**Circe**

**By Madeline Miller**

**About the Book**

In the house of Helios, god of the sun and mightiest of the Titans, a daughter is born. But Circe is a strange child--not powerful, like her father, nor viciously alluring like her mother. Turning to the world of mortals for companionship, she discovers that she does possess power--the power of witchcraft, which can transform rivals into monsters and menace the gods themselves.

Threatened, Zeus banishes her to a deserted island, where she hones her occult craft, tames wild beasts and crosses paths with many of the most famous figures in all of mythology, including the Minotaur, Daedalus and his doomed son Icarus, the murderous Medea, and, of course, wily Odysseus.

But there is danger, too, for a woman who stands alone, and Circe unwittingly draws the wrath of both men and gods, ultimately finding herself pitted against one of the most terrifying and vengeful of the Olympians. To protect what she loves most, Circe must summon all her strength and choose, once and for all, whether she belongs with the gods she is born from, or the mortals she has come to love.

With unforgettably vivid characters, mesmerizing language and page-turning suspense, Circe is a triumph of storytelling, an intoxicating epic of family rivalry, palace intrigue, love and loss, as well as a celebration of indomitable female strength in a man's world.

**About the Author**:

Madeline Miller was born in Boston and grew up in New York City and Philadelphia. She attended Brown University, where she earned her BA and MA in Classics. For the last ten years she has been teaching and tutoring Latin, Greek and Shakespeare to high school students. She also studied in the Dramaturgy department at Yale School of Drama, where she focused on the adaptation of classical texts to modern forms. She currently lives near Philadelphia, PA. The Song of Achilles is her first novel. Her second novel, Circe, will be published in April 2018. Visit her website at: www.madelinemiller.com

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**Discussion Questions**

1. Circe struggles to find a place for herself as a woman in a man’s world. What parts of her experience resonate with modern day challenges that women face?
2. A central theme of Homer’s Odyssey is a longing for “nostos”—homecoming. In what way does that theme resonate with Circe’s story?
3. Throughout the novel Circe draws distinctions between gods and mortals.  How does Glaucus change when he becomes a god?
4. Circe wonders if parents can ever see their children clearly. She notes that so often when looking at our children “we see only the mirror of our own faults.” What parts of herself does she see when she looks at Telegonus? What are her strengths and weaknesses as a parent to him?
5. Circe’s sister Pasiphaë begins the novel as a major antagonist. How does our perspective of her change after Circe’s visit to Crete?
6. Circe begins the novel feeling very close to her brother Aeëtes. Why do their paths diverge so wildly? Why do you think he make the choices he does?
7. Circe tells us that she recognizes parts of herself in Medea. In what ways are the two women similar? In what ways are they different?
8. Circe says to Telemachus “Do not try to take my regret from me.” What does she mean by that? What role does regret play in the novel?
9. Circe says that when she first meets Odysseus he seems “nearly familiar” to her. Why does she say that? Who, if anyone, does he remind her of?
10. There are numerous references to crafts in the novel, including weaving, carpentry and metal-working. What role does craft play in Circe’s story?
11. Circe encounters several famous figures from Greek myth. Were any of their portrayals surprising?
12. How does Circe’s relationship with her father change over the course of the book? What do you make of their final conversation?
13. Circe’s gift is transformation. How does she transform from the beginning of the novel to the end? Why does she ultimately choose the path she does?