**The Threesome – a sketch for three voices**

Act 1, Scene 1

*Three cloaked old women sit hunched on a stony ledge overlooking a turbulent sea. Far-off sound of waves breaking. The mouth of a cave is seen to the side of the stage. One woman is gnawing on a large haunch.*

**Enyo**: Who’s got it this time? It’s my turn, my turn, *my* turn!

**Pemphredo**: You well know I’ve got it, but this flesh is so tough I need more time. Piss off!

**Enyo**: My stomach’s been wailing from sunrise to moonrise and back. It rumbles like Zeus’s chariot. Give me the tooth! Or I’ll …

**Deino**: Stop it you two! Enyo, take the eye instead. Keep yourself occupied with guard duty while I take a rest. And Pemphredo, do hurry up. We’re all famished.

**Enyo**: Humpf. Big deal, I get the eye so that I can watch Pemphredo eat? And suffer more?

**All three**: An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. All for one, and one for all. Oh three happy sisters are we! Tra la la.

**Enyo**: That’s the point, there’s just the one tooth. Doesn’t make me happy.

*Voice off: Give that more oomph, and make the dialogue snappy. Play Enyo like a toddler with a tantrum.*

**Enyo:** (*wailing*) Me not happy! Not happy. There’s just the one tooth. Waaa!

*Voice off: Yeah. Better.*

**Deino**: *(removes her eye and hands it over)* Keep the eye out for skulkers, Enyo, there was one at the far rocks this morning. Gone now. Like a shadow. I’m always seeing things out the corner of that eye. It needs a polish I reckon.

*(A period of silence except for chewing and burping noises)*

**Pemphredo**: Almost done. The sinews in that hind leg take some chewing. But the meat is tasty. Here, Enyo.

**Enyo**: At last – the tooth. And I can see why you took so long. Big fellow, wasn’t he! Wow, there’s enough there for another two sunrises. That’s good.

**Deino**: Get stuck in, Enyo. Hey, give the eye back then. You know you can’t have both eye and tooth at the same time. It’s the rule.

**Enyo**: why can’t we get another tooth, or another eye? Are the gods that mean?

**Deino**: (*sighing*) Just pass it over to Pemphredo.

**Pemphredo**: Ta. That’s really handy. I’m off to have a shit, and don’t want to step off the cliff edge and topple into the sea. Did any of you notice the ledge is crumbling away quite badly?

**Enyo**: We should move somewhere safer, like into the forest.

**Deino**: And be victims to muggers? Rapists? Here in this cave we are sheltered. And if a rapist comes we can pretend willing, and then shove the bastard over the edge. Never trust a sweet-talking chancer. Remember what happened to our poor sister.

**Enyo**: (*Loud retching and spitting sounds*) Ugh, this paw is full of maggots.

**Pemphredo:** In my opinion that was Medusa’s own fault – for doing it in the temple. Too trusting. Too young. Got carried away.

**Deino**: Exactly. Too young. But they say she was forced. By that brute Poseidon. So don’t judge what you don’t see.

**Pemphredo:** But people say …

**Deino**: Listen! My vibes are telling me a creature is approaching. I can’t read his sweat. Not sure if it is a man or a beast. Is he seeking us? I can feel his urgent tread. Quick, Pemphredo, point the eye in the direction of the wooded hill. What is there?

*Voice off: Stop stop stop. Slow down. Break that speech up. Do a walkabout, like you’re listening to something you can’t make out.*

**Deino**: Listen! (*Gets up, holds arms out).* My vibes are telling me a creature is approaching.

(*Walks about*). I can’t read his sweat. Not sure if it is a man or a beast. (*Grabs Pemphredo’s arm*) Is he seeking us? I can feel his urgent tread. Quick, Pemphredo, point the eye in the direction of the wooded hill. *(Leans on Pemphredo’s shoulder)* What is there?

*Voice off: Great. Great. Much better.*

**Pemphredo**: Yes, it is a someone. It is a man, but strange. Tall. Not a village man. Golden hair.

**Deino**: A god? I fear his coming. His approach is too purposeful. Hide, hide!

**Enyo**: Where? We are between the cliff and the sea, and the way to the forest is now taken by the stranger. (*Wails in despair*) And I haven’t eaten yet, what with the maggots and the sinews. Aaagh! This is so unfair!

*Voice off: Remember to back off when Perseus appears. Maybe go inside the cave?*

*All three: No, no. It’ll look like he’s trapped us.*

*Voice off: OK, then how about circling round him? Act wary when he enters.*

**Pemphredo**: He is come. What is his tongue? What are his words?

*(The women fan out as Perseus strides in).*

**Deino**: He says he knows about us. This augurs badly. Who sent him?

*(Perseus demands Medusa’s whereabouts in a fierce tone).*

**Pemphredo**: He wants Medusa’s secret dwelling place. Do not tell. Our sister has suffered enough. Beware, his demeanour is wicked and unkind.

**Deino**: He is to be doubly feared for he comes with the gods’ blessing. Beware!

*(Perseus scuffles with the women. Loud cries.)*

**Enyo**: (*shrieking*) He has taken our tooth! I felt him rip it out of my mouth.

**Pemphredo:** Help!He struck me!By Zeus, I can no longer see! He stole our eye!

**Deino**: How, how?

**Pemphredo**: He palmed it slapping my face, and now we three are blind.

*(Perseus leaps about jubilantly)*

**Deino**: He says he will give them back but asks for special things from us in return.

**Enyo**: Special things? What things? Can you trust him? He is a thief. Perhaps a murderer?

**Pemphredo**: Without the tooth we will starve. Without the eye we will not spy the coming of wolves and bandits, and drown in the sea.

**Deino**: Alas, he is demanding your mask of Hades, Pemphredo, and my summer sandals with wings.

**Enyo:** Your sandals will not fit a man. It’s ridiculous. It is a joke Zeus is playing. All this must be a joke.

**Deino:** But more: he wants that diamond-edged sickle you found in the forest, Enyo.

**Enyo**: No. I will not give it. Never! Just tell him where our sister hides, Deino, and he will give back our eye and tooth. He is saying that.

**Pemphredo:** But he wants all those other things too, *(pauses and sighs loudly)* Enyo and Deino, we need our eye and tooth. Give him those things he asks. We’ll have no use for them blind and starved.

**Deino**: And so we betray Medusa, our beloved little sister? Is that what you want?

**All three**: She is already fated. So it will come to pass. And so it shall be written. Oh three unhappy sisters are we.

*Voice off: Good, good, but pump more pathos into that last line. Ok, let’s run through that bit again, and Perseus, try to look more menacing rather than just prancing about.*

Act 1, Scene 2

*(Perseus is sitting down with the three Graeae, sipping tea)*

**Deino**: How can we trust you to give our eye and tooth back?

**Enyo**: Yes, what guarantee do we have?

**Deino**: Just saying you will do that is not good enough. After all, you’re getting good stuff, my smart sandals even if too small for your feet …

**Pemphredo**: (*butting in*) And my mask of invisibility, handmade in Hades itself. A one-off.

**Enyo**: And my shining sickle that I cut our wood with. And slay our food with.

*(Perseus is smiling and nodding. He whispers something to Deino)*

**Deino**: He promises riches and everlasting life to us.

**Enyo**: But we already have everlasting life.

**Pemphredo**: I hear he is apologizing for his rough treatment of our persons. That sounds dodgy to me, I say he wants to bamboozle us. Take care, Deino.

**Deino**: If the gods have blessed him, then we must follow their demands. Let us hear his tale, where he hails from, why he wants to find Medusa.

*(They move closer to Perseus who now begins his long speech about the Gorgons and his parents, etc).*

*Voice off: We’ll skip that for now, Perseus, as your speech has been gone over quite a few times already. Main thing is for you Graeae to look rapt and attentive. Remember that at the end of the speech you have all been convinced to trust the guy).*

*Deino: Righto. When I clap my hands we’ll all go into the cave to fetch the stuff.*

*Voice off: Yep, nice touch. That gives Perseus the chance to throw the eye and tooth into the sea. I like that.*

**Deino**: *(claps her hands)* Let us bring out our precious things, the mask, the sickle and my sandals.

**Enyo**: How will he carry them?

**Pemphredo**: I know, I have a bag-for-life put away. He can take that too.

*(Ominous sea sounds play as Perseus returns just as the three witches emerge from the cave with a large and bulging supermarket-style bag)*

**Deino**: Here, take the bag. It contains all you asked for. And here is where you will find Medusa (*whispers in Perseus’s ear*). Now, return our eye and tooth!

**All three**: (*screaming as Perseus reveals he had tossed the eye and tooth into the sea)* Aieee! Woe and woe! A foul trickster and con man, and we have our sister doomed. Aieee! So it will come to pass. And so it shall be written. *(They fall on the ground as Perseus marches off)* Oh three unhappy sisters are we. Aieee! Aieee! Aieee!

*Voice off: Thank you all. Great stuff. OK, that’s a wrap. Now let’s go eat.*