

# SIRENS AND MISOGYNY





4

## · KALOS KAGATHOS ·

-Herodotus

*“Beautiful-virtuous”*

He is “the **chivalrous** ideal of the **complete human personality**, **harmonious** in mind and body, foursquare in battle and speech, song and action.”<sup>2</sup>

Ancient Greek writers’ descriptions of the beautiful male vs the beautiful female.

“She is **undisciplined** and **licentious**, **lacking the self-control** of which men are capable, yet necessary to society as constructed by men, in order to reproduce it.”<sup>1</sup>

## · KALON KAKON ·

-Hesiod

*“Beautiful-evil”*



3

# · ANCIENT GREECE'S **WOMEN** ·

## PANDORA

The first woman ever created in Greek mythology, due to her **lack of self control,** opens the forbidden pithos, releasing all hardship and illness into the world.



## HELEN OF TROY

Considered the most beautiful woman in Greece, her **seduction** causes the Trojan War as she attracts men from all over ancient Greece, causing them to fight over her.







# WHAT MAKES SIRENS

*irresistible?*

# · GENEVIEVE LLOYD'S **MAN OF REASON** ·

Lloyd explores the relationship between gender ideals and the reason vs. emotion binary they are often constrained to.

"When the Man of Reason is extolled, philosophers are not talking about idealizations of human beings. They are talking about ideals of manhood" (18).

Women are the 'fluctuating testimony of the senses' and the 'blundering constructions of imagination...' the emotional, the sensuous, the imaginative..." (23).



The ideal human is the "reason"-able **MAN**.



**WOMEN** are the overly-emotional, sensuous, and irrational counterparts of man.

**SIRENS** are monsters, (half woman and half bird) destined to destroy man using the unavoidable *evil powers of womanhood*.

SIRENS IN

***CHILDREN'S MEDIA***





# HARRY POTTER

# and the Goblet of Fire

"The oldest recorded merpeople were known as sirens (*Greece*) and it is in warmer *waters* that we find the beautiful mermaids more frequently depicted in *Muggle* literature and painting."

— Newton Scamander, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*

*seductive*

*guiding*

*beautiful*

*graceful*



Though they typically use their voices to lure innocent sailors to water, the siren in the stained glass painting guides the handsome Cedric Diggory to understand his clue for the second task of the Triwizard Tournament.

# PERCY JACKSON AND THE SEA OF MONSTERS



*Vulture* bodies, *human* faces

Face shift to people you *know & trust*

Reveal *fatal flaws & wisdom*

Ugly but *captivating*

Irresistible voices *lure* sailors to death

Mouths *greasy* with the last meal



# *H2O: Just Add Water*

A mermaid can turn into a *siren* through a moon spell



Enchanted songs exclusive to *women*

The ability is *inherent*

Puts men into a hypnotic and lustful *trance*; they cannot resist temptation

# MARVEL'S VENUS (SIREN)



Originally, she had used her beauty and voice to *seduce* men to their *deaths*, but later, Venus' soul was **TRANSFORMED** into one as *beautiful* as her body.

She repressed the horrifying memories of killing sailors and turned herself into the goddess **VENUS**, who had the power of

*love*

# SIRENS IN

## ***HORROR MOVIES***

And aquatic nymphs, sirens, etc.





# Lake Of The Dead (2018)

She is an *evil temptress*, able to *deceive* men into believing she is a beautiful woman.

When her true nature is revealed, it is too late for the men to escape.



She is *possessive* and *jealous*, causing her to not only haunt the men that reject her, but kill their love interests as well.

## *The Lure (2015)*

One mermaid falls in love with a human who does not love her back, causing her death. Her sister avenges her death by murdering the man.



## *Siren (2016)*

A group of grooms and the groom are lured into releasing a seemingly imprisoned dancer at a night club only to realize the siren's monstrous capabilities.



Through the various plots of siren horror movies, sirens retain the mysterious, luring, violent, and deceitful characters.

# SIREN MUSIC







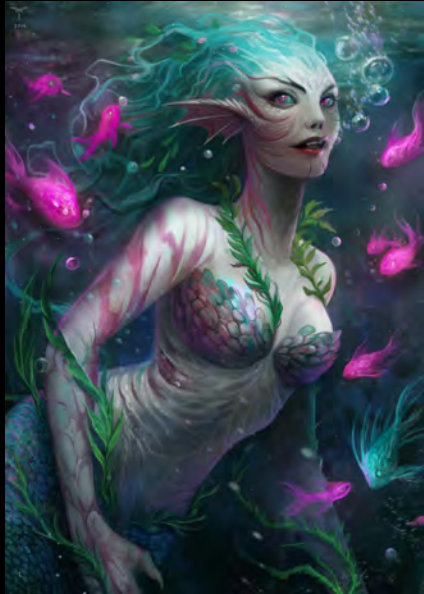
“ Siren song describes something that is very *appealing and alluring* on the surface but ultimately **DECEPTIVE, DANGEROUS, OR DESTRUCTIVE** ”

—DICTIONARY.COM



# “SIREN SONG”

BY MARGARET ATWOOD



This is the one song everyone  
would like to learn: the song  
that is *irresistible*:

the song that *forces* men  
to leap overboard in squadrons  
even though they see the beached skulls

the song nobody knows  
because anyone who has heard it  
is **DEAD**, and the others can't remember.

Shall I tell you the secret  
and if I do, will you get me  
out of this bird suit?

I don't enjoy it here  
squatting on this island  
looking picturesque and mythical

with these two feathery maniacs,  
I don't enjoy singing  
this trio, fatal and valuable.

I will tell the secret to you,  
to you, only to you.  
Come closer. This song

is a *cry for help*: Help me!  
Only you, only you can,  
you are unique

at last. Alas  
it is a boring song  
but it works every time.



# “SIREN SONG” ANALYSIS

The siren is a **DECEITFUL LIAR**



She's a bird-human hybrid that pretends to hate the fact that her "irresistible" song lures men to their deaths

She convinces men to come save her and learn the secret of the song


Her pleaful song brings the lustful men to their deaths

# · WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? ·

Women are shown to be confident and beautiful temptresses in nature

**WOMEN'S  
CONFIDENCE**

THE  
PERPETUALIZATION OF  
RAPE CULTURE  
THROUGH THE  
DEPICTION OF SIRENS



THE  
PERPETUALIZATION OF  
RAPE CULTURE  
THROUGH THE  
DEPICTION OF SIRENS

**THE  
SEXUALIZATION OF  
WOMEN BY MEN**

Men perceive the women as sexual, and are shown to be victims of the women's sexuality

■ HOW SO?

WELL...



When the idea that women's confidence and beauty automatically entails that she wants to attract men is normalized in the media, men internalize this thought and see all confident, beautiful women as threatening sexual objects



When these confident women refuse to lure these men by means of their beauty with sex, men are more likely to do as they please with the woman under the guise that they are the victims of temptation because they believe all beautiful women want to attract men, but some are harder to get



# **GENDER SHIFT** in the Media's Depictions of Sea Creatures



# · *Disney Pixar's* **LUCA** ·



Mercreatures are seen as **GOOD**, and merge the worlds between sea and land



As the media increases its depiction of mercreatures, the sexualization of women has **decreased** and **more** men have become included

# · Disney's *THE LITTLE MERMAID* ·



Men like King Triton are shown to have direct power and control over women's actions, rather than being shown to be victims of the female allure



While this does not *directly* perpetuate the *sexualization of women* or the *victimization of men*, this does reinforce the idea that men can control a woman's sexuality



**“ NOW THE SIRENS HAVE A STILL MORE FATAL WEAPON THAN THEIR  
SONG, NAMELY THEIR SILENCE... SOMEONE MIGHT POSSIBLY HAVE  
ESCAPED FROM THEIR SINGING; BUT FROM THEIR SILENCE,  
CERTAINLY NEVER. ”**

**- Franz Kafka,  
The Silence of the Sirens**

