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(Another curio to Jom alelvas: finished hondon 1925 tron rough notes made in (orpor thing 1920.)

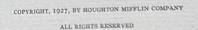
HIPPOLYTUS TEMPORIZES

A Play in Three Acts

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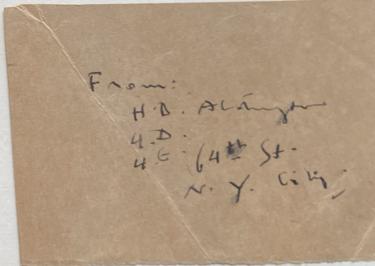


BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1927



Mosr of the lyrics and certain portions of this play and of an earlier version have appeared in: The Outlook, The Chapbook (London); Poetry (Chicago); This Quarter (Paris); and A Miscellany of American Poetry (1925).





THE ARGUMENT

This is the familiar story of Theseus of Athens. Hippolytus, his son and the child of Hippolyta, inflames a later wife, the Cretan princess, Phædra, in her palace outside Træzen in Attica. Theseus, King of Athens, finds his rival in his own son, the step-son of his foreign queen.

How Hippolytus returns the affection so secretly and tragically bestowed has become a legend, the prototype of unrequited passion for many centuries. Hippolytus is his mother again, frozen lover of the forest which maintains personal form for him in the ever-present vision, yea, even the bodily presence of the goddess Artemis.

Phædra by a trick (as we see in the second act of this play) gains the passion of the youth. The boy, as tradition has always maintained, in a frenzied drive along an infuriated seacoast, is broken and mercilessly battered by the waves. The consequence of his death to two of the Olympians is here set forth in the final act of this tragedy, Hippolytus Temporizes.





Artemis,
Artemis—

HELIOS.

0, O thou heartless, O thou passionless maid, O you should fly as some insidious plague the tyrannous green-wood and its poisonous shade that works like some still poison in the blood until men turn and hate the city portal and the city gate, until they shun as ill all, all man's wisdom, all art's subtleties, and worship and call good only the haunted shade of the dark wood.

HIPPOLYTUS. Artemis,
Artemis—

/ (Enter ARTEMIS)

ARTEMIS.

Silence then both of you with your indictments and your tyrannies, how can you judge the true, the upright, righteous

110 HIPPOLYTUS TEMPORIZES

HIPPOLYTUS. —my flesh, my hands, my feet — all, all was spirit.

Helios. O god and mortal cease.

(Enter Boy, not perceiving the group.)

Boy. There is no town in Greece

ignores his fame, there is no fane in island

or the furtherest sands

but charts his name, there is no temple

but red-hyacinth and cyclamen

frame a crown

on the white altar; no man stands

with comfortless hands; none pray him but he sends

answer,

none turn away with empty hands.

ARTEMIS. O destiny—

There is no star

that may ignore his fire,

no altar burns

but he claims share of every hecatomb;

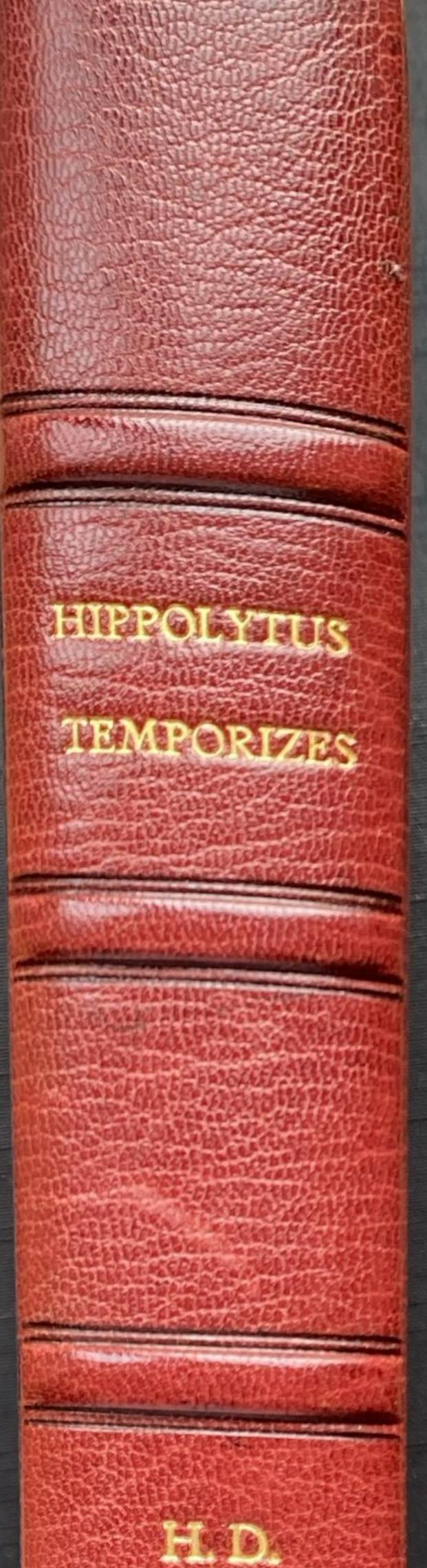
he knows the blinding desert

and the strands

pale in the noon-day,

chants

Boy.



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