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Rick Riordan

The Demigod Files (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, Guide)

United States (2009)

TAGS: Chthonic Deities Monsters Underworld



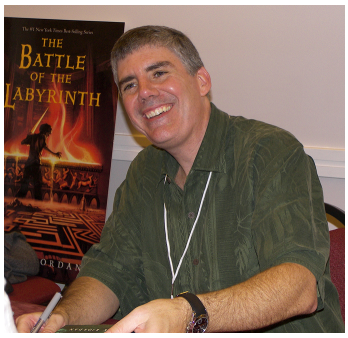


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General information	
Title of the work	The Demigod Files (Percy Jackson & The Olympians, Guide)
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2009
First Edition Details	Rick Riordan, *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Demigod Files*. Disney Hyperion, 2009, 160 pp.
ISBN	1615543236
Official Website	percyjackson.co.uk (accessed: March 9, 2020).
Genre	Fantasy fiction, Novels
Target Audience	Children (Aimed at ages 9+)
Author of the Entry	Kimberly MacNeill, University of Roehampton, macneilk@roehampton.ac.uk
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Creators



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

Rick Riordan , b. 1964
(Author)

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

Source:

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

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

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Additional information

Translation	Bulgarian: *Досиетата на героя* [Dosietata na geroâ], Egmont B'lgaria, 2011. Chinese: □□□□, trans. □□□, 2013. Indonesian: *The Demigod Files*, Mizan Fantasi, 2014. Italian: *Percy Jackson gli dei dell olimpo*: *Il Libre Secreto*. trans. Loredana Baldinucci, Mondadori, 2012. Japanese: □□□□□—□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□, Horupu Shuppan, 2010. Polish: *Archiwum Herosów*, trans. Agnieszka Fulińska, Galeria Książki, 2011. Portuguese: *Os Arquivos do Semideus*, trans. Luciana Bastos Figueiredo, Intrínseca, 2010. Russian: *Перси Джексон и олимпийцы. Секретные материалы* [Persi Dzhekson i olompiîtsy. Sekretnye materialy], Eksmo, 2015. Thai: □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ *The Demigod Files*, trans. □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□, Enter Books, 2013. Turkish: *melez dosyalar*, trans. , 2010. Vietnamese: *Hồ Sơ Á Thần*, trans. Thiên Tứ, Chibooks, 2011.
Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	*Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*, *Percy Jackson and the Sea of Monsters*, *Percy Jackson and the Titan's Curse*, *Percy Jackson and the Battle of the Labyrinth*, *Percy Jackson and the Last Olympian*, The Heroes of Olympus series:

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

Percy Jackson and the Greek Gods,

Percy Jackson and the Greek Heroes,

Percy Jackson: The Ultimate Guide.

Summary

The Demigod Files is a selection of three short stories and 'fact files' which acts as a companion to the series *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*.

The 'fact files' provide brief bibliographies of the main demigod characters and gods in the series. Each 'file' gives details on strengths and weaknesses, as well as personality traits of the individual. When discussing a god, the fact file refers to them in their ancient and modern incarnations.

In the first of the trio of stories, *Percy Jackson and the Stolen Chariot*, a daydreaming Percy spots Clarisse, daughter of Ares, being attacked by the *ornithes Areioi* (birds of Ares) outside his classroom window. Percy deliberates on whether to help given their previous animosity, but decides it would be wrong not to. Working together, the pair successfully vanquish the giant birds and Percy learns that Phobos and Deimos, Clarisse's immortal brothers, have stolen Ares's war chariot from her. Clarisse had been given the chariot by her father as a test: she must prove that she can control it and return by sundown. Phobos and Deimos were displeased that Clarisse had been given the opportunity to prove herself, as it is traditionally a male role.

Percy and Clarisse set out across New York, solving various clues in order to locate the chariot before the sundown deadline. The quest finally leads then to children's zoo on Staten Island, where Phobos and Deimos use their divine powers in an attempt to scare Percy and Clarisse. Percy's fear is revealed to be the destruction of Camp Half-blood with him powerless to prevent it. Percy is able to free himself

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from the delusion with the help of the animals at the aquarium who warn him it is merely an illusion. Subsequently Clarisse is able to break her own illusion, the disappointment of her father, with the help of Percy. Seeing their trickery is useless and facing a determined Percy and Clarisse, Phobos and Deimos relinquish the chariot and Clarisse is able complete her quest. The animosity between the two characters is partially resolved in part due to Percy helping Clarisse on her quest and partly due to his admission that she was included with his friends in his fear of the destruction of the Camp.

In the second story, *Percy Jackson and The Bronze Dragon*, Percy is back at Camp and preparing for a game of Capture the Flag. He is selected to be on the opposing team to Annabeth, the daughter of Athena, who is looking forward to beating him. Percy sets off into the woods with Beckendorf, son of Hephaestus, where they encounter several Myrmekes (giant ants) carrying a large robotic dragon's head. Beckendorf interprets it as a sign from Hephaestus and the duo thus abandon the game in order to battle the ants. Beckendorf runs ahead and is attacked by the ants while Percy is captured by Annabeth and Silena, the daughter of Aphrodite.

At first, believing the ant story is a trick, Silena sees Beckendorf being rendered paralyzed by a bite from the ants and dragged into their burrow. Annabeth identifies the robot head as the missing bronze dragon which had been built by Hephaestus to protect the camp. She further deduces that the only way to save Beckendorf is to try to fix the mechanical dragon and reboot its protect programme. By following the trail the ants have made though dragging the head along the ground, the remaining group are able to locate the body and reattach the head, waking the dragon. At first disoriented, the dragon quickly senses that a child of Hephaestus is in danger and dives into the anthill to rescue him with the campers following. After successfully rescuing Beckendorf the dragon goes berserk and Percy and Beckendorf work together to disable him. After the battle, Beckendorf invites Silena on a date and Annabeth asks Percy to attend the evening's fireworks with her.

In the final story, *Percy Jackson and The Sword of Hades*, the hellhound Mrs O'Leary appears and takes Percy to the Underworld, where he finds himself joined by an equally puzzled Thalia, daughter of Zeus, and Nico, son of Hades. As children of the 'big three', all three are suspicious and worried as to why they have been summoned. Persephone promptly appears and asks for their help to retrieve the

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sword of Hades, which has been stolen. Though reluctant at first, the three decide that the thief is most likely working for Kronos and therefore must be stopped.

The sword contains the keys to the gates of the Underworld and would give the possessor power over death. Persephone notes that the Underworld is on lockdown and currently cannot be entered or exited. The only weak point is the cave of Melinoe who has her own entrance and they should head there. Persephone gives them a magical flower that will drop its petals as the thief reaches the exit; when the last petal falls the sword is lost. The flower will also glow brighter when they are on the right path.

Percy, Thalia and Nico cross the Underworld facing a number of challenges and ultimately face Iapetus, a titan who is aiding the thief, Ethan Nakamura. The three do battle and Percy pulls both himself and the Titan into the water of the river Lethe. Percy's hope is that although he cannot command the waters of the Underworld, his ability to stay dry should prevent him losing his memory. The Titan on the other hand is submerged in the waters and cannot remember anything, including who he is. Percy convinces Iapetus that he is good, and Ethan, without the Titan's support, runs away giving up the sword. On returning the sword, the three discover that Hades did not in fact instigate he quest, and that he did not make the sword either. Rather it was Persephone. Ultimately Hades decides that as the sword is already almost finished, it should be completed and kept in case of the rising of Kronos in order to defend the realm of the Underworld. Percy and Thalia return to the living world whilst Nico stays below to speak with his father, as he is worried about the influence of Persephone. Iapetus is left in the Underworld now renamed Bob by the trio; Nico says he will retrain the Titan who could prove useful in the oncoming war with Kronos.

Analysis

As the collection acts as a compendium to the main series, one of its functions is to provide information. To a large extent, it assumes the reader has read the four books in the main series and is aware of the general relationships between the characters. It does however provide 'fact file' guides to the Greek gods in both their traditional form and in the modern Percy Jackson universe.

The three short stories are used to develop the relationships between

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Percy and the characters outside of the sphere of the central friendship between Percy, Annabeth and Grover. These short stories are bound together with reoccurring themes of trust, loyalty and friendship vs family bonds. In *The Stolen Chariot*, Percy aids his usual adversary: Clarisse. Over the course of the four books in the main series the Percy-Clarisse dynamic has evolved. The animosity between the two was sparked by Percy's encounter with Ares in *The Lightning Thief*, and Clarisse's loyalty to her father thus extended the god's feud with Percy. In each of the adventures the pair have had to work together to defeat the greater foe of Kronos; with the feud paling into a petty quarrel when compared with the danger than Kronos poses to the Half-blood community at large. In this short story, there is a quiet acknowledgment that, although their parents may not represent the same values, Percy and Clarisse respect and consider each other as friends. The maturity displayed by Percy and Clarisse is in contrast to the childishness of the gods, who, even in the face of the threat of Kronos, are unable to put aside their long-running feuds. The gods here are being used to represent a reactionary generation with outdated responses to current events.

The introduction of 'mini' quests in-line with an ancient heroic itinerary enables the demigod characters to showcase their particular strengths and allows for character progression for minor characters. The trio of stories further facilitate the development of the characters and their strengths, such as Beckendorf's engineering ingenuity, as well as exploring how love can push people to move out of their comfort zone. This is best demonstrated by Silena, a daughter of Aphrodite, who surprises Percy with her battle prowess during the rescue of Beckendorf. The idea of love powering courage in a quest was also visited earlier in the series when Aphrodite aided Percy in the rescue of Annabeth in *The Titan's Curse*. The undertaking of a quest for love is considered the most noble of quests by the house of Aphrodite. Clarisse had also been moved by her love for her father and her desire for his approval to undertake the task of the chariot and the threat of her brothers.

In all three of the stories, desire for parental approval puts the heroes in jeopardy. Beckendorf immediately identifies the bronze dragon as a test from his father Hephaestus, giving no thought to the danger he is putting himself in. Similarly, Nico throws himself into the quest for the sword to prove he is worthy of his father's notice. The dynamic between the Half-blood heroes and their immortal parents is very different from that shared with their mortal parent: the mortal

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relationship is based on the idea of unconditional love, rather than one that must be earned. This has been demonstrated by the interactions between Percy and his human mother and Annabeth having more feelings of abandonment by her mortal father than Athena, despite her father being her primary carer.

The question of trust and loyalty of child/parent and friend/friend, friend/foe are raised in the short stories. In *The Sword of Hades*, Percy, Nico and Thalia demonstrate the trust that exists between them: neither Percy nor Thalia raise the question of Nico's loyalties. This is in contrast to the relationships shared by their parents' generation. It was the mistrust between the brothers Zeus, Poseidon and Hades that led to the oath which resulted in Half-bloods not be claimed by their parents lest they be considered disloyal. Nico proved his loyalty to both Percy and Camp Half-blood during the invasion of the camp in *Battle of the Labyrinth.* He opted to pick a side and fight against Kronos, this is also in great contrast with his father Hades who is usually absent from conflicts choosing to be a passive observer. In *The Sword of Hades* the characters are initially wary of Hades holding a weapon of such power, but the rhetoric of Hades is that of wanting to be equal to his brothers and matching their power. Hades is also concerned with the defence of his realm. His language is that of protection, equality and balance not of aggression, attack or seizing power.

It is the first in the series where the action in the Underworld takes place during the winter months and thus Persephone is present. She is given a voice and an agency which fits the usual depiction of Persephone after the initial abduction sequence in myth: it is Persephone, not Hades, who commissions the forging the sword.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Chthonic Deities Monsters Underworld
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth	Coming of age Family Friendship Heritage Humanity Identity Individuality Knowledge Learning

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Culture

Further Reading	Paul, Joanna, "Percy Jackson and Myth-making in the Twenty-First Century", in V. Zajko and H. Hoyle, eds., *A Handbook to the Reception of Classical Mythology,* John Wiley and Sons Inc., 2017, 231–242.
Addenda	Q&A with the author (accessed: February 11, 2019).

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