

## The Story of Proserpine

### Summary of the story:

Ceres, the goddess of crops, plants and trees, lived with her daughter Proserpine in the beautiful island of Sicily. Ceres cared as deeply for her daughter as she did for the earth. Proserpine was the brightest and loveliest of all girls, so everybody said that she was the spring. One day Pluto, the king of land of the dead, came to earth and saw Proserpine behind the bushes. Pluto, attracted by Proserpine's natural beauty took away the beautiful maiden to his underground kingdom to make her his queen. Not finding her daughter anywhere Ceres neglected all her work on earth and as a result crops failed everywhere. The nymph of the fountain informed the grieving mother about her daughter's whereabouts. So Ceres visited Jupiter, the king of the gods and sought his help to get back her daughter. Jupiter told her that Proserpine might return if she had not tasted anything in the land of the dead. But Proserpine had eaten six pomegranate seeds, so she must be there for six months every year in the realm of the dead. So, when she came to the earth for six months the earth smiled, but when she joined Pluto for six months the earth became sad and gloomy.

### Meanings of Difficult Words:

- **Blossoms** - Flowers
- **Radiant** - Shining
- **Lonely** - Without any partner in life
- **Frightened** - Scared
- **Girdle** - Belt or waistband
- **Captive** – Confined or caged
- **Plunged** – Dived
- **Trace** – Discover or find
- **Barren** – Infertile
- **Broke out** – Spread
- **Implored** – Begged someone earnestly
- **Ceaseless** – Continuous
- **Descended** – Came down
- **Pomegranate** – A type of fruit with many seeds
- **Destined** – Fixed before hand

### Important Questions and Answers:

1. **Who was Ceres?**

Ans: Ceres was the Greek goddess of earth's fertility and harvest.

2. **What depended on Ceres?**

Ans: The health and happiness of the people of the earth depended on Ceres.

3. **Why did everyone say that Proserpine was the spring?**

Ans: Everyone said that Proserpine was the spring because she was as beautiful as the spring.

4. **Why did Pluto carry away Proserpine?**

Ans: Pluto carried away Proserpine because he knew that proposing her to be his queen would be useless.

5. **Briefly narrate what the nymph of the fountain told Ceres.**

Ans: The nymph of the fountain told Ceres that she lived in the dark depths of the earth and she had seen Proserpine on the throne of Pluto's kingdom and her cheeks were pale and eyes were heavy with weeping.

6. **What was the destiny of Proserpine?**

Ans: Proserpine was destined to spend six months every year in Pluto's underworld and the remaining six months on earth with her mother.

**Homework**

**Answer the following questions: (to be done in your classwork copy)**

1. Describe the beauty of Proserpine.
2. Why did Pluto lead a lonely life?
3. Why did Ceres feel sad in the morning?
4. Who was the king of gods?
5. What did Jupiter say to Ceres?
6. Why was Proserpine bound to live for six months in the underground kingdom?

**Note:**

- Drop your queries regarding the chapter in comment box, if any.
- Mention your NAME, CLASS, SEC, ROLL NO.
- Provide your CONTACT NO. (we shall directly contact you if required).