

Demeter and persephone essay



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Have you ever wondered how our seasons came about? It all has to do with the two major goddesses, Demeter, who is the goddess of the grain and harvest, and Persephone, the goddess of spring also queen of the underworld. Demeter is the daughter of Cronus and the titaness Rhea. Persephone who happens to be the daughter of Demeter, is also the daughter of the almighty Zeus. Demeter and Persephone have many powers. They both have the conventional powers of the Olympian gods including super human strength vitality, longevity, and resistance to injury.

In addition to that they each possess other powers. Persephone can cross dimensions, cure the sick, and influence the growth and prosperity of flowering plants . Demeter can alter her appearance and it is said that her emotions are in tune to the harvest. The harvest is bountiful when she is happy and drought occurs when she is sad.

Persephone grew up on Mount Olympus and her laughter spread throughout the halls. Demeter and Persephone were very close, so close in fact that Demeter could not bear to let Persephone out of her sight. When Demeter sat on her throne, Persephone was always on her lap and when she went down to Earth to look after her trees and fields, she always took Persephone. Wherever Persephone would dance on her feet in the fields, flowers sprang up. She was so lovely that even Hades, who noticed little, saw her and fell in love with her. He wanted her for his queen but he knew Demeter would never let Persephone go, so he went to Zeus and together they created a plan.

A few days later, Persephone was running about in a meadow, she strayed from her mother with the daughters of Oceanus, gathering flowers, she came upon what seemed to be the most beautiful flower she had ever set eyes on, amazed she reached out with both hands but suddenly the earth opened and Hades arose out upon her in his dark chariot drawn by black horses. He seized the frightened girl, turned his horses, and dove back into the ground. Persephone was very sad for she still hoped to see her dear mother and the tribes of the eternal gods, so long hope calmed her great heart for all her trouble...

and the heights of the mountains and the depths of the sea rang with her immortal voice: and her queenly mother heard her yet Persephones cries for help died out as the ground closed just as suddenly as it had opened. Bitter pain claimed Demeter's heart, she rushed wildly about in the meadow searching for her daughter who had vanished without a trace. Demeter "sped like a wild-bird over the firm land and yielding sea, seeking her child. " For nine days, Demeter, wandered over the Earth, so grieved that she neither ate nor drank anything. She didn't even sprinkle a single drop of water on her body. When the tenth day had come, Hecate, came to tell her the news.

Demeter, now knowing that her brother Hades had kidnapped her daughter was no longer sad but filled with anger. She cursed the Earth that had swallowed her daughter. Forests, gardens, and farm land all turned lifeless. People began to starve, the gods begged her to restore the Earth to fertility but she would not promise anything until she had her daughter back. Zeus could not let the Earth go to waste so he sent Hermes with a message to

Hades. " Dark-haired Hades, ruler over the departed, father Zeus bids me bring noble Persephone forth from Erebus unto the gods, that her mother ay see her with her eyes and cease from her dread anger with the immortals; for now she plans an awful deed, to destroy the tribes of earthborn men by keeping seed hidden beneath the earth, and so she makes an end of the honors of the undying gods.

For she keeps fearful anger and does not consort with the gods, but sits aloof in her fragrant temple, dwelling in the rocky hold of Eleusis. " Even Hades had to obey the orders of Zeus, and sadly he bid farewell to his queen but not before giving her three pomegranate seeds to eat. The fates have ruled that Persephone can be free now as long as she ate nothing while in the underworld. These three seeds are enough to invoke this ruling which even Zeus is powerless to change so a compromise has to be made.

Therefore, Zeus commands that Persephone must spend one third of every year living in the underworld with Hades and two thirds above ground with Demeter. In the underworld, Persephone became the wife of Hades and Queen of the underworld. It is said that Persephone came to love the cold blooded king but Demeter, however was consumed with rage and sorrow. These two goddesses should forever be remembered because they created our seasons and are an important part of our history.