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An Experiment in Gendered Writing: Translation and Original Prose Composition

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Running Title: Gendered Writing

An Experiment in Gendered Writing: Translation and Original Prose Composition

By

Julie Warren

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of the requirements for
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ABSTRACT

WARREN, JULIE An Experiment in Gendered Writing: Translation and Original Prose Composition

ADVISOR: Professor Stacie Raucci

This thesis is a two-part project of translation and prose composition. In part one, I am translating two letters from Ovid's *Heroides*, a collection of elegiac poems written from the female perspective of women in mythology to their male lovers. I chose the only two letters, Hypsipyle's and Medea's, in the collection that are both written to the same man, Jason. In part two, I am composing two letters in Latin from Jason's perspective to Hypsipyle and Medea. As Ovid was a male writing from the female perspective and I am a female writing from the male perspective, my goal is to explore the issues of gender in elegiac theme and more personally through the arts of translating and composing.

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INTRODUCTION

Ovid's *Heroides* is a collection of elegiac poems written from the female perspective of women in mythology to their male lovers. There are fifteen 'single' epistles and six 'paired' epistles. In the 'single' epistles, there are two letters that are written to the same man. In Letters 6 and 12, Hypsipyle and Medea express their grievances towards their husband, Jason. This offered an interesting opportunity to explore the complex character of Jason from two women that supposedly knew him deeply. Additionally, the perspective of each woman was profoundly examined through the reading of their own words. The first part of this project involved translating these two letters of the *Heroides*. Research on translation theory and other secondary sources were vital to capturing the authentic voice of each woman writer. The second part of this project sought to take the multifaceted character of Jason created from the original texts and provide him with a voice of his own. Two original prose compositions were written in Latin. These were responsorial letters to Hypsipyle and Medea. Research on Roman masculinity and ancient letter writing were important to writing from Jason's perspective. The translation and composition together sought to investigate and experiment with gendered writing in both antiquity and modern adaptation.

Part I: Poems as Stories & Women as Literary Characters

In translating these poems, it is critical to be aware of their purpose as stories and the female narrators' identities as literary characters. Therefore, there are three topics that need to be reviewed to understand this: elegiac refashioning, the characters within their literary tradition, and the relationship between Hypsipyle and Medea.

Elegiac Refashioning

The *Heroides* represents an important transition from Ovid's elegiac standards to an innovative overlapping with mythology in epistolary composition. These poems retell the familiar mythological tales of epic through an elegiac perspective (Drinkwater 368). While this change in thematic focus would be interesting enough, Ovid transforms these stories further by utilizing a letter format. By doing this, Ovid introduces a primary female voice to the text, allowing these "women of heroic legend" to have authority over their own stories (Farrell 309). Through these letters, their conventionally biographical tales become autobiographical; the women now speak, rather than being spoken for (Bloch 198). Furthermore, these letters empower the women to comment on their lovers, the heroes of mythology. Despite Ovid's modifications in the elements of presentation of these stories, the women remain founded in and inspired from the literary roots of their characters. Ovid's reconstruction takes the common perception of each heroine in mythology and creatively reworks her tale to fit the constructs of both elegy and epistolary writing. The letters of Hypsipyle and Medea demonstrate Ovid's mastery of this elegiac refashioning of mythology, in the context of epistles.

Characters Within Literary Tradition

The women of the *Heroides* are inspired from the collection of literary works associated with their names. Hypsipyle and Medea are both women founded in pre-Ovidian literature but are dramatically transformed in the *Heroides*. It is essential to be familiar with the literary history of each woman in order to be aware of Ovid's creative choices in his writings. These modifications influence the meaning and interpretation of the elegiac text.

Hypsipyle

The Apollonian account features Hypsipyle welcoming the Argonauts on their journey to Colchis for the Golden Fleece. It discusses her relationship with Jason but does not allude to any sense of permanence. Instead, Jason does not choose to rule Lemnos with Hypsipyle and instructs her to send the children she might have to his father. Both actions demonstrate an obvious fleetingness in their relationship and a lack of intense passion or dedication to each other (Fulkerson 41). This version suggests that “the pre-Ovidian Hypsipyle does not seem to have considered Jason the great love of her life; quite the contrary” (Fulkerson 40).

The duration of Jason’s stay on Lemnos is lengthened to two years in Ovid, rather than the few days it was in Apollonius (*Arg.* 1.861-2), and Hypsipyle alludes to her marriage with Jason (6.41-4), which is not contemplated, much less fulfilled, in the *Argonautica*. The departures from the canonical *Argonautica* are important: the lengthy duration of the Argonauts’ stay strengthens Hypsipyle’s claims on Jason as husband (and father to her children); the marriage that Hypsipyle shares with him places her in opposition to Medea (who in her own letter is thus set against Creusa)” (Bloch 199).

Additionally, Hypsipyle makes an appearance in a Euripidean play portraying events from later in her life. In this account, Hypsipyle has been exiled from Lemnos after saving her father’s life from the women’s massacre of the men of Lemnos and she is working as a nurse in Nemea. This interpretation could be useful in understanding the ironies of Ovid’s Hypsipyle, as these events demonstrate the curse she wishes on Medea in her letter will come true for her as well (Fulkerson 41).

Medea

In a similar fashion, Euripides and Apollonius both portray stories of Medea. Euripides’ version presents Medea in an active and offender-type role as an evil witch, betrayed by her husband and seeking revenge. Contrastingly, Apollonius depicts Medea in a

passive and victimized role as a naïve female whose scandalous actions are a direct result of Jason's seduction (Fulkerson 42). In other literary works, these two personas are often used together to foreshadow or describe the cause and effect of Jason's abandonment on Medea's disposition. As a result of Jason's rejection, a previously trusting Medea turns vindictive, leading her to kill her children, be stripped of her wealth and be pushed into exile (Bloch 204). Ovid appears to draw from a number of Medea representations, fastening together a unique character and placing her in a similar context of rejection as Hypsipyle (Fulkerson 42).

It is evident Ovid is drawing on a connection between Hypsipyle and Medea, their shared love for and betrayal of Jason, to develop the character of each woman individually as well as Jason. More generally, the women of the *Heroides* do not seem to live exclusively in their own letter but cross inter-textual boundaries, forming relationships and connections between other heroines. Just as women are not bound by their own writing, neither are their myths. It is important to consider these relationships when reading the *Heroides*.

The Relationship Between Hypsipyle and Medea

The relationship between Hypsipyle and Medea is observable as the letters share similar content, discussing the same events and comparable feelings of betrayal from Jason. "The letters are clearly in dialogue with one another" (Fulkerson 40). Moreover, they obtain a deeper meaning when reading them together and recognizing their relatedness; they express a pattern of recollection and prediction (Bloch 205). This quality is unique to these letters, as their intimate connection is not seen in any other 'single epistle' (Bloch 199). The two share vocabulary and themes, following a the same basic outline:

Each letter contains attacks on Jason... reminiscences about their time together... threats... and concerns about Jason's safety... Finally, each

woman represents Jason's wooing of her in precisely the same way: he promises to remain hers forever... with a lying tongue... and weeps upon departure (Fulkerson 44).

These parallels raise questions about the origin of the similarity; if the women wrote them at the same time, copied each other or if Jason just had romantic interest in a particular type of woman (Fulkerson 43). Regardless of the explanation, both women seem to be aware of the flaws of their beloved and his dependence on women to achieve all his success (Bloch 201).

However, Hypsipyle's letter more clearly evokes a stronger association to Medea than the reverse. "Although nominally addressed to Jason, the letter is so overwhelmingly about Medea that Hypsipyle concludes it with a polysyndetic address to them both" (Bloch 204). Moreover, Hypsipyle concludes her epistle with a curse for Medea, which coming true, becomes the provocation of Medea's own letter (Bloch 207). Therefore, readers of Medea's letter can value Ovid's use of irony having already read Hypsipyle's epistle.

Part II: Poems as Letters & Women as Writers

In translating these poems, it is critical to be aware of their function as letters and the female narrators' identities as writers. Therefore, there are three topics that need to be reviewed to understand this: gendered writing in ancient literary culture, the use of deception in writing, and issues of audience.

Gendered Writing in Ancient Literary Culture

It is imperative to consider the differences in how women and men were supposed to compose their writing in the ancient world. Ovid gives detailed instructions in his *Ars Amatoria* regarding these disparities. He explains that a woman writing a love letter does so

at a significant risk to herself and could suffer potential retribution if she is caught.

Moreover, he expresses knowledge about the most successful ways for a woman to sneak a letter out of the house, most of which include elaborate scheming. Additionally, he instructs women to use plain language and style. Using anything other than everyday speech, women risked sounding barbaric and unappealing, as they were not as familiar with Latin and rhetoric (Farrell 313). Especially since Ovid is the poet giving these heroines the ability to write, it is necessary to be knowledgeable of the guidelines. “The polarity of genders within the text [the *Heroides*] is (or should be) crucially important to the efforts of interpreting these poems on any level” (Farrell 337). Ovid is conscious of how a woman is expected to have composed a letter, making his female writing personas employ these tactics.

While it is crucial to recognize Ovid’s authority over these poems, these women should also be examined by their own identities as writers, a fairly abnormal occurrence in ancient literature. “The *Heroides* is presented as a collection of texts produced by writing women” (Farrell 310). Their fictional origins do not detract from the living testimonies they produce in their letters. These women are writing from their unique and individual perspectives, responding with raw and unedited emotion to the current circumstances in their lives. The letters are written honestly, with the purpose of initiating a line of communication with their lovers, who in many situations have betrayed them.

The Use of Deception in Writing

Deception is another gender-divided tactic in ancient writing. It is almost exclusively employed by males to produce an illusion of being physically present rather the letter (Farrell 313). Moreover, Ovid recommends men to use deception to mask the intensity of their desire for the female recipients of their letters (Farrell 317). Contrastingly, women do not use

deception to gain or increase the affections of their lovers. Instead, they must disguise and protect their letters from potential interception by an unwanted third-party. Ovid advises women to conceal their handwriting, use feminine pronouns to refer to the recipient, and discard any evidence of past correspondence (Farrell 316). Therefore, a woman should make use of these disguises to ensure her safety and keep her relationship private. In the *Heroides*, it is evident these female writers are no exceptions to these gender standards. The women have no intention of deceiving their lovers but instead rely on their understanding of the truth to beseech, reprimand, or humiliate their lovers. “The women of the *Heroides* delineate a clear polarity between men, speech, and deception on the one hand, and women, writing, and honesty on the other” (Farrell 329).

Issues of Audience

In reading the *Heroides*, it is important to consider the intended audience of these letters and a reader’s relationship to them. It becomes quite clear from the beginning of the collection, these letters are not meant for just any reader; the woman is composing an intimate letter to her beloved. Moreover, readers must decide if we are to interpret the letters from the beloved’s perspective or from someone who has managed to seize the letter on its transit (Farrell 315). It is indiscernible and not particularly relevant to comprehending the poetry. The many allusions to ancient mythological places and characters would be applicable and relevant for the recipients of the letters. The women make no effort to explain such references and do not seem to be aware that their letters will be intercepted. However, regardless of the readers’ role, the intended audience is indisputable and this is a crucial aspect to consider in translation.

Part III: Letters 6 & 12 in Translation

In translating these two poems, it was essential to consider the dichotomy of these women as Ovid's characters and as writers themselves. All the aspects and ideas previously discussed were compiled to inform my choices as a translator. In these translations, I sought to reveal the women I came to know from studying their words as well as their historical and literary contexts.

Translating Letter 6: Hypsipyle

In translating this letter, I wanted to structure the poem in an obvious letter format. The letter begins with a salutation, contains several body paragraphs, and concludes with a closing and signature. I desired to develop a specific voice for Hypsipyle and made stylistic and interpretive choices to convey this. In general, I wanted Hypsipyle's circumstances and feelings to be authentic and relatable in my presentation. Therefore, I chose to stay as true to the Latin text as I could, while still transforming the text into a readable and recognizable love letter. I decided the best way to capture Hypsipyle in her letter was to translate it as if it were an early draft facing critical revision. In its presentation, the letter contains visible edits, strikethroughs, bold, and italics. While each element was done for a different purpose, the sum of these format choices produced a heavily revised emotional first draft.

The frequency that Hypsipyle mentions Medea and the amount of space in the letter dedicated to her was very striking. I felt this needed to be emphasized in my translation and therefore, led to the greatest creative change I made. I imagined she would initially have addressed the letter to both Jason and Medea. In writing these sections, Hypsipyle, in her unavoidable anger towards her would have addressed Medea directly. In editing these sections, more distanced from her anger, Hypsipyle would have crossed them out, deciding to address Jason only, the true source of her pain. Additionally, I wanted to stress Hypsipyle

starting to distance herself from Jason and their previously intimate relationship. This was conveyed through Hypsipyle crossing out asides, phrases, or words that allude to their marriage or her possession of him. Moreover, in the beginning, Hypsipyle spends the first twenty lines ranting and obsessing about Jason's failure to write her. I wanted to emphasize this obsession by bolding words or phrases related to his unwritten letter. This small choice sets the tone for the remainder of her letter, as Jason's lack of correspondence is just one trivial illustration of his betrayals. Therefore, her letter relies on her own frustrations, memories, and understanding of the facts. I used italics whenever Hypsipyle quoted a conversation. This was done to convey a difference between her own thoughts and interpretations from her cataloging previous dialogues.

Translating Letter 12: Medea

In translating Medea's letter, I had similar intentions of portraying a reliable interpretation of the text and the woman. Contrasting to Hypsipyle, I wanted this translation to be Medea's final draft of the letter. Medea's words were just as filled with emotion and a sense of betrayal as Hypsipyle's, but she did not seem to be resolved with what had happened, still processing it. Rather, there was a more logical and composed tone; the letter had an attitude of finality. I chose to represent this in a standard letter format with a more polished appearance.

Ovid *Heroides* VI: Hypsipyle¹

Lemnias Hypsipyle Bacchi genus Aesone nato
dicit: et in verbis pars quota mentis erat?
Litora Thessaliae reduci tetigisse carina
diceris auratae vellere dives ovis.
gratulor incolumi quantum sinis; hoc tamen ipso
debueram scripto certior esse tuo.
nam ne pacta tibi praeter mea regna redires,
cum cuperes, ventos non habuisse potes:
quamlibet adverso signatur epistula vento,
Hypsipyle missa digna salute fui!
Cur mihi fama prior quam littera nuntia venit:
isse sacros Martis sub iuga panda boves,
seminibus iactis segetes adolesse virorum
inque necem dextra non eguisse tua,
pervigilem spoliū pecudis servasse draconem,
rapta tamen forti vellera fulva manu?
hoc ego si possem timide credentibus "ista
ipse mihi scripsit" dicere, quanta forem!
Quid queror officium lenti cessasse mariti?
obsequium, maneo si tua, grande tuli.
barbara narratur venisse venefica tecum
in mihi promissi parte recepta tori.
credula res amor est. utinam temeraria dicar
criminibus falsis insimulasse virum!
nuper ab Haemoniis hospes mihi Thessalus oris
venerat et tactum vix bene limen erat,
"Aesonides," dixi, "quid agit meus?" ille pudore
haesit in opposita lumina fixus humo.
protinus exilui tunicisque a pectore ruptis
"vivit? an," exclamo, "me quoque fata vocant?"
"vivit," ait timidus; timidum iurare coegi.
vix mihi teste deo credita vita tua est.
Utque animus rediit, tua facta requirere coepi:
narrat aripedes Martis arasse boves,
vipereos dentes in humum pro semine iactos
et subito natos arma tulisse viros,
terrigenas populos civili Marte peremptos
inplesse aetatis fata diurna suae.
devictus serpens. iterum, si vivat Iason,
quaerimus; alternant spesque timorque fidem.
Singula dum narrat, studio cursuque loquendi
detegit ingenio vulnera nostra suo.

¹ <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/ovid/ovid.her6.shtml>

heus, ubi pacta fides? ubi conubialia iura
 faxque sub arsuos dignior ire rogos?
 non ego sum furto tibi cognita. pronuba Iuno
 affuit et sertis tempora vincetus Hymen.
 at mihi nec Iuno nec Hymen, sed tristis Erinyes
 praetulit infaustas sanguinolenta faces.
 Quid mihi cum Minyis? quid cum Tritonide pinu?
 quid tibi cum patria, navita Tiphys, mea?
 non erat hic aries villo spectabilis aureo,
 nec senis Aeetae regia Lemnos erat.
 certa fui primo—sed me mala fata trahebant—
 hospita feminea pellere castra manu
 Lemniadesque viros—nimium quoque!—vincere norunt:
 milite tam forti vita tuenda fuit!
 Urbe virum vidi tectoque animoque recepi.
 hic tibi bisque aestas bisque cucurrit hiems.
 tertia messis erat, cum tu dare vela coactus
 inplesti lacrimis talia verba tuis:
 "abstrahor, Hypsipyle. sed dent modo fata recursus;
 vir tuus hinc abeo, vir tibi semper ero.
 quod tamen e nobis gravida celatur in alvo,
 vivat et eiusdem simus uterque parens!"
 Hactenus. et lacrimis in falsa cadentibus ora
 cetera te meminisse non potuisse loqui.
 Ultimus e sociis sacram conscendis in Argon;
 illa volat, ventus concava vela tenet.
 caerulea propulsae subducitur unda carinae:
 terra tibi, nobis adspiciuntur aquae.
 in latus omne patens turris circumspicit undas;
 huc feror et lacrimis osque sinusque madent.
 per lacrimas specto cupidaeque faventia menti
 longius adsueto lumina nostra vident.
 adde preces castas inmixtaque vota timori
 nunc quoque te salvo persolvenda mihi!
 Vota ego persolvam? votis Medea fruatur!
 cor dolet atque ira mixtus abundat amor.
 dona feram templis, vivum quod Iasona perdo?
 hostia pro damnis concidat icta meis?
 Non equidem secunda fui semperque verebar,
 ne pater Argolica sumeret urbe nurum.
 Argolidas timui—nocuit mihi barbara paelex!
 non expectato vulnus ab hoste tuli.
 nec facie meritisque placet, sed carmina novit
 diraque cantata pabula falce metit.
 illa reluctantem cursu deducere Lunam
 nititur et tenebris abdere Solis equos;

illa refrenat aquas obliquaque flumina sistit,
illa loco silvas vivaque saxa movet.
per tumulos errat passis discincta capillis
certaque de tepidis colligit ossa rogis.
devovet absentis simulacraque cerea figit
et miserum tenues in iecur urget acus.
et quae nescierim melius: male quaeritur herbis
moribus et forma conciliandus amor.
Hanc potes amplecti thalamoque relictus in uno
inpavidus somno nocte silente frui?
scilicet ut tauros, ita te iuga ferre coegit:
quaque feros angues, te quoque mulcet ope.
adde quod adscribi factis procerumque tuisque
se favet et titulo coniugis uxor obest.
atque aliquis Peliae de partibus acta venenis
inputat et populum qui sibi credat habet:
non haec Aesonides, sed Phasias Aetine
aurea Phrixiae terga revellit ovis.
non probat Alcimede mater tua—consule matrem!—
non pater, a gelido cui venit axe nurus.
illa sibi a Tanai Scythiaeque paludibus udae
quaerat et a patria Phasidis usque virum.
Mobilis Aesonide vernaque incertior aura,
cur tua polliciti pondere verba carent?
vir meus hinc ieras, vir non meus inde redisti—
sim reducis coniunx, sicut euntis eram.
si te nobilitas generosaque nomina tangunt:
en ego Minoo nata Thoante feror.
Bacchus avus: Bacchi coniunx redimita corona
praeradiat stellis signa minora suis.
dos tibi Lemnos erit, terra ingeniosa colenti;
me quoque dotalis inter habere potes.
Nunc etiam peperit. gratare ambobus, Iason—
dulce mihi gravidae fecerat auctor onus.
felix in numero quoque sum prolemque gemellam
pignora Lucina bina favente dedi.
si quaeris, cui sint similes, cognosceris illis:
fallere non norunt, cetera patris habent;
legatos quos paene dedi pro matre ferendos;
sed tenuit coeptas saeva noverca vias.
Medeam timui—plus est Medea noverca—
Medeae faciunt ad scelus omne manus.
Spargere quae fratris potuit lacerata per agros
corpora, pignoribus parceret illa meis?
hanc, tamen o demens Colchisque ablate venenis,
diceris Hypsipyles praeposuisse toro?

turpiter illa virum cognovit adultera virgo,
me tibi teque mihi taeda pudica dedit.
prodidit illa patrem—rapui de caede Thoanta.
deseruit Colchos—me mea Lemnos habet.
Quid refert, scelerata piam si vincit? et ipso
crimine dotata est emeruitque virum.
Lemniadum facinus culpo, non miror, Iason!
quamlibet ignavis ipse dat arma dolor.
dic age, si ventis ut oportuit actus iniquis
intrasses portus tuque comesque meos
obviaque exissem fetu comitante gemello—
hiscere nempe tibi terra roganda fuit!—
quo vultu natos, quo me scelerate videres?
perfidiae pretio qua nece dignus eras?
ipse quidem per me tutus sospesque fuisses,
non quia tu dignus, sed quia mitis ego.
paelicis ipsa meos implessem sanguine vultus,
quosque veneficiis abstulit illa suis.
Medeae Medea forem. quod si quid ab alto
iustus adest votis Iuppiter ipse meis,
quod gemit Hypsipyle, lecti quoque subnuba nostri
maereat et leges sentiat ipsa suas
utque ego destituor coniunx materque duorum,
a totidem natis orba sit aque viro!
nec male parta diu teneat peiusque relinquat:
exulet et toto quaerat in orbe fugam.
quam fratri germana fuit miseroque parenti
filia tam natis, tam sit acerba viro!
cum mare, cum terras consumpserit, aera temptet;
erret inops, exspes, caede cruenta sua.
haec ego, coniugio fraudata Thoantias, oro.
vivite devoto nuptaque virque toro!

Letter 6 Translation

~~Dear Jason and Medea,~~

Dear Jason,

I have heard that you landed on the shores of Thessaly, returning with your ship, enriched with the fleece of the golden ram. I congratulate you on your safe return ~~however much you allow me to~~. Nevertheless, I should have heard about this from you in a **letter**. Because you did not stop through my kingdoms on your return, ~~which were given to you in our marriage~~, I assume it is because you did not have the desired winds to get here. But a **letter** is sealed and can be sent however adverse the wind. I deserve a **letter**, Jason!

Why did the rumor come before **your letter**, with news that the sacred cows of Mars went under a curved yoke... that the crops of men have matured with thrown seeds and have not needed your right hand for their slaughter... that the always watchful dragon guarded the hide of the sheep... that nevertheless the golden fleece was seized by a strong hand? If I could say to those reluctant to believe the news, "**he himself wrote to me**," how great I should be! Why do I bother to complain that the duty of my lazy husband has ceased? I have received a great compliance, if I remain yours. People are saying that a foreign sorceress ~~accepted into part of our bed promised to me~~ came with you. Love is a **trusting** gullible thing. Blame it on that! So call me rash, that I am said to have charged my husband with false crimes!

Recently, a Thessalian guest had come to me from the Haemonian shores and he had just barely touched the threshold when I said:

"~~My~~ Jason, how is he?"

He, immovable by shame, adhered his eyes to the opposite ground. I sprung up immediately and with my undergarments ripped from my breast, I shouted:

"Can it be that he lives, or do the fates call me also?"

"He lives," he said cowardly.

I forced the timid boy to swear it. Even with a god as witness, hardly could I believe that you were alive. When my mind returned, I began to ask about your achievements. He told me that:

"The cows of Mars, with feet of bronze, plowed the teeth of vipers, thrown on the ground for seed, and... men sprung forth suddenly carrying weapons... a people born of the earth killed in a civil war, and fulfilled the fates of their lives in a day. The serpent has been subdued."

For the second time, I asked if you lived. Both hope and fear wavered in turns inside of me. He told me everything with a rush and excitement of his speaking and he revealed my wounds with his talented speech.

Listen! Where are the promises we agreed on? Where are the laws of marriage? And is our marriage torch more deserving to burn my funeral pyres? I did not trick you into marrying me. Juno, my matron-of-honor, was present and so was Hymen, his temples bound with wreaths. But for me, neither Juno nor Hymen, but sad bloody Erinys carried forth the

unlucky torches. What to me was the Argonauts? Or the Tritonidan wood? What to you was my homeland, sailor Tiphys? The remarkable ram with the golden shaggy hair was not here, nor was Lemnos, the royal seat of old Aeetes. ~~I was not enough for you.~~ I was certain at first - but the evil fates dragged me - to drive out the visiting armies with a feminine hand. The Lemnian women learned to conquer men - even beyond measure. Land should be protected by such a strong soldiery!

I saw the men in my city ~~and I received you in my guarded heart.~~ You spent two winters and two summers here. It was the third harvest, when you were coerced to set sail. You filled up your eyes with your own tears at these words,

“I am dragged away, Hypsipyle. But the fates may give me a way of returning. I depart from here as your husband, and I will always be a husband to you. Nevertheless, what is hidden from us in your pregnant womb, may it survive and also may we each be its parent.”

And you got as far as this, with tears falling down your lying face. I remember that you were unable to say the rest. You, the last out of your companions, ascended into the sacred Argo. It flew; the curved sails swelled with the wind. The blue wave was carried off by the ship driving onward. I gazed upon the waters, as you gazed upon the land.

Lying open on every side, the tower surveyed the waves. Here, I was brought and both my face and bosom were wet with my tears. Through my tears I watched and my eyes, having pity on my passionate heart, saw farther than usual. Consider also the pure prayers and vows mixed with fear, which I need to pay since you are safe? Should I pay the vows? ~~Or Medea, will you delight in these vows?~~ My heart hurts and overflows with love and anger mixed together. Should I bring the offerings to the temples, even though I have lost the living Jason? Does the sacrificial animal having been struck perish on behalf of my loss?

Truly, I was never free from care and I feared always your father would take up a daughter-in-law from an Argolic city. I feared the daughters of Argolis. ~~But you, barbarian mistress, injured me! Now, I bare a wound from you, an enemy I did not anticipate. Your beauty and merits do not please him, but you have learned spells and you reap awful herbs with a bewitched pruning knife. You struggle to draw the resisting moon from its orbit and to conceal the horses of the sun with darkness. You restrain the waters and stop the slanting rivers. You move the forests and living stones from their position. You wear loose clothes and wander through the tombs with your wild hair and you collect certain bones from the warm funeral pyre. You curse absent things and form waxed statues and press thin needles into a wretched liver. And other things that I do not want to know about.~~

Love that should be acquired by character and by beauty is searched for wrongly in herbs. Are you able to embrace her and be left in one bedroom fearless and to delight in sleep on a silent night? Certainly, just as the bulls, she compelled you to bear the yokes and she charms the fierce serpents and you too with her power. Add to that, she demands that she be added, in writing, to the achievements of you and your nobles. The wife is just a nuisance to the honor of the husband. Someone from Pelias' faction ascribes the acts to her poisons and people believe him when he says:

“Jason did not do these things, but the Phasian daughter of Aetes tore away the golden surface of the ram of Phrixus.”

Your mother, Alcimede, (you should ask her for advice!) does not approve, nor your father, to whom his daughter-in-law comes from the icy pole. ~~You, Medea, may seek a husband from Tanai and the marshes of wet Scythia and all the way from the land of Phasis.~~

Jason, you are fickle and more uncertain than a breeze of spring. Why do your words lack the weight of a promise? You left here as my husband. ~~You belong to me.~~ Why did you not return from that place? Please, let me be the wife of a man who returns, just as I was of a man who left. If noble class and names of noble birth influence you, behold, I am known as the daughter of Minoan Thoas. Bacchus was my grandfather. The wife of Bacchus, with a crown having been encircled, outshines signs smaller than her stars. The dowry for you will be Lemnos, a land naturally suited for cultivation. In addition to the dowry, you can have me.

Now, you should know, I gave birth. Rejoice for both of us, Jason. The author had given me a pleasant pregnancy. I am happy in number, too, by Lucina favoring I gave birth to twin-born offspring, a double pledge. If you ask who do they resemble, you will recognize yourself in them. They do not know how to deceive, but they have the rest of the traits of their father. I almost gave them to be brought to you as ambassadors for their mother. ~~But you, the savage stepmother, turned me back from the path² I would have taken. I feared you, Medea. Medea, you are more than their stepmother. Your hands are responsible for every crime.~~ But would she who was able to scatter the mangled body of her brother throughout the fields, spare my children?

Nevertheless, you were out of your mind and swept away by the poisons of Colchis, which you are said to have preferred to the bed of Hypsipyle. ~~Shamelessly, you, Medea, an adulterous young maiden, became acquainted with my husband. But a chaste torch gave me to him and him to me. You betrayed your father, I saved mine from slaughter. You departed Colchis, my Lemnos has my loyalty. What does it matter, if you, a sinful woman, conquer the faithful? And you received a dowry by the crime itself and you earned yourself a husband.~~ I blame the crime of the Lemnians, I am not amazed by it, Jason! However, pain itself gives arms to the cowardly.

Alright, tell me! If you and your companion, urged by hostile winds, had entered my ports and I had come with my twin offspring accompanying me, you should have asked the earth to open up. How could you, a criminal, look your sons in the face? How could you look at me? By which death were not you worthy of as the price of your faithlessness? Indeed you yourself would have been safe and sound and secure with me, not because you were worthy of it, but because I was gentle and kind. I myself should have filled my face with the blood of your mistress, and your face, which she had carried away with her sorcery. I would be Medea to Medea. But, if to some extent, fair Jupiter himself hears my prayer from on high, may the rival of our bed grieve and may she herself feel the conditions that Hypsipyle groans for. ~~Just as I am abandoned as wife and mother of two, may you, Medea, be bereft of as many sons and a husband. May you not hold your evil gains for long and leave them behind more~~

² (Showerman, 79)

wicked. ~~May you be exiled and seek refuge in the whole world. You were a bitter sister to your brother and daughter to your miserable father. May you be as bitter to your sons and to your husband. When you exhausted the lands, when you exhausted the sea, may you test the air. May you, weak and hopeless, wander bloody with your slaughter.~~ I, daughter of Thoas, beg these things, robbed of my marriage. Live as man and wife in a cursed bed!

Farewell,
Hypsipyle

At tibi Colchorum, memini, regina vacavi,
ars mea cum peteres ut tibi ferret opem!
tunc quae dispensant mortalia fila sorores,
debuerant fusos evoluisse meos;
tum potui Medea mori bene! quidquid ab illo
produxi vitae tempore, poena fuit.
Ei mihi! cur umquam iuvenalibus acta lacertis
Phrixeam petiit Pelias arbor ovem?
cur umquam Colchi Magnetida vidimus Argon
turbaque Phasiacam Graia bibistis aquam?
cur mihi plus aequo flavi placuere capilli
et decor et linguae gratia ficta tuae?
aut, semel in nostras quoniam nova puppis harenas
venerat audacis attuleratque viros,
isset anhelatos non praemedicatus in ignes
inmemor Aesonides oraque adusta boum!
semina iecisset totidem sevisset et hostes,
ut caderet cultu cultor ab ipse suo!
quantum perfidiae tecum, scelerate, perisset!
dempta forent capiti quam mala multa meo!
Est aliqua ingrato meritum exprobrare voluptas;
hac fruar, haec de te gaudia sola feram.
iussus inexpertam Colchos advertere puppim
intrasti patriae regna beata meae.
hoc illic Medea fui, nova nupta quod hic est;
quam pater est illi, tam mihi dives erat.
hic Ephyren bimarem, Scythia tenuis ille nivosa
omne tenet, Ponti qua plaga laeva iacet.
Accipit hospitio iuvenes Aeeta Pelasgos,
et premitis pictos corpora Graia toros.

tunc ego te vidi, tunc coepi scire, quid esses;
illa fuit mentis prima ruina meae.
et vidi et perii! nec notis ignibus arsi,
ardet ut ad magnos pinea taeda deos.
et formosus eras et me mea fata trahebant:
abstulerant oculi lumina nostra tui.
perfide, sensisti! quis enim bene celat amorem?
eminet indicio prodita flamma suo.
Dicitur interea tibi lex, ut dura ferorum
insolito premeres vomere colla boum.

³ <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/ovid/ovid.her12.shtml>

Martis erant tauri plus quam per cornua saevi,
 quorum terribilis spiritus ignis erat,
 aere pedes solidi praetentaque naribus aera,
 nigra per adflatus haec quoque facta suos.
 semina praeterea populos genitura iuberis
 spargere devota lata per arva manu,
 qui peterent natis secum tua corpora telis:
 illa est agricolae messis iniqua suo.
 lumina custodis succumbere nescia somno
 ultimus est aliqua decipere arte labor.
 Dixerat Aeetes: maesti consurgitis omnes,
 mensaque purpureos deserit alta toros.
 quam tibi tunc longe regnum dotale Creusae
 et socer et magni nata Creontis erat?
 tristis abis. oculis abeuntem prosequor udis
 et dixit tenui murmure lingua: "vale!"
 ut positum tetigi thalamo male saucia lectum,
 acta est per lacrimas nox mihi quanta fuit.
 ante oculos taurique meos segetesque nefandae,
 ante meos oculos pervigil anguis erat.
 hinc amor, hinc timor est—ipsum timor auget amorem.
 mane erat et thalamo cara recepta soror
 disiectamque comas aversaque in ora iacentem
 invenit et lacrimis omnia plena meis.
 orat opem Minyis, alter petit, impetrat alter,
 Aesonio iuveni quod rogat illa, damus.
 Est nemus et piceis et frondibus ilicis atrum,
 vix illuc radiis solis adire licet;
 sunt in eo—fuerant certe—delubra Dianae:
 aurea barbarica stat dea facta manu.
 noscis an exciderunt mecum loca? venimus illuc;
 orsus es infido sic prior ore loqui:
 "ius tibi et arbitrium nostrae fortuna salutis
 tradidit inque tua est vitaque morsque manu.
 perdere posse sat est, siquem iuvet ipsa potestas;
 sed tibi servatus gloria maior ero.
 per mala nostra precor, quorum potes esse levamen,
 per genus et numen cuncta videntis avi,
 per triplices vultus arcanaque sacra Dianae
 et si forte aliquos gens habet ista deos:
 o virgo, miserere mei, miserere meorum,
 effice me meritis tempus in omne tuum!
 quodsi forte virum non dedignare Pelasgum—
 sed mihi tam faciles unde meosque deos?—
 spiritus ante meus tenues vanescet in auras,
 quam thalamo, nisi tu, nupta sit ulla meo.

conscia sit Iuno sacris praefecta maritis
 et dea marmorea cuius in aede sumus!"
 Haec animum—et quota pars haec sunt?—movere puellae
 simplicis et dextrae dextera iuncta meae.
 vidi etiam lacrimas—an pars est fraudis in illis?
 sic cito sum verbis capta puella tuis.
 iungis et aripedes inadusto corpore tauros
 et solidam iusso vomere findis humum.
 arva venenatis pro semine dentibus imples,
 nascitur et gladios scutaque miles habet.
 ipsa ego, quae dederam medicamina, pallida sedi,
 cum vidi subitos arma tenere viros,
 donec terrigenae—facinus mirabile!—fratres
 inter se strictas conseruere manus.
 Insopor ecce vigil squamis crepitantibus horrens
 sibilat et torto pectore verrit humum.
 dotis opes ubi erant? ubi erat tibi regia coniunx
 quique maris gemini distinet Isthmos aquas?
 illa ego, quae tibi sum nunc denique barbara facta,
 nunc tibi sum pauper, nunc tibi visa nocens,
 flammea subduxi medicato lumina somno
 et tibi quae raperes vellera tuta dedi.
 proditus est genitor, regnum patriamque reliqui,
 munus in exilio quod licet esse tuli,
 virginitas facta est peregrini praeda latronis,
 optima cum cara matre relicta soror.
 At non te fugiens sine me, germane, reliqui.
 deficit hoc uno littera nostra loco:
 quod facere ausa mea est, non audet scribere dextra.
 sic ego, sed tecum, dilaceranda fui!
 nec tamen extimui—quid enim post illa timerem?—
 credere me pelago femina iamque nocens.
 numen ubi est? ubi di? meritas subeamus in alto,
 tu fraudis poenas, credulitatis ego.
 Compressos utinam Symplegades elisissent
 nostraque adhaerent ossibus ossa tuis!
 aut nos Scylla rapax canibus misset edendos!
 debuit ingratis Scylla nocere viris.
 quaeque vomit totidem fluctus totidemque resorbet,
 nos quoque Trinacriae subposuisset aquae!
 sospes ad Haemonias victorque reverteris urbes;
 ponitur ad patrios aurea lana deos.
 Quid referam Peliae natas pietate nocentes
 caesaque virginea membra paterna manu?
 ut culpent alii, tibi me laudare necesse est,
 pro quo sum totiens esse coacta nocens.

ausus es—o iusto desunt sua verba dolori!—
ausus es "Aesonia" dicere "cede domo!"
iussa domo cessi natis comitata duobus
et, qui me sequitur semper, amore tui.
ut subito nostras Hymen cantatus ad aures
venit et accenso lampades igne micant
tibiaque effundit socialia carmina vobis,
at mihi funerea flebiliora tuba,
pertimui, nec adhuc tantum scelus esse putabam,
sed tamen in toto pectore frigus erat.
turba ruunt et "Hymen" clamant "Hymenaeae!" frequenter;
quo propior vox haec, hoc mihi peius erat.
diversi flebant servi lacrimasque tegebant—
quis vellet tanti nuntius esse mali?
me quoque quidquid erat potius nescire iuvabat,
sed tamquam scirem, mens mea tristis erat,
cum minor e pueris iussus studione videndi
constitit ad geminae limina prima foris:
"hinc" mihi "mater adi! pompam pater" inquit "Iason
ducit et adiunctos aureus urget equos!"
protinus abscissa planxi mea pectora veste
tuta nec a digitis ora fuere meis.
ire animus mediae suadebat in agmina turbae
sertaque compositis demere rapta comis.
vix me continui, quin sic laniata capillos
clamarem "meus est!" iniceremque manus.
Laese pater, gaude! Colchi gaudete relictis!
inferias umbrae fratris habete mei!
deseror amissis regno patriaque domoque
coniuge, qui nobis omnia solus erat.
serpentes igitur potui taurosque furentes,
unum non potui perdomuisse virum.
quaeque feros pepuli doctis medicatibus ignes,
non valeo flammam effugere ipsa meas.
ipsi me cantus herbaeque artesque relinquunt
nil dea, nil Hecates sacra potentis agunt.
non mihi grata dies, noctes vigilantur amarae
et tener a misero pectore somnus abit.
quae me non possum, potui sopire draconem.
utilior cuivis quam mihi cura mea est.
quos ego servavi, paelex amplectitur artus
et nostri fructus illa laboris habet.
Forsitan et, stultae dum te iactare maritae
quaeris et iniustis auribus apta loqui,
in faciem moresque meos nova crimina fingas.
rideat et vitiis laeta sit illa meis.

rideat et Tyrio iaceat sublimis in ostro—
flebit et ardores vincet adusta meos.
dum ferrum flammaeque aderunt sucusque veneni,
hostis Medae nullus inultus erit.
Quod si forte preces praecordia ferrea tangunt,
nunc animis audi verba minora meis.
tam tibi sum supplex, quam tu mihi saepe fuisti,
nec moror ante tuos procubuisse pedes.
si tibi sum vilis, communis respice natos:
saeviet in partus dira noverca meos.
et nimium similes tibi sunt, et imagine tangor
et quotiens video, lumina nostra madent.
per superos oro, per avitae lumina flammae,
per meritum et natos, pignora nostra, duos,
redde torum, pro quo tot res insana reliqui!
adde fidem dictis auxiliumque refer!
non ego te imploro contra taurosque virosque,
utque tua serpens victa quiescat ope;
te peto, quem merui, quem nobis ipse dedisti,
cum quo sum pariter facta parente parens.
Dos ubi sit, quaeris? campo numeravimus illo,
qui tibi laturo vellus arandus erat.
aureus ille aries villo spectabilis alto,
dos mea: "quam" dicam si tibi "redde," neges.
dos mea tu sospes, dos est mea Graia iuventus.
i nunc, Sisyphias, inprobe, confer opes.
quod vivis, quod habes nuptam socerumque potentes,
hoc ipsum, ingratus quod potes esse, meum est.
quos equidem actutum—sed quid praedicere poenam
attinet? ingentis parturit ira minas.
quo feret ira sequar. facti fortasse pigebit;
et piget infido consuluisse viro.
viderit ista deus, qui nunc mea pectora versat.
nescio quid certe mens mea maius agit.

Letter 12 Translation

Dear Jason,

But I remember. I was the Queen of Colchis and I made time for you when you were begging for me to use my skill to help you! Right then, the sisters who arrange the mortal threads, they should have unrolled my spindles. Then I would have been able to die well! Life granted to me from that moment on has only brought me misery. Woe to me!

Why did your ship, driven by youthful arms, desire the ram of Phrixus? Why did we Colchians see the Magnesian Argo, and did you with your Greek crew drink the Phasian water? Why did I enjoy the sight of your golden hair and your beauty and the deceiving kindness of your words? So much joy - it was embarrassing!

But once your strange ship carrying your bold men had finally landed on my shore, unprotected by medicine, you would have gone thoughtlessly into the fire breathed out from the scorched mouth of the bull! You would have thrown many seeds, as many as your enemies, for the planter himself fell by his own cultivation! How much faithlessness would have died with you, criminal! How many painful memories would have been removed from my head! Sometimes it is pleasing to be disappointed in the merits of someone ungrateful. I delight in this and I only get this joy from you.

Orders directed your untried ship to Colchis and you entered the wealthy kingdoms of my fatherland. It was there that I was yours, but here your new bride has taken my place. Her father was wealthy, well mine was too. Her father held Ephyre, situated between two seas, and mine held everything up to snowy Scythia where the left web of Pontus lies. My father received the young Pelasgians as his guests and you Greeks immediately made yourselves comfortable, lounging on our embroidered couches.

That's when I saw you. Then I learned more about you. That was the first break down of my mind. I saw and I was ruined! I was in love and it was an unfamiliar kind of passion. It was strong as the pine torch burning to the great gods. You were beautiful and I was doomed: your eyes had captivated my eyes. Faithless one, you felt it too! Who can hide love well? Love gives itself away.

Meanwhile the condition is appointed to you: *to press the hard throats of wild bulls with an unfamiliar plow. The bulls of Mars were more fierce than just horns, their breath was a terrible fire, their feet solid in bronze and bronze rings in their nostrils made black by their breathing. In addition, you were ordered to scatter, by hand, bewitched seeds, throughout the wide field, that would give birth to peoples who would attack your body with their weapons. That harvest is awful for the farmer. The greatest effort was to somehow deceive with skill the guard that refuses to sleep.* My father had spoken. All you gloomy stood up, and the high table leaves the purple couches.

How far off for you was the kingdom of Creusa (part of your dowry) and the father-in-law and the daughter of the great Creon at that time? You were sad when you departed.

With tears in my eyes, I watched you leave and murmured softly: “*Goodbye!*” I was badly wounded and went to my bedroom to throw myself on my bed. That night drove me to tears. So many tears. Before my eyes, I saw the wicked crops and the bulls, before my eyes I saw the dragon keeping watch. These brought me love, but also fear. The fear itself increased my love.

Then it was morning and my dear sister came into my bedroom and discovered me with scattered hair lying on my face on my tear-stained bed. She pleaded help for the Minyae. One begged, another threatened. So I gave to you what she was asking for. There was a grove, dark both with spruces and with leaves of great scarlet oak; scarcely are rays of sun able to reach it. There was, or at least there had been, shrines to Diana where the golden goddess stood, made by barbaric hands. Do you recognize it or are these places fading along with me? Well, we went there.

You spoke first with your faithless mouth: “*Fortune has given you the duty to decide our safety. Life and death are in your hands. If having power pleases you, the ability to destroy us should be satisfying enough, but protecting me will bring you greater glory. I beg you, you can provide solace from our misfortunes. By descent and by divine will of your all-seeing grandfather, through the threefold faces and sacred mysteries of Diana and the gods, if by chance that race has any, please maiden, have pity on me, have pity on my men, be kind to me and make me yours forever! But if by chance you do not disdain a Pelasgian man, but can my gods be so easy to me? My spirit will vanish into thin air unless you may be my bride in marriage. The witness is Juno, commander of nuptial rites and the goddess of this marble temple!*”

Your words (and how little did I recapture adequately?) and your right hand clasped with mine moved the heart of this simple girl. And also I saw the tears. Could it be that was part of the deceit, too? I was quickly captured by your words. You united the brazen-footed bulls without being scorched by their fire and you split the solid ground with the appointed plow. You filled up the fields with teeth filled with poison instead of seed, and it sprung forth soldiers holding swords and shields. I had given you the drugs and I became pale when I saw the unexpected men holding their weapons, until these brothers born of the earth, an unbelievable sight, began to fight each other. Behold! The watchman caught off-guard with rattling scales, hissed and swept clean the ground with a twisted chest. Where was the help of your dowry then? Where was your royal wife for you and the Isthmus who keeps apart the waters of twin seas? I, who now is made a barbarian to you, now I am poor to you, now I seem harmful to you, I carried off the flaming eyes into sleep with my drugs and I gave to you the fleece that you snatched away safely. My father was betrayed, I abandoned my kingdom and fatherland. I got a gift too, I was granted to be in exile. My virginity was the booty of a foreign plunderer. The best sister and my dear mother were left behind. But as I was fleeing, I did not leave you behind me, brother.

In this one place, my letter fails. What deeds I was bold enough to do, my right hand does not dare to write. Thus, we should have been torn to pieces! Nevertheless, I was not afraid to trust myself to the sea, a woman and now a criminal. What indeed might I be afraid of after that? Where was the divine will? Where were the gods? Let us undergo the deserved punishment out at sea, you for your deceit, me for my trustfulness. If only the Symplegades

had struck us pressed together and stuck my bones with your bones! Or the grasping Scylla had immersed us to be consumed by her dogs! Scylla should harm ungrateful men. She, who vomits so many waves and swallows down just as many, could also have placed us under the Trinacrian water!

But you safe and sound and triumphant return back to the Haemonian cities and the golden wool is offered to your paternal gods. What may I recall of the daughters of guilty Pelias who in loyalty chopped their father's limbs with a maidenly hand? Though others disapprove, it is necessary for you to praise me. It is because of you I am so often forced to be a criminal. You dared, (fitting words are lacking for my justified pain) you dared to say: "*Go from the house of Aeson!*"

At your orders I left from the house with our two sons and with what always follows me, my love for you. Suddenly, I heard the Hymen being sung and saw the torches quivering with kindled fire and the flute poured out conjugal songs for you. But for me, a song even more lamentable than the funeral trumpet. I became very scared by it, and until now I did not think that the crime was so great but, nevertheless, it was cold in my entire chest. The crowd rushed on and they proclaimed with many voices: "Hymen, Hymenaeus!" The nearer the voice was, the more ugly it was to me. My slaves turned away to weep and covered their tears. Who would wish to be the messenger of so great an evil? Whatever it was, it was more enjoyable for me to be ignorant, but my heart was sad just as if I knew.

When the smaller one of the boys stopped by chance or in eagerness of seeing at the first threshold of the double door, he said: "*But come to this point, mother! My father, Jason, leads the procession and in a gold-laced robe urges the horses!*" Immediately I tore my clothes and struck my chest and my face was not safe from my fingernails. My soul urged me to go into the crowd, in the middle of the uproar, and to cut off the wreaths from my collected hair. Scarcely, with torn hair I maintained myself, so as not to proclaim: "*He is mine*" and hurled my hands at you. Injured father, rejoice! Rejoice, forsaken Colchians! Hold the offerings for the shades of my brother!

I am abandoned. My kingdom, my fatherland, my home, and my husband, who alone was all things to me, were lost. And so I was able to tame the serpents and raging bulls, but I am not able to tame a man alone. And I drove out fierce fires with expert drugs, but I myself am not strong enough to drive out the flames of my love. The chants and the herbs and the skills themselves abandon me. No goddess, nothing urges the sacred and powerful Hecate. Days are not pleasing to me, nights I am awake with bitterness and gentle sleep departs from my miserable heart. I was able to cause the dragon to sleep, but not myself. My treatment is more useful to whoever else but me. A mistress embraces the body I once protected and she holds the fruit of my labor. And perhaps, while you seek to boast to your foolish wife and to speak suitable things to her wrongful ears, you invent new crimes at my appearance and my customs. Let her laugh and be happy with my faults. Let her laugh and let her exalted lie down on the Tyrian purple material and she will weep and scorched will surpass my flames. While the iron of the flame and the juice of poison will be present, no enemy of Medea will be unpunished.

But if by chance the prayers touch hearts made of iron, now hear the smaller words from my spirit. Nevertheless, I am as much a suppliant to you as you were often to me, and I do not delay to have lied down at your feet. If I am worthless to you, consider our common sons. The cruel stepmother will be rage against my offspring. They are too similar to you and I am touched by the likeness. How often I see them, my eyes are wet with tears. I beg by the gods, by the lights of the ancestral flame, by merit and by our two sons, our children, restore the bed, for which I insane abandoned so many things! Increase the faith in your words and bring back help! I do not implore you against bulls and men and as the serpent rests conquered by your help. I begged for you. I deserved you. You gave yourself to me. You made me a mother together with you the father.

Where is my dowry, you ask? I counted it out on the field that you had to plough to get the fleece. That golden ram, noteworthy with high shaggy hair, was my dowry. If I may say to you: "*Return it,*" you would refuse. My dowry is you safe and sound, my dowry is the Greek youth. Go now, wicked one, bring together the riches of Sisyphus. That you are alive, that you have a bride and a powerful father-in-law, that you are able to be ungrateful, this itself is mine. Whom indeed without delay, but what does it matter to give notice of your punishment? Anger produces huge threats. I will follow my anger where it brings me. Perhaps I will grieve of my deeds, but it disgusts me to have looked out for a faithless man. The who god saw these deeds, now stirs my heart. Surely, I do not know what greater thing urges my heart.

Sincerely,
Medea

STATEMENT OF COMPOSITION

In order to compose letters from the perspective of an ancient Roman man, research in letter writing and masculinity were necessary. In ancient letter writing, the giving of praise and blame were important constructs to the functionality of letters. Both types of letters are centered on honor, either giving it or taking it away (Stowers 27). This was an important concept to consider in composing Jason's letters. In both of the compositions, there were elements of praise and blame. In the first letter, written to Hypsipyle, the praise is given to Hypsipyle and the blame is given to Jason himself. He praises her sense of duty and successes in motherhood. He blames himself for bringing her pain through his absence. His purpose is to appease her and provide her with a false sense of intimacy, security, and investment. Essentially, Jason is intending to say what is necessary to keep her around. This is decidedly a letter for selfish gain disguised in sincere concern for this woman he supposedly loved.

Contrastingly, the second letter to Medea features Jason praising himself and giving blame to Medea. He praises his achievements and his ability to effectively deceive women. He blames her for being foolish and explains she caused her own pain through her ignorance and credulity. In this letter, he is explicitly trying to assert his dominance over her. He has clearly felt threatened by her mystical abilities and refused to admit she had an integral role in his success with snatching the Golden Fleece. He is intending to put her in her place of femininity.

Letter Composition 1: Jason to Hypsipyle

Hypsipyle,

Tua epistula est tam sincera et gravis ut ego legens aegrescam. Oneror dolore tuo. Omne verbum est sicut saxum positum in meo tergo. Sed sincera verba sunt graviora saxis. Pondus satis est perdere virum. Potest furari animam et persuadere menti. Facie mea tincta rubra, scivi illam epistulam commeruisse responsum. Ita scripsi protinus et nunc spero eam invenisse te citissime. Sinis lumina tua adspicere verba mea ut scias cur morarentur?

Sic incipio: mea facta, quae tibi sentienda sunt, miriora sunt ardentibus sideribus clarae et obscurae noctis. Certim tibi facta sunt. Non potes videre et accipere illam veritatem? Gratare ambobus⁴, Hypsipyle. Exsultemus in triumpho nostro. Narro me arasse humum aripedibus bovis Martis et me jecisse vipereos dentes, ex quibus viri ferentes arma nati erant, pro semine⁵ et me vicisse illos viros et me devicisse serpentem. Tria facta, quae fieri non potuerant prius ab aliquo, ab me solo facta sunt. Potentior callidiorque eram et gratiam deorum habui.

Putas me exiisse te, care, libenter? Voto tibi in nuptias dato, mea ultima verba, sicut meus amor, erant vera. Amorem esse credulam rem dixisti. Non est. Potius est pulchrum promissum spiratum ex anima. Memora nostra vota! Confide me, Hypsipyle! Exii ut gloriam quam commeruimus caperem. Nisi tibi vel mox vel umquam redeam, fata meum recursum non dent.⁶ Cum te pigeat, tamen loqui non posses: "Scio cur non redeas. Pectore invidente, exiisti ut vinceris mundum, quod divitiis dominisque completur. Tuus amor mei est tam

⁴ *Heroides* 6.119

⁵ *Heroides* 6.32-33

⁶ *Heroides* 6.59

paulus et tua vota sunt tam futilia ut ab te relinquer." Cum dixi me virum tibi semper futurum esse,⁷ verax eram et volo te etiam credere mea verba.

Gaudeo prole gemella, quam peperisti. Cum absens sim, tamen sola illas curas. Te propter tuam pietatem laudo. Loquebaris illas esse similes mihi sed spero ingenio probato illas habituras esse tuam bonitatem constantiamque. Sint similes in proprietatibus optimis parenti omni. Pectora patrem scire quaerunt? Mea absentia vulnera eis sicut tibi facit? Si illa sententia vera est, me mei pudet et noceor tempore acto separatim. Sed profeci tam multas res per abitum meum ut facta ferant decus gloriamque familiae nostrae. Sint poenae praemiaque. Oro ab deis ut sentias amanter et comittamur iterum mox. Dum tunc amor meus erit altior mari immenso, quod distinet nos.

Cum amore,

Jason

⁷ *Heroides* 6.60

English Translation of Letter Composition 1

Hypsipyle,

Your letter is so genuine and painful that reading it, I become sick. I am burdened by your pain. Each word is like a stone having been placed on my back. But the sincere words are heavier than stones. The weight is enough to destroy a man. It is able to steal his soul and to persuade his mind. With my face having been tinted red, I knew that this letter deserved a response. Thus I wrote immediately and now I hope that it found you quickly. Do you allow your eyes to look at my words that you may know why they were delayed?

Thus I begin: my deeds, which must be perceived by you, are more remarkable than the burning stars of the clear and dark night. Certainly, they were done for you. Are you not able to see and to accept that truth? Be happy for us both, Hypsipyle. Let us rejoice in our triumph. I recount that I plowed the ground with the brazen-footed cows of Mars and I hurled as seed the teeth of vipers, from which men bearing arms had sprung forth, and I defeated those men and I subdued the serpent. Three deeds, which had not been able to be done before by anyone, were done by me alone. I am more powerful and more clever and I had the favor of the gods.

Do you think that I left you willingly, beloved? With my vow having been given to you in marriage, my last words, just as my love, were true. You said that love is a gullible thing. It is not. Rather it is a beautiful promise having been breathed out from the soul. Remember our vows! Believe me, Hypsipyle! I left so that I might seize the glory which we deserved. If I should not return either soon or ever, the fates would not grant my return. Although it grieves you, nevertheless you would not be able to say: "I know why you do not return. With a jealous heart, you left so that you might conquer the world, which is filled with

riches and mistresses. Your love for me is so small and your vows are so worthless that I am abandoned by you.” When I said that I would always be a husband to you, I was speaking the truth and I wish that you believed my words as well.

I rejoice for our twin offspring, which you gave birth to. Although I may be absent, nevertheless you alone take care of them. I praise you because of your loyalty. You said that they are similar to me but I hope with your character having been esteemed that they will have your goodness and perseverance. May they be similar in the best qualities of each parent. Are their hearts seeking to know their father? Does my absence cause wounds for them as for you? If that feeling is truth, I am ashamed of myself and I am hurt by the time having been spent apart. But I accomplished so many things through my departure that the deeds bring honor and glory to our family. Let them be both a punishment and a reward. I beg the gods that you understand lovingly and we are united again soon. Until then my love will be deeper than the vast sea, which keeps us apart.

With love,

Jason

Letter Composition 2: Jason to Medea

Medea,

Non miror te fructam esse mea specie suavitateque. Scio meos capillos esse flavos sicut auream lanam⁸, quam rapui, et meum decorem inebriare te sicut vinum et meam linguam esse dulciorem melle et meos oculos pellexisse te sicut undae frementes maris inter procellam pelliciunt nautam. Quaeris quomodo hic vir possit partus esse. Tamen vivus sum. Ego beneficium deorum habeo et ab eis electus sum. Dicis etiam me amavisse te item. Mea suavitas te fefellit, stulta puella. Verus amor sollers fallaciaque habent similes formas. Non posses agnoscere ullam diversitatem inter eos in oculis viri.

Misereor tui et tuarum lacrimarum. Traxi motus tui animi ut mea cogitatio concepta perfacete effecta esset. Convici tuam sororem ut iuaret me. Apparet meum decorem fecisse utras vos credulas. Tu consternaris et scita veritas terret te? Decepta es. Ego decepi te. Narravisti mea verba, quae persuaserunt tibi. Multis dictis, promisi tibi meam fidem animumque ut esses mea uxor. Fidelis in meo promisso non remansi? Tu mea uxor non es? Dum fallens, vir honorifice agere potest. Promissum semper conficiendum est.

Et scio te putare te emeruisse partem meae gloriae. Noli gloriari, insulsa puella. Tu eras tam ignara ut non senseris me usum esse te sicut instrumento, quod iactatur facile. Dicam hoc iterum. Instrumentum es et pro aliquo permutari potes. Noli condemnare me. Non culpa est mea et non sum causa tui exsilii et decrevistis exire mecum. Agnoscens tuam fortunam adversam, potes condemnare solam te.

Memora haec verba,

Jason

⁸ *Heroides* 12.11-12

English Translation of Letter Composition 2

Medea,

I am not amazed that you enjoyed my appearance and charm. I know that my hair is yellow like the golden fleece, which I snatched, and my beauty makes you drunk like wine and my speech is sweeter than honey and my eyes seduced you as the roaring waves of the sea in the midst of a storm seduce a sailor. You ask how this man is able to have been born. Nevertheless I am alive. I have the favor of the gods and I was chosen by them. And also you say that I loved you likewise. My charm deceived you, foolish girl. True love and skilled deceit have similar appearances. You would not be able to recognize any difference between them in the eyes of a man.

I pity you and your tears. I manipulated the movements of your soul so that my plan once devised had been accomplished brilliantly. I convinced your sister so that she might help me. It appears that my beauty made you both gullible. Are you shocked and does this truth having been understood frighten you? You were deceived. I deceived you. You recounted my words, which persuaded you. With many things having been said, I promised you my faith and heart so that you might be my wife. Did I not remain faithful in my promise? Are you not my wife? While deceiving, a man is able to act honorably. A promise must always be completed.

And I know that you think that you deserved part of my glory. Do not boast, stupid girl. You were so ignorant that you did not perceive that I used you as an instrument, which is easily thrown away. Let me say this again. You are an instrument and you are able to be exchanged for anything. Do not condemn me. The blame is not mine and I am not the cause

of your exile and you decided to leave with me. Recognizing your adverse luck, you are able to condemn yourself alone.

Remember these words,

Jason

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APPENDIX

Ovid's *Heroides* 6: Literal Translation

You are said to have touched the shores of Thessaly enriched with fleece of the golden sheep with your ship returning. I congratulate (you) on your safe (return), however much you allow (me); nevertheless I had ought to be more certain (of) this thing itself in your written communication. For you were not going back beyond my realms promised to you, you are not able to have had winds when you wished: with however adverse the wind, the letter is sealed, I, Hypsipyle, was worthy of a greeting having been sent! Why did the rumor earlier than a letter come with word that the sacred cows of Mars went under a curved yoke, that the crops of men have matured with seeds having been thrown and have not needed your right hand for their slaughter, that the always watchful dragon guarded the hide of the sheep, that nevertheless the golden fleece had been seized by a strong hand? Oh if I were able to say such things to those believing timidly “he himself wrote to me,” how great I should be! Why do I complain that the duty of my lazy husband has ceased? I have received a great compliance, if I remain yours. It is said that a foreign sorceress having been accepted into part of the bed having been promised to me came with you. Love is a gullible thing. If only I rash am said to have charged my husband with false crimes! Recently the Thessalian guest came from the Haemonian shores to me and the threshold had been touched quite scarcely, I said “what drives my Jason?” that one immovable hesitate his eyes with shame on the ground having been placed opposite. I sprung up immediately and with my undergarments having been ripped from my breast I shout “Can it be that he lives, likewise do the fates call me?” “He lives,” he believed cowardly; I forced him timid to swear. Hardly your life with the god as witness has been entrusted to me. When my mind returned, I began to ask for your

achievements: he tells that the cows of Mars with feet of bronze have plowed the teeth of vipers having been thrown on the ground for seed and the men having sprung forth suddenly carried weapons, the people born of the earth having been killed in a civil war fulfilled the fates of their generation in a day. The serpent having been subdued. For the second time, we ask if Jason lives; both hope and fear alternate in turn. While he tells everything, and with the rush and excitement of speaking he reveals our wounds with his nature. Listen! Where (are) the beliefs agreed upon? Where (are) the laws of marriage and the more deserving torch to go under the funeral pyres about to burn? I am not known to you in deception. Juno as pronuba was present and Hymen having been bound with respect to his temples with wreaths but for me neither Juno nor Hymen, but sad bloody Erinys carried forth unlucky torches. What for me with Minyis? What with the Tritonidan wood? What to you with my homeland, sailor Tiphys? The remarkable ram with the golden shaggy hair was not here, nor was the Lemnian royal seat of old Aetes. I was certain at first - but the evil fates dragged me - to drive out the visiting armies with a feminine hand. The Lemnian women learned to conquer the Lemnian men - even too much: the land ought to be protected by so strong a soldier! I received (you) both in a city deprived of men and in my guarded heart, here both two winters and two summers hasten for you. It was the third harvest, when you coerced to set sail, you filled up (your eyes) with your own tears at these words: "I am dragged away, Hypsipyle. But the fates may give a way of returning; I depart from here as your husband, I will always be a husband to you. Nevertheless what is hidden from us in your pregnant womb, it may survive and also we may each be a parent." And as far as this with tears falling into your lying mouth I remember that you were not able to say the rest. You the last out of the allies ascend into the sacred Argo; that one flies, the curved sails swell with the wind the blue wave is carried off

by the ship having been driven forward: the waters are looked at by us, the land by you.

Lying open on every side the tower surveys the waves; here I am brought and both my mouth and bosom are wet with tears through tears I watch and our eyes favoring the passionate mind sees it far off than having been accustomed. Consider also the pure prayers and vows having been mixed with fear now also ought to be paid by me with you safe? Should I pay the vows? Will Medea delight in your vows? My heart hurts and also love having been mixed with anger overflows. Should I bring the offerings to the temples, because I lose the living Jason? Does the sacrificial animal having been struck perish on behalf of my loss? To be sure I was not free from care and I feared always, lest the father took up a daughter-in-law in the Argolic city. I feared the daughters of Argolis - the barbarian mistress injured me! I bore the wound from the enemy not having been anticipated. Nor is she pleasing in her face and merits, but she learned spells and she reaps awful herbs with a pruning knife having been bewitched. That one struggles to draw the Moon resisting in orbit and to conceal the horses of the Sun with darkness; That one restrains the waters and stops the slanting rivers. That one moves the forests and living stones in position. She wearing loose clothes wanders through the mounds with hair having been spread out and she collects certain bones from the warm funeral pyre. She curses the absent (things) and forms waxed statues and presses thin needles into a wretched liver. And which better I did not know: love is searched for wickedly in herbs and must be acquired by character and by beauty. Are you able to embrace this woman and left in one bedroom fearless to delight in sleep on a silent night? One may know just as the bulls, thus she compelled you to bear the yokes: and which she charms the fierce serpents also she charms you with her power. Add to that she demands that she be added in writing to your achievements and of the chiefs and the wife hurts the honor of her husband. And also

someone from Pelias' faction charges the acts to drugs and he has a people who believe him: Jason did not (do) these (things) but the Phasian daughter of Aetes tore away the golden surface of the ram of Phrixus. Your mother Alcimedede does not approve - ask advice of your mother! - not your father, to whom his daughter-in-law comes from the icy pole. Let one seek from Tanai and the marshes of wet Scythia and all the way from the land of Phasis. Jason, fickle and more uncertain than a breeze of spring, why are your words lacking in weight of a promise? You had gone from here, my husband, why did you belonging to me not return thence? I may be the wife of one returning, just as I was of one going. If the noble class and names of noble birth influence you, behold! I am spoken of as the daughter of Minoan Thoas. Bacchus (is my) grandfather: the wife of Bacchus outshines having been wreathed with a crown signs smaller than her stars. The dowry for you will be Lemnos, land naturally suited to one cultivating; you are able to have me also among the dowry. Now furthermore I gave birth. Rejoice with both (of us), Jason - the origination had created a pleasant load for pregnant me. I am happy in number likewise I gave twin-born offspring, a double pledge with Lucina favoring. If you ask, to whom they are similar, you will recognize (yourself) in them: they do not know (how to) deceive, they have the rest (of these things) of their father; which I gave almost as envoys to be brought for the mother; but the savage stepmother held paths undertaken. I feared Medea - Medea is more than their stepmother - the hands of Medea made towards each crime. Who was able to scatter the bodies of the brother having been mangled through the fields, would that one spare my children? Nevertheless oh one demented having been swept away by drugs of Colchis, you are said to have preferred to the bed of Hypsipyle. Shamelessly that adulterous young maiden became acquainted with a man, the chaste torch gave me to you and you to me. That one betrayed the father - I snatched

Thoas from slaughter. She departed Colchis - My Lemnos has me. What does it matter, if she a criminal conquers the upright? and she was provided with a dowry by crime itself and she earned a husband. I blame the crime of the Lemnians, I am not surprised, Jason! However pain itself gives arms to the spiritless. All right! Tell (me), if you and your companion having been urged had entered my ports by hostile winds just as it is right. And I easy had come with twin offspring accompanying (me) - the earth ought to be asked by you certainly to open. How would you criminal see your sons in the face, how would you see me? By which death were you worthy of the price of faithlessness? Indeed you yourself had been safe and sound and secure by me, not because you are worthy, but because I was mild. I myself should have satisfied my face with the blood of the mistress, and your (face) which that one had carried away with sorcery. I would be Medea to Medea. But if anything from high fair Jupiter himself is present to my prayers, may the rival of our bed grieve and may she herself feel the conditions that Hypsipyle groans for and just as I am abandoned as wife and mother of two, when that one is bereft of just as many sons as a husband. Nor she may hold the evil gains for a long time and leaves (them) behind more wickedly: let her be exiled and seek refuge in the whole sphere. How she was a sister to her brother and a daughter to a miserable parent, let her be so bitter to her children and to her husband. When she exhausted the lands, when she exhausted the sea, let her test the air; she weak wanders, hopeless, bloody with her slaughter. I daughter of Thoas beg these things, robbed of my marriage. Live as man and wife in a bewitched bed!

Ovid's *Heroides* 12: Literal Translation

But I remember, I queen of the Colchians was unoccupied for you, when you begged, as my skill brought help to you! Then which sisters arrange the mortal threads, they had ought to have unrolled my spindles; Then I Medea was able to die well! I brought out whatever of life from that time, it was misery. Woe to me! Why did the tree of Mount Pelion having been urged by youthful arms ever desire the sheep of Phrixus? Why did we the Colchians ever see the Argo from Magnesia and did you drink the Phasian water in a Graian crowd? Why did the golden hairs and beauty and the false favor of your language give more pleasure to me than what is right? Or, one time because the strange ship had come onto our sands and had carried bold men, Jason thoughtless had gone not protected by medicine into the fire having been breathed out from the scorched face of the bulls! He had thrown as many seeds and had planted enemies, as the planter himself fell by his cultivation! How great faithfulness would have died with you, criminal! There were many evils having been removed in the head than me! Some pleasure is to bring up as a reproach merit to someone unpleasant; I delight in this, I may bear these joys only from you. Ordered to direct the untried ship to Colchis, you entered the wealthy kingdoms of my fatherland. I Medea was this in that place, what new bride is here; how there is the father to that one, he was so wealthy to me. Here that one (her father) holds Ephyra situated between two seas, that one (my father) all far as each snowy Scythia where the left web of Pontius lies. Aetes accepts the young Pelasgians with hospitality and you press the Graian bodies onto embroidered couches. Then I saw you, then I began to understand, what you were; that was the first break down of my mind. And I saw and I was ruined! I burned with not well known passions as the pine torch burns to the great gods. And you were beautiful and my fates dragged me: your

eyes had captivated my eyes. Faithless one, you understood! Who indeed hides love well? The flame having been brought forth stands out with its own proof. Meanwhile the law is said to you, that you pressed the hard throats of wild cows with an unaccustomed plough. The bulls of Mars were fierce more than by their horns, of whose breath was a terrible fire, their feet solid in bronze and bronzes having been stretched out by the nose, black through their breaths and also these deeds. In addition, you were ordered to scatter seeds about to give birth to peoples having been carried through the soil by a devoted hand, who attacked your bodies with weapons having come into existence with themselves: that reaping is unjust to its farmer. The greatest effort is to somehow deceive with skill the unaware eyes of the guard to submit in sleep. Aetes had said: All you gloomy stand up, and the high table leaves purple couches. How tedious for you then was the kingdom of Creusa forming part of the dowry and the father-in-law and the daughter of the great Creon? You depart sad. I pursue you departing with wet eyes and he said with a weak tongue in a murmur: "Goodbye!" As I badly wounded touched the bed having been placed in the bedroom, the night was driven by tears to me, how great it was. Before my eyes and the wicked crops and bulls, before my eyes the dragon was keeping watch. Here love, there it is fear - fear itself increases love. It was morning and the dear sister having been accepted into my bedroom discovered (me) having been scattered with respect to my hairs and turned away lying on my face and all things full with my tears. She pleads help for the Minyae, one seeks, another procures, I give to the Aesonian youth what that one asks for. The wood is black with black pitch and with leaves of great scarlet oak, scarcely is it permitted for rays of sun to approach there; There are in it - there had been at least - shrines to Diana: the golden goddess stands having been made by a barbaric hand. Do you recognize it or here the places perished with me? We came there; thus you began to

speaking earlier with your faithless mouth: Fortune handed over to you the right and judgment of our prosperity and life and death are in your hand. It is enough to be able to destroy, if power herself may help anyone; but I having been guarded will be a greater glory for you. I beg through our misfortunes of which you are able to be a solace, through race and divine will of your grandfather seeing all, through the threefold faces and sacred mysteries of Diana and if by chance that clan has any gods: o virgin, have pity for me, have pity for my (men), make it that I am yours for all time! But if by chance you do not disdain the Pelasgian man - but from which my gods so easy to me? My spirit will vanish into thin air, before another bride than you may be in my bedroom. The accomplice is Juno having been placed in command of nuptial religious rites and the goddess of whom we are in the marble temple!"

These things - and how many are part of these things? - move the mind of the simple girl and your right hand having been clasped with my right hand. And also I saw the tears - can it be that it is part of the deceit in those? Thus quickly I was a captured girl with your words. You unite the brazen-footed bulls with your body unsinged and you split the solid ground with a ploughshare having been appointed. You fill up the arable fields with teeth filled with poison instead of seed, and it springs forth and the soldier has swords and shields. I myself, who had given drugs, I sat pale, when I saw that the unexpected men held arms, until the brothers born of the earth - a marvelous deed! - linked among themselves hands having been drawn.

Behold! The unsleeping guard trembling with the scales rattling hisses and sweeps clean the ground with a chest having been twisted. Where were the helps of the dowry? Where was your royal wife for you and who keeps apart Isthmus waters of twin seas? I that one, who have now been made barbaric in the end, now I am poor to you, now seem harmful for you, I carried off flaming eyes in sleep having been medicated and I gave to you the protected

fleece which you snatched. My father was betrayed, I abandoned my kingdom and fatherland, I brought my duty into exile, which it is permitted to be, Virginity was made booty of the foreign brigand, when the best sister was abandoned with the dear mother. But I fleeing did not leave you behind me, Absyrtus. My letters fail in this one place: What is to do my bold deeds, my right hand does not dare to write. Thus I, but with you, should have been torn to pieces! And nevertheless I did not take fright - what indeed might I fear after this? - to trust me on the sea and now a criminal woman. Where is the divine will? Where the gods? We may go on the deep (sea) the deserved punishment you of deceit, I of trustfulness. If only the Symplegades had struck us having been pressed together and might stick our bones with your bones! Or the grasping Scylla had sent us ought to be consumed by dogs! Scylla ought to harm ungrateful men. And who vomits just as many waves and swallows down just as many and also had placed us under of the Trinacrian water! You safe and sound and triumphant turn back to the Haemonian cities; the golden wool is placed to the paternal gods. What may I recall about the daughters of guilty Pelias by loyalty and paternal limbs having been chopped by maidenly hand? As the others disapprove, it is necessary for you to praise me, for whom so often have been compelled to be guilty. You dared - o fitting words are lacking for just pain! - you dared to say "Go from the house of Aeson!" Having been ordered I withdrew having been accompanied by two sons from the house and who always follows me, love of yourself. As suddenly the Hymen having been sung comes to our ears and the torches quivered with fire having been kindled and the flute pours out conjugal songs for you, but for me the fatal more lamentable trumpet, I became very scared of it, and thus far I did not think that the crime is so great, but nevertheless it was cold in your entire heart. The crowd rushes and they proclaim "Hymen" "Hymenae!" with many voices; the nearer which

this voice, the worse for me. Slaves having been diverted wept and they covered their tears - who wished to be the messenger of so great evil? Whatever it was and also rather it was enjoyable that I am ignorant, but I knew as it were, my mind was sad, when the smaller one of the boys stopped in eagerness of seeing to the first threshold of a twin door: He said to me "From here approach mother! My father, Jason, leads the procession and in a gold-laced robe urges the horses having been attached!" Immediately I struck my chest with my garment having been torn off and faces were not safe from my fingers. The soul urged to go into the crowds in the middle of the uproar and to cut off the wreaths having been seized from the arranged hairs. Scarcely I maintained myself, so that not thus I having been torn with respect to my hair proclaimed "he is mine" and hurled my hands. Injured father, rejoice! Rejoice forsaken Colchians! Hold the offerings to the dead to the ghost of my brother! I am abandoned with both my paternal kingdom and home and lost by my husband, who alone was all things to me. And so I was able to have tamed the serpents and raging bulls, I was not able to have tamed one man. And I who drove out wild fires with expert medicine, I myself am not strong to drive away my fires of love. The chants and the herbs and the skills themselves abandon me, goddess, nothing urges sacred and powerful Hecates. Days are not pleasing to me, bitter nights are awake and gentle sleep departs from my miserable heart. I who am not able to cause myself to sleep I was able to cause the dragon to sleep. My concern is more useful to whoever it be than to me. The mistress embraces his body, which I protected, and that one holds the fruit of our labor. And perhaps, while you seek to boast yourself to your foolish wife and to speak suitable (things) to wrongful ears, you form my customs and new crimes in my appearance. Let her laughs and Let her be happy with my faults. Let her laugh and let her exalted lie down on the Tyrian purple material - and she will

weep and having been scorched will conquer my flames. While the iron of the flame and the juice of poison will be present, no enemy of Medea will be unpunished. But if by chance the prayers touch the iron chests, now hear the smaller words from my spirit. Nevertheless I am a suppliant to you as you were often to me, and I do not delay to have lied down before your feet. If I am worthless to you, consider our joint sons: the cruel stepmother will rage against my offsprings. And they are similar to you too and I am touched by the likeness and I see how often, our eyes are wet. I beg by the gods, by the lights of the ancestral flame, by merit and two sons, our children. Return the bed, for which I insane abandoned so many things! Add faith with words and bring back help! I do not beg you against both bulls and men nor that the conquered serpent rest by your aid; I beg you, whom I deserved, whom you yourself gave to us, which whom I was made a mother together with a father. Where is the dowry, you ask? I counted it in this plain, which had to be ploughed by you about to take the fleece. That golden ram noteworthy with high shaggy hair, my dowry: which I may say to you "Return (it)" you would refuse. My dowry you safe and sound, my dowry is the Graian youth. Go now, wicked one, bring together riches Sispyphias. That you are alive, that you have a bride and the powerful father-in-law, this itself, that you are able to be unpleasant, is mine. Whom indeed immediately - but what does it matter to give notice of your punishment? anger produces huge threats. Where anger will bring (me) I will follow. It will disgust perhaps of deed; and it disgusts to have looked out for a faithless man. The god saw that, who now spins my heart. I do not know which greater thing certainly my mind urges.