

[PDF] Pheme The Gossip (Goddess Girls)

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Description:

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Jackpot!

NO ONE WAS AROUND AS PHEME SNEAKED down the hallway of the girls' dorm on the fourth floor of Mount Olympus Academy. She knocked on a door.

"Anybody home?" she called out softly.

As usual her words puffed from her orange-glossed lips. They rose above her head in little cloud-letters before floating away. Since she was the goddess of gossip and rumor, this was a useful gift. Any newsy tidbits she spoke when others were around were guaranteed to spread swiftly throughout the Academy.

PHEME waited a few seconds outside the door, listening for a reply. She wasn't surprised when she didn't get one. It was lunchtime. Most students were in the cafeteria. Perfect.

She turned the doorknob. It gave easily. Most girls at MOA didn't bother to lock their doors. Quietly she slipped into the room—Artemis's room. Along with Athena, Aphrodite, and Persephone, Artemis was one of the four most popular goddessgirls in the whole school. She was also one of a handful of girls who didn't have a roommate.

First thing, PHEME opened Artemis's closet. A mess as usual. Sports equipment and old school projects lay in a heap at the bottom. Rumpled chitons hung half on and half off the hangers. Artemis didn't care much about neatness or clothes. Of course, none of this surprised PHEME. She'd snooped in here before.

It was her job—sort of. Earlier in the year Principal Zeus had made her floor monitor for the girls' dorm. And that meant she was responsible for doing weekly safety checks.

Zeus had never been especially clear about *how* she was to carry out the checks. Or even what kind of hazards she should watch for. So she'd decided all that for herself. And her methods included room-snooping.

As she peeked into a random box inside the closet, her stomach growled with hunger. Normally she'd be at lunch too.

But today was Thursday. And although none of the other girls knew it, every Thursday she skipped lunch to make the rounds of their dorm rooms. To look for hazards. And if she came across some gossip-worthy information too—well, that was just the ambrosia frosting on the cake!

She fished out a snack bar from her chiton pocket, then munched on it as she began sorting through the stuff on the closet floor. Her hand brushed against a broken wooden arrow. Here was a *definite* safety hazard. You could get a sliver from the split shaft. Or cut yourself on the sharp arrow tip.

PHEME stuck the two halves of the broken arrow into the trash can by Artemis's desk. With all the mess in here, Artemis probably wouldn't even notice. She had no idea it was her turn for an inspection today. Next Thursday would be Athena and Pandora's turn.

Of course, it wasn't just physical objects—like broken arrows—that could pose safety hazards. Sometimes students *did* things that were dangerous. Like flying off to who knew where without first

getting Zeus's permission. If PHEME uncovered such plans, it would be her duty to let Zeus know.

She smoothed out some crumpled papers she found in the trash and looked them over. Old math assignments. Nothing interesting. She tossed them in the trash again and headed back to the closet.

Today PHEME was really hoping to find more than broken arrows and other commonplace safety hazards. She needed to uncover some hugely hazardous information that Zeus absolutely needed to know. Something so mega-important that when she reported it to him, she'd win back his support and trust.

Because right now—just when she needed him to have confidence in her reporting abilities more than ever—Zeus had lost faith in her. Simply because she'd gotten it wrong about who'd stolen the Norse goddess Freya's necklace during the girls' recent Olympic Games. Honestly, anyone could have made that same mistake.

But try telling Principal Zeus that. He could be really unreasonable at times!

PHEME absentmindedly hung up a couple of Artemis's chitons before she realized what she was doing. Artemis would likely overlook a broken arrow in her trash. But for the most part things had to look undisturbed.

She threw the clothes back onto the floor. Then she tugged over a step stool and started digging around on the shelf above the clothing rod.

Regaining Zeus's support right away was critical. Until she could get back on his good side, he was unlikely to write her a glowing letter of recommendation. Which was something she needed to complete her application to *Teen Scrollazine*.

She just *had* to get the student staff reporter job that had opened up last week. Writing for *Teen Scrollazine* was her dream! Just imagine how it would impress her fellow students at MOA if she were in charge of covering important news stories. Finally she'd get some respect.

But she didn't have much time. She'd filled out the application days ago and was just waiting for the right moment to ask Zeus for a recommendation letter before sending it in. Both the letter and application were due on Monday, and—

"Whoa!" Something was staring at her from a dark corner of the shelf! Startled, she nearly fell off the stool. Was that a—a *head*? Wait. No. It was only an old Beauty-ology class project. The head form wore frightful makeup and a tangled wig.

PHEME remembered doing the same project back in fourth grade too. Only, as she recalled, her head form had turned out much better. Makeup and hair styling had never been Artemis's thing.

Owww-ooo-oo!

At the sound of howling out in the hall, PHEME froze. Dogs? There was only one girl in the MOA dorm that had dogs. Ye gods! Artemis was coming!

Panicking, PHEME kicked the stool away and leaped into the closet to hide. She made it only seconds before Artemis and her three hounds came into the room. The dogs made a beeline for the closet. She held her breath as they sniffed and scratched at the closet door. Were they after her, or the last

half of her snack bar?

Her stomach growled again. Would Artemis hear?

PHEME wanted to jump for joy when she heard Artemis quickly bid her dogs farewell. "See you later, guys. I've gotta hit Principal Zeus's chariot safety lecture next period after lunch. And I can't have you chasing the chariots like last time. I promise we'll go for a run tonight after classes."

The door to the hall opened and closed again. And then Artemis was gone.

Phew! After waiting a minute PHEME popped out of the closet. The dogs jumped and wiggled, acting happy to see her. Not at all the reception *Artemis* would've given her if she'd caught her nosing around.

Most girls, PHEME knew, would likely disapprove of her room-snooping. If they ever found out, they'd probably get all mad and say she was taking her monitor job far too seriously. However, she got results! She'd uncovered and removed many safety hazards during her weekly dorm checks. Why, she'd probably even saved lives!

Still feeling a bit rattled from nearly being discovered, PHEME slipped out of the room. No way could she snoop effectively with those dogs hounding her the whole time.

No problem. She could finish going through Artemis's room next Thursday. Today she'd trade for Athena and Pandora's room instead. After moving farther down the hall, she paused outside their door. She called out to check that neither of them was inside. Then she carefully looked both ways. The coast was clear.

She darted inside, then closed the door soundlessly behind her. Her eyes scanned the room for anything of interest. Anything mega-hazardous that she could report. Unfortunately, everything seemed pretty much as usual.

As she passed Pandora's unmade bed, she noted the jumbled-up bedspread. The curious girl's pj's, which were covered with a pattern of question marks, lay in a heap on top of it. She and Artemis had messiness in common.

Athena's bed, by contrast, was neatly made. Her blue and yellow dotted bedspread hung evenly and without wrinkles.

Like in all the girls' dorm rooms at MOA, the beds were on either side of the room. (Artemis's dogs slept on *her* extra bed!) Beyond the beds were identical closets and built-in desks. The boys' rooms on the fifth floor were rumored to have the same setup. PHEME didn't know that for sure, because she'd never snooped in them. Except for the occasional party in the common room at the end of the boys' hall, girls weren't allowed up there.

If a rule was clearly stated like that, PHEME tried to follow it. She was nosy, but she wasn't a criminal! Before she'd begun room-snooping, she'd even checked the *Goddessgirl Guide*, to be sure there wasn't a rule against entering an empty, unlocked room. There wasn't. Probably because no one but her had ever thought of doing it!

Stopping by Pandora's desk, PHEME bent to examine an article from the *Greekly Weekly News* that was tacked to Pandora's bulletin board. POSEIDON WATER WAVES OPENS TO THE PUBLIC

TODAY, read the headline.

The accompanying photo showed a cute godboy named Poseidon grinning big. He had designed the magnificent water park. Behind him you could see gracefully curving slides made of polished marble, gleaming fountains, and pools of turquoise water.

“Well, this is so not helpful, Pandora!” PHEME whispered to herself. “Update your bulletin board once a century, will you?”

The water park had opened way earlier in the year, just after Athena had first come to MOA. Back then Pandora had been crushing on Poseidon. But now she liked a Titan godboy named Epimetheus.

Not only was this article unworthy of reporting to Zeus, it was also old news. And nobody cared about old news. She needed *new* news!

PHEME moved on to Athena’s side of the room. There was a tall stack of textscrolls piled neatly on her desk. Which could onl...

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