I’ve given some thought to Anthony’s whimsical suggestion that Oedipus would have been able to solve the problem posed by the oracle if he had put on a play in which a character named Oedipus kills his father and marries his mother. Something like what we see in Hamlet, who puts on a play that mirrors the death of Hamlet’s father. At the end of class, someone suggested that this would make a good short story. I agree. Oedipus would prove himself an Oedipus for the twenty-first century, a postmodern Oedipus. This postmodern Oedipus would nod to his own textuality by recognizing his status as a creation of Sophocles and, himself being a literary character, would create an image of himself within the text in which he appears. He would be creating what lit. crit. folks call a mise en abyme: a representation within a text that mirrors the text itself.

I once heard in concert a great song by Livingston Taylor, James Taylor’s brother. In this song, the singer begins to sing about a courageous fireman who, according to the singer, is going to climb a tree and save a cat. However, this recalcitrant fireman thinks it below his dignity to stoop to engaging in such an activity. So he refuses to cooperate and begins a long, lyrical argument with the singer. I have something like this in mind. But I’m just a parasite on others people’s creative activity and lack any creative impulses. So it’s up to one of you to take up the challenge.