Act 1: “The Judgment of Paris”

Characters:
Thetis Perseus
Hera Zeus
Aphrodite Paris
Athena Menelaus
Eris Agamemnon
Helen Hermes

Scene 1: The Wedding and the Judgment

Thetis: (excited) We are so happy you could all come to our wedding! It is wonderful to see everyone here!

Perseus: Yes, we invited all the gods and goddesses except one. No one likes Eris, the goddess of Discord, and she always causes such a fight; we just couldn’t invite her. Now, we’re going to have a great party!

Eris: (running in and yelling) How DARE you not invite ME to the wedding? Why should I, of all goddesses, be shunned and turned away from such a festive occasion? Well, I brought you a wedding present anyway – HERE! (throws the apple and runs away)

Aphrodite: (picking up the apple) What is this? It’s so…beautiful! It says, “To the Most Fair…”

Athena: Obviously, it should go to one of the goddesses. Like me.

Hera: No way! I am the queen of the goddesses, the most powerful, and the most beautiful. I deserve the apple!

Aphrodite: What? You, the most beautiful goddess? NEVER!

Athena: Well, why don’t we have someone decide who is the most fair and beautiful among us three? Then, we can’t argue about it anymore.

Hera: I suggest Zeus….(calling out) Zeus! Come here! We have a question for you.

Zeus: Yes, my lovely wife. I am always at your service. What can I do for you?

Hera: We need you to decide while among us – me, Aphrodite, or Athena – is the most beautiful. The goddess that you choose will get the golden apple that Eris threw at the party.

Athena: (to herself) I wonder why she did that…

Zeus: (to himself/the audience) Well, this is a nice situation. How can I make such a choice? If I choose one goddess, the others will be angry at me. I can’t make Hera more angry than she already is at me, and I would hate to upset Athena or Aphrodite. Hmmmm…what should I do? A HA!
Ladies, goddesses, I could never make such a decision, because you are all SO lovely. However, there is a mortal – his name is Paris – who has proven himself to be very wise indeed. If you insist on such a competition, I say we should let HIM decide which of you is the most beautiful.

Aphrodite: Oh, yes! That sounds wonderful. Bring him right away, my king.

(Other goddess nod approval)

Zeus: Very well, Hermes, (he appears) bring Paris to me!

Hermes: Very well, my king.

(Hermes flies to find Paris in Troy, asleep)

Hermes: Paris! Wake up! The king of the gods, Zeus himself, requires you at this very moment!

Paris: What? ME? Well, of course I’ll come and do the bidding of Zeus.

(They travel back to Zeus and the goddesses)

Hermes: Here he is, my king. (bows and leaves)

Zeus: Thank you Hermes; you are always so fast. (turns to Paris) Now, Paris, I have an important job for you.

Paris: Oh, anything king Zeus. I would do anything you asked.

Zeus: Good to hear. Paris, I have heard of your wise decisions, and I have a decision for you to make now. Do you see these goddesses? (Paris nods) Each of them want this golden apple, and they’ve decided that the most beautiful goddess should have it. I cannot choose among these ladies that I love so much, so, I have brought you here to make that decision. Choose wisely, young man.

Paris: (stunned) Oh, wow. Thank you for this honor, my king. Now, the most beautiful goddess…(drifts off, confused)

Hera: (comes up front) Well, dear mortal, if you choose ME, I will make you a king over all the land of Europe and Asia. Your kingdom will be the greatest in the land!

Athena: (comes to the front) And if you choose ME, Paris, I will teach you great skill in battle and warfare. You, and you alone, will lead Troy to defeat your biggest enemy: Greece!

Aphrodite: (comes slowly to the front) Well, these are wonderful promises and bribes, aren’t they, Paris? However, if you choose me, I will give you the most beautiful woman in the world to be your wife.

Paris: Wow! To be a king…to defeat the Greeks and earn incredible honor…to have the most beautiful woman in the world as my wife…This is a really hard decision. (Pauses, thinking) I’m going to have to choose Aphrodite!

(Athena and Hera storm off)

Aphrodite: (snotty) Well, THANK YOU dear Paris…and as for your reward…the most beautiful woman in the world is named Helen, and she is wife of Menelaus, brother of the King of Greece. I shall arrange for you to travel there and meet her.

Scene 2: The Meeting and the Deception

(Paris comes up to Menelaus and Helen)

Menelaus: Hello, weary traveler! You must be so tired. Here, come inside our home and rest.

Paris: Thank you so much, Prince Menelaus. I appreciate your hospitality.

Menelaus: You’re most welcome. As you know, Zeus always commands us to take care of strangers seeking help. And help you shall have. By the way, this is my wife, Helen. She is rumored to be the most beautiful woman in the entire world.

(Helen waves hello at Paris, who waves back)

Menelaus: Let’s go have dinner!

(All follow)

Narrator: Later that night…

Paris: (sneaking up to Helen) Helen! You must come with me! Aphrodite, that most beautiful of goddesses, has promised you to me.

Helen: (shocked) What? No, I won’t leave Menelaus. I don’t care WHO promised me to you.

(Aphrodite appears, casting a spell on Helen as if by waving a wand)
Paris: What was that, Helen? Are you sure you don’t want to come back to Troy with me?

Helen: Of course I do, Paris. I love you. Let’s leave now!

(Both run away)

(Menelaus comes)

Menelaus: Helen! Heeelllleeeeen! Where are you? (looks around) Where could she have gone? And where is Paris, our guest? (sees an open door, realizes they have left together) NO! This can’t be! My wife, my Helen, run away with Paris? And my guest, who I honored and fed and gave shelter to, has stolen away the love of my heart, my beautiful wife? I can’t believe it!

(Menelaus runs to his brother, King Agamemnon)

Menelaus: Agamemnon! Agamemnon!

Agamemnon: What is it, brother? Why have you run over here in the middle of the night? And why are you shouting?

Menelaus: You won’t believe what happened! That thief, he stole away my Helen. What can I do? I want to fight Troy to get her back.

Agamemnon: Yes, this is a terrible wrong. Helen was deceived – or perhaps even kidnapped – and this prince of Troy is to blame. We will declare war on Troy at once.

Narrator: And that is how jealous goddesses and a silly man started the Trojan War.

Act 2: Wartime

Chapter 2   —   Updated Oct 30, 2008   —   8,856 characters

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Act 2: “Wartime”

Characters:
Achilles Artemis
Patroklos Clytemnestra
Hector Iphigenia
Odysseus Hera
Agamemnon Messenger
Menelaus Narrator (2)
Poseidon
Zeus

Scene 1: Trying to Leave Greece

Narrator: The Greeks tried to sail to Troy from the port at Aulis. However, the wind would not blow in their favor. They were just waiting, waiting, waiting…

Agamemnon: I can’t believe the wind won’t blow! What am I going to do? The men are getting angrier every single day!

Menelaus: Perhaps, brother, we should go to the oracle to find more information.

Agamemnon: That is a good idea. Let’s take Odysseus with us and go to the oracle.

Narrator: But here, they learn a terrible thing from the goddess Artemis.

Artemis: (angry) Yes, one of your men killed a deer on my temple grounds. As you know, the deer is very sacred to me. Now, you must offer a sacrifice to me. And once you do, the wind will start to blow again and you can sail to Troy.

Menelaus: That is great news, brother!

Agamemnon: Thank you goddess! Yes, we will offer a sacrifice to you, and it will be the greatest sacrifice that I have ever offered!

Artemis: (more angry) Wait! You have not yet heard what sacrifice you must offer.

Agamemnon: (frightened) What do you mean?

Artemis: You must sacrifice your oldest daughter, Iphigenia, to me. Only this will make the winds blow. (disappears)

Narrator: Agamemnon is very upset. He doesn’t know what to do. On one hand, he doesn’t want his daughter to die as a sacrifice. But, on the other hand, he knows the army will rebel against him if he doesn’t do it. He might lose his kingdom over it. So, he decides to send for his daughter, with the message that she is to marry a Greek war hero, Achilles.

(Messenger travels to Clytemnestra and Iphigenia)

Messenger: My lady, there is a message from Agamemnon. He says that Iphigenia must travel to Aulis to be married to the hero Achilles.

Clytemnestra: What wonderful news! I had to idea! Come, Iphigenia, we must gather your things for the wedding and leave at once!

Iphigenia: Yes, mother. How exciting! I’ve heard Achilles is very brave and handsome. I can’t believe he wants to marry ME!

Narrator: Clytemnestra finds out about Agamemnon’s plan. She is very angry and she confronts him about it.

Clytemnestra: (FUMING) Agamemnon! How dare you decide to sacrifice our daughter! What has she done to you?

Agamemnon: I didn’t want to! But if I don’t, the army will rebel, and I will no longer be king. Plus, we must fight this war against Troy.

Clytemnestra: Will you kill her yourself?

(Agamemnon shrinks back)

Clytemnestra: Just you wait, husband. Just you wait. (leaves in anger)

Narrator: She tells Iphigenia that her wedding was a lie, and she also tells her what her father is planning to do. Iphigenia runs away to the forest, weeping. Near sundown, Odysseus and Menelaus decide to move forward.

Odysseus: It’s time, Menelaus.

Menelaus: (to soldiers) Go quickly! Find the girl and bring her back!
(Soldiers chase Iphigenia, catch her, and bring her back, crying)

(Achilles appears)

Achilles: Lady, I was misused as well; your father told a lie about me. For that, I promise to protect you.

Iphigenia: Thank you, but I’ve already decided that I will die in peace.

Clytemnestra: No, my child! You shouldn’t say that! Let Achilles protect you!

Iphigenia: No, I made my decision while I was hiding in the forest.

Achilles: I will be right next to you in case you change your mind.

Narrator: Iphigenia is led calmly to an altar, where a priest is ready to sacrifice her. Just as she dies, the wind begins to blow.

(Soldiers cheer)

Scene 2: Fighting the Battle

(At the Greek camp)

Narrator: The Greeks are losing the battle against Troy. Achilles is still angry at Agamemnon, and refuses to fight. He is such a powerful warrior, that without him, the Greeks have no hope of winning.

Odysseus: (upset) We’re losing bad! I can’t believe Achilles is still upset over Agamemnon’s lie. Without him, we can’t win!

Menelaus: I know! What should we do? Hey, I have an idea – let’s tell Agamemnon to give Achilles a lot of gold and apologize to him, and maybe he will come fight.

Odysseus: Agamemnon! You need to apologize to Achilles. And give him some gold. We will go talk to him right now and see if he will fight for us.

Agamemnon: Yes, good idea – go, talk to him right away!

(Odysseus travels to see Achilles. Patroklos listens.)

Achilles: Odysseus! It’s good to see you. How are things going?

Odysseus: Things are really bad. That is why I have come to talk to you. Agamemnon is really sorry that he told a lie about you. He wants to apologize to you, and he has sent me with this gold to give you if you will come fight for us. He has promised a lot more rewards once we beat Troy!

Achilles: I’m sorry, Odysseus. I can’t. Agamemnon has shamed me, and I will not fight until the Trojans have fought their way to your ships and your ships are on fire.

(Odysseus leaves, sad)

Patroklos: My friend, I am really sad to see the Greeks losing. I have an idea. What if I put on your armor and go out to scare the Trojans back to their city?
Achilles: Hmmm….Okay Patroklos, you can do that. But you have to promise me that you will come right back after they run away. Don’t try to fight anyone. I couldn’t take it if you died.

Patroklos: I promise, Achilles.

(On Mt. Olympus)

Narrator: The gods and goddesses on Mt. Olympus have been very involved in the war, too. They have all taken sides: Hera, Athena, and Poseidon are fighting for the Greeks. Apollo, Artemis, and Aphrodite are all fighting for the Trojans. They were fighting so much, and helping their armies so much, that Zeus had to stop them and command them to stay out of the mortals’ war.

Hera: I can’t believe Zeus won’t let us fight. I want to get back at those Trojans! I’ll teach Paris a lesson – I’ll teach him not to choose ME!

Athena: I think the Greeks should win also. We have to distract Zeus somehow, or else he will stop us from fighting again.

Poseidon: Why don’t we trick him and make him fall asleep? Then, we can do whatever we want!

Hera: Great idea!

Narrator: Hera convinces the god of sleep to cast a spell on Zeus so that he falls into a deep sleep. (Zeus falls asleep) Then, the gods and goddesses join the battle.

(Soldiers on both sides are fighting together, and Hera, Athena, Poseidon and other gods start fighting as well)

(Zeus finally wakes up)

Zeus: WHAT IS GOING ON HERE!? I told you that you cannot be involved in this war! (grabs the gods and goddesses and pulls them out of the battle) Hera! What will make you stop all this and leave them be?

Hera: The Trojans must lose, Zeus. It’s the only way I will feel any peace.

Zeus: Fine! The Trojans will lose in the end. But you have to let me do it the way I want to do it!

Hera: Fine! I’ll stay out of it!

(Back on the battlefield)

Narrator: Patroklos has put on the armor of Achilles and has appeared on the battlefield with the Greeks. The sight of Achilles’ armor is so terrifying that the Trojans start to run away until they realize that it is Patroklos, and not Achilles.

(Trojans run back, screaming, when they see Patroklos)

Hector: Wait a minute, Trojans. That’s not Achilles at all! It’s only his friend Patroklos wearing his armor! Watch, I will go and fight him and take Achilles’ armor for myself!

(Hector and Patroklos fight. Hector finally wins.)

Hector: Ha ha ha! I have killed Patroklos! Now, look at this amazing armor. I will be invincible! Ha ha ha ha ha!

(Odysseus goes to Achilles)

Odysseus: Achilles, I have bad news.

Achilles: Where is Patroklos? My best friend – I’ve been through everything with him. He is like a brother to me.

Odysseus: Hector killed Patroklos. I’m so sorry.

Achilles: NOOOOOOOOO!!!!! Hector and all Trojans, you will PAY for this!

Narrator: Achilles tells his mother, Thetis, that he is planning to join the battle. She tells him not to go until she has had a chance to get him some new armor from Hephaestus, the blacksmith of the gods. She goes to him that night, and he makes the most beautiful and strongest armor anyone had ever seen. She brings it to Achilles the next morning, and he is then ready to fight.

Achilles: (putting on his armor) Oh, this armor is amazing! Now I am ready to fight Hector and kill him for killing my best friend! Prepare to die, Hector.

(Achilles and Hector approach each other and fight to the death)

Achilles: (after killing Hector) You have gotten what you deserve, Trojan Hector.