



Persephone

Persephone was beautiful. Everyone knew it, not least Persephone. If ever a shred of doubt entered her head, her thousands of social media fans were there to tell her just how amazing she was. The trouble is, once you grow used to people telling you wonderful things, you start to depend on them to survive. This was certainly true for Persephone. She would spend each evening sat on the balcony of her apartment. She'd pose for photographs to spread her messages of beauty and wonder.

Soon, her adoring fans grew tired of her vanity. They started to drift away. With them, they took their fawning and Persephone's confidence. It wasn't long before she grew desperate for fame and headed down into the city below. She'd heard that others were posing with fancy cars and shiny new handbags and so she headed to the richest part of town. Here, only the most famous celebrities dared to look at the price tags. Dozens of expensive vehicles lined the avenue. Each one stood alone, unguarded. Persephone couldn't resist their charms. She edged quickly over to a dark red number with sleek lines and gold trim. Its beauty was matched only by Persephone's.

The metal felt cold against her back as she leaned in to take a photo. Suddenly, a voice spoke to her from inside the car. "Get in, Persephone. I can solve all of your problems." Intrigued, Persephone opened the passenger door and peeked into the darkness. A handsome man smiled back at her. "My name is Hades," he said gently, "and I am here to help."

Inside the car, the tinted windows made it hard to see where they were heading. She knew they drove for a long time. When they arrived, Hades opened the door to reveal a vast mansion clad floor to ceiling in glass. "While you are here, every photo you take will be perfect, and you always look beautiful. But there is a cost. You must never tell anybody that you are here, otherwise, you will lose everything."

"Of course," Persephone said without thinking. "I will keep it a secret forever."

For the first few days, Persephone danced around her new home, contented. True to Hades' word, she had never looked more beautiful in her photos. And yet, something was missing. Sure, she could see how radiant she looked, but without the warming messages of her fans, she felt cold inside. "One little picture won't hurt," she reassured herself as she tapped out a message on her phone and attached her latest image. It didn't take long for her fans to flock back to her, and the stream of messages filled her soul.

Soon, Hades heard of her betrayal. When he realised that Persephone had sent out an image and that people knew where she was staying, he flew into a terrible rage. In his anger, Hades cast a curse on her that forbade her from ever leaving the house. As Persephone stood and watched,



the walls crumbled around her. Out of the floor grew an endless forest of cracked mirrors. Each one was perfectly angled to reflect every flaw she saw in herself.

"Perhaps if your inner beauty had matched what you saw in the mirror," he whispered as he left the building, "these mirrors would be your friend."

VOCABULARY

1. Use the context of the sentence to work out what "vanity" means.
2. Find the definition of the word "fawning".
3. Find three synonyms for "richest".
4. Find an antonym for "contented".

VIPERS QUESTIONS

R

Who remind Persephone how beautiful she is?

E

Explain how you know that this is a **modern** myth.

R

How many social media followers does Persephone have?

I

What does Hades mean in the final paragraph?

Answers:

1. Only interested in herself
2. Displaying exaggerated flattery or affection
3. Any suitable synonyms
4. Any suitable antonym

R: Her social media followers

E: Modern technology

R: Thousands

I: Persephone should have spent more time being a nice person rather than concentrating on her looks.