



## EVIDENCE: SEN\_0004\_EN

<b>Title</b>	<b>Act 5, scene 1, lines 910-953</b>
<b>Subtitle</b>	<b>Medea hesitates to kill her children.</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>Seneca</b>
<b>Date / Historical era</b>	<b>Antiquity</b>
<b>Theme(s)</b>	<b>motherhood, justice, revenge, guilt, innocence</b>
<b>Character(s)</b>	<b>Medea</b>
<b>Language</b>	<b>EN</b>
<b>Translation</b>	<b>Translated by Ella Isabel Harris (1899)</b>

## Excerpt

### Medea

I am Medea now, through sorrow strong.

Rejoice, because through thee thy brother died;

Rejoice, because through thee his limbs were torn,

Through thee thy father lost the golden fleece;

Rejoice, that armed by thee his daughters slew Old Pelias! Seek revenge!

No novice hand Thou bring'st to crime; what wilt thou do; what dart

Let fly against thy hated enemy?

I know not what my maddened spirit plots,



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# MEDIA SUM

Nor yet dare I confess it to myself!

In folly I made haste—would that my foe

Had children by this other! Mine are his,

We'll say Creusa bore them! 'Tis enough;

Through them my heart at last finds full revenge;

My soul must be prepared for this last crime.

Ye who were once my children, mine no more,

Ye pay the forfeit for your father's crimes.

Awe strikes my spirit and benumbs my hand;

My heart beats wildly; mother-love drives out Hate of my husband;

shall I shed their blood— My children's blood?

Demented one, rage not, Be far from thee this crime! What guilt is theirs?

Is Jason not their father? guilt enough!

And worse, Medea claims them as her sons.

They are not sons of mine, so let them die!

Nay, rather let them perish since they are!

But they are innocent—my brother was!

Fear'st thou? Do tears already mar thy cheek?

Do wrath and love like adverse tides impel



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# MEDIA SUM

Now here, now there? As when the winds wage war,  
And the wild waves against each other smite,  
My heart is beaten; duty drives out fear, As wrath drives duty.  
Anger dies in love.  
Dear sons, sole solace of a storm-tossed house,  
Come hither, he may have you safe if I May claim you too!  
But he has banished me; Already from my bosom torn away  
They go lamenting—perish then to both,  
To him as me! My wrath again grows hot;  
Furies, I go wherever you may lead.



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