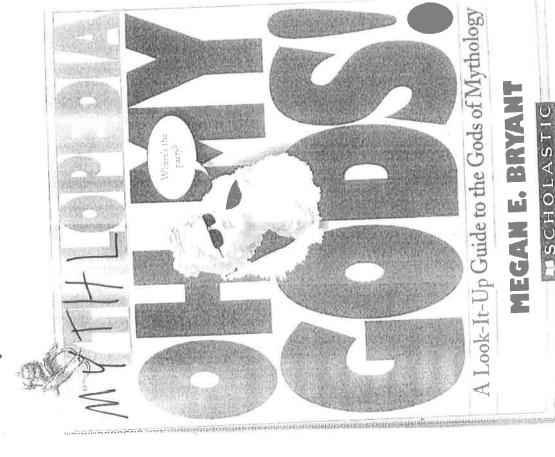
HAPES



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MEGAN E. BRYANT

SCHOLASTIC





"Feel the burn!"

Hades loses out-but **UNLUCKY LOTS** gains the entire

"That's just my

Underworld.

I can't believe

luck ..

I picked the short stick!"

After the gods Zeus, Poseidon, universe—earth, sky, sea, and Underworld. But how would these three powerful gods Itans in the Titanomachy, they controlled the whole and Hades defeated the

part? The only fair way, Zeus decide who would rule each

In the religion of ancient Greece, the dead were cremated and their souls went to the Underworld (the "House death realm, this region was ruled

IT'S GREEK TO ME

by the god Hades and his queen,

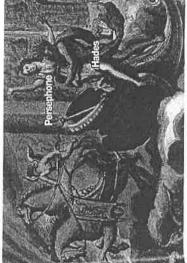
Hello from

of Hades"). Also known as the

Each brother took a chance and The result? All three gods were Hades ended up with the third hoped for the best part to rule. Poseidon's gave him the sea. portion—the Underworld, or wasn't happy about his pick. to rule the earth. Zeus's pick death realm. At first Hades also gave him the sky, and decided, was to draw lots.



certainly seemed to be a good! Inderworld was a fine area to or Hades' gloomy personality every dead soul would be oned underground wealth would be But once Zeus explained that his subjects, and that all the his, Hades realized that the rule. And the Underworld



Value of American

FERSEPHONE, QUEEN OF THE DEAD

didn't keep him from continuing

to look for love in all the wrong

places. But Hades now had

Hades' dramatic kidnapping of

entanglements end badly Most of Hades' romantic

for the ladies!

LOVE IS DEAD

his future queen, Persephone,

In one sad story, Hades fell in

love with the nymph Minthe.

jealous bride, who was fiercely to hide his romances from his

possessive of her husband.

Even the god of the dead b god of the Underworld, neds a mate.

down to the Underworld, where gompanionship. Zeus decided Ihat Persephone, his daughter Persephone and dragged her crops, especially grain), would housands of dead souls and with Demeter (the goddess of make a fine match for Hades. many faithful assistants, but Hades was surrounded by he made her his queen. % Hades kidnapped le longed for female

Demeter was heartbroken at While searching, she neglected the crops, so the harvest was sarched for her everywhere. the loss of her daughter and thined and people starved. Zeus had to do something. He insisted that Hades

in the Underworld, and the other crops flourish. When she is with months of the year with Hades Persephone is with her mother Zeus agreed to a compromise Persephone would spend four on earth. This story illustrates Persephone to return to earth Because Hades did not want the changing seasons. When he had deliberately given her a ripe pomegranate and she had eaten a few of its seeds. Hades, crops wither and die. anything in the Underworld. eight months with Demeter Persephone had not eaten mother-if, and only if,

return Persephone to her

named Leuce. When Persephone herb we know as mint, In another of bragging that Hades loved her more than he loved Persephone, From Minthe's remains grew the When Minthe made the mistake transformed Leuce into a white earned of their romance, she the queen of the Underworld trampled Minthe into the dirt! poplar tree—a tree that then "I can't help ale, Hades loved a nymph became sacred to Hades.

mean popular!" it if I'm poplar...

22

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"...I would rather be the unpaid servant of...the lowliest man...than be king over all the wasted dead."

—Homer's Odyssey

Hades

Αιδης

PRONUNCIATION: HAY-deez
EQUIVALENT CHARACTER: The Roman
god Pluto

GENDER: Male CULTURE: Greek

ATTRIBUTES: Underworld; Wealth;
Agriculture; Death

Hades was the Greek god of the Underworld. The Greeks believed all souls went to the Underworld after death, where they roamed about as empty, voiceless shades. Hades kidnapped Persephone and made her the queen of the Underworld. However, Zeus, the king of the gods, ordered Hades to return Persephone to her mother, Demeter, the goddess of the harvest. Persephone spent just part of the year in the Underworld from then on. Hades was also associated with wealth and with agriculture.

Hades was the son of the Titans Cronus and Rhea. During the great war of the gods, Zeus led his brothers and sisters—Hades, Poseidon, Hestia, Hera, and Demeter—in an

uprising against their father. Under Zeus' leadership, the young gods overthrew Cronus and the Titans. The young gods cast the Titans into Tartarus, the deepest chasm in the Underworld.

Hades Rules the Land of the Dead

Hades and his siblings became the ruling gods of Earth and made their home on Mount Olympus, the tallest mountain in Greece. The three brothers—Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades—drew lots to decide where each would rule. Zeus drew first and chose the sky and the heavens as his domain. Poseidon drew second

and chose the vast sea as his kingdom. Hades drew last and became the ruler of the Underworld, a place where the Greeks believed mortal souls went after death. The Cyclopes, a race of one-eyed giants, then forged weapons for the brothers. Hades received a cap of invisibility, which allowed him to strike at his enemies without being seen. In general, Hades' realm cannot be seen by anyone living. The Greeks believed that the name Hades (a-idês) meant "the Unseen One."

All of the Greek gods except Hades lived on Mount Olympus. He lived in a glittering palace deep underground. It was made of pure

TRUE OR FALSE?

- 1. Hades was the Greek god of the Underworld.
- 2. All mortals' souls went to the Underworld after death.
- 3. Hades lived on Mount Olympus with the other gods.
- Hades kidnapped Persephone and made her the queen of the Underworld.
- 5. Hades was considered the god of wealth because he collected a fee from each dead soul.
- 6. Hades was associated with agriculture.
- 7. The Greeks feared Hades so much they rarely called him by his real name.

Hades (continued)

gold and adorned with gems and jewels, for Hades was also the god of the wealth that lay under the earth.

Hades' Kingdom

The Greeks believed that when mortals died, their souls were accompanied to the Underworld by Hermes, the messenger of the Olympian gods. Hermes brought them to the banks of the River Styx, the principal river of the Underworld. There, they would meet Charon, the dreaded ferryman who would row dead souls across the Styx. Charon would not take anyone across the river unless they paid him a fee.

If a dead soul could not pay Charon, it would be forced to wander the banks of the Styx forever, trying to find another way into the realm of Hades. When a dead soul did reach the other side of the river, it encountered Cerberus, the three-headed watchdog of the Underworld. Cerberus let souls into the Underworld, but never out of it. This detail is a mythic expression of the belief that the dead never return to life.

The Underworld was a dark and gloomy place, with the shades (ghosts) of mortal men flittering everywhere. The shades enjoyed no existence. They were both unseen and even at times unseeing. It is interesting to note that, Homer calls death the "brother of sleep."

The Underworld had five rivers flowing through it: Styx, the river of hate and unbreakable oaths; Phlegethon, the river of fire; Cocytus, the river of lamentation; Acheron, the river of woe; and Lethe, the river of forgetfulness. When dead souls entered the realm of Hades, they would drink from the River Lethe to forget their lives on Earth. They would then become shades.

Not all dead souls shared the same fate in the Underworld. The greatest heroes were granted passage into Elysium, a beautiful meadow where the Sun never set. The worst criminals were either sentenced to torture or cast into Tartarus, which lay as far below Hades as Mount Olympus rose over the surface of Earth.

Hades Falls in Love

Hades lived a lonely life in the Underworld for many years. One day, he saw Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, and fell in love with her on the spot. He decided that he would take her as his wife. As Persephone was bending over to pick a flower, Hades caused a crack to break open in the earth. Hades then drove up to earth's surface in a golden chariot,

grasped Persephone around the waist, and pulled her into his chariot to take her back down into the Underworld. Hades placed a golden crown on Persephone's head and made her his queen.

Persephone was not happy to be in the Underworld and demanded that Hades return her to her mother, but Hades would not listen. He offered her a variety of sparkling jewels and shining gold, but nothing could persuade her to stay with Hades. Persephone repeated that she wished to be reunited with her mother.

Persephone Eats a Pomegranate

Hades knew that there was only one way he could keep Persephone in the Underworld. He needed to convince her to eat the food of the dead. He had great feasts laid out with the most delicious food and

To get to the Underworld, the dead had to cross the River Styx. The only way to do this was on the ferry boat of Charon.

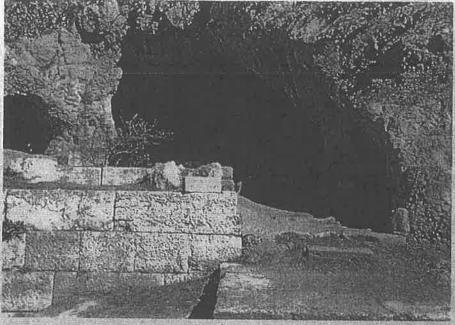
Charon expected payment for his services, and would only take the dead across if they had been buried properly, and had a coin to pay him with. If the dead didn't have a coin, they were doomed to wander forever on the shores of the river.

Hades (continued)

drink imaginable. But Persephone could not be swayed. She told Hades that she would not eat until she was returned to her mother. Over time, her rosy cheeks turned gray, and her joyous heart turned as cold as ice. Persephone's only comfort was Hades' garden, where a tiny pomegranate tree grew. One day, Persephone could no longer resist the juicy pomegranates and, before she could stop herself, she tore into one and ate six of the seeds.

Meanwhile, Persephone's mother Demeter searched Earth for her daughter. In her grief, she would not allow any plants to bear fruit. She made fields barren that had once been healthy. The Earth grew cold. Many mortals and animals died from lack of food, and the gods begged Demeter to make Earth green again. She refused, saying the fields would become healthy only when Persephone was returned to her.

Zeus was worried that Demeter's grief would destroy Earth. He sent Demeter, accompanied by Hermes, to the Underworld with an order for Hades to release Persephone. When Hermes and Demeter arrived at the palace of Hades, they told him of Zeus' orders: that Persephone was to be returned to Demeter.



Demeter and Persephone were about to leave the Underworld, the gardener of the Underworld brought his king important news. He showed Hades the half-eaten pomegranate and reported that Persephone had consumed part of this Underworld fruit. By law, Persephone was now bound to remain in the Underworld. Hades appealed to Zeus, and a decision came quickly: Because Persephone had eaten the pomegranate seeds, Zeus had no choice but to order that she remain in the Underworld for six months out of every year. The other half of the year she would be free to stay with Demeter

Another View of Hades

Because of his association with Persephone, Hades was sometimes viewed as an agricultural god. Many Greeks believed he controlled not only the souls in the Underworld, but anything that grew out of the earth. Therefore, the Greeks believed that both Hades

and Demeter were important to the production of grain. Demeter made the crops fertile, while Hades made the soil rich with minerals that would help the crops grow. Some Greeks thought that Hades carried a horn of plenty—the cornucopia—on the rare occasions that he visited Earth.

Although Hades was feared by mortals and disliked by many of the gods, he was not an evil deity-just one who was stern, pitiless, and not swayed by prayer or flattery. People in the ancient world feared Hades so much that they rarely called him by his true name. Some called him Plouton, meaning "rich one." This was a common name because Hades had access to the jewels and gems buried in the earth. He was also called Polydectes, meaning "all-receiver." This name was used because Hades collected the souls and bodies of every mortal who died and was buried on Earth

When mortal men invoked Hades (prayed to him for help), they would slap their hands on the The photograph to the left shows the cave at Eleusis. Located near Athens, it was believed to be an entrance to the realm of Hades.



In the painting above, called Orpheus in the Underworld, Hades is portrayed as a dark, fiery, and frightening place. Orpheus traveled to the Underworld to rescue his wife Eurydice, but was not successful. The painting is by Roelandt Savery (1576–1639).

ground rather than raising them to the air, as they would to invoke Zeus. When Greek mortals made sacrifices to Hades, it was customary to use black rams or sheep.

See also Pluto.

FAMILY: Father was Cronus; mother was Rhea; brothers were

Zeus and Poseidon; sisters were Hera, Demeter, and Hestia; wife was Persephone.

IN ART: In the art of the ancient Greeks, Hades resembled his brothers, Zeus and Poseidon. On Greek vase paintings, it is difficult to distinguish Hades from the

Hades (continued)

other figures, and his accessories become the distinguishing factor. As the king of the Underworld, Hades often wore a crown on his head and held a key to the lower world and a two-pronged staff. Most Greek representations of Hades show him with Cerberus or abducting Persephone.

In one fourth-century B.C. vase painting, Hades and his wife Persephone are shown in their underground palace. Hades is seated on his throne and wears his royal crown. Persephone also wears a crown and stands to the left of Hades. The royal couple of the Underworld is surrounded by the shadows of notable mortals, including Orpheus.

In one vase painting from the fifth century B.C., Hades is shown alongside his sister Demeter, the goddess of the harvest. Hades is spreading seeds from a cornucopia on a field that has just been plowed by Demeter. In this example, he is represented in his role as a god of agriculture.

IN LITERATURE: Many Greek authors wrote of Hades' abduction of Persephone. In fact, it is the only major Greek myth that involves the lord of the Underworld. Perhaps the best account of Persephone's abduction is in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter. In this passage, Persephone is picking flowers with

the daughters of Oceanus (spelled Okeanos here) when she is taken. Hades is not named, but is referred to as the "Host of Many," "He who has many names," or "Son of Cronus":

Apart from Demeter, lady of the golden sword and glorious fruits, she was playing with the daughters of Okeanus...

and gathering flowers over a soft meadow, roses and crocuses and beautiful violets, irises also and hyacinths and the narcissus...

the wide-pathed earth yawned there in the plain of Nysa, and the lord, Host of Many, with his immortal horses sprang out upon her—the Son of [Cronus], He who has many names.

He caught her up reluctant on his golden car and bare her away lamenting.

Then she cried out shrilly with her voice, calling upon her father, the Son of [Cronus], who is most high and excellent.

Homeric Hymn to Demeter, lines 4–7, 16–20; translation by Hugh G. Evelyn-White

In Homer's epic poem the Odyssey, Odysseus travels to the Underworld to speak with the blind prophet Teiresias. There he comes across many fallen heroes, including the great warrior Achilles. Odysseus tells Achilles that he should be happy to have gained so much glory in battle and that he should not regret dying. In this

famous passage, we hear Achilles' reply:

Do not speak well to me of death, O brilliant Odysseus. I would rather be the unpaid servant of the world's poorest and lowliest man than be king over all the wasted dead.

Homer, Odyssey, book 11, lines 488–491; translation by Rick M. Newton

Hades almost never went to Olympus—he much preferred his palace in the Underworld. Once, however, he did travel to Mount Olympus. The Greek hero Heracles had launched an expedition against the citizens of Pylos, a city on the western coast of Greece. Heracles was successful in the battle and killed many men. According to Homer, Hades came to Pylos to collect the souls of the dead and was wounded by one of Heracles' arrows:

Even the enormous Hades was struck by a swift arrow when this same man, son of aegis-bearing Zeus, hit him at Pylos and caused him great pain among the dead. But then he went to the halls of Zeus on far-off Olympus, with pains in his heart, pierced through with agony, for the shaft had driven through his huge shoulder and was wearing down his spirit.

Homer, Iliad, book 5, lines 395-400; translation by Rick M. Newton

In book 2 of English poet John Milton's epic work, *Paradise Lost*, Hades (spelled Ades here), is menprint page

close window

Hades

Literally "Sightless" in Greek, Hades is both the god of the underworld and the place itself; the term was later taken over by Roman and then Christian mythology. As a Greek deity, Hades is the son of Cronos and Rhea; full brother of Zeus, Poseidon, Hera, and Demeter; and lord of the dead. In the Homeric epics Hades is called "the unmerciful and irreconcilable" and is for mankind the most hated of gods, yet this description must be recognized as the poetic product of an elite literary tradition. Simultaneously an extensive fertility cult existed in folk tradition from the earliest times, which recognized Hades, with his wife Persephone (also called Kore) as not only the god of the underworld but the god of the Earth and thus provider of the gifts of the earth: fertility, life, and cyclic order. The Roman counterpart to Hades, Pluto, is even more explicitly connected with fertility and is always depicted with the horn of plenty, giver of all goods. This archaic tension in understanding Hades, god of death, as both "enemy" of life and "renewer" of life seems to have dissolved in the classical period as the Homeric tradition came to dominate popular imagination and Hades gradually became one-sidedly somber and fearsome.

Hades also came to be the name of the land of the dead. In the *Iliad* Hades lies directly beneath the earth, whereas in the *Odyssey* Hades may be reached by ship at the western edge of the world beyond the ocean. These are not necessarily contradictory ideas, for in Greek cosmology, as in most ancient cosmologies, it was thought possible to reach the end of the ocean and go under the edge, into the Earth. Certainly the west was long associated with the dead in ancient Greece, Egypt, Ireland, and elsewhere and connected with it was the idea that the sun, Helios, was thought to set in the west and travel through the underworld each night before rising in the east by morning. In any case both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* place the land of the dead far from human habitation and in close connection with water. The *Iliad* mentions the River Styx, river of hatred, but in the *Odyssey* we find several other rivers as well: Acheron, river of woe; Cocytus, river of wailing, where the unburied dead had to wander for 100 years; Lethe, river of forgetfulness; and Phlegethon, the blazing river. Styx or Acheron or both are generally considered by the ancient sources as the boundary between living and dead, and the "wailing" and "burning" of Cocytus and Phlegethon appear to recapitulate the funeral and cremation of the corpse.

The idea of a watery separation of the land of the living from the dead is common to much of the ancient world and is deeply symbolic. Underground water is not only a reminder of the watery chaos that existed before the world was ordered by the gods; water is connected to the ocean, which is the source of livelihood, transportation, and death for a seafaring people like the Greeks; and water is that mysterious force which brings up vegetation from the earth. Thus it is not coincidental that the ocean borders Hades, land of the dead, or that several rivers provide a massive barrier between the land of the living and the realm of death.

In classical Greek tradition the soul, or psyche of the deceased, may not cross the waters into Hades without burial. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is visited by the pathetic shade of his friend Elpenor, who was left "unburied and unwept" on the island of Circe. Elpenor's shade is thus stranded in the no-man's-land between the living and the dead, unable to rest unless Odysseus returns to the world above to provide proper funeral services. Those souls who are able to cross over are greeted by Hermes (in the *Odyssey*; in later tradition, by Charon) in his function as psychopompos (guide of souls) and led through the brass gates into Hades, from which there was no return. In archaic times there was no opportunity for necromancy or communing with the dead on Earth because

they were trapped forever in Hades; the only solution was to visit the dead where they resided. This feat was accomplished not only in the epic nekyla of Odysseus (Odyssey, Book 11) but later by Heracles in his labors and by Orpheus seeking his lost wife Eurydice.

Among the supernatural inhabitants of the underworld were the god Hades and his bride Kore/Persephone, rulers of the underworld; the Erinyes or Furies, which were thought to punish the shades of criminals and oath breakers; King Minos, judge of the underworld; the great sinners Tityus, Sisyphus, and Tantalus; the shades of epic heroes like Achilles and Patroclus; and far below the underworld, "as far below Hades as Earth is below the heavens," there lay Tartarus, dwelling place of the anticosmic Titans who once ruled the universe but were defeated by the Olympian gods. In later tradition one also finds the three-headed hound of Hades, Cerberus, and the Elysian Fields, a joyous land (or islands) separated from the rest of Hades, where the blest enjoyed their afterlife.

It seems clear that in archaic Greek thought all the dead experienced a similar fate: the shades of the famous heroes of the Trojan War existed in bleak Hades with everyone else. Even the great Achilles was reduced to nothing, for he says to Odysseus at his visit, "My dear Odysseus, spare me your praise of Death. Put me on earth again, and I would rather be a servant in the house of some landless man, with little enough for himself to live on, than king of all these dead men that have done with life."

This concept of equality and collective existence is somewhat challenged by the belief in the Furies who punish criminals as well as the eternal torment of infamous sinners such as Tantalus, but it is not until well into the classical period and particularly the time of the writings of Plato that judgment and just deserts for the dead become commonplace. In Plato's myth of Er, souls in the underworld no longer endure an eternal stay, but after centuries of reward or punishment, according to their merits they are reborn in new bodies on earth.

Roman mythology further elaborated the Greek conception of Hades, especially with the idea of punishment or reward for all souls. Virgil's Aeneid seems to enlarge Hades spatially, for the reader finds in book 6 an outer area of Hades, a kind of limbo for those who are neither punished nor rewarded for their earthly lives. It houses babies, those who died in battle, and suicides. Beyond the encircling river, ferried by Charon, there are many realms of shades. Deeper down, to the left a path leads to Tartarus and to the right the Elysian Fields, an underworld paradise complete with its own sun and stars and identical to the over-water Islands of the Blest. Following on Plato's doctrine of reincarnation, the Aeneid likewise teaches that souls "recycle" through the millennia. Much space is allocated in the Aeneid to those waiting to return to earth, showing the future heroes of Rome (descendants of Aeneas, fictional ancestor of the Romans) as yet unborn, awaiting in the Elysian Fields for their appointed time on earth. And Marcus Tullius Cicero, in his work "The Dream of Scipio" at the end of On the Republic, states that even punishment in the horrible Tartarus is temporary; after centuries of torturous purification all souls eventually make their way back to the "celestial sphere" of the Elysian Fields. Reincarnation from Hades became a common belief in the Roman Empire, though it was by no means the only conception of the afterlife; a great many tombs are inscribed with the formula "I was not; I was; I am not; I care not," demonstrating a pervasive skepticism as well.

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Hades

Hades, «HAY deez», was the god of the dead in Greek mythology. He ruled the kingdom of the dead, which had the same name. The ancient Romans preserved without change almost all the myths about Hades and his kingdom, but they called the god Pluto.

Hades was the son of Cronus and Rhea, and he was an older brother of Zeus, the king of the gods. In spite of Hades's importance to the Greeks, they did not devote any rituals to him. Few myths involve Hades directly.

The kingdom of Hades was a neutral region reserved for the souls of people who deserved neither punishment nor reward upon death. The Greeks believed that Hades was drab and dull, but not necessarily painful. The souls of those who had led virtuous lives dwelled happily in Elysium. The souls of those who had sinned greatly went to Tartarus, a land far below the earth. There, they suffered eternal torment.

The Greeks believed Hades was beneath the earth. It had five rivers—the Acheron, the Kokytos, the Lethe, the Phlegethon, and the Styx. Each served as a boundary between the land of the living and the land of the dead.

The Styx was the best-known river in Hades. To cross it, a soul had to be ferried by Charon, a boatman. He demanded payment, so the Greeks placed coins in the mouths of their dead before burying them. Hades' house stood on the shore of the Styx. Cerberus, a monstrous three-headed dog, guarded the house. After crossing the river, each soul was assigned to its eternal home by one of three judges—Aeacus, Minos, or Rhadamanthys. Those guilty of serious offenses were tormented by goddesses called *Furies* or *Erinyes*.

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