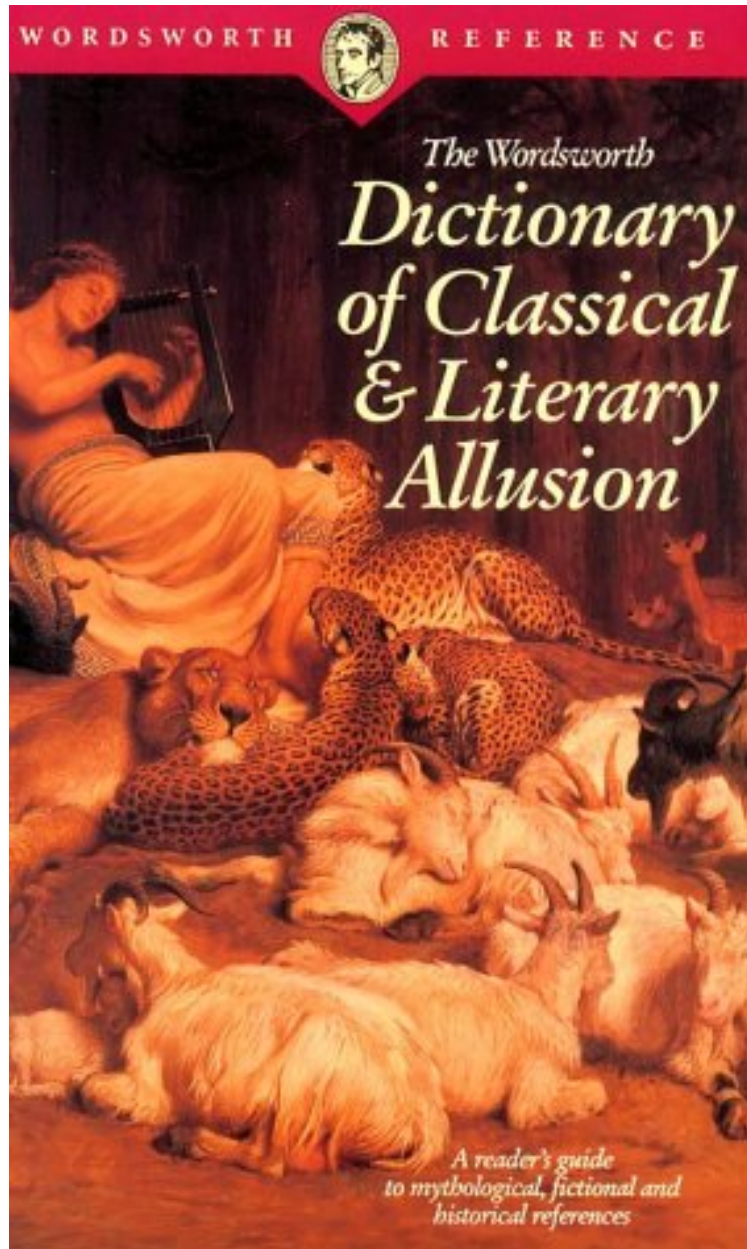


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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wordsworth

Dictionary of Classical Literary Allusion (Wordsworth Reference):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. inadequateBy CaraculiambroFrankly, I love this book. It's highly readable and neither too insulting or too abstruse. In fact I read the entire thing through on the john. Very fun to flip through, perhaps because it flatters me that I already know most of this stuff!Hard to recommend it to others, though: it's very short (about 230 pp.) and superficial. Most of the entries are well-known in the first place to the kind of person likely to pick something like this up in the first place. If you've got an obscure allusion on your hands, this book is unlikely to help. It heavily emphasizes, for example, Dickens and Gilbert Sullivan.Much more comprehensive is the dauntingly exhaustive 700+ page Lempriere's Classical Dictionary, which, at least as of my writing, can beat the pants even off the redoubtable Wikipedia! (I don't know how much longer that's going to be the case, though). It's got an incredibly small typeface: it's hard to browse through. It's also ancient world only. But here's an example of the kind of recondite entry you're gonna see in Lempriere:DADUCHUS: A minister of Ceres, who, at the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries, carried a horn, whence the name. (p. 213)Now there's a book that doesn't flatter anybody! Meanwhile, here's a typical entry in the comparatively airheaded Wordsworth:MERLIN: Legendary magician, enchanter and wise man in Arthurian legend and romance of the Middle Ages. Some legends depict him as demonic; others as a wise and good counselor. He is currently associated primarily with magic. See also: ARTHUR. (p. 145)Get the idea?

This dictionary contains 1300 entries arranged alphabetically and carefully cross-referenced for ease of use and to lead the reader to related terms. The original meaning of each allusion is clearly defined, as are the historical sources.