

OLYMPUS
EPISODE ONE
"THE TEMPLE OF GAIA"

by

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OLYMPUS

TEASER

OVER BLACK...

A deep guttural growl, like no creature you've heard before...

FADE UP...

... on a man's face... eyes closed, unconscious... handsome, but scratched, bruised and bloody... and young... perhaps mid twenties...

This is our hero... I would use his name, but as you will see his name is cursed... so for the moment I'll just refer to him as...

HERO

UUGGHHHH!

Hero heaves for air... opens his eyes... coughs up mucus... and looks around...

INT. OGRE'S CAVE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

He's lying flat on his back... his ankles clamped in WOODEN STOCKS...

He checks himself for fatal wounds... looks for a way to get his legs free... but it's locked tight with heavy metal bolts...

So he takes a proper look round the dark cave... water drips down the walls... torches flicker... and in neat rows on the wet, earthy ground...

HUMAN FEET... cleanly severed at the ankles... in pairs... painted in different colors...

A noise behind him... shuffling... growling... and...

Hero tries to crane his head around to see what it is... someone, something starts sharpening a blade...

A blade?

Hero looks down at his own feet, sticking out from the end of the stocks, then back at the neat rows of severed feet...

HERO

You're making a mistake.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HERO (CONT'D)

You don't want to hurt me. I'm here
to help you.

The sharpening stops suddenly and the cave goes deathly quiet.

Heavy footfall as a giant approaches, one and a half times
larger than a man, walks around Hero's prostrate body, and
sits at his feet.

Hero stares at its face - if you can call it that - because
there is no face... just a pot-marked head with tufts of
fungousy hair... and a mouth. No eyes, ears, nose... just a
mouth clamped shut. Grotesque and terrifying...

In its giant, ogre hands - a pot of paint...

It opens its mouth and inside, between its teeth, one, single,
giant EYE.

HERO (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Woah!

Grotesque, terrifying... and bizarre...

Cyclops concentrates, focuses its single giant eye on Hero's
feet and starts to paint them blue...

HERO (CONT'D)

Cyclops if you knew who I was you
wouldn't be doing this... I've been
sent here by Gaia - your mother - to
look for her Oracle...

Cyclops doesn't look up...

HERO (CONT'D)

You can't hear a word I'm saying can
you?

No reaction. Cyclops is deaf. Hero looks for something,
anything to use as a weapon...

Then pulls at the leather armor around his midriff - which
isn't armor at all, but a long piece of rope tightly wound
around him.

Before he can unwind it...

Cyclops picks up a MEZZALUNA - a very sharp, curved blade,
with a handle on each end - and prepares to sever Hero's
feet at the ankles.

(CONTINUED)

Panicked, Hero digs his fingers into the wet earth, pulls up a handful of gritty sand and throws it at Cyclops' eye... hits it flush...

Cyclops reels backwards, screeching...

Hero uses the rope like a whip, strikes at the Mezzaluna, flicks one end around it, pulls it out of the Ogre's hand...

And catches it.

HERO (CONT'D)

AHHH!

Cyclops looks at him, his giant eye pressed up against the back of his yellow teeth... decides not to try to take it off him and instead...

... walks away into the shadows, roots around and comes back with an even larger Mezzaluna...

And again prepares to sever his feet.

Hero takes careful aim and throws his smaller Mezzaluna...

But, because it's shaped like a boomerang, it acts like a boomerang, spinning around Cyclops, missing him entirely, ricocheting off a wall and flying backwards...

... slicing the fingers off Cyclops left hand clean off.

He drops the larger Mezzaluna, and reels around the cave, clutching his hand in agony.

Hero twists himself backwards, arching his back, and seizes the larger Mezzaluna...

... holds it high above his head and brings it down hard between his feet onto the wooden stocks.

Chink...

A tiny notch appears.

HERO (CONT'D)

Come on!

He tries again, harder. Another tiny notch.

HERO (CONT'D)

What the fuck is this made of!

(CONTINUED)

He tries again - and another tiny notch appears. But this time the metal bolt on the left side of the stocks falls off...

Hero lifts the catch, pulls the stocks apart and wriggles his feet free.

The ogre opens his grotesque mouth and bellows, spit and bile showering out between his teeth and around his bloodshot eyeball.

Hero runs, blue feet skidding over the wet ground... down an underground tunnel...

INT. OGRE'S CAVE. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Hero runs down a corridor, dimly lit by thin shafts of light from thin cracks in the cave ceiling.

He can hear Cyclops thudding his heavy body in pursuit...

In the shadows - a statue - or rather part of a statue protruding from the rock - a nose... a beautiful human nose, crumbling and cracked. The rest of the sculpture is no doubt buried deep in the rock...

And in the ceiling above another part of the statue - a single thumb sticks out...

Hero hides behind the nose... waits...

Cyclops trots by, hits his head on the giant thumb, something he's doubtless done a thousand times before, stops, rubs it, looks round, then continues on his way...

Hero sneaks out and double backs the way he came...

INT. OGRE'S CAVE. PIT - DAY

Hero comes to a junction where several tunnels join, chooses one...

... rounds a corner and - almost runs into the giant head of a snarling dragon -

- The statue of a snarling dragon that is, collapsed in the tunnel, cracked, worn and weather beaten... the rest of its body buried somewhere in the rock no doubt... but it nevertheless blocks Hero's path.

Then, from it's open mouth... the faint sound of whimpering... Hero concentrates, tries to pinpoint it, hurries down one of the tunnels until...

(CONTINUED)

HERO

Wooah!

He almost falls down the dragon's throat...

Deep inside, figures can just be seen moving around.

HERO (CONT'D)

I'm looking for the Oracle of Gaia.

YOUNG WOMAN (O.S.)

Why?

HERO

To rescue her.

A beautiful young woman steps into the light.

YOUNG WOMAN

I am the Oracle.

Hero starts to unwind a rope from round his waist. But then a middle aged woman steps into the light next to her.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN

No I am the Oracle.

Then an old woman.

OLD WOMAN

No I am the Oracle.

All three look up expectantly.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE - DAY

Once glorious, but now ravaged by war and weather, King Aegeus' palace presides over the tightly packed streets of the walled city of Athens...

INT. ATHENS. PALACE APOTHECARY - DAY

Blood drips into a tray of oil, spreads to form patterns...

A beautiful woman in her late thirties with dark eyes and even darker hair, stares into the tray, trying to decipher its cryptic messages. This is MEDEA, the greatest Sorceress who's ever lived.

Above the tray, on a treatment table, arm cut and bleeding, lies 16 year old LYKOS.

MEDEA

Go on.

LYKOS

An eagle hovers over a lake filled with fish, large fish, and swimming among them is a man...

MEDEA

Who?

LYKOS

An old man, gray hair, a beard, I think he might be drowning.

Medea analyzes the trails of blood in the oil as he speaks.

MEDEA

Go on.

LYKOS

He's calling up to someone, the gods perhaps, or the eagle...

LYKOS' voice fades as he starts to drift off. Impatient, Medea slaps him hard across the face.

MEDEA

Don't you dare fall asleep.

LYKOS

Sorry mother.

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

Carry on. A grey haired man looking
up at the eagle, what next?

LYKOS

I don't know, I've lost it...

Exasperated, Medea moves to a wall covered in signs, letters,
symbols and shapes... draws an eagle over the figure of a
fish, steps back and thinks.

Her apothecary is crammed with jars, powders, roots, dried
plants, stuffed animals, live animals in cages, homunculi
and hundreds of different tools and apparatus.

LYKOS (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Are we getting closer?

She shakes her head no.

MEDEA

You're a wasteful, selfish boy Lykos.
I should have eaten more figs when I
was pregnant. Go on, get out of here.

Lykos rises gingerly and shuffles out.

Medea sets light to the oil stained with his blood and watches
as its smoke turns into the outline of an eagle and flies
away...

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Bah!

She throws the tray against the wall.

INT. OGRE'S CAVE. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - DAY

Hero escorts the three women through a labyrinth of dark
passageways.

OLD WOMAN

Where are your weapons?

HERO

If the ogre finds us, there isn't a
sword in the civilized world that
will help us.

A growl.

The ogre has found them.

(CONTINUED)

HERO (CONT'D)

Run!

They takes off.

The old woman falls behind, desperately trying to keep up...

Hero grabs hold of her arm to help her along, but he knows she won't last long...

The passageways loop and drop off, then rise and split into more passageways...

Hero directs the women into one, then darts off into another, leading the ogre away from them.

But it's not long before... disaster...

INT. OGRE'S CAVE. TOP OF ABYSS - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Hero comes to a dead end.

The tunnel stops, turns into thin air - an abyss which drops away to nothing...

He quickly unties the rope from his waist and looks back...

INT. OGRE'S CAVE. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Cyclops, knowing these passages like the back of his hand, realizes he's got his man.

He slows, savoring the moment, rounds a bend to find Hero standing at the edge on the abyss...

INT. OGRE'S CAVE. TOP OF ABYSS - CONTINUOUS - DAY

The ogre sends a terrifying cry down the tunnel which shakes the cave walls...

Then takes off... sprinting towards Hero...

HERO

(quietly to himself)

Breathe... breathe...

When the ogre is almost on top of him Hero jumps backwards, like an acrobat... out into the abyss... and into thin air...

Cyclops, trying to grab hold of him finds himself going too far... over the edge...

(CONTINUED)

Now both are flying through the darkness... except Hero has a rope tied around his ankle... and the ogre does not...

When the rope snaps tight, Hero bounces back up, like a bungee jump... whilst Cyclops keeps going...

Hero flies past him, on his way up as the ogre, swinging his arms wildly to catch him, flies in the opposite direction... on his way down...

INT. OGRE'S CAVE. TOP OF ABYSS - DAY

Hero struggles back up onto the passageway to find the three women waiting for him.

YOUNG WOMAN

Do you actually know the way out?

INT. ATHENS. PALACE BATHS - DAY

Shafts of dull sunlight cut through thick steam...

Shapes emerge, naked flesh glistening with sweat... a man coiled around a woman... exhausted but unable to stop...

Then - elsewhere - a face appears, watching them... MEDEA... cat's eyes concentrating on the couple avidly...

And next to her, PRIEST XERXES.

PRIEST XERXES

We've trained him since the age of thirteen. A strict diet, careful tutoring and of course, a steady supply of the appropriate partners.

The woman starts to reach orgasm, her fingers clawing at the man's muscular arms.

PRIEST XERXES (CONT'D)

He's given himself to Eros, a vessel designed and built entirely for pleasure.

We see now that the couple are partly immersed in water. The woman lifts herself up out of it, legs clamped around his midriff, hands pulling at his hair as, finally, she climaxes.

Medea steps forward, watching...

MEDEA

I'm most impressed.

(CONTINUED)

The naked woman falls back into the water, letting it wash over her breasts, her skin, completing the moment...

PRIEST XERXES

Thank you Majesty. He comes with my blessing and that of ten thousand more.

Medea looks at the Priest, suddenly wary.

MEDEA

Why so many?

PRIEST XERXES

The hearts and hopes of our people reach out with one voice.

MEDEA

To you?

PRIEST XERXES

I am their humble guide.

MEDEA

And where will you lead them?

PRIEST XERXES

Into your benevolent embrace of course. And that of your husband, the King.

MEDEA

I thought we embraced them already.

Priest Xerxes gestures to the man in the pool.

PRIEST XERXES

Would you like me to have him sent to your private quarters?

Medea walks away.

MEDEA

Not him... her.

PRIEST XERXES

I'm sorry, did you say...

MEDEA

The girl. She's the one I want.

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. MAP ROOM - DAY

KING AEGEUS, ruggedly handsome at fifty, presides over a model of the city in the Palace war room.

General Dion and two other Generals are with him. On the map table the city can be clearly seen encircled by enemy troops.

KING AEGEUS

We need to change our tactics General Dion. The only way to break the siege is a bold counter attack.

GENERAL DION

Our men are exhausted and hungry, their weapons bound together with blood and raffia. At the moment all they can do is hang on for their lives.

KING AEGEUS

A couple of victories would lift their spirits.

GENERAL DION

King Minos' armies outnumber us ten to one.

KING AEGEUS

But we're Athenians General, we each have the strength of twenty Minoans.

Dion exchanges a look with the other Generals - among them the tall, thick set General Proteus.

KING AEGEUS (CONT'D)

Come back when you have a plan which will break the siege and push King Minos back into the sea.

With one sweeping gesture Aegeus pushes the model of the enemy troops off the table, sending them clattering to the floor.

KING AEGEUS (CONT'D)

And no more cowardly schemes to hide men inside wooden horses. I want something bold, something daring.

The Generals scamper out of the room, passing Medea on her way in. She kisses Aegeus fondly.

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

It's King Minos you should be
terrorizing, not your own men.

KING AEGEUS

They've no balls.

MEDEA

They're loyal at least. Which is
more than I can say for most in your
court.

KING AEGEUS

How much longer before you solve the
second stage of the Lexicon?

MEDEA

There seems to be nothing inside our
son but adolescent dreams of eagles
and drowning old men.

KING AEGEUS

What?

MEDEA

The Lexicon is more elusive than I
imagined.

KING AEGEUS

Come here.

He embraces her.

KING AEGEUS (CONT'D)

However elusive, you will eventually
unravel its mysteries, I know you
will. And when you do, we will only
have to click our fingers and our
enemies will be swept away.

He kisses her passionately.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS OF PARNASSUS - DAY

Black mountains rise out of thick forest.

EXT. MOUNTAIN SIDE - DAY

Hero and the three women emerge from Cyclops' caves into the
intense sunlight.

The young woman starts to walk away.

(CONTINUED)

HERO

Where are you going?

YOUNG WOMAN

East, so - thank you for everything -
you've been very kind, and brave, a
real hero - but now I have to get
back to my family and my pigs and...
chickens -

HERO

You're coming with me. To the Temple
of Gaia.

YOUNG WOMAN

I'm not the oracle. I just said that
so you'd get me out.

Hero looks at the middle aged woman.

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN

Don't look at me.

And the old woman...

OLD WOMAN

(shaking her head no)
I can't even cook soup.

The young woman hurries now.

HERO

I'm taking you all back. The priest
will know the right one.

The young woman starts running away.

Hero smiles, realizing he's just flushed out the real oracle.

HERO (CONT'D)

(to old and Middle
aged women)
Goodbye, good luck and may the gods
be kind.

He takes the rope from his shoulder and heads after the young
woman.

EXT. WOOD - DAY

The young woman, who from now on we will refer to as Oracle,
walks sullenly behind Hero, hands bound in front of her,
pulled by Hero's rope.

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE

This will end badly for you Mercenary.

HERO

Really? What do you see?

ORACLE

(Talking normally -
not vision)

A lot of blood. Death. People
screaming, burning, flesh burning,
and you in the middle of it all,
stone dead, your face as blue as
your feet.

Hero looks down at his feet - still blue.

HERO

That's some vision. Now I see why
they want you back so badly.

ORACLE

Not a vision, just common sense.
Once you've delivered me, the priest
will have you killed.

HERO

Why?

ORACLE

You think they want people to know
that their oracle ran away? I'm
supposed to be in a perpetual state
of divine trance. My heart in the
hands of Gaia.

HERO

And you're not?

ORACLE

How much did they offer you? A hundred
goats? Two hundred?

HERO

More.

ORACLE

Whatever it is, I'll double it. And
I'll throw in a vision or two.
Wouldn't you like to hear about your
future wife, what she looks like?

(CONTINUED)

HERO

How do you know I'm not married
already?

ORACLE

Please, you insult me.

HERO

Why did you run away?

Oracle stops, forcing Hero to look back at her...

ORACLE

The priests beat me every day. And
when I was too weak to care whether
I lived or died, they'd rape me.

Hero tries to read her, see if she's lying.

HERO

Why would priests offend the gods?

ORACLE

They said it would be easier for me
to channel Gaia if first they
channeled me.

HERO

You're lying. Oracles must be
virgins.

ORACLE

Who told you that?!

Hero sets off again, pulling her behind him.

HERO

The Priests of Gaia.

ORACLE

You believe them over me?

HERO

You lied to me before.

ORACLE

I was protecting myself!

HERO

What makes you think I care what
they do to you?

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE

I know you well enough Mercenary. I can see that you're a good man at heart, in fact, you're not even a mercenary.

HERO

What am I then?

She closes her eyes, concentrates...

ORACLE

Cursed.

Hero looks at her again, this time genuinely intrigued.

HERO

Anything else?

ORACLE

Your name... wait... what is your name?

HERO

You tell me.

ORACLE

It's... I can almost see it... no... oh... it's your name that's cursed isn't it? If I said it out loud, something terrible would happen to me. I'd burst into flames or...

HERO

(embarrassed)

Turn to stone.

ORACLE

What?

HERO

You would turn to stone.

ORACLE

Really? Have you actually seen that happen? What if you said it? Would you turn to stone?

HERO

I've never tried.

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE

Very wise. You must have really upset the gods. What did you do? Never mind. I don't want to know. I have enough troubles of my own. So. Now that I've proved myself, will you let me go?

HERO

No.

He sets off again, pulling her along behind him.

HERO (CONT'D)

All you've proved is that you belong in the temple of Gaia.

But when he looks up...

A man is standing a few yards away, watching them... a tall, ugly, wiry man, completely shaved, carrying a bludgeon.

SHAVED MAN

Poaching in my woods?

Two other men step out from behind the trees, even uglier than the first. Wild men, covered in scars, tattoos and body piercings, with partly shaved heads, patched leather and bronze armor.

SHAVED MAN (CONT'D)

Leave the animal and go.

SCARRED MAN

Wait. I'd quite like to hear what sound he makes when we carve the souls from the bottom of his pretty blue feet.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. WOOD - DAY

The wild men circle Hero and Oracle.

SHAVED MAN

I say we offer her head to Dionysus,
her feet and hands to Semele, flavor
the torso in olives and roast it on
a bed of vine leaves.

PIERCED MAN

Toasted wheat and honey cakes.

HERO

I am a marshal acting for the priests
of Gaia. This is their oracle so be
warned. She is protected by Poseidon
and Keto and carries the mark of
Keres.

SCARRED MAN

We'll take our chances.

PIERCED MAN

Will we skin her first?

They close in.

Hero gives his rope a little tug and the knot around Oracle's
wrists falls away as if by magic, releasing her. He gathers
up the rope in coils.

HERO

I can hear the Fates gathering.

SHAVED MAN

We lay tributes at the feet of the
wind-demon every day. Dionysus' army
of goatmen have our backs.

HERO

The Fates care little for Satyrs
when Bogeys steal their fruit.

PIERCED MAN

She's as smooth as grape skin I tell
you!

(CONTINUED)

SCARRED MAN

You dare cross into our wood, steal
our game and threaten us with the
mark of Keres!

SHAVED MAN

He's bluffing.

HERO

Am I? Which one of you would like to
test me first?

The wild men look at each other, rattled but hiding it.

HERO (CONT'D)

(To the Shaved Man)

How often do you face the Black Dog?

SHAVED MAN

I am invisible.

HERO

I can see that. Perhaps then you'll
impress your acolytes by being the
first to charge.

Hero stands very still, Oracle behind him.

SCARRED MAN

I'm no acolyte!

SHAVED MAN

He's bluffing!

SCARRED MAN

They look up to me!

SHAVED MAN

Don't let him get to you, Chiron!

HERO

Yes, take the advice of the invisible
man, Chiron, and keep your distance.

SCARRED MAN

(to the Shaved Man)

You gave him my name!!

SHAVED MAN

It slipped out.

(CONTINUED)

SCARRED MAN

Now he will burn my effigy in the
Temple of Gaia!

SHAVED MAN

We'll kill him first!

SCARRED MAN

We'll have to! Before I kill you!

Hero keeps one eye on the Pierced Man, the craziest of the three, who, unable to contain his excitement, is the first to charge Oracle.

Hero throws his rope, corkscrewing the end round his neck with a flick of the wrist and pulling him to the ground.

The other two charge.

Hero's rope is his weapon. He can make this simple length of leather twine do the most extraordinary things.

In his hands it's a whip, a lasso, a sling shot, a Surujin, a garotte all rolled into one.

And it works as effectively in defense as in attack, tangling opponents or tripping them up.

Hero pulls the Shaved man's bludgeon from him before he gets within 6 feet, circles it around his head and catapults it back, hitting him in the face.

Then he whip the rope, striking at the Scarred man's face, scarring him afresh.

The Pierced man, back on his feet, only has eyes for Oracle who he charges again and again, flaying knife clamped between his teeth.

But Hero doesn't let him get near her, tripping him, lassoing an ankle or nicking him from ten feet away.

Then - when the Shaved man gets too close - he loops the rope round his neck and pulls it tight, strangling him.

HERO

Get the hell out of my sight or I
will kill your friend.

The Scarred Man hesitates, but the crazy Pierced man doesn't care less and flies at Oracle again.

This time he grabs her and holds his knife to her throat.

(CONTINUED)

PIERCED MAN

Get the hell out of my sight or I
will kill your friend!

Distracted Hero loosens his grip on the Shaved man enough to let him out of his grasp... and he spins round, claws at him...

... so Hero hits him hard, knocking him to the ground.

He strikes his head on a rock and goes limp... eyes open... dead.

Hero approaches the Pierced man cautiously.

A stand off. Hero keeps half an eye on the Scarred Man, who's staring in horror at his dead friend.

HERO

If you kill her, then what? You think
I'll let you get away?

The Pierced Man runs his disgusting fingers over her skin, licks her face...

PIERCED MAN

Peaches.

The Scarred Man drops to his knees next to the body of the Shaved Man, tears in his eyes.

HERO

But if you let her go, I'll let you
go and everyone lives.

PIERCED MAN

We can share her. Aren't you hungry?

HERO

There's plenty of game in these woods
that won't get you killed.

The Pierced man starts to drag her away.

The Scarred Man's grief turns to anger. He looks at Hero, furious, then...

SCARRED MAN

AAAHHHHHHH!!!

... charges.

(CONTINUED)

Hero tries to hold him off, but can't, the Scarred Man is too pumped up.

As they battle fiercely, the Pierced Man drags Oracle into the woods.

Eventually after a brutal fight, Hero kills the Scarred Man.

But he's taken some tough body blows, injuring a leg... and an arm.

And Oracle is gone.

Hero finds a trail of blood and follows it.

After a few yards, the trail branches off in three opposite directions.

EXT. THE CITY OF ATHENS - DAY

Athens' walls rise high into the sky, once glorious, now cracked and crumbling.

EXT. ATHENS. CITY WALLS - DAY

King Aegeus hurries along the battlements with General Dion in tow.

KING AEGEUS

Can we move men from the east wall?!

GENERAL DION

We would leave it too exposed majesty.

KING AEGEUS

Where are the archers from Thebes?!

GENERAL DION

Holding the main gate!

A volley of shimmering arrows fizzes over their heads. Dion dives for cover but Aegeus ignores them and ploughs on.

GENERAL DION (CONT'D)

Please get down majesty!

Aegeus comes to the battle on the city's ramparts.

His beleaguered Athenians battle desperately with King Minos' troops flooding over the walls.

GENERAL DION (CONT'D)

No Majesty! Stay back!

(CONTINUED)

Aegeus draws his sword and throws himself in, fighting alongside his men.

Even at his age, Aegeus has the strength and courage of ten men. He pushes Minos' foot soldiers from the parapet, cuts their ropes from the wall, spurs his men on...

Dion, however, keeps his distance, afraid to get too close.

But eventually Aegeus' intervention changes the course of the battle and the invasion is averted.

But then -

FSTSSUMMM!!

An arrow fizzes through the air and strikes Aegeus in the chest. He collapses in the arms of his men.

Dion rushes over to attend to him.

GENERAL DION (CONT'D)

Dear God!

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. AEGEUS' ROOM - DAY

Four foot soldiers carry Aegeus into his room and onto his bed. General Dion is alongside them.

Medea enters, and rushes to him.

MEDEA

Why was he within range of enemy
fire?

GENERAL DION

I tried to stop him.

MEDEA

(to the beautiful
Courtesan Alexa)
Fetch the box of potions from my
apothecary, Alexa.

She immediately goes to work, her expert hands working their magic, inspects the arrow in Aegeus' chest...

GENERAL DION

I'm sorry majesty.

MEDEA

Leave us!

INT. ATHENS. PALACE PASSAGEWAY OUTSIDE AEGEUS' ROOM - DAY

Dion runs into PALLAS, King Aegeus' brother hurrying from the opposite direction.

PALLAS

My brother's wounded?

GENERAL DION

I'm sorry, Lord Pallas, an arrow to the chest.

PALLAS

Will he live?

GENERAL DION

Queen Medea is with him.

General Dion rushes away down the corridor. Pallas watches him go...

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. AEGEUS' ROOM - DAY

Medea removes the arrow from the King's chest and fights to staunch the bleeding.

Her box of potions is placed beside her.

MEDEA

Thank you Alexa.

But when she looks up, it's Priest Xerxes she sees, not the Courtesan.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

What is it?

PRIEST XERXES

I'm here to help.

MEDEA

I don't need your help.

PRIEST XERXES

Have you stopped the bleeding?

MEDEA

Please. Let me do my work.

PRIEST XERXES

If the King's life is at risk -

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

He's going to be fine. Now go!

He bows and - reluctantly - leaves the room.

Medea looks through her box of potions and pulls out a small red bottle... uncaps it when - just as she's about to pour it on the wound - becomes suddenly suspicious and takes a sniff.

Reassured, she pours it on the wound.

EXT. WOODS. STREAM - NIGHT

Oracle sits over the Pierced Man cleaning his wounds carefully.

ORACLE

Lie still.

PIERCED MAN

He killed Chiron and Hector.

ORACLE

Perhaps now you'll find something better to do with your time than hang around with cut-throats and thieves.

PIERCED MAN

That's the thanks I get for rescuing you?!

ORACLE

When you get home spread a little honey on your wounds.

PIERCED MAN

I'm coming with you.

ORACLE

I'll have a better chance on my own.

PIERCED MAN

You're not an assassin.

ORACLE

Neither are you.

PIERCED MAN

At least I know what to do.

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE

You were not in the vision.

PIERCED MAN

What difference does that make?

ORACLE

A big difference.

PIERCED MAN

At least let me get you to the city gates.

ORACLE

No. Too many have died already. I'd never forgive myself if you got hurt too.

PIERCED MAN

I can take care of myself.

ORACLE

I know you can. But this is something the gods want me to do alone.

She kisses him on the forehead.

ORACLE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Come on. Run all the way home and give mother a big hug from me and tell her everything's alright.

They embrace and Oracle watches him disappear into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Oracle hums as she walks trying not to let the dark woods bother her.

Something rustles the undergrowth... She stops, focuses on a shadow moving... A growl.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Sudden crack of a whip...

The end of Hero's rope wraps around Oracle's ankle, snaps taut and pulls her over.

ORACLE

Ahh!!

She lands awkwardly.

Hero steps out from the undergrowth.

HERO

Did you not see me coming Oracle?

She looks up at him.

HERO (CONT'D)

You must be losing your touch.

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. AEGEUS' ROOM - DAY

Aegeus is breathing normally and, although unconscious, is stable.

Medea turns to Courtesan Alexa.

MEDEA

If he wakes give him a little water.
He'll be fine now. But from now on
you only take instructions from me,
understand?

Courtesan Alexa nods.

Medea exits past two tall guards standing vigil at the door.

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. COURT GARDENS - DAY

Fountains. Dappled sunlight.

General Dion, alone, burns an offering to Athena... looks up at her statue over a small shrine...

GENERAL DION

Holy mother, give the King strength
and keep him safe.

He turns to walk away and finds Pallas watching him.

(CONTINUED)

PALLAS

I've heard that my brother is much recovered.

GENERAL DION

Yes Lord Pallas, we must give thanks.

PALLAS

Naturally. I rejoice. However, there are some in his court who feel that Athens can ill afford a leader who governs from a sick bed.

GENERAL DION

Take me to them and I will correct their treachery with the sharp edge of my sword.

PALLAS

That's why I've come to warn you. For now they're only whispers, but they're spreading like hungry locusts.

GENERAL DION

Names. I need names!

PALLAS

Believe me, I'm doing my level best to identify them. In the meantime you should take care.

GENERAL DION

Oh?

PALLAS

I've heard that you, General Dion, as the King's closest confidante, may be a target.

GENERAL DION

Me? Really?

PALLAS

And of course there are those who blame you for taking the King so close to the enemy.

GENERAL DION

I didn't take him, I tried to stop him!

Pallas suddenly looks to his right, as if he's heard something.

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL DION (CONT'D)

What?

PALLAS

These are dark times indeed. I'm
risking my own life by warning you.
We must both be on our guard.

He hurries away leaving the General looking around the Court
Gardens in terror.

INT. MEDEA'S BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT

MEDEA

It's a trick. Pallas is using you to
get to me.

Medea, exhausted from caring for Aegeus, strips the bloody
clothes from her body and washes herself.

General Dion hovers.

GENERAL DION

You think he knows about us?

She gives him a withering look - 'really?'

MEDEA

The only 'whispering' we need worry
about are his.

GENERAL DION

He said I might be the first they
target.

MEDEA

Show a little courage for once.

Dion sits on the bed, worried and scared.

GENERAL DION

I'll get a bodyguard.

MEDEA

A bodyguard in your own home, what
will your wife say?

GENERAL DION

She hoards gold and plots her escape
every day.

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

Who can blame her. Stop worrying and
come here.

Medea cradles the General in her arms. He lays his head on
her chest like a child.

GENERAL DION

How soon before the King's back on
his feet?

MEDEA

A while. Which may be a blessing in
disguise.

EXT. DESERT WILDERNESS - DAY

The sun now high and hot.

Hero pulls Oracle behind him, her wrists again bound by his
rope.

She's sweating and exhausted and drops to her knees.

HERO

We'll find a spring over the next
hill.

ORACLE

I'm tried.

HERO

You'll feel better with something in
your stomach.

She looks around the desert wilderness.

ORACLE

Something like what?

HERO

There's a feast under your nose, you
just can't see it.

Hero gives the rope a little tug and again the knot simply
falls off her wrist.

ORACLE

How do you do that?

She rubs her wrists.

(CONTINUED)

He coils the rope, loops the end into a snare and...

CUT TO:

EXT. BANK OF A STREAM. WILDERNESS - DAY

A hare roasting on a spit.

Hero and Oracle sit by the water's edge eating roast meat.

ORACLE

Where did you learn to use a rope
like that?

HERO

It was all I had growing up so I
made the most of it.

ORACLE

You grew up alone, didn't you?

HERO

Another vision?

ORACLE

No, just common sense. You're quiet
and headstrong, not the sort who's
had to fight for attention with
brothers and sisters. And for all
your skill with a rope, you tie your
sandals like a woman so I'm guessing
you didn't have a father around either
or he would have beaten that out of
you.

Hero looks down at his Sandals, blue as his feet.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

But you did have a mother who loved
you very much.

HERO

How did you figure that one out?

ORACLE

Sons always think their mothers love
them very much, even when they don't.
Now let's see... You grew up in the
forest of Troezen.

Hero is amazed.

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE (CONT'D)

Stands to reason. The forest of Troezen is the only place remote enough for a wild boy with a rope to run around all day and not meet another living soul.

HERO

Where did you learn to do that?

ORACLE

As an Oracle you've got to know how to read people or you don't last very long.

HERO

That's all you do? Read people?

ORACLE

No, sometimes other things comes to me. Like your name for instance. The curse of... whatever you're called. Believe me, I have no idea how those things appears. Sometimes I think we all have the power, it's just that I pay more attention.

HERO

How did you escape the wild man?

ORACLE

The wounds you gave him, he lost a lot of blood, got weak, and I ran.

HERO

You're also a very good liar.

ORACLE

Like you would know. Growing up all alone and innocent with only your mother for company who always spoke the gods' truth. You wouldn't know I was lying if I told you my father was Zeus and my mother was an a Dionysian ox.

HERO

I know how bad the wild man's wounds were.

ORACLE

Fine. You want the truth?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE (CONT'D)

He let me go because he's my brother.
He got a couple of friends together
to rescue me from Cyclops, but on
the way there they bumped into us
and he had to improvise. My brother
isn't very good at improvising.

Hero gives her a withering look, more lies.

HERO

Come on. If we pick up the pace we'll
make it to the Temple by nightfall.

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. AEGEUS' ROOM - DAY

Medea enters and finds Courtesan Alexa on her own and Aegeus gone.

MEDEA

Where is the King?!

COURTESAN ALEXA

He's called his Generals together.

Medea rushes out.

COURTESAN ALEXA (CONT'D)

I tried to stop him!

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. MAP ROOM - DAY

Medea finds Aegeus alone, propped up against the map table.

MEDEA

Why are you up?

KING AEGEUS

Where are Pliny's forces? And the
archers from Thebes?

MEDEA

You need to rest.

KING AEGEUS

There is only one Arcadian division
on this table. Where are the other
two?!

He coughs up a little blood.

Medea helps him to a chair.

(CONTINUED)

KING AEGEUS (CONT'D)

I must show my strength.

MEDEA

It's too soon.

Medea looks back at the door, anxious.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Sit still.

She hurries out...

INT. ATHENS. PALACE. PASSAGE OUTSIDE MAP ROOM - CONT - DAY

She stops at the door... hears footsteps coming towards her out of the gloom...

Four large men approach...

General Dion with the two other Generals including General Proteus... and a new face... a TALL YOUNG MAN.

MEDEA

The King cannot see you after all.

GENERAL DION

Is everything alright?

MEDEA

Before he can plan the next faze he needs a complete census of our current numbers, down to the last man.

GENERAL DION

That could take weeks!

She looks up at the tall young man standing behind Dion.

MEDEA

Who's this?

GENERAL DION

Captain Horos.

MEDEA

Your new bodyguard?

GENERAL DION

(embarrassed)

I'm training him in the Pyrrhic method.

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

The King has asked me to keep an eye on his affairs at this difficult time. Make sure you report back to me once you're done.

An awkward moment... the Generals not used to being talked to by the Queen like this...

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

They bow their heads respectfully and walk back the way they came...

She watches them go, worried.

EXT. PASS - DAY

A dried out river bed meanders through two tall walls of rock.

Hero stops, looks up at the escarpment above.

ORACLE

What?

HERO

We're going to run through.

ORACLE

Why?

HERO

It'll be safer.

ORACLE

Safer from what?

HERO

You can run can't you?

ORACLE

No. Not really. Not now anyway.

HERO

You'll have to.

Oracle sits on the ground.

ORACLE

You'll have to drag me.

(CONTINUED)

HERO

Get up.

ORACLE

No.

HERO

Get up!

ORACLE

Or what? You'll beat me? Then I won't even be able to walk.

HERO

All right! We'll walk.

ORACLE

Not until you tell me what's in there.

HERO

Nothing. Probably nothing. I was just being cautious.

Oracle tugs at the rope trying to mimic Hero's trick of undoing the knot.

HERO (CONT'D)

If we stop and make a lot of noise - like we're doing now - then we really will be in danger.

ORACLE

From what?

FIZZZZTHZZ!!

A missile fizzes through the air, strikes Hero in the chest and throws him to the ground.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

AHHHHH!!!!

Oracle crawls on her belly behind a rock.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

Mercenary!

No answer. She tugs at the rope.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

MERCENARY!!

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. PASS - DAY

Oracle looks out from behind the rock and sees a man running towards her.

PIERCED MAN

I killed him!

When she realizes it's only her brother she runs to Hero, finds him unconscious, a dart in his chest.

ORACLE

What did you do?!

The Pierced man is delighted with himself.

PIERCED MAN

I killed him!

ORACLE

What is this? Poison?

PIERCED MAN

Yes!

She pulls out the dart and listens to his heart... then starts sucking out the poison.

PIERCED MAN (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

Oracle spits blood on the ground.

ORACLE

Your knife!

PIERCED MAN

(handing her his
flaying knife.)

If you cut the side of the neck he'll
die more slowly.

ORACLE

When did you get like this Theo?

PIERCED MAN

You used my name!

ORACLE

So what, there's no one here!

(CONTINUED)

PIERCED MAN

He's here.

ORACLE

He's dying!

She carefully cuts the wound, and sucks out more blood. Then slaps Hero hard across the face.

He starts to come to, coughs up blood.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

MERCENARY!

PIERCED MAN

Give me the knife and I'll finish him myself!

Oracle throws the knife as far as she can. Theo - the Pierced Man - but from now on we'll call him Theo - runs to look for it.

ORACLE

Breathe!

Hero wheezes...

She slaps him again, harder this time.

HERO

All right! I'm breathing!

ORACLE

Can you move your arms and legs?

He can - but only a little.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

You have to get up and move around.

She tries to help him up, but he's too heavy.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

Theo! Get over here!

Theo looks over, pissed.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

Hurry!

He trots back, helps Hero to his feet, can hardly believe what he's doing.

(CONTINUED)

THEO

Why are we saving his miserable life exactly?

ORACLE

Walk him around in a circle.

Theo is on one side of Hero, Oracle on the other, talking to each other past him...

ORACLE (CONT'D)

Why did you come back?

THEO

I thought you'd be pleased to see me.

ORACLE

I had everything under control.

THEO

That's not what it looked like.

ORACLE

Keep him upright!

THEO

He killed Chiron and Hector!

ORACLE

So you wanted revenge!

THEO

No! Yes! They were my friends.

ORACLE

They were cut-throats who liked to kill people for fun and obviously a very bad influence on you.

THEO

Why are you defending him?!

ORACLE

I don't like what my brother is turning into!

HERO

He's your brother?

ORACLE

Stay out of this.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE (CONT'D)

And concentrate on moving your arms
and legs as much as possible.

HERO

You're an even better liar than I
thought.

ORACLE

I told you he was my brother!

THEO

You did what!

HERO

Enough! I can manage on my own now.
Let go.

They both let go and watch as Hero stands on his own, swaying
a little...

... then collapses in a heap.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. AEGEUS' ROOM - DAY

Aegeus head falls back on his bed.

Medea mixes a yellow liquid in a small bottle...

... holds it to his lips.

MEDEA

Drink.

He drinks.

She sits beside him, strokes his hair.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Sleep... let your dreams heal you.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. PASS - LATE AFTERNOON.

... Hero's face... eyes closed, unconscious... just as in
the opening scene...

HERO

UUGGHHHH!

(CONTINUED)

He heaves for air... opens his eyes... coughs up mucus... lifts his head... and looks around...

His wrists and ankles are bound very tight with seven or eight different knots.

Oracle and Theo are gone...

Hero shakes his hands in a Houdiniesque maneuver and the knots fall away...

Then he stands and looks over at two sets of footprints heading away from the river, follows them a little unsteadily until, just as before, they split up in three completely different directions...

EXT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE ROOF - SUNSET

Athens in all its glory. Tightly packed streets fan out to the distant city walls. And beyond that, the smoke from King Minos' besieging armies curlicues into the sky.

Medea stands at an altar in front of a statue of the Goddess Athena in an open temple built on the rooftop of the palace.

The altar itself is a six foot long highly polished bronze mirror laid flat like a table.

MEDEA

(a whispered machine
gun babel)

Mother, ruling from Ida's height,
greatest and most glorious in Olympus,
and Sun, who sees all things and
hears all things, and rivers and
earth and you gods below who punish
the dead when any has falsely sworn,
you be my witness and watch over the
keeping of these oaths.

She holds up the arrowhead which wounded Aegeus, still covered with his blood, and cuts her arm with it... then lets the blood drip on the mirrored altar as she walks along its length...

... staring down at the patterns it leaves on the altar and her own reflection through them, as if she's reading from a book...

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Oracle and Theo walk through dark overgrown woods.

(CONTINUED)

THEO

Aren't you happy that I'm with you?

ORACLE

I can look after myself, Theo.

THEO

There are Harpies in these woods.
Hector saw one feeding on a stag.
Its face was like a human skull except
it had a beak, a long pointy beak
with rows of tiny sharp teeth, and
instead of hands it had these long
talons that ripped the flesh from
the stag's bones and -

ORACLE

Enough!

THEO

You can't look them in the eye you
know or your blood will turn to -

ORACLE

Stop it!

THEO

I'm just making sure you know that
in case one swoops down on us.

Oracle looks up at the trees.

THEO (CONT'D)

No point looking up there, you'll
never see it coming. If they make up
their mind they want you -

ORACLE

I swear on our father's grave, Theo,
if you don't shut up, I'm going to
turn into a Harpie myself.

THEO

The road to Athens is littered with
Furies and mind altering demons.

ORACLE

You're not coming with me. Get that
into your crushingly stupid little
brain. As soon as we clear these
woods, you're heading home,
understand?

(CONTINUED)

A rustle in the undergrowth up ahead. Both of them freeze, stare into the darkness.

Hero steps out in front of them, the rope coiled in his hand.

THEO

I knew it. We should have finished him off when we had the chance.

ORACLE

Run Theo.

THEO

I'm not going anywhere without you.

ORACLE

(Through gritted teeth)
I'll be fine. Just run.

Theo steps forward, getting between them, pulls the blow pipe from his back...

Fzztum...

But before he's put it to his lips it's gone, whipped away by the end of Hero's rope.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

Run Theo!

Theo draws his flaying knife and stands his ground.

THEO

Come Mercenary, let's see what my knife will do to that pretty rope of yours.

CUT TO:

EXT. PASS - MORNING

Theo and Oracle, both bound at the wrists and pulled by Hero, approach the same pass as before.

Again Hero stops and looks up at the escarpment above, then back at Oracle.

HERO

You don't have any more brothers do you?

THEO

Five. All bigger than me.

(CONTINUED)

Oracle shakes her head.

ORACLE

No.

He heads off into the pass, pulling them behind.

EXT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE ROOF - DAY

General Dion enters with his bodyguard... looks around at the apparently deserted temple.

GENERAL DION

(sotto)

Be on your guard... even in this most private of sanctuaries.

MEDEA (O.S.)

You're late.

Medea appears as if from nowhere carrying a bowl which she lays at Athena's feet. The mirrored altar is gone.

GENERAL DION

I came as quickly as I could.

MEDEA

I asked Athena, holy Goddess of wisdom, to clear my head, allow me to look deep into the void.

She turns to face Dion.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

When smoke crosses a fallow field the crows take to the sky.

General Dion is completely lost.

GENERAL DION

I'm sorry, I...

MEDEA

I wanted to ask your opinion about something...

She gestures to a pedestal... Dion moves over to it, picks up the bloody arrow head.

GENERAL DION

The Minoan arrow that wounded the King?

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

Minoan? Are you sure?

GENERAL DION

It has the enemy's classic serrated edge.

MEDEA

And the binding?

GENERAL DION

(realizing the
significance)

Raffia.

MEDEA

Does the enemy use raffia to bind their arrows?

GENERAL DION

No.

He looks up, anxious.

GENERAL DION (CONT'D)

What does this mean?

She walks behind the pillars which circle the Temple.

MEDEA

My husband is a very popular King, if someone in his own court wanted to overthrow him, it stands to reason that they would need to make his death look like the work of the enemy.

GENERAL DION

Someone like who?

MEDEA

Let's see... He'd have to be in line to the throne.

GENERAL DION

Your son? Lykos!

Medea tries not to roll her eyes, he's more stupid than she thought.

MEDEA

In time of war it would have to be someone who could command the
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA (CONT'D)

confidence of the people... and their priests.

GENERAL DION

You're not suggesting that Lord Pallas, the King's brother, planned his assassination?

MEDEA

Whoever it was, failed. Thankfully the King has survived. But now he's weak.

GENERAL DION

You think there might be another plot?

Medea stops between two pillars, keeping her distance...

MEDEA (CONT'D)

If it was Pallas, the ideal scenario would be for someone else to kill the king, someone who's perhaps close to Aegeus and a known opponent of Pallas. Then Pallas could step in and kill the man who killed his brother. Everyone would unite around him and, out of deference to their beloved Aegeus, choose Pallas to replace him.

GENERAL DION

Who would do such a terrible thing?

MEDEA

Well, let's see now. He'd need to be someone who sees the King regularly, privately, someone Aegeus works with every day, and perhaps more importantly, someone with a motive.

GENERAL DION

I can't think of anyone who -

MEDEA

A general for instance, with aspirations of his own.

GENERAL DION

Are you suggesting that I would kill the king?!

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

Not you, but someone acting for you,
someone who would make it look like
they were doing it with you. Your
bodyguard for instance.

General Dion glances at his bodyguard, who's starting to
look worried.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Pallas knows that you're a coward at
heart General. That if he warned
you of a conspiracy, you'd hire a
bodyguard.

GENERAL DION

Captain Horos is a man with an
impeccable reputation.

MEDEA

A reputation constructed by General
Priam - and you fell for it - because
you, my dear General are as dim as
you are gutless.

The bodyguard draws his sword and rushes Medea, stabs her
directly in the chest.

GENERAL DION

No!!

But his sword bounces off her - and we see now why Medea was
keeping her distance, in the shadows... she isn't really
there at all - she's actually standing behind a pillar...

It was her reflection they were talking to... in the polished
bronze Altar table propped up.

She steps forward and stabs the bodyguard in the back of the
neck. He falls forward onto the mirror. Dion rushes to
him, makes sure he's dead.

MEDEA

It's no wonder we're losing the war
with you, General, at the tiller.

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. AEGEUS ROOM - DAY

Aegeus lies in bed... Medea at his side...

KING AEGEUS

I feel better. Help me up, I want to
walk around.

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

Dear Heart, you might think you're getting better, but you're still weak.

KING AEGEUS

Nonsense. Help me up! My Generals are gathering in the war room. I must show myself strong.

MEDEA

Very well, but first drink this, it will steady you.

She feeds him a potion which immediately takes effect. Aegeus falls back on the pillow, sedated.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Perhaps you should sleep a little first.

He hears a growl in his head... looks at the corner of the room.

KING AEGEUS

The black dog...

Medea looks over, there is no black dog.

He closes his eyes... sleeps...

Courtesan Alexa watches from the doorway...

INT. ATHENS. KING AEGEUS' PALACE. MAP ROOM - DAY

Generals, Priests and dignitaries gather round the map table talking quietly amongst themselves.

General Dion, Priest Xerxes, Pallas, Proteus and a few others.

Medea sweeps in flanked by guards and her son Lykos.

MEDEA

The King will not be joining us after all.

PALLAS

We're running short on time. We must make decisions today.

MEDEA

And so we shall, but first, a toast.

(CONTINUED)

Slaves enter with trays and Medea distributes cups of wine to everyone herself.

MEDEA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

We've averted an assassination attempt on the King. Someone close to him who saw his injury as an opportunity to strike.

PRIEST XERXES

No!

Hubbub. Pallas exchanges a worried glance with a General, Priam no doubt.

Dion looks smug. Medea raises her cup.

MEDEA

To King Aegeus, son of Pandion, father of Athens, blood of the Golden halos of the Night. We thank you Zeus and all your knowledge and glory for his safe deliverance.

She drinks from her cup, watches every one drink from theirs. Pallas hesitates, suspecting poison, but he knows that refusing the toast would be an admission of guilt...

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Sadly, although one of the assassins was apprehended, his accomplice was not.

GENERAL DION

Indeed.

MEDEA

However, the assassin confessed to his master's identity.

More hubbub.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

Gentlemen. He is among us now.

Anger mixed with indignation.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

But not for long. I've made sure of that.

PALLAS

Poison?

(CONTINUED)

Medea looks at him closely.

PALLAS (CONT'D)

Shouldn't you at least give the accused the opportunity to defend himself.

MEDEA

We're at war Lord Pallas, there's no time for trials.

She takes a step towards him.

MEDEA (CONT'D)

But I'll give him the opportunity to step forward, admit his guilt now, and smooth his journey through the river Styx.

Pallas doesn't take the bait.

But General Dion starts coughing. He grabs his throat, swoons, and collapses to the floor.

Everyone looks down at him, shocked.

PRIEST XERXES

It was General Dion?!

MEDEA

His bodyguard was the assassin.

Pallas is visibly relieved.

Xerxes takes Dion's pulse.

PRIEST XERXES

He's gone.

Not a flicker of emotion on Medea's face.

MEDEA

Lord Pallas. As the King's brother, and most trusted in his court, I ask you to join me as one of the judges to preside over the inquest.

PALLAS

Of course.

(CONTINUED)

MEDEA

We must find out why our most senior general, the man King Aegeus put in charge of the war, would turn traitor.

PALLAS

No doubt he had aspirations of his own. But who will command the King's armies now?

MEDEA

After such a crushing betrayal, it's perhaps no surprise that my husband has chosen the man closest to him. His son, Lykos.

Quiet noises of surprise. Lykos is more surprised than anyone.

PALLAS

With all due respect, Lykos is a boy.

MEDEA

The King considers that one of his most important qualities, free from the greed, ambition and hubris.

PRIEST XERXES

I think it's an excellent appointment. And let me be the first to thank you Queen Medea for uncovering such a sinister plot.

Pallas is furious, but tries to hide it, Medea is strengthening her hold over court and King.

PRIEST XERXES (CONT'D)

I think I speak for all those gathered here when I say that you have our full and unbridled support.

Noises of agreement from everyone... even Pallas, grudgingly.

PRIEST XERXES (CONT'D)

We salute you.

He raises his hands in an ancient salute.

PRIEST XERXES (CONT'D)

Queen Medea!

ALL

QUEEN MEDEA!

(CONTINUED)

Medea allows herself a slight smile.

EXT. TEMPLE OF GAIA - DAY

A secluded temple on a high hill.

Hero pulls Oracle and Theo to the entrance.

ORACLE

Home sweet home.

They enter the temple.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. TEMPLE OF GAIA. MAIN CHAMBER - DAY

A statue of Gaia looms at the far end of the Temple.

HERO

Priest!

CYRUS (O.S.)

Tie her to the mouth.

Cyrus appears from behind the statue - head shaved, long beard, dark unforgiving eyes - and gestures to a hole in the temple floor beneath the statue.

Hero takes Oracle to 'the mouth' and Cyrus secures her ankles to leather bindings.

THEO

Hurt her and I'll flay you alive.

Two other priests stand by the exit - younger, fitter...

Cyrus steps back, looks over at Hero.

CYRUS

Ask your question and go.

Hero takes his position on a mosaic in the center of the temple floor - and addresses Oracle.

HERO

Oracle. My mother died before she could explain the riddle of my life, so now I come to you great oracle of Gaia.

ORACLE

You dragged me back here for a vision?

HERO

Yes.

ORACLE

(re priests)

You're not working for them?

HERO

No.

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE

I could have answered your question
when we first met.

HERO

I was told it had to be here, at the
Temple.

ORACLE

Who told you that?

Hero glances at the Priest.

CYRUS

Only the breath from the mouth of
Gaia can guide the oracle.

ORACLE

Let me get this straight. You came
all the way from the forest of Troezen
to ask your question, but when you
saw that I'd run away, you went after
me, risked your life, killed two men
and the Cyclops, and dragged me back
here because the Priests said I had
to stand over the mouth of Gaia.

HERO

Is that not true?

ORACLE

The mouth helps - but you could have
let me try.

HERO

I did.

ORACLE

No, you lied to me.

HERO

Would you have come if I'd told you
the truth?

ORACLE

No.

Hero gives her a 'well then' look.

CYRUS

Oracle! Answer the traveler's
question.

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE

I'm - very - disappointed in you.

Exasperated, Oracle steps over the hole in the temple floor - the mouth - stands astride it... one foot on each edge.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

What was the question again?

HERO

Why was I was brought up in hiding?

A gust of hot gas rises from the hole...

Oracle closes her eyes and inhales the gases...

Flash!

A woman's face... a beautiful, young woman... making love to someone we can't see because we are that man, we're looking through his eyes... at her...

Then - we're suddenly back with Oracle...

Who swoons... profoundly affected by the vision...

ORACLE

You are the son of...

She tries to stay on her feet, but the gases are making her giddy...

ORACLE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

... a man of great power and wealth...

Flash... We're inside that man again... but now he's sitting on the side of the bed, and looking at the young woman, curled up asleep... he reaches down for a bowl of wine... for a moment we see his reflection shimmering in its surface...

ORACLE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Aegeus! Your father is the King of Athens!

Cyrus exchanges a look with the other two priests.

ORACLE (CONT'D)

And because you are his first born... you...

Flash! We're traveling through the cosmos now, past stars and planets... beautiful... iridescent...

(CONTINUED)

ORACLE (CONT'D)

... carry the mysterious Lexicon
inside you.

She collapses to her knees, only just avoids falling into
'the mouth'.

HERO

The Lexicon?

Cyrus steps forward.

CYRUS

A thing of unimaginable power.

Hero looks over at him, at his eyes blazing with wonder and
excitement.

HERO

Inside me?

CYRUS

It's hidden. We will have to work
together to retrieve it.

HERO

What does it do?

CYRUS

It leads to the doors of Olympus.

HERO

Home of the Gods?

CYRUS

Any mortal who finds his way there
is welcomed by gods, becomes one of
them, an immortal.

Hero shakes his head - enough.

He walks over and undoes Oracle's leather bindings with a
flick of the fingers and helps her to her feet.

HERO

Come on. We're leaving.

ORACLE

Really? Great!

They head for the door, Theo falling in behind. The other
two Priests block the exit.

(CONTINUED)

CYRUS

A few days is all I ask, here, in the luxury we can provide. All you have to do is eat, drink, sleep... and describe your dreams.

HERO

Out of our way.

CYRUS

Please, son of Aegeus, the alternative is imprisonment and torture.

HERO

Are you threatening me?

CYRUS

I would rather you were our honored guest.

Hero pulls his rope from his shoulder, ready to fight. The Priests advance, draw swords...

Unlike the wild men in the woods who were - wild - the Priests are well trained in the art of combat.

Hero battles impressively, using his length of rope to whip, trip and lasso his opponents, while Theo fights at his side.

Together they try to use the space to their advantage, dodging between pillars, splitting up and reuniting, and Oracle plays her part too.

But eventually Cyrus gets the better of Theo, clamps an arm around him and holds his sword to his neck.

CYRUS (CONT'D)

Submit, son of Aegeus, or your friend dies.

Theo is far from Hero's friend, but nevertheless he knows how much he means to Oracle...

She looks at him, her eyes pleading...

Hero throws down his rope.

CYRUS (CONT'D)

Very wise.

Cyrus takes the sword from Theo's neck.

The two priests grab Hero's arms and force him to his knees...

(CONTINUED)

Cyrus looks down at Theo, still submissive and... whips his sword over Theo's neck... slicing it open...

ORACLE

NOOOO!!!!

She runs to her brother's side, but there's nothing she can do. He is already dead.

CYRUS

Take him down.

The priests drag Hero away.

INT. ATHENS. PALACE APOTHECARY - DAY

Medea stands in front of her wall of symbols and signs.

Exasperated, she takes a wet cloth and starts to wipe it clean.

INT. TEMPLE OF GAIA - NIGHT

Oracle, ankles bound, sits by the mouth of Gaia, curled up, deep in shock.

INT. PIT - NIGHT.

Beaten and bruised, Hero lies in deep pit looking up at the night sky through a trap door.

END OF NIGHT ONE