



Apollon and the Sun Chariot

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Mythology

Sitting in his ghastly cell of a room, Apollon's head was spinning, steal the sun chariot? APOLLO'S sun chariot? How was he supposed to do that? When his father called him down the dark steps of the crypt, he thought he was getting yet another lecture. 'You're not evil enough', or, 'be more like your sister'.

Being the son of 'Hades, God of the underworld, and Lord of spirits' was hard, and making it even harder was his sister, correction, his 'twin' sister, 'The great Melinoe, goddess of ghosts, and sister of nightmares, sorry, BRINGER of nightmares'. Ugh, show-off.

This is how the conversation had gone:

"Apollon" Hades had started "As you well know, the Lenaea is in five days time, and, as required, I go to Olympus to watch the humans do their terrible showcases."

The best day of the year, thought Apollon, out loud he said, "So?", taking a sip of dark purple lemonade.

"I want you to take my place this year as a 'representative' for the underworld."

"What!" Apollon spluttered, trying to gulp down his lemonade, "Why do you want me to go? Olympus is lighter than the upper world, and full of fun besides, you have never wanted me to be a part of that kind of stuff! There has to be a catch" Apollon paused, "isn't there?"

"Ahh, at least you're smart enough to figure that out." mumbled his father. You know me too well Apollon, but I assure you, don't believe all the stories you here. You right, of course, I want you to steal Apollo's sun chariot."

Apollon stilled. "I'm sorry?"

"Steal. Apollos. Sun. chariot." Spelt out Hades impatiently, "I want it so that the sun will never rise on earth and it will be plunged into darkness know it's a long shot with YOU, I should really be sending your sister."

I should have seen this coming from the God of the Underworld, Apollon thought before he ran up the stairs.

That night he dreamt of the wrath the gods of Olympus would bestow upon him if he tried and failed to steal the sun chariot, he woke in the morning to the never-ending darkness of the underworld.

Three days later Apollon packed his bags and ascended the stairs. On his way, as usual, the spirits tried to claw at him in a vain attempt to drag him down into the soul pits forever. "Apollon" a voice whispered. Apollon ignored the voice and kept walking, "Apollon" the voice whispered more urgently. Sighing, he turned around and there stood Eurydice. Eurydice was a spirit and his secret friend, she had been since he could walk. In fact, she was his ONLY friend, they had no secrets between them.

"I have come to try to warn you, Apollon. Why did you ignore my pleas?"

"I have to stay focused, I have to make my father proud," Apollon took a deep breath, "I have to steal the sun chariot."

Eurydice looked down, ashamed, "I know," she said after a minutes silence.

"Oh" muttered Apollon, Of course, she knows.

"You don't have to do this Apollon" Pleaded Eurydice, "You don't know the consequences."

"I think I can guess," Apollon said bluntly before to walk away. He turned back around, "Eurydice, in case I don't come back," He paused, "You are my best friend." And he started walking, he turned around a second time and said, "Thank you." before he turned the corner.

Apollon went to climbed into Hades smoke chariot, but before he could his father grabbed his arm, "If you fail, you know what will happen." Apollon nodded stiffly and yanked his arm out of Hade's tight grip. When the chariot took flight, Apollon glanced out of the window. His father had already left but he was replaced by Persephone. His mother wore one of her most colourful gowns, his favourite, it was covered in springtime flowers and contained all the colours of the rainbow, anyway, Persephone was standing on the ground gazing up at the chariot with a sad, sorrowful look in her bright sky blue eyes. A single tear trickled down Apollon's cheek as the fog closed over and he lost sight of the person he loved most.

When he reached Olympus, he gazed around him in wonder. How can anything be so bright? And, as an afterthought, My eyes hurt. When suddenly he was on his hands and knees in shock. "Oh my gosh! I am so sorry! Let me help you up." he stood with the help "I'm so sorry" the girl he now faced said again. "It was my

one job, Bring the cupcake to the chariot” She gestured towards the cake splattered on the ground. Her shoulders slumped. Apollon burst out laughing, considering the circumstances, the girl smiled thankfully, “I’m Amara, daughter of Aphrodite” Amara said standing up straight and holding out her hand “And you are?.....” “Apollon, son of Hades, but I like to think I take after my mother” Shaking her hand “I like to think so too. I mean, my mother not yours” Amara blushed “Sorry, I was told to say as minimal words as possible, seeing as you’re Hades son but here I am blubbering like an idiot. Oops, sorry, wasn’t meant to say that, sorry.”

“It’s okay, I expected people to be like that, being Hade’s representative and all,” Apollon said stiffly.

Amara put a hand on his shoulder, “Are you okay? You can’t be like Hades, I can tell already. Because of 1. You have blue eyes and 2. You haven’t snapped at me yet! I can tell you and I are going to be friends.”

Apollon was speechless, he hadn’t been expecting anything like that, especially from the Olympians. “You’ve met my father?”

“Oh, yes. I greet the underworld chariot every year, he doesn’t talk much does he?

Now..”

“Th-thank you, Amara” He stuttered

“My pleasure. Now before we have to crowd into the Gods hall, I really have to show you your room.”

“My room?” said Apollon confused “Yes silly, where else are you going to stay?” giggled Amara

“I hadn’t thought about it.” Admitted Apollon., “That’s usually the first thing I think about when I go away, anyway, come with me.” She stated And she ran off, taking Apollon’s hand with her, through the crowd, Apollon had to sprint to keep up. They passed many wonderful things as they ran through Olympus. Golden statues of the gods, gilded fountains, but wherever he looked he could not find anything sad, dark, or lonely about this place. If father had his way we would all be plunged into darkness. He thought before they ran inside a building.

The next day he decided to carry out his task. Apollo’s sun chariot was closely guarded in the god’s hall. Apollon had stayed up all night planning a way in and out. He had studied the map that Amara had given him when she had taken him on a tour of Olympus on day two. Amara was making this task even harder than it was supposed to be. She was such a great friend and was actually interested in his point of view, his father had never shown any interest in his son what so ever.

That night while everyone was watching the humans showcases, he crept down the hall towards the

room/landing pad where the chariot was kept. The guards were the biggest problem. Apollon had observed and researched them over the last two days. They called themselves the 'Crimson Capes'. There were a dozen in total and half of them were made to guard the chariot because of its importance. Each of the Crimson Capes wore, as you could guess, crimson capes, all embroidered, in golden thread, the signal of the gods (A lone mountain with a temple outline on top, hovering atop the temple was Zeus', king of the gods, lightning bolt). Before the ceremony started, Apollon had broken into the weapons room on the far side of Olympus and stolen a flute that played a haunting tune that made everyone that heard it fall unconscious. He climbed up the door frame of the chariot room and aimed at the Crimson Capes. He shot them one by one knocking them out instantly with the tranqs. They didn't even have time to raise the alarm.

He climbed back down and walked inside. A few of the Crimson Capes were groaning but weren't going to get up anytime soon.

He had flipped a few switches, turning the chariot on, when the door opened behind him and someone gasped. "Apollon? Wh...what are you doing?" Stammered a voice. Apollon would recognize that voice anywhere, he whirled around and there stood Amara, holding her hands tightly to her chest.

"Amara, what are you doing here?" Apollon demanded.

"Looking for you. You disappeared from the hall and I wanted to know where you'd gone." She said quietly. Apollon glanced behind him. "Amara, it's not what it looks like."

"It looks like you're trying to steal the sun chariot! That can't be right though." It made Apollon sad to hear the determination and sureness in her voice.

"Ok, it is what it looks like, but I can explain..."

"Why? Was it your father? Was it me? Was it Olympus? Did..." Amara started asking hundreds of questions a minute.

"Will you allow me to tell you? I haven't got much time."

"Yes, of course."

"Ok," Apollon said sitting cross-legged on the ground, Amara sat opposite him, waiting. "I..my father called me down to his crypt, five days ago now, and told me I had to take his place at this celebration. He said I needed to steal the sun chariot to make him proud. I didn't think I would meet anyone special. I thought that it would be easy, an 'in and out' situation, that I wouldn't get caught. I didn't know that I would meet a friend, Amara. Someone I can talk to, someone like you."

Amara looked like she wasn't going to say anything for a minute, but then said, "You don't have to, you know. Your father can't touch you here, he can try but will fail under the law to take you back without your consent." "I didn't know that," said Apollon thoughtfully.

"So? Are you going to stay? Please do. I would love it if you stayed." Amara said shyly.

Apollon hesitated. "Would I be welcome? Would anyone accept me after what I was going to do? Would the other Gods?"

"It would be our little secret, no-one would ever know," She said.

"Are you sure? Do you really want a friend like me? Who tried to steal the most important item in Olympus?"

"Yes, of course. I have grown very fond of you these past days, Apollon, and I love being your friend."

"Then I will stay, of course, I will." and they leaned over and hugged each other.

Apollon did stay and never saw Hades again. Zeus granted Apollon passage to the underworld so he could visit his mother and Eurydice. He lived out his forever in Olympus and married Amara.

Apollon changed his name to Charalampos, meaning "Shining happiness."

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