

the spell-binding power in words, we'll find  
a way to free you from misfortune.

For I was the one who urged you on  
to kill your mother.

ORESTES

My lord

Apollo,  
you have no knowledge how to be unjust.  
That being the case, now learn compassion,  
too.  
Your power to do good is strong enough.

APOLLO

Remember this—don't let fear defeat  
you  
by conquering your spirit. And you,  
Hermes, [90]  
my own blood brother from a common  
father,  
protect this man. Live up to that name of  
yours,  
and be his guide. Since he's my suppliant,  
lead him as if you were his shepherd—  
remember Zeus respects an outcast's rights  
—  
with you to show the way, he'll get better,  
and quickly come among men once again.

*[Exit Orestes. Apollo moves back into the inner  
sanctuary. Enter the Ghost of Clytaemnestra.]*

GHOST OF CLYTAEMNESTRA *[addressing the  
sleeping chorus]*

Ah, you may be fast asleep, but now  
what use is sleeping? On account of  
you, [120]

I alone among the dead lack honour.  
The ghosts of those I killed revile me—  
they never stop. I wander in disgrace.  
They charge me with the most horrific  
crimes.

But I, too, suffered cruelty from  
those [100]  
most dear to me. And yet, although I died

← START HERE

at the hands of one who killed his mother,  
no spirit is enraged on my behalf.

Look here—you see these slashes on my  
heart?

How did they get there? While it's  
asleep

130

the mind can see, but in the light of day  
we have no vision of men's destiny.

You've licked up many of my offerings,  
soothing milk and honey without wine.

I've given many sacrificial gifts  
with fire in my hearth at solemn banquets,  
in that night hour no god will ever share.

I see all that being trampled  
underfoot.

[110]

He's gone, eluded you—just like a fawn,  
he's jumped the centre of your nets with  
ease.

140

He mocks your efforts as he moves away.

Listen to me. I'm speaking of my soul.

So rouse yourselves! Wake up, you  
goddesses

from underground. While you dream on I  
call—

now Clytaemnestra summons you!


 END HERE

*[The members of the Chorus begin to make  
strange sounds and to mutter in their sleep.]*

You may well moan—the man's escaped.

He's gone.

[120]

He's flown a long way off. The friends he  
has

are stronger than my own. You sleep on  
there

so heavily, no sense of my distress.

Orestes, the man who killed his  
mother,

150

has run off! You mutter, but keep sleeping.

On your feet! Why won't you get up? What  
work

has fate assigned you if not causing pain?

Sleep and hard work, two apt confederates,  
have made these fearsome dragons impotent,  
draining all their rage.