

Grand, and not so grand, narratives

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TETKPOΣ

1270 φεύ, τοῦ θανόντος ὡς ταχεῖά τις βροτοῖς
χάρις διαρρεῖ καὶ προδοῦσ’ ἀλίσκεται,
εἰ σοῦ γ’ ὄδ’ ἀνήρ οὐδ’ ἐπὶ σμικρὸν λόγον,
Αἴας, ἔτ’ ἴσχει μνήστῳ, οὐδ’ οὐ πολλάκις
τὴν σὴν προτείων προῦκαμες ψυχὴν δορί·
ἀλλ’ οὔχεται δὴ πάντα ταῦτ’ ἐρριμμένα.
ὦ πολλὰ λέξας ἄρτι κἀνόητ’ ἔπη,
οὐ μνημονεύεις οὐκέτ’ οὐδέν, ἠνίκα
1275 ἐρκέων ποθ’ ὑμᾶς ἐντὸς ἐγκεκλημένους,
ἤδη τὸ μηδὲν ὄντας ἐν τροπῇ δορός,
ἐρρύσατ’ ἐλθὼν μούνος, ἀμφὶ μὲν νεῶν
ἄκρουσιν ἤδη ναυτικοῖς θ’ ἐδωλίους
πυρὸς φλέγοντος, ἐς δὲ ναυτικὰ σκάφη
πηδῶντος ἄρδην Ἔκτορος τάφρων ὕπερ;
1280 τίς ταῦτ’ ἀπέιρξεν; οὐχ ὄδ’ ἦν ὁ δρῶν τάδε,
ὄν οὐδαμοῦ φῆς, οὐδ’ οὐ μὴ, βῆναι ποδί;
ἄρ’ ὑμῖν οὗτος ταῦτ’ ἔδρασε ἐνδίκαι;
χῶτ’ αὔθις αὐτὸς Ἔκτορος μόνος μόνου,
λαχῶν τε κἀκέλευστος, ἦλθεν ἀντίος,
1285 οὐδραπέτην τὸν κληῖρον ἐς μέσον καθεῖς,
ὕγρας ἀρούρας βῶλον, ἀλλ’ ὅς εὐλόφου
κυνῆς ἔμελλε πρῶτος ἄλμα κουφιεῖν;
ὄδ’ ἦν ὁ πράσσων ταῦτα, σὺν δ’ ἐγὼ παρών,
ὁ δοῦλος, οὐκ τῆς βαρβάρου μητρὸς γεγώς.

TEUCER

Alas, how swiftly does gratitude to the dead flow away among men and how soon is it caught betraying them, if this man does not bear you in mind, Ajax, even to a small extent, this man whom you often protected, risking your own life! But all this is cast away and gone! You who just

now spoke so many foolish words, have you no memory of the time when you were shut up inside your fence, already reduced to nothing by the turn taken by the battle, and this man came alone and saved you, when fire was blazing about the decks of the ships at their sterns, and Hector was leaping high over the moat onto the hulls of the ships? Who put a stop to this? was it not he who did this deed, he who you said went nowhere where you did not go? Was this action of his criminal? And again when he came against Hector, man to man, by lot and without orders, having thrown in a token that was no runaway, no lump of wet earth, but one that was bound to leap first out of the crested helmet?^a It was he that did this, and I was there with him, the slave, the child of the barbarian mother.