

THE HUNGER FLOWER

Illustrated storybook (ages 7–10) • ~2,000 words

When a forgotten god's creation escapes Mount Olympus, a single golden flower takes root in the mortal world—spreading hunger and chaos. From its shadow comes a child, bright and restless, found beneath an olive tree and raised beside the sea. Zenon is curious, quick, and full of storm—never quite fitting the rhythm of those around him. After one impulsive act breaks the harmony of his seaside home, he must face three trials to mend what is broken: the voices of the world, the questions of his beginning, and the wildness within.

The Hunger Flower is a modern myth about adoption, identity, and growing at one's own rhythm—where the flashes of fire inside us are not a flaw, but a companion on the journey home.

EXCERPT:

A low grumbling sounded from the walls.
Then smoke slid across the floor,
curling into horns atop a monstrous body—
The Kynarith.

It had lion's claws and strong human arms.
A bull's head. Hooves of stone.
Eagle wings that stirred the air.
Eyes shone gold like his own.

Phoros's voice drifted from the dark:
“The beast of the storm that lives within you.
Fight it, and it will grow.
Walk with it, and it will learn your step.”

The beast roared.
His fierce breath blew out the torch.
Zenon ran in panic,
but quickly got lost in the labyrinth.

Every path twisted back to the same place—
The Kynarith followed close,
hooves striking sparks,
Fear tightened in his chest.

AUTHOR NOTE:

Brian von Rueden is a classically trained singer and writer based in Dresden, Germany. His stories explore difference, empathy, and belonging through music and myth.