

# MEDEA

## CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

Medea, daughter of Aiêtês, King of Colchis.

Jason, chief of the Argonauts; nephew of Pelias, King of Iôlcos in Thessaly.

Creon, ruler of Corinth.

Aegeus, King of Athens.

Nurse of Medea.

Two Children of Jason and Medea.

Attendant on the children.

A Messenger.

Chorus of Corinthian Women, with their Leader.

Soldiers and Attendants.

The scene is laid in Corinth. The play was first acted when Pythodôrus was Archon, Olympiad 87, year 1 (B.C. 431). Euphorion was first, Sophocles second, Euripides third, with Medea, Philoctêtes, Dictys, and the Harvesters, a Satyr-play.

The Scene represents the front of Medea's House in Corinth. A road to the right leads towards the royal castle, one on the left to the harbor. The Nurse is discovered alone.

Nurse.

If only the gods barred the Argo from winning the golden fleece. Then my princess, Medea, would have never traveled to Iolcus with her love Jason. Then she wouldn't have deceived the daughters of King Pelias to kill their father. Causing her and her family to flee to Corinth. But now, Jason and Medea's love is poisoned. Jason has spurned my princess and his own sons, for a crown. He has married the daughter of Creon. And Creon is the king of Corinth. Medea cries for her family and her home that she destroyed in Colchis. What scares me the most is that she looks at her children with hate. I know that woman. She has some scheme. (Children playing noises) Here come her children, happy and free from their mother's pain. Youth is no friend of sadness.

(The two boys and their Attendant.)

Attendant.

Why are you out here alone at the gate? Where is Medea?

Nurse.

I cry for her sorrows to the earth and sky.

Attendant.

Is she still weeping over Jason?

Nurse.

Yes.

Attendant.

She is a fool, if I may speak of our mistress so. She hasn't even heard the latest of her sorrows yet.

(He moves to exit but the Nurse stops him)

Nurse.

What do you mean old man? . . . tell me!

Attendant.

It's nothing. Best to forget about it.

Nurse.

No, do not hide it if from me, your fellow slave, I will keep silence if you wish.

Attendant.

I heard an old man talking. He said, 'It is Creon's will, that she and her two sons be exiled.' But perhaps it's not true.

Nurse.

Jason could never exile his own sons—No matter how angry he is with their mother!

Attendant.

Old bonds shatter when new ones take their place. He has no love for this family anymore.

Nurse.

This means we are undone.

Attendant.

Do not tell anyone about this. Our mistress will be told all in good time.

Nurse.

Oh children! What do you think of your father's love? He is a traitor to his own blood!

Attendant.

What man on earth isn't? How is it you lived all these years, and haven't learned that every man only looks out for himself? He wants the bed of this new bride. He doesn't care about his sons' lives.

Nurse.

Keep them apart: Do not let their mother see them while she is in this state. Last night I saw hate in her eyes when she looked at these two.

Voice (within, Medea). Oh my wretched heart! I wish that I were dead!

Nurse.

Go, run into the house, my little ones: everything will be fine! . . .

(The Children and the Attendant ext.)

Voice (within, Medea).

Have I not suffered enough? Curse Jason and our dammed children, curse this whole house!

Nurse.

What do those babes have to do, with their father's sin? Why call your curse on them? . . . Ah, children my heart weeps for you.

(During the last words the Leader of the Chorus enters. Other women follow her).

Chorus 1.

I heard a voice cry out when I was outside the gates. Has she not stopped crying yet?

Nurse.

Medea wastes away in her chamber. She will not listen to help.

Voice (within, Medea)

O Zeus, why don't you strike me down? What is there to gain in my life? Oh world, give me the peace of death.

Chorus 2.

That is the cry of a scorned wife. Do not shed tears for him. This sin is on his head.

Chorus 3.

(To Nurse) Ask her to come out and listen to our counsel.

Nurse.

I will try.

(Medea appears startling the nurse and chorus)

Medea.

Women of Corinth, I come to you so that you may not despise me. Pride is the downfall of many. I am blindsided by this calamity. My cup, once full of life, shattered in my hands. Jason was my world... but he is corrupt! Of all things that bleed and grow, the thing most abused is woman. We give over our riches to buy some man's love, so that they can become our master! Good or bad, once the choice is made, she cannot reject him or else she is shamed for all her days. How does she serve this thing that sleeps next to her? Happy is her life, if he is content and stays. Otherwise she prays for death. And they mock us for staying at home while they fight in wars. I would sooner face their battles three times over than give birth once! Now I am made homeless... outcast...by the man who married me, the savage bride. Taken from my home, seas away with no mother, no brother, and no kinsmen to save me. I ask you all one thing. If I find a way to seek revenge against Jason, do not betray me. A woman can be fierce in the face of battle; but when her dignity is ruined, there is no more vengeful spirit between heaven and hell.

Chorus 2.

We will not betray you. It is just that you take your revenge on him.

Chorus 3.

Look! Creon, lord of Corinth, is coming.

(Enter from the right Creon, the King, with armed Attendants.)

Creon.

Medea, take your two children and leave. I banish you from this land. Depart at once.

Medea.

What crime am I charged with, O King?

Creon.

No crime you have done....yet. I am afraid of you. I fear you may commit some heinous act against my child. You are a witch. Your lover has spurned you. You have made threats against Jason, my daughter, and I. Before it is too late, I banish you.

Medea.

Once again, my reputation as a sorceress hurts me. Some say I am wise woman, and for that sin I am called aggressive, an idealist. A wretch. Others say that I am not that clever. Now you say I am dangerous. Creon, do not be frightened of me. When have you ever wronged me? You have betrothed your child to who you think is the best match. Why would I feud with the princess? No, it is Jason I hate. I hold no grudge against your house. May the gods bless you. Allow me to stay in Corinth. Though I am mistreated, I will be still and accept my defeat. (prostrates herself)

Creon.

Your words are kind, but I cannot trust you. Get up, go! No more pleading. I will not let an enemy abide in my land.

Medea (suddenly throwing herself down and clinging to Creon).

No! I implore you! If you love your daughter-

Creon.

Save your words.

Medea.

Listen to my pleas! Listen!

Creon.

Get up and leave or my guards will force you!

Medea.

No, no please... (guards starting to force her up) I will do as you wish! I accept banishment. I ask one thing. Give me a day to leave. I must make arrangements for my children. You are a father; have mercy on my sons. I do not care what happens to me, but before I go in exile, I must be sure of their safety.

Creon.

I am no tyrant. I will give you one day. But if by tomorrow's sunrise you and your children are still here...you die. One day, and no more.

(Exit Creon with his guards.)

Chorus 1

Oh, you unfortunate woman.

Chorus 2

Where will you go?

Chorus 3

Who will you turn to?

Medea.

Grief surrounds me, but this is not the end. Jason, his new bride, and Creon will soon begin their troubles. Do you think I groveled at Creon without it benefiting me? He's a fool! Creon could have foiled my plans by exiling me, but instead he gives me a day! How shall I execute them? So many ideas... Which one is best? I could set their house on fire, or stab the bridegroom in their bed... but I could be caught sneaking into their house and get killed. Maybe I should poison them...No! If they are dead, who will let me into their city? I must wait until I secure a refuge for myself. Then I will come for their blood. However, if my time runs out and no one aids me, I will not fear death to keep me from destroying them. By the goddess, Hecatê, who sustains me, no one who breaks my heart shall escape my punishment!

(Medea goes into the House.)

Chorus 1.

You come from your faraway home, with a heart of fire.

Chorus 2.

Across the dark blue waters you roamed, to live with whom you admire.

Nurse.

When you arrived at this alien land, your lover leaves your arms forever.

Chorus 3.

You must forge a new plan, taking charity from whomever.

Chorus and Nurse.

Gone is your home. Gone is your father.

Nurse.

And look who appears, Jason the betrayer. (Medea and Jason enter)

Jason.

A bad temper leads to tragedies, Medea. You could have stayed here, if you just kept low and quiet. I tried convincing Creon to let you live in this house. But because you threatened the royals of Corinth, you are banished. You do not intimidate me with your hateful words. Telling everyone what a monster I am! But your threats against my wife and father-in-law are the reason you are sent to exile. I am here to

help. You cannot be thrown into the streets with the children, penniless. Though you hate me, I will never resent you.

Medea

You, beast! (Turning to the Chorus.) What do you think of him? He has no shame. This man comes to me smiling. After he scorned, hurt, betrayed me! Yet, Jason, I applaud you for coming. Now I can release you from my heart and tell everyone how I came here. I saved you. I saved you and everyone who sailed on the Argo. I killed the dragon who guarded the Golden Fleece. I left my father and my home to be with you in Iólcos. I murdered King Pelias with his own daughters' hands, for you. How do you repay my love? By abandoning me and taking a new bride. I gave you children! Yet you come to me now as my friend to help me. How? Where should I go? Back to the father I betrayed for you? Back to the daughters of King Pelias? I'm sure they will welcome me with open arms after I made them cut their father into pieces! The people who loved and sheltered me, I betrayed and murdered, for you Jason. How am I rewarded? The woman who gave up everything to save you. You marry another. Then cast me aside, with our children, cast us out to be beggars.

Chorus 1.

When hearts that once loved each other turn to hate, no forgiveness can placate.

Jason.

You exaggerate your assistance to me. My true savior was the goddess Aphrodite. Oh, you do have a sharp wit, but Aphrodite compelled you with desire to save me. I appreciate the help, and I thank you for it. However, you have received more than what you gave. I took you out of your barbarian home and brought you to the beautiful land of Greece. You live in our civilized society. You know the ways of law and justice. Greece recognizes your brilliance and you enjoy your fame. If you stayed in Colchis what would become of the great Medea? As for my alliance with the King of Corinth, I do this for you and our children. (Medea scoffs) Let me speak! When I first came to Corinth after all my hardship in exile, I never dreamed of marrying a princess. I was not unhappy in our marriage. I did not lust after my new wife, nor did I seek more children. I want all of us to live comfortably. I want to raise our sons as befit my status and perhaps father them more brothers. All of us, together, as one family. Content and glad. If only you could tame your jealous heart! Why is it women put so much stock in simple love? If something hurts your feelings, you are quick to make enemies. If only men could give birth to their own children. Then we would have no use for women!

Chorus 2.

My Lord Jason, you chose your words with care, but your will I do not share.

Chorus 3.

You sin against your wife, betraying her heart and causing her strife.

Medea.

If what you say is true, then why didn't you ask for my consent? I could have helped your scheme because I loved you... so stop lying to me.

Jason.

That would not be a simple task. You can't control your jealous heart now!

Medea.

That's not why you left me. You grew bored of your old barbarian bride, Jason.

Jason.

Listen! The girl means nothing. She only serves to father me more royal sons so that our house may prosper. Your banishment was your choice, you have no one else to blame.

Medea.

How? Did I seduce you and then betray you?

Jason.

You cursed the King and his daughter!

Medea.

Maybe I cursed your house too? I am a living curse.

Jason.

Enough! For your sake and for the sake of those children, I offer to help you find some place to call home with one of my old friends. It would be unwise to refuse me.

Medea.

I will not take your charity. An enemy's gift is no blessing.

Jason.

May the Gods be my witness! I tried to make it right, but nothing pleases you. You have scared off any friends you have left. You only make this worse for yourself.

Medea.

Go run back to your new bride.

Chorus 3.

Oh, goddess of love, please never fire your golden quiver in my direction.

Chorus 2.

Aphrodite make me chase, so that I may never crave a man's affection.

Chorus 1.

My country, my home. I pray that you never cast me out helpless and alone.



Nurse.

For death is better than being banished from all I've ever known.

[While Medea waits downcast, seated upon her doorstep, a traveler enters. As he catches sight of Medea he stops.

Aegeus.

Happy greetings Medea!

Medea (looking up, surprised).

Oh. Happy greetings to you too, Aegeus, King of Athens! What brings you here?

Aegeus.

I am travelling back from the oracle at Delphi.

Medea.

What took you to seek prophecy there?

Aegeus.

To pray for children of my own.

Medea.

What did the oracle say?

Aegeus.

He spoke in riddles too hard to decipher.

Medea.

Oh? What was his riddle?

Aegeus.

He said, That I should not spill my life's wine until I return to the home of my sire's.

Medea.

What brings you here, to Corinth?

Aegeus.

Do you know King Pittheus?

Medea.

Yes, he is a son of Pelops.

Aegeus.

I want to ask him the meaning of this prophecy.

Medea.

He is knowledgeable in interpreting the will of the gods. I wish you good success in your travels.

Aegeus.

What about you? You look sick. The fire has gone out in your eyes.

Medea.

Aegeus, even though I was nothing but faithful to him, my husband has been untrue to me.

Aegeus.

Untrue! What has he done?

Medea.

He takes another wife and curses me with banishment.

Aegeus.

Jason would shame himself in this way? Who gave him the bride?

Medea.

King Creon of Corinth.

Aegeus.

I understand why you are grieving.

Medea.

Aegeus, my friend, I supplicate myself to you. Give me a home in Athens. I know magic herbs that can cure your sterility. If you let me stay with you, I will help you father children of your own.

Aegeus.

For the sake of the gods and the promise of future children, I will help. However, since I am a guest of Creon's house, I cannot shelter you here. Make your own way to my kingdom. Once you enter my home in Athens, you will be safe from anyone who means you harm.

Medea.

Do you swear this by the earth and the gods that rule over it?

Aegeus

I swear. May the gods strike me down if I fail.

Medea.

Then leave in peace. I will see you in Athens.

Chorus 1

Farewell King Aegeus, may Hermes guide your path.

Chorus 2

May your prayers be answered fast.

Chorus 3

Our eyes have seen your truth, you are kind and generous to the last.

(Aegeus Exits)

Medea.

I thank you Zeus and your daughter, Justice! I will have victory over my enemies! I have found a friend, my savior. Now I can begin my plan. I will ask Jason to meet me so that I may apologize. I will tell him I now see how right he was. Then I will ask one favor; that he lift my sons' banishment. As a gesture of peace, I will send my boys with gifts of fine robes and a crown of gold to his bride. When she puts them on, she will be stricken with poison and die an agonizing death, along with anyone who touches her. After this, I will slay those children I bore Jason. When I finish, Jason will have nothing. No bride, no children. And no one will ever call me weak or pitiful.

Chorus 2.

You can't kill the children your body bore!

Medea.

Yes, I can, if the father pained me more.

[She claps her hands: the Nurse comes out from the house.]

Bring Lord Jason here. I trust you, faithful servant, to say nothing about my schemes.

[The Nurse departs.]

Chorus 1.

They say Athens is pure and clean. Unafflicted by war and blessed by Athena their queen.

Chorus 2.

The people consume wisdom as if it were meat. They walk under bright skies, green grass lies at their feet.

Chorus 3.

Aphrodite dipped her hand in the river Cephissus, spreading her fragrance over the land.

Medea

Chorus 1.

How will this place, so blessed and clean, give you refuge, you, who are lost and disgraced?

Chorus 2.

Will you be blind to your children's tears? Will you raise the knife as they cry out in fear?

Chorus 3.

Can you not see your anger growing? Do you understand the horrors you are sewing?

All Chorus.

We beg you, for your soul, do not shed the blood of your sons!

Chorus 3.

You will have to turn your heart into ice. Your soul will surely pay the price.

Chorus 2.

This deed is not who you are! Your soul will be scarred!

Chorus 1.

Your icy resolve will thaw, when your babes crawl to your knees.

(Enter Jason.)

Jason.

I have come at your request. What more do you want from me?

Medea.

Jason, forgive me. Your words speak wisdom while my heart beats rage. I see now we must go our separate ways. You are no longer my husband, you married a queen. You have done this for our family. My sons will be brothers to Kings! I should be thanking you. I should have helped you. I should have stood by your side, welcoming this new bride. Since I chose anger over duty, I will go. I confess I wished you ill-will, but I see my wrongs. (She claps her Hands) Come quickly my children! (The children come from the house with the Attendant and the Nurse) Go to your father and say goodbye. Let all bitterness you have for him wash away. Your mother and your father have made peace. Go, say your farewells. (Children hug/hold the hand of Jason, Medea bursts into tears, the children quickly return to her, she recovers and is smiling through the tears, turns to Jason) Oh, how fear fills me. How long will it be until you hold our sons in your arms again? Forgive me, my tears come easy today. I am teeming with despair. (She wipes the child's face).

Chorus 1.

My eyes fill with tears.

Chorus 3.

Let this feud end. Let it die.

Jason.

Woman, I commend your new attitude and I will not hold your previous conduct against you. It is natural for a wife to lash out at her lord when his path diverges to a new marriage. But your heart is changed. You are an intelligent woman. (Turns to children) And for my sons, your father will not forget you. By the Gods grace, one day, I will give you brothers that will be kings of this land. I pray that you grow big and strong with the divine power that guides me. May I see you reach full manhood with mighty homes set higher than my enemies. (Turns to Medea who is crying) Woman, why are you crying? Take solace, I promise to protect them.

Medea.

I do take solace. I will never mistrust your promise. But as a woman, my courage is weak, prone to tears.

Jason.

What causes such unhappiness?

Medea.

Hearing your prayer for a long life for our sons, a wave of anxiety rushed over me. Is that prayer secure? King Creon banished me, it is best for me to leave. I will take my exile in peace, but our sons... I ask this land be their home. I want them to be with their father. Please, ask the king to lift the children's banishment.

Jason.

I don't know if I will be able to change his mind. But I will do it.

Medea.

Appeal to your wife to ask her father in your place.

Jason.

A sound idea! She will be easier to persuade, as she is a woman.

Medea.

I will help your endeavor. I will send the boys to her with a beautiful dress and a golden crown. (Snaps her finger and nurse goes to get the dress and the crown) What more could a woman want? She marries a great hero, and now wins gifts bestowed to my family by the Sun God! (Nurse Returns with the baskets of gifts). Come children. Take these gifts to the princess.

Jason.

Why are you giving these treasures away? What need does a royal palace have of dresses and crowns? Keep these things. She values me above all gifts.

Medea.

Gifts can persuade even the Gods. Gold speaks more than words, and I will pay any amount to secure my children's welfare. What a lucky girl she is; youth and the power of a queen. The gods bless her. My children, go and give your father's new bride these gifts. Be sure that no one but her touches these gifts. They are for her hands alone. Go now.

(She goes quickly into the house. Jason and the Children with their Attendant and Nurse exit.)

Chorus 1.

No hope is left for those innocent boys.

Chorus 2.

Their mother's plan seals their deaths.

Chorus 3.

They begin their end, carrying gifts of destruction in their baskets.

Chorus 1.

The bride will take the gifts.

Chorus 2.

The dress will drape around her frame.

Chorus 3.

The diadem will crown her head.

Chorus All.

And the poison will infect her body.

(Enter the Attendant with the two Children: Medea comes out from the house.)

Attendant.

Mistress! Your children are safe from exile! The princess accepted your gifts and made peace with the boys. (Notices Medea's expression) Why do you look so sorrowful? This is good news!

Medea.

I weep because my own vile mind and the Gods willed that this day should come.

Attendant.

Have faith Mistress, one day your sons will bring you home. Be patient. You are not the first mother separated from her children. We must endure what fate brings us.

Medea.

I will survive this pain. You may go (Attendant bows and leaves). (To the children) Oh, my sweet boys. Your home here is secure. You will grow into manhood and build your own houses. But, I will see none of it. I won't be there to see you shape your prosperous lives. I won't be there to lift the wedding torch over your heads. And you won't be there to care for my old age. When it comes time to bury me in the blessed earth, you will be nowhere near. What dreams my cold heart had for you! It was all in vain my body bore you. Why are you looking at me like that? What do you see? Go inside now, get out of my sight (Children exit) (To the Chorus) Women, my strength is gone. Looking into their faces...I can't do it. I will take them and hide them where no one will find them! Why should I strike at them to wound their father? The blow will cut me twice as deep. And yet... And yet... how will people think of me? Will they mock me for leaving my enemies unscathed? No. It must be done. (Turns to where the children have exited) They will not take my sons alive and claim victory over me. (Off stage a female scream is heard) No turning back now! The girl adorned herself with my gifts. My gifts, laced in poison, so she succumbs to her death. (Children come running out of the house scared, looking for their mother) Come here my sons. (they come rushing toward her, but she stops them) Not too close! Give me your hands so that we may say our goodbyes. (She breaks down again and hugs them) Oh those gentle eyes and brave faces! Your father did this to you! (She hands the children over to the nurse they exit again) How truly evil this deed is, but anger consumes my feelings. (Sees Messenger in the distance.) Look friends! One of Jason's men approaches fast. He brings news of calamity.

Messenger.

Medea you must leave!

Medea.

Why, what has happened?

Messenger.

Both the princess and King Creon are dead! Murdered by your fiery poison.

Medea.

What good news! Tell me, what is your name? From now on you and I are friends!

Messenger.

Woman, are you demented? Be afraid, you are guilty of regicide!

Medea.

My good friend tell me, How did they die? Was it painful? I will be so glad if it was.

Messenger.

Your sons, hand in hand with Jason, went to the bridal suite. We servants were so happy to see peace between you two. Then the princess, seeing the boys, turned away, refusing to come near them. Jason asked for her mercy. The boys then offered her the gifts. Jason asked her, for his sake, to talk to the King about lifting their exile. Once she saw your crown, she agreed to Jason's request. When Jason and the

boys left the room she put on the new dress and crown. She danced around the room, when suddenly she staggered to her chair and sat down. Then.... her eyes rolled into the back of her head and she foamed at the mouth. Her nurse screamed for help. One maid ran to the King's room and another maid ran to Jason. The princess awoke with loud shriek. The crown of gold and the dress erupted into flames. She tried to take off the crown, but it locked to her head. From her temples, her blood mixed with fire. Her flesh peeled from her body, exposing her bones. She fell to the floor dead. We dared not touch her, but her father rushed in, taking her lifeless body into his arms. He wailed and cried. Her dress suddenly clung to his body. He fought to free himself, but the poison steeped its way into his skin, the flames spread. He collapsed next to his fallen daughter. An awful death. I tell you once more. Leave now you foul witch.

Chorus 1.

Horrors upon horrors Jason faces this day.

Chorus 2.

Jason earned it all. The Gods say.

Chorus 3.

Poor princess, my heart cries at your short life. Ripped from life's glow and dragged to death's night.

All Chorus.

All is fault to Jason's heart. To darkness, all for Jason's love!

Medea.

I go now, women, to slay my children. Better they die now than face the knife of some enemy later. Fate calls for their death, and I will do the horrific deed. Oh, heart of mine, put your walls up. Why am I delaying the inevitable? Take up your sword, poor right hand of mine. For one brief day, forget the love you have for your children. Tomorrow, weep for everything you have lost. Though I kill them now, they still hold my heart. (She goes into the house)

All Chorus.

Oh, Earth and Gods Above! Cast your gaze down on this cursed queen!

Chorus 1

The blood she spills is divine!

Chorus 2

Oh Helios, god of the sun! Save your granddaughter!

Chorus 3

Give her peace, take her far, far away so that she remains a mother!

(A cry is heard from offstage)



All Chorus

Wasted are her birthing pains! These lives were born in vain!

(Nurse Enters)

Nurse.

Women, did you hear that? I heard a child's cry?

Chorus 1.

Oh, miserable woman!

Chorus 2.

Oh, mother scorned!

Chorus 3.

What terrible fates!

(A chaotic scene is heard but not seen. Medea tries to calm her children down while the children scream. The nurse panics and tries to go into the house, but the chorus women stop her.)

Nurse

I can help them! Please! I must save them!

(The chaotic scene backstage continues, the chorus lets NURSE go. She tries to open the doors but they are locked, she looks for another entrance. Finds none. She bangs the door.)

Nurse.

Medea! Has your heart turned to stone? Do not do this to your innocent children!

(The sounds stop. Nurse drops to the floor. Silence. Jason, with his attendants enters, He is a wreck)

Jason.

Women of Corinth, tell me where that damned evil woman is! (no answer, he tries to intimidate each person of the chorus) Is she still here? Has she left? After what she has done, there will be no place left for her to hide! Wait, wait, wait. Where are my sons?

Nurse.

You poor man, if you only knew the horrors that happened here.

Jason.

What? Will she try to kill me next?

Nurse.

No. Your sons. Killed by their mother.

Jason.

How... no... she wouldn't... You are lying! You are trying to trick me!

Nurse.

Believe it! Your children are dead.

All Chorus.

Open the door and you shall see your children's blood.

Jason.

Guards! Break down the doors!

(The Guards go to the doors, but Medea opens them. The bodies of her children lay behind her. She glows, dragons behind her. Guards attempt to arrest her but she stops them with her magical powers.)

Medea.

Peace! If you have quarrel with me say it, but you cannot touch me. My grandfather Helios's power protects me from my enemies. (Snaps the necks of the guards she has been holding)

Jason.

You villainous monster! Never has there been a crueller wife than you! You strip me of my family! Damn you!! I was so blind, bringing you back to Greece. When you betrayed your home and your father, I should have thrown you into the sea. Instead I brought you home on the Argo, made you my wife. For all that love and protection, you repay me by butchering my boys! You are no woman. You are a beast. Leave my sight, leave me to my grief. You have killed my bride, my children, and my purpose.

Medea.

Then we are even. Let us leave it at that and go our separate ways. We were never meant to be happy with each other. If it makes you feel better, call me a monster, a beast or inhuman. My claws have torn a hole in you that will never heal.

Jason.

You have also lost your children. Your heart breaks just like mine.

Medea.

You cannot mock me anymore. I take solace in that.

Jason.

My sons, what a hateful mother bore you! (Tries to go to his children's dead bodies)

Medea.

(Intercepts Jason) My sons, you died for your father's sins!

Jason.

How? My knife didn't stab them.

Medea.

The Gods know whose sins are to blame.

Jason.

They know your heinous heart.

Medea.

I tire of your voice. It is time we part.

Jason.

Wait. Give me their bodies so that I may bury them.

Medea.

No. I will bury them on Hera's holy ground so no one will ever disturb them again. I must journey to Athens where I will stay with Aegeus.

Jason.

I pray to the Gods that they avenge my sons and smite you where you stand!! Let me at least hold my sons one last time.

Medea.

They are not yours! They are mine! You cast your prostrations to the wind. But I tell you one last prophecy. You will die destitute and alone on the Argo. Her mast will smash in your head as you bitterly remember your wife, Medea. (She exits)

Chorus 1 and Nurse.

From his throne Zeus gives out strange fates.

Chorus 2 and 3

While men may search for a desperate way out,

Nurse

None can escape, as Medea proves with no doubt.

END OF PLAY