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LoveReading Reader reviews of **For the Most Beautiful** By Emily Hauser



Doubleday

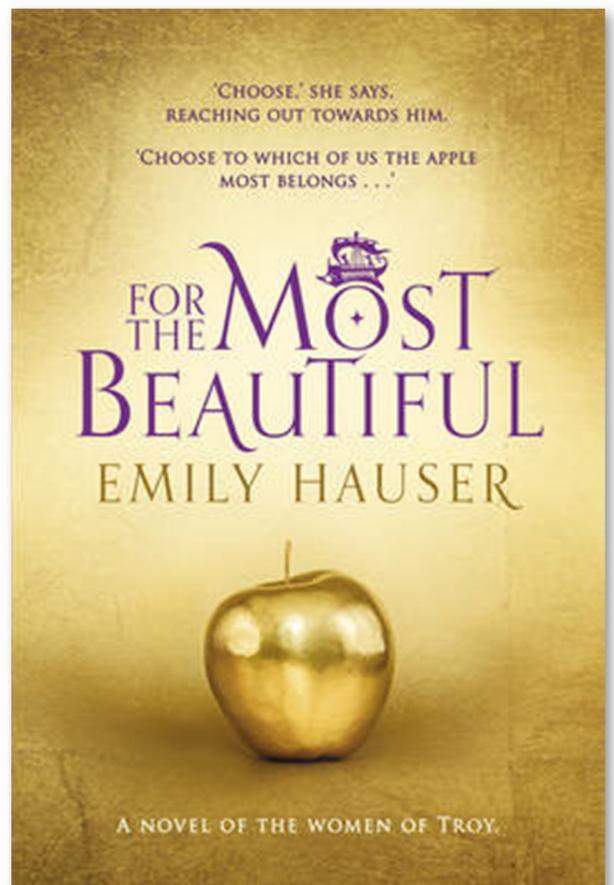
Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

Catherine Bryce

This is a sheer delight to read - Greek mythology and Greek Gods. I read it in two sittings and wow!!

Truly delightful as this is a book which takes you into an era of Greek gods and Greek mythology and is an enchanting story similar to Homers 'Illiad' but with a slight change as it is written from two female points of view – Briseis and Krisayis.

The author has written in such a way that takes your attention and imagination to Troy and tells the story in an enlightened manner. Emily Hauser has completed her research to a deep level and her knowledge of Greek mythology flows throughout the book. This novel is a lighter version of the Homers work and readers do not require a knowledge of this to follow the story as it unfolds in the book. This different perspective allows the reader to enjoy the story as it is written in an enjoyable modern day fashion that will appeal to readers from many genres. It is not a heavy book to read and is most enjoyable as it looks upon Grecian life from a different angle and allows the reader to step into the story which adds to the books enjoyment. A boring history story this book definitely is not.



'For The Most Beautiful' is the first of three novels leading to the 'Golden Apple' trilogy and these are books that I am really looking forward to reading.

Karen Swanscott

A beautifully written and enchanting reimagining of Homer's 'The Iliad'. Emily Hauser opens up this story to a whole new generation from a fresh and unique perspective.

Emily Hauser has reimagined Homer's 'The Iliad' into a story that will bring the Greek classic to a whole new generation. The story is of course the legendary fall of the city of Troy, a doom brought down on them by Prince Paris taking Helen back with him from Sparta. The Face who launched a thousand ships, the title could well have been set to describe her. I was glad to find however that this was not the case. The story although written from a female perspective, giving a fresh new outlook, is instead narrated by two central but often overlooked characters. This is essentially the story of Krisayis the daughter of Troy's high priest and Briseis the Princess of Pedasus. It is the fact that our narrators are the women striving to survive, love and protect in a time of war that makes this story so enchanting and fresh. The story does however have some issues. Especially if you have any fixation on the original. The gods in particular seemed very over done, and I felt their parts of the book added little and some characters have been altered. This aside the tale breathes new life into a classic and was a delight to read. I shall most certainly be looking for her following novels.

Tracey Thomas

*When I applied to review this book I was not sure if I would enjoy it, don't get me wrong I love history and especially good historical dramas as TVs show or movies but I have found them hard to read. Then this beautiful book arrived in the post, a lovely hardback no less. So **I started with some trepidation and ended staying up half the night to finish.***

It was a well written easy read by a debut author who you can tell is enamoured with the tale of the Iliad and it shows. Great characters that you grow to know and root for, even if you know how it ends.

A fabulous use of history that made you put the book down to look up facts, places and pictures featured in the story.

I will most definitely be looking forward to the second part of this beautiful trilogy.

Alison Layland

An inventive, well-researched retelling of the events of the Iliad.

This is a retelling of the Trojan War from the point of view of two minor female characters from Homer's Iliad. The story of Troy is all about heroes, gods and battles, right? Not here. Emily Hauser takes two female characters who are instrumental to the events but only minor characters in the Iliad, and not only imagines and tells their stories, but uses them to bring added depth and emotion to more familiar characters and events. It is an inventive and well-researched novel that vividly brings to life the sights, sounds and smells of the period. It has interesting characters, well-described locations and fascinating details that add plenty of colour without bogging down the narrative.

An added dimension is provided by humorous interludes with the capricious gods on Mount Ida, whose petty rivalries determine the fate of the mortals. This reflects the attitudes of Homer's time, but I didn't really find the tone of these convincing and I would have preferred to stay with the women's stories, where the chapter-by-chapter alternation of their voices drove the story in a retelling that sheds an interesting new light on the events told in The Iliad.

Jo-anne Atkinson

A lovely re-imagination of the world of the Iliad told from the perspective of the hidden voices, the women.

The gods sit atop the great mountain and direct the fates of mortals on Earth below. They have their favourites and their rivalry is a game of entertainment. Meanwhile on Earth the mortals have to suffer the capricious choices of their Gods as played out with their lives. As his reward for favouring Aphrodite above other goddesses Paris has stolen the most beautiful woman in Greece as his bride, unfortunately Helen was married and now her husband and his allies are coming to Troy seeking revenge. Krisayis is the daughter of a priest and companion to the Trojan princess but when her lover is killed by the Greeks, Krisayis realises that her loyalty lies to her people and her city. Briseis is a princess newly married and newly widowed, as a slave she understands the power of love and honour.

*Emily Hauser has taken a well-known story and created something new in this novel. A modern interpretation which takes the best aspects of historical and women's fiction but underlies them with a strong core of learning and knowledge. Whilst occasionally seeming light and superficial there are deep meaning cutting below the simple story - feminism, honour, love and strength. **This is a really enjoyable read and the debut of an interesting new voice.***

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Cathy Small

*We all know the story of Troy and Achilles but **Emily brings this story to life as we see the viewpoint from the gods and the mortals. It is a story full of love, deception and war.***

Emily brings her story through two key characters from the Trojans who start as young girls but work to bring about the safety of the people that they love. We see the history played out from the gods and the battle amongst themselves whilst they play with their toys, the Greeks and the Trojans. However we also follow the lives of both Krisayis and Briseis as they are faced with their fates and the decisions of the gods but they try to battle in their own opinions and paths in life and love. These girls' paths cross in trying to save their city of Troy and whilst they have their own agenda it does start to bring about the fall of Achilles and his Greek army. Emily brings the history book into an enjoyable and fascinating view of the story that we all think we know so well.

Jennifer Moville

This is a tale of the Trojan wars - as told by the women of Troy - Briseis and Krisayis.

Briseis is chosen to be the bride of Prince Mynes whilst Krisayis is told she is to devote her life to being a priestess - against her will.

The twists and turns as the war unfolds are also lived by secondary characters, Achilles, Paris, Helen and Hector.

I found this story started with the main characters, slipped into the lives of the secondary people and then took an age to revert back to the story as being told by Briseis and Krisayis. It was almost as if this book could really have been two.

I enjoyed knowing some of the Greek history and mythology but this book rather left me confused.

Glenda Worth

'For the most beautiful' by Emily Hauser, is full of Greek legends and tells the stories of the battle of the Trojan War. A novel which tells of the story of 'Krisayis, daughter of the Trojans high priest, and Briseis princess of Pedasus. Both girls fight to determine the fate of their city whilst the mischievous Greek gods do their utmost to upset things.

*Full of Greek legends and characters, the book took a little getting into, but once familiar with the characters of both the Greek gods and the individuals involved in the battle of the Trojan War **I was pleasantly surprised as this is not usually the genre that I read, and I will be looking out for other books by this author.***

Sharon Lowe

Interesting, enjoyable, factual. The first of a trilogy from Emily Hauser that brings to life the ancient gods. Looking forward to the others in the series.

I found this highly enjoyable as the author as she put flesh on the characters, even the gods, in a way that you can see them in your mind's eye, you feel that you are there with them enjoying the love, fighting the battles, for some who hasn't read much about the ancient gods. I found it fascinating and enjoyable wanting to learn more, I am looking forward to the rest of the trilogy, ready to be transported back to the ancients.

Sarah Hamid

A captivating, original retelling of the story of the Trojan War - with a beautiful dustcover!

The two main characters in this story are both women - a priest's daughter and a princess. Unusually, they both tell their stories in the first person. To start with, I found this confusing and had to refer to the inside of the (beautiful) dustcover to remind myself of who was who. Also, I didn't find their names easy to pronounce in my head.

However, once I got over this hurdle I really began to enjoy the story. The writing style is easy to read, though it tended to be rather melodramatic.

I particularly liked the chapters which describe the Greek Gods looking down from the clouds and sometimes descending on Earth. Their heartless meddling and endless bickering was amusing and entertaining. I imagine the author enjoyed writing these chapters.

For a book about war, it wasn't gory or laboured, which made it possible to read in bed. The information at the back was interesting and helpful - the author clearly knows her stuff. After finishing this, I was tempted to re-read one of my favourite childhood books of Greek myths.

I will definitely be looking out for the second and third instalments of this trilogy.

Oh - and the dustcover of the hardback copy is sumptuous - all gold and purple! Lovely!

Edel Waugh

For anyone familiar with their Greek mythology/ history from school this new take on this familiar story was very enjoyable. Many Greek gods and goddesses

are mentioned here and at the centre of the story is the women of Troy. Part coming of age story, part war, it is fascinating with a mystical element to the story that was very enjoyable. **A story about Gods and mortals is always going to make an interesting story and this one did not disappoint.** The time and setting of the story has a real escapist feel to it and these women made great female characters as their bravery was commendable even when they met with tragedy and heartbreak but kept their dignity. I recommend this for all fans of Greek legends.

Lisa Redmond

Emily Hauser's debut novel is a brilliant retelling of 'The Iliad' from the point of view of Krisayis and Briseis who though central to the original story never get a chance to speak for themselves. The book is **a wonderful story of love, loyalty and war. I really enjoyed revisiting this classic work and seeing the fresh perspective that the author presents.** This is a real page turner with the Gods dabbling in the lives of mortals like a game and the mortal characters straining against their fate. This was an enthralling read with great detail about everyday life in Troy, and though the research is thorough the detail is never laboured. I especially loved Krisayis and her determination to fight for her city and her people. The characters are brilliantly brought to life and the action and storytelling is fast paced and clever. I highly recommend this book.