I. Euripides, *Orestes* 1-15
Electra: Οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν δεινὸν ὡδ᾽ εἰπεῖν ἔπος οὐδὲ πάθος οὐδὲ ἐξμυθοφόρα θείλατος, ἢς οὐκ ἂν ἄραντ᾽ ἄχθος ἀνθρώπου φύσις.

ὁ γὰρ μακάριος — κοὐχ ὀνειδίζω τύχας — 5 Διὸς θεύλατος, οὐδὲ πάθος, οὐδὲ συμφορὰ θεήλατος, ἦς ἂν ἄραντ᾽ ἄχθος ἀνθρώπου φύσις. ὁ γὰρ μακάριος — κοὐκ ὀνειδίζω τύχας —

Διὸς πεφυκώς, ὡς λέγουσι, Τάνταλος κυριφής ὑπερτέλλοντα δειμαίνων πέτρον ἀέρι ποτᾶται. καὶ τίνει ταύτην δίκην, ἦς μὲν λέγουσι, ὁ θεὸς ἀνθρώπως ὁν κοινῆς τραπέζης ἀξίωμ᾽ ἔχων ὡσιν, 10 ἀκόλαστον ἔσχε γλῶσσαν, αἰσχίστην νόσον.

οὗτος φυτεύει Πέλοπα, τοῦ δ᾽ Ἀτρεὺς ἐφι, ὁ γὰρ μακάριος — κοὐκ ὀνειδίζω τύχας —

There is nothing so terrible to describe, or a suffering, or a heaven-sent affliction, that human nature has not borne its burden.

For the blessed — and I’m not reproaching his fortune —

begotten of Zeus, as they say, Tantalus
flies through the air, fearing the rock that threatens his head.

And he is paying this penalty, as they say, because being a man among gods
and sharing the honor of a common table, he had an unbridled tongue, a shameful affliction.

Tantalus begot Pelops, and from him Atreus was born, for whom the goddess, when she had carded her wool, spin a web of strife, to wage war with Thyestes, despite being a brother. Why must I retrace the unspeakable?

For Atreus slew the children and feasted on them.

II. Euripides, *Orestes* 35-38
Electra: ἐντεῦθεν ἅγια συντακείς νόσῳ νοσεῖ τλήμων Ὀρέστης ὁδε πεσὼν ἐν δεμνίοις κεῖται, τὸ μητρὸς δ᾽ ἀιμά ἐν τροχιλατεῖ μανίαισιν ὡσιν ἀνθρώπου φύσις.

Here poor Orestes, wasted away by a savage sickness, is ill; he’s fallen down and is lying on his bed, and his mother’s blood is giving him a dragging death by madness.

I am shy to call the goddesses the ones with benign minds, for they are driving him out of his mind with fear.

III. Euripides, *Orestes* 807-818
ΧΟ. ὁ μέγας ὀλβὸς ἀταρχήθηκεν ὥσιν ἐν Ἑλλάδα καὶ παρὰ Σιμουντίοις ὀχετοῖς 810 πάλιν ἄνηλθ᾽ ἐξ εὐτυχίαις Ἀτρείδαις.
The great prosperity and the valor
Thinking highly of itself in Greece
and beside the streams of the Simois
has gone back again out of good fortune
from the Atreidae long ago from and old disaster of their house,
when strife over a golden ram
came upon the descendants of Tantalos,
the most pitiable banquet and
slaughters of noble children;
from there murder exchanges with murder
and will not forsake through blood
the double sons of Atreus.

IV. A. Euripides, Orestes 917-930 (Messenger’s report on farmer’s speech)

Messenger: But another man got up and spoke in opposition to him,
a man not handsome in appearance, but brave,
rarely appearing in the city or the crowd in the market,
a farmer — for they are the only ones who save the land—
knowledgeable, and eager to come to issue with the questions,
inviolate, practicing a way of life unlikely to be condemned.
He said that they should crown Orestes, who wished to avenge his father,
murdering an evil and godless woman
who would prevent men from taking up arms
and going on foreign service,
if those left behind destroy households inside
by corrupting men’s bereft wives.
To those better men he seemed to speak well.
B. Euripides, *Orestes* 943-945

ἌΓ. ἀλλ᾽ οὖν ἐπειθ᾽ ὠμλον, εὖ δοκῶν λέγειν.  
νικὰ δ᾽ ἐκείνος ὁ κακὸς ἐν πλῆθει λέγων,  
945 ὃς ἤργοιυσε σύγγονον σὲ τε κτανεῖν.

But he (the farmer) didn’t persuade the crowd, although he seemed to speak well. For that wicked man who gave a speech in favor of killing you and your brother was victorious in speaking among the mob.

V. A. Thucydides, Book V.81.2  
[2] καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ Ἀργεῖοι, χύλοι ἔκατεροι, ἐξανύσαντες τὰ τῆς Σικυῶνι ἔλογος μᾶλλον κατεύθυναν αὐτοὶ οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἐλθόντες, καὶ μετ᾽ ἐαυτῶν ἀνάθρωπος ἥδη καὶ τὸν ἄρηγει δήμον κατέλυσαν, καὶ ἀλληγορίᾳ ἐπετίθεν τοῖς Λακεδαιμόνιοις κατέστη. καὶ πρὸς ἢδη ταῦτα ἦν τοῦ χειμῶνος λήγοντος, καὶ τέταρτον καὶ δέκατον ἄτος τὸ πολέμῳ ἐπέλευσαν.

The Lacedaemonians and Argives, a thousand from each, made a joint expedition. The aforementioned Lacedaemonians went to Sicyon and set up a more oligarchical government, and after this the two groups together disbanded the democracy and established an oligarchy acceptable to the Lacedaemonians. These things happened at the close of winter toward spring; thus ended the fourteenth year of the war.

B. Thucydides, Book 5.82.2  
καὶ Ἀργεῖοι ὁ δήμος κατ᾽ ὠμλόν ἐξανύσασθαι τε και ἀνάθρωπος ἥδην τοῖς ὠμλωσι, τιμῶντας αὐτῶς τὰς γυμνοσπανίας τῶν Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ μάχης γενομένης ἐν τῇ πόλει ἐπεκράτησαν ὁ δήμος, καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἀπέκτεινεν, τοὺς δὲ ἐξῆλασαν.  

The popular party among the Argives, organizing gradually and regaining courage, attacked the oligarchy, keeping an eye on them at the festival of the Gymnopaediae at Lacedaimon. After a battle took place in the city the popular party won; they killed some (of their adversaries) and exiled others.

VI. Diodorus Siculus 12.80.2-3  
περὶ δὲ τοὺς αὐτοὺς χρόνους ἐν τῇ πόλει τῶν Ἀργείων οἱ κατ᾽ ἐκλογὴν κεκριμένοι τῶν πολιτῶν χύλοι συνεφόντωσαν, καὶ τὴν μὲν δημοκρατίαν ἐγγυόταν καταλύειν, ἀριστοκρατίαν δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν καθιστάναι. [3] ἐξανύσαντες δὲ πολλοὺς συνεφόντας διὰ τὸ προεχθαι τῶν πολιτῶν ταῖς ὀυσίαις καὶ ταῖς ἁπαρασκευασίαις, τὸ μὲν πρῶτον συλλαβάντες τοὺς δημαρχοὺς εἰσώθοντας ἀπέκτειναν, τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους καταπλῆξάμενοι κατέλυσαν τοὺς νόμους καὶ δὲ ἐαυτῶν τὰς δημοσίας διώκουν. διακρατασάμενος δὲ ταῦτα τὴν πολιτείαν μῆνας ὀκτὼ καταλύσας, τοῦ δήμου συστάτους ἐπ᾽ αὐτούς: διὸ καὶ τοῦτον ἀναρρέθνητον ὁ δήμος ἐκομίσατο τὴν δημοκρατίαν.

And about the same time in the city of the Argives those Thousand chosen out of the muster of troops came to an agreement, and they decided to dissolve the democracy and to establish an aristocracy from among their number. Having many collaborators because of their prominence in wealth and bravery, they first seized and killed those accustomed to lead the people, and having terrorized the others they dissolved the laws and were managing the affairs of state by themselves. After holding the government for eight months they were overthrown when the people organized against them; and so, with these men having been put to death, the people got back their democracy.

VII. Euripides, *Orestes* 1678-1690  
ΑΠ. χροεῖτε νύν ἐκαστος οἱ προστάσσομεν,  
νεῖκας τε διαλύεσθε.  
ΜΕ. πειθεσθαι χρεών.  
1680 ΟΡ. καγὼ τοιούτως· σπένδομαι δὲ συμφοραίς,  
Μενέλας, καὶ σοίς, Λοξία, θεσπόμαισιν.  
ΑΠ. ίτε νύν καθ’ ὄδον, τὴν καλλιτήν  
θέον Ἑλλήνην τιμώντες· ἐγώ δ᾽ ἐκλέγην  
Δίοις μελάθροις πελάσω,  
1685 λαμπρὸν ἄστορον πόλον ἐξανύσας,  
ἐνδα παρ᾽ Ἡρα τῇ όθ᾽ Ἡρακλέους  
Ἦβη πάρεδρος θεός ἀνθρώποις
ἔσται σπονδαῖς ἐντιμός ἀεί, σὺν Τυνδαρίδαις, τοῖς Διὸς υἱοῖς, 1690 ναύταις μεδέουσα θαλάσσης.

Apollo: Go now each of you to the place I have appointed, and resolve your quarrels.
Menelaus: I must obey.
Orestes: And I likewise. By libations I will make a truce with the circumstances, with you, Menelaus, and the oracles of Apollo.
Apollo: Go on your ways, honoring Peace, the fairest of gods. I will bring Helen to the halls of Zeus when I have reached the vault of the gleaming stars. There as a god sitting by Hera and Hebe, and as the wife of Heracles she will be honored by people with libations forever, along with the Tyndarids, the sons of Zeus, guarding the sea for sailors.

All translations are my own.

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