Kimberly MacNeill, "Entry on: The Titan’s Curse (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, 3) by Rick Riordan", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/637. Entry version as of November 01, 2026.

Rick Riordan

The Titan’s Curse (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, 3)

United States

TAGS: Atlas Manticore Twelve Labours of Heracles



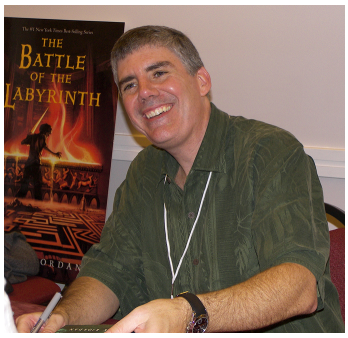


We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Titan’s Curse (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, 3)
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Details	Rick Riordan, *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Titan’s Curse*. New York City: Disney Hyperion, 2007, 294 pp.
ISBN	9780141321264
Official Website	rickriordan.co.uk (accessed: July 12, 2018)
Awards	2009 – Premio El Templo de las Mil Puertas for Mejor novela nacional perteneciente a saga
Genre	Action and adventure fiction, Alternative histories (Fiction), Fantasy fiction, Mythological fiction, Novels
Target Audience	Crossover (Aimed at ages 9+)
Author of the Entry	Kimberly MacNeill, University of Roehampton, macneilk@roehampton.ac.uk
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Creators



Rick Riordan by Larry D. Moore, 2007. Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons, licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 (accessed: December 22, 2021).

Rick Riordan , b. 1964
(Author)

Rick Riordan previously taught History and English at middle school in the American education system. He began writing mystery novels for adult readers before creating the *Percy Jackson* series, which began as a bedtime story for his son. Prior to *Percy Jackson*, his adult crime novels the *Tres Navarre* series received numerous nominations and awards. Most notably the final novel in the series, *Rebel Island*, won the Anthony Award, Shamus Award and The Edgar Allan Poe Award – the "big three" of the mystery genre. Though it is through the success of *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* and its subsequent purchase by Disney which has led Riordan to leave teaching to pursue writing as a full-time career. He is now one of the *New York Times* bestselling authors.

Source:

Q&A with the Author (accessed: January 10, 2018).

Bio prepared by Kimberly MacNeill, University of Roehampton, macneilk@roehampton.ac.uk

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Additional information

Adaptations

Audiobook: English, German, Polish, Swedish

Graphic novel: *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Titan's Curse: The Graphic Novel.* Adapted by Robert Venditti, Art by Attila Futaki, Disney Book Group, 2013.

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

- *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*,
- *Percy Jackson and the Sea of Monsters*,
- *Percy Jackson and the Battle of the Labyrinth*,
- *Percy Jackson and the Last Olympian,*
- *Percy Jackson: The Demigod Files.*

The Heroes of Olympus series:

- *The Lost Hero, The Son of Neptune,*
- *The Mark of Athena,*
- *The House of Hades,*
- *The Blood of Olympus,*
- *The Demigod Diaries.*

Percy Jackson and the Greek Gods,

Percy Jackson and the Greek Heroes,

Percy Jackson: The Ultimate Guide.

Summary

The third instalment of the *Percy Jackson* series begins with Percy, Annabeth and Thalia on a rescue mission. Sally Jackson drops the three off at a boarding school in Maine to collect two half-bloods of unknown parentage. During the mission, they discover that the head teacher is actually the Manticore. After being separated from Thalia, Annabeth and Grover, Percy fights the Manticore alone trying to defend the half-blood siblings. He is unsuccessful, and after being poisoned by the Manticore's sting, he is taken prisoner along with the two children. Thalia, Annabeth and Grover catch up and a battle ensues on the cliff top. Despite being outnumbered, the Manticore maintains the upper-hand and the battle seems lost; Artemis and her

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Hunters arrive and rescue the group. However, the Manticore escapes by jumping off the cliff, taking Annabeth with him.

The friends grieve as the Hunters make camp and the half-bloods introduce themselves as Bianca and Nico de Angelo. Both have been thus far unaware of their parentage, but Nico is knowledgeable about Greek mythology due to a Top Trumps style card game he plays and his collection of figurines. Percy discovers that Annabeth was considering joining the Hunters, which would give her immortality in return for her rejection of men. Percy is visibly hurt by this. Thalia and one of the Hunters, Zoe Nightshade, are noticeably hostile towards each other for reasons unknown. Artemis declares that she must hunt the beast who has returned and that her Hunters must stay at Camp Half-blood until her quest is complete much to the chagrin of Zoe. Apollo escorts the group to camp in a flying school bus. Before leaving Bianca takes the oath and becomes a Hunter.

Back at camp, a game of Capture the Flag ends abruptly when the Oracle uncharacteristically leaves her attic to speak to Zoe. The Oracle notifies the Hunters that Artemis is in danger and five heroes must undertake a quest to save her; the quest must be joined by both campers and hunters, but two will die. Perplexed Thalia, Bianca, Zoe and Grover set out on the quest. Nico and Percy are prevented from joining as Hunters cannot keep the company of boys. Percy nevertheless follows them using Annabeth's cap of invisibility and riding Blackjack (the Pegasus he rescued in book 2, accessed: January 29, 2019). He also promises Nico that he will protect Bianca. Percy catches up with them at the Smithsonian where he also encounters The General, along with Luke. Luke looks older and weary. Percy witnesses how The General creates a zombie army using dragons' teeth; he then directs these troops towards Thalia's group. Percy intervenes and defeats the Nemean Lion, receiving the skin (in the form if a coat) as a reward. Percy and the reunited group narrowly manage to escape on a car transporter sent by Apollo, who is concerned for his sister.

In Maine, the group encounter the Erymanthian Boar whom Grover communicates with to assist their escape. Grover also senses the brief presence of the god Pan. Hiding in a junkyard, Percy meets Aphrodite who implies his quest to rescue Annabeth is a quest of love and thereby worthy of her help. Through Aphrodite Percy discovers that they are in the scrapyard of Hephaestus and that they must not take anything. Bianca however finds a small figurine of a god to complete

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Nico`s set. This wakes the bronze man, Talos, who attacks the group. Bianca manages to crawl inside Talos and stop him, but is killed in the process.

Disheartened, the group head to the Hoover Dam where they once again fight The General's monsters. Athena appears to Percy and advises him help is always there if you look in the right place. Percy also encounters a mortal who can see through the mist and is aware of the monsters. This is cut short when Thalia asks the Golden angels who guard the Dam for help as they are votives to Zeus. They comply and fly the group the rest of the journey to San Francisco. Using the tip given to him by Apollo, Percy seeks out Nereus, the old man of the sea, who might know both the location of Artemis and the beast she was seeking. After a tussle, Percy gains the information he needs and the group head to the Garden of the Hesperides calling in on Annabeth's father and stepmother on the way. Zoe is revealed to be the daughter of The General, who is in fact Atlas. Annabeth and Artemis are located in the garden, with the latter holding up the sky. Luke arrives on his ship, the Princess Andromeda, and a battle ensues ending with Luke falling from the cliff. Artemis transforms Zoe is into a constellation after she is mortally injured by the dragon Ladon. Atlas once again holds up the sky and the remaining heroes have a surprising rescuer, namely Annabeth's father.

Mr Chase flies them to Olympus in order that Artemis arrives in time for the Counsel of Gods. With all of the Olympians in attendance, the gods question whether they should kill Percy and Thalia because of the prophecy and danger they represent. The decision is overturned and they unexpectedly find Mr D on their side once again. They also learn that Luke has survived his fall. Dejected, the four return to camp where Percy informs Nico of Bianca's death, giving him the figurine she found: that of the god Hades. Angrily he tells Percy that they are now enemies. Four of the zombie skeletons then attack Percy, but are swallowed by a crack in the Pavilion floor inadvertently created by Nico.

It is then that Percy realises that Bianca and Nico are children of Hades. Percy and Annabeth conclude that the siblings were born before the oath was sworn by the brothers: Nico and Bianca spent seventy years in the Lotus Casino (where time stands still – refer to *The Lightening Thief*), placing their birth prior to the end of the Second World War when the oath was made. Due to an already nervous atmosphere on Olympus, Percy and Annabeth decide to keep

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the truth about the Di Angelos' parentage a secret.

Analysis

The third book continues with the theme of family as seen in the first instalments of the series. This time the focus is on step- and adopted families. For Zoe, Bianca and Thalia their abandonment by their own families leads them to find a replacement in Artemis' Hunters.

Love features more pronouncedly as the themes of parental, sibling and romantic love are explored. Mr Chase's love for Annabeth sees him risking death to rescue her from Mount Tam. Though a mortal, he is able to come to both the heroes and Artemis's aid using his skills as pilot. Whilst hinting that mortals also have their strengths, it also serves as proof for Annabeth that her father cares for her, something which has been in doubt for her since the first book.

Annabeth's relationship with her father is contrasted with that of Zoe and her father Atlas. He regards her as a traitor and has abandoned all paternal duty and care. This ultimately leads to her death and enhances the unnatural nature of the Titan. Percy's own family life is changing with the introduction of his mother's boyfriend, Paul Blofis. Percy comments on the subtle changes in his mother in the form of increased confidence. Perhaps his lack of reaction to his mother's partner is caused by the lack of time to dwell on the matter. Whereas an average teenager going through puberty may act negatively towards a new partner for their parent, Percy is busy fighting monsters and trying to save the world.

Given Percy's age and the first-person narrative of the book, it is difficult not to make comparisons with and contrasts to Sue Townsend's *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Aged 13 ¾* (1982). Both protagonists are dealing with the emergence of romantic feelings and puberty, although the ways in which they deal with the situations are starkly contrasted. Mole, with his mundane life and disconnection from war (the Falklands War), is free to obsess over every interaction with a girl named Pandora and to ponder his own (self considered) greatness. Percy possibly sits somewhere between Mole and the character Peter in C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950). For the latter, puberty doesn't even factor in the narrative as he has experienced both the real War, from which he has been evacuated, and the fantastical war he is thrown into via the wardrobe. Percy's acknowledgement of some of the changes also reflects the

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different eras and societies Riordan and Lewis are/were writing in.

Percy's sense of betrayal on hearing that Annabeth was going to join the Hunters is twofold: it would signal the end of their friendship, but also, as Aphrodite mentions, Percy's quest is one of love in the rescue of Annabeth. With the onset of puberty, the dynamic between the two friends begins to change as they begin to view each other differently. Again, the usual teenage angst is offset by a life-threatening situation and there is little time for reflection or dwelling. This is perhaps best exemplified by the interruption of Percy's and Annabeth's dance by the Manticore attack at the beginning of the book. After this exchange, Annabeth is missing, presumed dead, for most of the book with the only real reference to her in Percy's dreams which are in fact visions of her plight. Despite her physical absence however, she is never far from Percy's mind. The act of loss forces him to consider his feelings towards her. This is similar to the effect of his brother Tyson's death in *Sea of Monsters*.

Familial love and loyalty are further explored in the dynamic between the three sets of siblings in the book: Artemis and Apollo and Bianca and Nico. Apollo and Artemis are depicted as a pair of bickering siblings who have squabbled over the millennia. In a time of need, however, Apollo breaks Zeus' rule and directly intervenes in the quest in order to help Percy rescue his sister. He sends both practical help (in the form of transport) and directs Percy to Neleus. This relationship is perhaps familiar to many siblings, who, despite getting older, often return to the dynamic of their childhood when reunited. For Bianca, her position as the elder sibling and their abandonment have brought a heavy responsibility for her young age. Though she is close to Nico, she chooses to join the Hunters.

For Bianca, joining the Hunters provides an escape from the parental role she has assumed. In the case of Thalia, joining the Hunters offers an escape from the prophecy of the child of the Big Three, for, by joining the Hunters, she will remain fifteen for eternity and therefore never reach sixteen, the age at which the prophecy is due to be fulfilled. Both Bianca and Thalia have recently returned to the real world and as such have few ties to it. Zoe's position in the Hunters comes from abandonment in both familial and romantic love. Hercules betrayed Zoe and she lost everything. It has led her to have a deep mistrust of heroes.

During the course of the story, Percy undertakes many Herculean

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	labours and his sword, Riptide, is revealed to have been the sword given to Hercules by Zoe. This exacerbates her distrust of him, but Percy continues to prove he does not fit the traditional heroic model and will risk all to save his friends, especially Annabeth. Before her death, Zoe is content that Percy is a deserving owner of Riptide.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Atlas Manticore Twelve Labours of Heracles
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Coming of age Emotions Family Friendship Heritage Humanity Identity Individuality Knowledge Learning Pop culture references Sacrifice Values
Further Reading	Paul, J., "The Half-Blood Hero: Percy Jackson and Mythmaking in the Twenty-First Century" in H. Hoyle and V. Zajko, eds., *A Handbook to the Reception of Classical Mythology*, New Jork: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017, 231–242.

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