



## Origins of Olympus (Pegasus)

By Kate O'Hearn

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Emily and her winged horse, face an ancient challenge of Olympic proportions in this fourth book of the exciting Pegasus series.

A deadly plague has struck Olympus. While the Olympians fade one by one, Emily's heart breaks as she watches, particularly when Pegasus begins to slip away. Determined to save him, she embarks on an investigation that takes her back in time to the origins of Olympus and to the deadly battle between the Olympians and the Titans.

In the present, she must face the force of the CRU. In the past, she must confront Cronus, the father of the gods and leader of the Titans, who is intent on destroying his offspring. When Emily encounters the full power of the flame and a discovery that could change the face of history, will she make the right decisions? And in the race against time to save Pegasus, will Olympus find its true hero?

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## Origins of Olympus (Pegasus) By Kate O'Hearn Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #33200 in Books
- Published on: 2015-12-01
- Released on: 2015-12-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.63" h x 1.20" w x 5.13" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 448 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### About the Author

Kate O'Hearn was born in Canada, raised in New York City, and has traveled all over the United States. She currently resides in England. Kate is the author of the Pegasus series, the Shadow Dragon series, and the Valkyrie series. Visit her at [KateOHearn.com](http://KateOHearn.com).

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Origins of Olympus

1

THE LIGHT OF THE SOLAR stream pulsed and flashed as she tore through it as fast as she could. She had to get home! But the faster she traveled, the longer the journey became. Obstacles blocked her path, slowed her down. Other worlds called to her. Unseen hands reached for her and pulled her down.

“No!” she screamed. “I have to go back before it’s too late. Leave me alone!”

Breaking free of their grip, she raced through the Solar Stream until at last she made it home. She arrived in the temple and hurtled along its long stone corridors. Her heart roared and her terror grew as she felt the others gathering far from the temple. They were drawing together and merging their powers. She had to reach them. Join them. She couldn’t be left behind.

She emerged from the stone temple and dashed into the dense green jungle. She put on more speed as she moved along paths as old as time itself, rushing past the great statues of her people and dodging around the massive trees. This was her home. Her sanctuary. Her world. But they were all about to leave it. To go on.

They had said they would try to wait for her. But when the stars aligned, they would go with or without her.

“Please don’t let me be too late . . . ,” she begged. “Please! Please!”

Emily’s cry woke her from the terrifying dream, and she felt a warm tongue on her cheek. She looked up and saw the magnificent winged stallion, Pegasus, standing at the side of her bed. He was glowing brightly as he stared down at her and nickered softly.

Emily’s face was hot and flushed, and she was panting heavily as if she’d been in a race. “I’m okay, Pegs,” she said quietly as she looked up into his large, concerned eyes.

Pegasus nickered again and pressed his face to hers.

“Em!” Her father raced into the room. “What’s wrong? You were shouting and crying.”

She was shaking all over. “It’s just a dream,” she said. “Ever since we got back from Area 51, I’ve had the same dream over and over again. It’s like I’m someone else and trying to get home before something huge happens. I’m so scared that I’m going to miss it. But as I go through the Solar Stream, things I can’t see block my path and something tries to hold me back.” She looked up into his caring face. “What does it mean?”

Emily's father sat on the bed and pulled her into a tight embrace. "I don't know, honey. They say dreams come from our subconscious as it tries to work something out."

"Like what?" Emily asked.

"I'm not sure. But you've been through so much lately. Maybe your mind is trying to digest everything that's happened. Look at how our life has changed. We live here on Olympus, and you've got so many powers now. I know they scare you. Maybe that's the cause of your nightmares."

"Not nightmares," Emily corrected. "Nightmare. It's always the same. I'm desperate to get home to some kind of gathering. But I always wake up before I make it there."

"Home?" he asked. "You mean New York? Do you want to go back?"

Emily frowned and shook her head. "No, not New York, and it's not Olympus, either. It's a strange place with jungle all around. I'm in a complicated stone temple surrounded by tall statues."

Pegasus snorted loudly and shook his head. He stepped closer to Emily and stared at her intently. As she gazed deep into his warm brown eyes, Emily saw a vision of a jungle world filled with tall stone statues. "That's the jungle! Have you been dreaming of it too?"

The strong white stallion shook his head again, pawed the floor, and whinnied several times. He turned his head to the door. Then he nudged Emily's father and turned to the door again.

"What is it?" her father asked. "What are you trying to tell me?"

"He wants you to go somewhere," Emily explained. "This time of night?"

After several more failed attempts to get Emily and her father to understand, Pegasus gave up and left the room. He returned moments later with a very sleepy Paelen and Joel.

"You okay, Em?" Joel asked groggily as he stepped closer to her bed. He was just wearing pajama bottoms, so she could see where his new silver arm joined his broad body. It looked exactly like the old one that Vulcan had created for him after he lost his real arm in the fight against the Gorgons. She was amazed at how quickly Vulcan had been able to build it after the Central Research Unit scientists at Area 51 had surgically removed the old one.

Emily nodded. "I'm fine. I've had that dream again. But then Pegs showed me a place exactly like the one in my dream."

Paelen yawned loudly. His hair stood at all angles and his nightclothes were twisted and unkempt. He looked at Pegasus and frowned. "You woke me because Emily was having a dream? What about me? I was having my own amazing dream featuring several water nymphs."

Pegasus whinnied and shoved Paelen.

"What!" Paelen cried. "Am I not allowed to dream?"

"Paelen, please," Emily said. "Pegasus is trying to tell me something, but I can't understand him. I think it's

important.”

Paelen concentrated on Pegasus. “What is it?”

The stallion nickered several times and shook his head yet again.

“This is very strange,” Paelen said. “Pegasus says the world you have been describing from your dream is the world you sent him to when you were shot at the CRU facility in the Nevada desert.”

Emily frowned. “How? I’ve never been there or even heard about it. Why would I dream of a place I’ve never seen? And why is it always the same dream?”

Pegasus pawed the floor and whinnied softly. Paelen looked shocked. “Really? Why have we not heard about this when it concerns Emily?”

“What concerns me?” Emily asked.

“Apparently, after we returned from Earth, Jupiter had some of his people go to the jungle world to explore it. He was curious why your powers would send things there.”

Emily looked at Pegasus. “You knew about this and didn’t tell me?”

The stallion dropped his head, looking very guilty.

“Pegasus only just found out. Jupiter told him to say nothing, as he feared it might upset you. After everything that happened on Earth, he wanted you to spend some quiet time on Olympus and not worry about the jungle world,” Paelen explained.

“Not telling me is what upsets me!” Emily replied angrily. “Jupiter promised we were going to figure that out together. He shouldn’t have sent people there without me.”

Emily’s father nodded. “I agree. There must be some reason why Emily’s powers sent you and Alexis, the Sphinx, there. We have a right to be involved in the investigation. I’ll have a chat with Jupiter in the morning and find out what’s going on.”

“I’m coming with you,” Emily said.

“Me too,” Joel added.

“And me,” Paelen said.

Pegasus nickered and nodded. Emily didn’t need Paelen to translate. The stallion would be there too.



Emily couldn’t go back to sleep. After her latest dream she didn’t really want to. Instead she and Pegasus slipped silently out of the palace and flew high in the night skies over Olympus.

The stars were shining brightly overhead and cast enough light for them to see. Emily looked down on the

night dwellers as they went about their silent lives, working, living, and playing only by starlight.

Pegasus landed on their private silver beach surrounding the calm lake. No wind disturbed its surface, and it was like a giant mirror reflecting the stars from above.

Emily climbed off Pegasus and walked knee deep into the cool, still water. She no longer needed her leg brace, as her powers had healed her damaged leg back at Area 51. The revelations from her time at the CRU facility still troubled her. She had only confided in Pegasus about what the scientists had said about her. She hadn't even told Joel or Paelen, for fear of what they might think of her.

Was she really not alive? They claimed she didn't have physical matter the same way all living organisms did—even the Olympians. And although she had blood and a heart that pumped it around her body, they weren't needed to keep her going. The scientists believed it was all there because Emily thought it should be.

In her quiet moments, or when she was alone with Pegasus, Emily asked herself the same question time and time again. "What am I?" But despite his love and support of her, Pegasus had no answers.

"It's so beautiful here." She sighed as Pegasus joined her in the water. "Sometimes I wish we could stay here forever and not worry about all the other stuff. Just you and me and this silver lake."

Pegasus pressed his head to hers.

She looked up into his beautiful face and combed his long mane away from his eyes. "Something's changed. I can feel it. I've changed, and it really scares me." Emily lifted her leg. "Look, there's no trace of the scar. All I had to do was imagine it gone, and it was gone. I sent you and Alexis away without really thinking about it, and I destroyed the CRU facility at Area 51 without any effort at all. Doesn't it scare you that I can do all that?"

Pegasus snorted and shook his head, then pressed closer to her.

"Thanks, Pegs," she said gratefully. "But it scares me. What if I make a mistake? What if I really hurt someone? I just don't have enough control."

Pegasus and Emily walked along the silver beach all night. When the dawn started to rise over Olympus, she climbed on the stallion's back and they made their way home to Jupiter's palace.

After flying through her large open window, Emily barely had time to change into her tunic before there was a knock on her door.

"You ready to see Jupiter?" Joel asked as he entered her room.

The winged boar, Chrysaor, was standing beside Joel and nudged his hairy snout into Emily's hand for a pat.

"I'm ready," Emily said as she gave the boar a good-morning kiss on the head.

They met her father in the corridor and made their way along the wide marble steps leading down to the main floor.

As always, there was a lot of activity in the palace as people came and went about their business. Bouquets

of unusual, fragrant flowers were being delivered, and the statues that adorned the palace were being cleaned by a group of young male satyrs—half goat, half boy—who saw Emily and Pegasus and greeted them excitedly.

Cupid was at the base of the stairs, chatting with a young centaur. When he saw Emily, his face lit up with a bright smile.

“Oh, great,” Joel muttered to Paelen. “Just what we need, Cupid here to cause trouble.”

“Good morning, Flame,” Cupid said brightly as he approached Emily and bowed elegantly. He reached for her hand and gave it a light kiss.

“Hi, Cupid. What brings you to the palace?”

“My mother is in a meeting with Jupiter this morning,” the winged Olympian explained. “I came along hoping to see your lovely face.”

Emily blushed at the compliment. Though her crush on him was long over, he still managed to charm her in an instant.

Beside her, Joel made an exaggerated gagging sound. “Give me a break, Cupid.”

Paelen was standing on Emily’s left. From the corner of her eye she watched him use his Olympian powers to stretch his arm. While Cupid was distracted with Emily, Paelen’s elongated arm slid past her back and then Joel’s until it looped around, unseen, behind Cupid.

Emily poked her elbow in Paelen’s side, but his hand had already reached Cupid and caught hold of a handful of feathers from Cupid’s wings. Paelen gave a mighty pull.

“Ouch!” Cupid cried as his wings flashed open. He spun around to see who had attacked him and didn’t see Paelen’s arm retracting. What he did see were several feathers falling to the floor.

“Paelen!” Cupid accused. “I know it was you.”

Joel and Paelen were lost in fits of laughter at the rage on Cupid’s face. As the Olympian charged, Paelen called down to the winged sandals at his feet. They had been a gift from Mercury, the messenger of Olympus, and now served only him. “Take me up!”

The tiny wings flashed acknowledgment and then lifted Paelen high in the air over Cupid’s head.

“Come down here, you coward,” Cupid roared, jumping up and trying to reach him. “You know I can’t fly indoors!”

“Come and get me, pretty boy,” Paelen teased as he dropped Cupid’s feathers one by one.

Emily’s father stifled a grin and raised his hands to calm the room. “That’s enough, boys. We’ve got work to do.”

“But you saw what he did to me!” Cupid cried. “He pulled out my feathers.”

“I did not,” Paelen teased, still hovering overhead and releasing feathers.

Footsteps on the stairs behind them stopped the argument.

“Good morning, Emily, Pegasus, and everyone,” Juno called as she descended the steps. Beside her, her pet peacock fanned open its large tail, and a hundred eyes blinked in unison.

She looked up at Paelen. “Have I missed something here?”

Paelen ordered his sandals to land. He bowed before Juno.

“No,” Emily’s father said, also bowing. “The boys were just having a little fun.”

Emily bowed respectfully to the wife of Jupiter. “Good morning, Juno,” she said. “Do you think it’s possible for us to see Jupiter sometime this morning?”

Juno was much younger looking than Jupiter and stunningly beautiful. She wore a long white gown of flowing silk that had thousands of pearls woven into the fabric. There was a delicate gold belt tied at her waist, and fine sandals adorned her feet. Her eyes were dark chocolate brown, the same color as her hair, which was elegantly styled high on her head and dressed in a ring of pearls.

“Of course, child,” Juno said as she led them across the foyer and into one of the large side chambers. “He is in here with his council.”

Emily’s father stepped forward. “If he is with the council, we don’t want to disturb him.”

Juno paused and smiled radiantly at Emily’s father. “My husband will always have time for you, Steve. You need not ask.” She pushed open the double doors to the council chamber and invited everyone in.

Behind Emily, Paelen and Joel were still chuckling at Cupid as the winged Olympian followed, muttering threats.

Jupiter was standing with his two brothers, Pluto and Neptune, as well as an odd assortment of councillors. Among them was the Big Three’s half brother, Chiron, the centaur and closest adviser to Jupiter. There was also a giant—so massive in size that his head nearly touched the ceiling of the tall chamber. Despite their size, the giants in Olympus were some of the gentlest citizens. A one-eyed Cyclops stood beside the giant, talking softly.

Emily looked at the gathering in awe. After all this time in Olympus, she still marveled at the wondrous assortment of mythical creatures that now formed part of her everyday life.

Across the chamber, Diana stood beside her twin brother, Apollo. Vesta was also there, locked in deep conversation with Cupid’s mother, Venus. Hercules was standing farther back with his arms crossed over his broad chest, talking to Mars, the head of the war council, and looking very disturbed.

Emily had only seen Mars on two other occasions and had never spoken with him. He was tall, handsome, and muscular like Hercules, but seemed perpetually angry, with a scowl that always darkened his fine features. Yet despite his angry exterior, Mars had many admirers among the women of Olympus and was often seen with Venus. His presence in the council room meant something big was happening.



Paelen stood beside Emily and nudged her lightly. “Vesta is not on the general council; neither is Hercules, Mars, or Venus. I wonder what they are doing here.”

“Husband,” Juno called as she strode in, “Emily and her family would like a word.”

Jupiter looked up, and his face lit with a broad smile. “Of course, of course, come in!”

Since the events at Area 51, where Emily had been forced to challenge Jupiter for the protection of Earth, they had grown closer. It frightened everyone to realize how near they had come to fighting over the fate of the world. They now talked often, and Jupiter, Pluto, and Neptune had become more like beloved grandfathers than the most powerful leaders of Olympus.

“What may I do for you?” Jupiter asked as he put his arm around Emily.

Before anyone could speak, Pegasus started to whinny.

Jupiter’s smile faded. “You have been having bad dreams?”

Emily described the recurring dream. As she spoke of the jungle world, the other council members crowded around her. When she finished, Vesta turned to Jupiter. “I believe it is time we showed her what we have found.”

“Indeed,” Jupiter agreed. He swept his arm wide to include everyone. “All of you, come with me.”

Jupiter led them through a second set of doors into an even larger marble chamber. It was filled with artifacts. Strange items sat on tables and on the floor. But it was the large slate chalkboard in the center of the room that immediately caught Emily’s attention. The board was filled with strange writing and symbols.

“There are millions of worlds along the Solar Stream,” Jupiter began, “though we have only cataloged a small number of them. But recently, thanks to Emily sending both Pegasus and Alexis there, we have discovered a world at the very start of the Solar Stream.”

Chiron stepped forward, his horse’s hooves clicking on the marble floor. “Until now, we never knew the Solar Stream had a starting point. This is a very exciting time for us. We have much to discover.”

“Are you talking about the jungle world?” Emily asked.

“Indeed we are,” Jupiter said. “Around this room are just a few of the artifacts we have found there. But among the most interesting was a stone slate mounted on the wall of a large temple.”

Jupiter invited Emily forward to get a closer view. “We have transcribed the words from that stone slate here. I’ve had my best scholars trying to decipher it, but as yet, they have failed.”

Emily studied the chalkboard. There was something familiar about the symbols. As she stared at the strange writing, everything seemed to blur and swim before her eyes. Suddenly dizziness overwhelmed her, and she started to stagger back.

Joel was at her side in an instant. He put his arm around her and steadied her. “You okay, Em?”

Emily leaned heavily into him. “I—I’m fine,” she said. “It’s just that . . .” When she looked back at the chalkboard, she sucked in her breath. “I know this writing!”

“What?” Her father gasped.

Emily approached the board. “I can understand it. All of it.” She pointed to each symbol and started to read aloud.

GENTLE TRAVELERS—WELCOME TO XANADU.

WE ASK ONLY THAT YOU VENTURE HERE WITH PEACE IN YOUR HEARTS AND RESPECT IN YOUR MINDS. FOR OURS IS THE OLDEST WORLD AND MUCH BELOVED. YET WE OFFER IT TO YOU AS REFUGE. THAT WHICH IS OURS IS NOW YOURS. BUT BE MINDFUL OF OUR HOME AND HONOR OUR LAWS.

- XANADU MUST BE RESPECTED. IT WILL FEED YOU, IF YOU DO NOT ABUSE IT.
- OUR WAYS ARE THE WAYS OF PEACE. DO NOT BREAK THAT PEACE, OR WE WILL DEFEND OUR HOME.
- ALL LIFE IS PRECIOUS. YOU WILL NOT KILL ANYTHING HERE, OR YOU WILL BE FOREVER CAST OUT.

WE ARE THE XAN, CREATORS OF THE SOLAR STREAM.

GUARDIANS OF THE UNIVERSE.

XANADU IS SANCTUARY.

Emily turned back to Jupiter. The leader of Olympus had his hand over his mouth, and his eyes were the widest she’d ever seen them. He looked at her like he was seeing a ghost.

Vesta looked from the chalkboard back to Emily in shock.

“Xanadu.” Diana and Apollo both breathed reverently.

“Is it possible?” Chiron asked softly. His golden eyes were huge and filled with admiration. “After all this time, we have finally found it?” The centaur turned to Emily and bowed respectfully. “Thank you, child.”

Pegasus had his head bowed as he stood before her. As did Chrysaor, the giant, and even the Cyclops.

“Would someone please let us in on the secret?” Joel asked, confused by the odd behavior of the Olympians.

Their reactions troubled Emily. They were all looking at her like she was something strange, dredged up from the bottom of the sea.

“What is it?” she asked. “Pegs, stop bowing and tell me what’s going on? What’s so special about Xanadu?”

Jupiter righted himself, and a smile came to his lips. “As Earth has its ancient myths about us, we Olympians

have our own ancient myths and legends.”

Vesta took over speaking. “Our oldest legend says that from the time before time, long before the Olympians and even the Titans, there was Xanadu. It was said to be a precious and sacred place protected by the Xan: a great and powerful race that benevolently ruled the universe. But something happened, and the Xan disappeared.”

Diana continued, her face radiant. “It was because of that legend that we became guardians of the Solar Stream. We have been visiting the many worlds searching for the Xan and evidence that Xanadu really existed. This, at last, is the proof we have sought. We have finally found Xanadu.”

“But what does that have to do with Emily?” her father asked.

Diana put her arm around Emily’s shoulder and started to walk her around the room. “Take a look at these artifacts we have brought back. Do you recognize anything here?”

As they moved from table to table, Emily stared at the items. They all looked so familiar to her, as though she knew what they were but had somehow forgotten. She reached for what looked like a dull piece of flat, round metal and recognized its weight and shape. She touched the bottom of the piece, and it burst into brilliant light.

“I know this,” she whispered. “It’s used like a flashlight.”

As the light blazed through the room, Jupiter ordered that the doors to the chamber be closed and the windows sealed. He called everyone forward. “Listen to me. This does not go any further. It would shake the very core of our foundation if Olympians were to learn that the one we have called Flame of Olympus is not Olympian at all.”

Jupiter knelt down before Emily and dropped his head. When he lifted it again, he reached for her hands. “Child, I do not understand how it is possible. But it is my strongest belief that you are neither human nor Olympian, but are in fact Xan.”

## **Users Review**

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