

Extract from Hesiod, *The Epic Cycle*,  
translated by Hugh G. Evelyn-White.

## THE THEBAID

1

Homer travelled about reciting his epics, first the Thebaid, in seven thousand verses, which begins: " Sing, goddess, of parched Argos, whence lords . . "

2.

"Then the heaven-born hero, golden-haired Polyneices, first set beside Oedipus a rich table of silver which once belonged to Cadmus the divinely wise: next he filled a fine golden cup with sweet wine. But when Oedipus perceived these treasures of his father, great misery fell on his heart, and he straightway called down bitter curses there in the presence of both his sons. And the avenging Fury of the gods failed not to hear him as he prayed that they might never divide their father's goods in loving brotherhood, but that war and fighting might be ever the portion of them both."

3.

"And when Oedipus noticed the haunch<sup>1</sup> he threw it on the ground and said: 'Oh ! Oh ! my sons have sent this mocking me ...' So he prayed to Zeus the king and the other deathless gods that each might fall by his brother's hand and go down into the house of Hades."

Hesiod, *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, translated by Hugh G. Evelyn-White (1936, 1967) London and Cambridge, Mass: William Heinemann and Harvard University Press.

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<sup>1</sup> The haunch was regarded as a dishonourable portion.

