



Hit the Road Helen!

Kate McMullan , Denis Zilber (Illustrator)

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When Paris and Helen decide to hit the road together, it means more trouble than they can imagine for both themselves and the people of Troy. But who says Helen is entirely at fault? Sure she had a face that launched a thousand ships but she also had a little interference from the meddling god of love and his mother, Aphrodite. Think you know the truth behind the Greek myths? Think again. Hades is here to set you straight once more on the true story of the Trojan War.

Hit the Road Helen! Details


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Author : Kate McMullan , Denis Zilber (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Hit the Road Helen! for online ebook

Dolly says

This is the ninth book in the Myth-O-Mania series by Kate McMullan. These books are fun to read and have a youthful and humorous perspective that makes it simple for people to remember the various characters and their stories. The humor is fantastic.

We are balancing these fun tales off with more classic fare, like *The Wanderings of Odysseus: The Story of the Odyssey* by Rosemary Sutcliff, so our girls can hear the original tales, too.

This book offers a humorous take on the story of the Trojan War - we really enjoyed the wit and wry sarcasm. The tale was rendered with enough fidelity to recognize the story, but it was still a very different version. It's an entertaining and quick read.

interesting quote:

"Do you like to travel?" Penelope asked him.

'Not too much,' said Odysseus.

'Good,' said Penelope. 'I'd really hate to have a husband who was away for long stretches of time.'

'Nah,' said Odysseus. 'I'm a regular homebody.'" (p. 40)

Liliana says

Reviewed on Lili Lost in a Book

This was such a fun read! I especially liked that Hades was the narrator...I really like him! He's always portrayed as the bad guy when really he's not! And this book shows that!

So, anyway, this book tells the story of the oh-so-famous Trojan War. You know, the wedding of the goddess Themis (mother of Achilles) to a king and the only goddess not invited to the wedding was the troublesome Eris, goddess of discord. Eris resented not being invited so she decided to do what she does best: stir some trouble among the guests. She threw a golden apple into the crowd with the words "to the fairest" carved into it. Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite all claimed the apple to be theirs, and thus the trouble began. Zeus decided that in order to settle things, a mortal man would choose which goddess was the fairest (bad move, Zeus). And that very (un)lucky mortal was Paris of Troy! Long story short, Paris chose Aphrodite who promised him the most beautiful woman in the world (Helen of Sparta who was already married!) Paris stole Helen and took her back to Troy; Helen's husband was not happy and put together an army to attack the walls of Troy, beginning the start of a very long war, featuring many great heroes of Greek mythology!

When you think Trojan War, you might think, "Oh, that war that was started because of Helen of Troy?" and that everything was her fault? Well, it wasn't! I really liked how this book showed that, and she was merely a victim of the gods' wrath.

I really like all the little quirky things you found throughout the book, such as Hades and his favorite pastime: wrestling, believe it or not! The books just had so many fun little things like that that certainly made things interesting.

There was one little thing though...because I LOVE mythology, I'm always (whether subconsciously or not) looking for accuracy in the myths. Now, all myths have many variations, and I don't claim to be an expert on the subject, but I am almost absolutely positive that Cupid (Greek: Eros) is not a son of Zeus. He is usually always said to be son of Aphrodite and Ares or just Aphrodite alone. But anyway, there might be versions I might not know about.

But overall, I think this is a very fun read and entertaining read, especially for kids wanting to learn about the myths.

Kristi Bernard says

If you are a fan of Greek mythology, or perhaps you are a new reader of these magical tales, then you will certainly enjoy this re-imagined story of Helen of Troy. According to Hades, the ruler of the underworld, the Trojan War was all Helen's fault. In a way it was.

“Helen was the world's most beautiful woman. She married a Greek king, Menelaus, but fell in love with Paris, a prince from Troy, and ran off with him. Menelaus raised an army to help him get Helen back, and for ten years, the Greeks fought the Trojans in the Trojan War.”

Hades tells the story with lots of humor and wit. He is a bit disgruntled and feels as though his brother Zeus left out a lot of details when he told the story. Young readers will get a kick out of Hades and learn about Helen and the Trojan War. The back of the book has a glossary for quick reference along with a guide to the myths. This fast-paced read will keep readers engaged and chuckling.

Zach says

good book come to me if you are instrid on borowing the book

Anne says

Either this one wasn't as good as the first few, or these books were a lot more entertaining when I was in 4th grade...maybe both? I really liked the innovative takes on the myths when I was a kid, but this didn't feel as creative. Just sort of more of what had already been done. Kind of disappointed.

Ms. Yingling says

This is book nine in the Myth-o-mania series, and is a retelling, in Hades' snarky voice, about the Judgement

of Paris right on through the Trojan War and the Trojan Horse. It has been quite some time since I have read any of these, and I had forgotten how very complete they are. Of course, Hades' assertion is that the whole Trojan war is Zeus' fault, but everything is covered—Leda and Tyndareus and the birth of Castor, Clytemnestra, Pollux and Helen, Menelaus meeting Helen, Thetis and Peleus' wedding and the apple of discord, Achilles being dipped in the river Styx. To make things a bit more lively, Hades talks about his La-Z-god chair, Necta-cola and his toga tux and calls Persephone "P-Phone".

Strengths: Students who read these will have just as much exposure to classical Greek mythology as they would reading Edith Hamilton or D'aulaire's Greek Myths. My students will often read one of these a day. This volume did seem longer than the others. I'm glad that Capstone has brought them out in hardcovers, since they get a lot of wear.

Weaknesses: They will be exposed to toga tuxes and Necta-cola.

BiblioQueen says

Hades, ruler of the Underworld, tells the Greek Myth of Helen of Troy as it should be told - with no convenient cover-ups. It turns out that the myths that we know are actually incorrect as they had been altered by Zeus to cover up any embarrassing situations that painted him in a bad light. According to Hades, it was really Zeus' fault that the Trojan War started in the first place! The other Gods involved didn't help out much either, their interference just ended up causing the war to last longer.

Our story starts off with Zeus falling for Helen's mom, Leda, which results in her giving birth to two blue eggs, each with a set of twins. One set of twins looks like their father, Leda's husband King Tyndareus, while the other did not. Zeus continues to meddle in many ways that affect Helen's life, while Hades tries his hardest to stop his little brother from doing something stupid. Good luck, Hades! If only he could save the world from the comfort of his La-Z-God chair!!

Kate McMullan returns to get Myth-o-Mania series after a 10-year hiatus. This fractured tale, or classic, well-known tale that has had its characters, plot, setting, or point of view changed, is told from Hade's perspective, which adds a touch of humor to the story. McMullan has managed to add another amusing chapter-book to her popular series. The book does a good job introducing all of the key players and explaining the various parts of the legend in a way that was easy to follow. Hit the Road Helen! is a quick and fun read that will help children ignite a spark of interest in Greek Mythology.

Echo says

While the book is titled about Helen, she doesn't actually appear much in it. But it's still a fun lil introduction to the Trojan War.

Rebecca says

As we learn from the underworld god Hades, Zeus has monkeyed with the myths we think we know so well,

but he's got the real scoop. In this humorous retelling of Helen's tale, it was all Zeus' fault that Cupid ended up shooting Helen just as Paris showed up, and then all the gods seemed more eager to promote and continue the war than try to stop it. Hades himself apparently tried countless times to get it stopped (it was clogging up the underworld and taking time away from his addiction to TV wrestling), but you can't mess with fate.

Although I now know some books in this series were published before *The Lightning Thief*, my first reaction on read this was that it was clearly trying to capitalize on the popularity of the Percy Jackson series by retelling the myths for kids not quite ready for Percy, and making them lighter and sillier while still sticking to the basic outline of the classic tale. Perhaps that's not true for the previously published volumes, but as this series has gone into recent reprints, I can't help but still think there's an element of taking advantage of the Riordan books' popularity. I loved the Percy Jacksons mostly because Riordan mixes humor and heart so well, and his humor is actually funny. I never laughed while reading this one, though I didn't dislike it--it just seemed sort of a predictable type of humor lacking Riordan's genius for it. Kids who read it will come away with a good understanding of the structure of the myth, so I could see it being used for curriculum, but more in elementary school. I think it's a bit young for middle school, when 5th graders are happily devouring Riordan. It includes a helpful list of names and how to pronounce them, a glossary, and discussion points, so clearly the author intends it for school use (trying to make the myths palatable).

Tera says

School assigned

Melissa McShane says

This is one of my favorite middle-grade series, right up there with the Alcatraz Smedry books and Sammy Keyes. Hades, misunderstood god of the Underworld, reveals the truth about the myths that Zeus, megalomaniac and "myth-o-maniac," has rewritten to cast himself in the best possible light. I was so excited to see McMullan return to this series after several years, in this case ambitiously tackling the Iliad and the Trojan War. This is an excellent introduction to the classic; McMullan has done her research and presents all the background to the story of Helen of Sparta who becomes Helen of Troy, including some bits from the Iliad that rarely make it into retellings. If it falls a little flat at times, that's mostly because on the surface, the story really is a lot of battles, but Hades' perspective as the guy who has to welcome all those dead souls into his realm gives it greater depth. Next up: the Odyssey, and I'm definitely looking forward to it.

Stephanie Cover2CoverBlog says

Background: *Hit the Road, Helen!* Is the story of the Trojan war and how it "really" went down. Narrated by none other than the famous god Hades, it retells the events leading up to and during the epic battle of the Greeks and Trojans over what seemed to be a woman, Helen. Little did we know, that is not the story at all, but instead a story of the gods getting too wrapped up in the lives of humans.

Review: The Myth-o-Mania series is a group of books that parody the mythology of centuries ago in a way for young readers (ages 9-13 is what my ARC tells me) to learn as well as enjoy themselves. Hades is a very

funny narrator for this tale and it also shows him in a different light. Normally Hades is represents as a hot head, angry all the time, shepherding the dead in the underworld. Here in this tale, he is trying to stop the war with all of his ideas, even though they are not working well. He is just a normal character.

The book is a very complete picture of the events leading up to the war and then the war itself with all the big pieces of history included. Hades spins it as if the war is all Zeus fault and also includes snippets about a good number of the gods who participated.

This is the ninth book in the series and I have not read any before this one, however I may just go to the library and grab them. It was a good thing that these seem to be stand alones as well. You can read them in any order really and it seems the next one is already in the works, per the epilogue. I learned a good amount of information I had forgotten and it was delivered in a fun and lighthearted way for young readers. I recommend this book to young readers and parents for their children to learn/enjoy at the same time.

Pms Mrsmoose says

Find this review at Bookalicious.org on August 12, 2013

This is the first book in the return of the Myth-O-Mania series since 2003. In this series, the Greek Gods, that we have all come to know, are portrayed in different lights. Kate McMullan has managed to take the typical characteristics of the Gods and make them feel modern, with normal problems. Zeus is usually a dumb oaf and it appears that he is the reason for everything that happens—good or bad. Hades returns as the narrator in this book and is actually quite hilarious.

In *Hit the Road, Helen!* the story about Helen of Troy, we get the entire story from Hades. On many occasions Hades tells us why he thinks things are going the way they are, and how his dumb brother could have prevented them. Most of the time Hades suggests that if Zeus would just keep it in his pants many of the tragedies of the past wouldn't have happened.

I absolutely loved this telling of the beginning of the Trojan War and if at all possible would love to sit down and have a few drinks with Hades and Persephone. The tone that Hades narrates in is snarky and playful, all the while showing he does love his brother Zeus even if he is a little . . . ambitious. I love how Hades doesn't cover anything up that happens because, well he is already the ruler of the Underworld . . . how much further could he fall? The way each God is portrayed is simply fantastic and makes Greek mythology interesting for any age.

As soon as this book releases, I plan to buy the entire series. All the books in the series just received new covers and they are all as amazing and quirky as this one. I would suggest this book to anyone who loves Greek mythology or wants to get a younger reader interested in mythology. I think these books would be great for young readers, middle grade, and even young adults. They are a light and easy way to get all the information from the myths, which are usually buried under complex language, and I think that everyone will love Hades' no-nonsense recollections. I give this book 5 out of 5 stars and hope that Kate McMullan continues to write many more.

This book releases September 2, 2013. My review was from an ARC through NetGalley.

BlackhamBoys says

These myth-o-mania books follow a familiar formula, but it is a formula that works, so that is okay! This has the same inner cover art (showing a checkout card from the underworld library) and the familiar "burned page" look at the chapter headings. And again, Hades is our narrator giving us HIS view on a myth we thought we knew.

Here, it's the tale of Helen of Troy. Now I've seen the movie "Troy" and recently read "Starcrossed" and felt like I was fairly up on my mythology ... yet these book do manage to provide such a fresh perspective, and I do always feel like I am learning something new. While Hades POV is different than the well known mythological tales, most of the important stuff is actually correct. So these books are a great educational tool for teaching mythology.

As always, there is humor galore to keep kids (and adults) entertained. Hades steeds are "Harley" and "Davidson". He relaxes in his Lazy-God recliner and has to wear a toga tux to fancy events. There are tons of little punny plays on words (like the Motel Styx *Ū*).

This book is very engaging and easy to read (as is the entire series). While there is a girl on the cover and she is featured in the book, this is still a great read for boys (I have boys, so that is always something I pay attention to). The only thing that makes it a little difficult for young readers are the names ... there are a lot of big, complicated names (but there IS a helpful glossary in the back for reference).

... another thumbs up for the myth-o-mania series!

Thank you Netgalley for the advance copy for review.

Shweta says

You thought you knew the story of Paris and Helen? Or do you just know the cooked up version that makes some Gods look good. In any case, Hades, the powerful God of Underworld is here to set the records straight. He will not let his snobby, all meddling brother Zeus get his way. In a funny and very engaging book we are presented the story of Helen of Troy.

Hit the Road, Helen is a part of the Myth-O-Mania series and I should remind myself to buy the previous books in this series as they are so much fun. Plus if they are anything like this book, they'll make for great gifting options. Introducing the Greek mythological characters to the younger lot becomes much simpler this way. Given that the Gods here use modern lingo and are in sync with all gadgets, but their powers are in the right place and their lives as complicated!

Hades fed up with Zeus's cover ups begins the story of Paris and Helen right from the time Zeus fell in love with Leda, Helen's mom. Hades who seldom leaves the underworld is usually updated by his wife Persephone on latest events. Rest of it is what he has seen and heard spending time trying to snoop around for anything fishy that Zeus might be up to.

It's a hilarious book and I would heartily recommend it to young readers who are interested in Greek Mythology and also to those who have read other versions. I bet there's none as funny and original as this one!
