

Troy: Fall of a City
Episode 1
By
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WILD MERCURY
In association with **KUDOS**

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1

EXT. OPEN PLAIN. EASTERN ANATOLIA. 1300 BC. NIGHT.

1

Close up on a HORSE's nostrils at full speed. Steam pouring.

We stay just on the horse's head for a moment.

A ROYAL MANSERVANT is riding the horse across the windswept plain that stretches for miles from the sea towards the city. He rides at breakneck pace, hurling the horse forward.

On the back of the horse sits an old woman, simple dress, a woven bag in her hand. SAMARIA. Gripping tight to the rider.

The horse whips its way through the night.

SAMARIA holds on tight.

Then suddenly looks to her left. Sees a GODDESS. HERA. Staring as she rides alongside. Then to her right. Another. Ominous. ATHENA. Are they warning? Mourning?

Then they are gone and she is alone again.

2

INT. TROY. LOWER CITY. NIGHT.

2

The HORSE charges through the quiet night-time city, to the gates of the Citadel.

3

INT. TROY. CITADEL. NIGHT.

3

The horse reaches the calm of the inner citadel. Darkness. Dim flames. Glimpses of marble, silk and gold.

SERVANTS rush to help SAMARIA off the horse.

SERVANT

She's calling for you.

4

INT. TROY. PALACE. HECUBA'S CHAMBER. NIGHT.

4

A stunning candle-lit royal chamber. Daylight diffused through curtains. Rich rugs and hangings.

Inside the chamber is a woman. Almost naked. Pregnant and in labour. Pale. We will later find out that this is HECUBA. Blood on the sheets of her royal bed. A shrine of figurines to the fertility goddesses.

HECUBA

Samaria. Quickly.

SAMARIA is taking herbs from her bag. Pressing them to a juice, she rubs them on the belly. Her hands expertly feeling the belly.

- 5 **INT. TROY. PALACE. CHILD CASSANDRA'S ROOM. NIGHT.** 5
- In another room in the Trojan palace a seven year old girl wakes. She hears the cries of her mother in a distant room. This is CHILD CASSANDRA.
- 6 **INT. TROY. PALACE. HECUBA'S ROYAL CHAMBER. NIGHT.** 6
- HECUBA is pushing. Little baby's feet are visible, crowning where the head should be. SAMARIA eases the feet. Blood everywhere. HECUBA grimaces, pushes, the WAITING WOMEN wipe her head. They murmur low prayers to the gods. Unintelligible.
- HECUBA
It won't come. It won't come.
- The BABY won't come. It seems stuck. A terrible tension.
- 7 **INT. TROY. PALACE. CORRIDOR. NIGHT.** 7
- CHILD CASSANDRA walks the corridors. Distant sounds of the birth. HECUBA's moaning. We are on the back of CASSANDRA's head. Her nervous hands.
- She walks towards the sounds.
- 8 **INT. TROY. PALACE. HECUBA'S ROYAL CHAMBER. NIGHT.** 8
- SAMARIA expertly takes a knife, holds it in the flame of a candle, uses oils to massage the perineum, then cuts HECUBA to open up the way.
- A wild scream of pain from HECUBA.
- 9 **INT. TROY. PALACE. CORRIDOR. NIGHT.** 9
- CHILD CASSANDRA hears the scream and increases her pace. Still we do not see her face.
- 10 **INT. TROY. PALACE. HECUBA'S ROYAL CHAMBER. NIGHT.** 10
- SAMARIA
Push now.
- HECUBA grimaces. A terrible effort. The room dripping with tension. SAMARIA eases the head through.
- And the child is out.
- HECUBA breathes a deep sigh. SAMARIA smiles. The BABY cries. Then the door opens.

3. TROY - Fall of a City, Episode One, draft 20.10.16

CHILD CASSANDRA stands there. Seven years old. HECUBA smiles at her.

HECUBA
Look. You have a brother.

Round on to CHILD CASSANDRA's face.

But it isn't what we expect. No love. No smile.

Sweat on her brow. Her breath tight, audible.

Her fingers play anxiously with each other.

And there is horror in her eyes.

TITLES: TROY - FALL OF A CITY

11 **EXT. TROJAN HILLS. DAY.**

11

A bright sunny day.

Horses hooves thundering across hard ground.

A young peasant boy is on horseback. Handsome. Rugged. One hell of a rider.

PARIS.

He and his brother are herding horses in the hills. Goats dart among the horses' legs.

PARIS stares across at his brother CANTENAUS and his 50 year old father AGELAUS. Together they herd the horses across the plain, riding, driving them on, wonderful skill with rope and horse.

There is a deep romance to the scene. Bright sun. Empty space.

Men of the prairie.

12 **EXT. / INT. AGELAUS DWELLING.**

12

A small dwelling on the hillside on Mount Ida.

Outside there are animals everywhere. Dirt. Poverty. AGELAUS' face weathered by time and the West winds that hurl across the prairie. He takes a rabbit, caught in a trap, bleeds and turns it on a spit over the fire. The fire is stoked by PARIS. Smoke from the fire. CANTENAUS stirs soup. Three men, no woman.

4. TROY - Fall of a City, Episode One, draft 20.10.16

Later: the meal made, the three men eat outside, on the ground. CANTENAUS chews the rabbit slowly, belches in satisfaction. PARIS downs his mug, gets up wanders over and quietly pisses on the fire.

AGELAUS
We need a woman in this house.

The SONS laugh.

13 **EXT. FIELD ON MOUNT IDA.** 13

A young woman is running through long grass. She is laughing,
enjoying the chase. Enjoying being hunted by the young PARIS.
She is OENONE.

14 EXT. LONG GRASS. TROJAN HILLS OF MOUNT IDA. DAY. 14

PARIS and OENONE are fucking. Naked in the mountain sun. OENONE is rustically sexy, not beautiful exactly, but sensuous. We don't need to see much of their faces here, it's all about nature, bodies, laughter.

PARIS can hear AGELAUS's voice shouting over the hills.

AGELAUUS (O.S.)
Son! Where are you?

OENONE
He's calling.

PARIS
His horses can wait. I've got a
beast of my own to take care of.

PARIS kisses her breasts. She laughs and grabs his arse.

OENONE
You're the animal.

AGELAUS (O.S.)
Where are you!!

But they are oblivious to his cries.

15 **EXT. THE PLAIN. DAY.** 15

The horses have broken free from their enclosure. It's mayhem. PARIS rides up. Bits of straw still in his hair.

AGELAUS
Where've you been?

PARIS

I was checking the fences.

CANTENAUS smiles. Like hell you were.

PARIS (CONT'D)

What happened?

AGELAUS

Bloody wolves scared them! Round them up!

CANTENAUS and PARIS laugh, racing their horses as they circle the wild horses.

AGELAUS (CONT'D)

Paris! Cantenaus! Stop those stupid bloody games!

They ignore him. Laughing in the sun.

AGELAUS (CONT'D)

If we lose one, you're paying for it.

But they just race on. They circle them, expert work, PARIS showing his skills, eyeing the horses, almost knowing them, by instinct. CANTENAUS and himself working quietly, beautifully together.

Then a cry. One of the young colts has broken free towards the hills. It's a pale grey colt, distinctive.

PARIS

Shit.

PARIS breaks away to see it escaping from the herd, bolting at speed towards the hills.

PARIS (CONT'D)

(calling) I'll go!

PARIS whips his horse and makes to follow.

The grey colt plunges into undergrowth that leads to the trees.

PARIS plunges after. Fights through long grass and into trees, he hacks and ducks his way through.

He hears the colt's hooves, follows.

Then thinks he hears something else.

The laughter of WOMEN.

Beat.

6. TROY - Fall of a City, Episode One, draft 20.10.16

PARIS drives his horse on through trees. Thicker and thicker the trees, he cuts and hacks, his face is torn by branches, he thinks he can go no further, lost as he is in the wood...

Then suddenly crashes through long grass to a dark shadowy clearing in the wood.

Mist in the air. It's threatening. Seductive.

A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG MAN sits waiting, holding a golden apple.

This is HERMES. Though we don't need to know this yet.

HERMES

Paris? Son of Agelaus the herdsman?

PARIS

That's me.

PARIS stops in disbelief. He jumps from his horse. He comes close to HERMES looking at him with utter curiosity.

HERMES

You've been chosen to resolve a dispute.

Then HERMES points. PARIS looks up to see three young women sitting apart. One is whittling wood with a sharp knife. HERA. The second is all wiry intensity. She stands half-behind a tree, her one visible eye staring straight at PARIS. ATHENA. The third, apart, sits at a pool, her naked back to him. APHRODITE.

HERMES (CONT'D)

Decide which of these three goddesses is the finest. Whoever you choose will receive the golden apple.

HERMES tosses a golden apple into the air.

PARIS glances up. He still doesn't quite believe this.

PARIS

Um. I herd goats. How can I decide something like that?

HERMES gets just a touch threatening.

HERMES

Zeus, bringer of storms, personally selected you. So you don't have much choice do you?

He gestures. And PARIS sees in the distance, sitting over a fire, a solitary almost melancholic figure.

It is ZEUS. He does not even look up.

7. TROY - Fall of a City, Episode One, draft 20.10.16

PARIS feels a strange fear.

HERA steps forward, the knife in her hand. The trees shake, birds fly from the bushes.

HERA

I am Hera. Choose me Paris, you'll
be the most powerful man alive.

PARIS breathes. What the hell...? ATHENA arrows PARIS with her one visible eye. APHRODITE does not move. Just washes her back.

HERMES

Athena.

ATHENA walks forward from the tree. HERA snubs her. The wind blows cold and hard. The power of nature is tangible. PARIS blinks.

ATHENA

I am wisdom. With me at your side,
you'll be the most admired man on
earth.

HERA defies him silently to do so.

Then APHRODITE stands and turns. She walks forward, puts a hand to his lips to silence him. A stillness descends.

APHRODITE

You know me of course.

PARIS

Aphrodite. Goddess of love.

APHRODITE

Choose me and I'll give you the
most beautiful woman in the world.

And that idea burns even brighter than the others.

PARIS

Who is she?

APHRODITE smiles, secretive.

APHRODITE

You'll know her when you see her.

HERMES

Time to choose.

PARIS looks at the three goddesses, then at ZEUS distant at the fire. A moment of intense anticipation as PARIS considers. The goddesses wait quietly for this mere mortal. Then PARIS takes the apple, hands it to APHRODITE.

APHRODITE smiles. She knew it. HERA's foot stamps the earth, birds scream in fear, ATHENA breathes out in disappointment, laying waste to a bush that lies smoking on the ground. ZEUS does not react at all. HERMES turns to ZEUS.

HERMES (CONT'D)
The mortal has chosen.

And suddenly HERMES disappears. As do all the goddesses. Only ZEUS remains.

PARIS
No wait! When do I meet my prize?

And only now ZEUS looks up. At PARIS. Deep sadness in his eyes. As if owning a terrible knowledge.

Then he too is gone.

There is nothing left of their visitation.

The wind blows in the trees.

The colt wanders into the clearing.

PARIS stares at the colt.

16 **EXT. MEADOW NEAR AGELAUS DWELLING.**

16

PARIS is chopping wood for firewood not far from the cottage. In the meadow CANTENAUS is riding OENONE on his horse. But PARIS is deep in thought. The visit of the gods has disturbed him. He takes another axe. Hits down hard.

CANTENAUS
Oy. Your girlfriend wants to ride with you.

PARIS
In a minute.

PARIS stares at his carefree brother then spits on his hand, wields the axe.

17 **INT. AGELAUS DWELLING.**

17

Father and son sit at night fixing ropes, mending boots, a storm outside. AGELAUS and PARIS. The place is a tip. CANTENAUS sleeps. OENONE washes up dishes. Makes herself useful in the background.

AGELAUS eyes her. Speaks quietly to PARIS so she can't hear.

AGELAUS
Why don't you marry her?

PARIS reaches for the rope. Anything to avoid this.

AGELAUS (CONT'D)
You won't do better.

PARIS eyes him. AGELAUS watches him with worry in his eyes.

18 **INT. AGELAUS DWELLING. NIGHT.** 18

The three peasant men are sleeping, all in the same room.

But PARIS is not sleeping. He can't.

He gets up, dresses, walks out.

Looks at the night sky.

Feels the air. Feels something inside him burning.

19 **EXT. HILLS OF MOUNT IDA. NIGHT.** 19

PARIS rides out fast. Across the night landscape as the sky just begins to promise the dawn.

20 **EXT. COASTAL CLIFFS. DAWN.** 20

PARIS rides to the cliffs that overlook the sea.

He looks out at the sea to the West. The sun creeps over the Eastern horizon behind him.

He is suddenly filled with a desire to leave. Just to go. Go anywhere but here. And more than anything to find the woman he has been promised. He speaks quietly, as if to some imagined lover.

PARIS
Where are you?

Then he hears hooves. He turns.

And sees eight finely dressed ROYAL LORDS riding on the horizon.

He watches.

They start to set up what look like challenges for sport. Equestrian challenges for the annual games.

They charge their horses.

They race their horses against each other.

PARIS rides up on his smaller horse, approaches a SERVANT-OSTLER sitting watching on a fine stallion.

SERVANT
Keep your distance.

PARIS
Who are they?

SERVANT
None of your kind.

TROILUS and the others prepare their horses. And PARIS is immediately entranced. The goddess' words still in his ears.

PARIS
What are they doing?

SERVANT
Training. For the city games. Keep back.

PARIS watches as the TROJAN PRINCES race their horses across the plains.

His heart fills.

And PARIS suddenly pushes the OSTLER off his horse and leaps on to the big stallion.

SERVANT/OSTLER
What the hell are you doing?!

But PARIS is already whipping the horse towards the PRINCES who are preparing another race.

And then as they start, he joins them and races alongside!

One PRINCE stares at him. This is TROILUS. Younger than PARIS but aristocratic, entitled.

TROILUS
Get out the way!

But PARIS does not. He accelerates, past TROILUS, past DEIPHOBUS.

He turns his horse in triumph.

The TROJAN LORDS catch up, stop, look at him. But PARIS's brush with the gods has given him courage.

PARIS
You may be lords in the city. But here I rule.

TROILUS
We're not lords my friend. We're princes of Troy. Priam's sons. And you are out of your depth.

Shit. PARIS didn't know that.

They surround him. They charge him, he veers, the horse whinnies and bucks, PARIS holds on brilliantly, magnificent horsemanship. Sweat on his brow.

TROILUS charges again, and the others, this is sheer bullying, the HORSE bucks again, kicks and rears, PARIS can't hold on, he is thrown to the dust.

TROILUS (CONT'D)
No hard feelings. Just be more
careful next time.

They turn to ride away. PARIS bridles in shame and rage. His face smeared in dirt.

PARIS
Take me to the games. I'll bet my
life I can beat any of you at any
event.

They pause their horses, turn back. Smile at him.

TROILUS
I'll give you one chance to take
that back.

PARIS fronts up, stares them in the eye. The impetuous conviction of youth. He's taking nothing back.

21

EXT. TROY. GAMES ARENA. DAY.

21

An arrow is fired through the air and pings a shield that has been hung as a target on a pole on the bowl-like arena outside Troy.

More arrows fly. Some miss, some catch the edge, some land plum. An exercise in martial skill.

For we are in the games on the plain of Troy.

The BOWSMEN drink the toast to the gods. Music plays wild and live. It's raw and gypsy this festival. It's dangerous.

PARIS stands nervously. Looks around. In another area a TROJAN leaps a bull held by another TROJAN. PARIS can see other injured TROJANS who have failed. Blood gushing from wounds. Blood and dust. He breathes deep.

Then TROILUS walks up.

TROILUS
You're up next.

He brings him forward. The huge crowds stare at him. Like a sacrifice waiting to happen. What has he got himself into?

The drumming begins.

In the distance he can just make out the royal enclosure, shaded from the sun. They are all watching him.

TROILUS speaks loud.

TROILUS (CONT'D)
Spear throwing. Deiphobus. Against
the boy from the hills. Who dares
to challenge the royal family of
Priam.

A hush descends. DEIPHOBUS, tall man, the largest of the PRINCES, walks forward. He eyes PARIS.

SERVANTS bring two javelins. Place one in PARIS' hand. One in DEIPHOBUS's hand.

Then DEIPHOBUS takes his giant frame away to a spot and runs fast towards a marked line - he hurls the javelin.

It travels miles in the air.

PARIS watches it land a hundred yards across the plain. The attending audience applaud and roar.

The PRINCES stare at PARIS.

TROILUS (CONT'D)
Your turn.

The PRINCES watch him. This stripling? No chance. The crowd are quietly enjoying the humiliation.

PARIS feels the javelin in his hand. Then suddenly he has an idea. He mounts his horse, javelin in hand, rides his horse to the run-up point, then charges, unbelievable speed, stands up on the horse's back. It's the most daring piece of horsemanship, and an astonishing image.

The city stares in amazement as PARIS hurls the JAVELIN into mid-air... and it flies for miles...

Shocked silence in the Trojan crowds. PARIS smiles and bows at TROILUS and DEIPHOBUS who stand in mute astonishment.

Then someone moves.

PARIS's eyes rest on a warrior of intense strength and nobility who has walked forward. This is HECTOR.

Slowly HECTOR unbuckles his leather armour. He talks quietly to TROILUS who walks over to PARIS.

TROILUS (CONT'D)
My brother Hector will fight you
for our family's honour.

Beat. PARIS stares at HECTOR.

TROILUS (CONT'D)
This can be avoided. Bow down and
seek forgiveness for your offence.

PARIS knows he should bow down. But stubbornness kicks in. He starts to unbuckle.

TROILUS (CONT'D)
Don't be stupid.

Even TROILUS is worried for him now. But PARIS has made his decision.

22 **EXT. COASTAL CLIFFS. DAWN.**

22

AGELAUS, CANTENAUS and OENONE ride up, anxious. They have noted PARIS' absence and are looking for him.

Then AGELAUS stops dead. There is PARIS' horse, untethered, alone on the cliffs.

But where is PARIS?

Then AGELAUS sees the mark of hooves on the ground.

23 **EXT. TROY. GAMES ARENA.**

23

HECTOR and PARIS have unbuckled to bare chests.

They face off. The crowd move in to provide a kind of ring formed of human curiosity. PRIAM and HECUBA are ushered forward to the best seats.

There is death in the air.

They fight.

They meet, PARIS swings wildly, no boxer he, HECTOR waits, silent assassin then with one quick combination, jab jab, hook, he has PARIS sprawled half-conscious on the floor.

His vision blurs. HECTOR stands above him, framed by the sun, like a god.

HECTOR
Bow down to the family of Priam.

PARIS shakes his head.

PARIS
Again.

14. TROY - Fall of a City, Episode One, draft 20.10.16

Our POV shifts suddenly to QUEEN HECUBA in the royal area. We recognise her from the first sequence, but now she is 20 years older. She sits alongside her husband KING PRIAM.

She glances to one side as PARIS shakily stands.

And we see that sitting next to her, a NURSE on either side, is a young woman. Who just like the girl in the opening sequence is rubbing her hands.

CASSANDRA.

On the games field, PARIS rises in shock.

They fight again. Again HECTOR is too quick, an upper cut this time sends PARIS sprawling.

In the crowd HECUBA's heart beats a little faster. Why does she feel an attachment to this boy?

PARIS hides his pain as his bones hit the earth. The crowd lean in closer. Sweat, blood, heat.

PARIS clambers to his feet, sways. HECTOR eyes him.

HECTOR

You've shown yourself a man. Bow down. Pay tribute. Then go back home. Enough's enough.

PARIS defies him.

PARIS

Fuck you.

Stunned silence in the crowd as PARIS rises. The two men circle.

HECUBA stares at the nervous hands of CASSANDRA. Yes, it mirrors her own feeling. Why does her heart beat stronger?

In the distance AGELAUS rides up towards the baiting crowd. OENONE behind him on her mare. They try to see what's going on.

And then PARIS attacks. It's wild, animal, but it's unexpected, his fists are flying, he kicks, bites, he has HECTOR in close so he can't use his sparring skills, the crowd have to push back, it's messy, and PARIS gets one punch in, HECTOR feels it but in one instinct retaliates with a left hook, PARIS crumples to the earth, HECTOR is on him, no decorum now, they scrabble in the dust.

They fight, body to body, scratching, biting, punches low and high, and then finally, HECTOR rolls, and suddenly he has PARIS in close, grabs PARIS by the neck, his hand on the throat of his opponent.

HECUBA almost rises from her seat. Is HECTOR going to kill him?

A disturbance in the crowd. AGELAUS and OENONE have broken through. AGELAUS tries to see through the crowds. Who is fighting?

PARIS, on the ground, his face bleeding, scarcely able to breathe, is eye to eye with his conqueror. HECTOR, his hand on his throat, his rage combatting his sense of justice, offers a quiet deal.

HECTOR

Beg for my mercy. I'll let you go.

PARIS

Never.

HECTOR, sweat pouring from him, starts to squeeze. HECUBA stands in terror.

And it's then that PRIAM makes out the haggard face of AGELAUS.

Their eyes meet.

As if in slow motion, AGELAUS shakes his head at PRIAM.

It means more than we could possibly know.

PRIAM

Hector stop.

HECTOR's blade pauses in mid-air.

PARIS looks up. AGELAUS is there. OENONE and CANTANEUS behind.

PARIS sees AGELAUS look into PRIAM's eyes. They look both to PARIS.

PARIS watches in confusion as PRIAM stands fast.

PRIAM (CONT'D)

(to PARIS)

Come here.

PARIS approaches, glancing at AGELAUS in confusion, but AGELAUS keeps his eyes down.

PARIS walks up to the royal enclosure. PRIAM and HECUBA await.

PRIAM stares deep into PARIS' eyes. HECUBA darts a look to her husband.

PRIAM suddenly reaches forward and exposes PARIS's breast.

A mark sits on it. HECUBA breathes in, in shock and disbelief.

Beat.

PRIAM turns to the close-in crowds. Speaks quietly.

PRIAM (CONT'D)
A miracle has occurred. This boy is
Alexander. Our second son. The gods
have saved his life! They have
brought him back to us.

PARIS feels the earth blur. What happens next is like a dream to him.

HECUBA rushes forward to embrace him. HECTOR, in astonishment, approaches.

HECTOR
Brother?

He touches him. Tentative. Still fused with the violence of what has just happened.

PARIS looks around, unable to take in what is happening.

TROILUS rushes over. Other LORDS join. They raise PARIS high in the air.

PARIS stares at AGELAUS in confusion. He tries to get eye contact to confirm or deny the truth but no time. He is lifted high in joy and exultation.

TROILUS
Carry our brother into the city!

A roar of joy as PARIS, his life transformed in a moment, is carried on the crowd into the city.

But all alone CASSANDRA's fingers play feverishly with each other.

24

INT. TROY. SKEAN GATE.

24

PARIS, his face bleeding, his half-naked body bruised, dusty, battered, is carried high into the city.

Troy's high towers greet him. Its wealth. Its bronze and gold and cloth. The smells and sounds, the cheering overwhelming.

He passes the twin horse caryatids that stand either side of the gate.

He enters the city of horses.

25

INT. TROY. PALACE. ROYAL CHAMBERS. EVENING.

25

SERVANTS are bathing the bleeding body of PARIS. They can't get the dirt off him.

PARIS
You're going to have to rub harder
than that.

They pour buckets over him like a horse. Someone chucks the peasant clothes on the fire.

They are dressing him in royal clothes.

They are preparing him for the great feast.

Then the door opens. The elegant and mercurial PANDARUS enters. He eyes PARIS. Who is not yet wearing his royal clothes with quite the right style.

PANDARUS
Your father. Wants to see you.

26

INT. TROY. PALACE. CORRIDORS.

26

PARIS, his face still showing signs of battle, is walked up the corridor by PANDARUS. He hears voices raised.

As he approaches he hears HECUBA and PRIAM. Another voice, that of a priest - LITOS - arguing with a righteous fury. PARIS can see through a small gap in the door. All three speak under their breath.

PRIEST LITOS
I beg of you...

HECUBA
I prayed for his return to us.
Every day for twenty years.

PRIAM
We both did.

PRIEST LITOS
My Lord, please listen -

HECUBA
No. We listened to you once. I
won't suffer again.

PRIAM
You'll speak no more of this to
anyone. Understand?

LITOS
You're making a big mistake. The
gods do not forget.

PARIS takes the plunge and walks in.

27

INT. TROY. PALACE. PRIAM'S PRIVATE ROOMS. DAY.

27

He enters. The priest, LITOS stands there, angry and
humiliated. And in the corner of the room, head bowed,
AGELAUS.

HECUBA turns to LITOS. Covering up.

HECUBA
Leave us Litos. We'll discuss this
further in the morning.

PRIEST LITOS eyes PARIS with deep hostility for a moment,
then turns and exits.

PARIS stands, more than a little confused. AGELAUS avoids his
gaze.

HECUBA instantly softens, goes to PARIS, looks at him. Holds
him.

HECUBA (CONT'D)
You must have a thousand questions.

PARIS
I'm a shepherd. Not good with
words.

PRIAM
You're not a shepherd. Not any
more.

PARIS again looks to AGELAUS.

HECUBA
It's hard I know. But you must
understand that Agelaus is not your
father.

PRIAM
And your name isn't Paris. It's
Alexander. You were taken by wolves
from this window when you were
three days old. Agelaus found you
on a mountain track where the
wolves left you. Scratches on your
face but nothing more. It was a
miracle you survived.

HECUBA
The gods protected you.

HECUBA smiles. AGELAUS says nothing.

HECUBA (CONT'D)
We searched for you for months. But
the mountains go on for miles. We
had no success.

PARIS breathes deep. These are his parents. It's too much to
take in.

PRIAM
Agelaus. Thank you for everything.
The city owes you a great debt.

He embraces the old man.

PRIAM (CONT'D)
Say goodbye to my son.

AGELAUS moves forward.

AGELAUS
Goodbye ... Prince.

He takes his hand. Wants to hug him but ends up kissing his
hand as you would a lord. PARIS tries to hug him but AGELAUS
does not respond as he wants. Slips out of the hug. Bows
again and leaves.

The door closes. PARIS stands, a touch awkward.

HECUBA
Come here.

And now PARIS goes to both of them, embraces them. It's
strange and new.

HECUBA (CONT'D)
Oh God how I've missed you.

She clutches him. Then PARIS turns to see two children
staring at him at the door. POLYXENA and POLYDORUS. Six and
eight years old.

HECUBA (CONT'D)
Come in.

They walk in, stare at him.

HECUBA (CONT'D)
Polydorus. Polyxena. Come and say
hello to your new brother. This is
Alexander.

PARIS smiles.

PARIS
Hello.

POLYXENA

What's it like to be stolen by
wolves?

PARIS

I can't remember.

They smile at him, slightly amazed. HECUBA beams with pride.
PRIAM smiles.

But we might wonder - is everything quite what it seems?

28

INT. TROY. PALACE. BANQUET HALL. EVENING.

28

HECTOR

Welcome brother. Our blood.

In a huge banquet room, HECTOR cuts his own hand, cuts PARIS'
hand. Their hands meet. All brothers do the same.

Solemn and celebratory.

PARIS with HECTOR.

PARIS with TROILUS.

PARIS with DEIPHOBUS.

HECTOR (CONT'D)

Now drink. To your new family!

He presents him with the long pipe. Wine poured from one end
into PARIS' mouth.

PARIS downs the pipe, roars of approval, he smiles in wine-
strewn triumph. Looks around at the glorious golden walls in
awe and wonder.

TROILUS

Let's feast for twenty days. One
for every year he has been away!

29

INT. TROY. PALACE. BANQUET HALL. EVENING.

29

A wild bacchanalean celebration. Food and wine. SOLDIERS and
DANCING GIRLS. Music plays from ouds and flutes.

The reunion party is in full flow. Flagons of wine, dancing
women, music from tortoiseshell lyres, benches of food. A
wild release of joy. PARIS taking it all in. It's shocking
and new. He is taken from one dance partner to the next.
Beautiful women, wine, it all blurs.

He takes a woman, dances with her. Whoops with joy. The music
goes faster. The BROTHERS attack him playfully.

A dance with pillows and cushions, feathers everywhere, PARIS grabs the feathers, sticks them to himself, dances like a chicken. The drums beat faster and the PRINCES roar as PARIS dances again. Wilder and wilder.

30 **EXT. TROY. PALACE WALLS. NIGHT.**

30

A stream of urine.

PARIS, drunk, is taking a piss off the palace wall. He finishes, looks up at the sky, stares in disbelief at where he is. As if expecting to wake up at any moment.

Then he hears something. Hooves below heading out. He looks to see two SERVANTS usher AGELAUS and OENONE out of the city gates. Then the SERVANTS turn back and the shepherd and the girl continue alone. PARIS watches as they proceed out of the gates of Troy and disappear quietly into the night.

Then OENONE looks back out of pure instinct. Does she see him on the walls? Do their eyes meet for a moment? His old family, his old life.

PARIS takes a breath, trying to gather himself.

And suddenly, he feels very alone.

31 **INT. TROY. PALACE. BANQUET HALL. NIGHT.**

31

Music plays. PARIS is drunk now. We're in his head as he swirls in a drunken hurtle to oblivion. Too many women, too much booze. Brothers blur with courtesans. Walls with ceilings. He's lost.

A voice in his ear. HECTOR. Seeing beneath the bravura.

 HECTOR
 You should take things a little
 more slowly brother.

 PARIS
 I don't do slow.

And in a very male denial of the confusion he is feeling, PARIS suddenly kisses HECTOR on the lips. Laughter as HECTOR pushes him off, PARIS falls into a girl, kisses her, grabs at her breasts, knocks over the wine, falls back on to the gold carpets, looks up, sees flesh and wine and feathers blur as the orgy intensifies. PARIS feels he is falling, falling into chaos.

And does he for a second see APHRODITE among the SLAVE GIRLS, laughing at him?

32 **EXT. TROY. LOWER CITY. DAWN.**

32

It's dawn.

A boy from the lower city EMMANDER, whom we will get to know well, is cleaning the baker's shop with his slave XANTHIUS.

They both watch as a distant figure weaves his way drunkenly through the city. It's PARIS, worse for wear, unshaven, filthy, singing badly, a half-naked SLAVE GIRL on his arm.

EMMANDER

Who is it Xanthius?

XANTHIUS

The new prince. Been like that ever since he got here.

He continues to brush the hearth as the ovens of the bakery light.

33 **EXT. TROY. LOWER CITY. NIGHT.**

33

Night has fallen. We're outside a small shack in the lower city. PARIS can be heard cavorting with two young WHORES inside. Maybe we can half-see naked figures through one of the shack's glassless windows.

In the darkness HECTOR is watching and listening.

PARIS (O.C.)

Come on, one more time.

WHORE (O.C.)

Aren't you tired baby.

PARIS (O.C.)

You herd goats all day. Then come talk to me about tiredness. Come here!

Giggles from inside the shack. In on HECTOR's eyes.

34 **EXT. TROY. STREET. DAY. CONT.**

34

PARIS walks up the street, returning from another night's revels. He's stumbling around, singing, the SLAVE GIRL in his embrace.

When suddenly coming the other way is the PRIEST LITOS, escorted by SOLDIERS to the gates. He passes PARIS who stares at him.

The PRIEST LITOS goes to speak but is gagged by SOLDIERS. PARIS watches as the PRIEST LITOS is marched brutally on before he can say anything.

The gates are opened and LITOS is marched through. The gates close behind him.

On PARIS: what was that about?

35

INT. TROY. PALACE. PARIS ROOMS.

35

PARIS enters his rooms with the SLAVE GIRL.

HECTOR is there.

HECTOR

You. Out.

The SLAVE GIRL leaves.

PARIS

No wait a minute...

Too late. She's gone.

PARIS (CONT'D)

Where's she gone? Get her back.

HECTOR

Sit down. Where've you been?

PARIS

Continuing the party.

HECTOR

In the lower city.

PARIS

Yes. So?

HECTOR

Where whores and pedlars hang out.
Not princes.

PARIS

This one does.

Beat. Tension between them.

HECTOR

Get dressed. We're dining as a
family tonight.

HECTOR leaves. The doors close.

PARIS stares at the bronze mirror.

He does look a mess.

He takes off his clothes, gets ready to shave.

Looks at the birth mark. A mark of good or evil?

He looks out the window. Tries to see the hills beyond the walls. Can't. The buildings block the way.

And then PARIS sees in a window across the courtyard a young woman staring at him. Wringing her hands.

CASSANDRA, her pale face staring at him in fear of something only she can see.

Their eyes meet.

36

INT. TROY. BANQUET HALL. NIGHT.

36

A family meal. PARIS, unshaven, not dressed properly, is eating with PRIAM, HECUBA and the family in the dining room. ANDROMACHE and HECTOR. TROILUS. DEIPHOBUS. PARIS eyes his father who smiles kindly. Efforts are being made.

PARIS

Our sister Cassandra. Why does she never come to meals?

HECUBA

Cassandra's mind is fragile. We have to protect her, for her own good.

PARIS

Can I meet her?

PRIAM

It would only disturb her. You focus on your own behaviour. And leave her to us.

PARIS

My "behaviour"? What does that mean?

They pause. It's time for that family chat. The whole family stare at him.

HECUBA

Alexander we all understand this is difficult for you. It's a very different life here. It's not easy making that change.

PRIAM

But make it you must.

PARIS

I'm sorry if I'm a disappointment to you all.

He chews his bread with a defiant peasant gusto.

PRIAM

You're not. But the party's over now. No more visits to the lower city. No more late nights. It's time for work.

PARIS

I thought princes didn't work. I thought that was the point.

He smiles. A challenge. Met with some style...

PRIAM

Well they don't herd cows. If that's what you mean.

PRIAM's tone is kindly but the message clear. PARIS stews silently. They all watch him quietly.

PARIS

I've got a better idea. Maybe you should just send me back.

Beat. HECTOR and ANDROMACHE eye each other: maybe they should. But PRIAM speaks quietly, with love.

PRIAM

No one's sending you back. And no one's asking you to change who you are.

He leans in. Private, even among the family.

PRIAM (CONT'D)

You think I wasn't the same when I was your age? I was exactly the bloody same. Couldn't bear it. Having to say the right words, playing by rules I didn't believe in. But sometimes it needs to be done. For the family. For the city. You'll learn that son. I'm going to help you learn.

PARIS

How?

PRIAM

Pandarus.

A figure enters from the shadows. PANDARUS.

PANDARUS

My lord?

PARIS
Who's this?

PRIAM
Pandarus is my most trusted public
servant. He's going to go with you
on your first official function
abroad.

This is news to everyone except PANDARUS and HECUBA. Shocked
silence.

PRIAM (CONT'D)
I have a friend across the waters.
King Menelaos of Sparta. Represent
me. And Troy. Introduce yourself
and pay tribute. The rediscovered
son. Strengthen the ties between
our two lands.

PARIS
How exactly do I do that?

PRIAM
You'll learn. I have faith in you.

He puts his hand on his arm.

PRIAM (CONT'D)
Prove yourself a prince, my son.

A challenge laid down.

PARIS
Well then. Better get dressed.

He walks out, with deliberate roughness, refusing to play the
courtier. HECUBA eyes PRIAM. Is the boy really ready?

37 **EXT. DIPLOMATIC VESSEL. SHORES OF ANATOLIA.**

37

PARIS, now officially made up as Prince, festooned with
gifts, boards the boat surrounded by rowing slaves, advisors.
POLYXENA runs forward. Garlands him.

PARIS
Goodbye little sister.

He kisses her. Gifts are being hauled on to the boat and
stored in huge crates and boxes.

He sees HECTOR on the shore. Watching him. Testing him. PARIS
breathes. And decides to front it. And enjoy it out of pure
defiance.

TROILUS and the other BROTHERS push the boat from the shore.
POLYDORUS and POLYXENA watch.

PARIS has never been on a boat before and it shows. He nearly falls in.

TROILUS

Don't drown yourself you idiot!

PARIS sits unsteadily on his royal seat, PANDARUS beside him, as the SLAVES start to row. HECUBA turns to PRIAM, talks quietly.

HECUBA

He's not ready. Let Hector go with him.

PRIAM

No. Let him learn on his own.

38

EXT. AEGEAN SEA. DIPLOMATIC BOAT.

38

A dot upon the empty ocean. PARIS stands somewhat impetuously on his throne as the boat cuts through the water. The sun is hot and the SLAVES are not rowing as the sail does all the work.

PANDARUS

We shall be there in good time. The winds are auspicious.

PARIS

It's you that's full of wind my lord.

PANDARUS smiles hollowly. PARIS does a little dance, trips on a rope, almost falls but rebalances, and bows to PANDARUS. He sits back in his throne, looks up at the sky, soaking in the sun.

PARIS (CONT'D)

If this is work, let me work.

Time passes. The sun. The wind. The birds. But then a voice.

VOICE

Land ahead!

He stirs. Ahead of him PARIS sees the shadows of the distant land.

And suddenly it's as if he can feel it. It hits him like warm air, an intoxicating perfume. He can feel something utterly magical approaching.

39

EXT. TRACK THROUGH PELEPONNESE MOUNTAINS.

39

PARIS is in a carriage of gold being pulled through the high Spartan mountains up a rough track.

Many other carriages before and after, most of them festooned with the gifts from Troy.

High peaks on all sides.

Hard rock, heat, olive trees scattered on the hills.

The horses fight against the incline. It is like a journey into the unknown.

The party continue through the winding mountain path, and PARIS sees before him as they turn a bend the Palace of Menelaos, perched on a plateau high above him.

Like a citadel. PARIS stares in admiration.

40 **EXT. SPARTA. PALACE.**

40

The chariot rushes into the courtyard of the palace. The rich smell of flowers. Birds flit across the yard. SERVING MEN and WOMEN appear with cloths and flowers, DIGNITARIES dressed in fine robes are lined up.

PARIS looks around, unsure of what's expected.

DIGNITARY
The gods bless your embassy.

41 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE. CORRIDOR.**

41

They walk down a corridor decorated with flowers. The aroma intense. PANDARUS at PARIS' side.

DIGNITARY
Your quarters are in the south of
the palace and afford the finest
views of the region.

PARIS passes hunting dogs that lie sleepily on the stone. Birds flit through distant doorways. There is a strange quiet. No other people.

What is this place?

42 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE. PARIS ROOMS.**

42

PARIS walks into the room. Cool white stone. Windows open out on the valley below. He goes to the window, looks out. Stunning fields of green.

High rocks. It's intoxicating but deeply strange.

The SERVANTS bring all his things inside.

DIGNITARY

Tonight the king will hold a
banquet in Prince Paris's honour.

PANDARUS nods. The DIGNITARY leaves.

PANDARUS

You should sleep now. Need to be on
form tonight.

A sharpness to his tone. He bows and goes.

PARIS is left alone. He's not quite sure what to do.

PARIS stares at the white walls. They seem white. He
approaches. Looks closer.

PARIS scratches away at the white plaster. To his amazement
and some excitement he reveals naked bodies. Men. Women.
Erotic acts of love. He breathes it in.

Suddenly, behind him - a woman's laughter.

He spins around. APHRODITE is sitting on the bed, bathed in
pools of light. PARIS blinks.

And she is gone.

43 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE. CORRIDOR.**

43

A SERVING WOMAN is walking fast. She opens the door to a room
in the palace.

44 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE. ROYAL CHAMBERS.**

44

Inside it's dark, curtained. There is a sadness and
loneliness to the room. A female figure lies on a silk-
covered bed in the darkness. Her back to us, we cannot see
her face.

SERVING WOMAN

The King asks if you are to attend
the banquet tonight for the Trojan
prince.

The FIGURE does not move. Still we have not seen her face.

SERVING WOMAN (CONT'D)

What shall I tell him?

VOICE (HELEN)

Tell him that diplomacy is when a
snake smiles before it bites. Tell
him what you will.

SERVING WOMAN
I'll say you are sick.

The WOMAN goes to the door, opens it.

VOICE (HELEN)
Akalia. This new Prince from Troy.
What's he like?

SERVING WOMAN
He's better-looking than any of his
brothers.

The FIGURE still does not move. The WOMAN leaves and closes
the door.

45 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE. THRONE ROOM. NIGHT.**

45

The ritual of diplomacy.

MENELAOS sits on the throne in the hall. SLAVES and OFFICIALS
surround. His favoured dog sits right by him.

PARIS walks slowly up the main aisle of the throne room.
Behind him SERVANTS bring gifts. He is doing the formal
stuff, it's new to him and he's a little hesitant. PANDARUS
helps him out.

PARIS
Oil of iris. Frankincense. Rose and
musk. Spices from the east, cumin
and...

He pauses. Forgetting the word.

PANDARUS
Turmeric.

PARIS
Turmeric. Amber from our Baltic
traders. From Africa - boxes of
ebony. Ostrich eggs. Crystal
thrones. All of Troy's traders pay
tribute to King Menelaos. They
bring the world to Sparta.

MENELAOS nods. PANDARUS smiles with cool support. PARIS sees
the empty QUEEN's throne beside him. MENELAOS stands, elegant
in his robe.

MENELAOS
Let us feast to celebrate the new
prince of Troy.

PARIS sits at a long table next to MENELAOS. Food is brought
in, studied, formal. Elegant but austere.

PARIS looks again at the empty chair.

PARIS
Her majesty not joining us?

MENELAOS
The Queen is unwell tonight.

PARIS
I'm sorry to hear that.

MENELAOS
She will feast when she recovers.

PARIS
Tomorrow?

A diplomatic mistake.

PANDARUS
Or when she judges it best.

MENELAOS eyes PARIS.

MENELAOS
Exactly.

46

INT. SPARTA. PALACE. FEASTING ROOM.

46

The meal continues, silent, formal. PARIS awkward, no fun this, unable even to know quite what implement to use for what task. He drinks more wine to calm the nerves. By contrast MENELAOS barely touches his wine. His dog takes more of the food than he does.

PANDARUS eyes PARIS. Say something.

PARIS
Nice palace.

MENELAOS
You think so? It was much neglected before I came here. The Queen's father was hopeless at that sort of thing. I am conducting a major renovation, and a complete re-plastering of all the walls. It will never have the majesty of Troy but we do what we can.

He sips his wine.

MENELAOS (CONT'D)
Your story's a strange one. I would like to hear it from your mouth.

PARIS pauses, wipes his brow.

PARIS

It was a miracle of the gods.

He smiles. Suddenly the door opens.

And a flurry of colourful birds enter the room. They flap fast round the room alighting on branches and eating from trays.

HELEN

I'm sorry. I'm late.

A figure in the doorway, silhouetted against the light outside, stunningly dressed. Then she moves forward. Two SERVING WOMEN at her side.

And PARIS sees her face.

White lead make-up, patterned with red, a translucent silk half-covering her breasts. Her hair is auburn-red.

HELEN.

PARIS stands, dazzled by her beauty. He bows.

MENELAOS

My darling. You are recovered.

He goes to her, kisses her softly.

HELEN

Curiosity defeated my tiredness.

MENELAOS

Sit. Save your strength.

There is control in his care. But she obeys.

MENELAOS (CONT'D)

I was just asking prince Alexander to recount his charming story.

HELEN bows deeply before PARIS. The coloured birds flutter to her.

PARIS

Are those your birds my lady?

HELEN

Yes. My father always let them fly free in the house.

MENELAOS

One of his little indulgences.

He smiles. HELEN looks at PARIS, a strange sadness in her eyes. But maintains her public courtesy.

HELEN

I interrupted you my lord. Please.

PARIS is utterly dumbfounded by her beauty.

PARIS

Uh so. I was stolen from the palace window as a baby by wolves. This shepherd found me on the mountain, took me into his house.

HELEN

Unaware of your true nature.

PARIS

Yes. He called me Paris. He taught me to ride, and run cattle. That was my life. Then a few weeks ago I saw the princes training on the plain. I challenged them.

MENELAOS

How brave of you.

PARIS

Foolish really.

HELEN

And you won?

PARIS

Yes.

PANDARUS

Until you fought your brother Hector.

PARIS

Yes. He would have killed me. But my father recognised me from a birth mark. And I was spared.

MENELAOS

Show me.

He does so. He looks at it. HELEN also looks. Turns to MENELAOS.

HELEN

To think something so small could change so much.

Beat.

PARIS

How did you two get together?

PANDARUS coughs at the vulgarity of the question but MENELAOS allows it.

MENELAOS

No it's fine, it's a good story and everyone knows it. My brother won Helen for me in competition. He fought a hundred lords for Sparta, and the right to Helen's hand.

PARIS

You're not from here?

PANDARUS

As I told you my lord. The King and his brother Agamemnon are from Mycenae. The true capital of Greece.

PARIS looks across at HELEN. Can't help saying it:

PARIS

So you didn't win her yourself?

HELEN hides the very slightest of smiles. MENELAOS eyes PARIS with a new and keen suspicion. PANDARUS winces at the lack of diplomacy.

MENELAOS

Be careful prince. Your father wrote in his letters you had much to learn.

Beat. PARIS flushes red with anger at his father's candid portrayal.

PARIS

What else did he say? I can't read so I wouldn't know.

MENELAOS smiles. A man with a secret.

MENELAOS

Time for bed I think. The Queen must not over-strain herself and you must be tired after your journey.

PARIS

Everyone keeps telling me I should be tired. I'm not tired.

MENELAOS has already risen.

MENELAOS

Well the queen is. Come Helen.

HELEN rises. Against her will but she makes no protest.

PARIS eyes her. Intoxicated by her.

47 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE. PARIS ROOMS.**

47

PARIS sleeps alone in the rooms. The night is warm, a warm breeze flutters the curtains of his room.

He hears a music. Distant.

He rises. Puts on a robe, walks out.

48 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE. CORRIDORS.**

48

PARIS walks down the dark passage way towards the music. The palace is asleep. SERVANTS lie sleeping on the stone.

PARIS follows the music through an outer courtyard, across a street to a series of rooms at the far end of the citadel.

The music leads him as in a dream.

He quietens his step, looks through into the rooms.

There is a music playing, stringed instruments. The MUSICIANS are all blind.

A kind of incantation, repetitive, trance-like.

The room is smoky, there is a cauldron on top of which a powder has been placed to create the opiate vapour. Flasks of red wine sit on the floor.

No man is present beyond the blind MUSICIANS.

PARIS edges closer.

And then he sees them.

YOUNG WOMEN are dancing slowly. Naked. Oiled bodies in the half-light.

PARIS stares through the amber light.

At the end of the room. Close to the fire. HELEN stands, half-robed. Inhaling the opiate vapour.

Her eyes flick up.

She sees him.

Their eyes meet.

A smile on her lips that might be deadly, and might be love.

He withdraws into the darkness, his heart beating with lust. And terror.

And sees an OSTRICH staring at him as if with a secret from the gods...

49

EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. DAY.

49

It's morning. MENELAOS walks with PARIS and PANDARUS on the walls of the palace. HELEN follows at a distance, with a group of LADIES. HERMIONE is also there. PARIS looks at the LADIES faces, now dressed in finery. Yes, the same women from last night.

PARIS turns to MENELAOS.

PARIS

The Queen's women are beautiful.

MENELAOS

Yes they've been friends of my wife's since birth.

PARIS

You're a lucky man.

MENELAOS

You think so? I miss my real home. Have you been to Mycenae?

PARIS

No.

MENELAOS

You should. There we have real culture. This place is a wilderness. I've done my best to civilise it.

He looks at HELEN, his face filled with a mixture of strange emotions.

MENELAOS (CONT'D)

But look at her. She's worth it all.

MENELAOS smiles to PANDARUS. A secret between them?

MENELAOS (CONT'D)

Helen. Bring our daughter to meet our honoured guest.

HELEN approaches with HERMIONE.

HELEN

Hermione, meet the Prince of Troy.

HERMIONE bows deep. 14 years old.

MENELAOS

Beautiful isn't she? And with
brains to match.

HELEN

You may go now Hermione.

But MENELAOS is too quick.

MENELAOS

No wait. Hermione will need a
husband soon.

PARIS breathes deep. It's clear. MENELAOS is making a
proposal.

MENELAOS (CONT'D)

Dynastic marriages strengthen all
parties involved. They are like
hands held fast across the water.
That's why your father sent you
here Prince. Or didn't you know?

And now PARIS understands. He is here to be married off.

HERMIONE is slightly taken aback, she looks down to the
ground, embarrassed. HELEN looks away but PARIS can see a
flash of jealousy in her eyes. She had no idea MENELAOS was
going to do this. Nor did PARIS. But he plays the game.

PARIS

I'm honoured to be considered
worthy of her.

MENELAOS

I didn't say you were. Not yet.

He smiles at PARIS, not unkindly and walks on with PANDARUS
and HERMIONE, talking quietly. PANDARUS looks back at PARIS
with a witty eye. This is a plan he was clearly in on from
the start.

HELEN looks at PARIS. They are alone for the first time.
Silence. A tension. He does not know what to say.

PARIS

Did you know about this?

She didn't but she conceals the truth.

HELEN

Why? Doesn't it please you?

PARIS

Of course it does. If it's my
father's wish. And yours.

A challenge. She evades.

HELEN

It's business. My husband wants a treaty with Troy. My daughter is part of the deal.

PARIS

Is Troy that important?

HELEN

Troy controls the straits from Asia. Everything passes through your city. Tin from the east to make bronze. Spices from India. So everyone wants a piece. Welcome to the world Prince.

PARIS smiles at her. Beat.

HELEN (CONT'D)

How did you sleep?

She eyes PARIS boldly. My God. Does she know he saw her?

PARIS

Not so well. In Troy we've got the sea breeze. Cools the skin. Here the heat's like a furnace.

Beat. Does he dare? Yes he does.

PARIS (CONT'D)

And then I thought I heard music. But maybe I was wrong.

HELEN

Do you know the story of Actaeon?

PARIS

No. Should I?

HELEN

He spied on the bathing goddess Diana and was turned into a stag for his pains. The dogs chased him through the forest and tore his flesh to pieces.

She stares at him. PARIS stares back. And in an instant he is certain. She is the one.

PARIS

Maybe it was worth it.

A joke? Or not. She smiles.

50

INT. TROY. PALACE. CORRIDOR/ CASSANDRA'S BEDROOM.

50

HECUBA is walking fast up the palace corridor, her face pale. She enters a room. Inside is kind of chaos, CASSANDRA is being restrained. SERVANTS are holding her down, calming her as she mutters in protest.

CASSANDRA scratches at her skin. She sees HECUBA, suddenly quietens.

HECUBA

What have you given her to calm her?

DOCTORS

She refuses to drink anything. She hasn't been this bad for years.

HECUBA

What is it Cassandra?

CASSANDRA

The new prince... I see it in his eyes ... Black blood...

HECUBA looks at her in concealed terror.

HECUBA

You need to sleep Cassandra. (to DOCTORS) Give her what she needs. And keep her in here. For tonight at least.

Then HECUBA walks out, the door closing behind her.

51

INT. TROY. PALACE. PRIAM'S ROOMS.

51

HECUBA, still troubled, enters. PRIAM is with a MESSENGER. He looks up. The MESSENGER nods and leaves. There is an awkwardness to the private scene, which we have not seen before.

PRIAM

They're staying longer. Pandarus thinks Menelaos will offer Alexander marriage to his daughter.

She smiles, but not convincingly.

PRIAM (CONT'D)

You see? I said he'd adapt.

HECUBA

I don't like him being away. He's reckless. He can't stop himself.

PRIAM

I was reckless at his age. Or I'd
never have won you.

Beat. An attempt to soften her. A difficult tender moment.

She breathes, deep emotion. He gets up, walks to the doorway
to the bedroom. Looks through the doors into the royal bed.

PRIAM (CONT'D)

He was conceived in there.
Remember?

He tries to touch her. But she pulls away.

HECUBA

Cassandra. She saw black blood. In
her dream.

Beat. He eyes her with a kind of anger.

PRIAM

The gods have forgiven. Why can't
you?

52

INT. SPARTA. PALACE. FEASTING ROOM.

52

PARIS stands in full ceremonial clothes.

The diplomatic dinner. All the local lords are here. They
have brought gifts for Troy. HERMIONE is seated at the table
like a princess, she is made-up, a potential prize. But she
is awkward with the attention. It's not her style.

And PARIS only has eyes for HELEN who is magnificently
attired. She does not speak at all during the meal.

PARIS is becoming more skilled as an ambassador.

AMBASSADOR

The kingdoms of Corinth and Thebes
bring you gold and stones, wine
from the hills and olives picked
from the finest trees.

PARIS

All of Troy is grateful and wishes
peace on Corinth and Thebes.

AMBASSADOR

Odysseus of Ithaca sends his
greatest tributes and affections.
Along with six chests of precious
stones, topaz, ruby and cornelian.

PARIS

All of Troy is grateful and pays
tribute to the great King Odysseus.

AMBASSADOR

King Agamemnon of Mycenae sends his
love and with it a chariot of gold.

PARIS

King Agamemnon won the beautiful
Helen and the kingdom of Sparta for
his brother. He knows the true
value of a gem.

He smiles. HELEN hears every word. But doesn't even turn to
him. She yawns. A challenge.

PARIS stares at her, anger rises, and he suddenly makes a
decision. And like a true diplomat...

PARIS (CONT'D)

May I walk with your daughter my
lord? It's only right we get to
know each other.

HELEN bristles. MENELAOS smiles. It's what he wanted.

MENELAOS

Of course. Hermione. Show the
Prince the chamber of silks. Take
your time. The feast is long and no
offence will be taken.

HERMIONE rises, nods obediently.

HELEN barely conceals her rage and envy as PARIS takes her
daughter's hand and walks her out of the door.

53

INT. SPARTA. PALACE. CHAMBER OF SILKS.

53

PARIS and HERMIONE walk among the fine silks in the room.

HERMIONE

These were a gift from an Indian
King. He tried to buy my mother's
hand but she turned him down.

PARIS

Why?

HERMIONE

She refused all offers until her
father forced her to take a
husband.

PARIS

Didn't she want to marry?

HERMIONE

Must we always talk about her?

PARIS

What do you want to talk about?

HERMIONE

I don't know. I don't know what to do or say. I'm not like my mother, I'm not skilled in these things.

She breaks down slightly.

PARIS

Hey come on. It's all right.

PARIS comforts her. Holds her like a young girl, not like a princess

HERMIONE

I'm not skilled with men. I don't know what to do.

She clings to him. Her hand seeks his chest. There is a sexuality here too but clumsy. He holds her, slightly embarrassed.

But then a figure at the door. HELEN. She sees PARIS with HERMIONE. Misreads it. Jealousy.

HELEN

Hermione your father wants to see you.

HERMIONE

But he asked me to come here.

HELEN

He didn't ask you to make a fool of yourself. I'll show the Prince the silks myself.

HERMIONE walks moodily from the room. HELEN shuts the door.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Stop playing games.

PARIS

Games my lady?

HELEN

It may suit my husband to do so. It does not suit you. Hermione's a girl. She's not ready for courtship.

PARIS

I wasn't courting her. I was
comforting her.

HELEN

That's not what it looked like.

PARIS

Well that's what it was.

A beat.

HELEN

We should go back to the dinner.

PARIS

Not yet. All those bloody dinners.
They're stifling.

He steps towards her slowly, through the silks. One step.

HELEN

These silks were given to my
father...

PARIS

By an Indian prince. You turned him
down. I know.

HELEN

Then there's nothing more to say.
We should go.

He's not so sure.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Please don't look at me like that.
I'm your hostess and Queen of this
palace.

PARIS

And does that make you happy?

HELEN

It's no concern of yours how I
feel.

PARIS

I bet this palace was once very
different. When it was yours and
your fathers. And you were
different too.

HELEN

What do you mean?

She bristles. He's hit a nerve.

PARIS

Don't pretend you don't know. Your world here was wild. Your civilised husband didn't want that. It scared him. So he tamed it. With his whitewash, his official dinners, his endless speeches. He tamed you.

HELEN

I'm a woman. We don't get to select our fate.

PARIS

What fate? A life of gritting your teeth through deadly banquets? Drugging yourself into oblivion? I rode horses every day on a burning plain. I know what freedom is.

HELEN

That'll change. You're royal now. Duty will be your master too.

PARIS

No one can master me. Except maybe you.

This with a humble but utterly seductive smile.

She stares at him, stunned. Now her warning is 100% genuine, her voice quiet.

HELEN

Be careful what you say.

PARIS

Caution never got me anywhere.

He stares at her unflinching. She has never been this close to such audacity. He is so close now he can touch her.

HELEN

What gives you the right...?

PARIS

The gods.

He reaches out.

HELEN

Please. Don't.

PARIS

Are you happy? Tell me yes and I'll go.

Beat. She says nothing.

Slowly he touches her. He runs his hand over her skin. Her breasts.

A beat of unbearable tension.

Then they hear hooves in the valley below.

54 **EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. OUTSIDE CHAMBER OF SILKS.**

54

They look out to see a lone HORSEMAN tearing through the palace gates.

A thumping at the gates.

Then suddenly a commotion. ATTENDANTS rushing through the palaces.

ATTENDANTS

My lady! Your majesty! The King -

55 **INT. SPARTA. PALACE.**

55

HELEN and PARIS rush through the passageways, flanked by ATTENDANTS. They walk into the feasting chamber where MENELAOS sits, reading a letter. PANDARUS watches concerned.

MENELAOS

My father. He's dead.

HELEN rushes to her husband. Holds him.

MENELAOS (CONT'D)

My brother's already set sail for Crete. I'm to join him there for the funeral.

HELEN

I'll come with you.

MENELAOS

No. We have a guest. You stay, offer hospitality.

HELEN

My duty's by your side. Hermione can attend to our guest.

PANDARUS

My lord. If it's easier for us to leave, just say.

MENELAOS shakes his head.

MENELAOS

I won't hear of it. My father has been sick and his death is not unexpected. But we must look to the future. Celebrate new alliances.

He gestures towards HERMIONE, even now the politician. He comes towards PARIS, places a friendly hand on his shoulder.

MENELAOS (CONT'D)

You have spirit, Alexander. I admire that. Please. Stay. Get to know my daughter.

PARIS nods, bows. He feels guilty in the face of such grace.

MENELAOS (CONT'D)

Prepare the carriages, I'll leave at first light. Come Helen.

Visibly grief-stricken he takes HELEN by the arm. PARIS watches as they walk out of the chamber together.

56 **EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. COURTYARD. NIGHT.**

56

The quiet of night. PARIS walks out into the cool courtyard, crickets in the air. He looks up into the window of the royal rooms. A candle burns behind curtains. A naked woman's shape is visible. Comforting her weeping husband. HELEN.

57 **EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. COURTYARD. DAWN.**

57

The departure.

The entire court is in black. A frenzy of preparation, servants and carriages.

MENELAOS climbs into his royal carriage. His dog goes with him. HELEN watches him go, he gazes back to her.

MENELAOS

Five days.

PARIS is there at the corner of the courtyard. He watches as the carriage storms out of the palace and into the hills.

HELEN turns and sees PARIS. They lock eyes. But neither approaches the other. Both of them know it's far too dangerous.

Beat. Helen gathers her black-clad women and disappears into her private chambers.

And the door closes shut behind her.

58 INT. SPARTA. PALACE. PARIS ROOMS. 58

PARIS sleeps alone. The night is silent. No music.

He gets up. Leaves his room.

He stands in the passageways, listening. No sound.

He starts to walk to the Queen's secret chambers but they are empty. No music, no opium. Nothing.

He walks back into the main courtyard. And it's as if he senses her.

59 INT. SPARTA. PALACE. HELEN'S CHAMBER. NIGHT. 59

She is washing her face in semi-darkness. Her WOMEN are with her. They conduct ritual ablutions for the dead. The women WHISPER in a low hum.

HELEN'S WOMEN

Grant Atreus safe passage to the
next life oh ye gods. Grant his
soul joy. Give him peace.

HELEN intones. But she isn't thinking about the dead. She's thinking about PARIS.

60 INT. SPARTA. PALACE. NIGHT. 60

PARIS walks to the wall of her rooms. Sits against it. Feels her inside the walls. His heart beating like a drum. He can hear the hum of voices...

61 INT. SPARTA. PALACE. HELEN'S CHAMBER. NIGHT. 61

Inside her chamber HELEN sits against the same wall as the WOMEN continue the low hum of prayers for the dead.

WOMEN

Death be his welcome gods. Let him
into your majesty. Give him peace.

In the shadows HELEN quietly puts her hand inside her robes... Her eyes close.

62 INT. SPARTA. PALACE. FEASTING ROOM. 62

PARIS sits and eats. HERMIONE sits with him. PANDARUS sits alongside.

PARIS looks at the Queen's seat. Empty.

But no HELEN.

PARIS
Where is the queen?

SPARTAN ADVISOR
She said to go ahead sir. She will
not eat today. Out of respect for
the king's dead father.

PARIS nods. He does not even touch his meal. His heart is
twisted with longing. PANDARUS watches. Does he notice
something strange in his young lord?

HERMIONE certainly does.

HERMIONE
Why do you always stare at her
chair?

She eyes him with the kind of hate born of envy.

HERMIONE (CONT'D)
Men are fools.

Suddenly PARIS hurls his food at the wall. HERMIONE flinches.

PANDARUS
My lord...

PARIS stands. Walks out. PANDARUS goes after him.

PANDARUS (CONT'D)
What the hell is going on?

PARIS
Pack the bags. We're leaving
tonight.

PANDARUS
His highness asked...

PARIS
I don't care what he asked.

63 **EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. COURTYARD. EVENING.**

63

The bags are packed on the carriages. PARIS stands in the
courtyard. But rain is falling.

And thunder is rolling in off the valley.

HORSEMAN
A storm's coming sir. We must wait
til morning.

PARIS
We're leaving now!

He climbs on board. The CARRIAGE DRIVERS mount and whip the horses through the courtyard.

Then a crack of thunder, the horses rise up, whinny wildly. The HORSEMEN whip them on but then another crack of thunder, the HORSES break their bridles and bolt, rains starts to fall hard, the mud churns, the carriage is stuck in water and mud.

HORSEMEN

Sir we must wait for the storm to pass!

PARIS looks up at the darkening sky with rage.

64

EXT. KNOSSOS FIELDS. EVENING.

64

An avenue of flaming torches. KING AGAMEMNON, tears scorching his face, greets the figure of MENELAOS who has just dismounted from his royal carriage on the outskirts of the great city.

Behind AGAMEMNON, his wife CLYTEMNESTRA and his children IPHIGENIA, ORESTES and ELECTRA. All wear the weeds of mourning, black flags, the sound of the formal female wailing. Slow drumming.

MENELAOS

Was he in pain, brother?

AGAMEMNON

The gods made his death hard.

MENELAOS, this controlled man, suddenly pours with tears, his brother holds him as the crows fly above and the keening grows stronger. ORESTES cries too and is comforted by IPHIGENIA who stands with remarkable fire-lit composure as the grief pours around her.

65

INT. SPARTA. PALACE. PARIS ROOMS.

65

Night has fallen. Quiet in the palace.

PARIS lies in his dark room, unable to sleep.

He gets up from his bed, looks over the rain-lashed valley from his window.

When suddenly the door opens.

PARIS turns.

It is HELEN's SERVING WOMAN.

He stares at her in astonishment.

She puts her finger to her mouth. Sssh.

She indicates for PARIS to follow.

66 **EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. SIDE GATES.**

66

She leads him through secret side gates in the darkness. The rain falls.

She walks him into the darkness of the mountain, through olive trees bent over in the rain.

They walk on through the grove, to another gate.

They pass through.

The SERVING WOMAN indicates for him to walk on. Alone.

PARIS turns to remonstrate but she is gone.

Beat.

He walks on, away from the palace into the fields.

He walks on blindly, trips, falls. Gets up, thinks about returning.

But goes on.

And there she is. By a rock by a stream.

Waiting.

HELEN. She is in a kind of physical and emotional torture.

 HELEN
Why didn't you leave?

 PARIS
I tried. The gods didn't let me.

 HELEN
I tried to hide from you. I locked
my door. I couldn't sleep. Three
days in darkness. I've gone mad.
You've made me mad.

He grips her, kisses her on the lips. She sucks his kisses from him.

They fall into an embrace. And they fall on the soft grass.

67 **EXT. KNOSSOS BURIAL GROUND. DAWN.**

67

Under sombre dawn skies, MENELAOS and AGAMEMNON, plus other lords of Greece, process the dead body of their father to the grave on a royal cart decked with flowers. The WOMEN sing and wail in lamentation.

68 EXT. SPARTA. MEADOW. DAWN. 68

PARIS and HELEN make love under the shadow of the mountain.
It's hungry. Fierce. Deeply intimate.

69 EXT. KNOSSOS BURIAL GROUND. DAWN. 69

The body of their father is laid in the earth with royal processions. AGAMEMNON and MENELAOS lead the chorus of lamentation.

70 **EXT. SPARTA. MEADOW. DAWN.** 70

PARIS and HELEN wake. Naked, bodies entwined, the dawn sun kissing their skin. Paradise.

PARIS
There's something I haven't told
you.

HELEN
What?

PARIS
I was told by Aphrodite I'd meet
the world's most beautiful woman
and she'd be mine.

She laughs, dismissive of such a story.

HELEN
And you think that's me...?

PARIS
I'm sure of it.

HELEN
You're a fool.

He kisses her. She responds.

But then in the distance they hear a horn sounding.

HELEN sits up and pulls her cloak around herself, suddenly distant. Retreating.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Your men are calling. You should
go.

PARIS
I can't leave you.

More horns. Voices calling.

HELEN

They can't find you here. My
husband will have you killed.

He stands. Torture of separation.

PARIS

When will I see you again?

HELEN

I don't know. Never maybe. Or maybe
at your wedding to my daughter.

PARIS

That will never happen.

HELEN

Well then never.

Beat. They are both torn by the pain.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Please. Just go.

PARIS

Come with me.

Beat. It's like PARIS has opened a terrifying door of
possibility.

HELEN

I can't.

PARIS

Come now. Before your husband gets
back.

HELEN

That's impossible. I'd be seen.
People would know.

PARIS

You say you are a woman and you
have no choice in matters. But
that's not true. You have a choice
now.

HELEN

Even if what you say is true. Even
if I could leave. I have a
daughter. I can't just walk away.
She doesn't deserve that.

PARIS

And what about you?... What do you
deserve?

He kisses her passionately, looks deeply into her eyes.

HELEN
Please. Don't do this.

PARIS
I'm not doing anything. It's your
choice. You have to decide.

HELEN
I can't! Let me go.

She suddenly leaves, walking fast back to the palace. PARIS
watches her go in anguish.

71

EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. COURTYARD. DAY.

71

The carriages are ready. PARIS, anger on his face, walks fast
out into the courtyard. Packed with DIGNITARIES and SERVANTS.
He calls out. A man in a hurry.

PARIS
Are the horses ready?

PANDARUS
Yes my lord. And the weather's much
improved.

HELEN's SERVING WOMAN appears on the steps. She looks at
PARIS.

SERVING WOMAN
The Queen sends her apologies. She
is feeling unwell. She won't be
down to say goodbye.

PARIS nods, his expression dark, hurried.

PARIS
That's a shame.

SERVING WOMAN
She is sending a gift for your
mother, Queen Hecuba. See that it's
carefully loaded onto the ship.

She turns and goes back inside.

Something about that. PARIS's instincts (and our own) are
pricked.

The DIGNITARIES all congregate for the farewell ritual.

HERMIONE appears. PARIS acknowledges her.

PARIS
I'm sorry I must leave.

HERMIONE
When will you return?

PARIS
When my father desires.

HERMIONE
My mother should be here to bid you
farewell.

PARIS shrugs, unmoved.

PARIS
No matter.

HERMIONE speaks quietly, with deadly menace.

HERMIONE
Is that why you're leaving early?
Because of her?

Eyes of steel. She smiles coolly.

HERMIONE (CONT'D)
She rejected you didn't she?

Then the smile evaporates.

HERMIONE (CONT'D)
Don't come back.

She turns and walks away. Suddenly a murmur as the SERVANTS
bring the golden chest from HELEN's inner rooms.

PARIS stares at it. And he knows. He just knows.

It's loaded on to the chariot of gifts. And suddenly PARIS is
tense with nerves.

PARIS
Let's get going!

They load it on.

PARIS, his blood pumping, climbs into his carriage. He eyes
the golden chest.

PARIS (CONT'D)
Let's go!

The HORSEMEN and CHARIOTEERS whip their horses!

Then suddenly the flock of coloured birds swoop down wings
flapping, and chase the Trojan Cortege as it tears out of the
city courtyard with HERMIONE watching in quiet rage as it
disappears out of the gates and into the hills.

72

EXT. BEACH OF GYTHEIO. SOUTHERN PELEPPONESE. DUSK.

72

The tiny beach of Gytheio.

The light is fading. They are loading the boat. PARIS is watching them load the golden chest. His heart races. PANDARUS approaches.

PANDRAUS

It's too late to sail now. We'll camp here and leave at dawn.

But PARIS is thinking...

PARIS

When does Menelaos return from Knossos?

PANDARUS

His letters say he will be here before dark. We may meet him as he lands.

PARIS's heart starts to beat faster.

PARIS

What's that island?

He can see it out in the bay. Distant but not that far.

PANDARUS

That's Cranae.

PARIS

Who lives there?

PANDARUS

No one. It's uninhabited.

PARIS

I want to stay there tonight.

PANDARUS

It's nearly night, why would we...

PARIS

Just do it.

73

EXT. THE AEGEAN SEA. DUSK.

73

PARIS sits on the boat watching the horizon as the boat approaches CRANAE in the near-dark. PANDARUS watches him like a hawk, knowing that something is wrong.

74

EXT. BEACH AT CRANAE. NIGHT.

74

The boat has rowed up at the beach at Cranae. The boat is hauled up, the chest off-loaded. Simple tents constructed on the sand.

Then PARIS sees a boat heading their way on the horizon. Black sail.

PARIS
Is that him?

PANDARUS
Yes. He bears the black sail of mourning.

PARIS looks at the black sail. Then at the lights on the beach.

PARIS
All lights out. Complete quiet.

PANDARUS is furious. Speaks quietly.

PANDARUS
What's going on? What aren't you telling me?

PARIS
Just do what I say.

PANDARUS
I will not defend this to your father.

PARIS defies him. It is dark now. The other boat is close to shore now. Has it seen them?

They watch as the KING's boat passes the bay, just a few dozen metres from them.

PARIS breathes deep. PANDARUS eyes him with rage.

PARIS watches the black sails of the boat pass in the darkness.

In on the black sails as the music rises.

75

INT. TROY. PALACE. PRIAM'S ROOMS.

75

The music continues.

HECUBA and PRIAM are lying apart in the royal bed. He sleeps but she is awake with worry.

Then a breeze blows the windows open.

HECUBA goes to the window but sees across the courtyard
CASSANDRA at her window. Staring out in distress.

In on HECUBA's face.

76 **INT. TROY. PALACE. PRIAM'S ROOMS. TWENTY YEARS EARLIER.** 76

We are back at the beginning.

A moan of agony from HECUBA.

SAMARIA eases the head through. A final roar of sheer raging
pain from HECUBA.

And the baby is out.

77 **INT. TROY. PALACE. CASSANDRA'S ROOM.** 77

But child CASSANDRA is staring in horror.

In on HECUBA's face.

78 **EXT. TROY. FIELD OUTSIDE CITY.** 78

Two doves fly through the air, and then, one by one, they are
caught in traps, baited by food, by ANATOLIAN HUNTERS.

79 **EXT. TROY. LOWER CITY.** 79

The dead doves are rushed through the market to the gates of
the citadel.

To the younger but unmistakable PRIEST LITOS.

80 **EXT. TROY. CITADEL.** 80

PRIEST LITOS makes offerings to the gods, praying.

PRIEST LITOS
King Priam seeks your blessing for
the new child. Oh gods. Be
merciful.

The JUNIOR PRIESTS slit the throats of the two birds.

Their faces turn suddenly grave.

As black blood pours over the ground.

81 INT. TROY. CITIDEL. DAY. PRESENT DAY. 81

Twenty years later and HECUBA stands at the window, closes it, on Cassandra, on the truth.

82 EXT. AEGEAN SEA. DIPLOMATIC BOAT. 82

On PARIS's face as alone on the beach, with everyone sleeping, he opens the chest, staring at the chest and into the chest and inside it to HELEN hidden inside.

83 EXT. SPARTA. PALACE. DAWN. 83

MENELAOS, all in black, is driven on a chariot up the ravine towards his palace.

The chariot turns into the palace courtyard where all is tumult and distress.

MENELAOS leaps from the chariot.

MENELAOS
What's going on here?

HERMIONE is sitting in tears. A DIGNITARY approaches in incomprehension.

DIGNITARY
My lord. Your wife the queen...

MENELAOS
Where is she? What's happened man!

But then another voice. His daughter's. HERMIONE. She stares almost coldly at her father. A kind of triumph in her eyes.

HERMIONE
He's taken her.

MENELAOS' face whitens with shock, the world disappearing from beneath his feet. A beat.

MENELAOS climbs back into his chariot, his eyes full of anger.

MENELAOS
Take me to my brother!

As he cracks his whip and the chariot pulls off, the camera rises above him to see the vast Aegean Sea stretching out to the West...

... and a small boat heading across the ocean with PARIS and his new bride HELEN sitting side by side, flushed with passion.

59. TROY - Fall of a City, Episode One, draft 20.10.16

And hell-bent for Troy.

END