

## **Mars, Venus and Vulcan**

By Big Billie

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Author's Note: The story of Vulcan entrapping Mars and Venus in a net is from Ovid, and many other details are taken from the literature on myths; the rest I have made up.

Greetings, mortals, from across the ages! I am Vulcan, also known as Hephaestos, the ancient god of fire. You may ask how I can speak to you in your third Christian millennium while I am locked in the ancient and unreal world of mythological imagination. Well, we gods can do things like that. Indeed, we can do lots of things, as your mortal poets Homer, Virgil, Ovid, etc., have told.

Alas, your modern educational curricula leave little time for the study of the ancient classics; you are all too busy learning about computers, IT, business skills, etc.; so you probably have no idea who I am. Well, I am the son of Jupiter, the king of the ancient gods, and of his wife, Juno. I was born lame, and my mother could not stand the sight of me; no sooner had I left her womb than she flung me from heaven. As you can imagine, I landed on earth with quite a bump after that long drop, and it made my lameness even worse than before; but I am a good artist, and an excellent blacksmith, and I can craft you anything in metal, as well as in ceramics, wood, leather, or anything else for that matter.

My wife is my half-sister, Venus, also known as Aphrodite. Yes, we ancient deities do not have any moral standards, and we enjoy a bit of incest. My wife was born from the foam of the sea. The west wind blew her through the billows to the island of Cyprus where a quartet of beautiful nymphs, the 4 Seasons, decked her out in goddess's attire and escorted her to Mount Olympus, to the seat of the gods. She was exquisitely beautiful and all the gods wanted her for their wife. The decision fell to my father, Jupiter, and, to thank me for all the thunderbolts that I had crafted for him over the years, he gave her to me.

Now goddesses are beautiful, and Venus is the most beautiful of them all; gods are handsome, except for me, and I am as ugly as sin. So the most beautiful goddess married the most ugly god, and it was a sure recipe for infidelity and marital strife. But, as you will now learn, before I am made a cuckold, and before I will wear the horns, I will, if I can, inflict a strict and sharp vengeance on my wife and on anyone who dares to meddle with her.

The most persistent adulterer has been my brother Mars, the god of war. He is a big, strapping fellow, brave, handsome and well endowed with sex

meat. He is not very bright, whereas I am the craftiest of all the gods; but even so he is a powerful and formidable enemy. It was Phoebus, the sun god, who first told me that Mars was bedding my wife, but I was afraid of my brother's reputation as a fighter, and I pretended not to notice. Soon, however, all of Mount Olympus was laughing at me, and I had to do something about it.

So I crafted myself a net, so strong that not even a god could break it, rigged it up over our marriage bed, and kept watch. Sure enough, one evening, when she thought that I was away in Lesbos, my wife summoned her lover. It was a hot night, so they flung the sheets and blankets aside, discarded their clothes, and lay on the bed completely naked.

It was then that I struck. As soon as they leapt onto the bed, and while they were still lying apart from one another, I pulled the chord and my net fell over them. Then, quick as a flash, I tied the net together underneath the bed, and pulled it so tight that the lovebirds could not move, not even to cover their naked sexes with their hands. Thus, ugly and deformed as I am, I had the most handsome of the gods, and the most beautiful of the goddesses, at my mercy; and I was resolved to exact a high price from them for making me a cuckold and a laughing stock.

Fortunately for my plan, my wife was lying on her front, and Mars on his back. I took my knife, and I cut the net from around Venus's fundament, and from around Mars's priapus, thus exposing their naked sexes to my ministrations of vengeance.

I started with Mars. I carefully pulled his sexual organs through the net for easy access. I pinched the skin at the end of his priapus, and I worked the meat inside it as far down the exterior skin as I could. Next I clamped together as great a length of the exterior skin as I could. Then down came my knife for cut number one, and off came the skin. As you modern mortals might put it, I circumcised the god of war, and I circumcised him very tightly. I made him smart, I made him throb, and I made the red blood flow.

After that I lifted his sex meat and pinched together another fold of skin. This was what you modern mortals call the frenulum, the stringy, twangy triangle of sensitive nerves, muscles and tendons on the underside of the male sex. Then down came my knife for cut number two, and off came the skin, nerves, muscles and tendons; indeed, off came the whole of Mars's frenulum. For a second time I made the god of war smart, I made him throb, and I made the red blood flow. I put the two pieces of severed skin into a jar of white vinegar and sealed it with wax. That was my trophy. From a small bucket full of blazing coals I then drew a short, red-hot iron. Raising again the priapus of the god of war, I branded him on its underside, where his sex meat met his stones, and rubbed black, powdered charcoal into the wound. The brand depicted my personal emblem of a hammer and anvil, and since that day the adulterer has displayed it, indelibly etched onto his sex. The god of war is brave and courageous. Drunken Bacchus, the god of wine, yelps and howls pitifully when in pain. But Mars took his punishment in silence, except for a few involuntary wincing and grunts; he did not plead for mercy, and, when it was all over,

he looked down impassively on his mutilated and bloodied sex. I could not make him out, but I assumed that he was silently vowing to himself to get his revenge.

Now it was Venus's turn to be chastised. For her I had fashioned in advance a twelve thonged leather whip, similar to the martinet used by mortals in France, but with the thongs about three times as long. With this I whipped my wife's naked fundament, hard--forty lashes. Then I branded her after the same fashion as I had branded Mars, but this time on the lower inside of her right buttock, just above her thigh. The whipping hurt her, as I meant it to, and she cried out pitifully, begging me for mercy. Then, as the brand bit into the white, naked flesh of her inner buttock adjacent to her vulva, she screamed loudly, and then whimpered as I roughly rubbed in the powdered charcoal.

Leaving the adulterers helplessly trussed up I flew from my home on Mount Etna to Olympus, and summoned all of the gods and goddesses to witness my triumph. They came, thronged around, and inspected my captives with amusement and interest.

My mother, Juno, hates Venus. You may have heard the story. Eris, the goddess of discord, angered that she had not been invited to a wedding, threw an apple among the guests inscribed "for the fairest." Venus, my mother Juno, and Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, all claimed it, leaving my father, Jupiter, with a delicate problem to resolve. He sent the three goddesses to Mount Ida, to the young shepherd lad, Paris, and gave him the task of deciding who was the most beautiful. Well, we had no bikinis or swimwear in the ancient days, and these three beauteous female immortals displayed themselves to their judge stark naked. Reports say that the lucky lad inspected the rivals meticulously and at great length (indeed, in numerous sessions, over several weeks) before making the inevitable decision. My wife, Venus, is universally acknowledged as the most beautiful among gods and mortals, and she won the prize, helped by a little judicious bribery. My mother, Juno, was furious. No wonder that she exalted now to see her archrival stark naked, trussed up like a turkey, and with her fundament striped, bloodied and branded. As for Venus, most observers thought that she could scarcely hold back tears of shame.

My uncle Neptune is the god of the sea. He has always had a weakness for feminine beauty, and a soft spot for Venus, who was born from the ocean foam. He pleaded with my father that the adulterers had been punished enough, and begged him to have them set free.

But the king of the gods, probably influenced by the thought of the nagging he would get from his wife if he let Venus and her lover off too lightly, gave judgment that the sin had not been fully atoned. He told me to loosen the net slightly, and he instructed both of my captives to turn over. Soon Venus was lying on her back and Mars on his front. Jupiter then told me to tighten the net again, and to cut away the netting from Venus's breasts, so that they hung free from it. Meanwhile, the hole that I had made for her whipping now exposed her hairy sex, upper thighs and lower belly. The ravishing view excited all of the gods, but especially

my father's brother Pluto, the god of the underworld, and Bacchus or Dionysus, the god of wine, and my half-brother. Both of them, I noted with jealousy and chagrin, had rock hard sexes. Meanwhile, Minerva, and my mother Juno, continued to smirk triumphantly at the public shame and humiliation of the rival who had snatched from them both the apple of discord.

Jupiter asked me to enlarge the hole in Mars's netting so that his fundament was hanging clear of it. Then he told my mother, Juno, to take my whip and administer another forty lashes, this time to her errant son. This she did, with all of her strength. As I have said, she hated Venus, and she hated her son's sexual liaisons with her. She was resolved to make him pay, and she gave him that whip as hard as she could. In fact, Mars, the fearless warrior, had suffered worse injuries on innumerable battlefields. His muscular, handsome body is covered with scars and he generally laughs wounds to scorn. But what he could not take was that he, the mighty god of war, was having his bottom whipped like a naughty little boy. Rather than this humiliating punishment, I think he would have preferred a more severe whipping all over his back with a more vicious scourge. Even so, what made his predicament worse was that his whipping hurt. My mother is a muscular and well-built goddess. You mortals use the word "Junoesque" to describe your bigger, more voluptuous ladies, and it is very apt. Although this was only a little boy's punishment, Mars felt it very sharply. All of the other gods and goddesses were laughing at him, but for him it was no joke.

Jupiter finished the session by making both of the adulterers promise on the waters of the river Styx (the most powerful oath of the gods) that they would never exact revenge from me. He then told me to release them, and, smarting from their wounds and full of shame, they flew off, Venus to Paphos and Mars to Thrace.

But your mortal poet Ovid got it right. Once their liaison was discovered and they had been publicly shamed, the lovers had no further need for concealment. Since then they have cuckolded me over and over again. Venus, however, as is typical of females, both gods and mortals, is ambivalent. She resents her shaming, her whipping and her branding, but she is flattered that I was jealous enough to plot and execute them. I keep the jar with the pickled, cut off pieces of Mars's sex in our boudoir, and she will often smile at them, and describe to me how ugly and messy his sex looks now, and how his lovemaking seems to lack the sharpness and edge that it had before.

The bad news is that my wife regularly cuckolds me; the good news is that she often sleeps with me. She has a daughter, Harmonia, with Mars, and a son, the famed Aeneas, with another of her lovers, Anchises. But it was with me that she conceived Cupid (also known as Eros) and Anteros. I get what pleasure I can, and some time in bed with the most beautiful female ever formed is better than none, especially for me, the ugliest of all the gods.