

PERSEPHONE
ΠΕΡΣΕΦΟΝΗ



WENDY RYLE

PERSEPHONE

By Wendy Rule

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HEKATE

THE STORY OF PERSEPHONE AND DEMETER

Persephone is picking flowers in a meadow with her friends. Beloved daughter of Demeter, the Earth Mother and Goddess of the Harvest, she is simply known as Kore (maiden). Unbeknownst to either Goddess, Hades has fallen in love with Kore and has obtained the permission of Zeus, her father, to take her into the Underworld as his bride. When Kore picks a magnificent flower that Gaia (The Earth) has created to aid Hades in his plan, the Earth splits in two and Hades emerges in his golden chariot. Seen only by Helios (The Sun) he whisks her away and the Earth closes over them.

When Demeter realises that her daughter is lost, her grief is all consuming. Long she wanders forlorn, the withering crops reflecting her sorrow and causing famine on Earth. With the aid of Hekate, ancient Lunar Goddess of Witchcraft who heard Kore's cries, she finally reaches the town of Eleusis. Disguised in her grief, the inhabitants nurture this suffering woman. Revealing her identity, Demeter demands that a temple be made in her honour.

When Helios tells Demeter what he witnessed - that her brothers Zeus and Hades conspired to ensnare Kore - Demeter's grief is coupled with rage and she demands of Zeus her daughter's release. With his people starving on the withered Earth, Zeus is forced to comply. He decrees that if Persephone has not eaten in the Underworld, she may be released.

But meanwhile below ground a change has taken place. Kore has willingly eaten six pomegranate seeds offered to her by Hades, and has become Persephone, powerful Queen of the Underworld. On discovering this, Zeus decrees that she shall spend one month in the Underworld for each seed she has eaten: six for the darkness and six for the light.



PERSEPHONE

PERSEPHONE

DISC 1

1: THE HARVEST

(Demeter)

We meet Demeter, mother of Kore, and Goddess of the Harvest.

Ripe grain rise golden
Sun on my body
Golden my hair
Resplendent
The bounty I share

Sweet bloom
Bright meadow
Dances my daughter
Never a care
Forever
With flowers in her hair

A field of poppies and of wheat
My feet
All dressed in scarlet petals kiss the land
My hands
With sheathes of barley and of corn
Adorn the Earth in beauty wondrous to behold
And gold the harvest.

2: OH GOLDEN GRAIN

(Chorus)

In an autumnal field of grain, Demeter's priestesses honour their Goddess

Oh golden grain
Oh golden Mother
Generous your reign
Generous your fields of corn
Here at your feet
We lay abundant fruit
And golden wheat
And scent your hair with oils sweet

3: THE WHEEL WILL TURN

(Hekate)

We meet Hekate, Goddess of Magic and Witchcraft - aligned with the Moon and the wisdom of change.

Ο τροχός θα γυρίσει
The wheel will turn

4: FLOWERS

(Kore / Persephone)

We meet Kore, maiden daughter of Demeter, picking flowers in a meadow with her companions, the Oceanides. When one particularly beautiful flower entrances her, Hades, God of the Underworld, takes his cue and abducts Kore into his realm.

Of this I am certain
This is not the same as it once was
Of this I am certain
This is not the same as it once was
Still the sun shines on the fields
On the flowers, beautiful flowers
Still the sun shines and it feels
So lovely

Scented is the meadow
Petals that are fragrant with wonder
I could dance forever
Lost within this spell I am under
Oh the field is calling my name
Can you hear it, oh can you hear it?
Oh the Earth is calling my name
Kore Kore Kore

Of this I am certain
Never was a flower so lovely
Of this I am certain
Never was a flower so lovely
Oh, the scent is dizzy as light
Oh the flower, beautiful flower
Hear it call me into the night
Kore Kore Kore
(*echoed by CHORUS ... Kore Kore Kore*)

5: THANATOS

(Hekate)

Hekate chants the name of Death, acknowledging the end of Kore's maiden phase.

Θάνατος, Θάνατος, Θάνατος

Thanatos Thanatos Thanatos

6: THE PANIC

(Chorus and Demeter)

When the Oceanides discover that Kore is missing, they convey the information to Demeter.

CHORUS:

Why can't we find her? Why can't we find her? Why can't we find her?
Why can't we find her? Why can't we find her? Why can't we find her?
Just for a moment, talking between us, turned back and she was
GONE GONE GONE GONE

DEMETER:

What's this? Tell me!
Whispers, wailings,
Faces fearful, frightened
What's this? Tell me!
Why your frozen eyes are filled with secrets
What is it you're hiding from me?

CHORUS:

Why can't we find her? Why can't we find her? Why can't we find her?

DEMETER:

What's this? Tell me!
Kore? Where is she?
Maid as pure as moonlight
Kore! Hear me!
Someone help me!
Tell me that you've seen her
In the bright meadow dancing
Fields of lilies and roses
Maid as pure as moonlight,
Where have you gone?

7: UNDERWORLD

(Chorus)

The Chorus welcomes us to the Underworld, a sacred place of transformation.

Here within the land of shadow
Here within the palace of bone
Here the darkness rearranges
Here the crucible of changes

8: DARK SHADOW

(Kore / Persephone)

*Kore finds herself in the Underworld - confused and in shock.
Her survival instincts compel her to explore this strange environment.*

What is this? Where am I?
Who's stolen the sun from the sky?
Eyes are blind, hollow sound
Strange echo of underground
Beating heart, all alone
Lost fingers on weeping stone
Cold the air, damp the ground
What is it that pulls me down?
What is this? Where am I?
Who's stolen the sun from the sky?

I recall, half erased
Strange visions of other days
Sweetest flower, meadow bright
Maiden dance, golden Light
Distant dream, far away
Strange echo of yesterday
What was it? Where was I?
So bright was the golden sky

(CHORUS: distant echo of 'Oh Golden Grain')

Deeper now, underground
What is it that calls me down?
Eyes awake, find the way
Brighter night, Darker day
I recall someone cried
Was it me? Dark shadow
Distant light, memory
Dark Shadow that swallowed me

9: HADES

(Hades)

Hades, regal and powerful, addresses Kore as 'Persephone', the Queen of the Underworld, and offers her the sacred fruit of the Pomegranate.

Persephone, Persephone, Persephone

10: POMEGRANATE

(Hekate)

Hekate acknowledges the magical and transformative power of the blood red fruit, ripe with the seeds of change.

Ρόδι (*Pomegranate*)
Από καρπό, Ο σπόρος
Από σπόρο, Ο ανθός
Από ανθό, καρπός
Ρόδι , Ρόδι

Out of the fruit the seed
Out of the seed the flower
Out of the flower the fruit
Holding the seed

11: RUBY SEED **(Persephone)**

Persephone eats six pomegranate seeds and enters into an ecstatic state of sexual awakening and empowerment

Defined in the palace of the darkness
My eyes have adjusted now to see
A light that glitters in the shadows
A ruby seed , A ruby seed
Alive to the mystery of creation
The jewel in the hollow of the cave
A hunger blooms and I desire to taste
To taste, to taste, to taste!

A thousand seeds to feed my fire!
A thousand mysteries to feel
Reveal
A vivid darkness
A bright abyss
A brilliant shadow
A ruby kiss

A treasure was hidden and I found it
And now I will never be the same
Of all the jewels I have discovered
My name, my name, my name!

(Chorus sings:) Persephone

Persephone

Persephone

Oh, the ecstasy of being!
Oh, the rapture of the flame!

My body shining
My skin awake
A crimson diamond
A coiled snake

12: ABOVE AND BELOW *(Hekate)*

Aware of the need for balance in all things, Hekate leads us back to surface where we find Demeter in a state of deep grief.

πάνω και κάτω
πάνω και κάτω
Οστό, Οστό, Ξηρό και μόνο

Above and below
Above and below
Bone, bone, dry and alone

13: HOLLOW *(Demeter)*

Demeter grieves the unexplained loss of her daughter.

All grief is mine and I am hollow
I'm parched with pain and cannot swallow
I dress myself in shrouds of shadow
And lay my head up on the ground

All grief is mine and I am hollow
I hold no vision of tomorrow
My child has wandered to the meadow
And now is gone gone gone gone
And now is gone

For others Joy
For other Light
For others Peace
For others day will follow night
For other golden is the flower
For others Fate on them has smiled
For others hope
But not the mother without child
But not the mother without child

Gone gone gone gone gone

All grief is mine and I am hollow

The field was ripe but now is fallow
I dress myself in shrouds of shadow
And lay my head upon the ground
And lay my head upon the ground



PERSEPHONE

DISC 2

14: UNDERWORLD QUEEN *(Chorus)*

The Chorus honour Persephone as Queen of the Underworld.

Here within the land of shadow
Here within the palace of bone
Here the seed within the darkness
Persephone upon her throne
Now the shadow shines
In the cavern of stone
Now the Queen within the darkness
The Ruby Queen upon her throne

15: BEFORE AND AFTER LIFE *(Persephone)*

Persephone embraces the power of her new role as Queen of the Underworld and guide to the souls of the dead.

See, I've come to the centre now
Here I usher the souls that pass
Over the threshold go
Over the threshold go
There to become the seed
Bidding the flower to grow
All life into the dark goes
Into the womb, the tomb
Into the hunger
Into the teeth falls
Into the mouth crawls
Into the cavern called
Into the centre
Life feeds, swallows its own tail
Filling its belly full,
Full of its children
All life into the dark goes
Into the womb, the tomb
Into the hunger

Birth am I
And Death am I

And woman am I
I am before and after Life

Deep in the Earth
A death and a birth
A quickening flame
That whispered my name
I honoured the call
Taking the throne
I wasn't alone
A spark of desire
Had kindled my fire
And freed me

Birth am I
And Death am I
And woman am I
I am before and after Life

Something below
I wanted to know
Eager to feed
I swallowed the seed
And now that I'm fed
I am alive, alive
With all this glorious red!

16: IN LIFE IS DEATH, IN DEATH IS LIFE **(Hekate)**

Hekate reminds us that all is in balance.

Στη ζωή υπάρχει θάνατος,
Στο θάνατο υπάρχει ζωή
In Life is Death
In Death is Life

17: ELEUSIS **(Demeter)**

*After days of searching, Demeter reaches the town of Eleusis.
The kindness and humour of the local women help her to regain hope.*

I will not cease to hope, I am her mother,
And she is my light
I'll leave no path untrod, no stone uncovered
'Til I find my flower bright
I try to seek the truth, to find an answer
Maybe I held on far too tight?
Maybe she slipped away and chose a lover
As other girls do every night?

I will not pass a door that I can open
No fence too high, no service too lowly
I wander many days and many nights
Hide my face behind my eyes

I have found tenderness, I have found kindness
Even so, it's just the same
The women gather round to soothe my sorrow
Try to make me smile
Remind me that life is more than pain

I hold a seed of hope that I will find her
Once again, my precious maid
And she will gather flowers and dance the meadow
As always was, and always will be
Once again

18: THE DARK EARTH OPENED. **(Chorus and Hecate)**

*Helios, the all-seeing Sun God, has informed Demeter that Zeus allowed Hades to abduct Kore.
This betrayal by her brothers is broadcast by the Chorus and Hecate.*

HEKATE:

Η μαύρη γη άνοιξε
Το σκοτάδι και το φως
Η σκοτεινή γη άνοιξε

CHORUS:

Dark, dark, the dark Earth opened
Demeter, the dark Earth opened
Willed by your brothers,
Willed by your brothers
Dark, dark, the dark Earth opened
Demeter, the dark Earth opened
The Sky and the Shadow,

The Sky and the Shadow
Dark, dark, the dark Earth opened
Listen to us! The dark Earth opened
Lured by a flower
Grown by the Earth
Dark, dark, the dark Earth opened
Demeter, the dark Earth opened
Seen by the Sun,
Heard by the Moon
Dark, dark, the dark Earth opened
Demeter, the dark Earth opened
Willed by your brothers,
Willed by your brothers

19: THE CURSE *(Demeter)*

Demeter responds to the news of her brothers' betrayal

Wither up the Earth with my pain,
May the rain disappear
May you struggle with hunger
Wither up the Earth with my grief
Every flower every leaf
May it fall to the ground
Wither up the harvest with a curse
I reverse what I gave
I can give it no longer
Tangled are the tresses of my hair
I don't care anymore
Whether golden or grey

Dry
My veins filled with sand
My heart is a desert
Brittle and broken
Frozen
My feet as they're searching
Are scorching the land

Suffer as I suffer may you feel
All the pain that I feel
Like a sea without water
Deceived, denied, your greed, your lies
Splintered
Return me my daughter!

Return me my daughter.

Curse you curse you curse you my brothers
The Sky and the Shadow
Betrayed
Curse you curse you curse you my brothers
Your temples untended and barren the land
Winter
My hands become knives
My eyes become crystals
Empty, naked
Dry
Unable to cry
The last of my tears fell long from my eyes

20: TEMPLE *(Demeter and Chorus)*

Demeter's priestesses soothe her sorrow, and suggest that a temple be made to honour her suffering.

DEMETER:

Oh where can a woman go with all this sorrow?

CHORUS:

From your grief a temple build.

From your grief a temple build

21: SIX FOR THE DARKNESS, SIX FOR THE LIGHT *(Hekate)*

Hekate references the bargain that is made between Demeter, Zeus and Hades: Persephone will spend one month in the Underworld for each of the six pomegranate seeds that she has eaten.

Ἐξί για το σκοτάδι

Ἐξί για το φως

22: ALL AS IT MUST BE *(Demeter)*

Knowing that her daughter will return in time, Demeter reluctantly accepts the terms of the bargain.

I'm told she will return
Deep from below she'll journey back to me
And I am forced to learn
All that is and all as it must be
And though my heart will yearn

Winter will come and steal my joy from me
And I am forced to learn
All that is and all as it must be

From everything I've lost
There's everything to gain
Bear witness to the cost
And honour my pain

And so the seasons turn
Soon is the Spring that calls her back to me
And I have come to learn
All that is and all as it must be
The Summer Sun will burn
High in the sky for all the world to see
And I am forced to learn
All that is and all as it must be

And so returns the corn
And so returns the grain
A ritual is born
To honour my pain

23: THE WHEEL WILL TURN FOREVER *(Hekate and Chorus)*

Again the wheel turns, but this time upward, toward Springtime and Persephone's return.

Ο τροχός θα γυρίζει

24: THE ASCENT *(Persephone and Chorus)*

Persephone is called back to surface, and must leave her throne and her beloved Hades.

CHORUS:
6 for the darkness and 6 for the light,
6 for the darkness and 6 for the light

PERSEPHONE:

And so this Winter
That others see as sorrow
Will soon be over
And I will mourn the shadow
And lose the darkness

That held me soft within its arms
And leave my lover

Under the surface
I am as radiant as light
There is a beauty
That's hidden deep within the night
And I have found it
But I am called away
And don't want to leave it
I don't want to leave it

Once I was maiden
And I will maiden be again
And though the Springtime
Will see me dancing with the flowers
And when I'm dancing
No other care will weigh my heart
I am resisting

Oh blessed darkness,
Oh blessed sanctuary of bone
Where I have hidden
Where I have come to be alone
Oh blessed darkness
I am at one with you
And now I must leave you
And now I must leave you
6 for the darkness and 6 for the light
6 for the darkness and 6 for the light



CREDITS

PERSEPHONE

By Wendy Rule

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(Except Track 9 'Hades' written by Timothy Van Diest)

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