



SCRIPT SAMPLES

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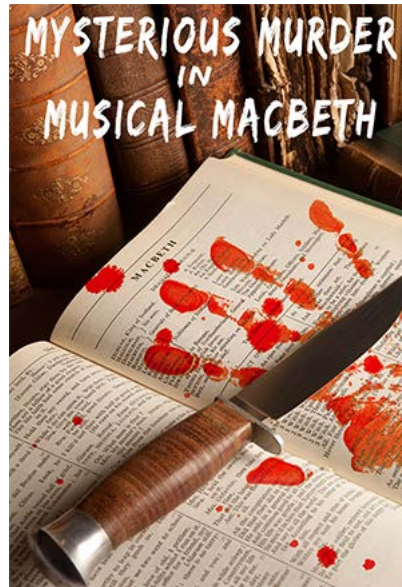
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MYSTERIOUS MURDER IN MUSICAL MACBETH (SCRIPT SAMPLE)

by

Albert Jamae

Amateur theatre has sunk to an all-time low!

STORY

Dysfunctional director Jéan is at the end of his tether, trying to stage his latest masterpiece. However, opening night nerves pale in comparison to flamboyant egos, the hovering Mafia, and a serial killer lurking in the wings...so it goes without saying...you really shouldn't name that Scottish play!

DURATION: 60 min (1 or 2 acts)

CAST

JÉAN (30+): Always on edge, quick talker to get out of any situation but never thinks too many steps ahead. He knows what he wants and refuses to listen to suggestions; especially if it risks his chance to stay alive.

JENNY (25-30): Jéan's loyal assistant. Gently spoken but quietly direct and quick witted. She appears to be submissive in conversation but will cleverly get the last word - a great asset as she investigates the murder.

WESLEY (30): Melodramatic drama queen. Very protective of his choreography and has something to prove.

MRS DOYLE (40+): Classic stage mother-esque; will do anything for her niece Marionette... anything.

MARIONETTE (18-25): Softly spoken pretty girl who's only on stage because her Auntie has groomed her for it; but longs for something more out of life...for as long as she lives.

WENDY (22-30): Thinks she's far more talented than she is. She's a control freak and has to have the last word - quite the bitch.

RACHEL (22-30): Always on edge - a drug addict with a doubtful memory.

HAROLD (50+): An ex-actor who's now the Janitor, keeping the theatre tidy, keeps an eye on everything, and longs for his 15 seconds of fame.

ANTONIO (30+): Mob boss - as cliché as you want to make him.

BIFF & REGGIE (25+): Antonio's henchmen - who are surprisingly intelligent and have a hidden desire to tread the boards.

MAGGIE (20-30): Lead chorus girl who is desperate for a speaking part so tries to find the killer.

HILDA & GRETEL (20-30): Chorus girls with german accents who's only love bigger than acting is food.

PIPPY (18-25): Smallest chorus girl who just loves to dress up.

OFFICER BEACON (40+ - can be played by Wendy if needed): Tough, suspicious and unforgiving.

ACT ONE

Scene 1 - On Stage

JÉAN is side stage on his phone as JENNY is doing some paperwork. WESLEY watches anxiously as WENDY and RACHAEL (dressed as witches), and CHORUS (MAGGIE, HILDA, GRETEL and PIPPY - dressed as villagers) rehearse a musical number. Wesley frustrated that the steps are wrong.

WESLEY

No, no, no, no, NO! For god's sake Wendy, its (*demonstrates*), turn, turn, pivot step lunge to your left! Can't you get a simple thing right?!

WENDY

But I can't lunge on my left!

WESLEY fumes.

WESLEY

Jéan! I can't work with this! What's the point of me spending hours choreographing, if little miss prissy here can't...

JÉAN

Let her do what she wants, it's not that important anyway. She's just one of the old hags that warn Mac...

EVERYONE gasp.

...you know who. And I don't give a rat's 'you know what', if she does some stupid lunge thingy!

WESLEY eyeballs Jéan.

WESLEY

(under breath) You'll regret this one day.

JÉAN

What was that?

WESLEY storms off and sulks. WENDY smiles at Jéan. JENNY glances sympathetically towards Wesley then turns to Jéan reading notes.

JENNY

Um sir, there seems to be a shortage in petty cash.

JÉAN

(anxious) Ah yes, just mark it down as Director's expenses, now where's Marionette? She's supposed to be in this scene! What the hell's going on here?! This is our final dress rehearsal for Mac...

EVERYONE GASP.

...you know who...and we haven't even...

DOYLE enters; fussing around MARIONETTE who couldn't be bothered.

DOYLE

Don't start with me Jéan, you know Marionette had her hair in curlers and they just came loose.

JÉAN

I don't care about her damn hair! I just want...

MARIONETTE

(calming) Jéan?

JÉAN

What?

MARIONETTE: I'm sorry I'm late. Don't get angry, it won't happen again.

DOYLE

Now listen dear you don't have to apolog...

JÉAN

Apology accepted. Now move into position!

DOYLE unhappy. MARIONETTE chuffed. RACHAEL steps up.

RACHAEL

(spoken or sung) All thee hail...er...hail to Thane of Cawdor!...or Fife...

WENDY

All hail to thee, to Thane of Glamis, no Cawdor is...for god's sake Rachael, I could've played both parts, at least I'd get the lines right.

RACHAEL

Don't start with me Wendy! I've had a rough week okay?!

WENDY

Jeez I wonder why. Your dealer run short?

RACHAEL gives her the finger.

JÉAN

I don't care what kind of week you've all had! Tonight we go on and if I have to replace any one of you I damn well will! Now get it right!!!

WENDY

Bet he doesn't speak to Kristin like that.

RACHAEL

I can't believe she got the lead again. Such a cow.

WENDY

And up herself. I could play it better.

DOYLE overhears.

DOYLE

Excuse me, but Marionette obviously out classes the both of you on stage so let's not kid ourselves.

JÉAN

Yes Kristin! Where is she?! We're about to do her big death scene, and we haven't run it with music!

WESLEY

And she keeps changing the choreography! How am I supposed to keep up with it?!

JENNY

Sir, I'll go and check.

DOYLE

It's alright I'll do it; I have to get another clip for Mari's hair anyway, won't be long.

JÉAN

This is a disaster. We have investors in the audience and I really need...

JENNY

I know sir, it'll work our fine, let's take a short break.

JÉAN agrees.

JENNY

Take five everyone!

JÉAN

Make it three!

EVERYONE groans. DOYLE comes back looking pale.

MARIONETTE

Miss Doyle? What's the matter?

DOYLE faints into MARIONETTE'S arms.

WENDY

Oh my God! She's dead!

JÉAN

Great, that's all I need.

JENNY checks her breathing. RACHAEL leaves for the dressing room.

JENNY

No she just fainted.

JÉAN

Just my luck.

DOYLE starts to come around.

DOYLE

What? I, er...there's...

JÉAN

Oh for God's sake I just want to see MACBETH!!!!

EVERYONE gasp.

WENDY

You said it! You said it!

JÉAN

And I'll say it again! Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth!

ALL cover their ears and do whatever physical ritual counteracts the supposed curse.

WESLEY

Stop it! We'll be cursed!

JENNY

Sir, its bad luck to say his name in the theatre.

JÉAN

And what's going to happen? Is a light or sandbag going to come crashing on my head? This isn't phantom of the...

RACHAEL screams off stage.

JÉAN

Exactly what I feel like doing.

RACHAEL appears shaken.

JÉAN

Oh great, perhaps you can tell me why the hell our leading lady's taking her merry time?

RACHAEL

She's...dead

DOYLE raises a hand.

DOYLE

No I just fainted.

RACHAEL

Kristin you idiot! She's dead.

ALL in shock. JÉAN collapses onto his knees. MARIONETTE runs off in tears. WENDY consoles Rachael. HAROLD enters sweeping.

HAROLD

Terrible things happen in this theatre, just terrible.

He takes some medication and gives his chest a thump.

HAROLD

And it always seems to involve the actors. Well I use that term loosely. Actors, hmf!
(exits sweeping).

Scene 2 - Green Room

JÉAN is pacing up and down. JENNY, WESLEY and MARIONETTE listening to Doyle recap the story. WENDY and RACHAEL listen while eating scones.

DOYLE

So I went in there to get a clip for Mari's hair and there she was, face down in her powder. Oh, it was awful!

JÉAN

I can't believe this. My leading lady has been murdered.

DOYLE

Murdered? I didn't say she was murdered!

Awkward silence.

WENDY

Well isn't it obvious?

MARIONETTE consoles the sobbing DOYLE.

JENNY

But I thought Rachael said she was lying back in her chair.

RACHAEL

I did.

DOYLE

Well...I had to move her to see if she'd just fallen asleep.

Silence, EVERYONE looks at her awkwardly.

DOYLE

Don't even think I had something to do with it!

WENDY

Wouldn't shock me if you did.

DOYLE offended.

RACHAEL

Probably ate one of your scones.

WENDY

(looking at scone) Is that what this is?

DOYLE snatches scone from Wendy who laughs.

MARIONETTE

For God's sake, someone just died and you're making jokes!

WESLEY

Yes have some compassion for the deceased...even if they were a little tramp.

MARIONETTE whacks him.

JENNY

(to Jean) Sir, we have to report this to the authorities.

JÉAN

I have a better idea. How about we don't?

ALL confused.

JÉAN

Listen, I've got more riding on this than any of you and if we bring in the bobbies they'll surely cancel the show.

MARIONETTE

You can't be serious! Aunty Doyle, tell him he's just being a prat.

DOYLE

Actually my dear, I think he has a point. That of course means Jean... you'll have to recast the lead.

WENDY, RACHAEL and MARIONETTE all look at each other.

WESLEY

Oh that's just great! Now there'll be some other little prima-donna princess I have to deal with! *(exits)*

JÉAN

I'll be in my office deciding who it will be. *(exits)*

JENNY

Okay everyone, take five. *(exits)*

JÉAN (Offstage)

Make it three!

DOYLE, WENDY and RACHAEL share piercing looks.

WENDY

Don't waste your time being hopeful, you know he's choosing me.

RACHAEL

(evil look) Don't get too comfy Wen.

RACHAEL leaves shoving past WENDY who leaves in the opposite direction.

MARIONETTE

Perhaps I had better see if Jéan needs anything.

DOYLE

No no no. You go and rest yourself and let me handle him. *(exits)*

MARIONETTE sighs and exits.

Scene 3 - Wardrobe Room

HILDA and GRETEL are eating cream cakes. PIPPY is trying on costumes.

MAGGIE pacing up and down

MAGGIE

This is not happening! I can't believe Kristin is dead.

GRETEL

I can't believe they ran out of pink donuts.

HILDA

I know it's a tragedy...they are Gretel's favourites.

GRETEL

Ya.

MAGGIE grabs the bun and throws it away; much to GRETELS' horror.

MAGGIE

Will you two be serious?! Our best friend has died, and we have to do something about it!

HILDA

Maggie's right. We do owe that much to Kristen.

GRETEL

You are right Hilda. Kristin was the only one from the cast who spoke to us. So what should we do?

HAROLD arrives to clean the bun and they all go quiet, he's suspicious and they pretend to look busy - making Harold suspect them even more. He exits

MAGGIE

We have to find a way to spy on everyone, see who is the most likely suspect and apprehend them. And if we capture the murderer, not only will we have honoured our dear friend, but it may propel us into great fame, great fortune and the ultimate respect from the powers to be!

HILDA/GRETEL

You don't mean?

MAGGIE

That's right. A minor speaking role in the next production!

HILDA and GRETEL clap excitedly.

MAGGIE

But first we need our spy. Someone discreet, easy to hide in small places, someone quiet as a ...

They all look towards PIPPY in the costumes, with mouse ears on.

PIPPY

What?

The OTHERS smile at her, escorting her away.

Scene 4(a) - Jéan's Office

STAGE NOTE - JÉAN'S OFFICE AND THE HALL OUTSIDE IS SET SIMULTANEOUSLY ON STAGE TO ALLOW QUICK MOVEMENT BETWEEN FOLLOWING SCENES (MARKED AS FOLLOWS 4a,4b,4c etc). WE JUST USED LIGHTING TO DENOTE THE SEPARATE AREAS.

JÉAN on the phone; nervous.

JÉAN

Look I promise you'll get the money! Just give me until after the show...why not now? Well because I'm not at the theatre, I'm er...at the dentist (*starts gargling and drilling noises*) sorry you'll have to call later! (*hangs up phone*)

ANTONIO (on mobile) with BIFF and REGGIE enter. Jéan doesn't see them.

JÉAN

Ha! Stupid gits fell for it again (*sees Antonio*) Ahhh! I mean...bye!

JÉAN tries to run but lands into Biff and Reggie; then backpedals.

Antonio! Boys. Nice of you to drop by.

ANTONIO

You disappoint me J an Pierre.

J AN

I can explain. Y'see there was this...

ANTONIO just holds his hand up to silence J an.

ANTONIO

I'm a patient man J an. If it wasn't for the fact that my beloved daughter Kristin is playing the lead in your show...

J AN

And I can assure you a fine performer she was.

ANTONIO

Was?!

J AN

Is! Yes, she *is* great.

ANTONIO

Be that as it may. I want my money J an, and I want it now.

BIFF/REGGIE

Yeah!

J AN

But I don't have it! I know bookings are good for tonight, so after the show, I'll make sure you get a decent cut from that...

ANTONIO gives him a look and BIFF & REGGIE twist his arm harder.

J AN

Okay, okay all of it. How does that sound?

ANTONIO

(thinking/pacing) Mmmm, better, but I need a little insurance first. Biff? You've always wanted to be on stage haven't you?

REGGIE sniggers. BIFF thumps him.

BIFF

Boss, I thought we agreed we wouldn't say anything?

ANTONIO

This is what I propose J an, how would you like another actor for your show, I'm sure you could work him into it?

REGGIE cracks up laughing.

ANTONIO

Make that two.

Now BIFF laughs at Reggie.

JÉAN

Do I have a choice?

*ANTONIO, BIFF and REGGIE pull out a ton of weaponry aimed at Jéan.
JENNY enters with HAROLD looking smug.*

JENNY

Excuse me Jéan but I'm in a bit of a predicament.

JÉAN still has his face in the barrel of guns.

JÉAN

(sarcastic) Oh really? Please tell me about your difficult situation, go ahead.

JENNY

Well it appears that Frank has...

JÉAN

Don't tell me he's died too?!

ANTONIO curious.

JÉAN

(to Antonio) It's an expression we use for those actors that really don't cut it.

ANTONIO seems impressed. HAROLD preening himself.

JENNY

Oh no, he's simply fallen ill. So I was thinking Harold could...

JÉAN

Harold be Frank?!

HAROLD smiles confidently. ANTONIO pushes the gun further into Jéan's nose.

JÉAN

No no no...Biff's going to Frank.

HAROLD gutted.

JENNY

He's going to be Frank?!

BIFF

I can be Frank.

REGGIE

Why can't I be Frank?

ANTONIO

You can both be Frank.

ANTONIO glares at Jéan.

JÉAN

Please take the boys to wardrobe Jenny; it appears they will be sharing the role of Mac...

BIFF & REGGIE gasp.

JÉAN

(sighs) You know who.

JENNY hesitant.

JÉAN

We'll make it work.

JENNY

Certainly sir. Sorry Harold.

HAROLD exits, grumbling and taking more medication. JENNY escorts BIFF and REGGIE into the next room.

Scene 4(b) - Hallway outside Jean's Office

A jug of water sits on a trolley nearby as JENNY escorts BIFF & REGGIE.

JENNY

Down the hall, second door to your left, right?

REGGIE

Turn right?

BIFF

No she said left, right?

BIFF & REGGIE exit arguing.

REGGIE

That's what I said!

BIFF

Look it's a simple grammatical error where you didn't accentuate your punctuation.

JENNY

(to audience) Anyway, back to business. It all seems far too suspicious for my liking. If Kristin was murdered, then the likely suspects would be someone in this theatre. Well someone has to get to the bottom of this so it might as well be me.

MISS DOYLE enters fluffing herself up.

JENNY

Excuse me Miss Doyle, May I ask you a few questions?

DOYLE

Not now dear I'm on a mission.

JENNY

To see J an I know.

DOYLE surprised she knew.

JENNY

He's er...expecting you; but asked for you to wait a minute.

J AN (Off scene)

Make it three!

DOYLE

Of course. Well what is it you wanted? I suppose I now have a few minutes to kill...I mean, pass.

They share a look.

JENNY

I need to know if there was anyone you thought may have had it in for Kristin.

DOYLE

Well of course; that little tramp Wendy. They used to argue about who was dating J an. You did know they both were didn't you? Well anyway Kristin used to brag about being taken on holiday as well. Wendy hated her for it, and wanted her part. You put two and two together. I'm not waiting any longer, I have more important business to attend to.

DOYLE fluffs herself up and enters J an's office.

Scene 4(c) - J an's office

J AN busy biting his nails in deep thought. DOYLE enters.

DOYLE

(flirty) Hello J an...now about this lead role.

J AN

Now come on Miss Doyle.

DOYLE

Call me ...Paris.

J AN

I don't care what city you want me to tour this time, you know as a highly respected director I have certain ethics and a reputation to uphold...

DOYLE whispers in his ear until his eyes light up.

J AN

Which I can't seem to recall just now.

He starts to undo his pants.

DOYLE

Now I need you to understand how important this is for Marionette's career.

JÉAN

Right...so this is like blackmail is it?

Still excited he drops his pants to his ankles.

DOYLE

Oh no Jéanny, blackmail would be me threatening to spill the beans on your little scam of always casting Kristin as the lead because she's the mob boss's daughter.

JÉAN

(stunned) You're right, that is more like blackmail.

DOYLE

So perhaps I should leave you with that in mind, Jéanny darling.*(pinches his cheek)*

As DOYLE turns to exit JÉAN mimes strangling her but she turns and he quickly pretends to be waving cutely. DOYLE exits.

Scene 4(d) - Hallway outside Jéan's Office

As DOYLE exits the office, WENDY goes to enter.

DOYLE

Too late my dear. *(fixing her hair)* I think we can get on with the show.*(exits)*

WENDY peers into the office and we see JÉAN struggling to get his pants up. She grunts in frustration and slams the door.

JENNY

Excuse me Wendy may I have a word?

WENDY

What is it Jen?

JENNY

I just wanted to ask you about Kristin.

WENDY

What's the point? She's dead.

JENNY

But if we can figure out who did it...

WENDY

You mean who done it! *(pleased with her own joke)*

JENNY

(slightly irritated) It means we can discreetly...

WENDY

Remove the killer without affecting the show. You have a point dear Jennifer. Let me see...It was Doyle.

JENNY

What? Are you sure?

WENDY

Of course. I was fixing the hem on my costume this morning when I saw her slip something into Kristin's makeup powder.

JENNY

But how did you know it was her? The main light in that room still hasn't been fixed.

WENDY

Even in the dark I could tell from the back of her it was Doyle, with that tacky shawl of hers.

JENNY

Why didn't you say something then?

WENDY

(caught on the spot) Well...I just thought she was... look it doesn't matter now. She hated Kristin. Always resented the fact her precious little niece Marionette didn't get the role. Ah, but if only Doyle knew that innocent little Mari was dating the director.

JENNY

Aren't you?

WENDY highly offended, storms off into Jean's office.

JENNY

(to audience) Well not enough to go on except what people will do for a lead role.
(exits)

Scene 4(e) - Jean's office

JÉAN is busy rocking back and forward with his teddy bear.

JÉAN

It's okay Mister Tiddles, daddy will find a way out of this.

WENDY appears in the doorway.

WENDY

Ahem!

JÉAN

Ahhhhh! Wendy you gave me a...*(realises he's still holding Teddy)*, I...er...you see

WENDY

Forget it Jean. I'm fully aware of your strange liking towards soft toys.

JÉAN

That was a once off I can assure you!

WENDY

Shut up! *(she grabs his teddy and tosses it away)* Now that Kristen is out of the picture, you can give me that lead role you've been promising me!

JÉAN

Well it's not that easy, you see...

WENDY pulls out a knife and holds it to Mister Tiddles's throat.

JÉAN

Don't do it Wendy!!!

LIGHTS DOWN.

Scene 4(f) - Hallway outside Jéan's Office

JENNY listens at the door - anxious.

JÉAN (Off scene)

Put the knife down!

MARIONETTE appears behind Jenny

MARIONETTE

Psst! Jenny?

JENNY screams, triggers MARIONETTE to scream and back and forward again.

JENNY

Marionette, What is it?!

MARIONETTE

Is Doyle gone? I don't want her to know I'm coming to speak to Jéan.

JENNY

(knowing) I see. Well he's kinda busy.

MARIONETTE

Oh.

JENNY

So tell me, how's the therapy sessions going? Any developments on the abandonment, absent father, anxiety, self deprecating, bi-polar issues?

MARIONETTE

Well...I do feel like I *might* be having a breakdown...through! Breakthrough yes.

JENNY

That's great. Well while we wait is there anything you can shed light on as to who might've had something against Kristin?

MARIONETTE

Well, I don't like to come to suspicions, but I did overhear Rachael arguing with Kristin yesterday.

JENNY

Really?

MARIONETTE

Oh yes and not the first time either; they were very heated. Rachael looked unwell and kind of desperate. But all I heard is Kristin saying she wouldn't do it anymore and Rachael flipped.

JENNY

(busy scribbling) Aha, then what?

MARIONETTE

Well this morning...

JENNY poised with pen. MARIONETTE hesitant.

Rachael had cornered Kristin in props and...

JENNY

It's okay, go on.

MARIONETTE

Then...it all happened so fast...

JÉAN screams; triggering JENNY and MARIONETTE to scream. LIGHTS DOWN.

END OF SCRIPT SAMPLE

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PETTY CRIMES (SCRIPT SAMPLE)

by

Albert Jamae

SYNOPSIS

Two burglars struggle with domestic disputes during a house invasion.

DURATION: 12-15 minutes

CAST

AMBER (30's)

TROY (30's)

SETTING:

Suburban house.

Scene 1 – House/Kitchen

A BODY lies face down on the floor with a knife sticking out of its back. *AMBER* and *TROY*, dressed in black, eat dinner at the table, sipping wine. A balaclava sits beside each of them.

AMBER

Did you feed the cat before we left?

TROY

(defensive) Well...no.

She drops her cutlery in protest.

AMBER

You said you would feed her! Now she's gonna be going mental when we get back.

TROY

Well if you didn't ask me to get the extra gear, maybe I would've had time to feed her.

AMBER

So you can't do more than one thing, is that right?

TROY

Why didn't you think of feeding her? Knowing I was busy.

AMBER

Maybe because I was too busy turning off all the lights you left burning around the house.

TROY

We're not in the dark ages honey. We don't use oil lamps.

AMBER

Did you see the last electricity bill?

TROY

Hard to miss when I woke up with it stuck to my face.

AMBER

It was the only way to get you to notice.

They eat in silence.

TROY

At least I didn't burn the toast.

AMBER

It's not my kitchen! How am I supposed to know what setting they have their toaster on?

TROY

You just have to keep checking it!

AMBER

Shut up and eat.

TROY

Next time make sure we stake out their pantry for more than baked beans before we commit to it.

AMBER

At least we're eating. More than I can say for Soxy.

TROY

Fine! Would you like me to go back and feed her?

AMBER

Forget it. We'll be home soon enough.

They eat a bit more and have a drink.

AMBER

I like the watch.

He looks at the watch on his wrist.

TROY

Yeah. Must've spent a bit on it. It's no fake.

He turns towards the body on the floor, showing the watch.

TROY

Hey mate? Nice quality this.

He waits a beat and then shrugs, returning to his drink.

AMBER

You expecting a response?

TROY

Hey, dead or alive, we can still show respect for our fellow mankind.

AMBER

Have you been reading the Dalai Lama again?

TROY

He has great insights on the human condition.

She groans. A bit more silence. He stops eating, bothered by something.

TROY

Hey babe?

AMBER

Yeah.

TROY

How long do you think we'll keep doing this?

AMBER

I dunno. The market's still strong so I guess we'll keep going until it changes.

He returns to his drink, still lost in thought. She notices.

What's wrong?

TROY

Nothing.

AMBER

You getting cold feet again?

TROY

It's just that, we're a good team yeah?

AMBER

I've had better.

TROY

What's that supposed to mean?

AMBER

You asked if we were a good team.

TROY

I didn't ask you to compare me to Gary!

AMBER

Oh. Sorry. Yes Troy, we're a great team. Now what were you saying?

TROY

Can't believe you brought up Gary again.

AMBER

You have to admit, he was the best in the biz.

TROY

Yes, was. You're with me now?

She goes silent.

AMBER

Just saying.

TROY

Well what I was trying to say, is that I think we'd work well at anything we did.

AMBER

I guess. Except keeping pets alive.

TROY

I will feed the damn cat for the next month okay?!

She shrugs, picking food out from her teeth.

TROY

I just had this thought that maybe we could think about branching out.

AMBER

Like what? You wanna hit banks or jewellery stores? I told you, I don't like the high profile jobs. Puts me on edge.

TROY

No, nothin' like that. I was thinking something completely different.

AMBER

Chemist? Servo?

TROY

Café.

She pauses, puzzled.

AMBER

You wanna rob a café? Great idea. Let's hit them early in the day so we know they have a full supply of muffins. The street value of those things are off the charts.

TROY

I mean, open our own.

She goes blank.

TROY

Nothin' too fancy, just a quiet one, maybe in a semi-rural environment, you know, where we get to know the locals, complain about the weather, that sort of thing.

AMBER

You're serious.

TROY

I want a change. Murder, theft and carjacking aren't really doin' it for me anymore.

AMBER

What the hell do we know about running a café?

TROY

It's just an idea. Nothin' in concrete.

They drink in silence for a beat.

AMBER

But this is all we know. And face it, we wouldn't be making the same money.

TROY

True we'd have to cut down on some of the luxuries we've gotten used to. But think about it, not looking over our shoulder all the time, working day shift instead of night. You said yourself your body clock suffers on the late night gigs.

AMBER

I know.

TROY

At least think about it.

AMBER

Alright.

He smiles, relieved.

AMBER

Nup. Can't do it.

TROY

You said you'd think about it!

AMBER

I did.

TROY

For two seconds!

AMBER

Because I know what you're like! You have these great ideas that seem awesome at first, but when there's hard work involved, you start to back out, and then you doubt yourself. It's pathetic.

TROY

At least I'm trying to make a difference in our lives. What if we want to start a family one day, this is not exactly a kid friendly profession is it.

AMBER

We're not even married! Why did you bring kids into it?! We can't even remember to feed a cat!

TROY

Stop it with the cat! I wanted a dog in the first place! But oh no, dogs are too much trouble!

AMBER

The yard's not big enough for a dog!

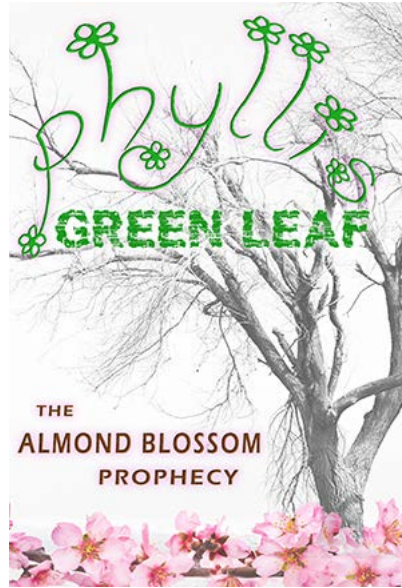
TROY

Because half of it is filled up with vege gardens that aren't producing veges!

She's about to retaliate when a POLICE SIREN wails. They freeze in shock.

END OF SCRIPT SAMPLE

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PHYLLIS GREEN LEAF (SCRIPT SAMPLE)

The Almond Blossom Prophecy

by

Albert Jamae

(Inspired by the Greek Myth)

SYNOPSIS

Based on Greek Mythology of how the Almond Blossom Tree originated, and how Almonds relate to love. Phyllis Green Leaf tells the story of Attican soldier Demaphon who after his success in the battle of Troy, falls in love with Thracian princess Phyllis, and they plan to marry. However his sick Grandmother Aethra, who he rescued from Helena, needs to return home. Demaphon takes a lot longer than expected and Phyllis travels to the harbor regularly for nine months waiting. Broken hearted, she takes her own life. But the Goddess Athena has pity on her, and turns her into an Almond Tree, but without blossom. Demaphon finally returns, and seeing the fate of his beloved, declares his commitment to stay by her side. This vow triggers the tree to blossom as a symbol of their love.

DURATION: 1 hr 45 mins (2 Acts)

CAST - can be just a handful of actors playing multiple roles

NARRATOR: Reverant, shows passion, but grumpy and intolerant old thespian

PHYLLIS: Princess. Dreamy and always good natured; loves nature and her garden.

DEMAPHON: Attican Soldier. Good with a sword, good willing but quite thick and clumsy.

AETHRA: Granny to Demaphon. Grumpy woman yielding a 'weapon' walking stick. (very Monty Python when played by a man)

PALLENE: Phyllis's older sister. Conniving with bad intentions

KING SCITHON: Father of Phyllis and Pallene. Regal, self-important but easily henpecked.

ATHENA: Zeus's daughter. High opinion of herself. Vanity and power is everything but has a good heart. (Great when played by a man)

PRINCE MARZIPAN: 16 yr old son of Phyllis & Demaphon. Spoiled brat but good intentions buried deep below.

YOUNG MARZIPAN: 10 yr old spoiled brat (played by child or adult)

YOUNG PHYLLIS: 12 yr old 'dreamy' (played by Adult Phyllis)

YOUNG PALLENE: 12 yr old 'pouty' (played by Adult Pallene)

HAG: Evil trickster, (Pallene in disguise)

MAID/MESSENGER/VILLAGERS/CHERUBS/GUARDS/ADVISER

STYLE - Very tongue in cheek, classic melodrama, Monty Python-esque with possible audience interaction. Music can be pre-recorded or played live. Sets and props work well as cheap cardboard. Ominous classical music like Grieg compliments the Greek comedy/tragedy.

ACT ONE

Scene 1 - Inside a cave

Light focus on one tablet of sketching as the NARRATOR enters from centre curtain.

NARRATOR

Long ago near the beginning of time; the destiny of mankind was hereby prophesied. A future that foretold of hope, laced with despair, valour...thwarted by treachery, and the path that would shape the course of mankind and its connection to the very world that created it. But as day becomes night, it also spoke of the relentless power to reap, without the need to sew. For thousands of years, the prophecy lay untold, it's mysteries to unlocking the secret to life's harmony had yet to be disturbed...until now. But first we must take a moment to introduce our characters. King Scithon.

Curtain open to reveal KING SCITHON posing.

A kind-hearted, downtrodden and somewhat hen-pecked man, who enjoys midnight strolls among the palace orchards, and pitiful renditions of musical theatre.

KING SCITHON

(singing) "If I were a rich man, la da dee da..."

Curtain close on him to cut him off.

NARRATOR

Next we have the eldest of the King's daughters, Pallene.

Curtain Open to reveal PALLENE cracking her whip.

Whose cunning deception, whose unrelenting treachery is something to behold! Preferred methods of torture include whips, hand stockades and tight leather undergarments.

Curtain close on her hissing and whip cracking.

And while someone fetches me a cold spoon, we now come across our accidental hero, Demaphon.

Curtain open to reveal DEMAPHON posing with his sword and shield.

NARRATOR

The deeply emotional, deeply misunderstood and deeply disturbing soldier from Attica. A man, who by reputation, talks from his heart...but thinks with his sword.

Curtain close on him to cut off his sword thrust.

And while we're on that unfortunate bloodline, we acknowledge the noblest of all, Aethra, Demaphon's ill fated grandmother.

Curtain open to reveal AETHRA posing nobly and grumpily with her walking stick.

A revered and radiating beauty, granny has strong values of family, integrity, and a healthy appetite for young men (to granny) hey this is your handwriting!

Granny cheekily taps Narrator on the bum with her walking stick.

Get off!

Curtain close on her glaring menacingly at the audience.

And now we introduce the unborn Prince. The yet unknown figure of dashing grace, unbridled dexterity, and above all a mere model of a gentleman.

Curtain open to reveal PRINCE with his back to the audience or masked.

PRINCE

(Burps) Will somebody please wipe my chin!

NARRATOR

And perhaps somewhat a spoiled brat. Next we pay homage to the much respected, much radiating and questionably virginal goddess Athena.

CHORUS/ACTORS

(Singing angelic) 'Aahh-Ohh-Ahhhhh'

NARRATOR

She can strike fear into the hearts of the living. She can send shivers down the spines of the dead. And she can pretty much do whatever she pleases...like not turning up when summoned.

THUNDER SFX. NARRATOR cringes.

Perhaps a bit later then, and that brings us to our final character. The gardenic heroine of our story, the compost queen herself, Phyllis Green Leaf.

Open curtain to reveal PHYLLIS, in all her gum boot glory.

Phyllis has but one mission in life. To bless this land with her fertilical nature, to rid life of its misery, to bring peace to the kingdom of Thrace, and to admit she once was a man! Wait a minute...Aethra!!!!

Curtain closes on a dumbfounded PHYLLIS. AETHRA laughs from behind the curtain.

Anyway there you have it, and now we begin our story which takes place in the ancient kingdom of Thrace – once brimming with fertility, it has, since the untimely death of the queen, become a barren land.

Scene 2 - Inside King Scithon's Palace

Curtain opens to reveal the inside the King Scithon's Palace KING SCITHON and ADVISOR look over plans.

NARRATOR

Since the loss of his beloved wife, King Scithon is saddened by his unfertile land and works day and night with his advisors to devise a plan to solve their problem... but to no avail.

KING

No no no no no! This will not do! Be gone!

ADVISOR exits.

How do I end this suffering? My Kingdom requires food and water. Oh Zeus, will thou not speak to me in this hour of need?

THUNDER SFX and lame flashing lights.

That's it?

NARRATOR

Despite his lament, the King has the blessing of two young daughters who comfort him. Pallene, the eldest is twelve, who boasts being knowledgeable beyond her years.

YOUNG PALLENE enters.

YOUNG PALLENE

Daddy? Why not pay merchants to voyage far and wide in search of distant lakes and distant farmers, and pay high prices to deliver it to Thrace.

KING

You might just have something there Pallene.

NARRATOR

Despite being overjoyed at such a simple plan; the King is bestowed with another suggestion, from further down.

YOUNG PHYLLIS nine yr old, enters and tugs on King's robes.

NARRATOR

The King's youngest daughter Phyllis, but a bud in the garden of life, has returned from playing in the compost, with her own idea to share.

YOUNG PHYLLIS

Daddy? We could get the whole kingdom to start mulching, and spread it all over our land. Soon the soil will get better, we can save the water we have, and we can plant more seeds, and we can help other lands that are also suffering.

KING and YOUNG PALLENE in shock about her idea.

NARRATOR

And the King's regal response was thus.

KING and YOUNG PALLENE burst out laughing.

KING

Oh Phyllis, you do amuse me with such frivolities. Please, we're trying to work here, now run along and play in your garden.

YOUNG PALLENE

Yeah, go play in the mud where you belong.

YOUNG PHYLLIS runs off crying.

Seriously daddy, who does she think she is? Interrupting the future queen, I mean... interrupting my ideas like that. I shall call her...Phyllis tree face, or Fertiliser Phyllis, because she's so full of...

King doesn't notice, too busy calculating.

KING

Now now Pallene, play nice.

YOUNG PALLENE

(sarcastic) Of course daddy.

YOUNG PALLENE exits after PHYLLIS.

Scene 3 - Inside a cave

YOUNG PHYLLIS runs along wailing.

NARRATOR

As poor young Phyllis runs away in sadness and humiliation, she stumbles across a cave.

YOUNG PHYLLIS stops crying and is intrigued, she looks at the paintings.

Her tears soon dry up at the discovery of the untold prophecy; and although she can't read its meanings, the simple imagery gave her a strong feeling of hope.

YOUNG PHYLLIS

Why can't we have a land like that? A land full of fresh air, lots of trees and blossoms; it's like paradise. That's it! I may only be small, but my I declare to devote

my life to make such a place, in Thrace, whatever the sacrifice! Oooh, that sounded very grown up didn't it?

YOUNG PHYLLIS exits. YOUNG PALLENE enters opposite side.

YOUNG PALLENE

Oh Phyllis? Phyllis... (thinks of another nickname)... Green Leaf? (laughs) Time to play with your big sister! Oh, hiding are you? You can come out, it's safe.

No response, YOUNG PALLENE disappointed.

(Mocking) Oooh I'm Phyllis, I just think I'm so adorable. Think again flower brat, if you think you're gonna win daddy's attention with that cutesy crap then...ooohhhh.

YOUNG PALLENE notices cave paintings.

NARRATOR

And then it was revealed. But unlike young and innocent Phyllis, these markings were no confusion for young Pallene; thanks to the teaching of many cultured studies from her mother.

(optional) Have 2 ACTORS miming Young Pallene's speech.

YOUNG PALLENE

I see strange visitors, sudden romance with equal pain & suffering, ooh I like the sound of that. I see trickery, deception, and bountiful wealth, oh this is soooo me! (disappointed) Oh...I see noble sacrifice...well as long as that part is someone else. And finally I see a land that is filled with riches and the love and respect for the leader who brings this to the people. And by the sounds of the prophecy, it could be anyone...well I wouldn't be doing my royal duty if I didn't make sure it was to come to pass. And to make sure this leader was in their rightful place, to make sure this leader was...me. Wouldn't daddy be proud?! '

YOUNG PALLENE exits.

NARRATOR

So young Pallene had a plan. She calculates it will be at least another nine years before the prophecy can be fulfilled, but she is patient, and every day she studied the prophecy in fine detail. So as time passed...[cont'd]

Curtain opens.

Scene 4 - Inside King Scithon's Palace

KING SCITHON mimes the following.

NARRATOR

[cont'd]... and following Pallene's suggestion, the King searched far and wide for food and water; spent the entire treasury with random stimulus packages for the peasants, with little return. And after raging inflation, crooked merchants, the kingdoms riches were gone and King Scithon gave up hope for his future and the wellbeing of his loyal subjects.

ADULT PALLENE enters.

KING SCITHON

Oh what have I done?! I will surely evoke the wrath of the gods with such... poppycock shenanigans!

PALLENE

(aside) Lighten up loser...(gushing) oh daddy, never mind all that, why don't you take a walk to see if anything should inspire you?

KING SCITHON

I couldn't possibly leave these chambers for the humiliation is too much to...

PALLENE

But you might meet a stranger; one who could be seeking shelter and food.

KING SCITHON

Oh no I have nothing to offer and it would...

PALLENE

Oh for Zeus's sake will you just go?!!

KING SCITHON

(Henpecked) Hmmf, I'm a king; she shouldn't talk to me like that.

KING SCITHON exits sulkily.

PALLENE

Thank the gods for that. Such a blithering fool; yet a vital pawn in the prophecy, which is unfolding quite nicely thou might add.

PALLENE exits.

NARRATOR

And Pallene had indeed read the prophecy correctly. A stranger was indeed journeying through the land of Thrace. On his way home to Attica, a young soldier named Demaphon, who had just saved his beloved Grandmother from the battle of Troy in a famous and monumental victory!

BATTLE NOISE SFX from behind the curtain.

Scene 5 - The Kingdom's Field

DEMAPHON and AETHRA enter front of curtain.

AETHRA

That's a very nice backswing you have dear Demi.

DEMAPHON

Thanks Granny.

AETHRA

The way you took that soldier's head clean off; would make any grandmother proud.

DEMAPHON

Yes it was rather heroic wasn't it?

AETHRA

Indeed.

DEMAPHON

Yes. I think when we return to Attica, I shall commission a large sculpture of myself in that very pose...or maybe this pose...or what about...

AETHRA whacks him over the head.

AETHRA

We have to get there first!

DEMAPHON

Ah, yes, sorry.

AETHRA

I'm hungry, thirsty and in need of a good bedding!

NARRATOR

I bet you are.

DEMAPHON

Of course Granny. However I feel there is nothing much to offer in such a barren land that lay before us.

AETHRA

And we won't know if you waste more time with that stupid talk. Now move it!

They exit.

NARRATOR

And thus our story brings us back to our innocent heroine, Phyllis. Phyllis Green Leaf. [cont'd]

Scene 6 - Palace Gardens

PHYLLIS enters (front of curtain)

NARRATOR

[cont'd] Who, despite creating a beautiful garden of her own, is feeling dismayed that after nine years of weeding, mulching, planting, pruning, digging, whipping and snipping...

PHYLLIS attempts to mime these gardening actions but gets mixed up.

...that after nine years, her efforts weren't making a difference on a grand scale as she had hoped.

PHYLLIS

Oh dear, my heart doth weep at such unfertile land. For the past nine years I have held the prophetic vision of sweeping beauty, and I try to inspire my fellow folk but alas! They are thus too busy to stop and smell... the compost.

Curtains open to reveal lush garden.

Scene 7 - Phyllis' Garden

PHYLLIS enters her garden, checking her buds [stays hidden from the others]

NARRATOR

And despite her Phyllis-ophical thoughts, our poor heroine finds her only comfort in the fruitfulness of her beloved garden. Meanwhile, the King, upon Pallene's advice, did in fact find our wandering travellers and cordially invited them to stay for supper.

AETHRA enters with DEMAPHON.

AETHRA

Half an hour we've been walking and no palace, castle or chateau in sight!

PALLENE enters.

PALLENE

Oh hello there strangers in need of food and shelter. I'm afraid Daddy, the King sent you the long way to the palace.

AETHRA

That's an understatement.

PALLENE

Let me show you a short cut my dear.

PALLENE escorts AETHRA out but stops DEMAPHON.

PALLENE

Er perhaps you'd enjoy the more...scenic route.

PALLENE hands him a golden trowel.

PALLENE

And please accept this as a...token of friendship.

DEMAPHON

Ooh local customs, how quaint.

PALLENE

Yes, whatever.

PALLENE exits.

DEMAPHON

Hey! What about that scenic route?

He's distracted by a smell.

My word, what is that intoxicating smell?

He notices the Phyllis's garden around him.

What a lovely garden, that dwelleth in such a barren land.

PHYLLIS backs out from her garden bed, bent over pulling weeds. Neither notice each other.

In all my days, I have never seen such beauty, such unrelenting colour...such firm ripe...

PHYLLIS unknowingly bending over in front of him, now he sees her.

...fruit.

An improvised courting routine (via a lame interpretive dance) to the theme of CHARIOTS OF FIRE (optional). She plays hard to get but softens to him. He presents gifts, a necklace, a shoe, a head (from battle) but fails until he presents the golden trowel, then he's won her heart.

NARRATOR

So it wasn't long before Phyllis and Demaphon fell deeply in love and were promised to marry.

DEMAPHON tries to carry PHYLLIS away and they both stumble out.

NARRATOR

Just as the prophecy foretold.

PALLENE enters.

PALLENE

Ahh the wait has been worth it, as the prophecy is now set in motion!

DEMAPHON sticks his head back in.

DEMAPHON

Pssst! (referring to trowel) Thanks for this...Pallenty.

PALLENE

It's Pallene.

PHYLLIS (Offstage)

Oh Demi? Bring back the trowel.

DEMAPHON disappears in a hurry. PALLENE cringes and exits. Curtain close.

NARRATOR

And so as the first stage of Pallene's plan is complete, she embarks on her second quest. In the lead up to the wedding of Phyllis, Pallene gets to know Demaphon's Grandmother, Aethra, and her family back home in Attica; to which Pallene uses to her utmost advantage.

Scene 8 - Inside King Scithon's Palace Chamber

KING is feeding AETHRA grapes.

AETHRA

Oh tis a hard life. Existing purely as a palace beauty for all to behold in wonder.

KING SCITHON

Indeed.

AETHRA

But I do miss my home in Attica.

PALLENE enters.

PALLENE

Hello Aethra.

AETHRA

Pallene my dear! Fancy a grape. (grapes fall out of her mouth)

PALLENE

I'll pass.

AETHRA

Suit yourself.

PALLENE takes KING SCITHON aside.

PALLENE

Er daddy, I believe the court jester has some new material to try out on you.

KING

Ooh jolly good, I do hope he has some new limericks, the last ones were atrocious. A boy stood on the burning deck, a pocket pull of crackers...what kind of child would keep food in his pocket?

KING exits.

PALLENE

Oh, I forgot, I have some bad news from home.

AETHRA

What is it dear? Spit it out!

AETHRA spits out grape pips.

PALLENE

A messenger came to say your dear Hercules has taken ill, and has called you to his bedside.

AETHRA

Oh my...oh dear! Not Hercules?! But what can I do?

PALLENE

You must go to him. He's family! And there just happens to be a boat leaving the harbour tomorrow night.

AETHRA

But that's the night of the wedding! I couldn't do that to my dear Demaphon. And besides; when he gets that look in his eye, like he has for that little garden tramp...I mean, your dear sister, nothing will stop him.

PALLENE

Well I do have a backup plan.

PALLENE whispers in AETHRA'S ear as they exit.

AETHRA

Oooh...ohhh...Oh you are a wicked one.

PALLENE

(aside) You have no idea.

Curtain Close.

NARRATOR

And so, in building up her alliance with Aethra, Pallene sets in motion her second stage of the prophecy, as we conveniently segue into the night of the wedding.

Scene 9 - Phyllis' Garden

Curtain open to reveal a lovely garden wedding. WEDDING MARCH plays as DEMAPHON and PHYLLIS stroll across stage as PALLENE, AETHRA, KING SCITHON and TWO CHERUBS throw petals.

NARRATOR

And a beautiful wedding was thus, in the luscious gardens of the palace where two hearts beat as one, as Demaphon and Phyllis combine their destinies in a single union of passion.

DEMAPHON, PHYLLIS, KING SCITHON and CHERUBS exit. DEMAPHON comes rushing back in with PHYLLIS in his arms; giggling lovers. An ad lib struggle to get her boots off for the consummation when AETHRA rushes in.

AETHRA

Alright alright that's enough! Demi, put that away, we've got to go!

DEMAPHON

But Granny! This is but my night of wedded bliss with thine saideth beloved...

AETHRA whacks him over the head.

AETHRA

Stop that stupid talk!

DEMAPHON

But why now? For a treasured moment awaits me.

AETHRA

Treasured?! Brief more like it. Now I've just had word that Hercules has fallen sick, and you don't leave family alone on a death bed!

DEMAPHON

But Granny, he's just the cat!

AETHRA

Just the cat? JUST THE CAT?! I'll have you know it doesn't matter about the size of one's contribution to a family. We must treat each member with equal love and respect; so ditch the little compost queen and take me to the harbour. There's a boat leaving tonight for Attica, and we're going to be on it!

AETHRA drags him off by the ear. DEMAPHON and PHYLLIS resist.

PHYLLIS

Hands off him you old hag!

AETHRA

What did you say?

DEMAPHON

Uh-oh you shouldn't have said that.

AETHRA slowly advancing towards PHYLLIS; DEMAPHON stuck in the middle.

PHYLLIS

(nervous) I said, he's mine, and you're not taking him anywhere!

AETHRA

(sharpening up her walking stick) Is that right missy?

PHYLLIS

Well...er...yeah! He's my...er husband and...

AETHRA winds up and bops PHYLLIS on the head. Adlib (slow motion) scrap fight between the ladies sees DEMAPHON come off the worse. PHYLLIS ends up dominating, so AETHRA fakes a melodramatic heart attack.

AETHRA

Oh, arggh! I'm having a heart attack! Oh Demi, everything's going dark, except the tunnel of light, and the angels are coming toward me, to take your dear Grandmother to the Underworld! I die!

AETHRA collapses.

DEMAPHON

I am afraid my dear wife, that my heart doth fill with grief at the sight of grandmothers ill health. I must therefore set sail and fulfil my duty to return her to Attica.

AETHRA relishes in discreetly showing PHYLLIS she's faking. PHYLLIS fuming.

PHYLLIS

But...

DEMOPHON

But have no worry; hold no sorrow for my departure as I pledge my word to return to your side by the next phase of the full moon.

PHYLLIS accepts.

PHYLLIS

Then set sail my dear; go forthwith and fulfil thy duteous family cause...but hurry your noble seed in return, (flirty) as my garden bed needs planting.

AETHRA and DEMAPHON exit. Curtain closes behind PHYLLIS.

NARRATOR

And so, as the prophecy continues unrelentingly, the two lovers were sadly torn apart; newly found passion ripped to shreds in a merciless...

PHYLLIS

Okay I get it!

NARRATOR

Sorry.

PHYLLIS

Oh but do not draw upon thyself the weight of my grief for I finally understand my vision from the cave. My chance to create a fertile paradise lies not only in my ability to churn a good compost, but when Demaphon returns by the next phase of the full moon, which he will because he promised, together we will plant a stronger seed of fertility, one which will surely give birth to the end of despair, the rise of a new era and awaken us all to the dawn of blessed utopia!

NARRATOR

That was rather dramatic.

PHYLLIS

(proud of herself) Did you like that?

NARRATOR

Meh.

PHYLLIS strides away. Curtain opens.

Scene 10 - The Harbour

NARRATOR

And as our noble heroine strides away, having absolute faith in her declarations...and absolutely no idea of the forces that work against her...

PALLENE enters in disguise as a fisherman waving from the harbour.

PALLENE

(seaman's voice) Farewell Demaphon, farewell Aethra, hurry back!

PALLENE pulls out a hand drill, and the disguise off.

PALLENE

And good riddance.

PALLENE exits as AETHRA and DEMAPHON enter paddling a leaky boat – she's bailing while he frantically thrashes the oar around.

DEMAPHON

Bail faster Granny!

AETHRA

Well I wouldn't have to if you got a decent boat!

DEMAPHON

But it was the sea-man, he said it was...

AETHRA

Don't use that kind of language with me, now keep rowing!

They exit. Curtain closes.

NARRATOR

And as Demi and Urethra...[cont'd]

AETHRA (off stage)

I heard that!

NARRATOR

[cont'd]...battled the forces of nature, their journey was somewhat delayed.

PHYLLIS enters (front of curtain), following the full moon (on a stick or hanging).

And every full moon forthwith, Phyllis returned to the harbour, in vein, I mean in hope that her true love would return as promised. But after the ninth moon passing, her hopes had faded and she returned to her only place of nurture...nature.

Scene 11 - Phyllis' Garden

Curtain opens to reveal PALLENE hiding; she places the trowel on the ground to be seen. PHYLLIS enters the garden but doesn't see Pallene or the trowel.

PHYLLIS

Oh the pain! The immortal suffering one must endure at the hands of cruel fate. My Demaphon has not returned as promised and I can't possibly go on.

PALLENE, annoyed, watches Phyllis walks past the trowel.

If I cannot fulfil my destiny to breed fertility across this land, then my beating heart is not worthy of this life.

PALLENE tosses the trowel in front of PHYLLIS walking and runs back behind the tree but PHYLLIS just walks over it. PALLENE has an idea, breaks a branch from the tree and exits with the trowel.

PHYLLIS

But what of this land? Who will save it from despair? Oh Zeus? Aphrodite? Athena? Will none of you answer my prayers?

A stick appears side stage, dangling the trowel in front of PHYLLIS' face.

PHYLLIS

But hark...is this a trowel I see before me?

PHYLLIS takes the trowel as the stick disappears.

PALLENE (off stage)

About bloody time!

PHYLLIS

(pacing around frantically) Oh Demaphon, I cannot bear another moment without your arms around me! Therefore...I must die! (big stab) Ow.

PHYLLIS performs the biggest drawn out dying routine possible, repeating 'I die, I die'.

PHYLLIS

Demaphon? Demaphon? It's getting dark Demi... your promise of planting is such sweet sorrow.

She finally dies.

NARRATOR

Thank god for that. And so, our dear Phyllis Green Leaf dies of a broken heart...and overacting.

PALLENE swaggers on; kicking PHYLLIS to make sure she's dead.

Therefore as the foretold prophecy continues its relentless path of cruelty, the tragic news is spread throughout the kingdom.

PALLENE squirts her own face with water.

PALLENE

Daddy? Oh Daddy come quick! Something awful has happened!

PALLENE skips off smiling to audience.

NARRATOR

And as our beloved, decomposing Phyllis lay in eternal death, someone did answer her prayers.

Big build up of DRAMATIC MUSIC as ATHENA arrives.

The virgin goddess Athena, Zeus's favourite child by far, took pity on Phyllis and reminded her of her true destiny.

TWO CHERUBS enter and skip around ATHENA as they sprinkle petals over PHYLLIS.

ATHENA

Oh dear, dear Phyllis. Got yourself into a right old mess haven't you. Fear not my child of the earth, for as your soul soars towards the underworld, I have but a gift for thou, that will see your destiny fulfilled.

Curtain close as ATHENA joins in tossing petals over PHYLLIS.

NARRATOR

And so it became. The prophecy took an unforeseen twist. The course of future history was about to be written...again...as a new journey was bestowed upon our fertile heroin.

Scene 12 - Palace Gardens

KING SCITHON and PALLENE stroll sadly in front of the curtain.

NARRATOR

And as our royal family grieved over the death of their young flower child...

PALLENE

(faking) Oh Daddy! Daddy!

KING SCITHON

Oh Phyllis...my poor sweet Phyllis. Thine heart doth flood with sorrow at your untimely departure. Thou was but a bud in my life; a rose of which has been but pruned of its beauty as the wretched thorn pierces my aching soul which wallows repeatedly in remorse! Oh great Zeus! Why not taketh me, why not taketh me?!!!

NARRATOR

Good question. And as the Kingdom wailed in grief over the death of the princess, they were even more astonished at the miraculous transformation that had occurred...

Scene 13 - Phyllis' Garden

Curtain open. PHYLLIS stands there, dressed as an Almond Tree with no blossom.

NARRATOR

For Athena had turned our Phyllis Green Leaf into an Almond Tree. A new gift from nature that none had seen before.

PALLENE

What?!!!

KING SCITHON

It's a miracle!!!

NARRATOR

However, her branches were but bare of blossom; reflecting her still broken heart, in the absence of her true love Demaphon. (calling off stage) in the absence of her true love Demaphon!

DEMAPHON arrives soaking wet with a broken oar.

DEMAPHON

(to narrator) Alright alright, do you have any idea how stormy that Black Sea gets?

KING SCITHON

(sarcastic) Well that was timely.

NARRATOR

No no, he's actually right on time.

DEMAPHON

I am?

NARRATOR

The prophecy did talk of the much delayed arrival of the Attican soldier.

DEMAPHON

It did?

NARRATOR

Who must live in eternal regret...

DEMAPHON

I do?

NARRATOR

Over the transformation of his beloved...

DEMAPHON

She what?

NARRATOR

Who must exist between two worlds for the sake of the foretold prophecy to come to fruition!

DEMAPHON still blank.

NARRATOR

God you're thick!

NARRATOR points DEMAPHON towards PHYLLIS, and it's the first time he sees her.

DEMAPHON

Oh no. Oh no! This cannot be!

KING SCITHON

Oh I'm afraid it is.

PALLENE

(aside) This cannot be!

KING SCITHON

(to Pallene) Oh I'm afraid it is.

PALLENE exits. DEMAPHON on his knees in sorrow at her trunk.

DEMAPHON

(repeats in exact same tone as King did) Oh Phyllis...my poor sweet Phyllis.

Thine heart doth flood with sorrow at your untimely departure.

KING SCITHON

(sulkily) Hey that's my line.

DEMAPHON

Thou was but a bud in my life; a rose of which has been but pruned of its beauty as the wretched thorn pierces my aching soul which wallows repeatedly in remorse!

NARRATOR

(annoyed) Oh god.

DEMAPHON

Oh great Zeus! Why not taketh me, why not taketh me?!!!

KING SCITHON

(to Zeus) Good idea, taketh him instead.

THUNDER SFX scares KING SCITHON who exits in fear. DEMAPHON picks up the trowel. DRAMATIC MUSIC.

DEMAPHON

This is my fault. This is all my fault! I must therefore make amends. My dear Phyllis, despite your barky nature, and your withering limbs of lifelessness, I pledge my word to stay by your side for eternity. My home will be here in Thrace, and I will tend to your garden bed, and continue your life's work in certified, biodynamic organic gardening, as you would yourself. (he begins weeding)

NARRATOR

But then, an incredible thing happened. Demaphon's commitment to his beloved Phyllis, to carry on her mission to bring richness to this barren land, bestowed upon her the magic of Athena once again, as her branches began to blossom.

TWO CHERUBS enter dancing, covering Phyllis's tree with blossoms. DEMAPHON in awe.

NARRATOR

And as the good news spread throughout the land, so did the sudden fertility of Thrace, as it thrived with good soils for farmers, plentiful water for all, and a generous love among the people, as they held homage for their beloved Phyllis, and her sacrifice.

TWO ACTORS mime Narrator's description of the plentiful surroundings as DEMAPHON stands in awe of the display as the curtain closes upon him.

NARRATOR

But not all were rejoicing.

Scene 14 - Inside the cave

PALLENE enters the cave, reading over the prophecy.

PALLENE

How can this be? There's no such mention in the prophecy of Phyllis turning into this Almond tree! Even in death they celebrate her! Damn that Athena; thinks she can outsmart me? (reading further) But what's this? Oh, how could I have overlooked that, yes of course, the immaculate conception of the prince. If that is true then...mmm...look out Athena.

She pulls out some potion ingredients and stirs them into a pot.

We shall see who's the smartest...and the prettiest.

END OF SCRIPT SAMPLE

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RED WIRE, BLUE WIRE (SCRIPT SAMPLE)

by

Albert Jamae

SYNOPSIS

Someone's strapped to a bomb. The timer counting down...and they're worried about 'coffee'?!

DURATION: 10-12 mins

CAST (NB: Have fun swapping gender for the roles of Trish and Marty. It's been performed multiple ways and still holds the comedy/story.)

TRISH PARKER (Victim) : Female 25-30.

MARTY CRAIGMORE (Bomb Disposal Officer) : Male 30-35.

GARY (Bomb Disposal Unit) : Male 30-40. (unseen)

SETTING - Office.

Sc 1 - Insurance Company Office

TRISH (late 20's), red dress, tied to a bomb in an office – she's erratic.

OFFICER (off stage/megaphone)

Now hold still Miss Parker! Our bomb disposal officer has just arrived! So please stay calm and we'll get you out of this in no time.

TRISH

Please stay calm? I have a freakin' bomb strapped to my arse!

MARTY (30's), enters in his bomb disposal outfit (with helmet so his voice is a little muffled). He doesn't see her face yet as she has her back to him.

TRISH

Could my life seriously get any worse?

MARTY

I know this is difficult, but I'm gonna need you to take a few deep breaths and keep as still as you can.

She takes a few breaths. He pulls out a device and starts scanning the area around the bomb.

While I do a quick scan of the area, why don't you tell me how you got into this mess.

TRISH

Well I was busy helping a customer fill out her insurance claim forms when this guy comes in complaining about...something, I dunno. I'd had a shitty weekend so I wasn't in the mood for his whinging. I just told him he'd have to book a time with me at a later date and he snapped. He pulled out a gun and then...this!

MARTY

Well it looks like a simple homemade job. Should be easy enough to sort out.

TRISH

(sarcastic) Oh I feel so much better...whatever your name is.

He removes his helmet, facing away from her, then walks over to face her.

MARTY

Officer Craigmore but my friends call me...

They recognise each other.

...shit.

He returns to the bomb – flustered.

TRISH

Well if that doesn't just top off the day.

MARTY

Look, we don't have time to deal with this now. I have to focus on getting us out of here safely, so I need you to hold still while I assess the unit.

He cautiously examines the bomb.

TRISH

Why haven't you called?

He cringes.

MARTY

Trish. In case you haven't noticed, I'm kinda preoccupied right now. Let's talk about it later okay?

He gets back to work.

TRISH

You ignore my text messages, my Facebook tag...

MARTY

I didn't know what to say! I mean, you seemed pretty disappointed when I said no to coffee.

He talks into his radio communication.

(to radio) Okay mate we have a backyard pipe bomb, one-inch wrought steel pipe, brass capped, electric fuse on a battery timer and stabiliser wired to hostage's hands...just under five minutes left on the clock, suggested evacuation radius at least eighty metres, copy?

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Copy that Marty.

TRISH

Well I didn't actually mean 'coffee'.

MARTY

I know.

TRISH

And it was our third date. So why didn't you?

He's still distracted by the bomb.

MARTY

Didn't what?

TRISH

Come up for coffee?!

MARTY

It's just...I...(to radio) Have you established the safety perimeter?!

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Still working on it.

TRISH

Oh is that what you were doing? Establishing a 'safety perimeter'. I get it.

MARTY

What?

TRISH

You're not a tea drinker are you?

MARTY

No! I'm not a tea drinker!

TRISH

Better if you were. Would've been less insulting.

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Traffic congestion Marty. Gonna take a bit before we have a clear zone.

MARTY

(to radio) Well you have four minutes Gaz so you better push it.

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Will do buddy.

TRISH

Why does he keep calling you Marty? I thought it was Adam?

He's caught out.

MARTY

It's...just a stupid nickname, we all have them. I call him Gaz but his actual name's...Bruce. It helps in...er...high pressure situations like these.

TRISH

Oh. Weird.

He's quietly relieved.

TRISH

I don't want you to think I've made a lot of coffee in my time.

MARTY

I wasn't thinking that.

TRISH

Good. I'm usually very particular about how much I drink. I don't make it for just anyone.

He puts his tools down and takes his gloves and jacket off. He's sweating and positions himself carefully in front of the bomb – about to remove the casing.

MARTY

Look Trish, if it's any consolation, I spent the last three days kicking myself. I wish I had come up for coffee. (to radio) removing outer casing. (to her) I'm sure it would've tasted good.

TRISH

Damn straight it would've.

She smiles smugly at him.

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Er, what tasted good mate?

MARTY

(to radio) Nothing!

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Copy that.

TRISH

And you're not just saying that because we only have...

MARTY

(to radio) Three minutes.

TRISH

Oh god, I hope it'd be longer than three minutes.

MARTY

Yes it would be longer than three minutes!

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Copy that? We have longer than three minutes?

MARTY

(to radio) No! Less than three minutes!

TRISH

Typical.

OFFICER (voice over radio)

Copy.

MARTY

(to radio) Outer casing removed and about to...shit.

TRISH

What?

MARTY

(to radio) Double fuse wire, one red one blue, obviously a dummy breaker but soldered together so can't defuse...I'm gonna have to cut it.

TRISH

Cut what?!

END OF SCRIPT SAMPLE

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