

You're listening to the Faeries and Folklore podcast by Ronel.

I'm dark fantasy author Ronel Janse van Vuuren. With nearly a decade of digging around in dusty folklore books, researching creatures of imagination that ignited my curiosity, I'm here to share the folklore in a nutshell and how I reimagined it for my writing in an origin of the fae.

This is the Faeries and Folklore podcast.

Hi, I'm your host Ronel Janse van Vuuren. You can just call me Ronel. In today's episode, we're continuing our exploration of the fae realm.

This episode is brought to you by my Irascible Immortals series, available in ebook, paperback, hardback and audiobook. They've been alive forever. They've been bored for some time. And now they're showing it. Go to ronelthemythmaker.com/my-books/the-irascible-immortals-series for more.

We're continuing our exploration of the Immortals.

Today's immortal: Dionysus

Folklore in a nutshell by Ronel

Hera's jealousy over her husband's infidelity caused Semele, a mortal lover of Zeus, to be tricked into being killed by her lover when he revealed his true form. Zeus saved the baby who wasn't ready to be born, and he was stitched into Zeus's thigh until he was really ready to be born. He was born immortal, a Greek god. Hera's jealousy reared its ugly head again and arranged for the new-born Dionysus to be torn to shreds by Titans. Rhea, Zeus's mother, took pity on him and reconstituted him so he came back to life. Persephone then took him to a mortal royal couple to rear him as their own. Of course, Hera being Hera, caused madness in the royal family and Dionysus had to be removed for his own safety. Hermes turned him into a lamb or a kid and gave him to nymphs in Mount Nysa to take care of. It is here that he learned about viticulture and created wine.

Hera cursed Dionysus with madness once he was grown. He travelled the world, bringing grape vines and the cultivation of wine where he went, and persuaded women to party with him. Because of how he acted and because of the wine, he was called the "drunken god". Many temples celebrating him were found in the ancient world. Revels were held in his honour. And sometimes, human sacrifices were made in his temples.

Dionysus were followed around by maenads, female followers who danced and were intoxicated – and raving mad. They were known to be violent in their devotion to Dionysus, even going so far as committing murder. Those in his cult went wild during their revels in the woods, ripping to shreds any animal they came across and eating it raw.

It's not clear when – or if – he regained his sanity. At some point he came across Ariadne after Theseus abandoned her (she sacrificed everything to help him kill the Minotaur), and Dionysus and Ariadne fell in love and got married. They had many famous children together.

He was either depicted as an older, bearded god or an effeminate, long-haired youth. He was usually accompanied by maenads and satyrs, seen wearing an ivy crown or fruiting grapevines, holding a drinking cup and riding a panther.

His Roman counterpart is Bacchus. He is known as the god of wine, viticulture, the grape vine, vegetation, fertility, intoxication, ritual madness, merriment, festivals and more. His main mission was to bring an end to care and worry through drink and merriment.

Whatever he's called, women love him and men wish they were him.

Origin of the fae: Dionysus

This guy loves to party. He looks like he's university age (maybe 22?) and is quite attractive. He's charming, persuasive and the kind of guy everyone likes. He can look older if he wants to, but has found that young people have more stamina to party all the time.

He's the god of wine and ecstasy. Maenads still follow him around after all this time – some have become immortal in a way.

Dionysus stays away from Olympus and his stepmother who still hates his guts. He has a good relationship with his siblings, especially Apollo.

Whenever Dionysus is at a party, it is sure to be a rager.

I hope that you've enjoyed this episode of the faeries and folklore podcast and that you've learned something new about faeries.

Remember that you can get a transcript of this episode in the description. If you're new to the podcast, why not go and grab your free copy of Unseen, the second book in the Faery Tales series, on my website ronelthemythmaker.com? Loads of folklore, magic and danger await! Take care!