

GREEK MYTHOLOGY

FOR TEENS

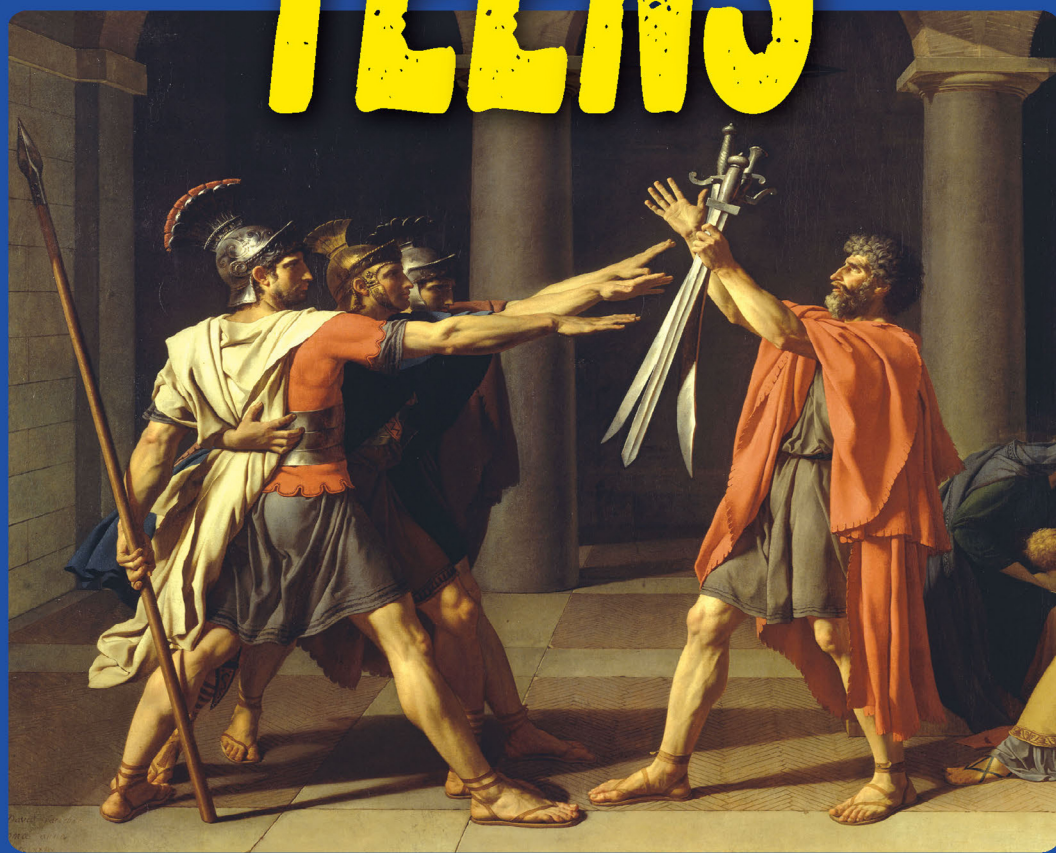
CLASSIC MYTHS
IN TODAY'S
WORLD

A **Prufrock Press** Book

Helps Students
Examine Life's
Big Ideas

Includes
Interactive
Activities to
Retell Classic
Myths

Discusses
Mythology
in Relation to
Real Life



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY **ZACHARY HAMBY**

GREEK MYTHOLOGY FOR TEENS





Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

GREEK MYTHOLOGY

FOR TEENS

**CLASSIC MYTHS
IN TODAY'S
WORLD**



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY ZACHARY HAMBY

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published in 2011 by Prufrock Press Inc.

Published 2021 by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © 2011 by Taylor & Francis Group

Cover and Layout Design by Raquel Trevino

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hamby, Zachary, 1982-
Greek mythology for teens : classic myths in today's world / written and illustrated by Zachary Hamby.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-59363-717-0 (pbk.)
1. Mythology, Greek. I. Title.
BL783.H36 2011
292.1'3--dc22
2011016960

Cover Image: ART147619
David, Jacques Louis (1748-1825)
The Oath of the Horatii, ca. 1784. Oil on canvas, 330 x 425 cm.
Photo: Gérard Blot/ Christian Jean
Louvre, Paris, France
Requested resolution : 10,000 X 7,838 pixels
© Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY

ISBN 13: 978-1-0321-4374-3 (hbk)
ISBN 13: 978-1-5936-3717-0 (pbk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003235378

DEDICATION

For Rachel

“All men have need of the gods.”

—Homer, the *Odyssey*, Book 3, Line 54



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface.....	ix
Teacher's Guide.....	xi

INTRODUCTION

Wrapping Truths in Myths.....	1
-------------------------------	---

CHAPTER 1

The Nature of the Gods	13
------------------------------	----

CHAPTER 2

The Power of Music	35
--------------------------	----

CHAPTER 3

Teamwork	53
----------------	----

CHAPTER 4

Heart and Soul	81
----------------------	----

CHAPTER 5

Self-Love (Vanity).....	99
-------------------------	----

CHAPTER 6

Wisdom vs. Intelligence	111
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER 7

Greed	129
-------------	-----

CHAPTER 8

Mind Over Matter	147
------------------------	-----

CHAPTER 9

Fathers and Sons	169
------------------------	-----

Conclusion	189
------------------	-----

Underworld Find-It	190
--------------------------	-----

Underworld Find-It Answer Key.....	191
------------------------------------	-----

Pronunciation Guide	193
---------------------------	-----

References.....	197
-----------------	-----

About the Author	199
------------------------	-----

Common Core State Standards Alignment	201
---	-----



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

PREFACE

Welcome to *Greek Mythology for Teens*, a book that uses reader's theater plays to retell ancient myths and legends. This is the second book in the *Mythology for Teens* series and also the second to deal with Greek and Roman mythology. Additional information accompanies each play, explaining the myth's relevance to the modern world, providing background information and commentary on the myth, as well as suggesting other topics of discussion or exploration. Only a handful of the Greco-Roman myths are presented here, and this book does *not* claim to be a complete collection of mythology. It is a sampling—one that hopefully will leave you hungry for more. In my opinion, the myths of the Greeks and Romans are the best that the world has to offer. I hope you enjoy reading, learning, and acting from this text, as it was designed for education, as well as entertainment. Please feel free to contact me with comments and suggestions.

—Zachary Hamby (mr.mythology@gmail.com)



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

TEACHER'S GUIDE

The poet Homer said, “It is tedious to tell again tales already plainly told,” and I sincerely hope he’s wrong. The Greek and Roman myths have been told time and time again, so what is there to make this book different? Once again, I defer to the words of another: “Teach mythology not as a study, but as a relaxation from study” (Bulfinch, 1855/1967, p. 12). This is Thomas Bulfinch of *Bulfinch’s Mythology* describing an approach that I am adopting as my own. The intention of this book is to make mythology fun, and I hope it succeeds.

This book presents mythology in ancient and modern contexts. As I mentioned before, it is not intended to be a comprehensive textbook of mythology. Out of many Greco-Roman myths, only nine are present. Because this is the second book in a series, I have tried *not* to retread the same ground as before. The chapters of *Mythology for Teens* were focused on (and used a particular myth) to explore certain themes and issues. This book carries on the same tradition but chooses different themes and issues than its predecessor. You will find less information about ancient Greece than was presented in the last book and more myths. After all, the culture that produced these myths is a dark age in the history of Greece, and most of what is known about that particular time period comes from the myths themselves.

A reader’s theater play makes up the main part of each chapter. When acted out, these plays run between 25–40 minutes. One myth, “Jason and the Argonauts,” is broken up into two plays to accommodate its length, and there are two episodes, “In the Cave of the Cyclops” and “Searching for Odysseus,” pulled from

the *Odyssey*. In addition to the play(s) in each chapter, there are several other follow-up sections that add to the reader's sphere of reference. Most sections include discussion questions, asking the students to analyze what they have read, and additional activities that may ask the students to draw, research, write, act, present, read, or watch outside material. These activities, designed with the intent of stimulating creativity, help to further the students' understanding and enjoyment of the myth. Their purpose is to breathe life into the old bones of myth through interactive learning. They may be utilized before, after, or perhaps even during the reading of the plays.

Even though they can be read and enjoyed individually, the reader's theater plays should be read with a group or "full cast" to utilize their maximum potential. The variety of voice and interpretation adds new dimension to the written word and links students together in a common learning experience. Students become active participants as they read because they are also required to interpret the text. Linguistic and audio processing combine, resulting in maximum comprehension. The group-learning atmosphere also makes the reading more enjoyable.

Let me stress that these plays can never replace the original works. As hard as I try to maintain the themes and tone of the poets, I will never be as good at telling Homer's story as Homer. If your students enjoy the version read here, please encourage them to seek out the source. That being said, these plays are as faithful as they can be. As you might imagine, fitting a complex story into a 30-minute play is a challenging task. A few of the stories' peripheral details have been lost, but the core is intact. At times, I have condensed events; at others, I have combined or eliminated characters. For that I apologize to all of the dead poets and mythographers who brought us these stories. If you truly wish to have the full flavor of the original, read the original. If you wish to have the condensed, but not-skimping-on-the-feel-and-emotion-of-the-story version, you cannot do better than these plays.

Writing these plays has been a process of translation, and during this process, I am sure a little bit of my own voice has snuck in. I have tried to make the plays' dialogue as engaging as possible for modern teenage audiences, while leaving it archaic enough to still be challenging. I have tried to avoid language that is *too* modern, but also lofty language that would trip up the tongue. The process is a balancing act between challenging the students' intellect without insulting it.

As for the actual reading of the play, you, the teacher, should act as the casting director. I strongly encourage you to participate in the play as well. This is helpful in breaking down a learning barrier. Instead of leaving students to learn on their own, you are becoming a participant and

experiencing with them. In my own classroom, I commonly choose to be the narrator. Emotion cues in parentheses such as (*frightened*) or (*angrily*) come at the beginning of important lines. Even those students who are not strong readers can still participate (and should be encouraged to do so) by contributing through sound effects and crowd reactions. These are indicated in the script, such as (*booming thunder*), and many can be performed by the whole class, such as (*applause from everyone*).

Reader's theater has experienced plenty of success in lower grades, but its usefulness in middle or high school is relatively unexplored. A common rationale is this: Older students will not like activities geared toward younger students. I am here to tell you that this is not the case. Teenagers enjoy acting, playing, and creating just as much as elementary students. Even though they would hate to admit it, they are still young at heart. One draw to reader's theater for teens is that it appears "easy." Reading aloud seems like an "easy assignment." But, in actuality, when students are handed parts in a play, they are presented with a complex task: Read the written word, interpret it, and present it for others to hear—all in a matter of seconds. This process looks less like an easy assignment and more like active learning.

Reader's theater is not the only way to experience literature, but it is a great way to create a classroom learning experience where everyone laughs and learns together. As you implement this book into your own classroom, please keep these things in mind. Students will value knowledge when you make it applicable to them. I haven't yet encountered a class that didn't enjoy participating, experiencing, and learning from these stories as they are presented here.

Note on Supplemental Materials

For the films recommended to accompany certain sections, all are rated either G, PG, or PG-13. Even though your students may fall into these age ranges, please preview each film to determine if its contents are appropriate for *your* classroom.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

INTRODUCTION

Wrapping Truths in Myths

British composer George Lloyd (1919–1988), who, like many composers before him, used Greek mythology as inspiration for his symphonies, made an important observation: “The ancient Greeks have a knack of wrapping truths in myths” (The George Lloyd Society, n.d., para. 7). He is playing off words that now mean the opposite of one another, *truth* and *myth*. To say something is a *myth* is to say that it is *false*, *untrue*, or at its very best, a *fanciful lie*. But you’re here to study *myth*-ology, and mythology is not the study of *lies*. Instead it is the study of *truth* (*told in an interesting way*). A truth is usually pretty straightforward—for example, “Money will not solve all your problems.” It is simple. It is cut and dried. It is the truth. But it is also boring. What if, instead of simply *telling* you the truth, it was illustrated through an entertaining story? What about a story that tells of a king who desired nothing more than money and used his one and only magical wish to gain the Golden Touch? The story itself is complete hogwash. A person cannot turn something into gold just by touching it. Gods do not just go around and grant random mortals’ wishes. Yet the truth is illustrated there in the story—wrapped up in layers of myth—waiting for the listeners to discover it, experience it, absorb it, and make it a part of their philosophy.

Until scientists discover that the sky does, in fact, rest on the shoulders of Atlas or that there are creatures who are half-man, half-something-else, we still classify the Greek myths as fiction. Yet you should always remember that myths were originally a way of examining humanity, and the truth of humanity is in them:

human emotion, weakness, courage, and love. And these truths will never change.

Why Classical Mythology Matters

With all of the types of mythology out there—everything from Native American to Japanese—it is important to mention why classical mythology occupies its seat as the most revered. (Classical mythology encompasses the mythology of Greece and Rome, which were basically one, but we will get to that later.) The Greeks laid the groundwork for Western civilization. Their contributions in the areas of science, literature, mathematics, art, philosophy, politics, and warfare paved the way for many successive civilizations. The Greeks invented important things like democracy, history, modern medicine, drama—things you have probably heard of. Along with all of these contributions came a complex mythology, which is at times both savage and poetic. And as Western civilization progressed, the mythology of the Greeks was passed along.

Greek culture gained significant ground when Alexander the Great, a Macedonian Greek, conquered the known world and made his own culture the “in” thing. After his empire dissolved, the Romans—Greece’s neighbors to the west—picked up the slack and, adopting Greek culture as their own, continued to spread it even further. The Roman Empire ventured even further north into Europe to then-remote places like France and England. Several centuries later, when this empire had declined and ultimately fallen, the European nations—which had once been complete barbarians but were now completely “enlightened” like the Romans and Greeks before them—carried on the torch of Western civilization. (Notice how things are basically heading west, hence “Western” civilization.) The tradition went *extremely* west when the European nations began to cross the Atlantic and found colonies in the New World. Now the United States of America (about as far west as you can go without going back east again) is the heir to the Greek tradition.

At each stage of Western civilization’s progression, the Greek myths found a new audience and a new fanbase. The Romans were so enamored with Greek mythology that they basically absorbed it. They kept the names of their own deities (e.g., Jupiter, Juno, Mercury, Venus) but tacked them onto the Greek gods. After a series of name changes, *Greek* mythology became *Roman* mythology. When the Europeans discovered the same mythology, they did not make it the subject of their worship, but the subject of their art. Literature, music, and art contain innum-

able references to classical mythology. Only the Bible is alluded to more often.

You may not spend your spare time looking at paintings or listening to classical music, so how has classical mythology technically impacted your world? Phrases like “Achilles heel,” “Oedipus complex,” and “Between Scylla and Charybdis” proliferate the English language. The planets in our solar system bear the Latinized (Roman) names of the gods, and the months of the year contain references to them as well (e.g., January, March, April, May, June). Everything from young adult novels (the *Percy Jackson* series), to tennis shoes (Nike), to video games (*God of War*), to the modern Olympics uses classical mythology as a reference point. So maybe it is time you started paying attention. No other set of myths has ever—or will ever again—impact your culture so greatly.

DISCUSS

- Can you think of any other references to classical mythology in the modern world?

RESEARCH

Locate a product that uses a reference to classical mythology in either its name or its advertising. Discuss how the reference helps sell the product.

The Many Meanings of Myths

For the original myth-makers, myths served a variety of purposes. For starters, myths helped ancient people answer their questions about the complex world around them: Why does the sun travel the same course over the sky day after day? Why do the seasons change? For this reason, myths were a primitive stab at science. In addition to Mother Nature, myths also helped explain human nature—why do humans act the way they do?—and the mystery of human existence or why men exist in the first place. Myths also served as warnings and determined the boundaries of society by illustrating which behaviors were unacceptable and resulted in punishment from the gods. Many fantastic things happen in myths—men fly, statues come to life, and men achieve the power to live forever. All of these reflect the conscious (or unconscious) desires of the myth-makers. Lastly (an often overlooked function of myth in all of the hubbub of hidden meaning), myths were made to entertain, and to this end they still succeed.

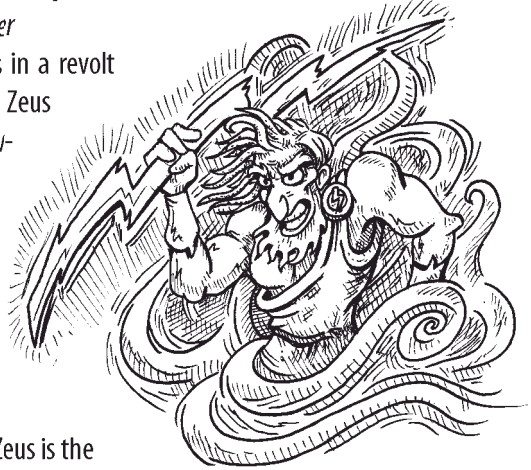
Mythologist is a term for someone who studies mythology, and this will be your title as you read the myths presented in this book. As you read, look for the various functions of mythology. Be prepared to discuss and analyze these at different intervals. These myths have been interpreted anew by each successive generation. Your interpretation will be no less valuable.

The Gallery of the Gods

Zeus (Roman Names: Jupiter, Jove)

Lord of the Sky, Rain-Bringer, Cloud-Gatherer

After leading his brother and sister gods in a revolt against their forefathers, the Titans, Zeus became the unquestioned ruler of the heavens. His feared weapon is the thunderbolt, and his palace on Mt. Olympus is a place of peace, where all gods are welcome. Zeus is the husband of the goddess Hera, but it's not in his nature to be faithful. Time and time again, he enters into disastrous affairs with other goddesses, nymphs, and mortal women. Zeus is the all-father. Almost all of the second generation of gods claim Zeus as their father. Many of the mortal heroes are children of the god as well. Zeus' bird is the eagle.



Apollo (Roman Name: Phoebus Apollo)

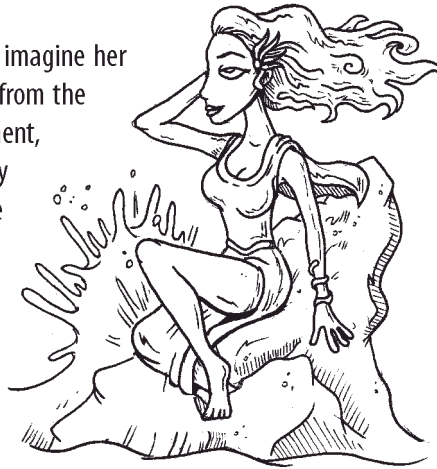
God of Light, Truth, Poetry, Health, Prophecy, and Music

From all of the important titles laid at Apollo's feet, you can see the Greeks thought very highly of him. He is called the "most Greek" of all of the gods. He, above all others, represented the ideal man—handsome, athletic, intelligent, talented, and good. His twin sister is Artemis, Goddess of the Moon. Over time, Apollo came to replace the Greek god Helios as God of the Sun as well. The lyre is Apollo's instrument, as he is the master musician. Apollo's tree is the laurel. A wreath of laurels was awarded in Greece to those who won a contest of poetry. Apollo's oracle in Delphi was the most reliable and the most popular.

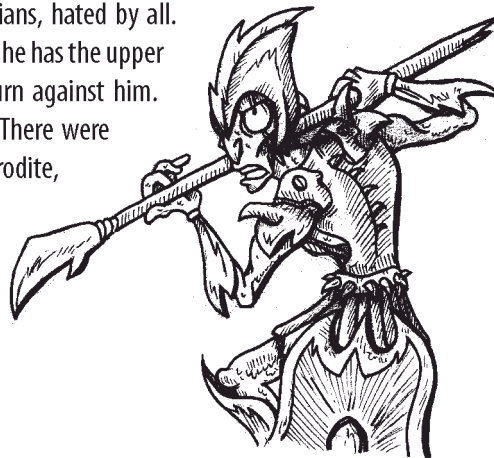


Aphrodite (Roman Name: Venus)*Goddess of Love and Beauty*

Aphrodite was so lovely that the Greeks couldn't imagine her being born in the usual way. Instead she sprang from the white beauty of the sea foam. In an odd arrangement, this most beautiful goddess was married to the only ugly Olympian, Hephaestus, the deformed forge god. Some said that Zeus forced her into the marriage; others, that she chose him herself. Either way, her vows did not stop her from having many affairs. Gods and mortal men found her charms simply irresistible. Whenever on business abroad, Aphrodite is pulled through the sky by a swan-drawn cart. The swan and the dove are both symbols of her grace. In Greece her worship was popular, although the temple priestesses were rumored to be prostitutes. Our word aphrodisiac, a passion-inducing substance, is derived from her name.

**Ares (Roman Name: Mars)***God of War*

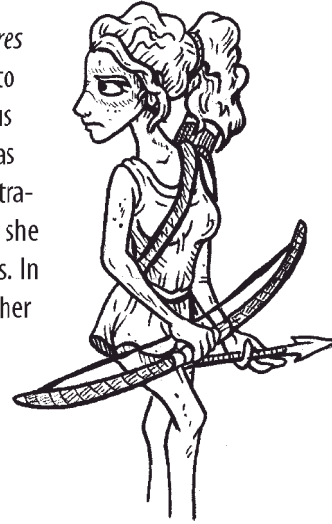
Ares is the cruelest member of the Olympians, hated by all. This god is known for his ruthlessness when he has the upper hand and his cowardice when the tides turn against him. Even the Greeks disliked this terrible god. There were no temples to Ares in ancient Greece. Aphrodite, in one of her many infidelities, started an affair with Ares, which was his motivation to fight for the Trojans in the war. Martial (having to do with war) and March are coined from his Latin name.



Artemis (Roman Name: Diana)

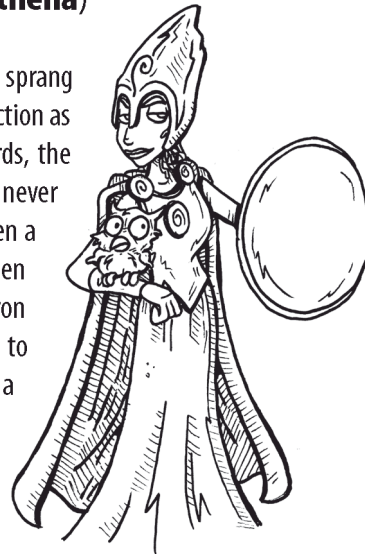
Virgin Goddess of the Hunt, Protector of Maidens and Wild Creatures

Artemis is often called upon by maidens who want nothing to do with men. Her silver arrows have slain many overzealous suitors. Artemis is also the twin sister of Apollo and revered as the Goddess of the Moon. At times her different duties contradict one other. Even though she is a hunter of animals herself, she often demands that mortals pay for killing defenseless beasts. In the most famous case, she demands that a Greek army offer her a human sacrifice in apology for trampling a family of rabbits. She asks for the life of the general's young daughter, a maiden. This is strange behavior for the protector of maidens.

**Athena (Roman Names: Minerva, Pallas Athena)**

Goddess of Wisdom and Battle

According to one tale, Athena was not actually born, but sprang fully grown from Zeus' head. This is symbolic of her distinction as Goddess of Wisdom. Athena's animal is the wisest of birds, the owl. As the leader of the Virgin Goddesses, those who will never marry, Athena refuses to let any man be her master. When a new city-state was founded, there was a contest between Athena and her uncle Poseidon over who should be its patron god. The competition was fierce. To win the people over to his side, Poseidon formed the first horse from the crest of a wave. In order to one-up his gift, Athena created the bridle, a tool man could use to subdue Poseidon's creation. Because her gift was the wiser, the city chose Athena as their patron goddess. From this point on the city-state was called Athens.



Demeter (Roman Name: Ceres)*Goddess of Agriculture*

The Greeks and Romans felt an extremely strong connection with Demeter. The goddess was responsible for providing them with their sustenance and livelihood. In addition to this, Demeter was one of the few gods who did not reside on Olympus. She lived on Earth, where she could be close to those who needed her most. Also unlike the other gods, Demeter's existence was bittersweet. In the fall and winter, she mourned her daughter, Persephone (Proserpine), who was taken into the Underworld to be the wife of Hades. Only during the spring and summer, when her daughter returned to visit, was Demeter truly happy. All of these qualities endeared her to her worshippers. Her sacred cult at Eleusis was one of the most popular, and the secrets were kept so well that to this day researchers have no clue what their rites consisted of. From Ceres comes our word for grain-based food, cereal.

**Dionysus (Roman Name: Bacchus)***God of the Vine and Wine, Patron God of the Theatre*

Dionysus was a latecomer to Mt. Olympus. He is the only god to have a mortal parent. Dionysus is a two-sided god. On one side, he is the gentle planter of the vine. On the other, he is a wild drinker, inspiring his followers to commit terrible acts through their intoxication. Satyrs—half-men, half-goat creatures—were said to be the companions of Dionysus, along with his fanatical female followers (the maenads). Followers of Dionysus gathered in the wilderness and drank themselves into a wild frenzy. More often than not their gatherings ended with violence. In many stories, kings, who do not approve of the new god or the behavior he promotes, forbid his worship. This probably reflects Greek society's displeasure with the worshippers of Dionysus, whom many viewed as hedonistic drunks. Despite his late addition to the gods and his initial opposition from men, Dionysus became one of the most popular additions to the Greek pantheon. Athens dedicated its springtime drama festival to the god, solidifying his place as patron god of the theatre.

