



Unveiling Greek Mythology

2

James Baldwin

How to Download **MP3** Audio Files

iCosmos app:

Scan the QR code on your book cover to download the iCosmos app. After you sign up, use the in-app QR code reader to scan the QR code on the cover again. Then download the MP3 audio files to your Bookshelf in the app.

Website:

Visit our official website (www.icosmos.com.tw). Sign up/in and search for the book. Go to the book's page and click on the "Download MP3" button to download the MP3 audio files to your device.

Preface

Perhaps no other stories have ever been told so often or listened to with so much pleasure as the classic tales of ancient Greece. For many ages they have been a source of delight to young people and old, to the ignorant and the learned, to all who love to hear about and contemplate things mysterious, beautiful, and grand.

They have become so incorporated into our language and thought, and so interwoven with our literature, that we could not do away with them now if we would. They are a portion of our heritage from the distant past, and they form perhaps as important a part of our intellectual life as they did of that of the people among whom they originated.

I have here attempted to tell a few stories of Jupiter and his mighty company and of some of the old Greek heroes, *simply as stories*, nothing more.

I have carefully avoided every suggestion of interpretation. Attempts at analysis and explanation will always prove fatal to a reader's appreciation and enjoyment of such stories.



Homer and His Guide

To inculcate the idea that these tales are merely descriptions of certain natural phenomena expressed in narrative and poetic form, is to deprive them of their highest charm; it is like turning precious gold into utilitarian iron: it is changing a delightful romance into a dull scientific treatise. The wise teacher will take heed not to be guilty of such an error.

It will be observed that while each of the stories in this volume is wholly independent of the others and may be read without any knowledge of those which precede it, there is nevertheless a certain continuity from the first to the last, giving to the collection a completeness like that of a single narrative.

In order that the young people of our own country and time may be the better able to read these stories in the light in which they were narrated long ago, I have told them in simple language, keeping the supernatural element as far as possible in the background, and nowhere referring to Jupiter and his mighty company as gods.

I have hoped thus to free the narrative still more from everything that might detract from its interest simply as a story.

J.B.

C O N T E N T S

Volume 2

1	The Story of Perseus	1
	1 . Danae and the Golden Shower	2
	2 . The Wooden Chest and Exile	5
	3 . The Quest of Medusa's Head	9
	4 . Mercury's Winged Slippers	12
	5 . The Gray Sisters: With One Eye and One Tooth	15
	6 . The Western Maidens and the Tree of Golden Apples	19
	7 . The Dreadful Gorgons	24
	8 . Andromeda and the Sea Beast	28
	9 . Medusa's Head and Turning Into Stone	35
	10 . The Death of Grandfather	37
2	The Origins of Athens	39
	1 . King of Athens: Cecrops	40
	2 . Athena Named Her City: Athens	44
3	The Adventures of Theseus (I)	53
	1 . Unstable Athens	54
	2 . Theseus Lifting the Stone	59
	3 . The Robber Giant: Club-Carrier	65
	4 . Pine-Bender: Sinis	67
	5 . Perigune and Asparagus	70
	6 . Vile Sciron	73
	7 . Wrestler of Wrong-Doer	77
	8 . The Stretcher: Procrustes	81
	9 . Returning Home	87
	10 . The Wicked Witch: Medea	92

4	The Wonderful Artisan	97
	1 . Perdix and Partridge	98
	2.The King of Crete: Minos	103
	3 . Minotaur and Labyrinth	106
	4 . Daedalus Wings	109
	5.The Fall of Icarus and Icarian Sea	112
5	The Adventures of Theseus (II)	115
	1 .The Cruel Tribute	116
	2 . Bound for Crete	120
	3.The Princess: Ariadne	123
	4.The Labyrinth and the Aegean Sea	126

Volume I

1 Jupiter and His Mighty Company

2 The Titans and the Golden Age

3 The Story of Prometheus

1. How Fire Was Given to Men
2. The First Woman: Pandora
3. Pandora's Box
4. How Prometheus Was Punished
5. How Prometheus Was Rescued

4 The Flood and the Creation of Humans

1. The Flood: Destroying All Humans
2. The Creation of Human Beings

5 The Story of Io

1. Changing Io Into a White Cow
2. Argus and Peacock
3. Gadfly and Bosphorus
4. Meeting Prometheus
5. Coming to Egypt

6 The Wonderful Weaver

1. Arachne: The Boastful Weaver
2. The Contest in Weaving

7 Apollo: The Lord of the Silver Bow

1. Leto's Escape and Dolphin
2. The Birth of Apollo and Diana
3. The Center of the World: Parnassus
4. The Serpent Python and the City of Delphi
5. Apollo Chasing Daphne and Laurel
6. Coronis and Crow
7. Grieving for the Dead Son Aesculapius

8 Cadmus and Europa

1. Europa and the White Bull
2. Searching for Europa
3. Pythia, the Priestess of Apollo at Delphi
4. The City Location and the Fierce Dragon
5. Sowing Dragon's Teeth and the City of Thebes
6. Alphabet and Europe

God and Goddess in Greek and Roman Mythology

	Greek	Roman	
1	Zeus	Jupiter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› principal god of the Greek pantheon› ruler of the heavens› king of the sky and the earth
2	Hera	Juno	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› principal goddess of the Pantheon› queen of the Gods› goddess of marriage
3	Poseidon	Neptune	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› king of the sea, earthquakes, and horses
4	Hades	Pluto	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› god of the dead› ruler of the underworld
5	Persephone		<ul style="list-style-type: none">› queen of the Dead, grain-goddess
6	Demeter	Ceres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› goddess of the earth, flowers, plants, and harvest
7	Prometheus		<ul style="list-style-type: none">› a Titan, brother of Atlas
8	Heracles	Hercules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› a divine hero

9	Dionysus	Bacchus	› god of wine and sensual pleasures
10	Pan	Faunus	› god of woods, fields, and flocks
11	Ares	Mars	› god of war
12	Hermes	Mercury	› god of commerce, invention, travelers and shepherds › messenger of the gods
13	Hephaestus	Vulcan	› god of fire and metalworking
14	Athena	Minerva	› goddess of wisdom and war
15	Aphrodite	Venus	› goddess of love and beauty
16	Apollo	Phoebus Apollo	› god of the sun, poetry, music, dance, medicine, and oracles
17	Artemis	Diana	› goddess of the hunt, the moon, virginity, animals, and childbirth
18	Eros	Cupid	› god of love
19	Muses		› sisterhood of goddesses › embody the arts, inspire the creation
20	Hebe	Juventas	› goddess of youth and spring
21	Pandora		› the first woman

1 The Story of Perseus

Danae and The Golden Shower



There was a king of Argos who had but one child, and that child was a girl. If he had had a son, he would have trained him up to be a brave man and great king; but he did not know what to do with this fair-haired daughter.

When he saw her growing up to be tall and slender and wise, he wondered if, after all, he would have to die some time and leave his lands and his gold and his kingdom to her.

So he sent to Delphi and asked the Pythia about it. The Pythia told him that he would not only have to die some time, but that the son of his daughter would cause his death.

This frightened the king very much, and he tried to think of some plan by which he could keep the Pythia's words from coming true. At last he made up his mind that he would build a prison for his daughter and keep her in it all her life.

So he called his workmen and had them dig a deep round hole in the ground, and in this hole they built a house of brass which had but one room and no door at all, but only a small window at the top.

When it was finished, the king put the maiden, whose name was Danae, into it; and with her he put her nurse and her toys and her pretty dresses and everything that he thought she would need to make her happy.

“Now we shall see that the Pythia does not always tell the truth,” he said.

So Danae was kept shut up in the prison of brass. She had no one to talk to but her old nurse; and she never saw the land or the sea, but only the blue sky above the open window and now and then a white cloud sailing across.

I do not know how many years passed by, but Danae grew fairer every day, and by and by she was no longer a child, but a tall and beautiful woman; and Jupiter amid the clouds looked down and saw her and loved her.

One day it seemed to her that the sky opened and a shower of gold fell through the window into the room; and when the blinding shower had ceased, a noble young man stood smiling before her.



Danae and the Brazen Tower



Danae



She did not know that it was mighty Jupiter who had thus come down in the rain; but she thought that he was a brave prince who had come from over the sea to take her out of her prison-house.

After that he came often, but always as a tall and handsome youth; and by and by they were married, with only the nurse at the wedding feast, and Danae was so happy that she was no longer lonesome even when he was away.

But one day when he climbed out through the narrow window there was a great flash of light, and she never saw him again.

2 The Wooden Chest And Exile



Not long afterwards a babe was born to Danae a smiling boy whom she named Perseus.

For four years she and the nurse kept him hidden, and not even the women who brought their food to the window knew about him. But one day the king chanced to be passing by and heard the child's prattle¹.

When he learned the truth, he was very much alarmed, for he thought that now, in spite of all that he had done, the words of the Pythia might come true.

The only sure way to save himself would be to put the child to death before he was old enough to do any harm. But when he had taken the little Perseus and his mother out of the prison and had seen how helpless the child was, he could not bear the thought of having him killed outright.



¹ prattle ['prætɪ] (n.) idle or childish talk



For the king, although a great coward, was really a kind-hearted man and did not like to see anything suffer pain. Yet something must be done.

So he bade his servants make a wooden chest² that was roomy and watertight³ and strong; and when it was done, he put Danae and the child into it and had it taken far out to sea and left there to be tossed⁴ about by the waves.

He thought that in this way he would rid himself of both daughter and grandson without seeing them die; for surely the chest would sink after a while, or else the winds would cause it to drift to some strange shore so far away that they could never come back to Argos again.

All day and all night and then another day, fair Danae and her child drifted over the sea. The waves rippled and played before and around the floating chest, the west wind whistled cheerily, and the birds circled in the air above; and the child was not afraid, but dipped⁵ his hands in the curling waves and laughed at the merry breeze and shouted back at the screaming birds.

But on the second night all was changed. A storm arose, the sky was black, the billows were mountain high, and the winds roared fearfully; yet through it all the child slept soundly in his mother's arms. And Danae sang over him this song:



Sleep, sleep, dear child, and take your rest
 Upon your troubled mother's breast;
 For you can lie without one fear
 Of dreadful danger lurking near.

Wrapped in soft robes and warmly sleeping,
 You do not hear your mother weeping;
 You do not see the mad waves leaping,
 Nor heed⁶ the winds their vigils⁷ keeping.

The stars are hid, the night is drear,
 The waves beat high, the storm is here;
 But you can sleep, my darling child,
 And know naught⁸ of the uproar⁹ wild.

2 chest [tʃɛst] (n.) a large strong box

3 watertight ['wɑ:tə'taɪt] (a.) not allowing water to pass in, out, or through

4 toss [tɔ:s] (v.) to be thrown repeatedly up and down or to and fro

5 dip [dɪp] (v.) to put something briefly into a liquid

6 heed [hi:d] (v.) to give serious attention to a warning or advice

7 vigil ['vɪdʒɪl] (n.) a period spent in doing something through the night

8 naught [nɔ:t] (n.) nothing

9 uproar ['ʌprɔ:r] (n.) a state of violent and noisy disturbance



At last the morning of the third day came, and the chest was tossed upon the sandy shore of a strange island where there were green fields and, beyond them, a little town.

A man who happened to be walking near the shore saw it and dragged¹⁰ it far up on the beach. Then he looked inside, and there he saw the beautiful lady and the little boy. He helped them out and led them just as they were to his own house, where he cared for them very kindly.

And when Danae had told him her story, he bade her feel no more fear; for they might have a home with him as long as they should choose to stay, and he would be a true friend to them both.

¹⁰ drag [dræg] (v.) to move something by pulling it along a surface, usually the ground

3 The Quest of Medusa's Head



So Danae and her son stayed in the house of the kind man who had saved them from the sea. Years passed by, and Perseus grew up to be a tall young man, handsome, and brave, and strong.

The king of the island, when he saw Danae was so pleased with her beauty that he wanted her to become his wife. But he was a dark, cruel man, and she did not like him at all; so she told him that she would not marry him.

The king thought that Perseus was to blame for this, and that if he could find some excuse to send the young man on a far journey, he might force Danae to have him whether she wished or not.

One day he called all the young men of his country together and told them that he was soon to be wedded to the queen of a certain land beyond the sea. Would not each of them bring him a present to be given to her father?





For in those times it was the rule, that when any man was about to be married, he must offer¹ costly gifts to the father of the bride.

“What kind of presents do you want?” said the young men.

“Horses,” he answered; for he knew that Perseus had no horse.

“Why don’t you ask for something worth the having?” said Perseus; for he was vexed² at the way in which the king was treating him. “Why don’t you ask for Medusa’s head, for example?”

“Medusa’s head it shall be!” cried the king. “These young men may give me horses, but you shall bring Medusa’s head.”

“I will bring it,” said Perseus; and he went away in anger, while his young friends laughed at him because of his foolish words.



Medusa

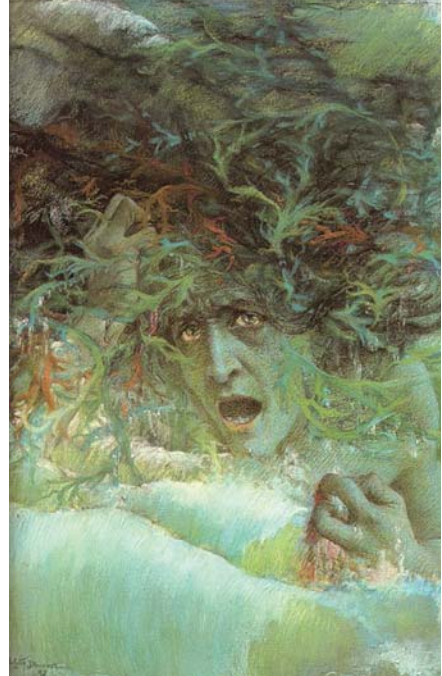
1 offer [ˈɑːfər] (v.) give something as worship

2 vexed [ˈvɛkst] (a.) confused

What was this Medusa's head which he had so rashly promised to bring? His mother had often told him about Medusa. Far, far away, on the very edge of the world, there lived three strange monsters, sisters, called Gorgons. They had the bodies and faces of women, but they had wings of gold, and terrible claws of brass, and hair that was full of living serpents.

They were so awful to look upon, that no man could bear the sight of them, but whoever saw their faces was turned to stone. Two of these monsters had charmed lives, and no weapon could ever do them harm; but the youngest, whose name was Medusa, might be killed, if indeed anybody could find her and could give the fatal³ stroke⁴.

When Perseus went away from the king's palace, he began to feel sorry that he had spoken so rashly. For how should he ever make good his promise and do the king's bidding⁵?



3 fatal ['fɛɪtəl] (a.) very serious and having an important bad effect

4 stroke [strəʊk] (n.) a hit or blow made by the hand

5 bidding ['bɪdɪŋ] (n.) somebody's orders or instructions