

## The Earliest Heroes

### PROMETHEUS AND IO (Baka vs prisoner)

- **After Prometheus stole fire** from the gods and gave it to mankind, **Zeus punished him by chaining him to a rocky mountain in the Caucasus**. There he suffered alone, unable to escape.
- One day, a strange creature wandered toward him. It looked like a **white heifer**, but it spoke with the voice of a young woman filled with misery. **She was Io, once a beautiful princess, now transformed into a beast**.
- **Prometheus recognized her immediately** and said that Zeus had fallen in love with her, while Hera's jealousy had caused all her suffering.
- Io explained what had happened. **Zeus often came to her in dreams, telling her he desired her**. But when Hera began to suspect him, **Zeus quickly transformed Io into a white cow to hide the truth**. Hera was not fooled. Pretending innocence, she **asked Zeus to give her the heifer as a gift**. Unable to refuse, Zeus handed Io over to her.
- Hera then **placed Io under the watch of Argus, a giant with a hundred eyes who could never fully sleep**. Zeus wanted to save Io, so **he sent Hermes to kill Argus**.
- **Hermes disguised himself as a shepherd and slowly lulled Argus to sleep with music and stories**. When all of Argus's eyes finally closed, **Hermes killed him**.
- But Hera still refused to let Io go free. **She sent a gadfly to sting and torment** her endlessly, driving her into madness and **forcing her to wander across the world without rest**.
- **Io met Prometheus during this painful journey**. Though he pitied her, he told her that her suffering was not over yet. Still, he gave her hope. He foretold that she would eventually reach the **Nile River in Egypt, where Zeus would restore her human form**. There **she would bear Zeus a son named Epaphus and finally live in peace**.
- Prometheus also revealed that **one of Io's descendants would someday become a great hero who would free him from his chains. That hero would be Hercules**.

### EUROPA (Giilogan sa continent, and ending gi kidnap ni Zeus)

- Europa was the beautiful **daughter of the King of Sidon**. Unlike Io, whose love story with Zeus brought her endless suffering, **Europa's fate was far kinder**, though it began with fear and wonder.
- One spring morning, Europa woke troubled by a strange dream. In the dream, **two continents appeared as women arguing over her**. Asia claimed Europa belonged to her because she had given her birth, while another unnamed land declared that Zeus would one day give Europa to her.
- Unable to sleep again, **Europa went with her companions to the flowery meadows beside the sea**, their favorite place for gathering flowers and spending time together. The girls carried beautiful baskets, but Europa's was the most remarkable of all (**Gold**). **Made by Hephaestus**, it showed scenes from the story of Io: her transformation into a cow, the death of Argus, and Zeus restoring her human form.
- As the maidens wandered through the meadow gathering roses, violets, crocuses, narcissus, and hyacinths, Europa shone among them with extraordinary beauty. **Watching from Olympus, Zeus saw her and instantly fell in love**.
- To approach her safely, he **transformed himself into a magnificent bull** unlike any ever seen before. His **body was bright chestnut** in color, a **silver circle shone upon his forehead**, and his **horns curved like the crescent moon**. Though powerful, **he appeared so gentle and beautiful that the girls were not afraid**.
- The bull walked calmly among them, and Europa herself stroked him. He responded with a soft musical lowing sweeter than the sound of a flute. Then he knelt before her as if inviting her onto his back.
- Laughing, **Europa told her friends that the creature seemed more like a kind man than a bull**. She climbed onto his back, but before the others could follow, the **bull suddenly sprang forward**. He raced to the **shore and then moved across the sea itself**.
- As they traveled over the water, the sea became calm before them. **Sea gods and creatures rose from the deep to accompany Zeus**: Nereids riding dolphins, Tritons blowing their horns, and even Poseidon himself.

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- Europa, terrified, clung tightly to the bull's horn while holding up her purple dress above the waves. The wind filled her garments like the sail of a ship. Realizing no ordinary creature could do such things, **she begged the bull not to abandon her in some strange land.**
- Then **Zeus revealed his true identity.** He told Europa not to fear because he loved her and was bringing her to the **island of Crete, where she would become the mother of great sons who would rule over men.**
- Everything happened as Zeus promised. They arrived in Crete, where the Seasons themselves prepared Europa for her bridal. **She became the mother of famous sons, including Minos and Rhadamanthus,** who later became judges of the dead because of their wisdom and justice.
- And though her sons became legendary, Europa's own name became even more famous, for the continent of Europe was named after her.

## THE CYCLOPES POLYPHEMUS (Gitusok ang mata nabuta)

- The Cyclopes were **giant one-eyed creatures** known for their enormous strength and savage nature. Though they were skilled workers who forged thunderbolts for Zeus, **they had no laws or sense of justice. They lived apart from civilization** in a rich land filled with vineyards, grain fields, sheep, and goats. Among them, the **most famous was Polyphemus.**
- Many years **after the fall of Trojan War,** the Greek hero **Odysseus landed on the island of the Cyclopes while trying to return home.** Searching for food and shelter, **Odysseus and twelve of his men entered a huge cave near the shore.** Inside they **found racks of cheese, pails of milk, and pens crowded with lambs and goats.** Believing the owner would offer hospitality, they waited.
- At evening, the cave's master returned. It was Polyphemus, enormous and terrifying, towering like a mountain. **He rolled a massive stone across the cave entrance, trapping everyone inside.** When he saw the strangers, he demanded to know who they were.
- Odysseus answered that they were warriors returning from Troy and **asked for mercy under the protection of Zeus,** guardian of guests and suppliants. But **Polyphemus laughed at Zeus and declared he feared no god.**
- Suddenly, the **Cyclops seized two men in his huge hands, smashed them against the ground, and devoured them.** Horrified, Odysseus and the others could do nothing. **They could not kill Polyphemus because only he was strong enough to move the gigantic stone sealing the cave.**
- The next morning, **Polyphemus killed and ate two more men before leaving with his flock.** Once he was gone, **Odysseus finally formed a plan.** Near the cave lay a **massive piece of timber.** Odysseus and his men **sharpened one end into a great stake and hardened it in the fire.**
- That evening, when Polyphemus returned and again feasted upon the men, **Odysseus offered him strong wine he had brought from his ship.** The **Cyclops drank eagerly until he became completely drunk and fell into a deep sleep.**
- Then Odysseus and his companions heated the sharpened stake in the fire **until it glowed red-hot. Together they drove it into Polyphemus's single eye, blinding him.** The Cyclops screamed in agony and stumbled wildly around the cave searching for them, but the men hid successfully.
- At dawn, **Polyphemus rolled away the stone entrance so his sheep could leave for pasture.** He sat by the opening and felt each animal's back carefully, thinking the Greeks might try to escape riding on them.
- But Odysseus had another clever plan. **Each man tied himself beneath the belly of a large ram, hidden by its thick wool.** As the sheep passed out, Polyphemus never thought to feel underneath them. In this way, **Odysseus and his surviving men escaped safely.**
- Once they reached their ship and sailed away, **Odysseus could not resist mocking the Cyclops.** He shouted that Polyphemus had been punished for harming guests beneath his roof.
- Enraged, **Polyphemus tore a huge boulder from the mountainside and hurled it toward the ship.** The rock nearly destroyed the vessel, but the **Greeks escaped with desperate rowing.** Then Odysseus proudly revealed his own name, declaring that it was **Odysseus, "the wrecker of cities," who had blinded him.**
- Later stories portrayed Polyphemus differently. Instead of a terrifying monster, he became a lonely and lovesick creature living in Sicily. In these tales, **he fell hopelessly in love with the beautiful sea nymph Galatea.**

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- Galatea teased and mocked him, sometimes throwing apples at his flock and laughing as the slow giant tried to chase her. Polyphemus sat sadly by the shore singing love songs, **knowing she would never truly love him.**
- In another version of the story, Galatea pretended kindness toward him because he was the son of Poseidon and therefore powerful. But **her real love was a handsome youth named Acis.** Furious with jealousy, **Polyphemus killed Acis.** Yet the **gods transformed Acis into a river spirit, allowing him to live on forever.**

## FLOWER-MYTHS: NARCISSUS, HYACINTH, ADONIS

### **Narcissus** (*GGSS, Awa namatay while galantaws reflection*)

- One story about the narcissus flower **begins with Persephone.** She was **gathering flowers in a meadow** with her companions when she noticed a strange and extraordinarily beautiful flower unlike any she had ever seen. **It was the narcissus, created by Zeus to help his brother Hades capture Persephone.**
- Drawn by its beauty, Persephone stepped away from the others to pick it. **The moment she reached for the flower, the earth suddenly split open.** Out of the chasm **burst Hades in a dark chariot drawn by black horses. He seized Persephone and carried her down into the underworld to become his queen.**
- Another and more famous story about the narcissus concerns a beautiful youth named Narcissus. So handsome was he that every maiden who saw him fell in love with him, but he rejected them all without pity.
- Among those who loved him was the Nymph Echo.** Once she had been cheerful and talkative, but **Hera punished her for distracting her with endless chatter** while other nymphs escaped notice. **Hera cursed Echo so that she could never speak first again and could only repeat the words spoken to her.**
- One day Echo heard Narcissus calling to his companions, "Is anyone here?" She joyfully replied, "Here—here!" When he shouted, "Come!" she stepped from the woods with open arms. But **Narcissus cruelly rejected her, saying he would rather die than let her have power over him.** All Echo could repeat sadly was, "Power over me." Ashamed and heartbroken, **she hid herself away until nothing remained of her except her voice.**
- Narcissus continued scorning everyone who loved him until **one of those he had hurt prayed for justice.** The **goddess Nemesis answered the prayer.**
- As **Narcissus bent over a clear pool to drink, he saw his own reflection in the water and instantly fell deeply in love with it, not realizing it was only his image.** Unable to leave the beautiful face he saw before him, he slowly wasted away beside the pool.
- Even in death he could not escape his obsession.** It was said that when his spirit crossed the river of the underworld, he leaned over the dark waters hoping to catch one final glimpse of himself.
- When the nymphs came to bury him, they found no body. **In its place grew a delicate flower, which they named Narcissus.**

### **Hyacinthus** (*Nagdulang frisbee naigo sa agtang namatay nigawas ang pare*)

- Hyacinthus was a **beautiful young prince and the beloved companion of Apollo.**
- One day the two were **playing a friendly game of discus throwing.** Apollo threw the discus with great strength, but it **accidentally struck Hyacinthus in the forehead.** The wound was fatal.
- Apollo rushed to him in horror, trying desperately to stop the bleeding, but **Hyacinthus died in his arms.** Grieving deeply, **Apollo wished he could give his own life in exchange.**
- As the blood of Hyacinthus soaked the ground, a beautiful flower sprang up from the earth.** Apollo marked its petals as a sign of his sorrow, and the flower became known as the hyacinth.
- Another version** of the story says that **Zephyrus (west wind) also loved Hyacinthus. Jealous** that the youth preferred Apollo, **Zephyrus blew the discus off course, causing the deadly blow.**

### **Adonis** (*Giilugan ni Persephone ug Aphrodite GWAPO!*)

- Of all the flower myths, the **story of Adonis was perhaps the most mournful.**
- When Adonis was born, Aphrodite immediately loved him for his beauty.** She entrusted him to Persephone for safekeeping, but **Persephone also fell in love with him and refused to give him back.**

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- **The dispute became so great that Zeus had to decide between them.** He ruled that Adonis would spend half the year with Persephone in the underworld during autumn and winter, and the other half with Aphrodite during spring and summer.
- While Adonis was with Aphrodite, the goddess devoted herself completely to him. He loved hunting, and she often followed him through forests dressed like a huntress.
- One day, however, **Aphrodite was absent when Adonis attacked a huge wild boar.** He wounded the beast with his spear, but the enraged animal charged him and gored him with its tusks.
- Hearing his cries, Aphrodite rushed to him in grief. She found him dying, his blood flowing onto the earth. She kissed him, but he no longer knew her.
- As Aphrodite mourned, a **crimson flower sprang from the ground wherever Adonis's blood had fallen.** This flower became the red anemone, also called the windflower.
- Every year the Greeks mourned Adonis's death and rejoiced again when the anemones bloomed, symbolizing his return with the coming of spring.

## CUPID AND PSYCHE (Dili magpakita iyang asawa bisag gwapo)

- There was once a king with three beautiful daughters, but the youngest, **Psyche, was so extraordinarily lovely that people began to worship her as if she were a goddess.** They even claimed that she surpassed Venus herself.
- As Psyche's fame spread, the temples of Venus were neglected. Furious with jealousy, Venus called upon her son Cupid and ordered him to make Psyche fall in love with the most horrible creature in the world.
- **But when Cupid saw Psyche, he himself fell deeply in love with her.**
- Strangely, although everyone admired Psyche, no man wished to marry her. Her two sisters found husbands, but Psyche remained alone. Worried, her father consulted the oracle of Apollo. The oracle declared that **Psyche must be left alone upon a mountain, where a dreadful winged serpent would come to claim her as his bride.**
- Though filled with grief, Psyche bravely accepted her fate. Left alone on the mountain, she suddenly felt the gentle wind of Zephyrus lift her softly through the air. **He carried her down into a beautiful hidden valley where a magnificent palace of gold and silver stood beside a shining river.**
- Invisible voices welcomed Psyche and served her with baths, music, and feasts. Though she could see no one, she was treated like a queen.
- At night, her mysterious husband came to her. He spoke tenderly and lovingly, and Psyche soon grew happy with him. Yet he always visited only in darkness and warned her never to look upon his face.
- One day her husband warned her that her sisters would soon come searching for her. He begged Psyche not to let them influence her, but she longed too much to see them again. Finally, he agreed.
- When the sisters arrived and saw the palace's riches, **jealousy consumed them.** They questioned Psyche constantly about her husband. Because she had never seen him clearly, her uncertain answers convinced them he truly was the terrible serpent foretold by the oracle.
- They filled Psyche with fear, telling her the monster would one day devour her. Then they advised her to hide a lamp and a knife beside her bed. While he slept, she should look upon him and kill him if he proved monstrous.
- That night, trembling with fear and doubt, **Psyche lit the lamp while Cupid slept.**
- Instead of a monster, she saw the most beautiful of all beings—the God of Love himself.
- Overcome with joy and shame for mistrusting him, she leaned closer to admire him. But a drop of hot oil from the lamp accidentally fell upon Cupid's shoulder, waking him.
- Seeing that Psyche had broken her promise, Cupid sadly told her:
  - "Love cannot live where there is no trust."
  - Then he flew away.
- Heartbroken, **Psyche wandered across the world searching for him.** At last, she decided to **humble herself before Venus, hoping to soften the goddess's anger and perhaps see Cupid again.**
- Venus, however, cruelly set Psyche impossible tasks.
- First, she mixed enormous heaps of tiny seeds together and ordered Psyche to sort them all before nightfall. Psyche despaired, but an army of ants took pity on her and completed the task.

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- Next, Venus ordered her to gather golden wool from savage sheep near a river. A kindly reed advised Psyche to wait until evening, when the sheep rested, and gather the wool caught on the bushes instead.
- Then Venus commanded her to fetch water from the black river Styx, whose waters rushed down dangerous cliffs. An eagle helped Psyche by filling the flask for her.
- Finally, **Venus sent Psyche into the underworld itself to ask Proserpina for a box containing some of her beauty**. Guided carefully, Psyche crossed the river of death with the ferryman Charon and passed safely by Cerberus. Proserpina gave her the box, and Psyche began the journey home.
- **But curiosity overcame her. Hoping to make herself more beautiful for Cupid, she opened the box.**
- Inside was not beauty, but a deadly sleep. Immediately Psyche collapsed into a deep unconsciousness.
- By then, **Cupid had recovered from his wound and escaped from Venus's palace**. Finding Psyche lying asleep, he brushed the enchanted sleep back into the box and awakened her gently with one of his arrows.
- **Cupid then flew to Jupiter and begged permission to marry Psyche properly**. Jupiter agreed and summoned all the gods together. Before them all, Psyche drank ambrosia and became immortal.
- At last Venus accepted the marriage, since Psyche was now no longer mortal but a goddess herself.
- So, Cupid and Psyche were finally united forever. Their story became the tale of Love and the Soul, for the name "Psyche" means "soul."

## PYRAMUS AND THISBE (Romeo and Juliet tirada)

- **Metamorphoses** tells the tragic story of Pyramus and Thisbe, two young lovers from Babylon whose love ended in sorrow and gave the mulberry fruit its deep red color.
- Pyramus was the most handsome youth in Babylon, and Thisbe was the loveliest maiden in the East. **Their houses stood side by side and shared one wall**. As they grew up together, they fell deeply in love and wished to marry, but their parents forbade it.
- Still, love could not be stopped. In the wall between their homes was a tiny crack that no one had noticed before. Through this little opening they whispered to each other every day. They spoke words of love, mourned the wall that kept them apart, and pressed kisses against the stones, though the kisses could not pass through.
- At last, they could no longer endure their separation. They decided to flee the city together. That night they would secretly leave their homes and meet outside Babylon at the Tomb of Ninus, beneath a tall mulberry tree beside a cool spring. At that time, the mulberry berries were pure white.
- When night came, Thisbe slipped quietly from her house and reached the meeting place first. While waiting for Pyramus, she suddenly saw a lioness approaching. Its jaws were bloody from a recent kill, and it was coming to drink from the spring.
- Terrified, **Thisbe ran away into the darkness**. As she fled, she accidentally dropped her cloak. The lioness found it, tore it with her bloody jaws, and then disappeared into the woods.
- A few moments later, Pyramus arrived. On the ground he saw the torn, bloodstained cloak and the tracks of the lioness in the dust. He immediately believed that Thisbe had been killed.
- Filled with grief and guilt, he cried out that he had caused her death because he had failed to protect her. Holding the torn cloak close, he went beneath the mulberry tree and said that the tree would drink his blood too. Then he drew his sword and stabbed himself.
- His blood splashed over the white berries of the mulberry tree, staining them dark red forever.
- Meanwhile, Thisbe, though still frightened, returned to the meeting place because she feared losing Pyramus more than the lioness. When she arrived, she noticed first that the mulberry berries were no longer white. Then she saw a body lying beneath the tree.
- It was Pyramus.
- She rushed to him, lifted him into her arms, and called his name. Hearing her voice, he opened his eyes one last time before dying.
- Thisbe saw the bloody sword and her torn cloak beside him and understood what had happened. Overcome with sorrow, she declared that death would not separate them now. Taking the same sword, she plunged it into her own heart.

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- The gods and their parents pitied the faithful lovers. From then on, the **mulberry tree bore dark red fruit as an everlasting remembrance of Pyramus and Thisbe. Their ashes were placed together in one urn, united even after death.**

## **ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE** (Gipaak og halas, gikuhas underworld pero gahig ulo nilingi)

- **Orpheus was the greatest musician among mortals**, so gifted that even nature itself obeyed his music. He was the son of a Muse and a prince of Thrace, a land famous for music. From his mother he inherited divine musical talent, and **whenever he played his lyre, wild animals gathered peacefully around him, trees bent toward him, rivers changed their course, and even rocks seemed to move.**
- Before the tragedy for which he became most famous, **Orpheus joined Argonautica and sailed with Jason and the Argonauts aboard the Argo.** During exhausting rowing, he played music that gave strength and rhythm to the heroes. When quarrels broke out, his songs calmed angry hearts. He even saved the Argonauts from the deadly Sirens. As the Sirens sang their irresistible songs, drawing sailors toward destruction, Orpheus played his lyre so beautifully and powerfully that his music drowned out their voices and kept the ship safely on course.
- Later, **Orpheus fell deeply in love with a beautiful maiden named Eurydice.** They were married, but their happiness lasted only a short time. Soon after the wedding, **Eurydice was walking through a meadow with her companions when a venomous viper bit her. She died almost immediately.**
- Orpheus was overcome with grief. Unable to live without her, he decided to do what no living man had dared before: **journey into the Underworld to bring her back.**
- Carrying his lyre, he descended into the realm of the dead. **When he played and sang, every horror of the Underworld grew still.** Cerberus stopped guarding the gates. The wheel of Ixion ceased turning. Sisyphus rested from pushing his stone. Tantalus forgot his endless thirst. Even the terrible Furies wept.
- At last, the rulers of the dead, Pluto and Proserpine, listened to him. Orpheus sang of love, loss, and how Eurydice had died too young, “before the flower bloomed.” His music moved even the hard hearts of the Underworld, and they agreed to let Eurydice return with him on one condition:
- **He must not look back at her until both of them had completely reached the upper world.**
- Orpheus accepted. Eurydice followed silently behind him as they climbed through the dark passages out of Hades. **He could not see her, but he trusted she was there.** Still, as they neared the surface, fear and longing overwhelmed him. **Just as he stepped into daylight, he turned to look at her.**
- But Eurydice had not yet fully left the Underworld.
- For one heartbreaking moment he saw her in the dim shadows reaching toward him. **Then she vanished back into darkness forever. All he heard was her faint farewell.**
- Orpheus tried desperately to follow her again into the land of the dead, but the **gods refused to allow a living man to enter twice. Broken by grief, he returned alone to Thrace.**
- After that, he wandered through lonely forests and mountains, playing sorrowful music to the rivers, rocks, and trees. He avoided human company and lived only with his grief and his songs.
- **In the end, a wild band of Maenads—frenzied worshippers of Dionysus—found him. In their madness they attacked and tore him apart.** They **threw his severed head into the river Hebrus**, and as it floated out to sea, it still sang mournfully of Eurydice.
- The Muses later gathered his remains and buried them near Mount Olympus. It is said that in that place the nightingales sing more sweetly than anywhere else on earth.

## **CEYX AND ALCYONE** (Nalumos nahimo silage langgam)

- Metamorphoses tells the sorrowful story of Ceyx and Alcyone, **two lovers whose devotion remained unbroken even after death.**
- **Ceyx was a king of Thessaly and the son of Lucifer**, the bringer of the morning star. His wife Alcyone was the daughter of Aeolus, king of the winds. They loved each other deeply and were rarely apart.

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- But a time came when **Ceyx decided he must sail across the sea to consult an oracle about troubles that disturbed him.** When Alcyone heard this, she was filled with fear. Since she had grown up in her father's palace among the winds, she understood better than anyone how dangerous the sea could become during storms.
- With tears, **she begged him not to go.** She told him of the raging winds, the black clouds, the lightning, and the wrecked ships she had seen washed upon the shore. If he truly had to leave, she pleaded to go with him so that whatever fate awaited them, they could face it together.
- Ceyx was deeply moved because he loved her just as much, but he refused to let her share the dangers of the voyage. Heartbroken, Alcyone watched from the shore as his ship disappeared into the distance.
- **That very night, a terrible storm rose over the sea.** The winds crashed together in a violent hurricane, waves towered like mountains, and rain poured so heavily that sea and sky seemed to become one. The ship was battered helplessly.
- Among all the terrified sailors, Ceyx thought only of Alcyone. He was grateful she was safe on land, and her name was on his lips as the ship finally sank beneath the waves.
- Meanwhile, Alcyone remained at home, counting the days until his return. She wove robes for him and prayed constantly to the gods, especially to Juno, asking them to protect her husband.
- **Juno pitied her prayers because she alone knew that Ceyx was already dead. She sent her messenger Iris to the house of Somnus, the God of Sleep, and ordered him to send Alcyone a dream revealing the truth.**
- The home of Sleep lay in a dark valley near the land of the Cimmerians, where sunlight never reached. Everything there was silent. No dogs barked, no birds sang, no branches rustled. Only the soft murmur of the River Lethe, the river of forgetfulness, could be heard. Around the entrance bloomed poppies and sleep-giving herbs. Inside, Somnus rested upon a soft black couch.
- **Somnus sent his son Morpheus, master of dreams, to Alcyone.** Taking the **exact form of Ceyx, pale, drenched, and dead, Morpheus appeared beside her bed.**
- He spoke sadly to her:
- "Poor wife, your husband is dead. The sea has taken me. Your name was the last word upon my lips. Do not let me go to the land of shadows without your tears."
- In her sleep Alcyone reached out to him and cried that she would go with him. Suddenly she awoke, filled with certainty that the vision had been real.
- At dawn she hurried to the seashore where she had last watched him depart. Looking far out across the water, **she saw something floating toward the land.** Slowly it drifted nearer until she realized with horror that it was the **body of Ceyx.**
- Overcome with grief, **she ran forward and threw herself into the sea, crying out to him.** But instead of drowning, a miracle occurred. She rose above the waves with wings upon her body. **The gods had changed her into a bird.**
- Out of pity and love, **they transformed Ceyx as well.** He too became a bird, and together they remained forever upon the sea they had once feared to separate them.
- The gods granted them one final gift. **Every winter there are seven peaceful days when the sea becomes perfectly calm and still.** During this time Alcyone broods peacefully over her nest upon the waters. These quiet days became known as the **Halcyon Days, a symbol of peace after sorrow.**

## **PYGMALION AND GALATEA** (Woman hater pero na in love sa statue boang)

- Metamorphoses tells the story of Pygmalion, a **gifted sculptor from Cyprus who hated women and decided never to marry.**
- Even though he rejected women, **Pygmalion devoted all his skill to carving the image of a woman.** As he worked, he became more and more absorbed in his creation. What he produced was so perfect that

it **no longer looked like ivory or stone, but like living flesh**. It was the **highest achievement of his art, where art seemed to hide itself completely.**

- In time, something strange happened: **Pygmalion fell deeply in love with the statue he had created**. He treated it as if it were alive—kissing it, dressing it in beautiful clothes, giving it gifts, and imagining responses that never came. But the statue remained cold and unmoving, and his love turned into sorrow and frustration.
- The goddess of love, Venus, noticed his unusual devotion. On her feast day in Cyprus, **Pygmalion prayed at her altar, not boldly asking for the statue to become alive, but hoping for a woman like it**. Venus understood his true desire.
- As a sign of favor, the **flame on her altar rose three times into the air**. Encouraged, Pygmalion returned home and touched the statue again. At first, it seemed unchanged, but slowly warmth returned. The **ivory softened like wax in sunlight**. Under his touch, the figure became alive—blood began to flow, and the statue transformed into a real woman.
- Overwhelmed with joy, Pygmalion realized that Venus had granted his silent wish. He embraced the living woman, who smiled back at him.
- He named her Galatea, and together they were blessed by Venus, who attended their marriage. **Their son, Paphos, later gave his name to the city sacred to the goddess.**

### **BAUCIS AND PHILEMON** (Duha ka tiguwang matinabangon)

- In the **Phrygian hill-country**, there were once two trees that all the peasants near and far pointed out as a great marvel. **One was an oak and the other a linden, yet they grew from a single trunk**. This strange sight came from the immeasurable power of the gods, and it was also a reward for the humble and pious.
  - Sometimes Jupiter, tired of ambrosia and nectar in Olympus, and weary of Apollo's lyre and the dancing Graces, would come down to earth. **He would disguise himself as a mortal and travel with Mercury**, the shrewdest and most resourceful of the gods. On this trip, **Jupiter wanted to test how hospitable the people of Phrygia were**, since all guests and strangers were under his special protection.
- So, the two gods went through the land as **poor wayfarers**, knocking at houses asking for food and shelter. But everywhere they were refused. Doors were shut, and they were treated with insult. No one accepted them, even after hundreds of trials.
- At last, they reached a **very poor little hovel, with a roof made only of reeds**. When they knocked, the door was opened wide, and a cheerful voice welcomed them inside. They entered a small, clean room where an old man and woman kindly received them. The old man was Philemon, and his wife was Baucis. They had lived there all their married life and had always been happy.
- Baucis said, **"We are poor folk, but poverty isn't so bad when you are willing to accept it, and a contented spirit is a great help."**
- She hurried to make them comfortable. Philemon placed a bench near the fire, and Baucis covered it softly. She fanned the dying coals until a cheerful fire burned. Philemon brought cabbage from the garden and added a piece of pork hanging from a beam into the kettle.
- While the food cooked, Baucis prepared the table with her trembling old hands. One table-leg was too short, so she propped it with a broken dish. She placed olives, radishes, and eggs roasted in ashes. When the food was ready, they offered their guests simple couches and invited them to recline and eat.
- Philemon then brought cups made of beechwood and an earthenware bowl of wine mixed with water. Though simple, he was proud and happy to serve it, and he kept refilling the cups. But soon, a strange wonder appeared: **the mixing bowl never emptied**. No matter how much wine was poured, it stayed full to the brim.
- The old couple saw this miracle and became afraid. They prayed silently and then begged forgiveness for their poor meal. **Philemon said they even had a goose they should have offered, and tried to catch it, but they were too weak and exhausted.**
- Jupiter and Mercury, greatly amused, finally revealed themselves. They said, "You have been hosts to gods. You shall have your reward. This wicked country that despises strangers will be punished, but not you."

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- They led the couple outside. To their amazement, **the whole countryside had turned into water—a great lake surrounded them**. Their neighbors were gone, and the old couple wept for them. But suddenly, their tears stopped as they saw another wonder: **their tiny hut had become a stately temple of white marble with a golden roof**.
- Jupiter said, “Good people, ask whatever you want, and you shall have it.”
- After a whispered conversation, Philemon spoke: “Let us be your priests, guarding this temple. And since we have lived so long together, let neither of us ever have to live alone. **Grant that we may die together**.”
- The gods agreed.
- They served in the temple for a long time. One day, in extreme old age, while remembering their past life, they noticed something strange: **each was turning into a tree**. Bark covered them, and leaves grew. They had time only to say, “Farewell, dear companion,” before they became trees.
- **The linden and the oak grew from one trunk**.
- From far and wide, people came to admire the wonder, and wreaths of flowers were always hung on the branches in honor of the pious and faithful pair.

## ENDYMION (Natulog forever)

- This story is told by the third-century poet **Theocritus**. It is told in a simple and restrained way.
- Endymion has a very short history. Some poets say he was a king, some a hunter, but **most say he was a shepherd**. All agree that he was a **youth of surpassing beauty**, and this was the cause of his singular fate.
- Endymion the shepherd, as his flock he guarded, she, the Moon, Selene, saw him, loved him, sought him, coming down from heaven to the glade on Latmus, kissed him, lay beside him.
- Blessed is his fortune. Evermore he slumbers, tossing not nor turning, Endymion the shepherd.
- He never woke to see the shining silvery form bending over him. In all the stories about him, **he sleeps forever—immortal but never conscious**. He lies on the mountainside, wondrously beautiful, motionless and remote as if in death, **but still warm and living**. Night after night, the Moon (Selene) comes to him and covers him with her kisses.
- It is said that this magic slumber was her doing. **Selene lulled him into sleep so that she might always find him and love him as she pleased**. But it is also said that her passion brings her only a burden of pain, full of many sighs.

## DAPHNE (Nahimo syag Laurel tree)

- This story is told by **Ovid** alone. It is a Roman-style story.
- Daphne was one of those **independent, love-and-marriage-hating young huntresses** often found in mythology. She is said to have been **Apollo's first love**. It is not strange that she fled from him, because many women loved by gods suffered greatly—some had to kill their children secretly, and others were killed or forced into exile, which many thought worse than death.
- **Daphne's father was the river-god Peneus**. He was troubled because she refused all handsome and eligible young men who wooed her. He would ask sadly, “Am I never to have a grand-son?” But Daphne would comfort him, saying, “Father, dearest, let me be like Diana,” and he would allow her to go back to the deep woods, happy in her freedom.
- But everything changed when Apollo saw her.
- Daphne was hunting at that time. Her dress was short to the knee, her arms bare, and her hair in wild disarray. Yet she was still enchantingly beautiful. Apollo thought that if she were properly dressed and her hair arranged, she would be even more beautiful. This thought made the fire of love in his heart burn even stronger, and **he began to chase her**.
- Daphne fled. She was a very fast runner, and even Apollo struggled at first to catch her. But he soon gained on her. As he ran, he called out, trying to persuade her and calm her:
- **“Do not fear! Stop and find out who I am—no rude rustic or shepherd. I am the Lord of Delphi, and I love you.”**

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- But Daphne ran even more frightened. If Apollo truly followed her, then escape seemed hopeless, but she still chose to fight until the end.
- At last, she saw her father's river ahead. She cried, "Help me! Father, help me!"
- At that moment, a strange numbness came over her. Her feet became rooted to the ground. **Bark began to cover her body, and leaves started to grow. She was changing into a tree—a laurel.**
- Apollo watched this transformation with grief and sadness. He said:
- "O fairest of maidens, you are lost to me. But at least you shall be my tree. With your leaves my victors shall wreath their brows. You shall have your part in all my triumphs. Apollo and his laurel shall be joined together wherever songs are sung and stories told."
- And the laurel tree, shining with leaves, seemed to nod its head as if in silent agreement.

## **ALPHEUS AND ARETHUSA** (Gilakag sa river God ky gigwapahan, ni transform into a river)

- This story is told in full only by Ovid. There is nothing especially noteworthy in his treatment of it. The verse at the end is taken from the Alexandrian poet Moschus.
- In Ortygia, an island which formed part of Syracuse, the greatest city of Sicily, there is a **sacred spring called Arethusa**. But long ago, Arethusa was not water or a water nymph—**she was a fair young huntress and a follower of Artemis. Like her mistress, she had nothing to do with men.** She loved hunting and the freedom of the forest.
- One day, after being tired and hot from the chase, she came upon a crystal-clear river, deeply shaded by silvery willows. It was a place of perfect coolness, and **she decided to bathe there.** She undressed and slipped into the water, swimming in peace.
- But while she was swimming, she felt something stir beneath the river. Frightened, she sprang to the bank—and as she did, she heard a voice:
- "Why such haste, fairest maiden?"
- Without looking back, she fled into the woods, **running as fast as her fear allowed.** But she was being pursued—by someone stronger than she was, though not faster.
- The unknown figure called after her. **He said he was the god of the river, Alpheus, and that he was chasing her only because he loved her.** But Arethusa wanted none of him. **She had only one thought: to escape.**
- It was a long race, but the outcome was certain. Alpheus could run longer than she could. At last, worn out, **Arethusa called to her goddess, Artemis,** and she was heard.
- **Artemis changed her into a spring of water and also cleft the earth, making a tunnel under the sea from Greece to Sicily.** Arethusa plunged down through it and emerged in Ortygia. The place where her spring rises became holy ground, sacred to Artemis.
- But even then, she was not completely free of Alpheus.
- The story says that the god, changing himself back into a river, followed her through the underground passage. **Now his waters mingle with hers in the fountain.** It is said that Greek flowers are often seen rising from its depths, and that if a wooden cup is thrown into the Alpheus in Greece, it will reappear in Arethusa's well in Sicily.
- Alpheus makes his way far under the deep with his waters, travels to Arethusa with bridal gifts, fair leaves and flowers. Teacher of strange ways is Love, that knavish boy, maker of mischief. With his magical spell he taught a river to dive.

## **THE QUEST OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE**

- This is the title of a long poem by **Apollonius of Rhodes**, very popular in classical days. He tells the whole story of the Quest, except the part about Jason and Pelias, which comes from Pindar. Apollonius ends his poem with the return of the heroes to Greece. The later events involving Jason and Medea come from Euripides.
- These three writers are very different, and each gives a different tone to the story.

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### *The beginning of the Quest*

- The **first great hero in Europe who undertook a long journey was the leader** of the Quest of the Golden Fleece. It was a voyage by water, since rivers, lakes, and seas were the only highways. But travel was dangerous. Sailors could face storms, monsters, or magicians on land and sea. Courage was necessary, especially outside Greece.
- No story shows this better than the voyage of the **ship Argo, where the heroes sought the Golden Fleece**. It was one of the most dangerous journeys ever made. The crew were heroes of renown, some of the greatest in Greece, and they were equal to every danger.

### *Phrixus and the Golden Fleece*

- The story **begins with a Greek king, Athamas, who rejected his first wife, Nephele, and married Ino**. Nephele feared for her children, especially her son Phrixus, and she was right to fear.
- **Ino, the second wife, plotted against the boy**. She **secretly destroyed all seed-corn so there would be no harvest**, then tricked the oracle so it seemed the gods demanded the sacrifice of Phrixus to save the land from starvation.
- The **people forced the King to agree**. But just as Phrixus was about to be sacrificed, a **wondrous ram with a fleece of pure gold appeared**. Sent by Hermes, it carried Phrixus and his sister Helle away **through the air**.

### *The loss of Helle and arrival in Colchis*

- While crossing the strait between Europe and Asia, **Helle fell into the sea and drowned**. That place was named the **Sea of Helle, the Hellespont**.
- **Phrixus safely reached Colchis, on the Black Sea**. The people there were fierce, but **King Aetes treated him kindly and allowed him to marry one of his daughters**.
- In gratitude, **Phrixus sacrificed the ram to Zeus and gave the Golden Fleece to King Aetes**.

### *Jason and Pelias*

- Jason was the rightful **heir to a kingdom in Greece**, but **his uncle Pelias had taken it from him**. Pelias had been warned by an oracle to **beware of a man wearing only one sandal**.
- **Jason later arrived in the city wearing one sandal**. Pelias recognized him and **feared the prophecy**.
- Jason demanded his rightful throne, but **Pelias pretended to agree**. He told Jason that **before he could become king, he must bring back the Golden Fleece from Colchis**. Pelias believed this would kill him.
- Jason accepted the challenge.

### *The Argonauts and the Argo*

- Jason **gathered the greatest heroes of Greece**. Among them were Hercules, Orpheus, Castor and Pollux, Peleus, and many others. Hera supported Jason and inspired the heroes with courage.
- They **sailed on the ship Argo**. Jason poured a libation to Zeus and began the journey.

### *Lemnos and Hylas*

- Their **first stop was Lemnos, an island where the women had killed all the men**. They welcomed the Argonauts and gave them food and rest.
- Soon after, **Hercules left the company when his companion Hylas was taken by a water nymph while fetching water**. Hercules searched desperately for him and never returned to the ship.

### *Phineus and the Harpies*

- Next, they met **Phineus, an old blind man tormented by the Harpies, monstrous creatures that stole and defiled his food**.
- The sons of Boreas, the North Wind, chased the Harpies away, but Iris, the rainbow goddess, stopped them and promised the Harpies would no longer trouble Phineus.
- In gratitude, Phineus helped the Argonauts. He **warned them about the Symplegades, the Clashing Rocks that crushed anything between them. He told them to test them first with a dove**.

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### *The Symplegades and further dangers*

- The Argonauts released a dove. It **passed safely, so they rowed through quickly**. The rocks nearly crushed them, but they escaped just in time. After this, the **rocks stayed fixed forever**.
- They **passed the land of the Amazons, warrior women, and saw Prometheus chained to the Caucasus while an eagle fed on him**.
- Finally, they reached Colchis.

### *Medea and Jason*

- The gods planned to help Jason. **Hera and Aphrodite caused Medea, daughter of King AEetes, to fall in love with Jason through Cupid's arrow**.
- Medea, a powerful sorceress, struggled with her love but chose to help Jason.
- She gave him a **magic ointment that made him invincible for a day**. She also told him how to defeat the dragon-teeth warriors: he must **throw a stone among them so they would destroy each other**.
- Jason succeeded in the impossible tasks set by King AEetes.

### *The Golden Fleece*

- Medea helped Jason again by **putting a serpent guarding the Golden Fleece to sleep with her magic song**. Jason took the Golden Fleece, and the Argonauts fled at dawn.

### *Apsyrtus and escape*

- Medea's brother, Apsyrtus, pursued them. In some versions, Medea killed him; in others, Jason did. His death allowed them to escape.
- They faced more dangers: Scylla and Charybdis, the **bronze giant Talus (whom Medea destroyed)**, and finally reached Greece.

### *Pelias and revenge*

- Jason returned to Pelias, but **Pelias had caused the deaths of Jason's parents**.
- **Medea tricked Pelias' daughters into killing him, promising to make him young again**. She showed them a false miracle with a ram, then **they killed their father**. Medea escaped.

### *Jason's betrayal and Medea's revenge*

- **Jason later abandoned Medea and planned to marry the daughter of the King of Corinth**. Medea was ordered into exile with her children.
- In her rage, she **sent a poisoned robe to Jason's bride, who died in fire**.
- Then **Medea killed her own children** to destroy Jason completely.
- Finally, when Jason tried to kill her, **she escaped in a chariot drawn by dragons**.

## PHAETON

- This is one of Ovid's best stories, told vividly, where details are used not for decoration, but to heighten the effect.
- The palace of the Sun was a radiant place. It shone with gold, gleamed with ivory, and sparkled with jewels. Everything inside and outside flashed and glittered. It was always high noon there—shadowy twilight and darkness were unknown.
- Few mortals could endure such unchanging brilliance, but few had ever reached it.

### *Phaethon's arrival*

- One day, a youth—mortal on his mother's side—dared to approach. His eyes were dazzled, but his purpose was urgent, so he pressed on through the burnished doors into the throne-room.
- There, surrounded by blinding splendor, the Sun god sat.
- The Sun saw him and spoke kindly:  
"What brought you here?"

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- The youth answered boldly:  
**“I have come to find out if you are my father. My mother Clymene said so, but others laugh at me. I came to ask you.”**
- The Sun smiled, **removed his crown of burning light** so the boy could look at him, and said:  
**“You are my son, Phaethon. Clymene told the truth. Ask anything you want, and I will grant it. I call the Styx to witness my promise.”**

### *The fatal wish*

- Phaethon had often dreamed of the Sun’s chariot racing across the sky. Now he immediately said: • **“I want to take your place. Let me drive your car for just one day.”**
- The Sun was horrified. He tried to warn him:
- **“You are mortal. No mortal, not even a god except me, can drive this chariot. The road is steep at the rise, dangerous at midheaven, and terrifying on the descent. Even I fear it. The horses are fierce and uncontrollable.**
- And there are dangers in the sky: the Bull, the Lion, the Scorpion, the Crab—all will threaten you.
- Choose something else. **My fears prove I am truly your father.”**
- But Phaethon refused to listen. He felt only excitement and pride. He saw himself as master of the sky and gave no thought to danger.

### *The journey begins*

- There was no time left. Dawn had opened the gates of the east. The horses were ready.
- Phaethon mounted the chariot proudly, and the journey began.
- At first, everything was glorious. The chariot flew faster than the East Wind, through clouds and into the heights of heaven. **For a moment, Phaethon felt like the Lord of the Sky.**

### *Loss of control*

- But soon everything changed.
- The **chariot swayed wildly**. Phaethon had lost control. The **horses realized their true driver was not there and became wild**. They left the road and ran wherever they wished—up, down, left, right.
- They nearly crashed into the Scorpion and the Crab. Phaethon, terrified, dropped the reins.
- That was the signal for disaster.

### *The burning of the world*

- The horses rushed madly. They climbed too high, then **plunged too low. The world caught fire.**
- **Mountains burned first**—Ida, Helicon, Parnassus, and Olympus. The flames spread to valleys and forests. Springs turned to steam, rivers shrank, and even the Nile fled and hid its source.

### *The end of Phaethon*

- Phaethon, half fainting in smoke and fire, wished only for death.
- **Mother Earth could no longer bear it and cried out to the gods.** From Olympus, Jupiter (Jove) saw the destruction and acted.

- He **seized his thunderbolt and hurled it at Phaethon**.
- It struck him dead, shattered the chariot, and sent the horses plunging into the sea.
- **Phaethon, burning, fell through the air and was received by the river Eridanus**, which cooled his body and extinguished the fire.

#### *Mourning and transformation*

- The naiads buried him and carved upon his tomb:
- **“Here Phaethon lies who drove the Sun-god’s car. Greatly he failed, but he had greatly dared.”**
- His **sisters**, the Heliades, daughters of Helios, came to mourn. In their **grief, they were turned into poplar trees by the river Eridanus**.
- There they weep forever, and their **tears fall into the stream, shining as drops of amber**.

## PEGASUS AND BELLEROPHON

- Two episodes in this story come from the earliest poets. Hesiod (8th or 9th century) tells about the Chimaera, and the story of Anteia’s love and the sad end of Bellerophon appears in the Iliad. The rest is best told by Pindar in the 5th century.

#### *The background*

- In Ephyre, later called Corinth, **Glaucus was King**. He was the son of Sisyphus, who in Hades must forever roll a stone uphill because he once betrayed a secret of Zeus.
- Glaucus also drew down the displeasure of heaven. **He was a great horseman and fed his horses human flesh to make them fierce in battle**. Because of this monstrous deed, the **gods punished him**. He was thrown from his chariot, and his horses tore him to pieces and devoured him.
- In that city, a bold and beautiful young man named **Bellerophon was believed to be Glaucus’s son**. But it was **also said that his true father was Poseidon**, the Ruler of the Sea. His mother, Eurynome, was a mortal but was taught by Athena, becoming wise and nearly godlike. So Bellerophon seemed more divine than human.
- Great adventures naturally called to him. No danger could stop him. Yet the greatest deed he is known for required no courage at all, but rather divine help.

#### *The desire for Pegasus*

- **Bellerophon wanted Pegasus, a marvelous winged horse born from the blood of the Gorgon when Perseus killed her**. Pegasus was:
- “A winged steed, unwearying of flight, sweeping through air swift as a gale of wind.”
- Even the spring Hippocrene on Mount Helicon had been created where his hoof struck the earth.
- But **Pegasus could not be caught or tamed by mortal hands**. Bellerophon suffered from hopeless longing.

#### *Athena’s help*

- The wise seer Polyidus **advised him to sleep in Athena’s temple**, since gods sometimes speak in dreams.
- There, Bellerophon dreamed that Athena appeared holding a **golden object—a bridle**. She said:
- “Wake. Here is what will charm the steed you covet.”
- When he woke, the goddess was gone, but the **golden bridle remained**.
- He went quickly to find Pegasus at the spring Pirene in Corinth. The horse was calm and unafraid, and allowed himself to be bridled. Athena’s charm had worked.
- Bellerophon mounted Pegasus in full bronze armor and learned to ride him through the sky. **He became master of the air, envied by all**.

#### *The killing and exile*

- Through accident, **Bellerophon killed his brother**. He went to Argos, where King Proetus purified him.
- There, trouble began. Anteia, Proetus’s wife, fell in love with Bellerophon. When he rejected her, she lied to her husband, saying Bellerophon had wronged her.

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- Proetus could not kill a guest because of Zeus's law of hospitality. Instead, he sent Bellerophon to the King of Lycia with a letter secretly asking for his death.
- The Lycian king also honored hospitality. He could not kill Bellerophon directly, so he sent him on a deadly task: **to kill the Chimaera.**

### *The Chimaera*

- The Chimaera was a **terrifying creature:**
- "A lion in front, a serpent behind, a goat in between— a fearful creature, great and swift of foot and strong, whose breath was flame unquenchable."
- **But Bellerophon, riding Pegasus, attacked from the air. He never came near it. He killed it safely with arrows from above.**

### *More trials*

- The king then sent him on other impossible missions:
- Against the **Solyimi**, mighty warriors
- Against the **Amazons**, warrior women
- **Bellerophon succeeded in all of them.**
- Finally, the king was impressed. He stopped trying to kill him and instead **gave him his daughter in marriage.** For a time, Bellerophon lived happily.

### *The fall of Bellerophon*

- But later, pride destroyed him. His success made him think thoughts "**too great for man.**" He tried to ride Pegasus up to Olympus and join the gods.
- This was forbidden. **Pegasus refused the flight and threw him down.**
- From that moment, Bellerophon was hated by the gods and lived in misery, cut off from divine favor.

## **OTUS AND EPHALTES** (Kambal nga higante gahig ulo abig si kinsa)

- This story is alluded to in the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*, but only Apollodorus tells it in full. He wrote in the 1st or 2nd century A.D., a dull writer, though less dull than usual in this tale.
- These **twin brothers were Giants**, but they did not look like the monsters of old. They were straight of form and noble of face. Homer says they were:
- "Tallest of all that the life-giving earth with her bread ever nourished, handsomest too, after peerless Orion alone."
- Virgil describes their mad ambition:  
They were twins, huge-bodied, who tried to destroy the high heavens and push Jupiter (Zeus) from his throne.
- They were sons of Iphimedia (or sometimes Canace), but their true father was Poseidon. Yet they were usually called the Aloadae, the sons of Aloeus, their mother's husband.

### *Their rebellion against the gods*

- When they were still young, they began to **prove they were superior to the gods.**
- They **imprisoned Ares, bound him with chains of brass, and shut him up.** The gods did not attack directly; instead, Hermes secretly rescued him at night.
- Then the brothers grew even more arrogant. **They threatened to pile Mount Pelion on Mount Ossa and climb into heaven, just as the Giants of old had done in reverse.**
- Zeus prepared his thunderbolt to strike them down. But Poseidon begged him to spare them, **promising to keep them under control.** Zeus agreed.

### *Their downfall through desire*

- After that, they stopped their war against heaven—but turned to new ambitions.
- **Otus decided to abduct Hera.** Ephialtes fell in love with Artemis (or thought he did). In truth, they cared most for each other.

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- They drew lots to decide who would first pursue his chosen goddess, and Ephialtes won.
- They searched for Artemis in hills and woods, but when they found her, she was moving toward the sea. She knew their evil intention.

### *Artemis' trap*

- The brothers **followed her across the sea**. Being sons of Poseidon, they could run over water as easily as land.
- **Artemis led them to the island of Naxos**. Just as they were about to catch her, she vanished—and in her place **appeared a beautiful milk-white hind**.
- The brothers forgot the goddess and chased the deer into the forest. They separated to search more effectively.
- Each suddenly saw the hind in a clearing and threw his javelin—but neither saw his brother hidden nearby.
- The spears crossed through the forest.
- **Each brother struck and killed the other—the only creature he truly loved**.
- Such was the vengeance of Artemis.

## DAEDALUS

- This story is told by both Ovid and Apollodorus. Apollodorus wrote later, but in this case his version is followed.
- **Daedalus was the great architect who built the Labyrinth for the Minotaur in Crete and helped Ariadne show Theseus how to escape it.**
- When King Minos learned that Theseus had escaped, he believed Daedalus must have helped him. So he imprisoned Daedalus and his son Icarus inside the Labyrinth itself—proof of its perfection, since even its maker could not escape without help.

### *The wings of escape*

- Daedalus said:
- **“Escape may be checked by water and land, but the air and the sky are free.”**
- So, he **made two pairs of wings using feathers and wax**.
- Before flying, he warned Icarus:  
Do not fly too high, or the **sun will melt the wax**; do not fly too low, or the **sea will weigh down the wings**. Keep a middle course.

### *The fall of Icarus*

- But **Icarus ignored his father's warning**. As they flew away from Crete, joy and pride overcame him. He soared higher and higher, forgetting everything.
- The sun melted the wax. The wings fell apart. Icarus dropped into the sea, and the waters closed over him.
- Daedalus, grief-stricken, flew on alone and reached Sicily, where he was kindly received by the king.

### *Minos' pursuit and death*

- Minos, enraged, searched for Daedalus. He devised a test: **he offered a reward for solving the puzzle of passing a thread through a twisted shell**.
- Daedalus **solved it by tying a thread to an ant, placing it inside the shell, and letting it pull the thread through**.
- Minos realized only Daedalus could have done this and went to Sicily to capture him. But the Sicilian king refused to surrender him, and in the conflict, Minos was killed.

## PERSEUS

<b>Perseus</b>	<b>The brave son of Zeus and Danae who defeats Medusa, saves Andromeda, and fulfills the prophecy about Acrisius.</b>
<b>Danae</b>	<b>Princess of Argos and mother of Perseus.</b> She was imprisoned by her father after a prophecy warned that her future son would kill him.
<b>Acrisius</b>	<b>King of Argos and grandfather of Perseus.</b> He tries to escape the prophecy that says his grandson will kill him.
<b>Zeus</b>	<b>King of the gods</b> who visits Danae in the form of golden rain and fathers Perseus.
<b>Polydectes</b>	<b>Cruel ruler of the island</b> who wants Danae and tricks Perseus into hunting Medusa.
<b>Dictys</b>	<b>Kind fisherman who rescues Danae and Perseus</b> from the sea and raises Perseus like a son.
<b>Medusa</b>	<b>Mortal Gorgon</b> with snakes for hair whose gaze turns people into stone.
<b>Hermes</b>	<b>Messenger god who guides Perseus</b> and gives him magical help, including a powerful sword.
<b>Athena</b>	<b>Goddess of wisdom who helps Perseus</b> by giving him her polished shield and guiding him during the fight with Medusa.
<b>Andromeda</b>	<b>Princess chained to a rock</b> as a sacrifice to a sea monster; Perseus rescues and marries her.
<b>Cassiopeia</b>	<b>Andromeda's vain mother</b> who angers the gods by claiming she is more beautiful than the sea nymphs.
<b>Cepheus</b>	<b>Father of Andromeda</b> who agrees to sacrifice her to save his kingdom.
<b>Nereus.</b>	<b>Sea god</b> whose daughters were insulted by Cassiopeia's boast.
<b>The Gray Women</b>	<b>Three strange sisters who share one eye</b> and help Perseus find the Nymphs of the North.
<b>The Gorgons</b>	<b>Three terrifying sisters with snake hair</b> and deadly gazes; Medusa is the only mortal one.
<b>The Nymphs of the North</b>	<b>Magical maidens</b> who give Perseus the winged sandals, invisibility cap, and magic wallet.
<b>Heracles</b>	Famous Greek hero who is mentioned as a <b>future descendant</b> of Perseus and Andromeda.

- The story of Perseus is **one of the most famous myths** in Greek mythology because it combines prophecy, magic, monsters, heroic quests, and divine help.
- King Acrisius of Argos had only one child, a daughter named Danae.** Although she was very beautiful, the **king was unhappy because he had no son to inherit his throne.** Wanting to know if he would ever have a son, he **traveled to Delphi to ask the oracle of Apollo.**
- The oracle gave him terrible news. **She said that he would never have a son and that Danae's future son would one day kill him.**
- Acrisius became terrified. He wanted to avoid the prophecy, but **he was also afraid of angering the gods by murdering his own daughter.** Instead of killing her, **he ordered a chamber made entirely of bronze and hidden underground, with only a small opening in the roof so light and air could enter. Danae was locked inside and guarded so that no man could ever reach her.**
- But the prophecy could not be escaped.
- One day, while Danae sat alone in the bronze chamber, a mysterious **shower of golden rain fell from the sky into the prison.** **This was actually Zeus** visiting her in magical form. Afterward, **Danae gave birth to a son named Perseus.**
- For some time, she managed to hide the baby from her father. Eventually, however, Acrisius discovered the child. Furious and frightened, he demanded to know who the father was. **Danae proudly answered that the child was the son of Zeus, but Acrisius refused to believe her.**
- Even so, he still feared killing them directly because he dreaded the punishment of the gods and the Furies, who punished those who murdered relatives.** Instead, he decided on another cruel plan. **He placed Danae and baby Perseus inside a large wooden chest and threw it into the sea, hoping they would die naturally.**
- Inside the dark chest, Danae held her son tightly while waves battered them through the night. She feared constantly that the sea would swallow them, but **Perseus slept peacefully beside her.**
- At last, the chest drifted safely onto the shore of a small island. **A kind fisherman named Dictys found the chest, broke it open, and brought Danae and Perseus to his home.** He and his wife had no children, so they cared for the two lovingly for many years.

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- **Perseus grew up on the island**, helping Dictys as a fisherman. Danae hoped they could live quietly and safely forever. **Unfortunately, trouble came again through Dictys' brother, Polydectes, the cruel ruler of the island.**
- **Polydectes became attracted to Danae and wanted to marry her**, but **Perseus protected his mother, making the king see him as an obstacle.** Polydectes then devised a deadly plan to get rid of him.
- **He organized a feast and announced that he would marry another woman.** According to custom, each **guest was expected to bring a gift.** **Perseus was poor and had nothing to offer**, which embarrassed him deeply. **Proud and impulsive, he declared that he would bring the king something greater than any gift there: the head of Medusa.**
- This was exactly what Polydectes wanted.
- Medusa was one of the three terrifying Gorgons, creatures with snakes for hair, golden scales, and huge wings. Anyone who looked directly at them instantly turned to stone. Of the three sisters, **only Medusa was mortal.**
- **Perseus soon realized how impossible his promise was.** He traveled across Greece trying to discover where the Gorgons lived. At Dodona he learned only that the gods were protecting him.
- **At his lowest point, two gods finally came to help him: Hermes and Athena.**
- **Hermes appeared as a radiant young man wearing winged sandals and carrying his magical staff.** He explained that Perseus first **needed special magical items owned by the Nymphs of the North.** To find them, **Perseus had to seek the mysterious Gray Women.**
- These strange sisters lived in a dark land where sunlight never reached. They were old, gray, and bird-like, and the three of them **shared only one eye.** **Hermes instructed Perseus to steal the eye while they were passing it among themselves and refuse to return it until they revealed the way to the northern nymphs.**
- **Hermes also gave Perseus an unbreakable sword.** **Athena handed him her polished bronze shield and warned him never to look directly at Medusa.** Instead, **he must watch her reflection in the shield as though it were a mirror.**
- Following Hermes' instructions, Perseus traveled to the Gray Women. When one sister removed the shared eye to pass it to another, Perseus quickly snatched it away. **Blind and desperate, the sisters begged for its return, and in exchange they told him how to reach the Nymphs of the North.**
- The **nymphs** welcomed Perseus kindly and gave him three magical objects:
  - **winged sandals** that allowed him to fly,
  - a **magical wallet** that could expand to hold anything,
  - and a **cap of invisibility** that made the wearer impossible to see.
- Now fully prepared, **Perseus journeyed with Hermes** to the island of the Gorgons.
- **Luckily, all three Gorgons were asleep when he arrived.** **Looking only at the reflection in Athena's shield,** Perseus carefully approached Medusa. **Athena guided his hand as he swung Hermes' sword and cut off Medusa's head in one clean stroke.**
- **Without ever looking directly at her, Perseus quickly placed the head inside the magical wallet.** The other two immortal Gorgons awoke and chased after him in horror and rage, but **Perseus escaped by using the cap of invisibility.**
- As Perseus flew homeward over the sea, he arrived in **Ethiopia, where he saw a beautiful young woman chained to a rock beside the ocean.** Her name was **Andromeda.**
- **Andromeda's mother, Queen Cassiopeia, had foolishly boasted that she was more beautiful than the sea nymphs, daughters of the sea god Nereus.** Angered by this arrogance, the **gods sent a monstrous sea serpent to devastate the land.** An **oracle declared that the monster would stop only if Andromeda were sacrificed.**
- So her father, **King Cepheus, sadly agreed to chain her to the rocks.**
- The moment **Perseus saw Andromeda, he fell in love with her.** **He waited for the sea monster to appear and then killed it just as he had killed Medusa.** After saving her, he asked her parents for permission to marry her, and they gladly agreed.
- **Perseus then returned to the island with Andromeda.** There he discovered that **Polydectes had continued harassing Danae after Perseus left.** **Danae and Dictys had hidden themselves inside a temple** to escape him.
- Learning that Polydectes and his supporters were **feasting in the palace**, Perseus entered the banquet hall carrying Medusa's head. Before anyone could turn away, he revealed it. Instantly, **Polydectes and all his cruel followers were turned into stone statues.**

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- Afterward, **Perseus rescued his mother and rewarded the good fisherman Dictys by making him king of the island.**
- Finally, Perseus, Danae, and Andromeda **returned to Greece, hoping to reconcile with Acrisius.** But Acrisius had **fled Argos, still terrified of the prophecy.**
- Later, **Perseus attended athletic games in the city of Larissa.** During a discus-throwing contest, the **discus accidentally flew into the crowd and struck an old man.** That man was **Acrisius.** **He died instantly.**
- In the end, the prophecy came true exactly as foretold. Perseus had killed his grandfather, although completely by accident.
- After these events, **Perseus and Andromeda lived happily together.** Their descendants became famous heroes as well. **Their son Electryon would later become the grandfather of Heracles.**
- As for **Medusa’s head, Perseus eventually gave it to Athena, who placed it upon her shield, the aegis, where it remained as a symbol of terrifying power.**

**THESEUS**

<b>Theseus</b>	The great hero and later king of Athens, brave, noble, adventurous, and protector of the weak.
<b>Aegeus</b>	King of Athens and father of Theseus.
<b>Medea</b>	A powerful sorceress who tried to poison Theseus.
<b>Minos</b>	Powerful king of Crete who demanded tribute from Athens.
<b>Androgeus</b>	Son of Minos whose death caused the conflict between Crete and Athens.
<b>Pasiphae</b>	Wife of Minos and mother of the Minotaur.
<b>Minotaur</b>	Half-man, half-bull monster living inside the Labyrinth.
<b>Daedalus</b>	Builder of the Labyrinth.
<b>Ariadne</b>	Daughter of Minos who helped Theseus escape the Labyrinth.
<b>Dionysus</b>	God connected with Ariadne after Theseus left Crete.
<b>Adrastus</b>	Leader who sought Theseus’ help after the war against Thebes.
<b>Oedipus</b>	Exiled king whom Theseus kindly protected.
<b>Hercules</b>	Cousin and fellow hero of Theseus.
<b>Pirithous</b>	Closest friend and companion of Theseus.
<b>Persephone</b>	Wife of Hades whom Pirithous tried to abduct.
<b>Helen</b>	Famous beauty kidnapped by Theseus while still young.
<b>Castor and Pollux</b>	Brothers of Helen who rescued her.
<b>Phaedra</b>	Wife of Theseus who tragically fell in love with Hippolytus.
<b>Hippolytus</b>	Noble son of Theseus devoted to Artemis.
<b>Aphrodite</b>	Goddess who punished Hippolytus.
<b>Artemis</b>	Goddess loved by Hippolytus who later revealed the truth.
<b>Lycomedes</b>	King who eventually killed Theseus.

- The **greatest hero of Athens was Theseus.** The Athenians admired him so much that they even had a saying: **“Nothing without Theseus.”** He became famous not only because of his strength and bravery, but also because he protected the weak and helpless throughout his life.
- **Theseus was the son of Aegeus, the king of Athens.** However, **he did not grow up with his father.** Before returning to Athens, **Aegeus hid a sword and a pair of sandals beneath a huge stone.** He told Theseus’ mother that if the child grew strong enough to lift the stone and retrieve the objects, she should **send him to Athens so he could claim his father.**
- Years later, the boy became incredibly strong. When his mother finally brought him to the stone, **Theseus lifted it easily and took the sword and sandals.** His grandfather prepared a ship to safely bring him to Athens, but Theseus refused. He wanted to become a great hero like his cousin Hercules, and he believed heroes should face danger, not avoid it. **Instead of sailing safely, he chose the dangerous road by land.**
- The journey was filled with terrible bandits who attacked travelers. But Theseus killed them all, punishing each one in the same cruel way they had harmed others. **A robber named Sciron forced victims to wash his feet before kicking them into the sea, so Theseus threw him off a cliff.** Another bandit, **Sinis, tied people to bent pine trees that tore them apart when released, and Theseus killed him the same way.**

Then there was **Procrustes, who forced victims onto an iron bed and stretched or cut them to fit it. Theseus ended his life using his own method.** Because of these deeds, **Greece praised the young hero** for making the roads safe again.

- When Theseus finally arrived in Athens, **King Aegeus did not recognize him.** In fact, he became afraid of the young man's growing popularity and thought he might try to take the throne. At that time, the **sorceress Medea was living in Athens after fleeing from Corinth.** Through her magic she immediately knew who Theseus really was, but she did not want him to inherit the kingdom because she had great influence over Aegeus. **She convinced the king to poison him during a banquet.**
- As Medea handed him the poisoned cup, **Theseus drew out his sword, wanting to reveal his identity.** The moment **Aegeus saw the sword, he recognized it as the one he had hidden years ago.** Realizing **Theseus was his son, he knocked the poisoned cup away before he could drink it.** Medea escaped once more and fled to Asia, while Aegeus publicly declared Theseus his son and heir.
- Soon after, Theseus learned about the terrible suffering of Athens. Years earlier, **Minos, the powerful king of Crete,** had lost his son Androgeus while visiting Athens. **Aegeus had sent the young man to capture a dangerous bull, but the bull killed him instead.** Furious, **Minos invaded Athens and forced the city into a cruel agreement: every nine years, Athens had to send seven boys and seven girls to Crete to be devoured by the monstrous Minotaur.**
- The Minotaur was a horrifying creature, **half man and half bull.** It was the **child of Minos' wife Pasiphae and a magnificent bull sent by Poseidon.** Poseidon had originally intended the bull to be sacrificed, but **Minos kept it because it was too beautiful to kill.** As punishment, **Poseidon caused Pasiphae to fall madly in love with it.** When the Minotaur was born, Minos did not kill the creature. Instead, he ordered **Daedalus to build the Labyrinth, a maze so confusing that no one who entered could ever escape.**
- When the time came for Athens to send another group of victims, **Theseus volunteered to go.** Everyone admired his courage, though they did not realize **he planned to kill the Minotaur.** Before leaving, he promised his father that **if he survived, the ship would return with white sails instead of black ones** so Aegeus would know he was alive.
- When the young Athenians arrived in Crete, they were paraded before the people before being led to the Labyrinth. Among the spectators was **Minos' daughter, Ariadne, who instantly fell in love with Theseus.** Desperate to save him, **she secretly asked Daedalus how someone could escape the Labyrinth.** Then she met with Theseus and promised to help him if he would take her back to Athens and marry her. Theseus agreed.
- **Ariadne gave him a ball of thread.** He **tied one end at the entrance of the maze** and unwound it as he went deeper inside. Eventually he found the Minotaur asleep. Armed with nothing but his strength, **Theseus attacked the monster and beat it to death with his fists after a terrible struggle.** When it was over, he **used Ariadne's thread to guide himself and the other youths safely out of the Labyrinth.**
- **Together they escaped Crete by ship, bringing Ariadne with them.** On the journey home, they **stopped at the island of Naxos.** What happened there is told in two different ways. *One story says Theseus abandoned Ariadne while she slept, and later Dionysus found and comforted her. Another story says she became very ill, and while Theseus returned briefly to the ship, a storm carried him away. By the time he returned, Ariadne had died.* Both stories agree on one tragic detail: **when Theseus neared Athens, he forgot to replace the black sails with white ones.**
- Watching from a high cliff, **King Aegeus saw the black sails and believed his son was dead.** In despair, **he threw himself into the sea and died. From then on, the sea was called the Aegean Sea.**
- After this, **Theseus became king of Athens.** Unlike many rulers, he did not want absolute power. He **organized the city into a government where citizens could gather and vote together.** He kept only the position of **commander in chief.** Under his rule, Athens became prosperous and known as a place where people governed themselves freely.
- Theseus also became famous for his kindness and justice. **When the victorious Thebans refused to allow the dead enemies of war to be buried, the defeated people begged Athens for help.** Theseus led an army against Thebes, **defeated them, and forced them to allow proper burials.** Yet even in victory he refused to let his soldiers loot the city because he had come only to do what was right.
- **He also welcomed the exiled Oedipus when everyone else rejected him.** Theseus comforted him until his death and protected his daughters afterward. Later, when Hercules went mad and killed his wife and children, everyone abandoned him in horror. **Only Theseus remained loyal, encouraging Hercules not to kill himself and bringing him safely to Athens.**

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- Still, Theseus never lost his love for danger and adventure. **He traveled to the land of the Amazons, fierce women warriors, and carried away one of their queens, either Antiope or Hippolyta.** She later bore him a **son named Hippolytus.** The Amazons invaded Athens to rescue her, but Theseus defeated them. During his lifetime, no enemy ever successfully invaded Attica again.
- **Theseus also joined the voyage of the Argo in search of the Golden Fleece and took part in the great Calydonian Boar Hunt.**
- Among all his companions, his **closest friend was Pirithous.** Their **friendship began when Pirithous stole some of Theseus' cattle simply to test whether the hero was truly as great as people claimed.** But when the two finally met face to face, Pirithous became so impressed that he immediately offered friendship instead of battle. **Theseus gladly accepted, and they swore loyalty to one another.**
- Later, **Theseus attended Pirithous' wedding.** The guests included the Centaurs, creatures with the bodies of horses and the upper bodies of men. The **Centaurs became drunk and attempted to abduct the women at the feast.** A violent battle broke out, and Theseus helped defeat and drive them away.
- Eventually **Pirithous decided he wanted the most impossible bride imaginable: Persephone,** the queen of the dead. Inspired by such recklessness, **Theseus decided first to abduct the young Helen, intending to marry her when she grew older.** He succeeded in kidnapping her, but her brothers, **Castor and Pollux, rescued her while Theseus was away.**
- **Theseus and Pirithous then traveled into the Underworld to abduct Persephone.** But Hades already knew their plan. Instead of attacking them, he calmly invited them to sit. **The seats were magical Chairs of Forgetfulness. Once seated, they became trapped and forgot everything.** Pirithous remained imprisoned there forever. **Later, when Hercules visited the Underworld, he managed to rescue Theseus,** but not Pirithous.
- In the later years of his life, **Theseus married Phaedra, Ariadne's sister.** By this time **Hippolytus had grown into a noble young man devoted only to Artemis.** He despised luxury and rejected romantic love completely. **Because he ignored and dishonored Aphrodite, the goddess decided to punish him by making Phaedra fall hopelessly in love with him.**
- **Phaedra was ashamed and miserable because of this forbidden love.** She planned to die without telling anyone, **but her old nurse discovered the truth and begged Hippolytus to return Phaedra's love.** Horrified, Hippolytus angrily rejected the idea and **declared he would never betray his father.**
- Soon afterward, **Theseus returned home and found Phaedra dead beside a letter falsely accusing Hippolytus of attacking her.** Filled with rage and grief, **Theseus cursed his son and banished him from the land.** Hippolytus insisted he was innocent, but there was no proof.
- As **Hippolytus rode away in his chariot beside the sea,** Poseidon answered Theseus' curse. **A sea monster rose from the water and terrified the horses, causing the chariot to crash.** Hippolytus was mortally wounded.
- Then **Artemis appeared before Theseus and revealed the truth:** Hippolytus had been innocent all along, and **Aphrodite had caused the tragedy.** As **Hippolytus lay dying, father and son forgave one another.** Artemis promised that Hippolytus would always be remembered in story and song.
- The ending of Theseus' life was also sad. **He later stayed with Lycomedes, who was supposed to be his friend.** For reasons the stories never clearly explain, **Lycomedes betrayed and killed him.**
- Yet after his death, the **Athenians honored Theseus more than almost any other mortal.** They built a **great tomb for him and made it a sanctuary for slaves, the poor, and the helpless, because throughout his entire life Theseus had always defended those who could not defend themselves.**

## HERCULES/HERACLES (DIRI TUNG 12 LABOR)

<b>Hercules</b>	The greatest hero of Greece, famous for his unmatched strength, courage, emotional nature, and the Twelve Labors he performed to atone for killing his family.
<b>Zeus</b>	King of the gods and Hercules' true father.
<b>Hera</b>	Zeus's wife who hated Hercules and constantly tried to ruin his life because he was Zeus's son by another woman.
<b>Alcmena</b>	Hercules' mother and wife of Amphitryon.
<b>Amphitryon</b>	A famous Theban general believed to be Hercules' earthly father.
<b>Iphicles</b>	Hercules' twin half-brother, son of Amphitryon.
<b>Teiresias</b>	The blind prophet who predicted Hercules would become the hero of mankind.

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<b>Theseus</b>	Hero of Athens and Hercules' loyal friend who comforted him after he killed his family.
<b>Megara</b>	Hercules' first wife whom he tragically killed during his madness.
<b>Eurystheus</b>	King of Mycenae who ordered Hercules to complete the Twelve Labors.
<b>Iolaus</b>	Hercules' nephew who helped him defeat the Hydra.
<b>Apollo</b>	God of prophecy and the oracle at Delphi; he argued with Hercules over the sacred tripod.
<b>Artemis</b>	Goddess of the hunt whose sacred golden-horned stag Hercules had to capture alive.
<b>Athena</b>	Goddess of wisdom who helped Hercules during some of his labors.
<b>Poseidon</b>	God of the sea who sent the Cretan bull and the sea monster at Troy.
<b>Hippolyta</b>	Queen of the Amazons who kindly offered Hercules her girdle before Hera caused misunderstanding.
<b>Atlas</b>	The Titan forced to carry the heavens on his shoulders; Hercules briefly took his burden while Atlas fetched the golden apples.
<b>Cerberus</b>	The terrifying three-headed dog guarding the Underworld.
<b>Antaeus</b>	A giant wrestler who gained strength from touching the earth.
<b>Achelous</b>	River god who fought Hercules for Deianira's hand in marriage.
<b>Deianira</b>	Hercules' second wife whose attempt to regain his love accidentally caused his death.
<b>Nessus</b>	A centaur who deceived Deianira into using his poisoned blood as a supposed love charm.
<b>Omphale</b>	Queen of Lydia who kept Hercules as her slave and humiliated him with women's work.
<b>Admetus</b>	A hospitable king and friend of Hercules whose wife died in his place.
<b>Alcestis</b>	Admetus' devoted wife who willingly sacrificed her life for her husband.
<b>Prometheus</b>	The Titan punished by Zeus and later freed by Hercules.
<b>Laomedon</b>	King of Troy who broke his promise to Hercules after Hercules saved his daughter.
<b>Philoctetes</b>	The young warrior who lit Hercules' funeral pyre and inherited his famous bow and arrows.
<b>Hebe</b>	Goddess of youth whom Hercules married after ascending to heaven

- **Hercules was considered the greatest hero in all of Greece.** Unlike Theseus, who was admired for wisdom and intelligence, **Hercules was admired mainly for his enormous strength, fearless courage, and endurance.** He was the **strongest man on earth**, so strong that even the gods needed his help when they fought the Giants. Hercules believed himself almost equal to the gods, and sometimes he even challenged them. Once, when the oracle at Delphi refused to answer his question, he seized Apollo's sacred tripod and threatened to take it away and establish his own oracle. Apollo confronted him, and the two nearly fought until Zeus intervened. In the end, Apollo admired Hercules' boldness and allowed the priestess to answer him.
- Although Hercules possessed unmatched strength, **he lacked wisdom and self-control.** He **acted from emotion rather than reason.** He was quick to anger and often caused terrible harm without meaning to. **Yet he also had a deeply emotional and noble heart.** Whenever he did wrong, he sincerely regretted it and willingly accepted punishment.
- **Hercules was born in Thebes. People first believed he was the son of Amphitryon, a famous general, and so he was called Alcides. In truth, however, he was the son of Zeus.** Zeus had visited Amphitryon's wife, Alcmena, **disguised as her husband** while Amphitryon was away at war. Alcmena later gave birth to twin boys: Hercules, son of Zeus, and Iphicles, son of Amphitryon.
- **Hera hated Hercules because he was Zeus's child.** One night, while the babies slept in their cradle, **Hera sent two enormous snakes into the nursery to kill him.** Iphicles screamed in terror, but Hercules calmly **grabbed both snakes by the throat.** Though they coiled themselves around him, he **strangled them to death with his bare hands.** When Alcmena and Amphitryon rushed in, they found Hercules laughing while holding the dead snakes. The **prophet Teiresias then foretold that the child would become the greatest hero of mankind.**
- As Hercules grew older, great care was taken with his education. However, **he hated music lessons.** One day, **in a sudden rage, he struck his music teacher with a lute and accidentally killed him.** This was the first sign of the terrible danger of his uncontrolled strength. He was far better suited to wrestling, fighting, and driving chariots. **By the age of eighteen, he had already killed the fierce Lion of Cithaeron alone and afterward wore its skin as a cloak.**
- Soon afterward, **Hercules defeated the Minyans,** who had long oppressed Thebes. As a reward, he **married Princess Megara.** He loved Megara and their children deeply, but tragedy soon destroyed his happiness. **Hera sent madness upon him.** In his insanity, **Hercules killed his own children and Megara** as she tried to protect them. When the madness passed, he awoke to find their bodies around him and

could not understand what had happened. Amphytrion finally told him the truth. Horrified, **Hercules wished to kill himself.**

- At that moment, **his friend Theseus came to him.** Instead of turning away in horror, Theseus stretched out his hands and offered friendship. He told Hercules that great souls must endure suffering bravely. **Hercules finally agreed to live, though he remained overwhelmed with guilt.**
- **Seeking purification, Hercules went to Delphi.** The **oracle ordered him to serve his cousin** Eurystheus, king of Mycenae, and obey whatever commands he gave. Eurystheus, **encouraged by Hera**, assigned Hercules **twelve impossible tasks that became famous as the Twelve Labors.**
- The **first labor was to kill the Lion of Nemea**, whose skin no weapon could pierce. Hercules **strangled the beast with his bare hands.** The **second labor was to destroy the Hydra of Lerna**, a **serpent with many heads.** Every time one head was cut off, two more grew in its place. Hercules and his nephew Iolaus **defeated it by burning the necks after each head was removed, and Hercules buried the immortal head beneath a rock.**
- His **third labor was to capture alive a sacred stag with golden horns that belonged to Artemis.** Hercules **chased it for an entire year before finally catching it.** Next, he **captured the great boar of Mount Erymanthus by exhausting it in deep snow.**
- For the **fifth labor, Hercules cleaned the filthy stables of King Augeas in a single day** by **diverting two rivers through them.** Then he **drove away the deadly Stymphalian birds with Athena's help and shot them from the sky.**
- The **seventh labor was to capture the savage Cretan bull given by Poseidon to King Minos.** **Hercules overpowered the beast and brought it back alive.** The **eighth labor required him to seize the man-eating mares of King Diomedes.** **Hercules killed Diomedes first and then easily took the horses.**
- For the **ninth labor, Hercules had to obtain the girdle of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons.** **Hippolyta welcomed him kindly and agreed to give him the girdle willingly.** But **Hera spread a false rumor that Hercules intended to kidnap the queen.** The Amazons attacked, and **Hercules, assuming Hippolyta had betrayed him, killed her without realizing she had been innocent.**
- The **tenth labor took Hercules far west to capture the cattle of the three-bodied monster Geryon.** During this journey, he **set up the great Pillars of Hercules, now known as Gibraltar and Ceuta.** He defeated Geryon and brought the cattle back safely.
- The **eleventh labor was one of the hardest: obtaining the Golden Apples of the Hesperides.** Hercules **sought help from Atlas**, the Titan who carried the heavens upon his shoulders. **Hercules agreed to hold up the sky while Atlas fetched the apples.** But when **Atlas returned, he tried to leave Hercules trapped beneath the heavens forever.** Hercules cleverly **tricked Atlas into taking the sky back for just a moment, then escaped with the apples.**
- The **twelfth and final labor brought Hercules down into the Underworld itself.** There **he rescued Theseus from the Chair of Forgetfulness.** **His task was to capture Cerberus, the three-headed dog guarding Hades.** **Hercules wrestled the monster with his bare hands and dragged him up to the world above.** Eurystheus was terrified at the sight of Cerberus and quickly ordered Hercules to return him to the Underworld.
- Even after completing the labors, Hercules' life remained filled with struggles and adventures. **He defeated the giant Antaeus, who grew stronger whenever he touched the earth, by lifting him into the air and strangling him.** He **fought the river god Achelous for the hand of Princess Deianira.** Achelous transformed into a bull, but **Hercules defeated him and broke off one of his horns.**
- At Troy, **Hercules rescued King Laomedon's daughter from a sea monster** after the king promised him magnificent horses as payment. But **Laomedon broke his promise**, so Hercules later attacked Troy, killed the king, and gave the rescued princess to his companion Telamon.
- During his travels, **Hercules also reached the Caucasus Mountains and freed Prometheus by killing the eagle that tormented him daily.**
- Not all of Hercules' deeds were noble. Sometimes his violent temper caused innocent deaths. Once he **accidentally killed a servant boy.** Another time he deliberately **killed the son of King Eurystus because of an insult.** As punishment, **Zeus forced Hercules into slavery under Queen Omphale of Lydia.** **Omphale humiliated him by making him dress as a woman and perform women's work such as weaving and spinning.** Hercules endured the humiliation patiently, though bitterly.
- One of the most famous stories about Hercules concerns King Admetus and his wife Alcestis. Apollo had once arranged that **Admetus could escape death if another person willingly died in his place.** No one agreed except **Alcestis, who sacrificed herself for her husband.** Soon afterward, Hercules visited

Admetus, unaware that the household was mourning. Admetus hid his grief to fulfill the sacred duty of hospitality. Hercules ate heavily, drank enormous amounts of wine, and loudly sang songs while the household silently mourned. **Eventually a servant revealed the truth.** Horrified by his behavior, Hercules blamed himself and decided to repay Admetus' kindness. **He wrestled Death itself and forced him to return Alcestis to life.**

- In the end, **Hercules' downfall came through Deianira.** Years earlier, the **centaur Nessus had attempted to insult her while carrying her across a river.** **Hercules shot Nessus with a poisoned arrow.** As the centaur lay dying, **he deceitfully told Deianira that his blood would act as a love charm if Hercules ever loved another woman more than her.**
- Much later, Hercules captured the city of King Eurytus and sent home many captive maidens, including the beautiful Princess Iole. **Deianira feared Hercules had fallen in love with Iole.** Hoping to regain his love, **she spread Nessus' blood upon a robe and sent it to him.** But the blood had become **deadly poison.** The moment **Hercules put on the robe, terrible agony seized him like burning fire.** In his suffering he **killed the innocent messenger who brought the robe.** When **Deianira realized what she had done, she killed herself.**
- **Hercules could not die easily because of his divine strength, but at last he ordered a great funeral pyre built upon Mount Oeta.** He climbed onto it willingly and gave his famous bow and arrows to the young hero Philoctetes before asking him to light the fire. As the flames rose, Hercules disappeared forever from the earth. **He was taken to heaven, reconciled with Hera, and married Hebe, goddess of youth.** After all his labors, sufferings, rage, and sorrow, Hercules at last found eternal peace among the gods.

### ATALANTA

Atalanta	A brave and skilled huntress known for her speed, strength, and independence.
Artemis	Goddess who sent the Calydonian boar to punish King Oeneus.
Oeneus	King who forgot to honor Artemis and caused the boar disaster.
Meleager	Hero who loved Atalanta and killed the boar after she wounded it.
Althea	Meleager's mother whose actions caused his death.
Aphrodite	Goddess who helped Hippomenes defeat Atalanta with the golden apples.
Hippomenes / Melanion	The clever suitor who won Atalanta through strategy instead of speed.
Jason	Leader of the Argonauts.
Peleus	Warrior defeated by Atalanta in wrestling.
Achilles	Famous Greek hero and son of Peleus.
Parthenopaeus	Son of Atalanta.
Zeus	One of the gods said to have punished Atalanta and Hippomenes

- Atalanta was one of the greatest heroines in Greek mythology. Some stories say there were actually two women named Atalanta because different writers give different names for her father—either Iasus or Schoenius. But the stories about them are almost exactly the same: **both wanted to sail on the Argo, both joined the Calydonian boar hunt, both married a man who defeated them in a foot race, and both were eventually transformed into lionesses.** Because of this, it is simpler to believe there was only one Atalanta.
- She was unlike most women in Greek myths. She loved adventure as much as the bravest heroes and could outshoot, outrun, and even outwrestle men.
- When Atalanta was born, her **father was bitterly disappointed because he wanted a son** instead of a daughter. **Thinking she was not worth raising, he ordered the tiny baby to be left on a wild mountainside to die from cold and hunger.** But animals proved kinder than humans.
- A **she-bear found the child,** nursed her, and kept her warm. Under the bear's care, Atalanta survived and grew into an active, fearless little girl. Later, hunters discovered her and took her to live with them. **Growing up in the forests,** she learned the difficult life of hunting and became equal—even superior—to the men around her in all the hard skills of a hunter's life.
- One day, while she was alone, **two Centaurs caught sight of her and began chasing her.** They were much swifter and stronger than ordinary mortals. Atalanta understood immediately that running away would be foolish. Instead, **she stood perfectly still, fitted an arrow to her bow, and fired.** Then she quickly shot a second arrow. **Both Centaurs fell mortally wounded.**

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- Then came the famous **Calydonian Boar Hunt**. The goddess **Artemis** had sent a **monstrous boar to ravage** the land of Calydon **because King Oeneus forgot to include her when offering the first fruits of the harvest to the gods**. The terrible creature devastated the countryside, destroyed cattle, and killed men who tried to stop it.
- Finally, **Oeneus called upon the bravest heroes in Greece for help**. A splendid company of young warriors gathered together, many of whom would later sail on the Argo. Naturally, Atalanta came as well.
- She entered that gathering of heroes proudly, **"the pride of the woods of Arcady."** She **wore a robe fastened at the neck with a shining buckle**, her **hair simply tied in a knot** behind her head. An **ivory quiver hung from her shoulder**, and she **carried a bow in her hand**. Her appearance struck everyone because she seemed **"too maidenly to be a boy, and too boyish to be a maiden."**
- Among all the heroes there, one man thought her more beautiful than any woman he had ever seen. **Meleager, the son of Oeneus, fell in love with her at first sight**.
- But **Atalanta treated him only as a companion in hunting**. She had no desire for romance and was determined never to marry.
- Some of the heroes were offended by her presence. **They believed it was beneath them to hunt beside a woman**. However, Meleager strongly defended her until they finally gave in. It proved fortunate they did.
- When the hunters finally cornered the boar, disaster erupted almost immediately. The enormous beast charged at them with terrifying speed and strength. Before anyone could help, it **killed two men**. At the same time, **another hunter was accidentally struck by a badly aimed javelin** during the confusion.
- Amid the chaos of dying men and flying weapons, Atalanta alone kept calm.
- **She raised her bow and shot the first arrow that successfully struck the boar. It was the first wound the beast received**. Then **Meleager rushed forward against the wounded animal and drove his spear into its heart, killing it**.
- Technically, **Meleager had dealt the final blow, but he insisted that the true honor belonged to Atalanta because her arrow struck first**. **He declared that she should receive the boar's skin as the prize of the hunt**. This decision led directly to tragedy.
- **Meleager's uncles were furious that a woman would receive the honor instead of the male hunters**. They angrily declared that Atalanta had no right to the prize and that Meleager had no authority to give it away. Furious at their insults, **Meleager killed both of them on the spot**. But Meleager's life had been bound to fate since infancy. When he was only **a week old**, the three Fates appeared to his mother, Althea. They **threw a piece of wood into the fire burning in her chamber** and declared:  
"To you, O newborn child, we grant a gift:  
**To live until this wood turns into ash."**
- Terrified, **Althea snatched the burning brand from the fire, extinguished it, and hid it safely in a chest**.
- When news reached her that Meleager had killed her brothers, grief and rage overwhelmed her. She **rushed to the chest, took out the hidden log, and threw it into the flames**.
- As the wood burned, **Meleager slowly fell dying**. By the time the log was completely consumed, his spirit had left his body. Afterward, Althea was horrified by what she had done. **According to the story, she later hanged herself**.
- Thus the great Calydonian Boar Hunt ended in tragedy. For Atalanta, however, life and adventure continued.
- Some stories say she sailed with the Argonauts, while others say Jason persuaded her not to go. Since she is never mentioned during the actual adventures of the Argonauts, it seems most likely that she remained behind.
- The next time she appears is at the funeral games held for King Pelias. During the wrestling contest, **Atalanta defeated Peleus, who would later become the father of Achilles**.
- After this, Atalanta finally discovered the identity of her parents and returned to live with them. By then, **her father had accepted her and realized she was every bit as worthy as a son**.
- Still, Atalanta had no wish to marry, even though many men sought her hand because of her beauty and fame. To free herself from these suitors, **she announced that she would marry only the man who could defeat her in a foot race**. Since she was the fastest runner alive, she believed this condition guaranteed she would remain unmarried.
- She delighted in the contests. Young men constantly arrived to race her, and she defeated every one of them with ease.

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- At last, however, a suitor arrived who relied not only on speed but also on intelligence. His name was either **Melanon or Hippomenes**.
- He knew he could never outrun Atalanta fairly, so **he turned to Aphrodite for help**. Aphrodite, always eager to humble proud maidens who rejected love, gave him **three wondrous golden apples**, beautiful like those from the garden of the Hesperides. No living person could see them without longing to possess them.
- At the starting line, Atalanta stood poised for the signal. Without her hunting garments, she seemed even more beautiful than before. Everyone watching was amazed by her beauty, but especially Hippomenes.
- The race began. Atalanta flew forward swift as an arrow, her hair streaming behind her shoulders, a rosy flush coloring her fair skin. She quickly began leaving Hippomenes behind.
- **Then he rolled the first golden apple directly in front of her.**
- **She could not resist it. She paused only for a moment to pick it up**, but even that brief hesitation allowed Hippomenes to draw level with her.
- Soon she began overtaking him again. **Then he threw the second apple a little to one side**. Atalanta swerved from the path to retrieve it, giving him another advantage.
- Still she almost caught him before the finish line.
- Finally, **Hippomenes threw the third golden apple far into the grass beside the course**. Atalanta saw its golden gleam among the green and could not resist stopping once more to seize it.
- That final delay was enough. Breathless and nearly exhausted, **Hippomenes reached the goal first**.
- **Atalanta had been defeated**. Her days of freedom alone in the forests and her athletic triumphs came to an end, **and she became the wife of Hippomenes**.
- Later, the couple **offended either Zeus or Aphrodite**, depending on the version of the story, and as punishment they were **transformed into lions**.
- Before this happened, however, **Atalanta gave birth to a son named Parthenopaeus**, who later became one of the famous Seven Against Thebes.

## THE TROJAN WAR

Paris	Prince of Troy whose choice sparked the war
Helen	Most beautiful woman in the world
Menelaus	Husband of Helen
Agamemnon	Commander of the Greeks
Achilles	Greatest Greek hero
Patroclus	Closest companion of Achilles
Hector	Defender of Troy
Priam	Elderly king of Troy
Hecuba	Wife of Priam
Andromache	Hector's loving wife
Astyanax	Son of Hector and Andromache
Odysseus	Clever Greek hero
Nestor	Wise old Greek leader
Diomedes	Powerful Greek fighter
Aeneas	Noble Trojan warrior
Thetis	Sea goddess mother of Achilles
Aphrodite	Supported Paris and Troy
Hera	Hated Troy
Athena	Helped the Greeks
Zeus	Ruler of Olympus
Apollo	Protected Hector and Troy
Ares	Fought for the Trojans
Poseidon	Supported the Greeks
Artemis	Demanded Iphigenia's sacrifice
Hephaestus	Forged Achilles' armor
Hermes	Guided Priam safely to Achilles

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- More than a thousand years before Christ, near the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, stood the **great city of Troy, one of the richest and most powerful cities in the world**. Its fame would live forever because of a terrible war fought between Troy and the Greeks, a war celebrated in the great epic, the Iliad. But the **war began not among men, but among the gods**.
- At the **wedding feast of King Peleus and the sea nymph Thetis**, every god and goddess was invited **except Eris, the goddess of Discord (conflict)**. Furious at being excluded, Eris came anyway and threw into the banquet hall a **golden apple marked with the words: "For the Fairest."**
- Immediately the goddesses quarreled over who deserved it most. In the end, only three remained as possible choices:
  - **Hera**
  - **Athena**
  - **Aphrodite**
- They asked Zeus to decide, but Zeus wisely refused. Instead, he sent them to Mount Ida near Troy, where a **young shepherd named Paris was tending sheep**.
- Paris was actually a **prince of Troy, the son of King Priam**. **Before his birth, Priam had been warned that Paris would someday destroy Troy**, so the child had been **sent away from the city and raised as a shepherd**. At that time Paris was living happily with the beautiful nymph Oenone.
- When the three goddesses appeared before him in all their glory, Paris was astonished. Yet they did not simply ask him which was most beautiful. Instead, **each tried to bribe him**.
- **Hera promised to make him lord over Europe and Asia. Athena promised victory in war and glory over Greece. Aphrodite promised him the most beautiful woman in the world.**
- **Paris chose Aphrodite** and handed her the golden apple. That judgment became the true cause of the Trojan War.
- **The most beautiful woman in the world was Helen, daughter of Zeus and sister of Castor and Pollux**. So famous was her beauty that nearly every prince in Greece wished to marry her.
- **Her foster father, King Tyndareus, feared that choosing one suitor would make the others enemies**. Therefore, **before selecting Helen's husband, he made all the suitors swear a solemn oath that they would defend Helen's future husband against anyone who wronged him**.
- **Helen married Menelaus, brother of Agamemnon, and Menelaus became King of Sparta**.
- After Paris chose Aphrodite, the goddess led him straight to Sparta. There **Menelaus and Helen welcomed him kindly as their guest**. Hospitality was sacred among Greeks; a guest was expected never to harm the household that sheltered him. But Paris betrayed that sacred trust.
- **While Menelaus traveled to Crete, Paris carried Helen away to Troy**. He also **abandoned Oenone** without a thought.
- When Menelaus returned and discovered Helen gone, he **called upon all the Greek princes to fulfill their oath and help him recover her**. The kings and warriors of Greece gathered eagerly for the great expedition against Troy.
- Only two famous heroes were missing: **Odysseus and Achilles**.
- **Odysseus, wise and practical, did not wish to leave his home and family for a dangerous war fought over a faithless woman. Pretending to be insane, he yoked a horse and an ox together and plowed a field while sowing it with salt instead of seed.**
- But the messenger sent to fetch him suspected trickery. He **seized Odysseus' baby son and placed him directly before the plow**. Instantly Odysseus swerved aside to **protect the child**, revealing that he was perfectly sane. He therefore had no choice but to join the expedition.
- **Achilles, meanwhile, had been hidden by his mother Thetis because she knew he was destined to die if he fought at Troy**. She **disguised him in women's clothing and concealed him among the daughters of King Lycomedes**.
- The Greek leaders sent Odysseus to find him. **Disguised as a traveling merchant, Odysseus laid out jewels and ornaments for the maidens**, but also displayed several splendid weapons. While the girls admired the trinkets, **Achilles immediately reached for the swords and spears**. Odysseus recognized him at once and persuaded him to join the Greeks.
- **Soon the great fleet gathered at Aulis — a thousand ships carrying the armies of Greece**. But **strong northern winds trapped them there day after day**.
- **At last the prophet Calchas announced that Artemis was angry because one of her sacred creatures, a hare with her young, had been killed**. The only way to gain favorable winds was to **sacrifice Agamemnon's daughter, Iphigenia**.
- Agamemnon was horrified. Yet his ambition and his **fear of losing honor** before the army overcame him. **He sent for Iphigenia, pretending she was to marry Achilles**.
- But when she arrived, instead of a wedding she was brought to the altar and sacrificed.
- Her death calmed the winds, and the Greek fleet sailed across the sea toward Troy.

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- **When the Greeks landed at Troy, the first to leap ashore was Protesilaus.** An oracle had foretold that the **first Greek to land would also be the first to die**, and soon he fell beneath a Trojan spear.
- The gods later allowed him briefly to return from the underworld to **visit his grieving wife, Laodamia.** But when he had to depart again, **she killed herself so she could follow him into death.**
- The **war continued for nine years** without decisive victory.
- Troy was defended by Priam and Queen Hecuba and their many sons, especially the **noble Hector, the bravest champion of Troy.**
- Among the Greeks, **Achilles was the greatest warrior alive.**
- Both heroes already knew their fate. Achilles had been warned by his mother that his life would be glorious but short if he fought at Troy. **Hector himself admitted to his wife that he knew the day would come when Troy would fall and he would die.**
- After years of fighting, disaster struck the Greeks because of a **quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon.**
- **Agamemnon had taken captive a maiden named Chryseis, whose father was a priest of Apollo.** When the priest begged for her return, Agamemnon insulted him and refused.
- Apollo answered the priest's prayers by **sending a plague upon the Greek camp.** Men died so rapidly that funeral pyres burned constantly.
- At last Achilles called an assembly and urged the Greeks **either to appease Apollo or abandon the war.**
- Calchas revealed that **Apollo's anger would end only when Chryseis was returned.** Agamemnon furiously agreed, but declared that if he lost his own prize, he would take another.
- So after Chryseis was returned, **Agamemnon sent men to seize Briseis, the captive awarded to Achilles.**
- **Achilles was consumed with rage.** He swore he would fight no longer for the Greeks.
- That night Thetis went to Zeus and begged him to help the Trojans so the Greeks would suffer and understand how much they depended on Achilles. Zeus reluctantly agreed, though he knew Hera would hate the decision. The gods themselves soon took sides in the war.
- **Aphrodite, Ares, Apollo, and Artemis supported Troy. Hera, Athena, and Poseidon favored the Greeks.**
- Zeus attempted neutrality but often aided the Trojans because of his promise to Thetis.
- **Zeus sent Agamemnon a false dream promising victory.** Encouraged, the Greeks attacked.
- While the battle raged, Helen stood beside Priam and the old men of Troy upon the walls. They gazed upon her beauty and admitted that men would indeed fight terrible wars for such a woman.
- Then the armies paused, and **Paris and Menelaus fought in single combat to settle the war.**
- **Paris threw his spear first, but Menelaus soon overpowered him.** He **seized Paris by the helmet and would have dragged him back to the Greeks if Aphrodite had not snapped the helmet strap and carried Paris away safely in a cloud.**
- Agamemnon declared Menelaus victor and demanded Helen's return. The Trojans might have agreed, but Hera was determined that Troy must be destroyed. **Athena therefore persuaded the Trojan archer Pandarus to shoot Menelaus, breaking the truce and renewing the war.** Battle exploded again across the plain.
- The Greek heroes Ajax and Diomedes fought magnificently. **Diomedes wounded Aeneas, son of Aphrodite.** When Aphrodite herself descended to rescue him, **Diomedes even wounded the goddess's hand.**
- Later, with Athena's help, Diomedes attacked Ares himself and wounded the god of war so badly that **Ares fled crying to Olympus.**
- Meanwhile Hector returned to Troy and urged the women to pray to Athena for mercy. Queen Hecuba offered the goddess her most beautiful robe, but **Athena refused the prayer.**
- Before returning to battle, **Hector sought out his wife Andromache and their little son Astyanax.**
- **Andromache begged Hector not to fight.** She reminded him that he was everything to her — husband, father, brother, protector. But **Hector gently replied that honor demanded he stand in the front lines.**
- When he reached for his son, the child shrank back in fear of Hector's horsehair-crested helmet. Hector laughed, removed the helmet, lifted his son in his arms, and **prayed that the boy would one day become greater even than his father.** Then Hector returned once more to battle while Andromache wept.
- With Achilles absent, Hector became unstoppable. He drove the Greeks all the way back toward their ships.
- The Greek camp fell into despair. Agamemnon even proposed sailing home, but **wise old Nestor advised him instead to reconcile with Achilles.**
- Agamemnon admitted his mistake and **sent Odysseus and others with rich gifts to beg Achilles' return.**
- But Achilles refused everything. He declared he would rather sail home than fight for men who had dishonored him.
- Meanwhile Hera devised a plan to help the Greeks. She adorned herself beautifully and borrowed Aphrodite's magical girdle. Zeus became overwhelmed with desire and fell asleep beside her.
- While Zeus slept, the Greeks regained the advantage. Ajax even struck Hector down with a huge stone.

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- But Zeus soon awoke, realized Hera had deceived him, and angrily restored aid to the Trojans. Apollo revived Hector and filled him with renewed strength.
- The Trojans stormed the Greek defenses and nearly burned the ships.
- At last **Patroclus begged Achilles to let him wear Achilles' armor and lead the Myrmidons into battle.** Achilles agreed but ordered him only to drive the Trojans away from the ships and not pursue them recklessly.
- As Patroclus entered battle wearing Achilles' armor, the **Trojans believed Achilles himself had returned.** Panic spread among them, and Patroclus drove them back fiercely.
- But he ignored Achilles' warning and pursued the Trojans too far.
- At last **Hector met him in combat and killed him.** Then **Hector stripped Achilles' famous armor from the corpse and wore it himself.**
- When Achilles heard the news from Antilochus, grief overwhelmed him. He collapsed in the dust weeping.
- Thetis rose from the sea to comfort her son. Achilles swore he would kill Hector even though he knew his own death would follow soon after.
- Thetis went to Hephaestus, who forged magnificent new armor for Achilles, including the famous shield.
- **Achilles finally returned to battle.**
- He admitted before the Greeks that his anger over Briseis had been foolish. Yet even then, he refused food or drink until Patroclus was avenged.
- Then the final terrible battle began.
- Achilles slaughtered Trojans without mercy. The river Scamander itself rose against him because its waters were clogged with corpses, but Achilles survived even that.
- The gods fought openly among themselves: **Athena struck down Ares, Hera boxed Artemis' ears, Poseidon challenged Apollo.**
- At last the Trojans fled into the city. Only Hector remained outside the walls.
- Priam and Hecuba begged their son to come inside, but Hector stayed, ashamed to face his people after leading them to disaster.
- Yet when Achilles approached blazing in his new armor, Hector lost courage and fled. Three times the two heroes raced around the walls of Troy.
- Finally Athena appeared beside Hector disguised as his brother Deiphobus and convinced him to stand and fight.
- **Hector offered a final agreement: whoever died should have his body returned to his family.**
- Achilles answered that there could be no agreements between them, just as there could be none between wolves and sheep. The duel began.
- Achilles threw first but missed. Athena secretly returned the spear to him. Hector then cast his own spear and struck Achilles' shield, but the divine armor could not be pierced.
- Hector turned to ask Deiphobus for another spear — and discovered no one was there. Then he understood Athena had deceived him and that death was near.
- Still, Hector refused to die dishonorably. Drawing his sword, he rushed forward.
- Achilles hurled his spear into the one **vulnerable place in Hector's armor near the throat.**
- Hector fell dying.
- With his last breath he begged Achilles to return his body to his parents.
- But Achilles, still mad with grief over Patroclus, refused savagely. He declared he wished he could devour Hector's flesh raw.
- Then Hector's soul departed for Hades.
- **Achilles pierced Hector's feet, tied the body behind his chariot, and dragged it around the walls of Troy** while Priam, Hecuba, and Andromache watched in horror.
- Even the gods were disgusted.
- At last Zeus sent Iris to command Priam to visit Achilles and ransom Hector's body.
- Guided safely by Hermes, Priam entered Achilles' tent. The old king clasped Achilles' knees and kissed the hands that had killed his son.
- Priam begged Achilles to remember his own father.
- Achilles was deeply moved. Both men wept together — Priam for Hector, Achilles for Patroclus and for his own father far away.
- At last Achilles relented. He ordered Hector's body washed, anointed, and wrapped gently so Priam would not see its terrible condition and become enraged.
- **Achilles then promised a truce so Troy could properly bury Hector.**
- Priam carried his son home.
- All Troy mourned him, and even Helen wept sincerely, saying Hector alone among the Trojans had always shown her kindness.

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- For **nine days** the Trojans lamented. On the tenth day they burned Hector upon a great funeral pyre. Afterward his **bones were placed in a golden urn wrapped in purple cloth and buried beneath a mound of stones.**
- And so ends the Iliad: the funeral of Hector, tamer of horses.

THE FALL OF TROY

Greeks		TROJANS		GODS/GODDESSES	
<b>Achilles</b>	Greatest Greek warrior; nearly invulnerable except for his heel.	<b>Priam</b>	Elderly king of Troy.	<b>Athena</b>	Goddess of wisdom; favored the Greeks.
<b>Odysseus</b>	Clever Greek hero who created the Wooden Horse plan.	<b>Hecuba</b>	Queen of Troy and wife of Priam.	<b>Apollo</b>	God who guided Paris' arrow to Achilles.
<b>Ajax</b>	Mighty Greek warrior who killed himself after losing Achilles' armor.	<b>Hector</b>	Greatest Trojan warrior and defender of Troy.	<b>Aphrodite</b>	Goddess of love; protector of Aeneas and Helen.
<b>Agamemnon</b>	Leader of the Greek army.	<b>Paris</b>	Prince of Troy who killed Achilles and abducted Helen.	<b>Thetis</b>	Sea goddess and mother of Achilles.
<b>Menelaus</b>	Husband of Helen; king whose wife's abduction began the war.	<b>Helenus</b>	Trojan prophet captured by the Greeks.	<b>Poseidon</b>	God of the sea who hated Troy.
<b>Diomedes</b>	Brave Greek hero who helped steal the Palladium.	<b>Cassandra</b>	Princess cursed so that no one believed her prophecies.	<b>Hephaestus</b>	God who forged Achilles' armor.
<b>Neoptolemus</b>	Son of Achilles; fierce warrior who killed Priam.	<b>Laocoon</b>	Priest who warned against the Wooden Horse.	<b>Hercules</b>	Legendary hero whose bow helped destroy Troy.
<b>Philoctetes</b>	Owner of Hercules' magical bow and arrows.	<b>Andromache</b>	Hector's wife.		
<b>Sinon</b>	Greek soldier who deceived the Trojans with a false story.	<b>Astyanax</b>	Young son of Hector and Andromache.		
<b>Calchas</b>	Greek prophet.	<b>Aeneas</b>	Trojan hero who escaped the city.		
<b>Nestor</b>	Elderly wise king of the Greeks.	<b>Anchises</b>	Father of Aeneas.		
<b>Antilochus</b>	Son of Nestor; killed in battle.	<b>Ascanius</b>	Young son of Aeneas.		
<b>Patroclus</b>	Closest friend of Achilles.	<b>Creusa</b>	Wife of Aeneas who died during the escape.		
		<b>Polyxena</b>	Daughter of Hecuba sacrificed by the Greeks.		
		<b>Memnon</b>	Ethiopian prince who fought for Troy.		
		<b>Oenone</b>	Nymph once loved by Paris.		

- **After Hector died, the greatest defender of Troy was gone.** The Trojans were losing hope, but the war was still not over. Achilles, the greatest warrior of the Greeks, already knew that his own death was near because his mother, the sea goddess Thetis, had warned him. Before his death, Achilles fought one final great battle.

Achilles and the Death of Memnon

- A **powerful prince named Memnon, son of the Goddess of the Dawn and ruler of Ethiopia, came to help Troy with a huge army.** He was a mighty warrior, and for a while the Trojans began winning again. Many brave Greeks died in battle, including **Antilochus**, the son of old King Nestor.
- At last **Achilles faced Memnon in combat and killed him.** This became Achilles' final and most glorious victory. But soon afterward, Achilles himself died.
- He drove the Trojans back toward the walls of Troy near the **Scaean Gates**. There, Paris shot an arrow at him. The god **Apollo guided the arrow so it struck Achilles in his only weak spot — his heel.**
- When Achilles was an infant, Thetis had dipped him into the **River Styx to make him invulnerable.** But she **held him by one heel**, so that part was **untouched by the magical water.**

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- Thus Achilles died from a wound to the heel.
- As fighting raged around him, Ajax carried Achilles' body away while Odysseus held back the Trojans. Later, Achilles' ashes were placed in the same urn as those of his beloved friend Patroclus.

### The Madness and Death of Ajax

- After Achilles died, the Greeks had to decide who deserved his magnificent armor, made by the god Hephaestus.
- The two greatest candidates were Ajax and Odysseus. Both had served the Greeks bravely, so a secret vote was held. Odysseus won.
- To the Greeks, losing such a contest was not merely disappointing — it was dishonorable. Ajax felt humiliated and believed Agamemnon and Menelaus had cheated him.
- Filled with rage, he decided to kill them during the night.
- But before he could act, the goddess Athena struck him with madness.
- In his insanity, Ajax thought the Greek cattle and sheep were enemy soldiers. He attacked and slaughtered the animals wildly, believing he was killing Greek leaders. He even dragged a huge ram into his tent, thinking it was Odysseus, and beat it savagely.
- When the madness passed, Ajax saw the dead animals around him and realized what he had done.
- Ashamed, disgraced, and unable to bear the humiliation, he said that a man who cannot live nobly can at least die nobly. He drew his sword and killed himself.
- The Greeks buried him but refused to honor him with a funeral pyre because they believed suicides should not receive such honors.

### The Prophecy of Helenus

- The deaths of Achilles and Ajax discouraged the Greeks deeply. Victory seemed impossible.
- Their prophet, Calchas, told them that the Trojans had a prophet among them named Helenus, who knew the future. If they captured him, he might reveal how Troy could finally be defeated.
- Odysseus managed to capture Helenus.
- Helenus revealed an important prophecy:
  - Troy would never fall unless the Greeks fought using the bow and arrows of Hercules. These weapons belonged to Philoctetes.

### Philoctetes and the Death of Paris

- Years earlier, while sailing to Troy, Philoctetes had been bitten by a serpent during a sacrifice. His wound became terrible and unbearable. The Greeks abandoned him on the island of Lemnos because they could not continue caring for him during the war. Now they needed him.
- The Greeks sent Odysseus — and in some versions Diomedes or Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles — to bring him back. At first, they planned merely to steal the magical bow and arrows, but they could not leave the suffering man helpless again. Eventually they persuaded him to return with them.
- Once back among the Greeks, Philoctetes was healed by their physician. When he returned to battle, the first man he wounded was Paris.
- As Paris lay dying, he begged to be taken to Oenone, the mountain nymph he had once loved before choosing Helen. Oenone knew magical healing arts. Paris begged her to save him. But Oenone could not forgive his betrayal and refused. She watched Paris die. Afterward, overcome with grief and regret, she killed herself.

### The Palladium

- Even after Paris died, Troy still stood strong.
- The Greeks then learned another prophecy: Troy could never fall while the sacred statue called the Palladium remained inside the city. This statue was an image of Pallas Athena and protected Troy. Odysseus and Diomedes decided to steal it. During the night, Diomedes climbed the walls with Odysseus' help, entered the city, and carried away the sacred image. Now the Greeks believed the time had come to end the war once and for all.

### The Wooden Horse

- Nearly ten years had passed since the war began. The walls of Troy still stood strong. The Greeks realized they could never conquer the city by force alone. So, Odysseus devised a clever and dangerous plan.
- A skilled craftsman built a gigantic hollow wooden horse large enough to hide several Greek warriors inside. Odysseus persuaded many Greek heroes to enter it, including himself and Achilles' fearless son, Neoptolemus.
- Meanwhile, the rest of the Greek army pretended to sail home. In reality, they hid behind a nearby island, waiting. Only one Greek remained behind: Sinon. His task was to trick the Trojans into bringing the horse into the city. If the plan failed, the warriors inside the horse would certainly die.

### Sinon's Deception

- The next morning the Trojans were amazed. The Greek camp was empty. The ships were gone. And before the gates stood the enormous wooden horse

- The Trojans rejoiced. They believed the war was finally over.
- As they explored the abandoned camp, they found Sinon. Pretending to weep, he claimed the Greeks had chosen him as a human sacrifice to calm Athena's anger after stealing the Palladium.
- According to Sinon, he escaped before the sacrifice could happen.
- Then he explained the purpose of the horse:
- He said the Greeks had built it as an offering to Athena. They purposely made it too large to fit inside Troy because they feared that if the Trojans brought it into the city, Athena would begin favoring Troy instead of Greece. The story was extremely convincing.

#### Laocoon and Cassandra Warn Troy

- Not everyone believed Sinon.
- The priest Laocoon warned the Trojans not to trust the Greeks.
- He famously said: "I fear the Greeks even when they bear gifts."
- Princess Cassandra also warned everyone, but no one ever believed her prophecies.
- Then a terrifying sign appeared.
- Two enormous serpents rose from the sea and attacked Laocoon and his two sons, crushing them to death before disappearing into Athena's temple.
- The Trojans believed this was punishment from the gods for opposing the horse. No one dared resist any longer.

#### The Horse Enters Troy

- The Trojans joyfully dragged the wooden horse through the gates and into the city near Athena's temple.
- That night, believing the war finally ended, the people celebrated and slept peacefully for the first time in many years.
- But in the middle of the night, the hidden Greeks climbed out of the horse.
- They silently opened the gates of Troy.
- The Greek fleet had already returned.
- The army entered the sleeping city.

#### The Sack of Troy

- The Greeks set fires throughout Troy. By the time the Trojans awoke, the city was already burning.
- Confused and half-awake, many Trojans rushed into the streets only to be slaughtered immediately. It was not a fair battle — it was a massacre. Still, some Trojans fought desperately.
- Some cleverly removed armor from dead Greeks and disguised themselves to confuse the enemy. Greeks often mistook them for allies and were killed.
- From rooftops, Trojans hurled beams and stones onto the attackers.
- At Priam's palace, defenders even toppled an entire tower onto advancing Greeks, crushing many of them.
- But eventually the Greeks broke through the palace gates.
- Inside, around the altar, stood the old King Priam with the women and children of the royal family.
- Achilles had once spared Priam. But Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, showed no mercy.
- He killed Priam before the eyes of his wife and daughters.

#### Aeneas Escapes

- As Troy fell, only one major Trojan leader survived: Aeneas, son of Aphrodite.
- He fought as long as he could, but eventually realized Troy was lost. He hurried home to save his family.
- The goddess Aphrodite appeared and protected him from fire and enemies as he escaped carrying his aged father Anchises on his shoulders while leading his little son Ascanius by the hand.
- But he could not save his wife, Creusa, who became separated and died during the escape.
- Aeneas eventually fled Troy safely. Later legends say he traveled to Italy and became the ancestor of the Romans.

#### Helen Returns to Menelaus

- The goddess Aphrodite also protected Helen. She led Helen safely to Menelaus.
- Instead of killing her, Menelaus accepted her back, and she returned with him to Greece.

#### The Suffering of the Trojan Women

By morning, Troy — once the proudest city in Asia — was completely destroyed. Only ruins, smoke, and fire remained. The surviving women were taken captive and prepared to be carried across the sea into slavery.

Among them were:

- Hecuba, queen of Troy
- Andromache, Hector's widow
- Polyxena, Hecuba's daughter
- Many grieving mothers and children

Hecuba sat watching her city burn, mourning everything she had lost: her husband, sons, daughters, home, and kingdom.

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### The Death of Astyanax

- Andromache still had her little son **Astyanax**, Hector's child.
- She **hoped the Greeks would spare him because he was only a boy.**
- But a Greek **herald** came with terrible news: **The child must die.**
- The **Greeks feared that one day he would grow up and avenge Troy.**
- Astyanax was **taken and thrown from the walls of the city.**
- Before this, the Greeks had already sacrificed Polyxena at Achilles' tomb.
- With the death of Hector's son, Troy's royal family was finally destroyed.

### The End of Troy

- As the Trojan women waited beside the Greek ships, they watched the last flames consume their city.
- Troy, once glorious and powerful, disappeared forever beneath smoke and ashes.
- The women were separated and carried away into slavery. And so ended the Trojan War: not with glory, but with ruin, grief, and suffering.

## THE ADVENTURES OF ODYSSEUS

<b>Odysseus</b>	King of Ithaca; clever, resourceful hero trying to return home after Troy
<b>Penelope</b>	Faithful and intelligent wife of Odysseus
<b>Telemachus</b>	Brave son searching for news of his father
<b>Athena</b>	Goddess who protects and guides Odysseus
<b>Poseidon</b>	Enemy of Odysseus after the blinding of Polyphemus
<b>Calypso</b>	Nymph who imprisoned Odysseus out of love
<b>Circe</b>	Powerful witch who later helps Odysseus
<b>Polyphemus</b>	Giant Cyclops blinded by Odysseus
<b>Nausicaa</b>	Kind princess who helps Odysseus
<b>Alcinous</b>	Hospitable ruler who sends Odysseus home
<b>Arete</b>	Intelligent queen respected by all
<b>Menelaus</b>	Greek king who informs Telemachus about Odysseus
<b>Helen</b>	Famous beauty connected to the Trojan War
<b>Nestor</b>	Elderly Greek king known for wisdom
<b>Hermes</b>	God who helps Odysseus against Circe and Calypso
<b>Eumaeus</b>	Loyal servant who aids Odysseus
<b>Eurycleia</b>	Trusted nurse of Odysseus
<b>Argos</b>	Odysseus' loyal dog who recognizes him after twenty years
<b>Teiresias</b>	Spirit who warns Odysseus in the Underworld
<b>Aeolus</b>	Ruler of the winds
<b>Scylla</b>	Monster that devours sailors
<b>Charybdis</b>	Whirlpool monster opposite Scylla
<b>Sirens</b>	Creatures whose songs destroy sailors
<b>Helios</b>	Sun god who punishes the crew
<b>Cassandra</b>	Prophetess cursed never to be believe

- After the Greeks finally defeated Trojan War and destroyed the city of Troy, the Greek fleet sailed home believing their suffering was over. But their troubles were only beginning.
- The **Greeks had become arrogant after their victory.** They forgot to honor the gods properly, and some committed terrible acts of disrespect. One of the worst crimes happened in the temple of Athena. There, **Cassandra, daughter of King Priam, clung to Athena's sacred image for protection while the city burned around her.**
- **Cassandra had once been loved by Apollo, who gave her the gift of prophecy. But after she rejected him, Apollo cursed her so that no one would ever believe her predictions.** She had warned the Trojans about the wooden horse, but they ignored her.
- Now, **in Athena's own temple, the Greek warrior Ajax the Lesser dragged Cassandra away by force.** The Greeks did nothing to stop the sacrilege. **Athena became furious and went to Poseidon asking for vengeance upon the Greeks.**
- **Poseidon agreed. Soon terrible storms struck the returning fleet. Many ships were destroyed. Ajax himself survived a shipwreck and clung to a rock, boasting proudly that even the sea could not kill him.** His arrogance angered Poseidon, who shattered the rock and drowned him.
- Many Greeks suffered on their journey home, but none suffered longer than **Odysseus. For ten years he wandered the seas before he could return to his homeland, Ithaca.**

## GREEK MYTHOLOGY REVIEWER

### Trouble in Ithaca

- While Odysseus wandered, his home fell into chaos.
- His faithful wife Penelope still hoped he would return, though almost everyone believed him dead. Their **son Telemachus had grown from a child into a young man.**
- Suitors from Ithaca and nearby islands crowded Odysseus' palace, **demanding Penelope choose a new husband.** They **acted like masters of the house**—eating Odysseus' cattle, drinking his wine, insulting his servants, and mocking Telemachus.
- **Penelope hated them all, but she was nearly powerless.**
- To delay remarriage, she devised a clever trick. **She announced she would marry only after finishing a burial shroud for Odysseus' elderly father, Laertes.** Every day she wove the cloth, but **every night she secretly unraveled her work.** For years the trick succeeded until **one of her maids betrayed her.** After that, the suitors became even more demanding.

### Athena Helps Telemachus

- Although Athena had once been angry at all the Greeks, **she still loved Odysseus because of his intelligence and cunning.** After ten years, her sympathy returned. **She decided to help him.**
- At that time **Odysseus was trapped on the island of the nymph Calypso.** She loved him deeply and refused to let him leave, though she treated him kindly.
- Athena went to Olympus while Poseidon was away visiting the Ethiopians. She persuaded Zeus and the other gods that Odysseus deserved to go home. **Zeus agreed to send Hermes to order Calypso to release him.**
- Meanwhile **Athena traveled to Ithaca disguised as a traveler.** She **encouraged Telemachus to search for news of his father.** She told him to **visit Nestor and Menelaus.**
- Telemachus gathered courage from her words. Though the suitors mocked him, Athena secretly helped him prepare a ship. **Disguised as Mentor, an old friend of Odysseus, she sailed with him to Pylos.**

### Telemachus Visits Nestor and Menelaus

- Nestor welcomed Telemachus warmly but had **no news of Odysseus.** He sent the young man onward to Sparta to visit Menelaus.
- At Sparta, Telemachus entered a palace of incredible splendor. Menelaus and his wife Helen treated him with honor and hospitality.
- **Helen immediately recognized him as Odysseus' son because he resembled his father.**
- Menelaus then told Telemachus how he had once **trapped the sea-god Proteus in Egypt.** **Proteus had revealed that Odysseus was alive but imprisoned on Calypso's island,** longing desperately for home.
- Hearing this filled Telemachus with sorrow and hope at the same time.

### Hermes Visits Calypso

- Hermes flew swiftly to Calypso's island **carrying Zeus's command.**
- **Calypso protested bitterly.** She had saved Odysseus when he was shipwrecked and loved him sincerely. Still, **she could not disobey Zeus.**
- Reluctantly she **helped Odysseus build a strong raft.** She supplied him with food, wine, and clothing. **Joyfully Odysseus set sail at last.**
- For **seventeen peaceful days he traveled safely.** Then Poseidon saw him.
- Enraged that the gods had freed Odysseus, **Poseidon summoned a terrible storm.** Huge waves shattered the raft. **Odysseus nearly drowned.**
- A **sea-goddess named Ino took pity on him.** She gave him a **magical veil to keep him safe in the water** and **advised him to abandon the raft.**
- Odysseus **swam for two days and nights before finally reaching land** exhausted and naked.

### Nausicaa and the Phaeacians

- The land belonged to the **Phaeacians, whose king was Alcinous and queen was Arete.**
- Their daughter **Nausicaa went the next morning with her maids to wash clothes by the river** near where Odysseus slept.
- After washing, the girls played ball and laughed loudly, waking Odysseus. He stepped out from the bushes looking wild and ragged. The maids fled in fear except Nausicaa, who bravely remained.
- **Odysseus respectfully begged her help.** Impressed by his speech and manners, she gave him clothing and directed him to her parents' palace.
- There **Odysseus approached Queen Arete as a suppliant.** King Alcinous welcomed him generously and **promised to send him home safely.**
- The next day Odysseus finally revealed his identity and told the full story of his adventures.

### The Lotus-Eaters (mao nani iyang mga adventures)

- After leaving Troy, **Odysseus and his men wandered for nine days before reaching the land of the Lotus-Eaters.**

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- The inhabitants offered Odysseus' men lotus flowers to eat. Whoever tasted them lost all desire to return home and wanted only to remain there forever.
- Odysseus dragged the affected men back to the ships by force and ordered the fleet to sail immediately.

### The Cyclops Polyphemus

- Next they reached the island of the Cyclopes. There Odysseus and his men entered the cave of the giant Polyphemus.
- Polyphemus trapped them inside with a huge stone and began eating the men alive.
- Odysseus devised a plan. He gave the Cyclops strong wine until he became drunk. When Polyphemus asked his name, Odysseus cleverly replied, "Nobody."
- After the Cyclops fell asleep, Odysseus and his men sharpened a stake and blinded his single eye.
- When the Cyclops screamed for help, he shouted that "Nobody" was hurting him, so the other Cyclopes ignored him.
- The next morning Odysseus and his surviving men escaped by clinging beneath the Cyclops' sheep.
- But as they sailed away, Odysseus foolishly shouted his real name in pride. Polyphemus prayed to Poseidon for revenge, and Poseidon cursed Odysseus to suffer long before reaching home.

### Aeolus and the Bag of Winds

- Odysseus next visited Aeolus, ruler of the winds.
- Aeolus treated the Greeks kindly and gave Odysseus a leather bag containing all dangerous winds, leaving only the gentle west wind free to carry them home.
- At last Ithaca came into sight.
- But while Odysseus slept, his crew foolishly believed the bag contained treasure. They opened it, releasing the winds. A terrible storm blew them far away again.

### The Laestrygonians

- They then reached the land of the Laestrygonians.
- The giants attacked the ships, smashing them with huge rocks and devouring the sailors. Only Odysseus' ship escaped because it had remained outside the harbor.

### Circe the Witch

- Afterward they arrived at the island of the enchantress Circe.
- She invited some of Odysseus' men into her house, fed them enchanted food, and transformed them into pigs.
- One man escaped and warned Odysseus.
- Determined to save his companions, Odysseus went alone to confront Circe. On the way Hermes appeared and gave him a magical herb that protected him from her magic.
- When Circe's spell failed, she became astonished and fell in love with Odysseus. She restored the men to human form and welcomed them warmly.
- Odysseus and his crew stayed with Circe for an entire year.

### Journey to the Underworld

- Eventually Circe told Odysseus he must travel to the realm of the dead and seek the prophet Teiresias.
- Odysseus sailed to the edge of the world and performed sacrifices to summon the spirits of the dead.
- Teiresias warned him not to harm the sacred cattle of the Sun God. If the cattle were harmed, Odysseus' men would die.
- Odysseus also met many dead heroes including Achilles and Ajax.
- The countless spirits terrified him, and he hurried back to the ship.

### The Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis

- Circe next warned Odysseus about the Sirens.
- Their enchanting song caused sailors to forget everything and sail to destruction.
- Odysseus ordered his men to plug their ears with wax, but he himself wished to hear the song. The crew tied him tightly to the mast while the Sirens sang promises of wisdom and knowledge. Odysseus desperately struggled to reach them, but the ropes held him until the danger passed.
- Soon after came the terrifying passage between Scylla and Charybdis.
- Scylla snatched six sailors from the ship and devoured them.

### The Cattle of the Sun

- At last, they reached the island of the Sun God Helios.
- Odysseus warned his men never to touch the sacred cattle. But while Odysseus slept, hunger overcame the crew and they slaughtered the animals. Helios demanded punishment from Zeus.
- As soon as the ship left the island, Zeus hurled a thunderbolt that destroyed it. Every sailor drowned except Odysseus.
- He drifted alone across the sea until he reached Calypso's island, where he remained trapped for many years.

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### Return to Ithaca (ok back to reality nani dili na throwback)

- After finishing his story, the Phaeacians prepared a ship and rich gifts for Odysseus. While he slept onboard, they carried him safely to Ithaca and laid him gently on the shore beside his treasures.
- Athena appeared disguised as a shepherd and revealed that he was finally home. She transformed him into an old beggar so he could secretly observe the situation in his palace.
- Odysseus first visited his loyal swineherd Eumaeus, who welcomed the disguised stranger kindly.
- Soon Athena brought Telemachus home. Father and son finally reunited after twenty years apart. Athena briefly restored Odysseus' true appearance, and Telemachus at first thought he was a god. Then Odysseus revealed his identity, and the two embraced in tears. Together they planned revenge against the suitors.

### Argos the Dog

- When Odysseus finally entered his palace disguised as a beggar, an old dog lying nearby lifted his head weakly. It was Argos, whom Odysseus had raised before leaving for Troy.
- Though neglected and dying, Argos immediately recognized his master. He wagged his tail faintly, then died after seeing Odysseus one last time.
- Odysseus secretly wiped away tears.

### Penelope and the Bow Contest

- The suitors insulted and abused the disguised Odysseus. One even struck him.
- Meanwhile Penelope devised a plan. She brought out Odysseus' great bow and announced she would marry whichever man could string it and shoot an arrow through twelve rings aligned in a row.
- None of the suitors could even bend the bow.
- Finally, Odysseus asked to try. The suitors protested angrily, but Telemachus insisted.
- Effortlessly Odysseus strung the bow and shot the arrow perfectly through all twelve rings.
- Immediately he revealed himself.

### The Slaughter of the Suitors

- Odysseus seized the doorway while Telemachus stood beside him armed with spears.
- Then Odysseus shot the first suitor dead.
- Panic spread. The suitors searched desperately for weapons, but Telemachus had hidden them earlier. Odysseus continued shooting arrow after arrow while Athena guided and protected him.
- Soon the hall became a battlefield. The suitors fell one by one until all were dead except the bard, whom Odysseus spared because the gods had given him the gift of song.
- Afterward the servants cleaned the bloody hall.

### Odysseus and Penelope Reunite

- The old nurse Eurycleia ran upstairs to tell Penelope that Odysseus had returned.
- Penelope could hardly believe it. When she finally came down, she sat silently studying the man before her. She feared being deceived. Then she tested him secretly by ordering their marriage bed moved.
- Odysseus reacted immediately. He angrily declared the bed could never be moved because he himself had built it around the trunk of a living olive tree rooted in the earth.
- At that moment Penelope knew beyond doubt that this truly was her husband.
- After twenty years of war, wandering, sorrow, and hope, Odysseus had finally come home.

## THE ADVENTURES OF AENEAS

<b>Aeneas</b>	Son of Venus and Anchises. A Trojan hero who escapes the fall of Troy and journeys to Italy to found the race that will become the Romans.
<b>Venus</b>	Mother of Aeneas. She constantly protects and guides him.
<b>Anchises</b>	Elderly father of Aeneas. Wise and respected; later appears in the Underworld.
<b>Ascanius</b>	Also called Iulus. Young son of Aeneas and future founder of Alba Longa.
<b>Achates</b>	Aeneas' loyal and faithful friend.
<b>Juno</b>	Bitter enemy of the Trojans. She tries constantly to stop Aeneas from reaching Italy.
<b>Jupiter</b>	of the gods. He ensures that fate is fulfilled.
<b>Neptune</b>	Calms the storm raised against Aeneas.
<b>Aeolus</b>	Releases the winds for Juno.
<b>Cupid</b>	Son of Venus who causes Dido to fall in love with Aeneas.
<b>Dido</b>	Powerful and tragic queen who loves Aeneas deeply.
<b>Mercury</b>	Sent by Jupiter to command Aeneas to continue his destiny.
<b>Andromache</b>	Former wife of Hector who later marries Helenus.
<b>Helenus</b>	Trojan seer who advises Aeneas on his journey.
<b>Polyphemus</b>	Blind giant encountered near Sicily.
<b>Palinurus</b>	Faithful helmsman who dies near Italy.

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<b>The Sibyl</b>	Guides Aeneas into the Underworld.
<b>Charon</b>	Ferries souls across the rivers of Hades.
<b>Cerberus</b>	Guardian of the Underworld.
<b>Minos</b>	Passes judgment on souls in the Underworld.
<b>Rhadamanthus</b>	Punishes the wicked dead.
<b>Latinus</b>	Welcomes Aeneas and wishes him to marry Lavinia.
<b>Lavinia</b>	Daughter of Latinus and destined bride of Aeneas.
<b>Amata</b>	Wife of Latinus who opposes Aeneas.
<b>Turnus</b>	Main enemy of Aeneas in Italy and rival for Lavinia.
<b>Alecto</b>	Sent by Juno to spread hatred and war.
<b>Camilla</b>	Swift and fearless female warrior allied with Turnus.
<b>Evander</b>	Ally of Aeneas and father of Pallas.
<b>Pallas</b>	Young warrior who fights beside Aeneas.
<b>Mezentius</b>	Ruthless ally of Turnus.
<b>Nisus</b>	Loyal friend of Euryalus.
<b>Euryalus</b>	Brave companion of Nisus.

### Part One: From Troy to Italy

- After the fall of Troy, Aeneas escaped the burning city with the help of his mother Venus. Carrying his old father Anchises on his shoulders and leading his little son Ascanius beside him, he sailed away with many Trojans who had survived the war. They hoped to find a new homeland where they could finally live in peace.
- At first, they did not know where they were meant to settle. Several times they tried to build cities, but disasters and bad omens always forced them away. Finally, while they were on Crete, Aeneas received a dream telling him that their true destiny was in Italy, then called Hesperia, "the Western Land."
- Encouraged by this prophecy, the Trojans sailed westward across unknown seas.

### The Harpies and Helenus

- During their wanderings they landed in a place haunted by the terrible Harpies, horrible creatures who attacked them savagely. Unlike Jason and the Argonauts, the Trojans could not defeat them and were forced to flee.
- Later they arrived at a land ruled by Helenus and Andromache. The Trojans were astonished because Andromache had once been Hector's wife. After Troy fell, she had become the captive of Neoptolemus, Achilles' son, but after his death she married Helenus.
- Helenus warmly welcomed Aeneas and gave him important advice. He warned him not to land on the eastern coast of Italy because Greeks lived there. Instead, he must reach the western coast. He also warned him never to sail through the dangerous strait between Italy and Sicily where Scylla and Charybdis waited. Instead, he should sail around Sicily.

### The Cyclops

- The Trojans followed Helenus' advice and rounded Sicily. But Helenus had forgotten to warn them that Cyclopes now lived there.
- They landed safely at night, but early the next morning a miserable man came running toward them. He was one of Ulysses' sailors who had been left behind in Polyphemus' cave. He warned them that the island was full of giant Cyclopes.
- The Trojans hurried back to their ships. As they rowed away, the blind Cyclops Polyphemus came down to the shore, his wounded eye still bleeding. Hearing the sound of the oars, he rushed into the sea, but the Trojans escaped before he could reach them.

### Juno's Storm

- Soon after, a terrible storm struck them while they sailed around Sicily. Huge waves rose so high they seemed to touch the stars. The storm was no natural disaster—it had been caused by Juno.
- Juno hated all Trojans because of Paris' judgment long ago. But she especially hated Aeneas because she knew his descendants would someday found Rome, and Rome was destined to destroy her beloved city, Carthage.
- She persuaded Aeolus, King of the Winds, to unleash the storm and destroy the Trojan fleet. The Trojans would have died if Neptune had not intervened. Angry that Juno interfered with his sea, Neptune calmed the waters and saved them.
- The battered Trojans finally landed on the coast of Africa near Carthage.

### Aeneas and Dido

- Carthage was ruled by the beautiful widowed queen Dido. Juno immediately formed a plan: if Dido and Aeneas fell in love, Aeneas might forget Italy and remain in Carthage forever.

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- Venus suspected Juno's plan and **sought help from Jupiter**. Jupiter assured her that fate would not fail. Aeneas' descendants would indeed find the mighty Roman Empire.
- Still, **Venus wanted to protect her son**. She **asked Cupid to make Dido fall hopelessly in love with Aeneas**.
- The next morning Aeneas and Achates explored the land. **Venus, disguised as a huntress, guided them safely to Carthage**. **Hidden in a magical mist**, they entered the city unseen.
- In a great temple Aeneas saw scenes from the Trojan War carved on the walls. Seeing the sufferings of Troy remembered even in a foreign land gave him hope. **He said: "Here too there are tears for things."**
- Soon Dido appeared, magnificent and gracious. When Aeneas revealed his identity, she welcomed him warmly and invited the Trojans into her city.
- That night she held a grand banquet where Aeneas told the story of Troy's fall and his long wanderings. Dido listened with growing love.
- Cupid's power worked perfectly. **Dido fell completely in love with Aeneas and treated him as an equal ruler of Carthage**. She gave him gifts, organized hunts and celebrations for him, and begged him to tell his adventures again and again.
- **Aeneas grew comfortable in Carthage**. Life there was pleasant, and thoughts of Italy slowly faded.

### Mercury's Message and Dido's Death

- Jupiter finally decided that Aeneas had delayed long enough. He sent Mercury to remind the hero of his destiny. Mercury found Aeneas dressed in luxurious clothes given by Dido. The god sharply rebuked him:
- **"Why are you wasting time here in idle luxury?"**
- He reminded Aeneas that he was destined to found a great race in Italy. Ashamed and troubled, **Aeneas secretly prepared to leave**. But **Dido discovered** his plans and confronted him.
- At first, she begged gently. She reminded him how she had saved him and given him everything. But **Aeneas replied that he had never promised marriage** and that Jupiter commanded him to leave.
- Heartbroken and furious, Dido fled from him. That same night the Trojans sailed away secretly. From his ship Aeneas saw a **great fire burning in Carthage but did not know its cause**. It was **Dido's funeral pyre**.
- Unable to bear her grief, **she had killed herself**.

### Part Two: The Descent into the Underworld

- The Trojans finally **reached Italy**. **Near the end of the voyage, however, Aeneas lost his faithful pilot Palinurus, who drowned at sea**.
- Remembering Helenus' advice, Aeneas went to **seek the Sibyl of Cumae**, a prophetess who could guide him. She told him he **must journey into the Underworld to meet his father Anchises**.
- Before entering Hades, he had to **find a sacred golden bough hidden in a forest**. Guided by two **doves sent by Venus**, Aeneas found the shining branch and carried it to the Sibyl.
- Together they descended into the world of the dead.

### The Underworld

- The entrance was terrifying. The **Sibyl sacrificed black bullocks to Hecate**, while the earth shook and dogs howled in the darkness. Inside, Aeneas saw dreadful shapes: Disease, Hunger, Fear, War, and Discord. Eventually they reached the rivers of the dead where countless spirits crowded the shore begging Charon to ferry them across. **The Sibyl explained that the wandering souls were those whose bodies had never been buried**. Charon at first refused to carry a living man, but the **sight of the golden bough persuaded him**. After passing Cerberus with the help of drugged cakes, Aeneas entered deeper regions of the Underworld.
- He saw Minos judging the dead and then entered the **Fields of Mourning where unhappy lovers dwelled**. There **he saw Dido**. Filled with sorrow, **he tried to explain that he had left her unwillingly**. But Dido would not answer him. Without a word she turned away and disappeared into the shadows.
- Deeply grieved, Aeneas continued onward.

### Anchises' Prophecy

- Finally, **Aeneas reached the peaceful Elysian Fields where the noble and blessed dead lived**. There he found Anchises. Father and son embraced joyfully. **Anchises then led Aeneas to the River Lethe where souls waited to drink forgetfulness before returning to life**.
- Anchises showed Aeneas the spirits of his future descendants—the **future Romans who would rule the world**. He described the greatness Rome would achieve and **instructed Aeneas on how to survive the coming wars in Italy**. Strengthened by this vision, Aeneas returned to the world above.

### Part Three: The War in Italy

- When Aeneas arrived in **Latium, King Latinus** welcomed him kindly. A **prophecy had warned Latinus that his daughter Lavinia must marry a foreigner destined for greatness. He believed Aeneas was that man**.
- But Juno refused to give up. She **summoned the Fury Alecto to spread hatred and war**.
- First **Alecto drove Queen Amata into madness so she violently opposed Lavinia's marriage to Aeneas**.
- Then she enraged Turnus, king of the Rutulians and Lavinia's former suitor.

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- Finally, she **caused Ascanius to accidentally kill a beloved pet stag belonging to local farmers**. Furious fighting immediately broke out between the Trojans and the Latins. War became unavoidable.

### Allies and Warriors

- Turnus gathered powerful allies:
  - The **cruel warrior** Mezentius
  - The **fierce maiden warrior** Camilla
  - The **armies** of the Rutulians and Latins
- Meanwhile, the **river god Tiber appeared to Aeneas in a dream** and advised him to **seek help from King Evander**.
- Evander welcomed Aeneas warmly and **showed him the simple hills and fields that would one day become mighty Rome**. He sent his son Pallas with Aeneas and urged the Etruscans to join the Trojans against Mezentius.

### Nisus and Euryalus

- While Aeneas sought allies, the Trojan camp came under attack from Turnus.
- Two Trojan friends, Nisus and Euryalus, volunteered to sneak through enemy lines to warn Aeneas**.
- The older Nisus tried to leave Euryalus behind for safety, but the younger warrior insisted on coming.
- At night they **crept through the sleeping enemy camp**, killing many soldiers silently. But **dawn came too soon**. **Enemy horsemen spotted Euryalus because of his shining helmet**.
- The two friends became **separated**. Nisus returned to rescue Euryalus and fought desperately against overwhelming odds. But **Euryalus was killed, and Nisus died beside him after avenging his friend**.
- Their loyalty and friendship became one of the most tragic moments in the story.

### The Final Battles

- Aeneas eventually **returned with Etruscan allies and saved the Trojan camp**. From this point onward, the war became increasingly brutal. Many heroes died:
  - Camilla fell after fighting bravely.
  - Mezentius was finally slain.
  - Young Pallas was killed by Turnus, filling Aeneas with terrible rage.
- Aeneas himself gradually changed. Earlier he had seemed compassionate and human, but **in battle he became almost superhuman and unstoppable**. Finally, **Aeneas and Turnus agreed to settle the war through single combat**.
- Turnus fought bravely, but **Aeneas was too powerful**. During the duel Turnus fell wounded and begged for mercy. **For a moment Aeneas hesitated**.
- Then **he saw that Turnus wore the belt of the dead Pallas, whom he had killed**. Furious with grief and vengeance, **Aeneas drove his sword into Turnus and killed him**. The poem ends there.
- Aeneas later married Lavinia and became the ancestor of the Roman people**. Through his descendants would come the founders of Rome and eventually the mighty Roman Empire, destined—as Virgil says—to **rule the world, spare the humble, and crush the proud**.

## THE HOUSE OF ATREUS

<b>Tantalus</b>	Ancestor of the House of Atreus. His terrible crime against the gods brought a curse upon his descendants.
<b>Pelops</b>	Son of Tantalus who was restored to life by the gods.
<b>Hippodamia</b>	Wife of Pelops, won through a deadly chariot race.
<b>Myrtilus</b>	Charioteer bribed to help Pelops win Hippodamia.
<b>Niobe</b>	Proud queen whose arrogance against the gods caused the death of all her children.
<b>Amphion</b>	Husband of Niobe and gifted musician whose music moved stones.
<b>Apollo</b>	Son of Leto who punished Niobe.
<b>Artemis</b>	Daughter of Leto who helped punish Niobe.
<b>Atreus</b>	Son of Pelops whose terrible revenge deepened the family curse.
<b>Thyestes</b>	Brother and enemy of Atreus.
<b>Agamemnon</b>	Son of Atreus and commander of the Greek forces in the Trojan War.
<b>Menelaus</b>	Brother of Agamemnon and husband of Helen.
<b>Helen</b>	Wife of Menelaus whose abduction caused the Trojan War.
<b>Clytemnestra</b>	Wife of Agamemnon who murders him to avenge their daughter.
<b>Iphigenia</b>	Sacrificed by her father so the Greek fleet could sail to Troy.
<b>Electra</b>	Loyal daughter who longs for Orestes to avenge their father.
<b>Orestes</b>	Son of Agamemnon who avenges his father by killing his mother.
<b>Aegisthus</b>	Son of Thyestes and enemy of Agamemnon's family.

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<b>Cassandra</b>	Daughter of Priam brought home by Agamemnon as a captive.
<b>Pylades</b>	Loyal companion and cousin of Orestes.
<b>Athena</b>	Helps end the curse on the House of Atreus.
<b>Apollo</b>	Commands Orestes to avenge his father.
<b>Hermes</b>	Warns Aegisthus not to kill Agamemnon.
<b>The Erinyes</b>	Spirits of vengeance who pursue Orestes.
<b>The Eumenides</b>	The transformed Furies after Athena establishes mercy.

### Introduction to the House of Atreus

- The **House of Atreus was one of the most tragic and cursed families in Greek mythology**. Generation after generation, murder, revenge, betrayal, and suffering destroyed the family.
- The curse **began with Tantalus**, whose crime against the gods brought doom upon all his descendants. From him came Pelops, then Atreus and Thyestes, and later Agamemnon, Menelaus, Electra, and Orestes.
- The story is about how one act of evil leads to another, until finally the cycle of vengeance is broken.

### Tantalus and the Beginning of the Curse

- Tantalus was the **son of Zeus and greatly favored by the gods**. He alone among mortals was allowed to dine with them on Olympus and taste nectar and ambrosia. But despite this honor, he committed one of the worst crimes in mythology.
- Wanting **either to mock the gods or test** whether they were truly all-knowing, **he killed his only son, Pelops. He cut the boy apart, boiled him in a cauldron, and served the flesh to the gods at a banquet.**
- The **gods immediately recognized** the horror and refused to eat. **Only one goddess—some say Demeter, others say Thetis—accidentally ate part of the shoulder before realizing the truth.** The **gods restored Pelops to life and replaced the missing shoulder with one made of ivory**. Tantalus, however, received **eternal punishment in the Underworld**.
- He **stood forever in a pool of water beneath fruit trees heavy with ripe fruit**. Whenever he bent down to drink, the water disappeared. Whenever he reached for the fruit, the wind blew it beyond his grasp. Thus he **suffered eternal hunger and thirst**. This crime began the curse upon his family.

### Pelops and Hippodamia

- Unlike most of his descendants, **Pelops lived successfully** for many years. He **fell in love with the princess Hippodamia**. But **her father did not want her to marry**. He challenged every suitor to a **chariot race**. If the **suitor lost, he was killed**. Many young men **died trying**. Pelops entered the race anyway. According to **one version, Poseidon gave him divine horses. Another version says Hippodamia herself helped him because she loved him and wanted to escape her father's deadly contests.**
- She **bribed** her father's charioteer, Myrtilus, to **remove the pins from the king's chariot wheels**. During the race the **chariot crashed, killing Hippodamia's father** and allowing Pelops to win. Later **Pelops killed Myrtilus**. As he died, **Myrtilus cursed Pelops and his descendants**.
- Some believed this curse caused the later disasters of the House of Atreus, though many believed the true source remained Tantalus' wickedness.

### Niobe and Her Pride

- **Pelops' sister Niobe** also seemed blessed at first. She **married Amphion, king of Thebes**, a wonderful **musician whose lyre music could move stones themselves**. When Amphion and his brother Zethus built the walls of Thebes, the stones followed Amphion's music into place. **Niobe had seven sons and seven daughters and believed herself greater than all other women.**
- Her pride became dangerous. **She mocked the goddess Leto**, saying:
  - Leto had only two children, Apollo and Artemis.
  - Niobe had fourteen children.
  - Niobe was rich, powerful, and queenly, while Leto had once wandered homeless.
- **Niobe demanded that the people worship her instead of Leto**. The gods never ignored such arrogance.
- **Apollo and Artemis descended from Olympus and shot down all fourteen of Niobe's children** with their arrows.
- Niobe was destroyed by grief. She sat motionless beside the bodies of her children until **she turned into stone**. Yet even as stone, **tears flowed endlessly from her face**.

### Atreus and Thyestes

- **Pelops had two sons: Atreus and Thyestes**. The evil of the family curse fully appeared in them.
- **Thyestes seduced Atreus' wife**. When Atreus discovered the betrayal, he **planned a revenge** so horrible it became one of the darkest crimes in mythology. He **killed Thyestes' young sons, cut them apart, cooked them, and served them as food to their father at a banquet**. Only after Thyestes had eaten did Atreus reveal the truth. Horrified, **Thyestes cursed the House of Atreus**. From this point onward, the family became trapped in endless revenge and bloodshed.

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### Agamemnon and the Sacrifice of Iphigenia

- **Atreus' sons were Agamemnon and Menelaus.** Menelaus married Helen, whose abduction started the Trojan War. Agamemnon became leader of the Greek army.
- Before the Greeks could sail to Troy, however, the winds stopped. The **prophet declared that Artemis demanded the sacrifice of Agamemnon's daughter, Iphigenia.**
- Agamemnon gave in to the demands of the army and sacrificed his innocent daughter so the fleet could sail. This act destroyed his family. **His wife Clytemnestra never forgave him.**

### Agamemnon Returns from Troy

- Ten years later Troy fell, and Agamemnon returned home victorious.
- At first it seemed he was the most fortunate of men:
  - He survived the war.
  - His ships survived the storms.
  - He returned in glory and triumph.
- But dark rumors surrounded the palace. The **people remembered Iphigenia's death and feared vengeance was waiting.** **Clytemnestra had taken a lover during Agamemnon's absence—Aegisthus, son of Thyestes.** Together they planned revenge. Agamemnon returned bringing Cassandra, the Trojan prophetess, as his captive. Cassandra immediately sensed doom in the palace. She spoke terrifying prophecies:
  - She saw **blood** covering the house.
  - She spoke of children murdered long ago.
  - She foretold her own death and Agamemnon's.
- **No one could stop what was coming.**

### The Murder of Agamemnon

- Agamemnon entered the palace with Clytemnestra. Soon cries rang out from inside.
- The elders outside heard Agamemnon scream that he had been struck down. Then the palace doors opened. **Clytemnestra stood there covered in blood** beside the bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra.
- She openly declared that **she herself had killed her husband.** She did not deny the murder or apologize for it. She believed she had delivered **justice for Iphigenia's death.**
- To her, Agamemnon was not a victim but a murderer punished for killing his own daughter.
- Aegisthus appeared beside her, claiming vengeance as well for the crimes Atreus committed against Thyestes. Together they ruled the kingdom. But their crime only continued the curse.

### Electra and Orestes

- **Agamemnon's children** Electra and Orestes survived.
- **Orestes had been sent away** as a child for **safety.** **Electra remained behind and suffered years of misery** under Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. Her entire life became focused on **one hope: That Orestes would return and avenge their father.** But the problem was terrible.
- **If Orestes avenged Agamemnon, he would have to kill his own mother. If he refused, he would betray his father.**
- Caught between two terrible wrongs, **Orestes traveled to Delphi and asked Apollo for guidance.**
- Apollo commanded him: **"Slay the two who slew."**
- Orestes understood that **he could not escape his fate.**

### The Revenge of Orestes

- Orestes returned secretly to Mycenae with his loyal friend Pylades.
- At Agamemnon's tomb, Electra recognized her brother and welcomed him with overwhelming love and relief. **Together they planned revenge.**
- Orestes and Pylades entered the palace **pretending to announce that Orestes had died.** Clytemnestra and Aegisthus welcomed them inside. **Once inside, Orestes killed Aegisthus.**
- Clytemnestra then came out holding a **battle-ax,** prepared to defend herself. But when she saw Orestes, she tried another approach. **She reminded him she was his mother.** She begged him to remember how she had nursed him as a baby. For a moment **Orestes hesitated.** Then **Pylades reminded him of Apollo's command.** **Orestes** followed his mother into the palace and **killed her.**

### The Furies Pursue Orestes

- After the murders, Orestes was immediately overcome with horror.
- **He began seeing the Erinyes—the Furies—spirits of vengeance** who punished those guilty of shedding family blood. To everyone else they were invisible.
- But Orestes saw **terrifying black-robed women with snakes in their hair and blood** dripping from their eyes. Driven mad by guilt and pursued by the Furies, **he wandered for years.**
- Yet suffering changed him. Unlike earlier members of his family, **Orestes truly regretted what he had done and sought purification.**

### The End of the Curse

- Eventually **Apollo sent Orestes to Athens to stand trial** before Athena.

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- Apollo defended him, arguing that Orestes had obeyed divine command.
- The Furies demanded punishment for **matricide**.
- Orestes admitted what he had done but insisted he had suffered and been purified. **Athena judged the case**. Instead of continuing endless revenge, **she introduced mercy and lawful justice**.
- She persuaded the Furies to accept the decision and abandon vengeance.
- The terrible Erinyes were **transformed into the Eumenides—the “Kindly Ones” or “Benignant Ones.”**
- **Orestes was declared free**.
- For the first time in generations, the cycle of bloodshed ended.
- **The curse of the House of Atreus was finally broken**.

## IPHIGENIA AMONG THE TAURIANS

Iphigenia	Daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Supposedly sacrificed at Aulis, but secretly saved by Artemis and taken to Tauris to serve as priestess.
Orestes	Son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Haunted after killing his mother to avenge his father.
Pylades	Orestes’ loyal cousin and closest friend, devoted to him through every hardship.
Artemis	Goddess of the hunt and protector of young creatures. She rescues Iphigenia from sacrifice.
Athena	Goddess of wisdom who finally intervenes to save the Greeks.
Clytemnestra	Mother of Iphigenia and Orestes.
Agamemnon	Leader of the Greeks in the Trojan War and father of Iphigenia and Orestes.
Thoas	King of the Taurians.
Apollo	God who commands Orestes to steal the sacred image of Artemis.
Erinyes	The Furies who continue to torment Orestes for killing his mother.

- Long after the terrible events in the House of Atreus, another story arose about **Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra**.
- The earlier version of the myth said that she had truly been sacrificed at Aulis so the Greek fleet could sail to Troy. But later Greeks disliked the idea that a noble goddess such as Artemis would demand the blood of an innocent girl. Artemis was known as the gentle protector of young creatures and helpless children. Many people believed such cruelty could never belong to her. So, another version of the story developed.

### The Miracle at Aulis

- At Aulis, the Greek army waited impatiently for favorable winds to carry them to Troy. **The ships could not sail because Artemis was angry**. The seers declared that only the sacrifice of Iphigenia would appease the goddess.
- Agamemnon had his daughter brought to Aulis. Some stories said she was **deceived into believing she would marry Achilles there**. Instead, she discovered she had been brought for sacrifice.
- When the time came, the soldiers arrived to lead her to the altar. Her mother, Clytemnestra, stayed beside her in grief and horror. Yet Iphigenia herself behaved bravely. She even told her mother not to accompany her to the altar because it would only increase their suffering. Clytemnestra remained behind in agony.
- After some time, a messenger came running toward her with astonishing news. He declared that a **miracle had occurred before the sacrifice** could be completed.
- As the priest raised the knife to strike Iphigenia, everyone present lowered their heads in sorrow and shame. **No one wanted to witness the death of the innocent girl**.
- Then suddenly the priest cried out in amazement. The people looked up and saw that **Iphigenia had disappeared**.
- In her place beside the altar lay a **deer with its throat already cut**. The priest proclaimed that **Artemis herself had removed the girl and provided the animal as the true sacrifice**. The **goddess would not allow human blood to stain her altar**. The messenger told Clytemnestra that her daughter had clearly been taken away by divine power.

### Artemis Takes Iphigenia to Tauris

- But Iphigenia had not been taken to Olympus. Artemis carried her far away to the **land of the Taurians**, on the shore of what the Greeks called the **Unfriendly Sea**, the region now known as Crimea.
- The **Taurians were fierce and savage people**. Their custom was terrible: **whenever Greeks landed in their country, they were captured and sacrificed to Artemis**. There **Artemis protected Iphigenia by making her priestess of the temple**. Yet even this rescue became a kind of misery.
- As priestess, she had to **perform the sacred rites before the sacrifices**. She herself did not kill the victims, but she prepared them and delivered them to those who would. Again and again **she watched innocent Greeks die**.

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- Year after year she **lived in loneliness**, separated from her homeland and believing her family thought her dead.

### Orestes Still Haunted

- Meanwhile, in Greece, her brother **Orestes continued to suffer after avenging their father's murder**.
- **He had killed his own mother**, Clytemnestra, because **Apollo commanded him** to punish her for murdering Agamemnon. Although Athena later judged him purified and ended the curse of the House of Atreus, peace still did not fully come to him.
- **Some of the Erinyes—the Furies—still seemed to pursue him**, or perhaps his guilt and madness made him think they did. Their dreadful presence haunted his mind constantly. In despair he **traveled to Delphi to seek help from Apollo**.
- The oracle gave him one final task. He **must sail to Tauris and steal the sacred image of Artemis** from her temple. If he succeeded and brought the statue safely to Athens, his sufferings would finally end.
- The mission was extremely dangerous because **every Greek entering Tauris was condemned to death**. Still, Orestes accepted.
- His loyal friend and cousin Pylades refused to let him face the danger alone. Their friendship was deeper than ordinary companionship; each was willing to die for the other. **Together they sailed to Tauris**.

### Arrival at the Temple

- At **dawn** the two young men secretly approached the temple of Artemis.
- The temple looked grim and stained by violence. Orestes whispered anxiously to Pylades, asking whether this truly was the bloodstained place they sought. Pylades answered that it must be.
- They realized they **could not attempt to steal the statue during daylight and decided to hide until nightfall**.
- But before they could act, they were **discovered by the Taurians and captured**.
- Because they were Greeks, their fate was immediate and certain: **they would be sacrificed**.

### Iphigenia Learns of the Prisoners

- At the temple, Iphigenia was carrying out her usual duties when a messenger informed her that two Greek captives had been seized and would soon be brought for sacrifice. She was ordered to prepare the sacred rites.
- As always, horror overwhelmed her. Though she had performed these duties for years, she could never become accustomed to the cruelty of the practice. This time her thoughts became even more troubled.
- She began questioning whether a true goddess could possibly delight in human sacrifice. She **decided the Taurians themselves were bloodthirsty and merely blamed their violence on the gods**.
- While she was still deep in thought, the prisoners were brought before her.

### Iphigenia Questions the Strangers

- The moment she saw the young men, she pitied them.
- They looked noble and refined, not like criminals. One of them, Orestes, especially appeared deeply wounded by suffering and sorrow. After dismissing the attendants, she spoke privately with them.
- She asked where their home was—the homeland they would never see again.
- Orestes gently replied that she should not grieve for them. When they came to Tauris, they already knew the danger. But Iphigenia continued questioning them eagerly. Were they brothers?
- Orestes answered that they were brothers in love and loyalty, though not by blood.
- Then she asked where they came from. **"Mycenae,"** Orestes replied.
- At once Iphigenia became intensely interested. **Mycenae was her own home**.
- Carefully she asked about Agamemnon. Orestes answered abruptly that Agamemnon was dead.
- She asked who had killed him. "His own wife," Orestes replied.
- Then she asked whether the wife still lived. "No," he answered. "Her son killed her." The three stood silent. At last Iphigenia whispered that the act had been just, and yet also horrible.
- Then she asked if people still spoke of the daughter sacrificed at Aulis.
- Orestes answered sadly that people spoke of her only as one speaks of the dead.

### The Letter

- At that moment an idea came to Iphigenia.
- If one of the prisoners could carry a message home to Greece, perhaps she could save him.
- She proposed that **one of them be spared in exchange for delivering a letter to Mycenae**.
- **Orestes immediately insisted that Pylades should survive** while he himself remained behind to die. Pylades protested, unwilling to abandon his friend, but Orestes reminded him that **he had a duty to return home to Electra, his wife**. Iphigenia left briefly and returned holding the letter.
- But before entrusting it to Pylades, **she decided to speak the message aloud in case the letter were lost during the journey**.
- She **instructed Pylades to tell Orestes that the girl sacrificed at Aulis still lived**. At these words Orestes was overcome with shock.
- Iphigenia continued: **"Brother, rescue me from this land and from this terrible priesthood."**

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- Then she revealed the name of the one who must receive the message: "Orestes."
- Pylades immediately turned to his companion and declared that there was no need to carry the letter anywhere because Orestes himself stood before her.

### Brother and Sister Reunited

- Still Iphigenia could hardly believe it. Orestes then began describing things that only her real brother could know: her room in the palace, the embroidery she had made before leaving for Aulis, and memories from childhood. At last all doubt vanished.
- Iphigenia threw herself into Orestes' arms, overwhelmed with joy and grief. She remembered him as a little child when she last saw him. Now he stood before her grown into a man marked by suffering.
- Orestes too wept for the sister he had believed dead for many years.
- But their reunion quickly gave way to fear. They were still trapped in Tauris and surrounded by enemies.

### The Escape Plan

- Orestes first suggested killing King Thoas and escaping by force.
- Iphigenia rejected the idea immediately. Though the king belonged to a savage people, he had personally treated her kindly, and she refused to repay kindness with murder.
- Then suddenly she formed a brilliant plan.
- She would tell Thoas that the prisoners were polluted because they had committed the terrible crime of matricide. Their presence had therefore contaminated even the sacred statue of Artemis.
- To purify both the captives and the image, she explained, she must bring them all to the sea for cleansing rituals performed in complete solitude. Thoas believed every word.
- He ordered the people to stay away and commanded that no one interfere with the sacred ceremony.

### Escape to the Ship

- Iphigenia came out carrying the sacred image of Artemis.
- Orestes and Pylades followed behind her as attendants carried vessels needed for the supposed purification. Iphigenia prayed aloud as they walked, making everything appear solemn and genuine.
- Once they reached the shore, she dismissed the attendants. Because they feared and respected the priestess, they obeyed immediately.
- The three hurried aboard the Greek ship. The crew pushed away from shore and raised the sails. For a moment it seemed their escape had succeeded perfectly.

### The Storm

- But suddenly disaster struck. At the mouth of the harbor a fierce wind began blowing against them, driving the ship backward toward land. No matter how hard the sailors struggled, they could not force the ship out to sea. The vessel drifted dangerously close to the rocks.
- Meanwhile the Taurians realized the truth. Some rushed to capture the ship if it crashed ashore. Others ran to inform King Thoas that the priestess and the prisoners had escaped.
- Thoas became furious and hurried toward the harbor to seize the fugitives and put them to death.

### Athena Appears

- Just as disaster seemed unavoidable, a radiant divine figure appeared in the sky above the king.
- It was Athena herself. Thoas stopped immediately in fear and reverence.
- Athena commanded him not to pursue the Greeks. She explained that the escape had happened according to divine will. Poseidon himself was calming the sea so the ship could pass safely.
- She ordered Thoas to dismiss his anger and allow the Greeks to depart unharmed.
- The king obediently submitted to the goddess. At once the winds changed. The waves quieted.
- The ship finally broke free from the harbor and sailed safely into the open sea.
- And so, after years of sorrow, exile, madness, and suffering, Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades escaped Tauris together and at last began their journey home.

## THE ROYAL HOUSE OF THEBES (CADMUS AND HIS CHILDREN)

<b>Cadmus</b>	Founder of Thebes and brother of Europa. He killed the dragon and built the city with the help of the warriors born from the dragon's teeth.
<b>Europa</b>	Sister of Cadmus who was carried away by Zeus disguised as a bull.
<b>Apollo</b>	God of prophecy who guided Cadmus to the place where Thebes would be founded.
<b>Athena</b>	Goddess of wisdom who instructed Cadmus to sow the dragon's teeth.
<b>Ares</b>	God of war. The slain dragon was sacred to him.
<b>Harmonia</b>	Wife of Cadmus and daughter of Ares and Aphrodite.
<b>Aphrodite</b>	Goddess of love who gave Harmonia the magical necklace.

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<b>Hephaestus</b>	Divine craftsman who made Harmonia's necklace.
<b>Semele</b>	Daughter of Cadmus and mother of Dionysus. She died after seeing Zeus in his divine form.
<b>Zeus</b>	King of the gods and father of Dionysus.
<b>Dionysus</b>	God of wine and madness who punished Pentheus.
<b>Ino</b>	Daughter of Cadmus who later became the sea-goddess Leucothea.
<b>Phrixus</b>	Boy saved by the golden ram; Ino was his stepmother.
<b>Melicertes</b>	Son of Ino who later became the sea-god Palaemon.
<b>Leucothea</b>	Divine sea-goddess form of Ino.
<b>Palaemon</b>	Divine sea-god form of Melicertes.
<b>Odysseus</b>	Greek hero later saved by Leucothea during a storm.
<b>Agave</b>	Daughter of Cadmus who killed her own son while driven mad by Dionysus.
<b>Pentheus</b>	King of Thebes who denied Dionysus and was killed by his own mother.
<b>Autonoe</b>	Daughter of Cadmus and mother of Actaeon.
<b>Actaeon</b>	Hunter transformed into a stag by Artemis and killed by his own dogs.
<b>Artemis</b>	Goddess of the hunt who punished Actaeon.
<b>Oedipus</b>	Great-great-grandson of Cadmus whose tragic story would later bring even greater suffering upon the House of Thebes.

- The story of the Royal House of Thebes is one of the greatest tragic family stories in Greek mythology. It became famous because of the plays written by Sophocles about Oedipus and his family, just as the House of Atreus became famous through the plays of Aeschylus.
- Before the tragedy of Oedipus began, however, there was the earlier story of Cadmus and his children— a family that also suffered greatly from sorrow, madness, and misfortune.

### Cadmus Searches for Europa

- The story **began when Europa was carried away by Zeus**, who had disguised himself as a beautiful white bull.
- Europa's father was devastated when she disappeared. **He ordered all her brothers to search for her and commanded them not to return home unless they found her**. One of these brothers was **Cadmus**.
- Instead of wandering aimlessly around the world, **Cadmus wisely traveled to the oracle at Delphi to ask Apollo where Europa had gone**.
- **Apollo told him not to continue searching for his sister**. He also told Cadmus not to fear his father's command never to return home without her. Instead, the god **instructed him to build a city of his own**.
- Apollo said that after leaving Delphi, **Cadmus would see a heifer, or young cow**. He was to **follow the animal wherever it went**. When it finally **lay down to rest**, that would be the **place where he should found his city**.
- Cadmus obeyed exactly as the god commanded.
- Eventually, the **heifer stopped and lay down in a fertile land**. There **Cadmus founded the great city of Thebes**. The surrounding country became known as **Boeotia**, meaning "**the land of the heifer**."
- But before the city could truly be established, Cadmus had to face a terrible danger.

### The Dragon and the Warriors from the Earth

- **Near the place** where Cadmus intended to build his city was a **spring guarded by a monstrous dragon** sacred to Ares.
- Cadmus sent his companions to fetch water from the spring, but the dragon attacked and killed every one of them.
- Filled with grief and fury, **Cadmus fought the dragon alone and finally succeeded in killing it**.
- Afterward, **Athena appeared** before him and instructed him to **sow the dragon's teeth into the earth**.
- Cadmus obeyed, though he had no idea why the goddess had commanded such a strange thing.
- Suddenly, **armed men sprang up from the ground where the teeth had been planted**.
- Cadmus was terrified when he saw these warriors rise from the furrows, fully armed and ready for battle. But instead of attacking him, they **turned upon one another and began fighting savagely**.
- They continued battling **until only five remained alive**.
- **Cadmus persuaded these survivors to help him build Thebes**. With their aid, the city became strong, prosperous, and famous throughout Greece.
- Cadmus ruled wisely and successfully for many years. Some ancient writers, especially Herodotus, even claimed that **Cadmus introduced the alphabet into Greece**.

### The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmonia

- **Cadmus married Harmonia**, the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite.

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- Their wedding was extraordinary because the gods themselves attended the celebration.
- As a wedding gift, **Aphrodite gave Harmonia a marvelous necklace crafted by Hephaestus**, the divine blacksmith of Olympus.
- The necklace was beautiful and magical, but although it came from the gods, it **would later bring terrible misfortune to future generations**.
- Cadmus and Harmonia had **one son and four daughters**. Though they once seemed greatly blessed by the gods, sorrow eventually entered their family through their children.

### Semele and the Birth of Dionysus

- One **daughter** was Semele.
- She became **loved by Zeus** himself and **conceived a child** by him—the future god **Dionysus**.
- But Semele's happiness ended tragically.
- **She wished to see Zeus in his full divine glory**. Zeus warned her that no mortal could survive such a sight, but he was bound by an oath and could not refuse her request.
- When he appeared before her in his true heavenly form, surrounded by divine fire and lightning, Semele was instantly destroyed. However, **Zeus rescued the unborn Dionysus**.
- Although Semele died, she was later honored among the immortals because she was the mother of a god.

### Ino and the Madness of Her Husband

- Another daughter was **Ino**.
- She became the **cruel stepmother of Phrixus**, the boy later saved by the golden ram connected to the story of the Golden Fleece. Later, terrible tragedy struck Ino's own family.
- **Her husband was driven mad** and, in his insanity, **killed their son Melicertes**.
- Overcome by grief and despair, **Ino threw herself into the sea while holding the dead body of her child**.
- Yet the gods pitied them.
- Instead of dying, **Ino became a sea-goddess** who later helped Odysseus survive a deadly storm when his raft was destroyed.
- In later myths she became known as **Leucothea**, while her **son became the sea-god Palaemon**.
- Unlike some members of her family, Ino eventually found peace.

### Agave and the Death of Pentheus

- Another daughter of Cadmus was **Agave**.
- Her tragedy was among the most horrible of all.
- Her **son was Pentheus, king of Thebes**.
- **Pentheus refused to worship Dionysus** or accept him as a true god. Because of this insult, Dionysus punished him terribly. The god **drove the women of Thebes into madness, including Agave herself**.
- In her madness, **Agave believed that her own son was a wild lion roaming the mountains**.
- Filled with savage frenzy, she **attacked him** with the other crazed women and **tore him apart with her own hands**.
- Only later did her madness leave her, and **she realized with horror that she herself had killed her son**.
- Thus Agave became one of the most miserable mothers in all Greek mythology.

### Actaeon and Artemis

- The fourth daughter was **Autonoe**. Her **son, Actaeon, was a famous young hunter**.
- One day while hunting in the forest, hot and thirsty, **Actaeon wandered into a hidden grotto where a stream widened into a clear pool**. He intended only to cool himself in the water.
- But by terrible chance he had **entered the sacred bathing place of Artemis** at the exact moment when the goddess stood bathing naked beside the pool.
- Actaeon had not come purposely to spy on her. He had entered innocently and unknowingly.
- But Artemis did not care whether he was guilty or innocent.
- Angered that a mortal had seen her, she **splashed water into his face**. At once Actaeon was **transformed into a stag**.
- Not only did his body change—his heart and mind became filled with a deer's terror. The **fearless hunter suddenly became prey**. He fled through the forest in panic.
- Then **his own hunting dogs caught his scent**. The loyal hounds **no longer recognized their master**. They chased him relentlessly.
- Even in terror, Actaeon could not outrun the swift and keen-scented pack.
- Finally the **dogs overtook him and tore him to pieces**.

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- Thus **Actaeon died a horrible and completely undeserved death** at the jaws of the very animals he himself had trained.

### The Final Fate of Cadmus and Harmonia

- Cadmus and Harmonia had once lived in happiness and prosperity, but in old age they saw tragedy strike nearly all their children and grandchildren.
- After the terrible death of Pentheus, they finally left Thebes, almost as if they hoped to escape the sorrow that haunted their family.
- But suffering followed them wherever they went. At last they **reached the distant land of Illyria**.
- There the gods **transformed both Cadmus and Harmonia into serpents**.
- This transformation was not meant as punishment because they themselves had committed no terrible crime.
- Instead, their story showed an important truth in Greek tragedy: **suffering does not always come because people deserve it. Innocent people often suffer just as much as the guilty**.
- And among all the descendants of Cadmus, none would suffer more than his great-great-grandson, Oedipus.

## OEDIPUS

<b>Oedipus</b>	The tragic hero of the story. Intelligent, brave, and determined, but unknowingly fulfills a terrible prophecy.
<b>Laius</b>	King of Thebes and father of Oedipus. He tries to escape a prophecy that his son will kill him.
<b>Jocasta</b>	Wife of Laius and later wife of Oedipus. Mother of Oedipus.
<b>Apollo</b>	The god whose oracle at Delphi reveals the future.
<b>Creon</b>	Jocasta's brother who brings Apollo's message from Delphi.
<b>Teiresias</b>	A wise seer who knows the truth about Oedipus.
<b>Sphinx</b>	A creature with the body of a winged lion and the face of a woman who terrorizes Thebes with a riddle.
<b>Polybus</b>	The man Oedipus believes is his father.
<b>Corinthian Messenger</b>	Brings news of Polybus's death and reveals important information about Oedipus's past.
<b>Theban Shepherd</b>	Theban Shepherd – The man who was ordered to expose the infant Oedipus on a mountain.

- The story of Oedipus is one of the **most famous tragedies in Greek mythology**. It shows how **impossible it is to escape fate**, even when people do everything they can to avoid it.
- The **Prophecy Against Laius**
- Many generations after Cadmus founded Thebes, the **city was ruled by King Laius and his wife, Jocasta**.
- One day, Apollo's oracle at Delphi delivered a dreadful prophecy. **Laius was told that he would be killed by his own son**.
- Terrified, **Laius decided to prevent the prophecy** from ever coming true.
- When his son was born, he **had the baby's feet bound together and ordered that the child be abandoned on a lonely mountain where he would surely die from exposure**.
- Laius believed he had defeated fate. If the child died, then the prophecy could never be fulfilled.
- But Apollo's prophecies could not be escaped.

### Oedipus Survives

- **The baby did not die**.
- Instead, he **survived and grew up far away in Corinth**. There he was **raised by King Polybus and his wife**, and **everyone believed he was their natural son**.
- Oedipus grew into a brave and intelligent young man.
- One day, however, he **learned of a disturbing rumor that he was not truly the son of Polybus**. Troubled by this, he **traveled to Delphi to ask Apollo's oracle about his birth**.
- The **oracle did not answer** his question.
- Instead, it revealed a horrifying prophecy:
  - He would **kill his father**.

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- He would **marry his mother**.
- He **would have children whose existence would bring shame and horror**.
- Oedipus was horrified.
- Believing Polybus and his wife were his real parents, he **decided never to return to Corinth**. By staying away from them, he hoped to prevent the prophecy from coming true.
- Like Laius before him, **Oedipus believed he could outwit fate**.

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### The Death of Laius

- As Oedipus wandered away from Delphi, he came to a place where **three roads met**.
- There he **encountered a nobleman riding in a chariot** accompanied by attendants.
- A **dispute arose over who had the right of way**.
- The nobleman **struck Oedipus with his staff**.
- Furious, Oedipus fought back. In the struggle, he **killed the nobleman and his attendants**.
- Only **one servant escaped**.
- Oedipus continued on his journey, **never realizing that the man he had killed was Laius, his true father**.
- Without knowing it, he had already fulfilled the first part of Apollo's prophecy.

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### The Terror of the Sphinx

- Meanwhile, Thebes was suffering under a terrible curse.
- A **monstrous creature called the Sphinx haunted the roads** leading to the city.
- She had the **body of a winged lion** and the **face and breast of a woman**.
- Anyone she captured had to **answer her riddle**:
- **"What creature goes on four feet in the morning, on two at noon, and on three in the evening?"**
- Anyone who failed was devoured.
- The Sphinx killed so many travelers that Thebes was almost under siege. Trade ceased, the city suffered, and famine threatened.
- When Oedipus arrived, he decided to confront the monster.
- The Sphinx asked her famous riddle.
- Oedipus answered:
- **"Man. As a baby he crawls on hands and feet. As an adult he walks on two legs. In old age he uses a staff as a third leg."**
- The answer was correct.
- Defeated, the **Sphinx destroyed herself**.
- Thebes was saved.

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### Oedipus Becomes King

- The grateful **people of Thebes made Oedipus their king**.
- As an additional reward, he **married the widowed queen, Jocasta**.
- Neither knew that Jocasta was actually Oedipus's mother.
- Thus the second part of Apollo's prophecy was fulfilled.
- For many years they lived happily and ruled wisely.
- They **had children together** and seemed blessed by fortune.
- It appeared that the terrible prophecy had somehow failed.
- But the truth remained hidden, waiting to emerge.

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### The Plague of Thebes

- Years later, after Oedipus and Jocasta's sons had grown up, a devastating plague struck Thebes.
- **People died** in large numbers. Animals perished. Crops failed. Famine spread throughout the land.
- Oedipus loved his people and suffered alongside them. **Determined to save the city, he sent Creon to Delphi to ask Apollo how the plague could be ended**.
- Creon returned with the god's answer:
- The **murderer of King Laius still lived unpunished** in Thebes.
- The **killer had to be found and punished** before the plague would end.
- Relieved that there seemed to be a solution, Oedipus immediately began an investigation.
- He **publicly cursed the unknown murderer and declared that no one should shelter or aid him**.

- Ironically, he was condemning himself without knowing it.
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### Teiresias Reveals the Truth

- Oedipus **summoned the blind prophet Teiresias**, hoping he could identify the killer.
  - At first, Teiresias refused to speak.
  - **He knew the truth and wished to spare Oedipus** from it.
  - But Oedipus pressed him relentlessly and even accused him of being involved in the murder.
  - Finally, angered, **Teiresias declared: "You are the murderer you seek."**
  - Oedipus was outraged. He **believed the old prophet had gone mad** and dismissed him.
  - **Jocasta also mocked the prophecy.**
  - To prove that prophecies could fail, she explained how an oracle had once predicted that Laius would die by his son's hand.
  - Yet their son had supposedly died as an infant, while Laius had been killed by robbers.
  - To her, this showed that prophecies were unreliable.
  - Instead, her words began leading Oedipus closer to the truth.
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### Oedipus Begins to Suspect

- As Jocasta described Laius's death, Oedipus became uneasy.
  - He learned that Laius had been killed where three roads met.
  - This was exactly where Oedipus had killed the nobleman years before.
  - He questioned her further.
    - How many men were there?
    - Who survived?
  - Every answer increased his fear. Still, he clung to hope. Perhaps it was only a coincidence.
  - Perhaps the survivor would prove that robbers had been responsible.
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### The Messenger from Corinth

- Then a **messenger** arrived from Corinth.
  - He **announced that King Polybus had died.**
  - At first, this seemed like wonderful news. Polybus had died naturally. Oedipus had not killed him.
  - Jocasta triumphantly declared that Apollo's prophecy had been proven false.
  - But the messenger added something unexpected.
  - **Polybus, he explained, had never been Oedipus's real father.**
  - Many years earlier, the **messenger himself had received the infant Oedipus from another man and given him to Polybus.**
  - Stunned, Oedipus demanded to know where the baby had originally come from.
  - The messenger answered: A shepherd who served King Laius had given him the child.
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### Jocasta Learns the Truth

- At this revelation, **Jocasta suddenly understood everything.**
  - She realized that Oedipus was the baby she and Laius had abandoned.
  - She knew what the final truth would reveal.
  - Terrified, **she begged Oedipus to stop asking questions.**
  - She urged him not to continue the investigation.
  - But Oedipus believed she was ashamed of his humble origins and ignored her pleas.
  - Jocasta rushed into the palace in despair.
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### The Final Revelation

- Soon the old **shepherd was brought before Oedipus.**
- At first he refused to speak. But Oedipus threatened him. Finally, the shepherd confessed.
- **Years earlier, Jocasta had given him a baby boy.**
- He had been ordered to leave the child on a mountain to die because of the prophecy that the boy would kill his father.
- **Unable to bring himself to kill the infant**, he had **given the baby to the Corinthian messenger.**
- At that moment all the pieces came together.

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- Oedipus realized the terrible truth.
- He was the abandoned child.
- He had killed Laius.
- He had married Jocasta.
- The prophecy had been fulfilled completely.
- Everything Apollo had foretold had come true.

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### The Fall of Oedipus

- Oedipus rushed into the palace searching for Jocasta.
- There **he found her dead**.
- **Unable to bear the truth, she had taken her own life**.
- Overwhelmed by grief, horror, and shame, Oedipus did not choose death.
- Instead, **he punished himself**.
- **He destroyed his own eyesight**.
- The world he had once seen as bright and hopeful had become unbearable.
- **Blindness seemed preferable to looking upon the consequences of his actions**.
- He chose darkness over sight.

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### Significance of the Story

- The tragedy of Oedipus is not that he was evil. In fact, Sophocles presents him as a good, courageous, and intelligent man.
- **His downfall comes because fate cannot be escaped**. Every attempt made by Laius and Oedipus to avoid Apollo's prophecy actually helps bring it to fulfillment.
- The story also emphasizes a major theme of Greek tragedy: **human beings may be innocent of intention, yet still suffer terribly**. Oedipus never knowingly killed his father or married his mother, yet he endured one of the greatest tragedies in all of Greek mythology.
- **His story becomes the central tragedy of the Royal House of Thebes**, whose sufferings continue through his children.

## ANTIGONE

<b>Antigone</b>	Loyal daughter of Oedipus and sister of Polyneices, Eteocles, and Ismene. She defies Creon's order and buries her brother because she believes divine law is greater than human law.
<b>Ismene</b>	Antigone's gentle and cautious sister. She loves her family but fears opposing the state.
<b>Oedipus</b>	Former king of Thebes who lived in exile after discovering his tragic fate.
<b>Polyneices</b>	Elder son of Oedipus. Driven from Thebes and later returns with an army to reclaim the throne.
<b>Eteocles</b>	Younger son of Oedipus who rules Thebes and fights against Polyneices.
<b>Creon</b>	Jocasta's brother and ruler of Thebes. He forbids the burial of Polyneices.
<b>Menoceus</b>	Creon's noble younger son who willingly sacrifices his life to save Thebes.
<b>Teiresias</b>	The blind prophet who foretells that Menoecus must die for Thebes to survive.
<b>Theseus</b>	King of Athens who honors and protects Oedipus during his final days.
<b>Adrastus</b>	Leader of the Argive forces that support Polyneices in the war against Thebes.
<b>Amphiaraus</b>	A prophet who knows the campaign against Thebes will fail but is forced to participate.
<b>Eriphyle</b>	Wife of Amphiaraus who is bribed with Harmonia's necklace and sends her husband to war.
<b>Jocasta</b>	Mother of Antigone, Ismene, Polyneices, and Eteocles; sister of Creon and wife of Oedipus.

- After the terrible discovery that he had unknowingly killed his father and married his mother, **Queen Jocasta died by her own hand, and King Oedipus blinded himself in grief**. Yet he did not die. He **remained in Thebes while his children grew up**.
- Oedipus had **four children**:
  - **Polyneices and Eteocles, his two sons**.
  - **Antigone and Ismene, his two daughters**.
- Although they were born from a cursed family, they were not the horrible beings the prophecy seemed to suggest. The **two young men were respected by the people of Thebes**, and the **two daughters were loving and devoted children**.

### Oedipus Is Driven from Thebes

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- After his downfall, **Oedipus gave up the throne**. His eldest son, Polyneices, also stepped aside. Because the royal family was surrounded by shame and tragedy, the **Thebans thought it wise for Creon, Jocasta's brother, to rule as regent**.
- For many years Oedipus was treated kindly. Eventually, however, the **people decided to drive him out of Thebes**. The **exact reason is unknown**, but Creon supported the decision, and Oedipus's two sons agreed to it.
- This was a bitter betrayal. **Only his daughters remained faithful to him**.
- **Antigone left Thebes and accompanied her blind father** wherever he went, guiding him and caring for him.
- **Ismene stayed behind** in the city to **watch over his interests and keep him informed** about events in Thebes.

### The Brothers Fight for the Throne

- After Oedipus left, the **two brothers each claimed the throne**.
- Although **Polyneices** was the elder son and had the stronger claim, **Eteocles succeeded in becoming king**. **He then drove Polyneices out of Thebes**.
- **Polyneices fled to Argos**. There he **worked tirelessly to gather support against his brother**. His goal was clear: he **would raise an army and march against Thebes to reclaim what he believed was rightfully his**.

### Oedipus's Final Days at Colonus

- Meanwhile, Oedipus and Antigone wandered from place to place until they arrived at **Colonus**, a beautiful place **near Athens**.
- There stood a **sacred sanctuary dedicated to the former Erinyes (Furies)**, who were now worshiped as the **Benignant Goddesses**. Because it was a holy refuge for suppliants, **Oedipus and Antigone found safety there**.
- At Colonus, Oedipus's long suffering finally came to an end.
- The oracle that had once brought him such misery now brought comfort. **Apollo promised that wherever Oedipus was buried, that land would receive a mysterious divine blessing**.
- The noble King **Theseus** welcomed Oedipus with honor and respect. The old man, who had once been hated and shunned, died knowing that he had become a blessing rather than a curse.
- For the first time in many years, he found peace.

### Ismene Brings News

- Before Oedipus died, Ismene came to Colonus bringing news about the oracle. She was present with Antigone when their father passed away.
- Afterward, **Theseus safely escorted both sisters back to Thebes**.
- When they arrived, they discovered that their worst fears had become reality.
  - One brother was **marching against** the city.
  - The other was **preparing to defend** it.
- Polyneices had returned with an army determined to capture Thebes, while Eteocles was equally determined to protect it.
- The sisters found themselves in an impossible position. **Polyneices had the better legal claim to the throne, but Eteocles was defending their homeland**. They loved both brothers and could not choose between them.

### The Seven Against Thebes

- Polyneices did not come alone.
- He was joined by **six powerful champions**, making a total of **seven leaders who would attack Thebes**. Among them were:
  - **Adrastus, King of Argos**.
  - **Amphiaraus**, Adrastus's brother-in-law and a famous prophet.
- Amphiaraus wanted nothing to do with the expedition. Because he possessed the gift of prophecy, he knew exactly what would happen:
  - **All seven champions would die except Adrastus**.
- However, long before this, he had sworn that **whenever he and Adrastus disagreed, his wife Eriphyle would decide between them**.
- Polyneices learned of this and **bribed Eriphyle** with a priceless treasure—the **magical necklace once given to Harmonia**, the ancestress of his family. The necklace had originally been a wedding gift from the gods.

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- Persuaded by the necklace, **Eriphyle ordered her husband to join the war.**
- Bound by his oath, **Amphiaraus obeyed** even though he knew it would lead to disaster.

### Menoceus Sacrifices Himself

- Seven champions attacked the seven gates of Thebes.
- Inside the city, seven defenders stood ready.
- Eteocles personally defended the gate where Polyneices would attack.
- As the **armies prepared for battle, a tragic prophecy was delivered.**
- The **prophet Teiresias came before Creon and announced that Thebes could only be saved if Creon's younger son, Menoceus, died for the city.** Creon was horrified.
- He declared that he would willingly die himself, but he **would never sacrifice his son.**
- Immediately he **ordered Menoceus to flee far away** before the citizens learned of the prophecy.
- "Go," Creon urged him. "I will provide money and everything you need."
- But once his father had gone, Menoceus reflected on the situation.
- He could not bear the thought of saving his own life while his city perished. He thought:
- **What value would life have if he abandoned Thebes when he could save it?**
- Determined to act nobly, **he joined the battle.**
- Young and inexperienced in war, **he was killed almost immediately.**
- Yet his sacrifice was not in vain.

### The Duel of the Brothers

- The war dragged on without a decisive result.
- Eventually both sides **agreed to settle the conflict through single combat between the brothers.**
- The terms were simple:
  - If **Eteocles** won, the **Argive army would withdraw.**
  - If **Polyneices** won, he would **become king of Thebes.**
- The two brothers met in battle.
- Neither emerged victorious.
- **They killed each other.**
- As Eteocles died, he looked at his brother and wept, unable to speak.
- Polyneices still had enough strength to whisper a few final words:
- **"My brother, my enemy, but loved, always loved. Bury me in my homeland—to have so much at least of my city."**

### Creon's Cruel Decree

- The brothers' deaths did not end the war.
- The fighting continued.
- In the end, **Thebes prevailed.**
- Of the seven attacking champions, **only Adrastus survived.** He escaped with the shattered remnants of the army and **fled to Athens.**
- Back in Thebes, Creon took control.
- He ordered that **Eteocles be buried with full honors as a defender** of the city.
- But **Polyneices was to receive no burial at all.**
- His body would be left exposed for birds and wild animals to tear apart.
- This punishment was considered shocking and impious.
- To the Greeks, burial was a sacred duty owed to every human being. **Without burial, a soul could not cross into the realm of the dead.** Instead, it wandered endlessly without rest.
- **Creon therefore went beyond human justice.**
- He was punishing not only the man, but also the dead man's soul.
- He further **declared that anyone who buried Polyneices would be executed.**

### Antigone's Decision

- The decree horrified both sisters.
- Ismene mourned deeply for Polyneices, but she believed they were powerless.
- **"We are women," she told Antigone. "We must obey. We have no strength to oppose the state."**
- **Antigone refused to accept** this. **"I go to bury the brother I love,"** she declared.
- Ismene begged her not to do it. "You are not strong enough."
- Antigone answered calmly: "Then when my strength fails, I will give up."
- She left to **perform the burial rites alone.** Ismene remained behind, too frightened to follow.

### Antigone Is Caught

- Some hours later, **news reached Creon**. Polyneices had been buried despite his command.
- Enraged, he rushed out and found the guards standing beside Antigone.
- They explained what had happened.
- A **great dust storm had suddenly swept across the area**, hiding everything from view. When it cleared, **Polyneices's body had been covered with earth and Antigone was making offerings for the dead**.
- Creon confronted her. "You knew my decree?"
- "Yes," Antigone answered.
- "And still you broke the law?"
- Antigone replied boldly:
- **"Your law, but not the law of Justice who dwells with the gods. The unwritten laws of heaven are not of today nor yesterday, but from all time."** She openly admitted what she had done.

### Ismene Tries to Share the Blame

- When Ismene heard what had happened, she **rushed forward in tears**.
- "I helped her," she said.
- But **Antigone immediately denied it**.
- Ismene had not participated.
- Antigone would not allow her sister to die for something she had not done.
- She told Ismene: "Your choice was to live; mine to die."
- Thus Antigone accepted full responsibility.

### Antigone Faces Death

- As she was led away to her execution, Antigone remained steadfast.
- She did not regret her actions. Looking at those around her, she declared:
- **"Behold me, what I suffer because I have upheld that which is high."**
- She believed that obedience to divine law was more important than obedience to any king.
- She chose death rather than betray what she believed was right.

### The End of the House of Oedipus

- After this, Ismene disappears from the story.
- No great legend tells what became of her.
- With the deaths of Oedipus, Jocasta, Eteocles, Polyneices, and Antigone, the **royal family of Thebes came to an end**.
- The once-glorious House of Cadmus and Oedipus, which had suffered generation after generation of tragedy, vanished from history.

## THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES

<b>Adrastus</b>	The only surviving champion of the original Seven Against Thebes. He appeals to Athens for help in burying the dead.
<b>Theseus</b>	Wise king of Athens who champions justice and secures burial for the fallen warriors.
<b>Aethra</b>	Mother of Theseus who persuades him that Athens must defend sacred laws and help the bereaved families.
<b>Creon</b>	Ruler of Thebes who refuses burial to the enemy dead, leading to conflict with Athens.
<b>Capaneus</b>	One of the fallen champions; remembered as wealthy, humble, generous, and loyal.
<b>Eteocles</b>	A warrior praised for his honor and refusal to be corrupted by wealth.
<b>Hippomedon</b>	Hardy warrior who embraced hardship and military discipline.
<b>Parthenopaeus</b>	Young hero loved by many and devoted to the welfare of his country.
<b>Tydeus</b>	Courageous warrior whose greatness was shown through deeds rather than words.
<b>Evadne</b>	Widow of Capaneus who throws herself onto her husband's funeral pyre out of grief.
<b>Teiresias</b>	Famous prophet who dies during the final destruction of Thebes.
<b>Diomedes</b>	Son of Tydeus and one of the Epigoni; later becomes one of the greatest Greek warriors at Troy.
<b>Polyneices</b>	His burial had already been secured by Antigone, but the fate of his allies drives the events of this story.
<b>Antigone</b>	Though absent from the main action, her sacrifice ensured Polyneices received burial and peace in death

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- This story **takes place after the events of Antigone**. Polyneices had finally been buried because of Antigone's courage and sacrifice. Thanks to her actions, his soul could cross into the realm of the dead and find rest.
- However, **five of the other champions** who had fought beside Polyneices against Thebes still **lay unburied on the battlefield**. **According to Creon's decree, their bodies were to remain exposed forever**.
- To the Greeks, this was a terrible injustice. An unburied person could not properly enter the world of the dead. Their souls would be left wandering without peace. Because of this, the families of the fallen warriors were overwhelmed with grief.

### Adrastus Appeals to Athens

- Of the seven champions who had marched against Thebes, only **Adrastus**, King of Argos, had survived.
- Realizing that he could do nothing alone, **Adrastus traveled to Athens**. With him came the grieving mothers of the dead warriors and their young sons.
- They went before **Theseus**, King of Athens, and **begged for help**.
- Adrastus said: "All we ask is burial for our dead. We come to Athens because of all cities, Athens is known for compassion."
- But **Theseus was not immediately persuaded**
- He reminded Adrastus that the war had been his own doing.
- "You led your people against Thebes," Theseus replied. **"The war was your responsibility, not Thebes!"**
- Thus, at first, **Theseus refused to become involved**.

### Aethra Speaks for Justice

- Present with them was **Aethra**, the mother of Theseus.
- The sorrowful mothers had first appealed to her, and she boldly interrupted the conversation between the two kings. She asked her son for permission to speak.
- When he agreed, **she reminded him of a ruler's duty**.
- **Aethra argued that those who deny burial to the dead violate one of the most sacred laws recognized throughout Greece**.
- She declared that justice required Athens to defend the wronged.
- According to her, laws and civilized society exist because people respect what is right. If sacred customs such as burial were ignored, the foundations of every state would be weakened.
- **Her words deeply moved Theseus**.

### Athens Decides Democratically

- Even though Theseus agreed with his mother, he would not make the decision alone. Athens was a free city. He explained that the **citizens themselves must decide whether Athens should intervene**.
- Therefore, he summoned the Assembly.
- While the people debated, the mothers waited anxiously and prayed for help. They begged Athens to defend justice and protect the helpless.
- When Theseus returned, he brought good news. The **citizens had voted in favor of helping**.
- Athens would first seek a peaceful solution. They would **ask Thebes to allow the burial of the dead**.
- If Thebes refused, Athens would be willing to fight.
- The Athenians declared:
- "We ask only for what is right. But if you refuse, then we must defend those who cannot defend themselves."

### The Debate Between Athens and Thebes

- Before any action could be taken, a herald arrived from Thebes.
- He demanded to speak to the ruler of Athens.
- Theseus answered: "There is no master here. Athens is free. The people govern themselves."
- The **herald mocked democracy**.
- He argued that a crowd of ordinary citizens could not wisely govern a nation and that rule by a single powerful leader was far superior.
- Theseus firmly rejected this idea. He explained that in Athens the laws ruled everyone equally.
- No man stood above them.
- He warned that tyrants fear wise and capable citizens because such people threaten their power.
- According to Theseus, a free state benefits from the talents and wisdom of all its people, while a tyranny destroys those who are most valuable.
- Then he delivered Athens' final message:

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- Athens preferred **peace over war**.
- The **Athenians did not wish to conquer Thebes** or enslave anyone.
- They sought only the **return of the dead**.
- Theseus emphasized that no person truly owns a body forever.
- Human beings are merely temporary guests on earth.
- In the end: "Dust must return to dust."

### Athens Goes to War

- Despite Theseus's appeal, **Creon refused**. The Thebans would not surrender the bodies.
- As a result, **Athens marched against Thebes**.
- The **Athenians won**.
- The Thebans were terrified. They believed their city would be destroyed, their people killed, and the survivors enslaved. Yet Theseus had never intended such a conquest.
- When victory was secured, he restrained his army.
- **He reminded them: "We came not to destroy the city, but only to reclaim the dead."**
- The purpose of the war had been **justice, not revenge**.

### The Burial of the Fallen Heroes

- Theseus personally supervised the preparation of the bodies.
- He washed them, clothed them with honor, and placed them upon funeral biers.
- At last, the **fallen warriors received the respect denied to them in death**.
- Their grieving mothers gained some comfort knowing their sons would finally rest in peace.
- Before the funeral pyre was lit, **Adrastus delivered a final tribute to each hero**.

### Capaneus

- Adrastus described **Capaneus** as a **wealthy and powerful man who remained humble** despite his riches.
- He was generous, honest, and loyal.
- He treated everyone kindly and spoke no deceitful words.

### Eteoclus

- Next was **Eteoclus**.
- Although poor in material wealth, he was **rich in honor**.
- He refused gifts of gold because he **would not allow himself to become a slave to money**.

### Hippomedon

- **Hippomedon welcomed hardship**.
- He loved hunting and warfare and had trained himself from youth to **endure difficulties** rather than seek comfort.

### Parthenopaeus

- **Parthenopaeus**, the **son of Atalanta**, was admired by both men and women.
- He **harmed no one and always worked for the good** of his homeland.
- Its successes brought him joy, and its troubles caused him sorrow.

### Tydeus

- Last came **Tydeus**.
- He was a **quiet man who preferred action to speech**.
- His greatness showed itself through deeds rather than words.
- His courage and nobility were revealed on the battlefield.

### Evadne's Final Act

- As **the funeral pyre burned, another tragic scene unfolded**.
- On a **rocky cliff above the flames appeared Evadne, the wife of Capaneus**.
- Overcome with grief, she declared that she had found her husband's tomb and would **no longer endure life without him**.
- Before anyone could stop her, **she leaped into the blazing pyre**.
- Thus she **joined her husband in death**.

### The Sons Swear Revenge

- The mothers found peace knowing their sons were finally buried.
- But the young sons of the fallen warriors felt differently.
- As they watched the flames consume their fathers' bodies, they made a solemn vow.
- **They swore that one day they would avenge the wrong done to their fathers**.
- They declared: "Our fathers sleep in the tomb, but the wrong done to them can never sleep."

### The War of the Epigoni

- **Ten years later**, the sons fulfilled their oath. They **gathered an army and marched against Thebes**.
- This new generation succeeded where their fathers had failed. **Thebes was defeated**.
- The city was destroyed and leveled to the ground. The surviving Thebans fled.
- **During the flight, the prophet Teiresias died**.
- The once-great city founded by Cadmus came to an end. Very little remained.
- Among the few surviving relics was **Harmonia's famous necklace**, which was **taken to Delphi and displayed there for centuries as a treasured object shown to pilgrims**.

### The Epigoni

- Although these young warriors accomplished what their fathers could not, they were always known as the **Epigoni**, meaning "**the After-Born**."
- The name suggests that they came too late, after the great heroes of the previous generation had already performed their famous deeds.
- Yet **one of them would become especially renowned**.
- The **son of Tydeus was Diomedes**, who later **sailed to Troy and became one of the greatest Greek warriors** in the Trojan War.
- Thus, the story of the Seven Against Thebes serves both as the ending of the tragic history of Thebes and as a **bridge to the coming events of the Trojan War**.
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## THE ROYAL HOUSE OF ATHENS PROCNE AND PHILOMELA

<b>Cecrops</b>	The legendary first king of Attica, half man and half dragon. He judged the contest between Athena and Poseidon.
<b>Athena</b>	Goddess of wisdom and protector of Athens. She won Athens by giving the olive tree.
<b>Poseidon</b>	God of the sea who competed with Athena for control of Athens and later flooded the land in anger.
<b>Erechtheus</b>	King of Athens and father of Procne and Philomela.
<b>Demeter</b>	Goddess associated with agriculture, said to have come to Eleusis during Erechtheus's reign.
<b>Procne</b>	Elder sister of Philomela, wife of Tereus, and mother of Itys. She carries out a terrible revenge against her husband.
<b>Philomela</b>	Younger sister of Procne. Through her weaving, she reveals the truth of what happened to her.
<b>Tereus</b>	Son of Ares, husband of Procne, and the villain of the story. His cruelty leads to the tragedy.
<b>Ares</b>	Father of Tereus and god of war.
<b>Itys</b>	Young son of Procne and Tereus whose death becomes part of Procne's revenge.
<b>Athens</b>	The city protected by Athena and home of the royal family.
<b>Thrace</b>	Kingdom ruled by Tereus where much of the story takes place.
<b>Daulis</b>	The place where Tereus nearly catches the sisters before the gods transform them

### Background: The Royal House of Athens

- The royal family of Athens was famous for experiencing some of the strangest and most tragic events in Greek mythology.
- The family's story begins with **Cecrops, the legendary first king of Attica**. According to myth, he was not entirely human. He had the **upper body of a man and the lower body of a dragon**.
- Cecrops became important because he **judged the contest between Athena and Poseidon** over who would become the protector of Athens.
- **Poseidon** struck the Acropolis with his trident and **caused a spring of salt water to appear**. He believed this would show his power and usefulness.
- **Athena**, however, gave the people something even more valuable: an **olive tree**, which would provide **food, oil, wood, and wealth**.
- Cecrops decided that **Athena's gift was better**, so he awarded the city to her. The city was thereafter called **Athens** in her honor.
- Poseidon was furious and punished the land with a terrible flood.

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- One version of the story says that women and men were both allowed to vote at that time. All the women voted for Athena, and all the men voted for Poseidon. Because there was one more woman than man, Athena won. Angry at this result, the men took away women's right to vote, but Athens remained under Athena's protection.
- Later generations of this royal family included **King Erechtheus**, whose reign was associated with the arrival of **Demeter** and the beginning of agriculture in Attica. Among his children were two daughters whose fate would become one of the most tragic stories in all mythology: **Procne** and **Philomela**.

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### Procne and Philomela

#### Procne Marries Tereus

- **Procne**, the **older sister**, married **Tereus, king of Thrace and a son of Ares**, the god of war.
- Like his father, Tereus possessed a violent and cruel nature.
- Procne left Athens and lived with him in Thrace. In time they had a **son named Itys**.
- **Five years passed**. Procne had not seen her family for a long time and deeply missed her sister Philomela. She **begged Tereus to travel to Athens and bring Philomela** to Thrace for a visit.
- Tereus agreed.

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#### Tereus Sees Philomela

- When Tereus arrived in Athens and first saw Philomela, he was **overwhelmed by her beauty**.
- She seemed as beautiful as a nymph.
- Although he had come only to escort her to her sister, he immediately **desired her**.
- He **persuaded Philomela's father to let her accompany him** back to Thrace. Philomela herself was delighted because she longed to see Procne again.
- They sailed safely across the sea. Everything seemed normal.
- But once they landed and began traveling overland, Tereus revealed his true character.
- **He told Philomela that Procne had died**.
- Then he **forced her into a false marriage**, pretending that he was now free to marry her.

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#### Philomela Learns the Truth

- It was not long before Philomela discovered that **Procne was actually alive**.
- Furious and horrified, she confronted Tereus.
- She **threatened to expose him and tell everyone what he had done**. She swore that she would find a way to make the truth known. Her words filled Tereus with fear and rage.
- **To silence her permanently, he cut out her tongue**.
- Then he **locked her away in a heavily guarded place** and returned to Procne.
- To explain Philomela's absence, he **falsely claimed that she had died during the journey**.

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#### Philomela's Clever Plan

- Philomela seemed completely helpless. She was imprisoned. She could not speak.
- And in those days there was no common system of writing through which she could easily send a message. Tereus believed he was safe.
- But he underestimated Philomela's intelligence and skill.
- The Greeks were master craftsmen. Just as blacksmiths could create shields that told entire stories through images, **women could weave scenes and figures into cloth** so clearly that anyone could understand the tale being shown.
- **Philomela decided to use this art**.
- Working patiently and carefully at her loom, she created a magnificent tapestry.
- Into the **woven cloth** she placed every detail of the wrong that had been done to her.
- The tapestry showed herself, Tereus, and the entire story.
- When it was finished, she **gave it to the old woman who attended her and indicated that it should be delivered to Queen Procne**.

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#### Procne Learns the Truth

- The old woman proudly brought the beautiful tapestry to Procne.
- At that time Procne was still mourning her sister, believing she was dead.

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- When she unrolled the cloth, she **immediately recognized the figures**.
- There was Philomela. There was Tereus. And there, woven into the fabric, was the whole terrible truth.
- The tapestry spoke more clearly than words. **Procne was horrified**.
- Yet instead of collapsing into grief, she controlled herself.
- She understood that this was not the time for tears. It was the time for action.
- **Using the old woman as a guide, she found Philomela and secretly brought her back to the palace**.
- The sisters were finally reunited. Philomela wept, but Procne's thoughts were fixed on revenge.
- "I am prepared for any deed," she told her sister, "that will make Tereus pay for what he has done."

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### Procne's Terrible Revenge

- At that moment, Procne's young son **Itys** entered the room.
- As she looked at him, she **saw in his face the image of his father**.
- A terrible idea came into her mind. "How like your father you are," she said.
- Then she decided upon her revenge. **She killed Itys**.
- Afterward, she **cut up the child's body, cooked it, and prepared it as a meal**.
- That night she **served the food to Tereus**.
- He ate it without knowing what it was. Procne watched him.
- When the meal was finished, she revealed the truth.
- She told him that he had just eaten the flesh of his own son.

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### The Chase

- Tereus was struck with horror. For a moment he was unable to move.
- That brief delay allowed Procne and Philomela to escape.
- When he recovered, he seized a weapon and rushed after them, **determined to kill them both**.
- Near the city of Daulis, he finally caught up with the sisters.
- Just as he was about to strike, the **gods intervened**.

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### The Transformation

- The gods **transformed all three of them into birds**.
- **Procne became a nightingale**.
- Her song became the **saddest and sweetest** of all bird songs because she forever **mourned the son she had killed**.
- **Philomela became a swallow**.
- Because her tongue had been cut out, **she could not sing**. She could only produce soft twittering sounds.
- **Tereus was transformed into an ugly bird** with a large beak, often said to be a **hawk**.
- Thus the story ended with all three forever changed.

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### A Note About the Nightingale

- According to the original Greek version, **Procne** became the nightingale because she **mourned Itys**.
- **Philomela** became the swallow because she had lost her tongue and therefore could not sing.
- However, later Roman writers accidentally reversed the sisters' identities and said that **Philomela** became the nightingale.
- Because of this Roman tradition, many English poets refer to Philomela as the nightingale even though the older Greek version identifies Procne as the bird.

## ORITHYIA AND BOREAS

<b>Orithyia</b>	Daughter of King Erechtheus and sister of Procne and Philomela. She was carried away by Boreas and became his wife.
<b>Boreas</b>	The powerful North Wind who fell in love with Orithyia and abducted her when her family refused his proposal.
<b>Erechtheus</b>	King of Athens and father of Orithyia.
<b>Tereus</b>	The cruel husband of Procne whose actions contributed to Athens' distrust of northerners.
<b>Zetes</b>	One of the winged sons of Boreas and Orithyia; an Argonaut.

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<b>Calais</b>	Brother of Zetes and fellow Argonaut.
<b>Jason</b>	Hero who led the expedition to obtain the Golden Fleece.
<b>Socrates</b>	The famous philosopher who questioned whether the old myths should be believed literally.
<b>Phaedrus</b>	Young companion of Socrates who asked about the story of Orithyia

- After the tragic story of Procne and Philomela, another daughter of King Erechtheus became part of a famous myth.
- This daughter was **Orithyia**, the **sister of Procne, Philomela, and Procris**.

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### Boreas Falls in Love

- The powerful **Boreas**, the **North Wind**, fell deeply **in love with Orithyia and wanted to marry her**.
- However, **neither** Orithyia's father, **Erechtheus**, nor the people of **Athens** **approved of him**.
- Their refusal was **influenced by the terrible fate of Procne and Philomela**. Since the cruel **Tereus** had come from the north, the Athenians had developed a strong distrust and hatred toward people from northern lands.
- Because of this prejudice, they refused to allow Orithyia to marry Boreas.

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### The Abduction of Orithyia

- The Athenians believed they could prevent the marriage.
- They were mistaken.
- Boreas was not an ordinary suitor. **He was the mighty North Wind itself**.
- One day, Orithyia was playing with her sisters beside a river.
- Without warning, **Boreas descended in a violent gust of wind**.
- The wind swept around her, lifted her from the ground, and carried her away.
- No one could stop him.
- Thus **Boreas took Orithyia to be his wife**.

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### Their Children

- Orithyia later bore Boreas two famous sons:
  - **Zetes**
  - **Calais**
- These brothers became celebrated heroes in Greek mythology.
- They **joined Jason and the Quest of the Golden Fleece** as members of the Argonauts, the band of heroes who sailed aboard the Argo in search of the Golden Fleece.

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### Socrates Questions the Story

- Many centuries later, long after these myths had become famous, the philosopher **Socrates** was walking with a young friend named **Phaedrus**.
- As they walked beside the **small river called the Ilissus**, Phaedrus asked whether they were near the place where Boreas had supposedly carried off Orithyia.
- Socrates replied that the traditional location was nearby and that there was even an altar dedicated to Boreas in the area.
- Phaedrus then asked an important question:
- **"Do you actually believe the story?"**
- Socrates answered thoughtfully. **He said that wise people often doubted such tales and that he himself would not be unusual if he also doubted them**.

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### Why This Conversation Matters

- This conversation took place in the **late fifth century B.C.**
- By that time, many educated Greeks had begun to question the old myths that earlier generations had accepted as true.
- Rather than believing every story literally, thinkers such as Socrates examined them critically and asked whether they were historical facts, symbolic tales, or simply traditional stories.
- The myth of Orithyia and Boreas therefore marks not only a famous legend but also a moment when **Greek society was beginning to move from unquestioning belief toward philosophical inquiry and skepticism**.

## CREUSA AND ION

<b>Creusa</b>	Daughter of Erechtheus, sister of Procris and Orithyia, and mother of Ion. She suffers in silence for many years before being reunited with her son.
<b>Ion</b>	Son of Apollo and Creusa. Raised at Delphi without knowing his parents. Eventually discovers his true identity.
<b>Apollo</b>	God of prophecy, music, and truth. He fathers Ion and later arranges for his survival and recognition.
<b>Xuthus</b>	Foreign prince and husband of Creusa. He longs for a son and mistakenly believes Ion is his own child.
<b>Athena</b>	Goddess of Athens who appears at the end to reveal the truth about Ion's parentage.
<b>Erechtheus</b>	King of Athens and father of Creusa.
<b>Pythoess</b>	Apollo's prophetess who finds baby Ion and raises him with care.

- Among the daughters of King Erechtheus, **Creusa may have suffered the most quietly**. Unlike Procne and Philomela, whose tragedy became widely known, **Creusa carried her pain in secret for many years**.
- Yet her story eventually led to one of the happiest reunions in Greek mythology.

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**Apollo and Creusa**

- One day, while still very young, Creusa was **gathering crocuses on a rocky cliff**.
- She filled her veil with **bright yellow flowers** and was preparing to return home when suddenly a **stranger appeared**.
- He seemed to come from nowhere, as though he had stepped out of the invisible world.
- The **man was extraordinarily beautiful**, but **Creusa was too frightened to notice**.
- Before she could escape, **he seized her**.
- Terrified, she screamed for her mother.
- No one came.
- **The stranger was Apollo**.
- He **carried her into a dark cave** and **forced himself** upon her.

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**A Secret Child**

- **Creusa hated Apollo** for what he had done.
- What made her suffering even worse was that **the god offered her no help** afterward.
- When she became **pregnant**, she dared **not tell her parents**.
- In Greek society, a **young woman who admitted such a thing could face severe punishment or even death**, regardless of whether a god had been responsible.
- So she **kept her secret** alone.
- When the time came for the **baby to be born**, she **returned to the same cave** where Apollo had taken her. There, **by herself, she gave birth to a son**.
- Overwhelmed by fear and despair, she **left the infant behind**.
- She **believed he would die**.

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**The Child Disappears**

- Later, **grief and curiosity drove Creusa back to the cave**.
- She wanted to know what had happened to her baby.
- When she arrived, she found something strange.
- The **child was gone**. There were **no signs of blood**.
- No evidence that wild animals had attacked him.
- Even stranger, the **veil and cloak** she had wrapped around him had **disappeared** as well.
- She could think of only one explanation: **perhaps a great eagle or vulture had carried away both the child and his wrappings**.
- She **left without knowing the truth**.

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**Marriage to Xuthus**

- Years passed.

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- Eventually, **Creusa married Xuthus**, a **foreign prince who had helped her father, Erechtheus**, in war.
- Although Xuthus was Greek, he was not from Athens. Many Athenians considered him an **outsider** and **looked down upon him**.
- The couple remained **childless**.
- This greatly troubled Xuthus, who desperately wanted a son and heir.
- Finally, he and Creusa traveled to Delphi, the most famous oracle in Greece, to ask Apollo whether they would ever have children.

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### Creusa Meets a Mysterious Youth

- While Xuthus remained in the town speaking with priests, **Creusa went alone into the sacred area**.
- There she saw a **handsome young man dressed in priestly robes**.
- He was **cleaning the sanctuary with water from a golden vessel** while singing hymns in praise of Apollo.
- The young man was **Ion**. Neither knew who the other was. They began talking.
- Ion immediately sensed sadness in Creusa.
- He remarked that she appeared noble and fortunate.
- Creusa answered bitterly that her life had been filled not with happiness but with sorrow.
- Ion gently asked why.
- At first she avoided the question.
- Then she explained that **she had come to Delphi because of "a friend."**
- **She told the story of a woman who had been wronged by Apollo and forced to bear a child.**
- The woman had abandoned the baby and now wished to learn what had happened to him.
- In reality, Creusa was speaking about herself.

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### Ion Defends Apollo

- Ion was shocked by her accusation.
- Having grown up serving Apollo's temple, he loved and trusted the god.
- He refused to believe Apollo could do such a thing.
- "It was probably some man," he argued, "and the woman blamed the god to hide her shame."
- But Creusa firmly insisted that Apollo was responsible.
- Even so, **Ion warned her not to confront the god** or seek proof that he had behaved unjustly.
- As she listened, Creusa found herself strangely comforted by the young man.
- She agreed to abandon her plan.
- **Neither realized that they were mother and son.**

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### Xuthus Receives a Surprise

- At that moment Xuthus entered, filled with excitement.
- He rushed toward Ion and embraced him.
- Ion pulled away in confusion. Xuthus joyfully announced:
- **"You are my son! Apollo has declared it!"**
- Creusa was stunned.
- Her heart filled with anger and jealousy.
- Who was this boy's mother?
- Why should the son of some unknown woman suddenly become heir to her household?
- Xuthus himself was not entirely sure what Apollo had meant.
- Perhaps Ion really was his lost son.
- Or perhaps Apollo had simply given him the boy as a gift.
- Either way, he was delighted.

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### The Clues from the Past

- As everyone struggled to understand what was happening, an **elderly priestess entered**.
- This was the **woman who had raised Ion after finding him as an infant**.
- In her hands she carried two objects:
  - A **veil**
  - A **woven cloak**
- The sight of them immediately caught Creusa's attention.

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- The priestess handed them to Ion.
  - "Take these with you to Athens," she said. "They were wrapped around you when I found you as a baby."
  - Ion was amazed.
  - For the first time, he possessed clues to his true identity.
  - He declared that he would search all of Greece and beyond to find his mother.
- 

### The Recognition

- Suddenly Creusa rushed forward.
  - She embraced Ion and began crying.
  - "My son! My son!"
  - Ion was bewildered.
  - He thought she must be mad.
  - But Creusa explained everything.
  - The woman in the story she had told him was not a friend.
  - It was herself.
  - Apollo was his father.
  - She was his mother.
  - **To prove it, she described every detail of the veil and cloak before they were unfolded.**
  - She even told him about **two small golden serpents she had attached to the garment.**
  - When Ion opened the wrappings, he found exactly what she had described.
  - There could be no doubt.
  - At last, after years of separation, mother and son recognized one another.
- 

### Ion's Doubt

- Although overjoyed, Ion was troubled.
  - Apollo had apparently told Xuthus that Ion was his son.
  - How could the God of Truth say something that was not true?
  - Had Apollo lied?
  - Creusa tried to reassure him.
  - She explained that Apollo had never actually said Ion was Xuthus's biological son.
  - Rather, the god had given Ion to Xuthus as a gift.
  - Still, both mother and son remained uncertain.
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### Athena Appears

- Then a brilliant light suddenly filled the air.
  - Mother and son looked upward.
  - Standing above them was a divine figure of incomparable beauty and majesty.
  - It was **Athena.**
  - She announced that **Apollo had sent her to explain the truth.**
  - Ion was indeed the son of Apollo and Creusa.
  - **Apollo had secretly rescued him from the cave** where Creusa had abandoned him and had arranged for him to be raised safely at Delphi.
  - Athena then instructed Creusa to bring Ion back to Athens.
  - The young man, she declared, was destined to rule her city and become a great leader.
  - After delivering her message, Athena vanished.
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### The Ending

- Ion was filled with joy.
- He had discovered his true parents and learned that he had a great future ahead of him.
- Creusa, too, had finally recovered the son she thought she had lost forever.
- Yet Euripides leaves one question unanswered.
- Could Apollo's late act of kindness truly make up for the suffering he had caused?
- Could years of fear, grief, and loneliness be erased by a happy ending?
- The story does not tell us.
- It leaves the audience to decide for themselves.

## MIDAS AND OTHERS

### King Midas

#### The King Who Wanted More Gold

- Midas was the king of Phrygia, a land famous for its beautiful rose gardens.
- Today, Midas is remembered as a symbol of great wealth. However, his wealth brought him almost no happiness.
- In fact, it nearly caused his death.

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### Silenus Gets Lost

- One day, an old satyr named Silenus wandered into Midas's rose gardens.
- Silenus was the loyal companion of Dionysus (called Bacchus by the Romans).
- As usual, Silenus was drunk.
- After becoming separated from Dionysus's followers, he lost his way and fell asleep among the roses.
- The palace servants found him sleeping and decided to play a joke.
- They decorated him with rose garlands and flower wreaths and brought him before King Midas.
- Instead of mocking him, Midas treated Silenus kindly.
- For ten days he entertained him as an honored guest.
- Finally, Midas personally escorted him back to Dionysus.

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### The Golden Touch

- Dionysus was delighted to have his old companion returned safely.
- To reward Midas, he offered to grant him any wish.
- Without thinking carefully, Midas immediately wished:
- "May everything I touch turn to gold."
- Dionysus granted the wish.
- At first Midas was thrilled.
- He touched furniture, plants, and stones, and each became pure gold.
- But when mealtime arrived, disaster struck.
- The bread he picked up became gold.
- The meat became gold.
- The wine became gold before he could drink it.
- Everything he touched turned into metal.
- Soon Midas realized that his wonderful gift was actually a curse.
- He was starving and dying of thirst.

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### Midas Begs for Help

- Terrified, Midas hurried back to Dionysus.
- He begged the god to remove the gift.
- Dionysus took pity on him.
- He instructed Midas to wash in the source of the Pactolus River.
- Midas obeyed.
- As soon as he bathed in the river, the magical power left him.
- According to the myth, the gold washed away into the river, which is why people later found gold in its sands.
- Thus Midas was saved from the consequences of his own foolish wish.

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### Midas and the Musical Contest

- Midas later proved that he had learned very little from his experience.
- Once a musical contest was held between Apollo and Pan.
- Pan played pleasant melodies on his reed pipes.
- Apollo played his silver lyre.
- The music of Apollo was so beautiful that it surpassed every sound on earth except perhaps the songs of the Muses themselves.

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- The mountain god **Tmolus** was chosen to **judge the competition**.
  - After hearing both performances, **Tmolus awarded victory to Apollo**.
  - Everyone agreed.
  - Everyone except Midas.
  - **Midas honestly preferred Pan's music**.
- 

### The Ass's Ears

- This was a dangerous mistake.
- Not only had Midas shown poor musical judgment, but he had openly sided against a powerful god.
- **Apollo was offended**.
- He declared that ears incapable of recognizing good music ought to have a more suitable shape.
- As punishment, he **transformed Midas's ears into those of a donkey**.
- Ashamed, **Midas hid them beneath a special cap**.
- **No one knew the secret** except the servant who cut the king's hair.
- The servant swore never to tell anyone.
- Yet the secret became unbearable.
- At last he **dug a hole in the ground** and whispered into it:
- **"King Midas has ass's ears."**
- Feeling relieved, he covered the hole again.
- But later **reeds grew from that spot**.
- Whenever the wind blew through them, they whispered:
- *"King Midas has ass's ears."*
- Thus the secret spread throughout the land.

## AESCULAPIUS

### Coronis and Apollo

- A beautiful **Thessalian maiden** named **Coronis** became the **beloved of Apollo**.
  - However, she eventually **fell in love with a mortal man** instead.
  - She **believed Apollo would never discover her unfaithfulness**.
  - This was a mistake.
  - Apollo was the god of prophecy and truth.
  - Nothing could be hidden from him.
  - According to one version of the myth, **Apollo learned the truth from a raven**.
  - At that time **ravens were said to have white feathers**.
  - In his **anger**, Apollo punished the messenger and **turned its feathers black forever**.
  - Then he punished Coronis as well.
  - Some stories say Apollo killed her himself.
  - Others say he ordered his sister, **Artemis**, to strike her down with an arrow.
- 

### The Birth of Aesculapius

- As Coronis lay dying on her funeral pyre, Apollo suddenly felt **regret**.
  - He remembered that she was carrying his child.
  - Just before the flames consumed her, **he rescued the unborn baby**.
  - The child was named **Aesculapius**.
  - Apollo entrusted him to the wise centaur **Chiron**, who lived on **Mount Pelion**.
- 

### Chiron's Greatest Student

- Chiron had trained many famous heroes.
- Yet **Aesculapius became his greatest pupil**.
- Unlike most boys, he cared little for games or adventures.
- He **devoted himself to learning medicine**.
- Chiron taught him about:
  - Healing herbs
  - Medicines

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- Sacred chants
- Remedies for disease
- Aesculapius **surpassed even his teacher.**
- Soon he became **capable of curing nearly any illness.**
- People traveled from great distances seeking his help.
- He healed wounds, diseases, and conditions that others believed impossible to cure.
- He became known as a benefactor of all humanity.

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### Raising the Dead

- Eventually Aesculapius became so skilled that he crossed a boundary the gods **considered forbidden.**
- He **brought a dead man back to life.**
- Many myths identify that man as **Hippolytus**, the **unfortunate son of Theseus.**
- According to some versions, **Hippolytus thereafter became immortal.**
- But Zeus viewed the matter differently.
- **Mortals were not supposed to overturn death itself.**
- Aesculapius had gained power that belonged only to the gods.

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### Zeus's Punishment

- Furious, Zeus **struck Aesculapius** with a **thunderbolt and killed him.**
- Apollo was devastated by the loss of his son.
- In his rage he traveled to **Mount Etna, where the Cyclopes forged Zeus's thunderbolts.**
- **Apollo killed either the Cyclopes themselves or their sons,** depending on the version of the myth.
- Zeus responded by **punishing Apollo.**
- He **forced the god to serve Admetus**, king of Thessaly, as a servant for several years.
- This is the same Admetus whose wife, **Alcestis**, was later rescued from death by **Heracles.**

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### Aesculapius Becomes a God of Healing

- Although Zeus killed him, Aesculapius was honored more than almost any other mortal.
- Throughout Greece, temples were dedicated to him.
- People suffering from illness, blindness, injury, or pain traveled to these temples seeking cures.
- After praying and making sacrifices, they would sleep within the sacred precincts.
- During their dreams, Aesculapius was believed to appear and reveal treatments or cures.
- Snakes became sacred symbols of Aesculapius and were associated with healing and medicine.
- For centuries, countless people believed that he had cured them and restored their health.
- Because of this, **Aesculapius eventually became worshiped not merely as a hero but as a god.**

## THE DANAIDS

- The story of the Danaids is **one of the strangest and most tragic tales** in Greek mythology. Although they are not among the most famous heroes or gods, they became well known because of the terrible punishment they suffered after death.
- The **Danaids were fifty daughters of Danaus**, a **descendant of Io** who ruled in the **land of Egypt near the Nile River.** Danaus had a **twin brother** named **Aegyptus**, who also had fifty children—all **sons.**
- One day, the **fifty sons of Aegyptus decided that they wanted to marry the fifty daughters of Danaus.** For reasons that the ancient stories never clearly explain, Danaus and his **daughters strongly opposed these marriages.** They **wanted nothing to do with their cousins.**
- To **escape** them, Danaus and his daughters **fled by ship across the sea and arrived in Argos**, a city in Greece. There they sought protection as suppliants, people asking for sanctuary and safety.
- The **people of Argos welcomed them and agreed to protect them.** Soon afterward, the **sons of Aegyptus arrived**, determined to claim the women as their brides. They were prepared to use force if necessary.
- However, the **Argives firmly refused.** They declared that **no woman should ever be forced into marriage** against her will. They also insisted that they would never betray anyone who had sought their protection, regardless of how weak the refugee was or how powerful the pursuer might be. As a result, the sons of Aegyptus were driven away.

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- At this point, there is a mysterious gap in the story. The ancient myths never explain exactly what happened next.
- When the story resumes, the situation has completely changed. Somehow, despite all the earlier resistance, the **marriages are about to take place**. The fifty daughters of Danaus are now being wed to the fifty sons of Aegyptus, and **Danaus himself is presiding over the wedding feast**.
- Yet it quickly becomes clear that neither Danaus nor his daughters have truly accepted these marriages.
- During the wedding celebration, **Danaus secretly gives each of his daughters a dagger**. He has already instructed them on what they must do, and they have agreed to obey him.
- That night, after the wedding festivities ended and the newly married couples retired to their chambers, the daughters carried out their father's command.
- **While their husbands slept**, the **women drew their daggers and murdered them**.
- **Forty-nine of the fifty bridegrooms were killed**.
- Only **one daughter refused to obey**.
- Her name was **Hypermnestra**.
- As she looked at her husband sleeping peacefully beside her, she was **overcome with pity**. She could not bring herself to kill him. The young man's name was **Lynceus**, and instead of stabbing him, **she woke him and revealed the plot**.
- She told him that all the other bridegrooms were being murdered that very night and **urged him to flee before it was too late**. With her help, **Lynceus escaped and saved his life**.
- By sparing her husband, Hypermnestra broke the promise she had made to her father and sisters. The Roman poet **Horace** later praised her, calling her "**splendidly false**"—false because she broke her oath, but splendid because she did so for a noble and compassionate reason.
- **Danaus was furious** when he learned of her disobedience. He considered her actions a betrayal and had her **thrown into prison**.
- What happened afterward depends on which version of the myth is told.
- One tradition says that **Hypermnestra and Lynceus were eventually reunited**. They lived together happily and became the ancestors of a great royal line. Their son was **Abas**, who later became the great-grandfather of **Perseus**, one of the greatest heroes of Greek mythology.
- Other versions of the story end with Hypermnestra's imprisonment and say nothing more about her fate.
- The fate of the other forty-nine sisters, however, is told in every version.
- Because they murdered their husbands, they were **punished after death in the Underworld**.
- Their punishment was endless and hopeless.
- Standing beside a river, the **Danaids were forced to fill large jars with water**. But the jars were **riddled with holes**. No matter how much water they poured into them, it immediately leaked out.
- Again and again they carried water from the river.
- Again and again the jars emptied.
- Their task could never be completed.
- For all eternity they labored without success, trapped in a cycle of useless effort—a punishment that became one of the most famous symbols in Greek mythology of endless, futile work.

## GALUCUS AND SCYLLA

This is a **tragic story of unreturned love, jealousy, and transformation**. It explains how the beautiful sea nymph Scylla became one of the most terrifying monsters in Greek mythology.

### Glaucus Becomes a **Sea-God**

- Long ago, there was a **fisherman** named **Glaucus**.
- One day, while fishing by the seashore, he sat on a **green meadow** that sloped gently down to the sea. After catching many fish, he **spread them out on the grass and began counting them**.
- Suddenly, something astonishing happened.
- The **fish started to move**.
- One by one, they wriggled across the grass toward the water. Then they **slipped back into the sea** and swam away as if they had never been caught.
- Glaucus was amazed and confused. He wondered whether a god had performed a miracle or whether there was some magical power hidden in the grass itself.

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- Curious, he **picked some of the grass and ate** it.
- The moment he swallowed it, a strange change came over him. An **overwhelming desire for the sea seized him**. The longing was so powerful that he could not resist it.
- Without hesitation, **he ran toward the water and plunged into the waves**.
- The sea-gods welcomed him warmly. Recognizing that he was destined to join them, they called upon **Oceanus and Tethys** to remove his mortal nature and **transform him into one of the immortals**.
- A **hundred rivers were summoned**, and their **waters poured over him in a mighty flood**. The torrent was so powerful that **Glaucus lost consciousness**.
- When he awoke, he **was no longer human**.
- His **hair had become green** like the sea, and the **lower half of his body had changed into a fish's tail**. He had become a **sea-god**.
- To the creatures and gods of the ocean, he looked perfectly natural. But to people on land, his appearance was strange and unsettling.

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### Glaucus Falls in Love with Scylla

- Not long afterward, Glaucus saw a **beautiful nymph named Scylla bathing** in a small bay.
- As he rose from the sea, Scylla caught sight of him.
- **Terrified by the sight of a creature** who was half man and half fish, she fled immediately.
- She ran until she reached a **high cliff** overlooking the sea. From there she felt safe enough to look down at him.
- Glaucus called out to her: "Maiden, I am no monster. I am a god with power over the waters—and I love you." But **Scylla would not listen**.
- She turned away and hurried inland until she disappeared from view.
- **Glaucus was heartbroken**.
- He had fallen deeply in love with Scylla, but she feared him and wanted nothing to do with him.

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### Glaucus Seeks Circe's Help

- **Desperate to win Scylla's** love, Glaucus decided to **seek the aid of the powerful enchantress Circe**.
- He hoped she could give him a **magical potion that would soften Scylla's heart** and make her love him in return.
- When he arrived, he told Circe his entire story and begged for her help.
- But things did not go as he expected.
- As **Circe** listened to him, **she herself fell in love with Glaucus**.
- **Instead of helping** him win Scylla, she **tried to win him for herself**. She spoke sweetly, used all her charm, and **attempted to persuade him to forget Scylla** and love her instead.
- However, Glaucus remained **completely devoted to Scylla**.
- He firmly **rejected Circe** and declared:
- **"Trees will cover the bottom of the sea, and seaweed will grow on mountain tops before I stop loving Scylla."**

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### Circe's Terrible Revenge

- **Circe was furious**.
- Yet she did not direct her anger at Glaucus. She **blamed Scylla for being the object of his affection**.
- Consumed by jealousy, she **decided to destroy her rival**.
- Circe prepared a **powerful and deadly magical poison**. Then she traveled to the bay where Scylla often bathed.
- There she secretly **poured the poison into the water**.
- Later, when Scylla entered the bay and stepped into the water, the curse took effect immediately.
- A horrifying transformation began.
- From **her body sprang monstrous forms—snakes and savage dogs' heads**. They grew out of her flesh and became part of her.
- Scylla **tried to escape** from them, but she could not.
- She could not tear them away.
- She could not run from them.
- They were now **permanently attached to her body**.

### The Birth of a Monster

- The once-beautiful nymph had **become a hideous monster**.
- In unbearable misery, **Scylla remained fixed to a rock overlooking the sea**.
- Filled with grief, rage, and despair, she **attacked everything that came near her**.
- Ships passing through those waters were in constant danger.
- Sailors feared her, for she would seize and destroy anyone who ventured too close.
- Because of Circe's jealousy, **Scylla became one of the great terrors of the sea**.
- Many famous heroes later encountered her, including:
  - **Jason**, during the voyage of the Argonauts.
  - **Odysseus**, during his long journey home from Troy.
  - **Aeneas**, during his wanderings after the fall of Troy.

### ERYSICHTHON

- The story of Erysichthon is **one of the darkest tales in Greek mythology**. It tells how a man's greed, arrogance, and disrespect for the gods brought upon him a punishment so terrible that it eventually destroyed him.
- It is also notable because it is one of the few myths in which the goddess Ceres (the Roman name for Demeter) appears harsh and merciless.

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### The Sacred Oak

- Erysichthon was a **wealthy and powerful man**, but he was also **arrogant and irreverent**.
- One day, he decided to **cut down a magnificent oak tree that stood in a grove sacred to Ceres**. The grove was a **holy place** where the **tree nymphs, known as dryads, lived and danced**.
- The oak was the largest and most beautiful tree in the grove.
- When Erysichthon ordered his servants to cut it down, they were horrified. They knew that harming a sacred tree was a terrible **act of sacrilege** and feared the anger of the goddess.
- But **Erysichthon mocked their fears**.
- When they **refused to obey**, he **seized an axe himself and marched toward the great oak**.
- Without hesitation, he struck the tree.
- Immediately, something miraculous and frightening occurred.
- **Blood flowed from the wound in the trunk** as though the tree were a living creature.
- Then a **voice** came from **inside the oak**. It **warned Erysichthon that he was committing a terrible crime and that Ceres would surely punish him**.
- But the warning had no effect.
- Filled with pride and rage, **Erysichthon continued chopping**.
- Again and again his axe struck the sacred tree until finally the mighty oak crashed to the ground.

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### Ceres Devises a Terrible Punishment

- The **dryads were heartbroken**.
- They hurried to Ceres and told her what Erysichthon had done.
- The goddess was deeply **offended** and resolved to punish him in a way no one had ever been punished before.
- She **summoned one of the dryads and sent her to a distant, desolate land where Famine lived**.
- There the dryad delivered Ceres' command:
- **Erysichthon must be cursed with a hunger** that could never be satisfied.
- Ceres declared that no amount of food, no matter how great, would ever fill him.
- He would starve even while eating.

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### The Curse of Endless Hunger

- Famine obeyed.
- She **traveled to Erysichthon's house while he slept**.

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- Entering his room, she wrapped her thin, skeletal arms around him and **breathed her dreadful power into his body.**
  - She planted within him an **insatiable hunger.**
  - The next morning **Erysichthon awoke with an overwhelming desire to eat.**
  - He immediately demanded food.
  - Servants brought him meal after meal.
  - Yet the more he ate, the hungrier he became.
  - **Nothing satisfied him.**
  - Every bite only increased his craving.
  - He devoured enormous quantities of food, but it was as if his stomach were an endless void.
  - While he was eating, he felt as though he were starving.
- 

### Wealth Cannot Save Him

- At first, Erysichthon relied on his great wealth.
  - He purchased huge stores of food and consumed them all.
  - **Day after day he spent money buying more and more.**
  - But the curse could not be defeated.
  - His hunger grew faster than his wealth disappeared.
  - Eventually he exhausted all his money and possessions.
  - At last, **only one thing remained that he could sell—his daughter.**
- 

### The Daughter's Escape

- **Erysichthon sold his daughter into slavery.**
  - The girl was **taken to the seashore** where her new owner's ship was waiting.
  - Desperate and afraid, she **prayed to Poseidon** for help.
  - Poseidon heard her prayer.
  - Taking pity on her, he **transformed her into a fisherman.**
  - When her owner arrived moments later, he saw only a man standing on the beach tending fishing lines.
  - Confused, he asked:
  - "Where is the girl who was just here? Her footprints stop suddenly."
  - The fisherman—who was actually the transformed girl—replied:
  - **"I swear by the God of the Sea that no woman has come here. I have been alone."**
  - The owner was completely baffled and eventually departed.
  - As soon as he was gone, the girl resumed her true form.
- 

### Her Father's Greed

- The daughter returned home and told her father what had happened.
  - Instead of being grateful for her safety, Erysichthon saw an opportunity.
  - **If Poseidon would keep rescuing her, then he could sell her over and over again.**
  - So he **sold her again.**
  - Each time she was sold, **Poseidon transformed her into a different creature** so she could escape.
  - Sometimes she became a mare.
  - Sometimes she became a bird.
  - At other times she took on different forms.
  - Every time she escaped and returned to her father.
  - And every time her father sold her once more.
  - **Erysichthon cared only about obtaining money to buy more food.**
  - His hunger had consumed every trace of love, gratitude, and humanity.
- 

### The Horrible End

- Even the money earned from repeatedly selling his daughter could not keep up with his endless appetite.
- The curse continued to grow stronger.
- No amount of food could satisfy him.

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- Finally, when there was nothing left to sell and no way to obtain more food, **Erysichthon's hunger drove him completely mad.**
- In his **desperation, he turned upon himself.**
- Unable to satisfy his craving, he **began consuming his own body.**
- The curse of Ceres had reached its final stage.
- Driven by insatiable hunger, **Erysichthon devoured himself until he died.**

## POMONA AND VERTUMNUS

- Unlike most of the stories in this section, the tale of **Pomona** and **Vertumnus** comes from Roman mythology rather than Greek mythology.
- It is a gentle story about patience, devotion, and a love that finally succeeds through understanding rather than force.

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### Pomona, the Keeper of Orchards

- Pomona was a **beautiful nymph**, but she was very different from most nymphs in mythology.
- She had **no interest in forests, mountains, rivers, or hunting.**
- Instead, she **devoted herself entirely to fruit trees and orchards.**
- Nothing pleased her more than tending her gardens.
- She spent her days pruning branches, grafting trees, cultivating fruit, and caring for every aspect of gardening. Her **orchards flourished under her attention and skill.**
- Pomona loved her work so much that she shut herself away from the world.
- She **avoided men and rejected every suitor** who tried to win her affection.
- She preferred the company of her trees to that of any admirer.

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### Vertumnus Falls in Love

- Among the many who desired Pomona, none loved her more deeply than **Vertumnus.**
- Vertumnus was a god associated with gardens, orchards, plants, and the changing seasons. Because of this, **he shared many of Pomona's interests.**
- Yet no matter how much he loved her, he **could not gain access to her heart.**
- Pomona refused to entertain any suitor.
- Fortunately for **Vertumnus, he possessed a special gift.**
- He could **change his appearance** at will.
- Again and again he **disguised himself so that he could enter Pomona's orchard and at least be near her.**
- Sometimes he appeared as a rough farm laborer carrying a basket filled with barley.
- At other times he disguised himself as a **herdsman.**
- Sometimes he became a vine-pruner or another worker from the countryside.
- **These disguises allowed him to enter her presence** without arousing suspicion.
- But although he enjoyed seeing her, his visits also caused him pain.
- **Pomona never recognized him.**
- She saw only the humble laborer he pretended to be, never the god who loved her.

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### The Clever Disguise

- Eventually Vertumnus realized that his previous attempts had accomplished nothing.
- He needed a better plan.
- This time he **transformed himself into a very old woman.**
- The disguise was so convincing that Pomona welcomed him without concern.
- The old woman admired the beautiful fruits growing in the orchard and praised Pomona's skill.
- Then she added:
- "But you are even more beautiful than your fruit."
- With that, the **old woman kissed Pomona.**
- Then she kissed her again.
- And again.

- The affection seemed strange.
  - No elderly woman would normally behave in such a manner.
  - Pomona became surprised and slightly uneasy.
  - Sensing her reaction, the disguised Vertumnus stopped and sat down nearby.
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### The Lesson of the Elm and the Vine

- Near them stood an **elm tree around which a grapevine** had grown.
  - The vine was heavy with clusters of **ripe purple grapes**.
  - The old woman pointed to them and spoke gently.
  - She explained how beautiful the two plants looked together.
  - The **vine depended upon the elm for support**.
  - Without the tree, the vine would trail helplessly along the ground and produce little fruit.
  - Likewise, the tree would be less useful without the vine.
  - Together they flourished.
  - Apart, each was diminished.
  - Then she compared Pomona to the vine.
  - Pomona, she said, insisted on standing alone.
  - She rejected every person who cared for her.
  - Yet there was **one man she should not reject**.
  - **That man was Vertumnus**.
- 

### The Praise of Vertumnus

- The old woman described Vertumnus as a devoted and faithful lover.
  - She **assured Pomona that she was his first love and would be his last**.
  - Unlike many suitors who were attracted only by beauty, Vertumnus genuinely loved orchards and gardens.
  - He would gladly spend his life working beside her among the trees she cherished.
  - The old woman urged Pomona to recognize how rare such devotion was.
  - Then she spoke even more seriously.
  - She warned Pomona not to be too hard-hearted toward a sincere lover.
- 

### The Warning of Venus

- To strengthen her argument, **the old woman reminded Pomona that Venus often punished those who cruelly rejected true love**.
  - As an example, she told the story of **Anaxarete** and **Iphis**.
  - **Iphis loved Anaxarete deeply**, but **she scorned him and treated him with complete indifference**.
  - His **suffering eventually became so unbearable that he hanged himself** from her gatepost.
  - Even then, **Anaxarete showed no compassion**.
  - As punishment for such cruelty, **Venus transformed her into a stone statue**.
  - The old woman used this story as a warning.
  - She begged Pomona not to reject a worthy and devoted lover.
- 

### Vertumnus Reveals Himself

- At last, the old woman finished speaking.
  - Then something extraordinary happened.
  - She cast aside her disguise.
  - The bent, wrinkled old woman vanished.
  - In her place stood Vertumnus himself—a handsome, radiant young god.
  - Pomona saw him as he truly was for the first time.
  - Not only was he beautiful, but he had also shown wisdom, patience, and genuine love.
  - His devotion had never wavered despite all her refusals.
  - This time, **Pomona's heart softened**.
  - **She accepted his love**.
- 

### Two Gardeners

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- From that day onward, **Pomona and Vertumnus were united.**
- The orchards that Pomona had tended alone now had two caretakers.
- Together they worked among the fruit trees and gardens they both loved.
- Their shared devotion to nature became the foundation of their happiness.
- And so, unlike many myths that end in tragedy, the story of **Pomona and Vertumnus ends in harmony, companionship, and fulfilled love.**