

THE TROJAN FOLLIES

by
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Cast of Characters

Notes

In keeping with Bronze-Age custom, the Greeks are also referred to as the Achaeans and the Argives.

The named roles below are played by a cast of 12 actors who, at places indicated in the script, also act as an ensemble of Trojans, Greeks, sheep, etc.

All the characters are adults. The exact age of a character is less important – and in the case of the gods impossible to determine – than the character's personality, so a cast of actors with a wide age range is possible. There are 12 female characters and 16 male characters. The themes of the play make it important that all the female characters are played by female actors. Three male characters will be played by female actors. All the other male characters can be played by male or non-binary actors. Each character will always be played by the same actor. Taking all of this into account, doubling suggestions for the named roles are given at the end of the cast list. If more than 12 actors are available, the roles can be divided differently.

<u>Thersites:</u>	Achaean warrior and rogue; male.
<u>Pandaros:</u>	Trojan warrior, uncle of Cressida; male.
<u>Kassandra:</u>	Trojan prophetess, daughter of Priam; female.
<u>Sappho:</u>	The Poetess; female.
<u>Helen:</u>	Queen of Sparta, wife of Menelaos; female.
<u>Cressida:</u>	Trojan maiden, daughter of Kalchas, niece of Pandaros; female.
<u>Briseis:</u>	Bargaining chip; female.
<u>Eris:</u>	Goddess of Discord; female.
<u>Zeus:</u>	King of the Gods, husband of Hera; male.
<u>Athena:</u>	Goddess of Wisdom and Warfare; female.

Cast of Characters (Cont.)

<u>Hera:</u>	Goddess of Marriage and Childbirth, wife of Zeus; female.
<u>Aphrodite:</u>	Goddess of Love; female.
<u>Paris:</u>	Prince of Troy, son of Priam; male.
<u>Tyndareos:</u>	King of Sparta, stepfather of Helen; male.
<u>Ajax:</u>	Achaean warrior; male.
<u>Menelaos:</u>	King of Sparta, husband of Helen; male.
<u>Agamemnon:</u>	High King of Mycenae, brother of Menelaos; male.
<u>Nestor:</u>	Achaean warrior, King of Pylos; male.
<u>Kalchas:</u>	Trojan/Greek seer, father of Cressida; male.
<u>Odysseus:</u>	Achaean warrior, King of Ithaca; male.
<u>Achilles:</u>	Achaean warrior, leader of the Myrmidons; male.
<u>Hektor:</u>	Prince of Troy, son of Priam, husband of Andromache; male.
<u>Andromache:</u>	Trojan woman, wife of Hektor; female.
<u>Troilus:</u>	Prince of Troy, son of Priam; male.
<u>Chryses:</u>	Trojan priest of Apollo, father of Chryseis; male.
<u>Chryseis:</u>	Trojan maiden, daughter of Chryseis; female.
<u>Thetis:</u>	Sea nymph, mother of Achilles; female.
<u>Diomedes:</u>	Achaean warrior, King of Argos; male.

Suggestions for Doubling of Roles

Female Actors

Actor 1 Sappho
Actor 2 Kassandra, Ajax, Chryseis, Thetis
Actor 3 Helen, Hera
Actor 4 Cressida, Aphrodite
Actor 5 Briseis, Athena, Hektor
Actor 6 Eris, Kalchas, Andromache

Male or Non-Binary Actors

Actor 7 Thersites, Diomedes
Actor 8 Pandaros, Tyndareos, Nestor
Actor 9 Zeus, Odysseus, Chryses
Actor 10 Paris, Achilles
Actor 11 Menelaos, Troilus
Actor 12 Agamemnon

Other Notes

Because most of the actors play many roles (and change roles rapidly), non-character-specific costumes are suggested. The costumes can be neutral, from one specific time period, or from mixed time periods, as the director desires.

There are no fixed set pieces, but there are a variety of hand props. Their use is indicated in the script. At the beginning of the play, most of the props are already on the floor of the stage. Their exact placement is at the discretion of the director. They are picked up and put back on the floor, as needed, by the actors.

THE TROJAN FOLLIES

ACT I

SETTING: An otherwise empty stage is strewn with the props that will be used in the play.

AT RISE: An obviously fake two-person horse lumbers onto the stage, trots around a little, looking for the perfect spot, and then squats to noisily deposit a brown blob. The horse stands upright and takes off its head. The two parts of the horse are now revealed as THERSITES (the front half) and PANDAROS (the back half).

THERSITES

(To PANDAROS.)

I told you to go before we started. Now, who's going to clean that up?

(KASSANDRA enters, sweeping the ground with a broom. THERSITES and PANDAROS don't pay any attention to her.)

KASSANDRA

Cry, Trojans!

PANDAROS

(To THERSITES.)

Not me, fart-face. I let it drop and you clean the flop.

KASSANDRA

(More insistently.)

Cry, Trojans!

THERSITES

Tell me, Pandaros, how many Trojans does it take to screw?

PANDAROS

I don't know, Thersites, how many Trojans does it take to screw?

THERSITES

Three, Pandaros: one on top, one on the bottom, and one to hold the sheep!

KASSANDRA

For crying out loud, Trojans, I'm trying to make a prophecy here!

(Singing in a Country Western style.)

Let your tears fall tonight,
I'm predicting a fight,
It really is gonna be long.
Kassandra won't lie,
Your menfolk will die,
You better pay heed to my song.
Girls who try to escape
Will be taken by rape,
The rivers will run red with gore.
Your city will burn,
There'll be no return
For Troy from her ten years of war.

(Exiting, singing and sweeping up the blob as she goes.)

Let your tears fall tonight,
I'm predicting a fight . . .

THERSITES

(Calling after KASSANDRA.)

Not my problem, lady – I'm a Greek!

(To the audience.)

Ladies and gentlemen, nymphs and satyrs, gods and mortals, denizens of the cosmos! Welcome to the wild, wacky, wonderful world of – drum roll, please! –

PANDAROS

(Banging an imaginary drum.)

Brrrrrrrrump-bumpa-dump-bumpa-rump-rump-dump!

THERSITES

The Trojan War!

(With a great roar, the
ENSEMBLE runs onto the stage
from all directions. SAPPHO
is among them.)

THERSITES

(To the audience.)

My friends, have we got a spectacle for you! Ten years of blood
and guts, lust and loot, sex and sacrifice – and all for
nothing!

PANDAROS

No boundaries re-drawn!

THERSITES

No territories taken!

PANDAROS

No high-minded principles established!

THERSITES

Why bother with any of that when all you really want is
pointless butchery and carnage!

PANDAROS

Throb to the martial music of spear against spear!

THERSITES

Laugh at the zany antics of madcap Myrmidons!

PANDAROS

Thrill to perilous feats of unremitting slaughter!

THERSITES

Marvel at the mayhem and mischief caused by the gods in one
death-inducing act after another. You may think you know all
about the Trojan War – thank you, Homer! – but truth is a tricky
business and never trickier than when it's told by men!

PANDAROS

So here to set the record straight and tell you everything
you'll never learn in school is the Tenth Muse herself, come
from the future to illuminate the past, the Poetess par
excellence –

SAPPHO

Anybody seen my lyre?

(An ENSEMBLE member hands her
a lyre.)

THERSITES

Let's welcome Sappho as *she* welcomes you to the Greatest War on Earth!

SAPPHO

(Strumming her lyre.)

Fruit and the gods I sing, who, at a fête,
And driven by scorned Discord's vengeful hate,
Determine that a royal shepherd boy
Will cause ten years of war 'twixt Greece and Troy.
Sing through me, O Muse, of beauty rare,
Of perfumed kisses, silken skin, of hair
Whose lustrous, golden light inflames desire,
Entraps the heart and sets the soul on fire.
Your power grant me, Muse, ignite my verse,
Whose siren song is: beauty is a curse.

THERSITES

And who better to sing that siren song than our tremendous trio of tempters – The Lubriciards!

(Three ENSEMBLE members
become HELEN, CRESSIDA, and
BRISEIS. With much sexy
displaying of their bodies,
they strike an intertwined
pose.)

PANDAROS

On the bottom we have Helen, lust-inducing adulteress!

HELEN

The gods made me do it!

THERSITES

In the middle we have Briseis, heart-sore bargaining chip!

BRISEIS

It's not my fault Agamemnon's a pig!

PANDAROS

And to top it all off, we have Cressida, double-dealing traitor!

CRESSIDA

Nineteen and still a virgin!

(HELEN, CRESSIDA, and BRISEIS
jump apart and start fighting
to tell their stories.)

THERSITES

One at a time, ladies, one at a time! Let's take it from the
bottom.

HELEN

One day, in the halcyon Age of the Heroes, Zeus, king of gods
and men, tired of turning himself into waterfowl,

CRESSIDA

Insects,

BRISEIS

Showers of gold,

THERSITES

Hoofed stock.

HELEN

Just so he could have his way with trusting –

THERSITES

And obviously not very bright –

HELEN

(To THERSITES, annoyed.)

FEMALES!

(Continuing her story.)

Zeus, king of gods and men, looked down on Earth from his puffy
Olympian cloud and saw that the world was groaning under the
weight of humanity. So he came up with a cunning plan to lift
some of the burden from the suffering planet: start a massive
war that kills off as many mortals as possible. It all begins,
as so many things do, with an apple . . .

(HELEN, BRISEIS, and CRESSIDA
melt back into the ENSEMBLE.
One of the ENSEMBLE members
becomes ERIS. She juggles
three golden apples.)

SAPPHO

The story starts when Eris, goddess proud,
Is not invited to the wedding crowd
Of Peleus, the King of Thessaly,

SAPPHO (CONT.)

And Thetis, blushing nymphet from the sea.

(The ENSEMBLE cavorts, as if
at a party.)

SAPPHO

The goddess comes, and just to right her wrong,
She throws a golden apple in the throng.

(ERIS speaks to the audience
as she juggles the apples,
getting angrier and angrier,
as the others continue to
make merry.)

ERIS

And why shouldn't I? All the other gods and goddesses are singing and dancing at the wedding bash, slurping nectar and wolfing ambrosia like there's no tomorrow – not to mention having sex with anything that isn't actually dead – and I get stuck in the barnyard with some moldy fruit. I mean, I am absolutely the only one out of the entire pantheon who is not invited to the party. Just because I wreak havoc wherever I go – they don't call me the Goddess of Discord for nothing – is no reason not to invite me to the biggest feast since Kronos ate his own children. Everyone, from horny-membered Zeus all the way down to that pathetic little naiad Daphne gets the coveted piece of parchment entitling the bearer to one certified Dionysian revel, BYOB – bring your own baklava – except for me. What do I get? The blame.

(In her anger, she misses
catching the apples and they
roll onto the ground. She
picks one up and sees that
there's something written on
it.)

Well, will you look at that. The handwriting on the pome.

(She reads what's on the
apple she's holding.)

"For the crankiest."

(The ENSEMBLE members snarl
at each other.)

ERIS

(She throws the apple down,
picks up the second apple,
and reads.)

"For the greediest."

(The ENSEMBLE members grab at
each other.)

ERIS

(She throws the second apple
down, picks up the third
apple, and reads the
inscription silently. She
smiles an evil grin. Calling
out loudly as she waves the
apple around.)

"FOR THE FAIREST."

(The ENSEMBLE members freeze,
then swivel to look at ERIS.)

ERIS

Got 'em.

(ERIS carefully places the
apple in the center of the
stage and rejoins the
ENSEMBLE.)

SAPPHO

"For the fairest," is the fruit's inscription.
Such a bold, provocative description!
And to dispute the golden prize are three
Who claim the honor simultaneously.

THERSITES

What a goddess-awful mess, Pandaros! Who's going to sort this
out?

PANDAROS

I know who, Thersites!

THERSITES

And who would that be, Pandaros? Could it be the Keeper of
Oaths,

PANDAROS

The Gatherer of Clouds,

THERSITES

The Protector of Guests,

PANDAROS

The Bearer of the Aegis,

THERSITES

The Lord of Thunder and Lightning,

PANDAROS

The Ruler of Earth and Sky,

THERSITES

The All-Around Mr. Marvelous and Biggest of the Big! Let's have a titan-ic round of applause for the King of Olympos . . . Heeeeeeeeere's Zeus!

(One of the ENSEMBLE members becomes ZEUS, hurling thunderbolts in every direction.)

ZEUS

Ca-rack! Tha-whack! Sa-mack!

(He hurls a thunderbolt toward the audience, and a shriek is heard; to the audience.)

Oops, sorry! Here we are in one of the most majestic settings on Earth, on the summit of beautiful Mount Pelion, outside the cave of Chiron the Naughty Satyr, overlooking the wild and wonderful Aegean Sea, to watch three gorgeous goddesses compete for the coveted prize of "The Fairest." In a pageant of prowess, pulchritude, and perspicacity, tonight a winner will be crowned who will go down in history as one of the most revered and reviled figures in the Ancient World.

(Three ENSEMBLE members become ATHENA, HERA, and APHRODITE.)

ZEUS

Will it be Athena, bronze-breasted Goddess of Wisdom and Warfare?

(ATHENA strikes a warlike pose and grunts.)

ZEUS

Hera, deep-girdled Goddess of Marriage and Childbirth?

(HERA squats on her haunches
and grunts.)

ZEUS

Or Aphrodite, juicy-tongued Goddess of —

(APHRODITE licks her lips and
starts to shimmy out of her
clothes. ZEUS quickly stops
her.)

ZEUS

Whoever she is, she'll be known forever after as the goddess who
started the Trojan War! So, let's hear it for our three ladies
as they strut their celestial stuff!

(APHRODITE, HERA, and ATHENA
strut their celestial stuff.
KASSANDRA enters, sweeping
and singing.)

KASSANDRA

Kassandra won't lie,
Your menfolk will die. . .

(She finds the apple ERIS
left at Center, picks it up,
looks at the inscription, and
speaks to the audience.)

No good will come of this.

(KASSANDRA bites into the
apple as she continues to
sweep.)

ZEUS

(Pushing KASSANDRA offstage,
taking the apple away from
her.)

Not now, sweetie.

(To the audience, laughing
uproariously.)

Pay her no mind. It's only loose-lipped Kassandra. Who'd believe
a crackpot like her?

(APHRODITE, HERA, and ATHENA
run toward ZEUS, clamoring
for the apple, but he throws
a thunderbolt at them and
they stop in their tracks.)

ZEUS

Whoa, ladies – hold your centaurs! If you think I'm going to insert myself between a bevy of baleful goddesses and history, you'd better go back to Delphi for another reading. How could I possibly choose between three such succulent seductresses?

HERA

It's easy, dear, I'm your wife – AND your sister – and oh, by the by, also the Queen of the Heavens, and if you don't pick me, so help me Kronos, I'll turn all your lovers into eight-legged members of the animal kingdom and you'll never enjoy another night out on the town again.

ATHENA

(To HERA.)

When was the last time you looked in a mirror, cow-face?

(To ZEUS.)

True beauty comes from one's deeds, not from one's looks. And as goddess of just about everything you can think of: wisdom, warfare, courage, chastity, justice, diplomacy, mathematics, philosophy, cunning, strength, strategy, law, metalworking, pottery, spinning, weaving, and – wait a minute, I know I'm leaving something out . . . oh, yes, civilization as a whole – I believe I have the right to claim the prize of The Fairest. And if that isn't enough, I also happen to be your daughter.

HERA

WHAT?! That's news to me!

ATHENA

You don't actually believe that old wives' tale about my bursting fully grown and armor-clad from Zeus's forehead, do you? That's just a myth.

HERA

(To ZEUS.)

So much for the "Sorry, dear, not tonight, I've got a splitting headache" excuse.

(To APHRODITE.)

And what about your "I was born from the sea foam" hogwash?

APHRODITE

Actions speak louder than words.

(APHRODITE starts to shimmy
out of her clothes again.
ZEUS quickly stops her.)

ZEUS

Now cut that out!

APHRODITE

(To ZEUS.)

And if that isn't enough, I also happen to be your daughter.

HERA

(Furious.)

What is going on around here? All I have to do is turn my back
for one minute, and the family tree sprouts another twig – AND I
DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

APHRODITE, HERA, AND ATHENA

(Crowding around ZEUS,
chanting with mounting volume
and speed.)

Me! Me! Me! ME! ME! ME! ME

ZEUS

(Extricating himself from the
women; to the audience.)

I have a better idea.

(ZEUS hurls a thunderbolt at
the goddesses, who join the
ENSEMBLE, all becoming a
group of sleeping sheep.
PARIS is snuggled in amongst
them. They are all snoring.
ZEUS struggles to get into a
sheep costume.)

ZEUS

And they said, "One size fits all."

(Completing his costume by
plopping a sheep's head over
his own.)

Now for the easy part.

(ZEUS squeezes in between PARIS and a sheep and starts bleating, tossing, and turning, as if in the throes of a nightmare. He suddenly yells and clutches PARIS, who wakes up with a scream.)

ZEUS

(In mock terror.)

Wake up, Paris, wake up! I just had the most terrible nightmare!

PARIS

Holy Hermes – a talking sheep! It must be an omen! Tell me, talking sheep, what fate lies ahead!

ZEUS

I dreamed that three ravishing goddesses are begging me to choose between them for the crown of "Most Beautiful Sex-Crazed Deity of the Year," but I can't make up my mind, even though they promise me fantastic rewards, so I decide to go in search of a handsome yet fatally gullible shepherd who is really the youngest son of King Priam of Troy in disguise, his prognostically savvy parents having given him to the royal herdsman with instructions for the latter – the herdsman – to arrange a fatal accident for the former – that's Paris – rather than have the former – still Paris – fulfill the prophecy that he would bring about the destruction of his homeland if he didn't die by the age of 20, not knowing that the latter – that's the herdsman – having a soft yet simpleminded heart, couldn't bear to kill the kid and left him on a hillside in hopes that a convenient she-bear would come along and suckle him, which she did, astounding the latter – the herdsman, I think – who, taking the former – Paris? – home and raising him as his own sheep-minding offspring, was responsible for the former – Right, Paris – making a monumentally dumb decision at a certain contest, resulting in a dangerous sea voyage, sweaty bouts of tempestuous love-making, and a really, *really* long war. You can guess what all this means, can't you?

PARIS

Gee, I don't know, talking sheep. A bad harvest?

ZEUS

No, you idiot, it means that *you* are going to judge the beauty contest instead of *me* – I mean instead of Zeus – so hop on board and let's fly to Olympus before Aphrodite puts her clothes back on.

PARIS

Blessed Bacchus – a talking, *flying* sheep!
 (Climbing on ZEUS'S back.)
 What was that about Aphrodite?

ZEUS

I'll explain on the way. Hold on tight, we're going up!

(PARIS clutches ZEUS'S sheep
 head, putting his hands over
 the eyes in fright.)

ZEUS

(Stumbling offstage with
 PARIS.)

Not the eyes, muttonhead, not the eyes!

(Three ENSEMBLE members
 become HERA, ATHENA, and
 APHRODITE again. They are
 lounging around, sipping cups
 of nectar.)

HERA

So, I say to her, Persephone, honey, I *told* you not to take
 pomegranates from strangers!

(HERA, ATHENA, and APHRODITE
 laugh uproariously.)

ATHENA

And what about Arethusa? Talk about naive! I warned her: if you
 insist on swimming naked in rivers that leer at you, you're
 going to get changed into a fountain. Anybody want to guess what
 happened?

(HERA, ATHENA, and APHRODITE
 all make gurgling, watery
 noises.)

APHRODITE

Let's not forget Pandora . . .

HERA, ATHENA, AND APHRODITE

(Together.)

Don't open that box!

(HERA, ATHENA, and APHRODITE
break out laughing again.)

ATHENA

(Looking offstage.)

Look lively, ladies. Here comes Mr. Big.

HERA

(Looking offstage.)

Oh, no, not another sheep disguise. I am so tired of smelling
like wet wool.

APHRODITE

(Looking offstage.)

Who's the piggy-back beefcake?

(ZEUS and PARIS enter,
careening wildly.)

PARIS

Wheee! That was fun – let's do it again!

ZEUS

(Popping off the sheep's head
and dumping PARIS on the
ground.)

Guess who?!

(HERA, ATHENA, and APHRODITE
run to PARIS, trampling ZEUS
flat on the ground in their
haste and talking over each
other to PARIS.)

HERA

What's your name, cutie?

ATHENA

What's your sign, dreamboat?

APHRODITE

What's your pleasure, peach-fuzz?

ZEUS

(Struggling to get out of the
sheep costume.)

Anyone going to help me out of this stinking pelt or shall I
just sit here and rot?

(HERA, ATHENA, and APHRODITE
exchange a glance and then
turn back to talk to PARIS.)

HERA

You wouldn't by any chance happen to be a handsome yet fatally
gullible shepherd,

ATHENA

Who is really the youngest son of King Priam of Troy in
disguise,

APHRODITE

Suckled by a convenient she-bear,

HERA

About to make a monumentally dumb decision,

ATHENA

Resulting in a dangerous sea voyage,

APHRODITE

Sweaty bouts of tempestuous love-making –

HERA, ATHENA, AND APHRODITE

(Together.)

And a really, *really* long war?

PARIS

(After a short pause.)

Could you repeat the question?

ZEUS

Of course he is! Let's stop beating around the bush, it's time
for –

ENSEMBLE

The Judgement of Paris!

SAPPHO

Our story tells a tale of tragic love,
Begun and ended by the gods above,
To while away eternity's dull hours,
And prove which goddess has the greatest powers.

ZEUS

All right, Paris, it's up to you. Which gorgeous goddess do you
choose to win the coveted prize of –

ENSEMBLE

The Fairest!

PARIS

They look kind of lumpy. Shouldn't they take their clothes off or something?

ENSEMBLE

Choose!

(ZEUS takes the apple out of his costume and holds it up.)

PARIS

That's my fantastic reward? A half-gnawed apple?

ZEUS

No, this mouth-watering little bauble is for the lucky winner. Let's hear what each goddess has in store for *you*, should you name her —

ENSEMBLE

The Fairest!

HERA

The kingdoms of Europe and Asia!

PARIS

I've always wanted to travel!

ATHENA

Victory in war against the Greeks!

PARIS

Think of the loot!

APHRODITE

Sweaty bouts of tempestuous love-making with the most beautiful woman in the world.

(A long pause.)

PARIS

I'll go for . . .

SAPPHO

The misery that's left in passion's wake,
Depending on whose legend is at stake,
We call heroic deed or –

PARIS

Number Three.

SAPPHO

Big mistake.

(PARIS sings the following
song in a Rock and Roll
style, backed up by the
ENSEMBLE.)

PARIS

Well, now I've got a pubis,
And you may call it hubris,
But I'm so horny I could die!

ENSEMBLE

He's just so horny he could die!

PARIS

Don't call me a home-wrecker,
My wild and wooly pecker
Is just so horny it could die!

ENSEMBLE

It's just so horny it could die!

PARIS

I need myself a filly,
To soothe my achin' willy,
It's just so horny it could die!

ENSEMBLE

It's just so horny it could die!

(Everyone dances.)

PARIS

I'm goin' off to Sparta,
Who cares if that's the start-a
Great big war where we all die!

ENSEMBLE

We're gonna die!?

PARIS

'Cause when you got a yearnin'
That keeps your pants a-burnin',
You get so horny you could die!

ENSEMBLE

You get so horny you could die!

(The dance ends with a
rousing climax. PARIS
disappears into the ENSEMBLE.
HELEN emerges from the
ENSEMBLE.)

THERSITES

Meanwhile, back in Sparta, the -

ENSEMBLE

Most beautiful woman in the world!

THERSITES

Is not amused.

HELEN

Let me make one thing perfectly clear. I never asked to be the most beautiful woman in the world: golden-haired Helen, white-armed divinity, crop-nurturing goddess. Queen, bitch, whore. If there's a name for it, it's been mine. Given to me by men. After 3,000 years of hairy-chested prevarication, it's about time someone told the real story - the tale of a simple yet stupendously stunning woman's quest for eternal happiness.

ENSEMBLE

(Shouting variously.)

I hear ya, honey!
Yeah, baby, tell it like it was!

HELEN

I blame the whole thing on Zeus. He had it planned out for me from the start. First he dresses up like a swan -

SAPPHO

Raping Leda in a rosy-fingered dream.

HELEN

Then he arranges for my deflowering at the age of 12 –

SAPPHO

King Theseus despoils her by a stream.

HELEN

Followed by marriage at 15 –

SAPPHO

When Menelaos wins her through a scheme.

(The ENSEMBLE becomes
TYNDAREOS, AJAX, and the
slavering hunks.)

HELEN

By which big, brawny, slavering hunks from all over Greece swagger and prance and wave the family jewels under my nose until my *official* father, King Tyndareos of Sparta, is kind enough to choose a husband for me. But before he picks the biggest, brawniest, richest of the hunks to be my connubial consort, he makes all the other suitors swear an oath.

TYNDAREOS

Listen up, hunks, anyone who wants to wed my daughter has to swear to join forces with all the other hunks – regardless of which hunk she actually marries – and come to her aid if she so much as stubs her toe.

(AJAX raises his hand.)

TYNDAREOS

Yes, Ajax?

AJAX

Would this include defending her sacred honor or does it just involve toe-stubbing?

(TYNDAREOS smacks AJAX on the
head with a sword.)

TYNDAREOS

Any other questions?

ENSEMBLE

(Variously, shifting their weight around uneasily.)

No. Nope. Not me. I'm good.

TYNDAREOS

Right, hunks. Swear! And if anyone breaks his word, may the hundred-headed viper sink its thousands of venomous teeth into your bowels and grind them up like sausage meat.

(The ENSEMBLE engages in an elaborate, silent oath-swearing ceremony during HELEN'S following speech.)

HELEN

So they all take the oath – even Agamemnon, King of Mycenae and commander-in-chief of the Greek military – but my father picks Agamemnon's brother, phallus-faced Menelaos, for my spouse – don't ask me why, he didn't even show up for the auction but had Agamemnon bid for him – and I figure maybe if I'm lucky, I'll die early from disease and over-zealous child-bearing. It begins well enough, though – nine years happily ruling Sparta, fabulous wealth, despotic power, and unlimited sex with an adoring, yet terminally boring, husband whose idea of romance is hump, slump, and sleep like a lump. Then one night, hubby and I throw a major banquet for the Ambassador from Troy who's blown into town on a couple of spanking new ships in the hope of forging an alliance between our kingdoms.

(PARIS emerges from the ENSEMBLE, who engage in a decorous banquet while PARIS sings.)

PARIS

I've come to Greece from Troy town,
To make our countries friends,
But then I see a lady
Who justifies my ends!
I'm just so horny I could die!

HELEN

He's just my type of horny guy!