

Medea Was Born in Fallujah

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CHARACTERS:

MEDEA: A Middle Eastern Woman, 35 years old

JASON: An American man, a restaurant owner in a small city in Midwest, 39 years old

Time: Midnight--Winter 2005

Place: A business office

(Jason's office. JASON is on the computer. MEDEA enters.)

MEDEA: *(Softly.)* Jason! Jason! *(JASON looks at her blankly.)* It's me, Jason! Don't you remember me?

JASON: What are you doing here?

MEDEA: What do you see in my face, Jason?

JASON: What?

MEDEA: Do you see in my face what you've expected before?

JASON: What do you mean?

MEDEA: Look! I'm smiling ...

JASON: So ... what!

MEDEA: You're still not recognizing me! It's me ... Medea! Don't you remember me?

JASON: I remember you! *(Pause.)* You look good!

MEDEA: You fired me two months ago!

JASON: Yes, I did! *(Pause.)* so ... what do you want?

MEDEA: You fired me because I wasn't able to smile ...

JASON: Yes I did, because you weren't able to smile! *(Pause.)*

MEDEA: ... I'm smiling now ...

JASON: So ...

MEDEA: Isn't it good to smile?

JASON: Look! If you're looking for job, go to job service, fill out applications ... Don't waste my time ...

MEDEA: No Jason, I'm not looking for a job ...

JASON: So, what do you want from me? Just go ... go ... that's easy ... go ...

MEDEA: *(Seductively.)* Jason ...

JASON: Yes ...

MEDEA: I came here to give you a gift!
JASON: What?
MEDEA: Yes Jason, I like to give you a gift.
JASON: Look, I've no time for nonsense!
MEDEA: No one refuses a gift!
JASON: A gift? For what?
MEDEA: For firing me!
JASON: It's not funny!
MEDEA: I'm not joking!
JASON: Is it a custom ... or tradition in your culture?
MEDEA: No ... but I like to celebrate my smile, after months!
JASON: Look, I've no time tonight! You're invading my time and space at the middle of night... Make an appointment, then come and see me ... Mitta ... Yes? Your name?
MEDEA: No, Jason ... how quickly you forgot my name! ME ... DE ... A! My name is Medea.
JASON: Good night, Medea.
MEDEA: But ... I must talk to you ... Please ...
JASON: It's late ... my fiancé is waiting for me.
MEDEA: Your fiancé?
JASON: Yes, I'm engaged.
MEDEA: She must be beautiful!
JASON: She really floats my boat!
MEDEA: Let's celebrate the one who makes you say bada-bing bada boom!
JASON: What?
MEDEA: Let's celebrate my smile. *(MEDEA takes a clarinet out of her bag.)* Once you said you were a music lover, but have preferred wealth over poverty!
JASON: Well, yes and no ... I'm a music lover, but a musician failure. *(MEDEA cleans her old clarinet.)*
MEDEA: I haven't played for a long time! *(JASON looks at his watch.)* I play only for five minutes! It's a piece for you ...
JASON: Your gift ... for me?!
MEDEA: Yes, you wanted me to play for you a few months ago, but things ... changed ... and now here I am ...
JASON: I didn't know you play music.
MEDEA: Well, It's the prelude. *(She plays a Middle Eastern piece. JASON looks at her mockingly, then with curiosity, then with admiration. The music creates a tender ambiance.)*
JASON: You play very well!

... mama ... and ... the music box plays a mechanical song ... *(She sings the song.)* I had to take another bus to come to your restaurant ... Where is your restaurant? Where is it? *(Pause.)* You fired me ... after the death of her father ... because I wasn't able to smile! *(Pause.)* I had to sell my smile to your customers for six dollars per hour. My daughter needed a father, a room, some food, and smile, and love ... I killed her this afternoon because I couldn't smile at you, and couldn't smile at the husbands and wives and children, I couldn't smile at those who have a country! *(Pause.)* The weather is so cold! *(JASON moves forward in search of the phone. Calmly MEDEA draws a pair of scissors toward him)* Sit Jason, sit there ... *(Pause.)* Do you know what my lipstick made of? You swallowed it all!
JASON: Poison?
MEDEA: No Jason, no poison.
JASON: You poisoned me.
MEDEA: A kind of, if you wish! A certain lethargic herb that Romeo gave to Juliet! It makes you numb for couple hours.
JASON: You poisoned me!
MEDEA: No Jason ...
JASON: You're terrorizing me! Horrifying ...
MEDEA: Horror?! No Jason you know nothing about horror! *(JASON slowly tries to open the drawer.)*
MEDEA: *(Moves closer to him with scissors.)* Jason, look at my daughter! *(JASON sits still.)* Now, hold her. Hold her in your arms. Hold her! *(JASON holds the dead body.)*
MEDEA: What do you see in her face? *(JASON shakes his head.)* Do you see your scissors under her neck? Do you see my face in her face? *(Silence.)* Now smile ... Smile ... smile!

LIGHTS OUT.

JASON: So, you're a college teacher!

MEDEA: I was . . .

JASON: Why don't you go back to your country?

MEDEA: Because you're there!

JASON: What?

MEDEA: Because you're there!

JASON: What do you mean?

MEDEA: Give me the scissors, let me help you. *(She cuts the last tape. He smiles, opens the box, looks at the gift surprisingly.)*

JASON: A doll?!!

MEDEA: Touch it. *(JASON touches it, tries to take it out from the box, but suddenly jumps back and cries out. The smile dies out on his face. Terrified, turns away. A deep silence.)*

MEDEA: Do you like it? *(JASON turns against the wall.)*

JASON: What is it?

MEDEA: You don't know what is in there? *(Silence.)*

MEDEA: . . . My little tiny daughter . . .

JASON: Your . . . daughter?

MEDEA: She was five months this afternoon . . . A girl who was born in the U.S, but is from Fallujah . . .

JASON: *(Agitated.)* What does it mean?

MEDEA: You're there occupying the city with more than 10,000 US troops, launching "Operation Phantom Fury,"!! Hurray!! you're promising a "decisive Victory" against "mugs, murderers, and terrorists," that controlled Fallujah . . . you meant my daughter's father who lived there is a mug, a murderer, a terrorist . . . and her grand father, and her grand, grand, grand father who lived there . . .

JASON: Your eyes are . . . unbearably dark . . .

MEDEA: In your arms . . . that night in your arms, I asked myself: is it love that draws me to infidelity?

JASON: . . . Dark and insane . . .

MEDEA: . . . Or I'm trying to devour your soul, conquering you as the unconscious enemy of Fallujah . . . *(Pause.)* You loved me that night . . .

JASON: . . . Unreasonably piercing . . .

MEDEA: You loved me that night . . . And I loved you since . . . *(Pause.)* You're afraid of my eyes . . . You're afraid of my dead husband of Fallujah . . . *(Silence.)*

MEDEA: After the death of my husband, I woke up at 6 AM as usual, making myself ready to come to work. I had to take a bus, take my daughter to a day care . . . Listen . . . listen . . . *(Pause.)* do you hear her voice? . . . Mama . . . mama

MEDEA: I do?

JASON: *(Tenderly.)* Come here . . . *(MEDEA ignores his eyes.)* I've always wanted to play cello, but . . .

MEDEA: . . . But? *(Places the clarinet in the bag, then goes to off stage, and comes back with a big gift wrapped box.)* I have another gift for you . . .

JASON: . . . I had to be realistic. Does cello bring food on my table and fill my stomach? Of course not . . . so, I had to . . .

MEDEA: *(Interrupts him)* Open it Jason, open it . . .

JASON: *(Surprised.)* What does it mean? *(MEDEA gazes into his eyes seductively.)*

MEDEA: You can kiss me if like to!

JASON: You're something!

MEDEA: I am!

JASON: Is it really a part of your tradition?

MEDEA: No! We don't kiss strange men!

JASON: Am I a stranger now?

MEDEA: Kiss me! *(JASON doesn't move.)* Haven't you kissed a stranger?

JASON: Well, of course I did! You were the last one!

MEDEA: Kiss me . . . Kiss me Jason . . . kiss me again . . . I haven't kissed a man for two months . . .

JASON: *(Smiles.)* You're really looking for something!

MEDEA: I'm pretty, aren't I?

JASON: Well . . . you are . . . that's why I wanted you to work for me as a waitress.

MEDEA: Touch my hands!

JASON: What's wrong with you?

MEDEA: Touch my hands!

JASON: Your hands are cold!

MEDEA: I'm sweating.

JASON: You're shivering!

MEDEA: I'm shivering!

JASON: You're smiling!

MEDEA: I'm smiling!

JASON: It's useless now. For a month you did not smile at all . . . you never attracted a customer . . . now after two months you came back to my office, with a big smile and offering me a gift? . . . I don't understand it . . . Are you insane . . . or something? What do you want from me? What can I do for you?

MEDEA: Nothing! *(Silence. MEDEA moves her face to his and kisses him, then both kiss each other.)*

JASON: It tastes strange ...
MEDEA: Strawberries?
JASON: No ...
MEDEA: Lemon?
JASON: No ...
MEDEA: Taste of love?
JASON: Love?
MEDEA: May be cucumber and tomatoes...
JASON: I feel dizzy ...
MEDEA: Have you had dinner?
JASON: I ... did ...
MEDEA: I can make you a good salad right now ...
JASON: Salad?
MEDEA: With cucumber and tomatoes ... a good one! *(She reaches into her bag and takes a cucumber and two tomatoes out of it.)*
JASON: Don't be ridiculous!
MEDEA: I have eaten cucumber and tomato salad for two months!
JASON: You have been on a diet?
MEDEA: No ... I ate them because of you!
JASON: Me?
MEDEA: Yes!
JASON: What for?
MEDEA: I was occupied with the thoughts of you ... and ...
JASON: You're crazy!
MEDEA: We did it once and ...
JASON: We did it just for fun ...
MEDEA: And I ate them since because of you and Fallujah ...
JASON: Fallujah?
MEDEA: Yes, Fallujah.
JASON: Why Fallujah?
MEDEA: You don't know where Fallujah is?
JASON: I know where Fallujah is!
MEDEA: So ...
JASON: So what?
MEDEA: Nothing! *(Silence.)* Two months ago we made love here ... on your desk ...
JASON: And ... you kissed my penis ...
MEDEA: I did!
JASON: It was funny

MEDEA: Funny?
JASON: That you kissed my penis!
MEDEA: Funny that I kissed your penis?
JASON: Yes, that you kissed my penis!
MEDEA: It smelled like cucumber and tomatoes ... and the smell of cucumber and tomatoes in the fields of Fallujah devoured me, and I remembered my puberty, picking cucumbers and tomatoes in the fields of Fallujah ...
JASON: And we fucked here on this desk ...
MEDEA: And I made love to you on this desk ...
JASON: It was a good fuck ...
MEDEA: And you said: Aren't you happy we made you free?
JASON: Aren't you really happy that we made you free?
MEDEA: And I said free of what?
JASON: Dictatorship of course ... oppression ...
MEDEA: And I said I'm here ...
JASON: But you're from there!
MEDEA: Where is "there"?
JASON: I don't know! ... where are you coming from?
MEDEA: From Nowhere!
JASON: Like where?
MEDEA: It's called Nowhere!
JASON: You're from Fallujah! *(Silence.)* You're from Fallujah! You were born in Fallujah! *(Silence.)*
MEDEA: Open your gift, Jason ... Open it.
JASON: You were born in Fallujah, weren't you?
MEDEA: Yes, I was born in Fallujah!
JASON: *(Starts to open the gift.)* How long have you been in the States?
MEDEA: It doesn't matter!
JASON: I've had employees from all over the world. They're all took refuge to us. Now that we have set you free you can go back to your country. What kind of jobs have you had before?
MEDEA: I've taught music in a college!
JASON: Now you can go back to Fallujah, you have lots of opportunity there. You can work in an orchestra or ... *(He tries to untie the ribbon.)*
JASON: It's tight! *(Silence.)*
MEDEA: I have wrapped it so tightly! *(She hands him a pair of scissors.)*
JASON: You women! ... in the middle of night ... you're going to surprise me! If it is a load of cucumber and tomatoes, no thanks! I have enough of that!
MEDEA: *(Smiles.)* I used so much tapes!