

Reader's Theater — Zeus: King of the Gods

This Reader's Theater has been taken from pages twenty-two to thirty-one of *Zeus: King of the Gods*. It comprises the scene in which Zeus first reveals his existence to the world, defying his father.

Read the original scene as it is portrayed in *Zeus: King of the Gods*. Then assign roles from the cast list. Act out the scene, with each character speaking and acting his or her part. Masks for the characters have been provided.

Cast List:

- Narrator
- Metis
- Kelmis
- Polybotes
- Kronos
- Rhea
- Zeus
- Hera

Narrator: Far from Crete, in the center of the world, Lord Kronos sat atop his mountain throne in the Islands of the Blessed. With Queen Rhea at his side, he held court over the inhabitants of the earth.

Metis: So much treasure . . . and Kronos will devour it all.

Kelmis: At least that's what we hope for, right?

Polybotes: G-greetings and salutations, Lord Kronos. I am Polybotes, of the Gigantes. We offer you these wonderful beasts we caught in the south. They are favorites of ours, and we hope that they satisfy your appetite. P-please don't eat us. Thank you.

Metis: Lord and mighty Uncle, I am Metis, a daughter of Oceanus, and. . . .

Kronos: Old woman . . . it seems I should know of one such as you.

Metis: U-uncle Kronos, this is Kelmis, one o—

Kronos: It is not you who I asked. . . .

Kelmis: Lord Kronos, as she said, I am Kelmis, once a handmaiden to your Queen, but now aged and long since retired. I —

Kronos: Do you take me for a fool? Did you believe I would not recognize a child of my own line, no matter how he was disguised?

Rhea: Child?

Kelmis: We obviously underestimated you.

Metis: Zeus!

Zeus: Metis! Look out!

Kronos: I do not know how you escaped the fate of your brothers and sisters. But you join them now in the belly of Kronos! Look upon me, Gaea! Look upon me, denizens of the earth. Witness the fate of those who oppose me! I am the Lord Kronos, and my reign shall be eternal! It is only at my whim that you sti—hhk! Kkkk! Hack! W-what is . . . kkk! H-happening? Koff!

Narrator: Gaea's herb worked. The youngest son of Kronos rocketed across the sky. To his surprise, he held in his arms the limp form of the youngest daughter of Kronos. Grown to adulthood in Kronos' belly, she was the most beautiful creature he had ever seen. Her name was Hera.

Hera: Mmm . . . oh. Hello.

Zeus: H-hello. My name is Zeus.

Hera: I've slept for so long. . . . Zeus . . . I had a dream about you. . . .

Narrator: One by one, reversing the order in which they had been swallowed, Kronos disgorged the rest of his children. Tempestuous Poseidon landed in the sea. Fair-haired Demeter, much given to mystery, awoke in a distant field of corn. Gloomy Hades, eldest son of Kronos, crawled from the crater his landing had made. And poor Hestia, the firstborn child, the last released, had so long lain in the stomach of Kronos, she was almost completely digested. With nearly no form of her own, she flickered, like a flame, from the still mouth of her father.

Kronos: Do not think what you have done . . . will go unpunished. Already my brothers come to my aid. Already, my strength returns. Prophecy be damned. We will . . . I will . . . not be beaten by brats like you. . . . In time, we will destroy you.

Zeus: You have had your time in the sun, Father.

Rhea: Zeus?

Zeus: We will take what we deserve. What we have been denied for so long. Any who stand with Kronos stand against us. Goodbye.