

Episode 5: MIDTERMS

Scene 1 - In the radio station

APOLLO

(the weekly spiel:) Happy Monday morning, Skymount students and local listeners! My name is Apollo and this is Rise and Shine, your favorite 7:30 commute mix of music, global updates, and campus news.

We are heading into midterms week! If it's anything like last semester, it will be taxing on us all—but we'll make it out alive! A friendly reminder from me, your favorite morning minstrel: pay attention this week! Don't forget any assignments! It is not fun! You deserve success! With that said, I am just going to let the music run today because I have to crack down into focus mode here at the station—unfortunately, organic compounds are not going to understand themselves. To kick off your midterms week, here are some relaxing study tunes from me to you.

[Theme song]

Scene 2 - Dining hall

[APOLLO (AB), HESTIA (GZ), and APHRODITE (NKD) meet for a Philanthropy Field Day planning session over lunch. APHRODITE sets up her phone]

APHRODITE

Okay. Let's get started. Philanthropy Field Day.

APOLLO

Olympics edition!

APHRODITE

(with gravity) One month away.

HESTIA

Aphie, are you President *and* Philanthropy Chair?

APHRODITE

Oh, no, Rosa's sick right now so I'm stepping in. I've also talked to Panhellenic, surveyed the other orgs about their event contributions and stuff... It's no biggie! I love planning. Besides, what else am I doing today? So Nu Kappa Delta is running a Hula Hoop contest—

APOLLO

Just—sorry to interrupt—can we make sure we keep things snappy? I've got a bio midterm in, uh, three days.

APHRODITE

Exactly—it's only Monday. (*"Focus!"*) Okay! Whatever! *(clicks pen authoritatively)* Apollo! What is Alpha Beta's big event this year?

APOLLO

Glad you asked, I'm calling it the Beer Bottle Breaking Bracket, or B-B-B-B—

APHRODITE

We can workshop the name.

APOLLO

—it has alliteration—and it's pretty self-explanatory. You throw a baseball, you break a bottle, you get a point. Or you fail and you don't.

(reads his notes) The game is open to everyone all morning, and then in the afternoon you can qualify to compete in a, uh, what's the thing people are saying? March—March M—

HESTIA
March Madness?

APOLLO
Yeah, a March Madness-style tournament. See how many bottles you can hit in a row, and if you beat the person you're paired with, you move up, yadda yadda yah, and then we crown a winner.

APHRODITE
Sounds like you've got that worked out! Nice. (*writing*)

APOLLO
A classic Olympian test of strength and accuracy!

APHRODITE
Commendable.

APOLLO
Thank you.

APHRODITE
And Hestia?

HESTIA
Yeah, so Gamma Zeta is hosting a paint run, which—we're doing this all out on Leigh Field, right?

APHRODITE
Right.

HESTIA
So—perfect, so the run takes place around the track, and as you run, people throw paint at you.

APHRODITE
...What?

HESTIA
Or you can choose to throw paint at the runners. It's one ticket per person to run two laps, or to be a paint-thrower for ten minutes.

APHRODITE

(horrified) But—their *clothes*—

HESTIA

Oh I forgot to mention the T-shirts! Yes. For five tickets you'll get a white version of whatever this year's t-shirt design is—GZ can pay for them ourselves—and then it'll be covered in paint splatters at the end of your run! Like a tie dye!

APHRODITE

Wow. Well, if you're sure people will do it—

APOLLO

I'll do it! That sounds amazing, Hess.

HESTIA

And you'll notice I gave people a lot of opportunities to spend tickets with Gamma Zeta. We're doing, like, an inter-sorority, inter-fraternity ticket competition, right? Or did I imagine that from, like, our second meeting?

APHRODITE

Right, yeah! Obviously every sorority and fraternity who contributes an event to Field Day—which is all thirteen of them—will raise money equivalent to the number of tickets people spend on them for their philanthropy of choice. And then on top of that—

HESTIA

Thirteen. We could've been split up across every Greek organization on campus.

APHRODITE

Oh, wow, that's true. I'm so glad we were able to stick together.

HESTIA

I bet we can thank Persephone for that. Hades wouldn't have bothered.

APHRODITE

Please, at least Hades' prank stuck us all in the same college!

APOLLO

(stressed) Yeah, serendipitous; can we finish hashing out the ticket stuff and move along?

APHRODITE

So sorry. Yes. So on top of getting money for all the tickets you earned, the organization with the most—

HESTIA

(finishing her thought) —with the most tickets should take home a grand prize!

APOLLO

More money!

APHRODITE

Where would more money come from?

APOLLO

What if we partnered with the school? Ask them to match whatever we make? And the winning group gets that amount?

HESTIA

Asking them to match is kind of a stretch depending on what we wind up pulling in...

APOLLO

Okay, so how about this: the school can match us up to a certain amount? \$5,000 Earth US dollars?

APHRODITE

(writing) Wait, slow down, I'm drafting a note we can send the student treasurer—five thousand...yeah! That sounds so great, you guys!

APOLLO

(packing up) Perfect. See you guys next—

APHRODITE

What about a second award?

HESTIA

Oooh...

APOLLO

What.

APHRODITE

Something to make sure the brothers and sisters are all participating in each other's events.

HESTIA

At the end of the day, the top sorority and the top fraternity should fight it out!

APHRODITE

OOOH...

APOLLO

Beach volleyball. Done.

APHRODITE & HESTIA

Ooooh...

APHRODITE

(writing for a moment) I love this. Apollo, you're a genius. Sexiest sport there is!

APOLLO

Great! Can I—

HESTIA

So we'll need to start ticket presales immediately after spring break.

APHRODITE

Right.

[APOLLO groans]

HESTIA

This works in tandem to raise awareness, funds, and stakes in the inter-organization ticket-earning contest.

APHRODITE

And you said GZ would do T-shirts?

HESTIA

Athena said GZ is paying for the *white* T-shirts, for our paint run.

APHRODITE

And your treasurer has confirmed?

HESTIA

(sighs) Who knows, with Athena. She may as well be our treasurer too.

APOLLO

Hey, she probably just wants things to run smoothly—

HESTIA

Yeah, even when it's not her job. *(beat)* Don't tell her I said that.

APHRODITE

Of course.

HESTIA

Do we have a T-shirt design yet? For the whole event?

APHRODITE

Apollo, how would you feel about designing our T-shirt logo—

APOLLO

(hurriedly) Sure, yes. Yup. Whatever you need.

(packing up) Can you email me the details? Text me the recording? I really have to go.

APHRODITE

What?

APOLLO

I've got a chem study session across campus in ten minutes.

APHRODITE

But it's a fifteen minute walk across campus!

APOLLO

(sardonically) I know.

APHRODITE

Oh. *(getting it)* Oh!

[Audio cuts]

Scene 3 - Voicemail exchange, and a phone call

AUTOMATED VOICEMAIL BOX (APOLLO)

You have reached Apollo! I'm probably in rehearsal right now—if you leave a cool enough message I'll listen to it when I'm out! Thanks!

[Beep]

ATHENA

Just letting you know, Hestia gave me your script—I'm on my way to the performing arts center to drop that off, and I brought you a chicken salad wrap from the student union too, since you probably haven't eaten since one. I think you're in the Bryan Theater? Okay. See you soon. Bye.

[Beep]

AUTOMATED VOICEMAIL BOX (APOLLO)

You have reached Apollo! I'm probably in rehearsal right now—if you leave a cool enough message I'll listen to it when I'm out! Thanks!

[Beep]

ATHENA

I just dropped your stuff outside, you all looked busy, so—

APOLLO

(picking up his phone) Athena?

ATHENA

—I just, oh hi Apollo.

APOLLO

Thanks for my script! Thank you so much.

ATHENA

It's no problem.

APOLLO

(overlapping) I'm serious. I felt like an idiot. Human mistake.

ATHENA

I get it.

APOLLO

Anyway, we just took fifteen if you wanna come chat for a bit? We can share the chicken salad wrap.

ATHENA

Oh, I'd love to, but I'm actually on my way to a calc seminar.

APOLLO

At night? (*whistles*) Girl, you are *busy*.

ATHENA

I get a 2% grade bump on the midterm if I show up!

APOLLO

(*as if shaking his head*) Math majors.

ATHENA

Uh, hello Mr. Pre-Med!

APOLLO

(*chuckles darkly*) And music theory.

ATHENA

What?

APOLLO

And, uh, and music theory.

ATHENA

You added a music theory major?

APOLLO

What can I say? It came naturally.

ATHENA

(*lovingly exasperated*) I'm proud of you.

APOLLO

Maybe save that until after the midterm, huh? See if I pass first.

ATHENA

Oh, Apollo. You're going to pass.

APOLLO

I don't know.

ATHENA

Apollo—

APOLLO

(suddenly serious) I genuinely don't know. It's a little daunting, to be honest.

ATHENA

Well—

APOLLO

(continuing) And *you*, you're so—you're so *good* with all of this stuff. Like, you've got this under control. Freakin' calculus seminars and behind-the-scenes Field Day stuff and...I don't know.

ATHENA

It isn't easy.

APOLLO

How do you do it?

ATHENA

(thinks for a second) Good time management, mostly. I mean—you know me—I always try to be logical about these kinds of things.

APOLLO

(fondly) That's for sure.

ATHENA

It comes in handy sometimes! A lot of the time. All the time! Be logical with how you spend your time! That's just as important as being logical when you're actually learning or working.

APOLLO

Logical with my time. Huh. Congratulations, Athena, you're my muse for the week.

ATHENA

Oh, please. *(beat)* Hey, would you—

APOLLO

(completely overlapping) Ah shoot, I have to get back to rehearsal. And I gotta scarf down this dinner wrap. Thank you so much Athena!

ATHENA

Anytime, Puck.

[Transition: the “beep” of an answering machine]

Scene 4 - Voicemail

DEMETER

Hi Persephone, baby, it's your mother. I miss you.

It's nearly spring here—I'm sick and tired of the cold but I know you've got big things in store. I'm looking forward to seeing your work this year. It's so special to be able to experience your creations on Earth, the way they're meant to be experienced. Just thinking about it makes me miss you even more.

I know you're busy with all of that, but I would really love to see you. We all would. Why don't you come on down to Earth sometime after the equinox? The Nu Kappa Delta girls are throwing a Spring Formal, and I'm the treasurer, so I get to make sure we put money into the important things. I'll do it all up special for you, honeybun. Your mama misses you so much, Persephone. I love you. Talk to you soon-soon. Buh-bye.

[Beep]

Scene 5 - Dining hall

[Voice memo start noise. In the background, the bustle of a college dining hall]

APHRODITE

Is this good?

DEMETER

Yeah.

APHRODITE

So Spring Formal—sounds like we should really lean into the *spring* idea, huh?

DEMETER

Yes. As floral as possible.

APHRODITE

Duh.

DEMETER

But it's not just flowers, Aphrodite. Spring is more than that. It's bigger.

APHRODITE

Okay?

DEMETER

It's life. It's birth, and more importantly, it's rebirth. It's warmth after darkness, hope after death.

APHRODITE

That's really beautiful.

DEMETER

My daughter always does a good job striking that balance.

APHRODITE

But it's also kind of a lot to try to fit into a dance theme.

DEMETER

Are you saying it can't be done?

APHRODITE

Of course not! Let's just...let's start simple. Can we rent out a garden somewhere?

DEMETER

Let me look. Let me check the "inter-net." Hm... *(she makes searching noises)*

APHRODITE

(after a nearly-uncomfortable beat) It's okay, you can look later—

DEMETER

There's a vineyard. Earth & Sun Winery. It says their "scenic outdoor deck makes an ideal venue for sophisticated and splendid social events."

APHRODITE

Vineyard sounds a little Dionysus-y. We wouldn't want to accidentally make *him* the guest of honor.

DEMETER

I'll keep my eye out for other places. Let's talk about decoration.

APHRODITE

I know you said it's not all about flowers, but—

DEMETER

Flowers.

APHRODITE

—flowers. Yes. Lots of flowers. Does she have any favorites?

DEMETER

(appalled) "Does she have any favorites?" She is the Goddess of Spring! Of course she has her favorites. It's imperative we start with roses and lilies. Classic and luxurious.

APHRODITE

(writing) Roses and lilies. Okay.

DEMETER

She gets these bouquets at the start and end of summer from that no-good husband of hers, and she always seems to like them. Let me think—roses, lilies, irises, violets, and—crocus, perhaps?

APHRODITE

(writing, stops) That sounds...like a lot of pollen, but nice. Pretty. And if she likes the bouquets, then a whole venue full of bouquets will get her attention for sure.

DEMETER

Agreed.

APHRODITE

We have the budget for a proper bar, yes?

DEMETER

What kind of treasurer do you take me for?

APHRODITE

Demeter, I didn't mean—

DEMETER

I apologize. I'm always a little on edge when I'm worrying about my Persephone.

APHRODITE

That's understandable.

DEMETER

Yes, I've portioned out a proper bar budget.

APHRODITE

Again, we don't want to skew too Dionysus-heavy.

DEMETER

Oh, no. We want quality over quantity. For the palates and livers of the mortal girls, especially.

APHRODITE

So pomegranate cocktails are a must.

DEMETER

(begrudgingly) She never could resist a good pomegranate.

APHRODITE

Oh, I wish I was sipping cocktails with Persephone in her gardens right now.

DEMETER

You're telling me!

APHRODITE

So flowers, pomegranates...

DEMETER

Could we get Hephaestus to do something?

APHRODITE

(immediately tense) Why, uh, why bring him into it?

DEMETER

He's helping you all with Field Day, right? He could build us a little pavilion?

APHRODITE

Demeter, how many hours do you think he has in a day?

DEMETER

It was only an idea.

APHRODITE

He's far too busy with Field Day carpentry alone. He'll be in over his head when tech week for *Midsummer Night's Dream* comes around. Olympus knows the set building they've dragged him into is enough of a weight on his schedule. It's amazing the poor man still has any time left for doing so well in his classes.

DEMETER

I bet you're proud of him.

APHRODITE

(flounders) I mean—

DEMETER

As one of your peers, at least.

APHRODITE

Sure. Okay. Yeah.

DEMETER

I hope we're doing it right.

APHRODITE
With...Hephaestus...?

DEMETER
(overlapping) I hope—I know Persephone will love it. She's always loved a good party.

APHRODITE
Did she say she was coming?

DEMETER
She didn't pick up. I left her a message. She's so busy with spring, and with trying to help us, and hopefully not getting distracted by messing around with that Hades of hers. I don't blame her for not having time for her old mom.

APHRODITE
Aw, Demeter...

DEMETER
(stifling tears) I miss her, Aphrodite. One day you'll have a daughter and she'll be grown up and working hard and all you can hope is that you throw her a good enough party to make her come visit you.

APHRODITE
Demeter...

[They hug. Respectfully, APHRODITE stops recording.]

Scene 6 - Voicemail

AUTOMATED VOICEMAIL BOX (DEMETER)

Hi, you have reached Demeter. I can't get to the phone right now, but leave a message and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. Thank you.

[Beep]

PERSEPHONE

Mom, I'm so sorry I missed you! Things have been a little crazy with spring this year, and it's weird with all you guys gone—hard to administrate everything that needs to get done on a day-to-day basis. The Formal sounds great! It's going to be amazing. I'd really really love to go, but Mom, until Hades and I can figure out what got you all stuck down on Earth, I can't risk going down myself. I know you understand. I'm so sorry. I miss you too, and I love you so much. I can't wait to see how the Formal turns out! I'll be watching you guys!

[Beep]

Scene 7 - Gamma Zeta lodge

ATHENA

Another week, another council check-in. How are we doing, GZs?

ARTEMIS

I've been better, I'll admit. Apollo is really going through it, though. Dude is way overbooked.
And I've gotta put up with the crying.

ATHENA

Okay, Artemis, we don't need any biographies. I'm gonna tell you what you all are in charge of
for the Field Day Olympics—

ARTEMIS

Tell us? GZ policy is that we talk about these kinds of things.

ATHENA

As if you've actually read the bylaws.

ARTEMIS

(*"duh"*) Front to back.

ATHENA

(*pissed*) Artemis—

HESTIA

(*warning + disapproving*) Athena.

ATHENA

What.

HESTIA

Just—nothing. Let's not get—

ATHENA

So we need volunteers for the paint run—yes, Hestia?

HESTIA

I just—you're a little on edge, is all. Just—be mindful.

ATHENA

(takes a breath) Thank you, Hestia.

ARTEMIS

(relieved) Yes, thank you, Hestia.

HESTIA

(warning) Artemis—

ATHENA

(overlapping, pissed off) Artemis—really?

ARTEMIS

What? I literally just repeated exactly what you said! You're really going to—

ATHENA

Yes, but your tone was incredibly—

HESTIA

Allllright.

[Audio cuts]

Scene 8 - In the radio station

ATHENA

This is 98.9 Skymount Student Radio, and you're listening to Wise Words. I'm Athena—

APOLLO (CALLER)

And I'm her cool friend Apollo!

ATHENA

And we want to remind you to—

ATHENA & APOLLO (CALLER)

Take a damn break!

ATHENA

Midway through midterms. You're making it. You've got it.

APOLLO (CALLER)

I believe in you!

ATHENA

And I believe in *you*.

APOLLO (CALLER)

Aw, thanks Athena.

ATHENA

Nothing to soothe the mind like music. Skymount Student Radio, thanks for listening.