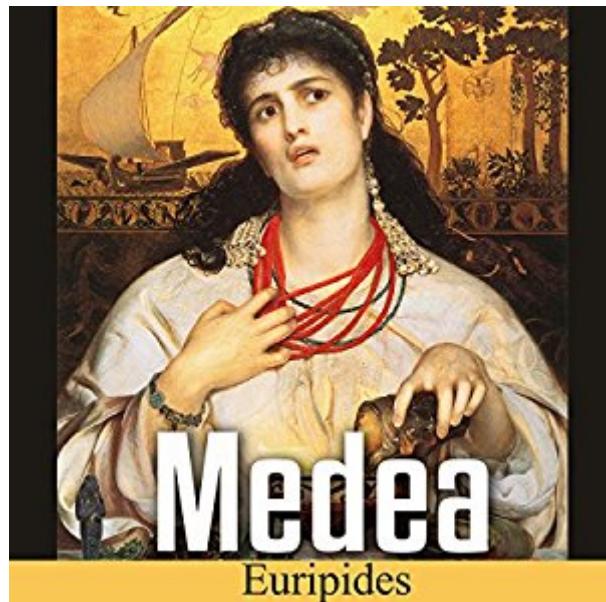


The book was found

Medea



Synopsis

The Medea, in spite of its background of wonder and enchantment, is not a romantic play but a tragedy of character and situation. It deals, so to speak, not with the romance itself, but with the end of the romance, a thing which is so terribly often the reverse of romantic. For all but the very highest of romances are apt to have just one flaw somewhere, and in the story of Jason and Medea the flaw was of a fatal kind. The wildness and beauty of the Argo legend run through all Greek literature, from the mass of Corinthian lays older than our present Iliad, which later writers vaguely associate with the name of Eumēfalus, to the "Fourth Pythian Ode" of Pindar and the beautiful Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius. Our poet knows the wildness and the beauty; but it is not these qualities that he specially seeks. He takes them almost for granted, and pierces through them to the sheer tragedy that lies below.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I read this before heading to Ashland to see Medea/Macbeth/Cinderella just to have a frame of reference. I enjoy plays in a wide variety of forms and styles from Shakespeare to Chekhov. I must say that I also enjoyed the tale of Jason and the Argonauts which was the first appearance of Medea. In that story she did some pretty horrific things, such as chopping her brother into bits and scattering the pieces in the Black Sea to shed her pursuing father. So I was ready for her to commit some atrocities. The play is short and pretty much consists of one setting. Granted this was written (or played and told) in a time when there weren't 'sets'. But the play mainly consists of Medea

conversing with a variety of folk. She is angry that Jason, her husband, has taken a new wife, one with a better social standing. Medea plots revenge. She curses a dress and causes it to engulf Jason's new wife and her father, the king, in flames. She then kills her own children in order to prevent others from using them against her. But really it seems she did all of this just to torment Jason. The events are tragic, but take place away from the 'viewer'. We hear about the death of the king and his daughter from a servant and Medea goes into her house and commits her final atrocity. It really detaches the reader. Again, I understand that this was groundbreaking in Ancient Greece. But after reading so many modern plays, it really does show its age. It is well worth reading for a foundation on classic theater, but reading for entertainment, it will probably fall short of expectations. I could see it being adapted well to modern stage with some good writing and directing though. I downloaded the free version to my Kindle player on my phone.

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