



Poisoned Kisses

Stephanie Draven

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Daughter of the war god Ares, Kyra had been born into darkness—a darkness she'd vowed to annihilate. Just as she'd destroy the notorious Greek arms dealer Marco Kaisiris for feeding the bloodlust she despised. She'd use her nymph's carnal powers to seduce him, then slay him. But Kyra wasn't prepared for Marco's secret weapon.

For millennia Kyra had avoided mortal men, but she couldn't resist Marco's magnetism, his raw sexuality. Time and again his sculpted body took her to heights to which only the gods soared. That he was a shape-shifting hydra she could forgive, but not his one fatal flaw—his poisoned blood could kill her. Kyra had fallen for the only being who could destroy her.... Yet how could she spend eternity without him?

Poisoned Kisses Details

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Author : Stephanie Draven

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From Reader Review Poisoned Kisses for online ebook

Elise says

This was hands down the best Nocturne I've ever read. Possibly one of the best books I've read this year. I NEVER savor books, I read them quickly so I can get to the next one in my stack. But I deliberately put this one down so it would last longer. Both the hero and heroine were real, lovable, and unique characters that didn't make me feel like I was reading a run of the mill love story. Even though HQN lines can feel like that sometimes. A fast paced read that had me on the edge of my chair, this is one book I'll be going back to read again and again. Highly recommended.

Harlequin Books says

Miniseries: Mythica

Megan says

I selected this for the 2017 PopSugar Ultimate Reading Challenge prompt "A book involving a mythical creature." While this book is outside of my normal reading fare, I decided to use it for this prompt because the female lead, Kyra, is a lampade (nymph) and daughter of the Greek god of war, Ares. The male lead, Marco Kaisiris, is a shape-shifting hydra and notorious Greek arms dealer. In this inventive, modern twist on Greek mythology, Kyra rebels against her father, vowing to eradicate war and destruction. She is attempting to destroy Marco for feeding the bloodlust that she despises; however, the two are deeply attracted to each other and Kyra's plans for destruction soon morph and eventually fall by the wayside. Their passions are not easily quenched, even knowing that Marco's poisoned blood could kill Kyra and that they are being pursued by blood-thirsty, warmongering gods. This book also includes a previously published ebook novella/short story called "Midnight Medusa," which features a gorgon and also fits the prompt.

Becky Wilson says

So, I thought I was going to read a romance novel. Oops.

What I did read was an engaging story in a style I grew to love with Neil Gaiman's American Gods. What happens when the world stops worshipping a god? This fantasy format really gets my religious and mythology gears turning. Poisoned Kisses delivers.

I'm not really a romance reader. Too often, the 'heroine' starts of strong, almost off-putting, then becomes some fragile flower who needs her man to breathe. Poisoned Kisses keeps the feminine strong and even at her weakest, her most incomplete without her love, she's not boring, pathetic or annoying. This, alone, would make this book leagues ahead of most romance.

But then you get to the meat of the story, the conflict of our world, the horrors wrought by one person against

another. It's real, it's gritty, it's in your face at times, but in a way that makes you think. This is a -smart-book. It's not fluff. Read at your own risk. Don't bother if you just want a damsel in distress story. Me? I'm digging the fiery characters, the dangerous world, the embodiments of gods with some love and (nicely) steamy bits thrown in, to lend it some romance cred.

I would definitely recommend it to anyone who likes romance novels. I would also offer it as an option to fantasy lovers too. It neatly bridges the gap and kept my attention.

Linda says

Having read her historical fiction written as Stephanie Dray, I was curious about the romance writing which launched her career and decided to give one of her Draven Harlequins a try. This genre is not one I usually read but Poisoned Kisses was engaging from the start despite being the third in her Mythica series but my first to read. Also the research that is a hallmark of Ms. Draven's/Dray's work in both her genres was highly evident. And while I much prefer her historical genre novels, I applaud her success as a romance writer who offers a fresh twist to the romance genre.

wanda flanagan says

I highly reccomend this book especially if you like Mythology in your paranormals like I do. Dauther of Ares and former Underworld nymph Kyra meets sexy shapeshifting human hydra Marcos. A plan to kill hom to keep him from being used by her father becomes a plan to protect as Kyra finds Marcos hard to resist. This is a great read I could not put it down. Stephanie Draven is a fantastic author .

Kristin says

Writing: 4

Story: 4

Satisfaction: 4

I really love the world that Draven has put together with her Mythica series. Her integration of supernatural elements is really well done and I like the aspect where humans can turn into mythological creatures by experiencing terrible things.

In Poisoned Kisses, Marco is a gun-runner seeking to even the score for refugees of Rwanda. During his stint in Africa, he watches children gunned down and turns into a mythical hydra, a creature who's blood is a deadly poison. For his blood, the Greek god of war Ares wants to add Marco to his collection.

Kyra is Ares's daughter. Born of a human woman, Kyra is a nymph and her kind is destined to live tragic love lives, always being left behind. But Kyra is not just a nymph. She is a nymph born of war and she's determined to stay above the stereotype of love-lost and to combat the evil doings of her father. She steals Ares's files on the hydra and sets off to kill him before Ares can find him.

Draven writes well and the chemistry that she's put together is fantastic. She writes the skepticism of the non-fantastical humans very well and the she writes human reactions in a very authentic feeling way.

If I had one complaint, it would be (view spoiler)

Nicole says

Publisher: Harlequin Nocture

Publish Date: 10/1/10

How I got this book: Requested from Publisher

Draven creates a unique new story in which the ancient Greek gods and goddesses literally come alive on the page, and rock the story from start to finish. Kyra is the nymph daughter of Ares the war god, and doing everything in her power to NOT be like good old dad. She is on a mission to find the hydra Marco and destroy him, as fate says she is supposed to do. But when her plan to use her prowess of seduction backfires, she finds herself falling for Marco at every turn.

Marco is the arms dealer to the underdog, and while he has no problem providing guns to kids, he does have a problem with his abilities as a hydra. Knowing the danger his blood has to those around him, Marco is constantly on guard with everyone, and although Kyra keeps popping up, he keeps being drawn to her while trying to push her away at the same time. When Marco gets pulled closer to a war gods clutches, he and Kyra set off to try and bring peace to not only the Congo, but a small piece of each of their souls.

I really enjoyed this book! Draven starts off with a bang and never stops the whole way through. The different spin on the paranormal, having nymphs, hydras, and gods come to life was fresh, exciting, and a blast to read. The spin on the hydra myth, with Marco being able to change his "faces" was neat, and Kyra as a nymph being able to have sexual prowess, but also having the ability to fall deeply and tragically in love.

I thought both Kyra and Marco were great characters. While Kyra was somewhat sheltered and naive, she was also passionate, caring, and had a pure heart. The whole right versus wrong, good versus evil theme throughout, and Kyra's dedication to stay on the "right" side of the line was a consistent and prevalent point in the story, and because of that, I really respected her character. While Marco had no problems toeing the line, while jumping across to one side then the other, I was amazed at the depth that Draven gave his character. With his history and past, he makes a phenomenal tortured alpha male hero.

The romance between Kyra and Marco was almost fairytale like. The obstacles in the way of forming their relationship were huge, but the desire to be together was just as big. I loved the feeling of the two of them needing to "slay the dragon" together in order to move forward. It was fun, flirty, and romantic all at the same time!

I was impressed with the way that Draven brought some world issues to the forefront, without being too preachy or political. With the history of Rwanda, and constant ongoing problems in Africa, I liked the spin she put on both sides of the issue. It was very, very well done.

While I personally wish the story would have been a little longer; it didn't feel rushed, like it ended abruptly, or was leaving out any pertinent information to the story line. I can only hope that Draven continues to write

stories set in this world in the future. Maybe featuring some of the other gods and their kids? Draven is an author that I will definitely have to add to my list of great paranormal authors!

All in all, I give Poisoned Kisses 4.5 out of 5 nymphs and hydras!

Murphy's Library says

(from Murphy's Library - <http://www.murphyslibrary.com/> - rated 3 and a half there)

You've got to have some balls to write about mythology and make it work. Draven haven't got balls, but she's got something much better: courage. This is the type of book you will read truly fast. Sit down, open it, and when you last expect it you will be near the end... Not that it makes the book less exciting. No! The book has the pages it has to have, and its construction is great.

Kyra is a great main character, and I loved how her personality was well built. She is a warrior nymph—and I think Stephanie did a really good job with Kyra's mythology—and her destiny is to conquer a hydra, but Kyra interpreted it differently and thinks what she needs to do is to kill one. So, you could say, her destiny is to kill Marco Kaisaris. Marco is an arms dealer with powers, a Hydra, and, ultimately, Kyra's biggest problem. Can she kill someone that attracts her that much? I think so, especially since Marco's kisses leads her to a poisoning case. But can she do it even after seeing Marco's soul?

The book is a big web of mythologies and fundaments that we've heard since our childhood, but it is really well put together. Marco is the character you can crush on—badass, mysterious, beautiful and sexy—and Kyra is the woman who can kick some asses, but seems to be too affected by Marco's power over her. It is cliché? Oh, hell, yeah, it is. But it is the type of book you need to read once in a while to decompress.

In terms of decompressing, **Poisoned Kisses** was the book that better did its job in a long time. It reminded me of the **Otherkin Series**, by Eve Silver, the narrative and the way the story hooked me. I liked it!

Allie says

Poisoned Kisses is a mythica Harlequin Nocturne Book by Stephanie Draven. this book features Kyra, the nymph daughter of Ares, hell bent on wrecking Daddy's world. Or at least stop him from wrecking havoc on the human world through controlling Marco, a war forged hydra. Initially a peace-keeper in Rwanda, Marco is now on the opposite side, as a weapons dealer. Kyra stalks Marco intent on killing him. But Marco almost kills Kyra with his poison blood. Or at least as close as a mortal can come to killing an immortal. But Kyra doesn't give up easy. She follows Marco to his father's funeral in his hometown and impersonates his vapid ex-girlfriend. instead of killing Marco, Kyra ends up trapped with him in a house. The attraction is like a flame, lighting both of their world's on fire. But when Marco figures out who Kyra is, the attraction goes hay-wire. Add in Ares minion's arrival and things really get interesting. Kyra and Marco split up but reunite in the Congo, and are now facing an African War God, as well as Kyra's Daddy. What will be the fate of Marco and Kyra's love?

If you didn't already know this, I love Greek mythology. Stephanie brought all the Greek mythology and sprinkled modern times on it, with a side of steamy. Kyra is not your typical damsel in distress and Marco is a monster-less monster. I loved how both characters evolved without changing who they were. This book is definitely worth your time, especially if you are a mythology or fantasy lover!!

<http://themusingsofabookjunkie.blogspot.com>

Anna says

Kyra is a nymph and the daughter of the god of war, Ares. She has made it her mission to take down the hydra called Marco Kaisaris. Prideful as she is-- she believes this will be an easy kill. She never expected to fall in love, never taking into account that Marco might be too hard to resist.

Poisoned Kisses was a good read. I was actually surprised how much I liked it. The last few Nocturne books haven't been all that great for me, so I was a bit hesitant about this one, but it turned out a very interesting story. I loved the mixture of the modern world and Greek mythology. Kyra and Marco start off as enemies in the beginning and by the end then are much more. Kyra is determined to kill Marco, but when they first meet she slides into his lap -- that one delicious moment you just know that she is a goner. Ms. Draven has created a tantalizing story of seduction and adventure.

Jeannie Lin says

I'd read Stephanie Draven's two Nocturne Bites, Midnight Medusa and Wild, Tethered, Bound before picking up her novel. For the shorts, I was impressed with the seamless way Draven wove in Greek mythology into the modern world. I was also very impressed with her vivid and unique heroines.

I have to say that even coming in with high expectations, POISONED KISSES still blew me away. The novel has all the mesmerizing storytelling of the shorts, but bigger, richer, with SO much more to offer. I had a couple of minutes one morning, so I picked up the book to check out the first pages. I was in the middle of other books at the time and had a day of work ahead of me -- forget all that. I was sneaking in reads of POISONED KISSES every chance I got and was done by the end of the day with tears streaming down my cheeks.

Kyra is a nymph of the underworld, struggling to find her place as the magic of the Old World wanes around her. Of all the Greek gods, only her father Ares, remains strong. Men have stopped worshiping the other gods, but warfare continues to feed Ares. Kyra is no Daddy's girl, and from the very first scene of the prologue, we can see she's going to be waging an epic battle against the god himself.

As a soldier, Marco was forced to stand by while innocent people were slaughtered in Rwanda. The experience traumatizes him and scars him so deep in his soul that he's become a hydra--a monster with many faces and blood that kills anything it touches. He's a very powerful weapon for Ares and the other gods of war. That's why Kyra has no choice but to kill him.

I LOVE the clash between Kyra and Marco. They are worthy adversaries and the tension is scorching every moment they're together. The worldbuilding is also breathtaking. Draven takes an approach that weaves in

the many mythologies of the world together. The story unfolds at a tight, tight pace and packs a lot in without a hitch. This book is a rulebreaker and an absolute pageturner.

After reading POISONED KISSES, the bar on paranormal stories interwoven with Greek myths has been set WAY high.

(Review also cross-posted on Amazon)

Cynthia says

I was very surprised. A well developed story line with a greek mythology spin to it. Not your usual gods and goddesses, but nymphs and gorgons. There are two stories in this book, with the second story being very short. Don't count these Harlequin books out.

Melindeeloo says

This book was actually a two-fer with the novella length Poisoned Kisses and the Nocturne Bite (formerly an e-short) Midnight Medusa, both books have loose mythological tie-ins.

Poisoned Kisses:

Kyra is a warrior nymph daughter of Aries whose fate is to conquer the Hydra. The hydra in this case is arms dealer Marco Kaisisris, whose powers - which include poison blood and the ability to shift his appearance - are born of the horror of war he witnessed in the past. Kyra is determined to kill Marco so that no one else will die from the bullets he provides, but once she really gets close enough to see into Marco's soul will she really be able to carry out her mission before her father claims Marco as a minion or will she fall for the tormented man and suffer as nymphs are wont to do - a nymph loving a mortal never ends well for the nymph. - I thought that the warrior nymph mixed was a bit odd, but I did think that Draven did a good job of transforming Marco from the inherent villainy of his occupation.

Midnight Medusa:

Renata is a Bosnian survivor and a sculptor, she sculpts only the dead or soon to die. Until she is kidnapped by a son of Ares and discovers that war has transformed her too and given her powers which can make her into as much of a monster as the war criminals she wishes to punish. - The idea here was interesting but it was quite short and the romance shoehorned in.

R.L. Syme says

I review Nocturnes regularly at The Pen & Muse blog, and this is by far the best Nocturne I've ever read. Stephanie Draven handles the re-interpretation of mythology with consummate grace. So fluid and easy, it's hard to understand why I haven't read one of her books before. But this was truly a masterpiece. I saw another reviewer said, "if all romance novels were this good, the genre wouldn't have a bad name." I second that.

You don't need me to tell you what the book is about--you can read the blurb for yourself. Suffice to say, I read these books a lot. They all start to sound the same after awhile, and that's not necessarily a bad thing. But this book is different. It's hard to put my finger on exactly all the things that make it different, but here's my biggest praise:

This book is not only well-written and engaging with a killer plot, but it's smart. As a woman with three degrees and a lifetime of intellectualism, it was nice to have an author treat me like an intelligent adult reader. I actually felt like I'd learned something after finishing this book. But not in a preachy-high-horsey way. More like the way you scratch your head and think, how in the **** did she just do that? Masterful.

Typically, I don't say, "hey, you should buy this book" because you just never can account for taste. But I'm gonna go out on a limb and say, you should probably buy this. At least plunk down the three bucks and change for the e-version on Kindle. It's worth the three hours (or however long it takes you to read it).

POISONED KISSES is going in my keeper pile for good.

~ Rebecca Lynn of <http://thepenmuse.net>
