Anacolutha may well be 'the stuff of natural speech'), but one may feel a certain reluctance to adduce the phenomenon as a justification of the text of L (vv. 185–6) in so carefully structured a piece as Amphitryon's cleverly wrought reply to Lykos (vv. 170 ff.). I wish to argue that, with a minimum of alteration to the text, sense and syntax can be restored and the thrust of the argument maintained.

Amphitryon begins his rebuttal (170–1) with a casual comment on Lykos' accusation about Herakles' parentage (v. 149): Zeus can deal with that himself. His concern (κακῶς γὰρ σ' οὐκ ἔστεν κλείνην) is to remove the unspeakable slur on Herakles' character, viz. that Herakles is a coward (171 ff.). This he does in some dozen lines of argumentation, which begin with divine witnesses (ὡς ἐπιθύμησεν τὸν καλλίνικον μετὰ τῶν θεῶν ἐκώμαςεν· τετρασκελές θ' ἥρωμα, Κενταύρων γένος, Φολόσφον ἐπελθὼν, ὡς κάκως βασιλέως, ἕρων τίν' ἄνδρα ἀριστον ἐγκρίνειαν ἄν· οὐ γὰρ παῖς τὸν ἐμόν, ὃς σὺ φήμης εἶναι δοκεῖν; Δίφρυν τ' ἔρωτών ἡ σ' ἐθερψαμ' Ἀβαντίδα, οὖν ἄν ο' ἐπαινεσσειν· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅποι ἐσθλὸν τὶ δρᾶσαις μάρτυρ' ἄν λάβοις πάτραν.


2) I do not dispute the fact that many examples of anacoluthon of similar form can be cited (see, for example, J. Diggle, Studies on the Text of Euripides [Oxford, 1981] 107). My point is that Amphitryon here chooses his words much too carefully to allow us to suspect him guilty of inadvertently going astray in his argument.
187) to Lykos’ own lack of brave exploits (ἔσθλον τι)\(^3\). Thus not only is the charge of cowardice against Herakles refuted, but the suggestion is insinuated that it is Lykos himself who should rather be branded as a coward.

At v. 185 L offers the ‘hanging’ nominative ἔρωτὼν, though clearly the subject of ἐπαινέσεις (186) must be Dirphys. No doubt the error stems from the preceding nominative participle ἐπιελθὼν (182) and perhaps also from the loss of σέ, which is required for both metre and sense, in 186\(^4\). Altering the participle to the accusative\(^5\), however, would remove any need to postulate an anacoluthon: so

\[Διώκειν τ’ ἔρωτῶν’ ἔστεψε’ Ἀβαντίδα,\]

and reading οὐκ ἄν σέ γ’ ἐπινέσεις\(^6\) will restore the necessary emphasis: ‘and if you were to ask Abantian Dirphys, which reared you (sc. whom it would select as the ἄνδρον ἄνωστον), it would not mention\(^7\) you at any rate; for never could you get your own country to testify to some brave deed of yours’.

Although the speech is essentially a defence of his son Herakles, Amphitryon lets no opportunity pass to hit at Lykos’ cowardice. Thus, apart from the lines considered above, Lykos is twice addressed as Δικαίωτός – 182, ὁ κάκιστος βασιλέως, and 208, αὐτός ἄν κακός – in contexts which clearly allude at least as much to his δείλια as to his general baseness and ignobility as an upstart incomer from Euboea. Indeed, in the latter case, where Amphitryon has been forced to concede that it is wise (οὐρόν, 207) of Lykos to wish to get rid of Herakles’ sons, he specifically – and ironically – attributes this desire to cowardice (δείλιας, 210) rather than the εὐλαβεία which Lykos has pleaded above (166). Likewise, in the very last line of his speech, Amphitryon drives home his point, viz. that the charge of cowardice should be transferred from Herakles to Lykos, by wishful thinking about how he would have dealt with Lykos had he but the strength, ἔστεψεν ὅποτε τῇ δείλαι τοῦ μοῦ δόμοι (234–5).

We see then that the aged Amphitryon does not lose his way through an unfortunate choice of witnesses. On the contrary, he neatly (and unobtrusively) appends to his citation of evidence in favour of Herakles ‘evidence’ which, if solicited, would show Lykos as a coward in the eyes of his own countrymen. This is clever pleading, not senile bumbling which has left its speaker at a loss for words.

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4) The same omission of the pronoun occurs at v. 1254 (also after οὗκ ἄν), as well as at Hel. 1045 (see Kannicht ad loc.).

5) Since arriving at this solution, I have discovered that this emendation was first suggested by Reiske in the eighteenth century.

6) With Wilamowitz. L has οὐκ ἄν ἐπαινέσεις with γ’ suprascript.

7) This translation of αἰνεῖν seems demanded here (despite the strictures of Fraenkel on Agam. 1482 [q. v.] or Cunningham on Herodas 4.47). However, even if one insists upon the translation ‘commend’, that will not greatly alter the sense of the passage.