

Mt. Olympus
"Best Laid Plans"
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SCENE 1: HOUSE MEETING

INT. ZEUS'S HOUSE, LOUNGE

Zeus is sitting on a chair on top of the coffee table. The rest of the Olympians are seated on couches, chairs, or the floor around him. He bangs a some sort of make-shift gavel.

ZEUS

This meeting will come to order.
Poseidon, read the agenda.

POSEIDON

"In light of recent events, this special meeting was convened to analyze the contributing factors to our current, unexpected impotence, and to outline a course of action to remedy the situation, along with protocol to follow in the interim."

HERMES

In short: Why are we powerless?
What should we do now? When's lunch?

POSEIDON

I'd appreciate it if you'd refrain from making inane comments.

(Back to business voice)

In attendance, eleven of the twelve Olympians; Hades is excused absent, on account of, well...

HERMES

We don't know his mailing address.

HERA

Excuse me, but is "Party clean-up on the list?"

POSEIDON

Please, let's stay on topic.

APHRODITE

Hera's got a point; this place is a pig-sty.

POSEIDON

(Louder, ignoring her)

We will start by reviewing the events leading up to our loss of power.

HEPHAESTUS

Excuse me, Aphrodite was talking.

ARES

Don't worry, I'm sure it's not permanent.

HERMES

Hey Ares, what happened to your face?

Ares makes a start at Hermes.

ZEUS

Everyone, settle down! We'll deal with Ares' face later.

ARES

(Off screen, defensively)
I fell!

ZEUS

We have more urgent things to take care of.

POSEIDON

Thank you.

ZEUS

Hera?

POSEIDON

Hold on a second...!

ZEUS

Ladies first.

HERA

Oh, I guess I was wondering if, since we'll be here a while, we should assign chores.

ZEUS

A well thought out concern, and one which we will address immediately.

He gives Poseidon a meaningful look as if to say, "See how a gentleman runs a meeting?"

ZEUS (cont'd)

(with sincerity)

Somebody will need to clean up after the party. Somebody will need to...

(He can't think of any more
chores.)
...muck the stables.
(Sure of himself again)
And I will de-ionize the air.

Zeus smiles. Pause. The other Olympians look at him.

HERA
I think it might be more productive
to focus your efforts elsewhere.

HEPHAESTUS
You could clean the bathroom.

ZEUS
(Annoyed)
I will not clean the bathroom.

HEPHAESTUS
Or we can trade it off.

ZEUS
I will not clean the bathroom.

HEPHAESTUS
Or, we could make a rotating
system...

ARES
Well, apparently Captain
Thunderbolt is too goddamn
important to clean up his own
mess...

HERA
Oh please. Nobody's calling you Mr.
Fightypants.

HERMES
Not yet.

ARES
You pee on the seat just as much as
any of the rest of us, so...

APHRODITE
Can we not talk about this?

HERMES
I think that Mr. Fightypants has a
point.

ARES
Don't call me that.

Beat.

HEPHAESTUS
Yes, I think a rotating system is probably the best solution...

ARES
Shut up about your goddamn system!

ATHENA
Why? So that you can decide who does what?

ARES
Well, frankly, that sounds like a pretty good idea to me!

ZEUS
Okay, now, if there's anyone who's going to be assigning the chores, it's me.

ARES
Who died and made you king?

ZEUS
I am king!

HERA
Dear, it's really just a metaphor.

ARES
(Under his breath.)
"Bloody king."

ZEUS
(Getting worked up)
No, if we will have order, we need a leader with power!

POSEIDON
Hey, man ...

ZEUS
(Flips out at Poseidon)
You will do as I say!

ARES
Screw this.

He leaves the room. The tension eases noticeably. Pause.

ATHENA

Well, why doesn't Artemis take your bathroom shift, and you can take one of her shopping shifts?

ARTEMIS

Okay.

ZEUS

Whatever. Sure.

Pause.

APHRODITE

Okay, well, if nobody else has anything to say, can we also talk about creating a shower schedule?

POSEIDON

(Suddenly.)

Does anybody else feel like we're all sort of missing the point here? Now, as much as I love to create shower schedules, it seems somewhat secondary in importance to the fact that we are here on Earth, powerless. Let's stop beating around the bush. I want to know why Hestia is here, what exactly she did, and exactly what *she* plans on doing to fix it.

ARTEMIS

Will you stop talking to her like she is not here in front of you? If you've got a question, just ask it, but treat her like the god she is.

POSEIDON

Should I do that? I don't know, frankly! You see, I've been doing my duties, and let me tell you: tending the Pacific Ocean is not exactly picking daisies. Fluid dynamics are a bitch. See, I'm not entirely sure what is so taxing about guarding a hearth, but it never seemed like rocket science to me.

(sarcastic and condescending)

Now, maybe whenever we leave, tiny *fireplace demons* come and attack Mt. Olympus. But, you know, I've

(MORE)

POSEIDON (cont'd)
 never seen them. So, "treat Hestia
 like a god?" I don't know if I can
 do that.

ATHENA
 Well, you can hardly expect to hear
 the full story if you don't stop
 talking.

He stops talking. They all turn to Hestia. She opens her
 mouth, but then runs out of the room, on the brink of tears.

POSEIDON
 Truly an enlightening statement.

ATHENA
 Thank you for your considerate and
 productive remarks, Poseidon.

Artemis leaves the room, running after Hestia. Zeus retakes
 control of the meeting.

ZEUS
 Everyone! Let's continue this
 meeting, while there is still
 anyone left to meet.

HERMES
 Hestia, Artemis and Mr. Fightypants
 excused absent, on account of
 "Everyone is so angry!"

ZEUS
 Here's the deal. We're not gods,
 and we don't know why. But guys,
 think about it! We're not exactly
 in Ancient Greece any more!
 Hephaestus, you're the god of
 technology. You and Hermes - go
 find an internet, and read it. The
 rest of us will hit the books.

Do you want to be human for the
 rest of your life? I know I don't!
 First of all, gods get way more
 action than humans. And second, did
 I just say "the rest of my life"? I
 am pretty happy with being
 immortal.

The answer's out there somewhere.
 It will take work, but we will

(MORE)

ZEUS (cont'd)
 regain our powers. We have been
 gods! We will be gods! WE ARE THE
 OLYMPIANS!

Zeus is standing on the chair on the coffee table. There is a small knock from the front door, and a balding head pops around the door frame. It's the landlord.

LANDLORD
 Hi, I came by to install the new
 doorbell.

ZEUS
 Oh.
 (to Poseidon)
 Do we need a new doorbell?

Poseidon shrugs.

ZEUS (cont'd)
 (Dismissively.)
 Very well, mortal, I thank you for
 your consideration. I give you
 leave to depart.

LANDLORD
 Who do you think you are?

ZEUS
 (with a genuine smile)
 Hi, my friends call me Zeus.

ATHENA
 (to Hermes, under her breath)
 Does anyone not call him Zeus?

HERMES
 (with a shrug)
 He's a friendly guy.

LANDLORD
 Well, alrighty. And, you can call
 me your landlord. Incidentally, I
 think that it is fairly explicit in
 the lease that furniture is not to
 be stacked, for any purpose.

He gives Zeus a penetrating look. Zeus backs down.

ZEUS
 Oh, um. I was just taking it off,
 actually. Off of the coffee table.

The landlord sees bottoms of chair legs as he takes it off.

LANDLORD

And I want to see felt chair
protectors on that the next time I
came by.

ZEUS

Right! That's actually exactly why
I put it on the table. To, um,
protect the floor.

Landlord gives him a look. Some of the Olympians exchange
glances. Poseidon steps in before his brother says anything
else stupid.

POSEIDON

I'm sorry. We'll fix it. Is there
anything else?

LANDLORD

No candles, no hair dryers, and no
balloons!

He looks around the room at post party debris.

LANDLORD (cont'd)

You know, it's hard on the house to
rent to college students. How old
are you, 21?

HERMES

(proudly)

I am two thousand, eight hundred
and ninety one years old.

Athena elbows him to shut up.

LANDLORD

Well, keep it clean. Okay?

ZEUS

Yes, sir.

LANDLORD

Okay. Unless anyone has any
questions, I'll be heading out.

(He smiles.)

Good luck in your classes!

He leaves. Worried glances are exchanged.

SCENE 2: ZEUS HAS AN IDEA

INT. ZEUS'S HOUSE, BEDROOM CONNECTED TO LOUNGE

Aphrodite is sitting in front of a computer, exasperated. Hephaestus is nearby.

APHRODITE

I don't even know how to find out where any of the classes meet.

HEPHAESTUS

It's not really that difficult.

APHRODITE

Sure, for the "God of Technology."

HEPHAESTUS

Let me see it.

He sits at the computer. He clicks a couple of times.

Wait, no. This is just a terrible user interface. I've got nothing.

APHRODITE

Zeus, do I have to go to classes?
Zeus?

Cut to Zeus, lost in intense thought in the other room. Suddenly:

ZEUS

I've got it!

Everyone looks at him.

ZEUS (cont'd)

Okay, listen to this. We need to create a spirit vortex. If we can get enough spirit-energy in one location, the fabric of the universe will fold into itself, pouring all the energy into ... the guy in the middle. That'll be me. Once I get my powers back, I'll restore everyone else's.

ARES

(Sarcastically)

How could this scheme possibly not work?

ZEUS

(Not catching the sarcasm)
I know, right? Now we just need to
gather as many potent spirits as
possible.

HERA

"Potent spirits"?

ZEUS

Like us. Folks with lots of power.
(He looks at Hera.)
Take Artemis. Go round up all the
nymphs and demigods you can find.
The rest of us'll do the same.

HERA

Believe me, Zeus, you'll need all
the help you can get.

SCENE 3: FINDING ECHO

EXT. IN FRONT OF CAVE OR TUNNEL - NIGHT

Hera and Artemis are walking towards some dark cave or
tunnel.

HERA

You think she'll be there?

ARTEMIS

I'm sure of it. It's dark,
enclosed.

HERA

Can anyone say agoraphobe?

ARTEMIS

She's got self-image issues.

HERA

I'd say. Well, here we are. Echo!
Are you here?!

ECHO

here.

HERA

Well, good.

Artemis nods: "told you"

HERA (cont'd)
Echo, we've got a favor to ask!

ECHO
ask.

ARTEMIS
A woman of few words.

HERA
Okay, here's the deal! We are
trapped in the bodies of humans!

ECHO
humans.

HERA
(Reflecting on it herself)
Humans.
(Louder again)
Zeus has a plan, but he needs your
help. Are you in?

ECHO
in.

ARTEMIS
I guess she's in.

HERA
Good. Well, we have to check up on
some more people, but, Echo, you
stick close by, okay?

ECHO
okay.

HERA
Okay, let's head out!

ECHO
let's head out.

HERA
God, she gets on my nerves.

SCENE 4: DAPHNE IS A TREE

EXT. BY TREE

We cut to Apollo, standing outside awkwardly talking to
someone; we don't see who, though.

APOLLO

Okay. Um, listen. I'm sorry that things have not always been the greatest between us. Still, I was hoping we could maybe put it all behind us and start off on a new... foot. Listen, I know that I was a bit obsessive, but, I assure you: I'm over it now. I won't bug you any more. I just want to be a friend.

He smiles. He stops smiling.

Okay, you're right. I am being disingenuous. I have a favor to ask.

Beat.

Can I ask one small favor?

Camera finally gives us our reverse shot: he is talking to a tree.

Come on! Why are you treating me like this? It's been ages! Can we just grow up a little bit! I'd only need you for like, an hour. Then you can continue ... blossoming. Are you with me? Are you with me?

He starts to walk away.

Are you coming or not?

The tree stays there.

Pff. Angiosperms.

Apollo rejoins Zeus and Hera, who are nearby. They start walking.

ZEUS

How'd it go?

APOLLO

Daphne's a no go. She's too busy, um, pollinating.

ZEUS

Damn.

HERA

Well, at least we managed to find Echo. She's around here somewhere. RIGHT?

ECHO
right.

ZEUS
And Hermes is out looking for Pan,
but I'm betting he doesn't show.
Haven't seen that kid in ages.

APOLLO
Are there going to be enough of us?

ZEUS
We'll make due. We already have
plenty, in Olympians alone.

HERA
Do they all know about this? I
haven't seen Athena all day.

ZEUS
Yeah, where is that girl?

SCENE 5: PROMETHEUS IS FRIENDLY

INT. CLASSROOM

Athena is slumped down, depressed, in the classroom of the class she takes with Prometheus. Prometheus's bag is also lying around somewhere. After a moment, Prometheus enters, and gets his bag. On the way out, he notices Athena.

PROMETHEUS
Oh, hi. I didn't see you there.

Pause.

I forgot my bag.

He stands there awkwardly for a moment.

PROMETHEUS (cont'd)
I liked your last paper. I thought
it was a very unusual but
insightful psychological
investigation into behaviors of the
Olympians. I'm not entirely sure I
entirely bought your account of
Zeus, though; he seemed a bit
too... shallow.

ATHENA
Hm.

Another pause.

PROMETHEUS

Are you okay?

ATHENA

I dunno. Things are strange.

PROMETHEUS

I was just about to head back to my office, but I'm done grading for the day. Would you like to chat?

ATHENA

That would be nice, actually. I don't have anywhere else that I have to be.

Hermes comes running into the classroom.

HERMES

Ath... Melissa! Big fun group bonding activity happening ... right now. We gotta go, stat.

ATHENA

Uh, but I just... how long will it take?

HERMES

An hour?

Athena is about to apologetically say something to Prometheus, but he interrupts.

PROMETHEUS

In an hour then. I can get some work done. Come by my office when you're done!

Athena smiles a thanks to him.

HERMES

Who's he?

ATHENA

He's my teacher.

HERMES

Hi teacher.

(To Athena)

Let's go.

SCENE 6: OFF TO THE RITUAL

INT./EXT. FRONT OF ZEUS'S HOUSE

Cut to the house. Everyone is heading out the door, led by Zeus.

ZEUS

Alright, this is everyone; Hermes
and Athena will join us on the way.
Let's roll out!

Hestia comes out, too. Zeus pulls her aside.

ZEUS (cont'd)

(Quietly)

I think I'd like you to stay home.

HESTIA

What? I thought you needed as many
"potent spirits" as possible.

Zeus smiles, but not particularly genuinely.

ZEUS

I think we'll be okay. We need
someone to stick around the house,
just in case.

HESTIA

Just in case what?

ZEUS

(harsher)

I dunno! Just stay and guard the...
just stay here and don't get into
any trouble, okay?

(To everyone)

Let's move!

Hestia stays behind, looking forlorn. She watches them leave, then slowly enters the house. The shot should be long enough to allow a slight time-jump.

SCENE 7: "ZEUS, ZEUS, ZEUS!"

EXT. IN THE WOODS

Cut to the group, again, converging on their destination.

ZEUS

Okay! Everyone spread out! Make a circle!

They do as he says. Poseidon feels the air, or smells it or something. He mutters to himself.

POSEIDON

Yes, this is a place of power. A good choice.

APOLLO

Glad you like it. Artemis and I found it earlier today. All the geometries of the landscape focus on that rock there.

Zeus is walking up to the mentioned rock.

ZEUS

This is where I will stand. The rest of you will face me, and direct your soul energy at me.

APHRODITE

(Whispering, to Hera)
What does that mean?

Hera shrugs. There is general murmuring from the crowd.

ZEUS

Please concentrate!

HERA

Dear, how does one direct their soul energy?

Zeus is exasperated by the question, but perhaps even more by the fact that he doesn't know the answer but doesn't want to admit it.

ZEUS

It's easy. You just...
(Pause.)

You should chant my name.

They begin chanting. It's really awkward at first, but less awkward as everyone joins in with more force.

EVERYONE

Zeus, Zeus, Zeus, Zeus, Zeus.

It gets more intense. Zeus in particular gets into it. He shouts his own name, his chest bared to the heavens. In an animalistic scream, he shouts his name one last time.

ZEUS

ZEUS!

This seems to cue everyone else to stop, and wait to see what has happened. Zeus turns to a tree, and flings his arm in an expression of power. Nothing happens. He tries again. Again nothing. He is frantic.

ZEUS (cont'd)

Keep chanting, keep chanting!

The chanting resumes, but now only half-heartedly. We can see, from their expressions, that the Olympians have begun to doubt the whole scheme. Zeus continues frenziedly flinging his arms at the tree. Nothing happens. It is clear that the plan has failed. One by one, everyone starts leaving.

ZEUS (cont'd)

Wait! It will work! Don't leave me!

Poseidon! Apollo! Echo!

(Pause. No echo.)

Echo? Not you too! Wait!

He falls to his knees in frustration.

ZEUS (cont'd)

It will work! I has to work. Just don't leave. Zeus, Zeus, Zeus, Zeus!

Zeus collapses on the ground, in defeat.

SCENE 8: NEW PLANS

INT. ZEUS'S HOUSE

Cut to the basement. Poseidon is perplexed and depressed by the washing machine. It is running. He opens it. It stops running. He closes it. It starts running. He opens it. It stops. Hermes comes down stairs.

HERMES

Hey kid. Back to the drawing board. We're reading up more on Ways to Restore Godly Powers. You don't want to miss it.

Poseidon shuts the washer again and starts to follow Hermes. Hermes bounds up the stairs. As they enter the living room, Zeus is reading from a book. Hermes eventually settles down with a laptop.

ZEUS

Here's one: "A state of god-like power can be induced by the sacrifice of a young virgin at the peak of the tallest mountain during a full moon."

POSEIDON

Yesterday was a waxing half moon. That gives us about a week. Anyone know where to find a virgin?

Everyone looks at Zeus.

ZEUS

Hey, why are you looking at me? Guys, imagine a virgin factory. I am, like, the opposite of that. Okay, okay. I can probably find a virgin.

POSEIDON

What does it mean "the tallest mountain"?

HERMES

Exactly. Tallest in the region? Tallest on earth? In total altitude or in relative height?

ARTEMIS

Oy! Hold on! Am I the only one who is not cool with sacrificing a virgin for a plan that might not even work? A pause.

HERMES

Seems like it.

Beat. They give in.

Okay, okay. I've got another one here.

(He's looking at a laptop)
This one calls for four hundred goats. Empty field, thunderstorm, yada yada.

ZEUS
400 goats. That would take at least
two weeks. Damn.

HEPHAESTUS
Well, on the bright side, it seems
that you were completely in the
right.

ZEUS
What?

HEPHAESTUS
I just finished reading the lease.
Beginning to end. There is nothing
in there about stacking furniture.

ZEUS
Oh!

HERMES
Yes!

Hermes starts stacking furniture.

ZEUS
I knew it! That lying scumbag. I am
totally gonna rub that in his face
if he comes back. Doorbell, hah!

Zeus meets Poseidon's gaze, which is serious.
Um, not that it matters. Okay,
anything that doesn't involve human
or animal sacrifice? Hermes?

They look at Hermes, who has completely abandoned the
computer search for the sake of stacking furniture.

ZEUS (cont'd)
What in Hades are you doing?

HEPHAESTUS
"Hades"? Hey, that's it. I've got
it. This could work.
(He smiles, an actually happy
smile.)
This could work.

Cut.

SCENE 9: ON POWER

INT. PROMETHEUS'S OFFICE

Close up: a teacup, being set down on a plate? Pull back: establishing shot: Prometheus and Athena are in Prometheus' office.

PROMETHEUS

Okay, what's up?

ATHENA

I dunno. She thinks for a moment.
You see.... Well, basically, my dad
just lost his job.

PROMETHEUS

Ah.

ATHENA

And, it wasn't some sort of minor
job. He was the big head honcho.
And now he's as powerless as, uh,
you.

Prometheus is jokingly offended.

PROMETHEUS

I hope that a college professor
holds more esteem to you than that!

Athena grants Prometheus a half smile.

ATHENA

Sorry. I guess I just wonder
whether he really even deserved to
keep his job. Maybe it's time for
an overhaul of the system: "Down
with the old!" and all that. But
still, he's been there for eons.
That has to count for something.

PROMETHEUS

No, it's true. We academics are
quick to get up in arms against
established power systems, but we
often forget that it's all just
people.

Maybe it's an inherent problem with
holding power. What do you think?

ATHENA

What, you mean "power corrupts"
sort of thing?

PROMETHEUS

That's one way to put it.

ATHENA

I think having power is pretty darn
hard. I think that as soon as
you're responsible for anyone
beside yourself, life gets a lot
more complicated.

PROMETHEUS

Not planning on having kids, then?

ATHENA

No.

PROMETHEUS

And yet, some people are crazy
enough to try parenting, and pretty
often, from the looks of it.

No, I'd say responsibility can be
beneficial for both parties. The
problem arises when the system
begins censoring and controlling
intellectual freedom for the sake
of maintaining its own authority.
Power for the sake of power.

Beat.

Sorry! I'm being really
insensitive.

ATHENA

No, not at all. On the contrary, I
think what you're saying makes a
lot of sense.

PROMETHEUS

You know, I've actually been
holding a small reading group on
some of these issues. Very bright
kids - the future leaders of the
world, I'm sure. Would you like to
attend?

ATHENA

That'd be interesting. Thanks.

PROMETHEUS

Well, we're meeting tomorrow at the faculty club at one. We'd love to have you.

And hey, I didn't mean to imply that your dad is a corrupt monster. Truthfully, if you're dad is anything like you, then his company has lost one of the few thoughtful and wise leaders that still exist today.

ATHENA

He's not really anything like me.

PROMETHEUS

(Joking.)

Well, then, I make no claims one way or the other about your dad's status as a monster.

Beat.

PROMETHEUS (cont'd)

So, how's he doing now?

ATHENA

Well, right now he's trying to get the job back.

PROMETHEUS

Good luck.

SCENE 10: SUMMONING HADES

INT. ZEUS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cut to the house again. Lights are low, candles are lit. There is chanting. Zeus is doing ritualistic gestures. It is all vaguely reminiscent of a satanic summoning.

Out in the hall, where there is a bit more ambient light, Hera is talking to Apollo. They are both whispering.

HERA

I don't get it. What can Hades do that we can't?

APOLLO

The working hypothesis, as I understand it, is that Hades was

(MORE)

APOLLO (cont'd)
not in human form at the moment
when we lost our powers, so he will
likely still be in the form he was
in at that moment. That is to say,
Hades may still be a god.

HERA
And even if we can summon him, and
he's a god, what then?

APOLLO
Well, it's a step in the right
direction.

We return to the ritual again. The tempo is increasing. Finally Zeus shouts something in Ancient Greek, and there is a small explosion and a flash of light. Everything returns to normal, and, for a moment, it looks as though nothing has happened.

Then the doorbell rings. Artemis goes to open it. She does so, then immediately slams it shut again. From the other side, we see Hades from behind, completely naked. The door opens again; the rest of the Olympians are now gathered behind Artemis. We see Hades from the front, from the waist up.

HADES
What the hell is going on?

END OF EPISODE. Cut to credits.

CREDITS

After the credits, we cut to another very short scene. Athena walks into the meeting room and sees a huge pile of stacked furniture. She is very confused.