



**ORION AND
ARTEMIS**

THERE CAN ONLY



BE ONE

SUMMARY

- There are a couple different stories about how Orion is born.
 - Tell me which one you like best.
- One: He was born of Euryale, Medusa's gorgon sister, and Poseidon, god of the sea.
- Two: He's born after some guy pees on an ox hide and bury it in the dirt. A little while later, baby Orion pushes himself up out of the soil.
- Okay, vote now. One or two?
 - Yeah, I agree.
- However he was born, Orion becomes one of the best hunters the world has ever seen.

SUMMARY

- Orion takes a shine to Merope.
- Orion follows Merope wherever she goes.
- Orion's dogs mistake the nymphs for birds, and Orion tried to capture Merope.
- The nymphs are saved by Artemis and Zeus. They make up the cluster of stars called the Pleiades.
- Orion becomes best buds with Artemis, goddess of the hunt.
- We bet you can guess why they get along so well.
- Yup, they both love hunting, and they do it all day long.
- Apollo, Artemis's twin brother, becomes jealous of their relationship.
- Orion battles a giant scorpion, sent by Apollo.

SUMMARY

- Orion swims away from the scorpion.
- While Orion is swimming, Apollo tells Artemis that Candaeon attacked a forest priestess.
- Apollo points to the water and tells Artemis that the tiny speck is Candaeon .
- Artemis nails the speck with an arrow, and Orion dies
- Artemis is way sad to see Orion go.
- To honor him, Orion is placed in the stars as a constellation.
- The scorpion is also placed beside him as the constellation, Scorpio.
- Why the gods thought he'd want to hang out with the thing tried to kill him for all eternity is anybody's guess.

VERSION 2

- Orion is an awesome hunter (cool). When he insults (some versions says he assaults) Merope, the daughter of King Oenopion, the king blinds him. With the help of Hephaestus and his servant Cadalion, blind Orion eventually makes it to Helios, the sun god, who heals his blindness. When Orion comes to take revenge on Oenopion, the king escapes by hiding underground.
- Later on, Orion becomes best buds with Artemis, the goddess of the hunt, and they do a lot of... you guessed it... hunting. Orion manages to seriously tick off Gaia, the Earth, when he brags that he'll kill every wild animal there is. So, Gaia sends a giant scorpion to sting Orion to death. Apollo convinces his sister that the black object in the water is Candaon who tried to secede one of her priestesses. Artemis shoots an arrow at the spot and kills Orion. He dies. Then he becomes a big, shiny constellation.

THEME: PRIDE

- In the most popular version of his story, Orion is brought down by a little thing the Greeks liked to call hubris (a.k.a. pride). When the big guy brags that he's going to hunt down and slaughter every wild animal on earth, Gaea gets ticked off and sends a huge scorpion to kill him. (What a way to go.) The theme of pride (and its destructiveness) is super popular throughout Greek literature. Seriously, it pops up in a ton of stories. We wonder why it was such a big deal to them. What do you think?

Questions About Pride

- What does Orion have to be so proud about?
- When is pride a good thing? Explain your answer.
- When is pride destructive? Explain.

ORION

- Dude, what is wrong with Orion? Seriously, he's like that kid in school who just can't stay out of trouble. You know the kind we're talking about, right? The teacher gives them chance after chance, but they just can't seem to help themselves. They always do something to land themselves in the principal's office.
- Orion was totally like one of these troubled kids... no doubt. Even though he's got tons of potential, he just can't seem to help bringing himself down. He commits his first major crime when he gets drunk and insults Merope. Her father, King Oenopion, blinds Orion as punishment, but he still doesn't seem to learn his lesson. After his sight is restored by Helios, Orion comes back to take revenge on the King. (Seriously, Orion? You think the King is the one who needs punishment here?)
- Later on, the big guy seems to have turned over a new leaf. He's hanging out with a better crowd: Artemis, whom he hunts with all the time. Next thing you know, though, Orion gets all big headed, and brags that he's going to kill every wild animal on earth. Sure, Gaia and Apollo might have been pretty harsh when they send a scorpion to kill him, but there's no doubt that once again Orion has brought about his own downfall.

HELIOS

- Apollo, the god of the sun, isn't in this story for very long, but he does have a big effect on it, when he gives Orion back his sight. It's interesting that the light of the sun gives somebody their sight back in this myth.
- Didn't the Greeks ever figure out that if you stare in the sun too long, it seriously messes up your eyes? Hmm, maybe we're being too literal here. Could it be meant more as a metaphor?
- You know like, the sun's light takes the darkness away from Orion's eyes. What do you think?

ARTEMIS

- In a lot of ways, it makes total sense that Artemis and Orion became such good buddies.
- She was the goddess of the hunt, and he was an awesome hunter.
- Both of them like nothing better than running around in the woods all day on the prowl for some fresh game. (Yay for friends.)

- Which came first? The constellation or the gigantic hunter? Well, it totally depends on whom you ask. Some scholars think that the ancient Greeks looked up into the sky and said, "Wow, that group of bright stars looks a whole lot like a giant holding a huge club. Let's call him Orion and make up stories about him. Yaaayyyy!"
- Other scholars think those stargazing Greeks said, "Man, that group of stars looks a whole lot like Orion, who we just so happen to have tons of stories about already. Let's name those stars after him and incorporate them into our oral tradition. Yaaayyyy!"
- There's really no way to know which way it went down.
- Unlike a lot of other famous Greek heroes, Orion doesn't have any big long definitive text that lays out his whole story. Maybe, there was one way back in the day, but if there was, somebody lost it. (Nice going, somebody!) So, these days we've got to piece together Orion's story from a bunch of different sources, most of which don't really agree with each other. You can find mentions of Orion by writers like Homer, Hesiod, and others.
- Orion is still waiting for the big Hollywood blockbuster made about his life, but he does appear in two operas by everybody's favorite modern composer, Philip Glass: *Galileo Galilei*, *Orion*. (Wow, artsy.) Oh, and the big guy also made a cameo on the Disney animated TV series about the life of Hercules. (Wow, not so artsy.)
- It's okay, Orion, you don't have to wait for Hollywood to make you a star. You already are one. Well, you're actually several stars, plus a nebula, but hey, who's counting?