



PAN, the great god of nature, was not a handsome god. He had goat's legs, pointed ears, a pair of small horns, and he was covered all over with dark, shaggy hair. He was so ugly that his mother, a nymph, ran away screaming when she first saw him. But his father, Hermes, was delighted with the strange looks of his son. He carried him up to Olympus to amuse the other gods and they all laughed and took him to their hearts. They called him Pan and sent him back to the dark woods and stony hills of Greece as the great god of nature. He was to be the protector of hunters, shepherds, and curly-fleeced sheep.

Pan was a lonely and moody god. When he was sad, he went off by himself and hid in a cool cave. If a wanderer happened to come upon him and disturb him in his retreat, he would let out a scream so bone-chilling that whoever heard it took to his heels and fled in a fear that they called panic.

But when Pan was in a good mood, and that was mostly on moonlit nights, he cavorted through glades and forests, and up steep mountain slopes playing on his shepherd's pipe, and nymphs and satyrs followed dancing behind him. Sweet and unearthly were the tunes that floated over the hills.

The satyrs much resembled their master, Pan, but they were mischievous and good for nothing except for chasing nymphs. Old satyrs, or

sileni, were fat and too lazy to walk. They rode about on asses, but they often fell off, since they were fond of drinking wine.

The lightfooted nymphs always looked young, though some of them were very old in years. Their life span was so long that they were almost immortal: they lived ten thousand times longer than man. There were water nymphs and nymphs of mountains and glens. There were nymphs who lived in trees and nymphs who lived in springs.

When a tree grew old and rotted, the nymph who lived in it moved to another tree of the same kind. A wood chopper, about to fell a healthy tree, must remember first to ask permission of the tree nymph. If he did not, she might send out a swarm of bees to sting him, or she might turn the ax in his hands so he would cut his own leg instead of the tree trunk.

A thirsty hunter must never drink from a spring without asking the water nymph's permission. If he ignored the nymph, she might send a venomous water snake to bite him, or she might poison the water and make him sick.

River-gods, too, had to be asked before anyone took water from their rivers. They were usually helpful and friendly to men and willingly shared their water, but woe to the one who tried to carry off their water-nymph daughters. They would rush out of their river beds and charge him in full river-god rage. They were dangerous opponents, for they grew oxhorns on their heads and could change their shapes at will. Zeus himself feared their rage, and Pan and the satyrs kept well out of their way, though Pan liked all nymphs and fell in love with many of them.



ECHO was one of the nymphs with whom Pan fell in love. She was a gay nymph who chattered and prattled all day long and never kept quiet long enough for Pan to win her with music and poetry.

One day Hera came down from Olympus to look for Zeus. She suspected that he was playing with the nymphs, but Echo detained her so long with idle chatter that Zeus, who really was there, was able to sneak away. Hera, in a rage, punished Echo by taking from her the gift of forming her own words. From then on poor Echo could only repeat the words of others.

Now at last Pan thought he could win her by his words. But before he had a chance, she had lost her heart to another. He was Narcissus, and he was so handsome that every girl and every nymph he met fell in love with him. Unfortunately, he liked nobody but himself.

Echo trailed silently behind Narcissus as he hunted in the woods, hoping to hear an endearing word from him that she could repeat. But he never so much as noticed her. At last toward nightfall, they came to a quiet pool, and as Narcissus was thirsty, he bent down to drink. Suddenly, he stopped and stared, for in the mirroring surface of the water he saw the handsomest face he had ever seen. He smiled and the handsome face smiled back at him. Joyfully he nodded and so did the stranger in the water.

"I love you," said Narcissus to the handsome face.

"I love you," repeated Echo eagerly. She stood behind him, happy to be able to speak to him at last.

But Narcissus neither saw nor heard her; he was spellbound by the handsome stranger in the water. He did not know that it was his own image that he had fallen in love with and he sat smiling at himself, forgetting to eat, forgetting to drink, until he wasted away and died. Hermes came and led him down to the realm of the dead, but where he had been sitting the lovely Narcissus flower sprang up. Echo stood beside the flower and grieved and pined until she too faded away.

Nothing was left of Echo but her voice, which to this day can be heard senselessly repeating the words of others.

Pan grieved for a while, but then another pretty nymph crossed his path and he forgot all about Echo. Her name was Syrinx.





SYRINX ran away from Pan; she thought he was so ugly. Pan chased after her, and, to escape from him, she changed herself into a reed. She stood among hundreds of other reeds on the riverbank, and Pan couldn't find her. As he walked through the reed patch, sighing and looking for her in vain, the wind blew through the reeds. They swayed and bent and made a plaintive whistling sound. Pan listened, enchanted. "Thus you and I shall always sing together," he said.

He cut ten reeds into unequal lengths, tied them together, and made the first panpipe. He called the new instrument his syrinx, for every time he played on it he thought he heard the melodious voice of his beloved nymph. Again Pan was lonesome and he retreated to his cool cave, deep in the woods, and scared away all passers-by with his unearthly screams.

Splendid Apollo himself fared no better than Pan when he fell in love with a nymph called Daphne. Daphne had a cold heart, she had vowed never to marry, and when Apollo wooed her, she would not listen to the sound of his golden lyre and ran away. As she fled, she was lovelier still, with her golden hair streaming behind her, and Apollo could not bear to lose her. He set off in pursuit, beseeching her to stop. Daphne ran to-



ward the bank of a river that belonged to her father, the river-god Ladon, calling to him to save her from her pursuer. Ladon had no time to rise out of his river bed and come to his daughter's rescue, but the moment Daphne's toes touched the sand of the riverbank, he changed them into roots. Apollo, who was close at her heels, caught up with her, but the instant he threw his arms about her, her arms changed into branches, her lovely head into the crown of a tree, and she became a laurel. Still, inside the hard bark, Apollo could hear the beating of Daphne's frightened heart.

Apollo carefully broke off some twigs and made a wreath of the shining leaves.

"Fair nymph," he said, "you would not be my bride, but at least consent to be my tree and your leaves shall crown my brow."

Ever after, the greatest honor an artist or a hero could be given was to be crowned with a wreath from Apollo's sacred tree, the laurel.

Daphne would rather be an unmoving tree than the bride of the great god Apollo, but all the other nymphs loved to sit at his feet and listen to his enchanting music, and were very honored when he or any of the other great Olympian gods chose one of them as a bride.