

TEIRESIAS: Let me go home. Bear your own fate, and
I'll
110 Bear mine. It is better so: trust what I say.
OEDIPUS: What you say is ungracious and unhelpful
To your native country. Do not refuse to speak.
TEIRESIAS: When it comes to speech, your own is
neither temperate
115 Nor opportune. I wish to be more prudent.
OEDIPUS: In God's name, we all beg you—
TEIRESIAS: You are all ignorant.
No; I will never tell you what I know.
Now it is my misery; then it would be yours.
OEDIPUS: What! You do know something, and will
120 not tell us?
You would betray us all and wreck the State?
TEIRESIAS: I do not intend to torture myself, or you.
Why persist in asking? You will not persuade me.
OEDIPUS: What a wicked old man you are! You'd try a
stone's
125 Patience! Out with it. Have you no feeling at all?
TEIRESIAS: You call me unfeeling. If you could only
see
The nature of your own feelings . . .
OEDIPUS: Why,
Who would not feel as I do? Who could endure
Your arrogance toward the city?
130 TEIRESIAS: What does it matter?
Whether I speak or not, it is bound to come.
OEDIPUS: Then, if "it" is bound to come, you are
bound to tell me.
TEIRESIAS: No, I will not go on. Rage as you please.
135 OEDIPUS: Rage? Why not!
And I'll tell you what I think:
You planned it, you had it done, you all but
Killed him with your own hands: if you had eyes,
I'd say the crime was yours, and yours alone.
140 TEIRESIAS: So? I charge you, then,
Abide by the proclamation you have made:
From this day forth
Never speak again to these men or to me;
You yourself are the pollution of this country.
OEDIPUS: You dare say that! Can you possibly think
145 you have
Some way of going free, after such insolence?
TEIRESIAS: I have gone free. It is the truth sustains
me.
OEDIPUS: Who taught you shamelessness? It was not
your craft.
TEIRESIAS: You did. You made me speak. I did not
want to.
OEDIPUS: Speak what? Let me hear it again more
150 clearly.
TEIRESIAS: Was it not clear before? Are you tempting
me?
OEDIPUS: I did not understand it. Say it again.
TEIRESIAS: I say that you are the murderer whom you
seek.

OEDIPUS: Now twice you have spat out infamy. You'll
pay for it!
TEIRESIAS: Would you care for more? Do you wish to
be really angry?
155 OEDIPUS: Say what you will. Whatever you say is
worthless.
TEIRESIAS: I say you live in hideous shame with those
Most dear to you. You can not see the evil.
OEDIPUS: It seems you can go on mouthing like this
for ever.
TEIRESIAS: I can, if there is power in truth.
160 OEDIPUS: There is:
But not for you, not for you,
You sightless, witless, senseless, mad old man!
TEIRESIAS: You are the madman. There is no one here
Who will not curse you soon, as you curse me.
165 OEDIPUS: You child of total night! You can not hurt
me
Or any other man who sees the sun.
TEIRESIAS: True: it is not from me your fate will come.
That lies within Apollo's competence,
As it is his concern.
170 OEDIPUS: Tell me:
Are you speaking for Creon, or for yourself?
TEIRESIAS: Creon is no threat. You weave your own
doom.
220 OEDIPUS: Wealth, power, craft of statesmanship!
Kingly position, everywhere admired!
175 What savage envy is stored up against these,
If Creon, whom I trusted, Creon my friend,
For this great office which the city once
Put in my hands unsought—if for this power
225 Creon desires in secret to destroy me!
180
He has bought this decrepit fortune-teller, this
Collector of dirty pennies, this prophet fraud—
Why, he is no more clairvoyant than I am!
Tell us:
Has your mystic mummery ever approached the
230 truth?
When that hellcat the Sphinx was performing here,
What help were you to these people?
Her magic was not for the first man who came
along:
185 It demanded a real exorcist. Your birds—
What good were they? or the gods, for the matter
of that?
190 But I came by,
Oedipus, the simple man, who knows nothing—
I thought it out for myself, no birds helped me!
235 And this is the man you think you can destroy,
That you may be close to Creon when he's king!
195 Well, you and your friend Creon, it seems to me,
Will suffer most. If you were not an old man,
You would have paid already for your plot.
CHORAGOS: We can not see that his words or yours
200 Have been spoken except in anger, Oedipus, 240