



Night of Pan

Gail Strickland

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Fifteen-year-old Thaleia is haunted by visions: roofs dripping blood, Athens burning. She tries to convince her best friend and all the villagers that she's not crazy. The gods do speak to her.

And the gods have plans for this girl.

When Xerxes' army of a million Persians marches straight to the mountain village Delphi to claim the Temple of Apollo's treasures and sacred power, Thaleia's gift may be her people's last line of defense.

Her destiny may be to save Greece...

...but is one girl strong enough to stop an entire army?

Night of Pan Details

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Author : Gail Strickland

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From Reader Review Night of Pan for online ebook

Kisa Whipkey says

I've always had a soft spot for books based in mythology, and this one definitely doesn't disappoint on that front. The story starts with fifteen-year-old Thaleia's wedding day. A strong, independent heroine, though, she has other plans for her future, plans that don't involve marrying a man she's been betrothed to since age five. She escapes and starts to flee, but is stopped by Pan and a prophecy — the Persian army is on its way to Delphi, and she's the only one who can save her people.

This is an interesting coming-of-age story about how the Oracle of Delphi comes to be. Strickland has clearly done a ton of research into the culture of the region, from the well-known pantheon of gods, to the day-to-day customs and warfare practices of the time. And from that standpoint, it's phenomenally written. But I did find myself struggling with some of the other aspects. Namely, that the character development felt shallow. I would expect a coming-of-age story to be largely character-driven, but this fell flat on that for me, reading instead like more of a plot-driven action-adventure. I didn't connect with Thaleia emotionally (nor with any of the supporting cast), and often struggled with her voice. She seemed to be both too mature and too young for fifteen, and some of the modern turns of phrase were jarring against the historical backdrop. While I do feel that she's a good role model for young girls, she almost borders on a cliché'd example of the "strong, independent woman" stereotype. I would have liked to see her be a littler more fully developed and multi-faceted as a character.

That said, I do think the prose itself is beautifully written. Lyrical and smooth, Strickland's style is effortless, and I could appreciate her voice as an author (not to be confused with Thaleia's voice, as mentioned above.) The additional material included in the book makes this a well-rounded choice for younger readers interested in mythology. It is a YA, and I think it targets it's market effectively. However, unlike some YA, it doesn't translate quite as well outside of that target readership. I would definitely recommend it for the 12 + age range it's intended for, though. And I will probably finish the trilogy, if only to see more of the richly developed, detailed world.

****Disclosure Statement: I received a copy from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. ****

Phyllis says

Night of Pan brings taste, scent, sound and raw emotion to every scene. I'm savoring every moment. Lucky to have received an advanced copy.

Mary Brent says

More than a night, Night of Pan captivated readers are drawn into the timeless world of Greek Mythology and emotions that resonate today!

eyes.2c says

....richly evocative, immediately accessible!

Evocative, poetic and moving. The story of the 300 takes new wings after King Xerxes and his Persian army defeat King Leonidas at Thermopylae, Greece 480 BC. What of Greece now?

Thaleia as the oracle come in to being, surrounded by treachery and greed, on the cusp of womanhood and great events is a striking female lead easily identified with. An epic character brought to life by Strickland's startling descriptors. I look forward to the rest of the trilogy.

I loved the cover. It reflects the moment when the satyr Pan tucks poppies into Thaleia's hair. 'The poppies burst into life and multiply until [Thaleia's] hair is a storm of green stems, a filigree of leaves and blooms...' Thaleia moves beyond herself, beyond the girl, to become the divine messenger, the oracle Pythia, with 'poppies dancing like Medusa's snake-hair.'

Strickland has combined a pantheon of Greek gods and historical happenings seamlessly with the very human story of a young girl/woman caught up in their drama and the destiny of her homeland. A YA novel at its best.

A NetGalley ARC

Literary Classics Book Awards & Reviews says

Thaleia is a young girl who was betrothed to Brygos, a considerably older brute of a man, when she was just five years old. Night of Pan begins when Thaleia is fifteen years of age. The day has come for her to be married, but feeling she can't possibly marry Brygos, she flees her village. As she takes flight through the woods she has a face-to face encounter with the god Pan, who persuades her to stay in Delphi, where she is needed by her people.

As the story progresses, Thaleia comes to learn who she is and what her role is as the Oracle of Delphi. But realizing her potential and fulfilling her destiny will not be easy when an imposter Oracle is already established. Saving Delphi seems nearly impossible when she must prove that she is the true Oracle and find a way to defeat the power-hungry priest, Diokles, who is determined to stop Thaleia at all costs.

Night of Pan is a suspenseful and intriguing book that will appeal to a broad audience, especially those interested in Greek mythology. Author Gail Strickland has skillfully woven mythology and history into an engaging coming of age novel that is sure to connect with young readers on many levels.

a_tiffyfit says

Review to come. I can't find my review notebook with my notes, so I will update as soon as I find it!

Casia Courtier says

Night of Pan is the first book in a trilogy about the Greek Oracle of Delphi. I'm not a huge Greek myth fan, I'm more of a Norse mythos kind of girl, but I do love the history of the Classics. This book was a great blend of history and myth with a dash of young adult adventure.

The prose is both lyrical and to the point. I could feel the Gods when they appeared in the book or showed their prophecies with Thaleia. It was both haunting and magical. I like that Strickland shows the Gods' own weaknesses and humanlike qualities that we see in their myths. It made them feel real.

Thaleia is the only human character I really felt connected to. She seemed outside the realm of both mortal and immortal. Which does make sense, given her purpose. The reader is supposed to take this miraculous journey with her, not other humans.

However, I feel that it would have been nice to be able to understand and be a part of her Mom's life or even her friend Sophia. For instance, her friendship with Sophia doesn't seem as strong as she says it is. I know they are supposed to be like sisters, but I didn't feel that energy in Thaleia's narrative. A little of it was there, just not enough to completely justify to me that they would go thick and thin for each other.

I've read some reviews that this book is written purely for education and though I can see what they mean, I disagree. There is a glossary with sites to go to for references and there is a study guide of sorts (you know the kind with questions that the reader answers). It does make the book seem targeted for schools or book clubs, but I like those type of things for something people don't really know or think about outside of their educational environment.

I like those type of questions to think about and wonder. I wouldn't write an essay about them, but I do like them. Now, do I think this book needs the study guide questions? No, but it is fun for the bookworm who just wants to reflect on what they've read. Is the glossary important? Yes. There are words I never heard of and it was nice to look at them and say "ahhh, now I get it." The Greek alphabet section seemed a little not needed though.

However, if it is the author's intention to educate as well as give the reader a good story, she did a good job. I love the story and the way Pan moves in the book. I felt like I was in a trance during those moments. Sure, more could be done with the emotional connection of the friends, but it makes sense that that isn't the center of the book. There is a war going on between the priest and Thaleia as well as a war between the Greeks and Persians. Sometimes, the depth of a friendship needs to be set aside for the true bulk of the story.

Would I continue in this series? Yes. Pan's flute music has me enthralled.

Bram Kincheloe says

I recently faced the prospect of a fourteen hour flight from SFO to Hong Kong. I had Night of Pan in my bag, and I figured I would spend the first hour or so of the flight reading before trying to fall asleep.

Ha, good luck. Instead, I read the whole thing in one sitting! Night of Pan

Thalia is a young woman at odds with her world--Ancient Greece. She feels more, sees more and thinks more than the average girl in her town. When, early in the story, she is drawn up the mountain by a combination of internal desire and cosmic attraction, she meets the God Pan and everything in her life changes.

Thalia, like many modern young women, finds herself questioning everything, bucking against the iron-gripped authority of the elders in her town. It is a coming of age tale centered around a young girl in Ancient Greece who finds she has more to offer than to just be a dutiful wife.

Though Night of Pan obviously has its roots in YA, I would recommend this to anyone who loves a good read. Five stars! Well done!

Isis says

I would like to thank author Gail Strickland & Curiosity Quills Press for granting me a copy of this e-book to read in exchange for an honest review. Though I received this e-book for free that in no way impacts my review.

Goodreads Teaser:

The slaughter of the Spartan Three Hundred at Thermopylae, Greece 480 BCE—when King Leonidas tried to stop the Persian army with only his elite guard—is well known. But just what did King Xerxes do after he defeated the Greeks?

Fifteen-year-old Thaleia is haunted by visions: roofs dripping blood, Athens burning. She tries to convince her best friend and all the villagers that she's not crazy. The gods do speak to her.

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Her destiny may be to save Greece...
...but is one girl strong enough to stop an entire army?

Thaleia is a young Greek girl living in Delphi, but she is different than all the other girls. Where then yield she stands strong and defiant. She doesn't mean to be problematic, nor does she mean to create problems for her best friend, Sophia. Yet somehow things always manage to go awry when Thaleia is involved. Thaleia is much more like a modern girl in her thoughts and deeds than she is like the others of her time. She thinks for herself, loves adventure, and won't tolerate injustice - not for others, or for herself. And that is how she views her upcoming betrothal to the crude Brygos, as a betrayal by her family, but more by her father as he holds

the power in their family, just like in all families.

But this story is about Thaleia's journey of self discovery, told against the backdrop of the Persian's invasion of Greece and the last stand of King Leonidas and the Spartan 300. Part of her journey includes growing up and starting to see things for what they really are. Life is not black and white, and no two people are exactly the same. It may be the power of her blood that allows her to make this leap in logic, or it may simply be her destiny; whatever it is, none of the other girls have it, nor do they even understand it. Not even her beloved Sophia. The other part is learning to believe in herself, to really know herself, and in that knowing to trust the gods to work through her and save Greece, and specifically Delphi, from the overwhelming Persian invasion. This combination certainly makes for an energizing set of events, keeping the pacing of the story steady and exciting, yet without overloading on the excitement and causing the reader to become immune to the drama being played out for them.

Thaleia meets the God Pan on the mountainside, where he gives her his pipes. She keeps this meeting to herself in the beginning, for even she doesn't trust that what happened was true. But as she has more and more visions it certainly seems that she really did meet Pan. Which means her destiny is far greater than being trapped in a loveless marriage, should she not be able to run away in time.

Time and again Thaleia is tested by the gods and villagers alike. The tests becoming faster and more dangerous once it is clear to her that she is the rightful Oracle, and the The Child of the Clouds. Indeed the Child of the Clouds on speaks in birdsong, which no one understands - not even the corrupt head priest Diokles. Yet somehow Thaleia does understand the girl, not that it makes anything easier for either of them.

Although Thaleia is the central character and focal point of the story, the other characters are also fascinating and often provide good counterbalance to Thaleia. Even with minimal descriptions and scenes, the supporting characters certainly manage to make themselves and their actions felt loud and clear throughout the entire book. While some questions are answered, others are being set up for the following books.

During Thaleia's self-exploration she finds that she will be betrayed by those she loves, and supported by strangers who believe in her from the very first. Yet she still finds a way to not only forgive those who betrayed her, but she almost seems blind to what is really happening. And at this point things could go either way - the worst betrayal could have come from real concern, or it could have been prompted by jealousy and anger. But the answer is not to be found in this first book of the series. And given what Thaleia managed to pull off in this first book, it does make me pause to wonder what on earth she can do in the second act to top this opening act!

This book is certainly fine for adult readers, but it felt to me as if it was designed for a younger audience - it felt much more like middle- & high-schoolers are the target audience. But don't let that stop you from reading this book/series, as it also easily speaks to older readers as well. Between the interesting protagonist, the smooth story arc, and the creative ending, this book certainly isn't lacking for any of the necessary requirements that make for good reading and solid entertainment!

Sarah Marie says

Night of Pan by Gail Strickland

First in the Oracle of Delphi trilogy

3 stars

Thaleia is supposed to marry a man she doesn't wish to marry. She runs away in the middle of night after being taken by the priests for her ritual in preparation for her marriage. She finds herself in the mountains and meeting a satyr, the god Pan. From there on Thaleia's life is completely uprooted and she learns that she is an important part in saving Greece. I'm surprised by this one. I started it on a whim because my copy on my computer was about to expire but I wasn't expecting to like it very much. In fact, I thought I would DNF it quickly and move on. That wasn't the case at all and I'm happy it wasn't. The atmosphere of this novel is adventurous. Thaleia is always up to no good and it makes Night of Pan a fast-paced novel. I do think that there was too much going on in chapters and in the plot overwhelm. This book is tiny (254 pages) and there was no down time, which isn't a bad thing, but the constant surprises and info-dumping gave me a headache.

Whimsical Writing Scale: 2.25

I love the Greek mythology in this novel. It's very heavy. In fact, this whole novel is just Greek mythology. There are gods present, but it's not god heavy like most mythology YA reads. It's an overall plus for me and it was what made reading Night of Pan enjoyable.

The main female character is Thaleia. I like Thaleia. She's mischievous, strong, and smart. I really like her character, but my biggest problem with her is that she has four or five prophecies surrounding her greatness and all that jazz. Nobody is that special. Special snowflake in Greek times.

Kick-Butt Heroine Scale: 3.75

The main male character is no one because embrace the Oracle life. You belong to the Gods and don't need no man.

Swoon Worthy Scale: ----

The Villain- There's a war; a big war that is solved quickly and is a little disappointing. It was over too quickly and didn't feel authentic.

Villain Scale: 2.5

I was incredibly annoyed by Sophia, Thaleia's best friend. She wasn't a very good friend and she betrayed

her only to be forgiven. They didn't even fight over the betrayal, it was just brushed under the rug and that really bothered me.

Character Scale: 2

This is very entertaining. It's good fun. I didn't like how it ended though. Cliffhangers in unnecessary places are annoying. I'm not sure if I'll read the sequels, but I'm glad I read Night of Pan. I highly recommend it if you are looking for a quick read or in the mood for authentic mythology.

Plotastic Scale: 2.75

Cover Thoughts: I like the roses and the girl reminds me of Medusa, but I'm not really sure if that was supposed to be the point.

Carrie Mansfield says

eARC provided by the publisher in exchange for fair review

Review will be available on my blog.

Grumble.

That doesn't count as a review, does it? I mean, it should because it more or less sums up how I feel and is a no-so-subtle hint as to what the final outcome of this review will be. But it'd make me a bad reviewer if I simply left it there, and if nothing else, I want to say I did my best, so let's take a look a look at this further.

On the plus side, I love the setting and concept: while Greek deities occasionally appear in modern books that touch on old pantheons, you simply don't see much fiction (let alone fantasy) set in this era. It's also neat to see some of the rituals of the time and the author clearly did her homework. It feels authentic.

But that's about all I can say that is genuinely positive.

First and foremost, while I do applaud the research that clearly went into this, the book seems so eager to show off that the author did her homework that it feels like a cross being a fantasy and a bit of a history lesson. Characters speak lines like

"He will never conquer us! Representatives of each city-state - from Athens, Milas, even might Sparta came together last autumn in Corinth to form the Hellenic League!" and "Xerxes' empire is vast - Asia Minor, Egypt, Judah, Lydia, Mesopotaia!"

People don't talk like that and so it doesn't sound like dialogue, but instead it sounds like recitation of fact. Adding to this sense is that there is an entire glossary in the back of the book. While that can be handy,

what's not so handy is that each word in the glossary is both italicized and underlined. It breaks immersion and is cumbersome to use, and ultimately detracts from the experience, more than enhances. It's nice to have the reference, but it doesn't need to be so front and center.

My next complaint is that the book feels cold. I really, really wish Strickland had given us more time with Thaleia before she had her first meeting with Pan. Our introduction to her is basically a girl that feels ridiculously modern with her "girls can be more than wives and mothers/we're just property of men!" spiel and then the mystical aspects of the book take over. Ultimately, I never connected with Thaleia because she never felt real, never felt human and Strickland went to great lengths to point out that she was human, and not semi-divine. She is the heart of the story, both in terms of plot and emotion, so having some more closeness to her would have done wonders for me.

Finally, this book has less an ending, and more a cliff-hanger. She has another vision and then boom, you're looking at the tease for book two. It is an ever-present annoyance of mine, especially in books this short.

Overall, the word I'd use for this is disappointing. There was a lot of promise, but it never quite came together for me. It is definitely fantasy, and it's interesting positing what powers a Pythia might have been able to have, but to give her powers and have her help save Greece before we even know her is to put her a bit on a pedestal and readers should never be kept at such distance.

Anne says

Night of Pan follows 15 year old Thaleia on a coming of age journey that navigates between the worlds of mortals and gods. The story is steeped in Greek history and myth, but the author does an excellent job of making it accessible. Thaleia is a strong role model for girls. I was drawn right in by the story and poetic prose.

Paula M. of Her Book Thoughts! says

Thaleia has always been a wild one. She's always in the mountains.. defying all the rules that are set in her village. So when the day comes that she's about to get married to Brygos, the man who her father chose for since she was 5, Thaleia ran away.. intending to get away and never to come back again. That is until the god Pan appeared in front of her and made her realize that she have a purpose in their village.

First of all, Strickland has a very lovely writing. I'm a fan of Thaleia's POV. Its a mix of mischief and innocence. I was easily gripped from the start because of the poetic and haunting way that Strickland is using in describing Thaleia's environment and their culture. I was enamored and kind of shocked on how they do things. I mean, engaging a 5 year old to some man who is much much older? Man, I'm glad we don't do that now.

The plot was entertaining.. though the pacing was a bit slow and I think some chapters should've been just cut short, I was still engrossed the whole time. I recommend Night of Pan for older fans of Rick Riordan's novels. But then again, I think kids will love it too. They just have to know that Pan is a bit different here. Any mythology fans will find Night of Pan fascinating.. with rich characters and setting and lovely writing, I can't wait how this series goes!!

Diane says

Received a complimentary copy to read and review. Gail is a great writer. I couldn't put it down. The characters and the world she has created is great. It has some great twists and turns. It will draw the reader in from the first page. Readers who love young adult historical fantasy will love this one. It's one of those that should be added to your TBR list you won't be disappointed. I look forward to reading the next book in the series.

Laszlo says

Finally, a new angle! Funtastic!
Thanks Laszlo
