

Brief Overview of *Wealth*

Synopsis: Why do the rich keep getting richer while the poor keep getting poorer? The Athenian housewife Inida and her friends attempt to uncover the reason for the inequitable distribution of wealth in their city. After a pilgrimage to Delphi, the women discover that the goddess Wealth has been blinded. If Wealth's sight can be restored, the economy will heat up. Can their scheme work despite opposition from the god Poverty himself? In the end, the redistribution of wealth changes the world in ways no one could predict.

Characters

Inida: A middle-aged housewife disillusioned by her inability to get ahead, despite her good works and thrifty nature. When the opportunity to fix the inequitable distribution of wealth presents itself at Delphi, she seizes the chance to better not only her own life, but also the lives of everyone who is down-and-out. Undeterred by gods and unperturbed by logic, Inida pushes those around her forward in her scheme to free the goddess Wealth and share her bounty. (Her name is pronounced "I-Need-A")

Carry: A young, sassy friend who is attached to Inida. Carry often serves as a foil for Inida and is often the first to criticize. Her role is a revision of the role of the clever slave in the original. Though she is criticized for hiding behind Inida's skirts when the going gets rough, this intelligent and quick operator comes up with not only the solution but also the method to solve society's woes.

Wealth: Zeus had blinded the beleaguered goddess. Now, homeless, old, and hunched over, she lives on the streets and survives on what others have thrown out. When treated with kindness, Wealth reveals that she has been used like the currency she represents and has been passed around by diverse political factions. Although blind and homeless in the beginning of the play, this allegorical figure, when healed, returns as a resplendent deity.

The Chorus of Working Girls: Three hardworking women who share dialogue in their own way. They work minimum wage jobs, and often are forced to rely on multiple jobs with tenuous futures and schedules. Although exhausted by their work-a-day life, they remember, if faintly, that there was a time when labor and laborers were valued and rewarded.

Faith: A perky pessimist who loves to see others have a rough time. Faith's complacency is her obstacle. She waits for the power-that-be, the gods, and the State to help her. Convincing her to work to restore Wealth provides Inida and Carry with an unexpected ally in the *agon* with Poverty.

Poverty: The intellectually superior God of Economics who is certain that he is necessary in this world. Convinced that all of society's advances have come from his promptings, he is deeply invested in his ability to "educate" the characters, and the audience, as to his preeminence, going so far as to claim that he is the benefactor of the

human race.

Just Citizen: A fiscally responsible male or female character that has budgeted, saved and given to charity, only to be punished by a vengeful Zeus. When Wealth's sight is restored, the Just Citizen receives his/her due.

Mortgage Broker: A strident venture capitalist who, upon the curing of Wealth, has lost everything gained during the period of economic growth enjoyed by the unjust.

Boy Toy: A poor youth who made it through the economic downturn by providing amorous services to an older woman. As a newly enriched man-about-town, he becomes fixated on the party scene. However, stepping away from his prior commitments proves more difficult than he anticipated.

Old Cougar: A rich older woman who procured the favors of Boy Toy during the downturn. While she has not been impoverished by the restoration of Wealth, she does request Inida's assistance to enforce her contract with Boy Toy.

Hermes: A god in transition. When Olympus becomes bankrupt, he eagerly seeks alternative employment. He is willing to do anything and everything, including trying to worm his way back into Carry's heart, in order to escape the impending consequences.

Priest of Zeus: The amoral corporate raider who seeks to divest him/herself of previous employment with Zeus. The Priest of Zeus praises Inida's model of the new capitalism, which includes installing latrines in the temple to successfully generate new streams of revenue.