

This is the story of the Greek Goddess Persephone and her transformation from the Goddess Kore, the Maiden to Persephone the Goddess of the Underworld.

Persephone, Queen of the Dead

By Isadora Marie

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Persephone



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Isadora Marie

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First Edition

I – Persephone

My birth name is Kore, but modern readers may only know me by the name Persephone; the name my husband gave to me on our wedding day many long centuries ago. You see I am the consort of Hades, the God of the Underworld, known by some as the Queen of the Dead. Throughout the centuries since I took my place within the Underworld, at my husband's side, I have heard many tales of how my uncle, the God Hades, kidnapped me while I was picking flowers with the daughter of Oceanos, the Sea Nymphs, one bright, sunny day; how as I screamed and struggled with all my might, he seized me and dragged me to the world below. These stories relate that once I was concealed within the depths of the Earth, he raped me and forced me to eat the food of the dead, ensuring that I would never be allowed to return to the world of the living. These myths continue with my mother Demeter, the Goddess of Agriculture and Fertility, in a fury destroying lands, crops and livestock; and how the barren lands would not yield any crops for almost an entire year, causing two-thirds of all mortal life on Earth to slowly die, swearing that she would not restore her blessings on the land until I was safely back in her arms. It was my grandmother, Rhea, who was called by the great God Zeus to settle the matter, and it was she who proposed the compromise, hoping to satisfy both of her children, Demeter and Hades. I had no say in this

matter, even though it was my Fate that was to be decided.

The compromise was that neither my mother, nor my husband could live with me for the entire year, but each would share me for only a short part of it. After much arguing, mother finally agreed that I would be allowed to live one half the year with her traveling between the earth and Mount Olympus, during which time she would graciously allow crops and livestock to flourish; then for the rest of the year when according to her I am confined to my earth and rock prison within the Underworld, the lands will once again become barren, making this the dark half of the year. Mortals have explained this as a myth only, a story that primitive humans passed down throughout the generations as a way to explain the progression of the seasons. The myths are correct, for before I married Hades and became Queen of the Dead, there was no change of the seasons, all of the earth enjoyed temperate weather and abundant crops year round; winter engulfed the lands only after I took my place at my husband's side.

What follows is the story of my transformation from Kore, the meek daughter of the Earth Goddess Demeter, into Persephone, the Queen of the Underworld. I must stress here that I wasn't an innocent victim of Hades lust; being dragged into the Underworld screaming and fighting as the old myths tell. My greatest transformation hasn't been adapting to being

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married to Hades, Lord of the Underworld, and spending half of my life deep within the Earth, it was leaving the life of living in my mother's shadow and becoming a Goddess in my own rite, a Goddess who is not only worshiped, but one who instills fear as well. What follows is very different from the patriarchal writings that have been passed down throughout the centuries; it is the story of my life, as only I can tell it.

I was still a young girl, a virgin, when I first glimpse my uncle Hades and instantly I knew I would love only him. It was many, many centuries ago, but I remember it as if it were only yesterday. Early one morning I was alone in the garden on Mount Olympus admiring the Sun as it's first rays gracefully touched the flowers that surrounded father's palace. Alone I sat on the damp grass, my knees pulled into my chest, my head resting there letting thoughts of nothing fill my mind. A gentle breeze blew through my hair as I sat there just enjoying all of Nature. I don't know how long I was sitting there alone before I suddenly was startled back into reality when father, the God Zeus, came into the garden and upon seeing me alone he spoke.

"Kore, your dear mother doesn't have any flowers on her bedside table..." he paused here, making sure that he had my full attention. "I'm sure she would be pleased to awake to the sight of fresh flowers."

I stood up and gave him a slight bow, showing him the respect that he deserved.

He continued.

“I’ve seen some beautiful flowers growing down on earth, why don’t you go pick her some.”

I left Mount Olympus as soon as Zeus excused me; I loved going down to earth, and wouldn’t pass up the opportunity to spend some time there. Mother, not wanting me to be alone, would make sure that I was always accompanied by many nymphs whenever I traveled to Earth, but this morning was different, there was no one to go with me, and so I came to the city of Attica alone. I saw the meadow covered with the most beautiful, fragrant flowers and I knew that father was right; mother would love to rise to the sight and smell of these flowers. I ran through the field taking in the scent of the flowers and the feel of the damp morning grass on my bare feet before I started filling my basket. It wasn’t long before I had already filled the basket half way when I noticed a strange flower, one I had never seen before. The center of the large bloom was dark purple, almost black, which delicately faded to a pale violet as it slowly opened its lovely face to soak in the morning sun. Within the center of this strange bloom was a light dusting of a silvery substance that glistened as the sun illuminated the dew that had collected there during the night; golden tendrils burst from the center,

reaching up to the heavens, while the strong, slightly musty scent filled my senses. I knew that I had to take this flower; mother would be pleased with it, for I had never seen its equal.

As I knelt on the soft, moist grass I stretched my hand out to touch one of these flowers and as my fingers caressed the tender bloom I heard a soft thundering that seemed to come from deep within the earth itself. Surprised, I snapped my hand back to my side. I was used to hearing thunder from the skies, since Zeus, the God of the Heavens, is my father. Whenever he would get mad, which was often, thunderbolts would fly causing all of Mount Olympus to shake. I was also used to hearing eruptions coming from the seas, you see my Uncle is Poseidon, the God of the Seas, and he also possessed a quick temper, causing many earthquakes and storms on Earth whenever he was mad. But I wasn't accustomed to hearing sounds coming from so deep within the earth, for my other uncle, Hades, the God of the Underworld, is the only God that dwells within the earth itself, and he seldom made any sound at all.

It was common knowledge that he would rarely leave the Underworld, only coming to Mount Olympus if there was a dire need. Only once, when I was very young, do I remember seeing him. Mother wouldn't allow me to go into the Great Hall and see what all the commotion was about, and after he left she told me he

was still sulking about drawing the Underworld as his domain when the three sons of Rhea drew lots to determine who would rule the Sky, Seas, and Underworld. Everyone knew that Zeus was the favorite of my grandmother Rhea, but it was the Goddess Ananke, the personification of the constraining forces of destiny, and not my grandmother who determined Zeus would rule the Heavens, Poseidon the Seas, leaving Hades, the eldest of the three sons, to rule the Underworld. You see mortals are not the only ones who have to answer to the Fates. While humans answer to Clotho, the Goddess who spins the thread of life, allowing their birth; her sister, Lachesis, who chooses their destiny in life; and the Goddess Atropos, who cuts the thread of life and unleashes the God of Death to consume their souls, the Gods answer only to their mother, Ananke. She alone can make or destroy a God or Goddess.

The rumbling grew louder and louder as I felt the earth under my feet began to quiver and shake. All the birds feeding in the grass instantly took flight and I too wanted to fly, but I couldn't move; it was as if my feet had taken root deep within the soil. I watched wide-eyed as the earth beneath my feet started to crack and break causing a small fissure. A strong odor of sulfur seemed to fill my senses and released me from my trance. Finally, able to move, and without a moments hesitation, I ran and hid behind a large tree, and thus

concealed, I watched as a chasm formed near the place I was standing just a few seconds earlier, and from the midst of the earth two jet black stallions emerged side-by-side, breathing heavy as if it took tremendous energy for them to break free of the ground. I could smell the sweet scent of sweat mingled with the smell of the earth, as the wind blew through their manes.

These stallions, like the beautiful horse Pegasus were winged, but instead of having his soft feathery wings, theirs was only a thin membrane of translucent flesh stretched taught over their bones, such as the wings of bats. Soon two more pairs of these winged stallions, equally as magnificent with glossy black coats appeared from the cavern and I could see they had bright red glowing eyes and fiery breath. Instantly I knew they must be the stallions of my uncle Hades, God of the Underworld, for only he would have stallions such as these. I wanted to run deeper into the forest to get away from these creatures before I was seen, but I was paralyzed with both fear and fascination. Without making a sound, I stood concealed by the tree while I watched as a brilliant ebony chariot swiftly emerged behind the stallions. Riding majestically on this gilded chariot, which was entirely covered with precious jewels; rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and diamonds that twinkled as the bright sun shone down them, was a God I didn't recognize. This must be Hades I thought, for no

other God would emerge from the depths of the world below.

At the sight of him my breath stopped, for he wasn't the horrid God I imagined him to be. At first I thought the strange feelings I was experiencing were caused by fear, but no, this wasn't fear. This was a feeling I had never known before. My entire body tingled as my breathing became heavy, and I'm certain that my heart skipped a beat. A quivering shot up my spine filling every cell of my body with a sensation of both pleasure and anticipation. I knew then that Eros, the God of Love, must have been near, for I'm sure that I felt the shaft of his arrow penetrate through my chest and plunge deep into my heart, where its burning flame soon began to melt my soul.

I stood transfixed as I watched the gilded chariot fly by and the cavern from which it emerged slowly began to fill with earth. Within seconds the field looked as if nothing had happened. The chariot stopped for only a brief moment and I was able to get a closer look at the God who had stole my heart. Clad in an elaborately embroidered white himation made from the finest silks, he paused and turned his head to my direction, as if he had noticed something. The robes, which were draped over both the Gods and mortal men at that time in history, with the folds gently gathered at his hips and the excess fabric draped over one shoulder left little to the imagination. Hades' robes fell from his shoulder as

he held tightly to the horses' reins leaving most of his upper body exposed showing his white skin and flexing muscles. Sweating, due to the great force he held over the horses, his body glistened with the moisture. This vision took my breath away. As you may know from the statues of Greek Gods, their bodies were extremely beautiful, but these statues, made by human hands couldn't compare to the sight of Hades riding his chariot, cracking his whips over the horse's heads, urging them to move swiftly on. Even though many centuries have passed, I still remember the sight as Hades turned his face towards me. I held my breath, not wanting him to see me hiding. His dark shoulder length hair, damp with moisture fell in soft curls framing his face. This dark hair, and along with his trimmed beard contrasted sharply with his alabaster skin, I couldn't help but notice the strong facial features he possessed; a square jaw and long slender nose, which drew my gaze up to his eyes. I will never forget his eyes, for when I saw them it was as if I was looking into his heart. His eyes were the brightest green, the green of emeralds; so bright that I was able to determine the color from such a great distance. I stood in awe of the sight of him, wanting him to come to me and take me in his arms. Wanting him to take me away from this place, it didn't matter where he took me, only that I would be with him, with him forever.

After a few moments of scanning the field, satisfied that he was alone, he turned and I watched breathlessly as his chariot thundered into the distance. Once I was sure he was out of sight, I cautiously left the safety of the grove where I was concealed by the trees and tall grass and walked to where he had just emerged from deep within the earth, looking for a way to enter his world, hoping that I would be allowed to wait until his return. I walked around the area looking for a sign that I had not only imagined him; that his chariot really had broken through from the world below right here in this very spot, but there was none. The field looked exactly as it was when I reached for the beautiful flower, only that the flower that called to me was no longer in sight. I knew what I had seen, and without hesitating I rushed back to Mount Olympus, thinking that would be the only logical place Hades could have gone.

When I reached the eastern slope of the mount, I saw the palace glimmering in the distance. I ran up the sloped terraces covered with lush gardens filled with every type of fruit tree know to man, and some that are exclusive to the Gods alone, it is from these sacred trees the sweet nectar Ambrosia, the food of the Gods, is made. Here the grass is permanently green and the leaves never fall from the trees. Birds fill the garden with beautiful sounds as the streams whose sources start near the palace as nothing more than a trickle, flow down the sloping channels bringing life to all the

flowers; marigolds, violets, poppies, hyacinths, roses, and lilies that grow there.

Within this garden paradise many mythical beasts dwell. The Centaurs, creatures having heads and torsos of men and from the waist down the bodies of horses, the wisest of them being Chiron, mentored many of the Greek heroes; Griffins, animals who had the body of a lion with wings and foreparts of eagles; the Hippalectryon, a strange creature even to the Gods, they possessed the front of a rooster on the body of a horse, complete with large colorful wings. Pegasus, our most famous winged horse, also lived here; a beautiful red-golden bird about the size and shape of an eagle, whose feathers shined like the sun, called a Phoenix; and the five immortal golden-horned deer who are sacred to the Goddess Artemis. There are many other creatures that lived safely within these gardens, but throughout the centuries most of them have either been destroyed, or chased far away, but that is another story altogether.

I held my robes up so I wouldn't trip as I ran through the garden, feeling the coolness of the damp earth on my bare feet. I ran past the cottages where the lesser Gods, Goddesses and nymphs dwelled, past the servant quarters and finally past the stables where the beasts that were used by the Gods to pull their chariots were housed. Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, only used the purest white doves to pull her gilded chariot;

Peacocks, her sacred animals were the mounts for Zeus' wife Hera; Apollo favored Swans; and two serpentine dragons drew my mother, Demeter's chariot. All these creatures lived peacefully together, along with the other beasts that the Gods keep as pets. Since I was not yet a Goddess, it was my duty to tend the stables, so I was well acquainted with all these mysterious creatures.

Finally, I reached the marble stairs that lead into the palace. Mortals can't imagine the splendor of the abode of the Olympian Gods. I've often heard mortals describe this palace as being made entirely of crystal. It's charming to imagine a crystal castle, but this is not so. The palace was made of the finest marble, built entirely by hand by the Cyclopes, the gigantic one-eyed Titans who were freed by Zeus during the war between the Titans and the Olympians. In gratitude for their freedom, they bestowed this palace for Zeus on the exact site where the Titans' palace once stood. The largest city on Earth would easily fit within the Great Hall itself, and here all the Olympian Gods and Goddesses and their families lived; all except Hades and Poseidon. Poseidon has his own palace almost as magnificent, deep within the ocean's depths, and Hades, as I stated earlier, lived within the Underworld. I knew little of his palace for Hermes and Zeus were the only Gods to ever have entered this world, and neither of them ever spoke of it.

Out of breath, I swiftly climbed the stairs and passed through the front gate, which was nothing more than clouds watched over by a beautiful Goddess, named Season. When she saw me approaching, she gestured with her left hand in a motion like opening curtains, and instantly the clouds began to part. Hurrying past her without saying a word I was soon within the Great Hall. I was expecting to see all the Gods and Goddess assembled there, for only a very special event would bring Hades to Mount Olympus, but to my surprise I was totally alone. The only sound I heard was my breathing, as I stood there panting, trying to catch my breath.

Mortals can't even begin to imagine the magnificence of the Great Hall, with its center court entirely open to the sky, and lined with two levels of private chambers on each side. Zeus allows neither rain, nor snow to fall from the cloudless firmament, which illuminates the Great Hall during the day. Growing up within this palace you would think I was used to the beauty, but still I become enchanted by the twinkling stars and gentle breeze that flows over the roofless hall at night. The floor is a solid piece of marble and there are caryatids, columns carved in the form of the Gods and Goddesses, lined on both sides of the hall, supporting the upper levels of private rooms. In each of these marble statues' flawless hand is a torch that magically lights at sunset, illuminating the entire hall. Zeus and his wife Hera occupy the entire southern

end of the palace, with its spiral staircase leading to their private chambers on the second level: their balcony overlooks the famous Greek city of Athens, while the other Gods and Goddesses dwell within modest chambers throughout the palace.

I share a very large four-room chamber with my mother and my older brother, Iacchus. Some myths say that Iacchus is not my brother, by my son, but this is not true, we are both descended from Zeus and Demeter. Iacchus is older than I; he was conceived on the night that the Olympians finally defeated the Titans. My half sister, and brother, fathered by Poseidon do not dwell within the palace on Mount Olympus, they both live on earth, so I seldom spent time with either of them. I had another brother on my mother's side, named Plutus who was the son of a mortal named Iasion, whom my mother fell in love with while on Earth. Being born of a mortal father, Plutus, unlike us was mortal, therefore he wasn't allowed to live within the royal palace. He lived with his aging father and his stepmother Cybele on earth until death finally greeted him. My mother being an Earth Goddess would visit him often, teaching him how to increase the fertility of the land. On my father's side I have many brothers and sisters, too many to name here. As many of you may know Zeus has had many lovers throughout his life, but these tales I won't relate here.

I knew Hades was here to speak to my father, but why? I ran through the deserted hall, my footsteps echoing as I slammed into each step as I made my way up to my father's private chamber. Once there I found Hermes standing guard, hovering in front of the door. Hermes, being the messenger of Zeus had to be swift, so the God Hephaestus created a pair of beautiful golden sandals with powerful wings attached to the heels as a gift for him. Hermes loved those sandals and could be seen swooping down from great heights with a smile on his face.

"Hermes, I was on Earth and saw Hades emerge from the Underworld. I ran all the way back here to the palace to see him. Is he here?" I asked Hermes still panting.

"He's in there," Hermes said pointing to the closed door. "With Zeus and your mother."

I was shocked to hear that mother was with them. She despised Hades. She tried to pretend that she didn't, but I have heard her speak with Zeus about him with loathing. I always wondered what he had done to her to make her loathe him so, but I dare not ask for fear that I would arouse her anger.

"What's mother doing in there?" I asked, a little surprised.

"Don't know." Replied Hermes, "I was instructed by Hades to tell Zeus of this meeting, and was told that it was not optional."

I attempted to move closer to the door to try hear what they were saying, but all I could make out was mother shouting, followed by the sound of father throwing a few lightening bolts.

"I wouldn't stay here if I were you, your father sounds angry." Hermes said to me with a mischievous smile. Of all the Gods, I think I liked Hermes the best; he was my half-brother, the son of Zeus and a nymph named Maia. He was called by many names such as Messenger of the Immortals, Bringer of Dreams, Thief at the Gates, and Psychompompus, meaning the 'Accompanier of Souls' which was the official title he used when he accompanied the spirits of the dead to the Underworld. He was a Trickster God and loved playing little pranks on the other Gods and Goddess. Even Zeus could be seen laughing at some of his wild pranks.

Before I could respond I was thrown to the ground as the great doors of the chamber flew open and Hades emerged. He smiled as he held out his hand to assist me up when mother, without hesitating pushed him aside and pulled me up to my feet. She grabbed me by the arm and practically dragged me to our rooms. As

she pulled me along I kept looking back noticing that Hades was watching.

"What brought Hades here to Mount Olympus, mother?" I asked as we entered our chamber and she finally loosened her grip on me.

She looked slightly pale and changing the subject, saying curtly, "You better dress for dinner, we don't want to be late."

I knew by the tone of her voice I wouldn't get any information. She can be stubborn when she wants to be, as all of the Gods and Goddess can. I hurried to dress and after grabbing my brother's arm we rushed down to the Great Hall. I hoped that Hades would still be there, but was disappointed to find he left immediately after I arrived.

Dinner on Mount Olympus consists of the sweet nectar Ambrosia and grape leaves stuffed with many different cheeses served by the Goddess Hebe, the daughter of Zeus and Hera, and one of my half sisters. Being around the same age as I am, Hebe and I were playmates our entire lives. While my name, Kore, means Maiden, the name Hebe stands for Youth, and Hera determined at her daughter's birth that age would not touch her and named her respectively. Her household duty is to serve the Gods at dinner, and to assist her mother, Hera in harnessing her splendid peacocks to her chariot. Even though it was my duty to

tend to the many creatures that bore the God's chariots, Hera wouldn't allow me to touch her sacred birds since I am Zeus' daughter by another Goddess. As I said earlier, Hera only tolerated my brother and I because Zeus forced her to. Being born of an Olympian God and Goddess was to my advantage, some of Zeus' other children born to lesser Goddess's or other immortals were persecuted their entire lives by Hera.

That night at dinner, I sat next to Hermes, hoping to get some information from him. If I were to find out why Hades had come to Mount Olympus, Hermes would be the one to tell. Usually I could convince him into telling me anything, but that evening I got nowhere with my questions. So I tried to ask the others if any of them knew what brought Hades out of the Underworld, but none of the Gods would answer my questions. Mother looked slightly pale and kept trying to change the subject, while Zeus' look warned all to be silent. I knew that for now I should drop it. I was quiet the rest of that night, but for the next couple of weeks I continued trying to pry out from anyone I could why Hades came to visit that day. I dare not ask either father or mother and incur their wrath.

Almost a year passed and even though I didn't see Hades again, I never forget his penetrating green eyes, nor the breathless longing I felt in my heart. I thought

about him night and day and with each thought I would feel the same tingling sensation, and my heart ached for his touch. Each day at dawn, while mother was still asleep, I would sneak down to earth where I would wait in the field where I had first seen him hoping that I would once again feel the earth tremble, slowly opening to reveal his emerging chariot. Day after day I sat under the same tree that hid me from his sight so long ago, only to return disappointed to mother. She wondered why I spent so much time on earth when I had all of Mount Olympus to enjoy. I told her that I was visiting the Oceanids, the sea nymphs who lived near the coast of Aegaea. Since they were nymphs and not Gods or Goddess they dwelt on earth with the mortals. When I was young, my mother and I lived with my uncle Poseidon in his palace deep within the Oceans for quite some time and I made friends with many of the nymphs, so she didn't question me.

Finally, one day, as I sat in the shade of the tree, half asleep, I heard a noise that startled me. Was I dreaming? The sound was so quiet at first that I wasn't sure if it was just my imagination, but then it became louder and louder until it soon filled the air. It was the same thundering that seemed to come from deep within the earth that I had heard when I first saw Hades, I was sure of it. This time I knew the sound and was determined not to run in fear. I stood my ground as the thundering rumbled and the ground began to shake,

sending a quiver of anticipation through my blood. Again the earth slowly spits and from deep within the chasm, the six winged stallions emerged two by two pulling the jeweled chariot, and then... my heart stopped. It was Hades. I was right in his path. Would he run me over? Before I had time to move aside, he used all his strength to pull the chariot to a halt, just inches from me.

"What are you doing here?" He asked me stunned.

I wanted to explain to him how I hid behind the trees so long ago and watched him emerge and go to Mount Olympus, but no words came to my mouth.

He looked down at me and again asked.

"Does your mother know you are down here on earth?"

"Oh yes", I replied, "I told her that I was visiting the Sea Nymphs."

"The Sea Nymphs don't live anywhere near here; they live near the sea. You know that." He said with a tone that suggested that I might be lying to my mother.

"I know, I had to tell her something. She is so overprotective of me." I said feeling like a child.

"Yes, I know, but you still didn't answer my question. Why are you here on earth?" He again asked.

"I've been coming to this field every day for almost a year." I said, then paused to find the courage to continue. "You see, I was here in the field one day about a year ago, picking flowers for mother and I saw your chariot emerge from the Underworld in the same spot you just came from, and I wanted to see you again."

"Why?" He asked with a look of confusion.

I wanted to tell him that Eros' arrow had pierced my heart and lit my soul on fire with a desire that I couldn't fight, that when I thought of him I felt as if my heart was going to stop and a quiver ran from the top of my head to the tips of my toes. I wanted him to know all this but was afraid he would only laugh at me, thinking I was only a silly child. Stepping down from his chariot he took me by the arm. I could feel his strength as he held my trembling hand and we walked toward the grove.

"Where are we going?" I asked, a little nervous.

"I thought we could go sit under the shade of those trees in the distance, and you can tell me about Mount Olympus." He said gently, watching my every move.

I couldn't believe this was really happening. I was with Hades! We were alone and he wanted to talk to me... to me! The trembling in my hands moved through my body as we walked, and when we reached a large tree, I thought my legs would give in. He helped me sit

down and then to my surprise he sat next to me, his body pressing into my thigh. I felt a flush of heat rise through me.

"How's your mother, Demeter?" He finally asked.

"Fine." I answered shyly.

"You do know that your mother and I don't get along." He said.

"I know." I said, not knowing how to answer this.

I had always wondered what happened between them, why she hated him so, but was too afraid to ask. I knew only too well what happened when one asked a God a personal question. Zeus would use his thunderbolts to pick you up and throw you across the room when angered. The look in his eyes told me he understood my question and I wondered if he did. Many of the Gods and Goddesses possess the ability to read others thoughts to some degree; I flushed with embarrassment at this idea. *'Does he know how I feel about him'*, I wondered.

"Your mother's anger towards me isn't the only reason I don't visit Mount Olympus, there are many more." He explained to me, "I do miss my brothers." He said pausing, "I see Poseidon occasionally when I am invited to his palace, but I hardly ever see Zeus."

“I heard Zeus will never set foot into the Underworld again.” I said, hoping that Hades would tell me why.

He didn’t answer right away, pausing for a moment before saying.

“He entered the Underworld only once a long, long time ago, before I was named as the ruler there. After many adventures, he was finally able to return to the land of the living, but he swore that he would never pass through its gaits again. None of the Gods who live on Mount Olympus, except Hermes, dare enter my world.”

“Why don’t you come to Mount Olympus since no one will come to your palace?” I asked, hoping that he would enlighten me to the relationship between him and mother.

“When I wish to speak to Zeus I send a message to him through Hermes and if we need to speak face to face we meet on Earth. I would come to Mount Olympus more often, but I just can’t stand all the bickering between the Gods and Goddesses.” He paused here, then finished his thought, “My home is at least peaceful.”

As he said this I thought I noticed his eyes become misty and though how lonely he must be. He looked away for a second.

“Tell me,” I finally said, “What brought you out of the Underworld and to my father’s palace, no one will tell me anything. They all treat me like a child, speaking in hushed voices whenever I approached.”

I could see that he, like the other Gods didn’t really want me to know.

II – Persephone

Hades paused for a few moments, reflecting on the past before he began to speak to me. “Before you can truly understand what brought me out of the Underworld to your father’s palace that day, I must explain to you the circumstances that influenced the Goddess of Fate to name me as the Ruler of the Underworld.”

He paused once again and I could see that he had to reach deep down into the pool of his memory to reconstruct the events that must have occurred thousands of years before I was even born, events that decided not only his Fate, but I was soon to find out my Fate as well. After what seemed like an eternity he finally he began his story.

“Let me start at the beginning, before the world as you know it was created. At this time in history the Universe was divided into two parts, the Heavens and the Seas, and the Titan Uranus ruled all. Land had not yet been formed, and the sea was lifeless and barren. Life only existed in the Heavens, where your ancestors, the Titans lived for millenniums peacefully under Uranus’ rule.

All those long years Uranus felt no threat, but then one day as he sat lazily on his throne, the force of Destiny swiftly came to him and invisible she whispered into his ear.

“Uranus, soon all that you possess will be taken from you.”

He opened his eyes to see who dared say such words to him, but only his wife Gaia was in the room.

“My dear, what did you say?” he asked, alarmed that his wife would utter such words to him.

“I said nothing.” Was her reply.

The voice came again, and instantly he knew it wasn't his beloved wife.

“Your youngest son will destroy all that you fought for, and then when you are finally beaten down, he will claim your kingdom.”

Uranus feared no one, and was determined to outwit Destiny, so in the midst of the sea he created a small speck of land. Once land had been formed, he plunged his hand deep within the newly formed land and there he carved out a void, and within this void he unleashed the countless horrors Destiny filled his dreams with. It was in this dreadful place that he imprisoned all of his children, not taking any chances. The Underworld was thus created, and the Universe no longer consisted of only the Heavens and Seas. Land was formed from his hatred and fear, and this land now separated the Underworld

from the Heavens. The Universe now consisted of four realms, the Heavens; Earth, as the new land was to be called; the Seas; and the Underworld.

Uranus had many children with his wife, Gaia, but after the seed of doubt had been planted he refused to lay with her, nor any other. All his children were safely imprisoned, and he would have no other children. After many centuries Gaia longed for another child, so she devised a plan. One day she brought her husband a drink, and kissed him as she gave it to him. He drank it in one great gulp. She brought another, and then another. What Uranus didn't know was that Gaia had placed some herbs that came from the entrance to the Underworld into his wine and soon he was intoxicated. That night she came to him and they made love the entire night. It was not long after that that she discovered that she was expecting another child and fearing that this child would soon be taken away from her and thrown into the Underworld dungeon with his brothers and sisters, she devised a way to conceal her unborn child within her womb until he was fully grown. This child, Cronus, grew within the womb of his mother, Gaia waiting until the day he could enact his revenge on his father Uranus.

After the night of the conception Uranus feared that Destiny had tricked him. He was sure that his wife would bare the child that was destined to

destroy him, but as the months passed and nothing happened, his confidence grew. It wasn't long after this that his desires were greater than his fears and he took his wife back to his bed. Many years had passed and during this time Gaia hid her son, but when Uranus wasn't around she would speak to him, preparing him for his destiny.

The time had finally come; Cronus was fully grown, but still concealed within his mother's womb. In a night of passion Uranus came to his wife and made love with her. Cronus seized the moment, knowing that the time had finally come; he must fulfill his destiny. As his father made love to his mother, Cronus castrated him. Once his father's rule was overthrown, he emerged from his mother's womb, covered with his father's blood and grabbed a nearby sword. He held the sword over his head and was about to behead his father, when Gaia spoke.

"My dear son, have pity and spare your father's life."

"But mother, it is destined that I destroy my father and take his kingdom." Cronus replied to his mother.

"No!" She shouted at him, hoping to stop him. "It is destiny that you rule the Universe in his place, but you can do this without killing him."

Cronus spared his father's life, and without a struggle he seized the Universe as his own. Once his kingdom was established he freed his brothers and sisters from their prison deep within the earth. The first few centuries Cronus ruled the Universe peacefully just as his father had done, but this second Golden Age was destined to fail, just as the previous one had. Unlike his father, throughout the centuries the Titan Cronus became a tyrant seeking only power. He didn't hesitate to destroy any who got in his way. The Titans, like the Gods, are immortal and not easily killed; they could only be destroyed by dismembering their bodies and scattering the remains or by cremation. Those who refused to obey Cronus were denied this fate, instead they were imprisoned deep within the same prison that his father sent his brothers and sisters to so many centuries before. This prison became known as the Dungeon of the Damned, Tartarus. Here all forms of tortures and punishments were inflicted on the poor souls for all eternity, those who were trapped there could not even hope for death, knowing that Death would never answer their prayers. There was no escape from Tartarus. Soon all feared Cronus' wrath.

Cronus ruled alone for many more centuries, then one day he decided that he would marry and produce an heir. He chose as his new bride the

most beautiful of the Titanides, his sister Rhea. She did not love him; fearing imprisonment in Tartarus, she reluctantly agreed to be his wife. The day of the wedding arrived and all the Titans, Giants and Cyclopes were present, this being the event of the millennium. The ceremony over, it was the second day of the feasting when a loud thundering soon filled the massive hall of the palace and all stopped speaking, silence enveloped everyone as they turned to see where this sound was coming from. To their amazement a small dark shadow started to form in the center of the room. With each heartbeat the shadow pulsated and grew in strength. Within seconds darkness soon filled the entire hall and a purple mist seemed to pour in from the heavens, engulfing all. The guests, ignorant of the cause of this were began leaving the palace in a panic. Above their screams, a disembodied voice that seemed to echo through the hall spoke. All stopped, standing silent as if mesmerized. The voice spoke the following prediction:

"Cronus, from your union with your sister Rhea you will have six children, and of these six, the youngest born to her will one day rise up against you and destroy you. He will rule in your place, just as you had replaced your father. All will worship him above all other Gods. He will unite

your other children, along with your brothers and sisters who you have imprisoned in Tartarus and with their help they will destroy the Titans, and create a new age of peace, a true Golden Age that will last for centuries. Only those who follow him will be spared destruction."

All the guests stood there, silent and watched Cronus, who showed no fear in his eyes. He decided then that he would never let this happen, he wouldn't allow any children born from this marriage to survive. Five years passed and five children were born to Rhea, and Cronos swallowed all five whole before she could do anything to stop him. When Rhea conceived for the sixth time, she swore that she wouldn't allow her husband's fear destroy this child, even though she knew that this would be the sixth child, the one the Oracle predicted would destroy his him and rule in his place.

The night of the birth came and as Rhea heard the snores of her sleeping husband she silently crept out of their private chamber and into that of her servant, the nymph Neda. With Neda watching over her she gave birth to a beautiful baby, a son who she named Zeus. She wrapped the infant tightly, and after giving him a kiss on the top of his head, she gave her beloved son to the trusted nymph, begging her to hide him on the earth where she was

sure that her husband would never be able to find him. It was only a couple of hours after the birth that Neda left, taking the infant Zeus with her to the island of Crete. Neda knew that she couldn't stay on earth, Cronus would suspect something if she wasn't present to attend to her mistress, Rhea, so she went to two of her sisters, the nymphs Amaltheia and Ida.

"My dear sisters, you must protect this child with your lives."

"Is this the child that's destined to destroy Cronus?" Amaltheia asked quietly, not wanting the Titan to hear them conspire against him. "He must be kept safe." Neda begged them. "We'll raise him as our own son." Neda rushed back to her mistress, not wanting to cause alarm.

As Rhea stood there alone, a fear seized her, she was sure that her husband would wake to find her missing. Looking around the room frantically and seeing a stone about the size of her newborn infant she picked it up and wrapped it in swaddling clothes and went back to her chamber. When she entered the chamber, holding what appeared as a newborn child she made a small cough hoping to wake her husband. Cronus, upon hearing the noise opened his eyes and saw what he thought was his sixth child in her arms. He jumped from the bed and

quickly snatched the infant from Rhea's arms and without even looking at it he swallowed it whole. This time the tears that rolled down her cheeks were not tears of pain, but tears of joy, for her plan had worked. Cronus thought he had destroyed this child just as he had destroyed the other five. She knew that her son would survive and one day he would return to take his father's throne and rule the Heavens. The knowledge that her son, Zeus, was safe down on earth allowed Rhea to sleep in peace for the first night since her marriage.

Rhea was finally able to rest peacefully, knowing that soon her son would rise up to destroy his father, but whenever Cronus slept, the Erinyes, the Goddesses of Vengeance and Retribution, came to him in his dreams and whispered to him.

"Your child, the sixth child born from your union with your wife Rhea, still lives. He will soon rise to destroy you."

At first he paid no attention to these dreams, he knew that the child was destroyed, he swallowed the infant on the night of its birth. There was no possibility that his son could harm him. Night after night the Erinyes would whisper these warnings to him, tormenting and haunting him, not even allowing sleep to release him from their taunts. He would wake up from these dreams screaming, and with

sweat on his brow he wouldn't be able to fall back asleep. Night after night Cronus would pace in their bed chamber not allowing sleep to come to him for fear of the Erinyes voices.

It was not long before Rhea, noticing that her husband desperately needed sleep, took action. She didn't do this because she felt pity for him, but because the lack of sleep was causing him to abuse any who happened to get in his way. She mixed a sweet honey mead with herbs that she picked from the banks of the Lethe river, one of the rivers that flow into the Underworld, which when mixed properly would induce a dreamless sleep. Cronus took this mead every night before retiring, and with its aid he was once again able to sleep without the nagging of the Erinyes. They no longer were able to torment him during his dreams, but they refused to leave him alone. During the day they continued to torture him, whispering in his ear as he sat on his throne "Your son still lives." hoping to slowly drive him mad.

Through the years as Zeus grew, Amaltheia told him about how his father destroyed his five brothers and sisters and how his mother saved him, fearing that he would destroy him as well; how Rhea risked her own life, for Cronus knew that it would be this

child, the sixth, who was destined to one day take his kingdom, by giving her child to another to raise. Amaltheia explained how on their wedding day the Oracle warned Cronus that his child would destroy him, and how the Erinyes refused to let him sleep in peace, pursuing him relentlessly and almost driving him to madness for his crimes. Zeus' hatred for his father grew as he did, and when he reached manhood he decided that the time had come for him to fulfill his destiny and take revenge on his father. Zeus went to Cronus' palace and confronted his mother.

"Mother, today I have come to free you from the cruel grip of my father and take what is rightfully mine. Cronus will no longer rule the Universe, for tomorrow I will sit on the throne."

Rhea felt pity for her husband even though she didn't love him, but she knew that there was nothing she could do to stop his death. She came up with plan to distract Zeus, hoping that he wouldn't kill his father, but would devise a way of overthrowing him, just as Cronus had done with his father. She sent her niece, the Titan Metis to Zeus. Metis was not only very beautiful, and Rhea knew that Zeus couldn't pass up the chance to be with a beautiful Goddess, but she was also very intelligent, and she hoped that the two Gods would be able to devise a plan of attack.

Zeus spent several days and nights with his cousin Metis, and even though he was enamored with her, he not once forgot why he had come to his father's house.

Metis instantly fell in love with the young God and wishing to assist him in destroying his father while saving his brothers and sisters, she gave him a drug that would induce Cronus to regurgitate all the children he had swallowed, allowing the young God to fulfill his destiny. Zeus agreed and that night instead of his mother Rhea, he mixed the sweet mead, not only adding the herbs from the Lethe River, but while the potion was simmering over a low flame, he added a second herb, the one that Metis picked from the River of Fire, the fiery river that surrounds Tartartus; he also added one of his mother's tears, along with mandrake root and simmered the potion for several hours. When it was almost ready, he picked up his sword and made a small cut along his wrist, adding a few drops of his own blood, causing a great steam to explode from the mixture as the blood flowed down. Once cooled, Zeus carefully poured the mead into his father's chalice and instructed his mother to give this to Cronus and say nothing of what was added to it.

That night before turning in Rhea walked into her husband's bed chamber with her head lowered, not wanting to make eye contact with her husband,

knowing that if he looked into her eyes, she could not hide her dishonesty. She held the poisoned honey mead in her hand and before she could say anything, he took the golden chalice and with one great gulp he drained the cup, not noticing anything was different until he wiped his lips and saw the blood on his finger. Before he could say anything the room began to spin. Faster and faster it spun. He held his hands up to his head hoping this would somehow stop the spinning, but it did no good, the room continued to spin round and round. He couldn't stand straight; he fell against the wall and tried to use this to pull up his weak body. Beads of sweat began to form on his forehead, and soon slid down his face, as his eyes rolled back into his head and his whole body began to first twitch, then convulse in spasms that he couldn't control. He held his stomach as he fell hard to his knees vomiting. First came up the stone that he thought was his sixth son, followed by his other five children all fully grown.

He knew then that he had been deceived and soon his son would come to destroy him. He tried to control his body, to stay awake and fight, but the powerful drug wouldn't allow that. Cronos fell into a deep stupor as Zeus, who was just outside the chamber, stepped in and loosened his robes exposing a scimitar hanging at his side. Rhea with

tears running down her cheeks, begged Zeus not to kill her husband.

"Please don't kill him, for he is your father."

"Mother, it is my destiny that I kill my father, was it not predicted by the Oracle on your wedding night?"

Zeus replied as he pulled the scimitar free. Rhea continued to cry as her son beheaded Cronus with a single blow. Blood splattered Zeus' face and covered his white robes as he continued to cut his father's body up into pieces, for this was one of the ways to destroy an immortal. After he was through, he directed his brothers and sisters to each take a piece of the body and dispose of it. Zeus, of course took the head and threw it far into the night sky. I took Cronus' heart deep into the Underworld, past Cerberus, the three headed hound that guards the entrance, to the River of Forgetfulness where I threw it in, and when his blood mixed with the cold water Thanatos, the God of Death, was born. Poseidon took the penis and disposed it into the seas, where its seeds, once released, began to foam and an eruption filled the seas, creating all mortal life on the planet, for before this only the immortals lived. Your mother, the Goddess Demeter, took his limbs and buried them on the barren earth, and it is from these that trees and grasses began to sprout up. The

eldest of the six children, Hestia, took the torso and threw it into the hearth where it was consumed within seconds by the great fire.

The Titanomachia, the war between the Titans and the Olympians had begun with Zeus as head of the Olympian army and Cronus' brother Atlas as the military commander of the remaining Titans. The sky turned a dirty gray color as the Titan Boreas, the North Wind, bellowed and a dark mist slowly rumbled across the sky obscuring the land below. Thunder shook the heavens, as veins of lightning flashed through the dark sky illuminating the Titans as they prepared to shoot their mighty weapons. Not all the Titans fought with their brothers, some immediately took sides with the Olympians remembering the prediction of the Oracle and the terror that Cronus inflicted on all who disobeyed him; Rhea; Cronus' brother Prometheus; the Sea Titan Oceanus, and his children the sea nymphs; the Sun God Helios; and Themis, who ruled over Law and Justice, were only a few of the Titans who were allies of the Olympians while others, who were loyal to their king decided to defend him even in death. Of those who fought against the Olympians were Atlas, Epimetheus, and Menoetius who were Cronus' brothers. Still others remained neutral, since Cronus was dead there was no need to fight, they would

wait until the war was over, then side with the victors.

Rhea, wanting to protect Hera sent her to the Titan Oceanus and his wife Tethys in the far west where the sun rests in the evening, for Rhea knew that her youngest daughter was destined to marry Zeus and rule the Heavens at his side. While Hera was away, Metis became Zeus' first lover and wife and it was from this union that the Goddess Athena was born. But Athena was not born in the usual way. Zeus, feared that if Metis bore a son he would grow to defeat his father, just as he had defeated Cronus, so Zeus decided to not destroyed the child after it was born, but to destroy it before it's first breath. Zeus consumed Metis in a single breath. Nine months later the beautiful Goddess Athena was born from Zeus' head and soon she joined in battle with the other Gods and Goddesses and it was Hera alone of the Olympians who did not fight in the war. Zeus led the army that fought from the sky, Poseidon used his powers to control the winds and waters and I, along with your mother Demeter led the Gods who fought on the land, while our sister Hestia protected the palace grounds.

The war continued with each side holding its ground for thousands of earth years. Each day as the first rays of the Sun emerged from Helios' chariot as his swift horses drew him from the far

ends of the world to fill the sky with his golden light, the two great armies would face each other, weapons ready. On the battlefield, the first few rows of the Olympians were entirely covered in a magical armor and shields made from the God Hephaestus, the God of Fire, while those in the back fired arrows soaked in the blood of the Gorgons, the hideous snake haired monsters who could turn mortals to stone with one look alone, for this precious blood not only would destroy the Titans, but if mixed properly it was a remedy used on the wounded Gods during the night allowing them to face their adversaries the following day. Once this poison was within the Titan's bloodstream they began to scream out in pain, the poison was not powerful enough to kill them, since they were immortal, instead their fate was to feel their blood burn for eternity. The Gods within the palace on Mount Olympus could hear their screams over the sounds of the battle. Only a few were lucky and put out of their misery by their companions.

This precious blood, the blood of the Gorgons was the Olympian's only weapon against their ancestors, the Titans, and for thousands of years each side held its ground, until one day the Titans emerged in their flying chariots as Helios' began his daily journey across the sky. As the first rays of the Sun caressed the battlefield the Titans let loose a

new weapon causing a terrible blast that hit the six majestic steeds pulling Helios' chariot and instantly their burnt corpses fell from the sky pulling the Sun chariot down with them. The heat from the falling Sun set fire to trees and grasses and caused the seas to boil and would have destroyed the entire universe had not the Wind God, Boreas called all the winds together to let loose all the power of the Universe and with all their might they were able to stop Helios from hitting the earth and prevent the Sun itself from being destroyed.

The Titans in anger prepared to let loose a second weapon, one even more terrible than the first, a weapon that was capable of destroying the entire universe. When it fired the earth shook and the skies turned blood red as smoke and flame as bright as ten suns lit the sky. The Olympians on the earth fled as fire and brimstone came crashing down on them from the heavens and exploded on impact killing beasts and Gods alike. The screams of the dying couldn't be heard for the entire earth let loose a terrible cry that drowned out all other sound for days. The fires burnt for almost a week straight and when they finally subsided and the damage could be seen, the few Olympians who survived thought that the war was finally lost. The corpses of the fallen Gods were mutilated beyond recognition by the

terrible heat of the fires. All life on earth appeared to have been destroyed.

The Titans, like the Olympian Gods dare not leave the warmth and safety of their palace, for the Earth was alight with fires that came from deep within it's depths. During the first weeks after the initial blast earthquakes, tidal waves, and erupting volcanoes destroyed any life that survived the initial attack. The fires burned for almost an entire year, and once finally quenched, a terrible winter set in, a winter that would last for years. Surrounded by nothing but darkness and cold, those of us who survived, and there were only a few of us left, stayed within the palace that was once our father's, too weak and frightened to dare leave. Even though the Titans were victorious, at least for the moment, they dare not leave their fort either.

Hades paused here to reflect on the events that happened so long ago, and even though I had heard many tales of the war between the Olympians and the Titans, I waited in anticipation for what was to happen next. No one on Mount Olympus dared speak of the war in this way. Zeus did not wish to relive those memories, therefore the stories I had heard, while accurate didn't really go into much details. I couldn't understand why he didn't wish to speak of it, but after hearing Hades tell me of what the Olympians endured for so long a time, I could imagine the terror that they all must have felt. I

wanted to stop Hades here to ask him about how he felt then, but before I could speak, he continued.

“It was during this period that Zeus, tired and beaten decided the risk traveling to the Oracle. He set out on the three-day path to the Oracle alone, and when he finally reached it, exhaustion almost overcame him as he stood at an entrance to a cave. Inside Zeus saw an old woman, a woman so old, he thought she couldn’t possibility still be alive. “Come” she croaked as she motioned for him to enter. Cautiously he crossed the threshold and as his foot touched the soil within the cave a mist rose from deep within the earth and the Great God Zeus almost lost consciousness as the poisonous vapors began to surround him. He stood still trying to keep his balance, his eyes closed and his breathing heavy when he heard the old woman speaking, her voice barely audible.

The Olympians will defeat the Titans only with the help of the Hekatonkheires and the Cyclopes who are held as prisoners within Tartarus. You must make the long journey deep into the Underworld alone, and continue along the River of Fire until you reach the deepest part. Here you will find the Dungeon of the Damned and while there you must secure those who your father imprisoned as your allies, for

only with their help will the Olympians win this war.

Upon returning to us, Zeus told what the Oracle had revealed and before we could try to talk him out of making that dangerous trip, he retired to his chamber and began preparations for the journey to the deepest, darkest depths of the Underworld where his father had imprisoned the Hekatonkheires, who were known as the Hundred-handed Giants along with the Cyclopes centuries ago. The other Olympians pleaded with him, to not make go alone, but he wouldn't hear of it, he needed the help of the Giants and the Cyclopes if the Olympians were to finally defeat the Titans, and he was determined to go to the Underworld alone. Within hours of his return he left the palace and for six days and six nights we waited praying that he succeeds. As the days passed by we could think of nothing anything else but the fear that he was to soon perish within the Underworld and the war would finally be lost.

When I entered the Underworld for the first time, to dispose of my father's head, I took the Acheron River to where it branches and there passed to the left, not daring to go near the river that led to Tartarus, for I had heard that this prison was a horrible dungeon and none who enter its walls are allowed to leave. Zeus took the passage to the right,

which led him deeper into the Underworld and he passed many obstacles and faced many monsters that dwelled deep within the earth, until he finally reached his destination. Once there he was able to bargain with the prisoners; for their freedom they would have to pledge allegiance with the Olympians and help them destroy the Titans. The prisoners agreed and as a sign of their pledge they gave the Olympians each a great weapon, weapons that would help destroy the Titans. Zeus was given the magical thunderbolts that Cronus had hidden there in the Underworld, knowing that if one of his sons would possess such a weapon he would be the strongest of the Gods; I was given the Helmet of Invisibility; and Poseidon was given his Trident. With these new weapons, and the help the Cyclopes and Hundred-handed Giants the Olympians were finally able to defeat the Titans. After thousands of years of fighting, within a week after Zeus' return from the Underworld the war was over, and the Olympians emerged victorious.

The Universe now belonged to the Olympians, and after restoring the Sun to it's former brilliance, the God Helios once again emerged with the first dawn of the new age. Zeus, now the true ruler of the Universe, imprisoned all those who fought against him in Tartarus. Once freed, one of the Hundred-Handed Giants, Gyges who agreed to support Zeus

and the Olympians left the God's side and returned to fight along with his brothers, the Titans, and after the war he was thrown back into his prison and to this day he remains there. Atlas, Cronus' younger brother and leader of the Titans was sentenced by Zeus to carry the weight of the sky on his shoulders for eternity as his punishment. Zeus, just like his father, imprisoned not only the Titans who fought against him, but any who would not obey his command in the same dungeon that Cronus sent his enemies.

Not long after the destruction of the Titans, Zeus decided that he would split the Universe into three parts, and each of the three sons of Rhea would rule a part. The Heavens would become the abode of the Gods, the Seas would become the birthplace for all life on earth, and the Underworld would be the House of Death. Of course Zeus, Poseidon and myself all wanted the Heavens as our domain, and the bickering started almost immediately. After nine days of fighting, without sleep or food, our mother Rhea decided to take action. Ananke, the personification of unalterable control over the careers of both the mortals and immortals, and who would be the mother of the Moirai, the Goddesses better known as the Fates, the deities who assigned each man's destiny at his birth, was called to decide

which God will rule the three parts of the Universe. We agreed that all would follow her decision.

The beautiful Goddess entered into the hall wearing a long white silk gown embroidered with gold threads, with her long blonde hair flowing down in soft waves to her waist. All eyes were on her as she slowly walked towards us, carrying a silver pitcher in her left hand and in her right she held the cards of destiny.

She spoke in a soft voice:

“The cards I hold are destiny cards, they will tell me where each God will rule. But, I must warn you; all must follow the path directed by the cards. Any who do not, death will surely take you.”

All were silent.

She continued.

“I have in my right hand a pitcher filled with water from the river Styx. All must swear an oath by this water, that they will abide the decision of these cards. Any oath sworn on this water and broken will cause instant death for all who taste it. I ask that all present partake a sip from this pitcher as your pledge to me and to each other.”

She then passed the pitcher to Zeus, who slowly lifted it to his lips and drank. Zeus passed it to

Poseidon who also drank. I was next. The water was bitterly cold, but I could feel the heat of it as it flowed through my mouth, down my throat and into my stomach. I coughed slightly, before passing the pitcher to Hera who also slowly drank from it before passing it to Demeter and finally Hestia. After all the Gods and Goddesses drank from this sacred water, Ananke slowly walked to Zeus and pulled a card from the deck she was holding.

The Emperor.

“I have pulled the Emperor card for you Zeus. You have proved yourself as a great leader in the war with the Titans.” Ananke said, “I give to you the Heavens to rule, seated upon your golden throne. All Gods and mortals will both worship and fear you above all the other Gods and Goddesses.”

As she said this Zeus smiled, he started boasting about the beautiful palace he would build, where all the Gods and Goddesses would live together for eternity.

Ananke held up a hand to Zeus, telling him to wait. She walked up to Poseidon and pulled another card from her deck. This time the card was the King of Cups.

“Cups represent the element of water. Poseidon’s skills in controlling the winds and waters

during the terrible war was a great asset, therefore, I name Poseidon as not only the King of the Waters of the World, but with his Trident he will also be the Earth Shaker. He will be feared by mortals as the God of the Seas, who not only controls the world's waters, but also the wind and thus the weather."

Poseidon smiled as his fate was told to him.

Ananke walked up to me, and this time she pulled not one card but two cards. The first was Death.

"The Underworld has been chosen for you Hades, for only you have the strength to control Death, and you alone have the endurance to withstand living in this dreadful place for eternity. You will not be Death itself, for that is reserved for the God Thanatos, who was born from the blood of Cronus as it mixed with the rivers of the Underworld. You will be the Lord of those who have died, and all mortals will fear you."

My heart felt as if it was destroyed. I was to become the God of the Underworld. I thought about being surrounded by nothing but death and decay, how no mortal would dare speak my name for fear that my cold bony hand would snatch their last breath. I thought to myself ' How could I bear this loneliness throughout the centuries', and as if she

heard me, Ananke answered loud enough for all to hear.

"You will not be alone for eternity. For I have pulled two cards for your future. The second card is the High Priestess," she said as she held the card up for all to see.

"This card states that you will not rule the Underworld alone, for a Goddess born from the union of the Earth and the Heavens will one day sit at your side to rule with you. You alone of all the Olympians will have a marriage that is built on love and trust.'

"Who is this goddess?" I asked

"She will be born from the elements of the Earth and the Air. Her mother will be the Earth Goddess Demeter, and her father will be the God Zeus." She answered.

At this Hera, who was not yet married to Zeus gave him a look of disgust. It was a well-known fact that Zeus would often visit the other Goddesses, and Hera like all the other Goddesses wanted him all for herself.

"My daughter won't live her life with the shades of Death." Demeter shouted.

Zeus held out his hand to his sister quieting her.

"Demeter, we've all drank from the waters of the river Styx, we gave our oath that Ananke would have the final decision. The cards have told us our destiny. If our daughter is to become the Queen of the Underworld, so be it."

Demeter started to say something, but Ananke stopped her, saying,

"The High Priestess sits between two pillars, one white and one dark. She will be pulled in two directions; she will be destined to split her life. When I look closely at this card, it shows the High Priestess sitting on a throne, resting her feet on the moon, telling me she will only be truly happy when she is with her husband in the Underworld."

Demeter started to object, but Ananke only said.

"All have sworn to abide my word; it has been decided." As she said this, she slowly turned and left the room.

Hades had finished his story, and for a few moments we sat there in silence, neither of us knowing what to say next. Finally, Hades broke the silence.

"For the next couple of centuries I lived in the Underworld, surrounded by nothing but death waiting patiently for my bride to relieve my loneliness. When you were born I wanted to present your mother with a

gift, an offering, but she refused me to enter Mount Olympus for fear that I would enchant you and you would return to the Underworld with me. Since your birth I have only been invited to your father's palace once when Demeter was visiting Earth. You were a very young girl at the time, I don't think you would even remember. Your mother is determined that you will not marry me, keeping you close to her side. I'm surprised that she allowed you to come down to earth, knowing that I'm so near. But I see, not only was my fate decided that night so long ago, but your fate as well. Now that you have heard my story, I hope that you will understand what I'm about to tell you."

Hades paused here, took my hand and looked me in the eyes before starting to explain why he met with Zeus that fated day a year ago.

"I came to Mount Olympus last year to discuss with your father Zeus the arrangements for our marriage, but your mother overheard him speaking to Hermes about my arrival and decided to meet me as I entered the gates. As soon as she saw me she started screaming at me to leave the palace at once, that I wasn't welcome there. Zeus quickly brought us to his private chambers, not wanting the other Gods and Goddesses to hear our discussion. Demeter forbade me to take her daughter as my wife. Zeus tried to explain to her, that as the King of the Underworld I was more than a suitable match for any Goddess, but she wouldn't listen to anything he

tried to say. I left in a fury without making any arrangements, but I was determined that I would meet with Zeus again. Even though I don't come to Mount Olympus and Zeus will never enter my palace within the Underworld, we do communicate to each other through Hermes, and yesterday Hermes came to me telling me that Zeus arranged to meet me today on the island of Crete to discuss the plans for not only my future, but yours as well. Your mother doesn't know anything about this meeting, if she did she would do anything in her power to stop it."

As he told me this I couldn't believe what I was hearing. For the last year I have fantasized about being Hades lover, and today I was sitting with him under a tree on this beautiful day and he was telling me that I was destined to be his bride.

He looked at me and said.

"I hope you aren't too disappointed to find out that you are destined to marry me, the Lord of the Underworld."

I replied.

"My mother was right when she said she didn't want you on Mount Olympus for fear that you would enchant me. You have enchanted me, and now my heart belongs to you alone."

Hades smiled and said.

"Will you accompany me to the island Crete to meet with your father, he'll be pleased that you have agreed to be my wife."

Hades stood up, and held out a hand to help me up. We walked quietly to his chariot where he lifted me effortlessly into a seat next to his. I held out a hand to help him up, and he kissed it softly before pulling himself up next to me. Hades took the reins in his hands and within seconds we were off to meet my father to discuss our marriage.

III – Persephone

The six black stallions assisted by their bat-like wings ran swiftly over the land without even pausing when they reached the northern shores of the Greek city Attica. I had seen my uncle Poseidon's horses move gracefully over the water many times and thought that his alone possessed this ability, for he was the God of the Seas; but Hades' horses were just as grand as their hoofs seemed to float effortlessly over the white foam of the waves. It was this foam that supported the weight of the six stallions and gilded chariot, and with each beat of their leathery wings I could see the waters below them stir only slightly as we seemed to skim over the sea. I could feel the cool mist of the salt water on my face as we headed swiftly toward the Island of Crete, and it cooled me, for I was feeling a little warm sitting next to Hades. He held my hand and gazing at me he smiled. We were silent as we rode over the sea, reaching the island of Crete sooner than I would have like to, since I feared that father would order me to return to Mount Olympus when he saw me with his brother.

Did he, like my mother want to prevent me from marrying the Lord of the Underworld? I heard many tales of father's voyage deep into the Underworld during the war between the Olympians and the Titans as Hades had told me, but he, nor any of the other Gods

would say what difficulties he endured during his short stay there. As far as I know Zeus had told no one the horrors he faced there, only that he swore never to set foot in that dreadful place again. I wondered if over the span of the many generations did he regret his decision to honor the Goddess *Ananke's* judgment of my fate, after all he is the strongest of all the Gods, would he now let me, his daughter, marry Hades, the Lord of the Underworld and spend eternity living within his dreaded domain.

When finally, we reached Crete I saw father standing alone on shore, waiting patiently for his brother. When the chariot stopped and Hades assisted me down, I noticed that Zeus looked surprised. His eyes were on me as the two brothers embraced each other tenderly before Zeus asked about my presence.

"Kore, my daughter, what brings you here? "He asked, giving no show of warmth in his voice.

I didn't answer at first, not knowing what to say.

"How is it that you have come with Hades, when I have summoned him alone?" Zeus demanded of me, with a tone of voice that I knew all too well, one that told me to speak the truth or face the consequences. I didn't dare lie to father, he could read other's thoughts and would know instantly if I did, but I was afraid to answer. Fear of Zeus sending me back home filled my head, but then I remembered what Hades told me just a few hours

ago, that he was meeting with father to make our marriage arrangements. I hoped that if I told him that I indeed wanted to marry Hades, that I had fallen in love with him, he would have no choice but to agree to the marriage. Then it would be easy for him to convince mother. None of the other Gods or Goddesses ever dare go against his wishes, and lived to tell about it.

"Kore, tell me why you have come here with Hades?" Zeus asked again, with a little more anger in his voice this time.

"Father forgive me," I began, "I was down on earth a year ago picking flowers for mother, when I felt the ground beneath my feet quiver and then shake as if the earth would burst open. I ran and hid behind some trees within the grove as the earth where I was standing a few seconds before was split open, and to my amazement, I saw a great glided chariot being pulled up from the Underworld by six magnificent winged horses. When I saw the rider of that chariot, I felt Eros' poison fill my body and instantly I fell in love. Since then, I've waited in that same grove hoping that I would see the Lord of the Underworld once again, only to be disappointed day after day. This morning started out the same and soon I fell asleep, only to be woke by the sound of my uncle's chariot once again being born from the earth."

Hades interrupted, "Zeus, I am sorry I am so late, but once your daughter told me of this, I thought it was necessary for me to explain to her how on the day we three brothers were given our kingdoms, I was promised that I would one day wed the only daughter of Zeus and Demeter, and how on that day she saw me leaving the Underworld, I was on my way to Mount Olympus to meet with you to discuss the marriage arrangements."

Father, being the stern judge that he always was, held up a hand to his older brother, quieting him before turning to me.

"Do you object to this marriage, Kore?"

"Father, I want nothing more than to wed Hades. When I saw him so long ago I knew that I felt Eros' arrow pierce my chest and penetrate deep into my heart. I have longed for this, for this is truly my destiny." I answered.

"Sit down child!" Zeus barked at me, "While I speak with Hades about this matter alone."

The two of them walked away from me, talking in hushed voices so that no matter how hard I strained, I couldn't hear what they were saying. I cannot explain to you the anxiety I felt just then. My father would decide my fate! I wanted to scream at him, to tell him that it was my decision, not his, whom I give my heart to and

marry, but I couldn't. I have seen too many times what happened to others when they crossed father, I wasn't the only Goddess who feared Zeus' wrath.

When my brother and I were growing up Zeus was not around much, his wife, Hera, wouldn't allow him to be near his children from other Goddesses. She didn't acknowledge any of his other children, whether born from Goddess, Nymph or mortal, and there were many of these children. The lucky ones, like my brother and I, she would simply ignore, but others she would torture for their entire life. Hercules was one of the unlucky ones; she was the cause of all of his misfortunes, and it wasn't until after his death, that she finally allowed his soul release. She only tolerated my brother and I because mother was one of the original Olympians, and a powerful Goddess, more powerful than Hera herself. The only time my brother and I would see our father, except of course during the evening meals in the Great Hall, when he would ignore all the children present, including the children born to his wife, was when we disobeyed our mother. After enduring a number of punishments from him, I learned to obey his word without questions. After that, all mother had to do was threaten us saying '*Do I need to inform you father about this*' and we would instantly obey her.

As I stood there waiting, I decided that I was no longer going to live my life according to what mother or father wanted. I was tired of being Demeter and Zeus'

daughter. I wanted to be a Goddess myself; I wanted to be Hades wife and rule the Underworld at his side, I wanted to be the Queen of the Dead. I'm sure that it's hard for some who read this to understand my feelings. The Goddesses of Destiny no longer exist within the modern era as they had in the past, therefore humans now have some freedom to choose their own destiny, to choose whom they wish to marry, but when I was growing up not only were humans forced to live by the rules of the Fates, the Gods and Goddesses were also bound by these universal laws. The bride's parents arranged almost all marriages and my marriage would be no different, being decided centuries before I was even born, and nothing I said or did would be able change it.

But then I thought, if the story Hades told me was indeed the truth, then the six children of Rhea all swore by the Oath of the river Styx that they would abide by the Goddess Ananke's decision. It was she alone who decided that I would marry Hades, but mother on hearing this swore that she would not let this happen. Would mother risk death to prevent this marriage from taking place? I thought that if I could speak to her and tell her how I felt, that I loved Hades and was willing to give myself to him, to live within his palace deep in the Underworld, that she would agree to this wedding. I think not, no matter what I said to her, she is very stubborn when she doesn't get her way, as are all of the

Gods and Goddesses. I had made up my mind, I wasn't going to just sit by and allow father, nor mother decide whom I was to marry. If Zeus objected I was going to stand firm and tell him, not ask him that he blesses this union, and even if he refuses, I would still find a way to marry Hades.

After what seemed like an eternity, the two brothers came back to where I waited and Zeus was first to speak.

"I've decided that I will bless this marriage under one condition."

Zeus paused here and my heart stopped beating for a second, he would allow me to marry Hades, but then my excitement turned to fear, I wondered what his condition could be.

He continued.

"Don't look so frightened," he said with a slight smile before continuing, "I'll agree to this marriage only after you spend one year and one day on earth, during which time Hades will court you. After the allotted time, you alone will make the decision whether or not you will marry Hades. But..." he paused here once again, making sure that he had my full attention.

"...before you decide though, you must be certain that your love for him endures. If it doesn't, then you'll

be free to return with me to Mount Olympus, but if your love lasts, you will spend the rest of your life in the Underworld as Queen of the Dead. I want you to understand, that once the decision is made, there'll be no coming back."

I nodded that I understood.

I would spend one year and one day on earth with Hades and then I could marry him, but then I thought of mother. How was I going to stay here on earth for a year without mother finding out and taking me back to Mount Olympus like a little child?

Zeus knowing my fears, spoke to me.

"I'll tell my dear sister, Demeter, that you're visiting your cousins the Sea Nymphs, the Nereids. I understand that you have been telling her this little lie for the last year." Zeus said as he raised one eyebrow.

He continued, "I'll tell her that it was I who wanted you to live with them so they can teach you the ways of both the sea and the earth, for you being the daughter of the Goddess of Fertility will soon be assisting her in her duties here on earth."

"But where on Earth will I stay, I know no mortals who would allow me to stay with them, father?"

I asked, for I knew that whoever allows me to stay with them would anger my mother, and I didn't know of

any mortal brave enough to show the Goddess of Fertility dishonor, not only that, if anything would go wrong than they would also face both Zeus and Hades' wrath.

"I'll speak to Minos, the king of Crete, he's one of my sons and is a just ruler. He'll watch over you for this year while you live within the walls of the royal palace on Knossos." Before I could reply, he continued, "While you are here on Earth, I expect you to obey the king as you would me." Zeus answered. I nodded, and he continued.

"I want you to know that I'll be watching you closely from Mount Olympus."

With this he left Hades and I alone while he went to speak to his son, the king. Hades took my hand and looked into my eyes before speaking.

"We have one year until I can hold you in my arms and love you as my wife." He placed his hand on my chin and lifted my face to meet his and kissed me on the forehead.

"It'll be torment for me to be so near you and not be able to express my love." I replied.

"I've endured centuries waiting for you, one year won't matter to me, especially since you'll be so close."

I wanted to be alone with him longer, I had so much to tell him but Zeus returned after only a short time followed by an elderly man who I knew must have been the King and a beautiful young woman, who I assumed was his wife.

"Minos, may I introduce my daughter Kore to you." Zeus began saying, pausing only a second before the introductions were made.

"Kore, this is Minos, King of Crete and his wife, Queen Pasiphae. "

As he was saying this to me, the king bowed as low as his aged body would allow, and the queen curtsied.

Minos was the son of Zeus and a nymph named Europa, making him my half brother. I had heard the stories of how Zeus fell in love with the young nymph and when she refused to acknowledge his advances he changed himself into a great bull and came to the shore where she and her companions would play for months until one day the nymph finally overcame her fear and mounted this magnificent animal. Immediately Zeus plunged into the sea with the frightened maiden on his back and with her hanging on to his horns he swam to the island of Crete. It was on this island that she bore Zeus three children, Minos being the eldest, followed by Sarpedon and Rhadamanthys before Zeus married her to the mortal Asterion and made him the king of Crete. At his mortal father's death Minos took over rule of the

island and has ruled it since. He obtained the throne of Crete not with the help of my father, for Hera would not allow Zeus to help his son, but with the aid of the Sea God, Poseidon, and with the assistance of such a powerful God, Minos was able to gain control over not only Crete, but all the Aegean Islands. He had been portrayed throughout history as a powerful and just ruler who has earned the respect of not only father, but the respect of most of the Gods.

Minos although being the son of a powerful God didn't have all immortal blood and was considered only a lesser deity. He was mortal and would face death as all mortals must, but still I was surprised that he appeared old and frail, with long gray hair and beard. He must have been very old indeed, since divine blood slows down aging, allowing some of the children of the Gods to live for thousands of years. Minos, even though he was Zeus' son, looked much older than his father. The Olympians, like the Titans before them and the second generation Olympians, of which I am one, are immortal, and do not age once we reach maturity, but the children born of the lesser Gods or of nymphs are mortal and therefore are destined to die. Looking at the King's shriveled hands and bent body I thought that he must have ruled this island for centuries.

Completely contrasting the King was his bride Queen Pasiphae, the daughter of the Titan Helios, the Sun deity, and a minor Goddess named Perseus,

Queen Pasiphae looked as if age would never touch her. She had pure white skin, almost translucent and thick brown hair that was pulled into a loose twist, allowing little wisps falling to frame her face. She had her father Helios' eyes, a light golden brown flecked with gold as bright as the sun itself surrounding the iris. She stood before me wearing a white gauze robe with colored ribbons around the waist, blowing in the wind. The fabric of her robe was sheer enough to glimpse her body beneath without really exposing it. She was extremely beautiful, and I knew why King Minos loved her, but I couldn't understand why she, who could have had any mortal of her choosing or even one of the Gods themselves, would chose a man who was old enough to be her father.

My father interrupted my thoughts by saying.

"Kore, Hades and I will leave you in the care of Minos, I have many things to discuss with him since we see each other only rarely." Zeus said, and seeing the disappointed look on my face, added, "Don't worry, I promise you'll see him tomorrow morning."

Hades walked over to me and whispered in my ear.

"I'll come to Minos' palace early tomorrow morning for you." With this, he quickly kissed my cheek and left with my father.

"I'll be waiting." I called out after them.

I sat within the king's gilded chariot and silently looked out the window at the passing huts until we reached the city walls, and as we approached the double gateway slowly opened to us, showing me the first glimpse of the city Knossos, the city that would be my home for the next year and a day. Once within the city the chariot stopped and the king, queen and I traveled to the palace on foot. The royal palace was at the heart of this splendid city surrounded by residences, the market and administrative centers, and as we slowly walked through the city streets I watched children run ahead as their parents pushed carts along the gravel roads. Wherever we walked the town folk stopped before us and soon silence filled the air as all bowed low to the King and Queen, and then to my surprise they bowed to me. We walked like this, for about half an hour before we reached the palace of King Minos, located on the southern coast of the island.

The palace was a massive structure with over a thousand rooms on three separate levels. Its passageways seemed to shift and twist even as you walk within them, causing many to get lost within the maze, thus helping to create the legend of the labyrinth holding its dark secrets deep within. Throughout the centuries this labyrinth within the palace was rumored to be the home of a terrible beast that ate only human flesh, a terrible monster with the body of a man and the

head of a great bull; a monster called the Minotaur. He was the son of Queen Pasiphae and a great white bull that Poseidon sent to Minos to sacrifice to the Gods. It was ironic that Poseidon sent a magnificent white bull to Minos, since it was in this form that Zeus mated with his mother and conceived him. Why Minos refused to sacrifice this bull, instead sacrificing one of his own, I didn't know at the time. As punishment Poseidon enchanted the Queen so she would fall in love with the bull and with the help of the court magician Daedalus, Pasiphae was able to express her love and the child produced from this union was the monster named the Minotaur. Whether or not this is only a myth or based on reality I won't say here, I'll leave that tale for another part of my story.

Let me briefly tell you of the palace of King Minos, it was almost as impressive as my father's palace on Mount Olympus. The central court, located on the main level, was able to seat thousands of visitors. This court had huge stained glass windows that covered all four walls, illuminating the entire room as beautiful colors danced off the walls when the sun shone. At night this hall was illuminated by several candelabras that were suspended from the high ceiling, which was painted with images of the creation of the world and many scenes from what has come down through the centuries as only myths. It was here in this grand room that the King conducted all court business, sitting on his gilded

thrown at the far end of the hall as the town folk gathered around presenting their cases to him.

Surrounding the central court were several halls each as impressive, some for dining, and dancing, and other for which I didn't know the purpose, one being a small room with light green marble walls and carved within the back wall of marble was a sculpture of a massive tree with branches reaching up to the heavens, each one reaching higher. On the end of each of these branches was a small shelf, and perched on each shelf was a single engraved jar. No two jars were alike, and I couldn't tell what these jars contained, for no one in the palace would speak of that room. It was only much later that I came to realize that these jars contained the ashes of the ancestors. I was surprised to learn this, since at that time in history, the dead were usually not cremated, they were buried. There were many other rooms that I didn't visit during my stay with the King and Queen, these included the kitchens, workshops and the servants' quarters located on the first level behind the central court.

In the central court, across from the king's thrown was a grand staircase that spiraled up to the second level of the palace. Here were the shrines to the many Gods and Goddesses worshiped by the royal family, along with the private chambers of the King and his three children, Androgeos, Ariadne, and Phaedra, leaving the third level entirely to the Queen and her

numerous servants. I would be staying in one of the rooms belonging to her. She took my hand and led me up the stairs to the third level and showed me the chamber that would be my home for the next year. It was a small chamber compared to the one I occupied on Mount Olympus, but by mortal standards it would be considered very large. The Queen told me that some mortals' entire homes aren't as big as this one chamber. The room was dark when we entered, so the Queen walked to the only window in the room and opened the curtains letting the bright sunlight flood the room, causing me to cover my eyes until they adjusted to the brightness. Across the room was a niche with bright green velvet drapes covering the opening. She pulled the drapes open showing me the king-sized bed covered in the same color green silk and velvet bedding, with numerous pillows thrown across. The room was simple, decorated using the fresco technique, where earth pigments were brushed onto the plaster before it had dried, and the scenes were a mixture of life-sized murals along with miniatures portraying the lives of the Gods. There were no other decorations within the room; none were needed, except for the mosaic floor, which was made from various colored pebbles, again depicting scenes of the Gods.

"You must be tired after your long journey."

She said to me as she clapped her hands, signaling for several of her servants to enter. Immediately the

servants pushed aside the curtains that concealed a second doorway and entered the chamber and slowly walked over to me. Without saying a word to either the Queen or I, the two servants took me by the arms guided me to a large stone tub located in the center of the room. In this tub the water was continually kept hot. Still, without speaking they started to undress me. One slowly reached for the broach that held my robe in place, and when she unfastened it the soft fabric fell to my feet. The servants lead me into the tub holding my arms to steady me as I slowly lowered into the warm water. While I was soaking another servant brushed my hair, and with a silk ribbon tied it up so it wouldn't get wet while I was bathing. Instantly the scent filled my senses relaxing me totally, and as I sat there, surrounded by warm water with my eyes closed one servant massaged my body with perfumed oil, while the other continued to brush my hair. I heard a lyre playing in the distance and this sound along with the warm water and the scents filling the air around me almost caused me to fall asleep.

This was the first time in my life that I was treated as a Goddess. Back home, on Mount Olympus, I was thought of as only a minor Goddess, and that is only because my father was the Great God Zeus. Had any other God fathered me, Hera would not have allowed mother and I to resided within the palace, our home would have been among one of the many cottages that

surround the royal grounds, but since Demeter is not only a first generation Olympian, but also one of the most powerful Goddesses, Hera couldn't use her influence to keep us out of Mount Olympus, so we were tolerated within the palace. But, here on earth, in this simple palace, I was being treated if I was Hera herself. I dare not say that out loud, for fear that Hera would hear me: The Gods don't like others to boast of their good fortune.

After the servants finished bathing me, they dressed me in the finest silk robes of pure white with silver and gold embroidery along the hem, and one plaited my hair, pulling it off my face and securing it with several golden pins on the top of my head as other massaged perfumed oil into my skin. When they were finished dressing me, they led me to the canopied bed and helped me down. As I sat there one of the servants kneeled at my feet waiting for me to release her.

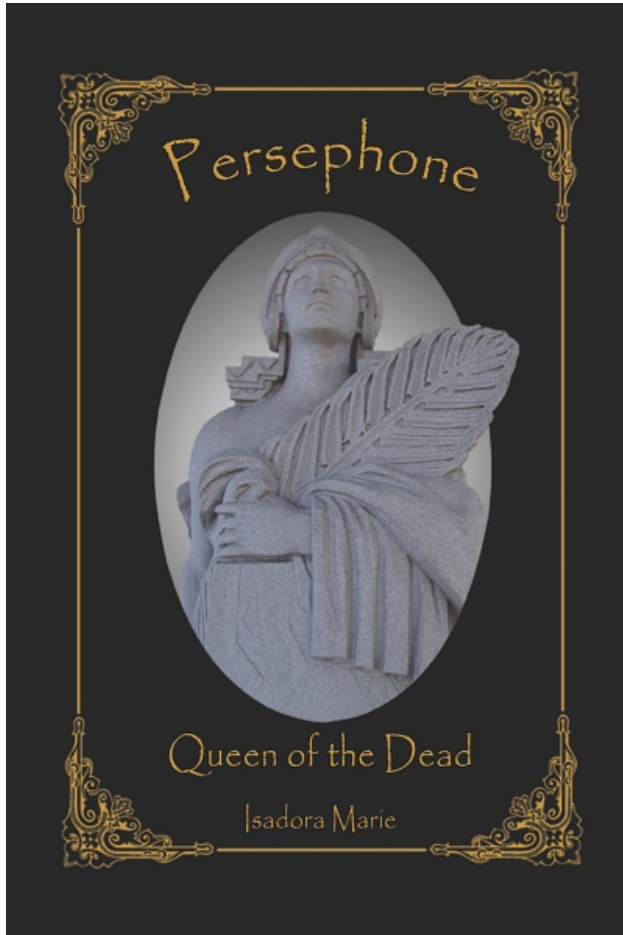
"You are free to leave; I'll call if I require anything." I said to them.

The servant who appeared to be in charge of the others picked up a small bell that was on the table next to the bed and handed it to me and bowed low before speaking.

"My Lady, we are here to serve you. If you desire anything, anything at all, all you have to do is ring this

bell and one of your faithful servants will attend to your heart's desires."

As she said this, all three servants bowed low before quietly backing out of the room. I laid on the bed and thought about what had happened that day. Not only did I finally meet Hades, but I found out that I would soon be his bride, the arrangements were being made as I sat there, I was sure of it. For the next year and a day, I would live here in this palace with servants attending all my needs during the day, and Hades to occupy my evenings with, and as my head filled with these delicious thoughts I instantly fell asleep.



This is the story of the Greek Goddess Persephone and her transformation from the Goddess Kore, the Maiden to Persephone the Goddess of the Underworld.

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