Neoptolemus: the making of a cruel warrior.

1. 1423-44

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| ἐλθὼν δὲ σὺν τῷδ᾽ ἀνδρὶ πρὸς τὸ Τρωικὸν  πόλισμα, πρῶτον μὲν νόσου παύσει λυγρᾶς,  ἀρετῇ τε πρῶτος ἐκκριθεὶς στρατεύματος,  Πάριν μέν, ὃς τῶνδ᾽ αἴτιος κακῶν ἔφυ,  τόξοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι νοσφιεῖς βίου,  πέρσεις τε Τροίαν, σκῦλά τ᾽ εἰς μέλαθρα σὰ  πέμψεις, ἀριστεῖ᾽ ἐκλαβὼν στρατεύματος,  Ποίαντι πατρὶ πρὸς πάτρας Οἴτης πλάκα.  ἃ δ᾽ ἂν λάβῃς σὺ σκῦλα τοῦδε τοῦ στρατοῦ,  τόξων ἐμῶν μνημεῖα πρὸς πυρὰν ἐμὴν  κόμιζε. καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ᾽, Ἀχιλλέως τέκνον,  παρῄνεσ᾽· οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τοῦδ᾽ ἄτερ σθένεις  ἑλεῖν τὸ Τροίας πεδίον οὔθ᾽ οὗτος σέθεν.  ἀλλ᾽ ὡς λέοντε συννόμω φυλάσσετον  οὗτος σὲ καὶ σὺ τόνδ᾽· ἐγὼ δ᾽ Ἀσκληπιὸν  παυστῆρα πέμψω σῆς νόσου πρὸς Ἴλιον.  τὸ δεύτερον γὰρ τοῖς ἐμοῖς αὐτὴν χρεὼν  τόξοις ἁλῶναι. τοῦτο δ᾽ ἐννοεῖθ᾽, ὅταν  πορθῆτε γαῖαν, εὐσεβεῖν τὰ πρὸς θεούς·  ὡς τἄλλα πάντα δεύτερ᾽ ἡγεῖται πατὴρ  Ζεύς· οὐ γὰρ εὐσέβεια συνθνῄσκει βροτοῖς·  κἂν ζῶσι κἂν θάνωσιν, οὐκ ἀπόλλυται. | Go with this man to Troy;  Be cured of this vicious wound.  Then as the army’s champion,  Kill Paris, cause of the harm, with my bow.  Take Troy, and the army will honour you.  Carry the spoils to the Oetian heights  As a joy to your father, Poeas.  From this rich war-prize dedicate  A portion to me; make an offering  At my pyre in recompense for my bow.  Son of Achilles, I say the same to you:  You will not take Troy without him,  Nor he without you. Twin lions,  You must protect each other.  Asclepius, the healer, I will send to Troy.  The city must fall twice to my bow.  Be warned: when you lay waste to the land,  Show true respect for the things of the gods.  This is paramount to my father, Zeus.  Reverence does not die when men do;  In life as in death it is immortal. |

2. 79-85

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| ἔξοιδα, παῖ, φύσει σε μὴ πεφυκότα  τοιαῦτα φωνεῖν μηδὲ τεχνᾶσθαι κακά·  ἀλλ᾽ ἡδὺ γάρ τι κτῆμα τῆς νίκης λαβεῖν,  τόλμα· δίκαιοι δ᾽ αὖθις ἐκφανούμεθα.  νῦν δ᾽ εἰς ἀναιδὲς ἡμέρας μέρος βραχὺ  δός μοι σεαυτόν, κᾆτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον  κέκλησο πάντων εὐσεβέστατος βροτῶν. | Son, I know that it’s not in your nature  To consider or articulate such cunning,  But victory is sweet, and he who dares, wins.  One day it will be revealed that we were right.  Now give me just one little day of shamelessness,  And for the rest of time you will be known  As the most virtuous of all living men. |

3. 3-4; 242; 332-3; 336-8

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| ὦ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεὶς  Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε…  ὦ φιλτάτου παῖ πατρός, ὦ φίλης χθονός,  οἴμοι· φράσῃς μοι μὴ πέρα, πρὶν ἂν μάθω  πρῶτον τόδ᾽, ἦ τέθνηχ᾽ ὁ Πηλέως γόνος;  ἀλλ᾽ εὐγενὴς μὲν ὁ κτανών τε χὠ θανών·  ἀμηχανῶ δὲ πότερον, ὦ τέκνον, τὸ σὸν  πάθημ᾽ ἐλέγχω πρῶτον ἢ κεῖνον στένω. | Odysseus:  Neoptolemus, true-bred son of Achilles,  Your father was the best of the Greeks.  Philoctetes:  Oh, son of a beloved father and a fine country!  (…)  Oh no! Don’t say any more! First, I need to understand:  Are you telling me that the son of Peleus is dead?  (…)  Both the killer and the killed were noble.  I hardly know what to do next, my son – hear how  You were disgraced or grieve for the dead. |

4. 88-9

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| ἔφυν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐκ τέχνης πράσσειν κακῆς,  οὔτ᾽ αὐτὸς οὔθ᾽, ὥς φασιν, οὑκφύσας ἐμέ. | And it is not in my nature to practice treachery,  Nor, so I am told, was it my father’s. |

5. 811; 889-91; 971-3

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| οὐ μήν σ᾽ ἔνορκόν γ᾽ ἀξιῶ θέσθαι, τέκνον.  αἰνῶ τάδ᾽, ὦ παῖ, καί μ᾽ ἔπαιρ᾽, ὥσπερ νοεῖς·  τούτους δ᾽ ἔασον, μὴ βαρυνθῶσιν κακῇ  ὀσμῇ πρὸ τοῦ δέοντος·  οὐκ εἶ κακὸς σύ, πρὸς κακῶν δ᾽ ἀνδρῶν μαθὼν  ἔοικας ἥκειν αἰσχρά· νῦν δ᾽ ἄλλοισι δοὺς  οἷς εἰκὸς ἔκπλει, τἀμά μοι μεθεὶς ὅπλα. | I shouldn’t need to remind you of your oath, my son.  (…)  Thank you, my boy. Help me up, like you said.  But leave them out of it; no need to unsettle them  With the foul smell before we need to.  (…)  You’re not a bad lad, but I think you’ve been trained  By bad men to come here and act ruthlessly.  Better to leave that to those best suited to it. |

6. 895; 969-70

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| παπαῖ· τί δῆτ᾽ ἂν δρῷμ᾽ ἐγὼ τοὐνθένδε γε;  οἴμοι, τί δράσω; μή ποτ᾽ ὤφελον λιπεῖν  τὴν Σκῦρον· οὕτω τοῖς παροῦσιν ἄχθομαι. | What should I do now?  (…)  What should I do? I wish I had never left Skyros  And had to face this unbearable pain. |

7. 927-8

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| ὦ πῦρ σὺ καὶ πᾶν δεῖμα καὶ πανουργίας  δεινῆς τέχνημ᾽ ἔχθιστον, οἷά μ᾽ εἰργάσω | Firebrand! Demon! Conniving monster!  What have you done to me? |

8. 974-5

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| ὦ κάκιστ᾽ ἀνδρῶν, τί δρᾷς;  οὐκ εἶ μεθεὶς τὰ τόξα ταῦτ᾽ ἐμοὶ πάλιν; | Traitor! What do you think you are doing?  Get away from him and give me that bow. |

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