Kimberly MacNeill, "Entry on: The Last Olympian (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, 5) by Rick Riordan", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/964. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Rick Riordan

The Last Olympian (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, 5)

United States (2009)

TAGS: Achilles Cyclops / Cyclopes Monsters Olympians Patroclus Pegasus Theseus Titans



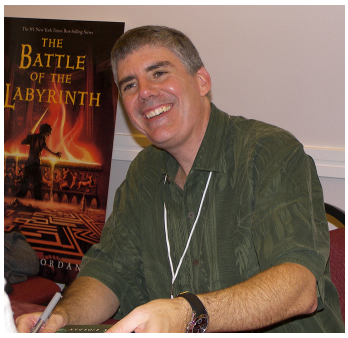


We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Last Olympian (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, 5)
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2009
First Edition Details	Rick Riordan, *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Last Olympian*. New York City: Disney Hyperion, 2009, 381 pp.
ISBN	9780141321288
Official Website	percyjackson.co.uk (accessed: March 3, 2020).
Awards	2010 – Soaring Eagle Book Award
Genre	Fantasy fiction, Novels
Target Audience	Children (Aimed at ages 9+)
Author of the Entry	Kimberly MacNeill, University of Roehampton, macneilk@roehampton.ac.uk
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

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

Translation

Basque: *Olinpoko Azken Heroia*, mezulari, 2016.

Bulgarian: *Последният олимпиец* [Posledniyat olimpiets], trans. Vladimir Molev, Egmont B'lgaria, 2011.

Catalan: *L'últim heroi de l'Olimp*, Salamandra, 2015.

Chinese: □□□□, trans. □□□,□□□□□□□□□□□□, 2010.

Czech: *Poslední z bohů*, trans. Dana Chodilová, Fragment, 2011.

Danish: *Den sidste olymper*, Carlsen, 2012.

Dutch: *De laatste Olympiër*, trans. Marce Noordenbos, De Boekerij, 2011.

Estonian: *Percy Jackson ja viimne olümplane*, trans. Eva Finch, Pegasus, 2018.

Finnish: *Jumalten sota*, trans. Ilkka Rekiaro, Otava, 2012.

French: *Le Dernier Olympien*, trans. Mona de Pracontal, France Loisirs, 2011.

Georgian : *უკანასკნელი ოლიმპიელი*, trans. ნიკა სამუშია, ბაკურ სულაკაურის გამომცემლობა, 2017.

Greek (modern): *Ο τελευταίος Ολύμπιος* [O teleutaíos Olýmpios], trans. Anastasia Lampropoulou, Papyros, 2011.

German: *Die letzte Göttin*, Carlsen, 2011.

Hebrew: 2009 ,□□□ ,□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□'□ □□□□ .

Hungarian: *Az utolsó olimposzi*, trans. Acsai Roland, Könyvmolyképző Kiadó Kft, 2012.

Indonesian: *Dewi Olympia Terakhir*, trans. Reni Indardini, Mizan

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Fantasi, 2010.

Italian: *Lo scontro finale* , trans. Loredana Baldinucci, Mondadori, 2012.

Norwegian: *Den siste olympier*, trans. Torleif Sjøgren-Erichsen, Schibsted Forlag, 2011.

Persian:2011 ,1392, □□□□□□□ □□□□□ .

Polish: *Ostatni Olimpijczyk*, trans. Agnieszka Fulińska, Galeria Książki, 2010.

Portuguese: *O Último Olimpiano*, Raquel Zampil, Intrínseca, 2010.

Romanian: *Ultimul Olimpian* , Editura Art, 2016.

Russian: *Перси Джексон и последнее пророчество* [Persi Dzhekson i poslednee prorochestvo], Eksmo, 2010.

Serbian: *Poslednji bog Olimpa*, Stylos Art, 2011.

Slovak: *Percy Jackson – Vojna bohov*, trans. Ján Durčo, Fragment, 2011.

Spanish: *El Ultimo Heroe del Olimpo (Percy Jackson y los dioses del Olimpo 5)*, Turtleback Books, 2012.

Swedish: *Striden om Olympen*, trans. Torun Lidfeldt Bager, Bonnier Carlsen, 2012.

Thai: □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□, trans. □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□, □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□.

Turkish: *Son Olimposlu*, Dogan ve Egmont Yayincilik, 2009.

Vietnamese: *Vị Thần Cuối Cùng,* trans. Nguyễn Lệ Chi, Thời Đại, Chibooks, 2011.

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief,

Percy Jackson and the Sea of Monsters,

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Percy Jackson and The Titan's Curse,

Percy Jackson and the Battle of the Labyrinth,

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

In the final volume of the Percy Jackson series, Percy's summer vacation is cut short by a mission to blow up the Princess Andromeda, the ship of Luke (son of Hermes). The plan goes awry and Beckendorf (son of Hephaestus) sacrifices himself to ensure the mission's success. A dejected Percy returns to Camp Half-blood with news of Beckendorf's death and the existence of a spy at the camp. In light of the recent events, Chiron sends Percy to the Oracle to hear the prophesy of the Big Three (Zeus, Poseidon and Hades) in its entirety. It is revealed that on their sixteenth birthday a child of the Big Three will decide the fate of Olympus and will also die. Percy's own sixteenth birthday is in five days' time.

Percy and Annabeth (daughter of Athena) undertake chores in an effort to restore some normality, but are interrupted by the arrival of Nico (son of Hades). After a visit to the home of Luke's mother confirms Nico's fears about Luke's plans, the pair travel to Orpheus'

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entrance to the Underworld in Central Park. There they encounter Percy's friend, the satyr Grover, who has been missing for two months under the spell of Morpheus. Nico's plan to make Percy invincible using the River Styx is revealed. Luke has already undergone the process, enabling him to host the spirit of Kronos. Despite a warning from the shade of Achilles, Percy undergoes the baptism and returns to the living world. Nico remains in the Underworld in an attempt to persuade an apathetic Hades to help in the fight against Kronos.

On his return Percy, assembles the other campers, led by Annabeth, in New York. It is noted that Clarisse (daughter of Ares) and the house of Ares are absent, refusing to fight due to offended honour. The campers travel to Olympus, housed in the Empire State Building, to seek a council with the gods. However, aside from Hestia, Olympus is empty, as the other gods are fighting the Titan Typhon. Hermes brings the news that no help is coming. Looking out on the city, Percy and Annabeth see that everyone is asleep under Morpheus' spell, and so the invasion has begun.

Thalia (daughter of Zeus) and the Huntresses of Artemis arrive to join the battle and the campers divide into groups, according to their Olympian parent, to defend different sections of the city. Percy and Annabeth themselves go to the confluence of the East and Hudson rivers where Percy trades the sand dollar given to him by Poseidon for help (the sand dollar carries the power of Poseidon and cleans away pollution). In return, East and Hudson sink Kronos/Luke's armies traveling by boat. With the protection of the Styx, Percy single-handedly fights several monsters, many of whom he has fought previously. In the skirmish, Annabeth is wounded and Percy uses his power over water to retreat. During a brief break in battle, Prometheus gives Percy Pandora's jar and an offer: give up hope and Kronos will spare the survivors.

When the battle commences, despite some victories, Percy and the campers are losing and quickly find themselves outnumbered, defending the entrance to Olympus. Silena, revealed as Kronos' spy, is killed while disguised as Clarisse in an attempt to get the House of Ares to join the fight. The battle seems lost until the surprise arrival of Percy's mother and stepfather, Chiron and the centaurs, and Hades and his army of the dead. With these reinforcements, Percy is able to go to Olympus with Annabeth to prepare to face Kronos/Luke. When Kronos enters Olympus, his hold over Luke is briefly broken. During this time, Luke begs for forgiveness and asks Percy to let him die by

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his own hand. Though reluctant, Percy trusts Luke and hands him Annabeth's dagger. Luke is then able to stab himself before Kronos takes control again, slaying the Titan. The Olympians return and reward the demigods for their bravery and actions. Hades and Nico are welcomed to Olympus as heroes and Percy is offered immortality as a reward for his actions. He respectfully declines, preferring to stay in the mortal realm with Annabeth. As an alternative, Percy asks that all gods and goddesses and their children come to be recognised, reminding Zeus that the rejection of the demigods and lesser deities was the cause of the war. Zeus accepts and Percy and the others return to camp to celebrate. Rachel Dare (a mortal girl with power of foresight) also travels to camp and is made the new Delphic Oracle, as Hades' curse is now lifted. Percy and Annabeth finally reveal their feeling for one another and kiss at the bottom of the camp's lake in a bubble made by Percy.

Analysis

The final instalment of the series sees many of the central themes of the books come full circle: loyalty, family and friendship form the core of the current book.

The relationship between parent and child, and families has been explored throughout the five-book series. In this final volume, a small throwaway comment made by Percy is perhaps one of the most poignant: he refers to his mother and new stepfather as simply "my parents". Though linguistically superficial, this carries deep weight and meaning. It concludes a narrative separate from Percy's heroic journey: that of his home life. In *The Lightening Thief*, Percy's stepfather Gabe subjects both Percy and his mother Sally to an emotionally abusive and humiliating relationship. Percy and Sally's relationship itself mimics that of Telemachus and Penelope, with Gabe representing the suitors. Percy supports and respects his mother and feels loved. This is in contrast to most of his fellow campers, who feel abandoned by their mortal parent in addition to their divine one. This can be compared to the contrast between the Telemachus/Penelope dynamic and the Orestes/Clytemnestra relationship, although unlike Telemachus, Percy recognises not his biological father, but Paul as his parent, this shows an an acceptance not only that he is part of Sally's life, but an important part of Percy's life too.

In his introduction to the 2009 Penguin relaunch of Lancelyn Green's *Tales of the Greek Heroes,* Riordan notes that he was heavily

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influenced by the book in his writing of the series and that it was his first experience of the Greek myths. It may be inferred that *Percy Jackson series* is a retelling not of the Greek Myths, but of Lancelyn Green's myths and a homage to Riordan's own mythical childhood.

At the beginning of this book, Percy borrows Paul's car to learn to drive. This is traditionally a father-son experience, but one that Percy can never share with his biological father Poseidon. The close relationship Percy shares with Paul is in contrast to the imagery of how at odds Percy is with Poseidon's realm. In previous encounters, Percy has met Poseidon on somewhat neutral territory, but at Poseidon's palace Percy has the opportunity to see his father's true life; one that he is not part of. Percy himself declares that he does not recognise Poseidon when he sees him in his underwater kingdom. Unlike Paul, Poseidon's goddess wife rejects Percy. The mortal realm offers some much-needed stability for Percy amidst his chaotic mythological relationships. As an actual god, Poseidon enacts the fantasy of an absent parent having a higher duty, which explains their abandonment of their child. Poseidon, like all of the gods, has abandoned his offspring because they are seen as a hinderance to his divine duties.

The motif of redemption, which has been a recurring trope, is the main focus of the book with Luke, one of the main antagonists, ultimately choosing to save Olympus and the other half blood demigods. Percy gives Luke another chance, allowing him to die a hero. It also cements the idea that Percy is a modern hero who puts the needs of others above his own glory. This is reflected by Percy's twist on Theseus' return to Athens. Unlike Theseus, Percy does not forget to provide a sign that he has been victorious: lighting the flame on Olympus blue to reassure his mother he is safe. This is in contrast to Theseus, who in basking in his own glory, forgets to change the ships sails, leading his father to jump to his death in grief.

Percy's encounter with Achilles in the Underworld is reminiscent of Odysseus' nekyia, warning against the quest for personal glory in favour of living. In addition to Percy giving Luke the chance to be a hero, he rejects Zeus' offer of immortality in order to stay in the mortal realm. This is the second time Percy has turned down the chance to be a god as Calypso makes the offer for him to stay on the island with her. By hearing Hestia's story of giving up her seat amongst the twelve Olympians to avoid a war, Percy is taught that the greatest victories sometimes come without glory.

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	In a minor side-story, Silena uses the myth of Patroclus' action Troy by wearing Clarisse's armour into battle to, in this case, rouse the house of Ares into action. Unlike in ancient versions of the myth, there is no romance between Silena and Clarisse, only friendship. Silena is moved to action through a wish to be redeemed for her actions as Kronos' spy.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Achilles Cyclops / Cyclopes Monsters Olympians Patroclus Pegasus Theseus Titans
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Coming of age Family Friendship Heritage Humanity Identity Individuality Knowledge Sacrifice
Further Reading	Paul, Joanna, "Percy Jackson and Myth-making in the Twenty-First Century", in Zajko, V. and H. Hoyle, eds., *A Handbook to the Reception of Classical Mythology,* John Wiley and Sons Inc., 2017, 231–242.

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