

Who's who

Every god, hero, monster and mortal with an entry in the book's glossary, in one alphabetical list, with the story and page where each one appears. Other names a character goes by are given in brackets.

A

- Akan** — The people whose language these stories are told in · Akan · 32. How the Stories Got Their Name · p. 153
- Amaterasu** (Amaterasu Ōmikami) — The sun, who has had enough · Japanese · 23. The Door That Was Opened by Laughing · p. 114
- Ame-no-Uzume** (Uzume) — Who dances on an upturned tub · Japanese · 23. The Door That Was Opened by Laughing · p. 114
- Aodh** — Her brother · Irish · 8. Nine Hundred Years on the Water · p. 47
- Aoife** (Aife) — Their stepmother · Irish · 8. Nine Hundred Years on the Water · p. 47
- Arachne** — A dyer's daughter from Lydia whose weaving is better than a goddess's · Greek · 2. The Weaver Who Would Not Look Down · p. 22
- Aso** — Ananse's wife, who works out how to do it · Akan · 32. How the Stories Got Their Name · p. 153
- Athena** (Minerva, Pallas) — Goddess of crafts and war, who challenges her · Greek · 2. The Weaver Who Would Not Look Down · p. 22
- Âu Cờ** (Au Co) — A mountain fairy · Vietnamese · 25. The Hundred Children in the Egg Sac · p. 122

B

- Basat** — A boy raised by a lioness who comes back to his people · Turkic · 16. The One-Eyed Giant of the Oghuz · p. 81
- Bhagīratha** (Bhagiratha) — A king who spends years asking for one thing · Hindu · 18. The River That Had to Be Slowed Down · p. 92
- Boghach** (Boğaç) — A boy who is fifteen and has not earned a name yet · Turkic · 15. The Boy Who Fought the Bull · p. 77
- Buyeo** (Puyō) — The kingdom he grows up in and has to leave · Korean · 22. The Boy Who Told the Fish to Rise · p. 109

C

- Callaway** — The man who printed the Zulu and the English side by side in 1868 · Zulu · 34. Two Messengers and One Road · p. 161
- Chang'e** (Ch'ang-o, Heng'e) — Who ends up on the moon · Chinese · 20. The Archer and the Woman on the Moon · p. 100
- Conchobar** (Conor) — King of Ulster, who forgot to send word ahead · Irish · 7. The Boy Who Took the Hound's Place · p. 43
- Culann** — A smith whose hound guards his house · Irish · 7. The Boy Who Took the Hound's Place · p. 43

D

- Daedalus** (Daidalos) — A craftsman imprisoned on Crete for knowing too much · Greek · 3. Wings Made in a Locked Room · p. 26
- Dangun** (Tangun, Dangun Wanggeom) — The first king of Gojoseon · Korean · 21. The Bear Who Waited in the Dark · p. 105
- Dede Korkut** (Dedem Korkut) — The old storyteller who gives names · Turkic · 15. The Boy Who Fought the Bull · p. 77
- Demeter** (Ceres) — Goddess of grain and Persephone's mother, whose grief stops the harvest · Greek · 1. The Girl Who Ate Six Seeds · p. 18
- Dirse Khan** (Dirse Han) — His father · Turkic · 15. The Boy Who Fought the Bull · p. 77

E

- Egypt** — The kingdom the court is arguing about · Ancient Egyptian · 27. Eighty Years of Arguing · p. 133
- Egyptian** — The language and the people this text comes from · Ancient Egyptian · 28. The Name the Sun God Would Not Say · p. 137
- Enkidu** — His friend, who died before the story opens · Mesopotamian · 11. Stones Tied to His Feet · p. 61
- Etana** — A king of Kish with no child and no heir · Mesopotamian · 12. The Eagle and the Snake Who Swore an Oath · p. 65

F

- Fenrir** (Fenrisúlfr) — A wolf who grows faster than anyone expected · Norse · 6. The Ribbon That Held a Wolf · p. 39
- Fereydun** (Fereydūn) — The young man Kāveh goes to find · Persian · 14. The Blacksmith's Apron · p. 73
- Fionnuala** — The eldest of four children and the one who holds them together · Irish · 8. Nine Hundred Years on the Water · p. 47
- Freyja** — A goddess who refuses, loudly, to be traded · Norse · 4. The Bride Who Ate an Ox · p. 31

G

- Gaṅgā** (Ganga, Ganges) — The river, who does not want to come down quietly · Hindu · 18. The River That Had to Be Slowed Down · p. 92
- Geumwa** (Kūmwā) — The king of Buyeo who raised him · Korean · 22. The Boy Who Told the Fish to Rise · p. 109
- Gilgamesh** (Bilgames) — A king who cannot accept that his friend is dead · Mesopotamian · 11. Stones Tied to His Feet · p. 61

H

Hades (Aidoneus, Pluto) — Lord of the world below · Greek · 1. The Girl Who Ate Six Seeds · p. 18

Haleakalā — The mountain, whose name means house of the sun · Hawaiian · 44. The Day That Was Made Longer · p. 203

Hanumān (Hanuman, Māruti) — A child of the wind who does not yet know what he can do · Hindu · 17. The Baby Who Mistook the Sun for Fruit · p. 88

Hawai‘i — The island the fire finally stayed on · Hawaiian · 45. The Fire That Was Looking for a Home · p. 207

Hina — His mother, who beats bark cloth and runs out of daylight · Hawaiian · 44. The Day That Was Made Longer · p. 203

His sister — Who brings him meat when she can · Inuit · 36. The Boy Who Got His Eyes Back · p. 171

Hī‘iaka — Her youngest sister, carried in an egg · Hawaiian · 45. The Fire That Was Looking for a Home · p. 207

Horus (Heru) — Osiris’s son, claiming his father’s throne · Ancient Egyptian · 27. Eighty Years of Arguing · p. 133

Hou Yi (Yi) — An archer given one arrow too few, or one too many · Chinese · 20. The Archer and the Woman on the Moon · p. 100

Huillacoto — The one mountain high enough to stand on · Andean · 41. The Llama That Would Not Eat · p. 189

Hunahpu (Hunahpú) — One of two brothers who are very good at a ball game · Maya · 37. The Ball Game Under the Ground · p. 175

Hùng (Hung) — The eldest son, first of the Hùng kings · Vietnamese · 25. The Hundred Children in the Egg Sac · p. 122

Hwanung — Who came down to the mountain with three seals of office · Korean · 21. The Bear Who Waited in the Dark · p. 105

I

Icarus (Ikaros) — His son · Greek · 3. Wings Made in a Locked Room · p. 26

Idun (Iðunn) — Keeper of the apples that keep the gods young · Norse · 5. The Goddess Who Kept the Apples · p. 35

Ilmarinen — A smith who can forge anything once · Finnish · 9. The Machine Nobody Can Describe · p. 51

Indra — King of the gods, who throws the thunderbolt · Hindu · 17. The Baby Who Mistook the Sun for Fruit · p. 88

Intulo (lizard) — The lizard, sent second and running · Zulu · 34. Two Messengers and One Road · p. 161

Inuit (Inuk) — The people whose story this is, across the whole Arctic · Inuit · 35. The Woman at the Bottom of the Sea · p. 167

Ise — The shrine where Amaterasu is revered today · Japanese · 23. The Door That Was Opened by Laughing · p. 114

Isis (Aset) — Horus’s mother, who is cleverer than the court · Ancient Egyptian · 27. Eighty Years of Arguing · p. 133

Its owner — Who is annoyed, and then listens · Andean · 41. The Llama That Would Not Eat · p. 189

iwi — A people or nation; each holds its own tellings · Māori · 43. The Children Who Pushed Their Parents Apart · p. 199

J

Jumong (Chumong, Dongmyeong) — A boy who can shoot better than his brothers can stand · Korean · 22. The Boy Who Told the Fish to Rise · p. 109

K

Kāveh (Kaveh) — A blacksmith who has lost seventeen sons · Persian · 14. The Blacksmith’s Apron · p. 73

Kushinada-hime (Kushinada) — The eighth daughter · Japanese · 24. Eight Heads and Eight Bowls of Wine · p. 118

Kwaku Ananse (Ananse, Anansi) — A spider who wants to own all the stories · Akan · 32. How the Stories Got Their Name · p. 153

L

Lạc Long Quân (Lac Long Quan) — A dragon lord of the water · Vietnamese · 25. The Hundred Children in the Egg Sac · p. 122

Lima — The city on the coast below Huarochirí · Andean · 41. The Llama That Would Not Eat · p. 189

Lir — Their father, who does not know where they have gone · Irish · 8. Nine Hundred Years on the Water · p. 47

Loki — The one who goes to find out who took it · Norse · 4. The Bride Who Ate an Ox · p. 31

Louhi — Mistress of the North, who names her price · Finnish · 9. The Machine Nobody Can Describe · p. 51

M

Māori — The people whose story this is, in Aotearoa · Māori · 42. The Fish That Became an Island · p. 195

Maui — The island the mountain stands on — spelled without the kahakō, unlike Māui himself · Hawaiian · 44. The Day That Was Made Longer · p. 203

Māui (Māui-tikitiki-a-Taranga) — The youngest brother, who was not invited · Māori · 42. The Fish That Became an Island · p. 195

Mexica — What the people of this story called themselves · Aztec (Mexico) · 39. The Small God Who Jumped First · p. 182

Minos — King of Crete, who will not let them leave · Greek · 3. Wings Made in a Locked Room · p. 26

My Nương (My Nuong) — The king’s daughter · Vietnamese · 26. Why the River Rises Every Year · p. 126

N

Nāmaka (Nāmakaokaha‘i) — Her elder sister, the sea · Hawaiian · 45. The Fire That Was Looking for a Home · p. 207

Nanahuatzin (Nanahuatl) — The small, sick god who has **nothing to offer** · Aztec (Mexico) · 39. The Small God Who Jumped First · p. 182

Ntikuma (Ntikuma) — His son, who says the useful thing · Akan · 33. The Pot That Would Not Go Up the Tree · p. 157

Nūwa (Nügua) — Who repairs the world when it breaks · Chinese · 19. The Woman Who Patched the Sky · p. 96

Nyame (Onyame) — The sky god, who owns them now · Akan · 32. How the Stories Got Their Name · p. 153

O

Ọ̀bàtálá (Obatala, Ọ̀rìṣà-ńlá) — Sent down to make dry land out of water · Yoruba · 30. The Chain Let Down from the Sky · p. 145

Odin (Óðinn) — Who knows how this ends and does it anyway · Norse · 6. The Ribbon That Held a Wolf · p. 39

Odùduwà (Oduduwa) — Who finishes it, in some tellings · Yoruba · 30. The Chain Let Down from the Sky · p. 145

Oghuz (Oğuz) — The people this story belongs to, and the people the giant is eating · Turkic · 16. The One-Eyed Giant of the Oghuz · p. 81

Olódùmarè (Olodumare) — Who gives the task · Yoruba · 30. The Chain Let Down from the Sky · p. 145

One Death (Hun Came) — A lord of Xibalba · Maya · 37. The Ball Game Under the Ground · p. 175

Ọ̀ṣun (Osun, Oshun) — The seventeenth, and the only one who can make anything grow · Yoruba · 31. The One They Left Out · p. 149

P

Papatūānuku (Papa) — The earth mother · Māori · 43. The Children Who Pushed Their Parents Apart · p. 199

Pele (Pelehonuamea) — Who is looking for somewhere her fire will not be put out · Hawaiian · 45. The Fire That Was Looking for a Home · p. 207

Persephone (Kore, Proserpina) — A young goddess taken to the world below, who becomes its queen · Greek · 1. The Girl Who Ate Six Seeds · p. 18

Phú Thọ — The hill country where the Hùng kings are commemorated · Vietnamese · 25. The Hundred Children in the Egg Sac · p. 122

Q

Quetzalcoatl — Who is watching · Aztec (Mexico) · 39. The Small God Who Jumped First · p. 182

Q’ukumatz (Gucumatz, Q’uq’umatz) — The other · Maya · 38. Made of Mud, Wood, and Finally Maize · p. 179

R

Ra (Re) — Who presides and would like this to be over · Ancient Egyptian · 27. Eighty Years of Arguing · p. 133

Ranginui (Rangi) — The sky father · Māori · 43. The Children Who Pushed Their Parents Apart · p. 199

Rostam — Zal’s son, and the hero the rest of the epic follows · Persian · 13. The Baby Left on the Mountain · p. 69

S

Sam (Sām) — His father, who comes back · Persian · 13. The Baby Left on the Mountain · p. 69

Sedna (Nuliajuk, Takánakapsâluk) — Who lives at the bottom of the sea and holds the animals · Inuit · 35. The Woman at the Bottom of the Sea · p. 167

Sétanta (Setanta) — A boy who arrives late to a feast · Irish · 7. The Boy Who Took the Hound’s Place · p. 43

Seth (Set, Sutekh) — His uncle, who says the throne should go to the strongest · Ancient Egyptian · 27. Eighty Years of Arguing · p. 133

Seven Death (Vucub Came) — Another · Maya · 37. The Ball Game Under the Ground · p. 175

Simorgh (Simorgh) — The great bird who raises him · Persian · 13. The Baby Left on the Mountain · p. 69

Śiva (Shiva) — Who agrees to stand in the way · Hindu · 18. The River That Had to Be Slowed Down · p. 92

Sơn Tinh (Son Tinh) — The spirit of the mountain · Vietnamese · 26. Why the River Rises Every Year · p. 126

Suga — The place where Susanoo settles afterwards · Japanese · 24. Eight Heads and Eight Bowls of Wine · p. 118

Susanoo (Susanoo-no-Mikoto) — Her brother, who caused this · Japanese · 23. The Door That Was Opened by Laughing · p. 114

T

Tāne (Tāne-mahuta) — The child who stands on his head and pushes · Māori · 43. The Children Who Pushed Their Parents Apart · p. 199

Tāwhirimātea (Tāwhiri) — The child who never agrees to it · Māori · 43. The Children Who Pushed Their Parents Apart · p. 199

Te Ika-a-Māui — The fish, which is now the North Island · Māori · 42. The Fish That Became an Island · p. 195

Tecuciztecatl (Tecciztecatl) — The rich god who was supposed to go first · Aztec (Mexico) · 39. The Small God Who Jumped First · p. 182

Tepegöz — A giant with one eye in the middle of his forehead · Turkic · 16. The One-Eyed Giant of the Oghuz · p. 81

Tepew (Tepeu) — One of the makers · Maya · 38. Made of Mud, Wood, and Finally Maize · p. 179

The angakkuq — The one who has to go down and comb her hair · Inuit · 35. The Woman at the Bottom of the Sea · p. 167

The boy — Blind, and better at listening than anyone realises · Inuit · 36. The Boy Who Got His Eyes Back · p. 171

The Eagle — Who swears friendship and then breaks it · Mesopotamian · 12. The Eagle and the Snake Who Swore an Oath · p. 65

The llama — Who knows what is coming and will not say it politely · Andean · 41. The Llama That Would Not Eat · p. 189

The loon — Who takes him down and holds him under · Inuit · 36. The Boy Who Got His Eyes Back · p. 171

The red ant — Who knows, and does not want to say · Aztec (Mexico) · 40. The Ant Who Would Not Say Where · p. 186

The sailor — The only survivor of his ship, telling the story to calm someone else · Ancient Egyptian · 29. The Island That Was Not There Afterwards · p. 141

The serpent — Thirty cubits long, with a beard, and entirely alone · Ancient Egyptian · 29. The Island That Was Not There Afterwards · p. 141

The Snake — Who keeps the oath and is wronged · Mesopotamian · 12. The Eagle and the Snake Who Swore an Oath · p. 65

Thor (Þórr) — Thunder god whose hammer has been stolen · Norse · 4. The Bride Who Ate an Ox · p. 31

Thrym (Þrymr) — A giant king who wants a goddess in exchange · Norse · 4. The Bride Who Ate an Ox · p. 31

Thủy Tinh (Thuy Tinh) — The spirit of the water · Vietnamese · 26. Why the River Rises Every Year · p. 126

Twī — The Akan language these stories are told and written in · Akan · 32. How the Stories Got Their Name · p. 153

Tyr (Týr) — The one god the wolf will take food from · Norse · 6. The Ribbon That Held a Wolf · p. 39

U

ubukwebezane — The berry bush the chameleon stopped at · Zulu · 34. Two Messengers and One Road · p. 161

Ungnyeo (Ungnyŏ) — The bear who became a woman · Korean · 21. The Bear Who Waited in the Dark · p. 105

Unkulunkulu (uNkulunkulu) — The first and greatest, who sends both messages · Zulu · 34. Two Messengers and One Road · p. 161

Unwabu (chameleon) — The chameleon, sent first and travelling slowly · Zulu · 34. Two Messengers and One Road · p. 161

Utnapishtim (Uta-napishti) — The one man who was made deathless, and cannot pass it on · Mesopotamian · 11. Stones Tied to His Feet · p. 61

V

Väinämöinen — An old singer who promised the smith would come · Finnish · 9. The Machine Nobody Can Describe · p. 51

Vāyu (Vayu) — The wind, his father · Hindu · 17. The Baby Who Mistook the Sun for Fruit · p. 88

X

Xbalanque (Xbalanqué) — The other one · Maya · 37. The Ball Game Under the Ground · p. 175

Xmucane (Xmucané) — The grandmother who grinds the maize · Maya · 38. Made of Mud, Wood, and Finally Maize · p. 179

Y

Yamata-no-Orochi — A serpent with eight heads and eight tails · Japanese · 24. Eight Heads and Eight Bowls of Wine · p. 118

Yoruba (Yorùbá) — The people whose story this is, in Nigeria and far beyond it · Yoruba · 30. The Chain Let Down from the Sky · p. 145

Yuhwa — His mother, who tells him when to go · Korean · 22. The Boy Who Told the Fish to Rise · p. 109

Z

Zahhāk (Zahhak, Aži Dahāka) — A king with serpents at his shoulders · Persian · 14. The Blacksmith's Apron · p. 73

Zal (Zāl, Dastān) — A boy born with white hair and left on a mountain · Persian · 13. The Baby Left on the Mountain · p. 69

Zulu — The language this was written down in, and the people who told it · Zulu · 34. Two Messengers and One Road · p. 161

Þ

Þjazi (Thjazi) — A giant who can put on an eagle's shape · Norse · 5. The Goddess Who Kept the Apples · p. 35