortune.' [The MSS. reading τύχην would mean 'disbelieve (the fact of) thy good fortune.]

1. ΙΙ.31. θίγω, &c. 'may I touch?' liceitene tangere?

1. ΙΙ.35. φθόνος, &c., in allusion to the wide-spread belief, that any great prosperity excited the jealousy of the gods and caused a man's downfall. Thus in Orestes 964 Electra says of the once glorious house of Pelops, φθόνος νυν εἶλε θεόθεν. The story of Polycrates (Hdt. iii. 40) is well known, to whom his friend Amasis wrote, saying—'Thy great successes please me not, knowing how jealous the gods are.' So in Livy v. 21 Camillus prays that some light mishap may befall him in the hour of victory, to avert the invidia of the gods.

1. ΙΙ.38. σώζω, 'keep you safe,' the pres. denoting continuance.

1. ΙΙ.40. δαιμόνων = 'the dead,' who were worshipped as δαιμονες. Cp. ll. 25, 1004 n. Death is styled 'king of the dead,' l. 843, as well as their 'priest,' l. 25. Usually an attributive gen. has the article when the other noun has it (τῶν δαιμόνων κοιράνω), but there are exceptions, though these are rare in prose authors. Cp. however Xen. Cyrop. vi. 3, 8 ἵππεων τοὺς ἥγεσιν. [Another, but an inferior reading is κυρις.]

1. 1142. τύμβος παρ' αὐτόν, 'close by the tomb.' Παρά with accus. marks extension in space as well as motion, as παρ' ἀλληλα, 'side by side,' παρὰ προμηθία νῆς Hom. Od. xii. 32.

1. ΙΙ.43. ἀναύδως, for two reasons; 1st because Alcestis was represented by a mute, there being no third actor in this play; 2ndly because of the belief that one under pollution could not speak till after purification. In Aesch. Eum. 426 this superstition is quoted in the case of a murderer, ἄφθογγον εἶναι τὸν παλαμναίον λόγος.

1. ΙΙ.46. ἄφαντητα, lit. 'unconsecrate herself,' i.e. release herself from her bond of consecration to the infernal powers (l. 76). The dat. θεότα implies that the necessary rites of 'deconsecration' must be offered to those gods; else we should expect the gen. θεῶν after the ἄντο in the compound verb.
NOTES. LINES 1125–1159.

τρίτον, possibly an allusion to the τρίτα, or offerings made to the δαιμον on the third day after death; but more likely in reference to the well-known mystic character of the number three. Reputed instances of a return from death to life are so rare, that we can hardly expect to find illustrations elsewhere.

1. Ι.1147. δίκαιος ὄν, not 'as you ought' (though it could mean this), but 'because you are a righteous man, continue to act piously,' &c. (pres. imp.). Heracles here defends Admetus for his hospitality, which he had thought excessive (l. 1017).

1. Ι.1150. Eurystheus was the son of Sthenelus, who was the son of Perseus and Andromeda. Perseus claimed descent from Zeus by Danae.

1. Ι.1152. αὐθις, 'some other day.' Cp. Hel. 713 ὅ δ' οὖ πονήσας αὐθις ἀλυται κακῶς.

1. Ι.1153. πόδα, cognate accus. Cp. l. 869, also νόστιμον πόδα, Hec. 939. [Other readings are ὄδων and ὄμιον.]

1. Ι.1154. τετραρχία. Thessaly was anciently divided into four districts,—Pthiotis, Thessaliotis, Hestiaeotis, and Pelasgiotis. If Admetus' dominions were as extensive as described in ll. 592 &c., they would include at least two of these. But Euripides may mean the four townships of Pherae, Iolcos, Boebe, and Glaphyra, mentioned by Homer, II. ii. 711, as forming the dominions of Admetus.

1. Ι.1155. ἐν' ἐσθλαῖς συμφοραίοιν, 'on this auspicious event.' Cp. Aristoph. Euph. 655 ἐπὶ συμφοράς ἀγαθαίσι θυεῖν.

ιστάναι, 'to institute,' the official term. The poet transfers to Thessaly what was done at Athens by command of the oracles of Delphi and Dodona, referred to by Demosthenes in Midiam, i.e. χειροῦς ἱστάναι καὶ κινισάν ἀγνίας καὶ στεφανοφορεῖν.

1. Ι.1156. βουθύτως προστροπαίς, 'prayers accompanied by the sacrifice of oxen;' Lat. supplicatio. Προστροπή is any prayer, but especially one offered with the view of averting pollution.

1. Ι.1157. μεθημύσεσθα, &c., 'we have changed' (lit. 'disposed ourselves') 'to a better life.' For μετά denoting change cp. μεταλάσσειν, μεταβάλλειν, μετανοεῖν, &c. Βίον is the accus. of the state into which the change is made. Cp. Aesch. Prom. 316 μεθάρμοσαι τρόπους νέους.

1. Ι.1158. εὕτυχῶν ἀρνήσομαι, 'deny that I am prosperous.' Cp. ἀρνεῖ κατακτάς Orest. 1581. So φαίνομαι, οἴδα, &c., with participle implying the reality of the fact. See on ἵστω πορεύσας l. 444.

1. Ι.1159. δαιμονίων = 'divine dispensations.' These lines also conclude the Helena, Bacchae, Andromache, and Medea; only in the last play the first line runs πολλῶν ταμίᾳς Ζεῶς ἐν 'Ολύμπῳ. They are purely conventional, and would suit any play having an unexpected catastrophe.
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