



SPOILER

Euripides, *Hippolytus*

Phaedra finds no escape from her shame except suicide. Her husband Theseus finds her body and reads her suicide note, which exacts revenge on Hippolytus for his cruelty by claiming that he violated her. Theseus, in a rage, ignores Hippolytus' protestations of innocence, and in fact the youth's ability to make his case is greatly weakened by his continued faithfulness to his oath of silence about Phaedra's love. Theseus banishes his son, and uses one of three wishes bestowed to him by his divine father Poseidon to curse Hippolytus to die that day. By the time Artemis descends into the house and tells Theseus the true story, it is too late—Poseidon has sent a monstrous bull out of the sea at Hippolytus' chariot, and the young man has been dragged by his terrified horses to the point of death. Before dying, he is brought home and is able to forgive and reconcile with his remorseful father. Artemis encourages Theseus and Hippolytus in the son's final moments, reminds them that the fault for this situation is not all theirs but also the gods', and promises to take revenge against Aphrodite by killing a man she loves.

