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Spring Mysteries 2009: [The Lesser Mysteries]

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Spring Mysteries Festival- Subseries 01

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Spring Mysteries

2009

Introduction

< Archpriestess speaks >

Welcome

Hierophant, Apollo, Pythia

Hierophant: *<comes out on stage>* Citizens of Athens, welcome to these most sacred rites of the Goddess Demeter. These are the Eleusinian Mysteries, and they are open to all citizens. Be you man or woman, slave or free, noble or peasant, you are welcome to these rites. The Goddess of the growing Earth provides for all of her children, and each is equal in her eyes. Those under the age of 13 years are welcome to attend the Lesser Mysteries, but until they attain their 13th year they must not enter into the Greater Mysteries, and then only if they have seen the Lesser Mysteries in a previous year. It has always been this way, and shall continue to be so.

I am the Hierophant and shall have no other name until I have been released from service to the Goddess. My sacred duty is to serve as your leader through these rituals. For some of you this is your first time and the rites will be new. For those who have returned to complete your initiation into the Mysteries, I am certain there will be revelations that even you Epopai have not seen before.

*<the theater door opens with a bang, and Apollo enters, with the Pythoness clinging to his arm, looking strange and frantic, muttering to herself
They walk up the center aisle to the foot of the stairs>*

Hierophant: *<kneeling & bowing, backing away a bit>* Lord Apollo!

Apollo: Rise Priest! My Pythoness insists that she speak to these people immediately!

Pythia: *< mounts the stairs, swaying unsteadily on her feet >* Yes, I see! I see... deepest dark, and blinding light, the suffering that runs red from open wounds, the wounded die, and do not die, and yet die again! The

path is twisted, turning, swirling down and down into nothingness ...
you must see the wind and taste the sea to know which path to choose!
You MUST choose, and by that choice all is changed forever ... forever...
forever... *<she collapses, whispering forever, forever...>*

Apollo: *<gathering Pythia gently in his arms>* I cannot tell you what she means at this moment, but know that she speaks of things yet to be revealed. Hierophant, all that I can say with certainty is to be sure that your people are properly prepared for that which may await them. Let no one come before the Gods who is not ready! I must go, my Priestess needs to rest.

Hierophant: *<bowing>* Yes, Lord Apollo.

<Apollo & Pythia exit down the aisle, she still swaying & muttering on his arm.>

Hierophant: Citizens, heed these words. Make every effort to prepare yourselves. This journey we are about to make is a profound and sacred communion between you and the gods. None can make it for you, and none can explain it to you. You must witness and experience it alone. But be warned: what is revealed to you in the next few days is for your eyes alone. Do not repeat it to those who are uninitiated. Do not write of the Mystery, for whether you speak the oath in truth or not, the justice meted out by the gods shall find and touch you. The sacred revelations will not be understood by the uninitiated. Should you tell them, it would do nothing but lessen the sacredness and the awe with which your own soul is touched. *<pause>*

For this reason, I ask you to swear that you will not reveal anything that you see, hear, or feel during these rituals to any who have not attended them. The magic cannot be explained and hearing of things that happen here without the experience of them would lessen their impact. Do you swear? *< he pauses, allows them to swear their oath>*

Before we begin our journey, think of why you are here. What does initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries mean to you, and how might it change you? Balance your thoughts with the joy & solemnity of the occasion. We will soon be on our way to Eleusis. If what you seek is important, then your path will be true. This does not mean that you cannot interact and celebrate with those around you, but if you dally you will miss the rites.

Carts for those who need aid are waiting outside, and they can make their way now. For the rest of you, please wait and follow me. The path as you knew it from years before is different and you will be lost if you do not follow. *<mobility impaired exit first.>*

Let us be on our way to Eleusis!

< Hierophant leads everyone out of the theater, drummers drum, chanting starts. The people are led to the pavilion of the Royal Family>

Royal Flush

Keleos, Metanaira, Triptolemos, Eumolpus, Hierophant

< Everyone is assembling before the Pavilion of the Royal Family>

Keleos: Welcome everyone! Welcome! You have come to our lands from near and far to join us in our most joyful of celebrations, and we are honored. I am King Keleos of the family of Eumolpidaes, the Royal Family of Eleusis. This is my Queen, Lady Metanaira, and my sons, the Princes Triptolemus and Eumolpus. *<Princes bow, as Queen Met steps forward>*

Metanaira: Today we gather to celebrate the renewal of the Earth, and the blessings that the Gods have bestowed upon us. Our people and our lands have prospered, and it is our sacred duty to give honor to the Gods that have provided for us so generously.

Eumolpus: Before we make our way to the Temple, please take a moment to think about all the gifts you have received from the Gods this year. The beauty of the Earth, the touch of the Sun, the fruits of the fields and orchards that have graced your table, the bounty of the sea that has nourished you. The warmth of the fire in your hearth, and in your heart. *< he pauses for a moment of reflection>*

Triptolemos: *<getting a little impatient>* Brother, isn't it time to go to the Temple? We are expected there soon!

Eumolpus: *<with a patient, indulgent smile>* Yes, of course. We should be on our way. Mother, Father, are we ready to proceed? *<King and Queen give their assent>* Very well then! Please allow us to lead your way to the Temple of the Gods!

<The Royals exit from the Pavilion, escorted by the Hierophant, leading all to the Bunkers>

Old Beginnings / I Love This Pig!

Aphrodite, Apollo, Ares, Artemis, Athena, Demeter, Hekate, Hephaistos, Hera, Hestia, Hierophant, Hiereiai (Theano, Lysimache, Iphigeneia), Kore, Pan, Rhea, Royal Family, Zagreus, Zeus

< Hierophant, Royal Family, & crowd are coming down the road to the bunkers. Demeter & Rhea are center stage. Once all have assembled, the Hiereiai enter the stage from inside the bunkers. Theano at the top of the stage, Lysimache on the stairs, and Iphigeneia on the lower stage. When they are tiered they hold their hands respectively down, up, and out to form the 6-armed Goddess stance. When all are silent, they begin their lines.>

Theano: It begins.

Lysimache: As it has before.

Iphigeneia: As it will again.

Theano: This is the first time you have seen this, yet you have seen it many times before.

Lysimache: Ovid and Homer and many others write of these gods, yet this is the first time these events have happened.

Iphigeneia: There are stories within stories, and rituals within rituals.

Theano: Open your mind to the past, the present, and the future.

Lysimache: Open your soul to the rites yet to come, and those that have passed.

Iphigeneia: Open your hearts to the blessings of Lady Demeter.

< The Hiereiai bow to the Gods, and go to pick up the baskets of pigs & flowers. The Hierophant goes to Demeter, to honor and greet his Goddess. He remains at her feet. The Royal family moves forward, standing a bit to the right.>

Keleos: In preparation for the rites to come, we must first make sacrifice and cleanse ourselves so that we may be fit to come into the presence of the Gods. *< coughs weakly, leaning on Trip for support>* . Have all brought with them the pigs required for sacrifice in the Rite of Purification? *<blank stares from crowd>* Have you no pigs?

Metanaira: *<turns to Keleos, puts hand on his arm, concerned for his health>*
Keleos, many of these travelers are new to our ways, and times are not as they were, when all had folds of their own to make offerings from. Our year has been most bountiful, can we not offer some of our pigs to these good people?

Keleos: *<again coughing weakly>* Of course my Queen ~ you are as wise as you are beautiful! *<turns to address the crowd >* Each year our Goddess Demeter renews her promise to us, blessings our lands, making them rich and fruitful. We show her our gratitude and give her honor by returning some of this bounty to her, and thereby complete the cycle and ensure her continued blessings. Each of you take one of these pigs that you will soon lead to the sea for purification and sacrifice.

< Hieresai & Princes pass out piggies. As they do this, the Hierophant rises from Demeter's feet, and turns toward the crowd. He gestures toward the Goddess, indicating that she is about to speak.>

Demeter: Welcome here, children of the Earth. You are about to enter into the *Haladai Mystai*, my sacred rites. Your feet are traveling an ancient path that can lead you to places where your spirit touches the Divine. The preparations you make for this great journey will ensure that you travel a path that is one of beauty, truth, and joy.

<Zeus and Hera appear at the top of the hill. They take no notice of the mortals. Kore sees them but Demeter does not. Kore scurries to her mother's side, pulling on her urgently.>

Kore: Are we almost done yet, Mother? Can we go to the water now? Pleeeeze? Let's go! And I get to be first!

Zeus: So here you are, Demeter! *<she looks up with a start>* And your lovely daughter too! I have not seen her in so long, and she has grown so. Such an impetuous child! But then she must get that from her mother ...

Demeter: I wouldn't be so certain about *that*, Lord Zeus. But what are you and Lady Hera doing here, so far from the lofty heights of Olympus?

Zeus: We simply come to add our blessings to these lovely rites, *<turning a bit sarcastic>* even if they are *yours*!

Rhea: *<wryly>* How very thoughtful of you, my son!

Demeter: I don't know why they would be of any interest to either of you. These are Rites of the growing earth, far...umm...*simpler* than those of mighty Olympus! *<turns her head, noticing Apollo for the first time>*

And you Apollo ~ why would you bother coming here either?

Apollo: <teasing> Why Demeter, here you are giving honor to the effects of the beautiful golden Sun! I wouldn't *dream* of missing it!

Demeter: <with an irritated sigh> Well if that is the case, you might as well invite the whole family here!

< at this point ALL of the Gods (except Pan) come into view, waving sheepishly at Demeter >

Demeter: <throwing up her hands in resignation> Why doesn't this surprise me? Have you all been spying on me?

Aphrodite: <sidling up to Ares> I wouldn't call it *spying*, exactly. But you know, we just can't resist a good party!

Demeter: Of course not ~ Especially not *you*, Aphrodite!

<at this, Hephaistos glowers>

Athena: So very true! But some of us wanted to offer our support and protection to you as you conduct your Rites. Isn't that so, Hephaistos?

Hephaistos: Quite so, Athena. Lady Demeter, my tools and my skills are at your disposal should you have need of them.

Ares: <snorting> Yes, if one should need the skill of lameness!

Athena: Mind yourself, Ares! Weapons do not a warrior make ~ remember that time I brought you down with the throw of a stone?

< Hephaistos gives her a gleeful thumbs up >

<Ares growls, and begins drawing his sword, but Aphrodite stops him.>

Aphrodite: Battles may be won in many ways, with weapons both sharp, and soft ... wouldn't you agree, Hera?

Hera: <grudgingly> I suppose. You have many clever weapons in *your* arsenal, Aphrodite. Perhaps I may need to borrow one of them.

Hermes: But the sharpest weapon of them all is a quick wit! And on that account, I have you all out-armed!

Apollo: I wouldn't be so sure of yourself, Hermes!

Hermes: Is that so, Apollo? Don't you still seem to be missing some cattle?

Apollo: *<laughing, never able to stay mad at Hermes>* Ah Yes, God of Thieves! *<waves his lyre at Hermes>* But it is well that you have other skills at your disposal!

Artemis: Brother Apollo! It is the simplest weapons that are the most reliable! A swift arrow, aimed with skill, from a well-made bow will never fail you. As well as a pure heart and a strong will.

Aphrodite: Perhaps, Artemis ... but even the purest of hearts is not immune to influence. I seem to recall someone by the name of Orion...

Artemis: *<blushing>* Umm, yes, well, I have to go now, I have target practice to do before the hunt... *<she bounds off into the woods >*

Demeter: That is enough! I have my celebrants waiting here, while you go at each other like always. Is it no wonder that I prefer the fields and orchards to the rarified air of Olympus? We have preparations to make before my Mysteries can begin! *<she stops speaking abruptly, peers down the road, visibly shaken, looking over the heads of the people. Kore sees her distress, and comes to her side.>*

< Enter Pan, bouncing down the road with a young man at his side. He comes up through the crowd, calling out jovially...>

Pan: Lady Demeter! I have brought someone with me who wishes to see you!

Zagreus: Mother Demeter! I have missed you so much! Am I too late to join in the ceremonies?

Demeter: *<glancing around nervously, then speaking in a loud stage whisper>* No Zagreus! It is not safe for you here! Pan! Have you lost your wits! Get him out of here!

Zagreus: But Mother, am I not also a child of your green earth?

Demeter: *<pleadingly>* My son, do not stay here. Please obey me now!

<Kore & Zagreus exchange glances, and she begins to reach out to him. He moves a little forward, but Demeter holds her back. Demeter looks very nervous. Hera notices what is going on below, peering over the edge of the hill. She motions to her son Ares, who comes to her side. They bow heads, intense conversation happens between them. Ares nods, and keeps his eyes glued to Zagreus. Zeus then notices Pan.>

Zeus: Well look who has shown up! Pan, you have your nerve, don't you! Or perhaps you are just on the scent of another nymph or satyr to chase ...

Pan takes Zagreus by the arm and leads him to the other side of the crowd, to exit on the far side of the bunkers. Zagreus is crestfallen. Pan is still energetic, maybe even a bit defiant. As he is almost out of sight he jeers at Zeus>

Pan: Well, Mighty Lord Zeus! You might think to be a bit more charitable toward me, seeing as your own nursemaid was... A Goat!... Ha Ha! Baaaa, Baaaa, Baaaaaa! *<Pan and Zagreus disappear on the far side of the bunker.>*

< Hera points to the direction they are going. Ares begins to draw his sword, heading in the general direction they went.>

Hekate: Silence! There have been enough interruptions to this rite, and I will bear no more! This is Demeter's festival... She has been more than patient with ALL of you, but it is time to get back to the business at hand. You each have your temples to prepare, so I strongly suggest that you do so now. *<all bow to her authority, though they don't move immediately>*

Rhea: *<stepping forward>* Well, what are you waiting for? You heard Hekate.

All: Yes, Mother Rhea
<Rhea shoos them off, >

Rhea: People of Eleusis, as you can see, even the Gods themselves can disagree, at times. There is no place for that here, in the festival of Demeter's bounty. Your differences do not matter, nor do your fears, jealousy, or petty competitions. Before you lies a wondrous opportunity to experience something beyond the realms of your mortal lives, something that will leave you richer in spirit, and forever changed. Do not squander this away! As wise Hephaistos once said: The finest feast is without pleasure, when discord triumphs. So enter these Rites with joy, and with harmony.

< Rhea goes to Demeter's side, giving support to her daughter. Demeter pats her hand, draws herself up, and begins to speak>

Demeter: Thank you Mother. Let us return our focus to the preparations we must make for the Rite of Purification. Does each of you have a pig to offer at the sea? *<pause, make sure everyone does>* Very well then. Next, do you have someone among you who will lead in your purification?

Keleos: Lady Demeter, as the head of the Royal Family, it should be I who enters the sea first for the purification. <*coughing*>

Eumolpus: <*pleading*> Father, please let me go in your stead. As your eldest son, it would do me great honor if you would allow me this. Your people need you to return to our pavilion, ready to guide them on their way when they return from the sea.

Keleos: Well, I suppose it would be fitting....

Metanaira: <*jumping in quickly*> Oh, a VERY wise choice, my King! We shall return to the pavilion to await the people's return!

Eumolpus: <*bowing to Demeter*> Gracious Lady, if it pleases you, I will lead these people in their cleansing, and see that they are fit to come before you for the next part of your rites. Will you allow this?

Demeter: Very well, so it shall be. Hierophant, will you accompany them, and be sure that my brother Poseidon is given proper honor?

Hierophant: As you will, my Lady.

Kore: Oh Mother! We forgot the flowers! Everyone must have a blossom of the awakening Earth to take with them to the sea!

Demeter: Yes, you are right, my little one. As a symbol of the blessings I bestow upon you, I give you flowers that represent the beauty and joy of this celebration. Please take these with you when you travel to the sea to complete your purification. Hiereiai, bring forth the blossoms!

< *Hiereiai begin the distribution of the flower, assisted by the Brothers.*>
When you have received your flower, you may continue down to the sea! Drummer drum, singers chant. Make a joyful noise to be heard in the farthest reaches of the realm!

Kore: <*racing out in front*> Hey! Wait! I get to be first!!

Kore in front, followed by Hierophant & Eumolpus. Rhea and Demeter last, attended by the Temple Priestesses. Hierophant & Eumolpus will part the crowd for the Goddesses when they reach the sea.

Surf's Up!

Aphrodite, Demeter, Eumolpus, Kore, Sirens, Poseidon, Rhea, Hierophant, Sea Priests & Priestesses, Hiereiai

As the people reach the bottom of the hill, the Sirens begin to sing. They sing 'where are you going?' 'why are you here?' 'come with us' (this needs further development)

Hierophant: *(voice rising above theirs)* Do not listen to their song! *(to Sirens)* Why do you try to distract us from our path?

Siren (Teles): Life has many distractions. The path is never straight, and each must choose for themselves which direction to travel. We merely offer another choice...

<Kore, hearing this, looks frightened, and makes her way back to Demeter's side>

Hierophant: These good people have made their choice! They go to the sea for purification, to prepare themselves for the Rites of Demeter! *(turns to people , looking around)* That is correct, is it not? You have all come here of your own free will, and have chosen to continue on the path we have begun, into the Mysteries?

Eumolpus: Yes! *(crowd will respond Yes!)*

Hierophant: Then delay us no longer with your song! Let us be on our way!

Siren (Raidne): We will let you go.... For now.

Siren (Leucosia): But you may encounter us, or other *distractions*, in the future

Siren (Ligeia): And you may have to choose a path once again

Siren (Parthenope) : You may want to give some thought to your future choices

Siren (Teles); Some choices are a matter of life...

Siren (Raidne): And death

Hierophant: I have heard the stories of those unfortunate enough to follow the path you Sirens might lead them on! We will not be foolish enough to fall into that trap, so let us be on our way!

<Hierophant begins leading the crowd to the platform of Poseidon

Poseidon is up on the platform as the crowd gathers around it. Hierophant & Eumolpus part the crowd so that the Goddesses can come up onto the platform. Hierophant & Eumolpus bow before Poseidon >

Hierophant: Honored Lord Poseidon, these people come to your realm to request permission to cleanse and purify themselves in the living waters of your sacred Ocean. They must do so to be allowed into the rites to come. Will you grant this to them?

Poseidon: My Oceans are the sources of life and renewal. You have given me and my realm the honor and respect that due, Priest. And so I will bid you welcome to my domain. I give you the gift of my sacred waters, to begin the first step of your journeys.

Hierophant: Thanks be to Lord Poseidon! *<he gestures to crowd, to repeat: Thanks be to Lord Poseidon!>*

<Poseidon inclines his head, accepting their praise & thanks. He hands his pitcher to the Kore, smiling indulgently.>

Demeter: In the beginning, there was water. To water we now turn, to wash away any impurities or dark thoughts from your hearts. Release anger, jealousy, anxiety, and fear. You will enter the mysteries as clean and pure as a child. *<smiles & nods @ Kore>*

Kore: *<takes her cue from Mom, first turning to the water, raising the pitcher in benediction, then turns back to crowd, pouring the water out in an arc before her. >*

May the sacred waters flow, and purify these seekers.
<looks @ Mom to make sure she did it right.>

Rhea: Now, take your pigs, sacred to Demeter, and thank them for the sacrifice they now make. Remember that you offer these in gratitude for the bountiful gifts that Demeter has provided for you in this past year. Release them into the sea. As the water carries them away, reach down and cleanse yourselves, that you may be free of all burdens that lie heavy upon your souls.

Poseidon: Have the celebrants chosen one to lead them to the sea?

Eumolpus: Great Lord Poseidon, I am Prince Eumolpus of the Royal Family of Eleusis. I have offered to lead the people in their cleansing, if it pleases you.

Poseidon: Very well, Prince, I grant you and your people leave to enter my waters. You may proceed.

< Eumolpus enter the water first. He returns, and is whisked off to warm up.>

< pandemonium ensues. When all return from the sea, Demeter speaks >

Demeter: People of the earth, your gifts have been accepted. In return, I have given you the blossoms of promise, the bright symbol of all that you hope and dream for. Infuse them with the energy of your wishes, your

aspirations, your plans for the future. The sea priests and priestesses will gather them now, and send them off on the tides of change. They will be carried to the dwellings of the Gods, who will hear what you have said. Priests & Priestesses, gather the flowers!

< *Kore looks around, searching for her flower*>

Kore: <*distraught*> Mother! I can't find my flower!

Aphrodite: Don't worry, little one! I have one here, especially for you...

<*Demeter looks suspicious, but says nothing*>

Kore: Oh, thank you Aunt Aphrodite! It is so beautiful!

Demeter: Now, have all the flowers been gathered?

Kore: Wait, Mother! I want to throw mine in first!

< *she scurries down off the platform, skipping to the water, releases her flower, and returns giggling to her mother. Rhea & Demeter watch, laughing. Aphrodite watches too, smiling knowingly.*>

Demeter: Now, Priests & Priestesses.... Into the Sea!

<*they do the chilly dash, return, and are whisked off to hot showers immediately*>

Demeter: I have gathered your dreams to my heart. Pay careful attention, and perhaps you may see a hint of them in the coming days, even as the Rites are unfolding.

Rhea: In these baskets are the tokens of your participation in today's rite. If this is your first time attending the Mysteries, you are *Mystai* and the gold ribbons are for you. If this is at least your second year, you are *Eoptai* and yours are the red ribbons. Let the Priestesses know which ribbon you need, and wear it all weekend. There are places you will not be allowed to enter without the proof that you went through the Rite of Purification today. Once you have your ribbons, return up the hill to the Pavilion of the Royal Family of Eleusis. They have maps to the shrines of the Gods. Please, come and visit our priests & priestesses; today we are here for you!

< *The Goddesses head up the hill while the Hierophant, and the Hiereiai distribute the ribbons*>

Lesser Mysteries of Demeter Part One

AND SO IT BEGINS

Hierophant, Hekate, Hiereiai

<entrance music is playing, Hierophant is center stage, Hiereiai off to one side. The stage behind them is already set for the Boardroom scene.>

Hierophant: Welcome everyone to Spring Mysteries in Eleusis. Are there any among you who did not participate in the *Haladai Mystai*, the Parade to the Sea, yesterday? If there are, please come forward now so that you may be purified, and ready to take part in the Rites to come.

< Hiereiai come forward & down the stairs with Poseidon's pitcher to purify anyone who missed the Parade>

Let us also give honor to those who braved the darkness of the night, and chose to join our community through the rituals of affirmation or transformation that took place at the secret temples here. Would all of these initiates please stand? *<wait a few beats for them to stand up>*

Friends, we honor you for the challenges that you have faced and the choices that you have made! Well done! *<applause>* Citizens, please recognize these fine people, and welcome them to our community as you encounter them throughout the Festival. Initiates, please be seated now.

As all of you sit here in the halls of Eleusis, prepare yourselves for the journey into the Mysteries. What you are about to experience will touch your spirit, if you allow. Open yourselves to these rites, as if for the very first time.

<music comes up, Hierophant comes down the stairs and takes a seat in the front row where he remains until the end of Lessers I. Hiereiai remain at the side of the stage. Hekate enter, music fades out.>

Hekate: I am Hekate Trevia, Goddess of the crossroads. You are about to begin a journey that is unique to each of you, and at some point over the course of this Festival, you will find that you are faced with a choice that may change the course of your own personal path. I will be there to guide you, but I cannot make the choice for you. So always think before you act, and know that your choices will affect not only you, but those around you as well.

What will be revealed to you today is our most sacred mystery. Do not forget this, nor the oath that you swore yesterday. Were you to speak of these rites to the uninitiated, it would be beyond their comprehension, and to break the oaths that have remained in place for thousands of years would not be the wisest of choices. Your destiny would find you on whatever path you chose to take.

It is my charge to guard over all who enter into these rites. I now cast the circle to hold the energies we bring here today, to protect initiates and the priests & priestesses who draw the gods into themselves.
<as she casts the circle> I call upon the Elements, the four directions and their protectors, the Winds:

I call Air, Eurus, from the East; keep our minds open, our intent clear.
I call Fire, Notus, from the South; keep our actions true, our spirits attuned
I call Water, Zephyrus, from the West; keep our souls safe, our emotions balanced
I call Earth, Boreas, from the North; keep our bodies whole, our paths visible. Be here now, above, below, and within.

<she uses her wand to direct the energy, and when the casting is complete, she lowers it and backs up the stage a bit. The Hiereiai enter up the side stairs, do the circle thing, then position themselves on the stage, and stairs as they did @ the Bunkers, and form the 6-armed Goddess. Then they exit down the center aisle, followed by Hekate.>

SHE'S GOT HUGE TRACTS OF LAND!

Aphrodite, Apollo, Ares, Artemis, Athena, Demeter, Hades, Hephaistos, Hera, Hermes, Hestia, Kore, Poseidon, Zeus

<The stage has been previously set "boardroom" style. There's a map of Greece hanging behind the boardroom table. Athena, Zeus, and Hera enter together, the Goddesses arguing with him as they come on stage.>

Athena: But Father, you aren't listening! He *flooded* Attica! Just because the citizens chose my olive tree over that nasty swamp he offered them!

Hera: That's not all, Zeus! He also says that he has claim of Argos! Argos!
That is the very heart of my realm! How could he presume that..

Zeus: Enough! Please! I can't think with you both going on at once! We will get this all sorted out. I have sent Hermes out to call all of the Olympians here, and we will work on settling all disputes.

<enter Apollo & Artemis>

Apollo: Father Zeus, I must speak with you at once! Poseidon says that he has claim to the Isthmus of Corinth! I distinctly remember you giving me that realm as my own!

Artemis: It is true! I remember it as well!

Zeus: *<exasperated>* Apollo! Artemis! I am dealing with as much as I can at the moment. Will you just wait until the others arrive, and we will address each issue one at a time! *<goes over to the map, and starts marking borders on it>*

Apollo & Artemis: Yes, Father.

< They go over to Hera & Athena, and all are chattering in the corner together>

<enter Aphrodite, Ares, and Hephaistos trailing behind>

Aphrodite: My my, what have we here? We received an urgent message from Hermes to come to Olympus immediately. Someone certainly has their chiton in a twist!

Hephaistos: *<muttering crossly>* Well, at least they are wearing one...

Ares: I smell a good battle coming on...and I am READY! *<begins unsheathing his sword, but is stopped by Aphrodite.>*

Hephaistos: Obviously your mind is not quite as sharp as your sword. Most of us prefer to settle things in a more ... civilized manner.

Aphrodite: *<gesturing suggestively>* Civilization is sometimes highly overrated, my dear husband!

<enter Hestia & Poseidon>

Poseidon: But Hestia, I don't understand! You have always been quite kind to me, it seems so right that we should join forces.

Hestia: My dear Poseidon, it isn't *you*, it's *me*... I am just not interested in marriage ~ to anyone. Not to Apollo, not to you, not to anyone. I really don't have time for it. In fact, I don't have time for this meeting we have been called to either. I have so much to do in the lands of the mortals, which lie far from Mighty Olympus.

Zeus: *<looking very relieved, then alternately very cross, as he sees Hestia & Poseidon>* Ahhh, Hestia! I am so glad that you have finally arrived! Perhaps you can use your skills as mediator to keep all of these gods from eviscerating your companion here, who it seems has been very busy stirring the cauldron as of late.

Poseidon: *<feigning shock>* Who, me? Why I don't now what everyone is so upset about! I have laid no claims upon realms that were not justly mine in the first place!

<Athena, Hera, & Apollo, & Artemis all start shouting at him at once about their grievances. Zeus looks pleadingly @ Hestia.>

Hestia: All right, everyone. As you know, I am the eldest of the siblings here, and it is my place to keep order amongst you. We will all discuss the issues in a reasonable fashion, or there will be serious repercussions. Am I understood?

All: *< sighing, grumbling, nodding assent, begrudgingly at best>*

<enter Hermes, dragging Hades with him, who is protesting bitterly>

Hermes: Greetings, Lords and Ladies. I see you have all received my messages. Except this one, who I practically had to pry out of Erebus as if he were the sweet meat of a sea scallop hiding within its shell.

Poseidon: Indeed! *<very pleased at the analogy>*

Hades: This is ridiculous! I have no interest in the doings of Olympus, and I have much to tend to in Erebus, and with no help at all.

Hermes: Come on Hades, it's not like the shades are *going* anywhere while you are gone...

<some snickers & good-natured jabs @ Hades >

Zeus: < *A little cautiously*> Well, little brother, these doings may have more to do with you than you might imagine.

Hermes: Now *this* should be good....

Zeus: After all, there are the five rivers that run into the Underworld, and Poseidon's realm is not just the Sea, but all fresh waters as well...

Hades: <*snorts derisively*> And you think that I should be concerned about this? I would be very amused to see him try to claim any part of my realm. Yes, very amused indeed! <*smiles darkly*>

<*enter Demeter, with Kore at her side*>

Demeter: I'm sorry to be late, I got Hermes' message, but could not find anyone to look after the Kore on such short notice, especially since it seems that everyone is here!

Kore: I'm not a little baby, Mother! Please! It's embarrassing!

Aphrodite: Kore, don't worry. It is very clear that you are most certainly *not* a baby anymore! You are becoming a lovely young woman. < *a pained look crosses Demeter's face at this remark*>

<*Hades turns his head, sees the Kore, and is transfixed by her bright beauty. Zeus takes no notice, as he has turned back to the map, still trying to work out the division of the realms. Athena, Hera, Artemis, Hephaistos, and Apollo have gathered around Zeus, "helping". Poseidon does notice, and so does Aphrodite, of course. Hermes is just grinning and observing it all.*>

Hestia: It's all right, Demeter. We are trying to work out some little details here that are causing quite a ruckus between Poseidon, Athena, Apollo, Hera, and, well, practically everybody. But we seem to be making some progress,

<*indicating over her shoulder at the mapmakers. Demeter sit @ the table beside Hestia and they talk with each other quietly as Hestia tries to explain what has been going on. Kore sits beside her, demurely, peeking up through her lashes @ Hades from time to time*>

Hermes: And Hades doesn't seem to be concerned about those rivers Poseidon thought he would claim. Or anything else, for that matter... Helloooooo.... Lord Hades..... Anybody Home....? <*snaps his fingers in Hades' face*>

Hades: *<disoriented, in a sort of a fog>* Rivers?

Poseidon: Well if you aren't interested in them, little brother, I'm sure you won't mind if I just "redirect" them a bit then?

Hades: *<now confused & angry at his show of weakness>* You will NOT touch my rivers! Stay away from Erebus, and stay away from me! I have not the time nor patience for this any longer ~ I am returning to my realm, where I belong!

< Hades gets up and storms off, but hesitates and looks @ Kore over his shoulder as he leaves.>

Zeus: *<turning around to see Hades departing>* What is going on? Hades just left?

Poseidon: It seems that he had other things on his mind besides real estate, I think. *<glancing @ Kore>*

Zeus: Well, I think that you should put aside your interest in the five rivers for the time being. We have worked out some of the other issues you have brought up.

< Athena, Hera, Apollo, Artemis & Hephaistos turn from the map and gather around the table.>

Zeus: The division of the realms stands as such: *<pointing @ the map>* Athena will have Attica. Hera has Argos. But you and Apollo will share the Isthmus of Corinth.

Poseidon & Apollo: *<both protesting @ once>* Hey, but ..

Ares: *<rattling his sword again, and being stopped by Aphrodite, AGAIN>*
Zeus, I can settle this for you... *< all the Gods roll their eyes & groan >*

Zeus: This is the ruling that I have made! End of discussion!!

Demeter: Are we done now? I have much to do in preparation for my rites.

Zeus: Yes, we all have other matters to attend to, so this meeting is adjourned. One more thing, Poseidon... I expect that you will clear up that little spill in Attica?

Poseidon: *<grumbling as Athena glares at him>* Well, if I must,

Hestia: *<standing>* Very well then, it has been decided, and we need to be off to see to each of our realms!

< Here all Gods exit except for Zeus & Hera>.

NUMBER ONE SON

<Pan & Zagreus enter.>

Pan: Greetings Lord Zeus! Did we miss all the fun??? And Lovely Lady Hera!
<Pan gives Hera a deep, but mocking bow>

< Hera shoots Pan & Zagreus a smoldering look>

Zeus: <oblivious to the interaction> We had a bit of family business to discuss, but nothing that you need to worry about. You know how complicated things can get on Olympus sometimes! <sighs> I do sometimes envy the ... err... simplicity of your life, Pan. So what are the two of you up to these days?

Pan: I was taking Zagreus to his music lessons. The Muses has been instructing him to play the lyre and the pipes! <he toots his pipes a bit, then laughs> Perhaps I should join in the lessons, too!

Zeus: <gives a good laugh as well> Perhaps so! But there is more to learn than music. Zagreus, are your other studies going well?

Zagreus: Oh yes Father! I also have lessons in history, and poetry, and art ...

Zeus: Excellent my boy! I would love to hear all about it, but I don't want you to be late for your next lesson. Let me walk with you for a bit, as I must go to check on Poseidon's..umm..work... in Attica. Hera, I shall return shortly. <gives her a nod, which she returns with a glare>

Pan: <cheerily> Goodbye Lady Hera! <exits with a sassy bounce, alongside Zagreus & Zeus who are talking about schoolwork >

THE GODMOTHER

<Hera is onstage alone, pacing furiously>

Hera: One simple thing is all I asked! Do I have to do everything myself around here? How can I protect my claims to the High Throne of Olympus when Zeus' little bastard is stealing it right from under me Ares! Where are you???

<Ares enters quickly, a bit out of breath>

Ares: Here I am, Mother - is something wrong? *<straightening up, regaining composure>*

Hera: Yes Ares... something is very wrong! Remember that little assignment I gave to you? *<Ares nods seriously>* I see that it has not yet been completed. Why not? It wasn't too difficult for you, was it?

Ares: *< with a snort>* Of course not! I will do as you bid - but as you said, there should be no witnesses. That blasted Pan was always in the way, never leaving his side. So how was I supposed to...

Hera: *<cutting him off>* I realize that stealth is perhaps not your strong suit. But find a way to get the job done, and soon! I have...*associates...* who can come to your aid, if needed.

Ares: *<warily>* Associates? You don't mean....*<Hera nods her head>* *<Ares in a loud stage whisper hisses...>* The Titans...

< Lights down, stage ninjas change set to split stage for Playmates/Brothers scene. Lighting divides the stage into 2 parts. Stage Left is House of Demeter, stage right is Grounds of Olympus >

PLAYMATES, BROTHERS, & MOTHERS

Artemis, Demeter, Kore, Rhea, Sirens, Hades, Poseidon, Zeus

< lights up on stage left, down on stage right. Enter Demeter & Rhea stage left.>

Demeter: *<pacing, worried>* I haven't seen Zagreus in a while. I cannot even feel his presence ... I'm afraid that something may have happened to him. I wish that he would keep in touch with me. Boys seem to forget about their mothers sometimes...

Rhea: He is probably just off on another adventure. Pan was with him, so at least he wasn't out wandering on his own. I will see if I can find him in a little while. *<pats Demeter's hand reassuringly>*

Demeter: Thank you Mother. I know that some on Olympus are jealous of him, because of his lineage, and his favored position with Zeus. *< sighs>* I wish Zeus had not let him play with those thunderbolts. And allow him to sit upon the High Throne of Olympus? It just drew more attention to him!

Rhea: So, who would risk the wrath of Zeus, knowing that he would find out if anyone tried to harm Zagreus?

Demeter: Oh, there are some who would try to get him out of the way, if they thought that they could get away with it.

Rhea: OK, I know that Pan can be, well, a bit *carefree* at times, but he takes his responsibility for Zagreus quite seriously. He would have come to you or Zeus if there were some problem.

<Sirens enter from the back of the theater, come up the stairs, whispering to each other, with arms of fabric, beads, & pretty things, to the "door" @ stage left>

Demeter: Perhaps ... If he were able to. I will certainly not entrust *anyone* with Kore! *< bell chimes >* Now who could that be? *<Demeter walks over to stairs>*

Teles: Good Morning Lady Demeter! Can we visit with Kore?

Raidne: We won't keep her very long...

Leucosia: We have brought some silks and jewels for her...

Ligeia: She will look so beautiful in them...

Parthenope: She is going to love it!

Teles: she will feel like a brand new girl!

Demeter: *<smiling>*Yes, she does love to dress in pretty things. *<calling offstage>* - Kore! Your friends are here to see you!

<enter Kore from backstage>

Demeter: Now you girls have fun, but try to behave and stay out of trouble! And pick up after yourselves, don't leave the house in a mess!

<Demeter & Rhea smile indulgently, look at each other with the "girls will be girls" look, and exit>

Teles: We brought all of our new things with us!

Raidne: Let's dress you up, and see how they look ...

< They proceed to play with all the stuff they brought, chattering all the while, then step back to admire their work >

Leucosia: Wow! Kore, you look great!

Ligeia: Yes, good enough to eat!

Parthenope: Or at least to nibble on for a while...

< they all burst out in uncontrollable laughter >

Teles: When we get done, you will turn the heads of all the boys on Olympus!

Kore: *<getting embarrassed>* Oh really now! And just who would that be?

< lots of giggling, snickering, etc. >

Raidne: Come on Kore, I'm sure there is *someone*

Kore: *< flustered >* I have no idea what you are talking about! Anyway, Mother says I have to clean up after you, so shoo! Go on! Out out out!

<she shoos them offstage, and they exit, still laughing, down the stairs and out the back of the theater. After they leave, she starts picking up after them, and catches a glimpse of herself in the mirror. She looks at herself, adjusting fabric, her hair, acting reflective, etc, as the lights dim a bit>

<lights come up on stage right. Enter Zeus, Poseidon, & Hades>

Zeus: Demeter and Rhea have come to me asking about Zagreus. They say that they have not seen him in some time. I saw him with Pan just after our meeting, but not since then, Do either of you know where he might be?

Poseidon: Zagreus? Hmmm, well I thought that I saw him briefly at the sea yesterday, but I can't be sure. There were hoards of mortals there, and it was quite a scene!

Zeus: How about you, Hades? I do hope that you haven't seen him, no offense, but...

Hades: *< just shrugs cryptically, looking distractedly in the direction of stage left. >* Isn't that the House of Demeter over there?

<lights on stage right dim a bit, and come up on stage left. Kore is still looking pensively into the mirror, as if seeing someone she doesn't quite recognize. She draws fabric up around her shyly as if someone is watching, and of course, he is. Enter Artemis, bounding athletically into the room, startling the Kore.>

Artemis: *<cheerfully>* Hey there Kore! It is a beautiful day, and I thought you might like to get out for a while, maybe track some game or shoot some targets?

Kore: *<responding slowly, hesitantly>* I .. I ... well, I don't really feel much like doing target practice today, Artemis. I'm not sure why, but I'm feeling sort of strange ...

Artemis: Strange? Well, you sure are acting strange! You usually love to go out to the forest with me. And what's up with all of this stuff? *<picks up some fabric, disdainfully>*

Kore: Oh, that? Some friends came by today to visit, and they brought all of this. We were just fooling around, sort of.... *<looks into the mirror again, dreamily toying with her hair>*

Artemis: *<irritated and concerned at the same time>* I don't know what has gotten into you today! You are so moody! The day is wasting away, and I want to get back out to the woods before it gets too late. Let me know when you feel like joining me... *<Artemis exits, Kore barely notices>*

< lights on stage left dim, lights up on stage right>

Zeus: What is wrong, little brother? You really don't seem like yourself today.

Hades: I'm, umm, not used to being away from my realm so much, I guess...

Poseidon: *<jovially>* Ahh, yes! You have been hiding yourself in Erebus for too long! Perhaps you should come out of the shadows more often...

<makes an indicating gesture in the direction of the Kore. Hades' gaze follows Poseidon's arm, and he reacts to Kore's beauty. Zeus, seeing his reaction, pushes Poseidon's arm down harshly, but it is too late ~ he sees Hades' reaction, and looks quizzically @ Poseidon, who shrugs his shoulders in a "Duh, it's obvious" kind of way.>

Poseidon: *< sort of under his breath>* Come on, Zeus, you can see it! It isn't a bad match, why are you being so stubborn?

Zeus: My daughter is a Child of the Light! I can't send her into the shadows!
Besides, her mother would never...

Poseidon: So who really rules around here? *<Zeus shoots him an angry glare>*
I know, why don't we just ask Hades? *<to Hades>* So, my Dark Brother,
what do you think of the lovely young Goddess? *<sly wink>*

Hades: *<whips his head around to face Poseidon>* don't you even speak of
her, you slimy sea serpent! She is so light ... beautiful ... more radiant
than my finest jewels ... *<turns back to Kore's direction>*

<Poseidon shoots a knowing glance @ Zeus>

Poseidon: Come on Zeus, let's get going. Our little brother is obviously...
Ahem... *occupied.*

< Zeus & Poseidon exit, talking, and arguing a little about Hades & Kore >

*<Kore is still facing the mirror, with her back to Hades. He begins to cross
over to her, then stops center stage, transfixed. Kore glances over her
shoulder nervously, sees him, then turns around slowly, equally
transfixed, then freezes, their gazes locked on each other. Demeter
begins her lines just before entering>*

Demeter: Kore, are your friends still ...

*<seeing Hades, gasps in surprise ...crosses in front of Kore placing herself
between them, staring fiercely at him. He drops his gaze, and turns to
exit but glances over his shoulder once, Demeter still looking at him
menacingly. Demeter turns to Kore, who looks away, ashamed and
embarrassed>*

Demeter: Do you know who that was?

Kore: No Mother, I just ...

Demeter: *<Sternly>* Why were you looking at him like that?

Kore: *<hesitantly>* Like .. Like what?

Demeter: *<softening a bit, realizing her innocence>* Oh, my precious child,
there is so much that you do not understand. There is danger out there
that I have tried to shelter you from knowing. I tried to shelter
Zagreus, too, by sending him away in Pan's care, and now I don't know
what has become of him!

Kore: Mother, is Zagreus my My brother?

Demeter: *<flustered, realizing she has said too much>* Well, no ... umm, yes, sort of .. not exactly ... It is hard to explain ... our family is very - *complicated* - you might be able to understand when you are a bit older.

Kore: I am not a little child anymore!

Demeter: But you are *my* child, and I could not survive if you were not here with me, and I would surely wither away like a vine that is deprived of the Sun's light if anything should happen to you.

Kore: But Mother, *nothing* will happen to me. Nothing. That is the problem! I just want to be ... something more. I will always be your daughter, but I know that there is something else for me as well.

Demeter: *<stern once more>* You have everything you need right here! And I will not permit this dangerous game that you are playing ~ You cannot possibly understand the implications ...

Kore: *<angry, defiant>* No Mother, it is YOU who doesn't understand! You don't understand *anything!* *< Storms offstage, sobbing>*

Demeter: But Kore! *<holds out her arms, and follows Kore offstage. Lights go out.>*

LOVE SHACK

Artemis, Aphrodite, Sirens

< Lights come up on the (round) stage on the floor of the theater. Aphrodite is lounging about languidly, the Sirens tending her, brushing her hair, fanning her, etc. Artemis comes up the stairs, uncomfortable, fidgety, uncertain of how to begin.>

Aphrodite: Oh My! What a pleasant, if unexpected surprise! How are you, dear Artemis? And what brings you here, so far from the wilds of the forest?

Artemis: Well, umm, you see, it's ... *<looks warily @ the Sirens>*

Aphrodite: Oh, don't worry about them! They won't bite ... Unless you ask them nicely!

Artemis: *<poking the ground with her foot>* Well, it is sort of a ... private matter.

Aphrodite: Oh *really!* This IS interesting! <waves Sirens away, who exit>
So the Virgin Goddess is coming to me for advice on a 'delicate' matter,
eh? Do tell!

Artemis: Aphrodite, this is serious! And it isn't about me, this is about the
Kore. She's very upset, and I don't know how to help her.

Aphrodite: The Kore? What has she got to be upset about? Demeter dotes on
her constantly, giving in to her every whim, it is a wonder that she isn't
spoiled rotten by now.

Artemis: I think that is part of the problem. I went to invite her to explore
the forest with me, but she was acting all strange and moody. She was
dressed up in fine silks and pearls, just staring into the mirror, and it
looked as if Queen Hera had exploded in the room! She didn't want to
go out at all, but then a little later she came running out to the woods
in tears, out of breath, sobbing that no one understands who she is - not
even her mother! I couldn't make any sense of it. Then she said that
she had caught this handsome fellow with piercing eyes looking at her ...

Aphrodite: A handsome fellow ... hmmm ... anyone I know?

Artemis: Aphrodite!! Please! This is about the KORE!

Aphrodite: Oh, yes, I'm sorry. Please do continue.

Artemis: She said that it made her feel, well, sort of strange. She wasn't
really clear about it, just that she felt like she was becoming different
somehow. And that Demeter was very upset about it.

Aphrodite: I had a feeling this was happening, I could sense it when we were
at the sea yesterday, and again at the meeting on Olympus. She is a
bud that is beginning to unfold into a blossom. I can understand why
Demeter isn't too thrilled about it. But it is inevitable, and she can't
smother the Kore forever. Did she say any more about the handsome
fellow?

Artemis: <*sighing*> Only that he was dark, seemed very intense, almost
scary... but that she was somehow almost drawn into his eyes. And that
he seemed to be cloaked in a sort of a mist ...

Aphrodite: Ooooooh, I think that I know who she is talking about! It must
have been the Dark Lord! This is even MORE interesting, and now that I
think about it, it makes perfect sense! We should try to put them
together and see what happens.

Artemis: What? You have got to be joking! The Kore and the Lord of Erebus? And what is this “we” business? I want no part of this... Demeter will kill us!

Aphrodite: Only if she catches us! And if we had Zeus’ blessing, she couldn’t do anything about it. But we have to figure out exactly how to do this before we go to Zeus with it. Let me think for a minute.

Artemis: Uh oh... here comes trouble. And there you go with the “we” thing again!

Aphrodite: *<persuasively>* Come on Artemis, the Kore is your friend. Don’t you want her to be happy? Because it doesn’t sound like she is right now. She needs to have her own life, and her own realm. She can’t stay in Demeter’s shadow for her entire immortal existence! *<Aphrodite shudders at the thought>*

Artemis: *<grudgingly>* I suppose you have a point. I just wish that it didn’t have to be so hard.

Aphrodite: Change is never easy, even for the gods. But choosing to change takes more courage and strength than anything else in the universe. Some would face the gravest perils to avoid it! But not choosing is also a choice. Artemis! That is it!!

Artemis: *<confused>* What?

Aphrodite: We have to give her the chance to make a choice. That way, she can decide for herself. And if we present it to Zeus as her decision to make, he will surely give us his blessing!

Artemis: How can you be so sure?

Aphrodite: Oh, I can be sure ... I have ways of getting the Lord of Olympus to see things my way. *<wiggles seductively>*

Artemis: Please, I *really* don’t want to know! *<putting her hand up to shield her eyes>*

Aphrodite: Oh Artemis! *<rolls her eyes>* Don’t concern yourself with that particular part of the plan. But I will need your help with the second part.

Artemis: *<warily>* Second part?

Aphrodite: Yes ~ in order to allow the Kore to make this choice, we have to put something in her path that will get her attention. Maybe a jewel, or a bracelet, or a...

Artemis & Aphrodite: *<looking @ each other>* Flower!

Artemis: When we are out in the forests and the fields, she spends as much time hunting the flowers as she does practicing her shooting.

Aphrodite: So it would be easy to put some interesting bloom where she would find it. And there is one that I know of which represents growth and change. It isn't very common, so she would certainly be drawn to it. But you have to be sure there is no one else around when she finds it. Can you do it?

Artemis: *<still a bit reluctant>* I suppose I can. But you had better hurry up and get things squared away with Zeus. I told the Kore to wait for me until I got back. She was so upset that she might have wandered off by herself by now. Meet me at the edge of the forest with that flower of yours, and I will be sure that she finds it. *<frowns>*

Aphrodite: All right then! Don't worry Artemis, our plan is perfect! Nothing could possibly go wrong.

Artemis: I really hope that you know what you are doing, Aphrodite. *<Artemis exits>*

<Aphrodite fiddles around, looking for something, humming happily to herself. She finds the narcissus, holds it up, does a little magical blessing of it, smiles, and says:>

Aphrodite: Perfect! Absolutely perfect! *< Aphrodite exits, still humming to herself as lights go down>*

BETTER WED THAN DEAD?

Artemis, Aphrodite, Kore, Hades

<set change, strike Aphrodite's palace & set center platform as a hill in the fields, with the narcissus placed in the center.. Main stage is also cleared and set similarly. Lights come up on both stages. Kore is already on main stage, and Artemis enters>

Artemis: Oh Kore! I am so glad that you are still here!

Kore: <*despondently*> Where would I go? I can't go back home right now. Mother would just tell me that everything will be fine, but I can't change the way I feel!

Artemis: And how do you feel?

Kore: It is hard to put into words. I love Mother more than anything, and I don't want to hurt her. But she doesn't understand me. There is a longing in my heart for *something*... something that I haven't found yet, but I don't know exactly what it is. I know that doesn't make sense, but I don't know how else to describe it. I'm... I'm so confused right now!

Artemis: Perhaps you will know what it is when you see it. Let's take a walk, maybe it will help to clear your head. <*she takes Kore by the hand, and the begin walking to the front of the stage ,and Artemis stops*>

Kore: Artemis, what is wrong?

Artemis: <*nervously*> I ... I... I think that I hear mortals entering my forest!

Kore: I don't hear anything.

Artemis: I am almost positive that I heard something. See that little hill over there? <*pointing to the platform*> Just go over there and wait for me, OK?

Kore: <*still despondent, sighs*> All right, I guess that I don't have anything better to do anyway.

Artemis: I will be back as soon as I can, Kore....

<*Artemis goes toward the rear of the stage, Kore begins down the stairs toward the platform. Artemis is crossing the main stage when Aphrodite comes out a little bit, motioning to her. They whisper intently to each other and exit backstage. Main stage lights go down. Lights up on platform, where Kore stands alone*>

< *Kore sighs, begins descending the center stairs and crosses over to the platform. She looks around her*>

Kore: Alone. Again. Why do I feel this way, even when I'm with the others? I still feel so alone, as if a part of myself were missing. There has to be something else ... <*notices the flower*> But what is this? I've never seen a flower like this one before! It feels different. It seems to be

calling me, but it also makes me afraid! I don't understand! I want to pick it, but I think that it might be dangerous ... Oh, I wish someone could tell me what I should do!

<voices begin whispering, inaudible at first, then more distinct.

Demeter's voice: Be careful Kore! I couldn't bear to lose you!

Aphrodite's voice: You aren't a child anymore ~ make your own decision.

Hades' voice: You know that you want more... just reach out and take it!

Demeter: Stay with me!

Aphrodite: Follow your heart!

Hades: Claim your own destiny!

Voices repeat these lines, building and joining into confusion..

Kore: *<holding her hands over her ears> Stop! Please stop!*

STOP!

<sound over stops suddenly, long silent pause, Kore looks around her, frightened>

Alone. It's... It's so quiet.

Mother?

Artemis?

<No answer>

Where are you?

DL's Voice: *They do not have your answer. Only you can make this choice!*

Kore: Who are you? What do you want?

DL's voice: *What do you want?*

Kore: I can't think! I have to... I need to... CHANGE!

< picks the Narcissus. Falls to her knees, and all is silent for a few beats. Then a rumbling sound begins, SFX door opening in slow time>

Kore: Oh no! What have I done? Artemis? Where are you?

<enter Hades from the back of the theater. He comes up the platform, draws sword and begins to cast circle around Kore>

Hades: She cannot hear you.

Kore: You! I have seen you before! What has happened?

Hades: You know the answers.

Kore: I ... I don't understand! Who are you?

Hades: You know who I am. I am what you desire.

Kore: You...you are The Unchanging One!

Hades: Yes, yet I am the change you seek.

Kore: No, not you, I didn't ask for death!

Hades: *(suddenly angry)* I am not...! *(calm)* I am not what you think. I am... I am here for you, Just as you wish.

<Kore stares, tries to answer, intrigued, then turns away>

Kore: No, this is wrong, this is not what I want. My mother will...

Hades: Your mother? Isn't it time you made your own decisions?

Kore: No... Yes... I don't know... Why are you here? What do you want?

Hades: *[Long pause, Hades stares at Kore]* You.

Kore: No! I can't go with you!

Hades: Yes, you can. You made your choice! Would you deny me? I am yours...and you...are mine!

<DL stops not knowing what to do next, holds out his hand. Kore reaches, hesitates, turns away.>

Kore: I don't think... I don't think I want this. I'm not ready. Please. Let me go.

Hades: You are as ready as you will ever be little Goddess. *[Urging, with a hint of menace]* Come with me now.

Kore: *<beginning to weep>* What have I done? I didn't know this was going to happen! I didn't know ... but *<catching her breath>* If I did go with you, my Mother would be so upset, she would be so devastated. How can I go with you, if it will destroy her?

Hades: There are ways that she could be convinced to accept your decision.

Kore: Wha... What do you mean? You wouldn't harm her, would you?

Hades: Of course not! But a marriage must be honored once the bride has entered the home of her betrothed.

Kore: Marriage? This is your idea of a proposal?

Hades: It is, as your father has agreed for it to be.

Kore: My father? He didn't, did he? Really?

Hades: Of course! I do not randomly abduct young Goddesses at will. I have...we have...your father's blessing.

Kore: But what of my mother? Surely she did not agree to this!

Hades: I do not fear your mother's wrath. Let her think you were plucked from the earth...like that flower...carried away into the darkness.

Kore: Against my will?

Hades: It is better this way. Once you are my Queen the matter is no longer open to discussion.

Kore: <dreamy-eyed> A Queen... I would be a Queen...

<Hades takes up the sword and opens the binding, and holds out his hand. Kore takes it, hesitates, drops her scarf onto the platform.>

<they exit the back of the theater, and the door slams.>

FURY DUTY

Apollo, Demeter, Hekate, Furies

< Demeter enters onto the main stage >

Demeter: Kore? where are you? <pause> Kore?

<Demeter wanders across the stage, then down the middle stairs to the center platform>

Kore? Can you hear me? *<she goes up onto the center platform>*

Kore? *<she sees the scarf on the platform, picks it up and gasps >*

No! No! Kore! *<begins to panic, looking around>* **Kore!**

<Demeter comes down from the platform and wanders through the audience, still holding the scarf>

Hestia, have you seen Kore? Artemis? Athena? Hermes, where is my child? Aphrodite? Hephaistos? Anyone? Can't anyone help me?

<she makes her way back up onto the main stage, and stands stage center>

Demeter: Hekate! Apollo! Where is my little girl! Someone help me!

<enter Hekate and Apollo>

Hekate: Lady Demeter, are you all right? We heard you calling, and came as quickly as we could.

Demeter: Hekate, she's gone. *<holds up the scarf>* I have looked for my beautiful daughter everywhere ~ no one will tell me what has happened to her! I am so afraid! I can't feel her presence, it is like an empty place inside me.

Hekate: *<trying to comfort her>* Oh Demeter, I am sure that she is fine. Isn't that so, Apollo?

Apollo: *< a little nervously>* Yes, of course she is fine. I'm sure no harm will come to her ...

Demeter: No harm? What do you know of this?! You know something, but you aren't telling me the whole truth!

Apollo: Well, it isn't like she was forced to go....not exactly...

Demeter: Forced?? I have a right to know what is going on here, so spit it out, Apollo! All of it ~ Right now!

Apollo: *< a bit reluctantly, then takes a deep breath>* OK, here goes... There was a very lonely God who needed a Queen to rule by his side. As is his right, Zeus agreed that the Kore should be his bride, as she has come of age. He is her father....

Demeter: *<slightly relieved>* Bride... My Kore is a bride...*<smiles a little, then frowns>* Wait a minute. Exactly which God?

Apollo: *<very softly>* Hades

Demeter: What did you say? I didn't hear you.

Apollo: Hades.

Demeter: Hades? Hades!!! What was Zeus thinking? She has been taken by Hades? That is unthinkable! She can't be married to Hades! She will fade away in the darkness, she is a child of the light!

<she starts swaying unsteadily, holding her head in her hands>

Hekate: *<gong to Demeter's side, supporting her>* She is all right Demeter, you should be happy for her.

Demeter: I don't think that I can ever be happy again. Everything I love is slipping through my fingers, like sand. *<moaning, beginning to cry>* I don't think I can bear this. First Zagreus, and now my precious daughter have been taken from me. Hekate, something is happening to me, *she begins shaking, gasping for air>...* I feel as if I am sinking into a dark pit, clawing at the sides, unable to lift myself out... *<she sinks to the floor, holding her head, swaying>*

*<fans begin blowing at the back of the theater, and sound FX of the winds>
<enter Furies from the back of the theater ~ with long strips of filmy fabric in their hands that catch the air of the fans, sound & light FX of moaning, shrieking, deep blue lights flashing, strobe like FX. They weave their way around the audience, up to the stage, and begin threatening APOLLO as if to destroy him. Demeter is still on her knees, swaying madly>*

Apollo: Hekate, something is going terribly wrong. We have to find Zeus, and bring him here to her.

Hekate: But I can't leave her here, not like this!

Apollo: There is nothing that we can do for her now. We have to find Father Zeus, before it is too late! It may already be....

Apollo: *<shrinking back from the Furies>* Hekate! We HAVE to go! NOW!!!

<Apollo & Hekate exit. Furies circle around Demeter>

<Sound FX of Furies fade out. Furies slow down, then slink backstage. The only sound in the theater is Demeter's soft weeping for a while.>

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

Demeter, Zeus

<Demeter is still on her knees, weeping softly. Zeus enters, sound FX of thunderstorm rises, then fades...>

Zeus: Demeter! What are you doing? Have you gone completely mad?

Demeter: *<looking up at him, slowly, anger rising, then getting to her feet>* Mad? Have I gone mad? Zeus, I think it is YOU who have gone mad! How could you give my daughter to the Lord of the Dead?? Without even so much as consulting me? How DARE you!

Zeus: And what would you have said? You would have never given your consent. Not for her to be wed to Hades, or anyone else, for that matter. She is my daughter as much as yours, and I did what I deemed to be best for both of them. And she made her choice freely.

Demeter: Choice? She is just a child! She does not understand the choice she was making. And who told you she chose this anyway?

Zeus: She isn't a child any longer, Demeter. Surely you can see that! And Aphrodite assured me that this was what she wanted.

Demeter: Aphrodite! And you believed her?

Zeus: Well, yes!

Demeter: *<throwing up her hands in exasperation>* I can't believe how gullible you are! All she needs to do is swish her hips around, and you completely lose your ability to think clearly! You have no idea what kind of damage you have caused.

Zeus: Damage? I have caused no damage. Look around you Demeter ~ I did not do this, YOU did!

Demeter: *<looking around, stunned>* I... I did this? I don't remember anything, just that I felt as though my heart had been ripped from my chest, then everything began to go dark. I called for Hekate and Apollo, and then you came here, roaring at me like a mad bull. Oh Zeus, what is happening to me? I am lost without my daughter!

Zeus: *<more gentle this time, but still stern>* Demeter, you have to pull yourself together. The Kore is now wed to Hades, and this is how it must be. If you need to take some time to get used to the idea, then do so. But I expect you to return to your duties in a reasonable amount of time. This is my final word on this subject!

<Zeus exits>

Demeter: I will never "get used to" the idea, Zeus. No one bothered to ask ME about this. I cannot be held responsible for the end result. This is NOT MY FAULT! *<begins weeping again>* Why am I here at Olympus? There is nothing here for me now. This is Zeus' realm, not mine. I don't belong here anymore, not without the Kore!

*Lighting fadeout. Demeter remains onstage, with veil drawn over her head.
Stage Ninjas - main stage is set for Royal family home.*

DOSO OR NO SO?

Baubo, Demeter

Demeter comes down center stairs and moved to the platform where the “well” is. Lights up on both stages. Baubo enters onto main stage, straightening up the house of the Royals. She is humming a little tune, picks up a water jug and makes her way down to the well.

Baubo: <seeing “Doso” at the well> Greetings, old Mother! I have not seen you here before. Are you a visitor to our fair city?

Doso: <weakly answering> I ... I think that I am lost. I am not quite certain how I got here. Where am I?

Baubo: >laughing gently> Why, you are in the city of Eleusis! You do seem familiar to me for some reason, though I cannot imagine why. Very strange!

Doso: Yes, that is strange. I don’t think that I have been here before, though my memory seems to have left me. I don’t know what to do!

Baubo: Can you remember anything of your life before? Where you came from or what you did before your journey?

Doso: I do have a vague memory of children ... That is all I can remember, being with the children. My children. The sweet smell of their skin, their happy laughter, seeing them grow.. and... and..... <she begins weeping again, heartbreakingly>

Baubo: Oh you poor woman! There must be something we can do to help you. My mistress is Queen Metanaira of Eleusis. She will know what to do. You should come with me to the home of King Keleos and his queen.

Doso: Do you really think that they can help me? That they will see me?

Baubo: The Royal Family of Eleusis is very kind, and care for the people of their land. They would not turn someone away in their time of

need! I am sure they can do something for you. But how should I introduce you to them? You have not told me your name.

Doso: I think that I remember my name - Doso, yes, that is it! I am called Doso.

Baubo: I am Baubo, of the House of Keleos. I am pleased to meet you, Doso! And now that we are no longer strangers, let us go together to meet my mistress.

<lights dim on the center platform. Doso & Baubo walk together up the stairs to the main stage.>

ROYAL TALES

Baubo, Doso, Metanaira

Baubo: *<calling out>* I have returned from the well, my Queen!

<Metanaira enters>

Metanaira: Thank goodness! The baby is getting fussy ... *<seeing Doso>* Oh! I didn't know we had a guest!

<Doso's interest is piqued at the mention of a baby>

Baubo: I met this woman at the well, my lady. She has had a, well, an unfortunate turn of events, and seems to have lost her memory. I thought perhaps you might be able to help her. She has remembered just that she is called Doso, and that she has *< pause, then more softly>* or had, children.

Metanaira: Is that all you remember? That isn't much to go on. Can you tell me anything else at all? Are you a citizen of Eleusis? I can't say that you look familiar to me, though you might be from a family of some standing elsewhere.

Doso: I can only remember being on an ocean journey, and there was a great storm that destroyed the ship. I must have been wandering for some time before I came here. *<here she does a charm on the Queen, lighting FX to illustrate>* I have been hoping that more of my memory will return, so that I can find my family and my children... perhaps I just need a little more time...

Metanaira: *<brightening up a bit>* You have cared for children before! I have been hoping to find some more help to care for my youngest son, Demophoon. With my husband being so ill, it has been difficult for us. My elder sons are looking after matters of state as best they can, but I find that I have so much to attend to lately. Baubo does her best, but even she cannot take care of the King, the baby, and the rest of us as well. And this bitter weather has made it even more difficult. I can't ever remember it being this cold in Eleusis!

Baubo: My Queen, I would be most grateful for an extra pair of hands to help run the household! Would you let Doso stay with us, at least until her memory returns and she can find her family?

Doso: I would be so grateful, I have nowhere else to turn ...

Metanaira: Then it shall be so! Doso, welcome to the family. I will bring my youngest one out so you can meet him. Baubo, please start a fire ~ it is so cold in here! *<Metanaira exits.>*

FLASH DANCE

Doso, Baubo, Metanaira

Baubo: *<at the brazier, starting a fire>* See? I told you she would help. Everything is going to be all right. Can I get you something to drink? Some wine perhaps, to soothe your nerves?

Doso: No!

Baubo: *<offended>* Well, fine then! I was just trying to cheer you up~!

Doso: I'm sorry, I didn't mean to be rude, it is just that... I'm not sure why. I don't think I can drink wine. *<she sinks down into a chair by the brazier>*

Baubo: Well, I'm sorry for you then. I happen to like it quite a bit myself! *<begins a little teasing dance, then speaks in a suggestive tone>* Is there something else you might like?

Doso: *<giving Baubo a bit of a sad smile>* Have you heard of a drink called kykeon? Made with barley water and mint?

Baubo: It doesn't sound as much fun as wine, but if that is what you want, so be it. *<chugs a bit of wine herself>* You know, you should consider yourself lucky... *<makes up the kykeon, then brings it over with a swish of the hips, putting the cup in Doso's hand>*

Doso: *<head is down, looking into her cup>* Lucky? I don't feel very lucky...

Baubo: Well, it is all in how you choose to play the hand that the Fates have given you. *<Doso slowly raises her gaze to Baubo>*. Sure, you have been through a lot, I can see that. But you are in a safe place now, and you can relax and enjoy living in the moment. *<takes up her sensual dance again>* That is all we mortals really have anyway, the here and the now. And here we are, just you ... and me... in this moment... *<slides her hands along the curves of her hips, beginning to raise her skirt>* so ... why shouldn't we enjoy the gifts we have right in front of us? *<raises her skirt over her hips, laughing, and starts giving Doso a lap dance>*

Doso: *<with a laugh, holding up her cup of kykeon, trying not to spill it>* My oh my! You do have a way about you, Baubo! *<more intrigued, almost kissing>* You remind me of someone... Maybe, my dau... *<breaks away>*

<Metanaira begins her lines offstage>

Metanaira: Sorry I was gone so long...

<Doso & Baubo jump up, straightening out their clothes, laughing quietly. Metanaira enters with Demophoon>

Metanaira: *<smiling at the women, because they are still smiling>* What have you two been doing?

Baubo: *<still smiling>* Just getting better acquainted...

Metanaira: Oh that's nice! And a good idea, since you will be working closely together now!

Baubo: *<not quite able to suppress her laughter, looks @ Doso>* Yes, my Queen!

Metanaira: What is so funny???

Baubo & Doso: *<trying to act innocent>* Nothing, oh, nothing....really nothing, you know, girl stuff.. *<more suppressed laughter>*

Metanaira: Well it is good to see you getting along so well! Doso, this is my youngest son, Prince Demophoon.

Doso: May I please hold him? *<Metanaira hands him to her>* He is such a handsome child! I would be honored to care for him, and I thank you for the kindness you have shown me.

Metanaira: And I am grateful that the Fates have led you to our home. If you will look after Demophon for a while, Baubo and I will prepare your quarters for you.

<exit Metanaira & Baubo>

PRINCE CHARMING

Baubo, Doso, Metanaira

<Doso sits by the fire, rocking the baby>

Doso: Here we are, my little Prince, just you and I. It feels so wonderful to hold a child in my arms again. I would keep you with me if I could... and maybe I shall! *<she begins to put the baby in the fire, laying the charm on him.>*

Doso: *<takes him out again, holds her hand over his head, then puts him back in the fire>* Shhhh, Shhhh, little one, it is almost finished...

<enter Metanaira & Baubo>

Metanaira: Your quarters are ready now.... Doso! Stop! What are you doing!!

Doso: Stay where you are! I am almost finished!

Metanaira: Are you crazy? Finished what? You were putting my child in the fire, you madwoman! You are going to burn him! *<she begins to go at Doso, then Baubo holds her back>*

Baubo: Wait, my Queen ~ if you go closer, she may try to hurt the baby again! *<looks warily @ Doso>*

Doso: *< confused for a moment>* Hurt the baby? I would NEVER hurt a child! How could you even think such a thing?

Metanaira: But we saw you put him in the fire! We both saw you!

Doso: You ignorant woman! I was not hurting him, I was protecting him from all harm. He would have been made immortal, had you not interrupted me. He would have been as a God!

Metanaira: Who are you? WHAT are you? Are you some kind of a witch? How do you come by such powers? No mortal can do these things!

Doso: I have many powers you do not know of. I was giving your son the greatest gift I could give.

Metanaira: *<shaking her head, pleading>* You don't understand at all, do you? Can you imagine what a curse it would be to be immortal, to see everyone around you wither and die? To watch your own children age, become sick, and die before you, knowing there was nothing you could do to prevent it? It would be horrible! And how would you cope with it? What deeds would you do, what kind of monster might you become, if you knew that you would be forever denied your eternal rest?
<shuddering> I could not imagine a more terrible fate!

Doso: *<still not understanding>* It doesn't have to be like that... think of all the good that could be done, the knowledge that could be attained and passed on to others! If not your son, what of your husband, the King? To restore his health, and allow him to continue his work? Surely that would be a great blessing?

Metanaira: My husband? *<she thinks for a moment>* that might be different, wouldn't it? *<questioning, hopeful>*. He has much unfinished work, the building of the roads, and the training of his sons as leaders ~ and he would be able to see his youngest one grow to be a man ... perhaps...

Baubo: and age, and become ill, and wither and die before his eyes! My Queen, you know this isn't right! I realize what is going on here. Doso, I know you are not in your true form! Reveal yourself to us as you really are!

<Demeter stands tall & regal, unveiling herself. Queen and Baubo drop to their knees>

Metanaira: Gracious Lady, forgive me! I meant no disrespect! I was so afraid for my family, for my child, you must understand this!

Demeter: *<pausing, drawing a breath>* Yes, Queen Metanaira, I do understand. All too well.

Baubo: *<rising up, looking @ Demeter>* Lady Demeter, you must not do this thing, you know it is wrong! Think of how this may result, if you meddle in the realm of the Fates.

Metanaira: *<still kneeling, shocked @ Baubo's impertinence>* Baubo! You must not speak to the Golden One like that!

Demeter: *< looking @ Baubo curiously>* It is all right, Metanaira. She does speak the truth. And there is more than that... I sense the presence of Olympian blood in your veins, or am I mistaken, Baubo? And something else as well... is it a bit of... goat??

Baubo: I cannot say, my Lady, but as you know, I do like wine! *<smiles coyly>*

Demeter: *<suddenly turning angry>* I do not wish to speak of Olympus!
<walks angrily back to her chair, and sits, stone faced>

Metanaira: *<rising>* Baubo, now look what has happened! Lady Demeter is angry! We must do something to appease her! My sons will know what to do. Come, we will bring them here to the Lady. *<Baubo and Metanaira exit>*

Demeter: *<rising from her chair>* Brother Zeus! Hear the words of your sister Demeter! The earth grows cold, and the fields now lie empty and barren *<her voice begins to break>* just as empty and barren as my heart. You say that this is my doing, but it is because of you! I can not stop what is happening because *you* have given my daughter into the darkness. Without her light my heart withers and dies, and the Earth along with it. Unless she returns, this is how it will be. And you only have yourself to blame! *<turns her back to the audience>*

BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

Apollo, Demeter, Eumolpus, Hierophant, Hermes, Triptolemos

<enter Eumolpus & Triptolemos, whispering to each other. They approach Demeter respectfully, who is still standing silent>

Eumolpus: *<beginning cautiously.>* Great Lady Demeter, may we come before you? *<Demeter slowly turns around and nods her assent>* We are so honored that you are here with us. We did not know it was you all this time, and we would be grateful if you would allow us to give you proper honor.

Triptolemos: Yes, Golden Lady, please let us build a temple for you! It is our duty to you and to our people.

Demeter: *<touched, but sad, in a barely audible voice>* As you wish.

<Princes go about constructing the Temple, placing the columns around her chair. They gesture to her when they are done. She takes her seat, and draws her veil over her head.>

Eumolpus: Do you think she is pleased with it?

Triptolemos: I'm not sure, brother. She is so silent. And it is still so very cold. I don't know if this is enough, but I don't know what else to do!

Eumolpus: I know! We should bring her some offerings...

Triptolemos: But we have almost nothing to give her. I have traveled across the countryside, and everywhere it is the same. The orchards are without fruit, the fields lie fallow, and the herds are thinning without pasture to graze. It seems that the Gods are abandoning us.

< *Enter Apollo & Hermes* >

Hermes: Abandoned, you say?

< *Both Princes jump with a start.* >

Eumolpus & Triptolemos: Lord Hermes! And Apollo! <*they both bow*>

Triptolemos: uuhh... we meant no disrespect! Please we beg for your understanding. Our people are suffering, and we have no power to help them!

Eumolpus: We don't know what else to do. The Lady of the Grain has withdrawn her blessings from our lands. We fear that we have displeased the Goddess in some way. Perhaps the temple we have built is not to her liking. We have done everything we can think of to regain her favor, and yet she remains unmoved.

Hermes: Lost her favor? It seems unlikely that Demeter would turn her back on you for no reason. She is very fond of mortals, for some strange reason. There must be something else going on here.

Apollo: Perhaps it is Demeter who has lost something. Something that she needs very much.

Triptolemos: But she is a Goddess! What could she need that she does not already have?

Hermes: Think, young princeling! You very well may have the answer in that tiny little head of yours already! Think!

<*Eumolpus looks curiously @ his brother*>

Triptolemos: I ... well... <*glances nervously @ Eumolpus*> I thought that I might have seen something, out on the plains of Nysa. But it was very misty, I couldn't be sure. I thought that I may have imagined it ...

Eumolpus: <*urgently*> Brother! What was it? You MUST remember! Our very survival may depend on it!

Triptolemos: You promise not to think I'm insane?

Eumolpus: Promise.

Triptolemos: I was traveling back to Eleusis, and I saw a black chariot come up out of the ground... there was a dark figure driving it, but I couldn't see who it was. Like I said, everything was shrouded in a thick mist.

Hermes: *<shooting a meaningful look @ Apollo>* That wasn't everything you saw, was it? Don't you remember anything else?

Triptolemos: Umm.. yes, I think .. I saw a bright figure at the top of the hill. The chariot went up to it, and took it away. Back into the Earth, I mean. I looked around, and I saw flower petals scattered all over the ground.

Eumolpus: Flower petals? Are you sure?

Triptolemos: No..I mean yes... I'm pretty sure. I didn't stick around, I felt like I definitely needed to get away from there. After that, it started getting really cold.

Apollo: *<with a heavy sigh>* And now do you understand what has happened?

Triptolemos: *<confused... looks to Eumolpus for the answer>* Nnnnot really, Lord Apollo... Brother, do you?

Eumolpus: Not exactly. But the flower petals are important, I just know it. Lady Demeter is the Goddess of the Green Earth, the abundant fields, the bountiful harvest. And...

Triptolemos: And her daughter! Her daughter is the Kore! The Child of the Flowers!

Hermes: *<pats Trip on the head>* Good boy! You finally figured it out! *<mugs a sarcastic grin @ the audience>*

Eumolpus: *<nervously>* But, that means... does that mean the Kore has been taken away from her mother?

Apollo: I am afraid so. This is why the Goddess is so silent. It was not because she was displeased with you.

Eumolpus: But who... Who would dare to do such a thing?

Apollo: A fissure opened up in the earth. That could only be one that I know of. One who reigns over the realms below.

Triptolemos: The Lord of the Shades ... Oh great! We are doomed. What can we do now?

Apollo: You must find a way to help heal her grief.

Triptolemos: WE are supposed to heal a Goddess?? We are MORTALS. She is a GODDESS! How are WE supposed to heal her?

Hermes: Well, you can't...

Triptolemos: So why don't YOU heal her? You are Gods!

Eumolpus: Uhhh, hey Trip... Shhhh...

<Trip claps his hand over his mouth, big eyes, sheepish look @ Gods>

Hermes: *<grins again>* Well, well! Impudence is one of my best qualities... it is rather amusing. So, God of Healing, would you like to spell it out for him??

Apollo: We have already tried. When she discovered that the Kore was gone, she went mad with grief. She wandered away from Olympus, searching everywhere for her daughter. Each of the Olympians tried to heal her, but to no avail. Even I could not help her

Eumolpus: Lord Apollo, if you could not heal her, then who can? *<gestures to the audience>* What can we mere mortals do to heal a Goddess?

Apollo: For once, Hermes does speak the truth...

Hermes: Hey!

Apollo: About Lady Demeter's fondness for you mortals. You might be able to find a way through her grief. You know suffering and loss in a way that the Gods often do not. The very nature of mortality may be a way to save it.

Triptolemos: But where do we begin?

Apollo: Go to her temple above the sea, where you will find her three Priestesses. They are her servants and the guardians of her temple in the mortal world. The Priestesses will be able to help you, if there is anyone who can. Perhaps her Priest, the Hierophant, can lead you on your way.

<The Hierophant rises from the front row, bows to Apollo & Hermes.>

Hierophant: Please remember, and respect that our Lady is grieving. We will exit to the temple in silence, and in silence we will return here at the appointed time. We will not disturb the Goddess in her grief. The earth grows colder, and the fields lie barren. After we have visited the Temple, we must seek what meager nourishment we can. There is still much work to do.

<All exit the theater, to the temple and then the blighted lunch.>

The three Priestesses will have simple “shrines” set up around the bunker area, set apart but still within an easy walk of each other. Each priestess will have bundles of herbs for Demeter’s healing that are in harmony with the energy of that priestess.

They will also have a short speech to give as they pass out their herbs. Here is a general outline of each message:

Theano - She is Peace and Compassion. The herbs she gives are frankincense & elder. Frankincense is associated with Demeter and the power of compassion. Elder is a healing herb strongly connected to Mother Goddess.

Theano’s message is that Compassion is needed for Demeter’s healing, but that it must be accompanied by Love as well as Courage, for without the other two, compassion becomes futility

Lysimache - Her attribute is Love. Her herbs are rose petals and violets. The rose in this case represents the love of the Goddess for her children. Violets are used to comfort a grieving heart, specifically for the loss of a child.

Lysimache’s message is that love must be paired with strength and compassion. Love without the other two becomes controlling and manipulative, but when combined they can heal almost any sorrow.

Iphigeneia - She is Courage, Strength, and Wisdom. Her herbs are Basil and Sage. Basil contains the energy of courage and strength, and specific to protection of family. Sage is for healing from grief and loss, as well as an herb of wisdom.

Iphigeneia’s message is that Demeter’s healing will require great courage and strength, but these qualities need to be tempered with Love, and with Compassion. Courage and strength alone are not enough, they can become brutality without the other two.

Lesser Mysteries of Demeter Part Two

MORTAL OFFERINGS

Apollo, Demeter, Hermes, Royal Family, Hierophant, Priestesses

Hierophant and Priestesses are stationed outside the theater doors as the crowd begins to assemble there. They remind everyone that the Lady Demeter still grieves, and that silence is required. At the signal, the doors open and all enter in respectful silence. The stage is dimly lit, and Demeter sits, veiled and unmoving, as she was in the last scene. As the last person enters, the Hierophant and Priestesses enter and close the theater doors.

The Royal Family is seated in the first row. Hierophant & Priestesses join them. Apollo and Hermes are onstage with Demeter. Lights come up.

Apollo: *< in hushed, urgent tones >* Princes! Have you returned with any news from the Temple of Demeter?

Triptolemos: *<standing up with Eumolpus in front row >* Yes, Lord Apollo. We traveled to the temple above the sea and sought out the Priestesses.

Apollo: And what did they tell you? Did they have any idea of how to help Lady Demeter?

Eumolpus: They did, Lord. They each had sacred plants for healing. These plants have powers of strength, courage, and love. They told us that all of these things were needed together, to give them to the Goddess, and to pray for her recovery.

Hermes: I suggest that you stop talking and start healing, because things are not getting any better while we stand here chatting.

Triptolemos: Lord Hermes is right. Things seem to be getting a lot worse. There is barely any food left in the city. We had nothing but a thin gruel to sustain us on our journey to the Temple. If we can't get Mother Demeter to come back to us, we may not last much longer...

<here King Keleos is seized by a fit of coughing, and the Princes rush back to his side, Queen Met is trying to hold the King upright>

Apollo: Hierophant, Hierieiai, Please gather the offerings these good people have brought here, and bring them to your Goddess.

<soft, meditative music begins. Hierophant & Hierieiai take baskets up and gather the offerings from everyone. They carry them up onto the stage, and the Princes follow them. Hierophant & Hierieiai lay the baskets at Demeters feet, step to the side of the throne, and the Princes kneel in front of her.>

Eumolpus: Holy Demeter, Mother of the Grain, we beseech you to return to us. Without you, our lands turn barren and our families starve. Let your radiance shine out upon us once more, and your blessings bring us wholeness.

Triptolemos: Golden Lady, great is your strength and compassion. We offer you these healing herbs, that your gracious glory be upon us in our hour of need. Mother Demeter, hear the voices of your mortal children!

<they wait in prayerful silence for a few beats, then look up hopefully. Demeter remains silent, unmoving>

Hermes: So, looks like you have your answer. Now what are you going to do?

< a tiny movement of Demeter's hand>

Apollo: No, wait! Something is happening! She is trying, but she doesn't have the strength. She needs more energy!

Eumolpus: *<panicking>* But what else can we do? We have nothing left to give her!

Apollo: Listen to me, Prince! What she needs is energy, as much as you can give to her. Every one, every last person here, needs to open their hearts and send out as much love and healing as they can. I will gather it together and pour it over her. Concentrate! Feel it pulsing through you, see it flowing out of you...

<Apollo stands behind her, arms reaching upward. Golden light becomes brighter and brighter over Apollo. He pulls his arms downward, with an

enveloping gesture over Demeter's head and shoulders. Then he places his hand over her heart. She draws in a sharp, gasping breath

Apollo: *<softly>* Demeter? Can you hear me?

Demeter: *<sounding weak, still veiled>* Yes. I hear you. What... what do you want?

Apollo: I want nothing. Except for you to be all right.

Demeter: *<lifting her veil, looking flatly at Apollo>* That is not possible. Nothing will ever be right again.

Apollo: What do you mean? Do you intend to starve the Earth into oblivion?

Demeter: It is not my doing, Apollo. It is out of my hands. *<she leans back in her throne, sad and tired>*

TWO TICKETS TO EREBOS

Apollo, Demeter, Hermes, Eumolpus, Triptolemos

Triptolemos: So that is it? We are all doomed to die?

Hermes: Well, you *are* mortals. That *is* what you do, isn't it?

Triptolemos: Yes, but, not usually like this! You know what I mean.

Apollo: Hermes... *<holding hands far apart, index fingers pointed up>* This is you *<indicating right hand>*, and this is helping *<indicating left hand>*.

Hermes: I am just making an observation. The mortals need Demeter to survive. Demeter needs the Kore, and the Kore is gone. It seems obvious ...

Eumolpus: Yes! It is! All we need is to give Demeter the one thing she needs!

Triptolemos: Are you saying what I think you are saying?

Eumolpus: Brother, it is our last chance. We have to figure out a way to get the Kore back.

Triptolemos: *<sarcastically>* Brilliant! Let's just open up a fissure in the Earth and knock on the Gates of the Underworld! Are you NUTS?

Hermes: Actually, he may have something here... After all, you are going to die anyway, right? So, if it doesn't work out you have saved yourselves a trip!

Triptolemos: That isn't exactly what I had in mind... And how would we even find Erebus, anyway? I mean, without really being dead?

Hermes: *<looking @ Apollo>* I am, among many other things, Psychopomp and Messenger of the Gods. I travel between all of the realms, though some are a little trickier to enter. I have heard very few tales of a living mortal entering the lower realms.

Triptolemos: Hold on, wait just a minute! What if we get there, and we can't find the Kore! What if she can't leave?

Apollo: My Father Zeus has said that the Kore may return as long as she has not eaten anything of the realms of Erebus.

Demeter: *<pulling out of her fog on hearing this>* Kore? Returning?

Hermes: Lady Demeter, these mortals have been discussing a plan. One that could possibly -just possibly - bring your daughter back to you.

Triptolemos: Golden One, we may not survive this. If we make the journey, will you bring your blessings back to our lands?

Eumolpus: Can you lift this blight, so our people may prosper once more?

Demeter: *<with a sigh>* I truly wish that I could help you. But the Kore is a part of me, the flower of my immortal flesh. When I gave her life, I also gave her a part of myself. Now that she is gone, so is that part of my power. Princes, there is nothing I can do to aid you. But if you succeed, my daughter and I will shower your lands with blessings of abundance the likes of which you have never known.

Triptolemos: But what if she can't leave? Lord Apollo said that if she ate anything in Erebus then she would have to stay there.

Demeter: The Kore would know better than to do that! She would never think of eating something in that, that Place!

Apollo: Perhaps so, but she has always had an...ummm... adventuresome nature. And if she has eaten of that realm, then ...

Hermes: Then perhaps your journey will be a one way ticket after all.

ONE FOR THE ROAD

Apollo, Demeter, Hermes, Eumolpus, Triptolemos, Keleos, Metanaira, Hierophant, Priestesses

Eumolpus: I don't see that we really have any other options. We have to try. Brother, are you with me?

Triptolemos: If this is the only way that we can save our people - then yes, I am with you.

< Hierophant rises from the front row and approaches the foot of the stage >

Hierophant: Princes, if I may speak - We all have a lot at stake here. If something were to happen to you on the journey, then the people of Eleusis and the lands beyond would have no hope of survival. Let us join you in your quest to find the Kore.

Eumolpus: Priest, are you sure? This is not a journey to be taken lightly. Do you think these people are prepared to face whatever may be lurking in the dark caverns of Erebus? Do they understand the risks? The responsibilities they have for themselves and those who travel with them?

Hierophant: *<turning to audience>*

People of Eleusis, of your own free will, are you prepared to face whatever awaits you on this journey?

<waits for response> Yes!

Do you accept responsibility for your own actions, and the well-being of your fellow travelers?

<waits for response> Yes!

Do you swear to respect and honor the Gods, and to serve our Lady Demeter with a pure heart and spirit?

<waits for response> Yes!

<at this, Demeter rises from her throne>

Demeter: You have chosen to take a most perilous journey on my behalf. You have no guarantee of success, and yet, you are willing to risk everything to help me and my beloved daughter. I will never forget this, and if I had the power to do so, I would lift this blight from your lands right away. But, as I have explained to Hermes, I can not. The only thing I can do is to offer you a

drink of my sacred Kykeon, made from mint and barley of the last harvest, to give you strength and protection on your journey.

<she gestures to Hierophant & Priestesses who pass out Kykeon. After this is completed, Demeter sit back down and Trip speaks->

Triptolemos: We must now make preparations to be on our way. Lord Hermes, you have traveled these realms before. Can you give us some advice to guide us?

Hermes: You are traveling to the Land of the Shades, and this means that you will need to appear as souls heading to their final rest. If you are not mindful, you may not be able to return. The most important thing is to remain completely silent at all times. The dead do not speak.

Eumolpus: We understand. *<looks out @ audience for assent>* But there must be more to it than that, right?

Hermes: Indeed. Silence is not always enough. There are beings that can sense if something is amiss, so keep your thoughts clear of noise and distraction. If this were really your last day on Earth, think of how you would want to be remembered. What have you left unsaid to family or loved ones? What have you done, or failed to do, that you would like to change? Are you satisfied with your efforts? Have you lived in accordance with your convictions? Meditate on these questions as you walk the roads between the realms.

Apollo: Hermes, I do believe that you have forgotten one very crucial detail. How are all these people going to get past Charon? Each soul must pay its passage across the River Styx. Even those who take other routes must pay the Ferryman.

Hermes: The Ferryman! He might be a bit of an ... obstacle. He takes his job very seriously. And he definitely operates a cash only service. Princes, do you have your coins for the passage?

<the Princes begin digging through their robes>

Triptolemos: I think that I have some coins stashed somewhere around here ... but what about everyone else? I don't think I have coins for everyone here!

<Keleos rises weakly from the front row, Queen Met by his side, he is coughing & wheezing>

Keleos: My sons, I fear that I will not be able to make this journey with you. The lives of our people depend upon your success. I offer the treasury of

Eleusis to pay passage for each brave soul who has chosen to go with you. Metanaira, you must go with them.

Princes: <protesting> But Father! No!

Keleos: Do not argue with me! This is too important. Heed well the advice of your wise companions. And return safely, Gods be willing. <bows to Hermes, Apollo, & Demeter. Met helps him sit back down>

Eumolpus: We should make haste! We don't have much time. The light seems to be thinner, and the cold is sharper than it was just a short time ago.

Hermes: We will need to find that route to Erebus as quickly as possible. Clear your minds of frivolous thoughts. Remember that we are traveling as souls to their rest. As we leave, take a coin from the treasury to pay your passage. You may put it across your eyes as the dead do, but this will make travel much more difficult. As we go on our way in silence, perhaps holding the coin between your lips might be a better idea.

Once we begin, there is no turning back. This is your last chance to change your mind. You can remain here and lend your energy to ours, in the thinning light of this realm, or descend with us into the depths of Erebus. Are you still willing to go on? <wait for assent> yes!

Then you must swear that all you are about to see, hear, and experience will never be revealed to the uninitiated. Do you swear, on your honor among mortals and as children of the Gods? <Yes!>

There may be some of you who have the dedication of heart to make the journey, but may not be ready to face all that may await you. Darkness will surround you, and the damp embrace of the tomb. The shadow of death will follow close behind you. Your fears of these things may be too great for you to face all at once. If you wait until all have departed, the Priestesses will guide you on a less challenging route. Your experience may not be as profound, but once you enter the Underworld there is no turning back. The only path out is through it.

Carts await those unable to travel the entire way on foot. Please, go to them now, remembering your coin as you leave. When they have left, then the rest of us will begin our journey.

< one Priestess gathers the phobics in a corner of the theater. The other two are stationed at the doors with the Hierophant, passing out coins as all exit, following Hermes. He gathers them on the road in front of the theater. The Sirens are on the green at the 101 side of the theater, on a short platform. They begin singing, and Hermes follows the song, giving Keleos time to exit to the Underworld>

SIREN SONGS

Hermes, Sirens

Sirens are singing 'where are you going?' 'come closer... listen to our song..'"
Hermes comes up to them, drawn in by the music.

Raidne: Come closer, come to us...

Leucosia: Yes, closer...

Ligeia: so you can hear...

Parthenope: don't be afraid...

Teles: just listen to the song...

Hermes: < *shaking his head, trying to clear out the sound*> Afraid? < *snorts derisively*> I am not afraid! I was just passing by, on my way to... to...
< *shakes his head again*>

Raidne: you were on your way here...

Leucosia: to listen to our song...

Hermes: No! I remember - it was < *turns around, looking at everyone, then toward the Telesterion*> over there! We have to go ...

Ligeia: Go where? There isn't anything over there...

Parthenope: Nothing at all...

Teles: except a dead end!!

< *sirens all begin laughing at this...*>

Hermes: That was it! Have to get these souls to the Land of the Dead!

Raidne: Why go to that boring, dull place...

Leucosia: when you could stay here with us...

Ligelia: and listen to our songs....

Parthenope: forever, and ever,

Teles: and ever... *< all the Sirens join in a wicked giggling fit >*

Hermes: *< getting nervous >* Thanks, but no thanks! Really, we have to be on our way now... It has been a pleasure - gotta go! Bye! *< motions to everyone urgently to follow him - they get back on the road and down to the Telesterion >*

TOLL CROSSING

Charon, Hermes, Hierophant, Eumolpus, Triptolemos, Metanaira

<Arriving at the Gates of the Underworld - the door is slightly ajar, and smoke is seeping out. Hermes stops everyone, and places his finger to his lips. Then he call out.>

Hermes: Charon!

Charon: Hermes Psychopomp.

Hermes: I have another group of souls that need passage.

Charon: Do they have the toll to pay the crossing?

Hermes: Oh yes, they all have coins for you ... lots of them!

Charon: Good. Have you instructed them on the conduct that is expected of them?

Hermes: Well, yes.... Uh, mostly, I think.

Charon: *<with and exasperated grunt >* Souls! Listen to me! I am Charon, the Ferryman. For those of you who are confused, you are at the gates of the Underworld. You have died, and go now to face whatever you earned in life. Those who gave their live heroically will travel to the splendor of the Elysian Fields to spend eternity in glory and honor. Those who have lived and died with no distinction nor dishonor will remain in the realms of Erebos. And those who have led lives of deceit, dishonor, and treachery will be cast into the depths of Tartarus to labor in the eternal pits of darkness. Once you pass through these gates there is no turning back. Place your coins in the basket and continue to the realms beyond. Do not hesitate, as you will hold up those behind you.

<everyone begins filing past Charon, who is on a platform just inside the doors to the right. He is observing everyone as they place their coins in the basket at his feet. The maze is filled with tactile but non-allergenic things. Hades is

behind a scrim in one corner of the maze, lit dimly and surrounded by shadows. Hierophant leads the group, and Hermes and the Royals are the last to enter.>

THE CORPSE BRIDE

Keleos, Kore, Hermes, Hades, Eumolpus, Triptolemos, Metanaira

<As all enter the Anakteron, it is bathed in a pale blue light. Kore stands alone on a platform in the center. When everyone is in, the light fades down and she is lit with a single down light above her head - no other light. She is disoriented, looking at the crowd filing in around her, as if searching for a familiar face in the crowd. Hermes steps forward.>

Hermes: *<in a stage whisper>* Kore! Kore! We came to get you out of here! Hurry, let's go before we attract too much attention!

Kore: *<very confused>* Hermes! ? Where am I? What are you doing here? What am I doing here?

Hermes: No time to explain right now - we have to go!

Kore: I don't think I can leave. I am supposed to wait here.

Hermes: No, you don't understand! We have to go before it is too late!

<enter Keleos, from the maze (or from behind a scrim) who then goes up to the upper platform, peering out over the crowd>

Eumolpus: Father! Father! I am over here! Can you see me??

<Hermes tries to shush Eumolpus who struggles to reach his father- then Hermes throws up his hands in frustration>

<Keleos turns his head toward his son's voice>

Triptolemos: Father! We are here! Please, say something! Speak to us!

<Keleos walks slowly to the corner of the upper platform, silently reaches his arms out toward where his family is gathered in the corner. Metanaira reaches up toward him, then lets out a gasp of understanding.>

Metanaira: *<tearfully>* He can not answer you. The dead do not speak.

< the Princes and the Queen hold on to each other for support, grieving. Light dims on Keleos who fades into the background>

<Hades enters from the maze, walking to the upper platform. He glances at the Royals as he passes them. He walks to the railing, and spots Hermes, who has been trying to hide from him.>

Hades: Hermes! I see you there - you cannot hide from me!

Hermes: *<sheepishly, feigning innocence>* Greetings, Lord Hades ... I have brought a new group of souls to your realm...

Hades: Oh really? Escorted here by you personally ... they must be quite special. But it seems to me that you may have brought them here prematurely. But if they wish to remain here, I am sure that could be arranged. *<begins to draw his sword>*

Kore: No! Wait! They came here because of me!

Hades: Because of you? That doesn't make any sense.

Hermes: Uhh, well, you see, there is a little problem we are trying to work out... we had to see the Kore, because, well ...

Hades: Spit it out Hermes, you are wearing my patience very thin.

Hermes: Ok, Ok ... Demeter says that without the Kore she cannot make the crops grow, or the trees bear fruit. The Earth is starving to death!

Kore: Oh no ...

Hades: To death, you say? How rare. *<getting angry...>* But Hermes! How dare you come my realm to try and take The Kore away from me...*[shouting]* Lord of Thieves!

Hermes: Well, uh, we tried ... but she refused to come with us.

Hades: *<softening a little as he looks down at his bride>* Really? Is that true? *<he begins to descend the stairs, headed to the center platform>*

Kore: *<softly>* Yes ... I could not leave, but ...I'm not sure why I am here ...

Hades: *<as he come up onto the center platform>* This realm needs you. The souls here need you.

Kore: *<looking down bashfully>* I thought that maybe it was something else.

Hades: *<a bit flustered - speaking softly>* I need you ...here.

<she looks up slowly, smiling, gazing into his eyes. He reaches out to embrace her - and she gasps, collapsing against him, unconscious>

Hades: *<panicking>* Nooooooo! Kore! Wake up!
<lays her down on the bier, then tries to wake her up - shaking her shoulder, stroking her hair and her face, pleading for her to wake>
Kore, please don't leave me! Someone help her! Hekate! Where are you????
Hekate! *<screams in anguish>* **Hekate! Help me!**

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN

Kore/Persephone, Hades, Hermes, Hekate

<Hades is sitting next to Kore who is lying on the bier, he is whispering to her, worrying over her. Enter Hekate..>

Hades: Hekate, please, can you help her?

<Hekate comes up to the bier, looking at Kore, looking at Hades, taking it all in. She takes a moment, holds her hands over the Kore.>

Hekate: *<gently, softly>* I don't think that I can, she is dying.

Hades: But she is a Goddess! She can't be dying! This wasn't supposed to happen! She came here to be my Queen. She wanted to be here with me. She was fine until

Hekate: Until what?

Hades: Until I touched her. Just a few moments ago, though now it seems like an eternity.

Hekate: This is your realm, the realm of the dead. When she took your hand she was in her own realm. Her powers there protected her. She is not yet of this realm. She must die to the maiden she was in order to become the Queen that she will be.

<Kore begins writhing around on the bier, moaning and crying out>

Hades: Kore! *<becoming more distressed, pleading>* Hekate, do something! You must help her! Please, don't let her suffer so!

Hekate: *<looking at Hades, surprised>* Calm down, Hades! I have never seen you like this before. I think that the Kore is not the only one who is changing.

Hades: < *shrugging off the comment* > Never mind me right now! Help her!

Hekate: < *holding the Kore still, trying to keep her calm* > Shhhh....it will be all right... don't fight it, Kore, let it happen. I am here. Let yourself flow into the change....

< *Kore struggles a bit more, then becomes calm and quiet.* >

Her energy is shifting, transforming. She is like the snake that sheds its skin and is renewed, or the seed stirring in the soil as it reaches for the surface. But this... this is completely new ... something that has never happened before. I don't think that even mighty Zeus knew what kind of power was sleeping inside this little Goddess. When she wakes, everything will be different.

< *Kore tries to sit up, and is aided by Hades & Hekate. Sitting on the side of the bier, she stands slowly. She looks around, then looks at herself, her arms, her legs, she touches her face* >

Kore/Persephone: < *in an unsteady voice* > Hekate? < *takes in a deep breath* > I feel.... I feel strange... Am I all right?

Hekate: < *with a sigh of relief* > Yes, yes you are.

Kore/Persephone: Hades! I am so glad that you are here! < *she reaches out to him* >

Hades: < *recoiling back from her* > No Kore! Don't touch me!

Kore/Persephone: < *hurt, almost tearful* > Wh... Why?

Hekate: It is all right, Hades. She has become a part of this realm now.

< *Hades holds out his hand, hesitantly, lightly touches her, seeing if anything will happen. She reaches for him, then they embrace* >

Hades: Kore, I thought that I had lost you. I thought that I had KILLED you!

Kore/Persephone: I could feel you reaching for me ... but I was lost, weak, stumbling down dark, twisting corridors, running into dead ends, trying to find my way back to you. Then I heard Hecate's voice. Her torch appeared in the darkness - I followed it, finding new strength as I came closer to it.

Hades: I felt lost, too. I didn't know that I could feel that way. I have always known what to do, what to say. For the first time, nothing mattered - except you.

< *they embrace again, holding each other close, then Kore pulls away* >

Kore/Persephone: Hades, I saw things in the torchlight. Things that I didn't like. Things that have got to change.

Hades: What do you mean? What kind of things?

Kore/Persephone: I saw souls, lots of them, wandering back and forth on a riverbank. There were beings at the river, making the souls drink. After they did, the souls became like those things Hephaistos makes - machines with no memory, no will, no nothing. It was horrible!

Hades: It is easier for them that way, my love. To spend their existence in Erebus holding on to the memory of their mortal lives would be cruel! You wouldn't want that for them, would you?

Kore/Persephone: Well, no... But I don't think that I could stand it, knowing that they would be like that forever. I can not be a part of this. If this is all there will ever be, I can't - I won't stay here. If there is no hope for these souls, I have no place here.

Hades: But this is Erebus! What can I do? If you leave me, then I have no hope. I would rather drink from that dark river myself and forget than live with the pain of losing you.

Kore/Persephone: Oh my love, that is not what I want! This realm does not have to be a place of stagnant existence. Together, we could make it so much more than that. If you are willing ...

Hades: I am still not sure what I can do, but with you by my side I would be willing to battle all the Titans in Tartarus.

Kore/Persephone: *<smiling, taking Hades' hand in hers>* We won't need to go that far ... yet! Let's just start with Erebus, and see how it goes.

Hades: Then you will stay? Kore, will you be my queen?

Kore: I will, Hades.

Hades: Hekate, will you witness these rites?

Hekate: Indeed, Hades. Please, lead the way!

SEEDS OF CHANGE

Demeter, Hades, Hermes, Hekate, Hierophant, Metanira, & Princes

<Hades takes Kore/Persephone's hand, and leads her up to the upper platform. Hekate & Hermes follow behind. Hades & Persephone come up near

the railing stage center, with Hermes & Hekate on either side. Hekate hands the pomegranate to Hades>

Hades: This is my gift to you, it is the fruit of this realm, my realm.... Our realm.

<He holds it up for all to see, and then begins to hold it out to Persephone. He hesitates, in inner struggle with himself. She reaches for it, he pulls it back and turns away from her>

Hades: *<voice beginning to break>* No... I can't ... I can't...do it. I love you too much to condemn you to this place for the rest of your immortal life...

Kore/Persephone: But my love, what do you mean? I don't understand!

Hades: There is one condition for you to return to the realms above. You can not have eaten anything of this realm.

Kore/Persephone: *<takes his free hand, clasping it in hers, and holding it over her heart>* Do you feel that? Do you feel the heartbeat inside me? That belongs to you.

<his head is still down, looking away from her. He drops her hand.>

Hades: How can you love me? I am not worthy of your devotion. I have done nothing to deserve it.

Kore/Persephone: Yes you have. Just now.

<she reaches to his face, turns it toward her, looking into his eyes. She pulls the pomegranate to her as well. She cuts it open, puts a seed in his mouth, then one in hers, then kisses him.>

Kore/Persephone: I want to be here, with you. *<strokes his face>* I want to see what you see.

<takes another seed, puts one in his mouth. He puts one in hers, sealed with another kiss>

I want to feel what you feel ... *<strokes his hair>*

<they takes another seed and give it to each other>

I want to know what you know...

<they fall into a deep embrace. Hermes begins fidgeting, then goes to get the crown. He clears his throat, holding the crown out to Hades. The couple release each other reluctantly, and Hades takes the crown from him.>

Hades: This crown has been made by my hand, for my Queen. Within each jewel burns the bright fire of my heart, which I have kept hidden away for so very long. It has been waiting here for you, just as I have.

Persephone: *<taking the crown from Hades>* I accept the responsibility and the joy of becoming your Queen. I am no longer the Maiden Kore - I am Queen Persephone, Goddess of Transformation. *<places the crown on her head, smiling, takes Hades hand>*

Hekate: *<holding her hands in benediction>* Hades and Persephone, with the powers allotted to me, I confer upon you my blessings: May you Persephone, continue to grow as Queen, in power, wisdom, and beauty, keeping the light always shining from your heart. May you, Hades, always remain open to that light, as it becomes a part of you, who are King of these Lands. I bless this Sacred Union; it is perfect and complete, and in accordance with Divine will. May its magic bring joy to you both, and to the souls of the dead also. *<she waves her hand out over the crowd>*

Persephone: Thank you for everything... you have done so much for us.

Hades: We are grateful for your blessing, Lady Hekate. But these are not the souls of the dead, are they Hermes??

< from the maze Demeter's voice begins calling out>

Demeter: Kore Kore... where are you? Kore.... Kore

Persephone: Mother! She is looking for me ... She needs me! *<looks pleadingly @ Hades>*

Hades: But so do I! Please don't leave me now, so soon!

Persephone: I have to go, though it breaks my heart to be parted from you...

Demeter: Kore! Kore! Please answer me ... *<tearfully>* Koreeeeeee.....

Hades: I know you will leave, and I will grieve until you return to me...

Demeter: *<she has left the maze and is outside the Anakteron doors. She starts beating on the doors>*

(bam bam bam) Kore! Kore! I can feel you in there! *(bam bam bam)* Hades! Let her out! *<stops pounding the door, and begins weeping>* Please...please come back to me, Kore...

Persephone: *<holding her head in her hands>* Hades, please ! Mother.... Hades.... **You are tearing me apart! Stop it! Both of you!**

Hekate: *<takes Persephone by the shoulders and looks her straight in the eyes>* Queen Persephone... you are yet new to your powers, and the full realization of them has not set in. Look within, and see the change you desire. It waits for your hand to begin the transformation.

Persephone: *<closing her eyes, breathing deeply>*

I see my mother, joyfully greeting me as I return to her. She comes to understand the love that I have for my Dark Lord, and the love he has for me. She accepts that I am Queen and must return to my realm, and to my King.

I see my beloved husband, rejoicing in my happiness, acknowledging my freedom to travel between the realms, knowing in his heart that I will always return to him.

I see all souls awaken to a rebirth of life within the Land of Death, and to knowledge of the beauty of the Eternal Mystery that we all share.

Hekate: *<smiling>* Yes, that is it... now put your will into what you would create. Send that power out to do its work now.

Persephone: Yes, Hekate... I can see it happening! Can you feel it?

Hekate: I think so, yes! Yes I feel it too.

Hermes: Something is definitely happening. This is going to be very interesting, eh, Hades?

Hades: Interesting - I suppose that is one word for it.

Persephone: Please Hades, this is difficult for me, too. But you knew that bringing me here would change the way things were. Everyone is affected by it, not just you. Especially these mortals, who risked their very existence to come here.

Hades: Yes, I knew there would be some changes when you came here. I just didn't expect it to be like this!

Persephone: Now you know how I felt, when you came to me on the plains of Nysa, and asked me to leave behind everything and everyone that I knew to be with you. It was worth it, I don't regret any of it, but it was not easy to do!

Hades: *<grudgingly>* I see, but it is a bittersweet lesson.

Persephone: Now I really do have to go see about Mother. And these mortals need to return as well. *<addressing the audience>* Are you ready to return with me to the lands of the living?

<wait for assent> **yes!**

Then I would share with you what once was the Fruit of the Dead. It has been changed, as have we all. Now it is the gift of transformation. As we return into the light, each of you please take a taste of this fruit which now becomes a bridge across the realms.

<Hierophant, Princes, & Queen Met get the pomegranate juice out, and hand it out as all exit the Anakteron>

MOTHER/DAUGHTER REUNION

Apollo, Demeter, Hekate, Hermes, Persephone, Rhea, Eumolpus, Triptolemos, Metanaira

<Demeter is pacing back and forth at the edge of the upper level, looking out over the crowd searching for Persephone. She finally sees her, coming up the stairs with the other Gods.>

Demeter: Kore - you have changed...

Persephone: I am not the Kore any more. Mother. I am Queen Persephone of Erebus. I shared the Fruit of the Underworld with my husband.

Demeter: *<stricken, looks @ Hekate>* No! Hekate, please say this isn't so! How could you let this happen??

Hekate: Demeter, it was her choice. She knew what she was doing.

Demeter: She has no idea what she has done! Nothing can grow while she is gone! This is a disaster!

Persephone: Mother! Will you listen?! Things have changed while I was in Erebus. Because of me - it is a new way of being.

Demeter: But Zeus said that if you had eaten anything of that realm you could never return! Apollo, isn't that right?

Apollo: Yes, that is what Father said. But as you can see, here she stands.

Persephone: I am of two realms now, so that means that I must divide my time between them.

<Apollo & Rhea begin having a 'conference' off to the side, while Demeter continues>

Demeter: But if nothing grows while you are gone, how will the mortals survive? They have already suffered too much because of this, and for that I am sorry. I did not intend to cause pain, but I was so wounded myself...

Rhea: *<coming up to comfort Demeter>* I am sure that the mortals understand. They did everything they knew to help you heal. Now you must think of a way to repay their love and loyalty to you. *<Rhea falls back and begins another conference, this time with Persephone>*

Demeter: *<thinking>* Ah! I have the solution! *<goes to the Royal Family>* When Queen Persephone must return to her realm, I will show you how to harvest and store grains, so that you will have enough to see you through the times that the Earth lies barren.

Prince Triptolemos, you have the nature of a traveler. So you shall become Dadochous, the Teacher. You must spread the knowledge of storing the harvest to people of every land.

Triptolemos: Golden Lady, I am honored that you entrust this sacred task to me. I shall do my best to serve you well.

Demeter: Hierophant, you have served me long and faithfully, through very difficult times. Now that there is finally one who is able to take this great responsibility from your shoulders, I am able to release you from my service to return to your family, who have missed you very much.

Hierophant: Lady Demeter, it has been my joy and honor to serve you these many years, though I shall be glad to see my family again! Who shall take the spear from me, and enter into your Priesthood?

Demeter: Prince Eumolpus, *<here Eumolpus looks stunned>* You have proven yourself to be pure of heart, with a deep dedication to your people as well as your Goddess. You have already built a temple to me at Eleusis, and you have been my priest in all but name. I now call upon you to become my new Hierophant. You shall celebrate my rites each year, leading them as the High

Priest. *<Hierophant steps forward and passes the spear to Eumolpus>* A great line of my Hierophants shall come from the House of Eumolpidae, and shall lead my Mysteries in the years to come.

Eumolpus: I will serve with all my heart and soul, Great Lady!

Demeter: *<smiling>* yes, I know that you will.

<Rhea, Apollo, and Persephone come forward to join Demeter>

Rhea: Demeter, I knew that you would come up with a way to provide for your people. Apollo and I have also been working out something. Persephone has become a Goddess of the Underworld as well as the Growing Earth.

Apollo: She did eat the fruit of the Underworld, so she is bound to return there. But she only ate a few seeds, which is why she was able to return to this realm.

Rhea: So, from the time that the grain is threshed and stored to the time the seed is brought up for planting, she will be the Queen of Erebus, ruling by Hades side. This will be the fallow time on the Earth. Then, when it is time for the seeds to be planted, she will return as the Maiden to be reunited with you. This will begin the Earth's season of growth and blooming.

Persephone: And I give you all my most sacred promise that I will return each year to see the seeds planted, transforming the barren fields into a harvest of great abundance. The Earth will rejoice with flower and fruit, and all will be renewed again!

Hekate: Citizens of Eleusis, Initiates of the Mysteries, your journey has been successful! You traveled into the unknown, in search of a lost Maiden. You have returned with a new Queen, and a new existence. In honor of this, there will be a great feast held in the dining hall at *<6:00>*. Then later this evening all are invited to the Theater at *<10:00>*, to a wedding reception in honor of the marriage of Lady Persephone and the Dark Lord of Erebus.

Metanaira: *<escorted by her sons to the front>* There will also be a service to honor King Keleos *< her voice begins to break with grief>* this evening at *<time & place>* His life will be celebrated, and his love for all of you, his people. Please join us if you choose, for this simple Rite of Remembrance.

Hekate: *<coming forward with her wand>* Now it is time to bring a close to the Lesser Mysteries of Demeter. I call upon the forces we asked to witness and protect these rites: Come Boreas, of the North, ever steady and strong; Zephyrus of the West, flowing and cleansing; Notus, of the South, fiery and transforming; and Eurus, of the East, inspiring and wise... come now and rest

inside the heartwood of this wand, until we have need of your protection again this evening. Our blessings and thanks go with you.