

Hades and Persephone  
By Ryan Robinson

Parts

Demeter

Persephone

Hades

Charon

Hekate

Aphrodite

Cyane / Eros / Hermes – Minor parts that can all be played by one person or split up.

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Hades: Myths are told in many different ways. Different storytellers have different traditions and different perspectives. The cultures where they're told have different expectations, and those expectations shift with time.

Persephone: The story of Hades and Persephone's marriage has many variations, even in the place and time where it came from. What doesn't change is what came after. While the details shift and change, it would be one of the healthiest, most respectful, and loving partnerships among the gods. Which is why this is how we choose to remember its beginning...

~\*~

Demeter: Kore?

Persephone: Yeah mom?

Demeter: Why don't we go see the fields?

Persephone: Mom... The fields are going to be green and lush, just like they always are. I was going to hang out with my friends.

Demeter: Kore, you can spend time with those nymphs any time. Come spend time with your mother.

Persephone: Fiiine.

~\*~

Charon: Lord Hades, greetings.

Hades: Oh, hi Charon. New deliveries from Thanos?

Charon: Indeed.

Hades: Anyone interesting?

Charon: All mortals live individual lives with unique stories.

Hades: So, that's a no.

Charon: Lord Hades, if I may, you seem particularly gloomy. Even for you.

Hades: I suppose so. There is only so much to do here in the underworld with the dead.

Charon: Have you considered going... out?

Hades: My kin on Olympus dislike my presence there because their immortality is sensitive to the "miasma" of death.

Charon: There are other places.

Hades: Ok, I don't like visiting Posiden because he's... tempestuous...

Charon: Thanos does have an unusually high number of pickups among those at sea. But there is also... earth.

Hades: The mortal realm?

Charon: Time there when he's not working always seems to brighten Thanos's mood...

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Demeter: See? Isn't this nice? Helios's chariot shining sunlight down on these ripe fields.

Persephone: Mom, the fields are always ripe and I'd be under the same light with my friends.

Demeter: Fine. Go.

Persephone: Really?

Demeter: Yes. Go, play with your nymph friends.

Persephone: Thanks mom!

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Cyane: Hey Kore!

Persephone: Hey Cyane! What's new with the naiads?

Cyane: Just seeing what's washing up.

Persephone: Anything interesting?

Cyane: Well, a guy wandered by a while ago. Tall, handsome, and brooding.

Persephone: Mortal?

Cyane: No!

Persephone: Any idea who it is?

Cyane: We have some guesses, but most of them are impossible.

Persephone: Well, I'm going to go pick some flowers.

Cyane: "Pick flowers," is that what the kids are calling it these days Kore?

Persephone: I am a several-thousand-year-old goddess, I will call things whatever I want.

Hades: Hmm. This is a nice change of scenery! Verdant, bright. Oh! Hi Helios!

Persephone: Hello there.

Hades: Oh! I didn't see you.

Persephone: Yes, these are such beautiful flowers. I'm collecting some to brighten my home with.

Hades: Ah. How sad.

Persephone: Sad?

Hades: These cut flowers will die and fade away sooner.

Persephone: But there are always more here.

Hades: Pushed up from the realms below, until they can reach into the light above on their own..

Persephone: Yes, and there are always flowers. I come here often to spend time with my friends, the nearby naiads. Here, let me introduce you!

Hades: Well, ok.

Persephone: I never did ask your name.

Hades: I am Hades.

Cayne: Lord of the underworld? Brother to Zeus and Poseidon?

Hades: Indeed. And who are you?

Persephone: I'm... Persephone.

Cayne: Kore?

Hades: Kore? That is the name of Zeus and Demeter's daughter.

Persephone: It is.

Hades: And fine young maidens you are. Well, I should return to my realm and ensure all is well.

Persephone: Will you come back and visit?

Hades: I believe I shall, but farewell for now.

Cayne: Kore!

Persephone: I am a several thousand-year-old goddess. I will spend time with who I want.

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Demeter: Aphrodite! Hekate! What a surprise running into you here!

Aphrodite: I just brought Hekate out to enjoy these lovely fields. Beautiful and rich as always.

Demeter: Yes, well, thank you. But I should be collecting my daughter and heading home.

Aphrodite: Please, don't leave on our account!

Hekate: I do believe that Aphrodite is almost done here.

Demeter: No, no. I have work I should be getting to.

Hekate: Well, I'm sure I'll see you again soon.

Aphrodite: Why do you think I'm almost done here?

Hekate: Because Hades left. Or did I misread your interest in his encounter with Kore? Playing with the hearts of the gods, especially the kings, is risky.

Aphrodite: Hush you. I have no idea what you're talking about.

Hekate: I'm sure.

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Charon: How was your walk, my lord?

Hades: Extraordinary!

Charon: As I said, some time under the sun and amongst the mortals...

Hades: I met the most wondrous woman!

Charon: Oh!

Hades: Fair of face and intriguing. A goddess unknown to me.

Charon: Goddess? What is her name?

Hades: Persephone. She was in the company of Demeter's daughter, Kore.

Charon: So you intend to see her again?

Hades: I do.

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Aphrodite: How did your mission go, my archer?

Eros: Well, my lady. I believe both are smitten.

Aphrodite: Excellent work Eros! Did they fall immediately into one another's arms?

Eros: No, both are more reserved than that, and there was another there.

Aphrodite: Another?

Eros: A nymph who is friends with Demeter's daughter.

Aphrodite: Interesting. I may have words with this nymph and see if she can provide details about their discussion.

Eros: Are you sure this is wise, my lady?

Aphrodite: What do you mean, Eros? I am the goddess of love and attraction. It is my job to match-make and play at heart-strings.

Eros: Even among the gods?

Aphrodite: Ha! Why not?

~\*~

Hades: Ah, Persephone. It is good to see you again.

Persephone: Hades, I'm so glad you got my message.

Hades: I was intrigued. Few people send offerings to the gods of the Underworld, and I don't think anyone has ever sent me flowers with a note before.

Persephone: Good to know that you can be surprised.

Hades: I am starting to think that you will be full of pleasant surprises for me.

~\*~

Hekate: Boatman.

Charon: Lady of Crossroads.

Hekate: What is new in the underworld?

Charon: Hades has been seeing a woman.

Hekate: I had some suspicions.

Charon: You know about this goddess, Persephone? All I know is she is a friend of Demeter's daughter, Kore.

Hekate: Persephone? A goddess friend of Kore? I may know some things.

Charon: What can you tell me of her? Do you think it likely she will become the lady of the underworld?

Hekate: I know... There may be trouble if what you tell me is true and I must discover some more information. Thank you, Boatman.

~\*~

Aphrodite: Lord Hades! How nice to see you out enjoying the fields and sunlight of the mortal realm.

Hades: Aphrodite. Yes... I have been finding walks in the mortal realm have helped to relieve a sour mood.

Aphrodite: I am so glad to hear that! Well, I'll not intrude any longer!

Hades: Have a good evening.

Persephone: Good evening, Hades.

Hades: Persephone!

Persephone: Were you talking to someone before I arrived?

Hades: Yes, I encountered another of the gods here. As much as I love our time among the fields, it feels that it is becoming busy here.

Persephone: Yeah... I'm worried that word might get back to my mother that we've been spending time together.

Hades: Your mother? Would that be a problem?

Persephone: Well... I may not have been entirely honest with you when we first met.

Hades: How so?

Persephone: When I told you that my friend was Kore...

~\*~

Hekate: Eros.

Eros: Oh, shit.

Hekate: What's wrong, archer of hearts?

Eros: Lady Hekate... Well... you're going to screw this up for me and I'm going to get in trouble with Aphrodite.

Hekate: Not necessarily. The outcome isn't an awful idea. But... as always, you two think with your hearts and other parts, not your heads, and are going to make a mess along the way.

Eros: You already know what's going on? Do you think you can prevent the mess?

Hekate: I think your lady wanted me to know. But... It's still definitely going to be a mess. Maybe I can preserve a happy ending.

~\*~

Zeus: Hades! Long time no see! I... do appreciate you cleaning up so thoroughly before coming to visit.

Hades: I know how much you dislike the... aura ...of death, Zeus.

Zeus: Well, it hurts me in my... immortal parts.

Hades: I don't think that's a thing.

Zeus: What?

Hades: Nothing, nothing. Look, I have a problem that I need your help with.

Zeus: Me, brother? What do you need?

Hades: Well, I met a woman...

Zeus: Ah! At last! How is this a problem? Oh, do you need help with... y'know... sealing the deal? I am the master...

Hades: No, oh, no, no, no...

Zeus: Ah, well, what is the problem then? Who is this woman? And, y'know, how beautiful is she?

Hades: Well... who... is the problem.

Zeus: Never been a problem for me!

Hades: We all know that Zeus. Most of wish it was more of one.

Zeus: What?



Hades: It's your daughter. Kore.

Zues: Demeter's girl?

Hades: Yes.

Zeus: So, you want to marry her or just...

Hades: Yes, we want to get married.

Zeus: Great! You have my blessing!

Hades: Oh, well... that's... nice.

Zeus: I don't know why you thought that would be a problem.

Hades: Well, I was more concerned because... you know... she lives with her mother.

Zeus: Oh, Demeter? Well, beyond giving my blessing I can't really help you there.

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Hekate: Goddess of Grain

Demeter: Queen of Witches

Hekate: How are things with you?

Demeter: Well! The plants grow, and the grain ripens, and the world is beautiful.

Hekate: And your lovely daughter, Kore?

Demeter: Oh, you know mothers and daughters. She's well, though. The light of my life.

Hekate: Indeed. Anything new for either of you?

Demeter: Like what? Things are great.

Hekate: New hobbies, new boyfriends, new girlfriends?

Demeter: No, no. We have no need for such things.

Hekate: You've never considered Kore getting married?

Demeter: No. Not at all. Why would she need to?

Hekate: Need to? No reason at all...

~\*~

Hades: Well, I guess I have good news. I got your father's blessing...

Persephone: You got permission from the literal god of the patriarchy and think it solves something?

Hades: I said good news, not a solution... Surely we can just talk to Demeter.

Persephone: Dear... no. I don't know what kind of relationship you think you have with my mother, but... that's not a workable idea.

Aphrodite: Just run away together.

Hades: Aphrodite!

Persephone: How did you find us?

Aphrodite: Wherever lovers are, the goddess of love knows.

Hades: We haven't...

Persephone: I'm not sure it works that way...

Aphrodite: Just run away together!

~\*~

Hekate: Boatman.

Charon: Mistress of Dusk.

Hekate: How fare things with your lord and this... Persephone?

Charon: Well... and poorly?

Hekate: What does that mean?

Charon: They are getting along fabulously. I have never seen my lord in a better mood. I think they are deeply in love and even speaking of marriage.

Hekate: So, things are going well...

Charon: But it turns out that Persephone is not her given name, and there is concern that her mother will not... support... the union.

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Persephone: I'm going to go hang out with the naiads!

Demeter: You've been spending a lot of time with those nymphs lately.

Persephone: Mom! You're always judging my friends.

Demeter: Wait a moment and I'll come to the fields with you

Persephone: Mother, that's not necessary.

Demeter: I know, but the trip there will let us spend some time together.

Persephone: That'll be nice.

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Hekate: Aphrodite, where are they?

Aphrodite: Who do you seek, Hekate?

Hekate: You know full well who I'm looking for. The two you decided to toy with.

Aphrodite: I'm certainly not "toying" with anyone. I'm matchmaking.

Hekate: Where are they? Neither is at their own home and I'm worried...

Aphrodite: They're right over there, coming to their own crossroads, keeper of ways.

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Cyane: So you and Kore are really going to just... run off?

Hades: I do rule a whole realm, Cyane. Castle and all. It's not like I'm taking Persephone to live in a hole.

Cyane: That realm is the underworld, so technically, it is a hole?

Hades: Cave? Cavern? Some word that feels more spacious than "hole."

Persephone: Hades!

Hades: Are you ready, love?

Persephone: We have a small problem, dear.

Hades: Whatever it is, we'll face it together.

Persephone: My mother decided to accompany me today.

Hades: Oh. Ahh...

Persephone: Yeah.

Hades: You want to call this off?

Persephone: No! No. We just have to... get away quickly.

Hades: Well, I can summon my chariot. Can't make a much faster getaway than that.

Cyane: You have your own chariot that you can just summon?

Hades: King of the Underworld... It's actually not a bad gig.

Cyane: Yeah, I guess so.

Persephone: Ok, let's do that.

Hades: I should warn you, this is going to happen... quickly.

Persephone: What do you mean, can't you control the speed?

Hades: We're gods, so... it's a metaphor. Death is always sudden, no matter how prepared you are for it.

Persephone: I guess that makes sense. Let's do this.

Hades: Ok. Take care Cyane.

Persephone: Hopefully we'll see you soon!

Cyane: You guys sure you should be doing this?

Hades: All right. One... two...

Persephone: **EEK!!**

~\*~

Demeter: Did you hear that? Where is Kore. You there, nymph! Where is my daughter?

Cyane: Me? Daughter? Ah... I tried to stop...

Hekate: What's going on Demeter?

Demeter: My daughter is missing. She was playing with the Nymphs so they must have seen something! Who has taken her?

Hekate: Your making the poor nymph cry, Demeter... and... melt into a pool.

Demeter: You have to help me find her!

Hekate: Let us search for any signs. We'll meet back here.

~\*~

Hades: So, this is Thanos, Charon, over there is Cerberus, and... that's the castle.

Persephone: Home now.

Hades: Yes, my love.

~\*~

Demeter: Hekate! Look at this! Chariot tracks!

Hekate: Chariot tracks? So... I talked to Sol and he saw what happened.

Demeter: Sol did?

Hekate: I mean, he's the sun, so he has a great view during the day.

Demeter: He would. What did he say?

Hekate: So... he saw Hades chariot sweep through and take Kore. Clearly nothing that poor nymph could have done.

Demeter: Hades has stolen my daughter? He must have taken her away to the land of the dead!

Hekate: Taking her to his domain seems likely... why don't I go down there and...

Demeter: NO! I WILL GET MY DAUGHTER BACK!

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Eros: So... Demeter seems upset.

Aphrodite: Yes, Eros.

Eros: You really think she's going to stop looking for her daughter?

Aphrodite: Probably not. But, not really our problem. We did our job. Made a match, made them fall in love, got them together.

Eros: We're really not going to do anything else about this?

Aphrodite: Unless you have some idea of a match for Demeter to distract her.

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Demeter: Boatman, take me across this river at once.

Hekate: Demeter are you sure...

Charon: I cannot, my lady.

Demeter: YOU WHAT?!

Charon: Oh, well, I...

Demeter: TAKE ME ACROSS!

Charon: Ah... all closed up for the day. No more fares. Sorry.

Demeter: GET BACK HERE!

Hekate: Demeter, why don't we take a breath and...

Demeter: Fine! I'll make Kore's jerk of a father fix this...

Hekate: Not escalate things.

~\*~

Charon: Hey boss?

Hades: Yes Charon?

Charon: Were you expecting your new mother-in-law to show up?

Hades: Not really. Why?

Persephone: Because I was and I asked Charon not to let her pass.

Hades: Ah, fair enough. Any particular reason?

Persephone: My mother can be a little... intense. I assume that if she showed up, she was unhappy. I'm really hoping some time will help her cool down.

Charon: Intense is a mild way of putting that.

Persephone: Yeah... sorry about that.

~\*~

Demeter: Zeus! Zeus, you bastard, get out here.

Hekate: Demeter... dear... I think you should breathe. He's around here somewhere.

Demeter: Hiding! Like he does whenever there's conflict. Either that or trying to get into some girl's pants. Either way, he needs to get his ass out here and help get his daughter back from that kidnapper!

Hekate: Well, are you sure...

Zeus: Demeter, mother of bounty... what can I do for you?

Demeter: Our jerk of a brother kidnapped our daughter, Kore.

Zeus: Poseidon? Why would he have any interest in Kore?

Demeter: No! Hades!

Zeus: Hades is usually considered the most polite of the group of us...

Hekate: Maybe not the point here Zeus.

Zeus: Besides, I gave him permission to marry Kore!

Demeter: You WHAT?!

Zeus: Well, I mean, with the blessing of her father it's not really kidnapping, is it?

Hekate: Not helping this situation, Zeus.

Demeter: YOU WILL GET YOUR DAUGHTER BACK RIGHT NOW!!!

Zeus: Umm... let me get Hermes to take a message to the underworld. He goes there on business regularly so he has access. He should be able to... negotiate ...some type of arrangement...

~\*~

Hades: So, these chambers will be yours for whatever you want. We'll get you a throne set up in the throne room...

Persephone: Wow, you weren't kidding about a whole realm of your own.

Hades: I mean, it's just the underworld. How about some dinner?

Persephone: I'm... not really hungry.

Charon: Sir, Hermes is here.

Hades: Making regular deliveries?

Charon: No, sir. A message from Zeus and Demeter demanding their daughter's return.

Hades: You want to leave?

Persephone: Not really.

Hades: Well, there's the answer.

Charon: I... ah... Very well...

Hades: What is it Charon?

Charon: Is it wise to ignore Zeus and Demeter?

Hades: What are they going to do? My queen and I rule this domain, and our word here is absolute. Are they going to invade the underworld? Can you really imagine Zeus dragging himself down here?



Charon: I suppose not.

~\*~

Zeus: So... apparently, she's going by Persephone now? And... will not be leaving the underworld.

Demeter: You have to make her.

Zeus: Hades rules the underworld. His word is law there just as mine is law on Olympus and Poseidon rules the sea. I really can't just pull people out of the underworld because I feel like it.

Demeter: You just don't want to go down there.

Zeus: I mean, there is that.

Hekate: Demeter, you have to understand what the consequences would be of Zeus doing that. The gods of Olympus declaring war on the lord of the Underworld would have grave consequences.

Demeter: I don't care. I want my daughter back.

Hekate: We all understand that. We sympathize that you have lost your daughter and want to know that she's safe.

Demeter: Fine, I'm going home.

Zeus: That sounds like a good idea...

Demeter: And I'm taking all my blessings with me.

Hekate: Wait, what?

Demeter: Until my daughter is returned to me the plants will not grow. The grain will not ripen. The earth shall fall barren.

Hekate: Demeter... that sounds very bad.

~\*~

Charon: Mistress, Dread Queen, Fasting One...

Persephone: Yes, Charon?

Charon: Lady Hekate is here to see you.

Persephone: Greetings, Hekate.

Hekate: The humans are starving.

Persephone: Chiron, you're seeing a lot of new deaths from hunger?

Charon: There has been a significant increase in deaths. There appears to be a famine in the mortal realm.

Persephone: What part of the mortal realm?

Hekate: All of it. Your mother has withdrawn her blessing and no crops will grow.

Persephone: Why would she do such a thing?

Hekate: To make Hades release you. To get Zeus to force him.

Persephone: And if I have no desire to return home?

Hekate: Then you should probably have told your mother that.

Persephone: You've spoken with my mother about this?

Hekate: Some.

Persephone: And how do you imagine that conversation going?

Hekate: Ahh...

Persephone: Yeah... about that well.

Hekate: This situation cannot remain as it is. The gods of Olympus will be forced to act, soon. Something must be done.

Persephone: What do you propose, oh lighter of ways?

Hekate: Well... have you eaten anything since you've been here?

Persephone: No. I... haven't been hungry.

Charon: Death will do that.

Hekate: Boatman, bring us some Pomegranate... and Persephone's husband.

~\*~

Zeus: I am awaiting word myself, Demeter. But I promise that we are seeking the release of your daughter. Are you certain you will not end this famine? The humans are starving. Worse, their suffering is reducing the worship they are giving the gods!

Demeter: I will return my blessings when my sweet daughter is returned to me, Zeus.

Hekate: I may have negotiated that release.

Zeus: That is wonderful news, keeper of keys! See, Demeter! You can restore the grain now!

Demeter: What is the catch, Hekate?

Hekate: Your daughter ate the food of the dead while in the underworld. Several pomegranate seeds. For each seed she ate, she must return to the domain of Hades for one month of the year.

Demeter: No!

Hekate: Hades has no need to return your daughter at all. He takes pity on the mortals who suffer and die. He has sympathy for the hardship that brings to Olympus.

Zeus: This deal will be struck. Persephone will spend a portion of the year with her mother, and a portion with her husband, Hades.

Demeter: Return my daughter to me, and I will return life to the earth. But each time she leaves I shall withdraw my blessings.

Hekate: Then the world will live in a cycle of life and death. Each year it will spring forth, renewed and reborn with the rise of Persephone from the world of the dead to the living. Each year it will fall away, dying and succumbing to decay as Persephone descends to join her husband ruling the world of the dead.

~\*~

Hades: Eventually, Demeter and I smoothed things over.

Demeter: It's hard to stay angry at probably the most devoted and loving husband among the Hellenic gods.

Hades: And Persephone was right, as she generally is. Time did cool Demeter's anger at us eloping.

Demeter: It could have been such a beautiful wedding!

Persephone: Mom, there would never have been a wedding and you know it. You still throw a fit every year when I leave and demand I come back to stay with you for about half the year.

Demeter: I do not throw a fit.

Persephone: The mortals call it “winter” mother. They spend the entire time praying for spring.

Demeter: As do I, dear one.

Aphrodite: So, you see, my wondrous matchmaking was perfect. Even among the gods.

Demeter: What?

Aphrodite: Nothing!

Hekate: So this is how it came to be that Dread Persephone ascended to the throne of Hades as his Queen. He showered her with gifts of precious stones from his domain every time she descended, and pushed the roots of plants to accompany her every time she returned to the world of the living. She softened the king of the underworld but became dire and fearsome in her own right. She remained a voice of both sympathy and judgment for all requests that came before their dark thrones. They love one another well and dearly.