# 1. Alcestis, Admetus

*Two sounds exist in French and German but not in English:*

**ē** = l**e**s, m**e**s, c’**e**st, c’**é**t**a**it; z**eh**n, l**e**derhosen, wie g**eh**t’s?  |  **ü** = t**u**, s**u**r, pl**u**s; f**ü**nf, **ü**ber, tsch**ü**ß

Alcestis Halie kai p-haos hameras

Sun and light of day,

ouraniai te dinai nep-helas dromaiou.

heavenly whirlings of running cloud.

Admetus Hora se kame, duo kakaws pepragotas,

The sun sees both you and me, two people suffering dreadfully,

ouden t-heous drasantas ant’ hotou t-hanē.

who have done nothing against the gods for which you should die.

Alcestis Gaia te kai melat-hrawn stegai

Earth and roof of the house,

nümp-hidi-oi te koitai patrias I-awlkou.

bridal bed of my homeland Iolcus.

Admetus Epaire sautēn, aw talaina, mē prodaws.

Raise yourself up, poor woman, don’t give up!

Lissou de tous kratountas oiktirai t-heous.

Beg the almighty gods to take pity.

Alcestis Horaw dikawpon horaw skap-hos en limna

I see the two-oared boat, I see it on the marsh lake

neküawn de port-hmeus

and the ferryman of the dead

ekhawn kher’ epi kontaw Kharawn m’ ēdē kalei.

with his hand on the pole, Charon, is calling me now.

Ti melleis?

Why are you delaying?

Epeigou, sü kateirgeis.

Hurry up, you’re holding (us) back.

Tade toi me sperkhomenos takhünei.

In this way he’s hurrying me and driving me on.

Admetus Oimoi; pikran ge tēnde moi nauklērian

Alas; bitter indeed for me is the voyage

elexas. Aw dusdaimon, hoia pask-homen.

you are speaking about. O poor soul, what terrible things we are suffering.

Alcestis Agei m’agei tis, agei me tis oukh horas?

He’s taking me – somebody’s taking, somebody’s taking me, don’t you see?

Neküawn es aulan,

– into the hall of the dead,

hüp’op-hrüsi küanaugesi blepawn pterawtos Haidas.

glaring at me under his dark brows, winged Hades.

Ti rexeis? Ap-hes.

What are you doing? Let me go!

Hoi-an hodon ha deilaiotata probainaw.

What a road I am going down – I the most wretched of all.

Admetus Oiktran p-hiloisin, ek de tawn malist’ emoi,

Sad to all who love you, and especially sad for me,

kai paisin, hois dē pent-hos en koinaw tode.

and for the children, for whom this sorrow is a shared burden.

Alcestis Met-hete met-hete m’ ēdē.

Let me go, let me go now.

Klinat’ ou st-henaw posin.

Lay me back down. I have no power in my feet.

Plēsion Haidas,

Hades is nearby,

skotia d’ep’ossoisi nüx ep-herpei.

black night is creeping over my eyes.

Tekna tekn’ouketi dē,

Children, children, no more,

ouketi matēr.

no more is your mother.

Sp-hawn esti khairontes, aw tekna,

May you live rejoicing, O children,

tode p-haos horawton.

to see the sunlight.

Admetus Oimoi, tod’ e-pos lüpron akouein

Alas, how bitter this is to hear

kai pantos emoi t-hanatou meizdon.

and a greater woe to me than any death.

Mē pros se t-he-awn tlēs me prodounai

In the name of the gods, don’t be so hard as to leave me,

mē pros paidawn hous orp-hani-eis.

in the name of the children you are leaving as orphans.

All’ ana tol-ma!

But take courage, rise up!

Sou gar p-ht-himenēs ouket’ an ei-ēn.

For if you die I would be no more.

En soi d’esmen kai zdēn kai mē.

In you, we live or we don’t.

Sēn gar p-hilian sebomest-ha.

We love you and revere you.

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Euripides‚ Alcestis‚ lines 244–83‚ ed. David Kovacs (1994)

<http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0006.tlg002>

Font: Biblical Uncial‚ based on Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis (5th century CE)  
<http://guindo.pntic.mec.es/~jmag0042/palegreek.html>

Rough breathing marks: **ͱ** (first half of the letter Η).  
Smooth breathing marks removed‚ line breaks revised.

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[Ἅλιε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*%28%2Falie&la=greek&can=*%28%2Falie0&prior=*)/alkhstis) [καὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kai%5C&la=greek&can=kai%5C0&prior=*(/alie) [φάος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fa%2Fos&la=greek&can=fa%2Fos0&prior=kai%5C) [ἁμέρας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%28me%2Fras&la=greek&can=a%28me%2Fras0&prior=fa/os)

[ουράνιαί](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29ra%2Fniai%2F&la=greek&can=ou%29ra%2Fniai%2F0&prior=a(me/ras) [τε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=te&la=greek&can=te0&prior=ou)ra/niai/) [δῖναι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=di%3Dnai&la=greek&can=di%3Dnai0&prior=te) 245

[νεφέλας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=nefe%2Flas&la=greek&can=nefe%2Flas0&prior=di=nai) [δρομαίου](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=dromai%2Fou&la=greek&can=dromai%2Fou0&prior=nefe/las)

[Άδμητος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*%29%2Fadmhtos&la=greek&can=*%29%2Fadmhtos0)

[ὁρᾷ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28ra%3D%7C&la=greek&can=o%28ra%3D%7C0&prior=*)/admhtos) [σὲ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=se%5C&la=greek&can=se%5C0&prior=o(ra=%7C) [καμέ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ka%29me%2F&la=greek&can=ka%29me%2F0&prior=se%5C)‚ [δύο](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=du%2Fo&la=greek&can=du%2Fo0&prior=ka)me/) [κακῶς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kakw%3Ds&la=greek&can=kakw%3Ds0&prior=du/o) [πεπραγότας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=peprago%2Ftas&la=greek&can=peprago%2Ftas0&prior=kakw=s)‚

[ουδὲν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29de%5Cn&la=greek&can=ou%29de%5Cn0&prior=peprago/tas) [θεοὺς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=qeou%5Cs&la=greek&can=qeou%5Cs0&prior=ou)de%5Cn) [δράσαντας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=dra%2Fsantas&la=greek&can=dra%2Fsantas0&prior=qeou%5Cs) [ανθ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29nq%27&la=greek&can=a%29nq%270&prior=dra/santas) [ὅτου](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28%2Ftou&la=greek&can=o%28%2Ftou0&prior=a)nq') [θανῇ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=qanh%3D%7C&la=greek&can=qanh%3D%7C0&prior=o(/tou).

[Άλκηστις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*%29%2Falkhstis&la=greek&can=*%29%2Falkhstis0)

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[πατρίας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=patri%2Fas&la=greek&can=patri%2Fas0&prior=koi=tai) [Ιωλκοῦ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*%29iwlkou%3D&la=greek&can=*%29iwlkou%3D0&prior=patri/as).

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[έπαιρε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Fpaire&la=greek&can=e%29%2Fpaire0&prior=*)/admhtos) [σαυτήν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=sauth%2Fn&la=greek&can=sauth%2Fn0&prior=e)/paire)‚ [ῶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%29%3D&la=greek&can=w%29%3D0&prior=sauth/n) [τάλαινα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ta%2Flaina&la=greek&can=ta%2Flaina0&prior=w)=)‚ [μὴ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=mh%5C&la=greek&can=mh%5C0&prior=ta/laina) [προδῷς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=prodw%3D%7Cs&la=greek&can=prodw%3D%7Cs0&prior=mh%5C): 250

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[ὁρῶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28rw%3D&la=greek&can=o%28rw%3D0&prior=*)/alkhstis) [δίκωπον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=di%2Fkwpon&la=greek&can=di%2Fkwpon0&prior=o(rw=) [ὁρῶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28rw%3D&la=greek&can=o%28rw%3D1&prior=di/kwpon)

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[μ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=m%27&la=greek&can=m%270&prior=*xa/rwn) [ήδη](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=h%29%2Fdh&la=greek&can=h%29%2Fdh0&prior=m') [καλεῖ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kalei%3D&la=greek&can=kalei%3D0&prior=h)/dh): [Τί](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=*ti%2F&la=greek&can=*ti%2F0&prior=kalei=) [μέλλεις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2Flleis&la=greek&can=me%2Flleis0&prior=*ti/); 255

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[τάδε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ta%2Fde&la=greek&can=ta%2Fde0&prior=katei/rgeis) [τοί](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=toi%2F&la=greek&can=toi%2F0&prior=ta/de) [με](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me&la=greek&can=me0&prior=toi/) [σπερχόμενος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=sperxo%2Fmenos&la=greek&can=sperxo%2Fmenos0&prior=me) [ταχύνει](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=taxu%2Fnei&la=greek&can=taxu%2Fnei0&prior=sperxo/menos).

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[οίμοι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=oi%29%2Fmoi&la=greek&can=oi%29%2Fmoi0&prior=*)/admhtos): [πικράν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pikra%2Fn&la=greek&can=pikra%2Fn0&prior=oi)/moi) [γε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ge&la=greek&can=ge0&prior=pikra/n) [τήνδε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=th%2Fnde&la=greek&can=th%2Fnde0&prior=ge) [μοι](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=moi&la=greek&can=moi0&prior=th/nde) [ναυκληρίαν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=nauklhri%2Fan&la=greek&can=nauklhri%2Fan0&prior=moi)

[έλεξας](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29%2Flecas&la=greek&can=e%29%2Flecas0&prior=nauklhri/an). [ῶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=w%29%3D&la=greek&can=w%29%3D0&prior=e)/lecas) [δύσδαιμον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=du%2Fsdaimon&la=greek&can=du%2Fsdaimon0&prior=w)=)‚ [οἷα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=oi%28%3Da&la=greek&can=oi%28%3Da0&prior=du/sdaimon) [πάσχομεν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pa%2Fsxomen&la=greek&can=pa%2Fsxomen0&prior=oi(=a).

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[άγει](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%2Fgei&la=greek&can=a%29%2Fgei0&prior=*)/alkhstis) [μ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=m%27&la=greek&can=m%270&prior=a)/gei) [άγει](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%2Fgei&la=greek&can=a%29%2Fgei1&prior=m') [τις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tis&la=greek&can=tis0&prior=a)/gei): [άγει](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%2Fgei&la=greek&can=a%29%2Fgei2&prior=tis)

[μέ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2F&la=greek&can=me%2F0&prior=a)/gei) [τις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tis&la=greek&can=tis1&prior=me/) [ουχ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29x&la=greek&can=ou%29x0&prior=tis) [ὁρᾷς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28ra%3D%7Cs&la=greek&can=o%28ra%3D%7Cs0&prior=ou)x);

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[τί](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ti%2F&la=greek&can=ti%2F0&prior=*(/aidas) [ῥέξεις](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=r%28e%2Fceis&la=greek&can=r%28e%2Fceis0&prior=ti/); [άφες](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%2Ffes&la=greek&can=a%29%2Ffes0&prior=r(e/ceis). [οἵαν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=oi%28%2Fan&la=greek&can=oi%28%2Fan0&prior=a)/fes)

[ὁδὸν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28do%5Cn&la=greek&can=o%28do%5Cn0&prior=oi(/an) [ἁ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%28&la=greek&can=a%280&prior=o(do%5Cn) [δειλαιοτάτα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=deilaiota%2Fta&la=greek&can=deilaiota%2Fta0&prior=a() [προβαίνω](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=probai%2Fnw&la=greek&can=probai%2Fnw0&prior=deilaiota/ta).

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[οικτρὰν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=oi%29ktra%5Cn&la=greek&can=oi%29ktra%5Cn0&prior=*)/admhtos) [φίλοισιν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fi%2Floisin&la=greek&can=fi%2Floisin0&prior=oi)ktra%5Cn)‚ [εκ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29k&la=greek&can=e%29k0&prior=fi/loisin) [δὲ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=de%5C&la=greek&can=de%5C0&prior=e)k) [τῶν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=tw%3Dn&la=greek&can=tw%3Dn0&prior=de%5C) [μάλιστ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ma%2Flist%27&la=greek&can=ma%2Flist%270&prior=tw=n) [εμοὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29moi%5C&la=greek&can=e%29moi%5C0&prior=ma/list')

[καὶ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kai%5C&la=greek&can=kai%5C0&prior=e)moi%5C) [παισίν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=paisi%2Fn&la=greek&can=paisi%2Fn0&prior=kai%5C)‚ [οἷς](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=oi%28%3Ds&la=greek&can=oi%28%3Ds0&prior=paisi/n) [δὴ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=dh%5C&la=greek&can=dh%5C0&prior=oi(=s) [πένθος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=pe%2Fnqos&la=greek&can=pe%2Fnqos0&prior=dh%5C) [εν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=e%29n&la=greek&can=e%29n0&prior=pe/nqos) [κοινῷ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=koinw%3D%7C&la=greek&can=koinw%3D%7C0&prior=e)n) [τόδε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%2Fde&la=greek&can=to%2Fde0&prior=koinw=%7C). 265

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[μέθετε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2Fqete&la=greek&can=me%2Fqete0&prior=*)/alkhstis) [μέθετέ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=me%2Fqete%2F&la=greek&can=me%2Fqete%2F0&prior=me/qete) [μ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=m%27&la=greek&can=m%270&prior=me/qete/) [ήδη](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=h%29%2Fdh&la=greek&can=h%29%2Fdh0&prior=m'):

[κλίνατ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=kli%2Fnat%27&la=greek&can=kli%2Fnat%270&prior=h)/dh)‚ [ου](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29&la=greek&can=ou%290&prior=kli/nat') [σθένω](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=sqe%2Fnw&la=greek&can=sqe%2Fnw0&prior=ou)) [ποσίν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=posi%2Fn&la=greek&can=posi%2Fn0&prior=sqe/nw).

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ουκέτι μάτηρ.

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[τόδε](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%2Fde&la=greek&can=to%2Fde0&prior=te/kna) [φάος](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fa%2Fos&la=greek&can=fa%2Fos0&prior=to/de) [ὁρῷτον](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=o%28rw%3D%7Cton&la=greek&can=o%28rw%3D%7Cton0&prior=fa/os).

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[αλλ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29ll%27&la=greek&can=a%29ll%270&prior=o)rfaniei=s) [άνα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%2Fna&la=greek&can=a%29%2Fna0&prior=a)ll')‚ [τόλμα](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=to%2Flma&la=greek&can=to%2Flma0&prior=a)/na).

[σοῦ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=sou%3D&la=greek&can=sou%3D0&prior=to/lma) [γὰρ](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ga%5Cr&la=greek&can=ga%5Cr0&prior=sou=) [φθιμένης](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=fqime%2Fnhs&la=greek&can=fqime%2Fnhs0&prior=ga%5Cr) [ουκέτ'](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ou%29ke%2Ft%27&la=greek&can=ou%29ke%2Ft%270&prior=fqime/nhs) [ὰν](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=a%29%5Cn&la=greek&can=a%29%5Cn0&prior=ou)ke/t') [είην](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=ei%29%2Fhn&la=greek&can=ei%29%2Fhn0&prior=a)%5Cn):

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