

AESCHYLUS'
"SUPPLIANT MAIDENS"
(IKETIAEΣ)

463-7BC

Translated
by
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Dramatis Personae

Danaus

Chorus

(of Danaus' Fifty Daughters)

Pelasgus

(King of Argos)

Attendant Women

(Maids to the fifty daughters)

Attendant Soldiers

Day. A small, rocky hill.

Nearby statues and altars of various gods. One is of Poseidon (a trident is attached), another of Hermes, another of Apollo.

SL, a shore

SR, Argos

At the foot of the hill are Danaus and his daughters with their attendants.

They have just fled from Egypt, so they are very anxious and afraid.

In their hands they carry branches of olive, some of which are wound with white wool.

They will use some of these branches to adorn the statues and altars.

Chorus:

O, Zeus, protector of the suppliant!

Chorus:

O, Zeus, look upon this group of women with kindness!

Chorus:

O, Zeus, look kindly upon our ship!

Chorus:

We have sailed with it from the outer reaches of the Nile.

Chorus:

From the fine sands of its shores.

Chorus:

We have fled from that sacred land whose meadows touch the borders of Syria.

Chorus:

We have fled, not because we were banished by a public decree...

Chorus:

Not because we have spilled blood...

Chorus:

But because we refuse to enter into a sinful marriage with the sons of Aegyptus.

Chorus:

The banishment is our own decision.

Chorus:

We have escaped an abhorrent act.

Chorus:

Danaus, our father and our guide, weighed the two dire evils and chose the lesser of them.

Chorus:

He decided that we should hurry and sail far away, over the great waters to tie our ship to these here shores of Argos.

Chorus:

This place, we say with pride, is the birthplace of our race. A race that was born when Zeus caressed with his healing hand and with his breath, a cow, an animal frenzied by the stings of a gnat. That was Io, our mother.

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Chorus:

What land is there, more kind than this to receive suppliants armed only with olive branches wound with wool?

Chorus:

O, city! O, land with your clear waters!

Chorus:

O, gods of the heavens above and of the world below, keepers of the most revered tombs!

Chorus:

And thirdly, you, Zeus, the saviour, protector of the homes of the pious!

Receive us with kindness! Receive this group of suppliant women with the caring spirit of the land.

Chorus:

But ah!

That whole crowd of the violent sons of Aegyptus!

Chorus:

Let them not set foot upon this marshy land but steer them and their swift ship back into the ocean!

Chorus:

Make their journey back toilsome!

Chorus:

Make them battle with winter's violent waters and with thunder and lightning and dire tempests.

Chorus:

Drown them with a hurricane's crushing blasts, lest they come to us, their cousins and take us to sinful beds, beds that the sacred law forbids.

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Chorus:

And, now, dear son of Zeus, Epaphus, I call on you!

Son of the Lord Avenger, Zeus,

Come to me from beyond the sea!

Come, be my witness!

Come, Epaphus, born of a grazing cow,

Io, the mother of our race,

Io, caressed by Zeus' lusty breath

And so Epaphus, the name you bare is proper: "born of a touch!"

And so the Fate you bare is now fulfilled.

I call upon Epaphus!

I call upon his mother, Io – his mother and the mother of our race!

Come, Epaphus and be my witness!

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Chorus:

Here we are, in the grazing fields of our mother!

And I recall the pains she had suffered back then.

And I will show faultless proof of them all to the local folk.

Faultless and complete, so that they may believe what is unbelievable!

Proof, strange and unexpected will appear

And as I reach the end of my tale, the people will learn the truth.

Chorus:

And if any one of you folk can discern one bird's call from another,

You might think our doleful lament sounds like the call of

Tereus' melancholy wife, Metis, the nightingale, hunted by the hawk.

Chorus:
Hunted from her old haunts, she weeps in her new home, forlorn
And sings of her child's death,
A prey to her own hand,
A hand moved by the pitiless wrath of a frenzied mother.

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Chorus:
And so, I, too, seek comfort in the songs of grief.
Chorus:
And I sing in Ionian rhymes.
Chorus:
And I tear at my tender cheeks, coloured by the Nile.
Chorus:
And I tear at my innocent heart.
Chorus:
I gather bunches of misery, anxious to find a friend who'll understand my flight from a misty land and offer us protection.
Chorus:
But you, gods of our race, hear me!
Chorus:
Hear me and look kindly upon my right for justice!
And if you can't grant us our full rights to justice, then, since you hate arrogance, stand by us and help us with these hateful marriages.

79

Chorus:
Even for those who flee the destruction of war there is a haven, an altar where they may be saved by showing their reverence for the gods.
Chorus:
May Zeus grant us a safe end to this.
Chorus:
The will of Zeus is not easy to follow. The paths of his thoughts are many and dense and his wish may crash like clear lightning upon mortals through the most obscure darkness of their fate.

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Chorus:
With great ease, Zeus smashes down men with evil, towering desires. The gods feel no toil in accomplishing their will. They sit on their holy throne, high in the Heavens and without moving from there, they do as they wish.

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Chorus:
So, let Zeus now see this arrogance of man, how its roots are born again; an arrogance that shot out with a fervent desire and evil thoughts for our wedding.
Chorus:
A sharp and inescapable goad, a frenzied mind, pricked by maddened lust.

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

Ah!

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Chorus:

Tears of black grief!

Chorus:

Tears of black pain!

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

I sing my own bitter, grave-side song!

I sing it now, while I'm still alive!

I sing it alone!

Chorus:
Hills of Apia, land of the Argives, I beg for you kindness.
You understand my barbarian tongue.
Here! Look!
Before your very eyes, I tear this veil of Sidonian linen into shreds!

120

Chorus
Again!
Here, look!
Before your very eyes, I tear this veil of Sidonian linen into shreds!

Chorus:
When the fear of death is not present and joy abounds among the mortals, the holy sacrifices to the gods are endless but –Ah!

Chorus:
Ah!
Perplexing pains!
Where will this wave of grief take me?

128

Chorus:
Hills of Apia, land of the Argives, I beg for you kindness.
You understand my barbarian tongue.
Here! Look!
Before your very eyes, I tear this veil of Sidonian linen into shreds!

Chorus:
Again!
Here, look!
Before your very eyes, I tear this veil of Sidonian linen into shreds!

Chorus:
The oar!
Chorus:
The wooden craft!
Chorus:
The windswept linen sails!
Chorus:
The salty breath of the wind!
Chorus:
The benevolent gods have given us a pleasant journey here.

Chorus:
I raise no complaints against any of the gods.
Chorus:
But, when the time is right, may the father of them all -
Chorus:
The god who sees all –

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Chorus:
May he grant me a kind end to my pains.
Chorus:
Let Zeus grant that we -
Chorus:
We, the children of a pious mother –
Chorus:
A pious and great mother, Io -
Chorus:
Let Lord Zeus grant that we escape the sinful marriage of these men!
Chorus:
May we escape unmarried and unconquered, still pure.
Chorus:
Ah!
Chorus:
Ah!

Chorus:

And the virgin goddess, daughter of Zeus, Artemis!

Chorus:

I pray to her also! May she look after us!

Chorus:

The pure goddess! May she use all her might to help us in this unholy outrage!

Chorus:

She, a virgin, just like us.

150

Chorus:

Let Artemis grant that we -

Chorus:

We, the children of a pious mother -

Chorus:

A pious and great mother, Io -

Chorus:

Let Artemis grant that we escape the sinful marriage of these men!

Chorus:

May we escape unmarried and unconquered, still pure.

Chorus:

And if this prayer cannot be granted, then we, the women with the sun-blackened skin, will lower our beckoning branches to Zeus, the host of the dead, and beg him to take us -

160

Chorus:

Us, the suppliant women, into his chambers, in the world below.

Chorus:

Dead, a noose around our neck, hunted by all the gods of Olympus.

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

Zeus, o, Zeus!

Chorus:

Some hatred the gods have for Io has turned them against us.

Chorus:

I see Hera's hand in this, Zeus! Your own wife's hand, the hand that rules all Heaven!

Chorus:

I see the whistling winds bringing the mighty tempests upon us!

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Chorus:

And it will be Zeus who will be found to be the doer of the unjust act!

Chorus:

His child, the child he begot by the heifer's daughter, he abandoned and turned his face away from our prayers.

Chorus:

He hears them, I know, even from his throne up high.

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

Zeus, o, Zeus!

Chorus:

Some hatred the gods have for Io has turned them against us.

Chorus:

I see Hera's hand in this, Zeus! Your own wife's hand, the hand that rules all Heaven!

Chorus:

I see the whistling winds bringing the mighty tempests upon us!

Danaus:

My daughters!

You must be sensible!

You have come here, by the sea, under the trusty guidance of your sensible father and now, I, your father, must guide you further while we're all here on land.

Hold my words deep inside your hearts.

He points towards Argos, SR.

FX: SOUND. Army approaching. Horses, chariots.

180

Look there!

I can see dust! Dust, the soundless messenger of an approaching army.

Listen! The axles of wheels! Hear them? They are not silent.

Look! Can you see the throng of soldiers? There they are! Armed with shields and swaying spears.

Look there! The horses, the round chariots!

No doubt, the rulers of this land have heard about us and now they're coming to see us with their own eyes.

Still, whether they're headed here with good intent or harried forth with anger, it would be better, my daughters, if you all went to that sacred mount there, and sit there as suppliants to the gods.

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An altar is stronger than a towering castle. It is an impenetrable shield.

Go then, daughters. Hurry! Walk there, reverently, with your ceremonial branches in your left hand, the wool wound around them, emblems that give joy to merciful Zeus.

Go and meet those Argive men there. Meet them as newcomers should meet local folk.

Let your words evoke tears and pity for your great needs. Explain in clear words why you have fled here, to their country, tell them that your hands have never spilled any blood and, most important of all, take care to speak calmly, respectfully. Let your eyes show modesty and thoughtfulness.

Speak when you're spoken to and speak little. The men here are easily offended.

Take care to show obedience. You are foreigners, you are hunted and you are in great need. The weak must never speak too freely.

204

Chorus:

Father, your wise words fall upon wise ears and I will take note of them and remember them well. Let Zeus, the father of our ancestors, keep watch over us.

Danaus:

May his eye be gracious.

Chorus:

Let me sit by your side, father!

Danaus:

Do so quickly, daughter. Waste no time!

The Chorus arranges itself around the altars.

Chorus: *Prays*

Zeus, have pity on our pains!

Chorus:

Protect us from destruction!

Danaus:

If he wills it, all will be well. Now pray to Apollo, your protector.

Chorus:

We call upon the saving rays of Apollo.

Danaus:

Apollo, too, a pure god, was once exiled from the Heavens!

Chorus:

You have suffered this and know our plight, Apollo. Have pity!

Danaus:

Indeed! May he have pity on us and be generous in his protection of us.

Chorus:

What other god must we call upon, father?

Danaus:

Ah! I can see a trident there. It's the symbol of the god Poseidon.

Chorus:

He has taken good care of us on the sea. I pray he also take good care of us here, on land.

220

Danaus:

And there! There's the altar of Hermes, the messenger, in his Greek form.

Chorus:

I pray his messages be good!

Danaus:

Respect all the gods in this common shrine!

Kneel and pray upon this sacred soil. Kneel and pray like frightened doves, hunted by an eagle. A bird, hunting a bird, polluter of families. A bird eating the flesh of birds!

The man who violates a woman, who rejects even her father's injunctions, will be cursed for ever.

Even Hades will not be a safe haven for him because, people say that even there, among the dead, Zeus delivers judgement upon evil deeds.

Remember this and speak to these men as I have told you, so that we may see a happy end to this difficulty.

FX: SOUND. CUT.

Enter the King of Argos (SR) with attendants.

234

King: *Examines the chorus closely*

Foreigners!

Your clothes are not Greek. Foreign robes of finely woven fabric... covered in gems... nothing like ours!

Where are you all from? No women from Argos or the rest of Greece wears such clothes.

You must be brave, coming here unannounced like this, with no friends and no one to guide you!

Astonishing!

Ah! I see branches on the altars and by your sides. That tells me that you are suppliants and you seek protection from me but that's all that a Greek can gather from that. I'll have to make my own assumptions about everything else, unless you tell me in your own words the rest of your story.

Chorus:

You were correct about our clothes but tell me first, sir how am I to address you? Are you a common citizen, some shrine's messenger, perhaps, or are you this city's king?

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King:

Speak freely.

I am Pelasgus, son of Palaechthon, and of the earth.

I am the king of this land whose people are rightly called after me: Pelasgians.

I rule over all the land West of the streams of river Strymon, as well as all the lands of the Perrhaebi, those beyond Mount Pindus, near the Paeonians and the Dodona mountain range, all the way down to the sea. I am the king of all that land.

260

As for this land right here, it's called Apia, after Apis the wise doctor, Apollo's son, who had come from the distant Naupaktos, to rid our land of man-eating monsters, earth's offspring, offspring of age-old curses for age-old murders. Earth sprouted them all to satisfy her rage. Slithering serpents, Beasts that no one could approach.

Apis concocted deadly herbs and drugs with which he purged the whole of Argos from this evil. We rewarded Apis by keeping his memory alive in our prayers.

Now that you know all about us, tell us about your lineage and whatever else you want to tell us, though we have no love for endless tales.

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Chorus:

Our tale is short and clear-cut, my lord. We are proud to say that our lineage is Argive.

Chorus:

We are Io's blessed children! Io, the god-touched heifer!

Chorus:

And we have proof of this!

King:

That, I cannot believe!

You are no Argives. You look nothing at all like us.

More like natives of Libya. Only the Nile would bring forth such a stock as yours.

Or Cyprus. I see the work of a good Cyprian craftsman on your faces.

Or Indian women, nomads, who, I'm told, ride on camels, rather than horses like us and wonder about

the lands neighbouring Ethiopia. If you were carrying a bow and arrow, I'd be guessing you were Amazons. Those virgins who eat human flesh. You'll need to tell me much more about yourselves to convince me that you are, truly, from Argive blood.

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Chorus:

Is it known here that once upon a time, Io kept the keys of Hera's shrine?

King:

Certainly. The story has been told widely for many years.

Chorus:

And does the story also talk of how Zeus slept with a mortal woman?

King:

Indeed and this... exchange of embraces was made known to Hera.

Chorus:

So, how did this royal feud end?

King:

Hera, the protector of Argos had transformed Io into a cow.

300

Chorus:

And Zeus? Did not Zeus go near this horned beast afterwards?

King:

That's how the tale goes.

They say that Zeus changed himself into a bull, eager to mate her.

Chorus:

How did Zeus' mighty wife respond to this outrage?

King:

She had sent an all seeing guard to her, to keep a constant watch over her.

Chorus:

An all-seeing guard? Who was that?

King:

Argos, son of Earth. Hermes killed him later.

Chorus:

What else did Hera do against the poor, unfortunate cow?

King:

She brought around a gad fly.

A fly that stings cattle and keeps them constantly moving.

Chorus:

Oestrus. That's what the people who live near the Nile call that fly.

King:

Well then, that oestrus fly drove her out of this land. Many miles from here.

310

Chorus:

Your story and ours are identical!

King:

In fact, she ended up in Kanovos and then in Memphis.

Chorus:

Quite so; and then, Zeus came down and touched the maddened cow with his hand and she gave birth to a child.

King:

And who is it who claims to be the child of that cow?

Chorus:

The child was named Epaphus, "Child of the Touch."

King:

Who came after Epaphus?

Chorus:

Libya, who's nourished from the harvest of an immense land.

King:

Who after Libya?

Chorus:

After Libya came Belos, who had two children. He was my father's father.

320

King:

And what is your wise father's name?

Chorus:

Danaus. He has a brother who has fifty sons.

King:

And, tell me, what's his name? Your uncle's I mean.

Chorus:

Aegyptus.

Now that you know the long history of our generation, please tell us the story of the Argives.

King:

It seems it's true. You have some old and distant connection with our land, Argos.

Tell me though, what misfortune made you leave the home of your ancestors?

Chorus:

King of the Pelasgians, the misfortunes that fall upon mortals are birds of many feathers.

Chorus:

None are alike!

Chorus:

Who could have guessed!

Chorus:

Who could have hoped!

Chorus:

Who could have believed that, fleeing from that marriage of horror, we'd find a safe haven here –

Chorus:

-in our old home, Argos!

King:

So, then. You have the branches of the suppliant and you are gathered here, around the altars of our gods. Tell me what it is you want from me.

Chorus:

Don't let the sons of Aegyptus make us slaves of their bed.

King:

Is that because you hate them or because you think it to be a sin?

Chorus:

What woman would ever willingly marry a cousin?

King:

The woman who would want to enhance the power of her family.

Chorus:

A cousin is easily married but is easily divorced.

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King:

Well then, I have a duty to help you and I shall do so. Tell me how.

Chorus:

Our request is that you do not hand us back to the sons of Aegyptus.

King:

That is a serious request you are asking.

You're asking me to go to war!

Chorus:

Yes, but Justice protects the just!

King:

That would be true if Justice was with you from the start.

Chorus:

Respect the garlanded altars of the city, my King!

King:

The sight of these shrines covered with wreaths like that, makes me tremble with awe.

Chorus:

Zeus the protector of the suppliant has an implacable temper!

Chorus:

King of the Pelasgians, son of Palaechthon, accept us!

Chorus:

Hear us!

Chorus:

Look at the state we're in!

Chorus:

A cow, hunted down by a wolf...

Chorus:

...running backwards and forwards, all the way to the edge of a precipice...

Chorus:

...a terrified cow, who sees her shepherd and trusting in him, bellows her plea to be saved.

King:

I can see the freshly cut branches shading the altars of the gods. The branches of suppliants.

And I can see all the gods nodding assent to your request. It is the request of fellow Argive who are born elsewhere.

Still, I hope the granting of this request of yours, to find a haven in our city, does not bring with it any trouble. No unpredictable war will be waged against us while we're unprepared. Argos can do without such troubles.

359

Chorus:

Let the justice of our flight be recognised by Zeus' daughter –

Chorus:

Themis, the protector of the suppliants.

Chorus:

And you, wise, old King, learn this from me, a young woman:

Those who respect the pleas of suppliants are richly rewarded by the gods.

Chorus:

Gods grant them their every wish, gladly and in full!

King: *Shakes his head*

No, no! It will not be just my own house you'll be staying but in the house of all of the citizens of this city. Theirs will be the fate that will be marred if your act is seen by the gods as a pollution. It is they who will carry the burden of its cure.

I, alone, can promise you nothing until I first talk the matter over with them.

370

Chorus:

My Lord! You are Argos! You are its people!

Chorus:

Your authority is absolute!

Chorus:

Over the city's altar and over its hearth!

Chorus:

Your vote alone, your throne alone, can determine the outcome of every matter!

Chorus:

You can protect yourself from every pollution.

King:

Pollution!

Let pollution fall upon my enemies!

But I just don't know how to help you without causing some harm... still, not to help you would be disrespectful, unwise... I am tormented by doubt.

My very soul is afraid.

To help you or not to help you? What will fate bring in either case?

381

Chorus:

Think of Zeus!

Think of the god who looks down from the heavens and protects those mortals in need.

Chorus:

Mortals who are met by neighbours, deaf to their just pleas.

Chorus:

The great wrath of Zeus, the protector of the suppliant, awaits the mortal who will not see the sorrow in the tears of the unfortunate.

King:

Still, if the sons of Aegyptus are your next of kin, then, according to your laws there, they have legal authority over you, so how could anyone try to fight them on your behalf?

392

Chorus:

Never!

Chorus:

We will never be under the legal authority of these men!

Chorus:

I'd rather be hunted all over the place, the stars guiding my paths, than submit to this sinful marriage!

Chorus:

My Lord, respect Justice!

Chorus:

Respect the sacred!

King:

Not an easy thing to judge this. Don't make me judge it.

I've told you before: I might be the King but I will not be the judge of this without first talking with my people. I don't want some citizen of Argos to come to me afterwards, after some dire consequence and tell me, "It was your fault! You've destroyed our city because you chose to honour strangers more than your own people!"

402

Chorus:

Zeus, our father in blood and equally the father of the men, is a fair judge and his scale always swings evenly between both our sides.

Chorus:

He can see both, the good and the bad and gives each their due.

Chorus:

So, my Lord, why are you afraid to do what is just?

King:

If we are to get to the bottom of this without causing any unwanted mischief to the State then we must act like good sea divers, with a clear mind and a cloudless vision.

I'll have no mischief done to Argos nor its citizens.

I want no enemy to take from my hands what I have now. I will have no enemy force me to hand you over to them.

You are my suppliants and have sought refuge at the altars of our gods. If I were to surrender you to these men, Vengeance would strike us and Vengeance destroys us all, throughout our lives, on Earth and still throughout our days in Hades. Vengeance never releases his victims.

So we had better think well about our safe exit out of this dilemma.

Chorus:

Care for us, my Lord!

Chorus:

Help us, protect us, give us justice.

420

Chorus:

Don't abandon this poor woman, hunted across long distances by god-hated men!

Chorus:

Don't be the one who will watch me being torn away from the thrones of all these gods.

Chorus:

You, my Lord! You are the solitary ruler of all these lands.

Chorus:

Recognise the outrage done by these men and guard yourself from the anger of these gods.

Chorus:

Could you endure the sight of your suppliant being dragged away, unjustly, from these statues of the gods, like a horse is dragged away by the straps on its forehead?

430

Chorus:

Dragged away by godless hands, tugging at my finely woven robes.

Chorus:

And remember the rules of Zeus, my Lord. Whatever you decide now, your children, your household, will receive the consequences of that decision.

King:

I have decided!

This is where all my thoughts lead me:

I am forced to wage a war one way or another. Either with the gods or with those men.

440

This fact is as firmly fixed as the planks of a ship's hull are fixed by its ropes and readied for nailing. These things will not end without the touch of great pain.

One may have his wealth stolen from his home but Zeus, its protector, will replace it for him. It is the same with one's words. Improper words may stir up anger and pain, but a sweet word will be their cure.

But let no blood of family be spilled and to avoid that we need to make many sacrifices, many sacrifices of many animals, to many gods.

450

I know not how to judge this conflict, I am no prophet and it's best that way but I do hope that the issue turns out well, even if it's against my thinking.

Chorus:

And now, my Lord, listen to the last of my pleas:

King:

Go on, then. Tell me. I am listening.

Chorus:

Ribbons and girdles hold my robes tightly around my body.

King:

Such garments are proper for women, yes...

Chorus:

These garments, my Lord are very useful...

King:

Useful? What do you mean?

Chorus:

If you will not promise us...

King:

What? Of what use can your ribbons and girdles be then?

Chorus:

Useful in adorning these statues with new offerings!

King:

Talk more clearly. You're talking in riddles!

Chorus: *Threateningly*

If you will not promise us safety, I will hang myself from these statues!

King: *Shocked*

Ah! Zeus Almighty!

Hang yourself? No!

Your words stab at my heart!

Chorus:

You've asked for clear speech and I gave it. Now you understand me!

King:

Yes! Yes, I understand!

Horrible difficulties to wrestle with from every side.

470

Ah! It's like a torrential river! A flood of evil is washing me away. It rushes me into an unfathomable abyss, an ocean of misery. I see no harbour anywhere. I see no haven of escape.

If, on one hand, I don't pay the debt you demand, the pollution of the act you threaten to commit – suicide- will be inescapable. On the other hand, if I were to stand before the walls of my city and wage war against your cousins, the sons of Aegyptus –what a bitter sacrifice that would be! To spill the blood of men upon our soil, for the sake of women!

Ah, but then again, the anger of Zeus is mighty and he protects the suppliant. I must respect him.

480

To Danaus

Old man, father of these women, quickly pick up all these branches and take them to the other altars of our city so that the Argives can see that you are here as suppliants and that you obey my words. The people usually blame their ruler when anything goes wrong.

Perhaps, if they see you carrying these branches they might feel pity for you and sympathise with your plight against the arrogance of these men. Everyone sympathises with the persecuted.

490

Danaus:

It is a great thing for us to have found such a revered protector of strangers.
Let me now have some local guides to take me safely through the streets of the city and show me where the altars and the shrines of the gods are located.
The Nile does not raise men similar in looks to those of Inahos and we must be careful not to be too confident. A friend may kill a friend through ignorance.

500

King: *To some of his attendants*

You men, go with him. This stranger speaks well.

Take him to the city's altars and to our holy places but there's no need for you to talk too much with those you meet in the street. This seafarer is here to pray to our gods.

Danaus is helped by his daughters to gather all the branches. That done, he and the guides exit SR.

Chorus:

Danaus has done as you said. He is gone to the city but what will I do now?

What safety can you provide for me?

Danaus:

Put your suppliants branches down.

Chorus: *They obey*

There! We have obeyed your order.

King:

Now go over to that hill there.

Chorus:

But it is not a sanctuary. Anyone can step onto that ground.

How could I be safe there?

510

King:

Oh, no, don't worry!

We won't leave you to the mercy of flesh-eating birds of prey!

Chorus:

What of all the other animals? Those men who we fear more than wild snakes?

King:

Speak no ill words, since no ill words were spoken to you!

Chorus:

Does it surprise you that I speak ill words when I am so afraid?

King:

Fear in women, always comes in excess!

Chorus:

Well, then, calm our fear with words and deeds, my Lord!

King:

Your father won't be long.

I've got to go and call my people to a meeting, now. I'll need to speak to them about you, make them your friends; and then have a word with your father, explain to him how to speak to them.

520

You, stay here and pray to the gods. Ask them that they grant you whatever you wish.

Right! I'm off to get all this done and I hope Fate brings all this to a happy conclusion.

Exit King and entourage

Chorus: *Praying*

Oh, King of Kings!

Chorus:

Zeus, most blessed god in the heavens.

Chorus:

The mightiest of the mighty.

Chorus:

Zeus, the happiest of the happy.

Listen to our plea!

Chorus:

Protect these women, Zeus!

Protect your god-loving children from the abhorrent lust of these god-hated men!

Drown them all!

530

Chorus:

Sink their ship!
With its black prow!
Sink it in the dark sea!

Chorus:

Look kindly upon these women's prayer!
Look kindly upon our ancient house!
Remember the joy of the woman you loved,
Our mother of old!

Chorus:

Remember again the beautiful tale about Io, the woman caressed by your lusty breath!
We are of your race, Zeus!
Your children, Zeus!
Born here, on this land and now returning to it.

Chorus:

We have returned to our mother's old footprints.
Io, our mother!

540

Chorus:

This is her meadow, full of flowers, where she grazed,
Where she was watched.

Chorus:

Where she was stung by that gadfly –

Chorus:

Where she was crazed
And from where she fled in frenzy!
Travelled through the lands of many races
Cut through the narrow surging straights

Chorus:

To the shores across the waves,

Chorus:

As Fate had declared.

Chorus:

Across to Asia!
Through Phrygia, rich in flocks!
Through Mysia, the city belonging to Teuthras,

550

Chorus:

Through the meadows of Lydia
Across the bordering mountains of the Cilicians
And the Pamphylians,
Across the rushing waters of rivers and
The lush soils of Aphrodite's fertile, wheat-nurturing land.

Chorus:

Stung by the goad of the winged shepherd, oestrus, she fled again,
Through the nourishing grounds of Zeus

560

Chorus:

Through the snow-fed valleys that are beaten by Typho's wild wrath,
Through the waters of the Nile
Waters untouched by any disease!

Chorus:

Maddened by her dishonourable pain!
Turned into a frenzied Maenad by Hera's tormenting sting!

Chorus:

And all those people in all those lands who saw her were seized by a cold terror that shook their hearts.

570

Chorus:

What abominable sight was this?
A strange beast!

A beast half woman!

A beast half cow!

Chorus:

And, finally, they asked:

“Who cured her? Who cured the poor unfortunate goad-stung Io?”

Chorus:

It was Zeus. Lord of the heavens over many centuries!

He came to her aid. He performed the miracle!

His almighty, soothing hand touched Io.

His divine breath cured her anguish.

She stopped. She rested.

The tears of shame fell from her sad eyes.

580

Chorus:

They speak truly those who say that the child she bore by Zeus’ sperm was immaculate.

Chorus:

Immaculate and fully blessed for many, long ages.

And the whole earth echoed loudly with the words,

“This mighty child is truly the child of Zeus himself!

Zeus, the very spring of life!

Who else but Zeus could put an end to Hera’s cruel punishment?

No, all must admit what’s true: these are the deeds of Zeus!

Epaphos was his son and this race is the race of Epaphos!”

590

Chorus:

Who then?

Of all the gods who perform deeds of protection, which of them is it that reason says I should call for help?

Who else but our father, our Lord?

With his own mighty hand he planted us!

With his own mighty hand he has nurtured our race!

Chorus:

Zeus, of the endless wisdom!

Zeus, whose breath gives life and prosperity to all things.

Chorus:

His throne is his alone and it rests below that of no other.

His rule is his own and it is lesser to that of no other.

No other being can claim his respect.

His deeds are accomplished the very moment he utters them.

The very moment his mind conceives them.

Enter Danaus

600

Danaus:

Courage, courage, my daughters!

The Argives have passed decrees in our favour! Their word is powerful!

Chorus:

Father! Old man! Most beloved of all messengers!

Tell us!

Chorus:

What was the decision of the people?

Chorus:

How did the votes go?

Danaus:

The vote of the Argive people was unequivocal!

One voice! It made my aged heart young again.

The whole assembly raised its right arm and made this holy decision. The air was made thick with all those raised hands, confirming their resolution.

609

It is now a law:

We are to settle and build our homes here, in this land, as free citizens, who no one –local or foreigner-

can either abduct or rob. Further, if for some reason, force is used against us, then that citizen who refuses to come to our aid, will be considered to have dishonoured the state and, by a vote of the people, he shall be exiled.

The king of the Pelasgians have persuaded them to pass this law by reminding them that Zeus, protector of the suppliant, would unleash upon them an even thicker anger.

The pollution, he told them, would be doubly bad, first because we are suppliants and second because we are not only of the same race but we are also foreigners.

The horror that the Argives would then have to deal with, he told them, would be like a beast of terror that has a gluttonous need to graze upon destruction.

621

The moment the Argives heard their king's speech they raised their hands to vote with him.

"Let things be done as you say!" They all shouted all by themselves and without the use of a herald.

But it was Zeus who brought the proper resolution to the problem.

Chorus:

Let us then send our blessings to the Argives!

Chorus:

Blessings sent for blessings received!

Chorus:

May the wishes uttered from the mouths of these strangers be heard by Zeus, their protector.

630

Chorus: *To the statues of the gods*

Gods, children of Zeus!

Chorus: *Pouring some libations onto an altar*

We pour our holy libations to you!

Grant what we wish for our Argive relatives!

Chorus:

Never allow the fires of Ares, the god of war, burn down this city of the Pelasgians!

Ares who rejoices in the shouts of wild battle and is the harvester of mortals in distant fields.

640

Chorus:

These Argives took pity on us!

They took pity upon this hunted flock and voted in our favour,

Respecting us as suppliants of Zeus.

Chorus:

Nor did they reject the plight of women to vote in favour of men.

But they considered the vengeance of Zeus' sleepless eye that looks over us from above.

A vengeance unconquerable!

Chorus:

What house could disobey his will?

What roof could carry his heavy vengeance?

It will fall upon it like the pollution of an evil bird!

651

Chorus:

They respect those of the same blood, suppliants of holy Zeus.

Their altars are pure and so the gods will bless them.

Chorus: *Takes a branch and puts it in front of her face*

Let my words of prayer, my words of gratitude for the city, flow from my lips through the shadows of these suppliants' branches!

661

Chorus:

May famine never empty this city of its folk, nor the blood of civil unrest stain its soil.

Chorus:

May the bloom of its youth never be cut, nor Aphrodite's lover, Ares, the destroyer of men, ever pluck its flower.

Chorus:

May every holy shrine always be crowded by revered men.

May the altars of this city be lit with the plentiful flames of glory.

670

Chorus:

May the city be ruled well, respecting above all else, the ancient and righteous laws of Zeus, the

protector of strangers.

May the line of the city's rulers be honourable!

Chorus:

May Artemis of the swift arrows look over its women while they give birth.

Chorus:

Let no sword fall into Ares' hand,

Bringer of grief and tears,

Lover of the war cry,

The god who hates the sounds of the lute and the joy of the dance.

681

Chorus:

And let no man-murdering disaster destroy this city.

Let the dire swarm of diseases fall upon lands far from Argos

And let the healer, Apollo, take good care of the Argive youth.

Chorus:

Oh, Zeus! Make fertile this land!

Make every season rich in harvest.

Gods bless the Argive herds! Make them plentiful!

Gods bless everything on this land!

695

Chorus:

Let the reverent bards sing sacred hymns of thanks at the altars!

Let the pure lips of virgins accompany the music of the lyres!

Chorus:

May the public council that rules this State, pass wise laws that protect the rights of all its citizens.

May they grant just rights and due process to the strangers at their gate before they wield their swords and suffer the harm of war.

704

Chorus:

And let them honour the gods that keep this city safe,

Upholding the sacred ceremonies passed on from their parents,

With branches of laurel held high and with oxen slaughtered.

Danaus walks over to the highest spot on the stage and looks into the distance, towards the shore, SL

Chorus:

Reverence to parents is a law, a duty, listed third in the Statutes of Justice which we must all obey.

710

Danaus:

Well said, my daughters!

Your prayers are wise and righteous.

But – but now, my daughters, don't be frightened by the sudden and dreadful news I'm about to tell you.

From here, from this spot where the suppliant gods have their altars, I can see a ship and, judging from her sails and her side-guards, her prow, with its eyes that scan the horizon ahead for any enemies, her guiding radar at the stern... it's obvious, she's an Egyptian vessel. She has all the markings of one.

The women rush around him to see for themselves

720

And I can see the men aboard her. White clothes, dark limbs.

Ah! Now here are her accompanying vessels! There they are. In full view now!

She's furled her sails now and the oars have taken over.

Now she speeds along towards our shore.

My daughters, stay calm. Think of these gods. Control your emotions.

Face the fact rationally. I'll go and bring some armed men who'll speak on our behalf.

I'll be back very soon.

Those Egyptians might send some herald or some other men to try and grab you, claim you as their prize and try to take you away from here but don't listen to them. Stand firm. Don't be afraid of them.

730

But if I'm late getting back with the help, don't forget the grounds you're standing on.

Courage, my daughters!

When the day comes when all the gods decide, all crimes against their laws will be punished justly.

Chorus:

Father, I'm afraid!

Chorus:

The ship is flying as if it had wings!

Chorus:

We have little time, father!

Chorus:

Father, I'm afraid all the trouble we went through to sail all the way here, has come to nothing!

Chorus:

Father, I'm dying with fear!

Danaus:

Fear not, my daughters, the Argives have decided to defend you, to fight for you!

Of this I'm certain, so, courage!

741

Chorus:

The whole race of Aegyptus is steeped in evil!

Madmen! Belligerent! Bloody! War mongers!

You know that's the truth, father!

Chorus:

Look at their ships!

Look at the heavy timber, their black prows!

They have sailed all the way here with a great army of dark men and with an even greater anger!

Father, they have found us!

Danaus:

Yes but here they will find men whose muscles are shaped hard and darkened by the mid-day sun.

Danaus is making to leave

Chorus:

No, father! Don't leave us here alone. Abandoned women can do nothing. I beg you! Women on their own have no strength, no courage!

750

Chorus:

These men are evil!

They have dreadful things in their mind!

Chorus:

Unholy things.

They care as little for altars and gods as do scavenging birds!

Danaus:

All this you say about them works in your favour, my daughters: They will raise the wrath of the gods as well as yours.

Chorus:

Father, no! These gods, and these tridents and these holy things will not keep them from attacking us.

Chorus:

Their heads are full of arrogant lust!

Madness!

Chorus:

Unholy rage!

Chorus:

Rabid dogs!

Chorus:

Deaf to the laws of the gods!

760

Danaus:

There's a saying, my daughters:

Wolves are stronger than dogs and wheat is stronger than the fruit of the papyrus plant.

Chorus:

They have the madness of wild, untamed beasts, father.

We must hurry and prepare ourselves for them.

Danaus:

It's not an easy and quick thing for a fleet to sail off and then again to stop and disembark on land.

It's a time-consuming and dangerous job for the captain, to drop anchor and secure the ropes on the

shore, particularly on a shore without a harbour and after the sun has sunk into the night.

770

The careful sailor knows the pitfalls of the night and worries deeply about them. He won't let his army get off that ship unless he has secured all the moorings.

You, though, be very careful that your fear doesn't make you forget your gods.

I'm off to call for help.

Argos, I'm sure will listen to me: an old man in body but with the heart and the tongue of a young man.

Exit Danaus SR

Chorus:

Oh, land of mountains!

How rightly people respect you!

What will become of us now?

Where in this Apian land can we go?

What dark cave is there for us to hide in?

Chorus:

Zeus! Make me a puff of smoke and bring me near you.

780

Chorus:

Or turn me into airy and invisible dust that I may fly with no wings!

Disappear, vanish!

Chorus:

But to escape this evil, we cannot and my darkened heart is beating fast with terror.

Chorus:

Father's warning has seized my soul and the fear is killing me!

790

Chorus:

I'd rather die hanging from a noose than be touched by the hands of a man I hate.

Let Hades' hands touch me, instead! Let him be my master!

Chorus:

If only I could find some place high up in the upper ether, to sit where the clouds of rain turn into snow, or a crag, a sheer rock, proud straight, untouched by human foot, solitary, a vulture's hanging nest.

From there I would plunge into my certain death rather than be the victim of a heart-slaughtering marriage.

Chorus:

And if the wild dogs and the vultures of the valley feed and fatten on my dead flesh, then I'd be happy.

Death leaves no room for suffering and tears, so let Death come soon and save me from my wedding bed.

Chorus:

Where else can I find escape from this marriage?

Chorus:

Scream!

Chorus:

Scream out a loud prayer!

Chorus:

Make it loud enough to touch the heavens!

Chorus:

Let the gods hear our prayer! Let the gods save us!

810

Chorus:

Zeus, come to us! Stop this terrible struggle! Save your suppliants!

Justice is within your sight.

Here it is, Look upon it, almighty Zeus!

Zeus, ruler of the land!

Chorus:

See Aegyptus' sons!

See their foul minds!

See their reckless arrogance!

See how they chase us!

820

Chorus:

Violent lust and violent shouts drive them!

Violent hands want to take us!

Chorus:

Zeus! The scales of Justice are yours alone, to hold with your own hand!

Without you, Zeus, what could mortals ever bring to fruition?

They point into the distance SL with terror.

Chorus:

Ah!

Ah!

There he is!

There is the wild abductor!

Chorus:

There is the pirate!

Here on the land!

Chorus:

May the earth open up and swallow you before you get here!

Chorus:

Gods help us!

Chorus:

Gods help us!

830

Chorus:

My horror begins!

Savagery!

Chorus:

Ah!

Ah!

Chorus:

To the altars, girls!

Seek refuge at the altars!

To the gods!

Chorus:

The wild man seethes with rage both on the sea and on the land!

Chorus:

King of the land!

Chorus:

King of the Argives, save us!

Enter the Herald of the Egyptians and an armed bodyguard, swords drawn.

Herald:

You lot!

Quick! Off to the ship! Go on! Get down there quick!

Move it! Move your feet now!

Do you want me to tear out all your hair?

840

Dig bleeding holes into you with my sword?

Chop your heads off? Soak this soil here with your blood?

Go on and pox upon all of you!

Off to the ship, I said and make it quick!

Chorus:

I wish you and your heavy ship sunk to the bottom of the salty ocean on your way here! You and the godless arrogance of your masters!

Herald:

I'll have you soaked in your own blood and drag you to the ships in no time if you don't get away from those altars.

I don't fear those who have no honour nor city!

Chorus:

Ah!

Chorus:

Never again!

Chorus:

Never again will I see the streams of the Nile –

Chorus:

Streams that nurture the blood of the our lusty men!

860

Chorus:

Streams that give flower to their youth and boil to their spirit.

Herald:

I'll soon have you aboard our ships, woman, whether you want to or not!

Do you want us to use violence?

Chorus:

Ah!

No!

Chorus:

I hope violence destroys you!

The violence of wild and bitter seas!

Chorus:

I hope they find your corpse tumbling in the surging waves of the sandy shores of Sarpedon, swept by the frenzied winds from the East!

Chorus:

Ah!

Ah!

872

Herald:

Scream and screech and yell all you like!

Let all your wails be heard by all the gods but you won't escape the Egyptian ships!

Go on! Yell! Yell out as bitterly as you can!

Chorus:

Ah!

Ah!

You spew out my misery like a rabid dog!

Chorus:

I hope the great Nile who is watching you bring you down from your brutal arrogance!

882

Herald:

Enough! Enough of your screeching!

I order you!

Get to those swift ships now!

Quickly!

All this screaming won't save you from being dragged by your hair!

Chorus:

Father!

Chorus:

Father!

Chorus:

The sacred statues give us no help!

Chorus:

A spider!

A spider has trapped me in her web and dragging me, step by step to the sea!

Chorus:

A black dream!

A black dream!

Chorus:

Father!

Chorus:

Mother Earth!

Mother Earth, I beg you!

Stop his fierce yelling!

Chorus:
Zeus, our father!
Zeus, son of Earth!

893

Herald: *Advancing towards them*

Understand this:

I'm not afraid of these gods here!

They're not the ones who raised me and brought me up to my old age!

Chorus:

Ah!

He charges towards me like a two-footed snake!

Herald grabs one by the waist

Chorus:

He holds me like a viper that's bitten my foot!

Ah!

Chorus:

Ah!

Mother Earth!

Chorus:

Mother Earth

Stop his horrible yelling!

900

Chorus:

Zeus, our father!

Zeus, son of Earth!

Herald:

If you don't get yourselves down to the ships, I'll have these fine clothes of yours torn to shreds!

Herald gives a sign to his men who close in and try to tie the women up

Chorus:

Rulers of the city, elders, help! We are being tied up!

Herald:

Rulers?

Ha! Rest assured about that, you women! You'll get plenty of rulers, all right! All of Aegyptus' sons will be your rulers. You won't be short of rulers in Egypt!

Chorus:

Help! Leaders of Argos, help! They are beating us!

She sees the King in the distance.

King, help! Help us!

Chorus:

They are dragging us away!

Herald:

You won't do as I say? Well, then, it looks like I'll have to drag you by your hair!

Enter the King with his own armed guard.

King: *To the Herald*

Ey, you!

What sort of arrogance is this, that drives you the heart to dishonour the land of the Pelasgians?

Do you think you've come to a city run by women?

Such insults; and from a barbarian to Greeks!

Such dreadful behaviour also tells me that you're bereft of any brains at all!

Herald:

What dreadful behaviour are you talking about?

King:

To begin with, you have no idea how a guest should behave.

Herald:

What do you mean? I have just found what I have lost and now I'm taking it back!

King:

To which of our leaders have you informed about this?

920

Herald:

To the Great Hermes! The god of lost things.

King:

You talk about gods but you show no respect for them!

Herald:

I respect only the gods of the Nile!

King:

And so you're saying that our gods deserve no respect?

Herald:

Look! If no one objects here, I'm taking these women away!

King:

Do that and it will not be long before you suffer the consequences!

Herald:

You don't seem to be too kind to your guests!

King:

He who shows disrespect to our gods is no guest of mine.

Herald:

Right! Well, then, I'll go and tell Aegyptus' sons what went on here.

King:

Go ahead. That will not frighten me in the least.

930

Herald:

I need to know who it is precisely that took their cousins away from me. As a herald I need to make an accurate report. How am I to explain that I went back empty-handed?

What am I to say to them? Not that Ares, the god of war, judges such cases according to the words of witnesses or the weight of coin or anything like that...

No, you'll see the fall of many men first, the loss of much life before I do that!

King:

No point in telling you my name now. You and your whole crew will hear of it soon enough.

940

As for these women, here, I'll need to be convinced by honest argument that they are willing and happy to go with you before I can let you take them.

But let me tell you this: the people of this city have voted unanimously that there will never be a surrender of these women to anyone who uses force.

The nail has been driven hard and fast upon this resolution. It cannot be shifted.

It's not a resolution written on tablets or on sealed scrolls. What you're hearing is the truth, as it is uttered by the mouths of free citizens.

Now get out of my sight immediately!

950

Herald:

It looks like we're about to get ourselves into a brutal war!

Well then, may the men be victorious!

King:

Yes, well, you'll find the men here are made of stronger stuff than those brought up on barley wine!

Exit Herald and his men

Now, you, women! Courage! Take your trusty servants and go to the city. It is fortified well with tall and sturdy towers with deep foundations.

There you will find plenty of well built houses to take you in. I also have some of my own. You can either stay together with other folk or even stay in a separate house, on your own, if you so prefer.

960

Choose whichever suits you best.

I and the citizens of Argos will protect you. They have made that resolution and they will now put it into effect. Waste no time waiting for better protectors.

Chorus:

Heaven-loved King of the Pelasgians!

I hope your generosity is rewarded with equal generosity but if you don't mind, please send Danaus here, our brave father to advise us and tell us his views on this.

970

Chorus

It would better if it were he and not we who worked out which are the safe neighbourhoods and where it would be best for us to stay.

Chorus:

The whole world is ready to treat badly those who speak with a foreign tongue.
Let's hope it all turns out well for us and for the Argives.

Exit the King

Chorus: *To their servants*

And you, dear companions, let's avoid being accused by the Argives and sully our good name.

Chorus:

Come and stand by your mistress, the one to whom our father gave you as dowry.

Enter Danaus followed by guards, carrying spears.

980

Danaus:

My daughters, we owe prayers of thanks to the Argives!

We should offer sacrifices to the gods of Olympus and pour libations for their sake because they are truly our saviours. There is no doubt about that!

They have listened to me as I spoke to them and told them about the behaviour of your cousins towards you –blood relatives to blood relatives- and they became bitterly angry against them.

The citizens have given me this guard of spearmen to identify me as one with rank and honour and to protect me from hidden and unexpected death by spear something that would bring eternal suffering upon this land.

990

Since they've been so generous to us, let your hearts honour and respect them even more than they honour and respect me.

But now, on top of all the other guidance I gave you so far, let this also be written into your mind:

Time will reveal the true nature of a foreign stranger. Scornful words are always at the forefront of everyone's mind when it comes to strangers and they are easy to utter and easy for those evil words to stick. But I advise you to be careful. Do not shame me. You are in your youth now, an age that attracts and pleases the eyes of men.

Fruit that is ripe and ready for the picking is hard to protect: both, beasts and gods destroy it and why not? Beasts that fly and beasts that walk the earth, both destroy it.

1011

Aphrodite, the goddess of love, calls Eros to go to the fruit that drips honey, not to the fruit that is not ripe yet. The beautiful virgins drip sweetness and passion and Eros shoots his arrows through the eyes of the passer-by.

Take care, then that we don't suffer what we have tried so hard to avoid. Struggles across raging seas and distant lands.

See that we bring no shame upon us and thus make our enemies happy!

There are two sorts of accommodation available to us and both are free:

1010

We may choose to occupy that offered by the king himself or that offered by the city. These are simple and good terms for us. Just make sure you obey your father's wish and guard your honour better than your life.

Chorus:

Let the gods of Olympus help us with everything else, father and don't you worry about the bloom of our virginity. Unless the heavens have some other plan for us, we will not change our mind.

Chorus:

Come then, sisters, let us praise the blessed gods!

Chorus:

Let us give thanks to the lords of this city and the protectors of this land who live around the ancient streams of Erasinus.

Chorus:

And you, our companions, take up the tune and sing with us a song that will praise this city, the city of Pelasgians.

Chorus:

Let it not praise any more the floods of the Nile that charge towards the sea.

Chorus:

Praise only these gentle streams here, whose fertile waters flow pleasantly and nurture the children and the soil of this land.

1030

Chorus:

And may pure Artemis look upon us, upon this group of women, with kindness and allow no forced Kytherean weddings to take place.

Chorus:

May the gods bring destruction to our enemies.

Maid:

Our song of praise will not neglect to mention our Aphrodite.

Maid:

She's is equal in power to Hera and both, together stand next to Zeus.

Maid:

She is loved and revered by mortals for her solemn rites and her curious ways.

Maid:

And by the side of the mother are Pothos and Peitho, Desire and Persuasion.

Maid:

No one says "no" to the charming Peitho.

1040

Maid:

Harmonia has been given a small share of Aphrodite's charms: all those whispering love words.

Maid:

But I hold great fears for the fugitives! I see untamed torment and blood-drenched wars ahead.

Maid:

How is it that they've managed to follow us here, splicing the waters of the sea with such ease and speed?

Maid:

Let Fate's word be realised.

Maid:

The will of Almighty Zeus is ineluctable.

1050

Maid:

Marriage is the fate of many women before us, in the past; so it will be yours also.

Chorus:

But let Zeus protect me from a marriage to the sons of Aegyptus.

Maid:

Perhaps that would be the best outcome

Chorus:

You are trying to change an unchangeable mind.

Maid:

No one can tell what Fate has in store for her.

Chorus:

How can I look into the fathomless depths of Zeus' mind?

Maid:

Well then, make your words measured.

Chorus:

What are you trying to tell me by that?

Maid:

Be temperate in what you ask of the gods.

Chorus:

No!

Chorus:

No!

Chorus:

Zeus protect me from a hateful marriage with an enemy!

Chorus:

Zeus! You have put an end to the pain of Io by the touch of your healing hand!

Maid:

Zeus! Give these women victory!

Chorus:

Let me take the lesser of the two evils and I'll call it bliss.

Maids:

Let Justice follow Justice, which was always my prayer to the gods.

Chorus:
There is our liberation!

**The End of
Aeschylus'
"SUPPLIANTS"**