

DELPHI OR BUST

Libretto by Michael Colby

Music by Gerald Jay Markoe

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Act One, Scene One

We journey back to Athens, Greece, in Ancient Times. Surrounded by Hellenic columns and periaktoi, the setting is a skene [i.e. Greek house and foreground], On view are a Greek Chorus of ATHENIANS—figures resembling a tableau on museum urns. They strum lyres, as they sing the show's Opening: We Greeks Have a Myth. In “story theatre” fashion, they may mime the images of which they sing. These ATHENIANS will later metamorphose into the Cast of Characters. They are led by a MASTER OF CEREMONIES: the actor who later portrays “APOLLO.”

COMPANY

AA-AH-AH...

HA-AH-AH...

“APOLLO”/MASTER OF CEREMONIES

[Possible introductory line:]

Follow Apollo to a time divine...

Presenting the first Greek Chorus line.

(Sings:)

LET'S GO **WAAAYY** BACK, EV'RYONE.

(He may don a laurel wreath—as if it's a top hat)

THEATRE AND ART HAVE JUST BEGUN.

(He may point a typical Greek urn or nude statue)

HERE IN OLD ATHENS, TALES ABOUND

ON WHAT MAKES OUR FLAT WORLD GO ROUND.

(The Greek Chorus of ATHENIANS [ENSEMBLE]
joins in)

ATHENIANS

LET OUR CHOIRS

AND LYRES

RESOUND.

(They sing separately and pantomime their parables.
These parts will be identified by the role later played
by each actor)

“APOLLO”

WHEN THE HIGH GOD—ZEUS—GETS ANGRY, HE HURLS LIGHTNING;

“PECTORUS”

WHEN THE WAR GOD A-RES WORKS NIGHTS, CITIES FALL;

“HERNIA”

EROS, GOD OF LOVE, MAKES MEN SO HOT, IT’S FRIGHT’NING;

ATHENIANS

WE GREEKS HAVE A MYTH FOR IT ALL.

“NEBULA”

PUFFY AE-O-LUS STIRS UP THE BREEZY WEATHER;

“CY”

DIONYSUS IS BEHIND EACH DRUNKEN BRAWL;

“ZIRCONY”

NATIONS GET CONCEIVED WHEN TWO GODS SLEEP TOGETHER;

ATHENIANS

WE GREEKS HAVE A MYTH FOR IT ALL.

“APOLLO”

AND NOW WE HAVE A STORY
YOU MAY NOT KNOW A WORD OF:
ON MORTALS AT ODDS
AND THE ODDEST OF GODS
ONLY GRECO-PHILES HAVE HEARD OF!

“NEBULA”

(Taken aback)
Ooh?

“CANDORA”

YET AS SURELY AS POSEIDON MAKES THE SEA RUN,

“PECTORUS”

SURE AS STARS AT NIGHT ARE SPIRITS RISING TALL,

“ASPHODEL”

WE’LL OBSERVE HOW MYTHIC HEROES TEND TO BE RUN

ATHENIANS

BY THE TRAITS OF LOVE AND FAITH...AND TOTAL GALL—
AS WE FATHOM ALL THE STRANGE THINGS THAT BEFALL:

(Dividing parts:)

MOON, SUN, EARTH...
LIFE, DEATH, BIRTH...
RAIN, GRAIN, GRASS...
FLAME, WIND, GAS!

“APOLLO”

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW, WE JUST LIE ABOUT—WHY STALL?

ATHENIANS

WE GREEKS HAVE A MYTH...
WE GREEKS HAVE A MYTH...
WE GREEKS HAVE A MYTH...
(Hitting higher and higher notes:)
MYTH...MYTH...MYTH...

“APOLLO”

(To a beautiful songstress who has just hit a high
note:)

Stunning...Myth!

ALL

FOR IT ALL!

(Disasters strike: Lightning and thunder are
witnessed. Winds. A eclipse. Earthquake)

EVERYONE

Help!!!

APOLLO

For our next myth, let's head
To an Athens scene...of dread.
Long before the Trojan wreck,
This place was a horse's neck.

(Sings)

GREECE THESE DAYS
HAS SO MUCH DRAMA,
OUR ORACLES
DIE FROM THE TRAUMA!

ATHENIAN 1 [ZIRCONY]

WHERE'S SOMEONE WHO
CAN SAVE THE DAY?

ATHENIAN 2 [CY]

TO SEE US THROUGH
AND POINT THE WAY?

ATHENIAN 3 [NEBULA]

SKIES STORM.

ATHENIAN 4 [ASPHODEL]

DOOM'S CLOSE!

ATHENIANS

ALL GREECE IS GROSS!

(ATHENIANS sing We Need Someone Now)

ATHENIANS

WE NEED SOMEONE NOW
OR ALL GREECE WILL FALL.
THE CHAOS GROWS
AND BRINGS MORE WOES
THAN IN ROME OR GAUL!

ATHENIANS

EACH CHICKEN AND COW
IS POKED WITH DISEASE.
OUR NEIGHBORS FIGHT,
OUR CROPS HAVE BLIGHT,
OUR VERMIN HAVE FLEAS!

ATHENIANS

EACH DAY BRINGS MORE DECAY...
NO LEADER LEADS THE WAY.
WHO'LL GIVE US HOPE AT LAST?
DEAR GODS, SEND SOMEONE—FAST!

WE NEED SOMEONE NOW
 TO DIG THROUGH THE POO—
 FOR OVERNIGHT
 THERE'S PLAGUE AND
 PLIGHT,
 DELIRIA AND FLU!
 (ATHENIAN 2 [CY]
 sneezes)

Achoo!

(All:)

WE NEED SOMEONE NOW.
 WE NEED SOMEONE NEW.
 BUT WHO?
 DEAR GODS,
 BUT WHO?
 DEAR GODS,
 BUT WHO?

(CANDORA, a lovely—but hopelessly frank—ingenue,
 emerges. Playing on a pipe, she is out of tune with the
 OTHERS)

CANDORA

(Putting away her pipe)

POOR PEOPLE, GOOD MORNING,
 I'M SORRY YOU'RE GLUM
 YET GIVE YOU FAIR WARNING
 THERE'S WORSE STILL TO COME.

ATHENIANS

(Dividing parts:)

BY ZEUS! IT'S CANDORA...
 A CURS'D GIRL SINCE YOUTH...
 SHE DOES ONE DEPLORA-
 BLE THING—

(All:)

TELLS THE
 TRUTH!

CANDORA

(Candidly; to various
 ATHENIANS)

YOU'LL PUT ON MORE WEIGHT.
 YOU'LL NEVER THINK STRAIGHT.

(Warning a WOMAN whose HUSBAND
 is standing close to a blond)

WATCH OUT—OR THIS
BLOND
WILL ABSCOND
WITH YOUR MATE.

*(or: WATCH OUT OR THIS DOPE
WILL ELOPE
WITH YOUR MATE.)*

APOLLO

O, PIPE DOWN!

CANDORA

(Putting pipe down)

I'M INCLINED
TO SAY WHAT'S ON MY MIND.

ATHENIANS

CANDORA...
YOU'RE A
PAIN IN THE BEHIND.

ATHENIAN 2 [CY]

WITH ALL THE GRIEF THAT'S BEEN.

ATHENIAN 5 [HERNIA]

Who needs you butting in?!

*(A trumpet blares. The messenger PECTORUS
marches in—putting down his trumpet. He is an
athletic, muscle-bound baritone, a soldier type who
lives by the laws of the republic)*

CANDORA

(Gazing at the arriving PECTORUS)
HOLD IT, CHUMS—
A MESSENGER COMES!

PECTORUS

HARK! HARK! HARK!

OTHERS

Well?

PECTORUS

I'VE NEWS YOU SHOULD MARK WELL!

(Posting a notice)

THOSE WHO THINK YOU SEE AND KNOW IT ALL,
THIS COULD BE YOUR CHANCE TO SHOW IT ALL!
TRY OUT TO BE **THE** HISTORICAL
TOWN OF DELPHI'S BRAND-NEW ORACLE.
TIMES WHEN LIFE HAS MORTIFIED US ALL

WE NEED SOMEONE WHO CAN GUIDE US ALL!
 YOU COULD BE THE PRIESTESS WE SEEK
 IF YOU HAVE THAT MYSTIC MYSTIQUE.

ATHENIAN 2 [CY]

(Pointing)
 Candora sees all truth—
 Past and fut'ya...*
 (*Pronounce "Few-cha")

ATHENIAN 5 [HERNIA]

Yeah, take her, please!

ATHENIAN 4 [ASPHODEL]

Forsooth,
 HER SKILLS WOULD SUIT YA!

CANDORA

What they say is so.

ATHENIANS

And how!

PECTORUS

THEN PLEASE PROVE IT...

CANDORA

(Reluctant)

Oh?...

PECTORUS

Right now.

(She stares intently, grabs his chest, and reads his mind)

CANDORA

Your name is "Pec-to-rus."

PECTORUS

(Astounded)

Right!...

CANDORA

Apollo's messenger.

PECTORUS
(Proudly)

Quite!

PECTORUS

Say more...
I implore!

(They perform The Test)

CANDORA
IN GREAT BATTLES, HAVE YOU SPARRED?

PECTORUS

(Nodding, with pride)
Aye!

CANDORA
DID YOUR MOTHER MAKE LIFE HARD?

PECTORUS

(Nodding, with shame)
Aye!

CANDORA
(Predicting something that happens twice in the
show)
YOU'LL BE STABBED WHEN YOU'RE OFF-GUARD!

(PECTORUS is so amazed he forgets what he is
doing with his sword—and jabs himself)

PECTORUS

(In pain)
Aye!!
'Tis so...

CANDORA

(Nonchalantly)
I know.

DID YOU LEAD OLYMPIC TEAMS?

PECTORUS

(Nodding)
Aye!

CANDORA

YET DO MICE PROVOKE YOUR SCREAMS?

PECTORUS

Aye!

CANDORA

ARE YOU SHAMED BY NAUGHTY DREAMS?

PECTORUS

(Trying to hush her)

Aye!

I BLUSH...

NOW HUSH!

CANDORA

BUT I HAVE ONE DRAWBACK
AND CAN'T TAKE THIS FLAW BACK:
I NEVER CAN CALL
MY OWN FATE AT ALL.

PECTORUS

WHAT AN ANNOYANCE—
TO HAVE UNCLEAR CLAIRVOYANCE!

(CANDORA and OTHERS sings I Know Everybody's
Business)

CANDORA

FEW CAN TELL THE FUTURE AS I DO;
BEYOND WALLS AND LIES, I SEE RIGHT THROUGH;
BUT MY OWN FATE'S ONE THING I CAN'T VIEW...
I KNOW EV'RYBODY'S BUS'NESS BUT MY OWN.

I CAN SOOTHSAY FAMINES, PLAGUES, AND WARS;
I PREDICT EACH TIME A RAINSTORM POURS;
THEN FORGET, SO I GET SOAKED OUTDOORS...

ATHENIANS

SHE KNOWS EV'RYBODY'S BUS'NESS BUT HER OWN.

CANDORA

(While OTHERS hum along)

I SENSE MY LOT'S TO BE
THE VOICE OF WHAT'S TO BE;
BUT BAD NEWS MAKES PEOPLE POUT.
THOSE—MISBEHAVIN'—MIND*

(*“MIND”=“resent the fact that”)
 I KNOW WHAT THEY’VE IN MIND;
 NOW NO MAN WILL ASK ME OUT.

I’LL REVEAL A HUSBAND’S CHEATING GAMES,
 TELL A WIFE SHE’S OLDER THAN SHE CLAIMS;
 I GUESS THAT’S WHY PEOPLE CALL ME NAMES...

ATHENIANS

YOU KNOW EV’RYBODY’S BUS’NESS BUT YOUR OWN.

PECTORUS

THEN, TELL ME, HOW WERE
 YOU GIVEN SUCH POWER?

CANDORA

BECAUSE OF A RUSE
 BY THE GREAT GOD ZEUS...

(Telling the whole sordid story, ashamed:)
 ZEUS SEDUCED MY MOTHER—DISGUISED AS AN OW-L:
 THAT’S WHY I CAN SEE THROUGH THE DARK.
 MAMA DIED OF SHAME FIN’LLY—FEELING SO FOU-L;
 AND I’VE HAD TO MAKE MY OWN MARK...

ATHENIANS

MAKE HER OWN MARK...

CANDORA

I’ve this gift, but nobody likes what I say,
 Calling me unkind and uncouth.
 In this world of li-ars, I’m hoping one day
 That people will welcome the truth.

CANDORA

NICK, THE WICKED EUNUCH, ACTED STUNG
 WHEN I TOLD HIM ONE DAY HE’D BE HUNG!
 I’VE BEEN WARNED

ALL

“SHUT UP OR YOU’LL DIE YOUNG!”

ATHENIANS

KNOWING EV’RYBODY’S BUS’NESS BUT HER OWN.

YOU COULDN’T MISS A FUSS
 WHEN SHE TOLD SISYPHUS
 HIS FUTURE WOULD ROCK DOWNHILL.

ATHENIANS

AND DID MEDEA REEL—
WHEN TOLD SHE'D BE A REAL
BAD MOTHER...

CANDORA

(Shuddering)

IF LOOKS COULD KILL!

I TOLD LEDA, "WATCH OUT FOR THAT SWAN!"
I TOLD SAPPHO THINGS...I WON'T DWELL ON.
I TELL FRIENDS THE TRUTH, AND SOON THEY'RE GONE!

ATHENIANS

HER GRIT TURNS A GRIN TO A GROAN...

CANDORA

NO ONE KNOWS THE TROUBLE I'VE KNOWN—
WHEN THE DAY ENDS, I'M SO ALONE...

CANDORA & ATHENIANS

KNOWING EV'RYBODY'S BUS'NESS BUT MY / HER...

(Heaving a sigh)

OWN!

...

PECTORUS

Based on what you say,
You could be Delphi's Oracle!

CANDORA

I'm not sure
I've got that ambition.

PECTORUS

Come with me today—
This could become historical.

CANDORA

I'm not sure...

PECTORUS

AT LEAST, COME AUDITION—

RATHER THAN BE SHOVED,
SPIT ON, AND FORCED TO FLEE—
YOU COULD PLAY
TO CROWDS THRILLED TO HEAR YOU.

YOU COULD BE BELOVED
 HELPING ALL GREECE AND ME ...
 WHAT YOU SAY
 COULD MAKE PEOPLE CHEER YOU.

(He elaborates on The Oracle at Delphi)

PECTORUS (Cont'd)

AS ORACLE AT DELPHI:
 THROUGH RASH, POX, FLOOD, AND FIRE,
 IT'S SHE WHOSE WORDS INSPIRE
 AND PAGANS WILL BELIEVE!

ATHENIANS

SHE—ALL OBEY!

PECTORUS

SHE WHO BRINGS ORDER
 BY SPEAKING TRUE;
 GREECE HAS ADORED HER!
 COULD SHE BE YOU?

THE ORACLE AT DELPHI:
 EARN PRAISE AND RECOGNITION,
 THE HIGHEST KNOWN POSITION
 GREEK WOMEN CAN ACHIEVE!

ATHENIANS

IN A NICE WAY.

PECTORUS

Since the last one fell dead,
 A day ago,
 Great disorder has spread
 And troubles grow...
 So Apollo has said:
 (We see APOLLO)

APOLLO

“Pectorus, go...
 Find a new seer—this week—
 Or you'll doom ev'ry Greek!
 Look for three maidens...”

ATHENIANS

Three?

APOLLO

Of whom one will be

EVERYONE

The [pronounced "Thee"]
New Queen of Prophecy!

CANDORA

(Nervously laughing)
Hee-hee-hee.
I'm not sure that's for me..

ATHENIANS

(Insistent, as if saying "Go to Hell")
Go to Delphi and see!

PECTORUS

O, try.

CANDORA

O, WHY?

(PECTORUS sings You Could Make History)

PECTORUS

TRUE, YOU CAN REST
SAFE IN YOUR BED
AND NEVER TEST
THE ROAD AHEAD.
NOT TAKE A CHANCE,
NEVER TAKE FLIGHT,
NEVER FACE MYSTERY.

OR YOU CAN GO,
MOVE AND MAKE NEWS,
LET THIS WORLD KNOW
YOUR VOICE AND VIEWS;
YOU CAN ADVANCE,
SEE WHAT'S IN SIGHT;
YOU COULD MAKE HISTORY.

ATHENIANS

YOU COULD MAKE HISTORY...

PECTORUS

NOW YOU'VE
A CHANCE TO PROVE
YOUR SPECIAL WORTH.

ATHENIANS

MAKE HISTORY...

PECTORUS

TO SHINE
AND HELP DEFINE
WHAT'S HERE ON EARTH.

HAVING THE STUFF
TO WIN THE RACE,
IT'S NOT ENOUGH
TO RUN IN PLACE.

PECTORUS (Cont'd)

YOU HAVE A GIFT
THAT YOU SHOULD SHARE;
YOU SHOULD BE SWIFT
TO DO AND DARE.
IF YOU DO THIS,
EVEN ALONE...
YOU COULD MAKE HIS-
TORY...

PECTORUS & ATHENIANS

YOUR OWN!

PECTORUS

ALL LIST'NERS WILL HEED YOUR THOUGHTS...

CANDORA

(Catching on, boasting)
AND SAY I'M WISE AND GREAT THAT WAY.

PECTORUS

SO WOULD YOU...?

CANDORA

(Excited)
I READ YOUR THOUGHTS!
ALL RIGHT! I'LL FOLLOW...

PECTORUS
STRAIGHT THAT WAY!

(PECTORUS points the way, as he and CANDORA
march onward)

PECTORUS, CANDORA, & ATHENIANS
TRUE— YOU / I COULD STAY
LOST IN THE CROWD,
OR WALK AWAY,
ASSURED AND PROUD.
MAKING NEW FRIENDS,
MAKING LIFE BLISS,
NOT MERELY BLIS-TERY.

PECTORUS
IF YOU'VE THE PACE,
DREAM, AND THE DRIVE,
YOU'LL REACH THE PLACE
WHERE YOU CAN THRIVE.
AIM FOR THESE ENDS;
HOW CAN YOU MISS?
YOU COULD MAKE HISTORY.

ATHENIANS
YOU COULD MAKE HISTORY...

CANDORA
NOW I
COULD PROPHE-SY
AMONG GREAT RANKS!

PECTORUS
Aye!

CANDORA
TO SHOW
MEN WHERE TO GO—
AND THEN GET THANKS!

(Grabbing her belongings, she waves goodbye and
marches off with PECTORUS—as the ATHENIANS
recede from view)

ALL
(Waving)
Bye!

CANDORA

NOW IS THE TIME
TO FIND **MY** FATE,
READY TO CLIMB
THE HILLS THAT WAIT.

PECTORUS

YOU'LL BE IMMENSE
IN YOUR FRESH WAY!

CANDORA

I EVEN SENSE
BIG THINGS TODAY!

PECTORUS

IF YOU DO THIS—
GO AND EXPLORE...
SEEING WHAT FEW CAN SEE...

CANDORA

BEING WHAT FEW CAN BE...

PECTORUS & CANDORA

YOU / I COULD MAKE HIS-
TORY...AND MORE!

(End of scene. Brief blackout)

Act One, Scene Two

As CANDORA's odyssey begins, she is led onward by PECTORUS. "**ATHENS**" fades into the distance, as the twosome journey forth: signified by a sign "**NEXT STOP—ELEUSIS SHORELINE.**"

The focus shifts to an ominously bleak and rocky area of Eleusis. Chained to a rock—by her own link jewelry—is the highly distressed ZIRCONY (pronounced "*Zir-KOH-knee*"). She is a voluptuously seductive beauty, amply displaying her cleavage and decked out in tinkling, artificial gems. Her jewelry enchains her to a rock or chair—making her look like a luscious lamb about to be sacrificed. Nearby is her brother ASPHODEL. He is even prettier than his sister—with fair skin and yellow hair, like the colors of the flower that will become his namesake. Holding a radiant looking hand-mirror [glass or brass], ASPHODEL is cursed with such good looks that he can't tear himself away from his reflection—even to rescue his sister. He may have an adolescent/goony voice that deepens as his character

APOLLO

Moving East, be ever wary *(or: Moving North.)*
 Of a seashore wild and scary
 Where fierce monsters make things rocky
 And fair maids become souvlaki.

ZIRCONY

(Calling out; a damsel in distress)
 ASPHODEL!
 ASPHODEL!
 SAVE ME!

ASPHODEL

(Oblivious; looking down at his mirror—in the classical pose of Narcissus)
 Well...

ZIRCONY

HEY, BROTHER, DON'T JUST LIE.
 IF YOU DON'T HELP ME SOON, I'LL DIE.
 THE MONSTER, **WASPRA**, WILL ATTACK:
 PART MAN, PART WASP—ALL MAN-I-AC!

ASPHODEL, HEED!

ASPHODEL

SISTER, DON'T PLEAD!

ALTHOUGH
 YOU'RE CHAINED AND WELL-BOUND,
 I'D HELP YOU BUT, ALAS,
 YOU KNOW
 HOW I AM SPELLBOUND
 WILL GAZING AT MY GLASS.

ZIRCONY

YOU GOT ME INTO THIS STEW,
 GAZING ALL DAY AS YOU DO.
 OUR PARENTS HOPED THAT YOU MIGHT,
 SEEING YOUR SISTER IN PLIGHT,
 FIN'LLY BREAK WAY FROM THAT GLASS.
 PLEASE, SAVE ME, YOU SILLY AS-
 PHODEL!

(ASPHODEL ignores his sister and continues to stare into the glass. Meanwhile, the terrifying WASPRA buzzes in. WASPRA is one of those nightmarish monsters found in Greek mythology: a man-size, part-human Wasp—with a ghastly Wasp's face, whizzing wings, and a sword-like stinger. He is played by the Actor who subsequently portrays "APOLLO")

ZIRCONY

(Afraid for her life)
 O HELL!

WASPRA

(Droning)
 HMMM...
 (Seeing ZIRCONY)
 IT'S MY LUCKY DAY!
 MMMM...
 WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PREY!

(The WASPRA circles around his intended prey, buzzing and sadistically taunting. ZIRCONY begs the self absorbed ASPHODEL to help her, as their solos combine contrapuntally)

ZIRCONY

HEY, BROTHER,
DON'T JUST LIE.
IF YOU DON'T HELP ME
SOON, I'LL DIE.
THE MONSTER, WASPRA,
WILL ATTACK:
PART MAN, PART WASP—
ALL MAN-I-AC!

ASPHODEL

ALTHOUGH
YOU'RE CHAINED AND WELL-BOUND,
I'D HELP YOU BUT, ALAS,
YOU KNOW
HOW I AM SPELLBOUND
WILL GAZING AT MY GLASS.

HEREBY
YOU'RE IN A RUT, STILL
YOU ALWAYS GET THINGS SOLVED.
YOU'RE MY DEAR SISTER, BUT STILL
DO NOT GET ME INVOLVED!

WASPRA

ZZZZ-
ZZZZ....

ZZZZ-
ZZZZ....

ZZZZ-
ZZZZ....

ZZZZ-
ZZZZ....

ZZZZ-
ZZZZ....

(As the WASPRA lunges near them, ZIRCONY screams)

ZIRCONY

O,
WOE!

WASPRA

HI HO!

I'M BUSY, BUSY, BUSY,
BEE-IN' BUZZY, BUZZY, BUZZY,
WITH MY STINGER

(Threatening to pulverize her)

THAT'LL ZING HER
FROM BEE-HIND!

I'M DIZZY, DIZZY, DIZZY
WHILE I'M ZOOMIN', ZOOMIN', ZOOMIN';
IT'S SO THRILLIN'
ZOOMIN', KILLIN'
HUMAN-KIND!

I HEAR THIS DUO'S OTHER BROTHER,
NARCISSUS, WAS SO ENCHANTING
TO HIMSELF—HE SWOONED AND DIED, I SWEAR.

AND THIS HERE BROTHER IS ANOTHER
NINNY—WHILE HIS PERT AND PANTING
SISTER IS MY PREY WITHOUT A PRAY'R!

(WASPRA is about to move in for the kill when he notices something: CANDORA and PECTORUS enter the scene, with CANDORA divining events)

I SENSE	CANDORA
STRANGER	PECTORUS
DANGER	CANDORA
THERE...	CANDORA & PECTORUS
THAN IN	PECTORUS
BEEHIVES	CANDORA
ANYWHERE!	CANDORA & PECTORUS
WATCH OUT!	CANDORA
STAY BACK!	PECTORUS
WAY BACK!	CANDORA
DO!	CANDORA & PECTORUS
THAT'S ONE	PECTORUS
UGLY	CANDORA
BUG ON VIEW!	CANDORA & PECTORUS

(The WASPRA's part combines with that of CANDORA & PECTORUS)

WASPRA

I'M BUSY,
 BUSY, BUSY,
 BEE-IN' BUZZY, BUZZY, BUZZY,
 WITH MY STINGER
 THAT'LL ZING HER
 FROM BEE-HIND!

I'M DIZZY,
 DIZZY, DIZZY
 WHILE I'M ZOOMIN', ZOOMIN', ZOOMIN';
 IT'S SO THRILLIN'
 ZOOMIN', KILLIN'
 HUMAN-KIND!

I HEAR THIS DUO'S
 OTHER BROTHER,
 NARCISSUS, WAS
 SO ENCHANTING
 TO HIMSELF—HE SWOONED
 AND DIED, I SWEAR.

AND THIS HERE BROTHER
 IS ANOTHER
 NINNY—WHILE HIS
 PERT AND PANTING
 SISTER IS MY PREY
 WITHOUT A PRAY'R!

CANDORA

I SENSE

PECTORUS

STRANGER

CANDORA

DANGER

CANDORA & PECTORUS

THERE...

PECTORUS

THAN IN

CANDORA

BEEHIVES

CANDORA & PECTORUS

ANYWHERE!

CANDORA

WATCH OUT!

PECTORUS

STAY BACK!

CANDORA

WAY BACK!

CANDORA & PECTORUS

DO!

PECTORUS

THAT'S ONE

CANDORA

UGLY

CANDORA & PECTORUS

BUG ON VIEW!

WASPRA

(Sniffing at ZIRCONY or salivating at the sight of her)
 BREAKFAST SMELLS GOOD TO ME!

ASPHODEL

(Shooing WASPRA away)
 WHAT'S WITH YOU!

ZIRCONY

(Seeing PECTORUS and CANDORA)
 HELP! HEAR MY PLEA!

(The resourceful ZIRCONY kicks WASPRA in the groin,
 temporarily stunning him)

PECTORUS

BUZZ OFF!

CANDORA

YOU SON OF A BEE!

(PECTORUS and CANDORA intercede to save ZIROCONY. CANDORA reads the monster's mind. PECTORUS duels—with sword and shield—against the WASPRA's stinger. ASPHODEL occasionally uses his mirror to swat at WASPRA. Finally, all singing parts combine: as the WASPRA fences with EVERYONE)

ZIRCONY	ASPHODEL	WASPRA	CANDORA
HEY, BROTHER, DON'T JUST LIE. IF YOU DON'T HELP ME SOON, I'LL DIE. THE MONSTER, WASPRA, WILL ATTACK: PART MAN, PART WASP— ALL MAN-I-AC!	ALTHOUGH YOU'RE CHAINED AND WELL-BOUND, I'D HELP YOU BUT, ALAS, YOU KNOW HOW I AM SPELLBOUND WILL GAZING AT MY GLASS. HEREBY YOU'RE IN A RUT, STILL YOU ALWAYS GET THINGS SOLVED. YOU'RE MY DEAR SISTER, BUT STILL DO NOT GET ME INVOLVED!	I'M BUSY, BUSY, BUSY, BEE-IN' BUZZY, BUZZY, BUZZY, WITH MY STINGER THAT'LL ZING HER FROM BEE-HIND! I'M DIZZY, DIZZY, DIZZY WHILE I'M ZOOMIN', ZOOMIN', ZOOMIN'; IT'S SO THRILLIN' ZOOMIN', KILLIN' HUMAN-KIND! I HEAR THIS DUO'S OTHER BROTHER, NARCISSUS, WAS SO ENCHANTING TO HIMSELF—HE SWOONE AND DIED, I SWEAR. AND THIS HERE BROTHER IS ANOTHER NINNY—WHILE HIS PERT AND PANTING SISTER IS MY PREY WITHOUT A PRAY'R!	I SENSE PECTORUS STRANGER CANDORA DANGER CANDORA & PECTORUS THERE... PECTORUS THAN IN CANDORA BEEHIVES CANDORA & PECTORUS ANYWHERE! CANDORA WATCH OUT! PECTORUS STAY BACK! CANDORA WAY BACK! CANDORA & PECTORUS DO! PECTORUS THAT'S ONE CANDORA UGLY CANDORA & PECTORUS BUG ON VIEW!

(The WASPRA prepares to kill ZIRCONY, as the OTHERS try to stop him)

WASPRA

BYE-BYE,
GAD-FLY!

ZIRCONY

YIE!

PECTORUS

HOW CAN WE AVERT HIM?

ASPHODEL

(Either breaking away from—or gazing through—
mirror)

NOTHING SEEMS TO HURT HIM?

ZIRCONY

DOES HE HAVE NO WEAK POINT?

CANDORA

(Divining the truth)

YANK HIS STINGER'S PEAK POINT!

(PECTORUS yanks out the stinger—the WASPRA's Achilles' heel. Like a popped balloon, the WASPRA whizzes around in an increasingly diminished state—before collapsing)

WASPRA

(With decreasing volume and vitality)

ZZZZZZZZzzzzzzz...

OTHERS

HE'S BUSY, BUSY, BUSY,
BEE-IN' BUZZY, BUZZY, BUZZY,
MAKIN' MERRY
FOR THE VERY
FINAL TIME!

WASPRA

ZZZZ...

(As number ends, WASPRA faces EVERYONE with these parting words:)

I'M

DYING—BUT FIRST,
I'LL SEE THAT YOU'RE CURSED!

(About to buzz off forever)

I PROMISE THIS TO YOU AND YOUR SPAWN:
YOU'LL HEAR MY SOUND WHEN YOU DREAM—FROM NOW ON!

(He expires, as PECTORUS announces:)

PECTORUS

GONE...

(PECTORUS disconnects the chains that bind ZIRCONY;
she reassembles them as strung jewelry. CANDORA grabs
WASPRA's stinger as her trophy)

ZIRCONY

(Gratefully introducing herself)

GOOD WORK!

I'M ZIRC-
ONY.

(In mock respect, pointing)

AND THERE GOES
ASPHODEL.

CANDORA

(More declarative than inquisitive; somewhat infatuated as
she introduces herself to ASPHODEL)

YOU KNOW—
YOU'RE SO
HANDSOME.

ZIRCONY

HE KNOWS

ALL TOO WELL.

PECTORUS

(To ZIRCONY)
YOU'RE COMELY TOO.

ZIRCONY

(Flirtatiously)

O...So are you.

ASPHODEL

I'm sorry I didn't save you, Sis...

ZIRCONY

(Angry)

Sphinx crap!

ASPHODEL

You know why...

PECTORUS

Why?

ZIRCONY

IF PRIED FROM HIS GLASS—ONE HO-UR—this
Dodo thinks HE'LL DIE!

ASPHODEL

(Upset)
Die...

PECTORUS

Would he?

CANDORA

(Sensing)
Could be...

(ASPHODEL sings When I Gaze, peering in mirrors and ponds)

ASPHODEL

SINCE, MORE OR LESS,
MY DAY OF BIRTH,
I'VE FOUND IT HARD TO COPE WITH WHAT'S ON EARTH.
AND YET IT SEEMS
A BETTER PLACE
WHEN I'M GAZING AT MY FACE.

I'M SCARED OF STRESS
AND DEATH AND CRIME,
AND BREAK DOWN HEARING OF THEM, EV'RY TIME.
BUT MY BRAIN BEAMS
AND DIMPLES SPREAD

(Shifting from trepidation to elation, while
gazing in reflection)
WHEN I SEE WHAT'S RIGHT...A-HEAD!

IN THIS WORLD,
WHEN ANY UGLY PART ATTACKS,
I START
HAVING PULSE AND HEART ATTACKS.
Oww!

(Gazing and feeling better)
Wow!...

BUT YOU CAN GUESS
 WHAT CALMS ME DOWN
 WHEN UNDER THUNDERCLOUDS ENOUGH TO DROWN.
 WHEN TROUBLES BREW,
 I HAVE MY WAYS
 TO BRAVE IT THROUGH
 THE BLEAKEST DAYS:
 WHEN I'M GAZING IN THE GLASS
 AT MY GLORIOUS GAZE!

HURT, PAIN, HATE
 AWAIT—NO WAY TO MEND IT ALL.
 I LOOK ROUND
 AND WANT TO END IT ALL!

(Stabbing movement)

Stuck!

Yuck!

BUT, NONETHELESS,
 I TURN AND SEE
 THE PROOF, IN ONE WAY, LIFE'S BEEN GOOD TO **ME**.
 WHEN NEWS IS GRIM
 AND HAVOC PLAYS,
 AND HOPE SEEMS DIM,
 ONE THING ALLAYS:
 SIMPLY GAZING IN THE GLASS
 AT MY GLORIOUS GAZE.

(The action continues)

PECTORUS

That's sad.

CANDORA

Too bad.

Still—I sense there's a cure for your condition...

OTHERS

Oh?

CANDORA

In Delphi, where we now track to.

PECTORUS

Where oracles will join in competition.

ZIRCONY

(Responding at the mention of "ORACLE"; competitively realizing CANDORA's skills)

Whoa!

(Competitively pointing
at CANDORA)
An oracle—I've that knack too!

CANDORA

I sense you might
Do quite well.

ZIRCONY

Right.
(Aside to ASPHODEL:)
I hear seers make a fortune!

ASPHODEL

Oh?...

ZIRCONY

And—for that cure—you too should go.

(ASPHODEL takes ZIRCONY aside)

ASPHODEL

(ASPHODEL nods "Yes," as ZIRCONY explains:)
But you've no powers to make it...

ZIRCONY

Wait, Asphodel! I can fake it!

(ASPHODEL nods "Yes," as ZIRCONY explains:)

If there's profit being a prophet,
I will prove it, living off it!

ASPHODEL

Why not try
Something else?

ZIRCONY

Why?
I COULD BE A DANCING MAIDEN,
(Dances)
BUT I'M NOT ALL THAT GREAT.
I COULD BE A COOK FOR ROY'LTY,
BUT THEY'D GAG—ONCE THEY ATE.
I WOULD BE A VESTAL VIRGIN,
BUT IT'S RATHER TOO LATE.
I MIGHT AS WELL TRY THIS!

ASPHODEL

Sure, Sis.

ZIRCONY

I COULD BE A HANDY SEAMSTRESS,
 BUT MY NAILS MIGHT ALL CRACK.
 I WOULD BE A SHAPELY SHEPHERDESS,
 BUT WOLVES COULD ATTACK.

(Speak-sing next line)

“BE A COURTESAN”—SOME TELL ME,

(Sing:)

BUT I’VE GOT A BAD BACK.
 IN DELPHI—I CAN’T MISS.
 I MIGHT AS WELL TRY THIS!

(ASPHODEL and ZIRCONY nod in agreement. PECTORUS interrupts)

PECTORUS

(To ZIRCONY)

To go with us to Delphi, can
 You prove yourself?

ZIRCONY

(At first timorous, then wily)

Myself? ... I can!

(She butters him up, flirtatiously, as The Test is reprised)

WERE YOU ALWAYS LARGE AND STRONG?

PECTORUS

Aye!

ZIRCONY

WOULD YOU FIGHT TO RIGHT A WRONG?

PECTORUS

Aye!

ZIRCONY

(Trilling)

DOES YOUR CHARM FILL MAIDS...WITH SONG?

PECTORUS

Aye!
'Tis so.

ZIRCONY

(Thrilled with herself, almost surprised as she says:)
I know...?!

(ZIRCONY becomes increasingly seductive)

IS YOUR VOICE—DEEP BASS AND RICH?

PECTORUS

(Showing off voice)
TRUE!

ZIRCONY

IS DEFENDING MAIDS—YOUR NICHE?

PECTORUS

True!

ZIRCONY

(Observing him)
DOES GREAT BEAUTY MAKE YOU...TWITCH?

PECTORUS

(Trying to control himself)
Ooo!...
You pass,
Fair lass!

ZIRCONY

(Relieved)
Phew!

(ZIRCONY smiles in triumph. CANDORA senses both
ZIRCONY's artificiality and the fact—for reasons clarified
later—that ZIRCONY should make the trip)

CANDORA

(Possibly to herself; fighting instincts)
She may pass muster,
But I don't trust her.
But her brother's cute,
So—for now—I'm mute...

(PECTORUS blows his trumpet to announce:)

PECTORUS

NOW, ALL RECRUITS,
LET'S SHAKE OUR BOOTS!
SO WHO'S COMING?

ZIRCONY

(Pointing to ASPHODEL)
HE'S COMING!

ASPHODEL

(Agreeing)
SHE'S COMING!

PECTORUS

COME!!

(He reprises You Could Make History)

PECTORUS & CANDORA

YOU COULD MAKE HISTORY...

PECTORUS

NOW YOU'VE
A CHANCE TO PROVE
YOUR SPECIAL WORTH.

ALL

MAKE HISTORY...

PECTORUS

TO SHINE
AND HELP DEFINE
WHAT'S HERE ON EARTH.

ALL

HAVING THE STUFF
TO WIN THE RACE,
IT'S NOT ENOUGH
TO RUN IN PLACE.

PECTORUS

YOU HAVE A GIFT
THAT YOU SHOULD SHARE;

OTHERS

YOU SHOULD BE SWIFT
TO DO AND DARE.

PECTORUS

IF YOU DO THIS...

CANDORA

(By herself, as the men concentrate on ZIRCONY)
EVEN ALONE...

ALL

PROVING ALL YOU CAN BE...
MOVING DETERMINED-LY...
WE COULD MAKE HIS-
TORY...
OUR OWN.

(They march on, as lights fade)

Act One, Scene Three

Shadows flicker—signifying the approach of nighttime.
The CHARACTERS enter “**A SYLVAN GLEN—
OUTSIDE THEBES**”. Blustery winds are heard in this
wintery setting.

APOLLO

Mmm...Smell the meadow’s musk
Near Thebes—outdoors—at dusk...
Where wood nymphs may **leap** through
And Eros can **peep** through.

(A WOOD NYMPH (NEBULA) leaps through, tossing
petals. Then EROS (CY) chases after her)

**PECTORUS, CANDORA, ZIRCONY, &
ASPHODEL**

(Tired and catching breath)
HAAHH-HAAHH...

(We hear the beautiful VOICE OF NIGHTTIME
[sung by the actress later playing “HERNIA”],
chanting Nightfall Theme)

VOICE OF NIGHTTIME

AAHH-AAHH...

ASPHODEL

What’s that sound?

CANDORA

(Truthfully and allegorically)
Nighttime calling.

(A scenic backdrop unrolls to reveal “darkness” and
trees)

PECTORUS

What was that?

ZIRCONY

(Trying to outdo CANDORA)
Darkness falling.

CANDORA

It's cold as ice.

(PECTORUS sees something on the ground and acts terrified)

PECTORUS

O mercy!

(Quieting down, as OTHERS console him)
Mice!

ASPHODEL

Where are we then?

CANDORA

A sylvan glen.

(Nighttime grows increasingly shadowy and erotic)

ASPHODEL

(Still feeling lusty)
I'm so roused!

ZIRCONY [& possibly OTHERS]

(Putting down things)
I suggest
We set up camp...

CANDORA

(Settling in)
And rest.

(Still in a daze, ASPHODEL rests—as does CANDORA. Focus shifts to ZIRCONY and PECTORUS)

ZIRCONY

(Brushing against PECTORUS)
You're powerful as a throng.

PECTORUS

I've always had to be strong.

ZIRCONY

Yet there's a soft spot in you
That makes you seek out truth!

PECTORUS

True.

From Mother...

ZIRCONY

Your mother...?

(He nods "Yes")

O, Brother!

(PECTORUS sings Mother)

PECTORUS

I LOVED MY MOTHER DEARLY,
AS DID MY FATHER—THOUGH
WE FOUND OUT ALL TOO CLEARLY
SHE LIED...LIKE RIVERS FLOW.

PECTORUS (Cont'd)

HER DI'RY PROVED, ONCE SHE WAS DEAD,
SHE'D BEEN A THIEF AND THREE TIMES WED,
AND TWELVE YEARS OLDER THAN SHE'D TELL,
AND NOT BORN BLOND OR GREEK...OR WELL.

IT LEAVES YOU BROKEN-HEARTED—
THE WAY WE CARED FOR HER—
WHEN SUCH SOULS HAVE DEPARTED:
TO NOT KNOW WHO THEY WERE...

I LOOK FOR ANSWERS, SHOWING—
IN THIS FALSE WORLD—WHAT'S TRUE.
IT PAINS YOU SO, NOT KNOWING
IF THOSE

ZIRCONY

IF THOSE

PECTORUS

YOU LOVED...

ZIRCONY

YOU LOVED...

PECTORUS

LOVED YOU.

ZIRCONY

(Compassionately cuddling
him)
Well, please believe
I won't deceive...

(The focus turns to CANDORA and ASPHODEL, who is in a
panic, having misplaced his mirror. CANDORA finds it and
hands it to him)

ASPHODEL

(Catching a glimpse of himself; primping his hair)
Why, thank you.

CANDORA

(Smitten, as she points to his glass)
Your treasure.

ASPHODEL

(Grateful)
You saved me.

CANDORA

A pleasure.

ASPHODEL

You're great.

(He tries to kiss her. She is unaccustomed to such
behavior and—though enticed—puts him off)

CANDORA

Now wait!

ASPHODEL

I THINK I LOVE YOU SOMEHOW.

CANDORA

THIS IS SO FAST...
NO ONE'S LIKED ME—TILL NOW.

ASPHODEL

That was the past.

CANDORA

The past?

(TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE NIGHT IS PERFORMED)

ASPHODEL

THE PERILS OUT HERE ARE NO MYTH...
 BUT WHEN YOU'RE THE ONE I AM WITH,
 I FEEL NEW STRENGTH AND PASSION.
 ADRIFT IN THIS DESOLATE PLACE,
 THE LEAST WE CAN DO IS EMBRACE.

(He leans forward, about to hug her. CANDORA stops him)

CANDORA

IT'S NOT THE TIME TO DASH IN.

IF YOU MUST MAKE A PASS
 (She maneuvers his mirror)
 THEN DO IT AT YOUR GLASS.
 (Softening)
 OR TELL ME JUST WHAT YOU WANT...
 (Reading his mind, she warns:)
 IN PROPER FASHION.

ASPHODEL

A ROOMY SHELTER WOULD BE NICE.
 A CRACKLING FI-RE WOULD BE NICE.
 PERHAPS SOME CAKE
 AND MILK TO SLAKE
 THE APPETITE.
 BUT MOSTLY, AT DAY'S END
 IT'S NICE TO HAVE A FRIEND
 TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE NIGHT.

CANDORA

A WARM EMBRACE MAY MELT THE COLD.
 THE HEAT OF PASSION MAY TAKE HOLD...
 STIRRED BY A STAR
 OR DRIVES THAT ARE
 TOO HARD TO FIGHT.
 BUT SOMETIMES WHAT'S PREFERRED
 CAN BE A CHEERING WORD
 TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE NIGHT.

ASPHODEL & CANDORA

IT'S A LONELY, DARK AND SCARY WORLD
 OUT THAT WAY.
 AND WHEN WE FALL SHORT,
 WE NEED SUPPORT
 TO FACE OUR NEXT DAY.

ASPHODEL

AND SO SOME KISSES MIGHT BE NICE...

CANDORA

A SLEEPING POTION WOULD SUFFICE.
A RENDEZVOUS WITH YOU MIGHT DO
OUR HEARTS DELIGHT.
BUT NICEST OF ALL PLANS
IS SIMPLY HOLDING HANDS
TILL ALL OUR CARES SEEM SLIGHT.

ASPHODEL

SO LET'S MAKE...DO...

ASPHODEL & CANDORA

I'LL STAY BY YOU
TO HELP YOU THROUGH
THE NIGHT.

(The focus returns to ZIRCONY, who is trying to seduce the tempted
PECTORUS)

ZIRCONY

O Pectorus...um...
THERE'S SOME-
THING—IN TENTS—I PROPOSE
WE COULD DO TONIGHT...BESIDES DOZE:
LET'S LOVE UNTIL WE'RE LISTLESS.

PECTORUS

(Aroused but resistant)
I MUST TURN YOU DOWN, THOUGH IT'S HARD.
TONIGHT, I HAVE GOT TO KEEP GUARD.

ZIRCONY

(Breathing heavily on him)
ONCE KISSED, YOU MIGHT RESIST LESS.

PECTORUS

YOU'RE SO TEMPTING TO ME.

ZIRCONY

GIVE IN.

PECTORUS

(Pointing to the OTHERS)
BUT THEY MIGHT SEE.
RIGHT NOW, FOR EV'RYONE'S SAFETY, WE'LL STAY TRYST-LESS.

(During this sequence, PECTORUS and ZIRCONY are actually contradicting their words: they progressively yield to passion)

PECTORUS (Cont'd)

ALTHOUGH YOUR LIPS LOOK GOOD TO ME;
 ALTHOUGH YOUR EYES WON'T LET ME BE;
 THOUGH SOME TIME SOON,
 TOUCHED BY THE MOON
 I'D HOLD YOU TIGHT.
 STILL, NOW I'M SATISFIED
 TO JUST BE BY YOUR SIDE
 AND HELP YOU THROUGH THE NIGHT.

(ZIRCONY and PECTORUS become more intimate;
 CANDORA and ASPHODEL remain innocent)

CANDORA, & ASPHODEL

IT'S A LONELY, DARK AND SCARY WORLD
 WHEN IT'S LATE;
 AS YOU FACE THE THINGS
 TOMORROW BRINGS
 ON ROADS THAT AWAIT.

PECTORUS

A CUP OF WINE MIGHT CUT THE ICE.

ZIRCONY

SILK SHEETS AND PERFUME MIGHT ENTICE.

ASPHODEL

A BED OF FEATHER

CANDORA

AND FAIR WEATHER

ASPHODEL & CANDORA

ALSO MIGHT.

PECTORUS

BUT STOPPING IN OUR TRACKS...

CANDORA

LET'S LIE BACK AND RELAX.

ZIRCONY

LET'S ACT LIKE GOOD FRIENDS WOULD.

Will you be good? **PECTORUS**

(Flirtatiously) **ZIRCONY**

REAL GOOD!

JUST ME... **ASPHODEL & CANDORA**

JUST ME... **PECTORUS & ASPHODEL**

AND YOU... **CANDORA & ZIRCONY**

AND YOU... **PECTORUS & ASPHODEL**

TILL DAY **CANDORA & ZIRCONY**

TILL DAY **PECTORUS & ASPHODEL**

IS DUE **CANDORA & ZIRCONY**

IS DUE **PECTORUS & ASPHODEL**

WILL HELP
US THROUGH
THE NIGHT. **PECTORUS, ZIRCONY, CANDORA, & ASPHODEL**

(PECTORUS and ZIRCONY end in a passionate clinch, while CANDORA and ASPHODEL innocently hold hands [or rest heads together]. Ultimately, lights fade, as the paris respectively make out and/or doze off. ASPHODEL may sleep—facing his mirror. Through the darkness, we hear a loud “ZZzz” sound: identical to that of the WASPRA; then another and another. As daytime dawns and sunshine illuminates the scene, we realize that we’ve been hearing the “snores” of PECTORUS, CANDORA, ZIRCONY, and APHODEL. Once by one, they wake—frightened by the noise. Birth of the Snore is performed)

ZIRCONY

Zzzzzz...

PECTORUS

(Who slept the least)
What are those bloodcurdling sounds?

ASPHODEL

Zzzzzz...

CANDORA

Sounds like the Waspra's curse!

PECTORUS

Zounds!

(Mystically we hear the WASPRA'S VOICE)

WASPRA'S VOICE

I PROMISE THIS TO YOU AND YOUR SPAWN:
YOU'LL HEAR MY SOUND WHEN YOU DREAM—FROM NOW ON!

(We refocus on the snores)

ZIRCONY & ASPHODEL

Zzzzzz...

PECTORUS

Is that a "Snort" or a "Roar"?

CANDORA

Both!

PECTORUS

Then let's call it...a "Snore"!

CANDORA

Sure!

(As the night turns into day, we hear more VOICES, led by the actors who later play "CY," NEBULA," "APOLLO," and "HERNIA")

VOICES

DAWN GLOWS, NIGHT GOES—IT'S PLAYTIME
FOR CREATURES OF THE DAYTIME.

(Our GROUP awake, yawning and staring. They speak in rhythm:)

Haze!

CANDORA

Mist!

PECTORUS

Dew!

ZIRCONY

Glare!

ASPHODEL

(NEBULA and CY arrive on the scene, just as dawn is breaking. NEBULA is a spacy, pretty lass—who is often possessed by extra-sensory impulses. Clothed in billowy green, she wears her hair in two peaks—on opposite sides—like antennae. As if changing channels [like the “Genie” in Disney’s ALADDIN], she speaks in different voices and personalities [which may be the spirits of future celebrities]. Also, she occasionally hums, unconsciously sounding like radio static.

CY is her protector: a strong, appealing cyclops—with one huge luminous eye and one dark eyebrow in the middle of his forehead

Though usually in a fog, NEBULA looks intently at the travelers)

CY

(Pointing; in rhythm)

Look!

NEBULA

(Waving with delight)

Hi!

PECTORUS

Who’s there?

(NEBULA shakes hands with EVERYONE)

NEBULA

PLEASED TO MEET!
AREN’T YOU SWEET!
IT’S A THRILL!
(Gazing at ASPHODEL)
HEART, BE STILL...

ASPHODEL

But who
Are you?

NEBULA

(With a high-pitched, adolescent quality similar to
that of ASPHODEL)
I'm Nebula...And
This is—

CY

(Manfully bowing to introduce himself)
Cy—RELY ON ME!

NEBULA

My guard'yan.

ZIRCONY

(Somewhat sarcastic)
How grand!

NEBULA

HE KEEPS AN EYE ON ME!

(She giggles)

CANDORA

A Cy-clops...

ZIRCONY

Dear,
Why are you here?
...

NEBULA

(Getting to the meat of the matter)
I CAN HELP IN YOUR DECISION
FOR AN ORACLE WITH VISION!

OTHERS

SHE CAN HELP IN YOUR DECISION
FOR AN ORACLE WITH VISION!

NEBULA

I'D LIKE TO APPLY FOR THAT POST.
My fam'ly were sorcerers...Most
Were murdered...

CY
OR SIMPLY WENT MAD.

NEBULA
Now I need a decent job—bad!

(The OTHERS confer)

CANDORA
SHE'S AS GREEN AS A FROG.

ZIRCONY
DIMMER THAN THE DAWN.

CY
(On the side)
BRITTLE **FLAKE**—
THE GODS MAKE
ME PROTECT.

NEBULA
I WAS BORN IN A FOG...

ZIRCONY, ASPHODEL, & PECTORUS
AND IT LINGERED ON.

CY
BUT THAT MIST
HAD A MYST-
ICAL EFFECT!

CANDORA
(Standing nearby; sensing truth)
CORRECT!

NEBULA
CORRECT!

ALL
CORRECT?!

(IN SHOW-BIZ STYLE, NEBULA AND CY SING BELIEVE HER.
NEBULA DOES A HARD-SELL ON HERSELF. **note**: THE
PARENTHETICAL LYRICS ARE THE INJECTIONS OF NEBULA'S
"OTHER VOICES")

NEBULA
CORRECT!!!

I PICK UP THINGS IN THE AIR:

(You don't say!)

I HEAR THE BIRDS' POINT OF VIEW.

(Thank you, jay!)

(We hear "bird" sounds as NEBULA raises her hand to her hair:)

OR CLOUDS WRITE WORDS AS I STARE.

(Sun today!)

OR FUTURE VOICES POP THROUGH...

(She speaks in future "spirit voices")

(HIGH ON A HILL, THERE'S A HOLY QUOTE HEARD:)-->[JULIE ANDREWS ("LONELY GOATHERD")]

(EV'RYTHING'S COMIN' UP MOSES!)--> [ETHEL MERMAN]

CY

BELIEVE HER...

NEBULA

POSSESSED, I'LL HUMMM IN TIME,
SAY WHAT'S TO COME IN TIME,

CY

MAKE PEOPLE NUMB IN TIME...
YET THEY TAKE THE CHANCE,

NEBULA

ENTRANCED BY MY TRANCE...

(NEBULA makes "radar sounds," then continues:)

THE SIGNALS START HERE AND THERE:

(Not so quick!)

A TELL-TALE ODOR I'VE
SNIFFED!

(Sniffs)

(Someone's sick!)

OR INSECTS TELL ME "BEWARE"!

(Thank you, tick!)

OR ZEPHYRS GIVE ME THE DRIFT.

(A weather girl voice takes over:)

Tomorrow, in our greater metropolis area, there's a 50% chance of locust.

CY

BELIEVE HER!

NEBULA

MY VOICES SPEAK TO ME—
 THOUGH IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME—
 THEY SIGH AND SHRIEK TO ME;
 FROM OUT OF THE BLUE...
 THEY YELL "PEEKABOO!"
 AND WHEN THEY MAKE ME SQUEAL
 THE WILD THINGS THEY REVEAL...

NEBULA & CY

IT OUGHT TO MAKE A REAL

NEBULA

BELIEVER...

CY

BELIEVE HER...

NEBULA & CY

BELIEVER...

NEBULA

(Darlink, isn't she vondaful!-->[EVA GABOR]
 (Reh-ily lovely!-->[KATHARINE HEPBURN]
 (Hot-cha-cha-cha!-->[JIMMY DURANTE]

NEBULA & CY

OUT OF YOU.

(NEBULA hums final spooky notes—à la the "STAR
 TREK Theme"—to button the song)

NEBULA

HMM-
 MMM-MMM...

...

PECTORUS

That's all very moving
 But needs further proving.

CY

If you used your sight
 And mind as I do—
 Instead of your might—
 You'd see she speaks true!

ZIRCONY

(Pushes CY away, covering his eye)
 AWW, NEBULA, SHOW US, PLEASE!

(A wind blows)

NEBULA

(Possibly with the Future Voice of
 "Maurice Chevalier")
 IT'S A BREEZE!

(NEBULA sings her version of The Test. She reaches up, "tunes in" via one of her hair peaks, and goes glassy-eyed. As she makes her proclamations, her voice can change to suggest different spirits speaking. First, she stares at ASPHODEL)

VOICES TELL ME, "YOU LOVE...YOU-OO-OO-OO."--> [JEANETTE MacDONALD]

OTHERS

(Except CY)
 Aye!

NEBULA

(Pointing to CANDORA, as ZIRCONY edges forward)
 YOU HAVE MYSTIC POWERS TOO!

(ZIRCONY tries to be the one NEBULA points to, as CANDORA looks vexed)

ZIRCONY

(In agreement)
 Aye!

NEBULA

(To PECTORUS—tired from his tryst with ZIRCONY)
 AND YOU NEED A NAP, YOU DO!--> [MEL BROOKS as SIGMUND FREUD]

ZIRCONY

My!

PECTORUS

(Interrupting)
 Astute!

PECTORUS, ZIRCONY, ASPHODEL, & CY

You'll suit!

(Truthful as ever, CANDORA has the spoilsport last word)

CANDORA

Despite her psychic ease,
I'm feeling something
Is very wrong and she's
Concealing something!

(While NEBULA looks distressed, CY tells her, supportively:)

CY

Please—Nebula, confide
The awful truth you hide,
The reason you could use
A safer place to muse!

NEBULA

(Reluctant, she finally admits:)
I'VE FLED FROM MY STEP-MOM ON THIS JOURNEY: A
GODDESS—OF INTERNAL DISORDER—NAMED "HERNIA."

(In this jazzy, rapid-pulse section, she tells all:)

SHE DROWNED MY MOTHER...

CY

TO WED HER DAD...

OTHERS

(In harmony)
WOO-
OO!

CY

THEN BROILED HER BROTHER...

NEBULA

STABBED DAD REAL BAD.

OTHERS

WOO-
OO!

NEBULA
 THEN BASHED MY OTHER
 COUSINS ON A SPREE.

OTHERS
 OO!

CY
 NOW, ON ANOTHER
 SPREE—SHE'S

NEBULA
 AFTER ME!

OTHERS
 HEY!

NEBULA
 AFTER ME!

OTHERS
 OO-WHO?

NEBULA
 AFTER ME!

OTHERS
 SAY!

NEBULA
 AFTER ME!

OTHERS
 (Waving off her fear)
 HEY!

NEBULA
 BUT, I STILL DESPAIR
 OF HERNIA'S SNARE.
 HER IMAGE FOLLOWS ME EV'RYWHERE.

(As lights darken, the shadowy figure of HERNIA arises—like a spectre. She is a tall, Wagnerian vision—galvanizingly glamorous—epitomizing every dangerous Greek Goddess in mythology. She has at least one long fingernail on each hand: which she waves like magic wands. This is an over-the-top character, with the allure of a nightclub siren. Elsewhere, NEBULA is comforted by CY

and CANDORA, while ASPHODEL timidly gazes in his mirror to avoid being frightened. HERNIA sings Its Own Reward)

HERNIA

(Addressing NEBULA)

ONE KISS FROM ME
ON A DATE'LL
QUITE FREQUENTLY
TURN OUT FATAL.
I'M BREATHTAKING FUN
IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE...

SOME KILL FOR RICHES,
SOME THRILL FOR POWER,
SOME SHREWS AND WITCHES
LIKE MEN TO COWER.
THERE'S ONLY ONE GOAL I AIM TOWARD:
CRUELTY...
IS ITS OWN REWARD.

WHAT GOOD ARE VASES

(Pronounce "VASES" as "VAY-SEZ")

UNLESS YOU CRACK 'EM?
OR SMILING FACES
UNLESS YOU SMACK 'EM?
I'VE NAILS TO SCRAPE ON SKIN AND BOARD.

(She rubs her fingernails on something, making a horrible squeak, as OTHERS recoil. Then, HERNIA smirks:)

CRUELTY...
IS ITS OWN REWARD.

TOWARD WOMAN AGING BADLY
I TELL **HOW** BADLY GLADLY;
WHEN I FEED A BIRD, IT FOAMS.
I LEAVE NO **EMPTY** COFFIN;
MAKE CHILDREN ORPHANS OFTEN,
THEN FIND THEM NEW **ROTTEN** HOMES!

MY FAM'LY CALL ME
"A PAINFUL KILLJOY."
THOUGH THEY APPALL ME,
THEIR PAIN IS STILL JOY!
I WRING MY MAID WITH ONE LONG CORD!
CRUELTY...
IS ITS OWN REWARD.

I COOK WITH EXTRA FISHBONES,
 SNAP EV'RYBODY'S WISHBONES;
 MY VICTIMS OUTNUMBER STARS.
 I HELP THE SUICIDAL...
 MAKE SURE NO DAGGER'S IDLE,
 PRESERVE ALL MY FRIENDS...IN JARS!

AS FAR AS MEN GO—
 FROM LADS TO LECHERS—
 THEY LOVE ME, THEN GO
 AWAY ON STRETCHERS!
 I REARRANGED ONE WITH HIS SWORD.
 CRUELTY...
 IS ITS OWN REWARD.

MENACE, ANYONE?
 HEADS SERVED—ON A BUN?
 IT'S TOUGH NOT TO GO OVERBOARD.
 CRUELTY...
 CAN'T BEAT
 CRUELTY...
 MY TREAT!!
 CRUELTY...
 IS ITS OWN REWARD.
 CRUELTY...
 IS ITS OWN REWARD.

(Closes with a manic laugh)

AH-

HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HAH!

(HERNIA's image fades out)

ZIRCONY

Sounds like some moth
 You'd like to smother!

(Suddenly, lights shine)

CY

Look, see!
 The road's clear.

PECTORUS

Aye! Come, let's move on!

(Pointing)

THE WONDERS OF DELPHI AWAIT!

CANDORA

Look! Mount Parnassus lies yon.

(OTHERS may yawn and echo “YAWN...”)

PECTORUS

LET’S GO BEFORE IT’S TOO LATE...

NEBULA

And bid our troubles begone.---->[EARTHA KITT]

PECTORUS, CY & ASPHODEL

WE’LL REACH THE HIGHEST HEIGHT THERE.

ZIRCONY

We have a date —with Fate...

PECTORUS, CY & ASPHODEL

RIGHT THERE

NEBULA, ZIRCONY& CANDORA

Where oracles orate.

(They reprise We Could Make History, **possibly in harmony**)

ALL

COME, LET US PASS
AND CLIMB WITH PRIDE
UP THE PARNASS-
US* MOUNTAINSIDE.
(*Pronounce “**PAN-ASS-ES**”)
TOO MUCH AT STAKE
TO HESITATE.
WE HAVE TO MAKE
THE BEST OF FATE.
IF WE DO THIS—
ACHIEVE OUR DREAM:
TAMING ADVERSI-TY,
TELLING WHAT WE FORESEE,
WE COULD MAKE HISTORY
SUPREME!

(They march off-stage, as scene ends and lights darken)

Act One, Scene Four

Lights brighten, as we see a backdrop: depicting a mountain area, with a sign saying “Delphi” and capped by the suggestion of a Greek Temple. This backdrop should deliberately look like a “drawing” [e.g. a charcoal or crayon drawing]. It may be pulled on a curtain rod by APOLLO: the resplendent Greek God.

PECTORUS guides in his group: CANDORA, ZIRCONY, ASPHODEL, NEBULA, and CY. Gazing into his glass, ASPHODEL is tugged forward by ZIRCONY. NEBULA is unconsciously humming. They reprise We Need Someone Now)

OTHERS

WE NEED SOMEONE NOW—
TO SCOUR THROUGH GREECE!

CANDORA

See the mountain drawing near us...

(APOLLO approaches them)

PECTORUS

And look who’s come to meet and hear us...

OTHERS

SOMEONE TO SOMEHOW
BRING ORDER AND PEACE.
BUT WHO,
DEAR GODS?
WHO,
DEAR GODS?
OO...
WHO!?

(Apollo’s Entrance is sung. APOLLO introduces himself to EVERYONE except PECTORUS [who already knows him]. APOLLO arrives like a burst of light)

APOLLO

I'M APOLLO, THE SUN GOD...

CANDORA, ASPHODEL, ZIRCONY, & CY

APOLLO, THE SUN GOD!
THE ONE GOD
I'VE WANTED TO MEET!

APOLLO

WHAT BEAUTY! WHAT BRIO!
(To PECTORUS)
YOU'VE BROUGHT A FINE TRIO
OF CANDIDATES HERE TO COMPETE.

NEBULA

Feel the heat.

APOLLO

(Playfully)
I'M APOLLO, AS GIVER
OF WARMTH, I DELIVER.
STEP RIGHT UP—I'LL LIGHT UP...YOUR DAY.
YOU AREN'T SIMPLY DREAMING.
I LEAVE PEOPLE BEAMING
LIKE NO OTHER GOD—I MUST SAY!

NEBULA

Shine my way. [< ---- MAE WEST]

APOLLO

IT'S TIME TO ENTER
THE BIG CONTEST OF THE YEAR.
LADIES, I'M THE JUDGE AND MENTOR
OF ALL ORACLES OUT HERE.

CY

(His eye aching)
Please stop flashing.

ZIRCONY

(Flirting)
Greetings, Dashing!

PECTORUS

It's Apollo, now mind you all,
Who assigned me to find you all!

ZIRCONY

(Showing off her figure)
We'll make a good showing.

ASPHODEL & CY

Then, ladies, get going!

(The competition begins. CANDORA, ZIRCONY, and
NEBULA huddle)

CANDORA

Now, girls, let's agree
Whatever choice is struck,
We always will be
Good sports!

NEBULA

(Agrees and adds:)
Good friends!

(They all shake hands)

ZIRCONY

Good luck!

APOLLO

Girls, now's your chance so you
Help me to better know you.

CANDORA, ZIRCONY, & NEBULA

YOU BET!
ALL SET!

CANDORA

(Taking over)
But I must say
One thing first...

(They compete with the song May I Be Candid?—
done as a round)

CANDORA

MAY

I BE CANDID?
I'D BE YOUR BEST BET—
BUT WORDS ARE TRUE
(Points to ZIRCONY and NEBULA)

WHEREAS THESE TWO
MAY FIB, DO NOT FORGET!

NEBULA

(Stepping forth)
MAY I BE CANDID?
I'D BE YOUR BEST BET!
MY VOICES SING
AND NEVER STING—
WHILE THOSE GIRLS MAKE YA FRET!

ZIRCONY

(Suppressing anger)
THEY'RE SO HIGHHANDED!
BUT I'M YOUR BEST BET!
I'M BETTER DRESSED
AND LOOK THE BEST;
THE SMARTEST MAID YOU'VE MET!

(They vie for attention—their parts overlapping)

CANDORA
MAY
I BE CANDID?
I'D BE YOUR BEST
BET—
BUT WORDS ARE
TRUE
WHEREAS THESE
TWO
MAY FIB, DO NOT
FORGET!
MAY
I BE CANDID?
MAY
I BE CANDID?

NEBULA
...
MAY I BE CANDID?
I'D BE YOUR BEST
BET!
MY VOICES SING
AND NEVER STING—
WHILE THOSE GIRLS
MAKE YA FRET!
MAY I BE...
MAY I BE
CANDID!

ZIRCONY
...
...
THEY'RE SO HIGH-
HANDED!
BUT I'M YOUR BEST
BET!
I'M BETTER DRESSED
AND LOOK THE BEST;
THE SMARTEST MAID
YOU'VE MET!
MAY
I BE CANDID?

...

My bet's on Zircony!

PECTORUS

CY

Nebula...

ASPHODEL

Errone-
Ous! My vote is for a
Triumph by Candora.

APOLLO

I thank you, Maidens. By the way,
There's something I forgot to say:
BESIDES ONE ORACLE—FOR SPICE—
I'LL CHOOSE A HUMAN SACRIFICE.

(The OTHERS are aghast)

OTHERS

CHOOSE ONE HUMAN SACRIFICE?!

O,
NO!
O,
NO!
O,
NO!
O,
NO!

(Suddenly, in a burst of stormy darkness, HERNIA enters—
cozying up to APOLLO. She has actually seduced him out of
his normal senses. She will constantly be doing cruel things:
digging her fingernails into people, tossing away hors d'oeuvres
and using their toothpicks to stick people; dropping poison into
goldfish bowls; stomping on open toes; having “live” mice
attached to her dress to upset the squeamish)

CY

(To NEBULA)
Don't turn! Ya
See—Hern'ya!

HERNIA

(Waving)
Step-child...Cy!

NEBULA

Step-mom...

NEBULA & CY

(Wary)
Hi!

CY

(To NEBULA)
I'll watch ya!

NEBULA

(Close-by)
I gotcha!

(NEBULA & CY stare at each other in trepidation.
HERNIA brushes against APOLLO, who seems to be
under her spell)

HERNIA

Sunnybun,
THANK YOU FOR LAST NIGHT.

APOLLO

(A bit glaze-eyed)

No, thank you!

HERNIA

NOW HAVE YOU ARRANGED **MY** FAVOR?

APOLLO

Yes, **I** did!

HERNIA

THEN AMONG THESE GIRLS YOU'RE SORTING THROUGH,
(Holding a divining rod in one hand
and a sword in the other)
ONE SHALL BE DIVINING, AND ONE...DIVIDED!

APOLLO

That's so.

PECTORUS, CY, & ASPHODEL

UH-OH!

ZIRCONY, NEBULA, & CANDORA

(Terrified)
If not chosen oracle, we might
Be a human sacrifice?!

HERNIA

That's right!

(May I Be Candid? is reprised)

ZIRCONY

(Stepping forward)
 MAY I BE CANDID?
 I'M NOT YOUR BEST BET!
 MY TASTE IS BAD,
 I LIE LIKE MAD,
 AND DO THINGS YOU'D REGRET!

(The OTHERS—especially ZIRCONY and NEBULA—
 cower. CANDORA steps forth—to the tune of I'm Your
 Best Bet)

HERNIA

(Not surprised)
 OH?

NEBULA

MAY I BE CANDID?
 I'M NOT YOUR BEST BET!
 RIGHT NOW I PRAY
 TO RUN AWAY
 AS FAR AS I CAN GET!

CY

(Blocking HERNIA from reaching
 NEBULA; gesturing for NEBULA to run)
 GO!

CANDORA

(Candidly stating:)
 THAT LEAVES ME STRANDED—
 I'M STILL YOUR BEST BET!
 THOUGH I COULD DIE,
 I CANNOT LIE...

(Points to HERNIA)
 HOW DARE YOU SMITE
 OUR HOPES FOR SPITE!
 WITH ALL YOUR HATE,
 YOU ARE THE GREAT-
 EST BITCH I EVER MET!

(The OTHERS gasp at CANDORA's candor)

Oy vez mir! **NEBULA** *[or: That does it!!]*

ZIRCONY
She's through!

CANDORA
I must say what's true!

(HERNIA is enraged but coolly restrains herself. She reprises Its Own Reward)

HERNIA
True...
THIS MAIDEN'S CANDOR
RATES PRAISE UPON HER...

APOLLO
FOLKS, IT SHOULD LAND HER
A SPECIAL HONOR...

HERNIA
WE'VE FOUND OUR SACRIFICE, MY LORD.

CANDORA
Help!!

ASPHODEL & PECTORUS
Uh-oh!

CY
Stop it!

APOLLO
(Raising his hand—possibly casting a spell)
Whoa!
You can't stop a God!

HERNIA
(Shaking head)
God no!

(HERNIA and APOLLO approach CANDORA with weapons of execution [e.g., an axe, sword, or sharp fingernail]. The OTHERS are aghast, freezing. Know Everybody's Business is reprised)

CANDORA

Can't we talk?

HERNIA

It's too late to atone!
If you'd just left well enough alone—
You'd be safe now—Write that on her stone.

CANDORA

I KNOW EV'RYBODY'S BUS'NESS...
BUT MY OWN!

(She is speechless, holding her hands to her head)

HERNIA

Ah-
Ha-ha-ha!

(CANDORA's friends look on, horrified: paralyzed and unable to help her. As APOLLO and HERNIA seemingly close in for the kill, it is:

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

)

Delphi or Bust is a two-act musical of which this is the first act. To receive a complete reading copy and for other contact information, please see the *Delphi or Bust* information page – click your browser's "Back" button or visit <http://www.singlelane.com/proplay/delphi.html>