

Alcestis underworld outline—concentric circle remix

A: Entering the underworld

- Flight with Hermes across rivers
- Idea of looking for Hippothoe
- Persephone/Hades interest
- Landscape (the palace, adamantine gate)
- Cerberus
- Into the palace to meet the gods (thrones, physical desc)

B: Conversation with P & H

- P as beautiful
- Their odd relationship
- P obsessed with A's sacrifice
- Asks for Hippothoe
- Tyro introduced/also introduces H's awareness of shades
- Meeting Tyro

C: Exploring the gardens

- Looking for Hippothoe
- Tartarus/Elysium
- Persephone in the garden
- P makes A tell her story again
- The first retelling of P's story

D: Feast with P & H

- Contrast with Mycenaean life
- P & H dynamic
- Second retelling of P's story (much more twisted and sad)
- A asks both about Hippothoe again
- They become absorbed in each other and she flees?
- Meets Tyro again here?

E: Chariot journey with Hades

- Picked up while looking for Hippothoe? (Some kind of flashback?)
- His story—doesn't tell it
- His interest in her a mirror of Persephone's
- A still trying to get him to tell her about Hippothoe
- H curious about her husband? (How does he value A?)
- Return to palace: P& H enter together?

F: The revelation

- A sees P & H making love (strangeness of gods, envy)—the audience
- Goes looking for Hippothoe
- Set piece with another shade—intro Tiresias here rather than after Persephone

The warning (Waste Land)
Desire for earthly world—sudden, not yet addressed
Weeping in the underworld, quietly

G: The game in the garden

A through the woods again, trying to find the garden?
A makes last attempt to get P to tell her where Hippothoe is
P wants A to tell her story again; A won't (parasitic) (bardic)
P says she will tell her own story
Seduction by tale, somewhat non-con
Audience of shades
Given a clue about Hippothoe? (Decide on this –leads to Tiresias?)
Abandoned, goes to find Tyro, who does not know her

F: The revelation

A both accepting (typical god interaction) and broken – temporarily forgets
Hippothoe
Momentary belief in herself as consort? (Re-ordering of the world)
Suppresses desire for mortal world; will rule there, if she is asked
Goes into palace; touching wall, shade touches her hand
Sees P& H together again—half-formed fantasy destroyed
H still a mirror of P; now sees that P a mirror of H
Scene with P alone here?
Leaves to look for Hippothoe—meets Tiresias

E: Chariot journey with Hades

Tiresias chides her for lack of concern with earthly world (no explicit warning)
A asks for help with finding Hippothoe
Clue from Tiresias—re: Hippothoe as no different from others, A doesn't
understand
Tells her to go back to Tyro?
Hades sees A, offers her a ride—A bitter, Hades surprised—doesn't see that she's
jealous
Allows herself to be taken back? (another return to the palace)—but won't go in
with them
P tries to come after her, but Tiresias catches her at the gates?

D: Feast with P & H

Tiresias warns her of the three-day limit and Heracles' arrival (sense of time)
A heartbroken, yet urgent to find Hippothoe before she goes
Return to palace, P & H feasting without her? Or an empty table, a seat open?
A realizes they knew
P declares her love? (H's reaction)
A furious, bitter, wants to know about Hippothoe, wants to know why P wouldn't
tell her
Finally tells A how to find Hippothoe (think this out)

Cerberus howls as Heracles arrives

C: Exploring the gardens

Looking for Heracles in Asphodel Fields, also looking for Hippothoe
Finds Heracles first
Blood sacrifice
He doesn't understand, though he comprehends a bit about P
Heracles sees Elysian Fields, happy; A cynical
Cannot enter unannounced
A begs P & H to help her stay—at least long enough to find Hippothoe
H enters the hall

B: Conversation with P & H

Heracles confused by tableau (P & A entwined?)
Heracles announces he will fight; H denies him, says she will go
P prophesies about A's children (move from earlier position)
P says farewell to A—tells her to go out now and she'll find Hippothoe—holds
her still long
 enough to kiss her (story)
A runs out through adamantine gate—Heracles, P & H follow
Finds Hippothoe just outside it—she's just like the others, A broken again
P whispers that that is why she wouldn't tell
Heracles leads A away

A: Exiting the underworld

Heracles takes A to Lethe, tells her to drink—spills down her chest, she won't
Heracles oddly quieted, somewhat understanding
Has to walk to exit with him, becomes more solid as she goes—tries to stop
Finds out he's doing a favor for Admetus
Her feet bleed
Out through the hole in the earth (Tartarus echo)
Heracles pulls her up

Back in the world:

1. Becoming queen again

Base on summary, but more about Hippothoe, her grief
Does Admetus understand this? It's the only thing she tells him.

2. Becoming alive again

Reunion with P—how does this work? Does it work? I think so. Alcestis has
somewhat forgiven her; P is still obsessed with her story, and with her. Work in
more storytelling, here. When they meet, have P tell Alcestis A's own story, very
briefly, very traditionally? And the ending is that they will be together when A

dies, truly, and though she knows what that means, it's the only thing she has to look forward to.