Medea

EURIPIDES

c. 480–406 BC

Medea

Μήδεια

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited

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Medea · Euripides (c. 480–406 BC)

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INTRODUCTION

Medea, a princess from Colchis at the far end of the Black Sea, helped Jason win the Golden Fleece, betrayed her own family for him, and followed him to Greece. Now they live as exiles in Corinth with their two sons—and Jason has left her to marry the daughter of Creon, the king.

Creon, afraid of what she might do, orders her out of the country. She asks for a single day. What she does with it has made her one of the most famous and frightening figures in literature: a wronged wife, a foreigner, a woman of formidable intelligence who refuses to be laughed at by her enemies.

First staged in Athens in 431 BC, the year the Peloponnesian War began, Medea won only third prize. It contains Medea's great speech on the lot of women ("I would rather stand three times in the battle line than give birth once") and one of the most harrowing monologues in Greek tragedy, as she argues with herself over her children.

Medea

Before Medea's house in Corinth.
Abandoned by Jason, Medea plots her revenge.

PROLOGUE

The Nurse tells how Medea came to Corinth; the Tutor reports a coming exile; Medea cries out inside.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1	**NURSE** Εἴθ' ὤφελ' Ἀργοῦς μὴ διαπτάσθαι σκάφος Κόλχων ἐς αἶαν κυανέας Συμπληγάδας, μηδ' ἐν νάπαισι Πηλίου πεσεῖν ποτε τμηθεῖσα πεύκη, μηδ' ἐρετμῶσαι χέρας ἀνδρῶν ἀριστέων οἳ τὸ πάγχρυσον δέρος Πελίᾳ μετῆλθον. οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιν' ἐμὴ Μήδεια πύργους γῆς ἔπλευσ' Ἰωλκίας ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγεῖσ' Ἰάσονος, οὐδ' ἂν κτανεῖν πείσασα Πελιάδας κόρας πατέρα κατῴκει τήνδε γῆν Κορινθίαν ξὺν ἀνδρὶ καὶ τέκνοισι, λανθάνουσα μὲν φυγῇ πολιτῶν ὧν ἀφίκετο χθόνα, αὐτὴ δὲ πάντα ξυμφέρουσ' Ἰάσονι·	**NURSE** If only the Argo had never winged its way to the land of the Colchians, through the dark-blue Clashing Rocks! If only the pine had never been cut in the glens of Pelion and fallen, to put oars in the hands of the heroes who went to fetch the golden fleece for Pelias! Then my mistress Medea would never have sailed to the towers of the land of Iolcus, her heart struck senseless with love for Jason. She would never have talked the daughters of Pelias into killing their father, and she wouldn't be living here in this land of Corinth with her husband and children, unnoticed in her exile by the citizens whose country she came to, and going along with Jason in everything herself.[1]
14	ἥπερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία, ὅταν γυνὴ πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ. νῦν δ' ἐχθρὰ πάντα, καὶ νοσεῖ τὰ φίλτατα. προδοὺς γὰρ αὑτοῦ τέκνα δεσπότιν τ' ἐμὴν γάμοις Ἰάσων βασιλικοῖς εὐνάζεται, γήμας Κρέοντος παῖδ', ὃς αἰσυμνᾷ χθονός· Μήδεια δ' ἡ δύστηνος ἠτιμασμένη βοᾷ μὲν ὅρκους, ἀνακαλεῖ δὲ δεξιᾶς πίστιν μεγίστην, καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρεται οἵας ἀμοιβῆς ἐξ Ἰάσονος κυρεῖ.	And that is the greatest safeguard there is, when a wife is not at odds with her husband. But now everything has turned hostile, and what was dearest is sick. Jason has betrayed his own children and my mistress, and he's bedding down in a royal marriage. He has married the daughter of Creon, who rules this land. And Medea, poor woman, cast off in dishonor, cries out about the oaths, appeals to the pledge of his right hand, the greatest pledge there is, and calls on the gods to witness what return she is getting from Jason.
24	κεῖται δ' ἄσιτος, σῶμ' ὑφεῖσ' ἀλγηδόσι, τὸν πάντα συντήκουσα δακρύοις χρόνον, ἐπεὶ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ᾔσθετ' ἠδικημένη, οὔτ' ὄμμ' ἐπαίρουσ' οὔτ' ἀπαλλάσσουσα γῆς πρόσωπον· ὡς δὲ πέτρος ἢ θαλάσσιος κλύδων ἀκούει νουθετουμένη φίλων· ἢν μή ποτε στρέψασα πάλλευκον δέρην αὐτὴ πρὸς αὑτὴν πατέρ' ἀποιμώξῃ φίλον	She lies there without eating, her body given up to her pain, wasting away in tears all the time, ever since she learned that her husband had wronged her. She doesn't lift her eyes or raise her face from the ground. She listens to her friends' advice the way a rock or a wave of the sea would. Only now and then she turns her pure white neck and, all to herself, weeps aloud for her dear father, her coun-

1 Pelias, king of Iolcus in Thessaly, sent Jason to bring back the golden fleece from Colchis, at the far end of the Black Sea. The Clashing Rocks guarded the entrance to that sea.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	καὶ γαῖαν οἴκους θ', οὓς προδοῦσ' ἀφίκετο μετ' ἀνδρὸς ὅς σφε νῦν ἀτιμάσας ἔχει.	try and her home. She betrayed them to come here with a man who has now cast her off in dishonor.
34	ἔγνωκε δ' ἡ τάλαινα συμφορᾶς ὕπο οἷον πατρῴας μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι χθονός. στυγεῖ δὲ παῖδας οὐδ' ὁρῶσ' εὐφραίνεται. δέδοικα δ' αὐτὴν μή τι βουλεύσῃ νέον· βαρεῖα γὰρ φρήν, οὐδ' ἀνέξεται κακῶς πάσχουσ'· ἐγῷδα τήνδε, δειμαίνω τέ νιν. μὴ θηκτὸν ὥσῃ φάσγανον δι' ἥπατος, σιγῇ δόμους εἰσβᾶσ', ἵν' ἕστρωται λέχος, ἢ καὶ τύραννον τόν τε γήμαντα κτάνῃ κἄπειτα μείζω συμφορὰν λάβῃ τινά.	The poor woman has learned from her misfortune what it is worth not to be cut off from your native land. She hates the children and takes no joy in seeing them. I'm afraid she's planning something unheard-of. Hers is a dangerous mind, and she won't put up with being treated badly. I know her, and she frightens me. I'm afraid she'll slip silently into the house where the bed is spread and drive a sharpened sword through the liver, or even kill the king and the bridegroom, and then bring some greater disaster on herself.
44	δεινὴ γάρ· οὔτοι ῥᾳδίως γε συμβαλὼν ἔχθραν τις αὐτῇ καλλίνικον οἴσεται. ἀλλ' οἵδε παῖδες ἐκ τρόχων πεπαυμένοι στείχουσι, μητρὸς οὐδὲν ἐννοούμενοι κακῶν· νέα γὰρ φροντὶς οὐκ ἀλγεῖν φιλεῖ.	She's formidable. No one who takes her on as an enemy will carry off the victor's crown easily, I can tell you. But here come the boys, finished with their running. They have no idea of their mother's troubles. Young minds aren't much given to grief.
49	**TUTOR** παλαιὸν οἴκων κτῆμα δεσποίνης ἐμῆς, τί πρὸς πύλαισι τήνδ' ἄγουσ' ἐρημίαν ἕστηκας, αὐτὴ θρεομένη σαυτῇ κακά; πῶς σοῦ μόνη Μήδεια λείπεσθαι θέλει;	**TUTOR** You old fixture of my mistress's household, why are you standing out here at the gates all alone, moaning to yourself about your troubles? How can Medea want to be left without you?
53	**NURSE** τέκνων ὀπαδὲ πρέσβυ τῶν Ἰάσονος, χρηστοῖσι δούλοις ξυμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν κακῶς πίτνοντα καὶ φρενῶν ἀνθάπτεται. ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰς τοῦτ' ἐκβέβηκ' ἀλγηδόνος, ὥσθ' ἵμερός μ' ὑπῆλθε γῆ τε κοὐρανῷ λέξαι μολούσῃ δεῦρο Μηδείας τύχας.	**NURSE** Old man, you who look after Jason's children: when their masters' affairs go badly, good slaves feel it as their own misfortune, and it grips their hearts. I've come to such a pitch of grief that a longing crept over me to come out here and tell earth and sky what has happened to Medea.
59	**TUTOR** οὔπω γὰρ ἡ τάλαινα παύεται γόων;	**TUTOR** You mean the poor woman hasn't stopped weeping yet?
60	**NURSE** ζηλῶ σ'· ἐν ἀρχῇ πῆμα κοὐδέπω μεσοῖ.	**NURSE** I envy you. The trouble's only beginning; it isn't even halfway yet.
61	**TUTOR** ὦ μῶρος, εἰ χρὴ δεσπότας εἰπεῖν τόδε· / ὡς οὐδὲν οἶδε τῶν νεωτέρων κακῶν.	**TUTOR** The fool—if one may say that of one's masters. She knows nothing of the latest troubles.
63	**NURSE** τί δ' ἔστιν, ὦ γεραιέ; μὴ φθόνει φράσαι.	**NURSE** What is it, old man? Don't begrudge telling me.
64	**TUTOR** οὐδέν· μετέγνων καὶ τὰ πρόσθ' εἰρημένα.	**TUTOR** Nothing. I'm sorry I said even what I did.
65	**NURSE** μή, πρὸς γενείου, κρύπτε σύνδουλον σέθεν· / σιγὴν γάρ, εἰ χρή, τῶνδε θήσομαι πέρι.	**NURSE** Please, by your beard, don't keep it from a fellow slave. I'll keep quiet about it, if I have to.
67	**TUTOR** ἤκουσά του λέγοντος οὐ δοκῶν κλύειν, πεσσοὺς προσελθών, ἔνθα δὴ παλαίτατοι θάσσουσι, σεμνὸν ἀμφὶ Πειρήνης ὕδωρ,	**TUTOR** I heard someone talking—I pretended not to be listening—when I went over to the gaming boards, where the old men sit around the sacred

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ὡς τούσδε παῖδας γῆς ἐλᾶν Κορινθίας σὺν μητρὶ μέλλοι τῆσδε κοίρανος χθονὸς Κρέων. ὁ μέντοι μῦθος εἰ σαφὴς ὅδε οὐκ οἶδα· βουλοίμην δ' ἂν οὐκ εἶναι τόδε.	water of Peirene. He was saying that Creon, the ruler of this land, intends to drive these boys out of the land of Corinth together with their mother. Whether the story's true, though, I don't know. I'd rather it weren't.
74	**NURSE** καὶ ταῦτ' Ἰάσων παῖδας ἐξανέξεται / πάσχοντας, εἰ καὶ μητρὶ διαφορὰν ἔχει;	**NURSE** And will Jason stand by while his children are treated like that, even if he is quarreling with their mother?
76	**TUTOR** παλαιὰ καινῶν λείπεται κηδευμάτων, / κοὐκ ἔστ' ἐκεῖνος τοῖσδε δώμασιν φίλος.	**TUTOR** Old ties lose out to new ones. He's no friend of this house.
78	**NURSE** ἀπωλόμεσθ' ἄρ', εἰ κακὸν προσοίσομεν / νέον παλαιῷ, πρὶν τόδ' ἐξηντληκέναι.	**NURSE** Then we're finished, if we're to take on a new trouble on top of the old before we've bailed this one out.
80	**TUTOR** ἀτὰρ σύ γ', οὐ γὰρ καιρὸς εἰδέναι τόδε / δέσποιναν, ἡσύχαζε καὶ σίγα λόγον.	**TUTOR** But you—this isn't the right time for our mistress to know—keep still and don't say a word.
82	**NURSE** ὦ τέκν', ἀκούεθ' οἷος εἰς ὑμᾶς πατήρ; ὄλοιτο μὲν μή· δεσπότης γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός· ἀτὰρ κακός γ' ὢν εἰς φίλους ἁλίσκεται.	**NURSE** Children, do you hear what kind of father he is to you? I won't wish him dead—he's my master. But he's been caught out being bad to his own.
85	**TUTOR** τίς δ' οὐχὶ θνητῶν; ἄρτι γιγνώσκεις τόδε, ὡς πᾶς τις αὑτὸν τοῦ πέλας μᾶλλον φιλεῖ, οἳ μὲν δικαίως, οἳ δὲ καὶ κέρδους χάριν, εἰ τούσδε γ' εὐνῆς εἵνεκ' οὐ στέργει πατήρ.	**TUTOR** Who isn't? Are you only now finding out that everyone loves himself more than his neighbor—some with good reason, some for profit too—when their father doesn't love these boys, for the sake of a bed?
89	**NURSE** ἴτ', εὖ γὰρ ἔσται, δωμάτων ἔσω, τέκνα. σὺ δ' ὡς μάλιστα τούσδ' ἐρημώσας ἔχε καὶ μὴ πέλαζε μητρὶ δυσθυμουμένῃ. ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον ὄμμα νιν ταυρουμένην τοῖσδ' ὥς τι δρασείουσαν· οὐδὲ παύσεται χόλου, σάφ' οἶδα, πρὶν κατασκῆψαί τινα. ἐχθρούς γε μέντοι, μὴ φίλους, δράσειέ τι.	**NURSE** Go inside, children; everything will be all right. And you, keep them as far away as you can, and don't let them near their mother while she's in this dark mood. I've already seen her eyeing them like a bull, as if she meant to do something. She won't let go of her anger, I know it, until she has struck someone down. Let it be her enemies she does something to, though, not her own!
95	**MEDEA** ἰώ,	**MEDEA** Oh!
96	δύστανος ἐγὼ μελέα τε πόνων, / ἰώ μοί μοι, πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμαν;	Wretched me, so miserable in my suffering! Oh, oh, oh—if only I could die!
98	**NURSE** τόδ' ἐκεῖνο, φίλοι παῖδες· μήτηρ κινεῖ κραδίαν, κινεῖ δὲ χόλον. σπεύδετε θᾶσσον δώματος εἴσω, καὶ μὴ πελάσητ' ὄμματος ἐγγύς, μηδὲ προσέλθητ', ἀλλὰ φυλάσσεσθ' ἄγριον ἦθος στυγεράν τε φύσιν φρενὸς αὐθάδους. ἴτε νῦν χωρεῖθ' ὡς τάχος εἴσω.	**NURSE** There it is, dear children: your mother is stirring up her heart, stirring up her anger. Hurry inside the house, quickly, don't go where she can see you, don't go near her. Beware of her savage temper, the hateful nature of that stubborn mind. Go now, get inside as fast as you can.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	δῆλον δ' ἀρχῆς ἐξαιρόμενον νέφος οἰμωγῆς ὡς τάχ' ἀνάψει μείζονι θυμῷ· τί ποτ' ἐργάσεται μεγαλόσπλαγχνος δυσκατάπαυστος ψυχὴ δηχθεῖσα κακοῖσιν;	It's clear this cloud of lament rising from its first beginnings will soon catch fire with greater passion. What will it do, that proud, unstoppable soul, stung by its wrongs?
110	**MEDEA** αἰαῖ, ἔπαθον τλάμων ἔπαθον μεγάλων ἄξι' ὀδυρμῶν· ὦ κατάρατοι παῖδες ὄλοισθε στυγερᾶς ματρὸς σὺν πατρί, καὶ πᾶς δόμος ἔρροι.	**MEDEA** Ah, ah! I have suffered, wretched, I have suffered things that call for great lament! You cursed children of a hateful mother, die, you and your father, and let the whole house go to ruin!
115	**NURSE** ἰώ μοί μοι, ἰὼ τλήμων. τί δέ σοι παῖδες πατρὸς ἀμπλακίας μετέχουσι; τί τούσδ' ἔχθεις; οἴμοι, τέκνα, μή τι πάθηθ' ὡς ὑπεραλγῶ. δεινὰ τυράννων λήματα καί πως ὀλίγ' ἀρχόμενοι πολλὰ κρατοῦντες χαλεπῶς ὀργὰς μεταβάλλουσιν. τὸ γὰρ εἰθίσθαι ζῆν ἐπ' ἴσοισιν κρεῖσσον· ἐμοὶ γοῦν, εἰ μὴ μεγάλως, ὀχυρῶς γ' εἴη καταγηράσκειν. τῶν γὰρ μετρίων πρῶτα μὲν εἰπεῖν τοὔνομα νικᾷ, χρῆσθαί τε μακρῷ λῷστα βροτοῖσιν· τὰ δ' ὑπερβάλλοντ' οὐδένα καιρὸν δύναται θνητοῖς· μείζους δ' ἄτας, ὅταν ὀργισθῇ δαίμων, οἴκοις ἀπέδωκεν.	**NURSE** Oh, oh, oh! Oh, poor thing! Why should your children share their father's wrongdoing? Why do you hate them? Oh, children, I'm sick with fear that something will happen to you. Royal tempers are terrible: ruled in little, ruling over much, they're slow to change their moods. Being used to living among equals is better. For me, at least, let me grow old in safety, if not in greatness. For moderation—even to speak its name wins the prize, and to live by it is by far the best for mortals. But excess brings no good to human beings. It pays back greater ruin to houses whenever a god is angered.

PARODOS

Corinthian women gather at the house, and Medea's cries and the Nurse's fears answer them.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
132	**CHORUS** ἔκλυον φωνάν, ἔκλυον δὲ βοὰν τᾶς δυστάνου Κολχίδος, οὐδέ πω ἤπιος· ἀλλά, γεραιά, λέξον· ἐπ' ἀμφιπύλου γὰρ ἔσω μελάθρου γόον ἔκλυον· οὐδὲ συνήδομαι, ὦ γύναι, ἄλγεσι δώματος, ἐπεί μοι φίλον κέκρανται.	**CHORUS** I heard the voice, I heard the cry of the unhappy woman from Colchis. Is she still not calm? Old woman, tell us. I heard her weeping inside the double-gated house. I take no pleasure, lady, in the sorrows of this house, for I've come to love it.
139	**NURSE** οὐκ εἰσὶ δόμοι· φροῦδα γὰρ ἤδη τάδ'· ὃ μὲν γὰρ ἔχει λέκτρα τυράννων, ἣ δ' ἐν θαλάμοις τήκει βιοτὴν	**NURSE** There is no house. It's gone, all of it. He has a royal bed, and she, my mistress, wastes her life away in her

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	δέσποινα, φίλων οὐδενὸς οὐδὲν παραθαλπομένη φρένα μύθοις.	room, and no word from any friend brings any warmth to her heart.
143	**MEDEA** αἰαῖ, διά μου κεφαλᾶς φλὸξ οὐρανία βαίη· τί δέ μοι ζῆν ἔτι κέρδος; φεῦ φεῦ· θανάτῳ καταλυσαίμαν βιοτὰν στυγερὰν προλιποῦσα.	**MEDEA** Ah, ah! Let fire from heaven strike through my head! What good is living to me now? Oh, oh! Let me find my rest in death and leave this hateful life behind!
148	**CHORUS** ἄιες, ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ γᾶ καὶ φῶς, ἀχὰν οἵαν ἁ δύστανος μέλπει νύμφα; τίς σοί ποτε τᾶς ἁπλάτου κοίτας ἔρος, ὦ ματαία, σπεύσει θανάτου τελευτάν; μηδὲν τόδε λίσσου. εἰ δὲ σὸς πόσις καινὰ λέχη σεβίζει, κείνῳ τόδε μὴ χαράσσου· Ζεύς σοι τάδε συνδικήσει. μὴ λίαν τάκου δυρομένα σὸν εὐνάταν.	**CHORUS** Do you hear, Zeus, Earth and Light, the cry, the song of grief the unhappy bride is singing? What longing, foolish woman, for that unapproachable bed will rush you on to death, the end? Don't pray for that. If your husband worships a new bed, don't let it make you rage at him. Zeus will take up your cause. Don't waste away like this, mourning your husband.
160	**MEDEA** ὦ μεγάλα Θέμι καὶ πότνι' Ἄρτεμι, λεύσσεθ' ἃ πάσχω, μεγάλοις ὅρκοις ἐνδησαμένα τὸν κατάρατον πόσιν; ὅν ποτ' ἐγὼ νύμφαν τ' ἐσίδοιμ' αὐτοῖς μελάθροις διακναιομένους, οἵ γ' ἐμὲ πρόσθεν τολμῶσ' ἀδικεῖν. ὦ πάτερ, ὦ πόλις, ὧν ἀπενάσθην αἰσχρῶς τὸν ἐμὸν κτείνασα κάσιν.	**MEDEA** Great Themis, lady Artemis, do you see what I suffer—I who bound my cursed husband with great oaths? Oh, to see him and his bride one day ground to pieces, house and all, for daring to wrong me first, unprovoked! Father! My city! I left you in shame, when I killed my own brother.[2]
168	**NURSE** κλύεθ' οἷα λέγει κἀπιβοᾶται Θέμιν εὐκταίαν Ζῆνά θ', ὃς ὅρκων θνητοῖς ταμίας νενόμισται; οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως ἔν τινι μικρῷ δέσποινα χόλον καταπαύσει.	**NURSE** Do you hear what she says, how she calls on Themis, who hears prayers, and on Zeus, whom mortals hold the keeper of oaths? There's no way my mistress will let her anger end in something small.
173	**CHORUS** πῶς ἂν ἐς ὄψιν τὰν ἁμετέραν ἔλθοι μύθων τ' αὐδαθέντων δέξαιτ' ὀμφάν, εἴ πως βαρύθυμον ὀργὰν καὶ λῆμα φρενῶν μεθείη. μήτοι τό γ' ἐμὸν πρόθυμον φίλοισιν ἀπέστω. ἀλλὰ βᾶσά νιν δεῦρο πόρευσον οἴκων ἔξω, φίλα καὶ τάδ' αὔδα· σπεῦσον πρίν τι κακῶσαι τοὺς εἴσω· πένθος γὰρ μεγάλως τόδ' ὁρμᾶται.	**CHORUS** If only she would come where we can see her and take to heart the sound of the words we speak—/ maybe she would let go of her heavy anger, the fury in her mind. May my goodwill never fail my friends! Go, then, bring her out of the house, and tell her this: we too are her friends.

2 Medea killed her brother Apsyrtus during her flight with Jason, to hold up her father's pursuit.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		Hurry, before she harms those inside. This grief of hers is surging on with terrible force.
185	**NURSE** δράσω τάδ'· ἀτὰρ φόβος εἰ πείσω δέσποιναν ἐμήν· μόχθου δὲ χάριν τήνδ' ἐπιδώσω. καίτοι τοκάδος δέργμα λεαίνης ἀποταυροῦται δμωσίν, ὅταν τις μῦθον προφέρων πέλας ὁρμηθῇ. σκαιοὺς δὲ λέγων κοὐδέν τι σοφοὺς τοὺς πρόσθε βροτοὺς οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοις, οἵτινες ὕμνους ἐπὶ μὲν θαλίαις ἐπί τ' εἰλαπίναις καὶ παρὰ δείπνοις ἡῦροντο βίου τερπνὰς ἀκοάς·	**NURSE** I'll do it. But I'm afraid I won't persuade my mistress. Still, I'll take on the task as a favor to you. And yet she glares at her servants like a bull, like a lioness with cubs, whenever someone comes near with something to say. You wouldn't be wrong to call the people of old clumsy, and not clever at all: they invented songs for festivals, for banquets and for dinners, sweet things for life to listen to.
195	στυγίους δὲ βροτῶν οὐδεὶς λύπας ηὕρετο μούσῃ καὶ πολυχόρδοις ᾠδαῖς παύειν, ἐξ ὧν θάνατοι δειναί τε τύχαι σφάλλουσι δόμους. καίτοι τάδε μὲν κέρδος ἀκεῖσθαι μολπαῖσι βροτούς· ἵνα δ' εὔδειπνοι δαῖτες, τί μάτην τείνουσι βοήν; τὸ παρὸν γὰρ ἔχει τέρψιν ἀφ' αὑτοῦ δαιτὸς πλήρωμα βροτοῖσιν.	But no mortal ever found a way with music and many-stringed songs to stop the hateful griefs that bring down houses with deaths and terrible misfortunes. And yet to heal these things with songs would be gain for mortals. Where the feasting is rich, why strain their voices for nothing? The fullness of the feast itself gives mortals all the pleasure they need.
204	**CHORUS** ἰαχὰν ἄιον πολύστονον γόων, λιγυρὰ δ' ἄχεα μογερὰ βοᾷ τὸν ἐν λέχει προδόταν κακόνυμφον· θεοκλυτεῖ δ' ἄδικα παθοῦσα τὰν Ζανὸς ὁρκίαν Θέμιν, ἅ νιν ἔβασεν Ἑλλάδ' ἐς ἀντίπορον δι' ἅλα νύχιον ἐφ' ἁλμυρὰν πόντου κλῆδ' ἀπέραντον.	**CHORUS** I heard a cry thick with groans and weeping; shrill and piercing she cries out her painful grief at the traitor to her bed, the faithless husband. Wronged, she calls the gods to witness, Themis of oaths, Zeus's Themis, who brought her over to Greece across the water, through the night sea, to the salt gateway of the endless deep.

FIRST EPISODE

Medea speaks on the lot of women; Creon banishes her but grants one day; she plans murder.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
214	**MEDEA** Κορίνθιαι γυναῖκες, ἐξῆλθον δόμων, μή μοί τι μέμψησθ'· οἶδα γὰρ πολλοὺς βροτῶν σεμνοὺς γεγῶτας, τοὺς μὲν ὀμμάτων ἄπο, τοὺς δ' ἐν θυραίοις· οἳ δ' ἀφ' ἡσύχου ποδὸς δύσκλειαν ἐκτήσαντο καὶ ῥᾳθυμίαν. δίκη γὰρ οὐκ ἔνεστιν ὀφθαλμοῖς βροτῶν, ὅστις πρὶν ἀνδρὸς σπλάγχνον ἐκμαθεῖν σαφῶς στυγεῖ δεδορκώς, οὐδὲν ἠδικημένος. χρὴ δὲ ξένον μὲν κάρτα προσχωρεῖν πόλει·	**MEDEA** Women of Corinth, I've come out of the house so that you won't find fault with me. I know many people who have been thought proud, some because they keep out of sight, others out in public; and those who go about quietly have earned a bad name for indifference. There's no justice in human eyes: before someone has clearly learned what's in a man's heart, he hates him on sight, though he's suffered no wrong from him. A for-

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	οὐδ' ἀστὸν ἦνεσ' ὅστις αὐθάδης γεγὼς πικρὸς πολίταις ἐστὶν ἀμαθίας ὕπο.	eigner, of course, must fit in completely with the city. But I don't approve even of a citizen who is self-willed and offends his fellow citizens through lack of sense.
225	ἐμοὶ δ' ἄελπτον πρᾶγμα προσπεσὸν τόδε ψυχὴν διέφθαρκ'· οἴχομαι δὲ καὶ βίου χάριν μεθεῖσα κατθανεῖν χρῄζω, φίλαι. ἐν ᾧ γὰρ ἦν μοι πάντα, γιγνώσκεις καλῶς, κάκιστος ἀνδρῶν ἐκβέβηχ' οὑμὸς πόσις. πάντων δ' ὅσ' ἔστ' ἔμψυχα καὶ γνώμην ἔχει γυναῖκές ἐσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν· ἃς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ πόσιν πρίασθαι δεσπότην τε σώματος λαβεῖν· κακοῦ γὰρ τοῦτό γ' ἄλγιον κακόν· κἀν τῷδ' ἀγὼν μέγιστος, ἢ κακὸν λαβεῖν ἢ χρηστόν. οὐ γὰρ εὐκλεεῖς ἀπαλλαγαὶ γυναιξίν, οὐδ' οἷόν τ' ἀνήνασθαι πόσιν.	But this blow has fallen on me out of nowhere and has destroyed my spirit. I'm finished. I've lost all joy in life, and I want to die, my friends. The man who was everything to me—you know it well—my husband, has turned out to be the worst of men. Of all the creatures that have life and mind, we women are the most wretched breed. First we have to buy a husband at an extravagant price, and take a master for our bodies; and that second evil is more painful than the first. And here's the biggest gamble: whether we get a bad one or a good one. Divorce does a woman's reputation no good, and she can't refuse her husband.
238	εἰς καινὰ δ' ἦθη καὶ νόμους ἀφιγμένην δεῖ μάντιν εἶναι, μὴ μαθοῦσαν οἴκοθεν, ὅτῳ μάλιστα χρήσεται συνευνέτῃ. κἂν μὲν τάδ' ἡμῖν ἐκπονουμέναισιν εὖ πόσις ξυνοικῇ μὴ βίᾳ φέρων ζυγόν, ζηλωτὸς αἰών· εἰ δὲ μή, θανεῖν χρεών. ἀνὴρ δ' ὅταν τοῖς ἔνδον ἄχθηται ξυνών, ἔξω μολὼν ἔπαυσε καρδίαν ἄσης, ἢ πρὸς φίλον τιν' ἢ πρὸς ἥλικας τραπείς· ἡμῖν δ' ἀνάγκη πρὸς μίαν ψυχὴν βλέπειν.	She arrives among new ways and customs, and she has to be a prophet, since she hasn't learned it at home, to know how best to manage the man she shares a bed with. If we work this out well and our husband lives with us and doesn't chafe at the yoke, life is enviable. If not, death is better. When a man gets tired of being with the people at home, he goes out and relieves the weariness in his heart, turning to some friend or to men his own age. We have to look to one soul alone.
248	λέγουσι δ' ἡμᾶς ὡς ἀκίνδυνον βίον ζῶμεν κατ' οἴκους, οἳ δὲ μάρνανται δορί· κακῶς φρονοῦντες· ὡς τρὶς ἂν παρ' ἀσπίδα στῆναι θέλοιμ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ τεκεῖν ἅπαξ. ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸς πρὸς σὲ κἄμ' ἥκει λόγος· σοὶ μὲν πόλις γὰρ ἔστι καὶ πατρὸς δόμοι βίου τ' ὄνησις καὶ φίλων συνουσία, ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος ἄπολις οὖσ' ὑβρίζομαι πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐκ γῆς βαρβάρου λελῃσμένη, οὐ μητέρ', οὐκ ἀδελφόν, οὐχὶ συγγενῆ μεθορμίσασθαι τῆσδ' ἔχουσα συμφορᾶς.	They say we live a life free from danger at home, while they fight with the spear. How wrong they are! I'd rather stand in the battle line three times than give birth once. But the same argument doesn't apply to you and to me. You have a city here and your father's home, the comforts of life and the company of friends. I'm alone, without a city, and I'm treated with contempt by my husband. I was carried off as plunder from a foreign land, and I have no mother, no brother, no relative to give me a harbor from this disaster.
259	τοσοῦτον οὖν σου τυγχάνειν βουλήσομαι, ἤν μοι πόρος τις μηχανή τ' ἐξευρεθῇ πόσιν δίκην τῶνδ' ἀντιτίσασθαι κακῶν τὸν δόντα τ' αὐτῷ θυγατέρ' ἥν τ' ἐγήματο, σιγᾶν. γυνὴ γὰρ τἄλλα μὲν φόβου πλέα, κακὴ δ' ἐς ἀλκὴν καὶ σίδηρον εἰσορᾶν· ὅταν δ' ἐς εὐνὴν ἠδικημένη κυρῇ, οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη φρὴν μιαιφονωτέρα.	So this is all I'll ask of you. If I find some way, some means, of making my husband pay for these wrongs—and the man who gave him his daughter, and the woman he married—keep silent. In everything else a woman is full of fear, a coward when it comes to fighting or looking at steel. But when she is wronged in her marriage bed, there's no mind more bloodthirsty.
267	**CHORUS** δρᾶσον τάδ'· ἐνδίκως γὰρ ἐκτίσει πόσιν, Μήδεια. πενθεῖν δ' οὔ σε θαυμάζω τύχας.	**CHORUS** Do it. You'll be right to make your husband pay, Medea, and I'm not surprised you grieve

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ὁρῶ δὲ καὶ Κρέοντα τῆσδ’ ἄνακτα γῆς στείχοντα, καινῶν ἄγγελον βουλευμάτων.	over what’s happened to you. But I see Creon, too, the lord of this land, coming this way, with news of some new decision.
271	**CREON** σὲ τὴν σκυθρωπὸν καὶ πόσει θυμουμένην, Μήδειαν, εἶπον τῆσδε γῆς ἔξω περᾶν φυγάδα λαβοῦσαν δισσὰ σὺν σαυτῇ τέκνα, καὶ μή τι μέλλειν· ὡς ἐγὼ βραβεὺς λόγου τοῦδ’ εἰμὶ κοὐκ ἄπειμι πρὸς δόμους πάλιν, πρὶν ἄν σε γαίας τερμόνων ἔξω βάλω.	**CREON** You there, with your scowling face and your anger at your husband—Medea, I order you to leave this land as an exile, and take your two children with you, and don’t delay. I’m here to see this order carried out, and I won’t go back home until I’ve thrown you out beyond the borders of the country.
277	**MEDEA** αἰαῖ· πανώλης ἡ τάλαιν’ ἀπόλλυμαι. ἐχθροὶ γὰρ ἐξιᾶσι πάντα δὴ κάλων, κοὐκ ἔστιν ἄτης εὐπρόσοιστος ἔκβασις. ἐρήσομαι δὲ καὶ κακῶς πάσχουσ’ ὅμως, τίνος μ’ ἕκατι γῆς ἀποστέλλεις, Κρέον;	**MEDEA** Ah! I’m lost, utterly ruined. My enemies are bearing down on me under full sail, and there’s no easy landing to escape this disaster. Still, badly treated as I am, I’ll ask you: why are you sending me out of the country, Creon?
282	**CREON** δέδοικά σ’, οὐδὲν δεῖ παραμπέχειν λόγους, μή μοί τι δράσῃς παῖδ’ ἀνήκεστον κακόν. συμβάλλεται δὲ πολλὰ τοῦδε δείματος· σοφὴ πέφυκας καὶ κακῶν πολλῶν ἴδρις, λυπεῖ δὲ λέκτρων ἀνδρὸς ἐστερημένη. κλύω δ’ ἀπειλεῖν σ’, ὡς ἀπαγγέλλουσί μοι, τὸν δόντα καὶ γήμαντα καὶ γαμουμένην δράσειν τι. ταῦτ’ οὖν πρὶν παθεῖν φυλάξομαι. κρεῖσσον δέ μοι νῦν πρὸς σ’ ἀπεχθέσθαι, γύναι, ἢ μαλθακισθέντ’ ὕστερον μεταστένειν.	**CREON** I’m afraid of you—there’s no need to dress it up—afraid you’ll do my daughter some harm that can’t be undone. Plenty of things feed this fear. You’re clever by nature and skilled in many evil arts, and you’re smarting at the loss of your husband’s bed. I hear that you’re making threats, so I’m told, to do something to the man who gave the bride, the groom and the bride herself. So I’ll take precautions before anything happens to me. Better to be hated by you now, lady, than to go soft and groan for it later.
291	**MEDEA** φεῦ φεῦ· οὐ νῦν με πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις, Κρέον, ἔβλαψε δόξα μεγάλα τ’ εἴργασται κακά. χρὴ δ’ οὔποθ’ ὅστις ἀρτίφρων πέφυκ’ ἀνὴρ παῖδας περισσῶς ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι σοφούς· χωρὶς γὰρ ἄλλης ἧς ἔχουσιν ἀργίας φθόνον πρὸς ἀστῶν ἀλφάνουσι δυσμενῆ. σκαιοῖσι μὲν γὰρ καινὰ προσφέρων σοφὰ δόξεις ἀχρεῖος κοὐ σοφὸς πεφυκέναι· τῶν δ’ αὖ δοκούντων εἰδέναι τι ποικίλον κρείσσων νομισθεὶς λυπρὸς ἐν πόλει φανεῖ.	**MEDEA** Ah, ah. Not for the first time, Creon, but many times, my reputation has hurt me and done me great harm. No man with any sense should ever have his children taught to be exceptionally clever. Quite apart from being called idle, they earn the hostile envy of their fellow citizens. Bring new cleverness to fools, and you’ll seem useless, not clever. And if people think you’re superior to those who are supposed to know something subtle, the city will find you offensive.
302	ἐγὼ δὲ καὐτὴ τῆσδε κοινωνῶ τύχης. σοφὴ γὰρ οὖσα, τοῖς μέν εἰμ’ ἐπίφθονος, τοῖς δ’ ἡσυχαία, τοῖς δὲ θατέρου τρόπου, τοῖσδ’ αὖ προσάντης· εἰμὶ δ’ οὐκ ἄγαν σοφή. σὺ δ’ αὖ φοβεῖ με· μή τι πλημμελὲς πάθῃς; οὐχ ὧδ’ ἔχει μοι, μὴ τρέσῃς ἡμᾶς, Κρέον, ὥστ’ εἰς τυράννους ἄνδρας ἐξαμαρτάνειν. τί γὰρ σύ μ’ ἠδίκηκας; ἐξέδου κόρην ὅτῳ σε θυμὸς ἦγεν. ἀλλ’ ἐμὸν πόσιν μισῶ· σὺ δ’, οἶμαι, σωφρονῶν ἔδρας τάδε.	I share this fate myself. Because I’m clever, some envy me, others find me retiring, others the opposite, and others again find me a nuisance. And I’m not all that clever. And you—you’re afraid of me? That you might suffer something unpleasant? Don’t be afraid of me, Creon. I’m in no position to offend against kings. Besides, what wrong have you done me? You gave your daughter to the man your heart chose. It’s my husband I hate. You, I think, acted sensibly in this.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
312	καὶ νῦν τὸ μὲν σὸν οὐ φθονῶ καλῶς ἔχειν. νυμφεύετ', εὖ πράσσοιτε· τήνδε δὲ χθόνα ἐᾶτέ μ' οἰκεῖν· καὶ γὰρ ἠδικημένοι σιγησόμεσθα, κρεισσόνων νικώμενοι.	And I don't begrudge you your good fortune now. Go ahead with the marriage, and good luck to you all. But let me live in this land. Though I've been wronged, I'll keep quiet, beaten by those who are stronger.
316	**CREON** λέγεις ἀκοῦσαι μαλθάκ', ἀλλ' εἴσω φρενῶν ὀρρωδία μοι μή τι βουλεύῃς κακόν, τοσῷδε δ' ἧσσον ἢ πάρος πέποιθά σοι· γυνὴ γὰρ ὀξύθυμος, ὡς δ' αὔτως ἀνήρ, ῥᾴων φυλάσσειν ἢ σιωπηλὸς σοφός. ἀλλ' ἔξιθ' ὡς τάχιστα, μὴ λόγους λέγε· ὡς ταῦτ' ἄραρε, κοὐκ ἔχεις τέχνην ὅπως μενεῖς παρ' ἡμῖν οὖσα δυσμενὴς ἐμοί.	**CREON** What you say sounds gentle enough, but deep in my mind I dread that you're plotting some harm, and I trust you even less than before. A hot-tempered woman—and the same goes for a man—is easier to guard against than a clever one who keeps quiet. Out, as fast as you can; no speeches. It's settled, and you have no way of staying among us, since you're hostile to me.
324	**MEDEA** μή, πρός σε γονάτων τῆς τε νεογάμου κόρης.	**MEDEA** No, I beg you, by your knees and by your newly married daughter!
325	**CREON** λόγους ἀναλοῖς· οὐ γὰρ οὖν πείσεις ποτέ.	**CREON** You're wasting words. You'll never persuade me.
326	**MEDEA** ἀλλ' ἐξελᾷς με κοὐδὲν αἰδέσει λιτάς;	**MEDEA** So you'll drive me out, and show no respect for my prayers?
327	**CREON** φιλῶ γὰρ οὐ σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ δόμους ἐμούς.	**CREON** Yes. I don't love you more than my own house.
328	**MEDEA** ὦ πατρίς, ὥς σου κάρτα νῦν μνείαν ἔχω.	**MEDEA** My country, how I think of you now!
329	**CREON** πλὴν γὰρ τέκνων ἔμοιγε φίλτατον πόλις.	**CREON** Yes—after my children, my city's dearest to me too.
330	**MEDEA** φεῦ φεῦ, βροτοῖς ἔρωτες ὡς κακὸν μέγα.	**MEDEA** Ah, ah—what a curse love is for mortals!
331	**CREON** ὅπως ἄν, οἶμαι, καὶ παραστῶσιν τύχαι.	**CREON** That depends, I imagine, on how fortune goes along with it.
332	**MEDEA** Ζεῦ, μὴ λάθοι σε τῶνδ' ὃς αἴτιος κακῶν.	**MEDEA** Zeus, don't let the man who caused all this escape your notice!
333	**CREON** ἔρπ' ὦ ματαία, καί μ' ἀπάλλαξον πόνων.	**CREON** Go, you foolish woman, and spare me the trouble.
334	**MEDEA** πονοῦμεν ἡμεῖς κοὐ πόνων κεχρήμεθα.	**MEDEA** I'm the one in trouble; I've no shortage of it.
335	**CREON** τάχ' ἐξ ὀπαδῶν χειρὸς ὠσθήσει βίᾳ.	**CREON** In a moment my men will throw you out by force.
336	**MEDEA** μὴ δῆτα τοῦτό γ', ἀλλά σ' αἰτοῦμαι, Κρέον —	**MEDEA** No, not that! But I beg you, Creon —
337	**CREON** ὄχλον παρέξεις, ὡς ἔοικας, ὦ γύναι.	**CREON** You're going to make a scene, it seems, Medea.
338	**MEDEA** φευξούμεθ'· οὐ τοῦθ' ἱκέτευσα σοῦ τυχεῖν.	

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		MEDEA I'll go into exile. That isn't what I was begging you for.
339	**CREON** τί δ' αὖ βιάζει κοὐκ ἀπαλλάσσει χθονός;	**CREON** Then why are you still pressing me, instead of leaving the country?
340	**MEDEA** μίαν με μεῖναι τήνδ' ἔασον ἡμέραν καὶ ξυμπερᾶναι φροντίδ' ᾗ φευξούμεθα, παισίν τ' ἀφορμὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἐπεὶ πατὴρ οὐδὲν προτιμᾷ μηχανήσασθαι τέκνοις. οἴκτειρε δ' αὐτούς· καὶ σύ τοι παίδων πατὴρ πέφυκας· εἰκὸς δ' ἐστὶν εὔνοιάν σ' ἔχειν. τοὐμοῦ γὰρ οὔ μοι φροντίς, εἰ φευξούμεθα, κείνους δὲ κλαίω συμφορᾷ κεχρημένους.	**MEDEA** Let me stay just this one day, to think through where we'll go in exile and how to provide for my children, since their father doesn't care to do anything for them. Pity them. You're a father of children yourself, after all; it's only natural that you should feel kindly toward them. I'm not worried for myself, about going into exile. It's them I weep for, caught up in this disaster.
348	**CREON** ἥκιστα τοὐμὸν λῆμ' ἔφυ τυραννικόν, αἰδούμενος δὲ πολλὰ δὴ διέφθορα· καὶ νῦν ὁρῶ μὲν ἐξαμαρτάνων, γύναι, ὅμως δὲ τεύξει τοῦδε· προυννέπω δέ σοι, εἴ σ' ἡ 'πιοῦσα λαμπὰς ὄψεται θεοῦ καὶ παῖδας ἐντὸς τῆσδε τερμόνων χθονός, θανεῖ· λέλεκται μῦθος ἀψευδὴς ὅδε. νῦν δ', εἰ μένειν δεῖ, μίμν' ἐφ' ἡμέραν μίαν· οὐ γάρ τι δράσαις δεινὸν ὧν φόβος μ' ἔχει.	**CREON** My temper is anything but a tyrant's, and by giving way to scruples I've ruined a great deal. Even now I can see I'm making a mistake, lady, but you'll have your way all the same. But I warn you: if the god's torch, as it rises tomorrow, sees you and your children inside the borders of this land, you will die. I've said it, and it's no lie. Now, if you must stay, stay for one day. You can't do any of the terrible things I fear in that time.
357	**CHORUS** δύστανε γύναι, φεῦ φεῦ, μελέα τῶν σῶν ἀχέων. ποῖ ποτε τρέψει; τίνα προξενίαν ἢ δόμον ἢ χθόνα σωτῆρα κακῶν ἐξευρήσεις; ὡς εἰς ἄπορόν σε κλύδωνα θεός, Μήδεια, κακῶν ἐπόρευσε.	**CHORUS** Unhappy woman, ah, ah, wretched in your sorrows! Where will you turn? What welcome, what house or land will you find to save you from your troubles? Medea, into what a surging sea of troubles, with no way through, a god has driven you!
364	**MEDEA** κακῶς πέπρακται πανταχῇ· τίς ἀντερεῖ; ἀλλ' οὔτι ταύτῃ ταῦτα, μὴ δοκεῖτέ πω. ἔτ' εἶσ' ἀγῶνες τοῖς νεωστὶ νυμφίοις καὶ τοῖσι κηδεύσασιν οὐ σμικροὶ πόνοι. δοκεῖς γὰρ ἄν με τόνδε θωπεῦσαί ποτε, εἰ μή τι κερδαίνουσαν ἢ τεχνωμένην; οὐδ' ἂν προσεῖπον οὐδ' ἂν ἡψάμην χεροῖν. ὃ δ' εἰς τοσοῦτον μωρίας ἀφίκετο ὥστ' ἐξὸν αὐτῷ τἄμ' ἐλεῖν βουλεύματα γῆς ἐκβαλόντι, τήνδ' ἐφῆκεν ἡμέραν μεῖναί μ', ἐν ᾗ τρεῖς τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν νεκροὺς θήσω, πατέρα τε καὶ κόρην πόσιν τ' ἐμόν.	**MEDEA** Things have gone badly on every side; who would deny it? But it won't end like this, don't think so yet. There are still ordeals ahead for the newlyweds, and no small troubles for the ones who made the match. Do you think I would ever have fawned on that man if I weren't gaining something by it, or scheming? I wouldn't even have spoken to him, or touched him with my hands. But he has gone so far in his folly that, when he could have wrecked my plans by throwing me out of the country, he has let me stay for this one day. And in it I will make corpses of three of my enemies: the father, the girl and my husband.
376	πολλὰς δ' ἔχουσα θανασίμους αὐτοῖς ὁδούς, οὐκ οἶδ' ὁποίᾳ πρῶτον ἐγχειρῶ, φίλαι, πότερον ὑφάψω δῶμα νυμφικὸν πυρί, ἢ θηκτὸν ὦσω φάσγανον δι' ἥπατος,	I have many ways of killing them, and I don't know which to try first, my friends. Shall I set fire to the bridal house? Or slip silently into the house where the bed is spread and drive a sharpened

GREEK	ENGLISH
σιγῇ δόμους εἰσβᾶσ' ἵν' ἔστρωται λέχος. ἀλλ' ἕν τί μοι πρόσαντες· εἰ ληφθήσομαι δόμους ὑπερβαίνουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη, θανοῦσα θήσω τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐχθροῖς γέλων. κράτιστα τὴν εὐθεῖαν, ᾗ πεφύκαμεν σοφαὶ μάλιστα, φαρμάκοις αὐτοὺς ἑλεῖν.	sword through the liver? But there's one thing against me. If I'm caught entering the house and scheming, I'll die and give my enemies something to laugh at. Best to take the straight road, the one we're cleverest at by nature: get them with poison.
εἶεν· καὶ δὴ τεθνᾶσι· τίς με δέξεται πόλις; τίς γῆν ἄσυλον καὶ δόμους ἐχεγγύους ξένος παρασχὼν ῥύσεται τοὐμὸν δέμας; οὐκ ἔστι. μείνασ' οὖν ἔτι σμικρὸν χρόνον, ἢν μέν τις ἡμῖν πύργος ἀσφαλὴς φανῇ, δόλῳ μέτειμι τόνδε καὶ σιγῇ φόνον· ἢν δ' ἐξελαύνῃ ξυμφορά μ' ἀμήχανος, αὐτὴ ξίφος λαβοῦσα, κεἰ μέλλω θανεῖν, κτενῶ σφε, τόλμης δ' εἶμι πρὸς τὸ καρτερόν.	So. Suppose they're dead. What city will take me in? What host will offer me a land of refuge and a house I can rely on, and protect me? There's none. So I'll wait a little longer. If some tower of safety appears for me, I'll go about this murder by trickery and in silence. But if some hopeless misfortune drives me out, I'll take the sword in my own hand and kill them, even if I'm going to die for it. I'll go to the very limit of daring.
οὐ γὰρ μὰ τὴν δέσποιναν ἣν ἐγὼ σέβω μάλιστα πάντων καὶ ξυνεργὸν εἰλόμην, Ἑκάτην μυχοῖς ναίουσαν ἑστίας ἐμῆς, χαίρων τις αὐτῶν τοὐμὸν ἀλγυνεῖ κέαρ. πικροὺς δ' ἐγώ σφιν καὶ λυγροὺς θήσω γάμους, πικρὸν δὲ κῆδος καὶ φυγὰς ἐμὰς χθονός. ἀλλ' εἶα· φείδου μηδὲν ὧν ἐπίστασαι, Μήδεια, βουλεύουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη· ἕρπ' εἰς τὸ δεινόν· νῦν ἀγὼν εὐψυχίας.	For by the mistress I revere above all others and have chosen as my helper, Hecate, who dwells in the inmost recesses of my hearth, not one of them will hurt my heart and get away happy. I'll make their marriage bitter and full of grief for them, bitter the alliance, and bitter my banishment from the land. Come on, Medea: hold back nothing you know as you plan and scheme. On to the terrible deed. Now it's a test of courage.[3]
ὁρᾷς ἃ πάσχεις; οὐ γέλωτα δεῖ σ' ὀφλεῖν τοῖς Σισυφείοις τοῖς τ' Ἰάσονος γάμοις, γεγῶσαν ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς Ἡλίου τ' ἄπο. ἐπίστασαι δέ· πρὸς δὲ καὶ πεφύκαμεν γυναῖκες εἰς μὲν ἔσθλ' ἀμηχανώταται, κακῶν δὲ πάντων τέκτονες σοφώταται.	You see what's being done to you. You mustn't become a laughingstock for this marriage of Jason's into the line of Sisyphus—you, a noble father's daughter, descended from the Sun. You have the skill. And besides, we women are born the most helpless at doing good, but the cleverest builders of every kind of evil.[4]

FIRST STASIMON

The Chorus sings that the world is turned around: now men break faith, and women will be honored.

GREEK	ENGLISH
CHORUS ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί, καὶ δίκα καὶ πάντα πάλιν στρέφεται. ἀνδράσι μὲν δόλιαι βουλαί, θεῶν δ' οὐκέτι πίστις ἄραρε. τὰν δ' ἐμὰν εὔκλειαν ἔχειν βιοτὰν στρέψουσι φᾶμαι· ἔρχεται τιμὰ γυναικείῳ γένει· οὐκέτι δυσκέλαδος φάμα γυναῖκας ἕξει. μοῦσαι δὲ παλαιγενέων λήξουσ' ἀοιδᾶν	**CHORUS** Back to their sources flow the sacred rivers, and justice and everything is turned around. It's men whose plans are treacherous; pledges sworn by the gods hold firm no longer. Report will turn, and give my life a good name.

3 Hecate, goddess of magic, ghosts and crossroads, was the special patron of sorceresses like Medea.
4 Sisyphus was a legendary king of Corinth, so the "line of Sisyphus" is Creon's royal house. Medea's father Aeetes was a son of the Sun.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	τὰν ἐμὰν ὑμνεῦσαι ἀπιστοσύναν. οὐ γὰρ ἐν ἁμετέρᾳ γνώμᾳ λύρας ὤπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδὰν Φοῖβος, ἀγήτωρ μελέων· ἐπεὶ ἀντάχησ' ἂν ὕμνον ἀρσένων γέννᾳ· μακρὸς δ' αἰὼν ἔχει πολλὰ μὲν ἁμετέραν ἀνδρῶν τε μοῖραν εἰπεῖν.	Honor is coming to the race of women; no more will ugly rumor hold women in its grip. The Muses of the old poets will stop singing of my faithlessness. For it was not on our minds that Phoebus, leader of songs, bestowed the lyre's inspired music; or I would have sung a hymn in answer to the race of men. The long ages have much to tell of our lot, and of men's.
432	σὺ δ' ἐκ μὲν οἴκων πατρίων ἔπλευσας μαινομένᾳ κραδίᾳ, διδύμας ὁρίσασα πόντου πέτρας· ἐπὶ δὲ ξένᾳ ναίεις χθονί, τᾶς ἀνάνδρου κοίτας ὀλέσασα λέκτρον, τάλαινα, φυγὰς δὲ χώρας ἄτιμος ἐλαύνει. βέβακε δ' ὅρκων χάρις, οὐδ' ἔτ' αἰδὼς Ἑλλάδι τᾷ μεγάλᾳ μένει, αἰθερία δ' ἀνέπτα. σοὶ δ' οὔτε πατρὸς δόμοι, δύστανε, μεθορμίσασθαι μόχθων πάρα, σῶν τε λέκτρων ἄλλα βασίλεια κρείσσων δόμοις ἐπανέστα.	You sailed from your father's house with a maddened heart, passing between the twin rocks of the sea. Now you live in a foreign land; you've lost your marriage, your bed left without a husband, poor woman, and you're driven out of the country, an exile, without honor. The grace of oaths is gone; shame no longer stays in great Greece but has flown off into the sky. You have no father's house, unhappy woman, to harbor you from your troubles, and another, a princess, mightier than you, has risen over the house in place of your bed.

SECOND EPISODE

Jason offers money for her exile; Medea recalls all she did for him, and they argue.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
446	**JASON** οὐ νῦν κατεῖδον πρῶτον ἀλλὰ πολλάκις τραχεῖαν ὀργὴν ὡς ἀμήχανον κακόν. σοὶ γὰρ παρὸν γῆν τήνδε καὶ δόμους ἔχειν κούφως φερούσῃ κρεισσόνων βουλεύματα, λόγων ματαίων εἵνεκ' ἐκπεσεῖ χθονός. κἀμοὶ μὲν οὐδὲν πρᾶγμα· μὴ παύσῃ ποτὲ λέγουσ' Ἰάσων ὡς κάκιστός ἐστ' ἀνήρ· ἃ δ' εἰς τυράννους ἐστί σοι λελεγμένα, πᾶν κέρδος ἡγοῦ ζημιουμένη φυγῇ.	**JASON** This isn't the first time—I've seen it many times before: what an impossible evil a fierce temper is. You could have kept this land and this house if you'd taken the decisions of those in power calmly. Instead, for the sake of foolish talk, you'll be thrown out of the country. To me it makes no difference: never stop saying Jason is the worst of men. But for what you've said against the royal family, count yourself lucky that your punishment is only exile.
455	κἀγὼ μὲν ἀεὶ βασιλέων θυμουμένων ὀργὰς ἀφῄρουν καί σ' ἐβουλόμην μένειν· σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνίεις μωρίας, λέγουσ' ἀεὶ κακῶς τυράννους· τοιγὰρ ἐκπεσεῖ χθονός. ὅμως δὲ κἀκ τῶνδ' οὐκ ἀπειρηκὼς φίλοις ἥκω, τὸ σὸν δὲ προσκοπούμενος, γύναι, ὡς μήτ' ἀχρήμων σὺν τέκνοισιν ἐκπέσῃς μήτ' ἐνδεής του. πόλλ' ἐφέλκεται φυγὴ	I was always trying to soothe the anger of the royal family when they were furious, and I wanted you to stay. But you wouldn't give up your folly, always speaking ill of the rulers. So you'll be thrown out of the country. Still, even after all this, I haven't given up on my own. I've come looking out for your interests, Medea, so that you won't be thrown out with the children without money, or short of

GREEK

κακὰ ξὺν αὐτῇ. καὶ γὰρ εἰ σύ με στυγεῖς,
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην σοὶ κακῶς φρονεῖν ποτε.

ENGLISH

anything. Exile drags many evils along with it. And even if you hate me, I could never wish you harm.

MEDEA ὦ παγκάκιστε, τοῦτο γάρ σ' εἰπεῖν ἔχω
γλώσσῃ μέγιστον εἰς ἀνανδρίαν κακόν,
ἦλθες πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἦλθες ἔχθιστος γεγώς;
θεοῖς τε κἀμοὶ παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένει;
οὗτοι θράσος τόδ' ἐστὶν οὐδ' εὐτολμία,
φίλους κακῶς δράσαντ' ἐναντίον βλέπειν,
ἀλλ' ἡ μεγίστη τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις νόσων
πασῶν, ἀναίδει'· εὖ δ' ἐποίησας μολών,
ἐγώ τε γὰρ λέξασα κουφισθήσομαι
ψυχὴν κακῶς σε καὶ σὺ λυπήσει κλύων.
ἐκ τῶν δὲ πρώτων πρῶτον ἄρξομαι λέγειν.

MEDEA You vilest of men! That's the worst word my tongue can find for your lack of manhood. You've come to us? You've come, when you've made yourself the bitterest enemy of the gods and of me and of the whole human race? This isn't boldness, or courage, to look your own people in the face after doing them harm. It's the worst of all the diseases human beings suffer from: shamelessness. But you did well to come. I'll lighten the weight on my soul by telling you what you are, and you'll be hurt to hear it. I'll begin at the very beginning.

ἔσωσά σ', ὡς ἴσασιν Ἑλλήνων ὅσοι
ταὐτὸν συνεισέβησαν Ἀργῷον σκάφος,
πεμφθέντα ταύρων πυρπνόων ἐπιστάτην
ζεύγλαισι καὶ σπεροῦντα θανάσιμον γύην·
δράκοντά θ', ὃς πάγχρυσον ἀμπέχων δέρας
σπείραις ἔσωζε πολυπλόκοις ἄυπνος ὤν,
κτείνασ' ἀνέσχον σοὶ φάος σωτήριον.
αὐτὴ δὲ πατέρα καὶ δόμους προδοῦσ' ἐμοὺς
τὴν Πηλιῶτιν εἰς Ἰωλκὸν ἱκόμην
σὺν σοί, πρόθυμος μᾶλλον ἢ σοφωτέρα,
Πελίαν τ' ἀπέκτειν', ὥσπερ ἄλγιστον θανεῖν,
παίδων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, πάντα δ' ἐξεῖλον φόβον.

I saved you, as every Greek who went aboard the Argo with you knows, when you were sent to master the fire-breathing bulls with the yoke and to sow the field of death. And the serpent that guarded the all-golden fleece, wrapped around it in its many twisting coils, never sleeping: I killed it, and held up for you the light of rescue. I myself betrayed my father and my home and came with you to Iolcus under Mount Pelion, more eager than clever. And I killed Pelias in the most painful way there is to die, at the hands of his own daughters, and rid you of every fear.[5]

καὶ ταῦθ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν, ὦ κάκιστ' ἀνδρῶν, παθὼν
προύδωκας ἡμᾶς, καινὰ δ' ἐκτήσω λέχη,
παίδων γεγώτων· εἰ γὰρ ἦσθ' ἄπαις ἔτι,
συγγνωστὸν ἦν σοι τοῦδ' ἐρασθῆναι λέχους.
ὅρκων δὲ φρούδη πίστις, οὐδ' ἔχω μαθεῖν
εἰ θεοὺς νομίζεις τοὺς τότ' οὐκ ἄρχειν ἔτι,
ἢ καινὰ κεῖσθαι θέσμι' ἀνθρώποις τὰ νῦν,
ἐπεὶ σύνοισθά γ' εἰς ἔμ' οὐκ εὔορκος ὤν.
φεῦ δεξιὰ χεὶρ ἧς σὺ πόλλ' ἐλαμβάνου,
καὶ τῶνδε γονάτων, ὡς μάτην κεχρώσμεθα
κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐλπίδων δ' ἡμάρτομεν.

And after all this from me, you worst of men, you betrayed us and got yourself a new bed, though we had children! If you were still childless, falling in love with this marriage would be forgivable. The faith of your oaths is gone. I can't make out whether you think the gods of those days no longer rule, or that new laws have been laid down for people now, since you know you've broken your oath to me. Ah, this right hand, which you clasped so often, and these knees: how pointless it was to be touched by a bad man, and how we were cheated of our hopes!

ἄγ', ὡς φίλῳ γὰρ ὄντι σοι κοινώσομαι,
δοκοῦσα μὲν τί πρός γε σοῦ πράξειν καλῶς;
ὅμως δ'· ἐρωτηθεὶς γὰρ αἰσχίων φανεῖ.
νῦν ποῖ τράπωμαι; πότερα πρὸς πατρὸς δόμους,
οὓς σοὶ προδοῦσα καὶ πάτραν ἀφικόμην;
ἢ πρὸς ταλαίνας Πελιάδας; καλῶς γ' ἂν οὖν
δέξαιντό μ' οἵκοις ὧν πατέρα κατέκτανον.

Come, I'll consult you as though you were a friend —not that I expect any good from you, of all people. Still, I will: questioned, you'll look even more shameful. Where am I to turn now? To my father's house, which I betrayed for you, along with my country, when I came here? Or to Pelias' poor daughters? They'd give me a fine welcome in

5 Medea persuaded Pelias' daughters that she could make their father young again if they cut him up and boiled him.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἔχει γὰρ οὕτω· τοῖς μὲν οἴκοθεν φίλοις ἐχθρὰ καθέστηχ', οὓς δέ μ' οὐκ ἐχρῆν κακῶς δρᾶν, σοὶ χάριν φέρουσα πολεμίους ἔχω.	their home, when I killed their father! This is how it stands. To my own people at home I've become an enemy, and those I should never have harmed I've made my enemies as a favor to you.
509	τοιγάρ με πολλαῖς μακαρίαν ἀν' Ἑλλάδα ἔθηκας ἀντὶ τῶνδε· θαυμαστὸν δέ σε ἔχω πόσιν καὶ σεπτὸν ἡ τάλαιν' ἐγώ, εἰ φεύξομαί γε γαῖαν ἐκβεβλημένη, φίλων ἔρημος, σὺν τέκνοις μόνη μόνοις, καλόν γ' ὄνειδος τῷ νεωστὶ νυμφίῳ, πτωχοὺς ἀλᾶσθαι παῖδας ἥ τ' ἔσωσά σε. ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δὴ χρυσοῦ μὲν ὃς κίβδηλος ᾖ τεκμήρι' ἀνθρώποισιν ὥπασας σαφῆ, ἀνδρῶν δ' ὅτῳ χρὴ τὸν κακὸν διειδέναι, οὐδεὶς χαρακτὴρ ἐμπέφυκε σώματι;	And in return for all this you've made me so blessed in the eyes of so many Greek women! What a marvelous, what a revered husband I have, wretch that I am, if I'm to go into exile, thrown out of the land, with no friends, alone with my children, all alone! A fine reproach for the new bridegroom, that his children wander as beggars, and the woman who saved him too. Zeus, why did you give mankind clear signs to tell which gold is counterfeit, but no mark stamped on the body to show which man is bad?
520	**CHORUS** δεινή τις ὀργὴ καὶ δυσίατος πέλει, / ὅταν φίλοι φίλοισι συμβάλωσ' ἔριν.	**CHORUS** It's a terrible kind of anger, and hard to cure, when people who love each other clash in a quarrel.
522	**JASON** δεῖ μ', ὡς ἔοικε, μὴ κακὸν φῦναι λέγειν, ἀλλ' ὥστε ναὸς κεδνὸν οἰακοστρόφον ἄκροισι λαίφους κρασπέδοις ὑπεκδραμεῖν τὴν σὴν στόμαργον, ὦ γύναι, γλωσσαλγίαν. ἐγὼ δ', ἐπεὶ σὴν καὶ λίαν πυργοῖς χάριν, Κύπριν νομίζω τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας ναύκληρον εἶναι θεῶν τε κἀνθρώπων μόνην. σοὶ δ' ἔστι μὲν νοῦς λεπτός, ἀλλ' ἐπίφθονος λόγος διελθεῖν, ὡς Ἔρως σ' ἠνάγκασε τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοὐμὸν ἐκσῶσαι δέμας. ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀκριβῶς αὐτὸ θήσομαι λίαν·	**JASON** It seems I mustn't be a poor speaker. Like a careful helmsman, I'll have to run before the storm of your ranting tongue, lady, with just the edge of my sail. As for me, since you're building your kindness into such a tower, I believe Aphrodite alone, of gods and men, was the captain of my rescue. You have a subtle mind, but it would be an invidious story to tell: how Eros forced you with his inescapable arrows to save my life. Still, I won't make the reckoning too precise.
533	ὅπῃ γὰρ οὖν ὤνησας, οὐ κακῶς ἔχει. μείζω γε μέντοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας εἴληφας ἢ δέδωκας, ὡς ἐγὼ φράσω. πρῶτον μὲν Ἑλλάδ' ἀντὶ βαρβάρου χθονὸς γαῖαν κατοικεῖς καὶ δίκην ἐπίστασαι νόμοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ πρὸς ἰσχύος κράτος· πάντες δέ σ' ᾔσθοντ' οὖσαν Ἕλληνες σοφὴν καὶ δόξαν ἔσχες· εἰ δὲ γῆς ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις ὅροισιν ᾤκεις, οὐκ ἂν ἦν λόγος σέθεν. εἴη δ' ἔμοιγε μήτε χρυσὸς ἐν δόμοις μήτ' Ὀρφέως κάλλιον ὑμνῆσαι μέλος, εἰ μὴ 'πίσημος ἡ τύχη γένοιτό μοι.	Whatever help you gave, it served well enough. But you've received more from my rescue than you gave, as I'll explain. First, instead of a foreign land you live in Greece, and you know justice and how to live by laws, not by the rule of force. All the Greeks have come to know that you're clever, and you've won a reputation. If you lived at the farthest ends of the earth, no one would talk about you. For my part, I'd want neither gold in my house nor the power to sing a sweeter song than Orpheus if my fortune weren't going to make me famous.[6]
545	τοσαῦτα μέν σοι τῶν ἐμῶν πόνων πέρι ἔλεξ'· ἅμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προύθηκας λόγων. ἃ δ' εἰς γάμους μοι βασιλικοὺς ὠνείδισας, ἐν τῷδε δείξω πρῶτα μὲν σοφὸς γεγώς, ἔπειτα σώφρων, εἶτα σοὶ μέγας φίλος	That's all I have to say about my own trials; you're the one who set up this contest of words. As for your reproaches about my royal marriage, I'll show that in this I've been, first, clever; second, sensible; and third, a great friend to you and to my

6 Greeks called every non-Greek people *barbaroi*, "foreigners"; Jason uses the word with a sense of Greek superiority.

GREEK	ENGLISH
καὶ παισὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν· ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἥσυχος. ἐπεὶ μετέστην δεῦρ' Ἰωλκίας χθονὸς πολλὰς ἐφέλκων συμφορὰς ἀμηχάνους, τί τοῦδ' ἂν εὕρημ' ἡῦρον εὐτυχέστερον ἢ παῖδα γῆμαι βασιλέως φυγὰς γεγώς; οὐχ, ᾗ σὺ κνίζει, σὸν μὲν ἐχθαίρων λέχος, καινῆς δὲ νύμφης ἱμέρῳ πεπληγμένος, οὐδ' εἰς ἅμιλλαν πολύτεκνον σπουδὴν ἔχων·	children. Just hold your peace. When I moved here from the land of Iolcus, dragging a load of hopeless misfortunes behind me, what luckier find could I have found than to marry a king's daughter, exile that I was? It's not, as you're so sore about, that I hated your bed and was struck with longing for a new bride, or that I was eager to compete in having lots of children.
558 ἅλις γὰρ οἱ γεγῶτες οὐδὲ μέμφομαι· ἀλλ' ὡς τὸ μὲν μέγιστον οἰκοῖμεν καλῶς καὶ μὴ σπανιζοίμεσθα, γιγνώσκων ὅτι πένητα φεύγει πᾶς τις ἐκποδὼν φίλος, παῖδας δὲ θρέψαιμ' ἀξίως δόμων ἐμῶν σπείρας τ' ἀδελφοὺς τοῖσιν ἐκ σέθεν τέκνοις εἰς ταὐτὸ θείην καὶ ξυναρτήσας γένος εὐδαιμονοίην. σοί τε γὰρ παίδων τί δεῖ, ἐμοί τε λύει τοῖσι μέλλουσιν τέκνοις τὰ ζῶντ' ὀνῆσαι. μῶν βεβούλευμαι κακῶς; οὐδ' ἂν σὺ φαίης, εἴ σε μὴ κνίζοι λέχος.	The ones we have are enough, and I have no complaint. No, it was so that, first and foremost, we could live well and not be in want, since I know that every friend gets out of a poor man's way. And so that I could bring up the children as my house deserves, father brothers for the children I had by you, put them on the same footing, unite the family, and prosper. What need do you have of more children? While for me it pays to help the children I have through the ones to come. Have I planned badly? Not even you would say so, if the bed weren't rankling you.
569 ἀλλ' εἰς τοσοῦτον ἥκεθ' ὥστ' ὀρθουμένης εὐνῆς γυναῖκες πάντ' ἔχειν νομίζετε, ἢν δ' αὖ γένηται ξυμφορά τις εἰς λέχος, τὰ λῷστα καὶ κάλλιστα πολεμιώτατα τίθεσθε. χρῆν ἄρ' ἄλλοθέν ποθεν βροτοὺς παῖδας τεκνοῦσθαι, θῆλυ δ' οὐκ εἶναι γένος· χοὕτως ἂν οὐκ ἦν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις κακόν.	But you women have come to such a pass that if your bed is going well you think you have everything, and if some misfortune touches your bed, you treat the best and finest things as your worst enemies. Mortals ought to get their children from some other source, and there should be no female race at all. Then mankind would have no trouble at all.
576 **CHORUS** Ἰᾶσον, εὖ μὲν τούσδ' ἐκόσμησας λόγους· ὅμως δ' ἔμοιγε, κεἰ παρὰ γνώμην ἐρῶ, δοκεῖς προδοὺς σὴν ἄλοχον οὐ δίκαια δρᾶν.	**CHORUS** Jason, you've dressed up these arguments nicely. But all the same, even if what I say goes against your view, I think that in betraying your wife you're doing wrong.
579 **MEDEA** ἦ πολλὰ πολλοῖς εἰμι διάφορος βροτῶν. ἐμοὶ γὰρ ὅστις ἄδικος ὢν σοφὸς λέγειν πέφυκε, πλείστην ζημίαν ὀφλισκάνει· γλώσσῃ γὰρ αὐχῶν τἄδικ' εὖ περιστελεῖν, τολμᾷ πανουργεῖν· ἔστι δ' οὐκ ἄγαν σοφός. ὡς καὶ σὺ μή νυν εἰς ἔμ' εὐσχήμων γένῃ λέγειν τε δεινός· ἓν γὰρ ἐκτενεῖ σ' ἔπος. χρῆν σ', εἴπερ ἦσθα μὴ κακός, πείσαντά με γαμεῖν γάμον τόνδ', ἀλλὰ μὴ σιγῇ φίλων.	**MEDEA** I really do differ from most people in a lot of ways. In my view, the unjust man who happens to be a clever speaker deserves the heaviest penalty. Because he's confident he can wrap injustice up nicely with his tongue, he'll dare any villainy. But he isn't so very clever after all. So don't you put on a fine show with me and make clever speeches. One word will lay you flat. If you weren't a bad man, you should have persuaded me first and then made this marriage, not done it behind your family's back.
588 **JASON** καλῶς γ' ἄν, οἶμαι, τῷδ' ὑπηρέτεις λόγῳ, εἴ σοι γάμον κατεῖπον, ἥτις οὐδὲ νῦν τολμᾷς μεθεῖναι καρδίας μέγαν χόλον.	**JASON** And you'd have been such a help with that plan, I suppose, if I'd told you about the marriage, when even now you can't bring yourself to let go of the great rage in your heart.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
591	**MEDEA** οὐ τοῦτό σ' εἶχεν, ἀλλὰ βάρβαρον λέχος / πρὸς γῆρας οὐκ εὔδοξον ἐξέβαινέ σοι.	**MEDEA** That wasn't what held you back. A foreign wife was turning out to be no credit to you as you got older.
593	**JASON** εὖ νυν τόδ' ἴσθι, μὴ γυναικὸς εἵνεκα γῆμαί με λέκτρα βασιλέων ἃ νῦν ἔχω, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ εἶπον καὶ πάρος, σῶσαι θέλων σὲ καὶ τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὁμοσπόρους φῦσαι τυράννους παῖδας, ἔρυμα δώμασι.	**JASON** Understand this clearly, then: it wasn't for the sake of a woman that I married into the royal bed I have now. As I said before, I wanted to save you, and to father royal children as brothers to my children, a bulwark for the house.
598	**MEDEA** μή μοι γένοιτο λυπρὸς εὐδαίμων βίος / μηδ' ὄλβος ὅστις τὴν ἐμὴν κνίζοι φρένα.	**MEDEA** May I never have a prosperous life that brings pain, or wealth that gnaws at my heart!
600	**JASON** οἶσθ' ὡς μετεύξει καὶ σοφωτέρα φανεῖ; τὰ χρηστὰ μή σοι λυπρὰ φαινέσθω ποτέ, μηδ' εὐτυχοῦσα δυστυχὴς εἶναι δόκει.	**JASON** Do you know how you could change that prayer and look cleverer? Pray that good things never seem painful to you, and that when you're fortunate you never think yourself unfortunate.
603	**MEDEA** ὕβριζ', ἐπειδὴ σοὶ μὲν ἔστ' ἀποστροφή, / ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος τήνδε φευξοῦμαι χθόνα.	**MEDEA** Go on, insult me, since you have somewhere to turn, and I'll go into exile from this land alone.
605	**JASON** αὐτὴ τάδ' εἵλου· μηδέν' ἄλλον αἰτιῶ.	**JASON** You chose this yourself. Don't blame anyone else.
606	**MEDEA** τί δρῶσα; μῶν γαμοῦσα καὶ προδοῦσά σε;	**MEDEA** By doing what? Marrying and betraying you?
607	**JASON** ἀρὰς τυράννοις ἀνοσίους ἀρωμένη.	**JASON** By calling down unholy curses on the royal family.
608	**MEDEA** καὶ σοῖς ἀραία γ' οὖσα τυγχάνω δόμοις.	**MEDEA** Yes, and I'm a curse on your house too.
609	**JASON** ὡς οὐ κρινοῦμαι τῶνδέ σοι τὰ πλείονα. ἀλλ' εἴ τι βούλει παισὶν ἢ σαυτῆς φυγῇ προσωφέλημα χρημάτων ἐμῶν λαβεῖν, λέγ'· ὡς ἕτοιμος ἀφθόνῳ δοῦναι χερὶ ξένοις τε πέμπειν σύμβολ', οἳ δράσουσί σ' εὖ. καὶ ταῦτα μὴ θέλουσα μωρανεῖς, γύναι· λήξασα δ' ὀργῆς κερδανεῖς ἀμείνονα.	**JASON** I won't argue the rest of this with you any further. But if you want to take some extra help from my money for the children or for your own exile, say so. I'm ready to give with an open hand, and to send tokens to my friends abroad, who'll treat you well. If you refuse this, lady, you'll be a fool. Let go of your anger and you'll be better off.
616	**MEDEA** οὔτ' ἂν ξένοισι τοῖσι σοῖς χρησαίμεθ' ἄν, οὔτ' ἄν τι δεξαίμεσθα, μήθ' ἡμῖν δίδου· κακοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δῶρ' ὄνησιν οὐκ ἔχει.	**MEDEA** I wouldn't make use of your friends, and I wouldn't accept anything. Don't give us a thing. A bad man's gifts bring no good.
619	**JASON** ἀλλ' οὖν ἐγὼ μὲν δαίμονας μαρτύρομαι, ὡς πάνθ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τε καὶ τέκνοις θέλω· σοὶ δ' οὐκ ἀρέσκει τἀγάθ', ἀλλ' αὐθαδίᾳ φίλους ἀπωθεῖ· τοιγὰρ ἀλγυνεῖ πλέον.	**JASON** Well then, I call the gods to witness that I'm willing to help you and the children in every way. But what's good doesn't please you; you're so stubborn you push your own people away. So you'll suffer all the more.
623	**MEDEA** χώρει· πόθῳ γὰρ τῆς νεοδμήτου κόρης αἱρεῖ χρονίζων δωμάτων ἐξώπιος·	**MEDEA** Go! You're overcome with longing for the girl you've just broken in, lingering so long away

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	νύμφευ'· ἴσως γάρ, σὺν θεῷ δ' εἰρήσεται, γαμεῖς τοιοῦτον ὥστε σ' ἀρνεῖσθαι γάμον.	from her house. Play the bridegroom! Perhaps— and a god will stand behind these words—you're making the kind of marriage you'll wish you could disown.

SECOND STASIMON

The Chorus prays for love in moderation and pities anyone who loses their homeland.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
627	**CHORUS** ἔρωτες ὑπὲρ μὲν ἄγαν ἐλθόντες οὐκ εὐδοξίαν οὐδ' ἀρετὰν παρέδωκαν ἀνδράσιν· εἰ δ' ἅλις ἔλθοι Κύπρις, οὐκ ἄλλα θεὸς εὔχαρις οὕτως. μήποτ', ὦ δέσποιν', ἐπ' ἐμοὶ χρυσέων τόξων ἐφείης ἱμέρῳ χρίσασ' ἄφυκτον οἰστόν. στέργοι δέ με σωφροσύνα, δώρημα κάλλιστον θεῶν· μηδέ ποτ' ἀμφιλόγους ὀργὰς ἀκόρεστά τε νείκη θυμὸν ἐκπλήξασ' ἑτέροις ἐπὶ λέκτροις προσβάλοι δεινὰ Κύπρις, ἀπτολέμους δ' εὐνὰς σεβίζουσ' ὀξύφρων κρίνοι λέχη γυναικῶν.	**CHORUS** Loves that come too strongly, past all measure, bring men no good name, no excellence. But if Aphrodite comes in measure, no other god is so full of grace. Never, my lady, never let fly at me from your golden bow the arrow no one escapes, dipped in desire. May self-control hold me dear, the finest gift of the gods. And may dread Aphrodite never strike my heart with frenzy for another's bed and hurl on me quarrelsome angers and strife that is never sated, but honoring beds at peace, may she judge women's marriages with a keen mind.
643	ὦ πατρίς, ὦ δώματα, μὴ δῆτ' ἄπολις γενοίμαν τὸν ἀμηχανίας ἔχουσα δυσπέρατον αἰῶν', οἰκτρότατον ἀχέων. θανάτῳ θανάτῳ πάρος δαμείην ἀμέραν τάνδ' ἐξανύσασα· μόχθων δ' οὐκ ἄλλος ὕπερθεν ἢ γᾶς πατρίας στέρεσθαι. εἴδομεν, οὐκ ἐξ ἑτέρων μῦθον ἔχω φράσασθαι· σὲ γὰρ οὐ πόλις, οὐ φίλων τις ᾤκτισεν παθοῦσαν δεινότατα παθέων.	My country, my home, may I never be without a city, living a life of helplessness, so hard to get through, the most pitiable of griefs. By death, by death may I be overcome first, and end my days. Of all troubles none stands higher than to be robbed of your native land. We have seen it; it isn't from others that I have this story to tell. For no city, no friend has pitied you, who have suffered the most terrible of sufferings.
659	ἀχάριστος ὄλοιθ' ὅτῳ πάρεστι μὴ φίλους τιμᾶν καθαρὰν ἀνοίξαντα κλῆδα φρενῶν· ἐμοὶ μὲν φίλος οὔποτ' ἔσται.	May he die unthanked who can fail to honor his friends by unlocking his heart with an honest key. He will never be a friend of mine.

THIRD EPISODE

Aegeus of Athens swears to shelter Medea; she reveals she will kill the princess and her own sons.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
663	**AEGEUS** Μήδεια, χαῖρε· τοῦδε γὰρ προοίμιον / κάλλιον οὐδεὶς οἶδε προσφωνεῖν φίλους.	**AEGEUS** Medea, I wish you joy! No one knows a finer greeting than that to offer friends.
665	**MEDEA** ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ, παῖ σοφοῦ Πανδίονος, / Αἰγεῦ. πόθεν γῆς τῆσδ' ἐπιστρωφᾷ πέδον;	**MEDEA** Joy to you too, Aegeus, son of wise Pandion. Where have you come from, to be visiting the soil of this land?[7]
667	**AEGEUS** Φοίβου παλαιὸν ἐκλιπὼν χρηστήριον.	**AEGEUS** I've just come from Phoebus' ancient oracle.
668	**MEDEA** τί δ' ὀμφαλὸν γῆς θεσπιῳδὸν ἐστάλης;	**MEDEA** And why were you sent to the prophetic navel of the earth?[8]
669	**AEGEUS** παίδων ἐρευνῶν σπέρμ' ὅπως γένοιτό μοι.	**AEGEUS** To ask how I might have children of my own.
670	**MEDEA** πρὸς θεῶν, ἄπαις γὰρ δεῦρ' ἀεὶ τείνεις βίον;	**MEDEA** By the gods, have you lived all this time without children?
671	**AEGEUS** ἄπαιδές ἐσμεν δαίμονός τινος τύχῃ.	**AEGEUS** We have no children, by the fortune of some god.
672	**MEDEA** δάμαρτος οὔσης, ἢ λέχους ἄπειρος ὤν;	**MEDEA** Do you have a wife, or have you never known the marriage bed?
673	**AEGEUS** οὐκ ἐσμὲν εὐνῆς ἄζυγες γαμηλίου.	**AEGEUS** I'm not without a wife to share my bed.
674	**MEDEA** τί δῆτα Φοῖβος εἶπέ σοι παίδων πέρι;	**MEDEA** Then what did Phoebus tell you about children?
675	**AEGEUS** σοφώτερ' ἢ κατ' ἄνδρα συμβαλεῖν ἔπη.	**AEGEUS** Words too clever for a man to make sense of.
676	**MEDEA** θέμις μὲν ἡμᾶς χρησμὸν εἰδέναι θεοῦ;	**MEDEA** Is it permitted for me to know the god's oracle?
677	**AEGEUS** μάλιστ', ἐπεί τοι καὶ σοφῆς δεῖται φρενός.	**AEGEUS** Certainly. In fact, it needs a clever mind.
678	**MEDEA** τί δῆτ' ἔχρησε; λέξον, εἰ θέμις κλύειν.	**MEDEA** Then what was his answer? Tell me, if it's permitted to hear.
679	**AEGEUS** ἀσκοῦ με τὸν προύχοντα μὴ λῦσαι πόδα,	**AEGEUS** That I mustn't loosen the wineskin's jutting foot...[9]
680	**MEDEA** πρὶν ἂν τί δράσῃς ἢ τίν' ἐξίκῃ χθόνα;	**MEDEA** Until you do what, or reach what land?
681	**AEGEUS** πρὶν ἂν πατρῴαν αὖθις ἑστίαν μόλω.	**AEGEUS** Until I come back to my father's hearth.

7 Aegeus was king of Athens, son of its earlier king Pandion.
8 Apollo (Phoebus) had his oracle at Delphi, which was believed to be the navel, or center, of the earth.
9 A deliberately riddling oracle, usually taken as a command to abstain from sex until he got home; at Troezen Aegeus would father Theseus.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
682	**MEDEA** σὺ δ' ὡς τί χρῄζων τήνδε ναυστολεῖς χθόνα;	**MEDEA** And what do you want, that you've sailed to this land?
683	**AEGEUS** Πιτθεύς τις ἔστι γῆς ἄναξ Τροιζηνίας.	**AEGEUS** There's a man called Pittheus, king of the land of Troezen.[10]
684	**MEDEA** παῖς ὡς λέγουσι Πέλοπος εὐσεβέστατος.	**MEDEA** A son of Pelops, they say, and a most devout man.
685	**AEGEUS** τούτῳ θεοῦ μάντευμα κοινῶσαι θέλω.	**AEGEUS** I want to share the god's oracle with him.
686	**MEDEA** σοφὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ καὶ τρίβων τὰ τοιάδε.	**MEDEA** Yes, he's a clever man and practiced in such things.
687	**AEGEUS** κἀμοί γε πάντων φίλτατος δορυξένων.	**AEGEUS** And to me the dearest of all my allies.
688	**MEDEA** ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης καὶ τύχοις ὅσων ἐρᾷς.	**MEDEA** Well, good luck to you, and may you get all you long for.
689	**AEGEUS** τί γὰρ σὸν ὄμμα χρώς τε συντέτηχ' ὅδε;	**AEGEUS** But why are your eyes and your skin so wasted?
690	**MEDEA** Αἰγεῦ, κάκιστος ἔστι μοι πάντων πόσις.	**MEDEA** Aegeus, my husband is the worst man in the world.
691	**AEGEUS** τί φής; σαφῶς μοι σὰς φράσον δυσθυμίας.	**AEGEUS** What are you saying? Tell me clearly what's troubling you.
692	**MEDEA** ἀδικεῖ μ' Ἰάσων οὐδὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ παθών.	**MEDEA** Jason is wronging me, though I've never done him any harm.
693	**AEGEUS** τί χρῆμα δράσας; φράζε μοι σαφέστερον.	**AEGEUS** Doing what? Tell me more clearly.
694	**MEDEA** γυναῖκ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν δεσπότιν δόμων ἔχει.	**MEDEA** He has a wife in his house as mistress over me.
695	**AEGEUS** ἦ που τετόλμηκ' ἔργον αἴσχιστον τόδε;	**AEGEUS** Surely he hasn't dared to do anything so shameful?
696	**MEDEA** σάφ' ἴσθ'· ἄτιμοι δ' ἐσμὲν οἱ πρὸ τοῦ φίλοι.	**MEDEA** Believe me, he has. And we who were dear to him before are thrown aside.
697	**AEGEUS** πότερον ἐρασθεὶς ἢ σὸν ἐχθαίρων λέχος;	**AEGEUS** Did he fall in love, or does he hate your bed?
698	**MEDEA** μέγαν γ' ἔρωτα· πιστὸς οὐκ ἔφυ φίλοις.	**MEDEA** Oh, a great love! He's never been true to his own.
699	**AEGEUS** ἴτω νυν, εἴπερ ὡς λέγεις ἐστὶν κακός.	**AEGEUS** Then let him go, if he's as bad as you say.
700	**MEDEA** ἀνδρῶν τυράννων κῆδος ἠράσθη λαβεῖν.	**MEDEA** What he fell in love with was marrying into royalty.
701	**AEGEUS** δίδωσι δ' αὐτῷ τίς; πέραινέ μοι λόγον.	

10 Troezen is a city in the Peloponnese, across the gulf from Athens.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		AEGEUS And who is giving her to him? Finish your story.
702	**MEDEA** Κρέων, ὃς ἄρχει τῆσδε γῆς Κορινθίας.	**MEDEA** Creon, who rules this land of Corinth.
703	**AEGEUS** συγγνωστὰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν σε λυπεῖσθαι, γύναι.	**AEGEUS** Then your grief was understandable, lady.
704	**MEDEA** ὄλωλα· καὶ πρός γ' ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.	**MEDEA** I'm destroyed. And on top of that I'm being driven out of the land.
705	**AEGEUS** πρὸς τοῦ; τόδ' ἄλλο καινὸν αὖ λέγεις κακόν.	**AEGEUS** By whom? That's yet another new trouble you're telling me.
706	**MEDEA** Κρέων μ' ἐλαύνει φυγάδα γῆς Κορινθίας.	**MEDEA** Creon is driving me into exile from the land of Corinth.
707	**AEGEUS** ἐᾷ δ' Ἰάσων; οὐδὲ ταῦτ' ἐπήνεσα.	**AEGEUS** And Jason allows it? I don't approve of that either.
708	**MEDEA** λόγῳ μὲν οὐχί, καρτερεῖν δὲ βούλεται. ἀλλ' ἄντομαί σε τῆσδε πρὸς γενειάδος γονάτων τε τῶν σῶν ἱκεσία τε γίγνομαι, οἴκτειρον οἴκτειρόν με τὴν δυσδαίμονα καὶ μή μ' ἔρημον ἐκπεσοῦσαν εἰσίδῃς, δέξαι δὲ χώρᾳ καὶ δόμοις ἐφέστιον. οὕτως ἔρως σοὶ πρὸς θεῶν τελεσφόρος γένοιτο παίδων, καὐτὸς ὄλβιος θάνοις. εὕρημα δ' οὐκ οἶσθ' οἷον ηὕρηκας τόδε· παύσω δέ σ' ὄντ' ἄπαιδα καὶ παίδων γονὰς σπεῖραί σε θήσω· τοιάδ' οἶδα φάρμακα.	**MEDEA** Not in words, but he's happy to put up with it. But I beg you, by this beard of yours and by your knees, I make myself your suppliant: pity me, pity me in my misery! Don't stand by and watch me thrown out friendless, but take me into your land and your house, to share your hearth. So may your desire for children be fulfilled by the gods, and may you die a happy man. You don't know what a find you've made here. I'll put an end to your childlessness and make you father children. I know drugs that can do that.
719	**AEGEUS** πολλῶν ἕκατι τήνδε σοι δοῦναι χάριν, γύναι, πρόθυμός εἰμι, πρῶτα μὲν θεῶν, ἔπειτα παίδων ὧν ἐπαγγέλλει γονάς· εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ δὴ φροῦδός εἰμι πᾶς ἐγώ. οὕτω δ' ἔχει μοι· σοῦ μὲν ἐλθούσης χθόνα, πειράσομαί σου προξενεῖν δίκαιος ὤν. τοσόνδε μέντοι σοι προσημαίνω, γύναι· ἐκ τῆσδε μὲν γῆς οὔ σ' ἄγειν βουλήσομαι· ἀναίτιος γὰρ καὶ ξένοις εἶναι θέλω. αὐτὴ δ' ἐάνπερ εἰς ἐμοὺς ἔλθῃς δόμους, μενεῖς ἄσυλος κοὔ σε μὴ μεθῶ τινι. ἐκ τῆσδε δ' αὐτὴ γῆς ἀπαλλάσσου πόδα.	**AEGEUS** For many reasons I'm eager to grant you this favor, lady: first for the gods' sake, then for the children you promise I'll have, because I've set my whole heart on that. Here's how it stands with me. If you come to my land, I'll try to be your protector, as is just. But I warn you of this much, lady: I won't be willing to take you away from this land, because I want to be blameless toward my hosts too. But if you get to my house yourself, you'll stay there safe from seizure, and I'll never hand you over to anyone. You must get yourself out of this land on your own.
731	**MEDEA** ἔσται τάδ'· ἀλλὰ πίστις εἰ γένοιτό μοι / τούτων, ἔχοιμ' ἂν πάντα πρὸς σέθεν καλῶς.	**MEDEA** So be it. But if I could have a pledge of this, I'd have everything I could want from you.
733	**AEGEUS** μῶν οὐ πέποιθας; ἢ τί σοι τὸ δυσχερές;	**AEGEUS** Don't you trust me? Or what's troubling you?
734	**MEDEA** πέποιθα· Πελίου δ' ἐχθρός ἐστί μοι δόμος Κρέων τε. τούτοις δ', ὁρκίοισι μὲν ζυγείς, ἄγουσιν οὐ μεθεῖ' ἂν ἐκ γαίας ἐμέ·	**MEDEA** I trust you. But the house of Pelias is my enemy, and so is Creon. If you're bound by oaths,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	λόγοις δὲ συμβὰς μὴ θεῶν ἐνώμοτος φίλος γένοι' ἂν κἀπικηρυκεύματα τάχ' ἂν πίθοι σε· τἀμὰ μὲν γὰρ ἀσθενῆ, τοῖς δ' ὄλβος ἔστι καὶ δόμος τυραννικός.	you won't hand me over to them if they come to take me out of your land. But if you've agreed only in words and haven't sworn by the gods, you might become their friend, and perhaps their heralds' demands would win you over. I have no power, while they have wealth and a royal house.
741	**AEGEUS** πολλὴν ἔδειξας ἐν λόγοις προμηθίαν· ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, δρᾶν τάδ' οὐκ ἀφίσταμαι. ἐμοί τε γὰρ τάδ' ἐστὶν ἀσφαλέστατα, σκῆψίν τιν' ἐχθροῖς σοῖς ἔχοντα δεικνύναι, τὸ σόν τ' ἄραρε μᾶλλον· ἐξηγοῦ θεούς.	**AEGEUS** You've shown great foresight in what you say. Well, if you think it right, I won't refuse to do it. It's safest for me too, to have an excuse to show your enemies, and your position is more secure. Name the gods.
746	**MEDEA** ὄμνυ πέδον Γῆς πατέρα θ' Ἥλιον πατρὸς / τοὐμοῦ θεῶν τε συντιθεὶς ἅπαν γένος,	**MEDEA** Swear by the ground of Earth, and by the Sun, my father's father, and add the whole race of gods together—
748	**AEGEUS** τί χρῆμα δράσειν ἢ τί μὴ δράσειν; λέγε.	**AEGEUS** To do what, or not to do what? Tell me.
750	**MEDEA** μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐκ γῆς σῆς ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖν ποτε, μήτ' ἄλλος ἤν τις τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄγειν χρῄζῃ, μεθήσειν ζῶν ἑκουσίῳ τρόπῳ.	**MEDEA** Never to cast me out of your land yourself, and, if any of my enemies wants to take me away, never willingly to hand me over as long as you live.
752	**AEGEUS** ὄμνυμι Γῆν καὶ λαμπρὸν Ἡλίου φάος / θεούς τε πάντας ἐμμενεῖν ἅ σου κλύω.	**AEGEUS** I swear by Earth and the Sun's bright light and all the gods to abide by what I hear from you.
754	**MEDEA** ἀρκεῖ· τί δ' ὅρκῳ τῷδε μὴ 'μμένων πάθοις;	**MEDEA** That's enough. And if you don't abide by this oath, what should you suffer?
755	**AEGEUS** ἃ τοῖσι δυσσεβοῦσι γίγνεται βροτῶν.	**AEGEUS** What happens to mortals who offend the gods.
756	**MEDEA** χαίρων πορεύου· πάντα γὰρ καλῶς ἔχει. κἀγὼ πόλιν σὴν ὡς τάχιστ' ἀφίξομαι, πράξασ' ἃ μέλλω καὶ τυχοῦσ' ἃ βούλομαι.	**MEDEA** Go, and fare well. Everything is as it should be. And I'll come to your city as soon as I can, once I've done what I intend and gotten what I want.
759	**CHORUS** ἀλλά σ' ὁ Μαίας πομπαῖος ἄναξ πελάσειε δόμοις, ὧν τ' ἐπίνοιαν σπεύδεις κατέχων πράξειας, ἐπεὶ γενναῖος ἀνήρ, Αἰγεῦ, παρ' ἐμοὶ δεδόκησαι.	**CHORUS** May Maia's son, the lord who guides travelers, bring you safe to your home, and may you achieve the purpose you hold to so eagerly, for to me, Aegeus, you have shown yourself a noble man.[11]
764	**MEDEA** ὦ Ζεῦ Δίκη τε Ζηνὸς Ἡλίου τε φῶς, νῦν καλλίνικοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι, γενησόμεσθα κεἰς ὁδὸν βεβήκαμεν· νῦν ἐλπὶς ἐχθροὺς τοὺς ἐμοὺς τίσειν δίκην. οὗτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ ᾗ μάλιστ' ἐκάμνομεν	**MEDEA** Zeus, and Justice, daughter of Zeus, and light of the Sun! Now, my friends, we'll win a glorious victory over my enemies; we're on our way. Now there's hope my enemies will pay the penalty. This man has appeared, just where I was most in

11 Maia's son is Hermes, the god who escorts travelers.

GREEK	ENGLISH
λιμὴν πέφανται τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων· ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀναψόμεσθα πρυμνήτην κάλων, μολόντες ἄστυ καὶ πόλισμα Παλλάδος. ἤδη δὲ πάντα τἀμά σοι βουλεύματα λέξω· δέχου δὲ μὴ πρὸς ἡδονὴν λόγους.	trouble, as a harbor for my plans. To him I'll make my stern cable fast, once I reach the town and city of Pallas. Now I'll tell you all my plans. Don't expect to enjoy what you hear.[12]
774 πέμψασ' ἐμῶν τιν' οἰκετῶν Ἰάσονα εἰς ὄψιν ἐλθεῖν τὴν ἐμὴν αἰτήσομαι· μολόντι δ' αὐτῷ μαλθακοὺς λέξω λόγους, ὡς καὶ δοκεῖ μοι ταῦτα καὶ καλῶς ἔχει, γάμους τυράννων οὓς προδοὺς ἡμᾶς ἔχει καὶ ξύμφορ' εἶναι καὶ καλῶς ἐγνωσμένα· παῖδας δὲ μεῖναι τοὺς ἐμοὺς αἰτήσομαι, οὐχ ὡς λίπω σφε πολεμίας ἐπὶ χθονός ἐχθροῖσι παῖδας τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι, ἀλλ' ὡς δόλοισι παῖδα βασιλέως κτάνω.	I'll send one of my servants and ask Jason to come and see me. When he comes, I'll speak soft words to him: that I agree with all this and think it's for the best, that this royal marriage he's made by betraying us is to our advantage and well judged. And I'll ask for my children to stay—not so that I can leave them in a hostile land for my enemies to abuse, my own children, but so that I can kill the king's daughter by trickery.
784 πέμψω γὰρ αὐτοὺς δῶρ' ἔχοντας ἐν χεροῖν, νύμφῃ φέροντας, τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα, λεπτόν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον· κἄνπερ λαβοῦσα κόσμον ἀμφιθῇ χροΐ, κακῶς ὀλεῖται πᾶς θ' ὃς ἂν θίγῃ κόρης· τοιοῖσδε χρίσω φαρμάκοις δωρήματα. ἐνταῦθα μὲν δὴ τόνδ' ἀπαλλάσσω λόγον· ᾤμωξα δ' οἷον ἔργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον τοὐντεῦθεν ἡμῖν· τέκνα γὰρ κατακτενῶ τἄμ'· οὔτις ἔστιν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται·	I'll send them with gifts in their hands, to take to the bride, asking that they not be banished from this land: a fine-spun robe and a crown of beaten gold. And if she takes the finery and puts it on her skin, she'll die a horrible death, and so will anyone who touches the girl. Such are the drugs I'll smear the gifts with. But I'll leave that subject there. I cry aloud at the deed I must do next. I will kill my children—mine. There's no one who can rescue them.
794 δόμον τε πάντα συγχέασ' Ἰάσονος ἔξειμι γαίας, φιλτάτων παίδων φόνον φεύγουσα καὶ τλᾶσ' ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον. οὐ γὰρ γελᾶσθαι τλητὸν ἐξ ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι. ἴτω· τί μοι ζῆν κέρδος; οὔτε μοι πατρὶς οὔτ' οἶκος ἔστιν οὔτ' ἀποστροφὴ κακῶν. ἡμάρτανον τόθ' ἡνίκ' ἐξελίμπανον δόμους πατρῴους, ἀνδρὸς Ἕλληνος λόγοις πεισθεῖσ', ὃς ἡμῖν σὺν θεῷ τίσει δίκην.	And when I've wrecked the whole house of Jason, I'll leave the land, fleeing the murder of my dearest children, having dared the most unholy of deeds. To be laughed at by your enemies is not to be borne, my friends. So be it. What do I gain by living? I have no country, no home, no refuge from my troubles. My mistake was made back when I left my father's house, persuaded by the words of a Greek man—who, with a god's help, will pay me what he owes.
803 οὔτ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ γὰρ παῖδας ὄψεταί ποτε ζῶντας τὸ λοιπὸν οὔτε τῆς νεοζύγου νύμφης τεκνώσει παῖδ', ἐπεὶ κακὴν κακῶς θανεῖν σφ' ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἐμοῖσι φαρμάκοις. μηδείς με φαύλην κἀσθενῆ νομιζέτω μηδ' ἡσυχαίαν, ἀλλὰ θατέρου τρόπου, βαρεῖαν ἐχθροῖς καὶ φίλοισιν εὐμενῆ· τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων εὐκλεέστατος βίος.	He'll never see the children I bore him alive again, and he won't father a child on his newly yoked bride, since she must die horribly, as she deserves, by my drugs. Let no one think me feeble and weak, or meek, but of the other kind: hard on my enemies and kind to my friends. People like that have the most glorious lives.
811 CHORUS ἐπείπερ ἡμῖν τόνδ' ἐκοίνωσας λόγον, σέ τ' ὠφελεῖν θέλουσα καὶ νόμοις βροτῶν ξυλλαμβάνουσα δρᾶν σ' ἀπεννέπω τάδε.	CHORUS Since you've shared this plan with us, I want to help you, and I want to uphold the laws of humankind: I tell you, don't do it.

12 Pallas Athena was the patron goddess of Athens.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
814	**MEDEA** οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως· σοὶ δὲ συγγνώμη λέγειν / τάδ' ἐστί, μὴ πάσχουσαν ὡς ἐγὼ κακῶς.	**MEDEA** There's no other way. But it's understandable that you should say so, since you aren't suffering as I am.
816	**CHORUS** ἀλλὰ κτανεῖν σὼ παῖδε τολμήσεις, γύναι;	**CHORUS** But will you really bring yourself to kill your two sons, lady?
817	**MEDEA** οὕτω γὰρ ἂν μάλιστα δηχθείη πόσις.	**MEDEA** Yes. That would hurt my husband most.
818	**CHORUS** σὺ δ' ἂν γένοιό γ' ἀθλιωτάτη γυνή.	**CHORUS** And you would become the most miserable of women.
819	**MEDEA** ἴτω· περισσοὶ πάντες οὺν μέσῳ λόγοι. ἀλλ' εἶα χώρει καὶ κόμιζ' Ἰάσονα· εἰς πάντα γὰρ δὴ σοὶ τὰ πιστὰ χρώμεθα. λέξῃς δὲ μηδὲν τῶν ἐμοὶ δεδογμένων, εἴπερ φρονεῖς εὖ δεσπόταις γυνή τ' ἔφυς.	**MEDEA** So be it. All words in between are wasted. Come now, go and fetch Jason; I use you whenever there's a need for trust. And don't say a word about what I've decided, if you wish your mistress well and are a woman.

THIRD STASIMON

The Chorus praises Athens and begs Medea not to kill her children.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
824	**CHORUS** Ἐρεχθεΐδαι τὸ παλαιὸν ὄλβιοι καὶ θεῶν παῖδες μακάρων, ἱερᾶς χώρας ἀπορθήτου τ' ἀποφερβόμενοι κλεινοτάταν σοφίαν, ἀεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου βαίνοντες ἁβρῶς αἰθέρος, ἔνθα ποθ' ἁγνὰς ἐννέα Πιερίδας Μούσας λέγουσι ξανθὰν Ἁρμονίαν φυτεῦσαι· τοῦ καλλινάου τ' ἀπὸ Κηφισοῦ ῥοὰς τὰν Κύπριν κλήζουσιν ἀφυσσαμέναν χώραν καταπνεῦσαι μετρίας ἀνέμων αὔρας· ἀεὶ δ' ἐπιβαλλομέναν χαίταισιν εὐώδη ῥοδέων πλόκον ἀνθέων τᾷ σοφίᾳ παρέδρους πέμπειν ἔρωτας, παντοίας ἀρετᾶς ξυνεργούς.	**CHORUS** The sons of Erechtheus, prosperous from of old, children of the blessed gods, feeding on the most glorious wisdom from a holy land never sacked, always stepping gracefully through the brightest air, where once, they say, the nine pure Muses of Pieria gave birth to golden-haired Harmony. And they tell how Aphrodite drew water from the streams of the fair-flowing Cephisus and breathed over the land soft breezes, gently blowing, and always, wreathing her hair in a fragrant garland of roses, sends the Loves to sit beside Wisdom, partners in every kind of excellence.[13]
846	πῶς οὖν ἱερῶν ποταμῶν ἢ πόλις ἢ φίλων πόμπιμός σε χώρα τὰν παιδολέτειραν ἕξει, τὰν οὐχ ὁσίαν μετ' ἄλλων; σκέψαι τεκέων πλαγάν, σκέψαι φόνον οἷον αἴρει.	How then will the city of sacred rivers, or the land that gives safe conduct to friends, take you in, the child-killer, the unholy one, to live among others? Think of the blow that strikes your children, think what a murder you're taking on. No—by your knees,

13 The Athenians traced their descent to Erechtheus, an early king born from the earth; the Cephisus is a river of Athens.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	μή, πρὸς γονάτων σε πάντως πάντῃ σ' ἱκετεύομεν, τέκνα φονεύσῃς. πόθεν θράσος ἢ φρενὸς ἢ χειρί, τέκνον, σέθεν καρδίᾳ τε λήψει, δεινὰν προσάγουσα τόλμαν;	with all we have, in every way, we beg you, don't murder your children! Where will you find the daring, my child, in your mind or in your hand and heart, to bring this dreadful boldness to the deed?
860	πῶς δ' ὄμματα προσβαλοῦσα τέκνοις ἄδακρυν μοῖραν σχήσεις; φόνῳ οὐ δυνάσει, παίδων ἱκετᾶν πιτνόντων, τέγξαι χέρα φοινίαν τλάμονι θυμῷ.	How will you cast your eyes on your children and play your part without tears? When your children fall at your feet, begging, you won't be able to wet your hand in their blood with a hardened heart.

FOURTH EPISODE

Medea pretends to make peace with Jason and sends the children to the bride with poisoned gifts.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
866	**JASON** ἥκω κελευσθείς· καὶ γὰρ οὖσα δυσμενὴς οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοις τοῦδέ γ', ἀλλ' ἀκούσομαι τί χρῆμα βούλει καινὸν ἐξ ἐμοῦ, γύναι.	**JASON** I've come because you sent for me. Hostile as you are, you won't be refused this much. I'll listen. What new thing do you want from me, lady?
869	**MEDEA** Ἰᾶσον, αἰτοῦμαί σε τῶν εἰρημένων συγγνώμον' εἶναι· τὰς δ' ἐμὰς ὀργὰς φέρειν εἰκός σ', ἐπεὶ νῷν πόλλ' ὑπείργασται φίλα. ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαυτῇ διὰ λόγων ἀφικόμην, κἀλοιδόρησα· σχετλία, τί μαίνομαι καὶ δυσμεναίνω τοῖσι βουλεύουσιν εὖ, ἐχθρὰ δὲ γαίας κοιράνοις καθίσταμαι πόσει θ', ὃς ἡμῖν δρᾷ τὰ συμφορώτατα, γήμας τύραννον καὶ κασιγνήτους τέκνοις ἐμοῖς φυτεύων; οὐκ ἀπαλλαχθήσομαι θυμοῦ; τί πάσχω, θεῶν ποριζόντων καλῶς;	**MEDEA** Jason, I ask you to forgive what I said. It's only reasonable for you to put up with my temper, since we two have shared so much love in the past. I've had it out with myself, and I scolded myself. Wretch, why am I raving, why am I hostile to those who mean me well, setting myself up as an enemy to the rulers of the land and to my husband, who's doing what's best for us by marrying a princess and fathering brothers for my children? Won't I let go of my anger? What's wrong with me, when the gods are providing so well?
880	οὐκ εἰσὶ μέν μοι παῖδες, οἶδα δὲ χθόνα φεύγοντας ἡμᾶς καὶ σπανίζοντας φίλων; ταῦτ' ἐννοήσασ' ᾐσθόμην ἀβουλίαν πολλὴν ἔχουσα καὶ μάτην θυμουμένη. νῦν οὖν ἐπαινῶ σωφρονεῖν τέ μοι δοκεῖς κῆδος τόδ' ἡμῖν προσλαβών, ἐγὼ δ' ἄφρων, ᾗ χρῆν μετεῖναι τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων καὶ ξυμπεραίνειν καὶ παρεστάναι λέχει νύμφην τε κηδεύουσαν ἥδεσθαι σέθεν. ἀλλ' ἐσμὲν οἷόν ἐσμεν, οὐκ ἐρῶ κακόν, γυναῖκες· οὔκουν χρῆν σ' ὁμοιοῦσθαι κακοῖς οὐδ' ἀντιτείνειν νήπι' ἀντὶ νηπίων.	Don't I have children? Don't I know that we're exiles from our country, and short of friends? When I thought about all this, I realized how very foolish I'd been, and how pointless my anger was. So now I approve. I think you're being sensible in taking on this marriage alliance for us, and I was senseless. I should have shared in these plans and helped carry them through, stood beside the bridal bed and taken pleasure in attending your bride. But we are what we are—I won't say anything bad—we're women. So you shouldn't have copied our faults, or matched childishness with childishness.
892	παριέμεσθα, καί φαμεν κακῶς φρονεῖν τότ', ἀλλ' ἄμεινον νῦν βεβούλευμαι τόδε.	I give in, and I admit I was wrong then; but I've come to a better decision now. Children, children,

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦτε, λείπετε στέγας, ἐξέλθετ', ἀσπάσασθε καὶ προσείπατε πατέρα μεθ' ἡμῶν, καὶ διαλλάχθηθ' ἅμα τῆς πρόσθεν ἔχθρας εἰς φίλους μητρὸς μέτα· σπονδαὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν καὶ μεθέστηκεν χόλος. λάβεσθε χειρὸς δεξιᾶς· οἴμοι κακῶν. ὡς ἐννοοῦμαι δή τι τῶν κεκρυμμένων. ἆρ', ὦ τέκν', οὕτω καὶ πολὺν ζῶντες χρόνον φίλην ὀρέξετ' ὠλένην; τάλαιν' ἐγώ, ὡς ἀρτίδακρύς εἰμι καὶ φόβου πλέα.	come here, leave the house, come out, embrace your father and speak to him with me, and be reconciled along with your mother, from the hatred we had before to love. We've made a truce, and the anger has passed. Take his right hand. Oh, the misery of it! The thought of what lies hidden comes over me! Children, will you stretch out your loving arms like this through a long life too? Poor me, how quick I am to cry, how full of fear!
904	χρόνῳ δὲ νεῖκος πατρὸς ἐξαιρουμένη / ὄψιν τέρειναν τήνδ' ἔπλησα δακρύων.	At last I'm ending the quarrel with your father, and I've filled these soft eyes with tears.
906	**CHORUS** κἀμοὶ κατ' ὄσσων χλωρὸν ὡρμήθη δάκρυ· / καὶ μὴ προβαίη μεῖζον ἢ τὸ νῦν κακόν.	**CHORUS** And a fresh tear has started from my eyes too. May the trouble go no further than it is now.
908	**JASON** αἰνῶ γύναι τάδ', οὐδ' ἐκεῖνα μέμφομαι· εἰκὸς γὰρ ὀργὰς θῆλυ ποιεῖσθαι γένος γάμους παρεμπολῶντι ... πόσει. ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ λῷον σὸν μεθέστηκεν κέαρ, ἔγνως δὲ τὴν νικῶσαν ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ βουλήν· γυναικὸς ἔργα ταῦτα σώφρονος. ὑμῖν δὲ παῖδες οὐκ ἀφροντίστως πατὴρ πολλὴν ἔθηκε σὺν θεοῖς προμηθίαν·	**JASON** I approve of this, lady, and I don't blame you for the other. It's natural for the female sex to get angry when a husband is slipping in another marriage on the side ... But your heart has changed for the better, and you've recognized the winning plan, even if it took time. That's how a sensible woman acts. As for you, children, your father has not been thoughtless: with the gods' help he has made full provision for you.
916	οἶμαι γὰρ ὑμᾶς τῆσδε γῆς Κορινθίας τὰ πρῶτ' ἔσεσθαι σὺν κασιγνήτοις ἔτι. ἀλλ' αὐξάνεσθε· τἄλλα δ' ἐξεργάζεται πατήρ τε καὶ θεῶν ὅστις ἐστὶν εὐμενής· ἴδοιμι δ' ὑμᾶς εὐτραφεῖς ἥβης τέλος μολόντας, ἐχθρῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπερτέρους. αὕτη, τί χλωροῖς δακρύοις τέγγεις κόρας, στρέψασα λευκὴν ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα, κοὐκ ἀσμένη τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχει λόγον;	I believe that one day you'll be among the first men in this land of Corinth, together with your brothers. All you need do is grow. The rest will be taken care of by your father and by whichever of the gods is kind to us. I hope I'll see you well grown, reaching the full bloom of youth, stronger than my enemies. You—why are you wetting your eyes with fresh tears and turning your pale cheek away? Why aren't you glad to hear me say this?
925	**MEDEA** οὐδέν· τέκνων τῶνδ' ἐννοουμένη πέρι.	**MEDEA** It's nothing. I was thinking about the children.
926	**JASON** θάρσει νυν· εὖ γὰρ τῶνδε θήσομαι πέρι.	**JASON** Cheer up, then. I'll see that they're well looked after.
927	**MEDEA** δράσω τάδ'· οὔτοι σοῖς ἀπιστήσω λόγοις· / γυνὴ δὲ θῆλυ κἀπὶ δακρύοις ἔφυ.	**MEDEA** I will. I won't doubt your word. But a woman is a soft thing, born for tears.
929	**JASON** τί δή, τάλαινα, τοῖσδ' ἐπιστένεις τέκνοις;	**JASON** But why, poor thing, are you grieving so over the children?
930	**MEDEA** ἔτικτον αὐτούς· ζῆν δ' ὅτ' ἐξήνχου τέκνα, εἰσῆλθέ μ' οἶκτος εἰ γενήσεται τάδε. ἀλλ' ὥνπερ εἵνεκ' εἰς ἐμοὺς ἥκεις λόγους, τὰ μὲν λέλεκται, τῶν δ' ἐγὼ μνησθήσομαι.	**MEDEA** I gave birth to them. When you prayed for the children to live, pity came over me at the thought: would it really be so? But of the things you came here to talk about, some have been said;

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἐπεὶ τυράννοις γῆς μ' ἀποστεῖλαι δοκεῖ, κἀμοὶ τάδ' ἐστὶ λῷστα, γιγνώσκω καλῶς, μήτ' ἐμποδὼν σοὶ μήτε κοιράνοις χθονὸς ναίειν, δοκῶ γὰρ δυσμενὴς εἶναι δόμοις, ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐκ γῆς τῆσδ' ἀπαίρομεν φυγῇ, παῖδες δ' ὅπως ἂν ἐκτραφῶσι σῇ χερί, αἰτοῦ Κρέοντα τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα.	I'll bring up the rest. The rulers have decided to send me away from the land, and I recognize that this is best for me too, not to live where I'd be in your way or in the way of the country's rulers, since I'm thought to be an enemy of the royal house. So I'll leave this land in exile. But so that the children can be brought up by your hand, ask Creon not to banish them from this land.
941	**JASON** οὐκ οἶδ' ἂν εἰ πείσαιμι, πειρᾶσθαι δὲ χρή.	**JASON** I don't know if I can persuade him, but I have to try.
942	**MEDEA** σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ σὴν κέλευσον αἰτεῖσθαι πατρὸς / γυναῖκα παῖδας τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα.	**MEDEA** Then at least tell your wife to ask her father not to banish the children from this land.
944	**JASON** μάλιστα, καὶ πείσειν γε δοξάζω σφ' ἐγώ.	**JASON** Certainly. And I expect I'll persuade her.
945	**MEDEA** εἴπερ γυναικῶν ἐστι τῶν ἄλλων μία. συλλήψομαι δὲ τοῦδέ σοι κἀγὼ πόνου· πέμψω γὰρ αὐτῇ δῶρ' ἃ καλλιστεύεται τῶν νῦν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, οἶδ' ἐγώ, πολύ, λεπτόν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον παῖδας φέροντας. ἀλλ' ὅσον τάχος χρεὼν κόσμον κομίζειν δεῦρο προσπόλων τινά. εὐδαιμονήσει δ' οὐχ ἓν ἀλλὰ μυρία, ἀνδρός τ' ἀρίστου σοῦ τυχοῦσ' ὁμευνέτου κεκτημένη τε κόσμον ὅν ποθ' Ἥλιος πατρὸς πατὴρ δίδωσιν ἐκγόνοισιν οἷς. λάζυσθε φερνὰς τάσδε, παῖδες, εἰς χέρας καὶ τῇ τυράννῳ μακαρίᾳ νύμφῃ δότε φέροντες· οὔτοι δῶρα μεμπτὰ δέξεται.	**MEDEA** Yes, if she's a woman like the rest. And I'll take my share of this labor with you. I'll send her gifts that are by far the most beautiful to be found among people today, I know: a fine-spun robe and a crown of beaten gold. The children will take them. One of the servants must bring the finery here as quickly as possible. She'll be happy not in one way but in thousands, having won you, the best of men, to share her bed, and owning the finery that the Sun, my father's father, once gave to his descendants. Take these wedding gifts in your hands, children, and carry them to the royal bride, so blessed, and give them to her. They're not gifts she'll find fault with.
959	**JASON** τί δ', ὦ ματαία, τῶνδε σὰς κενοῖς χέρας; δοκεῖς σπανίζειν δῶμα βασιλικὸν πέπλων, δοκεῖς δὲ χρυσοῦ; σῷζε, μὴ δίδου τάδε. εἴπερ γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀξιοῖ λόγου τινὸς γυνή, προθήσει χρημάτων, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγώ.	**JASON** Why empty your hands of these, you silly woman? Do you think a royal house is short of robes, or short of gold? Keep them, don't give them away. If my wife thinks I'm worth anything, she'll put me above possessions, I'm sure of it.
964	**MEDEA** μή μοι σύ· πείθειν δῶρα καὶ θεοὺς λόγος· χρυσὸς δὲ κρείσσων μυρίων λόγων βροτοῖς. κείνης ὁ δαίμων κεῖνα νῦν αὔξει θεός· νέα τυραννεῖ· τῶν δ' ἐμῶν παίδων φυγὰς ψυχῆς ἂν ἀλλαξαίμεθ', οὐ χρυσοῦ μόνον. ἀλλ' ὦ τέκν', εἰσελθόντε πλουσίους δόμους πατρὸς νέαν γυναῖκα, δεσπότιν δ' ἐμήν, ἱκετεύετ' ἐξαιτεῖσθε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα, κόσμον διδόντες· τοῦδε γὰρ μάλιστα δεῖ, εἰς χεῖρ' ἐκείνην δῶρα δέξασθαι τάδε. ἴθ' ὡς τάχιστα· μητρὶ δ' ὧν ἐρᾷ τυχεῖν εὐάγγελοι γένοισθε πράξαντες καλῶς.	**MEDEA** Don't say that. Gifts persuade even the gods, they say, and gold counts for more with mortals than a thousand words. Fortune is hers; a god is raising her up now. She's young, and she rules. To save my children from exile I'd give my life, not just gold. Come, children, go into the rich house and beg your father's new wife, my mistress: plead with her not to banish you from the land, and give her the finery. This matters most of all: that she take these gifts into her own hands. Go as quickly as you can. And may you succeed, and bring your mother the good news of what she longs for.

FOURTH STASIMON

The Chorus foresees the bride's death and grieves for Jason and for Medea.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
976	**CHORUS** νῦν ἐλπίδες οὐκέτι μοι παίδων ζόας, οὐκέτι· στείχουσι γὰρ ἐς φόνον ἤδη. δέξεται νύμφα χρυσέων ἀναδεσμῶν δέξεται δύστανος ἄταν· ξανθᾷ δ' ἀμφὶ κόμᾳ θήσει τὸν Ἅιδα κόσμον αὐτὰ χεροῖν. πείσει χάρις ἀμβρόσιός τ' αὐγὰ πέπλον χρυσότευκτόν τε στέφανον περιθέσθαι·	**CHORUS** Now I have no more hope that the children will live, no more: already they are walking toward murder. The bride will take it, she will take the golden diadem, poor girl, will take her ruin; around her golden hair she will set the finery of Hades with her own two hands. Its charm and its immortal gleam will persuade her to put on the robe and the crown of beaten gold;
985	νερτέροις δ' ἤδη πάρα νυμφοκομήσει. τοῖον εἰς ἔρκος πεσεῖται καὶ μοῖραν θανάτου δύστανος· ἄταν δ' οὐχ ὑπερφεύξεται. σὺ δ', ὦ τάλαν, ὦ κακόνυμφε κηδεμὼν τυράννων, παισὶν οὐ κατειδὼς ὄλεθρον βιοτᾷ προσάγεις, ἀλόχῳ τε σᾷ στυγερὸν θάνατον. δύστανε μοίρας, ὅσον παροίχει.	she will be dressing as a bride among the dead below. Into such a snare she will fall, into such a death, poor girl; and ruin she will not escape. And you, poor wretch, ill-starred bridegroom, marrying into the house of kings: without knowing it you are bringing destruction on your sons' lives, and on your wife a hateful death. Unhappy man, how far you have fallen from your proper lot!
996	μεταστένομαι δὲ σὸν ἄλγος, ὦ τάλαινα παίδων μᾶτερ, ἃ φονεύσεις τέκνα νυμφιδίων ἕνεκεν λεχέων, ἅ σοι προλιπὼν ἀνόμως ἄλλῃ ξυνοικεῖ πόσις συνεύνῳ.	And I grieve in turn for your pain, unhappy mother, you who will murder your children for the sake of a marriage bed, the bed your husband lawlessly abandoned to live with another wife.

FIFTH EPISODE

Medea wavers over killing her children; a messenger describes the deaths of the princess and Creon.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1002	**TUTOR** δέσποιν', ἀφεῖνται παῖδες οἵδε σοὶ φυγῆς, καὶ δῶρα νύμφη βασιλὶς ἀσμένη χεροῖν ἐδέξατ'· εἰρήνη δὲ τἀκεῖθεν τέκνοις. ἔα. τί συγχυθεῖσ' ἔστηκας ἡνίκ' εὐτυχεῖς;	**TUTOR** My lady, your boys here have been let off from exile, and the royal bride was glad to take the gifts into her hands. From that quarter the children have peace. What's this? Why do you stand there so shaken, when your luck is good?
1005	**MEDEA** αἰαῖ.	**MEDEA** Ah, no.
1006	**TUTOR** τί σὴν ἔστρεψας ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα, / κοὐκ ἀσμένη τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχει λόγον;	**TUTOR** Why have you turned your cheek away? Why aren't you glad to hear me say this?

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1008	τάδ' οὐ ξυνῳδὰ τοῖσιν ἐξηγγελμένοις.	That doesn't fit with the news I've brought.
1009	**MEDEA** αἰαῖ μάλ' αὖθις.	**MEDEA** Ah, no—and again.
	TUTOR μῶν τιν' ἀγγέλλων τύχην / οὐκ οἶδα, δόξης δ' ἐσφάλην εὐαγγέλου;	**TUTOR** Have I brought some bad news without knowing it, and been wrong to think it was good?
1011	**MEDEA** ἤγγειλας οἷ' ἤγγειλας· οὐ σὲ μέμφομαι.	**MEDEA** You've told what you've told. I don't blame you.
1012	**TUTOR** τί δὴ κατηφεῖς ὄμμα καὶ δακρυρροεῖς;	**TUTOR** Then why are you looking down? Why the tears?
1013	**MEDEA** πολλή μ' ἀνάγκη, πρέσβυ· ταῦτα γὰρ θεοὶ / κἀγὼ κακῶς φρονοῦσ' ἐμηχανησάμην.	**MEDEA** I have every reason, old man. The gods have contrived all this—and I, with my evil thinking.
1015	**TUTOR** θάρσει· κάτει τοι καὶ σὺ πρὸς τέκνων ἔτι.	**TUTOR** Take heart. One day your sons will bring you home as well.
1016	**MEDEA** ἄλλους κατάξω πρόσθεν ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.	**MEDEA** Before that I'll send others home, poor wretch that I am.
1017	**TUTOR** οὔτοι μόνη σὺ σῶν ἀπεζύγης τέκνων. / κούφως φέρειν χρὴ θνητὸν ὄντα συμφοράς.	**TUTOR** You're not the only woman to be torn from her children. We're mortal; we have to bear our misfortunes lightly.
1019	**MEDEA** δράσω τάδ'. ἀλλὰ βαῖνε δωμάτων ἔσω καὶ παισὶ πόρσυν' οἷα χρὴ καθ' ἡμέραν. ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, σφῷν μὲν ἔστι δὴ πόλις καὶ δῶμ', ἐν ᾧ λιπόντες ἀθλίαν ἐμὲ οἰκήσετ' ἀεὶ μητρὸς ἐστερημένοι· ἐγὼ δ' ἐς ἄλλην γαῖαν εἶμι δὴ φυγάς, πρὶν σφῷν ὄνασθαι κἀπιδεῖν εὐδαίμονας, πρὶν λέκτρα καὶ γυναῖκα καὶ γαμηλίους εὐνὰς ἀγῆλαι λαμπάδας τ' ἀνασχεθεῖν. ὦ δυστάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς αὐθαδίας.	**MEDEA** I will. But go inside and get the boys whatever they need for the day. Children, my children, you have a city now, and a home, where you'll leave me in my misery and live forever, robbed of your mother. And I'll go off to another land, an exile, before I've had any joy of you or seen you happy, before I've adorned your marriages, your brides and your wedding beds, and held up the wedding torches. How wretched my own stubborn pride has made me!
1029	ἄλλως ἄρ' ὑμᾶς, ὦ τέκν', ἐξεθρεψάμην, ἄλλως δ' ἐμόχθουν καὶ κατεξάνθην πόνοις, στερρὰς ἐνεγκοῦσ' ἐν τόκοις ἀλγηδόνας. ἦ μήν ποθ' ἡ δύστηνος εἶχον ἐλπίδας πολλὰς ἐν ὑμῖν γηροβοσκήσειν τ' ἐμὲ καὶ κατθανοῦσαν χερσὶν εὖ περιστελεῖν, ζηλωτὸν ἀνθρώποισι· νῦν δ' ὤλωλε δὴ γλυκεῖα φροντίς. σφῷν γὰρ ἐστερημένη λυπρὸν διάξω βίοτον ἀλγεινόν τ' ἐμοί. ὑμεῖς δὲ μητέρ' οὐκέτ' ὄμμασιν φίλοις ὄψεσθ', ἐς ἄλλο σχῆμ' ἀποστάντες βίου.	So it was for nothing, children, that I raised you, for nothing that I toiled and wore myself out with hardship, bearing the harsh pains of childbirth. And yet once, poor fool, I had such hopes of you: that you'd look after me in my old age, and when I died, lay me out properly with your own hands—the thing everyone envies. Now that sweet thought is gone. Robbed of you two, I'll live out a life of grief and pain. And you will never again see your mother with loving eyes, once you've gone off into another kind of life.
1040	φεῦ φεῦ· τί προσδέρκεσθέ μ' ὄμμασιν, τέκνα; τί προσγελᾶτε τὸν πανύστατον γέλων; αἰαῖ· τί δράσω; καρδία γὰρ οἴχεται, γυναῖκες, ὄμμα φαιδρὸν ὡς εἶδον τέκνων.	Ah, ah. Why are you looking at me like that, children? Why are you smiling at me—that last smile of all? Oh, what shall I do? My heart fails me, women, when I see my children's bright faces. I

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οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην· χαιρέτω βουλεύματα τὰ πρόσθεν· ἄξω παῖδας ἐκ γαίας ἐμούς. τί δεῖ με πατέρα τῶνδε τοῖς τούτων κακοῖς λυποῦσαν αὐτὴν δὶς τόσα κτᾶσθαι κακά; οὐ δῆτ' ἔγωγε. χαιρέτω βουλεύματα. καίτοι τί πάσχω; βούλομαι γέλωτ' ὀφλεῖν ἐχθροὺς μεθεῖσα τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἀζημίους;	couldn't do it. Goodbye to my earlier plans! I'll take my children out of the country. Why should I hurt their father through their suffering, and win twice as much suffering for myself? No, not I. Goodbye to my plans. And yet—what's happening to me? Do I want to be laughed at, letting my enemies go unpunished?
1051 τολμητέον τάδ'. ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐμῆς κάκης, τὸ καὶ προέσθαι μαλθακοὺς λόγους φρενός. χωρεῖτε παῖδες εἰς δόμους· ὅτῳ δὲ μὴ θέμις παρεῖναι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι θύμασιν, αὐτῷ μελήσει· χεῖρα δ' οὐ διαφθερῶ. ἆ ἆ. μὴ δῆτα, θυμέ, μή ποτ' ἐργάσῃ τάδε· ἔασον αὐτούς, ὦ τάλαν, φεῖσαι τέκνων· ἐκεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν ζῶντες εὐφρανοῦσί με. μὰ τοὺς παρ' Ἅιδῃ νερτέρους ἀλάστορας, οὔτοι ποτ' ἔσται τοῦθ' ὅπως ἐχθροῖς ἐγὼ παῖδας παρήσω τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι.	I must dare it. What cowardice, even to let such soft words out of my mind! Go inside, children. Anyone who has no right to be present at my sacrifice—that's his concern. My hand will not falter. Ah, ah! No, no, my angry heart, don't you do this! Let them go, poor wretch, spare the children! Living with me there, they'll be my joy. No—by the avenging spirits who dwell below in Hades, it will never happen that I leave my children for my enemies to abuse.
1062 πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή, ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν οἵπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν. πάντως πέπρωται ταῦτα κοὐκ ἐκφεύξεται. καὶ δὴ 'πὶ κρατὶ στέφανος, ἐν πέπλοισι δὲ νύμφη τύραννος ὄλλυται, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγώ. ἀλλ' εἶμι γὰρ δὴ τλημονεστάτην ὁδόν, καὶ τούσδε πέμψω τλημονεστέραν ἔτι παῖδας προσειπεῖν βούλομαι. δότ', ὦ τέκνα, δότ' ἀσπάσασθαι μητρὶ δεξιὰν χέρα. ὦ φιλτάτη χείρ, φίλτατον δέ μοι κάρα καὶ σχῆμα καὶ πρόσωπον εὐγενὲς τέκνων, εὐδαιμονοίτην, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ· τὰ δ' ἐνθάδε πατὴρ ἀφείλετ'. ὦ γλυκεῖα προσβολή, ὦ μαλθακὸς χρὼς πνεῦμά θ' ἥδιστον τέκνων.	In any case they must die. And since they must, I who gave them birth will kill them. In any case it's fated, and there's no escape. Already the crown is on her head, and in the robes the royal bride is dying—I know it for sure. But since I'm setting out on the most miserable road of all, and will send them on one more miserable still, I want to speak to my children. Give me, children, give your mother your right hand to kiss. Oh, dearest hand, and dearest head, the figure and the noble faces of my children! May you be happy—but there. What was here your father has taken away. Oh, the sweet embrace, the soft skin, the sweetest breath of children!
1076 χωρεῖτε χωρεῖτ'· οὐ γάρ εἰμι προσβλέπειν οἷα τ' ἔθ' ὑμᾶς, ἀλλὰ νικῶμαι κακοῖς. καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά· θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων, ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς.	Go, go. I can't look at you any longer; my sufferings are too much for me. I understand what evil I'm about to do, but my anger is stronger than my plans—anger, the cause of the greatest evils for mortals.
1081 **CHORUS** πολλάκις ἤδη διὰ λεπτοτέρων μύθων ἔμολον καὶ πρὸς ἀμίλλας ἦλθον μείζους ἢ χρὴ γενεὰν θῆλυν ἐρευνᾶν· ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔστιν μοῦσα καὶ ἡμῖν, ἣ προσομιλεῖ σοφίας ἕνεκεν· πάσαισι μὲν οὔ· παῦρον δὲ γένος (μίαν ἐν πολλαῖς εὕροις ἂν ἴσως) οὐκ ἀπόμουσον τὸ γυναικῶν. καί φημι βροτῶν οἵτινές εἰσιν πάμπαν ἄπειροι μηδ' ἐφύτευσαν	**CHORUS** Many times before now I have made my way through subtler arguments and entered greater contests than womankind should search into. But we too have a Muse, who keeps us company for the sake of wisdom— not all of us: a small number (one among many, perhaps, you might find) of womankind is not without the Muse. And I say that those mortals who have no experience at all, who never

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	παῖδας, προφέρειν εἰς εὐτυχίαν τῶν γειναμένων. οἱ μὲν ἄτεκνοι δι' ἀπειροσύνην εἴθ' ἡδὺ βροτοῖς εἴτ' ἀνιαρὸν παῖδες τελέθουσ' οὐχὶ τυχόντες πολλῶν μόχθων ἀπέχονται·	had children, are ahead in happiness of those who have borne them. The childless, never having had them, not knowing whether children are a sweetness to mortals or a grief, are spared many troubles.
1098	οἷσι δὲ τέκνων ἔστιν ἐν οἴκοις γλυκερὸν βλάστημ', ἀθρῶ μελέτῃ κατατρυχομένους τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον· πρῶτον μὲν ὅπως θρέψουσι καλῶς βίοτόν θ' ὁπόθεν λείψουσι τέκνοις· ἔτι δ' ἐκ τούτων εἴτ' ἐπὶ φλαύροις εἴτ' ἐπὶ χρηστοῖς μοχθοῦσι, τόδ' ἐστὶν ἄδηλον. ἓν δὲ τὸ πάντων λοίσθιον ἤδη πᾶσιν κατερῶ θνητοῖσι κακόν· καὶ δὴ γὰρ ἅλις βιοτὴν ηὗρον, σῶμά τ' ἐς ἥβην ἦλυθε τέκνων χρηστοί τ' ἐγένοντ'· εἰ δὲ κυρήσει δαίμων οὗτος, φροῦδος ἐς Ἅιδην θάνατος προφέρων σώματα τέκνων.	But those who have in their homes the sweet young growth of children, I see them worn down with worry all their days: first, how to raise them well, and where to find a living to leave them; and then, after all that, whether it's for worthless children or for good ones that they toil, no one can tell. And one more thing, the last evil of all for all mortals, I will tell now: suppose they've found enough to live on, and the children's bodies have come to their prime, and they've turned out good—if fate falls out this way, Death is gone to Hades, carrying the children's bodies away.
1112	πῶς οὖν λύει πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις τήνδ' ἔτι λύπην ἀνιαροτάτην παίδων ἕνεκεν θνητοῖσι θεοὺς ἐπιβάλλειν;	What good is it, then, that on top of all the rest the gods should lay on mortals this grief, the bitterest of all, for the sake of children?
1116	**MEDEA** φίλαι, πάλαι δὴ προσμένουσα τὴν τύχην καραδοκῶ τἀκεῖθεν οἶ προβήσεται. καὶ δὴ δέδορκα τόνδε τῶν Ἰάσονος στείχοντ' ὀπαδῶν· πνεῦμα δ' ἠρεθισμένον δείκνυσιν ὥς τι καινὸν ἀγγελεῖ κακόν.	**MEDEA** My friends, I've been waiting a long while for what fortune brings, watching to see how things will go over there. And now I see one of Jason's attendants coming. His panting breath shows he has some new disaster to report.
1121	**MESSENGER** ὦ δεινὸν ἔργον παρανόμως εἰργασμένη Μήδεια, φεῦγε φεῦγε, μήτε ναΐαν λιποῦσ' ἀπήνην μήτ' ὄχον πεδοστιβῆ.	**MESSENGER** You who have done a terrible, lawless deed, Medea—run, run! Don't pass up any way out, a ship on the sea or a carriage on the road.
1124	**MEDEA** τί δ' ἄξιόν μοι τῆσδε τυγχάνει φυγῆς;	**MEDEA** What has happened that I should run away?
1125	**MESSENGER** ὄλωλεν ἡ τύραννος ἀρτίως κόρη / Κρέων θ' ὁ φύσας φαρμάκων τῶν σῶν ὕπο.	**MESSENGER** The royal princess has just died, and Creon her father too, from your poisons.
1127	**MEDEA** κάλλιστον εἶπας μῦθον, ἐν δ' εὐεργέταις / τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη καὶ φίλοις ἐμοῖς ἔσει.	**MEDEA** That's the finest news you could have brought. From now on I'll count you among my benefactors and friends.
1129	**MESSENGER** τί φής; φρονεῖς μὲν ὀρθὰ κοὐ μαίνει, γύναι,	**MESSENGER** What are you saying? Are you in your right mind, lady, and not mad? You hear that

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ἥτις τυράννων ἑστίαν ἠκισμένην χαίρεις κλύουσα κοὐ φοβεῖ τὰ τοιάδε;	the royal house has been savaged, and you're glad, and not afraid of such things?
1132	**MEDEA** ἔχω τι κἀγὼ τοῖσι σοῖς ἐναντίον λόγοισιν εἰπεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ σπέρχου, φίλος, λέξον δ' ὅπως ὤλοντο· δὶς τόσον γὰρ ἂν τέρψειας ἡμᾶς, εἰ τεθνᾶσι παγκάκως.	**MEDEA** I too have something I could say in answer to your words. But don't rush, my friend. Tell me how they died. You'd give me twice the pleasure if they died horribly.
1136	**MESSENGER** ἐπεὶ τέκνων σῶν ἦλθε δίπτυχος γονὴ σὺν πατρὶ καὶ παρῆλθε νυμφικοὺς δόμους, ἥσθημεν οἵπερ σοῖς ἐκάμνομεν κακοῖς δμῶες· δι' οἴκων δ' εὐθὺς ἦν πολὺς λόγος σὲ καὶ πόσιν σὸν νεῖκος ἐσπεῖσθαι τὸ πρίν. κυνεῖ δ' ὃ μέν τις χεῖρ', ὃ δὲ ξανθὸν κάρα παίδων· ἐγὼ δὲ καὐτὸς ἡδονῆς ὕπο στέγας γυναικῶν σὺν τέκνοις ἅμ' ἐσπόμην. δέσποινα δ' ἣν νῦν ἀντὶ σοῦ θαυμάζομεν, πρὶν μὲν τέκνων σῶν εἰσιδεῖν ξυνωρίδα, πρόθυμον εἶχ' ὀφθαλμὸν εἰς Ἰάσονα·	**MESSENGER** When your two sons came with their father and went into the bride's house, we servants, who had been grieved by your troubles, were glad. All through the house there was talk straight away that you and your husband had made peace over your old quarrel. One kissed the boys' hands, another their golden hair. And I myself, out of joy, went along with the children into the women's quarters. The mistress we now look up to in your place, before she noticed your two children, kept her eager eyes on Jason.
1147	ἔπειτα μέντοι προυκαλύψατ' ὄμματα λευκήν τ' ἀπέστρεψ' ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα, παίδων μυσαχθεῖσ' εἰσόδους· πόσις δὲ σὸς ὀργὰς ἀφῄρει καὶ χόλον νεάνιδος λέγων τάδ'· οὐ μὴ δυσμενὴς ἔσει φίλοις, παύσει δὲ θυμοῦ καὶ πάλιν στρέψεις κάρα, φίλους νομίζουσ' οὕσπερ ἂν πόσις σέθεν, δέξει δὲ δῶρα καὶ παραιτήσει πατρὸς φυγὰς ἀφεῖναι παισὶ τοῖσδ' ἐμὴν χάριν;	But then she veiled her eyes and turned her white cheek away, disgusted that the children had come in. Your husband tried to take away the girl's anger and bitterness, saying: "Don't be hostile to your own family. Stop being angry, turn your head back, and count as your own the people your husband does. Won't you accept the gifts, and ask your father to let these children off from exile, for my sake?"
1156	ἣ δ' ὡς ἐσεῖδε κόσμον, οὐκ ἠνέσχετο, ἀλλ' ἤνεσ' ἀνδρὶ πάντα· καὶ πρὶν ἐκ δόμων μακρὰν ἀπεῖναι πατέρα καὶ παῖδας σέθεν, λαβοῦσα πέπλους ποικίλους ἠμπίσχετο, χρυσοῦν τε θεῖσα στέφανον ἀμφὶ βοστρύχοις λαμπρῷ κατόπτρῳ σχηματίζεται κόμην, ἄψυχον εἰκὼ προσγελῶσα σώματος. κἄπειτ' ἀναστᾶσ' ἐκ θρόνων διέρχεται στέγας, ἁβρὸν βαίνουσα παλλεύκῳ ποδί, δώροις ὑπερχαίρουσα, πολλὰ πολλάκις τένοντ' ἐς ὀρθὸν ὄμμασι σκοπουμένη. τοὐνθένδε μέντοι δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἰδεῖν·	When she saw the finery, she couldn't hold out, but agreed to everything her husband asked. Before your sons and their father were far from the house, she took the embroidered robes and put them on, set the golden crown around her curls, and arranged her hair in a bright mirror, smiling at the lifeless image of her body. Then she rose from her chair and walked through the rooms, stepping daintily on her white feet, delighted with the gifts, over and over turning her eyes to look at the back of her outstretched ankle. But after that came a terrible thing to see.
1168	χροιὰν γὰρ ἀλλάξασα λεχρία πάλιν χωρεῖ τρέμουσα κῶλα καὶ μόλις φθάνει θρόνοισιν ἐμπεσοῦσα μὴ χαμαὶ πεσεῖν. καί τις γεραιὰ προσπόλων δόξασά που ἢ Πανὸς ὀργὰς ἢ τινὸς θεῶν μολεῖν ἀνωλόλυξε, πρίν γ' ὀρᾷ διὰ στόμα χωροῦντα λευκὸν ἀφρόν, ὀμμάτων τ' ἀπὸ κόρας στρέφουσαν, αἷμά τ' οὐκ ἐνὸν χροΐ· εἶτ' ἀντίμολπον ἦκεν ὀλολυγῆς μέγαν κωκυτόν. εὐθὺς δ' ἣ μὲν εἰς πατρὸς δόμους	Her color changed. She staggered sideways, her legs trembling, and only just managed to fall into her chair and not onto the ground. One of the old serving women, thinking, I suppose, that a frenzy from Pan or some other god had come over her, raised the cry of worship—until she saw white foam coming from her mouth, her eyes rolling in their sockets, and the blood drained from her skin. Then she let out a great wail, the opposite of that cry. At once one maid rushed to her father's

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	ὥρμησεν, ἣ δὲ πρὸς τὸν ἀρτίως πόσιν, φράσουσα νύμφης συμφοράς· ἅπασα δὲ στέγη πυκνοῖσιν ἐκτύπει δρομήμασιν.	rooms, another to her new husband, to tell them what had happened to the bride, and the whole house rang with people running back and forth.[14]
1181	ἤδη δ' ἂν ἕλκων κῶλον ἐκπλέθρου δρόμου ταχὺς βαδιστὴς τερμόνων ἀνθήπτετο· ἣ δ' ἐξ ἀναύδου καὶ μύσαντος ὄμματος δεινὸν στενάξασ' ἡ τάλαιν' ἠγείρετο· διπλοῦν γὰρ αὐτῇ πῆμ' ἐπεστρατεύετο. χρυσοῦς μὲν ἀμφὶ κρατὶ κείμενος πλόκος θαυμαστὸν ἵει νᾶμα παμφάγου πυρός· πέπλοι δὲ λεπτοί, σῶν τέκνων δωρήματα, λεπτὴν ἔδαπτον σάρκα τῆς δυσδαίμονος. φεύγει δ' ἀναστᾶσ' ἐκ θρόνων πυρουμένη, σείουσα χαίτην κρᾶτά τ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοσε, ῥῖψαι θέλουσα στέφανον· ἀλλ' ἀραρότως σύνδεσμα χρυσὸς εἶχε, πῦρ δ', ἐπεὶ κόμην ἔσεισε, μᾶλλον δὶς τόσως τ' ἐλάμπετο.	By now a fast walker, striding out, would have reached the end of a two-hundred-yard track. Then the poor girl, who had lain silent with her eyes closed, woke with a dreadful groan. For a double torment was marching against her. The golden circlet resting on her head was sending out an astonishing stream of all-devouring fire, and the delicate robes, your children's gifts, were eating into the poor wretch's delicate flesh. She leapt up from her chair and fled, on fire, tossing her hair and her head this way and that, trying to throw off the crown. But the gold held its fastenings tight, and whenever she shook her hair, the fire blazed twice as high.
1195	πίτνει δ' ἐς οὖδας συμφορᾷ νικωμένη, πλὴν τῷ τεκόντι κάρτα δυσπετὴς μαθεῖν· οὔτ' ὀμμάτων γὰρ δῆλος ἦν κατάστασις οὔτ' εὐφυὲς πρόσωπον, αἷμα δ' ἐξ ἄκρου ἔσταξε κρατὸς συμπεφυρμένον πυρί, σάρκες δ' ἀπ' ὀστέων ὥστε πεύκινον δάκρυ γναθμοῖς ἀδήλοις φαρμάκων ἀπέρρεον, δεινὸν θέαμα· πᾶσι δ' ἦν φόβος θιγεῖν νεκροῦ· τύχην γὰρ εἴχομεν διδάσκαλον. πατὴρ δ' ὁ τλήμων συμφορᾶς ἀγνωσίᾳ ἄφνω παρελθὼν δῶμα προσπίτνει νεκρῷ·	She fell to the floor, overcome by the disaster, hard for anyone but her father to recognize. Her eyes had lost their natural shape, her face its beauty. Blood was dripping from the top of her head, mixed with fire, and the flesh was falling from her bones like resin from a pine, torn by the poison's unseen jaws—a horrible sight. Everyone was afraid to touch the body; what had happened had taught us. But her poor father, knowing nothing of the disaster, came suddenly into the room and threw himself on the body.
1206	ὤμωξε δ' εὐθύς, καὶ περιπτύξας δέμας κυνεῖ προσαυδῶν τοιάδ'· ὦ δύστηνε παῖ, τίς σ' ὦδ' ἀτίμως δαιμόνων ἀπώλεσε; τίς τὸν γέροντα τύμβον ὀρφανὸν σέθεν τίθησιν; οἴμοι, συνθάνοιμί σοι, τέκνον. ἐπεὶ δὲ θρήνων καὶ γόων ἐπαύσατο, χρῄζων γεραιὸν ἐξαναστῆσαι δέμας προσείχεθ' ὥστε κισσὸς ἔρνεσιν δάφνης λεπτοῖσι πέπλοις, δεινὰ δ' ἦν παλαίσματα· ὃ μὲν γὰρ ἤθελ' ἐξαναστῆσαι γόνυ, ἣ δ' ἀντελάζυτ'· εἰ δὲ πρὸς βίαν ἄγοι, σάρκας γεραιὰς ἐσπάρασσ' ἀπ' ὀστέων.	At once he cried out, put his arms around her, and kissed her, saying: "My poor child, which of the gods has destroyed you so cruelly? Who has robbed this old man, who's little more than a grave, of you? Oh, let me die with you, my child." But when he had finished his laments and his weeping and wanted to raise his old body up, he stuck to the delicate robes as ivy clings to laurel shoots, and it was a terrible wrestling match. He wanted to get up on his knee, and she held him back; and if he pulled hard, he tore his old flesh from his bones.
1218	χρόνῳ δ' ἀπέστη καὶ μεθῆχ' ὁ δύσμορος ψυχήν· κακοῦ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἦν ὑπέρτερος. κεῖνται δὲ νεκροὶ παῖς τε καὶ γέρων πατὴρ πέλας, ποθεινὴ δακρύοισι συμφορά. καί μοι τὸ μὲν σὸν ἐκποδὼν ἔστω λόγου· γνώσει γὰρ αὐτὴ ζημίας ἀποστροφήν.	In the end the unlucky man gave up and breathed out his life; he could no longer rise above the evil. And there they lie, dead, the daughter and her old father, side by side, a disaster to make anyone weep. As for you, let me leave your part out of what I say; you'll know for yourself how to escape

14 The old woman's cry (*ololygē*) was the shrill ritual shout women raised at sacrifices or when a god made himself felt; the wail that follows is a cry of mourning.

GREEK	ENGLISH
τὰ θνητὰ δ' οὐ νῦν πρῶτον ἡγοῦμαι σκιάν, οὐδ' ἂν τρέσας εἴποιμι τοὺς σοφοὺς βροτῶν δοκοῦντας εἶναι καὶ μεριμνητὰς λόγων τούτους μεγίστην μωρίαν ὀφλισκάνειν.	punishment. This isn't the first time I've thought human life a shadow, and I'd say without fear that those mortals who seem clever, who fret over fine arguments, are the ones guilty of the greatest folly.
1228 θνητῶν γὰρ οὐδείς ἐστιν εὐδαίμων ἀνήρ· ὄλβου δ' ἐπιρρυέντος εὐτυχέστερος ἄλλου γένοιτ' ἂν ἄλλος, εὐδαίμων δ' ἂν οὔ.	For no mortal man is truly blessed. When wealth flows in, one may be luckier than another—but blessed, no.
1231 **CHORUS** ἔοιχ' ὁ δαίμων πολλὰ τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κακὰ ξυνάπτειν ἐνδίκως Ἰάσονι. ὦ τλῆμον, ὡς σου συμφορὰς οἰκτείρομεν, κόρη Κρέοντος, ἥτις εἰς Ἅιδου πύλας οἴχει γάμων ἕκατι τῶν Ἰάσονος.	**CHORUS** It seems some god is fastening many troubles on Jason today, and justly. Poor girl, how we pity your misfortune, daughter of Creon, you who are gone to the gates of Hades because of your marriage to Jason.
1236 **MEDEA** φίλαι, δέδοκται τοὔργον ὡς τάχιστά μοι παῖδας κτανούσῃ τῇσδ' ἀφορμᾶσθαι χθονὸς καὶ μὴ σχολὴν ἄγουσαν ἐκδοῦναι τέκνα ἄλλῃ φονεῦσαι δυσμενεστέρᾳ χερί. πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή, ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν, οἵπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν. ἀλλ' εἶ' ὁπλίζου, καρδία. τί μέλλομεν τὰ δεινὰ κἀναγκαῖα μὴ πράσσειν κακά; ἄγ' ὦ τάλαινα χεὶρ ἐμή, λαβὲ ξίφος, λάβ', ἕρπε πρὸς βαλβῖδα λυπηρὰν βίου, καὶ μὴ κακισθῇς μηδ' ἀναμνησθῇς τέκνων ὡς φίλταθ', ὡς ἔτικτες· ἀλλὰ τήνδε γε λαθοῦ βραχεῖαν ἡμέραν παίδων σέθεν, κἄπειτα θρήνει· καὶ γὰρ εἰ κτενεῖς σφ', ὅμως φίλοι γ' ἔφυσαν, δυστυχὴς δ' ἐγὼ γυνή.	**MEDEA** My friends, my mind is made up: I'll kill the children as quickly as I can and leave this land. I won't linger and hand them over to be murdered by another, more hostile hand. In any case they must die. And since they must, I who gave them birth will kill them. Come, arm yourself, my heart. Why do I hold back from doing these terrible, necessary evils? Come, my wretched hand, take the sword, take it, go to the starting line of a life of pain. Don't be a coward. Don't remember the children, how dear they are, how you gave them birth. For this one short day forget your children—and then mourn. For even if you kill them, still they were dear to you. And I am an unhappy woman.

FIFTH STASIMON

The Chorus calls on Earth and Sun as the children cry out inside and are killed.

GREEK	ENGLISH
1251 **CHORUS** ἰὼ Γᾶ τε καὶ παμφαὴς ἀκτὶς Ἀελίου, κατίδετ' ἴδετε τὰν ὀλομέναν γυναῖκα, πρὶν φοινίαν τέκνοις προσβαλεῖν χέρ' αὐτοκτόνον· σᾶς γὰρ ἀπὸ χρυσέας γονᾶς ἔβλαστεν, θεοῦ δ' αἵματι πίτνειν φόβος ὑπ' ἀνέρων. ἀλλά νιν, ὦ φάος διογενές, κάτειργε κατάπαυσον, ἔξελ' οἴκων τάλαιναν φονίαν τ' Ἐρινὺν ὑπ' ἀλαστόρων. μάταν μόχθος ἔρρει τέκνων, ἆρα μάταν γένος φίλιον ἔτεκες, ὦ κυανεᾶν λιποῦσα Συμπληγάδων πετρᾶν ἀξενωτάταν εἰσβολάν. δειλαία, τί σοι φρενῶν βαρὺς χόλος προσπίτνει καὶ δυσσεβὴς	**CHORUS** Ah, Earth, and you, all-shining ray of the Sun, look down, look on this ruined woman, before she lays a bloody, kin-killing hand on her children! They sprang from your golden race, and it is a fearful thing for a god's blood to be spilled by men. Light born of Zeus, hold her back, stop her, drive out of the house this wretched, murderous Fury set on by avenging spirits. In vain the labor for your children is lost; in vain, then, you bore your dear sons, you who left behind the dark Clashing Rocks and their most inhospitable passage. Poor wretch, why does heavy anger fall upon your mind, and godless

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	φόνος ἀμείβεται; χαλεπὰ γὰρ βροτοῖς ὁμογενῆ μιάσματ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν αὐτοφόνταις συνῳδὰ θεόθεν πίτνοντ' ἐπὶ δόμοις ἄχη.	murder follow murder? For hard on mortals are the pollutions of kindred blood: griefs in tune with the deed fall from the gods on the houses of those who kill their own.
1271	**CHILDREN** οἴμοι, τί δράσω; ποῖ φύγω μητρὸς χέρας; / οὐκ οἶδ', ἀδελφὲ φίλτατ'· ὀλλύμεσθα γάρ.	**CHILDREN** Oh, no, what shall I do? Where can I run from Mother's hands? I don't know, my dearest brother. We're dying.
1273	**CHORUS** ἀκούεις βοὰν ἀκούεις τέκνων; ἰὼ τλᾶμον, ὦ κακοτυχὲς γύναι. παρέλθω δόμους; ἀρῆξαι φόνον δοκεῖ μοι τέκνοις.	**CHORUS** Do you hear the cry, do you hear the children? Ah, poor woman, ill-fated woman! Shall I go into the house? I think we must save the children from murder.
1277	**CHILDREN** ναί, πρὸς θεῶν, ἀρήξατ'· ἐν δέοντι γάρ· / ὡς ἐγγὺς ἤδη γ' ἐσμὲν ἀρκύων ξίφους.	**CHILDREN** Yes, for the gods' sake, help! Now's the time—we're already caught close in the net of the sword.
1279	**CHORUS** τάλαιν', ὡς ἄρ' ἦσθα πέτρος ἢ σίδαρος, ἅτις τέκνων ὃν ἔτεκες ἄροτον αὐτόχειρι μοίρᾳ κτενεῖς. μίαν δὴ κλύω μίαν τῶν πάρος γυναῖκ' ἐν φίλοις χέρα βαλεῖν τέκνοις, Ἰνὼ μανεῖσαν ἐκ θεῶν, ὅθ' ἡ Διὸς δάμαρ νιν ἐξέπεμψε δωμάτων ἄλη. πίτνει δ' ἁ τάλαιν' ἐς ἅλμαν φόνῳ τέκνων δυσσεβεῖ, ἀκτῆς ὑπερτείνασα ποντίας πόδα, δυοῖν τε παίδοιν συνθανοῦσ' ἀπόλλυται. τί δῆτ' οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἔτι δεινόν; ὦ γυναικῶν λέχος πολύπονον, ὅσα βροτοῖς ἔρεξας ἤδη κακά.	**CHORUS** Poor wretch, so you were stone, then, or iron, you who will kill the crop of children you bore with your own hand. One woman, only one, I have heard of before who laid hands on her own dear children: Ino, driven mad by the gods, when the wife of Zeus sent her wandering from her house. The poor woman plunged into the sea for the godless murder of her children, stretching her foot out over the sea-cliff, and perished, dying together with her two sons. What could be more terrible now? Women's marriage bed, so full of pain, how much harm you have done to mortals already![15]

EXODOS

Jason arrives too late; Medea appears in the Sun's chariot with the bodies and leaves for Athens.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1293	**JASON** γυναῖκες αἳ τῆσδ' ἐγγὺς ἕστατε στέγης, ἆρ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἡ τὰ δείν' εἰργασμένη Μήδεια τοισίδ', ἢ μεθέστηκεν φυγῇ; δεῖ γάρ νιν ἤτοι γῆς σφε κρυφθῆναι κάτω, ἢ πτηνὸν ἆραι σῶμ' ἐς αἰθέρος βάθος,	**JASON** Women standing near this house, is she inside, the woman who has done these terrible things, Medea—or has she gone off and fled? She'll have to hide herself under the earth, or lift her body on wings into the depths of the sky, if she

15 Ino, daughter of Cadmus and nurse of the infant Dionysus, was driven mad by Hera and leapt into the sea with her son.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
	εἰ μὴ τυράννων δώμασιν δώσει δίκην. πέποιθ' ἀποκτείνασα κοιράνους χθονὸς ἀθῷος αὐτὴ τῶνδε φεύξεσθαι δόμων; ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτῆς φροντίδ' ὡς τέκνων ἔχω· κείνην μὲν οὓς ἔδρασεν ἕρξουσιν κακῶς, ἐμῶν δὲ παίδων ἦλθον ἐκσώσων βίον, μή μοί τι δράσωσ' οἱ προσήκοντες γένει, μητρῷον ἐκπράσσοντες ἀνόσιον φόνον.	isn't to pay the price to the royal house. Does she think she can kill the rulers of this land and escape from this house unpunished? But it isn't her I'm worried about so much as the children. Those she wronged will do her harm; I've come to save my sons' lives, so that the king's kin don't do something to them, avenging their mother's unholy murder.
1306	**CHORUS** ὦ τλῆμον, οὐκ οἶσθ' οἷ κακῶν ἐλήλυθας, / Ἰᾶσον· οὐ γὰρ τούσδ' ἂν ἐφθέγξω λόγους.	**CHORUS** Poor man, you don't know how deep in trouble you've come, Jason, or you wouldn't have said this.
1308	**JASON** τί δ' ἔστιν; ἦ που κἄμ' ἀποκτεῖναι θέλει;	**JASON** What is it? Does she want to kill me too?
1309	**CHORUS** παῖδες τεθνᾶσι χειρὶ μητρῴᾳ σέθεν.	**CHORUS** Your sons are dead, by their mother's hand.
1310	**JASON** οἴμοι τί λέξεις; ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας, γύναι.	**JASON** Oh, no, what are you saying? You've destroyed me, lady.
1311	**CHORUS** ὡς οὐκέτ' ὄντων σῶν τέκνων φρόντιζε δή.	**CHORUS** Think of your children as no longer living.
1312	**JASON** ποῦ γάρ νιν ἔκτειν', ἐντὸς ἢ ἔξωθεν δόμων;	**JASON** Where did she kill them—inside the house or out?
1313	**CHORUS** πύλας ἀνοίξας σῶν τέκνων ὄψει φόνον.	**CHORUS** Open the doors and you'll see your children murdered.
1314	**JASON** χαλᾶτε κλῆδας ὡς τάχιστα, πρόσπολοι, ἐκλύεθ' ἁρμούς, ὡς ἴδω διπλοῦν κακόν, τοὺς μὲν θανόντας, τὴν δὲ τίσωμαι φόνῳ.	**JASON** Undo the bolts, servants, as fast as you can, loosen the fastenings, so I can see this double evil —them dead, and her, whom I'll make pay with her death.
1317	**MEDEA** τί τάσδε κινεῖς κἀναμοχλεύεις πύλας, νεκροὺς ἐρευνῶν κἀμὲ τὴν εἰργασμένην; παῦσαι πόνου τοῦδ'· εἰ δ' ἐμοῦ χρείαν ἔχεις, λέγ' εἴ τι βούλει, χειρὶ δ' οὐ ψαύσεις ποτέ. τοιόνδ' ὄχημα πατρὸς Ἥλιος πατὴρ δίδωσιν ἡμῖν, ἕρυμα πολεμίας χερός.	**MEDEA** Why are you shaking these doors and prying them open, searching for the dead and for me who did it? Stop that work. If you need something from me, say what you want—but you'll never lay a hand on me. Such is the chariot the Sun, my father's father, gives me, a defense against an enemy's hand.
1323	**JASON** ὦ μῖσος, ὦ μέγιστον ἐχθίστη γύναι θεοῖς τε κἀμοὶ παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένει, ἥτις τέκνοισι σοῖσιν ἐμβαλεῖν ξίφος ἔτλης τεκοῦσα κἄμ' ἄπαιδ' ἀπώλεσας· καὶ ταῦτα δράσασ' ἥλιόν τε προσβλέπεις καὶ γαῖαν, ἔργον τλᾶσα δυσσεβέστατον. ὄλοι'· ἐγὼ δὲ νῦν φρονῶ, τότ' οὐ φρονῶν ὅτ' ἐκ δόμων σε βαρβάρου τ' ἀπὸ χθονὸς Ἕλλην' ἐς οἶκον ἠγόμην, κακὸν μέγα, πατρός τε καὶ γῆς προδότιν ἥ σ' ἐθρέψατο.	**JASON** You hateful thing, woman most loathed by the gods and by me and by the whole human race —you could bring yourself to drive a sword into your own children, you who bore them, and you've destroyed me, left me childless. And having done this you look on the sun and the earth, after daring the most godless deed of all. Death take you! I see clearly now, though I didn't then, when I brought you from your home in a foreign land to a

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		Greek house—a great evil, a traitor to your father and to the land that raised you.
1333	τοιόνδ' ἀλάστορ' εἰς ἔμ' ἔσκηψαν θεοί· κτανοῦσα γὰρ δὴ σὸν κάσιν παρέστιον, τὸ καλλίπρῳρον εἰσέβης Ἀργοῦς σκάφος. ἤρξω μὲν ἐκ τοιῶνδε, νυμφευθεῖσα δὲ παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδε καὶ τεκοῦσά μοι τέκνα, εὐνῆς ἕκατι καὶ λέχους σφ' ἀπώλεσας. οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τοῦτ' ἂν Ἑλληνὶς γυνὴ ἔτλη ποθ', ὧν γε πρόσθεν ἠξίουν ἐγὼ γῆμαί σε, κῆδος ἐχθρὸν ὀλέθριόν τ' ἐμοί, λέαιναν, οὐ γυναῖκα, τῆς Τυρσηνίδος Σκύλλης ἔχουσαν ἀγριωτέραν φύσιν.	Such is the avenging curse the gods have hurled on me. You killed your own brother at the hearth, and then boarded the fair-prowed hull of the Argo. That's how you began. Then you married this man and bore me children, and for the sake of a bed and a marriage you've destroyed them. There's no Greek woman who would ever have dared this—and I thought fit to marry you instead of them, a hateful, deadly match for me: a lioness, not a woman, with a nature more savage than Tyrrhenian Scylla.[16]
1344	ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἄν σε μυρίοις ὀνείδεσι δάκοιμι· τοιόνδ' ἐμπέφυκέ σοι θράσος· ἔρρ', αἰσχροποιὲ καὶ τέκνων μιαιφόνε. ἐμοὶ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν δαίμον' αἰάζειν πάρα, ὃς οὔτε λέκτρων νεογάμων ὀνήσομαι, οὐ παῖδας οὓς ἔφυσα κἀξεθρεψάμην ἔξω προσειπεῖν ζῶντας, ἀλλ' ἀπώλεσα.	But I couldn't wound you with ten thousand insults, such is the brazenness born in you. Away with you, you shameless creature, murderer of your children! As for me, all that's left is to mourn my fate: I'll have no joy of my new marriage, and I'll never speak to the sons I fathered and raised while they're alive. I've lost them.
1351	**MEDEA** μακρὰν ἂν ἐξέτεινα τοῖσδ' ἐναντίον λόγοισιν, εἰ μὴ Ζεὺς πατὴρ ἠπίστατο οἷ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ πέπονθας οἷά τ' εἰργάσω· σὺ δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες τἄμ' ἀτιμάσας λέχη τερπνὸν διάξειν βίοτον ἐγγελῶν ἐμοί, οὐδ' ἡ τύραννος οὐδ' ὁ σοὶ προσθεὶς γάμους Κρέων ἀνατὶ τῆσδέ μ' ἐκβαλεῖν χθονός. πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ λέαιναν, εἰ βούλει, κάλει καὶ Σκύλλαν ἢ Τυρσηνὸν ᾠκησεν πέδον· τῆς σῆς γὰρ ὡς χρὴ καρδίας ἀνθηψάμην.	**MEDEA** I'd have made a long speech in reply to this, if Father Zeus didn't know what you got from me and what you did. You weren't going to spurn my bed and lead a pleasant life laughing at me—nor was the princess, nor Creon, who offered you the marriage, going to throw me out of this land and go unpunished. So call me a lioness, if you like, and Scylla, who lived on the Tyrrhenian shore. I've struck at your heart, as I had to.
1361	**JASON** καὐτή γε λυπεῖ καὶ κακῶν κοινωνὸς εἶ.	**JASON** You're in pain yourself; you share in the suffering.
1362	**MEDEA** σάφ' ἴσθι· λύει δ' ἄλγος, ἢν σὺ μὴ 'γγελᾷς.	**MEDEA** Be sure of it. But the pain is worth it, as long as you can't laugh at me.
1363	**JASON** ὦ τέκνα, μητρὸς ὡς κακῆς ἐκύρσατε.	**JASON** Children, what a wicked mother you had!
1364	**MEDEA** ὦ παῖδες, ὡς ὤλεσθε πατρῴᾳ νόσῳ.	**MEDEA** Sons, you died of your father's sickness!
1365	**JASON** οὔτοι νυν ἡμὴ δεξιά σφ' ἀπώλεσεν.	**JASON** It wasn't my right hand, you know, that killed them.
1366	**MEDEA** ἀλλ' ὕβρις οἵ τε σοὶ νεοδμῆτες γάμοι.	**MEDEA** No—your arrogance did, and your brand-new marriage.
1367	**JASON** λέχους σφέ γ' ἠξίωσας εἵνεκα κτανεῖν;	**JASON** You thought it right to kill them over a bed?
1368	**MEDEA** σμικρὸν γυναικὶ πῆμα τοῦτ' εἶναι δοκεῖς;	

16 Scylla, the man-eating sea-monster of the *Odyssey*, was placed by some on the Tyrrhenian (western Italian) coast.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
		MEDEA Do you think that's a small pain for a woman?
1369	**JASON** ἥτις γε σώφρων· σοὶ δὲ πάντ' ἐστὶν κακά.	**JASON** For a sensible one, yes. But to you everything is evil.
1370	**MEDEA** οἵδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσί· τοῦτο γάρ σε δήξεται.	**MEDEA** They are no more. That will sting you.
1371	**JASON** οἵδ' εἰσὶν ὠμοὶ σῷ κάρᾳ μιάστορες.	**JASON** Oh, they are—as savage avengers to fall on your head.
1372	**MEDEA** ἴσασιν ὅστις ἦρξε πημονῆς θεοί.	**MEDEA** The gods know who started the trouble.
1373	**JASON** ἴσασι δῆτα σήν γ' ἀπόπτυστον φρένα.	**JASON** They know, all right—they know your loathsome mind.
1374	**MEDEA** στυγεῖ· πικρὰν δὲ βάξιν ἐχθαίρω σέθεν.	**MEDEA** Hate me, then. I'm sick of your bitter voice.
1375	**JASON** καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σήν· ῥᾴδιοι δ' ἀπαλλαγαί.	**JASON** And I of yours. It's easy enough to be rid of each other.
1376	**MEDEA** πῶς οὖν; τί δράσω; κάρτα γὰρ κἀγὼ θέλω.	**MEDEA** How, then? What should I do? I want that badly too.
1377	**JASON** θάψαι νεκρούς μοι τούσδε καὶ κλαῦσαι πάρες.	**JASON** Let me bury these bodies and mourn them.
1378	**MEDEA** οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ σφᾶς τῇδ' ἐγὼ θάψω χερί, φέρουσ' ἐς Ἥρας τέμενος Ἀκραίας θεοῦ, ὡς μή τις αὐτοὺς πολεμίων καθυβρίσῃ, τύμβους ἀνασπῶν· γῇ δὲ τῇδε Σισύφου σεμνὴν ἑορτὴν καὶ τέλη προσάψομεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἀντὶ τοῦδε δυσσεβοῦς φόνου. αὐτὴ δὲ γαῖαν εἶμι τὴν Ἐρεχθέως, Αἰγεῖ συνοικήσουσα τῷ Πανδίονος. σὺ δ', ὥσπερ εἰκός, κατθανεῖ κακὸς κακῶς, Ἀργοῦς κάρα σὸν λειψάνῳ πεπληγμένος, πικρὰς τελευτὰς τῶν ἐμῶν γάμων ἰδών.	**MEDEA** Never. I'll bury them with this hand, taking them to the sanctuary of Hera of the Heights, so that none of my enemies can outrage them by tearing up their graves. And on this land of Sisyphus I'll lay a solemn festival and rites for all time to come, in return for this unholy murder. As for me, I'm going to the land of Erechtheus, to live with Aegeus, son of Pandion. And you, as is fitting, will die a bad man's bad death, your head struck by a piece of the Argo, after you've seen the bitter end of your marriage to me.[17]
1389	**JASON** ἀλλά σ' Ἐρινὺς ὀλέσειε τέκνων / φονία τε Δίκη.	**JASON** May the Fury of our children destroy you, / and Justice that avenges blood!
1391	**MEDEA** τίς δὲ κλύει σου θεὸς ἢ δαίμων, / τοῦ ψευδόρκου καὶ ξειναπάτου;	**MEDEA** What god or power listens to you, / you oath-breaker, you who cheated a stranger?
1393	**JASON** φεῦ φεῦ, μυσαρὰ καὶ παιδολέτορ.	**JASON** Ah, ah, you vile thing, you child-killer!
1394	**MEDEA** στεῖχε πρὸς οἴκους καὶ θάπτ' ἄλοχον.	**MEDEA** Go home and bury your wife.
1395	**JASON** στείχω, δισσῶν γ' ἄμορος τέκνων.	**JASON** I'm going—robbed of my two sons.
1396	**MEDEA** οὔπω θρηνεῖς· μένε καὶ γῆρας.	**MEDEA** You're not mourning yet. Wait till you're old.

17 Hera Akraia ("of the Heights") had a sanctuary near Corinth, the "land of Sisyphus," where yearly rites were held for Medea's children; Erechtheus was a legendary king of Athens.

	GREEK	ENGLISH
1397	**JASON** ὦ τέκνα φίλτατα.	**JASON** Children, so dearly loved!
	MEDEA μητρί γε, σοὶ δ' οὔ.	**MEDEA** By their mother, yes—not by you.
1398	**JASON** κἄπειτ' ἔκανες;	**JASON** And then you killed them?
	MEDEA σέ γε πημαίνουσ'.	**MEDEA** To hurt you.
1399	**JASON** ὤμοι, φιλίου χρῄζω στόματος / παίδων ὁ τάλας προσπτύξασθαι.	**JASON** Oh, no, how I long, poor wretch, / to kiss my children's dear lips!
1401	**MEDEA** νῦν σφε προσαυδᾷς, νῦν ἀσπάζει, / τότ' ἀπωσάμενος.	**MEDEA** Now you speak to them, now you'd embrace them, / when before you pushed them away.
1402	**JASON** δός μοι πρὸς θεῶν / μαλακοῦ χρωτὸς ψαῦσαι τέκνων.	**JASON** For the gods' sake, let me / touch my children's soft skin.
1404	**MEDEA** οὐκ ἔστι· μάτην ἔπος ἔρριπται.	**MEDEA** No. Your words are thrown away for nothing.
1405	**JASON** Ζεῦ, τάδ' ἀκούεις ὡς ἀπελαυνόμεθ', οἷά τε πάσχομεν ἐκ τῆς μυσαρᾶς καὶ παιδοφόνου τῆσδε λεαίνης; ἀλλ' ὁπόσον γοῦν πάρα καὶ δύναμαι τάδε καὶ θρηνῶ κἀπιθεάζω, μαρτυρόμενος δαίμονας ὥς μοι τέκν' ἀποκτείνασ' ἀποκωλύεις ψαῦσαί τε χεροῖν θάψαι τε νεκρούς, οὓς μήποτ' ἐγὼ φύσας ὄφελον πρὸς σοῦ φθιμένους ἐπιδέσθαι.	**JASON** Zeus, do you hear how I'm driven away, what I suffer from this vile, child-murdering lioness? But as much as I may, as far as I'm able, I mourn this, and I call on the gods, and summon the powers to witness that you killed my children and now keep me from touching them with my hands and burying the dead. I wish I had never fathered them, only to see them destroyed by you!
1415	**CHORUS** πολλῶν ταμίας Ζεὺς ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ, πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί· καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη, τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον ηὗρε θεός. τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.	**CHORUS** Zeus on Olympus is steward of many things, and the gods bring many things to pass beyond our hopes; what we expected was not fulfilled, and for the unexpected a god found a way. So this affair has turned out.