

Medusa: Pilot

By

Alexandra Keathley

FADE IN:

INT. DARK ROOM

A television screen flickers on through the darkness. After brief static, a home video of a child's birthday party begins to play. The camera displays a banner reading HAPPY 1ST BIRTHDAY MEDUSA; it pans down from the decorations to reveal a room full of monsters standing around chattering.

The camera zooms in on the child, MEDUSA, who has snakes for hair and sunglasses on her nose. As she plays with the small cake in front of her, her sunglasses fall off. A man rushes over to replace them, but turns to stone upon making eye contact with the child. The camera is dropped.

There is a flash of static, and a new clip begins to play. A five year old Medusa and LADON, a seven year old boy with wings and other dragon-like features, chase each other around a yard. Ladon sneezes and fire shoots out his nose, setting a nearby picnic table on fire. PHORCYS, a middle-aged man with crab-claw hands and red-spiked skin, runs into view and quickly turns the hose on the table.

PHORCYS

Ladon, I told you to be careful not
to set your little sister on fire!

There is a flash of static, and an eleven year old Medusa sits by a pool, waving to the camera. GREG, an eleven year old boy with the head of a bull, runs up and kisses Medusa on the cheek. Medusa screams and jumps back.

MEDUSA

Gross! Greg, I told you I only like
you as a friend!

There is a flash of static. Phorcys and APHRODITE, a beautiful woman in her mid-thirties with long golden hair stand at an altar.

PRIEST

You may now kiss the bride.

The couple kiss and the crowd cheers them on. A fourteen year old Medusa and sixteen year old Ladon sit in the front row, Medusa's arms crossed and a frown upon her face. There is another flash of static, and the television blinks out.

EXT. ISLAND OFF THE COAST OF OREGON - MORNING

A number of shops and homes line the sandy shores of the island. Docks extend from the beach.

EXT. MEDUSA'S HOME - MORNING

A centaur paper boy races by, throwing a newspaper at the porch.

INT. TEENAGE GIRLS' BEDROOM - MORNING

Medusa, now a fifteen year old girl, lies in bed under a pile of pillows and blankets. An alarm RINGS, and she slowly pulls herself out of bed and slumps down onto the floor. She sighs.

Aphrodite appears in Medusa's doorway.

APHRODITE

Medusa? Are you up?

Medusa pulls herself to her feet, resting the dark sunglasses sitting on her bedside table across the bridge of her nose.

MEDUSA

Yeah, Aphrodite, I'm up.

APHRODITE

You know... you can call me Mom if you want.

Medusa moves to her closet. She begins removing clothes from the closet, examining each item thoughtfully.

MEDUSA

But you're not my mother. You're my stepmother.

Aphrodite frowns. She quickly forces her expression back into a smile.

APHRODITE

I know I'm not your mother. But I want us to be as close as we can be. Even if you don't think of me as a mother, I hope that you can at least learn to think of me as a friend.

(CONTINUED)

Medusa snorts as she attempts to match a shirt to one of the many scarves in her collection.

MEDUSA

Thanks, Aphrodite, but friends have things in common.

APHRODITE

We have plenty in common.

(cont'd)

Yeah; you, Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty, the woman Barbie dolls were modeled after, must really know what it's like to be a freak monster with snakes for hair and eyes that turn all living beings they come in contact with to stone.

APHRODITE

I may not be a gorgon like you, but I was once a teenage girl, too.

(cont'd)

Yeah, when was that, yesterday?

Aphrodite opens her mouth to speak, but before she can get a word in, Medusa crosses the room and slams the door in Aphrodite's face.

APHRODITE

Breakfast in five, Medusa!

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Aphrodite enters the kitchen. Phorcys sits at the table with a newspaper in front of him.

PHORCYS

Honey, can you turn the page for me?

APHRODITE

Not a problem.

Aphrodite turns the page, kissing Phorcys on the cheek as she does so.

PHORCYS

Thanks. So how's Medusa doing? Is she still planning to go?

(CONTINUED)

Aphrodite removes a carton of eggs from the refrigerator, setting them down next to the stove before removing a bowl and a frying pan from the cupboard.

APHRODITE

Yeah, she's up. Still planning to go.

Phorcys shakes his head with uncertainty.

PHORCYS

I really wish she weren't going to do this.

APHRODITE

Every father gets nervous on his daughters' first day of school. It's nothing to worry about; I'm sure she'll be just fine.

PHORCYS

I'm not so sure about that. She is a gorgon, after all. The other kids won't understand; they'll call her a monster. Her going to school and being with them just isn't a good idea.

Aphrodite stares down at the eggs now sizzling in the frying pan pensively. After a moment, she turns to Phorcys.

APHRODITE

I know, honey, I know. But she has her heart set on seeing the world. We can't crush her dreams and forbid her from going to school just because we're worried she won't fit in. We just have to let her go to high school with the human teenagers and try our very best to be supportive. The other kids will be enough of an obstacle for her; she doesn't need us telling her she can't be who she wants to be as well.

PHORCYS

I suppose you're right.

INT. TEENAGE GIRLS' BEDROOM - MORNING

Medusa pulls on a dress, spinning in a circle as she examines herself in the mirror.

MEDUSA

Too dressy. This is the first day
of school, not prom!

She removes the dress and throws it to the side, stepping into a pair of jeans and a t-shirt. She once again examines herself in the mirror, frowning at the sight she sees in it.

MEDUSA (CONT')

Ugh, tomboy much?

She throws the shirt into a large heap of clothing on the floor, removing a peasant blouse from the closet and trying it on. After modeling it in the mirror, she grins.

MEDUSA (CONT')

Perfect. Now about this hair...

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Medusa enters the kitchen, a fashion scarf wrapped tightly around her head.

MEDUSA

Morning, Dad!

PHORCYS

Good morning, Medusa. Ready for
your big day?

Medusa grabs a muffin off the table, taking a slow bite and chewing thoughtfully.

MEDUSA

Honestly, I'm pretty nervous.

PHORCYS

I'm sure you'll do great. Just be
sure to keep the sunglasses on no
matter what anyone else says, and
keep your head down. Lay low. Don't
do anything to draw attention to
yourself.

APHRODITE

Don't be unfriendly, though. Smile
at everyone you come across, and be

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

APHRODITE (cont'd)
sure to sit by people who look nice
if you're unsure of where to sit in
class. Introduce yourself to your
new classmates. Try to make a new
friend every day.

Aphrodite sets a plate of scrambled eggs and bacon in front
of Medusa. Medusa wrinkles her nose, shoving the plate
across the table.

MEDUSA
I told you, Aphrodite, I'm a vegan.
I don't eat meat or poultry or
dairy or seafood or anything
containing any of those things. And
stop trying to give me advice; like
I said, you and I are nothing
alike.

PHORCYS
Medusa, don't talk to your
stepmother like that.

APHRODITE
It's alright, Phorcys, she's just
nervous. Aren't you, Medusa?

MEDUSA
I'm gonna leave now.

Ladon enters the room.

LADON
Wait, baby sister.

He snatches her plate off the table, quickly slurping down a
piece of bacon.

MEDUSA
What do you want, Ladon?

LADON
I just want to give you some
brotherly advice before you leave
for school.

MEDUSA
And what might that be?

Ladon grins as he swallows another piece of bacon whole,
grabbing a handful of eggs as Medusa looks on in disgust.

(CONTINUED)

LADON

Don't be too much of a freak.

MEDUSA

Thanks for that, big brother.

Medusa rises from the table, grabbing her backpack from its place next to the door.

MEDUSA (CONT')

Okay, now I really am leaving.

APHRODITE

Have a nice-

Medusa slams the door.

EXT. MEDUSA'S HOME - MORNING

Medusa exits the house, moving quickly down the street. She glances up nervously at the neighboring house. Upon noticing a pair of eyes behind the front window, she quickens her pace.

A door sounds behind her, and she grinds her teeth together, determined to move as fast as possible in order to avoid her neighbor.

Greg, now a muscular fifteen year old boy, chases after her.

GREG

Hey! Medusa!

Medusa continues walking at a brisk pace, pretending she can't hear him. He catches up, and Medusa sighs.

GREG (CONT')

Hey Medusa! Where are you headed?

MEDUSA

To school, Greg. I'm trying to catch the ferry to the mainland.

GREG

Oh. You're still doing that, huh?

MEDUSA

What do you mean, still?

GREG

Oh, I just mean... well... are you sure? Absolutely positive that this

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GREG (cont'd)
is what you want to do? You're not
like they are over there on the
mainland, you know? I'm just
worried about you.

MEDUSA
I want to see the world, though. I
can't do that without an education,
without knowing how to interact
with humans.

GREG
I know, but it just seems...
dangerous.

MEDUSA
Okay, but say I don't go to school.
Should I just stay here on this
island forever? What do I do with
my life?

GREG
Marry me and use your ability to
turn people to stone to open a lawn
ornament business.

Medusa stops abruptly, turning to look at Greg in awe.

MEDUSA
That was a rhetorical question,
Greg.

Greg looks away bashfully, clearly embarrassed by his
suggestion. Medusa's expression softens.

MEDUSA (CONT')
Greg, I'm really sorry. But you
know I only like you as a friend,
right?

GREG
Yeah, yeah, I know. At least let me
walk you to the docks, though.

EXT. DOCKS - MORNING

They walk in silence until a whistle sounds. A ferry is
approaching through the fog.

(CONTINUED)

MEDUSA
There's Charon now.

As the ferry pulls up, Greg turns to face Medusa.

GREG
Okay, Medusa. Good luck.

Medusa smiles as she reaches over and embraces Greg.

MEDUSA
Thanks, Greg.

Greg nods as Medusa pulls away from their hug. CHARON, the balding elderly ferryman with a long white beard, ushers people off of the ferry.

CHARON
All aboard!

Medusa adjusts her backpack on her shoulders, stepping nervously towards the ferry. She boards it, and Charon tips his hat to her.

CHARON (CONT')
Still going to school with the humans, Medusa?

MEDUSA
That's the plan.

EXT. BACK OF THE FERRY - MORNING

Medusa moves to the back of the ferry and take a seat. Charon takes his seat at the wheel and begins to steer the ferry away from the docks. Greg waves as the ferry pulls away, waving until he fades into the fog. Medusa stares out across the fog, brows furrowed, all signs of her previous confidence gone.

CUT TO: Medusa's foot taps nervously on the deck.

EXT. OLYMPUS HIGH SCHOOL - LATE MORNING

Students approach the school building, excitedly chattering as they enter.