

Clytemnestra from *The Iliad*, by Homer

What have I done?

Will the gods ever forgive me,

Forgive me for the murder of Agamemnon?

The path I took... was there any other?

Wasn't it my turn to experience life with vigor and action?

My turn to live life as he did?

Death...all around...

It engulfed the land

Like the waves of a violent storm swallowing a small ship;

My spirits foundered and grew weary,

Hoping to find so haven that would bring beatitude.

The years lingered on.

The stories and legends of my husband's heroic deeds

Swept over the lands but no word of his return.

I could hold no longer.

I fell into the grasp of temptation;

I followed Aegishus in his plan,

Death to Agamemnon.

Could you ever understand dear handmaid,

Your life revolving only around another,

The sorrow and turmoil I endured?

Have you seen difficult times,

Felt temptation, greed, and envy?

Of course not.

What nonsense I speak.

I am a woman of high rank;

I was right in my justifications

If the time were to come about again,

I would strike down the ax

And endure the same fate I now have,

even with the knowledge of the future.