

# Orphica Song Cycle

## Based on the Sacred Hymns

### Music by Edmund Barton Bullock

English translations: Thomas Taylor

#### I. GOLDEN TABLET A2

Pure, I come from the pure, Queen of those below the earth,  
And Eukles and Eubouleus, and the other gods and daimons;  
For I also claim that I am of your blessed race.  
Recompense I have paid on account of deeds not just;  
Either Fate mastered me or the thunderer flinging the lightning bolt.  
Now I come, as a suppliant, to holy Phersephoneia,  
That she, gracious, may send me to the seats of the blessed.

#### II. TO PROTOGONUS, OR THE FIRST-BORN

*The Fumigation from Myrrh.*

O Mighty first-begotten, hear my pray'r, two-fold, egg-born, and wand'ring thro' the air,  
Bull-roarer, glorying in thy golden wings, from whom the race of Gods and mortals springs.  
Ericapæus, celebrated pow'r, ineffable, occult, all shining flow'r.  
From eyes obscure thou wip'st the gloom of night, all-spreading splendour, pure and holy light  
Hence Phanes call'd, the glory of the sky, on waving pinions thro' the world you fly.  
Priapus, dark-ey'd splendour, thee I sing, genial, all-prudent, ever-blessed king,  
With joyful aspect on our rights divine and holy sacrifice propitious shine.

#### III. TO SATURN (KRONOS)

*The Fumigation from Storax.*

Ethereal father, mighty Titan, hear, great fire of Gods and men, whom all revere:  
Endu'd with various council, pure and strong, to whom perfection and decrease belong.  
Consum'd by thee all forms that hourly die, by thee restor'd, their former place supply;  
The world immense in everlasting chains, strong and ineffable thy pow'r contains  
Father of vast eternity, divine, O mighty Saturn (Kronos), various speech is thine:  
Blossom of earth and of the starry skies, husband of Rhea, and Prometheus wife.  
Obstetric Nature, venerable root, from which the various forms of being shoot;  
No parts peculiar can thy pow'r enclose, diffus'd thro' all, from which the world arose,  
O, best of beings, of a subtle mind, propitious hear to holy pray'rs inclin'd;  
The sacred rites benevolent attend, and grant a blameless life, a blessed end.

#### **IV. TO THUNDRING JOVE (ZEUS KERAUNOS)**

*The Fumigation from Storax.*

O Father Jove (Zeus), who shak'st with fiery light the world deep-sounding from thy lofty height:  
From thee, proceeds th' ætherial lightning's blaze, flashing around intolerable rays.  
Thy sacred thunders shake the blest abodes, the shining regions of th' immortal Gods:  
Thy pow'r divine, the flaming lightning shrouds, with dark investiture, in fluid clouds.  
'Tis thine to brandish thunders strong and dire, to scatter storms, and dreadful darts of fire;  
With roaring flames involving all around, and bolts of thunder of tremendous sound.  
Thy rapid dart can raise the hair upright, and shake the heart of man with wild afright.  
Sudden, unconquer'd, holy, thund'ring God, 'with noise unbounded, flying all abroad;  
With all-devouring force, entire and strong, horrid, untam'd, thou roll'st the flames along.  
Rapid, ætherial bolt, descending fire, the earth all-parent, trembles at thy ire;  
The sea all-shining; and each beast that hears the sound terrific, with dread horror fears:  
When Nature's face is bright with flashing fire, and in the heavens resound thy thunders dire.  
Thy thunders white, the azure garments tear, and burst the veil of all surrounding air.  
O Jove (Zeus), all-blessed, may thy wrath severe, hurl'd in the bosom of the deep appear,  
And on the tops of mountains be reveal'd, for thy strong arm is not from us conceal'd.  
Propitious to these sacred rites incline, and crown my wishes with a life divine:  
Add royal health, and gentle peace beside, with equal reason, for my constant guide.

#### **V. TO THE CURETES (KOURETES)**

Leaping Curetes, who with dancing feet and circling measures, armed footsteps beat:  
Whose bosom's mad, fanatic transports fire, who move in rythm to the founding lyre:  
Who traces deaf when lightly leaping tread, arm bearers, strong defenders, rulers dread:  
Propitious omens, guards of Proserpine (Persephone) preserving rites, mysterious and divine  
Come, and benevolent my words attend, (in herds rejoicing), and my life defend.

#### **VI. TO DEMETER ELEUSINIA (GAIA)**

*The Fumigation from Storax.*

O Universal mother, Ceres (Deo) fam'd august, the source of wealth, and various nam'd:  
Great nurse, all-bounteous, blessed and divine, who joy'st in peace, to nourish corn is thine:  
Goddess of seed, of fruits abundant, fair, harvest and threshing, are thy constant care;  
Who dwell'st in Eleusina's seats retir'd, lovely, delightful queen, by all desir'd.  
Nurse of all mortals, whose benignant mind, first ploughing oxen to the yoke confin'd;  
And gave to men, what nature's wants require, with plenteous means of bliss which all desire.  
In verdure flourishing in honor bright, assessor of great Bacchus [Bromios], bearing light:  
Rejoicing in the reapers sickles, kind, whose nature lucid, earthly, pure, we find.  
Prolific, venerable, Nurse divine, thy daughter loving, holy Proserpine (Koure):  
A car with dragons yok'd, 'tis thine to guide, and orgies singing round thy throne to ride:  
Only-begotten, much-producing queen, all flowers are thine and fruits of lovely green.  
Bright Goddess, come, with Summer's rich increase swelling and pregnant, leading smiling  
Peace;  
Come, with fair Concord and imperial Health, and join with these a needful store of wealth.

## VII. TO APOLLO (APOLLON)

*The Fumigation from Manna.*

Blest Pæan, come, propitious to my pray'r, illustrious pow'r, whom Memphian tribes revere,  
Slayer of Tityus, and the God of health, Lycorian Phœbus, fruitful source of wealth.  
Spermatic, golden-lyr'd, the field from thee receives it's constant, rich fertility.  
Titanic, Grunian, Smynthian, thee I sing, Python-destroying, hallow'd, Delphian king:  
Rural, light-bearer, and the Muse's head, noble and lovely, arm'd with arrows dread:  
Far-darting, Bacchian, two-fold, and divine, pow'r far diffused, and course oblique is thine.  
O, Delian king, whose light-producing eye views all within, and all beneath the sky:  
Whose locks are gold, whose oracles are sure, who, omens good reveal'st, and precepts pure:  
Hear me entreating for the human kind, hear, and be present with benignant mind;  
For thou survey'st this boundless æther all, and ev'ry part of this terrestrial ball  
Abundant, blessed; and thy piercing sight, extends beneath the gloomy, silent night;  
Beyond the darkness, starry-ey'd, profound, the stable roots, deep fix'd by thee are found.  
The world's wide bounds, all-flourishing are thine, thyself all the source and end divine:  
'Tis thine all Nature's music to inspire, with various-sounding, harmonising lyre;  
Now the last string thou tun'ft to sweet accord, divinely warbling now the highest chord;  
Th' immortal golden lyre, now touch'd by thee, responsive yields a Dorian melody.  
All Nature's tribes to thee their difference owe, and changing seasons from thy music flow  
Hence, mix'd by thee in equal parts, advance Summer and Winter in alternate dance;  
This claims the highest, that the lowest string, the Dorian measure tunes the lovely spring.  
Hence by mankind, Pan-royal, two-horn'd nam'd, emitting whistling winds thro' Syrinx fam'd;  
Since to thy care, the figur'd seal's consign'd, which stamps the world with forms of ev'ry kind.  
Hear me, blest pow'r, and in these rites rejoice, and save thy mystics with a suppliant voice.

## VIII. TO DIONYSIUS BASSAREUS TRIENNALIS

Come, blessed Dionysius, various nam'd, bull-fac'd,  
begot from Thunder, Bacchus fam'd.  
Bassarian God, of universal might, whom swords, and blood, and sacred rage delight:  
In heav'n rejoicing, mad, loud-sounding God, furious inspirer, bearer of the rod:  
By Gods rever'd, who dwell'st with human kind, propitious come, with much-rejoicing mind.

## IX. TO THE NYMPHS (NYMPHAI)

*The Fumigation from Aromatics.*

Nymphs, who from Ocean's (Okeanos') stream derive your birth, who dwell in liquid caverns of  
the earth  
Nurses of Bacchus (Bakkhos) secret-coursing pow'r, who fruits sustain, and nourish ev'ry flow'r:  
Earthly, rejoicing, who in meadows dwell, and caves and dens, whose depths extend to hell:  
Holy, oblique, who swiftly soar thro' air, fountains and dews, and mazy streams your care:  
Seen and unseen, who joy with wand'rings wide and gentle course, thro' flow'ry vales to glide;  
With Pan exulting on the mountains height, loud-founding, mad, whom rocks and woods delight:  
Nymphs od'rous, rob'd in white, whose streams exhale the breeze refreshing, and the balmy gale;  
With goats and pastures pleas'd, and beasts of prey, nurses of fruits, unconscious of decay:  
In cold rejoicing, and to cattle kind, sportive thro' ocean wand'ring unconfind:  
Nysian, fanatic Nymphs, whom oaks delight, lovers of Spring, Pæonian virgins bright.  
With Bacchus, and with Ceres (Deo), hear my pray'r. And to mankind abundant favour bear;  
Propitious listen to your suppliants voice, come, and benignant in these rites rejoice;  
Give plenteous Seasons, and sufficient wealth, and pour; in lasting streams, continued Health.

## **X. TO JUSTICE (DIKE)**

*The Fumigation from Frankincense.*

The piercing eye of Justice bright, I sing, plac'd by the throne of heav'n's almighty king (Zeus),  
Perceiving thence, with vision unconfin'd, the life and conduct of the human kind  
To thee, revenge and punishment belong, chastising ev'ry deed, unjust and wrong;  
Whose pow'r alone, dissimilars can join, and from th' equality of truth combine:  
For all the ill, persuasion can inspire, when urging bad designs, with counsel dire,  
'Tis thine alone to punish; with the race of lawless passions, and incentives base;  
For thou art ever to the good inclin'd, and hostile to the men of evil mind.  
Come, all-propitious, and thy suppliant hear, when Fate's predestin'd, final hour draws near.

## **XI. GOLDEN TABLET B2 PHARSALOS**

You will find in the halls of Hades, a spring on the right,  
And standing by it, a glowing white cypress tree;  
Do not approach it at all.  
Further along you will find, from a lake of Memory,  
The refreshing water flowing forth. But guardians are nearby.  
And they will ask you for what need you have come;  
To them you should relate very well the whole truth;  
Say: "I am the child of earth and starry Heaven;  
Starry is my name. I am parched with thirst; but give me to drink from the spring.