

“The Vision” (Cassandra) Monologue from the play *No More Trojan Wennen* by Justy DeForest

NOTE: Trailblazing English (TE) is used in this monologue. Actors agree not to substitute Conventional English words for TE terms as a condition for using this monologue, as stated on the “Permission to Perform My work” page of the author’s website at <https://stagepagan.com/permission-to-perform-my-work/>.

Character: Cassandra, unheeded soothsayer and daughter of Hecuba, Queen of Troy

Setting: In Agamemnon’s hut in the Achaean Camp

Background: Taken prisoner by the Greeks after the fall of Troy, Cassandra warns the Achaean Commander, Agamemnon, that the Greek victory over Troy is not what it seems.

CASSANDRA

Agamemnon! Agamemnon! I had a vision this morning. No, please listen to me!
I saw a compassionate lady transformed to a tiger, extending a raging claw.
There was a bull on a plain through whose sides I saw a man engulfed in its belly.
He tore at the beast’s flesh, struggling desperately to free himself.
I saw a dove with blood on her wings soar over a battlefield and cry. —
And I cried to hear her piteous sound.
There was a scorpion on the sand like no other that crawls upon the Earth —
or so it *seemed* — spreading venom everywhere.
And after all these things passed before my sight, a name repeated in my mind:
Agamemnon! Agamemnon!

No, don’t turn away! I know you have no time for me after sunrise.
I am merely your prisoner...Your concubine...Your *whore* of war!
But you must listen to me now! You alone have the power to stop
what is going to happen today. The Trojans didn’t believe my prophecies,
and it proved as much a curse on them as on me!

I’ll be calm...I’ll try to be calm. — But you must listen!
I know you don’t like when I call my rants “prophecies.” Forgive me!
You are a king; so was my father, Priam.
Yet he ignored my warnings like any fearful, common man.
He did nothing when the Trojans derided me and disregarded my visions.
“Cassandra, the Lunatic” sounds far less frightening than “Cassandra, the Prophet”!
“Cassandra, the Madwenn” is more easily ignored than “Cassandra, the Seer” —
who foresaw Troy’s destruction in a vision of the Wooden Horse!
What was that crazy girl thinking when she told her father,
“Beware of Greeks bearing gifts!”?
But you know better, don’t you, Agamemnon?

You are Greek! Yours is the most civilized race upon the Earth! —
The darlings of Immortal Athena, Godde of Wisdom, herself!
You are far too wise to make the same mistake as a Trojan king!

Both our peoples agree that prophecy is the gift of Apollo.
But it is no *gift* if one must pay for it as I have.
It's said that I promised the godde my virginity, then refused to surrender it to him.
And that is the reason why my warnings go unheeded,
why he has allowed me to be brought to ruin.
So says the rumor mill. Its words are believed as mine are not!

(pointedly) But I swear to you, Agamemnon,
I never promised Apollo *anything* except my devotion,
so you must listen to me now: Beware of *goddes* bearing gifts.
Your victory over Troy is *not* what it seems!

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