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The Sea of Monsters

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Riordan, Rick. *The Sea of Monsters*. Miramax, 2006. ISBN 0786856866. \$17.95. 288 p.

Reviewer: Laura Wadley

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Fantasy fiction; Adventure stories;

Subject: Mythology--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Perseus Jackson and friends take on a whole new batch of mythic monsters in the second volume of the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series. The book begins fairly slowly as Percy tries to complete his final day of school without getting kicked out for a change. But when some unexpected visitors show up to Percy's P.E. class to play dodge ball with gigantic flaming metal orbs, Percy barely escapes with his life, and gets expelled for burning down the gymnasium. Things are no better when he gets to Camp Half-Blood, the summer school for demi-gods: someone has poisoned Thalia's tree so the camp is no longer immune from the monsters trying to kill the campers. Percy, Annabeth, and Percy's new friend and half-brother Tyson (a slow kid with only one eye--located in the middle of his forehead) set out for the Sea of Monsters (known to humans as The Bermuda Triangle) to retrieve the golden fleece, that could heal Thalia's tree, and to rescue their friend Grover the Satyr.

The Sea of Monsters starts out a bit more slowly than *The Lightning Thief* because of Tyson hulking about, but by and by, the pace picks up: Percy forgets what he's not supposed to do and chops off a Hydra's heads; Tyson buys powdered sugar treats from Monster Donuts--a franchise pops up every time someone chops up a Hydra (see above); a beautiful young woman named CC changes men into something a bit less smelly than pigs, and so on. Rick Riordan's series is the perfect combination of humor and adventure. It is a fabulous, painless tutorial on Greek mythology. Apparently Miramax's proofreader left town before finishing up the last two chapters, but other than that, *Sea of Monsters* is a pip.