

## **How The Demigod Ksenya Came To Be**

After discovering yet another one of Zues' dalliances, Hera flew from Mount Olympus in a fire ball of anger. Her ire was so great, she burned all that was in her path. Finally, she calmed down enough to sit on a boulder by a brook and cry. It was there that Ksenio, a grounds keeper for King Minos, king of Cretes, found her sobbing, her hands covering her face. He thought she was a young maiden who he might be able to help, so he gently approached her and said soothingly, "Don't cry, young maiden. Nothing in your young life could be so terrible that it causes you this much distress when surrounded by this much beauty. Perhaps I can help you with your troubles."

At first, the fire of Hera's anger was fanned by his disturbance, but when she turned to see Ksenio's kind eyes, her fiery ire was extinguished. As Ksenio knelt by her side, she began to share the story of her broken heart. Ksenio said, "I cannot imagine how such a man can exist. How could anyone hurt one as beautiful and gentle as you?" Ksenio did not know he was talking to Hera who had a reputation for hurting those who crossed her; nor did he know that it was not a man who broke Hera's heart, but Zues himself. He thought she was just a young maiden whose heart was broken by some immature warrior in King Minos' army.

Ksenio invited Hera to visit the secret garden he kept near his cabin any time she felt sad. He knew the beauty of the many shrubs and flowers would make her feel energized and joyful. Sometimes when he found her there, they talked for hours. Soon, he grew to love her and proposed marriage. Hera could not bear to tell Ksenio the truth about Zues and who she truly was. Instead, she let him believe she was Hesa, a

young maiden who would be delighted to marry him. A small ceremony took place in the secret garden.

Not long after Ksenio learned he'd be a father, Zues discovered the truth about this "Hesa" of Cretes. One day, he spied Ksenio in the secret garden. Seeing all the beauty about the garden, Zues caused a storm that destroyed all the plants and flowers. He then struck Ksenio with a special lightening bolt that turned the man into a weed. No longer would this garden be adorned in beauty; instead, only this weed would grow. When Hera found the garden destroyed and her Ksenio turned into a weed, she began to weep. As her tears fell upon the leaves of the weed, a yellow flower started to bloom. Although Zues turned Ksenio into a weed, he could not stop Hera's tears from allowing it to grow a bright, yellow flower which spread and still grows wild every spring.

Hera gave birth to a daughter she named Ksenya after her father. Fearing for her child's life, Hera surrendered the child to a family in Crete who was related to Ksenio. The couple already had five strong sons, and eagerly welcomed the baby girl. She was raised surrounded by love. Hera often came to visit her in the form of a peacock. The little girl was often seen talking with this bird in the family garden where she tended the shrubs and flowers. Surrounding the garden, were wild yellow topped flowers. Her brothers looked after her carefully, never letting any harm come to her. They knew that when she grew up, she was destined for some sort of greatness. As she grew, she took care of the family's gardens. She welcomed animals of all kinds into her garden. She encouraged neighbors and strangers to stop by the bubbling brook that ran next to the garden and meditate on their lives. Many found comfort along that brook, just as Ksenya's mother did years before.