
THE TROJAN WOMEN *

HECUBA: Should I call upon the gods,
The gods who dwell in circles of darkness,
Who make mighty rules
and follow none,
the golden lords who live
above the law . . . ?

Should I *lean* on the gods as I lean on
this cane
Because something in me still cries out?—
The terrified child who lives in the mind,
The original, phantom self which drowns
in the lungs—
Cries out: God, God, *God!*
Cries out like a drowning man in a sea
with no bottom,
Cries out like the soul on the beaches
of *nowhere!*
. . . or like a great city
that falls as a shadow
on the *threshold* of nowhere . . .

I want to call upon the gods . . .
I still believe . . .

But I saw my man, my king, my Lord,
my master
Fall like a broken animal upon the holy altar,
and I have met with men who saw my sons,
those glorious princes, those birds
of Troy
Quiver and shriek and vomit and die . . .
How can I call upon the gods these days,
How can I pray?

Everything falls apart
In the hour before the dawn.
Trees scatter meaningless leaves to
the wind,
Dreams scatter hopes, or lies.
Truth is as short-lived as the sunrise . . .

Everything's coming to a close
Before it's even begun.
I am coming to a close,
I see my end . . .

I'm an ugly old slave
Shuffling back and forth
Between here and nowhere,
shuffling back and forth
among my enemies.

I open and close my enemies' doors,
I greet their guests.
(*I, who bore Hector!*)

.....

HECUBA: (SLOWLY RISING, HER VOICE SOFTENING)
If Troy is meaningless, then everything is
meaningless,
and that can't be.
I *demand* meaning. I *demand* it . . .

(PAUSING)

Smoke rises like dust and spreads its filthy wings.
I become a shadow, and the city disappears.
It falls on the threshold of nowhere. It
is a dream, an aftermath of flame.
Trees scatter black meaningless leaves
to the wind,
Dreams scatter hopes, or lies.
Truth is as short-lived
As the sunrise . . .

(THE STAGE DARKENS UNTIL THERE IS
ONLY THE DYING FIRE AND THE HISSING
OF THE FINAL FLAMES)

TALTHYBIUS: It's over, woman, it's over. Come . . .

(THERE IS A GREAT CRASH AS THE LAST
OF THE WALL GIVES WAY)

HECUBA: (AS TALTHYBIUS LEADS HER OUT)
Did you hear that?

TALTHYBIUS: Yes. So? Other walls have fallen.
I am tired. You are tired. Come . . .

HECUBA: (CHUCKLING DRILY)
Lead on, my captor. On, to a new day.
On to slavery, on to the ships
like giant angry birds
that will carry us over
the bitter sea.

Towards the cloudy towers of Somewhere,
Where alien riders ride along the shores . . .

(TALTHYBIUS GENTLY PUSHES HER OFF
STAGE; AS HE FOLLOWS HER AND EXITS,
HIS SHADOW IS IDENTICAL TO THE SHADOW
OF THE GOD POSEIDON AS WE SAW IT IN
THE OPENING SCENE)

TALTHYBIUS: As the moon bends the oceans
So this darkness bends the mind.
Even the planets are weary, old woman . . .
Everything awaits a series
of wretched and unreal tomorrows.

(LOOKING BACK FOR THE LAST TIME ON
THE RUBBLE OF THE CITY)

Goodbye, you splendid towers,
You once magnificent citadel,
You horrible heap of stones . . .

Sing for the great city that cries out
like a soul,
That falls like a shadow
On the threshold of nowhere . . .
This place, this place was Troy.

Gwendolyn MacEwan



Gwendolyn MacEwan

Dimitris Andrikoglou

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