

The Story of Aphrodite and the Sea Foam

written by Leanne Guenther based on the Greek Mythology texts by Berens and Baldwin

Long ago, even before the defeat of the Titans, a stretch of open sea lay calm and empty under the dawn.

Nothing moved there but the slow swell of waves on a windless morning. Then the water began to bubble. White foam gathered on the surface and turned pink, the color of the inside of a shell. The foam rose into a mound, and out of it stepped a young woman, standing in a huge curved seashell.

She shook out her long hair. Drops of water rolled down it and fell into the shell. Every drop turned into a pearl glowing like a little moon.

A warm breeze rose and pushed the shell gently across the water. It carried the young woman past the morning mist and on toward the island of Cyprus.

The beach was pale gray sand... bare and dry. Aphrodite stepped out of the shell, and wherever her foot touched the sand, it turned luscious and green. Grass sprang up around her ankles. Flowers followed, red and gold and pink, and the air filled with their scent. The green spread up the beach and over the hills, until trees were leafing out and the whole island seemed to be more alive than ever before.

The Seasons were waiting on the shore. They dressed her in robes that would never fade or wear thin, and they set a wreath of pure gold on her head. They fastened delicate rings in her ears and a glittering chain around her neck.

Aphrodite looked down with wide, innocent eyes at the flowers still opening around her feet.

"Did I do this?" she asked.

"You did," said one of the Seasons. "Try not to step on the daisies."

Then an excited group of nymphs led her up to the shining halls of Mount Olympus. The gods and goddesses looked up as she walked in, and they cheered and welcomed her, for none of them had ever seen anyone like her.

And they gave her a name from the sea that had made her. Aphrodite means "risen from the foam."





