

Greek Myths Reimagined



A compilation of dramatic monologues appropriating some of the Greek Myths for a contemporary audience.

By

10 English Scholars

Persephone & Demeter

Persephone, daughter of Demeter (goddess of agriculture), is abducted by Hades and taken to the Underworld to be his queen. Grief-stricken, Demeter neglects the earth, causing all plants to wither. Zeus intervenes and orders Persephone's return, but because she has eaten pomegranate seeds in the Underworld, she must spend part of each year there.

As a result, Persephone spends some months with Hades (bringing winter and autumn) and the rest with Demeter (bringing spring and summer). The myth explains the cycle of the seasons.

Persephone & Demeter - Phoebe Wong

Persephone:

People think I tripped, that I fell into a cycle of despair
But I didn't, he pulled me
Changed my entire world in one simple action
They think that feared silence means yes
Even saying no means yes
They don't need us to say yes
He did not ask
I did not slip,
I watched as the light faded away,
Like the fire on a torch going out
as I plummeted into a world of unknown

But something changed, I changed,
I used to be strong, but now I am weak
I used to be adventurous, but now I fear everything
I used to know myself, but now I am an empty hole

The world I once knew seems strange now,
The rooms I once tried to escape seem comforting,
The people I once thought about daily seem distant,
I couldn't bear to go back to that place,

Demeter:

They say she wandered,
That girls grow curious, drift away,
That leaving is part of becoming themselves
But to leave and never return?
She vanished without a footprint,
As if someone stole her from the sky,

I wait for her while the earth changes,
Seasons cycle, despair overcomes me,
Days pass, people act like nothing is wrong,
They tell me that life goes on,
As if losing a child is something insignificant.

They don't see the sleepless nights,
Every night a pain spent thinking about her,
The unsettling feeling settling in my bones,
It's as if she's disappeared into another world...

Artemis

Artemis, twin sister of Apollo and daughter of Zeus and Leto, is the goddess of the hunt, wild animals, and childbirth. From childhood she asked Zeus for eternal virginity, mastery of the wilderness, and a band of nymphs to accompany her. She is known for her fierce independence and protection of the young and vulnerable.

Many myths show her punishing those who violate her purity or disrespect nature—most famously Actaeon, whom she transforms into a stag after he accidentally sees her bathing. Artemis is also a guardian of women in childbirth, despite being a virgin goddess, and often aids heroes while demanding respect for the natural world.

Artemis – Charlotte Hoskins

Avery loved being free.
Not in the sense of free from society.
But free in her own sense.
Free in her purpose,
undefined by anyone else.
Yet, she didn't know this from the start.
Unfortunately like many things in life, she learnt this the hard way.

Pressured by the one she trusted enough to love
Amongst the teenage curse of lust over love,
Her boyfriend muttered, "It'll only be quick, love"
And maybe it was, but she never forgot the feeling of "love".

Slowly shoved into a tight-fitting box -
One with no extra room,
Only enough for the essentials
In that box, she lost herself.

Then she stepped into the world,
Strained like a deer in headlights,
Burdened with the question:
"When will you settle down?"

Arrows of angst scratch her sides.
She is the one searching for the freedom
Yet in-between the cypress' she is shot.
At least she is settled, right?

In the pursuit of something different,
Knowledge, memories, places
But still the seeds of mundane life are planted
Growing a life of monotony.

Io

Io was a mortal priestess of Hera who caught the eye of Zeus. To hide his interest from Hera, Zeus transformed Io into a white cow. Hera, suspicious, asked for the cow as a gift and placed her under the watch of Argus Panoptes, a giant with a hundred eyes. Zeus sent Hermes to rescue Io, and Hermes lulled Argus to sleep and killed him. Hera then sent a gadfly to torment Io, driving her to wander the world in cow form until she finally reached Egypt. There, Zeus restored her human shape, and Io eventually became an ancestor of many important Greek heroes, including Heracles.

Io - Georgia Simpson

Her green gems haunted me,
Narrowing, and narrowing.
Glaring at me like I was the only one at fault!
Remember your husband?

Tall with a beard,
Lightning bolt.
Does that sound familiar?
Ring a bell in that jealous head of yours?

How is it my fault that your husband couldn't keep it in his pants!
After all, I thought you were the goddess of marriage
Oh, but I must be mistaken because no amount of counselling will ever fix that
mistake.
Although apparently turning me into a hideous grass-muncher will!

My once sun-kissed skin is now white, wrinkly, and matted
And my back is killing me!
No one ever mentions how hard it is to stand on all fours all day.
Well, let me tell you it is exhausting!
And don't even get me started on the indigestion!
Who knew eating turf all day would be bad for the bowels?

And if I didn't already look like an animal,
I definitely felt like one, when the cruel eyes of Argus watched me
Night and Day.
Day and Night.

I mean what does a girl have to do to get some peace around here?
Just when I think all 100 of his eyes are closed,
50 more glare back at me!
Even while sleeping, his beady pupils meet me in my nightmares.

And Zeus. Huh. Don't even get me started on that guy!
"I'll come back for you"
He said.
Well, guess what?
I'm.
Still.
Waiting!

Gaea

Gaea is the Greek primordial goddess personifying Earth, born from Chaos as the "Mother of All". She created Uranus to cover her, bearing the Titans, Cyclopes, and Giants. Gaea frequently plotted against her ruling descendants—including Uranus, Cronus, and Zeus—to protect her children and maintain power, often acting as a vengeful force.

Gaea - Natalie Hayward

They forget.

They forget where they came from.

Who held them as they trembled.

Who showed them the way.

Who stood in the rain, shielding against the wind.

Who closed all the doors and checked under the beds.

Who taught them to fly and tie their shoes tight.

Who stood there,

Waiting,

Listening.

Watching,

Preparing,

Hiding from trouble.

Putting on a smile as their success filled the rooms,

Witnessing as their creations covered the walls.

Filled up the books,

Filled up the minds.

But now they are older

Out on their own.

They begin to listen.

Remember.

Appreciate.

Realise - *who* they came from,

When the house is silent.

Realise - *where* they came from,

When the doors no longer need checking.

Realise - *what* they came from,

Too late to be tucked in again.

Daphne, Apollo, and Eros:

After Apollo mocks Eros (Cupid) for his use of the bow, Eros decides to punish him. He shoots Apollo with a golden arrow, causing him to fall hopelessly in love with the nymph Daphne, and he shoots Daphne with a lead arrow, causing her to feel nothing but fear and revulsion toward Apollo.

Apollo pursues Daphne relentlessly, but she flees from him, calling on her father, the river god Peneus, to save her. Just as Apollo is about to reach her, Peneus transforms her into a laurel tree. Heartbroken, Apollo declares the laurel his sacred tree and honours her forever. The myth explains the laurel's connection to Apollo and symbolises unrequited love.

Daphne – Ella Kerdic

Feet slapped on the path behind me
The cold wind collided into my body
I knew who it was – no need to turn around.
Trees danced in front of me,
Their branches regally reaching to the heavens
Oh, how I wished I was one of them!
They didn't need to think about love – or hate.
Each turn I took I could hear a pair of footsteps behind me –
Following me.
I could do nothing more than keep walking,
Do not speed up, do not turn around, do not run,
Just keep walking.
Walk with the stride of a princess
Who has no fears to face
And no people to hate.
I kept walking,
My legs wood,
And my heart lead
Waiting for the time where he would
Sing out my name.
And his eyes would glitter
As if he had been struck in the heart
By one of Cupid's golden arrows,
As if he was blinded to my emotions,
As if he had no idea how I felt.
I continued down the path, heart pounding
The sun sinking lower in the sky
The birds calling in the trees
The water rippling in the pond.
I reached out and brushed a tree
As I walked past
Wishing to be anywhere but here
Praying to the gods and heavens
To save me.

Calypso:

The Greek myth of Calypso tells of a nymph exiled to the island of Ogygia by Zeus after the Titans' defeat. When the shipwrecked Odysseus washes ashore, Calypso—overcome by love—keeps him on the island for seven years. She offers him a life of ease and even immortality, highlighting the tension between a blissful, forgotten existence and Odysseus' painful but destined return to his mortal life in Ithaca.

Calypso's story also exposes the double standards of the Greek gods: she is punished for taking a mortal lover, while male gods freely do the same without consequence. Ultimately, when Hermes delivers Zeus' command that she must release Odysseus, Calypso obeys. Though wounded by the injustice, she provides Odysseus with the tools and supplies he needs to continue his journey. Neither wholly benevolent nor malicious, Calypso embodies a complex blend of desire, compassion, resentment and obedience, making her a morally ambiguous figure in the *Odyssey*.

Calypso – Aurora Everett

Countless hours and time,
Dedicated to where I am today.
Each rung on the ladder,
Cut my skin,
The metal seared my fingers
And ripped my hands raw,
Drawing blood staining into my palm.
Skin ripped apart
As my knuckles burned
from the fire that is the inequality.
Flames roared inside me
And the punishment
Of my love being taken away
Fuelled me with a burning hatred:
Hatred for the ones
Who had taken my love.
I will avenge that choice:
The choice to punish me.
And I will punish them.
I will burn them to the ground
until the embers go cold beneath my feet.
Until all their loves are washed away;
Washed away with the tide of a tsunami
That crashes into their lives.
Destroys everything they ever loved.
Just as they took away my love;
The purpose of my being, my only hope
And now it's all gone.
Eradicating the light that sparked in my life.
The light had been switched off.

Atalanta:

Known for her unmatched speed, hunting skill, and refusal to conform to traditional expectations of women, Atalanta was abandoned at birth and raised by a she-bear, she grows into a fierce and independent warrior. Atalanta joins the Caledonian Boar Hunt, where she is the first to wound the monstrous boar, earning widespread respect. Her father later tries to marry her off, but Atalanta—determined to avoid marriage—declares she will only wed a man who can outrun her in a footrace, and those who lose will be put to death. No one can defeat her until Hippomenes (also called Melanion) receives three golden apples from Aphrodite. During the race, he distracts Atalanta by dropping the apples, slowing her enough to win. Though Atalanta marries him, the union ultimately ends in tragedy when the pair anger the gods and are transformed into lions. Atalanta's story highlights themes of independence, female strength, and the tension between personal freedom and societal expectations.

Atlanta – Frankie Mitchell

I used to measure time
In laps, in seconds shaved thin as ice,
In steps pounding against rubber,
In the gold weight hanging round my neck.
Time to race,
Time to run,
Time to win.

Now it's time for school,
Sticky hands, lost books, a broken vase,
My husband kisses my cheek, walks out the door,
A high-pitched voice squealing,
"MUM!"

Three voices call the same name,
My name,

Once shouted through stadiums,
Stitched into headlines,
Painted on signs, whispered before starting guns,
Breaking records, winning medals,
Each trophy, medal, shield,
Etched with one name
"Atalanta"

A shelf heavy with proof
I was the best.
Then I won a different kind of victory.
White dress, gold rings, a home,
I thought that was it.

Then came the late nights,
the morning sickness, the horrible feeling
of weakness.
Then the small hand tugging mine,
golden ringlets, soft dimples,
Love multiplied and soon there were three
Time disappeared, and with it, my career.
My spikes gathered dust,
While medals sleep in velvet lined boxes,
I tell the children tales,
And they look at me like magic.
I'm happy-
Laughter fills the house,
With a light that is warm and mine,
I made it, I shaped it into what it is,
I chose them, I chose this life

But at night I lie, a medal in my hand,
Its soft gold surface shining up at me,
Clutching it in my hands I wonder,
About the races I never ran,
The medals I never won,
The fire I set down
and never picked back up.

I didn't fail,
I didn't lose,
I just set it down
And never chose again.
Do I regret it?

Cassandra

Cassandra was a princess of Troy, the daughter of King Priam and Queen Hecuba, blessed with the gift of prophecy by the god Apollo. When she rejected Apollo's romantic advances, he punished her by twisting the gift into a curse: she would still see the future clearly, but no one would ever believe her. Cassandra foresaw tragic events such as the arrival of Paris bringing doom to Troy, the danger of the Trojan Horse, and the fall of the city itself. Despite her desperate warnings, she was dismissed as mad. After Troy's destruction, Cassandra was taken by Agamemnon as a captive, and she correctly predicted their murders upon returning to Mycenae—another prophecy ignored until it was too late. Her myth embodies themes of truth silenced, the burden of knowledge, and the tragedy of being unable to change fate.

Cassandra's Curse (Still Burning) – Freya Berry

I'm already crying -
of course I am -
the tears come too fast, too hot,
like Apollo's hands on my throat
after all these centuries.
"I need you to listen,
to me." I say,
voice trembling like a prophecy;
unstable, dangerous, always betraying me.
I'm terrified to speak.
You look at me
like I'm exaggerating.
Like I'm fragile glass.
Like I'm a storm you can outwait.
And suddenly it erupts.
WHY WON'T YOU BELIEVE ME?
WHY DON'T YOU EVER BELIEVE ME?
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS LOOK AT ME LIKE I'M CRAZY?
My breath shatters.
My chest aches.
I'm choking on the truth that no one ever wants to hear.
You say, with that soft, poisonous calm,
"I do believe you,"
it feels exactly like Apollo's smile
right before he cursed me.
I sob harder.
I hate that I'm sobbing.

I slam my fist on the table,
not to scare you,
but because the truth is too big
to stay inside my ribs.
"STOP CALLING ME DRAMATIC!
STOP CALLING ME PARANOID!
STOP CALLING ME CRAZY!"
My tears fall like warnings,
that we both choose to ignore
My voice cracks like thunder.
I feel the old curse tightening
the one Apollo spat into my mouth
when I dared to refuse him,
Mascara is streaked down my cheeks.
I am crying so hard
I can barely breathe,
barely stand,
barely hold myself together
but the prophecy keeps rising,
keeps burning,
keeps demanding to be spoken.
You flinch
not because you believe me,
but because you don't like
when I get loud.
You say,
"You're overreacting."
And that's it.
That's the curse.

That's the knife.

That's the moment
every lifetime repeats.

I go quiet,
not calm,
never calm,
just quiet like a battlefield
after the last scream.

"I told the truth,"

I whisper,
tears dripping off my chin.

"I always tell the truth."

You don't answer.

You never do.

But I feel something ancient
ignite in my chest.

I stand.

I wipe my face.

I let the tears dry
like war paint.

And for the first time
in every lifetime,
I believe myself.

You turn away.

And I finally understand why the gods gave up on men.

Hera:

Hera is the queen of the Greek gods, sister and wife of Zeus, and ruler of marriage, women, and childbirth. Known for her regal power and fierce dignity, she is also famous for her jealousy—often directing her anger not at Zeus, who frequently deceives her, but at the mortal women and demigod children involved in his affairs. Throughout Greek myth, Hera appears as both a protector and a punisher. She fiercely defends the sanctity of marriage, yet her vengeance shapes many hero stories—such as her lifelong persecution of Heracles, whom she torments from infancy. Despite this, Hera is also a guardian of women, a deity of legitimate birth and family, and one of the most powerful Olympians. Her myth highlights themes of authority, betrayal, loyalty, and the complex dynamics of divine relationships in Greek storytelling.

Hera - Maisie Cooper

A peacock hung from the sky,
anvils kissing its ankles.
Still, it flew —
wings frantic,
feathers screaming blue and gold defiance
against the gravity of its situation.
He watches and laughs.
An angel on her right,
a devil on her left —
Though the devil looks suspiciously like him,
holding bank cards and overdue bills
like commandments.
The angel shines quietly.
A stiff hand in his.
A wedding ring that glints like a shackle.
She tells herself she is lucky.
He is stable.
He is adored.
At dinner parties he refills glasses
and kisses her temple.
Behind closed doors
his voice is softer —
which is worse.

Soft like rope.
She once tried to leave.
The hallway narrowed.
The walls leaned in.
The air felt like a noose tightening
around a goddess who should command
storms
but cannot command herself.
So she blamed the other women instead.
Turned them into cows in her mind.
Into temptresses.
Into myths.
Anything but him.
At work she smiles —
All around her
happy couples and babies
with fingers wrapped around wedding
bands
like anchors.
Inside, she is a cyclone.
A sacred fruit split open —
pomegranate seeds spilling
like quiet, shameful truths.
She tells herself
she doesn't deserve him.

But she doesn't deserve this.
A peacock cannot land
when anvils are tied to its feet.
He is unworthy of love, she
thinks.
But she is worthy of life.
And that thought
is the first feather
that falls loose.

Medea:

Medea is a powerful sorceress from Colchis best known for helping the Greek hero Jason on his quest for the Golden Fleece. Struck by love—often said to be caused by Aphrodite—she uses her magic to aid Jason, betrays her family, and flees her homeland with him. After years of exile and wandering, they settle in Corinth. When Jason abandons Medea to marry the Corinthian princess for political gain, Medea is consumed by grief and fury. Denied justice and facing expulsion, she takes revenge with calculated precision: she kills the princess and the king, and in the most tragic part of the myth, kills her own children to wound Jason beyond repair. Medea then escapes in a chariot sent by her grandfather, the sun-god Helios. Her story explores themes of love turned to rage, betrayal, exile, female agency, and the terrifying extremes of vengeance.

Medea – Georgia Tancred

I look at you now and I am blinded

From how you used to be Heaven in my eyes.

I look at you now and all I see is

The monstrous, traitorous, heinous

husband that you are now.

You stand there,

So certain of yourself,

So innocent yet you have done me

a world of wrong.

Now,

As I stare into your cold soul,

I release every feeling of joy I ever felt towards you.

Anytime you made me laugh. Held my hand.

Comforted me. Held me. Loved me.

Every moment is gone.

Exited from my life.

After what you have done to me.

Do you still think about that day?

The day that you broke my heart to pieces.

Of course you don't.

I still think about the heartbreaking tear

in my father's eyes when

I betrayed him

For you,

I still remember the stab in my chest when

I killed my own brother

For you.

As besotted and willing to do anything for
my love

I went beyond the imaginable.

Yes.

Yes. Yes. Yes.

Was my answer to all your commands.

Yet I still followed you

Through the black sea of our lives.

For you exploited my worth and took only
what you wanted

A fleece.

A golden fleece.

And once you finally got what you wanted

I still wasn't enough.

Philomela:

Philomela was an Athenian princess who became the victim of a brutal betrayal. After her brother-in-law Tereus assaulted her, he cut out her tongue to prevent her from revealing the crime. Unable to speak, Philomela wove the truth into a tapestry and secretly sent it to her sister, Procne. Procne rescued her, and together the sisters took a terrible revenge on Tereus before fleeing. As he pursued them, the gods intervened and transformed all three into birds—Philomela becoming a nightingale (or, in some versions, a swallow), forever associated with mournful song and the endurance of silenced suffering. Philomela's myth explores themes of violence, voicelessness, creative resistance, sisterhood, and transformation.

Philomela - Lola Mages

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Humiliation. | Each day I had worked for him. | I wanted to return the favour |
| That's my past life. | Under his power | He and everything associated |
| Guilt was a blanket that enveloped me and my life. | A recurring punishment - | with him would reek of |
| Humiliation was my shadow, growing when his | My work life. | humiliation. |
| cold hands would brush past me. | My friends. | I would make sure of it. |
| Taking me back to that night | My virginity and innocence. | Is he afraid? |
| His words coercing me, | | Be afraid. |
| A failed attempt to keep me close | They all say he left unscathed. | |
| | No consequence. | |
| Was it my fault? | No guilt. | |
| Was I in the wrong place at the wrong time? | | |
| | They always do | |
| No. | | |
| | So, I decided to embody his mentality. | |
| His hands explored parts of me that were free of | No mercy. | |
| violation. | | |
| His words separated me from my motherhood and | I didn't feel guilty when I conversed with his wife. | |
| relocated me by his side | Anger sprouting onto her face. | |
| My person illuminated with judgement. | I didn't feel guilty when I slipped mushrooms into the | |
| As if it was my fault. | workplace meal, under his name. | |
| | It wasn't enough to drop poison into his food. | |
| My fault. | The easy way out. | |

