

# Melissae

**“The strength of a woman is not measured by the impact that all her hardships in life have had on her; but the strength of a woman is measured by the extent of her refusal to allow those hardships to dictate her and who she becomes.” – C. JoyBell. C.**

**Quote:** You're trespassing on our farm, friend. I suggest you leave and tell no one what you saw. Although I secretly hope you do say something, because that gives me an excuse to come after you.



Melissae, also known as the Thriai, have been around for millennia, and have spent that time busy. In ages past, they made their magical honey-tincture for the Greek Gods, ensuring immortality of for the whole Pantheon, nursed a fledgling Zeus and hid him away from his cannibalistic father. They taught Heracles and Dionysus the importance of civility, curbing the boy's excesses (at certain times and places). Many also cite their own triumph

to bring men out of the wilds, by teaching them to mix water with honey, instead of spilling the blood of their fellow men. To this day, they still promote a sense of propriety to man-kind. Not that the Melissae have many dealing with men, not in today's world anyways.

An all-female Fylí (Kith), they are highly organized, much like the bees they so resemble. They act of their own accord in their own places, maintaining secret gardens on the rocky steppes as they have since time immemorial, ensuring that no trespassers (especially men) find their hidden Orchards. This xenophobia has multiple facets. One is that their health is intrinsically tied to the Garden (see below). Another is that the fruit of the Gardens are needed to brew Ambrosia- the literal food of the Gods.

Like the bees that they resemble (in appearance, paradigm, and organization all), every day is structured and eventful. While they are territorial, xenophobic, and even sexist (in their own way), the Kith isn't overly vicious. They may appear blood-thirsty when they are out to protect their own, but are also fond of dance, music, drinking, and carousing with the other sex (if they have that inclination). Duty will always come first, but pleasure isn't that far behind.

**Appearance:** In all Metamfiesi (Mien) they are long-legged, dark-skinned, and attractive females with unusually fair hair (sometimes greyish-white even as babies). The Andros Metamfiesi (the Mortal Mien) sports taut muscles toned intense play and work. They wear clothing appropriate for their roles (overalls for the workers, riot gear for the soldiers). The queens are always regal and statuesque in some-way, and despite their age, are stunning.

In Nereidias Metamfiesi (the Fae Mien) they appear much the same. The limbs may lengthen a bit, and the skin colors seem to darken into shades of red, gold, and bronze, (with some even manifesting stripes on their arms and legs). The colors of the skin seem to be indicators of a particular Garden - all the members sharing skin tones with their sisters.

## Αμβροσία

The magical tincture of the Melissae is Ambrosia. By dint of their Seeming, each of the daughters can brew a certain amount per day (See Birthrights below. honey). The Melissae are highly protective of this secret, and have their soldiers diligently protect the processes that create each bottle.

This nectar is a thick liquid distilled form of Megaleífo, (Glamour). Each bottle is one point and is highly coveted by those in the know. Those that do know don't like to share the information. operations at all times.

Each garden has their own brand, and it varies between. Some Garden's are redder and spicier, some are yellowish gold and sweet. Some Gardens with particularly Keres (Unseelie) Queens might have a sludgy brown and slightly bitter (not unpleasantly) Ambrosia.

**Lifestyle:** The Kith is in all ways organized. The Ápeiros learn, the Workers and Soldiers work or fight, and the beloved Queens dictate. There is no dissension, even for the youngest wayward daughte. Many of their mothers are workers and soldiers (with the fathers being out of the picture on purpose) who are as enthusiastic about their roles as the Ápeiros are to learn. Everyone has a role to play, and for all of the Melissae, this is what elevates them above all others.

Even some few have been sent out as voices to other motleys. They aid their fellow kiths (regardless of gender) and fight, laugh, and love alongside them. Yet they always report back to their Queen (the Melissae version of the Sofós Seeming). These are sent to learn from other courts in the name of inter-kith relations, but they still prefer their own sisters and mothers. Even some queens go out to ally themselves with the Olympian Sidhe.

To the real-world, their gardens and livelihood might manifest in selling their organic honey (a by-product from making ambrosia) to buyers around the globe, with their queen the face on the honey-jar's label.

Ápeiros *Melissae* are instructed from the moment they are sained. Eager to help and learn, they work hard and play harder. The gardens aren't just a work-environment, and many of the youth of the Kith have games and races amongst the flowers and fruits.

*Epanastátis Melissae* come in two stripes (no pun intended). The workers maintain the garden, both in agricultural sense and in business sense. Either as gardeners or lawyers, the workers have a full schedule. The soldiers are just that, serving as security at the garden site, or drivers and body-guards for their queens.

*Queen Melissae*, are called queens, never Sofós, and are the face and voice of the garden. Kindly matrons and fierce combatants, they have the most power in their garden. Many Queens from

differing gardens may form their own alliance called a Hive, under an elder matriarch. This matriarch is oldest Queen Melissa in Greece and serves as defacto leader for the whole of the Fylí.

**Glamour Ways:** Melissa regain Megaleío when around mortals enjoying the fruits of hard labour. An old-woman enjoying a rose-garden, or a little boy enthusiastically enjoying a glass of cold milk and honey, it's the little quiet things that make all the hard-work worthwhile.

**Unleashing:** Cantrips cast by the Melissa are accompanied by a hypnotically droning buzz, and an over-whelming sleepy, but sickeningly-sweet smelling fragrance of flowers.

**Affinity:** Scene

**Birthrights:**

**Ambrosia (Αμβροσία):** The Melissa are brewers of a magical sap-like substance known as Ambrosia. They are insanely jealous of not only the preparation, but who is allowed to partake in its supernatural goodness. The Ambrosia can only be made from enchanted flowers harvested from the Melissa's secret Garden (see Frailty below). The process takes 12 hours and has differing quantity dependent on the seeming of the Melissa brewing. All of the results are the same, however. The distillation and bottling of liquid Megaleío.

- ❖ **Apeiros:** brew one point of Megaleío (one bottle)
- ❖ **Soldier/Worker:** brew 3 points of Megaleío (3 bottles) per day
- ❖ **Queen:** brew 6 points of Megaleío (6 bottles of Megaleío)

**Swarm (Sminos):** The Melissa can spend one point of Megaleío to transform their Changing bodies into a mass of bees (although some of the Soldiers manifest as hornets, wasps, or yellow-jackets – which is the same in per garden).

It is in this form that they can descend on their gardens and gather the supplies to make their Ambrosia. The size of this form is dictated by their age and seeming, with the youngest of the Melissa manifesting bigger swarms, and the eldest manifesting in just a handful of queen bees. The Mental abilities are unchanged, the social are nonexistent, and the physical are altered while in the Swarm form.

In addition, the Melissa can attack, causing painful stings (or even death if the target happens to be allergic). There is no need to spend Megaleío to change back.

- ❖ **Apeiros:** Str: 2, Dex: 6, Sta: 2, Sting: 5 dice of damage
- ❖ **Soldier/worker:** Str: 1, Dex: 4 Sta: 0, Sting: 3 worker/4 soldier
- ❖ **Queen:** Str: 0, Dex: 3, Sta: 0, Sting: 2 dice of damage

**Frailties:**

**Secret Garden (Mystikós Kípos);** The Melissa are notoriously xenophobic of outsiders (especially men) and get even more territorial when it comes to their Gardens. This is due to their very livelihood being dependent on them.

If anything should happen to these gardens, the flowers wilt, or the touch of frost shrinks the petals, then the Melissa take physical damage as well. Each Garden is akin to Freehold, and must be purchased with Background Points (though a Good Storyteller will create NPC's to chip in). For ever dot of Freehold thusly, the Garden will have 5 Health points. For

every level of Damage that the Garden takes, each Melissa of the Garden is dealt one level of Bashing damage. For every 5 levels of Bashing Damage received, the Melissa will take one temporary point of Apopniktikós (Banality). Every Melissa attached to the Garden is at risk. More serious threats might cause a Queen to call for help, and many a soldier or worker might need to embark on a quest to seek out supernatural aid. In modern times, many a hive of Melissa has discovered the wonders of Green-houses to maintain their Magic Flower-Beds, and to protect them from the elements.

**Altheia, beloved Queen of Clover-Girl Honey Farm, tells you only what you need to know.**

**Automata:** Amazingly effective if striving for the same goal, maddeningly distractive if striving for otherwise.

**Cynocephali:** Braggards and ruffians who cling to a past that may not have even existed.

**Graeae:** Listen, don't talk. Just listen.

**Kéntauros:** Lazy and incompetent horse-penises with barely the brains of men. They aren't worth anyone's time.

**Keteas:** The oceans mean nothing to those who can just as soon fly over.

**Maenad:** Drunken whores with bouts of insight. Even a stopped watch is right twice a day.

**Nymphaea:** Let them stick to their trees, streams, and solitude. The world has forgotten about them, and I feel this is good.

**Onocentaur:** Stubborn doesn't mean strong. Often-times they forget this.

**Satyrs:** I remember tales of how they seduced us and ran off with our ambrosia; remember that next time you see one.

**Strix:** The owl-maidens are our allies. That is all you need to know.

**Teumessian:** Ineffectual vagabonds with no home, no duty, and no clue. Still... they aren't without their charms.

