

THE MEDEA

A Modern Adaptation in
One Act

By

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Introduction

Euripides' *Medea* was first performed in 431 B.C.E. and became the most popular version of her story almost to the point where people in the ancient world forgot other versions existed. Euripides added his own unique plot elements to the myth while effortlessly marrying together several plot points from other authors into his play. He was the contributor to the story that made Medea consciously aware and active in killing her children. Up until Euripides, she was either not responsible or indirectly involved in their deaths. She never once decides to kill her children over the course of the myth. Medea, however, is never really the main focus. She is part of a larger story, Jason and the Argonauts. Euripides acknowledges this and then allows Medea as a character to stand-alone and have the focus be solely on her. He paved the way for other ancient authors such as Seneca the Younger to write even more twisted and sadistic versions of the story, solidifying Medea's place as a solo act. We have these authors to thank for giving us such a rich and complex character. And it is to Euripides and the authors that came before him that I pay homage to in my adaptation.

The biggest innovation that Euripides adds to the story is Medea's participation in her children's death. In my version you will see that I set the stage for that to be a possibility but also for her not to be responsible at all. My major contribution to the story is Medea's mental illness. The entire play revolves around the ambiguity of her health. No one is quite sure if she is putting on a clever ruse to get herself out of trouble later, or she really is a woman with an illness. Another plot point that I wished to change was calling Jason's desertion of Medea into question. For most of the play we are unsure if Jason will leave his ailing wife for a less than perfect mistress. This creates a problem for Medea who cannot plan for the outcome as well because she herself is still unaware of how everything will end, unlike in Euripides' version.

There is long standing mythic tradition that allows me to make changes to the original storyline. Before Euripides there were dozens of authors that wrote dozens of versions of Medea's story. I am simply adding to the body of work laid out before me. There is a lot to be said about the way we tell stories like

this in a modern era. So much of our information comes from social media today, it would be impossible for me to ignore for a modern Medea. In a modern version there is no Greek Chorus dancing about on stage to chime in at key moments of the production. Instead I have replaced those voices with the voices of social media from the audience. Who better to help tell the story than those watching it?

In fact, social media is key to understanding what has happened in these character's lives before and after the events of the play. When ancient Greeks came to watch the *Medea* in 431 B.C.E. there was an inherent knowledge of the events leading up to the play. By providing audience members with fully fleshed out social media accounts that they can explore prior to the show, the role of the nurse for exposition becomes unnecessary along with the role of the tutor. What makes these accounts unique are their real time posts. The actors playing the characters will tweet and post as their characters with only basic guidelines and certain event markers to hit. These actors will interact with each other in character and build online relationships. Audiences will be able to interact with them before and after the production and see their online activity. The actors are given a certain amount of freedom to develop their characters where, in a traditional setting, they might be more limited.

With the large presence of social media, I am able to riff off of the established dramatic theory of environmental or immersive theatre. I am able to create a passive immersiveness for the audience, more akin to how we interact online. They get to enjoy a certain amount of anonymity while still being fully engaged in the character's lives. Part of this theory is blurring the lines between real and pretend, and audience and performer. The more realistic their social media accounts, the more emotionally invested the audience will be in these characters.

Through these characters, I am able to explore themes of forgiveness and love and what happens when it takes a turn for the ugly. Jason's infidelity is so much more complex than him simply wanting something fresh. Medea's hurt and hate for Jason isn't just because he had sex with another woman, but betrayed her when he takes her to a psychiatrist that plans on committing her. She feels ambushed and painted into a corner. The only solution she sees is clawing her way

out. Jason only ever partially understands where Medea comes from. His staunch religious views and one-track mind prevent him from really listening to Medea and her needs. This in turn bars Medea from being able to move past the infidelity to forgive him. The play takes place on Yom Kippur, a Jewish holiday where the participants fast and atone for their transgressions. As a former practitioner of the faith, Medea is aware of the holiday's purpose but hasn't quite yet atoned for the right sins.

Please enjoy *The Medea, A Modern Adaptation in One Act*.

-Claire Trivax

Dramatis Personae

Medea (Dee) Kaufman-Hughes: of the illustrious Kaufman family, she used to work for her family's financial planning and stock broking company Kaufman and Kaufman. She is Jason's wife and mother to their two children Mathew and Noah.

Jason Hughes: A Chief financial advisor at Kaufman and Kaufman. He is the husband of Medea and father to their two children Mathew and Noah. He cheated on Medea with their nanny, Gemma.

Gemma Keller: The nanny for the Hughes family. She is a young college student about the age of 20. She is the mistress of Jason.

Dr. John Keller: A well known psychiatrist and Gemma's father.

Adam Levy: The Kaufman estate lawyer. An older man who has watched Medea grow up. He

is hopelessly in
love with her.

Priest:

The priest at Jason
and Medea's church.

Mathew and Noah Hughes:

Medea and Jason's
children. Matt is
around 8 years old.
Noah is around two
months old. Matt is
never seen.

Waiter:

a silent role.

Scene

A luxury apartment in Manhattan. A doctor's
office. A restaurant.

Time

Yom Kippur. Present Day.

Act I

Scene I

Setting:

Split stage. Early in the morning, around 8. Stage Left: an open confessional booth. There is a screen that separates the priest's side from that of the confessor. The lighting is such that you just see shadowy outlines of the facial features of the characters. Stage right: a big leather couch with a side table and television in front of it. There is a box of tissues and lamp on the table. Used tissues are strewn about the sofa and on the floor. This set is slightly different than the full living room of the Hughes family.

At Rise:

Medea is lying on the couch watching TV. She is going back and forth between watching the TV and being on her phone. She is watching a soap opera; we can hear the dialogue in the background. On the left side of the stage, Jason sits in the confessional waiting for the priest. The priest walks in, there are long shadows obscuring the audience from making out his features.

JASON

Please, forgive me father for I have sinned-

(Dialogue from television show becomes audible)

WOMAN'S VOICE

How could you do that to me? Me, of all people!

MAN'S VOICE

Please, Jessica, keep your voice down, someone at the wedding might hear you.

WOMAN'S VOICE

So? They should know what you did to me!

JASON

-I have broken the covenant of marriage and potentially ruined a girl's reputation, who was previously in good standing with the church.

(Soap Opera from television can be heard again)

WOMAN'S VOICE

You cheated on me John! Then you flaunted the relationship in front of me. You could have at least had the decency to not have fallen in love with her too.

JASON

I am filled with regret, father. I love my wife, but I am unsure of how to proceed next.

PRIEST

Is your wife aware of your transgressions?

JASON

Yes. I have already asked for her to forgive me, but she hasn't yet. Instead she has become more depressed than she already was. I am worried she's going to ask for a divorce.

PRIEST

Divorce is not allowed unless the marriage was never consummated, and I have just recently performed a baptism on your infant son. Do you also love this woman that you consorted with?

(Soap opera comes on again)

MAN'S VOICE

No! She meant nothing to me! I love you, Jess. She was just there for me in a moment of weakness.

(MEDEA gets upset)

MEDEA

LIAR!

(Starts crying, addressing the television)
You always lie! Jessica, he hasn't loved you in a long time.

(realizing the gravity of her words, she puts her head in her hands)

JASON

I don't know if I do. I care about her, but I have a family to think about.

PRIEST

Then focus on repairing your family. This young woman has tempted you and jeopardized the state of your family. You would be advised to remove her and all other temptation from your life.

(MEDEA is up and pacing around the couch)

JASON

This is all my fault. I was the one that hired her. I made Dee's life a living hell.

MEDEA

(livid, and slightly manic, still pacing, not really directly addressing anything.)
How could you do this to me? Why did it have to be her? I trusted you to be better than that. Life is unbearable now. How am I supposed to get past this? You are my whole world and I have nothing else. Oh god.

PRIEST

You are too hard on yourself, Jason. The first step to healing is forgiving yourself. God forgives all, and you must too. Realize that no one is perfect and that

PRIEST (cont.)

you must strive to be better moving forward. Now,
please recite the Act of Contrition.

MEDEA

You asked me to forgive you. How could you have
expected me to do that? You may believe that everyone
deserves forgiveness, but I don't. You give me few
options now.

(MEDEA sits down on the couch now and looks
up)

(JASON, MEDEA, and the PRIEST all recite
their prayers by taking turns)

JASON

Oh my god, I am heartily sorry for having offended
you,

MEDEA

My father, my king hear my voice, I know I will sin
before you.

PRIEST

God, the Father of mercies, through the death and
resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to
himself,

JASON

-and I detest all of my sins because of your just
punishment, but most of all because they offend you,

MEDEA

Have compassion upon me and have compassion upon my
children.

PRIEST

-and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness
of sins.

JASON

-my god, who are all good and deserving of my love.

MEDEA

My father, my king, bring an end to all of this
trouble and oppression I have felt.

PRIEST

Through the ministry of the Church, may God grant you
pardon and peace.

JASON

I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to sin
no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

MEDEA

My father, my king, please still inscribe me in the
book of life. Hear my voice, please, please, hear my
voice.

PRIEST

And I absolve you of your sins, in the name of the
Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

MEDEA & JASON

Amen.

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene II

Setting: Later that morning. A large office in Manhattan. The office is spacious with a giant oak desk at one end of it. There are large comfy leather chairs and a couch off to the side with a small coffee table for meetings. Behind the desk there is a large window overlooking the city.

At Rise: Jason is working at his desk. There is a knock at the door.

JASON

(looking up)

Come in!

(GEMMA comes walking in and looks unsure of where she should go. JASON indicates she should sit at a chair on the other side of his desk)

GEMMA

(looking at JASON tentatively)

I got your message, what did you need to talk about?

JASON

How are you, Gemma?

GEMMA

Ok. I've been feeling kind of sick lately.

JASON

I am sorry to hear that. I hope it's nothing serious!

GEMMA

UM...well depends how you look at it, but anyways, you needed to talk about something?

JASON

(looking slightly uncomfortable)

Yes...I...well..um...

(clears his throat)

As you know, I recently told my wife about us. She, well, she isn't doing well. Her depression has gotten worse and I need to focus on helping her get better.

GEMMA

That's understandable, given the situation.

(JASON looks at her inquisitively)

I mean, I would be just as messed up in her position, you are an amazing man and I wouldn't want to find out that I was sharing you. But, of course, I knew that going in...

(nervous laugh)

JASON

Ahh, well, Gemma, that means that I can't spend time with you.

GEMMA

(Looking slightly surprised)

Oh. For how long? A few days? A few weeks? A month?

JASON

I think you are misunderstanding what I'm trying to say.

GEMMA

(gets worried look on her face)

W-w-what are you trying to say?

JASON

I went to confessional earlier this morning because I have been feeling incredibly guilty for what I have done, not just to Dee, but to you. We can't keep seeing each other. You are already ruined for your future husband, there is not need to continue to repeat that sin and make matters worse for you.

GEMMA

Make matters worse? I'm not a virgin anymore. You can't undo that. Why does it matter if I continue to make love to you?

JASON

Because, you should be doing that with your future husband and because that is not the attitude to take about having sex.

GEMMA

But aren't I supposed to do that with someone I love?

JASON

If that love is your husband, yes. With me, no. How can I make you understand that your sin is worse because you had sex before you were married with a married man. That is not something you should continue to do, Gemma.

GEMMA

But you came on to me!

JASON

I wouldn't have if you hadn't dangled yourself in front of me! You knew what you were doing.

GEMMA

So this is my fault? Why can't you just leave Medea? That would solve all of our problems.

JASON

That would solve your problem. When I married Medea, I made a commitment to her and to our family in front of God. The church doesn't allow for divorces and I have no good reason to go against that.

GEMMA

You love me, and you show that by making love to me. That's a pretty good reason, I think.

JASON

(sighs and furrows his brow)

Look, I didn't make love to you. I fucked you. There is a big difference.

GEMMA

(Gets visibly upset and starts to cry)

You said you cared! You said that what we were doing was special.

JASON

I do care about you, Gemma. But I love my wife. The only reason this happened, was because she was depressed after the birth of our son, and I was lonely. You were there. I never had any intention of turning this into something serious. I was very clear about that. Why you decided to build it up as something more in your mind, I don't understand.

GEMMA

But what am I supposed to do now? I only agreed to have sex with you because I thought we would get married one day!

JASON

I don't know! You are so young and naïve. Do you really think that men want to marry women with loose morals like yourself? If you were a true Christian you would have realized that. I never once said I loved you. Look, I am sorry you thought that, but there is nothing I can do. You should go date people your age and do whatever it is young people do.

GEMMA

(crying)

How could you be so cold? You made me feel like the most important woman in the world.

JASON

Dee is the most important woman in the world to me.

GEMMA

What if you had other kids with other women?

JASON

What if? I don't, so this is a pointless question. I know you're upset, but you really need to get ahold of yourself, this is getting to be pathetic. We fucked, that's it. It's over now, so time for you to move on.

GEMMA

That is going to be pretty hard to do.

JASON

(Gets up from his desk and walks over to sit on his desk in front of GEMMA. He takes her hands in his and looks at her sympathetically)

I know it doesn't feel that way now, but you will. You are a beautiful young woman, with a caring spirit, it won't take long for you to find a man who appreciates that and can give you the life that I can't.

GEMMA

No, I won't.

JASON

(slightly annoyed)

Yes. You will. You just-

GEMMA

I'm pregnant.

JASON

(Drops her hands, looks shocked)

Shit.

End Scene.

Act I
Scene III

Setting: Living room in Jason and Dee's house. It is nicely decorated. The house they live in is modest but nice. We can clearly see that at least one of them comes from money. The extremely nice furniture and various nick-knacks indicate a certain amount of wealth that do not match up with the modest, but nice brownstone that they live in.

At Rise: JASON and MEDEA are in the living room. MEDEA is caring for their infant child on the couch. JASON is pacing near the stairwell talking on the phone in a hushed voice, frequently checking that MEDEA cannot hear him. MEDEA is periodically looking up to see who he is conversing with, thinking that he is speaking with his mistress.

JASON
(On his cell phone)
Thank you, we'll see you soon.
(Hangs up cell phone)

MEDEA
(Looking back at JASON suspiciously)
So who were you on the phone with just now?

JASON

(Walking over to MEDEA)

Not Gemma if that is who you were thinking of.

MEDEA

Yeah, because I am supposed to believe you, like when you told me you were working late all those nights on a big project, when you were really just shtupping the nanny like an animal!

JASON

(Yelling)

YES! AND I APOLOGIZED FOR THAT!

(Calming down, saying quietly and guiltily)

I'm sorry I didn't mean to yell. I wasn't on the phone with her, I swear. I was on the phone with a doctor, a good one.

MEDEA

Why? Are you sick?

JASON

No, but you are.

MEDEA

(getting defensive)

No I'm not! Dr. Pearlman said when Noah was born, he had never seen two healthier patients.

JASON

You know that isn't what I am talking about. You have been so sad and distant lately. You either randomly burst out into manic fits or don't get out of bed for days. You have stopped eating; I am worried that you are a danger to yourself.

MEDEA

The only danger to me, in this room, is you.

(Gets up with the baby to put him in the bassinet)

JASON

(He comes up behind MEDEA and puts his hands on her shoulders. MEDEA flinches)

Medea...

(takes his hands off of her, talks in a sweet tone)

JASON (cont.)

Please, (pause) please, my only interest is in getting you well again. I was on the phone with a psychiatrist. We have an appointment with him this afternoon.

MEDEA

(Still looking at the baby, she says, in a small voice)

But, I'm not crazy.

JASON

No, you are not.

MEDEA

Then why do I have to go? (voice breaking)

JASON

Because, sometimes people get overwhelmed, and they can't always help themselves out of it. You haven't been yourself and deep down you know that.

MEDEA

(turning around suddenly and yelling)

Yes, I know I haven't been my normal cheery self. I've had my whole world turned upside down by you. I was fine until you told me you cheated on me.

JASON

No, you weren't fine. Ever since Noah was born you haven't been fine.

MEDEA

THAT IS NOT TRUE! YOU BETRAYED ME!
(yelling building)

JASON

(getting upset)

Do you honestly think I wanted to?

MEDEA

Yes! After Noah, I didn't have the same hourglass figure, you prided on me having. I am the mother of your children and you found me disgusting instead of beautiful. I was twenty-eight the last time I gave birth. I'm thirty-five now and my body won't bounce back like it used to.

MEDEA (cont.)

So instead of waiting for me to get back in shape, you fucked the closest pretty young thing you could find.

JASON

(angry)

You are being irrational. I never cared about that! I am not that shallow. Yes, I love when your body is in its prime, but I didn't marry you because you were hot.

MEDEA

No, you married me for my family's money; my tight ass was just a bonus. Now that's gone, and you have my money, you have no reason to stick around. Why stay with old, decrepit me, when you can go fuck your twenty year-old whore all night long.

JASON

(yelling now too)

DO NOT CALL HER THAT!

MEDEA

(mockingly)

Wow I didn't realize you cared so much for that bitch. Did you really mean all of that stuff about me getting better? Are we even going to a psychiatrist, or is this just your way of telling me you're divorcing me?

JASON

(still angry)

NO! I genuinely care about your well-being. ~~I care about you.~~

MEDEA

You have a piss-poor way of showing it!

JASON

Do you want a divorce, Dee? Is that what you are asking me for?

MEDEA

(Anger rising again)

Is that what you want me to do? Ask you, so you don't feel as guilty for asking me? I'm not here to help you placate your guilt.

JASON

(very angry and loud)

Do you hear yourself? You are making no sense!

MEDEA

(at the top of her lungs)

WHY BECAUSE I'M FUCKING CRAZY, JASON? BECAUSE I'VE LOST IT? THAT'S ME, MEDEA- THE WOMAN WHO WENT INSANE BECAUSE OF HER BASTARD HUSBAND WHO COULDN'T KEEP HIS DICK IN HIS PANTS. JUST ADMIT THAT YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE! THEN YOU CAN STOP PRETENDING TO CARE ABOUT MY HEALTH!

(the baby starts to cry and JASON runs over to pick him up and calm him down)

JASON

(quietly, in a defeated voice)

I can't.

MEDEA

What?

JASON

(Slightly louder)

I said, I can't.

MEDEA

Why not?

JASON

(voice breaking, on the verge of crying)

Because.

(looking at her)

I love you.

(looking at Noah)

And I love our children.

MEDEA

Then why cheat on me?

JASON

(Noah has stopped crying, JASON puts him back in the bassinet)

Because of this.

(Indicating Noah)

JASON (cont.)

Something changed after Noah was born. You cried all of the time, and you could never tell me why. I would watch you sit at the window and just stare at nothing for hours. Then you stopped taking care of Noah. I had to have Gemma here MORE because I couldn't trust you to make sure that he would be fed and changed. Matt would ask me why mommy didn't love him anymore. I didn't know what to say to him, because it really seemed like it was true.

(voice cracking, crying)

I was so overwhelmed. I was watching my wife waste away to nothing. It broke my heart, because for the first time in our marriage, I couldn't do anything to help you. Gemma was just there. She listened to my problems and comforted me. You have to understand, I didn't know if I was ever going to get you back. I was mourning the loss of my wife, the love of my life.

(Slumps to the floor in front of MEDEA, pleading, grabs her hands)

Please, forgive me. She never meant anything to me. She was just there when I needed someone to help me. The only person I have ever wanted is you. Dee, I love you, believe that I do. I don't want a divorce. I don't want Gemma. I just want YOU back.

(Puts face in hands)

MEDEA

(There is a shift in her face. She recognizes, perhaps for the first time, the sincerity in his statement. She kneels down and pulls his hands into hers)

Ok.

JASON

(looks up)

You'll go?

MEDEA

(smiles)

Yes.

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene IV

Setting: Mid-Afternoon. A nice doctor's office on the upper eastside of Manhattan. There is a desk with a large bookshelf filled with psychology and psychiatry books as well as other classical literature. There is a window to the left that overlooks the city. There are two large chairs on the other side of the desk and a couch and chairs off to the right for patients.

At Rise: The doctor is sitting at his desk, looking at some files when there is a knock at the door.

DR. KELLER

Come in!

(JASON and MEDEA walk in)

Ahhhh Jason! Medea! You must be Medea! I have heard so much about you!

MEDEA

Oh great...

DR.KELLER

Come, sit down!

(gestures to the chairs on the other side of his desk, he then sits down in his seat, JASON and MEDEA follow suit)

Now, it is my understanding that you have been having some trouble lately Medea. Your husband tells me that you have been a little down and distant lately. Why don't you tell me about what has been going on?

MEDEA

(looks at JASON and then back at DR.KELLER)
Well, my husband cheated on me. It has kind of put a damper on things.

DR.KELLER

Yes, Jason has told me. He thinks that you might be having trouble though, beyond just dealing with the infidelity. Why do you think he would think that?

JASON

(Cuts in)

Yes, it's true, she has been distant and almost catatonic since Noah was born. Sometimes she becomes extremely agitated and I worry for her and for our children what could-

(DR.KELLER puts up a hand to stop JASON from speaking)

DR.KELLER

Thank you Jason, but I would like Medea to tell me how she has been feeling.

(continues to place attention on MEDEA)

MEDEA

(still looking to JASON first and then to DR.KELLER)

Yes...I guess I've been slightly off since Noah was born. But I don't think it's anything to be concerned about. I mean it might be hard to get out of bed some mornings, but who doesn't want to stay in bed sometimes.

DR.KELLER

Do you think that not wanting to get out of bed for days at a time hinders your day-to-day activities?

MEDEA

No...well maybe...but it wasn't a problem until I found out what my husband's extra-curricular activities were.

DR.KELLER

I know what Jason has put you though has been hard on you, but maybe, just maybe there is something else going with you. Did you notice any changes after Noah was born?

MEDEA

(raising her voice slightly)

This is all my husband's fault, it has nothing to do with my son! I would be fine if he were more judicious of where he placed his dick!

DR.KELLER

(calmly)

Why don't you tell me more about that? I understand you have a lovely home, two wonderful children, and all-in-all a comfy life. Why do you think Jason would want to jeopardize that?

MEDEA

I don't know! The tramp isn't even pretty! She is just thinner and younger.

DR.KELLER

So if he didn't pursue the woman for her beauty, what did he pursue her for? Is it really as simple as her age?

MEDEA

And weight...

(shifts in her seat)

I just don't understand, completely, what I did wrong.

DR.KELLER

It isn't always a matter of right and wrong. You can still do everything right and experience these kinds of issues in marriage. You didn't make any mistakes, Medea. It is all about perception and you and Jason have some sort of dissonance in what you perceive as the issues. That is not your fault or his. It will be helpful for us to examine what those differences are and help you two get on the same page again.

MEDEA

(ponders for a second)

So maybe I thought I was fine, but Jason felt neglected because I wasn't? Like I abandoned him after Noah was born? Jason, did you really feel that way?

JASON

(Grabs MEDEA's hand)

Yes, but maybe I didn't make enough of an effort to help you. I tried and got frustrated. Work was really tough during that time. One of our biggest clients

JASON (cont.)

lost millions because of a fan error on our part. I was stressed from that. I felt like you weren't there for me when I needed the emotional support because you were stuck in your own world. Between that and trying to take care of the kids, I was overwhelmed.

MEDEA

So, you cheated on me because you didn't feel supported, both in and out of the bedroom, and sought that support in Gemma.

(DR.KELLER looks up at the mention of the name Gemma, the same name as his daughter. His expression is unreadable while deep in thought.)

JASON

(with relief)

Exactly! Dee, I didn't do this to hurt you and please don't blame yourself. You aren't well.

DR.KELLER

(Snapping out of the thought he was having)
Good. We are making progress. Now Jason, why don't you go and wait outside so Medea can speak freely with me and we can decide on the next course of action to take.

JASON

Of course.

(Kisses MEDEA's hand and gets up to leave)

I will be outside waiting.

(Smiles at MEDEA and walks out)

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene V

Setting: Same doctor's office
about an hour later.

At Rise: Medea and DR. KELLER are
still talking. DR.KELLER
looks drained and rubs
his forehead. He looks
as if he has been
through a tough session.
In the last hour e has
come to the realization
that his daughter is
Jason's mistress. MEDEA
on the other hand, looks
reinvigorated. She
believes that the
session has really
helped her. It looks
like they are wrapping
up their conversation.

DR.KELLER

(slightly annoyed)

So I think, in the future, referring to the nanny as a
whore would be counterproductive to your recovery. She
may not have acted completely right in the situation
but she isn't the one you should be directing your
anger at either. While I am sure she has an
explanation for all of this, it would be best to just
let it go and forgive her so as not to expend any more
energy on the situation. At any rate, why don't we
bring your husband in so we can talk about diagnosis
and treatment?

MEDEA

That's fine by me.

DR.KELLER

(presses a button on his office phone)

Jackie, could you send Mr. Hughes in please.

(a few moments later JASON walks in through
the door)

DR.KELLER (cont.)

Good. Please take a seat Jason.

JASON

How did everything go?

MEDEA

Well! I think I'm on a good path. John, has been great here.

(smiles at JASON)

JASON

That's great to hear! It's good to see you smile, Dee.

DR.KELLER

Medea is suffering from postpartum depression. You see, most women experience what we call the "baby blues" a few days to a week after giving birth. Normally it doesn't go past that and the mother is fine. Other times it can go on longer. Given the length of time and the symptoms she is experiencing, I believe this diagnosis is most accurate. One thing I fear though, that it may turn into postpartum psychosis. Although rare, it can lead to harmful thoughts either towards herself or her child. The added stress of an infidelity in the marriage could trigger this. I believe it's best, for you- Medea- to immediately go to a private facility a colleague and I run upstate called Athens Psychiatric Care. Being around you- Jason- still upsets her and the fresh air and new environment could do her some good. I am confident that this is the best option for Medea at this time.

JASON

Are you sure it is absolutely necessary for her to be sent so far away?

DR.KELLER

Oh yes. It is best for her and the safety of her family. You said yourself that she wasn't reliable with childcare. I promise, we will take good care of her. It is a top-notch private facility with hiking paths, a spa, meditation and yoga classes, and five star dining.

(Pulls a pamphlet out of his desk drawer)

Here is a pamphlet, take a look!

JASON

(Taking the pamphlet and looking it over and handing it to MEDEA)

It does look nice. It sounds more like a vacation, Dee. You will go, get rejuvenated and come back healthy and ready to be with our family.

MEDEA

(Leafing through the pamphlet)

It does sound nice..

DR.KELLER

I can have a place available for you tonight so you can get started right away.

MEDEA

NO!

(Dials it back, clears throat)

No, can I go tomorrow? I would like some time with my children tonight before I go away, if that is all right?

DR.KELLER

I would prefer you to go as soon as possible there is a group session tonight that would really help you.

JASON

Dee, we probably should get you there tonight.

MEDEA

Please? I'll go first thing in the morning. Give me the day to be with my children.

JASON

(Softens at this, she has not taken an interest in the children in some time)

Sure, Dee. We will come in tomorrow morning.

DR.KELLER

(dryly)

Fine. I will go and make the arrangements with my secretary. She will give you the address for APC and I will expect you there at 8 am sharp, excuse me.

(Gets up to leave and walks to the door, but MEDEA stops him)

MEDEA

You know John, I never caught your last name.

DR.KELLER

Oh, my mistake, my last name is Keller. We go to the same church actually.

MEDEA

(Looks at DR.KELLER nervously, realizing where she knows him from)

You don't happen to have a daughter do you?

DR.KELLER

Yes, Gemma

(Stresses the word "nanny")

She is your nanny.

(Smiles and leaves, closing the door behind him)

(MEDEA turns pale and looks as if she has just seen a ghost. She realizes she has just said incredibly nasty things about her psychiatrist's daughter. She waits for the door to close and regains her composure. She turns to JASON, furious.)

MEDEA

Oh my god, Jason! You brought me to your mistress's father? You're either a huge idiot or you thought I was one. Did you really think I would be ok with this once I found out, because I was always going to find out?

JASON

Now before you get mad, he is one of the top psychiatrists in New York.

MEDEA

But not *the* top psychiatrist. You could have taken me to anyone else. I am sure Dr. Pearlman could have given you some excellent suggestions.

JASON

Look. I knew him. He came highly recommended, and he goes to our church. I accepted the fact that you chose a Jewish OB/GYN over the Catholic one I wanted. But for this, I wanted someone who shared our beliefs.

MEDEA

What is wrong with Jewish doctors? I grew up using only Jewish doctors.

(pause)

No, wait, don't try to turn this around on me. How dare you think that this was ok!

JASON

Is it really that big of a deal? Look how much he has helped you in the last hour alone! He can be the one to get you healthy again.

MEDEA

And how do you think he is going to treat me up at that facility now that he knows his *shiksa* daughter is the one you cheated on me with? That is a bit of a conflict of interest, don't you think?

JASON

Dr. Keller is a professional. He can compartmentalize. He accurately diagnosed you. I doubt he figured it out, unless you said something specific or used her name.

MEDEA

Of course I gave him specifics! I wouldn't have if I had known whom he was when we started! You really dropped the ball on this one, Jason.

JASON

Well just try not to say rude things about his daughter while he is treating you. Apologize and I'm sure everything will be fine.

MEDEA

No. I refuse to see him. Get me a new doctor.

JASON

No. He is a good doctor, who is pulling a lot of strings to get you a spot in his facility.

MEDEA

Well I am sure as hell not going to that facility so he can stop doing me favors.

JASON

Stop being unreasonable. You need to get better. You have admitted that.

MEDEA

(softens slightly)

I know that, but that doesn't mean I have to do it with Dr. Keller. How do you think that makes me feel? It's like I'm being victimized all over again. I will work to get better, but I need a different psychiatrist to do that. I fear that he will take out his anger towards you and Gemma on me, if he hasn't already.

JASON

Well I'm sorry Dee, but I am putting my foot down. He is our best option. You are going to him.

MEDEA

(Suddenly getting extremely agitated)

NO I AM NOT! How do I know that this isn't part of a plan to get rid of me so his daughter can move in on you while I'm gone and take over my life? I can't be sure that he isn't in on it or that he didn't already know before this.

JASON

I told you that he didn't know. He would be extremely upset with Gemma if he had and she would tell me. Look, you either trust my judgment here, or you don't.

MEDEA

I don't.

JASON

Then you leave me with no choice. I spoke to a lawyer during your session, just in case you acted like this. He says that if you don't take the treatment as prescribed by Dr. Keller then I have the right to take the children away from you.

MEDEA

Those children are my life! You wouldn't dare.

JASON

Yes, I would, if you don't comply. You are going tomorrow and that is that.

MEDEA

Fuck you.

(MEDEA turns and storms out the door,
leaving Jason behind in total shock.)

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene VI

Setting: A nice restaurant on the upper east side of Manhattan. The restaurant is more upscale than what an average middle class individual might attend. It has large plush red booths and a beautiful chandelier in the center of the room.

At Rise: MEDEA is sitting in a more secluded booth in the corner of the restaurant. The lights are slightly dim by her except for a candle on the center of the table. She is casually sipping a glass of red wine. There is an empty glass on the other side of the table and a bottle in the center. MEDEA is still in the same outfit she wore to the psychiatrist's office. A waiter shows ADAM LEVY to her table and she gets up to greet him.

MEDEA

(kisses ADAM on both cheeks)

Hello dear, it's so nice to see you.

(Sits back down and indicates for the WAITER to get ADAM wine. ADAM puts up his hand to stop the WAITER)

Oh right, Yom Kippur isn't quite over. I am glad you took my call.

ADAM

Of course, Medea. You know I always come when you call.

(MEDEA smiles)

Now, what's going on? You sounded very...

(pause)

distressed on the phone.

MEDEA

Things with Jason and I are quickly going south.

(pause)

I think my marriage is over, Adam.

ADAM

(Looks slightly too happy to hear the news,
but trying to look sympathetic)

Oh my poor thing, I'm so sorry. What happened?

MEDEA

(Indicating that ADAM is happy about the
news)

Does it really matter?

(sighs and shakes head)

He took me to a psychiatrist today to help me work
through my "issues."

ADAM

What issues?

MEDEA

I don't know. Apparently I have postpartum depression
or something like that.

(waves hands in a dismissive fashion)

ADAM

That doesn't make any sense. In all the time I have
known you, and it has been a long time, you have never
had debilitating depression like that.

MEDEA

(Looking grateful for the validation)

I know! It's unbelievable! The doctor thinks I might
develop postpartum psychosis. But that's not even the
worst part.

ADAM

(Looks at her inquisitively)
What's worse than being falsely diagnosed?

MEDEA

The psychiatrist is that little *shiksa's* father and he and Jason want to send me to a facility upstate for treatment, where he can do god knows what to me and Jason can continue to fuck her. For all I know, they conspired together on this.

ADAM

Well I suppose it's possible they did. At least the girl isn't pregnant.

MEDEA

(laughs incredulously)
A small consolation prize, there is no bastard to take my sons' inheritance away.

ADAM

(pause)
So, why, my dear, did you want to meet today? I'm not really a divorce attorney.

MEDEA

I know that. I'm not asking you to help me divorce him.

(Grabs ADAM's hands and takes them into hers.)

I AM asking you, old friend, for some advice on how to proceed. You have worked for my father and for my family ever since I can remember. You watched me grow up and through that I have grown quite fond of you.

(ADAM smiles at this)

My father trusts you with the most intimate details of his life and I need your advice now. Jason threatened to take Matt and Noah from me if I don't go to that treatment center. He said legally, he could. I need to know if that is actually possible.

ADAM

(leaning back slightly)
Well, it is if he believes that you are a danger to the kids and can convince a judge of that. They can

ADAM (cont.)

remove your kids from your care until you comply with an order to seek treatment.

MEDEA

(Removes her hands from ADAM's in a tissy)
That is ridiculous! I'm not a danger to my kids!

ADAM

But he believes you are. It would be risky to call his bluff, and he just had a well-regarded psychiatrist in the community diagnose you with a mental illness that can be harmful to a mother's children.

MEDEA

But he's the father of my husband's mistress, which has to help me in some way.

ADAM

Maybe. You could argue it's all part of a conspiracy, that Jason took you to a doctor he knew would diagnose you a certain way to get you to this facility.

(MEDEA looks hopeful. ADAM quickly dismisses that hope)

That would be almost impossible to prove unless you had texts, emails, or recorded phone calls between them, explicitly stating that those were his intentions. IF you were able to get his diagnosis thrown out, you would then have to find a different psychiatrist to re-diagnose you, and if he found the same issues then you would be out of luck. Bottom line, my dear, you would have a long road ahead of you.

MEDEA

(Frustrated)

Honestly, this would be so much easier if the kids weren't a factor. I could just not go, without fear of retribution from Jason.

ADAM

It would. But unfortunately they are the most important issues in all of this.

MEDEA

(Semi-jokingly, laughing slightly)
Maybe I should get them out of the way, like Casey Anthony did with her daughter.

ADAM

(Looking slightly confused and not understanding what MEDEA is implying)
Well, I would never condone murder as a way to solve your problems...

MEDEA

Oh, I know, neither would I. It would solve my problems though, you know if the kids weren't around. I just mean she was lucky; she got off completely.

ADAM

She wasn't as lucky as you might think. She had a good defense team, and it was a highly publicized case. The prosecutor overcharged and she was able to create reasonable doubt with the lack of concrete evidence and her mental state at the time.

MEDEA

I thought her mental state wasn't the main part of her defense.

ADAM

It wasn't but it's a good strategy if you're actually mentally ill or can at least convince people you are.

MEDEA

(Looking curiously at ADAM with newfound interest)
How so?

ADAM

Well, assuming she was mentally incompetent at the time of the murder, if she could prove that, she could give a not guilty plea by reason of mental disease or defect. Her attorney would then attempt to prove that to a jury. IF she were found not guilty she would then most likely spend some time in a state mental facility for a year, max, and be released as long as she was found competent.

MEDEA

(Semi-sarcastically)

It all sounds so easy when you say it like that.

ADAM

Well I suppose so.

MEDEA

(ponders for a moment)

Adam, my love, what should I do? I have nowhere to go.

ADAM

(Perks up at the phrase 'my love')

You could stay with me awhile. I'll protect you from Jason and help you any way I can.

MEDEA

(looks at him and smiles slightly and leans in to table and strokes ADAM's hand)

Things have gotten to be too much for me to handle here, it seems. I think I'll go stir crazy if I don't get out of the city soon. Darling, why don't we go away for awhile instead, just the two of us? Maybe we could go somewhere warm like Rio?

(looks at ADAM intently with a slight seductiveness behind her eyes and mouth)

ADAM

What about your family?

MEDEA

Well, from what you have just said it sounds like it's a battle not worth fighting right now.

ADAM

Sounds fair. I am not sure we should travel together though. I can leave today and have a house ready for you by tomorrow afternoon. All you have to do is get there. It will be perfect.

ADAM

(ADAM still looks hesitant)

Are you sure this is what you want?

MEDEA

(Smiles sweetly)

Of course I am, my love,

(looking slightly forlorn)

MEDEA (cont.)

there is no doubt in my mind.

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene VII

Setting: MEDEA and JASON's home. Nighttime. Living Room. While it was previously messy and not kept, it has been cleaned. There are some craft supplies out on the coffee table where Gemma had been doing crafts with Matt earlier in the evening. Everything is in its place and put together. The bassinet is off to the right.

At Rise: GEMMA is holding Noah on the couch. She is feeding him a bottle and rocking him back and forth. MEDEA suddenly walks through the door looking triumphant and happy. She then notices the scene unfolding in front of her.

MEDEA

What's going on here?

GEMMA

(Looking up, startled and nervous)

Oh hi. I was just feeding Noah a bottle before putting him to bed. Matt is already upstairs asleep.

MEDEA

I can see that. What I don't understand, though, is why you're the one doing it.

GEMMA

Jason called me. He said you flew the coup after your visit with my father. He went out to look for you and needed someone who was familiar with the kids he searched for you.

MEDEA

Well I'm here now so you can leave.

GEMMA

(mumbles)

You weren't always here.

MEDEA

(Anger rising)

Excuse me? What did you just say?

GEMMA

(Looks at MEDEA matter-of-factly)

You weren't always here.

MEDEA

(Louder)

And you were? Are you kidding me?

GEMMA

Shhh, keep your voice down, you'll wake Noah up.

MEDEA

(quiets down and crosses to take Noah from

GEMMA)

Don't tell me to quiet down, and give me my son.

(crosses to bassinet and puts Noah in it,

looks at him for a moment, takes a deep

breath, and while still facing the bassinet)

I think you better leave now.

GEMMA

(She gets up to leave but pauses)

I am sorry, you know.

MEDEA

(scoffs at that)

Please.

GEMMA

(takes a step closer)

I am, Dee. I didn't intend to cause you this much pain.

MEDEA

Intensions mean nothing, without follow through on them.

GEMMA

I know. And I know that we will never be as close as we once were, but I will work to get back into your good graces, for all our sakes.

(Looks at her stomach)

MEDEA

Why bother? You will never be allowed in this house again.

GEMMA

I am trying to seek your forgiveness, Medea. And isn't that for Jason to decide? It's his house.

MEDEA

That he paid for with my money.

(Turns around abruptly)

And you know something? I don't really care what Jason has to say about it.

(Walks towards GEMMA)

Over the past 10 years I have had my job taken from me, my religion, my family, my youth, my husband, my sanity, and now my kids maybe. I am not going to let some shiksa like you tell me that now the power I hold in my house will be taken from me as well.

GEMMA

(puts hands up in defense)

Ok, ok, but I might not ever be completely out of your life.

MEDEA

What do you mean?

GEMMA

Jason is going to leave you for me.

MEDEA

(Making a realization)

That was your plan all along wasn't it? You started working here so you could steal my husband!

GEMMA

No, I started working here because I needed a job while I was in college that worked with my schedule!

MEDEA

And then you saw an opportunity open up for you that meant more money and no more college.

(accusatory, points at GEMMA)

You seduced my husband!

GEMMA

No! You have it all wrong! He came on to me! It just sort of happened one night, I swear! I had just put Noah down and you were asleep. I was cleaning up the living room when Jason came downstairs looking upset. I just listened to him talk and then he kissed me and-

MEDEA

(cuts GEMMA off)

ENOUGH! I don't want to hear the sordid details. You knew just how get at him. You and I used to talk all of the time. I shared intimate details about my marriage with you and you used them against me to get to Jason! I considered you a trusted friend!

GEMMA

You can trust me! I am trying to right this wrong. I want to be friends again.

MEDEA

You can't ever do that and I will never trust you. You are pathetically optimistic. Any friendship you thought we had was gone the moment your thin, dry lips touched my husband's.

GEMMA

I couldn't help myself. No man had ever paid any attention to me like that.

MEDEA

I understand why. You are so plain. Not exactly his normal type.

GEMMA

Look, I'm trying to get you to understand. I'm not making excuses.

MEDEA

No? I will never understand you *goyem*. You condemn everyone to hell for their trivial missteps, but can't admit when you've sinned more than the rest of them.

MEDEA (cont.)

You fucked a married man, you ruined your family's reputation and you disappointed your father.

GEMMA

And I feel guilty for that! But God forgives all sins.

MEDEA

He does so just a little too easily, I am afraid. What consequences have you suffered? Other than feeling guilty.

GEMMA

I have gone through a lot. Our church will cast me out if they find out what I did. My father will disown me, and I have suffered a broken heart.

MEDEA

(laughs mockingly)

That's it? Boy, it sure is all about you, isn't it? Poor little me, poor Gemma, poor fragile, damaged goods Gemma. "No other man will ever want me because of my archaic views on marriage and sex. I'm ruined now!"

(laughs at her own joke)

Grow up; it's the twenty-first century.

GEMMA

(upset, tears in eyes)

Your virginity may not have meant anything to you but it meant a lot to me, and I lost it to a man I'm not married to.

MEDEA

You're right. You aren't married to him, I am. And this delusional fantasy of yours that he is going to leave me, a well-bred, connected, and educated woman, for a cheap and tawdry whore like yourself is ridiculous.

GEMMA

(Crying)

That is not true! He loves me!

MEDEA

(Enjoying herself)

Is that what he told you? Oh honey, he just wanted to get into your pants so he could deflower you. Men love

MEDEA (cont.)

fucking virgins. It makes them feel important. He would have told you he could make you queen of New York, if he thought that would get you to open your legs. It sounds like it didn't take much for you to spread 'em anyways.

GEMMA

(Really upset now)

Stop it! STOP IT!

MEDEA

(Smiling maniacally, getting closer to

GEMMA)

I bet all those years of Sunday school where they taught you to repress your sexuality, made you so ready, you offered yourself to him. You are so simple and ugly; you knew you would never get anyone to notice you. By the time you came here, you were so desperate for a man's touch, you forgot about all of those good Christian morals that had been instilled in you. You gave it up so easily and asked for so little in return. You need to learn that sex is a woman's greatest tool and you forgot to use it properly. You really did just blunder your way through all of this, didn't you? Oh, Gemma it's almost laughable now that I was ever threatened by you.

GEMMA

(in between sobs)

He is going to leave you, you know.

MEDEA

(mocking)

Oh right, because he loves you. Jason doesn't believe in divorce and I don't intend on divorcing him myself right now so you are shit out of luck, my dear.

GEMMA

He changed his mind!

MEDEA

He would never do that, even if he were in love with you. We have children together and he wouldn't want to leave them.

GEMMA

He might if he thought that he was going to have a child out of wedlock...

MEDEA

(Face falls, Heart drops to the pit of her stomach)

No...

GEMMA

Yes.

(more triumphantly)

So I guess, that means you two are splitting up.

MEDEA

You little bitch! You fucking whore!

GEMMA

Now there is no need for name-calling!

(Smiles)

You really only have yourself to blame. If you weren't so fucking crazy, you wouldn't have driven Jason away, straight into my arms. I wasn't lying when I said I didn't plan this, but it sure worked out in my favor, didn't it?

MEDEA

(The anger is visibly rising in her face, but keeping an even tone, making one last attempt to jab GEMMA)

I bet he asks you for an abortion by the end of the day.

GEMMA

(Stepping towards MEDEA so they are close)

Not likely.

MEDEA

(Suddenly loses her temper and grabs GEMMA by the throat and throws her onto the couch)

No? Then how about I give you one myself.

(MEDEA continues to choke GEMMA. She is trying her best to fight MEDEA off, but MEDEA is much stronger. MEDEA goes to reach for a pair of scissors that are on the coffee table. As she is reaching, she has to let go of GEMMA with one of her hands, and

while she is doing this, GEMMA manages to
push MEDEA away and run out the door.)

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene VIII

Setting: Empty street corner. It is dark outside except for the street lamp that illuminates the corner. It looks to be a nice street, somewhere within walking distance of Jason and Medea's house.

At Rise: Gemma is hysterical. She is crying and pacing back and forth on the street corner. She is talking on the phone with Jason.

Gemma

(in between sobs)

Are- are you- almost here?

Jason

(on phone)

Yes, I am two seconds away just hold on.

Gemma

Oh- oh kay.

(Jason arrives and rushes to Gemma and she melts into his arms sobbing uncontrollably. Jason pats her head and holds her, but seems slightly impatient)

Jason

What happened? You said on the phone Dee got home?

Gemma

(looks up at him and sniffles)

Yes. She came home and was upset I was there. She was so angry. We got into a fight and-

Jason

(cuts Gemma off)

Did she do something? Did the children see? Oh god, she didn't hurt the children, did she?

Gemma

(backs away from Jason, annoyed that he didn't ask if she was the one hurt. She is still upset)

No! She hurt me, thanks for asking!

Jason

Did you do something to provoke her?

Gemma

No! I don't know...maybe. She called me a whore!

Jason

Ok, ok... when you say she hurt you, what did she do?

Gemma

(grabbing onto Jason again)

It was horrible. She lunged at me and choked me. She wrestled me to the couch and took a pair of scissors out...She tried to...I don't know...cut out our child! If I hadn't kicked her, I don't know what would have happened. Jason she tried to kill me!

Jason

(getting angry)

Dear lord, will the charades never end? I am so sorry she did that to you. Why don't you go home and rest. Don't tell anyone about this, especially your father. I will go take care of this right now!

Gemma

What are you going to do?

Jason

I am committing her tonight; she can rot in that loony bin for all I care! It is going to be ok, Gemma. This is the last straw. I can't let this go on.

(Jason gives Gemma a quick kiss on the forehead and turns to leave)

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene IX

Setting: Living room. The room looks the same as it has in other scenes. The bassinet is in front of the couch.

At Rise: Medea is sitting on the couch rocking the bassinet back and forth. She is looking at her child with sadness in her eyes.

Medea

(Addressing a sleeping Noah)

Oh Noah... What has become of me? Look at your mother, and tell me how everything could have gone so wrong. I was happy, we were happy, and then it all went to shit.

(Pauses)

Pity your mother, Noah. Pity her for all of the injustices she has suffered at the hands of her husband, that he can still have so much power over her even in today. Pity the injustices she must still endure for this to end.

(Looks down at Noah)

Oh *mine kleyne sheyna punim*, you too will have a wife someday.

(Picking up a sleeping Noah)

And I am sure she will be beautiful and kind, but you will inevitably put her through the same trials that your father has put me through. Because that's what men do and have done since the beginning of time. And your wife will do what women have always done. She will give herself to you completely and lose her career, her faith, and her identity in the process, all for you, my sweet boy. It never changes. She will work hard to keep you interested and keep your eye from wandering. She'll put large amounts of money into her appearance to do this. Your wife is smart, she knows that youth is fleeting and men are only interested in what's shiny and new. The woman you love will have changed completely by the end of your

MEDEA (cont.)

marriage. No matter what they tell you, everything changes when you're in love.

(Puts Noah back in the Looks out toward the audience)

And I was so in love. I remember meeting him at the office my brother ran. He was a low level stockbroker there and I was a successful personal financial advisor working in the adjoining office. One day I was grabbing my brother for lunch, when we spotted each other. He came up and introduced himself. Oh he was so charming and handsome, Noah. Jason was the most captivating man I had ever met. He courted me to the highest degree and made me feel like the most important person in the world. I was head over heels, crazy in love with him and when he proposed, I said yes without a second thought, when I should have. And now, my *sheyna kinder*, he treats me like an invalid and says I am insane. Who knows, maybe I am. Maybe I haven't been sane since before I met Jason. Love does that to you. You don't think clearly and you are willing to give up everything because you think it's a small price to pay for spending the rest of your life with this amazing person. God you would have to be crazy to do that.

(chuckles to herself and tears shine in her eyes)

Mommy is going to have to go away for awhile, Noah. She has lost her way and needs to go find it.

(voice starts to break)

I don't- (pause) I don't know when I will be back. B-b-but mommy loves you and your brother so very much.

(slumps down to the ground next to the bassinet with one hand still on the top of it. She breaks down and cries in loud, heaving sobs. Her cries are heartbreaking to anyone listening.)

I gave up my life for him and this is what I get?

(in between sobs)

I didn't even get to keep my religion-My family hates me for that. I betrayed them. I don't have anyone left- no prospects- no job-

(sits there for a beat and then calms herself down. She wipes the tears from her face and gets up.)

God, who am I? Poor Medea?

(In a mocking tone)

'Pity me! Pity me! Poor me!'

MEDEA (cont.)

(Laughs loudly then, more resolute)

No more pitying. It's pathetic. There are those sobbing fits Jason references ha. Maybe I am depressed.

(starts to pace)

I refuse to let this continue. I am Medea-Fuckin'-Kaufman for god sakes. I was a shark in the business world. Employees used to run when they saw me coming. They would laugh at me now. Enough is enough. Jason needs to know that all of this bullshit is over. I am going to make him understand where I am coming from and then I am going get my life back.

(Medea exits triumphantly up the stairs)

Blackout.

End Scene.

Act I

Scene X

Setting: MEDEA and JASON's living room. The bassinet is off to the left significantly farther away from the couch than it has been previously.

At Rise: There is a bottle of red wine on the coffee table with two glasses next to it. The craft supplies have been put away in a bin labeled 'craft supplies' near the bassinet. There is a small suitcase behind the couch out of sight. MEDEA is opening the bottle and then proceeds to pour a glass for herself. She goes over to check on Noah and then listens for noise upstairs. She then walks back over to the couch and takes a sip of her wine. MEDEA is dressed in a seductive cocktail dress and has her hair and make up done nicely. She looks extremely put together. She finishes taking a sip from her wine when JASON enters through the door.

JASON

(Storming in)

Where do you get off, attacking Gemma like that!

MEDEA

(Without missing a beat or acknowledging JASON's anger)

Would you like a glass of wine, dear?

JASON

(Confused and taken aback)

What?

MEDEA

(sighs)

Wine, dear. You look like you've had a long day and could use a glass.

JASON

(Really taking a moment to look at MEDEA for the first time since he entered the room)

What is with you? You look-

MEDEA

(Cuts off JASON)

Normal? It's amazing what a little make up and hairspray can do.

JASON

(semi-amazed, sits down on the couch, looking MEDEA up and down)

And a dress...

(MEDEA goes to pour a second glass of wine, when JASON grabs her wrist to stop her)

Forget the wine. Why the sudden interest in your appearance?

MEDEA

Well you stopped taking an interest in it, so I did.

(Takes JASON's hand off of her wrist, finishes pouring JASON a glass of wine, hands it to him, which he accepts, and moves to sit next to him on the couch)

JASON

I suppose I did, what a mistake that was...

(trailing off again)

MEDEA

Now, you were yelling about me attacking Gemma?

JASON

(Taking a sip of wine and relaxing slightly)

Yes. She says you took a pair of scissors and tried to give her an abortion.

MEDEA

(looking stunned)

What? That is absurd. Do you really think I would do something like that? Honestly, Jason, I know you think I have been a little off since Noah, was born but resorting to something like that? Absolutely ridiculous. She is making up stories to poison you against me. She clearly still loves you.

JASON

Yeah, that I know.

(Pauses)

Dee-

(searching for the words to say, not really looking at MEDEA)

Do you?

MEDEA

Do I what?

JASON

Still love me.

(Still avoiding eye contact with MEDEA)

MEDEA

(Takes a moment to think)

Yes. I do.

JASON

Despite everything?

MEDEA

Yes.

(Moves closer to JASON)

Jason, I didn't act the way I did, because I didn't love you anymore. You hurt me, more than anyone ever has, and that's only because I love you more than I have ever loved anyone.

JASON

I just figured, after everything, you would hate me.

MEDEA

Love and hate are cut from the same cloth. It doesn't take much for one to turn into the other.

(As if to anticipate JASON's disappointment)

But, that doesn't mean that they can't turn back.

JASON

(looks at MEDEA)

I love you, and I don't want to have to loose you.
(Looking away and ringing hands, said as a
bit of an afterthought)
Not just yet.

MEDEA

(Kneeling beside JASON on the couch, she
guides his face with her hands so that his
gaze meets hers)

You don't have to. We were an amazing couple, and we
can be again. Do you remember what Dan, from the third
floor said?

(Lightly petting JASON's head with her
hands)

JASON

(Laughs)

Yea, he said we were one for the books, a modern-day
fairy tale with a healthy dose of reality. All in all,
(smiling at this)
a perfect couple.

(JASON takes MEDEA's hand from his face and
kisses it. He then leans in and kisses MEDEA
on the lips. She deepens the kiss and JASON
pulls her onto his lap. They fully embrace
each other. This is the first time MEDEA and
JASON have had any intimate encounter since
before Noah was born. JASON is, at first,
slightly overcautious not to overstep his
bounds, but MEDEA reassures him and he
relaxes into her. Their movements are hasty
and clumsy as if they cannot get closer fast
enough, and JASON grabs MEDEA and lays her
on her back. He gets on top of her and takes
off his tie. JASON leans down to continue to
kiss MEDEA, and then his phone rings and
they are interrupted. JASON grabs his phone,
looks at the caller, and gets off of MEDEA
to answer it, slightly out of breath)

Hello.

(Voice on the other end speaks)

No, I didn't. Not yet.

(Voice can be heard again)

I will, ok? I'll call you later and we can talk about
it then.

JASON (cont.)

(says flatly)

Bye.

(Hangs up phone and goes back over to MEDEA,
but the moment has been ruined. She is
sitting up now)

MEDEA

(quasi-casually)

So what is it you didn't do yet?

JASON

Nothing,

(sitting down next to MEDEA)

not really anyways. It can wait until after we finish.

(Goes to kiss MEDEA and is denied)

MEDEA

What did Gemma want?

JASON

She was asking if I had talked to you about her
current situation.

MEDEA

Her alleged pregnancy?

JASON

Yes...she is pregnant.

MEDEA

Have you seen the test results?

JASON

No...but she has no reason to lie about something like
that.

MEDEA

Jason, she has every reason to do that! It's a great
way to get you to stay with her and leave me.

JASON

Uh, huh, and what happens when she isn't showing, she
can't fake that!

MEDEA

Oh there are ways. All she has to do is tell you she miscarried two months in. That way you're already stuck with her and I'm out of the picture.

JASON

I doubt she's capable of all of that. Gemma is a simple girl who doesn't understand how to deceive. Besides, who would want to build a relationship based on lies?

MEDEA

Yes, who would Jason?

JASON

Hey, that's not fair! I told you the truth. I came clean.

MEDEA

Yea, a month into it and I am not the only one you lied to. You got Gemma to sleep with you with promises of love and marriage. I know you don't really care for her that much. Look, you need to tell the *shiksa* to show some proof and then, if she is pregnant, tell her to get rid of it or something.

JASON

We are Catholic, and it's my child, I can't just tell her to get an abortion.

MEDEA

Why not? It's not like you have been the best with following Christian morals in the past, what is one more, exception?

JASON

This one involves killing a child that happens to be my own.

MEDEA

Assuming you were the only man she was sleeping with at the time.

JASON

I was! I was the first and only man to ever make love to her.

MEDEA

Oh so it's make love now?

(Laughs sarcastically)

No wonder she's so attached, you popped her cherry and she can't get over it.

JASON

And she's carrying my child.

MEDEA

Yes, and how do you propose we get past that, assuming all of this is true?

JASON

I don't know, Dee. I thought I did.

(Leans over to pull MEDEA back on his lap)

Let's just figure that out later.

(Looking her up and down and talking in between kissing her neck)

I would hate for all of your efforts to look sexy go to waste. Lord, have mercy on me.

(MEDEA gives in slightly. JASON goes to unzip her dress)

MEDEA

Indeed, may he have mercy.

(MEDEA lets JASON continue for a moment longer and then snaps out of it)

Jason, this is a real issue that we need to address.

JASON

(murmuring in between kisses)

Mmmhmm, and we can figure this out later. Dee, it's been so long since we-

MEDEA

(cutting in)

-had sex, I know.

(Suddenly realizing she can use that fact to her advantage and feigns interest in the subject)

Maybe it's time then.

JASON

(looks up at her)

Really?

MEDEA

(Leaning into JASON)

Mmhmm.

(Smiles and proceeds to take control. MEDEA starts to unbutton JASON's shirt and kisses his neck. JASON appears to be enjoying himself and MEDEA senses that. She continues to work him over and in between movements speaks)

So...you said...you thought...you'd it figured out?

JASON

(Not paying full attention to what MEDEA is saying)

What?

MEDEA

(Still working JASON over but speaking with more agency)

You figured out a certain problem of ours.

JASON

Ahhh...maybe...I thought I did.

MEDEA

What was your solution?

JASON

Irrelevant.

MEDEA

Come on, what was it?

JASON

(laughs slightly)

Something that wouldn't make you happy.

MEDEA

Oh?

JASON

Mhmm, I was going to leave you.

MEDEA

And now?

JASON

I don't know, I still might. But, fuck, you were just so inviting...

MEDEA

(Abruptly stops what she is doing to JASON and gets off of him)

So you were going to fuck and dump me?

JASON

Well, no. I was just going to tell you I want a divorce. Besides isn't that what you want, anyways?

MEDEA

Don't presume to know what I want! I was hoping that we could reconcile! Clearly you came here with other intentions!

JASON

Maybe, but you have to understand, the children I had with you are legitimate. How could you ask me to deny that right to my other child?

MEDEA

It was conceived illegitimately, marrying Gemma wouldn't change that.

JASON

Yes it would. He would be born into a family where his parents were together.

MEDEA

And your sons with me grow up in a world where their father abandoned them!

JASON

They will understand. It's a man's duty to do right by his family, whichever one that may be.

MEDEA

And what about to his wife? You said you still loved me! You said that all you wanted in this world was me and that Gemma didn't matter. What changed?

JASON

I thought about it and after everything that has happened today, it seems like the better option for both of us. We are bad for each other, Dee.

MEDEA

(Upset, turns away from JASON and delivers line over her shoulder)
You don't even love her or like her that much!

JASON

I care for her more than you believe I do.

MEDEA

(Turns around)
That isn't the same thing! The only reason you give a damn about her is because she is supposedly having your child. You love me. Let her have her child; I don't care, but stay with me, please.

JASON

I don't know if I can. You aren't well. Just because you put on nice clothes and make-up doesn't mean you are any better. I don't put it past you to have attacked Gemma and I wouldn't put it past you to do something worse!

MEDEA

Something worse? Jason, I did all of this
(Indicating the wine and her outfit)
to prove to you I can get better! You proved to me that you were up to helping me get there, and now I am returning the favor, but as soon as I try you abandon me, why?

JASON

Because I realized it's just too hard.

MEDEA

That is a poor excuse and you know it!

JASON

(angry)
Well I don't know what to tell you! I may not be in love with Gemma but I will ruin that girl's life if I don't step up.

MEDEA

So step up! Support her financially and visit the kid when it's born. Be there for the child and be here for this family.

JASON

What family? We haven't had any semblance of a real family for months! You abandoned us first!

MEDEA

And I am trying not to do that again!

JASON

(emotional, upset, tears in his eyes)

Well it's too late. You had your chance. When I walked in I was planning to ask for a divorce, and then you looked so sexy, so much like your old self, that I forgot, for a moment, everything else that had happened. But I can't forget what you did to this family, the toll it took on my boys and on me. You ruined this family with your withdrawal from it.

MEDEA

(Tears in her eyes)

You said that was because of a supposed mental illness I had. How can you blame me if you truly believe that I am unwell, unless you really never did?

JASON

(Sitting down on the couch)

I did. But I thought you could change and get better.

MEDEA

You haven't given me the chance to!

JASON

I gave you plenty of time. You thwarted me at every attempt to help you. There is only so much I can do. I am done!

(JASON puts his head in his hands and silently cries. MEDEA looks stunned at first, and then as the reality washes over her, breaks down and turns away hugging herself tightly. She sighs heavily, attempting to curb her sobs, but cannot get her cries under control. JASON looks up momentarily and cannot stand to look at her

so he puts his face back in his hands. He collects himself and looks up again, and speaks with a voice still heavy with emotion)

I-I am sorry.

(more even toned)

I think it's best you still go to Dr. Keller's facility.

MEDEA

(Turns to look at JASON, voice uneven and raw)

You would still have me go there?

JASON

It will give you time to recuperate from all of this.

MEDEA

(Looking out into space towards the audience and speaks under her breath)

It never ends, does it?

JASON

What?

MEDEA

(Looks at JASON with a distant expression)

Nothing.

(MEDEA goes over to the bassinet where Noah is sleeping and gazes at him)

JASON

(Not really noticing MEDEA's actions and getting down to business)

He can be here in an hour if we need him to be.

(MEDEA sees the pair of scissors she used earlier from the bin next to the bassinet the bassinet and grabs them)

All we have to do is call.

MEDEA

(has a look of incredible pain on her face, she whispers to Noah)

I am so sorry *mine kleyne sheyna kinder*.

(She is stroking Noah's face)

JASON

Once you are at the facility, you will be assigned a new doctor. I understand now, that it will probably be best for everyone involved.

(MEDEA covers Noah's mouth and with the scissors in the other hand, quickly stabs him in the heart and twists the scissors. Noah immediately stops moving. MEDEA removes the scissors from his chest, wraps him in a blanket and holds him tightly to her chest)

I know you may not see it now, Medea, but it will help you. You will be in a better position to deal with the divorce when you return. You'll have had time to move forward and then we can discuss custody and all of that. Things will go a lot smoother. What do you think?

(MEDEA turns around with Noah still tightly pressed against her. She is silently shedding tears and unable to speak. JASON ushers her closer)

Don't be sad. I promise I will have the new nanny I hire bring Noah and Matt to see you every week. You won't be separated from your baby for too long.

MEDEA

(A jolt of sadness hits her)

But I will. I'll be separated from him for a very long time.

JASON

You are exaggerating. It will be a month, two at most. And you will see him every chance we can get to have him taken to you.

MEDEA

It's going to be longer than that, I'm afraid.

JASON

No, it really won't.

(Suddenly notices something odd)

Medea, why are grasping Noah so tightly? You are going to suffocate him with a grip like that.

MEDEA

It's not hurting him, I promise.

JASON

(Realizing that something terrible is amiss)
May I hold him, just until we sort things out?

(MEDEA hands him the dead child wrapped in blankets. JASON takes Noah with great care and then pulls back some of the blankets, and discovers the crimson wound in his chest. JASON looks as if he has been stabbed himself. He utters a terrible shriek of loss. MEDEA wipes away her tears and looks at him coldly with a hint of satisfaction in her eyes. JASON looks at her. He continues to wail and weep, muttering nonsensical phrases)

No, no, noo, nooooo. My son. My beautiful son. No.
This can't- I-I, why? My son...my son

(MEDEA silently walks away towards the door and grabs a suitcase from behind the couch. The lights blackout before she reaches the door)

End Scene.

Social Media Accounts

Medea Kaufman-Hughes*:	Twitter @dee_kaufman1980 Instagram dee_kaufman1980
Jason Hughes*:	Twitter @jdog_hughes1983 Instagram jdog_hughes1983
Gemma Keller*:	Twitter @gembabel1995 Instagram gembabel1995
Dr. John Keller*:	Facebook only**
Adam Levy*:	Face book only**

*The Facebook accounts use the character's full names as they appear in the script.

**These characters are much older and therefore would not have much use for Twitter and Instagram.