

SEEKING SOCRATES

CHORUS 5: ALL IS LOST



The streets of Athens were filled with celebration. Revelers, drinking until all hours of the night, danced and made merry with the thought of victory so close at hand. At last, Athens would rule supreme once again. It was, after all, the most splendid fleet that any Greek city had ever sent to sea. Sailing straight for Syracuse, with Alcibiades and two other generals in the lead.

But just nights before their departure, the gaiety turned to panic. In an act of sacrilege, someone had smashed statues to the god Hermes throughout the city. Was this an omen on the eve of the expedition?

Still, the fleet sailed. And took the Syracuse defenses by surprise. But, on the verge of total victory, the three Athenian generals could not agree. As they struggled with one another to take command, Athens fleet stood paralyzed. Syracuse sent for help from its strongest allies—Corinth and Sparta.

Sparta too hesitated. To join Syracuse would destroy the truce with Athens, and plunge them back into war. Still, they sent troops. Under Spartan lead, Syracuse surrounded Athens fleet, preventing retreat. Ship after ship surrendered. Hundreds went down. The Athenian navy lay crippled... All was now lost.