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Circus Olympus**

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# CIRCUS OLYMPUS

A MYTHICAL COMEDY IN TWO ACTS BY  
*Lindsay Price*



*Circus Olympus*

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Printed in the USA

## **Characters**

### **Greek Geek Ringleaders**

**Merve:** Male narrator. The guy in charge. Fun.

**Ishy:** Female narrator. Responsible, but not restrictive.

**Manso:** Male. Gets easily rattled. Definitely nerdy looking.

**Osina:** Female. Nothing rattles her. Sultry and strong.

**Vigit:** Female. The youngest. Green, but not a pushover.

### **Ensemble**

There are roles for 12 males and 20 females in the ensemble. You will need a minimum ensemble of 10 (4m/6w) for the full version or 7 (3m/4w) for the one act version. See Appendix ONE for a doubling grid.

## **Different Versions**

There are three different versions of the show: Two Acts, One Act, or a 20 minute Competition Piece. See Appendix TWO for the configuration of the shorter versions.

## **Costumes**

A mishmash of styles: Greek, circus, and geeky clown outfits. Examples: elegant trapeze artist's outfit with high top runners, tux jacket with baggy clown pants and so on. At least a couple performers should wear modern-looking togas.

## **Sound Effects**

Any sound effect should be homespun (tambourines, kazoos, bells, castanets, a thunder sheet) rather than pre-recorded. As much as possible should be done on stage, by the actors.

## **Setting**

The setting is the inside of a circus tent. As elaborate or as sparse as you like.

## **Circus Elements**

See Appendix THREE for additional circus element suggestions, depending on the skills and abilities of your cast.

## **Word Pronunciations**

There are a number of variations in the pronunciations of the Greek Names. I've offered one set standard in Appendix FOUR. If you're more familiar and more comfortable with another version, that's fine. Just say them consistently and confidently!



## ACT ONE

*The setting is the inside of a circus tent. All the GEEKS enter, from all possible directions, yelling, waving banners, blowing whistles, banging on tambourines. Everyone carries props for the show. They land centre stage and create a group pose. The five ringleaders are out in front of the group.*

MERVE: Welcome to Circus Olympus!

ALL: (*banging tambourines*) Hie! Hie! Hie!

MERVE: We are the Greek Geeks!

ALL: (*banging tambourines*) Hie!

ISHY: We bring you all things mythical. All things magical.

OSINA: The world of Greek mythology to your door.

MANSO: We love the stories.

VIGIT: (*really excited*) So much so we put together this show!

MERVE: Now we can share the stories wherever we go.

MANSO: It is our life.

OSINA: It is our passion.

ISHY: And these are the best stories in the world!

MERVE: Filled with Adventure!

ALL: Hie!

OSINA: Love!

ALL: Hie!

MANSO: Mystery!

ALL: Hie!

VIGIT: Majesty!

ALL: Hie!

MERVE: And of course, us! The Greek Geeks. We make every myth great.

ALL: (*banging tambourines*) Hiiiiiiiiiiiie! Hie! Hie!

*They pose. They hold the pose. There is a pause. The pose deflates a little. The ringleaders step forward again.*

MERVE: OK. We know we're not Cirque du Soleil.

VIGIT: Or the Ringlings.

ISHY: Or Barnum and Bailey.

MERVE: Nonetheless we –

MANSO: (*interrupting*) We know we don't have an elephant on a bicycle.

VIGIT: As much as we'd LIKE an elephant on a bicycle.

OSINA: Only some of us.

ISHY: Now is not the time to do this...

MERVE: Exactly. On with the show!

VIGIT: We talked about elephants and bicycles.

OSINA: Just because we talked elephants and bicycles –

MERVE: On with the show!

OSINA: (*continuing*) – doesn't mean we think an elephant on a bicycle is a good idea.

ISHY: Now is not the time...

VIGIT: An elephant on a bicycle is very entertaining!

OSINA: It's ridiculous. What does an elephant on a bicycle have to do with Greek Mythology?

MANSO: It would be cute.

OSINA: Cute?? Cute!

*Everyone starts to talk at once. MERVE blows his whistle.*

MERVE: Hey! The show? On with it?

ALL: (*banging tambourines*) Hie! Hie! Hie!

*MERVE holds a top hat high above his head. The GEEKS start to hum. During the following the top hat is passed among the group.*

MERVE: The most important decision the Greek Geeks make: Who is Zeus tonight?

ALL: Who is Zeus tonight?

MERVE: Who gets to decide? Who chooses our fate?

OSINA: Zeus! Ruler of the Greek gods.

MANSO: God of Storm, Wind, and Rain.

ISHY: Zeus! Bolt of lightning in his hand.

VIGIT: Roll of thunder 'neath his feet.

ALL: Who is Zeus tonight!

*Everyone freezes in anticipation as MERVE pulls a name out of the hat.*

MERVE: *(reading)* Manso.

MANSO: *(with glee)* Manso!

ALL: *(groaning)* Manso...

MANSO: Hey! What's wrong with that?

VIGIT: You're not exactly Zeus material.

OSINA: A little lacking in the thunder and lightning department?

MANSO: My name was in the hat, my name came out of the hat, I get to play Zeus. *(He grabs the hat and puts it on. All the papers that were in the hat fall out.)* Now what?

MERVE: The first story?

MANSO: Right. The first story!

ALL: *(banging tambourines)* Hie! Hie! Hie!

*There's a pause.*

VIGIT: Which is...

MANSO: Right. Demeter versus the Underworld!

*Everyone gives a cheer and gets into position. NOTE: In the stories, the GEEKS are referred to by their Mythological character names.*

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## Demeter Versus The Underworld

DEMETER: I am Demeter, goddess of the Harvest. Never underestimate the power of a mother.

*She gestures boldly and there is thunder and lightning. MERVE moves centre stage. The rest scatter about the stage. They represent a field of flowers with different types of flowers in their hair or hats. They are on their knees. They bend and sway happily in the breeze.*

MERVE: A long time ago the land lived in continual harvest. Flowers always in bloom, trees full of bright green leaves, plentiful fruits and vegetables available morning, noon and night. Demeter was in charge of the land's growth and vegetation. When she was happy, all was good.

*PERSEPHONE enters and is stopped by DEMETER, who enters right behind her.*

DEMETER: Persephone, where are you going?

PERSEPHONE: Just to the field.

DEMETER: Do you have a sweater?

PERSEPHONE: I don't need a sweater. It's beautiful out. *(she starts to move away)*

DEMETER: *(calling after her)* Do you have a hanky?

PERSEPHONE: Yes mummy!

DEMETER: Make sure you're back in plenty of time for dinner! *(she exits)*

*PERSEPHONE dances and sings among the flowers. A bright happy song, nothing complicated, just like PERSEPHONE. The flowers bend and sway happily to the music. ZEUS and HADES are off to the side watching. At the end of the song, everyone, including the flowers, giggle. PERSEPHONE sits among the flowers and starts to make daisy chains. ZEUS and HADES step forward. HADES gives a big sigh.*

HADES: Oh Persephone. She is so sweet. And beautiful. And sweet. *(spitting a bit)* She's super sweet.

ZEUS: *(wiping his face)* Ugh. I asked for the news, not the weather.

HADES: What news? Is there news? Is there something I should know about? Oh boy, I'm always the last person to get the news!

ZEUS: It's an expression.

HADES: Expression?

ZEUS: Stop spitting on me! (*he wipes his face again*) You should ask her out.

HADES: Ask her out? Persephone? Me?

ZEUS: You.

HADES: Me?

ZEUS: You.

HADES: Me?

ZEUS: Hades.

HADES: No way! She'd never go out with a guy like me. I don't even have a tan! What if I asked her out and I had bad breath and she was grossed out and she told all her friends, "Hades has bad breath, Hades has bad breath." Or what if I was in the middle of asking her out and I farted? How would I ever live that down? "Hades farts! Hades farts!" No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Can't do it. Not gonna happen.

ZEUS: Hades. You're god of the Underworld. Do you think you could act like god of the Underworld?

HADES: I know I'm god of the Underworld. Dealing with the wailing and gnashing of the masses is a whole lot easier than trying to get a date. (*suddenly gets an idea*) Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey!

ZEUS: No.

HADES: Come on! Pal of mine? Pally Pal? Pal of Pal-mania?

ZEUS: I'm not going to ask her out for you.

HADES: Why not?

ZEUS: Because.

HADES: But you're more experienced than me. You've done a lot more dating.

ZEUS: No.

HADES: Please?

ZEUS: No!

HADES: OK. No asking. You don't have to ask her. You could just...  
*(he wiggles his fingers)* Poof! Off to the Underworld! I could charm her in the Underworld. The Underworld is very charming.

*He gives a sad look at ZEUS, who gives a big sigh.*

HADES: Please? Pal of mine? Pal of downtown Pal-around?

ZEUS: Demeter won't be happy. You know what she's like when she gets upset.

HADES: So... we won't tell her. That'll work. That's the perfect plan!

ZEUS: No plan is perfect. But we'll see what we can do.

*ZEUS points to MERVE. A bell is heard as MERVE puts on a flower hat. His flower looks completely different from the others.*

*PERSEPHONE gets up to exit but her attention is drawn to the singular flower.*

PERSEPHONE: Hello there flower. Aren't you pretty. I've never seen a flower like you before. And I know all the flowers: daises, azaleas, blue bells, magnolias, roses, snap dragons, tulips, violets, wisteria, *(she takes a deep breath)* zinnias, impatiens, iris-ss-sisses, gardenias, forget-me-nots, columbines, pansies, carnations, dandelions, baby's breath, ivy, *(she takes another breath)* hyacinth, hydrangea, honeysuckle, hibiscus! *(she staggers a bit)* Whooo! What a rush! But you don't look like any of those. You would look so pretty in my scrapbook. I collect flowers. Shhhh. It's a secret. I'm not really supposed to 'cause when I pick the flowers they die and mummy gets upset, and it's not good to get mummy upset, cause she loves the flowers and I do too and I try not to pick too many because when you pick the flower you can't enjoy the flower and I do enjoy the flower. I do, I do, I do, I do, I do!

ZEUS: Are you sure you want to date her?

HADES: I do, I do, I do, I do, I do!

PERSEPHONE: I do!

HADES: I do!

PERSEPHONE: I do!

ZEUS: Geez Louise.

*ZEUS wiggles his fingers again. MERVE begins dancing and gesturing.*

PERSEPHONE: What's that, little flower? You want me to pick you? You want to come home with me and be part of my collection? Are you sure? *(she reaches forward)* You are such a pretty flower. *(she pulls back)* I shouldn't. Mummy would get upset. *(she leans forward)* But maybe I could hide you and then mummy wouldn't find out and then she couldn't get upset and I wouldn't get in trouble. *(she pulls back)* I don't like getting in trouble.

HADES: Pick the flower!! Pick it! Pick it! Pick it!

ZEUS: Shhhhh. *(he wiggles his fingers again)*

PERSEPHONE: What's that, little flower? You want me to pick you, now? OK!

*As soon as PERSEPHONE touches MERVE... Everything happens at once. There is lightning and thunder. The rest all rush up to PERSEPHONE, swirling around her in patterns. They lift PERSEPHONE high in the air, carry her around the stage and then deliver her to HADES.*

HADES: Hi. My name is Hades. I like long walks on the beach and strawberry ice cream. I also run the Underworld. You're not allergic to mould, are you?

*There is thunder and lightning. The lights go out. When they come back on, HADES and PERSEPHONE have gone. ZEUS is alone centre stage.*

ZEUS: That went well. Merve!

*ZEUS starts to whistle. MERVE brings out a chair and a newspaper for ZEUS. At the same time DEMETER enters and starts to search for PERSEPHONE.*

DEMETER: Persephone!

*ZEUS and MERVE freeze. They look at each other. MERVE slowly goes back to setting up the chair. ZEUS starts whistling again. DEMETER crosses the stage.*

DEMETER: Persephone!

*ZEUS and MERVE freeze again. They look at each other. ZEUS starts to whistle again, more slowly, then opens his paper. MERVE takes a stance behind ZEUS' chair.*

*DEMETER crosses the stage getting more frantic.*

DEMETER: Persephone!

*ZEUS rattles his paper.*

DEMETER: Persephone!

*ZEUS rattles his paper louder.*

DEMETER: Persephone!!

*ZEUS crumples his paper into a tiny ball and tosses it into the air. MERVE catches the ball and throws it to another GEEK.*

*DEMETER crosses to ZEUS.*

DEMETER: Zeus.

ZEUS: *(not looking)* Hmm?

DEMETER: Zeus.

ZEUS: *(turning)* What? Oh Demeter! How lovely to see you!

DEMETER: Zeus have you –

ZEUS: My dear sister, we never talk anymore.

DEMETER: Zeus have you –

ZEUS: How's it going?

DEMETER: Zeus have you –

ZEUS: Did I tell you – *(he starts laughing)* It's the funniest thing...

DEMETER: *(as fast as she can)* Have you seen Persephone?

ZEUS: What?

DEMETER: Have –

ZEUS: What?

DEMETER: Persephone.

ZEUS: Who?

DEMETER: My daughter, Zeus.

ZEUS: How is she?

DEMETER: (*getting really upset*) Have. You. Seen. Her?

ZEUS: Can't say I have. How is she?

DEMETER: (*smoke is starting to come out her ears*) Zeus...

ZEUS: Have you met my new best friend? His name is Merve.

*MERVE waves but takes a big step away from DEMETER.*

DEMETER: Zeus.

ZEUS: He juggles weevils.

DEMETER: Zeus.

ZEUS: Live weevils.

*DEMETER jumps up and down and screams in frustration.*

ZEUS: Is there something wrong?

DEMETER: Do you know what happened to Persephone?

ZEUS: Who?

DEMETER: Zeus, I'm starting to get upset and the person standing in front of me when I get upset is not going to be very happy.

ZEUS: Buzz off, Merve. (*MERVE moves away*) Sorry, Dem, I should have known you wouldn't be in favour of juggled weevils. Now what's this all about? Something up?

DEMETER: Persephone is missing.

ZEUS: I'm sure she's around. You know. Around. In the area. In an around fashion. You know?

DEMETER: (*right up close to ZEUS*) I'm going to get to the bottom of this and if I find out you had anything to do with it... (*she gives a low growl*)

*There is thunder and lightning as DEMETER stalks off. ZEUS and MERVE look at each other.*

ZEUS: That went well.

*MERVE steps forward. The GEEKS take up their places again as the field of flowers. During the following the flowers start to droop and wane.*

*DEMETER moves about the stage searching for PERSEPHONE. ZEUS stands off to the side, watching the events.*

MERVE: While Demeter searched for Persephone, everything went by the wayside. The earth mourned as Demeter mourned. No flowers grew.

DEMETER: Persephone!

MERVE: No crops flourished.

DEMETER: Persephone!

MERVE: There was no harvest.

DEMETER: Persephone!

MERVE: For the first time, famine had come to the land.

*APHRODITE, ATHENA and HERA approach ZEUS. They are not happy. They each tug on ZEUS as they talk to him.*

APHRODITE: Zeus!

ATHENA: Zeus!

HERA: Zeus!

ZEUS: Aphrodite, Athena, and Hera. How lovely to see you ladies. My daughters and my wife all together, all bonding; isn't that wonderful? Doesn't that tug at the heart strings? Ah, the family ties, is there anything more precious than that? Excuse me, I need a tissue.

*ZEUS tries to leave and all three block him.*

HERA: You have to talk to your sister.

ATHENA: You have to do something.

HERA: This is a serious problem.

APHRODITE: No one wants to have any fun.

HERA: You have to get Persephone back.

ZEUS: Why do I have to do something?

ATHENA: People are getting worried.

HERA: And hungry.

APHRODITE: And very, very cranky.

ATHENA: The earth is dry and cracked.

APHRODITE: The fields are brown and lifeless.

ATHENA: The world has never been like this before.

HERA: Tell Demeter to start paying attention to the harvest.

ZEUS: Oh, she'll come around.

APHRODITE, ATHENA & HERA: Zeus!

ZEUS: What? I'm busy.

HERA: You're not going to do anything?

ZEUS: I'm very busy! I'm learning to juggle weevils.

APHRODITE: (*snapping her fingers*) I got it! I got it! (*she turns to the other girls*) Helios!

ATHENA: Helios!

HERA: Of course!

APHRODITE: Why didn't we think of her before?

ZEUS: What are you gonna do?

HERA: Get out of our way.

*The three trample over ZEUS and cross the stage to where DEMETER stands despondent.*

APHRODITE: Demmy!

ATHENA: Demmy!

HERA: How are you?

*DEMETER gives a growl of frustration. She dances up and down. There is thunder and lightning and the lights flicker. There is a small pause.*

APHRODITE, ATHENA & HERA: OK...

HERA: We're here to help.

ATHENA: We have the perfect plan for you.

ZEUS: (*from the other side of the stage*) No plan is perfect!

APHRODITE, ATHENA & HERA: Helios!

DEMETER: The sun? What can the sun do for me? Can the sun deliver my daughter? Create her warm embrace? Until Persephone is by my side there is no sun, no moon, no day, no night.

APHRODITE, ATHENA & HERA: OK...

ATHENA: We think the sun can help, Dem.

DEMETER: Nothing can help.

HERA: Helios sees everything that happens in the day.

APHRODITE: She probably saw what happened to Persephone!

DEMETER: Why didn't you say so! (*calling out*) Helios! Helios!

*HELIOS is up above either on a ladder, or on the shoulder of one of the other GEEKS, or ideally sitting on a trapeze with fabric rays streaming out from her costume. The rays should be held out by two GEEKS who also act as her ECHO.*

*DEMETER and the others rush to stand underneath HELIOS.*

HELIOS: Greetings.

ECHO ONE: Greetings.

ECHO TWO: Greetings.

HELIOS: Greetings, Demeter.

DEMETER: Helios, my daughter is missing. Did you see what happened to her?

HELIOS: Helios sees all...

ECHO ONE: Sees all...

ECHO TWO: Sees all...

HELIOS: From dawn to dusk.

ECHO ONE: Dusk...

ECHO TWO: Dusk...

HELIOS: Helios knows all...

ECHO ONE: Knows all...

ECHO TWO: Knows all...

HELIOS: From sky to dust.

ECHO ONE: Dust...

ECHO TWO: Dust.

DEMETER: So what did you see? Tell me what you saw!

*The ECHOES start to hum and keep it up during HELIOS' pronouncement. HELIOS raises her arms.*

HELIOS: The ground opened up and a hand reached from beyond.

DEMETER: Whose hand?

HELIOS: A hand reached up, and formed a stealing bond.

DEMETER: Whose hand!

HELIOS: A face looked up and a voice was heard.

DEMETER: Whose voice?

HELIOS: 'Twas Hades who took Persephone to the Underworld.

ATHENA, APHRODITE & HERA: Hades?

ZEUS: Oh crap.

DEMETER: Hades? It was Hades? I'll skin him alive!

ZEUS: Merve, you better get the weevils.

*DEMETER starts to roar offstage. The others stop her.*

HERA: Wait a minute, wait a minute! Hades has trouble putting his shoes on. He'd never ask a girl out, let alone take one.

ATHENA: Hades wouldn't have the nerve to do this on his own.

APHRODITE: Hades is terrified of girls.

ATHENA: So someone helped him.

DEMETER: But who?

*All four turn to look at ZEUS.*

DEMETER: You.

ZEUS: On second thought, I'll get the weevils.

*ZEUS runs away.*

APHRODITE, ATHENA & HERA: Zeus!

DEMETER: Freeze!

*ZEUS freezes mid-stride.*

APHRODITE: Don't move a muscle.

ATHENA: Did you know about this?

HERA: Did you help Hades?

ATHENA: You did, didn't you?

APHRODITE: Didn't you!

APHRODITE, HERA & ATHENA: Say something!

ZEUS: *(with a closed mouth)* Sorry. Not moving a muscle.

*DEMETER roars and launches herself at ZEUS, jumping on his back. The two crash to the floor.*

HERA: Go Demmy!

ZEUS: It's not nice to jump on the ruler of the gods!

DEMETER: Tell Hades to give back my daughter.

ZEUS: You know I never visit the Underworld.

*DEMETER twists ZEUS' arm behind his back.*

DEMETER: Say uncle. Uncle!

ZEUS: I can't go. I'm allergic to mould.

DEMETER: *(twisting harder)* Say it!

ZEUS: Ow! Uncle!

DEMETER: *(she lets go of his arm but stays on his back)* What are you going to do? And it better be good.

ZEUS: I'll send Hermes down there. He'll get her back.

DEMETER: And you won't stop till Hades gives her up?

ZEUS: And you'll let some crops grow?

*DEMETER growls again and twists ZEUS' arm.*

ZEUS: Uncle! Uncle!

*DEMETER and ZEUS get up. ZEUS is pouting.*

ZEUS: It's not nice to twist the arm of the ruler of the gods.

HERA: Serves you right.

APHRODITE & ATHENA: Yeah!

ZEUS: You're not the boss of me, you know!

*DEMETER growls and lunges toward ZEUS again.  
ZEUS shouts out.*

ZEUS: Hermes!

*Everyone clears out. MERVE steps forward.*

MERVE: And so Zeus sent his messenger Hermes into the dark and dangerous Underworld to ask Hades to return Persephone. It was a long arduous journey. Hermes had to cross the river Acheron, the river of woe, guided by the skeletal Charon: ferryman for dead souls. He had to soothe the savage three-headed serpent-tailed beast, Cerberus, who guards the gates allowing all to enter and none to leave. He had to calm the Furies of their frenzied, fevered wails. Until, at long last, Hermes found himself in front of the throne of Hades: god of the Underworld.

*During the above HADES and PERSEPHONE enter and move centre stage. There should be a huge procession around the two, with everyone involved – solemn ritualistic movements and gestures. Low humming. Waving banners. The GEEKS bring chairs out for HADES and PERSEPHONE. Everything should be large and solemn building up to the end of MERVE's speech.*

*As soon as MERVE stops talking, PERSEPHONE breaks the mood completely: She claps her hands in glee and gives a loud braying laugh.*

PERSEPHONE: I SOOOOOO totally used to do that when I was a kid.

HADES: Can you touch your tongue to your nose?

PERSEPHONE: I can twist my tongue.

HADES: That is so cool.

PERSEPHONE: Can you crack your knuckles? I've always wanted to be able to do that.

HADES: I can wiggle my ears.

PERSEPHONE: You are so talented.

HADES: No you are.

PERSEPHONE: You are.

HADES: You are.

*HERMES approaches and bows low before HADES and PERSEPHONE.*

HERMES: (*not really serious*) Hail Mighty Hades, god of the Underworld. Ohhhhhhhh I shake and tremble in your presence.

PERSEPHONE: Who's this guy?

HADES: What do you want, Hermes? Why are you bugging me and my eternal happiness?

HERMES: Right. Well, there seems to be a bit of a brouhaha over your eternal happiness.

PERSEPHONE: Oh, oh. Mummy got upset, didn't she.

HERMES: If you call stopping the growth of every little thing on earth upset...

PERSEPHONE: Hady-poo, I told you I should have sent her a postcard. I have to go.

HADES: But I want you to stay.

PERSEPHONE: And I want to stay. But when mummy gets upset...

HERMES: Famine in the land, folks.

PERSEPHONE: See, I have to go.

HADES: Stay Sephy.

PERSEPHONE: I want to stay. Ooooooh I want to stay. I'm staying.

HERMES: Crops dying, trees dying, flowers dying...

PERSEPHONE: Flowers! Hady-poo I don't like it when flowers die.

HADES: But you pick them.

PERSEPHONE: That's different! That's one or two at a time. Three tops. I don't like it when they die all at once. You don't either, right?

HADES: But everything's dead here.

PERSEPHONE: I miss the flowers. I haven't seem them in so long.

HERMES: (*high voice, mocking*) Hady-poo, whatever will we do?

PERSEPHONE: Oh woe! Oh double woe! Oh triple woe!

HADES: Wait a minute with the woe! (*he turns to look at PERSEPHONE*)  
The pomegranate seeds! How could we forget?

PERSEPHONE: The seeds! You're so smart, Hady.

HADES: Oh, you're much smarter than me.

PERSEPHONE: No, you are.

HADES: You are.

HERMES: Before I completely toss my lunch all over this nice marble floor, can we get back to the seeds?

PERSEPHONE: When I came down to the Underworld, Hady gave me a tour and I saw the three-headed puppy, and all the spirits –

HADES: And Uncle Charon.

PERSEPHONE: And Uncle Charon, and there were these pomegranate seeds.

HADES: And she ate some.

PERSEPHONE: (*sheepishly*) Four.

HADES: She did.

PERSEPHONE: I did. I admit it. They were really good and there's not so much to eat around here. Hady-poo we have to do something about that.

HADES: Anything for you my sweet.

PERSEPHONE: You're the sweetest.

HADES: You are.

HERMES: I'm going to start shoving pinecones up my nose any second now! What does this mean?

HADES: Since Sephy ate four pomegranate seeds; she is bound to the Underworld for four months.

PERSEPHONE: (*gleefully*) I get to stay!

HADES: No matter what her mother says!

PERSEPHONE: Hooray! No woe!

HERMES: Wait a minute with the no woe! I have to bring Persephone back. If I don't, my goose is going to be charcoal.

HADES: There are twelve months in the year, right?

PERSEPHONE: Riiiiight.

HADES: Persephone spends four of them with me.

PERSEPHONE: Four pomegranate seeds...

HADES: And the rest of the year with Demeter.

PERSEPHONE: No flowers dying all at once!

HERMES: No charcoal, Hermes!

HADES, PERSEPHONE & HERMES: Hooray!

*They hug. MERVE steps forward. DEMETER crosses to meet PERSEPHONE. They hug.*

MERVE: And so Persephone left the Underworld and returned to Demeter, who wasn't one hundred percent happy to hear about the pomegranate seeds.

DEMETER: What?

*There is thunder and lightning. Everyone ducks.*

MERVE: But she was happy Persephone was happy.

PERSEPHONE: Mummy, wait until I tell you about my new boyfriend.

ZEUS: I knew it would all work out.

*DEMETER growls at ZEUS.*

ZEUS: It's not nice to growl at the ruler of the gods, you know.

*All the characters stand together to form a family portrait.*

MERVE: And so when Persephone was with her mother, the land flourished, flowers grew and crops were bountiful. But when time came for Persephone to return to “Hady-poo...”

HADES: I heard that!

MERVE: Demeter mourned. The land grew cold and barren. Plants and flowers withered under a blanket of snow. And that is how the seasons came to be.

*MERVE moves as if he is a photographer taking a picture of the group.*

MERVE: Everyone say Hady-poo!

EVERYONE BUT HADES & PERSEPHONE: Hady-poo!

PERSEPHONE: Don’t make fun of my boyfriend!

ZEUS: That went well, don’t you think?

*Everyone holds their position and smiles. After a second they break position. VIGIT comes centre stage. She gives a big sigh.*

VIGIT: *(not very excited)* What’s next, oh great Zeus, tell us oh tell us please.

ISHY: Vigit. You have to give it a little more oomph!

VIGIT: I didn’t get an elephant on a bicycle; I have to oomph for a maggot in a top hat. This sucks. *(she pouts off to the side)*

ISHY: That’s better.

OSINA: Does Manso look taller in that hat?

ISHY: Osina...

OSINA: What? Can’t a girl ask a question?

ISHY: Next story!

ALL: What next? What next? What tale to tell? Do say, don’t tease, ‘cause we’re on pins and needles – please!

MANSO: Perseus and Medusa!

*Everyone cheers and gets into place. MEDUSA comes forward. She is very cruel. Two other GEEKS move around her, hissing and shaking rattles. They act menacing and snakelike.*

*NOTE: If PERSEUS isn't a big muscular actor, he has to pretend he's big and muscular. A sweatshirt stuffed with fake muscles would do the trick.*

## **Perseus And Medusa**

MEDUSA: I am Medusa. Hear my approach and beware. Hear my approach and desssssssssssspair.

*PERSEUS galumphs forward.*

PERSEUS: Hi! I'm Perseus. I may not be very bright. But I have a lot of might. I put up a good fight. And that's all right!

*There is thunder and lightning. Everyone stares at PERSEUS.*

PERSEUS: What?

VIGIT: *(stifling a giggle)* Who told you you could rhyme?

PERSEUS: Don't you like it?

ISHY: Why? Why are you doing that? You didn't do it last show!

PERSEUS: I'm exploring my character.

*ISHY groans and grabs PERSEUS. She drags him across the stage to stand with POLYDECTES*

ISHY: Perseus and his mother Danae lived in Seriphos where King Polydectes reigned. Even though Perseus and Danae were not well off, they had a place in the palace because Polydectes was in love with Danae.

PERSEUS: Wait, wait! I got a better one. *(he poses – in the next line he emphasizes the 'us')* I am Perseus. But I don't drive a bus. And if you make a fuss, I will make pus... *(completely losing the rhythm)* come out of you. Hmm. That doesn't quite work. *(sees everyone staring at him again)* What?

MERVE: *Ischy? (No response. He taps her on the shoulder.) Ischy!*

ISHY: *(dazed)* I feel like my brain has been beaten by the stupid stick. *(she shakes her head)* Sorry. Um, King wants Danae, Danae

doesn't want King. King afraid of getting beat up by Perseus. King comes up with a plan to get rid of Perseus. OK, go!

POLYDECTES: (*a sleazy hipster*) Perseus, I've come to tell you I'm not in love with your mother anymore.

PERSEUS: No?

POLYDECTES: No sir, not in the slightest.

PERSEUS: (*a little too excited*) That's great! (*realizing he may have gone too far*) Oh. Really?

POLYDECTES: I have a new love. Her name is Hippo... hippo... Hippodameia? Sure. In fact, we're going to get married. Hippo and me. Isn't that great?

PERSEUS: Really great! Thanks for telling me!

*He starts to leave but POLYDECTES pulls him back.*

POLYDECTES: But you see, Perseus, there's a little custom in this kingdom when the king gets married. Just a little thing we do to celebrate the happy news. All the young men in the kingdom have to each present the King, that's me, with a present. Sort of a pot luck thing. (*he claps PERSEUS on the back*) What have you got to give me, Percy?

ISHY: But Perseus had nothing. And King Polydectes knew this full well.

PERSEUS: Oh sire, I am but a poor man. My pockets are an empty pan. I could make you a flan? Or sew a caftan?

VIGIT: (*grabbing PERSEUS*) Stop rhyming or I'll pull your uvula through your nose!

PERSEUS: (*fast*) I have no wealth or possessions to give you.

POLYDECTES: It is law in this kingdom, Perseus. You must contribute. I wish there was something I could do, I wish, I wish, I wish – but I can't. Them's the rules.

PERSEUS: I would do anything for you.

POLYDECTES: Anything?

PERSEUS: Sure.

POLYDECTES: Right, then. Bring me the head of Medusa.

*The GEEKS hiss and shake rattles.*

PERSEUS: What?

POLYDECTES: (*very slimy*) Hey, this may be a dangerous, all-consuming, probably life-threatening task – but you would be the most important hero in all of Seriphos. That would be the best tribute anyone could ever give me.

PERSEUS: Ah... OK? I'll do it. I am up for the task.

*MEDUSA moves centre stage in a haughty manner. The others around her lose their snake movements for a moment and move like MEDUSA, as if they were all members of a snotty club.*

ISHY: A long time ago, Medusa had been a beautiful woman. She had the most beautiful hair in all the land. It was her greatest attribute. But she was cruel and she was vain. She put herself and her beauty above all things and the gods punished her.

*There is the sound of thunder and lightning. Those around MEDUSA retain their snakelike sounds and gestures.*

ISHY: Medusa became a monster. Her beautiful hair transformed into a nest of snakes, her face so ugly that anyone who looked upon it turned to stone. King Polydectes knew this. He knew he had just given Perseus an impossible task. He knew Perseus would probably never return.

*POLYDECTES exits laughing.*

ISHY: Perseus also knew the impossible nature of the task. He knelt and wept by the river. And he spoke in plain English and he didn't try to rhyme anything at all at any time cause he knows it hurts our brains so.

PERSEUS: Hmft. (*back into it*) Oh great gods what am I to do? I have been given this impossible task. It is hopeless and bleak. It will take me much longer than a... than I thought.

*The group of GEEKS begin a low constant hum. ATHENA and HERMES enter.*

ATHENA: Young Perseus rise. Hermes and I will aid you with your task.

PERSEUS: Hermes? Athena? Great Zeus! I never would have – why would you help me?

HERMES: You are a great warrior, Perseus. A champion. A hero. You deserve a fair fight. And besides... we like it when you rhyme.

ATHENA: Yeah.

*HERMES and ATHENA blow a raspberry at everyone. All the GEEKS blow raspberries right back at them.*

ATHENA: There is a way to complete this task Perseus. All you need is the proper tools and the proper guidance.

*The GEEKS hum again for the presentation of the gifts.*

ISHY: And the gods gave Perseus three gifts.

ATHENA: First, a sword and shield.

ISHY: The sword to sever Medusa's head and the shield to protect Perseus from her stony gaze.

HERMES: Next, my very own winged shoes.

ISHY: To travel swiftly over land and sea.

ATHENA: And last, a special satchel to hold the monster's head.

ISHY: For death does not stop the dangers of Medusa. Perseus knew he had been blessed.

PERSEUS: But where do I find Medusa?

HERMES: You must travel to the end of the earth. There you will find the Grae Sisters. They will know.

ATHENA: Be wary of them, Perseus. The sisters have sat at the edge of everything for thousands of years. They are weathered and weary with one tooth between them and only one eye. They are not inclined to give up their secrets.

*ATHENA and HERMES exit.*

ISHY: Perseus flew to the end of the earth with the help of the winged shoes and found the Grae sisters: Enyo, which means Horror.

ALL: (*whisper*) Horror.

ISHY: Deino, which means Dread.

ALL: (*whisper*) Dread.

ISHY: And Pemphredo, which means Alarm.

ALL: (*whisper*) Alarm.

*As each sister is introduced, she comes forward. The three are old hags covered in grey rags. They should keep their eyes shut tight, unless they are in possession of the eye and in that case, they only open one eye.*

*NOTE: Keep up the pace between the three. It should sound like one person speaking.*

ENYO: Oh.

DEINO: Oh.

PEMPHREDO: Oh.

ENYO: So.

DEINO: Cold.

PEMPHREDO: So.

ENYO: Cold.

DEINO: Today.

PEMPHREDO: Wind.

ENYO: Howls.

DEINO: Oh.

PEMPHREDO: The.

ENYO: Wind.

DEINO: Through.

PEMPHREDO: My.

ENYO: Bones.

DEINO: Oh.

PEMPHREDO: It.

ENYO: Aches.

DEINO: So.

PEMPHREDO: Oh.

ENYO: Oh.

DEINO: Oh.

PEMPHREDO: Oh!

ENYO: What?

PEMPHREDO: Sisters!

DEINO: What?

PEMPHREDO: I see –

ENYO: Pass it me.

DEINO: Let me see.

*PERSEUS approaches the sisters.*

ENYO: Oh!

DEINO: What?

ENYO: Sisters!

PEMPHREDO: What?

DEINO: Let me see! Oh! A man!

ENYO: Pass it me!

PEMPHREDO: Let me see!

ENYO: Pass the eye to me!

PERSEUS: Greetings, Grae Sisters.

ENYO: Oh.

DEINO: Oh.

PEMPHREDO: Oh.

ENYO: Leave.

DEINO: Us.

PEMPHREDO: Alone.

ENYO: Pass it me.

DEINO: Let me see.

PEMPHREDO: Pass the eye to me.

PERSEUS: I don't wish to disturb you. I only wish to know which direction I could find Medusa.

ALL THREE: Medusa!

ENYO: Fool.

DEINO: Fool.

PEMPHREDO: Fool.

ENYO: We.

DEINO: Will.

PEMPHREDO: Never.

ENYO: Tell.

DEINO: Our.

PEMPHREDO: Secrets.

ENYO: Pass it me.

DEINO: Let me see.

PEMPHREDO: Pass the eye to me.

PERSEUS: If you would just tell me, I promise not to bother you anymore.

ENYO: Pass it me.

DEINO: Let me see.

PEMPHREDO: Pass the eye to me.

*PERSEUS reaches out and snatches the eye from PEMPHREDO.*

ENYO: Pass it me.

DEINO: Let me see.

PEMPHREDO: Pass the eye to me.

ENYO: Where is it?

ALL THREE: You have it!

ENYO: You!

DEINO: You!

PEMPHREDO: You!

ENYO: Not I.

DEINO: Not I.

PEMPHREDO: Not I.

PERSEUS: I have the eye, sisters.

ALL THREE: Give it back!

ENYO: Only.

DEINO: Eye!

ALL THREE: Only eye!

PERSEUS: If you want the eye then tell me where Medusa is.

ENYO: Oh.

DEINO: Oh.

PEMPHREDO: Oh.

PERSEUS: Tell me!

ALL THREE: Never!

PERSEUS: You must!

ALL THREE: Never!

PERSEUS: I'll crush the eye.

ENYO: Then.

DEINO: Do.

PEMPHREDO: It.

PERSEUS: Huh. What do I do – (*getting an idea*) Oh! (*he jumps up and down and does a little dance*)

VIGIT: (*aside to ISHY, with humour*) Can we replace him with sea fungus for the next show?

ISHY: Shhh!

PERSEUS: You'll never tell me where Medusa is?

ALL THREE: Never!

PERSEUS: One last chance...

ALL THREE: Never!

PERSEUS: OK. (*he takes a deep breath, stands right before the sisters and...*) I am Perseus. But I don't drive a bus. And if you make a fuss. I'll put you in a truss.

*All three sisters clap their hands over their ears and start to howl.*

PERSEUS: And if we're in a tussle, then I'll use my muscle, and if you're really lucky I may do the hustle!

ENYO: Make.

DEINO: It.

PEMPHREDO: Stop.

ENYO: Make.

DEINO: It.

PEMPHREDO: Stop.

ALL THREE: We'll do anything!

PERSEUS: Where is Medusa?

*All three point in the same direction.*

PERSEUS: Thank you.

*PERSEUS returns the eye and exits.*

ENYO: Pass it me.

DEINO: Let me see.

PEMPHREDO: Pass the eye to me.

*The lights change and grow dark. There is the faint sound of hissing and rattles. Everyone scatters about the stage as the statues of those MEDUSA has turned to stone.*

ISHY: Perseus reached the cave of Medusa in no time. It was dark and ominous. Scattered all around were statues of those who had attempted to confront Medusa and failed. Perseus was not afraid but with each step he grew more and more...

VIGIT: Stupid?

ISHY: Perplexed.

PERSEUS: How am I to cut off Medusa's head if I can't look at her? I must look at her to know where to aim but if I look I'll be turned to stone! What am I to do?

ISHY: Not the sharpest tool in the shed. Athena, go talk to him.

ATHENA: Perseus! Use the shield. Look at the reflection of Medusa in the shield, not at her.

PERSEUS: Say, that's a good idea.

*MEDUSA starts to move slowly across the stage. Those around her slither, hiss and shake their rattles.*

ISHY: Perseus did not have to look far to find Medusa. She had found him.

*One of the GEEKS beats a drum, while the snake creatures shake the rattles in time. MEDUSA and her snakes do a serpentine dance across the stage, circling PERSEUS who has his eyes tightly shut.*

MEDUSA: Look at me Perseussssss... Look at me... Look at me and feel the gravel through your veinssss. Feel the heavy of your heart. Feel the weight of that sssssssword for one brief ssssssssecond before you feel abssssssolutely nothing at all.

*At the end of the dance PERSEUS draws back and prepares to fight.*

ISHY: Keeping his eyes firmly planted on the shield, Perseus swung with all his might.

*PERSEUS swings his sword. MEDUSA ducks and everyone gasps. He swings again. MEDUSA ducks and everyone gasps. PERSEUS fakes a swing to the left. MEDUSA moves right. PERSEUS, in slow-motion, finally hits his mark. MEDUSA cries out and drops to the ground, along with her SNAKE companions. Another GEEK gives PERSEUS a traditional looking MEDUSA head, with a mass of snakes for hair. PERSEUS holds the head by the hair, still not looking at it.*

ISHY: He had done it! The head of Medusa was his.

PERSEUS: Maybe one peek wouldn't hurt...

ALL: No, don't!

PERSEUS: OK, OK, I won't!

ISHY: Perseus carefully put the head into the satchel and then flew on the wind, back to his mother and King Polydectes.

*PERSEUS exits. Everyone changes position. Two chairs are brought out for POLYDECTES and DANAE. Everyone else acts as courtiers.*

ISHY: King Polydectes had been quite busy in Perseus' absence. Of course, he had no intention of marrying Hippodameia. He spent all his time pressing Danae to marry him.

POLYDECTES: Please?

DANAE: No.

POLYDECTES: Please?

DANAE: No.

POLYDECTES: Please?

DANAE: No.

*PERSEUS bursts into the throne room. Everyone gasps.*

DANAE: Perseus!

ALL: Perseus!

POLYDECTES: You!

PERSEUS: It is !!

POLYDECTES: You were not to return until you had the head of Medusa.

PERSEUS: And so I do.

POLYDECTES: I don't believe it!

PERSEUS: You don't?

POLYDECTES: Not a whit. There is not one person in all the world who has survived Medusa's snaky stare. You lie like a rug, Percy.

DANAE: If no one has ever survived, then why did you send my son on such an impossible task?

POLYDECTES: Uh...

PERSEUS: No fear, mother. I do have Medusa's head right here in this sack. But I understand King Polydectes' reluctance to believe me. I guess the only thing to do, sire, is to show you.

POLYDECTES: That's right. Show me. Pull that head right out of that there sack and show me.

PERSEUS: Look carefully. Make sure you all look carefully. (*as he opens the bag*) Mother, shut your eyes!

*Everyone leans in to stare at the bag, except for PERSEUS and DANAË. A bell rings and everyone looking at the head turns to stone.*

ISHY: Perseus and Danae were suddenly surrounded by stone figures. For the head of Medusa did not lose its power just because it was separated from the body.

*PERSEUS and DANAË move centre stage.*

PERSEUS: Is there any dinner left, mother? I haven't eaten since the end of the world.

DANAË: Anything for you, my son.

PERSEUS: And I came up with a whole bunch of new rhymes during my travels. I can't wait to share them with you.

DANAË: That's wonderful, dear. Maybe you can tell me... later.

*They exit. Everyone cheers.*

OSINA: (*waving across the stage at MANSO*) Hi Manso! Can't wait to hear what the next story is!

MANSO: (*waving back*) Ha, ha, ha! (*whispered panic*) Merve! (*he gestures frantically*) Merve!

VIGIT: Don't suck up to him. He won't be Zeus tomorrow, you know.

OSINA: I can't help it. He's growing on me.

ISHY: Osina, you always fall for the guy in the top hat.

OSINA: I do not. He's getting cute.

VIGIT: I'm telling you, he'll be less cute tomorrow.

OSINA: It's the ears. Something about the ears. (*waving*) Yoo hoo! Manso!

MANSO: (*waving*) Yoo hoo Osina! (*whispered panic*) Merve!

MERVE: What's the matter, oh mighty Zeus?

MANSO: There's only five minutes left before intermission.

MERVE: And?

MANSO: We don't have time to do another myth.

MERVE: And?

MANSO: So what do I do, Merve? What do I do? What are we going to do for five minutes? Sit here twiddling our thumbs? We can't do that, Merve, we can't do that!

MERVE: Slow down there buckaroo. No need to panic. What do you want to do?

MANSO: I don't know, I don't know. Why are you asking me 'cause I don't know!

MERVE: I'm asking you because you're Zeus, remember?

MANSO: Oh. Right. Any suggestions?

MERVE: We'll do a Mythapalooza slam jam.

*All the GEEKS give a big cheer and jump up and down.*

MERVE: You guys weren't listening to our conversation were you?

*Everyone freezes in mid-leap and regains their composure.*

ALL: (*syncopated*) No, no, wouldn't do that, course not, why would we, no way, no how, no.

MERVE: Good. Then I can properly announce that we're doing a slam jam!

*The GEEKS give a big cheer and jump up and down. They get into position, talking amongst themselves, deciding who will be on the two teams.*

MERVE: You know the rules: Two teams of two, no hesitating, stumbling, bumbling or fumbling, tag in, tag out. I have the timer, Ishy has the bell and when you hear me shout, you're done. Got it?

ALL: Got it!

MERVE: Good. Team One!

TEAM ONE *hi-fives* MERVE.

MERVE: Orpheus and Eurydice! (*he turns the timer*)

TEAM ONE A: Hi Eurydice.

TEAM ONE B: Hi Orpheus. (*she falls dead*)

TEAM ONE A: Hey, she's dead! (*B gets up and runs around to A's other side. A turns to B.*) Hey Hades, give me back my girl!

TEAM ONE B: OK, but don't look back. (*B turns A around so he's not looking at her. The two start walking in place.*)

TEAM ONE A: I got my girl, I got my girl – Is she really there?

*A turns around. B falls to the ground again.*

TEAM ONE A: Hey she's dead again! Curses! (*he hits the bell*)

MERVE: Daphne and Apollo! (*turns the timer*)

TEAM ONE *hi-fives* TEAM TWO.

TEAM TWO A: Hi Daphne.

TEAM TWO B: Hi Apollo.

TEAM TWO A: You're cute.

TEAM TWO B: Gee is that the time?

TEAM TWO A: Wanna have coffee?

TEAM TWO B: Gotta go! (*she starts running in place*)

TEAM TWO A: Hey! Come back here! (*he starts running in place after B*)

TEAM TWO B: Sorry!

TEAM TWO A: I'm gonna chase you!

TEAM TWO B: I wish I exercised more.

TEAM TWO A: I'm gonna catch you!

TEAM TWO B: Hey Dad! River god Dad! Help!

TEAM TWO A: Got you!

TEAM TWO B: Whoops. I'm a tree!

TEAM TWO A: A tree? You got turned into a tree?

TEAM TWO B: Yeah. Sorry.

TEAM TWO A: You got turned into a tree just to avoid having coffee with me?

TEAM TWO B: I know. It's a bummer.

TEAM TWO A: Curses. (*hits the bell*)

MERVE: Daedalus and Icarus! (*turns the timer*)

TEAM ONE *hi-fives* TEAM TWO.

TEAM ONE A: Icarus, King Minos has us in a tower.

TEAM ONE B: Yes, Dad.

TEAM ONE A: We're going to escape.

TEAM ONE B: Yes, Dad.

TEAM ONE A: We're going to make wings of feathers and wax.

TEAM ONE B: Yes, Dad.

TEAM ONE A: And fly away.

TEAM ONE B: Yes, Dad.

TEAM ONE A: When we go, don't fly near the sun. OK?

TEAM ONE B: Yes, Dad.

TEAM ONE A: Don't fly near the sun.

TEAM ONE B: Yes, Dad.

TEAM ONE A: Don't fly near the sun.

TEAM ONE B: Yes, Dad.

TEAM ONE A: Don't fly near the sun.

TEAM ONE B: OK, Dad! Geez.

TEAM ONE A: Here we go! (*they fly about the stage*)

TEAM ONE B: Hey, I can fly. Hey, there's the sun. Hey, look how close I can get. Hey, the wax is melting off my wings. (*falling*)  
Whaaaaaaaaaaaaa.

TEAM ONE A: Curses. (*he hits the bell*)

MERVE: Atalanta! (*turns the timer*)

*TEAM ONE hi-fives TEAM TWO.*

TEAM TWO B: Hi. I'm gonna get married. But I'm only gonna marry the man who can beat me in a foot race. Beat me, I'll marry you. You win, marriage. If you don't win, you get your head cut off. That ought to keep numbers down.

*B runs around the other side of A to play Aphrodite.*

TEAM TWO A: Aphrodite, I don't want to get my head cut off.

TEAM TWO B: Use these golden apples, Hippomenes. They will help you win.

*B runs around back to the other side of A.*

TEAM TWO A: Hi Atalanta.

TEAM TWO B: Hi. You're going to die, you know.

TEAM TWO A: We'll see. Ready, set, go! *(they mime running in place)*

TEAM TWO B: I'm gonna win. I'm gonna win. *(A mimes lobbing an apple in front of B.)* Oooh! Pretty apples! *(she veers off the race course)*

TEAM TWO A: *(victory pose)* I win!

TEAM TWO B: Curses. *(she hits the bell)*

MERVE: Zeus and Io! *(turns the timer)*

*TEAM ONE hi-fives TEAM TWO.*

TEAM ONE A: Hi Io.

TEAM ONE B: Hi Zeus.

TEAM ONE A: You're cute.

TEAM ONE B: *(fluffing her hair)* Thanks.

TEAM ONE A: Did I tell you about my wife?

TEAM ONE B: No.

TEAM ONE A: I have to turn you into a cow.

TEAM ONE B: What? *(falls on all fours and is a cow)*  
Mooooooooooooooooo.

TEAM ONE A: Oh Hera, is that you?

*B leaps up to run to the other side of A.*

TEAM ONE B: Hi.

TEAM ONE A: Hi.

TEAM ONE B: Nice cow.

TEAM ONE A: Isn't it?

TEAM ONE B: Sure is. What you doing with it?

TEAM ONE A: Just... standing...

TEAM ONE B: Can I have it?

TEAM ONE A: Huh?

TEAM ONE B: It'd make a lovely pet.

TEAM ONE A: Uh...

TEAM ONE B: Wouldn't you like to give your wife a present?

TEAM ONE A: Oh, ah, well, OK... Curses! (*hits the bell*)

MERVE: Heracles! (*to the audience*) Not Hercules. That's Roman. You want Roman stories, go do your own show. Heracles and the Twelve Labours!

ALL: Ooooooooooooooh.

MERVE: What's with the Oooooooooooooh? Are you chicken? (*he makes chicken noises*)

TEAM TWO A: We're not chicken. Stand aside, stand aside.

*TEAM TWO hi-fives TEAM ONE. TEAM TWO breathes in to prepare and then faces each other.*

TEAM TWO B: Heracles.

TEAM TWO A: Eurystheus.

TEAM TWO B: Twelve Labours.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: Kill the Nemean Lion.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of Cake.

TEAM TWO B: Kill the Hydra. Nine heads. Bad breath.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: Ceryneian Hind.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: Ah, ah! You can't kill it or wound it. It's sacred to Artemis and she'll hurt you bad.

TEAM TWO A: Sneaky. Hmmm. Piece of Bavarian Tort.

TEAM TWO B: Erymanthian Boar.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: The Augean Stables.

TEAM TWO A: Huh?

TEAM TWO B: Clean them.

TEAM TWO A: (*scornfully*) Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: Ah ah! There are over 10,000 cattle and the place hasn't been cleaned in 50 years. You do the fertilization math.

TEAM TWO A: OK, OK, OK... Got it! I'll divert a river and send that through the stable making it spick and span and I won't even have to get my pinky dirty.

TEAM TWO B: That's cheating!

TEAM TWO A: Next!

TEAM TWO B: The Stymphalian Birds.

TEAM TWO A: Please. Birds?

TEAM TWO B: They eat human flesh.

TEAM TWO A: Well, that's different. Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: The Cretan Bull.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of cake in my sleep!

TEAM TWO B: The mares of Diomedes.

TEAM TWO A: More cannibals? Boring.

TEAM TWO B: Hippolyta's belt.

TEAM TWO A: I think I can take the belt off an Amazon. Boring, boring.

TEAM TWO B: Steal the Cattle of Geryon.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: The Apples of Hesperides.

TEAM TWO A: Whoa. Let me think about that one. What's the last?

TEAM TWO B: Cerberus, the dog from hell.

TEAM TWO A: Oh piece of cake, piece of cake. Now about them apples...

TEAM TWO B: Ah ha! Ah ha! You can't do it. You've failed! You've lost! You can't get three teeny tiny little apples! Three little itty bitty apples. Three...

TEAM TWO A: Buzz off! Apples, apples, where would I find those apples...

*B runs to the other side of A.*

TEAM TWO B: Hey Heracles.

TEAM TWO A: Hey Prometheus. What you doing?

TEAM TWO B: Oh nothing. Being punished by Zeus. Getting my liver eaten by a giant eagle every afternoon. Not much.

TEAM TWO A: That sucks. Want me to kill the eagle?

TEAM TWO B: If you wouldn't mind.

TEAM TWO A: Piece of cake.

TEAM TWO B: Thanks! What are you doing way out here?

TEAM TWO A: Looking for the Apples of Hesperides. Know where they are?

TEAM TWO B: Sure. Talk to Atlas. He's the only one who can get them.

TEAM TWO A: Thanks dude! (*slaps him on the back*)

TEAM TWO B: No problemo.

*They do a complicated handshake. B runs around to the other side of A. She becomes Atlas holding the weight of the world.*

TEAM TWO A: Atlas! I need your help. I need the Apples of Hesperides.

TEAM TWO B: I'm kind of busy. (*she gestures to her load*) Weight of the world?

TEAM TWO A: I'll hold it for you while you go.

TEAM TWO B: You will?

TEAM TWO A: Sure. Piece of cake. Deal?

TEAM TWO B: Deal.

*They transfer the weight. B walks around A, whistling.*

TEAM TWO A: Did you get them?

TEAM TWO B: (*mimes tossing apples into the air*) Sure did.

TEAM TWO A: Great. Here, take the world back.

TEAM TWO B: No.

TEAM TWO A: What?

TEAM TWO B: I don't want to.

TEAM TWO A: Take the world back!

TEAM TWO B: I don't want the world back.

TEAM TWO A: Dude, you gotta take the weight of the world back.

TEAM TWO B: I like not having the weight of the world.

TEAM TWO A: Come on, you gotta take it back.

TEAM TWO B: Not gonna.

TEAM TWO A: You gotta!

TEAM TWO B: Not gonna.

TEAM TWO A: Uh huh!

TEAM TWO B: Uh uh!

TEAM TWO A: Fine. I'll keep the weight of the world. But... I'm not totally comfortable. I just need a pillow and I'll be good. Can you take the weight of the world while I get my pillow?

TEAM TWO B: OK.

TEAM TWO A: Great. (*they transfer the weight*)

TEAM TWO B: (*realising she's been had*) Curses!

TEAM TWO A: *(with a smile to the audience)* Piece of cake. *(hits the bell)*

MERVE: And time! That's intermission, my friends!

ALL: *(banging tambourines)* Hie! Hie! Hie!

MERVE: Everyone back in fifteen!

*Everyone runs off in every direction, blowing whistles  
and banging on tambourines.*

## ACT TWO

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### Athena And Arachne

*Lights up. The GEEKS run in from every direction, blowing whistles, banging tambourines, etc. They get to centre stage and pose. ATHENA is in the middle.*

ATHENA: I am Athena, goddess of Wisdom, justice and skill. Protector of arts and industry. I never have and never will surrender to defeat.

*There is thunder and lightning. Everyone scatters into place. ATHENA stays centre and poses.*

ISHY: Long time ago Athena was known as a warrior with the fairest of heart. She may have never suffered a defeat, but she also never lost her temper.

*Some of the male GEEKS snort and laugh, which they instantly turn into coughs when ATHENA gives them a withering stare.*

ISHY: Once. She lost her temper, once and only once. This is the story of Athena and Arachne.

*As ISHY is talking, a group of GEEKS take centre stage. They form a crowd of TOWNSPEOPLE behind ISHY with their backs to the audience. They are all eagerly awaiting something. There is a buzz of excitement. ISHY taps one of the TOWNSPEOPLE on the shoulder.*

ISHY: What's happening?

TOWNSPERSON ONE: Arachne is unveiling a new tapestry today.

TOWNSPERSON TWO: It is so exciting!

TOWNSPERSON THREE: Do you really think it could be better than her last?

TOWNSPERSON ONE: Of course.

TOWNSPERSON TWO: She's the best weaver in the village.

TOWNSPERSON THREE: On this side of the valley and the next!

TOWNSPERSON ONE: On this side of the mountain and the next!

TOWNSPERSON TWO: In the whole country!

ISHY: *(to the audience)* I'm sure this won't cause any problems.

*The TOWNSPEOPLE start to chant and clap.*

TOWNSPEOPLE: Arachne! Arachne! Arachne!

*The crowd splits. Through the centre ARACHNE walks downstage. She acknowledges the cheers with great ego and arrogance. She is guided by her mother, IBRON.*

ARACHNE: Thank you. Thank you. You are incredibly kind. Thank you.

ISHY: Arachne and her mother lived well off of Arachne's skills and fame. Of course, it all went to their heads.

TOWNSPERSON ONE: Arachne, can I have your autograph?

IBRON: No autographs!

ARACHNE: You fool!

IBRON: Fool!

ARACHNE: I never sign autographs.

IBRON: Never!

ARACHNE: What if I were to sprain a finger muscle? I wouldn't be able to work my loom. Shame on you!

IBRON: Shame on you! Do you want Arachne to sprain a finger muscle?

TOWNSPERSON ONE: No, no, how stupid of me!

TOWNSPERSON THREE: Arachne! When do we get to see the tapestry?

CROWD: The tapestry! The tapestry!

IBRON: No crowding, no crowding! Give the master weaver air!

TOWNSPERSON TWO: Please, Arachne! Let us see your work!

*They all start to babble all at once. ARACHNE holds up her hands.*

ARACHNE: I am ready to reveal the tapestry.

*The TOWNSPEOPLE clap and move to the side. Two GEEKS hold a cloth in front of another group of GEEKS who will form the tapestry.*

ARACHNE: I believe this is my finest to date. I have created a masterpiece, there is no doubt. Behold!

*The two GEEKS lift the cloth away. The group behind has formed a tableau – a battle scene from the Trojan War. The TOWNSPEOPLE applaud.*

TOWNSPEOPLE: (*syncopated*) It's marvellous! Stupendous! Tremendous! The colours! The detail! Breathtaking! Arachne! Arachne! Arachne!

*A young girl steps forward.*

DAMARA: But where are the gods?

*There is sudden quiet as everyone turns to look at her.*

IBRON: What did you say?

DAMARA: It's a beautiful tapestry. The best I've ever seen. The Trojan war come to life.

IBRON: Exactly.

DAMARA: But there aren't any gods in the picture.

ARACHNE: And why should there be? I don't have to put the gods in everything I do. That's preposterous.

DAMARA: But Arachne, you have to thank the gods.

ARACHNE: What for?

DAMARA: They give you your skills.

ARACHNE: Ha! I am the best weaver in the land.

DAMARA: Because Athena made you so.

ARACHNE: Don't be ridiculous. My skills come from me and me alone. Nothing was given to me by anyone.

*The TOWNSPEOPLE gasp.*

TOWNSPERSON THREE: Arachne! How can you say that?

TOWNSPERSON TWO: I would never say that.

ARACHNE: I would and I do. I say it out loud. Athena has her gifts and I have mine. Athena did nothing to make me a weaver. She had nothing to do with making me the best weaver in the world!

*Everyone freezes. There is thunder and lightning. ATHENA stands up in anger.*

ATHENA: She said what?

*There is thunder and lighting again. Everyone, including the GEEKS in the tapestry, scrambles off to the side. ARACHNE remains centre stage in a frozen pose of arrogant defiance.*

*ATHENA comes forward and circles the frozen ARACHNE. She is followed by APHRODITE, DEMETER and HERA.*

ATHENA: She said what?

APHRODITE: She said: Athena did nothing to make me a weaver. She had nothing to do with making me the best weaver in the world! *(she imitates ARACHNE's pose)*

ATHENA: How dare she!

DEMETER: What an impertinent girl.

HERA: We should turn her into a camel.

APHRODITE: She doesn't look very nice.

DEMETER: I would never let Persephone talk to me like that.

HERA: She called you out, Athena.

APHRODITE: She drew her line in the sand and went *(taunting)* "Nah, nah, nah, nah, boo, boo."

ATHENA: Arrrrrrgh!!!!!!!

DEMETER: Athena? Are you all right?

APHRODITE: You have steam coming out your ears.

ATHENA: I would like to crush this girl between my fists until her bones and blood become dust in my fingers.

APHRODITE: That doesn't sound good.

DEMETER: *(moving ATHENA away from ARACHNE)* Maybe we should deal with her. You're a little bit tense.

HERA: Let me turn her into a camel. See how easy it is for her to weave then.

APHRODITE: She's not that good a weaver anyway.

DEMETER: Not at all.

HERA: She's the worst.

ATHENA: (*returning to stare at ARACHNE*) No. She is one of the best. She very well may be the best in the world. (*getting right in ARACHNE's face*) But she has no right to deny the giver of her gifts. She must pay dearly for that.

DEMETER: (*again moving ATHENA away*) And we agree with you, but perhaps we can come up with something other than crushing blood and bone, hmmm?

HERA: I could turn her into a monkey. Haven't you always wanted a monkey for a pet?

APHRODITE: No it was me! I want the monkey!

*As they pull ATHENA off to the side, ISHY steps forward. The TOWNSPEOPLE crowd in once again around ARACHNE.*

ISHY: Athena decided to visit Arachne in disguise. She would give the girl one last chance. As usual, Arachne was surrounded by admirers and she was as egotistical as ever.

ARACHNE: Why should I give thanks for my talents?

IBRON: Her talents!

ARACHNE: I'm the one who does all the work.

IBRON: All the work!

ARACHNE: I'm the one who creates the beauty. (*she cuts off IBRON with a look before IBRON can speak*) Therefore, the only one I have to thank is me.

TOWNSPERSON THREE: And you do not fear the gods.

ARACHNE: Never!

TOWNSPERSON TWO: You don't think Athena will get angry you don't thank her for your gift?

ARACHNE: Idiot!

IBRON: Moron!

ARACHNE: How dare you!

IBRON: Get out of our sight!

ARACHNE: I have a skill. I have a talent. There is no gift.

*ATHENA steps forward, her head covered in a cloak. She speaks and acts as an old woman.*

ATHENA: So. You do not pay Athena tribute for your “skill.”

ARACHNE: (*laughing*) No!

ATHENA: You are quite an arrogant girl.

ARACHNE: Of course I am. I am the best.

ATHENA: You don’t think Athena hears you when you speak?

ARACHNE: I know she does. I know Athena hears me. And she knows I am right.

ATHENA: How do you suppose that?

ARACHNE: If Athena disagrees, why isn’t she here? Why doesn’t she show her face? I’ll tell you why. Athena is afraid of me.

IBRON: Ah, Arachne, that might be going a bit too far.

ARACHNE: Come out Athena! Come out come out wherever you are!

IBRON: Arachne!

ARACHNE: Come out and face me, Athena! Where are you hiding?

TOWNSPERSON ONE: She’s lost her mind!

TOWNSPERSON TWO: She’s crazy!

ARACHNE: You see? Nothing. She’s afraid to show her face. If Athena were here, if she were standing in front of me, I would look her straight in the eye and challenge her to a duel. We would see who works the loom the best. We would see whose tapestries are the greatest, who truly is the master weaver.

ATHENA: That can be arranged.

*ATHENA takes off her cloak. There is thunder and lightning. Everyone on stage gives a scream and dives for the ground. All except for ARACHNE, who*

*stands definitely with her hands on her hips glaring at ATHENA.*

IBRON: *(from the ground)* Please spare my daughter. Please Athena. She did not mean what she said.

ARACHNE: Hush mother. I meant every word.

ATHENA: You are not afraid?

ARACHNE: What have I to be afraid of?

ATHENA: You wish to challenge me on the loom.

ARACHNE: I do.

ATHENA: I accept. Prepare for defeat.

ARACHNE: I prepare for nothing but victory.

TOWNSPERSON THREE: We got ourselves a loom-off!

*The TOWNSPEOPLE scatter. The GEEKS form two groups: One for ATHENA and one for ARACHNE. During the following the two will manoeuvre their group to form a tableau. Everything should be very stylized and fast. The formation of the tableau should start out at the ground and move up the body, forming line by line as a tapestry does on a loom. Therefore the groups should start off as hunched over shapes and gradually form the pose.*

ISHY: The competition went into the night. Each weaver worked fast and furiously. Each weaver was determined to create the best. Their fingers moved faster than light. Their fingers moved with skill. With passion. The looms hummed and grew hot to the touch. So hot that Arachne burned the tips of her fingers.

ARACHNE: *(she gives a cry of pain)* Ah!

ATHENA: Do you surrender?

ARACHNE: Does the loom not hurt your fingers?

ATHENA: Do you surrender?

ARACHNE: Never!

ISHY: If Athena thought Arachne would fade away in the fight and give up, she was sorely mistaken. Arachne would never give up. But the fight took its toll. Arachne sweated blood from her forehead.

She looked as though she would faint on her feet, but refused to fall. Day came and night and day again. But the war raged on.

ATHENA: You might as well give up. You will fail.

ARACHNE: Not only will I not fail, I will finish before the sun sets.

ATHENA: Sunset is only a few moments away.

ARACHNE: Do you surrender?

ATHENA: Never!

ARACHNE: You should surrender, for I am finished!

*Both ARACHNE and ATHENA step away from their tapestries. Both groups of GEEKS are now in their finished poses.*

ISHY: And both tapestries were stunning to behold. Athena had created a tapestry that showed the glory and greatness of the gods. It was breathtaking and beautiful. Arachne, on the other hand, showed the gods looking foolish. It was manic, almost painful to look at. Both were exceptional, incredible works. But Athena's was cold. Reserved. Refined. Arachne had put such detail into her tapestry that the threads came alive.

*Those in ARACHNE'S tapestry begin to undulate and move subtly.*

ISHY: The action leapt straight off the loom. Looking at the two, Athena knew Arachne was right. Arachne was the best weaver.

ATHENA: It's impossible. You cannot be the best. It cannot be!

ISHY: Athena lost her temper.

*ATHENA starts to "tear apart" the tapestries. To show this, the two groups should break apart, swirling around ATHENA as if she's ripping the fabric and creating a whirlwind. The actors should tumble up and over each other. Use swatches of fabric in the movement as well. When ATHENA is finished, the GEEKS move off to the side.*

ISHY: With a cry, Athena let loose her anger on the two tapestries. Shredding the threads. Tearing the fabric apart. Ripping, rending, slashing and clawing. And when there was nothing but a pile of tattered rags on the ground, Athena turned to vent her fury on Arachne.

*During the above ARACHNE has fallen to the ground.  
She is cradled by IBRON.*

IBRON: Arachne! Speak to me, please!

ISHY: Arachne was no immortal. Despite her bravado, the force of the contest had been too much. The girl had died. Athena's rage dissolved in an instant.

*ATHENA kneels beside ARACHNE.*

ATHENA: Young one, you were right. You were the best weaver and your tapestry was a masterpiece to behold. I will grant you a present, Arachne. I cannot bring you back to this state but I can give you another. I can give you a life so that you may weave glorious tapestries all day, every day. Generations to come will forever know the name Arachne.

*A bell is heard. ATHENA helps ARACHNE to her feet.*

ISHY: Athena turned the girl into a spider. And that is why the spider spins such beautiful webs. It is Arachne at her loom, the best weaver in all the world.

*There is a pause. All the GEEKS turn to MANSO.*

ALL: What next? What next? What tale to tell? Do say, don't tease, 'cause we're on pins and needles – please!

MANSO: Ah... ah... *(he starts to wave frantically to MERVE again)* Merve! Merve!

MERVE: Not again. *(he crosses to MANSO)*

OSINA: *(waving cutely)* Anything I can do to help, Manso?

MANSO: *(waving frantically)* Ah, no, everything's fine, it's fine, we'll be right back. *(he pulls MERVE to the side)*

OSINA: He's getting taller, I swear.

VIGIT: It's the hat, I'm telling you.

OSINA: Don't be such a party pooper.

ISHY: Shhh! I'm trying to listen!

*Everyone leans over-exaggeratedly to listen in to MERVE and MANSO's conversation.*

MANSO: *(loud whisper)* Nafi never came back from intermission!

*Everyone gasps loudly. MERVE whips around to stare at them. Everyone turns their heads innocently, trying to look busy.*

MANSO: He never came back and he's in the next myth! What do we do, what do we do, what do we do, do, do?

MERVE: Stop that! There's no need to panic, Manso. We just won't do the Midas story.

*Everyone gasps again.*

ALL: *(very disappointed)* Awwwwwwwww.

MERVE: You all might as well come over here if you're going to be so obvious.

OSINA: No, no, Merve, we wouldn't dream of interrupting your private conversation. Go on. Don't mind us. *(waving cutely)* Hi Manso!

MERVE: Gee thanks. *(back to MANSO)* Hmm. Could someone else play the part? Does anyone else fit the suit?

MANSO: One person.

MERVE: So, ask them.

MANSO: *(holding his throat)* But I fear for my uvula.

MERVE: You're Zeus, Manso. It's your decision. Either we don't do the story –

*Everyone takes a worried breath in. MERVE glares at them. Everyone lets their breath out rather guiltily.*

MERVE: Or you put that top hat on, march over there and act in charge, mister. You can do it.

MANSO: *(putting the hat on)* I can do it.

MERVE: You're the man.

MANSO: I'm the man.

MERVE: You're the boss.

MANSO: *(marching over to the group)* I'm the boss.

MERVE: *(not moving)* I'm right behind you.

MANSO: Vigit! You're wearing the suit.

VIGIT: What?

MANSO: (*fast and frantic*) We need someone to wear the suit, you fit the suit, I'm Zeus, you're not, and you're the only one who can do it, so go!! Go to the suit! Be one with the suit! Go wear the suit like you've never worn a suit before!

VIGIT: (*dazed and startled by this side of MANSO*) But –

MANSO: No buts! Go now! Go, go, go!

VIGIT: (*moved by the momentum*) OK, OK!

*She runs offstage. MANSO frantically moves centre stage.*

MANSO: Merve! Get a move on before she realizes what's happened! King Midas! Hurry!

### King Midas

*Everyone cheers hurriedly. There is hurried thunder and lightning. MERVE runs centre stage with MIDAS. Two GEEKS bring out a tray with a pile of gold coins on it.*

MERVE: King Midas was a good king. A just king. A fair king.

MIDAS: (*in the middle of counting the pile of coins*) Four thousand, seven hundred and sixty eight, Four thousand seven hundred and sixty nine,

MERVE: But he was not always a wise king.

MIDAS: Or was that four thousand seven hundred and ninety six? Oh well! I'll just have to start over. One, two, three...

MERVE: King Midas had a weakness for gold. He loved to look at gold, touch gold, count gold, smell gold...

ALL: Ewwwwwwwww.

MERVE: Hey, don't shoot the messenger.

*PENELOPE, KING MIDAS' daughter runs over and gives her father a hug.*

PENELOPE: Good morning, Father!

MIDAS: Good morning, my little pea pod! (*He waves the GEEKS with the tray away and gives PENELOPE his full attention.*) And what do you have planned for today?

PENELOPE: Calliope and I are going to play dress-up in west wing.

MIDAS: That does sound like fun.

PENELOPE: What are you going to do?

MIDAS: Oh, this and that. King things.

PENELOPE: That sounds like fun too.

MIDAS: You have a good time and I'll see you at dinner.

PENELOPE: Bye Father!

*As PENELOPE starts to leave, Two GUARDS bring in SILENUS, a prisoner. PENELOPE lingers and eavesdrops.*

GUARD ONE: Keep walking, you canker sore.

SILENUS: Stop pushing, stop pushing!

MIDAS: What's this?

GUARD TWO: We found this pile of refuse snoring in the marble fountain.

PENELOPE: Oh, oh! Even I've never done that!

MIDAS: Off you go, pea pod.

*PENELOPE makes to leave but continues to listen.*

SILENUS: I'm the victim here! I am completely waterlogged! I could have drowned.

GUARD ONE: Silence!

GUARD TWO: You are before the King!

SILENUS: Hey, hey, stop pushing!

PENELOPE: He's in big trouble.

MIDAS: That's enough, Penelope. *(he points offstage and PENELOPE goes)* Let's get to the bottom of this. Who are you?

SILENUS: My name is Silenus. *(trying to regain some dignity)* I am a servant of Dionysus.

*The two GUARDS laugh, which they stifle when MIDAS looks at them.*

MIDAS: You are, are you?

SILENUS: I am indeed.

MIDAS: And how did you end up in my fountain?

SILENUS: We were in the middle of a parade. There was some, befuddlement, let's say. The parade went left! And I... went right! Then, I fell prey to thieves! And robbers! And cut-purses!

GUARD ONE: You forgot cut-throats.

SILENUS: And cut-throats! And then... something happened. I blacked out!

GUARD TWO: What a surprise.

SILENUS: Something, someone bopped me on the head and the next thing I know, I'm underwater and being rudely awakened.

GUARD ONE: Sire, you don't believe this blather do you?

SILENUS: King Midas, I speak the truth!

MIDAS: Hmmm. Well, I do know there was a parade last night for Dionysus so it could be true. Besides, I think our friend here is essentially harmless.

SILENUS: Absolutely harmless, sire!

MIDAS: Indeed. And you're going to be on your way and not spend any more time in my fountain?

SILENUS: Absolutely not, sire!

MIDAS: Very good. And here is some coin, Silenus, so you can catch up with your parade.

SILENUS: Thank you, sire. Thank you very much indeed. You're a prince! A prince among men! A King among princes among men!

*SILENUS scampers off. The two GUARDS also exit.  
There is thunder and lightning.*

MERVE: Suddenly the sky darkened, a cloud of smoke hovered above the palace and Dionysus stood before the king.

*Nothing happens. Everyone takes a long look offstage.*

MERVE: *(a little louder)* And Dionysus stood before the king...

VIGIT: *(offstage)* I'm not doing this!

MERVE: Yes you are!

VIGIT: (*offstage*) I was hoodwinked!

MERVE: You were hoodwinked by Manso? Will wonders never cease.

VIGIT: (*offstage*) When I get my hands on that maggot...

OSINA: Hey! Don't call my boyfriend a maggot! (*everyone looks at her*)  
Sorry, was that out loud?

VIGIT: (*offstage*) I'm not doing it!

MERVE: Ah, ah, ah. He's Zeus, remember? Whatever he says goes.

VIGIT: (*offstage*) I don't care!

MERVE: We're in the middle of a story. You don't want the audience to get a bad impression of you, do you?

VIGIT: (*offstage*) I'm not doing it.

MERVE: Do it for the Greek Geeks.

VIGIT: (*offstage*) I'm quitting!

MERVE: Manso says you have to.

MANSO: (*with panic*) Merve!

MERVE: (*tapping his own head to remind MANSO he's the boss*) Manso...

MANSO: (*grabbing the hat*) Oh right. (*he marches over to the side of the stage*) Get out here, Vigit! You're holding up the story.

OSINA: You tell her!

VIGIT: You wait till that top hat comes off, Manso. Just you wait.

MANSO: I can wait.

MERVE: Suddenly the sky darkened, a cloud of smoke hovered above the palace and Dionysus stood before the king.

*VIGIT stomps on. She is completely covered in purple balloons. In other words — grapes. Everyone on stage takes one look at her and has to turn away so as not to laugh.*

MERVE: At least I think it's Dionysus.

VIGIT: (*glaring at MERVE*) What's so funny?

MERVE: Not a thing. You look lovely.

VIGIT: (*glaring at the others*) No one laughs at Nafi when he wears this outfit.

OSINA: Nafi just wears it... differently.

ISHY: A whole other sphere of... different.

OSINA: The grapes look different on you. Somewhat cranky. Cranky grapes.

VIGIT: Why you –

MERVE: (*grabbing VIGIT*) Ah ah, Vigit! There's really no need for that, is there?

VIGIT: (*Taking a deep breath. She glares at OSINA.*) I am a nice person and so I'm going to be nice to you. I was going to pull your uvula through your nose. It's my speciality. Not that I'm going to do it. (*glaring at all the GEEKS*) But if I hear one snicker, if I catch one smirk, I'm going to be thinking about uvulas real hard. Just so you know.

*There's a pause.*

MANSO: Merve?

MERVE: Dionysus, ah, stood before King Midas. And King Midas was awed and amazed and not smirking at all, to have the great Dionysus in his palace.

OSINA: (*quietly to the others*) Otherwise known as Super Grape.

VIGIT: (*as Dionysus*) King Midas. You were very kind to my servant.

MIDAS: (*knowing if he opens his mouth he'll start to laugh*) Uh hmm.

VIGIT: (*very annoyed*) King Midas. You were very kind to my servant.

MIDAS: (*choking on a laugh*) Uh hmm.

VIGIT: Uvula time!

MIDAS: Wait! (*he clears his throat*) Dionysus! So, Silenus was telling the truth.

VIGIT: (*as Dionysus*) Indeed he was. Because you showed him a kindness, I will show you one. I will give you one wish.

MIDAS: A wish?

VIGIT: Anything you desire.

MERVE: King Midas did not think long and hard over this.

MIDAS: (*excited*) I want everything I touch to turn to gold!

VIGIT: That is what you want?

MIDAS: That's exactly what I want. I'll be the richest man in the world!

VIGIT: Then it is done. (*She touches MIDAS on the forehead. A bell sounds.*) Everything you hold, everything your fingers kiss, will turn into a precious gold, for this your greatest wish. And I better not hear anything when I leave. Uvula.

*VIGIT stalks off.*

MERVE: And Dionysus disappeared. No one saw him go. No one had any commentary about his leaving or what he looked like and there was no need to bring up that little piece of flesh that hangs at the back of your throat.

OSINA: (*sincerely*) Oh is that what a uvula is!

MERVE: King Midas was ecstatic, for the golden touch was a dream come true.

MIDAS: Everything I touch will turn to gold! Is it real? What will I touch first?

*One of the GEEKS holds out a stone.*

MIDAS: A stone. Of course. How could a stone become gold? Here we go. One, two, three!

*There is the sound of a bell. MIDAS touches the stone and it turns to gold (the GEEK switches stones). MIDAS does a dance.*

MIDAS: Hurrah! Hurrah! It worked! How about this flower? (*A bell rings. He picks up a gold flower.*) Again! This tree? (*a bell rings*) Gold! I have a gold tree! Ha ha! Everything is gold. I'm rich, I'm rich! (*singing*) I've got the golden touch! I've got the golden touch! (*he stops*) Hmm. All this work turning everything to gold is making me hungry. A feast! (*he claps his hands*) I call for a feast! Bring me the biggest and the best breakfast.

*Two GEEKS bring forward a tray of food.*

MIDAS: Sit down, sit down, you two eat as well. We're celebrating! To the best day in my life! Yum, French toast – my favourite.



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