

# **The Titan's Curse Study Guide**

## **The Titan's Curse by Rick Riordan**

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## Plot Summary

Titan's curse, book three of *The Heroes of Olympus* by Rick Riordan, begins with Percy's mother driving him and fellow demigod campers Annabeth and Thalia towards the military school, Westover Hall. The group is responding to a distress call from Percy's best friend, the satyr Grover. Grover had been sent to the school to recruit more demigods for Camp Half-Blood, as Luke had been trying to steal them away to join his and Kronos's Titan army. Thalia uses her abilities to charm the school staff, letting the group blend in and sneak into a school dance. There, they reunite with Grover who identifies two of the students, Bianca and Nico di Angela as being demigods. Before they can get away, the group is separated and Percy is attacked by the Principal, Dr. Thorn, who is in fact a monstrous Manticore.

Percy tries to fight him and protect the siblings, but Dr. Thorn is too powerful. He tells Percy that he will be taking them to see someone known as the General. Before he can take the group away, several women show up with the goddess Artemis, rescuing Percy and the others. During the rescue however, Annabeth is thrown over the mountain along with the Manticore. The women are a group known as the hunters. Artemis only accepts young females to join her in the hunt because they haven't been distracted by other things in life, namely boys. Her second in command, Zoe, clashes with Thalia. Artemis recruits Bianca to join the hunters, explaining how if she joins she will be made immortal and will defend the world from monstrous threats. Bianca accepts, which angers Percy since he feels she's giving up on her younger brother, Nico.

When Artemis hears about the General she tells Percy and the others that she needs to hunt the creature alone. She sends the hunters to Camp Half-Blood with Percy's group. Once there, the camp officials declare a game of Capture the Flag will take place, as per tradition when the hunters arrive. Thalia and Percy co-captain the Camp Half-Blood team, who due to Percy, ultimately end up losing to the hunters. After the game, the Oracle shows up and gives a prophecy, saying that the hunters and campers need to work together and go on a quest to stop the General, but the prophecy also predicts that two of the five that must go will not survive.

It is decided that Zoe, Thalia, Bianca, Grover, and a girl named Phoebe will go on the quest. Percy is dejected, especially when he has a nightmare about Annabeth being brought before Luke. The next day he's approached by the Pegasus Blackjack, who needs his help to free a part-cow, part-serpent creature that has gotten entangled in a net. Percy frees the creature, and on his way back to the camp finds Nico spying on the hunters as they get ready to leave. Percy finds out that Phoebe is unable to go on the quest, and that Zoe has been having her own visions so she's leading the group out sooner than expected.

Percy follows the group on his Pegasus. He follows them to Washington, but before he reconvenes with them he spots Dr. Thorn stalking the group. Percy follows him into a meeting with his rival Luke as well as the General. The General creates skeletal monsters that camouflage themselves as humans, sending them after the group. He



intends to use an item that has Thalia's scent on it as he wants her alive, but Percy steals it away, causing the skeletons to catch his scent instead.

Percy escapes the building and meets up with Thalia and the others. Together, they fight off a bronze lion, with Percy outsmarting the creature. Zoe rewards him with the mane of the lion, which acts as a protective jacket. With the aid of the god Apollo they begin their journey to San Francisco, where they know they can find Annabeth and Artemis, who was captured by the General. Apollo tells them of a guide who can help them in San Francisco. Along the way, Grover finds evidence of the long lost nature god, Pan. This fascinates Grover as it was his life quest to find the missing god.

On their journey, Percy gets the chance to speak with the goddess Aphrodite. She tells him that she arranged for the fifth hunter to get sick so Percy could take her place. She supports Percy because of the love that he shares for Annabeth. She warns him that they will be coming upon a junkyard soon and they shouldn't take anything from it. When they arrive, Bianca ends up taking a statue she intends to give to Nico. This causes a giant bronze guardian to try and stop the group. Feeling responsible, Bianca brings the creature down, but has to sacrifice herself in the process.

The group gets to San Francisco and follow up on the lead from Apollo. They learn that Luke and the General are on the top of a mountain where the hunters live. Percy encounters the serpent creature he had saved earlier, and the others recognize it as being a mystical creature, the Ophiotaurus. In the past, the Ophiotaurus could be sacrificed in order to get the power to destroy the gods. Grover goes into the sea to lead the creature to safety while the others continue to rescue Annabeth and Artemis.

Percy gets help from Annabeth's father who recently moved to the area. He gives them a vehicle to take up to the mountain. They get to the garden where the huntresses are, but they refuse the group passage, as they don't recognize Zoe and the others. Zoe wakes up a sleeping dragon in the garden, using the distraction so they can get up to the top of the mountain. Once there, they find that Artemis was being used to take Atlas's place, holding up the giant cavern roof. The General is revealed to be Atlas himself, as well as Zoe's father. Atlas and Luke try to get Thalia to summon the Ophiotaurus, but she refuses and says she will never work alongside the Titans.

Percy and the others get into a fight with Atlas. Percy frees Artemis, taking her place to hold up the cavern roof. Zoe gets injured in the fight, but Artemis manages to outsmart Atlas and gets him to swap places with Percy, so he is once again holding up the sky. Thalia throws Luke off of the mountain. The group gets swarmed by an army of monsters, but Annabeth's father shows up to save them. Artemis tries to treat Zoe, but her injuries are too great and she passes away. Afterwards, Artemis takes them to Olympus to decide what to do about the Titan threat.

The gods agree that they are going to fight the Titans. They are worried about Percy and Thalia though, as a prophecy from the earlier books say that one of them will betray the gods when they turn 16. Thalia is closest to turning 16, so she pledges herself to Artemis and becomes a hunter, effectively keeping her at the age of 15 forever. While



they are still worried about Percy, he's far enough away from 16 that they are willing to let it slide. Percy and the others return to the Camp where Percy has to tell Nico about Bianca dying. During the conversations they are attacked by the skeletal creatures that Atlas created before. Nico displays his power and drives the creature away; causing Percy to realize that he is a son of Hades, meaning he is also a possible applicant for the prophecy. Nico runs off, blaming Percy for the death of Bianca. The book ends with Grover telling Percy that he knows where Pan is and they have to go and get him.



# Chapter 1

## Summary

The book opens with Percy's mother driving him, Annabeth, and Thalia towards an old castle that Percy identifies as Westover Hall, a military school. Percy reveals that he and the two girls are responding to some sort of distress call from his best friend, Grover. Percy and the others have come equipped with a number of weapons that they have kept hidden. The group heads into the school, running into two teachers who immediately start to question them. Thalia snaps her fingers and uses a power she calls the mist to magically charm one of the teachers into believing that they are students there. Percy is discouraged that Chiron never taught him this ability.

Grover arrives and pulls the group away from the teachers and into a dance going on at the gym. He reveals that he was sent to the school to look for new demigods, as Camp Half-Blood has been steadily losing them and needs the recruits. He tells the group that he has spotted a brother and sister he believes to be demigods, Bianca and Nico di Angelo. He needs their help because there's a monster hunting the siblings, disguised as the principle Dr. Thorn.

The group pairs off to dance, blending into the crowd. Percy and Annabeth briefly discuss what her school life has been. She tells him that it is going well, but her father is planning on moving to San Francisco for work, a place that Annabeth says she cannot follow but Percy is unsure why. Percy realizes that Dr. Thorn and the siblings have gone missing. They get separated in their attempts to find the siblings. Percy finds them, but gets attacked and poisoned by the principal, who reveals himself as a Manticore.

## Analysis

In this chapter the reader sees that Percy has reunited with his mother and has, presumably, been having a good time visiting her. She has involved herself, again, with Percy and the other children's problems, showing that she is more than ready to stand by her son, and his friends. It is obvious that she knows their various backgrounds and in some ways has been trying to give them as 'normal' a homelife as possible, though they haven't been staying for very long when they must go and assist Grover. What this shows the reader is that even though these heroes have special abilities and capabilities, they are still very much human, too. They still need to know that they have someone who believes in them.

This book also sees Grover become more prominent once more. He has been on a quest to locate Pan, the nature god, but has postponed it because Luke has been locating and recruiting unclaimed demigods to Kronos's cause. Grover had been tasked with countering Luke's efforts by finding and protecting the young demigods. Here, the reader sees Grover's ability to be a 'team' player in that he has willingly postponed his



search for the great Pan. He understands the importance of the quest, and moreover, the reader can see the still-close bonds that he shares with Percy. Percy is the first person he calls on when he needs help.

Fighting the Manticore is the least of Percy's problems as he and Annabeth reunite, but it is awkward at best. She's keeping things from him and he can tell that she is. However, he also knows better than to press her on such matters. This is something that will weigh on his mind throughout the novel, especially when she is taken in later chapters.

## **Discussion Question 1**

How does Sally Jackson react when Percy tells her that they need to go to Westover Hall?

## **Discussion Question 2**

What could Annabeth's motives be for not telling Percy everything?

## **Discussion Question 3**

Why suggests that Grover considers Percy to be his best friend?

## **Vocabulary**

blizzard, churning, burrow, daggers, swirl, intercept, clean-shaven, wispy, flared, rustle





## Chapter 2

### Summary

Percy is unable to fight off the Manticore, and he and the di Angela siblings get taken captive. Thorn leads them away from the school and into the woods. He explains that something called the Great Stirring has been waking up powerful monsters such as himself. He tells Percy that he intends to take him and the siblings to see someone known as the General. While this is going on, Percy uses his empathetic bond with Grover to call for help. Percy stalls Thorn and keeps him talking, giving Grover and his friends the chance to show up and rescue him.

The three manage to save Percy and the siblings, but before they can defeat the Manticore his backup arrives in the form of an attack helicopter. The group doesn't know what to do, but before Thorn and his backup can act, a group of girls known as the Hunters show up from the woods and start to drive the Manticore back. Annabeth leaps onto its back, falling into the nearby water with the monster. The hunters use their magic to dismiss the helicopter, with the leader identifying herself to Percy as Artemis, Goddess of the hunt.

### Analysis

In this chapter the theme of friendship is shown both literally and symbolically through Percy's psychic bond with Grover. After he's been stung by Dr. Thorn, the Manticore's, stinger, he realizes that he is in a terrible situation. Since Grover had reached out to him in this way once before, Percy hopes that it works both ways. So, in a symbolic sense, the author is telling the reader that friendship is a two way street, and for a close friendship to exist, it must give as much as it must receive.

Percy learns that he is wanted by someone named The General, and this is the reason that Dr. Thorn does not kill him outright. The fact that the author gives this villain the name and title, The General, is interesting to note. A General is not the one completely in charge, but is high enough up the chain of command to determine outcomes. In order for this person to truly be a general for Kronos, he has to be a god, himself. But which one, Percy does not know.

During this time he is also injured, but his chief concern is protecting the innocents, namely Bianca and Nico. He considers jumping into the ocean nearby and saving them, but Dr. Thorn puts that attempt to rest when he assures Percy that he would kill him before he was able to hit the water, despite his employer wanting Percy alive. Luckily, Grover has heard Percy's call and comes to give them assistance. Artemis's arrival with her famed Hunters signals an end to the chapter and opens up new possibilities for the quest.



## **Discussion Question 1**

How is the theme of friendship introduced in this chapter?

## **Discussion Question 2**

Why does the Manticore say he and others like him have awakened?

## **Discussion Question 3**

What is Luke's ulterior motive in trying to find demigods before Camp Half-blood?

## **Vocabulary**

figurines, destruction, volley, wielding, leathery, impact, entangling, swatted, intercepted, dodged



# Chapter 3

## Summary

The hunters take Percy and the others into the camp. Thalia initially clashes with one of the hunters, Zoe, but Percy isn't sure why. Artemis has a private conversation with Bianca before bringing the others in. Percy explains everything about the Manticore, while Artemis explains about the Hunters. They are a group of immortal females that Artemis recruits at a young age, before they've had the chance to become distracted with other things in their lives outside of the hunt, namely boys. When Percy tells her about The General, Artemis gets afraid and says that he is a creature she must hunt alone. Bianca reveals she was asked to join the hunt, and she pledges herself to Artemis much to Percy's dismay. Artemis tells Percy she will summon her brother, Apollo, to take him and the others back to Camp Half-Blood.

## Analysis

In this chapter the key theme that threads its way through is that of gender and bias. Artemis declares that only young females who have not yet been corrupted by their feelings for boys can join her famous Hunters. They are responsible for hunting down monsters when they appear on the planet. Nico, still very young, thinks that all of this news is awesome, but Bianca, his older sister begins to grasp the gravity of their situation. Thalia seems to resent Zoe, Artemis's second in command. Later, the reader learns that what Thalia has feared has happened: the Hunters have recruited Bianca into their group. She will forever remain the age she is, and she will battle monsters for the rest of her life. Percy is angered at this because he can see the implications that this will hold for Bianca's little brother, Nico.

## Discussion Question 1

Why does Artemis like to recruit her Hunters from among young girls?

## Discussion Question 2

What indicates that Nico doesn't grasp the full import of the situation and who he is?

## Discussion Question 3

Compare Percy's reaction to Artemis to Thalia's reaction.

## Vocabulary

knapsacks, oversee, clenched, looming, winced, salve, holographic, brazier, gazelle, astray



# Chapter 4

## Summary

Apollo shows up and it becomes clear that he and Artemis have a tense relationship. He's perfectly willing to take Percy and the others to the Camp, including the hunters. Thalia warns Percy that the hunters don't have the best history at the Camp, but they are always welcome there. Percy notices that Bianca seems to be acting coldly towards Nico, and thinks she's being selfish for leaving her brother behind. Apollo lets Thalia drive to the Camp which ends up being a very bumpy journey, but they manage to get there in one piece.

## Analysis

The theme of family is demonstrated in this chapter by the tense relationship between Artemis and Apollo, whom she's called to safely escort the demigods to their home. Likewise, the reader sees the idea of family as Bianca tells Nico that she is leaving him to join the Hunters. Both of these examples show family members interacting under less than ideal situations, and still accepting the other's wishes, even if they don't agree with them. Apollo is Thalia's half-sibling and he allows her to drive the car back to Camp Half-blood, which doesn't make Thalia happy at all. Later, the reader will learn that this was done on purpose because of Thalia's mortal parent's death in a car accident.

## Discussion Question 1

What is Percy's main concern about Bianca joining the Hunters?

## Discussion Question 2

What could Apollo's motives be in forcing Thalia to drive the car back to Camp Half-Blood?

## Discussion Question 3

Why might the Hunters not be the most welcome at Camp Half-blood?

## Vocabulary

intensified, gesture, haiku, offended, recoiled, knelt, jangling, astronomy, philosophy, chariot



# Chapter 5

## Summary

Percy goes to talk to Chiron and the camp director, Mr. D. He tells them everything that happened, nearly getting into a fight when he sees how callous Mr. D is being when it comes to Annabeth being gone. When he tells them about the hunters, Chiron instructs him to tell the other campers that they will have an honorary game of capture the flag, as is tradition when the hunters are there. The camp is mostly empty since it is winter, so only a few full year students are around. Thalia runs into Percy and tells him that she tried to find her mortal mother after being gone for years, but she had passed away in a car accident. Percy figures that's why she had such a tough time driving Apollo's vehicle.

Percy goes to his cabin and finds that his father had gifted him with a special fountain. The bottom is filled with coins, which Percy uses to send a message to his half-brother, Tyson. He lies to Tyson about what happened to Annabeth and tries to ask about their father, but Tyson has to get back to work. He says that they're working overtime to prepare weapons to battle against Luke and the Titan's army. Percy goes to sleep and has a vision of Annabeth. In it, she encounters their long time enemy, Luke, who appears to be gravely injured. She goes to help him, but tons of rock fall on both of them. Miraculously, Annabeth is able to hold the rocks above them. She asks Luke for help, but he just runs away.

## Analysis

Percy is featured prominently in this chapter as he interacts with all of the new people that come into Camp Half-blood. The Hunters, minus Artemis, have a cabin at the camp, but it is clear that they don't like to use it because it is co-ed (which is hilarious since there are NO male hunters....ever). Percy learns more about the Hunters, in particular that they view men as a lesser species whose involvement in just about everything causes things to become corrupt. Percy is confused by this prejudice, but is more worried about Annabeth. He does have the comfort of knowing that she is not dead; Artemis told him that much.

The fountain that Poseidon leaves as a gift to Percy is notable in that it represents a never-ending renewal of water and, therefore, is a symbol of Poseidon's love for his son. Also in the bottom of the fountain are many drachmas, which could be used for communication. This is the god's version of a cell phone with an unlimited calling plan. This underscores and demonstrates the theme of family support, in that Poseidon is giving him the ability to reach out and contact anyone in the mythological world, anytime he needs to.



Most disturbing to Percy is the dream he has about Annabeth. He feels responsible for Annabeth's demise, since Thalia pointed out to him that if he'd just waited for her and attacked the Manticore together as a team, Annabeth wouldn't have had to take the actions that she did. This demonstrates the theme of acting responsibly, which is a major theme in the novel. Whenever characters don't act responsibly, doing the right thing, bad things inevitably follow. This act of sacrifice by Annabeth is not the last time this theme will be introduced by this character, as she is asked to do this several more times throughout the novel.

## **Discussion Question 1**

Why does Percy feel responsible for Annabeth's situation?

## **Discussion Question 2**

What is the ramification and symbolism tied to Poseidon's fountain?

## **Discussion Question 3**

What would lead Artemis to believe what she does about males?

## **Vocabulary**

imprisoned, mummified, dwelt, shouldered, scowled, stoking, forge, nymphs, rival, parlor



# Chapter 6

## Summary

Percy immediately tells Grover about the dream that he had regarding Annabeth. Grover tells him that Zoe also had a dream that night that Artemis had been lost. The hunters wanted to leave the camp immediately to try and find Artemis, but Chiron wouldn't allow it. Later that day, Percy sneaks into the attic to go and talk with the Oracle, wanting to find out how to find Annabeth. She doesn't respond though and Percy gives up, joining Thalia for the game of capture the flag against the hunters. The hunters end up winning, with Thalia blaming Percy for their loss.

The two start to fight, but are interrupted by the sudden appearance of the Oracle, who has never left the attic before. She gives a rather grim prophecy about the campers and hunters working together to rescue a chained goddess, but also predicting several of their deaths.

## Analysis

This chapter is pivotal for a few reasons. First, it shows that there is no true friendship or respect between the Hunters and the demigods living in Camp Half-blood. In fact, the Hunters are only there because they were told to come here by Artemis. When they receive the dream showing that Artemis has been lost, Zoe is determined to leave. It is only through Chiron's insistence that they are made to remain. This makes relations even more tense between the two groups.

Secondly, there is the appearance of the Oracle. A mummified body with a prophetic spirit trapped inside of it, the Oracle lives in the attic above Chiron's cabin. It is interesting to note that Percy goes to see her out of a desperate attempt to find out more information about Annabeth, but he is turned away. Then, a short while later, in an unprecedented move, the Oracle leaves the attic to come out and give a prophecy. It gives them hope, but it is also laced with dire warnings, warnings that state several of those who go on the quest will not return alive. This serves as the catalyst for moving the plot along, giving them a good reason to leave the camp, and it also gives them a place to start looking.

## Discussion Question 1

Why does Zoe hate living at Camp Half-blood, and why did she come there in the first place?





## Discussion Question 2

What could have been so important to make the Oracle come out of the attic?

## Discussion Question 3

What lets the reader know that the Oracle is very old?

## Vocabulary

grimaced, lout, scythe, abyss, javelin



# Chapter 7

## Summary

Percy and Grover bring the Oracle back to the attic. While there, Grover confesses to Percy that he hopes the nature god, Pan, might be returning because of the Great Stirring. It had been his life quest to find Pan, who had been missing for 2,000 years. Later that night, everyone gathers to discuss the prophecy. It is decided that three of the hunters will go on a quest along with two of the campers. Zoe nominates herself, Bianca, and another hunter named Phoebe. Grover and Thalia decide to go on the campers side, much to the chagrin of Percy who wanted to attend.

Percy sends an Iris message to his mother, surprised to see that she is studying with another man. The two seem to be having a good time. He goes to sleep and has a continuation of his previous dream. Annabeth is struggling to hold the rocks up when Luke returns with an unseen monster referred to as the General. Artemis is with them as well, and she swaps places with Annabeth. The General orders Luke to kill Annabeth, but he hesitates and then argues that she might be useful alive. Percy decides to go, taking Annabeth's invisibility hat with him as he feels he won't be back to his cabin for some time. Percy is awoken by the Pegasus, Blackjack showing up at his door. He tells Percy that the Hippocampi needed his help with matters relating to the sea.

## Analysis

The idea of family support is demonstrated in this chapter by Percy's interaction with his mother. When he contacts her using his fountain, he sees his mother with a man. They look happy. Percy manages to get her alone and explains the situation. She encourages him to do what he thinks is right, pushing for him to rescue Annabeth. Percy is surprised by this, and is unsure of what to do. Percy, in return, acts supportive when he sees that his mother has become interested in this new man, Paul. Even though he has reservations about him being part of their family, he pushes his mother to do what makes her happy. Both characters ultimately act with the other's best interest at heart.

Percy's dreams serve to give the reader, and the Camp, information crucial to determining a course of action. In this chapter Percy realizes that both Annabeth and Artemis are alive, but that they are being put through some terrible trials; trials that they may not live through. He is also contending with the notion that the big thing that Annabeth didn't want to tell him at Westover Hall was that she was considering joining Artemis's Hunters. Earlier, Grover had found a brochure for the Hunters. Percy is hurt because he loves her and if Annabeth joins the Hunters, then they will not be allowed to have a relationship.



## Discussion Question 1

Why did Zoe most likely choose Grover and Thalia to accompany the Hunters on the rescue mission?

## Discussion Question 2

How does Percy's mother show her support when he tells her about Annabeth?

## Discussion Question 3

From what the reader knows about Annabeth's background and abilities, what might make her want to join the Hunters?

## Vocabulary

distracted, cluttered, taxidermy, shriveled, winced



# Chapter 8

## Summary

Blackjack takes Percy out to the sea where he finds a strange serpentine creature trapped in a fishers net. He manages to get the creature free much to the delight of the Hippocampi. Percy starts to return to his cabin, but stops when he sees Nico spying on the hunters. He uses Annabeth's cap to get closer and listen in. Phoebe had gotten sick from a prank the Ares campers played on her, so she is unable to go on the quest. Bianca mentions that Zoe had another vision like Percy, but she doesn't go into details about what she saw. Zoe decides that they need to leave immediately.

Nico starts to go after them, but Percy stops him. He tells Nico that he's too young and would likely be one of the prophesized deaths. Nico insists that he has to go because his sister is going on the quest. Instead of him going, Percy promises to go in his place. He sets off after them, with Blackjack arriving promising to help Percy travel on his quest.

## Analysis

This short chapter sets the tone and the urgency for the heroes going to rescue and assist Annabeth and Artemis. While Percy doesn't get all of the details, it becomes plain that Zoe's latest dream has her frightened enough to want to leave right away. The problem with that, Percy learns, is that Phoebe has become ill and can't accompany them. Percy volunteers to go, though he knows it won't make Zoe happy at all. Still, his focus is on helping Annabeth and so he's willing to put up with Zoe's abrasive behavior.

Interestingly, this chapter shows a very young Nico peering through a hole in the cabin's walls at the Hunters as they discuss their early departure. He is determined to join them since his sister is going, too. Percy tells him that he is too young to go, but what is notable here, is the fact that Nico is looking in from the outside. This is a blatant act of foreshadowing for the entire novel series, as Nico always feels like an outsider, never quite fitting in.

## Discussion Question 1

What could have made Zoe decide to move up their departure date?

## Discussion Question 2

What do Nico's actions seem to suggest about him and how he feels about himself?



## Discussion Question 3

Why does Blackjack most likely offer to assist Percy on this mission?

## Vocabulary

presence, dust motes, corpse, souvenirs, assumed, stashed, gruesomely



# Chapter 9

## Summary

Percy follows the van that Zoe and the others took. While following them, Mr. D shows up and entangles Percy and his mount in vines. He scolds Percy for being a hero, talking about another son of Poseidon that had claimed to be a hero, only to abandon the woman that he loved. Mr. D goes on to say that heroes only care about themselves and their quests. He lets Percy go, remarking that he is just like the other heroes and only cares about his own glory.

Percy gets closer and spies on the group. Grover had cast a tracking spell, which led them not to the west as expected, but towards Washington. Percy continues to follow them; dismissing Blackjack once they go to the Smithsonian. Before he can follow them, Percy spots Dr. Thorn going into a different museum. Using his invisibility cap, he follows and finds Dr. Thorn meeting with Luke, the General, and a mixture of mortal and monstrous minions. Percy notes that Luke looks pale and sickly.

The General chastises Dr. Thorn for his earlier failures. He conjures a group of a dozen skeletal creatures who take on a somewhat humanoid appearance. Dr. Thorn mentions Zoe's name, which angers the General, but again, Percy isn't sure why. The General brings out a scarf that has Thalia's scent on it, intending for the creatures to go and capture her. Percy intervenes, grabbing the scarf and making a dash out of the museum. On his way out, one of the creature's grabs his sleeve and gets his scent, starting to pursue him instead.

## Analysis

The interaction between Mr. D and Percy is telling for a few reasons. First, it shows how bitter Mr. D has been with past demigods and how other demigods have proven to be less than 'godly' in their actions. Secondly, it illustrates just how different Percy is from many of the other demigods who had similar circumstances. The reader is forced to compare the basic decency of Percy to the other heroes that have gone before him, who were chasing such things as personal glory. Compared to the lives of his friends, it is apparent that Percy doesn't understand how anyone could choose fame over another person's life.

When Percy spies on Luke, the General, and Dr. Thorn, Percy can tell that Luke does not look well. This is the author indicating that evil, or choosing to be evil or irresponsible, bitter, and hateful, is not healthy, and that it can start to eat a person up from the inside. In comparison, Percy willingly sacrifices his own safety by taking the scarf with Thalia's scent on it and making them come after him instead. Here, the theme of sacrifice is hinted at.



## **Discussion Question 1**

Why is Mr. D so upset with Percy?

## **Discussion Question 2**

What can the reader tell from the interactions between Dr. Thorn, The General, and Luke?

## **Discussion Question 3**

Why is Luke looking so ill?

## **Vocabulary**

thermal, exasperation, ungrateful, scullion, skeptically



# Chapter 10

## Summary

Percy ends up running right into Thalia. The group is surprised and angered to see him. Zoe insists that he should leave, but their argument is interrupted by the appearance of a metallic lion. The group springs into action. Grover uses a song of confusion to distract the mortals, while the others try to bring the creature down. None of their weapons can penetrate the metallic hide though. Percy spots a vulnerability, the inside of the lion's mouth. He rushes to the gift shop and grabs a bunch of food, using it to distract the lion and get its mouth to remain open. The group brings the creature down, and Zoe accepts Percy as part of the quest, even letting him take the metallic hide of the creature.

## Analysis

This chapter continues with the theme of gender bias and equality. In this chapter, Zoe's perception of males is changed in that she sees Percy ready to commit himself to something that does not directly benefit him. As a reward she gives him the lion's mane, which has protective properties and she gladly welcomes him into their group. This is not to say that she truly has changed her mind about males, in general, but that now, at least, she's acknowledging that there may be some exceptions to the rule. In the previous chapter, Mr. D has hinted that Zoe has had a tragic past in regards to men and her treatment by some man in her life. Mr. D would not elaborate, but did go on to warn Percy that at least two people were going to die on this quest. Percy hopes that he's wrong.

## Discussion Question 1

What role does Grover play when the fight erupts?

## Discussion Question 2

As a result of the battle, what does Zoe now think of Percy?

## Discussion Question 3

What initiative and creativity in battle does Percy show when the lion first shows up?



## Vocabulary

audio, yelped, conceited, bounded, cadence, frantic, raked



# Chapter 11

## Summary

Percy decides that the group needs to get rid of the van that they were previously travelling in since the General could easily identify it. As the group is deciding what to do, they notice a helicopter is flying towards them, identical to the one from the start of the book. The group flees into a subway, which Bianca notes hadn't been there the last time she was in Washington. They travel the rails and eventually run into a drifter, who guides them towards a train filled with expensive cars.

After pointing out that they would have to fight Luke, Thalia tells Percy to get out. He runs into the drifter again, who reveals himself to be Apollo. The gods have strict rules about helping mortals, but Apollo was willing to risk it because he wants them to find his sister. He says he can't sense Artemis, but recommends they go to Nereus in San Francisco. Percy also finds out the reason that demigods don't like to go to San Francisco is because it is a gathering spot for monsters.

Percy goes to sleep and has a dream that he is an ancient warrior, battling a creature called Ladon. He is given a special blade, Anaklusmos, to battle it. Before he can see the results of the battle though he is jolted awake by Grover.

## Analysis

In an interesting statement, Zoe notes that often human beings can be more horrible than monsters. She says this in regards to mercenaries who've chosen to align themselves with The General in order to make money. Zoe is an interesting character in that she reinforces the idea that many of the demigods and magical creatures have lived for centuries. The way in which the author has Zoe speak, as if she were still living in 12th century England, adds to this notion and gives her a type of wisdom that only comes from having lived for so long, observing mankind.

Percy talks with Thalia for a bit, finding out that her and Zoe's apparent hatred for each other comes from Thalia rejecting an offer to join the Hunters. She refused because at the time it meant giving up on Luke, which she refused to do.

The theme of family support is demonstrated when 'the drifter' turns out to be Apollo, who is worried about his sister, Artemis. He is willing to break the rules and help the demigods because he is concerned for his sister, and he loves her. This shows and reinforces the theme that family, despite their differences, can be a strong supporter and help whenever one of the members needs it.



## **Discussion Question 1**

What is Zoe's attitude toward some human beings?

## **Discussion Question 2**

How is the theme of family support illustrated in this chapter?

## **Discussion Question 3**

How does the author develop Zoe's character and make her believable?

## **Vocabulary**

pursuit, faltered, pathetic, morosely, lingers



# Chapter 12

## Summary

The group ends up in a small mountain town in New Mexico. Percy and Bianca briefly talk while the others get supplies. She explains that she and Nico never had any mortal parents and most of their childhood was a blur. She says she joined the Hunters because she wanted to have a life of her own, and because she knew there would be people like Percy at the camp to protect him. She also thanks Percy for trying to save the two of them from Dr. Thorn when they first met.

The group uses the downtime to get some food, but end up being attacked by the skeletal monsters that the General conjured up. Grover starts acting strangely during the battle, muttering about the power of the wild. The skeletons have an advantage over the group, but a giant boar crashes through the woods and chases them away. Percy and Thalia manage to subdue the boar after crashing down part of the mountain, where Percy learns that Thalia has a fear of heights. Grover tells them that they can travel on the boar to San Francisco, saying that he was a blessing from the wild. Thalia confirms this, saying that she could feel Pan's presence from the woods.

## Analysis

This chapter introduces several running threads. First, the reader has been told that Apollo is directly, although covertly, assisting the demigods. His symbol is a Boar, though the reader may not be aware of that (it was mentioned in several of the other novels). Likewise, the appearance of luxury vehicles (Apollo's favorite form of travel), as well as the sudden appearance of the old 'homeless' guy who lets them share his fire, all indicate clearly that Apollo is assisting them in their quest.

Also, both Grover and Thalia mention that they sensed the power of the wild strongly in this area. It should be noted that Pan has not been seen in almost two centuries, and it is every satyr's dream to find him once again. Feeling a faint presence like this is almost more than Grover can stand, but it energizes him to continue his search when he can.

Thalia's confession that she is afraid of heights is interesting since she is the daughter of Zeus, god of the sky. This indicates that she has not fully embraced who she is and who her father is. Just as there is an uneasy relationship between her and her father, so too, is her relationship with her given element...air.

## Discussion Question 1

What does Bianca confess to Percy and why?



## **Discussion Question 2**

Why does the author mention that Thalia is afraid to fly?

## **Discussion Question 3**

Why does Grover want to find Pan?

## **Vocabulary**

deficit, pursed, immortality, confident, compliment, pavilion



# Chapter 13

## Summary

The boar guides the group into the desert before abandoning them to go and find food. They briefly discuss where to go. During this conversation, they come to the revelation that Bianca and Nico were trapped in the Lotus hotel, where time flowed differently. An hour to them was actually about 40 years, which is why Washington seemed so different to Bianca. Ares shows up in a limo, requesting a private audience with Percy. The others give them some space and Ares takes Percy into the limo where Aphrodite is waiting. She tells Percy that she supports his quest because she believes it is driven by true love for Annabeth. She does warn Percy that their love is going to be tragic, and she can't trust the Hunters. Lastly, she tells Percy not to take anything from the junkyard they will be encountering.

The group ends up at a magical junkyard, finding a number of tempting objects. Before they can leave, a giant bronze statue comes to life and attacks. Percy realizes that Bianca stole a small statue for her brother. She tries to return it, but the statue continues to attack. Percy spots an entryway into the bronze statue. Bianca gives Percy the gift she stole, telling him to get it to her brother. She manages to get inside of the bronze statue and destroy it, but they can't find her body in the aftermath of the destruction.

## Analysis

This chapter combines the themes of family support, friendship, responsibility, and sacrifice. The demigods have been told, expressly by Aphrodite, NOT to take anything from the junkyard. Bianca ignores this and it causes bad events to unfold. In acting in an irresponsible way, Bianca sets off a chain reaction of events that ultimately causes her to sacrifice her own life for the others. She symbolically 'owns' up to her actions by climbing into the bronze statue that has begun to attack them, literally facing up to her actions and taking the consequences of her actions.

Bianca is also demonstrating family support, not only to her friends whom she now considers family (especially the Hunters), but also in her desire to see Nico taken care of. She tells Percy that she never would have become a Hunter if Nico hadn't had some place like Camp Half-blood to take care of him.

## Discussion Question 1

The Lotus hotel is a place where time is lost. How does lost time play into Bianca's grasp of who she is and where they are?



## **Discussion Question 2**

Why does Bianca decide to sacrifice herself for the others?

## **Discussion Question 3**

What motivated Bianca to take the statue in the first place?

## **Vocabulary**

saguaro cactus, cluster, loathing, reluctantly, denial, microscopic



# Chapter 14

## Summary

The group manages to find a truck and travel down to a river. They borrow canoes and Percy uses his power over water to help the group travel. He and Zoe talk along the way. Percy tries to reassure her that she wasn't responsible for Bianca, but Zoe argues that Bianca was only there because of her. Percy pulls out his sword, realizing that it is the weapon from his dream, and the person who made it was a younger Zoe. Zoe reveals that she did make it years ago, breaking the rules against helping a hero.

The group arrives at the Hoover Dam, where Percy is momentarily pulled aside by the serpent he saved earlier. The creature warns Percy that the skeletal monsters the General summoned are back on their trail. Percy tries to find his friends, but ends up being chased by some of the skeletons. He runs into a mortal girl, Rachel, who can see his magical items as well as the monsters, something that should be impossible. With her help, Percy gets away and to his friends. Thalia prays to Zeus, as the dam is protected by statues that were created to honor him. The statues safely fly the group away from the skeletons.

## Analysis

In this chapter the reader gains insight into Zoe's story, and how she came to believe the way that she does. This happens when Riptide, Percy's sword is revealed to be a sword that Zoe made, herself, for another hero many years before. She hints that she helped the hero to trick her father and then, later, the hero denied that she ever gave him help. As a result she was exiled by her family. She joined Artemis soon afterward. This explains why Zoe distrusts all males, having suffered at the hands of several in her early lifetime.

Percy's good deeds save his life again as the serpent creature he saved earlier tells him that the General's skeletons are on their trail again. When he is trying to evade the skeletons, he meets a girl named Rachel, who is able to see through the MIST unlike other mortals. This sets off bells in Percy's head, but he doesn't have time to think about it. Thalia saves the group by doing something that she almost never does....calls out to her father for help. He responds by making the statues turn into flying statues and they get away. It should be noted that Thalia is able to overcome a couple of her issues in this chapter. First, she's never been close to her father and doesn't think he likes her. Secondly, she hates heights. However, when her friends' lives are at stake, she puts all of that aside and this selfless act on her part saves everyone's lives.

## Discussion Question 1

How does Riptide facilitate a discussion between Percy and Zoe?





## Discussion Question 2

Why might Zoe dislike men so much?

## Discussion Question 3

How does the reader know that Thalia has been able to set aside her own personal fears and insecurities when they escape from Hoover Dam?

## Vocabulary

spouted, straggled, churned, guardians, camouflage, squeal, swerved,



# Chapter 15

## Summary

The statues fly the group into San Francisco where they decide to try and find Nereus just like Apollo recommended earlier. Percy finds him, but he tries to escape into the sea. Percy is stronger there thanks to his powers and manages to capture Nereus, getting one question. He's tempted to ask about Annabeth, but instead asks about the creature that Artemis was looking for. It turns out that the creature was the serpent cow that Percy had rescued earlier. He explains how he saved it to the group, and Zoe recognizes that the serpent is actually an Ophiotaurus. Legend has it, that whoever sacrifices it will have the power to destroy gods, which must be why the General and the Titans want it.

Dr. Thorn shows up while they are talking with several of his mortal mercenaries. He reveals that he wants Thalia to be the one to kill the Ophiotaurus so she can be reunited with Luke. Thalia is momentarily tempted, but refuses. The group runs but are surrounded by the mortal mercenaries. Percy sends an Iris message to the camp, encountering Mr. D and not Chiron. He warns him what Dr. Thorn has planned, but Mr. D hardly seems to care. He does use his powers to save them from the guards, saying that Zoe knows where to take the creature.

## Analysis

In a startling revelation, this chapter shows that the serpent cow creature that Percy rescued from the fisherman's nets, earlier, and who made at least one other appearance to warn them of impending attack, is none other than the Ophiotaurus that they've been looking for all along. The fact that this creature has literally been in their laps all the time would seem to be an indication that even with the tools of the gods' demise in their hands, that the heroes will only use its powers for good, or at the very least will keep its power from going to the wrong people. By using his one question to Nereus, Percy does the responsible thing and asks about the Ophiotaurus, instead of how to save Annabeth.

Interestingly enough, when Percy manages to get out an SOS to the camp, and Mr. D receives the call, he does not seem interested that The General plans to sacrifice the Ophiotaurus at all. He does get them out of the situation, though, and says that Zoe knows what to do with the cow creature. Zoe tells them that there is a power that is released when the innocent are slaughtered. Dr. Thorn plays on Thalia's desire to protect Luke by telling her that she could sacrifice the cow and save Luke. Thalia refuses.

## Discussion Question 1

How does Percy show responsibility in his encounter with Nereus?



## Discussion Question 2

Why is the Ophiotaurus so important and why does its sacrifice mean anything?

## Discussion Question 3

What does the reader learn about Thalia and Luke?

## Vocabulary

pier, devouring, scrounge, auspices, preserve, sulfurous, ricocheted



# Chapter 16

## Summary

Zoe tells the group they need to travel up the mountain of despair to get back to her home, where Annabeth would be. Grover goes to take the creature by sea, while the rest of the group intends to go by land to get to Annabeth. Percy prays to his father for safety, throwing the lion's mane into the water as an offering. He realized that it belonged to Hercules, the very same hero that Zoe had helped in his dream. They need a vehicle, but have no money to buy one and don't want to risk stealing one. Thalia remembers that Annabeth's family moved to San Francisco, so they seek them out. The family is very supportive when they find out that Annabeth is in danger, wanting to go themselves. Percy talks them out of this though, pointing out that there was nothing they could do as mortals. Her parents reluctantly agree, giving Percy their car to use. They travel to the mountains and find that Luke has already arrived at the mountain in his ship.

Their car is struck by lightning, leading Thalia to believe it is Zeus trying to kill her, as per the prophecy they heard earlier. Zoe tells them to be quiet, warning them that the dragon, Ladon, resides in these mountains. They manage to get up the mountain and into the gardens, where they find the sleeping dragon and several women, who refuse to accept Zoe as one of their own. They warn the group that they will fail if they try and go to rescue Annabeth.

Zoe wakes up Ladon, using him as a distraction to get away from the women. The group travels further up to the mountain, which Zoe informs them used to be a Titan fortress back during the war. She also adds that it was where Atlas was forced to hold up the sky. They travel further but instead of finding Atlas, they find a chained Artemis holding the cavern roof, just like Percy saw in his vision. He realizes that she and Annabeth had taken Atlas's spot in his dreams.

The General shows up with Luke and several dragon creatures. Percy figures out that the General is, in fact, Atlas. He was punished because he was the leader of the Titans during the war against the gods. Luke reveals that they have Annabeth trapped, and that Atlas is Zoe's father.

## Analysis

The idea of family support is demonstrated at length in this chapter. First, there is the support that Annabeth's family gives when Percy reaches out to them in San Francisco. When he explains to Annabeth's dad that they need the car to get up into the mountains and that Annabeth is in trouble, Annabeth's father is determined to come along, too. It is all they can do to dissuade him. This is a major turn around from how he has acted toward Annabeth in the first novel in the series. Now, he and Annabeth have begun to



have a relationship and he's proud of his daughter. They have been spending time together, even. So, the fact that he's more than willing to support her by giving them his car, reinforces this theme of familial involvement and support.

Secondly, there is the polar opposite occurring for Zoe. They are on the mountain of despair which is where her sisters live. This is the spot where Zoe had helped Hercules deceive her father. It is the place that she was exiled from. When her sisters awaken, Zoe tries to tell them that they need help, but they not only refuse to recognize her, but they refuse to let them pass. Zoe wakes up the dragon and this keeps them busy so that the demigods can get past. Zoe tells the demigods that the mountain is a last bastion and stronghold for the Titans; that some of their power still remains there. It is also where Atlas is forced to hold up the sky. It suddenly makes sense to Percy that 'the General' is, in fact, Atlas.

## **Discussion Question 1**

Why does Thalia think her father hates her?

## **Discussion Question 2**

Compare and contrast Zoe's family to Annabeth's family.

## **Discussion Question 3**

How is the theme of family support demonstrated in this chapter?

## **Vocabulary**

contented, submerge, rifling, crumpled, lunatic, strafe, sponsor



# Chapter 17

## Summary

Luke tries to get Thalia to work with them and summon the serpent to be sacrificed. Luke pleads that Zeus and the gods care nothing for her. Zoe refuses and the group ends up fighting Luke and the others. Percy squares off against Atlas, but finds himself vastly overwhelmed. Percy outsmarts Atlas, freeing Artemis and taking her spot so the goddess can fight against Atlas instead. Artemis battles Atlas alongside Zoe, who gets thrown off the mountain in the fight. Artemis manages to get Atlas back under the mountain, saving Percy from being crushed.

Thalia defeats Luke, but Annabeth pleads to spare him. While this happens, Artemis tries to find Zoe. Luke attempts to escape, but ends up falling down the mountain to his demise. Artemis recovers Zoe, but it is revealed that she had been poisoned earlier when they were trying to escape from the dragon. The rest of Luke's monstrous army starts to ascend the mountain, but the group is saved by Annabeth's father flying in to their rescue on his plane.

## Analysis

When Percy offers to take Artemis's spot, it is the goddesses turn to be shocked by his willingness to sacrifice himself. Additionally, he changes her mind about males and who they can be. She tells him that Annabeth barely survived holding up the sky because she was a true huntress at heart. As a boy, and a non-hunter type, she is doubtful that he can hold it up. When he slashes through her chains with Riptide, it is evident that he is leaving her no choice. She accepts what he is offering, and it gains him her respect, something very few have ever gotten from her.

It should be noted that while Atlas is tricked into taking up his old burden of keeping the sky from the earth, his real burden, one that he cannot escape is his desire for power and control. The fact that he doesn't walk away and run from all of it after years of suffering tells the reader that this is a person who has given himself over to his own worst aspects.

The reader also gets to see the final confrontation between three friends who started out life together: Luke, Thalia, and Annabeth. In the end, Luke is no better than Atlas and can't see past his bitterness and hatred for the gods. He goes over the cliff. During this time, Zoe, who had been poisoned earlier when they fled from the dragon, has died. The theme of sacrifice is underscored in this moment, as the group learns that Zoe fought on long after she was already dying from the dragon's bite.



## **Discussion Question 1**

Why does the General even think that Thalia would agree to do as he wants her to do?

## **Discussion Question 2**

Why does Luke want Thalia to join him?

## **Discussion Question 3**

How is the theme of sacrifice exemplified in this chapter?

## **Vocabulary**

grudging, honor guard, bellowing, summit, volley



# Chapter 18

## Summary

Annabeth's father takes the group away from the mountain. They try to heal Zoe, but between the poison and her wounds from fighting Atlas there isn't anything they can do. She and Thalia reconcile, and Artemis says how proud she is of Zoe before she dies. Percy tells Annabeth about how much her family cared, and her father reassures her that she will always have a home with them. Blackjack arrives with several others of his kin to take the group to Olympus so Artemis can attend a meeting with the gods to discuss what to do about the Titan threat. On the way, Annabeth warns Percy that she feels that Luke is still alive, even after falling off the mountain. She expresses her hope that he can still be redeemed, arguing that he's under Kronos's spell.

## Analysis

This chapter is about loss and renewal of hope. First, there is the loss of Zoe. Grieving her friend's loss, Artemis, in an uncharacteristic gesture by a goddess, places a constellation in the sky to forever represent Zoe and her courage. Annabeth tells Percy that despite seeing Luke's broken body, that she doesn't 'feel' that he is gone. She tries to convince Percy that Luke is simply acting the way he is because Kronos has him under some sort of control. It is easy to see that Percy does not believe her, and is even less thrilled that Annabeth is so dedicated to saving Luke.

Before Zoe dies, she and Thalia settle things between them. It also becomes evident to Percy that Zoe was one of those mentioned in the Oracle's prophecy...killed by a parent's hand. He realizes that it is not the dragon's poison that killed her, but rather the blow that she took from her father when they were battling to get him back under the rock. The fact that her father still rejected her, broke her for good. This illustrates the darker side of family support, or rather what can happen when that support is not given or is used in an evil way. Before she dies, she tells all of them that she's changed her mind about men, that Percy has helped her to see that not all men are bad, just as all women are not good.

## Discussion Question 1

What makes Zoe's death so especially tragic?

## Discussion Question 2

Most of the gods and goddesses seem distant from their followers, but Artemis is different. Why?





## Discussion Question 3

How has Zoe changed in her beliefs about men?

## Vocabulary

grasped, contentedly, shudder, gulped, vanished, disintegrate, quizzically



# Chapter 19

## Summary

The group gets to Olympus where the gods decide they are going to start striking out against the monsters that the Titans are trying to awaken. They debate what to do with the group of heroes, arguing that they should be destroyed because of the prophecy from the first book, which states that Thalia or Percy will join Kronos when they turn 16. Thalia gets around this by becoming a hunter of Artemis, meaning she will never age past 15. Artemis and several other gods convince the other deities to spare Percy because of his heroics.

Percy also convinces the gods not to kill the Ophiotaurus and they should instead keep it protected in Olympus. They agree to this and decide to have a feast to honor everything the heroes have done. Athena speaks with Percy, telling him that Luke is indeed alive. She also points out that so far Kronos has consistently kidnapped people important to Percy in an attempt to turn him to his side. Percy says he would never give up on his friends, and that they aren't a weakness. Athena leaves, giving Percy a chance to dance with Annabeth.

## Analysis

This chapter brings up the matter of the prophecy that states that one of the children of the big three will rise up to join Kronos when they turn 16. Having made her peace with Zoe, and witnessing Artemis's true feelings towards her Hunters, Thalia is moved to join them...thus, she is sacrificing her mortality to remove herself from the prophetic running true because of her. She has truly let Luke go in her mind. He is not the boy that she once knew. This illustrates the theme of sacrifice.

The theme of responsibility shows up in the dilemma with the Ophiotaurus at the end of the book. This also shows the Greek gods trying to cast aside their responsibility to protect the living. The gods want to have the Ophiotaurus destroyed because if it is sacrificed it could destroy them. They believe if they destroy it first, nobody can use it against them. Percy is the only one to point out how hypocritical they are, and ultimately ends up reminding them that their responsibility is to protect the Ophiotaurus. Instead of killing it, they agree to give it a home in Olympus where nobody will be able to exploit it. Thus, symbolically, they are protecting innocence in the world, keeping it safe from misuse and destruction.

## Discussion Question 1

Why do the gods feel that they need to kill Percy and Thalia?



## Discussion Question 2

If the Ophiotaurus represents innocence, then by keeping it safe on Mount Olympus, what statement are the gods making?

## Discussion Question 3

How is the theme of responsibility exemplified in this chapter?

## Vocabulary

hearth, novelty, intently, weathered, shimmering, informed



# Chapter 20

## Summary

Percy and Annabeth return to the camp. Percy has to tell Nico about what happened to Bianca. Nico is heartbroken and blames Percy, saying he was supposed to protect Bianca. The skeletons that Atlas created appear, but Nico is able to banish them. Percy realizes that he is a child of Hades, which means that the prophecy applies not only to him and Thalia, but Nico as well. Nico runs off and Percy convinces the others not to tell anyone about Nico, vowing that he won't let Kronos get to him. The book ends with Grover running over, telling them that he got a message on where to find Pan.

## Analysis

This chapter simply ties up loose ends, introduces potential new wrinkles (to be explored in the next book), and Annabeth and Percy reconcile. What seems to still be hanging between them is Annabeth's interest in Luke changing his ways. Additionally, having to break the news to Nico about his sister's death is heartbreaking for both Nico and Percy. That she died because she simply wanted her brother to have a small figurine to add to his collection devastates Nico, though he is so young. His accusations toward Percy underscore a lifetime of trusting people only to have that trust misplaced. This is a character flaw and tendency that is going to follow Nico throughout most of the series. When Nico kills the skeletons it becomes apparent whose children they were and Percy's suspicions are confirmed. Nico might be the one that sides with Kronos.

## Discussion Question 1

What is the significance of finding out who Nico's father was?

## Discussion Question 2

Why is Annabeth glad that Luke hasn't died?

## Discussion Question 3

How does Percy feel about Annabeth's interest in Luke?

## Vocabulary

rumbled, fissure, awestruck, shivered, tentatively



# Characters

## Percy Jackson

Percy continues to be the main character of the series, and readers see the book from his first person perspective. Percy is a demigod, the son of Poseidon and a mortal mother, Sally Jackson. Unlike in the previous two books, Percy comes off as a more experienced and confident character. While there are still plenty of things that Percy is unsure about, he reacts more naturally when he's faced by the supernatural, and readers can really feel that he is someone who has spent the last two years being molded into a hero.

Percy seems much closer to his family at the start of the novel as well. He goes out of his way to speak with his half-brother, Tyson, who is away forging weapons for the upcoming war. Several times throughout the book he also goes to check on his mother. When he sees that she's getting closer with Paul he's much more supportive of her pursuing happiness with him, even if he's still uncomfortable with the idea of potentially getting another step-father. Percy is much closer with his "extended" family at Camp Half-Blood as well. He displays a sense of familiarity with the other resident of the camp, even the ones outside of his usual social circle.

Part of embracing his new role of experienced hero means protecting others. Throughout the book, Percy takes on a big brother role to several characters. He instinctively becomes protective of the younger di Angelo siblings, in no small part because he remembers himself what it is like to be at that young age and suddenly get thrust into the world of being a demigod. Whenever the group is threatened, Percy goes out of his way to put himself in danger to save them, such as when he throws himself at the skeletal minions to keep them from getting Thalia's scent, or how he frees Artemis by taking on the burden of holding the sky. Even his initial motivation for going on the quest at all comes from the responsibility he feels for letting Annabeth get captured in the first place. Even at the end of the book, Percy wants to protect Nico's secret from the rest of the camp, knowing that if everyone knew his true heritage it would not only make him a target, but also a social pariah.

While Percy has embraced the role of a hero, his perspective of what the word actually means changes throughout the book. Throughout the series, Percy has always idolized the demigod, Hercules, famous for being considered the best of all heroes. Over the course of the book Percy starts to see a darker side to Hercules from visions of his past with Zoe. At first Percy is ecstatic to have the lion mane just like Hercules has, but at the end of the book he purposefully sacrifices the mane, claiming that, unlike Hercules, he isn't going to let his selfishness or pride hurt other people. He doesn't want to be a hero for pride and glory, but instead one that helps the world and makes it a better place. This is especially evident at the end of the book, when Percy fights to have the Ophiotaurus saved instead of killed, directly going against what the heroes of the past had done to save themselves.



## Thalia Grace

Thalia is the daughter of Zeus, who had spent the last several years magically trapped in a tree, providing protection to Camp Half-Blood from monsters. After the events of Sea of Monsters, Thalia was free from her imprisonment. Thalia is referenced several times as being a punkish character, in both terms of appearance as well as attitude. She isn't the type of person who enjoys being told what to do, which is why she seems to initially go against Artemis and the other hunters. This is even more apparent when it comes to her strained relationship with her father, Zeus. Several times throughout the book she doesn't even try to call out to him for help, even when other characters urge her to. Her rebellious attitude also makes it harder for her to work with groups, ultimately blaming them for any failures.

Thalia has a past history with Luke when he was still a hero. His betrayal could also be seen as another reason that Thalia is hesitant to work with others, since she doesn't want to open herself up to another betrayal. Despite what Luke did, she still considers herself close to him and believes that something else was responsible for his actions. When Luke tries to get her to betray her friends at the end of the book, Thalia is truly torn. She is able to recognize that Luke really did betray them, and in the end she is actually the one that knocks him off the mountain.

Working alongside Percy and the others definitely softens up Thalia by the end of the book. Previously, Thalia had been very abrasive and developed a loner personality because of the time she spent trapped in a tree. She starts to confide in Percy more, discussing her difficult relationship with her mortal mother, and even sharing in the fact that she passed away while Thalia had been transformed into a tree.

Thalia shows the most change at the end of the book, when she not only defends the gods she feels have abandoned her, but also agrees to join the Hunters to thwart the prophecy about either her or Percy aiding the Titans when they turn 16.

## Grover

Grover is a satyr at Camp-Half Blood who is responsible for finding other demigods. Grover is also Percy's best friend, and was responsible for bringing Percy into the camp during the first book. In this book, Grover is largely reduced to a secondary character role. He continues to be supportive and loyal towards Percy and the other campers. Grover is a very laid back and peaceful character, constantly trying to keep everyone in the group working together. At the start of the book it is revealed that the satyr have strong feelings for Artemis and her Hunters because they are seen as being part of nature, leading to Grover becoming almost obsessed with them. Grover's protective nature is best shown near the end of the book where he goes to bring the Ophiotaurus to safety, despite being far from the best swimmer.



## Bianca di Angelo

Bianca is the older sister of Nico, and a recently discovered demigod. Bianca initially appears as a selfish character, since to Percy (and thus readers) the very first thing she does is abandon her brother at Camp Half-Blood so she can join the Hunters. Bianca eventually reveals to Percy that she only did this because she wanted to have a life of her own. All her life, she's been taking care of and protecting Nico, never getting to do what she wants or live her own life. When Artemis asked her to join the Hunters, she only accepted because she knew that Nico would be safe with Percy and the others. Bianca even risks her life and ultimately ends up sacrificing herself just because she wants to bring Nico a statue to complete his collection, knowing how important it would be to him. Near the end of the book, readers learn that both Bianca and Nico were born in the 70's, but due to spending time in the Lotus hotel ended up getting placed into the current year.

## Nico di Angelo

For the majority of the book readers don't get to see too much of Nico. What is seen suggests that he was just like Percy when he first joined the camp. Nico is very energetic and fascinated with the supernatural, seeming to accept all the magic around them much faster than Bianca. As readers learn about Bianca, they realize that Nico acts like this because he had been protected his whole life and never really had to deal with any problems on his own. At the very end of the book, Nico lashes out angrily at Percy, believing him to be responsible for Bianca dying. Nico banishes the skeletal minions summoned by Atlas, indicating that he's a son of Hades. This revelation means that he could be part of the prophecy about a demigod joining the Titans.

## Zoe Nightshade

Zoe is a unique character because she is one of the protagonists, but also acts at times as a rival antagonist. Zoe doesn't make a good first impression with the main characters. She dismisses Percy because of his gender, and she and Thalia share a past rivalry because Thalia previously rejected the Hunters. She is incredibly loyal to Artemis and the other Hunters though. This is why she's so dedicated to her quest and agrees to work with the campers at all. When Bianca dies, Zoe is torn up and feels responsible, even though she was in no way responsible for losing Bianca.

Because she is a Hunter, Zoe is immortal and has been shown to be at least a 1,000 years old. She had a history with Hercules where she had fallen for the hero and even forged a sword for him to battle a dragon, a sword that Percy now wields. Zoe clearly resents Percy because of this fact, and it only gets worse when he ends up getting the same lion mane that Hercules has. Zoe hates Hercules because he cared more about being a hero than he did her, which was her motivation for wanting to be a Hunter and forsaking the idea of ever being with a man. To top it off, her father is also the evil Atlas, further adding to her general distrust of men.



Zoe shows the most growth over the course of the book. Through watching Percy, she comes to realize that not only are there good men in the world, but also good heroes. By the end of the book she is willing to give her life to protect the rest of the group, and when she ultimately ends up dying she is at peace with not only her own past, but also the rest of the group. Even before that, readers can see the way that she changes simply because she stops clashing with the rest of the group so much, even begrudgingly letting Percy join their quest after he dispatches the lion.

## Luke

Luke continues to be an antagonist in the series; however he barely makes any physical appearances in the novel. In this book, Luke acts almost more like a symbol as opposed to a character. For Thalia, Luke represents her past life before she was imprisoned. Luke is still a driving force in the war against the gods, but because readers have Thalia being more sympathetic readers get to see another side of Luke beyond simply being a rival to Percy. Throughout the book Luke appears increasingly sickly, which Thalia believes is an indication he's under some sort of control that made him betray the rest of the camp.

Luke is most antagonistic at the end of the book when he tries to get Thalia to sacrifice the Ophiotaurus and join his side. In a way, he's a mirror of what Thalia could become if she didn't have Percy to show her a better way. Both of them have strained relations with their divine parents as well as their mortal parents, and both feel betrayed by the gods. Thalia was ultimately able to resist the call to go against the gods, while Luke succumbed to his darker urges, in no small part because of Thalia getting imprisoned.

## Atlas

Despite technically being the main antagonist, Atlas is absent for almost the entirety of the book. For Atlas, his motivation for wanting to destroy the gods comes from him being punished by holding up the sky. Atlas considers himself to be inherently superior to everyone, a fact which ultimately becomes his undoing as he underestimates Percy for being a demigod, and Artemis for being a girl. Despite being Zoe's father, the two clearly despise each other and he never tries to bring Zoe over to his side.

## Annabeth

Even though she was one of the main characters in the earlier books, Annabeth becomes at most a secondary character throughout this particular book. Despite her limited appearance, she actually manages to undergo a decent amount of development. At the start of the book, Annabeth is resentful towards her family because they are moving to San Francisco, a place that she cannot easily follow because it has such a high monster population. Annabeth takes this as a sign that her family doesn't care about her.





When Percy and the others are in San Francisco, her father and stepmother instantly step up to help them. This ends up surprising Annabeth, especially to hear that her stepmother of all people was so willing to help. If it weren't for her father, the group would have perished to Luke's monster army at the end of the book. Both her father and stepmother make it perfectly clear that Annabeth is always welcome, and they will always be there to help her whenever she needs it.

## Mr. D

Mr. D, also known as the wine god Dionysus, was punished by Zeus to serve as camp director for a century. As such, he shows scorn towards the rest of Camp Half-Blood as he doesn't even want to be around them. If he isn't showing scorn, he's completely ignoring them, and seems completely indifferent to whether or not they live or die. In fact, sometimes he even seemed to encourage the students to do something risky just so it would be one less student for him to take care of. This is one of the reasons why he lets Percy go on the quest at all. He also despises heroes because he believes they think of nobody besides themselves and only care about fame and glory.

Ultimately though, this is shown as being a front, as Mr. D does go out of his way to save the characters if they are truly put in peril, accepting their requests when Percy calls for him after finding out about the Ophiotaurus. In his own way, he also helped to guide Percy into becoming a better hero, pointing out some of the faults in people like Hercules that Percy used to idolize.

## Sally Jackson

Sally Jackson is Percy Jackson's mother. In a small portion of the book she figures prominently in that she becomes a 'mother' to all of Percy's friends. This makes Percy not only so proud that she's his mother, but it also reinforces the theme of family and the need for family support. Sally offers each demigod that she comes into contact with some bit of wisdom that later comes back to help them later on in the book.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## Riptide/the lion mane

Both of these items belong to Percy, with the mane being a new addition while Riptide has been with him since the first book. In the past though, they were wielded by the famous hero, Hercules, someone that Percy has been shown to look up to. Zoe and Mr. D help Percy realize that he wasn't the hero that everyone made him out to be, and he was constantly putting his needs above everyone else, and just cared about his glory. Percy is shown to reject this idea of a hero, sacrificing the cloak as tribute, and even directly telling Zoe that he wasn't going to be like Hercules.

## The Sky/Cavern roof

The sky marks the cave where Atlas had been imprisoned, forced to hold up the cavern ceiling, effectively holding the weight of the world on his shoulders. The sky represents a cruelty that has been explored with the gods. To someone like Luke, it serves as motivation to want to overthrow the gods, since it shows how callous they can be towards the people underneath them. Even to characters like Percy, it serves as a reminder that the gods aren't the most goodly or perfectly moral beings in the world. This is also where the book gets the title, as the Titan's curse is reference to Atlas's punishment having to hold up the sky.

## The Ophiotaurus

The Ophiotaurus is a relic from the past, representing the innocents that will get caught up if the Titans and the gods are allowed to go to war with each other. The Ophiotaurus has absolutely nothing to do with either side, but both sides want to kill it simply because of the fact that it could be useful in the war. This shows why Percy and the others are working so hard to stop the war, because if they don't innocents will be dragged into the crossfire and suffer.

## Annabeth's Yankees Cap

Annabeth's hat actually represents two different things depending on the character that has it. For Percy, it simply serves as his remaining connection to Annabeth after she is taken. The sole reason that he carries it with him is because he wants to feel as though Annabeth is still with him, even when she's imprisoned. For Annabeth though, it represents the connection that she wants to have with her family. To her, New York represents where she was raised by her mortal family, and the cap itself is a direct connection to her father's love.



## The Statue of Hades

When Bianca ends up getting killed in the junkyard it was because she wanted to bring back a statue of Hades to Nico. Up until now, readers have only seen Bianca through Percy's eyes. He believes that she doesn't care about Nico and was just ditching him at the camp. The fact that she risked her life just to get a statue for her brother shows how much she cared about Nico. It also ends up holding significant meaning for Nico when he finds out that Hades is his divine parent.

## Zeus's Statues

When the group is being chased by skeletal minions at Hoover Dam, Thalia refuses to try and ask her father for help. This has been a running theme with her throughout the book. She finally decides to ask for help when they are at the statues that were meant to honor him. To her surprise, her father responds and the statues spring to life and end up saving Thalia and the others. Even though Zeus doesn't directly speak to Thalia, the statues show that he clearly cares about his daughter and doesn't want to see anything happen to her.

## Paul

While actually a person, Paul acts more like a symbol in the few glimpses that we see of him. Paul represents the past that Percy was trying to escape with his abusive stepfather. He hated his former stepfather for the way that he treated his mother. Naturally, he's overly protective of Sally and initially comes off as very guarded when he realizes that the two of them are together. By the end of the book though, Percy realizes how important family is, and he can see through Annabeth's stepmother that not all step-parents end up being horrible people.

## Poseidon's Fountain

Near the start of the book, Percy finds that there's a magical fountain in his room from his father. The bottom of the fountain is filled with gold coins, which Percy can use to create an Iris message. The fountain represents Percy's connection to his family, both divine and mortal. Every time he uses the fountain, he thinks about his family, and ultimately only uses it to contact his mother as well as his half-brother, Tyson. Percy even thinks to himself that Poseidon specifically gave it to him so he'd remember the links that he's made with his family.

## Thalia's Silver Bracelet

This bracelet is Thalia's favorite magic item. When she is nervous about a battle she will absentmindedly twist it around her wrist.

## **Aegis Shield**

The Aegis Shield is a replica of Thalia's father's shield. It has the head of the gorgon Medusa molded into the bronze, and it is well known to be the shield of Zeus. Just seeing it causes Dr. Thorn to be afraid. The shield saves her from Dr. Thorn's large claw that tries to slice her in half in Chapter 2.



# Settings

## Westover Hall

The novel begins at this military school and serves as an introduction to many of the new characters, as well as setting up the basis of the quest. Percy is introduced to the di Angelo siblings at the school, and it is also where he learns about the General and where Annabeth gets captured. The militaristic nature of the school is a good representation of the way that the Hunters act in comparison to the much more laid back Camp Half-Blood.

## Camp Half-Blood

As always, Camp Half-Blood serves as a home for Percy and the other campers. The welcoming and homely nature of the camp is shown by how easily Nico gets accepted, even if he is initially treated as “the new kid”. The camp also represents a place of safety for the characters, as it is where Percy wants Grover to take the Ophiotaurus when it is in danger. The camp also gives the characters a chance to have some breathing room before becoming entirely consumed by the action of the quest, which is especially important for Percy since it lets him reconnect with his family.

## Washington/Smithsonian

While Percy and the others are technically travelling through Washington, readers really only get to see what they do in the Smithsonian. This is where readers are first introduced to the General, who uses his magic to reanimate some of the fossils in the museum, turning them into monsters to attack Percy and the others. It is also here where Percy officially joins up with Thalia and the others, after saving them from the animated metal lion.

## New Mexico

The group very briefly passes through a small mountain town in New Mexico. Apollo ends up taking them here as it serves as the next leg of their quest. While their time here is very short, it is important for Grover who ends up feeling a connection to Pan, discovering the Erymanthian boar which takes the group to the Junkyard of the Gods.

## Junkyard of the Gods

This is where the gods end up discarding items and treasures that they no longer care about. In the book, it is also where Percy is approached by Ares and Aphrodite, who explains why she worked to get Percy on the quest. More importantly, the junkyard is



also the place where the group ends up losing Bianca when she tries to steal the statue for Nico.

## The Hoover Dam

Percy and the others briefly go to the Hoover Dam when they are trying to get to San Francisco. This is where Percy encounters Elizabeth, a mortal that is capable of seeing supernatural events going around her despite being entirely normal. This also proves to be an important location because it is where Thalia ends up reconnecting with her father.

## San Francisco

Much like with Washington, Percy and the others only momentarily pass through San Francisco. The main reason that they are here is so that they can see Annabeth's parents and get transportation so they can go up Mt. Othrys and rescue Annabeth and Artemis. It is also here where Percy re-encounters the Ophiotaurus and finds out about how much power it holds.

## Mt. Othrys

This is where the majority of the action takes place at the end of the book. The mountain is supernatural in nature. In the past it rivaled even Mt. Olympus, but it was brought down when the Titans were defeated. This is where Atlas was originally imprisoned, though now it is Annabeth and Artemis that have taken his place. Since being freed, the mountain has started to rebuild and will be the staging ground where Kronos and the other Titans gather their army. The group also has to pass through the Garden of Hesperides on the mountain, which is where Zoe ends up getting the injury that later leads to her death.

## Mt. Olympus

Mt. Olympus is the magical home of the Greek gods. The characters go here at the very end of the book to attend a divine council, where the gods ultimately agree to spare the group and go to war with the Titans. Due to the magical nature of the mountain, it seems to become whatever the gods need it to be, shifting between a council room as well as a great banquet hall during the brief time that Percy and the others are there.



# Themes and Motifs

## Gender Equality

In the previous books the subject of gender isn't really touched upon. Camp Half-Blood has a very diverse population, and despite being the main character Percy tends to share his accomplishments with Annabeth. What's interesting about Titan's Curse is that it initially twists the usual young adult trope of the male characters underestimating the female characters. Instead, it is the all-female Hunters that see men as being the weaker and ultimately inferior gender.

Artemis only recruits young women because she believes that if they are too old their minds aren't going to be pure and dedicated to the hunt because they will be distracted by boys. Normally, Artemis wouldn't even allow men into her camp, only making an exception for Percy and Nico because of the fact that they were attacked by Dr. Thorn in the beginning. The Hunters always have an open cabin at Camp Half-Blood, but they almost never use it because of the fact that the camp is mixed gender, which, in their eyes, makes it weaker.

While Artemis is shown as favoring women, she isn't necessarily scornful towards men. With her second in command though, Zoe, readers see a much harsher side to this code. Initially, Zoe refuses to let any man join them on her quest. In fact, the only reason that she agreed to work with Camp Half-Blood is because they would only send two people. Thalia, who fit the requirements to be a Hunter, and Grover who was considered to be more a part of nature, so in her eyes he's essentially genderless.

Zoe is proven to be wrong, though, when Percy arrives to join their quest. Even then, she initially rejects him until he proves his worth by helping them fight the lion. Percy is able to figure out that Zoe's attitude towards men stems from her past with Hercules, and likely isn't helped by the fact that Atlas is her father. Percy goes out of his way to show her that not all men are like Hercules, and he further proves his worth by showing that he's willing to sacrifice himself to save Artemis. By the end of the book, Zoe has admitted she was wrong and genuinely regards Percy as not only essential to the quest, but also her equal.

There is another subtle more traditional reference near the end of the book with Atlas. After Percy has freed Artemis she starts to fight against Atlas. During the battle, Atlas remarks that she's not a bad fighter, for a girl, implying that he isn't taking the fight seriously because of her gender. He believes that because she and the rest of the fighters are all female he doesn't have to worry about being defeated. This ultimately leads to his undoing as he is not only physically bested by Artemis, but also outsmarted when she tricks him into taking Percy's spot underneath the sky.



## Family Support

Family has always been an important part of the series. There have been previous family themes, but in the other books they were largely about accepting your family. This was usually shown through Percy's relationship with his absentee father, or accepting the fact that Tyson is his half-brother. For once, Percy isn't the one having family trouble in this book. That honor falls onto Thalia and Annabeth.

Given that Annabeth is captured for most of the book, a lot of the attention falls onto Thalia. Thalia refuses to even try and call out to her father, Zeus, for help. Just like Luke, she believes that the gods have abandoned them. With Zeus especially she blames him for not helping when she was imprisoned, and she hints that she also blames him for the fact that her mortal mother died.

Even amongst her extended family at Camp-Half Blood, Thalia is having trouble relying on them. Because she was imprisoned she feels like she is an outsider to everyone but Luke and Annabeth, both of which aren't at the camp during the majority of the book. During capture the flag she can't work with any of the other students, and when it came to deciding who goes on the quest she was the one who suggested the hunters take the majority of the members.

Once the quest begins she gradually starts to accept Percy as part of her extended family, even going so far as to confide in him. When they are at the Hoover Dam she finally becomes desperate enough to call out to Zeus, who immediately answers her plea, saving them from the skeletal minions as well as taking them the rest of the way to San Francisco. Thalia is incredibly surprised by this.

Thalia's journey is very similar to Annabeth. Annabeth feels like her mortal family doesn't want her because even though they've been getting along her father intends to move to San Francisco for work. Annabeth sees this as their opportunity to move away from her and Camp-Half Blood. When Percy shows up asking for their help to get Annabeth, they immediately help out, and at the end of the book they make it perfectly clear that Annabeth is always welcome in their home and they weren't trying to move to be away from her.

The reader gets to see the positives of family support through the Jacksons as well. When Percy gets rejected from the quest he contacts his mother to get a ride home. Instead, she tells him that she wants to support him in doing what he feels is right, even if that means putting himself in danger and disobeying the camp. Percy in return acts supportive when he sees that his mother has become interested in Paul. Even though he has reservations about him being part of their family, Percy pushes his mother to do what makes her happy. Both characters ultimately act with the other's best interest at heart, and as a result both end up getting what they want by the end of the book.





## Accepting Responsibility

A reoccurring theme throughout the Titan's Curse is that when characters are unable to accept responsibility, bad things happen. This comes in two ways, not being able to accept when they were responsible, but also trying to take on someone else's responsibility. Bianca is one of the characters that best shows this. She tells Percy that her whole life she felt she was responsible for her younger brother. She says she sacrificed everything and gave up a life of her own to keep him happy. While this is ultimately effective, the end result is that Bianca is miserable, so she jumps at the first chance she gets to have her own life. Even when she joins the Hunters, she still feels responsible for making her brother happy. She tries to steal the statue of Hades to complete his collection, even though it puts the rest of the group at risk and ultimately results in her death.

This leads to another character struggling with responsibility, Zoe. Zoe blames herself for Bianca's death since she insisted that she joined them. As previously mentioned though, it was Bianca herself who brought about her death. Zoe did everything she possibly could do try and save Bianca, and Bianca was well aware of the possible risks when she accepted the quest. Zoe's gender issues also come from misplaced responsibility. Instead of recognizing that Hercules is the one that was responsible for betraying her, she treats it like every male she ever met should bear this responsibility.

Artemis herself has trouble accepting responsibility as well. She feels as though she is the only one that can defeat Atlas, despite the fact that the Hunters exist solely to combat these sort of threats. Even if she didn't want to go to the Hunters, she could have gone to the other gods who were responsible for punishing Atlas. Instead, she accepts sole responsibility and ends up getting captured herself, in no small part because Atlas was willing to accept help of his own. Artemis ends up defeating Atlas at the end, but only because she shared the responsibility with everyone else on the quest.

The dilemma with the Ophiotaurus at the end of the book also shows the Greek gods trying to cast aside their responsibility to protect the living. The gods want to have the Ophiotaurus destroyed because if it is sacrificed it could destroy them. They believe if they destroy it first, nobody can use it against them. Percy is the only one to point out how hypocritical they are, and ultimately ends up reminding them that their responsibility is to protect the Ophiotaurus. Instead of killing it, they agree to give it a home in Olympus where nobody will be able to exploit it.

## Friendship

The theme of friendship runs throughout the entire novel series, and in this novel centers around Percy Jackson and the lengths he will go to help his friends when they are in need. This first shows up in the early chapters as it shows Percy's mother driving him and several of his demigod friends all the way to Maine to help Grover. Additionally,



after helping Grover, he realizes that Annabeth is missing and is ready to go off impetuously to find her.

What Percy learns in this novel, in regards to friends, is that friendships that include others from different perspectives and groups are what makes a group stronger. He learns this with his interactions with the Hunters and their begrudging acceptance of his motives. Friends, then, don't always believe what they've heard about certain types of people, and instead make up their minds for themselves. This is true when Zoe sees how willing Percy is to give himself to a cause that does not directly benefit him. This is why she offers him the lion's mane.

The reader also sees Grover and Percy's friendship grow stronger. His bond with Percy is symbolically shown to be stronger in that the two of them have a new ability, which includes an empathetic bond. When Grover is in trouble he reaches out to Percy who is able to understand that his friend needed help. Later, Percy is able to use this same connection link to call on Grover to help him against Dr. Thorn in the school. It is because of this strong bond that they are able to save Nico and Bianca. Thus, the author is showing that friendship makes a person stronger, gives them hope when there doesn't seem to be any, and offers support even if they don't always understand or agree with the other person's actions.

## Sacrifice

The theme of sacrifice is suggested throughout the storyline. First, Sally Jackson, who has already established that she is more than willing to sacrifice her happiness for her son's safety, is once again involving herself in a situation that can place her in danger. She is driving the demigods to Maine to meet up with Grover. Though she doesn't stay, it is clear that she supports her son and is willing to give up whatever she must to make sure that he's safe and happy.

Next, there is the sacrifice that Bianca makes at the Junkyard. She realizes that she's gone against instructions and taken a statue that she ought not to have done. It is because of this action that they are pursued by the bronze statue. In the end, to buy them more time, she stands and fights the bronze warrior allowing her friends to escape. Sacrifice is not anything new to Bianca, however, and it is her character that would seem to embody this theme. The reader learns that she has a history of sacrificing herself for others, in particular, her brother, whom she's been keeping safe for all of these years.

When she is asked to join the Hunters she accepts without a moment's hesitation. It is her one way to remove herself from the responsibility of raising her brother by herself. Having sacrificed most of her childhood shielding him, she now sees a chance for herself to have a life. However, after only enjoying her time as a Hunter for less than a week, she makes a final sacrifice, giving herself and her new life up to save the rest.



# Styles

## Point of View

Like with the other books in the series, *Titan's Curse* is told from the first person perspective of Percy Jackson, a demigod living in the modern world. What makes this such an interesting choice is that readers get to see the actions and inferred thoughts of other characters through the eyes of Percy. While a book told in the third person might explain how Bianca sacrificed everything for Nico, Percy doesn't see that until Bianca outright tells him. Instead, readers just see what he sees, a sister who is more than willing to ditch her younger brother at the first chance she gets. Similarly, readers only get to see Percy's thoughts and reactions about the way characters like Zoe and Mr. D ask. To them, they are being unreasonable and treating him poorly for no apparent reason. Readers don't get to know that both of them have their own issues with heroes that they are projecting onto Percy until they outright tell him. Overall, this ends up being a very effective story telling method that really sucks readers into the world.

## Language and Meaning

Because readers are seeing everything through the eyes of Percy Jackson, readers are experiencing the world through the mind of a teenager. Rick Riordan does an excellent job of this through Percy's inner monologue. Percy will frequently think or speak in very simple terms, relating everything to what you would expect a young teenager to have experienced. He tends to use teenage slang as well, such as referring to people as dudes. He often comes up with childish nicknames for people and monsters. Sometimes this is intentional, but other times it is also a result of his dyslexia coming into play when he initially misreads something.

While we can't see their thoughts, the dialogue choices from other characters show a difference in age or maturity. A great example of this is with Zoe. Because she is immortal, Zoe is effectively thousands of years old. As a result, she struggles with the modern day words that the younger Thalia and Percy use. She frequently finds herself using old English words such as thee and thou. When Thalia insists that she uses more modern day words, she frequently struggles and either uses the wrong tense or puts the words in the wrong order.

## Structure

A trademark of the series has been the way that the characters transition from chapter to chapter. Rick Riordan will frequently move his characters throughout the world in-between chapters, focusing on the important parts of the story and not bogging down the narrative with unnecessary travel details. This presents a very simple structure that is appropriate for a young adult book.



Riordan also likes to keep his chapters as self-contained as possible. The title of each chapter typically acts as a summary of what that chapter is going to be about. Chapters tend to end once that initial subject has been resolved. While the quest is the overarching goal throughout the chapters, each one focuses on just a single leg of the journey and will very rarely end in any sort of cliffhanger. As such, some chapters do tend to be longer than others or will have more relevance to the plot. Each chapter builds on the last and they all come together in the end to tell a complete story.



## Quotes

Five shall go west to the goddess in chains, One shall be lost in the land without rain,  
The bane of Olympus shows the trail, Campers and Hunters combined prevail, The  
Titan's curse must one withstand, And one shall perish by a parent's hand.  
-- Oracle (Chapter 6 paragraph Page 89)

**Importance:** This quote from the Oracle sets the five heroes up for their main quest and just in general tells what the book will be about.

Boys are usually forbidden to have any contact with the Hunters. The last one to see this camp..." She looked at Zoe. "Which one was it?" That boy in Colorado," Zoe said. "You turned him into a jackalope." Ah, yes." Artemis nodded, satisfied. "I enjoy making jackalopes..."  
-- Zoe/Artemis (Chapter 3 paragraph Page 38)

**Importance:** This is one of the first introductions that readers get to the hunters. It very clearly shows their general disregard that they have for the male gender, while also emphasizing the fact that Percy is at least special enough to be allowed into their camp at all.

Let us find the dam snack bar," Zoe said. "We should eat while we can." Grover cracked a smile. "The dam snack bar?" Zoe blinked. "Yes. What is funny?" "Nothing," Grover said, trying to keep a straight face. "I could use some dam french fries." Even Thalia smiled at that. "And I need to use the dam restroom."  
-- Zoe/Grover/Thalia (Chapter 14 paragraph Page 208)

**Importance:** This little exchange at the Hoover Dam is one of the lighter moments between the characters where readers really get to see how close and friendly they have become on the quest. It also highlights the way that Riordan plays up Zoe struggling with the meanings of modern day language.

He went on asking questions. Did I fight a lot with Thalia, since she was a daughter of Zeus? (I didn't answer that one.) If Annabeth's mother was Athena, the goddess of wisdom, then why didn't Annabeth know better than to fall off a cliff? (I tried not to strangle Nico for asking that one.) Was Annabeth my girlfriend? (At this point, I was ready to stick the kid in a meat-flavored sack and throw him to the wolves.)  
-- Percy (Chapter 3 paragraph Page 36)

**Importance:** This is another small section that shows off the unique way readers get to see the world from Percy's perspective. It gives a simple but still very vivid description of his thoughts and makes it easy for readers to understand exactly where he's coming from.

There is always a way out for those clever enough to find it.  
-- Athena (Chapter 14 paragraph Page 211)



**Importance:** This quote ends up being instrumental at the end of the book, as it is what motivates Percy to free Artemis instead of trying to outright defeat Atlas. It reflects many of the other ways that Percy deals with problems throughout the book as well. While the hunters try to just fight their way through their enemies, Percy is constantly thinking on his feet to out-smart his enemies and use all of the talents of his friends.

Let the world honor you, my Huntress. Live forever in the stars.  
-- Artemis (Chapter 18 paragraph Page 279)

**Importance:** When Zoe ends up dying after the battle with Atlas, Artemis turns her into a constellation. All of the characters take a moment to honor her passing, showing just how close they became during their quest. This is especially important because it also shows that Zoe was able to get over both her issues with men as well as Greek heroes and form genuine bonds with the campers.

I know you'll do what's best for Annabeth.  
-- Sally Jackson (Chapter 7 paragraph Page 105)

**Importance:** This exchange between Percy and his mother has two significant purposes. The first is that it clearly shows how close Percy and Annabeth have become throughout the series. The second though is it also shows how close Percy is with his mother, and how supportive she's willing to be of his quest.

Wait just a minute," Ares growled. He pointed at Thalia and me. "These two are dangerous. It'd be much safer, while we've got them here—" "Ares," Poseidon interrupted, "they are worthy heroes. We will not blast my son to bits." "Nor my daughter," Zeus grumbled. "She has done well."  
-- Ares/Poseidon/Zeus (Chapter 19 paragraph Page 288)

**Importance:** Throughout the book, Thalia has struggled with the belief that Zeus cares little for her. At mount Olympus, though, he makes it perfectly clear how much he supports her, directly pointing out how proud he is of everything she has accomplished.

I will not have a sea creature destroyed, if I can help it. And I can help it.  
-- Poseidon (Chapter 19 paragraph Page 293)

**Importance:** When Poseidon makes this proclamation, it is after Percy tries to convince the other gods that the Ophiotaurus should be spared. Not only does it show him accepting responsibility for the creature, but it also shows how willing he is to support Percy.

No," I said. "I choose the prophecy. It will be about me."  
-- Percy (Chapter 20 paragraph Page 310)

**Importance:** Percy shows that he is willing to not only accept responsibility, but also that he is willing to embrace his more heroic side when he protects Nico.



I got around to explaining how the shield he'd made me last summer had been damaged in the manticore attack. "Yay!" Tyson said. "That means it was good! It saved your life!"

-- Percy/Tyson (Chapter 20 paragraph Page 301)

**Importance:** This quote shows how conversations don't always go as planned. Percy feels badly that something his brother made for him was badly damaged. But, rather than being upset, Tyson is proud that his shield did what it was designed to do and that it saved Percy's life. Also, this shows how much affection both boys have for one another, even if Tyson is, technically, a cyclops.

But seeing my mother laughing and smiling, after all the years she'd suffered with my nasty ex-stepfather, Gabe Ugliano, I couldn't help feeling happy for her.

-- Percy (Chapter 20 paragraph Page 303)

**Importance:** This quote is significant because it indicates Percy's continuing maturity throughout the series. Here, he has paused to wonder at his mother's happiness, and finds that he is happy for her that she's finally found someone who loves her and will treat her better than his former step father, Gabe.