

The Birth of the Starfish, - A Modern Greek Myth.

It came to pass, in the time of the great king Minos, that a great argument erupted between the sea god Poseidon and Apollo.

Nobody can remember what they were arguing about but it ended up with Apollo teaching the men of Greece how to build toilets that flushed with water and carried their effluents into the sea. The men of Greece were eternally grateful to him for this great gift, up to now their wives had carried their waste away to bury it in remote corners of the many olive groves but this was backbreaking work.

Apollo warned the people that although Poseidon would have to tolerate their waste floating around his kingdom, he would draw the line at small squares of paper, so it was made a rule that it should be collected separately and taken away to be burnt.

The Greeks followed his commands for many a long year and all was well but there came a day, when in the palace of Lymnisia, wherein the Muses dwelt, there was a great feast and the assembled company consumed spicy foods and too much hummus.

The party ended and the revellers went home to their huts. They slept soundly waking only to use the toilets, and being somewhat loose of bowel many forgot Apollo's warning and dropped their paper into the bowl.

They did not work the next day and were resting in their olive groves when the sea boiled with the wrath of Poseidon, a great storm erupted and many fishing boats were dashed to pieces on the rocks.

Poseidon emerged from the torrent, on the tips of his trident hung many sheets of soggy toilet paper, each bearing the mark of a sinner's backside, like a finger print, for the entire world to see.

Apollo, seeing what had happened, commanded all the men and women of Lymnisia to assemble on the rocky shore and to bare their behinds. Poseidon stood in the waves, holding up each sheet of paper in turn and comparing the impressions upon them to the pucker pattern of each man and woman.

When he had identified each miscreant his wrath was overwhelming. In his fury he changed each of them into a starfish, condemning them to be chained to a rock near a sewer outlet, so that they would spend eternity filtering the body waste of the people of Greece, and those people have never dared to flush their paper to this day.