The UWA Pantomime Society presents

Scene 1 – The Perils of Monetisation

Lights up. ZEUS enters the theatre through the stage curtain. He is toga-clad and carrying a BOX OF POPCORN. The following bits of dialogue can be improvised in line with audience responses, but basically: he introduces himself, expresses excitement for the trailer they are about to watch, makes some jokes about being a God.

ZEUS: Hello there, hi. I’m Zeus, Ruler of Gods and Men. And you are? No, nevermind. As soon as you learn a human’s name, they die, am I right? Boy, am I excited for this film, Sundown. You don’t know about it? You don’t know about it. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? Listen, would you be more comfortable if I transformed into a goat or something like that? A bull?

ZEUS sits on the stage near the side (so kind of in the audience but visible to everybody and able to watch the scene). The curtain rustles.

ZEUS: Quiet, quiet, it’s starting!

Two DIRECTORS, DRURE and BRYRON, come out from the curtain. The DIRECTORS speak in the creepy personable manner of people in ads.

BRYRON: Hello there, we’re sort of the directors of this show.

ZEUS: UGH ADS.

DRURE: Just think of us as more photogenic, recognisably more beautiful versions of the real directors.
BRYRON [laughing beautifully]: It’s true. Now, before you can watch this trailer, we’d just like to ask you to turn off your phones.

DRURE: And also, to let you know that you can interact with the actors in this performance.

BRYRON: Like so. [Moving to stand behind DRURE] Excuse me [tapping his shoulder], I’m behind you! [He winks at the audience.]

DRURE: Oh, yes you are.

BRYRON: Oh, no I am not. [He still is.]

At this point STAGEHAND appears downstage left with a SKIP AD ► | sign. The “oh yes you are” “oh no I’m not” dialogue continues indefinitely. If the audience doesn’t skip the ad on their own (by touching the SIGN) then ZEUS should make them (or do it himself). The DIRECTORS and the STAGEHAND leave.

Music plays as the curtain rises, signalling the start of the trailer, then segues into an AMERICAN MOVIE VOICEOVER.

VOICEOVER: From the studio that brought you Charlotte’s Web of Lies…

Spotlight appears on stage. CHARLOTTE is standing over a CHAUVINIST PIG, who is looking up from the ground, frightened. They can be animals or humans, whatever is funnier.

CHARLOTTE: You’re a chauvinist pig, Wilbur, and now I’ve trapped you in my web... [She points a GUN at him.]

CHAUVINIST PIG: C’mon baby, let’s talk about thi—

GUNSHOT SFX; he is dead. Spotlight disappears.

VOICEOVER: And the producers of Hannibal Montana...

Another spotlight appears, in which MILEY, a tween popstar wearing a wig, is standing with her dad BILLY RAY, who is holding a HANNIBAL MASK.

MILEY: What d’ya mean I’m not just an ordinary popstar with like five #1 hits worldwide?

BILLY RAY: The Montanas have a long history of secretly eating people, Miley. This was your grandfather’s.

BILLY RAY gives MILEY the MASK, which she puts on. Spotlight fades.

VOICEOVER: Adapted from the best-selling young adult teen western romance saga comes a new movie about love...

STELLA and WILLIAM LeKIDD appear in a spotlight on stage.

STELLA: I know what you are. Say it.

VOICEOVER: And cowboys.

WILLIAM [in Southern twang]: I’m an outlaw.

Spotlight goes down, another appears containing the next group.

VOICEOVER: Starring Tony winner, sorry, Tony Weiner’s step-son Tanning Chatum…
WILLIAM: How many “r”s are in “carnivore”?

VOICEOVER: Attractive female actor Venti Grande...

STELLA: I don’t know, like six?

VOICEOVER: And veteran dreamboat Jack Nicholson...

JACK NICHOLSON: Hey Stella, wanna come to my beach house? [He winks like “I’m a STUD”].

VOICEOVER: Next summer, don’t forget your heart...

CASH JACKSON and STELLA on stage.

CASH: You shouldn’t hang around with him, Stella. Come with me tonight instead. I’ll meet you at sundown.

VOICEOVER: As you live life on the wrong side of the tracks...

WILLIAM and CASH appear in a final spotlight. They each hold GUNS as in a duel.

CASH: Let’s settle this once and for all, Billy.

STELLA: No!

WILLIAM: The old railway crossing. Twenty paces. Sundown.

WILLIAM twirls his GUN. All lights up and the ACTORS freeze.

ZEUS: Wait, is that it? I need to see the rest! Curse you Mark Zuckerburger, I know you can hear me! [He brings out a LIGHTNING BOLT.]

HERA [calling out from backstage, pretending to sound nice]: Zeus, honey, I know you’re trying to watch that trailer again!

ZEUS: Uh oh. [He puts down the LIGHTING BOLT. To AUDIENCE, with an eyeroll] My wife, Hera. [Calling out, hopefully] No I’m no~oot!

HERA [appearing onstage, looking annoyed at ZEUS and disgusted at her surroundings]: Then what is all this? [Inspecting WILLIAM’s costume] Pleather. Tacky.

ZEUS stands up and climbs onto the stage.

ZEUS: Get out of there! This is the first trailer they’ve released and I still haven’t seen it yet because everywhere I go you come in and RUIN IT FOR ME! [Looking around] Where did I put that lightning?

HERA: Frankly, this is embarrassing. I’m embarrassed for you. [Indicating the audience] We’re all embarrassed for you.

ZEUS: Look at you, far too superior to ever be moved by a story of “true love”! If you weren’t such a devoted wife I’d have left you years ago.

HERA: If I wasn’t the goddess of marriage I’m sure I’d have left you first. Besides, it’s only the extent of your passion that I object to: the endless videos, magazines, the gossip! As if these characters are your real friends! [Disdainfully gesturing to the frozen actors] These… imaginary people who exist only in human mythology.
ZEUS: But Hera, that’s just it! The actors are in love outside the movie too! Tanning Chatum and Venti Grande are DOING IT.

HERA: It’s a publicity stunt! A ploy to get suckers like you to see the film.

ZEUS: Listen here. [He pulls out a MAGAZINE and reads from it.] “Tanning Chatum and Venti Grande have been spotted canoodling on the set of the Sundown adaptation.”

HERA [reading over his shoulder]: But right next to that it says: “Friends say that Chatum’s demanding schedule as one of Hollywood’s most popular thigh models rules out any potential relationship.”

ZEUS: Whatever, that’s just a ploy to get suckers like you to respect their privacy.

HERA: If you’re right – which you’re not... [revealing why they are really arguing] I’ll watch the whole ridiculous film when it’s done.

ZEUS [perking up]: Oh, a wager? And what if you win?

HERA: When I win you have to smite the entire cast of the film.

ZEUS: I have to WHAT?! Ohh “smite”, yes, okay that sounds fair. [He extends his hand for her to shake.]

HERA [shaking ZEUS’s hand]: It’s a deal.

They both grin in an “I’m totally going to win” way and a lightning bolt SFX plays. They are GODS.

Lights down. Scene change music is “Cakey Flaky Heart” from Hannibal Montana.

(“Miley?” “Yeah Dad?” “If you are eating somebody you better leave the heart for me! It’s my favourite bit!”)

You can take a guy and stab him in the eye
Eviscerate him anyway you please
And you can eat his nose (but not his underclothes)
And you can eat his feet and arms and knees
And you can eat his face with elegance and grace
And you can even eat his fingertips
And if you wanna try, just grab a slice of thigh
And taste his sweet sweet blood upon your lips

CHORUS:
But don’t eat the heart, the cakey flaky heart
That’s a thing a man just can’t forgive
And if you eat my heart, that cakey flaky heart
I hope you’ve got another place to live

(“But Dad!” “Not under my roof, Miley!”)

If necessary it continues with explaining how to cook (“don’t broil my heart,” etc.). Skip the second verse if this goes too long.
Scene 2 – Terms of Interferement

The setting is Mt Olympus, with various things to indicate it (clouds, maybe an Olympic flag).

APHRODITE, APOLLO, ARES, ARTEMIS, ATHENA, DIONYSUS, HEPHAESTUS and HERMES are assembled on stage. ATLAS is there too, holding up the EARTH, which obscures his vision (either by forcing his neck down or just being in his line of sight). They are all wearing things to make their jurisdictions clear (e.g., ARES is wearing a CAMOUFLAGE TOGA). ATHENA should have an OWL and APOLLO should have a LYRE, but they can ditch these when they go to Earth later.

HERA enters, speaking as she walks.

HERA: I have called together this assembly of gods because we share one common interest –

ARES: Ah, chasing nymphs!

HERMES: Using a magnifying glass to burn tiny human insects?

ATHENA: What if we only came out of a professional interest in meetings?

HERA: I’m talking about our mutual desire to humiliate my husband Zeus.

EVERYONE reacts noncommittally. They’re not specifically interested in that. A bit of shrugging (not from ATLAS) and comments like “I could take it or leave it”.

HERA: This is a mission for [to HADES’s back] ONLY THE BEST of you, anyway. We have at stake our complete credibility as supreme beings, the lives of a mortal film crew AND my entire Saturday afternoon, which I don’t want to spend watching a boring cowboy movie.

DIONYSUS [to HERMES]: See, I told you her motivations would be selfish.

HERMES: Fine, you win. [He gives DIONYSUS $10.]

HERA: Has anyone heard of this new movie Sundown?

APHRODITE: No, but if it’s anything like Hannibal Montana I’ll be seeing it!

APOLLO: Ugh, losers, Sundown is the upcoming teen cowboy romance based on the bestselling book trilogy, god!... s.
ARTEMIS [like she has memorised the plot synopsis]: Stella is just an ordinary teenage girl who moves to the new old wild west, only to find that her mysterious new friend, William LeKidd, isn’t all that he seems...

APOLLO [continuing this]: Meanwhile, the son of a railway tycoon, Cash Jacks–

HERA [interrupting]: Okay, okay, enough. The point of the bet is to avoid seeing the film, not to have a private reenactment thank you.

ATLAS [who cannot see past the EARTH]: That film sounds amazing... Are you guys watching it right now?

HERA [disgusted]: Can we do something about him or...?

All the GODS kind of shake their heads and hold up their hands like “not me”.

ATLAS: Guys?

HERA: Anyway, the point is that Zeus won’t stop wetting his pants over the idea that the lead actors are in a relationship.

APOLLO [confused]: Venti Grande and Tanning Chatum?

ARTEMIS [covering up her love 4 him]: Hmm, I can’t picture it. He deserves much, much... godlier.

HERA: The “relationship” is clearly nonsense but Zeus keeps reading about it in the tabloids.

ATHENA [explaining to a neighbour]: They’re a kind of magazine for human garbage.

HERA: So, we need to go to Hollywood to prevent and/or destroy this relationship.

ATHENA: So you’re going to cheat. [Thoughtfully] Interesting strategy.

HERA: Did I say ‘we’? I meant you. You’re going to cheat... for me. Aphrodite! Goddess of love, relationship expert – how do we make these celebrities consciously uncouple?

APHRODITE: Hera, darling, my advocacy work with young people keeps me very busy these days. The swiping left, the swiping right... May I suggest my son Eros for the task?

HERA: Hermes, fetch Eros.

HERMES leaves.

HEPHAESTUS: It will be good for him to go down to Earth to point his little arrow at people and make them fall in and out of love at whim. A nice break from playing The Sims.

HERMES returns with EROS. EROS is wearing a DIAPER and WINGS.

EROS: Hey Mum. Hey Dad.

HEPHAESTUS: { Hey.

ARES:   { Hey.

APHRODITE gives ARES a Look. The “joke” is that ARES (APHRODITE’s lover) is EROS’s dad but EROS thinks HEPHAESTUS (APHRODITE’s husband) is his dad.
EROS: Hey Uncle Ares! [Seeing ARTEMIS and blushing] Hi... Artemis... [ARTEMIS is like “omg did that lame-o nerd just speak to me?” Do people still say “lame-o”?]

APHRODITE: Eros, honey, how do you feel about going to Earth to prevent some actors from falling in love with each other?

EROS: I have like 10 woohoos lined up on my game!

ARES: Eros, do as your mother says.

APHRODITE: Listen to your father...’s friend Ares. [Saved it.]

ATHENA: How can you send this child? He can’t even identify his own paternity.

EROS: Hey, I’m not a child! I’m almost twelve... thousand years old. And I have the archery skills to match.

ARTEMIS [mockingly]: Ha!

EROS [thinking she is laughing with (rather than at) him and trying to keep it cool]: Ha, yes, hahaha. [Feverish aside] She thinks I’m funny!

ARTEMIS: You could hit a deer point blank in the eye and all it would do is fall in love with you.

EROS [to APOLLO]: I do NOT love a deer. [To ARTEMIS] Artemis, the truth is, I love you! Um, 2. U2. [Sadly] It was great when we got their album for free, hey?

ARTEMIS: You have the grossest opinions.

HERA: Yes, yes, Eros loves a deer. Now, Deer-Lover, as our resident “love” expert, I want you to disrupt any relationship between Venti Grande and Tanning Chatum.

ARTEMIS: You can’t trust him with a mission this serious! Tanning Chatum’s heart is at stake!

HERA: Okay, Artemis will go with Eros.

EROS: { YESSSS.

ARTEMIS: { What?!

ARTEMIS: I’m not going with him! [Gesturing to his DIAPER] At any moment he could be pooping!

EROS: No Hera is right, we should definitely go together. I arranged matching arrows for us and everything! Daa~aaad! [APHRODITE stops ARES from accidentally responding. EROS goes straight to HEPHAESTUS and notices nothing.]

ARTEMIS: You arranged WHAT?

EROS [to HEPHAESTUS]: Did you bring the arrows?

HEPHAESTUS hands over a QUIVER OF ARROWS. The QUIVER and ARROWS are identical to EROS's.

HEPHAESTUS: Here they are, a set of regular hunting arrows made to look exactly like your love ones, my little loved one.

EROS takes off his own QUIVER to compare with the new one.
EROS: Totally identical! [He moves the ARROWS back and forth a few times, trying to show off, doing the ole switcheroo etc.] See I bet you can’t even tell the difference.

ARTEMIS: Hera, this is why I refuse to go with him. He put love hearts on hunting arrows!

HERA: Fine, I don’t care anymore. Just take Apollo.

APOLLO: Woohoo, dream team!

EROS [distressed]: What?! No… but… love expert… perfect team… special arrows? [He starts to cry and it’s really disgusting.]

ARTEMIS: Ugh, don’t cry about it. I’ll take your stupid arrows.

EROS is somewhat appeased. He goes to give ARTEMIS the ARROWS but, staring at both QUIVERS, realises he doesn’t know which is which.

EROS: Uhhhh…

EVERYONE says things like “what’s taking you so long” and “just give her the arrows already”. The AUDIENCE can direct him to one or the other (it doesn’t matter which, they are wrong regardless and he can blame them later). EROS picks one of the QUIVERS and gives it to ARTEMIS, who snatches it.

HERA: Good, come with me.

APOLLO: Smell you later, Deer-Lover.

HERA exits stage left with ARTEMIS and APOLLO. EROS is upset again. ARES opens his arms out for a hug but EROS doesn’t notice and goes to HEPHAESTUS, who comforts him and maybe ARES just belatedly pats his head or something. ZEUS enters stage right, doing something casual like whistling or throwing M&Ms into his mouth.

ZEUS: Ah, you’re all here! Excellent. I have a job for someone.

ATHENA [speaking from out of ZEUS’s line of sight]: Let me guess, you bet Hera that two movie stars are in love and you want someone to make sure that this is the case.

ZEUS: That’s amazing! How did you kno– [Turning around] Oh, Athena, it’s you. Yes, I need you to plot them right into a perfect romance.

EROS: Perhaps you would like the aid of a love expert…?

ZEUS: Get out of here, Deer-Lover. This is a matter of war, not love! And it’s a war I intend to win.

EROS sadly goes to leave.

ATHENA: Eros, wait! [EROS is hopeful.] Leave the arrows.

ZEUS: Oh yes, Eros’s love arrows.

EROS [nervously]: Uh, these? Yes, love arrows… yes. I think.

EVERYONE: Ugh just hand them over already!
ATHENA: Well, I’ll be off then. It shouldn’t take too long – I’ll infiltrate some kind of trivial mortal gathering and be done by tomorrow.

DIONYSUS: Did somebody say “trivial mortal gathering”? I am THERE.

ZEUS: Yes, good, take Dionysus with you! If anyone can mingle in the Hollywood circles it’s either me disguised as a goat, or him.

ATHENA: That won’t be necessary. These meatheads adore me, I assure you.

ZEUS: You know what, just take him and see how it goes.

ATHENA: Fine. Carry these. [She hands the ARROWS to DIONYSUS.] If everything goes according to plan, this will be as easy as stealing candy and a baby.

EVERYONE leaves with only ATLAS remaining.

ATLAS: This is so exciting! Right guys? ... Hello? Zeus? ... Hera?

Lights down.


Scene 3 – He’ll Never Be (An Old Man Vidya)

Open on a spotlight of the wild-west setting of Sundown, centre-stage. The set consists of some CACTUSES, a HITCHING RAIL, a SALOON DOOR (that says “HICK FORD’S SALOON” on it) and a helpful sign somewhere that says “Welcome to Spoons: Home of the Spoons Spoons!” Film crew are on the side of the set. OSCAR BATE is sitting in his DIRECTOR’S FOLDING CHAIR, holding a MEGAPHONE and wearing a HAT that says “DIRECTOR”. Surprisingly, he is the film’s director. The SHERIFF and STELLA enter the spotlight, looking around. The SHERIFF is a well-intentioned oaf while STELLA is a sulky, moody teenager (16+).

SHERIFF: And over here, Stella, is your new school. [He indicates the SALOON DOOR.]

STELLA: That’s clearly a bar, dad. It says “Hick Ford’s Saloon” on the door!

SHERIFF: Saloon at night, sure, but look. If we rearrange the letters... [He rearranges the LETTERS (probably cheating by flipping something over).] Now it’s “An School For Kid’s”! Ain’t that neat?

STELLA: I hate this town! It’s so small and weird – it’s like something out of the 19th century! I’m never going to make friends here!

SHERIFF [confronted by her burgeoning selfhood and glimmers of an independent sexuality, patting her awkwardly]: Hey now, don’t be like that. Just think of it as a “new beginning”!

STELLA: You don’t understand! Nobody understands.
SHERIFF: Now, I have to go down to the sheriff's station and rearrange things on my desk. You stay here in town and who knows, you might make a friend?

OSCAR BATE: CUT! Great work everyone. Really felt your angst, Venti. It was like a dart right here. [He taps his heart.]

VENTI GRANDE [making prayer hands]: Thanks Oscar.

OSCAR BATE [to the actor playing the SHERIFF]: Howard, I’m not quite sure I’m getting your character’s motivations. Just think – why is he going to rearrange stuff on his desk?

SHERIFF [speaking in a totally different accent to whatever one he uses in character]: I knew it wasn’t coming through. Idiot! [He slaps his head with his hand because he has ISSUES.]

STAGEHAND [after muttering into a WALKIE TALKIE]: Mr Bate, can we move on to the scene with William and Stella? The handlers are saying that the horse is ready.

CAMERA OPERATOR: Props, please ready the set for the obligatory almost-getting-hit-by-a-vehicle scene.

STAGEHAND(S) reorganise the scene to be a different part of the town, perhaps indicated by a different sign (“Gunn’s Guns & Gums” or something). TOWNSPEOPLE mill around in the background.

OSCAR: Where is Tanning?

TANNING CHATUM enters, wearing SUNGLASSES and a ROBE, underneath which is his COWBOY COSTUME for the part of William LeKidd.

TANNING CHATUM: I know I’m late but it’s not my fault. [A STAGE HAND takes the ROBE and he casually throws away the SUNGLASSES.] I spent all night at Sophia Vergara’s birthday...-themed Scientology induction. Venti, I didn’t see you there. You weren’t invited...?

VENTI GRANDE: I was definitely there. Was that you I saw serving the Tom Cruise cupcakes?

TANNING CHATUM: How dare you! Oscar, I simply cannot work with this woman!

STAGEHAND [calling out in a “places, please” way]: Animosity on set! Animosity on set!

OSCAR: Cool it! You are both like my own children to me, except that I don’t have a favourite.

VENTI GRANDE [outraged]: What do you mean you don’t have a favourite?! I played a NAZI for you!

This devolves into an argument, with TANNING also upset that he wouldn’t be picked, OSCAR trying to calm them and so on. Meanwhile, ARTEMIS and APOLLO sneak onto the stage! Everyone is busy arguing and doesn’t see them. They try out a few vantage points and eventually find one behind the CACTUSES on set.

APOLLO [looking around]: This is so cool!
ARTEMIS: Ugh Venti Grande! How do people expect her to act alongside Tanning Chatum when she can’t even argue convincingly. [Grabbing her BOW and an ARROW] I’m so glad we have to kill her to make sure they’re not together.

APOLLO: Oh, look, they have little chairs with their names on them and everything. That’s like the one thing you don’t get as a god.

ARTEMIS: I wonder if I’ll inherit the role of Stella by killing Venti...

APOLLO: Maybe after Hera wins and Dad has to kill everyone they’ll be looking for a whole new cast!

ARTEMIS [sighing]: But what’s the point of playing Stella without Tanning Chatum as William?

APOLLO: Just picture it – I get the little chair with my name on it, you get to pretend to be Tanning Chatum’s girlfriend, Tanning Chatum dies, you get sad, you get over it — we’ll be STARS!

ARTEMIS [unconvincingly]: What? I won’t get sad! [APOLLO looks at her sceptically.] Shut up!

The film people seem to be resolving their squabbling and people begin to take their places for the filming.

CAMERA OPERATOR: Places for the horse scene, places for the horse scene.

APOLLO: Do you think that they’ll make us kiss in the movie, even though we’re siblings and you’re a virgin?

ARTEMIS: Okay shut up they’re starting and I can’t line up my shot with you talking.

STAGEHAND [with CLAPBOARD]: Careening horse chase, take 1.

OSCAR BATE: Action!

On the main set, TANNING CHATUM stands to the side. VENTI GRANDE and TOWNSPEOPLE #1, #2, #3 and others behind her remain center stage. VENTI GRANDE (as STELLA) is standing around awkwardly, biting lip, rustling her hair. ARTEMIS is lining up her shot. She draws back the bowstring...

APOLLO [instructing ARTEMIS]: NOW!

ARTEMIS is startled by APOLLO and fumbles with the ARROW and drops everything comically. She glares at APOLLO. She has lost her chance to shoot, as STELLA is now blocked by TOWNSPEOPLE/props/etc.

STELLA [to TOWNSPERSON #1]: Hey mister, is there like somewhere to play video games or something around here?

TOWNSPERSON #1: Vidya games? Is that like when you’re at the old rail station and you see whether Old Man Vidya can spit across the whole tracks?

TOWNSPERSON #2: My favourite Vidya game is the one with the hedgehog, where you try to guess where on his body crazy old Vidya has put it.

STELLA: Forget I asked.
ARTEMIS: I can’t get a clear shot!

APOLLO: You should have fired when I told you to!
[ARTEMIS makes an “oh really, that was my fault?” face at him.] We’ll just have to wait it out.

Meanwhile, the HORSE enters, carefully wildly careening slowly towards STELLA making sure not to trip over itself.

TOWNSPERSON #3 [acting badly]: Oh! No, a random careening. Horse!

TOWNSPERSON #1: It’s heading straight for that new girl!

TOWNSPERSON #3: Quick some, body! Do some! Thing!

The HORSE advances very slowly towards a frightened STELLA. The TOWNSPEOPLE silently panic in the background with varying levels of enthusiasm.

STELLA: Aahhhhh! [Protracted scream/yell.]

Enter WILLIAM LeKIDD. He swings his LASSO and then throws the entire thing onto the HORSE (i.e., he is not holding any of it). The HORSE stops just short of crashing into STELLA.

OSCAR BATE [to CAMERA OPERATOR]: We’ll fix it in post.

The TOWNSPEOPLE all gasp. Meanwhile, ARTEMIS stands up to shoot her ARROW.

WILLIAM: Yee-haw! C’mere boy.

STELLA: You saved me!

ARTEMIS fires her arrow. STELLA swoons into WILLIAM’s arms (this is not part of the script). ARTEMIS and APOLLO try to see from behind the CACTUS whether she is okay or dead.

APOLLO: You got her!

ARTEMIS: Why are you surprised? Did she die?

APOLLO: I think so?

STAGEHAND [indicating the arrow now on the ground near STELLA]: Hey, where did that arrow come from?

OSCAR BATE: Dammit, I told those Hunger Games kids to keep off our soundstage!

STAGEHAND goes to remove the arrow from the set. APOLLO and ARTEMIS take the hint and leave before they are spotted, still trying to see if VENTI is okay while they exit. After they are gone, STELLA rouses, and stares up into WILLIAM’s eyes as we play the falling in love music from The Sims or something.

WILLIAM: Err, yes, I did save you. [To OSCAR] Is this improv?

OSCAR: Good, good, go with it!

STELLA: You’re like a big strong handsome marshmallow.

WILLIAM: Strongest... marshmallow in the West. [Makes a “what am I saying?” face.]
STELLA giggles dreamily.

OSCAR BATE: CUT! [To the ACTORS] That was amazing! It was... well, it was like you actually... like each other!

VENTI GRANDE [still in TANNING’s arms, she giggles and touches his nose]: Boop! I’ve never noticed before how cute your little nose is.

TANNING helps VENTI GRANDE to stand upright and is loving this attention, as he would love any attention, whether from her or the flyby poo of a pigeon.

TANNING: Well, thank you! [Trying to be nice] I have never before noticed how into me you are.

OSCAR: Let’s take 10, then I’d like to run through the scene again with this new chemistry. Don’t lose it!

TANNING goes to leave.

VENTI GRANDE [devastated]: Where are you going?

TANNING [confused but pleased that she is interested]: I get electrolysis during all my breaks, to keep me looking like a teen heartthrob even though I’m 37. [He rubs his chin.]

VENTI GRANDE [after a pause just smiling at him]: Can I come?

TANNING: Uh, sure, we can fix your eyebrows.

TANNING and VENTI go to leave together, arm in arm. Lights down.

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**Scene 4 — Saloon Showdown**

ATHENA and DIONYSUS walk into a bar, Saloon 5. The bar is decorated like a kitschy Western saloon. MADAM LEVINE is reading a BOOK/working at the BAR, where ATHENA is boredly sitting with a GLASS OF WATER. DIONYSUS is off having fun at the back of stage with some CLIENTELE. PATRON #1 and PATRON #2 are near ATHENA.

ATHENA [to MADAM LEVINE]: Are you sure you don’t know if Tanning Chatum and Venti Grande are dating?

MADAM LEVINE: I told you, I’m sure. Why don’t you ask some of the actors? [She gestures to the other people in the bar.]

ATHENA: They are all FAILED actors, that’s why they are drinking in a bar. I’m quite sure they won’t be of any use to me. What are you reading?

MADAM LEVINE [showing her the cover]: “Romeo and Juliet”. Only read ten pages today, I don’t know how I’m going to finish it in time for my book club!

ATHENA: Oh, they both die. It’s a cautionary tale about primitive human communication systems. Very instructional.

MADAM LEVINE: And “The Comedy of Errors”?

ATHENA: Let’s just say that he is “not to be”.
ATHENA: A set of identical things gets mixed up. Nobody notices. Very unoriginal. *It's a joke about this play!* 

MADAM LEVINE [*nodding appreciatively*]: You've been very helpful! [Indignant] I'll show Joeline who's “consistently underprepared and always spiking the casserole.” [*To ATHENA*] Say, what are you drinking again?

ATHENA: Water.

MADAM LEVINE: Well, from now on, in my saloon, this [*air quotes*] “water” is on the house for everyone!

PATRON #1 makes a loud despairing noise, which gets ATHENA's attention so it's not weird for MADAM LEVINE to go and clear some glasses or something, ending that conversation.

PATRON #1: My boss is the biggest jerk. I’m next in line for a promotion but I’m never gonna get it from that jerk!

PATRON #2: Bosses are the worst. I was self-employed once but I just ended up hating myself.

PATRON #1: I went into his office and I said, Tom, please, you gotta make me Head of Money. And you know what he did? He laughed in my face.

PATRON #1: My boss is the biggest jerk. I’m next in line for a promotion but I’m never gonna get it from that jerk!

ATHENA is getting visibly agitated. #humanproblems

PATRON #2: Are you sure you asked nicely? I find that a little kindness goes a long way.

PATRON #1: I did! I just –

ATHENA [*snapping*]: For God’s sake, the man clearly doesn’t respect you. This is what you must do: make a tactical alliance with HR, ensuring the highest advantage in all future interviews. What department do you work for again?

PATRON #1: Mo–

ATHENA: Doesn’t matter. You need to hold the fort in your cubicle around the clock: work must be done and be seen to be done. Then, when a position arises and your boss exits his office, you STRIKE! [*She pounds her fist on the TABLE. PATRONS #1 and #2 are startled.*]

PATRON #1: Strike?

ATHENA: Yes! You align with your union representatives and picket the building until the job is yours. Strike while you have the home advantage and the element of surprise!

PATRON #1: Wow. It’s elaborate but I guess I haven’t tried it.

ATHENA: I’m not finished. Invite your boss to dinner to celebrate. Tell him 6pm sharp. Show up at 9 and do not mention the time at all. After the meal, call him by the wrong name. You’ll never see him again. Finished. You’re the CEO.

PATRON #1 [*to ATHENA*]: Well thank you Miss! Perhaps you can also help my friend...?

PATRON #2: No, it’s okay, really.

ATHENA: Just hurry up and tell me.
PATRON #2: It’s nothing really.

ATHENA: Quick!

PATRON #2: Well, you know when you try to open a door, and you push and push and – nothing, it just won’t open?

ATHENA [thinking this must be somehow more complicated than it sounds]: Did you try pulling it?

PATRON #2 [realising she’s right]: Of course! You’re amazing!

PATRON #1 [calling to MADAM LEVINE]: A drink for the lady!

DIONYSUS waddles over as MADAM LEVINE is getting a GLASS for ATHENA.

DIONYSUS [to MADAM LEVINE, indicating the GLASS for ATHENA]: Just make it my usual.

While DIONYSUS and ATHENA are talking, MADAM LEVINE makes a drink out of various SPIRITS and HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (and maybe a CHERRY).

ATHENA: Did you find out whether or not they’re in a relationship?

DIONYSUS: Those guys don’t know anything about Tanning and Venti. But they did give me this. [He passes ATHENA a PAPER.]

ATHENA [after reading for a second]: This is a degree from “WAAPA”.

DIONYSUS [taking the DRINK MADAM LEVINE just finished]: Yeah, they’re just giving them away back there!

FLINT WESTWOOD sadly enters the saloon with his HORSE and walks over to the bar (ATHENA and DIONYSUS may have to get out of the way).

MADAM LEVINE: Why the long face?

FLINT WESTWOOD [sadly]: I got a callback for the role of William LeKidd in Sundown and they even cast my horse! But then they picked Tanning Chatum instead. It’s because of his beautiful thighs, I just know it. [He stabs his own thigh with a fork a couple of times.] Stupid, stupid!

MADAM LEVINE: Excuse me, I was talking to your horse!

HORSE: Neigh!

MADAM LEVINE [holding back tears]: Oh you poor thing!

ATHENA: I’m sorry, did you say your horse is in Sundown?

FLINT: Sure, lead equine.

DIONYSUS [grabbing the sides of the HORSE’s face]: Listen carefully. I need you to tell me if Venti Grande and Tanning Chatum are dating.

HORSE: Neigh.

DIONYSUS: So, they aren’t dating or you don’t speak English?
ATHENA: Try asking if they’re NOT dating; if it says nay again we’ll know it’s lying. [She narrows her eyes suspiciously.]

FLINT: Tanning doesn’t really get along with anyone, he argues with Venti all the time. [Dramatically] If only there was a way for me to get back into the movie...

PATRON #1 [pointing to ATHENA]: Hey I bet she can get you in!

PATRON #2: Yeah she helped me with my big problem! There’s bound to be something you can do in the movie!

PATRON #1 and PATRON #2 look with admiration at ATHENA. It would clearly break their little hearts if she didn’t live up to their idea of her.

DIONYSUS [privately to ATHENA]: We need to get onto the set to shoot Tanning and Venti into a romance. I don’t know about you but I’m not the sneakiest guy around. [He shakes his costume and it sounds like Christmas, proving his point.] Maybe he can help?

FLINT: Is it true? Can you get me a role?

ATHENA looks at PATRON #1 and PATRON #2, who make puppy dog eyes.

ATHENA [sighing]: I’m not promising anything, but if you can get us onto the film set I’ll try and get you a role.

FLINT: Hmm. One moment.

The HORSE splits into two people and they huddle with FLINT. After a brief whispered discussion the HORSE reassembles.

FLINT: Alright, it’s a deal. If you pretend to be horse handlers, Scout here should be able to get you through to the set.

DIONYSUS [swapping his DRINK for a nearby LARGER DRINK and toasting]: To this guy and his horse! [He drinks.]

PATRON #1: Excuse me, Miss? Before you go... we just have to thank you again.

PATRON #2: Superhuman wisdom, a confidence disproportionate to your looks...

PATRON #1: It’s like you’re some kind of god, hahaha.

ATHENA [like Meryl Streep being humble]: Don’t be ridiculous.

They react in such a way as to make the cult in scene 8 seem like a natural progression. FLINT kisses his HORSE full on the mouth as a goodbye and goes to sit with PATRON #1 and PATRON #2. ATHENA, DIONYSUS and the HORSE exit the Saloon. A moment later ARTEMIS and APOLLO enter through the same door, looking behind them like they’ve just seen some people they knew and didn’t expect to see.

APOLLO: Did you...?

ARTEMIS: Was that Dionysus and Athena?
APOLLO: Dammit, Zeus must be cheating as well!

ARTEMIS: If we hadn’t just spent three hours wasting time we might have found out what they were doing! Do you think they’re going to the movie set? What if Venti isn’t dead? She’s definitely dead right?

APOLLO: Ugh, gross. We’d better go back and make sure they don’t ruin everything.

APOLLO and ARTEMIS leave as the lights go down.

Scene 5 – On the Right Track

OSCAR is sitting in a directorial CHAIR such that the set is in front of him (CAMERA OPERATOR can go to his side, behind him from the audience perspective). There is some space behind him so that Athena and Dionysus can bring a horse onto the set. At the back of the set there are some CACTUSES still. The set is probably just a little section of railway to tie STELLA to. CASH JACKSON is tying STELLA to the RAIL TRACKS (so she is sitting up with her hands tied behind her). TANNING, not yet in the scene being filmed, is around. VENTI, who is in love with TANNING, is distracted by him.

STELLA: Cash, stop! [After a pause, from looking at TANNING] It doesn’t have to end like this.

CASH: Stella, do you know who built this town?

STELLA: Your great granddaddy, Casholomew Jackson III.

CASH: Well, yes, but do you know what he was?

OSCAR [off-scene]: Focus, Venti!

STELLA [after a lengthy pause, rushed, like she has just remembered her line]: A railway tycoon.

CASH [impatiently]: And a law-abiding citizen. The kind of citizen that built this town up from a little speck of sand in God’s eye to the great desert town it is today. [Whispering to VENTI, who isn’t responding] It’s your line!
Off-stage, TANNING CHATUM does something like flex a tiny bicep or wave coyly to VENTI.

STELLA [giggling quietly, whispering to TANNING]: Stop! [Getting in character] Ahem. Please, just let me go. We can work this out!

CASH [very angrily]: As long as you love the outlaw William LeKidd this is the only solution! Do you think I want to do this?

STELLA: Cash, I know you’re a good guy. You’re always wearing that horse tooth necklace that you got from your mom, after she died volunteering at the horse shelter.

CASH [sad and expositiony]: I was only a child. And ever since, my father has been forcing me to be cold and unforgiving like all the Jackson Railway men.

STELLA: But you’re not like them!

CASH [righteously, having a change of heart]: No, I’m not like them at all! I’m a man who feels things and loves people. And I love y–

There is a TRAIN WHISTLE SFX. CASH worriedly looks offstage, in the direction of the train. VENTI is still looking at TANNING, in the other direction. Awkward pause before OSCAR’s next line.

OSCAR: Cut! Venti, you had a line there. “We don’t have much time, untie me now!” – remember? Venti, [he snaps his fingers at her] are you listening? [She is smiling and waving flirtatiously at TANNING.]

ATHENA and DIONYSUS enter suspiciously behind OSCAR, with the HORSE.

CLAUSE COLBERT [just continuing the talking while the audience is looking at ATHENA and DIONYSUS]: She was looking off-set at Tanning the whole time. I think this is like the most important scene in the whole film and she’s blowing it for all of us.

OSCAR: Yes, that’s – Venti, hello? [She is blowing kisses at TANNING.] What’s gotten into you lately? [DIONYSUS coughs politely. OSCAR turns.] What?

DIONYSUS: We are the horse handlers. [He indicates the HORSE.] I believe this exact horse is in your film and ready for his close up.

ATHENA: Now, I know you must be wondering, what happened to that horse’s wings? And the truth is –

DIONYSUS: We lost them.

ATHENA [glaring at DIONYSUS, who winks back]: In a terrible fire.

OSCAR: Look, I’m going to be honest: I don’t know what you are talking about. In any case, at the rate we’re going Scout won’t be needed for a couple of hours.

OSCAR turns back to continue trying to give feedback to VENTI and CLAUDE. While ATHENA and DIONYSUS are the focus, OSCAR does various visually funny things to get VENTI’s attention while she is distracted by TANNING.
DIONYSUS [fiddling with the ARROWS]: Are there instructions here or something?

ATHENA: In theory, we shoot one of the actors, they catch sight of the other and fall in love. In practice, it’s a messy process — you can’t make a romance without breaking a few feeble human hearts. Now, if you have no preference, may I suggest that we shoot Tanning Chatum first.

DIONYSUS: Sure, which one is that?

ATHENA: I was hoping you would know. They all look the same to me.

DIONYSUS: I’m assuming the person we just spoke to is... [monitoring ATHENA’s face] the... di...rec..tor?

ATHENA [pointing at CLAUDE]: Maybe that one? Look at his big human head. He’s definitely in the movie.

DIONYSUS [saying his name in a cough]: TANNING! [CLAUDE doesn’t look up, since that isn’t his name. Maybe TANNING looks around briefly.] I don’t know, maybe he twitched?

ATHENA: Well, I’ve got a clear shot of him and he’s staring right at the woman whom I assume is Venti Grande so we might as well try.

OSCAR [satisfied or giving up on getting through to VENTI]: Okay, let’s run that again. From the top!

STAGEHAND [with CLAPBOARD]: Railway capture scene, take 36.

The lights adjust appropriately. There is a TRAIN WHISTLE SFX.

STELLA: We don’t have much time, untie me now!

ATHENA interrupts by firing an ARROW at CLAUDE COLBERT. He is hit in the arm. EVERY MORTAL is startled and horrified.

CLAUDE: Agh, my guns! [He pulls a couple of GUNS out of his sleeve, dislodging the ARROW.]

CAMERA OPERATOR [calling onstage]: Can we get a medic on set?

OSCAR [spinning around to ATHENA and DIONYSUS with accusation in his eyes]: Did you two see where that came from?

Keeping eye contact with OSCAR, ATHENA passes the bow to DIONYSUS (as if to frame him) and DIONYSUS does the same to the HORSE. ATHENA, DIONYSUS and BOTH HALVES OF THE HORSE deny everything.

OSCAR: Was it those Hunger Games kids again? If you see that Josh Hutcherson up there you kick him in the balls for me, okay? [He turns back to the set.]

CAMERA OPERATOR: Someone get the arrow off set!

STAGEHAND removes the ARROW as the MEDIC arrives and moves over to CLAUDE, to inspect his arm.

OSCAR [to the MEDIC]: Tell me my second-best star isn’t hurt?
MEDIC: Hmm, it looks like firearms have once again saved a life. There’ll definitely be bruising but there’s only a minor cut from the arrowhead. [To OSCAR] You should be able to continue filming in a minute, I’ll just sterilise him. I MEAN IT, THE CUT, haha, not to worry Mr Colbert.

CLAUDE looks horrified. The MEDIC cleans the wound and puts a BANDAID on it while the scene continues (probably blocking the audience’s view anyway).

DIONYSUS: Wait, “Mr Colbert”? Did we shoot the wrong guy? [Clinging to ATHENA, dramatically] What kind of ménage à trois have we created?

ATHENA: Stop panicking. [With hints of concern] It doesn’t seem to be having any effect just yet. Besides, I think a threesome still counts?

DIONYSUS: I guess we can still shoot Tanning later when we work out who he is.

ARTEMIS and APOLLO sneak across the back of stage and hide behind CACTUSES again. They peer at the actors on set.

APOLLO: Is that Venti Grande? She is still alive!

ARTEMIS: No, I can’t believe it! We even saw that People magazine headline: “VENTI GRANDE IS DEAD TO ME, SAYS SOFIA VERGARA”.

APOLLO: And look, Athena and Dionysus are right there! Look how Venti is waving at Tanning. What if we’re too late and they’ve already made them fall in love?

ARTEMIS [with fury in her eyes]: We’ll see about that. I’ll get her this time.

VENTI: Claude, are you okay?

CLAUDE [inspecting his arm]: I’ll be fine. [As though he is describing the worst possible injury] They even gave me a novelty Wiggles bandaid, so I guess they’re expecting quite a lot of bruising.

As VENTI is worrying about CLAUDE, ARTEMIS shoots her. She swoons and falls onto CLAUDE’s injury —

— before slumping into his lap. They look into each other’s eyes and there is falling in love SFX. ATHENA’s face shows confusion then recognition as she understands what she is hearing.

APOLLO: Do you hear that?

ARTEMIS [evilly]: Yes, a requiem for her departing soul! Look at her, that vacant stare, her patchy, uneven complexion... yes, I definitely got her that time.

APOLLO: Cool, good job! Let’s get out of here before Hera finds out she won and Dad kills everybody.

ARTEMIS: Wait, I can’t leave Tanning Chatum here to die!

APOLLO: Well you should have thought about that before you got us sent down here! Let’s go!

ARTEMIS and APOLLO stay where they are, silently arguing (APOLLO trying to pull ARTEMIS away,
ARTEMIS resisting, etc.) instead of paying any attention to what is happening.

VENTI: Did it hurt really badly?

CLAUDE: Yes, I don’t know if you saw but I was just SHOT BY AN ARROW?

VENTI: No, I mean because you fell from heaven, you beautiful angel.

CLAUDE [feeling very awkward/uncomfortable at how forward this is]: Er... do you mean Cash? Are we filming? Haha...?

TANNING [suddenly realising what he has lost]: Venti, why aren’t you paying attention to me anymore?

OSCAR: Dial back the eyes there Venti, Stella doesn’t love Cash that way!

CAMERA OPERATOR: Actually, we’re not even rolling.

OSCAR [noticing the second ARROW on set]: WHY IS THERE ANOTHER ARROW ON SET? SOMEBODY BRING ME JENNIFER LAWRENCE’S HEAD!

EVERYBODY (including gods) onstage freezes. A not-so-mysterious poorly disguised figure walks onto stage from the audience, grumbling angrily. At centre front, the figure dramatically reveals herself to be HERA (i.e., by removing the HOODIE that was covering the top half of her TOGA). She looks out into the audience.

HERA [angrily]: Zeus Almighty! I know you’re out there somewhere! [Possibly the AUDIENCE can help find him.]

ZEUS [first in a funny voice, then revealing himself, wearing a fake beard over his “real” beard]: What? Nooo I’m not. Fine, yes I’m here! [Making his way to join her on stage] What is it now?

HERA [gesturing at the frozen forms of ATHENA and DIONYSUS]: What. is. this??

ZEUS: It’s not what it looks like!

HERA: Don’t lie to me Zeus! After all these years...! You’ve been unfaithful to me! [She’s really hamming it up.]

ZEUS: They didn’t even do anything! [Pointing behind the CACTUSES] Not like yours, they shot her twice and now she’s in love with both of them!

HERA [moving between ZEUS and the CACTUSES and losing her self-righteous tone]: What? What are you talking about? There’s nothing over there!

ZEUS forces his way past her and moves the CACTUSES (“ow my hands”) to reveal ARTEMIS and APOLLO (who are frozen like everything else, but in the exact shape of the CACTUSES maybe).

ZEUS [angrily/victoriously]: See! You were cheating too! [His mouth twitches with hints of a smile and he raises an eyebrow.]

HERA [walking away from him]: Ugh fine, I guess we’ll... cancel the bet. [She turns back with a questioning look.]

ZEUS: Wellll, perhaps there is another way forward.
HERA [pleased but pretending to be sceptical]: Go on....

ZEUS [knowing she will agree to this]: There is a press junket coming up, at which Venti Grande and Tanning Chatum will most definitely be asked to confirm the rumours surrounding their relationship. Whatever they announce determines the winner.

HERA: How about we make it a little more interesting? If you win, not only will I watch the dreadful film but I will [shudder] read the books as well.

ZEUS: And if you win?

HERA: When I win, you will smite the entire city.

ZEUS look around at the CAST and AUDIENCE.

ZEUS [pointing to someone in the audience]: Even that one?

HERA: Even that one.

ZEUS [pointing at someone else in the audience]: And him?

HERA: All of them.

AUDIENCE: No, don’t do it!

ZEUS [happily]: Okay, it’s a deal :) ZEUS and HERA shake on it. Lights down.

Scene 6 – Erotic Viewing

Same set as Scene 5. Lights up.

STAGEHAND: We’re three hours behind our shooting schedule and Jack Nicholson is getting hungry again!

OSCAR: Well Tanning’s in this scene so maybe Venti will find it easier to make up the time.

VENTI turns around, with her arms around both TANNING and CLAUDE. CLAUDE looks uncomfortable.

VENTI [on the verge of a tantrum]: But I want to film with CLAUDE as well! I don’t know how Stella manages to pick you [to TANNING, touching him affectionately (with her face?)] when you’re so great as well [doing the same to CLAUDE].

TANNING: But, like, you could pick one of us just because we’re so distinct. You don’t look at dogs and cats and go, “Oh, I could never choose”. You would choose the dog! [Making meaningful glances at CLAUDE] Because the cat is dumb and has a pointy head.

CLAUDE: Well maybe the cat is quite happy for the dog to be chosen and would actually just like to be left alone.

VENTI [laughing at him]: Hey, maybe when we do your electrolysis again later Claude can come? This time he can hold the magnifying glass and I’ll hold the tweezers.

CLAUDE: Uh, I might have to run my lines or just... be away... from there.
CAMERA OPERATOR [to OSCAR]: Why is she being so nice to them both? [Looking around] Is there a journalist on set?

OSCAR: I don’t know and I don’t care. I just need get this film done so they’ll let me make Hannibal Montana 2: The Other White Meat.

STELLA and CASH assume the same position as they were in the previous scene (STELLA tied up, CASH beside her).

STAGEHAND [with CLAPBOARD]: Take 1.

OSCAR: Action!

While the scene begins, the house lights come up. EROS, HEPHAESTUS, APHRODITE and ARES enter to sit in the audience near the front, like people late to a cinema. Perhaps they can walk across the stage to find seats on the other side (to make sure they are seen by everyone). Say things like “Excuse me!” “Sorry!” “Can you move? Mum’s friend Ares had to come for some reason.” House lights down.

TRAIN SFX, as if CASH has just untied the final knot on STELLA and pulled her out of the way of the “train” that rushed past them microseconds before they came into focus again.

CASH: Are you hurt?

STELLA: No, I’m alright, I think.

CASH: I don’t know what came over me. You have to let me make it up to you.

STELLA: I know a little Italian place that would be perfect. [She bumps him with her hip.]

OSCAR [calling out]: That’s not the line!

STELLA takes CASH’s hands.

STELLA: I mean, you have to understand, Cash. I love Ta-William. I didn’t realise it until now but when I was tied to those train tracks all I could think about, apart from the gruesome impending death awaiting me, was him.

CASH: Well, when you change your mind, you know where to find me. [He gestures toward a SIGN, which STAGEHAND rotates to reveal the text, “←Cash Jackson, 5 miles”.]

WILLIAM shows up. SFX of a horse galloping, but we only see him “dismounting” (i.e., HORSE doesn’t need to be there). He points a GUN at CASH JACKSON.

WILLIAM: Step away from her right now, Cash Jackson! Venti is mine!

OSCAR [calling out]: Her name is Stella!

WILLIAM: Stella is mine!

CASH [pulling a GUN out of a random place on his person]: People don’t belong to people! My family spent a lot of time and money trying to fight that but it’s something I’ve finally learned thanks to Stella.

VENTI [insincerely]: No, stop fighting over me...

WILLIAM: I’ll give you to the count of three!
**CASH** goes to shoot but **WILLIAM** shoots the **GUN** out of his hand. **CASH** gets another **GUN** out of some other hiding place on his person.

**WILLIAM**: One!

**CASH**: You don’t want to know where my next one is stored.

**WILLIAM**: Two!

**CASH** [desperately]: She knows what you are!

**WILLIAM** [lowering his **GUN**, horrified]: What? What did you...?

**OSCAR**: Cut! Okay let’s skip ahead to after Cash has left.

**CLAUDE** leaves the set. **VENTI** blows him a kiss. He purposefully ignores it.

**OSCAR**: Action!

**WILLIAM** [to **STELLA**, grabbing her shoulders]: Stella! What did he tell you about me?

**STELLA**: William, it doesn’t matter, I still love you! I love you both!

**OSCAR** [calling out]: No you don’t!

**STELLA**: I love only you!

**WILLIAM**: Tell me what you know! Say it!

**STELLA**: You’re... you’re a cowboy! [**WILLIAM** grimly releases her.] It all makes sense... the horse whispering, the rope skills, the way your skin gets in the sun... like, all dry and leathery.

**WILLIAM** [backing away]: I didn’t want you to see me like this.

**STELLA**: William, I love you!

**WILLIAM**: Stella, I can’t force you to be with someone like me!

**STELLA**: I don’t care!

**WILLIAM**: You best pack your things and get outta this town, kid. It ain’t big enough for the both of us. [He backs away sadly and then turns and runs away from her.]

**STELLA**: WILLIAAAAAAAAM!

*Lights down on the set and house lights up. The scene change can probably start. **EROS**, **HEPHAESTUS**, **APHRODITE** and **ARES** go to leave (across the stage is probably best). If the **AUDIENCE** reveals earlier than written that **EROS**’s **ARROWS** have been swapped/**ARTEMIS** has love arrows, the first lot of stuff should probably be abandoned to follow that up immediately.*

**EROS**: Why was Venti Grande acting like that?

**APHRODITE** [talking about herself]: Sometimes one man just isn’t enough...

**EROS**: Hmm. [After a pause] Dad?
HEPHAESTUS: { Yes?  
ARES: { Yes? [He tries to hide his mistake with a cough.]  

EROS: Why do you think Stella said she loved William and Cash, and the director told her she didn’t?  

HEPHAESTUS: Maybe the actress is in love with them both? This is more your field than mine, Son.  

EROS: Hmm.  

AUDIENCE [based on hints from APHRODITE and ARES and HEPHAESTUS if necessary]: Artemis shot her twice and she fell in love both times!  

EROS: WHAT?! [To his FAMILY] Do you know what this means?  

ARES, APHRODITE and HEPHAESTUS have no idea what is going on that could possibly be as significant as EROS is indicating.  

EROS: I gave Artemis the wrong arrows! She’s going to be so upset! This will ruin everything... for my chances with her! [To APHRODITE] It’s going to be just like the time Dad walked in on you and Uncle Ares! Playing Jenga! And you were so surprised you knocked it over and everything was ruined! [Or something funnier.] I’ll have to go down there and swap the arrows back without Athena or Artemis noticing!  

Lights down.  

Scene 7 – Acts of Gods  

Lights up on two-thirds of the stage. There is a visible SIGN that says “OPEN CASTING FOR EXTRAS: 12–2pm”. DESPERATE HOPEFULS 1, 2 and 3 loiter around, preparing for their auditions – with #1, a woman, practising Laban’s seven basic movements, perhaps #2 monologuing mysteriously to a HUMAN SKULL and #3 reciting a Greek tragedy. The others can be any gender. In the remaining third of the stage there is a TABLE at which three members of the AUDITION PANEL are sitting, PRODUCERS #1, #2 and #3. ARTEMIS and APOLLO enter with SCRIPTS. ARTEMIS’s stage makeup is running like she was crying and she has a BLACK VEIL on.  

APOLLO [pointing at the SIGN]: Yep, looks like they want extra actors. We were right, Zeus must have killed the old ones already. I’m so excited!  

ARTEMIS: Why is everyone so happy? Don’t they know a Cinematic Treasure has DIED?  

APOLLO: Artemis, of course they know. They wouldn’t even be holding auditions if Dad hadn’t killed everyone after we won the bet for Hera. Tanning Chatum dying just isn’t as sad as you think.  

ARTEMIS: How dare you!  

APOLLO: And now we can be the stars of the film!  

ARTEMIS: Well, that’s true.  

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #1 [making mouth warm up noises, first ascending then descending pitch]:

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #1 makes those awkward “er I stuffed up” noises that people make. PRODUCER comes out to the queue.

PRODUCER #1: #344, we’re ready for you!

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #1 moves before the panel and noiselessly auditions in the background of the scene.

ARTEMIS: Did you see that? She was way too over-prepared.

APOLLO: Not to mention totally wrong for the part of Stella. Far too much personality. You’ll be way better!

ARTEMIS: Really, you think so?

APOLLO: Okay, now do me. Who do you think I should audition for, Cash or William? I have a good body like William but I’m kind of bad like Cash.

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2 [practicing his audition]: Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest. [Suddenly he holds the skull YORICK like a ventriloquist act. It speaks in a bad cockney accent.] “Agh what ‘appened to me eyes!” Oh, don’t mind Yorick, he’s harmless. “Armless? You mean I don’t ‘ave arms either?!”

APOLLO laughs way too much at this joke.

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2 [as YORICK]: “Oh you like me Shakespeare, do you ‘andsome?”

APOLLO [laughing]: Artemis, look! The skull is talking!

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2: “Artemis? [YORICK makes a fart noise.] More like FARTemis!”

APOLLO [wiping tears]: How have I never thought of that!

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2: What part are you auditioning for today? [As YORICK] “I didn’t realise they ‘ave a role for a two-assed horse!”

ARTEMIS [to YORICK]: Then what are you two here for?

APOLLO [“sick burn!”]: Ohhhhhh!

ARTEMIS [to YORICK]: I’m auditioning for the role of Stella. I mean, with the sudden passing of Venti Grande and all...

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2 [shocked]: Venti Grande is dead? That’s awful! [As YORICK] “I wonder if they kept her skull!”

ARTEMIS: What do you mean, “is she dead?” She was the first to go! [DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2 is confused. ARTEMIS continues, inspecting her fingernails] But yeah, my feet are pretty big so... like... to fill her shoes.

PRODUCER #2: #345? You’re up.

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2: Well, nice to meet you, even under sad circumstances. [As YORICK] “I’ll see you at your mother’s house!”

APOLLO: Man, that guy was funny. He should go solo.
DESPERATE HOPEFUL #3 [reciting monologue from Antigone]: What greater wound is there than a false friend? So spit this girl out – she’s your enemy.

APOLLO [gesturing to DESPERATE HOPEFUL #3]: Oh my god, Artemis, I think she’s talking about you. That is so rude. [To DESPERATE HOPEFUL #3] PS you are really good.

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #3: Let her marry someone else in Hades.

ARTEMIS: Hades? [To DESPERATE HOPEFUL #3] Oh, I see. Zeus sent you, didn’t he? Can’t stand that he lost the bet so has to ruin our one chance at ever being happy. Like in a riches and fame way.

APOLLO: So traj.

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #3: I won’t perjure myself before the state. No—I’ll kill her. And so let her appeal to Zeus, the god of blood relationships.

APOLLO: Uhhh, no, we killed her. And you can tell that to Zeus.

ARTEMIS: I shot her so I get the role! Go find your own celebrity to kill and replace!

PRODUCER #3: Next up, #346!

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #3 [breaking character]: That’s me, but that was some really great riffing. Really good energy. Catch you! [Goes before panel.] I’ll be reading one of Creon’s monologues from Antigone.

HERMES enters, approaching from behind ARTEMIS and APOLLO so they don’t immediately recognise him.

HERMES: I come bearing a message from Zeus!

ARTEMIS: I’m sure they would love to hear it at the back of line.

HERMES: Whoa whoa whoa, kids, it’s me!

APOLLO: Hermes?

HERMES: Unky Hermy here to deliver the latest news from Daddy Zeus and Stepmummy Hera. [He waves an ENVELOPE or a SCROLL or something else MISSIVY.]

APOLLO: Ugh, what do they want now?

ARTEMIS: Wasn’t it enough to take Tanning Chatum away from us?!

HERMES: Firstly, you need to calm down. Secondly, I’m just here to say that Dad and Hera have changed the terms of the bet. They called each other’s bluffs and have doubled down on the terms. No matter who wins, we lose! [Unsympathetically] Oh, did I say ‘we’? I meant ‘you’. This is a tough job sometimes.

APOLLO: But the bet is over! Hera won after Artemis killed Venti Grande, since that meant there couldn’t possibly be a relationship between her and Tanning Chatum. Unless… ew.

HERMES: Venti Grande is alive. All of the leads are alive.

ARTEMIS: Um, we’re auditioning for their roles right now!
PRODUCER #2 appears in front of the queue.

PRODUCER #2: #347!

APOLLO: That’s us. Be quick!

HERMES: The bet ends at the junket. Here are some press passes knocked up by Hephaestus. [*He hands them PRESS PASSES.*] Whatever relationship the actors are in – or not in – by that time decides the winner.

APOLLO: This is really inconvenient! We were going to be stars!

ARTEMIS: Are you SURE everyone is still alive?

HERMES [*making a patronising noise followed by a pouty face*]: It’s hard when the grown-ups have conversations without you. Good luck byeeee.

PRODUCER #2: #347? [*Reading from a CLIPBOARD*]

“Apollo and Artemis, twin Gods of the Sun and Moon, protectors of Olympus and... wardens of the plague?”

APOLLO: It’s an old bio! We can brainstorm later.

APOLLO grabs ARTEMIS and they follow PRODUCER #3 to the panel.

ARTEMIS [*whispering to APOLLO*]: I can’t believe it! Why would they want extra actors if everyone was still alive?

APOLLO [*whispering back*]: We have to be professional about this.

PRODUCER #3: What will you be performing for us today?

ARTEMIS [*flustered*]: Uhh well actually –

APOLLO: We’ll be performing the final scene of the film, when Cash Jackson is shot and Stella delivers her eulogy. I’ll be performing as Cash, just because of my background in the Arts. [*He flourishes.*]

PRODUCER #3: Look, I’m going to be honest with you. We don’t have many roles for women at the moment.

PRODUCER #2: This is Hollywood after all.

PRODUCER #1: Just do the audition, then we’ll talk roles.

ARTEMIS [*pulling off her VEIL*]: Oh god, this is so embarrassing. What if Tanning Chatum sees us?

TANNING CHATUM appears behind the PRODUCERS.

TANNING: Hello, yes, I’m here for my debut. Apparently I have to do some kind of [*air quotes*] “work” for my producer credit?

PRODUCER #3: Ah, of course Mr Chatum.

*The PRODUCERS make room for TANNING to join them, perhaps fighting over who gets to give him their CHAIR. The panel stairs at APOLLO and ARTEMIS expectantly.*

APOLLO: Right, okay. [*In his Laurence Olivier “acting” voice*] Ah! I’ve been shot!
APOLLO falls to the ground. ARTEMIS's audition is very bad and filled with pauses in which she consults the script, etc.

ARTEMIS: No! Uh, oh no! Cash! What have they done? I’m so sorry. [She cradles APOLLO’s body.] You were so brave and now you’re gone.

TANNING: What is she doing with her mouth?

ARTEMIS looks at him, confused and hurt.

ARTEMIS: Cash, I know that you were in love with me. I don’t deserve your protection. You should have lived forever, you beautiful man! If it wasn’t for William, you’d be my everything. You’ll live on in my heart forever. [Raising her head] I blame you, God!

TANNING: Good thing she’s not actually playing Stella, I can’t imagine even beginning to pretend loving... [gesturing at ARTEMIS’s entire body] that.

ARTEMIS looks at him again. Aside from the whole immortality thing she dies a little inside.

APOLLO dies an exaggerated death. The PRODUCERS clap.

PRODUCER #2: WOW. Wow. Wooooow.

ARTEMIS [to APOLLO]: Did you hear what he said about me? He was awful!

APOLLO: No, I think they liked it!

PRODUCER #3: One of you is a star. And one of you literally makes me want to vomit into my own mouth.

TANNING: Ditto.

ARTEMIS [to TANNING]: What do you mean you couldn’t begin to pretend to love me?! You’d be lucky to have me! I can’t believe I mourned you when I mistakenly thought you were dead! [Unleashing her devastating attack] You look like you’re almost 40.

TANNING gasps.

TANNING: I’m leaving. Tell Oscar I get my credit.

TANNING leaves.

PRODUCER #1: Apollo, was it? I love that one name thing. Like Beyoncé or Aniston. Look, I think you’d be perfect for Townsperson #5.

PRODUCER #2: Why don’t you come through here to meet the crew?

APOLLO: No, I couldn’t do it without Artemis. We are a team.

ARTEMIS: I’m not going anywhere near that man again without–

APOLLO: Okay, I’ll take it! [To ARTEMIS, unapologetically] Sorryyyyy. I’ll be back soon I promise.

ARTEMIS [grabbing his sleeve before he can leave]: It’s on. We are winning this bet.
APOLLO leaves with the PRODUCERS as ARTEMIS plots the downfall of TANNING CHATUM.

Lights down.

Scene 8 — The Bar is Raised

Most of the stage is dark, but light comes up on the BAR downstage left, where MADAM LEVINE is cleaning some GLASSES (you know, wine glasses, shot glasses, reading glasses). DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2 sadly walks in and collapses miserably onto the BAR.

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2: I’ll have a double of your strongest, thanks.

MADAM LEVINE [passing a GLASS]: What’s troubling you?

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2: I auditioned for a role in Sundown and I didn’t get it, but they took my friend Yorick.

MADAM LEVINE [writing on a CLIPBOARD]: Mhmm, very sad, and what is your religion?

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2: I’m an atheist.

MADAM LEVINE [writing]: Hmm, yes, maybe don’t mention that in here. [She passes a TICKET to the PATRON and pats him encouragingly.] We’ll get you all sorted, just go up when this number is called.

DESPERATE HOPEFUL #2 [accepting the TICKET]: Sure, thanks. [After taking a sip from the GLASS] By the way, what is this? It’s really helping.

MADAM LEVINE: “Water”? Apparently we have it on tap here? [Shrugs.]
Lights up on the rest of stage. ATHENA is seated on an elevated THRONE towards the back (kind of behind and to the left of the BAR, from the audience perspective). Saloon 5 is filled with FOLLOWERS OF ATHENA (i.e., people she has helped) bowing in worship/prayer everywhere on the floor. Maybe some are bar jokes, e.g., a PRIEST, a RABBI and a VICAR. Important note to FOLLOWERS: they never have their backs to ATHENA, e.g. if they have to walk away they do backwards/if she moves around they angle themselves to be facing her.

DIONYSUS is around somewhere pouring BLEACH into a MARTINI GLASS and FLINT WESTWOOD is standing mopily. A TROUBLED FOLLOWER is kneeling at ATHENA’s feet.

TROUBLED FOLLOWER: Okay and 3 Across: Cleaning product scent, 4 letters.

ATHENA: Pine.

TROUBLED FOLLOWER: Thank you, oh thank you! Now I can finally finish my shopping! [TROUBLED FOLLOWER leaves.] 

ATHENA: #98!

FLINT WESTWOOD goes up to ATHENA. He doesn’t kneel but she is looking at her fingernails anyway.

ATHENA: Yes?

FLINT: You promised you would get me into Sundown and you didn’t.

ATHENA [looking at him]: Oh, it’s you. I’m still working on your situation.

FLINT: You said you would get me into the film with my horse but you haven’t done anything! Auditions are on right now and I didn’t go because you promised.

The FOLLOWERS OF ATHENA start whispering extreme heretical things like “maybe she isn’t that great”.

ATHENA [to FLINT]: Keep your voice down. Also, you’re wrong, I specifically said I wouldn’t promise anything.

FLINT: I have to admit. I’m having... doubts.

The FOLLOWERS OF ATHENA start up the heresy again. ATHENA is concerned.

ATHENA: I said I’m working on it, [to the FOLLOWERS] I’m working on it! How can you doubt me after I helped you with your embarrassing problems? “I can’t open this jar!” “My shirt is inside out!” “I’m having all the symptoms of a heart attack!” Pathetic!

HERMES arrives at the saloon entrance downstage right. ATHENA notices him and stands up.

ATHENA [wistfully]: Ah, Brother! [Sceptically] What do you want?

ATHENA [wistfully]: Ah, Brother! [Sceptically] What do you want?

HERMES arrives at the saloon entrance downstage right. ATHENA notices him and stands up.

ATHENA [wistfully]: Ah, Brother! [Sceptically] What do you want?

Everyone on the floor shuffles out of the way to make a path between HERMES and ATHENA. ATHENA steps down from her THRONE and HERMES takes some steps towards her.
HERMES: I have news of great importance from old Daddy Z.

ATHENA: Yes, the arrows.

HERMES: What? No, the –

ATHENA: I know, Hermes. The arrows that I borrowed from Eros to make the mortals fall in love were actually the hunting arrows Hephaestus made for Artemis.

HERMES: Yes, but, actually —

ATHENA: And only thanks to my cleverly testing the arrows on that other one first did we avoid accidentally killing Tanning Chatum and losing the bet.

HERMES: No, you’re not —

ATHENA: Artemis is in possession of the love arrows I need to win this bet for Zeus.

HERMES: IF YOU’LL JUST LET ME SPEAK I have something that’s gonna pop your cork.

ATHENA sighs sceptically and folds her arms, giving him an “okay what?” look.

HERMES: The terms of the bet have changed. Hera and Zeus caught each other cheating so now you have to get Venti and Tanning together and keep them together until their relationship is announced at the upcoming press junket. [He passes PRESS PASSES to ATHENA and DIONYSUS, who wades through the worshippers to accept it.] If you win, Hera has to watch Sundown AND read the book saga; if you lose, Zeus will smite the entire city.

EVERY MORTAL in the Saloon is like “but the entire city is where my house is!”

ATHENA [to the MORTALS]: Quiet! This has nothing to do with you.

DIONYSUS [putting his PRESS PASS around his neck]: So these passes will get us in anywhere? [Doing a bad impression of a human who isn’t anything like James Bond, flashing his PASS] “Uh, hello, yes, I’m James Bond.”

ATHENA [impatiently, to HERMES]: So what was the interesting thing you had to say?

HERMES: Uh, the bet has changed and that’s it?

ATHENA: Nothing has changed. We still need to get the love arrows from Artemis to make the actors fall in love.

DIONYSUS: Well, we don’t NEED the love arrows to make them fall in love.

ATHENA [laughing this off as she walks back to her THRONE]: Oh, you’re going to make them fall in love by spending time together or something ridiculous like that are you? [She turns. To HERMES] Oh, you’re still here?
[HERMES leaves awkwardly.] Perhaps if we lure her in somehow... [She sits down.] #99!

DIONYSUS: I'm telling you, just let me have a go! People fall in love temporarily at parties all the time, I know what I'm doing!

ATHENA [agitated]: I said #99!

DIONYSUS [pathetically throwing a TICKET vaguely in her direction]: I'M #99! And my problem is YOU!

ATHENA: Fine, go and do your... [dismissively] thing. But don't come crying to me when they aren't house-trained and you run out of actor food!

DIONYSUS: Fine, I won't!

ATHENA: Good, I'm glad we could sort this out. #100! [#100 stands up to approach her.]

DIONYSUS [finishing his DRINK]: I'm glad you're glad. In fact, I'm rapt your glad. I'm glad-rapt. All glad-rapt up in a little glad bag.

ATHENA: #101! [#100 sadly walks away. #101 approaches ATHENA.] Will you stop telling me how glad you are?

DIONYSUS: GLADLY.

DIONYSUS storms out. Lights down.

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**Scene 9 — The Quenchening**

Lights up on the film set. OSCAR is just wrapping things up for the day. VENTI, TANNING, CLAUDE and the HORSE are there. Some TOWNSPEOPLE are there as well (secretly including APOLLO, whose face is hidden from the audience). VENTI is showing affection to both TANNING and CLAUDE.

OSCAR: That’s a wrap for today everyone.

CAMERA OPERATOR: Press junket starts at 8 tomorrow. We need everybody well rested and tweetable. Is that how you use that word? “Tweetable?”

STAGEHAND: Also, be ready to talk about Syria! You know they’re going to ask.

OSCAR, STAGEHAND and CAMERA OPERATOR leave. It becomes arranged (if not already) so that the main actors are at the front and most of the TOWNSPEOPLE are in a corner. The HORSE is somewhere drinking. DIONYSUS comes in carrying DRINKS. TOWNSPERSON #1 and #2 are talking near his entrance.

TOWNSPERSON #1 [despairingly]: I can’t get that line quite right. [Saying it with different intonations] “Grab the cowboy”, “Grab the cowboy”.

TOWNSPERSON #2: “Grab the cowboy?”

DIONYSUS [offering DRINK to TOWNSPERSON #1]: Hard day at work? Need a drink? Try some Quench. [Offering another DRINK to TOWNSPERSON #2] It’s the quenchiest.
TOWNSPERSON #1 [accepting DRINK]: That hits the spot. No?

TOWNSPERSON #2: That hits the spot?

TOWNSPERSONs #1 and #2 go and join their brethren in the corner. DIONYSUS sits down with the main actors, inserting himself between CLAUDE and VENTI so that VENTI is only sitting next to TANNING (and DIONYSUS).

DIONYSUS [offering a DRINK to VENTI]: Try some Quench. [Offering a DRINK to TANNING] It's the quenchiest. [Offering a drink to CLAUDE after remembering he is there] Hard day at Quench? It's the workiest. Try some today.

They all happily accept the DRINKs. DIONYSUS has one left for himself.

CLAUDE [wearily]: Thaaanks. Sorry, who are you again?

DIONYSUS: Oh, I work on set. Make sure the actors are taken care of. Throw a bone to the paps outside every now and then.

VENTI: I thought we had Sandra [pronounced Sahndra] for that?

DIONYSUS [extended disbelief, boisterous tone]: Sandra? Her? No way. She can't wrangle those guys like I can. They're always like, “Hey, what's the latest with Tanning and Venti?” and I'm just like, “guys, cool it!” You know?

DIONYSUS [indicating VENTI, putting his arm around her]: This girl! This girl just needs to make up her mind, [shaking her quasi-playfully] blaagh!

TANNING and CLAUDE laugh awkwardly.
VENTI [angry at people who aren’t there]: I’m sick of being put on the spot like that! Especially when it’s only about these two handsome little mugs. [She touches TANNING and CLAUDE’s chins; they both respond like petted puppies, CLAUDE maybe a puppy who doesn’t like to be touched quite as much.]

DIONYSUS: Look, I’m not saying anything. I’m just saying that if you and Tanning were an “item”, it would just... simplify things. A lot. [Sarcastically] But don’t trust me, trust “Sahndra”.

CLAUDE: Ha!

DIONYSUS: Ha ha ha!

Everyone laughs. One of the TOWNSPEOPLE hears this commotion and turns around. It is APOLLO! You never would have guessed from that earlier stage direction. APOLLO inches over to the actors while they continue talking. (He is worried about what trouble DIONYSUS might cause.)

DIONYSUS: You guys are just so cute together. Look, let me prove it. [He gets up and makes a camera-shape with his hands.] Say cheese!

TANNING: That’s just your hands.

DIONYSUS [looking through his camera-hands]: And it still looks good!

APOLLO [inserting himself between VENTI and TANNING]: So... who here is dating? [Indicating VENTI and CLAUDE] Eh? Eh? [He reaches as if to take DIONYSUS’S DRINK for himself.]

DIONYSUS [moving his DRINK out of APOLLO’s reach]: Oh, are the extras allowed over here?

VENTI [trying to steer the conversation in another direction]: Let’s talk about something else. What’s the biggest danger you guys have faced in this job? I’ll go first: I once had to do a nude scene with a snake. [After nobody seems phased.] And the snake had a knife?

TANNING: Well I got a letter once with anthrax on it! [The others gasp.] Wait... it was either anthrax or FedEx.

CLAUDE: Are you kidding? I was SHOT BY AN ARROW.

VENTI [saying what she has wanted to say this whole time]: That’s the crazy thing! I think someone was trying to shoot me as well! This is an arrow they found on the floor while we were filming. [She reveals one of the ARROWS.]

DIONYSUS [casually, before realising]: Oh, how sweet, it has a little heart on it!

DIONYSUS and APOLLO look at each other, both realising that the ARROW is very probably a love arrow. They could both use it on the actors to reinforce a relationship (i.e., making CLAUDE love VENTI would really help out APOLLO).

APOLLO: Can I maybe just see that for a second—

DIONYSUS: No I think maybe, can I see it? I just want—in fact, if you could just get Tanning with it that would really—
APOLLO: DO NOT TOUCH TANNING WITH THE ARROW! Just, actually maybe if Claude—

VENTI: You guys are being weird. [Putting down her QUENCH and ARROW together] Also, what’s in this drink? It tastes just like Solo and tequila.

APOLLO and DIONYSUS look at each other then suddenly and simultaneously dive on/start wrestling for the ARROW. DIONYSUS finally gets it but in yanking it he accidentally pricks APOLLO. APOLLO, in pain and ANGER, snatches it off DIONYSUS and arrows him a bunch of times. They break apart and settle back, dropping the ARROW. There is Falling In Love SFX while APOLLO stares dreamily across at CLAUDE and DIONYSUS stares dreamily across at TANNING. They both stand up and move towards their new loves.

APOLLO [stroking CLAUDE’s hair flirtatiously]: Well, hello there.

DIONYSUS [after a pause, taking TANNING’s DRINK and stroking it]: Where have you been all my life?

CLAUDE is kind of nervous but clearly likes the attention from APOLLO more than he liked it from VENTI (he is a god after all). VENTI looks hurt and confused. TANNING looks thirsty and confused.

DIONYSUS: Who wants another drink? I know just the place!

APOLLO is like YEAH COME ON CLAUDE and CLAUDE is like oh okay and VENTI is like wait where is Claude going and TANNING is like Venti don’t forget me and they all follow DIONYSUS to Saloon 5/Athena’s Lair.

The HORSE follows them on a whim. When just about everyone has left, EROS appears on the other side, runs over to the abandoned ARROW, grabs it, and follows the cast to the bar. Lights down.
Scene 10 — Your 5 O’Clock Is Nearly Here

Same setting as Scene 8. Lights up on the entrance. ARTEMIS enters Saloon 5 but is stopped by PATRONS #1 and #2. She looks around, confused.

ARTEMIS: Excuse me?

PATRON #1: I’m sorry miss, but we can’t let you anywhere near Her Greatness with those weapons.

PATRON #2: You’ll have to place them with the others. [They indicate a nearby TABLE where ATHENA’s BOW and QUIVER of ARROWS are sitting, with a little SIGN that says “Athena”.]

ARTEMIS [insulted]: Do you know who I am?

PATRON #1: Um… Rob Schneider?

ARTEMIS: How dare you!

PATRON #2: Meryl Streep…?

ATHENA [calling out from the darkness]: No, I’m seeing Meryl at 5. Come in, Artemis.

ARTEMIS grumpily removes her BOW and QUIVER and places them on the table. PATRON #1 puts a little SIGN that says “Artemis” with her stuff. PATRON #2 waves something they like to imagine is an airport security SCANNER around ARTEMIS, complete with their own beeps and sound effects, before allowing her through.

Lights up on the rest of the bar. Near the THRONE, a FOLLOWER is holding a TO DO LIST, featuring ITEM 1: “Get love arrows from Artemis”.

ATHENA: Artemis! Still trying to win that bet for Hera?

ARTEMIS: Apparently Zeus has sent you for the same purpose. Why did you call me here? And what is this place? [She gestures to the FOLLOWERS on the floor.]

ATHENA: Oh, that. Just some people I picked up in a bar. Speaking of segues, I need your arrows.

ARTEMIS: What? No way! They don’t even work, but now that I know you want them I’m not giving them to you.

ATHENA: Ah yes, that does sound like something you would do.

ARTEMIS [reading the TO DO LIST]: Huh, love arrows?

ATHENA: Where did you hear that? [She follows ARTEMIS’s gaze to the FOLLOWER with the TO DO LIST and gestures at them to hide the list, which they take to mean they should turn the page, revealing ITEM 2: “Shoot actors” and ITEM 3: “Win bet”.]

ARTEMIS: No wonder they weren’t working! But if you have the love arrows [reading TO DO LIST again] you’ll just use them on Venti Grande and Tanning Chatum to win the bet! Like I almost did on your behalf, gross…

ATHENA [acting like she hadn’t thought of that]: Don’t be ridiculous, what are – [She follows ARTEMIS’s gaze to the FOLLOWER with the TO DO LIST again and shoos them away.] Get out of here!

DIONYSUS enters, followed by TANNING, VENTI, CLAUDE and APOLLO. APOLLO is getting a little touchy
feely with CLAUDE, who is embarrassed but partly enjoying it all the same. TANNING, behind the others, thinks this is good opportunity for him and VENTI but she is distracted by jealousy re: CLAUDE and APOLLO. DIONYSUS is still cradling his beloved DRINK. PATRONS #1 and #2 do their best to scan the NEWCOMERS as they stroll right on in.

The HORSE also enters at the back, with EROS hiding behind it. The two of them make a slow lap of the stage.

DIONYSUS: The party has arrived!

TROUBLED FOLLOWER: This is a place of worship!

DIONYSUS: It was, until they started serving water to everyone.

ARTEMIS [confused]: Apollo? What are you doing?

APOLLO [looking up from CLAUDE]: Oh hey Artemis! [Seeing the TO DO LIST, which has been flipped back to ITEM 1] Ohhh, love arrows. No wonder they didn’t work!

ATHENA follows APOLLO’s gaze and snatches the TO DO LIST from the FOLLOWER.

APOLLO [continuing]: We actually just had a bit of an altercation with a love arrow but... [booping CLAUDE’s nose] it all worked out in the end.

CLAUDE giggles.

ARTEMIS: This is all Eros’s fault! I’m going to kill that little turd.

Meanwhile EROS has been following the HORSE around the outside of the stage so as to keep his hiding place. The HORSE has just reached the front of stage, and walks across such that EROS is fully visible to the audience but blocked from the gods. He gestures at the audience not to give away his position.

AUDIENCE: LOL THERE HE IS!

EROS stops to try and shut them up, before realising the HORSE has moved ahead of him and he races to catch up with it.

ATHENA: Can somebody very quickly summarise what has transpired?

DIONYSUS: Well, Apollo is now in love with Claude. Which is VERY CONFUSING for Venti, since she was already in love with both Claude and Tanning. [Looking lovingly into his DRINK, then modestly] And, actually, I’ve found a special someone myself.

ATHENA’S FOLLOWERS start gossiping (“ooh Venti Grande is in love with Claude Colbert?” etc.). ATHENA looks annoyed at them and rises from her THRONE.

ATHENA [addressing FOLLOWERS]: Leave us!

This is only partially successful, so she is forced to shoo them out (maybe waving the TO DO LIST at them). They exit walking backwards, deferentially facing ATHENA.

ARTEMIS [to APOLLO, angrily]: Idiot! Claude was the one thing keeping Venti away from a relationship with Tanning! Since we don’t seem to be able to kill anybody we’re kind of relying on that! What were you thinking?
APOLLO: I don’t need to think. I’m in love!

*Meanwhile ATHENA has pulled VENTI over to have a chat. She isn’t very good at this. (ARTEMIS and APOLLO continue arguing silently.)*

ATHENA: So. You’re the girl one, yes?

VENTI: Excuse me?

ATHENA: Let’s have a chat, woman-to-woman. I need you to choose Tanning Chatum. It’s very important, to my father. And I have a sort of record on these things to maintain. [*She glances up at DIONYSUS, who gestures for her to smile. She does so but it’s really creepy.*]

VENTI: Huh?

ATHENA: I’m not explaining myself very well. [*Using gestures*] You. Love. [*Temporarily pointing at the wrong person*] Tanning Chatum. No love other one. Venti only love Tanning Chatum now.

VENTI: Are you my stalker or something? I’m confused.

ATHENA [*shrugging to DIONYSUS and giving up*]: This one is broken.

VENTI [*looking at the TABLE*]: Hey, what’s that? [*Her eyes widen in horror at the ARROWS and she looks at ARTEMIS and ATHENA, who smiles again in case it helps (it does not).*] Oh god. Ohhh god. It was you! You’re the crazy people who tried to shoot me!

VENTI [*backing towards the entrance*]: Claude… Tanning… I think it’s time for us to go….

ARTHTEMIS: Hey, what do you mean “tried”?!?

VENTI [*backing towards the entrance*]: Claude… Tanning… I think it’s time for us to go….

ARTHTEMIS [*noticing TANNING for the first time and getting angry*]: Tanning Chatum?! When did you get here? [*Pulling out a GUN from somewhere on CLAUDE*] You slimey—

TANNING looks horrified.

VENTI: I mean NOW, guys!
VENTI grabs TANNING and CLAUDE and they leave, CLAUDE making sure to give APOLLO his PHONE NUMBER ON A NAPKIN as he is dragged out of this apparent murder arena.

CLAUDE: Call meeeeee!

ARTEMIS empties the GUN, firing after them.

ARTEMIS: How did I ever love you, you fat jerk!

The GODS share a look with each other and the AUDIENCE once the ACTORS have left and the GUN is empty, like “what were they so worked up about?”

ATHENA: Now then Artemis, back to business. Do you know what arrows and I have in common?

ARTEMIS: Uh...

ATHENA: No. We are both very sharp. And you know what else is sharp? Scissors. Scissors in the shape of an X. The top half of an X is the letter V. V for Venti. And you know who Venti’s “ex” is?

ARTEMIS: Jack Nicholson.

APOLLO: Jack Nicholson.

ATHENA: Do you want to date this “Jab Nickerson”, Artemis?

ARTEMIS: No?

ATHENA: No. Nobody does. And you don’t have to, if you give me your arrows.

ARTEMIS [sighing]: Fine. Whatever. You can keep my arrows.

ARTEMIS takes her BOW and the QUIVER next to the “Athena” SIGN (after hovering briefly near the other one). ARTEMIS and APOLLO leave. APOLLO maybe salutes ATHENA/DIONYSUS or something (like they are honourable opponents).

DIONYSUS [raising his drink to ATHENA]: Well done!

ATHENA: I couldn’t have done it if Artemis hadn’t been so preoccupied by Apollo and Claude.

DIONYSUS: Why, thank you.

ATHENA: That wasn’t praise, I know it was an accident.

DIONYSUS: I think we just need to hit Venti again, to reinforce her feelings for Tanning. Before Artemis kills either of them, now she has her arrows back. It’s all down to the junket.

ATHENA: Indeed. Fastest shooter wins.

Lights down.
**Scene 11 – Junket? I hardly knew it!**

Well, it’s been crazy, but we’ve arrived at the press junket. Any GODS who do not appear in this scene can be in the audience (e.g. HERMES, HADES). A panel is set up with JOURNALISTS #1 and #2 and ARTEMIS, APOLLO, ATHENA, DIONYSUS, FLINT WESTWOOD and CAMERA OPERATOR among the spectating crowd. ATHENA has a big crowd of her FOLLOWERS from previous scenes. VENTI GRANDE, TANNING CHATUM, CLAUDE COLBERT and OSCAR BATE are sitting on a row of elevated CHAIRS. There is also a PANEL MODERATOR.

MODERATOR: Thanks everyone for coming to this event that closes out the first round of press for Sundown. Let me just say, everything about this film is hot. [Labelling them on his fingers] The script is hot, the cast is hot, the director is... here with us now. Oscar Bate, how has today been for you?

OSCAR: It’s been good to really talk about the art that’s behind th–

MODERATOR: Yeah wow, amazing truly inspiring.

ARTEMIS: Sight lines are clear. Let’s do this. [She raises her BOW.]

APOLLO: Just be careful! Claude is sitting so close to both of them!

MODERATOR [turning to VENTI and TANNING]: Now, our two leads, we received so many fan questions about the nature of your relationship.

VENTI GRANDE: Surprise surprise!

ATHENA [to her FOLLOWERS]: I need you to be brave and ready. When you see her lining up that arrow, you run.

ARTEMIS [firing an ARROW]: { Now!

ATHENA [motioning a FOLLOWER]: { Now!

A FOLLOWERS runs out and is hit by the ARROW. ARTEMIS glares at ATHENA and shoots again, but another FOLLOWER intercepts it. This happens two more times. The FOLLOWERS basically get hit and collapse onto the floor. ARTEMIS and ATHENA look at each other while starting to pull back her bowstring/starting to motion a FOLLOWER to run out, then they both stop, understanding.

MODERATOR: Z. from Mt Olympus, Ohio writes: “Venti Grande and Tanning Chatum, I’m a huge fan of your work, but tell me – what’s really going on between the two of you? Also hi Claude.”

ZEUS: That’s my question!

TANNING CHATUM: You know, down on that set it’s all love between everyone. People show me a lot of love generally and it can be confusing but –

MODERATOR: Sorry, if I can just interrupt you, we have another question along those lines from Hera [looking at the card] also from Ohio. [Baffled] Huh. She writes, “Dear actors, are you in a relationship?”

HERA [calling out]: No, I said “are you NOT in a relationship?” It’s supposed to be a leading question!
MODERATOR: Some excited fans out there. Hera continues, “It seems to me that you are not. Can you please confirm that for everyone?”

VENTI: I have loved working with all of my co-stars, from the great, much, much older Jack Nicholson to Tanning and Claude right here.

HERA [calling out]: That doesn’t sound like love love to me.

MODERATOR: And another one from Z. [Touching EARPIECE] The editors tell me that over 75% of questions were from Z, so good job Z.

ZEUS: Thank you.

HERA: Get on with it!

MODERATOR: He writes, “You are in a relationship question mark”. There is also a crayon drawing of the two of you holding hands. Venti, Tanning... can you state for the record, once and for all: are you currently engaged in a romantic relationship with each other?

The GODS all shout out the answer they want (“say yes!” etc.). The AUDIENCE joins in.

VENTI [frustrated]: I’m sorry, can I just say something. [She stands up.]

APOLLO [suddenly realising]: The bird is out of the cage. I mean, like, the shot is clear or something I don’t know. FIRE FIRE FIRE, her followers can’t jump that high!

ARTEMIS pulls back her bowstring. DIONYSUS sees what is happening.

VENTI: I’m quitting the film.

EVERYONE gasps.

ARTEMIS [pausing due to this news]: Oh.

DIONYSUS [running towards ARTEMIS]: Not today kids!

DIONYSUS dives onto ARTEMIS, causing her to fire an ARROW in the direction of CLAUDE.

APOLLO [diving to block the ARROW]: Nooooooooon!

JOURNALIST #1: He’s been shot! [To JOURNALIST #2] Are you getting photos of this?

Lots of gasping and camera flashes (can we do this?).

APOLLO: Euuugh. My heart! My heart!

JOURNALIST #2: Somebody help him with his heart!

APOLLO: It feels like it’s... growing! Oh, Claude! My love!

CLAUDE: Apollo, speak to me!

Falling in love SFX.

ATHENA: Oh, I see.

ARTEMIS: What? My arrows... [She stares at an ARROW, realising what has happened.]
The FOLLOWERS who were hit earlier start cuddling on the floor.

ARTEMIS [suddenly in a spotlight, mirroring her audition]: No! Oh no! Apollo! What have you done? I’m so angry. [She cradles APOLLO’s body.] You were so stupid and now I wish you were gone. Apollo, I know that you are in love with him. I don’t deserve your idiocy. I’m going to make you regret living forever, you stupid, stupid man! If it wasn’t for me, you’d ruin everything. This grudge will live on in my heart forever. [Raising her head] I blame you, Eros!

EROS [in the audience]: Uh oh.

MODERATOR: If I’m not wrong those were the words of one of Stella’s famous speeches in Sundown. This is a clever stunt, Oscar.

OSCAR: It was beautiful! I’m crying. [He turns to TANNING] Touch my face. Touch it.

JOURNALISTS crowd around ARTEMIS, asking questions. Meanwhile, ATHENA moves downstage, looking out into the audience.

ATHENA [waving one of her ARROWS at EROS]: We both know what this is. You’re very lucky I didn’t shoot anybody yet, Eros. Watch yourself.

EROS whimpers.

JOURNALIST #1: Venti, what does it mean for Sundown now that you’re quitting? Is it true that filming hasn’t even finished?

VENTI: It’s true that I’m leaving, but look, here is your new Stella! [She indicates ARTEMIS.] And you’ve already seen a taste of how good she’ll be!

OSCAR: Yes, yes, yes!

CAMERA OPERATOR [appalled at OSCAR]: What! Everything will have to be re-done! You can’t just replace an actor because someone got shot by an arrow!

JOURNALIST #2: But if Tanning Chatum is in the film without Venti Grande, how can they possibly start dating for real?

ATHENA turns around suddenly and stares into the audience thoughtfully. DIONYSUS and FLINT WESTWOOD, behind ATHENA, act out her inner monologue in echoey voices.

DIONYSUS: Tanning Chatum is in the film without Venti Grande...

FLINT WESTWOOD: Replace an actor because someone got shot by an arrow...

DIONYSUS: Plot them into a perfect roman— [ATHENA clamps her hand over his mouth.]

ATHENA: Yes, yes! [She gets her BOW and an ARROW and shoots TANNING in the thigh. Then sarcastically] Oops.

TANNING: Agh! My thigh! [He tries to shuffle into the centre to do a speech from the movie since it worked so well for ARTEMIS.] Oh, leg. You were so brave, and now you’re gone! Oh man this actually hurts so much acccgh.
MODERATOR: Tanning’s been shot! It’s strangely less compelling than the first time.

**ATHENA** pushes **FLINT** to the center.

**FLINT** [to **TANNING**, copying a line from the movie]: You best pack your things and get outta this town, kid. It ain’t big enough for the both of us.

**OSCAR** applauds.

MODERATOR: WOW another classic line from *Sundown*!

**TANNING**: I think my thigh is really hurt! Please.

**CAMERA OPERATOR**: At least he didn’t die.

**OSCAR**: No, it’s much worse than that. His thighs are what make him a star! Death would at least have been merciful.

**CAMERA OPERATOR**: True, we’ll have to reshoot the whole thigh scene.

**OSCAR**: Flint Westwood, you are hired!

MODERATOR: In a surprise twist Venti Grande and Tanning Chatum have now BOTH been replaced!

**FLINT**: Thanks Athena, you finally did it.

**ATHENA**: Yes, I finally proved you wrong about me not doing it yet.

**VENTI** goes to comfort **TANNING**.

**TANNING**: Uh, Venti, I have an **ARROW** in my THIGH.

**VENTI**: Tanning, don’t be sad. Not acting will be so wonderful. We’ll run a farm in the country and pick oranges every day! We can eat them while you cry about your life choices and I reply to old fan mail!

**ZEUSS**: They refused to answer my question clearly in the interview. [Gesturing to **VENTI** and **TANNING** and looking at the **AUDIENCE**] What does this look like to you?

**DIONYSUS**: Look how nicely Stella is caring for William! She’s clearly into him!

**HERA**, **APOLLO** and **ARTEMIS** (encouraged by **GODS** in the audience agree).

**HERA**: Okay, okay, I’ll read the stupid books!

**ARTEMIS**: But look! He doesn’t love her, he’s clearly obsessed with his own leg!

**HERA**, **APOLLO** and **MORTALS** (encouraged by **GODS** in the audience agree).

**ZEUSS** [getting his **LIGHTNING BOLT**]: Ugh fine. Don’t look at me like that [name of person in audience],
apparently it only feels like being punched in the back of the head.

DIONYSUS [to ATHENA]: Quick, do something! We’re about to lose the bet!

ATHENA [pretending to be a random guy in the crowd]: But they’re not even the leading couple anymore!

ZEUS, HERA and the GODS in the audience are like “Hmm true, but what does this mean for me as a person?”

ZEUS: What about the new couple?

HERA [sceptically]: Artemis and the cowboy?

ARTEMIS: No thank you!

ATHENA [from somewhere else in the crowd]: But they’re not the couple the bet was about!

ZEUS, HERA and the GODS in the audience are like “Hmm well that’s also true.”

ATHENA: Surely we have to go by the initial terms—

APOLLO: No, we were just told the leading couple—

DIONYSUS [giving ATHENA a thumbs up]: They’re clearly in love!

ARTEMIS: Please somebody confirm I don’t have to date the gross cowboy!

ATHENA: Yes, more arguing! MORE ARGUING!

This explodes into general arguing among the GODS, with those in the audience perhaps getting onto stage so their two cents will be more visible.

ZEUS: { SHUT UP!
HERA: { SHUT UP!

HERA: Ugh, do you people ever stop?

ZEUS: So competitive!

HERA: If we have to stand around wasting time to work out who won then we don’t even care.

ZEUS: Come on baby, let’s get out of here.

HERA [leaving with ZEUS]: Pack it up, this one’s ruined!

The GODS in the audience follow ZEUS and HERA backstage. ARTEMIS and APOLLO look at ATHENA.

ATHENA: What? Nobody loses if the event is cancelled. This was objectively the best available outcome!

DIONYSUS shrugs. ARTEMIS looks unfulfilled. APOLLO awkwardly pats a frozen MORTAL. Lights down.
Scene 12 — 2 Sun 2 Down

The scene opens with the same movie trailer music from Scene 1. Any directorial choices made for the trailer in that scene should be replicated here.

VOICEOVER: From the studio that brought you Sundown and The Diary of Anne Frankenstein...

A spotlight appears on ARTEMIS dressed as VENTI GRANDE and FLINT WESTWOOD dressed as TANNING CHATUM.

ARTEMIS [as VENTI]: Oh Tanning, they’ve been shooting at us again! If only I was a better actress! Me, Venti Grande!

FLINT [as TANNING]: Pull yourself together, Venti. We can’t let those crazy fans tear us apart. [He clutches her in a dramatic, chauvinistic way.]

VOICEOVER: Comes a movie about finding help… CLAUDE COLBERT appears dressed as FLINT WESTWOOD.

CLAUDE [praying]: Please, I need you to solve my problems…!

VOICEOVER: Just as you lose your career...

CLAUDE: I’ll do anything to get back into that movie, goddess Athena!

VOICEOVER: That was the guy who played Cash Jackson by the way. [Surprised] He’s pretty good. [Back into serious voiceover mode] With Apollo as a stunt double for literally all the male parts...

APOLLO has a FLINT WESTWOOD wig on. He badly fakes getting shot in the thigh and then turns and boops CLAUDE’s nose.

VOICEOVER: And a brief return to acting by organic farmer Venti Grande...

VENTI [reading a SCRIPT, confused]: “I can’t stand that they are in love… waves arrows about crazily”?

VOICEOVER: With a man who we’re still not sure is her lover or not...

TANNING [reading a SCRIPT]: “We’re going to be stars, Artemis!” [To Venti] Who is Artemis?

VOICEOVER: Featuring Academy Award winner, Scout the Horse...

HORSE [wearing an OSCAR BROOCH]: Neigh!

VOICEOVER: It’s the movie based on the pantomime based on the fictional idea of a real story of the film adaptation of the book, with catering by Dionysus...

DIONYSUS [appearing in front of the FOLLOWERS with a DRINK and winking]: It’s the quenchiest!

VOICEOVER: Meryl Streep called it, “a movie my friend did”...

Crowd of FOLLOWERS all bowing down to ATHENA (who is facing the back).
CLAUDE [on one side of the crowd]: Oh goddess of wisdom, solver of problems. How will we ever get this film made?

FLINT [on the other side of the crowd]: Ah, this damn press junket. Damn the fans! Damn the world!

ARTEMIS [with FLINT]: Run away with me, Tanning. Platonically!

VOICEOVER: After Sundown: The Book of Athena. Coming to a theatre near you.

ATHENA turns around, to reveal DIRECTOR accessories.

ATHENA: That is a wrap!

Everybody bows without need of an irrelevant dancing segment.

The End.