

*Versions of Greek Tragedy*

*Trojan Women: A version*

Hecuba

*She speaks to herself.*

Oh, this is the end. Ashes will cover the last traces of Troy. In the grim light of our city on fire we're to sail away. Death mercifully killed so many, but left me alone. I may have my chance now. Try, just this once, old feet, run and carry me to embrace that flame; I want to die with my city! Oh, gods, this is all I ask, help me now to die on the funeral pyre of Troy.

*She tries as best she can to run towards the flames of the burning city.*

Talthybius

Old woman, your suffering has driven you mad.

*He speaks to his soldiers.*

Seize her, men. No mercy. She belongs to General Odysseus now, his property.

*The guards seize Hecuba.*

Hecuba

*Screams.*

Is there no one to see what we suffer?

Chorus

The greatest of cities is no longer a city!  
Troy is no more.

Hecuba

*Another cry of grief.*

Chorus

Our land has fallen.  
It disappears like smoke on the wing of a breeze.

Hecuba

Oh, earth, who nourished me and my children.

Chorus

*Keening.*

Hecuba

Children, hear your mother calling you!

Chorus

You call the dead with your cries.

Hecuba

*Kneels on the ground.*

Old, and weary, I kneel on the ground.  
I beat it with my fists.

*The women all kneel and beat the ground.*

Chorus

We kneel and call on you below, our dead husbands! Our children.

Hecuba

We are dragged away, hauled off...

Chorus

Pain, pain and weeping...

Hecuba

To a house where we shall serve...

Chorus

Away from our homes and our land.

Hecuba

Oh, my husband,  
You are dead,

No tomb,  
No loved one close,  
No knowledge of  
Your wife's suffering.

Chorus

With black wings  
Death covered his eyes,  
Unholy slaughter of a holy man.

Hecuba

A scarlet flame of blood  
Consumes my city.

Chorus

Will anyone remember your name  
After you crash to the ground?  
Dust not dreams.

Hecuba

On smoke's wing,  
As it flies to the sky,  
Ash covers my home.  
Grey smoke, white bones,  
The shades of war.  
A ghost of life.  
Death lives.

Chorus

The name of this land, unknown.  
All gone, all lost, ashes everywhere.

Hecuba

Did you see?  
Did you hear?

Chorus

The fall of Troy.

Hecuba

The earth quaked.

Chorus

It shook the city to the ground.

Hecuba

Oh, trembling legs, trembling body,  
Carry me a little further.  
It won't be much longer.

Suffering has burned me like the city.  
Tempered me like steel.  
Nothing more to lose.  
Nothing to hope for.  
I want nothing.  
I have nothing to fear.  
Hecuba is finally Hecuba.

Chorus

My poor city! It's over now.  
New life begins,  
A new day for us!  
We are women.  
We are peacemakers.  
We are prisoners.  
Why won't men see what peace can do?  
That war kills their children  
and their future?  
The key is in a woman's hand,  
A woman's mind,  
A woman's womb,  
Darkness and light of the human race.

We must move on.  
The ships are waiting.

*The wind should increase in strength throughout the play and now blow vigorously.*