This paper will open with an overview of recent work by narratologists and analytical philosophers on the ontology of fictional characters. From there it proceeds to arguments about the ontological status of characters who appear in fictionalizing narratives such as the Odyssey or the Ramayana who are simultaneously the objects of religious belief. I suggest that such characters draw certain unique advantages from the ways in which their stories are narrated. Gods are described in different ways on different occasions. The ‘human’ god is easier to believe in, but the ‘theologically correct’ god can better be used to explain certain aspects of the way the world works and justify social norms. The Greek gods are portrayed in both ways. Cumulatively, the narratives created gods who were credible enough to believe in but powerful enough to matter.

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