



Asphodel

Lauren Hammond

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Persephone has been running for her entire life. Running from the humans to keep her immortality a secret. And running from a man who haunts her dreams. Not a man but a god, who will stop at nothing until he gets what he wants. And what he wants most, is her.

Trapped in the realm of the dead, Persephone plans to return to the land of the living. The underworld is a terrifying place where ghosts roam freely, three headed dogs patrol the gates, and it's a living grave where the rules of earth and the warmth of the sun no longer apply. But then, something unexpected happens. Persephone finds herself falling for the god who abducted her, the god who has chased her for five thousand years, a god who is none other than death himself, Hades.

Ripped out of the underworld by Zeus, Persephone must find a pomegranate to return to the realm of the dead and to her beloved. Consuming only a seed of the fruit of the dead would bind Persephone to spend her life beneath the earth's core with Hades. But Zeus has reduced every pomegranate tree in the world to ash. Except one. Persephone must locate that one remaining pomegranate tree, a quest that could ignite a war between the two mightiest of the god's. A war that could cause Persephone to lose the only family she's ever known or give up a love that comes only once every five thousand years.

Asphodel Details

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From Reader Review Asphodel for online ebook

Ayesha says

I wish there was a lower star rating than 1! This is a horrible book and I am really surprised how the author ever managed to get this published.

Either she was high when she was writing this or this was book written by her five year old! Her metaphors made me cringe the entire time and I read the entire book hoping that it will get better. I am not much of a grammar police so I won't bother commenting on her grammar but her writing style and metaphors made me gag. " I felt like a shop-vac had been thrust down my throat and had sucked all my organs out" WHAT?WHAT? seriously...cocaine is a hell of a drug!

Kristen says

Well, it was a great idea executed in a very poor way. It was a complete struggle to read and nearly impossible to enjoy.

Persephone is thousands of years old but has the maturity of a seven year old. She is whinny, irritating, dull and honestly, quite dumb (she can't figure out things that are blatantly obvious). I didn't like her and could not relate to her. She goes to high school and likes a boy at her high school. I'm in my 20s and could never do this if I were 17 again let alone if I were thousands of years old.

Persephone's Mother Demeter treats her as though she's about four years old - she tries to protect her and shield her from Hades who was promised by Zeus (Persephone's Father) that she would be his wife. Demeter and Persephone are constantly on the run from Hades but Persephone has never known why they are always moving from continent to continent. You're thousands of years old - figure it out!

The author's writing was very weak. It was full of spelling and grammar errors and painful, cliched metaphors.

I really wanted to enjoy this novel so it was a huge disappointment. Despite being a lover of YA novels and mythical stories, I would not recommend this book to anyone.

Lauren Hammond says

Yay... Nobody loves mythological re-tellings more than me :)

Mei says

Synopsis

Hades is lonely and bored ruling the underworld. Zeus has promised him a wife, but has refused to actually give her to him.

Review

I apologize for the very short synopsis, but I wasn't able to make it more than 50 pages in to the novel.

I was drawn to Asphodel by the cover and the premise of the story. I love retold or modernized myths, and this one looked interesting. Unfortunately, the writing was so poor that I gave up searching for the plot. The author uses words incorrectly and in the wrong tense constantly, and her use of really bad metaphors was

irritating.

Below are a few passages:

"A man lied in the middle of the street. His limbs were twisted and broken and blood oozed from every opening on the man's face."

"Through the centuries, the tasks of running his realm had become tedious and repetitive to Hades. The task of damning the souls that had crossed the river Styx into his domain was becoming tiresome for the deceitful king."

"Hades glared at the boy pre-adult boy, whose hazel eyes glistened with tears. Seconds later, Hades disappeared, reappearing in front of the boy. Fear crept up the mortal's spine and he stiffened, unable to move. Then he started shaking. Hades examined him, hoping to scorch him with his gaze. Rage bubbled inside of the might God and Hades boomed, "Aren't you a man?" The boy lowered his head and Hades blanched as he sniffed. But the boy did not answer."

My Recommendation

While I saw promise in the book before I opened, I was very disappointed in the writing. The novel feels like it was written by a very young, new writer. I looked into the author, Lauren Hammond, and it appears that she has written several books. I'm not sure if the rest of her body of work follows this example, but I will not search out more of her books to check.

I give it **1/5 - Not worth the effort**

Merve Özcan says

Story was really weak in the beginning, Persephone acts like a adolescent, though she is five thousand years old goddess. It really made me mad, so immature . But later she becomes better, not that she loses all of her childness.

Hades was like how i expected him to be; charismatic, myterious, smart.

Not in the beginning, but after half of the book i really liked book and story.It wasn't clasical Hades And Persephone, there were some differences. Like her going school and not acting like what was expected of her. There isno't a mature bone in her body.

There was a bit problem with characters and what was expected of them. If you read the book like a normal teenage girl and as not Persephone the book is great, but when you start to read it as Perse , a dissapointment is waiting for you.

I think her just a girl, she doesnt have power other than immortality and bloom some flower, so it was easy but after she falls to underworld, i started to think her as Perse, not that she acted like a goddess, mostly a toddler who could not get a toy she wanted.

Demeter is a dissapointment too, what happened to our mighty Goddess of fertility? I could not see her.

Story ends in an important place, i am really curious about Adonis trouble, i was expecting that though.

It is a short book, if you like this retold myhologic stories about greek mythology, i recommend it but dont keep your expectations up.

Natasha McNeely says

Asphodel is the first book I've ever read by Lauren Hammond and I must say I don't regret picking it up right when I first got my Kindle.

As a mythology fanatic, this book drew me to it like a moth to a flame and I read it on Christmas day, in one sitting. Still not convinced? Then let's move on.

Cover

The cover is what first drew me to this book. It shows the setting and is not as over-the-top as many covers are nowadays, particularly ones with cover models. This cover's beauty is in its simplicity and that, in my eyes, made it a catching cover.

Story

This book retells the myth of Persephone and Hades, and their challenging love. Told from multiple perspectives, I found myself drawn into each character's view and clung onto every word, waiting for what came next.

The story itself is believable and I found myself enjoying this retelling of a classic myth. From the motherly relationship between Demeter and Persephone, to the challenging relationship Hades and Persephone share - each relationship had its own aspects that drew me in.

I desperately wanted to know what would happen next and to see how the relationship between Persephone and Hades would progress. When Persephone was upset, I was upset. When she was desperate, I was desperate. Overall, I lived her life and wished the best for her. The last pages left me crushed.

Pace

There were a couple moments where the pace seemed to go too fast. It seemed rushed, almost. There were so many chances to delve deeper into the relationship between Hades and Persephone, the emotions they felt, and yet those moments were taken for granted. I felt that, despite that I was already attached to them, it could have been taken to a completely different extreme. I could have felt *more*.

Other

One thing that irked me was that I found a good two or three handfuls of typos that yanked me out of the story. I'd go back to reread what I read, to make sure I hadn't just misread it by skimming past.

Once, I believe Hades was referred to as "her" and there were times when the wrong words were used ("doubt" instead of "don't").

I understand that typos happen and it does not detract from the story itself, but for me, it interrupted the flow of the story whenever I came across one.

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Overall, Asphodel The Underworld Trilogy 1 is a great read and I am eagerly awaiting the next book in the series. The first book I ever read on my Kindle; I was not disappointed.

Charissa Sophia de la Rosa says

Asphodel (noun): any of various Old World herbs (especially genera Asphodelus and Asphodeline) of the lily family with flowers in usually long erect racemes.

This book is a light read and I'm pretty sure adolescents like me would also enjoy this. I have mixed feelings with it and let me start off with the good ones.

What I Like:

[_] Ms. Lauren really researched and knows a lot about Greek myths. I'd like to congratulate her for writing **real** facts from the Greek myths and one of the *almost* exact interpretation of Hades and Persephone love story. Most of my views were also hers, and I found myself enjoying reading it for the personality of the gods were the exact way I imagined them to be. If Ms. Lauren and I both have the same imagination and interpretation in Greek myths, then do I have a future in writing books? :) Just kidding.

I love how she wrote about the gods.

Zeus: A greedy and evil man who is the *real*, I repeat, **real** cruellest of all gods and sure doesn't really deserve to be the king of all. I'm glad Ms. Lauren and I both think that the king of Olympus is not that good. He's a womanizer that always commits adultery and only thinks of power and superiority that he can get everything he wants. (view spoiler)

Hades: He's what I exactly imagined him to be like! Cold and often misunderstood to be the most callous of all just because of his job as the 'god of the dead'. But in truth, he is not. He is the opposite. I hate how modern books and movies always misinterpret him (*glares at Hercules, that Disney movie that made Hades, one of my favorite Greek god as the antagonist*).

Hera: She was not that bad. She was just jealous of Zeus's women (Goodness, who wouldn't? If I were Hera, I already left Zeus) but a good woman who cares about her loved ones (She's always being misunderstood).

Demeter: Same motherly-like that I knew.

Hermes: I love how Ms. Lauren described him *almost* exactly the way I imagined him to be! *The Demigod disappeared through the opening and seconds later a tall, lean muscled man with ash-blond hair strolled toward Zeus. "You summoned me?" he questioned. "Yes," said Zeus. "Thank you for coming Hermes. We have a mission for you."* When I had read that, I almost squealed (that always happen to me when I read or hear Hermes).

Persephone: I love how she never gives up and will do everything just to be with Hades.

Athena: Oh, please, don't get me start with her. I'll explain why later. I didn't find anything I like in her personality in this book.

[_] The plot. It's quite good if you ask me. I like how she made a twist, making it a contemporary retelling of the Hades and Persephone myth. I really enjoyed it and could really relate.

[_] The cover. Is that Persephone in a field of Asphodels?

[_] The title. Asphodel was a very catchy title especially to those who are lovers of Greek myths. At first, I thought it was referring to The Fields of Asphodel, a desert full of floating spirits not knowing where to go. But I was wrong. Asphodel was referring to a very beautiful flower that only grows in the Underworld. (view spoiler)

[_] Writing style. I love how she described things and adding figures of speech here and there to make the reader visualize more what was happening or what the protagonist was feeling. An example of this: *She was the light to his darkness. The compassion to his rage. The key to his heart. Point blank, Persephone was everything to him [Hades].*

Another example: *Pain. All there is pain. I feel like someone has just plunged their fist into my chest and wrapped their fingers around my heart. They are squeezing and squeezing. There is blood everywhere. A crimson river trails down the length of their arm and when they yank their hand out of my chest cavity my organ is in their palm. But it doesn't beat. They've killed it. And now I'm dead inside.*

What I Dislike:

[_] I'll start off with Athena. I disliked how she was portrayed in this book. She was my *only* problem with the characters (except for Persephone) for the rest were fine. Athena was implied as an idiot like she wasn't treasuring her womanhood like she loved to flirt with handsome and hot guys. And that enraged me. A lot. Take a look how Athena appeared in the book:

Athena turns her attention to the guests. "I'm gonna go flirt with Apollo," she tells me. "I'll catch ya later." "Later." [Persephone said]

As I [Persephone] make my way to the kitchen, I hear Athena shout, "Hey Apollo! Looking good!"

Who wouldn't get mad at that? *points disgustingly above* That was one of the most horrendous thing I've ever read. Athena flirting to Apollo? She was wiser than that and for goodness sake, she swore to stay single forever like Artemis! *shakes head*

Next is Persephone. I am an adolescent myself and I must say, I dislike how Persephone acted. She was like a little child, weeping, wailing, and screaming when she doesn't get what she wanted. A spoiled brat actually. She was also selfish she even said so somewhere in the book. She wasn't that miss independent, I guess I can't blame her for the last five thousand years she was under the care of Demeter, repeating high school all over again. I also dislike her curiosity. It reminded me of Pandora.

[_] The ending. It's so cliffhanger-y it made me bang my head. What's up with the authors nowadays loving cliffhangers? It's getting annoying. Judging at the plot summary, I *thought* the whole plot will revolve around Persephone finding the last Pomegranate tree to be with her beloved Hades. But I was wrong. (view spoiler)

Conclusion:

Asphodel by Lauren Hammond, the first book of the Underworld Trilogy was good and a light read. The characters are the exact way I imagined them to be except for Athena and Persephone (which made it lose one star) but I have to give credit to Ms. Hammond for writing the real Zeus and Hades that always make

people misunderstood (which instantly made two stars). The twist with the contemporary style on an old and ancient myth was cool too.

I give this book 4 stars.

Emily says

This is more like 2.5 stars than 3.

I really, really wanted to like this book. I love Hades and Persephone, I love retellings, and I love ya novels, so it should have been a perfect fit for me. Unfortunately, it didn't really work for me.

First off, it should have been looked over once or twice more by an editor. Some of the mistakes may have just been because of the format (there were a couple of times where parts of sentences were repeated, and I know that ereaders sometimes do wonky things to the formatting), but others were easily fixable grammatical errors (such as lie v. lay).

The romance felt off to me. Persephone fell in love with Hades after two days. Previous to this, she had hated him for kidnapping her, but once she realized that he actually felt something for her beyond just seeing her as a prize, she immediately fell in love with him. I don't find that particularly believable and would have really liked some more development of their romance.

Persephone didn't really sound like a 5000+ year old goddess. She sounded like a modern day teenager. Also, it seemed kind of pointless for her to be going to high school. I know Demeter wanted them to blend in, but Persephone looks like she is seventeen. It probably wouldn't have seemed too weird if she wasn't going to high school, and if someone asked about it, either say that she was older than she looks or home schooled because honestly, not having her go to school would probably have made their hiding easier.

I didn't really like how Hades was portrayed. I always interpreted him as preferring to stay away from Mount Olympus and the other gods, and he never really seemed that bitter over getting the Underworld. He actually seemed like one of the better gods to me even with his kidnapping of Persephone. Here, he seems really bitter and spiteful about being in charge of the Underworld and just seems to hate everything. He didn't really work for me. Part of this may be because of different ways of looking at Hades; if I pretend that he is an original character, I can deal with his characterization better.

A little thing that annoyed me: Persephone *bit* into the pomegranate. Everyone I've ever known has always just eaten the seeds; in fact, I don't think you actually can bite into the skin of the pomegranate because it's pretty thick.

I did enjoy this book to some extent though. It was a quick read, and I read it all in one sitting, and it had a unique retaking on the myth of Hades and Persephone. I probably will pick up the next book because I think that one will be more action orientated than this one was, and I'm interested in seeing the direction this retelling takes.

Ellen says

It was only ok, I liked the story but I wasn't left in raptures or anything.

I thought that it seems ridiculous for Demeter to be immortal and pass as an adult but Persephone is not just a teenager but a seventeen year old it doesn't make sense. Also as if anyone remotely connected to Olympus doesn't know of Adonis.

But what annoyed me most of all is not only is Hades not said to also be a teenager but they kiss and his 5 thousand years of stalking means that Persephone is in love?

I hate to say it but Goddess of Spring by PC Cast made love more believable.

Loopy says

I attempted to read this story? a while ago but was so disgusted that I couldn't bring myself to review it. Anyway, although Kirsten's review (<http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/...>) sums up my thoughts quite well, I'll add my 2c.

This story not only requires suspension of disbelief (fine, it's a mythology story, that's expected) but also suspension of common sense and any thought processes whatsoever. Persephone makes Bella Swan look like an incredibly smart, strong, capable woman - now that's saying something! I skipped ahead quite a bit but I saw absolutely no glimmers of hope and in the end I just could not make myself read any more because I could feel my brain cells shrivelling and I don't believe my e-reader deserves that kind of abuse.

Shauna says

The mythology in this was just god awful. (that was bad wasn't it? moving on) One of the things that kept niggling at me was the character life cycles. It was mentioned a number of times that Persephone had had many 17th birthdays, the implication seemingly that her age never stretched any further than that, but that was it. What is that supposed to tell me?! That she's forever being re-incarnated? That her mother Demeter just keeps on jumping Zeus's bones to have her? That, although she herself constantly makes statements like '*Luckily for me, I've lived for a long time*' as in she's amassed a bit of knowledge over the centuries years, she still thinks and acts like a clueless, petulant child (which is another thing- as a child, does she retain all this? We just. don't. know.) I swear, this book did not even try to make sense.

Now you might be saying, 'Shauna, you are over-thinking it, go with the flow'.
There was no flow.

I gave up around page 100 (a solid effort on my part) at this charming exchange:

He takes me by surprise when he whips around, clutches my arm and backs me up into the wall, his cheeks flushed and red, full of rage. "Are you a child?" he growls.

For the first time since I've arrived here I fear him. A startled gasp gets stuck in my throat.

...

I'm captivated. Lost.

rubs temples

You're something alright love.

Emily Ever says

I am only half way through this book but I can't take it anymore. I love Greek myth stories and I love YA novels, but when the book is missing crucial words/punctuation/character traits it eats at my enjoyment. I don't think this book has ever even heard the word 'editor'.

On top of that, the heroine is - though immortal - acting like a child. She has supposedly lived for centuries and yet she still cries at the drop of a hat; still flustered by a cute boy; still doesn't question why her mother won't answer some basic questions. I know its a YA novel but I feel like she would be more self-possessed by now. Not exactly someone I would like to look up to as a strong independent woman. Not to mention her emotions are lighting-quick and can pull a 180 on a dime, making it hard to connect with her in any way.

so far the most memorable scene to illustrate this is where she first gets into the Underworld and confronts Hades with fury for kidnapping her. Not a page later she is bawling and (I am not making this up) wrapped around his leg like a four year old.

The writing also leaves something to be desired, too many cliches and not enough original thought. And when there is some original thought, it doesn't connect with what's going on and you have to pause and go '... what?'

Author needs to look up the meaning of reverse psychology.

I am going to continue reading because there must have been something in this book that other people liked but so far, nothing.

Darkfallen says

YAY another Lauren Hammond book!

That's exactly what I said when I found out about this book. Lauren Hammond and Greek mythology? What more can you ask for?!

Now I know you see those 3 stars up there and are wondering why. First off let me state that I enjoyed this book. I was intrigued by the take on Hades & Persephone's story...but I just felt that it was lacking that *Lauren Hammond* sparkle. Or should I say dark intrigue?

Here let me go on...

There were several parts that felt slightly rushed, and while I really REALLY wanted to feel all school girl

squee/swoon of Hades I just wasn't given the chance. Which led to the relationship between Hades and Persephone feeling forced and rushed. Now it wasn't like in most books when the relationship is rushed and you just aren't buying any of it...because I was so buying it. I wanted them to be together and love each other. But there just wasn't enough build time there for me to get so attached that my heart would be ripped out when it all fell apart. And as Nine Inch Nails says...*In the end everything all falls apart*. I just wished there would have been a little more feeling and building there so when the time came it would break me. YES that's right I'm complaining that I didn't cry or have my heart broken. Wow what a masochist am I?

In the end I still can't wait for the next book in the series. I need more of this story I need more of the love I saw starting to bloom, and I hope I get it. A part of me wishes this wasn't a YA series so I could get EVEN more. *waggles eyebrows* Still my previous statement stands...Lauren Hammond is an author to look out for. If you haven't read her stuff yet you have no idea what you're missing! Start by picking up *A Whisper To A Scream*, then *He Loves Me, He Loves You Not*, and then find your way to *Asphodel*. You'll be glad you met this author.

Julie Rimpula says

I've never met a more pathetic goddess than ASPHODEL'S Persephone. She's so clueless about everything, it was so frustrating! You'd think that because she's a goddess, she'd at least know her and the other deities' history. But nooooo! She doesn't know that pomegranate is the fruit of the dead, she doesn't know that Charon doesn't ferry anyone across the River Styx without payment, she doesn't know a thing about Hades except what her mother told her, of which half was crap. Seriously, Persephone? Just because you've been away from Greece the last five thousand years doesn't mean you have to be ignorant of your history. Maybe Demeter should be the one to blame since she took Persephone away from the home of the gods, but hey, how ignorant can you get to know little to nothing about your own ancestry? And as if Persephone wasn't enough to make me want to strangle myself while reading this book, the other characters were on different levels of annoying. Demeter was this control freak of a mother who doesn't trust her own daughter enough to tell her the truth. Zeus was being Zeus – the absentee father who only interferes with his children's lives when things were looking bad for him. Hades was surprising, though. It's no secret that the reason why Hades wants Persephone was because he's lonely and wants a queen. But he's as moody as a PMSing girl. One moment he's cold and cranky, the next he's sweet and gentle. Talk about unpredictable. I also don't get Adonis. Obviously, he's not what he appears to be, but why the hell is he there? I guess that's what sequels are for but I'm not gonna find out why because I'm not reading the next book. Fans of ASPHODEL might want to kill me for saying this but hey, if you haven't read this book yet, don't even bother.

Melissa says

The editorial mistakes. Dear god. Ms Hammond, if you're having trouble finding a copy editor, I am available for hire.
