Anna Mik, "Entry on: Gravity Falls (Series, S01E15): The Deep End by Alex Hirsch", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/763. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

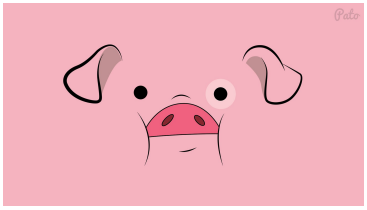
Alex Hirsch

Gravity Falls (Series, S01E15): The Deep End

United States of America (2013)

TAGS: Sirens





Free stock photo, pexels.com (accessed: May 14, 2019).

General information	
Title of the work	Gravity Falls (Series, S01E15): The Deep End
Studio/Production Company	Disney Television Animation
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2013
First Edition Details	*Gravity Falls* (S01E15): *The Deep End*, created by Alex Hirsch, creative director Michael Rianda (season 1), Disney Channel, May 11, 2013, 22:06 min.
Running time	22:06 min
Format	Aired on Disney Channel and Disney XD, available on Netflix.
Official Website	disneynow.go.com (accessed: May 14, 2019)
Available Onllne	netflix.com (accessed: May 14, 2019)
Genre	Animated films, Television series
Target Audience	Crossover (children)
Author of the Entry	Anna Mik, University of Warsaw, anna.m.mik@gmail.com
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

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Creators



Alex Hirsch, portrait under the Wikimedia Common Rights, Date: 20 July, 2013, Source: Flickr, Author: Andrew Speers, RanZag (accessed: May 13, 2019).

Alex Hirsch , b. 1985

Alexander ("Alex") Robert Hirsch, was born on June 18, 1985 in Piedmont, California. As he said himself, he had always wanted to be a creator of cartoons and that is why he went to CalArts (California Institute of the Arts). He graduated in 2007. Since then he has worked as a cartoonist, storyboard artist and voice actor in many productions for children, e.g., he was a co-writer of *The Marvelous Misadventures of Flapjack* (2008–2010) for Cartoon Network and co-creator of *Fish Hooks* (2010–2014) for Disney Channel.

Hirsch's most famous work though is *Gravity Falls* (2012–2016) aired on Disney Channel and Disney XD. It is a story about siblings – twins Dipper and Mabel Pines spend their summer in a Mystery Shack, a local tourist attraction run by their uncle Stan Pines. Stan is a mountebank who collects "wonders" from the woods and put them into display (e.g., he has sewn together two animals claiming it was a newly discovered hybrid). But a real mystery is hiding in the woods: in the first episode, Dipper finds a mysterious books full of guidelines about strange creatures and phenomena that the siblings discover in the following episodes. Some of them are inspired by the classical antiquity.

Sources:

Twitter (accessed: May 13, 2019)

Bio prepared by Anna Mik, University of Warsaw, anna.m.mik@gmail.com

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Additional information

Casting	Dipper Pines voiced by Jason Ritter, Mabel Pines voiced by Kristen Schaal, Grunkle Stan voiced by Alex Hirsch, Soos Ramirez voiced by Alex Hirsch, Wendy Corduroy voiced by Linda Cardellini, Mermando voiced by Matt Chapman.
Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Book by Alex Hirsch and Rob Renzeltc: *Gravity Falls: Journal 3*, 2016, ill. Andy Gonsalves, Stephanie Ramirez. Graphic novel by Alex Hirsh: *Gravity Falls: Lost Legends*, 2018. A spin-off television series: *Gravity Falls Shorts* by Alex Hirsch, 2013–2014.
Summary	On a very hot day, all residents and workers of Mystery Shack go to the public swimming pool. There, Mabel meets a “mystery loner”, a handsome man, who never leaves the pool and covers his lower body parts with a floating mattress. He speaks with a Spanish accent and communicates in a very dramatic (he has a “terrible secret!”); he has long hair, dark skin, and a fish tail instead of legs. His name is Mermando and he is a merman. Mermando was caught by a fisherman who wanted to sell him to the Bait Shop in Gravity Falls. However, he managed to escape from the cruel men’s cargo and with the help of forest animals (they licked him and this way – he remained hydrated) he survived and ended up in the swimming pool, where he is now stuck. Mermando misses his family and life in the ocean. Even though Mabel likes him very much and imagines their love blooming in Gravity Falls, she decides to make the right thing and helps Mermando returns to

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the sea.

At the end, Mermando fulfills Mabel's wish and they share a romantic kiss. Since then, all of his seventeen hearts beat only for Mabel.

Analysis

Classical mythology in *The Deep End* has been transformed with the help of popular culture. We do not deal here with ancient sirens who lured sailors into the depths of the sea with their song – but with a merman who does not appear in contemporary culture very often (in most cases we deal with females). Mermando can sing and play guitar, and his musicality is connected to both – cultural heritage of his "human part" (he is Mexican) and of his "animal part" (as a merman, descendant of sirens, he has power to attract people with his songs). While he does not use his powers to seduce or use Mable, it certainly is part of his irresistible charm.

Even though he is polite and treats Mable with respect, Mermando manifests syndromes of depression. He cannot enjoy his food or play with Mable, even though she offers him all kinds of entertainment. What is clear is that he do not belong to "this world". As a mythical creature he has to go back to his home, the Gulf of Mexico, where he was captured by sailors. That however does not stand in his way to begin romantic relationship with Mable, to whom later he will send love letters in bottles (the last one appears in the second season of the series, when he is announcing his engagement with the Queen of Manatees, which was purely a political arrangement).

Mermando has a voice of a grown man (incidentally, he also speaks "dolphin"); he claims to be 12 years old (according to him, merpeople mature very early). This conventionally romantic character has something in common with Harlequins heroes known from fantasies for women. In a way, such characters play the same role as sirens in antiquity – they too hypnotise their victims with romantic notions far removed from real life. When Mable sees Mermando for the first time, she is charmed by his looks, she runs to the pool, tripping over repeatedly. As a mermaid and Mexican he poses as the Other for two different reasons: as a mythical creature and as a foreigner. At the end, she is able to let him go, resisting his romantic appeal, and at the same time, she grows into an aware young woman who is not blinded by a man's pretty face.

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	The Deep End is the highest rated (by the viewers) episode of the series. It was watched by 4.5 million viewers on the night of its first broadcast on Disney Channel.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Sirens
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Coming of age Girls Loss Love Sexuality
Further Reading	*Beasts of the Deep: Sea Creatures and Popular Culture*, ed. Jon Hackett and Sean Harrington, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018. Cavalier, Stephen, *The World History of Animation*, Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2011. Piatti-Farnell, Lorna, "What's Hidden in Gravity Falls: Strange Creatures and the Gothic Intertext", *M/C Journal* 17.4 (2014), online at journal.media-culture.org.au (accessed: May 14, 2019). "Siren" entry in Pierre Grimal, *Dictionnaire de la mythologie grecque et romaine*, Paris: PUF, 1951; [eng:] *Dictionary of Greek & Roman Mythology*, 1981.

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