

# **HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL**

Translated and adapted by Frank J. Morlock C 2003

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# HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

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Etext by Dagny

1761

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## CHARACTERS:

### HERCULES

**DEIJANEIRA**, wife of Hercules

**HYLLUS**, son of Hercules and Deijaneira

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**PHILOCTETES, companion of Hercules**

**IOLE, captive Princess**

**LICHAS, slave of Hercules**

**DIRCE, confidante of Deijaneira**

**JUPITER**

**JUNO**

**JEALOUSY**

**CHORUS OF THESSALIANS**

**CHORUS OF CAPTIVES**

**CHORUS OF COMBATANTS IN THE OLYMPIAN GAMES**

**CHORUS OF PRIESTS OF JUPITER**

**CHORUS Of Women followers of Deijaneira**

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**CHORUS OF WARRIORS, companions of Hercules**

**CHORUS OF CELESTIAL DIVINITIES**

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**ACT I**

The stage represents the Palace of Hercules at Trachinae.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Dirce, here's the day my fate will be decided,  
The day which must render me Alcidas.  
Alas! if he can't be given to me,  
He himself set this term for his absence,  
And, the day expired, all hope is lost.

**DIRCE:** Juno holds him in her power.  
She has prolonged his labors.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Gods! yet new dangers!  
Don't let yourself test his confidence.  
He lives for the universe, he doesn't live any more for us.  
Weak, complaining, wandering, condemned to tears,  
His family is abandoned.  
He disdains the cares of father and spouse.

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**DIRCE:** Of all the troubles he's caused you,  
His glory ought to console you.

**DEIJANEIRA:** His glory? Ah! without shivering can I recall  
The perils, the battles, to which his valor exposes him?  
I think I see him surrounded  
By monsters of Nemea and Erimante.  
I hear the hissing of threatening Hydra.  
I hear the frightful howls of enchained Cerberus.  
And without cause my spouse presents himself before my eyes,  
Struggling against fate, to obstinately ruin himself.  
(Hyllus enters)  
Why, what do I see? my son! and whereabouts is Alcidas?

**HYLLUS:** He's coming back; even Juno is tired  
Of opposing useless obstacles to this rapid conqueror.  
At the foot of Mount Olympus a holy duty stops him.  
He's consecrating a feast to Jupiter, his father.  
Yet his captives are advancing towards these shores.  
In the fetters of the conqueror, a celestial beauty  
Attracts and charms all eyes.

**DEIJANEIRA:** And who is this slave?

**HYLLUS:** A modest silence  
Hides from us her country, her rank, and her eyes.  
But, if I believe my heart, she's of the blood of the gods.  
Everything about her is interesting, enchanting.  
With her one bewails her captivity.  
Ah! how touching sorrow is  
When it afflicts beauty!  
Will you see this agreeable captive without pity?  
It is so cruel to overwhelm  
Weak and fearful innocence  
And so sweet to console her.

**DEIJANEIRA:**  
Think of the return of Alcidas, of this day full of charms.  
Tell me that he's coming to dry the tears  
That his absence has caused to be shed.

ACT I

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

But, I hear songs of victory.

**(Enter Chorus of Thessalians coming to congratulate Deijaneira on the return of Hercules.)**

**CHORUS:** Victory, victory!  
The conqueror of tyrants is returning to our region.  
He's preceded by glory  
And peace flies over his steps.  
Victory, etc.

**(They dance.)**

**A THESSALIAN WOMAN:** Triumph, lovely peace, enchain the heroes.  
Your reign is the Springtime of the world.  
May the trumpet never reply to our voices,  
May only the bagpipe awaken echoes.  
Triumph, lovely peace, enchain the heroes.  
Your reign is the Springtime of the world.

**(They dance.)**

**DEIJANEIRA:** Folks, it's your support who is returning to these parts.  
Let's go interest the gods in his return.

**(As Deijaneira and the people withdraw, Juno appears in the air, pursued by Jealousy.)**

**JUNO:** Are you only fatal to me,  
Infernal Jealousy?  
In the skies, on earth, attached to my steps,  
You climb in my chariot, you never leave me.  
Are you only fatal to me,  
Infernal Jealousy?  
Do you only torture the heart of Juno?

ACT I

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

See the glory of Alcidas and the dazzle of his name;  
See the happy triumph that this shore unfolds.  
Hell is jealousy.  
Do you only know how to torment the heart of Juno?

**JEALOUSY:** No, no, in the whole of nature,  
Everyone happy is my rival.  
I would like for the Sun to darken the light  
Of Alcidas, as shivering I admire his labors.  
The happiness of Deijaneira  
Revolts me, tears me apart.  
I would like to punish her for it with new torments.

**JUNO:** Go, spread in her breast the fires that consume me.  
Those fires that vengeance and love ignite.  
Deijaneira loves her spouse,  
Invisible to her eyes, and ceaselessly about her.  
Go show your rage while serving my wrath.

**JEALOUSY:** Dark suspicions, torture of jealousy  
Though the voice of Dirce, her faithful companion,  
Come pierce her heart with the most sensitive blows.

**THE FURY AND JUNO:** May despair, fury,  
Seize, devour her soul;  
Let her sacrifice in her error  
The fatal object of her passion;  
Let Jupiter himself shiver with the horror of it.

**CURTAIN**

**ACT II**

The stage represents the Gardens of the Palace of Hercules, by the shore of the sea.

**IOLE:** (alone) What voice suspends my fears?  
What god is coming to soften the harshness of my fetters?  
In scouring through these vast seas  
My eyes no longer shed tears.  
What am I saying? my exile, my misfortunes, are dear to me;  
For my slavery has its charms.  
A calm happiness succeeds the tumult of arms,  
And hereabouts I am forgetting the most cruel reversals.  
What voice suspends my fears?  
What god is coming to soften the harshness of my fetters?

**(Enter Hyllus.)**

**HYLLUS:** Come, daughter of kings, it is time to appear.  
The rank in which heaven made you born  
Is not unknown in these parts.  
As for me, before learning of it,  
I read your destiny in your eyes.  
Love has subdued to you a heart who is master.  
Beauty, to reign doesn't need eyes.

**IOLE:** Let your victim lament.  
Are our hearts made for love?  
And can I pardon the blood that animates you  
Without revolting that which gave me life?  
Hyllus, my father is dead.

**HYLLUS:** He died with glory.  
It's the crime of Victory  
And not that of the Conqueror.  
But, if you must avenge yourself by piercing my heart,

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

Strike.

**IOLE:** You are not guilty.

**HYLLUS:** Then why overwhelm me with unjust harshness?

**IOLE:** Alas! through my sorrow  
Do you see an implacable hate burst out?  
No, no, you are not guilty.  
Sensitive and generous hero,  
You will be unhappy enough  
Without my hate overwhelming you.

**HYLLUS:** If you loved me, what blessing would my prayers lack?

**IOLE:** Ah! I tremble over the ills that love is preparing for us.  
But ought I to reveal this fatal mystery?

**HYLLUS:** Ah, speak. What terror is distracting my soul!

**IOLE:** Perfidious spouse, barbarous tyrant,  
Alcidas dares to love me.

**HYLLUS:** My father is my rival!

**IOLE:** Daughter of Palenor, I've seen the flickering flame  
Spread through our water its devouring fury.  
I've seen the inhuman conqueror  
In fetters drag me dying  
And I've seen him offer me his hand  
From which the blood of my father was still fuming.

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**HYLLUS:** O gods! What have I heard.

**IOLE:** His criminal love  
Has just attached me to him by a solemn bond.

**HYLLUS:** O unfortunate mother! o unhappy spouse!

**IOLE:** Tremble that his jealous fury  
Doesn't make him still more cruel.  
If possible let's flee the danger  
Of our being seen and heard.  
A look, a sigh, is easy to surprise.  
Mystery in love is a light veil  
And everything can betray a tender heart.  
If possible let's flee the danger.

**TOGETHER:** The pleasure of mixing our tears  
Will not ease our misfortunes.  
Pity in your eyes has too many charms for me.  
Forget my fears.  
Hide from me your sorrows.  
Pity in your eyes has too many charms for me.

**(Iole leaves. Deijaneira enters with Dirce.)**

**DEIJANEIRA:** My son, before the end of the day, let your ships  
Be ready to rush over the liquid plain.  
Laden with my presents, fly to Alcidas.  
Go bring him homage and the prayers of love.

**(Exit Hyllus.)**

**DEIJANEIRA:** Can I again doubt my happiness,  
Dirce? I love a hero that the universe adores.

ACT II

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

The worthy blood of gods, the example of mortals,  
A son that Jupiter himself honors  
Who must one day share his altars.

**DIRCE:** May the tender love with which you are burning ceaselessly  
Never cost you tears!

**DEIJANEIRA:** With a thousand virtues, Alcidas had his weaknesses.  
Pleasures cast flowers at his feet.  
They distracted his youth.  
The charm at last dissipated.  
He distances himself from Omphale, he's keeping his promise to me.  
He's coming to return to me a heart solely occupied with me.

(**The captives enter.** They dance–march in, while the captives present the tributes from their region. During the March, Iole remains at the back of the stage.)

**CHORUS OF CAPTIVES:** Spouse of a hero who is the image of the god;  
The love and terror of humans,  
Receive from hearts he has subdued humble homage.  
His valor would only have enchained our hands;  
His clemency has done more.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Let these fetters be removed from them

(**They dance.**)

**A CAPTIVE WOMAN:** I find my gods  
Everywhere that they are loved.  
For all, in all places,  
Love is the same.  
Victors and Vanquished,  
Under its supreme sway,  
It dominates all hearts.

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**CHORUS:** We find our gods  
Everywhere that they are loved.

**THE SAME CAPTIVE:** Among the laurels,  
In the shadow of a beech tree,  
Shepherds or warriors,  
We have only one master.  
Loved in chains,  
The slave thinks himself to be  
King of the Universe

**CHORUS:** We find our gods, etc.

**(They dance.)**

**(Iole advances to render homage to Deijaneira.)**

**DEIJANEIRA:** (to Iole) Princes, at the whim of victory  
Thrones are in turn destroyed or founded.  
Fate has betrayed you and seconded us.  
A great heart sets its glory in vanquishing the strong.  
Your rights are restored to you in this happy clime.  
The court of the son of Jupiter is your asylum.

**IOLE:** Misfortune flees the outbreak of day;  
It wants only a forgetful calm.

**DEIJANEIRA:** No, no, if my wishes are fulfilled,  
You will no longer wail from the misfortune that oppresses you.  
In these regions that you embellish  
All are interesting themselves in your destiny.

**IOLE:** (aside) For her, and for me, what a horrible future!  
(to Deijaneira) If you are sensitive to the tears of innocence,

ACT II

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

Let me be banished from these dangerous shores;  
Let me return to the regions of my birth  
To weep for my misfortunes.

**DEIJANEIRA:** No, I intend to end them.

**IOLE:** If you are sensitive to the tears of innocence,  
Let me be banished from these dangerous shores.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Enough of that. Alcidas is going to come here  
And you are under his power.

**(Iole withdraws.)**

**DIRCE:** (excitedly) Are you going to keep her?  
Learn that Alcidas adores her.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Gods, what am I hearing?

**DIRCE:** They say even more.  
To the scorn of your passion, marriage is going to unite them.

**DEIJANEIRA:** And who has revealed to you such a perfidious crime?

**DIRCE:** The favorite slave of Alcidas,  
Lichas, has published this odious mystery.  
Deign to interrogate him.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Me! to blush before his eyes!  
Alas! would anything more be needed to overwhelm me?  
I've understood only too much.

ACT II

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

This slave is trembling and wants to flee this shore.  
I've seen my son himself, speechless, confounded.  
Of the ingrate's crime their unease is the omen.  
Shame, sorrow, despair, rage,  
Are tearing apart my distracted heart.  
It's done, my children, you've lost everything.  
Opprobrium and abandonment, that's your share,  
Barbarous father! O gods, who placed me  
In tears I didn't expect,  
How can you see him break the holy bond that binds him?  
Is this the reward that is due me?  
No, I cannot survive this last outrage  
Shame, sorrow, despair, rage,  
Are tearing apart my distracted heart.

**DIRCE:** To bring back the renegade, don't you still have  
This precious shirt, this present from the Centaur?

**DEIJANEIRA:** Ah, Dirce, what a recourse! I blush to think of it.

**DIRCE:** You will allow yourself to be offended?  
In this enchanted veil love is hiding its flame.  
It's a powerful charm to soften his soul.  
Nessus predicted it to you as he expired before your eyes.

**DEIJANEIRA:** I no longer know myself, I'm trembling, I'm shivering,  
At the disturbance of my senses my reason is abandoning me.  
I am seeing him prepare this odious marriage.  
I will perish myself before he accomplishes it.  
Come. To perfidy we will oppose trickery.  
It's the last hope the gods are leaving me.

**CURTAIN**

## ACT III

The stage is an Amphitheatre above which the Temple of Jupiter can be seen.

**HERCULES:** (alone) Deceitful image of my glory,  
Hide my shame from the universe.  
Destroyer of tyrants of earth and seas,  
I cannot carry victory over my heart,  
And subdued by love, I languish in its fetters.  
Deceitful image of my glory,  
Hide my shame from the universe.

**(Enter Philoctetes.)**

**PHILOCTETES:** At the foot of Mount Olympus, an illustrious youth  
Is coming to celebrate the games you are holding.

**HERCULES:** Can they make me forget  
The charms that I avoid and that I see without cease?  
I haven't hidden from you my latest weakness.  
Beauty was always the stumbling block of my virtue.

**PHILOCTETES:** One easily succumbs to a danger that one loves.  
Your heart doesn't know what it can do over itself.  
It would have vanquished love, if it had fought it.  
Behold Deijaneira in tears;  
See the fruits of the most tender marriage abandoned.  
Have you forgotten the shame you are condemning them to?  
Will you break, without remorse, bonds so full of charms?

**HERCULES:** Too unworthy of the names of father and spouse,  
I'd really like to confess to you the fury that drives me;  
I would sacrifice my son as the first victim

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

If I abandoned myself to my jealous distractions.

**PHILOCTETES:** Hyllus!

**HERCULES:** He knew how to please the object that inflames me.  
Hate and pity, nature and love,  
Each in turn share  
And pull to pieces my soul.

**PHILOCTETES:** All the monsters are not yet defeated.

**HERCULES:** Love in my heart is a reborn Hydra.

**PHILOCTETES:** (excitedly) Urge against it your languishing strength.

**HERCULES:** I want to, but in vain.

**PHILOCTETES:** You wish it, that's enough.  
(a martial symphony announces the arrival of the combatants)  
The games are being announced  
In the airs of blaring trumpets.

**(Enter warriors, Companions of Hercules, bearing trophies composed of the spoils of tyrants and monsters he has subdued.)**

**HERCULES:** (turning towards the temple of Jupiter)  
Arbiter of destinies, o you whose power  
Fills the immensity of the Heavens!  
Sovereign god of all gods!  
Recognize a mortal who owes you his birth  
Like you, I have punished audacious crime.  
Like you, I have avenged timid innocence.  
In your eyes, am I worthy of your immortal blood?

ACT III

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

Arbiter of destinies, etc.

**CHORUS:** Let's sing of Hercules and his battles.

**HERCULES:** (excitedly and with gratitude)  
Sing, sing about the terrible god  
Who gives strength to my arm.

**CHORUS:** Let's sing of Alcidas and his battles.  
Tyrants are subdued and the earth is pacified.

**HERCULES AND PHILOCTETES:** Sing, sing about the terrible god  
Who gives strength to my arm.  
Who gives strength to his arm.

**CHORUS:** To his swift valor nothing is impossible  
And everywhere victory flies above his heels.  
Let's sing of Hercules and his battles.  
Let's sing.

**HERCULES AND PHILOCTETES:**  
Sing of the god who renders me invincible.  
Sing of the god who renders him invincible.

**CHORUS:** Let's sing of Alcidas and his battles.

**CHORUS AND ALCIDAS:**  
Let's sing of the terrible god  
Sing of the terrible god  
Who gives strength to his arm.  
Who gives strength to my arm.

**(The games begin with wrestling; the prize is a tiger skin. The**

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

victor, after having received it from the hands of Hercules,  
expresses his triumph by dancing.)

**CHORUS AND ALCIDAS:** The prize of song is a harp.

**(Dancing they present crowns to the victors.)**

**A THESSALIAN:** Fly, cherubs, to the chariot of glory.  
For heroes the sweetest leisures are over.  
Pleasant Peace embellishes Victory  
And pleasures embellish Peace.  
In battles you see Mars in wrath;  
He makes the alarmed universe shiver.  
With Venus you see Mars in Cythera;  
Nothing is sweeter than this god disarmed.

**THE THESSALIAN WITH THE CHORUS:** Fly, cherubs, etc.

**(They contest for the dance prize. The prize is a golden Tyrse.)**

**HERCULES:** Folks, let the universe celebrate, by your example.  
I am consecrating this day to solemn games.  
Let's raise altars to Jupiter, my father.  
And let these monuments hung in his temple  
Recall my labors and his glory to mortals.

**(The people and the Companions of Alcidas withdraw with a fanfare.)**

**HERCULES:** What! my son returned?

**HYLLUS:** (entering and presenting the robe sent by Deijaneira)  
From the most tender love  
Receive an offering and prayers.

ACT III

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

Return to Deijaneira a glorious spouse.  
Come dry the tears you are causing to flow.  
Ah! you couldn't have listened to it!  
How would you have been able to  
Look on the outbursts of her distractions?  
Her heart was rushing towards these shores,  
Impatient of waiting for you.  
Lord, come enjoy such a sweet spectacle.  
Deijaneira is trembling, and still dares to believe  
That appeased fate will return her spouse to her.  
Even the gods, the gods that the universe adores,  
Are not loved like you.

**PHILOCTETES:** (low)  
Between a guilty love and the most beautiful passion,  
How do you decide, Alcidas?  
Crime and virtue are battling over your soul.  
Are you going to give in to crime and betray virtue?

**HERCULES:** (low) I will conquer this heart too long battled.  
(aloud to Hyllus)  
You are not speaking to me of the young captive girl?

**HYLLUS:** The Queen who pities her, deigns to dry her tears.

**HERCULES:** Is it enough to soften, to pity her misfortunes?  
Is it enough that she live in humble slavery?  
Heaven placed her in the rank of kings.  
My son, a diadem must encircle her head,  
And I have chosen you to crown her.

**HYLLUS:** Me, Lord?

**HERCULES:** You love her; I am ceding to you my rights,  
And I am delivering my conquest to you.

**HYLLUS:** (at Alcidas' feet)

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

My father! ah, this blessing is more dear to me than life.

**PHILOCTETES:** (excitedly) At last I recognize Alcidas.

**HERCULES:** Virtue owes its return in my heart to you.  
And without the friendship which guides me,  
I was letting myself be distracted by love.  
Before leaving this shore,  
Let's go to Jupiter to present our homage.  
Come, Lichas, carry for me this precious veil.  
Can I dress myself in it for a more worthy custom  
Than to sacrifice to the sovereign of gods?

**CURTAIN**

## ACT IV

The stage represents the Vestibule of the Temple of Jupiter at Trachinae.

**DEIJANEIRA:** (distraught)  
What have I done? O Nessus, your furor deceived me.

**DIRCE:** Queen, what can alarm you?

**DEIJANEIRA:** Judge the mortal blow with which my soul is struck.

ACT IV

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

The blood in which the dress is drenched  
Has just enflamed itself before my eyes.  
Trembling at the edge of a precipice,  
I had thought to employ this funereal artifice.  
You inspired me with this guilty plan.  
Or rather, it was Hell that put it in my breast.

**JEALOUSY:** (crossing the air)  
Yes, recognize Jealousy,  
Companion and tyrant of Love.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Heaven!

**JEALOUSY:** I was serving Juno, and Dirce was serving me.  
Weep for expiring Alcidas; you've ruined him without return.

**(Dirce distances herself in despair and the fury disappears.)**

**DEIJANEIRA:** (alone)  
God, great god, be sensitive to my profound sorrow;  
Protect a hero dear to the world.  
Alas! he is your blood; he is worthy of you.

**(Deijaneira's women run and shout; the temple opens and the priests of Jupiter appear.)**

**DEIJANEIRA:** Ministers of altars, share my terror.  
This hero, the hope, the avenger of the earth,  
Alcidas' life is threatened at this moment.  
Draw the thunder on me.  
Let Alcidas live, that's enough.

**CHORUS WITH DEIJANEIRA:**  
God, great god, be sensitive to her profound sorrow.  
God, great god, be sensitive to my profound sorrow.

ACT IV

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

Protect a hero dear to the world.

**DEIJANEIRA:** I am approaching your altars all atremble;  
My crime has rendered your Temple formidable.  
Alas, my hand alone is culpable,  
And my heart, you know it, my heart is innocent.

**DEIJANEIRA WITH THE CHORUS:**  
God, great god, be sensitive to my profound sorrow.  
God, great god, be sensitive to her profound sorrow.  
Protect a hero dear to the world.

**(They dance.)**

**HIGH PRIEST AND CHORUS:**  
Father of Alcidas, at your knees,  
For him our vows are making themselves heard.  
Watch over him as he watches over us;  
Render unto him the blessings that he takes care to spread.

**(The priests prepare the sacrifice.** The dance expresses the prayers of Deijaneira's women. The altar shakes and thunder rumbles.)

**DEIJANEIRA:** The Temple is shaken! What threatening outbursts!

**THE HIGH PRIEST:** Flee, tremble, criminal spouse,  
Heaven, with horror, rejects your incense.

**(The Temple closes.** Hyllus enters.)

**DEIJANEIRA:** Ah, my son!

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**HYLLUS:** (distraught)

Gods! what am I hearing? and what voice is calling me?

**DEIJANEIRA:** You don't recognize your mother? Stop!

**HYLLUS:** Leave me alone.

That name makes me tremble with terror.

Go, go hide in eternal night

A heinous crime which renders you the horror of the universe.

When I thought to present gifts from a loving hand

I was serving your fury!

You are making your son the executioner of his father.

Can I, in these frightful features recognize my mother?

**DEIJANEIRA:** Alas! then it's indeed done.

**HYLLUS:** The greatest of humans,

Alcidas, your spouse, the author of my birth,

Has received death at my hands.

**DEIJANEIRA:** Unjust gods! cruel destinies,

It's you who are dragging innocence into crime.

**HYLLUS:** Alcidas is expiring, consumed

By the fire you have ignited in his blood.

Covered with the fatal robe,

He strode to the altar; an infernal flame

Suddenly penetrated his senses.

He wanted to choke the accent of sorrow,

But he could not subdue the horrible violence,

And with the most piercing screams,

He breaks his proud silence.

His smouldering body is exhaling a dark vapor

To his inflamed flanks the frightful veil is attached.

He's tearing it with fury,

But it's in vain he tears it into bloody shreds,

And the rapid poison is spreading to his heart.

He falls, he struggles with himself gnawing in the dust,

ACT IV

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

Tears mixed with dust inundate his eyelids,  
He stands up with difficulty,  
He embraces the altar; he implores death.  
Everything shakes, terror surrounds him and freezes us.  
Unfortunate, he said to me, your mistake has ruined me.  
But she is innocent and your sorrow effaces it.  
Drag me far from these altars  
That my weakness dishonors.  
Let's flee, since I am still living  
And cease to excite the pity of mortals.  
You are going to see him.

**DEIJANEIRA:** See him!  
After my crime! Ah! I am going to avenge him.  
Your father is the victim of my jealous transports.  
With an unknown charm I wanted to entice him.  
This charm was a funereal poison.  
That a fury prepared.  
The rage of Hell, the celestial anger,  
Nothing excuses the mistake of my distracted heart.  
Let Alcidas detest me as he dies,  
Let my name be abhorred by the whole universe.  
But when shutting the eyes of your unfortunate father  
Depict to him the despair of your guilty mother  
And tell him that my heart has always adored him.

**CURTAIN**

## ACT V

The stage represents Mount Oeta surrounded by thick forests.

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**(The Warriors, Companions of Hercules, are raising his funeral pyre.)**

**CHORUS:** Alcidas is going to descend to the tomb.  
Who deserves better altars?  
Alas! of the greatest of mortals  
Only ashes are going to remain.  
Alcidas, etc.

**(Hercules and Philoctetes enter.)**

**HERCULES:** (dragging himself onto the funeral pyre)  
At last I'm succumbing to my rage.  
The excess of sorrow has conquered my courage.  
(to Philoctetes)  
Cruel one, do you intend to abandon me to my tortures?

**PHILOCTETES:** This sole instant decides your glory forever.  
Dare to suffer life, dare to crown it  
With a death worthy of Alcidas

**HERCULES:** What death! under the blows of a perfidious woman!  
Yes, I intend to survive her; yes, I intend my hand  
To tear out her inhuman heart.  
Who steals her from my vengeance?  
What! my son is in communication with her?  
He's fleeing me!

**PHILOCTETES:** You see him plunged in sorrow.

**(Enter Hyllus.)**

**HERCULES:** Approach. Well, am I avenged?  
Have you just sacrificed my victim?

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**HYLLUS:** She is my mother.

**HERCULES:** After her crime  
Can you name her without horror?

**HYLLUS:** Alas! Know her error.  
In her tender alarms, to return you to your vows,  
She thought to employ only an innocent aid.  
Nessus deceived her and this potent venom  
Is the blood of perfidy infected by your weapons.

**HERCULES:** Her heart is not guilty!

**HYLLUS:** Ah! trust my tears  
And the sorrow that she's experiencing.

**CHORUS OF WOMEN:** (in the distance)  
O fatal day! o cruel death!

**HERCULES:** What am I hearing? what shaking scream?

**(Enter the chorus of women.)**

**CHORUS:** (as they approach)  
O fatal day! o cruel death!

**HYLLUS:** (to Iole who has led the women in)  
The Queen?

**IOLE:** She is no more.

ACT V

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**HYLLUS:** O my father!

**IOLE:** She just expired  
Before our eyes, asking the gods  
To exhaust their harshness on her.

**HYLLUS:** Our misfortunes are complete.

**HERCULES:** It's necessary to bear them.  
Come, very lovable captive,  
Let my son survive me to dry your tears.  
Dying, I must unite you.  
I must calm the plaintive ghost of Palenor.  
(to his son)  
All my ills are not finished; my son, embrace me.  
No, no stop distance yourself;  
Ah! fear to breathe the fire that is consuming me.  
I feel it is reigniting with greater fury.  
What a fit! what torture! o gods who are testing me,  
Who offered you more victim, more incense?  
And is this the fate that you reserve for me,  
That fate you destine for crimes?  
(he succumbs)  
Come, my son, be witness to the excess of my ills.  
Nations, happy through my labors,  
Is this the invincible arm,  
This arm under which fell choking lions?  
Desiccated, consumed by an invisible flame,  
Do you recognize it in this horrible condition?  
Hercules is beaten: Tyrants you are triumphing.  
(he raises himself)  
In default of my trembling hands  
Hasten to aid me.  
I am suffering a thousand deaths, and I cannot die.  
Tear off, disperse my bloody skin,  
Snatch my burning entrails from my breast.  
Cowards, you shiver, you are abandoning me.  
Where are they, those brigands I purged from the earth?  
They would be less cruel than you.  
Gods! grant me thunder!  
(he falls back on the pyre.)

## HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**HYLLUS AND CHORUS:** He's expiring in his torments.

**PHILOCTETES:** Alcidas! what moaning!

**HERCULES:** (rising again)  
My heavy eyes are going to lose the light.  
Hyllus, swear to me to accomplish  
The will of a father at his last hour.

**HYLLUS:** Direct.

**HERCULES:** Swear to me you are going to fulfill it.

**HYLLUS:** I witness the gods.

**HERCULES:** (mounts the funeral pyre)  
Come deliver my soul  
From its infernal prison.  
Dare to bring the flame to the funeral pyre of your father.

**HYLLUS:** (shocked) Me!

**HERCULES:** Are you shivering from perjury and treason?

**HYLLUS:** You want me to become the horror of nature!  
The gods would punish me if I didn't perjure myself.

**HERCULES:** Obey, you must.

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

**HYLLUS:** I cannot.

**HERCULES:** I insist on it.

**HYLLUS:** My father!

**PHILOCTETES:** Alcidas!

**HERCULES:** Ah, wretches!

**(Thunder falls on the pyre and ignites it. Hercules is enveloped in the flames. Suddenly the funeral pyre is transformed into a chariot on which Hercules appears triumphant.)**

**JUPITER:** (on his throne, surrounded by the celestial court)  
(to Hercules) Come my son, come revel in your new glory.  
Flame has consumed your mortal flesh.  
Triumph over death, freed from its sway.  
Gods, he is your equal. Earth, he is your image.  
Worlds that adore me, render him your homage.  
Brilliant stars of the heavens, retrace his exploits.

**(Hercules' chariot rises up to the foot of the throne of Jupiter.)**

**GENERAL CHORUS:** (the celestial court and the people)  
Let the whole universe be his temple;  
It is filled with his benefits.  
Let his glory be forever  
The example and hope of virtues  
And the terror of heinous crimes.

**(The celestial Divinities descend and form dances. This fest is the**

HERCULES DYING, BY MARMONTEL

apotheosis of Hercules.)

**HERCULES:** (rising to the heavens) Folks, receive my farewells.

(to Philoctetes)

Worthy friend it's to you that I leave my arms.

(to Hyllus)

My son, I'll be watching over you.

(to Iole)

Princess, embellish the earth with your charms,

But sometimes turn your glances toward the heavens.

**(A general divertissement ends the opera.)**

**CURTAIN.**