

*The Cyclops 423 BC*  
*Euripides 485/4-406 B.C.*

*(SCENE:-Before the great cave of the CYCLOPS at the foot of Mount Aetna. SILENUS enters. He has a rake with him, with which he cleans up the ground in front of the cave as he soliloquizes.) -*

*SILENUS*

*O BROMIUS, unnumbered are the toils I bear because of thee, no less now than when I was young and hale; first, when thou wert driven mad by Hera and didst leave the mountain nymphs, thy nurses; next, when in battle with earth-born spearmen I stood beside thee on the right as squire, and slew Enceladus, smiting him full in the middle of his targe with my spear. Come, though, let me see; must I confess 'twas all a dream? No, by Zeus! since I really showed his spoils to the Bacchic god. And now am I enduring to the full a toil still worse than those. For when Hera sent forth a race of Tyrrhene pirates against thee, that thou mightest be smuggled far away, I, as soon as the news reached me, sailed in quest of thee with my children; and, taking the helm myself, I stood on the end of the stern and steered our trim craft; and my sons, sitting at the oars, made the grey billows froth and foam as they sought thee, my liege, But just as we had come nigh Malea in our course, an east wind blew upon the ship and drove us hither to the rock of Aetna, where in lonely caverns dwell the one-eyed children of ocean's god, the murdering Cyclopes. Captured by one of them we are slaves in his house; Polyphemus they call him whom we serve; and instead of Bacchic revelry we are herding a godless Cyclops's flocks; and so it is my children, striplings as they are, tend the young thereof on the edge of the downs; while my appointed task is to stay here and fill the troughs and sweep out the cave, or wait upon the ungodly Cyclops at his impious feasts. His orders now compel obedience; I have to scrape out his house with the rake you see, so as to receive the Cyclops, my absent master, and his sheep in clean caverns.*

*But already I see my children driving their browsing flocks towards me.*

*What means this? is the beat of feet in the Sicinnis dance the same to you now as when ye attended the Bacchic god in his revelries and made your way with dainty steps to the music of lyres to the halls of Althaea? -*

*(The CHORUS OF SATYRS enters, driving a flock of goats and sheep. Servants follow them.)*

*translated by E. P. Coleridge*

