

Love's Memory: Eurydice and Orpheus

by Tom Smith

CHARACTERS: Eurydice, 18
Ophelia, 21, Eurydice's sister
Sophia, 20, friend
Hypatia, 20, friend
Isodora, 18, friend
Zoe, 18, friend
Maia, late 30s
Persephone, ageless, goddess of the Underworld

Orpheus, 22, prince of Thrace
Aristaeus, 25, a member of the Argonauts
Philandros, 20, a member of the Argonauts

Note: Isodora, Zoe, Sophia and/or Hypatia may be doubled with Maia and Persephone

TIME/PLACE: Act One: Ancient Greece, the woods outside of Thrace
Act Two: Months later, the Underworld

RUNNING TIME: 100 minutes

Ophelia, her sister Eurydice, and four friends set up camp to study for a period of two years. Soon after, Orpheus, prince of Thrace, returns home after fighting alongside Argonauts accompanied by two soldiers, Aristaeus and Philandros. The men encounter the women and agree to assist in their studies.

Ophelia and Eurydice, having grown up with Orpheus, ask him to teach music since he is a demi-god blessed with special musical abilities. During the lesson, Ophelia declares her love for Orpheus, who does not respond in kind. Her sister Eurydice, a girl when Orpheus left, is now a woman and the two find they have instant chemistry. Eurydice rushes off to find Ophelia.

Eurydice and Ophelia are attacked by Echidna, half-woman and half-serpent, but are saved by Orpheus. At a party celebrating this, Orpheus announces his love for Eurydice. Ophelia agrees to the match, though is deeply heartbroken. Later that evening, Aristaeus, drunk and jealous of Orpheus's abilities and reputation, attacks Eurydice, who runs away. She is attacked once more by Echidna and dies. Orpheus discovers her death the next morning, along with Ophelia's, who hung herself in grief. In anguish, Orpheus unleashes his power and the world seemingly disappears.

Eurydice finds herself in the Underworld, looked after by her sister, Ophelia, and Maia, an older woman with a hidden past. Inhabitants slowly lose their memory in the Underworld, and Ophelia struggles to help Eurydice retain hers. Suddenly, a door appears and Orpheus arrives, having fought his way to retrieve Eurydice, yet losing his memory of her. Persephone, queen of the Underworld, hears of Orpheus' arrival and banishes him. After much argument and a test, Persephone allows Orpheus to lead Eurydice back to the world of the living, as long as he does not look at her on the journey. Not hearing a single sound, Orpheus grows suspicious and looks back, banishing Eurydice to the Underworld forever. Days later, Eurydice sits in the Underworld, her memory of Orpheus completely gone, when Orpheus arrives, having killed himself to rejoin his love. Orpheus and Eurydice, not remembering each other, exchange pleasantries as he walks away forever...