

IPHIGENIA
AT AULIS



ΙΦΙΓΕΝΙΑ Η
ΕΝ ΑΥΛΙΔΙ

For Vanessa and Carl Lindgren

Iph = X

Helen = Saturn / Sit

Agam = God

Iph is traded for Helen
& Achilles

The Line - P. 260

Compressed video

1 hour 15 minutes

(train to 10?)

Q: what is the root problem?

Issue addressed in this play?

How is it addressed / solved?
Iphigenia at Aulis, together with, possibly, the *Orestes* and *Cyclops* and certainly *The Bacchae*, is among the last plays that Euripides wrote towards the end of his life when he was the guest of King Archelaus of Macedon. The *Iphigenia* proved to be his very last and was left unfinished when he died in 406 B.C. It is thought to have been completed by his son, who produced it shortly afterwards at the City Dionysia in Athens together with *The Bacchae* and a lost play, the *Alcmaeon*. It appears to be this trio for which Euripides was posthumously awarded first prize: for the fifth time only, compared to thirteen times for Aeschylus and eighteen for Sophocles.

Iphigenia at Aulis marks the culmination of Euripides' career as playwright and poet—not because this is his greatest play but because it is in many ways his most interesting, for in it he pushes to an extreme his disdain for the heroics of Greek tragedy and shows his characters to be pathetically, and almost endearingly, human.

The mighty Agamemnon, stripped down to his naked pomposity, is no more than another well-meaning but fumbling politician. His sidekick and brother, Menelaus, fares no better. The swashbuckling Achilles—answer to a maiden's prayer—is a flashy commonplace juvenile who could be waiting in his Porsche for his date at the high school gates. Even Clytemnestra, though a queen, is the kind of queen who rides a bicycle to the supermarket and trundles her trolley like any suburban housewife. Only Iphigenia, in her courage and simplicity, rises above the mediocrity and vulgarity of the rest of them.

In this reduction of the heroic to the ordinary, Euripides focuses on the psychology and probabilities of human beings as they are, and so opens the door to all we know about modern drama.

The text of this play is in many places uncertain, and the conclusion obviously spurious. In the mss. the Prologue is mysteriously sandwiched between the lyric dialogue of Agamemnon and the retainer that runs between lines 1–48. What is also odd is that this whole passage is cast in the verse form of lyric dialogue.

EURIPIDES

CHARACTERS

AGAMEMNON, commander in chief of the Argive forces
 OLD RETAINER of Agamemnon
 MENELAUS, brother of Agamemnon and husband of Helen
 CLYTEMNESTRA, wife of Agamemnon
 IPHIGENIA, daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra
 ACHILLES, Greek prince and soldier
 MESSENGER, officer of the Greek army
 CHORUS, women of Chalcis who have come to Aulis to see the fleet
 SECOND MESSENGER, a Greek soldier

Attendants and guards and the infant Orestes (son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra with his nurse)

TIME AND SETTING

Helen, wife of Menelaus, has been abducted—all too willingly—by the good-looking Trojan prince Paris. The outraged Menelaus, assisted by his brother, determines to bring her back by force of arms. The Greeks muster a formidable armada at the naval port of Aulis on the east coast of Boeotia. The fleet, however, is unable to sail for lack of breeze. Day after sultry day passes, and the idling army grows dangerously restless.

The scene is the Greek camp just before dawn. A light burns in Agamemnon's tent, and he steps outside with a letter in his hands.

FIRST EPISODE AND LYRIC DIALOGUE

AGAMEMNON: Come on out, old man, here by my tent.

RETAINER: [*emerging from a hut*] I'm coming, Agamemnon. What's up, my king?

AGAMEMNON: But hurry. I'm wide awake.

RETAINER: I'm hurrying. On the watch! Too old to sleep much. On the watch!

AGAMEMNON: What is that star in the night sky?

RETAINER: Sirius, rising high in the heavens,

Next to the seven Pleiades.

AGAMEMNON: [*gazing around the sleeping camp*]

Not a sound anywhere. No, not a bird.

Not even a whisper from the sea,

And along the Eripos the breeze is still.

RETAINER: And you fretting outside your tent!

Why, Agamemnon king, when all

Aulis is quiet. The watch on the walls

Hasn't yet stirred . . . Let's go in.

AGAMEMNON: I envy you, old man, as Lenvy

Anyone who's lived a quiet life,

Unrenowned. How little Lenvy *

Positions of power!

RETAINER: But that's where all the glory is.

AGAMEMNON: A dangerous glory, and ambition

However sweet lies close to grief.

A little irreverence and the gods

Swoop, and sometimes human beings

Through prejudice and misconception

Tear one apart.

RETAINER: This sort of pessimism, sire, won't do—

Not in a leader. No, Agamemnon,

You're not Atreus' son for nothing.

You'll have joy and you'll have sorrow

Just like an ordinary mortal man . . .

By divine arrangement, like it or not.

You've written a letter by the light of your lamp.

You're carrying the tablet* in your hands.

You've been wiping it clean again and again, †

Sealing it, unsealing it,

Throwing it on the ground and crying.

* * *

power as problem
 glory/fame is
 power
 P. V. D. S. X

*Letters were often incised in a waxed tablet with a stylus.

†One must presume that Old Retainer had been watching Agamemnon before retiring to his hut.

wind represent

There isn't a symptom I can think of that doesn't declare you raving mad. What's the trouble? What has happened? Come, Agamemnon, confess to me: Confess to a good and loyal man. Ages ago Tyndareus sent me As a bridal present for your wife— Part of her dowry.

[AGAMEMNON walks to a rock and beckons the OLD RETAINER to sit beside him. Looking into the distance and speaking almost to himself as if to clarify his mind, AGAMEMNON explains]

PROLOGUE

AGAMEMNON: Leda daughter of Thestius had three girls:

Phoebe, my wife Clytemnestra, and Helen. For Helen's hand the richest and noblest young men of Hellas came abiding. However, there was such rivalry among them that they hurled threats of murder at each other and Tyndareus her father was in despair. Then he hit on a plan:

let all the suitors come together, grasp their right hands in pledge, seal it with burnt offerings, then drink to the following treaty.

Whoever became the husband of Tyndareus' daughter, him they were to protect; and if any man wrested her from home and husband's bed, they would march against him and raze his city to the ground no matter who he was—Greek or alien. (Trojan war)

After old Tyndareus had cleverly tricked them to this pledge, he allowed his daughter to be guided in her choice by the sweet winds of love. She chose—and what a fatal choice!— she chose Menelaus.

Then who should come prancing into Sparta but the one legend says judged the beauty contest of three goddesses, Paris, dressed up like a flower, glittering in gold, stumming in un-Greek finery. He fell in love. She fell in love, and he carried her off to his ranch in the Idan hills.

All this while Menelaus was away; who came storming back, scorching his way through Greece and clamoring for action: fulfillment of the Tyndarian treaty against aggression. * The whole of Hellas flared up in arms.

They came with their ships and their shields, their cavalry and chariots, and— as a gesture to Menelaus my brother— chose me as their general:

* (an honor I heartily wish someone else had won.) Un desired honor/wife

So here we are, the whole army mustered at Aulis with not a thing to do. There isn't a breath of breeze for the fleet. We are at a loss.

And now the seer Calchas has declared: my own daughter, Iphigenia, must be sacrificed to Artemis, the goddess of this place. In no other way shall we set sail to sack Troy.

Hearing this, I've told Talthybius the herald to broadcast my decision to disband the army; for it is out of the question for me to kill my daughter. But now my brother, Menelaus, with the most pathetic pleas, has constrained me to a horrible dilemma.

So I've written a letter to my wife telling her to send our daughter here for a wedding to Achilles. I've extolled his manliness whose fault what price

and told her that he's refused to sail unless he has as bride a daughter from our family for his home in Phthia.

This fictitious prospect of a wedding was a trick I knew my wife would fall for.

~~There're only four of us Aethaens that know the truth: Calchas, Odysseus, Menelaus, and I.~~

But now I am trying to repair my mistake.

I've written another letter—the one you saw me opening—yes, old man, opening and sealing up again in the gloom of night.

Here, take it,

and off with you double-quick to Argos.

Wait.

You're such a loyal servant of my wife and me,

I'll tell you word for word the secret of the message.

LYRIC DIALOGUE

RETAINER: Yes, better speak it just in case it differs from the written word.

[AGAMEMNON unwraps the letter and reads]

AGAMEMNON: Daughter of Leda, I write again

Canceling what I wrote before:

Do *not* send your child here

To this lazy enclave of Euboea,

This placid port of Aulis.

We must postpone our daughter's wedding Till another time.

RETAINER: Yes, but how do you propose

To deal with the fury of Achilles?

If you deprive him of his bride

His rage against you and your wife

Will be uncontrollable—

Awesome—please tell me that.

AGAMEMNON: Achilles only lends his name.

He knows nothing about a wedding.

Nothing about what we've plotted.

He has no inkling yet of a proposal

To surrender our girl to his embrace in wedlock.

RETAINER: You've been playing with fire, my lord Agamemnon,

Even to think of bringing your daughter here

For the Greeks to slaughter

On the pretext of a marriage with Achilles,

Son of an immortal.

AGAMEMNON: I know, I know. I'm out of my mind.

I'm on the verge of collapse.

So go, go as fast as you can.

Make your old feet run.

RETAINER: King, I'm off.

AGAMEMNON: No sitting down by a shady spring

And taking a nap.

RETAINER: Well, I never!

AGAMEMNON: When you come to that fork in the road

Scan every direction and make sure

No carriage comes rumbling by

And slips past you

With my daughter and her escort

On her way here

Where the Greek fleet waits.

She may have started out,

So if you meet her on the road

Seize the reins and turn her back.

RETAINER: It shall be done.

AGAMEMNON: Go now. Race for Mycenae's walls.

RETAINER: Yes, yes, but why should they believe me?

AGAMEMNON: My seal—see it?—stamped on the letter.

Guard it well . . . Off with you now.

Already the fiery chariot of the sun

Is lighting up the east.

I'm depending on you.

[The OLD RETAINER hurries away in the direction of Argos. AGAMEMNON, shaking his head, rises heavily from his seat]

* No mortal man comes through life unscathed *

Or knows real happiness.

An unbruised human being has never yet been raised.

[AGAMEMNON walks wearily into his tent as the young women of the CHORUS, girls and matrons, enter in a slow dance, chanting. They have come from the nearby town of Chalcis on the west coast of Euboea, separated from Aulis by the narrow strait of Eripos. They have come to gawp at the magnificent display of men and ships mustered at Aulis and are overwhelmed by actually setting eyes on the various famous and beautiful young warriors. They go on to describe the different warships with their captains and admirals]

FIRST CHORAL ODE *

STROPHE I

- 1: I have come to the sandy shores
Of Aulis across the race
Of Euripus' squeezing channel.
- 2: I have come by boat and left
My home, the city of Chalcis,
Whose river, Arethusa,
Pours headlong into the sea.
- 4: I came to see the Achaean
Army and their fleet
Of a thousand ships, the heroes
Manning them; Menelaus
With his mane of flaming hair,
- 5: And mighty Agamemnon—
- 6: Here to get back Helen,
- 7: So our husbands tell us,
- 8: Snatched by the shepherd Prince
Paris from the reedy
River of Eurotas:
- 9: Reward from Aphrodite.
Glistening with spray
When he chose her as the champion
In that rivalry for beauty

*I have divided up the lines of the ode to be chanted severally.

Next time my qb -
Iphig / Iliad / Trojan Women -

Plot / Aristotle / Rec

Of three goddesses:

10: Pallas, her, and Hera.

Athena

ANTISTROPHE I

1: Hurrying through the grove

Where many a sacrifice

To Artemis is offered,

I blushed at my schoolgirl rush

To gape at the shields and tents,

2: The chariots and horses

Of the warriors of Hellas.

3: I caught a sight of Ajax

4: Sitting with an Ajax

Chatting: one the son

Of Oeleus, and the other

Of Telamon's son, the pride

Of Salamis, oh, and I saw

Protesilaus together

With Palamedes, grandson

Of Poseidon, deep in

A game of checkers, and

6: Diomedes showing off

His muscles at the discus.

7: Near him was Meriones

Of Ares' kin—a marvel.

8: And from the hills of Ithaca,

9: Laertes' son, and Nereus—

10: What a Grecian beauty!

STROPHE II

1: Then I came to the swarm of ships:

2: A vision to thrill the female eye

With the sweetest spasm.

3: The right wing of the fleet was held

By Achilles' Myrmidons from Phthia:

A fast squadron of fifty frigates

4: In battle array;

5: And at their poops engraved in gold

The Nereid goddesses presided—

6: Achilles' coat-of-arms.

ANTISTROPHE II*

- 1: Next to them keel by keel,
- 2: Also bristling with oars, stood
Another fifty ships from Argos
- 3: Whose admiral was Mecisteus' son
- 4: (Talaus being his foster father);
- 5: With him was Sthenelus
Son of Capaneus.
- 6: The next post was held by Theseus' son
Who headed sixty ships from Attica.
- 7: Pallas riding flying chargers
Was their ensign.
- 8: Enough to put heart into any sailor!

STROPHE III

- 1: Next, the force of Boeotia's naval might
Riveted my eyes:
- 2: Fifty galleys flying ensigns
Depicting Cadmus flaring a golden dragon
From their hulking sterns.
- 3: Leitus born of Gaea
Was this squadron's captain.
- 4: There were ships too from Phocis
- 5: And also ships from Locris
Equal to them in number
Led by Ajax son of Oeleus,
- 6: Stemming from the famous town
Of Thronium.

ANTISTROPHE III

- 1: From Mycenae's mighty cyclopean walls
Agamemnon sent
- 2: A hundred galleys with their men.
- 3: His comrade, his own brother, stood with him
- 4: To make sure that Hellas
Would bring to brook Helen

*This is one of the rare occasions when the number of lines in the antistrophe does not match the strophe. I have followed Euripides in this. Of course, it could mean that the text is uncertain.

- 5: Who forsook her home
For an alien's bed.
- 6: Then my eyes beheld
Nestor's prows from Gerenon
- 7: Flying ensigns of Alpheus,
Neighbor and river god
- 8: With bulls' feet.

EPODE

- 1: Then there were twelve Aenian galleys
Commanded by Goumeus the king,
- 2: And alongside these
The lairds of the Elis clan
- 3: (Called Epeians by everyone)
With their flotilla:
Captained by Eurytus,
- 4: Who commanded too the Taphian battleships
With their banks of snow-white oars.
- 5: His master was King Meges son of Phyleus
From the Echinean Isles:
- 6: A sailor's nightmare.
1: Ajax of Salamis
Had his ships lined up from left to right,
2: Twelve of the trimmest galleys,
Facing the center of the fleet.
- 3: All this is what I saw and had explained.
- 4: Woe to any enemy ships
That have to grapple with these!
- 5: They'll not get off scot free—
Not against the armada that I saw there.
- 6: Everything I heard at home
Was awesomely confirmed.

[From the road leading to Argos MENELAUS strides into view with his retinue of soldiers. He is an impressive figure, with flaming red beard and hair, and clad in all the military insignia of a general. In his hands he holds AGAMEMNON'S letter to CLYTEMNESTRA in which he told her not to send IPHIGENIA to Aulis. On his heels is the OLD RETAINER desperately trying to snatch the letter from him]

Hygiene Read Ag/Men
" / cly

SECOND EPISODE

RETAINER: This is outrageous, Menelaus, not worthy of you.

MENELAUS: Get out of my way with your ridiculous loyalty.

RETAINER: I take that as a compliment, not an insult.

MENELAUS: Don't overdo it or you'll be sorry.

RETAINER: You are overdoing it opening the letter I carried.

MENELAUS: A letter that betrays the lot of us.

RETAINER: Convince the world of that, but give the letter back.

MENELAUS: Certainly not.

RETAINER: Then I'll not let go.

MENELAUS: See this stick? D'you want a bloody head?

RETAINER: Go on, kill me... make me a martyr to my loyalty.

MENELAUS: Let go. You've too many answers for a slave.

RETAINER: [as AGAMEMNON comes out of his tent]

Sir, this man has snatched your letter right out of my hands.

He's quite devoid of conscience, Agamemnon.

AGAMEMNON: What's all this rumpus and abuse outside my tent?

MENELAUS: Hear it from me, not from this creature here.

AGAMEMNON: Menelaus, why have you upset him so and used force?

[The OLD RETAINER steals away, leaving the two leaders to thrash it out]

MENELAUS: I'll tell you exactly why, right to your face.

AGAMEMNON: Right to my face? Do you think that scares me, a son of Atreus?

MENELAUS: See this letter? Everything in it is complete betrayal.

AGAMEMNON: I see the letter. First you hand it back.

MENELAUS: Oh no, not till every Greek in the army knows what's in it.

AGAMEMNON: Do you mean to say you've opened it and read it?

MENELAUS: Unhappily for you, I've opened it and know your sneaky plot.

AGAMEMNON: How did you get hold of it? . . . Ye gods, what impudence!

MENELAUS: Waiting for your daughter on her way to the camp from Argos.

* A & Power / King-ship
Power-struggle
IPHIGENIA AT AULIS

AGAMEMNON: Who gave you the right to meddle? It's unparadonable.

MENELAUS: A canny instinct . . . I am not your slave.

AGAMEMNON: What impudence! Am I not master in my own house?

MENELAUS: No, you are too unreliable here. There, and every-where.

AGAMEMNON: How clever you are! I hate a slippery tongue.

MENELAUS: A slippery heart is worse, and a traitorous one.

Without trying too hard I'll prove it to you, and don't go frothing at the mouth.

Do you recall how keen you were to win

supreme command of the Panhellenic force against Ilium?

You pretended otherwise, but, oh, how you wanted it!

How you crawled to everyone,

keeping open house to whoever wished to see you,

being hail-fellow-well-met to all and sundry,

trying to sell yourself whether anyone wanted it or not.

Then the moment you got command you did a somersault:

friends were no longer friends,

locked behind closed doors you were no longer available.

No decent human being when he gets to the top

ditches everyone he knows.

Once in a position to help

he is more than ever at the disposal of his friends.

That is the first thing I have against you,

my first complaint. . . (Next comes this.

When you and the entire Panhellenic army arrived in Aulis,

and the divine dispensation denied us a breeze,

and the Greeks clamored for the fleet to be disbanded

and the whole sorry waste of effort at Aulis to be stopped,

you simply hit rock bottom.

Your jaw dropped when you found you were not to be

an armada's admiral of a thousand ships

and would never land a battalion on Priam's plains.

Then you came whimpering to me:

"Oh, what shall I do? . . . Is there no solution?"

How can I hang on to my command and the glory that goes

with it?"

When Catias announced

you were to offer up your daughter ritually to Artemis,

then the Greeks would ~~said~~ say,
 how ~~relieved you were!~~ relieved you were!
 How promptly you agreed to kill your child.
 And without the slightest pressure from us,
 but of your own free will—you can't deny it—
 you wrote to your wife and told her
 to send her daughter here
 for a trumped-up wedding with Achilles.
 Now you've done your somersault
 are caught sending out a very different message:
 "No no, I can't think of murdering my daughter."
 But nothing's changed,
 the selfsame sky records you then and now.

Well, that's the way of it.
 Thousands have acted just like you.
 They scramble up the ladder to power,
 then come slithering down:
 some because the public is just too dim to understand them,
 but mostly because they themselves haven't a clue about politics.

What makes me sad
 is the way poor Greece—all primed for glory—
 is made a laughingstock throughout Barbaria.
 And all because of you and that girl of yours.
 I'd never choose a politician or a general for his courage.
 Any man who isn't a blockhead can govern a state.
 For a general it's brain that's wanted.

CHORUS LEADER: It's a dreadful thing when brothers lose their tempers and come near to blows.
 AGAMEMNON: Now let me tell you where you've gone wrong.
 I won't go on and on about it or be unkind,
 but speak like a brother:
 a good man is considerate.
 But tell me this:
 why the blustering gestures and the bloodshot face?
 Who has wronged you? What are you after?
 Is it pining for a virtuous wife?

Ag. My
 SSM
 SSM

Is
 Ag. My
 SSM

each man in his
 a kind of madness...

Such I cannot provide.
 The wife you had you stupidly mismanaged.
 I'm not to blame for that.
 Must I smart for your cuckoldry? *
 Or are you simply jealous of my rank?
 No, it's just that you lust for a lovely woman in your arms,
 scandal and decency be damned.
 Am I mad because I am trying to right an error?
 Not a bit of it! It's you that's mad:
 mad to want that trollop back
 when a kindly heaven rid you of her.
 Those suitors who swore the oath to Tyndareus,
 every one of them itched to have her,
 and you won—not because of your manly strength.
 It was wishful thinking, the goddess Hope, that led them on.
 Well, you are welcome to them.

Round them up, be their leader, they are stupid enough.
 The gods are not so simpleminded
 as to be taken in by an idiot treaty and forced promises)
 I will not go murdering my own children.
 Do you think it would be fair
 for you to succeed in hunting down a worthless wife
 while I poured out my tears night and day
 for a heinous murdering of my children?
 My answer is short, swift, and easy to understand.
 Be deranged, if that's your wish,
 but I intend to put my family first.

LEADER: That is not what you said before;
 however, the sparing of a child is welcome news.
 MENELAUS: But it puts me in a pitiable position—without support.

AGAMEMNON: You'll have support when you stop trying to destroy your friends.
 MENELAUS: And you, can't you show that you and I have the same father?
 AGAMEMNON: Common sense in common we can have, but not madness.

MENELAUS: Friendship means sharing the agony of friends.
 AGAMEMNON: Then don't add to mine. Show some kindness.

Aristotle

Ag. My
 SSM

meaning?

W. C. C. G. G.

*

MENELAUS: What about Hellas? Will you share her agony?

AGAMEMNON: Hellas, like you, is mad—has got possessed.

MENELAUS: [preparing to leave]

Go on, bandy your commander's baton and betray your brother!
I shall have recourse to other plans and other friends.

[A soldier MESSENGER hurries in and steps up to AGAMEMNON]

MESSENGER: King Agamemnon, commander in chief of all the Greeks,

I have come here with your daughter, Iphigenia—
the name you call her by at home.

Her mother is with her, your noble Clytemnestra,
and the baby Orestes, too.

She knows how happy that will make you
after being away from home so long.

They've had a tedious journey
and are now dangling their toes
in the cooling waters of a stream,
where the horses are as well.

We've turned the horses loose
to munch among the meadow grasses.

I've run on ahead to let you know.

The army has already heard
(the wildfire way rumor spreads)
that your daughter has arrived.

Crowds have come running to get a look and see your child.
Everyone wants to see the rich and famous—
the focus of all eyes.

"Is there going to be a wedding—or what?" people are asking,
"Or did Agamemnon have his daughter fetched
because he misses her so much?"

I also heard people saying:

"They are offering a bridal sacrifice to Artemis, *Queen of Aulis.

* Artemis was patroness of unmarried girls and of childbirth—the irony here is painful.

read directly bet. Act 1

now?

wise of : Fete Gods Duty

But who is to be the groom?"
Up then, get the sacrificial flower baskets ready,
and decorate your heads with garlands:

Today a young girl's happiest day has dawned.

AGAMEMNON: [to the MESSENGER, somberly]

Thank you for the news. Now step inside.

Fate must take its course . . . I daresay for the better. *

[The MESSENGER, deflated by the ominous lack of enthusiasm,
goes into one of the tents. AGAMEMNON continues his solilo-
quy outside]

God help me!

What can I say or do? Where even begin?

I am clamped to a doom I cannot shake off.

Fate has outwitted me at every turn.

I thought I was smart. She was smarter still.

There's something to be said for being of humble birth.

Such can cry away and pour out everything.

We of the ruling class

have to keep the stiff upper lip when things go wrong.

We are slaves to popular opinion.

I am not allowed to cry,

nor allowed not to cry.

What a dilemma, what a pit I've fallen into!

What can I say to my wife? How can I face her?

How can I look her in the eye?

Her bursting in on this crisis

has upset everything.

Yet I might have known she'd come

for her darling daughter's wedding, to give her away.

When will she find out the awful thing I've done?

And the unlucky unwed girl? . . . Unwed? Oh no!

She'll be wed all right, soon enough, to Hades down below.

My heart dissolves

when I think of how she will plead with me:

"Father, will you kill me?"

Then I hope there is a 'wedding' waiting for you just like

mine—

for you and anyone you love."

i.e. — gob hell!

problem for A.

Boethius Hector Fate

Ag's dilemma

what is what?

what's she

Focus on
Δ of heart
- M₂₃₄ A.F. who plans
to kill Helen - 2
M₂₃₅ A.F. who plans
to kill Helen - 2

EURIPIDES

Oréstes will be there bawling his head off:
a baby crying meaninglessly with cries so fraught with
meaning.
Damn, damn, Paris, Priam's son!
With his lust for Helen he has wrecked my life.) and the work
He is the cause of all that has been done. of this is
LEADER: I too feel for you,
if a woman and outsider may weep for the suffering of a king.

[MENE LAUS approaches with outstretched hand]

MENE LAUS: Brother, let me shake you by the hand.
AGAMEMNON: Here, shake it. You have won, and I am finished.
MENE LAUS: Listen, I swear to you by Pelops,
father of your father and of mine,
and by Atreus from whom both of us were born,
that I speak now from the heart,
simply, with no ulterior motive,
to say exactly what is in my mind.
When I see your streaming eyes
I am so moved I can't help crying too.
I cancel everything I said before. *

friendship

I am not your enemy.
Now I am with you all the way.
I ask you not to kill your child,
not to put your interests after mine.
It is wrong to make your life a misery while mine is sweet;
wrong for a child of yours to die
while mine still see the light of day.

M's Δ
T's Δ
W?

After all, what am I after?
If it's a marriage I want,
why can't I marry again, and better?
What could be more reprehensible
than to wreck a brother's life
just to get the likes of Helen back again?
A choice of evil over good.
I was wrong-headed. I didn't think,
but when I saw close up what killing children means,
I was overcome with pity for the poor young woman,
my own niece—butchered for a failed marriage.

Wang's War balance!
Twain: It's the army's fault!
every one
Δ 5 prep
with except
235
for army

IPHIGENIA AT AULIS

What has your girl got to do with Helen?
Disband the army. Dismiss the lot from Aulis.
And you, my brother, please,
stop those trickling tears;
dry your eyes and I'll dry mine.
Give no further thought
to that seer's prognostication about your daughter,
and I'll ignore it too.
It interests me no longer—neither you.
What a lightning change, you must be thinking,
from all his bluster!
Yes, a natural change.
I love my mother's son, my brother,
and for one who knows what's best—
no bad around ~~the~~ either.
LEADER: A generous speech,
worthy of your forebear Tantalus, Zeus's son.
Your ancestors would be proud.
AGAMEMNON: Thank you, Menelaus.
What you say is to the point and does you honor.
When brothers quarrel it's usually over a woman *
or because of sibling rivalry. Helms is not cause

It disgusts me—so hurtful to both.
But now we face an unavoidable decision:
we must go ahead with the bloody murder of my daughter.

MENE LAUS: Why? Your own child? ... Who's compelling you?
AGAMEMNON: The entire Achaean army. *

MENE LAUS: Not if you send her back to Argos.
AGAMEMNON: That I could keep secret. There's something else I
cannot.

MENE LAUS: What? You don't need to fear the mob.
AGAMEMNON: Calchas will tell the whole army of his oracle.
MENE LAUS: Not if he dies first. That's not hard.
AGAMEMNON: What a scheming rotten breed these soothsayers
are!
MENE LAUS: Yes indeed, useless and ambitious—while alive.
AGAMEMNON: But there's a frightening possibility you have not
thought of.
MENE LAUS: I can't guess what, unless you tell me.
Pass the blame

Pass the blame

archetype - Agam = why is he
imposed on wife? husband

AGAMEMNON: Odysseus, that Sisyphus man, knows everything.
MENEALUS: So what? Odysseus can't hurt you or me.
AGAMEMNON: He's crafty—manipulates the mob.
MENEALUS: Yes, a slave to ambition—a dangerous disease.
AGAMEMNON: Can't you see him, standing up among the Ar-
gives,

blurring out the story of the oracle:
of how I promised Artemis her victim,
then reneged?

Can't you see him whipping up the mob
to go and kill you, me, and the girl—the girl as sacrifice?
Even if I escaped to Argos,
they'd just follow, smash Mycenae to the ground,
topple the Cyclopean walls.
What an appalling prospect! I'm at a loss,
cornered by the gods and in despair.
One thing, Menelaus, I must ask you.

In your perambulations among the troops
be careful Clytemnestra does not hear of what's afoot
until I have my child safe in Hades.
Let me do what I have to do
with the least possible tears.

[Turning to the CHORUS]

And you women, you visitors here,
not a word! Silence must be yours.

[As AGAMEMNON walks to his tent, and MENEALUS heads for
the camp, the ladies of the CHORUS, shaken by what they have
heard and seen, reflect on the two kinds of love that either
enhance or destroy. Then they attempt to restore their compo-
sure by surveying the age-old principles that keep life steady
and balanced. In an epode they give a thumbnail sketch of
what has caused the outbreak of war: the wrong kind of love]

*
wrong kind of love
love leads war
reigns in stead

2 kinds of love
wings love causes war
(a transcendental thing)

(lews) SECOND CHORAL ODE

STROPHE

CHORUS: Happy are they whose passion in loving
is balanced and Aphrodite's sway
Lets them go at a gentle pace.
Without the sting of untempered lust.
When Eros with his golden curls
Bends his bow for his arrows of love,
One of the shafts spells lifelong joy,
The other shaft a life of strife.
This is the one, I beg you, Queen,
To keep away from my house and bed.
Let me enjoy the bliss of love
But let it be a measured love:
A tender not a turbid thing.

// * * *

what are the
2 kinds of
love?

ANTISTROPHE

Great is the variety of human beings
Great the variety of their ways,
But true goodness is the same,
And virtue is bred by discipline,
And wisdom lies in reverence,
Which charms right-thinking into bloom
And gives to life a lasting glow.
Character is everything,
Let us as women shelter it
In love that's chaste. But for a man
The world is full of different ways
To show his service to the state.

3! true goodness

♀ vs. ♂

♀ vs. ♂
♀ vs. ♂
♀ vs. ♂

EPODE

Once, Paris, coming and going in those haunts
Where you were reared on Mount Ida's slopes
And lived as a herdsman with your snow-white cows,
Piping away exotic tunes
That echoed the ancient flute notes of Olympus
In Phrygian modes . . . One day there came,
While your fat cattle grazed, three goddesses
For a beauty trial;

And your reward from Aphrodite was
To stir your heart and send you off to Greece,
Where by the ivory palaces you stood
Stunned by the love that darted from the eyes
Of Helen, which your love returned: a passion
That blinded you and was to lead to this
Present strife that drives the whole of Greece
With men and ships against the towers of Troy.

[Escorted by a retinue of her own guards and attendants,
CLYTEMNESTRA in a horse-drawn chariot rattles over the
rough ground into AGAMEMNON'S compound. In the chariot
are also IPHIGENIA and a NURSE carrying the infant ORESTES.
Behind it trundle a couple of wagons piled high with boxes
and trunks containing the paraphernalia for a wedding. The
SOLDIERS of the camp crowd around clapping and cheering,
eager to catch a sight of famous royalty]

CHORAL DIALOGUE

SOLDIERS: Hurrah! Hurrah! for the rich, famous, and happy.

Look, there she is, Princess Iphigenia!

And Clytemnestra, Tyndareus' daughter.

Blest to the heights in a pampered life.

The rich and powerful are like-gods

To us small fry.

CHORUS: We the women of Chalcis standing by

With gentle hands shall help the queen

Not to stumble

As she steps to the earth down from her carriage.

And Agamemnon's daughter need not fear

On her first visit here.

We too, visitors from Chalcis,

Shall be careful not to ruffle or dismay

The royal visitors from Argos.

[CLYTEMNESTRA, smiling indulgently at the enthusiasm of her
welcome, holds up a hand to check the cheering of the SOLDIERS]

THIRD EPISODE

CLYTEMNESTRA: Thank you for your gracious welcome:
a good beginning for more good to come.

I have every hope of leading the bride
to a joyous wedding.

bride of war

[There is more cheering from all sides. CLYTEMNESTRA turns
to the soldiery]

Unload the wedding presents from the wagons
and lodge them carefully in the pavilion.
Iphigenia, dear girl,

it is time to leave the carriage,

so step down cautiously on your delicate tender toes.

You young women, give her a hand and help her down.

Someone lend me an arm.

Let me make a decorous descent.

You soldiers there, hold the horses' bridles.

They need steadying. They shy at the slightest thing.

[Once on the ground, CLYTEMNESTRA takes ORESTES from the
NURSE to allow her to dismount and prepares to hand him to
one of the women of the CHORUS]

Here, take him, this wee boy, this mite,

Orestes son of Agamemnon.

[Caring him as she hands him over]

There, there, my baby! Sleepy still?

Was the rocking of the carriage so very lulling?

Wake up now for your sister's wedding.

A hero's little son is going to have a hero uncle:

His mother is a Nereid—related to the gods.

[CLYTEMNESTRA and IPHIGENIA are escorted to seats, while
the NURSE settles herself on the ground. Soldiers are busy
unloading the wagons. Others stand around still mesmerized
by the royal party. CLYTEMNESTRA hands ORESTES back to the
NURSE]

There, little fellow, sit at my feet.

IPHIGENIA: stand up—here next to your mother.

Let these visiting ladies see how happy you make me.
Ah! here your dear father comes.

Give him a tremendous welcome.

[As AGAMEMNON emerges from his tent, IPHIGENIA runs into his arms]

IPHIGENIA: [calling back, laughing]

Oh mother, I've beaten you to it! Don't be cross.

We're going to hug each other breast to breast.

[CLYTEMNESTRA, conscious of the onlookers, becomes formal]

CLYTEMNESTRA: Agamemnon, your majesty, my goodly king, obedient to your summons, you see we've come.

IPHIGENIA: Oh Father, how I've longed

to rush into your arms and cuddle you! . . . Mother, forgive me!

CLYTEMNESTRA: Of course, my child!

Of all my children you love him most.

IPHIGENIA: Father, I haven't seen you for so long. I'm so happy.

AGAMEMNON: So is your father. That makes two of us.

IPHIGENIA: Oh yes yes! It was lovely of you to send for me.

AGAMEMNON: [shaken] I . . . I wonder . . . I don't know what to say to that.

IPHIGENIA: How come? . . . Glad to see me—with such a worried face!

AGAMEMNON: Kings and generals have so much on their minds.

IPHIGENIA: But this moment is mine! Drop all your cares.

AGAMEMNON: You are all mine, then—you and nothing else.

IPHIGENIA: Then smooth away that frown—let love flow in.

AGAMEMNON: [forcing a smile] There, you see! I'm all yours, darling.

IPHIGENIA: Are you? With those eyes so sad and brimming?

AGAMEMNON: Brimming because . . . because . . . we'll be apart so long.

IPHIGENIA: Apart? I don't understand, Father. What do you mean?

AGAMEMNON: You're so direct and honest, it makes me want to cry.

A is conflated over
twice

IPHIGENIA: I'll talk nonsense then, if that will make you happy.
AGAMEMNON: [to himself] Dear God! It breaks my heart not to tell her.

[Aloud]

. . . and grateful too.

IPHIGENIA: Stay at home, Father—stay with your children.

AGAMEMNON: I wish I could: a wish that tears my heart apart.

IPHIGENIA: Forget this silly war and Menelaus' troubles.

AGAMEMNON: They'll be the end of me, but of others too.

IPHIGENIA: But you've been away too long, bottled up in Aulis.

AGAMEMNON: And we're still waiting for the army to set sail.

IPHIGENIA: Where do they say these Phrygians live, father?

AGAMEMNON: Where Priam's son Paris comes from . . . I wish he didn't.

IPHIGENIA: So you're going on a long voyage, Father, and leaving me behind?

How I wish you would take me with you!

AGAMEMNON: ~~You are going on a voyage too—~~ then think of me.

IPHIGENIA: Sailing with my mother, or alone?

AGAMEMNON: Alone, without your father or your mother.

IPHIGENIA: Do you mean you've found another home for me?

AGAMEMNON: Don't ask. It's not for a young girl to know.

IPHIGENIA: Come back to me quickly, Father, when you've finished in Phrygia.

AGAMEMNON: First there is a sacrifice I must offer here.

IPHIGENIA: I know, you must do all those holy things.

AGAMEMNON: You shall see it. You'll stand by the sacrificial bowls.

IPHIGENIA: [excitedly] Oh Father, shall there be dances round the altar?

AGAMEMNON: How I wish I had your blessed innocence!

Now go inside, where young girls ought to be.

Kiss me. Give me your hand.

You'll be far from your father's home so long.

[Father and daughter clasp each other in a long embrace, as AGAMEMNON murmurs]

Goodbye, this young bosom, these cheeks, this golden hair.

Overwhelming is the burden Troy and Helen have laid on you.

[*Breaking away*]

Enough! The very touch of you
fills my eyes with tears.
Now go into the pavilion.

[*As IPHIGENIA leaves, CLYTEMNESTRA, who has been silently
watching, approaches*]

Forgive me, daughter of Leto, for this show of feeling
at losing my daughter to Achilles.

No matter how happy the event
it wrings a father's heart to give a child away
after all his loving care.

CLYTEMNESTRA: I do not blame you.
I'm not so dull of soul as not to feel
the selfsame pang

as I lead our girl to the wedding songs.
But marriage is a common habit
and time itself dries tears.

Now the name of the man to whom you are giving your child—
that I know,

but nothing about his family or where he comes from.

AGAMEMNON: Well . . . Aegina was the daughter of Asopus.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Married to a man or god?

AGAMEMNON: To Zeus, and he fathered Aeacus, husband of
Oenone.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Which of Aeacus' children inherited the house?

AGAMEMNON: Peleus. And Peleus married a sea nymph, daughter
of Nereus.

CLYTEMNESTRA: With the approval of the gods, or regardless of
them?

AGAMEMNON: Zeus himself promoted it. He gave her away.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Where was the wedding—under the sea?

AGAMEMNON: Under the blessed slopes of Pelion, where Chiron
dwells.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Isn't that where they say the Centaurs live?

AGAMEMNON: Yes, and where the gods gave a wedding feast for
Peleus.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Did Achilles' father bring him up or Thetis?

AGAMEMNON: Chiron did, so he wouldn't learn man's evil ways.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Good! A wise teacher and a wiser father.

AGAMEMNON: So that's the man your daughter is to marry.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Seems perfect; but where in Greece is his home?

AGAMEMNON: In Phthia, on the river Epidaurus.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Is that where you'll take your girl and mine?

AGAMEMNON: It will be up to *him* when they are married.

CLYTEMNESTRA: I do hope they'll be happy. When is the wed-
ding?

AGAMEMNON: When the moon is at its full . . . That brings good
luck.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Have you offered the goddess our ~~child's~~^{is my} ~~vietnam~~
yet?

AGAMEMNON: I am just about to. ~~We~~^{is my} have it all in hand.

CLYTEMNESTRA: And the wedding banquet afterwards—that too?

AGAMEMNON: Yes, when the sacrifices have been sacrificed.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Where shall I hold the banquet for the women?

AGAMEMNON: Why here—among our Argive ships' impressive
prows.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Well, if that's the decision . . . I hope it's for the
best.

AGAMEMNON: My wife, do you know your part in this I want you
to play?

CLYTEMNESTRA: Which is what? I have always done what you
have asked me.

AGAMEMNON: I shall stay with the bridegroom here, while
you . . .

CLYTEMNESTRA: While what? It is a mother's business to be
there.

AGAMEMNON: While I give your child away in front of all the
Greeks.

CLYTEMNESTRA: And where, pray, shall I be while all this is
happening?

AGAMEMNON: Back in Argos looking after the girls.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Deserting my daughter here? Who will light the
bridal torches?

AGAMEMNON: I myself shall light the bridal flames.

CLYTEMNESTRA: This is preposterous! Mean-minded too.

AGAMEMNON: It is preposterous for you to be among the troops.

CLYTEMNESTRA: But not for a mother to give her child away.

AGAMEMNON: Leaving young girls at home all on their own.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Safely tucked away in their own domain.

AGAMEMNON: Do what I say.

CLYTEMNESTRA: No, not by our Argive goddess queen!

You go and look after things outside,

I shall see to things within

and to all that is needed by the bride.

[CLYTEMNESTRA leaves with a determined look, and AGAMEMNON walks dejectedly towards his tent]

AGAMEMNON: Dammit! A useless move,

this attempt to get my wife out of sight.

I work out clever schemes to deal with those I love,

and at every point my plans are blocked.

Nonetheless,

I shall go with Calchas the priest to arrange this appeasement

to the goddess, this for me—disaster.

Greece's crisis is mine . . .

If a wise man can't keep at home

a good compliant wife—he does not marry.

[AGAMEMNON steps hopelessly into his tent as the women of the CHORUS, anticipating the certainty of IPHIGENIA's martyrdom and the release of the Greek fleet, begin to picture what the siege of Troy will be like, and the sad aftermath of the war for the Trojans]

THIRD CHORAL ODE

STROPHE

CHORUS: Now will come to the silvery stream

Of Simois the panoply

Of Grecian armament and galleys.

Yes, they will come to Ilium,

Come to the plains of Troy:

Apollo's Troy where I am told

Cassandra wreathed in the evergreen leaves

Of bay tosses her golden tresses

Whenever she is overpowered
By prophetic ecstasy.

ANTISTROPHE

Around the battlements and walls

Of Troy the Trojans stand, as over

The sea the clattering war god comes

With bronze, and bristling oars

As the magnificent galleys

Enter the shallows of Simois. All

To bring back Helen, the sister

Of Castor and Pollux who are in heaven;

Bring her to Greece from the land of Priam

By force of shield and spear.

EPODE

The son of Atreus will tighten the belt

Round Pergamum, that Phrygian city:

Girdle the stone of its walls with blood,

Tumble its silhouette to rubble

And sever from his neck the head of Paris.

Then the women of Priam's court

and his wife will mourn

And Helen daughter of Zeus will sit

In remorse for leaving her man.

Never let such a shadow of doom

Fall upon me or my children's children

As falls on the ladies of Lydia in their gold

And the wives of Trojans at their loom.

And they will be asking among themselves:

"What man will it be

Who clenches his fist on my golden hair

And plucks me like a weeping flower

Out of my perishing country?"

All this because of you,

Helen, child of Leda and

The arch-necked swan,

If the story they tell is true

That the swan was really Zeus;
Or is this only fable
Culled from poetic annals
Not worth knowing?

[*There is a stir among the women of the CHORUS as a strong, good-looking young man strides into camp: ACHILLES, clothed in all the panache of a Greek officer, and more than pleased with the impression he is making*]

FOURTH EPISODE

ACHILLES: Where can I find the commander in chief of the Achaean army?

Will one of you menials go and tell him

that Achilles son of Peleus is outside and waiting.

This hanging around the straits of Euripus

doesn't affect everyone the same.

There're us the unwed ones

who have left empty homes

and sit here idling by these shores.

But there are others

who have left wives and children.

What a strange passion for this war

has smitten Hellas. It's almost demons

My own case is this

(anyone else can speak for himself):

I left my old father Peleus in Pharsalus

and find myself waiting here for a breath of wind—

the merest whisper from the Euripus—

and trying to keep my Myrmidons in order.

They're forever at me, clamoring:

"Achilles, why are we stuck here?

How long more do we have to wait for our passage to Ilium?

Do something—anything—

or just take your army home

and stop waiting for the shilly-shallying sons of Atreus."

G's state of mind
A's -

[CLYTEMNESTRA comes out of the pavilion, eager to introduce herself]

CLYTEMNESTRA: Son of the goddess Thetis, I've come outside to meet you as soon as I heard it was you.

ACHILLES: In the name of divine Modesty who is this lovely lady that I can see?

CLYTEMNESTRA: I am not surprised you don't know me.

We've never met before. But thank you for your graciousness.

ACHILLES: Whoever you are, what made you come to the Greek camp?

A woman in the midst of shields and soldiery!

CLYTEMNESTRA: I am Clytemnestra, daughter of Leda.

King Agamemnon is my husband.

ACHILLES: That was brief and to the point, but my tête-à-tête might give the wrong impression.

CLYTEMNESTRA: [*as he begins to leave*]

Wait. Don't run away . . . Give me your right hand to hold.

ACHILLES: What are you saying? My hand in yours!

I'd blush for shame if Agamemnon caught me.

CLYTEMNESTRA: It's perfectly proper, son of sea nymph Thetis,

seeing that you are going to marry my daughter.

ACHILLES: Ma'ry? What marriage? . . . Madam, I'm completely floored.

Is this a wild delusion?

CLYTEMNESTRA: I know you men are struck with shyness before a wedding

when they have to meet their future in-laws.

ACHILLES: Lady, I've never even met your daughter,

and there's been no whisper of marriage from the Atreus brothers.

CLYTEMNESTRA: I don't understand.

You seem as astonished by my response as I by yours.

ACHILLES: Think back . . . We must work this out together.

The two of us may get to the bottom of this.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Have I been made a fool of?

Match-making where there was no match?

I am covered with shame.

ACHILLES: We've both been made a fool of. Don't brood on it.

It's not worth taking seriously.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Goodbye. I'm too mortified to look you in the face . . .

So humiliated—and made out to be a liar.
ACHILLES: Goodbye then.

I'm going inside to see your husband.

~~As they move away, shamefaced and angry, the OLD RETAINER calls out to them in a conspiratorial whisper from the threshold of AGAMEMNON'S tent]~~

RETAINER: Hullo there! Wait, stranger . . . Aeacus' grandson, and you, my lady, daughter of Leda.

ACHILLES: Who is calling so nervously from a doorway?

RETAINER: A slave, sir, as luck would have it, but no matter.

ACHILLES: Whose? Not one of mine. Agamemnon and I don't share slaves.

RETAINER: That lady's, over there, sir: given to her by Tyn-dareus.

ACHILLES: Well, I'm waiting. What was it you called to say?

RETAINER: Are you two alone out there . . . no one within hearsay?

ACHILLES: We are alone. Come out of the king's tent and speak.

[The OLD RETAINER slips out of AGAMEMNON'S tent and stands before ACHILLES, who beckons to CLYTEMNESTRA]

~~RETAINER: With a little luck and some smart thinking I may just save those I want to save.~~

ACHILLES: Cut the preamble. You can use it another time.

CLYTEMNESTRA: [as the RETAINER tries to kneel]

No need for that. Get on with what you have to say.

RETAINER: You know me, my lady, loyal to you and to your children.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Yes, you've long been a servant in my house.

RETAINER: I became Lord Agamemnon's with your dowry.

CLYTEMNESTRA: But you came with me to Argos and have been mine ever since.

RETAINER: Yes, ma'am, and am less devoted to your husband than to you.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Very well then, out with the secret information that you have.

RETAINER: Your child . . . her own father . . . with his own hands . . . is out to kill her.

CLYTEMNESTRA: What nonsense, old man! You're out of your mind.

RETAINER: He'll use a sword . . . slash through her poor white neck.

CLYTEMNESTRA: I can't believe it. Has my husband gone off his head?

RETAINER: Only when it comes to you and your daughter, ma'am.

CLYTEMNESTRA: For what reason? Is he driven by a fiend?

RETAINER: It's the seer Calchas. Without it he says the army cannot sail.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Sail where? It's too horrible.

He can't do this to me, to her, kill his daughter.

RETAINER: Sail to Troy . . . for Menelaus to drag Helen home.

CLYTEMNESTRA: So Iphigenia has to die for Helen to return?

RETAINER: Exactly that. Her father will sacrifice your child Artemis.

CLYTEMNESTRA: So the wedding was just a trick to lure me from home?

RETAINER: And make you happily bring your daughter to wed Achilles.

CLYTEMNESTRA: My poor, poor girl! Brought to destruction with your mother!

RETAINER: A crime, an outrage against you both . . . Oh, that Agamemnon!

CLYTEMNESTRA: I'm overwhelmed, ruined. I can't hold back the tears.

RETAINER: For an agony like this—to lose a child—let the tears flow.

CLYTEMNESTRA: But where did you hear all this, old man?

RETAINER: I was sent with a letter to you canceling an earlier one.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Stopping me or urging me to bring my child (we know now) for death?

RETAINER: To stop you. Your husband then was sound in mind.

I = sacrifice for H
= substitute

CLYTEMNESTRA: When you had the letter, why didn't you give it to me?

RETAINER: Menelaus snatched it from me.
He is to blame for all this trouble.

CLYTEMNESTRA: O Achilles, son of Thetis, child of Peleus, do you hear this?

ACHILLES: I hear it . . . misery for you and an insult to me.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Your wedding used to lure my daughter to her death.

ACHILLES: This is no trifle. I am as enraged as you are with your husband.

CLYTEMNESTRA: [*throwing herself before him*]

I am not ashamed to clasp your knees.*

I, only a mortal, you, son of a sea goddess.

Why should I be too proud?

Is there anything I wouldn't do to save my child?

Son of Thetis, be my champion,

rescue me from this disaster.

and her that I brought here—falsely I know—

decked in flowers to be your wife.

You will be a byword of reproach

if you don't stand up for her.

And even though you never married

everybody knew you were to be my poor darling's husband.

And so I implore your help,

by your manly beard, your strong right arm,

by your own mother's name.

It was your fame that led me on

use it now to save me.

I kneel at the altar of your knees, my only refuge.

I have no friends to turn to,

and as to Agamemnon, you know now

his barbaric cruelty, his immorality.

Here I am, as you see, a woman,

surrounded by a horde of sailors,

lawless sailors itching for a bit of sport.

But even these, if they see you on my side

*Clasping the knee was an accepted gesture of supplication.

Mis to blame

and under the cover of your arm, can help.

It's the only way to save us. There is no other hope.

LEADER: The wonderful power of motherhood: a magic all mothers have!

They'll go through fire and water to save their own.
ACHILLES: My chivalrous impulse is to act at once;
however, I've learnt to temper both my disappointments
and my enthusiasms. (ha!)
Men like me, schooled by reason,

lead a steady self-reliant life.

Of course there are times

when it pays not to be too cautious,

and times when simple common sense is best.

Brought up by Chiron, that god-fearing man,

I learnt to be straightforward in my ways.

Accordingly,

if the sons of Atreus behave properly, I shall obey them;
if not, not.

Whether here or in Troy I am my own free spirit

and shall as far as I am able

serve the war god with élan.

So you, my lady,

dreadfully abused by your dearest own,

I shall champion

and do everything that a young man can.

My sympathy shall be your shield

and never shall your girl, my future bride,

be slaughtered by her father.

nor I let myself be used in your husband's tricks.

My name, otherwise,

without my lifting a sword,

would itself be your daughter's assassin,

with your husband as accomplice.

If this girl should suffer such intolerable injustice,

such unheard-of outrage, because of me and our engagement,

the very temple of my body would be sacrilegious.

I would be the lowest man in the Argive camp.

A demon, not Peleus, would be my father—

yes, if murder were committed by your husband in my name.

Direct
parent!
omen
psychocy

This describes
Iphigeneia

Unpacke msg of 1) Clyt 2) Achilleus

I swear by Nereus, —
 reared in the swamping waves,
 and by the father of my mother Thetis,
 that King Agamemnon shall never touch your daughter,
 not so much as lay a finger on her dress.
 Call barbaric Sipylus a city—where these generals come from—
 call where I come from, Phthia, nothing,
 if this be not so.
 That frothy-mouthing Calchas shall be sorry
 for his porridge-mongering offerings,
 his holy-water sprinklings.
 What is a soothsayer, anyway?
 a man who utters a truth or two if he is lucky from a legion
 of lies,
 and when he is not, scatters.

I'm not saying all this because I am after a bride,
 not a bit of it:
 thousands of girls would like to bed with me.
 No, King Agamemnon has insulted me.
 He should have asked my permission
 if he wanted to use my name to trap his child.
 It was my name that made Clytemnestra bring her daughter
 to him,

and I would have lent it to the Greeks too
 if that helped their Trojan expedition.
 Now in the eyes of these generals I am nothing:
 of no importance to them whether they treat me well or badly.

[Stroking his scabbard]

My sword shall know a thing or two
 before I leave for Troy . . .
 a nice smear of someone's lifeblood
 if he tries to snatch your daughter from me.

So rest assured, dear madam,
 though I may not be a god—if I seem one to you—
 I'm as good as a god, a great one too,
 and shall certainly become one—just for you.

"The army as chemists?"

LEADER: A speech worthy of you, son of Peleus.
 Your holy sea-born mother will be proud.

CLYTEMNESTRA: My word!

How can I ever thank you
 without overdoing it and embarrassing you
 or not enough and appearing insensitive?
 Thanks if too effusive.

can make an honest man recoil.
 I do apologize for imposing on you
 the story of my private anguish.

My troubles are not yours

but there's something admirable when a sympathetic man
 holds out a helping hand
 in matters far removed from his.

Pity me, my position is so pitiable.

To begin with, I imagined

you were to be my son-in-law.

What a forlorn hope!

Not only forlorn but a death's-head

at any future marriage that you make if my daughter dies.
 This is something that you must guard against.

From first to last what you said was so convincing:

that if you chose to save my child she would be saved.

Well then,

will you have her come out here as suppliant to hug your
 knee?

Not something that a young girl does

but if you wish it she shall come:

come in frank and simple modesty.

But if my entreaty is enough,

let her keep her shyness to herself at home.

We should respect it if we can.

ACHILLES: Dear lady, no.

Don't bring your child out here for me to look at,

and play into the hands of the gaping crowd.

A rootless army away from home

feels free to feed on every kind of dirt and gossip.

In any case,

you'll gain no more by supplication than without.

I had!

vs ad ch 17/177
X name - lying

My main endeavor, my every effort,
is to get you out of danger.

Keep in mind the simple fact:
I never lie.

Should I prove a liar or purposely mislead you,
let me die right here.

Your girl's life is my guarantee.
If I save her, she saves me.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Heaven bless you for helping those in need.

ACHILLES: Now listen carefully, so that we get it right.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Yes, tell me what I am all ears.

ACHILLES: We must try to make her father change his mind.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Hopeless! He's a coward; cringes before the troops.

ACHILLES: Sometimes fear can be overthrown by reason.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Cold comfort that! But tell me what to do.

ACHILLES: First of all,
go down on your knees and plead with him
not to kill your child.

If he refuses, come to me.
If you persuade him, there's no need of me!
you will have won,

and I shall be on a friendlier footing with a friend.
If through diplomacy not force we gain our ends,
the army cannot blame me or complain.

So if this succeeds,
all will be resolved for you and those you love—
and without my help.

CLYTEMNESTRA: [dubiously]
It seems sensible, and I'll try to do what you suggest;
but what if I don't succeed?

Where shall I see you again?
Where shall I ever find you to hurry to my rescue:
I'll be in despair.

ACHILLES: I shall keep a watchout somewhere for you,
so don't go raging like a Maenad through the troops.

shaming your family's name.
Tyndareus must not be exposed to scandal.
His esteem is great among the Greeks.

issue - twelfth; death
of twelfth; the twelfth...

CLYTEMNESTRA: You are right. You must take command,
I must be your thrall.

If the gods exist, they surely will support your righteous stand.
Otherwise, why bother with anything at all?

[As CLYTEMNESTRA leaves for the pavilion tent and ACHILLES
heads back into camp, the women of the CHORUS sing a eulogy
of ACHILLES, dwelling first on the brilliant celebrations for his
parents' wedding in the land of the Centaurs. They go on to
describe Chiron's prophecy of ACHILLES' prowess and glory
at Troy. Finally, they tell of IPHIGENIA's inevitable death and
they decry the collapse of all morality.]

FOURTH CHORAL ODE

STROPHE

Oh what a joyful wedding song they sang
To the African flute and call to dance of the lute,

And the piping thrill of the reeds,
That day the Muses flowing
With their hair of running flame,
Flowed into the swords of Pelion

For Peleus' wedding and the god-blest wedding feast.
So sweet a music steeped
The glens and woodland dells of Pelion,

The Centaurs' lair,
Diffusing celebration
Of Thetis and her son.

Zeus's pretty catamite
Ganymede was there

Ladling out the wine from bowls of gold,
While on the sun-white sands
The fifty daughters of Nereus circled and wove.

ANTISTROPHE

Greenly crowned with leaves of olive they rode
With their lances of pine, the rout of man-horse Centaurs
Into the feast where the gods
Lay in their cups. And they roared:

1/2 way

"O Thetis, daughter of Nereus,
 Chiron the wise seer of Apollo
 Tells of a son you will bear who will shine like the sun
 On Thessaly, and he will come
 With his army of Myrmidons armed with shield and spear
 To the land of Priam,
 Cuirassed in a suit of mail
 Hephaestus made of gold
 His mother gave him."
 When sea-born Thetis,
 First of the Nereid princesses, came
 To be wedded to Peleus.*

EPODE

Meanwhile, the men from Argos, Iphigenia,
 Are twisting flowers into the curls of your hair,
 To lead you like a pure white heifer
 Out of a mountain cave for slaughter
 And prick a throat with human blood.
 Not to the shepherd's pipe or herdsman's whistle
 Were you brought up, but at your mother's side
 To be adorned one day as a bride
 For the son of a king.
 Where can Decency show her face?
 Where has Virtue hidden?
 Brute godlessness is all the rage:
 Virtue tossed on the refuse heap.
 Lawlessness now governs law.
 Mankind no longer is concerned
 With not provoking heaven.

[CLYTEMNESTRA, with a grim look of defiance, issues from the pavilion]

*The antistrophe has only seventeen lines instead of the eighteen of the strophe because line 1062 is missing.

FIFTH EPISODE

CLYTEMNESTRA: I am out here waiting for my husband.
 I can't think why he has been away so long.
 My darling child is in tears,
 Tears from the very core of her being.
 She knows now the death her father plans . . .
 Well . . . talk of the devil . . . here he comes.
 Here's the man whose criminal secret,
 Whose ghastly schemes for his own daughter
 are about to be exposed.
 AGAMEMNON: [enters from the direction of the camp]
 Ah! daughter of Leda,
 what a blessing to catch you here outside my tent!
 It gives me the chance to talk about the wedding
 with our daughter out of hearing.
 For a young girl it is better so.
 CLYTEMNESTRA: [icity] Gives you the chance? What is this mar-
 velous opportunity?
 AGAMEMNON: [with a sudden change of tactic]
 Go and fetch the girl.
 Have her come out here to join her father.
 The sacrificial waters are all ready,
 so is the barley meal to throw into the purifying flames,
 and of course the nuptial victim to be offered up,
 whose dark blood must spurt and run for Artemis.
 CLYTEMNESTRA: Fine words indeed,
 but I have no words for that which you intend.
 [She goes to the pavilion and calls for IPHIGENIA]
 Daughter, come out here,
 though you know it all—your father's plans.
 Bring Orestes your baby brother.
 Tuck him up inside your mantle. Symbol?
 [IPHIGENIA, carrying ORESTES, enters crying]

See, she does whatever you tell her!
 I shall speak for her and for myself.
 AGAMEMNON: Child, why these tears?

R's Theatre

What's happened to those smiles?
Such a downcast face!

And those eyes hiding behind your gown!

CLYTEMNESTRA: [*half to herself*] God help me! Where do I begin?

The list of the enormities I've suffered
has no beginning, middle, or end.

AGAMEMNON: What is this performance?

A concerted plot to face me with a scene
of panic and disaster?

CLYTEMNESTRA: One single question, husband, answer it like a man.

AGAMEMNON: Don't give me orders . . . Of course I'll answer.

CLYTEMNESTRA: This child, your child and mine—are you going
to kill her?

AGAMEMNON: Good God! What a question! What a foul sus-
picion!

CLYTEMNESTRA: Cut the surprise. Just answer me—yes or no?

AGAMEMNON: Ask a reasonable question and you'll get a reason-
able answer.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Just one question, only that: answer it.

* AGAMEMNON: Heaven help me! This isn't fair, everything's
against me.

* CLYTEMNESTRA: Against you, me, her—all three of us.

AGAMEMNON: Who has wronged you?

CLYTEMNESTRA: You ask me that? Are you brainless? Do you
have any brain at all?

AGAMEMNON: I'm finished. They know everything. My secrets
out.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Yes, I know everything—your whole disgusting
plan.

Even your dumbness gives you away.

You needn't tire yourself with explanations:
moans and groans will do.

AGAMEMNON: You are right. Not a word. No more evasions.

Why add barefaced bluster to complete disaster!

CLYTEMNESTRA: Now you listen to me. I'll speak plain straight.

No more half-hints, no more innuendos.

Firstly, the very first thing I have against you:
you murdered Tantalus my first husband

and forced me to marry you against my will.
You tore my baby from my breast
and bashed his head against the floor.

When my twin brothers, sons of Zeus,
came to my defense on shining steeds
you went cringing to my ancient father, Tyndareus,
and he saved you;

and even got me into your bed as wife.
I was reconciled; became—you must admit it—a model wife,
for you and for your home;

considerate in love, a careful housekeeper
not squandering but adding to your substance
so that you came and went a happy man.

It's a rare thing for a man to win such a wife;
worthless hussies are two-a-penny.

I bore this son to you after three girls,

and now one of them you cruelly mean to rob me of.

If asked why, why do you want to kill her,

what pray, will your answer be?

Or must I say it for you?

To get Helen back for Menelaus

Dear gods, what a price to pay!

One's own child for a prostitute!

Buying back what we hate with what we love!

So you leave me at home and go off to war,
disappear for years.

What kind of pain, do you think, my heart will feel
as I wander through the rooms,

see her empty chair, her empty bedroom in the girls' wing?
I'll sit down in tears, lonely tears, inconsolable, and think:

"My poor darling baby, he that gave you life, your own father,
took it from you and killed you with his own hand."

We'd hardly have to hunt for motives, would we,
my daughters and I, to give you the welcome you deserved
when you came home.

For the gods' sakes, don't force me
to take this hard line against you,
or force yourself to do the same to me.

Agamemnon's appeal to his gods

All right/then,

suppose you do sacrifice your child,

~~What will you pray for when you say your prayers?~~

~~What cut will you expect for cutting down a daughter?~~

A passage home as hopeless as the passage out?

And what do you think my prayers will be?

Blessings on you?

Confie, come! Are the gods so cretinous

they expect kind thoughts for murderers?

And when you do get back to Argos,

will you have the nerve to embrace your children?

Don't be preposterous! Not one of them will look at you,

a father who put one of them to death.

Has this thought even entered your head?

Or is your head too stuffed with playing

a baton-twirling general?

The right thing would have been to stand up and say:

"Soldiers of Argos and of Greece,

do you want to sail to Troy?

Then cast lots to see whose daughter ~~has to die.~~"

~~This would have been fair,~~

not hitting on your own daughter as the victim.

If Troy must have a victim,

let Menelaus kill Hermione, his child by Helen.

After all, the quarrel ~~is his,~~

and all of it for Helen.

As things stand,

I who have been utterly faithful to our marriage

am to lose my child,

while that whore keeps hers,

keeps her girl living happily and comfortably in Sparta.

You tell me if this isn't the plain truth,

and if it is, change your mind,

don't kill our child, be sensible.

LEADER: Be persuaded, Agamemnon, save your child.

The whole world would say it's the only thing to do.

IPHIGENIA: *Stepping forward* Father, had I the tongue of

Orpheus

to enchant the rocks with song

and make them follow me;

if I could cast a spell with words

on whomsoever I chose,

how I would have used that power,

but now the only resource I have is tears:

tears I offer—that I can manage.

Against your knees I'll press myself,

press this body which this mother here once bore you,

and I entreat you not to snuff out a life that's just begun.

Sweet is the light of day. Let me see it.

Don't force me to look on the gloom below.

I was the first to call you father

and you to call me your little girl.

I was the first to clamber on your lap

to kiss you and be kissed.

"So, my little girl," you used to say,

"shall I live to see you happily married,

full of life and busy in your husband's home?

How proud I'll be!"

And I would pull on your beard

even as I touch it now, and say:

"When you're an old man, Father,

do you know what I shall do for you?

I'll welcome you into my own house

and make up for all the trouble you took with me."

I remember it so well, this childish talk,

but you have forgotten it and are out to kill me.

Do not do that, please no:

by Pelops, by your own father Atreus,

by this mother standing here,

who went through the agonies of childbirth once

and now must face a second agony.

What have I to do

with Alexander's* going off with Helen?

Tell me, Father,

*Alexander: Paris.

how can it possibly be the end of *me*?

Look at me, father,
~~give me one glance, one kiss~~
 that I can at least treasure at my death
 if all my pleas have failed.

[Petting ORESTES]

Little brother, you're too small to help the ones you love
 but you can cry for me:
 cry to your father for your sister's life.

[A wail from ORESTES]

You see, even a baby knows.
 Without words, he is begging you, Father:
 have mercy on me, I am so young, pity me.
 By your beard your two loving children beg you:
 one a fledgling, one a grown young woman,
 In a single appeal I say it all:
 the light of day is passing sweet,
 below is nothingness.

~~The worst life is more than worth the best death.~~
 LEADER: Ah! Helen, your shameful love affair
 has overwhelmed in misery the house of Atreus and its chil-
 dren.

AGAMEMNON: I know what is pitiable and what is not.
 I love my children, ~~or I'd be mad.~~

To do this dreadful thing is torture to me—believe me, wife—
 and torture if I don't. I must.
 Cast your eyes over this mass of men, this armada,
 and the warlords of Hellas clanking in their bronze:
 all held back from their passage to Ilium with its towers,
 held back unless, as the seer Calchas says, I spill your blood.
 The famous citadel of Troy will not be taken.
 The Greek army is possessed by a kind of lust
 to sail at once to this foreign land
 and put an end to the raping of Greek wives.
 They will kill my daughters in Argos.
 They will kill you and me

Greece's fault
 gods' fault

if I break my pact with Artemis.
 I am not being forced by Menelaus, dear child.
 It's not to please him that I came here.
 Whether I like it or not, it's all for Greece, *!
 for Greece I must offer you up.
 The pressure of her claim is adamant:
 Greece must be free insofar as you and I can make her.
 Greeks we are and we cannot let our women
 be carried off and raped by aliens.

[AGAMEMNON, heavy-footed, walks off into the camp]

CHORAL DIALOGUE

CLYTEMNESTRA: You, good strangers, you, my child,
 Your father primes you for death, then runs away.

IPHIGENIA: You dear Mother, you and I

Must chant the selfsame dirge together.

No longer the light.

No longer the rays of the sun

Belong to me . . . Once long ago

In a snowy rift on Ida's slopes

In Phrygia, Priam exposed the infant Paris,

Torn from his mother's breast, left him to die,

And he became the child of Ida.

Paris of Ida he was called when he came home.

If only he had never been

Raised as a herdsman among the cows;

If only he had never found—

This Paris, Alexander—a home

Among the shining waters and the springs,

Where goddesses can gather

Hyacinths and roses.

Then one day there came there

Pallas with her spear,

Crafty Aphrodite, Hera,

And Hermes too, Zeus's messenger.

symbolism of wind
" " doldrums

judgment
of
Paris

Then was enacted the fatal competition,
The beauty contest and the judgment
That leads now to my death, dear women,
And to Greece's glory.
For Artemis accepts my sacrifice for Ilium.
But he that begot me, my own father
—Oh Mother! Mother!—
Has abandoned me and gone...
The bitterness of that bitter day
I first saw Helen!
It is the slaughtering of me now,
My demolition, my undoing
At the hands of a faithless father.

Why did Aulis ever welcome
Into her enclave
The ships with their beaky prows of bronze,
The armada that will carry the troops to Troy?
Why did Zeus not spring a breeze
Along the Euripus
To end the doldrums that locked us in?
He sends breezes to other men for happy sailings.
He has a treasury of winds:
Winds to hoist the sail,
Winds to haul in the sheets,
Winds that make one wait.
Poor struggling mortals, how they struggle
Till the pitiful ending of their day!
And now the house of Tyndarus will spell us
A tale of toil and agony
Brought on the sons of Hellas.

LEADER: How I sympathize with you in this dread ordeal:
A thing so far from your deserts!
[From the road into camp a disorderly rout of soldiers can be
seen and heard approaching]

The Army as a character

SIXTH EPISODE

IPHIGENIA: Mother darling, I see a crowd of men approaching.
CLYTEMNESTRA: It's him, my girl, Thetis' son Achilles: for
whom you came here.
IPHIGENIA: Maids, open the doors... I've got to hide.
CLYTEMNESTRA: My child, you mustn't run away.
IPHIGENIA: But I can't face seeing him.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Why ever not?
IPHIGENIA: The phony wedding—I'm just too embarrassed.
CLYTEMNESTRA: You're in no position to be finicky. Stay.
This is not a time to be coy, we must...

[ACHILLES bursts in upon them. He is no longer the dapper
young officer bubbling with self-confidence. His uniform is
torn and spattered with mud, he has bruises on his handsome
face, and he has lost his swashbuckling plumed helmet. Two
batmen carry his shield and spear. The mob of soldiers halts
some distance away, stones at the ready]

ACHILLES: [breathlessly] Daughter of Leda, you're in for trouble.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Don't I know it!
ACHILLES: There's uproar among the troops.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Uproar, explain.
ACHILLES: It's all centered on your daughter.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Dear gods! I can guess what is coming.
ACHILLES: They insist she be sacrificed.
CLYTEMNESTRA: And does nobody stand up for her?
ACHILLES: I did. And nearly lost my life.
CLYTEMNESTRA: How, my boy?
ACHILLES: By being stoned—
CLYTEMNESTRA: Trying to save my daughter?
ACHILLES: Exactly so.

CLYTEMNESTRA: You? Who would dare to lay a finger on you?
ACHILLES: The whole bloody army.
CLYTEMNESTRA: But weren't your Myrmidons there with you?
ACHILLES: They were the first to set on me.
CLYTEMNESTRA: There's no hope, my child—
ACHILLES: "Marriage-mongers!" they jeered.
CLYTEMNESTRA: And what was your response?

Army → Achilles

what drive this mob?
compare Euripides here of Bacchae

ACHILLES: "Kill my bride-to-be," I said, "you shall not."
CLYTEMNESTRA: Quite rightly too!
ACHILLES: "She was promised to me by her father."
CLYTEMNESTRA: He even sent to Argos for her.
ACHILLES: But I was shouted down.
CLYTEMNESTRA: What a terrible thing mob violence is!
ACHILLES: Even so, I shall protect you.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Take on an army single-handed?
ACHILLES: See my armor-bearers here?
CLYTEMNESTRA: Blessings on your courage, son.
ACHILLES: Yes, I shall be blest.
CLYTEMNESTRA: And the child shall not be slaughtered now?
ACHILLES: No, I will never allow it.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Will they come and lay hold of her?
ACHILLES: Yes, a crowd of them, led by Odysseus.
CLYTEMNESTRA: [with a grimace] Nah! The spawn of Sisyphus.
ACHILLES: That's the man.
CLYTEMNESTRA: His own choice? Or appointed by the army?
ACHILLES: His own choice . . . and he needed no encouragement.
CLYTEMNESTRA: An obscene choice . . . to commit murder!
ACHILLES: But I shall stop him.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Will he seize her and drag her away?
ACHILLES: He'll seize her all right—by her golden hair.
CLYTEMNESTRA: Then what must I do?
ACHILLES: Hang on to her for dear life.
CLYTEMNESTRA: No more than that? Then she is safe.
ACHILLES: It may well come to that.
IPHIGENIA: Mother, listen to what I think.
I see how angry you are with your husband,
but it does no good—
The odds against us are too great—
So let us thank this young man for his courage,
but not let his reputation suffer with the troops.
We should fare no better and he would face disaster.
But the remarkable thing, Mother, as I think it over,
is that I am willing to die—and die gloriously,
after putting every petty thing behind me.
On me the sailing of the fleet
and overthrow of Phrygia,
on me the remedy against any barbarian

self-sacrifice / liberator

carrying off our women from a happy home—
should such a thing enter his head.
All this my death accomplishes,
and my name shall be blest as the liberator of Greece.
So I must not cling to life,
I was born from you not simply for your sake
but for the common good of Hellas.
Ten thousand men are armed with shields.
Ten thousand men grip the galley oars.
Their country has been hurt
and they are brave enough to be warriors
against the enemy and die for Greece.
Is my life to be the only obstacle?
Would that be fair? How can I defend it?
And another thing.
It is unthinkable that this man*
should pit himself against the whole of Argos
for a woman's sake.
A single man is worthier
to look upon the light than ten thousand women.
If Artemis is determined to have my carcass
shall I a mortal female cheat the goddess?
No, I give my body to Hellas.
So sacrifice me and sack Troy.
That will be my memorial through the ages.
For the Greeks to govern barbarians is but natural,
and nowise, mother, for barbarians to govern Greeks.
They are born slaves—Greeks are born free.
LEADER: How courageously, young woman, you play your part!
It is Fate and Artemis that are at fault.
ACHILLES: Child of Agamemnon,
one of the gods intended to make me happy
with you as my wife.
Hellas is blest in you, and you are blest in Hellas.
Your speech is magnanimous.
*this man: she means Achilles.

eg!
of Euripides

who's liberator
fact
for Euripides
de. H. Hall

worthy of your fatherland.

You yielded in a battle with the gods
more powerful than you.

You faced the inevitable and saw your duty.

When I witness the nobility of your soul
I yearn all the more for your love.

So listen, I long to help you.

I long to win you for my home.

That is be my witness, it will be my loss
if I do not check the Greeks and save you.

Remember, death is a terrible thing.

IPHIGENIA: Without misgiving, I must say this:

Helen the Tyndarid has done enough harm by her beauty
in whipping up strife and making men shed blood.
Therefore, good stranger prince,
do not die for me. Kill nobody.

Allow me to save Greece if I can.

ACHILLES: O illustrious one,

what more can I say if that is your decision?
Your whole attitude is wonderful. That is the truth.
Nonetheless, should you come to change your mind,
this I want you to know:

I shall put my weapons at the ready by the altar
to rescue you from dying.

Perhaps you will take my offer up

when you see the sword come near your throat.

I shall never let you die for a ridiculous decision.

I'll take these weapons of mine to the temple of Artemis
and await you there.

[ACHILLES departs with his sword, spear, and dagger]

IPHIGENIA: Mother, why are you crying? Talk to me.

CLYTEMNESTRA: The pang in my heart gives me good reason
to cry.

IPHIGENIA: Don't, or you'll turn me into a coward. Please . . .

CLYTEMNESTRA: Whatever you want, my child. I'll do my best.

IPHIGENIA: Don't chop off your glorious hair.

Don't drape yourself in black.

The nature of sacrifice

CLYTEMNESTRA: Daughter, how can you say that, when I have
lost you?

IPHIGENIA: Not lost, saved. And through me your fame will be
great.

CLYTEMNESTRA: What are you saying? Am I not to mourn
for you?

IPHIGENIA: Not in the least. No grave shall be heaped upon me.

CLYTEMNESTRA: How do you mean? Does not death imply a
burial?

IPHIGENIA: In my case, the altar of Artemis will be my tomb.

CLYTEMNESTRA: My child, you are right. I shall do what you say.

IPHIGENIA: Because I am blest, the benefactress of Hellas.

CLYTEMNESTRA: What message shall I take your sisters?

IPHIGENIA: Do not dress them, either, in mourning black.

CLYTEMNESTRA: What words of love from you shall I bring
to them?

IPHIGENIA: Say goodbye for me.

Make sure baby Orestes grows into a man.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Hug him to you. This is the last time you'll
see him.

[The nurse puts ORESTES in IPHIGENIA'S arms]

IPHIGENIA: Sweet baby, you did all you could for us.

CLYTEMNESTRA: When I am back in Argos is there anything I can
do for you?

IPHIGENIA: Yes, don't hate my father—your own husband.

CLYTEMNESTRA: [grimly] Because of you I shall give him a run
for his money.

IPHIGENIA: Against his will, he sacrificed me to save Greece.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Treacherously and like a coward: unworthy of

[IPHIGENIA hands ORESTES back to the nurse.] I save Agamemnon & Atreus.

IPHIGENIA: Will somebody escort me, so I won't be dragged by
the hair?

CLYTEMNESTRA: I shall go with you and . . .

IPHIGENIA: No, that wouldn't be right.

CLYTEMNESTRA: . . . cling to your dress.

Tu R!

In a Savior

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EURIPIDES

IPHIGENIA: Listen, Mother, stay.

It is better for you and for me.

Let one of my father's men escort me
to the meadow of Artemis where I am to be slain.

CLYTEMNESTRA: O my child, are you going?

IPHIGENIA: Yes, never to return.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Abandoning your mother?

IPHIGENIA:—As you see. No easy thing!

CLYTEMNESTRA: Wait! Do not leave me.

IPHIGENIA: No tears, please.

[CLYTEMNESTRA sinks to the ground, clutching her daughter's dress]

Young women,

raise a paean of joy for me to Artemis, child of Zeus,
and let the Greeks observe a solemn silence.

Let the celebrations begin with the ritual baskets,
let the pyre blaze

with the purifying barley meal.

Have my father circle the altar from left to right:
for I come bringing to Hellas salvation and triumph.

CHORAL DIALOGUE

IPHIGENIA: Conduct me as a sacker of cities,

Sacker of Troy and Phrygia.

Load me with garlands, wreath the my head.

Play the holy fountains on me,

And in the temple weave and dance

Around the altar of Artemis:

Queen Artemis, the blessed one.

If it must be, let my blood

Fulfill in sacrifice her bidding.

[IPHIGENIA, in tears, raises her mother up]

My lady, my lady, my mother,

My tears pour down for you,

We pour them together,

But I may not weep at the altar.

Courage

IPHIGENIA AT AULIS

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[Turning to the CHORUS, shouting]

Holla, my ladies, ho!

Raise up a chant of praise with me
For Artemis, worshiped here,

Facing your Chalcis where

In the narrow cleft of Aulis

The irate army itches to fight.

Holla! my motherland of Argos

And my home Mycenae.

CHORUS: Are you calling on the city of Perseus

Which the Cyclops toiled to build?

IPHIGENIA: Which raised me to be the light

Of Greece. I do not shrink from death.

CHORUS: Your fame shall never leave you.

IPHIGENIA: Holla there! Day, bringer of light!

Holla there! the radiance of Zeus!

Another phase of light and life

Are to be mine . . . Farewell, light,

Beloved light!

[Escorts lead IPHIGENIA away. CLYTEMNESTRA, supported by servants, staggers into the tent. The CHORUS chants a congratulatory to IPHIGENIA for her bravery, then a somewhat sycophantic supplication to Artemis]

CHORUS: Cheers for the sacker of cities,

The sacker of Troy and Phrygia,

As she goes to be garlanded

And sprinkled with holy water.

Blood will flow from her throat:

Her body's lovely throat,

Upon the altar of Artemis.

The lustral bowls and droplets

Await you and your father;

And of course the army of Hellas

Impatient to sail for Troy.

Let us praise Zeus's daughter,

Artemis, huntress queen.

*IPH = tek
founded in
death*

Iphigenia's loss
 Is gain, my lady, yes,
 Joyer in human blood:
 Speed the Greek armada
 To Phrygia and dangerous Troy.
 Grant that Agamemnon
 Will crown the Grecian spears
 With wreaths of fame, and his brow
 With everlasting glory.

[The Greek text here becomes more and more suspect. We know that Euripides died before he could finish this play. The conclusion is undoubtedly spurious]

SEVENTH EPISODE

[A soldier, the SECOND MESSENGER, hurries in from the camp and halts outside CLYTEMNESTRA'S tent]

SECOND MESSENGER: Clytemnestra, daughter of Tyndareus, come out and hear my news.
 CLYTEMNESTRA: Indeed, I do. Your voice compels me.

I am shocked and giddy with fear
 in case you have come to tell me
 of another horror piled on the one already.

SECOND MESSENGER: About your child—it was wonderful and awe-inspiring.
 CLYTEMNESTRA: Well, get on with it. Do not dally.

SECOND MESSENGER: Of course, dear mistress, you shall hear everything.
 I'll tell it all straightforwardly from the start,
 and only hope I don't break down and begin to jabber.

When we had reached the domain of the virgin goddess, Artemis, Zeus's child, in her flower-splashed fields, and had brought your daughter to where the Achaean army mustered, the military immediately surrounded us.
 When Agamemnon saw the girl treading with steady steps towards the place of slaughter,

he heaved a groan, turned his head away, and wept, holding his gown before his eyes.
 But she came up and stood beside her sire.

"Father, here I am," she said, "as you bid me. Of my own free will I bequeath my body for my state and for the whole of Hellas, so lead me to the altar of sacrifice—if that is the decision."

May it help you, if that is in my power.
 May you be awarded victory
 and return a winner to your native land.
 Let no Argive lay his hand on me.
 Silent, unflinching, I bare my throat."

Those were her words
 and everyone marveled at the girl's heroism and nobility.

Then Talthibius, whose task it was,
 stepped forward and proclaimed a reverential silence
 and brought the army to a hush.

Calchas the seer, then,
 drew out of its scabbard a dagger, deadly sharp,
 and placed it in a gold-studded basket,
 and put a chaplet on the girl's head.
 Then the son of Peleus, Achilles,
 holding the basket and lustral bowl,
 ran round the goddess' altar as he uttered:

"Artemis, daughter of Zeus,
 huntress of wild animals,
 flooder of night with the moon's light,
 accept this sacrifice we offer
 of the pure blood from a virgin's throat,
 grant that our galleys sail unchecked,
 and that our spears topple the towers of Troy."

The sons of Atreus and all the army
 stood at attention with bowed heads.

Gripping the dagger and praying,

what happens?

the priest took the knife and searched for the spot to strike.
 I was in a ferment and
 Then suddenly a miracle took place:
 all of us heard the plunge of the stroke
 but none of us knew where on earth the maiden had vanished
 The priest gave a shout
 and the whole army echoed him
 as they beheld a prodigy, an unearthly phenomenon.
 A deer in spasms lay panting on the ground:
 a large and handsome hind.
 All the altar was speckled with her blood.
 Then Calchas spoke—you can imagine with what joy
 "Commanders of the Panhellenic and thwarted host,
 do you see this victim which the goddess
 lays upon her altar, this hind from the hills?
 Far more welcome to her is this oblation than a maid,
 that she may not tarnish her altar with noble blood.
 She has accepted this sacrifice with joy
 and grants us a favorable passage and attack on Troy."

Wherefore, let every mariner
 march with confidence to his ship;
 for this very day we must set sail
 from the hollow straits of Aulis
 and cross the Aegean surge."
 So when the victim was reduced to ashes in the fire god's flame,
 Calchas offered up a prayer
 that the army would in time come safely home.

Agamemnon sent me to tell you this
 and to say how blest by the gods he is,
 and how throughout Hellas his fame is everlasting.
 I was there and tell you exactly what I saw.
 There is no doubt your child was wafted to the gods,
 so cease from grief and resentment against your consort.
 Mysterious to us mortals are the ways of the gods.
 Those they love, they save.
 this day has seen your child dead and alive.
 LEADER: Happy am I to hear the messenger's news
 that your child lives and abides with the gods.

A blue hair

father

Agamemnon

CLYTEMNESTRA: O my child, what god has stolen you?
 How shall I address you? What can I say?
 Is this just a story to console me for you
 and heal my broken heart?

LEADER: Here King Agamemnon comes bearing the same report.
 [AGAMEMNON marches in from the direction of the camp]

AGAMEMNON: My wife, we should be happy for our daughter's fate.
 There is no doubt that now she shares the bliss of the gods.
 Take this little princeling and go home,
 for the army is ready to set sail.
 Farewell till after Troy.

It will be a long time before I talk to you again.
 May you live without chagrin.

CHORUS: Go, son of Atreus, with joy
 To the land of Phrygia,
 And with joy return here
 Loaded with sumptuous spoils,
 I hope, from Troy.

what does this play teach us
 about - courage, duty, nobility,
 the role of women, nature of sacrifice,
 (sensitive to gods, community, & family)
 Examine 2-3 diff. characters for this analysis

Agamemnon Greek

Agamemnon's wife