

THE TALE OF
KORE, THE
MAIDEN
GODDESS, AND
THE GENESIS
OF THE
SEASONS



Ma

The Father's Daughter: Athena

The goddess of wisdom, strategic warfare, and intellect. She is the daughter of Zeus. When she was born from the union of Zeus and Metis (Reason), springing forth as a divine spark upon the earth, it is said that *"the whole Earth trembled, and the vast seas swelled in awe."*



The Mother's Daughter: Kore

The goddess of maidenhood and pristine youth. She is the gentle daughter of Zeus and Demeter, the "bringer of grain" and goddess of fertility and harvest.



Daughters of Zeus:
Kore, defined by her deep bond with her mother, stood as the perfect antithesis to Athena, the fiercely loyal daughter of her father.

Poseidon

Lord of the seas: his wife is Amphitrite



Zeus

Lord of the cosmos: his wife is Hera



Hades

Lord of the underworld: his wife is none



**The sons of Cronus
(Time) – Hades,
Poseidon, and Zeus –
divided the universe
among themselves.**

Zeus, my younger brother,
give me your daughter,
Kore, to be my wife.



Hades, my elder brother, very
well; but her mother, Demeter,
is fiercely attached to her.



Kore was wandering through a meadow, gathering flowers, when the earth cleaved open, the world turned dark, and Hades appeared to sweep her



The Rape of Proserpine,
Christoph Schwarz, c. 1573, The
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge



Rape of Persephone,
Gian Lorenzo Bernini, 1622, Galleria Borghese, Rome

Kore resigned herself to her fate and followed Hades into the underworld.



She became the Queen of the Underworld; her new name was Persephone, the „bringer of destruction”.



Demeter, the goddess of fertility and grain, could find her daughter Kore nowhere, searching for her in vain.



She neglected her divine duties, refusing to yield harvest, and the lands completely withered away



Demeter Mourning for Persephone,
Evelyn De Morgan, 1906,
Cannon Hall Museum, Barnsley, England

**Ceres (Demeter) Begging for Jupiter's
(Zeus') Thunderbolt after the
Kidnapping of Her Daughter,
Proserpine (Persephone),**
Antoine-François Callet, 1777,
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA





Finally, Hecate, the underworld goddess of witchcraft, gave Demeter a clue: Kore was in the underworld. Thus, Demeter descended into Hades the underworld, in search of her daughter.

Hades, my
elder
brother,
return Kore
to me.



Take her, if
she is not
yet my wife
... If she
has not yet
accepted
food from
me.

Ascalaphus, the gardener of Hades, interrupted...



I saw it! She
accepted a
pomegranate
seed!

Demeter, the mighty goddess,
with a single gesture turned
the bearer of ill
tidings into
an owl..



And she even rolled a
massive rock on top of him.



My daughter, Kore! Did you eat anything in the house of Hades?

Yes. I accepted some pomegranates from him.



Oh, the crimson-fleshed pomegranate is the fruit of death. Now you are his wife, and you must remain here in the darkness.



**Proserpine
(Persephone)**, Dante
Gabriel Rossetti, 1874,
Tate Britain, London

In the ancient
world, a marriage
became legally
binding the
moment the young
bride first
accepted food
from her husband.

**Hades offering food to
Persephone in the
Underworld**, 440-430 BC,
Codrus Painter, The British
Museum, London



In European civilization, when a woman accepts a lunch or dinner invitation from a man, she signals through metacommunication her willingness to accept his courtship. This signaling principle applies to the acceptance of any gift, including money, jewelry, or material assets.

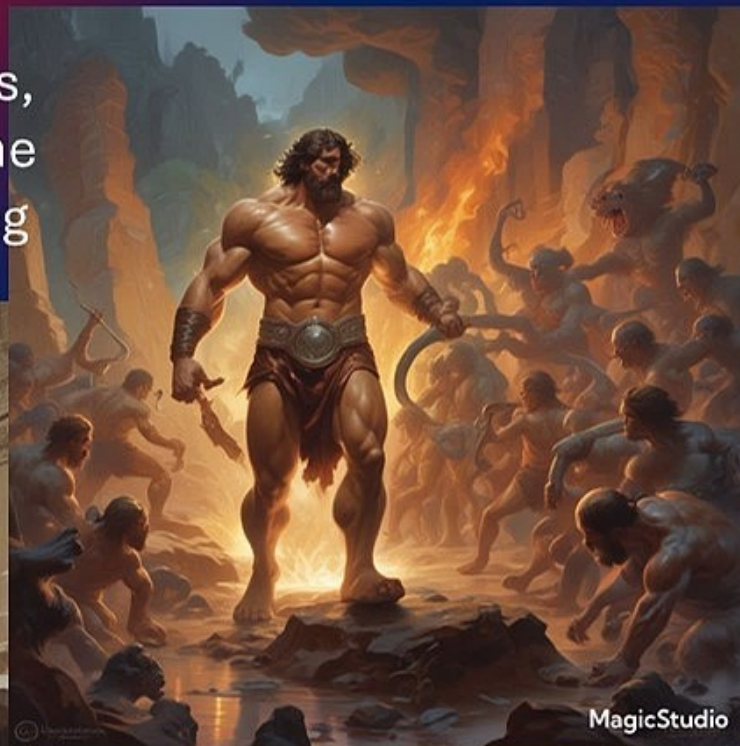


Only the acceptance of flowers, perfume, and sweets does not imply a 'green light' or any form of binding commitment on the woman's part





Heracles, the mortal son of Zeus, descended into the Underworld during his 12th labour..



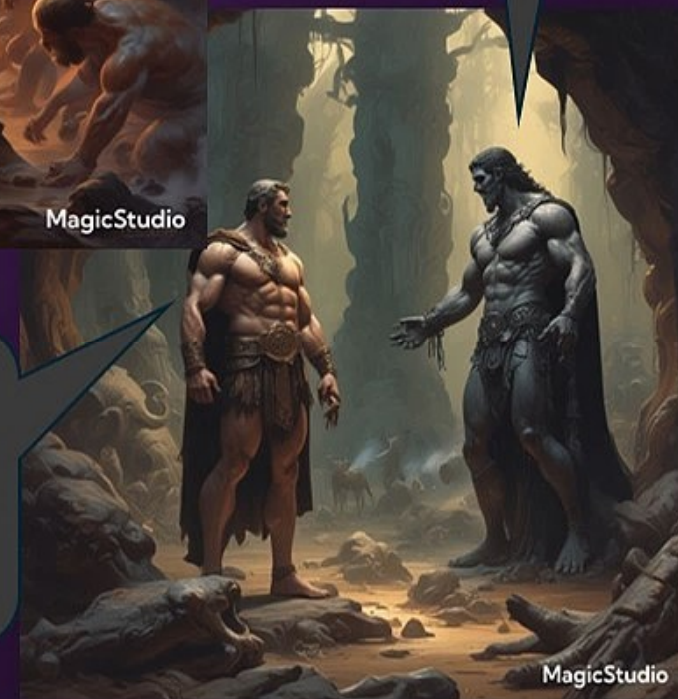
Take him if you can, kiddo.

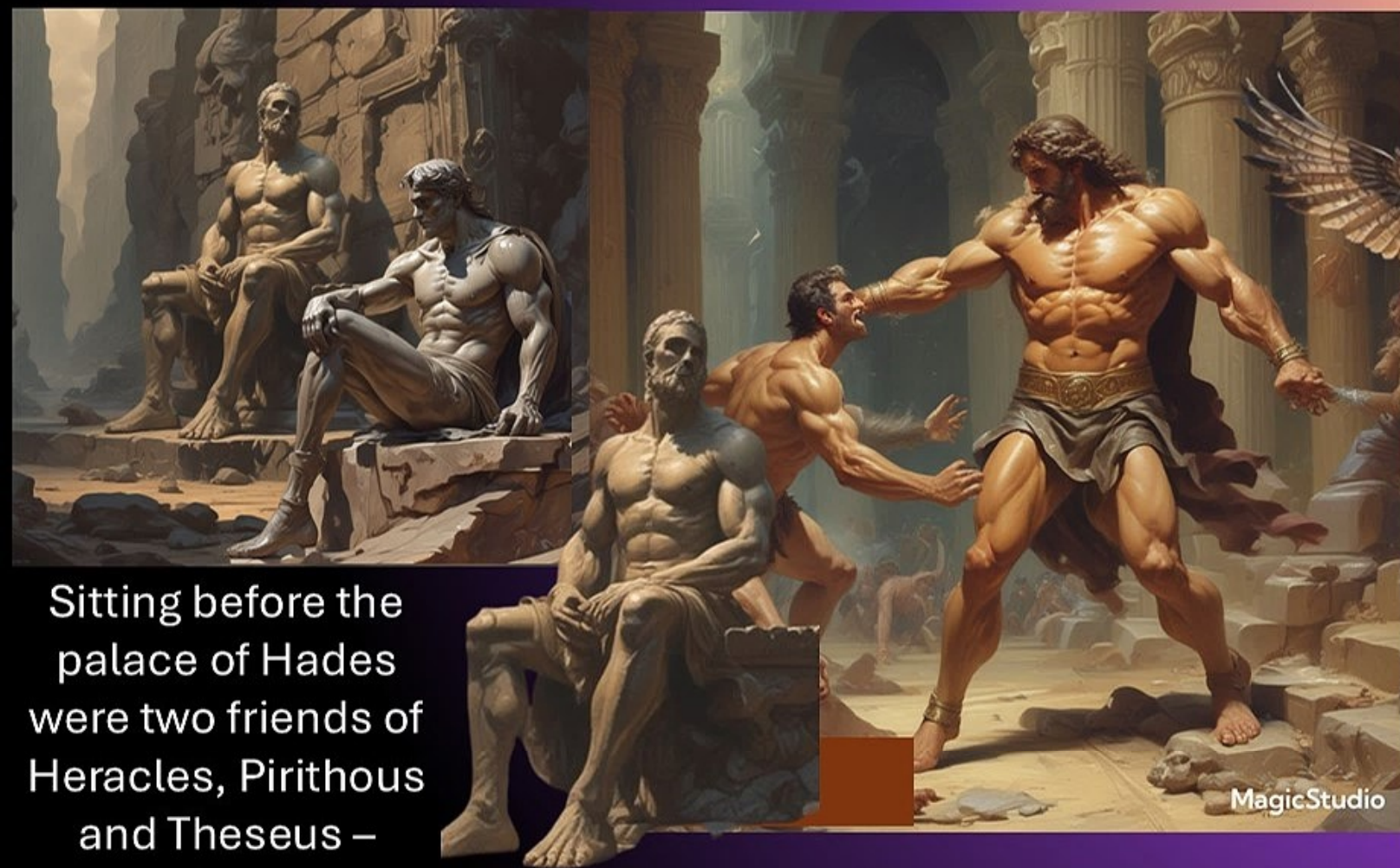
He was tasked with bringing up Cerberus, the 'brazen-voiced' monster hound..



Wherever Heracles walked, the underworld earth trembled beneath his thudding strides, and the shadows of the dead fled shrieking before him.

Uncle Hades, I have come for Cerberus!





Sitting before the palace of Hades were two friends of Heracles, Pirithous and Theseus – turned to stone because...

...in their hubris, they descended into the Underworld to demand the hand of Persephone from Hades for Pirithous.



Heracles rescued Theseus, but even he could not save Pirithous... at the same time, he rolled the massive rock off Ascalaphus, who, in the guise of an owl, flew up to the upper world.



Since then, in European culture, the owl hunting at night has been regarded as a bird of death. In ancient times, when lamp oil was a precious commodity, people would keep a light burning at night only if there was a critically ill person in the house. Thus, the hooting bird, drawn to the light and flying toward the window, became closely identified with death



Its hooting, or 'doom-mongering,' is consequently attributed to the bearer of ill tidings



Finally, Zeus permitted
Demeter to bring
Persephone up from
the Underworld, but
only for two-thirds of
the year.

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**The Return of
Persephone,**
Frederic
Leighton, 1891,
Leeds Art
Gallery, Leeds,
England

**Demeter and
Persephone,**
John D. Batten,
1891, Private
Collection





Persephone – the mother's daughter – spends spring and summer with her mother in the upper world. During this season, nature is in full bloom.



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by István Tózsá,
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and linguistic refinement by
Google Gemini AI.



Autumn and winter, when nature falls into its winter sleep, are spent by Persephone below in the underworld. During this time, Demeter is left alone and sorrowful; growth ceases, and nature loses its bloom.

Zeus fathered 3 daughters with Themis, the Titaness representing Law and Order.



The Horae became the goddesses of the seasons: spring, summer, and the combined autumn/winter.



The Horae are goddesses who maintain order in both nature and society.



Anatole is spring, Thallo is summer, and Carpo is autumn/winter; by their other names: ...

... spring is Eunomia (Order), summer is Eirene (Peace / Pax), and autumn/winter is Dike (Justice / Justicia).

It is told of Myrrha, daughter of King Cinyras of Cyprus, that her mother – Kenchreis – once dared to claim she was more beautiful than Aphrodite.



Hearing this, Aphrodite was enraged and incited an incestuous passion in Myrrha toward her own father, King Cinyras.



When the truth behind their secretive encounters was brought to light, Cinyras, consumed by rage, sought to kill his daughter. At the very last moment, Aphrodite transformed her into a myrrh tree, so the king's sword split the wood in two.



The infant falling from the split tree was so breathtakingly beautiful that Aphrodite took pity on him. She carried him down to the Underworld, entrusting him to her half-sister, Persephone, to hide him away.

As the young boy grew, he transformed into a youth who was the very incarnation of masculine beauty; his name was **Adonis.**





When Aphrodite beheld Adonis once more, she immediately demanded his return and brought him up to the upper world. However, Persephone had also grown deeply attached to the youth. The final decision fell into the hands of their common father – Zeus.

Adonis was permitted to spend two-thirds of the year – spring and summer – in the upper world with Aphrodite



However, for one-third of the year – during autumn and winter – he had to descend into the Underworld to Persephone; thus, both myths symbolized the changing of the seasons.



Ares (Mars), the god of war and Aphrodite's 'permanent' lover, looked upon this with fierce jealousy.



In the guise of his sacred animal, a wild boar, he attacked and killed Adonis.



From the spilled blood of Adonis, the red Pheasant's-eye (*Adonis aestivalis*) flower was born.





Orpheus before Hades and Persephone, François Perrier, 1645, Musée du Louvre, Paris

When Orpheus, the son of Apollo and the legendary singer, descended into the Underworld for his deceased beloved, seeking to move the heart of Hades with his song ...



Orpheus Leading Eurydice from the Underworld, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, 1861, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston



THE GOLDEN AGE OF EUROPEAN FABLE

...it was then that tears first appeared in the eyes of Persephone. Deeply moved, she implored Hades to release Orpheus' beloved from death. Within the grim, cold, and gray underworld of the Greek-European fable, it was always Persephone, the maiden goddess, who personified humaneness.