*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.

V

**Male Indeterminate Citizen 1 (Gryllus—pronounced GRILL-us): (Wife=Korinna)**

You are an adult male citizen of Athens. Like nearly all men, you have served in the Great War. You are also an active participant in the Athenian Assembly. Unlike many other Athenians, whose opinions and objectives are fixed, 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:

**Winning the game**

You must:

1) Remain alive by the end of April;

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

You are free to add a third requirement, which will make it harder to win—but more glorious in doing so: namely, to preserve Athenian democracy—including the Assembly in which you will soon speak.

If Athens surrenders now, the chances are that Spartan soldiers will likely execute you and enslave your wife and children; but if Athens refuses to surrender now, Lysander, the Spartan general, may become even angrier. 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 family will die of disease or starvation. You must decide what to do.

**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 or its armies will run out of money and 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 participate in the Assembly sessions—by asking questions and, ultimately, by voting—to help find the best way forward.

**Domestic Complications**

You are married to **Korinna.** Women do not have the right to participate in the Athenian Assembly, where 6,000 male citizens pass all laws and make all policy decisions. Yet women and children are influenced by its decisions. That was true in the decision to go to war with Sparta three decades ago; and it is true now, as the Assembly votes to determine the next step. Chances are that Korinna has strong opinions on these matters.

The main issue now is the extent to which you value her judgment on political matters. To find out, you should approach her immediately to determine the nature of your relationship. (You will find her among the women, standing outside the Pnyx: Her role sheet has sentences that mirror these.)

You will then flip a coin:

**If HEADS:** you are so enamored of your wife and her opinions that you must speak and vote in the way she thinks best; you must stand near the Pnyx exit and confer with her on all matters. [If you fail to do so, she may pray to Athena (that is, the Gamemaster), and the GM will likely punish you severely for transgressing this rule.]

**If TAILS:** you have no regard for your wife’s political opinions and need not follow her advice or even listen to what she has to say. You can do and say whatever makes sense to you. If she complains, you may wish to remind her of Pericles’s famous words (Funeral Oration) at the outset of the war. He told the widows of the men who had been died to ponder “the subject of female excellence.” “Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character,” he advised them, “and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men, whether for good or for bad.” Athenian women should remain within the shadowed precincts of domestic life: they should not stride into public spaces, give speeches, or otherwise draw attention to themselves.

**Special Note on Your Role:**

Many of those who speak and vote in the Assembly are obliged to advocate a particular cause. You [though perhaps in consultation with your wife] have free will. Your main job is to ask questions—of everyone!—and find the best way forward.

**THE STARVATION LOTTERY LOOMS, AS DO THE SPARTANS!**