

Power of the Gods

By Jeffrey Smart

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Ashley, a novice dryad, or tree sprite, makes her first visit to Mt. Olympus to meet the powerful pantheon of gods and goddesses of Ancient Greece. She is overwhelmed by the way the Great Olympians live and the power that they wield, and wants to grab a little of the glory for herself. She becomes friends with Persephone, the maiden of spring, who is running away from her brooding husband, Hades. Together the women set off on an ambitious odyssey to steal Zeus' lightning bolts, Poseidon's trident, and Hades' helmet of invisibility and take over Mt. Olympus! They are pursued by the vengeful goddess, Hera, and eventually learn an important lesson about the balance of power.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 6 w, many extras)

OLYMPIANS

ARTEMIS: A goddess of three forms: the hunt (Artemis); the moon (Selene) and of mystery (Hecate).

ASHLEY: A dryad.

HESTIA: Goddess of the Hearth.

ZEUS: God of Thunder.

POSEIDON: God of the Ocean.

HADES: God of the Underworld.

HERA: Goddess of Marriage.

HERMES: Messenger of the Gods.

PERSEPHONE: Maiden of Spring.

OLIVE: Another dryad.

LESSER GODS (any number)

WOMEN

MAENADS

DRYADS

OREADS

NAIADS

MEN

DACTYLS

CORYBANTS

TRITONS

4 FEMALE DANCERS (non-speaking)

DANAE, EUROPA, LO, and LEDA

EXTRAS: Other gods and goddesses may be represented by their appropriate props and serve as background in the crowd scenes (i.e. Apollo, a sun crest or lyre; Athena, an owl and a helmet; Ares a sword and shield; Demeter, a cornucopia or sheaf of wheat.)

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: The Great Hall of Olympus

Scene 2: The Underworld

Scene 3: The Sacred Grove

Scene 4: Zeus' bedchamber on Olympus

Scene 5: The Sacred Grove

Scene 6: Under the sea

Scene 7: Upon a shore

ACT II

Scene 1: The Sacred Grove

Scene 2: The Hall of Wonders in the Underworld

Scene 3: The Great Hall of Olympus

SETTING

The basic setting consists of heavily pleated curtains, layered on top of one another at stately angles. In front of them are a few classical columns, some standing, some fallen over. Large doors are on each side. Thrones and other furniture may be brought on as needed. On the curtains are projected appropriate gobos: clouds for Olympus, leaves for the Sacred Grove, etc.

PROPS

ZEUS: Thunderbolts.

POSEIDON: Flower that squirts water, trident, big flippers.

HESTIA: Trays and goblets, nectar and ambrosia.

ARTEMIS: Bow and arrows, large crescent moon, lantern,
long cloak with hood, knife.

HERMES: Several scrolls (one of pink parchment), small
casket with golden rose and diamond pendant necklace.

OREADS and TRITONS: Bathing caps, swim fins, snorkles.

HALL OF WONDERS: Helmet, golden lyre.

COSTUMES

In general, the characters all wear togas or long tunics of varying lengths (longer for the older gods, shorter for Ashley and the younger demi-gods). Color can be used to separate the groups, or they might simply wear jeans and T-shirts printed with *Dryad, Oread, Triton* etc. ... with a toga slung over one shoulder. Additional pieces, like Hermes' sandals and winged helmet, can further delineate characters. These items could be traditional, or modern such as sneakers and a ball cap with wings attached. Poseiden wears jams and a Hawaiian print shirt under his toga, as well as flippers. Hera can have an optional terry cloth toga and towel turban for after she gets drenched. Above all, the costumes should be fun and can be as anachronistic as you can imagine.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: The Great Hall of Olympus. Three great thrones dominate a dais. ARTEMIS enters trying to control the CROWD behind her.)

ARTEMIS: All right, could I have the naiads, the oreads, the maenads, the dryads please stay in your groups. Dactyls, demi-gods, corybants, tritons, could you catch up, please? *(GROUPS move appropriately.)* Thank you. All right, here we are in the Great Hall of Mt. Olympus. It is here that the twelve Olympians live and love. It's not every day we lesser deities get to peek inside. Now - are there any question so far? *(Silence.)* Good. *(SHE is about to move on when ASHLEY interrupts.)*

ASHLEY: Yeah, I have a question. What are these chairs?

ARTEMIS: Don't touch those! Those are the thrones of the Great Olympians.

ASHLEY: Which one's yours?

ARTEMIS: Well, I'm second generation. I just sit on the dais. Don't sit there!

ASHLEY: Gee, I thought when you got to be a Great Olympian you at least got a chair.

(HESTIA, a plump, motherly goddess, enters.)

HESTIA: What's all the noise?

ARTEMIS: Oh! Uh, everyone, this is one of the Great Olympians, Hestia, goddess of the hearth. *(Applause.)*

HESTIA: Oh, stop, stop. Artemis, aren't you going to introduce them to me? *(ARTEMIS looks at THEM all, then at HESTIA, who laughs.)* You're the new gods, aren't you?

ASHLEY: The lesser spirits of the earth, ma'am.

HESTIA: Oh, pish-tush. A god is a god. We all have pretty much the same power. Just different ... specialties. Where are the maenads and corybants? *(Hands up.)*

End of Freeview

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