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Spring Mysteries Festival 2011

Bonnabel, Katherine

Spring Mysteries Festival- Subseries 01

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Spring Mysteries Festival 2011

CAST

Demeter, The Kore/Persephone, Hades, Rhea(G), Aphrodite (G), Hekate, Zeus (G), Hermes, Apollo(G), Ares(G), Poseidon(G) , Hephaistos (G), Hera (G), Artemis, Athena, Hestia (G), Pan, Nyx (M), Charon, King Keleos, Queen Metanaira, Triptolemus, Eumolpus, The Heirophant, Baubo, Wanderer/Dionysus, Maenads-8, Ker-4 (M), (G)ephs-9

1.1 Tableau (Prologue)

*[As people enter the theater, Poseidon and Rhea are at the front on either side of the door, half way down the aisle, along the walls stand the Twins; Apollo and Artemis. In front of the stage, to the left and right: Hera and Aphrodite, on the steps to each side of the stage: Ares and Athena. Hephaestus, Hekate, and Hestia are across the back of the stage. Pan is on the center stairs. Zeus and Demeter stand in the middle of the stage. All are frozen in place. At the 5, 10, and 15 minute marks, each "statue" shifts towards Zeus and Demeter, who end up in a passionate embrace before all leave out of theater in preparation for the purification at the sea. Note: sea priests/priestesses will need to have been prepped and "dressed" prior to first seating in theater. They will be the ones to carry the pig into the sea. *need to include flowers for individuals*]*

1.2 Lights Out

[HPS stands center stage, with Royal Family and Hierophant making a semicircle behind her. Pig is on a table to one side, draped.]

HIGH PRIESTESS: Welcome to Spring Mysteries Festival 2011. This is our 26th year celebrating the Mysteries of Demeter. This year we ask you all to listen closely and follow the instructions given to you by the Gods and Goddesses, because this year, the Mysteries will take you to places that you have never imagined.

[High Priestess freezes on stage as Nyx enters from the back of the theater. As Nyx walks down the aisle, the overheads go out until she is on the stage, stage lights go dark except one diffused spotlight on her.]

NYX: I was there at the beginning and I will be present at the end of time. I encompass everything and everyone. I surround you and hide you from the world. I protect those who are powerless, or conceal the waiting killer. I bring serenity or terror to sleeping children. I keep secrets, secret...but there are no secrets from me. I know your darkest dreams and your

deepest desires. Dreams and desires. These things that drive you in your daily life, these things that keep you moving forward in the daylight, things that even you do not know. I know them. The romantics and the murderers both enjoy my company. I am a conspirator with both. I am darkness, I am night. Without me, could Apollo shine as bright? Without me, would Pan be as terrifying? Without me, would Hades call the Underworld home? *[Nyx walks back down the main aisle and the lights come back up as she leaves the theater]*

HIGH PRIESTESS: *[Continues on with her speech as if nothing happened]* The Mysteries change every year, and we ask you to open yourself up to them so that you too might be changed. *[insert protection speech and circle]* And now... *[leaves stage by front steps and takes a seat]*

1.3 Royal Introductions

KING KELEOS: Citizens! Guests of Eleusis! I am King Keleos. Welcome to these most glorious rites of the Goddess Demeter, in celebration of the eternal summer of her bounty on this Earth. These are the Eleusinian Mysteries, and you are all welcome. Be you man or woman, free or slave, noble or peasant, you are welcome to these rites, for the Goddess of the grain provides for everyone and all are equal throughout this ritual. All are welcome to attend the Lesser Mysteries, but only those age 13 and older may attend the Greater Mysteries, and then only if they have seen the Lesser Mysteries at least once in years past. Thus it has always been and thus it shall continue.

QUEEN METANIRA: I am Queen Metanira and I too welcome you to these sacred rites. This is a profound and sacred communion between you and the gods. None can make it for you nor explain it to you. You must witness and participate 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. The sacred revelations will not be understood by those uninitiated should you tell them and you would do nothing but lessen the sacredness and the awe with which your soul is touched.

KING KELEOS: For the same 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? *[King Keleos pauses to allow them to swear their oath, nods deeply, then makes way for the Heirophant to step forward to speak.]*

HEIROPHANT: I am the Heirophant, the supreme priest to Lady Demeter. It is time to prepare. Ask yourself, "Why am I here?" What does initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries mean to you, and how might they change you? *[give folks a minutes to think]* In preparation for the Sacred Rites to come, we will offer a sacrifice to Lady Demeter at the ocean's shore. *[removes drape from pig]* This pig, representation of the traditional offering to Demeter, will be our means to cleanse ourselves in preparation for this weekend of transformation and ritual. Let us now join together and fill this pig with any thoughts or emotions that you would be otherwise burdened with during these rites. Let any anger, jealousy, sadness, or anxiety flow from you into this sacred vessel.

[Leads silent charging of pig by holding it aloft and walking the aisles, when done returns to stage and begins to speak, holding pig reverently]

Oh sacred sow, most blessed of Demeter's creatures, we honor and thank you for the burdens you carry on our behalf. May your sacrifice not be in vein. So mote it be! *[sets pig back on stage before once again addressing the crowd]*

We will begin our journey now on the road to the ocean. If what you seek is important, then your path will be true. As you walk the trails there will be flowers for you to gather along the way. You will charge them with your hopes and dreams for the future as you make your way to the sea. This does not mean 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. *[Mobility impaired move out first]* Let us be on our way to Eleusis.

1.4 Purification at the sea

HEIROPHANT: Greetings Lord Posideon! We gather here at the edge of your realm to ask for your blessing as we seek purification to enter the Rites of Demeter this year.

POSIDEON: Greetings Heirophant. I see you have your purification offering prepared, but what do you and your people offer to *me* in exchange for access to my sacred waters? The sea is not something to be taken for granted. Nor are my blessings.

HEIROPHANT: *[shocked]* Why, Lord Posideon, we would never take you or your realm for granted! I think I can safely speak for all of the people

gathered here when I tell you that we honor and respect your oceans as the sacred well of life that they are!

POSIDEON: Hmmmph! If that is true, then why do you humans pour poisons and garbage into my waters with no regard for the life forms that reside there? I think you only value my realm for the fish that you *take*, not for what I offer you! I am...disinclined...to let these people pass.

QUEEN MET: *[to King Keleos]* Oh no! The Rites of Demeter cannot be performed without making the offering and cleansing ourselves! Keleos! Do something!

KING KELEOS: Priest - is there nothing to be done? No offerings to be given or prayers to be read? These pilgrims have travelled far and came all the way to my kingdom to experience these rites. We must do everything in our power to complete our duty to them...

HEIROPHANT: I think there is one thing we can do...Sea Priests and Priestesses, please come forward. *[sea priest/esses assemble near Heirophant, having be coached as to what to say in response to his questions. Heirophant then turns to address Posideon]* Lord Posideon, here before you are the people who have chosen to dedicate themselves to act as the Sea Priests and Priestesses for this gathering. In years past they have been the ones to carry the sacred blossoms of hope into the sea. They wish to perform this holy task yet again on behalf of all those gathered here. They hold your waters as sacred, as do all of us here this day, but I would have you hear of their love and respect directly in hopes that you will change your mind...Sea Priest, what would you say to Lord Posideon? *[2-3 of the sea preist/esses respond with statements of love and respect for the sea and Posideon's power and two or three sea priestess dance in front of him while other speak]*

POSIDEON: *[warming to the words of praise and the dancing]* I see... perhaps I was a bit too judgemental. Sea Priests and Priestesses I thank you for your... words. I will allow the rites to continue unhindered. I grant you access to my realm for the duration of these rites. Heirophant, you may proceed.

HEIROPHANT: *[bowing low]* In Demeter's name, we thank you Lord Posideon! *[turns and addresses the crowd]* All hail Lord Posideon! *[prompted by the royals, crowd responds "all hail Lord Posideon!"]* Now with your permission, we will make our offerings and be on our way. *[Posideon nods his approval]*

HEIROPHANT: *[addressing crowd]* We stand here at the meeting place of earth, sky, and water. We gather as a community to not only honor the Gods, but to prepare ourselves for a transformative journey of the soul. The Rites of Demeter have always changed those who have attended them with an open and pure heart. We begin by offering a sacrifice in the form of the sacred sow, now charged with all of our disruptive thoughts and emotions. By shedding this life and Demeter's acceptance of this offering, she grants us peace of mind and purity of heart. Sea Priest, please carry the sacrifice into the sacred waters! *[Heirophant turns to watch as the selected Sea Priest(ess) walks into the waters with the pig held reverently, then releases it into the waters]*. Oh Great Mother Demeter, please accept this sacrifice!

[Sea Priest(ess) returns and is met by designated recovery team, and the Heirophant returns his attention to the crowd]

Our community offering has been accepted! *[addressing the Royals]* My King and Queen, if you will...

Queen Met: I believe it is time to offer our flowers of hope to the sea now! These flowers were plucked by you along the pilgrimage to the ocean shores, and now must complete their journey into the sacred waters.

King Keleos: Yes, let us please have the Sea Priests and Priestesses collect the blooms. Once all the flowers have been gathered, they shall carry the offerings into the sea on our behalf...Sea Priests and Priestesses, are we ready? *[they nod in agreement]* Then into the sea!!! *[general mayhem and nekkid folk. Once all have returned and start being wisked away to warm showers, the Triptolemos speaks]*

Triptolemos: Our hopes and dreams have been cast upon the waters. Watch carefully in the days and weeks to come for your answers...

Emolpous: Our journey has officially begun!

HEIROPHANT: In these baskets are the tokens of your participation in today's rites. If you have never participated in this festival with us before, you are Mystai and the gold ribbons are for you. If this is at least your second year, you are Eoptai and your ribbons are red. Let the Princes know which ribbon you need and wear it all weekend. There are places you will not be allowed into without proof that you went through the purification today. Once you have your ribbons, head back up the hill.

[Disabled folks get loaded into the vehicles and all make their way back up the hill and into the theater]

[The Wanderer stays and walks along the beach, followed by two women in flowing dresses and free hair]

2.1 Pan's View

[Doors open to the theater and Pan is on stage. He is excited and scurries about the stage greeting people as they take their seats. When the theater is about half full, he jumps off the stage and starts mingling in with the crowd. Pan begins speaking when the door closes.]

PAN: Hello everyone! Let me start off by saying that you are all beautiful, it is like I have a giant buffet. I will start on this side of the room and work my way to this side. Be patient, I will get to all of you eventually. But first, a story. A story about me, naturally. Maybe you would like to hear the story of how Apollo cheated me out of a musical contest. Or maybe the story of how I came to make my pipes? I know, how would you like to hear of my night in bed with Herakles? Now there is a juicy tale.

<Insert Story Here>

[Pan is eating the flowers that line the edge of the stage. As he is plucking another bloom, Demeter and Aphrodite walk out on stage and listen to the end of his story. Both are laughing quietly, but Demeter steps forward when Pan reaches for another flower. Aphrodite stands back and laughs.]

DEMETER: Pan! What have you done to my garden? My flowers! You have eaten half of my lovely young blooms. Get your fuzzy butt out of here before you kill the rest.

PAN: Oh my lovely Demeter, after what I did back there, you will have plenty of pretty posies popping up.

DEMETER: Oh Pan, you are incorrigible. Go! Get out of here. *[Pan runs off stage and up the main aisle laughing all the way.]* Pan. Pan. Pan. What am I going to do with you?

APHRODITE: Well I could make some suggestions.

DEMETER: *[laughing]* Aphrodite! You are as bad as he is.

APHRODITE: I prefer to think that I am just as good as he is. And I seem to remember that you were once a fertility goddess yourself.

DEMETER: I still am, but I need to spend most of my time looking after Kore now.

APHRODITE: Do you really Demeter? How old is she, now?

DEMETER: What do you mean, Aphrodite?

APHRODITE: It's good to take some time for yourself once in awhile. When was the last time you...

DEMETER: Aphrodite I have no idea what you are talking about.

APHRODITE: That long, huh?

DEMETER: Trust me. You Aphrodite, have no idea. *[They both smile and laugh]* Still, I get to spend much of my time tending to my gardens. *[Demeter bends over to repair her garden when Zeus enters]*

2.2 Mistaken Identity-Been There Done That

[Demeter bends over to tend to the flowers when Zeus enters stage left. He stops and leers appreciatively at Demeter's backside. When she stands up, she catches Zeus staring. Zeus realizes he has been caught staring but makes eye contact with Demeter. They both smile and look a little embarrassed. Aphrodite waves good bye and exits without speaking. But soon laugh and walk towards each other and embrace with a long lingering hug.]

ZEUS: Well Demeter, it is good to see you this morning.

DEMETER: Thank you Lord Zeus. But what brings you to my gardens this early?

ZEUS: I am to meet our daughter here.

DEMETER: Oh yes, she did say that she was meeting someone. But I have bad news for you. Your daughter is still sleeping. She does enjoy her bed.

[Zeus is suddenly shocked and Demeter then laughs out loud.] Oh no, Zeus. Not like that. Not yet.

ZEUS: Demeter, you should not do that to me.

DEMETER: Really, you of all people.

ZEUS: It's different when you are talking about my daughter.

DEMETER: She is my daughter too.

ZEUS: Yes I know. [He looks longingly at Demeter] I can't help but remember when we...

2.3 Cat Fight

[Hera enters and sees the two together and steps between them.]

HERA: When you what, Zeus?

ZEUS: When we last had Kore up to Olympus for dinner.

DEMETER: Yes Hera, we were just talking about how much my Kore loves to spend time with her father.

HERA: Yes, I am sure you were. Tell me Zeus, when did you last spend any quality time with your SON.

ZEUS: You know how much running Olympus takes it out of me. [Hermes enters from backstage unnoticed]

HERA: I am more concerned with where you are putting it. [Glares at Demeter]

ZEUS: Now, Hera...

HERA: I don't want to hear it. While you're running around chasing after mortals, I'm left to tend to the business of Olympus and defend my children's rights to--

ZEUS: That remains to be seen, Hera.

HERA: I will not have one of your half-breed get--

ZEUS: *Enough.* [stares Hera down, then looks offstage] Ah, Kore. There you are. No, no, I'll come to you. [exits]

HERA: Typical.

DEMETER: [sympathetically] Yes, I'm afraid so.

HERA: What do you know about it?

DEMETER: Well, I--

HERA: You're down here on Earth, tending to your gardens, caring nothing for matters on Olympus.

DEMETER: The Earth and its children are under my care.

HERA: And I can't help but notice that Zeus always has time for *your* child.

DEMETER: *[getting a little defensive]* It's not my fault that he favors her. Zeus does have his favorites.

HERA: And maybe you're trying to use that favor to your daughter's advantage.

DEMETER: What do you mean?

HERA: The throne of Olympus.

DEMETER: *[genuinely surprised]* I can't believe you would say that! Kore is a child of the flowering earth. Her place is here with me, not on high Olympus with Zeus.

HERA: *[scoffs]* Please. Like you've never thought of it.

DEMETER: I haven't. I swear to you I haven't. Besides, I think there are others that Zeus is grooming for that lofty place. He does have other sons, you know.

HERA: But Ares is his only legitimate son! And I will do whatever I must to ensure his place.

DEMETER: Such as murdering innocent mortals?

HERA: Oh, don't be so self-righteous. You're a mother. You'd do anything to protect Kore. Don't deny it.

DEMETER: I would never harm a mortal. I care for them as if they were my own children.

HERA: Then you are weak. I am the wife of the Lord of Olympus. I will do what I want and I will do what I please. And right now I want to...

2.4 Hermes Saves the Day

[Hermes has entered and watches the two get angrier and angrier but steps in before the two Goddess come to blows.]

HERMES: Ladies, ladies, please. There's enough Hermes to go around. *[they both turn and stare at him. Hermes miraculously does not turn into a pile of cinders on the floor.]* Er...

HERA: Yes. Just like your father.

DEMETER: *[laughs]* Isn't that the truth! *[the two goddesses glare at one another, angry over their agreement, glare at each other for a few moments more and then leave in opposite directions]*

HERMES: *[watches them go, then turns to the crowd]* Oh! Hello there. Father Zeus has such a way with women, doesn't he? Though I'm no slouch myself. *[picks out someone in the crowd]* In fact, I'll see you in my shrine later. Bring a friend. *[clears throat]* Anyway, you may have noticed that things are a little...tense in our family. Now don't get me wrong, I wouldn't change a thing. But Hera's never really forgiven Demeter for getting there first, if you know what I mean. But I have to give Zeus credit, he really cares about their daughter, the Kore. He has children all over the world and more than a couple on Olympus, but he always tries to makes time for her. It's quite sweet, really. As a matter of fact... *[steps back as ZEUS and KORE enter]*

2.5 Zeus and Kore Wishes

KORE: She's doing it again, Father. You know how she is. "We'll talk about that later," or "you're too young," or some other excuse.

ZEUS: She cares about you very much, Kore. She just wants what's best for you.

KORE: What would be *best* would be if she would let me grow up! I'm tired of being treated like a child!

ZEUS: Kore...you will always be your mother's child.

KORE: But I want to be more than that. I *am* more than that. If she would just give me a chance--!

ZEUS: Like when you got lost on the plains of Nysa and we had to send Artemis out to find you? Or when Athena pulled you off the cliff when you reached too far out after a pretty pink bloom?

KORE: That's different!

ZEUS: And you know that a young woman should never travel alone. *[glances at Hermes]* I certainly do.

KORE: What?

ZEUS: *[coughs uncomfortably]* I--I mean it's just not safe for you, Kore. I see much of what happens on the earth.

HERMES: *[muttering]* Yeah. Swans, bulls...

ZEUS: *[glares at Hermes]* Thunderbolts, son? *[Hermes covers his mouth and pretends to throw away the key, attempting to look innocent]*

KORE: What *are* the two of you talking about?

ZEUS and **HERMES:** *[in unison]* Nothing!

KORE: *[frustrated, stamps her foot]* Now you're acting like Mother.

ZEUS: You're right, Kore. I'm sorry. What can I do to make it up to you? What do you want?

KORE: I don't know...I want to grow up, find some independence, maybe get married someday...

ZEUS: Married? Hm. *[looks at Hermes and points offstage. Hermes exits with a quickness.]* So tell me, Kore, married?

KORE: Of course, Father. You know. Blushing Bride marries Tall, Dark, and Handsome...

2.6 Pan Calls on Kore

[Pan comes bouncing onstage on the tail of Kore's last line, grinning]

PAN: You called?

KORE: *[surprised]* Pan!

ZEUS: *[warningly]* Pan...

PAN: I'm just saying! I'd be happy to help the Kore do some growing up. Show her a good time, you know...

ZEUS: I think not.

PAN: But Zeus! It's obvious that she's becoming a young woman. Obvious to *me*, anyway.

ZEUS: *[sighs, shakes his head]* Yes, Pan. She has grown into a beautiful young woman. *[KORE looks pleased.]* But she is not for you. Come. If it's a good time you're looking for, I know just where to find one.

PAN: *[gleeful]* The Porni?!

ZEUS: Yes, Pan. The Heteirai. In fact, it's been awhile since I've been to see them, too... *[takes out a pouch and shakes it. It clinks, obviously full of coins. They exit, leaving KORE alone onstage]*

KORE: Great. He can't even finish a conversation. Nobody listens to me. *[wanders downstage to sit on one of the stage thrusts]* And I don't even know what a Heteira *is*.

2.7 DÉJÀ VU Moment and Dreams

KORE: *[is silent for a significant amount of time. She looks disappointed and a little sad. She reaches for a nearby flower, picks it, and stares at it contemplatively.]* Is this what I am? Something pretty? Something colorful? Something that *smells* nice? What's the point? *[tosses the flower on the ground, stands up, and begins to walk to the round stage as she talks]* Am I simply going to be underfoot? Not listened to, not *told* anything. "There's no need to worry about *that*, Kore" or "Oh, we'll talk about that later, Kore". When is later? I've never known *later*! It's always...now. Nothing ever changes. *[looks down at herself]* I have always been this. And this is what I'll always be.

[pauses. Looks out over the crowd, as if searching for something.]

I don't know what I want. I don't know what there *is* to want. Just...something besides this. Something that's mine. Something that isn't following after my mother as she makes the fields and orchards bloom. Something that isn't running after Artemis wherever *she* chooses to go. *[sighs]* Something that isn't waiting for my father to remember he has a daughter. I just want something that belongs to me. *[picks another flower and looks at it as though it were a mirror]* Marriage? Maybe. Yes. At least it would be something different. Where I could be an equal...but would I? It's not as though my father treats Hera all that well...or my mother either. Maybe I'll be like Artemis, or Athena. *[frustrated]* But I don't want to be *like* anyone! I want to be myself! *[defeated]* And I have no idea who that is. I just know that it's not this. *[staring at flower]*

2.8 Artemis and Athena Guardians Concerned

[Artemis and Athena enter from the rear of the theater. They are somewhat anxious, and clearly relieved when they see Kore.]

ARTEMIS: There you are! We've been looking everywhere for you.

ATHENA: You were supposed to meet us, Kore.

KORE: I know. I'm sorry. I was talking with father and--

ATHENA: Oh, is he here?

KORE: He was. He went off with Pan, and--

ARTEMIS: [*mildly disgusted*] I can imagine.

KORE: Well, *I* can't. What's a Heteira?

ATHENA: [*exchanges a "no, YOU do it" look with Artemis*] Well, Kore, there are some women who...exchange money for their...pleasant company.

KORE: <I don't understand.> Like Aphrodite?

ARTEMIS: Yes, Kore. Like Aphrodite. [*Athena smacks Artemis on the back of the head. Lightly.*] Ow! Athena!

ATHENA: No, Kore. *Not* like Aphrodite. *She* doesn't exchange money for her time.

KORE: [*testily*] Well. Thank you for clearing that up.

ARTEMIS: [*frowning*] Kore, is something wrong?

KORE: Yes. No. I don't know. I feel like--Artemis, when did you go out to the Wild? For the first time?

ARTEMIS: [*somewhat puzzled*] Well, I--I couldn't really say, Kore. It's just what I've always done.

KORE: But why?

ARTEMIS: It's what I wanted. I told our father, I didn't want to marry, or be a mother, or any of those things. I just wanted the Wild, running through the woods and over the mountains. I wanted the hunt.

KORE: How did you know what you wanted?

ARTEMIS: I just did.

KORE: What about you, Athena?

ATHENA: I knew from the moment I sprang from our father's head. It's the city for me, and the work of the mortals living there. They need my protection, and the gifts of craft and wisdom that I give them.

KORE: So they need you.

ATHENA: Yes. Might I ask where all of this is coming from, Kore?

KORE: *[turning away, in the general direction of the main stage. They follow, not quite herding her back up to the front of the theater]* Oh, I don't know. I just feel--incomplete, somehow. Empty.

[The lights begin to go out]

2.9 Return of Nyx

ATHENA: Darkness in the middle of the day? Artemis this isn't right.

ARTEMIS: What is going on?

ATHENA: I am not sure, but keep Kore to our backs.

ARTEMIS: Kore, get behind me. Now. *[Kore gets behind Artemis but tries to look by her to see what is happening.]*

ATHENA: Artemis keep sharp. *[Artemis and Athena continue to back up to the main stage but with weapons at the ready]* I think I know who is behind this darkness.

ARTEMIS: It doesn't feel natural.

KORE: Who is behind this? What do you mean?

ARTEMIS: *[Also realizing who it was]* Why would she be here? Now? *[all three move backwards and onto the stage]*

NYX: *[walking up the main aisle as the lights go out behind her]* Am I not a Goddess too? With all of the rights and responsibilities?

ATHENA: Why are you here Nyx? This is not like you.

ARTEMIS: This is not your place Nyx. I have no quarrel with you, but you do not belong here. *[Raises her bow]* Leave now. *[Continues to move Kore back away from Nyx]*

KORE: Artemis, what is going on? Who is Nyx?

NYX: Kore, no. We have never met. I am the one goddess that your father fears. I am the one goddess over whom your father holds no power.

KORE: Why would my Father fear you? *[Kore tries to step around Artemis to face Nyx, but Artemis pushes her back.]*

ATHENA: Quiet Kore. *[To Nyx]* What do you want? You are not one to just go out in the middle of the day for a stroll on the plains of Nysa.

NYX: You are right Athena. This is not a stroll at all. *[Snaps her fingers; lights go down and out]*

2.10 Abduction (Four Lights)

[Athena and Artemis crouch down looking out into the audience]

[The first flash of light shows Kore alone on stage.]

[The second shows Hades behind her holding his cloak out to her from behind.]

[The third shows Kore wrapped in a red cloak.]

[The fourth shows her in Hades' arms in the classic abduction pose.]

[Lights stay down as Hades carries Kore up the main aisle, behind Nyx]

[The lights come back up to show Artemis and Athena still standing guard but Kore is gone. The two begin searching the stage, calling for Kore, but with no success. Each exits on opposite sides of the stage looking for Kore.]

2.11 Mom and Pop Talk Marriage

[Zeus and Demeter enter chatting cordially with Demeter]

ZEUS: So you see Demeter, Kore wants a chance to spread her wings.

DEMETER: When you put it that way Zeus, I can understand. But she is my child and I will always want to protect her. Even from herself sometimes.

ZEUS: Yes Demeter, but she must be allowed to make her own decisions and we have to let her deal with her own mistakes as well.

DEMETER: I know Zeus, but I just want to keep her safe. Deep down I know she needs to grow up and become her own person, but I just want a few more years with her. When she grows up, everything will change...

ZEUS: I understand, but you do agree that Kore needs to be given a chance to find herself. *[Demeter nods and smiles]* And we need to tell her about what really happens on Olympus and the Earth. No matter how uncomfortable it might feel at that moment.

DEMETER: Yes Zeus. She will be a powerful goddess someday, and she will make us both proud.

HERMES: *[enters with Aphrodite, from the same direction that he left, mid-gossip]* So did you hear that he's back?

APHRODITE: From India?

HERMES: Yes. But he's not altogether...here, if you know what I mean. *[sees Zeus]* Oh, Father Zeus, I took care of that thing you asked me to do for you. Hades didn't look too excited but then again when does he ever? But anyway, it is set up and ready to go, just say the word.

DEMETER: Hermes? What are you going on about?

HERMES: I told Hades that he could see his new bride...

APHRODITE: Oh Zeus, it is just so exciting. And Demeter, you must be so happy. *[Aphrodite hugs a confused Demeter and then steps back to look at Zeus]* I don't know how you did it, but I am glad you did. I just passed the happy couple on my way to meet Hermes.

HERMES: Well Aphrodite, I did have something to do with it too. Wait, what did you say? Happy *couple*?

DEMETER: What are all of you babbling about? And Hades has a new bride? Would one of you please tell me what is going on?

HERMES: Uh Father? Dear old dad. *[leans toward Zeus, stage whispers]* Please tell me you already told her and she agreed and we are all off to plan the reception. Please?

DEMETER: Tell me what Zeus?

APHRODITE: Demeter, Hades has taken Kore as his bride. She is to be his wife. Glorious isn't it!

DEMETER: *[is momentarily speechless]* Glorious? Bride? Kor--No. No, NO! This can't be. Zeus, tell me you didn't. Please!

ZEUS: Demeter, she asked--

DEMETER: She asked for a pet hydra, but we didn't give it to her!

ZEUS: *[quietly]* I just wanted to make her happy.

APHRODITE: It's time for her to grow up, Demeter. I've felt so for a long time, now.

DEMETER: No Aphrodite it isn't. She is just a child. An innocent with no business with someone like Hades.

ZEUS: Wait a minute Demeter. You just said that you believed Kore will become a powerful goddess.

2.12 Mother's Anguish Demeter accuses Hermes of going behind her back and Zeus for distracting her so she couldn't oppose the marriage.

DEMETER: *Will* become! Not now. Not today. Not like this!

APHRODITE: If not now, then when? When were you going to let her become this powerful goddess that you say she will be? Zeus agrees with me. He knew it was time.

DEMETER: *[does not want to lash out at Aphrodite, shifts her attention to Zeus]* Zeus! You are behind this aren't you. You kept me distracted while Hermes did your dirty work for you.

ZEUS: No Demeter it was not like that.

HERMES: Demeter. I simply delivered the message. There was no dirty work, I just told Hades that Zeus wanted him to come up and marry Kore.

ZEUS: Hermes! Demeter it was not like that either.

DEMETER: Oh really Zeus? Then exactly how was it then. Did you offer him a dowry? Or did you owe Hades some sort of favor? Zeus! What were you thinking?

ZEUS: She hasn't been happy, Demeter. I could see it. Why couldn't you?

DEMETER: How dare you! I know my daughter better than anyone else - you're never even around.

ZEUS: I love *our* daughter just as much as you do.

APHRODITE: *[interceding]* We all love the Kore and want her to be happy. We can all agree on that.

DEMETER: Stay out of this, Aphrodite.

APHRODITE: But Demeter, I--

DEMETER: This is a family matter.

APHRODITE: Fine. I'm sure I can find something more pleasant to occupy my time. Come with me, Hermes.

HERMES: Anytime. *[to Zeus]* Good luck. *[exits arm in arm with Aphrodite]*

ZEUS: Demeter, I understand that you're angry. And I suppose if I didn't know the whole story, I'd be angry too.

DEMETER: I don't want another one of your *stories*, Zeus. You'll say anything to get your way. You'll turn yourself into a swan, a bull...I think the *snake* fits your nature better.

ZEUS: Demeter, I was going to tell you. I *was* telling you, but--

DEMETER: But what, Zeus?

ZEUS: Aphrodite interrupted me. I was going to tell you.

DEMETER: Where have I heard that before? How could you do this to my daughter? *Hades?* The Lord of the *Dead?*

ZEUS: It *is* a change for her, but--

DEMETER: A *change?* I can't believe I'm hearing this. You've condemned my child, the child of the living Earth, to the Underworld! That is no change, Zeus. That is death!

ZEUS: She will be a queen, Demeter. A goddess in her own right.

DEMETER: How could she ever be happy in such a place? My heart is breaking at the thought of her there, trapped in darkness and decay.

ZEUS: You're overreacting, Demeter--

DEMETER: I'm *overreacting?*! You have killed my daughter. *Our* daughter!

ZEUS: Hades acted rashly, but he did not harm her. That was not a part of the agreement.

DEMETER: Oh, well that just makes it all better!

ZEUS: Demeter...I have told you how it is. The change has come. There is nothing you can do, or that I can do, to change it back. What's done is done.

DEMETER: Zeus--

ZEUS: We are done discussing this. *[exits, leaving Demeter alone]*

2.13 Guardians Abused

[Demeter is alone. Artemis and Athena hurry onstage, distraught. They halt when they see her and whisper urgently to one another. Athena pushes Artemis forward.]

ARTEMIS: Demeter! We--well-- *[glances back at Athena]*

ATHENA: We have something to tell you.

DEMETER: *[exhausted]* What is it?

ARTEMIS: We were with Kore on the plains of Nysa, and--

ATHENA: --it got so dark--

ARTEMIS: --we couldn't see what was happening--

ATHENA: --we tried to protect Kore--

ARTEMIS: --but when the sunlight came back--

ATHENA: --she was gone.

ARTEMIS: Demeter, we are so sorry!

DEMETER: You--were with her?

ARTEMIS: Yes.

ATHENA: But she was taken.

ARTEMIS: In the darkness.

ATHENA: We don't know who--

DEMETER: *[dully, but it cuts across their chatter]* Hades. It was Hades.

ATHENA: She's--

ARTEMIS: --dead? Hades killed her?

DEMETER: He married her.

ARTEMIS: *[quietly]* Oh.

ATHENA: How did this happen? Were there arrangements made? Why weren't we told about this?

DEMETER: Zeus. Your *father* just does what he wants to, and never mind who it hurts.

ARTEMIS: She has gone beyond my sight, then. There is nothing I can do.

DEMETER: Nothing you can do. [*makes a dismissive sound*] You *did* nothing, both of you!

ATHENA: Demeter, we--

DEMETER: You stood by and did nothing while Hades *abducted* my daughter. Leave me alone. [*pause, during which they don't move, uncertain for quite possibly the first time in their immortal existences*] Get out of my sight!

[*lights shift; from warm, daylight colors to cold and blue. Think transition from summer to winter; this color stays constant to the end of Lessers I.*]

ARTEMIS: [*looks around; seems to feel cold*] What's happening?

ATHENA: [*looks around as Artemis did*] More than a child has been lost... [*puts an arm around Artemis; quietly*] Come on, Artemis. Let's go.

[*Artemis and Athena exit up the aisle and out, heartbroken. Demeter, onstage, has her back to them. Total silence. When the theater doors close on Artemis and Athena's exit, Demeter shudders, still facing the back wall.*]

2.14 Crazy Train

[*Demeter reaches up to the neckline of her chiton and rips it open, letting out a heartrending wail. She stands there for a moment, then slowly turns around. She paces to the front of the stage, moving slowly, keeping her gaze on the floor. She kicks off her sandals, tears off her himation and jewelry and pulls down her hair. She keeps her chiton and her belt, which is a rolled veil. She walks down from the stage and out to the round, not meeting anyone's gaze--she has withdrawn from the world. When she reaches the round, she collapses, making sounds of grief.*]

[*Demeter is still huddled on the round stage. Whispers begin, indistinct except for occasional repetitions of Demeter's name. Slowly she raises her head, looking around*]

DEMETER: Kore?

[She stands up and begins to meander back to the stage, possibly through the audience. She murmurs to herself, occasionally her daughter's name. She comes up onstage to where the well is. Demeter's garden is gone. Demeter sits down by the well.]

DEMETER: What am I without my daughter? Without my Kore? [Looks into the well and sees her reflection.] Who is that? That cannot be me. That is who I used to be. When I was a mother above everything else. What do I do now? A childless mother. I am without reason. I am without use. I don't know who I am. I am no one. *[shivers]* Why am I so cold?

[DEMETER sits at the well, staring down at her hands in her lap. Her posture is slumped and subdued, and she is silent.]

[The WANDERER rises from an aisle seat a few rows from the front, walks up the center aisle and up the stairs followed by two women. DEMETER looks up and sees him. Her expression is startled as she sits up straighter; then she looks at him with hesitant recognition.]

WANDERER: Do I...know you?

DEMETER: I...don't know. I think so? You do seem familiar...

[The WANDERER retrieves a sprig of ivy from his sleeve, and offers it to DEMETER.]

WANDERER: Here. This is for you.

DEMETER: Why?

WANDERER: It will protect you. It has always protected me.

[DEMETER drops the sprig, startled. When she picks it up, it has gone dry and withered. She looks at the WANDERER again.]

WANDERER: Don't worry. It will still work. It will help you be strong. You have my word.

[The WANDERER touches DEMETER's cheek. Then he turns and descends the stairs, starting up the center aisle. As he passes the first row, two women rise from the audience and follow him. Two more follow from a few rows back, and two more from a few rows beyond that. RHEA enters from backstage to bring up the rear. The women are in street clothes, but are wearing loose garments--flowy skirts and the like--and with loose hair. They proceed out the back of the theater.]

2.15 Baubo Meet Doso

[Metaneira runs out onstage and to the edge of the stage, staring after the departing procession. She gathers up her chiton as if to follow. Baubo runs out after her, stops short at the sight of Demeter and gives her a look of recognition. Then she hurries after Metaneira and takes her arm before she can follow the Wanderer.]

BAUBO: My queen, no. You don't want to do that. Come back now. You have responsibilities.

METANEIRA: I won't be gone long...

BAUBO: It's too cold to be outside, and the baby will catch a chill. *[pause]* You have obligations, my queen.

METANEIRA: Yes. Of course. I don't know what came over me.

[Demeter stands up, looses the veil from around her waist, and covers her hair.]

BAUBO: Dem--?

[Demeter looks confused.]

BAUBO: *[briefly puzzled, but plays along]* Ah. I don't believe we've...met.

DEMETER: Where am I?

BAUBO: You are at the house of King Keleos, ruler of the city of Eleusis. I am Baubo, a...servant in the king's household. And this is my queen, Metaneira.

[Demeter stands regally, making a gesture of acknowledgment but not of subservience. Metaneira is obviously puzzled and a little annoyed.]

BAUBO: And this is...is...

DEMETER: Doso. My name is Doso.

BAUBO: *[pause]* Of course it is. *[raises an admonishing finger, stage whispers:]* My lady, stay right here. *[Demeter looks confused. Baubo removes her himation and drapes it over Metaneira's shoulders, finishing with a flourish to indicate that the action is magical]* I'll get you back to the palace soon, my queen, where it's warm. Just wait here a moment. *[returns to Demeter]* Lady, what are you doing here?

DEMETER: I...I don't know. Something's happened. Something bad.

BAUBO: Oh, my lady. Are you all right?

DEMETER: I don't think so. Truthfully, I don't remember much. I just have this overwhelming feeling of loss...

BAUBO: Then why are you here? I mean, amongst the mortals. Demeter--

DEMETER: Demeter? Who is Demeter? My name is Doso.

BAUBO: *[very troubled]* Don't you remember who you are?

DEMETER: *[with sudden awareness]* Is there a child? *[At the word "child", Metaneira perks up.]*

METANEIRA: Yes! Yes, I have a child. Demophoon. My youngest son. But he is not well.

DEMETER: My queen, I am a...nursemaid and a healer. If you would accept my service, I would be honored to look after your child. *[at this point Baubo begins to look alarmed and shake her head]*

METANEIRA: I have a nursemaid...Baubo has looked after Demophoon since he was born. And his brothers, before him.

BAUBO: What can you do for him, Dem--Doso, that I have not already tried?

DEMETER: I have traveled much, and know the properties and uses of everything that grows upon the earth. I am sure that there is *[puts a little mojo on it]* something I can do for him.

METANEIRA: Let us see what you can do for him.

BAUBO: Yes. Let's see what Doso can do.

2.16 Meet the (Royal) Parents

[Triptolemos and Eumolpos enter, in some hurry, and in obvious relief when they see Metaneira and Baubo.]

TRIPTOLEMOS: Mother! It's too cold to go wandering about outside.

EUMOLPOS: Yes, it is very cold. The trees, fields, and vines wither, and the ground freezes. I've never seen anything like it. *[shivers]*

METANEIRA: Oh, my sons. I am sorry to worry you. I was just... *[looks toward the back of the theater, where the Wanderer and his entourage vanished]* looking for something.

KELEOS: *[enters from the same entrance as the boys, holding a wet Demophoon at arm's length]* Someone. Take. The baby. *[looks down at his chiton, which has an evident...spill.]*

DEMETER: Here, let me.

KELEOS: *[looks at Metaneira]* Who's this? *[shifts a stern gaze to Triptolemos, who shrugs]*

METANEIRA: Keleos. This is Doso, our new nursemaid.

KELEOS: Oh. *[hands the baby to Doso]* Sons, you shouldn't let your mother wander out here in the cold.

TRIPTOLEMOS: We didn't let her do anything, father. I was reading Herodotus.

EUMOLPOS: And I was studying sacred--

BAUBO: Shh. *[makes a "zip it" gesture to Eumolpos]*

KELEOS: *[clears throat]* Yes, well. I see. Nevertheless, I rely on you two boys...

EUMOLPOS: Isn't that why we have Baubo?

BAUBO: Among other things. *[Triptolemos smirks, and Baubo swats him.]*

METANEIRA: Doso will look after Demophoon.

KELEOS: Yes. A wonderful idea, my dear. It's too much for Baubo to do that, and see to her...other responsibilities. *[he gooses Baubo who giggles]* Eumolpos, escort your mother back indoors. Triptolemos, the emissaries from Athens tell me that the situation is as dire there as it is here; their harvests wither and the trees do not bear fruit. Come with me to speak with them further. Baubo, will you see to getting Doso settled in?

BAUBO: Yes, my king. *[watches everyone leave, then turns to Demeter, who is cradling the child.]* Come, Doso. *[lights go down as they exit]*

2.17 Time After Time

[Lights come up on an indoor scene. Demeter is seated by a hearth with Demophoon in her arms. Baubo enters.]

BAUBO: Good morning, Doso. My, you do seem to have a...gift for caring for children. But can I get you something?

DEMETER: There is a drink called kykeon, made from barley and mint...

BAUBO: *[pause]* I haven't had kykeon since...my own days in the fields. *[they share a laugh]* It's good to hear you laugh. To see you smile again.

DEMETER: I'm afraid I haven't felt like laughing or smiling for a long time. *[rocks Demophoon as Baubo turns away to make the drink; her mood begins to sink again]*

BAUBO: *[returns with a cup, which she proffers to Demeter.]* Here you go. You know, laughter is a gift. It heals the heart and lightens the spirit. It keeps our troubles from weighing us down. It saves us from taking ourselves too seriously. And we women have a secret. Even when we're feeling as low as you are right now, there is always the belly laugh--the one smile that we always carry with us. Laugh, and the world heals. *[flashes Demeter, who laughs and finally sips her drink. Adds quietly:]* Why are you here, Doso?

DEMETER: *[drawing back]* I just need some time. And something to do.

BAUBO: I understand. *[walks upstage. Lights go down.]*

[lights come back up. Baubo returns downstage; some time has passed.]

BAUBO: Doso. You have been here for a month. And in that time, you have taken great care of Prince Demophoon. But the rest of the world suffers.

DEMETER: Are--are you sure? I hadn't noticed. But his health improves by the day. The queen is very pleased.

BAUBO: But in your concern for this one child, you have withdrawn your blessings from the land. Look around you, *Demeter!* Look out the window! The trees and fields are brown and barren!

DEMETER: *[ignoring Baubo's use of her real name]* All of my concern is right here. *[holding the baby in front of her]*

BAUBO: Demeter, the mortals suffer. And I can see that for all the care you have given this child, your heart is no lighter. You still grieve for something. What did you lose?

DEMETER: Oh, Baubo, I wish I knew. I have this hole in my heart. I feel like a part of me has been taken away...but I don't know what. Give me a little more time, Baubo.

[Baubo walks upstage. Lights go down.]

[lights come back up. Baubo returns downstage; some time has passed.]

BAUBO: I've noticed a change in you, Demeter. You have a purpose about you. What's going on?

DEMETER: Oh, yes. I have a purpose. I am keeping young Demophoon alive. I would keep him from Hades so that he can one day be king.

BAUBO: You would keep him from Hades? All mortals go to Erebus, in time. It is the way of things, Demeter.

DEMETER: I know, Baubo. But it doesn't have to be. Just this once, I want to change that. Besides, I feel like Hades owes me.

BAUBO: *[realization dawns]* Why would he owe you anything?

DEMETER: Because...he took something. *[sharply, frustrated]* Why do you keep asking me these questions, Baubo?

BAUBO: *[approaches Demeter, holding out her arms for the baby. Demeter hands Demophoon over, with a touch of reluctance.]* Because you have been here for three months, and in that time, nothing has grown. The mortals, the people who worship you, are starving. You need to return to your rightful place.

DEMETER: Nothing about being Demeter is right for me anymore. *[Baubo stares at her in shock.]* Give me the child.

METANEIRA: *[from offstage]* Baubo! Come here, please.

BAUBO: *[calls offstage]* Yes, my queen. *[hands Demophoon back, gives Demeter a troubled look and exits]*

2.18 Mama Demeter's Baby Back Ribs

DEMETER: There's nothing for me in my temples, or in the fields...but there *is* something for me here. Here is one child who will never go to Erebus, who Hades cannot claim as his own. *[tears a strip of trim or ribbon from the bottom of her chiton, and slowly, deliberately, ties knots in it. When she is done, she throws it into the fire.]* The third time this child comes from the fire, he will be truly immortal, and beyond Hades's

grasp. *[places Demophoon in the fire. Takes him out, cradles him, and puts him in again. Pulls him out a second time just as Baubo enters]*

BAUBO: Demeter, I--what are you doing?

DEMETER: This child will never leave me, Baubo. My work here is almost done. *[starts to place Demophoon in the fire again]*

BAUBO: Demeter, this is not your child!

DEMETER: But he soon will be.

BAUBO: *[deeply alarmed]* Metaneira! Triptolemos! Help!

[Triptolemos comes running onstage, sees what Demeter is doing, and rushes toward her, intent on taking Demophoon from her. Instead, he bounces off and hits the floor as Metaneira runs in behind him with Eumolpos and Keleos bringing up the rear.]

METANEIRA: My baby! *[snatches Demophoon from Demeter]*

KELEOS: What is going on?

TRIPTOLEMOS: Doso was trying to burn the baby!

METANEIRA: *[glaring at Demeter]* We took you in, gave you shelter when you had none, and entrusted our child into your care. How could you do this?

DEMETER: My queen, you do not understand. I was helping him.

METANEIRA: By putting him in the fire?

KELEOS: *[comes up next to Metaneira, drawing a weapon]* I will kill you for harming my son!

[Princes draw their weapons too, circling behind her so that she is surrounded.]

BAUBO: Wait, my king, you don't--

[Demeter stands up straighter, removing the veil from her hair and revealing her divinity. Keleos and the princes' weapons clatter to the floor, and all three kneel. Metaneira stares in shocked recognition.]

METANEIRA: Goddess Demeter!

DEMETER: Your son is unharmed, Metaneira. This is no ordinary fire. I was blessing your child.

METANEIRA: *[still somewhat defiant]* Blessing my child? You were burning him! What possible blessing is that?

DEMETER: Look at him. He is unburned. There is not a mark on him. I was using the flames to make him immortal.

METANEIRA: *[kneels]* But why, Mother Demeter? Why my child? How have we offended you?

DEMETER: Offended me? You speak as though this were a punishment.

KELEOS: Lady of the Golden Grain, forgive me, but what else could it be?

DEMETER: A gift. I was giving him a gift.

KELEOS: Such a gift is not for mortals. Would it be a gift for him to outlive everyone he ever loved or cared for, even his own children?

METANEIRA: Please, Lady. Do not do this. Do not condemn my son to such a fate. How could he live, while the world changed around him to something he no longer knew?

BAUBO: I tried to tell you, Demeter. This is the cycle of mortal life. To live, and then to die.

DEMETER: So be it. *[looks at Demophon]* So you are destined to meet Hades after all. *[draws her veil over her face and stands still as the princes and Keleos rise]*

EUMOLPOS: Mother, father, our brother has been spared. We must do honor to the Lady.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Let us build a temple to her, that she may return the blessings to our land.

KELEOS: Yes, my sons. This is something we must do. As a family.

[Princes bring out the throne. Baubo leads Demeter to the throne and she sits, remaining veiled. Princes and Keleos build the temple around her: columns, empty vases, fabric draping. Metaneira brings a basket of offerings, but the famine has clearly had its effect.]

As they finish the work, the Hierophant enters from the rear of the theater, walking up the aisle. He looks tired and worn, his clothes torn and dirty, far from the regal Hierophant we saw earlier. He approaches the stage.]

HIEROPHANT: Is this the temple you have built to honor the Goddess of the Grain? I heard rumors...that the Lady herself occupies this temple. Is it true?

KELEOS: *[stares in sudden recognition]* Hierophant? Where have you been?

HIEROPHANT: I have been seeking the Great Mother, the Bearer of Fruits, She who Sends Forth Gifts. Please tell me that she is here.

KELEOS: She is. *[steps back as Hierophant comes up the stairs to the Temple and kneels by Demeter's side.]*

HIEROPHANT: Goddess of Bountiful Harvest, I am here. I have returned to your side. Tell me what you would have me do. *[Demeter is silent. Hierophant bows his head.]*

TRIPTOLEMOS: She won't answer you. She won't answer anyone.

EUMOLPOS: We built her a temple, and offered what we could. But she is unmoved.

HIEROPHANT: But have you blessed this temple?

[Princes silently shake their heads. Hierophant stands, holds his spear upright, and walks around the temple in a circle, inspecting their work. He returns to the front, bows, takes out a pouch and draws out a handful of grain. He walks another circle, scattering the grain as he goes. He returns to the front again, raises his hands in a gesture of blessing, and bows again. Demeter stirs and draws an audible breath, but does not speak, and after a moment sinks back into her seat again. The Hierophant lays down his spear and resumes his place by her side. The royal family take evident hope from Demeter's breath, but are discouraged when she does not speak]

EUMOLPOS: Please, Mother Demeter. Are we not also your children? We need the fertility of the land in order to live.

[They all exit with obvious disappointment.]

2.19 Hermes Finds Demeter

[Demeter sits in her temple, with the Hierophant kneeling by her side. Both are silent. Hermes enters from the back of the theater. He has clearly been

traveling for quite awhile. He's talking to himself as he walks, about how long he's been searching and how slow it is having to walk, etc. Halfway up the aisle, he spots Demeter and gasps in astonishment]

HERMES: Demeter! I've been looking for you everywhere. *[RUNS the rest of the way to the stage and up the stairs.]* Have you been here the entire time? Why didn't you send word? I've been very worried. Well, we all have. Well, maybe not Hera, but the rest of us have been looking night and day for you. You disappeared, it was like you'd vanished from the Earth, not even Hekate could find you. And she finds *everything*. *[pause, walks around the temple]* Nice temple, by the way! Did the mortals build you this? I need to get on mine, I haven't had a new one in awhile. Where did they get this marble? *[shakes himself; refocuses on the matter at hand]* Uh. Anyway. Demeter, things have changed, and not for the good. But wait here. I'll let the rest of them know where you are. Just stay here. I'll be right back. *[hurries off the stage and back up the aisle. During this entire time, Demeter has not reacted. As Hermes leaves, the Hierophant lifts his head and looks after him, shakes his head, and returns to his vigil.]*

2.20 God-A-Thon

[Hermes leads Zeus and Hera up the main aisle, along with Ares and Aphrodite. From one side door, Hestia and Hephaestus; from the other, Poseidon and Apollo. Rhea and Pan come up the main aisle somewhat behind the others. Hierophant sees the gods approaching and leaves hastily to warn the royal family.]

HERMES: I'm back! I told you I was coming back. Father Zeus, see? I told you she was here!

HERA: So I see.

POSEIDON: I'm glad we found you.

APOLLO: Yes. My sister has been very concerned. She'll be glad to know you're safe.

HESTIA: We thought you were gone from the Earth, but here you are.

ARES: Yes, sitting safely in your temple while shirking your responsibilities.

APHRODITE: *[clears throat, puts a hand on his arm, warningly:]* Dear. *[to Demeter]* Demeter, I've been so worried.

PAN: *[bouncing into the middle of things]* Demeter! It's so good to see you again.

HEPHAESTUS: This is a nice temple. Are those columns Corinthian? Good work, for mortals.

RHEA: Hephaestus: focus. We're here for Demeter. *[comes forward to Demeter's side, where the Hierophant was.]* My daughter. What troubles you?

[Hekate begins her approach from the back of the theater.]

HERA: More like what trouble she's causing. *[Rhea gives her an admonitory look.]*

ZEUS: *[uncomfortably]* Now, Hera. *[to Demeter]* I have been...worried. About you. *[pauses, waiting for Demeter to react]* Demeter? *[no response]* Will you not even look at me? *[rest of the gods look uncomfortable and back away. Zeus goes on more firmly:]* I did what I thought best for our daughter, and I will not apologize for that. *[still nothing][voice begins to rise in anger]* Demeter, how can you abandon-- I see. Freezing me out, just as you've done to the Earth.

HEKATE: *[has reached the front of the stage, is walking up the stairs]* Zeus. That's enough. This is not the time or the place.

ZEUS: She has withdrawn from the world, Hekate.

HEKATE: Yes. She has.

ZEUS: *[realizes what Hekate is really saying. Turns to the Olympians:]* Oh. I understand.

HEKATE: She is beyond even our influence.

RHEA: I can hardly feel her presence, even though she is right next to me.

APOLLO: But if we can do nothing, then what hope is there? How can she heal?

POSEIDON: The world has turned cold. The earth as well as the ocean. But it can't be the end.

HESTIA: Demeter has always had great love for the mortals.

PAN: Perhaps they can do something.

ARES: Besides die? Would they fight?

HEPHAESTUS: Ever the optimist, Ares. Mortals have a great will to live. Given the right tools, they can do just about anything.

HESTIA: Yes. If we cannot help Demeter ourselves, then we can help the mortals.

HERA: Help them see what needs to be done.

APOLLO: To give them direction.

POSEIDON: And overcome obstacles.

HERMES: So it's settled. The Gods of Olympus are here for the mortals.

HEKATE: To aid them in their efforts.

HERMES: You all know what needs to be done. Go and prepare for the mortals.

[All gods exit except for Hermes and Hekate; Apollo, Poseidon, Hestia, Ares, Hera, and Hephaestus to their shrines for the Oracle visits.]

HEKATE: We will need to guide them, Hermes.

HERMES: Of course, Hekate. We would be remiss if we did not.

HEKATE: I will go see to the others. You stay here.

2.21 Go See the Gods for Help

[Hekate exits as the Hierophant returns, leading the brothers. Hermes hides on the other side of Demeter so they don't see him at first.]

HIEROPHANT: I tell you, princes, they were here.

EUMOLPOS: Which ones?

HIEROPHANT: All of them.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Hierophant, what have you eaten today? Anything besides kykeon?

HIEROPHANT: Well...no.

HERMES: *[pops out from his hiding place]* He's right, you know. They were all here.

[Hierophant and princes are visibly startled; then all three kneel]

HERMES: Oh, stop that. We don't have time--or, more precisely, *you* don't have time to waste on protocol. I am here to help.

HIEROPHANT: *[not snarky; if anything, relieved]* I told you so. *[returns to Demeter's side]*

TRIPTOLEMOS: Hermes! Messenger of the Gods! Psychopomp--

HERMES: What did I just say? We really don't have time for that.

EUMOLPOS: *[elbows Triptolemos in the side]* Great lord Hermes, then what can we do for you?

HERMES: Oh, it's not what you do for me, princelings. It's what I can do for you. I see you've built this lovely temple. How is that working out for you?

EUMOLPOS: *[exchanges a look with Triptolemos]* Well...what do you mean?

TRIPTOLEMOS: Not so well, actually.

EUMOLPOS: We have done honor to the Lady as well as we could. But she has not moved or spoken in months.

HERMES: She doesn't need honor, or sheaves of wheat, or burning bulls. She needs her daughter.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Her daughter? Why? What happened to her?

HERMES: Well, you see, she's gone to Erebos...

EUMOLPOS: Then she's dead? How are we supposed to do anything about that?

HERMES: Well, you'd better come up with something, hadn't you? I mean, look around you.

TRIPTOLEMOS: We've been trying.

HERMES: Yes. I know. I didn't say she was dead. You did.

EUMOLPOS: Then she's alive??

HERMES: Well...it's complicated. But let's just say that she is.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Well, what are we supposed to do about that? *She* might be alive in Erebos, but I don't think that's possible for mortals.

HERMES: You think you know a lot, don't you?

EUMOLPOS: But lord Hermes, my brother is right. Erebus is the land of the dead. Even if she's there, we can't reach her.

HERMES: Ah. Well. You can't reach her...on your own.

TRIPTOLEMOS: That's the help you're offering?

HERMES: No. Not just that. I have convinced several of the Olympians to help you, too. They are here, on the Earth, ready to give you gifts and guidance that will aid you in your task.

EUMOLPOS: But why can't they handle this?

HERMES: Look at your goddess, princes. She has drawn back from everything and everyone, including them. They cannot reach her.

EUMOLPOS: Are you saying what I think you're saying?

TRIPTOLEMOS: What do you think he's saying?

EUMOLPOS: That he wants *us* to go to Erebus, and bring back Demeter's daughter.

TRIPTOLEMOS: What? *[to Hermes]* You can't be serious.

HERMES: Most of the time, you'd be right! But this time, I am entirely serious.

TRIPTOLEMOS: With all due respect, Lord Hermes, are you insane?? *[Eumolpos begins making urgent shushing motions, which have no effect.]* We are but mortals. You are gods. How can we do anything where you cannot? *[Eumolpos is now shaking Triptolemos's arm. This also has no effect.]* Lord Hermes, if we go to the Underworld, we will die! And personally, I'm in no hurry! I will have plenty of time to be dead!

EUMOLPOS: *[breaking in, finally]* Lord Hermes, I'm so sorry. We don't mean to be disrespectful.

HERMES: *[grinning]* Well, prince, fortunately, you're talking to me, and not Ares or even Apollo. Besides, that death your brother is so eager to avoid may be closer than you think. You're both looking a little thin.

TRIPTOLEMOS: *[defeated]* Yes. And our people suffer. Our family suffers. Our brother...

EUMOLPOS: You are saying, Lord Hermes, that we have no choice.

HERMES: Oh, you have a choice. None of your options are good, I admit, but you do have a choice.

EUMOLPOS: But this decision is not ours alone to make. Our people must have a say.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Yes. *[turns to audience]* Citizens of Eleusis! We are charged with making a journey to Erebus to rescue Demeter's daughter, the Kore. The journey will no doubt be difficult and dangerous *[Hermes nods emphatically here]* but no better fate awaits us if we do not go. Will you make this journey?

AUDIENCE: YES! *[we hope]*

EUMOLPOS: We do not ask anyone to journey to Erebus who does not do so of their own free will. Will you make this journey?

AUDIENCE: YES!

HERMES: You have many challenges ahead, beyond what you can foresee. Do you accept them?

AUDIENCE: YES!

HERMES: Excellent! No problem, then.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Lord Hermes. You mentioned some...other assistance.

HERMES: Oh, yes! How could I have forgotten? *[to audience]* Mortals! The Olympians stand ready to aid you in your quest. Each of you, return to the god or goddess of your home city *[NOTE: we need to work out how these are assigned]*, hear what they have to say, and accept what they offer you. *[emphasis]* This is important. You must visit your gods and receive their messages and gifts. If you do not, your journey to the Underworld will be unsuccessful. Go and visit your gods, and then return here at *[time]*, ready to make the journey to rescue the Kore.

2.33 Oracle Visits (God Forms)

LESSERS II

3.1 Fair Warnings

[The Princes are pacing the front of the stage as people enter. They continue pacing until everyone is seated. Hermes and Hekate enter from backstage and stand behind the Princes.]

HERMES: Have you two even left to see the Olympians? I seem to remember you two standing right there when I left here last.

TRIP: *[Bowing in unison with Emo]* Oh yes Lord Hermes.

EMO: Yes we went to see them in their shrines and received messages.

TRIP: Although the messages were not all that clear. I am not sure that everyone understands...

HERMES: Yes yes yes. No. All will be made clear my young princes.

HEKATE: Hermes. They deserve more than that.

HERMES: *[Rolls his eyes]* OK. Did everyone go to the Gods for their messages and their gift? *[Waits for crowd's response.]* Show me your coins. Without them, you will not be permitted into the Underworld.

TRIP: Hold up your coins for Hermes to see. *[watches the crowd as they raise their hands.]*

HEKATE: Now. For those who did not go to see the Gods this afternoon.

HERMES: Who here did not go to see the Gods today? I know that there are at least one or two of you out there. You do not want to get to the gates of the Underworld and be refused entrance.

HEKATE: Do not waste any more of our time. If you did not see the Gods in their shrines today, come up here and get your passage to the Underworld now.

[Hermes moves to the center of the stage while each Prince moves to the opposite side of the stage. Hekate gestures to the center stairs and stands still as people come up the receive their coins.]

HERMES: Stand over here and listen. Today several Olympians took time to give mortals a gift and a message. You did not take the opportunity to hear the knowledge they would impart to you. So I have a message for you instead. And that message is: When the voice of the Divine speaks to you, do what it says! Now I will give you your coins for the ferryman. *[Hermes pulls out his pouch and opens it.]* But first, you must earn it. *[ritual hazing ensues; something reasonably noisy. As Hermes is giving the participants a hard time, Demeter stirs beneath her veil.]*

HIEROPHANT: My lady?

DEMETER: Hierophant. What is happening?

HIEROPHANT: Lady Demeter, you're awake!

HERMES: *[hastily concealing the evidence; gives coins to participants and ushers them back to their seats with shooing motions. Turns to Demeter; with great surprise:]**[princes stare at Hermes in disbelief; Hekate shakes her head.]* Demeter! My lady! Good morning!

HEKATE: *Morning, Hermes? Really?*

DEMETER: *[tiredly]* Hermes. I might have guessed you would be the one making all that noise.

HERMES: *[recovering]* Well, it seems to have worked...my lady Demeter, these mortals have agreed to travel to the Underworld, brave the dangers there, and attempt to rescue the Kore.

DEMETER: Rescue my Kore? Hekate? Is this true?

HERMES: What?

HEKATE: *[warningly]* Hermes... *[to Demeter]* Yes, Demeter. It is true. We will lead these people to the Underworld in an attempt to get your daughter back.

HERMES: Told you.

DEMETER: *[with a hint of her former spirit]* Hermes, you'll forgive me if I don't unquestioningly believe everything you say. But why the Underworld? Why must these people travel there? What's happened?

HERMES: Uh...because that's where she's been? Since Hades...

HEKATE: *[through clenched teeth]* She doesn't remember, Hermes.

DEMETER: *[alarmed]* Remember what? What did Hades do? *[pause]* Hermes, you are the god of communication. Spit it out.

HIEROPHANT: *[gently]* My lady, your daughter was taken. The Dark Lord abducted her to the Underworld.

DEMETER: *[shocked, memory flooding back]* Taken? My Kore...

EUMOLPOS: Lady Demeter, there is more. When you withdrew from the world and came here, your blessings were withdrawn from the land. Crops withered or did not sprout, orchards and vines failed to give fruit, and flowers did not bloom. The world is dying, and your people starve.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Lady, can you restore your blessings to the land?

DEMETER: *[rising from her throne]* Yes. To give you strength on your journey, I lift the blight. *[tries. Nothing happens. Tries again.]*

HIEROPHANT: My lady? What is wrong?

DEMETER: *[increasingly frantic]* I don't know! My hierophant, I cannot lift the blight! Nothing grows! *[starts to fall. Hierophant goes to her side and helps her to sit down again, staying by her side.]*

HEKATE: This is...not good.

HERMES: Oh, you think? *[turns to audience]* Demeter cannot make anything grow without the Kore. Your survival depends upon her rescue. Without Demeter's blessing on the land, you will all starve. I understand it's a most unpleasant way to go. *[Hekate smacks Hermes in the head.]* Ow.

EUMOLPOS: My brother and I are prepared to make this journey, lord Hermes.

TRIPTOLEMOS: And the rest of you? Are you still committed to this task?

AUDIENCE: Yes. *[we hope]*

HEKATE: Mortals, you say that you will go on this journey, but do you understand what that means? You will be traveling to the Land of the Dead. For most mortals, there is no return from that place. You will face many dangers along the way. Charon, for instance...

HERMES: Yes, Charon. I hope that *now* you all have your coins to pay passage--

TRIPTOLEMOS: *[gasps]* Charon! And the keres!

EUMOLPOS: The cares?

TRIPTOLEMOS: The keres, the guardians of the Underworld? Bloodthirsty creatures who'll rip out the throats of anyone who enters without leave? Charon's pets, with their obsidian claws and razor-sharp teeth? And--

HERMES: Prince. Prince Triplolemos!

TRIPTOLEMOS: *[derailed]* What?

HERMES: You're scaring the other mortals. *[gestures at Eumolpos, who is looking green around the gills.]*

TRIPTOLEMOS: Oh. Right. Sorry.

HERMES: Since you know so much, how about telling your people how they'll get past the keres?

TRIPTOLEMOS: Oh, oh yes. The gifts! Did you all receive your gifts from the gods?

AUDIENCE: Yes!

EUMOLPOS: But what do the gifts have to do with this?

HERMES: Everything! You will need all of them to successfully make this journey. Tell them, Triptolemos. Since you have all the answers.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Well...we put them to sleep!

EUMOLPOS: How? Sing them a lullaby?

TRIPTOLEMOS: No! I've heard you sing. Those of you who received gifts from Hestia and Hephaestus, your task is especially important...and especially dangerous. Use Hestia's gift to lull the keres to sleep. Then, use Hephaestus's gift to chain them. They'll be no danger to the rest of us then!

EUMOLPOS: And what about the rest of the gods' gifts?

TRIPTOLEMOS: Oh, we'll burn that bridge when we come to it.

EUMOLPOS: Well, I'm reassured.

HERMES: Excellent! Let's go, then.

HEKATE: Not so fast, Hermes.

HERMES: What?

HEKATE: There is a condition on Kore's return. If she has eaten anything of that place, she is bound there forever.

HERMES: Well...that's good to know.

DEMETER: *[rising from her seat, accompanied by Hierophant]* She would never do such a thing. *[all turn to her]*

HEKATE: She *is* an inquisitive young woman.

HERMES: Hekate. Not helping.

DEMETER: *[clears her throat; H&H fall silent and turn their attention to her. Addressing audience:]* My children, you have offered to place yourselves in harm's way; to follow a path that might well lead to your deaths; for my sake, and for my daughter's. I cannot go with you, but I will give you what protection I can on your journey. To all of you, I offer the last of my sacred kykeon.

[Royal family passes out the kykeon. Hierophant remains by Demeter's side. When all have drunk, the Hierophant stands and addresses the audience:]

HIEROPHANT: Petitioners to the Mysteries of Demeter. There is one more thing. You must swear that should you survive you will never share anything you observe with anyone but your fellow travelers. Your oaths will bind you together as initiates of the Mysteries. Do you all agree? *[wait for response]* Very well, repeat after me. *<Administers oath, piece by piece, projecting absolute seriousness:>* I am a child of earth and starry heaven, and I swear before the Gods and by my honor among mortal kind, that I will never reveal to any the secrets I am about to witness. As long as I remain on this earth I shall protect Demeter's mysteries. If I break this, my solemn oath, may the Fates cut my cord short, the Furies pursue me to utter destruction and may I wander forever on the shores of the Styx. *[starts to return to Demeter's side]*

DEMETER: *[turns attention to Hierophant]* My Hierophant, go with them. Bring my daughter back to me.

HIEROPHANT: My Lady? I would stay here with you. You are still...not yourself.

DEMETER: No. Lead these people. As you pointed out, I cannot go so you will go in my place.

HIEROPHANT: *[obviously torn]* My lady, it will be as you command. I will do my best.

HEKATE: Then it is time. Mortals, gather your gifts of the gods, and your coins.

HERMES: Place the coins between your teeth, thereby ensuring your silence. The dead do not speak, and neither will you--unless I tell you otherwise. Carts await for those of you unable to make the entire journey on foot. Prince Triptolemos will lead you to them now. *[Triptolemos leads them out.]*

HERMES: Now. The rest of you, follow me. *[comes offstage and up the center aisle, accompanied by Hekate. Hierophant follows, leaving Demeter with obvious reluctance. Eumolpos brings up the rear.]*

3.2 Hermes and Hekate Lead On

[HEKATE and HERMES lead the participants away from the theater, in the wrong direction--heading for the main field with the flagpole. After some distance, they begin to argue quietly, HEKATE with much head-shaking, HERMES clearly insisting that he knows what he's doing. They stop and wait for the crowd to catch up, HERMES looking around in confusion.]

HERMES: Hekate, I swear, it was right here! Where did it go?

HEKATE: Well, obviously, it is *not* here. Entrances to the Underworld don't just get up and move on their own. Perhaps you should consult your *map*?

HERMES: *[begins fishing in pockets, etc. Finally pulls out a very worn and obviously tattered map. He holds it up. There is an enormous hole in the middle.]* Oh. That's not good.

HEKATE: No it is not.

3.3 Apollo's Gift Apollo gifts each person a scrap of paper that looks like a piece of a map. *[Repair Hermes' map.]* [1]

HEKATE: *[addresses the crowd.]* Those of you who visited Apollo! Step forward. *[when all have arrived]* What gifts did you receive from him? Bring them out now. *[Participants, hopefully, have their map fragments and proffer them to HEKATE, who assists HERMES in re-assembling the map. When it is complete, Hermes holds it up, grinning, then studies it. After several moments, he turns the map the other way up.]*

HERMES: Ah! I see now! *[pointing back the way they came]* It's that way. *[HEKATE sighs, rolls her eyes, and smacks Hermes on the back of the head.]* Ow!

HEKATE: Can we go?

3.4 Poseidon's Gift Poseidon gives each person a cup of sea water (What about sand?- perhaps a baggie of sand would be easier to carry along.) *[Extinguish a flame barrier.]* [2]

[HERMES and HEKATE lead the crowd back down the road toward the Telesterion. They come to a pair of troughs angled toward each other, blocking the road. Flame burns in the troughs. The HIEROPHANT has come a

little ahead of the crowd, closer to HEKATE and HERMES. He catches up when they stop at the troughs.]

HIEROPHANT: What is this?

HERMES: That is the River Phlegethon, one of the five rivers of the Underworld. We're definitely on the right track now!

EUMOLPOS: But how do we cross it?

HERMES: Excellent question! Perhaps some among you are carrying something that might help?

TRIPTOLEMOS: Legend has it that only the power of Poseidon can prevail against the River of Fire...

HERMES: Exactly! *[Turning to the crowd.]* Those of you who visited Poseidon, come forward! *[participants who visited Poseidon come forward with their vessels of water]*

HEKATE: Use Poseidon's gift to quench the river's flames. *[participants pour their water into the troughs, extinguishing the flames and allowing everyone to proceed.]*

3.5 Ares' and Hera's Gifts Ares tells each person to take war drums with them. He also tells them to be ready to defend themselves and others on the journey. Hera gives each person a glass Protection against Evil Eye token, to protect all of the participants during the journey. *[Gephs; white masks] [3]*

[HEKATE and HERMES lead the crowd around the left turn past the berm, on the road toward the Telesterion. As they walk on, the Gephs emerge from behind Magnolia, running up to the crowd, shouting and jeering, and blocking their path. They try to pull participants out of the crowd, and get their coins.]

HEKATE: *[shouting to be heard over the noise as she and HERMES hold off the Gephs with their wands]* Those of you who visited Ares and Hera! Come forward and defend your companions! *[participants come forward with the drums ARES told them to get, making noise that drowns out the Gephs and helps HEKATE and HERMES drive them away; Hera's visitors hold up their protection tokens, likewise helping to drive away the Gephs]* Hierophant, lead your people!

HIEROPHANT: Yes, Lady Hekate. People of Eleusis, follow me! *[leads the crowd away from the Gephs, walking far out in front--TRIPTOLEMOS and*

EUMOLPOS follow behind, but at some distance, with the crowd following them.]

3.6 Hestia's Gift Hestia gifts each person a wooden match or a stick of incense [*Light incense to put the Ker to sleep.*] [3]

[HIEROPHANT rounds the corner toward the Telesterion entrance. The KERS spring from their hiding places and attack, ripping and shredding at the HIEROPHANT, who falls. The KERS turn toward the crowd, their faces and hands bloody. The HIEROPHANT lies still. EUMOLPOS tries to run to him, but TRIPTOLEMOS holds him back.]

EUMOLPOS: Lord Hermes! Lady Hekate! Help!

HERMES: [*comes running up*] Prince Eumolpos! Be silent!

EUMOLPOS: But--

HEKATE: We are almost to the gates of the Underworld. Now more than ever, you must be silent. There is nothing you can do for him. Your people need you now.

[EUMOLPOS visibly sucks it up. HERMES turns to the crowd.]

HERMES: And that goes for all of you. Do not forget! Soon we will face Charon. A single word spoken, a single sound, could mean all of your lives. Do not speak!

HEKATE: [*clears her throat. HERMES looks at her. She gestures toward the KER, who are watching her warily.*]

HERMES: Oh yes. Those of you who visited Hestia! Come forward! [*as they do so, HEKATE lights their bundles of incense and ushers them towards the KER, instructing them to approach slowly. The KER growl softly, but as they smell the incense, curl up and fall asleep on the ground.*]

3.7 Hephaestus' Gift Hephaestus gifts segments of chain and carabiners; [*participants make a chain to leash the Ker.*] [4]

HERMES: [*obviously trying to speak quietly*] Those of you who visited Hephaestus, come forward! [*participants bring their lengths of chain and carabiners. Hermes helps them to chain the KER, perhaps to a length of chain or post already in place.*] Now, let us go. Quickly. And quietly.

[As the crowd files past, EUMOLPOS gingerly removes the HIEROPHANT's spear from his grasp and takes it with him.]

3.9 Charon's Headache After everyone arrives at the gate to the underworld, Hermes pays off Charon to look the other way, but one person violates the agreement, forcing Hermes to pay additional coins for safe passage.

HERMES: Now remember everyone, absolute silence. Under no circumstances are you to speak. I will tell you when and if it is safe to speak.

[Hermes pounds on the door and waits then pounds again. The door opens slowly and deliberately and two keres fill the doorway. Hermes steps back out of arms length]

HERMES: Charon! Charon call off your keres. It's me Hermes.

[Charon steps through the door between the keres and the keres move silently back into the darkness]

CHARON: Why do you bother me Psychopomp? You know that Lady Hekate and yourself may come and go as you please.

HERMES: I bring another collection of souls for your domain. And I wouldn't want you to think that I was trying to cheat you out of any fares Charon.

CHARON: I see. How considerate of you. *[Charon looks over the crowd and then over at Hermes.]* Psychopomp, these are not souls, but living mortals.

HERMES: No Charon. I assure you, they're quite dead. Why else would I bring them here.

CHARON: I am sure I do not know. But I seem to remember that you are also the Trickster.

HERMES: A minor delegation that I assure you I rarely . . .

CHARON: Yes, I know of your antics and what you are capable of. Your tricks are not welcome here. So take these living mortals back to where they belong before I release the keres and collect their coins without your help.

[Keres move back to the door and stand silent but intent on the crowd.]

HERMES: Come now, Charon, I'm sure we can reach some sort of agreement. They all have coins. *[pulls a mortal out of the crowd and shows the coin in his/her mouth]* See? Money talks. And they don't.

CHARON: Yes. I see coins. And I see souls still inhabiting living flesh. I am not interested in mortal *bodies*, Psychopomp. It would not be worth my time and effort to take these in.

HERMES: What *would* make it worth your time and effort, Charon? Perhaps...double the usual fare? [*reaches behind him and pulls out an obviously very full bag that clinks.*]

CHARON: That is a very generous offer, Psychopomp. What are you up to?

Hekate: We are in a bit of a hurry, Charon. Take your fee and let us be on our way.

CHARON: How do I know that that bag contains enough to pay these...souls' passage twice over? It *is* the Psychopomp's bag.

Hekate: [*seizes bag from Hermes and shoves it into Charon's hands*] Oh, for the love of swans and bulls, Charon, take the money and let us be on our way!

CHARON: Oh, very well. [*to crowd, with obvious sarcasm:*] Souls, you are about to enter the Underworld. Put your coins into the baskets as you pass. Do not stop, and do not...speak.

[*As the crowd enters, opens the bag and rifles through it, obviously counting the contents. Eumolpos enters last, staging the spear outside for the reunion scene.*]

3.10 Tested By Nyx [voice]

[*Kore is wrapped in the red cloak on the lower stage. When the last of the people arrive the lights go down and stay down. We hear Kore die as the heartbeat slows and stops. We then **hear** Kore wake up in darkness and begin to panic.*]

NYX: So what / would you say / if I told you / you were dead?

KORE: No. No, that can't be! You're lying! I'm speaking to you right now, how can I be dead?

NYX: Then stand and face me, Kore.

[*dramatic pause*]

KORE: I can't. [*begins to panic*] I can't move! Mother, help me!

NYX: *[cutting across Kore's panic]* You still have your voice, and this is what you do with it? Call to your mother? She can't hear you. She can't help you.

KORE: But--

NYX: You wanted to be your own person. A goddess in your own right. And the first time you get into trouble, you call for your mother.

KORE: I'm in the Underworld and I'm afraid. Why shouldn't I call for my mother?

NYX: Your mother has fought your battles for you, whether you know it or not. Your mother has always protected you and looked after you. What are you without her?

KORE: *[wailing]* I don't know!

NYX: Then what am I doing here? I will leave you here, then. You will join the rest of the Dead, and wander this place without purpose.

KORE: For how long?

NYX: *[silence]*

KORE: Nyx? For how long?

NYX: *[silence]*

KORE: Answer me!

NYX: *[silence]*

KORE: Nyx? Are you there?

NYX: *[sarcastically]* Is it still dark? *[pause]* Yes, Kore, I am still here. And so are you.

KORE: Are you here to help me? Or to mock me?

NYX: I can find much better sources of amusement than you, Kore.

KORE: Then *leave me alone!* I know in my heart I am not dead! I can work this out for myself!

NYX: As you will it, Kore. *[exits]*

[pause]

KORE: As I will it. All right. I'll show her. I'm *not* dead. But everything is different. This place...I'm not....well. I asked for change, and this is it.

3.11 Tested By Hekate [body/identity]

[Lights come up to half. Hekate is standing on the upper platform, looking down at Kore. Hades is standing on the stair landing just outside the maze entrance, cloaked and hooded so you can't tell who he is. Nyx is nowhere to be seen. Kore is lying on the bier, still wrapped in red.]

HEKATE: Yes you did, Kore. What will you do now?

KORE: *[relieved]* Hekate! You're here! Help me, please!

HEKATE: I'm not your mother. Didn't I hear you say that you can work this out for yourself?

KORE: ...yes.

HEKATE: All right, then. Stand up.

KORE: *[tries]* I can't!

HEKATE: You're not trying hard enough. If you really want to be free, you must make it happen.

KORE: *[struggles]* I'm not strong enough.

HEKATE: Are you sure? I thought you had more strength of will than this.

KORE: *[continues to struggle, audibly breathing hard, like she's fighting. Works her hands to the top of the cloak, and pulls herself free with a scream. She lies still, not moving. She is dressed as Persephone.]*

HEKATE: Now. Stand and face me.

KORE: *[Slowly rises to her feet, wobbling at first, then becoming steadier, staring at Hekate. Quietly, stunned:]* I did it.

HEKATE: You have changed.

KORE: *[looks down at herself in amazement.]* Oh. Oh my...what is this? This is beautiful. This is what a queen might wear...

HEKATE: Yes. She just might.

KORE: *[stares at Hekate in shock.]* What?

HEKATE: And what would your king wear? *[slowly turns her head to look down at Hades. Kore's gaze follows Hekate's]*

3.12 Tested By Hades [will]

[Hades is revealed to be standing on the stairs watching and listening.]

HADES: *[drops the cloak, leaving it on the stair landing.]* Indeed, Hekate. What would a king wear?

KORE: *[shocked]* You?! *[whispers:]* Hekate?

HEKATE: *[preoccupied, like she's already thinking about her next appointment]* You did ask for change, Kore. Here he is. *[steps back to the wall and observes what follows]*

HADES: *[walking down the stairs towards Kore]* So, little flower. Why are you in my realm?

KORE: You should know. You brought me here.

HADES: Are you sure?

KORE: I think my memory is pretty clear. You brought me here, wrapped me up in that *[gestures at cloak]* and left me here to die.

HADES: Oh? *[maybe a little angrily]* You think I brought you here to die? *[comes up onto stage and picks up cloak]*

KORE: *[backing away]* What are you doing with that?

HADES: This? It's just a cloak. *[puts it on with a flourish, causing Kore to back away again. they begin circling]*

KORE: You had no right.

HADES: I did what I did. Now. What will you do?

KORE: This is just like being with my mother. She never told me anything either.

HADES: Don't you remember asking for change?

KORE: I didn't mean...this.

HADES: What exactly did you mean? You were not very specific with your wish. And really, most people don't get to choose. Neither when, nor how, nor where, nor by whom...change just happens. If you're lucky, you get to

live. If you're really lucky, you get to choose what you will do when it comes.

KORE: I don't think even Hermes has that much luck.

HADES: Then you are beginning to understand.

KORE: Oh, I understand. I understand that you brought me here against my will.

HADES: Oh, no. It is *your* will that brought you here...out from under your mother's wing.

KORE: *What?*

HADES: Your mother has dominion over all the living Earth. Where else could you become yourself, but in a place where she does not rule?

KORE: No. I would *never* choose your realm.

HADES: [*angry*] Then *go*.

3.14 Persephone Tries to Leave

KORE: [*storms past Hades and to the double doors. She puts her hand on them to push them open.*]

HADES: [*walks after her, as though following her, but then walks past her and starts up the stairs. Dismissively:*] Run back to your mother, like the child you are.

KORE: [*turns from the doors to face him.*] How dare you?

HADES: I only speak the truth.

KORE: I am *not* running back to my mother. I am leaving this place! You are a fool to think that I would ever stay here!

HADES: Yes. I was a fool to think that you were ready for marriage.

KORE: [*stunned*] Marriage?

HADES: Yes, Kore. Marriage. But I was wrong. I should have chosen someone already a goddess in her own right.

KORE: I *am* a goddess in my own right! I am! [*turns again to the doors and tries to open them. They shake, but do not open. Turns to Hades, voice colder and firmer but still angry:*] Hades, let me out.

HADES: That's not my decision. You're dead, remember? The dead don't leave this place.

KORE: I am not dead. I speak, I think, I move. The dead don't do those things.

HADES: But you are still here.

KORE: Could I be here...and not be dead?

HADES: No. That's not possible.

KORE: [*moves away from the doors*] Oh, I think it is. I *did* ask for change. And maybe your involvement means you have to change, too.

HADES: [*condescending*] Oh, no, little flower. I have ruled this realm from the beginning of time, and I am the Unchanging One. [*with a hint of regret*] A simple child can't change that.

3.16 Tables Turned

KORE: [*starts up the stairs; angry, but controlled*] Then I pity you. To live ever unchanging...I know how that feels. But you are alone. Growing stagnant, by your own choice.

HADES: This is *my* realm. I *have* ruled this realm from the beginning of time, and I *am* the Unchanging One.

KORE: You said that already. Who are you trying to persuade? Me? Or yourself?

HADES: You have no idea what you are saying. I rule this place by my choice. You are here at my whim.

KORE: I thought you said that I willed this.

HADES: Yes. But this is my realm, and my rules. And whether you believe you are dead or not, you cannot leave. Your being here is the consequence of your choice.

KORE: You are saying that I deserved this.

HADES: Do you believe that everyone gets what they deserve?

KORE: I...I would like to think so.

HADES: Then you are an ignorant child.

KORE: Then why did you choose me, if that is what you think I am?

HADES: I thought you would be different.

KORE: Well, like you said, you were wrong.

HADES: Why, you spiteful little...

KORE: Little what? Flower? Girl? Child? You would make me smaller than I am. Would you have it said that you were bested by a *flower*?

HADES: You cannot best me. I plucked you from the plains of Nysa. I claimed you as my own.

KORE: So you do not want a wife. You want a servant. A slave. A plaything.

HADES: That's not what I said!

KORE: Yes, you did.

HADES: Listen to me. This is my world. I make the rules here, and you will obey them.

KORE: Make me.

HADES: *[raises a hand, to strike her.]*

HEKATE: *[steps between them]* Enough. Hades, lower your hand. And you, stay your tongue. I will not allow you to harm each other.

KORE: I think he's done me enough harm already.

HEKATE: *[holds up a hand, telling Kore again to be quiet]* Both of you will listen to me. Kore chose to change, and Hades chose to be the agent of that change. Both of you went into this blind. But you are too caught up in your arguing to see the potential that lies before you. Open your eyes and see each other. You are here for a common purpose.

[dramatic pause]

KORE: All right. I see what you were trying to do. But you cannot change me. I must do it myself.

HADES: That's what I've been telling you. *[looks at Hekate in exasperation]*

HEKATE: *[warningly]* Hades...

HADES: I see a young woman looking desperately for herself.

KORE: And I see a man so used to the way things are that he cannot imagine how they *might* be.

HEKATE: And...?

HADES: And she is so full of herself that she cannot see how difficult that is.

KORE: I know exactly how difficult it is.

HEKATE: [*in a "that does it" tone*] Give me your hands.

3.18 Binding by Hekate

[Kore and Hades both hesitate, looking at Hekate, then at each other. Slowly, they put out their hands. Hekate takes two ropes from her belt and binds their hands together.]

HEKATE: Now talk. Tell each other what you want, what you dream of. And *listen*.

KORE: I dreamed of change, and I ended up here. I can accept that.

HADES: I am glad to hear that. I wanted to help you.

KORE: You wanted a plaything. A distraction from your boredom.

HADES: So what if I did?

KORE: Did it occur to you that I might want more than that?

HADES: [*pause*] Eventually.

KORE: So what do you want now?

HADES: I don't know anymore.

3.19 Nyx Reveals Their Dreams

[Nyx appears from the maze and the lights go down. She approaches them and takes them by their bound hands.]

NYX: Some truths are easier spoken in the dark. Let me help you.

[the lights go out]

NYX: I know of your dreams and wishes, and now I will reveal them to each of you.

KORE: You did this...out of love? Because you wanted love?

HADES: Doesn't everyone? *[pause. When Kore says nothing:]* Do you find it humorous that the Lord of the Dead might desire love?

KORE: No. Not humorous. I just never thought...never considered...

3.20 Equals

HADES: Neither did I. Until now.

[Silence. lights begin to come back up, slowly brightening during the next few lines. Nyx is nowhere to be seen. Hekate is holding a crown in her hands.]

KORE: *[leans closer, studying him]* I see not who you were, but who you may be. *[reaches with her free hand and touches his face]*

HEKATE: What do you see?

KORE: I see a man who can embrace love and compassion. I see a king no longer uncaring. I see what was once inert and unchanging transformed into something that nurtures new life. *This* is what I see. Will you be him--for me?

HADES: *[stunned]* I see a queen grown into the fullness of her power. I see an equal, not a servant or a child. I see a woman who knows the hearts of all souls. I see a realm transformed by her touch into a place of renewal. I see my future. Will you be her--for me?

KORE: I will.

HEKATE: Then are you still the Kore?

PERSEPHONE: No. I am no longer the Kore. I name myself Persephone, and I would be your queen.

HADES: And I would be your king.

HEKATE: Persephone, by choosing your own name, you claim sovereignty of yourself. *[places crown on Persephone's head]*

3.21 Marriage

HEKATE: To claim sovereignty over Erebus, Persephone, there is one more thing you must do.

HADES: *[a pomegranate appearing in his hands]* Yes.

HEKATE: Lady Persephone, Hades holds the fruit of the Underworld. The pomegranate symbolizes transition, transformation, and the change wrought by initiatory passage. You have been a child, and as a child were brought to face the challenges of the unknown. In facing them you have grown, and proven yourself worthy of being called Queen.

HADES: Lady Persephone, the pomegranate has another meaning as well. As the fruit of transformation, it is also a token of marriage. Eat of this with me...

TRIPTOLEMOS and **EUMOLPOS:** *[coming forward from the crowd as Hermes starts bounding up the stairs. Hekate meets Hermes at the top of the stairs and stops him by holding up one hand and shaking her head.]* No!!

HADES: Who dares-- *[suddenly notices all of the people]* Living mortals? In my realm? Hermes! What trickery is this?

HEKATE: There is no trick here, Hades. These mortals have here to save themselves...and the rest of the living world.

HADES: Do not play at words with me, Hekate. What is going on here?

HERMES: She's right. These are Prince Triptolemos and Prince Eumolpos of Eleusis. They have come here, along with these mortals, to bring Demeter's daughter back home. With her absence, the world starves.

HADES: And this is my problem...why?

PERSEPHONE: *[speaking almost on top of Hades's line]* The world starves? And yet these mortals warn me against the food of this place. Why is that, Hades? *[Hades shakes his head and doesn't answer.]*

TRIPTOLEMOS: My lady...Persephone. *[deep breath]* There is a condition placed on your ever returning to the living world.

EUMOLPOS: It is said that if you eat anything of Erebus, you are bound here forever.

PERSEPHONE: *[to Hades]* Is this true?

HADES: *[glaring at the brothers]* Yes.

HERMES: *[talking past Hekate]* Lady Persephone, there is more.

PERSEPHONE: What more?

TRIPTOLEMOS: When you were--were [*glances warily at Hades*] Well, when you vanished--

EUMOLPOS: --your mother lost herself in her grief and withdrew her blessings from the land. The plow breaks the earth, the seeds are planted, but nothing grows. The world starves.

PERSEPHONE: The world starves? [*shocked realization*] How long have I been here?

HERMES: [*gently*] Time passes differently here, my lady. Months have passed in the living world.

PERSEPHONE: [*almost whispering*] Months...I must return!

HERMES: Yes, my lady. I have come, with these mortals, to bring you home.

HADES: This is her home now, Psychopomp.

HERMES: Then it's going to get very crowded down here, very soon. [*the princes give each other defeated looks*] Oh, look at it this way, princelings: you've already paid!

PERSEPHONE: I cannot let the world starve. [*to Hades*] I can't.

HADES: Persephone, it is the nature of all living things to die, and for their souls to come here, and here remain for all eternity.

PERSEPHONE: That may be so, Hades. But I would hardly call this natural. I have always considered it the role of the gods to protect the mortals.

HADES: Protection? That is not our purpose. We keep the natural order of things.

PERSEPHONE: And that is why I must return, Hades. This is NOT natural.

HADES: Natural or not...you cannot leave me.

PERSEPHONE: And I would not. But I must.

HADES: But not forever. Yes, the pomegranate would bind you to me. But a binding of love. It is of my realm and would link you to Erebus, to me.

PERSEPHONE: [*gives Hades a considering look, then turns to the princes*] Thank you, princes, Lord Hermes, for telling me. But ultimately, this choice is mine to make. I cannot allow the world to starve, nor my mother to

disrupt the natural order of things. *[turns back to Hades]* Neither would I leave you forever. Hades, the pomegranate. *[takes the pomegranate and places it in their bound hands. With his free hand, Hades cuts it open. They each take out one seed, and each feeds the seed to the other. They kiss with tentative apprehension.]*

HADES: My wife.

PERSEPHONE: My husband.

[They each take out the second seed, and each feeds the seed to the other. They kiss with enthusiasm.]

PERSEPHONE: My king.

HADES: My queen.

[They each take out the third seed, and each feeds the seed to the other. They kiss with more fervor.]

HADES: My love...

PERSEPHONE: My love.

HADES: And everything changes. *[They kiss again with long lingering passion. Hermes makes a show of being patient, but soon starts tapping his foot, pretending to look at his watch, etc. Finally, Hekate rolls her eyes and taps Hades on the shoulder.]*

HERMES: Um. Mortals. Dying. Still.

PERSEPHONE: *[with some reluctance]* Yes. I must go. But I am now of two realms: the realm of the dead, and the realm of the living, and I may pass freely between them. This I claim as the Goddess of Transformation, and as the Iron Queen of the Underworld. *[holds up the pomegranate]* This is the fruit not only of the dead, but of all initiatory passages. As witnesses to my transformation, you have yourselves been transformed. Like me, you have gone to the Underworld--and like me, you will make the return journey to the land of the living. Triptolemos, lead your people.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Yes, my lady. *[moves through the crowd to the doors, which are thrown open. With Eumolpos, leads the people outside. Persephone waits with Hades until all have left. They ceremonially unbind their hands. Hades keeps one cord, and ties the other around Persephone's waist as a belt. Then Hermes precedes her down the stairs, with Hekate following.]*

3.22 Return to Earth

[The Gods and Goddesses are waiting. The crowd mills around waiting for Persephone. Demeter is agitated but trying to keep it together. Also present are Rhea and all of the Olympians except Artemis, Athena, Ares, and Pan. Artemis and Athena are among the crowd, cloaked. Ares will appear on the berm behind the crowd but is not currently visible. Pan is in the foliage, doing what Pan does.]

3.23 Death of the Wanderer

[After the crowd have emerged from the Telesterion, but before Persephone appears, the Wanderer appears from around the far corner of the building, near the doors where people entered. His entourage follow him as he crosses the upper level outside the Telesterion, comes down the stairs, passes in front of the Telesterion exit, and disappears around the corner. All of them are laughing and smiling, and appear quite intoxicated. Hera watches his passage with evident anger.]

HERA: Ares! Where are you? *[Ares appears on the berm behind the crowd. Hera points in the direction the Wanderer disappeared.]* Go! Lead the titans to him! *[Ares nods, slides down the berm, and goes in pursuit. Pan pops up from the shrubbery, looks around, and hurries after Ares.]*

3.24 Happy Reunion

[Hermes leads Persephone from the Telesterion, with Hekate following behind. They ascend the stairs where Demeter and the others are waiting.]

RHEA: Demeter, look!

DEMETER: *[rushing toward her daughter]* Kore! Oh, Kore! I thought I'd never see you again!

PERSEPHONE: *[embracing her mother]* Oh, mother! I thought that I would never see you or the light again. But mother, you blighted the earth. Why would you do that?

DEMETER: Well...you were gone, Kore. I couldn't find you. And when Zeus told me what he had allowed to happen, I could not stand it to think of you in Erebus. I could not bear to lose you and, I lost myself in my grief. I did not intend to blight the earth, but I was not myself.

PERSEPHONE: Mother, Zeus acted rashly. But I did ask him to help me.

DEMETER: Your father should have known better! Kore, what were you thinking? Asking Zeus for anything is asking for trouble...and I should know. But you're back now, whatever actions I had to take to make it happen...

PERSEPHONE: But you risked the lives of your people. You withdrew your blessings from the earth! How could you bear your people's suffering?

DEMETER: *[slowly, admitting with difficulty]* I had withdrawn so far into myself...that I could not hear them. But they did reach me, and when I did hear them, I tried to restore the earth's bounty. And...I couldn't. I *could not*, Kore. Not without you.

PERSEPHONE: *[thoughtfully, understanding the implications]* I see. But as you say, I am here now. Let us work together, and end this blight. *[they join hands to do so. When it is done:]* Mother, there is more that I must tell you.

DEMETER: Yes, Kore?

PERSEPHONE: *[deep breath]* Well, mother...Demeter. *[becoming more formal; stepping back a little]* I married him.

DEMETER: *[significant pause as this sinks in]* What? Kore--

PERSEPHONE: Persephone. That is my name now.

DEMETER: *[notices the cord tied around her daughter's waist; picks up the ends as she realizes what this means]* Oh, my daughter. What has happened to you? What have you done?

PERSEPHONE: I have grown up.

DEMETER: No--you can't--I'm not ready for you to be--

PERSEPHONE: An adult? It's not your choice. And it wasn't mine, either. But it happened.

DEMETER: Kore, what are you saying? Did he hurt you?

PERSEPHONE: *[extended pause as Persephone meets Demeter's gaze]* It wasn't easy. But he helped me become who I am.

DEMETER: And who are you now?

PERSEPHONE: I am Persephone. Goddess of Transformation and Queen of Erebus. I am of two realms now.

DEMETER: But you are still my daughter.

PERSEPHONE: Yes...and no. I am a goddess in my own right. Just as you are.

DEMETER: But you have returned to me!

PERSEPHONE: For now. Yes, I am still your daughter. But I am also the wife of Hades. And I have found myself along the way.

DEMETER: No. No! I will not permit this.

PERSEPHONE: We shared the pomegranate, mother. It is done. And I will return to him. My husband.

DEMETER: You ate of the fruit of the dead? Don't you know what this means?

PERSEPHONE: Of course I know what it means. I did it deliberately, mother, with the full understanding of what I was doing.

DEMETER: But when you are gone, the earth withers and starves! I cannot be what I am without you!

PERSEPHONE: Then I will not be gone from you forever. As I am bound to the world below, to rule as its queen by my lord's side, so I am bound to the world above, where my return brings forth the earth's abundance.

DEMETER: If things cannot be as they were...then I suppose I must accept things as they are. Everything is changed. My daughter... *[reaches to touch Persephone but stops short]*

HEKATE: This does change everything. Now the wheel turns year upon year; a cycle of abundance and growth balancing barrenness and death. There is a great lesson here. But who will teach the mortals to survive in this changed world?

DEMETER: *[still not happy, but she has a job to do]* Prince Triptolemos.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Yes, Lady Demeter.

DEMETER: To you I give knowledge: the knowledge to store and preserve the harvest of field and vine, to keep your people alive while the earth lies fallow. I title you Dadachous, the Teacher. As the Dadachous, you will travel the earth, teaching this knowledge to people everywhere, for they are all my children.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Lady Demeter, I will do my best.

DEMETER: Prince Eumolpos. You have dedicated a temple in Eleusis to me. Build this temple into a great complex, and there celebrate my rites yearly, that neither gods nor mortals forget my Mysteries.

EUMOLPOS: Yes, my lady.

DEMETER: [*sadly*] My Hierophant has passed into Erebus. You will take his place, as High Priest of my Mysteries. And from you shall arise a long line of Hierophants, of the family of Eumolpidae. [*gives Eumolpos the spear*]

EUMOLPOS: Lady Demeter, you give me great honor.

PERSEPHONE: And to you, Mother, and to all of you I give my word: I will return each year, and with my return the earth will give forth new life. Green shoots will rise from the soil and the fields will give forth flowers. And before I go, you will harvest my mother's bounty to sustain you during my absence. [*looks to Demeter. They clasp hands, then Persephone looks around at the gathered gods.*] Mother? Where are Artemis and Athena?

DEMETER: [*looks into the crowd*] They are here. Artemis, Athena, come here, please.

PERSEPHONE: [*as Artemis and Athena begin to work their way out of the crowd, and ascend the stairs*] Why are they not up here, with the rest of the gods?

DEMETER: I blamed them for your disappearance. They bore the full brunt of my anger, and suffered for it.

ATHENA: I could not stop him. It was so dark, and I could find no target for my spear.

ARTEMIS: [*sadly*] I could not protect you, Kore. Not from this. You passed beyond the borders of my realm, and I could not follow you.

PERSEPHONE: The path I traveled is one that must be walked alone. There was nothing either of you could have done.

DEMETER: And I see that, now. Artemis, Athena, you are not to blame. I am sorry for what I did to you. Will you forgive me?

ATHENA: Yes. I forgive you, Demeter. [*when Artemis says nothing, nudges her pointedly*]

ARTEMIS: [*reluctantly*] I forgive you. [*Persephone gives her a significant look, and finally Artemis smiles*]

EUMOLPOS: Citizens of Athens and Eleusis! Initiates of the Lesser Mysteries of Demeter! To celebrate our success and the end of the famine, there will be a great feast in the dining hall at *[time and place]*. Later, all are invited to the wedding reception in the theater at *[time]*. For those of you for whom this is at least your second year, and wear the red ribbon, will journey to the Telesterion to experience the Greater Mysteries of Demeter. Those who are Mystai and wear the gold ribbon, token of your first year as initiates, will stay in the theater, dancing, drumming, chanting, and holding the energy. Please do not forget the ribbons you received earlier today, for without a red ribbon, you will not be admitted to the Greater Mysteries.

TRIPTOLEMOS: Initiates! This concludes the Lesser Mysteries of Demeter. *[leads a cheer. Cast disperses.]*

Shrine Scenes God forms and their shrines

4.1 Wedding Reception

[The scene begins with the Olympians, minus Pan and Ares, enjoying wine and poking fun at each other. Demeter is present, but very evidently not pleased and going through the motions. Hera, meanwhile, is overjoyed that Kore is no longer a threat to her ambition, and is playing Hostess the Mostest. The fun becomes more pointed and tempers flare before Zeus speaks up and quells the violence.]

ZEUS: ENOUGH. Every one. *[With forced civility in the beginning]* I am very pleased to formally announce the marriage of my daughter, Ko-, Persephone, to the Lord of Erebos, Hades.

APHRODITE: And may they rule their realm with love and trust.

PERSEPHONE: Thank you Aphrodite, I know we will.

HESTIA: Persephone, I have prepared a special treat for you and your husband, in celebration of your marriage. *[Gestures to cake that is brought out by Baubo]*

PERSEPHONE: Thank you. But I want to share it with everyone, including the mortals. After all, I think they earned it.

APOLLO: Hades, I would like to take a moment to tell you an amusing story about your new bride.

HEPHAESTUS: *[interrupting]* I took the liberty of crafting two rings to symbolize your union. *[presents rings to Persephone and Hades]*

PERSEPHONE: Oh Hephaestus. They are gorgeous.

HADES: Hephaestus, the gems are flawless, why, they rival my own. Hephaestus. Where may I ask did you find such fine stones? *[looks knowingly at Hephaestus]*

HEPHAESTUS: *[Looking indignant]* Hades. I will have you know I bought them from Hermes. And I paid him well for them.

HERMES: *[looks away and takes an obvious step away from Hades]*

APOLLO: As I was saying.

POSEIDON: My dear brother, I had no idea you had any desire to marry or that you had a sense of adventure.

HADES: Neither did I.

HEKATE: Well I did. *[sips her wine with a smile]*

HERA: Hades, Persephone, If I may? Tonight I offer you a toast and a blessing to honor your marriage. *[to be written by Hera's priestess]*

4.2 Wedding Drama

[Pan enters with the slam of the back door. He has Ares in a headlock. Both are disheveled and bleeding from various wounds; Ares has a piece of leopard print stuck to him. Ares pushes Pan away from him. Pan turns and Ares punches him, sending Pan flying towards the stage. Ares turns to run back out the double doors, when Pan pounces on him from behind and spins him around and back into a head lock. Pan punches Ares as he drags him up the aisle. Pan drops Ares to the floor.]

PAN: My Lord Zeus. I bring you what is left of your son. *[He pulls out a bloodied and torn jacket and holds it in front of Hera]* Hera you have accused me of many things in my life, and in doing so, you have proven to everyone that you do not know me. But I know what you are. *[He throws the jacket on the stage.]* And now all of these people know what you are as well. *[Pan draws a primitive knife and advances on Hera.]*

ZEUS: *Pan! No.*

[Pan stands his ground for a moment, he turns to the audience and howls. He then runs out of the theater.]

[In the confusion, Hera exits to the backstage.]

[Ares stays on the floor and moans in pain but does not get up.]

[Charon enters from the back of the theater]

CHARON: My Lord and Lady, you both must come with me.

PERSEPHONE: Charon? You left the gate, unattended?

CHARON: The keres guard the gate my Lady. But we must go...now!

HADES: Charon, what is the meaning of this?

CHARON: The rivers are shifting my Lord. They are spilling over their banks and creating new routes.

HADES: Yes. That explains what I was feeling. Persephone we must go.

Persephone: Yes I feel as though, I feel like...

HADES: You feel like your insides are shifting. Uncomfortable and disturbing. It is your new connection to our realm.

PERSEPHONE: It is drawing me back to Erebos.

CHARON: Then we must go.

[All three exits down the main aisle and out the double doors]

4.3 Zeus' Lament and Challenge

[The remaining Olympians begin to talk and ask questions to each other.]

Hermes: Well it appears Hades is rubbing off on Persephone.

ZEUS: Hermes for once. shut up. *[sound effect: loud rumble, as of an earthquake. Olympians are all struck silent for the moment.]*

HEKATE: Much was changed when Kore went to Erebos, and emerged as Persephone. *[looks at Zeus]* Now it changes again, with *his* death.

ZEUS: He had only just returned from his war in the east. Returned alive. And now this...this death should never have happened.

HEKATE: *Should* mends nothing. He is dead, and world and underworld alike are falling into chaos. *[weird lighting effect here; another rumble]* Look to the living, lord Zeus. It is the task of your brother and your daughter to see to the dead.

ZEUS: *[meeting her gaze; then, looks at the other gods]* Yes. It reminds me of the last time the Titans were free. It is more important than ever that you all hold fast. The world shakes. Who will hold it together, if not the gods? Go now, and see to the safety of your realms.

[with various permutations of "Yes, lord Zeus" and "Yes, father," the gods exit through various doors. All look purposeful and somewhat grim. Demeter and Aphrodite leave together down the main aisle, ahead of everyone else. Only Zeus, Hermes, Hekate, Baubo, and Ares remain behind. Zeus stands in the center of the stage, flanked by Hermes and Hekate as the other gods exit. Once the other gods have gone, Zeus comes down the stairs to Ares' side, cradling his head.]

ZEUS: I have lost one son tonight. I will not lose another.

HERMES: *[coming forward to address the crowd]* Citizens! Tonight, a most unexpected event has taken place. A god is dead, and his death shakes the world to its foundations. Those of you who wear the red ribbon, for whom it is at least your second year attending the Mysteries, must brave the underworld once again. Will you do this?

AUDIENCE: Yes!

HEKATE: We do not know what we will find there. This is a new Mystery opening before us. The paths we travel now are unknown.

HERMES: Remember your oath. Those of you coming with us on this journey, be silent, as we must once again pass into the realms of the dead.

HEKATE: And ever after, keep silent about what you experience this night.

HERMES: Those of you who are Mystai, for whom this is your first year experiencing the Mysteries, remain here.

HEKATE: You too have a task. Dance, drum, sing, chant, and hold the energy for those undertaking their second journey to Erebus. Make a great and joyful noise to guide these initiates back from the Underworld!

BAUBO: Lady Hekate, I would be honored to stay...behind *[makes a suggestive gesture]* and show them what to do.

HERMES: I'm sure you would. *[gives Baubo an appreciative look, then clears throat, turns attention to crowd]* Carts await for those who cannot make the entire journey on foot. The Dadachous will lead you to them now. *[Trip leads out those taking the vans.]*

HEKATE: The rest of you, follow us now into the Greater Mysteries.

[Exits up center aisle with Hermes. Hierophant/Eumolpos follows, then the rest of the Eoptai. As the people exit, more rumbles and weird lighting. When they have gone, Baubo goes to Zeus and speaks to him quietly, then helps him lift Ares to his feet. Zeus and Ares exit out side door as Baubo gets the party started.]

4.4 Journey to the Underworld Again

[Hekate and Hermes take the most direct route to the underworld. The trip is done in silence but the crowd can hear sobbing and crying in the background along the way. As the crowd approaches the Telesterion, Pan is seen above them on the berm, howling in grief]

4.5 Gambling at the Gates

[CHARON is pacing in front of the open gates to the Underworld. HERMES and Hekate lead the crowd to the gates. The KERS are just inside the gates, heard but not seen. CHARON approaches HERMES when all are present.]

HERMES: Greetings, Charon! I bring yet another--

CHARON: *[Holding out a hand, palm up]* Coins, Psychopomp.

HERMES: Charon, don't you remember? These souls have already paid! In any case, they have no more coins to give you. Besides, I have heard that things are changing in the Underworld.

CHARON: Somethings do not change. One coin, one passage, Psychopomp. If they cannot pay, then you will have to cover their fares. *All* of them.

HERMES: *[Jingles the money pouch on his belt. It is rather flat and clearly does not contain enough coins for everyone. He holds the pouch up.]* Well, Charon, I'm finding myself a bit light at the moment--

CHARON: *[Grabs the pouch and shakes it.]* Indeed. *[Tosses the pouch to the kers.]* You may take *[walks through the crowd and randomly pulls six to the front of the crowd.]*...six.

HERMES: But what about the rest?

CHARON: What about them? No coin, no passage.

HERMES: But I can't just leave them here.

CHARON: No. *[Kers growl and slaver but are not seen.]*

HERMES: *[thinking fast]* Tell you what, Charon. You look like a gambler to me.

CHARON: Really?

HERMES: *[brightly, taking out pair of dice]* Sure! How about a game? If I win, everyone here may pass.

CHARON: And if I win, *I* take all of their souls...and your wings.

HERMES: That's...quite a wager, Charon.

CHARON: Are you saying their souls are worth less?

HERMES: *[looks around at the crowd, evaluating. Eumolpos glares at Hermes. Hekate shrugs and rolls her eyes.]* Agreed. *[offers dice to Charon with a grin. Charon throws dice, followed by Hermes, who wins. Hermes looks relieved]* Well! Thank you, Charon. I appreciate a good loser. *[starts to turn toward the crowd to lead the people in]*

CHARON: You know the rules, Psychopomp. Two out of three.

HERMES: *[freezes, turns, looks at Charon. With evident reluctance]* ...yes, of course, Charon. Two out of three. *[throws dice, followed by Charon, who wins]*

CHARON: *[straightens and smiles at the crowd. Hermes makes a fist and the crowd can see him mouthing "Shit, shit, shit!"]* I too appreciate a good loser, Psychopomp. *[turns back to Hermes and throws the dice. Smiles again--clearly, he has rolled high--and hands the dice to Hermes.]* I will enjoy your wings, Hermes. They will look good on the prow of my boat.

HEKATE: *[has been increasingly agitated throughout]* Counting your winnings already, Charon?

HERMES: *[Charon turns and looks at Hekate. Hermes takes advantage of the momentary distraction, tosses the dice in his hand over his shoulder, and reaches into a pocket or pouch, producing a new set of dice. He holds them up with a grin, blows on them, then tosses them as Charon turns back. Suddenly serious:]* I win, ferryman.

HEKATE: *[claps hands, to crowd]* Let's go, everyone. *[glances at Charon]* NOW.

CHARON: *[picks up dice, studies them, possibly sniffs them as people begin to file in through the gates, led by Eumolpos. Glares at Hermes:]* We will discuss this, Hermes.

HERMES: *[cheerily]* Yes, we will. Later. *[under his breath]* Much later. *[joins the crowd and hustles inside]*

4.6 Hierophant's Message

EUMOLPOS: We stand at the precipice of the Greater Mysteries of Demeter. This is your last chance to turn back before being forever changed by what you see and experience this night. When we step through that door, *[Gestures to the door to the maze.]* we will leave the world as we know it behind and enter a completely different realm, one of mystery and danger and most recently, of change. This time your path is lit. But remember you took an oath that you would not reveal anything you see except to your fellow travelers. That oath is even more critical now. *[Gestures again to the door to the maze.]* The path to the Underworld is lined with the Hiera, the sacred objects of these Mysteries. These are the gifts from the Gods and I cannot tell you what they mean or who they are from. Take them in with your eyes but do not touch them. Do not over think what you see, just take them in and let the objects call out to you. Now go forward and seek the heart of Mystery! *[Hermes is the first to enter the maze, Eumolpos, Hekate, and Triptolemos last.]*

4.7 Zagreus RIP'ed

[Low lighting as people file in. Hades and Persephone are on upper platform. Dionysos under the platform. Demeter is in the maze. Once everyone has entered, with Eumolpos and Triptolemos bringing up the rear, the lights go down until the Underworld is completely dark. Voices speak in the darkness:]

HADES: I remember claiming a prize. A gift from my brother. It was the last moment when I knew nothing. The last moment before everything changed. I can remember who I was, who I no longer want to be. I am Hades, Dark Lord of the Underworld, but I am changed. I am no longer alone.

PERSEPHONE: I remember the last moment before he bore me away. It was the last moment when I knew nothing. The last moment before everything changed. I cannot now remember the girl I was. But I know who I am. I am the knowledge of the inevitable. I am Persephone, the Iron Queen. And I cannot go back. None of us can.

DEMETER: I remember feeling whole. I remember being a mother above all else, caring only for the well-being of my children. Then that was lost. It was the last moment when I knew nothing. The last moment before everything changed. I don't know why I am here. All I can see is darkness before me...and sorrow.

DIONYSUS: I remember pain. My body ripped and broken, the taste of blood and soil in my mouth. It was the last moment when I knew nothing. The last moment before everything changed. I no longer know who I was, or who I will become. It lays before me, a story not yet written. I am...I...am...*[drops to a stage whisper]* changed.

[Lights come up. Hades and Persephone are on the upper platform. Hermes is in among the crowd, watching and silent for once. Charon is at the bottom of the stairs, carrying a body in a shroud. He carries the body to the lower platform and lays it out as though for a funeral. He looks up at Hades and Persephone.]

4.8 Demeter and Aphrodite enter

[Aphrodite and Demeter enter from the maze. Demeter looks confused and a little angry.]

DEMETER: I don't understand why you've brought me here, Aphrodite. You, of all people!

APHRODITE: This is where you have to be now, Demeter. And so do I. *[Sees the body on the platform.]* Look. There he is.

CHARON: *[Begins speaking as Hades and Persephone come to the rail. Shaken:]* I met him at the gates. They opened on their own accord. He stood before me, as a dead man would. But I recognized him, and knew that he could not be a dead *man*. So I brought him to you, my Lord and Lady. What would you have me do with him?

HADES: Leave him here. You have done well to bring him to us Charon. Now go and return to the gates.

CHARON: Yes my Lord. *[Charon exits out into the maze.]*

4.9 Lost in Death

PERSEPHONE: Let me see him. *[Descends to lower platform, followed by Hades, and gently pulls the shroud away from the face. It is the WANDERER, who is DIONYSUS, clean-shaven but bloodied.]*

HADES: *Him? [shaken]* I knew he was destined to return. I did not know it would be like this. *[shakes his head]* I've never known him to even be wounded in war.

APHRODITE: [also shaken] This is not possible.

HEKATE: [entering from maze] Clearly it is possible, Aphrodite. Everything is changing...for all of us. Even a god can die, now. The world shakes.

HERMES: *[coming forward from the crowd]* Wait a minute. Gods dying? I don't like the sound of that. Let me see him. *[comes to body and has a moment of astonished recognition]* I didn't know that *he* was the one who had died. I mean, he'd just returned to us. *[lays a hand on the body]* Wait. He is not truly dead. *[looks at Persephone]* Any more than you were. But there is work to be done.

HADES: I have an idea. My queen?

PERSEPHONE: *[touches the WANDERER's face. Hermes, Aphrodite, and Hekate all come forward and lay their hands on him. Nothing happens. Persephone turns to Demeter:]* This task is not ours alone. Mother, we need you.

4.10 Demeter Revives Dionysus

DEMETER: *[approaches the body and looks at the face. She recognizes him:]* But this is no god. He's the man from the well.

HEKATE: Was he just a man to you? What did he tell you?

DEMETER: He said... *[pulls out the sprig of dead ivy and places it in his hand.]* He said it would protect me. *[She begins to weep.]* He needed it more than I did.

APHRODITE: He gave it to you, Demeter. And it ended his life.

DEMETER: But if this is Zeus's son...Ares killed him.

PERSEPHONE: Ares is responsible for his death, yes. But it was necessary.

DEMETER: Necessary? For *what?*

4.11 Dionysus' Madness and Exit

[DIONYSUS sits up violently, tearing through the shroud but gripping the ivy tightly. He is naked, bloody and covered with wounds. He gets up and flees into the maze. Hekate and HERMES run after him.]

HEKATE: Wait! Stop!

HERMES: Oh, *crap*.

[Hekate and Hermes run after Dionysos into the maze. DEMETER follows after the others, but stops at the edge of the platform.]

APHRODITE: *[gently]* Go after him, Demeter. He needs you. *[DEMETER does not reply, but stands and stares into the maze.]*

[HADES and PERSEPHONE look at each other, then step back, going up the stairs to the upper platform and taking their seats.]

4.12 Demeter's Anger and Her Answer

DEMETER: I can't.

APHRODITE: You returned him to the living.

DEMETER: Then I have done quite enough.

APHRODITE: You are a mother, and he is as a newborn child.

DEMETER: You've all told me he is divine. What need does he have of me?

APHRODITE: Did your daughter need you any less because she is a goddess?

DEMETER: I am no longer a mother, and he is not my child.

APHRODITE: Are not all beings upon the earth your children? Would you cast them all aside so lightly?

DEMETER: *[rounding on Aphrodite]* How DARE you!

4.13 Hades and Persephone Speak to Change

PERSEPHONE: *[rising from her seat]* But you did it before, mother.

DEMETER: What??

PERSEPHONE: When I was taken from you, you punished all the earth. Your care for the living was cast aside for my sake. Will you do that again?

DEMETER: You know that that was not by my will. Any more than your abduction was by yours.

PERSEPHONE: You are right. I did not choose it. Not when, nor where, nor how, nor by whose hand...but I *could* choose how to respond. Now you have the same choice.

DEMETER: What answer can I make to what has happened? With you gone, I did not only lose my daughter--though that was bad enough. But with your absence, part of my power was torn away. I lost a part of myself, and when you are gone, that part is gone with you. You have become the goddess of transformation, but I fear that this change is too much.

PERSEPHONE: Mother...I *died* to become who I am.

DEMETER: Died...oh, my daughter. [*rounds on Hades, begins an outburst*]

HADES: Can there be any true change, without death?

DEMETER: Then I am changed, for a part of me has died.

PERSEPHONE: And will you let that change consume you? Or will you reclaim yourself, and become something more? Mother, the strength I found to become the Queen of Erebus--that came from you. Therefore, you have that strength as well.

HADES: That is why you are here. Your daughter has made Erebus a place of transformation. I am now the Changed God. Persephone has done this.

DEMETER: The Changed God. How have you changed?

HADES: When Kore came here, Erebus was the end. There was no going back, and no going on. I simply gathered the souls, and here they stayed. I had no true care for them. But with Persephone's coming, Erebus became a refuge. I hold the souls safe until it is time for them to begin the cycle anew. She has taught me compassion.

DEMETER: Then why do you need me?

PERSEPHONE: Once the seed is planted, what makes it grow? Without you, my power is useless.

HADES: And the mortals need you. When Persephone guides them from this place to their new lives on Earth, you are the one to greet them, shelter them, and help them grow.

DEMETER: Am I? I was that goddess once. And look where it has brought me.

HADES: To a place of opportunity, Demeter. A place of transformation. Look on it...as a gift.

DEMETER: You give nothing, Hades. And you have taken everything from me.

HADES: But there is one more thing I would ask of you, Demeter.

DEMETER: Of me? You would ask *more of me*?

HADES: Yes. I ask your forgiveness.

DEMETER: My...you dare ask that of me?

HADES: Yes. I do. I acted out of passion, and that was something I had never known. [*Looks to Persephone, and smiles.*] I do not regret the results. But I do regret the pain I caused you.

[*DEMETER looks stunned. She turns to Persephone.*]

DEMETER: Is this what you want? To be his wife? To be Queen of the Underworld?

PERSEPHONE: Yes. I love him, mother. And he loves me. This is my place, and I could not ask for more--except that you bless what we have become.

4.14 Rhea's Insight

RHEA: [*coming out of maze and descending the stairs*] Forgiveness is the key, Demeter.

DEMETER: The key? Key to what?

RHEA: To discovering yourself.

DEMETER: I know who I am, mother.

RHEA: Do you?

DEMETER: Yes! Of course I do!

RHEA: Then who are you?

DEMETER: I am...I am...

RHEA: You were a mother--and you still are. You were the goddess of the growing Earth--and you still are. But now, you have the chance to become so much more.

DEMETER: More? I am nothing! Empty. There is no purpose for me now.

RHEA: [*gently*] Do you think I do not know this pain, my daughter? Throughout your life, the music will change, and your dance must change with it.

DEMETER: I don't know how. I always knew who I was before, and what I had to do. When Kore was born, I thought that was the greatest change I would ever face. But now...

RHEA: Children grow up. And find their own paths. *You* did. Don't you remember arguing with me about how you no longer wanted to dance in the mountains, but instead go down to the fields and pastures of the mortals?

DEMETER: I never realized...how did you handle that change?

RHEA: I found a new dance...and I listened to my friends. And my heart.

4.15 Aphrodite's Other Face

APHRODITE: Everyone and everything has a purpose, Demeter. Sometimes, you have to find it for yourself. You say you are no longer a mother, that that child who fled from here screaming is nothing to you. This is an opportunity for you to choose. Will you close off your heart to everyone and everything? Even to those you bring to life? Or will you reclaim and embrace a wider purpose?

DEMETER: I cannot care for something so deeply again. It hurts too much. You ask too much, too soon.

APHRODITE: [*softly*] Do you think I know nothing of such pain? It is the price we pay for love, Demeter.

DEMETER: Then how do you bear it?

APHRODITE: By knowing that there is also joy. Remember that I am the goddess of merriment, as well as love.

RHEA: And by remembering the joys of love that have passed, we can endure. Remember how strong you once were. You can be that strong again. Children are not our possessions. We cannot keep them. Or replace them, for that matter.

DEMETER: Yes. I see that now. But I still feel empty. I can neither replace my child, nor that part of myself that I have lost in losing her.

APHRODITE: You cannot, that is true.

PERSEPHONE: But you are in Erebus, a place of renewal. Here you can lay your sorrows down, and be healed.

DEMETER: How could I do such a thing? It's not that simple. How can I just set aside what I have lost?

HADES: Or you could drink from the River Lethe.

DEMETER: How dare you! You are saying I should just *forget*?

RHEA: Well, daughter, if you cannot put aside sorrow, and you cannot forget, than what *will* you do?

DEMETER: I don't know. I don't *know!* [*repeats this line; beginning to break down*]

4.16 Dionysus Returns

[Dionysus re-enters from the maze. He is clean, and dressed in a simple wine colored chiton, but he is clearly mad and has no sense of who he is. Nor does he recognize anyone else. He speaks from the doorway:]

DIONYSUS: [*singsong*] Don't know...don't know...[*repeats until the two words blur into one, ending with maniacal laughter!!!*]

4.17 Bring forth the Maenads and The Madness

[He steps onto the landing and comes to the railing, laughing maniacally as the maenads pour out of the maze behind him. One of the maenads hands him a cup of wine. He stops laughing for a moment, stares into the cup, then tosses the wine in a spray over the audience and begins to laugh again. Some of the maenads flood down the stairs, trailing vines after them. The remaining Maenads finish dressing Dionysus, crowning and draping him in ivy, reminding him who he is. They offer him grapes, which he eats. They offer him wine; when he drinks it, they kiss him and he fully remembers himself.]

DIONYSUS: [*takes deep breath after tasting the wine*] I am the Lord of the Winding Ivy. I am the God of the Growing Grape Vine. I am Dionysus!

MAENADS: IO! Io Dionysus!

APHRODITE: He has returned!

RHEA: Reborn unto himself! Io Dionysus - the thrice born!

MAENADS: Io Dionysus!

4.18 Dionysus Mentally Returns

DIONYSUS: I remember the plains, and being set upon by my brother...my own brother! But how did I get here? What madness led me to this dark place?

PERSEPHONE: It was not madness, it was your destiny...to die, to be transformed.

HADES: Dionysus, you died to who you were. It was necessary.

DEMETER: You said that before. I don't understand. His death has shaken the world, and to what purpose? How can this have been necessary?

RHEA: He returned from his war in the east weary in body and soul. And when, thus weakened, he came seeking his father's comfort, Hera met him at the base of Olympus and drove his divinity from him. She left him mad and without his true identity.

[Dionysus sees Demeter and starts moving towards her].

DIONYSUS: Do I know you? Yes, yes I know you *[holds up living ivy]* You too suffered from madness - magnificent, wasn't it.

DEMETER: Magnificent?

DIONYSUS: *[laughing]* Yes, magnificent. It helped you bear the pain. And it has brought you here for rebirth. Only in the madness could you find such freedom!

APHRODITE: There is beauty in what he says, Demeter. You just have to open your eyes and...

DEMETER: Beauty in madness?! Aphrodite, what's come over you?

DIONYSUS: *[grins at Aphrodite, who is clearly under some influence]* Only in the madness are you free to do what you want, say what you want, desire what you want. The key is knowing enough about yourself to know exactly what it is you truly want. *[suddenly shifts focus to Demeter]* What do you want, Demeter? What do you desire?

DEMETER: I want nothing from you.

DIONYSUS: You lie. You lie to me but more importantly, you lie to yourself. I KNOW what you want.

DEMETER: I want things to be as they were!

DIONYSUS: Liar! You want this. *[holds out the green ivy]* Do I know you?

DEMETER: What?

DIONYSUS: I know you. I know your madness. Deep down, you want to be whole again.

DEMETER: Yes. Yes, I do. *[starts to gravitate towards him]*

DIONYSUS: Yes Demeter, you do. It is a chance for you to be whole again. For you to be free.

DEMETER: I was lost, lost in my own mind. I do not ever want to experience anything like that again.

DIONYSUS: Oh, but you will. Every time you remember the way things were, you will feel the pain. But you will be able to bear it. And to move forward. You have known the madness. You have been there, just like I have. And you are nearly ready.

DEMETER: Nearly ready?

DIONYSUS: To dance.

DEMETER: To dance?

DIONYSUS: Have you not been listening Demeter? There is music. Listen. Does it call to you? Will you dance with me? *[starts to sway a little, feeling it, then looks around and sees Queen Met coming in]*

4.19 Dionysus Speaks His Mind

DEMETER: You? What are you doing here?

QUEEN MET: Following Him.

DEMETER: But you have obligations. And what about your son? Where is your son?

QUEEN MET: Yes I do, but they will wait. And my son is safe at home. Where he will be when I return. Yes, Lady Demeter, I am a mother with responsibilities to my family and a queen with responsibilities to my people. I also have the right to enjoy myself, indulge myself from time to time. But I never let it interfere with my...obligations. Why can't you?

DIONYSUS: Yes Demeter, why can't you? Why can't you allow yourself to dance with me? Long I wandered, without knowing who I was or why I was

there. I did not recognize my companions, nor the faces of my family. I lost myself. Then I found you...and I began to remember. You brought me back to life. Please, won't you dance with me?

4.20 It Begins again

APHRODITE: *[comes close to Demeter, touching her gently but not intrusively]* Dance with us, Demeter. When was the last time you really had fun?

DIONYSOS: Would you know joy again, lady?

PERSEPHONE: *[standing and smiling; as she speaks, Demeter looks up to her]* Mother, thank you for all that you did for me. You are my mother, and always will be. But now it is *your* time.

DEMETER: Persephone, what are you doing?

PERSEPHONE: *[smiling]* What I do. *[makes a gesture of blessing. The Maenads begin to dance and swirl around Demeter, touching her softly. Demeter flinches at first, then begins to relax.]*

RHEA: *[comes up in front of Demeter and takes her hands]* Daughter. Is this what you want?

DEMETER: Yes.

RHEA: It will hurt.

DEMETER: I'm not afraid.

[Rhea lets go of her hands as the maenads close in. They begin tearing at her clothes, tearing them away. Demeter screams in pain but keeps her posture open, not resisting. The scream transitions from pain to ecstasy as the maenads tears away the last of her clothing. Persephone descends from the upper platform, carrying a lush green chiton. Dionysos has a burgundy sash, and Queen Met a leopard-print belt. Persephone, Dionysos, and Queen Met dress Demeter in her new finery, ending with Dionysos winding her in ivy.]

4.21 Underworld Party

[Hades joins Persephone on the lower platform while Dionysus and Demeter dance through the crowd. The Maenads move through crowd, reaching out to the people. Hades and Persephone stand together. Hermes and Hekate return from the maze, looking concerned. Hermes sees Dionysus, grins, and

joins the party, possibly with a cowbell. Hekate nods approvingly and goes to the upper platform to observe.]

4.22 High Rit

APHRODITE: How do you feel now, Demeter?

DEMETER: I feel like my heart has burst open in joy. My eyes are open to an ever wider world of possibility.

APHRODITE: *[addressing the crowd]* Do you see? Remember that I said it would all work out!

PERSEPHONE: But you could not know for sure, Aphrodite. No one could. That is what makes it frightening.

DIONYSUS: Frightening, yes. Change is always frightening. But the rewards--

HADES: --are beyond all the riches of the world.

DEMETER: That is saying something, coming from you, Hades. You are no longer the Unchanging One.

HADES: Your daughter saw to that, Demeter. And you no longer see your daughter as your life's only purpose.

PERSEPHONE: You have found a new purpose, mother--just as I have found mine. I am now the ever-changing goddess.

DIONYSUS: And thanks to you, Demeter, I am now the god of wine and joy, a current of life ever-flowing through the vine. And now you too have embraced that joy.

HADES: I am now more than the Lord of the Dead, rejoicing in the everlasting love I share with your daughter. You too have found a love that you did not expect--not for one alone but for all the world.

APHRODITE: You have all experienced change through love--the love of a mother for her daughter, the love between a husband and a wife, and the sheer love of life that does not die.

DEMETER: Mine is a love ever-growing, for every soul upon the earth and all those that lie waiting for rebirth. *[two maenads hand Demeter her hiera]*

PERSEPHONE: To be reborn as I was, ever-changed from who and what you were, you must accept love when it is offered from the heart. *[two maenads hand Persephone her hiera]*

DIONYSUS: Love, ever-flowing from those who truly care for you, will sustain and strengthen you through the most painful transitions. *[two maenads hand Dionysus his hiera]*

HADES: And through the most painful transitions, love will lead you to an everlasting place of peace. *[two maenads hand Hades his hiera]*

DEMETER: I am the ever-growing Earth Mother of all who walk upon the world.

PERSEPHONE: I am the ever-changing Iron Queen of death and rebirth.

DIONYSUS: I am the ever-flowing Wine God of joy and renewal.

HADES: I am the everlasting Dark Lord who prepares you for new life.

DEMETER: I am *[chorus of all gods]* ever-growing!

PERSEPHONE: I am *[chorus]* ever-changing!

DIONYSUS: I am *[chorus]* ever-flowing!

HADES: I am *[chorus]* everlasting!

DEMETER: *[addressing crowd]* YOU are *[chorus]* ever-growing!

PERSEPHONE: YOU are *[chorus]* ever-changing!

DIONYSUS: YOU are *[chorus]* ever-flowing!

HADES: YOU are *[chorus]* everlasting!

RHEA: *[picks up a drum and begins a beat, begins chanting]* Ever-growing, ever-changing, ever-flowing, everlasting!

[The Big Four, the Maenads, and Aphrodite take up the chant. Hermes dances with Queen Met. The doors fly open and the Maenads lead everyone outside to dance around the fire.]

4.23 Reunion of Dionysus and Pan

[The Maenads continue the chant as the dance moves out and around the fire. Pan appears out of the darkness.]

PAN: Io Dionysus! Io!

DIONYSUS: Io Pan!

PAN: My friend, I am so glad to see you alive!

DIONYSUS: Not just alive, but reborn.

[They hug, and Pan joins in the dance. The dance and chant build to a peak.]

Hierophant/Eumolpos: Now, dance and chant your way back to the theater! Join those who have waited for you and held the energy for your return! *[He leads the way up the hill with Hermes and Hekate.]*

4.24 Return to Apollo's Theatre

[Hierophant leads everyone into the theater, and then goes up on the stage. Hierophant motions for all to be silent. Baubo comes up onto the stage with the rest of the Gods]

Hierophant/Eumolpos:Hail Mystai! Hail Eoptai! Fellow initiates of Demeter's Mysteries!

Dadochous/Triptolemos: We have been successful! Our Lady Demeter and Queen Persephone stand with us, and the Earth is whole and healed once more.

Hekate: You have traveled many roads through these past days, and all have led you back here, to this place, where you have come together once more, in unity, love, and strength.

Hermes: You have faced many challenges, and learned many lessons. But the journey has not ended. Oh no! It has just begun.

Aphrodite: To honor the new bonds that have been created between the Gods and the mortals, we have an offering to share with you all.

[Offering of Demeter, blessed by Aphrodite, goes here. It is up to these priestesses to decide what this will be, and lines inserted appropriately]

Dadochous: The time is drawing near to end these rites. I give you the Directors of these Mysteries of Demeter!

[Directors speak as they are so moved to do. When finished, they invite the FERD to speak.]

Arch Priestess: You have seen and heard much; you carry the sacred truths of this rite for the rest of your days, and beyond – you are the children of Demeter!

By our will we have made this place Eleusis, where the timeless rites are continues even as one season follows another. We have summoned great energies and touched the Heart of the Mystery. It is time now to let the forces that have been with us to pass from us and return to the Earth, the body of our Mother. In passing, let these energies heal us and leave behind new wisdom and insight.

[Archpriestess closes circle that was summoned at the beginning of Lessers.]

Pan: And now, let the wild rumpus begin!

Writing Team: Leah Garvais, Genevieve Williams, Ray Snyder
Script Management: Erik Banach
Sounding Board: Patricia Snyder
Consultants: Most Everyone in the SMF Presentation Community