



Coils

Barbara Ann Wright

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Cressida loves Greek mythology, tales of gods and monsters, but she knows they aren't real no matter how awesome it would be to meet the beautiful women of myth. When her aunt June disappears, Cressida realizes the other members of her family aren't so rational. June's notes point to a possible entrance to the fabled Underworld before they cut off completely.

Following June's footsteps leads Cressida into a world she knew only as legend, a place of marvels and danger, where the living are highly prized by the dead. Desperate, Cressida turns to Medusa, a demigoddess who's been maligned by myth, but everything in the Underworld comes with a price. Medusa is more than willing to help find June, and all it will cost Cressida is one little murder.

Coils Details

Date : Published September 13th 2016 by Bold Strokes Books

ISBN : 9781626395985

Author : Barbara Ann Wright

Format : Paperback 312 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Lgbt, Glbt, Lesbian, Romance, Mythology, Queer

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From Reader Review Coils for online ebook

Nina says

Oh man I'm not sure how to review this book.

I have a weak spot for all things mythology and I love how it was spun with a modern twist. And if that wasn't enough the characters had me reeled in from the start. Sure there's some liberties taken with the mythological creatures, but in a good way. I really liked how well fleshed out(and more complex than you often get in most myths) most of them were.

Adonis trying to charm Cressida, the MC, while she was trying her best to not make a bumbling fool of herself in front of Medusa? Pure gold.

And what would this story be without a quest (or several)? (view spoiler)

I wouldn't have minded if the romance part took up a little more space, but at the same time it was kind of always simmering in the back because they're both smitten idiots, so that was cute.

And the humorous writing had me chuckling right along with their dry wit and dumb flirting

All in all this was an entertaining ride from start to finish, and easily enjoyed even if your mythology knowledge is limited.

Adventure, humor and romance? Sign me the heck up

Jade says

I am a huge fan of Greek and Roman mythology, I even took a semester course on classical civilisations ,and it has nothing to do with my degree.

This book is so well written, it has humour and adventure and you will not see the twist at the end coming because it is the product of such an imaginative mind.

Barbara Ann Wright has brought life to the Greek myths in a new and inventive way and she hasn't stuck to the old script of who is and isn't a hero, she rewrote it. Some might say this isn't factually correct but if that is what you are looking for check in a textbook.

I haven't read an advertisement story that actually took me on a journey in a while so I'd a definite 5 star story.

(Arc provided by netgalley and bold strokes).

Emily says

Definitely in the top 10 of wlw stories I've read. The characters, world building, and plot are so wonderfully executed and well done and I really have nothing but good things to say about this story. The plot is addicting and moves at a good pace and sets up for a fully unexpected but ridiculously satisfying twist near the end. Overall if you loved a story like *The Dark Wife* or other retellings of Greek mythology you will adore this book!

Jem says

Lesfic fantasy fans can just skip the review and go get the book. This is the most entertaining (and easily one of the best-written ones) in lesfic. Possible extra-mild spoilers for plot-sensitive readers towards the middle and end of the review. Otherwise, its safe to read.

Coils is a fun and exciting romp through the Underworld, where all the fallen characters from Greek mythology dwell for eternity. What makes this book feel like such a fresh take on the myriad variations of Greek myths-based stories around is the humor and wit and the modern vibe that the author imbues her characters and her settings with.

Cressida, a graduate student of classical literature, finds a cryptic email left by a missing aunt June, and goes in search of her. The search takes her on an adventure of a lifetime, as she dives headlong into hell and beyond. Cressida has such an engaging voice. As a student, she can be completely starstruck at the legendary figures she encounters, much like an avid fan, which she is. But as a 21st century woman trapped in a world bound by rigid, ancient and to her, totally arbitrary rules, she looks at things with a modern eye and sardonic wit. The author's treatment of the other characters run the gamut from pathos to serious to camp, and most of her characterizations are spot-on but jazzed-up with the occasional imaginative twist.

This book has a big cast of characters but I had no trouble telling them apart even though my ancient Greek myth chops were earned strictly from Hollywood/pop culture references and remnants of whatever high school history lessons still floating around in my brain. I mean who doesn't know Adonis or Medusa. (Which reminds me, two of the best scenes in the book that had me LOLing involved Cressida meeting these two for the first time. The former, because Adonis had been specifically sent to enchant Cressida with his beauty and of course, every lesfic reader just knows how bad he's gonna fail, but Adonis doesn't and can't figure out why, lol. And the second, when Cressida meets the grossly-dressed, mud-covered Medusa for the first time, and she just goes....this is one of my favorite first-meetup scenes of all time.) Even the more obscure characters are easily recognizable to the reader once the author has Cressida recall what evil misdeeds they were supposed to have committed.

I love the somewhat tongue-in-cheek world-building. The author makes the Underworld out to be like a distorted mirror of our present day world, in a manner that just might be plausible. :) Our fashions, trends and historical events filter down to them, apparently. Even 'Clash of the Titans'. They have their own problems (obscure denizens losing form and becoming ghosts), their own ways of getting around (massive elevators, Charon's cable car), their own cellular network which conveniently also doubles as a spying/gossiping and eavesdropping network.

The plot starts simple enough. Finding June in the Underworld. But it slowly and gradually expands to epic

scope and proportions as quest after quest reveal territorial battles, power struggles, intrigues, betrayals and double crosses, leading to the ultimate plot twist that may just completely upend the entire Underworld. I love the plot progression: how things start out so clear cut and then goes off-tangent and then just when you think its almost done and settled, things just go competely belly up. 5 stars for this shocker alone. I did think the theory behind the resolution was a bit too convenient though. But its hard to ponder seriously about it when the author covered up that flimsy bit with one of the most fun and frenetic final battles in lesfic fantasy.

I love the romance. From their very first meeting, these two ladies sizzle and pop. But, like all good adventure tales, the romance was sidelined in favor of the plot and the action. No worries though. There's an epilogue just for us romantics. :)

And finally, no adventure tale would be complete without a quest. Or two. Or three. The most fun one was Cressida leading the Suicide Squad from Hell (view spoiler) to retrieve some magical artifacts. I love the characters in this gang and their interactions. I can totally see a couple of them in their own spin-off books. Did I say couple? ;)

Bottom line: This is one hell of an entertaining read. A rollicking adventure tale with a nice, angsty romance on the side. Even if your mythology knowledge is limited to Xena and Clash of the Titans, it's enough to enjoy the book. And if you love it, check out my other all-time favorite mythological fantasy The 100th Generation featuring Egyptian deities instead.

5 stars

ARC from Netgalley/Bold Strokes Books

P.S. Love the gorgeous cover too! Nice hair accessories. Too bad I don't carry them well. ;)

Book Worm says

I loved this one. It may be because Greek mythology has always fascinated me. But this book enraptured me and not only because of the absolutely gorgeous cover.

Lex Kent says

When I see a Barbara Ann Wright book, I know that I am in for a grand fantasy adventure. I was excited to read this and was not disappointed. The story is about Cressida, who is a lover and student of Greek mythology. When Cressida's, Aunt June, goes missing, and all sign point to the fact she entered The Underworld, Cressida must suspend her disbelief and rescue her Aunt.

I was always a fan of Greek Mythology, back in my early school days. So the more I read this, the more I felt like a kid again. Each new character, Cressida meets, I got excited thinking "I know you" or "Oh, I remember your story too". I just honestly has so much fun with this book. I also loved that Medusa, was the main character Cressida had a crush on. She was always one of my favorite mythological characters, and I enjoyed watching her battle with wanting only her revenge, and her attraction with Cressida. I just honestly geeked out with this book.

I enjoyed the quests Cressida, went on to free her aunt. And all the scheming and backstabbing that went on in the Underworld. I do have to be honest though, I thought towards the end things got a little convoluted. Right around the "big battle" scene, it took me a bit to really understand what all was happening. But I did like how the ending worked out and was happy with it.

If you are looking for an adventure book, that brings the pages of Greek Mythology to life, don't pass this one up. This is a fun read, and I really enjoyed it.

An ARC was given to me by NetGalley and Bold Strokes Books, for a honest review.

Nikki "The Crazie Betty" V. says

I seriously LOVED this story! Cressida travels to the Underworld to try and save her Aunt and we are introduced to a whole slew of mythological characters! For the most part this is an adventure story as Cressida and her crew (including Agammemnon, Pandora and Medusa) travel through different parts of the Underworld to collect artifacts required for Cressida to save her Aunt June and get back to the living world. It's hard to really give a lot of details about the story, because there are just so many, but I will say that the thing that really made me love this story so much was taking these mythological entities and really giving them a voice and a character. Not just reiterating what's been told in the myths. We see who they are as people/heros/villains and are privy to a much longer and more in depth back story.

There is also a secondary developing love story between the MC Cressida and her companion Medusa. Medusa has ALWAYS been one of my favorite mythological entities, and seeing how the author portrayed her and her history made me so happy! I've felt so sad for her and always felt like she was robbed of her life, and this book provides more depth to those emotions.

Granted this story isn't purely based on what we've read in the mythology books, and takes liberties with some of those characters to give them more depth and personality. But I loved this book so much for that! The author takes characters like Adonis, Medusa, Narcissus, Persephone, Agammemnon, and the Titans and breathes new life into them. If legends truly live only because we believe in them, then this story would definitely resurrect some of that love for the Gods.

I would highly recommend this book to those who enjoy something slightly above YA, but not quite Adult, lovers of fantasy and/or mythology, and f/f romance.

ARC kindly provided by Netgalley in exchange for my honest review.

Lexxi Kitty says

I've read 7 books by this author, which happens to correspond to the total number published. I feel like I should put something here like 'I purchased this book and did not get it through any ARC programs' but cannot figure out how to word it. Other than, you know, like that.

What's there to say? Book is like the description on GoodReads. Cressida is a graduate student in college,

studying such things like ‘literature’, specifically those that would include Greek stories and myths. She was inspired to go in this direction by seeing her aunt’s life – though aunt June is more hands on than Cressida (as in archaeology and the like).

Book opens with Cressida standing around June’s place trying to figure out where June had disappeared to. And no, I don’t mean she was visiting and she misplaced June. I mean that she had an email from June indicating that she had found something quite neat, though some might call it impossible. That was four days ago. No news since.

During a bit of searching June’s apartment, and computer, Cressida connects up with some guy who had flown in from London. Apparently some of that Greek myth stuff might have some basis in fact.

One of my first thoughts, when I actually got the book and opened it, was how odd everything seemed. As in – the first four books I had read by Wright were in that ‘High Fantasy’ style (or at least a fantasy set on a world not Earth). Fifth was an odd one about Vikings and fantasy land. Sixth was literally on another planet, but this time with a Science Fiction thread. So the odd part? How contemporary and ‘modern times’ the opening of Coils was.

Course things immediately, more or less, turn to fantasy land – specifically the Underworld. So that contemporary feel left, eh? Well, not quite. See, those people ‘down there’ ‘keep up’ with what’s going on up here so . . . a mix of fantasy/underworld/‘contemporary cityscape’.

Interesting story. I’ve read several like it, though can’t recall one off the top of my head that specifically involved lesbians – or at least one lesbian (the others are, you know, something like pansexual; I’d make a comment about ‘ancient Greeks and their man-man love’ but I’m not sure how specifically to word that, and no, this time I’m not falling back on ‘except like that’).

Let’s see, Greek myth related would pull in those Rick Riordan young adult novels (with a bit of underworld fun here and there); a different version of ‘the afterlife/not earth’ would pull in the Hot Damned series by Robyn Peterman, though that’d be MF (and includes vampires, demons, angels, Satan, Jesus, and Satan’s daughters – the seven deadly sins). But enough of that.

As noted, seventh book I’ve read by Wright, after a longish run of books I’ve rated three stars (the last of the Katya & Starbride series; the Viking book, and the science fiction book – technically they were not all 3 star books, but close enough to that for this paragraph), I’m happy I’ve found one I can rate 4 stars. Not sure of exact rating but ‘4ish’ seems to work for now.

September 14 2016

Morgan says

This is probably the only book I've read in recent memory that I want to read a sequel to immediately. God I hope that next book and series is happening!

Coils is a shining example of lesbian fiction done correctly. This book is freaking awesome--full of action/adventure, the hero's journey, a fresh take on Greek mythology, epic battles and quests, Medusa (swoon!), and hilarious dialogue. It's extremely well-written and from the very first page, even the opening

lines, I felt pulled into and fully immersed in the story.

This book is definitely worth a read for any fan of great lesfic and especially fans of Greek mythology. I cannot recommend this enough.

ARC provided by NetGalley.

Katherine says

Cressida embarks on a (literally) epic adventure to retrieve her aunt June, alive but lost among the dead of the Underworld. The author was somewhat lazy in fleshing out her characters, relying on the reader to know the personalities and stories behind Arachne, Agammemnon, Medea, Hecate, Adonis, Narcissus, and Pandora. She did a nice job with Medusa, though, and the ending had enough *deus ex machina* to please the classicists.

Amanda Prado says

3,5 stars.

This was a really fun book even if it wasn't exactly for me - aka it was very plot/action-focused, to the point where when we reached the ~final battle~ I was just. v tired of it all. I'd have preferred more character-focused moments, but that's me. Also the romance has the "deception" trope which I just dont like/isnt my thing, even if I thought this book handled it p decently. What was REALLY fun in this book was how all the greek mythology was used, and how the author "updated" it to modern times. Plus, Cressida was just a really fun protagon - the part at the beginning where Adonis tries to seduce her and she doesnt give a fuck but Medusa just has to appear and say hi for her to get all flustered was hilarious. me2, Cressida, me2.

Lia says

I love it.

Elisa Rolle says

2017 Rainbow Awards Honorable Mention: Coils Barbara Ann Wright

1) A breezy adventure story with a rather abrupt start and slightly underdeveloped characterization, but a tight, engaging plot and lots of imaginative ideas. Delving into the deeper aspects of Greek myth, and contrasting that with the pop culture versions of same, added some much-needed depth. In all, a fun book.
2) Barbara Ann Wright is a reliable author, changing genres and heroines but consistently delivering something unique and worth the read. Coils is no exception. The main character is instantly relatable, and the plot as it develops gains in complexity in weird and wonderful ways. A fun romp through the Greco-Roman afterlife with all but forgotten gods and goddesses...and monsters you might grow to love. I loved the unusual takes on mythology and the writing style was, as ever, compulsively readable.

Lysimache says

As somewhat of a classicist myself, I loved this take on Greek mythology in the modern world! The acknowledgement that there are a myriad of versions of myths that develop over time was nice to see. And I personally found the characters to be quite compelling.

M says

Holy Zeus and Mount Olympus!

What an imagination, colour me very deeply impressed and more than a little blown away by the scale and scope of this extraordinary book.

I don't do plot and character analysis in my reviews, so let me simply say that both are superb and really grasp the true feeling of Greek mythology combined with a very modern sensibility that invoked films like "Inception" and books like the "Harry Dresden" series.

The writing was at times hilarious (that poor Satyr with his line about moisturiser), while always dramatic and well paced.

If I had one criticism, the romantic inter play between the two MC's felt slightly underplayed for me. However this is easily forgiven due the rollicking fun of the adventure that you are carried in.

So well researched, so well realised and so written. If you have any interest in mythology then this book is going to be a massive hit for you.
