**Calliope, Calliope, The Muse of Epic Poetry!**

I sit in my frame looking at you.

What are you thinking?

What can you do?

Can you make out from my painting alone,

Who I am and what do I know?

Once upon a time and far away, in a place that would take us longer than a day. Over hill and over sea, I wonder, I wonder, where we could be? And in this place that’s far away, in this place that would take us longer than a day, the sun is stretching its sleeping head and shining down on the world below. And in this place that's far away, in this place that would take us longer than a day, there is a Goddess, a Muse, of stories and words and of rhyme, who writes and recites and tells tales of time gone by, and of now, with a singing voice of honey to delight the crowds who listen in wonder and in awe!

Here, is a place that’s filled with myth and lore, and stories abound about Muses and Gods, and Goddesses and creatures, and all things divine, all from atop a mountain called Olympus!

This tale is about a Muse who existed a long time ago, when Gods and Goddesses would fly in the sky, above the mountains and the sea. And her skills were ones that she would bestow, the gift of discussion and getting on, and we might see her with some paper, or maybe a scroll, but here she sits on a throne of green and gold, with a stance of royalty, looking disdainfully, and we wonder why that might be? For who is this figure, this Muse, with a stance like royalty, who sits on a throne of green and gold, with an array of dolphins surrounding her, who look like they might be guarding her. With teeth as sharp as the coldest of ice, and ruby red eyes that glare like the night, or maybe at us!

So, in a time when Gods and Goddesses flew, and lived above the mountains and the sea, a place that you might not believe, until you were there above the mountains and the sea, this might be where this Muse resides. This Muse who sits on this throne like royalty, in clothing of blue, red and green, woven with gold luxury. With a shell of scallop just behind her, with a hint of coral and of crystal. A Goddess, a Muse, of stories and of rhyme, who tells tales of now and of time gone by, and this Goddess, this Muse, her name was Calliope! But Calliope was not the only one, she was one of nine Muses, but was of course, the most important one!

Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry!

And there was also,

Polyhymnia, the Muse of Mime,

Terpsichore, the Muse of Dance,

Thalia, the Muse of Comedy and

Clio, the Muse of History!

And there was also,

Euterpe, the Muse of Music

Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy,

Erato, the Muse of Choral Poetry and

Urania, the Muse of Astronomy!

But the most important of them all was,

Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry!

In clothing woven with gold luxury, with a shell of scallop just behind her, with a hint of coral and of crystal. Her name was Calliope! But why does she sit on this throne of green and gold, with this stare, looking so disdainfully? Shall we see?

So, in this time when Gods and Goddesses could fly, just there above the sky, beyond the mountains and the sea, the Muses were challenged by nine sisters, who were in fact daughters of a King! The King of Emathia to be precise! Even though they could sing beautifully, were they a match for the Muses? *The*y thought they were! And so the challenge was set! But would there be a surprise in store for them? Because they believed and were confident that they could sing far superior to the Muses, and most importantly Calliope. They were more than happy for a group of Nymphs to judge who the best would be! The Muses or the sisters? It would be for the Nymphs to make a decision! As the sisters started to sing their songs, with a sound so dull and a choice of song so, so wrong, it was obvious that they had nothing on the Muses, for they were the finest indeed! And then the time came, for the Muses to sing, one by one...

Polyhymnia, the Muse of Mime,

Terpsichore, the Muse of Dance,

Thalia, the Muse of Comedy and

Clio, the Muse of History!

Euterpe, the Muse of Music

Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy,

Erato, the Muse of Choral Poetry and

Urania, the Muse of Astronomy!

Their dulcet tones swept through the sky! Beyond the mountains and the sea! And then the moment that everyone was waiting for, it was the turn of the most important of them all, Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry!

With one deep breath she began to regale the Nymphs with her singing and her songs, of stories, of myths, and of Goddesses and Gods, and of all of their loves and wrongs, and it was clear who the Nymphs would choose and decide to be the finest! As the sound of her voice was still sparkling and twinkling through the air, the sisters were furious with the pronouncement that the Nymphs had made, and started to quarrel and squabble right there amongst themselves, and blame each other for the Nymphs decision, whilst also declaring that they actually should have been deemed to be the finest! Oh dear!

For Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry, looked out at the sisters with a little, ok a lot, of despair, for daring to challenge her and the Muses, she made the decision with the other Muses’ agreement, to transform the sisters into birds, well, magpies to be clear! Where they instantly chattered, flapped their wings, and soared far above Mount Olympus and the sea! Nine magpies soaring in the sky, chattering and flapping, above Mount Olympus and the sea!

So *this* is the reason why this figure sits with a stance like royalty, looking so disdainfully in clothing woven with gold luxury. With a shell of scallop just behind her, with a hint of coral and of crystal. A Goddess, a Muse, of stories and of rhyme, who tells tales of now and of time gone by, sitting on this throne of green and gold, with a stance like royalty. Calliope, Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry!

**Fiona Alderton August 2025**