Michael Stierstorfer, "Entry on: The Goddess Test (The Goddess Test, 1) by Aimée Carter", peer-reviewed by Markus Janka, Elizabeth Hale and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/860. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Aimée Carter

The Goddess Test (The Goddess Test, 1)

Canada (2011)

TAGS: Aphrodite Ares Demeter Hades Hermes Persephone Underworld





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

General information	
Title of the work	The Goddess Test (The Goddess Test, 1)
Country of the First Edition	Canada
Country/countries of popularity	worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2011
First Edition Details	Aimée Carter, *The Goddess Test*. Toronto: Harlequin Teen, 2011, 300 pp.
ISBN	9780373210268
Genre	Fantasy fiction, Mythological fiction, Novels, Romance fiction
Target Audience	Young adults
Author of the Entry	Michael Stierstorfer, University of Regensburg, Michael.stierstorfer@ur.de
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Creators



Aimée Carter , b. 1986
(Author)

Aimée Carter was born on January 24, 1986, in Detroit, Michigan, where she currently resides.

Carter graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in Screen Arts and Cultures. She also earned a First Degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do from Progressive Martial Arts. She wrote fan fiction before publishing her first original story. Apart from romantic fantasy literature like the series *The Goddess Test*, and the trilogy *The Blackcoat Rebellion*, Carter became known for her Animox series, in which teenage characters are able to transform into powerful animals like wolves. Two last volumes of the *Animox* series were released only in German.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: October 2, 2019)

Blog (accessed: October 2, 2019)

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Additional information

Translation	German: *The Goddess Test*, trans. Freya Gehrke, Mira, 2012.
Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Sequels: • Aimée Carter, *The Goddess Hunt – A Goddess Test Novella* 2012. • Aimée Carter, *The Goddess Interrupted*, 2012. • Aimée Carter, *The Goddess Legacy – A Goddess Test Novella*, 2012. • Aimée Carter, *The Goddess Inheritance*, 2013.
Summary	In this fantasy-romance novel for young readers, on her eighteenth birthday Kate moves to a small town in Michigan with her mother Diana, who is suffering from cancer, and wishes to be buried at home. Diana is in fact the goddess Demeter. At her new high school Kate gets to know the very popular and attractive Aphrodite and her friend Ares. Aphrodite lures Kate into a big old house called Eden Manor to introduce her to the powerful owner, an attractive and brooding man, Henry. Later it turns out that Henry is actually Hades, who is hundreds of years old, and Eden Manor is part of the Greco-Roman underworld. Because Hades was abandoned by his ex-wife Persephone, who fell in love with a young mortal called Adonis, he urgently seeks a new wife to jointly rule the underworld. Soon Kate falls in love with Henry. To become the new Persephone Kate has to resist the temptations of the seven deadly sins of Christianity. Consequently Kate has to stay there to demonstrate her virtues in order to become the next Queen of the underworld. When Kate gets her own room in the mansion she comes closer to Henry by kissing him timidly. Furthermore Kate informs Henry, that she is still an untouched virgin. But soon the couple gets intimate, although physical love before marriage is not allowed in the underworld. Soon it is revealed, that Hera, who also loves Henry, has given an aphrodisiac to both of them, because she wants Kate to fail the goddess-test. After Kate is introduced to the whole Pantheon, the community of the gods decides, whether she passed the test or not. Zeus reveals to her that she has proved worthy to be the new queen of the underworld,

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because sex with Henry was involuntary, under the influence of drugs. Kate passed the test and is allowed to stay with Henry. Coping with that challenge requires lots of effort. In the end Hades and Kate get married. Kate may leave Eden Manor only during summer time. She is accompanied by Hermes and visits the grave of her mother, who died during her absence. Soon she realizes that Demeter will live on as a goddess, after she has left her mortal body. It is also revealed, that Kate is Demeter's second daughter – the first of course was Persephone. At the end of autumn, however, Kate will have to return to Hades and enter the underworld again.

Analysis

The myth of Hades and Persephone is used as a vehicle for the theme of sexual initiation. Kate meets the Hades-figure, Henry, in front of the Eden Manor, i.e., the underworld. He falls in love with her at first sight. In this context it seems problematic, that sexual intercourse between lovers before marriage is devalued as a deadly sin and having sex before marriage is depicted as lust. From this ideological and rather conservative point of view only sexual relationships between husband and wife are tolerable and accepted by society. This novel is a mash-up of a number of different traditions like teen romance, Greek and Christian mythology. The Christian mythology is functionalized to celebrate chastity. According to that the Greco-Roman Gods have subordinated themselves to Christian values. The readership is informed about the domains of the ancient gods, but the gods have other names in modern times. For example has Demeter changed her name into Diana. It is not explained why. Furthermore the ancient myth is put in fairy tale context. Kate has to perform some tasks in a castle-like manor to become a princess like *sleeping beauty*. But in this version the role models are switched: Henry is the passive man, who has to be rescued, and Kate is the active heroine, who saves the for thousands of years waiting Henry from eternal sadness. The story of the maturation of a girl is put into mythical context, because it is an exciting variation for readers, who are keen on fantasy literature. The myth of Hades and Persephone ande the myth of Adonis are retold in the novel. But ancient sources are not described. Henry-Hades is a hybrid figure between the god of underworld, Edward of Meyers *Twighlight* and probably Henry VIII, because several potential new wives have died before Kate enters the mythical mansion. Also the role models are problematic. This trilogy is probably popular, because every (female) reader wants to become a princess by

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	demonstrating a strong will and by influencing an at first strict and uncanny ruler. To separate from her mother Diana-Demeter dies in the actual world. This is very painful for Kate. According to that the end seems like a bad joke when Diana-Demeter suddenly emerges at the underworld manor and says hello to Kate like there has not happened anything. This is a weakness of the plot.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aphrodite Ares Demeter Hades Hermes Persephone Underworld
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adolescence Coming of age Death Fairy tale references Individuality Princes and princesses Romance Sexuality
Further Reading	Blackford, Holly, *The Myth of Persephone in Girls' Fantasy Literature*, New York: Routledge, 2012. Stierstorfer, Michael, *Antike Mythologie in der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur der Gegenwart. Unsterbliche Götter- und Heldengeschichten?* [Ancient Mythology in Contemporary Children's Literature. Immortal Stories of Gods and Heroes?], Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017, 128 ff. Zinn, Laura and Otmar Kampert, "Lehren, Lernen und die neu-imaginierte Antike des 21. Jahrhunderts", *Der Altsprachliche Unterricht. Latein Griechisch* 1 (2017): 24–35. Zinn, Laura, "Camp Half Blood, Mount Olympus Academy & Co. – Die 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.

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