



The Suppliants

Aeschylus

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DEDICATION

Take thou this gift from out the grave of Time.
The urns of Greece lie shattered, and the cup
That for Athenian lips the Muses filled,
And flowery crowns that on Athenian hair
Hid the cicala, freedom's golden sign,
Dust in the dust have fallen. Calmly sad,
The marble dead upon Athenian tombs
Speak from their eyes "Farewell": and well have fared
They and the saddened friends, whose clasping hands
Win from the solemn stone eternity.
Yea, well they fared unto the evening god,
Passing beyond the limit of the world,
Where face to face the son his mother saw,
A living man a shadow, while she spake
Words that Odysseus and that Homer heard,—
*I too, O child, I reached the common doom,
The grave, the goal of fate, and passed away.*
—Such, Anticleia, as thy voice to him,
Across the dim gray gulf of death and time
Is that of Greece, a mother's to a child,—
Mother of each whose dreams are grave and fair—
Who sees the Naiad where the streams are bright
And in the sunny ripple of the sea
Cymodoce with floating golden hair:
And in the whisper of the waving oak
Hears still the Dryad's plaint, and, in the wind
That sighs through moonlit woodlands, knows the horn
Of Artemis, and silver shafts and bow.
Therefore if still around this broken vase,
Borne by rough hands, unworthy of their load,
Far from Cephissus and the wandering rills,
There cling a fragrance as of things once sweet,
Of honey from Hymettus' desert hill,
Take thou the gift and hold it close and dear;
For gifts that die have living memories—
Voices of unreturning days, that breathe
The spirit of a day that never dies.
