

Percy Jackson and the Curse of Aphrodite

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Percy Jackson and the Curse of Aphrodite

by [Farrahwaylande](#)

Summary

Okay, so maybe talking Smack about the Goddess of love in the middle of a tunnel of love wasn't my best Idea...

there's not much more to it honestly, I just kinda screwed up, and now I have to get Zeus' Master Bolt back In heels.

Notes

Hi! I've had this Idea wracking around i my head ever since the first time I read the Lightning Thief, where Percy, during the Tunnel of Love, ends up getting Gender swapped.

I have since Come out as Trans, and am now going back and doing this all over again and making Percy Trans as well, because why not?

Now Beta Read by: TheOneThatWanderedIn

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

The wierdest Mugging I've ever been a part of

“Honestly, how thrilling can *Love* be? Whenever I thought of the olympians, I felt like there was a power gap, Y’know? The sun, the moon, insanity, the sky, the ocean, marriage (debatably), crafting, *two* war gods, then... love. It felt a bit underwhelming, I guess?” I commented offhandedly as Annabeth and I slid down the side of the bowl.

“Wow, you must have a death wish or something: you just insulted eleven of the twelve olympians, *and* forgot Demeter.” Annabeth pointed out as she regained her feet at the bottom of the bowl.

“What?” I grumbled sarcastically. “They never listened to us before, why start now?” I grabbed Annabeth's hand. If she was going to be in this bowl with me, we were sticking together. I didn't like the way this place felt.

Annabeth sputtered, desperately trying to form a coherent sentence, and I tossed a look back at her. Seeing the vibrant shade of red her face had adopted, and looking down at my hand in hers, I realized my mistake.

I was holding Annabeth's hand.

In the middle of the **THRILL RID O' LOVE**.

I let go without a sound, my own face incredibly hot as I turned away and stalked to the Boat in the center of the empty bowl.

It wasn't until we reached the boat that I noticed that the wind seemed to be picking up... and existing... in a bowl.

“Something's wrong.” Annabeth put words to my thoughts as I peered into the abandoned boat, and saw Ares' shield. Placed delicately next to it was a silk scarf, glimmering faintly like a four-year-old's arts and craft project covered in the inevitable glitter. Somehow though, it actually felt... tasteful? Something in the wind changed, and my nose caught on the scent of strawberries, cherries and a myriad of other delicate fragrances.

Tearing my eyes away from the scarf, I saw that there were Mirrors surrounding the entire Bowl, which explained why Ares and Aphrodite would come all the way down here.

“Heh, they wanted to make out while looking at their favorite people.” I said to nobody in particular. The wind picked up as the other fragrances gave way to the overpowering scent of women's perfume, assaulting my nose on a whole new level.

“And who would that be, Seaweed Brain?” Annabeth asked from behind me, shaking herself free from her reverie.

I reached out to grab the shield, and opened my mouth to respond. “Themsel-” my witty remark was cut off as scarf seemingly caught by the wind now whipping around me,

slammed into my face.

“Percy!” Grover shouted in fear from the edge of the bowl. As I tried to pry the scarf clear of my face, it wrapped itself around my head, solidly covering my mouth. But as I pulled on the ends of it, it only got longer, tangling in my fingers as the smooth fabric slid right past my hands.

In shock, I took a few steps back and my foot caught on the scarf, which had stretched down to the ground. Now thoroughly panicking, I fell onto my rear.

I tried to open my mouth, to shout for help, to call out to anyone, but I was instead greeted with a mouthful of perfume covered silk. I retched as the noxious perfume wormed its way into my lungs, and again attempted to pull the soft, smooth fabric over my face. The silk continued to resist my efforts, and it covered my eyes.

Some part of me was vaguely aware of Annabeth trying to grab the scarf herself, but somehow my own attempts to rid myself of the thing were confounding hers, and I flailed out of reach.

The scarf slid across my body, and I knew something was happening to me. My skin was crawling, and it felt like things inside were... *shifting*. You know that feeling when your shirt gets caught as you put your sweater on? It was like that, but on every inch of my skin simultaneously.

“PERCY!” Annabeth shouted at me. “STOP MOVING!” She tried to grab the Scarf again, but I felt something slam against my face I was thrown backwards into the boat. Obnoxiously, the scarf chose that moment to turn back into an inanimate object, drooping against the boat as I caught my breath. “Are you okay?!” Annabeth freaked out a little as she ran up to the boat. Leaning over the side of it, she held out a hand for me to take.

I took it gratefully, and climbed to my feet. “I’m fine, just gotta get this thing-” I was cut off yet again as my backpack caught on the shield. The shield was pulled it up with me, and... *SNAP!* Far too late, I saw the string that had been attached to it. The shield crashed back to into the boat, as the awful grinding of metal on metal filled the bowl.

Slowly, agonizingly, the Cupid statues dotting the edge of the bowl began to rotate. On gears that betrayed decades of stillness, they pulled back the tired strings of decrepit bows, and loosed rotten arrows across the bowl.

Regardless of the rest of the machinery however, the celestial bronze fibers that followed behind the arrow held true, and I could tell at a glance that there was no getting through the mesh they formed.

“We need to get out of here...” I said, trying to clear my throat of the perfume that scratched at it. Annabeth was pressed against me; she’d been shocked badly enough by the shield clattering to the boat’s bottom that she fell on top of me, and now she was trying (rather unsubtly) not to look at me.

“Duh, Kelp Head!” Annabeth kept her gaze firmly pointed away from me as she tried to get her footing, only for the scarf to tangle further, pulling her deeper into my arms.

“GET THIS THING OFF OF ME!” Annabeth shouted, her face visibly burning as the scarf pressed us together at the bottom of the boat.

“I’m TRYING! I thought *you* were supposed to be the smart one!” I wiggled in place, which only seemed to make the situation worse as the scarf pinned my arms in place around Annabeth.

With the benefit of hindsight however, I can truly tell you that it was only then that things started actually getting bad.

The heads of the cupid statues popped open, revealing cameras, lights, and a range of other recording equipment in their place. One cupid received a beret, a fold up chair and a megaphone, which immediately began blaring: “**LIVE TO OLYMPUS IN T-MINUS ONE MINUTE!**”

“HEPHAESTUS! He set this as a trap! He was trying to catch Aphrodite and Ares in the act! But... Oh no.” As usual, Annabeth figured out what was happening in the time it took me to process what I was seeing. Then her face became red hot again, and she hid her face.

I lost my cool a little. “But What, BUT WHAT!?” I screamed. Annabeth was my best shot at survival, so If SHE was scared I didn’t like my chances.

“They’re going to think that we’re a thing!” Annabeth forced out as she buried her face into my shirt. (wait.. had it always been hot pink?)

“THAT’S WHAT YOU’RE SCARED OF?!” I shouted, before bursting into a coughing fit as I tried to rid my throat of whatever was making it sound so odd.

“If my mom thinks that I like you... I can only imagin-”

Annabeth didn’t finish her sentence before Grover chimed in: “SPIDERS!”

“**SPIDERS?!?**” Annabeth squealed in terror as the mirrors popped open, revealing a wave of celestial bronze creepy crawlies that began scuttling towards the boat.

The terror on Annabeth's face was like none other I'd ever seen from her. She wasn't afraid of social repercussions, or her angering her mother.

She was petrified of the notion of these spiders getting to her... of what might happen if they did.

“**LIVE TO OLYMPUS IN T-MINUS 30 SECONDS!**” Annabeth was crying, her tears soaking puddles into my now pink Waterland shirt as the spiders scraped up against the hull of the boat, building in number and piling up towards the rim.

The tears falling from Annabeth's eyes were clear and hot, her face red from embarrassment and fear. Her tears pressed against me, and she pulled herself closer into my shirt.

Her tears pressed into my skin.

Her tears.

Water.

Duh.

“T-MINUS 15 SECONDS!”

The noise crashed down around me deafeningly. The announcer’s shouts, Annabeth’s screams, Grover’s helpless cries, the spiders, the scraping of concrete as the cupids grabbed their recording equipment, and a new one sound, slowly building and overpowering: the roaring of the ocean.

“T-MINUS 10 SECONDS!”

Annabeth, The Ocean, Spiders, Grover.

“T-MINUS 5 SECONDS!!!”

Annabeth, The Ocean.

“3!”

The Ocean.

“2!”

No, not the Ocean.

“1!”

That’s *Me*.

“Z, E, R, O!!!!”

I grit my teeth.

“LIGHTS!”

The scarf glowed pink, contrasting against the light green that everything else was shining.

“CAMERA!”

And I ***PULLED***.

“ACTIO-”

The voice was cut off as a tidal wave of murky water erupted from every old pipe, every leaky faucet and every run down attraction in this decrepit structure, engulfing and

overpowering everything in its path. In seconds, the cupids were stones, and the spiders were gone.

The cameras were still rolling, but I couldn't afford to get distracted.

The Scarf seemed to seep into the water behind us as I willed the boat to hold together. As the water level rose, the boat got close enough to the cusp of the bowl to shred us against the net if we were still sitting up within it. I didn't know how, but I knew where we were in the ride, and where we needed to go, and even though I wasn't able to see anything outside of the boat, I pointed us towards the tunnel and we sailed into the darkness.

Annabeth was still screaming as we dipped, smashed, whipped, and crashed against the walls in a way that just barely allowed the boat to remain intact as we raced past all the lovey dovey dioramas of the ride.

Then, we were exposed to the open air once more. I sensed that there was a roadblock in our way, a large obstruction that acted like a dam.

I could feel the place we needed to jump to to survive, but there was a problem: we were still trapped inside the boat. The only way it would work is if we took it with us.

So I did.

We sailed through the air, the scarf loosening as we reached the top of our arc. Finally, it released me from the boat and Annabeth, sending us rolling across the pavement as the boat shattered into wood chips. The shield slammed into an abandoned photo board, forming a large shield shaped hole in the wood.

Catching my breath, I stood, and the scarf bunched up on the ground before me. Shimmering, it shrank back to a scale that obeyed the laws of physics.

I waddled over to the Photo Board, and pulled the shield out of the wood. Handing it to Annabeth, I stood directly in the spotlight somehow stilled trained on us. Annabeth hid behind me, face red and eyes puffy, but I stood tall. An interesting sight maybe, considering how Annabeth was taller than me now, but I had something to say.

When in doubt, make a reference no-one in the audience will understand.

“THAT’S ALL FOLKS! If I don’t see ya, and I hope that’s true, good day, good evening, and GOOD NIGHT!” I roared at the camera. Frustratingly, I was undermined by my voice, which settled at a resonance that was just as far from Annabeth’s as my old one, but in the other way.

The cupid statues, which moments ago had been thoroughly pulverized, returned to their original poses, concrete chunks merging, reforming from their places, scattered on the ground.

I was pulled back to reality(ope, there goes gravity) when I felt someone touch my shoulder.

“Uh... Perce?” it was Grover, he looked awkward, more so than usual, and was pointing at... something.

“What's up? Did I get a stain?” I asked, more than a little confused as to why that was my first thought as I looked down at myself.

I froze at what I saw.

My super corny outfit had shifted, changed. Gone were the ruby red unbuttoned Hawaiian shirt, clashing green swim trunks, and dubiously waterproof shoes.

Now, I wore a hot pink swimming shirt emblazoned with a large yellow flower on it. Beneath was a one piece bathing suit that matched the color perfectly. Worst of all: a pair of perfectly normal Sandals.

“...what?” I muttered to myself as I searched for a mirror to investigate further, as I approached the door to the bathrooms I heard Annabeth gasp, and saw Grover quicken his pace. Feeling denim bleed into existence and rest against my mid-thigh, I began running.

When I reached the bathroom, I did a double take. I was still wearing the same pink shirt, but now I wore a pair of Daisy Duke shorts over the Bathing suit, and I noticed a strange sensation in the sandals that had replaced my stolen surf shoes. Somehow, my sandals had the slightest heel to them.

Then I saw my face.

“...Mom?” I reached out to her, only for my hands to hit the mirror, which cracked.

That's... *me*.

My hair was roughly the same length, but now it was pulled into a high ponytail, held in place by a soft pink scrunchy.

And then there was the face...

My face.

MY FACE!

I had a button nose, and wide sea green eyes. my mouth was in a pout, and my face was so soft, so smooth, so...

“Cute...” I muttered, bringing a finger up to my slightly softer lip, and noticing the dusty pink nail polish on it. Then I realized: I was wearing makeup! It wasn’t anything too intense, just some eyeliner and lip gloss, but *STILL!*

“Percy... are you okay?” Grover asked, poking his head into the bathroom to check on me as I stared at my own adorable face.

“I... will decide that in a minute!” I shouted, booking it into one of the many stalls that lined the wall.

After a few panicked minutes, I left the stall, and saw Grover and Annabeth standing there.

As they looked anxiously at me, I spoke.

“...I’m a girl.”

We have a chat with a Striped Pony

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The walk back to the diner was miserable, my feet hurt, the Scarf was whipping in non-existent wind, Grover and Annabeth were giving me a wide berth, and I was really cold.

“Well, Well, Well, You came back, and your Dignity is still... *Mostly*, Intact.” Ares smirked at me, his teeth sharp and mocking as I grumbled, pulling the Scarf over my mouth as I Glared at him.

“You knew it was a trap!” I narrowed my eyes at him, my face screwing up in anger as Ares only began to smile wider.

“Don’t get your Panties in a twist, Pretty Boy, ‘Pheasty was *Pissed* that he managed to bag the most Awkward situation possible! You two looked *SO cute~*” Ares teased, crouching down to look me in the eye as he grinned at me, I could tell he was closing his eyes, mocking me, not taking me seriously-

My Train of thought was halted when the Scarf on my neck glowed pink, and my head was filled with a bunch of pink lights and clouds that made me begin to fall, only for Annabeth to grab me.

“Ooh, I see, that is Hilarious!” Ares Barked as he laughed, like... Actually Barked, I could hear what sounded like a full pound of Dogs going ham at a nearby Mailman.

“Your Shield, Ares...” Annabeth held out the shield with one arm, holding her face Neutral against its will.

“Jerk.” I said from her other arm, only for Annabeth to drop me onto the ground, which made Ares chuckle as he took the shield, tossed it into the air, watched it turn into a bulletproof vest, and slung it over his shoulder.

“That Truck over there’ll take you right to L.A, it stops in Vegas first, though.” Ares pointed to an eighteen wheeler that sat on the other side of the parking lot, it had big white letters on a black background sprawled across the back, Which made it easy for me to read:

KINDNESS INTERNATIONAL: HUMANE ZOO TRANSPORT. WARNING: LIVE WILD ANIMALS.

“...you have *Gotta* be kidding me.” I groaned as we walked over to the truck, which had a thick padlock on it. Ares did a Karate Chop against the Lock, which made it pop open easily.

“Free ride west, Pretty Boy, what, are you too good for a free ride now?” Ares asked rhetorically with a grin still on his face as he summoned a Backpack out of thin air, handing it to Annabeth as she pulled me into the back of the 18-wheeler, and she handed it to me when we all got inside, only to take it back when I went to throw it at Ares.

“Thank you for the gift Lord Ares!” Annabeth and Grover said loudly at the same time as Ares went to close the doors to the truck.

“You know, you talk big, for a guy who hides from Cupid statues.” I just *had* to open my mouth, didn’t I? I can’t even say that he was making me more confrontational, I felt entirely myself in that moment... just with cotton candy in my brain.

“...’Till next time, Cutie.” Ares turned away, Snapping his fingers as the Doors slammed shut. I was loosely aware of the Revving of a Harley outside the Truck as Ares rode down the road.

“Oh finally, I can sit down!” I complained in relief as I threw myself down onto a loose Bale of hay.

“That was a bad idea, Percy.” Annabeth told me as she sat on the ground, next to a cage that had an equine animal that was black with white stripes.

“What else is new?” I said as I began rifling through the backpack, my old one was ripped to shreds with the rest of the boat back at Waterland, and this one had ACTUAL CLOTHES! “OH thank goodness!” I said, relieved at the sight of normal clothes that didn’t smell like Sweaty 12 year old.

“You really don’t want to anger the gods, Ares in particular is an especially bad Idea.” Annabeth told me as I began trying to grab a shirt, and some actual pants.

“Ooh, there are shoes in here too!” I cheered to myself as I snagged a pair of black Sneakers, no particular branding on them, But I didn’t care, I had **shoes!** That *didn’t* hurt my feet!

“Gods, you really *are* acting like an Aphrodite kid.” I heard Annabeth speak, exasperated as I tied the new shoes, they would work until I got to a more private place so that I could change.

“What? But I’m not an Aphrodite kid though?” I said back to her as I took out Riptide, Uncapping it so that I could light up the dark Truck box.

Annabeth just sighed at me, “That,” She pointed at my outfit, “Is how Aphrodite claims her kids, You’re an honorary Aphrodite kid now.”

“What? No I’m not! That can’t be how that works... Right?” I looked to Grover, who looked away from me as he scratched at his ear.

“Well, you *do* smell like one of them now... and Artemis claims her hunters when they join her, so it... *can* happen...” Grover sounded like he hated the Idea about as much as I did, I was fine with being a girl now, Hades, I probably Preferred it, but being associated with the most superficial olympian?!

“No... No no no no, It- it’s the Scarf! If I take it off! I- **CAN-**” I tried pulling on the pink silk scarf that still hung around my neck, only for it to wrap around me tighter, never budging away from my neck, it just got longer, and longer, and longer.

“Percy, face it, you’re stuck like that now, you made Aphrodite annoyed, and she cursed you, and now you just have to live with this.” Annabeth told me as she ate a sleeve of Double Stuf

Oreos.

“...*My lord?*” I was about to say a super cool thing in response to Annabeth when I heard a deep, Scottish voice coming from the Zebra cage.

“...That's not a Zebra.” I said, walking up to the cage, the Equine inside of it was looking at me, he had solid black eyes that bore into my soul.

“What? Why? How? How is it not a zebra? It has the stripes.” Annabeth told me, gesturing at the tiny horse in front of her.

“Did you only ever get these things described to you? A Zebra is actually closer related to a Donkey than it is to a Horse, the tail is the easiest way to tell, this guy has an actual Horse tail, so I'm assuming that either this zoo is lying, or some bratty kids wanted a Zebra instead of a pony for their birthday.” I Brought my hand away from the fur of the Horse, showing that it was painted with black stripes, and took a handful of hay, and held it out for him.

When I looked back to my questmates, I was met with a blank stare from Annabeth, and a tired one from Grover.

“What? I like horses.” I told them as the Truck began to move, throwing me into Annabeth, who wrapped her arms around me out of some weird muscle memory, and then the Scarf to tangled around her, holding her arms around me as I tried to get out of there.

“Not again!” I shouted quietly, trying to pull myself away from Annabeth, who just looked to the side with wide eyes.

I knew that the gods were enjoying the show, Aphrodite afflicting my with association to her wasn't the worst thing to happen to me, but it was the part I hated most, I knew that My mom wasn't dead, I'm not Dumb, no matter how Superficial my adoptive God-mom might have been, I knew that people didn't turn into gold when they got squished, and I didn't really care about what the Gods wanted, if they wanted to watch me suffer? Be my guest.

“Hey, so... I'm sorry about what happened at the Water park.” Annabeth looked to the other side, failing to hide her blushing face as she was forced to grip me closer to her as the truck went over a bumpy part of the road.

“It's cool, you're just too cool, so of course you need some kind of weakness!” I told her, truthfully, she was really cool, sure she was a blushing mess at the moment, but who was I to judge? Not like I wasn't embarrassed too.

“Spiders...” Annabeth Shuddered against me, gripping me tighter *without* the Scarf doing it this time.

“Oh, right! Arachne! She was the one that got turned into a spider for weaving... *Stuff* about the Olympians, right?” I looked up to Annabeth, trying to see if I was right, and when Annabeth saw my face, I saw her blush get even worse.

“YEP! That’s the one!” Annabeth forced out, looking up and away from my face, “All of her children have since swore that they would get revenge, so now, if there was a spider within a mile of me, they will track me down, I hate the things, they’re Creepy.” Annabeth told me as she shuddered again, relaxing her arms so that I wasn’t going to get snapped in half from how tightly she was gripping me.

“Hey, we’re a team, it was the least I could do, plus, it was kinda cute.” I stuck my tongue out as she glared at me a little before rolling her eyes.

“You’re one to talk.” She told me, not blushing as hard as she looked down at me.

The Scarf let go of her, allowing me to grab an Oreo as I turned around so that I was sitting in front of her.

“...Did Luke really not say anything in the Iris Message earlier?” Annabeth asked as she pulled me closer to her again, the Scarf wrapping around her arms lightly.

“Well... He told me that you guys go back a ways, and that Grover wouldn’t Fail... that no one would become a... Pine Tree.” It was my turn to look away from my friends as Riptide and my Scarf glowed softly.

Grover let out a Bray that sounded like a defeated sigh, “I should’ve told you Percy, but I thought that if you knew my history, my failures, you would’ve left me.” Grover made a shuffling sound, like he was holding whatever goats had instead of knees.

“You were assigned to lead Thalia to camp.” I said, holding on to myself, this conversation was hard to have, he thought I was disappointed in him, and I didn’t want him to think that.

“And the other two?” I asked, already knowing the answer.

“Me and Luke, we were the only ones to get to camp safely, she found us while we were on the run, and Grover tried to lead us to camp, it would have been impossible for me to have managed to get to camp on my own... so I didn’t, I met up with Thalia and Luke a few weeks before Grover got there, fought a lot of monsters, they were good, *Really*, good, and when Grover found us...” Annabeth stopped so that Grover could continue the story.

“I was told to get Thalia to camp, that was it, but... I couldn’t just leave them there, in the rain, scared of what was going to happen if Thalia left them, so I took them too, Hades was hunting Thalia down, and I knew we didn’t have much time, but I still helped them, I thought I could get them to safety, Get *all* of them to safety, but I was panicking, the scent of two additional Demigods threw me off, I couldn’t smell our way back as well as I could have with one, and... we got caught, and Thalia- she-” Grover choked on his own sobs as he began rocking back and forth, Annabeth stood, moving to comfort him, dropping me to the ground and making the Scarf around my neck reluctantly let go of her arms, flowing back to me after reaching for her for a few seconds.

“No, It’s fine, I don’t blame you, Thalia wouldn’t, Luke doesn’t, no one does, and Percy doesn’t care.” Annabeth reassured him as I sat on the floor, eating an Oreo.

“You’re right, but don’t speak for me.” I told Annabeth as I tried to stand, only to fall backwards again.

“The Council does, they say that it was my fault. My fault she-” Grover was cut off by his own sob again as he began shaking.

“What? Why? Because you didn’t abandon two other children? That’s messed up.” I told him, trying to stand again and barely staying that way before the truck hit a speedbump and I fell again.

“Yeah, see?” Annabeth Agreed “If you followed your orders, I would probably be dead, Luke too for all I know, We don’t care what the council says, you did the Right Thing.”

“Just my luck, I, The lamest Satyr, manage to find the two most powerful Demigods in a century. First Thalia, then Percy.” Grover sniffed as he hugged himself tighter.

“You’re Not Lame, You’re the Coolest Satyr I know! Who else would go to the Underworld? And Percy Agrees.” Annabeth said, trying to kick me, only for me to fall over for a third time.

“Yeah! And plus, I’m not *That* strong, I’m sure. And there’s no way luck has anything to do with... anything!” I told him, forgetting where I was going with my sentence as I looked at the Sneakers I was wearing. Were they... too big?

Grover chuckled, Nodding a little before he closed his eyes, and the chuckle became a snore, he had fallen asleep.

“How the-”

“No Clue, that was a nice thing to say to him.”

“I was going to say something more... Deep, But I uh... Forgot...” I admitted as I looked at my shoes, they were definitely too big now that I looked at them, I groaned.

“That Love Magic is really doing a number on us, eh?” Annabeth commented as she sat next to me, swatting at the Scarf as it reached out to her.

“Hm?” What do you mean?” I asked, not understanding what she was saying.

“... Percy, you... I... why are you *SO* Cute! That can’t just be Aphrodite.” Annabeth grumbled as she looked at me, ignorant to how the Scarf wrapped around her wrist.

“Well, It *HAS* to be! I’ve never been called Cute before! So it *has* to be Aphrodite!” I told her, I, myself, was also exasperated at the current state of events as I tried to blink the pink out of my eyes.

When I looked at Annabeth, she was fiddling with her camp beads, avoiding eye contact with me as she looked at one of them in particular.

“Is that from your first summer?” I asked, feeling something like Honey coat my question as I pointed to it, and noticed the Glow of the Scarf get brighter.

“...yeah, we get a new bead after Summer’s almost over. I’ve got this one, one that has a Greek Trireme on fire, and a centaur in a prom dress. That was a nice one, some of Chiron’s family came down to visit, and it led to shenanigans, because of course it did.”

“When *Aren’t* there shenanigans?” I asked rhetorically, getting a small giggle out of Annabeth before she looked back at her necklace.

“And the College Ring?” I asked innocently, and I saw a flash of anger appear on Annabeth’s face, only for it to fall to one of melancholy.

“Yeah... he sent it to me folded up in a letter two summers ago, told me it was his main keepsake from Athena, he would’ve failed his doctorate had they not met... told me he wanted me to come back, told me he was sorry, for everything, told me that... He told me a lot, ok, and he told me a lot of... Lies, they couldn’t handle the monsters, I didn’t even make it through Winter Break, I... I wish that they would try as much as I did.” I could see the tears in her eyes, she didn’t know what to do, how to fix everything that was broken, and I didn’t either, I knew my mom was the best thing I ever had, and now she was gone, down in the underworld, I couldn’t imagine what it would be like to have to leave, to never see her again, and have it be the best decision.

“Well, maybe try reaching out, Visit them? Don’t try to live with them, that didn’t go very well, but maybe... stop by on weekends sometimes?” The Scarf stopped glowing momentarily as Annabeth looked at me, her face illuminated by Riptides glow and little more.

“I... I guess I could try that.” she told me, and I listened, sitting there for a few more seconds.

“So, My shoes don’t fit anymore.” I admitted, annoyed at how I could just avoid every wall to the shoes that were in the backpack that Ares had given me.

“Hm, the Curse might have more of an effect on your body than we thought...” Annabeth looked at me, focusing on me for the first time since I acquired a certain silk garment, and she looked like she was thinking about something.

I sat there, feeling awkward for about a half hour, until she actually spoke again.

“We’ll figure out how to fix... That, later, ‘K?’” Annabeth told me, gesturing at all of me as I sat on my shins.

“What, Why?”

“What else are friends for?” She responded before yawning big and laying on the ground with her stomach down on it, perching her face on her chin and drooling as she snored.

I sat there, smirking as I imagined her face when I woke her up later.

Then I fell asleep.

My... Dream? Nightmare? The thing I saw in my sleep was... not exactly *new*, but there was a new layer to it.

I was on a pedestal, wearing an outfit that included a skirt, my mom was clapping as I spun in place, showing her how good I was at wearing girl clothes, I was doing the usual for these dreams, switching outfits with a blink of an eye, which was new, but not that weird, when I saw something that stopped me dead in my tracks.

There, 4 yards away from the changing room I was in front of, was a girl with unruly, Black hair in a fauxhawk, she was in full maskara, and had eyes that looked like lightning striking in clouds, she was in a black leather jacket, white T-shirt, and a plaid skirt that sat above a pair of leather studded boots, she looked like she didn't like the skirt, but was Okay with the rest of the outfit, she also had Pine Needles in her hair.

"THALIA!" I screeched, jumping about a foot into the sky as my dream melted around me, and Thalia appeared right next to me.

"Hurry up, seaweed brain, stop playing dress up, you have a job to do."

I woke up soon after, remembering something about an exchange.

"The truck stopped! They're gonna check on the animals!"

"HIDE!" Annabeth Hissed at me as she pulled me behind some feed sacks, putting on her Invisibility Cap, the Scarf wrapping around her, and forcing us into a hug from behind position, luckily, the Scarf glowed lightly before also enveloping me in the invisibility that was provided by the Yankees cap.

We were stuck in an invisible cheesy pose as a human opened the doors, Blinding me temporarily as he splashed the Lion, gave the antelope a happy meal, and taunted the poor Pony.

"Please, my lord... Lady, Free us." The pony begged me as I felt Annabeth hit her head against the side of the truck so that the guy would leave.

"This Can't be legal." Annabeth said as she shook the Invisibility cap off of her head, the Scarf loosened, making me fall onto the backpack Ares gave us.

"Probably not, I don't care, We're getting this guy out of here." I stood, using one hand on the "Zebra" cage to hold myself up.

"And the rest... right?" Grover looked at me, eyes narrow as the Lion roared.

“Yeah, sure, Why not.”

“Open the cage, my lady, I will be fine after that, I assure you.”

I looked at the lock, it was a similar kind of lock to the one on the door. I was pretty sure that the way Ares opened that one didn't have to do with super strength, but I didn't want to risk it. So I held Riptide below it, point against the lock, and uncapped it really fast, slicing through the lock like a knife through hot butter.

As I did so, Annabeth stabbed her knife into the locks holding the other two animals, which Grover held out his hands to, speaking goat to them, A blessing of some kind passed over them, I could feel it effect the Pony, and the animals ran off into Vegas, which is where I assumed we were, as they were chased by The people who were transporting them.

Grover and Annabeth had a nice, civil discussion about what Grover did to the animals as we wandered the Desert of Nevada.

We definitely looked bad, I could tell, I was wearing swimming clothes and shoes that looked 2 sizes too big for me, I knew that the people didn't care, but something in my head was telling me that I had to change, my current outfit was gross and sweaty, I stood out like a sore thumb, Etc.

I was looking for a restaurant that didn't have a “No loitering” policy, but instead we ended up finding the...

“Lotus Hotel and Casino” I read out, the large block lettering made it hard to miss, and I just sighed as I began walking in.

“Hello there! You look tired, wanna come in and take a seat, rest, use the complimentary restroom, change your clothes maybe? You look gross-”

That was all he had to say, next thing I knew, I was running into the bathroom of a hotel room they gave us, completely free for some reason.

“AHHHHH!” I screamed as I threw myself out of the bathroom, the Scarf let me take it off when I hopped into the shower, but as I began swapping out my clothes for something not covered in my bodily liquids, it latched back onto me, I also felt compelled to brush and blow dry my hair, which I never bothered with before.

Instead of flailing on the ground,(Like last time) I jumped onto one of the beds, holding as still as the Scarf let me as it gave me another makeover.

I got up when my Scarf stopped moving, seeing Grover looking at me with wide eyes, and Annabeth covering her eyes. I looked down to check if I was wearing clothes, and found that I was... but not what I had put on.

I was in a black cocktail dress, the Sneakers that I had been wearing had turned into a pair of black one and a half inch heels, and my scarf had shifted into a feather boa that rested on my

shoulders no matter how hard I tried to take it off, and the socks I finally put on had turned into pantyhose, I managed not to think about my underwear.

I just sat there, my knees closed so as to not show anything off as the hem of the dress rested just below my knees, I could feel that I had more make-up on as I attempted to stand up again to check the mirror, Wobbling with every step I took, and needing Annabeth to help me walk back to the bathroom.

My eyeliner was accompanied by eyeshadow now, my hair was down to my shoulders and formed small rings as it fell, a half bun made more rings fall down my face, I also had actual lipstick on now, it was a light red, the only thing that wasn't black or pink on me, and I saw trace amounts of blush on my cheeks, and I *STILL* looked adorable.

Annabeth left me in the Bathroom so that she could get back to watching National Geographic.

After a minute or 3 of staring at myself, I groaned and wobbled out of the bathroom.

"Is there a fashion channel on? *I hate that that's the thing I wanna watch* " I told Annabeth.

"I mean, there *is*, But I like watching this, I think it's interesting."

"I like it here, So soft..." Grover was pressing his face against the bed he was laying on.

"So... what now? Sleep?" Annabeth suggested as she sat on the bed next to me, my scarf was glowing again, but it felt like it was more of a warning than the last few times.

"Well we have these things, so why don't we use them?" Grover pulled out a green plastic card that the bellhop had given us, Grover and Annabeth smiled before running out of the room and down to the game hall.

"WAIT, I can't run in these..." I sighed and began trying to wobble down to the ground level to the Lotus Hotel and Casino.

When I got down to the Arcade I noticed something was wrong immediately.

Why was that guy wearing neon? Was that Tie-dye? Nobody here was wearing any sort of cohesive clothing, some were dressed like they were from the seventies or something, I went up to a guy that had the most Clashing outfit I had ever seen, Bell Bottoms *AND* a polo shirt? Ew.

"Uh... excuse m-" I was cut off when a Girl ran into me at full force, pushing me to the ground, not that it took much effort on her part.

When I looked at her, I saw that she herself had on a sort of Wool coat that made her look like one of those kids from the industrial revolution, I also noticed that my Scarf had hit her in the face.

"AH! I'm so Sorry, are you Okay?!" I shuffled over to her and pulled the Scarf off of her face, she looked really pretty, she had long straight black hair that framed a soft face, she was

a year or so younger than me, and she looked really confused as she began patting her face, she had blue eyeshadow that was lightly applied and shimmered in the light like there was glitter in it, and some Lip Gloss that was just as glittery.

“Wh- What the-” the girl asked to nothing as she blinked her eyes in confusion before snapping her head to look off into the distance to a table where some grown-ups were playing Blackjack and a small 9 year old was rambling on about Power cards and type advantages and saving throws and other stuff that didn’t apply to Blackjack.

“NICO!” The girl shouted, a little mad as she sprinted in the direction of the table.

“You ok there Ms?” I looked up to see the guy I was trying to talk to before I was run over by an Italian.

“Oh, Uh yeah, I’m Okay... Can you help me stand up? I’m not used to these yet...” I gestured to my heels as I held out a hand for help standing.

“Name’s Darrin! Nice to meet a groovy lady like yourself here!” ok... he called me ‘Groovy’(and a lady but I’m going to ignore that). Something is definitely wrong here.

“Well Darrin, uh... do you know what year it is?” I asked, my Scarf glowed brightly as his eyes went foggy and his jaw dropped, his body going slack before his head looked me in the eye.

“The current year is 1977.” Then he blinked, went back to standing like an actual person, and walked away to the Arcade cabinets.

“1983”

“1999”

The reason everyone’s clothes looked so old was because they *WERE* there was something about this place, I had to get out, Grover and Annabeth had to get out, we had to **leave**.

“ANNABETH!” I shouted, speed walking through the game room, When did I get good at walking in heels?

There she was, building a city in a VR game. From the looks of it, she had been at it for a long time.

“Annabeth! We need to go!” My Scarf, still in the form of a feathered Boa, was shining brightly as I reached out to Annabeth, it was like a vibrant Pink spotlight was focused entirely on me and the area surrounding me.

When I touched her, Annabeth shivered a little bit, the pink glow washing over her momentarily.

“Percy? Where, why, When, How long have we been here?” She asked, shaking her head as the Scarf became a Scarf again and wrapped itself around her wrist.

“We need to get Grover, this place is doing something to your heads!” I pulled her along behind me, Trying to find Grover, I stumbled a few times before we found him.

He was playing an inverse hunting game, and had gotten really into it.

I grabbed him by the wrist and Pulled against him.

“COME ON! We need to get to the underworld! The world is going to end unless we do!” That seemed to work, the pink Glow flared even brighter and he was following us to the door outside.

“Well hello there! Are you here for your Platinum cards?” The Bellhop Stood between us and the door.

“We’re leav-” I felt something flash in my head, a pink light that left behind the scent of pink Cotton Candy.

“Oh... well that’s too bad, we just added A Clothing store too, it comes with a full runway and everything.” The bellhop said, it was like he was looking at me, the card looked so enticing, I could imagine the endless racks of clothing, the cheers as I went down a runway, the way they would love me, the way I would look, the way that-

“No thank you!” Annabeth grabbed my wrist, pulling me and Grover out of the Hotel and down the road, I was lost in thought as I imagined all the Dresses they had in there, all the clothes I could wear, anything I could want.

I was about to get up and go back in when Grover and Annabeth splashed me with water that they had taken from the minifridge and stuffed into the backpack.

“Wake up, Seaweed! Look alive! We were in there for 3 days! We need to hurry or we won’t be able to finish this.” Annabeth looked me in the eye, and the Scarf finally stopped glowing, and I was fully aware again, and realized I was in a dress. “If you didn’t get us out of there, we never would have left, come on.”

And she was right, we had to hurry, we didn’t have much time anymore, And we needed to hurry.

Chapter End Notes

and that's 5,000 words, not my longest chapter I've written, but it comes close.

I get Mugged by Someone Other than Aphrodite

“LOS ANGELES!” Annabeth shouted as she pulled me into the Taxi, Grover hopping in closely behind.

“Woah! That’s like... Three Hundred Miles, that’s gonna have to be an up front payment-” The Taxi driver told us as he patted the Meter machine.

“We need to hurry! *Please* ?” My scarf glowed intensely as the driver's face went slack for a moment before he perked up.

“Right away Ma’am!” and we were off to the races, the Driver floored it and was turning lazily as Annabeth grabbed onto me so as to not go flying, at which point the Scarf wrapped around her arms again and made her pull me into another hug.

“We need to stop bumping into each other like this.” I smirked at Annabeth as she pulled me in tighter when the roads got bumpy.

“Stop, you’re going to give me heart palpitations.”

That stunned me into staying silent for a good amount of the ride.

“Uh... Where in L.A.? Ma’am?”

“Oh! Uh... Santa Monica Pier! If you may.” The scarf glowed again and he slammed the gas pedal to the floor again.

After a surprisingly small amount of time, the Taxi driver pulled in to the beach, we hopped out, I thanked him, the Scarf glowed, and he sped off into the distance.

“Ok... how do I do this...” I looked down at my heels as they sank into the Sand.

“Just take the shoes off, it’s not that hard.” Annabeth told me, completely misunderstanding how I felt about my new footwear.

“I mean... they *do* hurt... Fine, Hold these, I’ll be back!” I figured that I needed to enter the water, it was pretty obvious, I was told to come here by a Water Spirit thingy to go to Santa Monica, so I probably needed to be in the water for it to work.

I stepped into the water.

In a flash of Pink light, I was deeper in the ocean, looking at the Water Spirit from the Arch, she held out a hand that looked to be made of Jellyfish tentacles.

“I am a Neriad, I hold a place in your fathers court, he wishes you the best in your trip into the underworld.” She told me, her arm disbanding and reconstituting as she spoke.

“Sure he does, If he cares So much, why Isn’t he here right now, doing this himself.”

“Do not misunderstand, he would be here if he could, Sea Prince, but there is a war on the horizon, and he is forbidden to help on quests.”

“He can’t even help his own kid.” I spoke darkly, not questioning, just saying a fact.

“Unfortunately, yes. He holds you in such high regards, and he wishes he could do more, but he must watch you suffer. But he did give you these.” the Neriad held out three glowing blue Pearls, they orbited each other as they floated towards me, stopping in front of me and allowing me to grab them.

“What are they?” I asked.

“A way out, crush them and they will help you get out, I cannot say how it will happen, but it will.” That was reassuring...

Then, she disappeared into the waves, my view of her shallowing down to a small light in her chest that burned into the surrounding ocean. I forgot to ask about the gifts she warned me against back at the Arch...

I thought about following her, seeing my dad’s Court, seeing Atlantis, but Thalia’s words from my dream rang through the cotton candy that had formed in my brain.

“You have a job to do, Seaweed Brain.”

I figured I should get back to the surface, we didn’t have a whole lot of time left. But how was I going to get back up there? I got here by Pink Flash, and the Water was so murky I couldn’t tell which way was up...

Well, I *could* , but the surface was so far away, it would take me about a day of swimming to get up there...

Then, my Scarf flashed Pink again, and a giant Clam appeared. It didn’t look like it was... 100% real, but it was good enough. I was sat in the middle of the Mollusc, and knew it was rising through the water at a very fast rate. I also saw that my Scarf was the only source of light as it glowed on the higher half of its light spectrum.

The Clam snapped open as it breached the water, and my Scarf pressed the ends of itself against the floor, forcing me to stand, and realize that I was wearing something else, *again* ...

I was in a two-piece swimsuit that Caused both me and Annabeth to blush when I noticed it. My Dress had melted into a black towel that I immediately wrapped around myself.

“Come on! Let’s go!” I shouted, my face red as I grabbed my heels off of Annabeth, which turned into Sandals that also had heels, even if they were shorter than before. I sat on a log and began to tighten them so that they wouldn’t fall off.

“So... What happened?” Annabeth asked me, she was getting better at shaking off the love magic that she said was making her blush so much.

“I got a gift, from dad.” I told her, ignoring the instinct to check my reflection as I got back up, and began walking towards the more populated parts of LA.

“Woah, Perc, Gods don’t just give things out for free, there has to be a price somewhere.” Grover jumped in front of me, his eyes wide.

“The price is probably stopping the war that my dad is going to get into.” I rationalized as I walked around him, moving my hair out from in front of my chest with a flourish.

“Excuse me sir, Do you know of a place called ‘DOA Records’ by chance?” I turned on the charm I had now, my Scarf glowing intently as I looked the random guy on the street in his eyes, which went solid Pink as he spoke.

“Sorry Miss, but I’ve never heard of a place with that name.”

“Well, Thanks anyway!” I told him before walking away.

It continued on like that a few times as me, Annabeth, and Grover ducked behind Cars to avoid the Cops and asked people if they knew the place I was looking for, only for all of them to tell me they never heard of it, the Phone Books didn’t know it either, it was like the place didn’t exist.

“Well, at least we know that’s where we need to go.” I said as I walked out of the abandoned phone booth, which was covered in pastels pink spray paint now.

Then I caught eye with a man I never wanted to see again.

Gabe.

“Honest, Ms. Walters, if it wasn’t for Sugar here, my grief counselor, I’d be a wreck. My stepson took everything I cared about. My wife... my Camaro... I-I’m sorry. I have trouble talking about it.” He lied about as easily as he breathed, holding the hand of the pretty average looking Blonde woman next to him as he cried Crocodile tears.

“There you have it America,” Ms. Walters turned to the camera, her face somber, “A man torn apart, and an adolescent boy with some *serious* issues. Now, let me again show you the last known photo of this troubled young fugitive, taken a week ago in Missouri.”

The image they showed was the one from when I crawled out of the river under the Arch, near completely dry, but I looked like a mess, my hair was matted, I had cuts running up and down my arms, my eyes were barely staying open, I was in an oversized sweater that would cover my arms if it weren’t for the gashes exposing my wounds, I reiterate, I looked Awful.

“-Is Perseus Jackson a Terrorist, a Delinquent, or perhaps the newest member of some Cult, When we come back, we chat with a leading child psychologist. Stay tuned, America.”

“Come on, We gotta get out of here.” Grover pulled his baseball cap down to cover his face as he began pulling me away from where the T.V. had been set up.

“Why?” I asked as I stumbled after him, he was going to fast for me to comfortably follow.

“They’re going to *recognize* you...” Annabeth stopped talking when she took another look at me.

I didn’t look that different physically, other than my face I had the same body proportions, but I was in a two-piece swimsuit and had hair that was too long for them to say I was the same person.

They slowed down when they realized that I wasn’t going to be recognised anytime soon, we eventually picked up the pace when I realized that unsavory individuals were coming out of their holes to play as the sun went down, and saw some of them staring at me in a way that I didn’t really appreciate.

As we were speed-walking through an alleyway I heard somebody from the darkness speak, “Hey, You.”

I stopped, mostly out of surprise from how close they were to me, and found us surrounded by kids.

Little rich punks who wanted to play at being big and bad, judging from the fact they had nice new clothes, but they had no clue how to use them, they thought that it being expensive meant they looked good.

And out came Riptide, the Glow of the metal clashing a little with the glow of my Scarf. The kids backed off a bit when I pulled out a sword from the Purse that Ares’ backpack had turned into.

Except one, he was either an idiot or an ares kid(what’s the difference?) because he stepped forward while flipping out a switchblade.

I went in for a slice, the glow of the Scarf getting a bit of a deeper red hue as my sword sailed through the guy's neck.

It didn’t do anything.

But the guy fell onto his backside anyway, grabbing his neck as he breathed heavily, then he looked up at me with fury in his eyes.

“Crap. *RUN!*” I shouted, the Scarf flared Pink, becoming a solid light of vibrant Pink as all of the kids scattered from my sight, the leader left a puddle behind as he ran as fast as he could. I went to look back at my friends, and saw them running too.

“Wait, NOT YOU!” I yelled after them, but my Scarf stayed lightless as I chased after them.

I managed to catch up with them as they entered “**CSURSY’T TERWA DEB CALAPE**”

They burst through the door right before I did, and when I got in there, I saw them trying to run in different directions.

“ *Stop running.* ” I told them, a little bit out of breath, and Annabeth slammed into a waterbed and Grover ragdolled like a scared goat.

“ *Ergo .* ” I heard the sound of whips cracking as belts snapped Annabeth's hands and legs to the Waterbed, which was too large for her by a large margin.

“Well hello there young lady, would you happen to be in the market for a waterbed?” I turned around just in time to catch sight of what seemed to be a dinosaur in the worst suit I’d ever seen. Why were his lapels so big???

“What did you do.” I glared at the 7 foot tall man as I flourished Riptide, feeling my Scarf start to reach Down my arm toward it.

“Oh, nothing, you see, I am Crusty, these are my Waterbeds, these Beds are all 6 feet tall, on the dot, but your friends are too short, *Ergo ,*” He waved his hand and the Belts started pulling against Annabeth, not enough to hurt her, yet, “I need to make a few... adjustments.”

I had a feeling that taking this guy down wouldn’t stop the bed from ripping Annabeth in half, Grover had knocked himself out and Annabeth was snoring, they couldn’t help me now, how could I...

I suppressed a shutter as I looked up into Crusty’s eyes

“Oh, jeez Mister,” I fluttered my eyelashes, putting Riptide back in my purse, “I would Just *Looove* to buy one of your *amazing* waterbeds, but I don’t know which ones are good enough, and my friend being in trouble isn’t helping me narrow down your *expansive selection .*” I pouted as I tapped my chin.

“OH! Well miss, no need to fear! I can start adjustments after we find what you're looking for!” Crusty snapped his fingers, the Belts stopped pulling, but stayed there, they were easier to deal with now, but I couldn’t just pull out my sword, the activation phrase was a single syllable long, so I had to preoccupy him with something.

Crusty led me a ways away from my friends. I could still see them, but they would probably miss me if they looked in my direction without knowing I was over there.

“How do you feel about this one, miss? It...” Crusty explained the many different functions that the bed had, it had a massage function, a toaster, it also had some cool looking lava lamps on the four posts.

“Oh WOW sir! It sure *does look well made*, And the things you told me it can do are *sooo interesting!* But...” I stopped, as though lost in thought as I closed my eyes and held my chin.

“But what? But what MADAME???” Crusty was panicking, his salesman persona was furious that he might miss a sale.

“Do you know if it’s *comfy* ?” I asked, purposely shortening Comfortable so that I could really push the ‘non-threatening ditz’ that he needed to think I was.

“OH! Well if that’s your problem, no need to worry! I have a 100% satisfaction GUARANTEE!” Crusty gave me a large salesman smile as he patted the bed, I watched it ripple as he began explaining the steps he took to make them the most comfortable beds he could.

“Hm... I don’ know Mister, I mean, it *sounds* really good... Almost too good to be true... Have *you* ever tested one of these beds? Seen if they’re as good as you want them to be?” I took the towel from around my chest and lowered it down to my hips, tying it so that it exposed one of my legs, and pressed my lips together in thought.

“Of course! I test every one of them myself!” Crusty’s eyes were pools of Pink now. Every time I complimented him, he got more and more blinded by my Praise as we looked at the bed in more depth.

It was time to act now.

“Well, *could you do it now? If it’s so good you should be willing to prove it, right?* ” I Smiled and closed my eyes, giving off an energy of being unaware of what the Beds were able to do, and hoping he would fall for it.

He did.

“Oh of course Madame! This one is actually my most Comfortable model, and-”

“ *Ergo.* ” I never dropped my smile as I said the command word, and just barely opened my eyes to look at him.

“Uh... Madame... you, uh... seem to have activated the bed, I am unfortunately unable to perfectly fit, so if you would perhaps let me go...” Procrustes was looking around wildly.

“Procrustes, *the stretcher* , that’s you, *right?* ” I asked as I sat on the bed next to him.

“Yes, that’s me.” He answered, his face slack before returning to normal as he looked at me in fear.

“So, you tie people to these beds, and then you stretch them so that they fit, but that’s only if they’re too short... *what if they’re too tall?* ” I tapped my chin again, giving a small pout as I acted confused.

“If they’re too tall, I cut them down until they fit.” Again, Slack jawed, and milky Pink eyes.

“OH! Well now that’s a good idea!” I hopped off of the bed, and pulled out Riptide, never dropping the pleasant smile that I had taken to deceive him, “And would you look at that, your legs poke over the edge, can’t have that now, can we?” I walked past the bottom of the bed, Cutting off one leg with the upswing and the other with the down.

Crusty screamed as I cut his legs off, thrashing against the bed as he tried to pull against the Belts that were tied to his legs, there was a garbled “NO!” in there.

“Oh... But you said this is what you would do... OH! It must be because I haven’t gotten to the Arms yet, *Right?* ” I walked along the edge of the bed and cut off one of Procrustes’ arms, walked the long way around and sliced through his other one, “There! That should be good! Right?” I asked the Screaming Giant as I Leaned against the headrest, he was crying, yelling about “HOW COULD YOU DO THIS” and other things, then I noticed something...

“Ooh, oh no sir, it looks like your head is poking out... that’s just too bad...” I shook my head as I walked to be at the same side as his head.

“NO! PLEASE! DON’T DO THIS!” Procrustes pleaded with me as I gave a few practice swings.

“Oh, but didn’t you do this ever? If you managed to get someone with their whole head going over the edge, *wouldn’t you make some... Adjustments?* ” I looked Crusty in the eye, my Scarf exploding with bright Pink light as I spoke with him.

“Of course, how inconsiderate could they be to be **that** oversized!”

“Well, There you have it! Good day, Good evening, And Good NIGHT!” I sliced down, the rest of Procrustes bursted into a golden dust that brushed away in the wind.

As I was walking back to my friends, I saw that they had woken up, and Grover had managed to bite his way through Annabeth’s Belts that were holding her in the bed.

“Oof, you’re back, what was that screaming?” Annabeth asked me.

“Nothing, Just a monster Attack, Look what *I* found.” I showed them a flier I had found that had D.O.A. records’ address on it.

“Hm, it’s about a block away, that’s good to know, should we get there as fast as possible?” Annabeth asked.

“We still need to get back to Olympus!” I grabbed her hand, the Scarf wrapping around her wrist as I put Riptide back in my purse and Pulled Annabeth out the door, Grover following not far behind.

I Meet a Giant Puppy

It was a block away.

Only a block away.

So why was it long enough for my Scarf to give me an *entire makeover* ?

NO IDEA!

I didn't even realize anything was different until we got to D.O.A. records, which was when I found out that I had been dressed in full funeral attire.

Black Dress that barely didn't touch the ground that also came with sleeves that covered my whole arms, Solid black 2 inch heels(because *of course*) that I could only tell existed because I could hear the way they clacked against the concrete, the Scarf also wrapped around my face again, but turned into a veil that I could see through but nobody else could.

The sleeves of my dress were actually really cool, they didn't stop at my wrists, instead they met around my middle finger, which had a ring that they looped through, exposing my pointer and thumb one one side, and my ring and pinky fingers on the other.

"Alright, New plan." I told my friends, seeing Annabeth blink a few times in surprise, "Back me up."

The door swung open easily as I entered D.O.A Records, I was Sobbing and coughing and going the whole nine yards as I stumbled my way up to the Counter that sat at the other end of the room, throwing myself against it.

"OH it's so HORRIBLE!" I cried out before blowing my nose on an offered napkin as I looked at the man behind the counter, "Oh Mister..." I looked at his nameplate, "Chiron?" my bewilderment immediately cut off my Crocodile tears as I looked back up at him, He didn't... *look* like Chiron.

"Do I look like a centaur?" The man looked down at me, sunglasses covered his eyes so I didn't know what they looked like.

"Nnno sir..."

"Now, little Missy, Care to read with me? C-h- a -r-o-n! Charon, *care-* on, now you go."

"Ch-Charon..."

"Good Job Little one! Here." He held out a light blue candy disk that sat on a paper stick, a Lollipop.

"YAY!" I managed to get back in character, and took the Lollipop from Charon's hand, And sat up on his desk, kicking my feet as I took a big *CHOMP* out of it.

“Now, what can I help you with, little ones?” I Swallowed the candy quickly, and hopped off of the desk, crying again, but not as hysterically.

“Oh Mr. Charon! I’m *So* sorry to trouble you, But we need to get to the U-Underworld...” I took another Tissue, and blew my nose into it again as I faked crying.

“Oh... um... there... there? It’s nice that you are... aware... of your predicament, uh... what was the cause of death?”

“ *HEARTBREAK!* ” I clutched my hands and fell to one knee, pouring all of the acting potential that my drama teachers would tell me I was wasting into convincing Charon that I was some heartbroken Pre-teen.

“And we drowned!” Annabeth said, trying to attach my friends to my trip to the underworld.

“Ah, Heartbreak is getting more and more common nowadays, do you little ones have a way to pay? Adults usually die with a card or something, but kids...” Charon looked away, not wanting to talk about it I assumed.

“I-I have these... Coins that I got from my da-da-father...” I began giving my best crying performance as I cupped my own face below my Veil.

“Oh... Hm, real Drachma! Quite... *rare* , nowadays I say. Say, you couldn’t read my name tag, you wouldn’t happen to be Dyslexic, would you?”

I thought of that thankfully, I just began crying harder, and pulled the tears out of my tear ducts, and pulled my now wet hands out from under my veil.

“Y-yes... why?”

Charon stood there(He had a standing desk, how long had he been standing?) for three minutes before tapping the coins.

“Where... Where did your father get these?” he asked me as he pushed the Drachma closer to me.

“My... My mom gave them to him before she d-disappeared...” I sobbed into the air, as though the thought brought me bad memories, it got a little easier for me to act now that I was twisting my actual experiences.

“... you lot really *do* die young, don’t you, Come along.” Charon waved us over to the Elevator, Pushing through the crowd of Spirits as I kept up my crying sounds, they all parted as I moved between them.

When we finally got in the Elevator, the Spirits seemed to press against the walls as to not come near me. Annabeth and Grover tried their best to look bummed out about what we were doing and where we were going.

The world shifted, and we were going forwards instead of down, I kept my eyes on the ground as the Elevator turned into a Boat, I could feel... *something* try to burst out of me, not

any specific part, just my general being as I looked over the edge, seeing an oily River that had so many things in it that I didn't think it constituted as mostly liquid anymore.

I stuck my tongue out and scooted back to the center of the boat, my little Bubble of Personal space allowed me, Annabeth, and Grover to stand there without the spirits crowding around us, but it *did* draw Charon's attention, I let out a small snuffle as his empty eye sockets narrowed in on me.

"... *oh father help me...*" I muttered under my breath, not quite sure why as we pulled into the shore.

As we stepped off of the Boat, the water beneath it burst out of the River(Did that make sense? No, Do you know what I mean? Probably not)

"PERCEUS JACKSON!" The very river seemed to steam off of itself as it looked me dead in the eye.

"And that's my cue! BYE!" I jumped into Annabeth's arms and waved to the Dead souls, and Charon, as she ran toward the entrance to the underworld proper.

"IS THAT THE RIVER STYX?????" Grover shouted before sprinting after us.

"But... you smelled like... I don't get paid enough for this." I was loosely aware that Chiron was speaking, but all I was focused on was the way that The very River of the Styx *glared* at me as it sank back down into itself.

"Ok! I think that's good! They probably won't assume too much, now put me down." I told Annabeth, un-wrapping my arms from her neck.

She used one hand to put me down on the ground in a standing position, and I could see the actual entrance.

"Oh hey, It's Cerberus!" I spoke softly as I looked up at the giant three headed pitbull before us, the **E-Z DEATH** line that passed right beneath him showing just how huge he really was, as the Souls didn't even need to duck in order to pass through.

Cerberus sniffed the air and made a look of confusion, the left head tilted left, the middle one pulled back, and the right one shook itself like it was trying to shake water out of its ears.

The middle head snapped to look me in the eyes, still sniffing at me and my friends.

"This isn't going according to plan!" Annabeth hissed, I could hear the sound of ruffling feathers as we got closer, when we got close enough for Cerberus to fully smell me(And only me for some reason), He got a good sniff in, and hopped up from his position of sitting into one that was universal Dog for Play time.

The three heads all had a tongue out as the middle one pressed against me, giving a little whine as he nuzzled against me. His head, being about 3 times my size, pushed me over pretty easily.

“Uh, there you are, who’s a good boy?” I asked, slightly confused as I patted the fur on top of the middle head's muzzle.

The right head Barked, not in a threatening way, but in a way as to answer my question.

“That’s right, You are! You’re a good boy! The Goodest boy!” I petted the giant dog with both hands, Grinning as all three heads started panting, their eyes getting pink.

“Do you want a ball? I have a ball!” I told Cerberus, pulling one of the three Waterland Balls out of my purse and holding it out for the middle head to take. And when he did, the other two heads started whining as they looked at me with the biggest puppy dog eyes.

“Don’t worry, the Underworld's goodest boys doesn't only deserve one ball!” I took the other two balls out of my purse, they were different colors, the one I had given the middle head was a shiny red, I also had a neon green and a sky blue one, I gave the green one to the right head, and the blue one to the left.

Cerberus dropped down to the ground and started rolling while chewing on the rubber pool balls, which were somehow not getting torn to shreds.

“Okay, we don't have much time, he’s going to roll back over here soon, *GO!*” I poured as much into my command as I could, and jumped into Annabeths arms as she ran through the **EZ-DEATH** Line.

Sure enough, Cerberus rolled back over the lines of the dead about a second after we got out of the way, and I heard the sound of three inflated Balls popping, one right after the other, and Cerberus looked at me with his Big eyes in Betrayal as the remnants fell from his mouths.

“I’ll get you more! And they’ll be BETTER!” I promised the Giant three headed Pitbull as Annabeth carried me away from the ghoulish guards, who were more occupied with taking care of the souls that Cerberus crushed than catching us, Unfortunately, I overheard them call in for the Furies, And I didn’t want to deal with Mrs. Dodds anymore than I had too.

THE END! (I wish)

The fields of asphodel were Bleak, to say the least I could about them. Everyone was a silhouette standing in a pitch black field that seemed to have a backdrop from the start of the Lion King, a bright orange light that seemed to originate from nothing that didn't illuminate, but only made shadows.

Annabeth carried me as Grover walked behind, the ground was too soft for me to stand in it without my heels sinking into it, so I just stayed in Annabeth's arms, keeping an eye out for the Furies as we passed through asphodel.

I could see a large tent that was Labeled as the judgment area, the large lines entered, and two smaller ones exited, one led to the barbed walls of the Fields of Punishment, where souls were escorted by ghosts that had what seemed to be Riot Gear.

The way to Elysium was paradise, not even just by comparison, the road there was paved in Gold, the gates were a glittering quartz, I could smell barbeque, I could see all kinds of homes, a good amount of them were mansions or castles, but a few were trailers and apartments, A normal house here and there, I could also see a shark tank sticking over the wall, which held what seemed to be every fish I knew existed, and just within the center I could barely see the shape of a human.

And next to that, was a lake that held a small Island, which had 4 houses at most, and only one of them actually showed signs of being lived in.

"The Isle of the Blessed, the end all be all of heroes," Annabeth told me, she didn't look down at me, but I knew she was talking to me, "I was told by one of my older Siblings, that's the place where Halfbloods that achieved great feats went to reside after three lives of greatness, it was also where Big Three kids come from, A Halfblood, or very lucky human, dies three times and manages to achieve elysium every time, they go the The Isle of the Blessed, and can choose a life destined for greatness, go back to the world they left, Make another life for themselves where they could live and experience the world once more... But that's just what Malcolm tells me." Annabeth seemed to rush out that last part. Maybe she thought about this a lot, the implications it had, but didn't want to take credit for it for some reason.

I heard a scratch and a whoosh, and looked up just in time to see the Furies fly over us, off to where we had left Cerberus, was the backup... *not* for us? I didn't have the time to think too hard about it as Grover's shoes sprouted wings and began to shoot forward.

"Grover? What are you doing?" I asked him as I looked over Annabeth's shoulder.

"I don't-" but before he was able to continue his sentence, the shoes, a pair of old beat up basketball shoes, lifted off the ground and began dragging him away from us.

"GAH! *AFTER HIM!*" I yelled, and my veil did the opposite of glow, it was almost like it sucked in even more light as the souls in the fields of Asphodel snapped their heads to look at

Grover flying downhill, Annabeth was also running after him, but not due to whatever hypnotizing thing my voice could do for some reason.

Grover was shouting the shoes activation phrase over and over again as they sailed past all of the souls of the damned, who were jumping at him, trying to grab him. I could loosely see a shorter spirit that was looking at me, it seemed to be confused about what was happening.

“Grover! Just UNTIE THEM!” Annabeth shouted as I watched the shoes veer to the right an instant before he slammed through the gates to Hades’ castle.

“It can’t be easy to do that when you’re being pulled foot first across the land of the dead.” I told Annabeth as we chased after Grover, a slope appeared and began to get incredibly steep.

“Well then why don’t YOU do something!” Annabeth snapped, the sounds of 12 owls hooted in the background.

I jumped out of Annabeth’s arms, the slope was steep enough that I could slide down without having to actually walk.

“GROVER *STOP* !” I jumped, grabbing hold of Grover’s hands, and stabbing my heels into the steep hill, which stopped moving as the shoes sputtered and got confused as my veil Glowed an intense pink, eventually they stopped flapping,

Right over the top of a deep pit in the middle of an eerily familiar cave.

Grover hyperventilated as I pulled him away from the edge, the shoes falling into the deep pit as he managed to finally kick them off.

“I... It was... I was-”

“So Close.”

I fell over when the deep whisper shoved its way through my body, it was as if the very Evil from the pit disagreed with me being this close to it.

“Tartarus... this is the entrance to Tartarus.” Annabeth shivered as she took a step back, pulling me up with her, and Grover up with me.

We managed to get about halfway out of the cavern that the entrance of Tartarus resided in when an intense wind pulled against me. I didn’t scream, and I also didn’t jump into Annabeth’s arms out of fear as she heaved me out of there.

But I was back in her arms...

It was just because it was more effective

Totally.

Definitely.

Mhm.

Grover tried to mutter something about “Never liked those shoes anyway...” But I could tell he was sad to see them go, he had told me once before that Satyrs had never flown like that, and he enjoyed it after he got the hang of it.

The walk to Hades’ castle was... strangely peaceful, the spirits seemed to give me a wide berth, the Furies flew back to the castle and started circling it threateningly, but they never tried anything.

The Gates were open.

From the top of the gate to the bottom were carvings of death, from the atom bomb falling being the thing at the top, to an etching of an Elderly person surrounded by family, there were also six nukes that were forming an arc across the top of the gate, if it were closed, anyway.

The garden looked relatively nice... on one side anyway, the right side of the garden had a rainbow of different flowers and seemed to have a preference for the color pink, as a large majority of the flowers were bright pink roses.

The other side was overrun by mushrooms, they all looked completely different from one another, and didn’t have any rhyme or reason to be in the places they were, some of them glowed, a simple blue, a toxic green, some of them seemed to breathe, puffs of rainbow colored spores coating the left side of the garden.

The only non-flower, non-mushroom in the garden was a singular large, healthy, and beautiful Pomegranate tree, it had a double helix of Mushrooms and Flowers intertwined around the trunk, the branches parted halfway up, and formed a large heart shape with a pomegranate growing from where they intertwined at the top of it, the path split to either side of the tree, eventually meeting again right behind it, the path to the left led to a bench that looked over elysium, and the right was a pretty typical flower path so that one could water the flowers. There was a fountain on the right side, with a stone version of the minotaur standing in the center, water Spouting from his horns, he had a nice looking toga on and was flexing.

“The Garden, after marrying Persephone, Hades got into plant tending, he likes mushrooms, don’t require much fuss, and after they were told that Persephone could leave, they planted the rest of the seeds she didn’t eat from the pomegranate, then Hades meticulously made it form a heart as a surprise for Persephone.” Annabeth told me, still carrying me as I looked around in confusion.

“How do you know all that?” I asked her as she set me on the hard stone path, my legs wobbled a little bit, having to get used to walking in heels again.

“It was the only thing Persephone would talk about at the winter solstice, she wouldn’t shut up about how romantic it was, Luke had to leave the room because he was going to throw up at how corny it was.” Annabeth snickered a little as we walked around the tree, right into the shadow it casted which... wasn’t... there a few seconds ago...

“ I would appreciate if you refrained from talking about my wife like that while she isn’t here. ” Hades’ voice shook his castle, and seemed to jostle my veil, hitting me in the face as the fabric got thicker.

When I could see again, I was almost out of breath, Hades was so... God-like, he had a silver crown on his head, dead roses wilting infinitely, petals falling into the faces of the dead that seemed to be sewn into A business suit that had wide sleeves that flowed over his throne like a thick black mist. The crown had jewels on it that I didn’t know existed, and the very shape of it seemed to form skulls that were also screaming in fear, and pain.

His throne was made out of the fused together bones of the damned, and seemed to have three metal bars fused to it holding it in place, one was Gold, it was the one right below where he sat, keeping it from deforming when he sat down, the second was Silver, holding the middle in place as the bottom one, Bronze, seemed to be fused to the ground, keeping the bones from falling outwards.

I slowly stood up, and noticed that he looked surprised that I could, I noticed that Grover and Annabeth seemed frozen in fear, I was terrified, don’t get me wrong, but not nearly as much as my friends appeared to be.

Hades’ skin was so white that it would be blinding if he ever stood in the sun, and he seemed to only have skin, and bones, because I could see the way his fingers seemed to shift the bones around instead of his bones pulling them so that he could point at me.

“You dare come into my home, my **Palace** , and talk about my *wife* behind her back after what *you* did, Child of the Sea?” Hades stared into me, his pure white pupils enveloped by Flames, but not like Ares’, these weren’t the flames of war, the flames of the homes and the families that were caught up in battle, the flames of fury that ate an innocent man alive until he was consumed by rage, No, these were the flames that punished those that set those same flames, Burned the men who set innocent homes ablaze, Showed no mercy to those who wouldn’t show any mercy themselves, the most horrifying thing about it?

I saw myself in them.

A mere few moments ago, I had those same fires in my eyes, the screams of Procrustes echoed in my ears.

“I, come with... *two reque-* ” my throat tightened as Hades narrowed his Eyes at me, the white Pupils shined in his pitch black eyes.

“You **DARE** , to come in here, into **MY** realm, Command **MY** Forces, and then you try to charm **ME?** ” my veil melted, pouring back into a hot pink scarf that hung limply on the ground, the light flickering.

“I... I didn’t know...” I coughed, the veil returning as I caught my breath.

“Your Chthonic connections are strong, I can feel that much, but you hold no power here, not against a direct order from the Dead's own **King**, Against **ME** . Now, Tell me what it is you intended on asking me while I still hold Patience, *Thief*.” I held my tongue, for the first time Ever, I actually feared the consequences of my own actions before I acted.

“Sir, please, Return... Zeus’ master bolt.” I winced, I could feel that what I was saying was wrong, I could feel my voice fighting against it, but I needed the bolt back.

“You... wait... you think *I* took it?” Hades shrank as he walked up to me, his fury subsided to confusion, and the Flame around his Iris turned Green.

“Well, We couldn’t think of anyone else... so...” I looked away, my throat was sore, and I was trying not to pass out from fear.

“Look at me, Child.” Hades spoke softly, I felt his movement in front of me, and when I looked up, I saw an entirely different person.

Hades had actual pigment now, he was still pale, but not the color of egg shells, his hair was still black, but not nearly as wirey, he had actual eyes, the pupils were White and the Sclera were black, and his Irises still seemed to flicker, but it was more existent, like they just changed color instead of being actual flames, he had a goatee, and it was solid black with a streak of white that was level with his mouth, his crown was the same, but it seemed to have more gold incorporated.

And he was looking at me, sitting on the ground, legs crossed, and face much less... Cold? Stoney?

I jumped back, trying to crawl away.

“Hold yourself, Child, I assumed the worst, I apologize, it is a common thing to do among our family. Now, Why do you assume that *I* wish to start a war between my brothers?” Hades looked at me, he... Apologized? I didn’t know the gods could do that, Nobody ever apologized to me, who would? Of course it’s the fault of the kid that was like five inches larger than everyone else!

“Well, you... A war would give you more subjects?” I asked, also not believing a word I said.

“And why would I want that? It would be far too much paperwork, I’m the one that introduced Reincarnating, and then that became even **more** Paperwork, trust me kid, be glad you aren’t Chthonic enough to have to deal with all of this.” Hades laughed, he actually laughed! I was shocked into silence as I stared at him, and realized I was staring up.

“Calm down kid, I’m not going to smite you, the youngest probably already called dibs... Anyway, the way you looked at me, as well as the fact you *suck* at sneaking places, means that *you* didn’t take my Helm, Or the bolt, but you have to ex[plain that to my Baby Brother yourself.” Hades sat on his throne, a larger version that had sat in front of me, not the pure horror that I had witnessed mere moments ago.

“Wait... but... then who-” I was cut off when my Purse Exploded into light, and melted, shifted, and got heavier, I looked into the tube shaped leather pouch that hung from my shoulder, and saw a bronze tube that had a window on it, exposing an arc of electricity that sat in it, the ends of it formed well defined points, but the middle arced around the entire tube.

“Especially with *that* thing in your hands.” Hades draped himself across his own throne, a bored look on his face.

“Wait... where did it... *Ares* !” I hissed, my veil got longer, hanging down to my mid stomach before waving in a soft breeze that didn’t exist. “*ARES DID THIS!*”

“Bingo Bongo, Girly-Pop. He must have stolen my Helm too, get it back to me and I’ll give you back your mom... your mortal one, anyway.” Hades pointed at me with a finger gun, making a pop sound as he “Fired”, and the ceiling began to cave, and a drop of water landed on my head, “Tell your dad that they owe me 12 Drachma, and that I agree about how shitty the youngest is!” Hades waved at me as the full force of the ocean began to fall toward me and my friends.

I braced for impact, pulling my friends close to me, my Scarf wrapping around Annabeth protectively as a large Clam closed around us, keeping the water out of it as my black dress melted and my shoes got shorter(YES!) but were still considerable as high heels(NO!) and the Scarf was a scarf again, draped down my body as I was tied back into a two-piece.

It was blue and pink, and my actual dress was turned into another towel, but this one was white, and wrapped itself around my hips.

I stood up subconsciously as the clam slammed open again, knocking a surfer off of his board and into the water.

“BRO!”

“Sorry... Please *forgive me* ...”

“No problem girl, I was already wet anyway.” and he swam himself and his board away, ~~I took~~ Annabeth took *my* hand and helped me down into the shallow water.

“Well then, looks like the ‘God who has turned’ wasn’t Hades.” I spoke to the air as we stepped out of the ocean, and I shivered as I looked into the sky, a storm, the rain was pouring, but there was no lightning, I smiled to myself.

“Well what now? How will we get Hades’ Helm of darkness from Ares? I’m out of Ideas.” Annabeth looked to me, eyes narrow. “Don’t-”

“I’m gonna **fight him** .” the tips of the Scarf turned a deep red, a line connecting them through the otherwise bright pink piece of fabric.

“Well then why don’t you put your money where your mouth is, **Pretty Boy** .” I Heard from behind me.

I deal with... A lot.

Chapter Notes

Content warning: Smelly Gabe(in Flashback)

“You took Zeus’ Master Bolt, *and* Hades’ Helm.” I glared at Ares, the sand turned red from the way his head light reflected off of it.

“Nah, not directly anyway, Gods can’t take each other's symbols of power, big No-no, that is, but, as you know, Demi-gods on the other hand.” He raised his eyebrow as he looked me up and down, I grabbed the Scarf and held it across my exposed midsection.

“Who did then? Clarisse? Annabeth told me she was there.”

A flash of fury lit behind Ares’ eyes before he shook his head, putting his wrap around sunglasses back on, “No, it doesn’t matter, anyway, because you’re getting in my way, so I’m going to run it down for ya, Corpse Breath was supposed to eviscerate you on sight, big ol’ Aqua would get pissed, and Dear Ol’ Dad would get mad because *his* lightning bolt would be down in the underworld, and Corpsey would still be lookin’ for *This Baby*.” Ares held up the Helm of Darkness, A bronze helmet that sat on the handlebars of his motorcycle, it seemed to shift as I looked at it, not letting me get a good look, but it looked horrifying, “Then, he’d get mad at both of the other two, he thinks that at least *one* of them took it, and then there would be a three way fight between the three most powerful gods!”

“But they're your family!”

... “Yeah? That’s kinda half the point! Bloodiest fights are between family, and ours in particular, we don’t pull **any** punches!” Ares seemed conflicted for a split second, almost like he needed to be reminded why he was doing this to his family.

“You gave me this thing in Denver... I’ve had the Bolt this whole time!”

“Not quite, Darling, It was more so that you had the things house, and it came home when you got into the Underworld. Unfortunately, I forgot that old Coral Teeth was a Chthonic God, So the Underworld likes you too much for what I had planned.”

“But why would you even send it to Hades? You seem like you would like having this much power in your own hands.” I told Ares as I went to grab Riptide, only to have my hand hit my bare thigh.

“Well... Actually that is a good point... why... but then...” Ares began talking to himself as I began patting myself down, my Purse had turned into the sheath for the Master Bolt, so

Riptide wasn't in there, I didn't have pockets, so that was a no go either, I began to panic when I heard something hit the ground at my feet.

I looked down and saw Riptide, in pen form, laying next to my left foot.

"Too much attention, and I Don't want to have to face consequences for not telling Dad about how I found it-" Ares flinched, reaching up and holding his head.

"Found? You didn't order the theft! You just found the guy who stole it and never told anyone!" I smiled, Unsure of why I felt relieved by this realization.

"YES I DID! I don't take orders from ANYONE but myself!"

"I never said that you were getting orders."

Ares' eyes were wild, he looked like a cornered boar, he let out a growl as he bared his teeth, showing off how the lower set of canines were about twice as big as the rest of them, and three times longer.

Suddenly, a wild boar exploded out of the sand and began trying to run me down.

I waited until the last second, and dove to the left, grabbing Riptide and decapitating the Boar as it sailed past me.

The head and body burst into flames before they hit the water.

"Fight me yourself." I glared, the world melted into shades of red as the Scarf around my neck began wrapping itself around my head, I could feel the push of metal from my time playing capture the flag and realized I was wearing a Greek helmet, But I kept eye contact with Ares, who looked uncomfortable with the idea.

"Uh... Listen kid, I know I said you needed to die, but I... Uh..."

"What's wrong? Scared of Little ol' me?" I asked, Smirking, even if I didn't know that he could see it with how the helmet obscured my face.

"In your dreams kid, I... just don't like the idea of fighting you."

"Because you're Scared!"

"NO I'M NOT!"

Another Boar, Another Boar Head.

"If you weren't scared, you wouldn't be trying to kill me with Ol' MacDonalds Farm, We're already down two Oinks."

"Or, I could just turn you into-" Ares was cut off when my Scarf, which was below the Helmet, Flashed a blood stained red, and what looked like Fire Light erupted from behind me by the look of my shadow.

“Yeah Yeah, sure, You could, couldn’t you, Save your pride from getting your Ass whooped by a little *Girl* ?” I leaned forward, the Fire behind me died down, and Ares looked fully pissed, Red flames were melting his sunglasses, and the leather on his jacket was peeling.

“Fine, If you want to get ground into a paste *so* badly, who am I to complain.” Ares took the Metal Baseball bat from next to his bike, twirling it in the air.

“If I beat you, You give me the Helm, If you beat me, you get the bolt, good enough for you?”

“Sure thing Sunfish, now, do you want to do this Classic, or Modern?” Ares twirled his Bat a few times, turning it into a shotgun, and back multiple times before I held out my sword.

“Classic it is then.” the baseball bat shifted in the light, turning into a sword that was definitely supposed to be held with two hands, but Ares was one handing it, the other hand resting on his hip.

“Percy you Idiot! He’s a god!” Annabeth grabbed me by the shoulder, and forced her words past her teeth.

“He’s a coward.” I could feel my Scarf congeal into a blood red cape that fluttered in the air below my helmet.

“... Here.” Annabeth told me, untying her necklace and tying it around my wrist, “May you have the strength of Athena on your side.”

“And the Satyrs stand with you too!” Grover took a bracelet he had made out of abandoned can tabs, and tied it around my other wrist.

“Wow... Grover... This is actually pretty cool.” I could tell that my Cape was glowing, as though happy that I was getting Gifts before I threw down with a god.

“Y’all done now?” Ares asked as he leaned on his sword, “Listen kid, not too late to back off, I’ve fought tougher types than you before I was able to speak, I have unlimited strength and can’t die, what are you going to do to fight against that?”

“I have Friends.”

“Wow, well, prepare to have the power of friendship get you turned into dust.”

Ares came in with a downward slash, but I stepped to the side, my shoes were actually flat sandals now, and my towel tied itself around my chest, under my armpits, and lengthened longer than any towel I’ve seen before, and lost the towel texture, becoming a nice silk dress that fell to my knees.

Ares then went for a leg sweep, I jumped before I knew what I was doing, and swung Riptide at his face as I began the downward part of my jump, but Ares retaliated with hit right to my stomach, his fist hit me right in the middle of my gut, sending me flying into the sand.

He walked closer, holding his sword away from himself, arms almost limp...

He stood above me.

Gabe stood above me, he had a beer bottle in his hand, he had found me playing with my mom's make up, he tore it out of my hand and had spent the last five minutes telling me how much of a freak my mom would think I was for this, and how I couldn't tell her about anything that had happened, and had to come up with a reason that I had bruises on my arm, or else he would tell my mom, and she would...

She would...

She would...

A flash of red.

"NO!" The very ground around me split apart, Ares' foot fell into a crack that had sprouted, I rolled out of the way as he swung his huge sword at me, I heard the sound of an explosion as a Gas pipe was ripped open and a spark dropped into it.

Ares ripped his leg out of the ground, sending shards of concrete and sand flying everywhere.

"What's wrong kid? Finally figure out that you're *outmatched*?" Ares covered about ten feet of difference in the span of a second, and grabbed me by the collar of my shirt, I could hear my friends shout my name, I could feel the way my cape whipped around my body, the storm above us was pouring rain, it was going nearly sideways, as I tried to keep my breath.

Ares changed his hold, from clutching my clothes, to holding me by the neck, and slammed me into the ground.

Right into the ocean.

Ares brought his hand up to probably slam my face into a paste, but the ocean pulled me away.

His fist hit a rock.

The water seemed to hold me, it was like it was hugging me as I looked at Ares, who glared into my eyes, and I disappeared into the waves.

"Oh... Shit!"

A tidal wave suddenly slammed down into Ares, the ocean had been holding back, I had been holding it back, and it hated to be restrained.

As though the water was ice, Ares slid forward, the current pulling him farther than he could possibly be able to fight in, and I circled around him, Ares tried to stab me through the water,

using his sword like a fishing spear, but I just went under his stabs, and then I took my own sword, and slashed at his ankle, slicing his achilles tendon.

The screams of the victims of war filled the air, the barks of millions of dogs, the squeals of couple dozen boars exploded through the ocean, sending the water flying away, but I stayed standing as Ares dropped to his knees as his ankle bled a golden sheen of blood, it glittered as it spilled on the sand, and Ares glared up into my eyes.

He began to stand, grabbing his sword.

Something stopped him.

The world began to lose color, but then it all filled with shades of red and pink, a couple baby blues were also in the mix.

Ares calmed,

Slightly.

He pointed his hand at me as the skin dripped from it, melting away from existence as he spoke to me.

“I curse you, Perseus Jackson, to never have a reminder of battle, Scars will never run along your body, no muscles will show beyond your skin, your body will never know the outcome of a fight, nobody will witness your accomplishments in battle be shown upon you.” Then he disappeared, a chorus of barks and squeals accompanying it.

I wandered back to the surface, and found the Furies standing there, speaking to my friends, and taking The Helm of Darkness, before flying into the air and disappearing into a swarm of bats.

“Percy! You're alive! That was so-”

“AWESOME!” Grover pulled me into a goat hug.

“STUPID!” Annabeth punched me in the shoulder, “You could have DIED!” Annabeth crossed her arms, and pouted to the right for a few seconds before pulling me into a hug as well, “Thanks for... Not... Doing that...”

The Helmet melted out of existence, and the world stopped looking red, and my Scarf stopped being a cape and wrapped around me and Annabeth again, making her lose her balance, which caused us to fall onto my back.

We were nose to nose, Annabeth’s gray eyes peering into my own bright blues as we laid there for a minute.

“You Drool in your sleep.” I told her.

She giggled.

I giggled.

We stayed like that, laughing for a few minutes, until Annabeth fell off of me, the scarf let go of us at some point.

“Okay, so now we just need to get to New York... within the week, shouldn’t take... too long?” I said, wandering up a set of stairs, which were split in half in a diagonal from the spider web of cracks that ran out from where I had been cornered by Ares.

“We would need to get a bus, and *maybe* we would make it, but we would need to convince someone to-”

“ *EXCUSE ME SIR!* ” I shouted as a nice car pulled into a space next to us.

“Yes Ma’am?”

“ *Could you **please** give me and my friends here a ride to New York?* ” I asked the man in the car, and watched as his eyes filled with Pink and his face dropped.

He just nodded.

I opened the door for Annabeth.

She pushed me in before her, and got in behind me, squeezing me between them.

“Get us there as fast as you can.”

He gave me a salute, and slammed his foot into the gas pedal.

We had 2 days left.

I think Annabeth was right about Aphrodite Claiming me.

Chapter Notes

In this chapter, we learn where Percy got her murderous rage at injustice against her friends!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Okay, You guys get back to Camp, Tell Chiron about how Ares was tricked into doing this, and how it was another half-blood in camp that stole the bolt.” I told them as I hailed a Taxi.

“What!”

“No!”

“We’re not leaving you!”

“I need you guys to warn them, tell everyone, They deserve to know the truth, and they need to know, even if I... if the Olympions don’t believe me...” The Taxi Pulled up, and they got in, More than a little hesitant.

“Take them to long island.” I told the guy the address for Camp Half-Blood, and watched them drive off into the distance before walking into the Empire State Building.

I breathed, I needed all the charm I could pull from, Even if I hadn’t bathed in the last three days and the feeling of my hair was driving me insane.

“Excuse me sir! Do you know how to *get me to the six hundredth floor?* ” I could see the way he seemed to fight against the effects of my words as he began to reach for a button, “*Pleasssse?* ” I looked at him with wide eyes and a slight pout, holding the Sheath close to my chest, the man’s hand stayed in place for a few seconds.

“Here you go Madame.” He handed me a key card, “Insert that into the Security Slot in the elevator, Ma’am.”

“ *Thank You~* ” I took the Key card and skipped into the Elevator, Giggling as I inserted it.

The ride up took longer than I expected.

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.

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“Do you like Pina Coladas, And getting caught in the rain...” I sang to myself quietly, I really liked this song, my new voice didn’t make me any better at singing, unfortunately. It was the summer solstice, so the gods would be convening at that moment. I hoped I would make it in time.

My Scarf reached down, running along my fingers, it was pretty calming...

Really calming...

My eyelids were heavy...

I could see the lights in the Elevator glowing pink...

DING

I was shocked awake when I heard the sound of the door opening, and wandered outside, I blinked the sleep out of my eyes and nearly died.

If it weren't for my Scarf wrapping around a pole, I would have walked off of the edge of Olympus, and plummeted to the ground almost thousands of feet below.

Then I saw the Mountain.

“Wow, just... the whole thing huh...” I muttered as I walked along to the largest Palace(A lot of Palaces), I noticed that there were so many gardens around.

“How many of these guys started doing Gardening?”

“Well, they *do* have forever, soooo.” I jumped when I looked over to see a nymph, she set her arm on my shoulder, and looked at me with a far off look in her eyes...

Then she giggled, poked me on the nose with her tongue sticking out of her mouth, and went back to a large group of Nymphs, who were all looking at me, smiling and waving.

I waved back.

I passed the Muses, who side eyed me as I passed.

I Passed a few minor Gods and Goddesses, and a few Minor gods and goddesses.

The large Palace was White and gold, it was also missing a few Pillars that lined up with ones I saw in the Underworld, which felt far worse now that I thought about how the place looked exactly like this.

As I approached the door to the Throne room, about to knock, I noticed something on my hand.

“APHRODITE! STOP GIGGLING!” I was shocked out of my realization when I heard what sounded like Annabeth shouting at Aphrodite.

“But you're going to meet her soon! I've been working on her for *SOOOOOO* long that I just can't WAIT!” I heard what sounded like the personification of Cotton Candy and Bubble Gum talk back to her.

“Well, it's nearly time for you to give me MY BOLT BACK BROTHER!” that was Zeus, he had a boom to his voice like he was a speaker system, or the Bass in a rock song.

“Like I told you, Brother, he DIDN'T TAKE IT!” I had an idea who that was, and I was running out of time, so I put my hand on the door.

“APHRODITE! SIT BACK DOWN!”

And it flew open, exposing a being of bright pink light in a vaguely human form that grabbed me, and pulled me inside, it was then that I realized that I was wearing heels again, I didn't make an embarrassing noise and DEFINITELY DIDN'T fall on my face!

I was pulled back onto my feet in the middle of the room, every single god was staring right at me, Zeus...

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER!

Aphrodite: SKIP

Apollo: He was looking at me curiously, mostly between me and Aphrodite, who was back on her own throne. He had golden hair and eyes, he hurt to look at for too long.

Ares: he wasn't actually looking at me, he was looking everywhere except at me, actually.

Artemis: She was looking at me with a different curiosity than Apollo, she looked like she was trying to figure me out, Apollo looked like he didn't know where to start. She was sitting on her own feet, in more of a crouch than a sitting position. Her eyes were pools of silver that didn't have anything but silver in them.

Athena was glaring at me, I could see feathers in her hair before I looked away to avoid her... exploding my brain or something, or maybe she would make me read that book I needed to do that report on, yeah, that was worse.

Demeter: The one I forgot about at the Water Park, she was looking at me tiredly, I was pretty sure she was the oldest one there, so that made sense. She looked like a grandma, but she had grain running through her hair, and a pair of glasses were hanging from a crown on her head, a silver band that had wheat sprouted out of.

Dionysus: ABSENT

Hephestus was looking at whatever was in his hands, which wasn't there before, and was working at speeds I couldn't understand.

Hera: she gave me a reassuring smile, which shocked me enough to realize that I was shaking. She had a pair of horns that were decorated with brilliant gems.

Hermes: He was smirking at me, he had a package that was eerily head sized in his lap, which he was fiddling with the tape on.

And finally(NOT LOOKING AT ZEUS) was my father, Posiedon, he had a pair of horse ears on his head, which poked up out of the bucket hat he had, he had sharp teeth that I couldn't see, a pair of fins on the side of his head that seemed to emulate ears, and slitted eyes that held a twinkle that I saw in the mirror every day before my quest.

"Father." I looked at him for a bit, not knowing what to do, do I bow? Curtsy? Kneel? (*In this Dress?*) so I just looked at the ground.

"Should you not address the Master of the house first *Boy*?" I heard the sound of a crack to my right, beyond the crackle of the storm that was brewing in the sky above Zeus.

"Calm yourself, brother, if the child wishes to speak to me, that Is only right." My father spoke, the sounds of waves hitting the beach accompanied his every word, he felt nice, like swimming after a long day, like the few times I actually enjoyed swimming because it wasn't at a pool, so the chlorine water didn't burn my skin.

"So, you still Claim him? You Claim this boy that you brought here against *OUR OATH*?" I kept my eyes on the ground.

Make yourself look small.

They might forget you.

"I have Admitted my Wrongdoing, now, let the child speak." oh, so I was a Wrongdoing then? Sure, why not, it wasn't the worst thing I had been called.

I told them about what had happened with Ares. Aphrodite was petting me as I spoke which I didn't enjoy, but it wasn't the worst she had done to me in the last week.

"Ares, does the Boy speak the truth?" Zeus looked over his Bolt as he spoke, caring more for his stuff than for his own son. I could almost understand Ares' perceived Hostility toward his father.

"Don't just blame him, he didn't do it himself," The room stopped, but Aphrodite was still brushing my hair, "He was being manipulated, he was tricked into doing it by something else, he accidentally said he was taking orders, but refused to elaborate, I don't know more about it, so you can ask him yourself after I leave."

"So it *was* Hades!"

"No! It was definitely *NOT* Hades! He was the one to figure out that Ares was Included in the first place! Man, is all you-" I yelped as Aphrodite pulled my hair into a braid.

"Brother..." I heard a whisper from behind me as Aphrodite began to stand, pulling me up with her.

Zeus vanished, probably to polish his bilt or something.

“Anyway! Nephew! You called this *DARLING baby* a Wrongdoing! If that is truely how you feel then I shall take her, show her the love that you refuse to show her!” Aphrodite hooked me under her arm, she was deceptively strong, and began to walk away.

“AH no! Aunt Aphrodite! I only said all of that because my Brother was here! And he wants to make everything boringly stale and serious! Don’t Steal My KID!” My father begged, his arms flying in different directions.

“Hm... well, if you apologize, then I will give you back your Daughter, but I want her too.” Aphrodite was commanding almost *more* respect from the gods than Zeus had, Hephestus was looking at her with half lidded eyes, and a big dopey grin on his face.

“I’M SORRY PERSEUS! PLEASE DON’T LEAVE ME I LOVE YOU!” my father was crying and had his arms out, Aphrodite was looking at me, asking a silent question.

“Uh... Okay?” Aphrodite then handed me to my father, who pulled me into a hug that almost shattered my bones.

“Oh, my baby, it’s been so long, I just want to take you down to Atlantis with me! I never want to let you go.”

“Dad, what was that thing in the pit?” I asked, getting past the bone crushing hug.

“... My father-”

“Kronos”

“Don’t say his name! Names give Power, especially from you, so... Don’t.” Father sat down on the ground, the gods do this a lot to talk to me.

“My Brother rustles every few years, whispers lies in the ears of men, fills people’s heads with false promises, but so far he hasn’t been able to pull himself out.” Aphrodite said from the doorway right behind me, she was checking her fingernails, which were perfect, like everything about her(gods I wish I was her)

what?

“Uh... Dad... Do you think...” I pulled on the scarf, and could see Aphrodite perk up at that moment, looking at me.

“What?” my father asked, not seeming to understand what I was insinuating.

“Well, uh... most of the things that it gives me are... non-pocketed... So...” I looked away from Aphrodite as my dad seemed to notice.

“Oh! Uh... well, see... Uh... that would be... her choice...”

Aphrodite waved her hand, and Riptide appeared in it. I looked to my father, who looked away as Aphrodite changed it from a Pen to a hair clip with a fake water lily on it, and waved her hand once more, causing the hair clip to appear in my hair.

“...I am very conflicted with this.” I deadpanned as Aphrodite showed me my own face in the mirror, I was in perfect Makeup, apparently at some point I had been given actual lipstick, and I had a full white silk chiton on, along with 3 inch tall high heels that made the clacking sound I had heard on the way there.

“Well, you need to look nice when you’re going to meet the gods!” she told me, finally putting me on the ground.

“Can I go home now? I miss my mom...”

“Of course Darling, but before you go, a little gift from me and Hermes, do what you wish with it, ‘K?’” Aphrodite Kissed me on the forehead, something I only ever let my mom do, and opened the door, dropping the Package that Hermes was messing with into my arms before the door closed.

“Remember, Perseus, I love you, and I always will.” my father bade me farewell as I began to walk back to the elevator.

I caught a Taxi to my mom’s apartment, and rang the doorbell.

I was nervous, of course I was, how would she react? I didn’t look the same at all, I had a different face, the scars from my moments of recklessness were all gone, I was in a *dress* -

The door opened, and all of my worries disappeared.

She was Okay, and that was all that I cared about. She looked at me curiously.

“Can I help you Miss?” right, she didn’t recognize me, but she was so amazing that she still greeted me with kindness.

“Mom... I’m sorry.” I cried, I admit it, I was standing in the hallway crying as my own mother seemed to realize who I was.

“Percy? Oh my baby, you don’t have anything to apologize for, it’s okay.” my Mom knelt down and pulled me into her arms and began running her hands through my hair, shocking me out of my tears.

“You... you don’t think...” My throat tensed, sobs hopping out as I clung to my mother. She seemed to understand what I meant.

“Why would I ever-”

“Gabe told me...” I sniffled, it felt nice, to finally break down, stop all of the ‘fearless savior of olympus! Stopper of the civil war between the sons of kronos!’ stuff that people were

calling me on Olympus, it felt nice to be a kid again.

“Sally! Who is it!” I physically recoiled when I heard his voice, the rough way it grated against everything that I knew, he felt like more of a threat than whatever was in that pit had ever been.

My mom looked over and saw my package, the one that Aphrodite gave me.

“Oh! It’s nothing babe, but you got a package!” my mom took the box, kissed me on the cheek, and leaned in to my ear.

“Go back to Camp, I’ll pick you up at the end of the summer, and we won’t ever have to deal with gabe again.” She smiled at me before getting a scary look in her eyes, and turned back to the inside of the apartment, removing the tape on the package as the door closed.

My mom is so cool.

Chapter End Notes

we also learned that the little shit gene comes from the Olympian side of the family. also, couldn't find where to put this in the chapter, but Percy had to do a lightning round of describing the Olympians because she thought they might smite her if she looked at them too long.

I get Adopted

I Iris messaged Chiron, and told him that I was going to come back to camp for the summer, and asked him politely to not make it a big deal, he agreed, but I could see Mr. D in the Background and knew that I was going to get mobbed once I opened the door to the van that Argus was driving.

Which is why I just... didn't.

I was nervous again.

I was nervous that they wouldn't respect me, that they would only care about what I looked like now, and not what I did.

Unfortunately, Aphrodite's Scarf had different plans in mind.

"Hey, wait I- NO!" I was thrown out of the Van as the glow of my Scarf practically blinded me.

I was quickly grabbed by bright glowing pink hands.

"INTRODUCING!" I heard a familiar voice cheer as I was pulled into a spin, my dress lengthening along with my hair, which reached the back of my shins.

"THE NEWEST QUEST RETURNEE!" Was that Clarisse? I distinctly heard clinks as bracelets appeared on my wrists and I got incredibly dizzy.

"PERCY JACKSON! DAUGHTER OF APHRODITE! (and Poseidon too)" a chorus cheered from my right as I spun across the ground, my hair bunching up in little mini Curls as I struggled to stand in my 4 inch heels.

"Son of Poseidon." I heard a mutter that was followed by a fist to the stomach of whoever just spoke as I blinked rapidly.

I was pulled around for the rest of the day, and nobody let me go to my Cabin. I got a golden Laurel Wreath and a feast that I ate half of, easy.

We then burned our burial shrouds, Annabeths was brilliant, it was truly worthy of the child of the Goddess of Weaving, with gray silk and darker gray owls that were embroidered into the cloth.

"It's a shame, I bet you would look amazing in it." I told her, Scarf reaching for her hand.

She punched me lightly on the shoulder, then took the cloth of my Scarf.

Mine was too shiny for me to tell what it was, the glitter nearly blinded me as I chucked it into the fire, it burned really well, and the Aphrodite Cabin helped me do it, I could see that the Ares kids looked more than a little embarrassed.

At the sing along, I was ganged up on by the Aphrodite Cabin, who just refused to let me go as they swayed side to side during the song, I got away with not singing, for once.

Mr. D looked like he was enjoying himself too, it was like I could see the years melt off of his face, going from middle aged drunk to a late teens party boy as he sat on the other side of the flames, and sipped from a suspiciously full can of diet coke.

“And here! Is to the new *HEROES* who did the impossible! Stop my dad from throwing a tantrum.” Mr... Dionysus said quickly before downing the can of *maybe not actually soda* , chucking it into a garbage can back at the pavilion, much to the delight of every Ares kid and His own cabin.

“WOO!” “Now get back to bed, I’m Tired.” Mr. D yawned before grumbling as he walked back over to the big house, Chiron at a slow Gallop behind him.

“Welp, You heard the God! I’m just gonna...” I began shimmying away from the group as they began getting up, only for Selina Beurigard, Head Aphrodite kid, to grab me by the scruff of my neck.

“Oh, no you don’t! We have a full Sleepover planned for our newest sister!” The way all of the Aphrodite Girls were smiling at me was sending my Fight or Flight instincts Firmly in the Flight side of things.

“ANNABETH! HELP ME!” I reached out to her as my Scarf went limp, not glowing at all as I tried to plead with my Quest mate.

Annabeth looked back, ready to take out her dagger, but when she saw the Aphrodite kids pulling me in the direction of their Cabin, she slipped her yankee cap on and disappeared.

“TRAITOR! GROVER!” I called out, reaching out to him, only for my best friend to say something about having a blind date and running off into the woods. “I WILL NOT FORGET THIS!!!” I screamed as I was pulled into the Aphrodite Cabin, the scent of perfume slammed into me full force as I was placed on an empty bunk.

“Okay... Uh, listen, I can explain-” I Muttered as all of them looked at me, I noticed that the ratio seemed to be 3/4ths girls, why did I notice that? I don’t know!

“Okay, Nella! Get over here!” A child with a large black hoodie that hid their body structure waddled up to us, the kid looked about my age, maybe a year younger, and they seemed very embarrassed about what was happening.

“Hi...”

“Hi?...” was all I got out before Selina grabbed my Scarf, and wrapped it around the kid’s neck, loosely draping it as more material was added so that it wouldn’t get off of me, Gods Forbid.

The Scarf glowed with the intensity of the sun again, pink light draping the whole cabin for a moment before it died down.

I looked to my left to check on the kid, and saw a little girl in a Tu-tu, her shirt had a Dove on it that seemed to be made out of sequins, and around it was a circle that said 'Mommy's little angel'.

"IT WORKED!" Nella cheered, Tears of joy on her face as the Scarf unwrapped from her neck, her face was slightly red but she seemed overall happy as she jumped up and down, nearly jumping her own height in every one of them, then she tackled Selina, who pulled the younger girl into a full bear hug, A few Duck feathers were tied in Selina's hair.

"Alright girls! We need to tell the rest tomorrow, but for now, let's get the rest of you done up with the full 'Wham Bam Shabam'!"

By the end of the night, the ratio was a full 4/4ths girls.

Except me!

I'm not...

I don't count!

"Wake up."

"Wake Up"

"WAKE UP" I got hit in the face with what felt like a Swan wing, those things have *VERY* powerful wings!

"WAH!" I blinked the sleep out of my eyes, looking up to see Selina pulling those same swan wings back under her shirt.

"You..."

"Yeah, it happens to the children of Gods with Birds as their main Iconography." Selina Explained as she began looking me over, I felt a shimmer across my body as my Scarf flashed pink again. "Oh wow." She blinked as she picked me up, placing me on the ground with very little effort.

My Sleeping gown pulled up, shocking me momentarily before turning into a pair of Shorts made of Denim, then the top wrapped around me again, turning into an orange Camp Half-Blood T-shirt.

My hair pulled itself up as it straightened, passing through a dark blue Scrunchie that materialized as I stood there, Selina staring as I went through this again.

And I was wearing sneakers.

I Cried a little tear of joy as I felt my heel hit the ground.

I spent the next week or so being held hostage by the Aphrodite Cabin, occasionally a kid would slowly walk in and I would Wrap the Scarf around them and a girl would Happily skip out.

My mom killed Gabe.

Gods, I love her.

Me and Annabeth were tied together again, but this Time we were watching what seemed to be an animation using fireworks, Grover told me he was off to look for Pan, he seemed a lot less wiry as he sat next to us for a bit, and tapped me on the nose before leaving because I couldn't stop him.

He walked off into the woods, I was worried for him, I didn't just hope he would be the first Satyr to find Pan.

I knew he would.

I spent the rest of the summer Trying to sleep in my own cabin, apparently Aphrodite had officially claimed me in the Camp directory, so I could get forced to stay in her cabin without the girls getting in trouble.

I kept winning at capture the flag, keeping the victory out of the hands of those who opposed me. A lot of cabins made alliances with me, and I had strategies with most of them by the last one.

Every time I won the Aphrodite girls would pull me into a sleep over, and then they would just talk about boys and forget I was there.

They forced me to learn how to actually apply Makeup, even though whatever Aphrodite did made the stuff just appear on my face when needed.

The camp bead was interesting, it had a dove on it that held a lightning bolt in one talon, and a trident in the other.

“To commemorate the first Child of Aphrodite, even if an honorary one, to ever complete a quest!” Luke cheered, holding the bead up before giving the first one to me.

The Aphrodite Cabin pulled me into a group hug that lasted at least an hour.

I surrendered to my fate.

The next day I was woken up when Drew, One of the campers that I Scarfed, hit me in the face with a goose wing.

“Gah!” I spat out dark brown goose feathers that were motling in droves from her back.

“AH! Sorry Pers, I’m just stressed, I haven’t told my mom about all of this yet!” she pulled me to my feet as she grabbed a toothbrush that went flying out of the bathroom.

“What?”

“Everyone! We have some unaccompanied Eyeshadow! Come and grab it or I’m going to give it to Clarisse!” Selina shouted over the commotion of Makeup scrounging as Nella snagged the container in question, white feathers were pushing out of the little girl's shirt collar, and there was red skin down her arms, as if she had been scratching at them.

I tumbled out of the Cabin as the girls began arguing over which containers of Maybelline were theirs and saw multiple of my Sisters were reading letters, some were crying tears of joy, some... weren't.

All of the other Campers I Scarfed were in similar states of disarray, I walked past them and up to my Cabin, I hadn't ever moved stuff into my God-Mom's Cabin yet, so I just had to scoop everything into a duffel bag and leave.

But when I opened the door, I saw something on my bed.

A medium sized Purse. It seemed to be made of leather, and had a strap that would fit over my shoulder. It was one of the ones with a flap on it, and when I opened it I almost fell onto the floor.

The thing didn't have a bottom.

Well, it did on the outside, it was nice and flat so I could set it on the ground when I wasn't using it, but on the inside...

It was an infinite black void.

I reached inside, and felt a piece of paper that I grabbed, pulling it out with a simple tug.

Dear Percy,

Duffel Bag? Really?

Those things don't go with *anything* .

Here, have this Purse.

I had my Husband make it, it will hold anything you want it too, any amount.

It's an infinite bag, Okay? Pheasty gave me a long explanation on how it works, but that's the jist of it.

It will also appear on you if you forget it in a room or something, but Only if you say the *magic word*

~Ooooh~

(The Magic word is Cethelipod)

Have a good year!

XoXo.

Your Momma

(Aphrodite)

[And Poseidon too I guess]

{This Product is Legally considered a Hephaestus Original™}

I looked at the bag, it had an Eta carved into the leather, and A followed it, which seemed to be embossed on with Glitter, and there was a P that seemed slapped on last minute.

I looked at it, unimpressed.

The bag sighed, the P getting slightly more impressive, a series of bright blue crystals twinkled into existence as I looked at it.

I grabbed it and began shoveling my stuff into it, Minotaur Horn, Check.

...

That was it, huh.

I never really... noticed that I didn't... *own* anything else in here.

I settled with wandering down to the training grounds, I wasn't in heels for once, so I might've been able to get some practice in for more flat footed fights.

I had been training in heels, mostly because it was a miracle if I was allowed to wear anything else, and had gotten good enough that I managed to put Clarisse on the back foot

our last sparring session.

Clarisse seemed to have mellowed out, not wanting to disembowel me quite so much. That didn't mean she wasn't still being super aggressive, she just wasn't going to kill me for looking at her for too long anymore.

When I got into the Sword Training ground, I saw Luke.

He was slicing through the Dunnies like they had killed his family, heads were rolling, straw was coating the ground, and twigs were scattered around the area.

His stance was off, it was like the sword was new, the weight wasn't familiar, it was too heavy on downswings, too light on ups, I could hear the sound of Snakes hissing every time he didn't do what he wanted to. He was clearly skilled, but the way he handled the weapon in his hands... It was like he had never picked up a sword before.

He saw me as he was pulling the sword against the side of one of the dummies, kicking it as it passed the tip.

That , was a practiced movement, he was more comfortable in that single instance than he had been at any point while slashing.

"Hey Percy, how you doing?" Luke was sweating, but this wasn't the sweat from exhaustion, this was the sweat from sickness.

"Oh! Uh... well, I was just about to..."

"Get in some last minute practice? Me too, good to see you aren't like the rest of them."

"What?"

"C'mon, I managed to smuggle something out of Mr. D's stash, let's celebrate." Luke held up a box of Coke, leading me away from the training area with the promise of sugary liquid.

"Uh..." I looked at his sword he was new to, the blade sent shivers down my spine, my Scarf gripped me tighter.

"Hm? Oh, this darling's Backbiter." He threw back as he rested the sword on his shoulder.

"Backbiter?" It was the dumbest name I ever heard for a sword, it was like he was trying to be edgy.

"Mhm, one side's steel, other side's celestial bronze, works both ways."

I thought about how I had been able to get out of every problem I had with Mortals without resulting to violence...

Almost... every problem.

“We’re here.”

‘Here’ was a clearing next to the remains of Clarisse’s spear, Luke sat on the rock by the water, leaving me on the other side from it, the call of the river was roaring in my ears, my Scarf was barely stopping itself from killing me with how hard it was gripping me.

I sipped the sugary liquid.

“So... Miss being on a ~quest~?” Luke made jazz hands at the word quest.

“... Not really, I like being able to... not deal with all of that...” I looked down at my scarf, it curled around my arm, my shirt hardened a bit.

“...” Luke looked at me, his eyes had little slits in them, and seemed to have strange little spots falling down his Iris.

“Fine, yeah, I miss it, the wacky antics, the way that me and Anna... *what about you* .” I blushed, hiding in my scarf, feeling the hard beginnings of a helmet form at the bottom of it.

Luke looked down, his face was cast in shadows, and I saw the way the specks in his eyes glowed, his hair seemed to gray, his scar got fresher, he looked like a mess.

A Naiad popped her head out of the water, she waved at me for a few seconds before leaving.

“I’ve lived here for about... I don’t know, when did Thalia die again? It felt like ages ago... I trained, Trained, and Trained, it was all I could do, I was the oldest before Grover found us, I had to protect the girls, give them a chance to live, a chance to relax... I didn’t sleep a wink after we found Annabeth, you know that? I stood guard, I led the charge, I helped Thalia through her first period, Percy, I WAS 14! I held her hand when she died, *I* told Annabeth what happened when she woke up, *I* Helped her learn how to use a knife. I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I! And do you know what the gods did? Nothing. The gods didn’t care, they *Don’t* , Care about us, Percy. Look at you, they did this to you, they sent you on a quest, and you got... *that* , In return, nobody treats you with *respect* , they did, for a bit, because you managed to save the world, but that very night, you got lumped in with the rest of those Bimbos in the Aphrodite Cabin-”

“Don’t talk about them like that.” I got up, the Helmet formed, the world was red, and my Scarf snapped to red.

“Really? Are you actually doing this? Okay... I was going to ask you to come with me, you know.” Luke Snapped his fingers at the same time as I did, My hair fell into a tight braid as Riptide appeared in my hand, I pressed into the metal, snapping it and watched as it shifted into a sword before my and Luke's eyes, the Pommel was tied in a ribbon.

“See, they don’t take you seriously.”

A small ring of fire appeared in the ground, and out of it crawled a Scorpion, pitch black and tiny.

“Luke...” I looked into Luke's eyes, he looked away.

“They’re the problem, this western civilisation *SHIT* that they spout Is a disease! It needs to burn to the ground.”

“Luke, you don’t mean that! Kronos is-”

The world went cold for a moment before I felt like hot chocolate had appeared in my gut.

“Oh, I see, you think that just because you have *her* on your side, you can go and be reckless with all those names?”

“HE’S CONTROLLING YOU!” I shouted, stomping my foot, shoe turning into a greek sandal and crushing the Scorpion that was right next to my foot at the time, cracks began to snake out from where my foot had landed.

“NO! He showed me who I could be. My quest, Percy, I was told by my father to get a golden apple from the Garden of the Hesperides, then get it back to them, that was it, that’s ALL THEY WANTED! I worked my ASS off for them! And that’s the best they could do?” His tears of anger were a shining gold that bled through the red of the rest of the world.

“Heracles did that, it was one of the tougher ones too.”

“EXACTLY! They needed me to reenact the glory days so they could pretend that nothing ever changed! I got slashed by the dragon, and everyone felt *SORRY* for me, I failed. That Night, Kronos told me what to do, I got out of there under the cover of needing to puke due to how lovey dovey Persephony was, and managed to steal Hades’ Helm AND Zeus’ Master Bolt! All without them ever finding out!” I watched as a snake seemed to push its way out of either one of his hips, “AND WHAT’S MORE! Everyone else gets Wings, and animal ears, and Tusks, and all the cool animal stuff, AND *I GOT SNAKES IN MY SKIN!* ”

“OH! AND THEN ARES! He managed to catch me because we both stopped at the same diner before I went back to camp, and I had to pull him in on it, and then the DUMBASS had to think it was *HIS IDEA!* ”

“I was stuck reliving the moment of my failure for what felt like 30 years as Kronos kept me in my dreams for a week, slowing down time until I didn’t want to sleep, but then they just got longer, he told me, the day before you arrived, that I could pawn them off on you, get *you* to deliver them to him, get Ares in on it, have a time with it, but no, you just *HAD* to get bound by Aphrodite, the only God that could get you out of those situations, and now, here we are.”

“Luke... Don’t do this.”

“I’m Sorry, Perc, but I can’t have you running to Daddy.” he lunged.

I disarmed him easily, as I expected, his hands weren’t used to handling a sword, and it flew out of his hand with a single swing, the world began to Glow Red as I approached him.

Luke didn’t seem nervous, he had a grin as he held out his hand, he said the sword's name and it flew into his hand, shifting into a more curved blade as the handle got longer.

A scythe.

That was the weapon I saw him use during Capture the flag, it was a scythe, I hadn't been around to see him use it, but I could tell he was good just from how he stood.

He bent his knees, A smirk on his face, and I could see tiny little wings pop out of his ankles as he began to lean forward.

"PERCY!" I heard the sound of Annabeth running through the forest, Luke got a look in his eyes that was the closest thing to fear I had seen so far, and with a Pop, he disappeared.

"Percy, are you okay?" Annabeth asked me, I tossed Riptide in the air and snapped my fingers, causing it to appear in my hair again as the helmet melted back into my scarf, the world got more colors than just red as I turned around.

"Why?" I asked Annabeth as she grabbed me by the wrist.

"Your mom has been waiting to pick you up for half an hour! And the Aphrodite girls wanted to see you off." Annabeth shook her head quickly as she pulled me, I saw some light gray feathers fall out of her shirt collar while we ran.

"Wait, before I go, Luke stole the Master bolt, and the Helm. I need you to tell Chiron, he disappeared before you showed up!"

"What?... I... Okay, I guess that makes sense, you're going to tell me more about this though!" Annabeth took my arm and began writing something on the inside of my forearm.

"What's that?"

"My Email Address, I set it up at a library before I met up with Thalia and Luke, used it for club penguin before the place got destroyed by the Minotaur." Annabeth then kept pulling me to my mom's New Camaro(Gabe's old one that went through MANY car washes.)

The Aphrodite Cabin Tackled me immediately, and Annabeth tried to run, but tripped on my Scarf, and got pulled in with me, a little "Hoot!" popped out of her mouth as she got squeezed by Selina, the weirdly strong head of the Aphrodite Cabin.

I could hear my mom Giggle from the car, and just let myself exist for a bit, when I pulled myself out of the group hug, I saw that Annabeth had Eyeshadow on, it was a light gray that only looked better when she looked at me with that look of total done with my antics that I had gotten a lot.

I hopped in the car before she found out that the stuff didn't come off and laughed as I saw her rub at it.

As we pulled out, I saw a car with Virginia plates pulling in.

End Notes

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