

Content Advisories

MEDEA

by Kate Mulvany and Anne-Louise Sarks

Original concept by Anne-Louise Sarks after Euripides

Directed by Daniel Evans

This information contains warnings and spoilers and is subject to change without notice.

About the Show

10-year-old JASPER and 12-year-old LEON are like most brothers you know. They fight. They laugh. They play games. Their bedroom is their fortress: home to Cornelius (their goldfish), watched over by Hercules (their teddy bear) and adorned with a ceiling of glow-in-the-dark stars.

But today something feels different. Their door is locked shut. Their parents' shouting is getting louder. And, unbeknownst to them, at some point in the next hour, their iconic fate will ensure they enter mythology as two of the most tragic siblings of all time.

Told entirely from the perspective of MEDEA's young sons, this is a tender, surprising and bittersweet reimagining of history's most misunderstood mother.

Content Advisory

This production contains adult themes and a depiction of filicide. There is the use of theatrical haze, some loud sounds and an extended period of low-light.

Age Suitability

Recommended for audiences 12+.

Resources for Further Support

Lifeline (13 11 14)

Lifeline has trained crisis supporters available 24/7. They also offer an online Crisis Support Chat 7 days a week between 7pm-4am AEDT (www.lifeline.org.au/crisischat)

Translation services available via 131 450

1800RESPECT (1800 737 7232 or <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>)

The national counselling service for anyone in Australia who has experiences, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence. 24/7.

In-Depth Content Analysis

Child Endangerment

Events that may pose a threat to a child's health, survival, development or dignity.

JASPER and LEON are unknowingly used in a power dynamic between MEDEA and their unseen Father, Jason.

In the final scene, MEDEA poisons JASPER and LEON by giving them green cordial.

These depictions have been heavily choreographed with a Fight and Intimacy Consultant.

Depictions of Death

The action or fact of dying, or being killed.

JASPER and LEON find many imaginative ways to die and depict death through play and with a spirit of childhood innocence – toy gun and sword fights, a toy bow and arrow, and through storytelling and make-believe.

In the final Scene, MEDEA poisons JASPER and LEON by giving them green cordial. They become tired and eventually die in her arms.

These depictions have been heavily choreographed with a Fight and Intimacy Consultant.

MEDEA – Spoiler Sheet

Below is the Scene Breakdown Spoiler Sheet for *MEDEA* Please note some changes to technical elements of the production may be subject to change.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT THE PLOT OF THE SHOW TO BE SPOILED – DO NOT READ AHEAD.

Overview:

The story of MEDEA by Kate Mulvany and Anne-Louise Sarks, after Euripides, and directed by Daniel Evans, is performed by two young actors and one adult actor. You will see the two young actors portraying JASPER and LEON perform scenes through a combination of play and scripted moments for the majority of the narrative.

The set is designed to look like a child's bedroom, which they are locked inside of. Similar to the aquarium in their bedroom, they are inside of a glass box, being observed by us.

They wear two major costumes – their casual clothes, and later, change into formal suits onstage.

At one point JASPER urinates in his pants – this is achieved visually by the actor playing JASPER emptying a small amount of water through his pocket into his pants.

At another point JASPER has a nosebleed – this is achieved visually by the actor playing JASPER applying a small amount of fake blood to his face whilst unseen from the audience.

At the end, the adult actor playing MEDEA enters with green cordial that is hinted at being poisoned, which after drinking, the characters of JASPER and LEON seemingly die.

The performance is supported by theatrical lighting and sound – including an extended period of low light.

Scene by Scene:

Introduction

The scene opens with JASPER and LEON lying perfectly still in their messy bedroom, surrounded by toys.

JASPER attempts to wake LEON up through various means, indicating their playful dynamic and the boredom they are experiencing.

This ranges from playful through to annoying and disgusting. JASPER becomes concerned.

Play-Fighting

LEON suddenly springs to life and grabs his toy gun, initiating a playful foam gunfight with JASPER.

They engage in a prolonged fight with foam bullets flying around, demonstrating their active imagination and love for imaginative play.

Each boy takes turns pretending to die in elaborate and dramatic ways, showcasing their creativity and enjoyment of storytelling.

Waiting and Boredom

The boys engage in conversation about their parents' marital issues and speculate on how long it will take for things to be resolved.

They play a game of naming animals, indicating their desire for entertainment.

JASPER's discomfort with the need to urinate punctuate the monotony and confinement they are experiencing.

Fishy Storytelling and Noises from the Hallway

JASPER tells a story with the fish while LEON ignores JASPER's attempts to involve him. LEON tells JASPER the story of his Father, Jason and the Argonauts, and the events surround The Golden Fleece.

They listen at the door for any signs of activity, wondering about their parents' situation and their desire to know what's happening outside their room. They think they hear crying and their Father leaving without seeing them.

They pretend to hurt their toy bear Hercules, and end up yelling to vent their frustration with the situation.

MEDEA Enters

MEDEA, their mother, enters the room and delivers a message from their father – they could live with their Father in his separate home, introducing the first true element of parental authority and outside influence into their confined space.

She criticises the room's cleanliness and abruptly leaves, adding tension to the scene leaving JASPER and LEON to think about their future while cleaning up.

Cleaning and Speculation

JASPER and LEON begin cleaning the room in excitement about the possibility of living with their Father in his 'mansion.' They are excited about things possibly changing.

They discuss the relationships between MEDEA, their Mother, and their Father and his 'Friend.'

They share playful banter and teasing about each other's feelings towards this 'Friend.' This teasing increases into a fight, with LEON dividing the room in half and telling JASPER to stay on his half.

The Golden Fleece

LEON retrieves a yellow woollen jumper that has been hidden from JASPER. It is clear he cherishes it – a reference to the Golden Fleece.

JASPER wants LEON to share the jumper with him, and ends up having a nosebleed. He crosses over into LEON's side of the room and threatens to bleed on the jumper, causing LEON to let it go.

MEDEA's Gift

MEDEA returns with a gift and tells the boys that it is from them, for their Father's 'Friend'. She tells the boys that the 'Friend' is beautiful and loves them – although we do not believe that she means what she is saying. She tells them that they will live in the mansion together. She instructs the boys to write a card for Dad's friend. MEDEA's behaviour becomes more suspicious, and she leaves to give the gift from the boys.

Brotherly Bonds

The boys playfight again, reenacting their Father's sword fights. JASPER shares his insecurities about being small. JASPER wets his pants.

LEON reassures JASPER that their Father is coming for them.

Green Cordial

MEDEA returns with green cordial for the boys, distressed. She assures them Dad will come for them soon. She dresses the boys and expresses her deep love for them and reminisces with them. They drink the cordial and slowly grow more weary and still.

They die in MEDEA's lap, together.