

INT. PERSEPHONE'S BEDROOM - SUNSET

PERSEPHONE lounges on her bed in her lavish, grecian bedroom. It is covered in hanging flowers, and there are many windows. She reaches out to a large hanging flower, and as she touches it, it morphs into a NYMPH. She grins, and raises her hands, inviting more NYMPHS to emerge from their blooms. She and the NYMPHS have some fun -- happy music and laughing. It's a party!

Suddenly, DEMETER knocks. The NYMPHS disappear into their blossoms, and PERSEPHONE rushes back to her bed. DEMETER checks in on PERSEPHONE, kisses her head, and offers her a nonverbal "good night". PERSEPHONE closes her eyes, and DEMETER, satisfied, leaves.

The NYMPHS awaken slowly, and PERSEPHONE rolls out of bed. She notices a breeze through her open window and jumps out, more NYMPHS reaching out from flowers on the ground to break and silence her fall. The NYMPHS from her room crowd around her window, and then jump after her.

EXT. OVERWORLD FIELDS - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The moonlight illuminates the beauty of PERSEPHONE's world. We see her delight on her face -- she's probably never been outside at night before. She and the NYMPHS run out into the night and explore their unfamiliar home.

After their frolic, PERSEPHONE and the NYMPHS lay down together. The NYMPHS fall asleep slowly, turning back into flowers. PERSEPHONE, realizing she is the only one left awake, begins to fall asleep, but then notices a large NARCISSUS FLOWER a few feet away. She gets up and inspects it, then notices that there's a path of them, leading away from the nymphs. She looks back once, then begins to follow the trail. A cloud obscures the moon. PERSEPHONE looks up, and then the world crumbles around her. She grabs at the flower, managing to pick it as she falls down through a hole in the earth. She tumbles, crying out silently and clawing for any purchase. She falls for what feels like days, then finally falls onto a large black pillow.

EXT. UNDERWORLD - NO TIME

PERSEPHONE sits up slowly, blinking and looking at the flower in her hand. It wilts, sags, and crumbles into dust. She looks up in fear, just in time for a gilded cage to be placed around her. She sits in a claustrophobic cage on a large wooden boat, gliding silently across the River Styx. At the head is CHARON, and standing silently in front of her, just outside the cage, is HADES. She screams, again without sound, attacking her cage and attempting, frenzied, to free herself.

They pass under the great dog CERBERUS, and through the colossal table of the JUDGES. Eventually, the boat reaches ashore, and HADES opens the cage, offering his hand cordially. She bolts, following a straight stone path leading through a ASPHODEL, a tall liminal field of wheat interspersed with seeing trees. Hades pursues her, walking almost faster than she can run. He reaches her, and grabs onto her arm. She throws him off of her. They fight. PERSEPHONE is fighting for her life tooth and nail, while HADES is almost apathetic. Eventually, in a moment of pride, PERSEPHONE spits in his face. His face betrays a hint of emotion for the first time... just a little bit of anger. He stretches a hand towards her, and she freezes over in fear, then passes out.

INT. PERSEPHONE'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

The room is empty. DEMETER knocks on the door. No response. She knocks again. Waits. She opens the door. We see the horror on her face when she sees PERSEPHONE is missing. She runs out the door --

EXT. OVERWORLD FIELDS - CONTINUOUS

-- and comes upon the sleeping NYMPHS in their flowery form. Angrily, she stomps her foot, and the NYMPHS quickly transform and jump up. As she rages, plants (including the NYMPHS), wilt and begin to die. DEMETER questions them, and they explain through movement and dance everything that they know (which isn't much.) The NYMPHS then form a sun, and DEMETER looks up at HELIOS's chariot in the sky.

INT. THE UNCOMFORTABLE BEDROOM - NO TIME

PERSEPHONE wakes up in a fancy-looking bed that is not her own. The room is monochrome and unlit, overgrown with crawling grey-purple vines. Beside her on a bedside table sits a plate of food. In a daze, she gets up, looks around. Her door is ajar, and she slowly wanders out through twisting liminal hallways.

INT. HADES' PALACE - CONTINUOUS

The walls are cobwebbed and dusty. The Gothic halls twist and turn as if they mean to confuse her. She passes a handful of doors, but they swiftly close in her face. Suddenly, she turns a corner and walks through a large archway, into --

INT. THE THRONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The throne room is minimalist and decorated in the Corinthian style, and in the center stand twin thrones of ivory and ebony. In the ebony throne sits HADES, looking bored and slightly melancholy. PERSEPHONE tries to leave, but then she freezes, turning. HADES has noticed her. He beckons nonchalantly with a finger, and her eyes close. When she opens them, she sits bound by the same gray-purple ivy in the ivory throne, and HADES has returned to gazing off into nothing. After a few moments, he stands, and offers his hand to her in the same manner that he had before.

The ivy retreats, and PERSEPHONE runs the other way.

INT. HADES' PALACE - CONTINUOUS

PERSEPHONE runs through the halls. This time, they seem to close in around her, as if alive and malevolent. She finds another door, which closes before her again, but she shoulders into it and, in a moment of adrenaline-fueled strength, breaks it down. She runs across the threshold and stumbles into --

EXT. ASPHODEL - CONTINUOUS

The sky is twilit, and the sun is almost fully eclipsed. The strains of light sift through thick fog, which mingles with pale sheafs of wheat which extend in all directions. The landscape is interspersed with gnarled birch trees that seem to follow her with painted eyes. She turns around, sure that she's being pursued, but the door is gone. When she turns back, a SPIRIT stands a few meters away from her. She turns again, running the other way, but only ends up three feet from another SPIRIT. She turns again, and the first is right up on her. She looks up into its face, and its eyes are wholly empty and unnatural. She is frozen. Suddenly, HADES appears beside them from a pocket of shadow, and dismisses the spirit. PERSEPHONE begins to run, but HADES reaches a hand out towards her and she stumbles and falls, fading to black.

EXT. HEAVENLY STAIR - NOON

DEMETER stands at the top of a golden staircase, and raises her hands as if in prayer. She addresses HELIOS, and he speaks to her from the sky. She implores him to search for her daughter, and he replies that he cannot see her. She angers, and plants on her outfit wither. She declares non-verbally that she will search for her herself. We see her turn, and then we see her stepping down from the bottom of the staircase, as plants wilt and wither behind her.

INT. THE UNCOMFORTABLE BEDROOM - NO TIME

PERSEPHONE awakens in her warped bedchamber, another plate of food beside her. The flowers and colors of her body have maybe begun to... fade, but only a little.

INT. HADES' PALACE - NO TIME AND EXT. OVERWORLD - DAY
(COULD BE MONTAGE OR SPLIT)

PERSEPHONE wanders the sleeping halls. DEMETER scours the waking world. They are both lost. They are missing each other. PERSEPHONE sits in the throne room, looking at HADES with disgust. DEMETER stands at the top of a mountain, looking around for her daughter.

Mother and daughter both wake up in their beds several times, losing life and determination every morning. PERSEPHONE loses color, as does the world around DEMETER. HADES presents PERSEPHONE with gifts, and she refuses them in turn. After a few lonely mornings for each woman, we follow them both down their normal trek. But something interrupts both of their inertia.

PERSEPHONE: A door stays open before her. It leads into a well-kept Gothic garden.

DEMETER: As she finds herself at a three-way crossroads, DEMETER sees a slight shift in a shadow behind her. She turns, and behind her stands a three-faced goddess, HECATE.

EXT. THE SPIRIT GARDEN - NO TIME

PERSEPHONE walks out into the garden. It at once contrasts and perfectly aligns with the themes of the underworld -- It is dark, but inviting. It is cold, but comfortable. Strange flowers and oddly writhing plants grow from carefully sectioned plots. She walks through it in awe, finding peace and a kind of enjoyment in the underworld for the first time. She sits in the shade of a pomegranate tree, enjoying... a breeze?

She wanders, astonished, through the softly lit fields, coming to rest on a bench below a single, gnarled pomegranate tree. She looks up at the pomegranates longingly, maybe touches one. Slowly, she lays back down and falls asleep to the lullaby of the garden.

EXT. HECATE'S CROSSROADS - SUNSET

DEMETER steps back, almost frightened. HECATE raises a torch, ablaze in lavender fire. A zoom on the torch shows us the face of PERSEPHONE alight in the flames.

HECATE gestures for DEMETER to follow.

EXT. THE DARK GATE - SUNSET

She guides DEMETER silently to the mouth of a cave that softly resembles a deer skull, pointing into its mouth at the cold darkness within. DEMETER, hesitant, reaches a hand into the dark, and recoils it just as fast. The color has withdrawn from her hand, and the skin has withered with visible age. DEMETER screams.

INT. THE UNCOMFORTABLE BEDROOM - NO TIME

PERSEPHONE wakes up. This time, she's invigorated -- she gets out of bed with energy. Without even glancing at the plate of food, she jumps out into the hall, excited to rediscover the garden. After a few doors close behind her, however, another corner catapults her into the Throne Room.

INT. THE THRONE ROOM - NO TIME

HADES waits for PERSEPHONE in his throne, peering expectantly towards the door. The vines drag PERSEPHONE kicking and screaming up to her raised ivory seat, and HADES presents her with a gilded mirror. She stares at her appearance, so changed now from her time here, and her eyes begin to water. Suddenly, she lashes out, slamming her head into the mirror and shattering it. HADES shrinks back, as do the vines, and PERSEPHONE runs out of the hall. HADES watches her as she runs away, stepping down off the pedestal and peering around the door slowly.

EXT. OLYMPUS SLOPE - NIGHT

Images flash of DEMETER, flooded with emotions, as she runs up the slope of Mount Olympus. She carries a torch, and the frenzied scene is illuminated by its inconstant, flickering light. Finally, she walks somberly, tears in her eyes, up the steps of the Hall of the Olympians.

INT. HALL OF THE OLYMPIANS - CONTINUOUS

The twelve Olympians sit in their thrones in a distinctly Grecian hall. In the center is ZEUS, a juxtaposition of *regal king* and *deadbeat dad*. DEMETER throws herself to her knees at the foot of ZEUS. She sobs and rages, employing him to help her. He listens absently. Finally, he sighs and gestures to HERMES, who sprouts white wings and flies out of the hall. DEMETER watches him anxiously.

INT. HADES' PALACE

PERSEPHONE runs through the halls. Somehow, we see that they are more friendly to her -- they have become accustomed to her presence. Finally, she finds the door to the Garden.

EXT. THE SPIRIT GARDEN

PERSEPHONE wanders the garden. She smiles under the twinkling lights -- she has finally found a home in this place. We see her sit down on the bench again, grinning into the distance. In the background, we see HADES silhouetted in the door. Unaware of his presence, PERSEPHONE turns her gaze to the pomegranates. They almost pull her in, entrancing and bewitching. Finally, she stands and plucks one -- only to find, when she sits back down, that HADES has taken the seat beside her. She yelps and jumps back, hiding the pomegranate, but it drops. HADES stoops and picks it up as PERSEPHONE cowers, trapped against the tree, but to her surprise, he simply dusts it off and hands it to her. Maybe a small smile if we can see his lips. She takes it, anxiously. He picks one for himself and takes a bite. She still hesitates, but he implores her to go on. She takes a bite, finally, and smiles. It's delicious. She eats more, faster. It's her first time realizing that she hasn't eaten in days. Watching her, he smiles again. He reaches out, maybe to touch her shoulder, and --

A LIGHT AT THE DOOR.

HERMES appears. He rushes in, grabs PERSEPHONE by the arm. Rapid stills as he flies away. HADES running after them. PERSEPHONE, feeling... complicated -- she's being saved. But. She has this weird feeling. Does she want to go?

Do I want to go?

It rings through her mind, zooming into her face, as we cut to black.

INT. HALL OF THE OLYMPIANS - NIGHT

PERSEPHONE stands at the entrance to the hall. DEMETER turns from her kneeling-place and looks at her daughter. She stays still for only a moment before running to her, embracing PERSEPHONE as she stands, stationary, eyes blank.

JUMP CUT. They stand together, facing ZEUS. He takes a long look at her gaunt and aesthetically disfigured form, and then notices --

THERE'S A STAIN OF POMEGRANATE JUICE ON HER LIPS.

At the same moment, DEMETER notices it, and she throws herself at ZEUS, begging for any outcome other than the one she knows is inevitable, but he holds her at bay, and as PERSEPHONE realizes what they've noticed herself, ZEUS sighs and snaps his fingers.

INT. THE UNCOMFORTABLE BEDROOM - NO TIME

PERSEPHONE wakes up.

There is a pomegranate on the bedside table.

She eats it as she walks, slowly, through --

INT. HADES' PALACE - NO TIME

And then into --

INT. THE THRONE ROOM - NO TIME

The vines gather at her feet. This time, they don't take her. She walks with them up to her throne, taking it of her own accord for the first time. She settles, turns, and looks at HADES. He looks back at her. He offers his hand.

She takes it.

WIDE SHOT.

END.