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## BOOK IX

*The Story of Achelous' Duel for Deianira*

When Theseus asked him why the groan, the gesture,  
 The mutilated forehead, the old river,  
 With unadorned and reed-crowned hair, made answer:  
 "A sorrowful story; for what loser tells  
 His battles with any pleasure? But I will tell you.  
 It was not so bad to lose as it was glorious  
 To have made the fight, and the greatness of the winner  
 Gives me some satisfaction. You have heard,  
 Perhaps, of Deianira, once most lovely,  
 The hope of many suitors, and I myself  
 Was one of them, and came to her father's house:  
*Receive me as a son-in-law*, I said,  
 And Hercules said that too, and all the others  
 Left it to us to settle. He began  
 By claiming Jove as father, did some bragging

About his labors, and some mission or other  
 His stepmother had set him. I was thinking  
 No god should yield to a mortal; Hercules  
 Had not yet, then, become a god. 'I am,'  
 I said, 'A god, lord of the river flowing  
 Through your own realms, King Oeneus. I am no stranger  
 From foreign shores, but one from your own country.  
 It should not count against me that Queen Juno  
 Is without hatred for me, or that labors  
 Have not been punishments inflicted on me.  
 As for your parentage, Hercules, you claim  
 Alcmena as your mother: that makes Jove  
 What kind of father to you?—either a product  
 Of your imagination, or, if real,  
 A cheater, and your mother an adultress.  
 So, take your choice—which would you rather be,  
 Liar, or bastard?' He stood there glaring at me,  
 Controlling his savage temper very badly,  
 And finally growled: 'I am a better talker  
 With fists than tongue. Provided I can win  
 The fight, I grant you the debater's laurel.'  
 I had talked so big I knew I had to fight him,  
 So I slipped out of my green robe, held up  
 My hands, assumed the proper pose. He took  
 Handfuls of dust, and sprinkled them over my body,  
 And made his own turn golden with the dust.  
 We could grip each other better so. His hold  
 Aimed at my neck, my flashing legs, he shifted  
 From one feint to another, but I was heavy,

Heavy and big; I stood there like a sea-wall  
 Which the waves beat in vain. We both gave way  
 A little, and came together again, and held there,  
 Determined not to yield, foot trampling foot,  
 And I leaned forward, grabbed his hands, my fingers  
 Bent back his fingers, and my forehead pushed  
 Against his forehead. I have seen bulls battle  
 In just that way for the most shining heifer  
 With the rest of the herd watching in fear and trembling,  
 Uncertain who will win. Three times he struggled  
 To throw me off, and the fourth time he loosened  
 The hold I had, and hit me hard, and swung me—  
 I have to tell the truth—in half a circle  
 And jumped on my back. I ought to have some credit,  
 There would be no sense in telling lies about it,  
 For holding up this mountain that weighed on me.  
 Still, I got out of it: my sweating arms  
 Managed to break the hold, but he rushed at me,  
 All winded as I was, gave me no time  
 To get my strength back, and he grabbed my neck,  
 And I went down, and knew the taste of the dirt.  
 Inferior in strength, I turned to cunning,  
 Became a serpent, slid away, and twisted  
 'My body into looping coils, kept darting  
 My tongue and hissing at him. All he did  
 Was laugh. 'I strangled serpents in my cradle,'  
 He cried, 'You might, Achelous, be bigger  
 Than some snakes I have seen, and still be only  
 A little fraction of the one at Lerna

Who multiplied with every wound, and lost  
 A hundred heads, and grew a double number  
 Each time I struck one off, a tree of serpents  
 Which I cut down, brought low. What do you think  
 Will happen to you in that disguise of yours,  
 In that false armor?' He got hold of my neck,  
 Squeezed, so I thought my throat was gripped with pincers,  
 I fought against the thumbs that pressed my jaws,  
 Until I took another form, a bull's,  
 But his arms went over the left side of my shoulders,  
 He dragged me down, he pinned my horns to the ground,  
 And this was not enough; his rough right hand  
 Broke off one horn and pulled it from my forehead.  
 And this the Naiads took, and filled it full  
 Of fruits and fragrant flowers, and the good goddess,  
 Whose name is Plenty, was made the richer by it."  
 His story ended, and a nymph, appareled  
 After the manner of Diana, came  
 With flowing hair, bringing the horn, all full  
 Of autumn's store, prime fruits, to grace the table.  
 And when day came, and the sun's rays were gilding  
 The mountain-summits with morning, they took their leave,  
 All those young men, before the stream ran quiet,  
 Before the waters were glassy smooth. Their host  
 Hid in the waves the mutilated horn,  
 The country features, all uninjured, really,  
 Except in loss of pride, and so his forehead  
 He keeps concealed with reeds or willow branches.



*The Story of Hercules, Nessus, and Deianira*

But the Centaur Nessus burned for Deianira  
 As if an arrow had pierced him. Hercules  
 Was coming home with his bride, and reached the river,  
 Evenus, swollen to flood with the rains of winter,  
 Too dangerous to cross, with its whirling eddies.  
 It was not for himself that Hercules was worried,  
 But what of Deianira? At this point Nessus  
 Came stalking up; he knew the fords, he told them:  
 "You swim it, Hercules; I'll carry her over!"  
 So Hercules entrusted her to Nessus,  
 And she was pale and trembling, afraid of the river,  
 Afraid of Nessus, but Hercules, undaunted,  
 Threw club and bow across the stream, but wearing  
 The lion-skin and quiver, faced the river  
 Knowing that he must finish what he started,  
 And had no hesitation, did not even  
 Look for the smoothest current, scorning favors  
 From any river. So he reached the bank,  
 Was picking up his bow, and heard his bride  
 Calling for help: Nessus was full of evil.  
 "So," Hercules cried, "this double-bodied monster  
 Has so much pride of strength and swiftness in him  
 He turns to violence. Now hear me, Nessus!  
 Let things of mine alone! The wheel your father  
 Rides in eternal Hell should be warning  
 Against forbidden loves. You will not escape me,  
 No matter how much you trust your vaunted horse-power!

I will catch up with you, if not by running,  
 By deeds, by wounds." And as he spoke, he proved it:  
 The arrow pierced the back, came out at the shoulder,  
 So two wounds bled, and the blood had poison in it  
 For the barb was dipped in the venom of the serpent,  
 And Nessus wrenched it loose. "I shall not die,"  
 He thought, "Without revenge," and gave his robe,  
 Dyed in warm crimson, as a gift to her,  
 The girl he would have ravished, as a token,  
 To help to make her love him.

Time went by  
 And Hercules' great deeds, and Juno's hatred  
 Spread over all the world. He was returning  
 Victorious from Oechalia, making ready  
 To pay his vows to Jove, when Rumor, lover  
 Of truth and falsehood both, the tattletale  
 Who makes big things of little ones, comes rushing  
 To Deianira, and her story has it  
 That Hercules burns with passion for Iole.  
 She loves him, she believes it, she is frightened,  
 Gives way, at first, to tears, pities herself,  
 Makes her grief grow by weeping, and recovers  
 A little, thinking: "What's the good of weeping?  
 Tears would delight my rival, and she is coming,  
 Is on her way: what I had better do  
 Is hurry, figure out something, while I can,  
 Before she is in my bed. Shall I complain,  
 Shall I keep silent? Shall I go again  
 To Calydon, or linger here? Shall I

Forsake this house, or keep her out? I might  
 Remember Meleager was my brother,  
 Might plan some desperate deed, murder my rival  
 To show her what a woman in grief and outrage  
 Can do by way of vengeance." So her mind  
 Wavers in all directions, but at last  
 She thinks it best to send the robe of Nessus,  
 Dyed with his blood, *to help to make her love him*,  
 To send this on to Hercules. Not knowing  
 What she is giving, the cause of her own sorrow,  
 She hands it over to Lichas, unsuspecting,  
 And with most gentle words bids him deliver  
 The robe to Hercules, and the hero takes it  
 Throwing it over his shoulder, Lerna's poison.  
 He was offering incense on the rising flames,  
 Praying and pouring wine on the marble altar,  
 And the warmth brought out the virulence of the garment,  
 Whose molten deadliness spread over his limbs,  
 And, while he could, his usual fortitude  
 Kept back his groans, but even his endurance  
 Could not hold out forever, and in his madness  
 He knocked the altars down, filled woody Oeta  
 With horrible cries, tried to tear off the robe,  
 And where he tore it, there it tore the skin,  
 Or, where it could not be torn, clung to the limbs,  
 Or burned to the naked muscles and great bones.  
 And the blood hissed, as white-hot metal does  
 Dipped in cold water, and the mixture boiled,  
 Poison and blood together, the hungry fever

Eating his very marrow, and the tendons,  
 Half-burnt, made cracking sounds, and livid sweat  
 Poured from all over his body. He raised his hands:  
 "Gloat on my suffering, gloat, O cruel Juno,  
 Sate that relentless heart, watching me burn!  
 Or if an enemy—and I am yours,  
 That much is certain—could find some reason  
 For pity, take away this life of mine,  
 Sick from its torture, hateful, born for anguish.  
 Stepmother, I ask a favor: give me death!  
 Was it for this that I subdued Busiris  
 Who fouled the temples of the gods with blood  
 Of strangers slain? Was it for this I lifted  
 Antaeus from supporting earth, for this  
 Slew Geryon, dragged off Cerberus? My hands  
 Seized the bull's horns, and Elis was the gainer  
 With the Parthenian groves, Stymphalian waters.  
 My hands brought back the golden belt, my hands  
 The golden apples from the sleepless dragon.  
 Centaurs could not resist me, nor the boar  
 That ravaged Arcady. I slew the Hydra  
 That gained by its own loss, and little good  
 That did the monster! And the Thracian horses,  
 Fed fat on human blood, the mangers filled  
 With human bodies, I found, and when I found them  
 Tore them to pieces. These were the hands that choked  
 The lion of Nemea, these the shoulders  
 That held the weight of the world, one time, for Atlas.  
 Juno grew tired of giving orders; I



Was never tired obeying them. But now  
 A new doom comes upon me, one I cannot  
 Fight off by arms or courage, and the fire  
 Devours my lungs, and feeds on all my members.  
 But still Eurystheus keeps his health: who is there  
 To think that gods exist?" So, racked with pain,  
 He wandered over Oeta, as a tiger  
 Drags off the spears that wounded him, when the hunter  
 Has fled in fear. There you could see him groaning,  
 Gnashing his teeth, still tearing at the garment,  
 Leveling trees, raging against the mountains,  
 Or holding out his hands to his father's Heaven.  
 Then he saw Lichas, trembling, lying hidden  
 Under the hollow of a rock, and pain  
 Roused all his fury: "You were the one who did it,  
 You, Lichas, brought me death!" And Lichas shuddered,  
 Turned pale, tried to say something, came to his knees  
 In supplication, and found himself raised high,  
 Whirled through the air, three times, four times, flung far  
 Toward the Euboean waters, as a stone  
 Flies from a catapult, and high in the air,  
 In the cold wind, he felt his body stiffen  
 As showers in cold wind are turned to snow  
 And snow to sleet and sleet to hail, so Lichas  
 Hurl'd through the air by Hercules, grew colder,  
 The blood, by fear, made rigid, and the body  
 All stone and hardness. To this very day  
 Euboean sailors show the traveler  
 A low rock rising, as if with human features,

Out of the water, and they call it Lichas,  
 And will not step there; they are never sure  
 It would not feel their tread, and be offended.

And Hercules cut down trees from lofty Oeta  
 To make himself a funeral pyre, and called  
 On Poeas' son to take the bow, the quiver,  
 The arrows that would visit Troy again,  
 And Philoctetes had the fire made ready  
 Under the barrow, and as the flames went roaring  
 Above, around, Hercules spread as quilt  
 The lion's skin, and used his club as pillow,  
 And lay there, no more troubled than a feaster  
 At a great banquet, garland-crowned, among  
 The brimming cups of wine. And the flame grew stronger,  
 Spread, sought the care-free limbs of its despiser,  
 And the gods were troubled for earth's champion  
 As Jove, with joyful voice addressed them: "Gods,  
 This fear of yours is my delight; my heart  
 Rejoices that the people I rule and father  
 Is grateful, that your favor guards my son.  
 He has earned that favor by his deeds, but I  
 Am under obligation for that favor.  
 Let not your hearts be troubled; Oeta's flames  
 Are nothing, and the conqueror will conquer  
 These also. Only his mother's heritage,  
 His mortal part, will feel the fire; that part  
 Which comes from me, no flames will ever master,  
 It will live always, safe from death and burning,  
 And I shall take it to the shores of Heaven

When it is done with earth, and you, I trust,  
 Will, all of you, approve. If anyone  
 Should grieve that Hercules becomes a god,  
 Should be unwilling that he have this honor,  
 Well, let him grieve, and let him grant, and let him,  
 Even against his will, own it was proper."  
 The gods agreed, and even royal Juno  
 Looked willing enough, only a little sullen  
 At Jove's last words, aimed, as she knew, at her,  
 And meanwhile anything that fire could conquer  
 Was conquered: there was nothing left, a form,  
 A shape, not to be recognized, of Hercules,  
 With nothing human about it, only spirit,  
 The proof of Jove, shining, the way a serpent  
 Shines with the old skin cast, when the new life glistens.  
 So Hercules put off the mortal body,  
 Thriving, and in his better part becoming greater,  
 More worthy of veneration, and Jove raised him  
 Through hollow clouds to the bright stars, a rider  
 In the chariot drawn by the four heavenly horses.  
 And Atlas, who bears Heaven on his shoulders,  
 Felt the new weight, and Sthenelus' son, Eurystheus,  
 Held to his ancient grudge at Hercules,  
 And, troubled with long suffering for her son,  
 Alcmena had one comforter, Iole,  
 To whom to tell her sorrows, an old woman  
 Proud of the world-wide glory of her son,  
 Unhappy in her misfortunes. This Iole,  
 By Hercules' command, had married Hyllus,

Was pregnant by him, and Alcmena told her:

### *The Story of Hercules' Birth*

"May the gods favor you, and shorten your labor  
 When the time comes to call on Ilithyia,  
 Helper of travail, and no friend of mine  
 Since Juno was my enemy. I remember  
 When my son's birth was near, the weight in the womb  
 So heavy anyone would know the father  
 Must have been Jove, and even in speaking of it  
 Today, I feel once more the pangs of labor.  
 Seven days, seven nights, I suffered, sick and weary,  
 Raised arms to Heaven, crying for Lucina,  
 With her two goddess-midwives, to come help me,  
 And she did come, but with a mind corrupted  
 By Juno's hate. She heard my groans, and watched me;  
 Sitting there by that altar near the doorway,  
 She crossed her knees, and laced her hands together,  
 And spoke constricting charms, I pushed and struggled,  
 Cursed Jove's ingratitude, wanted to die,  
 Screamed so that even stones were moved to pity,  
 And other mothers came to try to help me,  
 Prayed, urged me to keep trying. One of them,  
 Galanthis, yellow-haired, one of my servants,  
 A good devoted girl (I loved her for it)  
 Saw there was something wrong, and knew that Juno  
 Was working mischief. In and out the doorway  
 Galanthis went and came, and saw the goddess  
 Sitting there on the altar, the crossed knees,



The hands laced tight together, and she spoke:  
 'Whoever you are, congratulate my lady!  
 Her son is born, her prayer is heard.' The goddess  
 Leaped up; at that, and loosed her hands, and I  
 Was likewise loosed of my burden, and Galanthis  
 Broke out in laughter, but the angry goddess  
 Grabbed her, still laughing, yanked her by the hair,  
 Made forelegs of her arms, and would not let her  
 Rise from the ground. She kept her golden color  
 Though now in different shape, the little weasel  
 Who haunts my house, still busy in devotion,  
 And, so the story goes, since her mouth helped me  
 Give birth by telling lies, through her own mouth  
 Her young are born."

Alcmena's story ended

In a long sigh for Galanthis. Iole  
 Answered her: "Are you grieving, Mother, still,  
 For one no kin of yours? Then let me tell you  
 What happened to my sister, though my sorrow,  
 My tears, are arguments against my speaking.

### *The Story of Dryope*

Her name was Dryope, most famed for beauty  
 Of all Oechalian girls, the only daughter  
 Her mother had (I was not sister, really,  
 Only half-sister, by a different mother).  
 Apollo took her maidenhood, the god  
 Of Delphi and of Delos, but Andraemon  
 Made her his wife, and people thought him lucky.

There is a lake, with shelving shore, and myrtle  
 Growing around it, and Dryope came here,  
 Innocent of her fortune, bringing garlands  
 To give the nymphs, and carrying her son,  
 Not yet a full year old, whom she was nursing,  
 And near the lake the water-lotus blossomed  
 In crimson flower, the sign of berries, later,  
 And Dryope was picking these, to give  
 The little boy to play with, and I would have  
 Done the same thing, for I was there that day,  
 But I saw bloody drops fall from the flower,  
 Saw the boughs shudder, stir as if in terror,  
 And I remembered, then, too late, the story  
 The shepherds told, how Lotis, then a naiad,  
 Fled from Priapus' lust, and though her body  
 Was changed into this flower, she kept her name.  
 My sister did not know it. She was frightened,  
 Tried to draw back, and having made her prayer  
 And offering to the nymphs, she would have gone,  
 But found her feet were rooted. She tried hard  
 To lift them out of the ground, but only moved  
 Her upper parts, and from below the bark  
 Came creeping slowly over the groin. She struggled  
 To tear her hair, and filled her hand with leaves;  
 Leaves covered all her head. The little boy,  
 Amphisos (so his grandfather had named him)  
 Felt the breast harden, and no stream of milk  
 Come when he suckled. I saw it all, I saw it  
 And could not help, but I did what I could,



Held on to the growing branches and delayed them  
 With my embrace, and wanted to be hidden  
 Under that bark. Andraemon came, her husband,  
 And her poor father, Eurytus, both asking  
 For Dryope; I pointed to the lotus.  
 They kissed the wood, still warm, flung themselves down,  
 Clung to the roots. There was nothing left my sister  
 Except her face, the rest was tree. The tears  
 Fell on the leaves that used to be her body,  
 And while she could she spoke: 'If the unhappy  
 Can ever be believed, I swear by the gods,  
 I have not earned this evil; I am punished  
 Without a crime; my life is innocent,  
 Has always been: if I am lying, let me  
 Lose all my leaves, be looped with axes, burned  
 In fire forever. Take my boy away  
 From the branches of his mother, find a nurse  
 And let him drink his milk under my tree,  
 Play here, and when he learns to talk, then teach him  
 To say in sorrow: *Here my mother hides.*  
 But let him fear the ponds, and pick no flowers,  
 And let him think that all the bushes are  
 Bodies of goddesses. Farewell, dear husband,  
 Dear father, sister! If you love me, keep me  
 Free from the wounds of pruning-knife, from teeth  
 Of hungry cattle. I cannot bend over  
 To kiss you, so reach up to me, come nearer,  
 Lift up my little son while I can see him.  
 I can say no more, for the soft bark is creeping

Up the white neck to forehead, hair. I am hidden.  
 Remove your hands from my eyes; the bark will close them.'  
 Her mouth could say no more, could be no more,  
 But after the change of the body, the new-formed branches  
 Were warm a long long time."

And as Iole  
 Finished the story, and Alcmene dried  
 Her tears away, and wept herself, their sorrow  
 Was stopped by a new happening. Iolaus,  
 Almost a boy again, stood on the threshold,  
 His years turned back, so that his cheeks were blooming  
 With the first down again, for Juno's daughter,  
 Hebe, won by her husband's prayers, had given him youth.  
 She was about to swear that she would never  
 Grant such a favor again, but Themis stopped her.  
 "Thebes is commencing civil war," she told her,  
 "Capaneus cannot lose unless Jove beats him,  
 Brother will fight with brother, and the earth  
 Will open wide, so that a living prophet  
 Will see the ghost he is to be; a son  
 Will kill one parent and avenge the other,  
 Impious yet devoted, and his evils  
 Will drive him mad; he will lose his home, be haunted  
 By the Grim Sisters, by the shades of his mother,  
 Until his wife calls back the fatal gold,  
 Until the sword of Phegeus takes his life-blood.  
 Callirhoë, in that time, will ask of Jove  
 Years for her infant sons, lest the avenger  
 Murder unharmed, and he will hear, and speed them



Through youth to manhood, almost in an instant.”  
 So Themis told the future, and the gods  
 Murmured with varying voice: why could not others  
 Give the same gift? Aurora, Pallas’ daughter,  
 Had an old husband, and the gentle Ceres  
 Complained about Iasion, all that grayness  
 About his temples; Ericthonius should,  
 So Vulcan said, have one more life to live,  
 And Venus, all too heedful of the future,  
 Made offer to renew Anchises’ years.  
 Each god has his own favorite: the tumult  
 Swelled loud in argument, but Jove brought silence:  
 “What recklessness is this? What reverence  
 Is left me? Do you think yourselves so mighty,  
 So powerful, that the Fates are less? I tell you  
 The Fates returned his years to Iolaus,  
 The Fates made warriors of Callirhoë’s children,  
 The Fates rule you, so you had better like it;  
 They rule me too; if I had power to change them,  
 Years would not now be bending down my son,  
 My Aeacus; Minos and Rhadamanthus  
 Would still be in their prime, my own son, Minos,  
 Who rules but feebly now, since men despise him  
 For the sad weight of age.” So they were quiet  
 Seeing how Aeacus, Minos, Rhadamanthus  
 Were tired from the long years, though one time Minos  
 Had awed great nations with his mighty name,  
 But he was little now; Deione’s son,  
 Miletus, proud of his young strength, and boasting

Apollo as his father, frightened Minos,  
 Who thought his kingdom threatened, but lacked nerve  
 To banish the usurper, but Miletus  
 Fled of his own accord, sailed swiftly over  
 The blue Aegean waters, and in Asia  
 Founded the city which he gave his name,  
 And there he knew Cyane, Maeander’s daughter,  
 That river turning on himself forever,  
 And she was beautiful and bore him children,  
 Caunus and Byblis.

### *The Story of Caunus and Byblis*

Byblis is a warning  
 That girls should never love what is forbidden.  
 She loved her brother, and the way she loved him  
 Was not the way sisters should love their brothers.  
 At first she did not know what she was doing,  
 She saw no wrong in kissing him so often,  
 Putting her arms around his neck. The picture  
 Is what it seems, pure sisterly devotion,  
 But somehow this lacks color; she starts coming  
 To see him, in her very finest dresses,  
 Wants to appear a pretty girl, too much so,  
 Is envious if she sees a lovelier woman,  
 But still she does not realize; her fire  
 Hides, so far, never a wish, but it keeps burning.  
 She calls him lord and master, hates the name  
 Of brother, wishes he would call her Byblis,  
 Not sister. She suppresses, in the daytime,



Her wanton hopes, but in her soft sleep lying  
 She often sees the thing she loves, her body  
 Appears to join her brother's, and she blushes  
 Deep in her sleep, and her sleep goes, and Byblis  
 Is silent, and remembers the appearance  
 Of that sweet night, and talks to herself, all troubled:  
 "What does it mean, this vision of the night?  
 Do I really want it real? Why have I seen it?  
 He is handsome, yes; even the envious know it.  
 He pleases me; if he were not my brother,  
 He could be loved, and he is worthy of me.  
 It hurts to be his sister, to be on guard,  
 In all my waking moments, and try nothing.  
 So let the dream return again! No witness  
 Is there in sleep, and yet in sleep the pleasure  
 Was very real. Venus and wingèd Cupid  
 Will bear me out—what pleasure I felt, what touch  
 Of outright passion! How I lay there melting!  
 How wonderful to remember, though the night  
 Was swift, and brief the joy, and envious of me.  
 If I could change my name and be united  
 To Caunus, O how happy I would be  
 To be his father's daughter-in-law, and Caunus  
 Might, happily, be my father's son-in-law.  
 Would that the gods might give us everything  
 Together, except our parents! Would that Caunus  
 Were nobler-born than I! He will make someone  
 A mother some day, but will always be  
 Only a brother to me. All we have

By way of common bond is common barrier.  
 What do my visions mean then? And what weight  
 Have dreams? Do they have any? It is better  
 For the gods, it seems; the gods have had their sisters,  
 Saturn had Ops, and Ocean Tethys, Jove  
 Took Juno: gods are laws unto themselves,  
 And who am I, to strain poor human customs  
 To superhuman license? I must either  
 Drive this forbidden flame out of my heart  
 Or, if I cannot, die, and as I lie there,  
 Dead on my bed, my brother will come and kiss me.  
 What I would like needs two for consummation:  
 Suppose it pleases me, but seems a crime  
 To Caunus? But the sons of Aeolus  
 Were not afraid to enter their sisters' chambers.  
 Where did I learn of them? Why have I given  
 Myself such precedents? What am I doing?  
 Be gone, disgusting flames, and let him never  
 Love me, except as brother should love sister!  
 If he had been the first, if he had fallen  
 In love with me, I might perhaps have yielded,  
 So, since I would not, could not, have refused him  
 If he sought me, why can't I do the asking?  
 Can I speak out? Can I confess it? Surely.  
 Love will compel me to, I can. Or can I?  
 It might be better if I wrote a letter."  
 This notion pleases her; she is determined,  
 Raises herself a little, lies there leaning  
 On her left elbow. "He is going to see it,"



She thinks, "and I confess my crazy passion.  
 What have I come to? what a fire is burning  
 In my poor mind!" She puts the words together  
 After long thinking, and her hand is trembling.  
 Her right hand takes the pen, her left the tablet.  
 She starts, and stops, and writes, and makes corrections,  
 Rubs out, and changes, frowns in disapproval,  
 Nods in approval, puts the tablets down  
 And picks them up again, and does not know  
 Just what she wants, and nothing seems to please her  
 Whatever it is she is on the point of doing.  
 Her face shows her confusion of shame and boldness.  
 She had written *sister*: that required erasing,  
 She started over: "A lover of yours, who never  
 Will know what happiness is, unless you grant it,  
 Wishes you happiness. I am ashamed  
 To give my name, but ask me what I want  
 And I will tell you: I wish that I could plead  
 My case and give no name; let Byblis never  
 Be known until her hopes were realized.  
 You might have known that wounded heart of hers  
 By her complexion, fainting, sighing, tears,  
 Embraces, kisses, the kind, if you had noticed,  
 No sister ever gives. God help me, I  
 Have done all that I could, with this deep wound,  
 This fire within me; I have fought against it,  
 Tried to be well, tried to escape. I have borne  
 More than you might think any girl could bear,  
 Not given way. But now, and I admit it,

I know I am beaten, I am forced to ask you  
 To help me, with my timid prayers. You only  
 Can save me, or destroy me: which will it be?  
 No enemy asks you this, but a girl, joined closely,  
 Most closely, to you, asks to come still closer,  
 Asks for an even more intimate relation.  
 Let old men have their laws, let old men quibble  
 Of right and wrong, and study up on cases.  
 But we are young; our need is love, and rashness.  
 We are still too young to know what is forbidden;  
 All things are right, if only we believe it;  
 We have examples of the gods to follow.  
 And what is there to stop us? A strict father?  
 Regard for reputation? Only fear!  
 Not even fear, if we have no cause for fearing.  
 It is easy enough to hide our stolen pleasures  
 Under the names of brother and of sister.  
 As things are now, I can talk with you in secret,  
 We fondle each other, kiss in the sight of others,  
 And still—how much is lacking! Pity me  
 For saying so—I never would have said it  
 Except my love is desperate: do not be  
 My murderer—" There was no more room for writing,  
 And the last phrase was scribbled on the margin.  
 She seals the letter with her ring, and moistens  
 The imprint with her tears, and, filled with shame,  
 Summons a servant, tells him *Take this letter*  
*And give it to my*—she could hardly say it,  
 But after a struggle got the word out—*brother*.



And, as she gave it to him, from her hands  
 The tablets fell, and the bad omen troubled  
 Her mind, but still she gave it. And the servant  
 All in good time delivered the written secrets.  
 And Caunus, angry, threw away the tablets,  
 Having read a few lines only, had a struggle  
 To keep his hands off from the message-bearer.  
 "Get out of here," he said, "O filthy pander  
 To the lust of things forbidden. You are lucky  
 I do not kill you, but your death would be  
 Dirt on my hands!" And the slave fled in terror,  
 Told Byblis all her brother had said in anger,  
 And she grew pale, hearing herself rejected,  
 Turned cold as ice, but, as her senses gathered  
 Some strength again, so, once again, her passion  
 Came back to life, and her tongue found words to utter:  
 "So, I deserved it. Why was I so foolish  
 To give my wound away, in such a hurry  
 To get things down in writing I had better  
 Keep to myself? I should have tried, before this,  
 To test, with more ambiguous talk, his feeling.  
 Now I have spread my sail, and never noticed  
 Which way the wind was blowing, and run before it,  
 And I am dashed on rocks or drowned in ocean,  
 My ship has no retreat. I should have listened  
 To what the omens tried in vain to tell me  
 When my hands dropped the tablets, and the wax,  
 If not the letters, spelled out ruin for me.  
 That was a sign to change the day, to change

The purpose. No, the day. The god gave warning,  
 Gave certain signs, if I had not been crazy.  
 I should have spoken to him, never trusted  
 Words to the wax, I should have gone, myself,  
 Told him my passion; he would have seen my tears,  
 He would have seen the features of his lover.  
 I could say more than I could ever have written  
 On tablets, could have thrown my arms around him,  
 Clung to his knees, and, lying on the ground,  
 Begged for my life, and if I were denied it  
 I might have seemed to die: so many things  
 I might have done; if none of them had moved him,  
 Their sum, put all together, might. Perhaps  
 The time was wrong, the servant less than tactful  
 Waiting the proper moment—that was the trouble.  
 His mother was no tigress, he has in him  
 No heart of flint or iron, he was not suckled  
 On lion's milk. He can be won, he will be;  
 He must be asked again, and I must never  
 Tire, not while life remains. The best thing, surely,  
 If I had power of changing things, the best  
 Would be, not to have started: the second best  
 Is to go on and finish. Caunus cannot,  
 Even if I stopped, forget what I have dared,  
 And if I stopped, he would think I did not mean it,  
 Suspect that I was teasing, or a traitor.  
 No matter what, I shall appear the victim  
 Of the god who burns my heart or my own passion.  
 There is nothing I can do and not be guilty:

I have written, I have asked for it, I am not  
 An innocent girl, and nobody will say so.  
 So what have I to lose? My crimes are full  
 To overflowing, my desire still hungry.”  
 But, after this is said, her purpose wavers,  
 She hates, but yearns, to tempt him, and, unhappy,  
 Commits herself again to his rejection.  
 There seems no end to this; he leaves the country,  
 Flees from the desperate unnatural sister,  
 Founds a new city in a foreign land,  
 And then, they say, Byblis lost all her reason,  
 Tore at her garments, beat her arms, went crying  
 Her hopes for love forbidden, her lost hopes,  
 And leaves her country also and the home  
 She hates, pursuing still her flying brother.  
 As the Ismarian women, coming home  
 From Bacchus’ rites, have that wild look upon them,  
 So Byblis seemed to all the foreign people  
 Whose lands she wandered, wailing, Caria,  
 Lycia, past Mount Cragos, past Lymira,  
 Beyond the waves of Xanthus, to the mountain  
 Where the Chimaera lived, the triple monster,  
 Lioness, fire, and serpent. Even forests  
 Failed Byblis here, and she was tired. She fell,  
 Hair streaming over the hard rocks, and kissing  
 The leaves she thought were there. They tried to raise her,  
 Nymphs from the mountainside, and tell her, often,  
 To cure her love, but all their consolation  
 Falls on deaf ears. She lies there, silent, tearing

The green herbs with her nails, and the soft grasses  
 Are moistened by her tears. They say the naiads  
 Hollowed a channel for those tears, unending:  
 What else was there to do? As the cut bark  
 Oozes its pitchy drops, or as ice trickles  
 To melting in the warm west wind and sunshine,  
 So Byblis in her tears became a fountain  
 Which bears her name today as it goes flowing  
 Under the somber oaks along that valley.  
 Her story might have filled the hundred cities  
 Of Crete, except that Crete, by then, was dwelling  
 On a new wonder of her own, the change  
 That came to Iphis.

### *The Story of Iphis and Ianthe*

There was a man from Phaestus,  
 Ligdus by name, free-born, but undistinguished,  
 By no means rich, save in his life and honor.  
 His wife was near her travail, and he told her:  
 “I want two things, an easy labor for you,  
 And a male child. A daughter is more trouble,  
 And we are poor. I hate this, but—forgive me,  
 I hate to say it, too—if it should be  
 A girl, let her be killed.” They both were weeping,  
 And Telethusa over and over begged him  
 To be more merciful, but his heart was hardened.  
 Her time was very near, and the great burden  
 Almost too heavy for her, and at midnight  
 A dream or vision came, Inachus’ daughter,



With all her train of votaries, and stood,  
 Or seemed to stand, before her bed. The horns  
 Of the moon shone bright on her head, and ears of corn  
 Were golden bright in color, all her grace  
 Was royal: with her came the dog Anubis,  
 Holy Bubastis, and the mottled Apis  
 Harpocrates, the Silencer, with finger  
 Ever on lips; there were the sacred rattles,  
 The Egyptian asps, the god of the quest, Osiris.  
 She was aroused, saw them all plain, the goddess  
 Was speaking: "Telethusa, one of my own,  
 Be comforted: do not obey your husband,  
 And do not scruple, when your child is born,  
 To save it, boy or girl. I am a goddess,  
 Helper of those in need, and you will never  
 Have reason to complain of thankless worship."  
 She was gone, and Telethusa, happy, rose,  
 Raised her pure hands to heaven's stars, and prayed  
 Fulfillment for her vision.

And her pains  
 Grew sharp, and her womb's burden forced its way  
 To daylight, and the father did not know  
 He had a daughter. Telethusa told him  
 It was a boy, and gave the household orders  
 To rear and tend the child as boy, and no one  
 Knew better but the nurse. And Ligdus made  
 His proper vows, and gave the child a name,  
 Iphis, from his own father; Telethusa  
 Was glad, in that the name, of common usage

For boys and girls alike, would not commit her  
 To lying when she spoke the name. The fraud,  
 Begun in natural affection, prospered;  
 No one was ever the wiser; the child Iphis  
 Dressed as a boy, and grew in grace, the features  
 Beautiful, whether boy's or girl's, no matter.  
 Now thirteen years had sped, and Ligdus found  
 A bride for Iphis, golden-haired Ianthe,  
 Telestes' daughter, whom the Phaestian women  
 Praised for the lavish dower of her beauty.  
 They were of equal age, they both were lovely,  
 Had learned their ABC's from the same teachers,  
 And so love came to both of them together  
 In simple innocence, and filled their hearts  
 With equal longing, but they did not love  
 With equal hope: Ianthe waited, eager  
 For marriage and fulfillment; she is sure  
 The one she thinks a man will prove it to her  
 As husband; Iphis, dearly loving, knew  
 Love could not ever be enjoyed, and therefore  
 Loved all the more, a girl, a virgin, burning  
 For girl and virgin. She kept back her tears,  
 Or almost kept them back: "How will it end,"  
 She wondered, "when such love as no one ever  
 Has heard of, such a strange unnatural passion  
 Takes hold on me? If the gods wished to save me,  
 They should have saved me; if they wished my ruin,  
 They should have wished more natural ruin on me.  
 Heifers do not love heifers, nor mares in heat

Run after mares, but rams want ewes, and stags  
 Seek does, and birds mate so; in all the world  
 Of beasts no female ever takes a female!  
 I wish I were no girl. The land of Crete  
 Has had its share of monsters, that king's daughter  
 Who loved the bull—but that was male and female.  
 My passion, if the truth be told, is madder  
 Than hers was, and at least she had the hope  
 Of consummation, she enjoyed her lover  
 Through trick disguise, and her bull never knew it.  
 But what could all the cunning in the world  
 Do for me here? If Daedalus himself  
 Came back on waxen wings, how could he help me?  
 With all his craft could he make a girl a boy,  
 Could he change Ianthé somehow? Have some courage,  
 Iphis, my dear, and pull yourself together.  
 Give up this foolishness: you were born woman,  
 No use deceiving yourself as well as others.  
 Seek what is proper, love as woman should.  
 It is hope that genders love, and hope that feeds it,  
 And hope is what you do not have. No watchman  
 Keeps her away from your embrace, no husband  
 Is fearful of your suit, no cruel father,  
 And she would not refuse you, yet you cannot  
 Possess her, nor be happy, no, not even  
 If all things favored you, if gods and men  
 Worked to their utmost. Never a prayer of mine  
 Has been denied, the gods have been most gracious,  
 My father wants what I do, and her father

Wants what Ianthé does. There is only nature,  
 Stronger than all of them together, to hurt me.  
 The longed-for time has come, the wedding-day  
 Is near, and soon Ianthé will be mine  
 To have and not to have! Amid the waves  
 We die of thirst. Why do you come here, Juno,  
 Preposterous bridesmaid? Why do you come here, Hymen,  
 Where two brides wait, and never a bridegroom coming?"  
 And all this while Ianthé burned, imploring  
 That Hymen would come soon, but Telethusa,  
 Fearing what she desired, put off the marriage,  
 One way or another, a pretended illness,  
 An inauspicious dream, until her fictions  
 Were all exhausted. There was one day more.  
 The mother took the fillets off, her own,  
 Her daughter's, and, with flowing locks, was praying  
 Before the altar: "O Egyptian Isis,  
 Dweller by seven-horned Nile, bring help, I beg you,  
 Heal our anxieties! I can remember  
 Your symbols in my dreams, the clashing sounds,  
 The holy rattles, the votaries, the torches,  
 And I was careful to obey those orders.  
 That Iphis, still, beholds the light, that I  
 Was never punished, that is all your doing,  
 Your wisdom and your gift. Pity us, help us,  
 The two of us, in our need." And as she wept,  
 The goddess seemed to move, the altar trembled,  
 The doors of the temple shook, the moon-shaped horns  
 Were darting light, and the noisy rattle sounded.



The mother left the temple, cheered a little,  
If not entirely reassured, and Iphis  
Was walking, in her usual way, beside her,  
But taking, somehow, longer steps than usual,  
With face not quite as shining, and she looked stronger,  
The features not as soft, and the hair shorter,  
The vigor less becoming to a woman.  
She was no woman now, but a young bridegroom!

*Bring offerings to the temples, bring them quickly,  
Rejoice, be unafraid!* They made their offerings,  
Adding a brief inscription, one verse only:  
*The man has brought the gifts the woman promised.*  
And the next morning made the whole world brighter,  
As Venus, Juno, Hymen, came together  
To the marriage-fires, and Iphis had Ianthe.

GLOSSARY AND INDEX

*The index that appeared in the print version of this title was intentionally removed from the eBook. Please use the search function on your eReading device to search for terms of interest. For your reference, the terms that appear in the print index are listed below.*

SINCE THIS index is not intended as a complete mythological dictionary, the explanations given here include only important information not readily available in the text itself. Names in parentheses are alternative Latin names, unless they are preceded by the abbreviation *Gr.*; *Gr.* indicates the name of the corresponding Greek divinity. The index includes cross-references for all alternative names.

ACHAMENIDES. Former follower of Ulysses, rescued by Aeneas ACHELOUS. River god; rival of Hercules for the hand of Deianira ACHILLES. Greek hero of the Trojan War

ACIS. Rival of the Cyclops, Polyphemus, for the hand of Galatea

ACMON. Follower of Diomedes

ACOETES. A faithful devotee of Bacchus

ACTAEON

ADONIS. Son of Myrrha, by her father Cinyras; loved by Venus

AEACUS. King of Aegina; after death he became one of the three judges of the dead in the lower world

AEGEUS. King of Athens; father of Theseus

AENEAS. Trojan warrior; son of Anchises and Venus; sea-faring survivor of the Trojan War, he eventually landed in Latium, helped found Rome

AESACUS. Son of Priam and a nymph

AESCULAPIUS (*Gr.* Asclepius). God of medicine and healing; son of Apollo

AESON. Father of Jason; made young again by Medea

AGAMEMNON. King of Mycenae; commander-in-chief of the Greek forces in the Trojan War

AGLAUROS

AJAX. Son of Telamon; brave Greek warrior in the Trojan War

ALCMENA. Mother of Hercules

ALCYONE. Wife of Ceyx

ALTHEA. Queen of Calydon; mother and murderer of Meleager

AMMON. A spring in the Oasis of Siwa

ANAXARETE. A princess loved by Iphis, a youth of common birth

ANDROMEDA

ANIUS. King of Delos; priest of Apollo

APHRODITE. *See* Venus

APOLLO (Phoebus). God of music, poetry, medicine, and prophecy; also god of the sun



ARACHNE. A girl turned into a spider by Minerva

ARCADY. A pastoral region in the central Peloponnesus, Greece

**ARCAS**

ARDEA. City of Latium, turned into a heron

ARETHUSA. A woodland nymph changed into a fountain ARGUS. Hundred-eyed giant ordered by Juno to watch Io ARTEMIS. See Diana

ASCANIUS. SeeIulus

ATALANTA. A beautiful, swift-footed, warrior maiden

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**METAMORPHOSES**

ATHAMAS

ATHENA. See Minerva

ATLAS

AUGUSTUS. See Caesar

AURORA (*Gr.* Eos). Goddess of dawn

BACCHUS (*Gr.* Dionysus). God of wine

BATTUS

BAUCIS. Wife of Philemon; rewarded by Jove for hospitality to him

BOREAS. God of the north wind

BYBLIS

CADMUS

CAENEUS. The woman, Caenis, changed into a man by Neptune CAESAR. Family name of GaiusJulius and later of Augustus CALCHAS. Priest of Apollo

CALLIOPEThe Muse of eloquence and epic poetry

CALYDON . Ancient Greek city in Aetolia

CANENS. A river nymph; wife of Ficus

CASSANDRA. Daughter of Priam and Hecuba (she possessed prophetic power which no one would believe)

CAUNUS

CENTAUR. Monster with the head, trunk, and arms of a man, and the body and legs of a horse; offspring of Ixion

CEPHALUS. Husband of Procris, sister of Procne and Philomela CERES (*Gr.* Demeter). Goddess of agriculture, mother of Proserpina CEYX. Son of Lucifer; King ofTrachis

CHARYBDIS. Guardian of the whirlpool off the coast ofSicily

CHIONE. Daughter of Daedalion; loved by Apollo and Mercury

CHIRON. Wisest of all Centaurs, trainer of Achilles, Aesculapius, and Hercules

CINYRAS. Father of Adonis by his daughter, Myrrha

CIPUS

CIRCE. Enchantress who turned meninto beasts CLAROS. Town in Asia Minor, with an oracle of Apollo CLYMENE . Mother of Phaethon, son of

Apollo

CRONUS. **See** Saturn

CUMAE. Ancient city in southwestern Italy

CUPID. Son of Venus; god of love

CYANE. A nymph changed by Pluto into a pool; the pool

CYBELE (*Gr.* Rhea). Goddess of nature; sometimes considered mother of the gods

CYGNUS King of the Ligurians who turned into a swan and was placed among the stars. Son of Neptune; Trojan hero

CYLLARUS Handsome young centaur

CYPARISSUS

DAEDALION. Brother of Ceyx

DAEDALUS. Artist and inventor who built the labyrinth for King Minos in Crete DAPHNE. A nymph who evaded Apollo's advances by becoming a laurel tree

DEIANIRA. Second wife of Hercules, whom she accidentally killed

DELOS. Small island in the Aegean; birthplace of Diana and Apollo DELPHI. City in Greece, site of the famous oracle of Apollo DEMETER. **See** Ceres

DEUCALION. A son of Prometheus, he and his wife Pyrrha were the only survivors of the flood inflicted by Zeus because of man's wickedness

DIANA (*Gr.* Artemis). Sister of Apollo; goddess of the moon and of hunting; patroness of virgins

DIOMEDES. Greek hero in the Trojan War; founder of the city Arpi

DIONYSUS. **See** Bacchus

DRYOPE

METAMORPHOSES

ECHO

EGERIA. Wife of Numa

ENVY

ERYSICHTHON. King who was punished for scorning the gods

EUROPA. Phoenician princess EURYDICE. Wife of Orpheus EURYTUS. **A centaur**

EVENUS. Flooding river which nearly caused Hercules to lose his wife Deianira

FAUNUS. **See** Pan

GALANTHIS. Alcmena's maid, who was turned into a weasel

GALATEA. A Nereid, loved by Cyclops. Pygmalion's statue, turned into a live woman by Venus

GANYMEDE. Cupbearer to the gods

GLAUCUS. A sea-god

HECUBA. Wife of Priam; queen of Troy; mother of Hector, Paris, Polyxena, Polydorus

HERCULES. Son of Jove and Alcmena, who was known for his great strength



HERMAPHRODITUS

HERMES. *See* Mercury

HERSILIA. Wife of Romulus

HESPERIA. Daughter of Cebren, a river-god

HESTIA. *See* Vesta

HIPPODAME. Wife of Pirithous

HIPPOLYTUS. Son of Theseus; name changed to Virbius

HIPPOMENES. Winning suitor of Atalanta

HORA. Name of Hersilia, wife of Romulus, after her deification

HYACINTHUS

HYLONOME. Fairest of the female centaurs

IANTHE

ICARUS. Son of Daedalus

ILIA (Rhea Silvia). Mother of Romulus

INDIGES. Name of Aeneas after deification

INO. Sister of Bacchus' mother

IO. Daughter of Inachus; maiden loved by Jove, turned into a heifer to protect her from the jealousy of Juno

IPHIGENIA. Daughter of Agamemnon, who offered her as sacrifice to Diana

IPHIS. A girl in Crete. A youth of common birth in love with a princess, Anaxarete

IRIS. Goddess of the rainbow; assistant to Juno

ITYS. Son of Procne and Tereus

IULUS (Ascanius). Son of Aeneas; king of Latium and Alba

JASON. Leader of the Argonauts, who, with the help of Medea, got the Golden Fleece

JOVE (Jupiter; *Gr.* Zeus). Son of Saturn; chief of the gods, ruler of gods and men

JUNO (*Gr.* Hera). Wife of Jove; queen of the gods; goddess of marriage

JUPITER. *See* Jove

LAELAPS. Cephalus' hound, turned to stone during a chase

LAOMEDON. Founder of Troy; father of Priam LATONA (*Gr.* Leto). Mother of Apollo and Diana LATREUS. Centaur killed by Caeneus

LETO. *See* Latona

LEUCOTHOE LICHAS

LYCAON. A king of Arcadia, whom Jove turned into a wolf

MACAREUS. Greek warrior who traveled with Ulysses

MAENAD. Female follower of Bacchus

MARS. God of war

MEDEA. Sorceress who helped Jason get the Golden Fleece

MEDUSA

MELEAGER. An Argonaut, son of Althea, queen of Calydon

MEMNON. Trojan warrior; son of Aurora

MERCURY (*Gr.* Hermes). Messenger of the gods, agent of Jove

MIDAS. King of Phrygia

MINERVA (*Gr.* Pallas Athena). Goddess of wisdom, technical skill, and invention; patron goddess of Athens

MINOS. King of Crete; son of Zeus by Europa

MORPHEUS. God of dreams; son of the god of sleep

MYRMIDONS. A tribe of Thessalian warriors, transformed from ants into human beings

MYRRHA. In love with her father, Cinyras; mother of Adonis

MYSCELUS. Greek who founded the Italian town of Crotona

NARCISSUS

NEPTUNE (*Gr.* Poseidon). God of the sea

NESSUS. Centaur, who loved Deianira, wife of Hercules

NESTOR. Wise old counselor, who fought with the Greeks at Troy

NIOBE. Mother whose children were slain by Latona and Apollo because of her arrogance; she was turned into a stone by Jove

NUMA. King of Rome following Romulus

NUMICIUS. River-god in Latium, who purified Aeneas

OCYRHOE

ODYSSEUS. See Ulysses

ORITHYIA. Wife of Boreas

ORPHEUS. Musician whose music possessed magic power

OSSA. A mountain in Greece, in Thessaly near Pelion

PAEON. Son of Apollo; possessor of magic healing ability

PALLAS. See Minerva

PAN (Faunus). God of fields, forests, wild animals, flocks, and shepherds, represented with the legs, ears, horns, and beard of a goat

PANCHAIA. Island in the Arabian Sea, famous for perfumes

PARIS. Son of Priam; killer of Achilles; his kidnaping of Helen, wife of Menelaus, caused the Trojan War

PELEUS. Father of Achilles, by the goddess Thetis

PELIAS. King of Thessaly; uncle and guardian of Jason, murdered by Medea

PELION. A mountain in Greece, in Thessaly near Ossa

PENTHEUS



PERDIX. An inventor, turned into a partridge by Minerva to save him from the wrath of Daedalus

PERSEPHONE. See Proserpina

PERSEUS. Son of Zeus and Danae; slayer of Medusa PHAEDRA. Wife of Theseus; mother of Hippolytus PHAETHON. Son of Apollo

PHILEMON. Husband of Baucis; the couple were rewarded by Jove for their hospitality

PHILOMELA. Daughter of Pandion; transformed into a nightingale

PHOENIX. Legendary Egyptian bird which could renew its life after dying by fire

PICUS. Son of Saturn; father of Faunus; grandfather of Latinus; early king of Latium

PIRITHOUS. King of the Lapithae

PLUTO. God of the underworld, called Hades or Dis

POLYDORUS. Son of Priam, king of Troy; murdered by Polymestor

POLYMESTOR. King of Thrace during the Trojan War

POLYPHEMUS. A Cyclops, in love with Galatea

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METAMORPHOSES

POLYXENA. Daughter of Priam who was betrothed to Achilles

POMONA. A wood-nymph in Latium

POSEIDON. See Neptune

PRIAM. Last king of Troy, who reigned during the Trojan War; father of Hector and Paris

PROCNE. Daughter of Pandion; wife of Tereus; transformed into a swallow

PROCRIS. Wife of Cephalus; sister of Procne and Philomela PROSERPINA (Gr. Persephone). Wife of Pluto; daughter of Ceres PYGMALION. King of Cyprus; sculptor; fell in love with a statue

PYRAMUS

PYRENEUS. King of Thrace

PYRRHA. See Deucalion

PYTHAGORAS. Greek philosopher and mathematician, 6th century B.C.

PYTHON. A huge serpent born soon after the flood; killed by Apollo

QUIRINUS. Name of Romulus after his deification

RHEA. See Cybele

RHEA SILVIA. See Ilia

ROME

ROMULUS. Legendary founder of Rome

SALMACIS. A fountain whose waters make men weak

SAMOS. Greek island off Asia Minor; birthplace of Pythagoras

SATURN (Gr. Cronus). God of agriculture; son of Uranus and father of Jove

SCYLLA. Daughter of King Nisus; lover of King Minos. Guardian of a dangerous rock in the Straits of Messina

SEMELE. Daughter of Cadmus; mother of Jove's son, Bacchus

SIBYL. A prophetess consulted by Aeneas

SYRIN X. Nymph chased by Pan; just as he caught her, she turned into reeds

TEMPE. A lovely valley, sacred to Apollo, located between Mounts Ossa and Olympus, in Thessaly, Greece

TEREUS. Descendant of Mars; husband of Procne

THEBES. Ancient city of Greece in Boeotia THEMIS. Goddess of law and justice THESEUS. Hero of Attica; son of Aegeus

THESSALY. Ancient region in northeastern Greece

THETIS. Mother of Achilles; chief of the Nereids

THISBE

THRACE. Ancient region of the Balkan Peninsula, between Macedonia and the Black Sea

TIMOLUS. Mountain in Lydia, Asia Minor TIRESIAS. Blind soothsayer of Thebes TISIPHONE. One of the Furies

TROY. Ancient city in northwestern Asia Minor; scene of the Trojan War

ULYSSES (*Gr.* Odysseus). One of the Greek chiefs in the Trojan War

URANIA. The Muse of astronomy

VENUS (*Gr.* Aphrodite). Goddess of love and beauty

VERTUMNUS. A satyr in love with the nymph Pomona

VESTA (*Gr.* Hestia). Goddess of the hearth and the hearth fire

VIRBIUS. *See* Hippolytus

VULCAN (*Gr.* Hephaestus). God of fire and metalworking; husband of Venus

ZEUS. *See* Jove