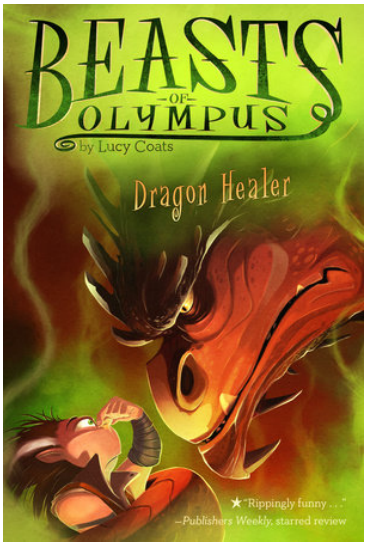
Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Dragon Healer (Beasts of Olympus, 4) by Brett Bean , Lucy Coats", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2021). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1292. Entry version as of September 14, 2026.

Brett Bean , Lucy Coats

Dragon Healer (Beasts of Olympus, 4)

United States of America (2015)

TAGS: Aphrodite Artemis Chiron / Cheiron Eos Hephaestus Hera Heracles Hestia Jason Medea Zeus



Courtesy of the publisher, Penguin Random House.

General information	
Title of the work	Dragon Healer (Beasts of Olympus, 4)
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2015
First Edition Details	Lucy Coats, *Beasts of Olympus: Dragon Healer*. Penguin Workshop USA, 2015, 144 pp.
ISBN	9780448461960
Genre	Fiction
Target Audience	Children (7–9 years)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@biu.ac.il
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

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Creators

Brett Bean (Illustrator)

Brett Bean is an American cartoonist and illustrator originally from Seattle who currently resides in California. His work has been featured in TV, films, comics, games (digital and analog) manuals and more. Brett Bean is also the creator of the *Zoo Patrol Squad* and the illustrator of *Battle Bugs*.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: April 1, 2021).

Author's profile of CGMA (accessed: April 1, 2021).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@biu.ac.il

Lucy Coats , b. 1961 (Author)

Lucy Coats is an British writer for children. She holds an MA in English Literature and Ancient History from the University of Edinburgh. She is also a member of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. In her books we can mostly find motifs from various legends and myths that she adapts for young readers. She published several picture books (including *King Ocean's Flute*, *The Animals Bedtime Storybook*), as well as novels for teenagers and young adults (including *Chosen*, *Hootcat Hill*). Among those inspired by Greek and Roman Mythology, besides the *Beasts of Olympus* series, Coats also wrote *Atticus the Storyteller's 100 Greek Myths* and *Great Beasts and Heroes – a 12 Book Series*. She also runs a blog and goes to school for

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reading sessions.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: July 4, 2018).

Twitter profile (accessed: July 4, 2018).

Bio prepared by Anna Mik, University of Warsaw, anna.m.mik@gmail.com

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Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Previous book: *Beasts of Olympus* (Series, Book 3): *Steeds of the Gods*. Next book: *Beasts of Olympus* (Series, Book 5): *Centaur School*.

Summary

This is the fourth book in the "Beasts of Olympus" series. Pandemonius (or Demon as he is most commonly refer to in the series) is the 11 year old half-mortal son of the god Pan and the mortal Carys. Demon is the official Beast Keeper of the Olympic gods and it is his responsibility to take care of the various beasts. In this story, Demon first encounters Hephaestus' fire-breathing brass bulls which were hurt by the hero Jason. Hephaestus helps him cure them. Then suddenly a girl comes to the stables and asks Demon to take care of her chariot's dragons. She confides in him that her name is Medea and that she got in trouble with Ares since she helped her boyfriend steal from the god's secret grove. She wants Demon to take care of her flying dragons while she hides from Ares.

Later, Ares arrives and takes Demon to examine his dragon on earth. When they arrive they meet with Ares' sister, Eris, who dismisses Demon as worthless. Ares threatens Demon, ordering him to care of Colin, his Colchian dragon or he will get hurt. Demon manages to persuade Ares to bring the beast to his stables. Later Demon discovers that the Dragon was banished from Olympus before due to his serious gas problem which causes terrible odour on Olympus. Demon also discovers that when the dragon cries, his tears become precious gems. The dragon is depressed, especially since Medea tricked him and caused him to lose Ares' faith in his abilities as a guard.

In order to cure him, Demon needs his special medicine box, but it has broken down, and needs to be fixed by Hephaestus, who is preoccupied with making a special necklace for Hera on Zeus' orders. Demon is frustrated and afraid since he does not know how to cure the dragon on his own. Later, Aphrodite, Artemis, Eos and Hestia pay him a visit. They threaten him, warning him to take care of the smelly dragon soon. Aphrodite also personally pleads with Hephaestus to help Demon so the god takes him to Mt. Pelion to ask Chiron for advice. There the master centaur healer tells Demon that he must

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learn how to cure the beasts on his own as well. He travels with him back to the stables and together they cure the dragon. In order to make the dragon happy again, Demon suggests that he assists Hephaestus in his workshop. From the dragon gem-tears Hephaestus creates the special necklace for Hera. Then Chiron asks Demon if he wishes to learn from him the art of healing and Demon gladly agrees.

Analysis

This story continues to explore the main themes of the series, the treatment of animals, the villainy of heroes and the poorly behaved gods. While Heracles was the main villain in the previous books, in this installment it is Jason who abused the bulls and the dragon, with the help of Medea. Demon is very adamant regarding heroes, "Heroes were mostly nothing but great big beast-battering bullies, as far as he was concerned." [location 183]. The series hence turns the role of the hero into the villain and also turns the beasts from dangerous creatures to harmless victims. This places emphasis on the message of better treatment to animals, but, by turning the tables in this way, the author also plays upon the character of hero and what it means to be a true hero. As Elizabeth Hale explains, "This is a common approach in adaptations, which critique the heroes' behaviour, and find sympathy for the villains and monsters." Kate McMullan did something similar in her "Myth-O-Mania" series.

The sense of smell pays an important part in Demon’s initial assessment of different persons and gods. He is acting similarly to the beasts for whom he cares. For example, when he first meets Medea, it is described, "she definitely wasn't a goddess, Demon knew that at once. She wasn't nearly scary enough. She wasn't a naiad or a dryad or a nymph either. The word that wormed its way into Demon's mind was ... witch. She had a kind of dry, crackly, magicky smell about her." [location 237]. From Demon's point of view, Medea is not a good person since she tricked the Colchian dragon, even though she does care for her own two winged dragons. She does seem sympathetic and cries for her beasts, yet the readers get the feeling that she is not entirely a good character. While the author does not illustrate Medea's story completely, only in bits, we understand that she betrayed her friend, the dragon, for Jason – a similar betrayal to her actions in the classical myth in which she betrayed her entire family for Jason. Her magical powers are hinted here and are not as strongly accentuated as in the myth. In our story she appears to be a

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mysterious character yet she is not the center of the story, according to the agenda of the series but rather the dragon.

The next smell belongs to Ares and it is used to give an impression of the god of war, "A smell of unwashed bodies and old blood wafted into his nostrils, and he began to hear the sound of tramping feet." [location 283]. His sister Eris is described as even worse than her brother. She talks down to Demon and cannot wait to cause mayhem on earth and shed blood. She does not even care about the dragon.

The unflattering description of the gods continue with the scene caused by Eos, Artemis and Aphrodite. They are infuriated over the bad smell the dragon causes and threaten Demon. Hestia tries to calm them as well as Demon. Being the hearth keeper, she functions as the soothing mother to Demon (when she wishes). The goddesses appear selfish and act like small children throwing a tantrum. In the accompanying illustration, there is a drawing of the three goddesses, and one appears to be dark skinned (whether Aphrodite or Eos), perhaps reflecting a desire on the part of the illustrator to show that the goddesses can be all shapes and colours.

Aphrodite goes with Demon to visit Hephaestus and try to force him to mend the box earlier, yet when he tells them that in the meanwhile Demon must find another way, she bursts into tears, stamps her feet and finally also threatens Demon. "'FIX IT!' she shouted, pointing a finger at Demon as she flounced out. 'Or I'll turn you into a myrrh tree and chop you down to make arrows for Eros!'" [location 674]. In the end, even the goddess of love is as frightening as the other goddesses when she cannot get her wish fast enough.

The dragon Colin himself is the character to which the readers might relate most. His only friend was Medea and he feels lonely, unloved and unwanted, and like an outcast, because of his health problem. He was betrayed and deserted and now he feels like everyone hates him and he also doubts himself. In the end, he also finds his purpose and place within the Olympic society. Demon himself also felt lonely when he first arrived to Olympus hence he can sympathize with dragon's feelings. These feelings of loneliness are also common in books aimed for older children and carry a message of empowerment, that one can find his/her place.

In the end, it is Chiron who, true to his mythological character, acts as Demon's mentor and teacher and offers to teach him how to cure the

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	beasts (in the story he is referred to as Zeus' brother, perhaps in an attempt to draw these two characters as caring and morally good in contrast with the other divine characters). There is an important message here: Demon cannot rely on the medicine box all the time; he must learn the profession himself and rely on his own skills to help others.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aphrodite Artemis Chiron / Cheiron Eos Hephaestus Hera Heracles Hestia Jason Medea Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Animals Conflict Emotions Family Good vs evil Heroism Humour Integrity Journeys
Addenda	The review refers to the Kindle edition (9781848125490). The illustrator of this Kindle edition is David Roberts and the publisher is Piccadilly Press, London. See under "Addenda" *Beasts of Olympus* (Series, Book 1): *Beasts Keeper*.

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