

The Demigod Diaries Study Guide

The Demigod Diaries by Rick Riordan

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Plot Summary

“The Demigod Diaries” by Rick Riordan is a book of demigod adventures that features four main stories. In the first story, “The Diary of Luke Castellan”, Luke and his fellow demigod Thalia are first seen following a magic goat called Amaltheia across Virginia. Thalia is the demigod daughter of Zeus. She doesn’t have much contact with her father but she is certain that he sent the goat to take her on this mission. The goat leads them to a rundown house in Richmond Virginia and then disappears in a mist. They enter the large house which was obviously once a grand residence but has been abandoned and is in disrepair. The demigods see pairs of eerie red eyes staring at them from the dark. Then they hear a man’s voice calling to them. They discover that a fellow demigod, Halcyon Green, demigod of Apollo and a rather old man compared to them, has been imprisoned in the house and needs their help to escape. They have to deal with the deadly creatures that keep Halcyon trapped in the house and they have to figure a way out to save their own lives.

In “Percy Jackson and the Staff of Hermes”, the demigod Percy Jackson, son of Poseidon, and his demigod girlfriend, Annabeth, daughter of Athena, are summoned by Hermes, Messenger of the Gods and the God of Travel, who has lost his staff – the Staff of Asclepius. Hermes is not able to function without the staff and the gods will not be able to communicate which will leave them vulnerable to their enemies. Percy and Annabeth have to deal with a “small” giant who is a thief and the guilty party. He lives below Manhattan in the sewer system and is not inclined to return the staff to Hermes. Percy has to resort to his powers over water to finally triumph over the thieving giant.

“Leo Valdez and the Quest for Buford” is a hair-raising tale about an errant table that ran off with a device in its drawers that can save Camp Half-Blood. If the device is not found in sixty minutes, the Argo II, the flying ship that Leo is building will explode. The demigods Leo, Piper and Jason must follow the table tracks to find the table. But during their pursuit they have to fight off a dangerous gang of Maenads, followers of Dionysus, who are determined to kill them. In the end, it takes the brilliant inventiveness to trap the Maenads and render them harmless, get the table back, install the missing device in the Argo II and save the day.

“Son of Magic” is written by Haley Riordan who is Rick Riordan’s son and was 16-years-old when he wrote the book. Alabaster, the demigod son of Hecate, is being chased by his mad and mendacious sister, Lamia. She is determined to kill all the demigods because Hera promised to return her dead children to life once all the demigods were destroyed. Alabaster is at a loss on how to deal with Lamia who, as a minor goddess, cannot die, so he recruits the smartest mortal on earth to help him. Dr. Claymore was an expert on death and didn’t believe in the afterworld – that is, until he met Alabaster and his crazy sister, Lamia and was able to get a taste of the underworld and the immortality of the gods.



The Diary of Luke Castellan (Pages 7 - 26)

Summary

While guarding the camp, Luke Castellan was making an entry into his diary about something that happened to him – something horrific. For the previous three days, Luke and Thalia had been following a goat across Virginia. The goat didn't appear special to Luke – other than the annoying fact that it would randomly disappear and reappear again – but Thalia swore it was an omen from her father, Zeus. Their trek was wrought with danger because as demigods, they were the targets of gorgons, the Furies and harpies who could sniff out heroes like them miles away.

The goat had disappeared for a while until they found it again in Richmond grazing on the grass under a city monument of Robert E. Lee. Thalia pulled Luke behind some rosebushes and told him to hide. The goat was a sacred animal of Zeus. Her name was Amaltheia. Thalia told Luke that when she ran away from home in Los Angeles, the goat had led her to him. Thalia's mother had fallen in love with Zeus who later dumped her. Her mother went off the deep end and began drinking. That was when Thalia decided to take off.

Thalia was sure that something was about to happen since Amaltheia had reappeared in her life. As Luke looked more closely at the goat, he saw that she was strange looking. There was a kind of gauzy glow around her. Thalia wanted to talk to Amaltheia which Luke thought was a little strange. But he'd support her because she was his only friend. He'd made a few mortal friends but when he told them of his true identity – that he was the son of Hermes, the immortal messenger, and that Greek gods were real and existed in the modern world – that was usually the end of the friendship.

When Thalia asked Amaltheia if her father had sent her, she looked up at the image of Robert E. Lee. Suddenly Lee's arm moved and pointed to the rundown house across the street. A mist formed around Amaltheia and when it cleared she was gone. Thalia knocked on the door but there was no response. She asked Luke to do his thing. He was the son of Hermes who was the messenger of the gods but was also the god of thieves. Thalia wanted him to break in. He was able to concentrate and will the door to unlock.

They entered the house that exuded a terrible odor and glowed with a sickly yellow sheen. The house that was probably once a grand mansion was now in disarray. As Thalia drew her spear and Luke drew his golf club (his sword had been melted down in acid sometime before), the door slammed behind them. Even with his special powers, Luke couldn't reopen the door. They were trapped. When Thalia ran to the windows and tried to pull the heavy black drapes back, the drapes twisted around her arms and



turned into an oily sludge that oozed up her arms and covered her spear. Luke was able to beat the drapes back with his golf club.

Thalia's arms were blistered and steaming. Luke quickly grabbed his vial of the nectar of the gods and poured some on Thalia's injuries. Immediately, her blisters disappeared and her arms began to heal. They saw several pairs of red glowing eyes down a dark hallway and heard a few growls. They decided that that it was best to ascend the staircase. A man's voice called out to them to hurry. The glowing red eyes advanced upon them from every direction. Luke grabbed Thalia's hand and bolted up the stairs.

Upstairs they ran down a dark hall, jumping over a pile of human bones. The voice urged them on. They heard the voices of the monsters behind them mimicking the man's voice. But the man's voice sounded real. They felt he was in trouble and that they had to help him. They reached a door that opened when they stood before it. When they entered the door slammed behind him. They could hear the frustrated growls of the monsters that had been pursuing them just beyond the door.

The man who had been calling to them was old and gaunt. He was dressed all in snakeskin. The room was in better shape than the rest of the house and it was set up like a small apartment. One eerie thing was a caged area off to the side where a creature with the body of a lion and hooves of a horse paced. Its face was a blend of wolf and horse. It had glowing red eyes. It was apparently the same type of monster that had been chasing them. Thalia asked the man who he was and what the thing in the cage was. When he answered, the voice came from the monster who told the demigods that he was Halcyon Green and that they had been lured there and would die.

Still speaking through the monster, Halcyon told the demigods that the creature was a leucrota which had the ability to imitate human voices. That was how it lured them into the room. Halcyon was the son of Apollo. The young demigods were shocked to learn that the old man was also a demigod. Halcyon had the gift of seeing the future because his father was the god of oracles. He was warned by his father not to use his gift but he disobeyed him and was banished to this prison-room from which he could not escape. He was also forced to wear the skin of Python who once guarded the Oracle of Delphi to remind him that he was not an oracle. He'd been there for decades. The gods sent the leucrotae to guard him. These monsters could not only mimic his speech, they could anticipate his words.

Luke told Halcyon to fight the curse and that they'd help him. He told them that other demigods had tried to free him but all had failed. The door was locked and could not be reopened. Fighting the monsters was hopeless. They were immune to injury from metal weapons. To demonstrate, the old man plunged his Celestial dagger into the monster's head. Normally such a weapon would dissolve the enemy but the leucrota deflected it unharmed.



Analysis

The demigods Luke and Thalia have a friendship based on their similar background with dysfunctional families. Thalia ran away from home after her mother went off the deep end when Zeus dumped her. Her mother had fallen in love with the god but as gods often did, he deserted her and left her with a child to raise alone. Although Luke has yet to reveal the specific problems in his childhood home, he stated that he could relate to Thalia. The fact that he ran away at nine years of age and had been living on the street for the past five years points to a very unhappy home life. Since the gods are known to leave their mortal “families” Luke is undoubtedly a victim of that abandonment. He has had nothing to do with his own father who is Hermes, the messenger of the gods.

Luke has made very few friends among the mortals and has not encountered many demigods. Whenever he befriends a mortal, the relationship ends as soon as he reveals his true identity. Thalia is Luke’s only friend which is why he agrees to accompany her on this adventure. She is certain that Zeus, her father, has sent the magic goat to lead her somewhere. While Luke thinks it’s Thalia’s caprice, he shows his loyalty to his friend by agreeing to go with her. She rescued him in the past and he owes it to her as a friend.

The character Halcyon Green, who is also a demigod, has suffered from the venom of the gods for failing to obey his father, Apollo. He has the gift of foresight but was told not to speak about his premonitions. When he decided to warn someone about the danger he saw, he was placed in a prison-like room for eternity. These gods are vengeful gods and their orders apparently are not up for debate. Halcyon tells the demigods that they are locked in the room and can’t escape the creatures. But Luke is the son of Hermes who is the god of thieves. Perhaps Luke will be able to devise an escape plan.

Discussion Question 1

Why did Thalia run away from home?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Halcyon speak through the creature?

Discussion Question 3

Why was Halcyon doomed to his jail-like room for eternity?



Vocabulary

furies, gorgons, harpies, curlicue, radioactive, camouflage, commando, automaton, dilapidated, dissipated, gaunt, brandished, homicidal, oracle



The Diary of Luke Castellan (Pages 27 - 61)

Summary

Halcyon explained that the creatures lured Luke and Thalia there to ease his loneliness and to subsist on any rations they brought with them. He had to cooperate with the creatures or else he would starve. Halcyon gave them the bad news that when it was eating time at sunset, the creatures, who are remarkably strong and can't be fooled, would drag them out and kill them. The demigods would be dinner.

Halcyon had a laptop and began using it to communicate with Luke and Thalia so the monsters couldn't hear their conversation. He typed that the other demigods hadn't been led their by the goat, they had come seeking the treasure. Thalia exclaimed that the treasure must have been why Zeus sent her there. He took them to the closet that contained the discarded weapons and equipment of demigods who had come before them along with a treasure trove of gold and diamonds. He pointed to a floor safe that he couldn't open. Luke concentrated on it and determined that there was a curse on the handle and a poison canister that would open if anyone got past the handle. But Thalia wanted him to try to open it. Luke just couldn't say no to Thalia. He focused on the safe and was able to circumvent the curse and disable to poison trap.

Thalia reached in and pulled out a silver bracelet and latched it around her wrist. Halcyon was jubilant. He ran to his computer and typed a message that Apollo told him the curse would end when the owner of the bracelet claimed it. But Thalia was confused. It wasn't her bracelet. She tapped on it and called out Zeus' name. Nothing happened and Halcyon still couldn't speak – so had the curse really been lifted? The apartment door would not open, the windows were guarded by venomous drapes, the panel that allowed the creatures in and out of the cell was obviously not a viable escape route and metal weapons were useless against the creatures. Luke decided that they needed to create a different kind of weapon. Luke looked up the creatures and Greek weapons on Halcyon's computer but nothing was of any help. Luke searched the Internet all afternoon with no results. Time was running out for them.

Halcyon decided to disobey the gods again and looked into the future. He saw a connection between Thalia and the goat, Amaltheia, that had nursed Zeus when he was a babe. He later slew her and made her hide into his shield the Aegis. Athena placed the head of Medusa on the front of the shield and covered it in Celestial bronze. The old man prophesied that Thalia would survive the day. For Luke he saw fire, a sacrifice and a betrayal.

Luke searched the Internet for Greek fire. Without good results, he resorted to the many books that Halcyon had in his apartment-prison. All three demigods pored over the books. Finally, Luke found a recipe for Greek fire. From the discarded weapons and



equipment of other demigods, Luke knew that they had everything they needed to make the fire. But they were missing a catalyst – they needed lightning. That was Thalia's department – she could summon lightning from Zeus. Halcyon typed that Greek fire was extremely dangerous. Luke was aware that it was a magical fire. It could not be put out with water or an extinguisher. It burned whatever it touched. Halcyon agreed that the fire could destroy the monsters but it would turn the room into an inferno.

They decided to make the fire because there were no other options. As he mixed the ingredients, he hoped that perhaps Hermes was watching over him. Luke encased the ingredients in a glass jar which should keep it safe until they break it to create the explosion of fire. Halcyon pulled Luke aside and gave him his diary so Luke could learn from Halcyon's mistakes. Halcyon also gave Luke his Celestial dagger so he could protect himself. It was obvious that Halcyon didn't think he'd make it out. Halcyon would stay behind and set off the explosion while Luke and Thalia escaped. Luke rejected the idea initially but Halcyon could not be moved. In the meantime, Thalia was able to summon lightning through Halcyon's laptop.

It was supper time and the bars began to raise on the cell as the leucrotae growled and clacked their jaws, preparing to kill their dinner. Halcyon took the jar and Thalia and Luke hid in the closet. While Halcyon distracted the creatures and led them to the bathroom, Luke and Thalia rushed out through the open panel in the back of the cage. A leucrota jumped on Luke, but Thalia was able to pull him through the panel just before it closed. They scrambled for the door as they heard the huge explosion.

The fire incinerated everything in its path. One of the leucrotae was able to escape the fire and was pursuing them as they ran for the front door. It pounced on Luke who suddenly remembered that the name of Zeus' shield was Aegis and it was probably the code word for the bracelet. Thalia tapped the bracelet and yelled, "Aegis!" The bracelet expanded and flattened into a huge bronze disc with Medusa as a death mask at its center. Thalia thrust the disc at the monster causing it to whimper and retreat. It ran into the drapes which encompassed him and finished him off. They got out of the house just before the whole thing exploded.

As they watched the house burn, Luke now understood what Halcyon saw when he told Luke there was a sacrifice in his future. He also recalled how he had said that Luke would make decisions that would change the world. He vowed to keep his promise to Halcyon that he would keep up the diary and learn from his mistakes. As they heard the sounds of sirens growing louder, they ran off. They were minors and didn't want to have to answer any questions.

They ran to a park where they rested and ate a snack. They heard a noise and Luke was sure something other than a mortal was near. They drew their weapons and were prepared to battle until they saw that the source of the noise was a little blonde girl about seven years old. Luke could tell that she was a demigod. She confessed that she had run away from home. She was hiding, afraid of monsters. Her name was Annabeth.



Luke told Annabeth that she seemed fierce and that they could use a fighter like her. He decided to give her the Celestial dagger that Halcyon had given him. They would take her to their safe house on the James River. Annabeth was relieved that they weren't going to return her to her family. Luke told her that she was a part of their family now.

Guarding the camp as Thalia and Annabeth slept, Percy thought of his mother and wondered what she was doing. He would continue writing in Halcyon's diary because he promised to, but he doubted that anyone would ever read it.

Analysis

It is apparent from this section of the story that demigods don't have it so easy. Their Greek god parents desert them and sometimes - as in Halcyon's case - even imprison and torture them. Both Luke and Thalia suffered from mothers who abandoned them emotionally when their Greek god fathers left their mothers. At the end of the story they meet yet another demigod who has run away from home. Annabeth is only 7 years old and was frightened that Luke and Thalia would return her to her home. She hasn't revealed her Greek god parentage but she is a demigod. The demigods are treated as half-caste beings who don't seem to be fully accepted by either their human families or their Greek god side. Luke is an emotional young boy who is sensitive to the struggles of both Thalia and Annabeth because of his own experiences.

Halcyon has the ability to see into the future. When he tells Luke that there is a sacrifice and a betrayal in his future, Luke naturally thinks that he will personally make a sacrifice. As it turns out, it was Halcyon who made the sacrifice. The betrayal he faces is yet to be revealed and will probably be told in a future story.

Luke is also told by Halcyon that he will make some important decisions that will change the world. That is quite a responsibility to place on a 14-year-old's shoulders. Halcyon didn't reveal any specifics, although he did give his diary to Luke so he could learn from his mistakes. He also asked that Luke continue making entries into the diary – thus the name of the series, “The Demigod Diaries.” Luke is taking a lot on for a young teenager. He takes promises he made to Halcyon seriously and does not shirk the responsibility he feels for protecting Thalia and Annabeth.

Thalia would have been able to break the curse placed on Halcyon but she used the wrong name to summon the powers of the bracelet. Thalia was certain that it was Zeus who sent the magic goat to lead her on this mission. Although she has felt abandoned by her father, if he led her to the powerful bracelet which is the Aegis Shield that Zeus once wielded himself, perhaps he is looking out for her after all.

Discussion Question 1

How does some of Halcyon's premonition about Luke's future come true? What part of it is yet to be proven out?



Discussion Question 2

Why does Halcyon decide to stay behind and allow Luke and Thalia to escape?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Luke feel responsible for Annabeth?

Vocabulary

ambrosia, cowering, gesticulated, cowardice, aegis, vendetta, potions, alchemy, catalyst, inferno, blanched, ominous



Percy Jackson and the Staff of Hermes (Pages 74 - 99)

Summary

Percy and Annabeth were in Central Park resting leisurely after a picnic lunch. Suddenly, she asked him if he had forgotten something. Since Annabeth was his new girlfriend he was afraid to answer fearing he'd say the wrong thing. Finally, she told him that it was the one-month anniversary of their first kiss. She mentioned the dinner he promised her that night which he forgot, too. He was about to admit his forgetfulness when a delivery truck roared up. The sign on the side of the truck read, "Hermes Express." It was Hermes, the messenger of the gods, who apparently had a delivery from on high.

Hermes had helped Percy out over the years. The summer before, Percy battled Luke, Hermes' demigod son, who'd been corrupted by the Titan Kronos. Luke's death hadn't been completely Percy's fault but it put a strain on his relationship with Hermes. Hermes appeared jittery and uncomfortable that Annabeth was with Percy. He told Annabeth that she had to swear not to say a word. If anything got back to Athena, she'd never stop teasing him. Athena thought she was cleverer than Hermes to begin with. Of course, Annabeth agreed that Athena was cleverer than Hermes—Athena was her mother.

Annabeth wasn't thrilled with Hermes' presence even though he was a god. She used to adventure with Luke, Hermes' son. As she matured, she grew to have feelings for Luke. She blamed Hermes for being a bad father and Hermes blamed Annabeth for allowing Luke to become evil and take sides with Kronos. Luke died in war and Annabeth and Hermes blamed each other.

To prevent an uproar Percy talked to Hermes privately. Percy noticed that Hermes' staff of power was missing. It was the staff of Asclepius the medicine god, and Hermes always had it with him. Hermes referred to the two snakes that were wrapped around it as George and Martha. He left his staff in his truck when making a delivery to Janus in Rockefeller Center. When he returned to his truck, the staff was gone. He knew who took it. The wind nymphs saw that the thief was Cacus.

Cacus was a small giant – only ten feet tall. He constantly stole things from the gods. Cacus currently lived in underground Manhattan. Percy asked why Hermes, a powerful god, wanted a 16-year-old demigod to retrieve his staff. Hermes was insulted. Such strong arm tactics as busting heads and ripping up cities was behavior that was beneath the gods. Besides, the other gods would ridicule him for losing his staff. Hermes told Percy he needed it by 5 pm that day and cautioned him that Cacus breathed fire. He also warned him to beware of the tip of the caduceus. It could turn people to stone. For taking on this mission, Percy asked for a favor in return.



Annabeth agreed to go with Percy on his mission. She picked up a dinner plate from the picnic spread and brushed off the crumbs. It was her magical shield that had doubled for a picnic plate. Annabeth could summon its highly reflective bronze surface to find missing objects. However, Cacus was apparently underground so the shield could prove to be useless. She ordered the shield to show them where he was. The image on the shield displayed an image of High Line Park in the Meatpacking District. A big square hole in the street was cordoned off with yellow police tape. There had been an accident the day before. A construction was burned from a fire beneath the surface. Since Cacus was a fire-breathing giant, the demigods decided to check it out.

The demigods took a cab to the area and found the hole. They sneaked under the police tape and, going unnoticed by the police who were guarding the area, descended into the hole. They climbed down the ladder for what felt like forever and finally reached bottom. It was a huge wet and murky area with a constant drizzle that spewed from the old sewer pipes. There were tool boxes and purses and coats sitting about. There were even several old cars and a burnt out bulldozer that looked like it had been in combat. There were several cow carcasses hanging on hooks from a scaffold.

Suddenly, the giant appeared. He was about ten-feet tall, had red hair and was wearing all red. Annabeth whispered that he was the Ginger Giant. The giant had good hearing and heard her whispers. He demanded that the interlopers come out of hiding. Percy uncapped his ink pen and his bronze sword, Riptide, sprang to life. It was time for the giant's breakfast so he snatched one of the cow carcasses, blew fire over it and swallowed it down in just a few bites.

The giant had everything for sale – handbags, coats, jewelry. He stole only the best. Percy told him they were looking for something really special, the caduceus. The giant was stunned. Percy pulled rank on the giant and told him that he was the son of Poseidon and Annabeth was the daughter of Athena and demanded that he hand over the staff. The giant laughed. The only demigod to ever defeat him was Hercules. The giant held up his hand and the staff instantly appeared. The snakes, George and Martha, were happy to see Percy. Annabeth told the giant that the staff was useless to him. It only obeyed Hermes.

The giant was determined that he would make the staff obey him. He pointed the staff at the cow carcasses which immediately turned to stone. It occurred to him that he could do the same to the demigods. The giant wouldn't reveal who he was working with but told the demigods that Olympus would soon fall. Without the staff, Hermes couldn't send communications back and forth between the gods. Percy and Annabeth agreed that it was time to fight.

Analysis

Just when Percy and Annabeth are having a picnic date in the park like normal mortal teenagers, they are summoned by one of the gods to take on a dangerous mission. This story serves to explain - at least in part - what happened to Luke who was featured in



the first story in the book, “The Diary of Luke Castellan”. This story also explains why Annabeth is immediately at odds with Hermes. Luke died in combat and they blame each other for his death. Luke was Hermes’ demigod son.

The demigods are sent on a perilous mission to retrieve the staff of Hermes who is the messenger to the gods. Hermes demonstrates the classism that exists within the Greek god community when he explains to Percy that he is calling on him to retrieve the staff because such a mission is beneath a god to carry out. Therefore, he relegates the mission that would essentially save Olympus to a lowly demigod. Percy tries his own bit of classism when he attempts to intimidate the Ginger Giant with the fact that he is the son of Poseidon and Annabeth is the daughter of Athena. Poseidon and Athena are two major gods, while the Ginger Giant is the son of a weaker god. But the giant is too obtuse and just laughs at Percy. He must not fear retribution from Poseidon and Athena probably because the demigods are clearly treated so shabbily by their parents.

It is important for the survival of Olympus that the staff is returned to Hermes. He is the messenger of the gods but is powerless without his staff. The Ginger Giant, who stole the staff, tells the demigods that Olympus will fall without Hermes’ ability to communicate messages between the gods. The Ginger Giant is working with other forces that he has not yet reveal. A good guess is that he is in collusion with the enemies of the Greek gods, the warriors of the defeated Titan, Kronos.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Annabeth resent Hermes?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Annabeth call the giant the Ginger Giant?

Discussion Question 3

What will happen to Olympus and the Greek gods if the staff of Hermes is not recovered?

Vocabulary

apocalypse, dyslexic, prejudiced, caduceus, labyrinth, nymph, petrify, cordoned, vertigo, satyr, incineration



Percy Jackson and the Staff of Hermes (Pages 99 - 116)

Summary

Percy and Annabeth fought well together. She attacked the Ginger Giant from the flank while Percy went at him head on. The giant emitted a stream of flames which drove Percy back. Annabeth stabbed him in the back of his knee. The giant swung the staff at Annabeth barely missing her. He breathed fire on her as Percy stabbed his other leg. The giant smacked Percy with the back of his hand sending him flying. Percy could hear George and Martha's voices in his head helping him in his struggle with the giant. The snakes used trickery and turned into different items to distract the giant. Percy used the powers of Poseidon and willed the water pipes to burst sending a torrent of water on the giant. Percy was able to grab Annabeth and swim through the water, find a geyser and ride it up to the city street above.

They were alive but they hadn't recovered the caduceus. Suddenly there was an explosion and a beam of blue light emanated from the hole scorching an entire glass building above it. The Ginger Giant climbed out of the hole carrying the staff that had been transformed into a bazooka. The giant chased Percy and Annabeth, launching laser bolts after them. They ran up the steps to the park with the giant roaring behind them.

Annabeth spotted an elevated train platform adjacent to a crane with a large claw hanging over it. The plan was for Annabeth to distract the giant while Percy grabbed the staff. The giant aimed his laser at Percy but Martha and George were able to change its form to a credit card swiping machine and all that shot out was a paper receipt. In his anger, the giant threw the staff down which Percy immediately picked up. The giant's back was to the crane; the hook was right over his head. Finally, Annabeth got the crane going and the claw slowly descended toward the giant's head.

The claw knocked the giant over allowing Annabeth to grasp the giant by his torso, pull him up and flip him out. The snakes transformed the staff back into a laser. Percy launched a laser blast at the giant and he disintegrated into a starburst. It was getting late; they had to get the staff back to Hermes who was anxiously waiting. Hermes was gratified to have his staff back and the snakes were glad to be back with him. Hermes thanked the demigods.

Percy reminded Hermes about the favor he promised him. Hermes snapped his fingers and suddenly Percy and Annabeth were in an exclusive restaurant in Paris for a romantic dinner.



Analysis

The love between Percy and Annabeth is reflected in the team work they benefit from in fighting off the Ginger Giant. Their hard-fought battle to regain the staff for Hermes paid off. Annabeth could not have been more pleased or surprised when with the snap of his fingers, Hermes sent them to Paris. The surprise Paris trip was Percy's request which proves that he definitely has a romantic side.

Annabeth displays her physical prowess as well as her ingenuity in figuring out how to defeat the giant. Her skills had been strengthened and honed through her years as a warrior. Her intelligence was inherited from her mother, Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom.

The rift between Annabeth and Hermes was probably at least partially healed after the success of her and Percy's successful quest to regain the staff. Not only would messages resume between the gods with the return of the caduceus, ultimately their success would save Olympus from ruin.

After their return, there was a brief interview with George and Martha, Hermes' snakes. Martha pointed out that they worked with Hermes not for him. Martha said the best part of their job was talking to the young demigods. George pointed out how the staff is versatile and can help Hermes in many ways.

Discussion Question 1

How was Percy able to will the water pipes to burst in the underground?

Discussion Question 2

How did the snakes help defeat the giant?

Discussion Question 3

What can Annabeth's intelligence be attributed to?

Vocabulary

ichor, expulsion, torrent, debris, bazooka, shinnying, ominous



Leo Valdez and the Quest for Buford (Pages 125 - 150)

Summary

Leo summoned the demigods, Piper and Jason, to help him. Buford was missing and it would be disaster if they didn't get him back. In fact, Camp Half-Blood would literally explode. Leo led the others across the hangar floor. Leo had worked on projects the entire two months he'd been there since he discovered the workshop in Bunker 9. The workshop was equipped with a plethora of tools and equipment. Leo had been working on a new lighting system and a display that would rival the JumboTron in Times Square.

Leo's major project was the Argo II. He had never cared more about a project. It was his most ambitious endeavor and even with the help of the entire Hephaestus cabin, it would still be a challenge to create a magic flying ship. Yet, Leo was slowly assembling it. All the parts were strewn about in the bunker. The dragon figurehead, formerly the head of Festus a bronze dragon that had been created in the workshop years before, was wrapped in velvet awaiting its installation on the prow of the Argo II. The dragon's head meant a lot to Leo. He hoped to reactivate its brain using the ship's electrical power.

Most of Leo's time was spent on building the ship's engine. Leo pointed out to Jason and Piper the major problem with the engine: a timer was ticking away, and in a little over an hour would send all the powerful fuels of the engine into the chamber at once. These liquids included fire from his father Hephaestus' forges and water from the River Styx. Without a control on the mix, there would be a nasty explosion. In fact, one square mile of the woods around the camp would become a smoking crater.

There was no turning off the engine. The only thing that could avoid an explosion was the installation of the syncopator, but it was lost. The last he saw it, it was in Buford's drawer but Buford was gone. Leo explained that Buford was a table. Leo had made a duplicate syncopator but it was in Buford's drawer, too. He had made a big mistake and polished Buford with window cleaner and he ran away because he only liked to be polished with Lemon Pledge.

The demigods had only one hour to find Buford. They found table tracks by the stream and followed them across. A naiad popped out of the stream and asked the demigods to be quiet. She warned them that they could all be killed by her crazy cousins and then disappeared back into the water.

The demigods came across a cursed battleground that would mean danger for them to enter. The Battle of the Labyrinth had taken place there. The huge mound of boulders in the middle of the field represented Zeus' First. The table tracks were lost on the rocky field. However, Piper spotted Buford across the way. Suddenly, a dozen barefooted



nymphs skipped into the clearing. Looking closely, the girls weren't ordinary nymphs. Their laurel wreaths were entwined with tiny vipers; their staffs were wrapped with snakes; and when they sang, their voices sounded like wild animals. A drakon stumbled out of the woods probably awakened by the awful singing. The drakon was a large creature with dagger-like teeth and flames curling from its nostrils.

The nymphs weren't afraid of the drakon; in fact, they were immune to his attacks. They asked him if he was Dionysus and then surrounded and attacked him turning him to dust. The nymphs were followers of Dionysus called Maenads. The demigods had thirty minutes before the ship exploded and the Maenads were between them and Buford. Jason, the demigod son of Zeus, tried to control the wind to fly over the Maenads, but he failed. Suddenly, the Maenads were heading for them. When asked by one of the Maenads if he was Dionysus, Leo said that he was.

The demigods convinced the Maenads that Dionysus had taken on the form of a teenage boy and that it was party time. One Maenad commented that Jason should be the first sacrifice. Leo focused their attention on thoughts of other food – taquitos, chips and queso – adding that they needed a table to lay out their food on. Leo motioned toward Buford and told the Maenads to wait there while he and his friends got the table. One of the Maenads, Babette, was growing suspicious. She warned Leo that anyone who impersonated Dionysus would die painfully. To prove that Leo was Dionysus, Babette told him to recite the order of the revelries. Leo failed the test and Babette ordered the Maenads to “kill the unbelievers.” (150)

Analysis

Leo is in trouble and has placed Camp Half-Blood in danger. A magical table has made off with the only device that can circumvent the explosion of the Argo II. Leo has been building the Argo II a ship to replicate the Argo which was the ship of Jason and the Argonauts of Greek mythology. Leo is a master builder and contributes his many creations to the Half-Blood camp. But he is rather naïve and not as savvy or as aware of current events as the other demigods are because he spends all his time in his workshop. For that reason, he calls on two other demigod friends, Piper and Jason, to help him find his table, Buford. Like many creative geniuses, he is brilliant at what he does but has a narrow scope and point of view.

While necessity is the mother of invention, danger is the mother of survival. When faced with the mercurial Maenads, Leo has enough wits about him to tell them that he is indeed Dionysus, their god and leader. But that turns out to be just a stall for time. The Maenads become suspicious of Leo and warn that impersonating Dionysus is a death sentence. With the quick-thinking of the other demigods, they are able to make a run for it, but they are still going to have to figure out how to get to the table where the device that will save the camp is stored. Nothing is ever as it seems in the world of demigods, and absolutely nothing is easy.



Discussion Question 1

Leo is building the Argo II. What was the first Argo and how did it figure into Greek mythology?

Discussion Question 2

What are drakons, and what do the demigods sometimes use them for?

Discussion Question 3

What do the Maenads demand of Leo to prove that he is indeed Dionysus?

Vocabulary

hangar, pneumatic, combustion, syncopator, naiad, gladius, imperial, trireme, nymph, laurel, ferocity, sacrilege



Leo Valdez and the Quest for Buford (Pages 150 - 168)

Summary

Leo pulled a flask of oil from his tool belt and doused the Maenads with it. He summoned fire and set the oil on fire. He had to remind himself that the girls weren't human—they were nature spirits who were determined to rip them apart. But the Maenads just laughed and danced through the flames. Their frenzy made them immune to the blaze. The demigods took off running. They half-ran, half-rolled down the hill. But the Maenads were still standing in the way of them and Buford. They couldn't kill the Maenads because they would be cursed by Dionysus. Those who killed his followers went crazy or morphed into animals. There were only 20 minutes remaining before the engine blew.

A solution began to form in Leo's mind. Leo told Jason to circle back around and grab Buford and return to the bunker. Leo and Piper would distract the Maenads and lead them back to the bunker by a different route. Leo shouted "party" once in a while so the Maenads knew where they were. They sprinted for the bunker with their pursuers uncomfortably close behind. Once inside the bunker, Leo grabbed a bronze control panel and handed it to Piper. He told her to go outside and distract the Maenads until he told her to push the button on the control panel. Leo grabbed parts and wires, activated time-delay sensors and threw switches. He stuffed a large piece of gold fabric into a pneumatic tube and hit the send button.

Leo began to yell for the Maenads to climb down into the bunker. Babette told him he was wise to accept his fate and ordered the others to kill him. Leo yelled to Piper to push the button. The bunker turned into party central. The pneumatic tubes showered the girls with gold confetti. His electronic banner read "Welcome, Psycho Nymphs!" Rock music blared and a large disco ball lowered down from the ceiling. A grappling hook came out of the disco ball and pulled Leo to safety as the girls tried to grab and claw at him. Leo had created golden netting that sealed the Maenads in and even with their super strength, they couldn't escape.

With only minutes to spare, Jason entered the workshop with Buford. Leo rushed and installed the syncopator into the combustion chamber and prevented the explosion. Leo was so stressed that he passed out. When he awoke the entire Hephaestus cabin was there. Soon, Chiron and Argus came to take care of the Maenads. They told the demigods that Dionysus will be glad that the Maenads had been captured. They annoy him, too. Chiron planned to load them on a bus to Atlantic City so they could get partying out of their systems. Later that night the three demigods sat together drinking hot cocoa. Leo thanked Piper and Jason again for getting him out of quite a scrape. Once the Argo II was completed they would sail off on another adventure. Gaea, the



earth mother, was the most powerful enemy god and was determined to destroy Olympus. The demigods held up their mugs and made a toast to “friends.”

Analysis

Leo used his brains and his ability with electronics to capture and trap the Maenads. As it turned out Dionysus would thank them for their work because the Maenads annoyed him, too. At one point, the Maenad Babette told Leo to accept his fate, but Leo wasn't willing to accept the fate that another had laid out for him. Leo was determined to fight that destiny and not allow the crazy Maenads to be victorious. If they destroyed him, it would just be a matter of time before they killed the other demigods.

The Maenads were a menace in the woods surrounding Camp Half-Blood that needed to be reined in. This adventure demonstrates the volatile nature of the missions that the demigods are challenged with. While initially the mission was to find Buford the table, it quickly turned into a battle with the dangerous Maenads. The demigods showed their ability to think on their feet and quickly switch priorities. Leo, Jason and Piper proved their worth in saving the Argo II, preventing an explosion and corralling the dangerous Maenads - and all in sixty minutes.

Discussion Question 1

Why couldn't the demigods kill the Maenads?

Discussion Question 2

How did Leo use his mechanical skills in distracting the Maenads?

Discussion Question 3

What mission is the Argo II being built for?

Vocabulary

morphed, contraptions, pistons, skeptical, dryad, reincarnated, combustion, warily, pyrotechnics, solstice



Son of Magic (Pages 183 - 212)

Summary

Dr. Claymore, who was selling his latest book, asked the audience what happened when one dies. A freckled-faced kid thought he had the answer. Claymore figured that the kid was too young and rattled to actually provide a response but he was surprised. The kid responded that no one knew what happens. He reproached Claymore about his continual criticism of any idea about afterlife. After a brief pause, Claymore responded that he, like everyone, was looking for the answer.

After he left the stage, Claymore scowled. He was a visionary and resented being paraded about from one event to another. His fans disgusted him and most of them didn't even understand his work. The hostess of the event, Mrs. Lamia, praised his performance. It was the first sellout they had for an author. Mrs. Lamia was a huge woman, as tall as Claymore himself. Claymore was considered by some to be the greatest mind since Stephen Hawking. He told Mrs. Lamia that people sought the truth and that was what he gave them.

As Claymore turned to leave the auditorium, the young boy who spoke up at the lecture stopped him. The only reason Claymore didn't tell him to get lost was that the young boy's father was standing a few feet away. The boy had an important question for him: "What happens if someone finds a way to stop death?" (189) Claymore commented on the impossibility of the concept. The boy insisted that he try to come up with an answer. He handed him a paper with his contact information and asked that he get hold of him if he figured it out. If he didn't have an answer, the boy said he would die.

The boy, Alabaster C. Torrington, stayed in Claymore's thoughts that evening. The conversation with the boy was eerie but Claymore convinced himself that he had nothing to worry about. He had many strange encounters with overzealous fans. Then the phone rang. It was late, nearly eleven at night. He saw on the caller ID that it was Mrs. Lamia. When the voicemail failed to answer, he reluctantly answered. She wanted him to give her the note that the boy had given him. He didn't feel comfortable giving her anything – he'd just met her that night. She asked if he believed in God. When he said that he did not, she said it would make her job more difficult. He angrily slammed down the receiver. When the phone rang again, he unplugged it. If she kept harassing him, he'd report her to the police. He had a strange urge to warn the boy.

Claymore dreamed that he saw the boy in an old dusty room. The boy was speaking to someone saying that the woman had found him again. She had caught his scent. An unseen woman responded that she could not help the boy because the woman was her child as was the boy. The woman told the boy that he had brought on this problem himself. He had accepted Kronos' blessing and fought with his armies in his mother's name. His fight was now with his sister.



Claymore recognized the name “Kronos” as a Titan in Greek mythology. He was the son of the earth and heavens. The boy became angry and scolded his mother for promising him that Kronos would win and that Camp Half-Blood would be destroyed. Claymore tried to wake himself up but couldn't. The boy became aware of Claymore's presence. He demanded to know what a mortal was doing in the house of the gods. His mother told him that she had invited him because he needed help.

After Claymore woke up the next morning, he was disturbed by memories of the dream. When he prepared to leave the house, he took a small handgun with him as a precaution. He was at his usual haunt, Black's Coffee Shop, writing at his computer when Mrs. Lamia sat down next to him. He wanted her to leave him alone but she wanted to talk about Alabaster. Mrs. Lamia told Claymore that she was Alabaster's sister. When Claymore said she looked older than the boy's father, she told him that looks could be deceiving. She'd leave him alone if he just gave her the paper with his address. Claymore noticed that Mrs. Lamia never blinked.

Claymore called to Burly Black, the coffee shop owner, but he didn't respond. Mrs. Lamia told him that Burly couldn't hear him because of the Mist. Claymore continued to try to get Burly's attention but to no avail. Mrs. Lamia decided she needed to show Claymore what he was dealing with. Her green eyes turned to mere slits and her fingers shriveled into lizard-like claws. She told him she could kill him on the spot. He drew his gun and shot her several times. She fell to the floor. Burly was still under the spell of the Mist and hadn't seen a thing. The corpse rose. Half her face was gone and instead of seeing blood and bone, there was only black sand. Lamia told Claymore that by his actions he had declared war on the children of Hecate. Claymore thought he was in a dream and ran out of the coffee shop.

There was a boot on Claymore's car. He must have violated a parking regulation. He couldn't move his car and Lamia was coming after him. He ran away with Lamia behind him casting a spell on him in Latin causing hail to rain down on him. He shot at her again. Her kneecap exploded and the lower portion of her leg disintegrated. But soon Claymore saw that her leg was regenerating. He returned to the coffee shop and grabbed Burly's truck keys. Burly was still oblivious to Claymore's dilemma. Lamia was right behind him. They fought and struggled. Lamia told him that Zeus had fallen in love with her mother Hecate, the goddess of magic. Hera slaughtered Lamia's children right in front of her eyes. Lamia evoked the Temple of Fire to punish Claymore for not leading her to Alabaster. The curse would destroy whatever was most precious to him.

The coffee shop went up in flames and consumed Burly. Claymore was aghast. She had killed an innocent man. Claymore was so angry that he savagely beat and kicked Lamia. Her face dissolved into black sand. Claymore told her that the next time he saw her he would kill her and then ran out. He knew who could help him.



Analysis

Alabaster's mother, Hectate, reached out to the smartest person on earth to help her son elude his obviously evil sister, Lamia. It is not an accident that the person Hectate invited in to solve a problem in her dysfunctional family is an expert on death. Lamia is apparently angry at Alabaster for fighting in Kronos' army in the name of their mother. But there could be more to her anger. Sibling rivalry, perhaps?

It is ironic that Claymore, who just recently wrote another book on the death and who does not believe in the afterlife, has met up with a demon who is immortal. He may have to add a chapter to his book. Lamia places the Temple of Fire curse on Claymore which will cause whatever he loves most to be destroyed. He lives alone, resents his fans, has no religion and thinks there is no afterlife. The man is isolated and in his own world. He loves little more than his writing and work and his brilliant mind. How will the curse impact such a man who, in a sense, has very little in his life?

The sheer power of the gods comes to the forefront in this story. Hectate wanted Claymore to help her son, so she invited him to the Temple of the Gods. He could only enter the temple in his dreams and obviously Hectate had the power to control his dreams. Lamia is a powerful demon-like being who, like all gods and goddesses, is immortal and cannot be killed. She has the power to change form and survive Claymore's bullets and his brutal beatings. She is trying to force him to lead her to her brother. Even though Claymore appears to be fundamentally unfeeling and detached from humankind, there is something within him that makes him want to protect Alabaster. Claymore's problems could be all over just by handing over Alabaster's location, but he refuses to sacrifice the boy.

As this portion of the story ends, Claymore seems certain that he can kill Lamia. This revelation will no doubt help Alabaster but at what cost to Claymore?

Discussion Question 1

According to Hectate, how did Alabaster bring his problems on himself?

Discussion Question 2

Why was Lamia so angry at Alabaster?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Lamia become enraged at Claymore?

Vocabulary

simplistic, berating, visionary, reprimand, indulging, solemn, pathetic, lucid, stoic, alchemy, runes, hallucinogen, regenerate, incantation, audacity



Son of Magic (Pages 212 - 227)

Summary

Claymore took Burly's truck. He hoped the cops wouldn't think he killed Burly. He recalled Alabaster's question: "What happens if someone finds a way to stop death?" (213) He called the phone number that Alabaster had given him. When Alabaster answered Claymore told him that his sister was trying to kill him. Alabaster told him to come immediately to the address on the sheet of paper.

Alabaster's "father" answered the door. A smile was frozen on his face. The house was meticulous. Everything looked like it just came out of plastic wrap. Alabaster came in the room and told Claymore to ignore his companion who was not his father but rather a Mistform that Alabaster created to pose as his parent so no one would ask questions. To prove his point to Claymore, Alabaster made the Mistform disintegrate. But Claymore wanted to focus on Lamia. Alabaster told him there were only two ways to kill a monster. One was with a godly metal and the other was a form of binding magic that prevented the monsters from reforming. Alabaster had killed her in the past but Lamia wouldn't die. He was hoping that Claymore could devise a way of keeping her dead.

Alabaster described the war between the gods and the Titans. Most of his fellow demigods fought for the Olympians but he fought for Kronos. The Titans lost in a massacre. Most of the minor gods accepted an amnesty deal but Hectate did not. Alabaster was the strongest of Hectate's children and most had followed his lead and fought for Kronos. Hectate lost more demigod children than any other god. They exiled Alabaster for supporting Kronos and agreed to spare his life if Hectate rejoined them. Lamia was Hectate's child from ancient times. He wasn't sure why Lamia had it in for him. He had been successful in fighting her off but she was wearing him down.

Suddenly, Alabaster sensed that Lamia had arrived. The incantation that Lamia put on Claymore had allowed her to get to her brother. Alabaster strengthened the inner walls which would keep her at bay. . . for a while. But she was near and she was there to kill them.

Outside, Alabaster saw that Lamia had locked them in with a binding incantation storm. They had no option but to fight her. Suddenly, Lamia announced that she was there. Alabaster turned a small card into a mighty sword. He told Claymore to get behind him and stay there. Claymore didn't argue. Suddenly Lamia appeared on the edge of the lawn and Alabaster attacked.

Analysis

Claymore has decided that Alabaster can help him defeat Lamia. Ironically, it was Alabaster's hope that Claymore could help him. Alabaster does have the key to killing Lamia but apparently not the means. Perhaps that is where Claymore will come in.



Alabaster doesn't know why Lamia wants to destroy him. The only hint at the source of her anger is the fact that Hera had killed Lamia's children right in front of her eyes. Perhaps in her madness she has made a connection between Alabaster and Hera or Alabaster and her dead children. Her rage has something to do with her dead children.

Claymore is becoming emotionally involved with Alabaster. He feels for him because he has been banished from his mother's home and has only a Mistform as a companion. But Hectate does love Alabaster because she complied with the gods' wishes to rejoin them in order to keep them from killing him. Perhaps Claymore relates to Alabaster because he, too, is alone and isolated.

Discussion Question 1

What is a Mistform?

Discussion Question 2

How did Hectate suffer from the war between the gods and the Titans?

Discussion Question 3

What was Alabaster's punishment for supporting Kronos in the war?

Vocabulary

array, meticulous, nonsensical, empathetic, demoralized, amnesty, vendetta, banishment



Son of Magic (Pages 227 - 242)

Summary

Alabaster engaged Lamia in battle. She told him she didn't die because her mistress sustained her. Her mistress had risen where Kronos has failed. Ultimately, she would destroy all of Olympus and lead the children of Hecate to their golden age. But Lamia's mistress did not trust Alabaster. Alabaster continuously struck Lamia with his sword, but she immediately healed and regenerated. Lamia raged about how much she hated Hera and how Hera had killed all her children. Lamia boasted that it was she who gave monsters the ability to track down demigods. Once all the demigods were dead, her mistress, Mother Earth, promised to return all her children to her.

The fighting continued when suddenly Claymore fired a bullet into Lamia's chest. Alabaster and Claymore decided to get away quickly before Lamia regenerated herself. Claymore suggested that there had to be a way to imprison her on earth if they couldn't kill her. A light bulb went off in Alabaster's head. Claymore had just solved the problem in the most simplistic way. Instead of sending Lamia to Tartarus, which is the place of exile for defeated monsters, why couldn't they imprison her on earth? They had to go back inside and retrieve a book on Alabaster's nightstand.

Alabaster had had the answer all along but didn't know it. He found the book and he was jubilant. Claymore observed Alabaster, at last the happy-go-lucky teen that he should be. The entire experience had confounded Claymore, a man who devoted his life to discovering the answer to death. Everything he had learned in the last few days threw a wrench in all the knowledge he had amassed over a life-time. How could he start all over? His career was now meaningless. The runes on Alabaster's cloak glowed bright green. He would be making an incantation that would work this time.

Suddenly, Lamia was right behind Claymore threatening to kill him if Alabaster carried through on his incantation. She ordered Alabaster to drop the book. Claymore shouted for Alabaster to read the spell but the book was in flames. Alabaster didn't want Claymore to die because of him. He had led his siblings to their deaths and didn't want another casualty on his conscience. Claymore decided he had to act. He pushed Lamia back and they became embroiled in a vicious struggle resulting in Claymore's death.

Claymore found himself on a boat on the River Styx. He would soon face judgment for aiding a traitor. For years he had privately feared dying and being rejected by heaven. But Claymore was satisfied that he had done the right thing. Since Alabaster wasn't with him, Lamia hadn't killed the boy. Surely, he had enough time to cast the spell on Lamia. But Claymore's fate hadn't been sealed after all. Hecate reached down and pulled him up from the river. He found himself in a church. Claymore was still dead but Hecate was able to save both her children – Alabaster and Lamia.



Hectate wanted both of her children to be happy. She saw that Alabaster liked Claymore because he reminded him of his father. Therefore, Hectate planned to have Claymore look after him. She could give Claymore new life as a Mistform. His sacrifice created powerful magic energy. She used that force to separate her children. Lamia will be kept at bay by the threat of the powerful incantation that Alabaster can use against her. Alabaster would face many challenges in the future and Hectate wanted Claymore there with him to help guide him.

Alabaster woke up in a field. His clothes were torn and slashed but he was unhurt. His last memory was of Claymore slamming into Lamia. Suddenly, Claymore appeared. He told Alabaster to follow him. They had a lot of research to do.

Analysis

Claymore is given new life in the most unexpected way. Not only does he realize that his life's work has collapsed around him, he feels worthless and can see no way to start over at this point in his life. With that in mind, he determines that one way that he can make an important contribution is by sacrificing himself to save Alabaster. Hectate rewards him and virtually gives him a new life – a new reason to live. Claymore has evolved from an uncaring, detached and condescending scholar to a man who cares about the joy of a young man and who recognizes that he doesn't have all the answers and never did.

Alabaster is given new life as well. He had been banished by the gods to live a life of solitude for his support of Kronos in the war between the Titans and the gods. Hectate saw that Alabaster admired Claymore – she even mentions that he reminds him of his father – and that he would be a good force in Alabaster's life.

Even Lamia is allowed to live and walk free. She will be kept at bay by the threat of the ultimate incantation that Alabaster has in his power at any time she violates the rules as set down by Hectate.

Discussion Question 1

What power did Lamia give the monsters?

Discussion Question 2

Why did Alabaster refuse to cast the spell on Lamia?

Discussion Question 3

Why did Hectate give Claymore "new life?"

Vocabulary

crone, protégé, sterner, invincibility, ironic, preeminence



Characters

Luke Castellan

Luke Castellan is a demigod who ran away from his human home when he was nine. As the story of “The Diary of Luke Castellan” begins, he is 14 years old. Luke is a troubled boy. He ran away from home because his mother had fallen apart after his father, Hermes, the Messenger of the Gods and the God of Travel and Thieves, left her. He felt abandoned by both parents. He didn’t make many friends among the mortals. When he did he lost them as soon as he told them about his true identity.

Luke accompanies his only friend, fellow demigod Thalia, on a trek to help out another demigod, Halcyon, who has been wrongly imprisoned by his own father, Apollo. He and Thalia have a lot in common because they both came from dysfunctional homes. While on their mission, Halcyon knows he will not survive the battle, so he gives the diary he’d been keeping for years to Luke to continue the tradition – thus the name of the book, “The Demigod Diaries.” Luke and Thalia must battle strange and savage creatures called leucrotae and barely escape with their lives. Later, safe in the woods, they discover another runaway demigod, Annabeth, daughter of Athena.

In a subsequent story, “Percy Jackson and the Sword of Hermes”, it is revealed that Luke died in battle and that Annabeth who had become his companion warrior blamed his father Hermes for his death and that Hermes blamed Annabeth for allowing Luke to fight on the wrong side of the war between the gods and the Titans.

Percy Jackson

Percy Jackson is a demigod and the son of Poseidon, god of the Seas. Percy and Annabeth have been sweet on each other for some time and finally have become boyfriend and girlfriend. Percy is known to be a valiant and brave warrior and always has his trusted bronze sword, Riptide, with him. Riptide is concealed in Percy’s ink pen. When he uncaps his ink pen, Rip Tide magically emerges.

Percy is called upon by Hermes, Messenger to the Gods, to retrieve his staff which had been stolen from him. Without the staff, the gods are not able to communicate, leaving Olympus vulnerable to attack. Percy and Annabeth take on the mission and are able to track down the guilty party in the sewer system under Manhattan.

Percy fights off Cacus, the small giant and perpetual thief, but the giant is relentless and savage. Percy finally has to summon up his powers over water. He wills the water pipes to burst and a deluge of thousands of gallons of water crush the giant. Percy, using his water skills, is able to grab Annabeth and ride the currents to a geyser that shoots them out of the sewer system and back on dry ground.



Thalia

Thalia is a demigod and the daughter of Zeus. She and the demigod Luke are summoned by Zeus to follow the magic goat, Amaltheia, to a rundown house in Virginia where a demigod needs their help.

Halcyon Green

Halcyon Green is the demigod son of Apollo. He was imprisoned in an old house in Richmond, Virginia, because he disobeyed his father and revealed events that he foresaw.

Annabeth

Annabeth is a demigod and the daughter of Athena, goddess of wisdom. Annabeth had run away from home and was found by Luke and Thalia when Annabeth was 7-years-old.

Hermes

Hermes is a Greek god and is the messenger of the gods and the god of travel. He lost his staff, the Staff of Asclepius, and was unable to communicate the messages of the gods without it. He called on Percy and Annabeth to find it for him.

Leo Valdez

Leo Valdez is a demigod and is a brilliant inventor and builder. He is working on a flying ship called the Argo II which the gods need for an impending battle with Mother Earth.

Jason and Piper

Jason and Piper are the two demigods who Leo Valdez recruits to help him track down and find Buford, the wayward table that ran away with a part Leo needs to avoid the explosion of the Argo II.

Alabaster

Alabaster is a demigod and son of the Hecate, goddess of magic. He has been banished from the Temple of the Gods for supporting Kronos in the war between the gods and the Titans.

Lamia

Lamia is the daughter of Hecate and sister of Alabaster. She is bound and determined to kill Alabaster. She was promised by Hera that she would have her dead children returned to her once all the demigods were destroyed.



Symbols and Symbolism

Amaltheia - The Magic Goat

Luke and Thalia followed a “magic goat” across Virginia. Thalia swore it was a directly omen from her father, Zeus.

Nectar of the Gods

The demigods always carried a vial of the nectar of the gods with them. The nectar would heal battle wounds they sustained in battles with monsters and enemies they encountered.

Leucrota

A leucrota is a creature that can imitate human voices. It was a leucrota that lured Luke and Thalia to the old man who lived in the rundown house in Richmond.

The Green Diary

The demigod Halcyon Green kept a diary that had a tattered green leather cover. When Halcyon knew he wouldn't make it out alive from the battle with the leucrotae, he gave the diary to Luke and asked him to keep it up.

Thalia's Bracelet

Zeus, Thalia's father, left a magical bracelet for her in a floor safe in an old run-down house in Richmond, Virginia. When she figured out the right code for it, it transformed into a huge bronze disc-like weapon that saved her and Luke's life.

The Aegis

The Aegis is Zeus' shield. It is made from the hide of Amaltheia, the magic goat who nursed him when he was a baby. Later, Zeus slew the goat in order to make his shield.

The Argo II

The Argo II was a ship that Leo was building at the workshop in Bunker 9 at Camp Half-Blood. The figurehead on the prow of the new ship was to be the head of the bronze dragon, Festus that had been constructed in the workshop years before.



Buford

Buford was a magical table that had a key piece of a boat engine that Leo was building in one of its drawers. When the table “went missing” with this device in its drawer it threatened to destroy the woods around Half-Blood Camp.

Staff of Asclepius

The Staff of Asclepius is Hermes’ staff. He is Messenger to the gods and the god of travel. He lost his staff which shut down all communication between the gods making them vulnerable to attack.

Riptide

Riptide is Percy Jackson’s trusty sword. He disguises it in an ink pen. When he uncaps the cap, Riptide magically emerges.



Settings

Richmond, VA

Luke and Thalia were lured to a rundown house in Richmond, Virginia. Inside in his prison apartment was another demigod, Halcyon Green, who had been imprisoned there by his father Apollo for using his powers of premonition.

Camp Half-Blood

Camp Half-Blood was the gathering place for the demigods where they could play and hone their skills and just be themselves with no worries about prying mortal eyes.

Leo's Workshop

Leo spent all his hours in the bunker at Camp Half-Blood where a well-equipped workshop was located. He was working on an important project – building the Argo II.

The NYC Sewer System

Percy and Annabeth had to descend into the murky sewer system underneath Manhattan when they were sent on a mission by Hermes to recover his missing staff.

The Temple of the Gods

The goddess Hecate was able to control Claymore's dreams and bring him into the Temple of Gods where no mortals are allowed.



Themes and Motifs

Abandonment

A very prevalent theme in the story entitled, “The Diary of Luke Castellan” is one of abandonment. Luke is only 14-years-old and has been on his own since he ran away from his mother’s house five years before. He was very unhappy at home because his mother was distraught that Luke’s father, Hermes, Messenger of the Gods, had dumped her.

Luke’s mother was not emotionally equipped to raise a child by herself. Luke felt abandoned by both parents and took off on his own. Luke didn’t make very many friends among the mortals. As soon as they learned that he was a demigod, they either didn’t believe him or thought he was freakish and the friendships ended. The only friend that Luke had was Thalia.

Thalia is the demigod daughter of Zeus. She has a tale that is very similar to Luke’s. Her father abandoned her mother and her mother fell apart and began drinking. She was not being a good parent to Thalia so she, too, ran away. She was only 12-years-old and was on her own when she met and joined forces with Luke.

After Thalia and Luke are triumphant in their battle against the leucrotae, they flee to the woods. There, they find a 7-year-old little girl who is hiding from monsters. She is Annabeth, the demigod daughter of Athena. Although she doesn’t reveal why, Annabeth ran away, too. She wasn’t happy at home.

These three demigods have special powers and gifts but one thing they didn’t have was parents who cared about them. They probably would have given up their special powers in exchange for the chance to have a happy home life and loving parents.

Intelligence

In the story of “Leo Valdez and the Quest for Buford” the protagonist, the demigod Leo Valdez, is not a valiant warrior like many of his contemporaries. Prior to the story’s beginning, he had spent the two months with his nose to the grindstone in Camp Half-Blood’s workshop doing construction on the Argo II, an important warship that he is making for the gods for the impending war with Mother Earth. He is not as savvy or sophisticated as some of his fellow demigods. He’s a creative genius and does not focus on honing his battle skills as do his peers. That is why he calls on them to help him find the errant table, Buford, that ran away with an important engine part in his drawer.

The three demigods encounter a group of vicious Maenads who are determined to kill them. While Jason and Piper, the other two demigods, fight off the crazy maidens in the best way they know how – with weaponry and smart battle tactics – it is Leo who saves



the day with his brains. Since the Maenads cannot be killed because they are followers of Dionysus and he would be outraged, Leo uses his brains and quickly devises a clever way to trap the Maenads without killing them. By trapping the Maenads unharmed, Leo did not rile Dionysus and he kept them from harming the demigods and enabled Jason to find Buford and prevent a disaster.

In these stories of demigods, it is refreshing to have one of these young heroes demonstrate that brains over brawn can win the day. The story is a good role model for those youngsters who are bright and accomplished in the classroom but maybe not be such much on the football or baseball field.

Sacrifice

In the story of “Son of Magic”, sacrifice is a strong and consistent theme throughout the story. Hectate, the goddess of magic, initially rejected to accept a peace offering after the war between the gods and the Titans. Her son, Alabaster and a number of her other children, had followed Kronos and had fought with the Titans and against the gods. The gods were willing to forgive and forget but Hectate was deeply hurt by the war.

Of all the gods and goddesses, Hectate had suffered the biggest loss in the war. She lost more of her children in the war than any other deity. Her principals meant everything to her, but she was informed that her son Alabaster, who had survived the war, would be killed if she didn't agree to the peace treaty and return to the Temple of the Gods. Hectate didn't have to think for even a moment. She abandoned her stand, licked her wounds and rejoined the gods. She swallowed her pride and sacrificed her broken heart to save another child.

When Lamia threatened to kill Claymore if Alabaster cast a spell on her, Alabaster abandoned his plans to enchant lamia. He did not want Claymore to die and certainly didn't want Claymore's death to be his fault. But by obeying Lamia he was making quite a sacrifice. Holding back on his incantation against Lamia would mean his own death.

Perhaps it is Claymore who makes the biggest sacrifice in the story. He is a broken man whose life's career has collapsed before him. He was an expert on death and did not believe in the afterlife. But after his experience with Alabaster and Lamia, he learns that he's been all wrong. He decides to sacrifice his life to save Alabaster.



Styles

Point of View

“The Demigod Diaries” by Rick Riordan is a work of fiction and is comprised of four main stories. In “The Diary of Luke Castellan” it is Luke Castellan who tells the story of his trek with another demigod, Thalia, to help a fellow demigod, Halcyon Green, who needs to be rescued. The demigod Halcyon is an old man compared to most demigods. He gives his tattered diary to Luke and asks him to keep making entries in it – thus the title, “The Demigod Diaries.” In this story, Luke is writing about this adventure in the diary.

In “Percy Jackson and the Staff of Hermes” the protagonist of the story, the demigod Percy Jackson, narrates the story of his mission to recover the Staff of Hermes. His demigod girlfriend, Annabeth, accompanies him on this trek. The story is told from Percy’s perspective which allows the reader to know his inner thoughts and intentions.

“Leo Valdez and the Quest for Buford” is told in the third person from the perspective of protagonist Leo Valdez. In this story of a quest for an errant table that ran off, the reader learns of Leo’s brilliance but also of his lack of confidence and his naiveté which brings a “human” touch to this story of “demigods.”

“Son of Magic” is by Haley Riordan, Rick Riordan’s son who was sixteen when he wrote the story. The story is written in the third person limited omniscient. From this perspective, the reader is privy to the thoughts and feelings of the main characters.

Language and Meaning

“The Demigod Diaries” by Rick Riordan is a collection of stories about demigods and Greek gods. Having some familiarity with Greek mythology is helpful since there are many references to the gods and the powers they have. The gods have the ability to summon The Mist when they want to hide from mortals. The Mist makes humans see things that aren’t there – a monster would appear as a dog or cat and a huge Titan would appear as a man with a slightly above-average height.

There are strange and eerie monsters and creatures in the world of demigods. For example, in the story of “The Diary of Luke Castellan”, the demigods must fight the leucrotæ which are creatures with the bodies of lions, horses’ hooves and faces that are the blend of wolves and horses. There was another characteristic that was interesting—they ate at sunset and especially enjoyed a dinner of demigod.

When Percy and Annabeth are on a mission to recover Hermes’ staff, they have to contend with a band of crazy and vicious Maenads whose laurel wreaths are entwined with live vipers. A drakon, awakened by the shrill singing of the Maenads, is turned to



dust when the Maenads attack him. The drakon is a creature the size of a subway car with dagger-like teeth and flames curling from its nostrils.

Alabaster's sister, Lamia, is actually a crazed and vicious creature that turns from the image of a woman to that of a lizard. Her clawed hands are as dangerous as daggers. When Lamia is finally under Hectate's control, she sends the deceased Claymore back to earth to watch over Alabaster. In his new life form, Claymore is known as a Mistform.

Structure

There are four main stories: "The Diary of Luke Castellan", "Percy Jackson and the Staff of Hermes", "Leo Valdez and the Quest for Buford" and "Son of Magic." These stories are separated by some puzzles and activities including a Guide to Greeks and Romans, a Prophecy Word Scramble and an Olympian Word Search. There are also graphics including one showing the "Dangers of Hal's House", the "Underground Cavern Escape" and "Bunker Nine." There is also a photo gallery of some of the demigods featured in the stories.

In the front of the book preceding the first story is a letter from Camp Half-Blood signed by the author, Rick Riordan, as Senior Scribe for the camp. In his letter, Riordan warns the demigods to prepare themselves for many challenges and battles. He provides a short synopsis of each story and ends his letter with a bit of wisdom: knowledge is a weapon.

The last story in the book is preceded by another note from Riordan. He explains that "Son of Magic" was written by his son Haley who was sixteen when he wrote it. He explains that Haley had suffered with ADHD and that Rick Riordan had modeled the character Percy Jackson after his son. He proudly introduces the reader to the debut story by his son.



Quotes

My hands are shaking as I sit here on guard duty. I can't get the horrible images out of my head.

-- Luke (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 7, Paragraph 2)

Importance: This quote establishes the premise of the adventure that will unfold in this chapter.

Thalia and I didn't even carry phones. We'd found out the hard way that when demigods used technology, it attracted monsters like blood attracts sharks.

-- Luke (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 31, Paragraph 2)

Importance: This quote explains why Luke and Thalia had no way of calling for help when they were trapped with Halcyon Green.

But Hermes was the god of communication, roadways, and commerce. Maybe that meant he had some power over the Internet. I could really use a divine Google hit right about now.

-- Luke (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 37, Paragraph 4)

Importance: This comment captures the essence of the story of demigods in modern society.

Luke, I want you to take this diary. It has my predictions, my notes about the future, my thoughts about where I went wrong. I think it might help you. . . . You have an important future. Your choices will change the world. You can learn from my mistakes, continue the diary. It might help you with your decisions.

-- Halcyon (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 48, paragraph 3)

Importance: Halcyon felt he was doomed. He had foreseen that trouble was ahead for Luke and wanted to help him based on what he knew from his own experiences and mistakes. He wanted to give his diary to Luke.

I could hear hopefulness in her voice, but also doubt. She was waiting for me to admit the obvious: I'd forgotten. I was toast. I was boyfriend roadkill.

-- Percy (Chapter 2 paragraph Page 75, paragraph 2)

Importance: This quote is evidence of the uncertainty inherent in new, young romance.

Annabeth used to adventure with Hermes' son Luke. Over time, Annabeth developed a crush on Luke. As Annabeth got older, Luke developed feelings for her, too. Luke turned evil. Hermes blamed Annabeth for not preventing Luke from turning evil. Annabeth blamed Hermes for being a rotten dad...

-- Percy (Chapter 2 paragraph Page 78, paragraph 7)



Importance: This passage explains what happened to Luke from the first story when he found Annabeth, then a 7-year-old runaway.

Without the staff, Hermes will be unable to carry messages. Olympian communication lines will be disrupted, and that's only the first bit of chaos my friends have planned.
-- The Ginger Giant (Chapter 2 paragraph Page 98, paragraph 10)

Importance: The Ginger Giant was telling the demigods Percy and Annabeth what his possession of Hermes' staff would result in.

Jason looked cool and confident as usual—all surfer-dude handsome with his blond hair and sky-blue eyes. The scar on his mouth and the sword at his side gave him a rugged appearance, like he could handle anything.
-- Narrator (Chapter 3 paragraph Page 126, paragraph 6)

Importance: This is the introduction to the demigod Jason. The description encompasses the blend of the human and demigod nature of all the demigod heroes.

The Argo II had to be finished by the summer solstice. Then they would sail off on their great adventure—first to find Jason's old home, the Roman camp. After that. . . the giants were waiting. Gaea the earth mother, the most powerful enemy of the gods, was marshaling her forces to destroy Olympus.
-- Narrator (Chapter 3 paragraph Page 167, paragraph 9)

Importance: This passage foreshadows the ultimate mission to save Olympus from Gaea and the importance for Leo to build the Argo II.

I preach the truth and people long for the truth about death.
-- Dr. Claymore (Chapter 4 paragraph Page 187, paragraph 2)

Importance: Dr. Claymore was quoting his book on death which served to set up the premise for this story.

She's found me again. . . I don't know if I can fight her off this time. She's closing in on my scent.
-- The boy (Chapter 4 paragraph Page 195, paragraph 3)

Importance: This is a dream sequence in which Claymore is in a dusty old room with the young boy who asked for his help. Someone is after the boy and although the entire matter is a mystery to Claymore, he is being primed to save him.

They couldn't kill Lamia for good. The earth goddess Gaea would simply let her back into the mortal world again and again. But what if they didn't try to send her to Tartarus? What if this earth became Lamia's prison instead?
-- Alabaster (Chapter 4 paragraph Page 231, paragraph 6)

Importance: Claymore had suggested that they imprison Lamia on earth which would solve Alabaster's problem with Lamia.