"Then thus: 'The lot of man the gods dispose;
These ills are past: now hear thy future woes,
O prince attend; some favouring power be kind,
And print the important story on thy mind!

"'Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plough the seas;
Their song is death, and makes destruction please.
Unblest the man, whom music wins to stay
Nigh the cursed shore, and listen to the lay.
No more that wretch shall view the joys of life,
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife!
In verdant meads they sport; and wide around
Lie human bones that whiten all the ground:
The ground polluted floats with human gore,
And human carnage taints the dreadful shore.
Fly swift the dangerous coast; let every ear
Be stopp'd against the song: 'tis death to hear!
Firm to the mast with chains thyself be bound,
Nor trust thy virtue to the enchanting sound.
If, mad with transport, freedom thou demand,
Be every fetter strain'd, and added band to band."

Odyssey, Bk. XII, pp. 623-624.
"O friends, oh ever partners of my woes,
Attend while I what Heaven foredooms disclose.
Hear all! Fate hangs o'er all; on you it lies
To live or perish! to be safe, be wise!

"In flowery meads the sportive Sirens play,
Touch the soft lyre, and tune the vocal lay;
Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
The gods allow to hear the dangerous sound.

Hear and obey; if freedom I demand,
Be every fetter strain'd, be added band to band."

"While yet I speak the winged galley flies,
And lo! the Siren shores like mists arise.
Sunk were at once the winds the air above,
And waves below, at once forgot to move:

Some demon calm'd the air and smooth'd the deep,
Hush'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to sleep.

Now every sail we furl, each oar we ply:
Lash'd by the stroke, the frothy waters fly.
The ductile wax with busy hands I mould,
And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd;

The aerial region now grew warm with day,
The wax dissolved beneath the burning ray;
Then every ear I barr'd against the strain,
And from access of frenzy lock'd the brain."
Now round the masts my mates the fotters roll'd,  
And bound me limb by limb with fold on fold. 
Then bending to the stroke, the active train  
Plunge all at once their oars, and cleave the main  

"While to the shore the rapid vessel flies,  
Our swift approach the Siren choir descries;  
Celestial music warbles from their tongue,  
And thus the sweet deluders tune the song:  

"Oh stay, O pride of Greece! Ulysses stay!  
Oh cease thy course, and listen to our lay!  
Blest is the man ordain'd our voice to hear,  
The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear.  
Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise!  
Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise!  
We know whate'er the kings of mighty name  
Achieved at Illion in the field of fame;  
Whate'er beneath the sun's bright journey lies.  
Oh stay, and learn new wisdom from the wise!"  

"Thus the sweet charmers warbled O'er the main;  
My soul takes wing to meet the heavenly strain;  
I give the sign, and struggle to be free:  
Swift row my mates, and shoot along the sea;  
New chains they add, and rapid urge the way,
Till, dying off, the distant sound decay:
Then scudding swiftly from the dangerous ground,
The deafen'd ear unlock'd, the chains unbound.

*Odyssey*, Bk XII, pp. 626-628.


Hesiod narrates how Dark Night gave birth to the Hesperides, and the work the latter are employed in:

And Night bore frightful Doom and black Ker,
And Death, and Sleep, and the whole tribe of Dreams.
Again although she slept with none of the gods,
Dark Night gave birth to Blame and sad Distress
And the Hesperides, who, out beyond
The famous stream of Oceanus, tend
The lovely golden apples and their trees.

*Theogony*, p. 30.

Hesiod sings about the abode of other mythical figures and incidentally about the Hesperides too:
And the Gorgons, they who lived beyond the stream
Of famous Ocean, on the edge near Night
Where the clear-voiced Hesperides are found.

(Theogony, p. 32)

And Atlas, forced by hard necessity,
Holds the broad heaven up, propped on his head
And tireless hands, at the last end of Earth
In front of the clear voiced Hesperides....

(Theogony, p. 40)

R.C. Seaton, trans. The Argonautica by Apollonius Rhodius

Jason, Peleus, and their comrades, were thirsty and searched frantically for some spring. This was after they had landed on the Libyan sands:

Then, like raging hounds, they rushed to search for a spring; for besides their suffering and anguish, a parching thirst lay upon them and not in vain they wander; but they came to the sacred plain where Ladon, the serpent
of the land, till yesterday kept watch over the golden apples in the garden of Atlas; and all around the nymphs, the Hesperides, were busied, chanting their lovely song. But at that time, stricken by Heracles, he lay fallen by the trunk of the apple-tree; only the tip of his tail was still writhing; but from his head down the dark spine he lay lifeless; and where the arrows had left in his blood the bitter gall of the Lernean hydra, flies withered and died over the festering wounds. And close at hand the Hesperides, their white arms, flung over their golden hands lamented shrilly....

Bk. IV, pp. 389-391.

In Tennyson’s "The Hesperides," the nymphs guard the apples warily. The excerpt given above shows the place after the theft of the golden apples.

Aiv


Nine days our fleet the uncertain tempest bore
Far in wide ocean, and from sight of shore ;
The tenth we touch'd, by various errors toss'd,
The land of Lotus and the flowery coast.
We climb'd the beach, and springs of water found,
Then spread our hasty banquet on the ground.
Three men were sent, disputed from the crew
(A herald one) the dubious coast to view,
And learn what habitants possess'd the place.
They went, and found a hospitable race:
Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,
They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast:
The trees around them all their food produce;
Lotus the name: divine, nectarous juice!
(Thence call'd Lotophagi); which whoso tastes,
Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
Nor other home, nor other care intends,
But quits his house, his country, and his friends.
The three we sent, from off the enchanting ground
We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound;
The rest in haste forsook the pleasing shore,
Or, the charm tasted, had return'd no more.
Now placed in order on their banks, they sweep
The sea's smooth face, and cleave the hoary deep:
With heavy hearts we labour through the tide,
To coasts unknown, and oceans yet untried.

*Odyssey*, Bk. IX, pp. 574-575.
APPENDIX-II B

SOURCES OF POEMS WITH GREEK MYTHICAL HEROINES AS PROTAGONISTS


Will you read my letter through? or does your new wife forbid? Read --this is no letter writ by Mycenaean hand.\(^a\)

It is the fountain-nymph Oenone writes, well known to the Phrygian forests-wronged, and with complaint to make of you, you my own, if you but allow.

What god has set his will against my prayers? What guilt stands in my way, that I may not remain your own? Softly must we bear whatever suffering is our desert; the penalty that comes without deserving brings us dole.

Not yet so great were you when I was content to wed you --I, nymph-daughter of a mighty stream. You who are now a son of Priam --let not respect keep back the truth!--were then a slave; I deigned to wed a slave --I, a nymph! Oft among our flocks have we reposed beneath the sheltering trees, where mingled grass and leaves afforded us a couch; oft have we lain upon the straw, or on the deep hay in a lowly hut that kept the hoar-frost off. Who was it pointed out to you the converts apt for the chase, and the rocky den where the wild beast hid away her cubs? Oft have I gone

\(^a\) She taunts Paris with fear of Agamemnon and Menelaus.
with you to stretch the hunting-net with its wide mesh; oft have I led the fleet hounds over the long ridge. The beeches still conserve my name carved on them by you, and I am read there OENONE, characterized by your blade; and the more the trunks, the greater grows my name. Grow on, rise high and straight to make my honours known! O poplar, ever live, I pray, that art planted by the marge of the stream and hast in thy seamy bark these verses:

**IF PARIS' BREATH SHALL FAIL NOT, ONCE OENONE HE DOTH SPURN,**

**THE WATERS OF THE XANTHUS TO THEIR FOUNT SHALL BACKWARD TURN.**

O Xanthus, backward haste; turn, waters, and flow again to your fount! Paris has deserted Oenone, and endures it.

That day spoke doom for wretched me, on that day did the awful storm of changed love begin, when Venus and Juno, and unadorned Minerva, more comely had she borne her arms, appeared before you to be judged. My bosom leaped with amaze as you told me of it, and a chill tremor rushed through my hard bones. I took counsel— for I was no little terrified—with grandams and long-lived sires. 'Twas clear to us all that evil threatened me.
The firs were felled, the timbers hewn; your fleet was ready, and the deep-blue wave received the waxed crafts. Your tears fell as you left me—this, at least, deny not! We mingled our weeping, each a prey to grief; the elm is not so closely clasped by clinging vine as was my neck by your embracing arms. Ah, how oft, when you complained that you were kept by wind, did your comrades smile!—that wind was favouring. How oft, when you had taken your leave of me, did you return to ask another kiss? How your tongue could scarce endure to say "Farewell."

A light breeze stirs the sails that hang idly from the rigid mast, and the water foams white with the churning of the oar. In wretchedness I follow with my eyes the departing sails as far as I may, and the sand is humid with my tears; that you may swiftly come again, I pray the sea-green daughters of Nereus—yes, that you may swiftly come to my undoing! Expected to return in answer to my vows, have you returned for the sake of another? Ah me, 'twas for the sake of a cruel rival that my persuasive prayers were made!

A mass of native rock looks down upon the unmeasured deep—a mountain it really is; it stays the billows of the sea. From here I was the first to spy and know the sails of
your bark, and my heart's impulse was to rush through the waves to you. While I delayed, on the highest of the prow I saw the gleam of purple --fear seized upon me; that was not the manner of your garb. The craft comes nearer, borne on a freshening breeze, and touches the shore; with trembling heart I have caught the sight of a woman's face. And this was not enough --why was I mad enough to stay and see? --in your embrace that shameless woman clung! Then indeed did I rend my bosom and beat my breast, and with the hard nail furrowed my streaming cheeks, and filled holy Ida with wailing cries of lamentation; yonder to the rocks I love I bore my tears. So may Helen's grief be, so her lamentation, when she is deserted by her love; and what she was first to bring on me may she herself endure!

Your pleasure now is in Jades who follow you over the open sea, leaving behind their lawful wedded lords; but when you were poor and shepherded the flocks, Oenone was your wife, poor though you were, and none else. I am not dazzled by your wealth, nor am I touched by thought of your palace, nor would I be called one of the many wives of Priam's sons --yet not that Priam would disdain a nymph as wife to his son, or Hecuba would have to hide her kinship with me; I am worthy of being, and I desire to be, the matron of a puissant lord; my hands are such as the
sceptre could well please. 'Or despise me because once
I pressed with you the beacon flame: I am better suited
for the purpled marriage-bed.

Remember, too, my love can bring no harm; it will
beget you no wars, nor bring avenging ships across the wave.
The Tyndarid run-away is now demanded back by an enemy
under arms; this is the dower the dame brings proudly to
your marriage-chamber. Whether she should be rendered back
to the Danai, ask Hector your brother, if you will, or
Deiphobus and Polydamas; take counsel with grave Antenor,
find out what Priam's self persuades, whose long lives have
made them wise. 'Tis but a base beginning, to prize a
stolen mistress more than your native land. Your case is
one that calls for shame; just are the arms her lord
takes up.

Think not, too, if you are wise, that the Laconian
will be faithful --she who so quickly turned to your embrace.
Just as the younger Atrides cries out at the violation of
his marriage-belt, and feels 'is painful wound from the wife
who loves another, you too will cry. By no art may purity
once wounded be made whole; 'tis lost, lost once and for all.
Is she ardent with love for you? So, too, she loved

a. Of his career as a Prince after his recognition.
Menelaus. He, trusting fool that he was, lies now in a deserted bed. Happy Andromache, well wed to a constant mate! I was a wife to whom you should have clung after your brother's pattern; but you — lighter than leaves what time their juice has failed, and dry they flutter in the shifting breeze; you have less weight than the tip of the spear of grain, burned light and crisp by ever-shining suns.

This, once upon a time — for I call it back to mind — your sister a sang to me, with locks let loose, foreseeing what should come: "What art thou doing, Oenone? Why commit seeds to sand? Thou art ploughing the shores with oxen that will accomplish naught. A Greek heifer is on the way, to ruin thee, thy home-land, and thy house! Ho, keep her far! A Greek heifer is coming! While yet ye may, sink in the deep unclean ship! Alas, how much of Phrygian blood it hath abroad."

She ceased to speak; her slaves seized on her as she madly ran. And I — my golden locks stood stiffly up. Ah, all too true a prophetess you were to my poor self — she has them, lo, the heifer has my pastures! Let her seem how fair soever of face, none the less she surely is a jade; smitten with a stranger, she left behind her marriage-gods. Theseus — unless I mistake the name — one Theseus, even before, had stolen her away from her father's land. b Is it

a. Cassandra.
b. Theseus and Pirithous had carried away Helen in her early youth.
to be thought she was rendered back a maid, by a young man
and eager? Whence have I heard this so well? you ask. I
love. You may call it violence, and veil the fault in the
word; yet she who has been so often stolen has surely lent
herself to theft. But Oenone remains chaste, false though
her husband prove—and, after your own example, she might
have played you false.

Me, the swift Satyrs, a wanton rout with nimbled
foot, used to come in quest of --where I would lie hidden in
covert of the wood --and Faunus, with horned head girt round
with sharp pine needles, where Ida swells in boundless ridges.
Me, the builder of Troy, well known for keeping faith, loved,
and let my hands into the secret of his gift. Whatever
herb potent for aid, whatever root that is used for healing
grows in all the world, is mine. Alas, wretched me, that
love may not be healed by herbs! Skilled in an art, I am
left helpless by the very art I know.

The aid that neither earth, fruitful in the
bringing forth of herbs, nor a god himself can give, you have
the power to bestow on me. You can bestow it, and I have
merited --have pity on a deserving maid! I come with no
Danai, and bear no bloody armour-- but I am yours, and
I was your mate in childhood's years, and yours through all time to come I pray to be!


Bi


Sorely groaned Paris; with the torturing wound Painted his spirit. Leeches sought to allay His frenzy of pain. But now drew back to Troy The Trojans, and the Danaans to their ships Swiftly returned, for dark night put an end To strife, and stole from men's limbs weariness, Pouring upon their eyes pain-healing sleep.

But through the livelong night no sleep laid hold On Paris: for his help no leech availed, Though ne'er so willing, with his salves. His weird Was only by Oenone's hands to escape Death's doom, if so she willed. Now he obeyed The prophecy, and he went—exceeding loth,
But grim necessity forced him thence, to face
the wife forsaken. Evil-boding foul
Shrieked o'er his head, nor darted past to left,
still as he went. Now, as he looked at them,
His heart sank; now hope whispered, "Haply vain
Their bodings are!"—but on their wings were borne
visions of doom that blended with his pain.
Into Oenone's presence thus he came.
Amazed her thronging handmaids looked on him
As at the Nymph's feet that pale suppliant fell
Faint with anguish of his wound, whose pangs
stabb'd him through brain and heart, yea, quivered
through
His very bones, for that fierce venom crawled
through all his inwards with corrupting fangs;
And his life fainted in him agony-thrilled.
As one with sickness and tormenting thirst
Consumed, lies parched, with heart quick-shuddering,
With liver seething as in flame, the soul,
Scarce conscious, fluttering at his burning lips,
Longing for life, for water longing sore;
So was his breast one fire of torturing pain.
Then in exceeding feehleness he spake:
"O reverenced wife, turn not from me in hate
For that I left thee widowed long ago!
Not of my will I did it: the strong Fates
Dragged me to Helen --Oh that I had died
Ere I embraced her --in thine arms had died!
Ah, by the Gods I pray, the Lords of Heaven,
By all the memories of our wedded love,
Be merciful! Banish my bitter pain:
Lay on my deadly wound those healing salves
Which only can, by Fate's decree, remove
This torment, if thou wilt. Thine heart must speak
My sentence, to be saved from death or no.
Pity me --oh, make haste to pity me!
This venom's might is swiftly bringing death!
Heal me, while life yet lingers in my limbs!
Remember not those pangs of jealously,
Nor leave me by a cruel doom to die
Low fallen at thy feet! This should offend
The Prayers, the Daughters of the Thunderer Zeus,
Whose anger followeth unrelenting pride
With vengeance, and the Erinnys executes
Their wrath. My queen, I sinned, in folly sinned;
Yet from death save me --oh, make haste to save!"

So prayed he; but her darkly-brooding heart
Was steeled, and her words mocked his agony:
"Thou comest unto me! --thou, who didst leave
Erewhile a wailing wife in a desolate home! --
Didst leave her for thy Tyndarid darling! Go,
Lie laughing in her arms for bliss! She is better
Than thy true wife --is, rumour saith, immortal!
Make haste to kneel to her --but not to me!
Weep not to me, nor whisper pitiful prayers!
Oh that mine heart beat with a tigress' strength,
That I might tear thy flesh and lap thy blood
For all the pain thy folly brought on me!
Vile wretch! where now is Love's Queen glory-crowned?
Hath Zeus forgotten his daughter's paramour?
Have them for thy deliverers! Get thee hence
Far from my dwelling, curse of Gods and men!
Yea, for through thee, thou miscreant, sorrow came
On deathless Gods, for sons and sons' sons slain.
Hence from my threshold! --to thine Helen go!
Agonize day and night beside her bed:
There whimper, pierced to the heart with cruel pangs,
Until she heal thee of thy grievous pain."

So from her doors she drave that groaning man --
Ah fool! not knowing her own doom, whose weird
Was straightway after him to tread the path
Of death! So Fate had spun her destiny-thread.
Then, as he stumbled down through Ida's brakes, Where Doom on his death-path was leading him Painfully halting, racked with heart-sick pain, Hera beheld him, with rejoicing soul Throned in the Olympian palace-court of Zeus. And seated at her side were handmaids four Whom radiant-faced Solono bore to the Sun To be unwearying ministers in heaven, In form and office diverse each from each; For of these Seasons one was summer's queen, And one for winter and his stormy star, Of spring the third, of autumn-tide the fourth. So in four portions parted is man's year Ruled by these Queens in turn --but of all this Be Zeus himself the Overseer in heaven. And of those issues now these spake with her Which baleful Fate in her ill-ruining heart was shaping to the birth --the new espousals Of Helen, fatal to Deiphobus -- The wrath of Helenus, who hoped in vain For that fair bride, and how, when he had flod, Wroth with the Trojans, to the mountain-height, Achaca's sons would seize him and would hale Unto their ships --how, by his counselling
Strong Tydeus' son should with Odysseus scale
The great wall, and should slay Alcathous
The temple-warder, and should bear away
Pallas the Gracious, with her free consent,
Whose image was the sure defence of Troy;--
Yea, for not even a God, how wroth soe'er,
Had power to lay the City of Priam waste
While that immortal shape stood warden there.
No man had carven that celestial form,
But Cronos' Son himself had cast it down
From heaven to Priam's gold-abounding burg.

Of these things with her handmaids did the Queen
Of Heaven hold converse, and of many such,
But Paris, while they talked gave up the ghost
On Ida: never Helen saw him more.
Loud wept the Nymphs around him; for they still
Remembered how their nursling wont to lisp
His childish prattle, compassed with their smiles.
And with them mourned the tender light of foot,
Sorrowful-hearted; moaned the mountain-glows.
Then unto travail-burdened Priam's queen
A herdman told the dread doom of her son.
Wildly her trembling, heart leapt when she heard;
With failing limbs she sank to earth and wailed:
"Dead!—thou dead, O dear child. Grief heaped on grief
Hast thou bequeathed me, grief eternal. Best
Of all my sons, save Hector alone, wast thou!
While beats my heart, my grief shall weep for thee.
The hand of Heaven is in our sufferings:
Some Fate devised our ruin—oh that I
Had lived not to endure it, but had died
In days of wealthy peace! But now I see
Woes upon woes, and ever look to see
Worse things—my children slain, my city sacked
And burned with fire by stony-hearted foes,
Daughters, sons' wives, all Trojan women, haled
Into captivity with our little ones!"

So wailed she; but the King heard naught thereof,
But weeping ever sat by Hector's grave,
For most of all his sons he honoured him,
His mightiest, the defender of his land.
Nothing of Paris knew that pierced heart;
But long and loud lamented Helen; yet
Those wails were but for Trojan ears; her soul
With other thoughts was busy, as she cried:
"Husband, to me, to Troy, and to thyself
A bitter blow is this thy woeful death!"
In misery hast thou lost me, and I look
To see calamities more deadly yet.
Oh that the Spirit of the Storm had snatched
Me from the earth when first I fared with thee
Drawn by a baleful Fate. It might not be;
The Gods have meted ruin to thee and me.
With shuddering horror all men look on me,
All hate me! Place of refuge is there none
For me; for if to the Danaan host I fly,
With torments will they greet me. If I stay,
Troy's sons and daughters here will compass me
And rend me. Earth shall cover not my corpse,
But dogs and fowl of ravin shall devour.
Oh had Fate slain me ere I saw these woes!"  

So cried she: 'Not for him, far less she mourned
Than for herself, remembering her own sin.
Yea, and Troy's daughters but in semblance wailed
For him: of other woes their hearts were full.
Some thought on parents, some on husbands slain,
These on their sons, on honoured kinsmen those.

One only heart was pierced with grief unfeigned,
Oenone. Not with them of Troy she wailed,
But far away within that desolate home
Moaning she lay on her lost husband's bed.
As when the copes on high mountains stand
White-veiled with frozen snow, which o'er the glens
The west-wind blast have strown, but now the sun
And east-wind roll it flat, and the long heights
With water-course strewn, on down the glades:
Slide, as they flow, the heavy sheets, to swell
The rushing waters of an ice-cold spring,
So melted she in tears of anguish'd pain,
And for her own, her husband, agonised,
And cried to her heart with miserable moans:
"Woe for my wickedness! O hateful life!
I loved my hapless husband —dreamed with him
To pace to e'dl's bright threshold hand in hand,
And heart in heart! The gods ordained not so.
Oh had the black Fates snatched me from the earth
Ere I from Paris turned away in hate!
My living love hath left me! — yet will I
Dare to die with him, for I loathe the light."

So cried she, weeping, weeping pitiously,
Remembering him whom death had swallowed up,
Wasting, as melteth wax before the flame —
Yet secretly, being fearful lest her sire
Should mark it, or her handmaid —till the night
Rose from broad Ocean, flooding all the earth
With darkness bringing men release from toil.
Then, while her father and her maidens slept,
She slid the bolts back of the outer doors,
And rushed forth like a storm-blast. Fast she ran,
As when a heifer 'mid the mountains speeds,
Her heart with passion stung, to meet her mate,
And madly races on with flying feet,
And fears not, in her frenzy of desire,
The herdman, as her wild rush bears her on,
So she but find her mate amid the woods;
So down the long tracks flew Oenone's feet
Seeking the awful pyre, to leap thereon.
No weariness she knew: as upon wings
Her feet flew faster ever, onward spurred
By fell Fate, and the Cyprian Queen. She feared
No shaggy beast that met her in the dark—
Who erst had feared them sorely—rugged rock
And precipice of tangled mountain-slope,
She trod them all unstumbling; torrent-beds
She leapt. The white Moon-goddess from on high
Looked on her, and remembered her own love,
Princely Endymion, and she pitied her
In that wild race, and shining overhead
In her full brightness, made the long tracks plain.
Throng round, and heaped the death-bale broad and high
For love's and sorrow's latest service done
To one of old their comrade and their king.
Sore weeping stool they round. She raised no wail,
The broken-hearted, when she saw him there,
But her mantle muffling up her face,
Leapt on the pyre: loud wailed that multitude.
There burn'd she, clasping Paris. All the Nymphs
Marv'led, beholding her beside her lord
Flung down, and heart to heart spake whispering:
"Verily evil-hearted Paris was,
Who loft a leal true wife, and took for bride
A wanton, to himself and Troy a curse.
Ah fool, who recked not of broken heart
Of a most virtuous wife, who more than life
Loved him who turned from her and loved her not!"

So in their hearts the Nymphs spake: but they twain
Burned on the pyre, never to hail again
The dayspring. Wondering herdmen stood around,
As once the thronging Argives marvelling saw
Ev'n the fire her lord
Capanus, slain by Zeus' dread thunderbolt.
But when the blast of the devouring fire
Had made twain one, Oceanus and Paris, now
One little heap of ashes, then with wine
Quenched they the embers, and they laid their bones
In a wide golden vase, and round them piled
The earth-mound; and they set two pillars there
That each from other ever turn away;
For the old jealousy in the marble lives.


Hugh G. Evelyn-White, trans. *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*

I BEGIN to sing of rich-haired Demeter, awful goddess of
her and her trim-ankled daughter whom Aidoneus rapt away,
given to him by all-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderor.

Apart from Demeter, lady of the golden sword and
glorious fruits, she was playing with the deepbosomed daughters of Oceanus and gathering flowers over a soft
mendow, roses and crocus; and beautiful violets, irises
also and hyacinths and narcissus, which Earth made to grow
at the will of Zeus and to please the Host of Many, to be a
snake for the bloom like girl—a marvellous, radiant
flower. It was a thing of awe whether for deathless gods
or mortal men to see: from its root grew a hundred blooms
and it smelled most sweetly, so that all wide heaven above
and whole earth and the sea's salt swell laughed for joy.
And the girl was amazed and reached out with both hands to
take the lovely toy; but the wide-pathed earth yawned there
in the plain of Nysa, and the lord, Host of Many, with his
immortal horses sprang out upon her—the Son of Cronos, He
who has many names.¹

He caught her up reluctant on his golden car and
bare her away lamenting. Then she cried out shrilly with
her voice, calling upon her father, the Son of Cronos, who
is most high and excellent. But no one, either of the
deathless gods or of mortal men, heard her voice, nor yet
the olive-trees bearing rich fruit: only tender-hearted
Hecate, bright-coiffèd, the daughter of Parsaeus, heard
the girl from her cave, and the lord Helios, Hyperion's

¹. The Greeks feared to name Pluto directly and mentioned
him by one of many descriptive titles, such as "Host of
Many":...
bright son, as she cried to her father, the Son of Cronos. But he was sitting aloof, apart from the gods, in his temple where many pray, receiving sweet offerings from mortal men. So he, that Son of Cronos, of many names, who is Ruler of Many and Host of Many, was bearing her away by leave of Zeus on his immortal chariot—his own brother's child and all unwilling.

And so long as she, the goddess, yet beheld earth and starry heaven and the strong-flowing sea where fishes shoal, and the rays of sun, and still hoped to see her dear mother and the tribes of eternal gods, so long hope calmed her great heart for all her trouble.... and the heights of the mountains and the depths of the sea rang with her immortal voice: and her queenly mother heard her.

Bitter pain seized her heart, and she rent the covering upon her divine hair with her dear hands: her dark cloak she cast down from both her shoulders and sped, like a wild bird, over the firm land and yielding sea, seeking her child. But no one would tell her the truth, neither god or mortal man; and of the birds of omen none came with true news for her. Then for nine days queenly Doo wandered over the earth with flaming torches in her
hands, so grieved that she never tasted ambrosia and the
sweet draught of nectar, nor sprinkled her body with water.
But when the tenth enlightening dawn had come, Hecate,
with a torch in her hands, met her, and spoke to her and
told her news:

"Queenly Demeter, bringer of seasons and giver of
good gifts, what god of heaven or what mortal man has rapt
away Paraclete and pierced with sorrow your dear heart?
For I heard her voice, yet saw not with my eyes who it was.
But I tell you truly and shortly all I know."

So, then, said Hecate. And the daughter of rich-
haired Rhea answered her not, but sped swiftly with her,
holding flaming torches in her hands. So they came to
Helios, who is watchman of both gods and men, and stood in
front of his horses: and the bright goddess enquired of
him: "Helios, do you at least regard me, goddess as I am,
if ever by word or deed of mine I have cheered your heart
and spirit. Through the fruitless air I heard the thrilling
cry of my daughter whom I bare, sweet scion of my body and
lovely in form, as of one seized violently; though with my eyes
I saw nothing. But you — for with your beams you look
down from the bright upper air over all the earth and sea —
tell me truly of my dear child, if you have seen her anywhere,
what god or mortal man has violently seized her against her will and mine, and so made off."

So said she. And the Son of Hyperion answered her: "Queen Demeter, daughter of rich-haired Rhea, I will tell you the truth; for I greatly reverence and pity you in your grief for your trim-ankled daughter. None other of the deathless gods is to blame, but only cloud-gathering Zeus who gave her to Hades, her father's brother, to be called his buxom wife. And Hades seized her and took her loudly crying in his chariot down to his realm of mist and gloom. Yet, goddess, cease your loud lament and keep not vain anger unrelentingly: Aidoneus, the Ruler of Many, is no unfitting husband among the deathless gods for your child, being your own brother and born of the same stock: also, for honour, he has that third share which he received when division was made at the first, and is appointed lord of those among whom he dwells."

So he spake, and called to his horses: and at his chiding they quickly whirled the swift chariot along, like long-winged birds.

But grief yet more terrible and savage came into the heart of Demeter, and thereafter she was so angered
with the dark-clouded Son of Cronos that she avoided the gathering of the gods and high Olympus, and went to the towns and rich fields of men, disfiguring her form a long while. And no one of men or deep-bosomed women knew her when they saw her, until she came to the house of wise Celeus who then was lord of fragrant Eleusis. Vexed in her dear heart, she sat near the wayside by the Maiden Well, from which women of the place were used to draw water, in a shady place over which grew an olive shrub. And she was like an ancient woman who is cut off from childbearing and the gifts of garland-loving Aphrodite, like the nurses of king's children who deal justice, or like the house-keepers in their echoing halls. There the daughters of Celeus, son of Eleusis, saw her, as they were coming for easy-drawn water, to carry it in pitchers of bronze to their dear father's house: four were they and like goddesses in the flower of their girlhood, Callidice and Cleisidice and lovely Demo and Callithoë who was the eldest of them all. They knew her not, --for the gods are not easily discerned by mortals--, but standing near by her spoke winged words:

"Old mother, whence and who are you of folk born long ago? Why are you gone away from the city and do not draw near the houses? For there in the shady halls
are women of just such age as you, and others younger; and they would welcome you both by word and by deed."

Thus they said. And she, that queen among goddesses answered them saying: "Hail, dear children, whosoever you are of woman-kind. I will tell you my story; for it is not unseemly that I should tell you truly what you ask. Dosso is my name, for my stately mother gave it me. And now I am come from Crete over the sea's wide back, -- not willingly; but pirates brought me thence by force of strength against my liking. Afterwards they put in with their swift craft to Thoricus, and there the women landed on the shore in full throng and the men likewise, and they began to make ready a meal by the stern-sabler of the ship. But my heart craved not pleasant food, and I fled secretly across the dark country and escaped my master, that they should not take me unpurchased across the men, there to win a price for me. And so I wandered and am come here; and I know not at all what land this is or what people are in it. But may all those who dwell on Olympus give you husbands and birth of children as parents desire, so you take pity on me, maidens, and show me this clearly that I may learn, dear children, to the house of what man and woman I may go,
to work for them cheerfully at such tasks as belong to a
woman of my age. Well could I nurse a new born child,
holding him in my arms, or keep house, or spread my masters'
bed in a recess of the well-built chamber, or teach the
woman their work."

So said the goddess. And straightway the unwed
maiden Callidice, goodliest in form of the daughters of
Cleus, answered her and said:

"Mother, what the gods send us, we mortals bear
perforce, although we suffer; for they are much stronger
than we. But now I will teach you clearly, telling you
the names of men who have great power and honour here and
are chief among the people, guarding our city's coif of
towers by their wisdom and true judgements: there is wise
Triptolemus and Diocles and Polyxenus and blameless
Eumolpus and Dolichus and our own brave father. All these
have wives who manage in the house, and no one of them, so
soon as she had seen you, would dishonour you and turn you
from the house, but they will welcome you; for indeed you are
godlike. But if you will, stay here; and we will go to our
father's house and tell Metaneira, our deep-bosomed mother,
all this matter fully, that she may bid you rather to come to
our home than search after the houses of others. She has an
only son, late-born, who is being nursed in our well-built house, a child of many prayers and welcome; if you could bring him up until he reached the full measure of youth, any one of womankind who should see you would straightway envy you, such gifts would our mother give for his upbringing."

So she spoke: and the goddess bowed her head in mourning. And they filled their shining vessels with water and carried them off rejoicing. Quickly they came to their father's great house and straightway told their mother according as they had heard and seen. Then she bade them go with all speed and invite the stranger to come for a measureless hire. As hinds or heifers in spring time, when sated with pasture, bound about a meadow, so they, holding up the folds of their lovely garments, darted down the hollow path, and their hair like a crocus flower streamed about their shoulders. And they found the good goddess near the wayside where they had left her before, and led her to the house of their dear father. And she walked behind, distressed in her dear heart, with her head veiled and wearing a dark cloak which waved about the slender feet of the goddess.
Soon they came to the house of heaven-nurtured Celeus and went through the cortico to where their queenly mother sat by a pillar of the close-fitted roof, holding her son, a tender son, in her bosom. And the girls ran to her. But the goddess val'ee to the threshold; and her head reached the roof and she filled the doorway with a heavenly radiance. Then awe and reverence and pale fear took hold of Metaneira, and she rose up from her couch before Demeter, and bade her be seated. But Demeter, bringer of seasons and giver of perfect gifts, would not sit upon the bright couch, but stayed silent with lovely eyes cast down until careful Lambe placed a jointed seat for her and threw over it a silvery fleece. Then she sat down and held her veil in her hands before her face. A long time she sat upon the stool without speaking because of her sorrow, and greeted no one by word or by sign, but rested, never smiling, and tasting neither food nor drink, because she pined with longing for her deep-bosomed daughter, until careful Lambe—who pleased her moods in after time also—moved the holy lady with many a quip and jest to smile and laugh and cheer her heart. Then Metaneira filled a cup with sweet wine and offered it to her; but she refused it, for she said it was not lawful for her

1. Demeter chooses the lowlier seat, supposedly as being more suitable to her assumed condition, but really because in her sorrow she refuses all comforts.
to drink red wine, but bade them mix meal and water with soft mint and give her to drink. And Metaneira mixed the draught and gave it to the goddess as she bade. So, the great queen Deo received it to observe the sacrament.¹

And of them all, well-girded Metaneira first began to speak: "Hail, lady! For I think you are not meanly but nobly born; truly dignity and grace are conspicuous upon your eyes as in the eyes of kings that deal justice. Yet we mortals bear perforce what the gods send us, though we be grieved, for a yoke is set upon our necks. But now, since you are come here, you shall have what I can bestow: and nurse me this child whom the gods gave me in my old age and beyond my hope, a son much prayed for. If you should bring him up until he reach the full measure of youth, any one woman-kind that sees you will straightway envy you, so great reward would I give for his upbringing."

Then rich-haired Demeter answered her: "And to you, also, lady, all hail, and may be gods give you good! Gladly will I take the boy to my breast, as you bid me, and will nurse him. Never, I ween, through any heedlessness of his nurse shall witchcraft hurt him nor yet the Undercutter:²

1. An act of communion—the drinking of the potion here described—was one of the most important pieces of ritual in the Eleusinian mysteries, as commemorating the sorrows of the goddess.

2. Undercutter and Woodcutter are probably popular names (after the style of Hesiod's "Boneless One") for the worm thought to be the cause of teething and toothache.
for I know a charm far stronger than the Woodcutter, and
I know an excellent safeguard against woeful witchcraft."

When she had spoken, she took the child in her
fragrant bosom with her divine hands: and his mother was
glad in her heart. So the goddess nursed in the palace
Demophoon, wise Celeus' goodly son whom well-girded
Metaneira bare. And the child grew like some immortal
being, not fed with food nor nourished at the breast: for
by day rich-crowned Demeter would anoint him with ambrosia
as if he were the offspring of god and breathe sweetly upon
him as she held him in her bosom. But at night she would
hide him like a brand in the heart of fire, unknown to his
dear parents. And it wrought great wonder in these that
he grew beyond his age; for he was like the gods face to
face. And she would have made him deathless and unaging,
had not well-girded Metaneira in her heedlessness kept watch
by night from her sweet-smelling chamber and spied. But
she wailed and smote her two hips, because she
feared for her son and was greatly distraught in her heart;
so she lamented and uttered winged words:

"Demophoon, my son, the strange woman buries you
deep in fire and works grief and bitter sorrow for me."
Thus she spoke, mourning. And the bright goddess, lovely-crowned Demeter, heard her, and was wroth with her. So with her divine hands she snatched from the fire the dear son whom Metaneira had born unhoped-for in the palace, and cast him from her to the ground; for she was terribly angry in her heart. Forthwith she said to well-girded Metaneira:

"Witless are you mortals and dull to foresee your lot, whether of good or evil, that comes upon you. For now in your heedlessness you have wrought folly past healing; for — be witness the oath of gods, the relentless water of Styx — I would have made your dear son deathless and unaging all his days and would have bestowed on him ever-lasting honour, but now he can in no way escape death and the fates. Yet shall unfailing honour always rest upon him, because he lay upon my knees and slept in my arms. But, as the years move round and when he is in his prime, the sons of the Eleusinians shall ever wage war and dread strife with one another continually. Lo! I am that Demeter who has share of honour and is the greatest help and cause of joy to the undying gods and mortal men. But now, let the people build me a great temple and an alter below it and beneath the city and its sheer wall upon a rising hillock
above Callichoros. And I myself will teach my rites, and henceforth you may reverently perform them and so win the favour of my heart."

When she had so said, the goddess changed her stature and her looks, thrusting old age away from her: beauty spread round about her and a lovely fragrance was wafted from her sweet-smelling robes, and from the divine body of the goddess a light shone afar, while golden tresses spread down over her shoulders, so that the strong house was filled with brightness as with lightning. And so she went out from the palace.

And straightway Kataneira's knees were loosed and she remained speechless for a long while and did not remember to take up her late-born son from the ground. But his sisters heard his pitiful wailing and sprang down from their well-spread beds: one of them took up the child in her arms and laid him in her bosom, while another revived the fire, and the third rushed with soft feet to bring their mother from her fragrant chamber. And they gathered about the struggling child and washed him, embracing him lovingly; but he was not comforted, because nurses and handmaids much less skilful were holding him now.
All night long they sought to appease the glorious goddess, quaking with fear. But, as soon as dawn began to show, they told powerful Celeus all things without fail, as the lovely-crowned goddess Demeter charged them. So Celeus called the countless people to an assembly and bade them make a goodly temple for rich-haired Demeter and an altar upon the rising hillock. And they obeyed him right speedily and harkened to his voice, doing as he commanded. As for the child, he grew like an immortal being.

Now when they had finished building and had drawn back their toil, they went every man to his house. But golden-haired Demeter sat there apart from all the blessed gods and stayed, wasting with yearning for her deep-bosomed daughter. Then she caused a most dreadful and cruel year for mankind over all-nourishing earth: the ground would not make the seed sprout, for rich-crowned Demeter kept it hid. In the fields the oxen drew many a curved plough in vain, and much white barley was cast upon the land without avail. So she would have destroyed the whole race of man with cruel famine and have robbed them who dwell on Olympus of their glorious right of gifts and sacrifices, had not Zeus perceived and marked this in his heart. First he sent golden-winged Iris to call rich-haired Demeter,
lovely Lar, to be courteous. And she obeyed the dark-clouded son of Cronus, and sped with swift foot across the space between. She came to the stronghold of fragrant Eleusis, and there finding dark-cloaked Demeter in her temple, spake to her and uttered winged words:

"Demeter, father Zeus, whose wisdom is everlasting, calls you to come join the tribes of the eternal gods: come therefore, and let not the message I bring from Zeus pass unobeyed."

Thus said Iris imploring her. But Demeter's heart was not moved. Then again the father sent forth all the blessed and eternal gods besides: and they came, one after the other, kept calling her and offering many very beautiful gifts and whatever right she might be pleased to choose among the deathless gods. Yet no one was able to persuade her mind and will, so wrath was she in her heart; but she stubbornly rejected all their words: for she vowed that she would never set foot on fragrant Olympus nor let fruit spring out of the ground, until she beheld with her eyes her own fair-faced daughter.

Now when all-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderer heard this, he sent the slayer of Argus whose wand is of gold to
Erebus, so that having won over Hades with soft words, he might lead forth chaste Persephone to the light from the misty gloom to join the gods, and that her mother might see her with her eyes and cease from anger. And Hermes obeyed, and leaving the house of Olympus, straightway sprang down with speed to the hidden places of the earth. And he found the lord Hades in his house seated upon a couch, and his shy mate with him, much reluctant, because she yearned for her mother. But she was afar off, brooding on her fell design because of the deeds of the blessed gods. And the strong Slayer of Argus drew near and said:

"Dark-haired Hades, ruler over the departed, father Zeus bids me bring noble Persephone forth from Erebus unto the gods, that her mother may see her with her eyes and cease from her dread anger with the immortals; for now she plans an awful deed, to destroy the weakly tribes of earth-born men by keeping seed hidden beneath the earth, and so she makes an end of the honours of the undying gods. For she keeps fearful anger and does not consort with the gods, but sits aloof in her fragrant temple, dwelling in the rocky hold of Eleusis."

So he said. And Aidoneus, ruler over the dead,
smiled grimly and obeyed the behest of Zeus the king.
For he straightway urged wise Persephone, saying:

"Go now, Persephone, to your dark-robed mother,
go, and feel kindly in your heart towards me: be not so
exceedingly cast down; for I shall be no unfitting husband
for you among the deathless gods, that am own brother to
father Zeus. And while you are here, you shall rule all
that lives and moves and shall have the greatest rights
among the deathless gods: those who defraud you and do
not appease your power with offerings, reverently perform­
ing rites and paying fit gifts, shall be punished for
evermore."

When he said this, wise Persephone was filled with
joy and hastily sprang up for gladness. But he on his
part secretely gave her sweet pomegranate seed to eat,
taking care for himself that she might not remain contin­
ually with grave, dark-robed Demeter. Then Aidoneus the
Ruler of Many openly got ready his deathless horses
beneath the golden chariot. And she mounted on the
chariot, and the strong Slayer of Argus took reins and
whip in his dear hands and drove forth from the hall, the
horses speeding readily. Swiftly they traversed their
long course, and neither the sea nor river-waters nor
grassy glens nor mountain-peaks checked the career of the immortal horses, but they clove the deep air above them as they went. And Hermes brought them to the place where rich-crowned Demeter was staying and checked them before her fragrant temple.

And when Demeter saw them, she rushed forth as does a Maenad down some thick-wooded mountain, while Persephone on the other side, when she saw her mother's sweet eyes, left the chariot and horses, and leaped down to run to her, falling upon her neck, embraced her. But while Demeter was still holding her dear child in her arms, her heart suddenly mingave her for some unaware, so that she feared greatly and ceased fondling her daughter and asked of her at once: "My child, tell me, surely you have not tasted any food while you were below? Speak out and hide nothing, but let us both know. For if you have not, you shall come back from loathly Hades and live with me and your father, the dark-clouded Son of Cronos and be honoured by all the deathless gods; but if you have tasted food, you must go back again beneath the secret places of the earth, there to dwell a third part of the seasons every year; yet for the two parts you shall be with me and the other deathless gods. But when the earth shall bloom with fragrant flowers of
spring in every time, the first the realm of darkness and
gloom then street come once more to be a wonder for gods
and mortal men. And now I tell ye how he reft you away
to the realm of darkness and gloom, and by what trick did
the strong "bat of Iapygian youth?"

Then beautiful Persephone answered her thus:

"Mother, I will tell you without error. When luck-bringing
Hermes came, swift messenger from my father the Son of
Cronos and other Sons of Heaven, bidding me come back from
Erebus that you might see with your eyes and so cease
from your anger and fearful wrath against the gods, I
sprang up at once for joy; but he secretly put in my mouth
sweet food, a pomegranate seed, and forced me to taste
against my will. Also I will tell you how he reft me away
by the deep plan of my father the Son of Cronos and
carried me off beneath the depths of the earth, and will
relate the whole matter as you ask. All we were playing
in a lovely meadow, Leucippe¹ and Phaeno and Electra and
Ianthe, Melita also and Iache with Rhodea and Callirhoë
and Kelobosis and Tyche and Ocyrhoe, fair as a flower,
Chryseis, Ianeira, Acaste and Admete and Rhodope and Pluto
and charming Calypso; Styx too was there and Urania and

¹. The list of names is taken with five additions—from
Hesiod, THEOGONY 346ff: for their general significance
see note on that passage.
lovely Galaxauro with Arrows who rouses battles and
Artemis delighting in arrows: we were playing and gathering sweet flowers in our hands, soft crocuses mingled with irises and hyacinths, and rose-blooms and lilies, miraculous to see, and the narcissus which the wide earth caused to grow yellow as a crocus. That I plucked in my joy; but the earth parted beneath, and there the strong lord, the Host of Many, sprang forth and in his golden chariot he bore me away, all unwilling, beneath the earth: then I cried with a shrill cry. All this is true, sore though it grieves me to tell the tale."

So did they then, with hearts at one, greatly cheer each the other's soul and spirit with many an embrace: their hearts had relief from their griefs while each took and gave back joyousness.

Then bright-coiffed Hecate came near to them, and often did she embrace the daughter of holy Demeter: and from that time the lady Hecate was minister and companion to Persephone.

And all-seeing Zeus sent a messenger to them, rich-haired Rhea, to bring dark-cloaked Demeter to join the families of the gods: and he promised to give her what
rights she should choose among the deathless gods and agreed that her daughter should go down for the third part of the circling year to darkness and gloom, but for the two parts live with her mother and the other deathless gods. Thus he commanded. And the goddess did not disobey the message of Zeus; swiftly she rushed down from the peaks of Olympus and came to the plain of Pharus, rich, fertile corn-land once, but then in nowise fruitful, for it lay idle and utterly leafless, because the white grain was hidden by design of trim-ankled Demeter. But afterwards, as spring time waxed, it was soon to be waving with long ears of corn, and its rich furrows to be loaded with grain upon the ground, while others would already be bound in sheaves. There first she landed from the fruitless upper air: and glad was the goddess to see each other and cheered in heart. Then bright coiffed Rhea said to Demeter:

"Come, my daughter; for far-seeing Zeus the loud-thunder calls you to join the families of the gods, and has promised to give what rights you please among the deathless gods, and has agreed that for a third part of the circling year your daughter shall go down to darkness and gloom, but for the two parts shall be with you and other deathless gods: so has he declared it shall be and has"
bowed his head in token. But come, my child, obey, and be not too angry unrelentingly with the dark-clouded Son of Cronos; but rather increase forthwith for men the fruit that gives them life."

So spake Rhea. And rich-crowned Demeter did not refuse but straightway made fruit to spring up from the rich lands, so that the whole wide earth was laden with leaves and flowers. Then she went, and to the kings who deal justice, Triptolemus and Diocles, the horse-driver, and to doughty Eumolpus and Celeus, leader of the people, she showed the conduct of her rites and taught them all mysteries, to Triptolemus and Phyeschmus and Diocles also, — awful mysteries which no one may in any way transgress or pry into or utter, for deep are of the gods checks the voice. Happy is he among men upon earth who has seen these mysteries; but he who is uninitiate and who has no part in them, never has lot of like good things once he is dead, down in the darkness and gloom.

But when the bright goddess had taught them all, they went to Olympus to the gathering of the other gods. And there they all before Zeus who delights in thunder, awful and reverend god. . . . Right blessed is he among men on earth whom they freely love; soon they do send
Plutus as guest to his great house, Plutus who gives wealth to mortal men.

And now, queen of the land of sweet Eleusis and son-fert Paros and rocky Aetron, lady giver of good gifts, bringer of seasons, queen Deo, be gracious, you and your daughter all heerious Persephone, and for my song grant me heart-cheerin' substance. And now I will remember you and another song also.

Homer's Hymn II, "To Demeter", pp. 289-325.
Virgil hero guides Dante to the eighth gulf of Inferno and from over the arch shows him numberless flames. Each flame contains a sinner except one strange flame that divides itself into two at the top. Diomede and Ulysses are enclosed in it. Dante narrates the encounter:

Upon the bridge I forward bent to look
And grasp'd a flinty mass, or else had fallen,
Though push'd not from the height. The guide, who mark'd
How I did gaze attentive, thus began:
"Within these ardours are the spirits; each
Swathed in confining fire." "Master! thy word,"
I answer'd, "hath assured me; yet I deem'd
Already of the truth, already wish'd
To ask thee who is in yon fire, that comes
So parted at the summit, as it seem'd
Ascending from that funeral pile where lay
The Theban brothers." He replied: "Within,
Ulysses there and Diomede endure
Their penal tortures, thus to vengeance now
Together hasting, as oerwhile to wrath
These in the flame with ceaseless groans deplore
The ambush of the horse, that open'd wide
A portal for the goodly seed to pass,
Which sow'd imperial Rome; nor less the guilo
Lament they, whence, of her Achilles 'reft,
Deidamia yet in death complains.
And there is rued the stratagem that Troy
Of her Palladium spoil'd." —"If they have power
Of utterance from within these sparks," said I,
"O master! think my prayer a thousand-fold
In repetition urged, that thou vouchsafe
To pause till here the horned flame arrive.
See, how toward it with desires I bend."

He thus: "Thy prayer is worthy of much praise,
And I accept it therefore; but do thou
Thy tongue refrain: to question them be mine;
For I divine thy wish; and they perchance,
For they were Greeks, might shun discourse with thee."

When there the flame had come, where time and place
Seem'd fitting to my guide, he thus began:
"O ye, who dwell two spirits in one fire!
If, living, I of you did merit aught,
Whate'er the measure were of that desert,
When in the world my lofty strain I pour'd,
Move ye not on, till one of you unfold
In what clime death o'ertook him self-destroy'd."

Of the old flame forthwith the greater horn
Begun to roll, murmuring, as a fire
That labors with the wind, then to and fro
Wagging the top, as a tongue uttering sounds,
Threw out its voice, and spake: "When I escaped
From Circe, who beyond a circling year
Had held me near Caieta by her charms,
Ere thus Æneas yet had named the shore;
Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence
Of my old father, nor return of love,
That should have crown'd Penelopo with joy,
Could overcome in me the zeal I had
To explore the world, and search the ways of life,
Man's evil and his virtue. Forth I sail'd
Into the deep illimitable main,
With but one bark, and the small faithful band
That yet cleaved to me. As Iberia far,
Far as Marocco, either shore I saw,
And the Sardinian and each isle beside
Which round that ocean lathes. Tardy with age
Were I and my companions, when we came
To the strait pass, where Hercules ordain'd
The boundaries not to be o'erstepp'd by man.
The walls of Seville to my right I left,
On the other hand already Ceuta past.
'To brothers!' I began, 'who to the west
Through perils without number now have reach'd;
To this the short remaining watch, that yet
Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof
Of the unpeopled world, following the track
Of Phoebus. Call to mind from whence ye sprang:
Ye were not form'd to live the life of brutes,
But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.'
With these few words I sharpen'd for the voyage
The mind of my associates, that I then
Could scarcely have withheld them. To the dawn
Our poop we turn'd, ...."

Alexander Pope, trans. *Iliad and Odyssey of Homer* (London: Frederick Warne and Co. and New York, n.d.)

"When lo! the mighty Theban I behold;¹
To guide his steps he bore a staff of gold;
Awful he trod! majestic was his look!
And from his holy lips these accents broke:

"Why, mortal, wanderest thou from cheerful day,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
What angry gods to these dark regions led
Thee, yet alive, companion of the dead?
But sheathe thy poniard, while my tongue relates
Heaven's stedfast purpose, and thy future fates."

"While yet he spoke, the prophet I obey'd,
And in the scabbard plunged the glittering blade:
Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then express'd
dark things to come, the counsels of his breast.

"Weary of light, Ulysses here explores
A prosperous voyage to his native shores;
But know --by me unerring Fates disclose
New trains of dangers, and new scenes of woes.
I see, I see, thy bark by Neptune toss'd,
For injured Cyclops, and his eyeball lost!
Yet to thy woes the gods decree an end,

¹. The mighty Theban: Tiresias.
If Heaven thou please; and how to please attend!

Where on Trinacrian rocks the ocean roars,

Grazo numerous herds along the verdant shores;

Though hunger press, yet fly the dangerous prey,

The herds are sacred to the god of day,

Who all surveys with his extensive eye,

Above, below, on earth, and in the sky!

Rob not the god; and so propitious gales

Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails:

But, if his herds ye seize, beneath the waves

I see thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves!

The direful wreck Ulysses scarce survives!

Ulysses at his country scarce arrives!

Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end;

New foes arise, domestic ills attend!

There foul adulterers to thy bride resort,

And lordly gluttons riot in thy court.

But vengeance hastes amain! These eyes behold

The deathful scene, princes on princes roll'd!

That done, a people far from sea explore,

Who no'or knew salt, or heard the billows roar,

Or saw gay vessel stem the watery plain,

A painted wonder flying on the main!

2. Trinacrian i.e. three-painted, an epithet applied to

Sicily from its form.
Bear on thy back an oar: with strange amaze
A shepherd meeting thee, the oar surveys,
And names a van: there fix it on the plain,
To calm the god that holds the watery reign;
A threefold offering to his altar bring,
A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the ocean king.
But home return'd, to each ethereal power
Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
So peaceful shalt thou and thy blissful days,
And steal thyself from life by slow decays:
Unknown to pain, in age resign thy breath,
When late stern Neptune points the shaft with death:
To the dark grave retiring as to rest,
Thy people blessing, by thy people bless'd:
"Unerring truths, 0 man, my lips relate;
This is thy life to come and this is fate."

... Bk. XI, pp. 606-607.

CII


So also golden-throned Eos rapt away Tithonus who was of your race and like the deathless gods. And she
went to ask the dark-clouded Son of Cronus that he should be deathless and live eternally; and then bowed his head to her prayer and fulfilled her desire. Too simple was queenly Eos: she thought not in her heart to ask youth for him and to strip him of slough of deadly age. So while he enjoyed the sweet flower of life he lived rapturously with golden-throned Eos, the early-born, by the streams of Ocean, at the end of the earth; but when the first grey hairs began to ripple from his comely and noble chin, queenly Eos kept away from his bed, though she cherished him in her house and nourished him with food and ambrosia and gave him rich clothing. But when loathsome old age pressed full upon him, and he could not move nor lift his limbs, this seemed to her in her heart the best counsel: she laid him in a room and put to the shining doors. There he babbles endlessly, and no more has strength at all, such as once he had in his supple limbs.

Excerpt from Homeric Hymn V, "To Aphrodite", pp. 421-423.

Ci ii (a)


ARCHYTAS

Though in thy time, Archytas, skilled to weigh
Poor gift of trivial dust by Matine bay
Confines thee now! Little avails to thee

The starry heights to have scaled, and to its end
Heaven's arch surveyed, since doomed at length to die!
So Tantalus died, yet he to gods was friend;
Tithonus too, though love-born to the sky.
Minos, Jove's confidant, died. Hell will not yield
Twice-born Pythagoras now. Once more he's fared
To Death's dark realm, though he unfixed his shield
From temple-wall, proving Troy's war he shared,—

And that, then dying, naught to Death he passed
But flesh and skin; though too, as thou dost know,
No mean judge he of Nature. At the last
One night waits all; Death's road we all must go.
The Furies some to gloating Mars assign;
Of some the insatiate Sea his meal doth make.
Thick perish young and old; and Proserpine
Fails not from each in turn a lock to take.

Me the Southwind, which ever comes in storm
When sets Orion,whelmed in Hadria's wave.
O sailor, to this poor unburied form
Grudge not unkindly the small boon I crave,—
A pinch of sand! For thee thus kind I'll vow:

"When 'gainst Hesperian waves the Eastwind's driven,
Let the Venusian woods be tost, but thou

Unharmed remain! Let guerdon free be given

By Jove who's just and can give, Neptune too,
The god who guards Tarentum's sacred fane!"

Art thou so reckless as foul wrong to do,
Which may for doom to thy poor babes remain?

Scorn of thy rights may yet such wrong repay;
Then shall my vengeance come! Nor gift nor groan
Shall save! Brief, though thou haste, the needful stay;
Thou 'rt free to run, when thrice the dust is thrown.


Ciil (b)

TO GHOSTHUS

Peace from the gods the sailor craves if caught
In open Aegean Sea, when clouds arise
And hide the moon, and guiding stars show naught
To watchers' eyes;
Peace Thrace expects, when rage of war burns high;
Peace, Parthian bowmen, while they bear the quiver;
Peace, that by gems or gold or purple's dye
Is purchased never.

For not king's wealth nor counsel's power can daunt
The angry passions which keep souls in thrall,
Or the fell cloud of carking cares which haunt
The fretted hall.

Well yet at little cost he lives, who shows
No silver on his board to outshine his sire's;
His easy sleep nor sordid terror knows,
Nor mean desires.

Why, when so brief our day, shoot we so wild
At marks so many? Why quit home to find
Lands warmed by other suns? Who, self-exiled,
Leaves self behind?

Soul-cankering Care climbs mighty ships, though ringed
With brass; riders she dogs across the plain;
Swifter is she than deer, or tempests winged
With clouds of rain.

Let not his mind, who's happy now, be fixed
On distant ills, but soothe life's present pains
With imperturbable smile; a good unmixed
For none remains.

Brief was Achilles' life, but great his fame!
Tithonus wastes and wastes, but still must live.
So what Time keeps from thee, perchance that name
To me he'll give.

Round thee a hundred flocks and heifers low,
Sicilian bred; to greet thee whinnies loud
A mare, for chariot fit; thy vestments show
Adornment proud
Twice purple-dyed. Fate grants me small estate,
But with it, breath of the Greek Muse's air;
And granting, too, of vulgar insolence hate,
Grants me full share.

Bk. 11, Ode XVI, pp. 49-50.

Civ


(Enter the prophet Tiresias, led by his young daughter, accompanied by Menoeceus).
Teiresias

Now lead me on, my daughter. You're the eye for my blind steps, as star is to a sailor. Now set my path upon the level plain and lead me lest I stumble. Your father's weak. Guard my lot-tablets with your maiden hand which on my holy seat of prophecy I drew when I had marked the oracle-birds. O young Menoeceus, Creon's son, now tell me, how far is still our journey to the town, and to your father? My knees begin to buckle. I've come so far I hardly can go on.

Creon

Take courage. You have come to harbor now, among your friends. Now hold him up, my son. Mule cars, and old men's feet, they need the help of someone else's hand.

Teiresias

Ah, we are here. Why did you want me, Creon?

Creon

I've not forgotten. But collect your strength,
and draw your breath; forget your laboring road.

Teiresias

I am fatigued, since only yesterday
I came from labor for Erechtheus' sons.
There they had war against Eumolpus' spear,
and I gave Cecrops' children victory.
So, as you see, I wear a golden crown,
as first fruit of their plunder from the foe.

Creon

I'll take your crown of victory as an omen.
We're in mid-wave of danger, as you know,
Danae's sons against us, strife for Thebes.
Our king is gone, dressed in his warrior-arms,
against Mycenae's force, Eteocles.
But he enjoined me to find out from you
what we should do in hope to save our city.

Teiresias

As far as he goes, I'd have locked my mouth,
withheld the oracles, but at your asking,
I'll tell you. Creon, the land has long been sick,
since Laius made a child against heaven's will,
and begot poor Oedipus, husband to his mother.
The bloody ruin of his piercing eyes
is the gods' clever warning unto Greece.
And Oedipus's sons who tried to cloak this up
with passage of time, as if to escape the gods,
erred in their folly, since they gave their father
neither his rights nor freedom to depart.
And so they stung the wretch to savage anger.
Therefore he cursed them terribly indeed,
since he was ailing and, besides, dishonored.
What did I not do, what did I not say?
All the result was hatred from those sons.
Death by their own hands is upon them, Creon;
and many corpses fallen over corpses,
struck with both Argive and Cadmean shafts,
will give the Theban land a bitter mourning.
You, my poor city, will be buried with them,
if no one is persuaded by my words.
This would be best, that none of Oedipus' house,
live in the land as citizen or lord,
since the gods hound them on to spoil the state.
But since the bad is stronger than the good
there is one other way to save the town.
But even for me it is not safe to say
that which is bitter to the man in power
who yet could save this city. Fare you well.
One among many, I will take what comes.
What else to do?

Creon

Stay here, old man.

Teiresias

Do not lay hands on me.

Creon

Now wait! Why flee?

Teiresias

Luck flees you, not myself.

Creon

Speak the salvation of the town and townsmen.

Teiresias

Now you may wish it, soon you'll wish it not.

Creon

I could not fail to wish my country's safety.
Teiresias

You really want to hear, and you are eager?

Creon

What should I be more earnest for than this?

Teiresias

Soon you will hear about my prophecies.
--But first there's something that I need to know.
Where is Menoeceus, he who brought me here?

Creon

He isn't far away, he's close to you.

Teiresias

Let him withdraw, far from my prophecies.

Creon

He is my son and will not talk at large.

Teiresias

You wish that I should speak while he is here?
Creon

Yes. He'll be glad to hear of what will save us.

Teiresias

Then shall you hear the way of prophecy, what you must do to save the Theban town. You must kill Menoeceus for his country's sake, Your child—since you yourself have asked your fate.

Creon

What are you saying? What's your word, old man?

Teiresias

Just what it is, and this you needs must do.

Creon

Oh, you have said much evil in short time.

Teiresias

Evil to you, great safety to your city.

Creon

I wasn't listening, I didn't hear.

City, farewell.
Teiresias

This is no more the man he was. He dodges.

Creon

Go, and goodbye. I do not need your seercraft.

Teiresias

Has truth now died because you are unhappy?

Creon

Oh, by your knees and by your old man's beard-

Teiresias

Why fall before me? What you ask is ruin.

Creon

Be quiet: don't reveal this to the town.

Teiresias

You tell me to do wrong; I won't keep quiet.

Creon

What will you do? You plan to kill my child?
Teiresias

Others must deal with action. I must speak.

Creon

Why is this curse on me, and on my son?

Teiresias

You are right to ask, and bring me to debate. He must, in that chamber where the earth-born dragon was born, the watcher over Dirce's streams, be slaughtered, and so give libation blood for Cadmus' crime, appeasing Ares' wrath, who now takes vengeance for his dragon's death. Do this, and Ares will be your ally.

If earth gets fruit for fruit, and human blood for her own offspring, then this land shall be friendly to you, she who sent up the crop of golden-helmeted Sown Men. One of their race, child of the dragon's jaws, must die this death. You are the one survivor of the Sown, pure-blooded, on both sides, you and your sons. Haemon's betrothal saves him from the slaughter. For he is not unwedded, though still virgin.
This boy, who belongs to none but to the city, if he should die, might save his fatherland, make harsh homecoming for Adrastus and the Argives, casting the dark of night upon their eyes, and make Thebes famous. There you have your choice, to save your city or to save your son.

Now you have all know. Child, take me home. A man's a fool to use the prophet's trade. For if he happens to bring bitter news he's hated by the men for whom he works; and if he pities them and tells them lies he wrongs the gods. No prophet but Apollo should sing to men, for he has nought to fear.

(Exeunt Teiresias and his daughter)

Chorus

Creon, why are you silent, holding your tongue? But I myself am stricken and amazed.

Creon

What can one say? But my response is clear. I'll never walk into such wretchedness as to give my city the slaughter of my son.
It's part of human life to love one's children.
No one would give his own son up to death.
Let no one praise me who would kill my sons!
Though I, since I am in the prime of life,
am ready to die to set the country free.
Up, son, before the whole town learns of this,
pay no attention to these wanton bodings,
fly quickly, get yourself outside this land.
For he will tell this to the chiefs and captains
making the rounds of the gates and their commanders.
If we anticipate him, you are safe.
If you come second, we're destroyed, you die.

Menoeceus

Where shall I flee, what city and what friend?

Creon

As far away from here as you can get.

Menoeceus

You'd better tell me where, and I will do it.

Creon

Go beyond Delphi-
Menoeceus

and where on beyond?

Creon

into Aotolia.

Menoeceus

And where after that?

Creon

Thesprotia's plain.

Menoeceus

Where holy Dodona stands?

Creon

Yes.

Menoeceus

What protection will that be for me?

Creon

The god will guide you.
Menoeceus

And for my supper?

Creon

I'll give you gold.

Menoeceus

Thank you for that, my father.
Go get it then. I'll go to see your sister
Jocasta, she who nursed me at her breast,
when my mother died and I was left an orphan.
I'll go to see her, and I'll save my life.
—Please hurry, Father, you don't want to keep me.

(Exit Creon. Menoeceus addresses the Chorus.)

Women, how well I've taken away his fear,
cheating with words, to get what I desire.
He'd steal me out, robbing the state of safety,
give me to cowardice. This can be forgiven
an ancient, but not pardoned in myself,
that I should so betray my fatherland.
Know well, I'm going, and I'll save the town,
and give my life to death to save the land.

_The Phoenician Women_, trans. by
Elizabeth Wyckoff, pp. 492-500.