

THE FURIES CALLBACK SCENES AND MONOLOGUES FOR ORESTES

MONOLOGUE ONE;

Orestes;

Behold the double tyranny of our land!

They killed my father, stormed my father's house.

True to their oath, hand in hand they swore

To kill my father, hand in hand to die.

Now they keep their word.

(He picks up the Clytemnestra robe, swirls it into the air and puts it on himself.)

Look on this, spread it out, unfurl it

So the Father, no, not mine, but the One

Who watches over all, Great Apollo can behold

So he may come

And be my witness when the day of judgment comes.

That he may say I pursued this bloody death with Justice,

My mother's death.

For her lover Aegisthus, why mention him?

The adulterer dies. For his death I will not be held to count.

But she who plotted a horror against her husband,

She carried his children, growing in her womb

And she—I loved her once

And now I loathe, I have to loathe—what is she?

(He throws the bloody cape from him, picks up the robe of Agammemnon.)

This, how can I dignify this, was it a snare for an animal,

A sheath for a corpse's feet?

This winding sheet of death, Fur3

This robe through which she stabbed him in his bath.

With this new robe, she lured him to put aside his armor,

To bare his skin to her knife.

ORESTES MONOLOGUE TWO

Orestes; Goddess Athena,

Under Apollo's orders I have come,

Receive me kindly. Cursed and an outcast

I come, but not for purging. My hands are clean.

I have been cleansed by Apollo, following his oracles

I have come, worn and battered, crossing the dry land Fur14

And sea alike. I come Goddess, before your statue and in

Your house I keep watch here, to wait the issue of my trial.

CLYTEMNESTRA MONOLOGUE;

Clytemnestra;

You. How can you sleep?

Awake, awake, what use are sleepers now?

I go dishonored thanks to you, alone among the dead.

And for those I killed, the charges of the dead will never cease.

I am driven in disgrace. I feel the guilt, withering guilt from all the outraged dead.

But I suffered too, terribly. And from those I held most dear.

And none among the Gods rages to avenge me!

I was slaughtered by Orestes' matricidal hand.

See these gashes—carve them in your hearts!

Still sleeping? And after all my sacrifices to you!
How you lapped the honey, the sober offerings poured to soothe you,
Midnight feasts I burned at the hearthfire,
At an hour never shared with other gods.
All those rites, I see them trampled down.
And he, Orestes, springs free like a fawn.
One light leap, he's free through the thick of your nets,
He breaks away!Fur8
Mocking laughter on his lips.
Hear me, hear my pleading!
Awake my Furies, goddesses of the Earth!

APOLLO AND THE FURIES SCENE;

Apollo;
Out I tell you, out of these halls!
Set the Prophet's chamber free!
Or take the flash and stab of this, this flying viper
Whipped from the golden cord that strings my bow!
Heave in torment, black froth erupting from your lungs,
Vomit the clots of all the murders you have drained.
But never touch my halls, you have no right.
Go where heads are severed, eyes gouged out,
Where Justice and bloody slaughter are the same.
You revolt the Gods, the whole cast of your shape is guide to what you are.
Your kind should infest a nest of knotted serpents,
But never rub your filth on the Prophet's shrine.

Out then, you flock without a herdsman, since
No God has such affection as to tend this dark brood. Fur11
Furies; Lord Apollo, it is your turn to listen now,
You are no mere accomplice in this crime,
You did it all, and the guilt is yours.

Apollo;

So? How?

Furies;

You commanded the guest to kill his mother.

Apollo;

Commanded him to avenge his father, what of it?

Furies;

And then you dared to embrace him, fresh from bloodshed.

Apollo;

Yes, I ordered him on, to my house, for purging.

Furies;

And you are abusive then to those that drove him here? Fur12

Apollo;

Yes. You are not fit to approach my temple.

Furies;

We have our mission, and our Apollo;

Authority? You? Tell me your glorious authority.

Furies;

Matricides, we drive them from their houses.

Apollo; And what of the wife who strikes her husband down?

Furies; That murder is not the shedding of kindred blood.
Apollo; So, you'd disgrace-deny the bonds of Zeus
And Hera, queen of brides! And Aphrodite, by such argument
Is thrown away, outlawed, and yet the sweetest things in life
Come from her, for marriage of man and wife is Fate itself,
Guarded by right of nature.
But if one destroys the other you relent, no revenge,
Not a glance in anger.
Then I say your manhunt of Orestes is unjust.
Some things stir your rage, I see. Others,
Atrocious crimes, then you are unmoved to act.
Athena will oversee this trial. Fur13
And review the pleadings of this case.
Furies; We will never let that man go free. Never.
Apollo; Keep after him then, and make more trouble for yourselves.
Furies; Do not try to cut our power with your arguments.
Apollo; I have no need of your power.
Furies; No? Perhaps because you sit beside the throne of Zeus,
You think you can disgrace us. But blood of the mother draws us on,
We go to win our right upon this man and hunt him down.

ATHENA AND ORESTES SCENE

Athena;
You stranger? What will you say?
What has befallen you that you must Fur19

Defend yourself against the anger of these?

Are you so confident you are right that you

Place yourself here at my image?

Do you come a suppliant, to be cleansed here?

Speak to me.

Orestes;

Queen Athena, first, I am no suppliant.

It is the law of man that the man with bloody hands

May speak no word until that blood is cleansed. I have been

Absolved. I bring no pollution to your halls.

I am from Argos, and my father, Agammemnon,

Lord of seafarers, was your companion when you made the proud

City of Troy bend to the dust forever. Honored on those fields,

He died without honor when he came home.

My blackhearted mother cut him down,

Entangled him in a fine robe, struck him in his bath.

I came from a place of exile and killed the one who bore me.

I loved my father, fiercely, and this was vengeance for his blood.

Apollo shares responsibility for this.

He spurred me on, he warned me of the punishment

Unless I brought the guilty down.

But were we just or not? Judge us now. Fur20

I am in your hands. I will accept your judgement.

Athena;

Is this a matter for mortal men to judge?

Is this a matter where my rights prevail?

It is an act of murder, where the edge of wrath is sharp,

And you come to my doors.

I think you bring no harm to my city,

I must respect your right to seek your justice here.

But these, these ancient sisters of the Fates,

They must not be dismissed.

And if I fail to hear them, the venom of their resolution

Will return to infect the soil and sicken all my land to death.

Since you have brought your argument to my doors, and the ending of it

All depends on me,

I will select judges of manslaughter, bind them with oaths

And found a tribunal here for all time to come.

You contestants, summon your trusted witnesses and proofs,

Your defenders under oath to help your cause.

I will bring the men of Athens they shall swear to make

No judgment that is not just, and make clear where the truth lies.

ATHENA AND FURIES SCENE

Athena

Listen to me. You have not been beaten. This was the result of

A fair ballot which was even. You were not dishonored, but the luminous evidence

Of Zeus was there, and Apollo, who spoke the oracle, it was he who ordered

Orestes to act and protected him from hurt. Do not with your anger make this place

uninhabitable. I have the power of Zeus behind me. Do we need to speak of that?

I am the only God who knows where the keys to his thunderbolts are kept.

We do not need such, do we?

Do not be angry with this land,

Nor bring your hatred down on it. Do not spill the dripping rain of hate

And death in fierce and jagged lines.

I tell you I promise you a place of your own,

Deep hidden underground, that much is yours by right.

You are goddesses, and shall be honored at a shining hearth,

Accepting devotions offered by your citizens.

Furies

The wind I breathe is fury and utter hate. Fur34

Night, hear me mother Night!

The hard hands of the Gods have taken my old rights away.

Athena

You are older gods, the years have taught you much.

But Zeus gave me intelligence, not to be despised.

Here in our homeland, never cast the stones

That whet our bloodlust. Never waste our youth,

Inflaming them with the burning wine of strife.

Never pluck the heart of battle and plant it in our people

To seethe against themselves.

My curse on civil war.

Stay here to do great things,

Stay here to be honored.