The Roman legends are adapted from earlier Greek versions, and not all the authors agree about which deity gave birth to whom when. The major accounts include Hesiod's Theogony, Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound, Ovid's Metamorphoses, and, of course, Sophocles, Homer, and Virgil.

Titans and the Elder Deities That Existed Before The Roman Olympic Gods

Nox (Night) and Erebus (Darkness) gave birth to a variety of beings that beautify the night sky or that torment humans. The Three Fates were so powerful that not even the gods could avert their decisions. Clotho wove the cloth of life, then Lachesis measured its length, and Atropos cut the thread of life when it was time for mortals to die. Collectively, they are called the Moira or the Parcae. An alternative genealogy has them born from a union of Zeus with Themis.

Out of the spinning chaos before time began three forces or beings emerged. One was Erebus, or darkness. The next was Gaea, the Earth-Mother. The third was Eros, or irrational desire. In some myths, Eros is equated with Cupid, and he is instead considered the son of Venus.

Key:
Black: Primordial Forces of Night
Green: Primordial Forces of Nature
Red: Monsters
Blue: Titans
Gold: Gods
White: Lesser Deities

Primal Chaos

Nox

Erebus

Gaea

Eros

When Chronos overthrew and murdered his father, Uranus, he feared that his own children would treat him in the same way. To prevent his children from ever doing so, he ordered his wife Rhea to swallow her children whole as soon as they were born. She smuggled one son, Zeus, to safety. He later grew up and overthrew Chronos, at which point Rhea vomited up the other godlings she had swallowed.

Ether (heavenly light)
Hemera (daylight)
Doom
Mortis (Death)
Morpheus (Sleep)
Dreams
Nemesis (Vengeance)
The Three Fates:
- ***Clotho***
- ***Lachesis***
- ***Atropos***

The Three Furies:
- ***Megara***
- ***Alecto***
- ***Tisiphone***

Uranus

Gaea

Pontus

As the ages passed, the feminine force Gaea (Earth) either split in half or gave birth to Uranus, the sky. The Earth and the Sky became lovers, and they spawned a series of children. In some versions, Pontus, the primeval sea, is another lover of Gaea. Between the three of them, Earth, Sky, and Sea manage to give birth to both marvels and monstrosities.

Nereus (m. Doris)

Thaumas

Phorcys

Ceto

The three cyclopes (singular cyclops), one-eyed giant monsters, were among Gaea's first children. Their names, Brontes ("thunderer"), Steropes ("flasher"), and Arges ("brightener"), show that they were associated with storms. They later aided Zeus by helping Hephaestus forge lightning bolts for Zeus to use as javelins against the titans. They are not related to the cyclopes that plague Odysseus in The Odyssey. Those cyclopes descend from Poiseidon's line.

3 Cyclopes

3 Hecatoncheires

Argus

Like the cyclopes, the hecatoncheires were abused by the titans because of their ugliness. They were monstrous giants each possessing one hundred arms and limbs. Argus, however, was a giant monster with one hundred eyes. These monsters willing served Zeus in exchange for their freedom from imprisonment in Tartarus.

Harpies

Iris

Gorgons

Scylla

Sirens

The sirens and Scylla were some of the monsters Odysseus faced on his voyage to Ithaca. The Gorgons were snake-headed creatures so ugly their appearance petrified men. Perseus killed one of the Gorgons, Medusa, and used her head as a weapon to petrify his enemies.

Oceanus

Tethys

Coeus

Phoebe

Inachus and river gods

Oceanids

Doris (m. Nereus)

Nereides

Latona (Leto)

Hyperion

Thea

Saturn

Rhea (Ops)

Sea foam

Iapetus

Themis or Clymene

Atlas (m. ?)

Prometheus

Epimetheus

Typhoeus

Maia

Mercury

Venus

First Olympian Gods: Jupiter, Juno, Neptune Pluto, Ceres, Vesta, Vulcan, and Mars. (Their genealogy continues on the next sheet.)

Unlike most of the Titans, who fought against the Greek gods and were punished by the victorious deities, wise Prometheus (forethought) saw the eventual outcome, and he talked his dumb brother Epimetheus (hindsight) into joining the winning side. Atlas missed the boat, however, and the deities punished him by leaving him the task of holding up the sky for all eternity. He did have time to sire a half-human daughter, Maia, who would later give birth to Mercury after being seduced by Zeus. For a time, Prometheus was a favorite of the gods. But later, he took pity on cold, shivering mortals and stole fire from the gods to give to them. Zeus was so angry with Prometheus for breaking up the divine monopoly on fire that he ordered him chained to a mountain where birds of prey tear out and eat Prometheus' liver for all eternity. The divine titan, being an immortal, cannot die, and his liver regenerates each night to be eaten anew.

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