

Just in the nick of time, Pandora got a grip on herself and slammed down the lid and Hope was kept safe in the box.

Under the circumstances, considering she was framed and all, I think Pandora did the best she could for us. You can blame her for your troubles if you want to. People have been giving her a bad rap for thousands of years. But when you're down-and-out and nothing else seems to help, just remember: there's always Hope. She's still there, waiting for you when you need her . . . deep inside. ∞



The Wise Goddess: Athena

BETTY BONHAM LIES



Of all his children, the gray-eyed Athena was Zeus's favorite. She alone was allowed to carry her father's thunderbolt and his great breastplate, called the Aegis. Athena was the only Olympian who was not born of a mother, but sprang directly from the head of Zeus, fully grown and dressed in armor.

Athena was the most complex of the twelve great Olympian gods and goddesses. As the goddess of war, she could perform mighty deeds of battle; at least twice she defeated the war god Ares. Yet war gave her no pleasure. She preferred peace, and would rather settle disputes by wise judgment than by fighting. In this, she was most unlike the wild Ares, who loved battle for its own sake, and was never happier than when he was slaughtering enemies or destroying cities. It was probably Athena's superior intelligence and strategy in battle that made her stronger than the war god with his mindless fury and love of bloodshed. In peacetime, she put off her armor to dress in graceful flowing robes. Although many of the gods desired to marry her, Athena chose to remain single.

Like all of the other deities, Athena took a deep interest in the affairs of mortals. But unlike many of them, she tended to use her power to make life better for those humans she cared for.

This is a typical gesture: Athena competed with Poseidon, the god of the seas, over a new settlement of people, which was destined to be one of the greatest cities in the history of the world. Which of them should become the patron¹ of the city, to be named after the winner? With the other gods and

¹ patron: guardian and protector



PALLAS ATHENA 1898 Franz von Stuck

goddesses sitting as judges, Poseidon and Athena each performed a miraculous act on the heights of Acropolis, overlooking the new city.

First the sea god struck the rock with his trident,² and immediately a great fountain of water burst forth. Everyone was amazed: even though the water was salty, it was a wonder to see a spring rising from the top

2 **trident:** a three-pronged spear

of a mountain. Then Athena struck the rock with her spear. From the rocky soil grew a tall olive tree, loaded with fruit. How much more useful that was than a flow of brackish water!

The goddess was made the patroness of the great city, now named Athens in her honor. Ever since that time, the olive tree has been the special tree, and the owl, the symbol of wisdom, her special bird.

It was not only Athens that this goddess protected, but all of civilized life. Think of the innumerable gifts she brought to Earth for the benefit of mortals! She invented the flute and the trumpet for our pleasure, the earthenware bowl for our convenience, and taught all the women's arts, especially weaving. But she also worked to improve farming, inventing the plough³ and rake, the yoke to harness oxen, and the bridle for horses. She gave us the chariot and the ship; she first taught us the science of mathematics.

During the Trojan War,⁴ many of the Olympians took sides; in fact, as much as a war among the gods and goddesses as between Greeks and Trojans. Athena took the side of the Greeks, and long after they had won the war, she continued to help them. She watched Odysseus during his ten-year journey home from the war, offering him advice and assistance when he most needed it. Among her favorites, to whom she offered help and comfort during their ordeals, were Heracles, Perseus, Jason, Bellerophon, and Orestes and Iphigenia.

Athena, called Minerva by the Romans, was unique among the deities. She defines heroism in a new way: courage does not necessarily mean fighting, but standing firm for what is right. She can serve as a model for women everywhere. The divine protector of human civilization, goddess of war who preferred peace, the judge who believed in mercy—this was indeed a gracious goddess, and a wise one. ♪



3 **plough:** or plow; an instrument used to prepare ground for planting

4 **Trojan War:** a ten-year war between the Greeks and Trojans caused by the kidnapping of Helen of Troy by the Greek warrior Paris