

# TROJAN WOMEN

By Lisa Hall

Based on Gilbert Murray's 1915 translation of Euripides' text

*For production permission or to read the full script, please contact lisahall3107@gmail.com*

CHARACTERS: 11 women/4 men

SCENES:

HECUBA  
CASSANDRA  
ANDROMACHE  
HELEN  
TALTHYBIUS  
MENELAUS  
ASTYANAX  
GREEK GUARD

I: Invocation  
II: Requiem  
III: Prophecy  
IV: Battle  
V: Tribunal  
VI: Rites  
VII: Benediction

The Chorus:

SEDA  
YELIZ  
FERAH  
ALEV  
BURIN  
MELIS  
EMEL

## SCENE I: INVOCATION

*A tent in the Greek camp near ruined Troy, which encloses the audience as well as the performing space. The sound of the ocean nearby and wind that moves the sides of the tent. Silhouettes of the guards outside the tent. A structure that the Chorus can climb vertically.*

*The CHORUS begins collapsed around the stage. Little ticks of movement ripple through them – as if they're in collective pain. Then, from behind the tent we hear HELEN's light laughter. The CHORUS reacts immediately, some of them may move towards her but are held back.*

EMEL

Don't listen to her, cover your ears.

BURIN

I can't help but listen.

SEDA

How dare she? She's kept here with us as a prisoner but she's carefree enough to laugh?!

BURIN

As if these ten years of war have been an entertainment for her.

ALEV

She may be kept here with us, prisoners of the same war, but she's not one of us - never forget that she's Greek, and we're Trojan.

MELIS

But the Greeks will punish her, won't they? They've kept her under guard.

YELIZ

Don't underestimate her. We are the remains of Troy and she will not let them punish her the same.

FERAH

Those years ago, when our prince Paris brought her here to Troy, stolen away from her Greek husband, Menelaus, we allowed her in our city's walls.

SEDA

Those formidable walls let one tiny woman in, and that infection has grown and consumed us. How could Paris think -

YELIZ

He must have known her husband would come for her.

FERAH

Maybe Paris didn't realize the Greek army would come as well, or that this war would divide even the gods.

BURIN

And now there's no one left to tell the story but us.

FERAH

It's not a story yet! The blood is still wet in the gutters and the altars are still piled with bodies. I can smell the ashes of Troy still burning.

ALEV

You shouldn't talk like that. One of those bodies is our King. While the Greeks are loading up their ships with gold and spoils, King Priam's body -

SEDA

His great body is rotting on the altar where he was butchered.

BURIN

I want to tear every Greek soldier off our earth and crush them between my own hands.

ALEV

Instead of violence, sing me the funeral song of Troy, fresh and sad as it is.

MELIS

The tale of Menelaus battling for his lost bride -

SEDA

While she packed herself away within Troy's walls, tasting every luxury –

*The CHORUS begins **MOVEMENT PIECE 1: THE FALL OF TROY**, during which they speak the following lines.*

FERAH

Just a few nights ago that beastly horse rolled up to our gates, was hauled into our city with its belly-full of soldiers. It sat silently – so quiet it seemed like a ghost.

ALEV

Troy's children and elders, maidens and men came forth. They opened their throats to sing praises and swallowed the deadly hook inside.

EMEL

After bringing Helen in, it was another act of welcoming that destroyed us.

ALEV

We thought the war was won – why shouldn't we have welcomed it? I watched the Greek ships sail away defeated, leaving only that parting gift, a wooden monstrosity and a symbol of their defeat.

BURIN

My brothers ran down to the empty Greek camp. My mother let them go because we were safe.

YELIZ

I never dreamt it was stuffed with Greek soldiers like a bursting sore.

FERAH

Through the pitch of night our feet beat the ground in celebration, the ground that would soon drink our blood.

MELIS

I was singing sleepily in torchlight.

EMEL

I was dancing ever more slowly.

YELIZ

I was cradling my tired baby.

BURIN

Then a new song rang through our fortress, there were cries of death - children's fists gripping mothers in terror.

ALEV

Greece spilled forth its soldiers from the gaping beast.

SEDA

Then the altars were washed in our blood.

FERAH

And Troy was killed, its young men fell asleep in their beds and woke up in a slaughterhouse.

YELIZ

Now we are left enslaved.

ALEV

Greece is crowned with victory, who we nearly beat so many times.

MELIS

Troy is scraped to the ground, but its funeral song is new.

BURIN

We fill this tent, captives now, just waiting.

EMEL

To be killed?

BURIN

To find out which of the Greek soldiers will become our new master. We've been parceled out like cattle. With some already gone...

FERAH

I could see them being divided by the shore. My ribcage is still echoing with their screams. I never thought -

YELIZ

No - never.

SEDA

I've lived in Troy my whole life -

BURIN

I've never seen our walls so much as shudder before the night they collapsed.

YELIZ

Some part of me thinks I'd rather be here, a body, than leave alive.

SEDA

I can't breathe through the smoke - it's everywhere - my clothes are soaked in ashes.

ALEV

Waiting here, with Helen -

SEDA

Who may as well have killed my family with her own lovely hands.

EMEL

Have faith, she'll meet her fate today.

*They look at her sharply.*

I heard the guards – Menelaus will come here for Helen today.

MELIS

To take her home?

EMEL

To punish her.

FERAH

Are you sure?

*EMEL nods*

SEDA

I don't trust him – he loves her.

EMEL

We'll know by nightfall – either way.

*They hear HECUBA curse and smash something against the ground.*

Hecuba.

SEDA

Imagine, a queen, here.

YELIZ

What is she a queen of now? Look – the last towers of Troy are beginning to burn. When they're gone, nothing will be left.

EMEL

Should we say a prayer?

*The women agree, take new positions*

As recompense for the soil of Troy on which we kneel, gods, give us your aid. Give us joy by making the Greek's journey home fraught with woe.

FERAH

When they set sail into the deep waters, drop tempests from the sky, and hurl bolts of lightning at their ships. Litter the ocean with their corpses.

EMEL

So shall it be.

ALL

So shall it be.

Script Sample