The Journey of a Greek Myth from 16th Century French to Modern English: A Translation of Act II of Robert Garnier's *Hippolyte* (1573)

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

Brigit Calder

Thesis Advisor:
Dr. Donald Gilman

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

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Abstract

Robert Garnier’s *Hippolyte*, until this point, has never had a definitive English translation. Originally written in Greek by Euripides (fifth century BCE), the play was first translated into Latin by Seneca (first century CE), then into French by Garnier (1573). This play is a historically important step in the transmission of the Hippolytus myth from Euripides to the present day. However, Garnier’s *Hippolyte* is often overlooked, with scholars instead focusing on Racine’s *Phèdre* (1677). I, along with several other students guided by Dr. Gilman, have worked to correct this oversight by translating *Hippolyte* in such a way as to make it available to a modern audience of English speakers. Although Seneca’s influence is clearly visible in certain sections of Garnier’s play, it is much more than a simple translation. Garnier follows the outline laid by Seneca, but provides new shape to the story by presenting a fresh view of the motivations behind the characters’ actions. An essay on this topic can be found in the Appendix following my translation of Act II. A few notes on the importance of this translation and on the challenges it posed are also included, just before the translation itself.
Acknowledgments

To Dr. Gilman - your advice and guidance have been irreplaceable throughout this process and throughout my time at Ball State. Thank you for everything.

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To my friends and family – you listened to my complaints and my confusion and encouraged me through it all, lending a hand or an ear whenever I needed it. Thank you for all your support.
Introduction

Garnier’s *Hippolyte*, written in 1573, does not mark the first time this story has been told. It is, in fact, a retelling of Seneca’s *Phaedra*, written in the first century CE, itself a reworking of the much older *Hippolytus* by Euripides (fifth century BCE). This vital link between the ancient versions and the more modern ones such as Jean Racine’s *Phèdre* has never been officially translated into English, leaving it inaccessible to those wishing to study the story of Phaedra’s illicit love for her stepson. With this in mind, this project set out to provide an accurate English translation of Act II of Garnier’s tragedy. Our main concern in the translation process was to remain as accurate and faithful to Garnier’s original version as possible while maintaining readability in the English version. Thus, a prose format was adopted rather than Garnier’s rhyming alexandrine format.

Working on this translation, I became interested in how Garnier employed emotional tensions as a motivation for the characters’ actions. This influenced me to take a look at Euripides’ original version of the play and how he orchestrated the characters’ actions. The clear dichotomy between the god-directed outcome of Euripides’ version and Garnier’s more psychological approach inspired as essay presented at the 22nd annual Butler University Undergraduate Research Conference and included here in the Appendix.
Notes on Translation

Finding just the right word to express an idea can be a challenge when writing in one’s mother tongue. Finding just the right word in English to express an idea someone else conceived of and wrote in French, is an altogether new problem. Translation requires a clear understanding of the source language as well as a fluency in the target language that is usually only present in one’s native language. One must consider also the author’s own vocabulary and style, evaluating how best to preserve this in translation. Garnier’s *Hippolyte*, written in sixteenth-century French, poses additional problems in the form of variable orthography, vocabulary that is specialized or no longer used in current French, and syntax made to fit a specific versification rather than rules commonly recognized today.

A couple things did prove to be invaluable in easing the difficulties inherent in the translation process. First, using the definitive Lebègue edition of the text eliminated questions of reliability. It also provided an introduction on sixteenth-century French versification that aided with questions and concerns about grammar. Additionally, spelling and vocabulary concerns were greatly alleviated with the use of Randle Cotgrave’s 1611 dictionary, made available online by Greg Lindahl.

Garnier’s syntax varies in order to best fit the versification of the play. For the majority of *Hippolyte*, rhyming couplets formed by alexandrines are used. However, Garnier employs “a variety of lyric forms” in the choruses (Lebègue 22). What this means in terms of the translation is that Garnier frequently rearranged the order of words and phrases within his sentences in order to fit the meter or provide a rhyme. This rearrangement often left us searching for the subject of the verb or even for the main verb itself at times. Contributing to this problem was Garnier’s method of subject-verb agreement, which sometimes depended on “proximity rather than logic,”
as well as his inconsistent agreement of adjectives with plural nouns (Lebègue 21). Garnier also employs various techniques popular in the sixteenth century that may not be immediately clear to the present-day reader. For example, influenced by Latin, Garnier substitutes the infinitive “for all sorts of dependent clauses, relative, causal, etc.” and uses adjectives adverbially, as can be seen in line 161 where he writes, “Le ceinturant espois” (Lebègue 201). These things required careful, repeated readings to be sure our translation accurately reflected Garnier’s meaning, if not his poetic style.

One final resource proved indispensable in translating this work: other individuals. Each of us who had translated an act met together under the supervision of Dr. Gilman in order to discuss our translations. These bi-weekly meetings provided an opportunity for collaboration that made deciphering Garnier’s syntax simpler as well as functioning as a sort of interactive thesaurus, allowing us to find just the right word or turn of phrase to express the original French in English. Hearing how another person interpreted Garnier’s work proved invaluable in creating an accurate, smooth English translation.
Work Cited

Translation: French-English

HIPPOLYTE

By Robert Garnier
Translation by Brigit Calder

ACTE II.

PHEDRE

O Roine de la mer, Crete mere des Dieux,
Qui as receu naissant le grand moteur des cieux,
O la plus orgueilleuse et plus noble des isles,
Qui as le front orné de cent fameuses villes :

Demeure de Saturne, où les rivages torts,
Remparez de rochers, s'ouvrent en mille ports,
En mille braves ports qui caressez de l'onde,
Reçoivent des vaisseaux de toutes parts du monde :

Pourquoi mon cher sejour, mon cher sejour pourquoi
M'as-tu de toy bannie en eternel esmoy ?
Las ! pourquoi, ma patrie, as-tu voulu, cruelle,
Me faire choer ésmains d'un amant infidelle ?
D'un espoux des loyal ? qui parjurant sa foy
Adultere sans cesse, et ne fait cas de moy ?

Me laisse desolee, helas helas ! me laisse
Sur ce bord estranger languissant de tristesse ?

O Dieux, qui de là haut voyez comme je suis,
Qui voyez mes douleurs, qui voyez mes ennuis :

Dieux, qui voyez mon mal, Dieux qui voyez mes peines,

Dieux qui voyez seicher mon sang dedans mes veines,

Et mon esprit rongé d'un eternel esmoy,

Bons Dieux, grands Dieux du ciel, prenez pitié de moy !

Ouvrez, je vous supply, les prisons à mon ame,

PHAEDRE

Oh Queen of the sea, Crete mother of the Gods,
Who received the nascent driving force of the heavens,
Oh the proudest and noblest of isles,
Which has a façade adorned with a hundred famous towns:

Residence of Saturn, where ominous shores,
Fortified with rocks, give harbor to a thousand ports,
A thousand welcoming ports which, caressed by the waves,
Receive vessels from all parts of the world:

Why, my dear retreat, my dear retreat why
Have you banished me and thrown me into eternal turmoil?
Alas! why, my homeland, you who are cruel, why did you want
To make me fall into the hands of an unfaithful lover?
Of a disloyal spouse? who, perjuring his faith,
Commits adultery endlessly, and does not think of me?

Why do you leave me desolate, alas! alas! Why do you leave me
On this foreign shore, languishing from sadness?

Oh Gods, who from there on high see how I am,
You who see my pain, who see my troubles:

Gods, you who see my affliction, Gods, you who see my grief,
Gods, you who see the drying up of my blood in my veins,
And the eating away of my spirit by an eternal turmoil,

Good Gods, great Gods of heaven, have pity on me!
Unlock, I beg of you, the prisons of my soul,
Et mon corps renversez dessous la froide lame
Pour finir mes langueurs qui recroistront toujours
Sans jamais prendre fin qu’en finissant mes jours.
L’espoir de ma santé n’est qu’en la tombe obscure,
Ma guérison n’est plus que d’une sepulture.
Parlé-je de mourir ? hé pauvrette ! mon corps,
Mon corps ne meurt-il pas tous les jours mille morts ?
Helas helas, si fait : je ne suis plus en vie,
La vie que j’avoy m’est de douleur ravie.
Pour le moins si je vis, je vis en endurant
Jour et nuict les dangers qu’on endure en mourant.

O Phedre ! ô pauvre Phedre ! hé qu’à la mauvaise heure
Tu as abandonné ta natale demeure !
Qu’il t’eust bien mieux valu, pauvre Princesse, alors
Que tu te mis sur mer, perir de mille morts.
Qu’il t’eust bien mieux valu tomber dessous les ondes,
Et remplir l’estomac des Phoques vagabondes,
Lors qu’à ton grand malheur une indiscrete amour
Te fait passer la mer sans espoir de retour.
Qu’il t’eust bien mieux valu, delaissee au rivage,
Comme fut Ariadne en une isle sauvage,
Ariadne ta sœur, errer seule en danger
Des lions Naxeans, qui t’eussent peu manger,
Plustost qu’adoulouree et de vivre assouvie,
Trainer si longuement ton ennuyeuse vie :
Plustost plustost que vivre en un eternel dueil,
Ne faisant jour et nuict qu’abayer au cercueil.

Voila mon beau Thésé qui, suivant sa coustume
And cut open my body beneath the cold blade
To end my languishing, which will ever increase
Without ever ending until the last of my days.

The hope of my well-being is found only in the dark tomb,
My recovery is no more than a sepulcher.
Am I speaking about death? Oh, miserable little thing! my body,
My body, does it not die a thousand deaths every day?
Alas, alas, so done: I am no longer alive,
The life that I had was torn away from me by pain.
Should I live, I live by enduring
Night and day the perils that we endure as we die.

Oh Phaedra! poor Phaedra! Oh at that dreadful hour
You abandoned your native land!
It would have been better for you, poor Princess, while
You set out to sea, to perish a thousand deaths.
It would have been better for you to fall beneath the waves,
And to fill the stomachs of roving seals,
At which time, to your great misfortune, an indiscreet love
Compels you to cross the sea without hope of returning.
It would have been better for you, abandoned on the shore,
Like Ariadne left on an uncharted island, Ariadne your sister,
It would have been better for you to wander alone into the danger
Of the Naxian lions, which could have devoured you,
Rather than to live physically satisfied yet in constant pain,
And to endure for so long a time your tedious life:
Rather instead to live in eternal mourning,
Doing nothing day and night but reviling the coffin.

There is my beautiful Theseus, who, following his habit

1 Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos of Crete, fell in love with Theseus and helped him find his way back through the Labyrinth after killing the Minotaur only to be deserted on the island of Naxos during their return voyage to Athens.
D'estre instable en amours, d'un nouveau feu s'allume.

Voila qu'il m’abandonne, après que le cruel
M'a fait abandonner mon sejour naturel :

35 Apres qu'il m'a ravie aux yeux de mon bon père :
Et aux embrassemens de ma dolente mere,
Fugitive, bannie, et qu'il a contenté
Son ardeur, des plaisirs de ma virginité,
Il va, de Pirithois compagnon detestable,

40 Enlever de Pluton l’espouse venerable.
La terre leur est vile : ils vont chercher là bas,
Sur les rivages noirs, leurs amoureux esbas.
L’enfer qui n’est qu’horrure, qui n’est que toute rage,
Qu’encombe et que tourment, ne domte leur courage.

Mais soient tant qu’ils voudront aux infernaux palus,
Ce n’est pas la douleur qui me gesne le plus :
Un plus aspre tourment rampe dans mes motuelles,
Qui les va remplissant de passions cruelles.

Le repos de la nuit n’allege mes travaux,

Le somme Lethean n’amortist point mes maux,
Ma douleur se nourrit et croist toujours plus forte.
Je brûle, miserable, et le feu que je porte
Enclos en mes poumons, soit de jour ou de nuit,
De soir ou de matin, de plus en plus me cuit.

J’ay l’estomach plus chaud que n’est la chaude braise
Dont les Cyclopes nus font rougir leur fournaise,
Quand au creux Etnean, à puissance de coups,
Ilz forgent, renfrongnez, de Jupin le courroux.

Of being unstable in love affairs, is aroused with a new passion.

There he is, the one who abandons me, after the cruel one
Has caused me to relinquish my natural home.

After he ravished me in front of my good father:
And from the embraces of my lamenting mother,
I have fled and am banished; he has quenched
His ardor with the pleasures of my virginity.
He, the detestable companion of Pirithous, goes
to kidnap Pluto’s venerable spouse.
The land is vile to them: they are going to search down there
On the black shores, for their lovers’ delights.
Hell, which is nothing but horror, which is nothing but
Complete madness, chaos and torment, does not subdue their courage.
But may they be in the infernal swamp as long as they want,
It is not grief that disturbs me the most:
A more bitter torment creeps into my marrow,
One which goes to fill them with cruel passions.

The repose of the night does not alleviate my labors,
Lethean sleep does not deaden my troubles,
My grief is nourished and grows ever stronger.
I burn, I am miserable, the fire that I carry
Enclosed in my lungs, whether day or night,
Evening or morning, scorches me more and more.
My stomach is hotter than the live embers
With which the bare Cyclopes have reddened their furnace,
When within the Etnean hollow, with the power of beating,
Scowling, they forge Jupiter’s wrath.

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2 The Lethe, or River of Oblivion, is the river in the Underworld from which the shades of the dead must drink in order to forget their previous life on earth.

3 The brothers Brontes, Steropes, and Arges, sons of Gaia and Uranus, who created Zeus’ thunderbolts and are said to live in Mt. Aetna, an active volcano in Sicily, which smokes as a result of their burning forges.
Hé bons Dieux ! que feray-je ? auray-je toujours pleine
La poitrine et le cœur d'une si dure peine ?
Souffriray-je toujours ? ô malheureux Amour !
Que maudite soit l'heure et maudit soit le jour
Que je te fus sujette ! ô quatre fois mauditte
La flèche que tu pris dans les yeux d'Hippolyte :
D'Hippolyte que j'aime, et non pas seulement
Que j'aime, mais de qui j'enrage follement.

NOURRICE
Ne verray-je jamais hors de vostre pensee
Cruelle s'affligeant, cette amour insensée ?
Languirez-vous tousjours, race de Jupiter,
Sous ce monstre d'Amour, que vous deuissiez domter ?
Dommez-le, ma maîtresse, et par cet acte insigne
Monstrez-vous, je vous prie, de votre These digne.
These est renommé par tout cet univers
Pour avoir combattu tant de monstres divers :
Et vous emporterez une pareille gloire,
Si de ce fier serpent vous avez la victoire.
> Amour est un serpent, un serpent voirement,
> Qui dedans nostre sein glisse si doucement
> Qu'à peine le sent on : mais si lon ne prend garde
> De luy boucher l'entree, et tant soit peut lon tarde,
> Bien tost privez d'espoir de toute guerison
> Nous aurons nostre sang infect de sa poison :
> Et alors (mais trop tard) cognostrons nostre faute
> D'avoir laisse entrer une beste si caute.

Therefore, take care of yourself, Madame, and in your efforts,
Quickly stifle this fawning love,
De peur qu’il s’enracine, et qu’après on ne puisse,
Quand il sera trop fort, combattre sa malice.
>Celui n’est plaint d’aucun qui obstiné ne veut
>Eviter son malheur, quand eviter le peut.
>Il faut prévoir son mal, on doit être le plus
>Celui qui plaidroit le joug qu’il s’est mis sur la teste.

PHEDRE
Je suis prête tousjours de constamment souffrir
Tel hazard qu’aux bons Dieux il plaira de m’offrir.

NOURRICE
> Ce n’est pas un hazard, s’il vient un infortune
> De notre seule faute, et non de la fortune :
> Alors est-ce hasard, s’il nous eschet d’avoir
> Quelque accident mauvais, que n’ayons peu prévoir.
Mais las! vostre malheur vous est tout manifeste.

PHEDRE
J’ay bonne confiance en la faveur celeste.

NOURRICE
Pensez-vous que les Dieux favorisent nos maux ?

PHEDRE
Appellez-vous un mal mes amoureux travaux ?

NOURRICE
Non, ce n’est pas un mal, c’est un crime execrable,
Un prodige, un forfait, qui n’a point de semblable.

For fear of it becoming rooted, and thus
Becoming too strong, preventing one from fighting its insidiousness.
> There is no reason to blame anyone who obstinately wants
> To avoid misfortune, especially when it is avoidable.
> One must foresee one’s ills; we would say he would be foolish
> To complain of the yoke placed over his own head.

PHEDRE
I am always ready to bear constantly
Such fortune that it pleases the Gods to set before me.

NURSE
> It is not chance, if it stems from a misfortune
> Of our fault alone and not from luck:
> Thus it is chance, if it falls on us to have
> Some terrible accident, which we could not foresee.
But alas! your misfortune is obvious to you.

PHEDRE
I have complete confidence in divine favor.

NURSE
Do you think the Gods favor our ills?

PHEDRE
Do you call my enamored acts an illness?

NURSE
No, it is not an illness, it is an execrable crime,
A monstrosity, an abomination which has no like.
PHEDRE

05 O puissante Venus!

Oh powerful Venus!

NOURRICE

Venus n’invoquez point.

Do not invoke Venus.

PHEDRE

Las! Nourrice, pourquoi? c’est son fils qui me poind.

Alas! Nurse, why not? It is her son who incites me.

NOURRICE

Un Dieu n’est point autheur d’un si vilain inceste.

A God is not the source of so vile an incest.

PHEDRE

Il embrase mon cœur.

He sets my heart ablaze.

NOURRICE

Plustost il le deteste.

Rather he detests it.

PHEDRE

Les Dieux ne sont faschez que lon s’aime icy bas.

The Gods are not angered that we love each another here on Earth.

NOURRICE

Les Dieux ne sont joyeux de nos salles esbats.

The Gods do not find joy in our impure escapades.

PHEDRE

Ils sont touchez d’amour aussi bien que nous sommes.

They are as touched by love as we are.

NOURRICE

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4 Eros, or Cupid, the god of love and sexual desire, usually pictured as a young winged boy who shoots his victims with arrows
Ils ne sont point touchez des passions des hommes.

PHEDRE

Et quoy ? pour s'entre-aimez commet-on tant de mal ?

NOURRICE

Non pas pour s'entre-aimez d'un amour conjugal.

PHEDRE

L'amour ne se doit pas bomber du mariage.

NOURRICE

Ce ne seroit sans luy qu'une brutale rage.

PHEDRE

Nature ne nous fait esclaves d'un espoux.

NOURRICE

Non, mais les saintes loix, qui sont faites pour nous.

PHEDRE

Les hommes nos tyrans, violant la Nature,

Nous contraignent porter cette ordonnance dure,

Ce miserable yoke, que ny ce que les flots

Enferment d'escaillé, ny ce qui vole enclos

Dans le vuide de l'air, ce qui loge aux campagnes,

Aux ombreuses forests, aux pierreuses montagnes,

De cruel, de bening, de sauvage, et privé,

Plus libre qu'entre nous n'a jamais esprouvé.

Là l'innocente amour s'exerce volontaire,

They are not touched by the passions of men.

PHEDRE

And what? In order to love one another, do we commit such evil?

NURSE

Not when making love through conjugal love.

PHEDRE

Love does not have to be confined to marriage.

NURSE

Without it, it would only be a violent passion.

PHEDRE

Nature does not make us slaves of a spouse.

NURSE

No, but the holy laws which are made for us do so.

PHEDRE

Men, our tyrants, who violate Nature,

Force us to bear this harsh law,

This miserable yoke, that neither that which streams

Enclose with scales, nor that which flies entrapped

In the void of the air, that which dwells in the countryside,

In the shadowy forests, in the stony mountains,

Cruel, benign, wild, and private, has ever experienced;

These burdens are still freer than our predicament.

There innocent love is freely practiced,
Sans pallir sous les noms d’inceste et d’adultere,
Sans crainte d’un mari, qui flambe de courroux
Pour le moindre soupçon qu’ait son esprit jaloux.
Et n’est-ce pas pitié qu’il faille que l’on aime
A l’appetit d’un autre, et non pas de soymesme ?
> En ce monde il n’y a pire subjection,
> Que de se voir contraindre en son affection.

> In this world, there is no worse subjection
> Than to see oneself constrained in one’s affection.

35

NOURRICE
Que dites vous, Madame, est-ce une chose honneste
D’ainsi vous abjecter aux façons d’une beste ?

NOURRICE
Et quelle liberté n’avez-vous eu tousjours
De vostre bon mari, qui vous prise et honore,
Vous aime et vous cherist plus que soymesme encore.

PHEDRE
Nourrice, je me plais en leurs libres amours.

PHEDRE
C’est pourquoy volontiers il est absent de moy.

NOURRICE
Pirithois l’a contraint d’aller avecques soy :
Puis qu’il avoit promis, il devoit ainsi faire.
> Qui promet quelque chose, il y doit satisfaire.

PHEDRE
Nurse, I find pleasure in their moments of free love.

NURSE
What do you say, Madame? Is it an honest thing
To demean yourself thus in the manner of a beast?

PHEDRE
Nurse, I find pleasure in their moments of free love.

NURSE
And what freedom have you not always had
From your good husband, he who prizes and honors you,
Loves and cherishes you still more than himself.

PHEDRE
That is why he is willingly absent from me.

NURSE
Pirithous compelled Theseus to accompany him.  
Since he had promised, he had to do so.
> Whoever promises something must follow through.

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5 Pirithous, son of Dia and Ixion, was Theseus’ good friend who desired to wed Persephone, Queen of the Underworld. Theseus agreed to help retrieve her, but both were trapped by Hades. Theseus was eventually released by Hercules; Pirithous remained trapped.
Mais il est chez Pluton pour violer son lict.

Il ne l’en faut blâmer, ce n’est pas son delict.

Ceux qui sont compagnons à faire un acte infame,
> Sont compagnons aussi pour en recevoir blâme.

Ce que Thesee a faict, il l’a faict pour autruy.

Il en est d’autant plus punissable que luy.

Pirithois de sa Dame avoit l’ame embrasee.

Cela luy sert d’excuse, et non pas à Thesee.

L’on parlera par tout d’un amy si parfaict.

L’on parlera par tout d’un si malheureux faict.

Pluton l’avoit jadis à sa mere ravie.
PHEDRE
Si Pluton a mal fait, y portent-ils envie ?

NOURRICE
Ils ne sont ravisseurs que sur un ravisseur.

PHEDRE
Pluton l'a prise à femme, et en est possesseur.

NOURRICE
Mais à qui se plaindra Pluton de son offense ?

PHEDRE
Il ne s'en plaindra pas, il en prendra vengeance.

NOURRICE
Thesé, qui, compagnon du grand Tirynthien,
A presque tout couru ce globe terrien,
Qui a faict, indomté, tant de brave conquestes,
Qui a tant combattu d'espouvantables bestes,
Tant domté d'ennemis, tant de monstres desfaits,
Tant meurtri de Tyrans pour leurs injustes faicts,
Aura peur volontiers des nocturnes encombres
De Pluton, qui n'est Roy que de peureuses ombres.

PHEDRE
Mais les Démons qu'il a père trop peu forts

PHEDRE
If Pluto committed such a wrong, do they desire the same?

NURSE
They are only ravishers on top of a ravisher.

PHEDRE
Pluto took her as his wife and is her possessor.

NURSE
But to whom will Pluto complain for this offense?

PHEDRE
He will not complain of it; he will avenge it instead.

NURSE
Theseus, who, companion of the great Tirynthien,\(^6\)
Has traveled nearly throughout this earthly globe,
Theseus, who untamed has accomplished so many brave conquests,
Who has fought so many horrifying beasts,
He who has subdued so many enemies, defeated so many monsters,
Murdered so many tyrants for their unjust deeds,
He will easily fear the nocturnal dangers
Of Pluto, who is King of nothing but fearful shades.

PHEDRE
But the demons that he has, will they be too weak

---

\(^6\) Hercules – so called either because his supposed father was King Amphitryon of Tiryns or because it was in the service of King Eurystheus of Tiryns that he completed his “Twelve Labors.”
Pour oser repousser ses outrageux efforts?
> Non, ma Nourrice, non. Les puissances humaines,
> Tant grandes qu’elles soient, là bas demeurent vaines.
> Nul qui soit dévalé sur le bord Stygieux
> N’est jamais remonté pour revoir les hauts cieux.

To dare to repel his outrageous efforts?
> No, my Nurse, no. The human powers,
> As great as they may be, remain powerless there below.
> No one who may be hurled onto the Stygian bank
> Ever resurfaces to see the high heavens once again.

NOURRICE

Celuy qui pour entrer à secu forcer la porte,
> La pourra reforcer quand il faudra qu’il sorte.

NURSE

Whoever forces open the door in pursuit of knowledge
> Will likewise be able to force it open again when he must leave.

PHEDRE

Il est aisé d’entrer dans le palle sejour,
> La porte y est ouverte et ne clost nuit ne jour :
> Mais qui veut ressortir de la salle profonde,
Pour revoir derechef la clairte de ce monde,
> En vain il se travaille, il se tourmente en vain,
> Et toujours se verra trompé de son dessain.
Mais feignons qu’il eschappe, et que vif il se treuve
Repassé par Charon deça le triste fleuve,
Pensez-vous qu’il sejourne une seule saison
Avec moy s’esbatant, paisible, en sa maison :
Ains qu’il n’aillle aussi tost en quelque estrange terre
Chercher, impatient, ou l’amour, ou la guerre,
Me laissant miserable icy seule à jamais ?

NURSE

He will stay with you longer from now on.
But whatever he wishes to do, and whatever his nature,
Which is constantly to pursue some new adventure,
Which tears him away from your arms and casts him far away,
Quoy qu’il ne prenne pas de vous assez de soing,
Et qu’il ne garde assez la foy de mariage,
Rien ne vous est pourtant octroyé d’avantage,
Pour cela ne devez vous dispenser d’avoir
Tout autant de respect à vostre sainct devoir.

> Le mal qu’un autre fait, n’est pas cause vallable
De nous faire à l’envy commettre un mal semblable.
> Le vice ne doit pas les hommes inciter
> De le prendre à patron, à fin de l’imiter.
Voyez-vous pas les Dieux nous estre debonnaires,
Bien qu’à les offenser nous soyons ordinaires ?

> Le ciel perpetuer son cours,
Et le luisant Phebus faire ses mesmes tours,
Et n’estre d’un moment sa carriere plus lasche,
Bien que nostre mesfaict incessamment le fasche ?

Car depuis que son 9il de luire commença,
Que ses premières fleurs le Printemps amassa,
Que l’Esté nous donna ses despouilles premières,
L’Automne vendangeur ses grappes vinotieres,
Et que l’Hyver glacé fist le premier amas,
Dessur son chef grison, de neige et de frimas,
Des malheureux humains les natures fautieres
Ont les Dieux courroucez en cent mille manières :
Et toutesfois, bons Dieux, le ciel ne laisse pas
De disposer la terre à nostre humain repas.
Vous ne nous ostep point le Soleil ordinaire,
De qui l’9il nous nourriss, nous chauffe et nous esclaire.

Vous ne nous ostep point l’Esté ny le Printemps,

Although he does not take enough care of you,
And although he does not sufficiently uphold the vows of marriage,
Nothing more, however, is bestowed upon you.
For this, you must not exempt yourself from having
Complete commitment to your sacred vows of marriage.

> The evil perpetrated by another is not just cause
> To make us commit a similar evil at every opportunity.
> Vice does not have to incite men
> To accept it as their master, with the aim of imitating it.
Do you not perceive the Gods as being kind to us,
Although we are human in offending them?
Do you not see the sky forever continuing its course,
And shining Phoebus7 completing his expected rounds,
And not for one moment growing lax in following his course,
Although our misdeeds constantly anger him?
Because ever since his eye began to shine,
Spring amassed its first flowers,
Summer gave us its first spoils,
Autumn, the grape-picker, provided its first wine-producing vines,
And icy Winter made the first heap of snow
And cold weather atop his grey head,
The faulty nature of unfortunate human beings
Has angered the Gods in a hundred thousand ways:
And yet, good Gods, the heavens do not leave
The earth at our disposal for a great feast.
You do not take from us the ordinary Sun,
Whose eye nourishes us, warms us and enlightens us.
You do not take from us either Summer or Spring,

---

7 Apollo, god of light, associated with the sun
L’Automne ny l’Hyver : ils viennent en leur temps :
Seulement quelquefois, quand la monstreuse masse
Des frères Etnéans, Titanienne race,
Entreprend de forcer le ciel ethérean,
Vous levez lors la main sur le champ Phlégrean
Et d’un foudre sonnant bouleversez les festes
D’Ossa et de Pelion sur leurs superbes testes.

> Jamais nos cruautés ne font les Dieux cruels.
> Si nous sommes meschans, pourtant ils ne sont tels :
> Si nous sommes ingrâts à leur bonté suprême,
> Si nous les oublions, ils ne font pas de même :
> Ainsi le plus souvent que nous méritons bien
> D’estre punis, c’est lors qu’ils nous font plus de bien.

Et ne voyons nous pas qu’au lieu de nous atteindre
De leurs foudres bruyans, ils ne font que se feindre ?
Et que le traict de feu, qui grandant, aboyant,
De tempeste et d’esclairs nous va tant effroyant,
Le plus souvent ne bat que les montagnes hautes,
Et non pas nous mechant, qui commettons les fautes ?
Ainsi, Madame, ainsi vous ne devez laisser
Pour Thésé votre espoux, qui vous peut offenser,
D’avoir cher votre honneur : et luy garder loyale,
Jusqu’au pied du tombeau, vostre amour conjugale.

> Never do our cruelies turn the Gods cruel.
> If we are wicked, they, however, are not:
> If we are ungrateful for their supreme goodness,
> If we forget them, they do not do the same:
> Rather, the more often we indeed deserve
> To be punished, it is then that they do even more for us.

And do we not see that instead of striking us
With their resounding lightning, they merely pretend to do so?
And that streak of fire, rumbling and shouting
With storm and lightning, which frightens us so much,
Most often strikes only the high mountains,
And not us, malicious people who commit mistakes?
Thus, Madame, thus you must not abandon
Your precious honor for Theseus, your husband,
Who is able to hurt you, and you must remain loyal to him,
Your conjugal love, to the grave.

PHEDRE

Je ne scauroy, Nourrice, et ne le dois aussi.
Aimerais-je celui qui n’ha de moy souci ?
Qui n’ha que l’inconstance, et de qui la moüelle

I do not know, Nurse, and it is not necessary either.
Will I love one who does not care about me?
Who is only fickle, and whose marrow

8 The giants, created when the blood of Uranus fell to earth. They tried to overthrow Mt. Olympus by stacking the Pelion and the Ossa mountain ranges atop one another, but were defeated and subsequently trapped under volcanoes around the world.
9 Campi Phlegrei – a volcanic district near Naples, Italy
S'enflamme incessamment de quelque amour nouvelle?

Helene Ledeanne aussi tost il ne veit
Qu'espris de sa beauté, corsaire, il la ravit:
Depuis il eut au cœur, Hippolyte, ta mere,
Qu'il amené vainqueur d'une terre estrangere:
Puis, ô pauvre Ariadne, ô ma chetive sœur,

55  Tu pleus à cet ingrat, cet ingrat ravisseur,
Qui pour le bon loyer de l'avoir, pitoyable,
Sauvé du Mi-taureau, ce monstre abominable,
Sur le bord Naxean te laissa l'inhumain,
Pour estre devoree, ou pour mourir de faim.

En fin mon mauvais sort me mit en sa puissance,
Pour goûter à mon tour sa legere inconstance.
Ores soulé de moy, possible aux sombres lieux
Il cherche une beauté qui ravisse ses yeux.

Que s'il en trouve aucune, et qu'elle luy agree,
Qu'attendé-je sinon que je soy' massacre
Comme fut Antiope, ou qu'il me laisse au bord
Où il laissa ma sœur, pour y avoir la mort?

Or allez me louer la loyauté des hommes:
Allez me les vanter. O folles que nous sommes,
O folles quatre fois, helas nous les croyons,
Et sous leurs feints soupirs indiscrettes ployons.
Ils promettent assez qu'ils nous seront fidelles,
Et que leurs amitiez nous li'ront eternelles:
Mais, ô deloyauté, les faulsaires n'ont pas

Si tost nos simples cœurs surpris de leurs appas,
Si tost ils n'ont deceu nos credules pensees,

Is incessantly inflamed with some new love?

As soon as he sees Helen, daughter of Leda,
He, a pirate, enraptured by her beauty, kidnap's her:
Since he had your mother at heart, Hippolytus,
Whom he, as conqueror of a strange land, brought here:
Then, oh poor Ariadne, oh my unfortunate sister,
You cry out to this ingrate, this ungrateful kidnapper,
You, the pitiful one, who in good faith, saved him
From the Minotaur, that abominable monster,
He left you cold-bloodedly on the Naxean shore
To be devoured or to die of hunger.

Finally, my evil lot placed me in his power;
Now it is my turn to taste his thoughtless infidelity.
Now having his fill of me, it is possible that
He seeks in dark places a beauty who delights his eyes.
That if he finds someone there and that she agrees with him,
What am I waiting for except to be massacred
As was Antiope,10 or to be left on the bank
Where he left my sister, there to die?

Now go ahead and praise the loyalty of men to me:
Go and praise them to me. Oh fools that we are,
Oh four times fools, alas we believe them,
And under their feigned sighs we bow imprudently.
They promise often enough to be faithful to us,
And that their friendship will link us eternally:
But, oh disloyalty, the counterfeiters have not surprised
Our simple hearts so immediately with their charms,
They have not deceived our credulous minds so quickly

10 Amazon, wife of Theseus and mother of Hippolytus, who fought on the side of the Amazons in the Attic War and was killed by another Amazon to prevent her being violated by the Athenian king. Alternately, upset about Theseus' marriage to Phaedra, she is said to have attacked the entire wedding party with the intention of killing all present, only to be slain herself.
Que telles amitiés se perdent effacées :
Qu’ils nous vont dedaignant, se repentant d’avoir
Travaillé, langoureux, voulant nous decevoir.

NOURRICE
0 Otez de votre esprit ce rage jalouse,
Vous êtes d’un grand Roy la cherissable espouse,
Le désir et la vie : il ne vous faut penser
Que jamais pour une autre il vous doive laisser.

PHEDRE
Il n’y a plus d’espoir, je n’y puis plus que faire,
Je porte dans les os mon cruel adversaire :
Il a forcé le mur, et planté l’estandart
Malgré ma résistance au plus haut du rampart.
Je suis en sa puissance, et quoi que je lui brasse,
Je ne puis, tant est fort, lui enlever la place.

NOURRICE
Vous laissez-vous ainsi subjuguer, imbécile,
À cette passion, de toutes la plus vile ?
Voulez-vous diffamer votre nom de mesfaits,
Et vaincre votre mère en ses lubriques faits ?
Puis ne craignez-vous point un remords miserable,
Qui se viendra plonger en votre esprit coupable,
Bourreau perpetuel, et qui joint à vos os
Ne vous laissera jamais sommeiller en repos ?

PHEDRE
There is no more hope, I am no longer able to do anything,
I bear in my bones my cruel adversary:
In spite of my resistance, he has broken through the wall
And planted a standard at the top of the rampart.
I am in his power, and whatever I devise for him,
I cannot, given his strength, remove him from this place.
My efforts are in vain, and reason cannot
Secure me as mistress, for he has imprisoned it.

NURSE
Remove this jealous rage from your spirit,
You are the cherished spouse of a great King,
His desire and life: it is not necessary for you to think
That he must ever leave you for another.

NURSE
Foolish one, will you allow yourself to be overcome in such a way
By this passion, the most vile of them all?
Do you want to defame your name with misdeeds,
And surpass your mother in her questionable deeds?
Then do you not fear at all a miserable remorse,
An eternal executioner which will come and plunge itself
Into your guilty conscience and which burrows into your bones,
Never allowing you to sleep in peace?

Reprimez, je vous pr’y, cette ardeur malheureuse,
Reprimez cette Amour qui ard incestueuse
Autour de vos roignons : repirez repirez
Avecques la raison ces desirs enflamez,
Qu'aucune nation tant barbare fut-elle,
05 Tant fut-elle à nos loix brutalement rebelle,
N'eut jamais en l'esprit : non les Getes espar,
Non les Scythes errans, cruels peuples de Mars,
Non les Sarmates durs, non le negeux Caucas,
Non le peuple qui boit dans les ondes de Phase.

Voulez-vous engendrer en vostre ventre infet
De vous et vostre fils un monstre contrefait ?
Voulez-vous que la mere avec son enfant couche,
Flanc à flanc accouplez en une same couche ?
Or allez, hastez-vous, ne vous espargnez pas,

Exercez vostre soul vos furieux esbats.
Que tardez-vous encor ? pourquoi la salle ouverte
Du monstre vostre frere est si long temps deserte ?
Et pourquoi ne se va vostre race estoffant
Des membres merveilleux de quelque enorme enfant ?

Les monstres trop long temps en vostre maison cessent,
Il vous faut efforcer que quelques uns y naissent,
Sus donq, mettez y peine. Et mais quoi ? n'est-ce pas,
O saincte Paphienne, un merveillable cas,
Qu'autant de fois qu'Amour poindra da sa sagette

Le cœur enamoure d'une fille de Crete,
La terre autant de fois des prodiges verra,

Restrain this incestuous Love which burns
In your kidneys; restrain, restrain
With reason these inflamed desires,
Which no nation ever had in spirit,
However barbaric it may have been,
However brutally rebellious to our laws: not the scattered Getae,\(^1\)
Not the wandering Scythians,\(^2\) cruel people of Mars,
Not the obdurate Sarmatians,\(^3\) not the snowy Caucasus,
Not the people who drink from the waves of the Phase.

Do you want to engender in your womb a grotesque monster,
Implanted by you and your stepson?
Do you want the mother to be united with her sleeping child,
Side by side in the same bed?
Now go and hasten, do not hold back,
Fuel your spirit with your mad pleasures.
What still delays you? Why is the open room
Of your monstrous brother so long deserted?
And why do your people not go about furnishing
Each of its marvelous members with some monstrous child?
For too long in your house have the monsters ceased;
You must strive to give birth to a few of them there now.
Additionally therefore, apply yourself accordingly. And but what?
Is it not, oh holy Paphienne,\(^4\) an astonishing case
That Love will prick, with his arrow, so many times
The enamored heart of a daughter of Crete,
The earth will see wonders many times over,

\(^{1}\) several Thracian/Dacian tribes occupying what is currently Bulgaria/Romania, who came into contact with the Greeks from the 7\(^{th}\) century BCE onward, flourishing especially in the first half of the 3\(^{rd}\) century BCE when they stretched to the Black Sea coast
\(^{2}\) an ancient Iranian people who dominated the Pontic-Caspian Steppe throughout Classical Antiquity, who lived as a confederation of pastoral, equestrian tribes
\(^{3}\) Iranian people of Classical Antiquity who controlled the western part of Scythia between the 5\(^{th}\) century BCE and 4\(^{th}\) century CE when the Goths gained control
\(^{4}\) of or having to do with Paphos, a city on Cyprus and one of the oldest centers of worship for Aphrodite
Nature autant de fois de son cours sortira !

PHEDRE

Las ! Nourrice, il est vray : mais je n’y puis que faire.

Je me travaille assez pour me cuider distraire

De ce gluant Amour, mais toujours l’obstiné

Se colle plus estroit à mon cœur butiné.

Je ne sçaurois sortir libre de son cordage,

Ma chaste raison cede à sa forçante rage :

Tant il peut dessur nous, quand une fois son trait

Nous a troublé le sang de quelque beau portrait.

J’ay tousjours un combat de ces deux adversaires,

Qui s’entrevont heurtant de puissances contraires.

Ores cetuy-là gaigne, et ore cetuy-cy,

Cetuy-cy perd apres, cetuy-là perd aussi :

Maintenant la raison ha la force plus grande,

Maintenant la fureur plus forte me commande :

Mais tousjours à la fin Amour est le vaincueur,

Qui paisible du camp s’empare de mon cœur.

Ainsi voit-on souvent une nef passagere

Au milieu de la mer, quand elle se colere,

Ne pouvoir aborder, tant un contraire vent

Seigneuriant les flots la bat par le devant.

Les nochers esperdus ont beau caler les voiles,

Ont beau courir au mats, le desarmer de toiles,

Ont beau coucher la rame, et de tout leur effort

Tâcher malgré le vent de se trainer au port,

Leur labeur n’y fait rien : la mugissante haleine

Du Nort qui les repousse, aneantist leur peine.

La nef court eslansee, ou contre quelque banc,
5 Ou contre quelque roc, qui luy brise le flanc.
Ainsi cette fureur violente s'oppose
A ce que la raison salutaire propose,
Et sous ce petit Dieu tyrannise mon cœur.
C'est ce Dieu qui des Dieux et des hommes veinqueur
Exerce son empire au ciel comme en la terre :
Qui ne craint point de faire à Jupiter la guerre,
Qui domte le Dieu Mars, ores qu'il soit d'armet,
De grève et de cuirace armé jusqu'au sommet :
Qui le Dieu forgeron brusle dans la poitrine
Au milieu de sa forge, où le foudre il affine :
Le pauvre Dieu Vulcan, qui tout estincelant
Aux fourneaux ensoulfrez travaille martelant,
Qui tousjours ha le front panché dans la fournaise,
Qui à bras découverts va pincetant la braise,
Sans qu'il soit offensé de la force du feu,
De ces tisons d'Amour se defendre n'a peu.
Il brusle en l'estomac, et tout sueux s'estonne
Qu'en luy qui n'est que feu, cet autre feu s'entonne.

NOURRICE
Voire on a feint Amour un redoutable Dieu,
Vagabond, qui ne loge en aucun certain lieu :
Il porte, comme oiseau, le dos empenné d'aëles :
Il ha le beau carquois, qui luy pend aux escelles :
Il ha tousjours les yeux aveuglez d'un bandeau,
Il ha, comme un enfant, delicate la peau,
La chair tendre et douillette, et la perruque blonde
De cheveux frisotez, comme les plis d'une onde.

Or against some rock which breaks the side of it.
Thus this violent furor stands in the way of
What good reason proposes,
And, under the influence of this little God, my heart is tyrannized.
It is this God who, conqueror of gods and men,
Rules his empire in heaven as on earth:
Who does not fear to wage war with Jupiter,
Who overcomes the God Mars, now that he is equipped with weapons,
Armed with greaves and cuirass up to the hilt:
Whose chest the blacksmith God brands
In the middle of his forge, where he casts lightning.
The poor God Vulcan, who all blazing
In the furnaces perfumed with sulfur, works hammering,
Who always has his face bent down in the furnace,
Who with bare arms goes plucking out live embers,
Without being repelled by the strength of the fire,
From those firebrands of Love he is unable to defend himself.
It burns in his stomach, and all sweating, he is astonished
That in himself, a being of fire, another fire erupts.

NURSE
Truly, we have imagined Love a redoubtable God,
A wayfarer, who does not stay in any certain place:
Like a bird, he bears wings upon his back,
He has the beautiful quiver, which hangs under his arm,
He has eyes always blinded with a blindfold,
He has, like a child, delicate skin,
His flesh tender and sensitive to pain, and blond hair
That curls like the crests of a wave.
Cyprine l’enfanta, qui sentist tost apres,
Blessee enragément, la rigueur de ses trêts.
Il guerroye un chacun. Car luy qui ne voit goute,
Du sang d’un Immortel aussi souvent degoute,
Que de quelqu’un de nous : aussi le traistre enfant
Est du ciel, de la terre et des eaux trionfant.

Voila comment le vice, en se flattant coupable,
Couvrent son appetit d’une menteuse fable.

Voila comme, excusant nos lubriques desirs,
Nous bastissons un Dieu forgeur de nos plaisirs,
Autheur de nostre honte, et n’avons peur qu’un foudre
Pour telle impité nous broye tous en poudre.

> Quiconque s’orgueillit de sa prosperité,
> Qui ne prend sa fortune avec sobriété,
> Qui tombe de mollesse, et delicat, ne treuve
> Rien à son appetit que toute chose neuve :
> Qui ore en ses habits, ores en son manger,
> Ore en ses bastimens ne veut rien qu’estranger,
> Celuy le plus souvent en ses entrailles porte
> De l’amoureuse ardeur une pointe plus forte
> Que le pauvre commun, et son esprit trouble
> Va toujours forcentant d’un desir dereglé.
> L’amour accoustumé luy desplaist trop vulgaire :
> Il veut s’ébatre d’un, qui ne soit ordinaire,
> Qui ne soit naturel, mais tout incestueux,
> Mais tout abominable, horrible et monstueux.
> Tousjours toujours les grands ont leurs ames esprises,
> Ont leur cœur enflamme de choses non permises.
> Celuy qui peut beaucoup, veut encor plus pouvoir :

Kypris\textsuperscript{15} gave birth to him, who soon after,
Was infuriatingly hurt, feeling the rigor of his strokes.
He wages war on each. For he who does not bleed,
Is just as often disgusted by the blood of an immortal
As he is by ours: and thus the treacherous child
Is triumphant over the heaven, the earth, and the waters.

Here is how vice, smoothing over its blame while shamefully
Flattering itself, covers its lust with an untruthful fable.

Here as, excusing our lewd desires,
We build a God, artisan of our pleasures,
Author of our shame, and we only fear that a lightning bolt
Will grind us into powder as a result of such impiety.

> Whoever boasts of his prosperity,
> Who does not acknowledge his fortune with restraint,
> Who falls from softness and fragility, finds
> Nothing to his liking except what is truly new:
> Who wants nothing foreign in his clothing,
> In his food, or in his dwellings,
> He who, most often, carries within himself
> A more intense piercing of amorous ardor
> Than the poor common man, and his troubled spirit
> Is always frenzied by a disturbed desire.
> Accustomed love displease him as too commonplace:
> He wants to indulge in a love that is not ordinary,
> That is not natural, but completely incestuous,
> Thoroughly abominable, horrible and monstrous.
> Always, always the great have enamored souls,
> Have their hearts set ablaze by forbidden things.
> He who is able to do much, wants to be able to do yet more:

\textsuperscript{15} Aphrodite, so called because she is said to have risen from the sea to the island of Cyprus
> Et cil qui ha beaucoup, veut encor plus avoir.
Mais qui vous flechira ce jeune homme inflechible ?
Voyez-vous pas combien il est inaccessible ?
Comme l’Amour il fuit, et l’amoureux lien ?
Comme il vit solitaire en Amazonien ?

> And he who has much, wants to have even more.
But who will sway this inflexible young man to you?
Do you not see how inaccessible he is?
How he flees Love and its amorous bonds?
How he lives in solitude as an Amazonian?

5

PHEDRE

Je le suivray par tout, dans les forêts ombreuses,
Sur les coupeaux blanchis de neiges paresseuses,
Sur les rochers aigus bien qu’ils touchent les cieux,
Au travers des sangliers les plus pernicieux.

PHEDRE

I will follow him far and wide, into shadowy forests,
Over thistles whitened with lazily falling snow,
Over sharp rocks, even though they may graze the heavens,
And past the most pernicious wild boars.

NOURRICE

Il fuira devant vous comme devant une Ourse,
Qui tâche recouvrer ses petits à la course.

NURSE

He will flee from your sight as he might from a Mother bear
Which hastily attempts to recover her young.

PHEDRE

Je ne croy pas cela d’une si grand’beauté.

PHEDRE

I do not believe that of one so beautiful.

NOURRICE

Il est encor plus dur, ce n’est que cruauté.

NURSE

He is still more harsh; there is nothing but cruelty.

PHEDRE

> L’amour amollist tout, fust-ce un rocher sauvage.

PHEDRE

> Love softens everything, even an untouched rock.

NOURRICE

Vous ouvrirez plustost un roc que son courage :
Puis il s’ira cacher au profond des desers.

NURSE

You will crack open a boulder sooner than his courage:
He will then go hide away in the depths of the desert.
Je le trouveray bien, et fust-il aux enfers :
Fust-il où le Soleil au soir sa teste trempe,
Fust-il où le matin il allume sa lampe.

NOURRICE
Que vous dira Thesé, s'il retourne une fois ?

PHEDRE
Mais moy, que luy diray-je, et à son Pirithois ?

NOURRICE
Et encor que dira vostre rigoureux père ?

PHEDRE
Qu'a-t'il dict à ma sœur ? qu'a-t'il dict à ma mere ?

NOURRICE
Par ces cheveux grissons tesmoins de mes vieux ans,
Par ce crepe estomach, chargé de soings cuisans,
Par ce col recourbé, par ces cheres mamelles,
Que vous avez pressé de vos levres nouvelles,
Je vous supply, mon ame, et par ces tendres pleurs
Que j’espan de pitié, prevoyant vos malheurs,
Ma vie, mon souci, je vous pry à mains jointes,
Deracinez de vous ces amoureuses pointes :
Vueillez-vous, mon amour, vous mesmes secourir.
> C’est presque guarison que de vouloir guarir.

PHEDRE
Or je n’ay pas encor despouillé toute honte.

I will indeed find him, even if he is in hell:
Whether he be where the evening Sun dips its head,
Whether he be where the Sun illuminates its lamp each morning.

NURSE
What will Theseus say to you if he returns once more?

PHEDRE
But me, what will I say to him, and to his Pirithous?

NURSE
And still, what will your strict father say?

PHEDRE
What did he say to my sister? What did he say to my mother?

NURSE
By this gray hair that attests to all my old years,
By this wrinkled stomach, weighed down with bitter cares,
By this curved neck, by these dear breasts,
That you have pressed with your young lips,
I beg you, my soul, and by these tender tears
That I pour forth from pity, foreseeing your misfortunes,
My life, my worry, with folded hands I pray you,
Tear this amorous pain from yourself:
Please, my love, help yourself.
> Wishing to be healed is almost recovery.

PHEDRE
And yet, I have not yet laid bare all shame.
Sus, mon cruel amour, il faut que l'on te domte.
Je sçay qui te vaincra, mon honneur m'est trop cher
Pour le laisser par toy si follement tacher.
La mort te combattr : sus sus il me faut suivre
Mon désiré mary, je suis lasse de vivre.

NOURRICE
Las, mon cher nourriçon, n'ayez-pas ce propos!

PHEDRE
Non non je veux mourir, la mort est mon repos.
Il ne me reste plus qu'adviser la manière,
Si je doy m'enferrer d'une dague meurtriere,
Si je doy m'estrangler d'un estouffant licol,
Ou sauter d'une tour et me briser le col.

NOURRICE
Au sec ours mes amis, au secours elle est morte!
Je ne la puis sauver, je ne suis assez forte.

PHEDRE
Taisez-vous, ma nourrice.

NOURRICE
Et comment ma douceur?
Et comment ma mignonne ? est-ce là le bon-heur
Que j'esproy de vous ? est-ce là la liesse
Que de vous attendoit ma tremblante vieillesse ?
Laissez ce fol désir qui gagne vos esprits.

Additionally, my cruel love, it is necessary that we subdue you.
I know who will defeat you, my honor is too dear to me
To let you tarnish it so foolishly.
Death will fight you: what's more, in addition, I must follow
My desired husband, I am weary of living.

NURSE
Alas, my dear child, do not persist in these ramblings!

PHEDRE
No, no I want to die, death is my repose.
There is nothing left for me but to determine the way,
If I must impale myself with a lethal spike,
If I must strangle myself with an oppressive halter,
Or jump from a tower and break my neck.

NURSE
Help! my friends, help! She is dead!
I cannot save her, I am not strong enough.

PHEDRE
Be quiet, my nurse.

NURSE
And how my sweet one?
And how my dear? Is it there, the happiness
That I am wishing for you? Is it there, the jubilation
That my tremulous old age was hoping for you?
Abandon this mad desire that overcomes your spirit.
> Celui qui de mourir a constant entrepris,
> Ne peut estre empesché par aucun qu’il ne meure :
> Si ce n’est à l’instant, ce sera quelque autre heure.

**NOURRICE**

Hey! What do you want to do? And why do you die?

Break the faith promised to your spouse instead,
And scorn the noise of the populace instead,
Scorn it, my heart, rather than causing yourself harm.

> Public opinion errs most often,
> Praising a vicious one, blaming a moral one.

We must approach this solitary man,
And attempt to soften his severe nature:
That will be my duty. And yet, take heart,
Perhaps we will be able to soften his harshness.

**CHŒUR**

> Ne verrons-nous jamais le jour
> Que lon soit libre de l’amour ?
> Jamais ne se verra le monde
> Affranchi de la dure main
> De ce Dieu, qui regne, inhumain,
> Au ciel, en la terre, et en l’onde ?

> C’est grand cas que les Dieux, qui ont
> Tout pouvoir sur ce monde rond,
> N’ont divinité qui repousse
> D’un Enfant les debiles coups,
> Et qu’ils sont navrez à tous coups

**CHORUS**

> Will we never see the day
> When people will be free from love?
> Will the world never be seen
> Emancipated from the hard hand
> Of this God, who reigns inhuman
> In the sky, on earth and in the waves?

> It is a major event that the Gods, who have
> All the power on this earthly sphere,
> Do not have a deity who pushes away
> A child’s feeble blows.
> And that they are all wounded by the blows
Des trèts venimeux de sa trousse !
Of the venomous bolts in his quiver!

Mais les hommes plus aigrement
But men feel this torment
Que les Dieux, sentent ce tourment.
More bitterly than the Gods,
Car les Dieux, s’ils sont d’aventure
For the Gods, if they are by chance
Comme nous blessiez dans le cœur,
Wounded in the heart as we are,
Ne souffrent pas grande langueur,
Do not suffer a great malaise
Devant que d’en avoir la cure.
Before being cured of it.

Mais las ! il advient rarement
But alas! It rarely happens
Que ceux qui sont nostre tourment,
That those who are both
Et nostre guarison ensemble,
Our torment and our cure
Soyent esmeus de quelque pitié,
Are moved with any pity,
Et que sous pareille amitié
And that under similar friendship
Ce cruel Amour les assemble.
This cruel Love unites them.

Car toujours le malicieux,
For the malicious one always,
A fin de nous tourmenter mieux,
In order to torment us more,
Par une beauté nous attire,
Attracts us with a beauty
Qu’il nous monstre, et ne baille pas
Which it shows us, but does not bestow:
Ains ne s’en sert que d’un appas
Thus it uses its charms
Pour nous tromper, puis la retire.
To deceive us and then withdraws it.

Comme on dit du vieillard chetif,
As we say about the stooped old man,\(^\text{16}\)
Qui dedans le coulant fuitif
Who wants to wet his mouth
D’un fleuve veut mouiller sa bouche,
With the fleeting current of a river,
Qui prompt s’est plustost retiré,
Which instead swiftly recedes
Que le miserable alteré
Just as the thirsty pauper

\(^{16}\) Tantalus - the son of Zeus who was invited to dine with the gods. He abused the privilege (some say by serving them his own son) and was punished in Tartarus: up to his neck in water, it vanished when he tried to drink, and the branches laden with fruit just above his head blew out of reach each time he tried to grab one.
Du bout de ses lèvres y touche.

> Il n’est si mortelle poison
> Qui ne treuve sa guerison :
> Tout, fors qu’amour, se rend curable,
> Quand Cupidon fait que celuy,
> Qui ha le remede avec luy,
> N’a la volonté secourable.

> Mainte cruelle passion
> Commande à nostre affection :
> Mais passion si furieuse
> Jamais pour nous gesner n’apprit
> Si fort tourment en nostre esprit,
> Que ceste fureur amoureuse.

Comme une eau botuillonne de chaud
Sur le feu qui plus fort l’assaut :
Nostre sang botuillonne en la sorte,
Quand il a les brasiers autour
De cest estincelant Amour,
Et que sa rage est la plus forte.

Quand Jupiter fut irrite
Contre le larron Promethe,
Pour avoir pris le feu celeste :
Entre les malheurs que sa main
Secoua sur le genre humain,

17 as partial punishment for stealing fire from heaven and giving it to the mortals, Zeus presented his brother, Epimetheus, with Pandora, whose natural curiosity led her to open the box that released all evil into the world, but gave people hope as well.
Fut cette abominable peste.

Was this abominable pestilence.

Cette peste née au profound

This pestilence, this ardent fury, was born

Du Styx en neuf tours vagabond,

In the depths of the Styx in nine ever-changing turns,

Pour troubler, ardante furie,

In order to disturb

L’heure des animaux poursuivis,

The good fortune of pursued animals,

Si tost qu’ell’les tient asservis

Immediately this pestilence holds them subjugated

Sous les pieds de sa seigneurie.

Under the feet of its authority.

Alcide, qui de tous costez

Alcides, who overcame

A tant de monstres surmontez

So many monsters from every side,

Et purgé le monde où nous sommes,

And purged the world where we now are,

Eust plus mérite qu’il n’a faict,

Would have deserved more had he done nothing

S’il eust de ce Tyran desfaict

Except defeat this tyrant,

Pour jamais delivré les hommes.

And had freed men forevemore.

Le sanglier Erymanthean,

The Erymanthian wild boar,

Le grand lion Cleonean,

The great Cleonian lion,

Busire, Eurypyle, et Antee,

Busiris, Eurypylus, and Antaeus,

Et l’Hydre au col sept fois testu,

And the seven-headed Hydra

Qui multiploit abatu,

Which, though slain, would multiply,

Cognurent sa force indomtee.

All encountered his indomitable strength.

Et toutesfois Amour n'eut pas

And nevertheless, no sooner had Love
Si tost roidi son tendre bras,
Pour luy decrocher une fleche,
Que laschement il se laissa
Frapper du tré, qui luy perça
Le cœur d'une profonde breche.

Steadied its tender arm
In order to unleash an arrow upon him,
Than he cowardly let himself
Be hit with the blow,
Which deeply pierced his heart.

Il devint de preux qu'il estoit,
Un vil esclave qui tortoit
De la filace enqenotillee :
Et de la mesme main filoit,
Qui fiere auparavant souloit
Estre au sang des monstres souillée.

Valiant as he was, he became
A base slave who was twisting
The yarn around the distaff;
And he was spinning with the same hand
Which was at one time proud: drenched
And stained with the blood of monsters.

Venus, et toy son cher enfant,
Qui allez des cœurs trionfant,
N'avous vengé le fait coupable
De Phæbus, qui vous decela,
Sur Pasiphe qui affola
D'une amour si abominable ?

Venus, and you her dear child,
Who goes from triumphant hearts,
Have you not avenged the guilty deed
Of Phoebus,\textsuperscript{25} who revealed you,
By maddening Pasiphaë with
Such an abominable love?\textsuperscript{26}

Pourquoy encore espandez-vous
Vostre insatiable courroux
Sur ceste miserable dame ?
Luy faisant par trop de rigueur
Rostir brourellment le cœur
En une incestueuse flame ?

Why do you still pour forth
Your insatiable wrath
On this wretched lady?
Making her, through too much hardship,
Burn and roast her heart
In an incestuous flame?

\textsuperscript{25} Apollo, god of light, or alternatively: Helios, god of the sun and father of Pasiphaë

\textsuperscript{26} Pasiphaë was the daughter of Helios (Phoebus Apollo) and wife of King Minos. She was made to lust after a bull sent by Poseidon, and, with the help of Daedalus, successfully mated with it to produce the Minotaur.
Robert Garnier’s Phaedra and the Prison of Love

The conflict between love and chastity forms the basis of the tragic conflict in Robert Garnier’s Hippolyte. This sixteenth century French play is an adaptation of Seneca’s Phaedra, itself a reworking of the much older Hippolytus by Euripides. In Euripides’ version of the play, he constructs the conflict in such a way that it is clear to the audience from the beginning: a declaration by Aphrodite that she will take control of the characters’ fates through love, specifically through Phaedra. However, while these two plays address the same myth, Garnier elaborates upon the conflict set out by Euripides. Instead of the direct interference and direction of the gods leading to the ultimate fates of the characters, he focuses on emotional tensions. Garnier explores the world of psychology, finding the motivations for characters’ actions and the rationalizations that each character might make for their actions. A focus on the characters of Hippolyte, especially of Phaedra, will demonstrate how Garnier provides new shape to a familiar story by presenting a fresh view of the motivations behind the characters’ actions.

In Hippolytus, Euripides frames the play as a whole with the two goddesses, Aphrodite and Artemis, on opposing sides. Aphrodite begins the play by asserting that Hippolytus’ unequivocal rejection of her and single-minded devotion to the chaste goddess of the hunt is an insult she will not allow to pass. She has caused Phaedra, the stepmother of Hippolytus, to fall in love with him, certain that the path she has set will lead eventually to the deaths of both Hippolytus and Phaedra. Although she has nothing against Phaedra personally, Aphrodite feels no remorse for using her in this way and considers it to be a kindness that Phaedra will die with her good name intact. In an essay on Hippolytus, Michael Halleran makes a key point, remarking that “[t]he chaste and tortured Phaedra, the religiously dedicated and proud Hippolytus have been the subject of many studies,” and that “[w]hile this play is not primarily a psychological drama,
the characters are drawn carefully, in relation both to each other and to the gods” (Halleran 65). Aphrodite has a specific end in mind for the characters, but she does not control their individual decisions. Instead, she carefully frames the situation, knowing Phaedra’s concern for her honor will force her to act drastically if and when Hippolytus should find out about her love for him, and knowing Hippolytus’ proud devotion to Artemis will cause him to react with revulsion to any such declaration of love. In spite of any semblance of individual choice or control, the results have been predetermined by Aphrodite.

In direct contrast with this stands Garnier’s version of the play, about which Lebègue has this to say, “Garnier n’a rien conservé de la rivalité d’Aphrodite et d’Artémis et de la ferveur mystique d’Hippolyte, qui sont les traits originaux de la pièce d’Euripide” (Lebègue 243-44). Translated, this means that Garnier kept nothing of the rivalry between Aphrodite and Artemis or of Hippolytus’ fervent belief, which were the original characteristics of Euripides’ play. Garnier does begin his play with a similar foreshadowing of the eventual outcome as Euripides does. However, he employs the shade of Aegeus, Theseus’ father, to do so rather than a goddess. In fact, according to this introduction, the cause of the horrors to come is not Hippolytus at all – it is Theseus. If Aegeus is to be believed, the gods have become angered with Theseus because of his abduction of Phaedra and her sister Ariadne and his journey with Pirithous to the Underworld in order to abduct Pluto’s wife Persephone, and they now wish to see him punished by destroying his family. This idea of a foregone conclusion to the characters’ actions, an inescapable destiny arranged by the gods, appears seriously nowhere else in the play. This kind of prophetic foretelling of events at the beginning of the play was formulaic of Greek tragedies, leading to the conclusion that Garnier included this scene for that reason only, and not because he wished to indicate celestial control over the characters’ destinies.
Phaedra is still the unfortunate victim of an unrequited love for her stepson, and Garnier maintains that she values the honor of her good name, fighting to resist this love and remain chaste. In fact, when we first see Phaedra at the opening of Act II, she is bemoaning her unfortunate lot, wishing she could just die. It is only when she reaches the end of her speech that it becomes clear that a large part of her problem is her love for Hippolytus.

At the same time, while the Nurse is attempting to convince Phaedra she must squelch this irrational love, Phaedra almost seems to wish the opposite. She argues with the Nurse that her love is divinely instigated and that love need not be limited to marriage – it should be experienced freely.

They continue to argue the case, with the Nurse insisting that Phaedra rid herself of this insane passion. Despite her earlier arguments in favor of this love and against her unfaithful husband, Theseus, Phaedra responds to this insistence by admitting:

Je porte dans les os mon cruel adversaire:
Il a force le mur, et planté l’estandart
Malgré ma resistance au plus haut du rampart
Je suis en sa puissance, et quoy que je luy brasse,
Je ne puis, tant est fort, luy enlever la place.
Mes efforts tombent vains, et ne peut la raison
Me secourir maistresse, il la tient en prison.

I bear in my bones my cruel adversary:
In spite of my resistance, he has broken through the wall
And planted a standard at the top of the rampart.
I am in his power, and whatever I devise for him,
I cannot, given his strength, remove him from this place.
My efforts are in vain, and reason cannot
Secure me as mistress, for he has imprisoned it

The Nurse continues to argue with her about it, trying to persuade her to uproot the invasive love that has taken over her heart and mind. This does not mean she has completely given in to this adulterous, incestuous love. She has, on the contrary, decided that if she cannot control her

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1 Act II, lines 461-465, my own translation, 2010
2 Act II, lines 684-690, my own translation, 2010
passion with reason, she will end her own life and thereby at least prevent it from destroying her honor when her disgraceful secret becomes known. Phaedra declares:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Sus, mon cruel amour, il faut que l'on te domte} & \quad \text{Additionally, my cruel love, it is necessary that we subdue you.} \\
\text{Je scay qui te vaincra, mon honneur m'est trop cher} & \quad \text{I know who will defeat you, my honor is too dear to me} \\
\text{Pour le laisser par toy si follement tacher.} & \quad \text{To let you tarnish it so foolishly.} \\
\text{La mort te combattra : sus sus il me faut suivre} & \quad \text{Death will fight you: what's more, in addition, I must follow} \\
\text{Mon desire mary, je suis lasse de vivre.} & \quad \text{My desired husband, I am weary of living}^3
\end{align*}
\]

The Nurse, who until hearing this plan has been encouraging Phaedra to fight against the love, suddenly executes a complete reversal of her position. She now advocates to Phaedra that the two of them should work together in an attempt to soften Hippolytus' hard stance against love and to convince him to accept the idea of loving his stepmother rather than spurning all love.

The Nurse is no longer concerned with the morality of their actions or even the effect on Phaedra's good name; she only wants to keep Phaedra alive. Genuinely concerned by Phaedra's behavior in general, and her obsession with death in particular, the Nurse confronts Hippolytus with the idea of love. She encourages him to be young and to experience the joys life has to offer - including love and youth - while he still can. Hippolytus insists, however, that the simple living of the country, hunting for what he needs and enjoying nature, is his sole desire. Realizing her first tactic would not work, the Nurse re-evaluates and tries once more, arguing for propagating the human race and thus allowing them to continue on into the future. In the face of this new argument, Hippolytus responds:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Je ne scauois aimer vostre sexe odieux,} & \quad \text{I would not know how to love your abhorrent sex,} \\
\text{Je ne puis m'y contraindre, il est trop vicieux.} & \quad \text{I cannot force myself to do it, it is too vicious.} \\
\text{Il n'est mechantete que n'invente une femme,} & \quad \text{It is wickedness that a woman forges,} \\
\text{Il n'est fraude, et malice ou ne plonge son ame.} & \quad \text{It is fraud, and malice that saturate her soul.}^4
\end{align*}
\]

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3 Act II, lines 844-848, my own translation, 2010
4 Act III, lines 1263-1266, as translated by Nathan Rush, 2010
He asserts his hatred for all women and his disdain of ever loving one of them. In spite of this hubris, the Nurse tells Phaedra to speak to Hippolytus of her love. When a self-conscious and ashamed Phaedra eventually makes it clear to Hippolytus that she loves him, he is appalled; when she asks that he kill her in order to allow her to preserve her good name, he refuses, concerned about how this entire situation will reflect upon himself and the chastity of which he is so proud.

Once more, it is the Nurse who takes control in Garnier’s play, deciding to accuse Hippolytus of some new crime now to protect Phaedra’s reputation, knowing he will have no one to support his claims of innocence. She convinces the others that Hippolytus has raped their queen and takes a moment to address Phaedra’s concern for her good name, asserting that she is still spiritually chaste because she was forced against her will. Theseus’ return in the midst of all this only creates more confusion, as he demands to be told what has happened. The emotionally distraught Phaedra, pushed by her husband to relate what has happened to cause her to desire death so ardently, “confesses” the story created by the Nurse.

Je vous invoque, ô Dieux! ô Dieux, je vous appelle
Tes moings de mon outrage, et de ma mort cruelle!
Les priers n’ont peu ma constance esmouvoir,
Le fer et la menace ont esté sans pouvoir
Le corps a toutesfois enduré violence:

I invoke you, oh Gods! Oh Gods, I call upon you
Witnesses of my abuse, and of my cruel death!
Prayers could not shake my steadfastness,
The blade and the threat have been powerless,
Yet my body has suffered rape:

Theseus, upon recognizing the sword left by the “rapist” as belonging to Hippolytus, reacts on a purely emotional level, immediately demanding that Neptune grant the last of the three wishes promised to him by killing Hippolytus. It is only at this point that the Nurse fully realizes the consequences of her actions, when she sees that Hippolytus will be killed because of the lie that she created to hide Phaedra’s illicit love. Overcome by guilt and remorse, the Nurse kills herself.

Footnote:
5 Act IV, lines 1721-1735, as translated by Crystal Smith, 2010
Phaedra, who has been torn by the conflicting feelings of love for Hippolytus and the knowledge that such a love is morally wrong throughout the play, knows she ought to have remained “chaste” and not risked her good name by telling anyone of her feelings. However, she allows herself to be prodded along by the Nurse, first into confessing her love for Hippolytus to her, then into confronting Hippolytus himself with her feelings, and finally, she goes along with the Nurse’s spur of the moment plan to accuse Hippolytus of rape in order to avoid anyone discovering her improper love. After hearing the Messenger report the tale of Hippolytus’ death to Theseus, Phaedra can no longer keep silent. Her guilt overwhelms her, and she confesses all to Theseus. Begging Hippolytus, if he can indeed hear her, to forgive her for what she has done, she commits suicide.

Garnier has made Phaedra altogether more emotional, more repentant, than Euripides. Rather than hanging herself and leaving a letter for Theseus that claims she was raped by his son, as Euripides has her do in his version of the story, Garnier leaves her alive she to see the consequences of the Nurse’s lie that she helped to spread. Now her dishonorable action (lying), undertaken to protect her good name, is revealed to all because her honorable nature will not allow her to continue in such a manner any longer. Unable to contemplate continuing on without her love and with her good name tarnished, Phaedra takes the only honorable course of action left to her: asking for forgiveness and ending her life. This revelation forces Theseus to stop and

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6 Act V, lines 2169-2176, as translated by Wesley Scott, 2010
think about what has happened, immediately causing him to feel horribly guilty for condemning his son to death. The end of Euripides’ version has an upset Theseus being informed of the whole story by Artemis, who clearly lays the blame at Aphrodite’s feet, claiming she was upset by Hippolytus’ chastity and neglect of her. She then assures Hippolytus and Theseus that she will have her revenge on one of Aphrodite’s followers. This, once again, removes the responsibility from the mortals’ shoulders; it is Aphrodite who orchestrated the outcomes this time, and it shall be Artemis who pulls the strings the next. The mortal characters only unwittingly play the parts they are given. Garnier adds another level of interest to the play, giving the control of the story to the characters, allowing the reader to see and feel the motivations for the characters’ actions—whether that be anger, hurt, pride, shame, or love.
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