

# **The Lost Hero Study Guide**

## **The Lost Hero by Rick Riordan**

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# Plot Summary

'The Lost Hero' is a story set in the Percy Jackson universe, in which three heroes go on a quest to rescue the goddess Hera, who has been captured by a race of giants. On the way they face many dangers from Greek mythology, including the witch Medea, King Midas, who can turn anything into gold, and man-eating one-eyed giants called Cyclopes. Jason struggles with his lost memories, eventually realizing that he is part of an exchange with a Roman camp of demigods, in an attempt to make the two rival sides reunite together in friendship.

Jason wakes up on a school bus unable to remember anything about his life or who he is. A girl called Piper thinks that he is her boyfriend and Leo thinks that he is his friend, but their teacher, Coach Hedge, does not recognize Jason. While they are at the Grand Canyon, some storm spirits attack and Jason fights back with a magical golden weapon. Coach Hedge reveals that he is a satyr, but is captured by the storm spirits as they retreat. A chariot pulled by winged horses arrives to take the children back to Camp Half Blood.

On the way, a demigod called Annabeth explains that they are all the children of Greek gods and are therefore heroes. She tells them that Camp Half Blood is a place for people like them, where they can train and be protected. When they arrive, Annabeth sends Jason straight to Chiron, their camp director. Leo is claimed as the son of Hephaestus. Annabeth gives Piper a tour of the camp and explains that her relationship with Jason was never real.

Chiron clearly knows who Jason is, but will not reveal his information. He seems to think Jason's presence there is dangerous. Jason has a vision of the goddess Hera, who tells him that she has been captured and needs saving. Around the campfire, Jason shows the camp his powers over lightning and they conclude that he is a son of Zeus. He decides to take Leo and Piper with him on his quest. Piper is claimed by Aphrodite.

Leo manages to fix the mechanical dragon that has been going haywire around the camp. They use it to fly to Canada to ask Boreas, the North Wind, what to do. He tells them to go to Chicago to collect the storm spirits, which they can then take to Aeolus, lord of the winds, as a peace offering. As they are flying towards Chicago, Festus crashes into a motor factory and they are attacked by Cyclopes. They manage to get away thanks to Leo's powers over fire. At Chicago they come up against Medea, an evil witch with the power of charmspeak. They fight her and manage to escape with the storm spirits and Coach Hedge. However, Festus crashes again in the garden of King Midas. Festus is destroyed. King Midas turns Leo and Piper into gold statues and tries to kill Jason, but Jason uses his lightning powers to defeat him and turns his friends back to normal. After King Midas the heroes face a werewolf called Lycaon and his pack of wolves, but they are saved by the Hunters of Artemis. Jason is reunited with his sister Thalia.



They reach Aeolus' palace, but although Aeolus is friendly at first, he changes his mind and sends storm spirits to kill them. They are saved by a friendly aura called Mellie, who cushions their fall as the storm spirits blow them away. They land in California. They decide to try to save Piper's father from the giant who has captured him. They fight the giant and his minions, and manage to save Piper's father. They receive a message from Thalia. She has found Hera but is under attack. They hurry to join her and are soon caught up in the final battle.

While Jason battles the king of the giants, Piper and Leo work together to release Hera from her cage. As she is freed, the king giant retreats back into the earth. Hera destroys the remaining enemies, but accidentally hits Jason in the blast. Piper manages to revive Jason, and Hera returns them to Camp Half Blood.

At Camp Half Blood they discuss the main threat as well as the mystery of who Jason really is. Their main enemy is Gaia, the primordial goddess of the Earth and mother of the giants. She wants to overthrow the gods. It was she who sent all the enemies against them. Jason is actually one of the demigods from the Roman camp. These are heroes who were born when their godly parent was in his or her Roman form. The Romans are enemies of the Greeks, but they will need to work together to defeat Gaia. Hera has performed an exchange; Percy Jackson was sent to the Roman camp and has no memories either. Hera hopes that they will learn to accept each other so that they can work together as allies.



# Chapters 1-4, Jason and Piper

## Chapters 1-4, Jason and Piper Summary

Jason, Piper, and Leo are the demigod children of the Greek gods. They are given a vision by Hera asking to be freed before the giants are released from the earth. They go on a quest to save her, battling monsters and beings from Greek mythology. Jason has no memories of who he was, but learns more about himself during his adventures. Eventually they manage to free Hera and stop the giant leader, but Gaia, the mother of the giants, is still planning destruction.

Jason wakes up on a school bus with no memories. His girlfriend Piper and friend Leo explain to him that he attends a boarding school in Nevada for misbehaving and difficult teenagers. They are currently on a school trip to the Grand Canyon. They walk around the museum, then step out onto a glass walkway above the canyon. Jason talks to Coach Hedge, the adult in charge of the trip, who reveals that he does not know who Jason is either. Suddenly a storm breaks over the canyon, and the walkway no longer seems stable. Coach Hedge yells for everyone to get inside.

The other children manage to get into the museum but the doors slam shut after them, trapping Leo, Piper, Jason, Dylan and Coach Hedge outside. Dylan then reveals that he is actually a monster. He flicks his wrist and Piper falls to the walkway, and he sends Leo flying off the edge. Coach Hedge kicks off his shoes and Jason sees that he is a satyr with hooves instead of feet. Coach Hedge bounds down the cliff to save Leo. Meanwhile Jason fights Dylan, who transforms to reveal that he is a ventus, a storm spirit. Two more venti appear. Jason is attacked with lightning but miraculously survives. He flips a golden coin in his pocket and a golden sword appears, which he uses to kill two of the venti. Dylan tries to leave with Leo, but Coach Hedge saves Leo and is taken instead. Piper is sent falling over the edge, so Jason jumps after her. He is surprised to find that he can fly by controlling the winds.

They return to the walkway, where they see a chariot pulled by winged horses arriving. In the chariot is a boy called Butch who is the son of Iris, the rainbow goddess, and a girl called Annabeth, daughter of Athena, who is searching for her lost boyfriend Percy Jackson. They take Piper, Leo and Jason back to a place called Camp Half Blood, where they crash land in the lake. An image of a fiery hammer floats over Leo's head, signifying that he is the son of the Greek god Hephaestus. Leo is taken to cabin nine where the other Hephaestus kids live. Annabeth asks a girl called Drew to take Jason to see Chiron, while she gives Piper a tour.

Annabeth explains that they are all children of Greek gods. Camp Half Blood is a place for the demigod children to train and be safe from monsters, which can sense and hunt demigods. Piper explains that she has always had the power to persuade others to do what she says. She doesn't tell Annabeth that she had a dream telling her to betray her new friends or her father will suffer. Annabeth tells her that Jason is not really her



boyfriend, and that they never even met before today. He was put there and her memories were altered by the Mist, a veil separating the mortal and magical worlds, which makes her think she has known him longer.

Annabeth takes her to find a weapon and Piper picks a dagger called Katoptris, which was once owned by Helen of Troy. They explore the camp and look inside the Hera cabin, which has no demigod children in it because Hera always remains faithful to Zeus. Inside is Rachel, the camp's Oracle who gives them prophecies at important times. Suddenly Rachel's eyes glow green and she grabs Piper. Piper has a vision of the goddess' statue coming to life. The goddess tell her that she must be freed.

## Chapters 1-4, Jason and Piper Analysis

This story is set in the same world as the Percy Jackson series of books, following on from the events of those stories but focusing on different characters. Many characters from the old books appear again, such as Annabeth and Chiron, giving the story a sense of continuation. However, this story is deliberately made accessible for readers who are not familiar with Percy Jackson, so the basic facts and rules of the world are introduced again in these first chapters. The three main characters are Jason, Piper and Leo. Piper and Leo do not know that they are demigods and have no knowledge of Camp Half Blood. This allows for everything about the camp to be explained to both them and the reader, while still seeming natural and necessary in the story. Jason has lost his memories, so also needs things explaining for him. His lost memories and occasional clues as to his identity throughout the story also help to add a sense of mystery and suspense.

Camp Half Blood is a place of safety and training for young demigods. Most demigods arrive there as children or young teenagers. Demigods who do not find the camp before puberty tend to find themselves being attacked by monsters, who can sense their godly half and want to kill them. All the children at Camp Half Blood are the sons and daughters of the Greek gods. These are powerful beings from the real mythology of the ancient world. According to ancient Greek myth, the gods ruled the world and controlled the forces of nature, as well as abstract ideas and emotions. For example, there is a goddess of love, a god of war, and a god of the sea. The Greek gods are anthropomorphic, meaning that they look and act like humans. They are particularly famous for having affairs with mortals, begetting children who were half-god and half-human. These demigod children would often have powers or greater strength than normal humans. They often went on quests, fought monsters, and accomplished great things. In this story the Greek gods are real and still around today. They are still having affairs with mortals and producing demigod children. Like the gods from real Greek mythology, they do not always behave well, and are often selfish and petty. They care about their children, but tend not to stick around very long to look after them, leaving them with a single mortal parent. Camp Half Blood helps to look after, protect and train these demigods so that they can fight monsters and stay alive. Like heroes from Greek mythology, they are often given quests to go on, which can be used as a mark of how



good a hero they are. In these chapters, Leo discovers that he is the son of Hephaestus, the blacksmith god.

Piper and Jason have not yet found out who their godly parents are, but some clues are given. Piper is beautiful, even without makeup, and can influence other people to do whatever she likes. She has a very charismatic personality. Her father is mortal, so her godly parent must be a female goddess. She also picks the dagger Katoptris as her personal weapon, a dagger that once belonged to Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman in the world. Helen was favored by Aphrodite, the charismatic goddess of love. Jason has no memories, so his godly parent could be male or female. He manages to produce a golden sword when he flips a coin, very like Percy Jackson's bronze sword that appeared when he clicked a ballpoint pen. Such an impressive weapon suggests that Jason is the son of an important god. Jason also finds that he can fly by controlling the air, and that he can survive being hit with a huge amount of electricity that would kill another person. The Greek god of the sky and lightning is Zeus, who is also the king of the gods. However, Jason automatically knows the Roman names for the gods and monsters instead of the Greek, suggesting that he may be the son of a Roman god instead. His tattoo also points to Roman origins, as the letters SPQR stand for 'The Senate and People of Rome.' The Roman gods are in most cases the same as the Greek ones, with different names. Their characteristics and the stories associated with them also vary slightly between the Greek and the Roman accounts.

There are many references to Classical mythology in these chapters. The venti, or storm spirits, are creatures from the real mythology of the ancient world, as are satyrs. Here a ventus appears as a normal human boy, using the Mist, a veil between the magical and mortal worlds, to fool people. In real Greek mythology gods and immortal beings would often disguise themselves as humans or animals in order to interact with the mortal world. The satyr has also disguised himself as a normal human, called Coach Hedge. Satyrs are creatures that have the body and head of a human and the legs and horns of a goat. In mythology satyrs are not as friendly as in these books, and tend to represent nature's wilder and more barbaric aspects. Here they are re-imagined as fairly innocent and peace-loving beings who protect demigods. The 'Hedge' part of Coach Hedge's name is a reference to nature, as satyrs are creatures of nature in mythology. It is also a joke that refers to his goat half, as goats notoriously will eat anything and often enjoy munching on hedges. Much of the humor and originality in these stories comes from the modern twists that the author has used to present Greek mythology in terms of our world. The Greek gods have moved to America, and the entrance to Olympus is now in the Empire State Building. Monsters hide out as humans and often interact with the modern world. Chiron's training school for heroes is now a summer camp, where heroes wear orange camp t-shirts and turn training into activities and games. These are just a few examples of how mythology has been updated, and there are many more throughout the book. This helps to make the mythology more accessible for the reader, and to provide an exciting new twist on very old stories.

One twist in particular will resonate with many readers. In these books, demigod children are always getting into trouble and being labeled as 'problem kids.' Many are diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia. These are things that are generally seen as



problems, and children who are diagnosed with them often feel alienated or inadequate, or are told that there is something wrong with them. These stories offer a different and very unique perspective. ADHD and other behavioral problems are represented as the demigod children's battle instincts, because they are hardwired to fight monsters and to be heroes. They need to be constantly alert and aware, and always ready to act. This means that they make great fighters, but often find it hard to concentrate or behave how they are expected to in environments such as school. They simply have too much energy. Dyslexia is presented here as a difficulty to read English because demigods' brains are hardwired to read ancient Greek. There is nothing wrong with them; this is just who they are meant to be. This encourages children to think of things like ADHD and dyslexia as part of who they are, rather than problems. It is what makes them unique and special, and there is certainly nothing wrong with them. In a world where children with these 'problems' can often feel let down or ignored by adults and teachers, it is important to be able to look at things more positively. Here the author seems to suggest that children with issues like these are perhaps meant for different things. Perhaps they are not very good at schoolwork, but maybe they will become a great athlete one day, for example. No one should let these 'problems' stop them from thinking of themselves as important. They can still be a hero.





## Chapters 5-8, Leo and Jason

### Chapters 5-8, Leo and Jason Summary

Leo is taken to the Hephaestus cabin where he meets the head councilor of the cabin, Jake, who is wrapped up in bandages in bed. He tells Leo to take Charles Beckendorf's bed, the old councilor of the Hephaestus cabin who died in the Titan War. Leo then goes to the forge, where he is greeted by the rest of the Hephaestus kids. They explain to him that there is a mechanical dragon out in the woods. It was built by Hephaestus cabin long ago. Beckendorf found the pieces and rebuilt it, but since his death it has gone haywire and attacks the camp. The Hephaestus cabin are now working on the problem of trapping it and deactivating it. Leo is also told that it has been centuries since the last Hephaestus kid was born with powers over fire, and that they tend to be very dangerous and cause catastrophes. Leo does not tell them that he has fire powers.

Meanwhile Jason is taken to the Big House, where Chiron the camp director greets him. Chiron is a centaur (half-man and half-horse), but he can fold himself into a magical wheelchair that makes him look human. When Chiron sees Jason he is shocked and says he should be dead, but he will not explain why he reacted in this way. Jason tells him his story, and Chiron points out that he can speak fluent Latin, which is unusual for a demigod as they normally speak ancient Greek. Suddenly everything freezes and Jason sees a vision of a goddess. She tells him that she is his patron and took his memories away deliberately to help protect him. She has performed some kind of exchange, which is necessary but risky. She needs Jason to find her and free her from her prison before the enemy king can arise. She says he has only four days, until sunset on the solstice. The vision then disappears and Jason tells Chiron about it. He says that it explains a lot, but before he can explain more Annabeth and Rachel burst in with an unconscious Piper.

They explain Rachel's strange premonition, and Jason tells them what he saw. They realize that the goddess must have been Hera, and worry about what the new threat could be that is worse than the Titans. Chiron refuses to help them, or to tell them anything about Jason, though it is clear that he knows something about him. Annabeth takes Jason to the cabin of Hypnos, god of sleep. She asks one of the boys there, Clovis, if he can help Jason get his memory back. Clovis says Jason's memories have been stolen by a god, so he cannot get them back. Clovis also explains that the Roman versions of the Greek gods are more warlike and powerful, the gods of an empire.

### Chapters 5-8, Leo and Jason Analysis

There are more references to Greek mythology in these chapters. Jason goes to see the camp director, a centaur called Chiron. Chiron is a real figure from Greek mythology, and was the trainer of many famous heroes. Whereas other centaurs, half-men and half-horse creatures, are wild, brutish, and constantly cause a nuisance, Chiron is



intelligent and civilized. Here Chiron is shown as a wise and caring camp leader who helps to protect and train demigods. He has a magical wheelchair that allows him to take the form of a human. He lives in the Big House, which is the headquarters of the camp. The camp was once run by the god Dionysus, and the house is still decorated to suit his tastes. This includes a slight jungle theme, plenty of masks, and a stuffed leopard's head that is still alive and likes to be fed dog treats. This references the mythology of Dionysus, who is the god of theatre and wine, and therefore likes vines, grapes and masks of all kinds. Masks are a mark of theatre and role-playing in many different cultures, particularly ancient Greece. Dionysus is often associated with the jungle and jungle animals, especially leopards and panthers. He is often depicted in art riding in a chariot pulled by panthers or leopards. It seems that Dionysus' flamboyant personality has left its mark on the Big House.

One of the Greek myths explored in this book is the story of Jason, for whom the Jason in this story seems to be a modern counterpart. Jason was an ancient Greek hero who sailed in a ship called the Argo to retrieve the Golden Fleece. He travelled with other heroes and had many adventures along the way, fighting monsters and magic before taking the fleece and returning home. The Jason in this story is compared to the Greek hero Jason by Hera/Juno who says that he reminds her of him. She claims to be Jason's patron, just as she favored the original Jason. Just like the Greek Jason, this Jason has a quest to go on and will have to complete it with the help of other heroes. He will meet some of the same characters and challenges that the original Jason faced. Just like the Greek Jason, this Jason also began his adventure with a prophecy about having one shoe. In Greek mythology, King Pelias was told to watch out for a man with one sandal. Jason lost his sandal while crossing a river and fulfilled the prophecy. Similarly, Annabeth is told to look for a hero with one shoe, which turns out to be this Jason. He lost his other shoe in the fight with the venti. In these chapters, Hera also says that Jason's father gave his life to her to appease her. This strongly suggests that Jason's father is Zeus, who is married to Hera and would need to appease her if he slept with another woman. Hera is famous in mythology for hating the children of Zeus' affairs and constantly taking revenge on them. However, she particularly loved the mortal hero Jason, who had no godly parents. It seems that she has adopted this modern Jason to be her new hero, choosing to overlook his parentage because of his similarities with the older Jason. Rather than hate him, she will make him her own pet hero. Hera is the Greek goddess of marriage and home, and her Roman name is Juno.

These chapters introduce the idea of the gods changing to suit their host culture. This is an interesting idea as it suggests a symbiotic relationship between gods and humans. The gods are powerful and affect nature and human life, but humans also affect the gods. When human values and ideas change, so do the things that the gods stand for. When human interests and cultures change, the gods adapt to suit new imagery and tastes. In chapter eight, the Greek god Hypnos is used as an example. Hypnos is a personification of sleep, and so the Greek god spent most of his time sleeping. The Roman version, Somnus, reflected some of the more dangerous ideas of sleep, and so would kill people who did not stay alert at their jobs. Other gods also became more warlike and strict, as well as more distant from mortals. This reflects changing ideas in Roman culture, which was different from ancient Greek culture. The Romans were more



intent on expansion and empire, and focused more on ideals such as discipline and honor. As a result, the Roman gods often seem less friendly than the Greek ones, but they are also less petty. Clovis also explains in chapter eight how the gods changed to suit America when the USA became their host culture. Now Zeus likes tailored suits and reality television, reflecting the interests and values of American culture. However, although the gods change to suit different cultures, they still hold on to their previous attributes and aspects. In other words, the gods become an amalgamation of all the ideas that have been attached to them. They represent Western civilization itself and all the changes that have taken place in it. As the attributes and personalities of the gods are linked so heavily to mortal culture, this suggests that it is human ideas and worship that keep the gods existing and gives them their power. In other words, the gods might not last forever, but they will last for as long as humans continue to value the ideals they stand for. Aphrodite still exists because we still think love is important, Demeter still exists because food and fertility are still important, Hermes still exists because trade, travelers and messages are still important, and so on. This suggests that the gods are not some strange external force that has always existed, but are part of and forever linked to mankind. This also suggests that even though society changes constantly, Western civilization is perhaps not so very different from how it was in the ancient world.



# Chapters 9-12, Piper and Leo

## Chapters 9-12, Piper and Leo Summary

Piper dreams about a perfect day she spent with her father on the beach, before her dad's assistant Jane arrived and shattered the happy day by telling him that Piper stole a car. Piper tries to explain that she didn't steal it but just persuaded the dealer to give it to her, but her father is upset. He sends her to a special boarding school in Nevada. Piper's dream shifts to a mountain where her father is tied to a stake. A giant tells her that if she goes on the quest, does his bidding and betrays her friends, her father will live.

Piper wakes up in camp and Rachel tells her they revived her with nectar, the drink of the gods. Piper missed dinner, so she goes to the campfire where the demigods are meeting. At the campfire, Annabeth fills everyone in on what has been going on. Drew asks if it is all to do with the Great Prophecy and Rachel confirms this. She tells them the Great Prophecy, which says that seven half-bloods will go on a quest to save the world. She thinks some of the seven are here tonight. Jason then shows everyone his powers by calling down lightning. They conclude that he must be the son of Zeus, and that he has already been claimed but just does not remember. Rachel then gives them a new prophecy for the quest to save Hera, which they agree Jason should lead. The prophecy mentions the dove and the forge, so Jason thinks a Hephaestus and Aphrodite kid should come with him. Leo begs to be given the chance and Jason agrees. Drew then offers herself as the Aphrodite demigod, but Piper argues against it, saying she is supposed to go. Suddenly her appearance changes; she is beautiful, with long hair, make-up, a new dress and a glowing pink aura. Aphrodite has claimed her as her daughter.

Leo remembers his babysitter from long ago, Tia Callida, realizing that she was actually Hera all along. She encouraged him to be brave and act heroically, often putting him in danger to see how he would respond. He also remembers a time when he was eight, when his mother got locked in the machine shop. A veiled woman appeared who seemed to be made of earth. She looked like she was asleep, although she was talking to him. Unintentionally, he created fire in his hands and then blacked out. When he woke up later his mother was dead and the police thought he started the fire. He was sent to different foster homes but he always ran away.

Now Leo goes to the woods and finds one of the traps for the mechanical dragon. The dragon appears and breathes flames at him but Leo is not harmed by fire. The dragon gets tangled in the trap and Leo sets about trying to fix it. Leo manages to get it working properly again, but it is still not completely fixed. He names the dragon 'Festus.' Leo then rides Festus, who takes him to a hidden cavern marked 'bunker 9.' Inside is a huge workshop full of tools, machinery, designs, and blueprints. Leo also finds wings and sets about attaching them to Festus.



## Chapters 9-12, Piper and Leo Analysis

These chapters give the reader some insight into both Leo's and Piper's pasts. From Leo's childhood, the reader can see why he acts and feels as he does. Leo has gone through some very upsetting and traumatic experiences, including the death of his mother. He remembers creating the fire that killed her, and the police also believed that he started the fire and caused his mother's death. Leo carries around a great amount of guilt about this, as well as confusion over the strange things he saw in his childhood. He remembers Tia Callida testing him, which he had believed was her attempts to murder him, and he remembers the strange sleeping lady who brought about his mother's death. Until now, Leo must have thought he was hallucinating or crazy, as well as a dangerous boy who killed his own mother. After the death of his mother, he never had anyone to care for him or make him feel special. His family thought he was some kind of demon and refused all contact with him. He felt abandoned and alone. He could not settle in foster homes and would always run away. He has never felt like he fits in anywhere. When he could find a home, such as in foster homes, he senses that he does not belong and simply runs away. He does not want to face his guilt and feelings of worthlessness. Now he finally understands everything that has happened to him. He understands why he has been diagnosed ADHD and why he has been labeled a problem kid. He constantly fiddles and tinkers with things because he is the son of Hephaestus, and he has problems concentrating because he is a demigod and so hardwired for battle. The strange things he saw in childhood were all real, and Tia Callida was actually Hera trying to prepare him for great things. His mother's death was not his fault but the attack of an evil being who knew he would defeat her children in the future. He is determined not to run anymore; now he will stand and fight.

Not only has Leo found answers to the questions from his childhood and understands that his mother's death was not his fault, he has also finally found a place where he can fit in. Now Leo understands what he is, and has found other people exactly like him. At Camp Half Blood he can find friends and support, but even more importantly than this, he actually has family. There is a cabin full of half brothers and sisters who all think like and share the same interests as him. Leo lost his mother and was abandoned by the rest of his family, so to find this is amazing to him. The demigods at Camp Half Blood will protect him and support him, and make him feel a part of something for the first time in his life. This is so wonderful to Leo he cannot believe his luck. This is the main reason he decides not to run anymore. He has found a place that could be home, and he is determined not to lose it. Now he is anxious to prove himself so that he will be accepted, and so that he can help his new friends and family. This is why he decides that he will capture and fix the mechanical dragon.

Piper's past is also explored in these chapters. She dreams about a day she spent with her father on the beach. This was a perfect day for her because it involved spending time with her father, just the two of them, uninterrupted by work. From this, the reader can conclude that this did not happen very much in Piper's life. Her father is a famous movie star, and so is very busy all the time. He can never give much attention to Piper, and most of the time she feels abandoned and ignored. She longs for a normal family



and a normal father-daughter relationship. She acts out in order to get his attention in the hopes that he will realize how much his busy life upsets her and change, but he does not react in this way. Instead, he seems disappointed and tired, and leaves most of the disciplining to his assistant. Piper would probably even prefer it if her father yelled at her, because that would at least be better than being ignored. The perfect day on the beach is ruined when her father's assistant arrives and tells him about the stolen car. Piper actually persuaded the dealer to give it to her for free, but of course her father does not believe this. He decides to send her away to a boarding school for problem kids, which is exactly what Piper did not want. Now she is even further away from her father. This dream reveals a lot about Piper. She does not want privileges and fancy possessions, and her father's fame and riches mean nothing to her. She would rather have a real family. She finds it hard to fit in anywhere because she has had such a strange upbringing. She is half Cherokee, but her father has distanced himself from his Cherokee side and they do not talk about it. They live in California in an affluent white area. Piper cannot feel like she really belongs anywhere. She has been bullied for her background and has often been called 'half-blood' as an insult.

When Piper arrives at Camp Half Blood she does not really know what to make of it. 'Half-blood' has always been an insult to her, but here she realizes that it is actually a compliment, something to be proud of. She is special, and can be a hero. She can fit in here because everyone here is like her. Finally she can find friends, family and a home, and somewhere to belong. However, she is conflicted and guilty because of her dream, which foreshadows events later in the book in which she will have to choose between her father and her new friends. She worries that she cannot pick the half-bloods and knows that she will one day betray them. This sours her whole experience at Camp Half Blood because she has finally found people she would never want to betray, but ironically these are the very people she will have to let down. Unlike Leo, she is not sure if she can allow herself to feel like she belongs here.

At the campfire, Piper is finally claimed, which is the last step in fitting in at Camp Half Blood. Now she is truly one of them. However, her godly parent is not what she expected. She is a daughter of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. The only other Aphrodite camper she has met so far is Drew, a petty and conceited girl who insulted her. Piper stands up to Drew and manages to sway the other campers in her direction, showing that she is just as charismatic and strong-willed. Piper's ability to persuade others is explained by her parentage; Aphrodite is about charm and personality as well as looks. When Piper is claimed, her appearance changes to make her look incredibly beautiful. She has perfect make-up, a low cut dress, and long hair. Everyone else is amazed, but Piper is horrified. This is because Piper is not the kind of person who cares about looks and fashion. She cares about what is inside rather than on the outside. She deliberately wears no make-up and does not particularly like to attract attention to herself. It is therefore very ironic that Aphrodite is her mother, and Piper could not be more different from Drew. Piper will have to find a way to work out what her connection to Aphrodite means to her. Like Leo, her journey of self-discovery has only just begun.



# Chapters 13-16, Jason and Piper

## Chapters 13-16, Jason and Piper Summary

Jason dreams of a mother wolf called Lupa, inside a burnt house. By a reflecting pool, there is an earth cage that holds Hera. Lupa tells him that she raised him long ago and taught him to be a hero, and that now he must find his way back. She tells him he must free Hera.

Jason wakes up inside the Zeus cabin. He sees an alcove with a bedroll and some pictures. He investigates, and finds pictures of Annabeth and another girl. Annabeth comes in and tells him that the girl is Thalia. Annabeth explains that Thalia was a daughter of Zeus, but that she joined Artemis' Hunters so she is now immortal. Jason asks what her last name is, and Annabeth tells him that it is Grace. Jason remembers that this is also his last name, so he must be Thalia's younger brother. They discuss the quest, and Jason decides the best way to find Hera would be to find the storm winds that attacked him. Annabeth suggests travelling to Quebec to talk to Boreas, the North Wind.

Piper wakes up in the Aphrodite cabin. Drew is mean to her, but when she is in the shower two Aphrodite kids called Mitchell and Lacy are more friendly. Lacy brings her supplies, clothes and a backpack for the quest, supplied by the other Aphrodite kids, who held a collection. They are all scared of Drew, and Mitchell tells her that Drew can charmspeak, so can persuade them to do anything just by talking. Piper also has this power, so she is not affected. The other kids tell Piper that an Aphrodite child's rite of passage is to break someone's heart, which Piper refuses to do. Piper tells them that Aphrodite must be about more than this, and leaves the cabin.

As she comes out of the cabin, Leo lands on his winged dragon. He tells the other campers that it is safe and that it is called Festus. Jason tells him that means 'happy' in Latin. They get on and leave on their quest.

## Chapters 13-16, Jason and Piper Analysis

Jason is trying to come to terms with who he is. He remembers some things, but they are not enough to piece together his real identity. He remembers a wolf called Lupa who raised and trained him, and that he was taught to survive or die. Prompted by Lupa, he also remembers that his last name is Grace, and realizes that he must be Thalia's younger brother. He still does not understand why he appeared at the Wilderness school with no memory, or why he is important. He does not know how he has stayed alive or where he has been. He resents Zeus for not talking to him and helping him to work things out. He feels abandoned and alone, and isolated from everyone else because of his lost memory. He finds it harder to fit in than Piper and Leo, who both felt instantly like they belong at Camp Half Blood. Jason never had this feeling, and



conversely feels as though he is in the wrong place, like he is in some kind of danger by being there. He also begins to worry about what his life is really like. He wonders if he has friends somewhere, and whether there is anyone looking for him as hard as Annabeth is looking for Percy. This makes him feel guilty, as he does not know who he has left behind. He could have a girlfriend he cannot remember, which makes his growing attraction to Piper confusing for him. This identity crisis is making it harder for him to accept his place and his quest. Annabeth tries to help him, and suggests going to see Boreas, the North Wind. Jason agrees and immediately feels better when he has a solid goal to aim for. Clearly going on quests is something that is familiar to Jason, even though Camp Half Blood is not.

Piper is also having something of an identity crisis. She has been claimed by Aphrodite, but everything about the Aphrodite cabin seems to clash with her personality and ideals. She does not like make-up or fashion, and she thinks it is appalling that the other Aphrodite campers like breaking people's hearts. She tells them that Aphrodite does not have to be about these things, but she is not confident enough in herself to tell them what Aphrodite should be about. She does not really know yet herself, and she does not understand how she fits in. She lets Drew's bullying get to her, and is disturbed when Drew tells her that a previous Aphrodite camper was a traitor. Piper is already finding it hard to fit in because she is afraid she will betray them all; now this new piece of information makes her feel even worse. It is as if she has been doomed all along to be a traitor and it is inevitable that she will betray them. She is confused and conflicted. She wants to help her Aphrodite brothers and sisters, who have shown her kindness and support, and stand up to Drew for them. At the same time, however, she is afraid to belong here. This is why she is not brave enough to stand up to Drew and leaves.

Piper's transformation is also giving her trouble. She does not appreciate being the centre of attention and does not find being incredibly beautiful the gift that others might. She feels ridiculous in attractive clothes, preferring to dress practically and to blend in. She does not like her new image because she does not feel like it is the real her. Jason agrees with this view. He thinks Piper looks gorgeous, but he actually prefers how she looked before because she was more like herself. By thinking this, Jason shows how much he really likes Piper. He is attracted to the person Piper is underneath, rather than what she looks like. Piper recognizes and appreciates that Jason likes her for the real her. Jason feels a similar way, hating how people respect him for being the son of Zeus rather than for who he is. If anyone can understand how Piper is feeling, it is him. Both of them are struggling with their place in the world and to understand who they really are. Both seem to be attracted to each other, but Jason's memory problems are currently standing in the way.





# Chapters 17-20, Leo and Jason

## Chapters 17-20, Leo and Jason Summary

As they fly into Quebec towards the hotel where Boreas lives, two winged figures fly out to meet them. They are the Boreads (the sons of Boreas), called Zethes and Calais. They tell Jason, Leo and Piper that they do not have clearance to land and so will have to be destroyed. Piper uses her charmspeak to persuade them that it is an emergency, so Zethes lets them in. Inside, the brothers confront Leo, saying that he smells of fire, and Zethes threatens him with his sword. Jason tells him that he is a son of Zeus and Zethes stops. He says they have been expecting a son of Zeus. Just then, Boreas' daughter Kione, goddess of snow, comes in. She takes Jason and Piper upstairs to her father, but Leo has to wait downstairs.

Jason and Piper are taken to Boreas, who speaks to them in French. Khione begins to translate, but Piper replies in perfect French. Boreas explains that French is the language of love, so naturally the child of Aphrodite can speak it. Boreas speaks French because he lives in Quebec, so he reflects his host culture. Boreas then tells them that he has orders to kill all demigods, issued by Aeolus the master of winds. Aeolus is angry because the Titan War caused all the wind spirits to escape and rage around the world, and he is sick of having to chase and collect them. He cannot blame the gods, so he takes it out on their children. However, Boreas promises to hear them out before deciding whether he will kill them. Piper explains everything that has happened to them, and their quest, asking for his help. Boreas is being swayed but is still not sure, then he spots the tattoo on Jason's arm, which says SPQR. Boreas laughs and changes form to look like Aquilon, his Roman equivalent. Boreas realizes what Hera's plan is, but does not tell them. He agrees to let them leave unharmed, and tells them that the storm spirits are in Chicago. If they capture them and take them to Aeolus, he might help them. Khione is angry that her father is helping them, but he tells her off and reminds her that he is the master.

Piper and Jason go back downstairs and meet up with Leo again. They take the dragon and start flying towards Chicago.

## Chapters 17-20, Leo and Jason Analysis

The mythology surrounding Boreas is explored in these chapters. Boreas is the personification of the North Wind in Greek mythology. His Roman counterpart is Aquilon, but the two were more or less the same being. Boreas is one of the four winds, corresponding to the four directions of the compass. Boreas, as North Wind, is cold and firm, but he is not as unpredictable and dangerous as the other winds. He is, however, very strong, and can have a violent temper when provoked. This reflects the properties of the north wind, which is strong, cold, and sometimes violent. It brings ice and snow, so can seem cruel and devastating to the world. Here he is represented as a man on an



ice throne, with long hair and a beard, covered in ice. He has large purple wings. In appearance he resembles the Greek idea, as he was often depicted in art as an old man with shaggy hair and beard, and large wings like angel wings. His appearance here, with the ice in his beard, the frost covering him and the throne, also brings to mind images of Jack Frost and Old Man Winter, and perhaps also Woden. This ties Boreas to other winter and frost figures within Western culture, which have all been amalgamated into the form of Boreas. Boreas no longer just reflects Greek myth, but also the many ideas that form our own culture and civilization.

Boreas' personality here also reflects classical mythology. He is cold and firm, seeming not to care for demigods or for life. He doesn't know if the frozen demigods in his hall are still alive, and finds it amusing to freeze them. He does not really care about Jason's quest until he sees Jason's tattoo, and then only seems to change his mind because he is amused and thinks Jason will offer him some interesting entertainment. He is not violent in a heated way, but dangerous in a very cold and calculating way, which fits his association with the cold north wind. He has made his home in Canada in a very northerly city, Quebec. There are places further north, but Boreas appears to have chosen this place because it is a centre of culture and civilization, while still being northerly enough to get very cold. The people here appreciate and respect winter in a way that cities in the USA do not, but at the same time Quebec is big enough and central enough to offer a place where Boreas can feel important. This fits in very well with the mythology of Boreas and the ideas that the author has already introduced about the gods and their desire to be near civilization. Quebec is also a very old and picturesque city, giving this whole episode a very magical feel. Boreas speaks French to reflect his host culture, making him seem different enough to be unpredictable, and the reader cannot be certain how he will act. Boreas lives at the top of a hotel, and the suite is covered in frost. The author has combined normal things and normal places with the supernatural and the magical. He has succeeded well in blending the mortal and immortal worlds of his story, making the translation of Greek myth in North America very believable.

Other aspects of Boreas' mythology also appear here. Boreas' sons are Zethes and Calais, represented here as immortal beings who appear as typical teenagers. They seem to have been frozen in their teenage years forever, never growing up. This allows for a lot of humor, as they act very immaturely. Zethes and Calais also appear in the mythology of the original Jason, as they sailed with him on the Argo on the quest for the Golden Fleece. This is yet another reference to the myth of Jason, which occur many times throughout this story. Jason seems to be constantly compared to the original Jason, suggesting that he is a modern day counterpart. The author has cleverly woven together different elements of Greek mythology here to create an interesting encounter and to reference the myth of Jason.

In these chapters, Piper begins to prove her worth. Leo has already contributed to the quest by providing Festus as transport. Now Piper helps by speaking for them to the Boreads, then to Boreas. She is very persuasive, and manages to get them into the building safely. She also seemed to be having some success in persuading Boreas to help them, despite the fact that his mind seemed made up against them. Piper's



persuasion abilities at first seem like charmspeak, her godly power. However, it becomes clear that this is actually a natural ability of Piper's. Even when Aphrodite's spell has worn off and Piper looks like her normal self, she still manages to convince the others that she is confident and correct. Zethes still refers to her as pretty, even without the spell's perfect make-up and hair. Piper's beauty clearly comes from inside her, rather than from any spell cast by her mother. Here Piper begins to prove what Aphrodite is all about, and so begins to answer some of her questions about what being a daughter of Aphrodite means. She shows that Aphrodite can be about confidence, inner beauty, and strength, and not just about outer beauty and conceit.



# Chapters 21-24, Piper and Leo

## Chapters 21-24, Piper and Leo Summary

Piper thinks about her father, who played many different roles but has never taken the part of a Cherokee. She thinks that she is like him, trying to hide who she really is and pretending to be something else. She worries she will betray her friends. She dreams of the giant on the mountain again, who tells her that her father is not coping well and won't last much longer. He says the quest is destined to fail and that her friends will die anyway, so she may as well betray them to save her father. She tries to defy him, so he says he will show her how easily she can be brought down. She wakes up to find that the dragon is spinning out of control and they are all falling.

Jason grabs Piper and Leo. He struggles to hold three people aloft, and they drop in small bursts, crash landing into the roof of a warehouse building. Festus crashes into the ground below. Piper hurts her foot in the landing, and they give her some of the ambrosia the Aphrodite kids packed for her. They don't want to risk giving her too much, so they set her foot. Leo decides to go off on his own to find Festus and see if he can fix him. Jason stays with Piper, who cannot walk. They hear noises and Jason goes to investigate. Piper then hears a bang, and decides to take more ambrosia so that she can walk. Then Jason calls to her and she walks forward, but it is actually a Cyclops mimicking his voice.

Leo finds the dragon in the toilets, and surprisingly it is hardly damaged. He sets about fixing it, when a vision of the sleeping woman appears in the asphalt and chemical sludge from the toilets. It tries to encourage him to give up on his friends. Leo throws a toilet seat at it and the vision disappears. He then hears a crash from the warehouse and realizes his friends are in danger.

Leo sneaks into the factory and sees Piper and Jason hung up by chains suspended from cranes. Around them are three Cyclopes who are planning on cooking them and eating them. Leo realizes that one of them is the mother of the other two, who are brothers. He quickly throws together a universal remote, but some wires spark and the Cyclopes notice him. One of them throws a car at him but he manages to dodge. Leo uses the remote to control the cranes, using them to kill the two brother Cyclopes. The mother is quicker and tougher, and manages to grab and destroy the cranes. She approaches Leo and prepares to kill him, but Leo uses his fire to break a link in the chain above her head, bringing an engine block down on her head. He releases Piper and Jason, but the Cyclopes are already beginning to reform. Piper remembers that Boreas had warned them about monsters no longer being confined to Tartarus. They decide they need to get out quickly.



## Chapters 21-24, Piper and Leo Analysis

Piper is feeling a lot of guilt about her dreams of the giant Enceladus. He tells her that she has to betray her friends or her father will die, and that her friends are destined to die anyway. Piper tries to defy him, but he tells her that he will show her how easily he can bring her down. She wakes up to find that the dragon is falling out of the sky. She connects this with her dream and thinks that it was Enceladus who caused them to fall. She blames herself, and feels guilty for not telling her friends about her dreams. She feels as though she has already betrayed them, and worries that it is inevitable that she will let them down. She feels like she is pretending to be something she is not all the time, and compares herself to her father acting various roles but never facing who he really is. She fears that she is like this too. She should give herself more credit. She is braver than her father, and more willing to search for who she is in order to understand herself better. She is a strong person and a good friend, and it is by no means inevitable that she will betray them.

Jason and Leo are also struggling with issues of identity. Jason explains how difficult it is for him without his memories. He feels like he is constantly having *déjà vu*, always on the edge of remembering things. He is constantly confused and never knows what he is supposed to be feeling. Piper also worries about his identity, for the first time wondering if he could be an enemy after all. They know nothing about him, and everyone who seems to have an idea who Jason really is has reacted badly. Chiron seemed to think he was a threat, and Boreas told them they would tear each other apart. Piper now realizes that her friend might not be her friend after all. Just as she is pretending to be something she is not, so too Jason might have a hidden dark past.

Leo is having a self-confidence crisis. He worries that his fire powers are dangerous, and that he will let the others down. He worries that the line in the Great Prophecy about the world falling to fire or storm refers to him. He thinks that it is inevitable that he will cause trouble, and will then be forced to move on again. He is afraid of losing his friends and a place where he can finally feel like he belongs. He has already felt like he lost Piper and Jason once when they became a couple, as it made him feel awkward, like a third wheel. Leo felt like Jason's memory loss gave them all a reset, but now Jason and Piper appear to be getting very close again. Once again Leo is becoming a third wheel, and does not feel as important as the other two. He worries that he is just tagging along on the quest, and that he is not really a hero at all. He feels eclipsed by Jason, who has special powers and is the son of the king of the gods. He is a little jealous, and feeling very insecure.

However, Leo proves himself completely wrong. When the Cyclopes capture the other two, he comes to the rescue. He uses his skills at invention and crafting to build a universal remote, controlling the cranes to fight the monsters. He then uses his fire powers to defeat the mother Cyclops. When things look very bad, Leo's powers and skills are exactly what is needed to get them out of trouble. He proves to himself that his fire powers can be helpful and not just dangerous, and that he can be a hero after all. Now his friends also know the truth about his fire powers, so he does not have to feel



guilty or lie to them anymore. More importantly than this, Piper accepts him and thinks his fire power is amazing. She does not treat him like a dangerous freak, but as a friend and a fellow hero.

The mythological creatures called Cyclopes are introduced in these chapters. These are creatures from the real mythology of ancient Greece. They are monstrous giants with a single eye. Some of them work for the gods in their forges, but many others are violent and like to eat human flesh. Cyclopes appear in the famous story of the Greek hero Odysseus, who landed at the Cyclopes' island on his way home from war. He encountered a Cyclops called Polyphemus who ate some of his men. Odysseus and his remaining men only managed to escape by tricking and blinding the monster. Here the Cyclopes are presented very similarly to the myth, as hideous, violent giants with one eye each, who try to eat Jason and Piper. They work at a car factory, which is appropriate to the mythology of the Cyclopes as crafters and blacksmiths. This is what they use as a front in order to live in the mortal world. The name 'Monocle Motors' with its logo of a single eye also gives a clue as to what lies inside the factory.



# Chapter 25-28, Jason and Piper

## Chapter 25-28, Jason and Piper Summary

While Jason is unconscious he dreams of Hera. She tells him she was lured to the Wolf House by a voice warning her of danger to her people here. She slipped away from Zeus but when she arrived she was captured and held here. She says Jason is an exchange and a peace offering to heal millennia of hatred, and that they can never win while they are divided. Jason asks her to explain but she will not.

Jason wakes up and Piper and Leo fill him in on what happened with the Cyclopes. Piper remembers some Greek mythology, that Hera was once captured by a giant called Porphyron and that this started a war with the gods. They think that it is happening again now.

They arrive at Chicago and follow a storm spirit towards a fountain. There are more venti swirling around it. As they watch, the venti fly across the fountain and down a drain. Leo, Piper and Jason land Festus in the park and Leo produces a whistle from his belt to call the dragon when needed. They head down a ladder in the drain. They stop to eat and rest, then walk down the sewer to find the storm spirits.

At the end of the sewer there is a sign for a department store that appears to sell magical items. They decide to start at the top. They see many strange items, but it is the atrium that catches their attention. On the bottom floor is a large pool with two cages next to it. In one cage are the storm spirits and in the other is Coach Hedge, petrified like a statue. Just then, a woman appears out of thin air in front of them. She introduces herself as the Princess of Colchis and asks their names, then insists on leading them around her shop.

Piper is suspicious of the woman and tries to get the boys to listen to her, but the princess has them in some kind of trance. Piper realizes that the woman is actually Medea, a witch who loved the original Jason but was betrayed and abandoned by him. She admits that she is working for a patron who helped her get out of the underworld and come back to life. She tells them that the price for the storm spirits and Coach Hedge is for Jason and Leo to fight. She says her fountain will bring the loser back to life. She uses charmspeak to persuade them that they resent each other and want to fight. She then shows Piper that she is controlling her father's assistant. Piper refuses to sacrifice her friends for her father, and puts all her power into a last attempt to break Medea's spell. She manages to do it, and Jason and Leo stop attacking each other. Medea releases two gold dragons to kill them. As the boys fight them, Piper chases Medea upstairs. She throws her shield at her, knocking over the potions. They combine to create a fire which soon engulfs the store. Festus crashes through the roof and attacks the smaller dragons, then flies off with the three demigods as the whole store goes up in flames.



## Chapter 25-28, Jason and Piper Analysis

In these chapters, the heroes come up against Medea, a sorceress from real Greek mythology. She is a very powerful and dangerous woman who helped the original Jason to take the Golden Fleece from her own father. She fell in love with Jason, and even helped to kill her own brother so that Jason could escape safely. Jason took her with him, and promised her a life with him. However, he betrayed her when he became engaged to a local princess, and abandoned both her and their children. Medea murdered Jason's new bride and her own children in order to exact revenge on him for betraying her. In this story, Medea proclaims her innocence in some of these crimes, claiming that she did not kill her brother or her children. She explains that these were lies made up to blacken her name. The Medea who appears in a famous ancient Greek tragedy written by Euripides also constantly claims her innocence, insisting that she is the victim. Here Medea makes a good case for how badly Jason treated her, but she is ultimately portrayed as a villain. Piper calls her one of the worst villains in Greek mythology. This story seems to suggest that although Medea is a victim, and is justified in being angry with Jason, the way she chose to take revenge shows that she is evil. She is a murderess, using her powers to manipulate, trick and harm others.

Medea is a sorceress who is particularly skilled with potions and poisons. In this story, she is presented as the owner of a magical department store, where she sells magical artifacts and potions. She uses her charmspeak and her powers to persuade customers to make bad deals with her, paying more than they would have liked. This fits in with the manipulative and uncaring character of Medea that emerges from the mythology concerning her. Medea in this story also reacts angrily when she hears the name Jason, associating him with the hero who betrayed her long ago. This is another case of the Greek hero Jason's mythology linking to the Jason of this book, as if he is a modern counterpart to the ancient hero. Medea tries to use the same tricks on them that she used in the ancient mythology. She tells them that her fountain will bring people back to life in an attempt to persuade Jason and Leo to fight each other. In the myths, she persuades a king's daughters to kill him and cut him into pieces, promising that her cauldron will bring him back to life younger than he was before. Of course, she did not bring him back to life, and the daughters were distraught that they killed their own father. This is just one example of Medea's cruel and manipulative behavior. In this story, when Medea does not get her way she tries to kill the heroes with dragons, then tries to manipulate Piper once again when her life is in danger. It is clear that she only really cares about herself, and will do anything to keep power.

Jason and Leo are encouraged to fight each other by Medea. They are friends, and yet she manages to convince them that they resent each other. This is partly due to her power of charmspeak, but also because there are some genuine feelings of resentment that she can manipulate. Leo has been feeling like a third wheel, like he is less important than the other two. In particular, he feels inferior to Jason, and resents that Jason is the real hero. These feelings are amplified by Leo's own insecurity about how useful he actually is, and whether he can be a brave hero or whether he will simply cause destruction. Jason has been feeling a little resentful of Leo's presence because





he wants to be alone with Piper to figure out his confused feelings for her. He also feels that he has to be strong because he is the leader, and has been faking confidence despite feeling very insecure and scared. He probably resents Leo's easy, joking attitude, feeling like he has to be strong and responsible when Leo has no responsibility at all. Jason's fears and confusion over his lost memories only make these feelings worse. It is these fears and resentments that Medea is able to manipulate.

Medea works with feelings that are already present, which is how she manipulates Jason and Leo. However, Piper can also do the same. Piper defies Medea and tries to use her own charmspeak on the boys. This does not work at first, but when she puts all her own emotions and feelings into her voice, she shatters Medea's spell. This is because Piper has chosen her friends over her father, refusing to betray them to save her dad. She has realized how important their friendship is, and so can make Jason and Leo see the same. Leo and Jason might have slight feelings of resentment towards each other, but their feelings of friendship and support are stronger, and it is this that breaks Medea's hold on them. Through this, Piper also proves her dedication to her friends and to the quest, showing that she is not as weak as she thought she was. Her betrayal is not inevitable after all.



# Chapters 29-32, Leo and Jason

## Chapters 29-32, Leo and Jason Summary

The heroes follow a vapor trail in the sky that Jason can see but the others cannot, which they think has been left for them by Aeolus. Leo falls asleep and his father Hephaestus appears to him in his dream. He tells Leo that he has been watching him all his life in a magic mirror, but that he never visited because he's not very good with kids. He explains that after the Titans were defeated, the earth bore a new batch of children sired by Tartarus to take revenge for the death of the Titans. This is now happening again.

Leo wakes up to find that they are falling again. Leo shouts for Jason to grab Piper and fly away to lighten the load, then he tries to fix Festus. He sees a large open lawn in the city below and directs the dragon there for a crash landing. However, that particular house and its grounds have a lot of security, and laser guns shoot the dragon down. Festus is destroyed. Piper tells them they are in Omaha, Nebraska, but she does not know what the house is. They cannot leave past all the security, so their only option is to go into the house. Inside, everything is dark and they cannot find a light switch. They decide to sleep on the sofas and find a way to leave in the morning.

When Jason wakes up Coach Hedge has been released from his cage and has woken up. They notice that everything in the room is gold, then an old pudgy man walks in. He shouts for his son, Lit, who comes in and prepares to attack them. Piper manages to stop him and assures him they mean no harm. The old man introduces himself as King Midas.

Midas explains that he can turn anything to gold with a touch, and reverse the effect with running water. He works for the same patron as Medea. The three demigods try to leave, but Midas offers them a choice: be turned into gold or fight his son Lit. Piper tries to charmspeak him but he grabs her and turns her to gold. He does the same to Leo. Jason tells him he chooses to fight Lit instead, and summons his magic weapon, which appears as a spear this time. He beats Lit, then summons lightning to bring the chandelier down on top of Midas. The roof falls in, and rain comes into the room, turning everything gold back into what it was originally. Jason shouts for Coach Hedge to grab Leo and Piper. He leaves Midas to the mercy of all his victims, who are now turning back into real people.

## Chapters 29-32, Leo and Jason Analysis

The demigods come up against Midas in these chapters. King Midas is a real mythological figure who was rewarded for his hospitality to Dionysus' teacher Silenus. Dionysus granted Midas whatever he wished, and Midas asked for everything he touched to turn to gold. This wish was granted, and Midas soon enjoyed creating great



wealth for himself. Then one day, he touched his daughter and she immediately turned into a golden statue. He also found that all food turned to gold, and he realized he would soon die of starvation. He prayed to the god, who told him to wash in the river Pactolus. He did so, and was cleansed. He then went to live in the country to worship the nature god Pan. One day he was asked to judge a music contest between Pan and Apollo, and foolishly chose Pan as the victor. Apollo punished him for his awful taste in music by giving him the ears of a donkey. Midas was embarrassed of this, and made his barber swear to keep it a secret. Unable to do so, the barber whispered the secret into a hole in the ground, then filled it in with earth. Reeds grew from the ground and whispered the secret that King Midas has the ears of a donkey. This story is often interpreted as a moral tale about the dangers of greed and arrogance.

In this book, many aspects of the Midas myth remain the same. Midas is a king whose touch turns anything into gold. He lives in a large house with extensive security, presumably to protect all his gold. Although Midas can simply make more gold, his reverence for the metal means that he would not be able to abide anyone stealing it. He is completely obsessed with gold, and fits into the modern world by advertising how gold is a great investment even in troubled times. This mimics many of the adverts that do appear on television in the mortal world, trying to convince people to either invest in or sell their gold. In this way, the author has managed to fit Midas' character perfectly into today's world. Midas also has donkey's ears, like the myth, and his daughter stands in the house as a golden statue. However, the author has chosen to include a twist on the tale. Midas has not learned any lessons from his greed, and is just as obsessed with riches as he ever was. He learned that running water, like the river the god instructed him to wash in, reverses the effects of the magic. This means that if he accidentally turns something into gold that he didn't intend to, he can simply turn it back. His daughter is still gold because he grew sick of her talking and turned her back into a statue again. Her statue is joined by many other people who he has turned into gold, including the barber who gave away the secret of his ears. Midas is clearly vengeful, cruel, and more than a little crazy. The idea of a crazy Midas who never learned his lesson fits in well with the mythology of Midas, as he ended up with donkey ears due to his lack of respect and tact. Self restraint is clearly just not something Midas understands.

Jason is trying to be a good leader in these chapters. He attempts to draw his team back together, as he senses that they are becoming distant because of their own individual problems and worries. He apologizes to Leo about the things he said when Circe convinced them to fight each other and tries to give Leo more confidence in himself. Leo appreciates the gesture, and Jason succeeds in clearing the air. He also tries to reach out to Piper, telling her he will try to help her father, but Piper is not ready to talk about it and to open up to the others yet. By attempting to unite them all as one team again, Jason shows that he is a good leader. It is up to him to make sure they work together and that they support each other. Leading a group of demigods will not be easy, but it is Jason's duty, just as it was for the original Jason.

Jason also shows how much he is thinking about his responsibilities as leader when Piper and Leo are turned to statues. Jason cannot believe he let this happen and feels



as though he has let them down. He is in charge, and he is supposed to make sure they do not get hurt. He is determined not to fail them, and realizing that he is responsible for them spurs him on to fight harder. He challenges Lit and manages to beat him, proving that he is a good fighter, then uses his godly powers to defeat Midas. In the confrontation he shows bravery, quick thinking, intelligence, strength and skill, and also a concern for his team. These are all qualities of a good leader and a great hero.

Through his dream of his father, Leo manages to get a step closer to understanding who he is and what his place in the world is. Hephaestus is sympathetic about his love of machines and how upsetting it is for one of his inventions to be destroyed. He tries to warn Leo about Festus, trying to make him feel better by telling him he cannot save every machine, and that things can always be reused. Hephaestus is also similar to Leo in relating to machines better than other people. Leo is nowhere near as bad as his father in this respect, but he can sympathize. They are not so different as Leo might have thought before he met him. At first Leo is angry with his father for abandoning him, but then realizes that Hephaestus has been watching him all his life with a magic mirror. Hephaestus really does care about Leo; he has just never plucked up the courage to visit him. Leo recognizes this fear. He can relate to this too, as his way of dealing with problems has always been to run away. He does not necessarily forgive his father, but he can now understand him better. Through understanding his father, he can get a sense of peace and closure. He can stop being so angry and afraid and can begin to understand himself a little better too.



# Chapters 33-36, Piper and Leo

## Chapters 33-36, Piper and Leo Summary

Piper wakes up in Colorado, where Jason has flown them using the power of the storm spirits and following the vapor trail left by Aeolus. Piper is suffering from hypothermia from being turned into gold and dunked in a river to turn her back. As they rest in a cave, she remembers a Cherokee story about a man sacrificing his wife in order to save his whole tribe and future generations of Cherokee. She realizes she might have to sacrifice her father to save her friends and the world. She tells them the truth about her dreams and about her father. Jason and Leo tell her that they want to help her father if possible. Coach Hedge concludes that the giant Enceladus must be trying to divert their journey to the mountain in California where he is holding Piper's father, meaning that Hera must be imprisoned somewhere else. It is unlikely that they can save both.

Suddenly, a pack of wolves appears outside the cave. A wolf enters and turns into a human called Lycaon. Piper remembers his mythology, telling them that Zeus made Lycaon the first werewolf. Lycaon and his wolves attack, but Leo creates a wall of fire between them, keeping the wolves back. Just as it looks like Leo cannot keep the fire going much longer, silver arrows come out of the darkness and begin killing wolves. Lycaon runs away. Artemis' Hunters arrive at the cave and Thalia comes in.

Jason tells Thalia he is her brother and she says she thought he was dead. She tells Jason that their mother was not very stable and could not cope with looking after both of them. One day they went to a park and her mother told Thalia to go back to the car for the picnic basket. When she returned, Jason was gone and her mother claimed that Hera had taken him. Thalia thought he was dead. They speculate that Jason may have been conceived when Zeus was in his Roman aspect, as Jupiter. That would explain why he speaks Latin and calls the gods by their Roman names.

After Piper has been healed by the Hunters, Thalia decides to take them to the entrance to Aeolus' palace. They climb the mountain and come to the peak, where a magical bridge connects the mountain to the floating palace. Piper and Coach Hedge cross safely, then Thalia, Jason and Leo cross. Halfway across, Leo begins to heat up as he realizes what Hera meant by an exchange; she has swapped Percy Jackson and Jason in order to make two sides come together. He gets so hot he begins to melt the bridge, and Thalia is forced to run back to the peak while Leo and Jason carry on to the palace. She calls to them that she will meet them at the Wolf House where Hera is being held prisoner, and that they should first try to save Piper's father.

## Chapters 33-36, Piper and Leo Analysis

Piper finally comes clean about the dreams she has been having about the giant Enceladus and her father. She remembers a Cherokee story about a woman who killed



a snake that was near her children, not realizing it was the king of the snakes. The snakes prepared for war against the tribe, but the woman's husband sacrificed his wife in order to save the whole tribe. Now snakes will not hurt the Cherokee as there is an understanding between them. Piper remembers asking her father why the man let his wife die, and he explained that sometimes one person's life is not as important as saving many more. Piper was actually named with this story in mind, as it is an important Cherokee song. Her grandfather inspired her name because he thought she would be a great pipe player and would one day master the snake song. Piper realizes that this helped prepare her for the awful choice she has to make now. She wonders if her grandfather could somehow see the future and knew that she would one day need guidance. She realizes that her father's life is not as important as saving the world, and that she cannot betray her friends to save her dad. She uses lessons from her mortal side, not her godly side, to decide this. She shows that both sides of her are important in making her the person she is. Her god side might make her a hero, but her Cherokee side has taught her the right thing to do. Unlike her father, who could not accept his past and the different sides to his life, Piper embraces everything about herself and accepts who she is. She has been searching for her identity, as she has always felt disconnected. Now she understands her human side, and is coming to understand her godly side too. Her journey of self-discovery is almost complete.

When Piper tells her friends the truth, she expects them to react with mistrust and hatred. Instead, she gets support and sympathy from them. They will stick together no matter what because they are friends, and they feel bad that she has had to carry this secret around with her. They assure her that they trust her completely, and point out how much she has already done to aid the quest and to save their lives. Piper is still very worried about her father, but Leo and Jason are determined to find a way to save him too. They do not want to let Piper down, as she is one of their team and they are like family to each other now.

Jason's reunion with Thalia in these chapters finally brings him some answers about who he is. Thalia remembers him as a baby, but thought that he was dead. She remembers her mother losing him in a park, and saying that she had given him to Hera. In some ways Jason's reunion with Thalia is good, as he learns more about himself, discovers a wonderful sister, finds out about his past and his mother, and now has an actual family. However, there are also bad points; his mother was unstable and got rid of him, his sister ran away because of this and had to cope with thinking he was dead, and he still does not know what has happened to him since his mother gave him up. This is the beginning of Jason finally uncovering who he really is, allowing him to understand himself a little better. This also provides the reader with some answers to the mystery that is Jason. They speculate that he speaks Latin and knows Roman names for the gods because he was conceived when Zeus was in his Roman aspect, as Jupiter. Later, Leo realizes that Jason must have been exchanged with Percy Jackson. Hera was trying to create a bridge by linking two places that are normally separate. Perhaps there is a camp for Roman half-bloods, like Camp Half Blood for the Greek demigods. This would explain where Jason has been, and also the purple camp t-shirts that they have seen. It would also explain the need for an exchange.



The demigods are attacked by Lycaon in these chapters, a king from classical mythology who was transformed into a wolf by Zeus as a punishment for his crime. Different versions of the myth disagree on what his crime was, but this story has gone with the version in which Lycaon tried to test Zeus at a dinner party, for which he killed Lycaon's fifty sons and turned Lycaon into a wolf. This seems a very harsh punishment for the crime, but it indicates something very important about the Greek gods. They hate being questioned, disrespected, or made to look foolish. This idea is explored elsewhere in this story, when the reader is told that Zeus has closed Olympus because he wants more respect from mortals. He also refuses contact with demigods because he does not want to be seen to have to rely on them. This causes all kinds of problems that could otherwise be avoided. By including Lycaon in the story, the author is therefore hinting once again at how petty and foolish the gods can be, and how Zeus' temper leads to problems. Lycaon therefore fits well into this story. In this episode, Lycaon is presented as an enemy because he hates the gods and works for the same patron that the other enemies have been working for. Here he is portrayed as a werewolf figure who can change between wolf and human forms freely. He tries to kill Piper and Leo, and they are forced to fight his whole wolf pack. Werewolves are more popular in Roman legends and stories than Greek ones, and so Lycaon also offers a nice bridge between the two mythologies. This is appropriate at this point in the story, as it becomes clear that Jason is more Roman than Greek, and that both Greek and Roman aspects of mythology seem to exist side by side in the modern world.



# Chapters 37-40, Jason and Piper

## Chapters 37-40, Jason and Piper Summary

They arrive at Aeolus' palace where an aura, a spirit of gentle breezes, called Mellie meets them and takes them to see Aeolus. Inside a rotunda is a huge space with all kinds of cameras and TV equipment. It has no floor, but Mellie calls some harpies to quickly build a makeshift floor. Aeolus is in the centre of the room preparing for his weather forecast. He greets Jason, making it clear that he has met him before. They give him the storm spirits and ask him to stop ordering demigods killed. He seems surprised that he even gave that order in the first place and happily takes it back. He then gives his weather forecast, changing it every few seconds as the gods put in orders for different weather.

When his forecast is over he returns to talk to Jason, Piper and Leo. He thinks Jason was sent by Zeus to renegotiate his contract. They explain what they are really here for and ask him to send them to Enceladus so they can find out where Hera is being imprisoned. Aeolus tells them that Zeus, Aphrodite and Hephaestus all agree that he should help them. Then, suddenly he changes his mind, saying he has just had orders from someone more powerful than Zeus. He summons the storm spirits to kill them. Mellie, who has taken a fancy to Coach Hedge, grabs them as the floor is blasted into pieces. She wraps them in a gentle breeze to cushion them as the storm spirits hit.

Aphrodite visits Piper in a dream and helps her to figure out who is the 'patron' that is behind all the evil forces they have faced. Piper realizes it is Gaia, the Earth herself, who they are fighting. She once raised a race of giants to defeat the gods after they defeated the Titans, and now she is doing so again. Aphrodite also gives her a vial of a potion that will erase her father's memory so that he can forget about the giant and the bad things he has seen. She explains to Piper that her father would not be able to cope with knowing that gods and monsters are real.

They wake up at a cafe in California, where the storm winds blew them. Thankfully Mellie's soft breeze managed to cushion their fall. They are wearing new outfits picked out by Aphrodite, and Piper finds the vial in her pocket with some money. They order coffee and scones and talk about Gaia.

## Chapters 37-40, Jason and Piper Analysis

These chapters explore several different elements of Greek mythology. First, the demigods arrive at the floating palace of Aeolus. In ancient Greek myth, Aeolus was the ruler of the winds, but his exact position and lineage are more ambiguous. He is immortal and has powers, like a god, but does not seem to be included amongst the ranks of the other gods. He seems to be on the same level as nymphs and demigods, but holds a lot more authority than any of them. In fact, when the gods want the winds to





do something specific, they have to ask or beg Aeolus, rather than simply telling him what to do. This ambiguity is picked up on in this story, as Aeolus is anxious to pin down exactly what his role is. He thinks Jason has come to renegotiate his contract, and asks if he can be officially known as a god. He complains that his title 'ruler of the winds' is too vague. He is also shown in this story having to constantly change the weather based on the requests of different gods. This has quite clearly driven Aeolus mad, as the gods are constantly counteracting each other's orders and demanding that he ignore other gods in favor of them. This fits in very well with the mythology of Aeolus. In the *Odyssey*, the hero Odysseus, who was favored by the goddess Athena, asks for Aeolus' help. Aeolus does help him, but Poseidon is angry with Odysseus, putting Aeolus in a difficult position. In the *Aeneid*, Juno wants Aeolus to send winds to wreck Aeneas' ship, but Jupiter favors Aeneas. This also puts Aeolus in a very difficult position. Aeolus even refers to this episode in this story when he explains how difficult it is to be him.

In this story, Aeolus is portrayed as a TV obsessed presenter who gives weather forecasts on Olympian TV. He knows a great deal of information because the winds bring him rumors. It therefore makes sense that he would be in charge of a large TV hub that deals with so much information. Aeolus wears too much make-up and comes across as quite fake, and has a very unpredictable temper. This is because he represents the changeable winds. As with other elements of mythology, the author has succeeded in creating a new portrayal of Aeolus that fits in with his modern interpretations of Greek myth, but also reflects the idea of Aeolus in the original myths.

In these chapters, the demigods finally realize who they are up against, and some of the creation mythology of the ancient Greeks is explored. Gaia is the villain behind all the monsters and dangers they have faced. In the mythology, Gaia is the primordial goddess of the Earth, who gave birth to many other gods and creatures. With Ouranos (the Sky), she created the Titans, and the Cyclopes, who Ouranos imprisoned in Tartarus. Fearing that he would do the same to the Titans, Gaia encouraged her son Kronos to kill his father. Kronos then fathered the Olympian gods with his sister Titan Rhea. Kronos feared the gods would kill him as he killed his own father, so he ate them all as babies. Rhea managed to save Zeus, who killed Kronos and released all the other gods from his belly. The gods then overthrew the Titans and locked them up in Tartarus. This angered Gaia, who was upset to see her children suffering once more. She appeared to feel no sympathy for her grandchildren the gods, and gave birth to a new race of giants to defeat the Greek gods. The giants came close to doing just that, as they were very powerful. In the end, only by combining the strength of gods and demigods could the giants be beaten. In this book, all of this is happening again. The Titans were defeated in the Percy Jackson series of books. Now Gaia is releasing the giants again, and gods and demigods will have to join forces to defeat them. The use of Mother Earth as a villain might seem like a strange choice, because in modern times we tend to associate the concept of Mother Earth with nature, peace and love. Mother Earth in Greek mythology is nothing like this, however. She is strong, powerful and vengeful. She is a primordial goddess, and so is a natural force intent on getting its own way, with very little sympathy or traces of humanity. She is an ancient force, far removed



from civilization. As such, she is nothing like the Olympian gods, who all act like people rather than forces of nature.

The author also explores the lineage and nature of Aphrodite further in these chapters. It is easy to think of Aphrodite as a very shallow and inconsequential goddess. She is about love and beauty, and so can come across as a little silly, petty or conceited. It is easy to dismiss her because she does not seem as powerful as other gods and goddesses. However, this would be to seriously underestimate her. Love is a very powerful force, which can spur people to do amazing things. As Aphrodite explains, some of the bravest and noblest things have been done for love. Some terrible and tragic things have been done in the name of love too, but just as love can cause sorrow, so it can make a person a hero. Aphrodite explains that it is how a person acts that determines whether they will be a hero or not. She is suggesting that Piper can be great if she believes in herself and acts heroically for the people she loves. Aphrodite also explains that love is one of the oldest forces in the world. She has a different lineage from the other gods, as Rhea and Kronos were not her parents. She was born from the sea foam that was created when Kronos cut Ouranos and the pieces of him fell into the sea. Aphrodite is therefore older than the other Olympian gods and is a direct daughter of the Sky. This information emphasizes just how important and powerful Aphrodite actually is. Piper is therefore not the daughter of a petty and inconsequential goddess, as she had imagined when she first found out that Aphrodite is her mother, but the daughter of a very old and powerful force. Being the daughter of Aphrodite does not mean she is a weak or unimportant hero. One of the greatest Roman heroes, Aeneas, was a son of Aphrodite. Like him, Piper can be brave and strong, can fight for those she loves, and can contribute to something great.

When Aphrodite visits Piper in a dream, Piper finally begins to understand what it means to be her daughter. Aphrodite explains what real beauty is, telling Piper that it is about accepting herself and not trying to be anything different. This is an important message. Aphrodite is not about being shallow, but about confidence and inner strength, and about understanding what kind of person one is. She is not about fakery or pretence at all, something that Drew has obviously misunderstood. Piper realizes that being a child of Aphrodite does not mean she has to love fashion or breaking hearts, but that she will fight for those she loves. Piper has a very loving heart, and cares a great deal about her friends and her father. If anyone can understand this message, then, it is Piper. In talking to Piper, Aphrodite shows that she is proud of her and that she accepts who Piper is. This is all very comforting to Piper, who has been trying to understand her identity since finding out that she is a demigod, and has been struggling with feelings of inadequacy.



# Chapters 41-44, Leo and Jason

## Chapters 41-44, Leo and Jason Summary

They take a cab up Mount Diablo, but the earth begins pulling at the tires and the car is forced to stop and go back. They continue on foot towards smoke in the distance. Eventually they get to Enceladus' camp. Enceladus, a huge giant with scaly legs and talons for feet is pacing around a large purple bonfire. On the other side of the fire Piper's dad is tied to a post.

Jason goes forward to get the giant's attention as Piper slips around towards her father and Leo edges over to the bulldozer. Leo drops a homemade device into the bulldozer and runs to the harvester as Enceladus breathes fire at them. Coach Hedge is knocked out. Enceladus then sees Piper and tries to persuade her to betray her friends and leave with her father. He calls six ogres with six arms each, known as the Earthborn, to fight Leo and Jason. Piper refuses to betray her friends, so Enceladus tells the ogres to attack her father. Leo runs for the harvester and manages to take out three of the Earthborn before the other three throw rocks at the harvester. He dodges out of the way and calls to the dozer, which comes to life and attacks the ogres. The dozer intercepts the stones that the ogres throw at Piper, killing two more before breaking. The last Earthborn runs after Piper as she takes her father to safety below the ridge. Leo bursts into flames and charges the ogre, but Piper stabs it in the back with her knife and destroys it.

Meanwhile Jason is fighting Enceladus. Jason manages to get in a few hits with his spear, but Enceladus is too quick and strong for him, and soon Jason is badly injured. Enceladus breaks Jason's spear, which explodes in a burst of heat and light, knocking them both backwards. Enceladus gets back up and prepares to kill Jason, but Leo manages to hit him with the hydraulic axe. However, Enceladus just heals himself, explaining that the giants can only be killed by the combined strength of gods and heroes. Jason then has an idea, and climbs onto Enceladus' neck. He begs his father for help, and is hit by lightning. It blasts him and the giant apart and creates a chasm in the earth. Enceladus falls in, but Leo and Piper throw a rope to Jason to pull him up.

The giant is gone, and Gaia leaves them alone for now. The earth stops tugging at their feet. Piper's father is free, but confused. The mountainside is on fire, and an emergency helicopter is arriving.

## Chapters 41-44, Leo and Jason Analysis

In these chapters the demigods finally come up against the giant, Enceladus, who is keeping Piper's father prisoner. Enceladus is one of the Gigantes in Greek mythology, huge giants who were born to Gaia. They fought the gods in a fierce battle, during which Athena killed Enceladus with her spear. He is portrayed in this story as he was in



mythology, as a giant with scaly legs and dragon feet. The author introduces the idea that he was created specifically to fight Athena, which ties into the story of his original death. This also means that he is a more intelligent giant than the others, since Athena is the goddess of wisdom and battle strategy. This makes him a particularly frightening opponent as he is more difficult to trick or catch unawares.

In the battle they also fight the Gegenees, a tribe of Earthborn ogres with six arms and wearing only leather loincloths. As with Enceladus, the author has portrayed these creatures as looking exactly the same as they did in Greek mythology. This makes them more frightening, as they look like terrible monsters rather than taking on a modern disguise. It also shows that the giants and the other creatures being raised by Gaia have not been on earth since the first time they were defeated. Unlike other monsters which have returned to the world many times, they have not adapted to modern life and learned to fit in with the world. They are ancient and evil, and their portrayal reminds the reader that they want nothing to do with the world other than to destroy life as we know it. The Gegenees are also another reference to the myth of Jason and the Argonauts, as Jason had to fight these six-armed ogres on his journey to bring back the Golden Fleece.

In the battle, Piper makes her final choice of whether or not to betray her friends. She chooses not to, shouting that no-one will take the people she loves. She loves her father, but she also loves Leo and Jason. There are many different kinds of love, including love for family and friends, and all are important. Piper recognizes this, and remembers her talk with her mother. She knows that she cannot be the cause of people she loves suffering, and is determined to fight for them. She understands what Aphrodite told her, that love can be a powerful motivator but that it is up to the person to choose to be a hero or not. Piper chooses to fight for love and so be a hero. She remains true to her friends and to herself, proving that she is a good and strong person. She also uses Katoptris to save Leo. Now she can use her knife as a weapon and not just a pretty trinket, because she has understood that being a daughter of Aphrodite is about more than looks and persuasive abilities. She understands that she can be powerful in order to save the people she loves.



# Chapters 45-48, Piper and Leo

## Chapters 45-48, Piper and Leo Summary

Piper persuades the woman piloting the helicopter to take them off the mountain. Coach Hedge offers to take Piper's father home and look after him. Piper's father tells her that he is proud of her, and she gives him the potion to help him forget the monsters. Piper's father's private jet arrives, and Coach Hedge takes him away. An image appears in the air, and Thalia comes into view. She tells Jason that she is at the Wolf House and they are holding off the giant's minions, but that she needs help. Jason remembers where the house is, and Piper persuades the ranger pilot to let them borrow her helicopter. They set off, with Leo piloting.

Jason remembers what the Wolf House is. It was the home of Jack London, a famous writer, before it burned down. According to Jason, Jack London was a son of Mercury, the Roman equivalent of Hermes. He wrote about wolves and called his house Wolf House to drop hints about who he really was.

When they arrive at the Wolf House, they land and jump out of the helicopter as a huge chunk of snow and rock is thrown on it. There is fighting all around them and the house, as Hunters battle storm spirits, wolves and six-armed ogres. Thalia appears and leads them into the house where Hera is being held prisoner. Hera is in an earth cage near a reflecting pool in the courtyard. Hera tells them that the large earth spire in the centre of the courtyard is the giant Porphyryon being born. He is using Hera's essence as his power source to rise up from the earth again.

As Leo tries to figure out how to free Hera, the storm spirits, wolves, and ogres break in, followed by Khione. Khione has turned Thalia into an ice statue.

## Chapters 45-48, Piper and Leo Analysis

Piper tells her father the truth about who she really is and everything she has been through. She explains that her mother was Aphrodite and that she is a demigod with a quest to save the world. At first Piper's father reacts very badly, crying and unable to accept everything he has seen and heard. He is like a small frightened child, and Piper cannot believe that her strong, confident father is behaving like this. However, as things begin to sink in, he manages to talk to Piper about everything. He realizes that she is an incredibly brave and strong young woman, and calls her a hero. He tells her that he is very proud of her. He also tells her that he has always tried to protect her. When he kept her away from him, it was his attempt to keep her away from the world of acting and fame that he was worried might corrupt or harm her. When he sent her away, it was to attempt to protect her from his crazy life. Now he realizes that she never needed that protection. Ironically, it is Piper's father that needs protection, as it is he who cannot cope with her crazy life. She sees his strength and confidence for what it always was: a



front that he puts up to the world to hide the fact that he is uncertain and afraid. Instead of needing his help, now he needs hers. Piper has always felt abandoned and unloved, so to find out that her father was actually trying to protect her and care for her all along is very comforting. She now feels that she needs to return his love and protection by helping him to forget the monsters. She knows that he will also forget that she is a hero, and she does not want to lose this new relationship of trust and respect that they have formed. However, she is willing to sacrifice this, the thing that she has always wanted, in order to make him better and give him a better life. She knows he cannot cope with the memories, and is willing to give up what she needs in order to help him. Here she shows how love can be self-sacrificing and kind, as well as strong and heroic.

Jason's memories are now starting to return, and he begins to piece together the information he does know. He remembers that the Wolf House is a house that used to belong to Jack London, a famous writer. He tells them that Jack London was the son of Mercury, the Roman name for the god Hermes, and that he called his house the Wolf House to drop hints about who he really was. Leo and Piper ask if he went to Camp Half Blood and Jason says he did not. These hints suggest that there is another camp like Camp Half Blood where a different kind of demigod goes. This is where Jack London was trained, and also where Jason was before he lost his memories and was transported to the Wilderness School. It must have something to do with Romans, as Jason uses the Roman names for things, and also something to do with wolves. Jason also mentions a wolf called Lupa who he says found him at the Wolf House and took him away. These clues all seem to point to a training school for Roman demigods. Earlier the reader was told about the different aspects of the gods, and how they hold on to their Roman personalities as well as their Greek ones. Thalia explained that Zeus seemed different the second time he visited their mother; more fatherly and stern. Jason guessed that he must have been conceived while Zeus was in his Jupiter aspect, and so uses the Roman names for things and can speak Latin. If all these things are true, then perhaps there is a camp for children born when the gods are in their Roman aspects. They are kept away from the Greek demigods and trained separately, and until now they were never supposed to interact. This would explain the many hints about Hera's risky plan. She has performed some kind of exchange, probably replacing Jason with Percy Jackson. This was probably an attempt to enlist both camps of demigods and get them working together. The reference to wolves, and to one mother wolf called Lupa in particular, also suggests a Roman link. Romulus and Remus, two great heroes of Rome, were raised in the wild by a she-wolf. Due to this, the wolf became a very important animal to the Romans and was associated with bravery, strength, and heroes. Lupa is perhaps the Roman camp's equivalent of Chiron, the trainer of Greek heroes.



# Chapters 49-52, Jason and Piper

## Chapters 49-52, Jason and Piper Summary

Khione admits that she has been the one whispering in various ears to make people do things such as tricking Hera into coming to this place, and persuading Aeolus to kill them. She also froze the wires in Festus' head, making him crash, and kept Enceladus informed on their progress. Khione tries to persuade Leo to join her, but Leo laughs at her and refuses. She orders the monsters to attack.

Jason jumps onto the back of a horse-shaped storm spirit and manages to control it. He rides it around, charging into other storm spirits and dissolving them. Piper charms the Earthborn, managing to make them stand still while she kills them with her dagger. Leo is taking on Khione, melting her snow attacks and keeping the whole courtyard from freezing over. Jason defeats all the wolves and storm spirits, just as Leo sets his hammers ablaze and smashes Khione into a pile of mush.

They race over to Hera's cage and Piper begins talking to the earth tendrils holding it together, persuading them to go to sleep. As she does, the tendrils get softer, turning from rock to tree roots, and Leo cuts them with a circular saw. However, before they can finish, the earth spire crumbles and Porphyron emerges. He is bigger and stronger than Enceladus, with the same scaly dragon legs. Jason keeps his attention while Leo and Piper continue to work on the cage. He boasts to the giant that he is the son of Jupiter and a consul of demigods, that he destroyed the black throne of Kronos and killed the Titan Krios singlehandedly. Porphyron calls up more monsters, but Jason attacks him and climbs to his shoulder before he can react. He grabs one of the giant's swords and sticks it into his ear. Porphyron is angry and prepares to kill Jason, but Leo and Piper succeed in freeing Hera. She emerges from the cage and Porphyron hastily retreats, disappearing into the ground. Hera warns the demigods to close their eyes, then gathers all her essence together to appear in her true form. The resulting supernova of energy blasts all the monsters around them, returns the ruins to normal and restores the frozen Hunters. However, Jason did not close his eyes in time, and he has been knocked unconscious.

For a while, it looks as though Jason will die. However, Piper manages to bring him back by repeatedly ordering him to wake up. Piper manages to stop an argument between Thalia and Hera and persuades them they need to work together. Jason remembers that he is from another camp, for Roman demigods, raised by the wolf Lupa. Hera refuses to tell him more, as she says he needs to find out for himself. Hera then sends them back to Camp Half Blood.

They answer all the campers' questions, then Chiron sends them to bed. The next morning Piper challenges Drew to be head counselor of the Aphrodite cabin and Drew steps down. Piper explains that Aphrodite is about being loving and being a friend. The Aphrodite cabin cheer and happily accept Piper as their new leader. Piper then goes to



the Big House and calls her father. Coach Hedge answers and tells her he has sorted everything out. Mellie, the aura who helped them at Aeolus' palace, is now her father's new assistant. Her father then comes on, and though he cannot remember anything, he tells her that he is proud of her and loves her.

Piper meets up with Jason and they talk about his lost memories. Piper decides that she is determined to make a relationship with Jason work, but she has time to work on it and she will be patient.

## Chapters 49-52, Jason and Piper Analysis

The bad guys reveal their ultimate plan in these chapters. Enceladus has mentioned the roots of the gods, and Khione gives more away. Porphyron also talks about roots, saying that they plan to destroy the gods completely once and for all. Jason realizes that they must be intending to go to Greece to attack the gods at their starting place, which is what the giants meant by 'roots.' The giants will attack the real Mount Olympus in Greece, where the gods' first home was. Their symbolic home is in the USA now, but Greece was their place of origin and where they are most vulnerable. This is the place where everything that made the gods what they are was formed, and this is where their essence is still tied. If the gods can be destroyed here, they will be destroyed for good. This risks plunging the world into chaos and destroying civilization forever, as the gods are so centrally linked to everything that civilization stands for. Khione, the giants and Gaia do not mind this, as they are creatures who relish chaos, and are not as close as the other gods are to civilization and human behavior. Destroying the gods and releasing Gaia could have devastating consequences for the world, and so this must be prevented.

When Piper and Leo manage to release Hera, she appears in her full godly form in order to vaporize all the remaining monsters. She warns the demigods to close their eyes, but Jason does not understand quick enough and accidentally watches as Hera takes her true form. This almost kills him, and would have killed him if Piper had not had the strength to bring him back. This is a real idea taken from Greek mythology, in which seeing a god's true form will kill a mortal. Zeus' lover Semele was tricked by Hera into asking Zeus for a gift. He agreed to give her whatever she wanted, and she asked to see his true godly form. Unable to go back on his promise, he showed her and she collapsed dead. She was pregnant at the time, but Zeus managed to save the baby, who later grew up to be the god Dionysus. This idea reflects the fact that a god's human form does not indicate what they really are. The Greek gods are powerful forces such as love and war, or natural forces such as the sky, the sea and the land. They can be in many places at once and can stand for many different things. They can appear in many different forms, but their true godly form simply contains too much energy to be withstood by mortals. The inclusion of this idea in this story also allows for the fulfillment of the prophecy told at the beginning, in which the demigods were informed that releasing Hera would release death. This turned out to be true; Hera's release caused Jason's death. Thankfully, however, Piper's powers made sure that this death did not have to be permanent.





Piper manages to bring Jason back with the power of love. She is even more powerful than she imagined, and even Hera is astonished. She says that healing is not a power of Aphrodite, but Piper has not healed Jason. She called him back from death with her powerful persuasion abilities, given a huge amount of force by her love for Jason. Clearly Piper's feelings for Jason run deeper than fake emotions created by the Mist. Her relationship with him might not have been real, but Aphrodite was correct when she pointed out the potential that exists between them. Piper loves Jason and now realizes that she wants a real relationship with him. She is determined to pursue this, but understands that she needs to be patient.

It is not only this event that indicates that Piper's powers are growing. She also manages to stop Thalia and Hera from fighting, and to persuade the queen of the gods herself that she needs to work with the demigods. Hera is very impressed by her, and Thalia suggests she join the Hunters. Piper finds it easy to make allies, and this is down to her own strong and confident personality as much as it is to her Aphrodite-given powers of persuasion. Now Piper understands who she is and has a lot more confidence and faith in herself. Now she realizes that Drew is nothing to be afraid of, and faces up to her for the sake of the Aphrodite cabin. She is determined to help her fellow campers and her extended family to understand what being children of Aphrodite means. As she explains to them, it means being loving and spreading beauty. It means loving friends and family as much as it means romantic love, and most of all it means fighting for the people they love. Aphrodite children can be heroes as easily as any of the other campers, as being a hero is about being brave and sticking up for friends. This is why Silena proved herself to be a hero at the end of the Percy Jackson books as she stood by her friends despite her earlier mistakes. Piper now understands what it means to be a hero, and proves her father correct in pointing out that she is one. She has become a good leader, as well as a very perceptive, intelligent, and strong young woman.



# Chapters 53-56, Leo and Jason

## Chapters 53-56, Leo and Jason Summary

Leo shows Bunker 9 to the rest of the Hephaestus campers, and to Jason, Piper, and Chiron. Chiron tells them that the camp has been attacked many times, and that the map inside the bunker, which details defenses for the camp, is from the Half Blood Civil War. The two sides caused so much devastation that the gods agreed to keep them separate and to use the Mist to make sure they never remembered each other or met again. One side was Camp Half Blood, and the other was a camp for Roman demigods, which is where Jason has been. Jason was exchanged with Percy Jackson so that the sides would learn to like and trust each other. This is because both sides will be needed to defeat the giants.

Leo reveals that his drawing matches one of the schematics in the bunker. It is a flying ship that will have Festus' head as a masthead. They will use this to fly to Greece when the time comes to stop the giants. The Hephaestus cabin agrees to help make it, and votes Leo their new head counselor.

Jason asks the statue of his father for some help, but it is Juno who appears. She tells him that she is on his side and that he will be her champion. She believes he can lead the demigods to success in their battle against the giants and Gaia. She gives him a new sword.

Chiron calls a meeting for all the head counselors of the various cabins. They explain everything, and Chiron tells them that it was the Roman camp who defeated the Titan base on Mount Othrys during the Titan War. They know that the Roman camp is somewhere near San Francisco, but they have no exact location. Jason plans to try to find it and sail there in Leo's flying ship to persuade them to join forces. He tells Annabeth she will be needed on this mission as her boyfriend Percy Jackson has been sent to the Roman camp as an exchange, and, like Jason, probably does not even know who he is.

## Chapters 53-56, Leo and Jason Analysis

Jason is finding it difficult to cope with the idea that the future of the world might rest on his shoulders. He is the son of Jupiter, the king of the gods, and so is looked to as a natural leader. He knows this is his destiny, and the fact that he has to fulfill a great prophecy only makes matters worse for him. He is terrified that he will not live up to expectations, or that he might fail and the world will suffer because of it. He remembers being a leader at the Roman camp, and that people always rely on him and look to him for leadership. He feels the weight of all their futures on him, not just the Greek demigods but the Romans too. At the same time, he feels very alone. This is because he has no-one to confide in about his responsibilities. He is in charge, so he can never



be just one of the team. He has to make the hard decisions and take the criticism for them. Just like Jupiter, he has to remain somewhat aloof at all times, and though he has friends, while he is their leader he can never be quite on the same level as them. He has a new understanding of how difficult things must be for his father, even though he still feels a lot of resentment towards him.

After Juno's visit, however, Jason begins to feel a little better about his destiny. Things are hard, and he is frightened he will fail, but the queen of the gods herself has faith in him and has called him her champion. He also realizes that he owes it to his friends to at least try. He feels that he really has something to fight for now, as he has a home, friends and extended family that he wants to keep safe. This is the motivation he needs to give him the strength and confidence to carry on, despite the all the dangers he will face.

Juno's visit also provides some insight into a misunderstood character. Hera is not portrayed well in the Percy Jackson books, and often comes across as extremely cruel and vindictive in Greek mythology too. She hates the fact that her husband has so many affairs, and will often punish the mortal women he sleeps with and their children rather than taking it out on Zeus. She often seems to act in a very unfair way, and is quick to anger or become jealous. She seems to be a goddess who cherishes family only so long as it fits the image of the perfect family that she keeps in her head. This fits in with Greek mythology, as she threw Hephaestus, her own child, from Mount Olympus for being too ugly. In previous books readers have seen her act cruelly to both Annabeth and Thalia. Here, however, the reader is given an entirely different view. Here she seems sad and almost pitiable. She has no mortal children of her own because she is the goddess of marriage and family, and so it is not in her nature to commit adultery. This does not mean that she hates demigods, but, as she admits, she is actually very jealous of the gods who have mortal children. She wishes she could have her own demigod children to connect her to the mortal world. Instead, she is disconnected and often lonely. Her own godly children are a constant disappointment to her, and it is clear that she wishes she could have more. She seems to treat Jason almost as an adoptive son, providing a new weapon for him, giving him comfort and confidence and showing him that she is proud of him. She seems genuinely to care how he feels. This is a more likeable image of Hera, perhaps because she is appearing here in her Roman aspect as the goddess Juno. Juno is like Hera in many ways, but more regal and dignified than her Greek counterpart. She is more war-like and will fight to protect her people, but she is perhaps also a little fairer and less quick to anger. It is clear that she cherishes having a hero to call her own again, as she did the original Jason, and the reader can feel that she might be a good patron goddess for Jason after all. It is also interesting that she came to him when he called for help from his father. When his father could not or would not answer him, Juno came instead, being the parent that his father is not. It is comforting for Jason to know that at least one god will be on his side.

Chiron mentions many conflicts and a civil war between the Roman demigods and the Greek demigods. He explains that the enmity between them goes back far into history, starting with the Trojan War. According to Greek and Roman myth, the Trojan War was a ten year war between the Greeks and the Trojans, which began when the Trojan



prince Paris brought Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, home to his city. Her husband, a Greek prince called Menelaus, was not happy. He gathered a Greek army and sailed to Troy, where they fought a long and fierce war. Eventually Troy was destroyed, but many of the Trojans managed to escape. Amongst them was a Trojan prince called Aeneas, who was a demigod hero and the son of Aphrodite. He sailed away and had many adventures before founding a new city that would eventually become Rome. The Trojans are therefore the ancestors of the Romans. According to Chiron, both sides have never forgotten the conflict. Much later, when Rome grew strong, they conquered Greece. As Jason explains here, the Romans did not hate the Greeks and were even a little jealous of their culture. The Romans were less artistic than the Greeks, but they were more militant and put importance into things like discipline and expansion. Both the Greeks and the Romans tended to think of themselves as the best people in the world and their own culture as being the pinnacle of civilization. Despite sharing the same gods and many other aspects of their culture, it is easy to see how the two different peoples could come to blows. However, neither group is necessarily better or more correct; they are simply very different. The author has picked up on these differences between the cultures and passed them on to the two groups of demigods, explaining that they have often been enemies and that it will be very difficult for them to work together. This fits well into his own universe while upholding the established mythology of the Greeks and Romans. Jason is correct to worry about Percy Jackson. Jason has been accepted by the Greek demigods, but the Roman demigods put more importance in proving oneself and in discipline and fighting. They are naturally more war-like, and if they find out who Percy really is, he could be in a lot of trouble. This is left as a deliberate cliff hanger to create suspense for the next book.



# Characters

## Jason Grace

Jason is one of the three main characters of the book. At the beginning of the story he wakes up on a school bus and cannot remember who he is. Later he finds out that his memories have been taken away by Hera/Juno. He is the son of the god Zeus, conceived while Zeus was in his Roman aspect of Jupiter. This means that Jason can read and speak Latin, and uses the Roman names for gods and monsters. He has powers over the air and the winds, which he can use to fly, and can also call down lightning. He has a gold coin that turns into a golden weapon when he flips it. Later Jason realizes that he is the brother of Thalia, the daughter of Zeus who has now joined Artemis' Hunters. Jason and Thalia had the same mother, who gave up Jason when he was very young. She gave him to Hera as a peace offering so that the goddess would leave her alone. Until now, Thalia had always assumed that her little brother was dead.

When Jason finds out that he is a demigod, he feels completely comfortable with the information. He is pretty sure that he has known this for a long time, and that he has been on quests before. Camp Half Blood feels somehow familiar and yet at the same time completely wrong, as if it is dangerous for him to be here. This is because he actually trained at a Roman camp for demigods, which is an enemy of the Greek camp. The two camps have been kept apart and the Mist placed over them so that the different groups of demigods never meet again. This is to prevent more fighting or another civil war between the camps. Now, however, Hera has taken the risk of sending Jason to the Greek camp and Percy Jackson to the Roman camp in the hopes that this exchange will encourage them to work together. She has taken Jason's and Percy's memories so that they will integrate into the camps before they find out who they really are.

Jason is chosen to be the leader of the quest to free Hera. He seems to be a natural leader, good at keeping his team together and making decisions. He is sensible and thinks practically. He keeps his fears and emotions hidden so as not to worry the rest of his team. However, he is not as confident as he seems. He worries that he will fail and let everyone down, and that he is not strong enough to face the dangers that will come. He feels the weight of the responsibility of being leader constantly pressing down on him. Leo and Piper give Jason the strength and motivation he needs to carry on. In the beginning of the book he is not even sure who he really is, but through his adventures with Leo and Piper he comes to understand more about himself. He becomes firm friends with them, and would do anything to protect them. They give him a reason to fight. He may not remember much about his life and who he is, but he knows that friends are important to him, and they help him to realize that he is a hero.

Jason is resentful of his father, who will not talk to him even when he desperately needs guidance. Instead, Juno appears to him and tries to give him comfort. She makes it clear that she is proud of him, and tells him that he is her champion. Jason is not quite sure how to feel about Juno. On the one hand, she took his memories and forced him



into this difficult situation. She keeps things from him, and stole him away from his mother when he was a baby. She is the reason he grew up without his family. On the other hand, she is his patron goddess and helps him out. She is there for him when no other gods are, and she tries to give him comfort and confidence. She is a powerful friend to have on his side, and it would not be wise to anger her.

Jason begins to have feelings for Piper. When he was placed in the Wilderness School Piper and Leo were given false memories of him. Piper remembers being in a relationship with him, and has the feelings to go with it. Jason does not remember, so does not automatically feel anything for her. However, as they adventure together, Jason comes to admire Piper's inner strength and beauty, as well as her kindness and love for her friends. He begins to feel a real connection to her, and she reciprocates his feelings. He feels torn because of this. He wants to act on his feelings and pursue a real relationship with Piper, but he worries about his lost memories. He wonders if he has a girlfriend somewhere who is looking for him, and does not want to do anything he might regret later, or to inadvertently betray someone he loves. Most of the time Jason does not know quite how to feel about anything. Without his memories, he can never be sure how the real Jason would feel. This uncertainty often makes Jason feel very unsure of himself.

In battle Jason is strong and brave. He faces monsters without stopping to worry about himself, and even goes up against the giants Enceladus and Porphyrion in order to distract them from his friends. He is very skilled in combat, and is quick-thinking and agile. He fights with discipline, not like a Greek but like a Roman soldier. This is obviously his training from the Roman camp kicking in. Despite having lost his memories, this training seems to have become second nature. Jason's skills, powers, bravery and leadership skills make him a great hero.

## Piper McLean

Piper is one of the three main characters of the book. Her father is a movie star called Tristan McLean, who has played many different roles including a Greek warrior. He is a teenage heartthrob, and Piper often gets very embarrassed about the attention he receives. She does not like to tell people she is the daughter of a famous film star, as she does not want to gain friends through her connections. This would feel false to her. She also feels no connection to the life of fame and riches that her father has. All Piper wants is a normal family and a father who pays attention to her. Unfortunately, her father is often too busy to spend much time with her, and Piper often feels very abandoned and alone.

Piper's mother is the Greek goddess Aphrodite. Her father never knew this, and Piper was completely unaware of her godly side before she came to Camp Half Blood. When she finds out that she is a demigod, it does not come entirely as a surprise. She always knew there was something different about her, because she can persuade other people to do anything simply by talking to them. For example, she once persuaded a car dealer to give her a car. This has gotten her into a lot of trouble in the past, as she is usually



accused of stealing the things that people give her. Finding out that she is the daughter of a goddess makes sense to Piper in a crazy way. However, she is completely unprepared for finding out that she is the daughter of Aphrodite. She had expected to be claimed by a different goddess, and hoped for the wise Athena. She has already met Drew, an Aphrodite camper, and did not like her at all. To Piper, Aphrodite seems to represent beauty, fashion, breaking hearts, and shallow and conceited behavior. She does not understand how she fits into this world, and what being the daughter of Aphrodite means for her. She does not care about fashion or beauty, and she hates the magical makeover that her mother gives her because it draws too much attention to herself. She does not like to be the centre of attention, and would prefer to dress in simple, practical clothes. She is very confused, and spends most of the book trying to come to terms with who she really is and what being the daughter of Aphrodite means.

Piper learns that Aphrodite does not have to be about breaking hearts and vanity. As she gains more confidence in herself, Piper understands that Aphrodite can be about inner strength and beauty too. She realizes that Aphrodite is about spreading love and beauty, and about fighting for the people she loves. This means fighting for her friends, her father, and her extended family at Camp Half Blood. Beauty is about being confident with who she is and accepting herself completely. When she realizes that she can contribute to the team and can help save the others from dangers, she begins to have more confidence in her ability to be a hero. She embraces her powers and her strengths, and no longer worries so much about being the centre of attention. Unlike Drew, she is not at all conceited, and does not take delight in having power over others. She wants to lead so that she can help people. By the end of the book she has come to understand herself and her place as the daughter of Aphrodite. She challenges Drew and takes over the leadership of the Aphrodite cabin. She is determined to help the others understand what Aphrodite is really about.

Before coming to Camp Half Blood, Piper found it hard to fit in anywhere. Her father is Cherokee, but left the reservation and became a famous movie star. Piper and her father live in a very rich area of California, a completely different world from the Cherokee reservation. Her father has abandoned that way of life, and seems to view his past with embarrassment. He gives Piper the message that her Cherokee half is something to be ashamed of or to laugh at. Piper has experienced bullying because of her Cherokee side, and has been called 'half blood' as an insult many times. When she arrives at Camp Half Blood, therefore, she is not entirely sure how she should feel about it. She soon learns to accept her godly half, as the campers show her that being a half blood is something to be proud of, something that makes her a hero. Later she also accepts her Cherokee half, remembering stories that she was told about her tribe and drawing lessons from them. She realizes that both sides of her are what make her who she is, and that it is these things that make her strong. Finding Camp Half Blood means that she has finally found a place where she can fit in and feel like she has a home. She has an extended family, and friends that she would do anything for. She feels accepted and loved. By the end of the story she also comes to understand that her father does love her, and that he has been trying to protect her all along. He tells her that he is proud of her, and seems more determined to be a proper father to her.



At first Piper is very reluctant to connect with her friends and the people at the camp. She has had dreams of the giant Enceladus, who tells her that she has to betray her friends or her father will die. Piper sees this as inevitable, and already feels a lot of guilt about what she thinks she will do. She tries not to get attached to the demigods, but ends up becoming firm friends with them. She saves them many times instead of betraying them, even when Medea gives her the option to. She feels guilty because she has been lying to them all the time, not telling them about her dream. She feels as if she is pretending to be something she is not by being their friend and one of their team. She thinks she is only pretending to be a hero, but is actually a traitor. However, Piper soon realizes that she could never betray her friends. She tells them about her dream, and is relieved to receive support and sympathy from them. When they do face the giant Enceladus, she refuses to betray them, and claims that no-one will hurt the people she loves. She fights to save those she cares about, and manages to save everyone. Piper proves she would never be a traitor, because she understands that being a hero is about supporting her friends and fighting for the people she loves.

## Leo Valdez

Leo is one of the three main characters of the book. He is the son of the Greek god Hephaestus and a mortal woman called Esperanza. He is very skilled with machines and at building and inventing things, and he has also inherited power over fire from his father. This is a very rare godly power, and very few children of Hephaestus are born with it. The other Hephaestus campers tell Leo that it is dangerous and often brings trouble. Leo believes them, as he has had a horrible experience with the danger of fire. His mother was killed in a fire when Leo was young, caused by Gaia. For years Leo blamed himself, thinking his own fire power killed his mother, and probably assuming he hallucinated Gaia. He carries around a lot of guilt because of this, especially as the police and his own family also blamed him. Leo keeps his fire powers secret from the rest of the campers, and from Piper and Jason too. Eventually he is forced to use his power in front of Piper to save them from the Cyclopes at the motor factory. Instead of fear and anger he receives only support and admiration from his friends, who point out what a useful and cool power it is. Leo uses his powers many times on their adventures to save all their lives, and by the end of the story has come to accept that he is not dangerous but is in fact a hero. He embraces his fire powers and learns to be proud of who he is.

Like Piper, Leo finds it very hard to fit in anywhere. When things get difficult he runs away and moves on, and never feels any attachment to places or people. He is afraid to feel at home or to belong anywhere, as he thinks he is a disaster who will always mess things up. His ADHD and behavioral problems cause him to constantly get into trouble. He likes to tinker with gadgets, and feels more comfortable with machines than he does with people. All this makes it very hard for him to fit in. Since his mother died he has never felt like he had a real home. Things change when he comes to Camp Half Blood. Finally he finds people who are just like him. They are all demigods, so they all have some kind of attention or behavioral problems because they are hard-wired for battle. Rather than this being a negative thing, it is part of what makes them heroes, and they





have learnt to be proud of it. Leo has a whole cabin full of people who are interested in the same things as him and who also like to tinker with machines. Not only could they be very good friends, they are also family. Suddenly Leo goes from having no real family to a whole cabin full of half brothers and sisters. He also finds firm friends for life in Jason and Piper, coming to trust them with his life, as well as all his hopes, fears and secrets. Leo has finally found a place where he can belong, and a real home again.

Leo sometimes feels like the third wheel when he is with Jason and Piper. This is partly because Jason and Piper look like they are forming a relationship, putting him in a slightly awkward position. However, it is mainly because Leo feels like a lesser hero than them. He is not very confident in himself and his abilities, and worries that all he does is make mistakes and cause trouble. He uses humor to deflect from his insecurities, and so becomes the joker of the group. This means that he is often taken less seriously than the other two. He begins to develop quite an inferiority complex. He thinks that Jason and Piper will be remembered as the real heroes, and that he will just be known as the sidekick who happened to come along with them. Through their adventures, however, Leo comes to realize that he is just as important as Leo and Piper, and saves their lives many times. His skills and fire powers are vital in their quest. He creates Festus, which gives them air transport, saves them from the Cyclopes, plays a major role in the fight against Enceladus, and single-handedly defeats the snow goddess Khione with his fire. He proves himself many times over. He is also assured by Hera of his importance in the Great Prophecy, and even Gaia's constant attention, though unwelcome, proves that he is someone for the bad guys to fear. By the end of the story, Leo has gained a lot of confidence and can think of himself as a hero.

## **Coach Hedge/Gleeson Hedge**

Coach Hedge is Piper and Leo's teacher at the Wilderness School, the school for troublemakers that they were both sent to because of their difficult behavior. When Jason suddenly appears on the school bus, Coach Hedge is the only one who realizes that he is not meant to be there. He is the only one whose memory has not been altered. This is because Coach Hedge is actually a satyr, a magical creature who is not as easily affected by the Mist. A satyr is a creature from Greek mythology that is a man with goat's horns and goat's legs. Coach Hedge had been in disguise at the school in order to watch out for the demigods there to ensure that no monsters killed them before they were ready to come to Camp Half Blood. His role is one of protector, but Coach Hedge slightly resents this, wanting to be involved in more action instead. He is very brave and loves to fight, but has a slightly inflated opinion of his own ability. In the fight against the storm spirits at the Grand Canyon, Coach Hedge manages to save Leo when he is thrown down the canyon, proving that he can be very heroic. However, in later fights Coach Hedge is not very useful. He comes in too late to help Jason with Midas, and gets knocked out early on in the fight against Enceladus. He almost causes problems at other points in the story when he is too eager to attack people straight away without talking to them first. Later, he realizes that he is more help to them in the role of protector than fighter, so he offers to look after Piper's father. Although Coach Hedge



can be annoying, his bravery, determination and strong friendship make him a likeable character.

As a satyr, Coach Hedge is strongly connected to nature. Unlike other satyrs, he focuses less on the peace and tranquility of nature, instead admiring the conflicts of the dog-eat-dog attitude of nature. The name 'Hedge' reflects his closeness to nature, as well as making a joke about the fact that goats eat everything. Coach Hedge lives up to his goat side, eating a variety of things throughout the story, from paper plates to plants. As a creature of nature, Coach Hedge is also attracted to nature spirits, and they are attracted to him. At Aeolus' palace he attracts the attentions of the aura Mellie, a spirit of gentle breezes. She helps them to escape, and later becomes Piper's father's new assistant.

## Chiron

Chiron is the camp director of Camp Half Blood. He is a centaur, a creature from Greek mythology that has the head and torso of a man and the legs and body of a horse. Chiron is a famous character from Greek mythology. He trained many of the great heroes of the past, and now runs Camp Half Blood to train modern demigods. Unlike other centaurs, who are unruly and like to party, Chiron is dignified and sensible. He talks to Jason when he arrives and makes it clear that his presence in Camp Half Blood is dangerous. However, he does not send Jason away and tries to make him feel safe, despite his reservations about him. Chiron is kind and cares about all the demigods he looks after, telling Jason that when he loses them it is like losing children. However, it is clear that he is keeping secrets from Jason, and he shocks Annabeth when he refuses to help them. Later, the reader finds out that this is because he has sworn a sacred oath not to reveal the existence of the Roman camp, in order to prevent bloodshed. Now that Hera has broken this oath of secrecy, however, Chiron feels compelled to explain things to them, and does so at the end of the book.

## Annabeth Chase

Annabeth is a camper at Camp Half Blood, the daughter of Athena and the counselor of the Athena cabin. Jason, Leo and Piper meet her when she arrives at the Grand Canyon in a chariot pulled by flying horses. She takes them back to Camp Half Blood and explains that they are demigods. She is friendly to Piper and Leo but a little harsher to Jason. This is because she was told that she would find her boyfriend Percy Jackson if she found the boy with one shoe. Jason had only one shoe when she arrived, but there was no sign of Percy. Annabeth knows this isn't Jason's fault, and blames Hera more than him, but she cannot help being a little grumpy and disappointed. She is extremely worried about Percy, and all her attention goes into trying to find him. She refuses to come with Jason on his quest because she wants to search for Percy instead, and refuses to help Hera, who she hates. Later she opens up more to Jason, but still remains a little suspicious of him. This is probably because she can sense that he does not really belong at Camp Half Blood, and is suspicious of his memory loss



since it was caused by Hera. She also trusts and respects Chiron a great deal, and Chiron seems to think Jason is dangerous. She is much kinder to Piper, helping her to come to terms with the fact that her relationship with Jason was never real. At the end of the book she learns that Percy has been sent to the Roman camp and probably has the same memory loss as Jason. She is brave and determined to find him.

## Thalia Grace

Thalia is the daughter of Zeus and was once a demigod at Camp Half Blood. She joined Artemis' Hunters, which means that she is now immortal and travels around with them rather than living with the other demigods. She resents her father as well as her mortal mother, who is now dead. She thought that her little brother died long ago. Having no family left, and feeling very bitter towards most of the gods, she decided to become a Hunter. Artemis is kind and loving towards her Hunters, and Thalia finds a family there where she never had one before. However, unknown to Thalia, her little brother did not die, but was given to Hera. Jason is actually her brother, and they share the same mortal mother and surname. Thalia explains that their mother was not a very good mother, and that she could not cope with them. She is bitter about her old life, but very kind to and instantly supportive of Jason. She agrees to help him without needing any persuasion. She is also very kind to Piper and tries to recruit her to be a Hunter. She obviously gets on better with girls than boys, finding the latter immature and annoying. She makes it clear that she finds Leo very silly. Thalia proves to be very brave and determined, as well as a skilled fighter. She helps them to fight the giant and his minions at the end of the story, despite the fact that she hates Hera and would rather not see her freed. She will stick up for the people she cares about.

## Drew

Drew is the daughter of Aphrodite and head counselor of the Aphrodite cabin at Camp Half Blood. Like Piper, she has the power of charmspeak, so can persuade people to do unlikely things simply by talking to them. She meets Piper, Jason and Leo at the beginning of the story when they are brought to Camp Half Blood. She immediately fancies Jason and takes an instant dislike to Piper. She insults Piper's appearance and nicknames her the 'dumpster queen.' She flirts with Jason, but Jason makes it clear that he is not interested. He already has some kind of attraction to Piper that he is not sure how to feel about, but his main reason for rejecting Drew is that he has no memories and no idea if he has a girlfriend somewhere. Drew blames Piper, and hates her even more. At first she just sees Piper as a rival for Jason, then when Piper is claimed by Aphrodite she sees Piper as a rival in every sense. She hates the fact that Piper does not care about fashion and beauty and yet is a member of the Aphrodite cabin. She hates the fact that Piper also has the power of charmspeak, and that Piper is receiving a lot of attention from the rest of the camp. Drew likes being the centre of attention and wants all the admiration to be focused on her. She deliberately tries to make things difficult for Piper by ridiculing her, being mean to her, and telling the other Aphrodite campers that they cannot be friends with her.



Using her charmspeak, Drew has taken control of the Aphrodite cabin. She manipulates and forces the others to obey her, and they are all too afraid of her to challenge her. She leads them very badly because she has completely misunderstood what Aphrodite is all about. She is shallow and conceited, caring only about looks and breaking people's hearts. Piper tells the others that Aphrodite is actually about spreading beauty and being loving, and understanding that beauty comes from confidence, strength and friendship rather than make-up and fashion. She challenges Drew, who steps down, proving that she is all talk and no actual strength or bravery.

## Hera/Juno

Hera is the Greek goddess of marriage and family. She is married to Zeus, so she is the queen of the gods. As the goddess of marriage it is not in her nature to have affairs, and she gets extremely upset when her husband cheats on her with mortal women. She is quick to become angry, jealous and vindictive. She will often take out her anger on the mortal women and their demigods, rather than confronting her husband directly. This is why Thalia hates her, because she made life very difficult for her and her mother, and took her little brother Jason away from her. Hera may be the goddess of family, but she only seems to like families that fit her image of the 'perfect family.' She is disappointed in her own godly children and even threw her son Hephaestus from Mount Olympus for being too ugly. It is this cruel, petty and manipulative side to the goddess that makes Annabeth hate her so much.

Hera's Roman counterpart is Juno. Juno is basically the same as Hera, but perhaps a little more dignified, disciplined and war-like. She seems a little less petty than the Greek Hera. She always appears in her Juno aspect when she talks to Jason, and seems to genuinely care about him. She explains that she thinks of him as her champion, and likes having a mortal to look out for. She also helped the original Jason, a hero of Greek mythology, and likes this Jason because he reminds her of the old one. She has no demigod children of her own, and often feels jealous of the other gods because she would like to have a half blood child to help her understand and connect to the mortal world better. This is a different perspective of Hera from how she has been presented in previous books by this author, and makes the reader feel almost sorry for her. Juno proves that she can be a good patron goddess to Jason, giving him a weapon, advice and support, and appearing to him when he asks for help and his own father ignores him. However, she also keeps secrets and took away Jason's memories for her own purposes. She is an ambiguous character.

## Hephaestus

Hephaestus is the Greek god of blacksmiths, fire, and the forge. He is the son of Hera and Zeus, and is married to the goddess Aphrodite. He is the father of Leo in this story, as well as the other Hephaestus campers. Hephaestus was thrown from Mount Olympus by his own mother for being too ugly. Although he was welcomed back, he has been very bitter towards his mother ever since, and considers her to be a bad example



of motherhood. He is also very resentful of his wife, who is constantly having affairs and treats their marriage as a joke. As Aeolus says, it is rare that the two ever agree on anything as they are usually quite antagonistic towards each other.

Hephaestus loves machines and gadgets, and is more at home with them than he is with people. He does not really understand people, and so finds it very hard to keep in contact with his mortal children. He is too afraid of messing up to pluck up the courage to visit them, but he watches them with a magic mirror and seems to genuinely care about them. When he appears to Leo he explains this, and sympathizes about Leo's lost machines. Leo realizes that he can relate to his father because he is very similar to him in many ways. He finds that although he might not entirely forgive his father for his absence, he can at least understand him.

## Aphrodite

Aphrodite is the Greek goddess of love and beauty. She is married to Hephaestus, but does not take the marriage seriously. Piper is her daughter in this story, as well as Drew and the other Aphrodite campers. At first Piper is not sure what to think about being the daughter of Aphrodite, as she is associated with fashion, vanity and breaking hearts. The other Aphrodite campers, particularly Drew, seem quite conceited and selfish. Aphrodite is not typically associated with strength and heroics, so Piper thinks that she cannot be a real hero or contribute to the quest. However, Piper soon learns that she can be strong and powerful. She comes to realize that Aphrodite is about confidence, inner strength and beauty, and about fighting for the people she loves. When Aphrodite visits Piper she explains that beauty is about being comfortable with who you are, and that Piper must fight for those she loves and prove herself a hero. Piper takes this message back to the Aphrodite campers, explaining that Aphrodite is about spreading beauty and being loving, and that being a hero is about standing by their friends.

Aphrodite has a different lineage from the other Olympian gods, who were the children of the Titans Kronos and Rhea, or the children of Zeus and Hera. Aphrodite is actually the child of Ouranos, as she was created when the pieces of him fell into the sea. Ouranos was the primordial god of the Sky and husband of Gaia. He was the father of the Titans, including Kronos and Rhea. This means that Aphrodite is older than the other Olympian gods and more directly linked to the first primordial gods. This is because love is an extremely old and powerful force.

Aphrodite shows herself to be compassionate when she talks to Piper about her father and how he could not cope with the truth about gods and monsters. She gives Piper a potion to remove those bits of his memory. She shows that she still cares about him, and about her daughter, rather than just abandoning them. Even though she has been ordered not to communicate with mortals, she still appears to Piper when she needs her. She gives her advice, new clothes and money, showing that she is thinking and caring about her even though she cannot be present in her life. She is portrayed as a beautiful woman who carries herself with grace and dignity. She is naturally beautiful because she understands herself and does not try to be something she is not,



something that she admits can be difficult for a god or goddess. She is proud of Piper because she stays true to herself and fights for the people she loves.

## Piper's Father/Tristan McLean

Piper's father is a famous movie actor called Tristan McLean. He has starred in many different roles, including a Greek warrior. He is a heartthrob, and Piper is constantly embarrassed of the attention he receives and the posters of him that appear everywhere. She loves her father for who he is and desperately wishes they could be a normal family. She does not love the fame and riches they have, and never uses her father's name to get what she wants. Her father seems to like his job, but at the same time never seems entirely happy or content. He is trying to protect Piper from his crazy life by keeping her emotionally distant from him, but does not realize that he is upsetting her and himself by doing so. By the end of the story he has realized that she is a hero rather than a troublemaker, and that he should pay more attention to her. Although he is not exactly the greatest father, he clearly loves Piper deeply.

Tristan's world view is very small. He does not accept the Cherokee stories and culture he was brought up with, and laughs at the idea of gods and monsters. He cannot cope with finding out that Greek myths are real because he will always be looking for someone to blame, unable to sleep at night through fear and anger. He regards his Cherokee past with mild embarrassment and humor, which teaches Piper to be embarrassed about that side of her too. Tristan is happy to ignore that part of himself and to start anew, but Piper is not. She is only happy when she embraces her past and comes to accept all the things that make her who she is. This is the biggest difference between the two of them.

## Boreas and the Boreads

Boreas is the Greek personification of the North Wind. His Roman counterpart is Aquilon. Jason, Piper and Leo travel to Boreas' home to ask for help in their quest. Boreas lives on the top floor of a hotel in Quebec, Canada. This is a northern, cold place where he can feel at home, but not too isolated that it is not connected to civilization and culture. Boreas' hotel rooms are covered in frost, and Leo is not allowed into his presence because he smells of fire. Boreas is portrayed as a man with a white beard and hair, crusty with frost. He has large purple wings and sits on a throne. He is very cold, and seems to feel no sympathy for mortals. He has a collection of demigods that he has frozen alive to create statues. He agrees to let Jason, Piper and Leo go because he believes their quest will kill them anyway.

Boreas has two sons called Zethes and Calais, known as the Boreads, who were originally mortal demigods. They sailed with the first Jason on his quest to retrieve the Golden Fleece. They are now immortal, and live with Boreas in Quebec. They try to kill Jason, Leo and Piper when they see them flying in their airspace, but Piper persuades them to take them to their father. Calais is large, dumb and strong, and seems to love



hockey and destruction. Zethes is cleverer than his brother and likes to dress in black, imitating a rock star. Both seem more in touch with the mortal world than their father. Although they seem eager to attack Jason, Piper and Leo, they seem much friendlier than Boreas and Khione, and they remember the old Jason fondly.

## Khione

Khione is the goddess of snow and the daughter of Boreas. She is a full goddess, rather than a demigod who turned immortal like her brothers Zethes and Calais. She is cold like her father, but seems much crueler than him. Unlike Boreas, she likes chaos better than civilization. She hates having to answer to her father and longs to overthrow him so that she can have her own power and independence. Working for Gaia offers her this possibility, so she turns against her father to do so. She tries to get him to kill Jason, Piper and Leo, and when he does not, she follows them herself. She reports on their activities to the giant Enceladus, and sends constant snowstorms against them. She also freezes the circuits in Festus' head, making him crash. At first Leo is attracted to Khione because of her beauty, and later she attempts to make him betray his friends. When he finds out she is an enemy, Leo no longer likes her, and laughs at the idea that he would betray his friends for her. He attacks her and single-handedly defeats her with his fire powers.

## Aeolus

Aeolus is the master of the winds, and so he controls the other wind gods and wind spirits. He is in charge of the weather and reports on it for the Olympian TV channels. He constantly has to listen to the requests and complaints of the other gods, and to change the weather to suit them. He has been driven mad by having to try to deal with all their contradictory requests. He is very changeable, like the winds, and quick to anger. At first he welcomes the heroes and retracts his order to kill demigods. Later, however, he changes his mind and orders the storm spirits to kill them. Later they find out that this is because Khione has been whispering in his ear, persuading him to do things to benefit Gaia.

## Mellie

Mellie is an aura, a spirit of gentle breezes, who works for Aeolus. She meets Piper, Leo and Jason when they come to ask for Aeolus' help. She is kind to them, and when Aeolus orders their deaths she gives up her job and risks herself to help them escape. She immediately takes a fancy to Coach Hedge, admiring his bravery and spirit. Later, she meets up with him again and takes the job of Piper's father's new assistant.



## Medea

Medea is an evil witch who works for Gaia. She lived a long time ago as the princess of Colchis, the place where the Golden Fleece was originally kept. She helped the original Jason to steal it, and then betrayed her own family to help him to escape. However, despite promising to marry her, he abandoned her and their two children to marry another princess. Medea got revenge by killing the princess. The myths tell that she also killed her own children, but in this story she claims those are lies. She tries to plead her case, claiming that she was justified to act as she did because Jason betrayed her. Piper does not buy this, concluding that Medea is evil because she reacted with murder, even if Jason did treat her badly. She also points out that Medea did many dangerous, manipulative and evil things, such as tricking King Pelias' daughters into killing their own father by pretending that she would bring him back to life younger than before. Medea tries the same trick again on Jason and Leo, persuading them to fight each other by telling them that she can bring the loser back to life in her magic fountain. Medea also has the power of charmspeak and seems to be much more powerful than Piper. She almost succeeds in persuading Leo and Jason to kill each other, but Piper manages to break the spell by putting all her love and friendship into her command. When Medea sees that her manipulation has not worked, she turns to violence and sends dragons against the heroes. Piper sets the place on fire and they escape on Festus, leaving Medea behind. Medea tries one last time to manipulate Piper, but Piper will not listen.

Medea, like other mortals from Greek mythology, has been brought back to life by Gaia. Somehow, Gaia has prevented death from working properly, allowing certain mortals who are useful to her to return from the underworld.

## King Midas

King Midas is a mortal from Greek mythology. He showed hospitality to Dionysus' tutor Silenus, and in return Dionysus offered Midas a gift of whatever he wanted. He asked for everything he touched to turn to gold, and Dionysus granted this. According to the myth, things were going well until Midas discovered that he could not eat because all his food turned to gold when he touched it. He also accidentally turned his daughter to gold. He prayed to Dionysus, who told him to bathe in a river. Many people have taken this as a moral story teaching a lesson about greed. However, here Midas is presented as a greedy and arrogant man who has never learned his lesson. He can still turn things to gold with a touch, but can reverse it with running water if needed. He is still obsessed with gold. He proves that he never learned anything by pointing out his donkey's ears, which he was given by Apollo for judging Pan better in a music contest. Midas seems very selfish, and can be quite cruel. He thinks nothing of turning other people into statues for his own pleasure. He turns Piper and Leo into gold, and tries to kill Jason. Jason manages to defeat him, then turns all his victims back into people. He leaves Midas to his victims.

Like Medea, Midas has also been brought back to life by Gaia.





## Lupa

Lupa is a she-wolf who helped to raise and train Jason when he was given to Juno by his mother. Lupa seems to be the Roman camp's equivalent of Chiron, a creature who trains heroes and explains their destiny to them. Lupa seems more frightening than Chiron. She is stricter and more likely to punish heroes who do not live up to expectations. Jason says that she will eat those who show too much weakness. Lupa is immortal and raised other heroes in the past. She is the wolf who raised the famous Roman heroes Romulus and Remus.

## Enceladus

Enceladus is the giant who has captured Piper's father and is holding him prisoner. He sends Piper dreams trying to encourage her to betray her friends to save her father. Enceladus has camped out on Mount Diablo in California. He is a huge giant with dreadlocks, and scaly legs and dragon's feet. He was created to defeat Athena, and so is more intelligent than other giants. This makes him very difficult to defeat. Jason goes up against him while Piper and Leo face his minions, the Earthborn six-armed ogres. Jason soon finds that Enceladus is more agile than he seems, and he is almost beaten by him. Jason manages to defeat the giant when he climbs onto his head and calls down lightning from Zeus. This blasts a crater into the earth that Enceladus falls into.

## Porphyron

Porphyron is the king of the giants. He is raised from the earth at the Wolf House, using the essence of the goddess Hera as a power source. He plans to either marry Hera or kill her. Either way he will significantly weaken the power of the Olympian gods. Jason fights him while Piper and Leo try to release Hera. Porphyron is taller and stronger than Enceladus, and has the same dragon feet and scaly legs. Jason pulls a similar trick on him, jumping onto his back and sticking a sword into his ear. In the end he is not defeated, but retreats back into the earth when Hera is released. He will certainly be back in later books.

## Lycaon

Lycaon is a mythological character who was turned into a wolf by Zeus when he dared to try to test the god. Zeus also killed all Lycaon's children. Lycaon now hates Zeus and all the gods, and so naturally has sided with Gaia. He is a werewolf and seems to be immortal. He was the first werewolf, but now controls a large pack. He attacks Jason, Piper and Leo in a cave, but is forced to flee by the Hunters of Artemis. Later, his wolves attack them again at the Wolf House, but Jason manages to defeat them by riding a storm spirit.

## Gaia

Gaia is the primordial goddess of the Earth. She is Mother Earth, but she is not gentle and motherly as one might expect. Instead, she is forceful, vengeful and often cruel. She wants revenge for the deaths and imprisonment of her first children, and blames the Olympian gods for this. She was born from Chaos, and so does not care for civilization and humanity as the Olympian gods do. Her return would mean destruction, chaos and suffering for the world. She is portrayed in the book as a sleeping woman who is formed of earth. She can speak to Leo and her minions, and affect events in the world, but she is not yet fully awake. She is incredibly powerful, and so it would take a lot of energy for her to be completely awake and present. She visits Leo in visions, and killed Leo's mother when he was younger. She is the main enemy of the book, and is the 'patron' that all the monsters and other enemies refer to.



# Objects/Places

## The Greek (and Roman) Gods

The Greek gods are beings from classical mythology who ruled over mortals and the mortal world. They had special powers, and represented certain aspects of the world, human nature, and civilization. The main and most powerful gods were the twelve Olympians. These were Zeus (god of sky, thunder, and king of the gods), Hera (queen of the gods, wife of Zeus, goddess of family and marriage), Poseidon (god of the sea and earthquakes), Demeter (goddess of crops), Apollo (god of light, archery, music, healing and prophecy), Artemis (virgin goddess of hunting and the moon), Athena (goddess of wisdom and battle strategy), Aphrodite (goddess of love and beauty), Ares (god of war), Hephaestus (god of smiths, the forge, and fire), Dionysus (god of wine and theatre), and Hermes (god of messengers, trade, travelers, and thieves). Hades was also a powerful god but did not live on Mount Olympus with the other gods. He was the god of death and his realm was the Underworld. There are also many minor gods such as Hypnos (sleep) and Iris (messages).

In this story, the Greek gods are real and have always existed. They move around according to where western civilization is strongest. For example, they moved from Greece to Rome when Rome took over most of the western world. Now they have moved to the USA, where western civilization is now the strongest. The entrance to Mount Olympus is now located in the Empire State Building, and other mythological places have also moved. Although people no longer believe in or worship the Greek gods, they still exist because civilization exists. The Greek gods are strongly tied to human civilization and its ideals, and as long as the same ideas and values are still upheld, the gods will continue to exist. They also change to reflect their host culture, so at the moment Zeus likes to wear a pin-striped suit, Ares dresses like a biker, and Aeolus, lord of the winds, is in charge of the Olympian TV network. The gods no longer demand worship, but they continue to have affairs with mortals and so still produce plenty of demigod children.

According to mythology, the first gods were Gaia and Ouranos. Among other children, they gave birth to the Titans, who overthrew Ouranos and gave birth to the Greek gods. In turn, the Greek gods overthrew the Titans and locked them in Tartarus, a fiery pit in the Underworld. Zeus was the king of the gods and the most powerful. He married his sister Hera, and they produced more gods. Zeus' brothers were Poseidon and Hades, and Demeter was his other sister. Only Aphrodite has a different lineage, being born from the pieces of Ouranos that fell into the sea. The Titans hate the gods and tried to defeat them in the previous series of books. This failed, and now Gaia has raised her other children, the giants, to try to retake Olympus. The Greek gods are often petty, jealous and vindictive, but they can also be kind and sympathetic to humans. They act like humans themselves, and so they are not perfect. They are not as evil as the Titans, the giants or Gaia, however, and the world is better off with them in power than the alternative. Although the Greek gods do not make good parents and are often resented



by the characters in this story, they are never the enemy, and the heroes fight to keep them in power.

The Greek gods also have Roman aspects, as their personalities changed to suit their host culture when they moved to Rome. They have held on to these different aspects, and can now appear either in Greek or Roman form. If they have children in their Roman form, the child becomes a Roman demigod and goes to a Roman camp for heroes instead. The Roman aspects of the gods are often more war-like, dignified, and disciplined.

## Venti/Anemoi Thuellai

The venti (singular: ventus) are storm spirits that exist in both Greek and Roman mythology. The Greek name for them is anemoi thuellai. They can appear in different forms, but usually appear as winged, angel-like beings or as stormy horses. They are immortal, chaotic beings that cause frenzied winds. They are usually controlled by Aeolus, the master of the winds, but often escape and cause havoc. The venti attack the heroes at several points in this story, being controlled by Medea and later by Aeolus. In the final battle, Jason manages to harness and ride the strongest storm spirit, which has appeared in the form of a horse, and he uses it to dissolve all the other storm spirits.

## Satyr/Faun

A satyr is a creature from Greek mythology that has the body and head of a human and the horns, hooves and legs of a goat. They are nature beings, and so love plants and wildlife. Like goats, they also tend to eat whatever they can get in their mouths. They are protectors by nature, and are often assigned to protect demigods before they come to Camp Half Blood. Satyrs are not immortal, but live longer than humans. They go back to nature when they die, becoming a tree or a flower, for example, in their next life. The Roman name for satyrs is fauns.

## Half Blood/Demigod/Hero

A demigod is the child of a god and a mortal. In this story, the demigods are created when one of the Greek gods has a love affair with a mortal. They are usually raised by the mortal parent, as the godly parent never stays with their lover and child for long. The demigod child is a hero, and so is hardwired for battle. This is why many demigod children are diagnosed with ADHD. They are also often dyslexic, as their brains are hardwired to read ancient Greek. Demigod children are often strong and skilled in battle, and can have various powers inherited from their godly parent. For example, Piper is the daughter of Aphrodite and has the power of charmspeak, meaning she can persuade others easily. Leo is the son of Hephaestus and has powers over fire. Children of particularly powerful gods tend to be the more powerful heroes, such as Percy Jackson, son of Poseidon, and Jason Grace, son of Jupiter. Demigods are often



referred to as half bloods because they are half god and half mortal. They are trained at Camp Half Blood and given quests to go on. They are claimed by their godly parent and live in a cabin with other children of the same god. Sometimes their godly parents will visit them and give them presents or advice. When a Greek god sleeps with a mortal in his or her Roman aspect, a Roman demigod is created instead. For example, Jason is the son of Jupiter rather than Zeus.

## The Mist

The Mist is a magical mist that the gods and other magical beings can place over themselves to hide what they truly are from mortal eyes. This is why the world is generally unaware that the Greek gods and monsters are actually real. For example, a monster like a Cyclops might appear to them to be a tall human. In this story, a ventus manages to conceal his true nature by appearing to be a normal school boy called Dylan. The Mist was also used in order to send Jason to the Wilderness School, altering everyone's memories so that they would think they had always known him. The Mist even fools Piper into thinking she had a relationship with Jason. Demigods can be fooled by the Mist because they are half mortal, but Coach Hedge managed to see through it because he is a satyr and so a magical being.

## Katoptris

Katoptris is the name of the dagger that once belonged to Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman in the world, who was favored by Aphrodite. Helen never used the knife as a weapon, but looked into its polished blade as a mirror instead. This is why she named it katoptris, which means 'looking glass.' Piper feels drawn to this weapon and chooses it to be her own. Later, she manages to use it as an actual weapon, spurred by the need to save the people she loves. She turns a beautiful trinket into something heroic through the power of love and friendship.

## Celestial Bronze

In this story, celestial bronze is the only material that can hurt monsters. All the weapons at Camp Half Blood are made from it. It also has the advantage of not harming mortals. However, Jason's own weapon is made of something more like gold than bronze, suggesting that there is another material that works in a similar manner.

## The Hunters of Artemis

The Hunters of Artemis are a group of young girls who dedicate their lives to Artemis and so become immortal. They hunt monsters for her, and live as one family. They have to swear off boys forever, something that many teenage girls cannot do. This is because Artemis is a virgin goddess. Thalia, Jason's sister, is one of Artemis' Hunters. The Hunters will often come to the aid of demigods when needed.



## Oracle

An Oracle is a person who can foretell the future. In this story, the Oracle at Camp Half Blood is a role filled by a mortal who has the gift of prophecy. At the moment this is Rachel Dare. She gives the heroes prophecies when they go on quests. These are rhymes that will help them know what to do, and warn them of any dangers to come. The prophecies are usually very cryptic.

## Centaur

A centaur is a creature from Greek mythology that has the head and torso of a human and the legs and body of a horse. They are usually wild, unruly, party-loving creatures, but Chiron is different. Chiron is the camp director and helps to protect and train all the heroes at Camp Half Blood. He is a mythological figure who trained some of the famous heroes of Greek myth. He is intelligent, dignified, and sensible. Chiron is mildly embarrassed of his relations, the other centaurs, who call themselves the Party Ponies.

## The Big House

The Big House is the main house at Camp Half Blood, and is where the camp headquarters is located. This is where Chiron lives, and where important camp matters are discussed. The decor inside is still jungle-themed because Dionysus used to run the camp. Dionysus is associated with jungles, theatre, wine, and leopards and panthers. Unsurprisingly, there are theatre masks and grape vines on the walls. There is even a living leopard head on the wall, called Seymour. The Big House also contains a room lined with celestial bronze where Piper can make a phone call to her father without worrying that monsters will pick up the signal.

## Camp Half Blood

Camp Half Blood is the camp where Greek demigod children come to be protected and train to be a hero. It is a training school in the form of a camp, with activities, campfire, and competitions. The campers live in cabins allocated to the various different gods. For example, all Aphrodite's children live in the Aphrodite cabin, which is neat and beautiful. All Hephaestus' children live in the Hephaestus cabin, which is full of machinery and gadgets. There are cabins for Zeus, Poseidon and Hades, but recently these gods have made a pact to have no more demigod children. This means that Jason has to sleep in the Zeus cabin alone. Hera and Artemis also have cabins because it would be disrespectful not to build them, but neither have ever had any demigod children. This is because Artemis is a virgin goddess and Hera is the goddess of marriage, meaning it is not in her nature to be unfaithful to Zeus. At the camp there is a lake, a campfire, a main house called the Big House, the gods' cabins, some woods and caves, practice grounds, a forge, and a hospital. Leo also discovers a place called Bunker 9 where battle plans were made and weapons were forged. Camp Half Blood is run by Chiron,



the camp director. It is protected from monsters by a magical boundary maintained by the power of the Golden Fleece.

## Festus

Festus is a mechanical dragon made by a Hephaestus camper long ago and restored by Beckindorf. When Beckindorf died it went haywire and started attacking the camp. Leo finds it and fixes it, naming the dragon Festus and giving it wings. They use Festus as flying transport on their quest, but the dragon is destroyed when they are shot down at Midas' estate. Leo saves Festus' head, planning to use it as a masthead on the flying ship that he will build one day.

## The Burnt House/The Wolf House

The Wolf House is the old house of Jack London, a famous writer who was also a son of Mercury. He called it the Wolf House because he was raised and trained by Lupa, the leader of the Roman demigod camp. The house burnt down in a fire and is now the site of a park. The Wolf House is also sacred ground for the Roman demigods, as it is where they are claimed by Lupa before being taken to the camp. It is at the Wolf House that Hera is being held prisoner and Porphyron is breaking through. It is here that the final battle of the book takes place.

## Cyclopes

Cyclopes (singular: Cyclops) are monstrous one-eyed giants from Greek mythology. Some of the Cyclopes are friendly to the gods and demigods, and help to work the forges that provide armor and weapons for the gods. These are the elder Cyclopes, which were born to Gaia and Ouranos but locked up until the Olympian gods freed them. Some Cyclopes were also the children of Poseidon. Other Cyclopes are more barbaric and cruel, such as the Northern Cyclopes who attack Jason, Piper and Leo, and the Southern Cyclopes who live in the Sea of Monsters. They like to eat human flesh.

## Leo's Tool Belt

Leo's tool belt is magical, and will produce anything he needs if he asks for it and draws it from one of the pockets. It is harder for Leo to produce items that do not exist in an ordinary workshop, though he is able to produce breath mints. The belt also seems to have a cooldown, meaning he cannot draw too many things from it at once. The belt comes in handy a lot throughout the story, particularly in fights.



## The Great Prophecy

The Great Prophecy is a prophecy given by Rachel Dare, Camp Half Blood's oracle. It talks about a great event in which seven demigods will have to save the world. It seems to suggest that the Greek demigods and the Roman demigods will have to work together. The Great Prophecy is: "Seven half-bloods shall answer the call/To storm or fire the world must fall/An oath to keep with a final breath/And foes bear arms to the Doors of Death." (Chapter 10, Piper, p. 120-1).

## Jason's Prophecy

Jason's prophecy is a poem given by Rachel Dare at the beginning of the story to help the heroes on their quest to free Hera. It suggests that freeing Hera will bring death, which proves to be true as she appears in her godly form and kills Jason by mistake. Thankfully, Piper brings him back from death. The line about the forge and the dove means a child of Hephaestus and a child of Aphrodite will have to work together, which of course refers to Leo and Piper. The prophecy is: "Child of lightning, beware the earth/The giants' revenge the seven shall birth/The forge and dove shall break the cage/And death unleash through Hera's rage." (Chapter 10, Piper, p. 126).





# Themes

## Identity

All of the three main characters in this story are trying to come to terms with who they are and to better understand themselves and their place in the world. Piper has a difficult inner struggle. There are so many different and often contrasting things that make up the person that Piper is. She is the daughter of a famous movie star, and so is extremely wealthy and privileged. She is half Cherokee on her father's side, meaning that her family comes from a Native American reservation. Her mother is the Greek goddess Aphrodite. Piper has a difficult time accepting any of these things. She is not comfortable living the life of a rich, privileged girl, and does not like other people to know that her father is a movie star. She would rather have a normal family than a famous father. She is also uncomfortable with her Cherokee side. Her father treats his lineage as something to laugh at and be mildly embarrassed by. He left the reservation as soon as he could and never looked back. He does not believe in any of the old Cherokee myths or stories, and is a very unspiritual person in general. His attitude has taught Piper to be embarrassed of her past, and has disconnected her from her Cherokee heritage. She would like to know more about it and to understand what being half-Cherokee means, but she cannot do this because of her father. She has also received bullying for her Cherokee coloring and features, being called 'half blood.' This means that it is very strange for Piper when she arrives at Camp Half Blood, where being a half blood is considered something to be proud of, something that makes her a hero. She is suddenly told that she is a demigod and her mother was a Greek goddess. This is a whole new side to her that she has to accept and get used to. If coming to terms with being half-Cherokee is difficult for her, the idea of being half god is certainly stranger. However, for Piper this is the side of her that makes the most sense. She has always had odd powers of persuasion, and has never really felt like she fit in anywhere. She was sent to a school for problem children, something that many demigod kids experience. Finding out that she is a demigod suddenly explains all this.

What Piper is not prepared for, however, is to discover that she is the child of Aphrodite. At first Piper finds this a bad thing, as she associates Aphrodite with caring too much about trivial things such as looks, make-up and fashion. This is made worse by the fact that the other Aphrodite campers she meets are not the kind of people she would normally associate with. She also hates Drew, the head Aphrodite counselor. The other Aphrodite campers tell her that being a child of Aphrodite is about breaking hearts, something Piper thinks is appalling. Drew treats her like dirt and clearly considers her inferior because she does not dress fashionably. Piper prefers to wear practical rather than beautiful clothes, and does not like to be the centre of attention. She values friendship, intelligence and other qualities over looks. All these things mean that it is very difficult for Piper to accept that she is the daughter of Aphrodite. She spends a lot of the story coming to terms with this and finding out what it means for her. She discovers that Aphrodite does not have to be about shallow things, but is really all about love. This means love for friends and family as well as romantic love. Most importantly, it



means fighting for the people she loves, something that Piper can easily value. Aphrodite also explains to Piper that beauty is about being comfortable with yourself and not trying to be something you are not. Piper discovers this on her quest, as she realizes that she has a lot of inner strength. As her confidence grows, she becomes a better hero, a better friend, and a more beautiful person. She realizes that she can be strong to fight for the people she loves, and that being a hero is about sticking by her friends. In this way, she comes to understand why she is a child of Aphrodite, and what this really means. When she returns to the camp she challenges Drew and takes over the leadership of the Aphrodite cabin. She is determined to help all her half brothers and sisters to understand their identities as children of Aphrodite too.

Piper also manages to come to terms with other aspects of who she is while she is on her quest. She remembers old Cherokee stories that her father and grandfather told, and even uses them to help her make difficult decisions. She accepts this side of herself and opens her mind to the possibility that Cherokee mythology might hold some truth to it, just as the Greek mythology turned out to do. She is willing to embrace all sides of herself and to question who she really is, something that her father was never brave enough to do. She also manages to come to terms with her relationship with her father. When she rescues him he realizes that she is stronger than he gave her credit for. He explains that he kept her distant because he was trying to protect her from his crazy life as a movie star. He calls her a hero and tells her how much he loves her. Even though she is forced to wipe some of his memories away, he holds on to this new view of his daughter, and their relationship is much better for it. Lastly, she manages to come to terms with the fact that Jason was never really her boyfriend. She has developed real feelings for him, however, and is determined to make things work between them.

Leo has similar problems to Piper in that he is trying to understand his own identity and his place in the world. He feels like he is useless and dangerous, and that he always messes things up. He uses humor to deflect from his fears and his feelings of inadequacy. He feels responsible for his mother's death and is convinced that he will never find a home or anywhere to belong again. He also finds it hard to get on with people, preferring machines and gadgets. During the quest, he constantly struggles with feelings of inferiority compared to both Jason and Piper. However, by being a hero and saving their lives many times, Leo comes to see that he is useful after all. He is strong and brave and skilled. He repairs the mechanical dragon, providing transport, and saves them all from the Cyclopes and later from Khione. His gadgets help out in several fights. Even his fire power, which he has always considered to be more a curse than a gift, turns out to be a very useful tool and a great power. Leo proves to himself many times over that he is a hero and that he is not inferior to anyone else. More importantly, Leo finally manages to find a place where he feels at home and accepted. In Camp Half Blood there are so many people like him that he really feels as though he belongs. He is no longer the troubled child with ADHD who cracks jokes and messes up, but a hero with family and friends and a place to call home.

Jason also spends the whole story struggling to find out who he is. He has lost his memory, but it does come back in pieces and sensations throughout the book. Not having all his memories confuses him, however, as he is not sure of his own identity. He



is worried about how he should feel about things, not knowing how the 'real' him would usually react. He is not sure whether he has friends or a girlfriend somewhere who are looking for him. He is resentful of his father and his godly side, wishing he did not have such a big burden placed on him. He has been chosen as a leader, but he does not feel confident about being one. He constantly worries that he will fail. Through his adventures, Jason proves to himself that he is a hero and that he is a good leader. He shows that he can succeed, even when he is afraid or unsure. Through his friends, Piper and Leo, he gains something to fight for. He still cannot remember everything about himself, but he knows he is the kind of person who sticks by the people he cares for, who will be brave and strong when needed. When he discovers Thalia he uncovers a little more of his past. However, just as it seems like he has found his family, he realizes that he does not really have one. Thalia is one of Artemis' Hunters and his mother is dead. She abandoned him when he was little, and now Thalia is lost to him as well. In some ways he is still very disconnected at the end of the book, with no real family or support from his old life. However, his new life has provided support, a place and people to fight for, and friends. He is not alone.

## Being a Hero

This story explores what it means to be a hero. This was a question that also concerned the ancient Greeks, whose mythological heroes provide examples of how heroes should behave. Ancient Greek heroes tended to fit certain criteria; they were very strong or highly skilled, sometimes had special powers, usually had at least one god on their side, were extremely brave, and were good leaders. Examples of such heroes are Odysseus, Theseus, Perseus, Achilles and Jason. The original Jason from Greek mythology is used in this story as an example for Jason to live up to. References to his namesake pop up continually, and the Jason in this story meets some of the people and creatures the old Jason faced. This allows the new Jason to be compared to the old Jason to test out his hero mettle.

One important aspect of being a hero is skill or strength in fighting. Jason proves this many times in the various fights they have against evil beings and monsters. Jason uses his wits, strength, agility and special weapon to beat his opponents. He also wields impressive lightning powers. When fighting both giants, Jason uses his agility and weapon skills to wound them and keep them distracted from his friends. He uses his lightning powers against Midas, and later against Enceladus, both to good effect. He proves he is a very capable fighter when he challenges Lityerses at Midas' house and manages to best him. This is thanks to Jason's discipline and training at the Roman demigod camp. Piper does not fight as much as Jason, but proves that she has the skills necessary to be a hero. She uses her dagger Katoptris to kill Earthborn ogres, and uses her power of charmspeak to get them out of many messes. Leo has never had a chance to train and so has no fighting abilities, but his fire power more than makes up for this. He also uses his skills in building gadgets to take over nearby machines and uses those to fight. He does this when fighting the Cyclopes and later against Enceladus' minions. In the final battle, Leo's fire power is the only thing that can stop



Khione. Each of the three friends has unique abilities, skills, and strengths that they bring to fights and they succeed thanks to each other.

Being a hero is also about being brave and willing to fight for what you believe in. All three children prove that they are more than capable of doing this. Jason is brave enough to go on a quest without his memories and knowing very little about what he is supposed to do. He takes two inexperienced demigods with him, knowing that he is responsible for them. In every fight he is brave and determined, even distracting terrifying giants to keep them away from his friends. In all the fights it is Jason who is expected to battle the biggest and meanest enemy, and he does this without showing his fear. He does all this because he wants to fight for the people he cares about, and because he knows that it is what he is supposed to do. It is his destiny, and he never really questions it. Leo, like Jason, charges into every fight bravely and rarely stops to think about himself or to show fear. He uses his fire power to help them in several fights, despite his fears over it being dangerous and a curse. Even though he sometimes feels inferior, Leo would never let his friends down, proving that he is a real hero. Piper also proves her bravery many times. She does not have much fighting skill or any active powers like Jason's lightning or Leo's fire, but she still enters bravely into each fight by their sides. She keeps a level head and uses her charmspeak when she can to get them out of trouble. Later, when Leo is threatened, she uses her knife against the Earthborn ogres. She is determined to fight for her friends. When forced to make a difficult choice between her father's life and the quest, she chooses not to betray her friends. Not only does she refuse to hurt the people she loves, she also will not let the world suffer to save one person. This is a very brave and heroic choice. Later, Piper explains to the Aphrodite cabin that being a true hero is about sticking by one's friends.

Heroes of ancient Greece and Rome usually had at least one patron god or goddess who was always on their side, watching over them throughout their adventures and offering help or advice when possible. For the original Jason, this patron goddess was Hera. For the Jason of this story, it is also Hera who supports him. She usually appears to Jason in her Roman aspect of Juno, and tries to give him support, comfort and advice. She even gives him a new weapon at the end of the story. She does not always seem like the most trustworthy goddess, and has taken away his memories for her own purposes, but her support is important to Jason, who feels completely abandoned by both his godly father and his mortal mother. Hera usually hates the children of Zeus, but she has made an exception for Jason because he is her own personal champion and reminds her of the old Jason. Piper and Leo also receive godly support on their quest, both from their godly parents. Leo receives a vision from Hephaestus giving comfort and advice, and Piper is visited by Aphrodite, who helps her to understand herself better. Aphrodite helps Piper to realize what being a true hero is, and encourages her to fight for her friends.

A final aspect of being a hero is being a good leader. Jason proves this many times as he attempts to hold his team together, directs the mission, makes decisions, gives his friends comfort and protection, and risks his life for them in battle. Both Piper and Leo trust Jason completely, and consider him a good friend. This is a great indication that Jason is doing a good job as leader of the quest. Although Jason did not ask or want to



be the leader, he accepts his position with good grace and is determined to succeed. This is also part of being a good leader. Piper and Leo also show leadership skills at some points. Piper has to take charge in Medea's shop when Leo and Jason are placed under her spell. She also challenges Drew, forcing her to step down as leader of the Aphrodite cabin. Piper takes over this role, hoping to help her cabin to understand what being a proper hero is about. Similarly, Leo is given the role as leader of the Hephaestus cabin, and shows the others the bunker he found. He shows them all a drawing he made when he was younger and explains that they will build this ship to fly in the great battle against the giants. He is confident and determined, and the other Hephaestus campers accept his leadership happily.

Compared with Greek heroes, all three children in this book have all the qualities needed to be great heroes. In comparison with the original Jason, the new Jason holds up very well. He is a good leader, strong, brave and determined to fight for his friends. Piper is briefly compared to Aeneas, another great hero who was Aphrodite's child. Piper proves that she can be a hero like Aeneas, who famously put his friends, family, people, and destiny ahead of his own needs. Despite Leo's worries that he will mess things up and his feelings of inadequacy, he also proves himself to be a good hero.

## Gods and Civilization

In these stories the Greek gods and myths are true, and exist in our own time. Throughout the book, many different elements of Greek mythology are explored and twisted to fit a modern telling. The author cleverly weaves together traditional elements of the Greek stories with new ideas and themes that compliment the old. For example, the Greek gods pick up aspects of their host culture, meaning that they now enjoy things like pin-striped suits, biker jackets and reality TV. Aeolus, lord of the winds, is portrayed as a TV presenter who is obsessed with his looks. He has been driven completely crazy by the other gods constantly telling him to change the weather. This is a great presentation of a character from Greek mythology who is always being petitioned by different gods to do various things with the winds. No wonder he has been driven crazy. His role as a TV host makes sense because as the lord of the winds he hears all information and rumors. Boreas, the personification of the North Wind, is presented as looking very similar to how the Greeks pictured him. However, now he lives in Quebec in Canada. This is because he has moved to North America with the other gods, but needs a colder and more northerly place than any in the USA. He does not want to move too far from culture and civilization, so Quebec suits him perfectly. His sons have also picked up on aspects of modern culture, as Zethes likes to dress like a rock star, and Calais is obsessed with hockey. Other figures from mythology appear as they did in the original myths, but their occupations and homes have changed. The Cyclopes are still barbaric, one-eyed giants, but since they used to enjoy working in forges, they now work in a motor factory. Medea is the same manipulative and powerful witch as she was in Greek times, but now she runs a department store selling magical items and potions. This suits her, as in the mythology she liked to use magic and potions to gain control over others. She can now do this from her store, manipulating buyers into giving her whatever she wants. King Midas has the same faults and



personality as he did in the mythology, and the same power to turn things into gold. He now tries to sell gold and convince others to invest in it, an idea that suits his mythology as well as fitting perfectly into modern times. Other creatures explored in the book are storm spirits (venti), giants, centaurs, satyrs, the Earthborn, and Lycaon and his werewolves. All of these are portrayed in a way that reflects their place in Greek mythology as well as their role in this story.

In this story, the gods are linked very strongly to human civilization. The author explains that they move to a new host culture whenever the focus of Western civilization shifts. They are now in the USA because it is here that Western civilization is strongest. This means that the gods are tied to Western civilization, and in many ways they are representations of it. They reflect all the things that people value. They were worshipped in ancient Greece, the place where civilization as we recognize it began. They are linked to such ideas as community, family, homes, work, war, love and beauty, invention, science, medicine, art and culture. Although they are not directly worshipped today, and most people do not believe they ever existed, the gods are still important to civilization and will exist as long as civilization exists. It is suggested in the story that if the gods are destroyed, the whole of Western civilization will suffer. This is what will happen if Gaia's ultimate plan succeeds, as she wants to permanently destroy the gods by uprooting them from their birth place in Greece. This will most likely throw the world into chaos. Gaia and the giants do not care about this, as they are linked more closely to chaos than to human civilization. They are much older gods, who were formed and worshipped in a time when people worried more about the awesome power of nature and simple survival than they did about communities, cities, and other people. The Greek gods (often referred to as the Olympian gods in this book) might sometimes be petty and annoying, but that is because they act like human beings. They act like people because they are more closely linked to humans, and care about them much more than the older gods. This is a very interesting idea that draws strongly on ideas from Greek mythology. It also seems to suggest that Western civilization has not changed that much since the ancient Greeks, and that the same key values and ideas run right through history to modern day.

## Friendship and Belonging

Friendship is an important theme running through this whole story, linked to the idea of belonging. All three children find it difficult to feel like they belong anywhere. Piper has had problems with her own identity, and even greater problems with others accepting her. She is part Cherokee, part Greek god, with a famous movie star father. She does not like being the centre of attention, and finds it hard to find a place where she can feel like she fits in. At Camp Half Blood she might have found that place, as there are so many people there like her, as well as a large extended family. However, her worries about being a traitor prevent her from feeling like she belongs. She worries that it is inevitable that she will betray her friends, and does not want the guilt of betraying a new home and family too. Through her adventures with Leo and Jason, however, she forms such a strong friendship that she could never betray them. She trusts them with her life, and would never allow anyone or anything to hurt them. When Leo is in danger, she is



spurred on to fight, and at several points she refuses to exchange their lives for her father's life. When Aphrodite visits her in a dream, she explains to Piper that love is a very old and powerful force, and that fighting for the people she loves is important. Piper realizes that Aphrodite is not just about romantic love, but also about the love she has for her friends. Later, she explains to the Aphrodite campers that being a hero is about standing by their friends. Not only is being a hero strongly tied to friendship, so is belonging. It is only through her friendship with Jason and Leo that Piper can finally feel like she belongs at Camp Half Blood, and that she has found a home.

Leo also has trouble feeling like he fits in. He never feels as though he belongs anywhere, and solves all problems by running away from them. He feels a lot of misplaced guilt about his mother's death, and uses humor to deflect from this. Now he realizes that Camp Half Blood could actually be a proper home for him. At last he has found a place where he can belong. At Camp Half Blood, his ADHD is explained as something good that allows him to be constantly ready for battle. His 'curse' is actually a useful fire power that can help him to save his friends' lives. Most importantly, he has found family again, and people who are just like him. Leo is terrified that he will mess up and lose all of this, just as he has messed up in the past. It is only through Piper and Jason's friendship and support that he comes to realize that he will not mess up, that he is useful, and that he is a real hero. They convince him that his mother's death was not his fault, and that his fire power is not a bad thing but a good thing. Through their friendship, he can finally feel like he belongs somewhere again.

Jason has the hardest time out of the three in fitting in. His memory loss prevents him from knowing who he really is, which makes it hard for him to make proper friends or to feel connected to anyone or anywhere. Making this worse, he has the feeling that Camp Half Blood is wrong and that it is somehow dangerous for him to be here. This is confirmed by Chiron, who treats Jason as though he is dangerous, tells him he should be dead, and refuses to tell him everything he knows. Even the normally friendly Annabeth is openly suspicious of him. It is only Piper and Leo who stick by Jason no matter what. Even when Piper and Leo wonder whether Jason could actually be dangerous, or an enemy, they find that they do not care. Just because he cannot remember who he is does not mean they should not become friends with the person he is now. Their adventures draw them much closer together, and what was once a friendship formed by a fake magical Mist, now becomes something real. Leo and Piper show their support many times over, and prove that they are willing to sacrifice everything for him. They trust him with their lives. Piper even begins to form the hesitant beginnings of a relationship with him. Thanks to their trust and friendship, Jason can more easily accept his quest and his place at Camp Half Blood. Later, when he talks to Juno about his worries, she admits that Zeus has already helped out by sending Piper and Leo to Jason. Clearly their friendship is very important to him, and he admits that it has given him a reason to fight. It is their friendship that makes him determined to succeed and gives him the strength to carry on. Ultimately, it will be the friendships he forms with the Greek demigods that will help the Greek and Roman sides to unite. This will be vital to the quest to save the world. In other words, friendship is the most important thing in the whole story and what the future of the world rests on.



# Style

## Point of View

The Lost Hero is told from the point of view of three main characters: Jason, Piper, and Leo. It is told in the third person, but with a close insight into the observations, feelings and thoughts of the characters. Third person allows the author to jump between characters without the narrative becoming confusing, as well as letting the reader see action and events from different perspectives. By having three different point of view characters, the reader can see how things are affecting the children differently. It also allows the reader to see how all three are plagued by similar worries, such as identity issues, problems fitting in, and worries that they are not good enough. We can see how the friendship of the other two helps each of the characters to come to terms with these issues and to feel like they truly belong. By providing such a close view of the thoughts and feelings of the children, the author also shows how brave they are to face their various fears, and how strong they are to overcome their doubts. This helps to show the reader that they are real heroes.

## Setting

The story is set in the USA, in which the characters travel to many different destinations. The USA is the current home of the Greek gods, as this is where Western civilization is strongest. The entrance to Mount Olympus is now located inside the Empire State building in New York. This setting allows for ancient Greek mythology to be presented with a modern, American twist, in a setting that is more familiar to the book's readers.

The story begins at the Grand Canyon, where Jason wakes up on a school bus with no memories. While standing on a walkway over the canyon, Coach Hedge, Piper, Leo and Jason are attacked by three venti, or storm spirits. Coach Hedge is taken, but the other three manage to escape. They are picked up by Annabeth and taken to Camp Half Blood. Camp Half Blood is located somewhere near New York. It is hidden from ordinary mortals by the Mist. This is the place where Greek demigods come to be protected and to train to be heroes. It has cabins for each of the gods, including minor gods, in which their children live. The cabins for Hera and Artemis are always empty, because Artemis is a virgin goddess and it is not in Hera's nature to cheat on her husband. The cabins for Zeus, Poseidon and Hades also tend to remain empty, as they all swore a pact to have no more children with mortal women. They do sometimes break this rule, however, which results in the occasional demigod like Jason or Percy Jackson. Zeus' cabin is a very lonely place for Jason and does not even have beds or furniture because it is supposed to be empty. Other cabins reflect the personalities of the gods and their children, such as the steampunk themed Hephaestus cabin, or the beautiful and neat Aphrodite cabin. Inside the campers put up posters, decorate, and make their cabins into a home. Camp Half Blood also has training grounds, practice areas, a forge, a hospital and other areas needed for learning to be heroes. There is an amphitheatre





where campfires are held. Here the campers sing songs and discuss camp issues, arrange and begin quests, and do anything else that involves the whole camp. There is also a Big House where Chiron lives, and where the camp is run from. This is where more serious or private issues are discussed. This representation of Chiron's hero-training school as a typical American camp with some not-quite-so-typical features works very well. It places elements from Greek mythology in a familiar setting. Camp Half Blood is a very warm and friendly feeling place, where demigods can feel accepted, safe, and at home.

The three main characters travel to many different places on their quest. First they go to Quebec, where Boreas now has him home. Boreas is the personification of the North Wind, so prefers a cold, wild place that it is nevertheless still strongly connected to civilization. It is therefore appropriate to find him in an old city in Canada. His hotel rooms reflect his nature, as they are freezing cold and covered in frost. After visiting Boreas the three heroes travel to Chicago but crash land in a factory somewhere near Detroit on the way. This is the lair of some Cyclopes, one-eyed monsters from Greek mythology. Again, the setting reflects the mythology, as the symbol of the factory and the name 'Monocle Motors' hints at the one-eyed creatures inside. It is also appropriate that the Cyclopes are in a factory, as traditionally Cyclopes worked in forges. The abandoned factory also provides a perfect ominous and creepy setting for the first real monsters that the heroes have to face. After fighting the Cyclopes the heroes arrive at Chicago and follow some wind spirits down a drain to the entrance of a department store. This is the new home of Medea, a powerful sorceress from Greek myth. Again, the setting reflects the mythology, as the department store sells magical items and potions, Medea's specialty. Working in a store and bartering with customers suits Medea's personality well, as it allows her to manipulate others and try to gain power over them by making deals. The fact that the department store is accessed from underground emphasizes the fact that Medea is now working for Gaia, whose dominion is the earth. It also reminds the reader that this place is far from normal.

After facing Medea, the group crash land at King Midas' house. King Midas is another figure from mythology, and his over-protected, opulent house reflects his greedy nature. The gold statues everywhere not only emphasize his love of gold, but also turn out to be real people that he has turned into ornaments. This highlights his cruelty. After beating Midas they take shelter in a cave on a mountain where they are attacked by Lycaon and his werewolf pack. This wild and inhospitable setting is a great place for a fight against wild, barbaric creatures. Climbing the mountain, they next come to Aeolus' floating palace. Aeolus is the master of the winds, so it makes sense that he would live in a citadel in the sky. His palace turns out to be a huge TV hub where the Olympian TV's weather reports are presented. This fits in well with Aeolus' mythology as he knows a vast amount of information and rumors brought to him on the wind. The madness of TV also reflects Aeolus' mad nature, as he is changeable and wild like the winds.

From Aeolus' palace, the heroes are blown to California where they face the giant Enceladus on Mount Diablo. This is very appropriate, as 'Diablo' means devil, and Enceladus certainly seems like a demon from hell. The rocky mountain is the perfect place for a desperate fight against the minions of the earth goddess. After this fight, they



fly to the Wolf House, also in California, where Roman demigods are claimed by the wolf Lupa. This is where Hera is being held prisoner, and where they must face the king of the giants, Porphyron. The ruined, burned down building provides a sinister and haunting atmosphere for the final battle. The fact that the site is sacred to the Roman demigods and their gods is also significant, as it means that it is a very important place to hold power over. If the gods can be defeated here, it will strike a terrible blow to them and their children. Thankfully, the heroes win and Porphyron retreats. They are then returned to Camp Half Blood, a safe place and a good base to plan their next move.

## Language and Meaning

The language in this story is usually very simple, with words and phrases that ordinary American teenagers would use. Feelings, thoughts and observations are all given as if from the characters themselves, using a lot of colloquialisms. Descriptions of what the characters are doing tend to be given in the objective, neutral voice of the narrator, but descriptions of what the characters see often take on the voice of the characters themselves. Leo is very sarcastic and glib, with a dry sense of humor. He often says what he thinks, not afraid to point out the obvious. Underneath this, however, he is very insecure. This means that his thoughts and any dialogue inside his own head tend to be a little less sure and cocky. Jason is more straightforward, using less sarcasm and witty colloquialisms than Leo. He is often sensible, and speaks with a confident voice even if this is not what he is feeling inside. Piper speaks with more emotion than the other two as she is the child of Aphrodite and so more open with her feelings. She is often very quiet at the beginning of the story as she is worrying about her dreams and what she thinks is the inevitability of her betrayal. Later, however, she speaks with more confidence as she becomes surer of herself. Other characters, particularly those from Greek mythology and the gods themselves, speak in a more stilted and old-fashioned manner, which reflects the fact that they have been around for a very long time.

## Structure

The story is told from the point of view of the three main characters, Jason, Leo, and Piper. It is split into chapters titled with their names, representing whose point of view we are seeing events from at the moment. Each character is given two chapters before moving on to the next person and always in the same order: Jason followed by Piper, Leo, and then starting with Jason and so on. This careful structure prevents the reader from becoming confused about which character they are following.

The story being told is quite complicated as it moves from area to area as the heroes try to find out where Hera is being held. First they need information, so go to Boreas. He tells them to capture the storm spirits to appease Aeolus before asking him for information. They are waylaid on the way by the Cyclopes and are forced to fight Medea for the storm spirits. They are then waylaid again by Midas and Lycaon's wolves, before finally reaching Aeolus. Aeolus tries to kill them, but they are blown safely to California. Here they decide to fight Enceladus to save Piper's father. Only at this point do they find



out where Hera is and rush to the Wolf House to save her. Most of the story involves a desperate search for information, with the heroes being unsure of exactly what they are supposed to do or where to go. The structure of the story simplifies this fairly complicated plot by presenting it in a very straightforward manner. The heroes always stay together and the narrative follows them, never switching to explore a different person or area. The heroes visit each place in turn and the story is told in simple, chronological order. The episodic structure helps to break up the story into bite-size chunks or 'mini-adventures' that are more manageable for the reader. Occasionally one of the characters will remember their past and a brief flashback will follow. These are always very obviously set in the past so as not to confuse the reader. These flashbacks help to provide the reader with additional information about the characters, which gives a greater insight into why they act or think as they do.



## Quotes

"Keep moving - that was his motto. Don't dwell on things. Don't stay in one place too long. It was the only way to stay ahead of the sadness." - Leo thinking. Chapter 5, Leo, p68.

"He was the class clown, the court jester, because he'd learned early that if you cracked jokes and pretended you weren't scared, you usually didn't get beaten up. Even the baddest gangster kids would tolerate you, keep you around for laughs. Plus, humor was a good way to hide the pain." - Leo thinking. Chapter 6, Leo, p80.

"...they're still around because they're a powerful part of civilization. They move from country to country as the centre of power shifts - like they moved from Ancient Greece to Rome." - Jason's explanation of the Greek gods still existing. Chapter 7, Jason, p88.

"The gods change to reflect their host cultures. You know that, Annabeth. I mean, these days Zeus likes tailored suits, reality television and that Chinese food place on East Twenty-eighth Street, right? It was the same in Roman times, and the gods were Roman almost as long as they were Greek." - Clovis. Chapter 8, Jason, p103.

"In Rome, they became more warlike. They didn't mingle with mortals as much. They were harsher, more powerful - the gods of an empire." - Clovis talking about how the Greek gods changed when they became Roman. Chapter 8, Jason, p103.

"Nobody cared about him, just his big scary daddy standing behind him with the doomsday bolt, as if to say, Respect this kid or eat voltage!" - Jason thinking. Chapter 14, Jason, p161.

"Everyone seemed to think he was so brave and confident, but they didn't see how lost he really felt. How could they trust him when he didn't even know who he was?" - Jason thinking. Chapter 14, Jason, p164.

"How could her dad pretend to be so many things he wasn't? She was trying to do that now, and it was tearing her apart." Chapter 21, Piper, p232.

"He'd never thought of beauty as a form of power, but that's the way Piper had seemed - powerful." - Jason thinking about Piper's transformation. Chapter 26, Jason, p283.

"'Maybe it's the other way around,' Jason suggested. 'Maybe people with special gifts show up when bad things are happening because that's when they're needed most.'" - Jason countering the idea that special powers like Leo's fire powers are dangerous and cause bad things to happen. Chapter 26, Jason, p285.

"Maybe Hephaestus was still a jerk, but Leo kind of understood where he was coming from. Leo knew about running away from people, not fitting in. He knew about hiding out in a workshop rather than trying to deal with organic life forms." Chapter 29, Leo, p325.



"She'd learned to be vaguely uncomfortable about her ancestry - like Dad's old pictures from the eighties, when he had feathered hair and crazy clothes. Can you believe I ever looked like that? he'd say. Being Cherokee was the same way for him - something funny and mildly embarrassing." - Piper thinking about her ancestry. Chapter 33, Piper, p367

"But beauty is about finding the right fit, the most natural fit. To be perfect, you have to feel perfect about yourself - avoid trying to be something you're not." - Aphrodite speaking. Chapter 34, Piper, p427.

"My point is that love is the most powerful motivator in the world. It spurs mortals to greatness. Their noblest, bravest acts are done for love." - Aphrodite speaking. Chapter 34, Piper, p430.

"Aphrodite is about love and beauty. Being loving. Spreading beauty. Good friends. Good times. Good deeds. Not just looking good." - Piper speaking to the Aphrodite cabin. Chapter 52, Piper, p521.

"Silena made mistakes, but in the end she stood by her friends. That's why she was a hero." - Piper speaking. Chapter 52, Piper, p521.

"I remember that it's hard being a son of Jupiter. Everyone is always looking at me to be a leader, but I always feel alone." Jason speaking to the statue of Zeus. Chapter 55, Jason, p540.

"As much as she appeared human, Jason knew she was not. He could still see that blinding light - the true form of the goddess that had seared itself into his brain. She was Juno and Hera. She existed in many places at once. Her reasons for doing something were never simple." - Jason thinking about the nature of the goddess Hera. Chapter 55, Jason, p542.

"He was still terrified, but something had changed. He no longer felt alone. He had friends now, and a home to fight for." Jason thinking about his destiny. Chapter 55, Jason, p543.



## Topics for Discussion

Discuss the importance of friendship in this story. When are friends needed and why? Does friendship help any of the characters in this story through difficult things?

Do you think Jason is a good leader? Give reasons and examples from the text to back up your answer.

How are different beings and creatures from Greek mythology portrayed in this story? How does the author try to merge ancient mythology with a modern setting? Does he succeed in doing so?

In what ways do Jason's lost memories affect him? What effect does this create?

Discuss the theme of identity in this story. Which characters are trying to understand themselves better and why? Do they succeed, and what do they learn?

What does this story tell the reader about being a hero? Who is a hero and why? What does it take to be a hero?

Discuss the idea of belonging. Who feels like they do not belong and why? How do all three main characters achieve a sense of belonging by the end of the story? How is belonging connected to friendship?

How does the author use the mystery of Jason's identity to add drama and suspense? What do we learn about Jason throughout the story and what implications does this information have?

Discuss the character of Piper in this story. Is she likeable? Is she a good hero? What changes does she go through?

Discuss betrayal in this story. Does anyone betray anyone else in the story? Are the characters ever given opportunities to betray each other? How do they react to this and why?

Which of the three main characters do you think is the greatest hero and why? Give examples from the text to support your answer.

Why is Gaia such a frightening enemy? What does she represent? What are her motivations?