



Goddess

Laura Powell

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Strikes. Starvation. Riots. Britain is at breaking-point and Aura is blind to it all. The Cult of Artemis is the only home she's ever known. Enclosed in its luxury lifestyle, the unrest gripping the country seems to belong to a distant world. Her dream is to serve the Goddess and taking a vow of chastity and obedience seems a small price to pay. But days before Aura is due to be initiated as a Priestess, she meets Aiden, the rebellious son of a cult insider, whose radical ideas and unsettling charm force Aura to question everything – and everyone – she knows.

Goddess Details

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Author : Laura Powell

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From Reader Review Goddess for online ebook

Debra says

For a more detailed review, please check out my review below:

Debra's Book Cafe

Debs :-)

Leah says

Received in exchange for an honest review

Thank you, Bloomsbury

This was a fun, light little read. I haven't read many mythology based books, but I've enjoyed all of the ones that I have read. Goddess was no exception to this. It's a quick read, being only 280 pages long - a welcome break from the A Song of Ice and Fire books that I've been reading! I wouldn't say that much happened in the book, or at least that's how it came across. Things weren't as exciting as they could have been, but that doesn't take much away from the book.

I think what I liked most about this was seeing the change in Aura's character. She transforms from a seemingly weak and naive girl to a powerful figurehead for a revolution. I always enjoy seeing the protagonist undergo a transformation and to become re-educated about the world she lives in. If the author had kept Aura as naive and innocent I would have been pulling the hair out of my head by the end of the book! Not only does she emerge as a stronger person, but I loved hearing about her connections to the goddess Artemis. I don't know a lot about Artemis but I love learning about the different gods and goddesses. I didn't like the repressiveness that was demonstrate in the book by them, but then again it could be a point being made about religion generally. Her following or Artemis took away a lot of her free will; that could often be a little uncomfortable to read.

Overall, I enjoyed this book. It's light and a very quick read. I'll be picking up more mythology based books in the future. It's an area I've always wanted to read more of so this book has pushed me in that direction!

Rita says

This review was originally posted at Weaving Pages.

Goddess was definitely a different book to those that I had read before. It focused a lot on the themes of cults and the influence of Greek mythology, and I felt that the end result was a fairly interesting novel. It definitely had a lot of plotting-to-overthrow-power-hungry-leaders which I always like.

The themes of cults and Greek mythology were definitely interesting to read. The cult in this book was

centred around the goddess Artemis, but was quite stereotypical in the sense that it has all the vows of purity and spiritually dressed members- it is that which you would expect from a fictional evil cult that hides itself in luxuries. Along with Aura who had made it her dream to serve Artemis, I found myself reading quite a normal book. What I felt made it different, however, was that it was still set in a version of the United Kingdom that was filled with all the attributes of a nation that's falling apart

At first, I did find this a bit confusing to process. The idea of a cult that people rely on whilst there is a government is certainly original, but I found it a bit hard to feel as though it was working. To me, it felt slight chaotic- which I guess is the feeling of the setting -but at the same time, something felt off. I did get used to this though, and I did like the story.

As you read the book, it definitely begins to show some traits of darkness, especially as more about the cult is revealed. To be honest, from the beginning I was screaming at Aura to get out of there. I knew no good was going to come from it! These darker sides did allow the book to then explore the idea of propaganda, and the contrast between truth and what is shown to the public- you definitely saw the difference.

My issue is that though Goddess obviously had many messages and themes I could tell it wanted to explore, the storyline made it quite difficult and hard to understand. It was something that doesn't just come naturally to the reader, and it's only now as I write this that I've truly started to think about what it was trying to get at.

In terms of characters, Aura was interesting as a main character. You could see her faith in the Goddess was really cemented into her, and even as the story built up, she never let go of that belief. Interestingly, Aura's character brought in the idea that the cult itself wasn't at fault, but instead it was how the people representing it interpreted and used it.

There were a few more interesting characters throughout, and there was definitely a wide variety of personalities, which I thought showed how different people interpret everything differently.

The story could have been a little less confusing, but I did find Goddess a likeable book.

Kate G says

I want a second book. Honest to God, this drew me in and I was hooked. When Laura describes it as a Cult, she's not lying. Full blown manipulative, oppressive, dismissive cult behaviour. Controlling people, controlling information, lying to the media etc.

The ending left something to be desired which is why I really want a second. There's such a damn good world in here, and some decent characterisation that I actually want more — and that's saying something.

We start off with a cult, and after thirteen chapters slide into V For Vendetta territory which is where the author really hit her mark. I read this in a day or two, but it was a day well spent.

Sarah says

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis. Thanks to Bloomsbury Publishing Plc (UK & ANZ) and Netgalley.)

Aura is a handmaiden in the cult of Artemis, and her only goal is to become a priestess. When the political climate is in uproar though, Aura begins having 'oracles', during which she speaks prophecies. The high priestess changes these prophecies to her own benefit though, and tells Aura to keep quiet.

Can Aura do what she is told? Or will she stick by her oracles instead?

This was an okay story, but it was a little confusing at times.

Aura was an interesting character, and I liked the way she refused to be swayed from what she knew was right. She was also incredibly brave to stand up to her superiors the way she did.

The storyline in this was quite interesting at points, but I also found myself bored at points too. The twists that were thrown into the story were good, and built tension, but I did feel like there was a bit of a lack of world-building, and I don't know whether it was just the writing style, but I did find that my attention kept waning.

There wasn't really any romance in this one, but there was plenty of scandal!

The ending was okay, and I liked that we got both a happy ending, and that things were tied up nicely. I did like this book in places, but it also irritated me the way it couldn't hold my interest at points.

Overall; lots of ups and downs with this book,
6 out of 10.

Cora ? Tea Party Princess says

5 Words: Cult, politics, revolution, mythology, prophecy.

When I started this book, it was with the thought "this is a pretty cover" running through my head. Because yet again I didn't read the blurb. But I think if I'd read the blurb I wouldn't have gone on to read the book, because it just doesn't sound like my cup of tea.

This alternate universe mixes mythology and magic with the political unrest and distrust that is evident today. And it's quite good.

This is quite a fast paced book for all that it sometimes feels like nothing is happening. I was never bored while I read it, and it kept me turning the pages. Because of the pace, it's a relatively quick read.

I liked Aura, and how she changed and the story progressed. She's almost unrecognisable from the quite girl you meet in the first pages, by the time you get to the end she's really come out of her shell. I also liked the complexities of the cult, and the corruption spreading throughout.

I received a copy of this for free via NetGalley for review purposes.

LilyCat (Agent of SHIELD)-- on hiatus :(says

3.5 stars.

A little stereotypical in the beginning, it becomes more of a societal commentary as the book progresses.
more later.

Johanna says

Goddess is a story inspired by Greek mythology and the Vestal Virgins in Rome. The Vestal Virgins were Roman priestesses who had to guard the holy fire of the Goddess' Vesta's hearth. It's really hard for me to rate this book because the whole time I read it, it felt so unreal. Like when you dream and something exciting might happen but you still know that this is a dream. This is how the book felt like, not like a real book because I couldn't place it anywhere.

And that is actually my main point of criticism. The setting is supposed to be some kind of modern Britain, including the royal family and politicians working a Democracy, but also including a powerful Artemis cult religion (next to the Christian religion and others). The priestesses of the Artemis cult live a sheltered life and the high priestess Opis is a pretty influential person in society. So this is obviously a world the author has created for her book. But there is no real information given about her world. Why is this government about to break? Which role does the Artemis cult play now and what has it been throughout history? How did this cult develop and become an important part in Britain? Does it only exist there or is it a worldwide phenomenon?

I was tempted to stop reading after about 20% because the story and the characters can't mean anything to me if I simply can't really place the setting. But even without all this information, the author developed her plot nicely and within those boundaries provided more details about the ongoing actions with the government and the rebellion. So I read on, but I can't say that I truly connected with the characters.

Aura was a difficult character to like. She grew up so naive and didn't know anything about the modern world, about internet and mobile phones. She was educated in Greek mythology and ancient languages. But then she suddenly uses phrases like "guilt trip" towards the end which I couldn't understand at all as it didn't fit her characterization. The romance parts between her and Aiden were nice but nothing more, nothing I could really feel.

The story was actually interesting and could have been so much more if the author would have worked out her world-building. I guess overall the book was much too short to provide any in-depth world-building. I liked to transport the idea of an ancient Greek goddess and her cult transferred to our modern world. The novel also raises the question whether one should quietly accept one's destiny or try to go and change it. It's the questions of being chosen versus choose for yourself.

I'm not sure who to recommend this book to. People who like Greek mythology and alternate history tropes might enjoy this book. It's well edited and though the author still needs some experience it's also well written. I'm curious what Powell's next book will be about.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you so much!

Heather A says

Actual rating 1.5 stars.

I received a copy from Netgalley. The cover caught my eye on this one and it sounded different and quite interesting. But in honesty I really don't quite know what to make of this particular book.

The setting seems to be an alternate UK. I originally thought it was a dystopia but there's nothing really in the plot to distinguish whether it's a dystopia or an alternate modern day. The world building is a little flat in that respect. On the one hand, the story is quite fast paced.

The Cult of Artemis seems to be the leading religious group in this future and everything falls around that. Ancient Greek ideas in a modern world. Which was interesting enough. The story focuses on the girl who's supposed to an Oracle. The heroine, Aura, has been brought up in the cult and knows nothing else. One thing I did like was the use of the word "cult" to describe the group. I always thought "cult" was the term used by the media and law enforcement to refer to weirdo religious groups. Do cults refer to themselves as cults? I don't have the slightest idea. I just found the use of the term here interesting. The Cult here is prominent and fascinating in a way to see how it fits in the novel. Its rich in myth and its own interpretations.

I would have liked a little more background on how this cult came to power and how it became so popular. We're not told much about how the UK came to be in the state its in throughout the novel. There's riots and political uprising and things going on and finical crash is mentioned but not much else.

SOME MILD PLOT SPOILERS

The cult's high priestess gives prophecies and oracles which help guide the people. But everything in the cult is not as it seems as our heroine discovers. Things are uncovered and she has to go on the run. Helped by a friend she makes. The male hero of the story Aiden is bold and brassy and along with his friend Scarlet, the daughter of an ageing rock star, is probably the most likeable character in the novel. He's not shy about his feelings over the Cult of Artemis and helps Aura when she realises the truth.

I don't really want to go into much more details over the plot as that would be very spoilery.

I honestly couldn't decide if I liked Aura or not. She was extremely sheltered but at least once she got out in the world and realised her potential and what she could do with her gifts to help, she did do something about it. On the other hand, the naivety was annoying. There's a little bit of slut shaming too which didn't sit well with me.

Another mild spoiler (view spoiler)

The story is wrapped up and concluded okay. It was fast paced, just...for me there was something missing. I found the novel very plot driven rather than focus on the characters other than Aura. Its a tough one. Its okay...but I guess in the end it just didn't do it for me.

I would recommend this to anyone who is looking for a YA a stand alone thriller that's different.

Thank you to Netgalley and Bloomsbury for approving my request to view the title. Even though the novel wasn't to my taste thank you for the opportunity.

Michelle (Fluttering Butterflies) says

I'm still not quite sure what to make of Goddess by Laura Powell. It was the first book by this author that I've read (she's written about witches previously) and I didn't know very much about it before I picked it up except that it was a book that incorporated elements of Greek mythology. I think I was pretty surprised by this story and where it went...

Goddess is a story about faith and corruption and political activism and doing the right thing. The story takes place in a present (?) day England that is badly crippled by riots and poverty and our main character, Aura, is pretty distant and sheltered from all of this growing up as she has in a cult that honours Artemis, a goddess from Greek mythology.

At the start of the story Aura is just about to turn 16, the age where she transitions between being a handmaiden into that of a priestess in this cult. As a priestess, she is expected to give vows of obedience and chastity but before this happens, Aura meets this boy, Aiden, who makes her question everything that has grown up to believe. Other events occur that make Aura realise that the people she has trusted have been keeping secrets and are using the position that this cult holds as a means of power for their own gain. Aura ends up in trouble and needing the guidance and support of Aiden if she is to end up doing the right thing.

I did enjoy Aura and Aiden's burgeoning friendship and the strength that Aura shows in standing up to the people who have raised her and for making the right choices when she comes to realise how other people are living outside of the luxury of this cult. And I felt that everything to do with the marches and protesting against political corruption and fairness for everyday people should resonate well with readers.

I just didn't quite get if this book was aiming for a dystopian setting or an alternate history sort of thing? I felt like more world-building needed to be done for me to feel comfortable with the setting of this book. There was mention of a lot of familiar things and people and buildings and then also this massive cult of Artemis and I wanted to know more about how they fit into the every day world.

Overall, I really enjoyed reading Goddess and will look into reading the other books Laura Powell has written! I flew through the pages of Goddess really quickly and I was surprised by the twists in the story towards the end and really felt for Aura's circumstances. I wanted the best for her.

Goddess by Laura Powell is being published by Bloomsbury on the 8th of May.

Leah Backus says

An interesting concept gone horribly wrong. The book itself was decently written but the plot was all over the place. The "bad guys" were mere ciphers with only the most basic bad-guy motives. I just didn't care about any of the characters. The ending was horribly abrupt and everything was wrapped up way too conveniently. The book was clearly an attempt by the author to jump on the "young girl leads a revolution" bandwagon.

Bookish Indulgences with b00k r3vi3ws says

Aura has grown up in the sheltered life of the Temple of Artemis. All she dreams of is serving the Goddess and becoming Artemis's Oracle someday. She has very little idea about the world outside her cult. She doesn't have inkling about how the world is in shambles and the politics that not only surrounds the country but is also deep rooted in her cult. When she makes an oracle in a public place, her life is about to change drastically. The only one she can turn to is Aiden, the rebellious son of a cult insider...

I think the world created in this book is awesome. It is a modern world where politics plays a big role and internet and other media have an equal standing. Yet, the people still believe in religion an oracle in a way that may seem very superstitious. The mix between science, politics, religion and magic is so balanced that as a reader I believed in both aspects of the story. It also depicts, how people in power – whether in politics or in religion are susceptible to corruption and how they manipulate the common people - which stands true in our reality as well.

Aura was an interesting character. From the meek and obedient servant of the God to the strong individual

who stands up against corruption, she makes an amazing journey of growth and development through the story. Aiden on the other hand is a character that grabs your attention right away but show very little growth. Together they help each other out and their growing affection for each other was fun to read.

I did miss the back story a bit. I mean we are introduced to a world where the government is in shambles and there is much political unrest. But how did things get there? Did any of the characters from the story have a hand or a role in it? I also would have liked to see more of the people on the council of the cult of Artemis. As a result the world building fell a little short of expectations and felt a bit flat.

Overall, the book kept my interest and the pages flew by. Interesting read!

Charnell (Reviews from a Bookworm) says

Probably a 3.5, this was a very strange read that's a little hard to sum up.

Jess says

I received a copy of this book via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. Thanks to Bloomsbury Publishing Plc (UK&ANZ) and Laura Powell

2.5 stars

Aura is a Handmaiden and soon-to-be Priestess in the Cult of Artemis and lives a life of luxury. The rest of Britain is a different story. After meeting Aiden, Aura starts to question if a life serving the Goddess is what she thought it was.

This was an easy read that wasn't particularly gripping but I liked the Greek aspect. The plot and the characters were okay and I thought Aura was an alright protagonist.

Overall this was an okay read.

Erin Wynn says

3.5 stars

So I had a lot of issues with this book. It should have been a lot longer and a lot of it was so rushed that I had to read parts over and over again to make sure I didn't skip any details. It kind of didn't know what genre it was. I also wish the character development was a little better.

THAT BEING SAID:

This was definitely the most interesting concept I've come across in a long time. As an aspiring theo/theologist and a Christopagan, imagining Artemisian Paganism as the main religion of the United Kingdom was crazy and awesome, and it made me think about the religion and politics of my country in

entirely new ways.

Religion helps many people but it can be a negative thing and is arguably responsible for much of the greed, war and violence in the world. While we usually associate those issues with Abrahamic religions, particularly Christianity which has the most institutional power, this book is about a corrupt Pagan religion. We are used to hearing about how people twist the word of God for their own selfish agenda, but what if it was the word of a Goddess they were twisting? In this book, the rich and powerful Cult of Artemis exercises a lot of control over the United Kingdom which is in great recession and social turmoil. The cult refuses to help the poor and downtrodden and spend money on things for the cult only. Sound familiar? It's what a lot of Christian denominations seem to be doing these days in the name of God.

The Goddess Artemis is such an interesting goddess to me because she is both a kind, loving mother figure and a tormentor to her worshippers. This book does not shy away from that and the main character Aura runs in to issues with her relationship with the goddess. I wasn't sure if she was actually having divine revelations, though, or if her visions were the result of something else, but that would mean her visions coming true were extreme coincidences.

Overall this book was an amazing experience to read and its flaws did not stop me from enjoying it.
