

FIRST MOVEMENT

SCENE 1

*A young woman stretches out
on an expensive white couch.
A Western on TV. Fire in the fireplace.
Nearby, her husband signs checks.
Stacks of unpaid bills surround them.*

MEDEA

All I want to do is drink beer
and float. If I'm lucky, I can choreograph
my own fall, my own birthright.
Two types of theatre-goers:
those who are on time & those
who are not. "Live in hiding,"
the philosopher says.
Would you try a chocolate-covered
ant if offered to you?

HUSBAND

What do you mean, try?

He does not look up from the checkbook.

MEDEA

Try as in to eat, to slice
with divine teeth!
To masticate with back molars!
To eat where others
have eaten and enjoyed.

Her arms above her head in a wild totem pose.

HUSBAND

You make no sense sometimes, Medea.

MEDEA

She speaks directly to the audience.

My husband likes to do this—
repeat his experiences.
I mean, who actually likes
watching a Western they've seen
258 times? He's trying to maximize
his happiness. Obviously, he's not
going to win. No one wins
against Pain. He's been fighting
Pain a lot lately. His face muscles
built up against Pain's prickling.
I notice the difference, even
if my husband doesn't
appreciate his new cheekiness.

At the commercial, she places a cowboy hat over her face.

I sleep under a saguaro tree.
With snakes curling around
my pelvis, I'm the eternal tree.

Can I lick the stamps for you?

HUSBAND

Of course, sweetie.

He hands her a roll of stamps.

Have we ever seen this movie before?

MEDEA

Are you kidding me?
I can't be expected to watch television
every night until I'm eighty.
The net's been too high for too long.
You've been playing to my disadvantage,
my weedy appetite out of hand.
I can't be expected to reinvigorate
two thousand years of thinking by myself.

HUSBAND

Medea! What's with you lately?

MEDEA

I feel restless.
Will you tie this blindfold on me?

HUSBAND

No, I will not.
I'm trying to pay these bills.

MEDEA

What is your true gift to me?
I want it evenly. Without
examining entrails or reading
tea leaves, I want it now.

*She gets up, stands behind her husband,
making a gun with her thumb and forefinger.
She slowly aims the gun at her husband,
then switches aim toward her own head.
She pulls the trigger. The flames rise higher.*

HUSBAND

Why don't we go on a road trip?
I think we're going to get more snow
this weekend. Might be fun to find a cabin.

MEDEA

Can we go to the hot springs?

HUSBAND

Sure. Why not?

MEDEA

Okay, I'll start packing.

HUSBAND

I'll clean the car.

MEDEA

Why do you always clean the car
before we go on a trip? Makes no sense
to me, we're just going to dirty it.

HUSBAND

I like starting trips with a clean car.

MEDEA

Fine. Whatever you like.
I'm going to start packing.

HUSBAND

Don't forget the camera—
you forgot it last time.

*Medea pulls out a suitcase from underneath the couch.
She plays a Lou Reed record while she packs.
She continues packing, and practices
air guitar on her thigh.
At one point, she holds up a pair of pants
and smells the crotch.*