

MEDEA: THE MUSICAL
by John Fisher

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Cast of Characters

(Each actor has an on-stage and an off-stage character. These are delineated thus:
On-stage Character / Off-stage Character.)

Jason, Captain of the Argonauts / Paul

Medea, Princess of Colchis / Elsa

Aetees, King of Colchis / Craig

Apsyrtus, Prince of Colchis / Matt

Phaedra, Queen of Athens / Kegan

Hippolytus, Prince of Athens / Darryl

Eros, A Goddess of Love / Shayna

Theseus, King of Athens / Gabe

Aphrodite, Goddess of Love / Jane

Oenos, Phaedra's Maid / Karen

First Argonaut / Cal

Second Argonaut / Christian

A Rabbit / Corey (Corey is also the on-stage and visible Music Director and
Accompanist)

Other Characters: A Deer (Matt), A Sea Monster (Craig), The Bronze
Giant (Matt), A Baby (Cal), Another Baby (Christian), Club Goers,
Living Dead Dancers, Argonauts

Time: The Age of Heroes

Place: Iolcus, Colchis, Athens, Corinth, Crete, The Mediterranean, The
Aegean, A Club, Mount Tamalpias, The Euripides Festival's
Theatre, and the Heavens.

MEDEA - THE MUSICAL

ACT I

Scene 1

(In the darkness we hear the opening strains of the Beatles' "Because." On the choral "ahhsss..." the act curtain rises to reveal a stage full of fur clad men - THE CREW - in eerie lighting. They look like cavemen and they begin to sing "Because" softly. A spot light slowly fades in to reveal PAUL, also clad in a fur, standing in the middle of the stage. He speaks to the audience.)

PAUL In the summer of 1996 I was hired by the Euripides Festival to perform the role of Jason in "Medea, the Musical." "Medea, the Musical" began with the voyage of the Argos to Colchis to obtain the Golden Fleece. The Golden Fleece could endow its possessor with eternal life. Colchis, an exotic city on the Black Sea was therefore seen as a city of magical powers - a mythical destination of hope, glory and happiness. For the crew of the Argos, the Argonauts, Colchis was a city not unlike Oz.

(We hear the vamp from "Colchis, Colchis" - which sounds suspiciously like the vamp from "New York, New York.")

PAUL And so our story begins...

(We hear the vamp from "Colchis, Colchis.")

PAUL In the third week of rehearsal...

(We hear the vamp from "Colchis, Colchis.")

PAUL For "Medea, the Musical!"

Song: "Colchis, Colchis"

PAUL START SPREADIN' YOUR LEGS,

CREW WE'RE SCREAMIN' TODAY,
"WE WANNA BE THE HEART OF IT!"

COLCHIS, COLCHIS.

CREW THESE CITY STATE SHOES
ARE MINCIN' AWAY
WE'LL SKIP AROUND THE HEART OF IT
COLCHIS, COLCHIS.

WE WANNA SHAKE IT IN THAT DISCO BY THE
 BLACK SEA
 TO FIND WE'RE QUEENS OF THE HIVE
 LADIES IN HEAT
 FAGGOTS WHO SQUEAK WHEN THEY'RE TWEAKED
 BETWEEN CHEEKS!

PAUL OUR AEGEAN BLUES

CREW ARE MELTIN' AWAY.
 WE'LL MAKE A QUEER CLUB MED OF IT!

PAUL Queer Club Med!

CREW OF WARM COLCHIS!
 IF WE CAN MAKE IT THERE
 WE'LL MAKE IT ANYWHERE

(They enjoy a "YMCA interlude with arm gestures.)
 "WE'RE GONNA STAY AT THE YMCA"

IT'S UP TO YOU COLCHIS, COLCHIS!

(By the end of the number the choreography has allowed them to form a ship which they "row" off-stage right. PAUL remains on-stage at the stage-right proscenium. The "Colchis, Colchis" vamp continues under the following.)

PAUL (To the audience) In Colchis lived Medea - daughter of the King of Colchis. The author of this musical rendered her as a girl like any other: kind, lonely and hoping for a place of excitement and happiness. She found Colchis to be remote and unexciting - a place not unlike Kansas - and she prayed that someone would transport her to a land of thrills and passion - to a place not unlike New York City.

(ELSA appears in a spotlight down stage left.)

Song: "Somewhere Way Out of Colchis" (Which sounds suspiciously like "Somewhere Over the Rainbow.")

ELSA SOMEWHERE WAY OUT OF COLCHIS
 IN THE SKY,
 THERE'S A LAND THAT I DREAMED OF
 EV'RYTIME I GET HIGH.

(She produces a Toto dog - a cheap cutout - from behind her back and sings to it. She also reveals that she is wearing ruby slippers.)

SOMEDAY I WILL LEAVE COLCHIS

TOTO TOO
 SO THE DREAMS THAT WE'VE DARED TO DREAM
 WON'T BE DOGGY-DOO.

(The CREW begins entering from stage right in their shipping pattern.)

CREW START SPREADIN' YOUR LEGS,
 WE'RE GONNA CHANTÉ
 AND THEN WE'LL CLOSE THE BARS OF IT
 OF WARM COLCHIS.

 IF WE CAN MAKE IT THERE

ELSA IF HAPPY LITTLE BLUEBIRDS FLY

CREW WE'LL MAKE IT ANYWHERE

ELSA OUT OF THIS SHITHOLE

CREW COLCHIS, COLCHIS!

ELSA WHY? OH WHY CAN'T I?

Scene 2

PAUL (To the audience) At this point in the show we arrived in
 Colchis and were received to the Colchian court by King
 Aeetes.

(There is a tremendous amount of noise and CRAIG, MATT, DARRYL and
 KEGAN enter dressed as if from Chinese Opera and begin cavorting about the
 stage waving swords ceremonially. MATT and DARRYL, for obvious reasons,
 are very scantily clad in skimpy skirts.)

PAUL The director's concept was that Colchis was a city with an
 Asian feel to it.

(CRAIG opens a small gold fan and executes some lame fan dance moves as the
 others chant like Buddhist monks. The movement stops, leaving CRAIG, MATT,
 KEGAN and DARRYL down stage left with ELSA.)

CRAIG Who is comes to disturb the age old tranquillity Colchis!
 (He executes a ridiculous karate posture.)

PAUL (Very queeny) It is I - Jason. (Looking meaningfully at the
 crew) And my boys. (They all giggle like a bunch of faggots.)
 We come in worship and seeking the Golden Fleece.

(CRAIG is thunderstruck and begins to recoil about the stage like a spastic Sumo wrestler. He arrives center stage and speaks.)

CRAIG The Golden Fleece?

PAUL Yes.

CRAIG That which gives eternal youth and virility? (CRAIG takes a big whiff of his arm pit and smiles.)

PAUL So I'm told.

CRAIG (Babyishly) The Golden Fleece is mine.

PAUL (To his CREW) Men!

(The CREW growls at CRAIG.)

CRAIG But... Perhaps we can work something out. The Fleece shall belong to he that can execute the labors: first, you, Jason must yoke the two fire-breathing-brazen-footed bulls, creations of Haphaestus, then you must plow the fields of fiery Ares to the extent of four plowgates, then you must sow the fields with the dragon's teeth. The dragon's teeth will then give sprout and life to whom you must then vanquish in single combat - The Living Dead.

CREW The Living Dead!

(All the characters careen about the stage screaming in abject terror. They come to rest. The music is sinister.)

CRAIG Yes, the Living Dead. Only when they are vanquished may you gain entrance to the Grotto of the Golden Fleece.

(GABE screams. PAUL, THE CREW and CRAIG all give him withering looks. He looks embarrassed.)

CRAIG Great Aeetes, your god, king and greatest dread has spoken.

(All supplicate themselves in noisy fear.)

PAUL (Simply) Will you introduce me to your fam-fam?

CRAIG But of course-course.

(They cross to stage left where KEGAN, DARRYL, MATT and ELSA are standing.)

CRAIG (Indicating MATT) This is my son Apsyrtus - nubile, soft, tender and virginal - he has a marvelous chest.

PAUL (Taking MATT's hand) Enchanté, Apssss.....

CREW Say it!

PAUL Syrtus!

CRAIG And this is my sister Phaedra from Athens.

PAUL (Extending his hand grandly) Dear Phaedra - one hears so much about you.

KEGAN Et vous, Jason. (Indicating DARRYL) This is my.....
(She can't finish the sentence because she is so overcome with lust for DARRYL's nipple. She snaps out of it.) son, Hippolytus. He too is fine chested.

PAUL (Very interested) Indeed. In Iolcus, where I come from, one greets the fine chested with a vice like clamp to the nipples. (He begins to reach. KEGAN slaps his hand away.)

KEGAN He has very sensitive nipples. (Suddenly hysterical) And he's my son, damn the gods! (She throws herself down hysterical.)

CRAIG (Pridefully) My family.

PAUL Charming. (PAUL and CRAIG begin to move away.)

ELSA (Meekly) Father.

CRAIG (Turning) Yes. (Realizing his oversight) Oh, yes, I'm sorry, this is my daughter.

PAUL And what is her name?

CRAIG Medea.

(There is a terrifying chord from the piano and a bloodcurdling scream from the balcony at the mention of Medea's name. An hysterical PATRON runs screaming from the theatre never to be seen again.)

PAUL (Unperturbed) I'm pleased to meet you. (He crosses to her and stretches out his hand to shake hers. Before they can shake SHAYNA steps from the wings as EROS. She holds a bow and wears a quiver on her back.)

SHAYNA (To the audience) I am Eros, Goddess of Love. I come to penetrate Medea with my Eros Arrows. (She shoots an arrow into ELSA's back. ELSA indicates the arrow's penetration and instantly her expression is transformed to one of love for PAUL. SHAYNA then exits.)

ELSA (Gesticulating grandly) Oh sweet minister of my heart's desire, I adore you.

PAUL (Not terribly interested) You'll get over it.

(Da-da-dum from the drums.)

ELSA You cannot yoke the bulls and vanquish the living dead without my help. I am a sorceress and I will help you to win the Golden Fleece.

PAUL (Suddenly interested) My darling. (They embrace. Thump from the drums.)

ELSA Come to my palace tonight. There we will plan your victory as we are voluptuating.

PAUL Voluptuating - my favorite gerund. (He turns to his crew.) Crew! To the ship! We will practice yoking bull.

(PAUL and the CREW exit stage right singing "Show us the way to the YMCA.")

CRAIG (Once they have exited) Come Apsyrtus and Hippolytus, let's plan the demise of this Greek upstart and his merry band of boy-toys.

(CRAIG, DARRYL and MATT exit in a flurry of ceremonial nonsense leaving ELSA and KEGAN on-stage.)

Song: "Oh No!" (Which sounds oddly like Dionne Warwick's "I Know I'll Never Love This Way Again.")

ELSA OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN.
OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN
SO I'LL KEEP SINGING ON
UNTIL MY VOICE IS GONE.

(KEGAN surfaces from her faint and joins ELSA.)

BOTH OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN
SING ON, SING ON.

(ELSA stops singing and looks bored. KEGAN continues solo.)

KEGAN OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN-

JOHN (Voice Over) Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop! Kegan stop singing. Corey stop playing the piano. Staaaaaaaaahp!

(The singing and music stop. Everyone onstage looks confused.)

JOHN (From the booth) Work lights please. (The work lights come up.) Elsa baby, what's the problem?

ELSA No problem.

JOHN This is the big love song - what's the problem?

ELSA You don't like it this way?

JOHN No, it's awful. What's the problem?

(JEFF enters from stage left and begins hemming ELSA's tunic.)

ELSA I'm playing what I feel.

JOHN What do you feel?

ELSA Right now? Nothing.

JOHN It shows.

ELSA I'm sorry. I have problems with this transition.

JOHN What transition?

ELSA The one from not loving him to loving him.

JOHN Look, Elsa, the only transition I see is from a lot of really boring dialogue into a great Dionne Warwick song. So can we just screw all the method acting crap and just belt out the fucking song please?

ELSA (Smiling) I'll try.

JOHN Thanks. All right, Corey, let's take it from the top. (COREY begins playing.) Stop! (COREY stops playing.) Jeffrey, do you have to hem in the middle of rehearsal?

JEFF Do you want these ready for opening?

JOHN Jeffrey, get off the stage. Go! (JEFF exits with an attitude. PAUL has wandered on-stage right.) Uh, Paul, are you in this number?

PAUL (Annoyed) Uh, no...

JOHN Then get the fuck off the stage, please. Thanks. (PAUL exits looking pissed.) All right, Corey, let's take it from the top.

COREY Which top?

JOHN The top, Corey, the top.

COREY Top of the scene, top of the song, top of the refrain?

JOHN Top of the song!

COREY (Seething) Thank you!

JOHN Go!

ELSA OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN...
I'm sorry, can we stop? (Long pause.) I need to stop. (Pause. Emotionally) Can I take a break?

JOHN Please.

ELSA Thank you. (And she exits stage-left.)

JOHN All right, Kegan, let's take your Act I solo. (JEFF begins hemming KEGAN's skirt.)

KEGAN (To JOHN) John, she's not the only fucking actress who can play Medea.

JOHN Thank you Kegan. Jeffrey, get off the stage.

JEFF (Not looking up from his work) Shut up.

JOHN Jeffrey, get off the stage.

JEFF Shut up.

JOHN Get off my stage!!!

JEFF (Singing to himself and continuing to stitch) "The hills are alive with the sound of music..."

JOHN Oh, Lord. Fine. I'll give some notes. (Throughout the following the performers appear briefly at the sides of the stage to receive their individual notes. Having received them they immediately exit.)

JOHN Craig!

CRAIG Yes, John.

JOHN Good work in the opening scene.

CRAIG Thanks, John.

JOHN But I want to see those transitions. Sharper, sharper.

CRAIG The transitions?

JOHN They're like mush, Craig. Mushy transitions. It's a mess. This is comedy, Craig. Comedy is about transitions.

CRAIG Comedy is about transitions. Got it. (And he begins to exit.)

JOHN Oh, and Craig, could you be a little more Asian?

CRAIG (Amazed) More Asian?

JOHN Yes, more Asian.

CRAIG Don't you think that's kind of offensive, John.

JOHN No, Craig, that's comedy. Comedy is about being offensive.

CRAIG I thought comedy was about transitions?

JOHN Well it's about transitions from one offensive bit to another. It's complicated, Craig. Acting is complicated. Work on it.

CRAIG (Deeply sarcastic) Oh, acting is complicated. I'll remember that.

JOHN Matt! Darryl! (CRAIG exits stage left.) Thanks, Craig! (DARRYL and MATT enter from down left. They both look quite stunning.) Darryl, you were exceptionally fine in the opening scene.

DARRYL I don't have any lines.

JOHN You're a visual experience, baby. (MATT laughs moronically at DARRYL) Matt, that's really good, only in the scene could you try to look a little sexier.

MATT Sexier?

JOHN Yes, sexier. Jeffrey, could you take up Matt's skirt a foot or so?

JEFF He'll look naked.

JOHN No, he won't look naked. Karen! Thank you, gentlemen.

KAREN (Emerging with a prompt-book in hand) Yes, John.

JOHN Karen, how are the lines coming?

KAREN They have the gist of it. They're not saying the exact words yet.

JOHN Karen, I want it word for word. I spent an entire weekend writing this thing. You keep after them, girl.

SHAYNA John, was that better?

JOHN Superb, Shayna. Very compelling.

SHAYNA Can I have my song back?

JOHN No, the song was a terrible. It was ruining the entire show.

SHAYNA (Bursting into tears) Thank you.

JOHN No, it wasn't you, dear, it was the tempo. Oh shit. Karen! Jane!

KAREN Yes, John.

JANE Yes, John.

JOHN Karen, take Shayna backstage and convince her I don't think she's a shitty actress. I just hated the song.

KAREN Yes, John.

JOHN If she doesn't believe you give her a taco.

KAREN A taco?

JOHN Yes, a taco. Out! Out! Jane, what the hell are we going to do with you?

JANE I don't know, what?

JOHN You were giggling in the opening scene.

JANE No, I wasn't.

JOHN No, I heard you. You know, it's extremely unprofessional and annoying for you to be-

JANE Would you just- I wasn't -

JOHN You were laughing backstage!

JANE I wasn't laughing backstage.

JOHN No, I don't write these things so you can giggle in the middle of my opening scene- (She screams.) Yes, well, screaming won't change the past. (She screams again and exits.) Karen!

KAREN Yeah, John.

JOHN How's Shayna doing?

(We hear SHAYNA crying off-stage left. A taco flies on-stage and hits KAREN.)

KAREN (To JOHN) Good suggestion.

JOHN Rosanna?

ROSANNA (From the back of the house) Yeah, John?

JOHN Did you watch the opening scene?

ROSANNA Yeah.

JOHN Yeah, do you think Paul is gay enough? I mean, do you think the audience will get that he's supposed to be gay?

ROSANNA (After a pause) Uh, yeah.

JOHN Thanks. Jane! (JANE appears holding a phone to her ear.)

JANE Yeah.

JOHN You're the choreographer on this production?

JANE Yeah.

JOHN The opening number?

JANE Yeah?

JOHN Gabe in the opening number?

JANE Yeah?

JOHN He sucks.

JANE Yeah.

JOHN Talk to him.

JOHN Yeah. Yeah. (And she says this last one directly into the phone such that we realize that's where all of her "yeahs" have been going. GABE appears from down right.)

JOHN Gabe. Now about your dancing- (And GABE runs off the stage.)
Gabe! Gabe!

JEFF All done!

JOHN Oh, goodie. Corey, let's take it from the top!

COREY Which top?

JOHN The top, Corey, the top.

COREY Which top?

JOHN Go!

KEGAN Top of the song, dear.

JOHN Oh, Kegan, are you directing this production?

Song: "Greek Boys" (Well, let's just say it might be mistaken for "The Rose.")

KEGAN Are you? (And she begins singing.)
SOME SAY GREEKS, THEY ARE THE HOTTEST
THOSE BOYS IN GOLD LAMÉ

(JEFF appears on the platform and walks to center hiding a hammer from view.)

KEGAN SOME SAY MOMS, THEY SHOULD BE MODEST
AND LEAVE THEIR SONS TO PLAY

(JEFF begins hammering wildly on the platform. JOHN becomes hysterical.)

JOHN Jeffrey, stop it! Stop it! Stop it! (KAREN surfaces from behind the platform and wrestles the hammer away from JEFF.) Get off the stage, you maniac! (JEFF exits with attitude.)

KEGAN OH STEP SON, YOU ARE SO STUDLY
 I CRAVE YOUR SUPPLE FLESH.
 AND A MOM, SHE NEEDS HER SONS LOVE.
 I DREAM OF BANGLADESH.
 (Looking out at JOHN) That rhyme still doesn't work for me.

(ELSA comes crashing through the Stage Door, leaving it open behind her.)

ELSA Asshole. (She lights a cigarette and sits at the proscenium stage left.)

Scene 3

(PAUL emerges from the Stage Door looking at ELSA. KEGAN begins humming the melody. PAUL is smoking a cigarette.)

PAUL (To the audience) Meanwhile, outside the theatre. (He yanks at a piece of black felt and reveals a sign which reads: Stage Door. He continues to speak to the audience.) Portrait of an actress smoking by the stage-door. This particular actress has proved difficult before and will no doubt prove difficult again. As a difficult actress myself, I have no patience for it. As far as I'm concerned, she can go to hell.

KEGAN (Voice over as if she were inside the theatre)
 SOME SAY, "LUST FOR TEENAGE BOYS
 IS GROSS AND DISGUSTING."

PAUL Still. I should make an effort.

KEGAN I SAY, "LUST FOR TEENAGE BOYS

PAUL (To ELSA) Pretty song isn't it?

KEGAN IS GREAT, IT MAKES ME SING."

(ELSA rises and slams the fire doors. The singing and the on-stage lights are abruptly cut off leaving only the "Stage Door" area still lit.)

PAUL (To the audience) Guess not.

(GABE enters through the doors. As he opens the door we hear KEGAN still holding her "Sing" note from the song. When he closes the door behind him, this note is cut off.)

GABE Paul.

PAUL Gabe.

GABE How are you?

PAUL I'm fine. How are you?

GABE You know. (Pause.) OK.

PAUL (To the audience) Gabe. My ex-boyfriend. In case you couldn't already guess.

GABE So I was thinking about you the other night.

PAUL Oh yeah?

GABE Yeah. I was watching "Mommie Dearest." It reminded me of your performance as Hamlet.

PAUL Thanks.

GABE (Hopefully) So tonight I'm watching "Network."

PAUL You're on a regular Faye Dunaway binge, aren't you?

GABE Something like that. You want to join me?

PAUL 'Fraid I can't. I have tons of work to do on my character. You see, it wouldn't do to perform him like any musical comedy hero. I have to answer to a higher authority. Euripides.

GABE Yeah, all right, Paul. I get the picture. Well, I guess I'll see you tomorrow.

PAUL Indeed. (GABE begins to move off stage right. He then turns to PAUL.)

GABE Paul-

PAUL Yes?

GABE (After a pause) Nothing. (And GABE exits weeping.)

PAUL (To the audience) Oh, please.

(CRAIG comes through the Stage Door wearing lots of leather and chains and holding a whip menacingly. He's a real Daddy.)

CRAIG Paul!

PAUL (Startled) Craig!

CRAIG (Annoyed) So what's happening tonight? (He snaps his whip.)

PAUL (To the audience) Craig, my current boy friend - a bit different from Gabe.

CRAIG Are you going to be a good slave or what?

PAUL (In the practiced tones of a liar) I should stay and work out the opening scene with Elsa.

CRAIG Of course, nothing like getting that first scene perfect.

PAUL Very important. But I'll be by later.

CRAIG Don't bother. I'll be at Gabriel's. We're watching "Les Enfants de Paradise."

PAUL Funny. He invited me over to watch "Network."

CRAIG Did you accept?

PAUL I declined. (With meaning) I've seen it too many times.

CRAIG Have you seen Gabriel's copy of "Les Enfants de Paradise?"

PAUL Yes. I found it tedious and unengaging.

CRAIG Really. I loved it. Perhaps it was its extreme length that you found forbidding.

PAUL No, I saw a cut version.

CRAIG In French?

PAUL No, it was dubbed.

CRAIG Ah, well, I've seen the original. In all its native glory. Uncut. Undubbed. As the French meant it to be seen and experienced. Bon soir. (And he exits singing "La Marseilles.")

DARRYL (Entering) Goodnight, Paul.

PAUL Goodnight, Darryl. (To the audience) Darryl, my future boyfriend, if there's a God in heaven.

MATT (Appearing beside DARRYL) Goodnight, Paul.

PAUL Goodnight, Matt. (MATT giggles like an idiot. To the audience) Wouldn't touch him with a ten foot pole. (MATT exits giggling moronically to himself.)

DARRYL (Staring after MATT) How sad.

PAUL Hmm.

DARRYL You were great in that opening scene. I really love watching you.

PAUL Thank you, Darryl. That means a lot. I like watching you too.

DARRYL Yeah, I wish I had some lines.

PAUL Baby, you don't need lines. You've got curves.

DARRYL (Innocently) What do you mean?

PAUL Nothing, Squirrel. Don't you worry - just be yourself.

DARRYL (Laughing) You know, you're kind of weird man.

ELSA No, he's not weird. Just horny.

(PAUL turns and gives her a withering stare.)

DARRYL Oh. (After an awkward pause) Well, I guess I'll see you two later.

PAUL (Waving affectionately) Good night, sweet prince. (To ELSA) All right, missy, what was the point of that crack?

ELSA Just an observation.

PAUL Look, I could care less what you do on-stage. I don't even care if you waste an entire rehearsal because you can't manage a transition. But offstage, spare me your asinine observations.

ELSA It was an observation on your performance as well.

PAUL Is this a critique?

ELSA Well, you're not a very convincing Jason, now are you?

PAUL Well now, you're not a very convincing Medea.

- ELSA Is that so surprising. The role wasn't written for a woman to play, was it? I mean, Euripides wrote the part for a man to play.
- PAUL And you really think that makes a difference?
- ELSA Certainly. The role doesn't make any sense. We're supposed to believe that this incredibly intelligent woman falls for this incredibly stupid foreigner who offers her nothing but a little adventure and the occasional screw. Sounds like something a man would do. Everything she does is manlike - superficially clever, spiritually and emotionally stupid. As a woman, she doesn't make any sense.
- PAUL You have to contextualize it. In the Greek world a woman needed a man.
- ELSA Not that bad. And in this production I don't even get a straight man. I'm supposed to fall head over heels and sing my heart out like Dionne Warwick because I've supposedly fallen for you - a man the audience will recognize as a homosexual from the moment he steps on the stage. I am going to look like a jerk up there. But I suppose that's the point in this production: straight people are morons, right?
- PAUL You think I'm that unconvincing as a heterosexual.
- ELSA Not when you want to be. I saw your Romeo a couple of years ago. It was great. Turned me on. But then you played that one straight. This one you're playing as a queen.
- PAUL I've been directed to play it as a queen.
- ELSA Yeah, well, that interpretation makes Medea look like an even bigger idiot than she is in Euripides. So maybe I won't belt out my big love song with such ecstasy. Maybe I won't perform Medea as the victim of a lot of clever fags.
- PAUL And maybe the director will fire you.
- ELSA I said maybe I won't perform it as a victim. I can rehearse it that way. Opening night can make all the difference.
- (PAUL smiles.)
- PAUL The Bay Area Reporter and the Bay Times won't like it.
- ELSA Yeah, but the Chronicle will love it.

(Pause.)

PAUL So, you liked my Romeo.

ELSA I liked it a lot.

PAUL What did you like most about it?

ELSA Your tights. You've got great legs.

PAUL And there's nothing about this performance that you like?

ELSA One thing.

PAUL What's that?

ELSA The beard. Very convincing.

PAUL You think?

ELSA Oh yeah. And sexy.

PAUL Are you flirting with a gay man?

ELSA I'm discussing my role with my co-star. If he's too much of a queen to entertain different interpretations, well then, he's kind of lost it as an actor, hasn't he?

PAUL (Testing her) You ever seen "Network?"

ELSA Yeah. I saw "Network."

PAUL What did you think of Faye Dunaway?

ELSA Pretty good. She won the wrong Oscar though.

PAUL Oh, yeah?

ELSA Yeah, she should have won for best actor not best actress.

(PAUL laughs. He catches himself laughing and tries to flee.)

PAUL Maybe we should go back inside.

ELSA Maybe we should go out. We're accomplishing a lot more out here than we were in there.

PAUL And, uh, where would we go?

ELSA There's this band I was going to see tonight. Kegan's step-brother Cal is in it.

PAUL What about the rehearsal?

ELSA What about it? I'm sure they've forgotten all about us. (She opens the stage door and we hear KEGAN holding her "Sing" note and JOHN hollering at JEFF. The sound is deafening.)

JOHN Jeffrey, get off the stage! Get off my sta-

(PAUL slams the door shut.)

ELSA That should keep them busy the rest of the night.

PAUL Where's this band playing?

ELSA In a club. A straight club.

PAUL They still exist?

ELSA A few. Don't worry, you'll pass. Come on.

Scene 4

PAUL (To the audience) So, suddenly intrigued, I must admit, by my co-star, I ventured, for the first time in many years, into the straight world.

(CAL and CHRISTIAN appear upstage center in silhouette. They are holding electric guitars. They hit an incredibly loud chord.)

PAUL It was exactly as I remembered it.

(CAL and CHRISTIAN hit another chord.)

PAUL The music was terrible.

(CAL and CHRISTIAN now launch into an incredibly ugly duet which sounds suspiciously like nothing at all whatsoever. It is loud, percussive and unintelligible. PAUL looks visibly overwhelmed by the music. ELSA gyrates with abandon as the stage fills with eager dancers. PAUL slowly gets into the music and begins to gyrate like a gay man at a disco. He shouts out gay colloquialisms: "Go, girl! Go, girl! Shake your booty. Toot-toot! Beep-beep!" The rest of the dancers, headbangers all of them, grow quiet and look at PAUL in disgust. CAL and CHRISTIAN stop playing their instruments. PAUL becomes aware of the silence and the awkwardness he is creating. He starts up the headbangers again with some rock-and-roll noises and gesturing. The crowd and band grow wild again.)

CAL (Into his mike) Thank you very much. Thank you very much. We are Blister. My name is Scab.

CHRIS And I'm Open Sore.

CAL We are available for weddings and Bar Mitzvahs. We're going to take a little break. So why don't you.

(The headbangers exit.)

ELSA (To PAUL) Now that wasn't so bad, was it?

PAUL Terrible.

(CAL and CHRISTIAN cross down stage to PAUL and ELSA.)

CAL (Hugging ELSA) Elsa, you came. (He is wired.) Unfucking-believable man! I am so wired, dude. (To CHRISTIAN) Christian, I don't know what you're on tonight, man, but you are hot, do you hear me? Hot!

PAUL (To the audience) I didn't know what kind of a heterosexual beast he was, but I was scared.

CAL (Indicating PAUL) So who the fuck is this?

ELSA This is Paul. He's my co-star.

CAL (Taking PAUL's hand) What did you think of the act, man?

PAUL (After a nervous pause) Incendiary.

CAL (After a pause) What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

PAUL I mean I thought it was... Ah... Unfuckingbelievable. Yeah.

CAL You making fun of my act?

PAUL No.

CAL Then what the fuck's your problem?

PAUL Ahh... (To the audience) Elsa was, of course, no help at all. This was probably exactly what she wanted to happen. (CAL looks at the audience, confused.)

CAL (To PAUL) Who are you talking to, man? (To PAUL) If you

don't like my music just tell me. Don't get sarcastic. Don't get weird. Did you like it?

PAUL (Truly scared) Yes?

CAL (Menacing) Man, if you don't like my music then you don't have to come to my club. There are plenty of gay clubs in this town. There ain't no shortage of fag discos in this city. (Getting mad) You know, people like you, I wish you'd just give me a break. Just one goddamn break. Is that so goddamn much to ask?

PAUL This is a joke right?

(CAL busts up laughing.)

PAUL How clever.

CAL Bustin' your balls, man, just bustin' your balls. It's like Joe Pesci in "Goodfellas." I fuckin' love Joe Pesci in "Goodfellas." Fucking changed my life. (He does a Joe Pesci imitation.) "So, what, I'm a clown to you? I amuse you? I make you laugh?"

PAUL (To the audience) He had the worst taste in movies.

CAL Who do you keep talking to, man? (CAL suddenly has an elaborate and prolonged drug freakout. In time, he recovers.) Now go and hug Christian. I don't know what he's on tonight but he's really into hugs for some reason.

PAUL (Approaching CHRISTIAN) Hello, I'm Paul.

(CHRISTIAN gives him a big E hug.)

CHRIS (Into PAUL's ear) I love you, man. I love you.

PAUL And I you, man.

CAL You see, he's into some really weird shit tonight.

(CHRISTIAN begins to molest PAUL while CAL has a second drug hallucination.)

CHRIS. (To CAL) Can we go?

CAL No, we can't go, we're in the middle of a set, dude.

ELSA Where does he want to go?

CAL To Marin. He wants to go up Mount Tam.

ELSA Why?

CAL He says he lost something up there. He wants to go look for it.

ELSA What did you lose, Chris?

CHRIS My youth.

CAL You're weird, man. I mean like Joe Pesci weird. Like tres weird. But for real.

ELSA Oh, let's go Cal. Let's go up Mount Tam. We can go to the Mountain Theatre.

CAL Elsa, doll, I'm in the middle of a set.

(CHRISTIAN hugs ELSA and soon begins to rub both her and PAUL simultaneously.)

ELSA Come on, Cal. Look at Christian.

CAL (To CHRISTIAN) Man, I hate it when you do this. You take the wrong fucking drugs, then you start this touching shit and you get Elsa all worked up and you know I can't say no to Elsa!

ELSA Please, Cal.

CAL All right. But I got to get some Dolly. I can't go up the mountain without my Dolly. Wait here. (The stage goes black except for a spot on PAUL.)

Scene 5

PAUL (To the audience) So we snuck out in the middle of his set. He loaded his Land Rover up with beers and a lot of ancient Dolly Parten and we headed to Marin.

(PAUL sits on the steps down center. The lights come up to reveal PAUL, CHRIS, ELSA and CAL seated as if they were sitting in a car driving towards the audience. Dolly Parten blares over the sound system. CAL mimes driving the car - with the other three moving in unison to indicate downshifts, breaking and accelerations.)

CAL So you like Dolly, Paul?

PAUL I do actually. Ever since I saw "9 to 5."

CAL Now that's a good fucking movie, man. Wait a minute, there's this open field over here - I wanna show you guys something. (He turns and the passengers make motions as if they were going off the road and onto rough terrain.) Paul!

PAUL Yeah, Cal?

CAL You know what a roll bar is?

PAUL 'Fraid I don't.

CAL They put roll bars in a lot of cars like this in case they roll over on the freeway or on rough terrain. That way when the car rolls over on its top the roof doesn't collapse and squish the passengers.

PAUL How interesting.

CAL My car doesn't have roll bars. I couldn't afford them.

(Suddenly PAUL looks terrified. CAL laughs maniacally and spins the wheel suddenly. PAUL screams. The lights black out and we hear the sound of PAUL screaming combined with the sound of the Land Rover rolling over. A spot light reveals a tiny Land Rover rolling over and over on the stage. The spot snaps out and the lights come back up on CAL, CHRISTIAN, and ELSA who are laughing with excitement. PAUL is orgasmic.)

CAL Full fucking rotation, man! We didn't even have to get out and right her!

PAUL That was great, man! Do it again! Do it again! Woo.....

CAL Wait a minute. Wait a minute. We're here. We're here. Now this is the parking lot for the Mountain Theatre. (He turns down the music.) Now everyone be really quiet. We're not supposed to be up here after midnight. And leave your beers in the car. Shhh..

Scene 6

(The lights black out. We hear beer cans falling.)

CAL Shhh....

PAUL Where the hell are we?

CAL That clearing up ahead is the stage.

(The stage is flooded with blue moonlight. We can hear them off stage left fumbling about. Some beer cans are kicked on and CAL and CHRISTIAN enter. CHRIS falls on the ground. ELSA and PAUL follow holding hands.)

CAL (Drunkenly) Oh, man, look at that view. (And he collapses on the stage. Suddenly both CAL and CHRIS pass out and begin snoring loudly.)

ELSA Aren't they cute?

PAUL So what is Cal? Ex-boyfriend?

ELSA Something like that. (Dramatically) He picked me up when I was down.

PAUL (To the audience) She actually said stupid things like that. I loved it.

ELSA Have you ever been up here before?

PAUL No.

ELSA It's spectacular isn't it?

PAUL It certainly is.

ELSA "Medea" was originally performed in a amphitheater such as this. No lights, no sets - just fresh air, the open sky and the whole world spread out in front of you. This is true opulence.

PAUL You like this theatre quite a bit.

ELSA Two very important things happened to me in this theatre.

PAUL Yeah, what were those?

ELSA My high school graduation was held here. And three months after that I played my first lead in a musical.

PAUL Up here?

ELSA Yes. They do a show up here every summer.

PAUL What was the show?

ELSA "Oklahoma."

PAUL You played Laurie?

ELSA No, I was Ado Annie. But I could have played Laurie. The Laurie they cast sucked. She was pretty, but she couldn't sing. And she was a horrible actress. So I learned all of her lines and all of her songs and I decided that if anything terrible happened to her, like if she accidentally fell off the mountain or something, that I would go on for her.

PAUL And then one morning, just before curtain time, you gave her a nice big push.

ELSA No, I never built up the nerve. But I was a great Ado Annie. (Deathly serious) And one day, I am going to be a great Laurie. (She sings a cappella.)

Song: "People Will Say We're in Love" (Which sounds exactly like "People Will Say We're in Love.")

ELSA DON'T SIGH AND GAZE AT ME

(PAUL joins her.)

BOTH YOUR SIGHS ARE SO LIKE MINE

(CAL and CHRIS snore and roll over in their slumber.)

BOTH YOUR EYES MUSTN'T GLOW LIKE MINE
PEOPLE WILL SAY WE'RE IN LOVE.

ELSA (Laying on a corny Southern accent)
DON'T TAKE MY ARM TO MUCH

PAUL (Joining her in corn)
DON'T KEEP YOUR HAND IN MINE

BOTH YOUR HAND FEELS SO GRAND IN MINE
PEOPLE WILL SAY WE'RE IN LOVE.

DON'T START COLLECTING THINGS,
GIVE ME MY ROSE AND MY GLOVE.
SWEETHEART, THEY'RE SUSPECTING THINGS
PEOPLE WILL SAY WE'RE IN...

(Their singing fades as they become attracted to each other's lips. They are suddenly interrupted by a lone voice singing the "Indian Love Call" from somewhere out front. They freeze and listen.)

PAUL What the hell was that?

ELSA Tamalpa.

PAUL What?

ELSA My God, it's Tamalpa.

PAUL What the hell are you talking about.

ELSA Tamalpa was an Indian squaw who loved a Spanish Conquistador named Diablo. The Indians caught her in his arms and they sacrificed the two of them at the summit of this mountain. They killed her in the European manner because she had dared to love a European. They burned her at the stake. They say, that as the flames leapt up towards her lips, that she sang out a beautiful song to her lover. But the song remains incomplete because she was burnt to a crisp before she could finish the refrain. The Indians were so moved by her song and so ashamed of their deed that they named this mountain after her and the next greatest peak after her lover.

PAUL That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard.

(We hear the "Indian Love Call" once again.)

ELSA They say she only sings to unlikely lovers.

(PAUL and ELSA eye each other suspiciously.)

ELSA (Quietly, with immense feeling) I don't believe it. Do you?

PAUL (After a pause) Maybe we should be getting back.

ELSA Yes.

Scene 7

(The lights dim on them looking at one another as the "Indian Love Call" is heard. The "Indian Love Call" transforms itself into "Greek Boys" as the little Land Rover drives down the mountain in a spot. Another spot picks up DARRYL prancing about the stage holding a bow and arrow and chasing MATT, who is wearing a cow mask, as a pool of light reveals KEGAN at the stage right proscenium. She sings to the dancing DARRYL. COREY, accompanying the dance at the piano, wears a rabbit mask.)

Song: "Greek Boys"

KEGAN SOME SAY GREEKS, THEY ARE THE HOTTEST

THOSE BOYS, IN GOLD LAMET.
SOME SAY MOMS, THEY SHOULD BE MODEST
AND LEAVE THEIR SONS TO PLAY.

JUST REMEMBER, HE'S SEVENTEEN
HE'S ALMOST LEGAL FLESH
AND A MOM, SHE NEEDS HER SON'S LOVE
LOOK! HE DREAMS OF BANGLADESH.

(The song and the dance end tranquilly.)

JOHN Yes, Kegan, that was beautiful. Corey, what did you think?

COREY I told you, I can't hear when I'm wearing the bunny mask.

JOHN But you're the music director.

COREY Yes, well, I'm also a bunny. If you want a music director, why get don't yourself a damn rabbit?

JOHN Just humor me. What did you think?

COREY It was lovely. (And he gags himself with his carrot.)

JOHN Thank you. Jeffrey! (JEFF appears from left) Jeffrey, is that the deer's costume?

JEFF Yes.

JOHN It's terrible. It looks like a bull.

(JEFF stifles a tear and exits in a snit.)

DARRYL Can I ask a question?

JOHN Of course.

DARRYL What the hell's going on in this scene?

JOHN Oh, well, you're out hunting deer and your mama's watching you because she's fantasizing about having sex with you.

DARRYL With me or the deer?

JOHN With you. The deer's gay.

DARRYL And Kegan's playing my mama?

JOHN That's right.

DARRYL Who's going to believe that?

MATT I will. (And he does his moronic laugh.)

DARRYL And my mother wants to have sex with me?

KEGAN That's right, son.

DARRYL Isn't that kind of offensive?

JOHN No, it's Greek.

MATT And what am I?

JOHN You're a gay deer.

(MATT doesn't understand.)

KEGAN (To MATT) Like Bambi.

MATT (Suddenly understanding) Cool. (And he exits like a gay deer.)

COREY And why am I a bunny?

JOHN It's for woodland ambiance. (COREY puts his mask back on and shakes his head in disgust.)

DARRYL Last question.

JOHN Yes?

DARRYL (Indicating his loin cloth) Why do all of my costumes look like this?

KEGAN Because they can.

JOHN Karen!

KAREN (Appearing in a trap down center) Yes. (We can only see the upper half of KAREN's body.)

JOHN Where the hell's Elsa?

KAREN She's late. (Into the trap) Stop it! (Suddenly KAREN looks like she's suffering, or enjoying, some occurrence below the stage level - something that is happening to some portion of her mid-drift. This "suffering" intensifies.)

JOHN Karen, is everything all right down there?

KAREN (Orgasmic) Oh, yeah.

JOHN Well, you'll let me know when Elsa gets here, won't you?

KAREN Yeah. (And she submerges with a scream. SHAYNA surfaces through the trap looking annoyed and disappears as she closes the hatch behind her.)

KEGAN (Taking the opportunity to audition)
SOMEWHERE WAY OUT OF COLCHIS-

JOHN Yes, thank you, Kegan. I'll keep it in mind. All right, let's take the Phaedra/Hippolytus disco number then. Quickly. Everybody onstage for the disco. Quickly. Time is money. Quick, quick, quick, quick, quick, quick... And... Go!

Song and Dance: "Hippolytus" (Which sounds surprisingly like Barry Manilow's "Copacabana.")

(As GABE sings the dancers enact the action described.)

GABE HIP, HIPPOLYTUS
WE'LL CALL HIM HIPPY
THIS BOY HAD ROCK HARD PECTORALS
A PHYSIQUE WORKED OUT AT GOLD'S.

HE WAS A VIRGIN
AND DAMN PROUD OF IT
THAT PISSED OFF APHRODITE ABOVE
FOR HE RENOUNCED THE POWER OF LOVE.

AND THEN THE HEAVENS REELED
THAT'S WHEN HIS DOOM WAS SEALED.
HE LOST HIS LIFE FOR HUBRISTIC CANDOR,
WHICH WILL BE REVEALED!

APHRO, APHRODITE, THE GODDESS OF LOVE ALMIGHTY
OH, OH, APHRO, APHRODITE.
THE POWER OF VENUS ENLARGES THE PENIS
APHRODITE
DON'T CROSS HER PATH.

HER NAME WAS PHAEDRA
SHE CAME FROM MINOS,
SHE MARRIED THESEUS THE DAD
OF THAT HIPPOLYTUS LAD.

SO APHRODITE
 THEN SOUGHT HER VENGEANCE.
 AND THOUGHT "NOW WOULDN'T IT BE FUNNY
 IF PHA FELL IN LOVE WITH SONNY?"

PHA WATCHED HIM FROM THE HILL
 SHE COULDN'T GET HER FILL
 SHE STOPPED EATING, SHE STOPPED SLEEPING,
 SHE BECAME QUITE ILL!

(REFRAIN)
 HER TALENT FOR SEX TEASE
 WILL ENFLAME YOUR TESTES!
 APHRODITE
 DON'T DENY LOVE.

HER NAME WAS OENOS,
 SHE WAS A SERVANT,
 SHE SAW PHAEDRA SICK IN BED
 UNDERSTOOD HER SECRET DREAD.
 THEY WROTE A LETTER
 TO LITTLE HIPPY
 SAYING "SON I GOT IT BAD,
 LET'S RUN AWAY,
 SHH, DON'T TELL DAD."
 AT THIS OUR HIPPY GAPED.
 PHA SAW BUT ONE ESCAPE:
 SHE HUNG HERSELF LEAVING A NOTE
 CLAIMING SHE'D BEEN RAPED!

(REFRAIN)
 SHE'LL TOUCH YOUR TOTEM
 THEN EXCITE YOUR SCROTUM!
 APHRODITE
 YEAH, SHE'S DA BOMB.

NOW THESEUS WAS HAVING A BAD DAY
 HE CAME TIRED FROM HIS WORK
 HIS WIFE IS DEAD
 HIS SON'S A JERK
 HE TOLD HIPPY HE WAS EXILED
 THEN PRAYED TO NEPTUNE OF THE SEA
 PLEASE KILL MY SON, PLEASE HEAR MY PLEA.

AND NEPTUNE HEARD THE PRAYER
 HE SENT A MONSTER THERE
 HIPPY WAS KICKED AND KILLED
 THESEUS WAILED IN DESPAIR!

(REFRAIN)

Scene 8

(ELSA enters from the back of the house and runs down the aisle to the Stage Door. As she reaches it the Stage Door bursts open to reveal PAUL.)

PAUL Elsa!

ELSA Paul! I'm late.

PAUL I have to talk to you.

ELSA I'm late.

PAUL Elsa, I'm very confused.

ELSA About what?

PAUL About last night.

ELSA We had a wonderful time last night.

PAUL I know, that's why I'm confused.

ELSA Oh, come on. It's no big deal. We're friends. It's not like we had sex.

PAUL Oh my god, don't say that. Don't even mention sex.

ELSA Paul, calm down. We had a great time last night. We did some fun things. We enjoyed ourselves. Don't panic - that doesn't mean you're straight.

PAUL It doesn't?

ELSA No. We had a great time, that's all.

PAUL We had a great time.

ELSA We had a great time. Now I have to get on-stage, OK?

PAUL Yeah, yeah, so do I. (She runs through the door. PAUL skips happily through the door after her.)

Scene 9

KAREN (To JOHN in the booth) Elsa's here.

JOHN Oh, goodie! All right, let's take the opening scene. We'll take it from the crew's line "The Living Dead." And quick, quick, quick, quick, quick, quick, quick... And... Go!

(Everyone goes to their places. COREY starts the music.)

CREW The Living Dead. (And the CREW and CRAIG execute their screaming run-around maneuver. PAUL, who is staring at ELSA, does not join in.)

CRAIG Yes, the Living Dead.

CREW Oh, the Living Dead.

CRAIG Only when they are vanquished may you gain entry to the grotto of the Golden Fleece. (GABE screams and "CHRIS" hits him on the shoulder.)

GABE (Annoyed) Ow!

CRAIG Great Aeetes, your god, king, and greatest dread has spoken.

(All supplicate themselves in noisy fear except PAUL who stares at ELSA. GABE, annoyed at being hit, is late throwing himself down.)

PAUL Will you introduce me to your daughter?

CRAIG (A little confused) But of course-course I'll introduce you to my fam-fam.

(They cross to stage left where KEGAN, DARRYL, MATT and ELSA are standing. PAUL stares at ELSA throughout.)

CRAIG (Indicating MATT) This is my son Apsyrtus - nubile, soft and virginical - he has-

PAUL Hi, Apsyrtus!

CREW Say it!

CRAIG And this is my sister Phaedra-

PAUL Hi.

KEGAN (Confused) This is my....

PAUL Hi, Hippolytus.

KEGAN (Convictionless, but determined) And he's my son, damn the gods! (She throws herself down hysterical. PAUL steps over her body to stand next to ELSA.)

PAUL And what is her name?

(CRAIG is completely confused. He looks off left.)

CRAIG Line.

(KAREN enters looking at the script and throws up her hands.)

CRAIG (Annoyed with KAREN) Thanks!

JOHN Keep going! Keep going!

PAUL Medea. I'm pleased to meet you. (PAUL takes ELSA around the waist, dips her deep and kisses her passionately. SHAYNA as EROS enters on the platform.)

SHAYNA I am Er - (And she sees PAUL kissing ELSA and dries up.) Er- (And she bursts into tears.) Oh, forget it! (She runs off left weeping.)

ELSA (Surfacing) Oh, sweet minister of heart's desire, I adore you.

PAUL I love you.

(Everyone onstage stares at PAUL and ELSA shocked.)

ELSA You cannot yoke the bulls and vanquish the Living Dead without my help.

PAUL I love you!

(Da-da-dum from the drums. This makes CRAIG jump and scream.)

ELSA Come to my palace tonight. There we will plan your victory as we are voluptuating.

PAUL (Ecstatically) Voluptuating! My favorite gerund! (Still staring at her and backing reluctantly off stage.) Crew. To the ship. We will practice bull.

(PAUL and the CREW exit singing a convictionless "YMCA!" PAUL gestures broadly to ELSA that he loves her. COREY tries to hasten PAUL's exit by playing insistent music.)

CRAIG (Once they have exited) Come Apsyrtus and Hippolytus-

Song: "Oh No"

(Without letting CRAIG finish his line ELSA bursts full voiced into song.)

ELSA OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN.

(Gesturing for COREY to start his accompaniment.) Corey!

(And the accompaniment begins. As ELSA sings CRAIG and KEGAN try to interrupt her. Now ELSA sings with deep feeling.)

ELSA OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN.
SO I'LL KEEP SINGING ON
UNTIL MY VOICE IS GONE.

JOHN Wait, wait, wait. Elsa, you don't sing here. That's later in the scene. Elsa, that's later. Later, Elsa! Later! Corey, stop playing the piano. Now you stop playing the piano this instant!

(But COREY continues to play with one hand as he flips JOHN off with the other.)

ELSA OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN
SING ON, SING ON, SING ON.

(And ELSA runs off stage right as the lights cross fade to the stage door where PAUL appears looking confused. JOHN shouts after ELSA as she exits.)

JOHN Elsa, where are you going? Elsa, we're not finished. Elsa, come back. Elsaaaaa.....

Scene 10

(ELSA bursts through the stage door and sings triumphantly to PAUL.)

ELSA OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN

(PAUL triumphantly joins her.)

BOTH SO I'LL KEEP SINGING ON
UNTIL MY VOICE IS GONE
OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN
SING ON, SING ON, SING ON.

(And they are locked in a mad embrace.)

PAUL I adore you. (To the audience) This doesn't make any sense. I'm completely confused. Bewildered. I've had one girlfriend in my entire life. I was five years old. We went steady for three days before she told me she was certain I was gay. This doesn't make sense mentally, physically, chemically. I have never in my entire life felt even the vaguest physical attraction to a female of any species. I have spent my life pursuing and lusting for boys and men. And I have been happy in that life. Ecstatic. Cocky and carefree. I laughed at those who desired women. Told them, they didn't know what they were missing. I've been arrogant in my homosexuality. What am I saying? (He runs back and embraces ELSA) Your body consumes me. I want to possess you, to inhabit you, to feel and caress every inch of you. I've spent the entire day thinking about your lips, your teeth, the scent of your hair. I went to Walgreen's and spent the whole afternoon opening conditioner bottles hoping against hope I'd find your brand. You're Germac, right?

ELSA Yes! (Thrilled with this revelation, they embrace ecstatically.)

PAUL I bought twelve bottles of it. I filled my bathtub with it and sloshed about in it for an hour before rehearsal. I didn't think I'd make it here. I thought I'd die before rehearsal came. My body, my mind, all of me is full of you. I want your mouth. Give me your mouth.

(A deep intense kiss as the music swells and the lights cross fade back into the theatre where COREY plays the piano and MATT limbers up on the stage.)

Scene 11

JOHN (From the booth) So, is Elsa coming back?

COREY I don't know.

JOHN Well, what happened tonight?

COREY When?

JOHN In the opening scene.

COREY Elsa was great.

JOHN Yes, but Paul played it like he was actually in love with her.

COREY Yes, it works better that way.

JOHN Yes, but Corey, that's not the point of my production.

COREY And yet, John, it works.

JOHN Yeah, well... I'm going out through the building. You'll get out all right?

COREY Of course.

JOHN Goodnight, Matt.

(MATT laughs moronically.)

JOHN Goodnight, Jeff!

JEFF (Emerging from right) Goodnight, John! (We hear a door slam in the booth. JEFF appears at the stage-right proscenium with a staple gun and some felt. He mouths the word "Asshole" to the booth. JEFF begins staple gunning some fabric onto one of the platforms. MATT continues to limber up. COREY notices him. COREY looks up into the booth. When he has visually confirmed that JOHN has left, he sings "Oh, Sweet Mystery of Life" in MATT's direction. JEFF, crestfallen by COREY's rejection of him for MATT, slumps down the proscenium until he becomes merely a clump of limp misery on the stage.)

Song: "Oh, Sweet Mystery of Life"

COREY OH SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE
AT LAST I'VE FOUND THEE.

(MATT stops dancing, looks at COREY and smiles.)

COREY NOW AT LAST I MUST
HAVE MY ARMS AROUND YOU.
etc...

MATT (In excited response to COREY's overtures) Cool.

Scene 12

(The lights cross-fade to center-stage where ELSA and PAUL are revealed in silhouette in a shower. We hear shower sounds as they lather each other.)

PAUL Oh God, I love this conditioner!

ELSA You're body feels wonderful.

PAUL You're body feels completely unique to me. I am Columbus sailing into the unknown. I am Perry discovering the North Pole. I am Stanley discovering Livingston. (A thought) Oh, maybe that's not the right metaphor.

ELSA You were great in our opening scene tonight.

PAUL It was the easiest rehearsal of my life. The last twenty-four hours have been like living in one big musical comedy.

(We hear the "Indian Love Call." They stick their heads around the shower curtain.)

PAUL Especially when that happens.

ELSA It's beginning to annoy me.

PAUL We are Tamalpa and Diablo - come back from the dead to show that mismatched lovers will not be burned.

ELSA We are Romeo and Juliet.

PAUL Tony and Maria.

ELSA Aida and Radames.

PAUL The Captain and Tenille.

ELSA Jason and Medea.

PAUL Mmmm.

(They kiss. We hear PAUL's doorbell.)

Scene 13

PAUL Who could that be?

ELSA Don't answer it. (We hear the doorbell sound again - this time it sounds angry.)

PAUL Oh, hell.

KEGAN (Over the intercom) Paul, it's Kegan. I'm here with Gabriel. We have to talk to you.

PAUL Damn.

ELSA Just go answer it. I'll stay in the bathroom.

PAUL OK. I'll get rid of them as fast possible.

(PAUL puts on a terry-cloth bathrobe and crosses to the door stage right. He collects himself and opens the door. KEGAN and GABRIEL stand there. GABE is visibly upset. He weeps.)

KEGAN Gabe needs some water.

(PAUL exits and quickly returns with water. GABE takes it and is instantly recovered.)

KEGAN Paul, you have to stop being such an attitude queen and talk to Gabriel. He's very upset.

PAUL (Incredulous) About what?

KEGAN He's still in love with you.

PAUL Is he?

KEGAN Gabe, talk to Paul.

GABE (After a pause) I can't.

KEGAN He's convinced that you're seeing someone else. I told him that's absurd.

PAUL It is. (We hear ELSA singing in the shower. PAUL shouts to cover her voice.) Who would I be seeing?

KEGAN Paul, talk to Gabe.

(KEGAN exits and returns with a glass of water.)

PAUL (Crosses to GABRIEL) Gabe, I'm sorry you're so upset. It's late. I have to finish my shower and get to bed. Now I'll call you tomorrow and we'll talk. OK?

GABE OK.

(PAUL begins pushing GABE out the door but GABE stops and pushes PAUL out of the way. GABE smells something. He sniffs several times and then turns to KEGAN.)

GABE (To KEGAN) Do you smell that?

KEGAN Smell what?

GABE Someone we know is here.

KEGAN Yes, I do smell it.

GABE (Announcing to PAUL) There's someone else here.

PAUL This is ridiculous.

KEGAN Who is it?

GABE (After two more sniffs) Elsa!

KEGAN Yes, it is Elsa. And her cheap Walgreen's hair conditioner.

PAUL Quickly) We're working on our roles.

GABE (After a gasp) He's lying. I know that expression. (He has a thought) A first date with Paul always end in the bathroom. (GABE runs to the bathroom and comes to a halt when he sees ELSA in the shower.) Ahhhh.....

ELSA (Sticking her head out) Hey, Gabe.

GABE (Wheeling on PAUL) You bitch!

PAUL Gabe, calm down.

GABE Traitor! You've fallen for that temptress. That seductress. She's tempted you from your own.

PAUL Gabe.

GABE She'll use you, then ruin you.

PAUL No.

GABE She just wants you to play Jason straight, that's all.

ELSA (Appearing in a terry-cloth bathrobe) Paul. (PAUL turns to her.) Tell them to get out.

PAUL I can't. He's my ex-lover.

ELSA And I am your present.

PAUL I'm sorry, Gabe. You'll have to leave. (Thunderously dramatic music from COREY. The lights black out on KEGAN and GABE and bump up on MATT as APSYRTUS stage left of PAUL and ELSA.)

MATT Ahhhh....

ELSA Apsyrtus, my brother.

MATT Medea, you monster.

ELSA Apsyrtus, calm down.

MATT Traitor! You've fallen for this tempter. This seducer. He's seduced you from your own.

ELSA Oh, my brother.

MATT He'll use you then ruin you.

ELSA No.

MATT He just wants you to help him obtain the Fleece, that's all.

PAUL Medea. (ELSA looks at PAUL.) Kill him.

ELSA I can't. He's my family.

PAUL I'm your family now.

ELSA (To MATT) I'm sorry, Apsy, you must die. (She shoves a knife into his throat. Blood sprays from his neck as if from a garden hose. He screams. The stage goes red. Screams fill the theatre. MATT sprays the audience with his blood - which flows out of a hose from backstage. Eventually MATT falls to the floor dead.)

ELSA My God, what have I done?

PAUL You've declared your independence.

ELSA I behaved rashly. I've betrayed my family. I've betrayed Colchis. I'll be hounded by my brother's furies. I am now an exile.

PAUL (Lifting ELSA from the floor) You can never be an exile, so long as you have me. Your home is no longer your city and your family, but my heart.

(The lights shift back to PAUL's apartment.)

PAUL (Pointing for KEGAN and GABE to leave) Go!

(GABE screams and throws his glass of water on the audience.)

KEGAN (To PAUL) Me too?

PAUL Yes.

(KEGAN looks wickedly at the audience and approaches the center section with her glass. She actually throws it on the audience left section. She and GABE then run off stage right screaming in horror. After they've left, PAUL falls on the floor.)

PAUL My god, what have I done?

ELSA You've declared your independence.

PAUL I behaved rashly. I've betrayed the homosexual community. I'll be shunned by every faggot I know. Laughed out of the Castro. Mocked. I am now an exile.

ELSA You can never be an exile, so long as you have me. Your home is no longer your sexuality, but my heart.

(The lights shift back to Colchis.)

ELSA (To PAUL) Now I have destroyed for you, Greek. There's no turning back. It's you and me against the world.

PAUL That's exactly the way I want it. Grrrr....

(The lights shift back to PAUL's apartment.)

PAUL (To ELSA) Now I have destroyed for you, Elsa. There's no turning back. It's you and me against the Castro.

ELSA That's how I like it. Grrrr...

(Back to Colchis.)

ELSA Ug, so much of my brother's blood.

(Back to PAUL's apartment.)

PAUL Ug, so much of Gabe's water.

(Back to Colchis.)

ELSA I am still so confused.

(Back to PAUL's apartment.)

PAUL Life. (Colchis.) Art. (PAUL's apartment) Life. (Colchis) Art. (PAUL's apartment.) Life. (Colchis.) Art. (PAUL's apartment.) Life. Where does one leave off and the other begin?

(PAUL and ELSA scream. Back to Colchis.)

PAUL Invoke your powers to help me to harness the bulls of Haphaestus so that I may sow the dragon's teeth, vanquish the Living Dead and thereby win the Golden Fleece.

(Back to PAUL's apartment.)

ELSA We better get a mop and clean this up.

(Back to Colchis.)

ELSA (Spreading her arms wide) Oh Great Goddess Hecate, grant this mere Greek the strength and cunning to master so much bull.

PAUL I will master them with your love.

JOHN (From the booth) Paul, you're playing it like you're actually in love with her.

PAUL (Triumphantly) Yes!

JOHN I don't want it that way.

PAUL I'm sorry. The die is cast. Jason loves Medea.

(We hear the "Phantom of the Opera" organ music. Two reins fall from the access holes over the auditorium. PAUL takes one in each hand as if he was guiding a team of giant bulls. We hear the mooing of two massive bulls.)

PAUL My god, Medea, the bulls are huge!

ELSA Sow the dragon's teeth Jason.

(PAUL puts both reins in one hand and with the other hand sows the dragon's teeth which he pulls from one of his pockets and throws over his shoulder into the audience. The music is thunderous.)

PAUL There, I've done it! (He lets the reins go and they fly into the ceiling.) Adieu, Great Bulls.

ELSA Oh, Jason, you did it.

PAUL With your help. (They kiss.) What do we do now?

ELSA We wait for the Living Dead to spring from the soil.

PAUL And while we wait for the sprouts to spring, won't you sing to me?

Scene 14

Song: "Jason, Medea" (Along the lines of Gershwin's "He Loves, She Loves.")

ELSA PAULEY.

PAUL SWEET ELSA.
SWEET ELSA!

ELSA OH PAULEY!
JASON.

PAUL MEDEA, DEAR!

JOHN (From the booth) PAUL, DON'T SING IT LIKE YOU MEAN IT!

PAUL (To JOHN) OH, SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT.

ELSA OH JASON, I SO LOVE YOU.

PAUL OH, I ALWAYS KNEW I'D GET YOU
ONE FINE DAY;

ELSA BLOND HAIR AND BLUE-EYED
THUS I'VE COME YOUR WAY.

BOTH LOVE YA.'
JASON,
MEDEA.

PAUL I LOVE YA.'

ELSA I HEAR YA'

BOTH JASON,
MEDEA, DEAR.

(They dance about the stage romantically. As they dance, the rest of the cast filters on to the upstage area and looks on.)

JOHN (As they dance about the stage) Paul, you can't play it this way.

PAUL (As he dances) I'm sorry, but I must.

JOHN This isn't the interpretation we discussed at all.

PAUL I know. Isn't it wonderful?

JOHN You're ruining my concept!

PAUL OH, I ALWAYS KNEW I'D
GET YOU SOME FINE DAY.

ELSA BLOND HAIR AND BLUE EYED
THUS I'VE COME YOUR WAY.

BOTH LOVE YA.' (They kiss.)

(The rest of the cast has filtered on in their Greek costumes.)

ALL PAULEY,
MEDEA.
THEY'RE TRAITORS!

ELSA/PAUL (To the others) WE HEAR YA.' (They go on kissing.)

ALL TRAITORS AND LOVERS , TOO!

(Everyone on-stage kisses.)

ELSA (Breaking from PAUL and singing to him with
enthusiasm)

OF THEE I SING, BABY,
SUMMER, AUTUMN, WINTER, SPRING, BABY,
YOU'RE MY SILVER DRACHMA,
YOU'RE MY GRECIAN URN.

PAUL BABE, I'M GONNA ROCK YA.'

ALL TILL THE COWS RETURN.
OF THEE I SING, BABY,
SUMMER, AUTUMN, WINTER, SPRING, BABY,
CHI-CHI WA AND INSPIRATION
WORTHY OF SOME PROCREATION
OF THEE I SING.

GIRLS OF HE SHE SINGS: TRAITORS.

BOYS SUMMER, AUTUMN, WINTER, SPRING: TRAITORS.

(In the middle of all this JEFF enters from down right with a jigsaw and a hammer, crosses to down center and begins constructing something on the apron.)

GIRLS YOU'RE MY SILVER LINING.

BOYS YOU'RE MY SKY OF BLUE.

GIRLS THERE'S A LOVE LIGHT SHINING.

BOYS JUST BECAUSE OF YOU.

ALL OF THEE I SING, BABY,
 YOU HAVE GOT THAT CERTAIN THING, BABY!
 SHINING STAR AND INSPIRATION
 WORTHY OF SOME PROCREATION

PAUL Elsa, I love you.

(ELSA gasps with pleasure. Rice is thrown and a wedding picture is taken.)

ALL OF THEE I -

(JEFF turns on his saw and the sound is deafening.)

ALL SING!

(Blackout.)

END OF ACT I

ACT II

(We hear the opening strains of "Because." The curtain rises to reveal PAUL and ELSA standing in the same positions they occupied at the end of Act I. They kiss.)

Scene 1

ELSA (To the audience) One week before opening night and we finally choreographed the sword battle with the Living Dead.

(We hear rumbling noises. ELSA and PAUL begin to shake as if the earth were shaking.)

PAUL Medea, what is happening?

ELSA Night is falling.

PAUL The earth is quaking.

ELSA The heavens are in a fury.

PAUL And the soil gives breach to the undead.

ELSA The unliving.

BOTH (To the audience) It's the Night of the Living Dead! Ahhhh!!!

(We hear cracking sounds from upstage. The music is thunderous. The LIVING DEAD soldiers begin to claw their way up from the earth which is represented by the upstage platform. Each one wears a hideous mask and wields a sword. They are each covered with filth and vines. When they have all emerged they stand along the upstage platform, a phalanx of LIVING DEAD. PAUL stands facing upstage holding only his small sword.)

PAUL (To the audience) Gulp.

ELSA Have courage, Jason.

PAUL Who are the Living Dead?

ELSA They are the bodies of my ex-lovers come back from the grave to haunt me.

PAUL What should I do?

ELSA Hecate, through my song, will give you strength. Chant
"Ooommm Ba Ba" and strike.

PAUL Ooommm Ba Ba!

(The LIVING DEAD all groan hideously.)

LIVING D. Ooommm Ba Ba!

PAUL (To the audience) Oh, dear.

ELSA Cry Havoc! And let slip the dogs of war!

(There now follows the greatest battle scene in the history of the American Theatre. COREY accompanies the battle with a spirited rendition of a song that might be mistaken for "I Will Survive" in a kinder, less copyridden world. PAUL vanquishes all comers, sometimes fighting several at one time. ELSA runs about the stage causing confusion with acts of magic: explosions, optical illusions, and tricks which confuse the LIVING DEAD. As each of the LIVING DEAD is killed it squirts large amounts of blood from blood packets onto the audience. At the height of all this, with all the heavy beat, dancing and flying about of half-clad sweaty bodies - the theatre should resemble a typical SOMA disco in the wee hours of a Sunday morning. By the end of the battle the stage is littered with corpses and PAUL stands with ELSA in his arms in the center of the upstage platform. The stage has gone into red light and a huge fountain of blood sprays up behind the lovers. The music reaches a terrifying crescendo. ELSA and PAUL kiss and the stage goes black. After a moment the "work lights" come on revealing the LIVING DEAD actors in their positions of death.)

KAREN (Entering from stage left) That's ten o'clock. Everyone: call
is two o'clock tomorrow afternoon for a run-through of
Act I. Leave the stage. I have to mop up your sweat.

(The performers begin to mill about and leave the stage.)

PAUL (Watching GABE leave the stage) Good night, Gabe.

GABE "Go on now, go! Walk out the door..." (And he exits right.)

PAUL Good night, Craig.

CRAIG "He's a super freak, super freak..." (And he exits left.)

PAUL What babies.

JOHN (From the orchestra) Paul, could you wait a minute?

PAUL (To JOHN) Yes. (To ELSA) Wait for me?

ELSA Of course. (And she exits stage left. KAREN begins to mop up the water on the stage.)

Scene 2

PAUL (To JOHN) What is it?

JOHN Look, Paul, I think you're a wonderful actor and I think you're doing a great job in my show-

PAUL (Beginning to exit) Thank you.

JOHN But you can't play it this way.

PAUL What way?

JOHN The way you're playing it. It's ruining my show.

PAUL I don't understand.

JOHN Look, Paul, you've got to play Jason as a gay man.

PAUL Why?

JOHN Because I'm not interested in doing a show about a Jason and Medea who have nothing but love and respect for one another. I'm doing a show about a gay man who marries a straight woman for purely pragmatic reasons.

PAUL Oh, so you want to do a sort of gay empowerment play. Show how a fag can manipulate the system.

JOHN Yeah, that's right.

PAUL And Medea never realizes that Jason is gay?

JOHN Yeah.

PAUL Which reduces her to a cultural stereotype: the stupid victimish female.

JOHN It's got nothing to do with her being a female. She's a typical straight person who has no regard for homosexuals so she never even imagines her husband could be one.

PAUL Oh, so all straight people hate fags.

JOHN No, they don't hate fags because they don't bother to think about us. They are willfully ignorant of our existence.

- PAUL Oh, so all straight people are stupid.
- JOHN Look, you're playing it like you're madly in love with her goes against the text that I've written.
- PAUL Well, maybe your text is faulty.
- JOHN It can't be faulty. It's my interpretation.
- PAUL An interpretation I don't subscribe to. It's misogynistic and homosexualist.
- JOHN (Hysterical) I can't believe I'm having this conversation. It is not my job to tow the feminist-heterosexualist line. I am trying to render a homosexual interpretation of an ancient text. I'm trying to create a space for the homosexual on-stage. That is what is important to me. Now let a feminist director do a feminist production of "Medea."
- PAUL I'm not sure this is the right play in which to create a space for the homosexual on-stage.
- JOHN Every play is the right play.
- PAUL And yet the play is called "Medea." Not "Jason." Perhaps you should have chosen a different vehicle if you wanted to serve up a gay reading of an ancient text.
- JOHN Yeah, well, originally you were supposed to play Medea.
- PAUL A drag Medea. Drag theatre. How original. How dignified. That's not gay theatre. That's not creating a space for the homosexual on-stage. That's co-opting the female's space so a man can run around in a dress for a couple of hours. It's an insult to both women and gay men.
- JOHN I can't believe this. You're saying this to me? You the Bette Davis Hamlet.
- PAUL We're doing "Medea." However it came to pass - we are doing a show about Medea. We have an opportunity - a responsibility - to finally put a Medea on stage that is neither a victim nor a bitch. Euripides and Seneca, all of them, failed. We must do what no one has done before - present a Medea that makes sense to women as well as to men.

- JOHN Well, I'm a man and nothing about your performance makes sense to me.
- PAUL It makes perfect sense. It is a refutation of all homo-misogynistic stereotyping of women.
- JOHN What has gotten into you?
- PAUL Are we still talking about the play? (Pause.) Is this about the play?
- JOHN Yes, ultimately everything's about my play. What has gotten into you?
- PAUL Nothing's gotten into me. I'm responsible for my performance. I have to play what feels right. When I played Hamlet it felt right to play it as a faggot. Jason does not feel right as a faggot. I'm sure the Euripides Festival will agree with my interpretation of this play..
- JOHN Is that a threat?
- PAUL Ultimately everything's a threat.

(The lights fade on JOHN.)

Scene 3

- ELSA (Emerging from stage left) And so Paul stood up to the tyranny of yet another sexist reading of "Medea."
- PAUL (Taking her around the waist) And Elsa-
- ELSA Whose lease had run out-
- PAUL Moved into my flat.
- ELSA And Paul-
- PAUL Ecstatic in my new found heterosexuality-
- (PAUL crosses to stage right and reaches off stage.)
- ELSA Bought me a cat. (PAUL obtains CIRCE, a stuffed kitty on a bit of elastic, from off-stage. He hands her to ELSA who cuddles her.)
- PAUL We named her Circe, after Medea's aunt.

ELSA The Goddess Circe purified Jason and Medea of their sins.

PAUL And I felt in need of a little absolution since all my gay friends had made a big point of rejecting me when I came out as a straight man. (To CIRCE) Didn't they? (They both hug CIRCE. PAUL sets him down on the stage.) Go play. (And CIRCE shoots magically off the stage.)

ELSA During the day we would rehearse:

Scene 4

PAUL (To ELSA) Where then is the Golden Fleece?

ELSA In the Fleece Grotto. (The lights come up upstage to reveal the Golden Fleece hanging on one of the pillars. APSYRTUS lies dead in a huge bag that covers his body.) But it is protected by the many headed Hydra.

(The HYDRA flies out from behind the platform and wraps itself around PAUL's neck. PAUL struggles with the beast for a moment.)

JOHN (Storming down the aisle) Stop! Stop! Stop! Gabriel! Gabe!

GABE (Entering hurriedly with a stool and a microphone) Yeah, yeah, I know, I'm sorry.

JOHN (Furious) Look, Gabriel, you're the narrator in this scene. If you don't come out and explain what's going on to the audience, they get confused, they get annoyed, they go home.

GABE Look, John, I'm sorry. I've been a little depressed lately. OK? God. (And he feigns weeping for JOHN's benefit.)

JOHN All right, Gabe, let's take it from the top. Hmm?

(JOHN walks up the aisle - apoplectic. PAUL struggles with the HYDRA as GABE sings.)

Song: "Misty" (No, not the Johnny Mathis "Misty"! But very like it.)

GABE LOOK AT THAT,
HE'S LOCKED WITH THE HYDRA IN REPTILE COMBAT.
AND IT'S TOOTH VERSUS FANG,
THEY'VE TAKEN A DIVE,
I GET... TWISTY
WHICH ONE WILL SURVIVE?

(PAUL has vanquished the HYDRA and thrown its carcass off-stage left.)

ELSA Go on then, get the Fleece.

(PAUL runs up and grabs the Fleece and cradles it lovingly in his hands. Suddenly CRAIG appears upstage and runs across the platform.)

ELSA Oh no, here comes my father.

PAUL What will we do?

ELSA We can't fight him. My powers are useless against him.

PAUL You must be able to think of something.

ELSA My brother, we'll dismember him and scatter his limbs about the grotto. My father will have to pause to reassemble him for proper burial. Then we'll make our escape.

PAUL You are nasty.

(They reach into the bag and make tearing gestures as if they were tearing the limbs off of APSYRTUS' torso. They then throw the bloody limbs about the stage. Soon the stage is littered with gore.)

GABE LOOK AT HIM,
BEING TORN UP BY HIS SISTER AND HER JIM
WHAT FUN, THEY'VE TORN HIM LIMB FROM LIMB
RIGHT FOOT ON THE FLOOR
(Pointing at a hand) AND A FISTY
LEFT FOOT OUT THE DOOR.

(PAUL throws the left foot out the door. They are finished.)

ELSA That should do it.

PAUL Let's run my love. (And PAUL and ELSA run off stage right as CRAIG comes on from stage left.)

CRAIG Lascivious, traitorous daughter... Ahghurhfkdk!!!! (He looks about.) Apsyrtus, where's your sister? (Realizing what he's seen.) Apsyrtus. (He howls.) Oh, my gods! (He begins gathering up the pieces of APSYRTUS' body frantically.)

GABE IT'S SO SAD
THE EFFECT OF CUT UP CHILDREN ON A DAD
AND HE FEELS LIKE THE SHITTIEST OF POPS
HE CAN'T UNDERSTAND,
HE GETS MISTY
JUST HOLDING HIS HAND.

(CRAIG is holding one of APSYRTUS' hands as he weeps and the stage goes black.)

Scene 5

ELSA (Entering from stage right) After rehearsal we'd hang out with Cal and Christian.

PAUL (Entering behind ELSA) The only people we knew who weren't suspicious of us.

ELSA (Hugging PAUL) Who didn't think I was up to something.

PAUL Cal was full of insights on our relationship.

CAL (Entering) Sexuality is completely over-rated in this country. Everyone feels constrained by their sexuality. Most people are capable of all sexual expression and will indulge freely if given the opportunity. Right, Christian?

CHRIS (Entering behind him) I love you, Cal.

CAL You see. Christian's been attracted to me for years. And I'm attracted to him. But we've never indulged because it's wrong for our image as rockers. You see, we are constrained by our sexuality which is prescribed by our career ambitions.

PAUL Exactly. I'm tired of being a gay man simply because I'm a musical comedy actor.

CAL Sexuality is politicized. Once you've declared yourself straight or gay you've joined a political party which does not appreciate or condone deviation from its norm.

(CHRIS puts his hand back on CAL's thigh.)

ELSA Gender is the only essential. Sexuality is inessential. It's adjustable.

CAL Depending on your profession. (Slapping CHRIS's hand away) We're rockers!

PAUL I've ceased to believe in sexuality. I believe in the heart. One heart steers to another heart. Every human body provides both openings and means of penetration. If one heart is attracted to another the necessary openings will be found.

ELSA (To the audience) Other nights we'd stay at home. (To CAL) Alone.

CAL Well, excuse us. (And he and CHRIS exit left.)

ELSA We'd research the Medea myth.

PAUL Apparently the historical Medea never killed her children as revenge on Jason. She did kill Creon and his daughter, but then she fled Corinth leaving the children in Jason's care. The Corinthians then stoned the children to death since they couldn't kill her.

ELSA Hundreds of years later the Corinthians paid Euripides large sums of money to change the ending of his play so that Medea killed her kids and thereby save the Corinthians from going down in history as kid killers.

PAUL And thus the legend of Medea the kid killer was born.

ELSA Well, if Medea didn't kill her kids, then I'm not going to.

PAUL We'll present it to John tomorrow.

Scene 6

JOHN (From the booth) Not kill her kids? But that's the best part of the show.

ELSA But why would she kill her kids?

JOHN Because her husband has cheated on her with another woman and she wants to hurt him.

PAUL But in the script you don't even have me getting upset about the death of my children.

JOHN No, you never wanted those kids in the first place. The only reason you had the kids was as part of the phony marriage to Medea. As far as your concerned, as a gay man, you're well rid of them.

PAUL Well, that's the most misogynistic thing I've ever heard.

JOHN Look, Medea has got to kill her kids. The only reason anybody comes to see a production of "Medea" is to watch Medea kill small children.

PAUL Well, it might work theatrically, but politically it's all wrong.

(KAREN enters holding a flesh colored water-melon and a huge water-melon smasher á la Gallagher. She crosses to ELSA.)

KAREN Here's one of the kids. They're actually water-melons. Now John wants you to smash them on the up stage platform and then eat the red part. Now, you use this mallet and you have to make sure they're properly positioned. (She aims the watermelon at an audience member in the front row. She makes to smash the watermelon. ELSA stops her in the nick of time.)

ELSA (To JOHN) I am not killing that kid.

JOHN Oh come on. Killing your kids is a feminist act. It's the ultimate act of self-empowerment. It's like burning your bra.

ELSA No, it's a woman hurting herself to hurt the man she loves because he no longer loves her. It's a man's idea of a feminist act.

PAUL (Grabbing the masher and raising it) I'll kill the kids.

JOHN No, you can't kill the kids.

ELSA Well, I'm not going to.

GABE (Entering and moving towards the kids) I'll kill the little-

JOHN Gabriel, please.

KEGAN (Entering at the proscenium)
SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW...

JOHN Thank you, Kegan.

KAREN John, it's 9:30. Rehearsal ends at ten. Who's killing the kids?

PAUL What about the Corinthians? They're the ones who actually killed the kids.

JOHN Oh great. Then we end up with an anti-Corinthians play. What the hell kind of a political statement is that?

ELSA So who ever kills the kids is the villain. Well, I'm definitely not killing them.

- JEFF (Entering) I am not making costumes for a bunch of stupid Corinthians. (And he exits.)
- PAUL Jason, acknowledging his cruelty in cheating on Medea, will smash the children as an act of self-punishment.
- JOHN If you touch those kids in performance I swear to God I will turn out the lights.
- KAREN (Hysterical) John, it's 9:35. Who's killing the kids?
- JOHN Ahh... All right, let's go back to Act I and run the scene where Jason saves the crew from the Bronze Giant.
- PAUL Excuse me, but in most versions of the myth Medea saved the crew from the Bronze Giant.
- JOHN So?
- ELSA So, can I be the one who does it in the play?
- JOHN I don't believe this.
- KAREN It's 9:40, John.
- JOHN Yes, fine, Medea can save everybody from the Bronze Man. Let's just run this scene? Go!
- (The CREW has milled on behind PAUL and ELSA. They all assume tired postures.)
- JANE How long until we return to Greece?
- GABE (Eating from a Chinese take-out bucket) Is there no food on this wretched island of despair?
- PAUL Courage men. Learn from Medea's fortitude.
- (We hear crashing noises from off stage left.)
- ALL (Terrified) Ahhhh!!!!
- JANE (Pointing off left) It's the Great Bronze Giant.
- GABE Of Crete!
- PAUL Run!

(PAUL, ELSA and the CREW run off stage right screaming. Then we see them in a miniature clump - tiny versions of the real people towed on a string - run across the upstage area still screaming. The BRONZE GIANT enters from up stage left and growls at them.)

ELSA (In a tiny voice) He's headed us off.

PAUL (Ditto) Run!

(The tiny clump runs off up stage right screaming and runs on down stage right, now full sized again, still screaming. They all look upstage at the BRONZE GIANT.)

GABE He's huge.

JANE And Bronze.

ELSA I know how to defeat him.

PAUL How, Medea?

ELSA Pull the stopper from his heel and his life giving fluids will pour forth and drain him of succor.

GABE (Bored) Sounds like a wonderful idea. Go to it, honey.

PAUL I'll provide a diversion.

(ELSA and PAUL run off down stage right and appear as little people on either side of the BRONZE GIANT.)

PAUL (Diverting the BRONZE GIANT's attention) Hey, hey, golden boy, look down here. I can sing.

OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN...

(Meanwhile the tiny ELSA has moved in to the heel of the BRONZE GIANT. She pulls out his stopper and he begins to groan. He dances about a bit trying to step on ELSA but, in time, and with a huge clatter, he falls. The clatter continues long after his body has come to rest. The CREW sways as if from the earthquake that the falling of the massive Bronze Giant has caused.)

JOHN Thank you! (The CREW stops rocking.) That's a very convincing earthquake. Thanks!

KAREN (To the actors still on-stage.) That's ten. We'll see you tomorrow at two for a run-through of Act I. Now clear the stage - my suppositories are starting to kick in.

ELSA (To the audience) We decided to celebrate that evening's successful rehearsal by visiting Cal and Christian's club.

Scene 7

PAUL Their act had changed somewhat since the first time we'd seen them. It was now a Tom Jones routine.

(CAL enters in a curly black wig, skin tight jeans and a fishnet shirt. He crosses to PAUL and ELSA.)

CAL Man, am I glad to see you two. (CHRISTIAN, dressed the same as CAL, appears beside him.) You were smooth tonight, baby. Oh so very smooth. (CHRISTIAN hugs ELSA.)

ELSA Oh, Chris. (To CAL) Does he want to go up the mountain again?

CAL No, he's really upset.

ELSA About what?

CAL Listen, guys, I've gotten myself into some really bad shit the last couple of nights.

PAUL Why, what's happened?

CAL I don't know if I can tell you.

ELSA Of course you can.

CAL This is a really bad situation, man. Really bad.

PAUL Cal what is it?

(KEGAN enters at stage right.)

KEGAN Cal! I'm ready to go. (She crosses to CAL.)

CAL (Pathetically) I'm going to hang out with Paul and Elsa for a while.

KEGAN (Crossing into him) Baby brother, I said, I'm ready to go. (And she sticks her tongue down his throat. COREY provides a dramatic chord from the piano. PAUL and ELSA look shocked. KEGAN surfaces and smiles.)

KEGAN (To ELSA) You see, most people are capable of all sexualities. (To CAL) Right Cal?

ELSA But Kegan, he's your brother.

KEGAN Step-brother. He's my step-brother. We don't share blood. (Wickedly) Except when things get kinky. Right, lover?

ELSA This is a joke right?

CAL It was a mistake.

KEGAN It wasn't a mistake. It's something I've wanted for a long time. Of course, my father might agree with you. (Another dramatic chord from COREY.)

CAL She's blackmailing me for sex. Her father would kill me if he found out. He's a Marine Corps drill sergeant. (Yet another dramatic chord.)

PAUL (To COREY) Corey, stop that.

CAL So, we've got to get going. Will you see that Christian gets home all right?

ELSA Of course.

CAL Good night, Christian. I'm sorry, man.

KEGAN Good night, Christy.

(CHRISTIAN hides himself behind ELSA. KEGAN smiles.)

ELSA (To KEGAN) You better just go.

KEGAN I'll see you two on stage. (She takes CAL's arm.) Come on, lover. (To COREY) Corey. (COREY gives them a dramatic chord as they exit.)

PAUL (To the audience) And so the stage was set.

ELSA (To the audience) And all the characters in place.

PAUL For the real night of the Living Dead - when all passions that we thought were dead and buried suddenly tempted us once again.

ELSA And we both did what we thought was best.

PAUL It began after our final dress rehearsal.

Scene 8

JOHN (Entering) Well, that's it then. Jason will kill the kiddies and Medea, guiltless of infanticide, will escape safely to Athens.

KEGAN/GABE
Boo....

JOHN (To KEGAN and GABE) Thank you. (To the cast) Well, tomorrow night is your opening night. You should all be very proud of your work on this show. It has been a truly collaborative effort. (He gives ELSA a dirty look.) You must be very good tomorrow night because the reviewer from *Time Magazine* will be here.

JANE What does he look like?

JOHN He's a big old queen. He sends nasty notes backstage at intermission. So, I want you all to get some sleep and I'll see you tomorrow at 7:30. (And he exits the stage. There are some weak claps from the cast members.)

PAUL (To ELSA) You're going to make a wonderful Medea.

ELSA Thanks to you.

PAUL You made me see the light.

ELSA I'm going to go get changed. I'll see you outside.

(PAUL and ELSA kiss and she exits off stage left. DARRYL crosses to PAUL and sits beside him.)

DARRYL Paul.

PAUL Hi, Darryl.

DARRYL Are you nervous about the opening tomorrow?

PAUL I am actually.

DARRYL Well, you shouldn't be. You're going to be terrific - I can tell.

PAUL Thank you, Darryl. That means a lot.

DARRYL Can I tell you something?

PAUL What's that?

DARRYL This is going to sound really stupid...

PAUL Why?

DARRYL You excite me. I think about you constantly.

(ELSA comes through the stage door at left as the lights come up to reveal CAL waiting for her.)

ELSA Cal! What are you doing here?

CAL (Touching her) Elsa, hold me.

ELSA Why? What's happened?

CAL You excite me. I think about you constantly.

PAUL Well, I don't know what to say.

DARRYL You don't have to say anything. I just had to tell you...
To get it off my chest.

PAUL (To audience) Nobody tells you anything just to get it off their chest. When they tell you something like this, they want sex.

DARRYL (To audience) True.

PAUL Look, if it means anything to you, a month ago I was infatuated - at least sort of - with you too.

DARRYL Infatuated-with-me-sort-of-a-month-ago?

PAUL Yeah.

DARRYL But now things have changed?

PAUL Yes.

CAL This whole thing with Kegan has really screwed me up. You see, I've been lonely for so long and Kegan's always wanted to sleep with me for some weird reason and I succumbed and now she's threatening to tell her father if I break it off with her. And this guy's something out of "Full Metal Jacket." I'm scared.

ELSA (Holding his face) It's alright.

CAL (Looking at her) Oh, Elsa...

ELSA (To audience) Oh, no.

PAUL (Holding DARRYL) I have very strong feelings for you - still. But it just doesn't feel right acting on them.

(DARRYL holds him tighter.)

CAL Do you still have strong feelings for me?

ELSA Yes, but it doesn't feel right- (And he kisses her tenderly.)

(DARRYL and PAUL are rubbing about each other heavily. They both seem very into it.)

PAUL Darryl, if this is me comforting you it's fine.

DARRYL Uh-huh.

PAUL If it's something else it's a disaster.

DARRYL It's a disaster.

ELSA (Surfacing) Cal, if this is me comforting you- (And CAL kisses her again.)

CHRIS (Appearing through the stage door) Cal.

CAL (Surfacing from his kiss with ELSA) Yeah, Chris.

CHRIS Can we go?

CAL All right. Bring the truck around. (CHRIS produces the little Land Rover from inside his jacket. To ELSA) Will you come?

ELSA (Without a moment's hesitation) Yes. (And the three of them exit up the aisle.)

PAUL (Stopping himself) Ah, look, Darryl, I'm sorry, but this isn't going to happen.

DARRYL Why not?

PAUL Because it's just not right. I'm sorry.

DARRYL (Embarrassed) Well, I guess I made a mistake.

PAUL Darryl, please-

DARRYL (Offended) No, leave me my dignity.

PAUL Darryl-

DARRYL Please! (And DARRYL exits.)

PAUL (To the audience) And so, after that bizarre incident, I went home and dreamt of Elsa and the song that brought us together.

(PAUL lies down on the upstage platform as if he was asleep. We hear the "Indian Love Call" again. In the middle of it JANE, wearing a fiery red dress, enters and we can see that she is singing the love call. She stops her singing and looks at ELSA, who has appeared in a sinister light down left.)

JANE (To ELSA) You're going to be a wonderful Medea.

ELSA (Crossing to JANE) Thanks to you.

(JANE and ELSA kiss passionately. We hear Twilight Zone music and see flashing lights. Suddenly the lights black out and PAUL is revealed thrashing about under a blanket on the upstage platform.)

Scene 9

PAUL (Thrashing about with his eyes closed) Temptress!
Seductress! Ahhhh!!!!

(ELSA runs on from stage left and holds him.)

ELSA Paul, Paul, wake up. You're having a nightmare. Paul, it's me. Wake up.

PAUL Oh, God, how awful.

ELSA What happened?

PAUL I had this horrible nightmare that you and Jane were these evil lesbians who contrived to make me fall in love with you so that I would help you undermine this musical.

ELSA Me and Jane?

PAUL Yes. She was following us everywhere singing the "Indian Love Call" and you were giving her sex in return.

ELSA You have quite an imagination.

PAUL So, what happened to you? I couldn't find you after the rehearsal.

ELSA I waited a little bit outside the stage door.

PAUL Yeah, well, I got into this whole thing with Darryl. You don't want to hear about it.

ELSA Anything happen?

PAUL Nothing, thank God. (He claps and his apartment lights snap on.) So, what happened to you?

ELSA (After a pause) I got into this whole thing with Cal.

PAUL Cal?

ELSA Yeah, he met me at the stage door. You don't want to hear about it.

PAUL Why, what happened?

ELSA I told you, you don't want to hear about it.

PAUL Of course I do. Tell me.

ELSA It's personal. Between me and Cal.

PAUL What's that supposed to mean?

ELSA He picked me up when I was down. Well he was down tonight. So I picked him up. I owed him.

PAUL What, is this a joke?

ELSA Only if you think it's funny.

PAUL Are you telling me you slept with Cal?

ELSA I'm telling you I helped a friend. It has nothing to do with you.

PAUL Of course it has something to do with me.

ELSA Don't turn this into something it's not. I had a whole life before you and that life goes on. Tonight I had an obligation to my old life. And I fulfilled it.

- PAUL What is that? A speech? Did you write that on your way home? It's like a TV-movie way of saying, "Yeah, I screwed him."
- ELSA Well, I'm just a stupid actress. I guess that's the only way I know how to speak. (We hear the climax of the big aria from "Pagliacci.") What is that?
- PAUL Opera singer downstairs. He's singing about how his wife is a tramp.
- ELSA Oh, so is that what I am now? A tramp? (She stomps on the floor and the singing stops. We hear the voice of the opera singer from underneath her say: "Mi scuzi!")
- PAUL Would you explain to me why you think it's alright to have slept with Cal when you are supposedly living with me?
- ELSA Because, like you said, "*I think it's alright.*" *I do.* It doesn't matter what *you* think. That's what this is all about. *I do what I think is right.*
- PAUL Regardless of how it effects other people.
- ELSA I told you, it shouldn't affect you. That is what I honestly believe.
- PAUL And yet it does.
- ELSA I'm sorry it does.
- PAUL It's incredibly selfish.
- ELSA No, falling for you was incredibly selfish. It's something I wanted and didn't care that it might prove difficult for you because you were gay. Cal is something else.
- PAUL And why did you want to sleep with me? So I'd help you with your reworking of "Medea?"
- ELSA Is that what you think?
- PAUL Yeah, it is.
- ELSA Well, that's a nice tidy cliché. The bitch who screws her way to the top.

PAUL No, I'm hardly a top. I'm just the actor who could change the tenor of the production. Turn it into a feminist "Medea." You did it for political reasons.

ELSA Oh, so now I'm the feminist sex-pot. Screws for women everywhere. Well, that's a whole new cliché.

PAUL Clichés are best when they're new. They're harder to spot.

ELSA Yeah, well you're a whole new cliché and you're not hard to spot.

PAUL Am I?

ELSA The straight actor trapped in a feminist production he doesn't approve of. Now that's something new, isn't it?

PAUL Is that what I am?

ELSA Yeah, I only recognize it because I've been there a number of times myself - trapped in a production I didn't approve of.

PAUL And this is your revenge.

ELSA No, it's not. But you want to think it is.

PAUL I don't want to, I do.

ELSA Well, then I guess you really are trapped.

PAUL I'm not trapped.

ELSA Oh, no?

PAUL No. Opening night can make all the difference.

(We hear a recording of the sewer music from "Guys and Dolls." The lights blackout on PAUL and ELSA standing center-stage. The "Guys and Dolls" music continues and the lights come up again to reveal COREY standing center-stage wearing white tie and tails. The CREW is milling about the stage in their furs. COREY is peaking through the "act curtain" down-center. JEFF, in black tie and tails, is touching up the stage with paint. The music is soon replaced by loud booing. KAREN enters from stage-left dressed in all black.)

Scene 10

COREY Karen, Karen, look through the curtain. They're going crazy out there. Has Paul come out of his dressing room yet?

KAREN No, John's on his hands and knees outside his door.

COREY What time is it?

KAREN It's nine o'clock. We should have started an hour ago.

(JOHN, also in black tie and tails, enters in a panic.)

JOHN OK, Paul's coming. He'll be out here in a minute.
Karen, go make sure Elsa's all set. Everybody, places for Act I.
Jeffrey, get off the stage. Corey, I want you to get out there and cover.

COREY Cover?

JOHN Yes, just a few more seconds.

COREY But, what do I say?

JOHN I don't give a damn. (He hustles COREY off stage left.)
Something. Anything. Sing. Tap-dance. Quote Shakespeare.
Just cover.

COREY But-

(And COREY is pushed out through the door stage-right and into the audience. He tries to sneak back stage but he is caught in a spot light. He smiles lamely at the audience. There are some more boos.)

COREY (Big cheesy grin) Hi. I'm Corey. This is a piano. Tonight's performance of "Medea, the Musical" will be accompanied on the piano. By me on the piano. And my name's Corey. (A pause.) I'm telling you all this because the director of this production is a devout Brechtian and he wants you, the audience, to be aware of the presentational nature of this production. Never forget that I am here and that the music you hear comes not from some nether world but from this piano. (Gaining in confidence) Now the piano has eighty-eight in the keys. There are sharps and flats. This is a sharp. (He hits a sharp.) And this is a flat. (He hits a flat.) Now, the thing I've always found interesting about the piano is-

(KAREN sticks her head through the door.)

KAREN Corey, we're ready to go with "Colchis, Colchis."

COREY (Offended) I'm right in the middle of something. (To the audience) Anyway, let me just finish this thought -

JOHN (Appearing behind KAREN) Corey, go!

(COREY begins to play. The "curtain" rises to reveal the CREW in position. The vamp begins. PAUL wheels on from down-right wearing a tight fitting, red kimono, high-heeled pumps and a strawberry blond wig - the vision of a drag goddess. He launches into "Colchis, Colchis.")

PAUL START SHAVIN' YOUR LEGS
MAMA'S LEAVIN' TODAY
SHE'S GONNA BUMP AND GRIND IN IT.

CREW (Singing weakly once they've seen PAUL's getup)
COLCHIS, COLCHIS.

(Blackout and in the dark we hear:)

CRAIG Great Aetees, your god, king and greatest dread has spoken.

(The lights come up on the appropriate moment in the first scene of the musical. The CREW members supplicate themselves in noisy fear of CRAIG.)

PAUL Will you introduce me to your boys.

CRAIG But of course I'll introduce you to my boys. (Indicating MATT)
This is my son Apsyrtus - nubile, soft and virginical - he
has a marvelous chest.

PAUL (Taking MATT's hand and salting it up with a small shaker)
Enchanté, Apthhhh...

CREW Say it!

PAUL Thyrtus! (PAUL begins kissing MATT's hand and then working
his way up MATT's arm. CRAIG enjoys this for a few seconds
and then continues.)

CRAIG And this is my sister Phaedra from Athens.

PAUL (Surfacing briefly from MATT's arm) Dear, Phaedra - one hears
so much about you. (But it takes him a while to finish this
sentence because he's backed into CRAIG's - well, he's
backed into CRAIG and the two of them are enjoying the
collision.)

PHAEDRA Et vous, Jason. (Indicating DARRYL) This is my.....
son, Hippolytus. He too is fine chested.

PAUL (Suddenly losing interest in CRAIG) Indeed. In Iolcus, where I come from, one greets the fine chested with a vice like clamp to the nipples. (He begins to reach. KEGAN slaps his hand away.)

KEGAN He has very sensitive nipples. (Suddenly hysterical) And he's my son, damn- (But PAUL shoves her down before she can fall.)

PAUL (An aside) Odd. (And PAUL bites DARRYL's nipple. DARRYL cries out in pain and then succumbs to the pleasure of the bite. CRAIG simply stares. PAUL eventually surfaces, smiles and then wipes his mouth.)

CRAIG My family.

PAUL Delicious. (He makes a slurping sound and blows a big sloppy kiss to CRAIG.) Crew! To the ship! We will practice yoking ball! (And PAUL whips the CREW off-stage. ELSA looks confused.)

ELSA (To CRAIG, pleading) Father. (CRAIG smiles wickedly at her then turns to his boys.)

CRAIG (Queenly) Come, big titted boys of mine. Let's plan the demise of this Greek as we voluptuate.

(CRAIG, DARRYL and MATT exit leaving ELSA and KEGAN alone on-stage. ELSA looks confused. KEGAN is laying face down on the stage trying to stifle laughter. We hear the musical cue for "Oh, No." ELSA does nothing. COREY gives the cue again louder. Finally ELSA turns to KEGAN.)

ELSA Phaedra.

KEGAN (Looking up) Yes?

ELSA I've always loved you.

KEGAN (Stunned) Oh.

ELSA (Straddling KEGAN)
OH NO, I'LL NEVER LOVE THIS WAY AGAIN.
(And she presses her lips to KEGAN's.)

(The spot on KEGAN and ELSA blacks out and the stage lights come up on DARRYL hunting the DEER as KEGAN sings. But the DEER is now played by PAUL and DARRYL is being pursued by the RABBIT which is now played by GABE. DARRYL looks confused and tries to make the best of the pandemonium.)

First he shoots PAUL with the bow and arrow and then GABE as the RABBIT both of whom, in "dying", fall on top of DARRYL. KEGAN sings throughout.)

KEGAN JUST REMEMBER, HE'S SEVENTEEN
 HE'S ALMOST LEGAL FLESH
 AND A MOM, SHE NEEDS HER SON'S LOVE
 LOOK, HE DREAMS OF JOHN TESH.

(The lights blackout on the pile-up and come up stage left on ELSA and MATT. MATT has thrown himself down on the floor.)

MATT Medea, you monster.

ELSA Apsyrtus, my brother.

(PAUL has stepped into the light.)

MATT Traitor. You've fallen for this tempter. This seducer. He's seduced you from your own.

ELSA No, he hasn't. I've fallen for our Aunt Phaedra. (ELSA pulls KEGAN from off stage-left. KEGAN is holding a cigarette. She tries to hide her exhale by blowing it off-stage.)

PAUL (Pulling DARRYL from stage-right) And I'm nailing your cousin. (DARRYL is in the midst of eating a large banana.)

MATT (Horribly confused.) Oh. (He thinks.) And I am so alone! (He rams his dagger into his own neck. The blood explodes and he falls dead on the stage.)

ELSA (To KEGAN) PHAEDRA.

PAUL (To DARRYL) SWEET HIPPY.
 SWEET HIPPY!

ELSA OH PHAEDRA!
 PHAEDRA.

PAUL OH HIPPY

ALL DEAR.

(The "curtain" falls and KAREN steps on-stage.)

KAREN That's intermission. Ten minutes to places for Act II.

(JOHN enters stage from left foaming at the mouth. His tuxedo is drenched in sweat.)

JOHN (Rabid) WHAT THE FUCK IS HAPPENING? Paul, you've got to stop this. It's completely nerve wracking to watch. I don't know what's happening from scene to scene.

PAUL I think it's going beautifully. (PAUL turns to ELSA.) Don't you?

ELSA Better than ever.

PAUL I think though that the second act will be devoted entirely to the love of Jason for Hippolytus.

ELSA Not if I can help it.

PAUL You won't be here.

ELSA Wild bulls couldn't drag me off this stage.

(PAUL meows in her face, makes strangling gestures and then runs off the stage laughing maniacally. ELSA tries to run after him but is restrained by JOHN.)

JOHN Elsa, where are you going?

ELSA John, my kitty's in danger. I have to get home.

JOHN All right, wait here. Karen, we're canceling the second act. "Medea, the Musical" just became "Medea, the One-Act." Send the audience home. They'll be grateful.

(JOHN turns to discover that GABE has entered from stage left and is standing behind him drunkenly holding a note card.)

GABE A note from a big old queen in the audience.

JOHN (Looking at the note's envelope) My God, it's *Time* Magazine stationary.

GABE How fascinating. (GABE exits as JOHN steps into a down center special and reads the note. We hear the voice of the *TIME* critic in voice over.)

TIME Dear John, It's just great. It's completely nerve-wracking to watch. I don't know what's going to happen from scene to scene. I love it. Especially Medea and Phaedra as lovers. You're brilliant. Your best work ever. Over.

JOHN (Confused) Over?

TIME Turn the card over.

JOHN Oh. (JOHN does so.)

TIME You're all wonderful. I can't wait for the second act!

(JOHN, looking excited, folds up the note as his special fades.)

JOHN Karen! (KAREN appears from right) I changed my mind.
Places for Act II!

KAREN (Exiting right) Places, places!

ELSA John, what about my kitty?

JOHN Jeffrey! (JEFF appears in the platform's trap) Get over to
Elsa's house and save that kitty. (JEFF winks and sinks into
the platform. To ELSA) Elsa, if you leave now this play will be
about the triumph of a bunch of clever fags. You've got to stay
and hold up the lesbian end.

ELSA I'll do it.

JOHN Good girl!

COREY John.

JOHN Yes, Corey.

COREY There's a marine going crazy in the auditorium.

JOHN A marine?

KEGAN A marine. (She looks through the curtain breach.) It's my
father, damn the gods!

(CAL and CHRISTIAN wheel around the proscenium stage left.)

KEGAN Cal!

CAL Kegan, you're father found out about you and me. He chased us
to the theatre. He's going to kill us.

KEGAN John, we've got to hide them. My father's a maniac.

JOHN We can't hide them. It's a tiny theatre.

KEGAN Give them some costumes. Put them in the show.

KAREN But your father will see them on the stage.

KEGAN He won't harm them though. My father believes in the inviolability of the representational frame.

JOHN (Looking at the audience) Oh. (To CAL and CHRIS) You two, get into some costumes. Karen, write them some lines. Corey, get out there and cover. (As JOHN chases COREY off right he runs smack into DARRYL.)

DARRYL (Furious) Well, if everybody's changing things then I want a shirt. I am too too tired of this exploitation of my pectorials for this "Mandingo, the Musical."

JOHN Karen, sew Darryl a shirt.

SHAYNA (Grabbing JOHN by the collar) And I want my song back!

JOHN Karen, work Shayna into the finale.

PAUL (Entering) Oh, incidentally, I'm not killing those kids.

ELSA (Entering) Well, neither am I.

JOHN Karen, I'm leaving it up to you! Those kids must die!!!

(KAREN screams. JOHN screams. The lights blackout on the screaming and bump up on COREY at the piano drinking a martini and smoking from a cigarette holder.)

COREY (To the audience) Hello again. Now to continue on our grand tour of the piano. We finally come to the peddles. You see, the peddles control how long I hold out a particular sound. If I depress the left peddle-

KAREN (Sticking her head through the door) Go!

COREY (To the audience) More later. Just remember - I'm the pianist and my name's what?

AUDIENCE (With some help from backstage) Corey!

(COREY smiles and begins playing. The lights come up to reveal PAUL and DARRYL holding hands and facing off against ELSA and KEGAN, who are also holding hands.)

PAUL I can't believe that you Medea slept with Hippolytus, your lover's son and my boyfriend.

ELSA And I can't believe that you Jason slept with Phaedra, your lover's Mother and my girl friend.

PAUL Someone must die.

ELSA I agree.

PAUL/ELSA/DARRYL/KEGAN (To the audience)
But who?

(CHRISTIAN and CAL appear UC in diapers and baby bonnets.)

CAL We are the babies born of these unhealthy unions.

(CAL squeezes a small hot-dog toy which squeaks.)

CHRIS I the baby of Medea and Hippolytus.

CAL I the baby of Jason and Phaedra.

BOTH We love each other.

(They take each other's hand and smile wanely.)

CHRIS Which we know is wrong.

CAL So we offer ourselves for sacrifice to the gods.

CHRIS Before death we have but one message to deliver.

ELSA What's that?

CAL The kitty's fine.

ELSA Oh. (The kitty on elastic shoots across the stage. KAREN and MATT are chasing it but they get caught onstage and feel the need to strike a romantic pose. ELSA smiles lovingly at PAUL.)

PAUL (Looking at ELSA) I'm sorry.

ELSA No, I'm sorry for any pain I might have caused you.

PAUL Don't be. Perhaps you were right.

ELSA Thank you

KEGAN (To CAL) I'm sorry, son.

CAL That's alright, mom. Sometimes I'm just a big baby. (To CHRIS)
I'm sorry, my brother.

CHRIS That's alright, my babylove. (Fiddling with his diaper) We all
have a load to bare.

GABE (Entering stage right) And I'm sorry for being so judgmental.

CRAIG (Entering stage left holding APSYRTUS' butt from the
vivisection scene) I'm sorry for being such a butt.

JOHN (Appearing in the Euripides cutout stage left) And I'm sorry
for being such a pompous ass.

DARRYL (Sincerely) And I'm sorry too. For all of you.

ALL Thanks.

(PAUL takes ELSA's hand and they cross slowly together up to CAL and
CHRISTIAN. PAUL and ELSA unsheathe their daggers and prepare to
sacrifice CAL and CHRISTIAN.)

PAUL (To CAL) This is going to hurt us more than it's going to
hurt you.

CAL (Fumbling with his blood pack) Wait a minute. (He gets it
in position by his neck.) OK. Go for it.

(PAUL slits CAL's throat and ELSA slits CHRISTIAN's throat. The two BABIES
collapse dead on the stage. As everyone sings, APHRODITE enters on point,
throws wreathes on the dead babies and then spits on them.)

ALL OF THEE WE SING, DEAD BABIES.
WINKY, DINKY, DINKY, DING, DEAD BABIES.
INFANTICIDE AND MUTILATION
SUFFERING FROM LACERATION.

GABE (Pointing at SHAYNA who now stands on the platform
dressed as an Indian Squaw.) Look!

ALL (Everybody looks and points) Tamalpa!

(SHAYNA sings the "Indian Love Call" to draw JEFF, dressed in armor and
Spanish helmet as Diablo the Conquistador, on-stage. JEFF winces with
embarrassment, then indicates for the finale to continue.)

ALL OF THEE WE SING, SING, SING.

(And then the cast launches into a reprise of "I Will Survive" for a Finale Ultimo at the end of which there is a blackout.)

END OF ACT II

END OF PLAY

FIN