

[music]

[00:00:23] **Jordan:** Hi, I'm Jordan.

[00:00:25] **Kit:** I'm Kit.

[00:00:26] **Jordan:** Welcome to *Starry Time* where stars plus lines--

[00:00:30] **Kit:** Equal stories.

[00:00:32] **Jordan:** This week we'll be exploring the pop culture of the constellation Cepheus the King.

[00:00:39] **Kit:** Yes. Last week we talked all about the myths and we wrote constellations to them. Now we're just going to be a little bit more silly and talk about our favorite and least favorite occurrences of Cepheus and pop culture. Then of course we'll take over the brand. We'll wish upon the star for what we wish existed and then we'll wrap it all up. Jordan, do you want to start off with your favorite pop culture appearance of Cepheus?

[00:01:03] **Jordan:** Kit, I'd be happy to. My first question I have for you is, are you familiar with the two words Odds Bodkin?

[00:01:12] **Kit:** Yes.

[00:01:14] **Jordan:** What kind of stories would Odds Bodkin tell?

[00:01:18] **Kit:** [laughs] Odds Bodkin is a storyteller who would retell the *Iliad* or other Greek myths or the *Odyssey*. I feel like I had a multidisk CD of the Odds Bodkin retelling of one of those, maybe the *Odyssey* for sure.

[00:01:39] **Jordan:** I actually do think it was the *Odyssey*.

[00:01:42] **Kit:** Yes.

[00:01:42] **Jordan:** From this retelling of the *Odyssey*, do you happen to remember a character called Cepheus?

[00:01:50] **Kit:** No, I don't.

[00:01:52] **Jordan:** Ah, Kit, I was wondering if this could count as pop culture given that it's a character in the *Odyssey*, but I remembered it was not only pop culture, it's pop culture that had a poster on your wall.

[00:02:07] **Kit:** [chuckles] That's true.

[00:02:07] **Jordan:** Let me refresh your memory here. Cepheus does appear in the story of the *Odyssey* as one of the comrades of of course the Greek hero Odysseus. Cepheus, along with 11 others come to port close to Sicily, where they are captured,

Completed: 12/24/2024

seized, and confined by the Cyclops Polyphemus. Eventually, Odysseus uses his clever wits to outsmart the Cyclops, but not before half of these 12 men die, including Antiphon, Eurylion, Apheidas, Stratios, Menetos, and a certain comrade named Cepheus. I would say my favorite appearance of Cepheus in pop culture is as Cyclops food for Polyphemus in the *Odyssey*, which I went through a lot of work to prove is still pop culture.

[00:03:26] Kit: Did you know that-- We've talked about Cepheus the King in the Andromeda story and the Cassiopeia story. We've just talked about in the *Odyssey*, but there's also another Cepheus in Greek mythology, Cepheus of Arcadia. That's a whole other mythology related to Cepheus that is not this Cepheus.

[00:03:46] Jordan: I looked into that myth as well and it's pretty great. In the Cepheus of Arcadia's case, he has 20 sons, and after much debating and back and forth, Hercules persuades Cepheus and his sons to join him in a war against the king of Sparta, who is known as Hippocoön. Interesting name.

[00:04:12] Kit: That's a good name.

[00:04:13] Jordan: Anyways, the coolest part of the myth is that Hercules gives Cepheus's daughter a lock of Medusa's hair.

[00:04:22] Kit: Like a snake?

[00:04:24] Jordan: Yes, which Athen-- I guess a lock of Medusa's hair technically could just be. Apparently that Athena says, "If you hold up this snake lock three times from the city walls that any enemy advancing on the city would turn away in flight." Who knows if Athena was telling the truth or she just really didn't care very much for Cepheus's family. Long story short, Cepheus of Arcadia dies in this war against Sparta, along with 17 to 20 of his sons.

According to Apollodorus, all 20 sons are killed. Whereas historian Diodorus Siculus says all were killed except for three. 17 to 20 of his kids.

[00:05:13] Kit: I will say for the other Cepheus, he's got a better myth or at least he's a more well-developed character than Cepheus from the constellation. That was not my favorite selection. Although I did read about Cepheus of Arcadia. I didn't really find much that I was really excited about seeing. I did see there was something in the *Soulcalibur* universe to do with Cepheus, but I haven't played *Soulcalibur* since *Soulcalibur 2*. I feel like that's the one we had.

[00:05:48] Jordan: 1998. Somewhere around there.

[00:05:51] Kit: That's the one we had. I was like, "I don't know what this is," in some kind of store. I was like, "Well, that makes no sense to me." I decided to go with one of my fallbacks that isn't the *Stargate*, which was Acraea Cepheus, which is a butterfly that is found in various parts of Africa. It's a really beautiful butterfly. Anytime I'm out walking in nature and I see a butterfly, I just feel so delighted.

Completed: 12/24/2024

There's just something really beautiful about just having that moment in nature.

You're like "Oh, you're so beautiful and sweet." That's what I decided to go with for my pop culture appearance which like yours may or may not be pop culture, but is an appearance in the broader world.

[00:06:38] Jordan: We've each gone over our favorites, mine being Cyclops food, yours being a relatively beautiful butterfly from Africa. Now I think we should talk about our least favorite occurrences of Cepheus in pop culture.

[00:06:57] Kit: I have a couple of least favorites. I'm going to go with the one I hate most.

[00:07:07] Jordan: The least, least. The most least.

[00:07:08] Kit: Most least. I don't know how words work in that case. I'm going to just hearken back a second to our discussion of the myths of Cepheus. What we talked about last week was essentially that there was so little to say about Cepheus that we actually just talked about Io. If you haven't listened to that episode yet because you're like, "What could you possibly say about Cepheus?" go and listen to it because we actually talked about Io who's a distant relative of Cepheus, an ancestor.

I was frankly appalled and irritated that Cepheus is also the name of an impact crater on the moon because--

[00:07:53] Jordan: Disappointment.

[00:07:54] Kit: Yes. I'm like, "We already have a Cepheus constellation. I don't know why we need more Cepheus representation in astronomy."

[00:08:05] Jordan: As we went over last week, this guy's basically claim to fame is offering his daughter up as tribute, being a coward. That's it. That's all he really brings to the table. It's even more offensive when you actually look up the names of impact craters on the moon. We have Tycho, we have Copernicus, we have Humble, we have all of these great astronomers who actually did something with their lives. We have Kepler, we have Newton and then we have Cepheus. It's giving this guy way too much credit.

[00:08:43] Kit: Way too much. What was your least favorite? What did you come up with for your least favorite occurrence?

[00:08:49] Jordan: First of all, I don't want to live in a world where any jump cannon doesn't have a crater.

[00:08:55] Kit: Great point.

[00:08:56] Jordan: Cepheus does? Get your priorities in order NASA.

Completed: 12/24/2024

[00:09:01] **Kit:** Whoever names the moon.

[00:09:02] **Jordan:** [crosstalk] Whoever's naming the moon. If it's the IAU, if it's NASA, we have some notes. DM us. We'll get back to you. My least favorite occurrence of Cepheus was actually something I hadn't thought about in a few years, which is the world of Texas Hold'em poker. Apparently, in a January 2015 article that was published in Science, a group of researchers, mostly from the University of Alberta, which is apparently one of many or a couple of schools at least, that will pay you to develop a poker bot, they made an announcement in Science that they "Essentially weakly solved, W-E-A-K-L-Y, Texas Hold'em poker poker" with the development of their poker bot, which they have named Cepheus.

[00:10:01] **Kit:** Which is a funny name, but why? Why is it named this?

[00:10:07] **Jordan:** The more I read about the bot and the more time I spend on the website of the company that developed it, the more I think it's wholly appropriate because these-

[00:10:22] **Kit:** That's apparent.

[00:10:22] **Jordan:** -researchers at the University of Alberta, I think, are taking us all for a wild ride here. Thank you for the poker bot. I hope it made people a lot of money, but you lived up to Cepheus the King's less-than-gold standard, and for that, you win least favorite.

[00:10:45] **Kit:** Did you see also the other thing I was seeing that was least favorite is a game called the *Cepheus Protocol*?

[00:10:54] **Jordan:** No, I did not *Cepheus Protocol*. Tell me about that.

[00:10:57] **Kit:** It's a video game. All my notes say here is I don't need a virus zombie game right now.

[00:11:06] **Jordan:** [laughs] Fair, or maybe ever. Yes.

[00:11:10] **Kit:** I was like, "Yes, I don't think I need that." I'm out on virus things, destroying the world. I think it's too soon. Don't need it. Then again, with the naming, I'm like, "But why have you named it this?" I don't know. I don't get it. I don't get the reference to Cepheus unless it's a different Cepheus. I'm not sure.

[00:11:35] **Jordan:** At best, there are three Cepheids, which is Cepheus plural, Cepheids, either dead by a Spartan army, dead by Polyphemus, or coward father, dad, loser. Choosing any of those for your brand name, maybe there shouldn't be a favorite other than that butterfly.

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[00:12:08] **Jordan:** Now that we've talked about Cepheus in every possible way,

Completed: 12/24/2024

we've gone over the bugs, we've gone over the myth, we've gone over the poker bots, now let's do our best to fill in what we wish existed with this brand.

[00:12:26] Kit: I'll start us off. It took me a really long time to come up with something. I think it's because there's not a lot, as we talked about. Not a lot going on with Cepheus. I decided that I would take that on more metaphorically. I would like to create the Cepheus couch.

[00:12:47] Jordan: Tell me more about the Cepheus couch. It's alliterative. Good start.

[00:12:52] Kit: I love that. When in doubt, alliteration helps everything. It's a comfy couch. You can lay down on it. What better thing to represent Cepheus the King than a place where you might take a nap? Just a thing that lives in a house.

[00:13:14] Jordan: Yes. Where you might laz about as opposed to take on the responsibilities of protecting your family.

[00:13:21] Kit: Of course, it only comes in neutral colors. It's gray, white, black. That's it. You can't get it in any fun colors. It's a very ordinary sofa. It's just a sofa. That's what I came up with.

[00:13:39] Jordan: Kit, I think it's worth noting that last month, what I wished was a grooming recliner. This month, what you wish for is a deluxe sofa.

[00:13:50] Kit: Napping sofa.

[00:13:52] Jordan: That might say more about us as narrators. The best way to tackle these brands. To be fair, though, what I wish existed also focused more on the luxury because what else are you going to do with Cepheus other than attributed to the king, attributed to royalty? When I looked up at that constellation, I had one word come to mind, Doghouse. My idea is Cepheus Doghouse.

[00:14:29] Kit: Oh, that's so good.

[00:14:29] Jordan: Treat your canis like a king.

[00:14:33] Kit: Oh, wow. A tagline? Are you kidding me?

[00:14:35] Jordan: I've also looked up what the best doghouses money can buy are. I think there's room in the luxury doghouse market for Cepheus brand to pretty much take over. There's no Greek god-themed doghouse.

[00:14:57] Kit: Wow, with columns and stuff?

[00:15:00] Jordan: With columns. Nothing. You can't get a single Parthenon Coliseum doghouse.

[00:15:05] Kit: Wow. That's a gap in the market. If you're listening to this-
Completed: 12/24/2024

[00:15:08] **Jordan:** Huge gap.

[00:15:09] **Kit:** -make that happen. Make that happen.

[00:15:12] **Jordan:** What I'm saying is this pod is here to make you money. If you want to appeal to the **[inaudible 00:15:20]** If you know someone who loves Caesar's palace, they will love Cepheus Doghouse. There's nothing like it on the market. It's basically just cosplay your dog as a Greek king. What do you think about that, Kit?

[00:15:41] **Kit:** Oh, my gosh. That's incredible. What a great idea. People do name their dogs Apollo or Zeus or all these kinds of Greek god names. I think it's an amazing idea. I literally don't have any building skills, but somebody out there, if you have these skills, it would be amazing.

[00:16:02] **Jordan:** Kit, whether it's superior sofas or the best doghouses the Greek architects could imagine, it's only a matter of time before one of our wishes comes true.

[00:16:17] **Kit:** This has been Kit.

[00:16:19] **Jordan:** And Jordan.

[00:16:20] **Kit:** Sisters, lovers of stars and stories.

[00:16:22] **Jordan:** We'll see you next time.

[00:16:24] **Kit:** On *Starry Time*.

[music]

[00:16:51] **[END OF AUDIO]**