

Helena Troy

A comedy in two acts

Synopsis:

Helena Troy is a comedy about an artistic director of a theatre who learns to express her voice. It takes place in a small theatre in New York. Amy wants to write a new play in order to win an important grant for women writers which will sustain the struggling theatre, but Ted, her co-founder, co-artistic director and boyfriend, refuses to abandon the theatre's original mission to produce works exclusively by classical Greek authors, all of whom were male. The play begins when the Amy learns an important grant has been lost, and it ends when Amy takes full credit for having written the play that has saved their theater.

Characters:

AMY, 30, F, co-founder and co-artistic director of Theatre Athena

TED, 30, M, a co-founder of the theater and Amy's boyfriend

PETER, 30, M, a co-founder of the theater.

CAROL ANN, 40's, F, a frequent cast member

RICK, 20's, M, a frequent cast member

CLARISSA, 20's, F, an auditioner

LASZLO, 40's, a foundation executive

LATTIMORE, 70, M, a Classics professor

Rich Espey

410.812.4181

richespey@gmail.com

www.richespey.com

Helena Troy**Act One**

(In darkness we hear a flute playing a pastoral tune in Dorian mode. The flute is joined by a chorus of voices:

*“What news has just arrived from far away?
A message of new riches and great wealth?
Or word of famine, loss, decay, collapse?
Athena, tell us what has come to pass!”*

Lights up on the stage of a tiny theatre in the West Village. AMY, TED and PETER, all 30, not quite grown up, dressed casually. PETER looks at his iPhone.)

AMY

Folded? What does that mean? Folded?

PETER

Out of business. Closed up shop.

TED

How can the Democracy Project go out of business?

PETER

They're privately funded. Funds dry up, they go out of business.

TED

We're privately funded, too. By them!

AMY

Great. What was that? Twenty-five thousand?

PETER

Uh, thirty, actually, last year.

TED

Our biggest grant...and it's gone?

PETER

Yeah, looks that way.

What about subscriptions?

AMY

Uh, they're a little down, too.

PETER

Yeah, well we knew that.

AMY

What does that mean?

TED

Nothing.

AMY

No, that was a dig, wasn't it?

TED

No, Ted, it was not a dig against you.

AMY

Because we all did agree to this season, Babe.

TED

I know. It's not the season, Ted.

AMY

TED
Antigone, Electra, Agamemnon, The Birds and Ajax. That is a kickass season! Right, Pete?

PETER

Yeah. Except for *Ajax*, Ted, you've got to admit...

TED

It is a totally underrated play. One of Sophocles' best. It will rock!

PETER

Honestly, I think *Philoctetes* might have been a better choice –

TED

Yeah, but we did *Philoctetes* four years ago. We've never done *Ajax*.

PETER

With good reason.

AMY

It's not the season, it's the mission! The whole thing! The problem is the mission!

TED

Our mission is not "the problem".

PETER

It's not just the Democracy Project and subscriptions. Private donations are down, too. We're a very tough niche.

AMY

We need to reach out to a new audience, new people -

TED

The people should be reaching out to us!

AMY

Here we go -

TED

We founded Theatre Athena because we knew that in the Greek canon was the foundation of our civilization. And if people ever needed to be reminded about our foundations it's today! With what's going on? People should be thanking us, worshipping us, lining up to write checks for caring enough to remind them about what's important.

PETER

We're not exactly the niche people are looking to give to right now. We do plays exclusively by the Ancient Greeks. Which is a club of exactly four dead white men.

TED

Five. If you count Menander.

PETER

(consulting his iPhone) Luz Foundation – ten thousand dollars for Hispanic-themed plays. Cartwright Trust – up to fifty thousand dollars for theatres that produce works that explore issues of ethnic diversity. The Glendora V. Rich Foundation – up to one hundred thousand dollars – holy crap – for theatres producing works by women writers.

AMY

No Ancient Greek women writers the last time I checked.

TED

That...that pisses me off!

AMY

Me too!

TED

I mean, the fact that they will only support theatres that produce female playwrights. Come on! The greatest female stage voices in history are found in the canon that we produce: Antigone, Medea, Clytemnestra, Hecuba. Strong women! Women who kicked butt, and we're the only ones who still give them voice. And we did *Lysistrata* before *Lysistrata* was cool!

AMY

Maybe they'll make an exception.

PETER

I really doubt it.

AMY

A hundred thousand dollars, it's worth a try.

TED

Those places are all alike.

AMY

What places?

TED

Places that are so hung up on their politically correct mission that they can't recognize who their allies really are.

AMY

Only twenty percent of the plays produced in this city are written by women.

TED

Hey, if there were an Ancient Greek female playwright I would be first in line to sign her up. You do know that, don't you?

AMY

Pete, what does it say, exactly?

PETER

"The Glendora V. Rich Foundation offers an annual award of up to one hundred thousand dollars to established theatre companies" –

TED

We're established. Seven years, baby. Goin' on eight. Goin' strong!

AMY

Shush!!

PETER

“To established theatre companies that produce plays by women, for women, about women with profound gravitas.” Sounds like a medical condition.

TED

Gravitas - dignity, seriousness, purpose. They want plays with balls!

PETER

And writers without them.

AMY

I could do it.

TED

What?

AMY

I could write a play with gravitas. A new Ancient Greek play.

TED

What are you talking about?

AMY

One play. Something new, something different.

TED

Our mission statement says that we produce work solely by -

AMY

Then we change the mission statement. We wrote it in the first place.

TED

You can't just change your mission statement to get a grant you like.

PETER

Yeah, they do look pretty closely to make sure people aren't just pandering –

AMY

Then we adapt it. We say we mostly produce works from the ancient canon but we also –

TED

But we don't.

AMY

Maybe it's time we did.

TED

Well the point is moot anyway.

AMY

Why is that?

TED

You've never written a play.

AMY

What do you call our senior seminar?

TED

This is a major foundation we're talking about, not Dr. Lattimore's senior seminar.

AMY

So what? That has nothing –

TED

Look, it's a sweet idea and all and I appreciate the thought but I don't care if Wendy Wasserstein comes back from the grave and pens the Helen of Troy Chronicles, we are not changing our mission statement to include living women just to get some grant from some ridiculous politically correct foundation. What we ought to do is get the Glendora V. Rich Foundation to wake up and realize that we are advancing the mission of strong women's voices in theater better than anyone else in this city!

AMY

I could write a play with balls.

(CAROL ANN, 40's, a bit heavily made up, wearing clothing really meant for a younger woman, enters.)

TED

I'm gonna call them. I'm gonna get Glendora V. Rich herself over here, whoever she is – is she alive?

PETER

No idea.

TED

I'm gonna get her over here to see *Antigone*. You talk about a woman with balls!

CAROL ANN

You must be talking about Carol Ann again!

TED

Hi, Carol Ann.

CAROL ANN

Good morning, good morning! Am I interrupting something?

PETER

No, we were just, uh, discussing the budget for this season.

CAROL ANN

Don't pay any attention to me. The reason I'm here so early is I just wanted to pick up the script for *Antigone*. You know me, I love to get a head start.

AMY

We haven't finished casting. We're seeing a few more people today, actually.

PETER

And given the news we just got we really need to discuss casting.

CAROL ANN

What news?

TED

Carol Ann, this isn't really a good time.

CAROL ANN

I hear Rick Ramirez is playing Creon. Good choice! I just saw him in a new one of those commercials for...oh what is that place called?

PETER

Mister Lube.

CAROL ANN

Mister Lube, right. Oh, he's so gorgeous. In that workshirt and those tight pants! His big wrench...Mmmm... Tell me the blue hair day-trippers won't be packing the buses to get a load of Mister Lube in a Greek tunic!

PETER

Let's hope they do.

CAROL ANN

But he's a little young, isn't he?

AMY

I was very impressed with his reading.

CAROL ANN

I guess you'll gray him up a bit, you know, since he is Antigone's uncle and all. He and I work so well together, you know. And we look good together, too, right? OK, dolls, Carol Ann is just gonna nip back in the office and grab one of those scripts and start in on it. Don't pay any attention to me.

(CAROL ANN exits.)

AMY

Did you say anything to her about her playing Antigone?

TED

Look, she's our workhorse, she's dependable -

AMY

She's way too old! Especially with Rick as Creon -

TED

She has been loyal to us for seven years!

AMY

I want to look at some new people.

PETER

Ted, we have to reconsider casting completely. We can't afford to pay eight actors for this show.

TED

There are eight roles.

PETER

We'll have to do what the Greeks did. Three actors, doubling, tripling up. It's the only way we can afford this.

TED

Three actors?

PETER

We can get by for now with three. Barely.

TED

Fine, but Carol Ann's one of them.

AMY

You cast her without consulting me?

TED

She's good, in case you haven't noticed.

AMY

That's not the point! There are other good people out there! Good, hungry, young actors-

(CAROL ANN enters with a script.)

CAROL ANN

You know, Amy doll, I can sit it on auditions today, if you need someone to read sides.

AMY

Thanks, I think we're fine.

CAROL ANN

I've got nothing else going on. No auditions, no other work.

AMY

No, really –

CAROL ANN

No husband. No kids.

TED

Oh, Carol Ann...sure, we've got someone coming at...uh, eleven thirty.

CAROL ANN

Oh. Well I usually eat an early lunch. But if you insist. I'll be in the lobby. Spending a few quality hours with Antigone. At least I have her. And you three.

(CAROL ANN exits.)

TED

And you want to get rid of her? Fine. But you do it alone.

AMY

I don't want to...

TED

Why not? Get rid of Carol Ann, change the mission, throw the whole damn thing away.

AMY

All I'm saying is that if we slightly adapt our mission we could actually get some real money for once -

TED

We are not selling out!!

PETER

I'll say.

TED

We have survived for seven years with our mission intact.

AMY

Barely surviving, always scraping by -

TED

We have never starved.

AMY

Only because we bus tables or answer phones or make overpriced frappucinos all day and come here at night, exhausted -

TED

So we will just have to keep on doing that.

AMY

For how long?

TED

A little longer.

AMY

We can not both work eighteen hours a day and raise a child.

TED

Wait, are you telling me...are you...?

AMY

No, I'm not.

TED

Oh, thank God.

AMY

Ugh.

TED

What??

AMY

The expression you just had on your face.

TED

This would be an especially bad time, that's all.

AMY

So when would be an especially good time? Never, right?

TED

That's not true –

AMY

“When our first baby grows up a little.” How many times have I heard that?

TED

That is not fair! I have worked my ass off –

AMY

I know you have! And look where we are! Ted, I can not keep doing this. I am thirty years old! Either we make this company and our lives somewhat financially stable or –

TED

Or what? Or what?

AMY

It's time to make some serious decisions about where we're going.

(TED grabs PETER's iPhone and pushes buttons.)

TED

Glendora V. Rich Foundation, huh?

AMY

When is that grant due?

PETER

Like six weeks.

AMY

We could workshop a new play on the two dark weekends after *Antigone*.

PETER

We won't have a set.

AMY

We don't need a set. We need gravitas. We need balls. I can write a play with balls.

TED

(on phone) Hi, my name is Ted Henley and I'm the AD at Theatre Athena here in New York. We're committed to producing the work of the ancient Greeks and appear to be ineligible for your grant. However, I want to speak with someone about visiting our upcoming production of *Antigone*, which I think you'll agree is about the most gravitas-laden feminist power statement you'll see all year and will leave you eager to support the mission we do have. Please get back to me at your earliest possible convenience to schedule a visit.

(TED returns the phone to PETER.)

Satisfied?

(TED exits.)

PETER

Well that should put Glendora V. Rich in her place.

AMY

I'm thirty, Pete.

PETER

Me too.

AMY

And my eggs are already thirty-one. And they're an old thirty-one. For the last seven years they've been exposed to soot, asbestos, exhaust fumes, lead -

PETER

My God, what do you two do at night?

AMY

You don't care.

PETER

I do care, Amy.

AMY

No offense, Peter, but it doesn't much matter if your gonads are exposed to all sorts of urban ills.

PETER

I do not expose my gonads nearly as often as I should.

AMY

The Glendora V. Rich Foundation is not going to send someone to see our *Antigone*, are they?

PETER

Not a chance.

AMY

I'll be back in time for the audition.

PETER

Where are you going?

AMY

The office supply place.

PETER

Getting ink and paper so you can write that play?

AMY

Actually, they have a "now hiring" sign in the window.

(AMY exits. RICK, 20's, enters. He's tall, dark, fit, the epitome of the Village.)

RICK

Hola, Flaco!

PETER

Hey you. You're late.

(PETER goes to kiss RICK. RICK evades.)

RICK

I know, I know, but I think I am to be forgiven today.

PETER

I didn't know where you were.

RICK

I told you. Stephanie said she had to see me. Check your email. I just sent you my bio for the program.

PETER

I've got your bio.

Not the latest. There's something new.

RICK

Really?

PETER

Check it out.

RICK

Are you serious? Oh my God, really??

PETER

Read it, read it!

RICK

I will, I just need to find it.

PETER

(HE clicks and reads.)

Isn't that amazing??

RICK

(crushed) Amazing.

PETER

You should be happy for me!

RICK

I am.

PETER

(CAROL ANN enters.)

You don't look happy. You don't get news like that every day!

RICK

What news, doll? Tell Carol Ann!

CAROL ANN

Here.

RICK

(RICK hands CAROL ANN the iPhone.)

CAROL ANN

(reading) “Rick Ramirez is pleased to –“

RICK

Lower.

CAROL ANN

“After graduating from – “

RICK

Keep going.

CAROL ANN

“He was cited by the Village – “

RICK

Keep scrolling, mama!

CAROL ANN

Oh. My. God. “He has just signed a contract to appear as Mister Lube in a national television advertising campaign marking Mister Lube’s expansion throughout all fifty states.” A national! Oh, Rick, that’s wonderful news, honey!!

RICK

Let me top off your fluids, ma’am.

CAROL ANN

I love it!

RICK

So that’s why I’m late.

PETER

Congratulations.

RICK

Stephanie got them to agree to start after *Antigone* closes.

PETER

They shoot at night?

RICK

No, during the day.

PETER

Then why - ?

In L.A. **RICK**

In L.A. **PETER**

RICK
It's a national campaign and they want to shoot the commercials in L.A.

CAROL ANN
I shot a national one time in L.A. I played a woman suffering from feminine itch. Do you remember...you wouldn't, never mind. Anyway, you'll love it. Much better spreads.

PETER
So what does that mean...L.A.?

RICK
It means Los Angeles.

PETER
I know what it stands for. Where do we stand?

RICK
Hey, hey, hey!!

PETER
I meant – I thought you liked it here.

RICK
Yeah man, but these little gigs. Don't get me wrong – Theatre Athena has been great to me but I'm tired of eating off the dollar menu. And that's not gonna change any time soon.

CAROL ANN
Well, it's obvious to me. You'll just have to become bicoastal, that's all.

PETER
Sure, Rick can add that to his bio. Not only is he bicoastal, he's bilingual, biracial -

RICK
Easy, Flaco.

PETER
Ambivalent.

RICK

I intend to fulfill my contract to Theatre Athena. Stephanie made it clear to them that I have a six week run in *Antigone*.

PETER

And after *Antigone*?

RICK

We'll see how Mister Lube takes off.

CAROL ANN

My God, Rick, of course he's gonna take off. Are you kidding? Carol Ann is so happy for you, doll! I can hear the blue hairs now when they read it in the program. Now if you need to go out there early I can understudy Creon. What? It could be a timely political gender statement.

(CAROL ANN exits.)

RICK

You promised not to say anything.

PETER

I said nothing.

RICK

You almost –

PETER

Anyone would be a little upset.

RICK

This is the big break for me! What? Flaco, I told you, man, that's just a little fun.

PETER

You know...when you told me you had changed your bio...

RICK

What?

PETER

I thought maybe you meant you were going to say something about me.

RICK

Whoa, Flaco...

PETER

It's just that I thought ...well, you know how some people put, "thanks to so-and-so" in their bios –

RICK

Pete, Pete, Pete. Come on. I told you. I mean we have our fun and all, but...I really do like the chicas. And when I do have a thank you in a bio, it'll be for my lady. Besides, man...Mister Lube? To say that? You gotta be kidding me! I gotta go pick up my script.

(RICK exits. AMY enters.)

Hola, Amy.

AMY

I expect full busloads to see you, Mister Lube! *(to PETER)* Well, that was a waste of time. The sign was down. You OK?

PETER

Yeah. Just thinking.

AMY

About?

PETER

Fate. Choices. Amy, I want you to write that play.

AMY

Why?

PETER

The theatre needs money and you can get it for us.

AMY

There's no point! Ted will never produce it!

PETER

We'll figure something out. The two of us can outwit Ted. No offense.

AMY

only way Theatre Athena will get that grant is if someone somehow miraculously discovers a long lost play that just happened to be written by a Greek woman.

PETER

What was that thing they discovered by Sophocles a hundred years ago?

AMY

Oh, uh, The *Ichneutae*, I think it's called. It was just a few lines on papyrus. And Sophocles was still a guy.

PETER

Hey, what about Sappho? Some of her poems were found less than a hundred years ago.

AMY

Not a playwright.

PETER

We could transform her poetry into a play.

AMY

I tried to get Ted to let me do that a long time ago. No deal. Besides, they're just not very interesting poems.

PETER

You'd think for a lesbian –

AMY

Oh, God, I just wish there had been one woman in Ancient Greece who wrote a damn play!!

PETER

There had to have been.

AMY

Well, I would sure like to meet her.

*(There is a knock on the door and
CLARISSA, 20's, enters. She "came to live
out loud.")*

AMY

Hi, can I help you?

CLARISSA

Hi, I'm Clarissa McLean and I have an appointment to read for *Antigone*.

AMY

Hey, I'm Amy. This is Peter.

PETER

Hi.

AMY

You're a little early.

CLARISSA

It's called Clarissa time. You'll be loving me for it. Here's my resume and headshot. My videos are online. (*grabbing Peter's iPhone*) Let me show you.

PETER

No, that's OK.

AMY

We still like to do things the old-fashioned way here.

(CAROL ANN enters.)

CAROL ANN

I thought the audition was at 11:30?

AMY

Oh, uh...

CAROL ANN

Not to worry, dolls, Carol Ann is ready to assist.

PETER

Where's Ted?

AMY

I don't know. I guess he's still mad. Where's Rick?

PETER

Rummaging around in the closet, no doubt.

AMY

OK...

CLARISSA

Is there a problem?

AMY

No, no.

CAROL ANN

She looks a little younger than me. She'd make a lovely Ismene.

CLARISSA

I'm interested in reading for Antigone.

AMY

Actually we're mounting this with three actors.

CLARISSA

Cool. I do love a threesome.

CAROL ANN

I've memorized Antigone's first speech with Ismene, if you'd like to have her read that.

CLARISSA

I thought it was a monologue. My agent said it was a monologue followed by some sides.

AMY

It is, it is. What's your monologue from?

CLARISSA

Lipstick Emergence-C.

AMY

I'm not really familiar with that.

CLARISSA

You will be.

AMY

No doubt.

PETER

Playwright?

CLARISSA

McLean.

PETER

McLean?

CLARISSA

Clarissa McLean.

AMY

Now that'd be you?

CLARISSA

It's my Fringe show. I sold out five shows in Minnesota, four in DC and three in Iowa City.

AMY

Uh, as a classical theatre we require a monologue from a classical text. Your agency should have -

CLARISSA

I think you'll find my work up to those standards.

CAROL ANN

She's got balls, I'll give her that.

PETER

Testes testes one two three.

CLARISSA

Heterosexist males have been stifling underrepresented voices in theater for 2500 years. I think you two as women and you as a gay male would agree?

PETER

How did you know - ?

CLARISSA

Honey... "testes testes one two three?" And where are the heterosexual males in this company, may I ask? Oops, West Village, maybe not.

AMY

There are two.

PETER

(muttering) One and a half.

AMY

One's pouting.

CLARISSA

About what? No, let me guess. Power and privilege, am I correct?

AMY

In a way.

CLARISSA

So if you require a classical text I'll be happy to bore you with some Clytemnestra or some Medea, unless you'd prefer to hear truth spoken to power in which case I'll give you something that will completely and totally fuck you in the skull.

AMY

Preach on, sister.

CLARISSA

Hello, I'm Clarissa McLean. C-L-A-R-I-S-S-A M-C-L-E-A-N. SAG eligible and Equity candidate. I'll be performing a selection today from Lipstick Emergence-C by Clarissa McLean.

PETER

How do you spell that?

CLARISSA

C-L-A-R-I

PETER

No, I meant the show.

CLARISSA

Lipstick – do you have that, sweetheart?

PETER

Yes, girlfriend.

CLARISSA

Emergence – E-M-E-R-G-E-N-C-E...C, the letter C at the end. See the title is kind of a quadruple entendre, get it? First, “Emergency”, like a problem, right, and the, second, “emergence, see”, like “see, it’s emerging”, and then, third, C for Clarissa, so it’s like “lipstick emergence, Clarissa,” like I’m coming out as a lipstick lesbian and then, fourth, “C”, referring to the body part where the lipstick actually emerged from in the embarrassing incident that gave rise to the entire thing and about which my monologue will be. I’m actually not a pure lesbian, however, I alternate between male and female partners to keep my Yin and Yang aligned, although I did recently go to Lesbos and dug pottery. Literally. I mean I literally dug it up, you know not just “oh, I really dig that, man”. Although I do really dig Greek pottery. I guess I dig it both ways, if you know what I mean.

PETER

You went to Lesbos?

CLARISSA

As inspiration for my show. I found this really cool piece of pottery with writing on it. It was from the 1940's, but still, it made me think.

AMY

Did it, now?

CLARISSA

Yeah, about all those Classical Women, what it was like and all. And what it must have been like for Antigone. Her brother, rotting in the sun and all.

AMY

It's too bad you didn't dig up a new play. A new old play, that is.

*(PETER and AMY both look at each other.
They confer briefly.)*

CLARISSA

Do you want to hear my monologue?

CAROL ANN

I thought we just did.

AMY

Clarissa, we have something else we'd like you to do.

CLARISSA

I don't take my clothes off, OK? Not for scale.

PETER

This is a little bit different, Clarissa.

*(BLACKOUT. In darkness we hear the flute
and the chorus of voices:*

*"We call to you, Athena, come to us.
We suffer in a world of pain and strife.
Lead us along the path out of darkness.
Point us in the direction of the light."*

*Lights up on TED, AMY and PETER watching
CLARISSA deliver her monologue. She's
actually good.)*

CLARISSA

“...I stand now where I struck him down.
I struck him twice. In two great cries of agony
He buckled at the knees and fell. When he was down
I struck him the third blow in thanks and reverence to Zeus.
Thus he went down, and the life struggled out of him;
And as he died he spattered me with the dark red
And violent driven rain of bitter savored blood.”

Scene.

TED

Very nice. That was the Lattimore, I believe.

CLARISSA

Actually, it was from *Agamemnon*. I said that at the beginning. Didn't you hear me?

TED

I meant the Lattimore translation. Harrison Lattimore, was one of our Drama professors at school. He inspired all of us to start Theatre Athena. An amazing scholar, actor, translator, dramaturge...a true kickass Athenian.

CLARISSA

Then he must be really excited about the big find.

TED

What big find?

CLARISSA

You haven't heard about the big find?

PETER

What kind of find are you talking about?

CLARISSA

Oh, an old papyrus.

TED

As opposed to a young papyrus?

AMY

Where did they find this...this find?

CLARISSA

It was in a tomb. On Lesbos. I heard about it when I was there this spring with my girlfriend. Researching for my new show, Lipstick Emergence-C, which sold out twelve

times during three fringe festivals this summer. You can see the whole thing on my website, and there's segments on YouTube –

AMY

Tell us more about the papyrus.

CLARISSA

Oh yeah. Um, it's a piece of an old play. They're not sure who it's by.

TED

Sounds like another *Ichneutae*.

CLARISSA

They were saying it was considerably more than the *Ichneutae*.

TED

You know the *Ichneutae*?

CLARISSA

Of course.

PETER

But not a complete play, right?

AMY

Certainly not a complete, finished play?

CLARISSA

No, not complete.

TED

I hadn't heard anything about this.

CLARISSA

Well, they had just discovered the papyrus in this tomb, not far from where we were in our dig. And they were taking it to Athens.

AMY

To the state museum?

CLARISSA

Right, that's what I think they said. Anyway, they said it was still in Greece. And it was going to stay in Greece. Just like my girlfriend, the bitch.

TED

Well that's good.

CLARISSA

I know, I am so ready to cycle back to men.

TED

No, I meant good for the papyrus. No more Elgin Marbles. We should find out about this.

PETER

I'm on top of it big guy. (*referring to his iPhone*) Here it is. "New papyrus sheds light on ancient Greek drama." Appears to have been a comedy.

TED

What's it about?

PETER

Uh, it doesn't really say.

TED

Uh huh. They have a name for it?

PETER

Uh, they haven't determined its title yet.

CLARISSA

Maybe Harrison Lattimore will translate it.

TED

I'm sure he will.

AMY

Well, as well as being our business manager Peter is our dramaturge and literary manager and I'm sure he will look into this further.

PETER

Yes, I certainly will look into it further. Thank you so much.

AMY

Yes, thank you so much for letting us know about that. That's fascinating. Isn't that fascinating, Ted?

TED

Yeah, it's interesting.

AMY

It's more than interesting, if it's bigger than the *Ichneutae*.

TED

If it pans out, sure. You guys, they find scraps all the time.

(TED receives a text message on his phone.)

CLARISSA

This was more than a scrap.

TED

(reading his message) YESSS!!!!!!

CLARISSA

Well not that much more.

TED

I gotta get over to Brooklyn.

CLARISSA

You're leaving my audition?

TED

Polite Mechanicals got evicted from their space in DUMBO. They got a light board and a box of gels on the street and it's first come, first served.

AMY

Do you have to go now?

TED

Hey, I'm trying to save us some money.

PETER

What should we do about this new find?

TED

Keep digging, so to speak!

(TED exits.)

AMY

Thank you SO MUCH!

PETER

You were perfect, perfect!

CLARISSA

He left my audition.

AMY

It's fine. Like we said, you convince him there's a new find, you've got the part.

CLARISSA

Cool. So what happens now?

AMY

I think I have to write a play.

CLARISSA

No, I meant me.

PETER

You want to help?

CLARISSA

Not really.

(CAROL ANN enters.)

AMY

When's the grant due?

PETER

Six weeks from today.

CLARISSA

When do rehearsals start?

AMY

I haven't even started writing yet.

CLARISSA

I meant for me! Playing Antigone? Remember me?

AMY

Monday.

CLARISSA

Awesome. Antigone ROCKS! I have always wanted to play her.

CAROL ANN

That's funny, so have I.

AMY

Carol Ann –

CAROL ANN

What does she mean “playing Antigone”? She’s playing the third part, right? All the boring parts? Ismene? Haemon? The God damned Chorus?

AMY

Carol Ann, it’s a long story, but Clarissa just helped us convince Ted that there’s a newly discovered ancient play, and that might win us the Rich Foundation grant.

CAROL ANN

Big whoop.

AMY

And we promised her Antigone if she could do it.

PETER

And we need you to play the third role. And to demand that Ted casts you in it.

CAROL ANN

You have got to be kidding me.

AMY

Look, we’re only casting three people and we still really really want you for one of them.

PETER

We’re kind of desperate here Carol Ann.

AMY

See, if I can write a new play and we get this grant then Theatre Athena can survive but Ted will never produce something I write so we have to convince him it’s a new ancient play and Ted can not know.

CAROL ANN

Fine, my lips are sealed.

AMY

Thank you.

CAROL ANN

I won’t tell Ted a thing as long as I get to be Antigone now.

CLARISSA

Well that’s funny because I won’t tell Ted a thing as long as I get to be Antigone now.

AMY

Carol Ann, please, I'm begging you –

PETER

It's our last chance and if you tell him what we're doing you'll ruin it and we'll never see each other again and we'll all either starve to death or have to go clean hotel rooms or sell ourselves into white slavery to survive.

CAROL ANN

Why me? Why not beg Miss Trixie here?

PETER

Because she doesn't give a crap about us.

CAROL ANN

And I do.

AMY

You were in our first show, remember? Remember?

PETER

Oedipus Rex. And your suicide was the most beautiful thing I've ever seen on a stage.

AMY

It was beautiful, Carol Ann.

PETER

You're still beautiful.

CAROL ANN

But apparently not beautiful enough to play Antigone.

PETER

Seven years, Carol Ann, and it all comes down to this.

CAROL ANN

What about the seven years I've put in here? Doesn't that count for anything?

AMY

That's what I'm counting on.

CLARISSA

Yeah, 'cause I don't really give a crap about any of you.

AMY

Look, if we don't get this grant, Carol Ann, I can't keep doing this. None of it.

CAROL ANN

A new ancient play?

AMY

Yes.

CAROL ANN

And the part you're writing for me in this new play?

AMY

Will be awesome.

CAROL ANN

It better be. Almost fifty. And I'm playing the Chorus. How did that suicide go again? Just kidding! That's funny stuff! Laugh! You'll keep from crying. But seriously, dolls...you know what the problem with theater is?

AMY

What?

CAROL ANN

I'll tell you when you're old enough to understand.

AMY

Thank you, Carol Ann.

CAROL ANN

At least we're producing something not older than Jesus. So what's it about?

AMY

Well, I was thinking that to resonate with the Rich Foundation, it obviously needs a strong woman's voice. And we also need an audience, so I think it should be a comedy.

CLARISSA

Awesome. I do awesome comedy. In my Fringe show –

PETER

It needs gravitas.

AMY

Comedies can have gravitas.

CLARISSA

Gravitas?

AMY

Balls. It needs balls. We need audience, grant, gravitas. So I'm thinking...a comedy...about a woman...in the Trojan War.

PETER

Comedies were always about their present day. The Trojan War was always a subject for tragedy.

AMY

Right, and those were the rules that men played by.

PETER

Touché.

AMY

OK, so what about this? There's this Greek woman who's so fed up with the stalemate of the Trojan War that she decides to dress up like a man and go to Troy and do something about it. But she falls in love with one of her soldier buddies -

PETER

And he's really gay so he falls in love with who he thinks is a him but it's really a her?

CLARISSA

No, no. There should be one straight guy and one gay guy and the gay guy falls in love and thinks the girl is a gay guy but she's really a bi girl and the straight guy somehow knows this on a subliminal level and is all freaked out that he thinks he's going gay until one day he rips off the girl's clothes and finds out he's a she - 'cause that happened to someone I met in Iowa City. OK, so it was me.

PETER

Or the gay guy could rip the girl's clothes off and find out he's a she and then get really mad and kill her. 'Cause that happened, too. On Avenue C. But I didn't know them.

AMY

Excuse me, but aren't I the one writing the play?

PETER

Sorry...

CAROL ANN

The Goddess Athena herself was fairly instrumental in the Trojan War if I'm not mistaken. She got top billing, you could say.

AMY

Yes, yes, she definitely, definitely deserves top billing. I can see her presiding over it all, and at the end when all the mortals have made a mess of everything, you, Athena, our Deus ex Machina, descend from heaven and set everything straight.

PETER

So to speak.

AMY

So to speak.

CAROL ANN

At the end? I arrive at the end?

AMY

Well...

CAROL ANN

So I'd have all this down time in which I might accidentally tell Ted -

AMY

She'll be there at the beginning, too. And the middle. And especially the end.

PETER

And now that we're down to three actors you can play other parts, too.

CLARISSA

Maybe you can be the Trojan Horse.

CAROL ANN

OK, fuck you.

(CAROL ANN exits.)

CLARISSA

What? What's her problem? Anyway, this gender-bender girl-guy? Loving it! I would so totally love to read for that. Otherwise my lips, well, let's just say you haven't seen loose lips yet. Ciao, babies!

(CLARISSA exits.)

PETER

You know what we really need?

AMY

A couple of more divas?

PETER

I'm not really worried about them. I'm worried about Ted asking questions.

AMY

Yeah, I know. I mean the Wikipedia article is one thing, but if he really starts digging...

PETER

So there's the Wikipedia article I posted, and I posted to four different blogs, and those should probably get picked up by other blogs, so I'm thinking the coverage should be pretty deep on Google.

AMY

The Internet'll be fine. What if he calls Dr. Lattimore?

PETER

He will, won't he?

AMY

Of course he will.

PETER

Then we need Dr. Lattimore on board.

AMY

Right.

PETER

I'm serious.

AMY

There's no way... is there?

PETER

He was always a good guy.

AMY

Yeah, but I mean...

PETER

Think about it. If Dr. Lattimore is on board then Ted would never question whether a lost play has been discovered.

AMY

You're right.

PETER

And let's face it. It's really the only way we can be sure Ted will go along with producing a so-called "new play".

AMY

You know...he will never believe there's a play by a Greek woman! Even if Dr. Lattimore -

PETER

You're right. OK...Ted doesn't have to believe the play is by a woman. We can tell *him* it's by Sophocles...or Aeschylus or whoever. And we get Doctor Lattimore to *say* he's going to flesh out the recently discovered fragment, and Ted produces it.

AMY

OK...

PETER

And in the meantime, you, a woman, write a new play in the ancient Greek style, with gravitas, The Rich Foundation declares it fabulous, and we get the grant.

AMY

Oh. Is that all we have to do? Gosh, Mickey, let's do it in the barn. Mom's got some old clothes we can use as costumes -

PETER

OK, so it's not easy, but unless you have a better idea for getting 100,000 dollars, and no, I don't feel like going to jail. Amy, he's thirty years old and he just skipped out of here happy as a Chelsea twink on Pride Sunday about schlepping a beat up light board and a box of gels back on the subway from yet another failed theater company. That's not exactly focusing on fatherhood. Now if we get the grant maybe he settles down enough to make a baby, right? Isn't that what you want?

AMY

So you really think Dr. Lattimore will lie for us?

PETER

Dr. Lattimore does not want to see Theatre Athena die. He'll probably love the idea of a genuinely new play in the Ancient style. We don't have to lie to Dr. Lattimore. We don't have to lie to the Rich Foundation. The only person in the world we have to lie to is Ted.

AMY

Something I've done a thousand times. Call Dr. Lattimore.

(PETER works his iPhone.)

PETER

I'll see if can get his office number. By the way, what's your play called?

AMY

What would be the name of a Greek comedy about a woman pretending to be a man so she can go off to fight in the Trojan War?

PETER

Gynepolemos.

AMY

Gynepolemos?

PETER

Yeah. Gyne, woman. Polemos, war. Gynepolemos. War woman.

AMY

Wow. Catchy.

PETER

OK. Um...Androgyna?

AMY

Boring. They always had bawdy names in comedies. What's a Greek sounding bawdy name? Voluptuous?

PETER

Promiscuous!

AMY

I've got it. Testocles. *(she pronounces it "Test-o-cleez")*

PETER

Now that's some balls! Here's his number.

(PETER calls on his phone.)

Testocles it is. So what's our hero's name before?

AMY

You mean before she becomes –

PETER

Before she grows a pair, yeah.

AMY

Helena.

PETER

Nice.

AMY

Helena Troy.

PETER

Hi, I'm trying to reach Harrison Lattimore...Oh...Oh no...Oh, I'm so sorry...uh, I'm a former student...oh, I understand...please...please pass along my condolences...Peter Truett. OK. Bye.

AMY

Oh my God.

PETER

There was an accident when he was driving home from work last week.

AMY

What do we do now?

PETER

We don't tell Ted.

AMY

I think we owe it to Dr. Lattimore to write *Testocles*.

PETER

And I think we owe it to Dr. Lattimore to let him work on it with us.

AMY

I think he'd be the perfect person to translate the fragment.

PETER

And I think Ted would be excited if Dr. Lattimore were to be excited.

AMY

Especially if Dr. Lattimore wanted to flesh out the missing parts of *Testocles* and complete the play.

PETER

I can feel Dr. Lattimore trying to contact us right now.

AMY

Me too. He's dying for one last great theatrical triumph.

PETER

So... if Dr. Lattimore were to have an email account, what would his screen name be?

(PETER works his iPhone. We hear the flute and the chorus of voices:

*"Athena, bless our offering to you,
Conceived to keep your blessed voice alive.
Forgive our mortal foibles and our lies.
We sacrifice for greater good to you."*

TED, AMY, PETER and CAROL ANN are there. PETER refers to his iPhone.)

PETER

Dr. Lattimore says they think *Testocles* might have been by Agathon, but they're not sure.

TED

Wasn't he a minor poet?

AMY

You're always pigeonholing people. Maybe Agathon tried his hand at playwriting. Why not?

TED

I never said Agathon couldn't have written a play. Especially if Dr. Lattimore says he did.

AMY

What else did Dr. Lattimore say?

PETER

He said he was excited to translate the fragment and he's even going to try to flesh out the remainder of the play.

CAROL ANN

Wow, a new play. How exciting!

AMY

A new old play, really.

TED

I thought it was kind of dull.

AMY

Dull?

TED

It was a hundred lines of blah.

AMY

It's about a woman who dresses up like a man to go off and fight the Trojan War.

TED

Yeah. And it was boring.

PETER

The title alone is hilarious. And when Dr. Lattimore fleshes it out -

CAROL ANN

Didn't you say he was planning to expand the part of the Goddess Athena? Substantially?

PETER

Yes, and he says he hopes to have a draft of a full play in a couple of weeks. (*showing TED his iPhone*) See?

TED

Huh, he's got a hotmail account.

AMY

A lot of people have hotmail.

TED

I just meant that since he's older...

AMY

He's not dead!

PETER

I'm sure it will be fabulous.

AMY

We should have a reading when he gets it done.

PETER

Great idea.

AMY

Then we should workshop it, right after *Antigone* closes.

PETER

Super great idea!

TED

How can we add a workshop if we don't even have money for actors now?

AMY

Carol Ann, you'd do a workshop for free, right?

CAROL ANN

Let's see what comes out of Dr. Lattimore's pen.

TED

We'd need to print postcards –

PETER

We can do all the publicity we need online for free.

TED

Between *Antigone*, the coffee shop and barbacking I don't have time -

AMY

I am perfectly capable of directing by myself.

PETER

You don't have to do anything. We'll take care of all of it.

AMY

We can make it a fundraiser.

TED

Funds come from selling tickets to established plays we've already budgeted and from getting grants from places like the goddamn Glendora V. Rich Foundation, who by the way didn't even have the decency to return my call, not from producing a hundred lines of crap! (*to Amy*) I'm gonna be really late tonight. Don't wait up.

(*TED exits.*)

AMY

Great.

PETER

Great.

CAROL ANN

(taking out her phone) What's Ted's number?

AMY

Why?

CAROL ANN

There's no chance he's got Carol Ann on his contact list, is there?

AMY

I don't think so.

CAROL ANN

Of course not. Then give me his number.

AMY

917-845-2398 but why are you calling –

CAROL ANN

You want him to agree to workshop this play, right? *(She calls.)* Voice mail. *(to phone in a disguised voice)* Hello, Mr. Henley, this is Marjorie Rosenberg from the Glendora V. Rich Foundation. While we regret that we can not send someone to attend your production of *Antigone* we've read online about this new play. About the Goddess Athena. We're very interested in hearing more. *(She hangs up.)* Never let it be said that Carol Ann Nawicki is not a team player. Now all you have to do, Amy doll, is write a play.

(CAROL ANN exits.)

AMY

All I have to do is write a play.

PETER

Yeah, about that...I know it's your play and all...

AMY

Yes?

PETER

I was just hoping that the part you write for Rick...

AMY

What about Rick?

PETER

I promised I wouldn't say anything.

AMY

Pete, I'm not stupid.

PETER

No, you're not.

AMY

I figured it out a long time ago.

PETER

God, Amy, he's so frightened about anybody knowing.

AMY

Why do you put up with that? You deserve so much better.

PETER

Why do you put up with Ted?

AMY

So what about Rick's part?

PETER

I was thinking it would be great if the part could somehow help him come to terms with his sexual orientation.

AMY

Oh, absolutely, Peter. I'll just put that on the list. Satisfy Ted with something worth staging. Satisfy Rich Foundation with gravitas. Satisfy young diva's vanity so she'll keep her mouth shut. Satisfy aging diva's vanity so she'll keep her mouth shut. And...saving the best for last...bring Mister Lube out of the closet!!

(A change. We hear the flute and the chorus of voices:

*"We come to you, Athena, in a time
Of stress and strain. We look to you for strength.
Bring forth the Muses! Let them shine their light
As we embark upon this rough voyage."*

*We see part of the first draft of Testocles with
CLARISSA as Testocles, RICK as Epididymus and
CAROL ANN as Athena, on a platform. AMY
types into a computer.)*

AMY

The *Testocles* of Agathon. Fleshed out by Harrison Lattimore. Scene: the deck of a Greek ship on the Aegean, sailing from Greece to Troy. Athena appears on the mast.

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Nine years of war has ravaged ancient Greece.
 Three thousand mornings rosy-fingered dawn
 Arrives to wake the soldiers from their beds.
 A maiden, lately angry and in need
 Of long forgotten men and what they have
 Between their legs has sailed away to Troy.

AMY

(to herself) Maybe not quite so naughty at the beginning.

CAROL ANN (Athena)

A maiden, lately angry and in need
 Of long forgotten men and what they bear
 Has sailed away to Troy to break the jam.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

I, once called Helena, a Spartan maid
 On board this ship now wrapped in my disguise
 Shall sail away to Troy and end this war
 And bring the men folk back from foreign land.
 So in this cloak, I, now called Testocles,
 In honor of that sac that men possess
 Await the sweat of combat heretofore.

AMY

No that sounds terrible.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Await the lusty, sweaty combat stench.

AMY

Much better.

RICK (Epididymus)

Ahoy, young man, I see we're to be mates.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Hello there, friend, what do you call yourself?

RICK (Epididymus)

I'm –

(AMY is stuck. PETER is there.)

AMY

I need a good name for Testocles' buddy.

PETER

Scrotum.

AMY

How about something a little more...polysyllabic.

PETER

Oh, what's that thing next to the testes –

AMY

Vas deferens?

PETER

No, epi-something. Epididdle or something?

AMY

How do you spell it?

PETER

E-P-I-D

(AMY clicks her computer.)

AMY

There we go. "Epididymis. Tightly coiled tubes in which sperm undergo the maturation process necessary for complete function."

PETER

Good name for a Greek warrior who needs to grow up.

AMY

Are you referring to Ted?

PETER

Actually I was referring to Rick, but Ted will do nicely.

AMY

Huh, interesting.

PETER

What?

AMY

These pop-ups. I had no idea there were this many sperm banks in our area. Look at this, did you know about this?

PETER

Um...well....

AMY

Oh my gosh, you...?

PETER

One does what one can to make ends meet on a poor artiste's salary.

AMY

You go, boy! Have you ever...?

PETER

Fifty bucks a shot, so to speak, and in the Village you get the full range of stimulatory reading material beforehand.

AMY

No, I meant, have you ever...been "used"?

PETER

Oh...uh, I don't think so. I don't really know.

AMY

Hmmm... you can practically design your own baby from these.

PETER

Amy, I hate to inject, so to speak, a note of reality into this reverie, but we do have a reading of *Testocles* in two weeks...

AMY

I know.

PETER

So back to Epididymus?

AMY

It's spelled m-i-s, but the Greeks would end it in m-u-s, wouldn't they?

PETER

Yup.

AMY

Epididymus it is.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Hello there, friend, what do you call yourself?

RICK (Epididymus)

I'm Epididymus, son of Scrotum.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Young Epididymus, I'm Testocles.
With names like those I'm sure we'll get along!

RICK (Epididymus)

And since we are to be so closely berthed
We'll lie together as our namesakes do!

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Young Testocles, this Epididymus
Appears to have a strong desire for you.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Perhaps he knows I'm really Helena
And wants my maiden gulch to plow with seed.

AMY

Oh God, I can't say that. Can I? Would Harrison Lattimore say that?

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Perhaps he knows I'm really Helena
And wants to use his sword to spar with me.

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Prepare your shield then, girl.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Don't call me girl!

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Then p'raps a bit more manly you should be.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Hi, Epididymus, how goes it, guy?

AMY

Oh my God, that's really awful. Come on, focus, focus!!

(PETER is there.)

PETER

I don't mean to bother you, but how's it going?

AMY

Oh, you know.

PETER

Not to add any pressure or anything, but...

AMY

What?

PETER

One slight problem.

AMY

WHAT?

PETER

Um, I just got an email that a Mister Laszlo from the Glendora V. Rich Foundation will be attending the first reading.

AMY

Great!

PETER

It's in five days...

AMY

I am aware of that!!

PETER

He'll be coming to observe our process. To see if the piece is developing enough gravitas. Is it?

AMY

It's great! Heavy, man. Heavy freakin' stuff!

PETER

I knew it would be.

AMY

Yup.

PETER

Good. One other thing.

AMY

Yes?

PETER

Ted thinks the Rich Foundation is sending a woman named Marjorie Rosenberg.

AMY

Then just tell Ted that they're sending Mister Laszlo instead.

PETER

That's the slight problem. Mr. Laszlo knows you're the playwright and wants to meet you. But Ted can't know you're the playwright. So all we have to do is keep Mr. Laszlo far away from Ted.

(PETER is gone.)

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Perhaps he knows I'm really Helena
And wants to use his sword to spar with me.

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Prepare your shield then, girl.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Don't call me girl!

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Then p'raps a bit more manly you should be.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Ahoy there, Epididymus, how goes?

RICK (Epididymus)

It's wonderful to see you, Testocles.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

This shipboard slop they feed us does me wrong.
I belch and fart and blow hot gaseous breath.
And spit and scratch my lousy manly crotch.

My male stench is in full vigor today.
 When we arrive in Troy they'll surely run!
 We're bound to win a noxious victory!

RICK (Epididymus)

Oh Testocles, oh Testocles my friend,
 The sweetness of your smell envelops me.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Athena, can you not come rescue me?

CAROL ANN (Athena)

It's you who made this bed girl, now lie down.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

I must repel this Epididymus.
 For through this cloak he must have surely seen
 And fallen deep in love with my true self!
 I must disguise my fertile flowing field.

AMY

Oh well, I'll fix that later.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

With stick and balls, a twig and berries two
 With sausage and potatoes, firm and round.

*(CLARISSA/Testocles places a stick under
 her tunic so that it protrudes.)*

He'll have no doubts that I'm a manly man!!
 What, ho there, Epididymus, look here.
 This trip is far too long without women
 It's made *me* far too long, nudge nudge, wink wink.
 I fear that I can no longer conceal
 My longings for that long forgotten sex!

RICK (Epididymus)

Oh Testocles, young Testocles, forgive
 What I'm about to do to you, young man!
 To see your manliness stick out like that...
 It drives me wild. I can't control myself!

*(RICK/Epididymus starts to dive under
 CLARISSA/Testocles' tunic. Lights change.
 We're now in the middle of the first reading)*

of Testocles. TED, AMY and PETER are seated as CLARISSA, CAROL ANN and RICK read.)

RICK

(*as Rick*) What? Are you kidding me?

AMY

Keep going.

RICK

(*reading*) “Epididymus starts to dive under Testocles’ tunic?” I don’t think so.

CLARISSA

That’s a stage direction, dude. You don’t read stage directions.

RICK

I know it’s a stage direction.

TED

Guys, guys, there’s an audience. Including Marjorie Rosenberg, remember?

RICK

I am not doing that.

AMY

Just...fake it then, but keep going.

RICK

I am not going on. Epididymus is gay.

PETER

Yeah, so what?

RICK

That’s ridiculous. He’s in the Ancient Greek army.

TED

OK, let’s just take a five minute break, actors. To our awesome audience, thank you so much for your kind attention. We’re going to take a short break and finish the reading, uh, soon. Now is there a Marjorie Rosenberg in the audience?

RICK

No, we are not. This is crap.

PETER

(*aside to Rick*) Will you stop it? You are going to ruin this.

RICK

No, she is the one who is ruining this.

PETER

Keep your voice down, please. I hope you're kidding about this, right?

RICK

I am not kidding.

PETER

People were laughing!

RICK

I heard! Believe me!

PETER

They were laughing with you! For all the right reasons!

RICK

I know why they were laughing.

PETER

Look, Amy spent dozens of hours writing the part of Epididymus for you!

RICK

Some part.

TED

Rick, what's the problem?

RICK

I don't have a problem.

CLARISSA

I have a problem.

TED

Oh?

CLARISSA

This play is called *Testocles*. And I'm Testocles. Now, in *Antigone*, where I'm Antigone, Antigone has lots of wonderful, long solo pieces. I thought you said there would be solo pieces -

AMY

Um, perhaps we can talk to Doctor Lattimore -

CLARISSA

Yeah, well I hope so because I would hate to have to get on the phone to Doctor Lattimore and -

CAROL ANN

While we're on the subject of lines -

AMY

Yes, Carol Ann?

CAROL ANN

I really think that Athena, as the goddess of Wisdom, would have a lot more to say, especially about this whole shoving a stick up your skirt thing. I mean that is some funny stuff, really Amy, funny, funny stuff.

AMY

Well, I'm sure we can bring all of this up with Dr. Lattimore but we still have about twenty pages to get through.

CAROL ANN

And I love Athena. I really do, Amy doll, but that platform I'm on -

AMY

OK, it's just a first read, Carol Ann.

TED

She's right. It's just a first read. Thank God. I'm sure when Doctor Lattimore revises -

RICK

Doctor Lattimore is sick.

TED

He's sick?

RICK

He's a sick bastard! Sick in the head! It's garbage, refuse, caca, pardon my French.

(RICK storms off. PETER follows.)

TED

I can't say I completely disagree

AMY
Dr. Lattimore busted his butt on this.

TED
I know, but it just...it doesn't sing.

AMY
Sing?

TED
A Lattimore translation sings, you know? This just kinda...bleats.

AMY
Bleats?

TED
Kinda...croaks along. Well...he's old. Don't tell him I said that.

CAROL ANN
Don't worry.

TED
I gotta call him.

AMY
So you can tell him it bleats?

TED
So I can thank him for the effort.

AMY
His feeble effort?

TED
And ask him if he can come down here to work on revising it? Are you sure he said he was too busy to come down even for one day?

(TED takes AMY's computer.)

AMY
What are you doing with that?

TED
I need Dr. Lattimore's number.

No you don't!!

AMY

Yes, I do.

TED

He's extremely busy!

AMY

I want to talk to him about this!

TED

Well...he prefers email.

AMY

(PETER enters.)

People are leaving the building.

PETER

They're probably smoking.

AMY

They're walking away.

PETER

What about Marjorie Rosenberg? She better not leave. Does anyone know what she looks like?

TED

Oh. Well, I'm sure she wouldn't, you know...

CAROL ANN

Do not let her leave!

TED

(TED exits.)

What does that mean, it bleats?

AMY

(AMY exits.)

PETER
(to audience) Hey folks, don't leave! Who wants a free soda?

(PETER exits.)

CLARISSA

This sucks. What's eating Rick?

CAROL ANN

Well, he seemed fine until the little skirt diving bit.

CLARISSA

You're so rude.

CAROL ANN

What rude?

CLARISSA

He didn't seem to have any objections last night.

CAROL ANN

Are you kidding me? You and Mister Lube?

CLARISSA

Does that surprise you?

CAROL ANN

I thought maybe he was...

CLARISSA

You're so conventional.

CAROL ANN

And I thought you were a lesbian.

CLARISSA

Do you not pay attention to me?

(TED enters. AMY follows.)

TED

There is no Marjorie Rosenberg in the audience!

CAROL ANN

Maybe she's smoking.

TED

And there's no Marjorie Rosenberg outside! Goddamn Glendora V. Rich Foundation!
Typical! Typical feminist –

CLARISSA

What is that supposed to mean?

TED

I go to all this trouble –

AMY

You? You go to all this trouble?

(PETER enters.)

PETER

We really need to get started. There's only like...fifteen people left in the audience.

(TED gets a text message.)

TED

It's Rick. He's not coming back.

PETER

Let me see that.

TED

That's it. We're canceling.

AMY

You can not -

TED

The play clearly is not worth reading –

PETER

I can read Epididymus.

TED

Doctor Lattimore is clearly past it -

PETER

We owe it to the people who have stayed to finish.

TED

Marjorie Rosenberg has walked out –

CAROL ANN

(to AMY) Maybe I should go and make a phone call to Marjorie Rosenberg? Ahem?

CLARISSA

Well if Rick's gone then I'm leaving because I have an audition in one hour –

PETER

You can't leave!

CLARISSA

On 45th, OK? And Clarissa time means I leave in about ten, so, you know...

AMY

Clarissa, you can not just walk out in the middle of –

CLARISSA

I can't? Ted, did you know this play was really written by –

AMY

Break a leg, Clarissa.

PETER

Break both!

CAROL ANN

At least!

CLARISSA

Ciao, babies.

(CLARISSA exits.)

TED

Well that settles that.

AMY

I can read Testocles.

TED

Forget it, Amy. Let it go.

AMY

You can not do this! There is still an audience!

TED

I'll make the announcement.

AMY

No! Either we finish this reading or –

TED

Or what?

AMY

We are finishing this reading.

TED

The hell we are.

AMY

I'm going to tell the smokers that we're starting in two minutes. And we will finish this reading.

(AMY exits.)

TED

I refuse to allow this theater to embarrass itself in public.

PETER

There's only a dozen people left. It's not that public.

TED

All that I have worked for –

CAROL ANN

Lighten up, doll! We still have Carol Ann's big moment to read! I'll be brilliant! Thunderous applause! Two minutes! Thank you, two!

(CAROL ANN exits.)

TED

(to audience) Folks, I'm sorry, but we're going to need to cancel the remainder of today's scheduled reading. I apologize for any inconvenience.

PETER

You can not do that!

TED

I just did. And now I'm going to call the Glendora V. Rich Foundation and find out why Marjorie Rosenberg walked out in the middle –

(TED works on AMY's computer.)

PETER

You can't do that either!

TED

People need to learn they can't just - *(he stops)* Jesus.

PETER

What?

TED

Oh my God.

PETER

Look, Ted, I can explain everything

TED

What is she doing looking at those websites?

PETER

What websites?

TED

I pull down the history to get Google and I see...Insemination Solutions dot com?

PETER

Huh?

TED

East Village sperm dot net? Big Apple swimmers dot org? Pete, what the hell is she doing looking at sperm donation websites?

PETER

Oh, that's just when we were...

TED

When you were what? You know about this?

PETER

No, look, Ted....

TED

She can not be serious! Is she serious? Pete?

PETER

I...I...

(ISTVAN LASZLO enters. LASZLO is short, dark, middle-aged, well-dressed and Hungarian. He speaks in a curiously high voice.)

LASZLO

Jello.

TED

We're kind of busy here.

LASZLO

Neeb to zee *(consulting his notes)* Amy.

TED

Oh?

LASZLO

She, uh, contact me. E-mile.

TED

About what?

LASZLO

Dornation.

TED

Donation?

LASZLO

She, uh, want it fram me. I mebbly give it to her. Neeb to zee...make sure...

(LASZLO gestures "gravitas" with his two hands but TED perceives the gesture as something else. TED looks at the computer then looks back at LASZLO.)

PETER

I guess maybe she is serious.

TED

Oh...Shit, man. Shit!!

(TED exits.)

PETER

Can I help you?

LASZLO

Jello. Istvan Laszlo.

PETER

Oh! Mister Laszlo! From the Glendora V. Rich Foundation!

LASZLO

Chess.

PETER

So nice to meet you!

LASZLO

Why he tell everybunny go home before play feeny?

(AMY enters.)

PETER

Ah, Amy, this is Mister Istvan Laszlo from the Glendora V. Rich Foundation.

AMY

Oh, hi.

LASZLO

Amy, yes, Amy. You write blay for us! Gravitass, no? Gravitass!! Why no feeny?

AMY

(to PETER) He's judging us and he can't even speak English?

LASZLO

I umberstand dood. No speak dood. But umberstand perfecto!

PETER

See?

AMY

Where's Ted?

PETER

Uh...he left.

LASZLO

He tell everybunny go home.

AMY

He told everybody to go home?

LASZLO

Zee? You umberstand me perfecto!

PETER

(loudly and slowly) We will finish the play for you.

LASZLO

No neeb to speak blow por me.

PETER

OK. I'll be reading Epididymus and Amy here will be reading Testocles and Carol Ann is still here. I think.

(CAROL ANN enters and climbs on her platform.)

CAROL ANN

Get ready for a Deus ex Machina that'll knock your socks off. *(Looking out)* Where'd everybody go?

LASZLO

Muz kitsch drain beck to Poughkeepsie.

AMY

Ted cancelled the reading and left?

PETER

Mister Laszlo is still here. That's all that matters.

AMY

What did Ted say?

LASZLO

He say "Sheet Man Sheet" and work out. And cry little bip tear. *(indicating a tear)*

AMY

He cried?

PETER

Not much, no. Not really. Amy, this is the best thing that could ever happen, trust me.

LASZLO

Muz kitsch drain. Zo nice to beat you.

PETER

Oh, you can't leave yet! There's about twenty pages.

LASZLO

No dime. Muz go.

CAROL ANN

Let Carol Ann summarize. So after Epididymus does the skirt diving 'cause he's so in love with Testocles, he figures out, of course, Testocles is a she. And then all hell really breaks lose because the other sailors all want to jump on Testocles 'cause they're all hard up, too, and they all try to get rid of Epididymus 'cause they have this sort of twelfth century B.C. version of "don't ask, don't tell" and boy, did he tell, am I right? So anyway, it's all gone to hell and then Athena descends from the machine. That's me.

(as Athena) Hold back you swarthy men! Withdraw your swords.

LASZLO

No dime! No dime! Muz go now!

PETER

OK, but I hope you got a sense of the piece? We're obviously still very much in process with it. You can rest assured we have a thorough development plan -

CAROL ANN

So did you like it?

LASZLO

I like it...mini bip.

PETER

Mini bip?

LASZLO

Mini mini bip.

PETER

Well, specifically, what did you see that worked?

LASZLO

I like...I like girl.

Thank you.

CAROL ANN

No. Mini girl.

LASZLO

Anything else that you liked?

PETER

Eh.....no.

LASZLO

So what about the grant?

PETER

No gravitas.

LASZLO

No. No gravitas.

AMY

But I like mini girl.

LASZLO

But the play?

PETER

De blay...it need many, many work.

LASZLO

Can you be specific?

PETER

Eh.....no. Come back in free weeps.

LASZLO

Free weeps?

PETER

Free weeps fram dobay. Zee again. Virgin number doo.

LASZLO

CAROL ANN

Would you like to see more of Athena in “virgin number doo”?

LASZLO

Want to see mini girl. Must see mini girl. You umberstand?? Bye Bye.

(LASZLO exits.)

CAROL ANN

I think he'd like to see more of Athena. Don't look so down, dolls! You know what the trouble with theater is?

PETER

What?

CAROL ANN

I'll tell you when you're old enough to umberstand.

PETER

OK, we can fix this. You heard him. We have free weeps!

AMY

Peter –

PETER

You were rushed before. Now you've got some time. I'll cover for you here –

AMY

There's no point. I told Ted not to cancel the reading, and he did anyway. The hell with it. The hell with him. And on top of that he walks out! And what's with the crying?

PETER

He didn't walk out because of the play. He walked out because...because...

AMY

Say it!

PETER

Because he thinks Mister Laszlo is your sperm donor.

(AMY laughs.)

AMY

Well he might as well be, at this point.

PETER

And if Ted thinks that –

AMY

Enough with the schemes, Peter! The point is I can not write a play with gravitas! And part of me...part of me doesn't even blame Ted for canceling the reading.

CAROL ANN

You shut your mouth, Amy! I wouldn't have memorized my entire part, brief as it is, unless I thought it was worth memorizing! Now Ted will be back and we will find a way to read your second draft in three weeks. But whatever you do, do not change a word of Athena's final speech, do you hear me? Because the words are beautiful. Listen to your own words and tell me they're not worth saving:

Hold back you swarthy men! Withdraw your swords.
 And let your Testocles not feel your grasp.
 A maiden she, but braver she than you.
 Now you will sail her safely home to Greece.
 You will not sail to Troy to fight this war.
 For war is waste, the game of little boys
 And I won't let you play your childish game.
 This girl's disguise has saved you from the fight.
 Athena sends you back where you belong.

Blackout. End of Play.

Thunderous applause.

(The applause of one person is heard.)

So there is somebody still left.

AMY

Ted? Is that you?

PETER

I can't see.

CAROL ANN

It's not Ted. But it's someone who likes your play. Now get to work, Amy.

PETER

You've got free weeps.

AMY

Free weeps. Oh, God!

PETER

What?

AMY
Ted was going to call Dr. Lattimore!

PETER
We will find Ted.

AMY
Pete –

PETER
We can still stop him, we can tell him...we can tell him...

AMY
Pete, forget it. It's over. Done.

PETER
Yeah. Yeah, it's done.

VOICE
(O.S) Perhaps not my dears!

AMY
Who is that?

CAROL ANN
It's an older gentleman.

PETER
Um, Who are you?

VOICE
(appearing) I am your Deus ex Machina!

PETER and AMY
Doctor Lattimore!!

LATTIMORE
It's good to be alive again my dears!

(His cell phone rings. He answers.)

Hello? Ted Henley! So good to hear from you! You'll never guess where I am!

BLACKOUT

Act Two

(In darkness we hear the flute and the chorus of voices:

*“Speak, stranger, tell us from what land you come.
Is it from Hades that you now ascend?
Or have you come to us from up on high?
Descending from Olympus’ mighty peak?”*

*Immediately following Act One. Lights up on DR.
LATTIMORE, 70, tweed-and-bowtie professor, and
AMY, PETER and CAROL ANN..)*

LATTIMORE

(on his phone) I’m at your theatre. With Amy and Peter and the lovely woman who played Athena so nicely...I *am* very busy these days, but I managed to find time to sneak away...Well, you’re welcome, you’re welcome, it’s been great fun...Yes, I’ll see you here in a few minutes.

CAROL ANN

Aren’t you dead?

PETER

They said there was an accident.

LATTIMORE

Perhaps I should explain. You see, my entire life I have lived safely. No smoking, no drinking, no exceeding the posted speed limit. And I’m driving home from work a month ago, and some cosmic voice just says to me, “Go on Harrison, old boy, put the pedal to the metal.” And I speed over the University Avenue bridge, and then ...it collapses behind me. It just...crumbles. All those poor souls. I was almost one of them. And I understand it’s a sign from the gods. Stick to the rules and you’ll die, or let yourself go, and you’ll live.

And it’s as if the gods are driving me, and I’m at the airport... Long long long term parking. And the first flight is leaving for Greece. Another sign, you see. And it’s there in front of the oracle at Delphi, that I am finally able to mourn the loss of my beloved Cynthia. To once and for all come to terms with being truly, utterly alone.

And then I read at a delightful Internet Café that I am presumed dead in the terrible bridge collapse. And my obituary is a tale of a pleasant but staid and depressingly dull existence But I realize that I can stay dead a little longer, for they’ll never find my car in long long long term parking, until the gods send me a sign for what to do next. Then one day as I’m googling myself – I see it: “Harrison Lattimore to translate newly discovered classical fragment!” “Harrison Lattimore to complete ancient play!” And finally, a

headline that can only be described as stunning: “Come see Harrison Lattimore’s Testicles.”

PETER

We pronounce it “Test-uh-cleez”.

LATTIMORE

As I discovered upon hearing your reading....Imagine how excited I was to read that I had translated and completed a new play! It quite lifted me out of my depression. So I thought, “I wonder what I’ve written? I do hope it’s good!” And so I came to see for myself!

AMY

I’m sorry it’s not very good.

LATTIMORE

It’s a wonderful start my dear!

CAROL ANN

I told you that, Amy!

AMY

We owe you an explanation, too.

PETER

You see, we have no money.

AMY

But there’s this grant for women’s plays.

PETER

But Ted refuses to produce anything that deviates from our mission.

AMY

So we figured I’d write *Testocles* –

PETER

And we needed you to convince Ted that *Testocles* is really a lost ancient play that you were completing.

CAROL ANN

But you were dead.

PETER

You have every right to be angry.

LATTIMORE

Angry? Your play brought me back to life!

AMY

And there's three weeks to fix it.

LATTIMORE

May I help?

AMY

You would do that?

LATTIMORE

They're called plays, for heaven's sake! One is supposed to play!

PETER

That would be awesome.

LATTIMORE

You know, when I was dead I realized that I had gone my whole life...and I had never ever really, truly played.

(TED enters.)

PETER

Well, Dr. Lattimore, here's your chance!

TED

Doctor Lattimore! What a nice surprise. To see a friendly face.

LATTIMORE

Ted Henley. So good to see you again! And what a lovely reading your ensemble gave to the *Testocles*. What did you think of the poetry?

TED

It...sang.

LATTIMORE

I think it did, too. But why did you cancel the ending?

AMY

Yes, why did you cancel the ending?

TED

Well... the woman from the grant foundation had already left and...

CAROL ANN

I'll be right back.

TED

And it was kind of falling apart with Rick and Clarissa leaving and...

AMY

We could have still made it work.

PETER

And we still can, right?

TED

Is there any point in still trying to make it work?

AMY

You tell me.

TED

It seems a little...beyond repair at this point.

LATTIMORE

No piece of art is ever beyond repair.

AMY

My point exactly.

TED

The point of the play was to secure our future, and it seems like you've already decided that –

(TED's phone rings and he looks at it.)

Excuse me, I need to take this. *(He answers.)* Hello? Yes, Ms. Rosenberg, I did wonder where you had gone. Yes, I'm sorry you had an emergency. A fully staged workshop production? Sure, sure. Yeah, I'm really glad you enjoyed it. Bye bye.

(TED hangs up.)

She wants to see more of Athena.

LATTIMORE

Well, I think that could be arranged.

(CAROL ANN enters.)

CAROL ANN

Yes, I think that's just what the piece needs. And by the way, I'm so sorry about your wife.

(We hear the flute and the chorus of voices:

*"O Ancient Muse who rescues us from death -
Who draws us from the darkness to the light -
Give us your wisdom and give us your strength
To shepherd us along this rocky path.*

Lights change and we are in a rehearsal. TED, AMY, PETER, CLARISSA, RICK, CAROL ANN and LATTIMORE are there. AMY is looking at a script. CLARISSA, RICK and LATTIMORE wear helmets and rehearsal tunics.)

PETER

Dr. Lattimore, this is great. Really, really great.

LATTIMORE

I can't tell you how much fun I've had. I hope you'll enjoy it.

PETER

Amy, isn't this amazing?

AMY

Yeah.

LATTIMORE

I hope you'll find the addition of Odysseus helpful in structuring the narrative and adding another level of complexity to the story.

PETER

It's definitely got more weight, more heft...

LATTIMORE

It's got...balls! If I do say so myself.

TED

(to AMY) Are you feeling any better?

AMY

Yeah, a little. I'm fine. OK, everyone, places from –

TED

You don't look well. Let me take over.

AMY

I'm fine.

TED

You rest.

AMY

But –

TED

Places for line 450, everyone. This is Dr. Lattimore's awesome new part with Odysseus and Testocles. It comes right after Epididymus makes his first pass at Testocles and Testocles decides to wear the prosthetic penis, henceforth referred to as the "p.p.", to prove he's a man.

CLARISSA

Do you want me to start wearing that to rehearsal?

TED

We haven't even gotten it yet.

CLARISSA

Oh don't waste your money. I have a bunch of strap-ons at home. What? I'm just looking out for you guys!

TED

The helmet and rehearsal tunic are fine.

AMY

(to *PETER*) This totally sucks.

PETER

Are you kidding? You see how excited Ted is? It's a great play and the Rich Foundation will love it.

AMY

No, they won't.

PETER

Yes, they will! It has everything they're looking for.

AMY

Except that it wasn't written by a woman.

PETER

Yes it was!

AMY

I did not write that! Doctor Lattimore did!

PETER

Look, you've been sick. And he just added a little to what you wrote.

AMY

Three hundred lines! A whole new character! I bust my butt for you, changing Rick's part to make it less gay, and Lattimore writes entirely new scenes.

PETER

He just added two scenes with Odysseus.

AMY

In the play, he now has Testocles come up with the idea of the Trojan Horse! It's no longer just about a woman who wants to fight a battle – it's about a woman who wins an entire war!!

PETER

You don't think that's a brilliant idea?

AMY

Of course it's brilliant! It's the most brilliant modern ancient Greek play I've ever seen. And it was written not by me but by a man!!

TED

Ready, Clarissa? 450?

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Odysseus, commander of our troops
We fight and fight for years to no avail.
I have in mind another tack, a ruse
Whereby these Trojans shall be caught off guard.

LATTIMORE and RICK (Odysseus)

Come, come, dear Testocles, what kind of ruse
Could lull these Trojans from their sentry posts?

TED

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Awesome stereo, but no. Rick, that's Odysseus. New addition.

RICK

I know it's Odysseus. I was told I was Odysseus.

TED

Who told you that?

PETER

I said I would *try* to get you the new part.

AMY

(*to PETER*) I told you I was rewriting Epididymus.

PETER

I know, but Rick is so...look, I know him.

AMY

Whatever.

LATTIMORE

I would certainly be happy to read Epididymus.

TED

Dr. Lattimore, I'd like you to read Odysseus.

RICK

How come he gets to read Odysseus?

TED

Odysseus is the commander. He's older.

RICK

I played Creon in *Antigone*. He's a college professor.

TED

Dr. Lattimore has an outstanding resume of acting in summer stock. He's more than qualified.

RICK

(*to PETER*) I have no intention –

PETER

(*to RICK*) She changed a bunch of your lines, OK?

RICK

The only reason I came back here –

TED

454!!

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

Come, come, dear Testocles, what kind of ruse
Could lull these Trojans from their sentry posts?

CLARISSA (Testocles)

A gift, Odysseus, a giant horse
An offering of peace as we retreat.
Left at the gate as we set sail for home.

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

You say we shall retreat? You speak treason!!

CLARISSA (Testocles)

No treason, sir, a gentle Grecian trick.
We leave the gift and some of us set sail.
And as Troy drinks and revels in the night
Our horse's mouth shall open and our troops
Shall all pour forth to slay our drunken foes!!

AMY

Can you try "to slay those drunken bums" instead?

TED

Amy!

AMY

Oh, I mean, do you think that would be OK, Dr. Lattimore?

LATTIMORE

Well, since this is one of the...uh...reconstructed pieces not from the original fragment, I think some license would be appropriate.

AMY

Thank you.

LATTIMORE

However, even in comedy, a pejorative like "drunken bum" would probably not be applied. The Greeks were nothing if not respectful of even their worst enemies

TED

Thank God you're here. Let's go back. Uh...462, please, Clarissa.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

And as Troy drinks and revels in the night
 Our horse's mouth shall open and our troops
 Shall all pour forth to slay our drunken foes!!

(Long pause as RICK refuses to read.)

TED

Rick? 465, please? A brilliant scheme?

RICK (Epididymus)

A brilliant scheme, O Testocles, my friend.
 Is there no end to what this man can do?

TED

Can you camp that up a little? Maybe zing the word "end" or something?

RICK

No.

TED

I want you to camp it up. Again.

RICK (Epididymus)

(straight as can be) A brilliant scheme, O Testocles, my friend.
 Is there no end to what this man can do?

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Rest easy, Epididymus, for I,
 A manly man, have more tricks up my sleeve.

(Another pause as RICK refuses to read.)

TED

Rick? 469, big guy?

CLARISSA

(impatient) Come on, chico. After me.
 "Rest easy, Epididymus, for I
 A manly man have more tricks up my sleeve."

RICK (Epididymus)

What tricks are those my dear friend Testocles?
 Perhaps I shall inspect your sleeve myself.

TED

And at this point you will touch the sleeve gently. Stroke it, if you would, please.

RICK

Isn't it time for our break yet?

TED

We have five minutes. Let's please get through this section. Take it from 467.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Rest easy, Epididymus, for I
A manly man have more tricks up my sleeve.

RICK (Epididymus)

What tricks are those my dear friend Testocles?
Perhaps I shall inspect your sleeve myself.

TED

Stroke it, please.

RICK

No, you stroke it!

AMY

Rick, please.

RICK

(to her) You promised me that this was going to change!

AMY

It did! I gave the lines you hated to Athena. Please?

PETER

Come on, Rick. Please? 469?

RICK

WHAT?

AMY

Line number four sixty-nine.

RICK (Epididymus)

What tricks are those my dear friend Testocles?
Perhaps I shall inspect your sleeve myself.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

My sleeve is full of wonders and of wiles
Which you, my friend, shall never ever know.

TED

OK, on that I want Epididymus to go for the sleeve and Testocles, you counter and go above him, get up on that platform so you're behind him and your crotch is about at the level of his neck. And when you're up there, Athena –

CAROL ANN

Finally.

TED

Athena appears.

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Be wary, Testocles, for your disguise
While meant to make you look more like a man
Has so excited Epididymus
He can no longer keep his hands at bay.
If truth be told it's not your sleeve he seeks
But what's beneath your tunic that he craves!

TED

OK, so when she says "tunic" I want Epididymus to swing around and bang his face into Testocles' tunic.

RICK

What the fuck, man??!! That is not in the script!

TED

That wouldn't be out of keeping with the Greek style, would it?

LATTIMORE

No, no, there was always some sort of genital hijinx like that in the satyr plays.

RICK

Fuck this shit, man!

TED

OK, let's just calm down and take our break, what do you say?

AMY

That's a five, everybody.

RICK

Take your girlie rehearsal dress. I am out of here!!

(RICK tears off the helmet and rehearsal tunic and exits, as do ALL except PETER and CLARISSA.)

CLARISSA

(calling off) You know, Rick, if you have some sort of problem working with me I really wish you would just come out and say it.

PETER

It's not about you, Clarissa.

CLARISSA

Of course it is.

PETER

You know, not everything is about you!

CLARISSA

This is!

PETER

You got along fine in *Antigone*, so his problem is obviously not with you.

CLARISSA

Typical man – real nice when he wanted to sleep with me and then when he finally does he's an asshole.

PETER

What?

CLARISSA

He acts like he's all into me for weeks and then I finally say, "OK, what the hell," and for a while I was like, "OK, maybe this guy's actually worth my time," and then he's all like, "Oh, it's not you, it's me. I can't commit to anyone, I'm going to Cali, Mister Lube this, Mister Lube that. I'm confused, I don't know who I am anymore."

PETER

You guys were...?

CLARISSA

It was like, two weeks. Not even.

PETER

And he said he was confused?

CLARISSA

Typical male bullshit. Been there done him. Whatever. I am so ready to cycle back to women.

PETER

Um, did he go into any more details?

(LASZLO enters.)

LASZLO

Mini girl!

PETER

Mister Laszlo! Jello.

LASZLO

Jello, mini girl!

CLARISSA

Hey....

PETER

It hasn't been...free weeps yet.

LASZLO

I come zee today, no? Zee virgin number doo in reversal.

PETER

Uh, sure, sure. Uh, it's only a -

LASZLO

Reversal, I know. Need many, many work. Zee Clarissa. You no neeb many, many work.

CLARISSA

Hey, thanks...

PETER

How long have you been here?

LASZLO

Ten meeny or zo.

PETER

Well, that little disturbance you saw? That's just a little theatre game warm up, to establish appropriate dramatic tension –

LASZLO

De Mister Lube man no like Clarissa? He craze.

(AMY and CAROL ANN enter.)

AMY

Mister Laszlo!

LASZLO

Jello, Amy. You do many, many work, no? You make gravitas?

AMY

Yeah. Trying, trying.

(AMY's phone beeps. SHE looks at it.)

Look at this.

(AMY shows PETER her text message.)

PETER

(reading) “Gone to LA. Have a nice life.”

AMY

Pete, I'm sorry.

PETER

Whatever. It's not your fault.

AMY

If Ted hadn't taken over and blocked it like that -

PETER

He's being ridiculous!

LASZLO

No more Mister Lube?

AMY

He'll be back. I'll call him –

(AMY tries to call RICK.)

CLARISSA

Ted is gonna freak.

PETER

No. We'll recast it. If that's how he's going to be -

CAROL ANN

That's at least a couple of days gone. We'll be lucky to have anything ready for Marjorie Rosenberg.

AMY

There is no Marjorie Rosenberg, Carol Ann!

CAROL ANN

Oh. You're right.

PETER

But there is Mister Laszlo. Who expects a show in a week.

LASZLO

Neeb to see gravitas!!

AMY

Yeah. Gravitas.

TED

(o.s.) Is that five yet, Amy?

LASZLO

And neeb to talk to director.

AMY

Can you go out the audience, please?

PETER

Yeah, this, uh, is not a really good time...

LASZLO

Why? He cry little bip tear again?

AMY

Yeah, it's a little stressful right now -

TED

(o.s.) Is Rick back yet?

PETER

Ted can not see Mr. Laszlo!

CAROL ANN

Marjorie Rosenberg to the rescue! I'm on it!

AMY

Rick's not answering!

PETER

Of course not!

TED

(o.s) Are you guys ready?

PETER

Carol Ann! Call Ted! Hurry!

CAROL ANN

Wait, I don't have my phone!

CLARISSA

(shouting off) Uh, wait, Ted, I need to talk to you about this scene -

LASZLO

I reeb Epididdlemouse!

AMY

What?

LASZLO

I reeb dood. Many, many better than speak. In fat, I can reeb just like Mister Lube.

(LASZLO grabs the script off the floor.)

I no afraib of mini girl. Comee comee Clarissa.

PETER

No, please, Mister Laszlo -

LASZLO

Laszlo insist!! I reeb dood! You zee!

(TED enters, followed by Dr. LATTIMORE.)

CLARISSA

Wait, Ted! I'm having a problem with -

PETER

(to *LASZLO*) Here, put this on!

CLARISSA

With...with my motivation for this scene.

*(PETER puts the helmet and rehearsal tunic on LASZLO. For the first time, the ensemble works **together** to keep TED from seeing that RICK is no longer there.)*

TED

You look awesome up there. Is that five, Amy?

AMY

Yeah. OK, everybody, we're back. (to *PETER*) You call Rick!

PETER

I'm tired of -

AMY

Just do it!

TED

OK, I want to jump to the part at the end where Testocles' plan for the Trojan Horse has kicked butt, the Greeks have sacked Troy and they're all celebrating. And I just want to say, people, that you need to trust me as a director and realize that I am not going to make you look foolish on stage, OK? The audience will be laughing with you. Let's take it from line 1155.

AMY

(to *PETER*) Did you get him?

PETER

(to *AMY*) He won't answer. He's not going to answer anyone from here!

AMY

We need another phone.

PETER

He knows everybody here.

(AMY goes up to LASZLO. She first adjusts his position so he is less visible to TED.)

TED

What are you doing?

AMY

Epididymus is not in the right place from when we blocked this before.

TED

We haven't blocked this yet.

AMY

Oh. *(to LASZLO)* Can I borrow your phone?

(LASZLO gives AMY his phone.)

Thank you so much!

(AMY hands the phone to PETER who dials and goes off.)

TED

OK, 1155, Odysseus.

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

And as we plunder Troy and lay it waste
 Let us remember how it came to pass.
 'Twas through the cunning wiles of Testocles,
 whose wooden horse led us to victory!
 An ordered mind and a robust body –
 With tools like these are men sure to succeed!
 So let us raise a glass and loudly cheer
 The author of this moment! Speak, lad, speak!

CLARISSA (Testocles)

I'm happy that the horse could hold us all.
 I'm happy that it didn't fall apart.

PETER

(to AMY, overlapping) He's not coming back.

AMY

OK. Give me the phone.

(AMY starts texting on the phone.)

CLARISSA (Testocles)

My only regret for the future is
 The world shall beware of Greeks bearing gifts!
 I'm happy that we've ended this stalemate.
 But sorry that there's no more chance to fight.
 But since we're men, we'll find another chance!

TED

Testocles, you need to take a pause after "stalemate". The line, "I'm happy that we've ended this stalemate," is really Helena's true voice coming through. She's achieved her goal. She's ended the war. But then she worries that she's exposed herself as a woman, so she immediately switches back to her dumb jock Testocles character – "But sorry that there's no more chance to fight, but since we're men we'll find another chance". Right? I think it's that fear of being exposed and attacked that I think makes this play way more than just light humor. Amy, do you want to add anything?

AMY

No. That was...that was really good.

(TED's phone beeps.)

I think you have a text message?

TED

I'll get in a minute. Speak, lad, speak!

CLARISSA (Testocles)

I'm happy that the horse could hold us all.
 I'm happy that it didn't fall apart.
 My only regret for the future is
 The world shall beware of Greeks bearing gifts!
 I'm happy that we've ended this stalemate.
 But sorry that there's no more chance to fight.
 But since we're men, we'll find another chance!
 But now we journey home to love our wives
 To give them what they've all so sorely missed.

TED

OK, and there you will obviously gesture to your p.p., at which point Epididymus will speak to it.

(There is a very long, uncomfortable pause.)

AMY

Maybe we should take a break.

TED

We just took one.

AMY

Don't you have a text message?

TED

Epididymus, 1170? I told you you needed to trust me.

LASZLO

Oh –

TED

You know what? Why don't you fall to your knees and look up at him when you do this? Testocles, give him the cue again.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

But now we journey home to love our wives
To give them what they've all so sorely missed.

(There is another long, uncomfortable pause.)

LASZLO

Oh –

TED

Actually, why don't you take the helmet off before speaking.

PETER

Would a Greek soldier have done that, Dr. Lattimore?

LATTIMORE

Uh, no, no. Certainly not. They would have, uh, still been worried about...attack from spies who had infiltrated...

TED

OK. My bad. One more time.

CLARISSA (Testocles)

But now we journey home to love our wives
To give them what they've all so sorely missed.

*(There is a third long, uncomfortable pause.
As he speaks, LASZLO sticks his face into*

CLARISSA's tunic skirt, but still manages to read from his script. His voice is, of course, a little muffled, but he does manage to sound an awful lot like RICK.)

LASZLO (Epididymus)

Oh Testocles, I can no longer keep
From telling you the way I truly feel.
I've loved you since the day I first saw you.
And love has grown each day that I've known you.

TED

OK, that's a bold choice, but I can live with that. Epididymus, you lift up the tunic and Odysseus responds.

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

What's this? A girl? You naughty little girl!
To dare impersonate a warrior!
Your wicked stunt defiles this uniform!
Come, men! Let's show this girl her proper place!

CLARISSA (Testocles)

But sir, did I not win your war for you?

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

You cunning little bitch, don't you talk back!
I'll show you what men do to those who lie!
Prepare to suffer death from your own sword!

TED

And I think at this point we'll try having Odysseus stab Testocles with the prosthetic penis and not his actual sword because this is a comedy after all. And Epididymus, you'll draw your sword as well because you're pissed about being lied to. Keep going.

(On CAROL ANN's speech, as LASZLO faces forward, CAROL ANN pushes him face down on the stage to conceal him from TED.)

CAROL ANN (Athena)

Hold back you swarthy men! Withdraw your swords.
And let your Testocles not feel your grasp.
A maiden she, but braver she than you.
You will not touch her with your dirty hands
But bear her safely home and set her free.
Our Testocles has spared you from your death.

Athena sends you back where you belong.

TED

Blackout. Thunderous applause. Cool. Guys, I gotta tell you, I am stoked to do this. Let's do notes. You can get out of those helmets.

(TED reads his text message as LASZLO tries unsuccessfully to get up.)

Huh. Marjorie Rosenberg wants to meet me immediately at the Starbucks on Astor Place.

AMY

You should not keep her waiting.

PETER

Yes, go, see what she wants.

CAROL ANN

Give her my best.

TED

(to AMY) Hey, depending on how long this takes I may just go straight to work tonight –

AMY

That's OK, I understand.

TED

I won't be back until –

AMY

It's OK, go.

TED

I'm doing this for –

AMY

I know. Go. Go!

(TED exits.)

PETER

Mister Laszlo, are you all right?

AMY

Are you OK? We get a little physical at times...

LASZLO

Me vine, me vine!

AMY

Oh, good!

CAROL ANN

Your reading was very good. You sound a lot like Rick, actually.

CLARISSA

I have no idea how you managed to get any sound out at all.

LATTIMORE

Hello, young man, I don't believe we've been formally introduced.

PETER

So how are we doing? Gravitas?

LASZLO

No. And I no come beck until ovary night. In one weep.

PETER

Great, great. Any recommendations? Any suggestions?

LASZLO

You neeb to finger it out. You finger it out, you give me bone call. My bone?

AMY

Oh, your phone. Thank you for letting us use your phone.

(AMY returns the phone.)

LASZLO

You finger it out. What I neeb. One weep. Bone me.

(LASZLO exits.)

CAROL ANN

Shall Marjorie Rosenberg call Ted and cancel?

AMY

I guess so. I don't know.

CLARISSA

He is gonna freak!

AMY

I didn't know what else to do!

CAROL ANN

I could go there and be Marjorie Rosenberg.

CLARISSA

I could do an awesome Marjorie Rosenberg.

CAROL ANN

She's a mature woman! And can you do her voice?

CLARISSA

I'm just trying to help!

AMY

It doesn't matter! The play is still not what they're looking for! "You finger it out. What I need. One weep. Bone me."

CAROL ANN

Quite a provocative offer.

LATTIMORE

I have to admit I didn't quite catch all of that but I do think I inferred a certain meaning from his colorful *patois*.

CLARISSA

Guys...Laszlo's a skank...but if you want me to? I would do it for you guys because you're awesome.

PETER

I thought you alternated between men and women.

CLARISSA

So?

PETER

If Rick was the last person –

CLARISSA

Peter, when you said it wasn't all about me? You might have been right.

AMY

No, Clarissa.

CLARISSA

Oh, good, so it is still all about me. Kidding!!

PETER

I think what Amy means is that we are not going to get a grant that way. God!! A grant for women playwrights obtained through sexual manipulation of women! I am going to call the Glendora V. Rich Foundation and raise holy hell!

AMY

No, Peter. And no, Clarissa. You all assumed that's what he meant. I don't think so. All he said was that we need to finger it out. It's a challenge. And why shouldn't it be for that kind of money? Why should there be easy answers? This is real life. It's slow and painful and difficult and there's not going to be a Deus ex Machina with thunder and lightning crashing down from above -

(Thunder and lightning crash down from above. In darkness we hear the flute and the chorus of voices:

*"I have so often been at a crossroads
Not knowing which of several paths to choose.
Which way leads me from darkness to the light?
How do I find the true voice within me?"*

(When light returns AMY is there alone. A light shines down on her.)

AMY

Athena? Is that you? No. That's the point.
There is no goddess from above who will
untie the knots and make the pathway clear.
Gravitas. Dignity, purpose...Balls.
No goddesses to get you out of jams.
You figure it out. You dig down and find
the strength to do the thing you can not do.
Helena must do it for herself,
With every ounce of strength and every stroke
of mind and every drop of heart and soul.
Helena must get home by herself.

CAROL ANN

(O.S.) Does that mean that Athena's been cut?

(And we're back. It's now a week later and the cast assembles for the next reading.)

AMY

Carol Ann...

CAROL ANN

(indicating a script) I just read your final draft.

AMY

There's some really nice stuff for the Chorus leader.

CAROL ANN

Almost fifty and still in the Chorus. I have half a mind to go straight to Ted...

AMY

I can't stop you.

CAROL ANN

You know what the problem is with theater, Amy?

AMY

What, Carol Ann?

CAROL ANN

I'll tell you tomorrow.

*(PETER, CLARISSA and LATTIMORE
enter. AMY distributes scripts.)*

AMY

Here's the final draft, guys. Our last chance.

PETER

Where's Ted?

AMY

Home asleep. He's exhausted. He's got hours all week at this after hours club. He won't be in this week. He says he trusts me to bring the baby home.

CLARISSA

(looking at the script) Wow.

AMY

The story is basically the same. Helena pretends to be a man so she can sail to Troy and end the Trojan War. She comes up with the idea for the horse -

LATTIMORE

A minor contribution, really. All great art is collaborative at some point.

AMY

And the Greeks defeat the Trojans. I changed Epididymus a little. And not to suit Rick, although I did email him this draft, just in case he changes his mind. Peter, you can read Epididymus today –

CLARISSA

Just as long as it's not skirt-diving skankboy.

AMY

And I've got a couple of guys lined up to read for me tonight.

PETER

They better be quick studies.

AMY

They are. You'll see that in this version Epididymus is conflicted about his feelings throughout.

PETER

So you're backing off on having a gay character.

AMY

No. I just wanted a more real character. You'll see at the end. The end is the big difference. There's no Deus ex Machina. No Athena watching throughout and then stepping in to save the day.

CAROL ANN

Amy, this is not Carol Ann being a diva, it's really not, but Ted liked the last version.

AMY

Laszlo didn't. And I didn't.

LATTIMORE

How do I explain why I decided to change it yet again?

CLARISSA

I can't believe he still believes any part of my original story, even though I have been awesomely convincing.

PETER

Ted has always hung on to what he wants to believe in.

CAROL ANN

I don't think any amount of story-telling is going to convince him.

AMY

I don't want to tell a story Ted will believe. I want to tell the story I want to tell.

Let's look at the new ending first. Line 1175.

CAROL ANN

(to LATTIMORE) I wasn't being a diva.

LATTIMORE

I know. And I do hope you'll decide to stay.

AMY

Line 1175, please.

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

And as we plunder Troy and lay it waste
 Let us remember how it came to pass.
 'Twas through the cunning wiles of Testocles,
 whose wooden horse led us to victory!
 An ordered mind and a robust body –
 With tools like these are men sure to succeed!
 So let us raise a glass and loudly cheer
 The author of this moment! Speak, lad, speak!

CLARISSA

(to AMY) Am I still going to be wearing the p.p.?

AMY

Yes.

(RICK enters, unseen. HE carries a script he printed.)

CLARISSA

Cool.

(CLARISSA straps on a stick beneath her tunic.)

LATTIMORE

Speak, lad, speak!

CLARISSA (Testocles)

The stalemate's ended, but no thanks to men.
 Your ordered minds and robust bodies caused
 Ten years of suffering and misery.

It took a different course, a softer path
 To break the gates of Troy and end bloodshed.
 This horse was not the ruse of one like you
 But rather sprang from woman's fertile mind.

(CLARISSA/Testocles rips off the stick.)

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

What's this? A girl? You naughty little girl!
 To dare impersonate a warrior!

CAROL ANN (Chorus)

What trickery! What unabashed deceit!
 How we shall make her pay for shaming us!

LATTIMORE (Odysseus) and CAROL ANN (Chorus)

Your wicked stunt defiles this uniform!
 Come, men! Let's show this girl her proper place!

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Odysseus, comrades, show me respect!
 I'm still the one who won your war for you.

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

You cunning little bitch, don't you talk back!
 I'll show you what men do to those who lie!
 Prepare to suffer death from your own sword!

CLARISSA (Testocles)

Hands off my sword! And hands off yours as well!
 The time has come for laying down of arms!
 Do you not know to whom you speak right now?
 Have you not seen before with your own eyes?
 Have you not heard my name a thousand times?
 Athena! Bow before me mortal men!

LATTIMORE (Odysseus)

You are not she the goddess of wisdom!
 And how dare you blaspheme Athena's name!

CLARISSA (Testocles/Helena)

Not Athena herself, I do confess.
 But through her power have I persevered
 And with her cunning did I win this war
 And through the strength which she bestowed on me
 Shall I defend myself from any foe!!

Look up to me! Behold me! HELENA!!

PETER (Epididymus)

Oh Helena, I can no longer keep
From telling you the way I truly feel.

(RICK joins him.)

PETER and RICK (Epididymus)

I've loved you since the day I first saw you.
And love has grown each day that I've known you.
This mystery revealed, I understand.

CLARISSA (Testocles/Helena)

I feel the same, sweet Epididymus.
Let us go forth and build a world of love.

RICK

(reading) "Lights fade slowly on the two lovers, united. Blackout. End of Play."

PETER

Thunderous applause.

AMY

Let's take ten.

(No one moves.)

RICK

I liked what you did with my part, Amy.

AMY

Are you back in?

RICK

Is the part still open?

PETER

If it's because Epididymus is now straight, no.

RICK

He's not completely straight. In this version, he's conflicted throughout.

PETER

Until the end. He has to prove himself.

Check your email.

RICK

(PETER checks his iPhone.)

Your new bio?

PETER

Yes.

RICK

We're only on a ten.

PETER

Scroll to the end.

RICK

(reading) "All my love to Flaco."

PETER

Did he prove himself? *(beat)* Flaco?

RICK

What about Mister Lube?

PETER

I think I can handle being bicoastal. Can you?

RICK

(A change. In darkness we hear the flute and the chorus of voices:

"The hour before the dawn is the darkest.

Yet light emerges each and every day.

So it is true for each crossroads we face.

Which way to turn? Dawn breaks and points the way."

Lights up at the curtain call of the first workshop production of Testocles.

Thunderous applause, bows, hugs. AMY, TED and PETER join CLARISSA, CAROL ANN and LATTIMORE.)

You guys that was amazing!

AMY

PETER

Incredible guys.

TED

What just happened?

PETER

We did a fabulous show! Didn't you love it?

TED

I'm gone for a few days and the play is entirely different? Dr. Lattimore, I don't understand.

LATTIMORE

Well, Ted, you see, new radiocarbon dating has suggested that the papyrus dates from the early fourth century rather than the late fifth century and after further consideration of the standard archetypal forms of the period -

TED

Oh, sure, sure.

LATTIMORE

The most important question is did you like it?

TED

To be honest? It totally sang! And Testocles really kicked ass at the end!

AMY

Helena.

TED

Right.

(RICK enters.)

RICK

You guys, there are seriously people asking for autographs!

PETER

And we just made about two thousand bucks tonight.

TED

What really matters is what Marjorie Rosenberg thought.

CAROL ANN

Oh, I saw her out there. She was loving it.

TED

I didn't see her.

PETER

How do you even know what she looks like?

TED

The coffee shop last week? When I met with her?

AMY

You met with her?

TED

Yeah, she was awesome! Oh God, with me working all night and you here all day I never told you, did I? Anyway, she's just got these awesome ideas about theater, and, you know, after slogging it out for seven years, you forget that this can actually be a lot of fun. You guys have all made this fun for me again.

*(THE OTHERS all mutter guiltily
"Thanks....Gee, thanks, Ted...Oh, hey man,
any time....etc.)*

And there is one person that I really owe that renewed sense of fun, sense of joy to. *(beat)* Clarissa McLean.

AMY

WHAT?

TED

If Clarissa had not walked in here to audition and told us about the newly discovered fragment of papyrus, tonight could have never happened.

AMY

CLARISSA?

PETER

I think there's someone else you need to thank.

TED

Of course. And if it hadn't been for the tireless work of Dr. Lattimore, the rest wouldn't have been possible either. I can't imagine how many hours he spent...

"An ordered mind and a robust body –
With tools like these are men sure to succeed!
So let us raise a glass and loudly cheer
The author of this moment! Speak, lad, speak!"

AMY

I wrote it! I wrote the play! I knew you would never agree to produce a work by a woman so I made up the story about the fragment, I wrote the play. To get the grant that you refused to bend for. Yeah, I got a little help from Dr. Lattimore and Peter, I mean everybody helped a little. But it's my play! *Testocles*, by Amy Lawrence.

TED

Everybody helped? Everybody knew?

AMY

It was the only way.

TED

So, this whole time...Dr. Lattimore? Pete? *(to AMY)* And you.

(TED begins to leave. CAROL ANN interrupts his exit.)

CAROL ANN

Ted, you know what the problem with theater is?

TED

What?

CAROL ANN

No matter how much you love it, it will never love you back.

AMY

I did this for us. And I did this for me. I did this because I want your theatre, my theater, our theater to survive and grow. And I wanted to prove that I could write a play with gravitas.

TED

I think you did.

CLARISSA

I bet the skank gives you the grant.

AMY

Well, we're going to need it. Especially now.

TED

Wait, are you...?

Yes. **AMY**

Are you serious? **TED**

Uh huh. **AMY**

(LASZLO enters.)

Is it mine? **TED**

What the hell kind of a question is that? **AMY**

TED
(indicating LASZLO) I thought it might be his.

(LASZLO removes some outer layers and reveals himself to be a woman.)

LASZLO
(standard English) That's rather unlikely.

TED
Marjorie Rosenberg!!

LASZLO
Hello again, Ted. I love the changes you made since we had coffee last weekend.

CAROL ANN
Wait a minute, I thought I was Marjorie Rosenberg!

LASZLO
And I'm not really Marjorie Rosenberg.

PETER
Oh my God! You're, you're...

LASZLO/GLENDORA
Glendora V. Rich. Lovely to meet you.

PETER
You look just like the picture on your website.

CLARISSA

You're not a skank at all.

RICK

How dare you masquerade as someone you're not!

LATTIMORE

There's a lot to be said for reinventing one's self in mid-life.

AMY

You're Glendora V. Rich?

PETER

So this whole time...?

GLENDORA

It's the one way I know to catch people being real.

AMY

I get it. You pretended to be into Clarissa to see if we would try to use sex as a way to improve our chances of getting the grant.

PETER

Which we didn't.

GLENDORA

Yes, you didn't. So good for you. But, I wasn't pretending.

CLARISSA

Cool.

AMY

Clarissa, you do not have to –

CLARISSA

(to GLENDORA) I make this mint chocolate pineapple martini that will totally melt your panties off.

PETER

So when do we find out if we get the grant?

GLENDORA

In the words of our mission statement, The Glendora V. Rich Foundation offers an annual award of up to one hundred thousand dollars to established theatre companies -

TED

We're established. Seven years, baby. Goin' on eight. Goin' strong!

AMY

Stronger that ever.

GLENDORA

To established theatre companies that produce plays by women, for women, about women with profound gravitas.

Testocles has gravitas.

(A change. We hear the flute.)

CLARISSA

The whirlwind whips round women and round men
With power to unite or tear apart.

CAROL ANN and CLARISSA

We do not watch the storm muted in fear

CAROL ANN, CLARISSA, AMY and GLENDORA

But raise our voices strong and brave and proud.

PETER and RICK

We will not live in silence or in fear.

CAROL ANN, CLARISSA, AMY, PETER, RICK and GLENDORA

We will rejoice and live this life in love.

TED

From mind and body, power and order rise.

LATTIMORE

And ordered minds make smooth a troubled world.

TED and LATTIMORE

And man's strong arms keep nature's wrath at bay.

THE FOUR MEN

The mind and arms of man can tame this world.

THE FOUR WOMEN

But mind and arms alone are not enough.
And in excess there may be suffering.
Therefore let heart and soul rise up in love

To cure, to soothe, to heal the troubled world.
Let understanding rise to save the day.
Let tenderness clear out a cluttered mind.

ALL

Let balance be the rule by which we live.
Strong body, gentle heart, and agile mind
Enveloped by a warm and tender soul.
Let each of these in human spirit rule.
Until the peace of wholeness reigns supreme.

AMY

Until the peace of wholeness reigns supreme.

*(AMY is elevated on what had been Athena's
platform, with her arms raised, looking
skyward. There is a brilliant light.
Blackout.)*

END OF PLAY