

MEDUSA

A
NARRATIVE
FOR
A
VIDEO SCRIPT
BY

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PREFACE

"When I was a very little girl my favourite cheese was Gorgonzola because it was bonded in name to my mother.
Early in the morning I would go to my mother in her bed, for a cuddle. Her hair was black and straggled down her shoulders in limp locks. My father would tease her and call her Medusa the Gorgon.
Intimate moments.
Medusa. Gorgonzola.
Later she would sit in front of her dressing table mirror, taking her time, sometimes dabbing Chanel No.5 behind her ears.
More intimate moments.
I would hang around and soak it all in."

THE STORY

Child's voice

"The Gorgons' names were Stheino, Euryale and Medusa, they all had been beautiful. Till one night Medusa lay with Poseidon, and Athene, enraged at their profanity in one of her own temples, changed Medusa into a glaring winged monster with huge teeth, an enormous tongue, brazen claws and snake locks, whose gaze turned men to stone. When a long time later Perseus decapitated Medusa, Poseidon's children were born from her dead body..."

Woman's voice

"Shaking her snake-like locks loose, she danced and danced. She danced slithering and naked. She poked her big tongue out and spat on the floor, not a neat well practised spit, but one which went everywhere. The spit dribbled, leaving trails down her wrinkled mother's belly.

Snails popped up out of her skin to join the end of the trails and slid around in spirals until they became a small shoal of nautiluses. She looked down, they fossilised at her glance and dropped to the floor with a clatter.

She looked at the spit on the floor and it glazed over. It was smoother than any ballroom now. She danced and danced, her feet delicately missing the hard shapes of the fossils.

In the moonlight she danced and she shook her head of curls merrily."

Child's voice

"The Gorgons were representatives of the Triple-goddess. They wore prophylactic masks to terrify strangers and keep them from their Mysteries. Their names, Stheino (meaning strong), Euryale (meaning wide roaming) and Medusa (meaning cunning one) are also titles of the Moon-goddess. Poseidon's fathering of Pegasus on Medusa is similar to how he begat the horse Arion on Demeter, both myths describe how Poseidon's Hellenes forced marriage on the Moon-priestesses, ignoring their horrific Gorgon masks, and taking over the rain-making ceremonies of the sacred horse cult."

Woman's Voice

"It was while she was dancing that Poseidon saw her, never mind the Gorgon's head, Medusa was a lascivious, viscous mass; he couldn't resist her.

And how was Medusa to know, as she sank into an antique sofa, that he'd fuck-and-run like the rest of her lovers? No post-coital tenderness for Medusa, they'd let her big tongue do what it will to their bodies, but would they look at it? No. It was plain ugly when not at passionate work.

Poseidon had his pleasure, stolen her wet secrets and pissed off.

And Medusa was left with a hated swelling mound of belly. The foetus kicked its goddamned hooves inside her. This was not what she wanted. She wouldn't have Poseidon's child.

If only she could gain access to it through her navel. Perhaps if she stole

some fibre-optic cable from the hospital she could look down it and calcify the Pegasus inside . . . and then have the blighted ovum removed. A priority operation, no waiting list and all over within the week. But how?

She had been so abusive to the doctor at her last clinic appointment, that her social worker had been told to accompany her on all subsequent visits. It would be too difficult to nick the cable while she was being watched. Some other way had to be found. She clenched her vaginal muscles and released them slowly – over and over again. It was hard at first, but she became obsessed and practised the whole time. 'On the bus, anywhere, no-one will know' they had said at the clinic. So she did. Her muscles became stronger and stronger.

She bought a Red Rover and went to Kew Gardens every day. She knew that if she went on long enough she could hold that bastard horse in. She wouldn't have to give birth to it at all. It would be her sweet revenge – hold in that child . . . Pegasus held in captivity forever by her pelvic floor.

Good riddance she laughed, but not too loudly, she mustn't let go. She would never let go. They would have to cut her head off before she'd give in. Peeing might be a problem, but if she just drank less she could sweat out the excess in a fine mist. The plants would prefer it anyway. The full flood when she let her bladder go in a hurry had often damaged the seedlings in the propagating trays, and there was all that trouble when one of the gardeners had caught her.

Medusa sat in the palm house. The sun poured in through the glass, it

was hot for this time of year and she started to sweat profusely. Poseidon hadn't won yet. The son would never repeat his father's violation of her vagina. It was hers. She could say no. She sat in the greenhouse scheming."

Child's voice

"Death was ensured for a man removing an aegis – the goat skin chastity tunic – without the woman's consent; hence the prophylactic Gorgon mask worn above it.

When finally Perseus decapitated Medusa, Athene fastened Medusa's head to her aegis. Although some say it was the aegis that was Medusa's skin, flayed from her by Athene."

Woman's voice

"Medusa wondered about ringing up Athene and giving her an earful about the hairdresser. After all it was her fault for catching them fucking on that sofa, she shouldn't have come home early. Athene and her precious bloody family heirlooms – all that fuss about making a mess on the new upholstery. How typical of her.

But you wouldn't have thought she'd have been so petty as to bribe the hairdresser into leaving Medusa's perm on for double time.

The bitch.

No, she wouldn't ring Athene because she might start crying, and Medusa needed to be cunning when it came to her reply."

Child's voice

"Perseus flew to the west to the lands of the Hyperboreans, where he found the Gorgons sleeping among the weathered shapes of men and beasts petrified by Medusa. He fixed his eyes on the reflection in his shield, Athene guided him as he cut off Medusa's head with one stroke of his sickle; and then to his surprise, a horse with wings – Pegasus, and a warrior – Chrysaor, leapt fully grown from her body. He had taken the Gorgon's head from the wallet, and now placed it face down on a pillow of seaweed (which instantly turned to coral), while he washed his hands of blood."

Woman's voice

"Medusa held the hate in her womb for so long that it upset her far more than Poseidon or Athene; and as for Pegasus, he was in a blissful foetal state without anxieties caused by birth, so he could kick his mother viciously and never feel remorse, guilt or even get a sharp slap across the fetlocks for being cheeky.

Poor Medusa was not winning.

Eventually Perseus broke into her flat and mindlessly hacked off her head while looking for her Giro – the only item of post that morning and it was still sitting on the door-mat. Perseus didn't need the money for himself, he only did it to impress his friends.

So that was how Pegasus got born and also his sibling Chrysaor, who I didn't mention before on account of the fact that she didn't kick in utero.

The only thing that can be said in Perseus' defence was that, like most men, he couldn't honestly look his victim in the eyes while he committed his dastardly deed.

He stuffed Medusa's head into his satchel and neatly wrapped the bread and cheese he found on her dressing table, and put that in his pocket. He also took a bottle of perfume because her head stank.

Medusa had been sweating from clenching her vaginal muscles and sitting in the sunny green house at Kew. The sweat from her brow smelt with the strength of an armpit of a Greenham woman skilfully cutting an acre of fence wire.

Like most women, Medusa had enjoyed her own smell. Like most gynephobics, Perseus didn't. Even the Chanel No.5 couldn't mask it.

Perseus went for a walk by the sea, eventually Medusa's stink overcame him, he ran up the Pier . . . Oh I forgot to mention, we are at Brighton now . . . and threw the incriminating contents of his satchel into the sea. He then went to the Gents and washed his hands.

Medusa felt her hair untangle and the salty cold water soothed her furrowed brow. She tenderly kissed some seaweed and nuzzled her face into the pretty pink coral that formed around her lips."

Child's voice

"Asclepius had learned to heal. But as well as healing the sick, Athene had given him two phials of the Gorgon Medusa's blood; so that with what had come from the veins of her left side, he could raise the dead, and with what had come from her right side he could instantly destroy."

POST SCRIPT

"And you, of course, the spectator, must look on this story through a mirror, because the men and wild beasts among you might inadvertently be turned to stone by *her* gaze."

