



# M E D E A ;

OR,

THE BEST OF MOTHERS,  
WITH A BRUTE OF A HUSBAND

A Burlesque,

IN ONE ACT,

BY

ROBERT B. BROUGH,

AUTHOR OF

*Twelve Labours of Hercules—Lord Bateman's Overland Journey—The Moustache Movement—Kensington Gardens—*

AND JOINTLY OF

*The Enchanted Isle—Mephistopheles—Sphinx—Ivanhoe, &c. &*

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THOMAS HAILES LACY,

WELLINGTON STREET,

STRAND,

LONDON

MEDEA.

*Originally produced at the Royal Olympic Theatre,  
On Monday, July 14th, 1856.*

CHARACTERS.

- CREON, (*King of Corinth, a tyrant of the old school, a genuine Greek, but nevertheless a terrible Turk*) - MR. EMERY.
- JASON, (*a hero of antiquity, of fabulous courage, about to marry the second time without the slightest hesitation*) ---- MISS JULIA ST. GEORGE.
- ORPHEUS, (*his intolerably good-natured friend, first fiddle at the ancient concerts, Corinth*) - - - MISS FANNY TERNAN.
- A CORINTHIAN (*of excitable temperament*)-- MR. E. CLIFTON.
- LYCAON, } (two miniature souvenirs of Jason, left for Medea to keep) } MISS ROSINA RANOE.  
MELANTHE, } MISS CONWAY.
- MEDEA, (*a conjugal lesson, surpassing in intensity anything of a similar description attempted even at this establishment, an awful warning to every single individual*) --- MR. F. ROBSON.
- CREUSA, (*a more agreeable prospect from the same point of view*)---- MISS BROMLEY.
- SAIREE, (*Creusa's nurse, combining the antique virtues of the good old body and the jolly old soul*) - MISS STEVENS.

SCENE I.  
A PALACE NEAR CORINTH.

*(At all events near enough for Burlesque purposes.)*

Enthusiastic Reception of a Popular Performer on his Return from the Provinces—Factious Opposition to a Proposed Measure for Legalising

**MARRIAGE WITH A NON-DECEASED  
WIFE'S RIVAL.**

ARRIVAL OF MEDEA, A RIVAL OF CREUSA,

*Mutual Explanations of the most Unsatisfactory Description.*

**Serious Disturbance, Violent Outbreak  
TREMENDOUS AGITATION !!**

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SCENE II.  
CLASSIC INTERIOR,  
WITH  
**SEVERAL COLUMNS OF THE TIMES  
DESPERATE  
BROAD-SWORD COMBAT !**

(N.B.—ONLY ALLUDED TO)

Between Miss Julia St. George, and a Giant Eighteen Feet Seven Inches in height—a Native of Greece, weighing 35 Stone, and never having had a day's illness in his life—who has been engaged expressly for the occasion !—(the Engagement resulting in his Total Defeat).

The Long-Lost Found—Melancholy Occurrence—"J" is advertised that, if he will Return to his disconsolate Wife and Family, he will hear of Something to his Advantage—but he doesn't see it!!!

SCENE III.  
**BANQUETTING HALL**  
IN THE PALACE OF CREON.

Preparations for Wedding Festivities, Illuminated by a Brilliant Effect of PHOTOGRAPHY, or SUN-WRITING, never before attempted on the Stage—An Unwelcome Guest, who will not be ejected, though everybody else is put out.

**Medea Goes to Work with a Vengeance**

Very Critical Situation—The Sorceress pours out her Vial of Wrath, and has a stopper put to it!

BARBAROUS MURDER OF TWO  
UNOFFENDING BEINGS,

(Euripides and Legouve.)

**Allegorical Groupe of Sculpture,**

DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY SIGNOR MONTI.

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COSTUME.

CREON.—Long red shirt and robe, red sandals, wig and beard, crown.

JASON.—White merino tunic, trimmed with red, red toga, fleshings, red boots, fillet of white ribbon for head.

ORPHEUS.—White merino tunic and toga, fleshings, buff sandals, laurel wreath.

CITIZENS.—Red and white shirts, fleshings, sandals.

COURTIERS.—Red and white shirts, togas, fleshings, sandals.

LYCAON. } *First dress*—Brown shirts, fleshings, and sandals.

MELANTHE. } *Second dress*—White merino shirts, trimmed with silver, fleshings, sandals.

CREUSA.—White merino train dress, trimmed with silver, white wreath.

NURSE.—Blue dress, brown long cloak, green veil.

BRIDESMAIDS.—White petticoats, blue and yellow short robes.

MEDEA.—Yellow skirt and body, trimmed with cabalistic characters in black, large brown cloak or robe, ringlet wig, ribbons in hair, sandals.

*Time of Representation—One Hour.*

M E D E A .



SCENE I.—*A public place outside the gates of Corinth. A wood of olive trees, R. H. A statue of Diana, supposed to be on the threshold of that Goddess' temple, up stage, R. C.; steps to temple, R. U. E.; at back, L. H., a hill descending in direction of the town. Flourish at the rise of curtain.*

CREON *on steps of temple, R., attended with* CITIZENS *of Corinth in the act of welcoming* ORPHEUS, C., *who is attended by a small tiger, carrying a violin in bag, &c.* JASON *standing moodily apart, L., H.*

CREON. (R.) Wandering minstrel, welcome home once more!

We trust engagements upon foreign shore  
And in provincial town, melodious cousin,  
Have brought your active bow abundant "Rosin."  
We fear'd our city you had given the slip,  
Meanly abandoning your leader-ship  
Of Corinth's orchestras; "Yes, sure enough,"  
We said, "he's cut his baton in a huff,  
"And spurning penalties of pound or dollar,  
"Thrown off his *op'ra tie* through *warmth of choler.*"  
But, minstrel, since you've calmed our fears *to-day* so  
We're glad to see you, and have come to *say* so.

A CITIZEN. (*enthusiastically.*) Cheers for the fiddler!  
Hip!

CROWD. (*vociferously.*) Hooray!

ORPHEUS. (C. *checking them with a gesture.*) My friends,  
These violin delights—have violent ends.

(to CREON, *modestly*.) Great Creon, why these honours thrust on me,

Whose services are—pshaw ! Fiddle-de-dee !

CREON. (R.) Orpheus, you give your work too mean a place,

Make for your instrument a better case.

Why, man, all classes—soldier and civilian,

Own thou hast music for at least a million.

Have we not seen thy strains their magic proving,

By num'rous instances of table moving ?

Sofas—clocks—bedsteads—capering away—

(Highly convenient on quarter day.)

Nor rests thy fame on tables' legs, or chairs!

Go ask the dancing dogs—and dancing bears.

Do we not know thy matchless reels and jigs

Can soothe the porcupines, and please the pigs ?

Could hats of coppers full e'er pay the piper,

Who from our hedge-row steals away each viper.

Whose witching melody, so softly deep

Catches the artful weasel while asleep,

Till fascinated by the cadence drop,

The interesting animal goes "pop !"

Cats, rats, bats, gnats, sprats, periwinkles, salmon—

All join the chorus of thy praises—

JASON. (L.) Gammon!

CREON. (R.) Jason, that's rude.

JASON. Is it ? I'm very sorry !

Talk common sense, then! What a pretty story !

A wretched squalling, cat-gut scraping sinner

Who sings for lunch, and whistles for his dinner—

CREON. (*interrupting mildly*.) Jason, the services to you we owe, (*crosses to C.*)

We quite admit. No gentleman we know

Of savage tribes, or pirates so defiant,

You've not your match in tackling—say—a giant.

Or when an awkward dragon's in the way

I don't care whom it's to I always say,

(Feeling, in fact, I ought, to, as a friend,)

" Jason's the party I can recommend; "

But still the crown of Orpheus wouldn't fit

Your head! you're no musician you'll admit.

There's not a single instrument you play—  
 Save your own trumpet—which *you'll crack some day.*  
*(crosses to R.)*

JASON. (*laughing scornfully.*) 'Twas ever thus—in trumpet  
 times of war,  
 Us fighting men alone you've honours for;  
 But piping times come round—our claims get mouldier,  
 You pay *the piper*—and *halfpay the soldier* !  
*(changing his tone.)*

Come, Orpheus! here's a challenge ! what d'ye say ?  
 A giant landed on these shores to day.

CREON. (*alarmed.*) No ! *(general consternation.)*

JASON. And will soon his foot this city place on.

CREON. (*eagerly, crossing to C.*) Orpheus, stand back ! My  
 lion-hearted Jason!

*(embraces JASON, who thrusts him aside.)*

JASON. (*to ORPHEUS.*) The grim Antestor! Does the title  
 strike you ? *(ORPHEUS looks alarmed.)*

I meant to settle him myself.

CREON. (*rapturously.*) Just like you.

JASON. (*to ORPHEUS.*) Perhaps you'll quell him with  
 your arts enlighten'd,

ORPHEUS. (R.) I could, if—

JASON. (L.) What?

ORPHEUS. (*laughing.*) Well! if I wasn't frighten'd.

Come, Jason, let's not quarrel, you and I—

My share of work commences by and bye.

*You* crush the foe with heart and muscle strong,

I'll sing your deeds in an undying song,

But I'm in fiddling time, it seems—that's hearty!

Creusa going to marry ? who's the party ?

CREON. (*pointing to JASON.*) the favour'd individual  
 you perceive.

ORPHEUS. (*starting,*) Jason!

CREON. Precisely ! (*aside.*) With the giant's leave.

ORPHEUS. He wed your daughter ?

JASON. (*proudly.*) Ay, sir ! why not?

ORPHEUS. You?

CREON. You've the king's word for it.

ORPHEUS. It can't be true!

CREON. Fiddler!

- ORPHEUS. (*agitated.*) A whirl of mystery and doubt  
Maddens my brain. (*to CREON and others.*) Here—all  
of you—Get out! Leave us together.
- CREON. (*indignant.*) Minstrel!
- ORPHEUS. (*impatiently.*) Will you fly?  
You won't? The pow'r of music then I'll try.  
(*seizes his violin from his attendant, who has got to R. 1 E.  
and plays it above the bridge—CREON, and all but  
JASON, run off R., U. E. and L. U. E., holding their ears in  
agony. ORPHEUS then gives back violin to attendant,  
who exits, R. 1 E.*)
- ORPHEUS. (*laughing.*) I thought that little scheme would  
not miscarry. (*comes down confronting JASON.*)  
So, my young person that's about to marry—  
Where is thy wife, Medea?
- JASON. (*L. nervously.*) Hush! don't name her—  
'Twasn't a happy match—I couldn't tame her,  
She left me in a tantrum of impatience—  
I think she's gone to stay with some relations.
- ORPHEUS. 'Tis false!
- JASON. How now?
- ORPHEUS. I know the woman's heart.
- JASON. (*rubbing his head.*) I know her hand!
- ORPHEUS. From you—Medea part?  
Why, man, that matchless woman from your side  
You couldn't drive away.
- JASON. (*aside.*) No! for I've tried.
- ORPHEUS. Or, if you had attempted it, I know  
The more you drove—the more she wouldn't go.  
She'd stay—if but to prove herself a martyr—
- JASON. Orpheus, you must admit—she *was* a Tartar?
- ORPHEUS. (*coldly.*) Sir, as the ladies' champion, I've some  
fame  
When wives are bad, the husbands are to blame.
- JASON. (*mildly.*) Cases exceptional you must admit?
- ORPHEUS. None.
- JASON. Three legg'd stools for instance?
- ORPHEUS. Not a bit.
- JASON. (*makes action of throwing.*) Projected bootjacks?
- ORPHEUS. (*shaking his head.*) Can't allow the plea.
- JASON. Candlesticks!
- ORPHEUS. Burning lights till half-past three.

JASON. At least, you'll own, no weight of female wrongs  
Can justify the use of kitchen tongs ?

ORPHEUS. In vain your plan, as innocent you'd figure me.  
*Mon petit ami*, your intention's *big-amy!*

JASON. I own it. Fate a girl has pleased to find me—  
Better than her—(*looking round nervously.*) I hope—  
I've left behind me.

SONG.—JASON,

AIR, — " *The girl I left behind me.*"

I made a slight mistake in youth,  
Experience plain has shown it;  
I was to blame, and that's the truth,  
I'm not ashamed to own it.  
A dame strong-minded I espoused,  
Who round her thumb entwined me ;  
One night in secret I "vamoused,"  
And the old girl left behind me.  
Her vixen ways of all my days  
Contrived the peace to toss awry.  
She magic spelt, and largely dealt  
In poison, cup, and sorcery.  
A wand'rer since, renown'd in war,  
All martial feelings bind me,  
Except the soldier's weakness for  
The girl I left behind me.

*Harp music, distant.*—CREUSA *appears ascending the hill,*  
L. U. E., *with her NURSE and BRIDESMAIDS, bearing*  
*garlands and offerings—they disappear.*

ORPHEUS. (*going up R.*) What strains are those?

JASON. My love, with Nurse and Bridesmaids,  
A path has down the mountain's flow'ry sides made.  
She comes to ask forgiveness of Diana,  
For her desertion of that virgin's banner.

ORPHEUS. I'll to the king at once, and let him know  
That you're a benedict already.

JASON. GO !  
Spread discord, minstrel, 'stead of harmony ;  
Say that the marriage tie's no noose to me.  
What then ? Let Creon find a champion better—  
Though he give fifty brides he'd be my debtor.

DUET.—ORPHEUS AND JASON,  
*"Sul campa della gloria."—(Belisario.)*

JASON. Decamp I will to glory, ah !  
To slay the giant, start oh!  
To Creon I am far too  
Important to let go.  
No mortal hint or story, ah!  
Can make him me overthrow—  
You'll see, see, see, &c.

ORPHEUS. In scampishness you glory, ah !  
To Creon I will start, oh !  
Your secret to impart, ah !  
He really ought to know—  
The mention of your story, oh !  
Will soon your schemes o'erthrow.  
You'll see, see, see, &c.

*Exeunt—ORPHEUS, R., and JASON, L.*

*Harp music.—Enter CREUSA, with NURSE, down platform  
L.U.E., preceded by BRIDESMAIDS, who cross stage and  
exit into temple, R. U. E.*

CREUSA. Dear Nurse, whose thoughtful care ne'er slept a  
nod,  
Or spared the child in fear to spoil the rod;  
Whose views on discipline and education,  
Fully developed, would whip all creation—  
Deck with these offerings Diana's shrin,  
To-morrow frees me from her rule and thine.

Pout not! 'Tis no great fall from honour's top ;  
 You know you always liked a *little* drop.  
 Possets of comfort you shall never lack,  
 The sherry—or, if needful, mind—the sack!

*Exit into temple, R. U. E.*

NURSE. (*solus.*) Dear, happy soul! what tenderness she  
 merits!

I'm fond of anything that's full of *sperrits*.  
 Her taste in dress so perfectly complete—  
 How I do like a little something *neat*.  
 Always so ready with her purse or needle  
 To help poor people—(*looking off, L. U. E., sees MEDEA.*  
 Beggars! Where's the beadle ?  
*Exit hastily, R. 1 E.*

*Slow Music.*—" *The Beggar's Petition,*" Enter MEDEA  
 with her two CHILDREN, one in her arms, the other by  
 her side, down platform, L. U. E. They come down c.—  
 she then puts the child down, and they stand like street  
 beggars ; the smallest child having a placard on its neck,  
 inscribed—

<p>Φα θερλεσσ          ORPHELINS          ORFANI          FATHERLESS.</p>
---

*The other has a little tin begging-box and wallet.*

MEDEA. My Grecian friends, with deep humiliation  
 I stand in this disgraceful situation.  
 Though unaccustom'd publicly to speak,  
 I have not tasted food since Tuesday week.  
 Three sets of grinders out of work you see,  
 Through the invention of machinery.  
 A landlord, as inclement as the weather,  
 Has seiz'd our flock bed—we were out of feather.  
 Shoeless and footsore, I've through many lands  
 Walked, with this pair of kids upon my hands.  
 The tear of infancy requests you'll stop it—  
 (*looking round.*) Bother! there's no one looking at  
 us—drop it! (*the CHILDREN go up R. C.*)

*Re-enter* NURSE, R. 1 E.

NURSE. I wonder where that beadle is ?  
 MEDEA. (*seeing* NURSE *for the first time—snappishly.*)  
 Here, you—  
 Is this Epirus ?  
 NURSE. Yes.  
 MEDEA. Oh ! that'll do.  
 NURSE. (*aside.*) She must be some of the better sort,  
 To take a common person up so short.  
 MEDEA. (*seeing the* NURSE *occupied.*) What are you at ?  
 NURSE. (*curtseying.*) Your ladyship, I'm threading  
 Garlands, and so forth, for my nurse child's wedding.  
 MEDEA. A wedding ?  
 NURSE. Truly! though she's scarce left school.  
 The sweetest chicken breathing—  
 MEDEA. Name the fool!  
 NURSE. The gentleman?  
 MEDEA. NO, idiot! the other,  
 Who robb'd an ass, by suckling from his mother.  
 NURSE. (*aside.*) She's some great queen disguised, beyond  
 all doubts.  
 You don't belong, I think, to hereabouts ?  
 MEDEA, (*turning upon her fiercely.*) I don't belong to  
 hereabouts or thereabouts,  
 Woman! For months I haven't had a whereabouts.  
 I lodge at number nothing—nowhere.  
 NURSE. (*shrinking terrified.*) Spare me!  
 MEDEA. (*with increasing mildness.*) Nobody'll have me—  
 nobody can bear me!  
 Nobody will keep me, with my woes import'nate ;  
 Or if they do a week, they won't a fortnight.  
 To overseers, if I make application  
 To join the Union, there's a conflagration:  
 To model lodgings I'm not endurable—  
 Hospitals kick me out, as past incurable!  
 Soup kitchens don't consider me the ticket—  
 I'm even bowl'd out at the gaoler's wicket.  
 NURSE. (R.) Unhappy being! whence this fate pernicious?  
 MEDEA. (L.) Well, do you know, I fear I'm rather  
 vicious.

I kick a little—when things don't go right.  
 'Tis also rumoured that I sometimes bite.  
 The fact is, I'm the daughter of a nation  
 A little backward in civilization.

NURSE. Lor'!

MEDEA. Yes. For instance, captive foes—you treat 'em  
 With leniency ?

NURSE. Decidedly.

MEDEA. *We eat 'em !*

Parents again, who thwart your schemes and spoil  
 'em—

You talk them over ?

NURSE. TO be sure.

MEDEA. *We boil 'em!*

And husbands, who should stay at home, but won't—  
 How treat you them ?

NURSE. Forget the brutes !

MEDEA. *(in a shriek.) We don't!*

Woman, my breast is charged with vengeful thunder!  
 I had a husband—

NURSE. *(cowering before her.)* And he died ? No  
 wonder !

MEDEA. I said not that. French leave of me he took it.'

NURSE. *(tumbling on her knees.)* So, you're a widow ?

MEDEA. Yes, bewitch'd!

NURSE. You look it.

*(Harp music.—MEDEA turns away from the NURSE, to  
 the latter's great relief. The CHILDREN come down C.)*

MEDEA. *(through music.)* The bride, no doubt. Boys, in  
 her pathway stop her,

And supplicate her for the lowly copper.

Look sentimental—if a grin you're trying,

Remember what you got just now for crying.

*(goes up L. H.—the CHILDREN stand in front, R. C.,  
 begging.)*

*Re-enter CREUSA, from temple, R. U. E., and comes down R.*

CREUSA. My happiness on all the world I'd visit;

Let all who want Creusa's aid solicit.

Till of her worldly goods they drain and dreg her.

LYCAON. Give me a kiss.

CREUSA. You saucy little beggar!

(*takes him up and kisses him, laughing.*) Who bade thee ask ?

LYCAON. My mother—there she is. (*pointing to L. H.*) She bade me beg —I thought I'd beg a kiss.

MEDEA. (*aside, L.*) How like his father!

CREUSA. Well, my champion bold,  
Here's something better worth accepting—gold!

LYCAON. Give that to mother.

MEDEA. (*taking gold, and crossing to L. C. to CREUSA, offers her a veil from the basket she has previously taken from the child.*) From our slender store,  
Lady, this gift—I see she's got plenty more. (*aside.*)  
If you'd accept—

CREUSA. Nay—keep your gift.

MEDEA. (*shutting up box.*) I will.

(*gives box to CHILD, and the two CHILDREN go up and stand R. C.*)

CREUSA. But what's the matter ? You look worn and ill.  
That face proclaims a mind distress'd and harried.

MEDEA. It couldn't well be otherwise—I'm married.

CREUSA. Ha!

MEDEA. To a hero—also to my sorrow !

CREUSA. Please don't—I'm going to marry one to-morrow.

MEDEA. I'm sorry for you.

CREUSA. Why my prospects damp,  
Because your own choice may have been—

MEDEA. A scamp!

I sacrificed my duty as a daughter ;  
Betray'd my native town to fire and slaughter ;  
Robb'd my fond father, killed my aged mother ;  
Also (but that's not much) my little brother.  
I stuck at nothing criminal or awful  
To serve the wretch ! And now, his consort lawful  
He leaves—in search of some vile minx to match  
him.

(*with sudden calm.*) You can't conceive how I should like to catch him.

CREUSA. You'd punish him ?

MEDEA. Him ? Well, not him alone.  
With him, of course, I'd *have* to pick a bone.

But *as* to bones, if free to choose and nib,  
The one I'd pick would be *his second rib*.

CREUSA. (*aside.*) My heart within my bosom pit-a-pat  
jumps!

In what way would'st thou act ?

MEDEA. The way the cat jumps

Upon a tender, unsuspecting mouse,  
Loose in a pantry, no one in the house,  
Nibbling away, with confidence unshaken,  
Eating his cheese up first, to save his bacon.  
She's in no hurry ; with dilating eyes,  
And undulating tail, she crouching lies—  
Till his enjoyment's crisis he is at,  
Then pounce!—she makes a spring and has him  
"pat!"

(*using the action of a cat tossing a mouse about.*)

To a short game of pitch and toss she treats him—  
Tears him to pieces slowly, then—sc-runch !—*eats*  
him!

CREUSA. (*terrified.*) From injured ladies, all the gods  
deliver us!

With tastes so cruel—not to say carnivorous.  
But let me have your history in full.

MEDEA. There's been much cry about a little wool—  
The Golden Fleece.—You've heard of it ?

CREUSA. (*agitated.*) Proceed!

MEDEA. Of Orpheus and of Jason ?

CREUSA. (*eagerly.*) Yes—I heed.

MEDEA. Know, then, I owe this form and features  
haggard—

*Enter ORPHEUS, R. 1 E.*

ORPHEUS. (*not seeing MEDEA.*) Creusa !

MEDEA. Orpheus here! (*crosses hastily and seizes him by  
the wrist.*) Now, where's that blackguard?

*Vive ?* Is he alive, and—speak, my chicken!  
Say that he's but alive—I'll do the kicking.

## QUARTETT.

MEDEA, ORPHEUS, CREUSA, AND NURSE.

*" The Blue Bells of Scotland."*

MEDEA. Oh where, and oh where, is those children's daddy  
gone ?

ORPHEUS. Oh, he's gone to fight a giant for King Creon  
on his throne.

And it's oh, in my heart I wish you'd stay'd at home.

CREUSA. What name, oh, what name does your children's  
daddy bear ?

MEDEA. Oh, his name when he's at home is Jason—but  
he's seldom there. *(CREUSA faints.)*

And it's oh, in my heart I can see the whole affair.

*Changes to Air from " Norma."*

MEDEA. Guerra! guerra!

Let me rend and tear her.

She in sev'ral pieces for my benefit shall act.

NURSE. Where are—

Where are

The police ?

ORPHEUS. Oh, spare her!

Don't you see she's fainting ?

MEDEA. I observe the pleasing fact.

CREUSA. Sarah! Sarah!

Please of me take care, ah !

Save me from her—

MEDEA. If she does I'll own that it's my fault.

Sc. 2. MEDEA. 17

ALL. Scold her!  
Hold her!

Clap her on the shoulder,  
Take her into custody on charge of an assault.  
*(during this they struggle up the stage, and are closed in.*

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SCENE II.—*Hall in the Palace of Creon, an opening, C,  
first and second grooves.*

*Enter ORPHEUS, R. C.*

ORPHEUS. The stars are in a fog, I can't see through it!  
What's to be done—and who is there to do it?  
To set things right, I fear I've come a *bit* too late.  
Let me the state of matters recapitulate, *(considers.)*  
Medea rages like a fiery dragon—  
A female cup of wrath—a full Moll Flaggon,  
Cauldron and witch combined—she boils and bubbles,  
Catching all comers in her toils and troubles.  
Jason has gone to kill the giant—good!  
His wild oats he has not yet sown—he should ;  
His wife, though, soon will bring him to a dead-lock,  
And bruise them for him—a la Mary Wedlock.  
Creon's alarm'd—Creusa much enraged—  
She holds herself to Jason still engaged.  
To check the woes Medea's wrath fortels,  
Creusa ought to marry some one else.  
Could I Eurydice's sweet mem'ry shelf,  
To save the plot, I'd sacrifice myself!  
I'd do it, too, could I a fair apology  
Offer to Constancy—and to Mythology.

*(looking off, L. 1 E.*

She comes in tears—and really tears become her!  
How very much she has improv'd this summer,

*Enter CREUSA weeping, L. 1 E.*

CREUSA. (L.) Oh, Orpheus ! *(falling on his shoulder.)*



SPOKEN. (*to* AUDIENCE.)

Excuse a brief parenthesis of "spoken,"  
 If with America peace should be broken,  
 Defence on Europe's side must surely well lie.  
 This song alone would form a *casus belli*.  
 (*sung together.*) Sometimes medley winkum, lingtum nip  
 cat,  
 Sing song, Apollo, don't *it* try you, oh?

ORPHEUS What's this breaks off our duo in the middle ?

*Enter* CREON, L. C., *agitated*.

CREON. (C.) Orpheus, be good enough to get your fiddle,  
 Go out and try to calm the people common—  
 They're pitching into that unhappy woman.

CREUSA. (L.) Medea!

CREON. (C.) Just so ! they say—(and p'raps it's true.)  
 Their champion will have work enough to do  
 To thrash the giant—and if spared with life,  
 Will need repose—therefore they'd kill his wife.

ORPHEUS. I'll calm them down with measures strong and  
 quick too. (*crosses to C.*)

Cheer up, Creusa, what I said, I'll stick to.

*Exit* ORPHEUS, L. C.

CREUSA. (L.) Papa!

CREON. (R.) My angel child!

CREUSA. (*timidly* ) After the turn  
 Affairs have taken, I should like to learn  
 What are your views in reference to me ?  
 My match with Jason broken off must be—  
 At least, I should suppose so.

CREON. You suppose it ?  
 My angel child, not if your father knows it;  
 You know our way—so don't look cross or nettled,  
 This married lady must be somehow settled;  
 We'll set her up in bus'ness—when she's cool,  
 Or get her boys into the Blue Coat School.  
 But let's ascend to watch from yonder height—  
 'Tis time they telegraphed about the fight.

I've bet on Jason rather heavily,  
 And so feel nervous—(*shouts outside, c.*)  
Shouts of victory!  
 It must be—we can scarcely keep our wig on  
 For tremor.

*Enter an excited CITIZEN, hastily, L. C. and down C.*

CITIZEN, (*delighted.*) All's right! Jason's wopp'd the  
big 'un! *Exit CITIZEN, L. C.*

CREON. Ring all the bells—light up no end of candle !

Grind ev'ry organ box that's worth a handle !  
 With, rare device of colour'd lamp and gilding  
 We'll decorate the front of ev'ry building.  
 And hit on some new plan, by which, at night,  
 Some of them shall at least, be seen alight.  
 Haste, daughter ! dress in gorgeous array.  
 Stint not yourself in washing bills—we'll pay !

*Exit CREUSA, L, 1 E.*

Not ev'ry day we a fine giant slaughter—  
 And so—what, ho ! Who waits without ?

*Enter an ATTENDANT, R. 1 E.*

Hot water!



*Exit CREON, preceeded by ATTENDANT, R. 1 E.,*

*Shouts very loud, L. C.—Enter JASON, with sword and shield, followed by the POPULACE, cheering, the mob remains in opening, C.*

JASON. (C.) Thanks, thanks, my friends—enough! Although the winner,

I've wounds to see to, and I've had no dinner.  
 Here are two shillings—get them changed for copper.  
(*the Populace retire, L. C., cheering as they go.*)

That giant was, and yet was not—a wopper.

His head's outside—I hope they may be able

To get it in the wash-house—or the stable.

Whew! Giant killing's really no light work.

Fighting's a duty, though, I never shirk.

The honest homages of friend and stranger,  
 On your return, make up for all the the danger.



SONG.—JASON,

" *The British Grenadiers*"

They talk of queer provisions,  
 Of trench work in the cold,  
 Of tents in bad conditions,  
 And huts that water hold.  
 But with such to check a warrior's zeal,  
 The task as vain appears  
 As to cow, or to row, or to bow wow wow  
 The British Grenadiers.

In leathern stocks half strangled,  
 We scarce could shut our eyes,  
 In broadcloth strangely mangled,  
 We've shown you warlike guys.  
 If you ask me why we bear so much,  
 An answer meets your ears,  
 You'll allow in the row, you are making now,  
 To the British Grenadiers.

Now at the fair Creusa's feet to lay  
 Antestor's spoils to grace our wedding-day,  
 To fresh deeds fired, as in her smiles I revel  
 Bold, aye! and strong enough to face—  
 (*going, L. 1 E. is confronted by MEDEA, who has entered  
 with her garments slightly disordered, she stands rigidly  
 looking at him, L.*)

The devil! (*returns to R. H.*)  
 Would I could make my boast good to the letter.  
 MEDEA, (*L., aside.*) The brute ! I never saw him looking  
 better. (*a pause.*)  
 I'm in no hurry, (*stands calmly.*) sir, I wait your  
 leisure.

JASON. (*faltering—his back to MEDEA.*) Really—this—  
 very—unexpected—pleasure—

MEDEA. (*with continued calmness.*) You do not recognize  
 me, I perceive,  
 I'm altered, I can readily believe ;  
 Through suffering, a little worn and livid.  
 Besides, (*referring to the state of her dress.*) as you  
 have heard, I've just been "chevied,"  
 (*with bitter irony.*) "Giason io son Medea—"

JASON. (*aside.*) 'Tis most bewild'rin'!  
 I don't know what to say—how are the children ?

MEDEA. Thank you, they're bobbish.

JASON. (*a little bolder.*) So, good news you bring—  
 Are they in want of boots, or anything ?  
 Or are the school bills due ? Because, if so,  
 Draw on me for what sums you like—and go !

MEDEA. (*preserving her forced calm throughout.*) Go?

JASON. Y—es.

MEDEA. Where to ?

JASON. Wherever 'tis you stay.  
 Let me no obstacle be in your way ;  
 We both are free—

MEDEA. *Free, am I ?*

JASON. Yes. (*aside.*) Much more  
 Than welcome, any day. Our ties are o'er.

MEDEA. O—oh! I was not aware.

JASON. Why, yes, of course;  
 Our separation equals a divorce.

MEDEA. A—ah!

JASON. You can marry any one you please.  
 (*aside.*) If any one you *can* please. And to ease  
 You of a load that heavily must press—  
 I meant, when I could meet with your address,  
 To write to you. (*with money, I should state.*)  
 To send the boys to me to educate.

MEDEA. (*suppressing her emotion.*) The boys to come to  
 you, and part from me ?

JASON. You understand what's reas'nable, I see.  
 Of course 'twould never do for boys like those  
 Within whose veins the blood of prince's flows,



To be brought up by (no offence) a vagrant,  
Given to sorcery and crimes as flagrant.  
You understand me ?

MEDEA. Quite.

JASON. I'm glad to find  
For once, at any rate, we're of one mind.  
So, you've forestalled my wishes—brought the boys ?  
For velvets they shall change their corduroys.  
Crack tutors they shall have, and guardians fond—  
Don't be alarmed—I'll let you correspond.  
Nay, more, for shewing such praiseworthy animus,  
Towards yourself—I'll do the thing magnanimous.

MEDEA. You overwhelm me!

JASON. Pray don't mention it!  
A treasure-ship to-morrow out I'll fit,  
Laden with spoils, won by my arm victorious,  
To sail where'er you please—won't that be glorious ?

MEDEA. De—licious ! and yourself—

JASON, (*awkwardly*,) Why, I remain.  
A rumour you have heard—no doubt with pain—  
I'm going—I mean—you follow me ?

MEDEA. I do, sir!

JASON. (*slowly*.) I'm—going—to marry—the Princess—  
Creusa.

MEDEA. Cre—u—sa?

JASON. Yes! (*eagerly*.) A state alliance!

MEDEA. Oh ?  
I see !

JASON. A mother's love, the boys, she'll show  
Equal to yours—with pow'r to help them stronger.

MEDEA. (*giving sudden vent to her suppressed passion*.)  
Now drop it! I can't stand it any longer!  
Oh, gods celestial and gods infernal !  
Oh, pow'rs of mischief—dark and sempiternal!  
Demons above, and deities below,  
I ask ye sternly—isn't this a go ?

## DUET.

MEDEA, AND JASON.

AIR, "*Robinson Crusoe*."

MEDEA. I have done for this man,  
All that tenderness can,  
I have followed him half the world through, sir,  
I've not seen him this year,  
And the first thing I hear,  
Is, "he's going to marry Creusa,"  
Going to marry Creusa,  
Going to marry Creusa,  
Ting a ting ting !  
Ting a ting ting!  
All I can say, sir, is, *do* sir.

JASON. If you'll take my advice,  
You'll pack up in a trice,  
Nor of time to pack off be a loser,  
For the popular wrath  
Might be likely to froth  
'Gainst a foe to myself or Creusa.  
I'm going to marry Creusa.  
And believe me the best thing for *you's* a  
Fast ship to bespeak,  
And some desert isle seek,  
Like a sort of she Robinson Cruiser.

*Exit* JASON, R. 1 E.

MEDEA. (*solus.*) "Sangue! sangue! Straziar spezzar suo cuore,"

Which means, translated, something red and gory.

"Unche di spavento's atroce strano"—

Murder in Irish! No—Italiano!

"Ai! Ai! Dia mow Kephelas flox owrania,

"By-ee tidde moi zeen èté Kurdos"\*—

Stop, that's Euripides!

"Du sang! du sang!"

"Briser torturer son coeur—oui!"

That's wrong!

I've got confused with all these versions jinglish—

Thunder and turf!—And even that's not English.

To rend that fellow's heart, now—claw and grip it—

But, psha! a chisel even wouldn't chip it.

To pulverize it—I my rank forget—

I haven't come down to stone breaking yet.

Stone! Ha! a dreadful thought itself suggests.

His gallivanting taste that never rests

Has led him to make eyes e'en at—Medusa.

(*reflecting on the rhyme.*) "Dusa!" The deuce, ah!

You, sir! (*shrieks.*) Ha, Creusa!

Yes, there my path of vengeance lies; to-morrow,

To change their festive merriment to sorrow.

It's very seldom I mince matters—(*draws knife.*) yet—

Jason in search of his new wedded pet,

Fresh from the bridal toast and sparkling cup,

I fear will find her very much cut up.

I've thought—I've plann'd—resolv'd—and I'll go through it.

Hooray! hooray! hooray! I'll do it.

(*shout of pursuit, L.*)

*Enter CREUSA, L. 1 E. MEDEA conceals her knife.*

CREUSA. Fly, wretched individual?

MEDEA. What's the matter?

CREUSA. Dost thou not hear that direful noise and clatter?

MEDEA. What of it?

CREUSA. 'Gainst thee still the people's ireworks—  
They're going to have a grand display of fireworks.

\* To be pronounced exactly as spelt.

MEDEA. What then ?

CREUSA. Fly!

MEDEA. Why ?

CREUSA.. And she can ask me why ?

Canst thou not guess ? (*leads her forward.*) They  
seek thee for a guy !

This way—they come ! (*trying to force her off, R. H.*)

MEDEA. Let go—I won't be lugged!

CREUSA. Stay then, misguided woman, and be smugged!  
(*footsteps and murmurs, L. C.*)

MEDEA. (*aside.*) This unforeseen pursuit my vengeance  
baulks.

Guys, eh. ? I'll show them knives instead of *Fawkes* !  
(*attempts to stab CREUSA—ORPHEUS runs in R. 1 E.,  
and wards off the blow. CREON enters, L. C., keeping  
back the crowd. JASON enters, L. 1 E.*)

CREON. (C.) Woman, that guilty look and striking atti-  
tude,

Betrays the very pitch of black ingratitude.  
Since thus our kind protection is requited,  
Let the avenging lucifer be lighted.

(*CROWD rush forward.*)

ORPHEUS. (R.) Nay—back ! The woman's grieves her rage  
excuse.

JASON. (L.—*conceitedly.*) That's true. A husband like  
myself to lose

Is no light trial. Creon, let her go—  
The creature's to be pitied.

CREON. Be it so.

'Gainst her, of banishment, we'll strike a docket.  
So, with to-morrow's tide—

*Enter, L. C., the usually excited CITIZEN.*

CITIZEN. (*in opening c.*) There's the first rocket.

(*all are running out C.*)

CREON. Hold! (*they stop.*) This unseemly haste our court  
disgraces.

Form a procession—and start fair for places.

(*the CITIZENS all rush out hastily, C.*)



## DUETT AND CHORUS.

CREON, JASON, ORPHEUS, CREUSA.

AIR, — " *The Young May Moon.*"

JASON. (to CREUSA.) The bright maroon is beaming, love,  
And the Roman light is gleaming, love,

Let's seek some alcove,

Or sequestered grove,

To be safe from the rocket-sticks streaming, love.

CREON. Look awake! the Heavens are bright, my dear,  
(to MEDEA, *ironically.*) I'm sorry you can't see the sight,  
Medea.

But I think the best way

To make sure you don't stray,

Is to keep you locked in for the night, Medea.

CHORUS. Look awake ! the Heavens are bright, my dear,  
I'm sorry, &c.

*Exeunt all but MEDEA, C.—the opening is then closed upon her.*

SOLO.—MEDEA.

*West Country air.*

Procrastination's the thief of time, they say  
Don't leave till to-morrow things that might be done to-day.  
I've lots of time, now, for every preparation,  
And to decide on my plan of operation.

Something very brutal it'll

Be, I'll either shoot a little

Poison'd dart, or *two* too little

For the purpose deem.

Drop some stuff in port a little  
 Ever such a mortal little,  
 Quite a little vital it'll

Prove towards my scheme.

Ri tle itle, &c.

*(dances off, R. 1 E..)*

SCENE III.—*Banqueting Hall in the Palace overlooking gardens. A gigantic statue of Saturn with altar steps, C. A banquetting table going up the stage, R., splendidly dressed—seats, R. H.*

CREON, JASON, CREUSA, GUESTS, COURTIERS, &c., *assembled to celebrate the nuptials of JASON and CREUSA. ORPHEUS standing c. with a goblet in his hand, bowing as if he had just completed a song,*

*Chorus as the scene opens.*

A jolly good song—and jolly well sung,  
 But none of us feel very sorry it's done.

CREON *and all the GUESTS rise and come forward, and ATTENDANTS clear off table, &c.*

CREON. (R. C.) Thanks, minstrel, for thy song; the air was grand;  
 The words we didn't clearly understand.  
 But that's an indispensable condition,  
 From all I hear, in modern composition.  
 I hope this license won't be long. I say,  
 Jason, what's needful on a wedding day  
 You should have known — you've done the thing  
 before.

JASON. (R.—*looking at CREUSA.*) Please, I don't mean to do so any more.

CREON. Now where's that messenger? He took a cab.

JASON. A dark thought seizes me!

CREON. Out with it—blab!

JASON. Some adverse pow'r of vengeance with a nice sense,

Has stopp'd his cab, and ta'en away his license.

CREON. Step out and look. (JASON *runs out*, L. 1 E.)

ORPHEUS. (*aside*.) No license, cab or curricule

Will bring, till I've my answer from the Oracle.

A MESSENGER *entering* L. U. E, *gives* ORPHEUS *a scroll*.

ORPHEUS. (*reading*.) "Sun Office." Phœbus's own hand,  
I see.

Glorious Apollo ! God of Harmony !

(*tears open letter and reads*.)

"Dear Orpheus,—We have just received your letter.

"The spots on our face are rather better.

"In ref'rence to the matter that you mention—

"It shall receive our very best attention.

"We'll see all right." So then, no risk we run.

"Dear Orpheus, always your paternal son."

A postscript, though—"We would have written  
sooner,

"But have been bother'd by our sister *Luna*.

"In anger, some astronomer she taxes

"With saying that she hasn't got an *axis*."

*Re-enter* JASON, *eagerly*, *with a scroll*, L. 1 E.

JASON. (*crosses to* R. C.) Dearest, behold the document at  
last—

The roads were heavy and the horse stuck fast.

Come, let us haste, our tender vows to chronicle,

Or we shall really miss the hours canonical.

What feeling's this ? I should be glad and merry.

(*offers his arm to* CREUSA, *suddenly changing his tone*.)

Yet grim forebodings seize me.

CREON. (*coming down on* Jason's L.) Take some sherry ?  
(*offering goblet*.)

JASON. (C.) I couldn't look at it. (CREON *goes up*.) My  
feelings savour.

No whit of golden hue, or nutty flavour.

CRETSA. (*huffed*.) Well, if the gentleman repents—

CREON. (*harshly on her* R.) You hush !

JASON. Methinks, impending on my head to rush,

A torrent hangs of woe and misery.

CREUSA. (L. C.) What a delightful compliment to me!

JASON. Dearest, I meant not that—come, let us go!

Though Fate, cold water on our bliss to throw  
All the earth's cataracts be gathering  
In one huge shower bath—I'd pull the string;  
Hence ! idle fears ! our sacred ties concluding.  
What shall prevent—

*Enter MEDEA, L. 1 E., turning to go, he sees her standing at his elbow.*

MEDEA, (*mEEKly.*) I hope I'm not intruding.

(*curtsies. General consternation.*)

JASON. (C.) Medea, by all that's villainous!

MEDEA. (L. C.) Just so !

ORPHEUS. (*aside, R.*) I see there's going to be a row—I'll go! *Exit, ORPHEUS, R.*

JASON. (C. to CREON, R. C.) Speak to her! I'm not well! (*goes up a little, and down, R. H.*)

CREON. (*crossing to L. C.*) Woman!

MEDEA. (L.) Your *ludship* !

CREON. How comes it that you are not, in fact, aboard ship?

And bring, forgetful of our usage lenient,  
Your presence where it's not at all convenient ?

MEDEA. Forgive a poor lone woman's schemings, pray,  
I really couldn't keep myself away.

You've been so thoughtful of my wants and ailings,  
So very lenient to my little failings.

My grateful impulses too weak to stem,

" Something," I said, " I'll go and do for them,

" If it's to bestow my blessing." (*aside.*) Drat 'em !

" And throw an old shoe after them." (*aside.*) Or at 'em!

(*shows a highlow she has got concealed under her robe.*

(to CREUSA, and going to c.) How well you look, my love—excuse me, pray,

Taking the liberty—And Mr. J.—

Like one of his own sons, I vow,—but then,

The wedding costume so sets off the men;

It makes a difference when they've thrown it by;

It's odd—but so it is—I wonder why ?

But I detain you, and delay's unpleasant—  
I wished to make the bride a trifling present.

*(producing veil.)*

When this you see her wearing at the kirk,  
You'll own I've made *a pretty piece of work.*

CREUSA. *(pleased.)* The veil you showed me yesterday?

MEDEA. Precisely!

But then you'll find I've done it up so *nicely!*

CREUSA. *(admiring the veil.)* Oh! give it me!

MEDEA. Expressly for your marriage!

*(CREUSA is about to put it on—MEDEA stops her quickly.)*

Not yet!

JASON. *(impatiently.)* Your maid can fix it in the carriage.

MEDEA. Say at the altar! it would be a shame  
To scrunch it!

JASON. True! thank—Mrs.—what's-her name!

MEDEA. *(sharply.)* Got none!

JASON. *(confused.)* Ahem! the carriage waits!  
*(crosses to C.)*

MEDEA. One word!

I know the weakness will appear absurd,  
But might I be allowed farewell to say  
To the two boys that were mine yesterday?

JASON. (B. C.) You ask too much!

CREUSA. (R.) Oh! grant her that for charity!

JASON. My life! The woman's coarseness and vulgarity—  
Well, I consent!

MEDEA. Ah!

JASON. Dearest! there's the bell—come!  
*(to MEDEA.)* Don't thank me! For I cannot say  
you're welcome!

*(the bridal procession moves out at back, R., all exeunt but MEDEA.)*

MEDEA. *(calling after them and taking out her shoe.)* May  
ev'ry blessing of earth, sea and skies

That walks, or jumps, or creeps, or swims, or flies,  
Conveying bliss through all the solar system  
Follow—and never overtake you. *(throws shoe after them savagely.)* Missed 'em!

Their mirth, as soon as she puts on that veil  
Will change to something very like a wail.



" Though forced by my papa, your spouse to marry,  
 " I would not, needlessly, your feelings harry,  
 " Your children I restore. Should wants distress you,  
 " I enclose money—may the Heaven's bless you."

(MEDEA *at first astonished, then wholly overcome by this sympathy, stands trembling—crushing the letter in her hand; then she falls sobbing on her knees, embracing her two children, who have knelt on each side.*)

LYCAON. (*tenderly.*) Mamma! what is the matter? Tell us,  
 pray?

Have we been naughty ?

MEDEA. (*starting up wildly.*) From my sides, away !  
 Touch not my hands, there's blood upon them  
 seething,

For I have slain the sweetest lady breathing.

I've killed Creusa—the divinest she—(*suddenly.*)

No ! 'Twasn't I that murder'd her—'twas he.

(*murmurs without.—gradually increasing.*)

Those sounds ! the spell has work'd ! 'Tis past time !

He comes to urge me to another crime—

This way, my babes !

(*crouches down, R., sheltering her two children with her robe.*)

In vain my robes I gather

Round ye—I cannot save ye from your father.

(*murmurs approach.*)

He comes! his vengeance swells like gath'ring  
 thunder!

(*she rushes with the two children, first to L. U. E. then to R., and round back of statue, when she is encountered by CREON, L. and POPULACE, who rush in.*)

CREON. Quick! Tear the she-wolf and her cubs asunder.

MEDEA, (*grasping the children.*) Approach one step !

CITIZEN. The murd'rous witch to death.

CREON. Secure the children !

MEDEA. Not while they have breath!

(*the CROWD have concealed her from the AUDIENCE—two plaintive cries are heard—CREON and the CROWD*)

NOTE. From the reading of Creusa's note to the final denouement, the action must be conducted by all the characters as in tragedy.

*start back with a shriek of horror—MEDEA is seen standing alone, on steps, c. quivering with emotion—a reeking knife in her hand—the CHILDREN lying on the steps, (apparently dead.)*

JASON *appears* R. U. E. *with drawn sword, but is withheld by the* POPULACE.

JASON. (*struggling.*) Back for your life—her life to me is due.

(*he breaks away R. to rush at MEDEA—stops horrified seeing the bodies of his two CHILDREN.*)

My boys both murder'd ! Who has slain them ?

MEDEA. (*with one foot on steps, darting towards him.*) *You!* (*the dagger she has hitherto grasped is discovered at this moment to have been changed into a jester's bauble, with cap and bells—MEDEA very much astonished, comes forward c. inspecting it.*)

Holloa! what's this ? I thought it was a knife  
With which I'd robb'd my blessed babes of life !  
Who's been employing magic and cajolery  
To change my serious business to tom-foolery—  
Making a bauble of Medea's blade ?

ORPHEUS *enters* L. U. E., *with CREUSA on his arm.*

ORPHEUS, (L. C.) Some of us comic poets, I'm afraid—

MEDEA. Creusa! and alive ! without a scar ?

Then—p'raps the blessed infants—

LYCAON, & } (*starting up from steps and running to her.*)  
MELANTHE. }

Here we are !

MEDEA. (*leading them forward c.*) What can a poor, lone, helpless woman do—

Baffled on all sides—but appeal to you? (*to AUDIENCE.*)

My plot destroyed—my damages made good,  
They'd change my very nature if they could.  
Don't let them—rather aid me to pursue  
My murd'rous career the season through ;  
Repentance is a thought that I abhor,  
What I have done don't make me sorry for.  
Even for my least pardonable crime—  
Which I'll explain in a familiar rhyme.

## FINALE.

MEDEA AND THE CHARACTERS.

*" One horse Shay."*

There was a little man,  
 And he made a little fun  
 Of a very great woman 'bove his head, head, head,  
 And he got some other bucks  
 And a lot of little ducks  
 To assist him in the project that he led, led, led.

And he trusts you'll carry hence  
 Of his harmless impudence  
 No impression to your supper or your bed, bed, bed,  
 Save the merry chirping sound,  
 Of a gadfly buzzing round

The wreath upon a noble statue's head, head, head.  
*(the statue of SATURN disappears, discovering an allego-  
 rical groupe.)*

CHORUS. And he trusts you'll carry hence  
 Of his harmless impudence  
 No impression to your supper or your bed, bed, bed,  
 Save the merry chirping sound  
 Of a gadfly buzzing round  
 The wreath upon a noble statue's head, head, head.

## CURTAIN.

CITIZENS. JASON.      STATUE.      CITIZENS.  
    CREON.  
    CREUSA.  
    ORPHEUS.  
    MEDEA & CHILDREN.

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