**Jocasta Audition Monologue**

Prophets and prophecies . . . they spawn nothing but mayhem and misery. I have learned this too well. The scars of that lesson still burn across my beating heart. It is prophecy I have to thank for my greatest sorrow, my deepest regret.

I will tell you a story I have buried in memory. All the years of our happy life together, I couldn’t bear to think of it. But I’ll tell you now and let you judge for yourself the truth of prophecies.

When I was first married to Laius, I had a child, a boy. That unlucky creature I never knew. He was born with open eyes and we stared at each other in amazement. He lay on me and I kissed his smooth feet, feet that had never touched earth.

Three days I had him, that was all. On the third day, a vile prophecy was delivered to us. Not from god, you understand, just some old charlatan, jingling charms, but it was enough to wreak havoc. This child, this wide-eyed, wordless stranger I held in my arms, would be his father’s murderer, the prophet said. The utter horror of it. Laius believed him. Panicked, he wrenched the baby from my breast and gave him over to the winter night to do its work. The last time I saw my child, he was curled naked in his father’s arms, staring up at him in confusion, one tiny hand splayed above his father’s thundering heart, as if to calm it. It was brute fear that killed that child. To trust that prophet was a terrible sin. No man can speak for the gods, no man can speak for the future. Nothing could be clearer—just look at what happened. For all his lethal caution, some group of men he never knew butchered Laius at a crossroads.

Fortune tellers lie. And those who believe them are fools. Criminal stupidity. And I didn’t have the strength to stop it. I let my child be taken from me, let them fling his life away on the bare rocks of Citheron as the winter night howled his tiny bones to ice. I have so little of him, just three days, nothing to remember. Only the glitter of his open eyes. When the nights are darkest, when the cold moves in, I feel the glint of them on me and I shudder for what he suffered, what I didn’t save him from.

My unlucky stranger. My king, why do you shiver?