

of them. For enquiring of a matter, there is no strength in a reporter like going yourself to the source.

*Aeg.* I want to see *the* reporter, and to question him again, as to whether he was himself present in the neighbourhood of the death, or whether he speaks from the weak information of rumour. I warrant 'they will not deceive a mind that is not eyeless'. (*Exit.*)

*Cho.* Zeus, Zeus, what am I to say, whence now to begin my prayers and adjurations? How, with such good will, to give my desire words adequate ere I close? This is the moment, when either the murderous cleavers, essayed (?) before and stained, will make an utter destruction of Agamemnon's house: or else he, kindling a fire and a light for the cause of freedom and lawful rule, shall win the high fortune of his fathers. For such a prize, succeeding sole to a bout of pairs, Orestes with strength divine is now to wrestle—and O, may he wrestle victoriously! (*A shriek and outcries within.*)

'Ah! Ah!' And 'Ah!' say we. How goes it? What is the fate of the house? Let us get away from the finishing of the affair, that so we may pretend ourselves blameless, if it has been unhappy in the end, 'for after all', we shall say, 'it is the fighting which has decided that'. (*Exeunt.*)

*Servant.* Woe, and yet woe again, for my lord undone (?)<sup>1</sup>! And woe once yet for a last farewell<sup>2</sup>! Aegisthus is no more. Now open, open quick, and unbar your women's door. Though the need is for a man, and a lusty,—not to help the dead—no use in that—Ho, I say, Ho! Ho!—I scream to the deaf, and bay to idle sleepers without effect. What has become of Clytaemnestra? What is she doing? It will be another case of the 'barber's neck', near in the natural course to be stricken down.

*Clytaemnestra.* What is the matter? What clamour is this thou raisest to the house?

*Servant.* The dead are slaying the live. That is my news. (*Exit.*)

*Clyt.* O me! I read the sense in the riddle. We are to perish by treachery, as indeed by treachery we slew. Give me a battle-axe, some one, and quick! Let us know whether we are victors or vanquished. For to this point this woeful way hath brought me.

*Orestes.* Ah! I was going to seek thee. *He* hath enough.

*Clyt.* O me! Dead, my loved, my gallant Aegisthus!

*Or.* Thou lovest the man! Therefore shalt thou lie in one grave with him. Dead though he be, thou shalt never play him false.

*Clyt.* Stay, O my son; have pity yet, my child, on this, the breast

<sup>1</sup> See note below on p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> προσειπέιν say farewell; Eur. *Hipp.* 1099.