

In Stephen Fry's [*Mythos*](#), physical transformation is a central theme used by the gods as a tool for punishment or reward, but also for preservation. Narcissus was a beautiful youth that was told he would be happy as long as he didn't recognize his face, but he saw his reflection in the water and fell in love with himself. "Day after day, he lay by the river, passionately and hopelessly in love with his own reflection, gazing at himself, filled with love for himself and longing for himself, with eyes only for himself, and consideration for no one and nothing but himself" (274). Narcissus was not able to leave his reflection so the gods turned him into a daffodil flower that always looked down at the water. This was not a punishment; Narcissus was born the way he was. He was not being evil, therefore, he did not need to be destroyed.. The transformation was a way of preserving Narcissus' life. Echo was a beautiful nymph that liked to talk too much. When she lied to Hera, Hera took away her voice and made it so she could only repeat the last words spoken to her. Echo saw Narcissus and fell madly in love with him. Narcissus rejected her and broke her heart. "In mute despair she begged to be relieved of the pain of love and the intolerable burden of her cursed existence"(273). Because the pain of heartbreak was too much for Echo to bear, she asked Aphrodite to take away the pain. Aphrodite made Echo fade away entirely until nothing was left of her body but a shapeless voice. This transformation was not a punishment; it also was a way to preserve Echo's life and let her live without pain. Because Narcissus and Echo had not behaved in an evil way, they did not deserve a punishment. The gods mercifully transformed their physical beings in order to preserve their lives and alleviate their suffering.