

The Birth of Athena

Characters

Zeus, King of the Gods

Athena, Goddess of Wisdom

Hephaestus, God of the Forge

Hermes, Herald of Olympus

Narrator, Voice in the Clouds

Narrator: On high Olympus, the mighty Zeus, Lord of Thunder and King of the Gods, whined like a little baby.

Zeus: Can it, Narrator, I have a migraine! I have faced down giants, Titans, those freaky guys with one hundred arms, and my father Kronos himself! I wield pure lightning and govern the ordering of the universe. But *nothing* has caused me so much pain as this headache. Not even when Hera kicks me out of bed because she's mad about my latest demigod son. It's positively SPLITTING!

Narrator: Zeus perks up, as he's had an idea.

Zeus: Hermes!

Hermes: Yeah, pops?

Zeus: Go fetch your brother Hephaestus! I need him to do something for me!

Narrator: Hermes clicks the heels of his winged sandals and takes off into the clouds. He flies down to the lower slopes of the great mountain and finds his older brother in his forge, hammering at a large sheet of bronze.

Hermes: Hey Hephaestus!

Narrator: Hephaestus does not respond.

Hermes: HePHAEstus! HEPHAESTUS!

Hephaestus: WHAT?

Narrator: The God of the Forge pulls out his earplugs.

Hermes: Are you busy? Doesn't matter actually, pops is asking for you.

Hephaestus: I swear if he broke ANOTHER lightning bolt impressing mortals I'm gonna--

Narrator: Hephaestus trails off in a huff, continuing to mutter about ungrateful parents.

Hephaestus: Hey, I was *muttering* for a reason!

Narrator: The sons of Zeus ascend the mountain to their father's palace. When they reach the top,

Zeus is reclined on fluffy cushions with an ice pack on his brow.

Hephaestus, breathless: Note to self... invent... escalators.

Zeus: Oh thank myself, you're finally here.

Narrator: Hephaestus pinches his lips and tries not to think about his lame leg.

Zeus: Oh, right. We should really invent escalators at some point.

Hermes: Good idea, pops!

Hephaestus: Try hard.

Hermes: Can it or I'll steal *your* sacred cattle too.

Hephaestus: You leave my sacred cattle out if it!

Zeus: BOYS! Can we please focus on the actual problem here? My headache is so painful it's interfering with my day-to-day functioning!

Hephaestus: **takes a long, slow breath** So... what do you want me to do about it? I'm no healer, that's Apollo's thing.

Zeus: Oh we're way past that. I want you to split my skull open.

Hermes: Wait, WHAT?

Hephaestus: Nuff said.

Narrator: With no further hesitation, Hephaetus lays his mighty chisel in between Zeus' eyebrows and slams his hammer onto it. It cleaves Zeus' skull with a sharp, wet crack.

Hermes: Oh I'm gonna be sick.

Narrator: But instead of dripping bits of pre-frontal cortex, the crack in Zeus' head begins to emit a bright silver glow. From the glow, a tall, imposing woman wearing full armor and wielding a spear and shield leaps out.

Athena: Behold, father and brothers! I am Athena, Olympian goddess of wisdom and battle strategy. I will wield the fearsome aegis shield in the divine wars to come, teach mortal man the ways of intelligent combat, and I will give patronage to the greatest city-state of the Hellenic world; a power rich in art, theatre, law, religion, and half-baked natural philosophy that will undermine the advancement of empirical science for centuries! You must, however, promise me one thing.

Zeus, still a little dazed: Uhh... what's that?

Athena: Don't make me get married.

Zeus: Oh, yeah, I made the same deal with your Aunt Hestia and cousin Artemis. It's cool.

Athena: My thanks.

Hermes: Holy shit she's so cool.

Narrator: And thus the goddess Athena was born. And all the Olympians learned a valuable lesson in what whacky god stuff can happen when you swallow your first wife.

Hermes and Hephaestus: You WHAT?

