

Monster? RUN!

Percy Jackson By: Rick Riordan

I stepped out of the Ares cabin, my face red from shouting (some freak busted the fireplace). A snow leopard leaped out of the cabin and wove its way to me. I stalked forward and flicked my black ponytail with purple stripes to the side. Percy and Annabeth were laughing together as I broke between them.

“Um hi,” I said, staring disinterestedly at them. “Could you get one of the Hephaestus kids to Ares cabin?”

“Nah,” Percy said, crossing his arms with a glimmer in his eyes. “They’re getting ready for capture the flag.”

I shot a charming smile at Annabeth. “Could we get in on your team?” Frosty, my snow leopard, purred, as if urging her on. Annabeth glared at me then gave into a smile and nodded.

A couple of hours later, I walked out of the Ares cabin, the armor weighing down on my shoulders. The whole of the cabin followed me as I walked across the lawn, my chin tipped up.

“I suppose you would want to scout with me and Percy.” Annabeth said without turning around.

I suppressed my urge to jump up and down. Percy and Annabeth were my MODELS and I get to do the best job with them. I nodded eagerly as the Chiron stepped up and yelled out the rules I’ve heard WAY too many times.

A couple of minutes later, I was hunting down an Apollo kid (they walk like a startled hippo) with Annabeth creeping up on the other side. He had led us to one of the woods, but that didn’t matter right now. He dove behind a bush and I swung my hands out and Frosty leaped on top of the bush. I rushed over to her but found...Nothing? I pushed the bushes aside as Percy and Annabeth raced to my side. There wasn’t anything but ants crawling over the dirt. A sudden hushed whisper echoed through the forest.

“I’m right here.” A sweetly deadly voice hissed in my ear. I whirled around. “And I’ll promise to kill you and your *friends*.”

The overgrowth shuddered at those words and two stunning women stepped out of the bushes we had been looking in. Frosty let out a growl that vibrated through my bones.

“Oh no,” Percy groaned, uncapping his pen which burst into a glowing sword. “The empusas never give up, do they? I thought you guys were dead!”

One of them threw back her head and laughed. Claws grew from her nails and her skin molted into something horrible. A moment later, I was staring at a girl with wicked claws and fangs for teeth. “Percy, one thing you should learn is that us monsters never give up.”

I didn’t even try to be brave. I spun on my heels and dashed out of there, the rest of them following me. A girl with one leg copper the other a goat leg leaped in front of me. She turned into a human and leaped at me, snarling. She scored a scratch down my arm. Frosty lunged in front of me and slashed the empusas.

“Rotten leopard,” She growled, holding her hand to her stomach. “Normal claws can’t destroy me!”

“Normal claws won’t,” I smirked, “But celestial bronze claws do.”

She let out a loud shriek as she poofed into dust. I smirked as I looked down at the dust. I heard Annabeth shriek behind me. I whirled around and an empusas snarled into my face. My face paled and I stumbled back, landing on my back, my bad arm screaming in pain. She shifted forms, one second a beautiful lady the next a witch with fire hair. Percy leaped in front of me and jabbed out his sword. Her arm dissipated into a sandy mess on the forest floor, and she started screeching. Annabeth crept up from behind, her dagger gleaming in the sunlight. The empusas fiery hair lashed out behind her, lashing at Annabeth, as though it knew it was there. Annabeth pulled her hands up, slightly burning them, and slashed her dagger down and covered us head to toe with sand.

After a couple of minutes, we trudged back to camp. My first thought was capture the flag would be over. That was proved wrong when an Apollo kid put us in the “prison”. I made my way to the prison and slept the rest of the game. Hey, fighting a monster isn’t as easy as it seems!