

Deny your Destiny. Fight your Fate.

Cassandra Triumphant!

When no one believes the prophecies of Greek mythic hero Cassandra, the tragic prophetess takes matters into her own hands, single-handedly changing the course of the Trojan War.

Cassandra Triumphant!

*a stage combat play for women
and others*

by Jeff Goode

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FIFTH DRAFT
March 23, 2023

DRAMATIS PERSONAE**

[tentative]

† indicates fighter / (†) indicates optional combat

††††	CASSANDRA	(†)	APOLLO
†††	Aphrodite	†	Hector
†††	Hera		Agamemnon
†††	Athena	†	Achilles
†	Helen*	(†)	Paris
†	Cressida*	(†)	Troilus
	Hecuba		Polydorus*

*Polyxena?

*Polyxena?

** the 7th male doubles any additional roles (if needed) in this male-heavy mythology
* additional characters can also be doubled by Helen or Cressida (since they each appear in only one act)*

***actors may be any gender / character genders are per Greek mythology*

CASSANDRA – *Princess of Troy, Priestess of Apollo, cursed prophet*

A bright, but sheltered student, who learns very quickly, and can't believe nobody else is going to do something about this.

§ 4 major fights, optional hand-to-hand

APHRODITE – *God of Love & Beauty*

A sex-positive role model and sex worker with a heart of apple-tinis. Sultry, snarky, self-confident.

§ 4 major fights

HERA – *Queen of the Gods, Goddess of Marriage, Women & Family*

Type-A homemaker, multi-tasker, and kingmaker. A powerful, intelligent mother figure who gets no credit for doing it all and having it all. Bossy, because she's the boss.

§ 4 major fights

ATHENA – *Goddess of Wisdom & War*

A gender-defiant super hero. Wise, strong, and fair to a fault. But it's a pretty big fault.

§ 4 major fights

HELEN – *the most beautiful woman in the world, "the face that launched 1000 ships"*

An empowered beauty queen, who's tired of being mistaken for a blonde.

§ 1 major fight

CRESSIDA – *lover to Troilus*

A long-suffering lover who resents her boyfriend's cavalier attitude and casual racism and plots an epic breakup.

§ 1 major fight

HECUBA – *Queen of Troy*

The Queen Bitch. Has seen it all, and stopped caring a long time ago. Knows she's in charge and doesn't mind if you also think you're in charge. Now rub your mother's feet.

non-combatant

APOLLO – *God of Archery, Prophecy, Poetry, Truth, Music, Medicine, the Sun, etc.*

First world problems deified. Thinks he's God's gift to women. Also thinks he's God.

(§) 1-2 fights

HECTOR – *Crown Prince of Troy, Commander of the Trojan Army*

Trojan Golden Boy. Man-boy. Mama's boy.

(§) 1 fight

PARIS – *Prince of Troy, husband to Helen, slayer of Achilles*

Pretty boy. Idiot. Gullible. Everything in life is handed to him, because he's pretty, but he mistakenly believes it's because he's smart.

(§) 1 fight

ACHILLES – *the greatest of all Greek warriors*

Indestructible killing machine. Fragile ego. Thinks he has something to prove, but gods only know what that is.

§ 1 major fight

AGAMEMNON – *Commander of the Greek Armada during the Trojan War*

Career military. Accustomed to getting his way, even when he's wrong. Doesn't understand women, because he doesn't know any. Professional bully. But knows when he's been beaten.

non-combatant (mostly)

TROILUS – *a lesser Prince of Troy, lover to Cressida*

Infatuated and irresponsible. Risks his life and the fate of his entire country to prove his obsession for a girl he barely met.

(§) 1 fight

POLYDORUS – *a young Prince of Troy*

Cassandra's annoying little brother. Idolizes his older brother Hector. Mysogynizes his older sister Cassandra.

non-combatant

POLYXENA – *a young Princess of Troy*

The littlest Trojan Princess. Hero-worships her big brother Hector. Resembles her twin brother Polydorus.

non-combatant

2023mar23

FIFTH DRAFT

BLUE INK = combat.

Cassandra Complex, *noun*; a psychological phenomenon in which an individual's warnings of impending danger are ignored or dismissed.

Named for the mythological prophetess **Cassandra of Troy**, whose accurate predictions about the **Trojan War** could have prevented tragedy, if anybody would just fucking listen.

But she probably should just do it herself...

I. APOLLO + CASSANDRA

Scene: THE ROYAL GARDEN.

Lights up on: APOLLO, contemplating a small gift box.

Enter CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA Helloo-ooo? Is there somebody out here?

APOLLO quickly hides the box behind his back.

APOLLO Cassandra! What a delightful surprise!

CASSANDRA Oh my gods! It's you! Apollo! God of Archery and the Moon!

APOLLO And Prophecy. Don't forget Prophecy.

CASSANDRA Archery, Prophecy and the moooooon!

APOLLO And it's the sun, not the moon.

CASSANDRA I always get that confused, I don't know why. God of Archery and the Sun!

APOLLO Thank you.

CASSANDRA It is I who should be thanking you.

APOLLO Couldn't agree more.

CASSANDRA looks around in wonder.

CASSANDRA What is this place?

APOLLO It's the garden. Don't you recognize it?

CASSANDRA The garden of Apollo?! On Mount Olympus?!?

APOLLO No, the garden of Troy. Right outside your palace.

CASSANDRA Really? I've never been.

APOLLO *(points up at the palace)* See? That's your bedroom window, right there. *(realizes he's probably said too much)* Not that I would know.
CASSANDRA How did you know that?
APOLLO *(caught)* uh... Prophecy?
CASSANDRA So this is my garden.

CASSANDRA waves to someone.

CASSANDRA Hello Royal Gardener!
APOLLO That's a sheep.
CASSANDRA Oh. Then why is it trimming the hedges? With its mouth. And fertilizing the lawn. With its...other mouth.
APOLLO You don't get out much, do you?
CASSANDRA Well, when you live in a fortified city surrounded by an impenetrable defensive wall, in a land overrun with Spartans and Myrmidons and other enemies—And when your younger brother went missing as a child after he did get out, so now your parents keep all the doors and windows locked—Nope, you mostly stay inside and study.
APOLLO Oh God, you're a student?
CASSANDRA Yes, of course. A student of Apollo. I'm training to be a priestess. Remember?
APOLLO Oh! Oh, that. Yes, of course. Of course, you are. I thought you meant something boring, like...
CASSANDRA Like medicine? You're also the God of Healing and Medicine.
APOLLO Yeah, yeah. Enough about me. Let's talk about me and you.
CASSANDRA What could I possibly have done to deserve such an honor?
APOLLO We'll think of something. Spring is in the air. The nymphs are in bloom. But first, I want to give you a gift.
CASSANDRA Oh Apollo! God of Archery and Prophecy! You have a Divine Gift you wish to bestow upon me? Yay!
(then suspicious) Wait, you mean a gift like a magical talent? Or a gift like a box of cheesy lingerie you expect me to model for you?
APOLLO *(flustered)* Can't it be both?
CASSANDRA Cuz the High Priest already tried that one, and it wasn't funny the first time. And that box is not my size.
APOLLO Don't be ridiculous. What would an already-sufficiently-talented young woman... *(realizes she is not with him on this)* ...need with more lingerie?

APOLLO discards the lingerie box into the bushes.

APOLLO Of course, it's a talent!
CASSANDRA Is it Archery? Oh, I hope it's Archery! You're the God of Archery. And the moon.
APOLLO And prophecy. And it's the sun, not the moon.

CASSANDRA My mother will be so proud. She has kind of a thing for archers. And I'd be the first female Archer! Archerette? Lady Bowman? Or is it bowperson? Or Bowmaiden? Sagittatrix? Y'know what? Maybe just "archer" is fine. Oh wait! Amazon! It was right there in front of me. Amazonian Ballistic Specialist! ...tista?

APOLLO It's not Archery.

CASSANDRA So...what? ...Moonstress?

APOLLO No!

CASSANDRA You're giving me a palace on the moon!?

APOLLO I'm the Sun God!

CASSANDRA Oh, right, right, right. Are you sure about that?

APOLLO You want a castle on the sun? Cuz I've got half a mind to do that, right now.

CASSANDRA Why did I think you were the Moon God? Where did I hear that?

APOLLO No idea.

CASSANDRA Have you ever been to the moon?

APOLLO Why would Apollo go to the moon?

CASSANDRA You're right, that doesn't make any sense. Okay, what about poetry? You're the God of Archery & Poetry.

APOLLO Don't forget Prophecy.

CASSANDRA And music! Ooh! And also the God of Dance! My little sister Polyxena would be sooo jealous if I was a pop star.
(tries to twerk) Or if I knew how to twerk.

APOLLO You've got a sister named Polyxena?

CASSANDRA A little brother. No, wait, you're right, sister. Polydorus is my brother.

APOLLO I am not gonna make you a pop star.

CASSANDRA And you're sure it's not Archery?

APOLLO Positive.

CASSANDRA I mean, you're the God of Archery, Wisdom, Truth, Justice and Medicine. What else could it be? Oh my gods! That's it! You're the God of Healing and Medicine! *(puzzled)* And Diseases, for some reason.

APOLLO Not to mention, Prophecy, Premonition and Oracles. The Oracle of Delphi? That's me. That's all me.

CASSANDRA Y'know, with a little preventive prophecy, you could probably keep a lot of people from getting diseases in the first place.

APOLLO glares.

APOLLO Castle on the Sun, comin' right up!

CASSANDRA Y'know what? What do I know? I'm just an intern. What do I know about preventative anything? But I'm studying to be a priestess of Apollo. And you're giving me a Doctorate! I'll be the first person in my family with an advanced degree! Or a 3rd grade education. And I'd be the first lady female Doctor person! Doctorette? Medical Practition...stress?

APOLLO I think the word you're looking for is "nurse".
CASSANDRA A Nurse Doc-titioner!
APOLLO Why would you want that? Although, to be honest, the outfits are hot. Okay, Psychic Nurse, it is!
CASSANDRA My parents were so excited when I got into med school. Mostly because they thought I'd marry a rich physician. I bet they never dreamed I'd actually become one!
APOLLO Become one what? I'm confused.
CASSANDRA A Doctor-ess! A lady female Physician-atrrix! A femme Physicienne!
APOLLO Now you're just making up words. Female Doctor is not a thing.
CASSANDRA But you could make it a thing.
APOLLO Look, if you want to try on the nurse outfit, we can see where it goes. I've got a spare in the chariot. But you are not going to be the first... female... Male Nurse.
CASSANDRA Well, whatever we call it. You can do that, right? Make me a Medicatrix? What am I saying? You can do practically anything. Apollo the God of Poetry, Pestilence, Shepherds and Seafarers. Archery, Medicine, Music, the Moon...
APOLLO The Sun.
CASSANDRA (*puzzled*) And Prophecy, for some reason.
APOLLO I have a very diverse portfolio.
CASSANDRA What do you even do with that?
APOLLO Prophecy?
CASSANDRA Just know stuff that's probably gonna happen anyway. And you get all the credit, cuz you're the first person to say it out loud?
APOLLO Well, I mean, it also has to rhyme.
CASSANDRA What about a pet owl?!
APOLLO That's Athena.
CASSANDRA Pet owl would be so cute.
APOLLO That's Athena! I'm snakes! You wanna pet Python?
CASSANDRA Ew.
APOLLO (*lewdly*) Cuz that's his name.
CASSANDRA Snakes are gross.
APOLLO You haven't seen my python.
CASSANDRA How 'bout a chariot pulled by swans? That's you, right?
APOLLO That was one time. And it was Pride Week.
CASSANDRA I've always wanted to travel. If I had a chariot pulled by swans, I could really go places. I can see it now... I have this very vivid vision of me leaving Troy and adventuring out into the world. With a handsome Greek Prince at my side. Agamemnon, maybe. And his mighty armada. We'd sail the six or seven seas, and see exotic shores. The wind as our guide, and the water as our...road, I guess? Until one day we finally get back to his palace in Argos. And I find out he's already married! With four kids! And two of them pretty angry. And he introduces me as the new housekeeper!! But his wife isn't buying it for a minute... And she murders me anyway! Oh...!

A beat, as that image sinks in.

CASSANDRA It's Prophecy, isn't it?
APOLLO It's Prophecy!
CASSANDRA *(mutters)* Dammit.
APOLLO *(gesturing deifically)* I bestow upon you the divinely-inspired Power of Premonition!
CASSANDRA And it's permanent?
APOLLO Sure, why not. *(snaps his fingers)* The permanent power of perpetual precognition! The greatest of gifts! And also, purely by coincidence. The cheapest.
CASSANDRA Cheaper than archery lessons?
APOLLO Prophecy!
(no response, so he gives a flourish and adds:) Ta da!
CASSANDRA Thanks? I guess?
APOLLO You guessed right.

APOLLO "finds" the lingerie box in the bushes.

APOLLO Oh, wow. And look. What's this lingerie doing here? Tags still on it. Y'know, one of us should really try this on. Just to see if it's her size.
CASSANDRA I gotta be honest...
APOLLO Please, don't. Spoils the mood.
CASSANDRA I don't feel any different.
APOLLO Ahh, but how do you see?

APOLLO gestures and the lights shift, mystically.

CASSANDRA looks around.

CASSANDRA Well, there's the garden, of course... Wait, where are we? These flowers are indigenous to Thessaly. This is not my garden!
HERA *(off)* It's mine!!
APHRODITE *(off)* No, it's mine!
CASSANDRA Somebody's coming! Hide!
APOLLO Perhaps I should explain how this works—

CASSANDRA grabs APOLLO and pulls him into the bushes.

APOLLO Oof!

II. THE GOLDEN APPLE

Enter ATHENA, HERA & APHRODITE bickering over a Golden Apple.

HERA Give it back!
APHRODITE It's not yours!
ATHENA Sisters, please!

APHRODITE taunts HERA with the Apple.

HERA Give it! Give it to me!

CASSANDRA Three Great Goddesses! Hera, Aphrodite, and my personal hero
 Athena, Goddess of Wisdom!

APOLLO Well, Female Wisdom.

CASSANDRA Heroette? Hero-ess?

APOLLO I think it's just "hero". No, that doesn't sound right. Lady hero?

CASSANDRA Well, anyway... Three great role models. HER-oes. (*giggles*) And
 they're here in my garden! Well, somebody's garden.

HERA That Golden Apple is mine.

APHRODITE I don't see your name on it.

HERA snatches the Apple out of APHRODITE's hand.

HERA It doesn't have to. It says right here on the label: "To the Fairest."
 Which is me.

APHRODITE Says who?

HERA Everybody says so.

APHRODITE To your face. You wanna know what they say behind your back,
 Hera?

HERA Can't be worse than what they say behind your back, Aphrodite.

ATHENA They also write it on bathroom stalls.

APHRODITE Any publicity is good publicity.

HERA hands the Apple to ATHENA.

HERA Athena, you're the Goddess of Justice.

APOLLO (*aside to Cassandra*) Female Justice.

HERA Settle this before Aphrodite hurts herself. On my fist.

ATHENA examines the writing on the Apple.

ATHENA Clearly, the Golden Apple rightfully belongs "to the fairest" one of all.
Quod erat desputandum
HERA Which is me.
APHRODITE No, it's, me!
ATHENA Ergo... as the Goddess of Wisdom and Justice, it is an objective fact
that nobody is more *fair* than me.
APHRODITE That's not what "fair" means.
ATHENA It is literally what "fair" means.
HERA Fair means "attractive"! Physically.
ATHENA I am also the fittest.
APHRODITE You're also the fattest.
ATHENA That is sinew! I am toned!
APHRODITE Well, then it's settled. "Fair" means "attractive". And "attractive"
means me. Case dispersed.
HERA You're not attractive, you're slutty.
APHRODITE *Ergo*, attractive. (*to Athena*) Am I using that right?
ATHENA "Ergo"? Or "slutty"?
APHRODITE I know how to use "slutty"!
ATHENA And I know how to use a dagger.

ATHENA draws a dagger.

ATHENA There's only one way to settle this.

HERA and APHRODITE both immediately draw daggers as well and square off.

ATHENA Whoa, whoa, whoa! Calm down. And bend your knees. Keep your
back straight. Bad form. Have I taught you nothing?

HERA and APHRODITE adjust their stances, but continue to circle threatenly.

ATHENA I was going to say: The only *fair* way to settle this is to cut the Apple
into three equal pieces... And then for me to keep all three of them!
Ha!

They FIGHT.

**HERA VS ATHENA VS APHRODITE
3F DAGGERS (& HAND-TO-HAND)**

It is only slightly light-hearted.

APHRODITE If you harm a single hair on the head of that Apple...
ATHENA Hair? There's no hair on an apple.
APHRODITE What fruit am I thinking of?
HERA If you got any fruit with hair on it, you need to get a new gardener. Or
a new hairdresser.

CASSANDRA rushes in to break up the fight.

CASSANDRA Stop it! Why are you fighting? You are three of the greatest female role models in history.

APOLLO They can't hear you, Cassandra. It's a prophetic vision.

APOLLO gestures and the THREE GODDESSES continue fighting in slow motion.

CASSANDRA Oh. It's so real.

APOLLO gestures toward the bushes, which he has made into a bed...

APOLLO So what do you think?

...but CASSANDRA is still watching the fight.

CASSANDRA Well, Hera is the goddess of Marriage. So obviously, by definition, she's the most marriageable. But for some reason, a lotta guys are really into Aphrodite. Personally, I don't see it. Maybe if she smiled less. But I think there's something about a Warrior Goddess that is objectively speaking, way hotter than anything you can slap on with makeup.

APOLLO And some prosthetics. It's all silicon from here up. And here out.

APOLLO gestures again toward the nearby bushes:

APOLLO Now, which of these bushes would you say looks most comfortable?

III. JUDGMENT OF PARIS

CASSANDRA touches one of the Goddesses and, to her surprise, the fighting returns to normal speed.

APOLLO is a little surprised, too.

CASSANDRA I just can't believe they're fighting over an apple? Surely, three remarkable women have better things to bicker about.
(can't think of any) Shoes, for example.

APOLLO Cassandra, hush! Get back here! Don't touch that!

APOLLO tries to pull CASSANDRA back into the bushes, but the Goddesses spot him. They abruptly stop fighting each other, and ATHENA draws her sword.

APHRODITE What was that?

ATHENA Halt! Who goes there?

APOLLO *(to Cassandra)* Excuse me, that's my cue...
CASSANDRA Wait, you're here, too?
APOLLO I will be.

APOLLO steps out of the bushes and into the scene.

APOLLO Ladies! What a delightful surprise!
HERA Apollo?!
APOLLO *(laughing nervously)* Hera, Athena, Aphrodite! Such a coincidence running into the three of you here in this idyllic and secluded location.
HERA What are you doing skulking around in the bushes?
APHRODITE Oh gawd, he's been stalking someone again.
APOLLO Stalking? Pff! When have I ever?
APHRODITE It's not premonition that tells you what brand of underwear I prefer.
ATHENA Since when is "commando" a brand?
HERA We're going to have to burn this bush now.
APHRODITE Hey! Let's let Apollo decide who's fairest. You're the God of Lechery. He can speak for all men.
APOLLO It's pronounced "Archery". And you know that.
HERA Yes! And you're the God of Truth and Wisdom.
ATHENA Male Wisdom.
HERA *(mansplaining)* Which means you can mansplain anything we haven't already inferred from context.
APOLLO This is starting to feel more like a roast than a request.

HERA shows APOLLO the Golden Apple.

HERA We have this apple, inscribed "To the Fairest" and we need you to decide which of the three of us *(pointedly)* is not completely full of herself.
APOLLO Where did you get this?
HERA We were at a party. Somebody must have left it.
APOLLO Did they leave it? Or did they hurl it into the room, like a grenade?
APHRODITE Whatever. But clearly it was intended as a gift for me.
HERA Or me.
ATHENA Or me.
APOLLO Have you considered the possibility that somebody is messing with all three of you?
ATHENA It doesn't matter. It raises a valid theological question:
APHRODITE Who is the fairest of us all?
HERA And these two refuse to answer correctly.
ATHENA I already said it's objectively me!
HERA It is subjectively me!
APHRODITE It is hug-jectively me.

APHRODITE embraces APOLLO in a way that makes everyone uncomfortable.

APHRODITE *(flirtatious)* So you see, we really, really need your big strong opinion.
APOLLO Ladies, please. Of course, my taste in women is obvious—
ATHENA Don't be too hard on yourself.
APOLLO But I—*(glares at Athena)*—But I... I must recuse myself. I simply cannot be the judge.
APHRODITE *(pouts)* Aww... Why not?
APOLLO Because... and I say this to all three of you, equally. But really only to Aphrodite... You're my sister!!
APHRODITE *(unflirtatious)* Oh, that's right.
APOLLO But if I might make a suggestion. Why don't you let Paris decide?
HERA Who the Styx is Paris?

Enter PARIS.

PARIS Baaaaaa...?
APOLLO That guy.
PARIS Hey, any of you seen a lost sheep? About so tall. Brown eyes. Kinda hot.
CASSANDRA My long-lost brother Paris! Who was abducted as a child and raised by wolves! Oh no. You don't want Paris to decide. Even for a child, he had very poor judgment. One time, mother left a window unlocked and he crawled out to play with some wolf cubs he saw frolicking in the yard, because he thought they were puppies. Really, really angry puppies.
APOLLO Cassandra, hush!

APOLLO shoves CASSANDRA back into the bushes.

ATHENA *(to Paris)* You there! Goatherd!
PARIS Actually, I'm a sheep-herd. I just got a promotion. Shep-herd? Shepherder?
APHRODITE He'll do.
PARIS Sheep wrangler? Sheepler? Shpangler?
ATHENA Why? Because he probably hasn't seen a human female since childbirth?
PARIS Flock-tologist? Ovine-ecologist?
HERA You're right, he's perfect.
APHRODITE *(to Paris)* Hey, buddy! You wanna judge a beauty pageant?
ATHENA Don't call it that.
APHRODITE Fine. *(to Paris)* You wanna judge a "scholarship competition"?
PARIS What's it pay?
HERA Pay?
PARIS Cuz I'm probably gonna lose my job over this. I already lost two sheep today. And Chloe was the boss's favorite. So if I get distracted again—No, wait, there she is.

(to sheep) Chloe! Baaaaa! You come back here! Don't give me that look! You stick with the flock. We talked about this.

(to Goddesses) Okay, only one sheep I've lost today. But if I lose another one, the boss is gonna have my hide. And he is a taxidermist. So what are we talking? And can I get that in drachma?

APHRODITE There's no pay.

PARIS Okay, I'm out.

HERA You get to spend the afternoon ogling two or three of the most out-of-your-league women in the known universe!

ATHENA You should be paying us!

APHRODITE Now who's a whore?

PARIS Wait, there's women in this? Okay, I'm in!

(to the sheep) Go on, shoo! Shoo! You're free!

(to Hera) So how does this work? Do we all get naked?

PARIS starts undressing.

HERA No! Nobody's getting naked.

APHRODITE is already half way there.

ATHENA Aphrodite!

APHRODITE What?

HERA Good God, goddess! He's judging who's fairest, not barest.

APHRODITE For your information, I am also fair down there.

ATHENA Fair to middlin'.

HERA gently averts PARIS' gaze away from APHRODITE.

HERA No, we will all remain fully-clothed.

ATHENA And no touching!

APHRODITE *(raises her hand)* Can I touch myself?

HERA *(to Paris)* We just need you to sit right here and judge... Who is the fairest one of all?

PARIS Boy, I dunno. It's been awhile. I gotta tell ya, when you've spent as much time with sheep as I have, anything with two legs starts to look pretty good. Two less legs, I mean.

APHRODITE *(to Paris)* You just need to think back to the last time you were with a woman—

PARIS *(thinking)* Well...

ATHENA Other than your mother.

PARIS Oh. Right.

APHRODITE The last woman you had impure thoughts about.

PARIS *(thinking)* Well...

ATHENA Other than your mother!!

PARIS Right, right.

HERA Stop bad mouthing the boy's mother! It's probably the closest he's ever been to a goddess. (*massaging Paris' temples*) Just think about momma, and remember all the qualities that make a woman *fair*... Beauty. Grace.

APHRODITE Allure.

ATHENA Strength.

APHRODITE Shut up.

ATHENA Intelligence. Wisdom.

APHRODITE Don't listen to her.

PARIS I wasn't.

HERA And when you are done thinking... (*handing him a juice box*) And you've finished your juice box... Just tell us. Which of us is half as fair as the woman who raised you?

ATHENA hands him the Golden Apple.

PARIS And if I guess right, I get to keep this Golden Apple?

HERA & ATHENA No!!

HERA The Apple is the prize!

PARIS For guessing right?

ATHENA The prize you award to the winner.

HERA And you're not "guessing". The answer should be obvious!

PARIS Oh, it is, it is. Answer to what?

ATHENA Oy. Can we get one of the sheep back in here to do this?

HERA Who is the fairest!!!!

PARIS And if I guess right?

HERA You're not getting the Apple!

APHRODITE Don't yell at him. He's just experiencing cognitive dissonance from such an overwhelming display of feminine Fairness, and the fact that the two of you are also here.

ATHENA Bitch.

APHRODITE I mean, seriously, why do we hang out?

HERA Shut up.

ATHENA (*to Paris*) There is no pay per se. Buuuut there might be *other* rewards. For a job well done.

PARIS Like what? And don't say "pride in a job well done."

ATHENA Don't tell me what to do!

APHRODITE (*encroaching slinkily*) How about... the eternal gratitude of three very generous, and very well-endowed—

ATHENA For gods' sake.

APHRODITE Endowed with power! You didn't let me finish.

HERA shoves APHRODITE aside.

HERA The Goddess of Booty is right.

APHRODITE It's pronounced—! Y'know what? I'll take it.

HERA Look, if you do your job right, I'm sure there will be untold rewards.
PARIS Such as?
HERA Untold!!

CASSANDRA Are they trying to bribe the judge?

PARIS *(annoyed)* Look, if you all think you can bribe me... then you have got
to speak much slower. And one at a time.

ATHENA *(shoving Hera aside)* I could give you military might. Make you a
warrior feared throughout the Mediterranean.

HERA *(elbows her way back in)* I could give you a kingdom. Power beyond
your shepherdly dreams.

APHRODITE And I could give you the single most beautiful woman in the world.
PARIS And she's single?
APHRODITE *(shrugs)* More or less.
ATHENA *(scorns)* You're going to just give him a woman?
APHRODITE Go with your strengths. Yours is what? Moving refrigerators?
ATHENA You're so tacky.

PARIS ponders.

PARIS It's every goatherd's dream. To be a wealthy warrior king with the
most beautiful trophy bride in the whole wide flock. And if I do this, I
get all three of those things!

CASSANDRA You idiot!
(to Apollo) They're not gonna give him all three. The two losers are
going to be pissed off and give him nothing. If he's lucky!

APOLLO Okay, spoiler alert?

PARIS I have to admit, that hot wife thing sounds like a sweet deal.
ATHENA *(scoffs)* Are you kidding? One heroic battle and you can have any
woman in the kingdom.

HERA *(scoffs)* One sprawling kingdom and you can have any woman in the
world.

APHRODITE *(whispers)* One word from me, and she can be here and sprawling in
an hour.

PARIS *(to Athena & Hera)* You all make very good points. If I work hard and
make good choices, I can eventually have everything Aphrodite is
offering to give me right now.

HERA & ATHENA Exactly!

PARIS On the other hand... *(to Aphrodite)* An hour, you say?
APHRODITE Two hours if you want her to bring a friend.

CASSANDRA You see? This is why you don't want Paris to judge anything. He's
like an idiot trapped in a man's body. Which, now that I hear it out
loud, I realize I just described a man. Sounded better in my head.

HERA *(whispers)* Pick me and get power.
ATHENA *(whispers)* Pick me and get prowess.
APHRODITE *(whispers)* Pick me and get laid.
PARIS Laid, please!

PARIS awards the Golden Apple to APHRODITE.

CASSANDRA But Paris—!
APOLLO Cassandra, hush.

PARIS *(thought he heard something)* What was that?
APHRODITE *(declaims)* The heart of Helen of Sparta, the most beautiful woman in the world... is yours for the taking! Go get her!

PARIS turns to leave. CASSANDRA jumps in front of him.

CASSANDRA Stop! No! Helen of Sparta is already married! To Menelaus of Sparta. It will mean war. Can't you see that?!
(sotto voce) Plus, the Goddess of Marital Fidelity is standing right there.
APOLLO He can't hear you, Cassandra. This is a prophetic vision. You're not really here. Also, technically, none of this has happened yet.
PARIS *(to Aphrodite)* But not just her heart, right? It's the whole package? Or was I not reading the room?
ATHENA You're not reading the room right now. Get outta here!

ATHENA draws her sword. PARIS hurries out. APHRODITE smugly polishes the Apple on her sleeve.

APHRODITE Well, I'm glad that's settled.
HERA I hope you choke on that apple.
APHRODITE Don't be ridiculous. I have no gag reflex.

As the GODDESSES exit, the lights shift again...

END of PREMONITION

IV. CASSANDRA CURSED

CASSANDRA I have to warn my family!
APOLLO Um... You're welcome?
CASSANDRA Excuse me?

APOLLO Don't give me that look. I've just given you arguably the greatest gift any impressionable young innocent has ever received from an older, but still quite virile, male benefactor. Don't you want to thank me?

CASSANDRA Thank you. But I really gotta go.

APOLLO And this is the thanks I get?? A cursory curtsy and a curt word of thanks?

CASSANDRA I don't know what you want from me. Thank you... very much?

APOLLO No, I know you say you're grateful. But don't you want to show me?

CASSANDRA Show you?

APOLLO How grateful you are?

CASSANDRA I don't under—?

APOLLO Sexually?

CASSANDRA Oh.

APOLLO With your body.

CASSANDRA No, I got it.

APOLLO Not even the whole body, necessarily. Just parts.

CASSANDRA Okay...

APOLLO The mouth. The nethers.

CASSANDRA Look, Apollo. If it means that much to you...

APOLLO It does. It really does.

CASSANDRA How about if I just give it back?

APOLLO Give it back?

CASSANDRA May I?

APOLLO You want to return a gift from the gods?

CASSANDRA If it's not too much trouble.

APOLLO futilely snaps his fingers, muttering under his breath:

APOLLO Wish you woulda said something before I made it permanent.

CASSANDRA I mean, it's very nice and all, but I really don't know what I'd do with it.

APOLLO *(melodramatically refusing)* No, no, I don't want it back. A gift is a gift and I expect nothing in return.

CASSANDRA Except sexual favors?

APOLLO As an expression of gratitude! It can be strictly consensual.

CASSANDRA *(snarks)* Can it, now?

APOLLO I don't think I like your tone.

CASSANDRA Okay, look, Apollo.

APOLLO Wuh oh. This one's worse.

CASSANDRA I am, and always will be, a loyal and devoted virgin priestess of Apollo.

APOLLO Good to know.

CASSANDRA Emphasis on virgin.

APOLLO So?

CASSANDRA So, no.

APOLLO *(puzzled)* What does that mean?

CASSANDRA It means "no".
APOLLO *(still doesn't get it)* In what language?

CASSANDRA just glares at him.

APOLLO Ahhhh... I see where this is going. Your lips say "No..."
CASSANDRA What do these pliers say?

CASSANDRA grabs some garden tools and applies them to APOLLO.

**OPTIONAL: A SMALL PHYSICAL
ALTERCATION WITH APOLLO?
§ 1F/1M HAND-TO-HAND**

APOLLO Ow! Stop! Stop!
CASSANDRA But if you'd like me to return the gift, I will be more than happy—
APOLLO No refunds! Store credit only— Ow ow ow! Okay, fine! Keep the
gift! See if I care! But I curse you, Cassandra!
CASSANDRA You're cursing me?
APOLLO That's right.
CASSANDRA Because I won't sleep with you?
APOLLO You mess with the bull, you get the horns.
CASSANDRA What's that supposed to mean?
APOLLO *(cursing)* Though you always know the future,
Though you always speak the truth,
May you never once be heeded,
Nor respected, nor believéd,
Even when you're right all the time about everything!
CASSANDRA That's womanhood. You just described the fate of every girl over 18
in this country. And under 17. And not just this country. Pretty much
every woman everywhere.
APOLLO Y'know what? Let me start over: I curse you, Cassandra—!
CASSANDRA Gotta go.

CASSANDRA rushes out.

APOLLO Come back here! We're not done with this conversation! I mean, this
part, yes. But we are going to circle back!

V. FAMILY MEETING!

Scene: TROJAN WAR ROOM.

*The TROJAN ROYAL FAMILY is enduring the heat of the sweltering Trojan
summer here, because it's the coolest room in the house. Cassandra's mother*

HECUBA fans herself with a peacock feather. Her older brother HECTOR sprawls on a chaise. Younger brother TROILUS fans himself with a smaller peacock feather.

CASSANDRA rushes in.

CASSANDRA Okay, Family meeting! What the—?

There's hardly anyone here. HECTOR springs to his feet.

HECTOR Family meeting? Is that today? I gotta get out of here.

CASSANDRA Hector, come back here!

HECTOR slumps back into his torpor.

CASSANDRA I called an emergency family meeting! Where is everybody?

HECUBA I think they heard there was a family meeting, so they left.

HECTOR springs to his feet.

HECTOR Family meeting? Is that today?

CASSANDRA Hector, sit!

HECTOR sulks back onto the couch.

CASSANDRA Where's Polyxena? Where's Daddy?

POLYXENA *(pouts)* I'm right here!

HECUBA Your father is the King. You know he has executive time about now.

CASSANDRA So he's taking a nap?

HECUBA *(shrugs)* It's harder than he makes it look.

CASSANDRA Well, thank you for coming, Mother.

HECUBA I didn't come. It's hot as Hephaestus outside and this is the coolest room in the house.

CASSANDRA And Hector?

HECTOR springs to his feet.

HECTOR Family meeting? I can come back later.

CASSANDRA Get back here!

TROILUS I'm gonna go see Cressida.

CASSANDRA Cressida can wait, Troilus. Sit!

TROILUS *(grumbles)* ...bossy.

CASSANDRA Okay, I have good news, and bad news, and also some pretty horrible news. Apollo, the God of Prophecy and Truth, and yada yada yada... has given me the ability to see the future.

HECUBA So you're a prophet now? You poor thing. And what's the good news?

CASSANDRA That is the good news! I now have the power of Precognition.
HECUBA If you say so. I would have asked for a chariot pulled by swans.
CASSANDRA I can foresee future problems and come up with preemptive solutions so we don't have to face them. How is that bad?
HECUBA If you see the future, you'll know all the horrible things that are going to happen and you'll be plagued with worry your whole life, instead of enjoying yourself in blissful ignorance like a young girl should.
TROILUS Especially, if it's plague.
HECUBA Like Troilus here who has no future and no foresight and thinks only about Cressida that nice girl from the Merchant District.
CASSANDRA Okay, perfect example. Thanks to the gift of Prophecy...
(*to Troilus*) I can forewarn you that your girlfriend Cressida is a treasonous little trollop who's going to betray our city, betray you to the enemy and then make the beast-with-four-backs with the first three Greeks who come along.
TROILUS She what?!
HECUBA Well, don't ruin it for him!
TROILUS Cressida cheats on me?
CASSANDRA With half the Greek armada. And the other half is "not her type".
TROILUS (*sobs*) I have to see Cressida!
CASSANDRA Stay here!
HECUBA You see? And now your brother is miserable. Prophecy is a curse.
HECTOR Unless we use it to see the future and then do something to prevent the horrible things from happening. And then it would be the good news.
CASSANDRA That's exactly what I just said!
HECTOR Thanks.
CASSANDRA No, that's not—! I wasn't—! Rrrgh!
HECTOR Well, then what's the bad news?
CASSANDRA Our long-lost brother Paris is alive and well and, well, he's going to steal Helen of Sparta from her husband and start a war that will get us all killed. I could go into details, but I see some of you have just eaten.
HECUBA That's wonderful news! Paris is alive?
CASSANDRA And he's going to start a war that gets us all killed.
HECTOR And?
CASSANDRA And we have to stop him. Before he gets us all killed.
HECTOR And how do you suggest we do that?
CASSANDRA Well, I suggest that... Someone go find him and bring him back before he does it.
HECTOR So you mean I have to find him, right? It's always "Hector, do this," and "Hector, do that." Be nice if somebody else did some finding and stopping and doing around here.
CASSANDRA You're the commander of our armed forces. You have literally every male Trojan over the age of consent at your beck and call. You don't have to do anything. Just tell whoever you tell to do things to do it. And they'll do it for you.

HECTOR You think it's that simple?
CASSANDRA Yes! In fact that's exactly how simple I think you are.
HECTOR I'd like to see you do it.
CASSANDRA I would love to see that, too. Unfortunately, our entire history just
 flashed before my eyes. And somehow female commander-in-chief
 never comes up! Ever. So if you don't mind, "Commander"—
HECTOR Why are you making air-quotes?
CASSANDRA —would you please show your devotion to Nike the Goddess of
 Victory and "Just do it!"
HECTOR Do what?
CASSANDRA Find Paris!
HECTOR (*grumbles*) ...bossy.
TROIUS What'd I tell you?
CASSANDRA Is nobody going to try to find Paris?!

HECUBA points to the door.

HECUBA Don't bother, he's right there.

Enter PARIS.

PARIS Baaaaaa...? Sorry, old habits.
CASSANDRA Paris, you're here. ...Already.
PARIS Do I know you?
CASSANDRA Okay... So I guess Apollo gave me a vision of the future. Just not a
 very distant future. (*mutters*) Dammit, Apollo.
HECUBA Paris! Welcome home! We missed you so much. Come give your
 mother a hug.
HECTOR We never stopped looking for you. We were just talking about it,
 actually.

HECUBA notices his bow and arrows.

HECUBA What is that, a bow? So you're an archer now? I'm so proud of you.
PARIS And I'm in a jug band.
HECUBA A what?

PARIS twangs his bow.

PARIS So, do I know you people? I was just wandering by and this seemed
 like a great place to take refuge. Y'know, if someone was, I dunno,
 after me. For some reason.
HECUBA We're your family. You're a Prince of Troy.
HECTOR Not the Crown Prince. Just sayin'.
PARIS So wait, so you guys are the ones who fed me to the wolves?
CASSANDRA No. No. You did that to yourself.

HECUBA Leave the poor boy alone. Hasn't he suffered enough?
CASSANDRA Okay, so, great. No, this is good. He's here now. We just have to keep him here. Lock him in his room and never let him leave the house, so he never meets Helen. And problem solved. Or chain him up in the dungeon. Or send him to a convent. Or tie him to this couch. Or anything to prevent him from marrying Helen and destroying the kingdom. And all of us with it.
PARIS Which reminds me... I'd like you all to meet my newlywed bride Helen. ...Sweetheart?

Enter HELEN.

HELEN Baaaaaa!
PARIS I taught her that.
HELEN Hi.
CASSANDRA *(mutter)* Dammit, Apollo...

VI. CASSANDRA VERSUS HELEN OF TROY (& PARIS)
--

CASSANDRA Okay, no problem, so we have to lock her up! Before she gets us all killed. Or send her to a convent.
HELEN Or that couch thing sounds fun.
HECTOR All right, that's enough of your nonsense, Cassandra.
(to Helen) Don't mind her. She acts a little crazy around this time.
HELEN Of day?
HECTOR No.
HELEN Of the month?
HECTOR No! Ew! I'm never gonna be able to unsee that.
HELEN Well then...?
CASSANDRA He means the Bronze Age.
HELEN Oh. The what?
HECTOR See what I mean? *(sotto voce)* Crazy...
CASSANDRA So none of you is going to do anything about this... very obvious problem?
HECUBA Cassandra, please, we have guests. *(to Helen)* You are not a problem.
HELEN Who are you people, again?
CASSANDRA Do you understand what happens when the Greeks find out Helen is missing? And that she's not missing, she's here? And Paris took her? And now they're married!?!
TROIUS No. Tell us, you're so smart.
HECTOR Yeah, I don't see how this is an issue.
CASSANDRA I already told you.
TROIUS Yeah, but we weren't listening.
CASSANDRA This whole... star-crossed cluster-fondle starts a war. And gets each and every one of us killed in increasingly creative and sadistic ways.
TROIUS Like what?

CASSANDRA First they surround us. Then they starve us. Then they find a way to breach these walls.
HECTOR Ha ha ha! The walls of Troy? How is that even possible?
CASSANDRA And once they get inside, they destroy and pillage the entire city. They round up every male over the age of swaddling and kill him. And they round up any girl over the age of 7 and traffick her to every whorehouse in the Mediterranean.
TROIUS HA HA HA!

Everyone glares at TROIUS.

CASSANDRA What is funny about that?
TROIUS Cassandra thinks she can see the future!
HELEN She's right, though. Menelaus is going to be pissed.
CASSANDRA Our father, Priam, the last king of Troy is dragged onto the altar of Zeus and clubbed to death with the corpse of one of his baby grandchildren.
HECUBA My god! Which one?!
CASSANDRA Does it matter?!?
HECUBA Oh, I hope it's not Astyanax. He has such a sweet face.
CASSANDRA Hector is killed in a senseless duel with Achilles, and then dragged around the city at the back of his chariot. There's not much left of his sweet face.
HECTOR What?
CASSANDRA Troilus is also killed by Achilles, after he is lured into a trap by his hot mess of a girlfriend Cressida.
TROIUS What??
CASSANDRA Mother, you turn into a snarling dog after you find out what happens to Polyxena and Polydorus.
HECUBA What happens to them?
CASSANDRA Well... Polyxena is sacrificed as a blood offering to the wind gods so the Greeks can have smoother sailing on their way home. Because for sailors, they apparently suck at rowing.
HECUBA What???
CASSANDRA And Polydorus gets thrown off a cliff.
HECUBA Grrrr...
CASSANDRA And Paris... Pretty much every single warrior on both sides has a literal axe to grind and wants to personally see you impaled on his shaft, but I'm gonna say the lucky grinder is... Philoctetes.
PARIS Who?
CASSANDRA Helen, of course, goes back to Sparta and lives happily ever after, which she should do right now and spare us all a lot of grief.
HELEN I dunno. War sounds fun. I'll have so many stories to tell.

CASSANDRA brings it back around to HELEN:

CASSANDRA OOOOORRRR we could send this one home right now, and none of this happens. To any of us!
HELEN Oh no! I'm not going back there! You know what they eat in Sparta? It's mostly red meat and dairy. The vapors alone are enough to choke a songbird. You know what my skin is gonna look like in 30 years?
HECUBA You're gonna need moisturizer. Welcome to the family, Helen.

HECUBA goes in for a hug.

CASSANDRA Augh! Fine, I'll do it myself.

CASSANDRA seizes HELEN.

HELEN Hey! No grabbing!

They FIGHT.

<p>CASSANDRA VS HELEN +PARIS § 2F HAND-TO-HAND & SWORDS +1M UNARMED</p>

HELEN Agh! Not the hair!
CASSANDRA Sorry, sister, you gotta leave. You don't have to go to Sparta, but you can't stay here.
HELEN But I like it here! You people seem gullible.

HELEN grabs Paris' sword and attacks CASSANDRA.

PARIS Hey!
HELEN *(brandishing a sword)* Stay back! I've got one of these, and I know how to use it!
(examines the hilt, puzzled) Where's the safety on this thing?
HECTOR I think she's bluffing.
HELEN *(brandishes again)* Back! Back!
CASSANDRA Careful! Careful!
HELEN You think because I'm gorgeous, I can't defend myself?
CASSANDRA I never said that!

CASSANDRA grabs Hector's sword and fights back.

HECTOR Hey!
HECUBA For gods' sakes, boys, button your sheathes.
HELEN Don't just stand there, Paris! Defend me!
PARIS She's really very nice, once you get to know her.
HELEN Not like that!
PARIS You took my sword.
CASSANDRA We just want to take you home. To Sparta. Where you belong.

HELEN You'll have to kill me first!
CASSANDRA Now, no, nobody's trying to kill you.
HELEN You know what happens to me if I return to Sparta?
CASSANDRA Nothing!
HELEN That's right! Menelaus will take me back in a heartbeat.
PARIS I dunno, he seemed kinda angry.
CASSANDRA Shut up, Paris!
HELEN He will welcome me home with open arms. Those hairy, sweaty arms. And one of us will live happily ever after. Guess which one!!
TROIUS (*raises his hand*) Oh. I know this one.
HELEN Do you know why my father chose Menelaus to be my husband? He wanted a new boat! The old one had 100 thousand nautical miles on it.
HECTOR That's a lot. He's gonna need a hull change, at least. And you're gonna wanna rotate the sails.
HELEN The man is nearly retired! He doesn't need a new speedcraft! My father was having a mid-life crisis. So he married me off to the guy who owns a dealership.
HELEN Menelaus gets a new wife. Daddy gets a new yacht. And I got a royal palace whose décor could best be described as... *Spartan!*
CASSANDRA It's still a palace! You entitled, little...
HELEN I deserve better! I'm Helen of wherever the Hell I am! I could've had any man in the world. Literally. They had a sign up sheet.
HELEN (*points at Hector*) I could have this guy right now.
PARIS That's my brother!
HECTOR (*to Paris*) You are dead to me.
HELEN Any man in the world!! And 2/3 of the women. You don't think Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons knows how to treat a lady? You bet your sweet maidenhead she does! That woman practically invented cunnilingus.
HECTOR Is anybody else kinda weirdly turned on by this?
TROIUS That's your sister.
PARIS And your sister-in-law.
HECTOR Yeah, me, too.
HELEN I swear to gods, I'll kill myself if I have to go back there. And then I'll kill our children. And then I'll kill Menelaus!
HECUBA Oh don't do that.
HECTOR Yeah, it's all out of order.
TROIUS You gotta kill the children first.
CASSANDRA Don't give her ideas!
HELEN We don't even have children. So first, I'll have some children. And then I'll kill the children, so Menelaus has to watch. And then I'll kill Menelaus, so I have to watch. And then I'll make a pitcher of margaritas. And I'll go down to the marina. And I'll burn my Daddy's yacht!

PARIS All right...
CASSANDRA Stay out of this, Paris.

HELEN hammers at CASSANDRA, driving her back.

HELEN *I*...shouldn't have...to settle!!
PARIS Cassandra, stop it! Don't hurt her!
CASSANDRA Hurt her?!
PARIS All right, that's enough!

PARIS leaps in between them. CASSANDRA stabs them both by accident.

PARIS Ow!? You hurt me!
HELEN Argh! You killed us both.

THE FAMILY is in shock. So is CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA Uh oh.
HECUBA Cassandra. What have you done?
CASSANDRA I think I just prevented the Trojan War.
HECTOR The what?
PARIS I will love you forever.
HELEN If sheep have a heaven. I hope they send you to that part. Because, seriously, the smell.

EVERYONE glares at CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA Well, look on the bright side: At least we don't have to worry about that prophecy coming true.

Just then, they hear Greek battle trumpets outside the Walls...

AGAMEMNON (*outside*) Attention in the City! This is the Greeks. We have you surrounded.

VII. OLYMPUS, WE HAVE A PROBLEM

Scene: OLYMPUS.

THREE GODDESSES at SPARRING PRACTICE.

**ATHENA VS HERA & APHRODITE
§ 3F SPARRING SWORDS**

ATHENA singlehandedly duels the other two, easily holding them both at bay, while giving them unsolicited pointers.

ATHENA Watch your flank. Watch your back. Watch your mouth.

APHRODITE gloats about her Apple.

APHRODITE Y'know what I'm thinking? Apple-tinis. Is that a thing? I'm gonna make it a thing.

ATHENA Keep your guard up. Keep your head down.

APHRODITE Or maybe I should make a cobbler.

HERA You don't cook.

APHRODITE So?

HERA So cobbler is a baked good. It requires an oven. And effort.

ATHENA Watch your footwork! Hands. Hands!

APHRODITE I've never seen you cook, either.

HERA I'm the Goddess of Marriage and Homemaking.

APHRODITE So??

ATHENA Aphrodite...

HERA So I cooked once. And it was so damn delicious, he married me!

ATHENA Hera...

HERA And now it's my house, and I hire people to do the cooking!

HERA lunges at APHRODITE, but ATHENA deftly disarms them both, abruptly ending the fight.

ATHENA You both need to focus more on your hands and less on your mouth.

APHRODITE You wouldn't say that if you had my mouth. Or her hands. Ew. So scaly.

HERA This is not my weapon-of-choice. Why do we always practice with sparring swords?

ATHENA Because it's practice. This is how you learn.

HERA But a sharpened blade would give me more incentive.

ATHENA Because you'd work harder to defend yourself?

HERA No, if my blade were sharpened.

APOLLO rushes in.

APOLLO Olympus, we have a problem! The Trojan War is starting! That idiot Paris stole Helen from Menelaus, and he got his brother Agamemnon to attack Troy.

HERA Already? You told us that would be later. Much later.

ATHENA Like a lifetime away.

APOLLO Yes! A mortal lifetime! Crateus of Crete, to be exact. And this morning he choked on a fishbone. So it's happening now!

HERA And you couldn't have predicted this?

APOLLO Prophecy is really less of a science and more of an art form.
ATHENA And you're really less of an artist and more of a moron.
HERA I thought you were going to do something about it. Give the Trojans
 the gift of Prophecy or something, so they would know not to do
 something so stupid.
APOLLO Well, not all of the Trojans.
APHRODITE Just the hot ones?
APOLLO That's beside the point.
ATHENA So what went wrong?
APOLLO Is it my fault they never listen to her???
HERA Something tells me it is.
APOLLO That's also beside the point.
APHRODITE So what is the point? I'm making appletinis and I really don't want to
 have time for this.
APOLLO The point is: It is what it is, and now we have to do something.

APHRODITE brandishes her sparring blade.

APHRODITE I fight for Troy. And for love. *(exits)*
ATHENA I fight for Athens. And for honor. *(exits)*
HERA I fight for humiliating Aphrodite. In any way possible. *(exits)*
ATHENA *(comes back)* I changed my mind. That's what I wanna do, too.

They all exit.

VIII. THIS MEANS WAR!!

Scene: THE RAMPARTS and BEFORE THE GATES of Troy

*The Trojans gather on the Ramparts – CASSANDRA, HECUBA, HECTOR,
TROIUS. Below them, AGAMEMNON and the Greeks, and ACHILLES.*

AGAMEMNON Attention on the ramparts! This is Agamemnon and the mighty and
 undefeated Greek armada.
ACHILLES Plus Achilles!
AGAMEMNON *(grumbles)* Would you stop?

Enter HECUBA, on the ramparts.

HECUBA Hello, Agamemnon.
AGAMEMNON Ah, Queen Hecuba! Nice to see you again! Can I speak to the King?
HECUBA King Priam can't come to the siege right now. Would you like to leave
 a message?
AGAMEMNON We're looking for my brother's wife, Helen. Helen of Sparta.

Offstage effort grunts throughout scene, as we here CASSANDRA dragging a body up the stairs to the wall.

- HECUBA Helen of Sparta? Never heard of her. Have you tried looking in Sparta?
- AGAMEMNON She may be traveling under an alias. Helen of Athens. Helen of Argos. Helen of Thessaly. Helen of Thebes. ...Helen of Troy, maybe?
- HECUBA Why would she go by Helen of Troy? She's not Helen of Obvious, is she?
- AGAMEMNON All right, look! We know she's in there. So just send Helen out now and nobody gets hurt.

CASSANDRA finally drags Helen's body up onto the ramparts and unceremoniously dumps it over the wall. AGAMEMNON stares at the body.

AGAMEMNON Okay, well... Prepare to die, I guess.

The Greeks go off to prepare for battle. The Family glares at CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA *(shrugs)* It was worth a shot.

The Trojans shake their heads in dismay and file back inside.

-----**INTERMISSION**-----

IX. EVERYBODY, SHELTER IN PLACE! ... WHERE'S TROILUS?

Scene: TROJAN WAR ROOM.

The Trojans gather to dither over battle plans: HECUBA, HECTOR pore over maps. POLYDORUS stares out a window.

HECTOR Well, we're doomed.
HECUBA *(exasperated)* We sent you to military school.
HECTOR In the walled city of Troy! They taught us how to bake delicious bread and graciously accept surrenders.

CASSANDRA enters with an armload of ancient scrolls.

HECUBA And where have you been?
CASSANDRA The library.
HECTOR How can you think of homework at a time like this?!
CASSANDRA I was doing research.
HECTOR Great. Now she thinks she's an alchemist.
CASSANDRA Look, I know this looks bad, but trust me, all the signs and sigils suggest that we're safe as long as we stay inside the Walls of Troy.
HECTOR Is this another one of your crazy prophecies?
CASSANDRA It's not just me. I looked it up. And it's in all the prophecies.

CASSANDRA reads a scroll.

CASSANDRA Look, here's one that says, "Priam's Troy shall never fall, if nothing Greek comes within its walls."
HECTOR That's kinda racist.

CASSANDRA reads another scroll.

CASSANDRA And this one says, "The unkillable Achilles is destined to die with Paris' arrowhead lodged in his thigh."
HECTOR Um...
CASSANDRA I'm just gonna put a pin in that one. They can't all be winners.

She sets that one aside.

CASSANDRA Okay, but here's another one that says Troy will live a thousand years if Troilus lives to 20. And he's 19 now.
POLYDORUS 19³/₄.
CASSANDRA See? Even better! 19³/₄! So we just stay inside a few more weeks. Keep Troilus indoors. Keep him away from the windows.

CASSANDRA gently but firmly moves POLYDORUS away from the window.

CASSANDRA Wait a minute. You're not Troilus.
POLYDORUS I'm Polydorus. Is it true I get thrown off a cliff?
CASSANDRA Where's Troilus?!

They all glance around in a panic. Troilus is not there.

X. CASSANDRA VERSUS CRESSIDA

Scene: THE GREEK CAMP.

Enter CRESSIDA, disguised as a Greek soldier, with TROILUS in tow, sneaking through the Greek camp. CRESSIDA seems to be in a hurry to get somewhere. TROILUS takes her in his arms.

TROILUS O precious Cressida! The gods are cruel to let this horrible war keep us from each other's arms. I, shut up with my loyal family, in the Royal Chambers of Troy like a rich prisoner. Subsisting on nothing but bread and water.
CRESSIDA Well, cake and water.
TROILUS And you, stranded out here in the filthy Greek encampment with the filthy Greeks. And their marauding Myrmidons. And the icky Ithacans. I could go on, but you get the idea.
CRESSIDA Ssh! Keep your voice down, Troilus. There are Greeks all around us. If they hear you, they'll catch you. And they'll kill you. And I won't get the reward. ...of seeing you live past 19¾.

CRESSIDA tries to exit into a tent.

TROILUS And those despicable Spartans! I mean, who dresses like that? There are women and children watching from the walls of the city.
CRESSIDA *(hisses)* Troilus! You are 14th in line to the Trojan throne. You would think that shutting up and doing as you're told would be second nature by now. Now hush! Let's talk about it inside this tent.

TROILUS takes her in his arms again.

TROILUS My sweet caressible Cressida... Forced to flee the city that you love – and the Troilus that loves you back – by your treacherous father and his treasonous scheming.
CRESSIDA And I wish you'd stop calling my father a traitor. He's Greek. We're not defecting. He's getting us a ride home. I get to see my grandma. Why can't you be happy for me?
TROILUS Your grandmother? Is she also a filthy Greek?

CRESSIDA I'm Greek! Technically, I would be betraying my family if I left them and stayed here with you.

TROILUS You would do that for me?

CASSANDRA No! Troy is your home. You grew up within its walls. But I just got here. Remember that first night we met? Down by the fountain in the town square? About a week ago??

TROILUS I'll never forget that fountain.

CRESSIDA And you said, "Where have you been all my life?" And I said, "Greece. My father's here on business." And you laughed like I'd said something super, super funny.

TROILUS *(chuckles)* And I said, "That reminds me of a Greek joke. But it's filthy."

CRESSIDA And I said, "Are all Trojans this dumb? It's a wonder you're still in the gene pool." And you laughed again.

TROILUS *(laughing)* Because Gene!

CRESSIDA Because you knew someone named Eugene who almost drowned in your swimming pool.

TROILUS Oh, no, he drowned. He was cleaning the filter.

CRESSIDA Oh my gods! I thought he survived!

TROILUS Why?

CRESSIDA Because you were laughing!

TROILUS Well, he was staff. So it's kinda funny. Guess you had to be there.

CRESSIDA Were you there??

TROILUS *(laughing)* Yes!

CRESSIDA Why didn't you pull him out?

TROILUS That's what staff is for.

CRESSIDA *(disgusted)* Ugh. Okay, I'm out. *(signaling)* Ca-caw!
Listen to me, Troilus. Watching someone die is never ever funny. Ever. Unless you've been waiting a whole week to see it. Now can we please talk inside the tent?!

TROILUS Are you flirting with me, Cressida?

CRESSIDA Will that get you in the tent?

TROILUS Alas, I fear that our innocence(s) will not survive the night if we find ourselves alone together in a darkened tent on a sweltering summer beachfront.

CRESSIDA Uh huh. And would that get you into the tent?

TROILUS O cherished Cressida! Why must we rendezvous like spies in the night? Sneaking across a blood-spattered battlefield? And for what? Because of a brother I barely know. And a sister-in-law I barely know even more. Or is it less? The point is that I barely know both. And neither one of them is worth dying a virgin over. You are still a virgin, right?

CRESSIDA *(calling into the tent)* Ca-caw!

TROILUS If our first time together is to be our last time together, then I would rather it be the first time than the second or third. Wouldn't you? *(no response)* Or fourth. *(no response)* Fourth or fifth?

CRESSIDA *(calling)* Ca-caw! Ca-caw!
TROILUS It's not more than six, is it?

Enter CASSANDRA, also disguised as a soldier.

CASSANDRA Troilus, there you are!
CRESSIDA Who are you?
TROILUS *(mumbles, embarrassed)* It's Cassandra...
CASSANDRA I'm his sister.
CRESSIDA Cassandra? The crazy sister? What are you doing here?
CASSANDRA Troilus, get back in the house!
 (to Cressida) And you, stay away from him!
CRESSIDA Nuh uh. He's mine. He's coming with me!

They FIGHT.

<p>CASSANDRA VS CRESSIDA +TROILUS § 2F SWORDS +1M UNARMED</p>

CASSANDRA Keep your hands off my brother!
TROILUS Don't listen to her! I don't think your hands are filthy at all!
CRESSIDA She didn't say they were filthy!
TROILUS Did I say "filthy"? I meant "Greek". Your hands aren't Greek at all!
CASSANDRA They're totally Greek!
TROILUS You take that back!
CASSANDRA Troilus, get out of the way!

TROILUS tries to intervene.

TROILUS I won't let you hurt her!
CASSANDRA I'm trying not to hurt you!

TROILUS lunges at CASSANDRA. They struggle for her sword. CASSANDRA manages to shove TROILUS out of the way, but CRESSIDA takes advantage of the distraction to stab CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA Agh!
TROILUS Cassandra!
CRESSIDA Ha!

CRESSIDA stabs CASSANDRA again and kicks her into the nearby tent. She goes in after her, to finish the job.

TROILUS Cressida!

TROILUS runs into the tent to try to stop her.

Loud offstage effort grunts, as CRESSIDA brutally and repeatedly stabs CASSANDRA!

TROILUS *(offstage)* Oh God! Oh God! Oh Cressida! Oh God!

The lights shift, disturbingly...

CRESSIDA emerges from the tent, victorious. And dressed in a nightgown, for some reason.

CRESSIDA I betcha didn't see that coming, didja, bitch?!

CASSANDRA enters from the opposite side. With Cressida's sword, for some reason. She picks up her own sword, where it had fallen.

CASSANDRA Actually, I did see it coming.

CRESSIDA What the—? Who are you? What are you doing with my sword?

CASSANDRA Which is why, when I came upon the two of you, playing at nymphs and satyrs. Instead of charging in and interrupting, like I was gonna do. I let you have your way with my little brother.

TROILUS enters from the tent, also wearing a nightgown.

TROILUS Cressida sweetheart, who are you talking to? Come back to bed. Cassandra? What are you doing here?

CRESSIDA Cassandra? The crazy sister?

CASSANDRA Crazy like a prophet. So while the two of you were unleashing the kraken...

CASSANDRA brandishes Cressida's sword.

CASSANDRA I snuck in and stole your sword.

CRESSIDA realizes she is unarmed.

CRESSIDA Now hold on...

CASSANDRA Troilus, get back in the house!

CRESSIDA This is not what it looks like.

CASSANDRA It looks like you didn't see this coming.

CASSANDRA swings both swords.

TROILUS Cassandra! Don't hurt her!

TROILUS lunges, but this time, CASSANDRA deftly dodges him and stabs the stunned CRESSIDA.

CRESSIDA Agh!
TROILUS You hurt her very badly.
CASSANDRA *(remembers Troilus)* Hey, and you're still alive! I think I'm getting the hang of this.

TROILUS rushes to CRESSIDA's side.

TROILUS Cressida! My love! I will never forget you.
CRESSIDA Troilus... you moron... I never loved you.
TROILUS What?!
CRESSIDA Your people are a scourge.
TROILUS What?!
CASSANDRA Okay, let's go.
TROILUS Oh yeah? Well, you know who's a scourge? The Greeks, that's who! And Sparta! It's like...all scourges over there.
CASSANDRA Okay, come on.
TROILUS Myrmidons? More like Myrmi-don'ts!
CASSANDRA Awright, knock it off.

CASSANDRA grabs him by the ear and drags TROILUS back to the city.

Enter, from another tent, ACHILLES and AGAMEMNON.

ACHILLES Did you hear that, Agamemnon? I'm telling you, I heard voices. Was that the signal? Cressida? Cressida?? Ca-caw!

AGAMEMNON sees Cressida's body.

AGAMEMNON Aw, crap.

XI. HECTOR PREPARES (FOR BATTLE) / PARIS' ARROWS
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Scene: TROJAN WAR ROOM.

HECTOR is preparing for battle. HECUBA looks on, as POLYXENA helps him into his armor. CASSANDRA enters with TROILUS.

CASSANDRA Now stay inside! *(puzzled)* Hector? What are you doing?
HECTOR Achilles has challenged me to a duel.
ACHILLES *(off)* Hectooooooooooooo! *(continues heckling throughout the scene)*
HECTOR And I am going to accept.
CASSANDRA Are you insane?!

HECTOR You just went out into the enemy camp dressed as a hermaphrodite, because some crazy million-year-old prophecy told you the walls of Troy would come crumbling down if Troilus misses his next birthday. And you think I'm insane?

TROILUS *(grumbles)* There better be cake.

CASSANDRA He's alive, isn't he!?

TROILUS *(grumbles)* I was going to lose my virginity.

HECUBA No, you weren't, dear.

HECTOR Mother, will you help me with these straps?

HECUBA and POLYXENA help HECTOR prepare for battle.

CASSANDRA You are not going out there.

HECTOR Who's gonna stop me?

CASSANDRA, feeling her oats, draws her sword.

CASSANDRA Well, you're going to have to go through me first.

HECTOR Don't be foolish. You know I would never hurt a woman.

CASSANDRA Ha!

HECTOR slaps her.

CASSANDRA Ow!

HECTOR Oh, that didn't hurt!

CASSANDRA slaps him back.

HECTOR Ow! Mom!

HECUBA Leave your brother alone.

CASSANDRA Me?!

HECTOR If I can beat their best champion in single combat, then the war is over and everyone goes home a winner. Well, except Achilles. And the Greeks. This is our only option.

CASSANDRA No, it's not! We have at least two options. One, you could go out and fight this foolish duel and die. Or, two, you could NOT do that. And do anything else. And live!

HECTOR Well, unless you've got a better idea.

CASSANDRA I just did! That's the better idea right there!

HECTOR And look like a coward?

CASSANDRA Better a live coward than a dead idiot.

HECTOR I'd rather be an idiot.

CASSANDRA You're already an idiot! We don't need you to keep proving it!

HECTOR How dare you bring up my test scores?!

POLYXENA Tacky.

CASSANDRA Need I remind you that Achilles is the best, and only, undefeated warrior in the entire world?
HECTOR Oh pish! I'm undefeated. This is war. Anyone who's still alive in the morning is undefeated. Until they're not. Achilles is just a show-off.
CASSANDRA And what does that make you?
HECTOR Mom!
HECUBA Cassandra, if you're just going to nitpick, could you please not distract your brother.
POLYXENA He doesn't need this kind of negativity before he goes into battle.
CASSANDRA If he'd listen to me, there wouldn't be any battle.
HECTOR There you go again. Mom!
POLYXENA So much negativity.
HECUBA Cassandra, do you really want this to be the last thing you ever said to your brother before he dies?
HECTOR Ma!
HECUBA Or...the first thing he rubs your nose in at the victory party afterward?
HECTOR Thank you.
TROIUS I'll make the cake.

TROIUS exits.

CASSANDRA Okay, you want positivity? (*rummages in her notes*) I am 100% positive... That there is a little-known prophecy that says that Achilles is unkillable. Except by Paris' arrow.
HECTOR Well, Paris is not here. In case you didn't notice.
CASSANDRA I know!
HECTOR He died.
CASSANDRA I know.
HECTOR (*pointedly*) Because *somebody* killed him.
CASSANDRA I know!!
HECTOR I'd tell you who... but I'm not a fucking prophet!!
CASSANDRA (*shoves the prophecy in his face*) "Achilles is unkillable." It even rhymes, so it's easy to remember.
HECTOR (*crumples up the prophecy*) We don't need any more of your insane... premon-itions.
CASSANDRA What's insane is taking on an unstoppable killing machine in single combat, when you could stay inside and not do that.
HECTOR Pff! No one is unstoppable.
CASSANDRA Well, the only thing that stops Achilles is Paris' arrow in his heel. And Paris, as you so tastefully pointed out, is no longer with us.

She spots Paris' bow.

CASSANDRA Wait a minute... But his bow is! That's it! We have to shoot him! We have to shoot Achilles with Paris' bow! And by "we", yes, I mean you.

HECTOR I'm not an archer.

CASSANDRA grabs Paris' bow and runs to the window.

HECTOR And neither are you!

CASSANDRA I can see him from here! You have a perfect shot right out this window. I mean, you have to lean a little, but...

ACHILLES *(off)* Hey, Cassandra! Tell your brother to come to the window. I've got something to show him.

CASSANDRA *(shields her eyes)* Ugh! Hold that thought, Achilles!

ACHILLES *(off)* It's my ass! Ha ha haha!

CASSANDRA *(to Hector)* If you don't shoot him, I swear to gods, I will.

CASSANDRA hands HECTOR the bow.

HECTOR Oh no. I'm not touching that thing.

CASSANDRA Couldja try? Could anyone in this family, besides me, put one iota of effort into winning this war?

HECUBA You're exhausting enough for all of us, Cassandra.

CASSANDRA Fine, I'll do it!

While HECTOR snickers, CASSANDRA struggles to draw the bow, takes aim out the window and...TWANG...painfully snaps herself with the bowstring.

CASSANDRA Ow!

CASSANDRA rubs her bow-side boob.

CASSANDRA How do Amazons do this?

Outside, ACHILLES and the Greeks guffaw.

ACHILLES *(off) (guffaws)* Ha ha ha!

As do HECTOR and the rest of the family inside.

HECTOR *(laughs)* Ha!

HECTOR picks up the quiver of arrows and smugly hands it to her:

HECTOR You forgot to load it.

CASSANDRA angrily shoves the bow at him:

CASSANDRA I'd like to see you do better!

HECTOR I said, "No."

CASSANDRA You don't know how, either, do you?
HECTOR It's not that I don't know how. It's that I choose to don't know how.

HECTOR casts the bow and arrows aside.

HECTOR Archery is for the weak and the useless.
HECUBA With amazing deltoids.
HECTOR Real warriors settle their differences the old fashioned way: Boots on the battlefield. Fists in the air. Mano to Mano. And blood everywhere. Not being a warrior, I wouldn't expect you to understand.
CASSANDRA There's nothing wrong with archery! Apollo, the God of Archery is the patron saint of the City of Troy.
HECTOR Maybe he should've given you that instead of the Gift of Prophecy!
CASSANDRA You think I didn't ask?!?
HECTOR Ha! The only thing more useless than a lady prophetess would be a lady bowman! Bowmaid? Archerette?
CASSANDRA They're just archers!!
HECTOR So unless you've got a better idea... *(before she can interject)* Besides the ones I already told you to keep to yourself!! I've got a duel to prepare for. Or die trying.

As HECTOR continues to armor up, CASSANDRA rails at him:

CASSANDRA You will die. That's what I'm trying to tell you. You will try, and you will die, Hector, I'm tellin' you! I'm telling you, and you're not listening...

CASSANDRA gestures futilely at the abandoned arrows.

CASSANDRA Those useless arrows have a better chance against Achilles just sitting on the couch than you do!

CASSANDRA gets an idea!

CASSANDRA Wait a minute...

She grabs the quiver of arrows and rushes out onto the battlefield...

HECTOR Where is she go—? Cassandra!

XII. ACHILLES UNKILLABLE

Scene: THE BATTLEFIELD – Before the GATES OF TROY

ACHILLES heckles the Trojans, while AGAMEMNON and the Greeks look on.

ACHILLES Come out and fight me, Hector!

*The Olympians – HERA, APHRODITE, ATHENA and APOLLO also look on.
APOLLO sets up deck chairs. APHRODITE enjoys an apple-tini.*

ATHENA This should be interesting.

APOLLO Remember, no divine intervention. We are here to observe and advise.

APHRODITE Go Hector! *(to Apollo)* Which one's Hector?

Suddenly, CASSANDRA charges out of the City Gates and rushes at ACHILLES!

CASSANDRA Achilleees!!

They FIGHT.

<p>CASSANDRA VS. ACHILLES (+HECTOR, +AGAMEMNON?) § 1F/1M SWORDS & HAND-TO-HAND (+ ARROW) +OTHERS JOIN IN (HECTOR, AGAMEMNON?)</p>

CASSANDRA is no match for ACHILLES, but he is taken aback by the sheer stupidity of her onslaught.

ACHILLES Somebody, get her off me!

AGAMEMNON Okay, that's enough, Princess.

AGAMEMNON tries to hold her back, but CASSANDRA bites him and slashes him away...

AGAMEMNON Ow! Watch it!

...and resumes her attack on ACHILLES.

ACHILLES Why is this happening? Don't we have Amazons for this?

AGAMEMNON Amazons are on their side, Achilles!

CASSANDRA The Amazons are on our side, you jerk!

ATHENA I mean, seriously. Did that guy not read the intel?

HERA He doesn't need intelligence, he's gorgeous. Go Achilles!

HECTOR rushes in from the Gates of Troy and also tries to restrain her, apologizing profusely for his sister's behavior.

HECTOR Sorry, sorry. Won't happen again.

ACHILLES Hector? You let your sister do your fighting for you?

HECTOR Nope. No. She's not— This doesn't count. Let me just get her back inside and I will be right with you.

But CASSANDRA attacks HECTOR, as well, forcing him back...

HECTOR Ow! Cassandra!!

...before turning and charging at ACHILLES again.

ACHILLES deftly parries her assault, still demanding that somebody do something about this girl.

ACHILLES Agamemnon, please!

AGAMEMNON Hector, please!

HECTOR Cassandra! This isn't funny!

AGAMEMNON chuckles. HECTOR glares at him. AGAMEMNON stops laughing.

AGAMEMNON Princess Cassandra, please!

HERA For the gods' sake, does the girl want to die a spinster?

ATHENA I like her.

APHRODITE I like her, too.

ATHENA *(grumbles)* Dammit.

HERA This is just not marriageable behavior. Do you know how many eligible Greeks are watching this?

ATHENA & APOLLO All of them.

APHRODITE Bite him again!

CASSANDRA ignores everyone imploring her to stop. ACHILLES finally becomes fed up and attacks her for real: Batting away her blows, slapping her, beating back her assault, forcing her into retreat, then with one mighty blow knocking her to the ground, her sword flying from her hand.

ACHILLES And stay down!

She does. Instead, CASSANDRA draws one of Paris' arrows and stabs Achilles in the ankle! Achilles SCREAMS and kicks her away.

ACHILLES Ow! Dang it! What the Hades!?

HERA Achilles? Oh no.

HERA lunges toward the battlefield, but APOLLO and ATHENA both stand in her way.

ATHENA Hera, no.
APOLLO Observe and advise.
HERA I advise you to get out of my way.

HERA brushes past APOLLO and ATHENA and draws her sword as she charges into the battle. But APHRODITE intercepts her, daggers out.*

**or other weapon of choice*

APHRODITE Going somewhere?

<p>APHRODITE VS HERA § 2F SWORD VS DAGGERS ° ° OR WEAPONS-OF-CHOICE</p>

They FIGHT in the background, while in the foreground...

ACHILLES towers over CASSANDRA, who is still trying to jab at his feet, as he taunts HECTOR.

ACHILLES *(proclaims)* And now, Hector, I am going to brutalize your sister! As a lesson to all Trojans! But especially the Trojan women, I guess. *(toward the City)* So this is for your own good!

(to Cassandra) Stop that.

(kicking sand at her) Stop stabbing my feet!

(to the Greeks) This should also serve to dispel a few inconvenient rumors that have been circulating in the Greek camp, as well.

AGAMEMNON Aw, jeez, let it go.

ACHILLES *(to the Greeks)* One time, I dressed as a woman! ...for seven years. And that was it! And does that make me any less of a man? Or more of a woman? *(preemptively)* No no. These are rhetorical questions.

HECTOR What is he...?

AGAMEMNON *(shaking his head)* You don't wanna...

ACHILLES Less of a nymph, more of a satyr? Less of a warrior, more of a draft dodger?

AGAMEMNON For Crete's sake! Nobody cares, Achilles!

ACHILLES Tough crowd. *(to Cassandra)* Okay, let's do this. Go ahead and make yourself comfortable, I'll be right with you in a second.

(closing his eyes to psyche himself up) Patroclus patroclus patroclus patroclus...

APHRODITE What on earth...?

APOLLO I can't look.

ATHENA I mean, who is this for, really?

ACHILLES *(bellows)* Patrocluuuus!!! *(opening his eyes)* Let the games begin!

ACHILLES prepares to brutalize CASSANDRA.

But HECTOR tackles him to the ground!

HECTOR Keep your hands off my sister!

They FIGHT.

ACHILLES VS HECTOR & CASSANDRA § 2M/1F SWORDS & HAND-TO-HAND (+ ARROW)

ACHILLES knocks HECTOR away. They both go for their swords. ACHILLES repeatedly smashes HECTOR with blows that he barely deflects. Suddenly, CASSANDRA is on ACHILLES' ankle again, stabbing repeatedly, relentlessly.

ACHILLES Ow! Would you knock it the Sphynx off?!

ACHILLES tries to kick her away, but she is on him like a bad terrier and he also has to fend off HECTOR who presses the attack.

Finally, ACHILLES deals a vicious blow, crippling HECTOR and knocking the wind out of him.

ACHILLES picks CASSANDRA up by the throat/hair and snatches the bloody arrow out of her hand.

ACHILLES What is with you and this stupid arrow?!

He throws her to the ground, snaps the arrow in half and flings it away, as he glares down at her.

CASSANDRA glares right back up at him:

CASSANDRA That is Paris' arrow. The only thing that can kill you. You're already as good as dead, you just don't know it yet! ...Probably.

ACHILLES Fwhat??? Shut up!

But instead of yielding to the victorious Achilles, Cassandra gives him an ultimatum:

CASSANDRA Go home, Achilles! This is not your country. This is not your fight. Surrender now, Achilles, and return/go home to a long life of peace and obscurity. Or stay and die tonight with Paris' arrow in your heel! And live forever in insipid glory.

ACHILLES doesn't know whether to laugh or snarl. So he does both.

ACHILLES There's not a single thing in all of Troy can harm me. Not Paris' arrow, or Hector's sword. Or you and your ridiculous predictions!

But behind him, HECTOR has recovered the broken arrowhead and strapped it to the tip of his sword.

HECTOR How about all three?

HECTOR plunges his arrow-tipped sword into ACHILLES' ankle!

ACHILLES Aaaagh!!

ACHILLES smacks HECTOR away and clutches his ankle. He struggles to stand, but stumbles and falls. He tries to crawl toward AGAMEMNON and the Greek lines, but he is losing too much blood and collapses, bleeding out on the ground.

ACHILLES Why is there so much blood? It's just an ankle!

CASSANDRA crawls after him like a vengeful shadow.

CASSANDRA That's the peroneal artery. It channels humors from the femoral artery to the calf and the back of the ankle. It's a small wound, but very mortal. You're going to bleed out and die in a matter of minutes.

ACHILLES What are you supposed to be some kind of lady prophet? Prophetette? Premonitionista?

Furious, she stabs him repeatedly with another arrow.

CASSANDRA No! I went to med school!! You chauvinist son of a nymph!!

ACHILLES Aaaaghh!

The sound of his death wail distracts HERA from her fight.

HERA Nooooo!!

When HERA turns to react, APHRODITE sucker-punches her in the head, knocking her out cold.

APHRODITE Peaches! Peaches have hair!
(relieved) That was gonna keep me up all night.

ATHENA *(mutter)* Oh for fruit's sake.

APHRODITE Mmmm... She's gonna be pissed when she wakes up.

ATHENA No, she's not.

ATHENA matter-of-factly draws her sword.

ATHENA I'll handle this.

APOLLO & APHRODITE Wait! Athena, wait!

ATHENA knocks them both aside and stalks toward CASSANDRA with grim purpose.

CASSANDRA Athena?!
HECTOR What? Where?

ATHENA closes on CASSANDRA with Terminator-like single-mindedness, slapping HECTOR aside as if he was nothing.

CASSANDRA grabs ACHILLES' weapon and desperately tries to parry the goddess' attack, but this is not going to go well for her, as ATHENA calmly and methodically drives her back.

ATHENA VS CASSANDRA § 2F SWORDS
--

They FIGHT!

CASSANDRA Goddess Athena? Why are you attacking me?
ATHENA I'm sorry, Cassandra, but certain lines are not meant to be crossed.
 And this is at least five.
CASSANDRA But I'm a loyal priestess of the gods.
ATHENA You're a priestess of Troy. And I fight for Athens.
CASSANDRA You fight for men. Men who desecrate your temple the minute this
 war is over, looking for virgins to ravage.
ATHENA What?
CASSANDRA You should be fighting for me.
ATHENA Why? Because you're a woman?
CASSANDRA No. Because you are. And half the people of this city look up to you.
 But right about now, they're looking down at all these men you
 brought with you. And wondering if they need to hide their daughters
 tonight. What happens to them when this is all over?
ATHENA I don't care.
CASSANDRA You don't care? Or you don't want to care?

ATHENA hesitates, bewildered by the question.

ATHENA Do I what?
CASSANDRA Do you know what happens to me at the end of this war? Cuz I do.
ATHENA No. How would I?
CASSANDRA When Troy has fallen, and I take shelter in the Temple of Athena?
ATHENA I don't know.
CASSANDRA You know what happens when they catch me at your altar, begging
 you for sanctuary?
ATHENA I said, no.

ATHENA falters, as CASSANDRA starts to fight back.

CASSANDRA What happens to women in every senseless war when the men get tired of killing each other and take a break to brutalize the widows and orphans they leave behind?

ATHENA I... well... not exactly. I mean... That's just a few bad apples.

CASSANDRA DO YOU KNOW?

ATHENA Look, I'm not psychic. And frankly, I don't think you are either.

CASSANDRA This isn't prophecy. It's history. You're the Goddess of War. You've seen this scenario a thousand times before. You know exactly how it plays out. The second the surrender is sounded, those soldiers turn to satyrs and sack the city for pillage and spoils. And savage and ravage and ravish and rape.

CASSANDRA circles like a mad animal. Even ATHENA is a little afraid to go near her.

CASSANDRA I don't need to tell you what happens when a virgin priestess of Troy succeeds in escaping the massacre and takes to your temple for shelter and sanctuary. You already know.

ATHENA I don't...

CASSANDRA And they corner me in the apse. Clinging to your sacred altar. Praying to you—Begging you for mercy.

ATHENA I... I don't... I swear.

CASSANDRA You're a liar.

ATHENA angrily smacks her to the ground.

CASSANDRA I don't have to tell you. You already know.

ATHENA I don't. ...I don't want to know.

CASSANDRA *(pointedly)* They don't... even have the decency.... to drag me... outside.

ATHENA, shaken, lowers her weapon.

CASSANDRA You're fighting me. Because you think I crossed a line? But I'm not the one who defiles your temple. With innocent blood. The minute those walls come down.

An Athenian SOLDIER runs over, sees CASSANDRA.

SOLDIER Hey! This one's still moving! And she's kinda hot!

ATHENA decapitates him with one stroke.

ATHENA Ugh.

Disgusted, ATHENA turns and walks away. CASSANDRA quickly helps HECTOR to his feet and they flee back into the city.

HECTOR I can't believe that worked.
CASSANDRA I don't think it did.

XIII. HECTOR GETS THE CREDIT

Scene: TROJAN WAR ROOM.

CASSANDRA and HECTOR limp in from the battlefield. They are greeted by the relieved Trojans: HECUBA, TROILUS, POLYDORUS, POLYXENA.

POLYXENA They're here!
HECUBA Hector! I can't believe you're alive!
HECTOR Ma!
POLYDORUS I can't believe one of Cassandra's predictions came true.
CASSANDRA They all come true, you little jerk.
POLYXENA How did you do it, Hector?
CASSANDRA Hector??? *I'm* the one who killed Achilles!
POLYXENA After Hector killed him first.
POLYDORUS We all saw what happened, Cassandra.
POLYXENA Hector is a hero.
HECUBA You were mostly getting in the way, dear.
HECTOR Well, uh... I mean... Cassandra helped, of course.
CASSANDRA I helped?!?
HECTOR A little.
CASSANDRA A little?!?!? I told you all exactly what was going to happen, and then I did it!
POLYDORUS Sure, after the fact.
POLYXENA Every premonition is 20/20 in hindsight.
POLYDORUS Even a stopped sundial is right 12 times a day.
POLYXENA Even a blind Cyclops gets a sheep once he's locked in a cave with one.
HECUBA Even your mother knows when to shut up and change the subject.
POLYDORUS But how could we have known that this would be one of those times?
CASSANDRA My "predictions" always come true!
POLYDORUS Beginners luck.
POLYXENA I'm thinking of a number from one to 10.
CASSANDRA Seven.
POLYXENA How the—?
CASSANDRA You always pick seven.
POLYDORUS Okay, *I'm* thinking of a number from one to—
CASSADRA Seven.
POLYDORUS Dammit! Okay, rock paper sciss—
CASSANDRA Paper.

POLYDORUS What the—?
CASSANDRA You like making fists.
POLYDORUS Stop reading my mind!!
HECUBA All right, no fighting. Hector is a hero. Cassandra participated.
 Everybody gets a trophy. Let's just stay inside now and stay away
 from the windows.

She herds the children away from the windows.

CASSANDRA Yes! Please! Thank you!
HECUBA *(glancing out the window)* Wow. Look at all those archers.
CASSANDRA Mom!!

HECUBA scurries away from the window.

POLYXENA So how did you do it, Hector? Tell us everything!
CASSANDRA *(snarks)* Yes, mighty warrior. Give us all the gory details.
POLYXENA Ew! Was it gory?
HECTOR A little, I guess.
POLYXENA Ewww!!
POLYDORUS Nothing you can't handle, though. Right, Hector?
HECTOR Well, it was just basic military strategy and tactics, really.
CASSANDRA Oh yeah? Which strategy was that, Mr. Military Genius? Ingeniously
 beating the crap out of his fists with your face?
POLYDORUS That's General Ingenious to you!
CASSANDRA Whatever.
HECTOR Well... you see, I... When I was out there in the heat of battle... I
 noticed, very *strategically* that while Cassandra was making a
 nuisance of herself, she must have accidentally nicked him in the
 humors.
CASSANDRA I nicked him in the peroneal artery.
HECTOR The what?
CASSANDRA It's a branch of the posterior tibial artery which channels blood from
 the femoral to the back and sides of the leg.

Everyone stares at her, incredulous.

CASSANDRA What? I'm a priestess of Apollo. The God of Medicine.
HECTOR Anyway... I saw that his femular humors were extruding from his
 victuals.
CASSANDRA Are you trying to say "viscera"?
HECUBA Hush now.
HECTOR And I knew from my extensive military intuition that if I struck him
 there again that a well-placed blow would sever his... primordial?
CASSANDRA Peroneal artery.
HECTOR That's what I was going to say!

CASSANDRA Right.
HECTOR I mean, I'm a warrior, for the gods' sake. I leave the techno-babble to the historians and the medical examiner to fill in later. When you're locked in mortal combat, like me and Achilles just were, it's really more gut instinct.

HECUBA And why did you tie Paris' arrowhead to your sword?
POLYXENA Yeah, that was odd.
HECTOR Um... For luck, I guess? As a symbolic gesture, really. In memory of our brother Paris.

HECUBA That's sweet of you to include your brother.
HECTOR But symbols are important in wartime, Troilus.
POLYXENA I'm Polyxena.
CASSANDRA I got a symbol for you...
HECTOR And Cassandra helped in her own way. Why if she hadn't been out there, helpless in the clutches of our enemy. Would I have rushed out onto the battlefield like I did? Against all odds of success?

POLYDORUS No. No way. Nobody's that stupid.
Except maybe Cassandra.

POLYXENA Can you believe she tried to fight the most undefeated warrior in the world?? With a lady sword??

CASSANDRA This is not a lady sword! It's a man sword! And it's not a man sword! It's a sword!

HECTOR It was your helplessness in the face of certain death that inspired me to persevere against impossible odds and defend my sister's innocence.

CASSANDRA Ugh! Fine! I did nothing. Hector did everything.
(to Hector) Congratulations. You must be very proud.

HECUBA We are, dear.
CASSANDRA Not you, mother! Would you just—? You know what, never mind.
HECUBA What is it, dear? Everybody, listen, Cassandra has something to say.

XIV. THE TROJAN HORSE

CASSANDRA Look, all that matters now is: We have to stay inside. I know I've said this before. So I think it goes without saying that you are all now hearing it for the first time: The enemy cannot get inside. Our walls are too strong. As long as the Greeks are on that side of the wall, and we are—

Enter a MESSENGER with a spear and a torch.

MESSENGER Good news! We've received a wonderful gift from the Greeks! It's a big wooden horse!

CASSANDRA No! No gifts! No giant horses!

POLYXENA Oh, I like horses.

HECUBA This could be a real turning point.

CASSANDRA Mother, no!

Have you all forgotten the famous oracle who said: "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts?"

HECTOR No. Who said that?

CASSANDRA It was me! I'm saying it right now!

No gifts. No gift horses. No Greeks!

HECUBA Fine, we'll send it back. Where is it?

MESSENGER We already brought it inside. It's right out here in the courtyard.

POLYXENA Yay!

CASSANDRA Oy.

CASSANDRA doesn't even bother trying to argue anymore. She grabs a torch and stomps out.

(TORCHING, BURNING and BLOODCURDLING SCREAMS off.)

CASSANDRA stomps back in.

CASSANDRA Stay—In—Side!

Blank stares.

CASSANDRA Or I—will kill you—myself.

POLYDORUS *(whispers)* She's just crazy enough to do it.

CASSANDRA Ugh!!!

CASSANDRA snatches a spear from the hapless GUARD and storms out.

XV. CASSANDRA ON THE RAMPARTS

Scene: ON THE RAMPARTS

CASSANDRA, with a sentry's spear, stands at the ramparts, looking out over the battlefield. HECUBA joins her.

CASSANDRA Nobody ever listens to me.

HECUBA Try being their mother.

CASSANDRA I've been cursed by the gods. Do you have any idea what that's like?

HECUBA I married your father, didn't I? Had gods know how many children.

CASSANDRA Eighty-four, mom. There's eighty-four of us.

HECUBA Is that how many?

CASSANDRA That we know of.

HECUBA And some of you are adopted. Don't tell Hector.

CASSANDRA Hector is adopted??

HECUBA No, but I think he'd sleep with some of his sisters if he knew which ones were off-limits.

CASSANDRA Ugh.
HECUBA So it's been one curse after another, really.
CASSANDRA It's never-ending.
HECUBA Oh, it ends. Soon enough. But you don't want that, either. No, you just have to hang onto this life for as long as you can. Like a dog with a bone. A disgusting raggedy-ass bone that you dug out of the trash. And now it's your favorite thing. And you'll never let it go. You gotta ignore the gods. And the men. And about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the women. And make the best of things with what you've got.
CASSANDRA What if my best isn't enough? I talk and nobody listens. I try, but none of it matters.
HECUBA Don't say that. Of course it matters. Everything you do matters. We're only in this mess because of you. And we're only almost out of it again because of you. You are a cornucopia of consequence, Cassandra. What you did today, if your father were with us, he would have been proud.
CASSANDRA Daddy's not dead, Mom.
HECUBA No, I know. He's downstairs taking a nap. But if he'd stayed up past his bedtime, he would have been proud.
CASSANDRA You think so?
HECUBA I would have told him to.
CASSANDRA Thanks, mom. That means... I don't know what that means. But thanks for saying it. Out loud like that. I think.
HECUBA You will do great things. That's my prediction. Or you'll do terrible things and die horribly. I'm really not a prophet.
CASSANDRA I know, Mom.
HECUBA One of the two, though. I'm sure of it.
CASSANDRA Great.
HECUBA Or maybe you'll do stupid things and people will talk about you a lot. That's also an option. Perhaps, as a cautionary tale.
CASSANDRA Thanks, Mom, you can go back inside now.
HECUBA Nah, I'm going to stay up here a little longer. I enjoy the view. And the company.

Enter APOLLO. HECUBA doesn't see him. CASSANDRA doesn't even have to look.

HECUBA Did you just feel a cold chill up your spine?
CASSANDRA Oh Jesus.
APOLLO Guess again.
HECUBA Y'know, I think I *will* go inside. Don't stay out too late. And put on a sweater. You don't want to let the Greeks see you shiver.

Exit HECUBA.

APOLLO Y'know we work very well together.
CASSANDRA You cursed me!
APOLLO Well, a blessing and a curse.
CASSANDRA Is still a curse!!
APOLLO Now, look...
CASSANDRA No, you look! Thousands of people are going to die in bloodshed that you could prevent at any time.
APOLLO You have to understand... I work in strange and mysterious ways.
CASSANDRA No, you don't! You work in painfully obvious ways that are excruciatingly easy to predict. I don't need psychic visions to know where this is going.

XVI. GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

HERA explodes onto the scene in a fiery rage!

HERA Cassandraaaa!!!
CASSANDRA Whoops. Did not see that coming.
HERA You ruin everything!

They FIGHT.

HERA VS CASSANDRA
+APOLLO, +APHRODITE, +ATHENA
§ 4F FREE-FOR-ALL, VARIOUS WEAPONS
(+1M UNARMED (?) APOLLO)

HERA is clearly dominant, but she is also fighting berserk, which makes her sloppy.

CASSANDRA What did I do?!
HERA You killed Achilles!
CASSANDRA Thank you! Wait—What?
HERA No one is supposed to do that! It was supposed to be impossible!
CASSANDRA What do you care? You're the Goddess of Mothers and Homemakers! Not toxic man-boys.
HERA Even man-boys have mothers! And Achilles' mother worships me!!
CASSANDRA Well, I mean... What's not to worship?
HERA I care, because I am the Goddess of Marriage and Matrimony. But every single day I catch my own husband boning some nymph! Or nereid! Or naiad or dryad or sylph! And any mortal minx who's willing to hop in the sack with a bull or a goat or swan or a snake. Or a golden shower!
CASSANDRA Ugh. That's just disgusting.
HERA But Achilles' mother Thetis worshipped me. She told Zeus "no". And Poseidon "no". And Hephaestus and Dionysus.

CASSANDRA She sounds very popular.
HERA Thetis honored her wedding vows. So I rewarded her with a son who would always be loyal and true and defend his mother and make her proud. And you turned all that to shit!
CASSANDRA He was already kinda shit, if you ask me.
HERA Nobody asked you!!

HERA beats her relentlessly.

HERA Nobody...will ever...ask you!!
CASSANDRA Can I just say something?
HERA No, you may not!
CASSANDRA *(does anyway)* You're supposed to be the Goddess of Women, but everything you do is defined by Men! Thetis is your favorite because she was loyal to one man and doted on another. You care more about Achilles and his Oedipal fixation than every single housewife in the house of Troy!
HERA Where do you get the hubris?!
CASSANDRA Why? Because I say things people shouldn't be allowed to think? Because I do things people shouldn't be allowed to try? Or because I'm tired of watching the world go to Styx while the gods do nothing!?
HERA Because you are out of your league!! You are out of your depth! You don't know what you're doing. And nobody...talks back...to me!!!

HERA renews her attack.

APOLLO finally intervenes, heroically coming to CASSANDRA's defense.

APOLLO Hera, enough! This girl is under my protection.
HERA That's her mistake.

APOLLO draws his bow and aims an arrow at HERA.

APOLLO You shall not harm one delicate hair on her delicate head. Or any of her other delicate parts. And you shall do it over my dead body!
HERA Dial it back, bow-boy, she's not gonna sleep with you.
APOLLO Wha—? She's not—? That's not why I'm doing this!

CASSANDRA just cringes in disgust and embarrassment.

While APOLLO is flustered, HERA has moved closer. Too close for arrows.

HERA And I'm no expert, but I believe that's a ranged weapon you're threatening me with.
Not as effective at point blank. Kind of a theme with you.
APOLLO I can still bruise you very, very badly.
HERA That's also a theme.

HERA knocks the bow out of his hand and attacks APOLLO, beating him badly.

Enter APHRODITE, rushing to protect APOLLO from HERA! They FIGHT.

APHRODITE Hera, no! He's your brother.
HERA He's about to be my half brother!
APHRODITE He's an immortal.
HERA We'll see about that.

ATHENA also rushes in, struggling with both of them.

ATHENA Sisters, please! Break it up!

ATHENA fights them both, trying to keep them apart. She is still a match for them. But it is a tough fight, because they are both fighting for real now, and with their preferred weapons-of-choice.

APOLLO heroically takes cover with CASSANDRA.

APOLLO Don't worry. Just stay behind me. You'll be safe as long as we—What the—?!

CASSANDRA grabs Apollo's dagger and rushes past him into the battle, stabbing ATHENA in the back.

ATHENA Ow!

ATHENA smacks CASSANDRA aside and shoves her back to APOLLO!

ATHENA Keep her out of this!
APOLLO Athena's right, maybe we should go somewhere and—What the—?!

CASSANDRA charges back into the battle, stabbing ATHENA in the back again!

ATHENA Ow! For the love of Nectar!

APOLLO, realizing his cowardice is not impressing CASSANDRA, also heroically charges into the fray! ATHENA smacks them both aside.

ATHENA I'm on your side!!
CASSANDRA Oh.

Seizing the advantage of ATHENA's distraction, both HERA and APHRODITE attack her from behind!

ATHENA Ow! Gods dammit!

Injured, enraged and off-balance, ATHENA turns and brutally slashes both goddesses. They collapse against each other, dying.

The Golden Apple rolls out of APHRODITE's hand, as they both tumble off the wall.

ATHENA picks it up and turns again to CASSANDRA badly-injured and struggling for breath.

ATHENA Hera's right, Cassandra... you ruin everything.

CASSANDRA, terrified, brandishes her sword nonetheless. ATHENA stalks toward the trembling blade. Having difficulty breathing, ATHENA seizes the edges of her cuirass and, in a terrifying gesture, rips her own armor in half! She points a bloody finger at CASSANDRA.

ATHENA If you ever... get tired... *(breathes heavily)* ...of being a priestess of Apollo...

APOLLO charges across the ramparts at ATHENA...

APOLLO *(bellows)* AAAAAHHHHH!!!!

...body-slaming her over the side of the wall!! He deftly whips out his bow and fires a quick double-tap down at her for the coup de grace.

CASSANDRA Oh my...goddess... You killed her.

APOLLO Mess with the bull, you get the horns.

APOLLO turns to CASSANDRA, exhausted and badly-injured, as well, but also smugly self-satisfied.

APOLLO Teamwork. I think. Is the takeaway from all this. Yeah, let's go with that, teamwork. We've had our ups and downs, Cassandra. But if Prophecy teaches us anything, it's that certain things are always meant to be. And I think we both know that the two of us are one of those. We can try to fight it, and deny our inevitable destiny, but we both know that in the end... you'll always come back to me.

CASSANDRA Apollo... Can I call you Apollo?

APOLLO Can you moan it?

CASSANDRA smiles, as she goes to APOLLO and gently relieves him of his bow. And when he goes in for the kiss... She BEATS him with it!

CASSANDRA I...was...never...YOURS!!!
APOLLO Wait! What?

APOLLO backpedals, as CASSANDRA thrashes him relentlessly, until he stumbles and tumbles off the wall.

APOLLO *(off)* Aaaahhhhh...Oof!

CASSANDRA puts down the bow and peers over the side.

Cassandra's stunned family emerges – HECTOR, TROILUS, etc., and HECUBA with a sweater for CASSANDRA. They see the carnage.

HECTOR My god! ...My other god!
TROILUS *(peering over the edge)* There's a couple over here, too.
HECTOR My gods!!
POLYXENA Cassandra, what have you done?
CASSANDRA What does it look like I've done? Because I'm afraid if I just tell you straight out, you're probably not going to believe me.

HECUBA *(handing her a sweater)* I brought you a sweater.
CASSANDRA Thanks, Mom.

CASSANDRA picks up the Golden Apple where it had fallen and polishes it on her sleeve, as they all peer over the side.

AGAMEMNON *(off)* Attention on the ramparts! This is the Greeks!

XVII. AGAMEMNON SUBMITS A PROPOSAL

Scene: THE RAMPARTS and BEFORE THE GATES of Troy

CASSANDRA's family – HECUBA, HECTOR, TROILUS, etc. – rushes to the side, and look down at AGAMEMNON, waiting before the Gates.

AGAMEMNON Um, Hi. It's me, Agamemnon. Commander of the mighty and undefeated Greek armada. My brother Menelaus was inside that horse you burned up. Also Odysseus, our best strategist. Horse was his idea, actually. And nine or ten of our best guys. Acamas. Agapenor. Ajax the Lesser. Kinda rapey. But he's always got your back in a bar fight. Amphidamas, Amphimachus, Antimachus, Antiphates. And that's just the As! Calchas. Diomedes. Echion. Philoctetes. Well, you get the idea.

AGAMEMNON seems to be struggling to find the words.

AGAMEMNON Menelaus of Sparta, my brother... he was Helen's husband. In case you forgot. He's the only reason we're here, really. So, uh... We surrender, I guess.

HECTOR *(to Troilus)* Get the bread!

AGAMEMNON Yeah, and, um, I think we're just gonna go home now.

POLYDORUS Yeah, you better run!

HECUBA Polyxena, hush!

POLYDORUS I'm Polydorus!

HECUBA *(to Agamemnon)* Sorry about that. Go on.

AGAMEMNON Yeah, so we're just gonna pack up and go. Is all.

HECTOR So who's stopping you, Agamemnon?!

AGAMEMNON Yeah, no, you're right, you're right, um.... We just gotta wait for the wind, of course, but I'm sure that'll clear up, once we... burn some virgins. We were gonna use your virgins, of course, but... Nah, no, that's all right. We've got a lot of guys who were... looking forward to their first shore leave, if you know what I mean. Pardon my French, Lady Hecuba.

HECTOR What is he...?

HECUBA Hush!!

AGAMEMNON Just one thing, before I go. Your sister Cassandra? Is she still single? Because she's a real sparkplug. Which is kinda my type. I like 'em a little crazy. And I know I'm not much to look at, but... I am a king, so... I guess I'm very rich, is what I'm saying, so... *(nervously clears his throat)* I'm not very good at this.

POLYDORUS Obviously!

AGAMEMNON So I guess I was just wondering if we could come to some sort of arrangement, y'know, as to her hand in marriage?

Awkward silence.

AGAMEMNON I guess I should...

AGAMEMNON gets down on one knee. HECUBA steps forward, pushes HECTOR aside.

HECUBA Let me stop you right there, Agamemnon! I think I speak for all of us when I say: How dare you?! Cassandra is a Princess of Troy. Not something to be bartered like livestock.

HECTOR We do have livestock, though, if I could interest you in a horse?

HECUBA And she is not "crazy", Agamemnon. Far from it. In fact, any king would be wise to heed her—

CASSANDRA is already outside.

CASSANDRA Yeah, I'm gonna go with this guy now. See ya!

HECTOR What?!

HECUBA But Cassandra! What about Troy? Your home?

CASSANDRA *(to Agamemnon)* You got a house, right?

AGAMEMNON Big one.

CASSANDRA You guys are on your own now! Let's go, Aggie. Which way to the boats?

HECTOR But Cassandra, we need you! Clearly! There, I said it.

POLYXENA Are you happy now? You made Hector apologize!

CASSANDRA Okay, first: That was not an apology. And what you needed was to listen to my advice! Back when it was still advice. And not hindsight!

POLYDORUS Well, sure, you say that now.

CASSANDRA Good luck! You're gonna need it! Come on, Aggie.

AGAMEMNON Now, uh... Full disclosure: I am, still, technically, already married. To my wife. Clytemnestra. But I don't think she's that into me, to be honest.

CASSANDRA Yep, she's been cheating on you the whole time you've been away.

AGAMEMNON What?

CASSANDRA And she kills us both the minute we get there, I know, I know. Just follow my lead, it'll be fine. To the boats!

CASSANDRA exits, triumphantly taking a bite out of the Golden Apple.

AGAMEMNON Ha! *(to the Trojans)* And she's hilarious! My last wife had no sense of humor! Clytemnestra never laughs. Kinda disturbing, really.

CASSANDRA re-enters, a little embarrassed.

CASSANDRA Boats are this way.

CASSANDRA exits the other way.

AGAMEMNON Now, my buddy Aegisthus? That guy kills me. I remember this one time...

CASSANDRA *(off)* Agamemnon!!

AGAMEMNON Coming!

AGAMEMNON hurries off after her.

The lights shift...

XVIII. SO YOU SEE MY PROBLEM?

END of PREMONITION

[The whole play has been a preemptive vision.]

The Four Olympians - APOLLO, HERA, APHRODITE and ATHENA – enter and stare down in disbelief at their own lifeless corpses.

APOLLO So you see my problem?
HERA Yeah. You can't keep your eunuch in your tunic. And it gets us all killed.
APOLLO He's not a eunuch! And to be fair, this outfit is open at the bottom, so...
ATHENA I can't believe you shot me!
APOLLO Focus, Athena. Big Picture! What are we gonna do about this?
APHRODITE We? Hera's right, your wee is what got us all into this mess.
APOLLO Listen, I know it looks bad, but all of this can be avoided. If I could just get a little help from you ladies. Y'know, female help.
ATHENA Female help?
APOLLO Yeah, y'know. Romantic advice. Dating tips. Maybe a love potion?
 An infallible love potion?
APHRODITE Ugh. You disgust me. And I am not easily disgusted.

APOLLO takes out the lingerie box.

APOLLO Or maybe next time, I lead with the lingerie? What do you think?
 Or – and I'm just spit-balling here – what if I wear the lingerie?
APHRODITE Sorry, can't hear you. I'm going into a tunnel.

APHRODITE exits.

APOLLO Hera? Please? What am I gonna do?
HERA I guess you could try listening to her.
APOLLO So now you're taking her side?!
HERA You mess with the rose, you get the thorns.
APOLLO What's that supposed to mean???
HERA (*exiting*) Trousers. Google it.

HERA exits.

APOLLO Athena? Come on! Help a brother out. Athena... Goddess of Feminine Wiles...
ATHENA Goddess of Strategy!
APOLLO Goddess of Feminine Strategy...
ATHENA It's just Strategy!!
APOLLO That's what I said. Goddess of you zig when I zag. Goddess of, No, Dummy, here's what you do next. C'mon. You gotta have some advice.
ATHENA Okay... Here's some advice, Dummy.
 Next time... maybe teach her Archery.

ATHENA exits, leaving APOLLO alone on stage.

APOLLO What's that supposed to mean? Athenaaaa!! Hera?! Ladies!

But they're already gone.

APOLLO contemplates the small lingerie box.

Enter CASSANDRA... in the garden... at the beginning of the play.

CASSANDRA Helloo-ooo? Is there somebody out here?

APOLLO quickly hides the box behind his back.

APOLLO Cassandra! What a delightful surprise!

*END OF PLAY
and the beginning...*
