Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Pegasus and the Fight for Olympus (Pegasus, 2) by Kate O'Hearn", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/673. Entry version as of November 07, 2026.

Kate O'Hearn

Pegasus and the Fight for Olympus (Pegasus, 2)

United Kingdom (2011)

TAGS: Apollo Cupid Diana Euryale Gorgon(s) Heracles Hercules Jupiter Medusa Neptune Pegasus Perseus Stheno Venus Vesta





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

General information	
Title of the work	Pegasus and the Fight for Olympus (Pegasus, 2)
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2011
First Edition Details	Kate O'Hearn, *Pegasus and the Fight for Olympus.* Warwickshire: Hodder Children's Books (a division of Hachette Children's Books), 2011, 356 pp.
ISBN	9780340997413
Genre	Action and adventure fiction, Bildungsromans (Coming-of-age fiction), Novels
Target Audience	Children (6–10)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Photo Courtesy of the author.

Kate O'Hearn , b. 1950
(Author)

O'Hearn is a children's author. Born in Canada, she has lived in many places throughout the USA, with a special fondness for New York City, which she views as her home. The itinerant lifestyle with her family as a child, and the consequent experiences she accumulated, greatly influenced her imagination. These journeys and the stories she heard from her parents, contributed to her love of writing. O'Hearn writes that her books are the result of her love of fantasy and writing.

Source:

Official website (accessed: February 25, 2019)

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Additional information

Summary

This is the second installment in the *Pegasus* series. For more on this series, see the entry on *Pegasus and the Flame*.

After saving Olympus, our heroes, Emily, Paelen and Joel, together with Pegasus, are still nonetheless facing constant threats from the Nirads. They need to return to earth to save Emily's father, who is being held by CRU. They are also being assisted by the charming Cupid, who causes some tension within the group. Cupid relies on his charm, yet he is an aloof Olympian who cares nothing for humans at the beginning. After spending more time with Emily and the group he becomes more conscious of the lives of simple mortals. He is handsome and is well aware of it, and Emily's infatuation with him annoys Paelen. Paelen tries to prove his worth to Emily and insists that Cupid is a coward.

Meanwhile, Emily, "the fire of Olympus", is struggling to control her new-found power. She has the ability to manipulate fire; makes it burst out of her fingers and uses it to create fires and even smaller beams. Yet this power can quickly get out of control and cause serious harm. When the heroes flee to an abandoned diner, Emily's power gets out of control when she fights the Nirads. She torches the entire diner, even burning Pegasus badly in the process. Earl, a passerby who knows the diner, is also caught up in the story and tries to help Emily and her friends escape the CRU forces who find their hiding place.

Later as the book progresses, our heroes discover that the Nirads are not as evil as they first seem and that they are controlled by the vicious Gorgons who wish to destroy Olympus in revenge for the death of their sister Medusa by Perseus. The Nirads are afraid of the Gorgons since they turned their children to stone and capture their princes. Yet Emily and her friends alert Jupiter to the situation and they succeed in persuading the Nirads to join them in a fight against the evil Gorgons. Emily now faces a heartbreaking dilemma: should she kill Jupiter in order to save her friends or should she die trying to save the world? She chooses to use her power to destroy the Gorgons without hurting Jupiter. The Gorgons turn her and her friend to stone during the final battle, yet Emily's fire helps her melt the stone and free her friends and the Nirads who had been petrified. There are casualties in the battle and not all the Nirads can be brought back to

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life. Joel even loses his arm which turned to stone and broke. Thus Emily and her friends end the story with mixed feeling of triumph and loss.

Analysis

This book contains several messages for its young readers. Like the first, it is a coming-of-age story, examining all the different complications of growing up. Emily, who was reborn in the last installment, needs to face the changed reality of her life. She is now an Olympian herself and not a regular mortal teenager any more, although she feels like one. She is facing insecurities more than ever, since she needs to find her place in the world once again. During adolescence, adolescents try to establish their own distinct and independent identity. While Emily now becomes the acclaimed "flame of Olympus", she is nevertheless still confused and struggling to find her real place in this fast-changing world. She holds on to the things that comfort her and give her courage, mainly her family and friends.

She notes to Pegasus, "You know something, Pegs? The older I get, the more confused I am. Can you please tell me what just happened here?" (location 186–7). Emily feels the burden of her new position: "She was too young to have such a heavy responsibility thrust upon her. She should be at home in New York, her biggest worry being what to wear to school the next day or if a boy in her class liked her." (locations 3147–8). These are the normal worries of an adolescent girl, but Emily is preoccupied with saving the world. Yet she is still young and she is caught between the regular world and the fantasy world where she has a more significant role. She cannot yet put aside her old worries, while she tries to cope with the idea of her immortality. "The decision was too big. She wasn't up to it. Emily wished more than ever that the choice would be taken away from her." (locations 3149–51). Emily wishes to go back and hide in her old adolescent self, to be a kid. But growing up means making difficult decisions by yourself. While the story of course amplifies the decisions Emily needs to take, the overall feeling is similar to that every adolescent experiences. For teenagers, every decision might seem world-changing. They need to grow up and decide for themselves, yet while still relying on the counsel of others. While Emily has to make tough choices, she is still surrounded by friends and family to support her and advise her. The author never leaves Emily truly alone without any support. She is always assisted and supported by friends.

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Adding confusion is the presence of Cupid, a god who ran from Olympus, fearing the Nirads, and who claims he wishes to protect Emily. The dashing god confuses Emily and charms her while he also makes Paelen jealous. Infatuation is another stage of growing up, and what better way to present it then via the image of the god of love? Although Cupid is an ancient god, he needs to grow up just like his mortal companions. In this book, he learns to trust others and his own strength; understanding others and reacting to their needs will give him the humanity he was lacking. Cupid tries to explain the immortals' philosophy: "We do not race around like you humans, trying to fill every moment of your short lives with one kind of action or another. We live, love and enjoy ourselves." (locations 1065–7). This is a reminder that humans waste their time by running around and not enjoying the world we live in, and relates to the authorial attitude towards ecology and the need to keep animals safe; people should just stop and smell the roses once in a while.

As mentioned, Emily struggles to control her power. It consists of the ability to manipulate fire. Yet when Emily is distressed and her emotions are unbalanced (as is the case with many adolescents), her powers go out of control, causing harm. These powers are a graphic manifestation of the emotional roller-coaster which is adolescence. They reflect Emily's inner feelings and magnify them, physically hurting those around her, as adolescents can sometimes lash out at those closest to them. This is the case even when Emily does not wish to cause harm, which, of course, makes her feel miserable and alone: "Her friends were staying away from her because she was dangerous." (locations 261). Emily needs to learn and realize that her friends accept and love her regardless of her powers; that she is not alone. He friend explains to her "This is why you can't control your powers. You do not believe you can control them." (locations 1215–6). It is all about self-belief and self-acceptance. The Nirads will go through a similar path later when they learn to trust the Olympians and fight the Gorgons.

In the end, the author does not create a "happy-ever-after" ending. The battle is fierce and there are casualties which cannot be ignored. Again this is the path of growing up, of coping with loss. Humanising the monster is also an important message of the story. The frightening Nirads are not monsters, but victims, thus presenting a message that harsh judgment should not be cast upon others just because of how they look or because their behavior is different than ours.

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Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Apollo Cupid Diana Euryale Gorgon(s) Heracles Hercules Jupiter Medusa Neptune Pegasus Perseus Stheno Venus Vesta
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adolescence Adventure Adversity Animals Death Environment Family Friendship Journeys Revenge War
Addenda	The review refers to the Kindle edition

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