

X: Ariadne to Theseus

Even now, left to the wild beasts, she might live, cruel Theseus.

Theseus, what you read has been sent to you from this land, from which your sails carried your ship without me,

in which my sleep, and you, evilly betrayed me,
conceiving your plans against me while I slept.

Theseus:

there was no one there. I drew back, and tried again,
and moved my arm across the bed: no one there.

Fear broke through my drowsiness: terrified, I rose
and hurled my body from the empty bed.

(...)

the place itself wished to give aid to my misery.

There was a hill: a few bushes were visible on its summit: a crag hangs there hollowed out
by the harsh waves.

I climbed it: courage gave me strength: and I scanned
the wide waters from that height with my gaze.

Then I saw ñ now the cruel winds were also felt ñ
your shi, I called Theseus at the top of my voice.

If you could not hear at least you might still see:
I made wide signals with my outstretched hands.

(...)

and I touch what I can of the traces of you, instead of you, and the sheets your body
warmed.

Suppose I was given companions, winds and ship,
where would I make for? My country denies me access.

The promise that you gave should be dissolved by death. Now I see not only what I must
endure, but what any castaway would suffer.

A thousand images of dying fill my mind,
and I fear death less than delay in that penalty of death.

The sky remains: I fear visions from the gods:, a prey and food for swift beasts.

If men live here and cultivate this place, I distrust them.

Theseus hadn't killed the Minotaur, half man, half bull,

I'm not surprised that victory was yours, and the monster, prone, lay groaning on the Cretan
earth.

His horns could not pierce your iron heart:

though you might fail to shield it, your breast would be safe.

Rather I should have been buried forever in eternal night. You too cruel winds, you gales, all
too ready

and officious in bringing tears to me:

cruel right hand that causes my death, and my brother's, and offered the promise I asked, an
empty name:

Sleep, the breeze, the promise conspired against me:

The seabirds will hover over my unburied bones:

these are the ceremonies fit for my tomb.

You'll be carried to Athens, and be received by your homeland,

where you'll stand in the high fortress of your city,

and speak cleverly of the death of man and bull,

and the labyrinth's winding paths cut from the rock: speak of me also, abandoned in a lonely land.

May the gods have ordained that you saw me from the high stern,
that my mournful figure altered your expression.

Now see me not with your eyes, but as you can, with your mind,
clinging to a rock the fickle sea beats against:

I mournfully display to you what remains of my hair:

I beg you by these tears your actions have caused:

turn your ship, Theseus, fall back against the wind:

if I die first, you can still bear my bones.