Amy Arezzolo, "Entry on: Ungodly (Goddess War, 3) by Kendare Blake ", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2021). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1355. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Kendare Blake

Ungodly (Goddess War, 3)

United States of America (2015)

TAGS: Achilles Aeacus Andromache Aphrodite Apollo Ares Athena Atropos Calypso Cassandra Clotho Fates Furies Hades Hector Hephaestus Hera Hermes Lachesis Minos Moirai Monsters Odysseus / Ulysses Odyssey Persephone Poseidon Rhadamanthus / Rhadamanthys Thanatos Trojan War





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Ungodly (Goddess War, 3)
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	United States of America, United Kingdom, Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2015
First Edition Details	Kendare Blake, *Ungodly*. New York: Tor Teen, 2015, 367 pp.
ISBN	0765334453
Available Onllne	Available online on booksvooks.com (accessed: October 7, 2021).
Genre	Fantasy fiction, Horror fiction
Target Audience	Young adults
Author of the Entry	Amy Arezzolo, University of New England, aarezzol@myune.edu.au
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Creators



Kendare Blake , b. 1981
(Author)

Kendare Blake is a writer of young adult short stories and novels in the genres of horror and fantasy. She was born in Seoul, South Korea, but grew up in Cambridge, Minnesota. She attended Ithaca College in New York and Middlesex College in London, from which she graduated with a Masters in Creative Writing. Her books include *Anna Dressed in Blood* (2011) and its sequel *Girl of Nightmares* (2012), the five books of the *Goddess Wars* series (2013–2015), and most recently, the *Three Dark Crowns* series.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: September 6, 2019).

Profile at Pan Macmillan (accessed: September 6, 2019).

Bio prepared by Miriam Riverlea, University of New England, mriverlea@gmail.com

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Additional information

Adaptations

Ungodly was adapted into an audiobook in 2015 and is narrated by Kate Reading. The audiobook is available on audiobooks.com (accessed: October 7, 2021).

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

Ungodly is the final book in Kendare Blake's *Goddess War* Trilogy. It follows *Antigoddess* and *Mortal Gods* and was published in 2015. Outside of the series, Kendare Blake has also published two prequel novellas set in this same universe, *When Gods and Vampires Roamed Miami* (2014) and *The Dogs of Athens* (2015).

Summary

As this novel is the third in the *Goddess War* series, it is the culmination of several plotlines developed over the course of the first and second books in this trilogy. Summaries for the previous two novels can be found here:

Goddess War (Series, Book 1)*: Antigoddess*

Goddess War (Series, Book 2)*: Mortal Gods*

Ungodly begins a month after the events of *Mortal Gods* in which the key characters, Cassandra and Calypso, Athena, and Odysseus, as well Hermes, Henry, and Andie are all separated from one another following their failed assault on Olympus against Aphrodite, Ares, Achilles and the Moirae.

Consequently, the characters are divided for much of the narrative: Cassandra and Calypso embark on a trip to find Hades; Athena attempts to heal Odysseus in the underworld; and Hermes, Henry, and Andie all try to find additional supporters in the war against the other gods as well as to find Athena.

Cassandra and Calypso

In the first of these plots, Cassandra wishes to find Hades to discover where Aidan (Apollo) has gone. She has realised through her interactions with Persephone in the previous novel, *Mortal Gods*, that he was not in the underworld. Likewise, she is also motivated by her

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premonition that Hades' death will release a myriad of illnesses upon the world. To find Hades' location, Cassandra, and Calypso (grieving the apparent loss of Odysseus) seek out the God of Death, Thanatos to find Hades. During this mission, a side-narrative develops as it is revealed that Cassandra has at Calypso's request promised to kill her. After finding Thanatos in Los Angeles, the pair convince him to track Hades. They do so by trapping and killing Megaera, one of the Erinyes to drink her blood and track Hades' whereabouts. Subsequently, this leads to several other Erinyes pursuing Cassandra, Calypso and Thanatos on their journey to Greece and at Hades' home in Athens, where they are attacked by Alecto. In the midst of this confrontation Cassandra accidentally kills Calypso. Cassandra's culpability is subsequently hidden from the others as they return to Kincade, New York.

Hermes, Andie and Henry

Meanwhile in New York, Hermes, Henry, and Andie are attempting to collect themselves following the assault on Olympus. Following a visit to Demeter in the final pages of *Mortal Gods* that revealed that both Athena and Cassandra are alive, an additional visit to Hermes' aunt also establishes the primary arc for these characters; that, in order to defeat Achilles, Henry must become something more. This triggers a series of events wherein Hermes seeks out Hephaestus who has been living in nearby Buffalo, but as a result of his own mythic affliction, is becoming disfigured. Following a lunchtime reunion, Hermes asks Hephaestus to build a shield for Henry/Hector. Several days later, Hermes, Henry, and Andie return to Hephaestus' home to develop the shield and after an extensive tour of his home, in which Hephaestus slowly explains the various doors and rooms in his home where it is revealed that Hephaestus no longer has a forge or bellows and accordingly, there is no new shield. Hermes begins to suspect that Hephaestus has betrayed them but before he can act on this thought, Achilles and the Moirae, Lachesis, Clotho and Atropos enter from one of the other doors leading to the main room. This confrontation then leads Achilles and Henry to fight one another to retrieve the original shield of Achilles that is up in the attic. Hephaestus, however, confirms his loyalties to Hermes and directs Achilles into the wrong rooms enabling Henry to retrieve the shield.

During Achilles and Henry's confrontation, the Moirae force Andie and Hermes to the ground. However, Andie challenges their authority by refusing to submit to their orders and convinces Hermes to believe

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that "they can't hold you down anymore… they're nothing" (p. 170). Hermes then questions the Moirae who were previously considered the Gods of the Olympian pantheon. With Andie and Henry they descend into the basement of Hephaestus' mansion, leaving Hephaestus to hold off the Moirae from pursuing them.

Athena and Odysseus

In the final group of Athena and Odysseus, Athena has entered the Underworld by jumping from Olympus in an effort to save Odysseus' life. Here, Odysseus' fatal wounds are suspended and, as Athena quickly realises, so are her own afflictions, the feathers that growing throughout her body. However, much to Athena's chagrin both Ares and Aphrodite join her and Odysseus. After some time passes, Odysseus comes clean to Athena that the strength and agility she had observed during his practice with Achilles in *Mortal Gods* is a new ability that appears to be the result of his reincarnation. Shortly after this confession, the group begin to navigate the Underworld in an effort to return to the mortal realm. In order to force Hades to help them leave, they kidnap Persephone. As a result, Athena, Odysseus, Ares and Aphrodite discover that they must go through Hades' palace and face the three judges; Minos, Rhadamanthus and Aeacus before they can leave. As they make their way, Aphrodite decides to remain behind in the underworld; she realises that the madness that prompted her to kill Aidan (Apollo) is progressing far more slowly here.

The Reunion (and Final Act)

Following their defeat of the judges, Ares, Athena, and Odysseus quickly exit the Underworld through a door that takes them up a series of stairs. They then run into Hermes, Andie and Henry who were fleeing the Moirae and Achilles. As these two storylines converge, they are reunited a short while later with Thanatos and Cassandra who confirm Calypso's death. Now that all are reunited, the novel's final act begins. Hermes' condition worsens and it is feared that he will not live through the night. This prompts two of the Moirae, Clotho and Lachesis to take possession of Cassandra's body and offer a proposition to Athena that in helping them kill Atropos, they will get their lives back and afflictions cured, on the condition that Cassandra joins the Moirae as the fate of death. This agreement colours much of the remaining chapters, as both Athena and Cassandra argue with one another about who will take up this position

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as the third Moirae.

As a parting gift, the Moirae in possession of Cassandra's body tell Athena that Achilles has attacked Cassandra and Henry's home. In the chapter immediately following, the reader is then privy to Henry and Andie's perspectives and these capture fleeting moments of the emerging romance between them, but it is also the precise moment that Achilles enters Henry and Cassandra's home in search of Henry (Hector) so as to kill him. However, before he can kill Henry or his parents, Ares saves Henry's father, and fights Achilles, gruesomely wounding him and pulling his intestines out. Consequently, Achilles flees the house and in the following moments, Athena, Odysseus, and Cassandra quickly enter to a haphazard scene which prompts Athena to tell Henry and Cassandra's parents the truth about each of their identities and the reason Achilles entered the home in the first place.

In the subsequent days, and in line with the instructions from Clotho and Lachesis, the group wait until Cassandra receives a vision of the location (Mount Emmons) of the Moirae so that Atropos can be killed. While Hermes' fever breaks, he is still too weak for battle and Ares chooses to stay behind and watch over his brother. Once at Mount Emmons, Athena, Odysseus, Andie, Henry, and Cassandra hike to the caves but along the way are confronted by Achilles who Henry, using the shield, defeats in battle (unlike Achilles, Henry opts to let the Greek hero live as he runs away from the group). Continuing on, the group eventually make their way to the Moirae and in a twist, Cassandra and Athena end up killing all three Moirae, further reinforcing an emerging theme in this novel that each of the characters are in control of their own fates.

In the epilogue which takes places several days later, Athena and Hermes are healed and along with Odysseus, plan to leave Kincade, New York. Likewise, Ares has also decided to return to the underworld to rescue Aphrodite. Cassandra, on the other hand is experiencing a major emotional realisation. Facing Aidan's (Apollo) grave, she has accepted that her visits to the cemetery will eventually slow then peter out altogether. Further, Cassandra has finally accepted Aidan's death, admitting to herself that he was "in the light, and the wind. And he was with her, too. In memories… the past never left" (p. 362). As she walks away from the cemetery, Cassandra attempts to flip the coin that she and Aidan used to test her prophetic skills in *Antigoddess*. This time she cannot predict whether or not it will be heads or tails, thus signifying the end of the trilogy and a

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beginning of a new chapter for Cassandra and her friends.

Analysis

Ungodly deals in multiple large, complex, and universal themes that the Young Adult audience can, either directly or indirectly relate to. Blake's construction of the narrative in this third book situates characters such as Cassandra, Athena, Hermes, Henry, and Andie with unique perspectives on themes such as fate, free will (and implicitly notions such as identity and responsibility emerge from this theme), and grief. These concerns are relevant to an audience that, for a large part are trying to forge their own identities against notions such as following their family's expectations of them, moving on from seminal times or losses in their lives or simply in the process of making decisions for themselves. Therefore, *Ungodly* (like the series as a whole) not only subverts popular representations of the Greek gods and goddesses by resisting the urge to make their caricatures of their mythical selves but alternatively presents a fantasy-horror representation that uses the Greek pantheon to challenge ideas about Fate. As such, this develops a discussion on how free will and choice prevail. In doing so, Blake encourages her Young Adult readership to see that each character (and inherently themselves), have choices and control in their own lives.

As the final volume in the trilogy, *Ungodly* represents the culmination of several plots, themes and ideas that are developed throughout the series as a whole. One of the major concerns addressed is Cassandra's grieving process over the loss of Aidan (Apollo) who died at the end of the first volume, *Antigoddess*. In *Mortal Gods*, Cassandra is overwhelmed by her feelings of anger, rage, and denial that Aidan, as a Greek god, can die. These feelings are catalyst for Cassandra (and Calypso) to search for Hades in *Ungodly* but as they initially come face to face with Thanatos, his burgeoning relationship with Cassandra challenges her grief for Aidan. By the end of the novel, Cassandra has not necessarily overcome her grief, but has accepted that Aidan is not returning. Accordingly, the series as a whole is representative of the various stages of the grief such as anger, denial, bargaining, acceptance, and hope.

Further, Cassandra's journey through her grief also ties into a broader theme of fate, free will and choice that affect each of the characters in different ways. For Athena and Hermes (as well as for the Olympian deities more broadly), Fate is explicitly anthropomorphised through

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	the Moirae who are considered not only the Gods of the Olympians, but as it is eventually realised, the root of their specific afflictions that kill them. More specifically, Athena and Hermes firmly believe in the immutability of fate, and that it cannot be changed. They grapple with this concept throughout the series as reflected by Athena's reluctance to admit her feelings to Odysseus and especially after Calypso arrives in Kincade given their previous histories in antiquity. However, it is in *Ungodly* where they eventually overcome this belief by standing up to the Moirae in their respective confrontations (with Hermes at Hephaestus' mansion, and Athena at the caves at Mount Emmons). Through their confrontations, both deities realise that fate is not a fixed concept and that they are in control of their own lives. In contrast, throughout the series, Henry and Andie are adamant about not becoming their past selves Hector and Andromache and this is a particular motivation for their reluctance to admit their feelings for one another throughout most of the series. However, when they eventually do begin a relationship with one another in *Ungodly*, Andie is quick to remind Henry that "we're not them… we're us" (p. 119) as a way to underline that their relationship is their choice and is not dictated by their past selves or histories. Further, Andie also expresses this view in a range of other contexts. For instance, she is instrumental to Hermes' challenging the Moirae when she convinces him that "they can't hold you down anymore, Hermes… they're nothing" (p. 170).
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Achilles Aeacus Andromache Aphrodite Apollo Ares Athena Atropos Calypso Cassandra Clotho Fates Furies Hades Hector Hephaestus Hera Hermes Lachesis Minos Moirai Monsters Odysseus / Ulysses Odyssey Persephone Poseidon Rhadamanthus / Rhadamanthys Thanatos Trojan War
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adversity Emotions Friendship Journeys Memory Morality Romance

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Further Reading

Brown, Sarah Annes, "The Classical Pantheon in Children's Fantasy Literature" in Brett M. Rogers and Benjamin Eldon Stevens, eds., *Classical Traditions in Modern Fantasy,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, 189–209.

Coste, Jill, "New Heroines in Old Skins: Fairy Tale Revisions in Young Adult Dystopian Literature" in Rebekah Fitzsimmons and Casey Alane Wilson, eds., *Beyond the Blockbusters: Themes and Trends in Contemporary Young Adult Fiction*, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2020, 95–109.

Malkoun, Angelamarie, "Sacrifice, Magic, and Age: The Young Adult's Burden (A Study of YA Fantasy)", *The Macksey Journal* 10 (2020): 1–45.

Phillips, Leah, "Mythopoeic YA: Worlds of Possibility" in Rebekah Fitzsimmons and Casey Alane Wilson, eds., *Beyond the Blockbusters: Themes and Trends in Contemporary Young Adult Fiction*, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2020, 123–140.

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