

Book of the Week

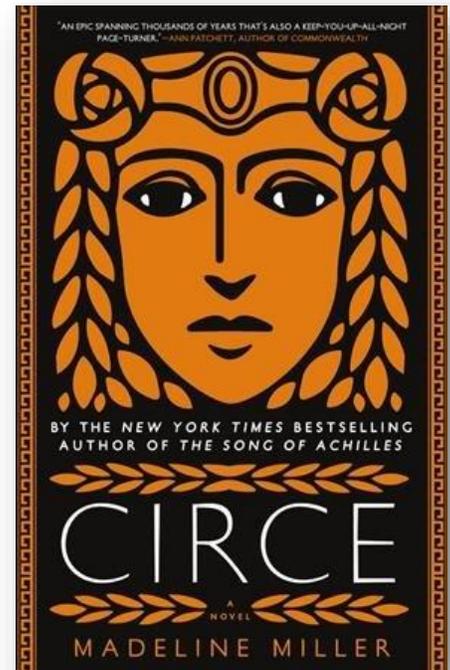
***Circe* by Madeline Miller**

Book Review by Peggy Bates

A good friend of mine recently said to me, "I'm just dying to read *Circe* by Madeline Miller." Seriously?! *Circe* is categorized as a fantasy, and I tend to be more interested in "who-done-its", but my friend almost never steers me wrong. So, when I saw *Circe* listed in the audiobooks section of Libby, our library's online card catalogue, I checked it out and found I was taking longer and longer walks so I could keep listening to the excellent reader of this very engaging book.

Circe tells her own story. She was a daughter of Helios, the mighty Titan and God of the Sun. She was a lesser god who was immortal with limited powers, but she was not highly regarded among the deities. She just didn't fit. Her father whom she adored ignored her, her mother hated her, and her siblings belittled her. During her stay in her father's home, a place of palace intrigue to match no other, the cunning *Circe* meets all the great Titans and Olympians, including Zeus. Continually rejected by them all, she finds that what fascinates her more than her own divinity are charms and potions and witchcraft, and witchcraft can be dangerous to the gods. It is forbidden. According to legend, Zeus has *Circe* banished to the deserted island Aiaia because she used magic to change a beautiful rival named Scylla into the famed multi-headed monster of the same name. It is on Aiaia that she hones her skills to become the most powerful witch of the ages.

Many mythic personae of Greek and Roman legend are found in this telling of *Circe's* story. Daedalus, Ariadne and the bone crushing Minotaur, Jason and murderous Medea, the wily Odysseus and his men journeying home from the Trojan war, and let's not forget Scylla. *Circe* is a sympathetic yet powerful figure caught between the omnipotent deities of her heritage and the flesh and blood humans that she comes to respect and love.



Circe has page-turning suspense, mesmerizing language and vivid characters that will send you to Google to learn more about them. I just know Mrs. Mary Brooks, my Starkville High School Latin teacher, would have loved it, even without declensions and conjugations. I hope you will, too.

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