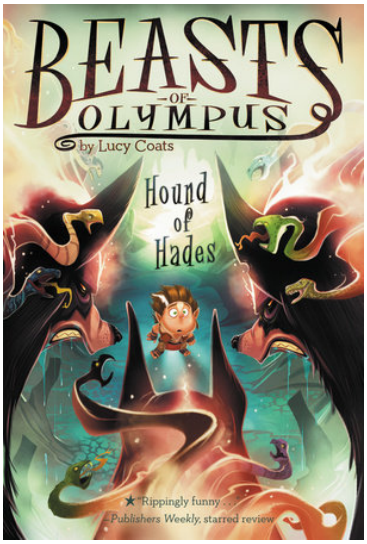
Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Hound of Hades (Beasts of Olympus, 2) by Brett Bean , Lucy Coats", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2021). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1288. Entry version as of September 14, 2026.

Brett Bean , Lucy Coats

Hound of Hades (Beasts of Olympus, 2)

United States of America (2015)

TAGS: Arachne Cerberus Eurydice Hades Heracles Hermes Orpheus Persephone



Courtesy of the publisher, Penguin Random House.

General information	
Title of the work	Hound of Hades (Beasts of Olympus, 2)
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2015
First Edition Details	Lucy Coats, *Beasts of Olympus: Hound of Hades.* Penguin Workshop USA, 2015, 144 pp.
ISBN	9780448461946
Genre	Fiction
Target Audience	Children (7–9 years)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@biu.ac.il
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators

Brett Bean (Illustrator)

Brett Bean is an American cartoonist and illustrator originally from Seattle who currently resides in California. His work has been featured in TV, films, comics, games (digital and analog) manuals and more. Brett Bean is also the creator of the *Zoo Patrol Squad* and the illustrator of *Battle Bugs*.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: April 1, 2021).

Author's profile of CGMA (accessed: April 1, 2021).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@biu.ac.il

Lucy Coats , b. 1961 (Author)

Lucy Coats is an British writer for children. She holds an MA in English Literature and Ancient History from the University of Edinburgh. She is also a member of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. In her books we can mostly find motifs from various legends and myths that she adapts for young readers. She published several picture books (including *King Ocean's Flute*, *The Animals Bedtime Storybook*), as well as novels for teenagers and young adults (including *Chosen*, *Hootcat Hill*). Among those inspired by Greek and Roman Mythology, besides the *Beasts of Olympus* series, Coats also wrote *Atticus the Storyteller's 100 Greek Myths* and *Great Beasts and Heroes – a 12 Book Series*. She also runs a blog and goes to school for

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reading sessions.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: July 4, 2018).

Twitter profile (accessed: July 4, 2018).

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Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

Previous book: *Beasts of Olympus* (Series, Book 1): *Beast Keeper*.

Next book: *Beasts of Olympus* (Series, Book 3): *Steeds of the Gods*.

Summary

This is the second book in the "Beasts of Olympus" series. Pandemonius (or Demon as he is most commonly refer to in the series) is the 11 years old half-mortal son of the god Pan and the mortal Carys. Demon is now the official Beast Keeper of the Olympic gods and it is his responsibility to take care of the various beasts in the divine stables. Several of these mysterious beasts were hurt by Heracles, whom Demon sees as a villain. Demon becomes closer to Arnie, the griffin, who helps him in his job.

In this story, Demon is ordered by Hades to come to his realm and check on his hound, Cerberus, which was dragged from home and then returned to the underworld by Heracles. Demon must travel to the underworld to check on the hound and in his journey he is guided by Hermes. He is also assisted by the ghosts of Orpheus and Eurydice in his attempt to retrieve the necessary ingredients for a special potion to save the hound's life in the short time Hades has granted him. For this potion he needs a thread from Arachne and needs to battle a legion of Hades' skeleton guards. In the end Demon succeeds in making Cerberus feel better and with Hermes' help he avoids eating any of the food offered to him by Hades and Persephone and returns to Olympus.

At the end of the book there is a glossary with a short description of the different beasts, gods and goddesses, mythical beings and places which are presented in the stories. Black and white cartoonish drawings appear at the end of some chapters. They show a scene (for example Hades and Demon) or an individual beast.

Analysis

In this installment, Demon must prove his worth to Hades, after overcoming Hera's challenge of healing her Hydra in the previous book. Slowly throughout the series, Demon will face many of the various Olympians. Demon is left on his own to face Hades and a scary

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journey to the underworld. However, where in the previous book Hephaestus served as Demon's surrogate father, in this story it is Hermes who helps him through his journey and even rescues him in the end.

Hades is described as a frightening god. He is covered by a cloud of darkness and is dressed in black. When Demon gets close to him, "as soon as the mist touched him, it felt like he was being pulled down into a never-ending pit of grief, whose clammy depths clutched and clung to him, strangling all happiness. All the sad things that had ever happened in his life swirled through his head at once." [location 242]. This is a very dark description, especially the sad events which Demon recounts which involve the death of his animal friends, this might be a sad reading for some young readers.

Hades wears a helmet studded with red rubies, described by the author as "blood-red" in an attempt to intensify the chilling atmosphere around him. This description hints at Hades' ancient epithets as the lord of the underworld but also as the wealthy Pluto. His palace is built of black granite and its tall towers are crowned with silver skulls with ruby eyes.

Hades' voice is "soft and dangerous" [location 80]. The author also describes the god in the long modern tradition of the seductive and mysteriously dangerous god which is often found in YA novels (such as "Demigods Academy" series for example). This series is aimed at younger crowd so any reference to Hades' alleged sexiness is avoided and his seductiveness is only insinuated.

Hades drives a chariot pulled by dragons. As in the first book, the author combines different mythological traditions. In the stable of the gods we can find mythological creatures from different cultures, such as griffin, hydra but also unicorns and dragons.

The journey to the underworld is also described as frightening. Even though he is followed by Hermes in a nod to his role as Psychopompos (although Demon is of course very much alive), Demon encounters alarming beings, the angry ghosts who try to grab him. The author does insert a touch of comic relief with the mention of a mortal tour guide named Georgios who organizes tours to the underworld, since when Heracles took Cerberus he left the gates of the realm open and so unwelcomed mortals can enter the realm (again Heracles is causing unnecessary harm).

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Yet the overall description of this realm is dark and creepy (unlike the more tongue-in cheek description in David Slavin's *Odd Gods: The Odyssey* for example) and includes images of ghosts tearing limbs off each other. Hermes explains that "'They're the souls of the murdered dead, seeking a way back to life to get revenge on their unpunished killers in the upper world,'" [location 334]. It may be wondered why the author chose this very specific categorization of the ghosts in a book aimed for 7–9 years old. Perhaps in order to show that revenge is futile and should be avoided?

The description of Cerberus in this story is imaginative; "It had a dog's body, three gigantic dog heads, each crowned with a hissing mane of differently coloured snakes, a long, thick serpent tail and lion's paws, each tipped with needle-sharp golden claws." [location 377]. He is not simply a three-headed dog, but more of a monster. Although in ancient texts Cerberus is described as frightening (see for example Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 10.65ff; Virgil's *Aeneid* 6.417ff), he still resembles a dog in his appearance. This is probably in order to intensify the danger facing Demon with this task. This description of course intensifies Demon's kindness to the beats, he cares for him even though he is a bit scared of him. For Demon every beast in need deserves love and care.

Regarding the other figures Demon meets, the ghosts of Orpheus and Eurydice, who help him find the ingredients to a potion that can cure Cerberus, are described as lovers without mentioning their tragic tale. Arachne provides Demon with spiderwebs for the potion, but again there is no direct mention of her story. She is simply described as an enormous spider which creates tapestries of the gods and goddesses in which the gods are depicted slightly irreverently, with Hephaestus, for example, using a chicken instead of a hammer. Demon tells her that she must be very brave to weave such scenes. Such things are touches by the author, whereby she provides a literary wink at readers (or their parents) who are familiar with classical myth.

Demon and Orpheus theft of Persephone's silver cauldron for the potion, which make the skeleton guards chase them, is a scene reminiscent perhaps of Ray Harryhausen's unforgettable skeleton fight from the 1963 *Jason and the Argonauts* film. Persephone herself is hardly described. Her chambers are colourful and covered with flowers. Orpheus mentions that Hades caught her since she ate seven pomegranate seeds in the underworld and must remain in the realm for four months. She tries to convince Demon to stay for dinner with

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	them (her tempting voice is likened to "melted butter" [location 805]), so he may remain as the underworld's beast keeper. Yet Hermes intervenes and saves Demon. To conclude, this book offers a scarier and darker adventure than the previous novel yet in the end the light tone returns and all ends well. No one is harmed and Demon saves the day. The author does not narrate the various myths related to each character (Arachne, Orpheus, Eurydice, Persephone), but only hints at them. The moral message of the story regarding the proper care of animals (no matter how scary they seem) continues in this book.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Arachne Cerberus Eurydice Hades Heracles Hermes Orpheus Persephone
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Animals Death Emotions Family Heroism Journeys
Addenda	The review refers to the Kindle edition (9781848124400). The illustrator of this Kindle edition is David Roberts and the publisher is Piccadilly Press, London. See "Addenda" under *Beasts of Olympus* (Series, Book 1)*: Beasts Keeper*.

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