

ARCHIMEDES

by
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Based on historical records of true events.

BLACKNESS

The voice of an unseen old man calls out to us.

CONON (V.O.)

The Punic War was a time of greed
and tragedy. After Carthage
united the Greek cities against
Rome, the punishment for their
audacity was swift. Terrible.

A HUGE BOULDER SUDDENLY SMASHES THROUGH SAND AND BRICK
TOWARD US. We're inside a building that is being
decimated by CATAPULTED BOULDERS.

As men in ANCIENT GARB scramble through the opening to
streets that are swarmed with soldiers, we realize we are
in the middle of an urban war in:

EXT. CARTHAGE - CITY OF AGRIGENTUM - 261 BC.

Carthaginian PEASANTS try to defend themselves against
the Roman SOLDIERS, only to be massacred by the hundreds.

CONON (V.O.)

City after city was sacked. The
fires could be seen throughout the
isle. But Rome's greatest triumph
was in the neighboring seas.

EXT. MEDITERRANEAN SEA - THE AEGATES ISLANDS - 241 BC

SOLDIERS on ROMAN SHIPS swing BRIDGES attached to their
masts onto CARTHAGINIAN SHIPS. They race over bridges and
slaughter Carthaginians, burning and sinking the vessels.

CONON (V.O.)

Hamilcar Barca, King of Carthage,
surrendered, and was forced to pay
tithes for ten years. This bitter
price has made Hamilcar's son,
Hannibal, hungry for revenge.

EXT. CARTHAGE CITY CASTLE - BALCONY - 225 BC - DAY

A man whose face we do not see, HANNIBAL, puts on a
helmet with CURLED HORNS. He raises his sword and
hundreds of Carthaginians in the streets below cheer!

We race PAST THE CROWD and then OVER BARREN LAND until we
reach the sea. ZOOMING AROUND THE COAST, we arrive in a
DESERT. On the desert is a road. The Road to Alexandria.

A merchant drives his WAGON up that road.

CONON (V.O.)

Here, in Alexandria, we are men
from many worlds, and just as many
allegiances. But the rising drums
of war do not resound within these
walls.

EXT. STREETS OF ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT - 225 BC - SAME.

The heavy WAGON reaches the gates of Alexandria.

With a whip's crack, SOLDIERS urge bulls to shove open
tall gates. The majesty of ALEXANDRIA is revealed.

Entering with the wagon, we drift through the
international, interracial, bustling metropolis of
ancient Alexandria, past gilded Egyptian soldiers on
horseback, arriving at the LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA.

CONON (V.O.)

Here, at the Library of
Alexandria, as long as peace is
the Pharaoh's law, the greatest
minds in the world find sanctuary.
Here, we are free to unravel the
mysteries of the universe.

The disembodied tour ends at the glorious courtyard of
the Library of Alexandria. Hundreds of students and
Alexandrians alike are crowding the space to gaze at a
RAISED PLATFORM in the back of the courtyard.

On the platform are a dozen STUDENTS of the Library,
sitting on stools. ERATOSTHENES, (40s), a serious
teacher with a grim expression, stands nearby.

CONON, a dignified man in his 50s, stands at the front,
addressing the crowd.

CONON (CONT'D)

And today we present to you the
work of our most gifted students.
We pray that you are inspired,
entertained, and reminded that the
ingenuity fostered by peace is
beyond value and exceedingly rare.

Conon looks back, eyes an empty stool among the Students.
Someone is absent. He sighs.

CONON (CONT'D)

A fact that perhaps *some* of my
students need to take a little
more seriously.

INT. ALEXANDRIAN BAR - DAY.

A quill sloppily writes in ink upon a WAITRESS' AMPLE BOSOM. The writing is MATH.

ARCHIMEDES, a slender man in his 20s with an easy grin, shows off in a packed bar for a crowd of students and drunks. The BUXTOM WAITRESS giggles as he writes.

ARCHIMEDES
(drunkenly joking)
Control yourself, you are ruining
the discovery of the century!

BUXTOM WAITRESS
But it tickles!

ARCHIMEDES
(finishing)
There! If you divide any circle's circumference by its diameter - any! - you get the same number.

STUDENT
Amazing!

The crowd claps and the Buxom Waitress tips wine into Archimedes' mouth. Seals it with a kiss.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BAR

A young, beautiful and stately woman, AMELIA is pointed toward the bar by a STREET MERCHANT. She hears BOISTEROUS LAUGHTER spilling out. Steeling herself, she approaches.

INT. THE BAR. SAME.

Archimedes pours wine for himself and his friends.

ARCHIMEDES
It's just barely more than three.
I'm working on it--

AMELIA (O.S.)
My business is not with you, it is
with Heracleides!

Archimedes notices Amelia trying to muscle her way through the bar. A couple ROWDY STUDENTS, drunk since noon, accost her.

CARTHAGE STUDENT
If it's Greek you're after, I can
be of assistance.

The Carthaginian student is shoved by a Roman Student.

ROMAN STUDENT

Why would she want the refuse of
Carthage when she could have a
Roman stallion like me?

AMELIA

Heracleides is all I seek. He's a
mathematician. At the Library of
Alexandria.

ROMAN STUDENT

The pretty lady wants some math.

CARTHAGE STUDENT

All ovals are circles, but not all
circles are ovals.

He makes a grab for her chest. She slaps him away.
Archimedes slides in between her and the Students.

ARCHIMEDES

(to the students)

If Hercules and Hannibal were to
get into a fight, who would win?

ROMAN STUDENT

Hercules!

CARTHAGE STUDENT

Hannibal!

The two lunge at each other and start to wrestle.

BAR PATRON

(yells)

A Roman and a Carthaginian are
fighting!

Students and Locals take sides. CARTHAGINIANS help their
comrade. ROMANS join the Roman Student. A riot starts.

ARCHIMEDES

You're welcome.

AMELIA

(horrified)

They'll kill each other!

ARCHIMEDES

You seek Heracleides?

AMELIA

(ducks a brawler)

His Uncle has sent me to check up
on him. Now that I'm here I see
why. If his education is being
wasted, I will halt his funding.

ARCHIMEDES

Poor fellow. I wouldn't want to be
in his sandals.

A CARTHAGINIAN tosses a ROMAN out the window. Several UNIFORMED SOLDIERS enter, arresting the rioters.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

(to Amelia)

See? No reason to worry. Fighting
is illegal here. Too many touchy
people these days, you understand.

AMELIA

And what is your name?

ARCHIMEDES

Archimedes. The Archimedes.

A group of LOVELY YOUNG WOMEN at the bar overhear.

LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN 1

Archimedes, the scholar?

Archimedes looks at Amelia and shrugs, he gets this a lot. Amelia frowns, unimpressed.

LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN 2

It is an honor to meet you. I am--

ARCHIMEDES

My biggest admirer. Yes, I'm sure.

LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN 2

I intended to give you my name.

ARCHIMEDES

Oh, I'd only forget it. This young woman is new to the city and trying to find someone. Maybe you can help.

AMELIA

I am here to find King Hieron II's nephew, Heracleides.

LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN 1

Heracleides?

(the two giggle)

Heracleides changed his name. He has become more famous since.

AMELIA

(starting to realize)

Changed his name? To what?

BOTH LOVELY YOUNG WOMEN

Archimedes.

Amelia turns around. Archimedes is long gone. Amelia realizes she's been tricked. The Women LAUGH at her.

AMELIA
I suspect I'm going to dislike
this assignment.

EXT. STREETS OF ALEXANDRIA - SAME.

Archimedes moves quickly through the Alexandrian streets. He sidesteps a camel, weaves through the thick crowds, and nicks a flagon of wine from a merchant's wagon.

Archimedes reaches the entrance to the Library Courtyard, and sees an impassable herd of people, pushing to get inside. He looks up to the walls of the Library.

Sees a PROPPED-UP WAGON nearby, heavy with merchandise.

Archimedes kicks off the propping leg of the wagon and it tips forward, creating a ramp to the top of the wall.

EXT. WALLS INSIDE THE LIBRARY - LATER.

Archimedes hops over the top.

EXT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - COURTYARD.

Archimedes approaches the platform from behind. He hears crowds applauding. Conon sits on a stool on the side.

An eager student, DEIMOS (30s), stands at the front, exhibiting a large wooden device.

DEIMOS
My invention masters time itself!

He inserts a mirror. The SUN'S RAYS are captured by the mirror and REFLECTED against a nearby wall in SEGMENTED SLICES. The crowd ooohs.

Archimedes sneakily joins the Students on the platform. Eratosthenes notices. And is not pleased.

DEIMOS (CONT'D)
A device that gives Man accurate
readings of the sun's hours.
(self-consciously)
That is, if you reposition it
every day. And if there are no
clouds in the sky. And if--

ERATOSTHENES
(interrupting)
Well done! Thank you, Deimos.

The crowd politely claps. Archimedes rolls his eyes.
Deimos helps his lackeys move the sundial away.

ERATOSTHENES (CONT'D)
Citizens of Alexandria, I pray you
have enjoyed the festival of
Athena. It appears we have arrived
at our final student.

(beat)

I present Archimedes, of Syra--

The students in the crowd ERUPT IN APPLAUSE AND CHEERS!
Eratosthenes rankles at the praise. CONON hides a smile.

Archimedes grins wide and waves to the crowd, soaking it all in as he walks forward.

ERATOSTHENES (CONT'D)
I am eager for your presentation
as much as the crowd, Archimedes,
since I have yet to see you toil
on anything.

ARCHIMEDES
(addresses the crowd)
That you could not see the
evidence of my work is not
surprising, Eratosthenes.
(the crowd snickers)
For I am using my near-limitless
genius to advance the field of
arithmatic.

The Students and Locals cheer and whistle their support.

ERATOSTHENES
As head of mathematics here at the
Library, I fail to see how you can
improve upon it.

The crowd reacts to this insult, highly entertained.

ARCHIMEDES
Allow me to illuminate.

He signals to A STUDENT at a SIDE GATE. The Student grins, opens the gate, and directs A HERD OF COWS inside. They are black, white, brown, spotted...And unruly.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)
If you are the expert,
Eratosthenes, answer me this:
Among the cows, the number of
white is one third plus one
quarter of the total black cattle;
the number of black is one quarter
plus one fifth the total of the
spotted cattle;

the number of spotted is one fifth plus one sixth the total of the brown cattle; the number of the brown is one sixth plus one seventh the total of the white cattle. What is the composition of the herd?

As Archimedes rattles off the figures that would go down in history as The Cattle Problem (*only solved centuries later by the first computer*), cows create chaos.

ERATOSTHENES
 (purpling with rage)
 Get those cows out of my library!

ARCHIMEDES
 How many cows would you like gone?

ERATOSTHENES
 ...all of them!

ARCHIMEDES
 You cannot solve my equation?
 (to the crowd)
 Maybe you should just count them.

The Students and Alexandrians hoot and holler. A LARGE COW lumbers up on stage and moos at Eratosthenes.

ERATOSTHENES
 Get it away from me!

CONON
 You've made your point,
 Archimedes. Now be done with it.

ARCHIMEDES
 (to the crowd)
 Push the cows to the doors, then.

Everyone laughs and assists, pushing the cows out of the courtyard. Eratosthenes gets PINNED, LICKED by his cow.

ERATOSTHENES
 (sputtering)
 Archimedes! We will speak of this!

Suddenly Archimedes is lifted up by his fellow students.

ARCHIMEDES
 I'm afraid I am currently indisposed.

The students drag him away, cheering. He sees Conon shake his head at him, disappointed. Archimedes shrugs.

EXT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - COURTYARD - MORNING.

A PASSIONATE YOUNG MAN stands at the feet of a statue.

PASSIONATE YOUNG MAN
 (to the crowd)
 He will avenge his father and
 throw the Roman dogs out of
 Carthage once and for all!

Archimedes sits at a bench, not listening. Pours sand out of his hand. Makes a note on a scroll of PARCHMENT.

PASSIONATE YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)
 Our day is coming! Join with us!
 Join with Carthage! Join Hann--

The Passionate Young Man is yanked from his perch by SOLDIERS of the Alexandrian Guard.

SOLDIER
 You will join your friends in
 jail. Take him.

PASSIONATE YOUNG MAN
 (as he's pulled away)
 We will not stay silent! Tell
 Rome, tell the world, Hannibal
 rises and he will triumph!

Conon approaches Archimedes unseen.

CONON
 This looks to be Archimedes in
 front of me, but rarely have I
 seen him looking so studious.

ARCHIMEDES
 That is very much like the voice
 of Conon, but that cannot be. Even
 he doesn't sound that old.

CONON
 (smiles and sits)
 You should respect the wisdom of
 your elders.

ARCHIMEDES
 My father was "wisely" told by his
 elders that he could not be an
 astronomer. He died a soldier. And
 far too young.

CONON
 Count the stars, then. Realize his
 dream. Your Uncle patiently
 supports your education.

ARCHIMEDES

My uncle has money to spare. And time. And armies, even.

Conon takes Archimedes' parchment from him. On it are basic schematics for a small CATAPULT and a CHAMBER POT. The trajectory of the chamber pot leads to a STICK FIGURE. The name "Eratosthenes" is written by the figure.

CONON

I see you have solved the triangulation issues to shorten distance. Your wasted talents, as ever, are quite impressive.

ARCHIMEDES

Thank you.

CONON

But you tarnish your reputation with ridiculous pranks.

ARCHIMEDES

True. I would have liked to have shown the crowd that I am capable of solving that word problem.

CONON

Now, that would have been impress-

ARCHIMEDES

But how could I have fit 50,389,082 cows in the courtyard?

Conon is floored that Archimedes has the actual answer.

CONON

Archimedes, you are my most gifted student and an invaluable addition to the Library.

(Archimedes beams)

But if I hear of any more embarrassments like the surprise you pulled at the festival, your Uncle shall know my displeasure.

ARCHIMEDES

I do not wish to grieve you, Conon. I respect you and I love you. So I will do my best to keep you unaware of any future wrongdoings.

He jumps up and strides away confidently.

CONON

What do you mean unaware? Archimedes!

Archimedes is gone. Conon sighs. Shakes his head.

EXT. STREETS OF ALEXANDRIA - DAY.

Amelia pushes through a boisterous market in Alexandria. She approaches a BURLY MARKET SELLER.

AMELIA

Excuse me, do you know where--

Suddenly she hears the LOUD ROAR OF A LARGE CROWD.

EXT. THE WALLS OF THE LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - LATER.

Amelia finds the CROWD thronged around an exterior wall. A young man with a GREEK MASK stands on a cart. Draws a complicated geometrical shape on the wall in paint.

He finishes with a flourish and the crowd cheers.

The Masked Man puts his hand to his ear. Beckoning.

CROWDSPERSON #1

A perfect circle!

CROWDSPERSON #2

A circle within an oval!

The Masked Man mimes disgust at these. Too easy.

ERATOSTHENES

A heptagon.

The crowd turns to ERATOSTHENES. He stands with crossed arms and a sneer on his face.

ERATOSTHENES (CONT'D)

With only a compass and straight edge.

The crowd "ooohs" this. That isn't so easy.

CROWDSPERSON #2

The Euclidian Challenge?

CROWDSPERSON #3

It's impossible!

With a sweep of his arms, the Masked Man quiets the crowd. He beckons to nearby students. They provide him with a STRAIGHT EDGE and a COMPASS - common equipment.

The Masked Man draws while the crowd waits with baited breath. Amelia gasps as the Man finishes with a flourish.

The crowd goes wild! Suddenly an angry voice calls out.

SOLDIER
You disgrace our Pharaoh's city!

The Masked Man turns to the small posse of ALEXANDRIAN GUARD SOLDIERS as they move into the street.

MASKED MAN
You dare call my work a disgrace?
Do not pretend you understand it.
No one here will believe you.

The crowd laughs at the soldiers. Amelia winces.

SOLDIER
You will come with us.

MASKED MAN
Don't make me do everything for
you. Catch me first.

He STEALS A KISS from a PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN. Then pulls himself up to the roof and races along it to the west.

SOLDIER
After him!

The soldiers turn, but are stopped by a LARGE SOLDIER, MARCUS MARCELLUS (30s), not a Roman to be fucked with.

MARCELLUS
Wait. You four, chase him. You two, follow me.

He aims EAST. The bewildered Soldiers do as he commands.

EXT. ALEXANDRIA ROOFTOPS - MOMENTS LATER.

The Masked Man hops on a canopy and crawls into a window. Soldiers below do not see this and continue running.

INT. ALEXANDRIAN HOUSEHOLD - SAME.

The Man removes his mask. He is, of course, Archimedes. He peers out the window. Watches the soldiers run away.

He turns around, sighing in relief, and is nearly brained by an ANGRY HOUSEWIFE brandishing a chamber pot.

ANGRY HOUSEWIFE
Guards!

ARCHIMEDES
Sssh! No, it's okay, I'm not-

ANGRY HOUSEWIFE
(swings again)
GUARDS!

Archimedes darts back out the window as fast as he can.

EXT. LIBRARY WALLS - LATER.

Archimedes pulls himself over the walls of the Library, landing back in the courtyard. Wipes sweat from his brow.

MARCELLUS (O.S.)
Here, let us help you with that.

ARCHIMEDES
Huh?

Archimedes is splashed with water. As he attempts to clear his eyes, soldiers swarm him and tie his arms. MARCELLUS reveals himself, holding an empty pitcher.

MARCELLUS
You are a student of the Library?

ARCHIMEDES
A resident genius.

MARCELLUS
Not from what I've seen. Take him.

ARCHIMEDES
Wait! I can explain! ...I can pay!

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN AIR PRISON - THAT NIGHT.

The scum of Alexandria awaits sentencing in a prison yard. Archimedes tries to get a SOLDIER's attention.

ARCHIMEDES
I am far too important to be allowed to starve.
(Soldier ignores him)
I am not like these...animals.

A large brutish thug, EPYCIDES(20s), turns to Archimedes.

EPYCIDES
Animal? Did you call me animal?

ARCHIMEDES
(to Epycides)
Everyone but you.
(to the soldier)

My Uncle is King Hieron II and he will reward you handsomely for my release.

A second prisoner, HIPPOCRATES (20s), thinner but meaner looking, overhears this and looks at Epycides.

HIPPOCRATES
King Hieron? Of Syracuse?

ARCHIMEDES
(to the soldier)
Gold, wine, women. Please!

Hippocrates suddenly slaps Archimedes on the back.

HIPPOCRATES
Come now, friend. Don't waste your words on him. We're the ones you want to talk to.

ARCHIMEDES
You mean...or else?

The two brothers laugh at Archimedes' terror.

HIPPOCRATES
The name is Hippocrates. This is my brother, Epycides.

EPYCIDES nods a hulkish hello.

EPYCIDES
A pleasure.

HIPPOCRATES
You're a Syracusan? We're from Carthage. We Greeks used to stick together.

ARCHIMEDES
Not anymore.

HIPPOCRATES
You shouldn't let a little thing like Rome get in the way of an old friendship.

ARCHIMEDES
And here I thought to speak against Rome is treason.

EPYCIDES
That's not all we'll do against Rome.

HIPPOCRATES

What my brother means to say is
that we're good, loyal men of
Carthage. Straight from Hannibal's
army.

ARCHIMEDES

Hannibal has an army now, does he?

HIPPOCRATES

And if you were Hannibal,
humiliated by your father's
surrender to Rome, what would you
do with an army?

ARCHIMEDES

What every army does that loses to
Rome. Pay taxes.

A tense beat. Hippocrates laughs. Epycides follows suit.

HIPPOCRATES

Hannibal could use a smart fellow
like you on our side. Someone who
could talk sense into your Uncle
about the dangers of a Roman
alliance.

ARCHIMEDES

I am not a politician. I am a
mathematician.

HIPPOCRATES

War makes hyphenates of every man.

ARCHIMEDES

I hear Hannibal makes whores of
every woman. And slaves of every
child.

Hippocrates' smile runs away.

HIPPOCRATES

We do not need to be friends. But
it would be in your best interest.
And in the best interest of
Syracuse, your home.

ARCHIMEDES

You would do best to go to
Syracuse and threaten her in
person.

Epycides picks Archimedes up roughly.

EPYCIDES

We are asking nicely.

ARCHIMEDES

(choking)

You are asking. The wrong. Man.

Behind Epycides, Hippocrates pulls out a hidden DAGGER.

HIPPOCRATES

Hannibal's army will come for
Syracuse. If you won't deliver
this message to the King with your
tongue, your blood will do the job
just as well.

Epycides throws Archimedes against the wall, stunning
him. Archimedes barely fumbles out of the way of
Hippocrates' dagger. He is not much of a fighter.

SOLDIER

What is going on over there?

Criminals jump up, hollering for Hippocrates to win.

Archimedes can only stay a step ahead for so long. He
sees Hippocrates LUNGE with his dagger-expects the worst.

But suddenly Hippocrates is felled by a large SOLDIER. It
is MARCELLUS. He offers his hand to Archimedes.

MARCELLUS

Are you hurt?

Behind Marcellus, Epycides raises a large rock.

ARCHIMEDES

Behind you.

Marcellus unsheathes A **BEAUTIFUL KNIFE** in a lightning-
fast movement and holds it to Epycides' neck.

MARCELLUS

Hannibal's dogs are not welcome in
Alexandria. Tell him the Roman,
Marcus Marcellus, says this.

EPICYDES

(drops the rock)

When I get my sword, that pretty
knife of yours won't save you.

AMELIA (O.S.)

Excuse me?

The men all turn to see Amelia at the prison gate.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I come with funds to release the
problematic Syracusan.

EXT. STREETS OUTSIDE OF THE PRISON - MOMENTS LATER.

Marcellus escorts Archimedes out of the prison. Amelia pays the PRISON BOOKKEEPER. She turns to Archimedes.

AMELIA

What were you thinking? You could have been convicted of a serious crime.

ARCHIMEDES

Can I just say in my defense... that I don't care.

AMELIA

You will care when King Hieron cuts off your funding.

MARCELLUS

You are Syracusan royalty? But you are not trained in combat.

ARCHIMEDES

Thank the gods for soldiers. Please, tell me how to reward you.

MARCELLUS

(thinks)
Do not pay me for this one kindness. Hire me.

ARCHIMEDES

To do what?

MARCELLUS

Sword training. Basic defense. You can pay me then.

AMELIA

Excuse me. Hello, I represent the interests of Syracuse. We have invested in this man's education.

ARCHIMEDES

(triumphant)
I am too important to be beaten senseless on a regular schedule.

AMELIA

--and I believe it will be best for Syracuse if he does undergo training in the ways of the sword.

ARCHIMEDES

What?

Marcellus smirks at Archimedes.

AMELIA
I will pay. And I will supervise.

MARCELLUS
(frowns)
Women are a distraction.

AMELIA
We, and I do include the King when
I say "we," insist.

MARCELLUS
(annoyed)
Do not forget your coin purse.
(to Archimedes)
Until tomorrow.

Marcellus strides off.

AMELIA
You have changed your name to
"Archimedes?" meaning "Master of
Thought?"

ARCHIMEDES
Is it not accurate?

AMELIA
(amused)
That remains to be seen. Tomorrow.

Amelia starts to walk away.

ARCHIMEDES
(catching up to her)
I remember a beautiful Amelia in
Syracuse. A senator's daughter?

AMELIA
Senator Sacchus.

ARCHIMEDES
Perhaps we should include a
private inspection of my physical
prowess tonight. So you can assure
Hieron I am in the peak of health.

AMELIA
I am eager to see a demonstration
of your form and strength.
(pushes him away)
During the lesson.

Amelia leaves. The first ever to turn him down.

INT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - STABLES - NEXT DAY.

Archimedes shovels hay into a DONKEY's stall. He has created a makeshift fulcrum and lever to take up much of the weight of the hay as he moves it. Casually ingenious.

Conon enters.

CONON

I see Eratosthenes is still angry.
A curious punishment, stable work.

Archimedes turns. Conon reacts to the bruises.

CONON (CONT'D)

Your face--

ARCHIMEDES

It is nothing. A misunderstanding
with a couple of Carthaginians.

CONON

I see. If Hannibal has ambitions
for Rome, he will need Syracuse on
his side. His war will threaten
your home. Your people.

ARCHIMEDES

Soldiers stabbing each other over
parcels of land has nothing to do
with me.

Conon takes the pitchfork from Archimedes' hands.

CONON

The great works of Man are often
subjugated by the great wars of
Man.

ARCHIMEDES

No need for lectures, my friend.
We are not in your class.

Archimedes feeds an apple to the donkey. Indignant.

CONON

Here you are, with all the tools
to change the world and you wish
to do nothing. Your choices are a
luxury.

(exiting)

But it is time to decide what kind
of man you will become. Or the
Fates will lose their patience and
decide for you.

Archimedes, alone, pats the donkey. Disquieted.

EXT. SOLDIER TRAINING COURTYARD - SUNSET

YOUNG MEN train to fight in a dusty courtyard. Marcellus and Amelia stand nearby. Having been left waiting.

MARCELLUS

Punctuality. Not a Syracusan trait, I see?

AMELIA

As much as tact is a soldier's.

MARCELLUS

Do not drum up an ill humor with me, woman. Where is he?

AMELIA

(sighs)
I'll start with the brothels. You check the bars.

They glare at each other and part ways.

INT. RESTAURANT IN ALEXANDRIA - NIGHT.

Belly-dancers weave through crowded tables. Archimedes downs what must be his eighth drink.

MARCELLUS enters and spies Archimedes.

MARCELLUS

You missed your first lesson.

ARCHIMEDES

I outsmarted you.

MARCELLUS

Yes. You hid at a restaurant next to the Library. Very clever.

ARCHIMEDES

What are you doing in Alexandria anyway? Aren't you needed in Rome?

MARCELLUS

Not quite yet. Until I am, there is money to be made here.

ARCHIMEDES

I will pay you double if you stay away from me.

Marcellus sighs. He pulls out a stretched skin and clay figurines. On the skin is drawn a cross-section of boxes. A game that is the ancestor to chess.

MARCELLUS
Let us play for it.

ARCHIMEDES
A game?

MARCELLUS
You should outwit me easily. Move
two pieces together.
(demonstrates)
Three pieces together can take
away one of my pieces. If you
remove all my pieces before I
remove yours, I will leave. If
not, you will start your lesson at
dawn tomorrow.

Archimedes assents. They play the game.

ARCHIMEDES
I wish to move four pieces, not
two. Then you would be cornered.

MARCELLUS
Games are based on combat. Combat
has rules. You cannot change your
materials, or the laws of physics,
simply because you want to win.

ARCHIMEDES
I have got another of your pieces!

In one move, Marcellus captures Archimedes' FINAL PIECE.

MARCELLUS
You may not have a care for your
future, but I do. Tomorrow. At
dawn. Do not disappoint me.

Marcellus leaves. Archimedes slumps in his chair.

Two YOUNG WOMEN next to Archimedes struggle with a BOTTLE
OF WINE. Archimedes takes it from them, wraps the bottom
in a cloth, bangs the base against the wall twice.

The CORK, displaced, now sticks out the top. He grabs it
with his teeth and pulls it out. Presents the bottle.

YOUNG WOMAN
You're amazing.

ARCHIMEDES
I know.

The girls laugh. Cheered up, he laughs with them.

EXT. SMALL AMPHITHEATER IN ALEXANDRIA - DAWN.

Archimedes is SMACKED IN THE FACE by the flat of Marcellus' blade. He falls backward onto stone.

The nearly empty, round stage is faced by rows of chiseled seats. Empty, except for Amelia.

AMELIA

(snorts)

Be careful with your toy,
Marcellus. Break him and you will
owe King Hieron a hefty sum.

ARCHIMEDES

I am fine.

Marcellus comes at Archimedes again, sending him scampering away.

MARCELLUS

Come now, you must stay on the
battlefield.

ARCHIMEDES

Getting close to you is a death
sentence. I am better off throwing
sticks from a distance.

AMELIA

You would need a large stick.

ARCHIMEDES

I assure you, my stick is very
large.

MARCELLUS

If you want to win, never give a
single foot of land to your enemy.

Archimedes rushes Marcellus. He fares better, but ultimately his sword is knocked away. Archimedes stumbles over a SLEEPING HOMELESS MAN on the side of the stage.

AMELIA

(laughs)

Archimedes, be careful or you will
hurt someone other than yourself.

ARCHIMEDES

Of course this is funny to you.
You will never have to raise an
unwieldy length of metal to defend
an arbitrary country line.

AMELIA

Oh no?

Amelia picks up the sword.

MARCELLUS
Put that down before you cut
yourself.

She attacks. Marcellus defends, retreating backward several feet. He is finally able to counter. She smiles.

AMELIA
My father wanted sons. He raised my sisters and I to take up the sword instead.

Amelia returns the sword to the amazed Marcellus.

MARCELLUS
That was...impressive.

AMELIA
Women can be more than just "a distraction?"

A charged moment between he and Amelia. Archimedes doesn't like it.

CICERO (O.S.)
Pardon me!

The trio turn to see a distinguished-looking Roman, CICERO (40s), hesitantly enter the amphitheater.

CICERO (CONT'D)
Good day, citizens. I am Cicero, the legendary biographer.

ARCHIMEDES
You are famous for writing about others who are genuinely famous?

CICERO
(ignores him)
I was told Archimedes, Inventor of the Cattle Problem, The Great Geometer himself, is nearby?

ARCHIMEDES
You have found him.

Cicero looks at Marcellus, misunderstanding.

CICERO
My gods, an Adonis as well!

ARCHIMEDES
Not him. Me. I am Archimedes.

CICERO

You? You smell like a drunk.

ARCHIMEDES

That is also true.

CICERO

I seek the wise and mighty
Archimedes. And I will not be
played with by some smelly child.

Archimedes narrows his eyes. He points at the OLD HOMELESS MAN who is awake, muttering to himself.

ARCHIMEDES

You are too shrewd for me, Cicero.
The real Archimedes is there.

CICERO

That...that man? But he is filthy.

ARCHIMEDES

Archimedes is so obsessed with
numbers, he sometimes forgets to
bathe. But he is a genius. Look at
that imposing gray beard.

Cicero looks in awe at the Homeless Man. He rushes to him. Hastily pulls out papyrus and ink.

CICERO

Archimedes, sir, speak to me of
your mathematical processes.

HOMELESS MAN

(finds an apple core)
Eureka!

Fascinated, Cicero writes the mumbling down.

MARCELLUS

Is this a joke to you? Cicero's
biographies are widely read. Every
man in Rome will think Archimedes
is a babbling old fool.

AMELIA

King Hieron will not be pleased.

ARCHIMEDES

Well, if Hieron has women like you
fighting for Syracuse, surely he
has no need of me.

AMELIA

I have seen nothing of you that I,
nor Syracuse, have need of at all.

ARCHIMEDES

Oh, no? I have far more interesting things to show you than a few pieces of flattened steel being waved around. Come.

He spins on his heel and exits the amphitheater. Intrigued, Amelia and Marcellus exchange looks, follow.

INT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - OBSERVATORY - LATER.

The three enter a large room. Windows are covered, light comes from oil lamps around the edges of the room.

Taking up most of the room is an enormous MODEL OF THE KNOWN SOLAR SYSTEM. With the sun at its center.

Using one finger, Archimedes lifts the cranium-sized ball that represents EARTH. Everything is connected with ropes and pulleys, so it lifts easily.

ARCHIMEDES

Give me but a place to stand in the universe, and I shall move the Earth.

He grins at the other two. They are astounded.

AMELIA

The sun is in the center.

ARCHIMEDES

Aristarchos' idea. And a good one.

Amelia walks around the room, marveling at the construction. Marcellus approaches Earth, frowning.

MARCELLUS

Seeing the world from a god's view makes even clearer the importance of war. Someday there will be peace. Borders will become permanent and the size of your country will never increase.

ARCHIMEDES

I see. Better to kill everyone while you still can?

MARCELLUS

I am no murderer. I fight for Rome. For order and reason. Hannibal razes conquered towns to the ground. Killing everyone.

ARCHIMEDES

Roman soldiers have the right to
pillage any town they defeat, do
they not? I fail to see a
difference.

MARCELLUS

(angering)

We do not wipe them out. We
embrace them. They become part of
Rome.

ARCHIMEDES

How lucky for them.

AMELIA

(placating)

--Perhaps it is time for lunch--

MARCELLUS

You speak against Rome?

ARCHIMEDES

I speak for myself.

A tense beat. Suddenly, SCREAMS are heard outside.

EXT. STREETS OF ALEXANDRIA

Archimedes, Marcellus and Amelia exit the observatory
into the STREET to find absolute chaos. EGYPTIANS, GREEKS
and ROMANS run in all directions. The clashing of swords
can be heard. ALEXANDRIAN GUARDS try to control a **riot**.

AMELIA

By the gods...

HIPPOCRATES, the sneaky thug from the prison, rides a
horse into the fray.

HIPPOCRATES

Fight on, free citizens of
Carthage! Bring any Roman you find
to his knees!

He skewers an ALEXANDRIAN GUARD from his perch.
Elsewhere, the larger EPYCIDES smashes a guard's head
against a city wall. He turns to the rioting crowd.

EPYCIDES

For the glory of Hannibal!

Dozens of CARTHAGINIAN CRIMINALS from the prison, armed
with knives and crude axes, cry out in response.

CARTHAGININANS

For Hannibal!

An ALEXANDRIAN SOLDIER spots Marcellus. RUNS to him.

ALEXANDRIAN SOLDIER
The Carthaginians - they've
started a riot. Marcellus, they're
killing anyone allied with Rome!

Marcellus pushes Archimedes and Amelia back to the observatory doors.

MARCELLUS
Do not let them see you.

He draws his sword and charges into the fray. Archimedes darts through the doors. Amelia hesitates - sees HIPPOCRATES engage with MARCELLUS from his horse--

INT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - OBSERVATORY - SAME.

Archimedes runs through the solar system to the doors on the other side. Opening them, he sees into the Main Courtyard of the Library. CARTHAGINIANS dart through the scholars, cutting down student and professor alike.

Archimedes turns to warn Amelia, but she is not with him.

ARCHIMEDES
Amelia?

EXT. STREETS OF ALEXANDRIA - SAME.

Amelia rushes a TOOTHLESS CARTHAGINIAN (20s). He grins at her, thinking her easy prey. She knocks him down and takes his sword from his unconscious hand.

EXT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - MAIN COURTYARD - SAME.

Archimedes is about to go back to find her--

CONON
This is a place of peace!

Archimedes turns, sees CONON beating a CARTHAGINIAN with his scrolls.

CONON (CONT'D)
Of higher learning!

Angered, the Carthaginian brings down his sword.

ARCHIMEDES
CONON!

CONON IS CUT DOWN. Archimedes rushes forward.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

NO!

The Carthaginian turns on Archimedes, sword slicing.
Archimedes barely rolls out of the way.

INT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - OBSERVATORY - SAME.

Archimedes tears into the room. Bars the door behind him.
SLAMS are heard as the Carthaginian forces his way in.

Quickly, Archimedes unties ROPE that is wrapped around a HINGE. The CARTHAGINIAN busts into the room. Lifting his sword, he runs for Archimedes.

CARTHAGINIAN

You are marked for Hades!

Archimedes lets go of the ROPE. It unspools and the ENORMOUS SUN in the solar system swings down fast and hard, SLAMMING the Carthaginian against the WALL.

ARCHIMEDES

I will see no gods today.

An idea forms in Archimedes' brain. He yanks ROPE off of another wall and the Sun LOWERS to the ground. He grabs a few hinges and kicks open one of the shuttered windows--

EXT. STREETS OF ALEXANDRIA - SAME.

Hippocrates and Marcellus battle. They knock each other's swords out of their hands, but Hippocrates gets close, stealing **MARCELLUS' BEAUTIFUL KNIFE** from his hip.

As Hippocrates LUNGES at Marcellus with the long knife, Amelia BLOCKS the attack with her purloined sword.

AMELIA

You will need this.

She tosses Marcellus his sword. He stands and they face Hippocrates. Ready. Hippocrates backs up.

HIPPOCRATES

A delay of the inevitable.

He disappears into the crowd. Three large CARTHAGINIANS take his place and attack Marcellus and Amelia.

UP CLOSE

Archimedes's HAND loops a HINGE around a second-floor balcony and ties ROPE to it.

UP CLOSE

Another HINGE is looped around the bars of a gate. ROPE is pulled through quickly by fervent hands.

BACK ON THE STREET

Marcellus' arm is sliced by one of the many Carthaginian swords. He cries out in pain.

AMELIA

Marcus!

She is suddenly knocked out from behind. Marcellus cradles her unconscious body in his arms--

Unaware that behind him, an ENORMOUS SUN LIFTS into the air, "conjured" into the sky above a MASKED MAN...

MARCELLUS

(to Amelia)

I am sorry--

CARTHAGININAN #1

What man is that?

CARTHAGININAN #2

That is no man!

CARTHAGININAN #3

A sign from the gods!

Marcellus looks up and sees Archimedes wearing the GREEK MASK and standing on a rooftop, APPARENTLY HOLDING THE SUN above his head. Apollo himself would be terrified.

CLOSE ON THE SUN

Archimedes is not holding the sphere up with inhuman strength, rather it is being held aloft by the ROPE looped around the rooftops.

ARCHIMEDES

(in a booming voice)

No. More. Blood.

ON THE GROUND

The Carthaginians waver, superstitious and nervous.

HIPPOCRATES

A Roman trick! No god would dare defy Hannibal.

EPYCIDES

Bring him down!

Enraged, the Carthaginians rush toward Archimedes.

CLOSE ON THE SUN

He unhooks the ROPE. The SUN ACCELERATES DOWN THE ROOF.

ON THE STREET

The first few Carthaginians are blown off their feet when the SUN punches through the group. The remaining thugs scramble to escape, but are mowed down.

The Sun rumbles toward Marcellus. He shields Amelia with his body. Slowing, the Sun stops before reaching them.

ON THE ROOFTOPS

Archimedes lifts his mask and smiles.

CARTHAGINIAN (O.S.)
You will be wearing that smile
around your throat!

He turns, sees a Carthaginian unsheathe his sword and dive in for a killing blow-

SHLUNK! A SPEAR pierces the Carthaginian in the abdomen, thrusting him off the roof. Archimedes looks down.
MARCELLUS SALUTES Archimedes. He returns the gesture.

Into the streets of broken bodies ride the PHARAOH'S SOLDIERS, on horseback in GOLD livery.

PHARAOH'S CAPTAIN
All rioting shall be seen as treason in the eyes of the great Pharaoh! Who here desires to make war on Egypt's land?

The Carthaginians limp and run away, what few can.

Hippocrates wipes and CONCEALS MARCELLUS' KNIFE IN HIS CLOTHES. He and Epycides disappear into the crowd.

EXT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - MAIN COURTYARD - LATER.

Archimedes kneels over Conon's body. Marcellus approaches him, Amelia in his arms.

ARCHIMEDES
(jumps up)
Is she--

MARCELLUS
Wounded. She will recover.

ARCHIMEDES
Thank you.

MARCELLUS
Thank you.

EXT. LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA - MAIN COURTYARD - NEXT DAY.

FLOWER PETALS rain down on the Library courtyard, thrown by SOBBING STUDENTS along the balcony, as BODIES OF THE DEAD are honored in a funeral ceremony.

Archimedes helps carry Conon's body through the courtyard to the pyre. His eyes hard, void of his usual playfulness. A MOURNFUL CHOIR sings.

AT THE PYRE

Conon's body is laid down upon brambles and wood on the courtyard dais. Archimedes places a COIN in Conon's mouth. A Roman ritual.

ARCHIMEDES

For the Ferryman. A far better use
for coin than I ever had. As well
you know.

MOURNERS

(chanting)
Igne natura renovatur integra.

The pyre is lit by ERATOSTHENES. He weeps as his compatriots burn. Archimedes and Marcellus watch.

ARCHIMEDES

If not for you, I would be with them.

MARCELLUS

(guilty)
There is something I must ask
forgiveness for. I did not tutor
you to earn a few extra coins.
Hannibal would need to control
Syracuse if he wishes to crush
Rome. It is your home that will
determine the victor of his war. I
pursued your trust to encourage
your loyalty to Rome, and through
you, the Syracusan king. I did not
expect to find...a friend.

ARCHIMEDES

(thinks it over)
Conon would have said it is
destiny. In the middle of such
terrible loss, to find friendship.

MARCELLUS

You will be a great man someday,
Archimedes. Despite yourself.

ARCHIMEDES
(offers his arm)
Until we meet again.

MARCELLUS
I pray it will be soon.

The two embrace. Marcellus walks out to the--

STREETS OF ALEXANDRIA

Running into AMELIA as she enters. She carries a LETTER.

AMELIA
Marcus! I am much healed and I
would like to thank you --

MARCELLUS
I am called back to Rome. Hannibal
makes to advance on our borders.
When you return to Syracuse, urge
their loyalty.

AMELIA
It was my understanding that a
friendship between our countries
had already been established.

MARCELLUS
Let us endeavor to keep that
friendship alive.

AMELIA
One might misunderstand your tone
for a threat, Marcellus.

MARCELLUS
As long as Syracuse is loyal to
Rome, there is nothing to fear.
(he hesitates)
Goodbye.

He bows awkwardly to her and strides away. She watches.

AT THE DAIS

Amelia approaches Archimedes. He sees the LETTER.

ARCHIMEDES
And what does my Uncle command?

AMELIA
War is brewing, Archimedes. It is
time to come home.

EXT. SOUTH OF ALEXANDRIA - DAWN.

Archimedes and Amelia ride away from the City of Alexandria toward Syracuse. Archimedes watches his temporary home disappear. One he will never see again.

EXT. GATES OF SYRACUSE - SOME DAYS LATER.

Amelia, Archimedes and their entourage approach the mighty GATES OF SYRACUSE. A great fortress, the CASTLE of Syracuse, is atop a tall plateau.

ARCHIMEDES

It has been too long since I've
had Syracusan wine.

AMELIA

I am surprised you remember her at
all.

ARCHIMEDES

Everything I am was begun here.
Perhaps I have only been gone long
enough to bring knowledge home. To
repay Syracuse for all she has
inspired in me.

AMELIA

(impressed)
Nobler words than I expected.

SOLDIERS open the OUTER GATES.

ARCHIMEDES

That, and being gone for so long
means I'll get a hero's welcome.

The INNER GATES swing wide open--

What must be ALL OF SYRACUSE is revealed. At the sight of Archimedes, they let out an enormous CHEER! Drums and music begin in earnest. Archimedes grins at Amelia.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

I see Syracuse remembers me.

Amelia is speechless. The crowd surges around Archimedes and leads his horse to the front of a celebratory PARADE.

AMELIA

Archimedes! We must report to the
King!

ARCHIMEDES

He will understand if I am a
little late.

AMELIA
Archimedes!

He is pulled away by the crowd. Amelia smolders.

EXT. CITY STREETS OF SYRACUSE - LATER.

The parade leads to the streets of Syracuse. It is a beautiful city by the sea that prizes arts and culture.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - SAME.

At the top of the plateau is the CASTLE OF SYRACUSE. Looking down upon the celebration is KING HIERON II (70s), a man who should be crippled by age, but who, instead, is robust, and rarely sits on his throne.

He is surrounded by the Syracusan SENATORS.

KING HIERON II
(smiles)
He is home.

The throne room door opens and Amelia is shown inside.

AMELIA
King Hieron. Senators. Father.

SENATOR SACCHUS embraces her. A servant brings a glass of wine. King Hieron raises his glass to her.

KING HIERON II
Well done, little Amelia. You have brought back to us our crown jewel. And in one piece. Do not think I am unaware how difficult that had to be.

AMELIA
Yes, well, I fear you may be disappointed by him. He is undisciplined, disrespectful, insensitive to our plight and generally... nightmarish.

ARCHIMEDES (O.S.)
The man sounds frightful.

Amelia whirls to see Archimedes standing in the throne room doorway, a wreath of laurels in his hair.

KING HIERON II
Nephew!

ARCHIMEDES
Uncle!

KING HIERON II

(embracing him)

Carthage will think twice when
they learn the greatest mind in
the known world is at last
returned to Syracuse.

(raises his glass)

To...it is Archimedes, now, is it?

SENATORS

Archimedes!

ARCHIMEDES

To me!

They drink. Amelia shakes her head, disgusted.

KING HIERON II

I have a surprise for you.
Something I am sure you will
appreciate.

Archimedes is intrigued.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - WAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.

With a flourish, Hieron opens the double doors to his war room. Archimedes follows.

KING HIERON II

Isn't she beautiful?

Archimedes' smile melts away when he realizes Hieron is indicating an enormous schematic of a ship.

ARCHIMEDES

A boat. How thrilling.

KING HIERON II

(ignores his sarcasm)

Rome is too far to save us from
Carthaginian greed. I have begun a
defensive plan of the most sneaky
and depraved kind: Diplomacy.

The Senators and Amelia have followed them in. They look to Archimedes expectantly.

KING HIERON II (CONT'D)

You will make this. A present for
the Pharaoh to secure an alliance.
Even Hannibal would not dare
attack Syracuse if we are allied
with both Egypt and Rome.

ARCHIMEDES

Rome is Hannibal's target. Not us.

KING HIERON II
Without the port of Syracuse,
Hannibal is cut off from Carthage.
Cut off from supplies. With
Syracuse under his command,
Hannibal would be unstoppable.

ARCHIMEDES
(beat)
Uncle, this ship will not be
built.

KING HIERON II
You refuse to build it?

AMELIA
More likely he cannot.

ARCHIMEDES
You are correct.
(everyone reacts)
Mine will be twice as large. And
twice as long.

The Senators chatter, surprised and doubtful.

SENATOR SACCHUS
Young man, I am familiar with your
work, but a ship that big cannot
be built in the sea.

ARCHIMEDES
Then it will be built on land.

SENATOR SACCHUS
But it would be far too large to
get to water.

ARCHIMEDES
Senator...?

SENATOR SACCHUS
Senator Sacchus.

ARCHIMEDES
(eyes Amelia)
Ah. I am familiar with your work
as well. Very impressive.

Sacchus and Amelia are offended.

KING HIERON II
Archimedes. I have always enjoyed
your puzzles. But you are not a
boy. And this is not a game--

ARCHIMEDES

Fear not, Uncle. It will be done.
And it will be glorious. The
Pharaoh will be grateful.

KING HIERON II

Then we will have our alliance.
And you will have earned your
tuition. Amelia. You seem to have
the magic touch with my nephew.
Keep us apprised of his progress.

AMELIA

(less than thrilled)
Of course, your majesty.

KING HIERON II

Enjoy your homecoming, Archimedes.
And remember, the lives of every
Syracusan, including your own, is
in your hands.

INT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SYRACUSE - NIGHT.

A young page, DAMIPPUS (12) opens the door for
Archimedes, and then follows him in with his things.

ARCHIMEDES

My first workshop.

He wanders the room. Finds a toy that looks like a large
screw. He twirls it, watching the spiral.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

This was given to me by an artist
my father knew. Simple. Elegant.
An expression of eternal motion...

Damippus brings in and rolls out the enormous designs of
the ship. Archimedes looks at the designs.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

Do you think you could start a
fire for me? I need to burn those.

DAMIPPUS

Sir?

ARCHIMEDES

It's impossible. That ship would
be far too heavy to pull to sea.

DAMIPPUS

Do you have to pull it, sir?

Archimedes holds back a snarky comment. Thinks. Does he?

ARCHIMEDES
You make a fair point, Damippus.

Damippus grins, delighted.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)
But I'd still like a fire. It's
cold as death in here.

Damippus nods and jumps to it. Archimedes grabs a quill -
one that hasn't been used in years. Begins to work.

EXT. A SYRACUSAN PLAIN NEAR THE SEA - DAYS LATER.

WORKERS place smoothed, round trees under the SKELETON OF
A LARGE SHIP. Archimedes observes nearby. A WORKER looks
to him. They are ready. Archimedes nods the go-ahead.

The workers grab ropes, pull the skeleton of the ship
over the logs, which roll. It looks like it's working!

But the logs do not roll straight - they are separating
too far. Suddenly the ship falls in between. Cracking.

ARCHIMEDES
Stop!

Too late - the structure falls over and breaks. He sighs.

AMELIA
(surprising him)
It will certainly be large.

ARCHIMEDES
I never lie when it comes to size.

AMELIA
But are you sure it will perform?

ARCHIMEDES
If I can get it to water...

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS (O.S.)
Cousin!

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS (17) lopes up the hill to them. He is
a privileged son in a rich city, and knows only pleasure.

ARCHIMEDES
Who is this full grown man? The
Prince Hieronymous I remember was
but seven years of age.

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS
For a mathematician, you are lousy
at counting the passage of time.
(embraces him)

Come, I wish to hear all the
gossip of Alexandria.

ARCHIMEDES
That would be marvelous--

AMELIA
--but he cannot. He is moving too
slowly with your father's task and
needs to dedicate himself.

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS
For the ship? It is kind of you,
cousin, to humor the old man and
his imaginary war.

AMELIA
Archimedes takes it seriously. He
promised to build the ship twice
the size of the original plans.

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS
Can you do that?

ARCHIMEDES
I have to now, don't I?

Hieronymous laughs as he walks away.

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS
I too must finish what I started,
or, rather, the bottle I started.

ARCHIMEDES
Before you go ruining all of my
evenings, Amelia, consider that
wine might be exactly what I need
to unloosen my brain.

AMELIA
I have seen you lift the sun with
your fingertips. Surely a ship is
no challenge.

She departs. Archimedes thinks over her words. Grabbing a
stick - he draws the Sun from his planetarium on the
ground. Traces the triangle the HINGES and ROPES formed.
Draws out a larger TRIANGLE. A FULCRUM. That's it!

EXT. AMELIA'S FRONT DOOR - DAYS LATER.

Archimedes knocks insistently on a large wooden door.
Senator Sacchus answers.

SENATOR SACCHUS
Archimedes?

ARCHIMEDES
I'm here for your daughter.

SENATOR SACCHUS
I beg your pardon?

Amelia guides her father out of the way.

AMELIA
Shouldn't you be working?

ARCHIMEDES
How much do you weigh?

INT. ARCHIMEDES WORKSHOP - LATER.

Archimedes' apartments have become crowded with math instruments, scribbled notes and crumpled scrolls. Amelia notes the evidence of his work with some surprise.

Archimedes places her on the seat of a very small catapult. On the other side, he stacks STONES.

AMELIA
This is truly your most bizarre attempt at procrastination.

As he places more stones, she starts to lift.

ARCHIMEDES
Good gods, woman, you lied.

He adds one more stone. She pops up quickly.

AMELIA
(terrified)
Archimedes!

But she is not catapulted out of her seat. The stones and she are balanced, like scales. He pushes on the end with the stones, and Amelia swings from side to side easily.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
This is incredible. Is it a ride
for children?

He pushes harder and she swings all the way around to him. He catches her with his arms. She hovers close.

ARCHIMEDES
Small children. And large ships.

AMELIA
I admit it. I am impressed.

She jumps off of the catapult seat.

ARCHIMEDES

No, wait!

The side with the stones comes crashing down. Breaking the catapult. She gives him an apologetic look.

AMELIA

Sorry.

ARCHIMEDES

Now you owe me lunch.

EXT. SYRACUSE - STREETS - DAY.

Amelia lugs a heavy basket as she follows Archimedes. He is distracted, searching the streets for something.

AMELIA

I apologize for ruining your toy,
but this punishment is cruel.

ARCHIMEDES

What punishment? You get to share
lunch with a genius. Ah, here.

He directs her to a small courtyard. Against one wall is an enormous painted-tile fresco of a seashell. Amelia takes it in while Archimedes unpacks their lunch.

AMELIA

Whose is this?

ARCHIMEDES

An artist who lived in this square
decades ago. The segments
consistently get smaller by a
third every time. Do you see?

AMELIA

It appears infinite.

ARCHIMEDES

It gave me ideas. Some of my best.

Amelia smiles, charmed. Pours the wine.

AMELIA

I must admit that I misjudged you.
Your construction is an impressive
advancement.

ARCHIMEDES

Let us hope that is enough. For
Syracuse.

They clink glasses.

AMELIA
For Syracuse.

Suddenly DAMIPPUS races to them. Ruining the moment. A LETTER is in his hand.

DAMIPPUS
It's from Rome.

Archimedes tears it open. Recognizes the writing.

ARCHIMEDES
Marcellus.
(reading)
Hannibal nears Rome. Marcellus leads an army to stop them.

AMELIA
Let us pray he succeeds.

ARCHIMEDES
And survives.

Amelia takes Archimedes' hand. He feels the electricity of their touch. He squeezes her hand reassuringly.

We move away from them. Away from Syracuse. To the sea.

We move along the water, hundreds of miles, to ITALY.

Zooming along the countryside, we arrive at **NOLA**, a small town north of Rome.

EXT. PLAINS SURROUNDING NOLA - DAY.

A fearsome ARMY rides a mixture of horses and ELEPHANTS away from a burning town. It is clear this conquering militia has left nothing alive in their wake.

At the center, atop the largest elephant, rides HANNIBAL. His face unseen, covered by his helmet with curved horns.

They ride toward NOLA. A small town with humble gates. The Romans inside are doomed.

EXT. NOLA COURTYARD - DAY.

Inside, ROMAN SOLDIERS evacuate the PEOPLE OF NOLA out the back of the town.

ROMAN SOLDIER
(to a Nolan)
Take only what you can run with.

The last Nolans are guided out and the gates are locked.

AT THE FRONT GATE

Roman soldiers watch the Carthaginians march closer. The LIEUTENANT of the Romans turns to the MAN next to him.

ROMAN LIEUTENANT
Our presence is unknown.

The man next to him reveals himself. It is MARCELLUS. In full battle gear. Their captain. Tense and ready.

MARCELLUS
Let us hope Hannibal hates
surprises.

He nods to an ARCHER. The Archer lights an ARROW on fire, using a fire horn, and shoots it up into the sky.

AT THE BACK GATE

ROMAN SOLDIERS see the ARROW. They open the gates and pour out the back of Nola en masse.

NEAR HANNIBAL

CARTHAGINIAN SOLDIERS spot the ARROW in the sky. Point.

INSIDE NOLA'S FRONT GATE

The small retinue at the FRONT with Marcellus pulls open the front gates and attacks.

It's a suicide run: Marcellus' small group attacking Hannibal's army head-on.

Surprised, the CAPTAIN of the Carthage force looks to Hannibal. Hannibal NODS. The Captain spurs his horse, leading an attack on the small Roman force.

The Romans are insanely outnumbered, but fight bravely.

Marcellus JUMPS at the Carthaginian Captain on his horse, pulling him to the ground. The Captain rises and engages with Marcellus. He laughs at the tiny Roman army.

CARTHAGINIAN CAPTAIN
This is the best Rome has to
offer? Pathetic.

MARCELLUS
I hoped you would think so.

The Captain pulls a SECOND SWORD and attacks. Marcellus barely defends himself. Grabs a SPEAR and fights with SWORD AND SPEAR. He SKEWERS the Captain with the spear.

MARCELLUS (CONT'D)
(to his Lieutenant)
NOW!

The Roman Lieutenant finishes off a Carthaginian and pulls out an ARROW. LIGHTS it, FIRES it into the air.

NEAR NOLA

From a bird's eye view, Marcellus' plan is clear. The bulk of his army waits on both sides of Nola, hidden.

Marcellus' TROOPS see the ARROW from either side of Nola and kick their horses, racing to the battle.

MARCELLUS

Smiles to see Carthaginians swivel to defend themselves from the remainder of the Roman army. Too late. The Roman troops quickly flank the Carthage soldiers.

CARTHAGINIAN CAPTAIN
(spitting blood)
Bah! A few extra Romans cannot stop our elephants.

ARCHERS from atop an enormous ELEPHANT pick off the Roman Soldiers. An advantage that could turn the tide.

Marcellus sheathes his sword. Grabs the REINS of the Carthaginian Captain's HORSE. Swings up into the saddle. PULLS the SPEAR from the Captain's gut.

MARCELLUS
(spurs the horse)
Hah!

CHARGES toward the ELEPHANT that carries the Archers.

MARCELLUS (CONT'D)
FOR ROME!

Time slows as he SPEARS the Elephant in the shoulder. Unlike a battle horse that is trained for war, the elephant freaks the fuck out. Bucks into the air - its front feet lifting dangerously above Marcellus' head...

Twists in the air and lands turned around. Runs--

--Right into Hannibal's entire cavalry.

Mass PANDEMONIUM breaks out. The panicking elephant charges at horse, elephant and Carthaginian alike. Ranks are broken, horses trampled, and elephants scattered.

MARCELLUS

Roman Soldiers CHEER at the devastation. Marcellus spies HANNIBAL, barely able to control his own elephant.

Hannibal looks up. Appears to SEE Marcellus. After a moment of hesitation, he turns his elephant around. RETREATS as fast as he can. The Carthaginians follow.

The Romans cheer! But not Marcellus.

MARCELLUS
He is getting away!

ROMAN LIEUTENANT
Let him run. All the way back to Carthage.

Marcellus attempts to follow on his horse. But he cannot. He stops. Watches the Carthaginian Army escape.

The Roman Lieutenant catches up to Marcellus.

ROMAN LIEUTENANT (CONT'D)
Rejoice, Captain. We have won.

MARCELLUS
We have won only time. And lost the advantage.

He tosses his HELMET in aggravation.

EXT. ITALIAN COUNTRYSIDE - LATER THAT NIGHT.

Hannibal's army slows their hasty retreat. Hannibal descends from his elephant, shaking with rage.

A Carthaginian LIEUTENANT rushes to him.

CARTHAGE LIEUTENANT
General, we lost half our elephants crossing the Alps. What supplies we have left were greatly reduced in the chaos. As it stands, we cannot win--

Hannibal unsheathes a wicked sword and BEHEADS the man. He turns to his elephant. Ready to take its head as well.

HIPPOCRATES (O.S.)
Honored General.

Hannibal pauses. HIPPOCRATES, the sinister Carthaginian from the Alexandrian prisons, steps forward. EPICYDES, his hulking brother, hovers behind him.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)

With you, we cannot lose. All that
is needed are ships of supplies.
The port city of Syracuse was once
loyal to Carthage. Isolate her
from her friends and she will be
allied with us once more.

Hannibal considers this. Using the tip of his blade, he
lifts and throws his dead Lieutenant's sword in the air.
Hippocrates catches it. Grins.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)

(bows his head)
It will be done.

The sound of a MILLION JUBILANT VOICES brings us back to--

EXT. SYRACUSE - PORT - DAY.

Syracusans jostle each other outside the front gates of
Syracuse for a better view of the PORT.

On the plains next to the sea, the enormous, finished
ship - THE SYRACUSIAN - sits proudly on the grass.

Next to it, a GIANT CATAPULT waits. It is different from
a typical catapult. It has what looks to be an enormous
CLAW - palm down - at its head.

Near the Catapult, Archimedes, Amelia, King Hieron,
Hieronymous and Syracusan Senators wave to the crowd.

AMELIA

(sotto to Archimedes)
Will it work?

ARCHIMEDES

There is no other way to test it
than to try.

King Hieron addresses the CROWD.

KING HIERON II

Citizens of Syracuse. Today our
Archimedes performs the
impossible. He will bring a ship,
that no amount of men or cattle
can move, to water. A ship that
will make Syracuse proud. A ship
that will bring us peace.

The crowd cheers. The King turns to Archimedes.

KING HIERON II (CONT'D)

Make a fool of me, nephew, and you
will feel my displeasure.

ARCHIMEDES
Your confidence inspires, Uncle.

Archimedes steps forward, motions to WORKERS at the ship.

The Workers lower the head of the catapult over the top of the ship. The FINGERS of the claw are attached to supports all along the deck.

At the other end of the catapult's lever, Workers load HUGE HEAVY BRICKS into a LARGE BASKET.

The Workers on the ship signal Archimedes. They are done.

The Workers on the catapult continue to add bricks...

AMELIA
Is it...working?

ARCHIMEDES
Not yet.

The balance of Bricks-to-Ship starts to even. The basket of bricks starts to sink. With a terrifying GROAN, the ship barely LIFTS from the ground. The Crowd gasps.

SENATOR SACCHUS
By the gods.

More Bricks, and the Ship lifts completely off the plain.

ARCHIMEDES
Allow me.

Because of the perfectly positioned lever, and the perfectly balanced weight, the ship is light as air.

Pushing the basket with one hand, Archimedes swings the boat from the plains to over the sea. He turns and smiles at his audience. They are shocked out of their minds.

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS
Fantastic trick, cousin.

ARCHIMEDES
(to a worker)
Have them take bricks out of the basket. Slowly. We don't want to break the eighth wonder of the world, do we?

He grins at Amelia. She cannot help but grin back.

EXT. THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA - NIGHT.

"The Syracusian," a ship that impresses in every way, cuts through the Mediterranean waves, bound for Egypt.

Archimedes and Amelia are alone at the prow. She instructs him in sword combat. They breathe heavily.

AMELIA

Push too far forward and you'll be unbalanced.

ARCHIMEDES

I thought victory was all thrust.

He slices at her, she easily avoids and trips him.

AMELIA

I assure you, there is much more to it than just your hips.

She retires her sword, grabs two goblets of wine. Archimedes pulls himself up. Takes one from her.

ARCHIMEDES

(indicates the sky)

Have you ever wondered where the stars go when the moon is full?

AMELIA

Where do they go?

ARCHIMEDES

They are jealous of the moon's beauty when she smiles, so they leave her. But her beauty can be stolen, with this.

He takes out a small MIRROR and uses it to reflect the moonlight into her eyes. She laughs. Pushes him away.

AMELIA

I can only imagine how many women that philosophy has worked on.

ARCHIMEDES

You do not trust me?

AMELIA

Syracuse is betting her future on you already. Isn't that enough?

ARCHIMEDES

And you think Hieron is mistaken, I know. You have made that clear.

AMELIA

No. Archimedes, I am proud of you.

ARCHIMEDES

I could not have done it without you. You are my muse.

AMELIA
 (stunned)
 Your muse?

ARCHIMEDES
 My everything.

He leans in for a kiss. She allows it. He throws his cup over the side. She laughs, does the same. They embrace.

EXT. TEMPLE OF EFDU - PORT - DAY.

The Syracusian is welcomed to this newly constructed city with a lavish Egyptian celebration. DANCING GIRLS, FIRE EATERS and other PERFORMERS lead a PARADE. King Hieron, Prince Hieronymous, Archimedes, Amelia and their retinue are led onto a golden parade float and plied with wine.

Sexy women drape garlands of gold-encrusted leaves over their heads. Archimedes and Amelia laugh at each other.

The parade winds its way toward the TEMPLE.

INT. TEMPLE OF EFDU - RECEIVING ROOM - LATER.

Archimedes and the other Syracusans are led into an enormous, beautiful room covered in hieroglyphics. SLAVES work tirelessly. The Temple is decades from finished.

At the center of the impressive room sits the teenaged PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV (14) on a resplendent cushion. His loyal guardian, ADVISOR SHEKTAT (30s) stands at his side.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
 It is a good omen you arrive on
 the day of our Festival for Horus,
 who we honor with this temple.

KING HIERON II
 You honor us, mighty Pharaoh, with
 the generosity of your time.

The Pharaoh nods to Shektat. He claps his hands and Slaves rush to help the Syracusans to cushions.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
 Your ship is unlike any I have
 ever seen. Who built it?

KING HIERON II
 A Syracusan, your eminence.
 Archimedes.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
 Ar-chi-me-des? Greek for Master of
 Thought?

ARCHIMEDES
Indeed, your utmost holiness.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
I have little use for learning. My father started this temple as a record for the Egyptian way of life. Our culture, our wisdom, it is all being copied here.
(indicates walls)
But this is ridiculous. Everyone already knows who we are.

ADVISOR SHEKTAT
Perhaps your father thought it would benefit future generation--

The Pharaoh silences Shektat with a poisonous look. In a burst of rage, he kicks a SLAVE, tripping him. He laughs, his good mood returning. Archimedes hides his disgust.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
It gives the Slaves work. That is something, I suppose.
(to Hieron)
The ship. It is for me?

KING HIERON II
A gift of friendship. To symbolize brotherhood between our nations.

ADVISOR SHEKTAT
A greater gift has never been seen.
(hesitates)
If it pleases the Pharaoh.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
It pleases me.

A wave of relief passes through the Syracusans.

KING HIERON II
In this age, when hasty generals from Carthage wish to bring back war, friendship is very important to Syracuse.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
I understand. Let us drink to our brotherhood. And to peace.

Glasses of wine are distributed. King Hieron salutes Archimedes with his glass. Archimedes nods back. Proud.

KING HIERON II
To brotherhood! And pea--

He is suddenly interrupted by announcement HORNS blaring.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
Are more Syracusans expected?

ADVISOR SHEKTAT
No, my liege...

Striding into the room, wearing armor so brightly gilded they are blinding, come HIPPOCRATES and EPYCIDES.

A Carthaginian HERALD rushes ahead and plants himself.

CARTHAGE HERALD
Announcing the arrival of Hippocrates, Captain of Hannibal's armies. Announcing Epycides. Co-captain of Hannibal's armies. Brother to Hippocrates.

Hippocrates' eyes flit over to Archimedes. Then back.

HIPPOCRATES
Holiest Pharaoh. Allow Carthage to offer her present to Horus on this most blessed of days.

TWO FILTHY MEN in chains are pushed forward.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)
These men wish to marry the same woman. They have brought their suit to me for a decision.

The two men are unchained and given WEAPONS. The Syracusans look worried. The Pharaoh - intrigued.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)
Let it be settled.

Soldiers holding the two men release them. They lunge at each other, ducking and stabbing, they slice at each other until one is fatally wounded. The Pharaoh APPLAUDS.

EPICYDES
Hold!

Soldiers grab the victorious man. Hippocrates takes the winner's sword and offers it to the Pharaoh.

HIPPOCRATES
Our gift.

Gingerly, the Pharaoh steps to the wounded man. Raises the sword and ENDS the wretch. Archimedes is horrified.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV
I am pleased. Come.

Hippocrates and Epycides are given wine and seated.

HIPPOCRATES

(re: Hieron)

I see the Pharaoh accepts slaves
of Rome in his temple. You are too
charitable, my liege.

KING HIERON II

You insult Rome and Egypt herself
when you insult a Syracusan.

HIPPOCRATES

Rome will soon be conquered. As we
speak, Hannibal's army grows.

(to the Pharaoh)

When Hannibal rules the Romans and
unites the Greeks he will reward
those who showed him friendship.
And devastate his enemies.

PHARAOH PTOLEMY IV

Your leader demonstrates much...
aggression.

HIPPOCRATES

It is the only way to lead. Don't
you agree?

The Pharaoh smiles cruelly. He agrees.

INT. TEMPLE HALLWAY - THAT NIGHT.

Slaves lead the Syracusans to their sleeping quarters.
Hieron and Amelia argue quietly at the front of the line.
In the back, Archimedes is suddenly joined by Shektat.

ADVISOR SHEKTAT

Do not put your faith in the
Pharaoh.

ARCHIMEDES

(politic)

An alliance will benefit us both,
I'm sure.

ADVISOR SHEKTAT

He is fickle. Quick to anger. As
his Advisor, every sunrise I see I
expect will be my last. Your room.

Shektat indicates a door. Walks away. Archimedes looks to
Amelia, but she disappears into the King's chambers.

Archimedes enters his room alone. Shuts the door.

INT. ARCHIMEDES ROOM - MORNING.

LOUD KNOCKING suddenly startles Archimedes awake.

INT. HIERON'S LIVING QUARTERS - LATER.

Archimedes is shown into Hieron's room. Amelia is helping the King with breakfast. He has never looked so old.

ARCHIMEDES
Your highness?

KING HIERON II
The Pharaoh will not declare an alliance with Syracuse.

ARCHIMEDES
And that is all there is?

KING HIERON II
That is all. We shall return to Syracuse. To prepare our defenses.
(beat)
What are your thoughts concerning your cousin, Hieronymous?

ARCHIMEDES
He...has his father's zest for life.

KING HIERON II
I am afraid I am no longer the conquering warrior. My life has nearly run its course.

AMELIA
No, your majesty.

KING HIERON II
Archimedes, I worry Hieronymous is not ready for what will come. He needs you. We all do. I will pass the crown to him when we return, and when I do I will nominate you to be his Chief Advisor.

ARCHIMEDES
A politician?

AMELIA
It is a great honor.

ARCHIMEDES

It's a curse. You imagine an Advisor is a helpful guide, but in truth that role is a daily struggle to coax a king through adversity while nurturing his ego for the right to continue living.

AMELIA

Archimedes, you are needed.

ARCHIMEDES

I will not do it.

He waits to hear his punishment. King Hieron sighs.

KING HIERON II

Then I will not ask again. Bring Hieronymous to me.

INT. TEMPLE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER.

Archimedes exits Hieron's room, his mind racing. Seconds later, Amelia exits as well, rushes to him.

AMELIA

Do not answer so hastily. Accept the nomination. Think of the lives you could save.

ARCHIMEDES

What about my life?

AMELIA

That is all that concerns you?

ARCHIMEDES

Is that really such a surprise?

AMELIA

You are a coward.

ARCHIMEDES

And you put all the pressure on me only because you know you are useless.

Amelia is shocked and heart-broken. He storms off.

INT. TEMPLE COURTYARD - LATER.

Prince Hieronymous, Hippocrates and Epycides are engaged in a SWORD FIGHT. Archimedes sees and races toward them.

ARCHIMEDES

Hieronymous!

Hieronymous' sword is knocked from his arm. But rather than look afraid, Hieronymous laughs.

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS
That was a good move, there.

HIPPOCRATES
I must teach it to you sometime.

ARCHIMEDES
Hieronymous, what are you doing?

EPIYCIDES
He's having a bit of sport.

Archimedes pulls the Prince away.

ARCHIMEDES
Your father requests you. And he would not like you exchanging... words with criminals.

PRINCE HIERONYMOUS
You are no fun in Egypt.
(to the brothers)
Good day, my Carthaginian cousins!

The Prince saunters into the Temple. Hippocrates and Epycides pack up their swords and gear.

HIPPOCRATES
Until next time. "Cousin."

They depart. Archimedes has no response.

EXT. TEMPLE OF EFDU - PORT - NEXT DAY.

The Syracusans board a MUCH SMALLER boat for their return trip. Archimedes approaches Amelia.

ARCHIMEDES
Quite a small boat in exchange for our gift. Greedy little bastard.

AMELIA
(frosty)
True friendship is rare. And has not been found on this trip.

She turns and leaves him. He looks out over the waves.

EXT. SYRACUSE - DAYS LATER.

The royal parade in Syracuse, back to the castle, is met with crowds and cheers. Hieronymous grins and waves. Archimedes, however, cannot find a reason to smile.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY.

The CORONATION of Prince Hieronymous is the biggest celebration Syracuse has ever seen. No expense has been spared on lavish decorations and food.

King Hieron, uncharacteristically frail, takes off his CROWN and sets it on Hieronymous' head. Hieronymous, NOW KING, holds up his arms triumphantly. Syracusans cheer!

KING HIERONYMOUS

(somewhat drunk)

Great people of Syracuse! You are the best. The best in the world! And you deserve the best in your king. I will continue in my father's footsteps. But I will not be mired by tradition. I will always do what is best for you, even if that means throwing off the chains of our greedy "friends" across the seas for alliances in Carthage that can offer us so much more. Trust in me, Syracuse, to pursue what is best for all of us!

Hieronymous takes a big swig of wine. There is a smattering of applause, but the Syracusans are shocked by his words. Archimedes looks to Amelia. She is pale.

KING HIERONYMOUS (CONT'D)

Music! Dancing! More wine!

The music shakily starts back up. Amelia leaves.

EXT. AMELIA'S FRONT DOOR - LATER.

Archimedes knocks on Amelia's door. There is no answer. He opens it and enters.

INT. AMELIA'S HOUSE - SAME.

Servants are busy packing up clothing and food items. Amelia instructs them while she helps.

AMELIA

Pack the gold cups. They will make for a fine present.

ARCHIMEDES

You are leaving Syracuse?

Amelia coldly registers Archimedes' entrance.

AMELIA

The senators are traveling to Leontini. Their king's alliance with Rome is strong. If we can convince the King of Leontini to return and speak to Hieronymous, then perhaps our new King will stop saying things like, "Is Hannibal really that bad?"

ARCHIMEDES

You will ride with them?

AMELIA

It is a way I can be less "useless," don't you agree?

ARCHIMEDES

It will be dangerous.

AMELIA

Don't worry, you're not invited. You won't have to risk a thing.
(to a servant)
Show Archimedes to the door.

ARCHIMEDES

Amelia--

AMELIA

All I care about is stopping this war before it's too late.

The Servant indicates to Archimedes to leave. He hangs his head and complies. The door is shut hard behind him.

INT. ARCHIMEDES' WORKSHOP - NIGHT.

Archimedes drafts designs for a large, corkscrew device. (*The Archimedean Screw, used for irrigation to this day.*)

King Hieron enters the room. Damippus jumps up.

KING HIERON

Leave us.

Damippus exits. Hieron appears especially weary.

ARCHIMEDES

You are in no condition to be out of bed. Why didn't you summon me?

KING HIERON

I miss this room. It has been too long. What are you working on?

Hieron supports himself on Archimedes' table.

ARCHIMEDES

The spiral design lifts water from deep within the ground. Providing acres of irrigation.

KING HIERON

Food production will increase.

ARCHIMEDES

Hunger will evaporate.

KING HIERON

(beat)

I know you are capable of much, Archimedes. But when Hieronymous breaks our alliance with Rome, Syracuse will have need of you in the ways of war. Any other endeavor is a waste of time.

ARCHIMEDES

It is not too late, your highness. Rescind the nomination of Hieronymous. Crown Senator Sacchus; he is loyal to Rome.

KING HIERON

(angrily)

Before I became king, rulers who did not inherit the throne by blood were lucky to last a single year. It will be war either way.

Hieron's body suddenly seizes. He clutches his chest, sinks against the table. Archimedes leaps to his feet.

ARCHIMEDES

Damippus!

Archimedes eases Hieron to the ground. Damippus enters.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

Get help!

Damippus' eyes go wide. He rushes away.

KING HIERON

Please --

ARCHIMEDES

Do not speak.

KING HIERON

For once in your damned life, listen to me! Well you know that a Roman soldier is allowed to pillage any conquered city.

Our art, culture and people will
be stolen. Enslaved. Destroyed. As
if we never existed.
(grabs Archimedes)
Do not let Rome in.

ARCHIMEDES
Uncle, I promise.

KING HIERON
(relieved)
Your father would be proud.

Exhausted, Hieron crumples. Lies still. Archimedes kisses his forehead. Hieron is gone.

Soldiers rush in and gather the body. Archimedes backs away. Looks at his DESIGN OF THE SCREW. Tosses it aside.

DAMIPPUS
Sir?

ARCHIMEDES
Go to bed, Damippus. Sleep. If you can.

EXT. FOREST OUTSIDE LEONTINI - LATE AFTERNOON.

Horses' hooves pound a trail through the trees. The Senators of Syracuse ride to Leontini as the sun sets.

Senator Sacchus fumbles with jerky and a large KNIFE.

SENATOR SACCHUS
If I had remembered the dull taste
of rationed venison, I would not
have joined you on this trip.

AMELIA
Father, let me.

She urges her horse closer and takes the meat and knife.

SENATOR SACCHUS
Such a kind daughter. You will
make a man of your choosing very
happy someday.

AMELIA
(teases)
What man could possibly be more
worthy than you, Father?

SENATOR SACCHUS
(sniffs)
I am no longer fit for the road.
Even awake I dream of roast pig.

AMELIA
I smell it too. Something cooking.

A large man, SENATOR FILLIPUS, points at the sky.

SENATOR FILLIPUS
Smoke!

Amelia sheathes the knife and shoves it **INTO HER BODICE**.
The Senators spur their horses, racing to Leontini.

EXT. FRONT GATES OF LEONTINI - MINUTES LATER.

The City of Leontini smolders in the aftermath of a
siege. Dead soldiers dot the fields, the walls are
blackened and broken, the GATES lie wide open.

Beyond a few crackling fires, the city is silent.

AMELIA
(riding forward)
We must find the King.

SENATOR SACCHUS
Amelia!

But she is determined. The other Senators follow her.

EXT. LEONTINI - STREETS - MOMENTS LATER.

The main thoroughfare is awash with blood. Carts on fire.

SENATOR FILLIPUS
Is no one left?

AMELIA
Maybe in the palace...

They push their horses forward.

EXT. LEONTINI - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER.

As the Senators enter the courtyard below the palace,
they do not realize they are being watched.

HIPPOCRATES
Welcome!

Horses startle. Amelia sees Hippocrates and Epycides on
the balcony of the PALACE. Armor stained with blood.

AMELIA
Hippocrates.

HIPPOCRATES

Amelia. Lovely to see you again.
What is the reason for your visit
to Leontini? If you seek the King--

EPIYCIDES

You just missed him.

SENATOR SACCHUS

(outraged)
What have you done?

HIPPOCRATES

Us? An army led by Marcus
Marcellus did this.

AMELIA

You expect us to believe that?

HIPPOCRATES

Don't let the royal blood on my
hands confuse you.
(takes out a knife)
See? Marcellus' knife.

AMELIA

You stole that from Marcellus in
Alexandria.

HIPPOCRATES

I say I found it in the King of
Leontini's dead body.

SENATOR FILLIPUS

We have caught you in the act. Why
would we lie for you?

CARTHAGINIAN SOLDIERS draw arrows along their bows. Aim.

HIPPOCRATES

Marcellus stormed Leontini and
murdered everyone in a rage when
they would not betray Hannibal.

SENATOR SACCHUS

No such lie will escape my lips.

AMELIA

Nor mine.

HIPPOCRATES

Pity.
(calling out)
Cephales?

CEPHALES (40s), a murderer and psychopath, breaks from
the ranks and walks to the courtyard.

AMELIA
 (scared)
 Father...

SENATOR SACCHUS
 The truth will out, do not fear.

HIPPOCRATES
 Remove the Senator's traitorous
 tongue.

Soldiers grab Sacchus and bring him to Cephales. They force him to kneel. Cephales draws his sword.

AMELIA
 Stop!

HIPPOCRATES
 Last chance, old man.

SENATOR SACCHUS
 Your deeds will be remembered.
 Your lies will not survive.

Hippocrates nods to Cephales. He BEHEADS Sacchus.

AMELIA
 No!

She spurs her horse forward, but Cepahles spins and cuts the horse's legs. Amelia falls and is pinned.

HIPPOCRATES
 (points)
 You there.

SENATOR FILLIPUS
 Sir?

HIPPOCRATES
 Leontini is a horror. Who could have done such a terrible thing?

SENATOR FILLIPUS
 (hesitates)
 I hear Marcellus has done it.

HIPPOCRATES
 You heard?

SENATOR FILLIPUS
 I...saw with my own eyes.

HIPPOCRATES
 (feigns shock)
 Not the Roman General, Marcus
 Marcellus?

SENATOR FILLIPUS
 (gritting his teeth)
 Even he. Sir.

HIPPOCRATES
 Did anyone else see Marcellus lay
 waste to this city?

The Senators look at each other. Four of them raise their hands in assent. Amelia sputters from the ground.

AMELIA
 Cowards! Clods of filth!

HIPPOCRATES
 Take the others away.

Soldiers pull resistant Senators off their horses.
 Cephales uses the tip of his sword to lift Amelia's chin.

CEPHALES
 I'll save your head for last.

The loyal Syracusans are dragged into the palace.

AMELIA
 No! Help us! No!

HIPPOCRATES
 (to his brother)
 We leave at first light. Syracuse
 will be ours by sunset.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - EVENING.

King Hieronymous is hosting a wine-soaked party in the throne room. Young Syracusans feast and dance. Archimedes picks at his food, concerned.

KING HIERONYMOUS
 I would like to make a toast.

The dancing abruptly ceases and all grab a cup.

ARCHIMEDES
 (quietly)
 Another, Hieronymous?

KING HIERONYMOUS
 To my father. He was an excellent man and king. His like will never be seen within these walls again.

The Syracusans ceremoniously drink.

ARCHIMEDES

(to Hieronymous)

Perhaps you have honored your
father enough for one evening.

KING HIERONYMOUS

(emotional)

He would be upset with me.

ARCHIMEDES

No, your father loved you. And he
knew you would rule this city
well. And keep our alliances.

KING HIERONYMOUS

You talk of Rome again.

ARCHIMEDES

Do not let me speak for it. A
Roman I met in Alexandria is
better equipped with the words.

KING HIERONYMOUS

A politician?

ARCHIMEDES

A soldier. Like your father. And
mine.

KING HIERONYMOUS

His name?

ARCHIMEDES

Marcus Marcellus.

KING HIERONYMOUS

Send for Marcellus. Any friend of
yours would be a welcome advisor.

Archimedes grins with relief. The two grasp arms in
friendship. Suddenly, the doors to the throne room are
THROWN OPEN and the bedraggled Senators rush inside.

SENATOR FILLIPUS

Your highness!

KING HIERONYMOUS

What has happened?

HIPPOCRATES

(appearing)

King Hieronymous. I am happy to
see you, though our news is grave.

ARCHIMEDES

What are you doing in Syracuse?

HIPPOCRATES
Saving your lives.

Out of sight, he nudges a DAGGER into Fillipus' back.

SENATOR FILLIPUS
Leontini has been sacked, your
highness. By the Roman General,
Marcus Marcellus.

ARCHIMEDES
Lies.

HIPPOCRATES
These men, your Senators, saw this
with their own eyes.

SENATORS
Aye./It's true./I saw it.

KING HIERONYMOUS
Marcellus?
(to Archimedes)
The man you wanted to bring into
our home?

ARCHIMEDES
They must be mistaken.

HIPPOCRATES
This knife was buried in the heart
of the King. A warning to all who
do not bend to Rome's will.

Hippocrates throws MARCELLUS' KNIFE into the center of
the throne room. Archimedes recognizes it.

ARCHIMEDES
(mystified)
It is his knife. It bears his
insignia... Where is Amelia?

HIPPOCRATES
She tried to talk reason into the
brute. He killed her instantly.

ARCHIMEDES
Amelia is dead?

HIPPOCRATES
Do not blame yourself for being
fooled, Archimedes. He was trained
to deceive.

ARCHIMEDES
No.

HIPPOCRATES

Are you so certain his friendship
with you was not merely a
political duty?

Archimedes remembers Marcellus' own confession, back in Alexandria, that this was the case. He falls silent.

EPYCIDES

Syracuse will be next, oh wise
King. You need our help.

KING HIERONYMOUS

Yes, of course. The time for
feasting is over. We hereby
nominate Hippocrates and Epycides
as co-heads of our city's defense.

HIPPOCRATES

Your majesty's haste in this
regard is prudent. We humbly
accept.

As the crowd disperses, Archimedes picks up Marcellus' knife from the ground. Cannot believe what he is seeing.

ARCHIMEDES

Marcellus. What have you done?

EXT. LEONTINI - DAY.

Marcellus leads a small Roman troop into Leontini. He surveys the complete damage of the destroyed city.

MARCELLUS

We are too late.

ROMAN SOLDIERS on horseback ride into Leontini. They carry a writhing CAPTIVE (teens) between them.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

General, we captured a
Carthaginian Runner on his way to
Hannibal. His message, sir.

Marcellus takes the scroll from his Captain.

MARCELLUS

(reading)

Safely arrived in Syracuse. She
is, at last, returned to Carthage.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

It is the seal of Hannibal's
captain, Hippocrates.

MARCELLUS

Syracuse has allied with Hannibal.
With her seaports at his command,
Hannibal will have what he needs
to conquer Rome.

(resigned)

We take Syracuse back. Those will
be our orders.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

War with Syracuse? From what I
hear, their art will fetch a fine
price.

ROMAN SOLDIER 1

And their wine!

ROMAN SOLDIER 2

And their women.

The Soldiers laugh, excited to fight.

MARCELLUS

(grim)

Back to Rome. To prepare our ships
for war.

INT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SYRACUSE - DAWN.

Archimedes packs his belongings. Pauses when he comes
across the mirror he had used to flirt with Amelia.

Damippus suddenly enters. Realizes--

DAMIPPUS

You are leaving.

ARCHIMEDES

As should you. Get your family out
of here as fast as you can.

DAMIPPUS

We would never survive the thieves
on the road.

ARCHIMEDES

Then stay. Become a Roman when
they conquer Syracuse. But first,
take this to my horse.

He shoves one of his packed bags into Damippus's arms.

DAMIPPUS

The Roman soldiers will take
everything of value. My family
will be sold as slaves.

ARCHIMEDES

Blame your gods and your fate,
then. This is a foolish war
between a cadre of imbeciles and
has nothing to do with me.

DAMIPPUS

You are the only one who can save
us.

ARCHIMEDES

(this stops him)
Amelia would have agreed with you.

He picks up the mirror. Stares at it. Decides.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

Unpack my things, Damippus. Let us
see if she was right.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY.

Hippocrates, Epycides, Hieronymous, and Archimedes
analyze MAPS laid out. A SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN(40s) indicates
tiny Syracusan model ships facing the huge Roman navy.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

We will send every ship. Meet
Rome's navy at sea and hope to
stop them there.

ARCHIMEDES

No. Call them home. All of them.

KING HIERONYMOUS

Bring in all the ships?

ARCHIMEDES

The castle plateau is our most
defensible position. If we are to
survive, we cannot give ground. I
learned that from a very smart
man. Besides, I need the wood.

He puts a hand on the map, wipes model ships off the sea.

EXT. DOCK ON MEDITERRANEAN - MARCELLUS' SHIP - SAME.

Marcellus leads his men as they tie GIANT WARSHIPS
together. His Roman Captain attends.

MARCELLUS

We will use our biggest catapult.
Eight ships together will be
enough to support it.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

Yes, sir.

MARCELLUS

At least the battle will be swift.

INT. SYRACUSE - RAMPARTS - DAY.

Soldiers pass bags of supplies down a line of men.

ARCHIMEDES (V.O.)

If we play by the rules against
Marcellus, we will lose.

INSIDE THE PALACE, AT THE WAR TABLE - DAY.

Archimedes shows his plan using a map of Syracuse.
Hieronymous looks worried and confused.

ARCHIMEDES

We concentrate supplies to the
strongest advantage. Arrows kept
at towers. Swords at the gates.

KING HIERONYMOUS

What are the mirrors for?

Archimedes smiles.

ON THE RAMPARTS OF SYRACUSE

Soldiers polish large ten-foot amalgamations of smaller
MIRRORS to an eye-searing shine on the ramparts.

ARCHIMEDES (V.O.)

I refuse to play this game with
only the pieces we've been given.

EXT. MEDITERRANEAN SEA - MARCELLUS' SHIP - SAME.

Marcellus' ship sails toward Syracuse. All around him,
SOLDIERS prepare for war.

MARCELLUS

We must attack at full speed; all
at once. Ships will be lost while
we are in their catapult range,
but it will be brief.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

An acceptable loss, sir.

MARCELLUS

A pittance compared to how many ships will remain.

Behind them, SCORES OF ROMAN SHIPS stretch along the seas to the horizon. Rome is taking no chances.

EXT. OUTSIDE SYRACUSE - DAY.

WORKERS build more CATAPULTS WITH CLAWS in the fields.

ARCHIMEDES (V.O.)

More levers like the one I used to launch The Syracusan are just about finished. We will haul them inside the city gates. And wait.

INSIDE THE PALACE, AT THE WAR TABLE - NIGHT.

Hieronymous pushes all the figurines off the maps with a great cry of frustration. Hippocrates, Epycles, a few Carthaginian SOLDIERS, and Archimedes react.

KING HIERONYMOUS

This is insane! There are too many of them. We cannot win this!

HIPPOCRATES

Sire, Archimedes has done much to prepare us--

KING HIERONYMOUS

How gallant of him. And stupid. Cousin, you do not truly think we stand a chance?

ARCHIMEDES

There is no alternative.

KING HIERONYMOUS

Yes, there is. Surrender.

Epycles gives Hippocrates an angry look. Hippocrates shakes his head, 'Not now.'

ARCHIMEDES

Surrender to Rome will bring the same repercussions as defeat.

KING HIERONYMOUS

It is better than certain death. Which is what all of you are planning here, not victory.

ARCHIMEDES

Hieronymous, you are tired--

KING HIERONYMOUS

Do not dare tell your king what he feels. Or what to do. If the Romans are open to a peaceful resolution, I will surrender Syracuse. You can thank me later.

HIPPOCRATES

Your highness-

KING HIERONYMOUS

Good night.

He storms out of the room.

HIPPOCRATES

It is not a treaty the Romans send, but warships.

ARCHIMEDES

He will think clearer after sleep, we all will.

Archimedes leaves, weary. The brothers watch him go.

EPIYCIDES

The King will surrender.

HIPPOCRATES

No. He won't.

Hippocrates looks to the Carthaginian Soldiers. He jerks his chin toward where the King exited. The soldiers bow and draw their weapons. They follow the King's path.

EPIYCIDES

(approves)

It's about time.

EXT. SYRACUSE - STREETS NEAR THE RAMPARTS - FALSE DAWN.

SOLDIERS prepare. Archimedes finds the Syracusan Captain.

ARCHIMEDES

Any sign of them?

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

The sky brightens. We will know soon.

As the marine layer lifts, the pale ghosts of ROMAN SAILS approach the battlements. TRUMPETS sound.

SOLDIER

The Romans! The Romans are here!

Hundreds of ROMAN SHIPS approach. At the head, a combination of eight ships supporting a HUGE CATAPULT.

ARCHIMEDES

Start with the first catapults.
Play into their expectations.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

READY ALPHA GROUP!

Soldiers load BOULDERS into five catapults at the edge of the wall. GREASE is poured. The boulders are lit on FIRE.

MARCELLUS

His huge ship leads the charge. He gauges the distance.

MARCELLUS

We are in their range! Maximum speed!

Their sail is stretched tight. Wind throws them forward.

ARCHIMEDES

Lifts his fingers. Waits for the right moment...

ARCHIMEDES

...now...

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

RELEASE!

The catapults' ropes are cut. The flaming boulders leap into the air toward the Roman ships.

ON THE SEA

THREE SHIPS are hit by the flaming boulders, causing chaos and death. They sink. The loss is minuscule.

MARCELLUS

We are through! Ready the catapult.

The Roman Captain leads the soldiers as they heave the MASSIVE CATAPULT's basket down. The BOULDER resting inside is almost as big as a single warship.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

At your command, General!

MARCELLUS

Do it.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
RELEASE!

The rope is cut. The gigantic boulder flies from the catapult. The force causes the lashed ships to briefly bob down into the ocean, but they right themselves.

The Boulder arcs high into the air.

ARCHIMEDES

Sees its trajectory.

ARCHIMEDES
Evacuate the South Wall now!

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN
(to the Soldiers)
Back! Get back!

The Boulder slams forcefully into the South tower.
SOLDIERS explode into the air and fall to their deaths.

The Tower sheds stones and wavers, but does not fall.

ARCHIMEDES
Ready the Beta Catapults, now!

Soldiers attend to catapults with uniquely SHORTER ARMS.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN
Primed.

ARCHIMEDES
RELEASE!

MARCELLUS

Stands with his back to Syracuse. Underestimating them.

MARCELLUS
Secure the ships. We are safe here
to attack. A few more hits, and
she will surrender--

ROMAN CAPTAIN
General, look!

Marcellus turns and sees boulders arcing through the air.

ROMAN CAPTAIN (CONT'D)
Impossible. We are too close, out
of range...

MARCELLUS
Stop loading! Prepare for impact!

Soldiers scramble clumsily. Seven boulders find their targets and smash seven of Marcellus' fleet to bits.

MARCELLUS (CONT'D)

We need to get closer.

(to his ship)

Race for the wall!

Sails are pulled taut. Warships launch forward.

ARCHIMEDES

Watches the Roman Fleet approach. He nods to the Captain.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

UNCOVER THE MIRRORS!

At the top of the towers, Soldiers unveil one of the many infamous weapons of war Archimedes created: PATCHWORKED MIRRORS LARGER THAN ELEPHANTS that focus sun rays.

MARCELLUS

Holds his hand up to his eyes as he is blinded by a mirror's light. It swivels over him, causing a SUNBURN. Looking up, he sees the light settle on his main sail.

MARCELLUS

What is that---?

ROMAN CAPTAIN

A sign from the gods?

MARCELLUS

A trick. Like one an old friend of mine might try. Ignore it.

But it's no trick. The sunlight is focused, searing. The sunlit point suddenly BURSTS INTO FLAME.

SOLDIER

Fire from Apollo!

Soldiers panic as the hungry fire spreads to the mast.

ARCHIMEDES

Lets out the breath he didn't realize he was holding.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

It's working.

ARCHIMEDES

Keep changing targets. Chaos is our only hope.

Where is Hieronymous? This will return his smile.

Mirrors swivel and ignite sails on ship after ship.

MARCELLUS

Looks out over his fleet and sees pandemonium. More and more of his precious boats are set ablaze. He is losing.

MARCELLUS
Signal the retreat.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

MARCELLUS
(shouting)
Get the surviving ships back, away
from Syracuse, we need to RETREAT!

SNICK SNACK! The men look up. The mast, burnt black, SNAPS. Marcellus and the Captain LEAP out of the way.

The mast falls, SMASHES their enormous CATAPULT to ruins.

Marcellus picks himself up and grabs a large RED FLAG. He races to the back of his ship and WAVES it.

On other ships, SAILORS grab red flags and wave them.

ARCHIMEDES

Spots the red from the ramparts. Closes his eyes briefly in relief. **SOLDIERS** cheer! The Roman Fleet is retreating.

MARCELLUS

Watches his fleet skulk away. Throws down his flag in frustrated rage. Around him, Soldiers chatter in fear.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

MARCELLUS

INT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SYRACUSE - LATER.

Archimedes tears through his weapon designs, books and clothing, searching for something.

The Syracusan Captain bursts into the room, jubilant.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN
You have done it! We have won!

ARCHIMEDES
They will return. After dark.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN
At night we can only defend
against a few ships. They have
hundreds. What are we going to do?

Archimedes finds his old scary GREEK MASK. Smiles.

ARCHIMEDES
Cheat.

EXT. OUT ON THE SEAS - DUSK.

On his battered ship, Marcellus studies the sky.

MARCELLUS
Prepare the ladders. This time we
will take no chances.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
The men are unnerved, sir.
(Marcellus glares)
But ready.

A few drops of rain splat onto the ship.

MARCELLUS
Tonight it ends.

The Captain lifts a YELLOW FLAG. Other ships raise and wave YELLOW FLAGS. The Roman Fleet moves out.

EXT. SYRACUSE RAMPARTS - LATER THAT NIGHT.

The seas are pitch black. Invisible. Archimedes inspects a fire that Soldiers hurriedly build bigger and bigger.

ARCHIMEDES
More wood.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN
Sir, these fires are a beacon to
our position.

ARCHIMEDES

The Romans are mighty, but they
are still men. We can use that
against them when they attack.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

(squints)

They are already here.

A spidery LIGHTNING BOLT suddenly illuminates the ENTIRE
ROMAN FLEET -- only a few hundred meters from the walls.

MARCELLUS

Grins through the pounding rain.

MARCELLUS

Where are your tricks now?

ROMAN CAPTAIN

READY THE LADDERS!

Roman Soldiers take positions around insanely long
ladders that lie across the length of the boats.

MARCELLUS

LADDERS! RISE!

As Marcellus' ship nears the walls, the Romans lift
comrades on ladders to the top of the ramparts.

Archers shoot at the Romans on top, but each ladder is
quickly climbed by several more. Other ships follow suit,
and ladders go up all over Syracuse.

ARCHIMEDES

Turns to see Syracusans cutting down Romans as they
ascend, but there are just too many of them.

Romans spill out on top of the Syracusan ramparts.

ARCHIMEDES

LOWER THE CLAWS! NOW!

Catapults are lowered over the edge of the Syracusan
walls, into the sea. Rather than a basket on the end,
each catapult is adorned with a HUGE CLAW, like the one
that lifted "The Syracusan," but **PALM UP.**

ON THE BOAT

Streaks of lightning reveal the HUGE CLAWS (*known through
history as the Claws of Archimedes*) splashing in the sea.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
What witchcraft is this--?

Suddenly, MIRRORS next to the FIRES ON THE WALLS are uncovered. Soldiers SWIVEL the mirrors to reflect the firelight onto a SOLITARY FIGURE standing in the middle of the ramparts. He wears a cloak, and the GREEK MASK.

MARCELLUS
(sure now)
Archimedes.

The Masked Man raises his arms--

INSIDE THE WALLS OF SYRACUSE

Syracusan Soldiers waiting for the signal hack at ropes that hold LARGE BOULDERS above the basket-end of the catapults. Boulders drop onto the ends of the catapults--

MARCELLUS' SHIP

--On either side of Marcellus, FOUR WARSHIPS SUDDENLY RISE INTO THE AIR OUT OF THE SEA. Underneath them, lifting them up, are the clawed ends of the catapults.

RUNNING ALONG THE LENGTH OF THE CATAPULT

Behind Syracusan walls, a dozen soldiers are all it takes to push the balanced catapults from side to side.

ON THE SEAS

The WARSHIPS ARE TOSSED from side to side. Terrified Sailors fall from them, screaming!

The Masked Man GESTURES with his hands, and the Claws PIVOT, SMASHING THE SHIPS INTO ROCKS.

TWO SHIPS ARE SMASHED TOGETHER, SPLINTERING INTO PIECES!

MARCELLUS

Is frozen in shock.

Lighter after destroying ships, the Claws rise dramatically into the air. ROMANS lose their shit.

ROMAN SOLDIER 1
We are bound for Hades!

ROMAN SOLDIER 2
Poseidon preserve us!

Soldiers everywhere abandon ship, diving into the water and swimming away for their lives.

MARCELLUS
Stop, you fools!

But the crashing of thunder drowns him out.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
(fighting insanity)
This is no mortal man we fight!

Marcellus grabs the Captain's tunic and pulls him close.

MARCELLUS
Archimedes is a clever boy playing
a game. He has won the seas. But
he will not win the war! Get us to
land!

The Captain rushes to lead the Sailors in a retreat.
Marcellus throws a last angry look at Syracuse.

ARCHIMEDES

Watches Marcellus' ship turn and sail away from the
walls. The other Roman Warships follow. Archimedes steps
back, out of the reflected light, and takes off his MASK.

ARCHIMEDES
Now stay away, Marcus. Please.

HIPPOCRATES (O.S.)
Impressive.

Archimedes turns to see Hippocrates and Epicydes.

ARCHIMEDES
I trust Hieronymous is pleased.

HIPPOCRATES
I am afraid while this day was a
success, losses were still had.

Hippocrates turns to the SOLDIERS below.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)
Citizens of Syracuse, our brothers
and friends. Our great King
Hieronymous has been killed by a
Roman assassin.

The soldiers react in shock and sadness. Archimedes looks
to the Syracusan Captain, confused.

ARCHIMEDES
Impossible. How could an assassin
have breached our walls?

HIPPOCRATES

Epycides and I have decided to co-rule the city through these dark days and lead Syracuse to victory!

The soldiers cheer and vow to shed Roman blood.

Archimedes angers. He moves to the wall. Grabs a sword. But his arm is stopped by the Captain. Hippocrates and Epycides bask in the roar of the crowd, and do not see.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

(sotto voce)

Hold, Archimedes--

ARCHIMEDES

Do not try and stop me.

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

At war, you are brilliant. But if you fight these men with your own hands, you will lose. And without you, Syracuse will fall.

ARCHIMEDES

I will not fight for them!

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

This war is not about believing in kings. It is survival.

Archimedes looks at his people. Thousands of them.

EXT. SICILIAN COUNTRYSIDE - SUNSET.

Tents are erected by Roman Soldiers. Marcellus walks into the LARGEST TENT. High-ranking SOLDIERS follow him in.

FURTHER OUT IN THE SICILIAN COUNTRYSIDE - SAME.

A LONE RIDER pushes a horse to its limit, racing over the plains. The horse foams. The Rider is smeared with blood.

INT. MARCELLUS' WAR TENT - NIGHT.

Maps are spread out on a fur-lined table. Goblets and wine bottles perch on top. The soldiers' mood is tense.

MARCELLUS

We did not ask for this war. But we will not fail Rome's command. Do not succumb to superstition. It is but a man we fight, not a god.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

Whatever he may be, we cannot keep
running blindly into his traps.

MARCELLUS

No. We need a trick of our own.

EXT. EDGE OF ROMAN WAR CAMP - SAME.

The Rider races toward the camp. A SENTRY notices.

SENTRY

Hold or be shot!

He draws his bow. The horse slows to a walk. The Rider,
exhausted, slips off the horse to the ground. The Sentry
rushes up to the fallen figure.

RIDER

...please...

The hood falls back, revealing AMELIA.

AMELIA

Take me to your General.

INT. MARCELLUS' WAR TENT - MOMENTS LATER.

Marcellus moves pieces on the map. Soldiers watch.

MARCELLUS

(frustrated)

The approach is open terrain. We
will be seen for miles--

Suddenly, the Sentry stumbles in, Amelia with him.

SENTRY

Sir? She asked for you.

MARCELLUS

Amelia?

AMELIA

Marcus.

She FAINTS from blood loss and exhaustion.

INT. MARCELLUS' WAR TENT - NIGHT.

Amelia wakes. She is lying in a bed. Marcellus is
wrapping a bandage on her arm. They are alone.

AMELIA

Leontini, it's gone.

MARCELLUS
I saw. What happened?

AMELIA
We were captured by Hippocrates.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - LEONTINI PRISON - NIGHT.

A Senator is executed by Cephales. Amelia is the last alive, trapped in a cell.

CEPHALES
Just you and me, like I promised.

AMELIA (V.O.)
I had to wait for the right moment.

Cephales unlocks her cell.

CEPHALES
Now, be a good girl.

He pushes her head over the chopping block. She slips THE JERKY KNIFE from her bodice into her hand.

CEPHALES (CONT'D)
For a delicate flower like you,
I'll make it quick.

He raises his sword above his head. Amelia lurches up, stabs him in the GROIN. He SCREAMS and stumbles. She drives her HAND into his ELBOW and he drops the sword.

She grabs the sword. Cephales grabs her. Bringing the hilt to his nose, she knocks him back. Lifts the sword.

AMELIA
For Syracuse. And my father.

She brings it down, through his neck.

END FLASHBACK

Amelia greedily gulps down wine. Her first drink in days.

AMELIA
I tried to return home, but Carthaginian scouts were everywhere. I survived in hiding. When I saw your ships, I stole a horse.
(sorrowfully)
I got lucky.

MARCELLUS
You were smart. And brave.

AMELIA
Hippocrates blamed the massacre of Leontini on you. He uses that to control Syracuse. We must tell them the truth. And end this.

MARCELLUS
Tell who?

AMELIA
Archimedes. I know a way.

MARCELLUS
Archimedes is leading Syracuse against Rome. What good is talk?

AMELIA
The truth will change everything.
And with him we can end this war.

MARCELLUS
(amazed)
We? And here I thought the only fingers a politician ever lifted were to pull someone else's strings. I misjudged you.
(grabs her hand)
We will speak to Archimedes and find a solution.

AMELIA
And here I thought all soldiers saw war as the only solution. I am much surprised by you as well. And glad for it.

MARCELLUS
Thank you for noticing.

AMELIA
Thank you for your compassion.

MARCELLUS
You're welcome...

Without thought, they drift closer, bridging the small space between them to press their lips together.

They break apart just as suddenly.

MARCELLUS (CONT'D)
You...you are in need of wine.
Food. A place to sleep.

AMELIA
 (flushed)
 Yes. Thank you.

MARCELLUS
 And tomorrow we will--

AMELIA
 No, tonight. It must be tonight.

MARCELLUS
 Tonight. Of course. Well. I shall
 ready the horses, then.

He stands up stiffly and strides out of the tent. Amelia lets out a long breath. Exhilarated, but confused.

EXT. THE ROAD TO SYRACUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT.

Two riders gallop toward the walls. Amelia and Marcellus.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE WESTERN WALL OF SYRACUSE - LATER.

Amelia and Marcellus creep close but stay hidden.

AMELIA
 The mirror.

MARCELLUS
 (hands her a mirror)
 How can this reach Archimedes?

AMELIA
 With the help of a full moon, he
 will come to us.

She reflects the moonlight through a window above--

INT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SAME.

The light darts around the ceiling of Archimedes' room. Archimedes is awake, obsessing over a map of Syracuse.

ARCHIMEDES
 Here we are, masters of the very
 war Amelia died to prevent.

He takes a deep gulp of wine. Notices the glinting light on the wall. Squints at it. Is he dreaming?

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)
 Amelia?

The light dances, then vanishes. Archimedes rushes to his window. Sees a CLOAKED FIGURE below. The figure WAVES. Archimedes WAVES back, runs from the room.

OUTSIDE THE WALL

Marcellus steps from the bushes to join Amelia.

MARCELLUS
He knows it is you?

AMELIA
It is a joke between us. He knows.

MARCELLUS
You two have become...closer since Alexandria?

AMELIA
(avoids the question)
Come, he will use the Southern Gate.

EXT. SOUTHERN GATE OF SYRACUSE - MOMENTS LATER.

Amelia and Marcellus wait, hidden, near the Gate. Suddenly, it creaks open. A SYRACUSAN SOLDIER exits.

MARCELLUS
We have been betrayed--

AMELIA
No, wait.

The Soldier removes his helmet. It is Archimedes.

ARCHIMEDES
Amelia?

AMELIA
(reveals herself)
I knew you would come.

ARCHIMEDES
You're alive!
(embraces her)
Hippocrates told us you were killed by--

Marcellus reveals himself. Archimedes pushes Amelia behind him. Draws a sword.

MARCELLUS
Come, now, we both know you're useless with that.

ARCHIMEDES

What is he doing here?

AMELIA

I brought him. To end this.

ARCHIMEDES

(reluctantly agrees)

Step inside. If an archer sees us out here, it would certainly ruin the evening for all of us.

He turns, leads them inside the Gate.

INT. SOUTHERN GATE OF SYRACUSE - SAME.

Archimedes latches the GATE. Marcellus whispers.

MARCELLUS

Rome will never stop. We have supplies for years of siege.

ARCHIMEDES

Then we will beat you on the battlefield.

MARCELLUS

Don't be ridiculous--

AMELIA

Boys! None of our actions started this war. But we are the ones who can stop it. We must work together, bring down Hippocrates and Epicydes tonight and proclaim loyalty to Rome.

MARCELLUS

No. Rome will not trust any Syracusan monarch now. The city must be conquered.

ARCHIMEDES

So we remain at an impasse.

MARCELLUS

Not at all. Bloodshed can still be avoided. Surrender. Open the gates to admit my soldiers.

ARCHIMEDES

No.

MARCELLUS

No?

AMELIA

Roman soldiers are awarded "spoils of war" for their service, even in surrender--

ARCHIMEDES

(overlapping)

--any conquered citizen can be enslaved, any riches stolen-

NERVOUS SOLDIER (O.S.)

Who goes there?

The trio suddenly freezes. Archimedes gestures they follow him. They squeeze inside a narrow alley.

INT. DARK ALLEY BEHIND THE GATE - SAME.

They shuffle and squeeze along, following Archimedes.

MARCELLUS

(whispers)

Spoils of war is what soldiers risk their lives for. It is how Rome repays their service. No one can change that. If I tried, they would turn on me. But you need not die. You have clearly shown your importance, and Rome would gladly patronize your work. You would be made very comfortable.

EXT. BACKYARD NEAR THE ALLEY - SAME.

They exit into a small yard. Crouch in the shadows.

ARCHIMEDES

But Syracuse would be scattered to the winds. Her art, her history, and her people destroyed.

MARCELLUS

It is the way of war.

ARCHIMEDES

It is not my way. I am all that Syracuse has, and I will defend her unto my death.

MARCELLUS

(matter-of-fact)

I could kill you now.

ARCHIMEDES

You could.

They stare at each other. Marcellus smiles.

MARCELLUS

I suspected you would become a
great man someday, Archimedes.

ARCHIMEDES

I had a good tutor.

FOOTSTEPS are suddenly heard nearby. The trio ducks.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

Go back the way we came. I will
get rid of the guards so you can
leave safely.

MARCELLUS

(to Amelia)

Are you coming with me?

ARCHIMEDES

(surprised)

With you?

AMELIA

I am staying.

MARCELLUS

...are you sure?

Archimedes can tell Marcellus wishes to say more. He gets a bad feeling in the pit of his stomach.

AMELIA

This is where I belong.

MARCELLUS

So be it.

He disappears back into the alley. Archimedes frowns.

AMELIA

Archimedes, I--

ARCHIMEDES

Wait here.

He darts around the corner, toward the Southern Gate.

INT. DARK ALLEY BEHIND THE GATE - MOMENTS LATER.

Marcellus pushes past the bricks, positioning himself at the mouth of the alley, ready to exit quickly.

His hand accidentally PUSHES A BRICK OUT OF THE WALL.

EXT. SOUTHERN GATE OF SYRACUSE - SAME.

The BRICK plops to the dirt outside the wall. This is the Gate that got a beating from the Roman warship catapult.

NEAR THE GATE

The NERVOUS SOLDIER suddenly returns. He heard Marcellus. He approaches the dark alley. Closer, closer...

ARCHIMEDES
(suddenly appears)
Good evening.

The Nervous Soldier pivots, but brings his weapon down.

SOLDIER
General, I thought I heard
something.

ARCHIMEDES
You did. We have a Roman spy here,
trying to break in.

IN THE ALLEY

Marcellus stiffens. Is Archimedes about to give him up?

NEAR THE GATE

ARCHIMEDES
A Man was seen running away from
the Northern Gate. Report there to
assist the other soldiers.

SOLDIER
At once!

The Soldier exits. Archimedes opens the Southern Gate. Marcellus comes out of hiding. Stands next to Archimedes.

MARCELLUS
(re: the war)
I cannot stop.

ARCHIMEDES
Neither can I.

Marcus offers an arm in friendship. Archimedes grasps it.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE SOUTHERN GATE - MOMENTS LATER.

Marcellus mounts his horse. Takes a look at the wall. Bricks jut out all the way up. SOMETHING TO REMEMBER.

MARCELLUS

Hah!

He kicks his horse and gallops off into the night.

INT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SAME.

Archimedes watches Marcellus depart from his window.

AMELIA

I don't like hiding.

ARCHIMEDES

You're dead. If Hippocrates hears
you're wandering the streets he
just might try to kill you again.

AMELIA

We should assassinate the brothers
tonight.

ARCHIMEDES

That would only cause civil war.
There is no clear heir.

AMELIA

Hieronymous?

ARCHIMEDES

Dead.

(beat)

Is that the only reason you wanted
to stay with me? To kill them?

AMELIA

Foremost in my mind is that none
of us will even survive the
'morrow. Thoughts of anything
else...can wait.

ARCHIMEDES

(sits at his table)

Fine. Take the bed. I have work to
do. After all, Marcellus will try
to kill us in the morning.

AMELIA

Good night.

He nods tightly. She slips into his bedroom. After a
moment, he throws down his instruments. Pours himself a
large glass of wine. "Toasts" the shut bedroom door.

FADE TO WHITE.

EXT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THE SKY - DAY.

A flaming BOULDER arcs through the bright, clear sky in slow motion, a deadly, yet entrancing, object.

It speeds up and SMASHES into the NORTHERN WALL of Syracuse. Syracusan soldiers on the wall are VAULTED into the air or BURIED in the rubble.

ARCHIMEDES, dirty and sweaty, runs along the wall.

ARCHIMEDES
RELEASE!

SOLDIERS at CATAPULTS -- pointed over the Northern Wall -- HACK at ropes. Weights release, the side of each catapult over the wall FALLS, dropping BOULDERS onto the field.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL

The enormous BOULDERS roll downhill from the fortress. RIGHT ON TOP OF THE ATTACKING ROMAN ARMY.

ROMAN SOLDIERS try to jump out of the boulders' paths, but are MOWED DOWN. Horses panic, breaking up army lines.

The Roman Captain rallies those the boulders missed.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
To the wall! Every Roman!

SOLDIERS
For Rome!

The Captain slows when he sees TALL THIN POLES being raised just inside Syracuse's walls.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
What trick is this?

A SILVER HOOK flashes out over the army, attached to a nearly-invisible thin rope on the pole.

The HOOK sinks into a SOLDIER's leg near the Captain.

SPEARED SOLDIER
...Captain?

The Soldier SCREAMS as the hook RETRACTS at whip-like speed. He is YANKED up and thrown through the air.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
By the gods.

Several ominous WHISTLING sounds fill the air as hook after hook launches out and snags Roman Soldiers, spearing them and lofting them several stories high.

ON THE NORTHERN WALL

Archimedes orchestrates the chaos. He yells to the men at the enormous poles that launch the silvery hooks.

ARCHIMEDES

Again!

Soldiers rush to relaunch. Archimedes scans the fields.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

Where is he...?

SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN

Many ships were lost. Marcellus might've drowned at sea.

ARCHIMEDES

No. He should be leading them, but I see no standard. No General's armor...Something is wrong.

OUTSIDE THE SOUTHERN WALL

Relatively quiet compared to the skirmish at the North, the Southern wall is mostly unattended.

From behind nearby bushes, MARCELLUS and three ROMAN LIEUTENANTS sneakily approach the wall.

MARCELLUS

The bulk of the army has done its job admirably. Syracuse does not even look our way.

ROMAN LIEUTENANT 1

But what can we do from here, General?

MARCELLUS

(rubs the wall)
These bricks were loosened by our catapult attack. We climb.

He sticks a KNIFE between his teeth and starts to climb by PULLING OUT LOOSE BRICKS, making handholds.

The other Romans follow him. Slowly, they ascend.

TOP OF THE SOUTHERN WALL

THREE SYRACUSAN SOLDIERS stand transfixed by the battle to the North. Behind them, MARCELLUS raises himself up.

Hearing Marcellus, one Soldier turns, but he is too slow. Marcellus spits his knife into a free hand and ends him.

The others are dispatched by the Roman Lieutenants.

MARCELLUS
Not too much blood on their
clothes. Careful.

They strip the Syracusan soldiers and don their clothing.

MARCELLUS (CONT'D)
(proud of disguise)
You are not the only one with
tricks, Archimedes. Follow me.

The two Lieutenants in Syracusan outfits run after Marcellus. The remaining Roman disposes of the bodies.

ON TOP OF THE NORTHERN WALL

Archimedes' weapons are making a dent in the Roman Army

SYRACUSIAN CAPTAIN
The catapults are reloaded, sir!

ARCHIMEDES
Release!

Boulders and Hooks again massacre dozens in seconds.

HIPPOCRATES
(suddenly appearing)
My, my, Archimedes. Who knew what
a deadly man you would become?

ARCHIMEDES
The battle is not yet won.

HIPPOCRATES
And a magnificent battle it is.

ARCHIMEDES
(sickened)
I see now that Marcellus was
right. Peace is inevitable.

HIPPOCRATES
Because together we shall conquer
the world?

ARCHIMEDES
Because men like me will some day
make weapons that no man can bear
witness.

HIPPOCRATES
Let me know when they have given
up.

Archimedes glares at Hippocrates as he descends the wall.

EXT. COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER.

Hippocrates moves through Syracuse. A FIGURE IN A CLOAK AND GREEK MASK breaks out of hiding and FOLLOWS...

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - SAME.

Hippocrates strides through. Sensing a noise, he pauses.

The CLOAKED FIGURE IN A GREEK MASK slides behind a pillar, barely concealed before Hippocrates turns around.

Hippocrates' turns his back, the Cloaked Figure draws a sword and raises it up--

Hippocrates whirls with his sword, blocking the attack.

HIPPOCRATES

Bad form, Archimedes. Shouldn't you wait until the war is won before you seize the throne?

He shoves the Figure back, they fight...evenly matched.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)

Either you have been taking lessons, or it is not Archimedes I fight.

He trips the Cloaked Figure. As the assailant falls to the ground, the cloak slips off her head: Amelia.

AMELIA

It's not stealing the throne if I take it from a thief.

HIPPOCRATES

Didn't I kill you already?

AMELIA

Only my father.

She pops up and attacks Hippocrates ferociously. Without the hindrance of the hood, she is besting him.

HIPPOCRATES

Wait -- I have riches!

AMELIA

You have nothing that will not be taken by me. Including your life!

She moves to BEHEAD Hippocrates, but is suddenly body slammed by EPYCIDES! She hits a pillar hard.

EPYCIDES

Good night.

He raises his sword to kill her--

HIPPOCRATES

Hold. Archimedes is no true friend
of ours, but for her life he will
pledge loyalty to Hannibal.

AMELIA

I will gut you like a fish!

She makes a wild stab at the brothers, but Epycides, a large bear of a man, grabs her and ties her up.

HIPPOCRATES

If she is here it is likely she told Archimedes about Leontini.

(thinks it over)

Keep her close. There is one more thing we need to insure our safety.

Epycides nods. Hippocrates hurriedly exits.

SYRACUSE - COURTYARD - SAME.

Marcellus and his Lieutenants rush through the soldiers. Hedging around a catapult, they run into ARCHIMEDES!

ARCHIMEDES

Load the boulders! You there.

Marcellus freezes, turns his head away.

MARCELLUS

(disguises voice)

Sir?

ARCHIMEDES

(hands him a bag)

Get more arrows to the ramparts.

He nods and moves away. The other two follow. Distracted, Archimedes rushes on, none the wiser.

THE NORTHERN GATE

SOLDIERS frantically run around the gate, passing supplies up to the ramparts. A SOLDIER among them notices the disguised MARCELLUS and his men running toward them.

SOLDIER

Just in time! We need men on the--

Marcellus' sword leaps into his hand and with the drawing move, he slices the throat of the Soldier.

MARCELLUS
The others, quickly!

Marcellus starts opening the gate. The Syracusan Soldiers try to defend themselves against the Lieutenants, but are cut down. One is left. He attempts to get help.

SURVIVING SOLDIER
Romans! Romans inside!

Lieutenant #2 draws an arrow from the BAG that Archimedes gave them and SKEWERS the fleeing Soldier.

MARCELLUS
The gate!

The Romans open the gate. Marcellus lights two cloth wrapped arrows. Fires them into the air: a SIGNAL.

OUT ON THE BATTLEFIELD

The bloodied Roman Captain sees the SIGNAL in the sky.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
He has done it! To the gates!

SOLDIERS
To the gates!

They stampede to the open gates of Syracuse.

INSIDE SYRACUSE

Archimedes helps a SOLDIER prepare a catapult.

ARCHIMEDES
It won't take much more to end
this--

SYRACUSIAN CAPTAIN
Archimedes!

Panting, the Captain runs to Archimedes.

ARCHIMEDES
You are needed at the North--

SYRACUSIAN CAPTAIN
The gate has been opened sir. The
Romans are inside!

Archimedes' face pales. He rushes up the nearest stairs to the top of the ramparts. What he sees is his worst fear. The Romans are spilling in by the dozens.

ARCHIMEDES
They will overwhelm us.

SYRACUSIAN CAPTAIN
I'll send every man--

ARCHIMEDES
No. Tell them to go home.

SYRACUSIAN CAPTAIN
Home?

ARCHIMEDES
To their families. To protect them as best they can. Our walls were our only chance. Find your family. And then run.

The Captain nods and darts off. Archimedes takes one last, despairing look at the courtyard, now a mess of Roman and Syracusan soldiers in an uneven battle.

INT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SYRACUSE - MOMENTS LATER.

Archimedes blasts into his home. It has been ransacked.

ARCHIMEDES
Amelia? Amelia, we have to leave, now!

DAMIPPUS, the loyal page, runs into the room.

DAMIPPUS
Sir! Hippocrates was here! He took your designs--

ARCHIMEDES
(ignoring him)
Amelia? Amelia, there is no time!

He bursts into his bedroom.

INT. ARCHIMEDES BEDROOM - SAME.

There is no one inside. She is gone.

ARCHIMEDES
(realizes)
You never listen.

INT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SAME.

Archimedes returns, with a grim look.

ARCHIMEDES
Pack what you can, Damippus.

DAMIPPUS
Sir, we must flee immediately.

ARCHIMEDES
Not until I find Amelia.

EXT. SYRACUSE COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER.

Archimedes tears through the courtyard battle, stopping for nothing. He races to the castle.

EXT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - SYRACUSE.

Damippus stuffs scrolls into satchels on a DONKEY in an alley. He spots an OLD MAN huddled against the wall.

DAMIPPUS
Take this gold piece.

The Old Man looks at him, a little slow and confused.

OLD MAN
Gold?

DAMIPPUS
There is more gold for you if you protect the donkey while I pack.

He puts the reins into the Old Man's hand. He nods. Damippus runs back into the apartments.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THRONE ROOM.

Archimedes thrusts the main doors open.

ARCHIMEDES
Amelia?

The room is abandoned.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - WAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.

Archimedes comes upon Hippocrates, Epycides and several of their CARTHAGINIAN SOLDIERS escaping. They freeze.

ARCHIMEDES
Where is she?

Epycides reveals Amelia - bound and gagged.

EPYCIDES
Coming with us.

HIPPOCRATES
Through the tunnel your Uncle was
kind enough to have built for just
such an occasion. Join us and
she's yours.

ARCHIMEDES
(beat, sarcastic)
That's your best offer?

EPYCIDES
Oh, just kill him now.

HIPPOCRATES
...Alright.

The Carthaginian thugs drop their stolen goods and draw swords. Archimedes looks up, sees a LAMP. Grabs the POT OF OIL at the bottom and tosses OIL at the Carthaginians.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)
Stop him!

Archimedes tosses the lit flame onto the oil spill. The Carthaginians fall backward ON FIRE.

EPYCIDES
Fools!

They extinguish each other. Archimedes rips a CURTAIN, ties it around the LEG OF A TABLE. Runs for the window.

HIPPOCRATES
Get him!

Archimedes dives out the window, holding the curtain tight. Carthaginians rush toward the window as the curtain unfolds. It SNAPS TIGHT and YANKS the TABLE to the window, knocking the Carthaginians over.

OUTSIDE

Archimedes slides down the curtain toward the ground.

INSIDE

Epycides draws his sword. Slices the curtain.

OUTSIDE

Archimedes plummets. Lands hard, but is okay. Looks at the ground war in front of him. RUNS RIGHT INTO IT.

He dives out of the way of Roman SWORDS--

Shimmies his way in between two SOLDIERS hand-fighting--

Grabs a shield from a downed Soldier to defend himself from a ROMAN CAVALRYMAN--

Ducks into an alley to outrun a BLOODTHIRSTY ROMAN--

Until he spies the man he seeks: MARCELLUS, larger than life, cutting down Syracusan Soldiers like a god.

ARCHIMEDES

Marcellus!

Yelling will do no good in this crowded battle. He grabs a sword and dives into the middle of the action.

A ROMAN attacks him. Archimedes defends. But not well enough. The Roman aims to kill -- suddenly the SYRACUSAN CAPTAIN leaps in to block the blow.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)
I need to get to Marcellus!

SYRACUSIAN CAPTAIN

Together the two of them fight their way to the center, where Marcellus is little more than a blur of mayhem.

ARCHIMEDES
Marcellus!

Marcellus turns, confused. The Syracusan Captain takes the opportunity to attack.

MARCELLUS
Archimedes?

Archimedes launches himself in front of his Captain.

ARCHIMEDES

SYRACUSIAN CAPTAIN
What are you doing?

ARCHIMEDES

Hold, I say!

A Roman raises his sword to kill Archimedes.

MARCELLUS
(blocks him)
Stand down!

The center of the battle has suddenly become the calm eye of the storm. Soldiers on both sides do not know what to do. Their commanding officers are...holding?

ARCHIMEDES
They've got Amelia.

Marcellus stares at him. Makes his decision.

MARCELLUS
Lead on.

The two men turn and rush toward the castle.

Soldiers they leave hover, unsure. Are they still at war?

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.

CARTHAGINIAN SOLDIERS carry treasures away down the TUNNEL. Hippocrates ties a BAG OF SCROLLS onto his hip.

EPICYDES
Is that secure enough?

AMELIA PULLS FREE of Epycides and makes a run for it.

HIPPOCRATES
Better than yours.
(grabs her)
We have no more need of her anyway.

He unsheathes his sword to kill her, when suddenly a KNIFE sings out of the air and through his sleeve - pinning his arm to the wall.

EPYCIDES
The Roman!

They turn to see Marcellus and Archimedes at the door. Ready to do some serious murder.

MARCELLUS
Drop her. Or lose your head.

HIPPOCRATES
Speak honestly, Marcellus, like a good soldier. You're here for my head regardless.

ARCHIMEDES

Well if you hurt her, he'll just
make it that much more painful.
I'm pretty sure.

MARCELLUS

True.

EPYCIDES

No more talk!

Epycides charges Archimedes. Hippocrates pulls free of the knife in the wall. Draws his sword.

Marcellus defends Archimedes, drives Epycides to the door. He puts his back to Archimedes' back.

MARCELLUS

(sotto to Archimedes)

We stay together.

A CARTHAGINIAN SOLDIER rushes out from the tunnel.

CARTHAGINIAN SOLDIER

Captain?

HIPPOCRATES

Get the others back here, you
idiot! Now!

The Carthaginian ducks back down to grab the other thugs.

Marcellus advances, crossing swords with Hippocrates in front. Epycides slashes at Archimedes, but Archimedes defends and retreats - keeping his back to Marcellus'.

Amelia sneakily grabs Marcellus' knife out of the wall and CUTS OFF HER BINDINGS.

AMELIA

Marcellus! A sword!

Hippocrates turns, surprised. Marcellus pulls a second SWORD, tosses it to her. She points it at Hippocrates.

ARCHIMEDES

Three against two.

HIPPOCRATES

Two against two, really.

ARCHIMEDES

I could get lucky.

HIPPOCRATES

(smiles)

I may not be as clever as you.

But I will be bringing the best of
you back with me.

Hippocrates shows off his bag. It is full of SCROLLS.

ARCHIMEDES
My designs?

With a loud stomping, SIX Carthaginians return up the tunnel and draw SWORDS. The heroes are sandwiched.

HIPPOCRATES
Your creations will win Hannibal
Rome, and, after that, the world.
(to his men)
Kindly show him our thanks.

The Carthaginian Soldiers ATTACK! Amelia, Archimedes and Marcellus defend themselves. Hippocrates and Epycides RUN AWAY in the confusion - OUT THE DOOR.

ARCHIMEDES
They're running!

AMELIA
Then go after them.

ARCHIMEDES
What?

She SKEWERS a Carthaginian and CUTS the Achilles tendon of a second one. Archimedes clumsily defends himself.

AMELIA
I will handle these men myself.

ARCHIMEDES
But--

MARCELLUS
(spears one)
She's right. If Hannibal adds your weapons to his army, the world is doomed. Let her finish this. We will catch the brothers.

He yanks his sword from his victim and runs for the door. Archimedes takes a last look at Amelia, and then follows.

Amelia squares off against the remaining three.

AMELIA
(smiles)
I really needed this.

They attack. In a few angry moves she kills them all.

INT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - HALLWAYS - SAME.

Marcellus spies Hippocrates disappearing up a staircase.

MARCELLUS
Archimedes, the ramparts!

ARCHIMEDES
They'll escape over the wall.

MARCELLUS
Not if you manage to run just a
little faster.

ARCHIMEDES
I'm a mathematician!

Marcellus races off. Archimedes pauses to gulp air.

EXT. SYRACUSE - RAMPARTS - MOMENTS LATER.

Marcellus jumps the last stairs onto the ramparts. He sees NOTHING. Sensing an attack, he ducks, moments before Hippocrates' sword slices where his neck had been.

Marcellus turns to see Hippocrates and Epycides.

THEY ATTACK TOGETHER. Clearly a challenge for Marcellus.

ARCHIMEDES
Marcellus!

Archimedes pulls himself up the last few steps and leaps into the fray. He and Epycides clash swords. Archimedes is the poorer swordsman. Epycides pushes him back --

MARCELLUS
(to Archimedes)
Don't give ground!

ARCHIMEDES
Have you seen the size of mine?!
Care to trade?

Epycides pushes Archimedes against the edge of the rampart. He peeks over the side. Through the CATAPULTS, the ground is HUNDREDS OF FEET below. Archimedes pales.

EPYCIDES
No jokes?

ARCHIMEDES
No need.

He feints, slices at Epycides. Epycides dodges slow, and his arm gets CUT. Archimedes smiles. Enraged, Epycides rushes him, raises him up and THROWS HIM OVER THE SIDE.

MARCELLUS

NO!

Archimedes is gone. Epicydes joins his brother. Marcellus uses all his skill to fight BOTH. Helpfully, Epicydes is wounded. Marcellus gains the advantage, disarms Epicydes.

MARCELLUS (CONT'D)

For Archimedes.

He thrusts his sword through Epicydes' ribs. Epicydes' eyes widen in surprise. He crumples to the floor.

HIPPOCRATES

Epicydes!

(to Marcellus)

What have you done? What have you done!

Hippocrates attacks Marcellus in a furious rage, HAMMERING him. Disarms Marcellus. Raises his sword high.

HIPPOCRATES (CONT'D)

For Hannibal. And my brother!

Marcellus knows he's beat. But suddenly, he sees MOVEMENT BEHIND HIPPOCRATES. A WOODEN ARM SWINGING AROUND.

Hippocrates turns to see what Marcellus is gaping at. The ARM of a fulcrum-catapult SWIVELS through the air. At the far end ARCHIMEDES is revealed! He GUIDES the arm around.

Thinking fast - Marcellus GRABS THE BAG FROM HIPPOCRATES' HIP.

The CLAW SWOOPS DOWN - SKEWERS HIPPOCRATES.

Like a slingshot, the Claw LOFTS HIPPOCRATES over the courtyard of Syracuse. Screaming.

Soldiers on the ground look up. Hippocrates squeals as he flies over Syracuse and slams into the gate. Dead.

His body is immediately looted.

ON TOP OF THE RAMPARTS

Archimedes limps over to Marcellus and helps him up. Together, they walk to the edge of the ramparts and look down at the men. Marcellus lifts his arms in victory.

The ROMANS raise their swords and cheer! The SYRACUSANS hang their heads and drop their weapons.

ELSEWHERE IN A COURTYARD

ROMAN SOLDIERS run through the streets, taking anything of worth. Several of them TEAR THE TILES off of the SEASHELL FRESCO that Archimedes had shown to Amelia. Destroying the fresco completely.

BACK ON THE RAMPARTS

Archimedes registers the chaos. His smile quickly fades.

MARCELLUS

We have won.

ARCHIMEDES

(bitterly)

And what is your first command?

MARCELLUS

Come, now, Archimedes. Rome desires your happiness as much as I do. You will be given a hero's welcome.

Archimedes looks below. Romans are grabbing pouches and belongings from Syracusans.

ARCHIMEDES

I am your spoil of war?

MARCELLUS

You are a celebrity. Isn't that what you wanted? And with your machines, no army will dare defy us. We can unite the known world!

ARCHIMEDES

(corrects him)

Defeat.

MARCELLUS

We will bring peace. And with these, you will become the most important man on the planet.

He hands over Archimedes' scrolls that Hippocrates stole.

MARCELLUS (CONT'D)

Pack. I will send an escort. We will feast in Rome.

Marcellus claps him on the back and runs down the stairs.

INT. ARCHIMEDES' WORKSHOP - LATER.

Archimedes enters his haven. He pauses, surrounded by models of his designs for war.

He takes out the scrolls from the bag Hippocrates had tried to purloin. Schematics of his mirrors, the hooks, the Claws of Archimedes. He fondly runs his hand over it. The work of genius. His pathway to fame and greatness.

HE THROWS HIS DESIGNS ON THE FIRE. All of them. In a sudden outburst of emotion he grabs all of his models, everything in sight and throws them in the fire too.

He pauses when he comes across his design for THE ARCHIMEDEAN SCREW. An invention to help, not harm.

AMELIA (O.S.)
Somehow, I doubt Marcellus would approve.

Archimedes whirls around. He had been so consumed he had not heard her enter. He realizes she saw what he's done.

ARCHIMEDES
I can't do it. I will not be a war puppet. I will not go to Rome.

He waits. Will she turn him in? Surprisingly, she smiles.

AMELIA
I am glad to hear it.

ARCHIMEDES
(relieved)
Come with me.

AMELIA
The senators who lied for Hippocrates will be banished. I am all that's left, and needed for the transition to protect our people.

ARCHIMEDES
I need you. I love you.

AMELIA
(wavers)
If only you could have said that in Egypt. We had choices then. But now it is too late.

ARCHIMEDES
I didn't know what I had. Now I know. Give me one more chance.

AMELIA

Our chances have been superseded
with fate. You cannot stay. And I
cannot leave.

(beat)

But I will not tell Marcellus that
you have gone.

ARCHIMEDES

Thank you.

Awkwardly, he packs THE DESIGN OF THE SCREW into a bag.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

Goodbye.

AMELIA

Fare well.

This is it. Their final moments. He suddenly grabs her up
in his arms. They kiss passionately.

He releases her. Hesitates -- grabs a few SACKS OF WINE.

ARCHIMEDES

For the journey. Of course.

She lets out a small laugh. He smiles sadly. Leaves.
Amelia holds herself and wipes a tear from her cheek.

EXT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENT - SAME.

The OLD MAN holding the reins of the Donkey for Damippus
is suddenly surprised by TWO ROMAN SOLDIERS.

ROMAN SOLDIER 1

What have we here?

OLD MAN

Leave me be! This is how I get my
gold!

ROMAN SOLDIER 1

Gold?

ROMAN SOLDIER 2

Anything precious must be turned
over to Rome, grandfather, didn't
you hear? We won.

OLD MAN

Leave off!

He shoves Roman Soldier 1, who trips and falls in a pile
of MANURE. Roman Soldier 2 laughs.

ROMAN SOLDIER 1
 (drawing his sword)
 You think that funny?

He SKEWERS the Old Man. Damippus arrives, witnesses this.

DAMIPPUS
 No!

He attacks the Romans, but they push him back, laughing.

ROMAN SOLDIER 1
 This one's got a little muscle.

ROMAN SOLDIER 2
 Help me grab his arms. A young
 buck will fetch a fine price.

ARCHIMEDES
 Unhand him!

Archimedes approaches, furious. Sets down his BAG.

ROMAN SOLDIER 2
 Whatever you've got in your sack
 there, belongs to Rome.

ROMAN SOLDIER 1
 Refuse and die, Syracusan.

Damippus stomps on his captor's shin. WRIGGLES FREE.

DAMIPPUS
 Sir, get behind me!

ARCHIMEDES
 (draws his sword)
 Damippus. In my satchel you will
 find a design. Take it to Amelia.

Archimedes attacks. Surprised, the Romans defend.

DAMIPPUS
 But, sir--

ARCHIMEDES
 GO!

Damippus grabs ARCHIMEDES' SCROLLS from the bag. Runs.

Roman Soldier 1 regains his confidence. Slices at
 Archimedes. Archimedes ducks the first, the second...

But not the third.

The Soldier's sword CUTS ACROSS ARCHIMEDES' CHEST.

RED POURS OUT, STAINING HIS SHIRT, POOLS AT HIS FEET.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)
That was...unexpected.

He appears to get an IDEA. But then crumples to the ground, lifelessly.

ROMAN SOLDIER 2
Grab the goods and get on with it.
We're missing all the fun.

They take the DONKEY. Leaving two bodies behind.

EXT. SYRACUSE CASTLE - PALACE STEPS - LATER.

Amelia approaches Marcellus. He is gazing down at SOLDIERS ransacking Syracuse.

AMELIA
(cooly)
And what will you do with
Syracuse, General, now that you
have her?

MARCELLUS
In accordance with the rules of
war, Soldiers of Rome will
pillage. And keep what they find.

AMELIA
We are yours to ravage?

MARCELLUS
There is no other way.

AMELIA
Because you make no other way.

He does not answer. Conflicted. Suddenly, his Captain runs up, distressed. Damippus follows.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
General, I have bad tidings--

MARCELLUS
Not now, Captain--

ROMAN CAPTAIN
Archimedes is dead, sir.

AMELIA
Dead?

ROMAN CAPTAIN
Apparently he resisted Roman
Soldiers when they tried to take
his scrolls. This servant came to
me for help.

I detained him to check his story,
but when I arrived I found
Archimedes dead.

DAMIPPUS offers Amelia the scroll.

DAMIPPUS

He wanted you to have this. It was
his final wish.

She opens the scroll. Sees Archimedes' Screw.

AMELIA

(begins to cry)

No...no...

Marcellus' eyes go dark. This is all his fault.

MARCELLUS

Gather the men. All of them.

EXT. COURTYARD IN FRONT OF THE PALACE - LATER.

The Romans stand at attention, facing Marcellus, who stands at the top of the Palace stairs. Syracusans watch.

A DEAD BODY COVERED IN A WHITE SHEET is carried ceremoniously through the crowd and up the stairs.

Amelia stands behind Marcellus. Tears stain her face.

MARCELLUS

Courageous soldiers of Rome. For
your bravery, Rome offers any
treasure of Syracuse you find.
(beat)
But I will not allow it. You will
not take her riches. You will not
take her art. And you will not
take her people.

ROMANS SOLDIERS

Deny us our fee?/He cannot!/etc.

MARCELLUS

SILENCE.
(they stop, shocked)
The greatest treasure of Syracuse,
a man that can never be matched,
nor replaced, has been killed. His
name was Archimedes, and with him
Rome would have achieved her true
potential. But that man is dead.
(wavers)
His light has left our universe.
But his memory stays in our
hearts.

Nothing more will be destroyed,
for we have taken too much
already. Any man who steals from
Syracuse will be put to death. Do
any here wish to defy my decree?

The Soldiers stand silent, awestruck by his emotion.

AMELIA

Then let us all spend a moment
together remembering Archimedes. A
man we were privileged to live
alongside, however brief that was.

The whole of Syracuse and the Roman army bow their heads
in tribute. Men of faith raise their voices in sorrow.
The CHANT is taken up by all those in attendance.

Amelia sees TEARS roll down Marcellus' cheeks. She puts
her hand in his. Despite the crowd, they are alone.

Their fingers interlace. Grip tight.

The pall-bearing soldiers present the COVERED BODY to
Marcellus. He raises the sheet to look at Archimedes'
face - and SEES INSTEAD THE DEAD OLD MAN.

He and Amelia look to the Roman Captain. Shocked.

ROMAN CAPTAIN

(sorrowfully)
Exactly as Cicero described him.

MARCELLUS

Cicero? But --

Amelia touches his arm, secretly silencing him.

AMELIA

Captain, we would like to see
where exactly he was killed.

WALKING ALONG THE SYRACUSAN STREETS

The Roman Captain leads Marcellus and Amelia.

AMELIA

(whispers)
Cicero. That was the biographer
Archimedes tricked in Alexandria.

MARCELLUS

Every Roman reads Cicero's work.

AMELIA

...And thinks Archimedes is an old
man.

They look at each other with mounting hope.

EXT. ARCHIMEDES APARTMENTS - MOMENTS LATER.

The Captain leads them to the road near Archimedes' home.
TWO RED STAINS soak the street.

ROMAN CAPTAIN
It was here, my lady.

AMELIA
Why are there two pools of blood?

ROMAN CAPTAIN
The second is from an assistant.
According to the soldiers he put
up a fight for his master's books.

He takes his leave. Amelia goes pale, turns to Marcellus.

AMELIA
Only Archimedes would have been
foolish enough to fight for his...

MARCELLUS
There is far too much blood here
for him to have survived.

AMELIA
Wait. Do you smell that?

He sniffs. Kneels. Touches the stain. Smells his fingers.

MARCELLUS
(smiles)
Wine.

Amelia giddily smiles. Then realizes the repercussions.

AMELIA
If Rome finds out, they will
pursue him. To the ends of the
Earth.

MARCELLUS
(beat)
I have already made my decree,
Amelia. No man shall be taken from
Syracuse against his will.

She smiles wide, wraps herself in his arms. He holds her.
He notices a TRAIL OF WINE...leading toward the castle.

DEEP IN A TUNNEL UNDER SYRACUSE.

A CLOAKED MAN moves quickly through the underground passage. He stops. His hood falls back: Archimedes. Pulls a slashed, dripping WINE SKIN BAG from under his tunic.

ARCHIMEDES

Not how I planned to use you, but
you were useful, nonetheless.

Tosses it. Yanks another from his sack. Takes a pull.

ARCHIMEDES (CONT'D)

Let's see where this goes, then,
shall we?

Packs it. Moves on to the light at the end of the tunnel.

FADE TO WHITE.

THE FOLLOWING WORDS APPEAR OVER BLACK IN THESE GROUPS

Because of General Marcus Marcellus' decree in 212 BC, the first of its kind, the art and works of Syracuse were preserved. These are credited with inspiring the golden age of Rome. They can be seen today in a museum in Italy.

In 48 BC, the Library of Alexandria burned down in a war between Julius Caesar and Pharaoh Ptolemy XIII. Surviving artifacts were relocated to the Library of Iraq, which was looted and burned down in 2003 AD.

Much of Archimedes' works have been lost to time and the destruction of war. What documents remain accelerated human understanding of math and physics.

Archimedes' incredible war machines were documented by soldiers on both sides.

Rumors of his death, however, have never been confirmed.