

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Euripides: *Medea*

**CHORUS:**

[Strophe 1]

O Earth, O radiant beam  
of Helios, look down and see her—  
this woman, destroyer, before she can lay  
her hand stained with blood,  
her kin-killing hand  
upon her own children  
descended from you  
the gods' golden race;  
for such blood to spill  
at the hands of a mortal  
fills us with fear.  
Light born from Zeus,  
stop her, remove  
this bloodstained Erinys;  
take her away  
from this house cursed with vengeance.

[Antistrophe 1]

Your toil has all been in vain,  
in vain, all the heartache of raising  
your children, your dearest, O sorrowful one  
who once left behind  
the dark Clashing Rocks  
most hostile to strangers.  
What burden of rage  
descended upon  
your mind? Why does wild  
slaughter follow on slaughter?  
Blood-spatter, stain,  
slaughter of kin,  
murder within  
the family brings grief  
tuned to the crime  
from the gods to the household.

**CHILD:**

*(From within the house.)*

Oh no!

**CHORUS:**

[Strophe 2]

Do you hear the shouts, the shouts of her children?  
Poor woman: she's cursed, undone by her fortune.

**CHILD 1:**

Oh, how can I escape my mother's hand?

**CHILD 2:**

Dear brother, I don't know. We are destroyed.

**CHORUS:**

Shall I go inside?  
I ought to prevent this,  
the slaughter of children.

**CHILD 1:**

Yes, come and stop her! That is what we need.

**CHILD 2:**

We're trapped; we're caught! The sword is at our throats.

**CHORUS:**

Poor thing: after all  
you were rock, you were iron:  
to reap with your own hand  
the crop that you bore;  
to cut down your kin  
with a fate-dealing hand.

[Antistrophe 2]

I've heard of just one, just one other woman  
who dared to attack, to hurt her own children:  
Ino, whom the gods once drove insane  
and Zeus's wife sent wandering from her home.  
The poor woman leapt  
to sea with her children:  
an unholy slaughter.  
She stepped down from a steep crag's rocky edge  
and died with her two children in the waves.  
What terrible deed  
could surpass such an outrage?  
O bed of their marriage,  
O woman's desire:  
such harm have you done,  
so much pain have you caused.