

## Krétská literatura

**Georgios Chortatsis, Erofilí**

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### Prologue spoken by CHAROS

My countenance so wild and grim and veiled in pitchy dark,  
The scythe I carry in my hand, my bones all bare and stark,  
The thunders which so oft do roar, the lightnings which forth break,  
Opening the ground, and seeming from the depths of hell to make  
A road – all these alone, without the aid of speech, full well  
To those who look upon me here to-day my nature tell.  
Yet none the less I have desire for easing fo my mind  
To tell you clearly who I am that you my powers may find.  
I am that one whom all mankind hate with a deadly hate,  
And that I am dog-hearted, blind, and pitiless relate.  
For I am he who when I list hurl suddenly to death  
Kings and the great ones of the earth, and take away their breath  
From rich and poor impartially, from master and from slave,  
From young and old, from great and small, from lively and from grave,  
From wise and fools – from every sort that is of human kind,  
Whether they be in flower of youth or grip of years confined.  
Glories and honours I blot out, o'er names a veil I cast,  
And friend from friend I separate, and reputations blast.  
The angry heart I dominate, the schemes of men I change;  
Their hopes I scatter to the winds and all their plans derange.  
And wheresoe'er my eyes are turned, blazing with bitter ire,  
Whole towns sink into wreck headlong and continents expire.  
Where are the kingdoms of the Greeks? Where are the lands of Rome  
So wealthy once and powerful? Where now will you those glories find  
Of famous Athens – famous once for arms and powers of mind?  
Where is the mighty Carthage now, and where those warrrios great  
Of Rome? Where now the wealth which these once brought unto their state?  
Where now is Alexanders' fame and all his warrior's might?  
Where now the Caesars' glories which the world once filled with light?  
All these are shattered by my hand and through me come to nought,  
They are but dust and ashes now and to neglect are brought.  
Therefore I count thoser fools indeed who think by toil or art  
They can defy my hand and e'en prevent it from its part  
Of bringing to and end their names, by writing idle tale,  
Or can by doing of some deed, or true or false, prevail.

More foolish still I those account who immortality  
Woo by the making of base gain or heaping fee on fee.  
For all these are by me destroyed and také their wings for flight,  
All these by time and passing years are blotted out of sight.  
Where is Chaldean's lettered lore, and where are those who sought  
For immortality by pen, and all their power brought  
To write the history of the wars which were waged by mankind,  
Or those who scattered their great wealth like chaff before the wind?  
Where now the greatness, where the wealth untold fo that huge town  
Which with her royal sway controlled Semiramis did own?  
Come tell me, where are now those man for height of wisdom famed?  
Those rulers strong who with their rod myriads to slavery tamed?  
But since no more on earth they're seen, no trace of them is left,  
One name at least, come mention me; Are they of that bereft?  
Tell me, who were they who did raise what men ,colossi' name,  
Who gathered mountains and thereout half finished that great frame  
The Tower of Babel called? Who bulit, toiling by night and day,  
Those pyramids which still are seen standing in their decay?  
Vain toil! One name of many tell from all that famous band,  
That we may see if, as they deemed, they could immortal stand!  
Nay, all alike by common fate are vanished from the light;  
Hades their names and bodies too has buried out of sight.  
But what need is there I should cull examples drawn from far  
And ancient times, which from ourselves so much removed are?  
Come tell me, where is seen to-day full many an honoured friend,  
Your love dones whom ye held so dear and faithfully did tend?  
Where are those lovers of your place who sauntered up and down,  
And sprinkled musk-leaves in the streets and perfumed all your town?  
And where are they who on their lips the honey-dew dod lay,  
And in their frolics had the power to turn night into day?  
Poor wights! Their dwelling is the pit, all silent is their cry;  
Their naked souls flit o'er the earth, they dust and ashes lie.  
Yet spite these warnings none there is who pondereth in mind  
That he too, ere long time, must needs to Hades passage find.  
They live as if they were to be the heirs of earth for aye,  
As if no thing that world contains their whims could satisfy.  
O wretched above measure they! They cannot e'en perceive  
How fast their days are minishing, how fast the years them leave!  
For yesterday is past and gone; The day before is fled,  
And but a spark of light mid gloom can by to-day be shed.  
Ere that an eye can open and shut, on victim I descend,  
And without pity I that man straight to his doom do send.  
The light of beauty I put out, I pity not the fair,  
No reck have I of savage heart, of humbleness no care.

Those who fly from me I o'ertake, who seeks me I repel;  
Oft uninvented I arrive as guest at marriage bell,  
And bride and bridegroom, old and young alike away I bear;  
Revel I turn to funeral train, and laughter into tear.  
Instead of pastime I bring gloom, instead of singing, sobs,  
And the grim purpose of my mind my heart of pity robs.  
The whiteness fair of flesh through me foulness of earth infests,  
The face I blot out in decay, the sweetly-scented breasts  
I on a sudden make the home of worms that therein breed;  
Daily my hand is firm resolved to ruin's train to lead  
Houses and families therein, kingdoms and worlds alike.  
For so heaven's justice is fulfilled – with equalness to strike.  
Yet spite of this, I bid you all whom chance assembles here  
To put from out your hearts to-day the slightest thrill of fear.  
For not in quest of you by Zeus have I been hither sent;  
On making prey of you, your sires or children I'm not bent.  
For it is writ in heaven's book that many years ye live,  
And that these years shall wealth enjoy and honours richly give.  
But I am come unto this high and noble palace-gate  
(A place of such surpassing bliss in the world's estimate)  
To deal out death, as you shall see, ere this day pass away,  
Unto the king that dwelleth here and eke his daughter slay;  
To lay his glory in the dust, and then his realm to place  
In other's hand, for all the crimes which his foul rule deface.  
Yes, and a soldier slay I too, the sole remaining shoot  
Left in the world of other king, whom battle did uproot.  
And what I do is to be done at Zeus's strict behest,  
For Zeus will never let a deed of Right unfinished rest.  
Therefore ye must expect to take here grief within your heart;  
With tears in eyes ye will again to your own land depart.  
I say 'your own land, for ye are not now, as ye believe,  
In Crete, but it is Egypt's land that doth your feet receive.  
This city famous Memphis is, throughout the wired world known  
For its great pyramids which rise with stone piled upon stone.  
By Zeus's favour are ye come suddenly to this land,  
That 'fore the eyes of each and all a warning dread may stand –  
That by his death Philógonos may you with terror fill,  
And that the hatred of Unright may through your being thrill;  
That warned by other's fall ye may abide in your estate,  
Seeing how oft prosperity in overthrown by fate.  
O plans of men, ye go awry; judgement, thou lovest eyes,  
O hopes of men, ye are but dupes and end in bitter sighs.  
This king has hopes of joyfulness, on wedding sets his mind;  
'O Fortune,' cries he, 'thou to me hast proved thyself too kind.'

And yet – the bitterness of woe will soon him overpower,  
And maidens' weakly hand with blows will bring him to death's hour.  
So if in this wise kings who rule the wide world with their sway,  
So often find that humbly they my bidding must obey,  
Who amongst lesser folk can hope to reach unto the goal  
Of glory, wealth and honour, though they seek these with their soul?  
Poor dupes! What ye snatch runs away; that which ye grasp takes flight,  
Your gathered store is scattered far, your building sinks from sight;  
Your glory's snuffed out like a spark, your wealth in which ye trust  
I whirled away, e'en as the wind scatters the gathered dust;  
Your name is blotted out as though 'twere written in the sand  
Which the sea covers with its flood, or in the dust on land.  
But now I leave you, for I see the General from the gate  
Comes forth – e'en he whom pangs of death in sharpest form await.

### Act three

#### Scene one

#### EROPHÍLE SPEAKS

Laughter and tears and joys and griefs are all together sown,  
And as one crop you see them born and to their fullness grown.  
Therefore 'tis they turn about, and one takes other's place;  
Who laughed at morning ere the eve to tears will change his gace.  
And so I see it is with me; the joy I erst did show  
Will change to sorrow measureless and to excess of woe.  
For I now trembling stand with fear as though I had to make  
The passage of some stormy sea or traverse some wild brake...  
O wicked Fate that art to me a foe, accursed Fate,  
What sufferings at the hand of Love received can I relate!  
When have these wretched lips of mine had rest from sighs and groans,  
When have they ceased from uttering bitter laments and moans?  
When have these eyes of mine from tears one moment had respite?  
When have I rest received from them or closed them in delight?  
When I was yet a little lass love's slavery I knew,  
And all the ills which from him come and torments round me grew.  
All single-handed every hour with Love I had to fight,  
And never dared what I endured to bring from dark to light.  
A thousand times he pierced my heart, a thousand times I strove  
To banish him this way or that lest he my heart should move.  
A thousand times I, as it were, did fill my ears with lead

To keep his sweet enticements out and free myself from dread.  
I thousand times paced to and fro and sought a path to find  
Wherein I could refreshment seek to cool my burning mind.  
But he could hold me well in check as captain skilled in fight,  
And day and night as doughty foe would make display of might.  
Sometimes I saw him arms in hand, sometimes without his bow  
In guise of friend, and that a friend most deeply loved, he'd go.  
At times he'd show a kindly mien, at times a scowling face,  
At times display a soldier's might, at times a childish grace.  
At times he'd torment cruelly, but often he would show  
The sweetest consolation's balm and fondlings dear bestow.  
A thousand precious promises he'd every day supply,  
And thousand gardens fair for me he'd build aloft in sky.  
A thousand joys he'd paint for me to give my soul delight,  
And ever, fore my eyes he'd hang a thousand beauties bright.  
My difficulties he'd remove and give me daring mind,  
And sweetest converse me to school and counsel he would find.  
Therewith he won a victory, and I became his slave,  
And o'er my miserable heart I him full empire gave.  
Therefore I did myself account a wondrous happy maid,  
And to the credit of my life a thousand blessings laid.  
But now I see he's traitor turned and what he named love's life  
So falsely hath proved nothing else but battle's endless strife.  
But look! I see Panáretos; his looks his grief disclose;  
From these 'tis clear that he by now the bitter tidings knows.

Scene two

PANÁRETOS AND EROPHÍLE

PANÁRETOS

When lightnings flash and thunders roar, and the strong storm winds blow,  
And to the shore the angry waves with a wild crashing go,  
The rolling bark upon the sea now here now there they shake,  
As with a mighty din the floods of heaving waters break.  
Then is it that the captain good is known; a pilot strong  
For skilfulness is homage paid and honours great belong.  
For by the art of sailor's craft trophies o'er sea are raised,  
And he who guides the vessel's helm is for his cunning praised.  
So I too with a right brave heart Fate's tempest-shock will meet,  
Since it has suddenly conspired to sweep me off my feet.  
I will not bow to death's decree, without I effort make  
To fight against it best I can, ere life from me it take.

EROPHÍLE (aside)

Alas! What is it that I hear! Shall I then now be told

That new misfortune has arrived and will be linked to old?

PANÁRETOS

But 'tis my lady, as I see, yonder towards me fares;  
Her face is bent unto the ground, her eyes are thick with tears.  
O love, how many are the trials thou causest me to know,  
And yet I cannot but to thee my thankfulness forth show;  
For she with her sweet countenance doth compensate each pain,  
E'en as the sun with his fair light earth's beauties doth sustain.  
The turtle-dove when thunders roar and rain without a rest  
Descends from heaven, leaves the field and flies unto her nest;  
So, lady, why, when tempest sore doth thus our fortunes shake,  
Dost thou from shelter of thy bower hither thy passage make?  
Why art thou come upon this day? Thy face is dark with pain,  
And with its mystery doth rend my wretched heart in twain.

EROPHÍLE

In every sore trial of mine, in every bitter wound,  
Panáretos, save in thyself I've never comfort found,  
Save in thy noble countenance and in thy manly mien,  
As I know well that thou thyself hast ever clearly seen.  
This is the cause for which I've come, only to let these eyes,  
That now so humbly on thee rest, a little ease devise.

PANÁRETOS

O Princess, who my mistress art, my courage and my hope,  
I judge that never tongue of man could with the telling cope  
Of all the misery which has to-day assailed my heart,  
Nor could another thing on earth comport thereto impart  
Save this thy countenance alone; and as the thirsty deer  
Doth with an eager panting to the running stream repair  
That he may drink and be refreshed, in such wise, mistress mine,  
These eyes have panted sore to see those lovely eyes of thine,  
That thou from out my heart shouldst chase its heavy weight of pain,  
And I thereby of cheerfulness full measure might regain.  
But ere I came, my lord and king summoned me with much speed  
To go and meet him; this behest I had forthwith no heed  
As coming from my king, and thus I could not come to thee  
At once, as thy dear nurse did bid, what time she met with me.

EROPHÍLE

What meant this urgent summons?

PANÁRETOS

Yet my lip shrink back with fear  
From opening to tell the tale of all we have to hear.  
Two envoys, lady, for thy hand they to the king have brought,  
And he has told me he's resolved (Alas! my heart woe-fraught!)  
To make thee wed; and for that he has seen thee sad at heart  
(As thou thyself hast heard him say, my own life's better part),  
That I to thee enticing words should speak he hath me sent,  
That thou thereby shouldst give to this marriage accursed consent.  
So when this fatal word I heard, lady, thou well canst think  
Into what blaze of burning fires my wretched heart did sink.  
Nay, death itself and slavery I call not such a woe,  
As it that bitterness of pain which I now undergo.  
For death to misery brings end, and even slavery  
As time moves onward in its course may turn to liberty.  
But this my pain which tortureth me whilst in the world I live  
Will, even after I am dead, in Hades torment give;  
And never shall I there below alleviation find,  
But still the memory of my woe will wring my tortured mind.

#### EROPHÍLE

Each man on earth who is in love hath every cause to fear  
And start at shadows; but for him is consolation near  
When he beholdeth that his love with him is as one soul,  
And that his frame and hers are knit inseparably whole.  
That I do love thee well, thou knowst, and confidence on earth  
Can from no other source for me be brought unto the birth.  
It is upon thy noble mind, upon thy boundless grace,  
Upon thy strength, thy conduct firm, thy wisdom, that I place  
As on foundation strong my love, and in my inmost heart  
I have that noble building set, surpassing in its art.  
And thus it is that in this world nought can this building wreck  
Save death and death alone; and still that ardent love will deck  
With greater beauty, as I trust, our souls in realm of hell,  
For with most faithful love e'en there we shall together dwell.  
Ah me! I would that I could ope for thee my inmost breast,  
And show thee how deep-planted there my love doth ever rest.  
So hadst thou said, Panáretos: 'Unless I meet my deats,  
From thee, my love, I'll ne'er be torn away, while I have breath.'  
Although, my mistress, with my eyes I cannot see thy heart,  
And how I am therein enshrined, yet with painter's art  
The eye of mind can well portray the secret of thy soul  
And what is in thy face enwrapped can like a scroll unroll.  
But my poor heart can by no means its trembling lull to rest  
At thought that what it loves so well may be snatched from its breast.

I'm like a miser who his hoard has hidden in strong place,  
And ever feels a thousand doubts through his brain surging race,  
And with anxiety is torn that men this place may find  
And snatch away from out his grasp the darling of his mind.  
Alas! If other for the sake of paltry treasure-hoard,  
Can never to his heart the peace of restfulness afford,  
How can it be that I from fear and trembling should have peace,  
Or from the thought that I should lose thy peerless beauty cease?  
Nay I have fear e'en of the sun and every wandering star,  
Lest, as they gaze, my mistress, on thy beauties from afar,  
They may rush down and ravish thee and leave me thus forlorn,  
More miserable than any wight that ever yet was born.

EROPHÍLE

Nay, no such beauty is in me and no such comely face;  
It is thy love that my poor self with comeliness doth grace.  
Yet whether fair or foul to view, Panáretos, I be,  
This frame of mine is for thee born, for thee and only thee.

PANÁRETOS

Never, my princess, water could with its streams fire allay,  
As these thy worlds have power to drive my bitterness away.  
Yet, mistress mine, by that some love which 'gan with childhood's years,  
And, grown to full, a loyalty invincible now bears,  
Which both of us by its strong force inseparably detains,  
And both our bodies with love's bond unmeasurable chains,  
I straitly charge thee, never let the king so conquer thee,  
That thou wilt let this love for me from out thy memory flee.

EROPHÍLE

Alas! I cannot find what cause I ever to thee gave,  
Panáretos, that thou shouldst doubt my love for thee, and have  
Such terror in thy mind, as though this thing thou didst not know,  
That I on thee my mind and soul and all my heart bestow.  
O Love, since my lord's eyes are blind, and have no power to see  
That with the fullest powers of soul I love him faithfully,  
One of thy shafts in poison dip, and shoot it to my breast,  
So that it pierce my inmost heart, and thus it stand confessed  
By my untimely death that I remain his loyal mate,  
And only for my love to him meet this my death and fate.

PANÁRETOS

Nay, let this fate upon me fall, if I have any fear  
About that love, my Nereid, or if I know not clear



That not e'en death can ever cause this love from me to swerce  
Or think that it can the desire of any other serve.  
But why I know not – yet some cause fills me with nameless dread  
That this which I so closely grasp may soon from me be sped,  
And that this thing which should to me great consolation give  
And was my life's hope, will ere long make me with terror live.

#### EROPHÍLE

It is the message which to us so suddenly they brought –  
Panáretos, let us with grief not be so overwrought,  
For that same heaven which at first did join us with one band  
Will see that as companions close we evermore shall stand.  
I pray that heaven, the sea, the earth, the airs that round me play,  
The sun that shines aloft so bright, the stars, the night, the day,  
May put themselves in arms and stand against me as my foes,  
If e'er desire for other man this heart of mine enclose.  
But since we thus conversing here no longer may remain,  
Come to my bower and seek me there, that we some way may gain  
Whereby these envoys for my hand may find themselves in foil;  
For all else after that can we set fairly without toil.  
I go, and see thou dally not.

#### PANÁRETOS

My lady, go thy way,  
And I will come with speed, and thus what thou commandst obey.

### Scene three

PANÁRETOS speaks alone

The sun's bright orb in gloom so dark never can leave a place,  
When he from out the world of day withdraws his shining face,  
As my fair Nereid leaves my heart plunged un profoundest gloom,  
When she my company doth quit and from my side gives room.  
Nor can the winter in the sky collect so many clouds,  
When she with gathered tempest's pall the sun's bright orb enshrouds,  
As are the pond'rings which within my mind are born and sway  
My anxious soul twixt hopes and fears now this and now that way.  
And oftentimes these change about and cannot take firm root;  
Like battling winds they hostile shafts each 'gainst the other shoot.  
One shows to me the faithful love of this my maid so dear,  
And makes a thousand thrills of joy within my heart appear;  
Another doth declare to me 'Fickle is womankind  
And never faithful to their word', and thereby slays my mind.

Another says to me that I must needs my master dread,  
 For if he hear of what I've done, I am as good as dead.  
 Another full of daring cries that I my hopes should set  
 Upon the strength of my right hand and confidence beget.  
 A thousand say 'Depart from here', a thousand cry 'Abide',  
 And thus a thousand changing thoughts within my mind reside.  
 And so it is I suffer what no mortal man yet bore,  
 For with this torment which I feel my heart's wrung to its core.  
 Lights doth for me darkness beget, and wealth but beggary,  
 Refreshing streams do parch me up, and joy means misery.  
 Like a strong tower I firmly stand, but like a reed I shake,  
 In the same breath I laugh and cry, I dare and yet I quake,  
 I walk as in a garden fair, yet am in gaol confined,  
 I'm safely in the harbor moored, and yet the depths I plumb  
 Of evil fate and to the extreme of misery am come.  
 Nay, what is worst of all, amid the surge of tortures fell  
 I seem within the glories bright of Paradise to dwell.  
 O evil Fate, thou thrice accursed, why dost thou pleasure find  
 Without respite for evermore thus to torment my mind?  
 O Love, let none who 'fore his eyes this my example bears  
 E'er hope for long with thee in joy to live and free from cares.  
 For thou all joyousness bepleckst with weeping and repine,  
 And dost refreshing water with a burning fire combine.  
 O Aphrodite whom I serve, who whilst I still was boy,  
 Didst thy son's cup – of poison full – give to me to enjoy!  
 A draught which such refreshing sweets did temper and refine,  
 It seemed to me that what I drank was nectar all divine –  
 On me thine eyes with pity turn, rally my fainting mind,  
 That I may courage for my heart and knowledge for brain find.  
 And grant to me an easy road, for my escape some way,  
 That I to check this embassage some hindrance may array,  
 And thus their cursed project foil, thereby to still the pain  
 Which Erophile and myself from it must needs sustain.  
 And if I have against my lord in ought offended, see  
 How strong thou art, how fair my love, and pity give to me.

#### Scene four

The GHOST of the King's brother speaks:

From realm of Hades I am come, with dark and gloom o'erspread,  
 Since Pluto leave hath given me to view the light that 's shed  
 By the bright orb of day; nor yet my eyes have power to see  
 The beauties of this brilliant world which lie surrounding me,  
 For they have been to nothing save the gloom of darkness trained,  
 Nor can the dazzling light of sun by them be yet sustained.

But though these eyes have not the power of day to see the light,  
Yet can my senses in earth's scents and sweet air take delight.  
O world, thou art so fortunate, a spot so blessed with grace,  
A paradise for those who live, a justly longed-for place  
By us who thee have lost, because we cannot again find,  
Whene'er we wish it, that old bliss which we have once resigned.  
But if they do not me deceive, my eyes begin to see  
The shining light that is revealed by the sun's majesty.  
Mountains and plains I now espy and now in vision clear  
The walls of Memphis – town so famed for its great might – appear,  
The seat of my unhappy sire, which to my portion came,  
Sole cause of that untimely death which snatched away my frame!  
In this high palace was I born, and in this house was bred,  
A house on which above the rest fortune her honours shed.  
And while I was but still a lad, I joyed in great delight,  
And beyond that of other boys my lot was gay and bright,  
The while I walked upon this land and entered in this gate,  
And sat aloft upon this throne; thus in my royal state  
My ears did listen oft to words of praise, for 'tis the hap  
Of kings that others them as 'twere in robe of honour wrap.  
But O how false the show of things! Fortune's a fickle jade –  
'Twas in this very place that she an end of my life made,  
And of my children's too – and this was not by foeman's art,  
But by my brother's wrought, that man most pitiless of heart,  
Who now stands free from care, and rules o'er this wide realm to-day,  
And o'er this city of renown and mighty power holds sway.  
We both were of one mother born, one father us begat,  
One town did see our growing years, we in one palace sat.  
Now though throughout our kingdom's realm this custom held its sway,  
That when sire died, then brother should his other brother slay,  
That thus the elder without care should keep his rule in peace,  
And every cause of strife throughout our empire's bounds should cease,  
Yet I, though I the elder was, did this same custom break,  
Nor from my brother, as was wont, essayed his life to take.  
And when he bade me o'er my hosts give him the sole command,  
I these, as unto brother loyal, entrusted to his hand.  
So I, poor fool, within my min did the fond hope sustain,  
That I with him o'er this wide realm as monarch should remain.  
Ye empty thoughts of humankind, ye confidences vain,  
Why have ye not for your own selves example from me ta'en?  
I thought to grow to mighty power, increase of wealth to bring,  
Nay, the whole world seemed to my mind an all too little thing.  
But that great hope which the world's bounds in expectation passed  
Was suddenly in tiny place shut up by death at last.

For me my brother, knowing nought of gratitude, one day  
Within these very palace-walls with his own hand did slay.  
No reason had he save that thus the kingdom would be riven  
From me – that kingdom which the grace of Zeus alone had given.  
And with me at the selfsame time he hurled down to their death  
My children twain of tender age loved more than my own breath.  
But the unkindest cut of all, which gave to me more pain  
Than sharpest swordstroke, was that next my wife was by him ta'en  
And made the partner of his bed; O God, how couldst thou see  
Unmoved from heaven's height this act of matchless cruelty?  
By her as wife he but one child – a daughter – did beget,  
And that same child will him to-day with grief and pain beset.  
For so the heavens give command and Zeus' high justice wills,  
Who evermore for deeds of crime the penalty fulfils.  
But if so be that penalty he puts off for a space,  
And to the sinner to repent doth give some days of grace,  
Yet he remembers in the end, and cometh in his might,  
That thus when men but least expect he may their errors smite.  
And so it is that he to-day will work the bitterest woe  
Upon Philólogos and deal to him a deadly blow,  
This very day on which he thinks he stands at height of bliss  
And doth no honour, that has e'er fallen to monarch, miss.  
But that the sword may pierce his heart with e'en a sharper blow,  
His daughter's love and what it means his own eyes him will show;  
For he will see her clasped within her lover's arms, and groan,  
And o'er a fate, that all ill fate surpasseth, he will moan.  
And this young lover's death with it his daughter's death will bring,  
Yea, and in no great time, himself will to destruction fling.  
This is the sentence that by Zeus is passed upon them all,  
And news thereof has even now reached unto Hade's hall,  
And this such joyousness infused, so filled me with delight,  
That all the pains of hell, it seemed, passed suddenly from sight.  
And Pluto, knowing what just joy I felt within my heart,  
Gave leave to me that from below I should for here depart,  
That these my eyes should feast to-day upon this slaughter great,  
And so I might thereby my soul with greater pleasure sate.  
But look! 'Tis he who issues forth. I tremble at his sight.  
I fear that wound which in my breast he dealt with all his might  
May open once again and spray, as then, a fount of gore,  
And that this blood will fill this place as once it did of yore.

Scene five

KING and his brother's GHOST

KING

Of all the joys wherewith the heaven and nature's mighty power  
Have deigned as with some robe of state the race of men to dower,  
None is more fair to view, nor yet more worthy to obtain  
That strength of daring; this I judge to all men must be plain.  
For nothing else exists which them more speedily doth lift  
To heights of splendor or on them bestows great honour's gift.  
'Tis this which has the forests felled and from them timber made  
For ships, and these has on the seas' wide watery highways laid.  
'Tis this which bridges rivers o'er and mountains high ascends,  
'Tis this which into foreign land with mighty forces wends.  
'Tis this alone which honour gives and hoards of wealth obtains.  
This laughs at fear and of the power of Hades recketh nought.  
He who possesses it alone is unto true life brought.  
'This me did lift to kingly power and suffer me to set  
Upon my head a royal crown and golden coronet,  
And made me with much honour lord of Egypt's wide estate,  
So that no man on earth as I can be as fortunate.  
Victory, wealth, honours every hour are multiplied for me,  
And many joys within my house and in my heart I see.  
One single care within my breast disturbed my peace of mind –  
My daughter's marriage. Now I see that this my fortune kind  
Accomplishes, and that indeed in a far better wise  
That e'er I deemed it possible; so that I must surmise  
That no good fortune upon earth with mine can equal be,  
And never power 'mongst humankind matching mine own you'll see.  
But I to Erophile go, the brightness of my eyes,  
Myself to tell her what fair lot of marriage 'fore her lies.

#### GHOST

O Zeus, who art aloft in heaven, lend an attentive ear  
From thy seat whence thou all beholds, and these high boastings hear.  
O linger not, but speedily on him thy justice show,  
For while thou lingerest his pride ever the worse doth grow.  
E'en now and henceforth work on him the bitterness of death,  
And may this triumph be the last he feels whilst he draws breath.  
Do thou, O Pluto, out of hell a mighty fire upraise,  
As thou didst promise, and therein from end to end let blaze  
Anger and torments, murder foul, and weeping s mournful sound,  
And may this palace from to-day be levelled to the ground.

*(Hereupon three FURIES come forth with lighted torches and rush with noise from one end of the stage to the other and say:)*

#### FURIES

What other work dost thou obtain?

## GHOST

Return again apace

Below into the murk of hell and into torment's place.

## CHORUS

O race for wealth, hunger for fame,

O cursed lusting after gold,

For you full many to death came.

Unjust wars arise untold,

And quarrels countless for your sake

O'er mankind their fell empire hold.

May your name to Hades take

Flight, and never raise its head,

Terror among men to make.

Some demon was it who you led

Upwards unto the world of men,

And from you was poison bred.

For pity ye abhor, and when

Ye come, justice flees apace.

Fairness and beauty ye nought heed,

For you in heaven is no place;

But here upon earth ye breed

Restless strife in the human race,

And brethren into wars lead.

Friend through you denieth his friend,

And children hate to fathers bear.

Love's pleasures to pains descend

Thanks to you, and oftentimes we hear

Lover's groans which the heart rend.

O blessed poverty how dear

Thou art, who dost invite sweet sleep

Upon the bed thou visitest;

In what delights fair dost thou steep

Two loving hearts; with what rest

Thou dost their mind refreshed keep.

Nor will a word like this arrest

Thine ears by poor man spoken:

'This man is not my peer, his looks.

No kingly race betoken.'

But him and him alone he brooks

Whose love shines forth unbroken.

There ambition breeds no strife,

There no jealousies arise

To make burning hell of life.  
They no fetters for lips devise,  
But speak freely man to wife  
What loving heart to tongue supplies.  
O wealth accursed, what friend to thee  
Is not like a maddened hound  
To self, to guests, to family?  
What miser contentment found  
In wealth? What limit did he see  
Set unto his heaped gold-mound?  
With justice doth heaven feel rage  
Against such men, and make its aim  
Them in torment to engage.  
Their wealth, their kingdom in doth maim,  
It blotteth out from off the page  
Themselves and their swollen fame,  
But ere they go down into hell,  
They a thousand torments bear;  
Of tears their eyes are made a well.  
Philógonos, thy crimes cry clear  
For vengeance, they are so fell.  
And heaven and justice this declare,  
Who soon reward due will send  
For all thy deeds done on this earth,  
And make thy neck 'neath torments bend.  
Thy riches, which have their birth  
In blood and plunder without end,  
And thy might are nothing worth.  
But in this danger threatening thee  
Alas! I view my lady caught,  
And I weep of tears a sea.  
To thee, O Zeus, I make resort,  
All humbly on bended knee.  
Let not this house to what I fear be brought.

### **End of act three**

### **Act five**

Scene five

MAIDENS, CHORUS, and NURSE

MAIDENS

Let us go forth, that we may of our mistress somewhat hear.

But who is this that's lying dead, here at our feet, so near?

Alack! What is it that I see? My mistress, is it thou?  
What ails thee that thou liest here, with death writ on thy brow?  
My princess, speak a word to us. Raise thyself to thy feet.  
Turn thou thy silvern face that we may greet thee, as is meet.  
Alas, she's slain herself! Help us, strangers, to bear this blow!

CHORUS

O lift her up, and speedily. Why dost thou dally so?

MAIDENS

Seest thou not, she's slain herself? Her hand still grasps the sword  
Which deep into her very heart its savage way has bored.  
Alas! Unutterable woe, evil that knows no bound!  
O ladies, lend your aid that I a little turn her round.  
Ill-fated mistress, why hast thou thyself thus done to death,  
What cause so great that thou to-day hast ta'en away thy breath?

CHORUS

Markest thou not the cause of this? It is this severed head,  
Panáretos's, which with such deep streams of gore has bled.  
This only is the cause!

MAIDENS

O youth, who wast so full of grace,  
Panáretos, who to the world gave beauty by thy face!  
O mistress kind and pitiful, to us so passing dear,  
Why hast thou thus the hearts of all to-day to grief laid before?

NURSE

Ladies, what is the cause why ye make this ado and weep?  
Why are ye so o'ercome with grief and loudly wailing keep?

CHORUS

Seest thou not, Chrysónome, dost not our mistress mark?  
Thou askest why we make ado, though she in death lies stark?

NURSE

Alas! my Erophíle dear! Alack, alack, alack!  
Ah me! Unuterrable woe!

CHORUS

Hold her and keep her back,  
Else she will surely slay herself.



NURSE

Alas! my daughter dear,  
With what an evil dawn for me to-day's light did appear!  
My mistress, tell me what's the cause that thou thyself hast slain?  
For that thou liest dead, this sight is to my eyes too plain.

CHORUS

Seest thou not within this bowl the severed hand here placed  
Of what was once Panáretos, and here his head defaced?

NURSE

This then must be the cause why she herself has likewise slain;  
'Twas but to-day she said she had this resolution ta'en.

CHORUS

O hand of king so pitiless and ne'er to kindness bent,  
Why hast thou this day to death's realm these two fond lovers sent?  
Alas! my Erophíle dear, I would that from my eyes  
Now darkened o'er two fountains full of water might arise  
To wash away the stains of blood that there surround thy heart.  
And after that is done no less I will on mine own part  
Unto myself with this my hand deal out a ruthless blow,  
As thou didst to thyself, and thus unto my death will go.  
Alas, my Erophíle loved, shall then such beauty be  
Consigned to Hades? Must we it mere dust and ashes see?  
Shall then those locks gold-tinted fall from off that comely head?  
Shall those blue eyes, like sapphires bright, dissolve in earthy bed?  
Shall that fair face and those fair hands as a pure marble white  
Become mere food to feed the worms, my daughter, my delight?  
Alas! my Erophíle dear, shall Hades' realm thus thrive  
Upon thy beauties, though of these thou wilt the earth deprive?  
Without thy presence thou must leave the sun's orb darkened o'er,  
And all the world in blackness plunge and cause it sorrowing sore.  
On gladness thou death-sentence layst, for this must needs to-day,  
My Erophíle, with thyself to Hades pass away.  
Ah me! What heavy weight of woe and bitterness is mine!  
How through thy loving act beguiled and cheated I repine!  
I thought to kiss thy marriage-crown when placed upon thy head,  
But now I tremble thee to touch by thy self-slaughter dead.  
I hoped to take into my arms the child which thou shouldst bear,  
And rear him tenderly – nay more, to see that same child's heir.  
And I am burying thee this day, and with thyself thus slain  
Thou from my miserable frame its life no less hast ta'en.  
Alas! What wealth of torturing that dream laid on thine heart,

That evil dream which thou to me didst on this day impart!  
How well thou knewest its import and of me tookst thy leave,  
And kissedst me as though thou didst o'er some fond mother grieve.  
But I make promise that with thee I will to Hades fare,  
To be for thee a faithful nurse and servant even there,  
When I have buried with thy corse, my mistress, what remains  
(How little!) of Panáretos – for Fortune so ordains.

CHORUS

Chrysónome, I see the king – that heartless wretch – draws near.  
So cease thy wailings; for a plan I will e'en nor prepare  
Whereby he shall no longer live. But let him come anigh,  
For him we with the sharpest pangs that death can give will try.

NURSE

Nay, ladies, nay! leave it to heaven its own revenge to win,  
Never yourselves on day like this enter on such a sin.

CHORUS

It were a sin that such a wretch another hour should live...  
But he is here; so to thy tears thou must a truce now give.

Scene six

KING, NURSE, MAIDENS, and CHORUS

KING

Great sounds of weeping I do hear – and for that traitor too  
Who justly has been put to death. Why make you this ado,  
Ladies, and one to other pour your lamentations loud,  
As though each one before her set beheld her own death-shroud?

CHORUS

My lord, it is because we see our mistress 'fore us dead  
And Fate has us to look upon this sight of misery led.

KING

And who has caused her death?

CHORUS

The things thou seest and yonder knife  
Wielded by her own hand, my lord, have ta'en from her her life.

KING

And 'fore your eyes slew she herself?

CHORUS

Nay, when we came, we found  
Her lifeless corse before our eyes outstretched upon the ground.

KING

One who has wrought an evil deed must e'er expect to find  
An evil and ultimately end, wherever he's confined.  
The thought that I have lost my child with grief my mind must bend,  
But for that on this day thereby my shame is brought to end –  
At this I must rejoice so much that I reckon nought of pain;  
Nay rather, more than e'er before I filled with joy remain.  
For sundered once from honour's name wealth doth not help at all,  
Nor can we those who are content to dwell with shame e'er call  
Alive in this world.

CHORUS

That which thus your Majesty's wise mind  
Lays down as sentence can from men no contradiction find.  
That were not possible nor fit. Yet this to me a sin  
Appears – that others save thy child such heritage should win  
As is thy glorious kingdom's might, and I have heard it said  
That for this cause, and this alone, pardon was born and bred  
That sinners might with it be dowered; and pitiless are they  
By men acclaimed who for a sin pardon will not display.

KING

Perchance this might be said with truth for men of common state,  
But never for a king who is beyond all others great.  
But though my child inheriting my kingdom you'll ne'er see,  
Yet will my honour and my name an heir full worthy be.  
So hold your peace, for otherwise I solemn promise make  
(For not from you as from school dame will I such lecture take),  
That I will send you down to Hell your mistress there to reach,  
And thus in other strain to say your wise saws will you teach.

NURSE

Humbly, as far as in me lies, down to thy feet I fall  
And beg your Majesty, as is duty of lowly thrall,  
To grant me pardon for the words which I did speak of late;  
For 'twas my grief, and this alone, which did that thing dictate.  
*(At this point she kneels and pretends to embrace his feet to kiss  
them, but she holds them tight, and throws him to the ground.  
Then she calls on them all to rush in and slay him.)*

CHORUS

My comrades, hasten with me all; we will together make  
This man of men most merciless for Hell departure take!  
*(At this point they all rush un and fasten on to him.)*

KING

Help me, my servants, hither haste to me, my captains brave!  
They smite me without ruth and send my life down to the grave.  
*(At this point they kill him. Hereupon the GHOST of his brother comes out and stands over him and says:)*

GHOST

I stood and waited to behold thy wretched body's end –  
Now shall thy soul in company with me to Hell descend,  
That tortures on thee, as is due, forever may be laid,  
And thou for thy great villainy in full mayst be repaid.

NURSE, MAIDENS, and CHORUS

NURSE

Ladies, no further cruel deed work on him out of spite;  
For it suffices that ye thus a death with death requite.

CHORUS

Nay, he is cruel and pitiless who thinketh that the truth,  
And for this which we do to him feels e'en a little ruth.

NURSE

O king, who art more hapless far and more unfortunate  
Than any man or any sire, no matter what his state.  
To-day thou to the heavens didst fly and graspedst with thy mind  
At every honour and good luck thou and thy child could find.  
And yet misfortune thee surprised and death laid hold on thee,  
And set thine honour in the dust and made thy glory flee.

CHORUS

Why stand we idle any more, why wait we further here?  
Let us forthwith unto the bower of our poor mistress fare,  
That there we may her funeral make with every sign of woe,  
And that there fail no rite which we have power to bestow.  
But as for this vile heartless wretch, as he lies, let him stay,  
That he, as is most justly due, be left for dogs and prey.  
Lift her, my maidens, tenderly with all the care ye can.  
My eyes, unto misfortune born, what sight is this ye scan!

*(Hereupon her maidens lift her up, and go in with the NURSE,  
and the CHORUS of women remains; as they recite the verses  
below written, they drag the KING within, and disappear  
from view.)*

CHORUS

Ah! How unfortunate are they, what very fools they seem,  
Who, while they still walk here below upon this earth, yet deem  
That they are fortunate and can aloft to heaven fly,  
Because around them they see wealth and glory's light espy.  
For all the blessings of this world and all the wealth it holds  
Are but a shadow which this life of misery enfolds,  
Or like a bubble on a stream, or like a blazing fire,  
Which as the higher shoot its flames, the sooner will expire.

## Vitsentzos Kornaros, Erotokritos

Překlad: Erotokritos. A translation with introduction and notes by Gavin Betts, Stathis Gauntlett, Thanasis Spiliadis, Melbourne 2004.

The circle's turns that rise and fall, and those of the wheel that now mount high and now plummet to the depths, time's changes that never rest but advance and speed to good and evil, the turmoil of arms, hostilities, suffering, the power of Cupid and the charm of friendship – all these have today moved me to tell the story of what they caused and brought for a maid and a youth who were enmeshed in a pure and blameless love. A case of true love appeared in the world. It was written in the heart, never to fade. Two persons were, with honour, subjected to love's furnace.

Rotokritos: 'Have you heard the news that your father has condemned me to take the road into exile in foreign parts? He gave me only four days' respite before I go abroad into exile. How shall I be separated from you? How shall I leave you? How live apart from you in exile? I know that your father will soon give you in marriage. He is looking for a prince, a child of noble blood as you are yourself.

Aretousa: The moment my father determines and wishes to marry me off and I see him promising marriage and seeking a bridegroom, I shall at that hour rather suffer a hundred deaths than that someone other than Rotokritos should take me as his wife.

Rotokritos: 'I beg you, remember well what I say to you now. I am leaving you very soon and going from the city. Wherever I may go, wherever I may be, for the whole of my life, I promise you that I shall never look at, nor gaze upon, another woman. I would rather have you and die than have another and live. For you was my body born into the world.'

Poet: This is implanted in us all: although what we desire is difficult, we think it easy; what we like, we believe simple. In this anyone can make a mistake and be at fault. The sad nightingale no longer sang of its woes but happily flew about in the company of other birds. This faithful love ended in joy, and they were given a great reward for their torments. Consequently, whoever is wise will not be lost in his sufferings; the rose, though a fair flower, is born amid thorns. Let everyone who has read now understand this: do not fail amid dangers but always keep up hope.

Aretousa: Of all the graces a man has, it is words which have the charm to make every heart take comfort.

Poet: Eyes do not see well at a distance from their object, but a human heart sees further and better.

Aretousa: But for me everything is wrong and goes topsy-turvy. For me the nature of things has been born anew.

ΕΡΩΤΟΚΡΙΤΟΣ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΥΜΕΝΟΣ ΑΠΟ 77 ΚΑΛΛΙΤΕΧΝΕΣ ΣΕ 40 ΣΗΜΕΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΑΤΤΙΚΗΣ

77 καλλιτέχνες, 40 διαφορετικά σημεία της Αττικής και ένα αριστούργημα της ελληνικής λογοτεχνίας, συνθέτουν τον καμβά της δράσης και της δημιουργίας του «εναλλακτικού» video «Παίζουμε Οικολογικά -- Ζούμε Λογικά -- Ενεργούμε Ομαδικά»!

Του Κύκλου τα γυρίσματα που ανεβοκατεβαίνουν  
Και του τροχού που ώρες ψηλά κι ώρες στα βάθη πηαίνου,  
Και των αρμάτων οι ταραχές, έχθρητες και τα βάρη,  
Του Έρωτα η μπόρεση και της φιλιάς η χάρη,  
Ετούτα μ'εκινήσασι τη σήμερον ημέρα  
ν'αναθιβαλω και να πω τα κάμαν και τα φέρα  
Τότες μια αγάπη μπιστική στον κόσμο έφανερώθη  
Κ'εγράφη μέσα στην καρδιά κι ουδέ ποτέ τση έλειώθη.  
Και με τιμή ήσαν δυό κορμιά στου πόθου το καμίνι  
Και κάμωμα πολλά ακριβό σ' έτοιους καιρούς εγίνη  
Έκουσες Αρετούσα μου τα θλιβερά μαντάτα,  
Που ό κύρης σου μ' έξόρισε στις ξενιτιάς τη στράτα;  
Τέσσερεις μέρες μοναχάς μου δωκε ν'ανιμένω  
Κι άπόκει να ξενίτευτώ,πολλά μακρά να πηαίνω  
Και πως να σ' άποχωριστώ και πως να σου μακρύνω  
Και πως να ζήσω δίχως σου στον ξορισμόν εκείνο;  
Κατέχω το κι ο κύρης σου γλήγορα σε παντρεύγει  
Ρηγόπουλο, αφεντόπουλο, σαν είσ' έσύ γυρεύει  
Κι ο κύρης όντε βουληθεί και θε να με παντρέψη  
Και δω πως γάμο κτάσσεται και το γαμπρό γυρέψη,  
Καλλιά θανάτους εκατό την ώρα θέλω πάρει,  
Άλλος παρά ο Ρωτόκριτος γυναίκα να με πάρη.  
Παρακαλώ, θυμού καλά, ό,τι σου λέγω τώρα  
Και γρήγορα μισεύγω σου, μακραίνω από τη χώρα  
Μα όπου κι αν πάγω, όπου βρεθώ και τον καιρό που ζήσω  
Τάσσω σου άλλη να μη δω μηδέ ν' ανατρανίσω  
Καλλιά 'χω εσέ με θάνατο παρ' άλλη με ζωή μου,  
Για σέναν εγεννήθηκε στον κόσμο το κορμί μου.  
Τούτο εδώθη σ'όλους μας: ό,τι κι αν πεθυμούμε,  
Μ'ολον οπού 'ναι δύσκολον, εύκολο το κρατούμε  
Κι εύκολα το πιστεύομε κείνο που μας αρέσει  
Και κάθα είς σ' τούτο μπορεί να σφάλει και να φταίση.  
Τα πάθη πια δεν κιλαδεί το πικραμένο αηδόνι,  
αμέ πετά πασίχαρο, μ' άλλα πουλιά σιμώνει.  
Ετούτ' η αγάπη η μπιστική με τη χαρά ετελειώθη  
Και πλερωμή στα βάσανα μεγάλη τως εδόθη.  
Για τούτο οπού 'ναι φρόνιμος, μηδέ χαθή στα πάθη  
Το ρόδο κι όμορφος αθός γεννάται μες στ' αγκάθι.

Και κάθε είς που εδιάβασεν εδά κι ας το κατέχη :  
Μη χάνεται στον κίνδυνο, μα πάντα ελπίδα άς έχη.  
Στάλα τη στάλα το νερό το μάρμαρο τρυπάτο  
Εκείνο που μισεί κανείς γυρίζει κι αγαπάτω.  
Τα μάτια δεν καλοθωρούν στο μάκρεμα του τόπου  
Μα πιο καλά και πιο μακριά θωρεί (βλέπει) η καρδιά του ανθρώπου.  
Απ'οτι κάλλη έχει ο άνθρωπος τα λόγια έχουν τη χάρη  
Και κάνουνσι κάθε καρδιά παρηγοριά να πάρει  
Για μένα όλα σφάλουσι και πάσιν άνω-κάτω  
Για με ξαναγεννήθηκε η φύση των πραγμάτων