*Xaire*!

You are about to play a short, fun, intense game set in Athens in 403. Big ideas are going to collide, surprises will happen, skill and luck will play a role, and you are going to have the chance to change history – *but should you*?

Everything you need to know is in this packet. You don’t need to do any outside research, all the relevant information is here. You don’t need to study the information here too diligently to have a good time, read it over once or twice and you’ll be all set.

Here’s what you should to:

1. **KEEP THE CONTENTS OF THIS PACKET A SECRET!!!!! DON’T TELL ANYONE YOUR CHARACTER INFORMATION BEFORE THE GAME BEGINS!** Everyone has a different character, everyone has secrets. You want to keep your information secret so nobody has an advantage over you.
2. Print a copy of this packet. You’ll need some parts of it for the game itself. There is an introduction, a big letter, your individual role sheet. Some characters may have a couple extra secret documents here as well.
3. Read the contents of this packet once or twice before the game starts.
4. When you enter the game-room, find other people with the same big letter as you and sit with them. They will be your team. 2 things:
   1. The roles are not equally distributed – if you see another group with more people than you, don’t worry about it. The game has been carefully calibrated, this is all part of the plan. Everyone can win the game regardless of what role they are in.
   2. If you have a K, M, P or L, you will not have a group, come find the game-master at the beginning of the game, or, if possible, right before the game begins. You’ll recognize the game-master because he’s a big, goofy looking guy with brown hair and blue eyes in a black suit. He will likely be shouting instructions.

***This is going to be so much fun!***

-GameMaster Chrol

**Introduction to Athens Besieged: Debating Surrender**

When you walked through the doors today, you probably thought you were entering a classroom. You were wrong. Instead you passed through the Dipylon Gate into Athens. You also moved 2500 years back in time. The year is 405 BCE; the month is December. The walls you can touch are the 18-foot-high stone walls of ancient Athens (shown below). Beyond those walls, stretching as far as the eye can see, are the tents and campfires of the Spartan army, joined by armies from Thebes, Corinth, and other city-states that have long sought to destroy Athens. For 27 years they have sought to climb over the walls of Athens. For 27 years they have waited to slaughter the men of Athens and enslave its women and children. For 27 years they have prayed to destroy Athens and annihilate its democracy.

Now, at long last, their dream—and your nightmare—may become a reality. Sometime soon, perhaps one month from now, perhaps more, Spartan soldiers and their allies will march into Athens and supervise its surrender.

And then the horrors will begin. If you are a man, you will likely be butchered by the Spartans, cut down like a pig in a pen. If you are a woman, you and your children will be seized as slaves.

How did it come to this?

The Great War began 27 years ago. Athens had become a mighty empire, collecting annual tribute from hundreds of city-states throughout the Aegean. Sparta, alarmed by Athenian power and its aggressive democracy, invaded Attica and marched on Athens. Believing the Spartan army to be invincible, Athenian generals ordered its soldiers to retreat behind the protective walls of Athens. Most citizen-farmers, too, streamed through the gates to safety, bringing their families, slaves, cattle and as many household goods as they could carry. While the Spartans ravaged the countryside and probed your walls, the Athenian fleet, sailing from Piraeus, raided the coast of Sparta, burning and plundering Spartan towns and cities.

Nearly every year brought another Spartan invasion of Attica—as well as Athenian raids on the Spartan coast. The walls around you form a protective corridor, encircling Athens and extending all the way to the port city of Piraeus (see map, next page). You are now within these walls (the white area on the map). Throughout the war, ships carrying grain from the Black Sea, Egypt and elsewhere have docked at Piraeus. That all changed a few months ago, when the Spartans caught the Athenian fleet by surprise and destroyed it. The gods, who so long favored Athens, have dealt her a cruel blow.

Spartan ships ring harbor of Piraeus. No grain ships can get through. And just beyond the great walls, the Spartans lie in wait, sharpening their swords and spears. Lysander, their victorious general, is brilliant and brutal. He demands that Athens surrender immediately: If Athens tears down the North Long Wall, he says he will not slaughter Athenian men or sell the women and children into slavery.

But if you tear down the Long Walls, the Spartans and their bloodthirsty allies will be able to march into Athens and commence the slaughter. When Lysander defeated the Athenian fleet a few months ago, he similarly promised to spare those who surrendered. Instead he lined up the 4000 Athenian sailors along the beach and hacked them to pieces. Rumor has it that he even ordered his soldiers to stab victims in the soft parts of the abdomen, lest his men’s blades become dull from striking the ribs or necks of victims.

Now the public granaries are empty. Most Athenians have set their slaves free, letting them slip over the walls at night. Some Athenian citizens have tried to escape, too, pretending to be slaves. But their lilting Attic accent and soft hands give them away. Each morning you see their bodies, hacked beyond recognition, just beyond the walls.

Now you must make difficult decisions. Though there are no good options, there is some hope.

A few weeks ago Theramenes (theh-RAH-meh-neez), one of Athens's most respected leaders, told the Athenian Assembly that he had some "secret" knowledge that could save the city. The Assembly authorized him to negotiate with Sparta and he left on this mission. Nothing more has been heard from him. Many expect him to walk through the gates at any minute, carrying a treaty that will deliver Athens from calamity.

But what if he fails to return? Or returns without a treaty? What if the treaty authorizes the elimination of the Athenian democracy? What if Sparta and its allies, after signing a treaty, go back on their word and kill all Athenian men? What should Athens do?

You must find a solution, and persuade the Assembly to adopt it. You must speak, because some 500 Athenian citizens hang on your every word and vote exactly as YOU do.

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**Female Indeterminate Citizen 2 (Chrysilla—[kri-SIL-la]): Wife of Diceratus (DICE-eh-RAH-tus)**

You are a sixteen-year-old adult Athenian citizen. You are also a woman, the wife of **Diceratus**, a prominent speaker in the Assembly. As a woman, you do not have the right to participate in the Athenian Assembly, where 6,000 adult male citizens pass laws and make all policy decisions. Yet you and your children are influenced by its decisions. That was true when the Assembly voted to go to war three decades ago; and it is true now, as the Assembly votes to determine whether to surrender to the Spartan troops beyond the walls. You surely have strong opinions on these matters. You want your views to count. And, unlike many other Athenians, you belong to no faction. You can speak and vote on matters as makes the most sense to you. As long as you achieve your objectives for

**Winning the game**

1) Remain alive by the end of April;

2) Preserve the lives (and freedom) of your children.

If Athens surrenders now, Spartan soldiers will likely execute your husband and enslave you and your children; if Athens refuses to surrender now, the chances of a horrendous outcome may increase. On the other hand, Athens is running out of food. The longer you wait to surrender, the greater the chances you and your family will die of disease or starvation. You must decide what to do, and then persuade your husband—and the Assembly—to listen to you.

**Problem 1: STARVATION**

Note: The game will begin in 10 minutes (early December, 405 BCE). At the end of December (another 10 minutes), and at the end of every successive month, you will must participate in the starvation lottery. Perhaps the GM will have you draw marbles from an urn, or perhaps use some other random procedure.

If you perish, the Gamemaster will give you an envelope with a ticket to take you to Hades. You must take the envelope, read the contents, and leave the room. What happens next, no mortal knows.

**Problem 2: THE ENEMY BEYOND THE WALLS**

The Spartans and their allies wait beyond the Long Walls, sharpening their spears and swords. Perhaps some way can be found to prevent surrender. Perhaps Theramenes, whom the Athenian Assembly sent to negotiate with Sparta, will soon return with good news. Perhaps the Spartan coalition will collapse, its armies will run out of money and they will return home. Perhaps Alcibiades, the famous Athenian hero, will raise an army and break through the Spartan lines. Perhaps the goddess Athena will intervene as she once saved Athens from the Persians. But with each passing month, more Athenians will die; and the anger of the Spartans will doubtless intensify.

You must help find the best way forward.

**DOMESTIC COMPLICATION**

You surely have strong views. The main issue now is the extent to which your husband values your political judgment. Approach him immediately to determine the nature of your relationship. (His role sheet includes sentences that mirror these. Perhaps call out his name—“Diceratus! Diceratus!”—sweetly, submissively.

In your presence, Diceratus will then flip a coin:

**If HEADS:** your husband is so enamored of you and your opinions that he will speak and vote exactly as you think best; he must therefore stand near the Pnyx entrance and confer with you on all matters. [If he fails to do so, you may pray to the goddess Athena (a.k.a. the Gamemaster) and Athena will likely punish him severely for transgressing this rule.]

**If TAILS:** your husband has no regard for your political opinions and is not bound to follow your advice or even listen to what you have to say. He can ignore you completely. Perhaps you can still persuade him to confer with you, but he is under no obligation to do so. He may cite the words of Pericles at the start of the war, who declared that the “greatest excellence” of women was their invisibility. “Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character,” he told the widows of the war dead, “and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men, whether for good or for bad.”

**If your Husband Dies: Special Options and Problems:**

If your husband dies, your role in the game is limited. Immediately approach another male citizen and ask if he will accept you as his wife. If he says yes, you can marry him. Then you can inform him of the coin flip rule. (How was he to know in advance how deeply he could fall for you?) If the coin flip is heads, his old role sheet is effectively terminated and he must do what you propose. If he objects to this, you can show this paragraph to the Gamemaster and she will enforce it.

Whatever your relationship with your husband, you may wish to crowd close to the Assembly, and shout encouragement or offer suggestions to the Athenian men inside.

There is another option for you to survive:

**The Dramatic Gambit**

You can **EARN FOOD** by staging a scene from a play with other women of Athens or with any other willing Athenian. If you play it well, you (and others) can EARN FOOD which will exempt you from the next Starvation Lottery. You can perform your scene just outside the Assembly, or perhaps you can even slip inside. Everyone loves a good drama—especially in difficult times.

Your scene is from *The Trojan Women,* (415 BCE) by the Athenian playwright **Euripides** (yoo-RIHP-ih-DEEZ). It is set in ancient Troy, after the city has surrendered to Greek invaders. The Greeks have executed the men and rounded up the women of the palace. A Greek herald has just informed them that their husbands and adult sons have been executed. Hecuba, the Trojan queen, is to become a slave and Andromache (AHN-dro-mack), her daughter-in-law, will become the slave-wife of the son of Achilles: Achilles himself has been killed by Andromache’s husband, now dead. One actor will play Hecuba; a second actor, Andromache. Additional actors can write in their own lines. **If you deliver the lines with true feeling, and if no one in the room laughs, you may be exempted from a SECOND Starvation Lottery as well. Fine acting does have its compensations.**

You may wish to begin with an announcement: “The Gamemaster has given us a three-minute respite from our hungers. And during this time please reflect on this scene from the play *The Trojan Women* by our Euripides [yoo-RIHP-ah-deez], which was first performed right here ten years ago.

**Hecuba (Queen of Troy)**: [To audience]

Women of Troy! Hear me! Our husbands are dead

And so, too, our fathers. The enemy is within our gates.

And soon the Greeks shall be upon us, and we, their slaves.

**Andromache (daughter-in-law of Hecuba)**:

Abandoned and alone, I weep

**Hecuba**:

as we await miserable last hour

**Andromache:** of the house of Troy,

Oh, my husband. Come and defend me now!

**Hecuba:**

Ah, poor wife. Your husband—my son--lies in a tomb.

**Andromache:**

Unhappy mother. Bitter are these woes:

Our city ruined;

our men--gory corpses carried off by vultures.

Our people—soon to be yoked as slaves.

And we women of Troy:

Mother, what is to become of us?

**Hecuba**:

I, queen of Troy, a slave!

What Greek will take me?

Will it be a grizzled old warrior?

Shall I clean his house? Nurse his children?

I see the work of gods

who dash down to nothing those who were once great.

No sorrow can surpass my own!

**Andromache:**

We are the hated of god.

Death is better than the life I am to live.

A life I cannot live. A life I will not live.

**Hecuba**:

Suicide? Child, no! You must live!

Any type of life is better than death, since death is nothing.

In life, hope still lives.

**Andromache**:

No, Mother: hear me: Death is better than a life of pain.

Soon I shall be the slave-wife of a Greek warrior.

If I give him all my heart, I betray my dead husband.

But if I cling faithfully to the memory of my beloved Hector,

My new master will hate me.

No, Hecuba. My fate is worth than death.

Death, indeed, is my only hope.

**Hecuba:**

Beloved child, your husband is dead. Forget him.

Obey your new master. Make him love you. You CAN have a future.

**Andromache**:

And I, a proud Trojan woman:

I shall never be a Greek soldier’s whore. I shall be saved by death.

[End of scene]