Michael Stierstorfer, "Entry on: The Blood of the Harpy [Harpyienblut] by Daniela Ohms", peer-reviewed by Markus Janka and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/857. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Daniela Ohms

The Blood of the Harpy [Harpyienblut]

Germany (2011)

TAGS: Harpies Metempsychosis Tartarus Underworld





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

General information	
Title of the work	The Blood of the Harpy [Harpyienblut]
Country of the First Edition	Germany
Country/countries of popularity	Germany
Original Language	German
First Edition Date	2011
First Edition Details	Daniela Ohms, *Harpyienblut* (The Blood of the Harpy). Berlin: Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf, 2011, 429 pp.
ISBN	9783862651375
Genre	Fantasy fiction, Mythological fiction, Romance fiction
Target Audience	Crossover (children/young adults)
Author of the Entry	Michael Stierstorfer, University of Regensburg, Michael.stierstorfer@ur.de
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Creators



Daniela Ohms , b. 1978
(Author)

Daniela Ohms was born in 1978 in Rheda-Wiedenbrück in Germany. She was brought up on a farm, in daily contact with farm animals. She began to write as a teenager. Later she studied literature, history, and psychology in North Rhine-Westphalia but did not complete her studies. To this day, history, mythology and the human psyche are important inspirations for her books. She lives with her husband and children in Berlin. Ohms was a founding member of the label INK REBELS, a publishing platform for new and independent writers. Her novels are also published under the pseudonym "Daniela Winterfeld." Her works focus on urban fantasy and criminal stories combines with fairy tale motifs. The 2012 *Blood of the Harpy* is her first novel. Since then, she wrote a two volume fantasy novel *The Isle of Nyx* (2013-2014).

Sources:

Profile at autorenwelt.de (accessed: October 1, 2019)

Blog (accessed: October 1, 2019)

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Additional information

Summary

The eighteen year old girl Lucie was abandoned in infancy by her mother Aello, who as a harpy was afraid that her baby – half harpy, half human – would be killed by other harpies. Luckily, Lucie was found by Maria, a hermit who lost her own child, and brought her up in a hut at the edge of the woods. After the sudden death of Maria, Lucie found shelter with the family of Maria's sister in Berlin. There, Lucie goes to school and plays in a local volleyball team. She becomes acquainted with a Russian assistant Sergej and a male harpy Jean. Lucie is eager to hide from her classmates the fact that she has harpy wings. Unfortunately, she is endowed with other traits inherited from her mother: she exudes an unpleasant odour and suffers from a ravenous appetite. For these reasons she feels deprived. These are not her only problems: she must cope with the burdensome job (shared with Jean) of harpies which is to implant souls of dead people into embryos every night. During this task they are threatened by so called harpies of death, who catch and eat the souls of the deceased. In the end, there is a fight between Lucie and her friends and the harpies of death who attack them. Suddenly emerge the mothers of Lucie and Jean, Aello and Celaeno. With their support, Lucie and Jean manage to win the fight and banish the harpies of death. After that, Lucie and Jean move as a couple to a special area for harpies in Siberia.

Analysis

Harpies as mythical beasts are described in Hesiod's *Thegony*, Virgil's *Aeneid* (book 3) and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (books 7 and 13). In these ancient literary sources, the will of the harpies is subordinated to the will of the gods. In Ohms' novel, the modern harpy Lucie makes her own decisions as an individual. Her actions meet with the wrath of the deadly harpies. After a fight with those tyrannical creatures, Lucie and Jean decide about their own fate. They become a traditional couple. In ancient mythology, harpies and men were inferior to gods and every revolt was punished by the higher authority. Putting the figure of the harpy in the context of individuality may encourage the readers to lead a self-determined life, but they learn little about the concept of the mythical harpy. The myth is briefly discussed in the novel, but its ancient sources are not described. The idea of harpies transporting souls is not derived from the ancient myth, but from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, where harpies are situated in the seventh circle of hell and abuse souls who committed suicide. In this way,

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harpies also resemble angels, because they are guardians of human souls. In the novel, the process of growing up of a young girl is set into a mythical context and its difficulties and pain are shown in the magnifying mirror of a hybrid species. The otherness which makes growing up much more difficult is of a radical kind here, the young girl is half-harpy and can finally find peace and love only with someone of her kind, and far away from humans like her father – in the symbolically chosen Siberia, a destination for the officially undesirable, for exiles. Another racially charged aspect appears in the unhappy fate of the half-breeds: they are abandoned by their mothers who fear for their survival in a world where they will be despised and threatened equally by people of their mother's and father's kind. It is a powerful message against racial prejudice. On the other hand, some may view it differently and consider that the novel by showing the suffering and misery of hybrid beings promotes an anti-mixed couples attitudes and also draws a parallel between girls maturing into women and the transformation of a half-human, half harpy child into a half-animal with "unlawful" sexual desires.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Harpies Metempsychosis Tartarus Underworld
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adolescence Coming of age Heroism Individuality
Further Reading	Stierstorfer, Michael, *Antike Mythologie in der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur der Gegenwart. Unsterbliche Götter- und Heldengeschichten?* [Ancient Mythology in Current Children's Literature. Immortal Stories of Gods and Heroes?] Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017, 160 pp. Zinn, Laura, "Camp Half Blood, Mount Olympus Academy & Co. – Die

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Inszenierung der Schule in Mythenadaptionen des 21. Jahrhunderts", Markus Janka, Michael Stierstorfer, eds., *Verjüngte Antike. Griechisch-römische Mythologie und Historie in zeitgenössischen Kinder- und Jugendmedien*, Heidelberg: Winter, 2017, 99–115.

Zinn, Laura and Otmar Kampert, "Lehren, Lernen und die neu-imaginierte Antike des 21. Jahrhunderts", in *Der Altsprachliche Unterricht. Latein Griechisch*, Heft 1, 2017, 24–35.

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