AENEAS and DIDO dance and sing together.

**Sail Away**

AENEAS:  
COME WITH ME, ACROSS THE SEA  
SAIL AWAY, FROM ALL OUR FEARS  
WE’LL BE TOGETHER, WE’LL BE FOREVER  
JUST YOU AND ME

AENEAS:  
I WAS A LOST BOY  
YOU FOUND ME ON YOUR SHORE  
WE’LL BE TOGETHER, WE’LL BE FOREVER  
JUST YOU AND ME

[DIDO and AENEAS next sing the two verses at the same time in harmony]

DIDO/AENEAS:  
WE WILL BRAVE THE STORMY WEATHER  
THOUGH THE WAVES COME CRASHING DOWN  
AND WE WILL SEE THE WORLD TOGETHER  
THOUGH WE BOTH WILL LOSE OUR CROWNS  
’COS NOTHING IN THE WORLD’S WORTH MORE THAN  
LOVE IN THE END

DIDO:  
MAN THE SAILS AND SET OUR COURSE  
BEFORE THE GODS MAY USE THEIR FORCE  
WE’LL STEAL AWAY UNDER THE STARRY NIGHT  
STARS HIDE YOUR FIRES

AENEAS:  
WE’LL SEE THE SUN RISE  
I’LL WATCH ITS GLOW IN YOUR EYES  
WE’LL STEAL AWAY UNDER THE STARRY NIGHT  
STARS HIDE YOUR FIRES

DIDO/AENEAS:  
WE WILL BRAVE THE STORMY WEATHER  
THOUGH THE WAVES COME CRASHING DOWN  
AND WE WILL SEE THE WORLD TOGETHER  
THOUGH WE BOTH WILL LOSE OUR CROWNS  
’COS NOTHING IN THE WORLD’S WORTH MORE THAN  
LOVE IN THE END

A deafening crack of thunder rings out through the cave and the stage goes black. The two huddle together amidst the storm and kiss as the lights dim.

**END SCENE.**

**SCENE 16: RUMOUR, Carthage**

[Dance scene about Rumour goddess spreading rumours in Carthage of DIDO and AENEAS’ forbidden love affair out of wedlock and their neglect of their civic duties]
SCENE 17: JOVE'S DISAPPROVAL, Heaven

On one side of the stage, AENEAS and DIDO sleep peacefully in each other’s arms – but this side only softly lit up in deep blues.

On the other side of the stage, fully lit up, JOVE sits in his palace in the sky and listens to the rumours flying in Carthage about DIDO and AENEAS. His brow is furrowed in worry as he rests his head on his hand and sighs. He calls out to MERCURY, the winged god of messages.

JOVE: Mercury!

Nothing happens. JOVE is impatient.

JOVE: MERCURY!

MERCURY bustles onto the stage in a hurry. He is out of breath and trips over his own feet.

MERCURY: I’m... I’m here sire!

JOVE: About time. Where on earth have you been?

MERCURY: Well, I’m afraid Hercules was in a bit of trouble and then Odysseus ran into those awful Harpes so I’ve really been quite busy. You wouldn’t believe what happened to -

JOVE: [Interrupting] - I need you to send another message for me.

MERCURY: [Bowling low] I am at your service! What is it my lord?

JOVE: I need you to send a message to Aeneas, as quickly as you can!

MERCURY: Yes sire.

JOVE: You’ll find him in Carthage, in the arms of their Queen, forgetting his duties... forgetting the city Fate promised him.

JOVE: Tell him his mother did not save him twice for this – to waste away his days in the arms of a Phoenician Queen! No, Aeneas is meant for much more—he is to unite tribal Italy, to give birth to a line of Roman Kings, the greatest the world has known! No, he must sail [slamming his sceptre down].
JOVE’s side of the stage goes dark.

DIDO and AENEAS’ side of the stage becomes more lit up by the moon outside their window. MERCURY discovers them, landing gently and silently on the floor of their room. AENEAS, who has been sleeping lightly, awakes to see the god standing there, glowing. He rises with a start, terrified. DIDO does not stir.

MERCURY: [Shaking his head] Aeneas, Aeneas...

AENEAS: Who... who are you? What are you?

Mercury: [Laughing in disgust] So... this is how you spend your days. Lying in your lovers’ arms. Building her towers, laying the foundation for her Carthage walls. This is not what your mother, Venus, saved you for. What a waste... You have become blind Aeneas! Blind to your Fate.

AENEAS: What do you want from me?

MERCURY: I come with a message from Jove. He commands you to leave, to fulfill your destiny and found the city of Rome! If not for you then for your son! You are needed for greater things than... this. Get up and go, Aeneas. Waste no more time.

With this, MERCURY vanishes. AENEAS is shocked. He looks at DIDO then puts his head in his hands.

Indecision – Leaving Carthage

AENEAS: MY HEART IT IS BEATING, MY VEINS ARE ON FIRE CONSUMED BY A BURNING DESIRE LONGING TO STAY, LONGING TO BE SAFE HOW CAN I LEAVE WITHOUT BREAKING HER HEART

BUT IF I STAY I DISOBEY THE GODS CONDEMN MYSELF TO LIE FOREVER OUT OF FAVOUR. BUT IF I LEAVE I SAVE MY PEOPLE AND WE CAN FOUND GREAT TROY ANEW AM I TO DO WHAT MY HEART COMMANDS? NO, I MUST DO WHAT THE GODS DEMAND.

AENEAS throws on his shirt roughly and readies his things.

AENEAS: I must figure out a way to tell her gently... to break it to her at the right time. But there is no time to waste. I will ready my men and the
ships. Then I will tell her. And gods help me when I do!

AENEAS goes to leave but pauses to look back at the beautiful Dido sleeping peacefully. The pain is obvious in his eyes.

**You Will Never Know**

AENEAS: **YOU WILL NEVER KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVED YOU OR HOW IT HURTS TO GO.**

[to the heavens]

**WILL I NEVER MAKE MY OWN DECISIONS OR AM I YOURS TO OWN?**

AENEAS then closes his eyes for a moment and turns away, knowing what he must do.

**END SCENE.**

**SCENE 18: A WOMAN ALWAYS KNOWS, Dido’s Bedroom**

DIDO stands in her silk dressing gown staring out of her bedroom window. She watches the pink glow of dawn spread over her city. It is eerily silent. She knows something is afoot.

ANNA knocks at the door. She has brought breakfast. DIDO says nothing. ANNA opens the door gently and stands and watches her sister, concern in her eyes. DIDO speaks softly and there is melancholy in her voice. She looks as if she has seen a ghost.

DIDO: Anna... Anna I have had a terrible dream.

ANNA puts down the breakfast tray and rushes to Dido, taking her sister’s hands in her own.

ANNA: What is it Dido?

DIDO: I dreamt that Aeneas left me. He packed up all his ships, his men and he just... left. I was standing on the cliffs and I could see his white sails on the horizon. I called and called to him but I couldn’t make a sound. When I turned around all of Carthage was just... ashes. Ashes on the ground.

DIDO’s eyes are wild, wide and red. She has a mad, restless air about her like a deer being hunted.

ANNA: Oh come now Dido, it was just a dream!

DIDO starts frantically getting ready.
DIDO: [Shaking her head] I must find Aeneas.

ANNA: Dido, really... there is nothing to worry about! You must rest. Come and have some breakfast first at least.

DIDO makes for the door.

DIDO: I must find him. I have a terrible feeling.

DIDO leaves and ANNA is left standing in the room in shock.

END SCENE.

SCENE 19: DISCOVERED, Carthage

DIDO rushes about Carthage in search of AENEAS, her silk dressing gown flowing behind her. [Dance scene – she figures everywhere and thinks they are AENEAS]. She calls AENEAS' name to no avail. The people of Carthage (Rumour amongst them) whisper about her and laugh at her. DIDO is oblivious, driven mad by her suspicion that AENEAS is planning to leave her.

DIDO: Aeneas! ... Aeneas!!

The people of Carthage shout at her, making fun of her. It appears that Dido is the last to know. [Music fading]

PHOENICIAN 1: Didn’t you know? He’s at the ports. Preparing his ships!

PHOENICIAN 2: Serves you right, you whore!

PHOENICIAN 3: You must’ve known he could never love you.

PHOENICIAN 4: Good riddance I say!

DIDO is in a complete frenzy. Their words appear to cause her physical pain. She grows increasingly mad. She rushes to the ports and finds AENEAS talking to his men, making plans. The men see DIDO storming down the hill and skulk away, embarrassed. DIDO screams at her lover.

DIDO: AENEAS!!

AENEAS pauses a moment before turning around. This is exactly what AENEAS was dreading. His heart breaks for the young Queen.

DIDO, in full flight and spurred on by the words of the Phoenicians, accosts AENEAS.
Tr Aid

DIDO: OH TRAITOR, THOUGHT YOU'D LEAVE IN THE NIGHT
OH TRAITOR, THOUGHT YOU'D STEAL AWAY IN FLIGHT
OH TRAITOR, THOUGHT YOU VANISH FROM MY SIGHT
WITHOUT A WORD, WITHOUT A CARE, WITHOUT A FIGHT

BLACK! BLACK IS THE NIGHT
BLACK ARE THE SKIES
IS THIS HOW MUCH YOU DESPISE ME?
YOU’D RISK YOUR LIFE ON STORMY SEAS

JUST TELL ME YOU DON’T LOVE ME
SAY OUR LOVE’S A LIE
TELL ME YOU DON’T LOVE ME
LOOK INTO MY EYES

WHY WON’T YOU STAY?
YOU’VE GOT TO STAY!

AENEAS: YOU KNOW I’VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU
I CANNOT LIE
IN MY HEART YOU’LL STAY
ALL ME LIFE

BUT NOW THE TIME HAS COME
I MUST BE MOVING ON
WE HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN
MY LIFE IS NOT MY OWN

I MOST OBEY THE GODS IN HEAVEN
TO FIND A KINGDOM OF OUR OWN
THIS WAS NOT THE FATES’ INTENTION
TO BE DEPENDENT ON YOUR THRONE

THOUGH I LEAVE MY HEART BEHIND LOVE,
NOW I MUST GO ON.

AENEAS departs, resolute, without looking back. DIDO falls to her knees, weak and in tears, at the front of the stage. Behind her and in the distance the Trojan ships are readying for departure.

DIDO: SO YOU’RE LEAVING ME
ALL ON MY OWN
WITHOUT A CHILD’S HAND TO HOLD

I CANNOT BREATHE, I CAN’T BELIEVE
THAT THIS WILL BE THE END OF YOU AND ME

DIDO: YOU TOOK MY HAND, YOU MADE A VOW
BUT LIKE A GHOST YOU’RE VANISHED NOW
I SACRIFICED MY NAME, MY PRIDE
MY DIGNITY YOU TOOK IT IN YOUR STRIDE

AENEAS: COME WITH ME ACROSS THE SEA
SAIL TO OUR DESTINY
COME WITH ME ACROSS THE SEA
SAIL TO OUR DESTINY.

DIIDO: I GAVE YOU ALL
MY EVERYTHING
I GAVE YOU ALL
YOU TOOK MY ALL.

SCENE 20: A PLAN, Dido’s Bedroom

DIDO paces in her room, her mind preoccupied. She has not slept for days.

DIDO: Still nothing?

ANNA shakes her head.

ANNA: I have tried many times to move him, Dido, but nothing will do! It is as if the gods have blocked his ears to our cries and made his heart grow cold to our tears. This is not the work of any man with a soul.

DIDO pauses and thinks.

DIDO: Then I have no choice. Anna... I need your help again.

ANNA: Of course Dido. What is it?

DIDO: Gather all of that Trojan’s things and everything we ever shared together – our bed, his clothes, for I cannot bear to touch them – and bring them together in a pyre.

ANNA: Dido... what are you planning?

DIDO: I must destroy every last memory of him. It is the only way. Make the pyre in the palace courtyard – it must be in secret. I will set fire to it – so that there can be nothing to make me think of that heartless man again.

ANNA nods and departs. DIDO is left staring out the window.

SCENE 21: DIDO’S SUICIDE, Palace Courtyard
We see the pyre made in the palace courtyard, lit up by the light of the moon. It has AENEAS' clothes and all of their furniture and belongings together. Their bed lies atop the pyre. Past the courtyard we see the dark Mediterranean Sea and a full moon. The white sails of the Trojan ships are illuminated in the moonlight.

DIDO enters silent and barefoot in her dressing gown. She carries AENEAS' sword. She pauses a moment and watches the Trojan ships on the horizon. Her face looks haggard with grief but her eyes are set with steely determination.

DIDO turns to the pyre and prays silently as she lets sand through her hands over the pyre in ritual. [Ancient eery singing in the silence – her curse in latin].

As she sings, DIDO looks at and touches many of AENEAS' things on the pyre, reminiscing.

**Once Upon A Time**

DIDO: 

---

**ONCE UPON A TIME**

EVERY LOVE SONG, EVERY RHYME
AND EVERY STORY EVER TOLD
WAS WAITING FOR US TO UNFOLD

---

**ONCE UPON A TIME**

EVERY SUNRISE, EVERY STAR
AND EVERY SUMMER'S EVENING GLOW
WAS THERE FOR ONLY FOR US TO HOLD

---

BUT NOW IT'S ONLY RAINY DAYS I KNOW
NOW MY WORLD HAS TURNED SO DARK AND COLD

---

WHEN YOU LEFT
YOU STOLE MY SUN, YOU STOLE MY MOON
WHEN YOU LEFT
YOU STOLE MY DREAMS AND MEMORIES
WHEN YOU LEFT
YOU STOLE MY SUN, YOU STOLE MY MOON
WHAT FUTURE'S LEFT NOW I FIND MYSELF AGAIN
ON THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

---

WHAT AM I TO DO
WITHOUT MY SUNLIGHT, WITHOUT MY MOON?
AM I TO STAY AND
LET HIM SAIL AWAY?

---

OR DO I FOLLOW WHERE HE GOES?
GIVE UP MY KINGDOM, GIVE UP MY THRONE?
TO WAIT ON HIM WITH BENDED KNEE,
A SLAVE FOR ALL ETERNITY

NO I DESERVE THIS TRAGIC ALONE
THIS GIRL WHO BROKE A VOW MADE LONG AGO

WHEN YOU LEFT
YOU STOLE MY SUN, YOU STOLE MY MOON
WHEN YOU LEFT
YOU STOLE MY DREAMS AND MEMORIES
WHEN YOU LEFT
YOU STOLE MY SUN, YOU STOLE MY MOON
WHAT FUTURE’S LEFT NOW I FIND MYSELF AGAIN
ON THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON

DIDO paces around the pyre.

DIDO: So... what am I to do now? Am I to make a mockery of myself? Am I to go back to my old suitors and beg them to take me in, to see me wed? Or should I follow the Trojans ships – give up my kingdom here and become a slave to theirs? Be hated and scorned as their Phoenician whore? Or should I set fire to their camps, hunt them down and take revenge on their ungrateful souls?

No... no, no. I deserve only one end to my tragic tale. This woman who broke her vow to her husband all those years ago.

By now the horizon glows with the pink of early dawn. DIDO takes AENEAS’ sword and a flaming torch and climbs in a frenzy atop the pyre, onto their marital bed.

DIDO: As the gods are my witness, I make one final prayer. If the Fates truly command that this unfaithful Trojan is to ever reach Italian shores then promise me this. Let him be plagued by war, let him watch his people suffer and let him die an untimely death so that he may never live to see his people prosper!

And you, my Phoenicians. May you forever carry a burning hatred of his people. Let there be no love between us, no peace. May an avenger rise from my ashes!

Let this be my curse. War between our children – endless and eternal war!!

DIDO sets the pyre beneath her on fire.
DIDO: Oh if only the Trojans ships had never landed on my shores!

DIDO raises AENEAS’ sword.

DIDO: I will die un-avenged but I will die. Even this death with pleasure I receive, for in any case, it is better than to live. May the false Trojan see these flames, a bad omen of things to come!

With that, DIDO stabs herself with AENEAS’ sword and falls onto the bed where she is consumed by flames, towering high into the night [ancient singing].

CURTAIN.
END ACT I.