

The Lightning Thief Book Review by Sarina

Some books truly are magical because of how they are able to exceed your expectations and become a classic in your heart. One of those books is Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan. I thought that it would not be a story I would want to continue reading, but it ended up being re-read over and over again. The story follows the journey of a twelve-year-old (why are they all so young and going through so much?) boy named Percy Jackson, who discovers he is a demigod and the son of Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea. I discovered I absolutely loved Greek mythology.

Percy Jackson has always felt different. Diagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD, he struggles in school and has been expelled from multiple. The story begins with a school field trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where Percy encounters a terrifying creature, Mrs. Dodds, who transforms into a monstrous Fury. With the help of his Latin teacher, Mr. Brunner, who gives him a pen that turns into a sword, Percy defeats Mrs. Dodds, but no one else seems to remember her existence.

After the school year ends, Percy returns home to his mother, Sally Jackson, and his abusive stepfather, Gabe Ugliano. On their way to a beach trip, they are attacked by a Minotaur. In the chaos, Sally is captured, and Percy manages to escape. He is then taken to Camp Half-Blood, a sanctuary for demigods, where he learns about his true heritage.

At Camp Half-Blood, Percy meets other demigods, including Annabeth Chase, daughter of Athena, and Grover, a satyr who becomes his protector. He learns that he is the son of Poseidon, which puts him at the center of a brewing conflict among the gods. Zeus's lightning bolt has gone missing, and Percy is accused of stealing it. To clear his name and prevent a war among the gods, he is tasked with retrieving the bolt.

Percy, Annabeth, and Grover embark on a quest across the United States to find the lightning bolt and return it to Zeus before the summer solstice. Their journey is full of challenges as they encounter various mythological creatures and gods. They face harpies, Medusa, and even Ares, the god of war.

Upon reaching the Underworld, Percy learns that the true thief of the lightning bolt is not Hades but Kronos, the Titan god. With the help of his friends, Percy manages to escape the Underworld and returns to the mortal realm. They confront various challenges, including a showdown with Ares, who has manipulated them throughout their journey. Percy ultimately retrieves the lightning bolt and returns it to Zeus, proving his innocence.

In the end, Percy returns to Camp Half-Blood, where he is celebrated as a hero. However, he grapples with the implications of his journey. He learns to accept his identity as a demigod and the complexities of his family dynamics. The novel concludes with Percy returning home to his mother, who has managed to escape her abusive relationship with Gabe.

The Lightning Thief is not just an adventure story; it is a coming-of-age tale that explores themes of identity, friendship, and the importance of accepting one's heritage. Through his journey, Percy learns to trust his friends, embrace his abilities, and redefine his understanding of family and loyalty. This story is engaging and I rate it a 10/10.