

The Mount Olympus Diner

By Stephen Murray

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Welcome to the Mount Olympus Diner where Zeus is the chef and Hera is your waitress. The food is great, but what the customers really love about the diner are the stories told there, the stories of Greek mythology. Diner Network star Sparky Guy arrives to do research on the restaurant and is treated to a variety of tales. This play features contemporary and family-friendly retellings of the myths in the scenes *Hades and Persephone*, *Echo and Narcissus*, and *Arachne and Athena*. A Greek Chorus of diner staff takes on multiple roles and keeps the action moving in each story. You'll meet delivery Amazons, a track star named Nike, and a three-headed dog Cerberus. With flexible casting options, you've got a show that's sure to be a hit with your audience and actors.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 - 4 m, 11 - 14 w, 3 flexible, + extras)

Female Characters

HERA: Head waitress at the Mount Olympus Diner, Queen of the Gods, and storyteller.

PANDORA: Assistant waitress, enthusiastic employee obsessed with boxes.

CASSANDRA: Kitchen assistant who has a knack for predicting the future, but no one believes her.

PERSEPHONE: Goddess of Vegetation, love interest of Hades.

DEMETER: Goddess of the Harvest, mother of Persephone.

ECHO: A Wood Nymph (Dryad) in love with Narcissus.

ERATO: A Dryad in love with food.

PHOEBE: A Dryad in love with food.

PEGGY: A Dryad in love with food.

NIKE: Winged athlete.

ARACHNE: Overconfident weaver, future spider.

ATHENA: Goddess of Wisdom, disguises herself as an old woman to trick Arachne.

ARTEMIS: Goddess of the Hunt.

APHRODITE: Goddess of Love.

AMAZONS: Military delivery people.

Male Characters

ZEUS: Owner and chef of diner, King of the Gods, father to Athena.

HADES: God of the Underworld, sports announcer in the weaving scene.

NARCISSUS: A very handsome young man who falls in love with his reflection.

Flexible roles

SPARKY GUY: TV celebrity from the Diner Channel.

HELIOS: Pilot of the chariot that brings the sun across the sky.

CERBERUS: The 3-headed dog of the underworld.

CHORUS: Various patrons enter the restaurant and interact with the staff. Some will be indicated in the script; others are up to you. Feel free to have a Cyclops come in for a cup of coffee, a Minotaur order a sandwich, or any mythological creature. When actors are not engaged in a specific role, they are part of the chorus.

Doubling Options: AMAZONS and CERBERUS. PERSEPHONE and ARACHNE. DEMETER and ATHENA. NIKE and ECHO. HELIOS and NARCISSUS or HADES and NARCISSUS.

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SETTING

A Greek diner with part of the kitchen area visible to the audience. The various tables and chairs should be easy to move. Greek flags and décor brighten the seating area. There should be a visible sign reading "Mount Olympus Diner." This is a hybrid modern/mythological world. In the manner of the modern Stone Age of "The Flintstones" or the contemporary fantasy world of Pixar's "Onward."

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(AT RISE: The scene opens on the dimly lit interior of a Greek diner. CASSANDRA enters and flips a light switch, and we see the whole diner. She starts her work of opening the restaurant. After a moment, PANDORA enters, in a rush.)

PANDORA: Good morning, Cassandra!

CASSANDRA: Good morning, Pandora. You're in a hurry this morning!

PANDORA: I thought I was going to be late. I overslept because I stayed up way too late last night.

CASSANDRA: No worries, the bosses aren't even here yet. What kept you up?

PANDORA: I fell down an internet rabbit hole. I started watching unboxing videos and I couldn't stop. They're fascinating!

CASSANDRA: I knew this would happen to you. Didn't I warn you the internet could be addictive?

PANDORA: Yes, you did. And as usual, I ignored you.

(THEY share a laugh together. SPARKY GUY enters. He is a boisterous television personality and producer with crazy spiked hair.)

SPARKY: Hello, wonderful diner people!

PANDORA: I'm sorry, sir, we are not open yet.

SPARKY: Oh, I know. I'm Sparky Guy. I'm here to meet the owners.

CASSANDRA: Sparky Guy, you mean like that Diner Network person?

SPARKY: I am that Diner Network person, in the flesh, me dot com!

PANDORA: Wow! A TV celebrity!

SPARKY: We're doing a feature on this diner, and I stopped by for some pre-production work. What do you two do here?

CASSANDRA: I'm Cassandra and I work in the kitchen.

PANDORA: I'm Pandora. I wait tables and stuff.

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SPARKY: That's hoot-tastic! Where are the owners?

CASSANDRA: Zeus and Hera? They'll be here soon.

SPARKY: Zeus and Hera running a Greek diner. That's great!
Are they anything like the real Zeus and Hera?

PANDORA: They *are* Zeus and Hera, sir. Stick around, you'll be surprised.

(ZEUS and HERA enter together. They are both very pleased to see Mr. Guy in their diner.)

ZEUS: Mr. Guy! Welcome to the Mount Olympus Diner!

SPARKY: Are you the owners?

ZEUS: Yes, I'm Zeus!

HERA: I'm Hera, and we own this place. He cooks.

ZEUS: She waits tables. And the customers love our food.

HERA: That's not why they come here, dear.

ZEUS: What? I make the best souvlaki in the world.

SPARKY: I love a good souvlaki!

HERA: Our souvlaki is very nice. But people come here for the stories.

SPARKY: Stories?

ZEUS: Yes, the stories! But not just any stories.

HERA: The stories of our native land.

ZEUS and HERA: Greece!

SPARKY: I can see your pride in your heritage in how you've decorated the place.

(HERA motions to CASSANDRA and PANDORA. They set SPARKY up DSR with a table, menu, silverware, cup of coffee, and a meal.)

ZEUS: Greece has contributed a great deal to modern society. For example, democracy and baklava.

SPARKY: I like both of those things.

ZEUS: It's one of the most beautiful places in the world.

HERA: But it is the stories that keep our customers coming back. The myths of ancient Greece. And no one tells a tale like Zeus.

ZEUS: You are too kind, my wife.

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(SFX: The horn of a tractor trailer is heard.)

CASSANDRA: Guess who's here!

PANDORA: Every morning, like clockwork.

SPARKY: Do you get truckers here? That's a sign of a good diner.

ZEUS: Yes, we do, but this one's kind of special. Take a look.

(ZEUS motions for SPARKY to join him looking out the window. SPARKY peers offstage.)

SPARKY: Is that a chariot?

ZEUS: It sure is! You don't see that every day, do you, Sparky Guy?

SPARKY: No, no I don't.

(HELIOS enters. He is dressed in yellow, perhaps wearing a gold lamé vest. He is also wearing sunglasses. You could say that Helios has a sunny disposition.)

HELIOS: Good morning, Zeus! Good morning, Hera!

ZEUS: Helios! Right on time as usual.

HERA: He's always our first customer of the day.

HELIOS: The sun's not going to rise by itself! I've got to get to work early.

ZEUS: Helios, I made something special for you today. I'll be right back. *(ZEUS exits to kitchen.)*

SPARKY: *(To HELIOS.)* You look familiar.

HELIOS: That's probably because you see me every day pulling the sun across the sky with my chariot.

SPARKY: Wait a minute... in my astronomy class, I learned...

HELIOS: Astronomy? Bah! You look at the sun very carefully, you're gonna see me. Only, don't stare at the sun. That would hurt your eyes.

(ZEUS returns with a large stick with several food items on it.)

ZEUS: Here you go, Helios!

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HELIOS: What's that?

ZEUS: It's my special breakfast souvlaki.

HERA: How is that souvlaki?

ZEUS: If I can put it on a stick, it's souvlaki!

SPARKY: That's a lot of food on a stick!

ZEUS: Yes! Yes! An egg and cheese sandwich, bacon, a bagel, and a jelly donut!

HELIOS: Wow!

ZEUS: *(Giving food stick to HELIOS.)* Take it! No charge today!

HERA: Do you still want your usual?

HELIOS: Yes. And coffee! Gotta stay alert when I drive.

HERA: Coming right up!

(HELIOS goes to a table to sit and enjoy breakfast. A group of customers enter, they are the CHORUS, played by the ensemble of the show. They speak together as a group.)

CHORUS: Greetings, Zeus and Hera. We have arrived!

SPARKY: Looks like the diner is getting busy.

HERA: That's the chorus. We couldn't tell our stories without them.

SPARKY: A Greek Chorus?

ZEUS: That's right!

CHORUS: *(In unison)* We are the chorus. We help with storytelling. We can be anyone, anywhere. We are also hungry.

HERA: Of course, of course! Please friends, have a seat. We will take your orders. Pandora, Cassandra, let's get down to business.

(Murmurs of approval and enthusiasm from the CHORUS as they take their seats. CASSANDRA goes to work in the kitchen as PANDORA and HERA wait tables. Some actors exit to prepare for entrances as other characters.)

SPARKY: Well, this is just a bouncy house of fantastic!

ZEUS: I hope you feel welcome here.

SPARKY: Thank you, Zeus.

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ZEUS: What can we do for you and your TV program today?

SPARKY: Well, I'm here to get the feel of the place before we send our cameras in. You know, check out the vibe here, see how your feng is shui-ed. (*Pronounce it "FUNG is SHWADE."*)

ZEUS: You will be our honored guest, Mister Sparky Guy.

(ZEUS escorts SPARKY to his table)

SPARKY: Just go about your business. Let me see the place in action. When you're not busy, I may have a question or two.

ZEUS: Then I'm off to the kitchen! (*Heads to the visible area of the kitchen.*)

CASSANDRA: (*Approaching SPARKY.*) Mr. Guy, I love your shows. The Diner Network is my favorite. When I'm not in this diner, I'm watching them on TV.

SPARKY: Well, I am as pleased as peach cobbler in an elevator to hear you say that, young lady!

ZEUS: (*Calling from kitchen.*) Cassandra, we are almost out of tomatoes. Remind me to order more!

CASSANDRA: I told you we were going to run out of tomatoes, but you didn't believe me!

ZEUS: Well, I believe you now. Make sure we order tomatoes.

CASSANDRA: Yes, sir.

HERA: Ordering for Helios! Two eggs sunny-side up!

ZEUS: I'm on it!

(SFX: A doorbell is heard.)

HERA: Oh, someone's at the back door. Pandora, could you see who it is?

PANDORA: Yes, ma'am.

(PANDORA opens the door. The AMAZONS, a group of women in military outfits, enter carrying two packages.)

PANDORA: (*Cont'd.*) It's the Amazons!

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AMAZONS: *(Spoken in unison.)* Yes, we are the Amazons. We have deliveries for you. We detected you were running low on tomatoes.

CASSANDRA: I told you...

ZEUS: *(Aside to CASSANDRA.)* Be quiet, Cassandra. *(To the AMAZONS.)* How did you know we were running out of tomatoes?

AMAZONS: We are the Amazons. We always know, and we will always deliver what you need.

HERA: Thank you!

AMAZONS: We also have this box addressed to Zeus and Hera.

PANDORA: A box? Can I open it?

HERA: No, Pandora!

PANDORA: Pleeese? *(Lovingly holding the box.)*

HERA: We'll open it later. Get to your tables. *(To the AMAZONS.)* Thank you for the delivery! Stay and have something to eat.

AMAZONS: Sorry, we must leave. Medusa needs an order of beauty cream. A LOT of beauty cream. Amazons, away! *(THEY exit.)*

ZEUS: Order up! Sunny-side eggs!

HERA: Pandora, deliver those eggs to Helios. *(PANDORA is reluctant to leave the box.)* Put it down and go.

PANDORA: Fine.

(PANDORA puts down the box, picks up the eggs from the kitchen and delivers them to HELIOS.)

HELIOS: Thanks. Can I get this to go? I need to get to work.

PANDORA: To go?

HELIOS: Yeah, put it in a box or something.

PANDORA: *(Very excited that her box obsession gets to be useful.)* Right! A box! I can do this. I'll be right back!

(PANDORA hurries off stage. NIKE, a woman dressed in exercise gear and wings, enters the diner enthusiastically.)

NIKE: I won! I won! I did it! I won!

End of Freeview

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