

## **Medusa, ‘Transformations’: Ovid Metamorphoses Book 1**

Ages of Mankind: According to legend, there were 4 Ages of Mankind. The Golden Age during the reign of Saturn was a paradise. Then came the Silver Age. With the Bronze Age arrived the presence of evil among men. The Iron Age was filled with so much evil that Jupiter flooded the entire world.

Lycaon into a wolf by Zeus – Zeus visited the palace of Lycaon, but he refused to recognize his visitor as a god. To prove that the visitor was not a god, Lycaon killed a man, boiled his flesh, and served him to Zeus. Zeus was outraged, and he destroyed his home and changed Lycaon into a wolf (the Greek word *lykos* means ‘wolf’).

Stones of Deucalion and Pyrrha- After the flood sent by Jupiter, an oracle ordered them “to throw their mother’s bones behind them.” Deucalion and Pyrrha, the only two humans to survive the flood, then threw rocks over their shoulders, and they transformed into people.

Daphne into laurel tree by father Peneus b/c of Apollo – To punish his brother Apollo for his arrogance & boasting, Cupid shot Apollo with a golden arrow of love, but shot the maiden Daphne with a leaden arrow of hate. Apollo, burning with love, pursued Daphne, fleeing in fear. Just before Apollo took hold of her, her father, the river god Peneus, transformed her into a laurel tree. To honor Daphne, Apollo vowed always to wear a wreath of laurel.

Io- Jupiter transformed Io into a heifer to escape Juno’s suspicions that he was having an affair. After she saw her new appearance in a river, Io fled to her father Inachus and wrote her name in the sand. Eventually, Jupiter convinced Juno to transform Io back into a human. As a result, Io was worshiped as an Egyptian goddess.

Argus' eyes- Juno commanded Argus, a 100-eyed guard, to watch Io while she was a heifer. Mercury told a boring story about Pan and Syrinx that put Argus to sleep. When all of his eyes were closed, Mercury sliced off his head. To honor Argus, Juno placed his eyes on the feathers of the peacock.

Syrinx- Pan, the god of shepherds and flocks, pursued the nymph Syrinx. To avoid capture, Syrinx was changed into a bed of reeds. Pan then cut off some of the reeds and made the 'panpipe' to honor her.

### **Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book 2**

Phaethon – Phaethon was the son of Clymene and Apollo. Epaphus, son of Io and Phaethon's friend, challenged him to prove that he was truly the son of Apollo. Apollo offered to do anything Phaethon wished in order to prove that he was his father. Phaethon requested to drive the sun chariot of Apollo for a day. Apollo was reluctant to grant Phaethon's wish, because the sun chariot was difficult to control and the journey was filled with dangers. Despite his best efforts, Apollo granted his promise. Phaethon was unable to control the chariot, and he scorched the earth in some places (creating deserts), and froze the earth in others (creating the polar regions). Tellus (Mother Earth herself, sometimes called Gaea) screamed out in pain, and Jupiter threw a lightning bolt at Phaethon, and he fell to his death in the river Po.

Heliades into poplar trees with amber tears: The Heliades were the daughters of the Sun-god (Helios in Greek, Apollo/Sol in Latin). When their brother Phaethon plunged to his death in the river Po, they began to mourn and weep. They were transformed into poplar trees, and their tears became amber.

Callisto – Jupiter desired Callisto, a follower of the virgin goddess Diana. He disguised himself as Diana, and Callisto was fooled. Yet when Jupiter began kissing her wildly, she knew that it was someone else. She tried to fight against him, but he overpowered her. Callisto hid her pregnancy from the goddess Diana, but the followers of Dian eventually discovered that she was with child. Diana banished Callisto, and Juno (angry that she had been with her husband) changed her into a bear. Callisto had a son, Arcas. He was a hunter, and was about to kill his own mother, the bear Callisto, but Jupiter pitied them. He changed them into the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, the Big Bear and the Little Bear.

crow from white to black with Apollo & Coronis – Apollo was having an affair with the mortal woman Coronis. The crow, then with pure white feathers, discovered that Coronis was unfaithful to Apollo. The bird flew to Apollo, who shot down Coronis in his great anger. As she was dying, Coronis told Apollo that she was pregnant. Apollo saved the child, Aesculapius the god of healing, and gave it to the centaur Chiron. Apollo then turned the crow's feathers to black as punishment for his excessive talking.

Ocyrhoe – This daughter of the good centaur Chiron possessed the power of prophecy, but revealed forbidden secrets about the future to Chiron and Aesculapius. For this transgression, she was changed into a mare.

Mercury & Battus – As the day of his birth, the god Mercury stole some of the cattle of Apollo, his brother. The only witness to this theft was an old man named Battus ('Chatterbox'). Mercury offered the man a cow for his silence, and he agreed. Mercury was not convinced that Battus would remain silent, so he came back disguised as an old man. In this disguise, he offered Battus 2 cows for information on the missing herd. Battus, unaware that this was a trick, broke his silence, and Mercury turned the man into stone.

Aglauros – Mercury was in love with Aglauros' sister, Herse. Aglauros was jealous that her sister's lover was a god. So she attempted to block Mercury from seeing Herse, and stated she would not move. Mercury therefore changed her to a statue.

Jupiter into bull with Europa: children are Minos, Rhadamanthys, & Sarpedon – To have Europa, Jupiter changed himself into a gentle white bull. When she climbed on the bull's back for a ride, the bull leapt into the sea and swam from Tyre (in Phoenicia) to the island Crete.

### **Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book 3 (unfinished)**

Actaeon into a deer by Artemis – Actaeon was hunting with his hounds when he came upon a pool of water. He went to get a drink and saw the virgin goddess Artemis bathing. Angered, Artemis threw water upon him. Actaeon was then changed into a deer and ripped apart by his own hunting hounds.

Bacchus into priest with Pentheus – When Pentheus refused to worship Bacchus, the god visited him as one of his priests and convinced him to observe the female worshippers in the mountains. His mother and aunts, in a Bacchic frenzy, mistook Pentheus for a wild boar and ripped him limb from limb.

## Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book 4

Zeus into golden shower with Danae: child is Perseus – Since Danae was imprisoned, Zeus changed himself into a golden shower to be with Danae. Perseus is sometimes called *aurigena*, 'the one born from gold.'

mulberry from white to red with Pyramus & Thisbe – Pyramus & Thisbe were young and in love, but their parents would not let them marry. Living next door to one another, they talked through a crack/chink in the wall. They made a plan to meet outside the city at night under the white-fruited mulberry tree and to run away together. Thisbe was the first to arrive at the tree, but a lioness came and she – dropping her veil - ran. The lioness chewed on the veil and left. Pyramus found the veil under the tree, thought Thisbe was dead, and stabbed himself. Thisbe returned, found her Pyramus dead, and killed herself. The fruit from the mulberry tree was changed from snow-white to blood-red.

Affair of Venus & Mars: Venus was married to the blacksmith god Vulcan, but was having an affair with the war god Mars. When the Sun-god informed him of Venus' infidelity, Vulcan transformed their bed into a trap to catch the 2 lovers by making invisible yet unbreakable chains. As soon as Vulcan left, Venus and Mars went to bed, but were captured in the act by the chains of Vulcan.

Clytie into a sunflower, Leucothoe into frankincense: Clytie loved the Sun-god, but he loved the nymph Leucothoe. Venus (still angry that the Sun-god had told Vulcan about her affair with Mars) caused Leucothoe's father to fly into a rage and to kill his daughter for her loss of purity. The Sun-god then transformed her into the fragrant frankincense shrub. Although the Sun-god continued to reject her love, Clytie always followed his travels across the sky and was changed into the sunflower, which bends in the direction of the sun.

Hermaphroditus into half-man, half-woman: Hermaphroditus was the beautiful son of Mercury and Venus. One day, he came upon a pool of water, and the nymph of this water, Salmacis, became consumed with passion at the sight of him and asked to become his bride. Hermaphroditus was embarrassed and rejected her. Salmacis pretended to leave but jumped into the water and clung to him as he began to bathe in the pool. She prayed to the gods that they would never be separated, and her prayer was answered: Hermaphroditus became at once both male and female. He then was granted his prayer that all who entered the pool would achieve the same androgynous fate.

the daughters of Minyas into bats: During a festival to Bacchus, the daughters of Minyas refused to worship the god, so they were changed into bats.

Ino into sea goddess Leucothea, her son Melicerta into the god Palaemon: To punish Ino (because Bacchus was the son of Jupiter by her sister Semele), Juno sent a madness upon her husband Athamas. Thinking that he was hunting animals, Athamas killed their youngest son Learchus. Ino, carrying her son Melicerta, jumped off a cliff to escape her crazed husband, and the god Neptune transformed them into the gods Leucothea and Palaemon.

Cadmus & his wife Harmonia into snakes: Cadmus had founded the city Thebes with men who were transformed from dragon's teeth into warriors. In old age, Cadmus and his wife were themselves changed into snakes.

woman Medusa into snaky-haired Gorgon: Medusa was a beautiful young woman. Neptune saw her, loved her, and raped her in a temple to Minerva. Because Minerva could not punish Neptune, one of the strongest of the gods, she took out her anger on Medusa and transformed her into a snaky-haired Gorgon. When Perseus cut off her head, an offspring of Medusa and Neptune sprang forth, the winged horse Pegasus.

blood of Medusa into snakes of Libya: Perseus was the hero who killed the snaky-haired Medusa. As Perseus flew above Libya carrying the severed head of Medusa, droplets of her blood fell onto the ground and turned into a variety of poisonous snakes.

### **Medusa Exam, ‘Transformations’: Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book 5**

enemies of Perseus into stone: On his way back home, Perseus saved the woman Andromeda from a sea monster. In return, he was given Andromeda as his bride. At the wedding feast, a fight broke out between Perseus and Phineus, to whom Andromeda had been promised before Perseus arrived. Perseus killed many men, but soon found himself overwhelmed. So, he lifted Medusa’s head high and turned his enemies into stone. When Perseus finally returned home, Polydectes (who had ordered him to bring back the head of Medusa) refused to believe that he had actually killed the monster and demanded that Perseus provide proof. So Perseus turned him to stone with Medusa’s head.

Atlas into mountain: Perseus also turned the Titan Atlas into the a mountain (the Atlas Mountains in north Africa) with the head of Medusa.

change of seasons with abduction of Proserpina: Pluto, the king of the Underworld, abducted Proserpina, the daughter of Ceres, and took her down to his kingdom to make her his wife. During her time in the Underworld after the abduction, Proserpina ate some seeds from the pomegranate fruit. For this reason, she was forced to return to the Underworld for a few months every year. Her mother Ceres is sad every year during her absence, and she refuses to let anything grow (winter). With the return of her daughter, Ceres causes the earth to burst forth in bloom (spring).

Cyane into water: The nymph Cyane had seen Pluto abduct Proserpina and had ordered him to stop. Pluto destroyed her pool of water with his scepter. In sadness over Proserpina & her lost pool of water, Cyane began to weep and eventually dissolved into water.

Ascalabus into lizard: Ceres was thirsty from the search for her daughter Proserpina, so she stopped and got a drink of water. A foolish boy, called Ascalabus, mocked her as she greedily drank down the water. Ceres angrily threw her drink upon him, and he was changed into a lizard.

Ascalaphus into screech owl: When Proserpina ate some of the seeds of the pomegranate fruit, Ascalaphus was the only witness. But he told Pluto about what happened, and Proserpina was thus forced to return to the Underworld each year. To punish him, Proserpina changed him into a screech owl.

Arethusa into stream: Arethusa, a follower of Diana, was hot from hunting and bathed in the glassy river of Alpheus. He took human form and chased her, but Diana covered her in a mist and turned her into a stream to save her. Alpheus found her and returned to his water form to be with her, but Arethusa disappeared under the earth and did not emerge until she reached Sicily.



Lyncus into a lynx: Ceres gave Triptolemus her flying chariot to spread the art of agriculture and planting. He went to King Lyncus to give him Ceres' own seeds to plant for his harvest. Lyncus became envious and wanted to kill Triptolemus. Lyncus was turned into a lynx by Ceres.

Pierides ('daughters of Pierus') into birds/magpies: Pierus had 9 daughters called the Pierides. These arrogant girls challenged the 9 Muses to a musical contest. When the nymphs voted for the song of the Muses, the 9 Pierides were turned into magpies, birds which love to chatter and hear their own voices.

### **Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid Metamorphoses Book 6**

Athena into old woman with Arachne – Famous for her tapestries, Arachne boasted that she was a better weaver than Athena. Disguised as an old woman, Athena visited Arachne to try to persuade the young girl to take back her arrogant boast. When Arachne refused, Athena revealed herself as a goddess and proposed a weaving contest. B/c Arachne's tapestry was flawless, Athena angrily struck her and changed her into a spider.

Niobe - Niobe, queen of Thebes, made the mistake of boasting that she had more and better children than the goddess Latona (Gr. Leto) and that the people should worship her, and not Latona. Out of anger, Latona calls her children, Apollo and Artemis, and they shoot down all 14 of Niobe's children. Unable to stop weeping, Niobe turned into stone with trickling water.

Latona and the Lycian Peasants - Latona, very thirsty after giving birth to Apollo & Diana, tried to drink from a lake, but the local peasants of Lycia jumped in the water to make it muddy so that she couldn't drink. Out of anger & frustration, Latona turned the peasants into frogs so that they could jump in the water forever.

Marsyas - The satyr, Marsyas, was flayed alive by Apollo for challenging him to a music contest (M's flute vs. A's lyre). His friends mourned his horrible death, and their tears transformed into a river, named the Marsyas.

Procne, Philomela, Tereus - At first sight, Tereus was physically taken with Philomela, the sister of his wife Procne. While Tereus was bringing Philomela to his home to visit Procne, he raped Philomela and cut out her tongue so she would not speak of the crime. Tereus told Procne, his wife, that her sister had died, but many years later Procne encountered Philomela at a festival of Bacchus. Discovering the violence which her husband Tereus had committed upon her sister Philomela, Procne plotted revenge. She killed her own son, Itys, and fed him to his father Tereus. Tereus chased the 2 sisters, and they all were transformed into birds: Procne- the nightingale; Philomela - the swallow; and Tereus - the hoopoe (the bird that looks like war).

## Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book 7

Jason into Fire-Resistant Person & Dragon's Teeth into Warriors: In his quest for the Golden Fleece, Jason was forced to yoke together 2 fire-breathing, bronze-footed bulls. He was protected from the flames by a magical ointment which Medea had given him. He then used the team of bulls to plant dragon's teeth in the ground. Up from these dragon's teeth grew armed warriors. But Jason tossed a rock among them, and this caused them to fight and kill one another. Jason then drugged the dragon which protected the Golden Fleece. He and Medea then fled Colchis with the Golden Fleece and returned to Iolcus.

Aeson into a Young Man: After Medea helped Jason obtain the Golden Fleece, she returned home with him to Iolcus. There, she used her magic to restore Aeson, Jason's old father, to the prime of his youth: she cut his throat, drained all his blood, and replaced it with a magical brew of herbs. Medea then told the daughters of King Pelias that she would also do this for their father. (Pelias was the king who had sent Jason upon the quest for the Golden Fleece and who had wrongly taken the kingdom of Iolcus from his brother Aeson.) Medea even performed the same rejuvenation with an old ram to convince them it would work. The overzealous daughters of Pelias therefore slit Pelias' throat themselves and cast him into the boiling cauldron of brew. Medea, however, did not add the magical herbs, so Pelias died.

Ants into the Myrmidons: Juno hated Aeacus, king of Aegina, since he was the son of Jupiter and Aegina, one of his many mistresses. In vengeance, Juno inflicted a plague on the inhabitants of Aegina and killed nearly all of them. To repopulate Aeacus' kingdom, Jupiter transformed the ants on a nearby oak tree into people, and these people were called the Myrmidons (from the Greek word for 'ant').

Cephalus into stranger by Aurora: Cephalus and Procris were happily married. Aurora, the goddess of the Dawn, fell in love with Cephalus, but he rejected her love. Aurora therefore prophesied that Cephalus would one day regret that he loved Procris so much. Cephalus then began to ponder Aurora's threat and to suspect that she was having an affair. So, Cephalus had Aurora change him into a stranger, and in this disguise he went home to test the fidelity of his wife. At home, Cephalus (disguised as the stranger) offered Procris an enormous bribe for a night in bed, but Procris refused. Cephalus then doubled the bribe. When she hesitated momentarily, he revealed his true identity. Angry at the trickery of her husband, Procris fled the palace in shame and became a follower of Diana. Later, after many apologies from Cephalus, she returned to him. And she brought him 2 gifts from Diana: a spear which would never miss its mark, and a hunting dog named Laelaps which always caught its prey.

Cephalus' dog Laelaps into a statue: When a monster was ravaging the countryside, Cephalus released his dog Laelaps to capture it, because it always caught its prey. Just as it was about to overtake the monster, both the monster and the dog Laelaps were changed into marble statues.

Death of Procris: Cephalus enjoyed hunting with his spear which never missed. After he had killed enough animals during each hunting trip, Cephalus would rest in the shade and would call upon the breeze to cool him down. He gave the breeze the name 'Aura' (the Latin word for breeze). Someone overheard him calling to 'Aura' and telling 'Aura' to soothe his burning heat. This person told Procris, who then thought that her husband was having an affair with a woman called 'Aura.' Procris followed him out hunting to catch him in his infidelity with 'Aura.' When Cephalus stopped to rest and called out 'Aura,' he heard a rustling in the leaves, thought it was an animal, and threw his javelin. The unerring javelin killed Procris.

## Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book 8

Scylla, Nisus, Minos- Scylla, daughter of Nisus, fell in love with Minos while he was attacking Nisus' city. To win Minos' love, Scylla cut off the purple tuft of hair on Nisus' head (which prevented defeat) and gave it to Minos. Minos won the war but rejected Scylla. He then sailed back to Crete. Scylla swam after the fleet and latched onto Minos' ship. Nisus, who had turned into an osprey, pecked at her, and she finally fell off the ship. Before she hit the water, Scylla was turned into a bird, the ciris.

Daedalus, The Minotaur, Theseus, Ariadne- Minos commissioned Daedalus to build the labyrinth. Theseus, with Ariadne's help, killed the Minotaur, but later abandoned Ariadne on the island Naxos. She wept until Bacchus found her and made her his queen. Her crown turned into the constellation Corona.

Daedalus & Icarus- Daedalus, to escape Crete, made wings for himself and son, Icarus, to fly home. When Icarus flew too high, the sun melted the wax holding the wings in place, and he fell into the sea. He was buried on the isle of Icaria.

Daedalus & Perdix- Perdix, Daedalus' nephew, was to be taught by inventor Daedalus. But when Perdix showed too many brains by inventing many useful tools, Daedalus got jealous and threw him off Minerva's citadel. Before he struck the ground, Minerva changed him into a partridge, a bird which prefers low places to high ones.

The Calydonian Hunt - The Calydonians forgot to honor Diana for their copious harvest so she sent a raging boar to destroy all the crops. Warriors tried to defend the crops but couldn't hit the boar. Meleager killed it and gave the top honor to Atlanta, the only woman, since she had been the first to hit the animal. Meleager's uncles objected and insulted his choice, so Meleager killed them.

Althaea & Meleager- Althaea, Meleager's mother, mourned the deaths of her brothers and wanted to kill Meleager. She burned the log that had been given to her at Meleager's birth by the Fates, who had said, 'Meleager will live as long as this log is not burned.' Althaea burned the log. Far away, Meleager suffered a somewhat 'spontaneous combustion' and burned to ashes where he stood. Althaea killed herself by stabbing, and Meleager's mourning sisters were turned into guinea-hens.

The Echinades & Perimele- There were 5 islands in the river Achelous. They had once been nymphs who forgot to sacrifice to him. Achelous got enraged, flooded the entire land with water, and swept the nymphs out to sea, where they turned into 5 isles. Perimele was a nymph raped by Achelous. Her father, disappointed, hurled her from a cliff into the sea. Achelous saved her and asked for Neptune's help. Neptune turned her into an island.

Baucis & Philemon- Jove and Mercury, disguised, were shunned by 1000 houses but were brought in and treated like gods by poor Baucis (the wife) and Philemon (the husband). When they attempted to kill their only goose for the strangers, the gods made themselves known and took the couple to the top of a mountain to see the everything (people and land) destroyed except for their small house, which turned into a temple. Jove and Mercury wanted to grant a wish and Baucis & Philemon said they wanted to serve in the temple and then die together. They lived long but died and turned into an oak tree (Philemon) and linden tree (Baucis) next to one another.

Erysichthon's sin- Erysichthon had no regard for the gods and cut down Ceres' sacred oak. When a man tried to stop him, Erysichthon cut off his head.

Erysichthon & Famine- The protectors of the sacred oak begged Ceres to make Erysichthon pay. Therefore, she commissioned an Oread (a nymph of the mountains) to find Famine (because Ceres and Famine were fated never to meet) and to tell her to take hold of Erysichthon. Famine did so, and Erysichthon became forever hungry. The more he ate, the more hungry he became.

Erysichthon's Daughter- Erysichthon sold his daughter for food. She, pursued by her owner, fled to the shore and asked her lover Neptune to save her. He changed her into a fisherman who tells the owner he has seen no one, then changed her back into a girl. Thus, Erysichthon sold her over and over again for food because she could change form. Eventually, his hunger was so great that he starts eating the flesh off his own body.

### **Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid's Metamorphoses, Book 9**

Achelous: Achelous and Hercules were fighting over Deianira. Achelous could not defeat Hercules as a human, so he changed into several creatures - a snake, then a bull. Yet as a bull, Hercules pinned him down and broke off his horn, which was later made into the 'cornucopia' by the nymphs.

Hercules, Deianira, Nessus: As Hercules and his wife, Deianira, came to a flooded river, Deianira had difficulty crossing. Nessus, a centaur, offered to help Hercules get Deianira across the river. However, as Hercules crossed the river, he became suspicious that Nessus was kidnapping her to rape her (as Centaurs were so famous for). Hercules shot him with an arrow tipped with Hydra's poison. The centaur, seeking vengeance, gave his shirt covered in Hydra's poison to Deianira and told her that it was a talisman that would renew love. Deianira later sent Hercules the shirt, unaware that it was poisoned.

Deification of Hercules: Deianira learned that Hercules was having an affair with Iole, so she sent him the shirt covered in the Hydra's blood because she thought it was a magical garment which would return Hercules to her. But when Hercules put on the shirt, it burned his skin so badly that he built a funeral pyre to end his life. When his body was burning upon the pyre, Jupiter transformed the mortal Hercules into an immortal god. Hebe, the goddess of youth, became his wife on Mt. Olympus.

Galanthis: When Alcmena was in labor with Hercules, Juno instructed Lucina, the Roman goddess of childbirth, to prevent the birth of the hero. Lucina refused to enter the room where Alcmena was in labor and thus delayed the birth of Hercules for 7 days. Galanthis was one of Alcmena's maids, and she pitied the long labor of Alcmena. So she came out and falsely reported to Lucina that a child had finally been born. When Lucina jumped up and entered the room to see this birth (which had seemingly been accomplished without her help), her presence allowed Alcmena to give birth to Hercules. Out of anger, Juno changed Galanthis into a weasel for her trickery.

Dryope: Dryope's fate was to be transformed into a lotus tree for unwittingly picking blossoms from a tree that had once been a nymph.



Iolaus: Iolaus, once Hercules' charioteer, had grown old with age, but he desired to be young again. Hebe, the wife of the deified Hercules, gave into his plea for youth, and removed years from his life. The goddess then added the years to the lives of Callirhoe's sons so that they would grow up faster.

Byblis: Byblis was unable to fight her incestuous urges for her brother, Caunus. She wrote him a letter telling him how she felt and hoping that he felt the same way. Yet, he was revolted by the idea. When Byblis wouldn't take 'no' for an answer, he fled. She couldn't find him, no matter how much she looked for him. Frustrated, she sat down by a stream and cried for so long that a wood nymph turned her into a spring.

Iphis & Ianthe: Telethusa was pregnant with her husband Ligdus' child. Ligdus told his wife that, if a girl were born, she must be killed b/c they were too poor to raise a girl. But the Egyptian goddess Isis/Io commanded Telethusa to save the child. When a girl was born, Telethusa gave her the name Iphis (which could be the name of either a girl or boy) and hid the fact that she was a girl. She then raised Iphis as a boy. Only Telethusa and a nurse knew the truth. When Iphis was a 'young man,' Ligdus arranged a wedding with Ianthe, a beautiful woman. On the day before the wedding, Telethusa and Iphis prayed to Isis/Io for a miracle, and Iphis was changed from a woman into a man. The young man Iphis then married Ianthe.

## **Medusa, ‘Transformations’: Ovid Metamorphoses Book 10**

Orpheus and Eurydice: Orpheus was a magnificent lyre player and was married to Eurydice, who was killed by snakebite. He went down to the Underworld to plead his case with Proserpina, the queen of the Underworld, and he played his lyre so beautifully that all the torture in the Underworld stopped. Pluto and Proserpina allowed Eurydice to return to the Upperworld on one condition: Orpheus must not look back at her until they reached the Upperworld. Unfortunately, Orpheus looked back, and she disappeared down into the Underworld.

Cyparissus into a cypress tree by Apollo – Cyparissus was a youth loved by the god Apollo. There was a deer which had been tamed by the woodland nymphs, and it was kind to all humans, but especially to the young man Cyparissus. One day, Cyparissus accidentally shot and killed this deer while hunting. The youth was so sad that he wished to die or at least to mourn forever. Apollo therefore turned the weeping Cyparissus into the cypress tree, an ancient symbol of death and mourning.

Ganymede: Ganymede was a Trojan boy loved by Jupiter. Jupiter changed himself into an eagle and abducted Ganymede. On Mt. Olympus, Jupiter then made him the cupbearer of the gods.

Hyacinthus: He was a youth loved by Apollo. One day, they were exercising and throwing the discus. Hyacinthus ran to retrieve Apollo’s discus, but it had not stopped moving. The discus rebounded off the earth, struck him in the face, and killed him. In his pity for the boy’s death, Apollo turned him into the hyacinth flower (a kind of lily).

the Cerastae, ‘the people with horns’: These people lived on the island Cyprus, sacred to the goddess Venus. They had an altar to Jupiter at their city gates, but visitors, not animals, were impiously sacrificed there. Because of this crime, Venus transformed them into bulls.

the Propoetides, or ‘daughters of Propoetus’: These women denied that Venus was a goddess. In her anger, Venus turned them into the first prostitutes. They were later changed into stone.

Pygmalion and Galatea: Pygmalion was disgusted at the sacrilege committed by the Propoetides. He worshipped Venus, but found no mortal woman worthy to be his wife. So he created a statue, and he began to treat it like a real woman. He gave it kisses, hugs, & presents. During a religious festival, Pygmalion went to the temple of Venus and prayed that he might have a wife like his statue. When Pygmalion returned home, the statue softened and turned into a real woman (named Galatea). They had a daughter, Paphos.

Cinyras and Myrrha: Cinyras was the son of Paphos, and Myrrha was Cinyras’ daughter. The Furies inflamed Myrrha with an incestuous love for her own father. Filled with turmoil, Myrrha went to her nurse for advice. The nurse helped Myrrha to satisfy her forbidden desire, and Cinyras unknowingly slept with his own daughter. When he discovered what he had done, Cinyras tried to kill his daughter, but she escaped. In despair, she turned into a myrrh tree. Adonis, the son of Myrrha and her father Cinyras, was later born from the tree.

Adonis: Adonis, the son of Myrrha and her father Cinyras, was a very handsome youth loved by Venus. She warned him to stay clear of wild beasts, but he did not listen. He was killed by a wild boar gashing him through the leg, and was turned into the ‘anemone’ flower, a kind of buttercup.

Atalanta and Hippomenes: Atalanta was warned by an oracle never to marry. So Atalanta, known for her speed, refused to marry unless her future husband beat her in a foot race. If he lost the race, he was killed. Many raced against her, but all lost and were killed. Hippomenes fell in love with Atalanta. To aid him, Venus gave Hippomenes three golden apples to distract Atalanta during the race. With the help of these apples, Hippomenes was able to beat her and marry her. Hippomenes, however, did not properly thank Venus for her help. So Venus, angry at his ingratitude, exacted her revenge: she filled Hippomenes with a lust for his new wife, they slept together in a temple of the goddess Cybele, and Cybele changed them into lions because of their sacrilege.

### **Medusa, 'Transformations': Ovid Metamorphoses Book 11**

Death of Orpheus: After his unsuccessful attempt to bring his wife Eurydice back from the Underworld, Orpheus arrogantly rejected the advances of all women. Finally, a group of crazed Maenads attacked Orpheus because he scored all women and ripped him apart. Orpheus' spirit went down to the Underworld to be with Eurydice. As punishment for killing this great musician, Bacchus turned the Maenads into oak trees.

Midas (Pt. 1): Bacchus then set out in search of his friend Silenus, who was missing. Silenus was a fat, ugly satyr who was usually so drunk he could not sit upright on his donkey. King Midas of Phrygia found Silenus and safely returned him to Bacchus, who was so happy that he granted Midas a wish. Midas wished that all he touched would turn to gold, and thus he received 'the golden touch.' However, the gift was actually more of a curse, because Midas was unable to eat or bathe. He even turned his own daughter into gold. Midas then begged Bacchus to take away his awful gift, and the god instructed him to bathe in the Pactolus river. The river removed 'the golden touch,' and this explained why the Pactolus had gold flecks in its river bed.

Midas (Pt. 2): The god Pan challenged Apollo to a musical contest, with Pan on his pipes vs. Apollo on his lyre. A nearby mountain, Tmolus, was selected as the judge. Tmolus gave the victory to Apollo. Midas was the only person who disagreed with the decision that Apollo played better. In anger, Apollo transformed Midas' ears into donkey's ears. Midas kept his new, unusual ears a secret, and only his barber knew the truth. But the barber could not keep the secret to himself, so he dug a hole and whispered his secret into the hole. A bed of reeds then grew at that place: when the wind blew through them, the reeds whispered their secret.

Peleus and Thetis: These two were the parents of Achilles, the greatest warrior at Troy. The goddess Thetis was fated to have a son greater than the father, so Jupiter forced her to marry a mortal man, Peleus. In this way, Jupiter made sure that her son would not be powerful enough to overthrow him. Thetis was not happy about the marriage and did not want to have any children with Peleus. So whenever Peleus came to sleep with her, Thetis changed into a bird, or a tree, or a tiger, so that Peleus might not conceive a child with her. Finally, Peleus held Thetis down until she tired of changing shapes, and they conceived the child Achilles.

Daedalion into a hawk/falcon by Apollo: Daedalion had a daughter, Chione, who was very beautiful. She was also arrogant, and boasted that she was more beautiful than the goddess Diana. Because of her arrogance, Diana shot her with an arrow and killed her. While Chione's body was burned on a funeral pyre, Daedalion was so filled with sorrow that he threw himself off Mt. Parnassus, but Apollo pitied him and changed him into a hawk/falcon.

Peleus and the Wolf: A wolf was sent by the Nereid Psamanthe to destroy the cattle of Peleus because he had murdered her son Phocus. The wolf brutally killed much of the cattle and any of Peleus' men who attempted to kill it. Thetis, the wife of Peleus and a fellow Nereid, pleaded with her sister, and finally Psamanthe forgave Peleus. In the midst of his bloody slaughter, the wolf was changed into a marble statue.

Ceyx and Halcyone into kingfisher birds: Against his wife Halcyone's wishes, Ceyx set sail on a voyage. He was killed during a storm at sea. Halcyone waited and waited for her husband's return. Finally, out of pity, Juno sent a vision of Ceyx to Halcyone as she slept. The ghost of her husband informed her of his death at sea and instructed her to go to the shore. There, Halcyone discovered his body. Filled with grief she leapt off a nearby cliff, and the gods transformed the couple into kingfisher birds. These birds lay their eggs at sea during a period of calm called the 'halcyon days' in their honor.

Aesacus into 'diver-bird' by the sea goddess Tethys: Aesacus saw the young woman Hesperia and fell in love. He began to chase Hesperia. As she was running away, Hesperia was bitten by a snake and died. Aesacus was so filled with guilt and sadness at the death of Hesperia that he threw himself off a nearby sea cliff. The sea goddess Tethys transformed him into a diver-bird.

## **Medusa Exam, ‘Transformations’: Ovid Metamorphoses Book 12**

Snake at Aulis into stone: All the Greeks had gathered at the port city Aulis in Greece to begin their voyage to Troy (so that they could get Helen back). During a sacrifice to Jupiter for a safe voyage, a snake was seen in a nearby tree. The snake discovered a nest of birds and devoured 8 little birds & the mother bird. The snake then changed into stone upon the branch of the tree. The Greek prophet Calchas interpreted this unusual event: the omen meant that Troy would indeed be captured, but only after 9 full years of fighting.

Iphigeneia replaced by a deer at Aulis: Before the expedition to Troy, while the Greek forces were gathering at Aulis, Agamemnon killed a deer sacred to Diana. The goddess then made the winds blow the wrong way as punishment (and thus prevented the Greek fleet from sailing to Troy). Diana demanded that Agamemnon sacrifice his own daughter Iphigeneia if he wanted favorable winds to lead the Greek forces to Troy. Agamemnon then tricked his daughter into coming to Aulis by claiming that she was going to marry Achilles. In most versions of the story, Agamemnon killed his daughter when she arrived. In Ovid’s version of the story, Diana pitied Iphigeneia and, at the last moment before her death, replaced her with a deer.

Cycnus into swan by his father Poseidon: The god Neptune had made his son Cycnus invulnerable to weapons. When the Greek fleet arrived near Troy, Cycnus joined the Trojan forces and tried to prevent their landing. Achilles attacked him with both spear and sword, but was unable to kill Cycnus. Finally, Achilles relentlessly beat him with the hilt of his sword and shield until Cycnus fell to the ground. Achilles then choked him to death with his own helmet strap. At his death, Neptune changed him into a swan.

The woman Caenis into the man Caeneus, then into a flamingo: The god Neptune raped the woman Caenis but granted her a wish. Caenis' wish was to be a man so that she would never be raped again. Neptune granted this wish, and Caenis the woman became Caeneus the man. Neptune also made Caeneus invulnerable to weapons (cf. Cycnus, another son of Neptune). During the attack of the Centaurs at the wedding of Pirithous, Caeneus was buried under a mass of logs & mountains thrown by the Centaurs. He was then transformed into a flamingo.

Periclymenus into eagle and killed by Hercules: Periclymenus, a son of Neptune, had the power to change his form. When Hercules was attacking the city Pylos (and killing everyone except Nestor, the later king of Pylos), Periclymenus changed himself into an eagle and pecked away at Hercules, who then killed him with his bow & arrow.

### **Medusa Exam, 'Transformations': Ovid Metamorphoses Book 13**

Palamedes into a 'traitor' through the treachery of Odysseus: Odysseus did not want to go to the Trojan War, so he faked insanity and began to plant his field with salt. Palamedes saw through his trick and placed Odysseus' newborn son Telemachus in front of the plow. Odysseus swerved his plow to avoid hitting his son: this was seen as proof of his sanity, and he was forced to go to Troy. Odysseus thus hated Palamedes. Once at Troy, Odysseus planted a treasure in Palamedes' tent, and then accused him of accepting a bribe from the Trojans in exchange for military secrets. In spite of his innocence, Palamedes was convicted of treason and killed by his fellow Greek soldiers.



Achilles disguised as a young woman on the island Scyros: The goddess Thetis did not want her son Achilles to go off to the Trojan War because he was fated to die at Troy. Therefore, she disguised Achilles as a young woman and hid him on the island Scyros. The Greeks arrived searching for the great warrior Achilles, but were unable to find him. Odysseus then tricked Achilles. Odysseus brought forth a huge number of presents for the women of Scyros. Among the dresses, jewelry, and perfume, Odysseus had also included armor and a sword. All the women of Scyros admired and chose the other gifts, but Achilles revealed his true identity because he picked up the sword. Thus, Achilles went to Troy.

Ajax's blood into hyacinth flower with 'AI' on the petals: After Achilles was killed in the 10<sup>th</sup> and final year of the Trojan War, there was a debate whether his divine armor should be given to Odysseus or Ajax. The Greek army voted to give the armor to Odysseus. Ajax was so enraged that he went crazy and attempted to slaughter all the Greek army. Instead, Minerva caused him to slaughter all the cattle of the Greeks. When he returned to his right mind, Ajax was filled with shame and killed himself. From his blood grew a hyacinth flower, which has the letters 'AI' on its petals (which are the first 2 Greek letters of Ajax's name).

Hecuba into dog: During the Trojan War, Priam & Hecuba (the king and queen of Troy) had given Polymestor, the king of nearby Thrace, a great treasure to protect their son Polydorus. After the destruction of Troy, Polymestor killed Polydorus and took the treasure. When Hecuba discovered the treachery of Polymestor, she blinded the king. The Thracians then attacked Hecuba, but she turned into a dog and ran away.

Polydorus' body into trees: After the fall of Troy, Aeneas & his Trojan refugees began a search for a new homeland. When they stopped in Thrace, Aeneas began to cut branches from some trees to set up an altar to make a sacrifice to the gods. The trees, however, began to bleed where he had cut the branches. The trees were located on a mound in which Polydorus' body had been hidden. Polydorus then tells Aeneas about his death, and Aeneas gave him a proper burial.

Ashes of Memnon into fighting birds called the 'Memnonides': Memnon was the king of Ethiopia and son of Aurora, the goddess of the Dawn. He fought with the Trojans against the Greeks. After his death at the hands of Achilles, Memnon was burned on a funeral pyre, and his ashes were transformed into birds which returned each year to fight one another.

Tears of the goddess Aurora (Gr. Eos) into morning dew: The dew in the morning is said to come from the tears of Aurora, still weeping over the death of her son Memnon.

the daughters of Anius into doves: Anius, the priest of Apollo on the island Delos, had 1 son and 4 daughters. His son received the power of prophecy from Apollo, his daughters received from Bacchus the power to transform anything into food & wine. Agamemnon heard about the powers of Anius' daughters. He demanded the daughters for his own use, and so Bacchus transformed them into doves.

the daughters of Orion into twin stars: There was a devastating plague in Thebes. To end the plague, the daughters of Orion offered themselves as human sacrifices. After their death, these 2 daughters were changed into twin stars called the 'Coronae.'

Acis into water god: The Nereid Galatea loved the youth Acis, but the Cyclops Polyphemus loved Galatea. When Polyphemus saw them together, in a jealous rage the Cyclops broke off a chunk of mountain and crushed Acis. Up from the his body grew a reed with water, and Acis was transformed into a water god.

Glaucus into sea god: Glaucus, a fisherman, was changed into a sea god with a fish tail when he tasted some magical grass on the shore.

### **Medusa Exam, ‘Transformations’: Ovid Metamorphoses Book 14**

Scylla into monster: Scylla was a beautiful young woman who was loved by the sea god Glaucus. Because Scylla ran from him, Glaucus went to Circe, the witch, to get a potion to make Scylla fall in love with him. Circe, however, immediately fell in love with Glaucus, but he scorned her advances. To punish Glaucus, Circe transformed Scylla into a monster. She lived in a cave opposite the whirlpool Charybdis on the strait between Sicily and Italy. She had dog’s heads growing from her waist and would eat sailors as they passed by. According to Ovid, she was later transformed into a rock.

Sibyl of Cumae into a cicada/grasshopper: The Sibyl of Cumae was the priestess of Apollo. The god gave her as much life as the grains of sand in a pile, but refused to give her eternal youth because she rejected his advances. She lived 1000 years, and at the end she had shriveled up into a cicada/grasshopper and was kept in a cage. [Cf. the Tithonus myth.]

Picus into a woodpecker: Picus loved the woman Canens, but the witch Circe loved Picus. When Picus rejected her advances, Circe changed him into a woodpecker and his men into horrible beasts. Canens (‘the singer’) grieved for 7 days, and then vanished into thin air on the banks of the Tiber.

Acmon & other followers of Diomedes into swans: During the Trojan War, Diomedes - with the help of Minerva - had wounded the goddess Venus. For this reason, Venus harassed Diomedes after the fall of Troy. When some of his followers, led by Acmon, complained about Venus and scorned her power, the goddess transformed this impious group into swans.

Aeneas' ships into water nymphs: After the fall of Troy, Aeneas built a fleet from trees of Mt. Ida, which were sacred to the goddess Cybele. Aeneas wandered for 8 years and finally made it to Italy. When Turnus, his enemy in Italy, attempted to set fire to Aeneas' fleet, Cybele transformed the ships into water nymphs.

Alcinous' ship into stone: After Odysseus had wandered for 10 years after the Trojan War, he finally came to the mythical island Scheria, home of the Phaeacians and King Alcinous. The Phaeacians were famous for their skills in sailing. After a brief stay, Odysseus was returned to his home Ithaca by a ship of the Phaeacians. Poseidon – who had harassed Odysseus because he had blinded his son, the Cyclops Polyphemus – was angry at the Phaeacians for delivering Odysseus safely home, so he turned the ship into stone as it was returning to Scheria.

Aeneas into god: Upon his death, Venus requested deification for her son Aeneas. He was cleansed in the river Numicus near Lavinium (the city which he had founded in honor of his wife Lavinia) and then he was deified with the name Indiges, 'the native-born.'

Vertumnus into various people: The god Vertumnus was in love with Pomona, the goddess of fruit & gardens. Vertumnus (from the Latin verb *vertere*, ‘turn, change’) had the ability to change his shape. In a variety of different forms - a reaper, a plowman, a fruit picker, a fisherman - he visited Pomona and urged her to marry Vertumnus. But none of Vertumnus’ disguises convinced Pomona. Finally, Vertumnus appeared to Pomona in his divine form, and she was so impressed by his beauty that she immediately fell in love with him.

Anaxarete into stone: Iphis was a young man who fell in love with the cold, heartless Anaxarete. When he was mocked and flatly rejected by her, Iphis hung himself out of sadness. When Iphis’ funeral procession passed by her house, Anaxarete watched without emotion and was turned into unfeeling stone.

Romulus into god Quirinus: When Romulus died, his father Mars changed him into the god Quirinus. In addition, his Sabine wife Hersilia was changed into the goddess Hora.

### **Medusa Exam, ‘Transformations’: Ovid’s Metamorphoses, Book 15**

Pythagoras: He was a philosopher who believed in reincarnation. Pythagoras claimed that he himself had participated in the Trojan War in an earlier life. He claimed that he had been the Trojan warrior Euphorbus, who had been killed by Menelaus.

Transformation of Egeria - Egeria, a nymph, mourned out of affection and devotion for her husband Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome. Egeria eventually melted away in her tears of mourning for Numa; Diana then turned Egeria's body and limbs into an eternal cool spring.

Clod of earth into Tages the Etruscan prophet: One day, a farmer saw a clod of earth come to life and take the shape of a man called Tages. Tages instructed the Etruscan people in the art of divination, particularly through the inspection of the entrails of sacrificial beasts (called haruspices).

Romulus' spear changed into a tree- The spear of Romulus was firmly stuck in the hillside of the Palatine when it sprouted branches and formed roots which held it firmly on the hill.

Julius Caesar- Venus deifies Julius Caesar by taking his soul from his body so that he shines as a star.

## **Medusa Exam, ‘Transformations’ - Others**

Zeus into swan with Leda: children are Helen & Castor/Polydeuces – To have Leda, Zeus changed himself into a swan and seduced her. Leda had 4 children, 2 by her mortal husband Tyndareus and 2 by Zeus. Helen was from Zeus, Clytemnestra was from Tyndareus; for Zeus’ son, some versions have Castor, some have Polydeuces, some have both (thus their nickname, the Dioscuri or ‘sons of Zeus’).

Zeus into cuckoo with Hera – During a rainstorm, Zeus changed himself into a cuckoo and sought refuge with Hera. When the goddess slipped the bird beneath her garments to warm the creature, Zeus reverted back to his true form and promised to make Hera his wife.

Zeus into Amphitryon with Alcmena: child was Herakles – To seduce Alcmena, Zeus disguised himself as her husband Amphitryon and doubled the length of the night for their affair.

Poseidon into horse with Demeter – Poseidon desired Demeter, but she changed into a mare and fled. Likewise, Poseidon changed into a horse and caught her.

Poseidon into ram with Theophane – Poseidon, as a ram, abducted Theophane, whom he transformed into a sheep. Later, she gave birth to the famous ram with the ‘Golden Fleece.’

Cupid into Ascanius with Dido – To guarantee a warm welcome for her son Aeneas at Carthage, Venus convinces her son Cupid to replace Ascanius and fill Queen Dido with love for Aeneas. When Aeneas later departs for Italy, Dido commits suicide.

Proteus into various things (fire, boar, tree, etc) with Menelaus – To find out the best way home from the Trojan War, Menelaus needed Proteus’ prophetic powers. When the sea god slept with his pack of seals, Menelaus and his men held him down as he changed into various shapes to scare them off. When they refused to release him, Proteus agreed to help Menelaus return home to Sparta.

Hera into old woman with Jason – To test the piety of Jason, Hera disguised herself as an old woman and asked Jason to carry her across a river. Jason did so and earned the support of Hera. During the crossing, Jason lost one of his sandals and thus fulfilled a prophecy that he would someday kill Pelias, the evil king who had unjustly taken the kingship of Iolcus from Jason’s father Aeson.

Aphrodite into young maiden with Anchises: child is Aeneas – To give her ‘a taste of her own medicine,’ Zeus caused Aphrodite to fall in love with the mortal Anchises. Disguised as a young maiden, she seduced him and later gave birth to Aeneas.

Venus into huntress with Aeneas near Carthage – When Aeneas & his Trojan refugees were driven to Carthage by a storm, Venus disguises herself as a huntress to meet her son and to tell him about Carthage and Queen Dido.

Athena into Mentor with Telemachus – After his father Odysseus had been gone for almost 20 years (10 for the Trojan War and 10 more for the journey home), Telemachus finally came of age. Disguised as Mentor (an old friend of Odysseus), Athena visited Telemachus in his home on Ithaca and advised him to travel to Nestor & Menelaus to find out if they had any news about Odysseus.



Athena into Deiphobus with Hector – At the climax of the Iliad, Achilles chased Hector around the city Troy 3 times. Athena, a strong supporter of the Greeks, changed herself into Deiphobus, a brother of Hector. In this disguise, the goddess convinced Hector to stop & to fight. In the ensuing combat, ‘man-killing’ Hector was killed by ‘swift-footed’ Achilles.

Artemis into deer to trick the giants Otus & Ephialtes – The twin giants, also called the Aloedae, attacked Mt. Olympus. The thunderbolts of Zeus merely bounced off them. As part of a trick, Artemis transformed herself into a deer and ran between the brothers. Since they were avid hunters, Otus & Ephialtes tried to kill the deer with their spears, but each one wounded the other with his spear. In Tartarus, the twin giants were tied back-to-back to a pillar by snakes.

Metis into a fly – Zeus had an affair with Metis. But there was a prophecy that Metis, the goddess of wisdom, would give birth to a son greater than the father. Zeus convinced Metis to play a shape-changing game, and when she was in the form of a fly, Zeus swallowed her. Later, Zeus gave birth to Athena from his head.

Olympian gods into animals in their flight from Typhon – Gaea gave birth to the monster Typhon to overthrow Zeus and to free her children from Tartarus. Terrified by the monster, the Olympian gods all changed into various animals and fled to Egypt. Zeus changed into a ram and was worshipped in Africa as Ammon, the ram god. Eventually, Zeus imprisoned Typhon under Mt. Aetna in Sicily.

Mt. Aetna from dormant mountain to active volcano with Typhon – Using a barrage of thunderbolts, Zeus finally defeated the monster Typhon. He then imprisoned Typhon under Mt. Aetna on Sicily. It is said that whenever Typhon blew his fiery breath, Mt. Aetna would explode into an active volcano.

Odysseus into beggar to sneak into his own home on Ithaca: After 10 years of the Trojan War and then 10 years of wandering, Odysseus arrived in his homeland Ithaca, but over 100 suitors filled his house and were a threat to his life. With the help of the goddess Athena, Odysseus therefore transformed himself into a lowly beggar and entered his house in this disguise. Once inside his own home, Odysseus plotted against the suitors and eventually killed all of them.

Orion, with Artemis & Apollo – The giant Orion, son of Poseidon, was an excellent hunter and so tall he could walk across the sea without getting his head wet. Because of his skill in hunting, he was associated with the goddess Artemis. Orion was changed into the constellation which bears his name in the sky. There are various stories of his death and transformation into a constellation, but all concern Artemis in some way. In one version, Apollo became jealous of the close friendship between Orion and Artemis, and tricked his sister into shooting him. Other versions of his death explained the movement of the constellation Orion: because a scorpion killed him, the constellation Orion always flees the Scorpion and never shares the sky with it; or, when Orion fell in love with and pursued the Pleiades (the daughters of Atlas), all of them were changed into constellations, and this explains why the constellation Orion seems to chase the Pleiades across the sky.

Pleiades – The 7 Pleiades were the daughters of the Titan Atlas and Pleione. Pleiades means ‘daughters of Pleione.’ In addition, their name is associated with the Greek word for ‘sailing,’ because the constellation Pleiades was visible in the summer, and it was often used for navigation in the open sea. When the giant Orion fell in love with and pursued the Pleiades, all of them were changed into constellations, and this explains why the constellation Orion seems to chase the Pleiades across the sky.

Ariadne – She was the daughter of King Minos of Crete. When Theseus came from Athens to Crete to kill the Minotaur, Ariadne fell in love with him and helped the hero to kill the monster. Ariadne then fled with Theseus, but he abandoned her on the island Naxos. Soon afterwards, the god Dionysus found her on the island and made her his wife. He transformed her wedding garland into the constellation ‘Corona,’ the Crown.

Odysseus' men into pigs by the witch Circe – When Odysseus' ship landed on her island, the witch Circe changed some of his crew into pigs. Through the help of Hermes and the magic plant 'moly,' Odysseus resisted the magic of Circe and forced her to change his crew from pigs back into men.

pirates into dolphins by Dionysus – Some pirates kidnapped Dionysus, drunk on wine, so they could receive a ransom. During their voyage, the pirates refused to believe their prisoner was god. The ship was then covered with vines, and wild animals magically appeared all over the ship. The pirates were terrified, jumped overboard, and were changed into dolphins.