

DIONYSOS

Did you hear?

XANTHIAS

Did I hear what?

DIONYSOS

Flutes being blown.

XANTHIAS

I heard them too, and there's a crackle
and smell of torches. Seems like it's mysteries going on.

DIONYSOS

Let's just quietly squat where we are, and listen in.

CHORUS

Iacchos Iacchos*

Iacchos o Iacchos.

XANTHIAS

That's what I thought it was, master. The Initiates.
Remember, he told us, their playground's hereabouts. They sing
the Iacchos song by that noted theologian, Diagoras.*

DIONYSOS

I think you're right, but still we'd better sit quiet here
until we find out just exactly what goes on.

CHORUS

In white, as Initiates.

Iacchos! Well beloved in these pastures o indwelling
Iacchos o Iacchos
come to me come with dance steps down the meadow
to your worshipping companions
with the fruited, the lifebursting,
the enmyrtled and enwreathed garland on your brows, and bold-footed
stamp out the sprightly measure
of the dancing that's your pleasure,
of the dancing full of graces, full of light and sweet and sacred
for your dedicated chosen ones.

XANTHIAS

Demeter's daughter, Persephone, holy lady and queen,
ineffable fragrance wafts upon me. Roasting pigs!*

DIONYSOS

If I promise you a handful of tripes, will you shut up?

CHORUS

Let flames fly as the torch tosses in hand's hold
Iacchos o Iacchos

star of fire in the high rites of the night time.

And the field shines in the torch light,

and the old men's knees are limber,

and they shake off aches and miseries

and the years of their antiquity drop from them
in the magical measure.

Oh, torch-in-hand-shining.

Iacchos go before us to the marsh flowers and the meadow
and the blest revel of dances.

Four Comedies by Aristophanes

Lysistrata

The Acharnians

The Congresswomen

Translated by Douglass Parker

The Frogs

Translated by Richmond Lattimore

1969

Ann Arbor Paperbacks

The University of Michigan Press

CHORUS

Slowly.

Advance all now, firmly
into the flower strewn hollows
of meadow fields. Stamp strongly
and jeer and sneer
and mock and be outrageous.
For all are well stuffed full with food.

Advance advance, sing strongly
our Lady of Salvation
and march to match your singing.
She promises
to save our land in season
for all Thorykion can do.

LEADER

Come now and alter the tune of the song for the queen of the
bountiful seasons;
sing loud, sing long, and dance to the song for Demeter our lady and
goddess.

CHORUS

Demeter, mistress of grave and gay,
stand by now and help me win.
Protect this chorus. It is your own.
Let me in safety all this day
play on and do my dances.
Help me say what will make them grin.
Help me say what will make them think.