

and he gives the alarm within. He expresses his delight in a dance (after *v.* 33), by way of prelude to the general rejoicings. Exit.

What here follows is not clearly indicated; but it can scarcely be supposed that the elders, who have still to be summoned (*v.* 270), enter at once. The text presumes some interval and it is not likely that the action was arranged so as to contradict it. We may conjecture that the rousing of the palace, the sending out of the messengers, the kindling of fires upon the altar or altars before the entrance, and the rejoicing of the household, was typically represented in action with music, for which the words of the watchman (*φροῦμιον χορεύσομαι*) seem to prepare the way. Enger, in his *Introduction*, makes, if I understand him rightly, some such suggestion (p. xviii).

Enter the Elders, singing first a *march* (40—103) and then the *First Stasimon* or regular ode in responsion (104—268).

The great length of this chorus is not an arbitrary or accidental circumstance. It is necessary to suppose here a considerable lapse of time, even after the entrance of the Elders, and the delay of Clytaemnestra in appearing is a proper part of the plot¹.

The elders state the reason of their coming. They recall how the war was commenced with ambiguous omens, the sacrifice of Iphigenia, and the threatening prophecies thereupon. Doubtful as to the meaning of this nocturnal alarm, they have come, as invited by the queen, to assure themselves of the safety of the fortress.

*First Scene in Dialogue*² (*vv.* 270—378). Clytaemnestra, attended by Conspirators, comes from the palace. She informs the elders that Troy has been taken during the night, and the news announced by a chain of beacons, of which she gives an imaginary description. By the assistance of her followers she eludes further enquiry and retires.

From this time forward the elders are carefully watched, as the situation of the plot requires, by those in the queen's interest, who continue to assemble. The proceedings of the elders and even their actual words, are reported within the palace. This, which upon the stage would be manifest of itself, is accidentally indicated to us by the text in the next scene, where Clytaemnestra makes a pointed allusion to the doubt which, during her absence, they have expressed as to the truth of her information. This deserves notice as an instructive example of the difficulties presented by a stage-play stripped of the necessary directions for action³. I think it

¹ As to the apostrophe addressed to her at *v.* 83 see note there.

² *ἐπεισόδιον*.

³ I submit that the above is the only natural way of solving the question which the more careful commentators justly raise. "*καὶ τίς μ' ἐνίπτων*" clearly refers to the incredulity of the chorus (485). How would K. know of this, it is asked, as she was not there? The answer is

that the chorus only expresses the general feeling of the citizens, which she can naturally be supposed to learn." (Sidgwick on *v.* 595.) This answer seems to me, I confess, not an answer but an evasion. The question is not what other persons may have shared the feelings of the elders, but how did Clytaemnestra know what feelings the elders had expressed? It is to their expressed incre-