



Artemis Alabaster Bust Statue

Artemis is one of the Olympian Goddesses, the daughter of *Zeus* and the nymph *Leto*, and the twin sister of *Apollo*. *Artemis*, like her twin brother, was born for greatness. From birth she knew she wished nothing more than to be a great huntress and to live in the mountains and forests of Arcadia hunting and exploring.

Naturally her father, the mighty *Zeus*, granted his daughter's wish. He also gave her seven nymphs to protect her. The *Cyclops* gave *Artemis* a bow and arrows made of pure silver. *Pan* gave her hounds to help in her hunt. Soon *Artemis*' skills as an archer rivalled even those of *Apollo*, and like her brother, she became a fierce competitor.

Artemis spent her days and nights hunting. She could love with the heat of a thousand fires, but she also could be cold and unforgiving. Her reputation and her longing for solitude were fierce and mortals stayed clear of her – all except for one who became a close friend. His name was *Orion*.

When *Apollo* noticed that *Artemis* was spending a great deal of time hunting with the mortal, *Orion*, he decided to put an end to the relationship. He challenged *Artemis* to prove her skill at archery by shooting at an object floating far out at sea. Her shot was perfect. The target turned out to be the head of *Orion*.

Apollo's relief alarmed his sister. "Who have I killed?" she asked, and when she learned she had killed her true friend, she swam out to sea to retrieve his body. But she was too late. Orion's spirit had already departed. Tenderly, and with great sadness, Artemis - also known as the Moon Goddess - took Orion's body in her silver moon chariot and placed him in the sky as a tribute to their friendship. To this day there he remains, his faithful hounds, Canis Major and Canis Minor, beside him.

See what other stories you can find about Artemis.

