



**Mysteries of the Mother
The Abduction of Kore
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THE ABDUCTION OF KORE

This Winter Ritual, from the Southern Mysteries of the Goddess, should be celebrated at the Feast of Virgo, dedicated to the Earth Goddess. It is based on Homer's Hymn to Demeter. It should be succeeded at the Spring Feast of Libra by its companion rite, The Mystery of the Return of Kore; or by a Celebration of the Coming of Aphrodite.

Southern Worshippers of the Goddess who draw their inner energies from the Mysteries of the classical world find great joy in the fact that Virgo, dedicated to The Maiden and a winter sign in the Southern Hemisphere, is succeeded by Libra, the sign of fruitful Aphrodite at the Spring Solstice.

Perhaps ancient astrological symbolism originated in the Southern Hemisphere. The annual cycle of the Signs fits the Southern seasons extraordinarily well.

The Virgo Rite enacts the Abduction by Hades of Persephone, called Kore or the Maiden in the first part of the Hymn to Demeter, which is chanted throughout the Rite.

The Mystery begins

The Mystery is best performed by between 12 and 20 people. After such opening ceremonies as are appropriate to the grades of those participating, all the company, except the principal actors in the drama, should form a circle holding flowers. If possible, the flowers should include as many varieties as possible of those mentioned in the Hymn, such as roses, crocuses violets, iris, hyacinth and especially narcissus. Garden-flower members of the Narcissus family include daffodils, jonquils and poet's narcissus. If

none of these are available, any flowers, especially scented ones, will serve. If daffodils cannot be found, then any brilliant yellow flowers should be substituted.

If possible, there should be only a small, central, ceiling light, so that only the centre of the room around which the circle is formed is well lit.

The woman chosen to be Kore should preferably be someone due to be elevated soon to a higher grade. Whoever enacts Kore at Virgo must be prepared to be Persephone or Aphrodite at Libra. In this rite, she should wear flowers in her hair and around her neck. She should wear a white, light-weight dress, symbolising her maidenhood and the scented breezes of late summer. Although the rite is celebrated at Virgo, which is a winter season in the South, the myth begins in late summer or autumn.

The Chant to Demeter

The Cantor should know how to pronounce the names in the ancient manner:

Demeter	DEY-meyter
Kore	KOR-rey
Hades	HEY-deez
Zeus	Zoyss
Hecate	HEK-a-tey

A Winter Rite at Virgo

Helios HEY-lee-os
EJeusis e-LOY-siss

[*EY is a long E, like a French E grave*]

The Cantor should declaim the Hymn, i.e., speak the words rhythmically, not sing them. If possible, the chant should be accompanied by a drum, harp or guitar to provide the rhythm. If the musicians can, their instrument should be tuned and played in the Locrian or Ionian modes.

The main rhythms of the chant are STRONG-weak-weak and [less often] weak-STRONG-weak-weak. The rhythm is not regular, but it should be definite. The first stanza would be declaimed with the accent falling on the syllables in capital letters, as shown box below. A 5-4-4-4 stress pattern occurs in most of the stanzas.

While the chant is being declaimed, the circle of people should be swaying to the rhythm. Not like soldiers all one way, then all the other, but each swaying to their own rhythm, like the tossing and swaying of flowers in the random breezes of a sunny autumn day.

The Dance of Kore

Before the chant begins, The Maiden should dance within the circle in whatever graceful style she should choose, from time to time taking a flower from one of the circle. After a few minutes, when she has gathered perhaps half-a-dozen flowers, the cantor should begin to declaim the Hymn.

Narcissus

While the fourth stanza is chanted, she should, for the first time approach near those two or three people in the circle who are holding jonquils or daffodils

[narcissus]. They should be standing together towards the West end of the circle. As the stanza concludes, she should reach out to pluck one of them.

Hades captures the Maiden

Then, while the fifth stanza is being declaimed, two of the people carrying narcissus should step apart. From between and behind them, where he has been standing more or less hidden, the man enacting the role of Hades should step forth.

Hades should wear a voluminous, dark cloak over a brown robe. His hood should be drawn up so that his face is in darkness. The ideal Hades is tall and dark in both complexion and hair. He should enfold the Maiden in his cloak and take her out of the circle and out of the temple into the darkness, as she cries aloud, Meter, Meter, which means Mother. De-meter means Divine Mother or Mother Goddess. Meter is pronounced something like *Meytair*.

During the seventh stanza, Kore should cry out in a voice which should sound as far away as is possible, Meter, Meter. She should cry Meter a third time, more faintly, and then be silent.

The Mourning by Demeter

While the seventh stanza is being chanted, a mature female member of the lodge should enter the circle from the East and walk sadly around the circle, wringing her hands or showing sorrow in other ways.

She should go around the circle nine times, once for each day of her search. During the thirteenth stanza, the West end of the circle [not among the narcissus

NOW let me SING of de-ME-ter, with BOUN-ti-ful HAR-vest
and KOR-e her DAUGH-ter with BEAU-ti-ful FEET,
whom HA-des carried FAR a-WAY from her MO-ther.
ZEUS who sees FAR was the ONE who a-LLOWED it.

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bearers] should open up to reveal a throne
on which she should seat herself. During
the second last Stanza, she should take a
large veil and place it over her head, face
and shoulders. She should remain seated
until the rite is concluded.

If possible, the participants should have
learned by heart the final two lines of the
Hymn so that they can declaim it together
at the end of the chant.

Concluding the Rite

Within the Order, with whose
permission this Rite is published, the
custom is for the people in the circle to join
hands at the end of every rite and engage
in extemporised, spontaneous chanting of
the syllables Aa-meen. On this occasion,
the chants should be soft and mournful.
While they are chanting, Demeter should
slip away to another room. The rite should
be concluded in whatever way is customary
in you own lodge.

The Virgo ritual, as is proper for a
winter rite, leaves Kore with Hades in the
Underworld; and Demeter, the Earth
Mother, in mourning at Eleusis. The Libra
rituals celebrate Aphrodite, Goddess of
Gardens and Fruitful Increase.

The Abduction of Kore, as published
here is only portion of a very long Hymn to
Demeter, by the famous Greek bard,
Homer. It comprises less than one-fifth of
the whole Hymn, which also deals with the
establishment of the Temple and Mysteries
of Demeter at Eleusis and the Restoration
of Persephone from the Underworld.

The rites of Demeter, the Earth
Mother, and Persephone, Queen of the
Underworld and Goddess of Spring, were
reserved for those who had entered the
innermost grades of the Eleusinian
Mysteries.