*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 3 (Kassandra) [ka-SAH-dra]: Wife of Strombichides24 [strom-bih-KYE-deez], pro-democracy general**

24 Strombichides was a real historical person: See Debra Nails, *The People of Plato.*

You are an adult Athenian citizen. You are also a woman, the wife of Strombichides, a general in the Athenian army and a zealous defender of the democracy. 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 Sparta. You surely have strong opinions. And yet you also believe that in all public matters, wives must defer to their husbands.

That is, you may disagree with your husband on politics and statecraft; but you must uphold his views in all public contexts. The words of Pericles, the founding father of the Athenian democracy, have long been drummed into your head. In his famous Funeral Oration at the outset of the war, over two decades ago, he counselled the widows of the fallen men to not bemoan their fate but to accept their lot with strength and courage. This, he explained was intrinsic to “female excellence”: “Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character; and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men, whether for good or for bad.”

If you see women who strive for fame and power, remind them of the wise words of Pericles.

**Winning the game**

You must:

1) Remain alive by the end of April;

2) Preserve the lives (and freedom) of your husband and children;

3) Endorse and speak in support of your husband’s views. You may not agree with them, but you must voice his opinions. And if, as seems likely, he requires that you support the democracy (even at the cost of your life and that of your children), you must do so, too. If, at the end of the game, you have failed to support his views, or if his views have not prevailed, then you have failed in your duty as a good Athenian wife.

**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.

**YOUR INDETERMINACY**

Perhaps you agree with your husband’s decision to uphold the democracy at all costs—even if it means your death and that of your children. Or perhaps you disagree with him. In that event, you can try to persuade him to change his views: this is unlikely. Chances are that you will be obliged to persuade Athenians to preserve the democracy at all costs. You must especially work on other Athenian women, especially those who favor surrender. Persuade them to resist surrender in order to save the democracy. Persuade the Athenian women—and the men as well—to remain strong and resolute. Remind them of the words of Pericles so long ago.

“There is one principle, Athenians, which I hold to through everything, and that is the principle of no concession to the Spartans.” He noted that if Athens surrendered, it would be accepting slavery.

And that ultimately is the issue: Should the men and women of Athens ever agree to become the slaves of Sparta?

The answer must be no.

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

If your husband dies, you are no longer obliged to defend the democracy. You are free to voice your own opinions. On the other hand, your role in the game is limited, and you and your children will be vulnerable. If your husband dies, immediately approach another male citizen—preferably one whose opinions you value--and ask if he will take you as his wife. If he says yes, you can immediately marry him. But you must then speak and act as your new husband instructs, unless he grants you the freedom to speak as you wish.