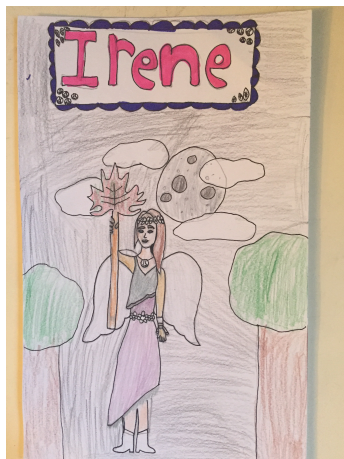


Why Volcanoes Erupt

By Safa Al-Jamal

One day, inside of Mount Olympus in Greece. There lived three goddesses who loved the planet Earth and wanted to give everything to make it perfect and beautiful. The three goddesses' names are Gaia, Irene, and Artemis. Gaia is Mother Earth, Irene is the goddess of peace and spring, and Artemis is the goddess of wild animals. Each of these goddesses has a job to make Earth the most perfect and most beautiful place ever. Gaia's job is to make sure that everything was in an orderly fashion and to make sure everything is perfect. Irene's job is to make sure that everything goes peacefully and to make sure that everybody chooses peace over hate. And in the spring, she makes sure that the forests and nature are strong and healthy. Artemis's job is to make sure that the animals are happy and that nothing will kill them or destroy their habitat. They loved doing this and never wanted to stop doing their jobs.

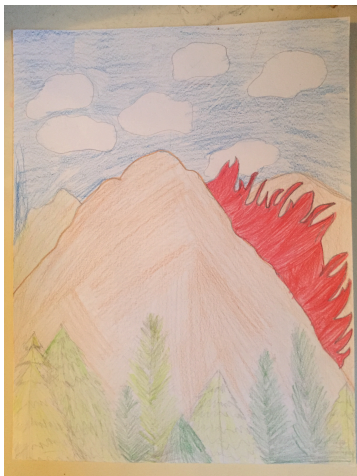


But one day, Hephaestus, the god of fire and darkness, and Ares, the god of war, came, and they demanded to let them put some evil into the world. But Gaia, Irene, and Artemis did not want that to happen, so they immediately said no. This infuriated Hephaestus and Ares, so they came up with an evil plan to destroy them. When Hephaestus and Ares left the mountain, Gaia told Irene and Artemis that Hephaestus was not an evil god. He was a decent god who loved to play with fire, and he did good deeds as well. He was known for saving people's lives by using flames to protect them. However, what made him choose evil is that people started to save themselves, and they also made fun of because they were frightened by his power. So he decided to go evil after that day. And that is why he is called the god of fire and darkness. Irene and Artemis were shocked by

that story because they would have never guessed that Hephaestus was a good god.

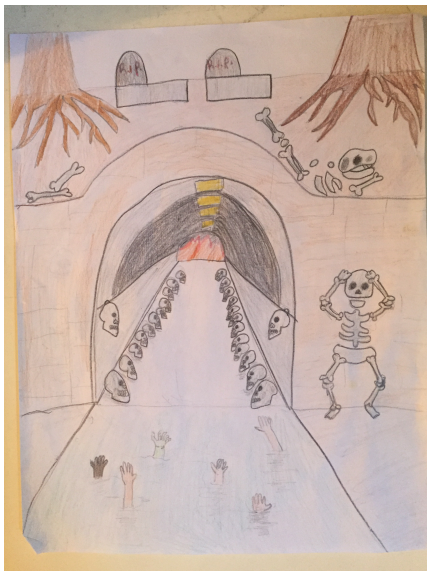


After Gaia told the story, Gaia, Artemis, and Irene went outside of the mountain to see the beauty of Earth's nature. When they were on top of the mountain, they smelled smoke. And smoke always meant there was trouble. As they looked to the right, they saw flames crawling their way down the hill. The color of the flames was as red as blood, and it resembled Hephaestus. Gaia, Irene, and Artemis knew that Hephaestus and Ares left the flames here on purpose, but Irene and Artemis did not know why, but Gaia did. So Gaia told Irene and Artemis another story about Hephaestus. As Hephaestus grew angry, his firepower let him make a trail of fire as red as blood.



While Gaia, Irene, and Artemis were putting out the fire. Hephaestus and Ares went to the underworld to discuss their plan with Hades. As they got off the ferry, they got frightened by all the dead bodies and skeletons

hanging on the walls and in the water. As they entered the dark tunnels that were leading them right to Hades, they heard growling. At the end of the tunnel, there stood Hades next to the guardian dog. When they saw the guardian dog, they started to regret going to the underworld. The three-headed, growling, flaming, spooky dog, started to come closer to them. But then Hades said, "now, Cerberus, (Cerberus is the name of the guardian dog) don't eat our guests, we rarely get guests here in the place. Why don't you go eat the people that the ferryman is going to bring." Then Hades had asked them, "who are you, why are you here, and what do you want!" "I'm Hephaestus, the god of fire and darkness, and this is Ares, the god of war. We are here to discuss our plan to destroy Gaia, Irene, and Artemis so we can put some evil into the world," Hephaestus mumbled. "Ah, that is a very good reason for you to be here. I'm the best at making evil plans!" Hades said with an evil voice. "Come, we shall discuss your plan," Hades demanded. As they started to discuss their ideas, Ares recommended going to war with Gaia, Irene, and Artemis. Everybody liked that idea, so that was the final decision, going to war with Gaia, Irene, and Artemis.



When Gaia, Irene, and Artemis heard that they were going to war. They immediately refused. However, after they thought about it and realized that they did not want Hephaestus and Ares to win. So, they realized that they had to go to war. While Hephaestus and Ares were busy last-minute planning, Gaia, Irene, and Artemis were also discussing their plan. "I know we normally fight with peace, but, this time we can not take the risk. We can not have Hephaestus and Ares win." Gaia enounced. "I think Gaia is right. We can not take the risk of losing over Hephaestus and

Ares, so that means fighting non-peacefully," Artemis murmured. Although Gaia and Artemis thought it was a marvelous plan, Irene did not.

Gaia and Artemis continued with their plan, and they started to gather animals to help them defeat Hephaestus and Ares. After the gathering of the animals, Irene finally said, "I don't like our plan. I don't think fighting violently is a good idea. We need to fight with peace. Because we will not get any were if we fight violently, but with peace and love, we could win the war." Gaia and Artemis did not like the idea of fighting peacefully, but after Irene said to trust her, and the key to success is peace. They finally agreed with Irene. Two days have passed since they gathered the animals, and it was the day of the war. Everybody was worried because they did not want to lose to Hephaestus and Ares. If the evil Gods won they would destroy planet Earth. Gaia, Irene, and Artemis were getting ready to go on Mount Olympus because Hephaestus and Ares demanded to meet up on top of Mount Olympus at sundown.

The sun was setting, and Gaia, Irene, and Artemis were ready to fight. But they had to wait till Hephaestus and Ares were there. And suddenly, they heard loud booming sounds, and smoke was spreading across the evening sky. And there stood flaming Hephaestus and Ares across from Gaia, Irene, and Artemis. The war began, and Hephaestus and Ares came with anger and hatred. But, Gaia, Irene, and Artemis came with peace and love. Hephaestus and Ares thought they were crazy and thought they were going to lose immediately, but Gaia, Irene, and Artemis knew exactly what they were doing. Gaia, Irene, and Artemis were using butterflies, mountain lions, deer, snakes, and many different animals to help defeat Hephaestus and Ares. But, Hephaestus and Ares were using shields, fire, and weapons to defeat Gaia, Irene, and Artemis. The way that Hephaestus and Ares came off frightened Gaia, Irene, Artemis, and the animals, but they knew that they had to continue the war no matter what.

It's been six hours ever since the war began. And Gaia, Irene, and Artemis were getting tired. So they decided to do more than just using the animals to annoy Hephaestus and Ares. So they started to use the animals to shoo off Hephaestus and Ares down the mountain. As they were doing this, little did they know that there was a big hole dropping right down into the mountain. While the snakes, coyotes, and mountain lions were scaring Hephaestus and Ares, they started slowly walking down the mountain. But, Hephaestus noticed what they were doing and started to shoot flames at them. And that startled the animals, and they ran away.

Now it was only Gaia, Irene, and Artemis battling Hephaestus and Ares. They did not know what to do.

But suddenly, Gaia came up with another plan. So she started to use her power to make the ground shake and carry Hephaestus and Ares down the mountain. While Irene and Artemis were enjoying what was going on, Hephaestus and Ares felt the exact opposite. "Put me down! I demand you to put us down!" Hephaestus cried. And suddenly, Gaia, Irene, and Artemis heard, "aww! Help!" So they turned around, and to find that Hephaestus and Ares had fallen into the mountain. And a few seconds later, an enormous fire explosion started shooting out of the mountain. "Run!" Gaia exclaimed. Gaia, Irene, and Artemis started running down the mountain and went inside their home. "I think we are safe here," Gaia murmured. After waiting and waiting to go outside, they thought it was going to take forever till it would be safe. And by the time they went out, it was morning. Gaia, Irene, and Artemis were so disappointed. The fiery explosion destroyed part of Greece, all the nature was burnt down, and all the animals were gone. They thought this was the most tragic day ever in their whole life. But then Artemis pointed out that the fire explosion may have been pretty bad, but it gives the Earth a fresh start. New trees, new soil, and new everything. After Artemis pointed that out, they thought the day went from the worst day to the best day. So after that day, Gaia, Irene, and Artemis continued to make Earth a beautiful and perfect place, once again.

Whenever volcanoes erupt, it is because Hephaestus and Ares get in the way of Gaia, Irene, and Artemis. And that causes a fiery explosion to some mountains around the world. And those fire explosions are called volcano eruptions. And that is why volcanoes erupt.