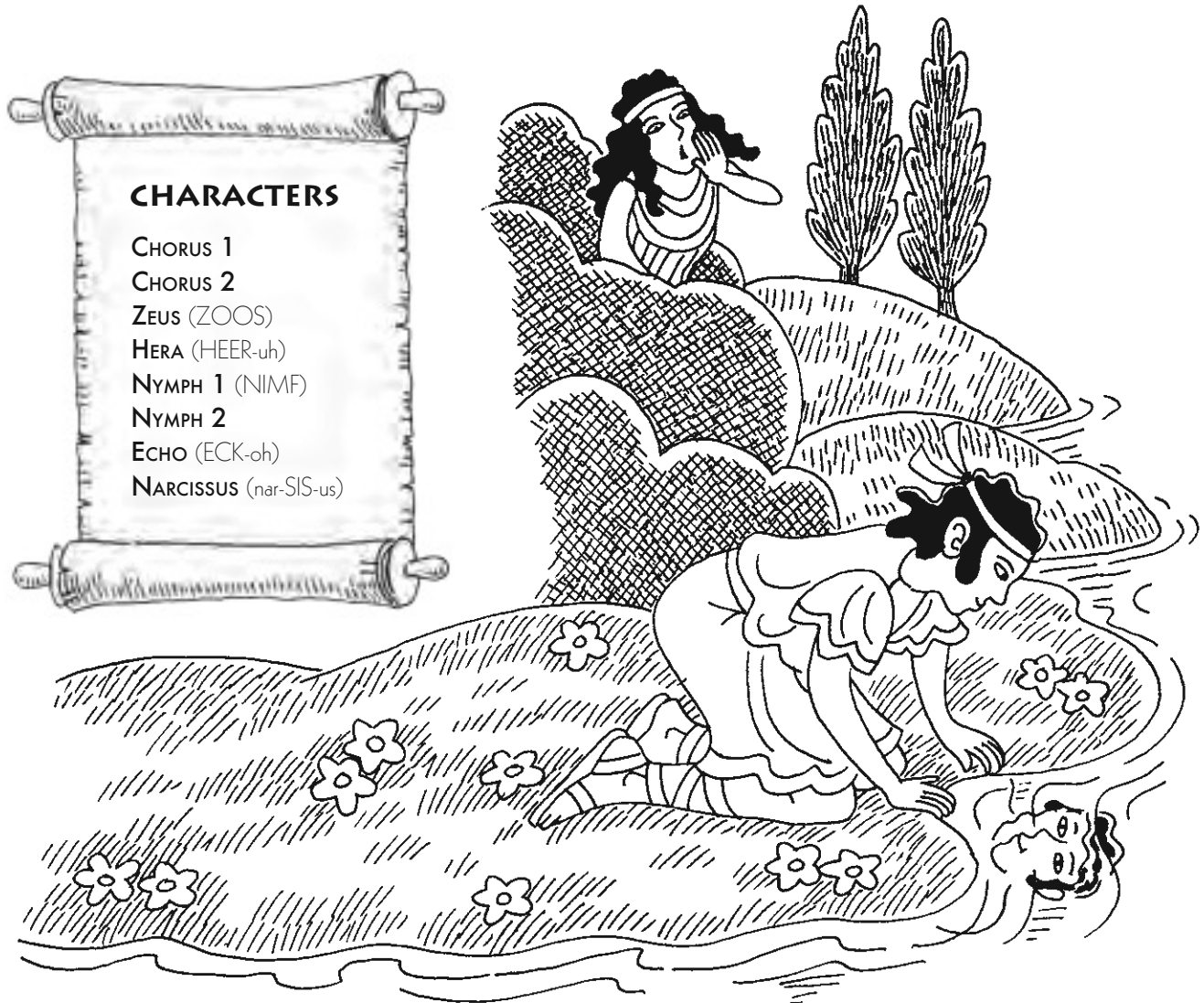


# ECHO AND NARCISSUS



**CHORUS 1:** Zeus, the mightiest of the gods, was married to Hera, the goddess of marriage.

**CHORUS 2:** Zeus, being a powerful god, was popular with the ladies. He liked to flirt. As you will see, Hera will have none of it.

**ZEUS:** Ah, what a beautiful day! I think I'll pop on down to Earth and walk in the woods a bit.

**HERA:** A walk in the woods, huh? Are you sure you're not going down there to flirt with the nymphs?

**ZEUS:** Flirt? Nymphs? Me? Don't be silly. Why would I flirt with nymphs when I have a beautiful wife like you?

**HERA:** Well, perhaps you're right. Okay, go for your walk. Be home for dinner.

**ZEUS:** Ta-ta, my dear!

**CHORUS 1:** Hera, what is this?

**CHORUS 2:** Are you really going to believe Zeus's story?

**HERA:** No way. He must be kidding. I trust him about as far as I can throw him, and that isn't far. Oh, well. It's nothing that a little careful spying won't take care of.

**CHORUS 1:** Now that sounds more like our Hera!

**CHORUS 2:** Meanwhile, on Earth, three nymphs are in a meadow.

**NYMPH 1:** What a beautiful day for picking flowers!

**NYMPH 2:** It's awesome!

**ECHO:** (*Speaking very quickly*) Well, the weather report showed a cold front moving in. Soon there will be clouds and pretty heavy winds. Maybe even some rain. I really don't mind the rain, though. It does help these beautiful flowers grow. And I love flowers. I think my favorite is the violet. However, I'm also quite fond of the evening primrose.

**NYMPH 1:** Echo, slow down.

**NYMPH 2:** You sure love to talk!

**ZEUS:** Ladies, ladies, good morning! How are you?

**NYMPH 1:** (*Giggling*) Oh, hello, Zeus.

**NYMPH 2:** (*In a flirty tone of voice*) It's so nice to see you.

**ECHO:** Look, here comes Hera.

**ZEUS:** Oh, no! My wife! Echo, be a dear. Distract Hera while my friends here and I make a quick get away. Thanks, love!

**CHORUS 1:** Echo has a job to do.

**CHORUS 2:** She must distract Hera with her gift of gab.

**CHORUS 1:** Will Hera fall for it?

**CHORUS 2:** *(To Chorus 1)* Come now. You know her better than that!

**HERA:** I was sure I heard Zeus's voice. And some high-pitched giggling. That can only mean one thing. Now where are they?

**ECHO:** Good morning, Hera.

**HERA:** Oh, hello, Echo. Have you seen my husband?

**ECHO:** Seen? Hmm . . . Well, I'm not sure I would trust my eyes right now. You see, this early spring pollen really makes my eyes water and I can't see very well with my eyes all teared-up. I never used to suffer from allergies, but now it's sneeze, sneeze, sneeze, all the time.

**HERA:** Hush, girl. I'm sure I heard him, and I think you know where he is. Now tell me!

**ECHO:** Well, you know sounds can be deceiving. Once I thought I heard a Cyclops coming toward me. I was sure of it. I panicked and hid, shaking all the while. Turned out it was just a gentle deer walking among the leaves. And there I was shaking in my sandals. By the way, those are lovely sandals you're wearing. Where did you get them?

**HERA:** Enough! I'm sure he got away by now, thanks to your chatter. From now on you will be almost silent. You will only be able to speak the last words someone else says!

**ECHO:** Else says. *(Gasps as Hera storms off)*

**CHORUS 1:** Sorry, Echo.

**CHORUS 2:** We thought you knew better.

**CHORUS 1:** Enter Narcissus.

**CHORUS 2:** A man who is his own best friend.

**NARCISSUS:** I love me.  
It's me I love.  
My beauty comes from  
The gods above.

**ECHO:** *(From her hiding place)* Gods above.

**NARCISSUS:** Who's there?

**ECHO:** Who's there?

**NARCISSUS:** Come out!

**ECHO:** Come out!

**NARCISSUS:** Oh, so you're playing a joke on me! Well, I won't have it! Show yourself this instant!

**ECHO:** *(Coming out of hiding)* This instant.

**NARCISSUS:** Silly girl. I suppose you are so awestruck by my beauty that you have lost the ability to speak properly. Surely you love me.

**ECHO:** Love me.

**NARCISSUS:** Love you? Never. No one is good enough for me. How dare you love me.

**ECHO:** *(Holding out her arms toward Narcissus)* Love me! Love me!

**NARCISSUS:** Ahhh!!!! *(Runs away)*

**ECHO:** *(Quietly)* Ahhh!

**CHORUS 1:** And so Narcissus rejects Echo . . .

**CHORUS 2:** As he has done to so many nymphs before.

**NARCISSUS:** Imagine that girl thinking I could love her. Hah! She's just like all the rest. Oh, well. Who can blame them? I am quite the dreamboat. And speaking of boat, here's a delightful pond. I think I'll have a drink.

**CHORUS 1:** Narcissus bends down to drink from the pond. Echo sees Narcissus and hides so she can watch him.

**NARCISSUS:** *(Seeing his reflection in the pond)* Well, well, what do we have here? Hello, my lovely. *(He pauses.)* Oh, you're shy. How charming. You certainly are beautiful. *(He pauses again.)* Oh, well, no need to speak. I'm happy just to lie here and gaze upon you. Hmm . . . perhaps just one small kiss as well . . .

**CHORUS 2:** Silly Narcissus bends toward the water to kiss his reflection. But as soon as he touches the water his reflection disappears.

**NARCISSUS:** Oh, no! Where did you go? Oh, I have frightened you away. Please come back! *(He waits.)* Oh, thank goodness, there you are. I'll behave and just look at you.

**CHORUS 1:** Narcissus gazes lovingly at his reflection.

**NARCISSUS:** I can't stand it. I must embrace you!

**CHORUS 2:** Narcissus grabs at the water, and his reflection disappears altogether.

**NARCISSUS:** You're gone! Oh, I can't live without you! I won't! Good-bye, cruel world!

**ECHO:** *(Noticeably upset)* Cruel world.

**CHORUS 1:** *(to Narcissus)* Narcissus? Narcissus? *(To audience)* He has died of love for himself!

**CHORUS 2:** Look! Where he lay there is now a flower. It shall be called a narcissus.

**CHORUS 1:** And what became of Echo? She fled to a cave and also perished from love for Narcissus.

**CHORUS 2:** If you are ever near that cave, you will hear her speak the last words anyone says.

**CHORUS 1:** Look, here come Zeus and the nymphs!

**NYMPH 1:** *(Looking at the narcissus flower)* Hey, cool flower!

**NYMPH 2:** It's awesome! Can I have it, Zeussy?

**ZEUS:** Of course, my pet.

**CHORUS 2:** Watch it, Zeus! Here comes Hera!

**HERA:** *(Angrily)* Ah-hah!

**ZEUS:** *(Panicked)* Hera! So . . . so . . . nice to . . . Lovely day . . . um . . . Let's get out of here! *(Runs off with the Nymphs)*

**HERA:** *(To audience, as she goes after Zeus and the Nymphs)* Gods!

**CHORUS 1:** Let's go!

**CHORUS 2:** Yeah, we don't want to miss this!

## THE END



### Glossary

**popular:** liked or enjoyed by many people

**flirt:** to play at being in love with someone

**nymphs:** in ancient Greek and Roman stories, beautiful female spirits or goddesses who lived in a forest, meadow, or stream

**cold front:** a movement of cold air which causes a change in the weather

**distract:** to weaken someone's concentration on what they are doing

**gab:** to chat or to gossip

**pollen:** tiny yellow grains produced in flowers. Some people are allergic to pollen.

**deceiving:** having the ability to trick you into believing something that is not true

**panicked:** suddenly felt great terror or fright

**awestruck:** suddenly hit with a feeling of admiration and respect, possibly mixed with a little fear

**perished:** died or was destroyed