

*King.* I see this throng of gods of festival nodding assent beneath their shade of fresh-plucked boughs. May this your cause bring no mischief to the city whose kinship ye claim; and may no feud arise from some source unforeseen and unforestalled; for of such troubles our state stands in no need.

*Chor.* Yea: may Justice, the suppliant's aid, daughter of apportioning Zeus, look on this flight, that it bring ill to none. But do thou, of old experience though thou art, learn from one of younger birth. In paying heed to the suppliant thou would'st be paying such sacrifices as are the best that a holy man can lay upon the altars of oblation.

*King.* 'Tis not my house at whose hearth ye sit: and if the city is being stained with a common stain, in common be it the people's charge to work out the cure. For myself, I will pledge no promise till I have made all the citizens to share herein.

*Chor.* 'Tis thou that art the city: 'tis thou that art the commonwealth. Thou, above question lord, dost rule the altar, hearth of the country, by thy undisputed nod, and upon a throne of undivided sway thou dost decide every matter. Beware pollution.

*King.* Pollution—if such there be—fall on my foes. But I know not how to aid you without harm. And yet it is no gracious thing to set these supplications at nought. Helpless am I, and fear possesses my soul, whether to act or not to act and to let fortune take her course.

*Chor.* Think of him who keeps watch from on high, guardian of harassed mortals who take refuge at their neighbour's hearth and obtain not their due of right. Verily, when Zeus is angered for his suppliant's sake, his wrath abideth unappeased by the wailings of the punished.

*King.* If the sons of Aegyptus are your masters by the law of your state, claiming to be nearest of kin, who would seek to withstand their right? Needs must that ye should plead according to your own country's laws, that they have no authority over you.

*Chor.* Nay; never may I come beneath the men's tyrant hand. Far as earth stretches beneath the stars, I set no bounds to my flight from this forceful wedlock. But do thou choose Justice on thy side and give judgment for that which is holy in the sight of heaven.

*King.* No easy matter this for judgment: choose not me for judge. For already I have said I cannot, for all my rule, do what ye ask, without my people's will: and never shall the folk say, if perchance some untoward thing befell, "Thou didst honour aliens and ruin thine own land."

*Chor.* Zeus, of whose blood we are, with balance nicely-poised o'erlooks both sides alike in this dispute, duly apportioning to the