* Pyramus and Thisbe

The two are madly in love and live in houses next to each other. Their parents, however, forbid their romance and build a wall between the houses. The lovers find a chink in the wall through which they speak and kiss one another. One night they decide to run away together, meeting at the Tomb of Ninus. Thisbe arrives first, and she sees a terrifying lioness with blood on its mouth. She runs away in fear, dropping her cloak. The lioness tears up the cloak and bloodies it. When Pyramus arrives, he sees the cloak, assumes his lover has died, and kills himself in sorrow. Thisbe returns, sees Pyramus' body, and kills herself with the same knife. From then on, mulberries take on the dark red color of their blood, making the lovers' bond eternal.

* Orpheus and Eurydice

Orpheus is the most talented musician alive, rivaling only the gods. He falls in love with [Eurydice](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53283), but a viper stings her and she dies. Devastated, Orpheus travels down into the underworld to beg her return. He successfully charms the creatures of death with his sweet music, and finally [Hades](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53221) agrees to give Eurydice back to Orpheus on one condition: Orpheus must not look back at his wife as she follows him back above ground. Just before the two lovers return to the light, Orpheus cannot wait any longer and looks back. He sees his wife disappearing, saying "farewell.”

* [Ceyx](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53285) and [Alcyone](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53287)

Ceyex and Alcyone are married happily until the day when Ceyx decides to journey across the ocean. Knowing the dangers of the sea, Alcyone begs him not to go, or at least to take her with him. But Ceyx declines her offer and sets out without her. On the first night of the journey, a storm ravages his ship, and Ceyx dies with Alcyone's name on his lips. Alcyone continues to wait for her husband, making him cloaks and praying fruitlessly to Juno for his safe return. Juno pities the woman and asks [Somnus](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53289), god of Sleep, to tell her the truth about her husband's death. Somnus sends his son [Morpheus](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53291) to break the news in a dream, so Morpheus takes the form of the drowned Ceyx. Alcyone wakes from the terrible dream and knows her husband has died.

 She goes into the ocean to drown herself and be with him, but she sees his body floating towards her. She dives in but, miraculously, flies over the waves instead of sinking into them. The gods have turned her into a bird! The body of Ceyx disappears, and Ceyx turns into a bird as well. They are still together, flying and in love.

* Pygmalion and Galatea

[Pygmalion](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53293) is a tremendously talented artist who has never fallen in love with a woman. Instead, he has fallen in love with his art--specifically, a beautiful sculpture of a woman. He gives her presents, tucks her into bed, and dresses her. Finally, Pygmalion realizes the futility of his efforts and gives up. [Venus](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53275) notices the situation and pities him, turning the statue into a living woman named [Galetea](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=53295). Pygmalion marries her.

* Baucus and Philemon

Philemon and Baucis were elderly peasants in the country of Phrygia. Their story comes out of a wish granted to them by Zeus, the god of hospitality.

**O**ne day Zeus grew bored on Mt. Olympus. Hermes was nearby and suggested they venture to earth in disguise and test how hospitable the people of Phrygia were. As poor wandering travelers they knocked at every house, asking for food and a place to rest. Each time they were refused.

**A**t last they came to the poor hut of Philemon and Baucis, located on a remote hill. This old couple cheerfully greeted and entertained them with great kindness. During the meal, as Philemon poured wine from a mixing bowl he noticed that it kept filling up by itself. He suddenly realized that their guests were not human. The gods then revealed themselves and led the old couple to the top of the hill. When they looked around them, they saw that the town in the valley below had disappeared completely below a new lake. Their neighbors had not been kind, but still the old couple wept for them.

**T**heir sadness soon turned to wonder as their humble hut was transformed into a stately pillared home with a golden roof. Zeus said to them, "I will grant you whatever you wish." The old couple whispered to one other. Then Philemon replied, "Oh, mighty Zeus, let us be your priests and serve you in this temple. When it comes time for one of us to die, please let us die together." Zeus agreed as the gods ascended to Mt. Olympus.

**T**he old couple served for a long time in that great temple and they did not miss their small hut and cozy hearth. One day as they were standing in front of the building, they started talking about the old days. Suddenly each saw the other putting forth leaves. Their skin started to turn into tree bark. They embraced each other and cried, "Farewell!" Baucus was turned into a linden tree and Philemon into an oak, two different but beautiful trees intertwined with one another. In wonder, people came from afar to admire and hang wreathes on the branches in their honor.

* Daphne and Apollo

**Daphne** was an independent-minded, love- and marriage-hating young huntress and a follower of **Artemis (Diana)**. Her father, the river god **Peneus**, wished her to marry and have children, but all Daphne wanted was to hunt alone in the deep woods, rejoicing in her freedom. One day **Apollo** saw her. She was hunting, her dress short to the knee, her arms bare, her hair in disarray. She was enchantingly beautiful and Apollo thought, "She is lovely now, but what would she look like properly dressed with her hair nicely arranged." The idea inflamed him, and he started running after the nymph. Daphne fled, and she was an excellent runner.

Apollo was hard put to overtake her, although he grew steadily closer. He cried out, "Do not fear, stop and find out who I am. I am no rude rustic or shepherd but the **Lord of Delphi**, and I love you!" But Daphne flew on, even more frightened than before. She knew she could never outrun Apollo, but she was determined to resist to the end. She could almost feel Apollo's breath on the back of her neck when she saw her father's river ahead of her. She screamed to him, "Help me father, help me." At these words a dragging numbness came over her, and her feet seemed rooted in the earth. Bark was enclosing her body, and leaves were sprouting from her arms. She had been changed into a **laurel tree**.

Apollo sadly watched the transformation as he held her in his arms. "Oh, lovely tree," he mourned, "you will always be mine. I will give you the gift of eternal life. Your leaves will always be green and victors will wear your leaves as wreathes upon their brows." Poets also write that Apollo took a limb from one of her branches and made a musical instrument, the **guitar**.

* Another version of Apollo's instant love for Daphne was the cause of a trick played by Cupid who struck Apollo with one of his **golden arrows** when he first saw the nymph, and her with a **lead arrow** when she noticed his advancement.