



Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes: A No-Bullshit Guide to World Mythology

Cory O'Brien , Sarah E. Melville (Illustrator)

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All our lives, we've been fed watered-down, PC versions of the classic myths. In reality, mythology is more screwed up than a schizophrenic shaman doing hits of unidentified...wait, it all makes sense now. In *Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes*, Cory O'Brien, creator of *Myths RETOLD!*, sets the stories straight. These are rude, crude, totally sacred texts told the way they were meant to be told: loudly, and with lots of four-letter words. Skeptical? Here are just a few gems to consider:

- Zeus once stuffed an unborn fetus inside his thigh to save its life after he exploded its mother by being too good in bed.
- The entire Egyptian universe was saved because Sekhmet just got too hammered to keep murdering everyone.
- The Hindu universe is run by a married couple who only stop murdering in order to throw sweet dance parties...*on the corpses of their enemies*.
- The Norse goddess Freyja once consented to a four-dwarf gangbang in exchange for one shiny necklace.

And there's more dysfunctional goodness where that came from.

Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes: A No-Bullshit Guide to World Mythology Details

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From Reader Review Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes: A No-Bullshit Guide to World Mythology for online ebook

Marianna says

Here's the thing; This book is not for everyone. If you get offended by porn or people swearing or if you believe that myths are sacred and holy then you definitely wanna take a pass on this. But if you don't have such issues, and if mythology interests you then this is probably the book for you. O' Brien retells myths hilariously while including most mythologies and not only greek and norse as it is in most cases. He calls out on the bullshit of the myths and people's beliefs in general.

Booknut says

I know what you're thinking: "Oh boy...another book on mythology."

Because let's face it...mythology has become what vampires became after *Twilight*. Overused, poorly represented, and with added sparkles. And no one wants sparkly myths *or* vampires.

Mythology is meant to be appreciated in its raw form. Cory O'Brien points out that today's mythologists (ah...that's probably not a word, but oh well!) are far too concerned with dissecting myths, and should instead enjoy them for what they are.

'Anybody who complains that a retelling of a myth is 'inaccurate' doesn't really understand what it means to retell a myth, or probably even what a myth is.

*(...) Everybody's always studying them in school or reading watered-down version of them to little kids, and what that means is that hardly anybody has the time to actually sit down and look at how f***ing funny these things are.*

Myths are hilarious, as Cory points out. I mean...have you *looked* at some of these myths?! They're filled with outlandish ideas, disgusting feats, bad parenting, and questionable characters.

Cory starts off with Greek myths. And straight off the bat, you can tell that Cory's retellings are going to comedic to say the least!

*'Uranus suddenly decides he hates all of the kids and instead of like, giving them up for adoption or something, he just decides to try and **stuff them all back into his wife** like "THESE ARE NOT THE BABIES I ORDERED I AM RETURNING THEM TO THE BABYSTORE."*

Which I think demonstrates a really shocking lack of understanding of how babies are made.

(...)Cronus comes up with a more sensible alternative which is to stuff all his kids into his

stomach.

(...)So the moral of the story is that if you are not ready to be a father, consider all of your options before skipping directly to cannibalism.'

And the descriptions are just so perfect that they will bring tears (of laughter) to your eyes.

*'Narcissus is **gorgeous**. Like, imagine if someone could **look** exactly like bacon **tastes** and you have a pretty good picture of Narcissus (unless you're a vegetarian).'*

This book also provides an insight into the tactfulness of the gods.

*'Hades is down in the underworld and he looks up one day and sees her (Persephone) and he goes "Daaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaayum. I gotta get me some of **that**."*

So he just pops on up to the world in his black chariot of ultimate wretchedness and he says, "Hey, little girl, do you want to come to hell?" And she probably would have said no, only he kidnapped her.

Basically Hades is the ultimate ladies' man.'

But the best bit is the moral of the 'Persephone gets stuck with Hades 'cause of pomegranates' tale.

'So the moral of this story is once again for the gentlemen: Gentlemen, learn to cook one home-cooked meal, and BAM - she will be trapped inside of your house forever, or for half of the year if she has a good lawyer.'

Let me also just say that this book *really* makes you appreciate your parents. I mean...Zeus and Hera threw Hephaestus off Mount Olympus because he was ugly - and only let him come back once he showed them he could make nice jewellery. I'm pretty sure the Olympians created a whole new parenting category titled 'Uninvolved and relative abusive (unless gifts are involved)'.

Not that the Norse are any better. Between selling off their women, tying up their offspring, and stealing each other's stuff, they're a bit of a motley bunch of misfits. As for Odin...he's not getting the *Father Of The Year* award anytime soon!

Some other things about this book you may find intriguing:

- Orpheus is the ultimate emo symphony composer
- Zeus cannot seduce women when Linkin Park is playing in the background
- Fenrir inspired motivational posters with his spit
- Swedish trivial pursuit involves bloodshed
- In the event of an apocalypse, head towards the invincible forest...*not* the blood-drenched battlefield
- According to Egyptian mythology, we are all descended from spit and puke
- Isis invented Jenga

Basically, this book is just pure gold. Just be prepared for unedited, swear-word-decorated myths and lots and lots of laughs!

Steve says

The Dude Who Shouts Myths at the Internet

So lemme tell you about this guy.
He's young and American
and like all young Americans
his favourite thing is to read mythology.
(Hey, every young American I know likes reading mythology.
You just know the wrong ones.
Don't blame me for your lousy acquaintances.)

But what makes this dude different is this:
he notices that some of his mythology reading friends
are BORED.

"How can this be?" he wonders
and his friends are like,
"Man, this is just so dull
and unrealistic
and it all happened in another country
like a hundred years ago.
Let me go back to something exciting
like 'Breaking Bad'
with the drugs
and the murders
and the sex
and the ad breaks."

And this dude is just confused
because all the myths he's been reading
have the murders
and the drugs
and the sex
but all turned up to 11.
Especially the sex.
So maybe it's the lack of ad breaks
that stop people from enjoying
the murders
and the sex
and the drugs
and the sex
(Did I mention the sex?
There is so much sex in mythology.
Weird kinky stuff that leads to people giving birth
to entire COUNTRIES.
Seriously, just Zeus alone produced enough case studies

to fill a book of sexual deviances.)

So he goes on the internet
and starts bettermyths.com
where he retells old myths
(and new ones,
because people are still making up
crazy stories that no-one could ever believe
and other people
are still believing them)
but in small bite-size chunks
and in the modern vernacular
and to keep peoples' interest
he leaves in all the sex, drugs, sex and murder
so that it's clear what a complete sexdrugmurderfest
the story was in the first place.

And people come to his site
and read the myths
and ask for more
and he delivers on it
until one day he decides
"Hey. I've done a whole lot of these
and people want to be able to buy dead trees
with these written on them."
So BANG
he puts them in a book
plus some more so that people who'd read them online
were still getting something new for their cash
and I bought it
and I read it
and I loved it
like I knew I would.

So if this sounds kinda cool to you,
head over there.
Read a couple of myths.
(Maybe start with the Greek
'cos everyone knows some of those, right?)

If you don't like it,
no problem.
You've lost maybe 10 minutes of your life.
Trust me, you've wasted more time than that
this week already.
Like yesterday when you couldn't decide
which pair of socks to wear.

If you do like it,

great.
Show him some love.
Buy the book.
Maybe send him a new hat
This dude rocks a hat mightily.

And so the moral of this story is that
Breaking Bad is fine
but it's just a new myth
and the old ones are still fun
in the way only a sexdrugmurderfest can be.

Absinthe says

I greatly appreciate and agree with the parting message that O'Brien shares. The book definitely isn't for everyone, but if you appreciate O'Brien's sense of humor AND you appreciate mythology of all kinds, you will probably enjoy this book. A fairly quick and enjoyable read, 'Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes' is one of my favorites of 2016 thus far.

David Berger says

As a longtime fan of mythology as well as a fan of humor, I guess I expected something more... interesting. Parts were funny, but just not enough for me to keep reading every section. The book cover says "[t]hese are rude, crude, totally sacred texts told the way they were meant to be told: loudly, and with lots of four-letter words." Why? I don't find almost 300 pages of repeated expletives and crass humor particularly funny, I guess. Once in a while, for effect? Maybe. I am sure many people find this book amusing, and I do commend the author on his unique style in relating the various myths (none of his stuff actually offends me personally). I guess I was simply underwhelmed.

Scott says

Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes is a hilarious book, for about the first 50 pages, and then the gimmick of retelling the myths of various cultures through the medium of dick jokes gets kind of stale; and this is coming from a dude who loves a good dick joke. Sure, the author can pull out a good one every once in awhile, even after your eyes have started to glaze over, but honestly I gave up about 3/4 of the way through. Maybe I missed the world's best dick joke in the chapter on Sumerian mythology; and Lord knows the Epic of Gilgamesh is dick joke gold, but I was willing to roll the dice on that one. This book would make a better "amusing website you check with once in awhile and have a good laugh."

Kate says

I heard about this book on Tumblr and just had to read it. This takes various world mythology as told through

what sounds like a college student texting you. It's hilarious and raunchy, although at times a little breathless and shouty. But the goods overcome the bads - I just had to read this in spurts. It's funny if you know a bit about the myths at hand, and also funny if you've never heard of the myth at all. Myths are just crazy weird like that.

The book starts off with the classical Greco-Roman myths, then Judeo-Christian, and Norse, then moves to some of the less widely known African, Sumerian, Mayan, Native American, and Asian myths, finishing up with more modern American myths. I liked the conclusion a lot. While the tone of this is less than intellectual, I think the ideas presented and the way things are tied together are actually quite thought-provoking.

Louisa says

LOL-on-public-transport funny! I read the Hindu bits to my Indian best friend while a bunch of us were at a bar and the beer/daiquiris/general alcohol we were having only made the reading aloud funnier. Review to come when I'm not insanely busy with uni (and it's winter break, WTF).

Asia Lee says

Okay, I've been waiting to read this one for ages and was so glad when I did! Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes: A No-Bullshit Guide to World Mythology is exactly what it says on the tin: Cory O'Brien tells mythology like it is, weirdness and all. I would recommend to anyone with an interest in mythology and fairy tales, but maybe not everyone as I think this would suit the taste of people who already know a little bit about myths, It's just funnier that way. In the parts where I didn't know the myths it was based off, it was a little less funny because I didn't really get what it was referencing.

Loved this, and I think it's something that will get better the more you read it!

Helen 2.0 says

Sigh. I hate to sound like a constipated bitter old nag, but **profanity and childish parody do not equal instant humor**. Especially not in such large quantities. Rather than spicing up mythology and retelling it in a modernly relatable way, the author dumbs it down to pre-teen potty humor and all-caps rages. I don't know if I'm in the wrong for approaching this book with the false expectation of actually learning something.

F says

It's not that deep, bros.

Lots of people are pissed at this book for not being funny, or for using swear words in order to get a laugh. I mean--it worked for me. Mythology is meant to be amusing and fun, and I was amused while reading this book. It's a quick and easy read, I laughed out loud and, I kid you not, was actually educated on lots of myths

I had never head of before. It is researched and it is then served to you in little bite-sized portions. I really liked it!

Regarding the rating: it is always hard to rate books that are segmented (like short stories, or essays), but some chapters were definitely stronger than others, earning this book a respectable 3.5.

Bárbara says

2.5 stars

This was hilarious- but rather simplistic, and seriously, the main (if not the only) thing it had going on was the creative way of telling the stories. The info (even about the myths I was less familiar with) is nothing really new, nothing really exclusive that you can't find in a quick google search. Maybe if it had been longer it could have done better for the more complex myths, too.

Mrs Giggles says

Cory O'Brien owns, runs, and writes for bettermyths.com, which is a crude, vulgar, and hilarious website that sees him retelling stories from mythology and even fantasy fiction in his own way. Unsurprisingly, he eventually got a book deal and Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes is the result. It is a collection of some of his writings related to mythology from various cultures.

Mind you, this is not a serious work, despite the subtitle A No-Bullshit Guide To World Mythology: the author promises in the introduction that there will be some bullshit. At its best, this book is like an epic profanity-laced soliloquoy penned by Kevin Smith for his character Jay, and at its worst, it's something created by a fellow who has about half the collective IQ of the braindead cast of Jersey Shore. One way or the other, it's not something that can be easily forgotten after the last page.

Nothing gets spared here, although the bulk of the stories are predictably devoted to Greek and Norse mythology. Unfortunately, these episodic Tourette syndrome outbursts don't portray a full, or even necessarily coherent, idea of the actual tales being skewered by the author, so read this for the humor and not the subject matter.

Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes sends some love to Norse goddess Freyja after she slept with four dwarves for four days for a necklace. Well, she is the goddess of love and sex, after all.

And Odin is like, "Yeah, that sounds like Freyja.
I mean WHAT??
I WANTED TO FUCK FREYJA.
WE ALL WANTED TO FUCK FREYJA.
THAT'S LIKE THE WHOLE REASON WE KEEP HER AROUND
AND ALL WE HAD TO DO ALL THESE YEARS
WAS OFFER HER JEWELRY?
UNACCEPTABLE.

GO STEAL HER NECKLACE."

And hello there, Japan:

So they do their crazy marriage thing
and then immediately get down to business
and then suddenly Izanami gives birth
to a hideous mutant leech baby.
BIG SURPRISE, ASSHOLES.
Y'ALL ARE SIBLINGS.

And even the Judeo-Christian mythology gets a shout-out. Here's Adam, after being persuaded to eat that apple by Eve,

So he eats the apple
and suddenly both of them realize
HOW INCREDIBLY NAKED THEY ARE.
THIS IS WHAT THE TREE DOES
IT LETS YOU KNOW YOU'RE NAKED
THE MYTHICAL TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL
COULD HAVE EASILY BEEN REPLACED
BY A FIVE-DOLLAR MIRROR
FROM A COLOMBIAN BROTHEL.

And God isn't pleased.

And then God wakes up from one of his meganaps
and he's like "HEY
WHO THE FUCK TOLD YOU YOU WERE NAKED?"
See, this was his big plan.
His big plan was just to look at naked people all day.

Juvenile? Sure. But the author has to be commended for knowing which button to push and which punchline to deliver. When he's on the roll, I find myself laughing like a deranged hyena. There are also some moments when he misses a few beats, especially the chapters on Egyptian and African mythology, when he often stumbles and the jokes feel more forced than anything else. But even at its weakest, this book still manages to get a chuckle from me, so I'm fine with it.

As someone who has a deep interest in mythology from all over the world, something that I couldn't shake

off since my childhood days, I find this book is a much welcome diversion. Just be warned that this book is best read in small chunks at a time, as the incessant jokes centered around pee-pees and honey pots can get tedious after a while, as is the author's efforts to channel the dumbest character in every Scary Movie sequel in existence. But it's all good in the end, as this is a novelty book that works wonders as a pick-me-up kind of diversion.

Amina | PAPER/PLATES says

Full review at PAPER/PLATES.

Imagine heading to a dive bar for some raunchy stand-up. When you get there, you realize the inside of the bar is actually a cavernous library full of imposing columns and scholarly tomes. That's what reading Zeus Grants Stupid Wishes feels like.

This irreverent little collection of myths made me laugh until my shoulders shook and my boyfriend looked over at me in concern. It shocked me, provoked me, and educated me much more than I would have predicted.

Cory O'Brien is a scholar like you've never read before. His forward proves he knows his stuff, referencing years of study and Joseph Campbell-fanboy status. But his approach is unique—he wants to demystify these stories and keep it real for modern day readers. O'Brien cares so much about mythology and anthropology that he refuses to gloss over ancient stories with the lazy, snooty airbrush that is so common today, and instead represents these tales in all of their absurd, violent, sexual glory. Though his collection of myths is far from comprehensive, it is more honest than any I've read.

Even the titles of his adaptations are more elucidating than many other translations. Some of my favorites: Hephaestus Gets Dicked Around a Lot, Chang'e Is a Substance Abuser, Ganesh is the Very Definition of an Unplanned Pregnancy, and The Moon is Made of Meat. And it gets even more real. Take, for example, his preface to the Ancient Egyptian chapter: “the ancient Egyptians/liked to tell some seriously messed-up myths/they've got all the essentials:/ booze, blood, and jerkin' it.” The stories don't disappoint—they go on to tell us about how Ra “F*CKS HIS OWN SHADOW UNTIL HE GETS PREGNANT” and that all humans are descended from either spit or puke.

Full review at PAPER/PLATES.

Melki says

The gods must be crazy...and blood-thirsty...and really pervy.

All I can say is that they were damned lucky they were gods, 'cos if they had been lowly humans, they would have had their heads displayed on spikes, been burned at the stake, or possibly been lobotomized, depending on what century they lived in.

This book features Cory O'Brien's hilarious retellings of classic myths and legends. Reading this book is kind of like listening to a drunken frat boy rant and rave about mythology, and it turns out to be W-A-Y more

entertaining than you might think it would be.

Why listen, here's Cory now. He's had some beers, and he's ready to tell you about some dude he read about...

**Let me introduce you to the baddest prophet around.
His name is TIRESIAS.**

**So besides having an awesome name
Tiresias is this guy who was out hiking one day
and he sees these two snakes doing it
and so he goes "WHAT?
I DON'T WANNA SEE NO SNAKES DOIN' IT UP
ON THIS MOUNTAIN."
and just runs up and beats them to death
with his trusty walking stick
LIKE A BADASS.**

You're probably familiar with the Greek myths, but I can guarantee you've never heard them told *quite* this way before...

**Narcissus is *gorgeous*.
Like, imagine if someone could *look*
exactly like bacon *tastes*
and you have a pretty good picture of Narcissus
(unless you're a vegetarian).**

How 'bout some Norse legends?

**So Loki
(the god of being a needless prick all the time)
sneaks up on Thor's wife, Sif, one day
and shaves off all of her hair
like he's one of the guys on *Jackass* or something
and Thor really loves hair, I guess
so he gets SUPER ANGRY
and he chases down Loki and is like "Hey
how about I cut off all YOUR FACE?!"
and Loki is like "But I need my face
for making infuriating smirks with!"
And Thor is like "Well, how about...
I just break every bone in your body?"
and Loki is like "No, I need those too.
How 'bout instead
I have the dwarves make your wife some *new* hair?
it will be made of GOLD and it will grow like
NORMAL HAIR."
And Thor is like "AWESOME."**

Or Egyptian?

**So basically what Ra does
is he turns around and gives Egypt the world's
DEADLIEST STINKEYE
this eye is so stinky
it produces an entire brand new goddess
the goddess is named Sekhmet
and she is basically like a lioness
with *chainsaws for legs*
SEKHMET:
THE ORIGINAL THUNDERCAT**

There are also Bible stories, Hindu, Asian and African myths, and some REALLY crazy Sumerian stuff:

**This guy that Eiru creates is called Enkido
and he is basically just Cousin Itt from *The Addams Family*
if Cousin Itt had the ability to TEAR YOU IN HALF
AND THEN FEED YOU TO YOURSELF.
He pretty much just runs screaming through the forest
punching bears every day
until one day some namby-pamby hunter sees him
drinking water with all his sweet animal pals
and the hunter is like "THAT DUDE IS SO MANLY
HE MADE MY GUN GO LIMP"**

You even get to relearn popular American mythology like John Henry, Davy Crockett and, oh yeah, SCIENTOLOGY.

These things just BEG to be READ ALOUD to your family, friends and coworkers, again and again, until they are begging YOU to go elsewhere...
