

Persephone's Study

Step Inside The Coziest Spot in the Underworld...

Tucked away beneath an infernal pomegranate tree, glittering and glossy with the magic in its veins, we find the study of Persephone, Goddess of Spring and Queen of the Underworld. Everything in this room is alive, from the plush moss that carpets the floor to the glowing flowers hanging from the ceiling. You may also notice the plants climbing across the wallpaper and the mushrooms sprouting up across the ground, leading to a giant mushroom tree that curls around a gilded bookcase. Persephone can't help it: by her very nature, her space will be bursting with flora.

Our goddess has clearly just stepped away—she's left a steaming cup of tea on her bedside table along with a juicy pomegranate just waiting to be devoured. And she's clearly been enjoying how us mere mortals interpret her and Hades' story since she's reading the first volume of Rachel Smythe's *Lore Olympus*. Her bookcase showcases an eclectic taste in literature. She's obviously a fan of classic regency romance, as she has a particularly fine copy of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. And she clearly supports the stories of women as some of the titles we can see include Jennifer Saint's *Ariadne* and Madeline Miller's *Circe*. Persephone appears to be a fantasy and romance girly, showing titles like Adalyn Grace's *Belladonna* series, Tessonja Odette's *A Taste of Poison*, and Sarah J. Maas's *A Court of Wings and Ruin*. There are also some charming, weird, and witchy titles, too, including (respectively): Emily Krempholtz's *Violet Thistlewait is Not a Villain Anymore*, Mona Awad's *Bunny*, and Alix E. Harrow's *The Once and Future Witches*.

So, before Persephone comes back in, why don't you take a seat in her giant velvet chair, adjust her leaf throw pillow, snuggle up with her knitted, pomegranate-embroidered blanket, and enjoy yourself for a spell? Don't you, too, deserve a bit of the goddess treatment?

Behind the Story with Brittany Norwood

It started with the tree. Or, rather, with my Instacart shopper not being able to find the color of the clay I wanted. Let me explain. This was originally just going to be a lush, forested, perhaps slightly witchy scene with a bit of an impressionistic color palette. I knew I wanted to sculpt a tree to wrap around the box, but it was going to be navy, and the pink moss was going to be used as leaves. But despite the fact that there were supposed to be several packs of the navy clay in stock, my shopper couldn't find it and I was too sick to go shopping myself. So I went to pick a replacement color, saw that glittery black clay, and fell in love. As I started sculpting the tree, it became clear to me that it needed to be a pomegranate tree. And what better inspiration for pomegranates and lush flora than the Queen of the Underworld and the Goddess of Spring herself? The rest is mythology.