

If you don't know me, my name is Percy Jackson. I'm a modern-day demigod—a half-god, half-mortal son of Poseidon—but I'm not going to say much about myself. My story has already been written down in some books that are total fiction (wink, wink) and I am just a character from the story (*cough—yeah, right—cough*).

Just go easy on me while I'm telling you about the gods, all right? There's like forty bajillion different versions of the myths, so don't be all *Well, I heard it a different way, so you're WRONG!*

I'm going to tell you the versions that make the most sense to me. I promise I didn't make any of this up. I got all these stories straight from the Ancient Greek and Roman dudes who wrote them down in the

first place. Believe me, I couldn't make up stuff this weird.

So here we go. First I'll tell you how the world got made. Then I'll run down a list of gods and give you my two cents about each of them. I just hope I don't make them so mad they incinerate me before I—

*AGGHHHHHHHHH!*

Just kidding. Still here.

Anyway, I'll start with the Greek story of creation, which by the way, is seriously *messed up*. Wear your safety glasses and your raincoat. There will be blood.

# THE BEGINNING AND STUFF



**I**N THE BEGINNING, I wasn't there. I don't think the Ancient Greeks were, either. Nobody had a pen and paper to take notes, so I can't vouch for what follows, but I can

tell you it's what the Greeks *thought* happened.

At first, there was pretty much nothing. A lot of nothing.

The first god, if you can call it that, was Chaos—a gloomy, soupy mist with all the matter in the cosmos just drifting around. Here's a fact for you: *Chaos* literally means the *Gap*, and we're not talking about the clothing store.

Eventually Chaos got less chaotic. Maybe it got bored with being all gloomy and misty. Some of its matter collected and solidified into the earth, which unfortunately developed a living personality. She called herself Gaea, the Earth Mother.

Now Gaea *was* the actual earth—the rocks, the hills, the valleys, the whole

enchilada. But she could also take on humanlike form. She liked to walk across the earth—which was basically walking across herself—in the shape of a matronly woman with a flowing green dress, curly black hair, and a serene smile on her face. The smile hid a nasty disposition. You'll see that soon enough.

After a long time alone, Gaea looked up into the misty nothing above the earth and said to herself: “You know what would be good? A sky. I could really go for a sky. And it would be nice if he was also a handsome man I could fall in love with, because I’m kind of lonely down here with just these rocks.”

Either Chaos heard her and cooperated, or Gaea simply willed it to happen. Above

the earth, the sky formed—a protective dome that was blue in the daytime and black at night. The sky named himself Ouranos—and, yeah, that's another spelling for Uranus. There's pretty much no way you can pronounce that name without people snickering. It just sounds *wrong*. Why he didn't choose a better name for himself—like Deathbringer or José—I don't know, but it might explain why Ouranos was so cranky all the time.

Like Gaea, Ouranos could take human shape and visit the earth—which was good, because the sky is way up there and long-distance relationships never work out.

In physical form, he looked like a tall, buff guy with longish dark hair. He wore only a loincloth, and his skin changed color—sometimes blue with cloudy patterns

across his muscles, sometimes dark with glimmering stars. Hey, Gaea dreamed him up to look like that. Don't blame me. Sometimes you'll see pictures of him holding a zodiac wheel, representing all the constellations that pass through the sky over and over for eternity.

Anyway, Ouranos and Gaea got married.

Happily ever after?

Not exactly.

Part of the problem was that Chaos got a little creation-happy. It thought to its misty, gloomy self: Hey, Earth and Sky. That was fun! I wonder what else I can make.

Soon it created all sorts of other problems—and by that I mean gods. Water collected out of the mist of Chaos, pooled in the deepest parts of the earth, and formed the

first seas, which naturally developed a consciousness—the god Pontus.

Then Chaos really went nuts and thought: I know! How about a dome like the sky, but at the *bottom* of the earth! That would be awesome!

So another dome came into being beneath the earth, but it was dark and murky and generally not very nice, since it was always hidden from the light of the sky. This was Tartarus, the Pit of Evil; and as you can guess from the name, when he developed a godly personality, he didn't win any popularity contests.

The problem was, both Pontus and Tartarus liked Gaea, which put some pressure on her relationship with Ouranos.

A bunch of other primordial gods popped up, but if I tried to name them all we'd be here for weeks. Chaos and Tartarus had a kid together (don't ask how; I don't know) called Nyx, who was the embodiment of night. Then Nyx, somehow all by herself, had a daughter named Hemera, who was Day. Those two never got along because they were as different as...well, you know.

According to some stories, Chaos also created Eros, the god of procreation...in other words, mommy gods and daddy gods having lots of little baby gods. Other stories claim Eros was the son of Aphrodite. We'll get to her later. I don't know which version is true, but I *do* know Gaea and Ouranos started having kids—with *very* mixed results.

First, they had a batch of twelve—six girls and six boys called the Titans. These kids looked human, but they were much taller and more powerful. You'd figure twelve kids would be enough for anybody, right? I mean, with a family that big, you've basically got your own reality TV show.

Plus, once the Titans were born, things started to go sour with Ouranos and Gaea's marriage. Ouranos spent a lot more time hanging out in the sky. He didn't visit. He didn't help with the kids. Gaea got resentful. The two of them started fighting. As the kids grew older, Ouranos would yell at them and basically act like a horrible dad.

A few times, Gaea and Ouranos tried to patch things up. Gaea decided maybe if they