

SCARLETT ST. CLAIR

ULTIMATE BOOK GUIDE

HADES X PERSEPHONE

WARNING

SPOILER
AHEAD



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SECRETS. SEDUCTION. SACRIFICE.

A TOUCH OF DARKNESS

1. Near the beginning of the novel, Persephone asks, “What possessed people to bargain their souls?” After meeting Hades and learning about his deals, does she find an answer? Why is it more complicated than she initially believes?
2. Gods have all the power in New Greece, so why doesn’t Persephone want her identity as a goddess to be known? How much of that has to do with the way her mother, Demeter, has raised her? Who might Persephone have been with a different upbringing?
3. Perception and deception are notable themes in the novel. What does Persephone initially believe about Hades’ intentions in New Greece, and why does she begin to change her mind about him? What are some of the ways in which she was both wrong and right in her original impression?
4. The author blends Greek mythology with a modern city setting and contemporary romance tropes. How does this blend work to create a unique urban fantasy world? In what ways do the characters seem like people from mythology, and in what ways do they seem modern?
5. Persephone brings a fresh perspective to how Hades could help the mortals coming to him suffering from grief and addiction. How do their different life experiences contribute to their views on humanity and suffering? How do they try to understand each other’s point of view?
6. Do you think Persephone would have ever found her magic and the darkness inside her if she hadn’t met Hades? Why or why not?
7. Hades challenges Persephone to “create life in the Underworld.” What are the different ways she and other characters interpret this request? Why does Hades give Persephone this specific challenge?
8. Near the end of the novel, why does Persephone so easily believe Aphrodite’s words over Hades’s actions? What does Hades have to do to prove his love isn’t a game?
9. How does Persephone integrate herself with the people and culture of the Underworld? How might she rise to the idea of being their queen as the series goes on?
10. What is the difference between love, worship, and respect in this novel, and how does Persephone navigate all three in her relationship with Hades and his realm?



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A GAME OF FATE

1. Hades, Thanatos, and the Fates have a complicated relationship, all working between life and death. How does Hades use the idea of “bargain and balance” to offer what fairness and redemption he can to mortals? Does he have a realistic grasp on his limits?
2. Aphrodite could have asked for anything in her bargain with Hades. Why might she have asked Hades to make someone fall in love with him? Do you think she genuinely wanted to help Hades?
3. After seeing Persephone’s point of view in *A Touch of Darkness* and now Hades’s in *A Game of Fate*, what are some of the ways Hades initially doesn’t understand Persephone’s heart? What new ways do we discover Persephone didn’t understand Hades from the start, either?
4. What insights does Hades’s perspective offer about the other gods’ personal lives, such as Aphrodite, Hephaestus, and Helios, that Persephone doesn’t get to see? Do these glimpses into the gods’ lives make them seem more or less human?
5. Hades can see fate, and so he knows from the start that Persephone is meant to be his lover. Does this knowledge help or hurt him as he develops real feelings for her? What might have changed if neither of them had known the truth?
6. “A soul for a soul” is a constant, looming threat in Hades’s line of work. How does he work with and against that idea as he tries to stop Sisyphus and Triad?
7. Hades allows Persephone and the mortal realm to think the worst of him, even when it would be easy to show off his good deeds instead of keeping them a secret. Why does he do this, and does loving Persephone change his perspective? How is the Halcyon Project an example?
8. *A Game of Fate* shows more of Hades’s violence, as well as the dangers of the world of the gods, than *A Touch of Darkness*. How might Persephone react if she knew about Poseidon, Sisyphus, and Triad? Would the Persephone at the beginning of the story react differently than the Persephone at the end?
9. The author’s note discusses the myth of Sisyphus. How does this book adapt that story, and how, as the author mentions, does “Hades’s journey mirror this same fate” but with a different, more positive outcome?
10. Vasilis asks Hades, “What would you trade for something you loved?” and Hades’s internal reply is, “The world.” How is Hades’s world changed by his love for Persephone? How does he overcome his fear of “exposing the truth of my heart—that I have always desired to love and be loved”?



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A TOUCH OF RUIN

1. Persephone is fearful that Hades only admitted to wanting to marry her because she is a goddess. Has Hades given Persephone reason to think this? Why might Persephone believe she isn't really loved or wanted by him?
2. Persephone is very independent. Why does it bother her so much that Hades seems to be so into their relationship? Why does she have such trouble with becoming popular?
3. Apollo is treating women badly in this story. Do you think it is right that Persephone wants to write an incriminating story about him even after Sybil asks her not to? Why is Sybil so averse to Persephone trying to take down Apollo?
4. Why is it so important to Persephone that she has her own career that isn't influenced by Hades at all? Why does it make her so upset that she suddenly has so many fans after it is unveiled that Hades is her lover?
5. Why do you think Persephone was so hurt by the arrival of Leuce? Was Persephone's main purpose in publishing her article on Apollo to hurt Hades?
6. How does Lexa's accident affect Hades and Persephone's relationship? Why is it so devastating to Persephone even though she is dating Hades, King of the Underworld?
7. Apollo is not who he originally seemed to be. How does Persephone's time with him change her opinion of him?
8. Zofie is someone Hades has employed to protect Persephone. Why does Persephone originally take such offense to this? Why is it so important to Zofie to be able to protect Persephone?
9. Hades and Persephone finally admit their mistakes and make up after Persephone realizes her greatest fear is losing Hades to someone else. Why is this scene so essential to Persephone's view of herself and how she wants to live her life? Do you think Persephone can have everything she wants?
10. Lexa passes away at the end of this book. How does this change Persephone? What does she realize about life and death?



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A GAME OF RETRIBUTION

1. Hades does not tell Persephone a lot of pertinent information at the beginning of this story. Do you think he is correct in trying to hide Leuce from her or is he wrong to leave out important information when he is with her?
2. Hades questions a lot of his choices when it comes to Persephone. He wants to give her independence, yet he is also obsessed with protecting her. Why do you think he is so indecisive when it comes to her?
3. Hera enlists Hades in performing tasks for her, all so she will bless his marriage to Persephone. Do you think Hades was right in performing these tasks, even though they ended in him killing people he cared about that didn't deserve it?
4. Hades and Persephone fought a lot throughout this book. Why do you think they were having so much trouble getting along? Do you believe one of them was more in the wrong or were they carrying equal blame for their transgressions?
5. Persephone bargains with Apollo for Lexa's life and Hades tells her that she has condemned Lexa to a fate worse than death. How do you look at Persephone's decision? Was it wise or not?
6. After the solstice celebration, Persephone is very upset that Hades never came. Why was him being there such a big deal for Persephone? Why did it hurt her so much that he didn't show up?
7. Persephone forgives Leuce even after she leads her to the Forest of Despair. Would you have forgiven her? Do you think it was wise of Persephone to accept Leuce back into her good graces?
8. Lexa ends up dying even after Persephone bargains for her life. What does this say about death? Do you think Persephone learned a lesson?
9. Hades asks Persephone to marry him three times before she agrees. Why do you think Persephone finally agrees at the waterfall?
10. Hades has many responsibilities as the King of the Underworld that he does not enjoy. At first, he has trouble understanding Persephone's grief over Lexa. How does he understand death in a different way than everyone else?



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A TOUCH OF MALICE

1. Persephone is informed that she will most likely have multiple weddings. She is also inundated with wedding preparations. Why does all of this bother her so much?
2. Demeter is trying to get to Persephone throughout the book by destroying innocent lives. Why does Demeter want to be terrible to her daughter? Why is Hades someone she despises?
3. Harmonia is attacked and injured by masked people who seem to be working for Triad. Why is this attack especially worrying to the other Gods and Goddesses?
4. How does Hecate help Persephone manifest her powers? Why does Hecate's teaching make the most sense to Persephone?
5. Helen leaves Persephone to work for Triad. Do you think Helen is in the wrong here or is she being manipulated?
6. Why do you think Persephone is so intent on keeping her status as a Goddess unknown to the rest of the world?
7. Ajax and Apollo begin to fall in love in this book. Why do you think Apollo is so bad at showing his true feelings to others? Why does he have such a difficult time opening up to people?
8. Hades and Persephone are trying new things sexually in this book. How are they doing this in a safe, consensual way?
9. Do you think Demeter's past in any way makes up for why she is so horrible to her daughter? Can you see why Demeter has become terrible?
10. Persephone kills her mother at the end of this book. Do you think Persephone did the right thing or should she have held back?



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A GAME OF GODS

1. Hades is very protective over Persephone. Do you think he is right to be this way considering how Persephone is coping or is he being too overprotective?
2. Dionysus begins to fall in love with Ariadne in this book. What makes her different for him? Why does he find her so intriguing?
3. Hades wants to protect Persephone so much that he considers trapping her in the Underworld and facing her wrath rather than letting her venture into the dangerous Upperworld. How does this idea harken back to the original Greek myth of Hades and Persephone?
4. Hephaestus loves Aphrodite greatly and she seems to love him at times. What do you think might be keeping them apart?
5. Persephone struggles with nightmares of her kidnapping. How is this an accurate portrayal of trauma? Why does Hades feel so helpless?
6. Why does Persephone's close brush with death multiple times throughout the book cause Hades to finally realize why Lexa's death was so devastating for Persephone?
7. Hades scares Persephone when he attempts to train her. Why do you think Hades' training of Persephone goes over so poorly?
8. Hermes breaks his deal with Hades by not protecting Persephone when she battled for Tyche's life. Do you think Hermes deserved to be scarred by Hades for not completing his end of the deal?
9. Persephone traps Hades in his office at Nevernight to go with Theseus and save her friends. He feels partially angry, yet also proud. Why does this choice make him feel so many emotions?
10. Hades becomes trapped in the labyrinth at the end of this book. How do you think this will affect Hades and Persephone's relationship as their story continues?

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A TOUCH OF CHAOS

1. Persephone and Hades have a very close relationship. How is it different to see them apart from each other at the beginning of this book? How is it affecting each of them?
2. What toll does Demeter's death have on Persephone? Even though they weren't close in life, why does her death hit Persephone so hard?
3. There is a terrifying scene where Theseus rapes Helen. How does this scene delve into the psyche of Theseus? How does it show the true depth of his evilness?
4. Aphrodite holds games to honor the dead and force Theseus into the open. Why does this cause greater problems for the Olympians?
5. How does the death of Apollo change things for the Olympians? Does his death mark something different in the war against Theseus?
6. Dionysus is desperately in love with Ariadne. How does their relationship differ from Theseus' relationship with Ariadne? How does Dionysus earn her trust after the way Theseus treated her?
7. Why does Dionysus go to help Medusa? What makes her important to him? Overall, why do you think Dionysus helps women who have been in bad situations?
8. Hades decides that he needs to confront Theseus himself in order to win the war. He must lose a game to him. Why does this scene portray how much Hades has changed since the beginning of the series?
9. There are many strong women portrayed throughout this story: Persephone, Lexa, Sybil, Harmonia, Zofie, Aphrodite, Hecate, and Ariadne, just to name a few. How do these women's stories portray a feminist sense of power? How do their shared and separate struggles bring them together as women?
10. Persephone is finally made Queen of the Underworld at the end of this story, and she is completely ready for it. How has her story arc changed throughout the series? How have she and Hades changed each other for the better?



THANK
YOU!