

*Cass.* After I did that wrong, I could never make any believe me.

*Eld.* To us however thou seemest a prophet worthy belief.

*Cass.* Ah!...Oh agony!

Again the fearful pangs of present vision<sup>1</sup> grow on me, whirling my soul in a confused beginning of—There!...Sitting there!...do ye see them? Sitting before the house!...young children, like forms in a dream.

As infants slain by their parents they appear, their hands full of that meat of which he ate, whose own flesh it was, carrying, oh pitiable burden!, the hearts and inward parts, of which their father tasted.

And hence the vengeance, plotted, I tell you, now by a certain lion of a craven sort, who haunting the couch hath watched at home for him, alas, who is come, who is lord—for the slave must bear the yoke—of me. Little he knows, the destroyer of Ilium, captain of a lost fleet, how the tongue of that lewd creature hath spoke and ‘stretched’, with joyful thoughts her ‘plea’ (her cast!) of treacherous death, and fatally shall reach him! So bold the crime, a woman to slay the man!

She is—ah what should the loveless monster be fitly called? A dragon, a Scylla, housed in the rocks, the mariner’s bane, offering her fell sacrifices, like a priestess of Death, even while in the prayer of her soul her husband hath no part. And how the bold wretch raised her cheer, as at the turn of battle, pretending to be glad of the safe coming-home!

And of this how much is believed, it matters not. What is to be will come, nay, soon thou present thyself wilt say with compassion ‘A prophet only too true!’

*Eld.* Thyestes’ feast of children’s flesh I understood, and shuddered. Truly ’tis more than semblance, and it makes me afraid to hear it. But in what else was said I am thrown out of the track.

*Cass.* I say that thou wilt see Agamemnon dead.

*Eld.* O hush, poor creature, hush thy profane lips!

*Cass.* Nay, it is not as a Saviour that he directs this sentence.

*Eld.* No indeed, if he will be present; but I trust it shall not be so.

*Cass.* While thou prayest against them, they are busy to slay.

*Eld.* Who is the man who is contriving this woe?

*Cass.* Thou must indeed have looked far wide of what I showed.

<sup>1</sup> By the peculiar word *ὀρθομαντεία* which the object becomes, as in this case, perceptible to the actual senses of the *μαντική* not *true divination* but *direct divination*, that is a communication in

*μαντείας*.