

### Scene 3 – Scene from Euripides’ “Suppliant Women”

Iphis: Why can't mortals have a second youth  
and then grow old again? In daily life  
at home, if something fails, we patch it up  
and make it better second time around.  
But a while life-course never comes again.  
If we were young and old twice over  
we could correct all mistakes on the  
second try.  
I used to envy others who had children  
and thought I would die with desire for  
my own.  
But if I had known the suffering that  
comes  
from losing children, I wouldn't be here  
now  
in this nightmare, having a noble child  
born to me, then suddenly snatched  
away.  
So be it. Now what can I do?  
Go home? And see that echoing void  
in room after room, my whole life out of  
place?  
Life was sweetest then, when I had my  
girl.  
But she is gone, who used to kiss my  
cheeks  
and hold my head in her hands. For an  
aging father,  
nothing is gentler than a girl.  
Sons are nobler of soul, but daughters  
give  
the softer caress.

Lead me away, quickly,  
lead me away and shut me in the dark,  
and let my old body melt away and die.  
Old age, I despise this battle with you.  
I despise those fools who stretch out life's  
last days  
with fancy diets and drinks and magic  
cures,

diverting life's course, trying to bypass  
death.

When they're useless with old age,  
let them clear out of the way and leave  
room for the young.

### Scene 4 – Lear and Cordelia, Shakespeare's "King Lear"

Cordelia: How does my royal Lord?  
How fares your Majesty?

Lear: You do me wrong to take me out o'  
th' grave;

Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound  
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears  
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor: Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; where did  
you die?

Cor. Still, still, far wide.

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I?  
Fair daylight?

I am mightily abus'd. I should e'en die  
with pity

To see another thus. I know not what to  
say.

I will not swear these are my hands: let's  
see;

I feel this pin prick. Would I were assur'd  
Of my condition!

Cor. O! look upon me, Sir,

And hold your hand in benediction o'er  
me.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me:

I am a very foolish fond old man,  
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more  
or less;

And, to deal plainly,

I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Methinks I should know you and know  
this man;

Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly  
ignorant

What place this is, and all the skill I have

Remembers not these garments; nor I  
know not  
Where I did lodge last night. Do not  
laugh at me;  
For, as I am a man, I think this lady  
To be my child Cordelia.  
Cor. And so I am, I am.  
Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes, faith. I  
pray, weep not:  
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.  
I know you do not love me; for your  
sisters  
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:  
You have some cause, they have not.  
Cor. No cause, no cause.  
Will't please your Highness walk?  
Lear. You must bear with me.  
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am  
old and  
foolish.  
Cor. We are not the first  
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd  
the worst.  
For thee. Oppressed King, I am cast  
down;  
Myself could else out-frown false  
Fortune's frown.  
Shall we not see these daughters and  
these sisters?  
Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to  
prison;  
We two alone will sing like birds i' th'  
cage:  
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel  
down,  
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,  
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and  
laugh  
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor  
rogues  
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with  
them too,  
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's  
out'  
And take upon 's the mystery of things,

As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear  
out,  
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of  
great ones  
That ebb and flow by th' moon.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,  
The Gods themselves throw incense.  
Have I  
Caught thee?  
He that parts us shall bring a brand from  
heaven,  
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine  
eyes;  
The good years shall devour them, flesh  
and fell,  
Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see  
'em starv'd  
first.  
Come.