1. The specter of human sacrifice haunted ancient Greek mythology, especially when it was dramatized in the form of Greek tragedy. Among the more famous of these narratives was the story of Iphigenia, the oldest daughter of Agamemnon, the king who led the Greek forces to the Trojan War. He faced the divine command to sacrifice Iphigenia on the altar to the goddess Artemis in order get his troops to the war, a horror Euripides developed into a tragedy called Iphigenia at Aulis. In an earlier play, however, Euripides had made an adventure story out of a version of the myth where Iphigenia escapes the sacrifice and is transported to the far-off land of the Taurians. There she serves the goddess Artemis as a priestess. Many years later, her younger brother, Orestes, and his best friend, Pylades, arrive in the land of the Taurians, unaware that Iphigenia is even alive. Paradoxically, Iphigenia is supposed to make a human sacrifice of any foreigners to come to the temple. When she realizes that her newest victims are in fact fellow Greeks, she agrees to spare Pylades, so that he may deliver a message back to her family in Greece (not yet realizing that her own brother is right before her). To be sure that Pylades will in fact deliver her message, she demands that he swear an oath, and so begins one of the most famous recognition scenes in world literature:

ORESTES

ē kántiδώσεις τῶδε τούς αὐτούς λόγους;

IPHIGENIA

τί χρῆµα δράσειν ἢ τί µὴ δράσειν; λέγε.

ORESTES

ἐκ γῆς ἀφήσειν µὴ θάνοντα βαρβάρου.

Iphigenia agrees. Orestes then asks whether the king of the Taurians will agree to the plan.

IPHIGENIA

ναί· πείσω σφε...

Orestes then says that the swearing of the oath can go on. Iphigenia makes Pylades swear that he will give the messages to her friends.

PYLADES

τοῖς σοῖς φίλοισι γράµµατ’ ἀποδώσω τάδε.

IPHIGENIA

κάγὼ σὲ σώσω...
Pylades then worries that if there is an accident and the letter is lost, he will not be able to deliver the message. He says in part, if there is a shipwreck:

**PYLADES**

...σῶμα δ’ ἐκσώσω μόνον.

Iphigenia then says she will read the letter aloud to Pylades, so that he can either deliver the letter or relay the message.

**IPHIGENIA**

λόγῳ φράσω σοι πάντ’ ἀπαγγεῖλαι φίλοις...
τὸ σῶμα σώσας τοὺς λόγους σώσεις ἐμοί.

Iphigenia begins reading the letter aloud, a letter wherein she is writing to Orestes and explaining how she herself is still alive. At one point Orestes shouts out:

**ORESTES**

Πυλάδη, τί λέξω;

Iphigenia ignores the interruptions and insists on reading the letter to the end, at which point Pylades declares:

**PYLADES**

τὸν δ’ ὀρκὸν δὲν κατώμου ἐμπεδώσομεν. ἰδού, φέρω σοι δέλτον ἀποδίδωμι τε, Ὄρεστα, τήσδε σῆς κασιγνήτης πάρα.

selections from Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* 737-92
ἀπαγγεῖλαι (inf act) report
ἀντιδίδωμι -δώσω give in return
βαρβάρου (gen sg) ἡ foreign, barbarian (modifies γῆς)
γῆς (gen sg) ἡ earth, land
γράμμα –στὸ letter, writing
dέλτον (acc sg) ἡ tablet
dράω, δράσω do
έγω (nom sg) I
ἐκσώσω – σώσω
ἐμοί (dat sg) me
eμπεθῆ –σωσάω establish, accomplish
ἡ makes a yes/no question
θάνων –οντος ὁ dead
ἰδού Look!
kάγῳ = καὶ ἐγώ
κάντιδώσεις = καὶ ἀντιδώσεις
κασιγνήτης (gen sg) ἡ sister
cατώσιον' (1st sg) swore
λέγω, λέξω say, talk
λέγε (a command, from λέγω)
λόγους (acc pl) λόγῳ (dat sg) ὁ word
μόνον only
ναι yes
Ὀρέστα (vocative case, indicating a direct form of address)
ορκον (acc sg) ὁ oath
πάντ’ = πάντα (acc pl) τὸ everything
πάρα = παρά (the shift in accent indicates that it is postpositive, i.e., the nouns that it governs precede, rather than follow, the preposition)
σέ (acc sg) σοι (dat sg) you
σῆς (gen sg) ἡ / σοῖς (dat pl) ὁ your
σφε (acc sg) him
σώσας (nom sg) by saving
φέρω carry
φίλοις/φίλοισι (dat pl) ὁ friends, family
φράζω -σω declare