

# OFFENBACH

## LA BELLE HELENE

English Version by Donald Pippin

### ACT ONE

*The overture stops abruptly ....*

#### NARRATOR

Hold on! Where are we? Oh, yes. Of course! Here's the massive Temple of Zeus and over there, the lovely Temple of Venus. It must be Sparta, the very place I was looking for. Here's where I've been sent to check up on the wild rumors currently being circulated by a long winded poet, whom some consider talented, named Homer. I give him credit for one thing – he knows how to give the public what it wants -- sex and violence, with no redeeming social value. the most blatant sensationalism. I refuse to read a word of it. What's more, he is famous for playing fast and loose with the facts. As he likes to say, add a little harp and people will swallow just about anything.

Still, there must be something behind the story -- the Trojan War didn't start over nothing, and nobody's denying that Queen Helen of Sparta ran off with Prince Paris of Troy. The scandal has rocked the entire world. Some are calling it the story of the year. Frankly, I wouldn't be surprised if people were talking about it ten years from now.

According to our sources, it all began on that balmy spring afternoon right here at the Temple of Zeus, God of Thunder, presided over by Calchas – Grand Augur, High Priest and local Oracle. He handles the thunder himself occasionally, on weekends, and if you will pardon the expression gets quite a bang out of it.

To this sacred shrine, bright eyed young folk from farms and villages across the country come swarming in to express their gratitude with humble gifts to the god ...

CALCHAS: Crap! Nothing but crap! Do they think Zeus has turned vegetarian? Sacrilege! An insult! But what can you expect nowadays? Young people today have no style. They don't know a sacrifice from a salad bar. They've not been trained to do things properly: ox drawn processions, screams and incantations, burning entrails, blood, lions, virgins! Something elegant, sophisticated. Now what do we get? Bouquets ... wheat germ ... sprouts! Decadent times! (*music begins*) No more flowers! No more flowers!

## CHORUS OF COUNTRY YOUTH

**Unto thy shrine, O Zeus, we come with open arms  
From village green and country side  
We come from far and wide  
To offer him the best our farms and fields provide,  
The fruit and flower of tree and vine.**

**O Zeus, supremely wise,  
With beard of burning gold,  
Attend our sacrifice;  
Thy faithful flock behold.  
With boughs in bloom, your servants come  
From fruitful farms.  
We come with gratitude and zest  
With baskets of the best  
Including vintage wine.  
Unto thy shrine,  
From countryside, from far and wide,  
With open arms we come!**

## NARRATOR

A second group of ladies emerges from the Temple of Venus, a group markedly different from the first: jaded, bored, blasé, exhausted. Venus has been acting up again. Moody at best, she has been listless ever since the sad business about Adonis, who never should have gone hunting. And the trouble is she's let her work slide. A strange blight has already spread over the land. Love has grown stale, passion pale and sickly, l'amour – forget it. Rumor is spreading that Venus plans to give up love altogether and switch to philanthropy.

The ladies are horrified. They have come to beg the goddess to reconsider. Beautiful girls . . . gorgeous, ravishing. Ah, but here comes another. (*Helen enters*) And by Zeus, it happens every time! The mind goes blank, the eyes swim, the breath stops, and all other women might as well go home and bake cookies. It is Helen, in casual attire – Queen of Sparta, wife of King Menelaus, daughter of Leda and Zeus himself, hatched from the egg of a swan – a fact certified by our most eminent historians. This is the face that will sink a thousand ships . . .

HELEN & CHORUS OF JADED LADIES

CHORUS

Fairest flowers of the nation,  
Let us weep in desolation  
For the love that comes not again.  
Let us mourn, let us mourn  
For the lack of young handsome men.

HELEN

Adonis, for thy cruel lot  
These tears we shed.  
Venus fair, forsake us not,  
Though your love lies dead.  
Oh, heed our cry,  
Let love not die!

O love divine! O flame enchanted!  
Adonis and Venus, ah! Return!  
That fire so fierce and seldom granted,  
Alas! That fire has ceased to burn.

Venus, pity this land  
Where love lies dying.  
Heed our longing and sighing;  
Oh, lend a helping hand.

How we long for romance,  
For the glories of fable.  
Ready, willing and able,  
We need but a chance.

The world today is cold and ashen;  
Love is stale, *l'amour passee*.  
Our empty souls that starve for passion  
Decline and droop and waste away.

Venus, hear our appeal!  
You, too, have lost a lover.  
And have felt as we feel,  
Endured what we endure.

Love alone is the cure  
For the boredom we suffer.  
End this lengthy ordeal;  
Oh, bring back *l'amour*!

NARRATOR

One person is untouched by the general *ennui* – young Orestes, son of King Agamemnon, nephew of Helen, immortalized in Greek tragedy as the guilt ridden hero, pursued by the furies, hounded by remorse. We meet him now at an earlier phase of his career. As usual, in questionable company ...

**ORESTES**

*(with Calchas and two loose ladies)*

**High at the cabaret called Hades,  
There I caroused all night, old chap,  
Living it up with two fair ladies,  
Each with a turn upon my lap.**

**Meet Parthenis, Leona, too.  
And it appears they're not unfriendly.**

**CALCHAS**

**What is a holy man to do?  
From the bordello evidently ...**

**ORESTES**

**Tsing la la, tsing la la, etc.**

**Eager and ready, young Orestes  
Longs for the grand romantic scenes!  
Though very willing, put to the test he's  
Not what you call a man of means.**

**Meet Parthenis, Leona, too.  
How would you like to get acquainted?**

**CALCHAS**

**They're quite attractive, *entre nous*.  
Oh, what a shame to be a man so sainted!**

**ORESTES**

**Tsing la la, tsing la la, etc.**

NARRATOR

Orestes and his ladies of pleasure depart, leaving Calchas, the holy man, alone with his pious meditations . . .

**CALCHAS** *(solo)*

**Tsing la la, tsing la la, etc.**

NARRATOR

Ah, well! Back to the tiresome routine, tidying up the temple. But wait! Calchas is detained by the arrival of a newcomer. (*Paris enters*) a handsome though insignificant young shepherd. Calchas is about to give him the brush-off befitting a holy man, when a tiny speck appears on the horizon. It's getting bigger . . . coming closer ... a white dove, bearing a letter from the Isle of Cythera, home of Venus.

PARIS: (*takes the letter, examines it, and hands it to Calchas*) It's for you.

CALCHAS: A personal letter from Venus!

CALCHAS (*reading*)

*A youth of twenty, fair of form,  
A shepherd lad by trade,  
From Venus of the waves shall come  
And turn to you for aid.*

*Though young in years, he is, I claim,  
A man of taste supreme;  
In gratitude, I've promised him  
The woman of his dream.*

*Helen's the fairest of the land;  
On this have all agreed.  
Calchas will take the two in hand  
And say to both: proceed!*

*Help out the lad; observe benignly,  
Love and kisses, Yours Divinely.*

NARRATOR

So the young shepherd is none other than Prince Paris, son of King Priam of Troy . . . a celebrity, the hero of front page headlines in the Cytherian Chronicle, idol of the columnists, guest of talk shows in forums throughout the nation, the constant topic of conversation around the bar in Troy's favorite hangout, *The Trojan Horse*. It is he who galvanized the critics of the Mt. Ida Gazette with his superb demonstration of judgment in that most exacting of beauty contests, selecting Venus as the most beautiful of the goddesses. Much pleased, she has promised him the most beautiful woman in the world – Helen, naturally – and he comes now to pick up the prize. Wishing to win her on his own merits, he has retained his lowly shepherd garb.

However, there comes a point in a shepherd's life when he simply has to face the fact that to win the queen, he's going to need a little help. Calchas, a staunch believer in Safety First, is reluctant to pitch in, aware that the waters are murky and dangerous. But you don't mess around with Venus. He knows also that he is a mere pawn in the hands of fate -- an element that figures prominently in Greek drama. When Venus commands,

you square the shoulders and fall in line. Yet who could resist asking one small favor in return?

CALCHAS: Come on, tell us. Just what did happen that afternoon on the mountain?

PARIS



God-dess-es three up-on Mt. I- da on a point could not a- gree:  
Which of us wears the crown of beauty?  
Who is the fairest of the three?

**Evohe! Heavenly ladies!  
Oh, you simple lads, beware!  
Evohe! Heavenly ladies!  
Thus with charm they bait the snare.**

**Through the woods a youth approaches,  
Handsome, bold, with sparkling eye.  
In his hand he bears an apple –  
I myself can testify. Ah!**

**Wait, they cry! Young man, a moment!  
Gaze upon us and compare.  
Then present the golden apple  
To the one you find most fair.**

**Evohe! Heavenly ladies!  
Oh, you simple lads, beware!  
Evohe! Heavenly ladies!  
Thus with charm they bait the snare.**

**Said the first, I'm chaste Minerva,  
None so modest, none so wise.  
These are merits that deserve a  
Valid claim upon the prize.**

**Evohe! The heavenly ladies!  
Oh, you simple lads, beware!**

**Said the next, my name is Juno,  
Unsurpassed in rank and fame.,  
Both of them as well as you know  
I have far the greater claim.**

**Evohe! The heavenly ladies!**

**Oh, you simple lads, beware!**

**Ah, but the third, the third was silent,  
For she spoke but with her eyes.  
And the apple went to Venus.  
'Twas to her I gave the prize,  
Evohe! Heavenly ladies!  
Oh, you simple lads, beware!  
Evohe! Heavenly ladies!  
Thus with charm they bait the snare.**

*During soft, sweet music Helen is brought in by Calchas to meet Paris. They gaze at one another silently and melt. She is taken away most reluctantly ...*

#### NARRATOR

Helen is ... favorably impressed, even though she is yet to discover his noblest attribute, still unseen, unparalleled for thrust and penetration, which will be publicly displayed this very afternoon. I refer to his intellect, of which he will give a stunning demonstration. A contest, open to king and shepherd alike, is about to take place. Thanks to a bit of backstage maneuvering on the part of Calchas, Paris will compete with the most celebrated kings and heroes of Greece for the coveted Olympic laurel crown awarded for intellectual gymnastics.

Meet the contestants: the two Ajaxes, young Achilles, Menelaus, *and* the mighty Agamemnon, considered by some, most notably himself, the greatest of the great.

#### CHORUS

**Here (We) come, the noble kings of Greece!  
Each one by name we'll introduce.  
Presenting now -- presenting now --  
Famous heroes of war and peace.**

**Rise to a standing ovation;  
Hail to the heads of the nation!**

#### THE TWO AJAXES

**We come, Ajax and his brother,  
Jax and his brother, -jax and his brother,  
Ajax one and two.**

#### OTHERS

**Ajaxes one and two.**

#### THE TWO AJAXES

**Each more robust than the other,  
-Bust than the other, -bust than the other,  
Rockbound through and through.**

**OTHERS**

**They're rockbound through and through.**

**THE TWO AJAXES**

**For keen intellect and wit  
We're famous for the opposite.  
We come, Ajax and his brother,  
-Jax and his brother, -jax and his brother,  
See the double feature,  
Meet the two Ajax.**

**OTHERS**

**They come, Ajax and his brother, *etc.***

**ACHILLES**

**Behold triumphant Achilles,  
-Umphant Achilles, -iumphant Achilles,  
Man of solid steel.**

**OTHERS**

**A man of solid steel.**

**ACHILLES**

**Just one thing gives me the willies,  
Gives me the willies, gives me the willies,  
Damn that dratted heel!**

**OTHERS**

**Oh, damn that dratted heel!**

**ACHILLES**

**Although I'm in principle  
Ninety nine per cent invincible,  
Yet one thing gives me the willies,  
Gives me the willies, gives me the willies,  
Damn that dratted heel,  
That bloody blasted heel!**

**OTHERS**

**Behold triumphant Achilles,  
Umphant Achilles, iumphant Achilles,  
Man of solid steel.  
Although in principle quite invincible,**

Still he's hounded by that heel.

**MENELAUS**

I am just husband of Helen,  
Husband of Helen, husband of Helen,  
And to boot the king.

**OTHERS**

To boot, to boot the king.

**MENELAUS**

Alas, there's no way of tellin',  
No way of tellin', no way of tellin',  
What hangs threatening.

**OTHERS**

What blow is threatening.

**MENELAUS**

Will her virtue stay intact  
To get us through the second act?  
I am just husband of Helen,  
Husband of Helen, husband of Helen,  
And to boot the king,  
By Zeus, I am the king!

**OTHERS**

He is just husband of Helen, *dtc.*

**AGAMEMNON**

I'm chief, bombastic and regal,  
-Bastic and regal, -bastic and regal.  
Agamemnon greet!

**OTHERS**

Great Agamemnon greet!

**AGAMEMNON**

Supreme, superb as an eagle,  
-Perb as an eagle, -perb as an eagle,  
Let none dare compete.

**OTHERS**

Let no one dare compete.

**AGAMEMNON**

On me kings and princes wait;

**They call me greatest of the great.  
Supreme, superb as an eagle,  
-Perb as an eagle, -perb as an eagle,  
Agamemnon greet, great Agamemnon greet!**

**OTHERS**

**The chief, bombastic and regal,  
-Bastic and regal, -bastic and regal.  
Agamemnon greet!  
Supreme, -superb as an eagle,  
-Perb as an eagle, -perb as an eagle,  
None with him compete.  
With him let none, let none compete.**

*Helen makes her entrance.*

**CHORUS**

**At last! The noble Queen of Greece!  
Disturber of the manly peace.  
Just look at her!  
By Jupiter,  
A swan amid the gabbling geese.**

**NARRATOR**

The eagerly anticipated contest begins. Again and again the kings step up to the plate for a valiant effort, each time with dismal results. Then Paris takes his turn. With effortless aplomb, he is rated perfect at the pun, adept at *double entendre*, expert at the epigram, master of the bon mot, champion of the charade. In short, a straight ten on all points, a clean sweep. Helen gazes on, overcome with admiration, as the prize goes to the lowly shepherd, And in the finale of Act I, assisted by the ever cooperative Calchas, accompanied by thunder, Paris makes a spectacular leap toward the attainment of the far greater prize that he is seeking.

**CHORUS**

**Awesome! Awesome!  
Won by a lowly shepherd swain,  
Cheers for the man who's got the brain!  
Hail the shepherd!  
Cheers for the man who's got the brain!**

**ACHILLES**

**Disgraced! And by a peasant!**

**AGAMAMNON**

**Who is this lowly scum?**

**PARIS**

**This lowly scum, by name of Paris,  
Is son of King Priam!**

**OTHERS**

**Of Priam!**

**HELEN**

**The hero! The hero of the epical apple.**

**PARIS**

**The epical apple.**

**OTHERS**

**That artful chap of the epical apple, no less!**

**HELEN**

**The lad from Mt Ida! *Mon Dieu!* Oh, heaven!  
The fabled apple man, the celebrated apple man!  
The boy from Troy!  
My gift from Venus! Ah, *mon Dieu!***

**OTHERS**

**The epical apple chap.**

**MENELAUS**

**Of such superior extraction!  
A great relief and satisfaction.  
The Queen I fear would frown  
To place the laurel crown  
So highly coveted  
Upon the lowly head  
Of a crude shepherd lad.  
(*to Helen*) Perform the coronation.**

**HELEN**

**Ah! With heart and soul!**

**OTHERS**

**Hail to Paris in victory!  
Man of mighty mentality,  
Hail to Paris in victory!  
Man with the great mentality,**

**MENELAUS**

And now I hope you'll grant a small request.  
Pray allow us to entertain the winner,  
And at the palace be our guest.

**HELEN**

Oh, but of course! Come for dinner!  
Tonight at seven join us at the table.

**MENELAUS**

Daughter of Jupiter, believe me,  
I shall not be late.  
No, no, no, no! I shall not be late.

**HELEN**

(It is the gods, not I!  
The mighty hand of fate!)

**CALCHAS** (*aside to Paris*)

(You see we aim to please.)

**PARIS**

'Twould be an even greater pleasure  
If the king were overseas.  
'Twould be an even greater pleasure  
With her husband overseas.)

**CALCHAS**

Quite simple to arrange,

**PARIS**

What an understanding friend!

**CALCHAS**

Philome, attend!

**AGAMEMNON**

Skies are dark and thunder rolls.  
Zeus decrees to mortal souls  
With this sacred sign.

**OTHERS**

Skies are dark and thunder rolls.  
Zeus decrees to mortal souls  
With this sacred sign.

Voice of the god! His word disclose.

**CALCHAS**

The god decrees through me, his instrument;  
All shall hear Zeus' order:  
Menelaus take to sea!  
From port depart by boat  
Or a mountain top remote  
On the isle of Crete across the water.

**MENELAUS**

What the deuce! I detest mountain climbing!

**HELEN**

Go, husband, go! Zeus has spoken.

**PARIS**

My thanks. A case of perfect timing.

**MENELAUS**

The deuce! I detest mountain climbing!

**VARIOUSLY**

Part from port, away by water.  
Part by port, obey the order.  
From port depart. Away on the water.  
Travel away on the water.  
Go, go! Go, go! Go, go! Go, go!  
Go on the galley!

**HELEN**

The king embarks heavy hearted,  
-Barks heavy hearted, -barks heavy hearted,  
But he'd best obey.

**OTHERS**

He'd best, he'd best obey.

**HELEN**

His wife stays home little guarded,  
Home little guarded, home little guarded,  
Danger on the way.

**OTHERS**

With danger on the way.

**HELEN**

**You know what the stories say:  
The cat's away, the mice will play.  
The king embarks heavy hearted,  
-Barks heavy hearted, -barks heavy hearted,  
But the fatal order he had best obey.**

**OTHERS**

**The king embarks heavy hearted,  
-Barks heavy hearted, -barks heavy hearted,  
But he'd best obey.  
His wife stays home little guarded,  
Home little guarded, home little guarded,  
Danger on the way.**

**Embark on the boat, embark -bark -bark.  
-Bark on the boat, embark on the boat,  
Get ready on your mark.  
Depart from the port, depart from the port,  
Depart from the port, depart -part -part  
Depart from the port, depart from the port,  
In short, depart -part -part -part.**

**Go, go, go on the galley!  
With no more delay,  
No further dilly dally.  
Onward, sail away  
To that foreign land.  
Even kings obey  
When the gods command.**

**ACT TWO**

*Scene: Helen's boudoir.*

**NARRATOR**

Menelaus has been gone for exactly one month, reluctantly mountain climbing in Crete, and one might suppose that Paris has enjoyed every minute of his absence. Alas, no! On the contrary, just when it seemed that the path was clear, that every barrier had been removed, he has come up against the most formidable obstacle of all in the least expected of places – Helen herself.

Make no mistake. Helen is stirred. She broods by day, she lies awake nights, she sighs, she yearns, she picks at her dinner. Nonetheless, she has steadfastly barred her door and refused even to see him, determined to remain a loyal if not loving wife.

Now before you go criticizing Helen for this touch of provincialism, bear in mind that she is a woman in whom Venus has always taken a keen interest. She has been swept up before by the inexorable hand of fate – quite frequently in fact. One blushes to recall the abandon of her youth, the passions, the thrills, the transports of ecstasy, the nights of amorous intoxication. And all of it entirely against her will.

But enough is enough. She is resolved that it will not happen again. After all, she is now a respectable married woman, a queen, an aunt, and she firmly intends to live down her early indiscretions. It would appear that her resolve is unshakeable.

#### **CHORUS OF LADIES**

**With diadem of pearl, golden rings,  
Bedeck the queen whose beauty dazzles mortal sight.  
Wonder shall strike the four great kings  
Who come to call on her tonight.**

#### **BACCHIS**

**Here's something sheer and rather daring.**

#### **HELEN**

**Away! Away! Tonight a sterner style I shall be wearing.  
Nothing extreme ... and no décolleté.  
Disdainful of rude and probing eyes,  
My charms I choose not to advertise.  
Brazen and bold display is not for me;  
I shall assume a blushing modesty.**

#### **BACCHIS**

**Why wish to hide on this occasion  
The pride and glory of the nation?**

#### **LADIES**

**'Tis a crime! Why? Why?  
With diadem of pearl, golden rings,  
Bedeck the queen whose beauty dazzles mortal sight.  
Wonder shall strike the four great kings  
Who come to call on her tonight.**

BACCHIS: But gracious majesty, you can't be serious! Mon Dieu! To hide your gifts from the world ... deprive the public ...

HELEN: This is the gown I have chosen.

BACCHIS: But the kings will be coming for cards. The cream of Spartan society, perhaps the great Agamemnon himself. And supper afterwards in the gallery of Bacchus ...

HELEN: This is what I shall wear.

BACCHIS: But what will people say?

HELEN: This I shall wear, and if I owned a plainer gown, more severe, more modest, I should be wearing that. I have made a vow and I intend to keep it till my husband returns.

BACCHIS: But the demands of common decency, the most basic rules of etiquette...

HELEN: I shall keep my vow.

BACCHIS: It is fortunate then that your reputation has been established, and that everyone knows already of your beauty.

HELEN: Please! No more of that! (*aside*) Ah, the beauty that has ever been my undoing! (*a slave appears*) And when have I given my slaves permission to come barging into my boudoir?

SLAVE: Madame! Prince Paris is at the door!

HELEN: Prince Paris! The visitor I dread the most! Send him away! Tell him again and again, as always, that I am not receiving. (*exit slave*)

BACCHIS: But Madame, dismissing him day after day, week after week, as you do, is the height of indiscretion. People will think that you have a reason for avoiding him. He might even come to suspect that you are afraid ...

HELEN: (*with proud indignation*) I, the daughter of Leda, afraid?

BACCHIS: You could show him that he is much mistaken.

HELEN: Bacchis, have him come in. But first, a moment to compose myself.

BACCHIS: As you wish, Madame. (*aside, as she leaves*) Menelaus, watch out!

HELEN: Oh, dear! If only there were some polite way of telling Venus to shove off!

HELEN (*alone*)



My varied past we need not dwell on –  
The list of lovers does go on.

I'm warm of heart, but just between us,  
My generosity would be a flaw,  
Except that I am ruled by Venus.  
Not I but she lays down the law.

Venus, pray tell why you always compel  
Me to comply, though I try to defy  
Providence.  
Venus, why me?  
What particular glee  
Can you derive putting down,  
Putting down my defense?

We ladies would be chaste and proper,  
A husband's honor to uphold.  
But fate conspires to pull the stopper –  
A tiresome tale too often told.

For example, take my mother's story –  
Would you suspect a snow white bird,  
Or fear its motives amatory?  
The consequence you all have heard.

Venus, oh say  
Why go out of your way  
To drive your true devotee,  
Devotee to despair?  
Venus, explain  
What amusement you gain  
In catching me unaware,  
Unaware in your snare.

Alas, beset by shame and scandal,  
We ladies lose by all the odds.  
Though men are hard enough to handle,  
'Tis surely sin to fight the gods.

**You see how I put up a struggle,  
Yet all my efforts go for naught.  
The gods observe and merely chuckle.  
The trap is sprung, the prey is caught.**

**Venus, what next?  
Am I just oversexed?  
What fatal lure evermore, evermore draws me on?  
Venus, for me  
Go back into the sea!  
Return, return to your shell'n  
Leave Helen alone.**

HELEN: That should do it! *(to Bacchis)* Bacchis, have Prince Paris enter.  
*(Bacchis ushers in Prince Paris and exits)*

PARIS: Good evening, Madame! Ah!

HELEN: You seem quite taken ... with my gown.

PARIS: *(taken aback)* Your gown, of course.

HELEN: It's quite becoming, don't you think?

PARIS: *(stiffly)* Most becoming.

HELEN: Any news in the great social world?

PARIS: Nothing worth speaking of.

HELEN: You're not in a very agreeable humor this evening.

PARIS: You deign to notice?

HELEN: You're not angry with me?

PARIS: And why should I be angry?

HELEN: Perhaps because I kept you waiting?

PARIS: You've had me doing that for an entire month. Tell me, have you ever found yourself face to face with a man who was bound and determined?

HELEN: *(thrilled, despite herself)* You frighten me!

PARIS: (*forcefully*) Sit down and listen to me.

HELEN: (*with docility*) Very well. I am listening.

PARIS: As you know, the Goddess Venus promised me the love of the most beautiful woman in the world.

HELEN: I thought we had agreed to drop that subject.

PARIS: (*with authority*) The most beautiful woman in the world! Upon seeing you, I knew right away who that woman was. But from the first, you have stubbornly resisted. You have turned your back, locked your door, given me not the tiniest sign of encouragement. So that now I cannot help but wonder ...

HELEN: Yes ... go on ...

PARIS: I ask myself, have I made a mistake? The most beautiful woman in the world ... can it be someone else?

HELEN: (*immediately on fire*) Another woman! Oh, indeed! No doubt! I suppose you mean that frowsy little Parthenis, who fancies that no one notices the absurd way she touches up her hair. Or Penelope, whom some find so attractive when she makes an indecent public spectacle of herself? Or possibly my sister Clytemnestra, the *grande dame* whose mildest look can turn a grown man into a miniature poodle.

PARIS: (*quietly amused*) No, Madame! Rest assured, it is not Parthenis, Penelope nor Clytemnestra. No, nor any other that you might name. There's no way around it ...

HELEN: Yes? Yes?

PARIS: (*with a sigh*) It can be none but you.

HELEN: (*vastly relieved*) Ah!

PARIS: You and no one else. And since the Goddess Venus promised ...

HELEN: Yes?

PARIS: (*getting down to business*) Helen, it is now one month that you have been putting me off. But I am resolved ... and I have a theory. There are three ways to overcome a woman's resistance.

HELEN: Three ways?

PARIS: First, the way of love. (*with great passion*) I adore you! You are the breath of life to me. Everything! Earth, air, fire and water! Do you love me?

HELEN: No! No!

PARIS: Take time to consider. One, two, three!

HELEN: No, no ... no!

PARIS: Then we must move on to the next way ... force!

HELEN: Oh, my goodness! You wouldn't dare!

PARIS: Oh, wouldn't I? How can I hold back? How can I restrain myself?

HELEN: (*aside*) The poor boy is desperate!

PARIS: (*leaping towards her*) Princess!

HELEN: Help! Bacchis! Help me! Come!

BACCHIS: (*returning*) Your Majesty called?

HELEN: It's nothing ... nothing at all. Prince Paris is on his way out. (*hesitantly*) You mentioned a third way, Prince?

PARIS: The third way, Madame, is my secret. (*he leaves, escorted by Bacchis*)

HELEN: A secret ... what can he possibly mean? No, I am better off not knowing, But I shall be on guard. I have been warned.

NARRATOR

The kings come for cards.

**TUTTI**

**Kings accustomed to command  
Come with pomp to pay regard,  
See the famous Helen and  
Have a friendly game of cards.  
Hip hooray! Rah rah rah rah!**

NARRATOR

The game proceeds, but only one person seems to be enjoying it. Calchas, the high priest, is having an extraordinary run of luck.

CALCHAS: Excellent game! Delightful evening! I don't know when I had a better time, or held better cards. Piety gets its humble reward.

**CHORUS**

**Underneath the pale, saintly look,  
I believe the holy man's a crook.  
We lose the game and take a beating  
Because the pious priest is cheating.  
The quack! The phony!  
He's taking all our money!  
The imposter! The fraud! The schmuck!  
So that's why he has all the luck!**

**CALCHAS**

**Just what I need!**

**OTHERS**

**For what? For what? For what?**

**CALCHAS**

**To win! I get the pot!  
See for yourself – the ace!**

**OTHERS**

**Wow!**

**CALCHAS**

**And the ace takes the king,  
And I take all you've got.**

**AGAMEMNON**

**Grand Augur, not so fast!  
This king will not be taken.**

**CALCHAS**

**Insulting me? To my face?**

**AGAMEMNON**

**You don't suppose that we're naïve?**

**AJAXES**

**The winning card was up his sleeve.**

**ACHILLES**

**A dirty dog, a slimy snake!**

**CALCHAS**

**My friend, you make a big mistake.**

**HELEN**

**Come on, confess, get it off your chest.**

**ORESTES**

**Just give the money back and never mind the rest.**

**CALCHAS**

**I'll not return a bloody dime.**

**OTHERS**

**We caught him in the nick of time.**

**CALCHAS**

**My name and honor you attack.**

**OTHERS**

**Shut up and give the money back.**

**CALCHAS**

**Dare you accuse a man of Zeus?  
Wait till I let the thunder loose.**

**OTHERS**

**Seize the devout! Don't let him out!  
He has to pay! No other way!**

**CALCHAS**

**Try to remember if you can  
I am a highly holy man.**

**OTHERS**

**Seize the devout! Don't let him out!  
He has to pay! No other way!**

**OTHERS**

**The money owed he must repay!**

**CALCHAS**

**(I'd better make a get-away.)**

**OTHERS**

**He must repay the money owed!**

**CALCHAS**  
**(High time for me to hit the road.)**

**AJAXES**  
**In stead of setting a high example,**  
**A shining light to all that gamble,**  
**Imagine our dismay and grief**  
**When the holy man turns thief.**

**OTHERS**  
**The money owed he must repay!**

**CALCHAS**  
**Dare you accuse a man of Zeus? *Etc.***

**NARRATOR**

Unexpectedly alone once more, Helen retires for the night. Determined to maintain her virtue, she has taken the precaution of ordering extra slaves to guard her bedchamber, one of whom, unfortunately, is a familiar face in disguise. No question, firm as granite, Helen's mind is made up: she is not going to succumb to the handsome shepherd prince. Yet as a small compensation for so much virtue, she does allow herself one concession: she prays that she might be permitted to be with him in her dream.

And so when the young slave appears at her bedside, clad mainly in a gold earring, and turns out to be none other than Paris himself, who can blame Helen for gratefully assuming that her prayer has been answered? And since it is all a dream, who can wonder that she allows herself to go considerably further than she would otherwise? As she so aptly puts it, "Why not?"

*Paris quietly slips in during the offstage chorus, after bribing one of her attendants.*

HELEN: *(half awake)* Paris! Prince Paris! My shepherd boy! Here at my bedside.

PARIS: Yes, my love, it is I!

HELEN: I'm dreaming. Yes, it can only be a dream. But since you are not here, I don't see how I can possibly order you away.

PARIS: Only a dream?

HELEN: The dream that I longed for, that I prayed for!

PARIS: A dream, am I? But of course!

**HELEN**

In a dream, in a trance,  
I see him I adore.  
What a gift of romance,  
Not to hold, not to keep!  
But a ray of the sun  
That descends to charm my sleep.  
Oh, lovely dream! I dream ...

**PARIS**

Oh, lovely dream! A dream ...

**BOTH**

*(alternately & together)*



On- ly a dream ... mo- ment of love too sweet to stay,

Born of the midnight stars that hover,  
Fated to end at break of day.  
Savor the sweetness too soon to be over.

A dream of love too sweet to stay,  
A dream that dawn will snatch away.  
Only a dream!  
Moment of love too sweet to stay.

**HELEN**

Oh, tell me, Prince, the truth.  
Reply, though, not as prince,  
But as simple shepherd youth.  
There's something I would know ...

**PARIS**

Then but ask ... say! What would you be told?

**HELEN**

I'd never be so bold,  
Were not, were it not only a dream ...

**PARIS**

Speak!

**HELEN**

Am I as fair as lovely Venus, would you say?

**PARIS**

Oh, Helen! A question of delicate balance;  
The goddess showed more of her talents.  
Her attire on that day ... *vous comprenez* ...

**HELEN**

Your point I see.

**PARIS**

I saw ...

**HELEN**

How much?

**PARIS**

Dear Helen, the joy to behold her!  
The charm of her ivory shoulder!  
And scarce concealed by golden locks of hair,  
A rounded beauty sheer!  
A ripeness past compare!

**HELEN**

Since it is all a dream ...

**PARIS**

Oh, but of course, a dream!

**HELEN**

Since it is all a dream ... why not, why not?

**BOTH**

Only a dream!  
Moment of love too sweet to stay.  
Born of the midnight stars that hover,  
Only a dream!

**HELEN**

So now what have you to say?

**PARIS**

My love, your beauty's wondrous rare, and yet ...

**HELEN**

And yet? ...

**PARIS**

To be frank, upon Mt. Ida –  
I say this *entre nous* –  
In short, in short, I admired her more than you.

**HELEN**

Then she indeed is fairer?

**PARIS**

No!

**HELEN**

Is Venus not the fairer?

**PARIS**

No! But beauty goes for naught  
Without abandon, too.  
She knew this well untaught  
Goddess passionate and tender.  
Could that be why I thought  
Her more pleasing than you?

Freely did she render, freely render  
Kisses one, two, three! Rather long ...

**HELEN**

Rather long?

**PARIS**

All long!  
And that's what made the goddess more adorable to me.

**HELEN**

Since it is all a dream ...

**PARIS**

Oh, but of course, a dream!

**HELEN**

Since it is all a dream ... why not, why not?

**BOTH**

Only a dream!

**Moment of love too sweet to stay,  
Born of the midnight stars that hover,  
Fated to end at break of day.  
Savor the sweetness too soon to be over.**

**A dream of love too sweet to stay,  
A dream that dawn will snatch away.  
Only a dream!  
Moment of love too sweet to stay.  
A sweet dream of love! Oh, dream of love!**

*Their dream is rudely interrupted by the return of Menelaus.*

MENELAUS: Ha! What's this?

HELEN: My husband! Good God, it was *not* a dream!

MENELAUS: A dream? Ah! My wife in the arms of a slave!

HELEN: (*the dutiful wife*) Darling! Did you have a pleasant trip, dear?

MENELAUS: What about that slave?

HELEN: Lovely landscape, Crete? I do hope that you had nice weather. It can make all the difference.

MENELAUS: Perfect weather ... Who is that slave?

HELEN: Impressive mountains? How was the hunting? I can't wait to hear about ...

MENELAUS: Prince Paris! You!

HELEN: A smooth crossing? No tummy trouble?

MENELAUS: Prince Paris, at this hour, in my wife's boudoir, ALONE!

HELEN: It does look that way, doesn't it?

MENELAUS: Slaves, attend! The Queen's boudoir!

PARIS: Sir, control yourself. Or at least keep your voice down.

MENELAUS: I will *not* keep my voice down. This is my house and my wife and I will shout as much as I wish.

HELEN: But my dear, the kings are down the hall having supper.

MENELAUS: (*stricken*) Having supper!

PARIS: Raise a ruckus and they'll come running. Do you want them to know?

MENELAUS: I want the whole world to know!

**MENELAUS**

**Oh, kings! Come and bear witness! Behold!**

**HELEN**

**Why such an uproar? Why start a scandal?**

**PARIS**

**No need to shout. This we can handle.**

**HELEN**

**The hand of fate! The hand ...**

**PARIS**

**Of fate!**

**MENELAUS**

**Oh, kings of Greece! Come and behold!**

**ORESTES**

**Weave a garland of rose and lily, *etc.***

**AGAMEMNON**

**See ... Menelaus!**

**OTHERS**

**The king!**

**MENELAUS**

**Friend, 'tis I, just returned.**

**Good God, hat do I find?**

**My wife here with a man.**

**You that were to keep an eye upon her ...**

**Are you totally blind?**

**What of my honor?**

**Utterly gone! I am undone!**

**My honor gone and I'm undone.**

**VARIOUSLY**



**MENELAUS**

I'll have it out and no mistake  
On the dog that barks at my door.

**AGAMEMNON**

Away! Away! Licentious rake!  
Your behavior I abhor!

**PARIS**

No dog am I nor rascal neither,  
And you will pay for that misnomer.  
Check it out some time in Homer.  
I'll return by sea  
And carry Helen off with me.

**OTHERS**

Go, go, lusty fiend  
Before you get the shove!

**HELEN**

Be off, my friend,  
But go with all my love.



I fear their fur- ore. Lin- ger not, but while you can de- part!

'Tis you I adore.

Though you leave, you take with you my heart.

**OTHERS**

For rascals and sneaks  
Our contempt we barely can contain.  
We're proud, manly Greeks / These proud, manly Greeks  
We're (are) prepared to fight for our domain.

**PARIS**

Helen rallies round me  
Plus all the gods.  
You can hunt and hound me,  
But I've got the odds.  
Why so hot and peppered?  
'Tis Venus that reigns.  
She picks the shepherd  
To a pack of featherbrains.

**HELEN**

I fear their furor.

**Linger not, but while you can, depart.  
'Tis you I adore.  
Though afar, you take with you my heart.  
Farewell! Farewell! You alone I adore.**

**PARIS**

**Go on, rage and roar!  
Your disdainful cries cause no alarm.  
In both love and war  
I can show a proud and manly arm.**

**OTHERS**

**A rogue we abhor!  
Your wrongs will not be soon forgot.  
Away! Leave our door  
Or we'll cast you out upon the spot.**

**AGAMEMNON**

*(taken up by others)*

**Better beat a beat a beat a quick retreat.  
I already feel a feel a feel a rising heat.**

**ACT THREE**

*Scene: a seaside resort.*

**NARRATOR**

One up for Menelaus. One down for Paris. But Venus does not accept defeat lightly. Like Calchas, the high priest, she has many cards up her sleeve.

After the pandemonium we have just witnessed, people are ready for a change of scene. So here we are at the seaside, a most attractive little resort town – or so it was till it got discovered. It's here that *everyone* has come to get away from each other.

We notice right away a drastic change that has come over the land. No more languid boredom, no more lackluster restraint. Instead, a spirit of reckless revelry, fun and frivolity. It would seem that Greece is on a mad pleasure binge. Youth is in revolt and Venus, back in form, is on a rampage.

**CHORUS**

**Come dance! Make love!  
Drink up! Have fun!  
Drink up! Enjoy!  
The fire within us has exploded'**

**Restraint is but a form outmoded.  
Come on, let's dance!  
Come on, make love!  
Carouse, let go!  
Celebrate! Regale!  
Where Venus reigns, let love prevail!**

**ORESTES**

**King Menelaus dared make Venus burn with anger  
By chasing off the prince.  
And ever since,  
Our women hunger with an appetite immense  
For the pleasure, the madness of love and romance.  
(For the joys of romance)**

**Venus enflames our wedded women,  
All avid to love anew  
Every day a sheltered creature  
Casts aside an old taboo.  
Hold your tongue, oh prude and preacher;  
Here is what we say to you:  
Try and stop us,  
Try and stop us, ancient prig.  
For your scripture, for your lecture,  
For the lot here take a fig.**

**King Agamemnon high and mighty  
Finds sanity gone askew.  
Dear Papa, though hearts are flighty,  
Must you take so stern a view?  
If you frown on Aphrodite  
Here is what we say to you:  
Try and stop us,  
Try and stop us, ancient prig.  
For your scripture, for your lecture,  
For the lot here take a fig.**

**NARRATOR**

In saying that Greece is going wild with pleasure, one should note one exception. Menelaus is obsessed by that enigmatic remark of Helen's . . .

HELEN: (*entering*) I have nothing more to say about it . . .

MENELAUS: (*at her heels*) That comment, “It was *not* a dream!” Just what did you mean? Correct me if I am misquoting. These, I believe, were your exact words. I want an explanation: *what* was not a dream?

HELEN: Just leave me alone! Go away and stop pestering me!

MENELAUS: One week ago today, I return from a most disagreeable month in the mountains, you address that remark to me under circumstances that to say the least ...

HELEN: Sir!

MENELAUS: ... circumstances that we need not go into. A remark that I find highly provocative ... provocative and baffling!

HELEN: God give me patience!

MENELAUS: In plain and simple Greek, I want to know what it was that was not a dream.

HELEN: King Menelaus!

MENELAUS: I’m waiting.

HELEN: I came to the seashore to try to forget ...

MENELAUS: To forget? Aha! To forget what? That’s exactly what I’m driving at.

HELEN: I came here to rest, to get away. I came because I wanted to walk along the shore, breathe fresh air and collect my thoughts. What I had not bargained on was you at my heels, haunting my every step, hanging on my neck, repeating the same tiresome question, day after day, ad nauseam. Have I not made it clear to you, King Menelaus, you annoy me, you anger me, you are driving me mad!

MENELAUS: (*calmly*) Yes, that’s clear enough. I understand. I understand perfectly well (*getting worked up again*) But what I don’t understand is what you meant a week ago ...

HELEN: A week ago! And you’re still harping on it! Oh! How much longer can I control myself?

MENELAUS: I am only asking for a simple explanation – which you refuse to give me. But I’m not asking again. I’m demanding!

HELEN: (*with a touch of glee*) Very well, then. You’ll get it!



**PATRIOTIC TRIO:**

**AGAMEMNON**

**Throughout the land disarray and disorder,  
Decay and ruin manifest.  
You live serene and safe in your own quarters  
And say to hell with all the rest.**

**CALCHAS**

**Each man's inclined to play the lover ...**

**AGAMEMNON**

**... with his wife no longer contented.**

**CALCHAS**

**And the women go mad,  
For romance has become their latest fad.**

**MENELAUS**

**Why look at me? Why should I take over  
When all around go demented?**

**CALCHAS**

**This terrible tide of events!  
I fear it does barely commence.**

**AGAMEMNON**

**The future line of lechers reaches far,  
For generations yet to come.  
The merry Greeks are but a sample ...**

**CALCHAS**

**... to set the world a bad example.  
Can you refuse to help us out  
While these depravities increase?**

**AGAMEMNON**

**Look around you if still in doubt;  
Examine well the state of Greece.**

**Fire and rebellion sweep the nation;  
Venus is out to get revenge.  
Look at the modern generation  
Out on a frantic pleasure binge.**

**For song and dance are all the rage,**

**And the things you see put on the stage!**

**It can't go on, it can't go on.  
Jack and Jill have got to tumble down.  
Wait and see, wait and see.  
We are headed for catastrophe!**

**Gone is respect for old traditions;  
Wisdom is swallowed up in noise.  
On every corner street musicians;  
Boys dress as girls and girls as boys.**

**But first of all they ought to ban  
The dreadful dance they call can-can.**

**It can't go on, it can't go on.  
Jack and Jill have got to tumble down.  
Wait and see, wait and see.  
We are headed for catastrophe!**

**CALCHAS**

**The end is up to you**

**AGAMEMNON**

**On you we all depend.**

**CALCHAS**

**Give up your wife to save the land.**

**BOTH**

**No less than that the gods demand.**

**AGAMEMNON**

**Undecided?**

**CALCHAS**

**Vacillating?**

**BOTH**

**Your answer we're awaiting,**

**MENELAUS**

**I ponder ...**

**CALCHAS**

**When national honor and duty call,**

**A hero stands ready to bear the cross,  
His only regret that he has, after all,  
But one wife to give for the cause.**

**MENELAUS**

**Though national honor and duty call,  
Am I now expected to bear the cross,  
My only regret that I have, after all,  
But one wife to give for the cause?**

**Inspired by patriotic ardor,  
I'm overwhelmed, my spirit melts.  
And I agree, the role of martyr  
Is just the thing for someone else.  
But why am I the chosen victim?**

**AGAMEMNON & CALCHAS**

**'Tis the gods, not ourselves, that picked him.**

**ALL THREE**

**When national honor and duty call, *etc.***

MENELAUS: But suppose I came up with another way of appeasing the Goddess Venus, a less drastic approach?

AGAMEMNON: You have a different plan?

MENELAUS: I do indeed. If you'll just be patient and listen to it ...

CALCHAS: I'm sure it's not as good as our plan.

MENELAUS: I *said* ...

AGAMEMNON: It's so simple, *our* way. A, you have a wife ,,,

CALCHAS: And duty requires that you give her up.

AGAMEMNON: So you give her up.

MENELAUS: As I was trying to say ...

CALCHAS: What's complicated about it?

AGAMEMNON: You don't suppose the Queen would object? As I see it, you would be making everyone happy.

MENELAUS: But you've not heard ...

CALCHAS: I fail to understand why you are being so difficult. Holding on to a wife that ...

MENELAUS: Brother Agamemnon! Would you please listen to me?

AGAMEMNON: Yes, but when the solution is already obvious ...

CALCHAS: A child could see it right away.

MENELAUS: Would you kindly shut up for a minute? I have something to say.

AGAMEMNON: Then why don't you say it?

CALCHAS: Speak up, we're listening.

MENELAUS: Then hear that I have already taken steps. How shall I put it? (*to Agamemnon*) Brother, watch. Calchas is about to do a standing high jump.

CALCHAS: And what reason have I to go jumping around?

MENELAUS: I wrote to the isle of Cythera ...

AGAMEMNON: Ah, ha! You old lecher!

MENELAUS: (*indignantly*) That was not my reason for writing. I had a higher purpose in mind. I wrote to Cythera ... watch carefully ... Calchas is going to leap like a billy goat ... requesting that they send to us at once the Grand Augur of Venus.

CALCHAS: (*leaping to his feet*) Another Grand Augur? On my territory! A busybody, infringing on my rights, stealing my thunder!

MENELAUS: (*with satisfaction*) Do I win?

AGAMEMNON: Calchas, after you have finished hopping around, you might settle down for a moment and recognize that there is merit in my brother's idea. It just might work.

CALCHAS: But to bring in outsiders? Amateurs!

AGAMEMNON: And when do you expect him, this Grand Augur of Venus?

MENELAUS: If the winds have not been misbehaving, his galley should be arriving any minute.

NARRATOR: And indeed, a sail appears. A galley glides in over the blue water – if I may say so, this is one of the loveliest effect that Pocket Opera has yet attempted. The Grand Augur of Venus steps out of the boat – an old man, but he does look vaguely familiar.

### CHORUS

From Cythera hail the galley  
As it glides swift in flight,  
Borne by a breeze on friendly seas  
From the Isle of Delight.

Here *en masse* together rally  
As the holy priest arrives –  
Dwellers all, each Tom and Sally,  
Come, disgruntled husbands, wives!

From Cythera hail the galley  
As it glides swift in flight  
From the Isle of Delight.

All Greece unites in lamentation.  
Saintly priest, we kneel in despair.  
Take pity on our fallen nation.  
Oh, heed our prayer!

### AGED PRIEST



Learn first of all, you folk for- lorn of na- ture,

My mode is not the minor but the major.  
'Tis not for me the somber look and doleful cry;  
Salute me with a shout to raise the rafters high.  
For life and love are in  
When Venus wears the crown!

Ah! Hip hooray, sing away,  
Ever glad, ever gay!

I hear that weighty schools of stern philosophy  
Make much of Adam's fall and frown on levity.  
These learned men I find entirely in the wrong.  
That man is wise that laughs and sings a joyful song.  
For life and love are in  
When Venus wears the crown!

**Ah! Hip hooray, sing away,  
Ever glad, ever gay!**

**NARRATOR**

Sure enough, aged though still sprightly, the Grand Augur of Venus has a proposal. The goddess, after all, is notoriously soft-hearted. Though touchy at times, undeniably temperamental, she is not intractable if approached the right way. The tiniest gesture should suffice, one that entails little or no inconvenience . . .

PARIS: The Queen is merely to take a short trip . . .

OTHERS: A trip? Is that all? Where to?

PARIS: Only a few leagues away, by boat . . . to the lovely island of Cythera, where the Queen will offer a sacrifice, a token . . .

AGAMEMNON: To Cythera!

PARIS: Escorted by myself. Together we shall sail away on the galley of Venus.

MENELAUS: Well, well! As simple as that! You see, when you approach me with a reasonable solution . . . a short trip to Cythera in a gorgeous galley . . . blue skies, gentle breezes, agreeable companionship . . . I see no problem at all.

ALL: Long live Menelaus!

AGAMEMNON: A pretty plan, but . . . I wonder if the Queen will consent.

MENELAUS: Will the Queen consent? *Will* she? Huh! You can count on me for that. By Zeus, we'll find out who's the boss around here. She'll go whether she wants to or not.

PARIS: I would like to meet this lovely Queen that I've heard so much about . . .

**CHORUS**

**She appears! None braver,  
She arrives here at last.  
So fair! More than ever,  
Although overcast.**

**HELEN**

**(What sound of honey so exquisite?  
Voice of beauty unsurpassed!)**

**MENELAUS**

**From Venus, hear this holy priest.**

To Cythera, he orders you to visit  
The island of the goddess  
Whom we have so displeased.

**OTHERS**

On your help we rely.

**HELEN**

Her anger is aimed at you. You  
can visit her, not I.

**PARIS**

Perhaps I can persuade ...

**ORESTES**

Implore and plead, explore each avenue.

**OTHERS**

If only you would try!

**PARIS**

(O gods, come to my aid!)  
(to *Helen*) I am that shepherd who adores you,  
Paris, ardent and naïve ...

**HELEN**

His voice!

**PARIS**

Can you refuse when he implores you  
On the boat with him to leave?

**HELEN**

No, no! Nor shall I yield to persuasion,

**MENELAUS**

But I'm the boss and I'll be obeyed!

**AGAMEMNON & CALCHUS**

Regard it as a short vacation.

**HELEN**

Again I hear the hand of fate!

**OTHERS**

Obey, noble Queen! Away, fairest Helen!

**Depart! Depart!**

**MENELAUS**

**Be off! You dare dilly dally,  
Damn this dithering!**

**ORESTES, *joined by others***

**So *bon voyage* on the galley,  
*Yage* on the galley ...**

**CALCHUS**

**There's something fishy here.**

**OTHERS**

**You haven't got all year.  
The sail's up, the whistle blows,  
So climb aboard before it goes.**

**HELEN & PARIS**

**You win! We sail for Cythera.  
Who are we to oppose?**

**OTHERS**

**Embark on the boat, embark bark bark.  
Get ready on your mark,**

**PARIS**

**We're off to sea. Too bad, Menelaus!  
I've got your Helen!  
She now belongs to gay Paree!**

**OTHERS**

**They are on their way to the foreign land,  
Even wives obey when kings command!**

**THE END**

