

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

Translated and adapted by FRANK J. MORLOCK C 2003

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Etext by Dagny

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PROLOGUE

CHARACTERS:

VIRTUE

PHRONIME, follower of Virtue

MEGATHYME, another follower of Virtue

A Troupe of Male Followers of Virtue

A Troupe of Female followers of Virtue

INNOCENCE

THE INNOCENT PLEASURES

FORTUNE

MAGNIFICENCE

ABUNDANCE

Troupe of Male Followers of Fortune

Troupe of Female Followers of Fortune

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PROLOGUE

The stage represents a grove.

PHRONIME: Virtue intends to choose this place for her retreat.
It's a lucky abode; everything here pleases my eyes.

MEGATHYME: Virtue causes a secret felicity to be found
In the saddest places.

PHRONIME: Without Virtue, without her help,
There's nothing truly good.
She's always lovable,
She must always be loved.

MEGATHYME: She eternalizes the memory
Of a hero who follows her.
The glory that Virtue leads to
Is perfect glory.

PHRONIME AND MEGATHYME: Let's follow all her steps.
You cannot know her
Without loving her attractions.
Happiness cannot be
Where Virtue is not.

(Virtue comes forward in the midst of her male and female followers.
Innocence and Innocent Pleasures accompany Virtue.)

PHRONIME, MEGATHYME AND THE CHORUS:
O Charming Virtue,

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Your empire is sweet.
With you everything contents us,
No one is happy without you.
O charming Virtue,
Your empire is sweet.

VIRTUE: Don't abuse yourself by a vain attempt.
One doesn't easily win the prize I present.
It costs a thousand efforts; it makes a thousand jealous.
Fickle Fortune constantly injures me.
If you follow my steps you are exposing yourself to her blows.
You find in her fatal wrath
A hydra that is always reborn.

MEGATHYME: With you, nothing shocks.

PHRONIME: No one can be happy without you.

MEGATHYME, PHRONIME AND THE CHORUS: O charming Virtue, etc.

VIRTUE: Let's flee the grandeur of embarrassing pomp.
Retreat has delights whose sweetness enchants,
And which are reserved for us.
Let's enjoy the happiness of an innocent life,
That's the greatest good of all.

MEGATHYME, PHRONIME AND THE CHORUS:
O charming Virtue, etc.

(Innocence, the Innocent Pleasures and the followers of Virtue express their joy by dancing and singing.)

PHRONIME AND MEGATHYME: The brilliant grandeur
That makes such a stir
Has nothing which tempts us.

PROLOGUE

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Rest flees it,
Misfortune follows it!
Fickle Fortune,
Leave us in peace!
You never give
Anything but pompous slavery.
All your delights are only false attractions.
In a sweet asylum
We restrict our ambitions.
Our fate is peaceful.
It's a comfort that ought to makes us happy.
Virtue crowns
Her constrained lovers.
He is happy who gives to her
His efforts and his time.
His wishes will be satisfied.
Fickle Fortune, etc.

(The rustic place that Virtue has chosen for her retreat is suddenly embellished by magnificent decorations. From the ground a bed of flowers can be seen emerging, rows of statues, golden arches, and splashing fountains.)

VIRTUE: Who is making us see all this magnificence here?
It's Fortune who is advancing.

(The dazzling noise of a great number of instruments can be heard. Fortune approaches; Abundance and Magnificence accompany her, with a richly decorated following. All rejoice and dance around Fortune.)

VIRTUE: Are you seeking for me when I am fleeing you?
Fortune, I know too well that you hinder me.
No, embellishing where I am
Is not a care you usually take.

FORTUNE: Let's efface the past importunate memory.
I've always vainly fought against you.
An august hero is ordering Fortune
To be at peace with Virtue.

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VIRTUE: Ah! I remember him without pain.
He's the hero who is calming the universe.

FORTUNE: He alone could vanquish my hate for you.
He reveres you and I serve him.
I love him constantly, I who am so fickle.
I run after him everywhere following his desires.
You always seem strict
And you are always his most beloved.

VIRTUE: My delights shine less than yours.
You find so many hearts that only adore you,
You almost enchant them.

FORTUNE: You reign over a heart that alone is worth all the rest.
Ah! if he had wanted to follow men he would have surpassed all.
All trembled, all gave in to the passion that animates him.
It's you, too magnanimous Virtue,
It's you who have seized him.

VIRTUE: His great heart makes itself better known;
He had made a glorious effort over himself.
He intends to make the world happy.
He prefers to the happiness of being a master
The glory of showing he deserves to be one.

VIRTUE AND FORTUNE:
Let's strive without cease as to who will better serve
This glorious hero.

VIRTUE, FORTUNE AND THE CHORUS:
The Gods have given him that for the benefit of the world.
How great are his labors! How beautiful is his destiny!
In a profound peace
He finds a fruitful source
Of new triumphs.
The Gods have given him that for the benefit of the world.

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VIRTUE: How almost in games everything speaks to us of him.
The Gods, who are meditating their most perfect work
Once in Perseus traced the image.
I will obtain that Apollo revive him today.

VIRTUE AND FORTUNE:

A thousand new concerts ought to make themselves heard.
All promise to deserve a favorable fate.
What delights must not be expected
Of our happy accord?

(The followers of Virtue and the followers of Fortune join together
and express their joy in dancing and singing.)

A SERVING WOMAN OF VIRTUE AND A SERVING WOMAN OF FORTUNE: (together)

What a happy day for us!
All follows our wish!
What a happy day for us!
How sweet is our fate!
Virtue sees all those who follow her at peace.
Fortune is losing its fatal wrath against them.
What a happy day for us, etc.
All our days will be happy; let's experience, let's enjoy life.
Nothing disturbs our wishes; heaven fulfills them all.
What a happy day for us, etc.

VIRTUE, FORTUNE AND THE CHORUS: Happy news,
Sweet and charming peace,
Fulfill our hopes.
Sweet and happy peace,
May you last forever.

CURTAIN

CHARACTERS IN PERSEUS:

PERSEUS, son of Jupiter and Danae, lover of Andromeda

CEPHEUS, King of Ethiopia

CASSIOPIA, Queen, wife of Cepheus

MEROPE, sister of Cassiope

ANDROMEDA, only daughter of Cepheus and Cassiope

PHINEUS, brother of Cepheus, to whom Andromeda has been promised

Troupe of Male followers of Cepheus

Troupe of Female followers of Cassiope

Troupe of Ethiopians of both sexes

Quadrilles of young men chosen to contest for the prize of Junoian games

Quadrilles of young girls chosen for the same games

AMPHIMEDON, Ethiopian

COLITE, Ethiopian

PROTENOR, Ethiopian

MERCURY

Troupe of Cyclops

Troupe of Warrior Nymphs in the suite of Pallas

Troupe of Infernal divinities

MEDUSA, a Gorgon

EURYALE, a Gorgon

STENONE, a Gorgon

Troupe of Monsters formed from the blood of Medusa

IDAS, one of Cepheus' courtiers

Troupe of Male Sailors

PROLOGUE

Troupe of Female Sailors

The High Priest of the God Hymen

Followers of the Grand Priest

Troupe of Courtiers of Cepheus

Troupe of Fighters on Phineus' side

Troupe of Fighters on the side of Cepheus and Perseus

VENUS

LOVE

Troupe of Loves (Cherub–Cupids)

Hymen

The Graces

The Games

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PROLOGUE

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ACT I

The stage represents a magnificently decorated public square arranged for the celebration of games in honor of Juno.

CEPHEUS: I fear that Juno will refuse
To appease her hate for us.
I fear that, despite our prayers, the horrifying Medusa
Will return to serve her funereal wrath.
Ethiopia in vain has submitted to my sway.
What hope is permitted me
If heaven still wishes to arm all being against us?
What's the use of all my power?
Against these horrifying monsters my people are defenseless.
Whoever sees it is suddenly transformed into a rock.
And if Juno, whose pride you offend,
Doesn't halt her vengeance
I will soon be king of a lifeless people.

CASSIOPIA: Happy spouse, happy mother,
Too vain of a glorious fate,
I was unable to prevent myself from exciting the wrath
Of the spouse of the God of the earth and the heavens!
I compared my glory to her immortal glory.
The goddess is punishing my criminal pride,
But I hope to soften her harsh wrath.
I am ordering games celebrated
That they are preparing in these parts in honor of Juno.
My pride offends this divinity,
My respect must repair
My vanity's crime.

CEPHEUS: With Perseus, I am going to implore the assistance
Of the God he owes his birth to.
He is the son of the greatest of Gods.
You appease Juno's fatal wrath.
A son of her rival
Would be an odious object
For her in these parts.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

CASSIOPIA: By means of a cruel punishment
The Gods are making us see their hate.
They are easily irritated
And with difficulty appeased.

CEPHEUS: The Gods punish pride.
It's not grandeur that irritated heaven
Abases when it wishes and reduces to ashes,
But a prompt repentance
Can stop the lightning bolt
Ready to descend.

MEROPE: Let us try to disarm heaven that threatens us.

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA, AND MEROPE: O Gods! go punish audacity!
God! formidable enemies!
We ask your mercy and
Pardon for submissive hearts.

(Cepheus leaves.)

CASSIOPIA: Phineus is destined to marry my daughter.
You know my plans for you,
My sister: by your marriage, it would have been delightful to me
To unite Perseus to my family.
But I wish it in vain; love doesn't consent to it.
My daughter has too many attractions to the eyes of heroes.

MEROPE: The son of Jupiter adores her.
Do you think that I am yet
To notice it?
I take too much interest to not see it.
I was enjoying a happy peace
Before this hero appeared in this court.
Through a deceitful hope
Did I have to be delivered to the power of love?

ACT I

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

CASSIOPIA:

Carefully hide the weakness in which your heart is ensnared.

MEROPE: Even today my conqueror
Is unaware of my heart's funereal slavery.
I would die of shame and rage
If the ingrate knew of the love I have for him.

CASSIOPIA: With chagrin and bitter anger
Your heart is torn.
You are losing hope of pleasing him.
Can one rid oneself too soon
Of a hopeless love?
Call on scorn, let your love give in to it.
With its help escape from such a fatal torment.

MEROPE: The sad assistance of a remedy
More cruel than the illness.

CASSIOPIA: I must leave you to oversee the games.
Your sorrow is irritated by my advice.

CASSIOPIA AND MEROPE: Time alone can cure
The ills that love makes it suffer.

(CASSIOPIA leaves.)

MEROPE: Ah! I will indeed protect my heart
If I can get it back.
Come, just scorn, come, it's too much to expect;
Break these fetters full of pain,
Hasten to free me
From the charming sweetness of my first repose.
Ah! I will indeed protect my heart

ACT I

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

If I can get it back.
Alas! my heart sighs, and this too tender sigh,
Go, despite my scorn, supports my languishing
Love is still my conqueror
And vainly I want to protect myself from it.
Ah! I've entangled my heart too much.
I cannot get it back.
Andromeda's coming to see the games.
Phineus is coming this way with her.
The hope of their marriage still flatters my prayers
And it's my last hope.

(Enter Andromeda and Phineus.)

ANDROMEDA AND PHINEUS: Believe me, believe me.

ANDROMEDA: Stop worrying.

PHINEUS: Stop pretending.

ANDROMEDA: I want to love you, I must.

PHINEUS: You don't love me, I can see it.

ANDROMEDA: Stop worrying.

PHINEUS: Stop pretending.

ANDROMEDA AND PHINEUS: Believe me, believe me.

MEROPE: The two of you are lovable

ACT I

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

And you both love each other.
What differences are capable
Of breaking such beautiful bonds?
How must wretched lovers suffer
If love has ills for happy lover?

ANDROMEDA: His pain bursts out without reason.

PHINEUS: Shall I lose my sweetest hope without pain?
Condemn an ingrate.

ANDROMEDA: Condemn a jealous lover.

PHINEUS: Perseus has known how to please her, and with an idle excuse
She intends to blind my outraged love.
She loved me— No, I'm abusing myself.
No, since she changed so swiftly.
Her heart was never really entangled with mine.

ANDROMEDA: Duty gives you a rightful sway over my heart.
You ought never to fear a fatal change.
A lover assured of the happiness he desires,
Can he be jealous of an unfortunate rival?

PHINEUS: No, I cannot suffer that he share a bond
Whose weight seems delightful to me.
If you overwhelm him with cruel torture,
I will be jealous of his pain.
But he doesn't see scorn bursting out.
If he's so unhappy, his constancy astonishes me.
Love that's abandoned by hope
Is less calm and less constant.

ANDROMEDA: What pleasure seizes you in worrying yourself
And by what can your love be so alarmed?
I flee your rival with extreme care.
Is it customary

ACT I

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

To flee what one loves?

PHINEUS: You regretfully pursue glory and duty
By fleeing a lover very pleasing to your eyes.
You find him very formidable
Since you are scared of seeing him.

ANDROMEDA: Everything frightens you, everything irritates you.
You are teaching me to fear a glorious hero.
I don't want to see his merits.
Does your importunate suspicion want to open my eyes to them?

PHINEUS: Ah! if you flatter him with the least hope,
The God that he's made you believe is the author of his birth,
Were he to make his thunderous wrath burst out,
Won't be able to save him from my distracted jealousy.

ANDROMEDA: Just heaven!

PHINEUS: You are trembling! Perseus knew how to please you,
If his peril can disturb you.

ANDROMEDA: Heaven is too much enraged
And you brave a god who can overwhelm you.
It's for you that I must tremble.

PHINEUS: A trick is of no use to you.

ANDROMEDA: Don't be unjust to me,
I want to love you, I must.

PHINEUS: You don't love me, I can see it.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

ANDROMEDA: Stop worrying.

PHINEUS: Stop pretending.

ANDROMEDA AND PHINEUS: Believe me, believe me.

MEROPE: He fears more than he loves.

You must excuse him.

Intense love

Serves to excuse itself

For the worries it causes.

MEROPE, ANDROMEDA, AND PHINEUS:

Ah! How love causes alarms.

Ah! what attraction would love have

If it didn't trouble lovers

With the sweetness of its charms!

Ah! what attraction love would have

If one always loved in peace!

ANDROMEDA: My duty is for you, my duty can suffice

To give you calm hope.

PHINEUS: Will you always speak of duty?

Love has nothing to say to me?

ANDROMEDA: The games are going to begin;

Let's take our place to see them.

(Enter Cassiopia with her troupes of followers and Male and Female
Quadrilles.)

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

CASSIOPIA: O Juno, powerful goddess,
That one cannot revere enough,
In your name I am assembling this pleasant youth.
Each is going to demonstrate his cleverness
To struggle for the prizes I have prepared.
Don't keep an implacable hate for us.
If pride renders me culpable,
I recognize my crime and want to repair it.
Look with a favorable glance
On the games we are going to celebrate to honor you.

CHORUS: Allow your wrath to calm,
O Juno, exact our prayers!
If we can please you
Then we will be happy!

(The games begin and the dance contest starts.)

(Amphimedon, Colite, and Protenor enter.)

AMPHIMEDON: Let's flee, our prayers are vain and
Juno is refusing them.
By new misfortunes, converted to rocks,
We are only too well warned.
They have seen Medusa appear.

COLITE: Medusa is coming this way!

PROTENOR: Beware the sight of her, death is in her eyes.

ALL TOGETHER: (as they flee) Let's flee this terrible monster.
Let's save ourselves if it's possible.
Let's escape, hasten our steps.
Let's flee this terrible monster.

CURTAIN

ACT II

The stage represents the gardens of the palace of Cepheus.

CASSIOPIA: Must all heaven interest itself against us?
Gods! Can't I hope to soften you ever?

PHINEUS: I've brought the princess here.

MEROPE: Medusa is withdrawing; she's leaving us in peace.

CASSIOPIA: She can return, she can surprise us.
Juno is obstinate in avenging herself.
Against her none of the gods care to defend us.
My only hope is to entice
Jupiter to protect us.

PHINEUS: I understand you; I know what your hope is.
Perseus has idly boasted of his divine birth.
After your promise, after the choice of the king,
Andromeda must be mine.

CASSIOPIA: Heaven is punishing my crime; it is inexorable.
I have need of succor in my mortal terror.

PHINEUS: Ah! if heaven is fair,
Will it find you less culpable
If you are lacking in faith to me?

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

MEROPE: He's loved by the one he loves.
You have approved his wishes.
Will you break the bonds
You yourself have forged?
How horrid is despair
For an intense love
Which was flattering itself on being happy.

PHINEUS AND MEROPE: Will you break the bonds
You yourself have forged?

(Enter Cepheus and his followers.)

PHINEUS: Lord you have destined for me
A fortunate marriage
With lovable Andromeda.
They want me to give in to the love of Perseus.
Would you separate me from a blessing you've bestowed on me?

CEPHEUS: One can give way to the son of Zeus without shame.

PHINEUS: And you, too, believe the fable that he tells?
You believe that a sovereign god
Who presides over the whole universe
For love, allows himself to change into a golden liquid,
To secretly enter into an a bronze tower.
By this imaginary prodigy
Perseus is revered by vulgar credulity.
He calls himself son of the god whose law heaven obeys.
But I don't pretend to believe it on his word.

CEPHEUS: Your incredulity will have no more excuse,
My brother. His valor is going to open your eyes.
Recognize the son of the most powerful of gods.
He's offering to cut off the head of Medusa.

MEROPE, CASSIOPIA, AND PHINEUS:

ACT II

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

The head of Medusa! o heavens!

CEPHEUS: My daughter is the reward he demands.

CASSIOPIA AND CEPHEUS:

What price can be too much to pay for this glorious effort?

PHINEUS: Success isn't certain, suffer that I wait for it.

Allow my love to defend itself still,

To abandon so precious a blessing.

Perseus is not yet victorious.

(Phineus leaves.)

CEPHEUS: Hope must be reborn in our hearts

Gods, let Juno engage to suspend her wrath,

Irritated gods, be appeased!

Heaven's vengeance has known only too well how to appear.

The son of Jupiter intends to fight for us.

O heaven! favor the son of your master.

(All three together repeat the last two verses and then Cepheus and Cassiopia leave.)

MEROPE: Alas! he's going to perish. Must I tremble over it?

For the lover of Andromeda why have I taken fright?

Is my scorn then forgotten?

What interest have I in his life?

He will live for another, he is lost for me.

Yet, when I think of his extreme peril,

When I see him seeking out a terrible death,

Without thinking that he doesn't love me,

I feel only that I love him.

(Enter Andromeda.)

ACT II

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

ANDROMEDA: (aside) Unfortunates, that a terrible monster
Has changed by its frightful glances into rocks,
You no longer feel your harsh destiny.
And your hardened hearts are forever peaceful.
Alas! feeling hearts
Are a thousand times more unhappy.

MEROPE: (aside) Andromeda seems speechless.
She's coming to dream around here.
Ah! I recognize in her eyes
The same trouble that agitates me

ANDROMEDA: (aside) He loves me too much, and everything solicits me
To love him in my turn.
It's from the greatest of gods he received life.
Love is precipitating him into our mortal perils.
Is there a way to resist so much merit
And so much love?

MEROPE: (to Andromeda) Ah! you love Perseus; he's causing your alarms.
No longer disavow your tears,
Your tender feelings are very plain to see.
You love him.

ANDROMEDA: You love him.
The hope of marrying him charmed your eyes
And I know the plans that you have made.
I see that scorn hasn't extinguished your flame.
Perseus is in peril and you are alarmed.
You love him.

MEROPE: You love him.

ANDROMEDA AND MEROPE: Ah! how a tender heart is to be pitied
For being reduced to pretending!
What tortures to be made to suffer

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

An unfortunate love that cannot be extinguished.
Ah! how a tender heart is to be pitied
For being reduced to pretending!

MEROPE: It's true, scorn vainly wants to drive me.
I feel pity destroying my rage.
Perseus is an ingrate who cannot love me.
He didn't allow himself to please me.
He's loved you too much, alas!
How could you not love him?

ANDROMEDA: The love he has for me enticed him
To seek to ruin himself hurriedly.
Don't reproach me further with this funereal future.
I will pay very dearly for it.

MEROPE: Let's join our regrets, the same love links us.
What difference does it make to which of us Perseus offers his vows?
We are both going to lose him,
His peril reconciles us.

ANDROMEDA AND MEROPE: This hero is exposing himself for us.
His ruin is infallible.
Ah! If possible let him live
Even if he were to live for you.

ANDROMEDA: My love must hide itself and not betray itself.
O heaven! he's going to leave; he's seeking me hereabouts.

MEROPE: I intend to spare myself the torture
Of being witness to your goodbyes.

(Merope leaves; enter Perseus.)

PERSEUS: Beautiful princess, at last you suffer my presence.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

ANDROMEDA: Lord, they ordered me to do it, and I know my duty.

PERSEUS: You want to make me know
That I owe this blessing only to your obedience.
No matter, nothing can shake my constancy.
Until this day I've loved you without hope.
With pleasure I am going to take up your defense,
Because for a reward, I shall have
The only sweetness that I feel in seeing you.

ANDROMEDA:
No, don't flatter yourself; I don't want to keep anything from you.
You love me vainly; Phineus knew how to please me.
He is chosen to be my spouse.
Our two hearts are joined; what reward can you hope for
From a dangerous undertaking?
If you were to be conqueror, your soul is generous,
And you wouldn't want to break such sweet fetters.

PERSEUS: I will be unhappy, despairing, jealous,
But I will die happy if you are living happy.

ANDROMEDA: O gods!

PERSEUS: Your beautiful eyes are blessed by my glance.
You suffer to see me, my love outrages you.
I am going to seek Medusa, and I love you enough
Not to force you to suffer more.

ANDROMEDA: What! you are leaving me forever!
Stop, stop, Perseus!

PERSEUS: What do I hear? O heavens! beautiful princess!
What do I see? you are shedding tears.

ACT II

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

ANDROMEDA: Ah! from the excess of my sorrows,
Know, if it's possible from the excess of my tenderness,
See to what I had recourse
To separate you from the from the passion that makes you undertake
A battle fatal to your life.
Alas! haven't I rendered myself
Unworthy of your help?
Are you less magnanimous?
Medusa with a glance bears certain death.

PERSEUS: You might be her victim.

ANDROMEDA: All the effort of mortals against her will be vain.

PERSEUS: When love urges him, the son of Jupiter
Must go before all human effort

ANDROMEDA: Won't you be disarmed
By the terrors of a tender love?

PERSEUS: I was unaware of your love, and I was going to defend you
Can I be less driven to defend you
Now that I know I am loved?

ANDROMEDA: What! You are leaving?

PERSEUS: Love is calling me.

ANDROMEDA: You scorn my tears! my cries are superfluous!

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

PERSEUS: You will see me full of immortal glory.

ANDROMEDA: Alas! we will never see you again!

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA: Ah! your peril is extreme!
I see your danger, I don't see mine.
Gods! You know who I love!
And for myself
I demand nothing.
Gods! You know who I love!

(Andromeda leaves.)

MERCURY: (emerging from Hell)
Where are you running to? What are you going to undertake?

PERSEUS: An unfortunate people has engaged me to defend them.
It's to glory that I am rushing.
If I die my death will be worthy of envy,
I am entrusting the fate of my life
To god who gave me life.

MERCURY: This just and powerful god favors your prayers.
And it's through my voice that he's explaining himself.
He recognizes his blood in the generous effort
That you are going to attempt with heroic ardor
To save the unfortunate.
But it's not by boldness
That your steps must rush into peril.
The assistance of the gods will be necessary to you.
They want to offer it to you; don't neglect it.
I've just informed all nature
That Jupiter is interested in your life.
Jealous Juno vainly had grumbled,
And all, even hell, promises you aid.

(Some Cyclops come dancing in to give Perseus, on behalf of Vulcan, a

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

sword, and winged sandals like those of Mercury.)

ONE OF THE CYCLOPS: It's for you that Vulcan with his immortal hands
Has forged this sword and prepared these wings.
Hurry to signal
By a celebrated victory;
Each must go to glory
But a hero must fly to it.

(A troupe of warrior nymphs enters. (One of the warrior nymphs
presents Perseus on behalf of Pallas a diamond shield; she sings to
him as she gives him this present and the other nymphs dance.)

A WARRIOR NYMPH: The most valiant warrior abuses himself
To dare to hope all from the effort of his own arm.
If you want to vanquish Medusa
Take the shield of the wise Pallas.
Valor and prudence
When used with intelligence,
Fulfill generous exploits.
The most furious monster
Vainly resists them.
Peace cannot reign except with their assistance.
The universe owes them its happiness.
Nothing can better give an immortal blessing
Than valor and prudence
When they are used with intelligence.

(A troupe of infernal deities emerges from hell, and brings Pluto's
helmet which they present to Perseus. One of the divinities sings, the
rest dance.)

AN INFERNAL DIVINITY: This helmet is presented to you
In the name of the sovereign emperor of Ghosts.
In the midst of peril, for your safety,
It will spread thick darkness about you
Such as reigns in our somber abodes.
This mysterious gift must teach humans
How they can assure themselves of a favorable success.
It's necessary to hide great plans
Under an impenetrable secret.

ACT II

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

MERCURY, CYCLOPS, NYMPHS, AND INFERNAL DIVINITIES:

May hell, the heavens, and the seas,
May the whole universe, favor
Your generous undertaking.
May hell, the earth, and the heavens,
May the whole universe, favor
The son of the most powerful of gods!

MERCURY: Escorting you is committed to my care.
Impatience bursts from your eyes.
The glory that is promised to you
Can no longer endure postponement.
Follow me, we are leaving here.

(Mercury and Perseus fly off.)

THE CHORUSES: May hell, earth, and heaven, etc.

CURTAIN

ACT III

The stage represents the cavern of the Gorgons.

MEDUSA: I've lost the beauty that made me so vain.
I no longer have such beautiful hair
That once the god of warriors
Felt bind his heart with such a sweet chain.
Pallas, barbarous Pallas,
Was jealous of my attractions
And made me as horrible as I was gorgeous,
But the astonishing excess of the deformity
With which her cruelty punished me
Will make known, despite her,
What the excess of my beauty was.
I reveal only too well her cruel vengeance.
My head is yet proud to have as a decoration
Serpents whose hissing
Excites a mortal terror.
I bring shock and death in all parts.
Everything changes into rocks at my horrible aspect.
The darts that Jupiter hurled from above in the heavens
Are not so terrible
As the look of my eyes.
The greatest gods of heaven, earth, and sea,
With need to avenge themselves, rely on me.
If I've lost the sweetness of being the love of the world,
I have the new pleasure of becoming it's terror.

MEDUSA, EURYALE, AND STENONE:

O sweet job of rage
To cause frightful ravishing.
Happy the furor
Which fills the universe with horror!
(the three Gorgons hear a sweet concert)
In this sad abode who can make us hear
The sweet uproar that comes to surprise us?
Never has a mortal with impunity
Borne his discreet sight here.
What concert! what novelty!
Who can be seeking the secret horror

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

Of our fatal retreat.
It's Mercury who's coming into this lonely cavern.

(Mercury enters.)

MEDUSA: Is my terrible dwelling necessary to you?
Do proud mortals dare to displease you?
Must you be avenged? Must there be armed against them
The funereal wrath of my frightful serpents?
Where must my furor fly to?
You have only to name the unlucky domain
That you want me to desolate.

MERCURY: It's always my dearest wish
To see the whole universe in profound peace.
Don't allow yourself any further barbarous pleasure
Of disturbing the repose of the world.

MEDUSA: Can I ever cause misfortunes great enough
To satisfy the furor with which my heart is distracted?
It's from the cruel gods that I am learning
How to become barbarous.

MERCURY: It's true that a fatal wrath
Burst out much against you.
You had too many charms.
But for Pallas, without her harshness,
You would only have troubled hearts
With sweet alarms.

MEDUSA: What's the use of discussing with me
About a blessing too soon past, that cannot return?
I feel only too much the irreparable loss!
Ah! when one finds oneself terrifying,
What a cruel recollection it is
To think one was once lovable.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

MERCURY: In your misfortune, I can only
Offer you a peaceful sleep.

MEDUSA: With a vivid sorrow
Rest is incompatible.

MERCURY: O peaceful sleep, how charming you are!
How you make a sweet enchantment felt
In the most sorrowful isolation.
Your divine power calms uneasiness,
You know how to ease the cruelest torment.
O peaceful sleep, how charming you are!
(to the Gorgons)
Rejoice in the peace of this solitary abode.

THE THREE GORGONS: No, it's only for wrath
That our unhappy hearts are made.
No, rest cannot please us,
We renounce it forever.
No, it's only for wrath, etc.

MERCURY: (touching them with his caduceus)
You must give up, you must surrender
To the charm which is going to surprise you.

THE THREE GORGONS: We must surrender despite ourselves
To the charm of a very sweet sleep.

(The Three Gorgons fall asleep.)

MERCURY: Perseus, come forward, Medusa is dozing.
Advance without noise, surprise
Such a terrible enemy.
If you dare look at her, your life is done for.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

PERSEUS: I will follow the advice you've given me.

MERCURY: I am leaving you in the midst of a formidable peril.
I can no longer do anything for your life.
Find your last succor
In an unshakeable courage.

PERSEUS: A reward which must charm me
Is offered to me by Victory.
What peril can alarm me?
Love and glory
Unite to urge me on.

(Mercury withdraws. Perseus, holding the shield before his eyes,
approaches Medusa, cuts her head off, and hides it in a scarf to carry
it with him.)

PERSEUS: The world is delivered from a monster so terrible,
Heaven has been served by my arm.

EURYALE AND STENONE: (awakened by the sound of Perseus' voice and
rushing to where they hear it coming from)
You made Medusa perish! ah! traitor! you shall die!
Let him die a horrible death.
(The two gorgons intend to attack Perseus but the secret power of the
helmet he wears prevents them from seeing him)
But what can render him invisible?
After her death Medusa still troubles the universe.
It's her blood that is producing so many diverse monsters.

(Chrysaor, Pegasus and several other monsters with bizarre and
terrible figures rise from the blood of Medusa. Chrysaor and Pegasus
fly, some of the other monsters rise in the air, others are rampant,
others run and all seek Perseus who is hidden from their eyes by
virtue of the helmet.)

EURYALE AND STENONE: Monsters seek your victim ,

ACT III

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

Avenge the blood that animates you.
Serve our fury, arm yourselves.
Let's avenge Medusa, let's avenge ourselves.

MERCURY: (returning) Perseus, go, fly where love calls you.
Gorgons, henceforth you will be without power.
This place is no longer a dark enough abode for you.
Come into eternal night.

(Perseus flies off, bearing with him the head of Medusa. The monsters who are forcing themselves to follow him fall, along with Euryale and Stenone into hell into which Mercury forces them to descend.)

EURYALE AND STENONE:
Profound abysses are opening
Ah! we are falling into hell.

CURTAIN

ACT IV

The stage represents the sea and a shore bordered by rocks.

TROUPE OF ETHIOPIANS: Let's all run, run to admire
The conqueror of Medusa.

PHINEUS: Perseus has returned; everyone rushes to honor him
And the public happiness is going to make me despair.
No, no, it's no longer time that a vain hope should abuse me.

SECOND TROUPE OF ETHIOPIANS: Let's all run, run to admire
The conqueror of Medusa.

MEROPE: Let's go sigh in secret.
No, I can no longer show myself,
Sad as I am, speechless, and confused.

THIRD TROUPE OF ETHIOPIANS: Let's all run, run to admire
The conqueror of Medusa.

(The Ethiopians leave.)

PHINEUS: We are experiencing the same sorrows.
Let's flee an importunate crowd
And with a common wail
Deplore our common misfortunes.

MEROPE: How love has pains and alarms for me.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

How Perseus has cost my heart displeasures.
His departure, his perils, made me shed tears
And his fortunate return tears sighs from me.
Perseus has returned, but it's for Andromeda,
For me to offer to his eyes the ardor that possesses me,
Made me hurry idly,
He saw nothing that he loved,
He didn't even deign
To notice my haste.
And all the cares of my intense love
Haven't been paid with a single look.

PHINEUS: How prodigious in miracles heaven is for Perseus!
Who would not have believed that a furious monster
Would have ridded me of an odious rival?
Still, despite a thousand obstacles,
My rival is victorious.
He's made new routes,
He's flown to hasten his return,
And Mercury and Love
Have taken care at need to loan him wings.
The people think they owe him everything.
His name echoes on this shore,
The king is hastening to honor his courage.
Everybody has come here to receive him.
How satisfied Andromeda seems to see him.
What a triumph for him that charming advantage,
And for me, what rage,
And what horrible despair.

(The seas is annoyed, the waves rise and spread on the shore.)

PHINEUS AND MEROPE: The imperious winds are escaping from the chain
Which forced them to remain at rest.
A sudden tempest
Is raising the waves,
Vast sea, deep sea,
Whose waves are stirred up by winds in their wrath,
Amorous and jealous hearts
Are more agitated than your waves.
Amorous and jealous hearts
Are a hundred times more agitated than you.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

(Troupe of Ethiopians enters with Idas.)

IDAS AND THE ETHIOPIANS: O inexorable heaven!
O deplorable misfortune.

PHINEUS AND MEROPE: (aside) Who can cross these very happy lovers?
(to Ethiopians) What's the cause of your wailing?

IDAS: Implacable Juno is causing our misfortune.
She's arming the empire of Neptune against us.
A monster is emerging from it who is coming to devour
Innocent Andromeda;
And Thetis and her sisters excitedly declare
That it's no longer permitted to hope
Of seeing an end to our ills without a cruel remedy.
Tritons seized the princess before our eyes.
And the power of the gods
Rendered us completely motionless.
It's certain that she must be exposed to a monster on these shores.
To succor her Perseus in vain wants to dare all.
His efforts will be useless.
You must give in to the gods; you must give in to fate
Which Andromeda is pursued by.
Can you imagine seeing such a beautiful life end
With such a terrible death?

(The Ethiopians place themselves on the rocks which border the stage.)

IDAS AND THE ETHIOPIANS: O inexorable fate!
O deplorable misfortune.
Unlucky princess, alas!
You deserve a more favorable fate.
Such a cruel death—
O inexorable fate!
O deplorable misfortune!

PHINEUS: The gods are taking care to avenge us.
The pleasure that I feel is difficult to hide.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

MEROPE: You will see Andromeda in danger without sorrow?

PHINEUS: Is death snatching her from me?
It's for Perseus to be afflicted.
Love is dying in my heart; rage is succeeding it.
I prefer to see this frightful monster
Devour the ingrate Andromeda
Than to see her in the arms of my happy rival.
Let's await the end of her fate,
Let's observe everything from a more secluded place.

(Phineus and Merope withdraw.)

CEPHEUS AND CASSIOPIA: (on the shore) Ah! what terrible torture!
Gods! o gods! what cruelty!

CEPHEUS: Alas, I'm losing my daughter; propitious heaven
Gave her to me for my happiness.
Today, angered heaven
Intends for a monster to ravish her from me.
Heaven, that I've always respected,
Have you kept me in enlightenment so long
Only to make me see this terrible sacrifice?

CEPHEUS AND CASSIOPIA: Ah! what a terrible torture.
Gods! o gods! what cruelty!

CASSIOPIA: It's my funereal vanity.
It's my crime, great gods! if it must be punished,
My daughter is not my accomplice,
And your lightning has burst out against her!
Gods! can you want Andromeda to perish?
Her youth, her beauty,
Have they not always bowed to you?
Does virtue, innocence, deserve
The harshness of your justice?

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

CEPHEUS AND CASSIOPIA: Ah! What a terrible torture!
Gods! o gods! what cruelty.

(Tritons and Nereids appear in the sea. The Tritons surround Andromeda and attach her to her rock!)

CEPHEUS: Let me expiate such a funereal crime by dying!

CASSIOPIA: From pity let me obtain a legitimate death.
Cruel ones! Don't attach my daughter to this rock.
I'm the one who should be attached to it.

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA, AND THE CHORUS OF ETHIOPIANS:

Divinities of the waves, what wrath urges you on
Against an innocent victim?
Our prayers, our tears, our screams, cannot touch you?

ANDROMEDA: Gods! who destine me to such a cruel death
Alas! why did you flatter me
With a destiny so sweet?
You! from whom I take life—and you, faithful people
Enjoy, through my death, an eternal peace.
I am going to soften the irritated gods against us.
And if my mother is criminal,
With the blood that I received from her,
It is I who must calm the celestial wrath,
Happy to perish for the benefit of all.
In dying I recall a charming memory,
The attractions, the sweetness, of a mutual love
Are the most terrible blows to my fatal destiny.
The son of Jupiter ought to have been my spouse.
Ah! how beautiful my life would have been!
Gods! who destine me to such a cruel death, etc.

A TRITON: Tremble proud queen.
Tremble, audacious mortals.
Let your pride learn

ACT IV

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

How vain your grandeur is.
Tremble, audacious mortals.
Dread the wrath of the gods.

CASSIOPIA: Ah! what inhumane vengeance!

CEPHEUS: Andromeda!

CASSIOPIA: My daughter!

ANDROMEDA: O heavens!

CASSIOPIA: How cruel the gods are! How ingenious
In making their hate felt.

CEPHEUS: Andromeda!

CASSIOPIA: My daughter!

ANDROMEDA: O heavens!

(The monster appears.)

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA, AND THE ETHIOPIANS:
The monster's approaching these parts.
Ah! what inhuman vengeance!

NEREIDS AND TRITONS: Tremble, audacious mortals, etc.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

ANDROMEDA: I no longer see Perseus; and I was flattering my pain
With the sad hope of dying before his eyes.

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA, AND THE ETHIOPIANS:
See this glorious hero fly.

(Perseus flies in the air.)

ANDROMEDA:
To expose himself for me is a vain thing in which he is obstinate.

(Perseus flies and battles the monster.)

NEREIDS AND TRITONS: Bold Perseus stop, respect
Divine vengeance.

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA AND THE ETHIOPIANS:
Magnanimous hero, battle, carry off
The prize that love destines for you.

NEREIDS AND TRITONS:
The son of Jupiter is braving our wrath.

ALL TOGETHER: The monster is expiring under his blows.

A NEREID AND A TRITON: Juno vainly sought our assistance.
We boasted idly of achieving her vengeance
And Perseus has on his side gods stronger than us.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

NEREIDS AND TRITONS: Let's dive under the waves.
Our shame must hide.
Let's go seek
Deep retreats.
Let's dive under the waves.

(The sea calms. The waves abate and withdraw. The Nereids and Tritons disappear.)

ANDROMEDA, CASSIOPIA, AND CEPHEUS:
The monster is dead. Perseus is its conqueror.
Perseus is invincible.

(The Ethiopians repeat these two verses as Perseus unties Andromeda.)

CEPHEUS AND CASSIOPIA: When love animates a great heart
It finds nothing impossible.

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA: Ah! how terrible your danger seemed to me!

THE ETHIOPIANS: The monster is dead, etc.

(The Ethiopians come down from the rocks and express their joy by singing and dancing. The sailors, male and female, mix in with the public, rejoicing. A male Ethiopian sings in the midst of the dancing sailors.)

ONE OF THE ETHIOPIANS:
Our hope was going to shipwreck.
Let's finally experience a happy fate.
What happiness to escape the storm,
What a pleasure to retrace the waves,
Once safely in port!

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

CEPHEUS: Let us honor forever the glorious hero
Who is giving us a happy rest.
His valor, at his caprice, made victory fly.
The earth and the sea in turn
Are the theatre of his glory.
Let's honor forever the glorious hero, etc.

(Andromeda, Cassiopia and the Ethiopians repeat the last verses sung by Cepheus, and the sailors, male and female, dance in rejoicing over the deliverance of Andromeda.)

ONE OF THE ETHIOPIANS: Who doesn't love?
Unfeeling hearts!
Who doesn't love?
Nothing is so sweet.
No, don't boast of being invincible.
The gods, all the greatest of gods have loved.

THE CHORUS: Who doesn't love, etc.

ONE OF THE ETHIOPIANS: Love no longer has terrible features
For a heart that gives in to its blows.

CHORUS: Who doesn't love you, etc.

ONE OF THE ETHIOPIANS: For a lover,
Tender and faithful,
For a lover,
Everything is charming.
Hope nourishes its fires; it's chain is so beautiful,
It makes a pleasure of its torture.

CHORUS: For a lover, etc.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

ONE OF THE ETHIOPIANS: Happy the heart called by love,
Unhappy if it delays for a moment!

CHORUS: For a lover, etc.

CURTAIN

ACT V

The stage represents the place prepared for the wedding of Perseus and Andromeda.

MEROPE: O death, come finish my deplorable destiny.
My rival is enjoying a very favorable fate
And I will suffer too much if I don't die.
Her happiness has rendered my life unbearable.
The terrible night of death
Seems to me less shocking.
O death! come finish my deplorable destiny.
Alas, funereal death, alas!
For happy hearts you are frightful
But your horrors have appeal
For a heart that love has rendered miserable.
O death! come finish my deplorable destiny.

PHINEUS: (entering) It's not to tears we must have recourse.
Juno is coming so that today I can avenge myself with her.
Iris, the faithful interpreter of her will
Has come, by her express order, to offer me her aid.

MEROPE: What succor can one hope for from Juno?
Perseus has triumphed twice over her wrath.

PHINEUS: What can't her wrath do
Joined to my jealous distraction?
Happy the one who can taste a sweet vengeance!
It's the sole hope
Of wretched lovers.
To serve my wrath it's diligently taken arms.
My rival will not have my treasure for his reward.
If he triumphs over me it's of little consequence.
It's in vain that Andromeda has betrayed my confidence.
Love is in idle cahoots with them.
I will break its charming fetters.

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

Marriage will deliver to me the ingrate who offends me.
She's seen my sorrow with indifference.
I intend to be insensible to her wailings
And if I cannot see her heart in my power
I will rejoice in her torments.
Happy the one who can taste a sweet vengeance, etc.
We must move away from the folks who are coming forward.
This superb apparel, these rich decorations,
Everything here makes the violence of my rage increase.
Let's go to hasten the outburst of my resentment.

MEROPE AND PHINEUS:

Happy the one who can experience a sweet vengeance, etc

(They leave.)

(Cepheus, Cassiopia, Perseus, Andromeda, the High Priest, The God Hymen, followers of the High Priest, a troupe of Courtiers magnificently dressed to be present at the wedding of Perseus and Andromeda enter.)

THE HIGH PRIEST: Hymen! o sweet Hymen, be propitious to our prayers.
Come unite these faithful lovers,
Come render them forever happy.
Take care to preserve their mutual passions.
Light the most lucky of your flames in their favor.
Let their hearts be fulfilled with eternal sweetness.
Let them be forever satisfied and always amorous.
Charming Hymen, how beautiful are your fetters
When love has forged the bonds!
Hymen! o sweet Hymen, be propitious to our prayers!

(The chorus repeats the last three lines. The marriage ceremony that the High Priest of Hymen and his followers wish to begin is interrupted by Merope.)

MEROPE: Perseus, it's no longer time to keep silent.
I had thought to wish your death,
But my heart is in cahoots with you,

ACT V

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

And, ready to avenge myself, I am experiencing a distraction
A hundred times stronger and more urgent
Than the distraction of vengeance.
Your rival is approaching; he wants your life.
A thousand enemies surround you.
Avoid their fury, use the help
That the propitious gods are giving you.
Fly away, and save yourself in the midst of the air.
You won't find any other way open.

PERSEUS: Let's arm ourselves: let's punish the audacity of rebels.

MEROPE: Escape; profit from my faithful advice,
You must only think of fleeing.

PERSEUS: If the gods have loaned me wings,
It's not to flee danger.

(Phineus enters with his suite.)

PHINEUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS:
Perseus must perish; die and leave Andromeda
To the power of a happy rival!

CEPHEUS, PERSEUS AND THEIR FOLLOWERS:
Perfidious! Receive the fatal punishment
For the fury that possesses you.

ALL THE COMBATANTS: Give up, give in to our endeavour,
You will not avoid death.

(Perseus, Cepheus and their followers pursue Phineus and his followers.)

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

CASSIOPIA AND ANDROMEDA: What horrors! what alarms!
Gods! be touched by my tears!

ALL THE COMBATANTS: Give up, give in to our endeavours, etc.

(The combatants distance themselves.)

CEPHEUS: (to Cassiopia)
The need to defend you recalls me to these parts.
Fear all from a rebellious people.
What blood don't they dare to shed?
A spear that was thrown at Perseus
Struck your sister with a mortal blow.
Juno, implacable towards us,
Animates the mutineers with her fatal wrath.
Their rage and number increases.
Perseus in vain still heatedly battles.
What's the use of the efforts he's attempting?
Numbers sooner or later will overwhelm valor.

PHINEUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS: (enter pursuing Perseus and his followers)
Don't let him escape, let him perish.
This audacious foreigner
Who pretends to reign around here.

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA, AND ANDROMEDA:
Heaven! o heaven! be propitious to us!

PHINEUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS: Don't let him escape, let him perish!

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA, AND ANDROMEDA: Defend us, o just gods!

PERSEUS (to those on his side) Fear nothing; shut your eyes.
I am going to punish their injustice

ACT V

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

(Perseus petrifies Phineus and his followers by showing them the head of Medusa.)

PERSEUS: See their funereal death.

CEPHEUS, CASSIOPIA, AND ANDROMEDA:

What a prodigy! What a transformation!

PERSEUS: The head of Medusa has brought their punishment.

Let's cease to suspect cruel fortune,
Heaven promised us a happy life.
Venus is coming to our aid,
She's leading love and Hymen with her.

(The palace of Venus descends.)

VENUS: (appearing with Love, Hymen, The Graces, Cherubs, Games)

Mortals, live in peace; your misfortunes are over.
Jupiter is protecting you in favor of his son.
To this very powerful god all the gods intend to please,
And even Juno, at last, is appeasing her wrath.
Cassiopeia, Cepheus, and you, happy spouses,
Take places in heaven with us.
The sovereign Fates order it.
May dazzling fires always surround you.

(Cepheus, Cassiopeia, Perseus and Andromeda are raised into heaven, and brilliant stars surround them.)

VENUS, LOVE, HYMEN AND THE CHORUSES:

Victorious hero, Andromeda is yours.
Your valor and Hymen give her to you.
Glory and Love are crowning you.
Was there ever a sweeter triumph?

ACT V

PERSEUS By QUINAULT

Victorious hero, Andromeda is yours

(The courtiers of Cepheus, the Ethiopians, express their joy by their dancing.)

CURTAIN