

The Mark of Athena Study Guide

The Mark of Athena by Rick Riordan

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Plot Summary

Mark of Athena opens with Annabeth travelling to Camp Jupiter. Camp Jupiter is similar to Camp Half-Blood except the residents are descendants of Roman gods and not Greek ones. Annabeth is travelling with several other campers, including Leo Valdez, Gleeson Hedge, Jason Grace, and Piper Mclean. She's on guard around Jason because she doesn't trust him, finding him to be too perfect. The group arrives at the camp, seeing that it had recently been attacked. Before their ship can land the Roman god of boundaries, Terminus, arrives on the ship and insists that they all disarm before being allowed to enter the camp. An agreement is finally reached and Annabeth is finally allowed in.

Annabeth runs into Percy and Reyna. She instantly embraces Percy before they are all dragged off to a feast. At the feast, both camps discuss the Prophecy of Seven, with Annabeth trying to convince Camp Jupiter that it means both Greeks and Romans need to work together in order to close the Doors of Death. Unfortunately for them, the Augur of Camp Jupiter, Octavian, doesn't trust them. Leo takes Octavian aboard their ship, the Argo II, in an attempt to get him to start trusting the Greeks. At the same time, Reyna privately talks with Annabeth, telling her that she believes the Romans and Greeks should work together.

During their conversation, the Argo II suddenly opens fire on the city. A mob starts to form, rioting against the Greeks, but Percy is able to hold them at bay. Octavian returns from the ship, claiming that Leo is the one who initiated the attack. The group manages to flee onto the ship before it is brought down, with Annabeth taking Percy, Hazel, and Frank with them as well. Once they escape, they question why Leo attacked. Leo claims he has no idea why he did it, and doesn't actually have any memories of the attack itself.

Piper takes care of Jason, who was injured during the escape. While tending to him, she has a vision and sees a number of unsettling images, including a man in purple next to a Topeka road sign. The group decides to travel to Topeka to speak with Bacchus. Bacchus is none too pleased to see them, but Piper tells him about her vision. This calms him down somewhat, but he tells them he doesn't want to be part of their quest, as he no longer considers himself a demigod. He does give them information, telling them to seek out Phorcys for information on Gaea.

Bacchus leaves and Gaea attacks the group, using two Eidolons to get control of Jason and Percy. She tells Piper that she only needs a boy and a girl demigod, forcing Piper to choose whether Jason or Percy should live. Piper can't decide, so Percy and Jason are forced to fight. Piper manages to interfere before they can kill each other and manages to knock both of them unconscious. The group retreats on the Argo II where Percy and Jason awaken without any signs of possession.

The group comes to the conclusion that Gaea must have used the same control on Leo to get him to attack Camp Jupiter, but they have no evidence to show to Octavian and



the other Romans. Instead, they decide to follow Bacchus's advice and search for Phorcys. Piper realizes the Eidolons are still on the ship, but she manages to outsmart them and get them to swear never to possess a member of the Argo II again.

That night, Percy has a dream that Otis and Ephialtes are preparing to destroy Rome at the start of July. In his dream he also sees Nico di Angelo trapped in a jar. Percy tries to reach out to him, but Nico is in a meditative trance and doesn't hear him. Percy vows that he will save Nico before being woken by Annabeth. Afterwards, the group arrives in Atlanta to begin their search for Phorcys. With the help of Keto, the mother of sea monsters, the group is able to find Phorcys in an aquarium.

Percy gets Phorcys to talk about Ephialtes and Otis and also gets him to talk about a prisoner, Nico, which they were using as bait for the group. Phorcys tries to trap the group in the aquarium, but they manage to escape. Percy informs everyone that they need to find a map that leads to the Athena Parthenos in Rome. Annabeth reveals that she saw Athena several months ago looking at a map. When she tried to talk with her, all she said was she had to follow the mark of Athena. She then gave her a silver coin and warned her that if she worked with the Romans she would be no child of hers.

With the aid of Aphrodite, the group is able to find out that the map is hidden away at Fort Sumter. On their way to the fort, they are attacked by Octavian who still believes them to be responsible for the attack on Camp Jupiter. They manage to slow the Romans down and split up to find the map. Annabeth has to overcome her fear of spiders, but manages to get the map. Reyna confronts Annabeth before she can get away with the map, saying that she has to come back to Camp Jupiter to stand trial. Annabeth convinces Reyna to let her go so she can repair things between the Camps. Reyna reluctantly agrees, warning Annabeth if she doesn't they will next meet as enemies. She leaves and rejoins the others, sailing out to the Mediterranean Sea to save Nico and find Athena Parthenos.

The group finally gets to Rome where Percy has a vision about Gaea destroying Camp Half-Blood. She offers to spare the Camp if Percy surrenders himself and Annabeth. He refuses and wakes up. Annabeth uses her map which leads her on a series of trials she has to overcome. The rest of the group splits up with the intent to rescue Nico. The group eventually manages to find and rescue Nico, but Annabeth isn't so lucky in her own trials, ultimately being captured by the spider creature, Arachne. Percy and the others arrive to save Annabeth, but she and Percy end up falling into Tartarus together. The book ends with the rest of the group setting sail for Greece so they can break into Tartarus and rescue Percy and Annabeth.



Chapters 1-2

Summary

Chapter 1

Annabeth and the others are flying on the Argo II, bringing it to camp Jupiter. They're preparing the speech for when they arrive at the Roman camp, hoping to convince them to work with Camp Half-Blood to battle the evil Goddess Gaea and her army of Giants. Before they arrive, Annabeth feels a cold presence on the ship, but can't identify where it comes from. She writes it off as her just being nervous about the upcoming meeting, and the fact that she was going to be seeing Percy again.

Terminus, the sentinel and security guard for the Roman Camp, arrives onboard the ship and forces them to disarm. They argue back and forth about what constitutes as a weapon, since Terminus finds the ship to be a weapon meaning it shouldn't be allowed to land in the city. Finally, they come to an agreement that the ship is fine as long as it is just hovering above the city and they descend down from ropes.

Chapter 2

Annabeth and the others descend into Camp Jupiter where they are greeted by a cold reception. Annabeth quickly spots Percy who, to her dismay, is walking alongside another girl named, Reyna. Percy and Annabeth rush forward and embrace each other. They confess how much they miss each other, but quickly collect themselves realizing that everyone else is still watching them. Annabeth tries to recover and go about the rest of the introductions. She completely forgets about Reyna.

Octavian arrives and argues against letting them into the camp at all. Reyna tells him they aren't going to the camp, but will instead have a feast in the forum where Annabeth arrived. Octavian is far from pleased, but ultimately has to agree as Reyna is his superior. Percy tells Annabeth that not all of the Romans are bad, quickly introducing the new friends he made, Frank and Hazel. Annabeth feels the cold presence again, this time accompanied with laughter. She resists the urge to run away, dismissing the feeling as the rest of the group organizes the upcoming feast.

Analysis

Chapter 1

This chapter opens up where the last one left off. The heroes are split into two groups. One group is aboard the Argo II, and the other group is in the Roman Camp. Annabeth is anxious to see Percy because over the course of the last few books their relationship has grown. Annabeth also knows that the task ahead of them is one that may not end up well. The gods are having identity crises as first their Roman, and then their Greek



sides exert themselves. The heroes hope to bring unity back to the gods so that they can be themselves by making peace with the roman equivalent of camp Half-blood.

Terminus, an enchanted statue that guards the Roman camp, threatens to annihilate them if they dare to try and land on Roman soil. It is interesting to note that Terminus argues with them about the definition of 'weapon', which leads the reader to wonder if, given their various abilities, that Terminus is right to question them.

Chapter 2

Annabeth and Percy are reunited in the Roman Camp. Percy has been there after losing his memory for the entire summer and being tended to in the Roman Camp. It is easy to see that they've accepted him and that he has befriended Reyna, who is the Praetor (leader) of the group. One of the major differences between the Roman camp and Camp Half-blood is that the Romans adhere to a strict code (ala Sparta) and do not depart from it. They are all about honor and duty.

The cold feeling that Annabeth keeps feeling foreshadows something bad is about to happen. When the feeling escalates and she actually hears laughter Annabeth dismisses it because she doesn't want to appear crazy. One of Annabeth's flaws is that she is very full of pride and has a healthy ego. This is something that she eventually has to learn to tame down because it will continue to place her in harm's way.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Octavian give in to Reyna's request?

Discussion Question 2

Why doesn't Annabeth do something about the cold feeling that she's been having?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Terminus argue about the definition of a weapon?

Vocabulary

sulfurous, pedestal, muscular, Pomerian Line, charmspeak, monstrosity, impertinence, forum, praetor, technicalities



Chapters 3-4

Summary

Chapter 3

The forum is converted into a great hall for the feast. Annabeth is happy to be with Percy, but also a little hurt that he seems to consider New Rome his home and not Camp Half-Blood. Jason shares his experiences at Camp Half-Blood with Camp Jupiter, both in an attempt to make Camp Half-Blood out to be good as potential allies, but also to warn them that the evil goddess, Gaea, is about to wake up and use monsters from Tartarus and the Giants to destroy the gods. Percy relates his own story, about fighting the giant Alcyoneus and repelling an attack by his army of giants against New Rome.

Octavian points out that they now have three preators, Percy, Reyna, and Jason. Percy happily steps down leaving just Reyna and Jason. Reyna has Octavian recite the Prophecy of Seven. While he recites it, Annabeth joins in at the end. They discuss the prophecy, with Reyna believing it means that the Greeks and Romans need to work together. Hazel mentions that her brother, Nico di Angelo, had gone to learn more about the prophecy, but disappeared. Hazel is worried about him. Percy assures her they'll try and find him, and also adds that based on his past discussions with the gods he believes they need to find the original Rome.

Jason tells Percy that the Romans haven't been allowed to travel through the Mediterranean Sea because it is home to so many dangerous creatures. Leo assures them that with the Argo II they'll be able to make the trip. As part of the prophecy, a mix of seven must go from the camps. They agree on Jason, Piper, Leo, Annabeth, Percy, Hazel, and Frank.

Octavian is unhappy with the ruling. Leo tries to calm him down by giving him a tour of the Argo II. The feast winds down and Percy tries to take Annabeth out in the city, but Reyna stops him. Annabeth feels the coldness once more, but is again unable to identify it. Reyna asks Annabeth to come with her instead so they can privately speak.

Chapter 4

Annabeth and Reyna start to walk through the city, with Annabeth marveling at how beautiful it looks despite the fact she didn't want to enjoy it. Reyna introduces Annabeth to her automaton greyhounds, Aurum and Argentum. They briefly discuss the differences between their two pantheons. In the Roman Camp, Annabeth's mother, Athena, goes by the name Minerva. She isn't very well respected because she isn't a goddess of war. The Romans were surprised that she would have children at all. To the Romans, Annabeth shouldn't be able to exist at all.

Reyna mentions how the two had actually met before on the isle of Circe. Annabeth barely remembers the trip though. The topic shifts when Reyna bluntly asks if Camp



Half-Blood can be trusted, wanting to know more about their potential allies. Annabeth notes that Reyna seems sad to find that not only does Jason not remember her, but he's now dating Piper. Annabeth talks about all of her previous adventures and what it was like to meet Percy. She doesn't mention the problems that she was having with Athena though.

Reyna talks about meeting a son of Athena on Circe's island, who was raving that he had gone to Rome following the Mark of Athena. Their conversation is interrupted as the city is suddenly attacked. Annabeth believes it is giants, but Reyna quickly confirms that it is in fact the Argo II that is firing on the city. The Romans start to riot in their efforts to get to Annabeth and her friends.

Percy manages to hold the rioters back so the others can escape. Everyone manages to get on the ship, with Annabeth quickly questioning Leo. She notices that his movements are unnatural and he seems to be speaking like a robot. Percy knocks him unconscious and Annabeth quickly pilots the ship away from the city before the Romans are able to launch a counter attack against them.

Analysis

Chapter 3

Everyone gathers in the forum and has their say. What becomes immediately evident is that Octavian is power hungry and a bit crazy. He believes in signs and omens, and sacrifices stuffed animals in order to read their stuffing for a sign from the gods. He also is a stickler for the rules as he brings up the fact that there are now three praetors (Jason, Reyna, and Percy) and that the rules say there can be only 2. Percy relinquishes his title. What one can tell from these outbursts is that Octavian is always undermining authority in order to make himself look better. He also seems a bit paranoid when it comes to anything that is new.

Chapter 4

In this chapter the reader sees Leo trying to ease Octavian's fears by inviting him aboard the Argo II. Octavian agrees. Meanwhile, Reyna reaches out to Annabeth to speak to her one-on-one about the problems with the gods. She marvels that Annabeth exists at all because their Athena counterpart, named Minerva, was not such a great goddess. What Reyna wants to tell her is important because it becomes the catalyst for the entire book, which is the Mark of Athena. After this discussion with Reyna, which is interrupted when the city comes under attack, this will be the one thing that Annabeth remembers and understands may possibly bring the healing that is needed to bring the gods back to their senses.

Meanwhile, the problems that have occurred on the Argo II are many. Of note is the fact that Leo, consummate conconctor of all things mechanical, is acting very oddly, possessed even. Since there is not much time to find out what's going on, Percy is



forced to knock Leo unconscious. This shows the reader how 'connected' Leo is to those things that he creates.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss Octavian's character and how he reacts to the Greek visitors.

Discussion Question 2

What does Reyna tell Annabeth about in regards to the Mark of Athena?

Discussion Question 3

How have Annabeth and Reyna met before?

Vocabulary

appetite, auras, legionnaire, grudging, scoffed, decipher, expedition, Mediterranean, summoning, shuddered



Chapters 5-6

Summary

Chapter 5

Once Leo awakes he appears to be normal. The group questions him again trying to figure out what happened, believing that Octavian had to be behind the attack. Leo dismisses that, taking responsibility for firing on the city. He says he doesn't know why he did it, just that he felt a strange cold sensation before suddenly finding himself compelled to fire on New Rome. While this is going on, the group has to scan for materials to repair the ship as it had taken some damage when fleeing from Camp Jupiter.

The group decides that it would be safer for them if they all split up and went looking for supplies. Having more than three demigods in an area was risky because it could attract unwanted attention from monsters and other dangers. Frank still seems untrusting of Leo, something which clearly hurts. Leo is determined to prove that he can be trusted and won't screw up again.

Leo tells Frank that Hazel's horse, Arion, is following them. Frank tells Leo to set the ship down. This is when the reader learns that to set the ship down one more time will mean that wherever they set down, will be permanent until the ship is fixed. They prepare to land. Jason, meanwhile, is still recovering from an severe injury that he took during the assault on Rome. Piper ministers to him. Leo feels guilt every time he sees him lying there.

Chapter 6

Leo and Hazel set out to start gathering the supplies needed to fix the ship. Before they leave, Percy gives a brief overview of Hazel's life. She had formerly been a daughter of Pluto's, but had died in the 1940s. She had just been brought back to life four months ago. He warns Leo to be nice to her. Hazel talks to Leo about how he reminds her and Frank about someone from their past named Sam. She briefly talks about what it means to be a child of Pluto. While gathering supplies they are confronted by a strange woman. They both see her as being someone completely different, but they both see someone that they hate. Leo figures out that it is in fact the goddess of revenge, Nemesis. Nemesis is reading through fortune cookies, angrily mocking how useless they are. She starts changing them to darker things, much to Hazel's dismay.

Nemesis tells them that the gods are preparing to go to war in retaliation for the attack on New Rome. Nemesis tells them where they can get supplies, and also warns Hazel that her brother, Nico, is going to die in six days along with the entire city of Rome. Nemesis makes a deal to help Leo, saying that one day Leo is going to have to pay her



back. She gives him a fortune cookie and tells him to break it if he ever has a problem that he cannot find the answer to.

Analysis

Chapter 5

The theme of Trust is demonstrated in this chapter when Leo wakes and finds out what he did. Despite his explanations he is unable to shake the idea that the others don't trust him. While he doesn't blame them, he also is hurt that they don't trust him enough to include him in things. This idea of trust bringing belonging is strong in this chapter, and will be a theme that will be hinted at in some form or fashion throughout the novel.

Leo takes responsibility for what he did, which brings up the notion of self-identity. Leo is a character that, in comparison to the others, really has a sense of purpose. The fact that he did what he did aside, he still confesses to what he did, offering that he was overcome by a cold sensation, and that he had no control over what he did. He does remember doing it, however, and as such, accepts whatever punishment they are willing to mete out. No one punishes him, but Frank blatantly does not trust him, and is openly distant.

Chapter 6

This chapter explores one of the other themes in the book: identity. Leo reminds Hazel and Frank of someone that they knew in another time, named Sam. As they will learn much later on in the book, Sam is actually Leo's descendant. When Nemesis appears she seems different to each person who views her, due to the fact that everyone has something or someone different that they hate and want revenge on. This is very telling for both Hazel and Leo as the reader gets a clear understanding of what some of their motivations are and why they have made the decisions that they have made. The theme of family is also suggested in that Hazel is told that Nico (also a child of Pluto/Hades) is going to die in 6 days. Hazel is terribly upset and it is only after Nemesis gets Leo to agree to do something for him (as of yet undisclosed) she will do what she can to save him.

Nemesis also assists the heroes in finding supplies, pointing them in the right direction. The symbolism of the fortune cookie is significant, as well as ironic. Typically, fortune cookies tell a person's good fortune. However, Nemesis doesn't like that and changes the cookies to tell more gruesome fates. This is a direct corollary to the way Nemesis acts and thinks....she embraces the darkness in all possibilities, which she passes along to the heroes. Thus, the message is clear: revenge is dark and gruesome with very few survivors.

Discussion Question 1

What does Leo tell everyone about the episode on the Argo II?



Discussion Question 2

Why do the heroes split up to go looking for supplies?

Discussion Question 3

What does Nemesis tell Leo and Hazel when they meet?

Vocabulary

shambles, figurehead, wheezing, asthmatic, sumo wrestler, scowled, armory, aerial, compromised, scan



Chapters 7-8

Summary

Chapter 7

Hazel and Leo briefly discuss the forms they saw Nemesis take during their conversation. Hazel tells a little about her brother, Nico, who saved her from the Underworld and made sure she was accepted at Camp Jupiter. Leo laments about being a seventh wheel to the group, but Hazel tries to cheer him up. The two are interrupted when they stumble upon a cursed girl, Echo, who can only repeat whatever was last said. Echo leads them to a group of several dozen nymphs at a pond. The nymphs all seem to be focusing on an incredibly handsome man, Narcissus.

Leo spots a sheet of bronze that Narcissus is using as a mirror. He tries to barter with him to get it, but Narcissus refuses, too captivated by his own image to really care. Leo, Hazel, and Echo retreat to discuss a plan to distract the nymphs so they can steal the bronze they need to repair the Argo II.

Chapter 8

Leo undergoes a quick makeover and goes back into the group of nymphs. With the help of Echo, he starts to declare himself better than Narcissus, taunting him and insulting his appearance. This finally causes Narcissus to look away from his reflection and answer the challenge. While this happens, Hazel starts to steal the mirror, but unfortunately Narcissus catches onto their plan. All three run away, with the nymphs chasing after them. Echo stays behind to stop Narcissus. She manages to reveal that she believes Narcissus can be saved from his vanity and wants to stay to help him. Hazel and Leo manage to safely get away thanks to a quick ride on Arion, and they return to the ship.

Analysis

Chapter 7

This chapter allows the reader to gain access to much of the background stories for Leo and Hazel. Leo sees his Aunt Rosa, and Hazel sees Mrs. Leer, her third grade teacher. Nemesis makes each of them face their feelings about these people. Leo has much to resent, as Aunt Rosa had rejected Leo when his mother had died, and he had ended up in social services, living in various orphanages until coming to Camp Half-blood. It is only when Leo recognizes Nemesis for what she is that he feels better.

Two things are at work, in this particular chapter. First, there is the theme of family being demonstrated. Family can build up, or it can tear down, as is evidenced by Leo's story. Adults can influence for good or bad, in the case of Hazel and her teacher. Additionally,



Nemesis, the goddess of revenge, has no power to make them remember painful things once she is named and recognized for who she is. The meaning, then, is that revenge loses its power when rational minds prevail.

Chapter 8

Leo and Hazel locate the source of the Celestial Bronze that they need to fix the Argo II, but unfortunately it is the looking glass that Narcissus is using to look at himself with. They have to work together to distract him long enough for the bronze shield to be stolen. In this chapter, the reader sees poor Echo have compassion and empathy for Narcissus whose life is wasting away by gazing at his reflection all of the time. She makes the sacrifice to stay behind to help him. The theme of sacrifice for the good of others, emerges in this chapter, when Echo offers to help Narcissus.

Discussion Question 1

Why did Leo need the Celestial Bronze?

Discussion Question 2

What is Hazel's background and nemesis?

Discussion Question 3

What is Leo's backstory and nemesis?

Vocabulary

flexed, vaguely, beamed, crater, lugging, manicure, collapsed, dissolved, brethren, nectar



Chapters 9-10

Summary

Chapter 9

Piper uses her dagger to see visions of what is going on back at New Rome. She can see Octavian whipping the crowd into a frenzy, trying to get them fired up for marching to war with the Greeks. The vision starts to shift and she soon sees a road sign in Topeka. Her visions are interrupted when the others return with the supplies to fix the ship. It takes a few hours, but with the new materials Leo is able to fix the ship and get it running again, declaring afterwards that they should have a meeting to discuss what to do next.

The group discusses the prophecy and what happened in New Rome. Piper wants to go back and try to explain what happened, but Annabeth dissuades her, pointing out that they have no proof, and even if they did, the Romans were more likely to attack them first instead of trying to speak. The group knows they need to get to Rome and save Nico, but they aren't sure how. Piper reveals the vision she saw about the road sign in Topeka and the group decides to go there.

Chapter 10

Once in Kansas, some of the group stays behind to continue repairs on the ship and scout for Romans while Percy, Jason, and Piper go to investigate the road signs. Percy and Jason both summon their respective mounts, Blackjack and Tempest. They ride out to find the road sign where they are greeted by the man Piper saw in her vision, the wine god Bacchus. Bacchus reveals he was waiting for the god, Ceres, to discuss the rising threat of Gaea.

Bacchus wants nothing to do with the group at first, but Piper is able to charm him and appeal to his vanity which gets him talking more. He talks a little about the twin giants, Ephialtes and Otis, who were mentioned in the prophecy. Piper tries to get him to join them, but he says that his days of questing are over since he is no longer a demigod. He does say that he can help them though if they provide tribute. He tells them that they should seek out Gaea's son, Phorcys. He hates his mother and doesn't like the giants so he might be willing to help. Bacchus tells them that he can be found in salt water located somewhere in Atlanta.

Bacchus cuts the conversation short, realizing that if Ceres is late that this must be a trap. Bacchus quickly leaves, leaving the rest of the group panicked. Before they can leave, Gaea arrives and starts to taunt the group. She reveals that she needs a male and female demigod, but only one of each. She focuses on Piper and tells her she has to choose which male ends up surviving, Percy or Jason. Piper refuses, so Gaea takes over both Percy and Jason and makes them charge at each other.



Analysis

Chapter 9

This chapter is all about deciding what to do. Of importance is the fact that they all work cooperatively, no one taking more of a lead than the others, none declaring themselves to be in charge. This is a clear indication that none on the ship sees themselves below any of the other heroes. The decision to save Nico takes precedence and they head for Topeka based on intel gathered from Piper's dagger.

Chapter 10

This chapter gives both the reader and the heroes more information about the ensuing rise of Gaea. The goddess, herself, appears briefly, to pit Jason and Percy against one another, to Piper's horror. Bacchus has departed, sensing trouble, but not before he's given them another vital set of clues, so that they can continue. The theme of friendship emerges at the end of this chapter, when Gaea gives her the command to choose between her friends as to which one would die. Since she is dating Jason, one would think that the choice would be clear. But, because they are all friends, Piper refuses to make a choice, forcing Gaea's hand.

Discussion Question 1

Who is Bacchus?

Discussion Question 2

How is the heroes' friendship put to the test in Chapter 10?

Discussion Question 3

Why did they decide to go to Topeka?

Vocabulary

potion, unsheathed, unadorned, hull, ceded, garbled, avenged, woven, schizophrenic,



Chapters 11-12

Summary

Chapter 11

Percy and Jason start to fight, but Piper is able to use her charmspeak ability to cause them to hesitate, though not stop fighting outright. The two start to talk to her and reveal that it isn't Gaea controlling them, but actually spirits known as Eidolons. Piper is able to quickly figure out that it was one of the Eidolons that possessed Leo and caused him to fire on the ship. The two start to go back to fighting, but Piper is able to trick them into just knocking each other out instead of trying to kill one another. Once they are subdued, she brings them both back to the ship where they are treated and eventually wake up without the spirits in them. Piper quickly catches everyone up to speed about what the Eidolons can do and how they were responsible for the attack.

The group calls another meeting to discuss the newest developments. They still lack enough proof to go to the Romans and convince them they weren't responsible for the attack on their city. They discuss how Gaea wanted a male and female demigod and theorize that it is specifically their blood that Gaea needs. They agree to go and find Phorcys, hoping that he will have more information that can help them. Before the meeting ends, Piper reveals that the Eidolons are still on the ship.

Chapter 12

Piper is able to use her charm speak to reveal who the Eidolons are possessing. She continues to use her gift to get them to vow never to return to the ship or try and possess anyone on it. With that threat resolved, the group decides to get some much needed rest while the ship flies towards Atlanta. Jason and Piper end up talking and Piper asks him about the Mark of Athena. Jason reveals that he heard Romans stole something important from the Greeks, which caused the children of Athena to hate all of the Romans. The children of Athena are tasked with finding what was stolen, being led to Rome by a sign known as the Mark of Athena. Jason adds if the Greeks ever found what was stolen, they would never be able to forgive the Romans. Jason had been keeping this secret because he was afraid if he revealed it then the Greeks and Romans would never be able to make an alliance.

Analysis

Chapter 11

Both boys are literally out of their mind in this chapter. The Eidolons have possessed them and are making them fight until one of them is dead. A terrible choice continues to present itself to Piper: choose which one will die. The decision continues to sneak into her mind courtesy of Gaea. Finally, it is when Piper realizes her own strength and



pushes aside her fear that she is able to use her charmspeak to slow down the intensity of the battle.

Then, when she discovers who the Eidolons are, she is able to use her charmspeak on them directly to cause them to make an alternate, less deadly, choice. What this illustrates, then, is the theme of War, once again. The Author clearly wants to make the point that there are always alternatives to fighting to the death, as well as the message that when both sides in an argument (or war) will stop to listen to the voice of reason, peace can be regained.

Chapter 12

Piper goes so far as to use her ability to not only get the Eidolons to stop possessing the boys, but she gets them to agree never to return to bother them again. In essence, then, in a continuation on the War Theme, Piper is having both sides agree to peace terms. Because she is so persuasive, the Eidolons agree and leave them in peace.

These two chapters are very revealing when it comes to Piper's character, as the reader sees her becoming stronger than she knew she was. She is also faced with several choices in the span of two chapters. First, Gaea gives her the ultimatum to choose between the boys, and then she has to decide what to do with the information that Jason divulges to her later when they return to the ship. In each case, the reader sees Piper set aside her emotions and use her deep compassion for everyone to decide the best course of action for all those involved. She becomes a very good ambassador and diplomat in both instances.

Discussion Question 1

What does discovering who and what the Eidolons are help Leo?

Discussion Question 2

Why hasn't Jason told the others about the Mark of Athena?

Discussion Question 3

When Piper refuses to choose between her two friends, what does this say about her and decision making?

Vocabulary

balked, dazed, parry, heeded, dissipated, ricocheted, gladius, sickbay, resilient, berths, disheveled, helm, seize



Chapters 13-14

Summary

Chapter 13

Percy has nightmares where he is drowning in water, something that makes little sense to him given his divine heritage. He realizes that it must have to do with the fear of suffocation that he had developed. His nightmare changes and he sees the twin giants setting up a trap. He sees that they have Nico trapped in a jar, bait to lure out Percy and the others. The giants mention something about a statue, but Percy isn't sure what that means. Percy is eventually awoken by Annabeth. The two walk the ship together and talk about their future and how much they have missed each other.

Percy ends up revealing what happened in his nightmare to her. The discussion soon turns to the subject of their divine parents. Annabeth tells Percy about how she saw Athena a few weeks ago. Athena told her that she had failed as a daughter, and ever since then she's been having strange visions in her nightmares.

Chapter 14

Everyone gathers in the morning to discuss what Percy had learned in his visions. The group recognizes that it is a trap, but don't see any other way around if they want to rescue Nico. Jason brings up that Nico has been acting suspicious since he had been going back and forth between the two camps. Hazel is quick to defend her brother, and although the rest of the group still seems a little suspicious, they are content with her defense. They arrive in Atlanta and Coach Hedge decides that he, Percy, and Frank are going to go down into the city to try and find the salt water where Phorcys could be.

Analysis

Chapter 13

Percy and Annabeth both have nightmares in this chapter. Annabeth's stem from a conversation with her mother, where she was told that she wasn't a good daughter, and had disappointed her mother. Percy's is about drowning. Both of these dreams are revealing, as well as present foreshadowing, by the Author. Annabeth's one overriding desire, since the first novel, has been to make her mother proud. Being told that she is a disappointment is something that hurts Annabeth but it also serves as a motivation to understand why her mother would say such a thing. Percy's dream is even more ironic since Percy cannot 'drown' in water. He tries to rationalize it as a fear of suffocation that he has.

The last part of Percy's dream is a direct challenge to the demigods to come and save Nico. It is quite clear that it is a trap, that the twins are using Nico as bait, and it is



equally clear that despite knowing it is a trap, the demigods will go to Atlanta to rescue him. The fact that Nico is one character that has freely gone from one camp to the other makes the others suspicious of his travels and why he would feel compelled to move from one to the other. Hazel stands up for her brother and the others relent, though it is clear they still have their suspicions.

Chapter 14

Both Annabeth and Percy, because of their nightmares, find themselves up and wandering the ship while everyone is asleep. They run into one another and discuss their godly parents and the quest at hand. Later, they go down into the stables where they fall asleep together. Frank finds them in the morning and it is clear that he is afraid something 'more' happened in the stables. Annabeth is mortified and Percy thinks it is funny. Coach Hedge goes ballistic and makes them promise never to do anything that irresponsible again.

Meanwhile, they have a war council to decide how they will rescue Nico. Hazel listens to Percy's dream vision of Nico and tells them that if what Percy saw was correct, Nico only has five days left. He is eating Pomegranate seeds to survive, which are a food of last resort for Hades's children. Placing himself in a death trance, Nico will be able to hold out only for that length of time. When they arrive in Atlanta, Coach Hedge decides that he, Frank, and Percy will go down to look for Phorcys.

Discussion Question 1

What motive could Nico have had for going between both camps?

Discussion Question 2

Why was it traumatic for all of the demigods aboard the Argos II when Annabeth and Percy can't be found, and then are located in the stables?

Discussion Question 3

Knowing that it is a trap, why do the demigods decide to continue on to Atlanta anyway?

Vocabulary

braziers, pulley, toga, stale, tarnished, dejected, tattered, sentimental, mechanized, reassuring, crisscrossed, smirked



Chapters 15-16

Summary

Chapter 15

The group starts to search Atlanta and realize that the salt water refers to an aquarium. They travel there and realize they have no means of paying the entry fee. Much to their surprise, a mysterious woman, Kate, shows up and refers to them as VIP guests, bringing them inside. Hedge tells the other two that she definitely doesn't smell mortal and it is probably a trap of some kind. Nevertheless, they travel with her throughout the aquarium. On the tour, Percy's fear of suffocation starts to kick in again. Kate eventually reveals that she and Phorcys are brother and sister, and that she has been leading them towards him. She also reveals that her name is Keto, not Kate, the Goddess of Sea Monsters.

Keto takes them to a hidden exhibit filled with various sea monsters. Percy is angry to see these creatures kept in the aquarium, but he can't do anything about it for now. They eventually meet Phorcys and reveal they were sent to him to learn more about Gaea and the twin giants. Phorcys confirms the giants have Nico prisoner in Rome. He also tells them that Gaea has put a bounty out on demigods, but specified that one boy and girl demigod must be spared. Nico was captured to lure demigods into Rome. Phorcys also mentions that there is a map in Charleston that can lead them to the Mark of Athena.

Chapter 16

Phorcys brings Percy and Frank to an empty exhibit, and then traps them inside. He reveals that VIP meant Very Important Prisoner. He wants the two of them to put on shows where they fight each other. If they refuse, he will just send monsters for them to fight instead until they become compliant. Percy tries to escape, but the exhibit is enchanted to prevent him from using any of his water controlling powers. Fortunately, Hedge was on another part of the tour with Keto. When he comes upon the exhibit he manages to knock Keto out. The three work together to break the exhibit, making a quick escape out of the aquarium by blending in with the mortals. Percy promises the other creatures that he will come back and find a way to free them.

Analysis

Chapter 15

The only large body of saltwater in Atlanta is the Atlanta Aquarium, so that is where Coach Hedge, Percy, and Frank go. Knowing that it is a trap when Kate/Keto ushers them inside, they nonetheless go along with it. Here, the theme of friendship emerges in that they willingly go where good sense tells them not to because it is the only way they



can get information on Nico. Additionally, the reader sees more development of Percy's character in the way that he reacts to seeing sea creatures kept against their will in the aquarium. His compassion for other creatures gives him an increased depth of character.

When Keto tells them who she really is they try and reason with her. It is clear that she is more interested in the bounty that has been placed on their heads. Not for the first time in this novel, the demigods are placed in a situation where they are told they will battle for the amusement of others. When they refuse, they are told that they will be subjected to monsters that they would have to battle until they agree to battle one another. Battling for amusement ties into the themes of War in this novel, suggesting that sometimes wars happen because those in charge believe it will better their circumstances and those in charge have no real imminent and direct threat to their own lives, so it is easy to send others to their death.

Chapter 16

In this short chapter, Percy and Frank escape thanks to Coach Hedge. He had wandered away from them when Keto had come to bring them behind the scenes as VIPs. Of note is the fact that when they are imprisoned and the water starts to fill the tank, Frank panics and turns into a goldfish. Percy asks him why a goldfish, since it is not even remotely helpful in this situation, and he replies that this sometimes happens when he's suddenly frightened. Additionally, though Percy can communicate with the sea creatures, his control of water (other than being able to still breathe) is blocked by the enchanted tank they are in. He has to rely on other resources to maintain calm and assist Hedge when he arrives.

Discussion Question 1

What bothers Percy the most about the creatures he sees in the tanks?

Discussion Question 2

What is a reason for war that is suggested in Chapter 15?

Discussion Question 3

What is Kate/Keto's motive for helping her brother capture the demigods?

Vocabulary

incapacitated, telepathic, gruesome, incomprehension, chaperon, charades, faulty, assure, regaling, denarii



Chapters 17-18

Summary

Chapter 17

Percy tells the others what he learned and they agree to search Charleston for the map that will lead to the Mark of Athena. They manage to narrow it down to two possible locations. One of them is at the Battery, and another is a museum (both in Charleston). They decide that they will split up when they get there. The girls will seek out a ghost supposed living in the Battery (a park), and the boys will go to the museum. For the time being though, they have to worry about throwing off the Romans who are still pursuing them. Leo says that he has a plan for that and everyone goes back to their rooms.

Annabeth reflects on meeting Athena at the subway. Athena seemed to be confused and saddened by the fact that she was replaced as her Roman form, Minerva. She barely seems to recognize Annabeth, but does give her a silver coin and tells her to follow the Mark of Athena so Annabeth can avenge her. At the time, Annabeth didn't focus too much on the coin because Percy had been missing. Athena says she doesn't care since this was when Percy was with the Romans. Athena says that all of the Romans should be killed for what they did to her.

Chapter 18

The group splits up to start looking for the map that will lead to the Mark of Athena. The girls go to investigate a ghost in the park while the others check out a museum. They manage to locate the ghost, but Hazel tells them that what they're seeing isn't actually a spirit. The woman ends up revealing herself as being Aphrodite. She eagerly greets the girls and brings them over to have tea and discuss the upcoming war. She brings up that Annabeth had an argument with her mother and mentions in more detail how the Romans had offended Athena by turning her into the goddess of crafts and cleverness because they already had other gods to cover their war needs. She also mentions that the Mark of Athena will lead to a statue in Rome. Roman eagles arrive so the group has to leave, but as they are departing Aphrodite tells them that the map can be found at Fort Sumter.

Analysis

Chapter 17

Of note in this chapter is the introduction of the Mark of Athena, directly from Athena's mouth. She has handed Annabeth a coin that has Athena's head on one side and says 'the mark of Athena' on the other. No matter what Annabeth does to get rid of the coin, it always returns. This would seem to suggest that despite Annabeth's attempts to put her mother's desires for revenge aside, she is unable.



Learning where they are to go (Charleston) is only part of the issue. They realize that they are going to have to split up once they arrive there. The ghost that lives at the Battery will ONLY speak to other females, so Annabeth, Hazel, and Piper have elected to take that task on. Annabeth is not looking forward to it at all.

Chapter 18

Arriving at Charleston Harbor Percy prepares to hop into it to speak with the local watery denizens. Annabeth, for once, has had a good night's rest which unsettles her because she believes it is a precursor to something very bad happening. The theme of Family is demonstrated in this chapter in several ways. First, Aphrodite, Piper's mother, appears to them at the park (Battery). She had been disguised as a ghost. She helps Piper and is openly warm and loving, something that many of the other godly parents aren't. She gives them much needed information about the Mark of Athena, why Athena is upset about the Romans, and what must be done to right an old wrong. This demonstrates how family can assist and support one another. Conversely, readers learn why Annabeth's mother, Athena, was acting so strangely in the subway. This illustrates the message that families stand by you even when you are ill or not quite yourself. The Eagles arrive and they have to leave. The Eagles, themselves, are representative of Rome, as this is their emblem which they carry into war.

Discussion Question 1

Why do you think Aphrodite concealed herself as a ghost first?

Discussion Question 2

Discuss the symbolism of Annabeth's mother's coin.

Discussion Question 3

Compare and contrast Aphrodite to Poseidon as parents.

Vocabulary

symbolic, muggy, automatons, vague, forbid, strolled, siesta, blanketed, chivalry, architecture, elaborate



Chapters 19-20

Summary

Chapter 19

The girls manage to signal Percy who drives the Romans away using his water powers. The group gets a message out to Jason and the others that they need to leave now and get to the Fort where the map is. Jason gets the message but his group is unable to land on the ship and is instead forced to land at the fort. The ship starts to head to the fort, but they are chased by Roman reinforcements. Annabeth tells Percy and the others that she is the only one that will be able to find the map. She tells them to defend the ship while she goes into the fort to get the map and rescue Jason.

Chapter 20

Jason and the others manage to get free from the Romans by using the crowd of mortals around as a distraction. They head towards the ship while Annabeth makes her way inside the fort to recover the map. The walls start to become covered in spider webs, which makes Annabeth recount her childhood fear of spiders. Her stepmother had ignored a younger Annabeth when she complained about spiders, which caused her to run away from home. At Camp Half-Blood she learned that Athena feared spiders because she once cursed a mortal weaver, Arachne, for being too prideful. She was turned into the first spider, and ever since then spiders have hated Athena and her children.

Gaea taunts Annabeth, saying that soon the weaver will have her revenge. Annabeth hears her mother telling her to find the mark and avenge her, so Annabeth is able to overcome her fear and start searching for the map. She finds it, but before she can get back to the ship she is confronted by Reyna. Reyna says that Annabeth needs to stand trial, but Annabeth says she can fix the grudge between the two camps. Reyna hesitantly decides to let her go, agreeing to do what she can to delay Octavian from marching to war on the Greeks. She does warn Annabeth that the next time they meet they will be enemies if she can't succeed. Annabeth escapes the other Romans and gets back to the ship which quickly takes off away from the fort.

Analysis

Chapter 19

In this chapter the theme of friendship is shown when Annabeth tosses her dagger into Charleston Harbor, trusting that Percy will understand the message and rescue them. It, of course, does work, showing that true friends understand one another and work together as a team, moving forward to a common goal. This theme is shown, again, when Annabeth realizes that she, alone, must be the one to go into Fort Sumter to



retrieve the map. The reader also sees Annabeth taking charge and none of the others questioning her commands. This, once again, reinforces the idea that none of the demigods consider themselves the leader, but, rather, person's strengths are recognized and used when needed, as needed. As a descendant of the goddess of victory in war, Annabeth is the natural choice to call everyone to action.

Chapter 20

This chapter continues with Annabeth's character development by the author. Here she goes into the fort looking for the map, only to have the place begin to fill up with spiders, one of Annabeth's worst phobias. Her mother saves her by sending a large owl symbol to burn away the spiders, encouraging her to continue her search. Just as she's completed the task she is confronted by Reyna who feels like a fool for trusting the Greeks. Annabeth does not fight her, but offers explanations. Interestingly, one of Reyna's solutions to the current problem is for Annabeth to sacrifice herself to Reyna, allow herself to be put on trial and executed. She says that this will buy everyone more time. Annabeth is appalled at the suggestion, considers it, then realizes that a sacrifice must be offered when there is no other way. This demonstrates the theme of sacrifice in this chapter, and it shows that Reyna is not blood thirsty like Octavian.

The reader also sees Gaea's intent to prevent Annabeth from moving the mission forward. By releasing Arachne she has purposely chosen one of Annabeth's greatest fears to use against her. Annabeth, however, faces her fears, and while she doesn't completely get over them, she realizes that she can put them into perspective and still manage to get the job done when she needed to.

Discussion Question 1

How is the theme of friendship demonstrated in both Chapter 19-20?

Discussion Question 2

Why doesn't Annabeth agree to go with Reyna to stand trial in New Rome?

Discussion Question 3

Why did Gaea choose Arachne to confront Annabeth in the Fort?

Vocabulary

reenactment, rampaged, sweltering, assaulted, garrison, mortar, battlements, etched, schematic, heaved



Chapters 21-22

Summary

Chapter 21

Annabeth tells Leo to guide the ship towards Chiron's brothers, believing that they can help to protect them from the Romans that are still chasing after them. He inputs the coordinates and it takes them out to the sea. Leo hands over the controls of the ship and goes to rest. He ends up running into Hazel, who admits to him that she's worried about her captured brother, Nico. She tells Leo that she was impressed with how he handled the nymphs and then comments again about how he looks like Sammy. She says that she can show him a flashback of Sammy with her powers.

Chapter 22

Hazel takes Leo back into one of her memories. In her memory, Hazel is younger and attending school. She tries to avoid being noticed by the other students but one of them, Rufus, sees her and starts to bully her. Leo wants to defend her, but he can't actually interact with anything since it is a memory. Instead, he sees someone that looks remarkably similar to him step up to defend the young Hazel from the bullies. Sammy jokes around and acts like he's a director, mocking Rufus for the way that he acted during the "scene". Rufus is angry with him, but a teacher shows up before he can do anything about it. Leo is impressed with the way that Sammy handled the situation, and the way that he comforted Hazel afterwards.

The memory shifts and Hazel is confused because it isn't one of her memories. Leo realizes that it is one of his memories. He sees his mother holding him as a baby. The two then realize that Leo's grandfather in the vision is actually the grown up version of Sammy. The older Sammy talks about how he wishes he could have met Hazel again, but at that point Hazel had been cursed and taken into the Underworld so they never got the chance to meet again. The two return back to the present to find that the ship is being attacked by monsters.

Analysis

Chapter 21

Both chapters focus on Hazel and Leo's connection from the past. Returning to the ship, Leo makes certain that everyone is out of harm's way before he gives in to the need to seek medical attention. As he makes his way down into the hold of the ship he runs into Hazel. She finds ambrosia and nectar to make him better and in turn she, once again, she mentions that he looks remarkably like someone named, Sammy.



One of Hazel's powers is that she can take others back into her memories. She offers to show Leo a memory of Sammy. Leo agrees, mainly because he is curious.

Chapter 22

Once they go back, it is to a schoolyard scene where the reader sees how harshly Hazel is treated by the others. Friendship's theme emerges during this point in that Leo, even though he can't interact, moves to try and protect Hazel. Meanwhile, Sammy, his look-a-like, does step in and defend Hazel (in the memory).

Hazel gasps when she is drawn into a memory that is not hers, but Leo's. Here, they see Leo, as an infant. Sammy is a grandfather, holding Leo. The mystery is solved: Leo is Sammy's great-grandson. What this means to Leo, or Hazel, is left for the reader to decide as both of them are astonished and aren't sure what to do with the information. What is clear is that Hazel is saddened by the information that they gain. She learns that Sammy never stopped looking for her, but eventually used the diamond that she gave him to start a new life. He believed that the diamond had come with the curse that he would never see her again. Hazel is devastated as she views the depth of Sammy's former love for her. And, they don't have time to ponder it as a monster attacks the ship.

Discussion Question 1

In Chapter 21, what emotions does Hazel go through when she learns of the Leo-Sammy connection?

Discussion Question 2

What are the pros and cons of being able to share one's memories as Hazel and Leo did?

Discussion Question 3

What are the similarities between Leo and Sammy?

Vocabulary

pistachio, jujitsu, dunce cap, villain, valve, admiration, treacherous, token, dissolved, leathery, suspenders, dignity



Chapters 23-24

Summary

Chapter 23

A giant sea monster grapples the ship and stops it from being able to use any of their weapons. Leo manages to get to a crate filled with Greek fire, which he uses to injure the creature. He's knocked out in the battle though and wakes up to find that he, Hazel, and Frank had been taken prisoner by smaller aquatic creatures working alongside the giant one. Frank is angry with Leo because he was alone with Hazel, but Leo is able to calm him down and explain that they were just learning more about Sammy. The aquatic creatures return and separate Frank and Leo to be interrogated.

Chapter 24

The aquatic monsters reveal themselves to actually be fish centaurs, half-brothers to Camp Half-Bloods centaur, Chiron. They reveal they have their own underwater camp where they train heroes. Leo manages to convince them that they are friends and allies of Chiron. Hazel is reunited with Leo and she explains why Frank is afraid of fire. His life is connected to a piece of firewood she was given to protect. If it burns up, he dies. The centaurs return and tell Leo that they are going to rescue the sea creatures that Percy wanted to save. They also tell him that they need to reach Rome and save Nico, as he will be essential in their journey. Lastly, he gives Leo a letter of introduction to the god of the Tiber River, Tiberinus. He says that Annabeth will need it to get the Mark of Athena. The centaurs send the group out of the water and back onto their ship.

Analysis

Chapter 23

Several things are happening in this chapter. First, there is the attack on the ship, where Leo has forgotten to switch the ship's sonar over to radar and it has allowed a monster to get too close, and then attack. Then, there is the revelation that he and Hazel had been holding hands and staring into each other's eyes (a total misunderstanding on Coach Hedge's and Frank's parts). This chapter sees Leo run through many emotions, including paralyzing fear, shame, embarrassment, and then courage. Leo saves the day by using Greek Fire to get the monster to release the ship. Leo's last thought is for his friends as he loses consciousness.

When he comes to, he and Frank finally talk out their problems and Frank realizes that he's jumped to the wrong conclusions about Leo and Hazel. Leo fills him in and they are reconciled. Unfortunately, they are also imprisoned somewhere under the water, being held by water centaurs.



Chapter 24

The water centaurs interrogate everyone. Leo learns that the sea monster that attacked them was sent by Keto, from the Georgia Aquarium. Aphros, the one interrogating Leo, says that they are lucky to have escaped from the monster, and that they are being interrogated because they weren't sure whose side the demigods were on. There are a series of prophetic warnings by the mer-folk that both encourages and frightens all of the travelers. What emerges from this entire chapter is that all of the friends, when interrogated separately, opt to just tell the truth. They do not try to deceive their captors since they seem to truly be trying to learn who they were and what they were doing in their area. They are also pleased that Percy has shared the plight of the imprisoned sea creatures in Atlanta and make plans to go rescue them.

Discussion Question 1

In Chapter 23 and 24 how does Leo feel about himself and everything he's learned?

Discussion Question 2

Why might Frank be afraid of Fire, and in particular, Leo?

Discussion Question 3

Describe where the theme of friendship is demonstrated in both chapters 23 and 24.

Vocabulary

sludge, morphed, brutish, carbonated, kelp, summit, tridents, embarking, tentacles, attuned



Chapters 25-26

Summary

Chapter 25

Leo tells everyone what they learned from the centaurs. Annabeth also opens up about her earlier encounter with Athena. She tries to show them the map, but it is blank. She concludes it only works when she is alone. She then goes on to say that she suspects the statue in Rome is supposed to be the Athena Parthenos, a famous Greek statue. Annabeth believes she has to go alone in order to find the Mark of Athena. Annabeth is nervous because she believes the statue is guarded by spiders, but she also knows that if she can get the statue, it could heal the rift between the two camps and give them the united force necessary to stop Gaea. Even if she has to go alone, the rest of the group will be useful in Rome since they still have to rescue Nico from the giant twins.

Chapter 26

The group arrives at the Pillars of Hercules which lead into the Mediterranean Sea. The group spots Hercules himself who seems to be standing guard over the entrance into the Mediterranean Sea. They decide that Piper should go to speak to them since she is their best diplomat. Jason ends up going with her as well. Hercules is friendly, but reveals that he can't let the group pass through without proving their worth by completing a quest. When he hears that Hera sent them on their quest he doesn't want to help them. He finally agrees to give them a quest, but instead of an easy one like he initially promised he tells them that they have to get the horn of the old god, Achelous. He says only the two of them can go on this quest and they have to complete it by sundown. He does give them a book which he says will help them to complete the quest.

Analysis

Chapter 25

The group reunites and everyone shares what they have learned. Annabeth, it would seem, is going to be tested in ways she can't begin to imagine, but she most definitely believes that there will be more spiders to come. They also have enough pieces to figure out some of Gaea's plan. Gaea will take advantage of the disorientation of the gods (their split personalities and impending wars) to rise, of course, using demigod blood. She has been actively trying to prevent them from finding the Mark of Athena, because now the demigods know that the map leads to the Athena Parthenos, a lost statue taken by the Romans from Greece. This statue will heal the rift between the gods' twin personalities and allow them to be a force great enough to fight and contain Gaea.



While the group are disheartened that Annabeth will most likely have to go this quest alone, at some point, they do realize that an integral part of the quest will be to save Nico, who is running out of time. More than one creature and helpful god/goddess has stated that he is the key to 'endless death' which they will need in order to fully complete the quest.

Chapter 26

In this chapter Jason and Piper confront Hercules, who is less than heroic. He gives them the task of bringing back the horn of Achelous. Otherwise, they can't pass through the Mare Nostrum. They are committed to the quest that Hercules sets for them because he's promised that if they fail he will tear the ship apart and kill all of them. Hercules gives them a book called the Hercules Guide to the Mare Nostrum. He says that it will assist them. What we see from this chapter is that sometimes family ties aren't the kind that bind brothers to one another kindly. Jason and Hercules are both sons of Zeus/Jupiter but this does not cause Hercules to look favorably on Jason. In fact, Jason makes things worse by mentioning that they are on a larger quest set up by Hera. On hearing this, Hercules becomes petty and belligerent, holding a grudge against Hera.

Discussion Question 1

What is Gaea's strategy in keeping the gods unsettled?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Hercules create such a hard quest for Jason and Piper?

Discussion Question 3

Discuss the theme of friendship and family as it pertains to Chapter 26.

Vocabulary

vessel, hastily, cyclone, charred, populated, sheer, tiers, sphinx, colossal, ocher, trireme



Chapters 27-28

Summary

Chapter 27

Jason and Piper wander around the island for a bit, reading through the book and trying to find Achelous. They discern that he is a god of the river. They end up stumbling upon him by accident, getting near a river that seemed to compel them to enter. Just like Hercules, he is friendly at first, talking about the past and how he had a feud with Hercules as they competed for the heart of the same woman. Hercules ended up winning, but Hera twisted the relationship so Hercules was poisoned and his new wife killed. They explain that they need his horn in order to get passage through to stop Gaea, but Achelous refuses to give it to them without a fight.

Chapter 28

Piper gets swept up by the river, but before she drowns she is able to use her charm speech on Achelous. She convinces him that he should help her, which causes him to lower his guard. The two speak a little more and she realizes that Hercules just sent them here to further humiliate Achelous as the two were still bitter rivals and their feud had never ended. Piper cuts his horn and Jason uses his lightning powers to weaken Achelous so they can run away. She brings the horn back and Hercules says that the ship can pass. When he asks for the horn, Piper refuses, saying she doesn't want to be part of their feud and that Hercules was wrong for continuing the rivalry in the first place. She uses the horn to summon a mountain of fruit to bury Hercules as the ship sails into the Mediterranean.

Analysis

Chapter 27

What emerges from this chapter, which features primarily Jason and Piper, is that what they are presented with are two sides to one story: Hercules and Achelous. One states that the other stole his betrothed and cruelly defaced him, while the other claims that he was tricked and poisoned. What both Jason and Piper have to do is figure out for themselves who is right and who is wrong. Working together they realize that there are never any clear cut right and wrong on either side of a war. Thus, the theme of War is illustrated in the flashbacks and backstory of the fight between Achelous and Hercules. Both men were wrong, and both were right.

Achelous, even while he's torturing them, continues to apologize as if he has no choice but to try and stop them. This may insinuate that sometimes people go to war, not because they truly want to, but out of a sense of obligation.



Chapter 28

In this chapter both Jason and Piper find themselves in a life or death situation with Achelous who has them trapped in a whirlpool. He makes a bargain with Piper who uses her charmspeak to get him to listen to her in the first place and pull her up out of the water. She agrees with Achelous that Hercules does not deserve his horn, and she really figures out that she means it. However, in order to save Jason and move forward with their quest, she does have to have the horn. She tricks Achelous, feeling horrible while doing it, and takes his horn.

Here, readers see Piper taking charge and succeeding where Jason is failing, which is a change from what normally happens. However, she is a daughter of the goddess of love and compassion and she is filled with pity for Achelous for the wrongs done against him by Hercules. She vows to Jason that Hercules will NOT get the horn. In the end, it is her love and her compassion that flood the horn with good thoughts and bounty, and it spews forth so much food that it distracts Hercules long enough to allow them to get away.

Discussion Question 1

Compare and contrast Achelous and Hercules.

Discussion Question 2

How does Piper finally decide which god to trust (Hercules or Achelous)?

Discussion Question 3

Ultimately, what power does Piper possess that allows her to complete the quest and keep the horn?

Vocabulary

contemplating, slashed, gust, cauldron, wailed, dissolved, puny, harboring, torrent, produce, whiplash, cascade



Chapters 29-30

Summary

Chapter 29

Percy finds himself frustrated that he can't do more to help his friends, especially since they are in the open sea which should be his territory. To make things worse, Annabeth is barely talking to him since she's occupied with the Mark of Athena. Percy goes to sleep and ends up having another nightmare vision about the giant twins. In it, they are talking to an unknown lady about the trap that they have set with Nico. The mysterious lady reveals that she wants to kill Annabeth, but the giants tell her that Gaea wants Annabeth taken alive, along with Percy. The lady promises to do what she can to deliver the girl alive, but hints that she will be tormented first. The giants also mention how the group will have to get through someone known as the golden boy in order to reach Rome.

Percy awakens and goes to tell Annabeth everything about the vision. He wants to go with her to protect her, but she insists that she has to do her quest alone. She also says not to tell the others as she doesn't want to worry them. The ship is suddenly attacked by more water creatures and a human wearing golden armor and wielding a golden blade. Percy realizes that this is the golden boy the giants spoke about. He identifies himself as Chrysaor, the Golden Sword and fellow son of Poseidon. He tells the group that he's here to take everything of value from them.

Chapter 30

Chrysaor talks about how his mother was the Medusa that Percy had killed and his father was Poseidon. He is resentful towards the other demigods who chose to ignore him, not to mention that his mother had been turned into the Medusa by Athena, adding to his hatred for the group. The rest of the ship is captured by Chrysaor's army, although Percy notes that Frank doesn't seem to be with them. Chrysaor reveals that he knows about the bounty set by Gaea, so he's bringing in all of the demigods. Percy tries to take him by surprise, but Chrysaor proves to be too fast. The two end up sword fighting, but Chrysaor easily overtakes Percy, disarming him and threatening that he will take them all to Gaea's minions, who will spill their blood so the evil goddess can fully awaken.

Analysis

Chapter 29

In this chapter, the focus turns to Percy. He's feeling inadequate lately because all of the water and ocean creatures that they've come up against lately have not come under his domain to control or defend against. To make matters worse, Annabeth, his girlfriend, is so preoccupied with her quest to find her mother's statue that she has little time for him.



In addition, he's been having prophetic dreams again, about Nico. This time there is a unnamed female involved in Nico's demise. She states that neither Percy nor Annabeth are to be harmed, but that they can be tortured. This female also says that the Golden Boy was on his way to slow down the demigods. When Percy wakes he tells Annabeth, she refuses to let him accompany her, as this is her quest to undertake alone. Percy is furious, but he respects her decision (at least to her face). He also realizes, perhaps for the first time, that this must be what she feels whenever he places himself in danger in pursuit of a quest. He is maturing and developing a sense of empathy.

Chapter 30

The battle with Chrysaor, aka The Golden Boy, would seem to suggest the old adage: all that glitters is not gold. In other words, he may look like a good thing but he is actually determined to destroy them if he can. He captures them all then leaves them tied up on the deck of the ship. The theme of Family emerges as the heroes learn that Chrysaor is none other than Medusa's son. He's furious that they have killed Medusa at the Gnome Emporium and he wants revenge. This shows that often grudges and feuds, prejudices and perspectives can be passed down from one generation to the next. The cycle of violence doesn't end until someone questions it.

Discussion Question 1

What do the prophetic dreams in Chapter 29 seem to suggest?

Discussion Question 2

Why does the female in Percy's dream (Chapter 29) state that Percy and Annabeth are not to be harmed?

Discussion Question 3

What does Chrysaor's revenge have to say about the nature of family honor?

Vocabulary

buccaneer, preparations, slack, glacier, churns, eroded, nauseating, oblivion, manning, amnesia



Chapters 31-32

Summary

Chapter 31

Percy manages to think quickly, realizing that Chrysaor's army is afraid of the god, Dionysus. He convinced them that Dionysus is on board the ship and angry with them. He has Frank turn into a dolphin, pretending that Dionysus is the one that has cursed them. The monsters are terrified and quickly run away, leaving Chrysaor alone. Frank turns into a giant bear and manages to chase Chrysaor away. Percy is afraid that he will return, but the group can't take the time to try and search for him and continue to go to Rome. They do search the ship that he had come on, discovering millions of dollars' worth of gold and gems. Percy says to leave it as tribute for Bacchus, recalling his earlier words about how he wouldn't help them without tribute.

Percy goes to get some rest, lamenting on the fact that he isn't as powerful a hero as he needs to be. He ends up falling asleep where he has a dream of Gaea taunting him, showing him the ruined remains of Camp Half-Blood after the Roman army has torn through it. Percy is awoken from the dream to hear that the ship has arrived in Rome. Once again, the group finds themselves splitting up. Percy and Annabeth go to the river Tiber to learn more about the mark. Jason and Piper stay to watch the ship while Frank, Hazel, and Leo go to try and find Nico.

Chapter 32

Percy and Annabeth start to travel through Rome looking for the river. They stop for lunch and Annabeth tells Percy that he did good dealing with Chrysaor and that he needs to remember he isn't alone in his quest. The two are interrupted by Tiberinus showing up with his wife Rhea. Tiberinus seems pleased to see them, saying that he's here to help them. He asks for the letter of introduction from Annabeth. He says that Annabeth needs to go alone from here on out. Percy tries to insist, but Rhea says he's needed back at the ship. She says Piper will have a vision of the giants soon and without Percy they won't be able to defeat the giants and rescue Nico. Percy hesitantly goes back to the ship, with Annabeth reassuring him that she will be fine.

Analysis

Chapter 31

In this chapter Percy's abilities and quick thinking are evidenced when he remembers that Chrysaor is terrified of Dionysus. Of note is the fact that Percy states that he realizes he's become so dependent on Annabeth filling in and remembering all of the old legends that he's seldom had to. Now, unable to call upon her to do this, he finds that he is capable of doing it himself. Likewise, Frank, who hasn't been able to control



his 'shifts' is able to control a shift and turn himself into a dolphin, just long enough to scare Chrysaor into believing Percy's deception. Working together, as well as overcoming previous personal limitations, both Percy and Frank have realized some very important things about themselves as a result.

One of the overriding fears for Percy is that they will fail, that he isn't strong enough, and that Gaea will destroy a way of life that he's come to love. The theme of overcoming fear, of moving beyond it to accomplish the task that needs doing, is played out in this chapter, toward the very end. Percy has a nightmare where Gaea shows him the ruined and destroyed Camp Half-blood, many of his friends injured and dying. This terrifies him almost into paralysis, and definitely causes him to doubt his own abilities (in effect threatening to weaken him).

Chapter 32

Having to split everyone up again makes Percy tense but he realizes that in order to accomplish everything that they must accomplish that it is a necessity. Here, readers see a typical pairing off of Percy/Annabeth, Hazel/Frank with Leo, and Jason/Piper. One notable thing that Annabeth tells Percy when they begin their search for the Mark is to reiterate and remind him that he is not questing alone. She mentions that overcoming one's fears, facing them head on, is the only way to come through on the other side of things. This is particularly ironic since she has faced her own fears (spiders) in a previous chapter, and will be called on, again, to do the same thing.

Soon after this, they both meet Tiberinus who tells them, to Percy's horror, that he must return to the ship and that Annabeth must continue on, alone. Percy does not want to leave her, not only because he has a need to protect her, but because he's still remembering the vision that Gaea sent him in his dreams. It is only when Tiberinus points out that Piper will receive a vision and that without Percy's help, Nico will perish, that Percy relents and goes back to the ship. Percy is almost always motivated by a need to help his friends, especially if they are in trouble.

Discussion Question 1

What is Percy's number one overriding and recurring fear?

Discussion Question 2

How did Percy overcome Chrysaor onboard the ARGO II in Chapter 31?

Discussion Question 3

What is ironic about the statement Annabeth makes to Percy about overcoming fear in Chapter 32?



Vocabulary

navigated, scuffling, ejected, embankment, girders, Caesar, cobblestones, minions, confessed, Vespa



Chapters 33-34

Summary

Chapter 33

Rhea and Tiberinus take Annabeth throughout the city, giving her a tour of all the historical landmarks on the way. They arrive in front of a marble building. Rhea tells her that it will lead underneath the city, and that Annabeth has to navigate her way underneath Rome if she wants to find the statue. She confirms that it could bring peace for both camps, but also warns her that she's going to have to face a guardian if she hopes to succeed. She travels underground and finds that the stairs end and she has to descend a long drop to continue. She is briefly frustrated by her lack of powers, thinking about all the ways her friends could easily overcome the obstacle. Annabeth calms herself and starts thinking like a child of Athena, cleverly creating a makeshift rope ladder out of supplies she found in the basement above her. She uses the ladder to navigate deeper underneath the city.

Chapter 34

Annabeth travels through an underground maze, eventually stumbling upon the bodies of what she assumes are other children of Athena who had attempted the same quest. She ends up getting trapped in a room by spirits who seem angered at both her gender as well as the fact that she is Greek. Annabeth convinces the ghost that she is the chosen of Athena and not like the others. She tricks the ghosts into giving her more information about the maze, including that it is guarded by the weaver, who the ghosts fear. The ghosts won't let her pass without overcoming a test. Annabeth recognizes that they are trying to trap her, so she makes a wager that she can bring the room down around them with one strike. They doubt her, but she spots a weak spot in the ceiling and uses it to bring the room down around her. While she succeeds, the floor underneath her breaks away and she descends into darkness.

Analysis

Chapter 33

Symbolically, and literally, Annabeth must go underground to avenge her mother and fulfill her quest. While she is physically required to go underground, having been warned by Tiberinus to learn from her fallen brothers and sisters mistakes, it must be noted that this also works on a deeper, psychological level. Annabeth must come to terms with how it is her mother chooses to relate to her, and view her, and where Annabeth finds her own identity, apart from being Athena's daughter. For this she will be challenged, and must go within (go underground) to discover who she truly is and what she is truly made of. She mentions when she is enjoying a brief moment with Percy in Rome that in regards to her mother and her father, that people often see what they want to see in the



person they are with. It is only when the reality of the other person's true nature surfaces that really determines whether or not a relationship will survive.

Chapter 34

Though her mother does not appear, she does continue to send her emblem (an owl) to guide Athena toward the Mark. It is Annabeth's own wit, intelligence, and courage that allows her to use her mind to outwit the spirits in the maze, and allow her to continue her journey. It is during this confrontation with the ghosts of Mithras that she realizes that her intellect IS her greatest weapon, one that she uses to great facility. She is able, by simple observation and former knowledge, to convince the ghosts that she knows their ways, their secret initiations, and their patron god, Mithras. When they pose a question about which ordeal she will select, dagger or torch, she correctly misdirects them, offering a third option. She's learned from the fallen bodies of her previous brothers and sisters in the cave, that to select either dagger or torch resulted in death. Therefore, the only logical choice was to select neither.

Discussion Question 1

What are some ways that Annabeth doubts herself?

Discussion Question 2

What are Annabeth's greatest strengths/abilities?

Discussion Question 3

What does Annabeth learn about identity in these two chapters?

Vocabulary

ornate, padlocked, predecessors, shrine, liberate, beamed, dilapidated, mimicking, plumed, frescoes



Chapters 35-36

Summary

Chapter 35

Annabeth survives the fall, but ends up breaking her ankle. She is able to treat the injury somewhat with ambrosia, but she still can't put much weight on her injured leg. She ends up making a makeshift cast out of the supplies she finds in the room. While far from perfect, it makes it so she can at least limp on and continue the quest. Once she fixes her leg, she is able to continue further down into the maze.

Chapter 36

Annabeth is confronted by a horde of spiders in the maze. She holds them at bay by creating a torch and setting fire to the barricades around her. She ends up facing a room with a giant pit, but she manages to use her string to weave a makeshift bridge that allows her to get across. She can also set fire to the bridge behind her to continue to keep the spiders at bay. Once she reaches the end of the room, the spiders leave her room. She continues on and finds the Athena Parthenos. Her victory is short lived as Arachne arrives, saying she always knew that Annabeth would be the only one clever enough to get here. Arachne curses Athena's name and threatens Annabeth. Arachne tells Annabeth that there's no way she's going to get the statue, especially with how hurt Annabeth is. Arachne continues to taunt her before moving in to attack.

Analysis

Chapter 35

Annabeth finds herself injured when she takes a fall from the collapse of the cavern of Mithras and the judgmental ghosts. She eats Ambrosia and it is important to note that the flavor of the food is one of comfort for her, as well: buttered popcorn like the kind she and her father would eat together while they watched old romantic comedies. The memory gives her strength, even as the ambrosia is said to 'warm her heart'. She briefly entertains trying to call for help, but her pride keeps her from doing so. She rationalizes that it is supposed to be a solo quest and that she's being ridiculous. She doesn't need help, yet.

Chapter 36

This is the fear chapter for Annabeth. Spiderwebs begin to show up and though she's certain of what lies ahead, she pushes forward. Because this chapter centers around Annabeth's phobia to spiders, it is also centered around the theme of Overcoming Fear. Of interest is also Annabeth's memory of how to weave a net, which is what she does to go across the chasm that she must cross. Avoiding the provided path, she correctly



assumes that she needs to create a net to get across on, weaving it. She thanks her mother's skills in this area and notes that it is an area of expertise that most have, until now, downplayed.

She comes face-to-face with her mother's larger than life statue and marvels at its beauty. She's found the parthenos and she's filled with a sense of pride for her mother, and for herself. She also notices the exquisite tapestries woven and hanging on the wall. They are truly works of art. Of note is the fact that they are beautiful, but they are deadly, since they belong to Arachne, herself. She is a living reminder of how pride goeth before a fall, and Annabeth learns this lesson fully when she realizes that she should have called for backup from her friends instead of trying to go it alone. She also learns that the only way to overcome fear is to set your emotions aside and use your mind. It works for her in the cavern of Mithras, and when facing Arachne.

Discussion Question 1

In Chapter 35 what does eating the Ambrosia remind Annabeth of and why?

Discussion Question 2

What important lesson does Annabeth learn about overcoming fear?

Discussion Question 3

In both chapters, what is the author suggesting about the nature of pride?

Vocabulary

jarring, hobbled, gauzy, bode, mosaics, tapestries, sconces, skittering, bulk, regroup



Chapters 37-38

Summary

Chapter 37

Leo, Frank, and Hazel explore Rome, looking for places that Nico might be. With his understanding of engineering, Leo is able to intently study the buildings and look for any sort of secret entrances. He finds one in one of the temples and manages to figure out how to open the secret door. The group argues for a moment about whether to go and get help or explore. Hazel decides to go in, saying that she'll be safe because of her power to navigate underground. The others reluctantly agree. Leo and Frank talk for a little about their respective past with fire and how Leo would never use his fire to bring harm to Frank. The conversation is interrupted when Eidolons show up in the form of possessed tourists. They threaten the pair who quickly jump through the secret door leading into the Roman underground.

Chapter 38

Once they go through the secret door it shuts behind them, keeping them safe from the Eidolons. They quickly find Hazel who is stuck at a door. She asks if Leo can use his power to figure out how it works. He manages to mess around with the lock and figure out the puzzle, getting the door to open. The door opens up into Archimedes' forge. They find a book that contains the secrets of Archimedes, something which greatly excites Leo. He believes that they can use it to help save lives if the Roman's attack, as well as fighting against Gaea and the giants. Their celebration is short lived as the Eidolons possess some of the machinery in the workshop and threaten to attack once again.

Analysis

Chapter 37

The theme of Family and Sacrifice is demonstrated in this chapter when Frank and Leo talk about their families and what has happened to them as the result of fire. Frank's mother died in Afghanistan and Leo's mother died in a huge fire that happened in her workshop. Both understand the other more fully and are able to act as a team when the possessed tourists begin to close in on them. They both care for Hazel, and while Leo isn't interested in her romantically, both he and Frank are concerned when she doesn't seem to emerge from the underground entrance. Though they were chased into the entrance by the tourists, chances are good that they were going to have gone in anyway.

The theme of Sacrifice is demonstrated in that both of their mothers died trying to save others. Each gave their lives for someone else that needed their help.



Chapter 38

They figure out why Hazel has been so long getting back to them. She is stuck at a doorway, which Leo is able to figure out and open. This chapter shows how each demigod's abilities help the group out, and how working cooperatively they are able to move forward. Ironically, the one thing that Leo Valdez prides himself on is technology and gadgets, so when two automatons come to life in Archimedes's lab, and he must fight them, he finds himself both appreciating and hating their abilities.

Discussion Question 1

How have Leo and Frank become 'brothers in arms'?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Hazel believe that she's better equipped to work underground?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Leo act so excited when they find Archimedes's lab?

Vocabulary

hatch, sphere, steampunk, enclosed, loft, cylinders, scroll, manikins, confiscated, aqueducts



Chapters 39-40

Summary

Chapter 39

Leo's friends are almost immediately knocked out. The Eidolons say that they only need those two as they are a male and female demigod. They try to go after Leo, but he manages to escape into another room, using his fire to fuse the locks together. The Eidolons continue to threaten him, but he ignores them and starts searching the room, finding a control sphere that he can use to fight them. Unfortunately, the sphere is locked and he knows he doesn't have much time before the Eidolons are able to break into the room. He breaks out the fortune cookie that Nemesis gave him, opening it up and hoping that it will give him the answer that he needs.

Chapter 40

Leo gets the answer from the fortune cookie and manages to activate the sphere. It takes a bit of getting used to, but he manages to use the sphere to take control of the Eidolons, trapping them inside of the wires of the machines. Unfortunately, in the ensuing battle the machinery is destroyed, but Leo is hopeful that with the scrolls they recovered he will be able to recreate the inventions. Hazel and Frank wake up, but the doors in the room close. Gaea reveals herself. She placed Nico's sword in the room, which was acting as a beacon towards Hazel. She tells them that she has trapped the demigods and can use them for the sacrifice to become fully awakened. She shows them images of Annabeth fighting Arachne, taunting them by saying she is about to die. She says the same fates await Percy, Piper, and Jason. Leo breaks the mirror that Gaea had appeared to them in, saying that he has a plan to break free but it requires all of them working together.

Analysis

Chapter 39

In this chapter, Leo finds himself placed in the position of being the only one capable of saving the group through his understanding of mechanics. Unfortunately, he also comes to the conclusion that it is beyond his understanding. While he's fused the locks together, it is only a matter of time before they manage to get to him. He reflects back on the other times when he's managed to come up with something to save others, but now, he's realizing that he needs help. Unlike Annabeth, Leo does not allow pride in his abilities to keep him from asking for help when he needs it. By breaking open Nemesis's cookie, he is not only asking for help, but he is offering himself as a sacrifice for his friends, because Nemesis's cookie came with a price. She had told him that when he broke it open that she would be free to ask anything of him when the time came.



Chapter 40

In this chapter, as if they haven't dealt with enough, Leo, Hazel, and Frank face Gaea, who has appeared in the reflection of Nico's sword. She shows them all of their other friends and in each instance, they are all in life or death situations. Gaea uses this knowledge to try and weaken their resolve. Unfortunately, she doesn't understand that the demigods have a very close bond and that all her visions only serve to make them more determined to save Nico and the others. Leo gathers Frank and Hazel to him and tells them that acting together, they will overcome Gaea and get out of the room.

Discussion Question 1

What terrible choice does Leo have to make in Chapter 39?

Discussion Question 2

Compare Annabeth and her decision in the Caverns of Mithras to Leo's decision in Archimede's Lab.

Discussion Question 3

Why can Gaea appear to them in Nico's sword?

Vocabulary

unfurled, wreak, incentive, intact, orb, comply, pommel, deformed, warbling, jitterbug, surging, salvaged



Chapters 41-42

Summary

Chapter 41

Piper and Jason celebrate his birthday while the others are out in the city. Jason confides in her, saying how he has felt useless the whole trip. He's used to being the leader and not relying on others, but he feels like all he has done is get injured and rescued while working with the group. Piper comforts him, but the two are interrupted by Percy arriving. He tells them everything that happened and asks Piper to look in her dagger. She sees that the Romans are preparing to launch a full scale invasion on Camp Half-Blood. When that vision fades, she sees an image of Nico trapped in his jar with the giants happily toasting each other. She believes it is a vision of the future, saying that their rescue attempt failed and Nico is doomed. Nevertheless, Percy says that they have to go, remembering that this was supposedly the last day Nico had before he would die. Piper wants to wait for the others, but Percy says there is no time. Jason and Piper agree and they head off to try and rescue Nico as Percy recognizes one of the buildings from the vision.

Chapter 42

Percy leads them into the building he recognized. They find a hidden staircase that leads down to a seemingly empty chamber. Jason is able to recognize it as being a shrine to the nymphs. Normally, it would be filled with water, and Percy is able to sense that there should in fact be water in the room. He wonders what had happened to the nymphs when they reveal themselves, having been turned into water cannibals. They reveal that they have been working for the giant twins who are just next door. They were promised Percy and the others so they could use their power to fill the room with an infinite source of water. Percy tries to reason with them, but they refuse to listen and end up attacking.

Analysis

Chapter 41

Piper and Jason have some alone time for a while and the reader sees the two trying to act as normal teenagers might. Jason tells Piper that he feels very inadequate, that he's been unconscious or injured for most of this leg of the quest. Ironically, this is exactly the same sentiment that Percy expressed to Annabeth several chapters earlier. What this shows the reader is that it doesn't matter how extraordinary one's abilities might be, self-confidence and esteem come from within and have to be developed over time and having faced, and overcome, various experiences.



Readers also see Piper giving in to her worst fears in this chapter as she believes that what she sees in her prophetic dagger is going to happen in the future. She sees Nico dying and the giants celebrating. Percy joins Piper and Jason and instead of giving up on Nico, they push forward towards finding him. Percy recognizes one of the landmarks from Piper's dagger and it makes as likely a starting point as any. In this scene we see Percy taking charge, which, as it ends up is a good idea.

Chapter 42

Percy leading the way ends up being a good idea because the are that they find themselves arriving at was once a grotto filled with water, a tribute to the water nymphs. Percy doesn't have to wonder for long about what happened to them as they have converted into water cannibals and attack them. The twin giants who are next door, holding Nico captive, have promised the nymphs an unending source of water. Desperate, they attack the demigods. In this chapter the reader sees, once again, something that should be beautiful, turned ugly and violent. This motif recurs frequently throughout the book, illustrating the power of evil to corrupt, change, and destroy beauty.

Discussion Question 1

What is making Jason feel badly about himself?

Discussion Question 2

Why have the water nymphs become cannibals?

Discussion Question 3

Compare the corruption of the water nymphs in Chapter 42 to Arachne's tapestries.

Vocabulary

baffled, relieved, descended, corkscrew, masonry, ambush, high-velocity, reassured, alcoves, niche, illusion, shrines



Chapters 43-44

Summary

Chapter 43

The room begins to fill with a black water, while Piper prays for some kind of miracle. She knows that their weapons aren't going to be effective against the nymphs. She thinks back to when she was little and her father told her a story about a lake and a dog. In the story, the dog could speak and told his owner that one day the water will rise and flood the area. His owner could build a raft to escape, but he'd have to sacrifice the dog. As the story went on, it was revealed that the dog was already dead. The flood came and the man escaped with his family. Once he was safe, he could see the remains of all the ghosts. They looked happy that the man had escaped. Piper was confused with the way the story abruptly ended. She fears that the story relates to their current position, that Percy and Jason might be able to escape, but that she is already dead.

Chapter 44

Water continues to fill the room. It acts like a poison to the demigods, draining them of their strength. Not even Percy can use his powers to control or breathe it. Growing desperate, Piper uses the horn she took earlier, realizing that it could do more than just produce food. She deduces that the horn runs on positive emotions from whoever uses it. She tells Percy and Jason to think about clean water and blow into the horn. She keeps encouraging them, telling them to think about positive emotions. Eventually, they are able to produce enough clean water to counter the poisonous water. The nymphs are surprised by how selfless the mortals are and stop creating the poisonous water.

Piper realizes that the nymphs are like the ghosts in the story. The nymphs apologize and thank the demigods for their kindness. They reveal a tunnel that Percy and the others can take to get to the giants. After that, the nymphs vanish, finally at peace.

Analysis

Chapter 43

This chapter is all about the theme of Sacrifice. It is underscored by Piper's memory of an old Cherokee tale about the ghost dog and the flood. In this story, the dog sacrifices itself to save its family, though the man doesn't want to do so. Piper is afraid that in the situation that they currently find themselves in that she will be called upon to sacrifice herself for the others. She believes that it is a very noble thing to do, to sacrifice yourself to save others. Now, after all these years, she believes that she's remembered the story for a reason. She also realizes that of all of them, she is the most expendable (or so she rationalizes).



Chapter 44

What Percy and the others find out in this chapter is that the water is not acting as it should. Instead of obeying Percy, it does not. Percy cannot even breathe underwater. Like so many other objects in this novel, that should be life sustaining and supportive, it is not. Where it should be beautiful, it has been corrupted. Interestingly enough, it is Piper's Horn of Plenty (cornucopia) that saves the day because they focus 'good' and 'uplifting' emotions and thoughts and it is able to change the poisonous water into life-sustaining, pure water, again. The author's purpose, here, then is to suggest that when someone is selfless and does something for others, without expecting anything in return, that everyone wins. He also seems to be suggesting that love and positive emotions are far stronger than the negative variety.

Piper is still thinking about the Cherokee story as they come to the conclusion of their adventure with the water cannibals (who all turn back into nymphs). She now understands the Cherokee tale and that the ghosts rejoice at the end of the story because everyone has been saved, that at least some have understood and taken the time to be honorable, to share the essence of who they were with them.

Discussion Question 1

What makes Piper think about sacrifice and what she may be called upon to do?

Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast the numerous objects in the story that were once beautiful but are now ugly and monstrous.

Discussion Question 3

What is the author suggesting in Chapter 44 in regards to sacrifice?

Vocabulary

subsided, afterlife, basin, electrocute, embedded, flailing, malicious, affecting, leaching, scruff



Chapters 45-46

Summary

Chapter 45

The group travels through the secret tunnels and find themselves in a giant factory. There are dozens of different monsters in cages and death traps set up. The group finds the jar that contains Nico, but they also found the giant twins, Ephialtes and Otis. They reveal that they set the place up to be a grand performance, having a dramatic vision for the way that Rome should be destroyed. They free the weakened Nico, who is far too injured to help in any way. Ephialtes and Otis try to get the group to go along with the performance they have planned, also mentioning that the other demigods have been captured and that Annabeth is about to be killed.

Piper and the others manage to trick the giants into talking more. They reveal that Gaea will be free in one month, vaguely hinting that August 1st is a special date for her. Their destruction of Rome is supposed to last for the remainder of the month, leading into her awakening. Piper tries to use her power to charm the giants, but it doesn't work. With no other options available, Percy and Jason draw their swords and charge at the giants.

Chapter 46

Percy and Jason do their best to fight the giants, but find themselves outmatched. The giants separate the group and start to release their various monsters on them. Percy does his best to dodge a hydra, making his way over towards weapons that were meant to be used in the destruction of Rome. He activates one of the weapons and manages to blast the hydra to bits. He uses the weapon on the giants, and while it can't kill them it does slow them down enough. Jason recognizes that the giants are using a control station, which he has Percy destroy while they are regenerating from their wounds, hoping that it will be enough to stop their plans for destroying Rome. The giants are furious and intend to kill the group, but Bacchus shows up at the last minute before they get the chance to attack.

Analysis

Chapter 45

What is notable in this chapter is how the twin giants, Otis and Ephialtes, view the entire ordeal. They have staged it as a form of entertainment, like one elaborate stage show. That it is life or death only makes them believe it has more 'star' quality. Once again, readers see something appearing different that it really is. What works out nicely, of course, is that the motif of Pride shows back up, courtesy of the 'show'. Both Otis and Ephie are very proud of their show and have no problem telling Percy and Jason all



about what is intended. This gives them more information about Gaea and her plans for reawakening.

Meanwhile, Nico is released, though death's child is too weak to do anything more than look up at them. Likewise, Ephi confides that really none of the scenarios posed by Piper will work because it will take a god to kill them...and they aren't gods. Piper tries to use her charmspeak on them but it doesn't work. Raw, brute force will have to suffice. The demigods charge into battle.

Chapter 46

The battle that ensues and the demigods do their best to keep the monsters and explosives below ground with them, rather than being leashed on the unsuspecting people above ground. In the end, something that Percy did many chapters previously pays off. Back when they captured Chrysaor's ship they found that it was filled to the brim with gold and silver, treasure of all sorts. He left it as a tribute to Bacchus, who'd said that he wouldn't help them without a proper tribute. Having hoped that he would accept the gift, Percy had no idea if it would work at the time. However, it did, and Bacchus shows up to help. This reinforces the theme of Friendship, in that when a person acts in a nice way toward someone else, with respect and mutual kindness, it can make a friend of those who seem very unlikely.

What this indicates is that acts of kindness, though they may take a while to see any change or difference, can repay the person ten fold who initiated the act. Sometimes, in other words, doing the right thing can end up paying a person back more than they had hoped.

Discussion Question 1

Why have Otis and Ephi set up the entire cave as they have?

Discussion Question 2

What act of kindness and respect did Percy show to Bacchus many chapters prior, which comes back to save the day in Chapter 46?

Discussion Question 3

What is the author saying about kindness, respect, and friendship?

Vocabulary

vanished, hydra, grove, dress rehearsal, ravage, impaled, conveyor belts, absorbed, contraption, bazooka, projectiles



Chapters 47-48

Summary

Chapter 47

Bacchus reveals that he showed up because he got the tribute that Percy left earlier. He mocks the giants, saying that their performance was a sham. They are insulted, but Bacchus decides to show them how to really put on a show. He turns the area into a giant arena, setting the two giants up to battle against Percy and Jason. Percy seems annoyed that Bacchus won't help, but he promises that if the two put on a good performance he will help them slay the giants. With little else to do, Jason and Percy once again prepare themselves to fight the powerful twins.

Chapter 48

Jason and Percy decide to work together against the giants. They combine their powers of wind and water to overwhelm the two giants, throwing them into the water and trapping them in a whirlpool. No matter what they do though, the giants are able to regenerate and Percy and Jason soon tire themselves out. Things seem dire, but before the giants have the chance to finish them off, the Argo II arrives and blasts the giants apart. Bacchus uses his divine power to ensure that the giants stay dead and are unable to heal.

Leo and the others arrive with the Argo II, revealing how they had also combined their powers to escape from the prison. Once they were free, they got the ship and tracked down Percy and the others. They all gather on the ship and find out what happened to Nico. He reveals that he was going to investigate the Doors of Death and was captured by Gaea. He says there are two sides to the door, the mortal side and a side in the underworld. Gaea's forces are guarding the mortal side, and the side in the underworld was kept in Tartarus.

Analysis

Chapter 47

Bacchus begins by saving the heroes by 'not saving' them at all. He says that he's there for backup, but that he wants them to do the heavy lifting. Thus, he begins by insulting and angering the twins, allowing Percy, Piper, and Jason to attack them. Though the demigods are furious with Bacchus, they are reasonably assured that if the tide turns against them that he will step in....or so they hope. By allowing them to do it by themselves, or to try, Bacchus is not stealing their accomplishment from them, but rather just leveling the playing field.

Chapter 48



This chapter really shows the power of true friendship. Both Percy and Jason have grown into their powers, but have never combined them before. This time they do, creating great and powerful whirlpools that trap the giants. However, they also find that they can't sustain it much longer. Just as they are weakening, the Argo II blasts through and vaporizes the giants. Just as they are about to reanimate, Bacchus steps up and makes certain they stay dead.

Once they are all safely aboard the Argo II, Nico tells them that there are two doors of death. One is in Greece and heavily guarded. The other is in the immortal world of death...in other words, Tartarus. In order to close the gates they have to go down to Tartarus, something that no mortal or god has ever done. To make matters worse, both sides have to be closed at once, so they would still have to secure the gate on the mortal side. Percy decides to worry about that problem later, remembering that Annabeth is still out there. They fly to the building where Annabeth entered and decide to use the ship to blast their way down to her.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Bacchus not fight against the giants?

Discussion Question 2

What do Percy and Jason do that they have never done in a battle?

Discussion Question 3

What does Nico tell everyone about the House of Hades?

Vocabulary

shimmered, winced, surge, adrenaline, stern, wrestling, jousting, monitor, hunched, darted, muster, scathing, pursed



Chapters 49-50

Summary

Chapter 49

Arachne starts to descend on Annabeth, who realizes that she is too weak to fight. She remembers that Arachne got turned into a spider because she was prideful. Annabeth starts to compliment how beautiful her work is, which gives Arachne pause. She explains that she was tasked with redesigning Mount Olympus and wishes that she could use some of the art that Arachne has created. At first, Arachne thinks this is just a trick. Annabeth points out that Athena all but disowned her and sent her to die. She has no loyalty to her mother, who she adds was just jealous of how good Arachne's art is.

This pleases Arachne who decides to spare Annabeth. Annabeth goes on to say that she wants Arachne to create a giant magnificent piece of art with her silk. Arachne laments that she wouldn't have enough, so Annabeth suggests she uses the webbing that is all around the statue. Arachne agrees, and also mentions that underneath the floor is a gateway that leads into Tartarus. This certainly terrifies Annabeth, but she doesn't worry about it for the time being, instead getting Arachne to unravel the webbing holding the Athena Parthenos.

Chapter 50

Annabeth has Arachne unravel the statue and start to design it into a piece of art. Little does Arachne realize that Annabeth is actually having her construct a trap. Once the piece is finished, Annabeth convinces Arachne that there is a flaw. She crawls inside of the piece only to discover that she is trapped inside. Despite how much she struggles, she is unable to escape. Annabeth is pleased with herself as she not only trapped the spider, but also got to the statue. Her victory doesn't last long as Arachne starts to thrash about and calls upon her children to save her. Thousands of spiders start to descend on Annabeth, who is still trapped in the cavern with an injured leg. Before she is devoured though, the roof is blown open as the Argo II arrives to save her.

Analysis

Chapter 49

Pride, or the theme of Pride, takes center-stage in this chapter as Annabeth uses Arachne's pride against her. It is pride that gets the Athena Parthenos clear of the cobwebs, and it is pride that allows Arachne to believe Annabeth's tales about her mother sending her down into Arachne's pits to die. In fact, Arachne decides to spare Annabeth's life because she is so appreciative of her talents. Through this parry of words Annabeth also learns that there is yet another entrance to Tartarus....in the void underneath Athena's statue.



Chapter 50

In the nick of time Annabeth's friends save her from death by baby spiders. Having used her intellect, yet again, Annabeth manages to trap Arachne in her own web. It immobilizes Arachne and keeps her from emerging to battle Annabeth. It should be noted that in a similar fashion, Annabeth has realized that going it alone isn't what the prophecy had meant at all, and that walking alone meant figuring things out without all of the gadgets or additional abilities, like controlling the wind or water. It is her mind, alone, that walked by itself to accomplish this task that so many have failed at.

However, she doesn't account for all of the pride, and smaller spiders, not trapped in the trap with Arachne and begin to attack Annabeth. Luckily, her friends arrive to save the day.

Discussion Question 1

What is the author saying about the negative consequences of pride?

Discussion Question 2

What does Annabeth learn from her discussions with Arachne?

Discussion Question 3

How does Annabeth best Arachne?

Vocabulary

assaulted, chauvinist, commemorative, barbed, distracted, impressed, smug, three-dimensional, wistfully, scuttled, mandibles



Chapters 51-52

Summary

Chapter 51

The spider army scatters as the Argo II crashes in. Percy comes down and the two exchange stories about what happens. The group is happy that they recovered the statue and set about using the ship to get it out. While they are trying to move the statue, the cavern starts to collapse around them. The group heads to the ship to escape, but Annabeth is caught in a web spun by Arachne. Percy grabs her arm and tries to stop her from being pulled down into Tartarus. She tells him to let her go, but he refuses. He reiterates the promise he made to always be with her and they declare that as long as they are together they can survive anything. To the horror of everyone else, the pair descend together into Tartarus.

Chapter 52

Leo and the surviving members of the group manage to get the ship out of the cavern before it completely collapses, sealing the pit that leads into Tartarus. They manage to get the Athena Parthenos out with them, although it only just manages to fit in the ship. Everyone is sad about losing Percy and Annabeth. Leo feels as though he is responsible, remembering that Nemesis said there would be a significant price to pay for her help. Everyone reassures him that it wasn't his fault, that it was Gaea who was responsible. Even still, he feels responsible as the whole mess began when he got possessed and fired upon the city.

Nico points out that Percy and Annabeth aren't dead. He says that Percy is the most powerful demigod he ever met and believes that if anyone can survive in Tartarus, it would be Percy. He says he can lead them to Epirus, where the mortal side of the Doors of Death lay. He believes that they can work together with Percy to seal the doorway from both sides, and rescue Percy and Annabeth in the process.

The group is initially doubtful, but they realize that they have no other choice. On top of that, the Romans are still getting ready to march on Camp Half-Blood. Jason points out that from what they learned, they only have a month left. Leo decides he can't give up and promises that he can use Archimedes sphere to upgrade the ship and make new weapons to battle Gaea and her army. He makes a vow that they are going to stop Gaea and save all of their friends.

Analysis

Chapter 51



In a heart-stopping chapter and sequence of events, both Annabeth and Percy fall into the pits of Tartarus. Here, the reader sees both themes of Sacrifice and Friendship coming together with Percy's decision to follow Annabeth into the pit. Though Annabeth begs him to let go of her, he refuses, instead both of them sacrificing themselves for the rest of the group, as well as maintaining that their friendship is stronger, even, than death. They make Nico plan to meet them on the other side of Death's Doors at the House of Hades. And then Percy lets go.

Chapter 52

It is a bittersweet victory for the demigods as they lift Athena's statue from Arachne's lair. They'd attempted to dig Annabeth and Percy out of the rubble, but to no avail. They are gone. The friends must come to terms with their sacrifice, and what their next steps should be to honor that decision. Leo, in particular, is beside himself because he believes that if he'd just saved the fortune cookie until this moment, that he'd have been able to save them, rather than activate the sphere. He wonders if he let his intellectual curiosity win out over his friendship. He is miserable with the thought.

This final chapter sees the friends all consoling one another, building one another back up, and making each member, in kind, realize that losing Annabeth and Percy was not their fault. What they do determine, though, is that both Annabeth and Percy are still alive and that they must proceed on with the plan to meet them at Death's Doors.

Discussion Question 1

How does Annabeth initially start to fall into Tartarus?

Discussion Question 2

Why is letting Annabeth go an impossibility for Percy?

Discussion Question 3

What statement is the Author making about friendship and sacrifice in these two last chapters?

Vocabulary

gazed, woven, bane, exhaled, voyage, plumes, lunged, grappling, momentum, imploded, verge, debris



Characters

Percy Jackson

Percy is the son of Poseidon and a mortal woman named, Sally. Because of his father's abilities, he can also talk to horses, control water in all of its forms, and create hurricanes. In this novel, he's just regained his memory after having lost a year and living in the Roman equivalent to Camp Half-blood: Camp Jupiter. He has developed a relationship with Annabeth, another half-blood daughter of Athena.

Percy's greatest strength is also used against him in many instances, and that is his loyalty to his friends. They are his sole motivation in nearly every adventure that is initiated. In this novel, he is drawn into the quest because Annabeth seeks the Athena Parthenon to restore the balance to the gods, whose Roman and Greek identities are warring with one another. While in New Rome, Percy begins to imagine what living a 'real' life might be like and the reader glimpses a maturing Percy, one who is now looking to the future and possible happiness.

Percy is not beyond sacrificing himself for others, as he has done so in other novels, and this novel is no exception. Though he still longs for a deeper relationship with his father, his relationship with his mother, though they don't live together any longer, is solid. Percy is happy that she is finally living happily in New York. The novel ends with Percy and Annabeth falling into Tartarus together.

Annabeth

Annabeth is the daughter of Athena and is one of the first people that Percy met when he first came to Camp Half-blood. Over the course of several books their relationship has grown and they have drawn closer to one another. One of Annabeth's greatest issues to overcome is that she over thinks things when she should trust raw emotion and instinct. Piper points this out when they are in the chamber trying to secure the heartbeat of the frozen god. Piper lectures her about living in her head too much and that people are meant to feel things. Once Annabeth allows herself to trust her emotions, she realizes that having a balance between head and heart IS the smart thing.

Annabeth is horribly afraid of spiders, which the reader learned in previous novels. This fear comes back in this novel as she must undergo a series of tasks that she must accomplish before the Athena Parthenos, lost to the world for centuries, can be found. For a large section of the book, Annabeth quests alone, testing her courage, her commitment to the task, and learning more about her mother and her own connection to her.

She is one of the seven listed in the prophecy, early on in the book, and takes the appointment seriously. She is jealous of Reyna, initially, but realizes that Percy is



attracted only to her. In this the reader sees that for all of her talents and skills, she is still very much a teenage girl with the same kinds of worries, concerns, hopes, and dreams of any other girl her age. At the end of the novel, she and Percy fall into Tartarus, both of them pledging to have each other's backs.

Piper

Piper McLean is the daughter of legendary actor, Tristan McLean. They are both of Cherokee descent, but Piper's mother was Aphrodite. This heritage gives her the ability to use 'charmspeak' which means that she can manipulate those who are unaware into answering her questions and doing her bidding. As a daughter of Aphrodite, she is gifted with incredible beauty. She also possesses a cornucopia 'weapon' which at first she detests. Later, it is this very weapon that saves their lives.

Piper has another weapon, Katoptris, which is a small dagger gifted with the ability to foresee and farsee things. She uses this on numerous occasions and it allows the heroes to plan and prepare for things that are headed their way. She is dating Jason, and stays by his side when he is injured in the attack by Camp Jupiter.

Leo

Leo is the son of Hephaestus, which means that he has the ability to use and withstand fire. He is also very good with all things mechanical and is constantly inventing gadgets that assist the crew in completing their mission. Early on in the novel he is taken over by a spirit who makes him fire on Camp Jupiter, causing the heroes to have to leave the area under heavy fire. Later, when he is no longer under the spirit's control, he feels miserable to have caused a rift between the camps. He spends much of the novel trying to make up for it.

Leo looks much like another person that Hazel Levasque knew many centuries before. The reader learns later on that the person they are referring to is named Sam, and that this person was Leo's great, great grandfather. Leo has not had a great childhood, like many of the demigods. His mother's forge burned down and his Aunt Rosa blamed him for her death. Leo carries around this feeling of guilt throughout the novel and it is used against him by monsters seeking to weaken him.

Reyna

Reyna is the daughter of the Roman goddess, Bellona. When this novel opens she is part of the group attempting to make peace between the two camps, in hopes of holding off a war between the gods. She believes that if the two camps can unite that it will allow the gods to come back into harmony as well. However, when the Argo II fires on Camp Jupiter, these hopes are dashed. As one of the leaders (praetors) of New Rome she must make the decision to go with the Argo II, and leave Octavian in charge. This ends up being a mistake on her part.



Reyna has two mechanical dogs made of silver and gold. They do her bidding. Leo LOVES them and is constantly observing them and making notes. At first the reader thinks that she has feelings towards Percy, or even Jason, but that notion is soon put to rest as the novel unfolds. Her sister is the Queen of the Amazons.

Hazel

Hazel Levasque is a daughter of Pluto/Hades and as of this novel has only been resurrected for a few months, having died initially in the mid-1900's. Many times when she touches something, precious jewels will leap out of the ground. This is due to a wish that was granted to her mother upon her birth. This bothers Hazel and there is little she can do about it.

Her one thrill in the world is riding on her horse, Arion, which she often does in this novel. She has also fallen for Frank and they take care of one another, watching out for dangers, and making sure that the other is protected.

Nico

Nico de Angelo is also a son of Pluto/Hades. Dark, brooding, and gifted, he wanders through the novel like a lost storm cloud. The reader learns later on that this is due in large part to the fact that he has been keeping a secret throughout most of the novels. He has had a secret crush on Jason for many years, but understands that these feelings would never be reciprocated. It is only after he lets this go that he is able to find real love toward the end of the novel.

Nico has many talents that have been given to him as a son of Hades. He can 'shadow travel' which comes in handy throughout many novels. In this novel, however, he has been captured and imprisoned by the twin giants. He stays alive by eating small pomegranate seeds. He nearly dies before the others can rescue him.

Gleeson Hedge

Gleeson Hedge is a satyr, much like Grover from earlier novels. However, unlike Grover, Gleeson is short, round, and feisty. They call him Coach as he fancies himself one. Not only is he always ready for a fight, and always offers this as the solution to any problem, but the reader learns that he was punished by the gods for having an illicit relationship with a Cloud Nymph named, Mellie. He appears to humans as a fat, bald, aging man in his mid-fifties, but in reality he is over a hundred years old. His wife, Mellie, and he are expecting their first child, which the reader learns toward the end of the novel.



Jason

Jason Grace is Zeus's son and as in many of the other novels, takes great risks for his friends. In this novel, within the first few chapters, he has been wounded and must recover from his injuries. He also lost time and ended up living with the Greeks, as a duplicate, almost, of Percy. He has also regained his memories and together he and Percy (as sons of Zeus and Poseidon) plan to reconcile the Romans and the Greeks, having seen the worth in both.

Jason and Piper are dating and they make a very formidable team. Jason is a praetor of New Rome and when Octavian begins his mischief, it will take both Jason and Reyna, together, to undo his damage.

Octavian

Octavian is the son of Apollo, and thus is very good at divination and music. He is power hungry and is always seeking to undermine those in positions of authority. When Jason left, he felt that he was certain to become the next praetor, but then Percy arrived and trumped his succession. This has made him even more cunning and resentful. He wastes no time whipping the legions into a fury when the Argos II unwittingly attacks New Rome.

Octavian does his divination by ripping out the packing from stuffed animals. Most are afraid of him because he is very intense and slightly crazy.

Gaea

Gaea, the Earth Mother, is upset and she wants revenge. In order to do this she needs the blood of two demi-gods, one female and one male. She is not awfully concerned in regards to which demigod she uses, but when she finds Jason, Percy, and Piper within her grasp she cannot resist making the boys fight to the death (of at least one of them). Gaea's overall plan is to continue to release monsters that have been held below the surface and to eradicate all other forms from the planet. She is upset because she is very protective of those of her creation, and feels that she is protecting them by getting rid of those that seek to injure and destroy all that she's made. Many times she tries to convince the others to join her in her mission, but early on in this novel, she's switched tactics and has simply become cruel and bloodthirsty.

Athena

Athena is the goddess of wisdom and military victory (at least to the Greeks). Her Roman aspect, Minerva, was the goddess of poetry and medicine. These two aspects are at war with one another, as they are for all of the gods. She is Annabeth's mother and often attempts to communicate to her clandestinely. When Annabeth feels as if she



is going to fail on her quest, her mother gives her comfort and she manages to think her way free.

Athena is the one that can bring healing to the gods by having her parthenos restored to its former position. However, instead of taking it to Athens, as they had originally planned, they now must take it to Camp Half-blood, where it will restore peace between the camps as well as the gods.

Porphyron

Porphyron wants to wake Gaea and is assisting her in obtaining the blood of two demigods.

Terminus

Terminus is the animated statue that guards Camp Jupiter. Comic in nature, though he doesn't intend to be, he is only a bust, and has no actual arms. So, when he says that he will slap one of the demigods for their impertinence, it is ironic and funny at the same time. He is in control of many weapons at Camp Jupiter, so when war is declared by Octavian he is more than willing and ready to comply.

Arion

This is Hazel's special horse. He is able to run across most surfaces, though he can't fly. He follows the Argo II until they decide to stop and pick him up. He eats gold.

Aphros

When the demigods are thrown from the ship and land underwater, they are taken to the underwater camp of the mer-folk (underwater centaurs). Aphros is one of the camp trainers, though his skills are more along the domestic lines. He speaks of making brownies, and while he's interrogating Leo, pulls out knitting needles and creates a baby's bonnet. However, he offers them a letter of introduction to Tiberinus, the god of the Tiber River, saying that Annabeth will need it when she goes to Rome.

Tiberinus

This is the River god located in Rome. He shows Annabeth the way to the underground cavern where he will find the Mark. He is kind and wishes her good luck. He and his wife, Rhea, are supportive and give her much intel when it comes to how her other friends are faring and what she may face in the caverns of Mithras.



Arachne

Arachne was once a human weaver, but she bragged too much on her abilities and talent and was reduced to a monster spider, doomed to weave her tapestries in private, never to show them to the world. It is this weakness, Arachne's pride, that Annabeth uses against her to rescue the Athena Parthenos. Arachne is the guardian of the Parthenos.

Ephialtes and Otis

These are the two twin giants who hold Nico as bait to lure the other demigods to them. They like to put on theater shows and dress flamboyantly with pointed jester's shoes.



Symbols and Symbolism

Argos II

The Argos II is the ship that Leo constructs to carry them by air or sea on their quests. Because he is very good with all things mechanical, the ship is loaded with 'extras'. These extra abilities by the ship save their lives more than once. The ship provides for all of their needs, especially in the galley, and with protection from attack. It's figurehead, a dragon named, Festus, is also an integral part of the cyber-intelligence of the vessel.

Athena Parthanos

The Athena Parthanos was once a colossus that stood in Athens in the temple dedicated to her. When it was ransacked by the Romans it was stolen and lost to all time. Horrified and humiliated at this desecration to her statue, Athena has continually charged each of her mortal children to avenge her. This is the statue that Annabeth goes to retrieve, not just to avenge her mother, but to bring healing to the Roman and Greek camps, to right an old wrong, and to help bring the gods' different Roman and Greek aspects back into harmony and balance.

fortune cookie

Nemesis is breaking open fortune cookies when Leo and Hazel come upon her. She is taking the good fortunes out, and placing bad fortunes inside. This symbolizes that revenge darkens everything and that those who follow revenge have fortunes that are not good. When Leo names her, her power to influence them is lessened. However, she extracts a promise of help from Leo in exchange for telling them where they can get supplies. Therefore, Leo will be asked to do something in Revenge's name before the story is up.

Katoptris

This is a charmed dagger that gives the bearer the ability to see the future or to find others. Piper owns this dagger and uses it to help find Nico. The Greek name, Katoptris means 'looking glass'.

Pomegranate Seeds

These are the food of last resort for children of Hades. Once the demigod goes into a death trance, they can sustain themselves on the seeds, one day for each seed. This is



what Nico de Angelo eats when he is trapped in the bronze urn by the twins. When the demigods first have a vision of Nico, he has five seeds left.

water

Water is not only the element that is integral to Percy Jackson's character, but it is in, itself, a character as well. At one point Percy defines water as wanting to be free and if given enough time, water overcomes any barrier, hating to be trapped.

Athena's Coin

This is the coin that she gives Annabeth in the subway. Despite trying to throw it away, it will always reappear back in Annabeth's pocket. This is representative of revenge and how it can be passed down from one generation to the next. In the scene where Athena gives it to Annabeth she's directly charged her daughter to avenge her and right the wrongs perpetrated on her by the Romans. Despite Annabeth's attempts to dismiss the idea of revenge, like the coin, the idea keeps coming back to her.

Roman Eagles

Roman Eagles are both REAL eagles, of the giant variety, that work in conjunction with Camp Jupiter, and symbolic type. The Romans use the Eagle as their emblem. Whenever Eagles are spotted nearby the demigods know that Rome is close, is spying on them, or that they haven't much time to act.

The Owl

The Owl is considered to be the representative animal totem for Wisdom and Athena. When it shows up at Fort Sumter it is a clear indication that Athena is helping her daughter. A series of owl emblems further assists Annabeth in the fort and enables her to find the map.

Cornucopia

Legend has it that Hercules battled Achelous over a woman named Deianira and during the struggle Hercules broke off one of his horns. This became the first Cornucopia, horn of plenty. Piper breaks off the other horn from Achelous and uses it to battle Hercules so that she and Jason can leave the island and the ship can pass into the Mediterranean.



Settings

Argo II

While it acts as an object itself, the Argo II is also the setting for much of the action to take place. This is where, for example, Chrysaor attacks the demigods but is defeated when he believes that Dionysus is aboard. This is where many of the demigods have deep conversations, have prophetic nightmares, and sail to and from one adventure to the next.

Camp Jupiter

This is the Roman equivalent of Camp Half-blood, but they are more militaristic. They are ruled by military order and rank systems. Of course, it is clear that it is prone to corruption, as evidenced by Octavian. Camp Jupiter vows revenge after Leo (possessed by a Eliodon) fires on the camp. They determine to march on Camp Half-blood.

Pillars of Hercules

This is the crossing into the Mediterranean that the demigods need to pass through. Unfortunately, it is guarded by none other than Hercules. He guards the entrance and challenges Piper and Jason when they ask if they can pass through. Their adventure and quest on the island results in their being able to pass through, as well as gain a magical cornucopia.

Fort Sumter

This is one of the first places that Annabeth is directed to look for the Mark of Athena. This is where she goes to find the map that would tell her where she could locate the Athena Parthanos. It is located in Charleston, SC.

Mithras' Cavern

Underneath Rome are the Caverns of Mithras, where Annabeth meets the ghosts of the order who will not let her pass. Learning from the mistakes of her fallen brothers and sisters from previous generations, she correctly learns that the ghosts in the cavern fear Mithras and those who are like him.

Arachne's Lair

Arachne has created a lair deep under the city of Rome. She guards the Athena Parthenos and weaves beautiful tapestries in secret.



Themes and Motifs

Friendship

Friendship is one of the core themes that drives all of the novels by Rick Riordan. In this novel, the reader sees friendships tested, strengthened, and created. For example, at the beginning when Percy and Jason find themselves faced with battling some giants, they both are having fun doing it. Percy stops to acknowledge that Jason is just like him and thinks the same way that he does on a lot of things.

The reader sees friendships that have already been established grow stronger, be tested, and reconciliations occur. The reader sees this when Frank and Leo are being held by the fish centaurs and Leo explains to Frank why he and Hazel and been holding hands. They share additional information with one another about their mothers and find out that they have a lot in common.

Additionally, the demigod's friendship is used against them by many of the monsters, kidnapping Nico and forcing the others into a trap, forcing Leo into using his fortune cookie, and causing Percy to go with Annabeth into Tartarus. The reader also sees friendship and kindness having more power over evil, as evidenced in the section where Piper speaks kindly to Achelous when she takes his horn, refusing to give it to Hercules. The reader also sees this when Percy decides NOT to take Chrysaor's gold and to leave it instead for Bacchus. Lastly, it is demonstrated in the Nymphaeum when Percy and Piper channel their positive thoughts and emotions toward the water cannibals to change the water from poison to pure, indicating that kindness and friendship are powerful agents of change.

Overcoming Fear

The theme of overcoming fear is shown throughout the novel, but most noticeably in the second section of the book. Annabeth's character depicts this concept more than the others, although all of them face it to some degree in the course of the novel. Annabeth, however, is tasked with taking on her mother's desire to be avenged, and in doing so must overcome her fear for spiders.

Several times when Annabeth is in Arachne's lair she realizes that the only antidote to fear is to continue to move through it and to allow her mind to reason with her. Her vast intellect is her greatest weapon against the fear that she feels and it allows her to trick Arachne and secure her mother's centuries lost statue. She also loses her fear of failing her mother when she realizes that she is loved by her friends for who she is, not what she has done for any of them. This overriding theme of friendship as a strength and support is one that carries all of them through their individual tests with their own fears.



Identity

Each demigod struggles with who they are and where they fit into the world/worlds that they know. First, they long to fit into the mortal world, and then they try to find a way to fit into the demigod world. Often the two cannot reconcile with one another, as evidenced in the way that they must deal with tourists, structures, and rules.

Each demigod is still operating under the assumption that they need to prove themselves worthy somehow of their divine parent, even Percy, who saved Mount Olympus. Annabeth, especially after her encounter with her mother in the subway is even further determined to gain her mother's love by doing what none of her siblings have been able to do before; return the parthenon to Athens.

Family

The theme of Family is tested and introduced throughout the novel. There are the types of family situations that support and heal, such as Percy's mother, Piper's father, and Frank's grandparents. Each of these examples show parents and family that have supported and nurtured their children, giving them the confidence to love others, too.

Conversely, difficult family situations are also depicted. Leo's family, as well as Hazel's were less than ideal. Leo's Aunt Rosa (who was Gaea the reader later learns) not only blamed him for his mother's death, but turned his whole family against him, which allowed them to easily turn him over to the orphanage. Hazel's mother was prideful and greedy, wanting riches and wealth above and beyond anything else. She was willing to even sacrifice her child's welfare to secure untold treasures for herself. This is why Pluto gave her what she wanted, but at a terrible price.

Lastly, the idea of family is extended to the group that find themselves together on the quest aboard the Argo II. They all listen to one another, take care of each others' illnesses and injuries, as well as cheer the others up when they doubt themselves. They act as surrogate family members and become close to one another as a result. The healing nature of family ties, as well as the strength and courage that it can give is exemplified in this.

Sacrifice

Sacrifice is one of the main themes in this novel. It is exemplified in many sections throughout the storyline, and weaves into and out of each character's tale. This idea of the 'noble sacrifice' is an old theme that recurs in many classic works of literature, with usually the main characters being willing to sacrifice themselves for the betterment of others. This is often used because it establishes a deep emotional punch and allows for the reader to want to protect the protagonist who is willing to give up his or her own life for another's cause.



In each case, there is always someone who is in desperate need from some sort of harsh circumstance or reality, such as the deepening rift between the Greeks and Romans, the disorientation of the gods different aspects, or falling into Tartarus. In this, the reader sees the character of Percy Jackson very willing to lay down his life to follow Annabeth into Tartarus, despite knowing it most likely spells his death. Likewise, the reader sees Leo use the fortune cookie to save Hazel and Frank in the lab, knowing full well that the price for using it was to owe Nemesis something.

The concepts of sacrifice are tied so closely to love that it gives instant explanation to why many of the characters do what they do. Annabeth loves her mother and wants her to be whole and well, again. As a result, she is willing to risk her life to find the statue. Percy risks his life to follow Annabeth into Tartarus, and Percy, Jason, and Piper are willing to drown trying to bring love and happiness back to the water nymphs.

Pride

The theme of Pride is a common thread from one chapter to the next. Each demigod must deal with their own version of it, and all of them realize how if it is allowed to run unchecked and unguided then it can turn a person into something monstrous, as it did Arachne. Likewise, pride keeps Annabeth from asking for help, and for going the quest on her own, when she should have accepted help. Pride shows up several times between Percy and Jason as both face their own versions of their pride causing problems for them with their friends and the quest.

Of all of them, Piper is the one demigod who is not prideful, though she is considered to be extremely beautiful. Perhaps this is because, as Aphrodite's daughter, she is also able to be compassionate and empathetic, kind, and caring. These traits come out just when they need them to, and often she is able save everyone because she has mastered her own pride. When Annabeth realizes this about her own pride, then she is able to move forward with her quest.



Styles

Point of View

The narrative is written from Seven distinct points of view, one for each of the demigods who go on this quest. Each viewpoint emerges as a specific chapter. At the beginning of the story, most of the points of view rest with Percy and Annabeth, for approximately the first third of the novel. This is appropriate given the themes of 'friendship' and the ending where both Percy and Annabeth end up falling into Tartarus together.

The second and third portions of the novel introduce the points of view of the other characters. At times the narrator allows the reader to be inside the head of the character, showing how each character is feeling in regards to a situation, or revealing memories that are a large portion of that particular character's motivation. This is particularly evident in the characters of Leo and Hazel.

Whether focused on Percy's point of view, or Hazel's, Frank's, or Leo's each narrative is focused on the themes of friendship, sacrifice, identity, overcoming fear, pride, and family. The choice of voice and tense lends a sense of immediacy to the action, placing the reader into the action and allowing for a stronger sense of connection with the characters and their decisions. This is particularly poignant as each character faces and overcomes their fears, realizes more about who they are, and discover how powerful love for others can truly be.

Language and Meaning

Rick Riordan is a master of language as it pertains to his intended audience, (young adults). He manages this in that he employs slang terminology, some invented terminology, and often plays with the combination of words, such as 'butt kicking ninjas'. His way of describing something in terms that modern day teens will understand lends to the credibility and accessibility of this text.

The reader sees this 'playfulness', for example, when Bacchus appears and ridicules the twin giants for using leopards for their spectacle, saying, "Killing demigods is one thing, but using leopards for your spectacle? That's over the line." The characterization of the twin giants, two bumbling brothers who are more interested in being famous than anything else lends to the hilarity of the moment, and takes some of the intensity away from the actual gruesome nature of the scene (death of the demigods).

Structure

The book's structure consists of 52 chapters, each about 10 pages long, and offering seven distinct narratives throughout the novel. It is defined and shaped by the perspectives of the demigods as they work toward the completion of their quest. At first,

the novel presents the story in a linear fashion, but later, through the use of magical devices, memories, and shared moments with others, the reader learns more about the backstories of many of the heroes.

This revelation of backstories also lends itself to thematic development. In the first third of the novel, it would seem that the theme of family and friends takes precedence, whereas in the mid-section the themes that arise to center stage are those of overcoming fear, and identity. The last portion of the novel deals with the themes, primarily, of sacrifice, and pride.

Examples of family and friends is shown when the reader learns about the various demigods' parents and relationships. The demigods also begin to create the type of close friendship that almost becomes a sort of family in and of itself. This is shown to keep them strong throughout all of the trials that they face throughout the novel.

Chapters are denoted using Roman Numerals to keep in line with the notion that they are now including and dealing with Romans in this book.



Quotes

We call it the Prophecy of Seven. Octavian, you have it committed to memory?
-- Reyna (chapter 3 paragraph Page 21)

Importance: This is significant because it kicks off the entire novel sequence of events. Because of what is written here, seven demigods from both camps will be selected to go on the quest.

Maybe," Percy ventured, "you should bring our other friends here. You know, spectacular deaths... the more the merrier, right?
-- Percy (chapter 45 paragraph Page 510)

Importance: This shows Percy's ability under pressure. He's trying to buy time for himself and his friends while in the twin giant's theater, where they rescue Nico.

Annabeth knew that expression. She saw it every time she looked in a mirror.
-- Narrator (chapter 2 paragraph Page 12)

Importance: This line is quite important because it shows that Annabeth sees herself in Reyna and finds that she both likes, respects, and understands her because of it.

You're just a pawn on the chessboard, Leo Valdez.
-- Nemesis (chapter 6 paragraph Page 70)

Importance: This quote is a chilling precursor to a revelation that Leo learns about his birth and his destiny. He finds out that Gaea had plans for him since before his conception. He feels as if he's been created to be a pawn and it makes him more determined to be his own person, instead.

Wisdom's daughter walks alone." That didn't just mean without other people, Annabeth realized. It meant without any special powers.
-- Annabeth (chapter 33 paragraph Page 403)

Importance: This is one of the lines of the prophecy that began the novel. For a good deal of the novel Annabeth thinks it means that she's to do this part of the quest on her own. However, at this point in the novel, she realizes that it means she's to solve her problems without relying on special powers like flying or causing fire, but to just use her intellect. She also realizes that it means she could have relied on the help of her friends.

Sorry," she said. "It's just... there's so much underground here, so many layers, it's overwhelming.
-- Hazel (chapter 37 paragraph Page 435)

Importance: Hazel says this as they enter the underground cavern below Rome. She



insists on going down there first, being a daughter of Pluto. However, she finds it disorienting because there are so many layers of history on top of one another.

Good luck is a sham. True success requires sacrifice.

-- Nemesis/Leo (chapter 37 paragraph Page 444)

Importance: Nemesis first tells Leo this when they meet, and she's angry about the fortune cookies. Later, Leo recalls this statement and realizes that she means that success always comes with a price and it is those who are willing to pay that price that succeed.

Sacrificing yourself to save your family seemed like a noble thing— a very doglike thing to do.

-- Piper (chapter 43 paragraph Page 490)

Importance: Piper references a story that her father told her when she was a child. The main theme of the story is sacrifice, and it finally makes sense to her in this statement.

Annabeth knew something about being prideful. It was her fatal flaw as well. She often had to remind herself that she couldn't do everything alone. She wasn't always the best person for every job. Sometimes she got tunnel vision and forgot about what other people needed, even Percy.

-- Annabeth (chapter 49 paragraph Page 540)

Importance: This is a very important revelation to Annabeth as she faces her last hurdle in Arachne's lair. After watching Arachne and speaking with her, Annabeth realizes the terrible consequences of letting pride run away with a person.

But Arachne's skill wasn't the point. She had been punished for being prideful and rude. No matter how amazing you were, you couldn't go around insulting the gods. The Olympians were a reminder that there was always someone better than you, so you shouldn't get a big head.

-- Annabeth (chapter 50 paragraph Page 552)

Importance: This also furthers the theme of keeping pride in check, that it can be a destructive force if not used respectfully and mindfully.

We're staying together," he promised. "You're not getting away from me. Never again.

-- Percy (chapter 51 paragraph Page 566)

Importance: This is what Percy says to Annabeth as they are dangling over the pit of Tartarus. All of a sudden he recalls a line from the prophecy that talks about 'a very hard fall'. This makes him decide to go with her.

It's okay," he said. "We're together." He didn't say you're okay, or we're alive. After all they'd been through over the last year, he knew that the most important thing was that they were together. She loved him for saying that.



-- Percy/narrator (chapter 51 paragraph Page 560)

Importance: This is the exact point where Percy knows that he's going to go to Tartarus with Annabeth and she realizes that there's no talking him out of it, and that she truly loves him.