

"Greek Myth of Ursa Major"

The nymph Callisto, a servant of the hunter Artemis, was made to bear a child by Zeus. Artemis banished Callisto for impurity. Callisto gave birth to the child names Arcas. This made Zeus' wife Hera very jealous and in revenge, Hera turn Callisto into a bear, which ran away into the forest. Arcas grew up to become a hunter. One day while he was hunting, the bear Callisto heard Arcas' voice and rushed to great her sun. Arcas, not knowing the bear was his mother, was about to kill her when Zeus intervened and sent both mother and son into the sky as the Greater and Lesser Bears. The way Zeus got the bears into the sky explains why their tails are so long. Apparently Zeus grabbed them by their tails and swung them around over his head and finally flung them into the sky, and that is why these two bears have long tails!