

ON POSEIDON'S PRIDE

A Play in One Act
for Young People

by

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SYNOPSIS

On Poseidon's Pride is about two parallel stories. In the immortal world of the Greek gods and goddesses, a conflict arises between Athena, goddess of wisdom and war, and Poseidon, god of the sea. As their conflict intensifies, the other deities strive to make peace, but also cannot resist taking sides. In the mortal world of contemporary humans, a boy and girl who became enemies at camp the summer before find themselves on the same ship cruising the Greek isles. The humans are oblivious to the immortals; the gods and goddesses are aware of, but fairly indifferent to the mortals. In alternating scenes that span a single day, the two stories build to their intersecting and simultaneous conclusions on a cliff overlooking the Aegean Sea, and peace again reigns in both the mortal and immortal worlds.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

On Poseidon's Pride was produced for two studio performances by the Junior Players of the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, GA, in 2007. The performances took place in the Black Box Theatre of the Woodruff Arts Center. The show was presented free of charge, and it was not reviewed.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

On Poseidon's Pride has 21 roles, which can (and were written to be) played by ten actors, six girls and four boys. With a cast of ten, each actor plays both a god and a mortal, with one character playing two immortal roles. Conversely, the roles could be distributed with one each to a cast of 21 actors, with no doubling. In this case, there would be 11 girls and 10 boys.

Immortals:

Zeus, King of the Gods
Poseidon, Sea-God, Zeus's brother
Hermes, Messenger of the gods
Cupid, child-god of Love
Hades, God of Death, Zeus's brother
Hera, Queen of the Gods, Zeus's sister/wife
Demeter, Earth goddess, Zeus's sister
Athena, wisdom/war, Zeus's daughter
Apollo, Sun God, Zeus's son
Artemis, Moon Goddess, Zeus's daughter
Aphrodite, Goddess of Love and Beauty

Mortals:

Jane Sparks, an archaeologist
Ian Sparks, her older son
Jack Sparks, her younger son

Rich Smith, a Las Vegas resort hotel owner
Angelina Martinez, his second wife
Monique Jenay Smith, his daughter
Ramona Anderson, Monique's friend
Grant Delay, another boy on the cruise
Ms. Loela Cole, Social Director
Alexis Thompson, Youth Activities Coordinator

Possible character doubling:

Zeus/Ian; Athena/Loela; Poseidon/Rich; Hera/Jane; Hades/Grant;
Demeter/Ramona; Apollo/Monique (girl playing male god); Artemis/Alexis;
Aphrodite/Angelina; and Hermes/Cupid/Jack.

SET AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

On Poseidon's Pride can, as it was in its original incarnation, be produced with a minimum of set or technical needs, using simple props, neutral stage pieces, and ordinary sound effects to establish the various settings. Conversely, the play could also be presented with more elaborate sets, costumes, lights and sound to evoke the two contracting worlds of Olympus and modern Greece, and the various locales within these worlds.

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PROLOGUE

(Poseidon's Sea Palace. Before dawn. Darkness. Single light up on a face. Wavelike movements in the background. Water sounds. Sound of a Dolphin.)

Poseidon: Poseidon! Earth Shaker, Wave Breaker
Poseidon! Life Taker, Grave Maker
Ruler of the Seas
Cooler than the Breeze

She has insulted me! She must pay. Her cities empty garbage into my realm. Her people endanger my beloved creatures. (Sound of a Dolphin.) They no longer travel my foam-covered highways. Instead, they fly through the air with the arrogance of Bellerophon astride the glorious Pegasus. They only sail my watery pathways in pursuit of idleness and gluttony, as vain as Narcissus. Athens should have been mine. But she won it with an olive branch, and she has let it become as dirty and noisy and wasteful as all the rest. Transformed from shining Acropolis to seething metropolis. When I confront her about this, she laughs at me. She insults me. She must pay!

SCENE 1 -- WELCOME ABOARD

(A dock at Piraeus. 8 am. Loela enters briskly, with Alexis trying to keep up.)

Loela *(to audience)*: Welcome aboard Poseidon's Pride, one of the finest cruise ships of the entire Greek fleet. We're so happy to have all of you joining us on this three-day cruise to some of the near islands. You will find that Poseidon's Pride is a floating five-star hotel. Oh, I see some families here -- hi, kids! -- so let me take this opportunity to introduce our Youth Activities Coordinator, Alexis Thompson. Alexis, why don't you say hello and tell us a little about yourself.

Alexis *(sluggishly)*: Hello. I go to college. My parents said I had to get a summer job. This is better than working at Wal-Mart.

Loela: Thank you, Alexis. Alexis will be escorting your children to a variety of activities on board ship, such as the magic show, the karaoke contest, and a visit to the control room. Fun, fun fun! Well, here come some more arrivals.

(The Sparks family arrives.)

Welcome aboard Poseidon's Pride. I'm Loela Cole, the Social Director for your cruise.

Jane Sparks: Thank you. Boys, say hello to Ms. Cole.

Loela: Please, call me Loela!

Ian and Jack (*trying to be polite*): Hello . . . Loela.

Loela: And you are?

Jane Sparks: My name is Jane. Dr. Jane Sparks.

Loela: Oh, you're the famous archaeologist! I understand you're on your way to some important research sites.

Jane: Yes.

Loela: And how do you two like coming along for your Mom's work?

Jack: It's cool.

Ian: Yeah. It's better than last summer, when I was stuck at Camp Wagamacheechee.

Alexis: That sounds like fun.

Ian: Hardly. There was this girl there named Monique. I called her Dog-face.

Jane: Ian!

Jack: But, Mom, he likes dogs! Dogs are cute!

Ian: She made me miserable.

Loela: Well everyone on Poseidon's Pride is nice. We'll all work hard to make your cruise very pleasant.

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[From Scene 5, as the kids are on a youth expedition on Santorini]

Monique: I loved the ride up here in the cable car.

Ramona: I know. I can't believe some people rode up that winding trail on donkeys.

Alexis: Speaking of which, here come those boys at last.

(Ian, Jack and Grant enter, limping and weary.)

Monique: Hey, Possum-breath, how was the donkey ride?

Ian: It was great! Especially since you weren't there!

Alexis: Actually, they're mules.

Monique *(indicating Ian)*: Well, he smells like a mule. Who did you give a ride to?

Ian: Shut up!

Loela *(smiling)*: Children! You are about to go on a wonderful hike. You will go through the winding streets of the town, past old churches and historic buildings, to a place where you can see the entire island. You will see that Santorini is shaped like a horseshoe, with another small island facing it over there. You may recognize the shape of a volcano's rim. This island used to be a large fully-exposed volcano, but over 3, 500 years ago it erupted, and most of the island sank under the sea. The eruption cause a gigantic tidal wave that scientists believe destroyed a large part of the Aegean civilization. Well, I'll leave you all to your adventure. *(She exits.)*

Alexis: Come on, kids. Let's go look for rocks. Everyone stay together.

Monique: I think I know here we can find some rocks -- in his head!

Ian: Yeah, I'd rather have a rock-solid brain than what you have -- Air-Head!

Alexis: Come - on!

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[From Scene 6, the Council of the Gods on Mt. Olympus]

Hermes: It's simple. Athena has insulted the Sea-God. Poseidon's Pride is wounded. He has given her an ultimatum. Apologize, or he will shake the earth.

Zeus: So what can we do?

Aphrodite: I think she should apologize to him.

Demeter: I think he should relax a little.

Artemis: It's not his fault. He has a right to feel slighted. He is a son of the great Cronus. As I recall, Athena was born from her father's head.

Zeus (*touching his head*): Yes, and I still have the scar to show it.

Hera: Don't bring that up!

Apollo: Yeah, what does it have to do with anything?

Demeter: He doesn't have the right to wreak havoc on the earth. After his quaking and flooding, it's always so hard to provide a quality harvest.

Hades: Look, I know how he feels. Nobody likes me. The God of Death -- oooohh!!!

Artemis: And he's right. Athena's city is horrible. The buildings and highways and cars! My wild animals have no space, and people can't see the moon through the smog.

Apollo: Stop thinking only of yourself!

Zeus (*feebly*): Excuse me - -

Hades: Leave your sister alone, Mr. Sunshine and Light!

Apollo: Don't blame me if you live in darkness!

Aphrodite: Can't we stop fighting?

Hera: Oh, look at who's the peacemaker now -- the one who started the Trojan War!

Aphrodite: I can't help it if I'm the most beautiful!

Hera: Skin deep, honey, skin deep!

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