

THE LIGHTNING THIEF

By Craig Titley

Rewrite By

Chris Columbus

Based on the novel by Rick Riordan

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INT. INDOOR SWIMMING POOL - NIGHT

Wooden bleachers line the surrounding walls of the Olympic-sized pool. The room is empty. MOONLIGHT shines through the skylights, reflecting off the water. Nikes, Jay-Z T-shirt and an iTouch are piled at the pool's edge. CAMERA CRANES INSIDE the water. AT THE POOL'S BOTTOM, we find...

PERCY JACKSON, age 17, sitting with his legs crossed, dressed in cargo shorts. His eyes are closed. His long, dirty blonde hair floats around him. His expression is peaceful.

PERCY (V.O.)

Ever since I was a kid, I liked being in the water. It's where I do my best thinking. Sometimes, when I concentrate, I hear this distant voice... like somebody trying to guide me, give me direction... Weird, huh?

Percy opens his eyes, shoots to the surface, fills his lungs with air.

PERCY (V.O.)

Probably just water on the brain.

EXT. YANCY ACADEMY - DAY

A large campus in upstate New York. Old, brick buildings are scattered across several well-manicured acres. Percy walks alone across campus, dressed like a Venice Beach surf rat, listening to an iPod. His attitude is tough, hard, cool.

PERCY (V.O.)

My name is Percy Jackson. Until a few months ago, I was a student here at Yancy Academy. The kind of place where parents send their "troubled" kids when no one else will take them.

A fight breaks out between a group of students. Teachers run to break it up. Percy keeps on walking.

INT. YANCY CLASSROOM - LATER - DAY

A 52 year old, grey haired, bearded teacher in a wheelchair, MR. BRUNNER, lectures to a group of kids who would rather be elsewhere. Percy stares at his textbook.

PERCY (V.O.)

My so-called troubles, had impressive-sounding names--

Percy squints at the text. The words MORPH into odd shapes.

PERCY (V.O.)
 --like "dyslexia" and "attention deficit disorder." But I had a better name for them: boredom.

INT. PERCY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Percy's roommate is asleep, SNORING. A pair of rusted, metallic FOREARM CRUTCHES lean against his roommate's bed. Percy lies awake, the walls around him covered with posters of SURFERS riding EXTREME WAVES. Tacked to the wall is a photograph: Percy and his mom, in happier times.

PERCY (V.O.)
 I was also supposed to have some displaced rage because my father abandoned my mom before I was born. But quite honestly, none of that really mattered...

Distant THUNDER roars. Percy gets up, looks out his window. STORM CLOUDS form in the sky, obscure the moon.

PERCY (V.O.)
 ...because my real troubles were just beginning.

EXT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM - MANHATTAN - THE NEXT DAY - DAY

The sky above Manhattan is heavy with dark, ominous clouds. A "YANCY ACADEMY" BUS is parked in front of the museum.

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - LATER

A spacious, glass-domed room filled with ancient GREEK ARTIFACTS, rusted WEAPONS, and ARTWORK. In the center of the room, are imposing SCULPTURES of the TWELVE OLYMPIAN GODS. MR. BRUNNER lectures from his wheelchair

MR. BRUNNER
 There are twelve Olympian Gods. The major three were brothers, who went on to rule the world. Zeus became the King of the gods and ruled the sky. His brother, Poseidon ruled the sea. And their other brother, Hades, ruled the underworld.

A group of fairly disinterested high school SENIORS stand around Mr. Brunner. Percy stands off to the side, sweatshirt pulled up to hide his ipod headphones. GROVER, Percy's roommate, stands beside him. Grover is overweight, with curly brown hair, glasses, a wispy goatee and a perpetual expression of lust and mischief. Using his cell phone, Grover snaps a photo of the Aphrodite statue's breasts. Brunner notices. Frowns. Not amused.

MR. BRUNNER
Grover. Please.

Grover looks up. Guilty. Brunner extends his hand.

MR. BRUNNER
A little more respect for the Gods.

Grover sighs, hands over the cell phone. Brunner looks at the photos, holds up the camera for the class to see. The kids chuckle at the image of Aphrodite's breasts.

MR. BRUNNER
What does this tell us about Grover?

CUTE GIRL
He's a sex addict.

MR. BRUNNER
Possibly. Grover may be a tad more, hormonally challenged than most teenagers. But he still shares a similar weakness with all of us. Lust.

GROVER
(leans to cute girl)
I knew we had something in common.

MR. BRUNNER
It's something the Greek Gods also shared with us. There were several occasions, when the Gods would come down to earth and... how shall I put this?...

GROVER
Hook up.

MR. BRUNNER
They would *hook up* with mortals.

Several kids snicker.

MR. BRUNNER
The children of these unions were half-God and half-human. Can anyone tell me what they were called?

Mr. Brunner scans to DREW BOBOFIT, a tough, angry, mean spirited bully with a buzzcut and tattoos.

MR. BRUNNER
Mr. Bobofit?

DREW
Bastards? Mongrels? Mutts?

Drew's two friends, two hoodlums named TONY and VINCE, laugh. Brunner scowls, looks around.

MR. BRUNNER
Anyone else? Percy?

But Percy doesn't hear, lost in his music. Grover uses one of his crutches to yank the headset out of Percy's ear.

PERCY
Huh? What?

MR. BRUNNER
What is the proper name for the offspring
of a human and a God?

Percy narrows his eyes, thinks, finally... it comes to him.

PERCY
Demigods.

MR. BRUNNER
Very good, Mr. Jackson.
(to Drew Bobofit)
Mr. Bobofit, you and the rest of the
class obviously need a bit more incentive
to learn this material. Perhaps a quiz
will help. Tomorrow. Chapters 7 and 8.

INT. MUSEUM MEN'S ROOM - LATER - DAY

Percy and Grover enter. Grover, using his crutches, walks with a pronounced limp.

PERCY
I can't get above a D in most classes.
But somehow, without even studying...
I get this stuff...

GROVER
(ironic smile)
Maybe it's in your blood.

The bathroom door FLIES OPEN. Drew and his friends enter, shove past Grover, nearly knocking him down.

DREW
Out of the way, Crip.

PERCY
Shut your mouth, Drew.

Drew turns, walks back to Percy, getting in his face.

DREW

You're the one who should keep your mouth shut, Jackson. If you weren't so busy kissing Brunner's ass, we wouldn't be having a quiz tomorrow.

PERCY

Big deal. You have to study. Grow up.

DREW

Not all of us can get a fancy tutor by pretending we have dyslexia.

PERCY

I'm not pretending. I mix things up. Like right now, I could swear your dick is where your head is supposed to be.

Furious, Drew and his gang DRAG Percy him into a STALL. Drew tries to SHOVE Percy's head into the toilet bowl. Percy STRUGGLES to break free. Grover BANGS on the stall door.

GROVER (O.S.)

Percy!?

As Percy's face gets closer to the toilet water, the water begins to CHURN and BUBBLE, growing in POWER.

PERCY

Stop!

Drew keeps PUSHING. The water CHURNS violently.

PERCY

I... said... *STOP!*

Suddenly, a BLAST OF WATER EXPLODES out of the toilet bowl.

The water moves with EXTREME FORCE and a definite PURPOSE. It SHOOTs past Percy, STRIKES Drew and the boys with the power of a FIREHOUSE, blows them out of the stall and...

...ACROSS the bathroom floor, right past Grover. They land UNDER the urinals. Grover SEES Percy step out of the stall. Percy is SHAKEN, CONFUSED. UNSURE what just happened.

GROVER

Percy... Let's go...

Drew and the boys get back on their feet, SOAKED. They BLOCK Percy and Grover's exit.

A CREAKING SOUND fills the room. Followed by a low, GROANING NOISE and the sound of pipes RATTLING.

Then -- CRACK! CRACK! -- several HAIRLINE FRACTURES form in the walls and on the floor, spreading out like spiderwebs.

Urinals and sinks EXPLODE, firing like missiles across the bathroom. Water RUSHES in through the holes in the wall, forming into the shape of several snake-like TENTACLES.

The water-tentacles WHIP through the room, like living creatures. They ATTACK Drew and his friends.

Grover watches in AMAZEMENT. Percy is BAFFLED, standing in the center of the maelstrom.

The floor beneath Drew's feet CRACKS OPEN. A GEYSER of water shoots upward. The Powerful water LIFTS Drew into the air.

The bathroom door FLIES OPEN. MR. BRUNNER rolls in. STUNNED by what he sees.

The Geyser quickly DISSOLVES. Drew FALLS to the floor, right on top of his soggy, freaked-out friends. The other water STOPS FLOWING, retreating back into the pipes, leaving POOLS OF WATER everywhere.

MR. BRUNNER

What's going on?!?

DREW

Jackson. He blew up the bathroom.

Mr. Brunner looks very CONCERNED. Percy's expression is equal parts amazement, confusion, and fear.

PERCY

I didn't... I don't... it just--

Mr. Brunner nods, speaks softly, almost knowingly.

MR. BRUNNER

--happened.

INT. MR. BRUNNER'S OFFICE - LATER - DAY

Angry, Percy is sitting across from Mr. Brunner's desk. Grover stands in the background.

PERCY

Detention!? But it wasn't my fault... I don't even know how it happened...

MR. BRUNNER

I believe you, Percy. But Dean Campbell wants to suspend you. I argued for a compromise.

PERCY

One month detention is a compromise?

MR. BRUNNER

For you? Yes. You've been to six different schools in eight years. You've got a D-minus average. You're on very thin ice.

PERCY

Perfect. I like cold water.

MR. BRUNNER

You really want to be expelled from another school?

PERCY

Do I really give a damn?

MR. BRUNNER

Maybe you don't. But your Mother does.
(soft, solemn)
Don't let her down again.

The words sting. Percy looks out the window. Troubled, upset. Mr. Brunner feels Percy's torment. Mr. Brunner takes a THICK BOOK off his shelf.

MR. BRUNNER

I want you to read this.

PERCY

You know that I can't--

MR. BRUNNER

Try.

Mr. Brunner places the book in front of Percy. The writing on the cover is in GREEK. Percy refuses to look at it.

INT. LIBRARY - LATER - NIGHT

Outside, THUNDER rumbles. We are inside a dark, ancient library with high vaulted ceilings and lead glass windows. Rows and rows of towering bookshelves stand along the walls, each with its own ladder-on-wheels.

Percy sits at a long wooden table, in the middle of the room. He is alone, save for the LIBRARIAN, a small elderly woman. Percy is trying to read Mr. Brunner's book, staring at the GREEK LETTERS on the cover. He squints.

The Greek letters MORPH INTO ENGLISH LETTERS. They read: "A GUIDE TO GREEK MYTHS AND LEGENDS." Percy is surprised, pulls the book close and reads to himself.

PERCY

"The Father of the Olympians was Kronos.
He was the King of the Titans-"

(pauses, a small smile)

I can... read?...

There is a LOUD CRASH. The sound of BREAKING GLASS.

Percy LOOKS UP and sees...

A CREATURE, hidden in the SHADOWS, LEAPS through the window. The creature LANDS on the floor and slowly RISES UP. It's over TWELVE FEET TALL.

The librarian SCREAMS. The creature PULLS BACK its arm, SWIPES at the librarian with tremendous force.

The librarian is KNOCKED OFF her feet, FLIES through the air and SLAMS into the wall. OUT COLD.

Percy STANDS. TERRIFIED. He starts to BACK AWAY.

The creature TURNS, faces Percy and STEPS FORWARD. INTO the light.

It is the MINOTAUR.

HALF MAN. HALF BULL. MUSCULAR, with a long snout, cruel yellow eyes, and battered razor-sharp horns. Seeing Percy, the Minotaur ROARS, then SPEAKS in an inhuman VOICE.

MINOTAUR

Where is it?!

Percy turns and SPRINTS toward the door.

The Minotaur RACES after him. Faster than Percy, the Minotaur is UPON HIM in seconds.

The Minotaur GRABS Percy, LIFTS him into the air and HURLS him at a bookshelf. Percy SLAMS into the shelves, FALLS to the floor, buried under a PILE OF BOOKS.

Percy is STUNNED. The wind knocked out of him. The Minotaur RUNS FORWARD, lifts its arm, about to PUMMEL Percy...

Percy ROLLS OUT of the way. The Minotaur's arm JUST MISSES Percy and SMASHES a hole in the library floor.

Percy gets to his feet, DASHES around the corner. The Minotaur FOLLOWS. Percy KICKS one of the wooden ladders into the path of the creature.

The Minotaur SLAMS through the ladder as if it were balsa wood. Percy heads for the LIBRARY DOORS.

The Minotaur RUNS up, SWINGS its razor sharp claw across Percy's back. The claws RIP through his jacket. Percy CRIES OUT in pain, falls to his knees. The Minotaur MOVES IN FOR THE KILL.

The library doors BURST OPEN. The Minotaur STOPS, TURNS to the sound.

MR. BRUNNER

Percy!

Mr. Brunner races into the room on his wheelchair, holding a simple BALL POINT PEN.

MR. BRUNNER

Use this.

Mr. Brunner THROWS the pen to Percy. Confused, Percy CATCHES the pen. Brunner SHOUTS.

MR. BRUNNER

Click it!

PERCY

What!?

MR. BRUNNER

Click it! The pen is mightier than the sword.

Percy CLICKS the pen. IT TRANSFORMS INTO A LARGE, SHARP METAL SWORD! Percy stares at the blade in DISBELIEF.

The Minotaur TURNS BACK to Percy, who is on his feet, wielding the heavy sword.

Percy LUNGES FORWARD and SWINGS. The tip of the sword SLICES DEEP ACROSS the creature's arm.

The Minotaur CRIES OUT. BLOOD seeps from its wound. This only makes the creature ANGRIER. The Minotaur CHARGES Percy.

Percy SWINGS again, this time SLICING DEEP into the Minotaur's TORSO.

The Minotaur HOWLS in pain, holding his bleeding CHEST WOUND. With a final GROWL, the Minotaur TURNS and LEAPS OUT of the library window.

Percy looks around the room, a gigantic mess of DESTROYED books, furniture and bookcases. Percy glances to the sword. It CHANGES BACK into a common everyday ballpoint pen.

PERCY

What... was... that thing?

MR. BRUNNER

We have to go. It's coming back for you.

PERCY

Coming back!? It was hurt--

MR. BRUNNER

You temporarily scared it off. A Minotaur can only be killed by severing the horn from its body.

Brunner EXITS, followed by a confused Percy.

PERCY

A Minotaur!?

INT. PERCY'S DORM ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Grover is asleep, an open copy of MAXIM lying on his blanket. Percy and Brunner enter.

BRUNNER

Pack only what you need. Fast.

PERCY

Can you tell me what's going on?!

BRUNNER

No time. Grover. Out of bed.

Grover groggily gets out of bed, LED into the hallway by Brunner. Percy grabs a backpack and begins to PACK. From the hallway, we hear Grover and Brunner's WHISPERING. Percy stops packing, slowly walks to the door, EAVESDROPS. Outside, THUNDER RUMBLES. Brunner WHISPERS to Grover.

BRUNNER

Today. In the bathroom. The water.

It was a sign.

(a beat)

Percy's powers have begun to surface.

GROVER

Why now?

BRUNNER

It happens when their lives are in danger.

GROVER

Danger?

BRUNNER

He was attacked. By a Minotaur.

GROVER
What? But why?

BRUNNER
Listen. What do you hear?

GROVER
Thunder.

BRUNNER
But no lightning.

GROVER
(trying to understand)
Yeah...

BRUNNER
Stolen. And they suspect Percy.

GROVER
Impossible.

BRUNNER
I know. But because of who he is...
Everyone thinks he did it.

GROVER
Oh, man... Nowhere is safe for him.

BRUNNER
Only one place.

GROVER
Right... You want me to take him there?

BRUNNER
(nods)
Pick up Sally along the way.

Grover nods. An ANGUISHED ROAR echoes from outside. The CRY of the Minotaur. Grover and Brunner turn, HURRY back to Percy's bedroom. Percy RACES back inside, resumes packing.

INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - LATER - NIGHT

Grover and Percy sit inside a crowded subway train. Grover is SILENT. Percy is ANXIOUS, wants information.

PERCY
Would you please tell me what's going on?
What's all this stuff about my powers
starting to *surface*? What powers? And
me *stealing* something!? Is that why
nowhere is safe for me?

GROVER
 (softly, paranoid)
 Quiet. Keep your voice down. They could
 be listening.

PERCY
 Who? Who could be listening?

GROVER
 (whispering)
 Not here. Not with all of these people
 around. No one can be trusted.

Grover glares at an ELDERLY LADY who is staring at him.
 Percy shakes his head, thinks Grover is crazy.

EXT. QUEENS NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A working class neighborhood. Grover and Percy exit the
 subway, HURRYING along the sidewalk. Grover is TENSE,
 ANXIOUS, suspiciously eyeing anyone who passes by.

PERCY
 Why did Brunner send you home with me?

GROVER
 To keep you safe.

PERCY
 You're gonna' keep *me* safe?

GROVER
 I'm your protector.

Percy responds with an incredulous LAUGH.

GROVER
 What's so funny?

PERCY
 Nothing. It's just... well, you--

GROVER
 (angry, hurt)
 What? You think because I'm disabled?...
 I'm not capable of keeping you safe?...
 Huh?... Is that it?...

PERCY
 I didn't say that.

GROVER
 (insulted, softly)
 You didn't have to.

Percy sighs, feels TERRIBLE. They arrive in front of a small, mean, WOODEN TWO-STORY HOME, sandwiched between ROWS of similar homes. They walk to the door and ENTER.

INT. UGLIANO HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GABE UGLIANO, Percy's 39-year old, sloppy, overweight stepfather sits at a table in this cramped apartment, playing cards with four POKER BUDDIES. Several empty BEER BOTTLES are on the table. 70's SOUTHERN ROCK plays in the BG.

PERCY (V.O.)

This disgusting slob is my step-father Gabe Ugliano. I call him "Smelly Gabe" because he never showers, puts Tabasco and garlic on everything he eats, and...

Gabe lifts a butt-cheek off his chair and lets one *RIIIIIP*.

PERCY (V.O.)

You get the picture. Sometimes when Gabe drinks too much... he fights with my Mom... screams at her, slaps her around... A real prince.

GABE

(calls OFFSCREEN)

Sally? Hey? Can we get a couple beers?

Percy's mom, SALLY, enters, carrying a six pack. Sally is in her mid-30's, attractive, beaten-down by a hard life. There's a toughness, an inner strength, a radiant glow about her. Gabe takes the beers, looks at his friends.

GABE

Ya' know, guys... If God wanted men to get their own beer, he wouldn't have invented wives...

Sally forces a smile, places the beers on the table.

PERCY (V.O.)

My mom, on the other hand, is an angel. I could never understand what she was doing with this jerk.

Gabe pulls Sally in for a sloppy kiss, GRABS her ass.

GABE

Just kiddin', babe. C'mere...

PERCY (O.S.)

Get your hands off my Mother.

Everyone TURNS. Percy and Grover stand in the doorway. Sally is SURPRISED, but delighted by the appearance of Percy.

SALLY

Percy!

Sally rushes to Percy, embraces him. She notices Grover, kisses his cheek.

SALLY

Grover?... You too?...
(suspicious, to Percy)
What are you doing home?

GABE

Probably got his ass kicked out of another school.

PERCY

Disrespect my Mom again and you'll get your ass kicked out in the street.

GABE

Yeah!? Let's see what you got--

Gabe stands, in a drunken rage, GRABS Percy by the collar. Ready for a FIGHT. Gabe's gonna' kill him. Grover BRINGS DOWN his crutch. HARD. ON TOP off Gabe's foot. Gabe CRIES OUT. Grover feigns an apology.

GROVER

Oh, geez. Sorry. New crutches.

Grover MOVES his crutch from Gabe's foot, LIFTS IT... this time SLAMMING Gabe in the balls. Gabe CRUMBLES to his knees.

GROVER

I am so clumsy. Are you okay?

The wind KNOCKED OUT of him, Gabe is helped back into his chair by his friends. Grover LEANS to Percy, whispers.

GROVER

I'm your *protector*. You cool with that?

Percy hides a small smile, NODS. Sally hurriedly LEADS the boys out of the room, into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

PERCY

Why do you stay with that smelly pig?

SALLY

Not another word. He's been good to us in ways you'll never know.
(to Grover)
Now... what's going on?

GROVER

We have to go. To the camp.

SALLY

Right now? Why?

GROVER

Percy's in danger. They're coming after him. They think he stole--

From OFFSCREEN, we hear a LOUD, INHUMAN ROAR. Grover panics.

GROVER

The Minotaur!

SALLY

Relax.. It's only Gabe.

GABE (O.S.)

PERCY JACKSON! GET YOUR ASS IN HERE!

SALLY

We'll take Gabe's car. C'mon.

They hurriedly exit through the BACK DOOR. Grover quickly SNATCHES a jumbo bag of Cheetos.

EXT. UGLIANO HOME - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

A battered, rusted orange '78 CAMARO, complete with racing stripes, SPEEDS out of the garage.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER - NIGHT

The Camaro is the only car on the road, moving deeper into the dense countryside. On one side of the road, miles and miles of TREES. On the other side, a hilly FIELD.

INT. CAMARO - NIGHT

Sally is at the wheel. Grover is in the back seat, nervously gobbling Cheetos and checking a ROAD MAP. Percy turns to Sally. He's UPSET. WORRIED.

PERCY

Mom, I don't know what's going on. But I didn't steal anything. I swear...

SALLY

I believe you, honey. I know that you're scared and confused right now. Trust me, I didn't want any of this for you. I thought you could have an ordinary life.

(warm, loving)

But nothing about you could ever be ordinary.

PERCY
So where are we going?

SALLY
Think of it as a camp. A camp for special people. Like you. And your father.

PERCY
(bitter)
Great. A camp full of losers.

SALLY
Your father was not a loser. He was a great... man.

PERCY
A great man who abandoned his family.

SALLY
He did not abandon us, Percy. He had to leave. He couldn't live in our world.

PERCY
Our world? Who was my Dad? *E.T.*?

SALLY
Percy. You know all the myths about the Greek gods and goddesses? Well, they're not really myths. The gods are alive. They're here.

PERCY
What?...

SALLY
You saw the Minotaur...

PERCY
Right. Okay. But, I mean... if the Gods are real, wouldn't they be in Greece?

SALLY
They were. A long time ago. But the Gods tend to follow the heart of the West. They've been settled in America for the past two centuries.

PERCY
What does this have to do with me?

GROVER
Remember what Brunner said in class?... Sometimes when the Gods are down here on Earth, they fall in love with mortals... have kids...

PERCY
Demigods...

GROVER
Half-god and half-mortal. There are
hundreds living in the world right now.
Some lead normal lives, others become
pretty famous.

PERCY
What are you saying?

SALLY
(turns to him, dead serious)
You're a Demi-God.

Percy is stunned. SPEECHLESS.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

The Camaro passes a field of grazing CATTLE. As the car
passes, one of the cows RAISES its enormous head, above the
rest. It's a large BULL'S HEAD with TWISTED HORNS. It
follows the Camaro with GLOWING YELLOW EYES. The MINOTAUR.

INT. CAMARO - NIGHT

The car continues down the deserted, DARK ROAD. Percy is
still shocked by the news. Sally EXPLAINS.

SALLY
I was young when we met, just out of
school, working at a resort for the
summer, right on the ocean. Your Father
was...not like any guy I had ever met.
He was just... dazzling.

GROVER
They're *always* dazzling.

SALLY
We were very much in love... And then...
you came along... But he had to leave...

PERCY
So he did abandon us.

SALLY
He had no choice. The Gods, by their
very nature, can't live among mortals.
They are responsible for an entire
universe...

PERCY
Then maybe they shouldn't have kids.

SALLY

Your Father loved you, Percy. Leaving you was probably the most difficult thing he ever did.

PERCY

(pauses, softens)
What was his name?

Sally turns, ABOUT TO TELL Percy who his Father was. A loud INHUMAN ROAR fills the air. Grover LOOKS OUT the window. When SUDDENLY...

CHUD! A COW lands in the road, in front of them.

Sally screams, SWERVES to miss the animal.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The Camaro FLIPS onto its side, CAREENS off the road. It SKIDS into a ditch, coming to a STOP beside a VAST FOREST of tall PINE TREES. SMOKE pours from beneath the hood.

INT. CAMARO - NIGHT

In PAIN, Percy grabs his head. He sees Sally, SLUMPED over the wheel.

PERCY

Mom?... Mom?!?...

Sally stirs, more STUNNED than hurt.

SALLY

I'm okay. How's Grover?

He raises his head up from the backseat.

GROVER

Is it just me, or is it raining cows?

The car suddenly SHAKES, from an IMPACT TREMOR. This is followed by several IMPACT TREMORS. Something very large, very HEAVY, is running toward them. Percy looks out the mud-splattered back window. He SEES...

COWS, being THROWN INTO THE AIR, flying LEFT AND RIGHT. A MONSTROUS THING plows through them, heading TOWARD THE CAR.

SALLY

Everyone out!

Sally THROWS HERSELF against the driver's side door. It is JAMMED SHUT. Percy TRIES TO OPEN his door. Also jammed. The creature is GETTING CLOSER... CLOSER...

Grover REMOVES his sneakers, strips off his baggy pants.

PERCY
What are you doing?

GROVER
My job.

Grover lifts his feet, revealing that they are... THICK, FURRY HOOVES. Percy stares at Grover's hooves, SHOCKED.

PERCY
Okay. So you're half donkey.

GROVER
Goat actually.

Grover PULLS BACK his leg. With a POWERFUL KICK, he SHATTERS the rear window and CLIMBS out of the back window. Percy ASSISTS his mom out of the car. When Percy climbs out, he sees Grover standing in all his glory... He's a SATYR.

GROVER
Follow me.

With tremendous speed and agility, Grover RUN/GALLOPS toward the PINE FOREST. Percy and Sally FOLLOW. They glance over their shoulder and see...

The MINOTAUR, stepping into the road, spotlighted by the car's HEADLIGHTS. The creature stops at the car, SNUFFLES, nuzzling at the windows.

A few feet away, at the edge of the pine forest, Sally, Percy, and Grover stop, looking back at the Minotaur. The Minotaur unleashes a CHILLING, ANGRY HOWL, turns toward Sally and the boys.

GROVER
He just picked up our scent. *Run!*

They SPRINT OFF, into the pine forest.

The angry Minotaur PICKS UP the Camaro, LIFTS IT and HURLS the car in their general direction. The car FLIES toward Percy, Sally and Grover, SMASHING through the pine trees.

Sally TACKLES Grover and Percy, PINNING THEM to the ground. The car FLIES OVER their heads, MISSING THEM by inches. It lands with a CRASH, only a few feet in front of them.

PERCY
Gabe's gonna' be pissed.

SALLY
I always hated that car.

They quickly get back on their feet, hearing the Minotaur SMASHING and BREAKING the trees, as he CHARGES after them.

GROVER

C'mon. We're almost there.

Grover POINTS just ahead of them. There is an OLD WOODEN GATE/ARCHWAY, leading into a small clearing. Faded GREEK LETTERS arc across the top of the gate.

Percy, Sally and Grover RUN FOR THEIR LIVES, toward the gate.

The Minotaur CHASES them, GETTING CLOSER...

Percy, Sally and Grover reach the gate. Percy LOOKS UP at the letters. PERCY'S POV: The letters SHAPE-SHIFT, MORPH into English letters. Percy reads the words.

PERCY

Camp. Half. Blood.

Grover GRABS Percy, PULLS HIM THROUGH the open wooden gate. Sally STOPS at the entrance. She DOESN'T go through.

The Minotaur CRASHES through a row of pines. MOVING FAST. Less than FIFTY YARDS AWAY. Percy looks back to his Mom, sees that she's STOPPED.

PERCY

Mom! What are you doing!?

SALLY

I can't go any further.

Percy REACHES OUT, GRABS his Mother's arms, TRIES TO PULL her through the Camp Entrance. AN INVISIBLE, FORCE FIELD WALL prevents Sally from entering. Percy CAN'T PULL HER THROUGH.

SALLY

I can't go through. I'm not like you.

The Minotaur STOMPS forward. Only a FEW FEET AWAY.

SALLY

I love you, Percy. Now go. Please.

PERCY

I'm not leaving without you!

SALLY

You have to. You're meant to.

Sally PULLS HER ARM FREE from Percy. She takes a step back, just as the Minotaur ARRIVES. Percy REACHES for his Mother again, but the beast grabs Sally and pulls her AWAY.

PERCY

No!!!

Up ahead, Grover SKIDS to a stop, looks back and SEES...

The Minotaur GRAB Sally by the neck and LIFT her off the ground. She STRUGGLES, kicking and pummeling the air.

The Minotaur CLOSES HIS FISTS around Sally's neck. She MELTS into light, becoming a shimmering, GOLDEN FORM. There is a BLINDING FLASH. And Sally DISAPPEARS. Simply... GONE.

PERCY

MOM!!!

Percy's face is covered with ANGER and GRIEF. He is filled with newfound strength, a rush of BURNING ENERGY. Percy CHARGES toward the beast. Grover runs toward him, YELLS --

GROVER

Percy! Don't--

Percy RUNS up to the Minotaur and LEAPS onto its back. The creature TOSSES HIM OFF like a rag doll. The force SENDS Percy FLYING INTO A TREE. HARD. He FALLS onto the ground. Motionless. EYES CLOSED.

The Minotaur LOWERS ITS HEAD and CHARGES Percy. At the last moment, Percy ROLLS OUT OF THE WAY.

The Minotaur JUST MISSES him and PLOWS into a tree. HEAD FIRST. The Minotaur's horn GETS STUCK in the trunk. With a LOUD ROAR, the Minotaur PULLS BACK its head. There is a HORRID SNAP of bone. The Minotaur's horn SNAPS OFF, RIPPED from its head, now STUCK in the tree.

FURIOUS, the Minotaur turns to Percy and ROARS. A weakened Percy takes a step back, his legs SHAKING. The Minotaur RACES toward him, ready to FINISH THIS.

As the Minotaur CHARGES, Percy RUNS to the tree. He PULLS the Minotaur's horn OUT OF THE TREE.

Percy STABS the creature, PLUNGING the horn into the middle of the Minotaur's chest. The Minotaur HOWLS IN PAIN. BLACK BLOOD pours from the wound. The Minotaur FALLS to the ground. DEAD.

Breathless and weak, Percy STANDS over the fallen Minotaur. Percy DROPS the horn, LOOKS UP, the trees SPIN. Percy's eyes ROLL BACK. Softly, he speaks...

PERCY

Mom...

He FAINTS.

INT. CAMP HALF-BLOOD - INFIRMARY - DAYS LATER - DAY

Percy is lying on a HOSPITAL BED. ANNABETH, a 17 year old girl with stunning GREY EYES and curly blond hair, stares down at him. She's wearing body armor and is covered in sweat and dirt, but she's still radiant.

ANNABETH

This is him? Doesn't look tough enough to kill a Minotaur. I'm not impressed.

Percy's eyes slowly flutter OPEN. He stares up into Annabeth's hypnotic, grey eyes, sees all of her BEAUTY. Light reflects off her armor making her look otherworldly.

PERCY

Hello--

ANNABETH

You drool when you sleep. Wipe your mouth.

Percy wipes his mouth, Grover steps out from behind Annabeth.

GROVER

Welcome back, Buddy.

Percy notices the cacophony of MOANS and GROANS. He sees that his bed is one of several dozen, inside of a large, stone walled INFIRMARY. Kids, ages 11-18, are in the beds. They are BATTERED and BRUISED, some with broken bones.

PERCY

Where am I?

GROVER

The infirmary. You've been unconscious for three days.

Percy tries to sit up, but he's IN PAIN. Annabeth shoves a GOBLET filled with a GOLD, GLOWING LIQUID in his face.

ANNABETH

Drink this. It'll make you feel better.

Percy sniffs it, not sure.

ANNABETH

Don't be a weasel.

Percy smiles, takes a SIP. Grover and Annabeth watch him expectantly. He looks instantly REJUVENATED.

PERCY

Good stuff. What is it?

ANNABETH

Ambrosia and nectar. Food of the Gods.

PERCY

Tastes like my Mom's caramel brownies.

GROVER

It always tastes like your favorite food.

ANNABETH

(checks clock)

Time for more training.

(to Percy, sarcastic)

See you on the battlefield... hero.

She CLANKS away in her armor, carrying a shield and sword. As Percy watches her, he hears more CLANGING as several kids, covered in dirt, mud and blood, wearing classic GREEK BATTLE ARMOR over jeans and T-shirts, are carried in on STRETCHERS.

PERCY

What happened to them?

GROVER

She did.

Percy grins, thinks it's a joke. Grover's not laughing.

GROVER

Do you remember anything?

PERCY

Just some crazy dream. My Mom was there. There was a Minotaur... And you were some kinda' weird hybrid goat thing--

He looks at Grover, then trails his eyes from Grover's face down to his lower half which is completely VISIBLE now, furry arched legs, goat butt, hooves and all.

GROVER

Actually, I prefer "*Satyr*".

(a beat)

Oh. And this is yours.

He hands Percy the Minotaur HORN. Percy stares at it. His expression darkens. REALIZATION sets in.

PERCY

It was real. All of it was real.

GROVER

(ashamed, heartbroken)

I'm sorry, Percy. It's my fault. I blew it. It was my job to protect you. *Both of you.*

Percy stares at the horn. His expression is sad, filled with despair. He speaks softly, in grief. TEARS fill his eyes.

PERCY
My Mom. She's really gone.

INT. INFIRMARY - LATER - DAY

Percy is dressed, depressed, walking with Grover down the aisle, past the beds, past the MOANING, BATTERED KIDS. Percy looks at all of the wounded kids.

PERCY
Where are we?

CAMERA FOLLOWS THEM as they step out of the Infirmary and stand at the top of a hill, looking out over...

GROVER
Camp Half Blood.

The camp is spread across several acres of a beautiful, lush, landscape surrounded by a pine forest. The buildings' architecture is straight out of ancient Greece. Constructed of stone and marble, with weathered, well-worn, facades. A small COLISEUM is visible in the distance.

GROVER
Created by the Olympians, for their offspring. Demigods. Kids like you.

Percy stands in awe. Speechless.

EXT. CAMP HALF-BLOOD - LATER

Percy and Grover walk through the camp. Hundreds of kids, aged 11 to 21, dressed in modern clothing, are everywhere.

They walk past several kids sitting inside a small outdoor amphitheater, as an OLD, BLIND POET recites Homer's Odyssey.

GROVER
This is where you guys learn to harness your powers, to become leaders, warriors... artists... and heroes...

PERCY
(incredulous)
You got the wrong guy. I'm no hero... I'm a screw-up... with dyslexia, ADHD...

GROVER
Those are your greatest gifts.

PERCY
You call those gifts?

They pass other kids FIRING ARROWS in an ARCHERY RANGE;
throwing JAVELINS; forging WEAPONS in a Blacksmith furnace;
making VASES at a potter's wheel.

GROVER

When you try to read, the letters seem
to float off the page, right? That's
because your brain's hard-wired for
ancient Greek. Not English. I bet
you had no trouble reading the book
Mr. Brunner gave you in detention...

PERCY

That was Greek?

GROVER

(nods)

And your ADHD? You're impulsive, you
can't sit still. Those are your natural
battle reflexes. They kept you alive
when you fought the Minotaur. No mortal
screw-up could defeat the Minotaur,
Percy. Your blood is special. It's...

(somber)

The blood of a God.

PERCY

And these kids?... They're all sons
and daughters of gods?

GROVER

And goddesses.

They pause at a practice BATTLEFIELD. Annabeth SWORDFIGHTS,
beating several stronger, male opponents. Percy WATCHES,
very ATTRACTED to her.

PERCY

What's her name?

GROVER

Smokin', huh?

PERCY

Her *name*?

GROVER

Annabeth. Daughter of Athena. Goddess
of Wisdom.

PERCY

I thought Athena was a virgin goddess...

GROVER

She was. But you try holding out for
10,000 years. I barely make it through
health class.

Percy and Grover walk to the edge of the coliseum. A HORSE RACE is in progress. EIGHT HORSES circle the track in a CLOUD OF DUST. They are SILHOUETTED against the bright rays of the afternoon sun.

As the horses reach the finish, the dust clears. Percy's mouth drops when he sees that they are CENTAURS. HALF-MAN, HALF-HORSE. One of the Centaurs walks away, TROTS toward Percy. As the Centaur gets closer, Percy RECOGNIZES him.

PERCY

Mr. Brunner!?

MR. BRUNNER/CHIRON

Here, I'm known as Chiron. Nice to see
you up and around.

PERCY

You're... you're...

CHIRON

A real horse's ass, I know. I'm sorry I
had to keep my true form hidden from you,
but it was for your own good. I hope
you'll forgive me.

PERCY

What happened to your wheelchair?...

CHIRON

Only when I'm in mortal form. I could
never walk on only two legs.

He leads Percy and Grover away. They WALK through the camp with Chiron.

PERCY

Is this your camp?

CHIRON

No. I'm just an overseer and a trainer.

Chiron enters an ALCOVE, nestled in the woods by the lake. Eleven distinct frat-like houses, are arranged around a common area, dotted with old STATUES and ancient FOUNTAINS.

CHIRON

This is where you'll be staying.

GROVER

Greek Row.

The first "house" they pass has several SMOKESTACKS belching BLACK SMOKE. Outside, a few kids covered in sweat and grime work billows and anvils.

CHIRON

The heirs of Hephaestus, smith and weapon-maker of the Gods.

Chiron and Percy continue on, past a BUILDING that resembles a FORTRESS. BARBED-WIRE fencing surrounds the lawn. ANGRY MUSIC BLASTS from within. A dozen BIG, UGLY, MEAN KIDS are YELLING at each other, some are physically fighting.

CHIRON

The offspring of Ares, God of War.

The next home is filled with dozens of HYPER, ENERGETIC KIDS, running through the lawn, playing pranks, laughing. They all have sharp noses, upturned eyebrows and mischievous smiles.

CHIRON

Those pranksters are the offspring of Hermes, messenger of the gods.

One of Hermes' SONS motions to a nearby BROTHER, clearly up to something. He's watching: the sorority house next door. It is decorated with romantic statues and gardens, the most lush home on Greek row. The GIRLS who live here are drop dead gorgeous, most of them outside SUNBATHING.

Grover stops dead in his tracks, frozen like he's fighting an urge... and desperately losing.

GROVER

Daughters of Aphrodite, goddess of love and other four letter words.

SPRINKLERS go off, drenching the girls. They SCREAM, run inside. Hermes' sons roll on the ground laughing.

GROVER

I'll catch up with you guys later.

Grover makes a MAD DASH toward the drenched daughters of Aphrodite, CHASING them around the grounds.

CHIRON

Satyrs. You can never completely train them to stop chasing the nymphs.

Chiron and Percy round the "U" and stop at one of the largest homes in Greek Row. The home looks as if it were made of CORAL. A LARGE FOUNTAIN is in front. Chiron turns to Percy.

CHIRON

Welcome home.

Percy is taken aback, yet INTRIGUED.

CHIRON
Your Father built this. For you.

PERCY
My Father?

Chiron lifts his front legs, and KICKS OPEN the doors.

CHIRON
Poseidon.

INT. POSEIDON'S PALACE - SAME

Percy and Chiron enter Poseidon's home. Most of the interior is taken up by a large INDOOR POOL. The stairways are lined with cascading waterfalls. There are many statues of HORSES. And a wall filled with various ancient, rusted METAL TRIDENTS. Percy stares in AWE.

CHIRON
Your father is God of the Seas, as well as horses and earthquakes. It was his wish that you lead a normal life. He asked me to watch over you and, when you got older, I chose Grover to be your protector.

Percy looks at the collection of rusted TRIDENTS, grabs one.

PERCY
Why didn't my mom ever tell me?

CHIRON
She couldn't. It was for your own safety. There hasn't been a Demi-God born of the Big Three in over a hundred years.

PERCY
The big three... Zeus, Hades and Poseidon?...

CHIRON
(nods)
That makes you special, powerful, a threat. That's why your Mom married your step-father. His rather pungent odor masked the smell of your blood, in case you were ever in danger.

PERCY
Like the Minotaur...

CHIRON
Exactly.

PERCY
So Gabe's ass saved mine?

CHIRON
I wouldn't put it that way, but yes.

PERCY
But why am I in danger? Why are things chasing me, trying to kill me?...

CHIRON
Actually. For the time being. They prefer that you stay alive.

PERCY
Why?

CHIRON
They think you've stolen something valuable.

PERCY
But, I didn't steal anything...

CHIRON
I believe you. Not many others do. Zeus has convinced almost everyone, that you're...
(a beat)
The Lightning Thief.

Percy is confused. Chiron points to the palace ceiling. Here, is a stunning *THREE DIMENSIONAL PAINTING*, depicting the history of the Gods. It makes the Sistine Chapel look pedestrian. Chiron points to a powerful image of Zeus, riding in the clouds, the powerful *MASTER BOLT* in hand.

CHIRON
Zeus' Master bolt. The bolt where all lightning originates. The most powerful weapon ever created, harnessing more power than several hydrogen bombs. It was stolen four days ago.

PERCY
Why do they think it was me?

Chiron points to an image of Zeus in combat against Poseidon.

CHIRON
When the bolt disappeared, Zeus naturally blamed your father. They've been in a power struggle for centuries.
(MORE)

CHIRON (CONT'D)

But ancient law forbids Gods to cross into each other's realm. Only a *Demi-God* is capable of that. Someone like you. Zeus' closest relative.

PERCY

But I've never even met my Father... And I sure as hell wouldn't do his dirty work...

CHIRON

Unless the bolt is returned by midnight of the summer solstice, *two weeks from now*, there will be a war of the gods.

PERCY

(mocking)

Zeus vs. Poseidon. Two gods enter the ring, only one will leave.

CHIRON

War between the Gods is a serious matter, Percy. Olympians will be forced to choose sides. Nature will turn against itself. Modern civilization will be destroyed.

PERCY

(pause, concerned)

So what do we do?

CHIRON

For the next few days, we stay here. Until Zeus calms down. Then we go to Olympus, where you'll convince Zeus of your innocence.

Percy nods.

EXT. POSEIDON'S PALACE - THE NEXT MORNING - DAWN

Grover walks up the stairs, of the palace, enters.

INT. POSEIDON'S PALACE - BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY - DAWN

Grover enters, looks around. No sign of Percy.

GROVER

Percy?

No answer. Grover walks around, looks into the pool. FLOATING at the bottom, is Percy. Eyes closed.

GROVER

Hey! Wake up!

PERCY (O.S.)
 (opens his eyes, sleepy)
 What time is it?

GROVER
 6:00 AM. Chiron sent me. He wants
 you to start training.

Percy climbs out of the water.

PERCY
 Training for what?

GROVER
 This isn't celebrity rehab. There
 are things trying to kill you, remember?
 Big. Scary. Things.

EXT. CAMP HALF-BLOOD - BATTLEFIELD - LATER

The sky is GRAY, OMINOUS. There are several WEATHERED TENTS scattered around the grounds, the type of tents used on the ancient battlefields of Rome and Greece. Dozens of kids, all in armor, SHARPEN their swords, practice battle moves.

Percy walks onto the battlefield, wearing ARMOR, holding a heavy shield and sword. He looks extremely uncomfortable and awkward in it. Grover is beside him.

PERCY
 How do you move in all this stuff?

GROVER
 You get used to it. Or you get killed.

Percy gives a nervous laugh. Grover is dead serious. When the other kids see Percy, they all stop and stare, whisper to each other... *"Is that him?" The Lightning Thief?... Son of Poseidon?... Slayed the Minotaur..."*

Percy notices Annabeth, wearing a RED PLUME surrounded by her team, all wearing Red Plumes. Annabeth uses her sword point to draw a game plan in the dirt. CHIRON trots up.

CHIRON
 Heroes! Warriors! Fall in!

The young warriors line up in FORMATION by teams. RED PLUMES on one side; BLUE PLUMES on the other. Annabeth is CAPTAIN of the Red soldiers.

CHIRON
 Today, we have some new blood in
 our midst. Percy? *Step forward.*

Percy pauses, then STEPS FORWARD. The kids crane their necks to get a good look at Percy, FASCINATED by him. Percy smiles at Annabeth, but she just stares at him stoically.

CHIRON

This is Percy Jackson. He's going to need a team.

LUKE, a small, energetic, impish kid with a thin sloping nose and a mischievous smile, steps forward. Luke is CAPTAIN of the Blue soldiers. He holds an ancient BRONZE SHIELD with SEVERAL WARRIORS carved into the surface.

LUKE

We'll take him.

Luke hands Percy a blue plumed helmet.

LUKE

I'm Luke. Son of Hermes.

Percy takes his helmet and... BUZZZ! Percy gets a a HUGE ELECTRICAL SHOCK from the helmet! SPARKS FLY! Percy jumps back, drops the helmet. Luke turns to his teammates.

LUKE

I dunno'... Maybe it isn't so safe to have a *lightning thief* on our team...

Everyone is staring at Percy. Suddenly, they all break up LAUGHING. Luke picks up Percy's helmet, removes an electrical JOY BUZZER from inside. Luke grins at Percy.

LUKE

Sorry. Just bustin' your balls. Couldn't resist. My old man's God of the Pranksters... It's in the blood.

Percy forces a smile, nods, takes the blue helmet from Luke.

CHIRON

You all know the rules. First team to capture the enemy flag wins. Assume your last positions and remember... We fight to build each other up, not to tear each other down. Use your skills on the battlefield, but save your true anger for the dark forces.

The Red soldiers start MARCHING OFF into the forest. Percy turns to Chiron, NERVOUS.

PERCY

I thought this was a game... I don't know how to use this stuff.

CHIRON

You defeated the Minotaur.

PERCY

But I had that cool flic-a-bic-sword...

CHIRON

That would give you an unfair advantage over the red team. Just relax. Demigods all have some degree of inherited skill. Hercules was only a level three when I began teaching him.

PERCY

You taught Hercules?

LUKE

Chiron trained all the great Demigods. Hercules, Alexander the Great, Bruce Lee, Michael Jordan... turned them all into heroes.

CHIRON

They turned themselves into heroes. I only trained them.

(confident)

Just do what comes naturally, Percy. You'll be fine.

LUKE

Blue team... *Move out!*

They march off into the forest.

INT. PINE FOREST - LATER - DAY

Reds and Blues CLASH! Kids THRASH relentlessly at each other, dealing powerful blows. Swords CLANG against shields and armor. In the midst of it all, Annabeth savagely HACKS her way through dozens of the blue soldiers. Several of the blue team RUN OFF. Annabeth removes a BOW, pulls ARROWS from a quiver and FIRES a barrage at the fleeing blue soldiers.

The arrows PIN kids to trees, safely, by piercing through their clothes, etc. One KID is TRAPPED by an ARROW on each side of his head and one between his legs. Annabeth gets right in his face, SNARLS.

ANNABETH

Where is Percy Jackson?

INT. FOREST - ELSEWHERE - DAY

Percy, Luke, and the blue soldiers are CAUTIOUSLY MOVING through the forest. Percy LOOKS AROUND. Nervous. Suddenly, several Red soldiers appear, COMING RIGHT AT THEM.

LUKE

Incoming!

Blues and Reds CLASH. METAL ON METAL. Percy DUCKS, avoids blows and ends up face-to-face with an angry SON OF ARES.

The Son of Ares comes at Percy, SWINGING. Percy DEFLECTS the first several blows, but gets KNOCKED DOWN by the proceeding FLURRY OF HITS. LUKE appears and with two FAST SWINGS, takes out the Son of Ares. Luke EXTENDS his hand to Percy.

LUKE

Shake it off.

As Percy gets to his feet, more red soldiers ATTACK. Luke and the other Blues FIGHT BACK. A red soldier starts PUMMELING Percy. Percy FIGHTS BACK. The two kids are in a HEATED BATTLE. Percy manages to deliver a HARD KICK to the red soldier's midsection. The red soldier FALLS to the ground. Momentarily WINDED.

Percy SPRINTS into the pine forest. Red soldiers FOLLOW.

EXT. DEEP IN THE PINE FOREST - DAY

Percy STOPS, catches his breath, next to a SMALL CREEK. Percy looks around. NO SIGN of his pursuers. Percy takes off his helmet, BREATHLESS.

He kneels beside the creek, SPLASHES water on his face. He sees something REFLECTED in the water... A RED FLAG. It's a FEW FEET AWAY on the other side of the creek.

Percy steps INTO THE WATER. He WADES across the creek. TOWARD the flag.

Percy STEPS OUT of the water, walks TOWARD the red flag. He REACHES forward... about to PICK IT UP...

A DOZEN RED SOLDIERS DROP from the trees. They SURROUND Percy. He PUTS ON his helmet, takes a DEFENSIVE STANCE.

ANNABETH (O.S.)

Did you think it would be that easy?

ANNABETH appears..

ANNABETH

My mother is the Goddess of Wisdom and Battle Strategy. You know what that means? I never lose.

The Red Soldiers ATTACK Percy. Percy is able to DEFLECT nearly half the blows. But they soon OVERCOME him. He is HIT. SEVERAL TIMES.

Percy FALLS to his knees. He is BLOODIED. BEATEN. EXHAUSTED. Annabeth steps forward, looks down at him.

ANNABETH

You actually claim to be the Son of Poseidon and the slayer of the Minotaur!?

The other Red soldiers BACK AWAY, give Annabeth her space.

ANNABETH

Stand up. Fight.

Percy slowly GETS TO HIS FEET. Annabeth EXTENDS her sword. ARMED and READY. Percy EXTENDS his sword.

ANNABETH

Let's see what you're really made of.

Their EYES MEET, displaying a shared sense of intense EXCITEMENT and ATTRACTION. They begin a HEATED SWORDFIGHT. Percy LUNGES, Annabeth SLASHES his arm. Percy tries to defend against Annabeth's ASSAULT. He's NO MATCH for her. Annabeth is more ADVANCED, more EXPERIENCED...

Several RED and BLUE SOLDIERS gather on opposite sides of the creek, WATCHING the fight. Luke, Grover and Chiron ARRIVE.

GROVER

Should we stop it?

CHIRON

Not yet.

Annabeth SLASHES Percy at every opportunity... Percy's arms and legs have deep CUTS on them. There's a WOUND above his right eye. He is WEAK, can barely hold his sword up. Annabeth is starting to SYMPATHIZE with him...

ANNABETH

Surrender...

Percy shakes his head. NO WAY. He attacks SLOWLY, EXHAUSTED. His swings are LABORED. Annabeth easily DEFLECTS the blows.

Annabeth RAISES her sword, flips it in the air, grabs it by the blade and SWINGS IT at Percy's head. CRACK! Percy's helmet FLIES OFF his head. He FALLS down, into the shallow waters at the CREEK'S EDGE. Almost UNCONSCIOUS.

The red soldiers RAISE their swords in the air and chant: ATHENA! ATHENA! ATHENA!

They CONGRATULATE Annabeth, but she doesn't look happy. She watches Percy, feeling REMORSEFUL.

Percy's bloody, battered body LIES A FEW FEET FROM THE RIVER'S EDGE. Blood DRIPS from his mouth. A DISTANT MALE VOICE echoes in his head.

VOICE (V.O.)

Go to the water, Percy... The water...

Percy uses his last bit of strength, CRAWLING toward the water. He COLLAPSES... His FINGERTIPS TOUCH THE WATER.

Suddenly... WATER from the creek SLITHERS up Percy's hand and arm, moving around Percy's body. The water CRAWLS up Percy's skin and COVERS HIM in a thin wet veneer.

Percy's wounds INSTANTLY HEAL.

Percy's EYES OPEN. His muscles TIGHTEN. His hand moves and GRABS the handle of his sword. He slowly RISES to his feet. Behind him, the water in the creek SHOOTs UP into the air...

All of the kids stare in AWE. Annabeth turns to see what is happening. She is struck SPEECHLESS by the sight of Percy, dripping wet, standing in front of a GIANT WATER TRIDENT.

SIX RED SOLDIERS rush forward to ATTACK. Fighting like an expert soldier, Percy quickly and effortlessly TAKES THEM DOWN, one by one.

Then, Annabeth CHARGES Percy. Their blades CLASH. It's a hard fought, INTENSE DUEL.

Percy skillfully KNOCKS the sword out of Annabeth's hand and sends her FALLING to the ground. He stands over Annabeth, staring confidently down into her eyes. The tip of his sword is POINTED at her HEART.

PERCY

You drool when you're impressed. Wipe your mouth.

Annabeth wipes her mouth and then... exchanges a slow smile with Percy. He RAISES his sword high in the air.

PERCY

POSEIDON!

Kids start chanting "*POSEIDON! POSEIDON!*" but it soon turns to "*PERCY! PERCY! PERCY!*"

Luke can't believe what he just witnessed. Grover runs up and practically tackles Percy. Standing apart from the crowd, CHIRON watches. A small smile appears on his lips. Percy looks at Chiron, gives a small, confident nod.

EXT. COMMON'S AREA - OUTSIDE - LATER THAT NIGHT

A huge BONFIRE rages in the common's area of Greek Row. Kids from all the houses are celebrating, like warriors after a battle. SATYRS and CENTAURS mingle with the kids. GLOWING AMBROSIA flows from large jars into mugs and goblets. A WILD BOAR cooks on a spit.

Percy and Grover work their way toward the Ambrosia. Kids congratulate Percy, patting him on the back. He seems ill at ease with the attention. Two APHRODITE GIRLS smile at Percy, oozing sex appeal.

APHRODITE GIRL ONE

I love a man who can handle a sword.

Nearby, Annabeth is talking to a few kids. She glances over, SEES the girls fawning over Percy. A flicker of jealousy registers on Annabeth's face. The Aphrodite Girls turn to exit, each giving Percy a kiss to the cheek. Grover nearly faints. Annabeth walks up to Percy.

ANNABETH

Feeling like a hero?

PERCY

More like a mutant. I'm not gonna' grow a fish tail or gills or anything like that?

ANNABETH

Not likely. Although a huge ego isn't out of the question.

Annabeth fills a goblet with golden Ambrosia. Percy is attracted to her, yet cautious, suspicious.

PERCY

You know... you almost killed me out there. I could've died... If I was normal.

ANNABETH

But you aren't. Besides... I always knew.

PERCY

How?

She hands him the goblet of Ambrosia.

ANNABETH

You drank the Ambrosia. There's a reason it's called "food of the gods." If a pure mortal drank Ambrosia, it would kill them. Your blood would have boiled and your bones turned to dust.

PERCY

But you didn't know that when you gave it to me.

ANNABETH

Women's intuition.

PERCY

Intuition? You bet my life on intuition?

She shrugs, smiles, takes a long drink of Ambrosia. Percy NARROWS his eyes, looking at her.

PERCY

I get the sense that you don't like me very much...

ANNABETH

It's possible. I mean... Our parents hate each other.

PERCY

They do?

ANNABETH

(nods)

And I definitely have strong feelings for you. I just haven't decided if they're positive or negative.

PERCY

Let me know when you figure it out.

ANNABETH

You'll be the first.

She smiles, raises her glass, DRINKS. Percy does the same. Their eyes are LOCKED. A SPARK of romance.

She suddenly FREEZES, spots something OFFSCREEN. In the distance, Annabeth sees THREE PAIRS of glowing RED DOTS.

ANNABETH

No... That can't be possible...

PERCY

What?

He turns. The red eyes are getting CLOSER... and CLOSER...
Annabeth screams, warning the others...

ANNABETH
HELLHOUNDS!

Everyone stops what they're doing. The kids see the trio of red eyes. They PANIC, RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES.

GROVER
How did they get in?

ANNABETH
I don't know... The camp's under a veil of protection against underworld forces... Someone must have lifted it...

THREE HELLHOUNDS charge into the camp. They are DEMONIC BEASTS, hounds the size of buffalo. Lava-red eyes, fangs like daggers. Chiron runs up, SHOVES Percy out of the way, just as one of the HOUNDS charges right at him.

CHIRON
Grover! Get Percy out of here!

Chiron removes his PEN, flicks it. The pen TRANSFORMS INTO THE SWORD. Centaurs and kids SPRING INTO ACTION. They grab THEIR SWORDS, BOWS AND ARROWS, and prepare to FIGHT. Percy GRABS a sword.

GROVER
Percy, no!

PERCY
They need help...

The Hellhounds are RUTHLESS. They DRAG one kid away, another gets MAULED. Annabeth fires a DOZEN ARROWS into one of the beasts but it DOESN'T PHASE the creature.

The three Hellhounds CIRCLE BACK, seeking out Percy. They see him and CHARGE AT PERCY. Chiron LEAPS into the Hellhound's path and STABS ONE with his sword. It FALLS to the ground. DEAD.

THREE OTHER CENTAURS surround another Hellhound. It CHARGES right through them. Chiron HURLS the sword. It IMPALES the beast, killing it INSTANTLY.

ANNABETH
Chiron! Watch out--

The last Hellhound HITS CHIRON. He FALLS, BLEEDING.

Percy immediately GRABS Chiron's sword. The Hellhound sees him, CHARGES. Percy RUNS STRAIGHT for the Hellhound!

They are on a COLLISION COURSE. At the last second before impact, Percy DROPS and SLIDES UNDER under the beast, raising his sword. It SLASHES along the beast's underside. The hellhound is mortally WOUNDED.

Percy stands, looks down at the DYING beast. Grover and Annabeth JOIN Percy. The beast lifts its head, looks at Percy. The beast SPEAKS. A slow, weak, DEMONIC VOICE

HELLHOUND

Where... is the bolt?...

PERCY

I don't have it. I'm not the thief.

HELLHOUND

Liar... If you want your Mother back... bring Hades the bolt...

PERCY

My Mother's dead.

HELLHOUND

No... She is still alive... abducted by Hades... Bring him the lightning bolt... in exchange for your Mother...

The beast closes its eyes, its breathing slows to a STOP. DEAD. Percy exchanges a look with Annabeth and Grover. He turns, sees Chiron lying on the ground, his leg badly wounded. Percy RUNS to Chiron, Grover and Annabeth FOLLOW.

INT. CHIRON'S STABLE/HOME - LATER

Filled with books, weapons, and alchemical devices. Chiron is sitting as Annabeth BANDAGES his leg wound. Grover and Percy are watching, but Percy's mind is miles away. He's flicking the pen-sword on and off. Chiron looks at Percy.

CHIRON

That sword has a name.

Percy reads the GREEK name ENGRAVED along the sword's handle.

PERCY

Anaklusmos.

CHIRON

In English, it means "*Riptide*." I want you to keep it.

PERCY

Really?

CHIRON

You'll be needing it more than me. It's made of celestial bronze and lethal to any creature from the underworld.

GROVER

Hades never sent his creatures into our camp before.

CHIRON

With Olympus in turmoil he will only get bolder. And as long as he thinks Percy has the bolt, he'll stop at nothing.

Percy stands, walks to Chiron, looks at him. Very solemn.

PERCY

Chiron. The hellhound... It spoke to me... told me that...

(swallows back emotion)

My Mom is alive.

CHIRON

What?

PERCY

She was *abducted* by Hades. Is that possible?

CHIRON

(nods)

Hades has been known to abduct the living... Like Persephone. His wife.

PERCY

The hellhound said that I can get her back, in return for the bolt...

CHIRON

But you don't have the bolt.

PERCY

I know... But you said I could convince Zeus that I'm not the thief... Can't I do the same with Hades? When he realizes I don't have the bolt, he'll give me my Mother back.

CHIRON

It isn't that simple.

PERCY

Why not?

CHIRON

Zeus and Hades are very different. Zeus can be stubborn, but he is honorable. Fair. Hades is a master of darkness and deceit. The personification of evil. When he finds out that you aren't the lightning thief, he'll kill both you and *your Mother*.

There is SILENCE. Percy is DEVASTATED. HELPLESS.

PERCY

So... What can I do?...

Chiron rises up, his wound dressed. He places his arm firmly on Percy's shoulder, LOOKS him in the eye.

CHIRON

Stay with our original plan. Tomorrow we go to Olympus. Once you've convinced Zeus of your innocence, we will do everything in our power to bring your Mother back. I swear.

Percy, his face filled with FRUSTRATION and DISAPPOINTMENT, looks at Chiron, and slowly nods. Grover and Annabeth exchange a glance.

EXT. POSEIDON'S PALACE - LATER - NIGHT

The door OPENS. Percy peeks outside. The coast is clear. He steps out with his backpack flung over his shoulder. As he starts to walk away, a VOICE INTERRUPTS...

GROVER (O.S.)

Going somewhere?

Grover is sitting ON THE ROOF, chewing on a bushy plant. He DROPS DOWN in front of Percy.

PERCY

Out for a walk.

Percy steps around him, continues on his way. Then Annabeth WALKS OUT from behind the fountain, right in his path.

ANNABETH

One small victory and you think you're ready to take on the world?

PERCY

(passionate)

Look... I just found out that my Mother is still alive. She's the most important thing in my life. And I'm going to get her back.

ANNABETH

You're going to walk all the way to Hades and fight the Lord of the Underworld?

PERCY

If I have to.

ANNABETH

Do you even know how to get there?

PERCY

If I had to guess I'd say: down.

GROVER

I can't let you do this.

PERCY

I wasn't asking for permission.

GROVER

I mean, I can't let you go by yourself. I'm your protector. I'm going with you.

PERCY

I don't need any help. This is something I have to do alone.

ANNABETH

We weren't asking for permission.

Percy looks at Annabeth. You too?

PERCY

Earlier today you wanted to kill me, now you want to risk your life to help me?

ANNABETH

My mom always looks out for heroes. It's in my blood. And if we're going to succeed, it's going to take some brains, not just pretty blue eyes, a fancy pen, and a set of disgusting hooves.

(to Grover)

No offense.

GROVER

Offense taken.

ANNABETH

So like it or not, Percy, you've got company.

Percy looks at them, resigns himself.

PERCY

How do we get there?

INT. HERMES HOUSE - LUKE'S ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

It is filled with fun house novelties: trick mirrors, clowns, a fortune teller machine, etc. Percy, Grover, and Annabeth sit across from Luke.

LUKE

What makes you think I would know something like that?

ANNABETH

Your dad's the Messenger of the Gods. He's one of the few who can get in and out of the underworld. Surely he's told you something.

LUKE

My dad's a prick and I've never even met him.

PERCY

Then we have a lot in common.

Luke gives Percy a devilish smile.

LUKE

But I have broken into my Father's house on several occasions.

Luke CLIMBS A LADDER to grab a SHOEBOX from a top shelf. He TOSSES the shoebox to Percy, who opens it... Inside, is a pair of WINGED SNEAKERS. They're VERY COOL.

PERCY

Flying shoes?

LUKE

My gift to you. Look underneath.

Percy lifts the shoes out of the box. Beneath them, is a folded, yellowed piece of PARCHMENT. Percy OPENS it, revealing a tattered MAP OF THE UNITED STATES.

LUKE

People have gone to the underworld, without having to be dead. Hercules did. And Orpheus. Getting in is the easy part. It's getting out that's the trick.

Luke points to the MAP. The town of RUMSON, NEW JERSEY begins to GLOW. An ADDRESS magically appears next to it.

LUKE

This will lead you to the locations of the *three* green pearls.

PERCY
Green pearls?

LUKE
This is a copy of a map that belongs to Hades' wife, Persephone. She keeps the green pearls hidden for her many lovers, to use when Hades is away. They provide a quick escape from the underworld. You can use them to get out.

ANNABETH
How do they work?

LUKE
Put a drop of your blood on the pearl, then shatter it. Close your eyes, and imagine the place you want to go. The pearls will take you there.

They nod. Luke gives Percy one last item... His ANCIENT, ENGRAVED BRONZE SHIELD, with a SHINY GOLDEN HANDLE.

LUKE
Take this.

PERCY
Your shield?

LUKE
For protection.

PERCY
(touched)
Thanks, Luke.

Percy stands, to exit. Luke CALLS out to him.

LUKE
Percy.

Percy LOOKS BACK.

LUKE
If you run into my Father along the way...

PERCY
Yeah...

LUKE
Kick his ass for me.

PERCY
Deal.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - LATER - NIGHT

Percy, Grover, and Annabeth sit next to each other on the half-full bus. Percy is studying the MAP.

PERCY (V.O.)

And that's how yours truly, Percy
Jackson, son of Poseidon, ended up on
the highway to Hell.

AC/DC'S "HIGHWAY TO HELL" FILLS THE SOUNDTRACK. CAMERA
DOLLIES into the map, zeroing in to the first location:
NEW JERSEY.

EXT. NEW JERSEY - THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON - DAY

A deserted, two lane highway in the badlands of New Jersey.
The Greyhound bus pulls to the SIDE OF THE ROAD. Percy,
Grover, and Annabeth step off the bus, all wearing back-
packs. The bus PULLS AWAY. Across the street, is...

AUNTIE EM'S GARDEN EMPORIUM. It's a rundown, corrugated
steel "SHACK" with dead plants, cement fountains, and a dozen
weathered statues -- CHERUBS, LIONS, ANGELS. The place feels
deserted, save for TWO CARS parked in front: A rusted PICK-
UP TRUCK and a 1993 CADILLAC ELDORADO with ILLINOIS plates.

ANNABETH

You're sure this is the place?

PERCY

That's what the map says.

INT. AUNTIE EM'S OFFICE/SHACK - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

The kids ENTER. It's dark, dusty, and DESERTED.

PERCY

Hello? Anyone here?

Grover picks up a cobwebbed phone, LISTENS for a dial tone.

GROVER

Dead.

ANNABETH

Auntie 'Em must've gone back to Kansas.

Percy opens the CASH REGISTER's drawer. It's full of American
CASH and several ancient Greek GOLD COINS (DRACHMAS).

Percy pushes open the creaky SCREEN DOOR, leading to the back
lot. He steps OUTSIDE.

PERCY

Check this out.

EXT. AUNTIE EM'S GARDEN EMPORIUM - BACK LOT - DAY

Annabeth and Grover JOIN Percy. A winding, serpentine gravel path leads through acres of STATUARY. Hundreds of LIFE-LIKE STATUES create a maze-like atmosphere. There are ANIMALS, TOURISTS, SOLDIERS from all eras, GARGOYLES, etc.

ANNABETH

Must be thousands of 'em. How are we supposed to find a pearl in this cement stack?

PERCY

You're the grand strategist.

Grover walks to an old "ENJOY COCA-COLA" ice cooler.

GROVER

Anyone thirsty?

He opens it, startled to find dozens of LIVE MICE scurrying around inside. He quickly CLOSES the door.

GROVER

Never mind.

ANNABETH

Let's split up. Check every statue. The pearl could be inside one of them.

They walk into the statue maze and SPLIT OFF in three directions. As they do, a GARGOYLE'S HEAD appears to TURN, ever so slightly, in their direction.

EXT. STATUE MAZE - GROVER'S PATH - DAY

Grover HOBBLER among the statues, TAPPING them with an ANCIENT DAGGER. The statues are all SOLID and very LIFE-LIKE, in strange, everyday poses. Grover taps a ROMAN SOLDIER. SOLID. Grover moves on, the Roman Solider BEGINS TO MOVE and LIFTS HIS SWORD.

Grover, hearing a NOISE, LOOKS BACK. NOTHING. The Roman Soldier is STIFF. But now his sword is HELD HIGH. Grover DOESN'T NOTICE and MOVES ON.

EXT. STATUE MAZE - PERCY'S PATH - DAY

Percy TAPS the statues. All SOLID. He comes upon a relatively new statue: a MIDDLE AGED MAN wearing a Chicago Cubs hat, holding a map as if he were asking for directions. There's a look of HORROR on the man's face.

At the end of the row, Percy sees a LARGE STATUE of a SLEEPING, COILED COBRA. Percy walks TOWARD it.

EXT. STATUE MAZE - ANNABETH'S PATH - DAY

Annabeth taps each statue and MARKS THEM with an "X" after she's examined them. From the corner of Annabeth's eye, she sees a QUICK BLUR. Someone is RUNNING BETWEEN THE STATUES.

ANNABETH

Hello? Is someone there?

She turns and... *SHOCK!* Annabeth runs into a crazed, SCARED HYSTERICAL WOMAN, in her late fifties.

HYSTERICAL WOMAN

*Have to leave... have to get out...
She's coming...*

ANNABETH

Who's coming? What's going on?

HYSTERICAL WOMAN

*We stopped... For directions... Bill...
My husband... Stone...*

The Woman GRABS Annabeth, PULLS her through the maze...

EXT. STATUE MAZE - GROVER'S PATH - DAY

As Grover walks, FIVE MORE STATUES come to life. They FOLLOW Grover like cement zombies, lead by the Roman Soldier. Every time Grover TURNS BACK, the statues assume their FROZEN POSITION. Grover stops in front of a statue of an OLD SATYR.

GROVER

Hey. You look like my Uncle Ferdinand.
But that's impossible. Uncle Ferdinand
was killed by Medusa--
(sudden panic, swallows)
Auntie 'Em.

WHACK! A CONCRETE SWORD BLADE BARELY MISSES Grover and SHATTERS Uncle Ferdinand. Grover SPINS and finds himself SURROUNDED BY LIVING STATUES. They are CLOSING IN ON HIM.

GROVER

*Percy! Annabeth! We're in Medusa's
lair!*

ON PERCY

Standing in front of the coiled Cobra as he hears Grover's warning. Suddenly the Serpent's EYES OPEN, revealing that one of them is a GREEN PEARL.

The Cobra STRIKES at Percy. He ROLLS AWAY just in the nick of time. Percy WHIPS out his pen, CLICKS IT. The pen transforms into RIPTIDE...

ON ANNABETH

The Hysterical Woman LEADS Annabeth through the statue maze.

HYSTERICAL WOMAN

*Have to... get out... before... she
finds us...*

Annabeth tries to break free, but the woman's grip is STRONG.

ON GROVER

The statues CLOSE IN. Grover RAISES his crutches like they're Chinese fighting sticks. He KICKS OFF his shoes, exposing his HOOVES.

GROVER

You ugly stiff want a fight?

Grover goes all Shaolin-Satyr on their stone asses. He WHACKS them with his crutches, KICKS them with his powerful hooves. ONE KICK and the statues CRUMBLE.

ON PERCY

The Cobra's tail WHIPS at him. Percy SLAMS into a group of statues, KNOCKS THEM OVER like bowling pins. Percy RISES UP. The Cobra STRIKES AGAIN. Percy DIVES out of the way...

...just as GROVER leaps into the action. The Cobra TURNS toward Grover. And in that instant, Percy HURLS his sword. Riptide FLIES THROUGH THE AIR and IMPALES the Cobra, right BELOW THE EYE.

The Cobra FALLS, CRUMBLING into a hundred pieces. The GREEN PEARL (the size of a golf ball) ROLLS to Percy's feet. He picks it up. Grover picks up the sword and it TURNS BACK to a pen. He HANDS IT to Percy, who is concerned, worried.

PERCY

Where's Annabeth?

ON ANNABETH

The Hysterical Woman continues to PULL Annabeth through the maze of statues. Annabeth finally STOPS the woman.

ANNABETH

Look! You've got to tell me what's going on! Who are we running from?!?

MEDUSA (O.S.)

Leaving so soon?

Annabeth turns to the direction of the VOICE. A WOMAN, dressed all in black, is standing there.

She is wearing a LONG BLACK GOWN, that covers everything but her hands. Her hair is wrapped in a BLACK TURBAN. She wears IMPENETRABLE BLACK SUNGLASSES. This is MEDUSA.

MEDUSA

Leaving so soon?

The Hysterical Woman SCREAMS. Annabeth BACKS AWAY. Medusa looks at Annabeth, sniffs the air around her.

MEDUSA

You have such beautiful gray eyes. I've only seen eyes like that once before...

Medusa slowly starts to UNWRAP her turban.

MEDUSA

...on the face of the bitch that did this to me.

As she unwraps her turban, we see the FACE of Medusa for the first time... greenish, cracked, distorted, and PULSATING. She removes the last of the turban, revealing the LIVING, HISSING SNAKES that are her hair. The snakes are SNAPPING at each other. ANGRY. Annabeth is FREAKED.

MEDUSA

The daughter of Athena here in my emporium. And my hair so unruly.

Medusa walks to the Coca-Cola cooler and OPENS IT. Medusa bends down, LOWERS her head into the cooler. When she pulls her head out, each of her hair-snakes has a MOUSE in its mouth, swallowing them. It's a HORRIFIC SIGHT. This causes the snakes to CALM down slightly, stop fighting each other.

Medusa approaches the girls. Annabeth recoils in horror as the snakes SNAP at her. Medusa LOWERS her sunglasses...

MEDUSA

I've seen your eyes. It's time for you to see mine.

She takes off her glasses, revealing her GLOWING YELLOW EYES. Annabeth quickly LOOKS AWAY. The Hysterical Woman CAN'T RESIST a peek. She looks and is HYPNOTIZED. As she stares into Medusa's eyes, she begins to TURN TO STONE. Her hand TURNS TO STONE, still holding Annabeth's arm. Annabeth shudders, CAN'T BREAK FREE from the cement grip.

Medusa MOVES her face to within inches of Annabeth's face. The snakes "FEEL" Annabeth's face, as if they were the fingers of a blind person. Annabeth keeps her EYES SEALED.

MEDUSA

What a wonderful addition you'll make to my collection. Or perhaps I'll send you back to Mom. One piece at a time.

EXT. STATUE MAZE - DAY

Percy and Grover WATCH from the cover of the statues.

PERCY

How are we supposed to fight something we can't look at?

GROVER

You can look at her reflection. In a mirror or something.

Grover pulls an iTOUCH from his pocket, holds it up. Medusa is visible in the REFLECTIVE BACK. Percy GRABS it.

PERCY

You get Annabeth while I distract Medusa.

Percy sighs, SNEAKS OFF, iTouch in one hand, the pen in the other. He DUCKS behind a large statue, holds out the iTouch to get a VIEW of Medusa, who is still in Annabeth's face.

MEDUSA

Sooner or later you *will* open those big grey eyes. The temptation to look is too hard to resist.

PERCY (O.S.)

I could resist your ugly-ass face for a looooong time.

Medusa SPINS around, hisses.

MEDUSA

Who is that!? Who's there!?

Medusa WALKS to the edge of the statue maze. She looks around, SNIFFS the air. Percy MOVES SWIFTLY from statue to statue, keeping a view of Medusa in his iTouch mirror.

MEDUSA

I can smell you, Demigod. Come out and I may let you live.

Medusa WALKS into the statue maze. Seconds later, Grover RUNS OUT, to Annabeth. He WHISPERS to her.

GROVER

You can open your eyes. It's me, Grover.

ANNABETH
(opens her eyes)
Grover! Thank Gods. Auntie Em is--

Grover SLAMS HIS CRUTCH INTO the arm of the Hysterical Woman statue. It CRUMBLES, releasing Annabeth.

GROVER
Medusa. We know.

INT. STATUE MAZE - DAY

Medusa RACES through the maze, honing in on Percy. Even the snakes are SEARCHING, LOOKING AROUND. But Percy RUNS AHEAD, watching her every move in his iTouch's reflective surface.

MEDUSA
Who are you? Why are you here?

PERCY
The name is Percy Jackson...

He stealthily DUCKS to another position. Medusa FOLLOWS.

PERCY
Son of Poseidon.

As Medusa gets CLOSER and CLOSER, Percy grips his PEN.

MEDUSA
So it is true. The mighty Poseidon has a child.

Percy DOESN'T RESPOND. Medusa is TOO CLOSE. A few more steps and she'll be in STRIKING DISTANCE.

MEDUSA
You can't hide for long, Lightning Thief.
These statues are not just my victims...

She lets out a LOUD, TERRIFYING HISSSSSSSS.

MEDUSA
They are my *slaves*.

The statues near Percy COME TO LIFE, GRAB HIM. The iTouch FALLS to the ground.

Medusa STEPS forward, gets RIGHT IN Percy's face. He CLOSES his eyes. The snakes are all posed to STRIKE at once.

MEDUSA
I'll give you a choice. Give me the lightning bolt... Or die by the poison fangs of my serpents...

A CAR HORN BLARES! Medusa LOOKS UP, sees...

Her rusted PICK-UP TRUCK, CRASHING through the path of statues, HEADING DOWN THE PATH, toward them. GROVER is at the wheel, ANNABETH is beside him. Both are BLINDFOLDED.

Percy uses the distraction to KICK Medusa away. He CLICKS the pen, turns it INTO THE SWORD and BREAKS FREE from the statue, just as...

...the PICK-UP PLOWS into the statue maze. Statues TUMBLE and CRUMBLE. As the dust clears, Medusa LOOKS AROUND angrily. She sees NO SIGN of Percy. She sees the iTouch, lying in the rubble. Medusa PICKS IT UP. She turns it around to the SHINY SIDE. She sees PERCY'S REFLECTION. He's STANDING RIGHT BEHIND HER.

PERCY

Add this to your playlist.

Percy SWINGS THE SWORD. WHACK! Medusa's head GOES FLYING. It HITS the windshield of the truck and FALLS to the ground.

Grover and Annabeth GET OUT of the truck, TAKE OFF their blindfolds. Percy joins them and they see the HAIR-SNAKES DRAGGING Medusa's HEAD away, across the ground.

GROVER

That's something you don't see every day.

ANNABETH

We should take it with us.

PERCY

The head?! You're kidding.

ANNABETH

Her eyes still work, dead or alive. Never know when something like that might come in handy.

PERCY

(nods, to Grover)
Gimmee' your jacket.

GROVER

What?

PERCY

Your jacket. We need something to wrap it in. At least until we can get an ice bucket.

Grover reluctantly gives Percy his jacket. Percy grabs the head, WRAPS IT UP. Percy TOSSES the head back to Grover, who FUMBLES IT like a hot potato and TOSSES it to Annabeth.

She **TOSSES IT** into the back of the truck where it lands with a **SQUISHY THUD**. Percy holds up the **PEARL** for all to see.

PERCY
One down, two to go.

INT. AUNTIE EM'S - OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Percy opens the cash register, takes the cash and **GOLD DRACHMAS**.

EXT. DESERTED HIGHWAY - DAY

Medusa's **TRUCK** peels out onto the highway.

INT. TRUCK - FRONT SEAT - DAY

Grover **DRIVES**. Percy and Annabeth are in front with him. Percy **STUDIES** the **MAP**. Annabeth holds the green pearl up to the light.

ANNABETH
You think Luke could've warned us that Medusa was guarding this...

PERCY
Maybe he didn't know.

GROVER
(glances to Percy)
Where's the next location?

On the map, the second address **APPEARS...**

CENTENNIAL PARK. NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE.

PERCY
Nashville.

Grover **NODS**, **FLOORS** the gas. The Shocking Pink's "**VENUS**" **BLASTS** from the radio. **DISSOLVE TO:**

INT. TRUCK - LATER - NIGHT

Annabeth and Percy are fast asleep (her head is on his shoulder). Grover's head is bobbing as he fights off sleep. The pick-up **GLIDES** into the on-coming lane of traffic. **HEADLIGHTS** shine on them and a car **HOOOOONKS!**

Grover jerks awake, sees the oncoming car, **SCREAMS**, and **SWERVES BACK** into the right lane. Percy and Annabeth **JOLT AWAKE** as the pick-up **FISHTAILS** in the shoulder, then gets back on the road. Grover is **STARTLED**, **FREAKED**.

PERCY
We should stop for the night.

EXT. MOTEL 6 - NIGHT

Somewhere on the I-70 WEST heading toward Missouri. The Motel is located next to an INTERSTATE EXIT. The VACANCY LIGHT IS ON. The Pick-Up truck PULLS into the parking lot.

INT. MOTEL 6 OFFICE - LOBBY - NIGHT

A cramped, dusty reception area. The MANAGER, a scrawny 74 year old, sits behind the desk. Grover, wearing his handicap disguise, enters with Percy and Annabeth.

PERCY

We need a room.

MANAGER

You got an I.D.?

The manager stares them down SUSPICIOUSLY. Percy takes out a wad of cash, peels off five twenties. The Manager grabs a bill, holds it up, looks at it, then looks at Percy.

MANAGER

The spittin' image.

INT. MOTEL 6 ROOM - NIGHT

Percy opens the door. They enter the small, MUSTY old room. There is one QUEEN bed. Grover's pockets are packed with countless vending machine SNACKS.

ANNABETH

Only one bed.

GROVER

I'll sleep in the chair.

Grover dumps out the pile of snacks onto the bed. He PLOPS down in the chair, clicks on the TV and starts eating a Snickers' Bar, wrapper and all. Grover goes to the ADULT MOVIE PAY CHANNELS and makes a selection. Annabeth GRABS the remote and TURNS OFF the TV. Grover GLARES at her.

GROVER

What?! I can't watch a movie?!

Percy unwraps a Snickers, sits on the bed, looks to Annabeth.

PERCY

Pretty big bed. Maybe we could both--

She throws a PILLOW at him.

ANNABETH

Floor or bathtub. Your call.

PERCY
 (sighs, stands)
 I'll get some ice.

INT. MOTEL 6 - BEDROOM BATHROOM - LATER - NIGHT

Percy fills the sink with ICE and places Medusa's head in it. He has DUCT-TAPED HER EYES SHUT, so there is no danger of stoning themselves. Percy and Annabeth (she's wearing cotton boxers and a T-shirt, ready for bed) both grimace at the head, its skin BLUISH, surrounded with FLOPPY DEAD SNAKES.

GROVER (O.S.)
 Percy! Get in here!

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Percy and Annabeth hurriedly enter. Grover, covered in crumbs, surrounded by half eaten junk food, finishes chugging a COKE, then starts CHEWING ON THE CAN. He looks at Percy.

GROVER
 You're on TV.

ON THE TV SCREEN: a NEWS ANCHOR sits at a desk, a school yearbook photo of PERCY is on the screen behind her.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)
 ...and still no word on the disappearance of seventeen-year old Percy Jackson and his mother Sally. Gabe Ugliano, Sally's husband, maintains that the 17 year old Percy is behind the disappearance.

Cut to: GABE, standing in front of his garage, being interviewed by a REPORTER.

GABE (ON TV)
 Kid's been in trouble his whole life.
 A real loser.

Percy watches the screen. Stoic. Annabeth looks at him sympathetically.

GABE (ON TV)
 I mean... What kind of deranged person kidnaps his own mother?

REPORTER (ON TV)
 Mr. Ugliano is offering a cash reward for any information on the whereabouts of his wife, son--

GABE (ON TV)
 Step-son.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Stepson.

GABE (ON TV)

Kid's no blood relation to me.

Percy looks away. Grover tries to lighten the situation.

GROVER

Cool. You're a fugitive.

ANNABETH

This is going to complicate things.

Percy doesn't respond. He stands, exits, SHUTTING the door behind him. Annabeth and Grover exchange a CONCERNED look.

EXT. MOTEL 6 - POOL - NIGHT

Percy SWIMS the length of the pool underwater, purging his emotions. When he surfaces, Annabeth is standing there.

ANNABETH

Nice work today, saving us from Medusa... Thanks.

(extends her hand)

Friends?

Percy reaches up... and pulls Annabeth into the pool.

PERCY

Mess with the son of Poseidon...
you're gonna get wet.

Annabeth splashes frantically, like she's drowning.

ANNABETH

Can't... swim...

Percy panics, reaches for her...and she leaps up and shoves his head under the water. When he surfaces, she's LAUGHING.

ANNABETH

Mess with the daughter of Athena...
you're gonna' get outsmarted every time.

PERCY

Then I'm glad you're on my side.

They exchange a warm smile.

PERCY

So... Why do our parents hate each other?

ANNABETH

They both wanted to be Patron God of Athens. The people chose Athena. Poseidon was insulted. He cursed the city so they would never have enough water. Our parents have hated each other ever since.

PERCY

My old man sounds like a bigger jerk than my Stepfather.

ANNABETH

I doubt that. Besides, that's the *historical* version... I think there was another reason your Father got so angry at my Mom...

PERCY

Why's that?

ANNABETH

He had a huge crush on her. And she blew him off.

PERCY

How do you know it wasn't the other way around?

ANNABETH

You haven't met my Mom.

PERCY

What's she like?

ANNABETH

Intense. Always busy. The rare time we spend together, she criticizes everything I do, points out all my weaknesses... She says it's to make me stronger and wiser. But it only pisses me off.

(rolls her eyes, smiles)

She'd be furious if she knew I was helping you.

PERCY

(playfully, a touch serious)

So that's why you came... rebelling against Mommy... You want her to notice you, see how tough you are...

ANNABETH

Maybe. A little. But I have other reasons too.

They look deep into each other's eyes, intense attraction...

PERCY

Like what?

They slowly lean into each other, lips getting closer...

ANNABETH

Like...

Their lips are almost touching. Their kiss is INTERRUPTED by... A FLASHLIGHT BEAM, shining on them.

MANAGER

What's goin' on here?

PERCY/ANNABETH

We're... just talking.

MANAGER

No funny business in the pool. Get Out.

Percy and Annabeth climb out, their moment gone. The manager walks away. The two share an awkward beat of silence.

PERCY

I'm... I'm gonna' chill out here for a while. You can stay if you--

ANNABETH

Actually, I'm pretty tired. I think I'll call it a night. Goodnight, Percy.

She gives him a peck on the cheek, walks away to the room. Percy sighs. FRUSTRATED.

EXT. MOTEL 6 POOL - THE FOLLOWING MORNING - DAWN

Percy is ASLEEP. At the BOTTOM OF THE POOL. He opens his eyes, SWIMS to the surface and gets out.

EXT. MOTEL 6 OFFICE - DAWN

The Manager pours himself a CUP OF COFFEE, accidentally spills some on the desk. He grabs a USA TODAY newspaper to sop up the mess. Percy's PHOTO is on the front page. The headline: "TEEN BOY STILL MISSING; WANTED FOR QUESTIONING." He RECOGNIZES Percy, picks up the paper, examines it.

MANAGER

The spittin' image.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Annabeth is in bed, waking up. Grover walks out of the bathroom holding the MEDUSA HEAD by the snake-hair.

GROVER

Alright. Who put Medusa's head in the sink?

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The Manager is peaking in through a gap between the curtains. He sees Grover HOLDING up the SEVERED MEDUSA HEAD. The Manager gags, holds back vomit. Terrified, he backs away from the window... and BUMPS right into... Percy.

PERCY

Looking for something?

The Manager, petrified, tries to speak.

MANAGER

You... you... killed her... You killed your own mother.

Percy, confused, sees the USA TODAY clutched in the Manager's hand. Percy sees his photo on the front page, looks to the window, sees Grover, inside the room, holding Medusa's head. The Manager pulls out a PISTOL, aims at Percy.

MANAGER

Murderer!

PERCY

No, I'm not... It's not what you think...

The Manager BACKS AWAY, still holding the gun on Percy. Percy steps forward, trying to explain.

PERCY

You got it all wrong...

The Manager CLICKS the pistol. READY TO SHOOT. Percy closes his eyes, CONCENTRATES. The pool's water RIPPLES. A HUGE WAVE erupts over the side of the pool. The Manager LOOKS UP, sees the wave RISE over the pool. It ENGULFS the Manager and SWEEPS him down the street. Percy RACES BACK to the room.

PERCY

Guys! We're checking out!

EXT. THE HEARTLAND OF AMERICA - DAY

The Pick-up CRUISES on a two-lane blacktop highway. The weather is getting more OMINOUS. Dark CLOUDS. Heavy WINDS.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

Everyone is quiet, reflective. Annabeth is ASLEEP between Grover and Percy, her head on Percy's shoulder. He's looking out the window, watching the landscape pass before his eyes.

Percy looks to Annabeth, resting peacefully on his shoulder. A small SMILE appears on Percy's face.

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - THE FOLLOWING MORNING

The pick-up passes a sign that reads: WELCOME TO NASHVILLE. ATHENS OF THE SOUTH!

EXT. NASHVILLE - CENTENNIAL PARK - DAY

The pick-up truck pulls up. Percy, Grover and Annabeth step out. Percy wears sunglasses and a baseball cap, pulled down to conceal his identity. CAMERA PULLS BACK. We are in the middle of a LARGE PARK, crowded with people. Percy, Grover and Annabeth walk through the park, passing families on PICNICS, JOGGERS, STREET PERFORMERS, to stand before...

THE PARTHENON.

An exact DUPLICATE of the ancient Greek architecture, directly in the middle of a modern Nashville park. The juxtaposition of past and present is STRIKING. Percy, Grover and Annabeth examine the map, look up at the Parthenon.

GROVER

The second pearl. It's in there.
Somewhere.

ANNABETH

Wish Luke's map had been a little more specific than "Parthenon".

INT. NASHVILLE PARTHENON - DAY

Filled with TOURISTS. Percy, Grover and Annabeth ENTER. The space is surrounded by imposing columns, housing a 41 FOOT STATUE of the Goddess ATHENA. It's as if they've stepped back in time 4000 years. Annabeth, slightly moved, looks at the statue. Percy notices the name ATHENA on the base of the statue, turns to Annabeth...

PERCY

Your Mom?

Annabeth nods.

PERCY

Does she really look like that?

ANNABETH

Slight resemblance.

GROVER

Nice rack.

ANNABETH

Excuse me?!

GROVER

Nothing. Hormones. Sorry.

Percy's eyes WIDEN. He sees something OFFSCREEN.

PERCY

Up there.

Percy points to the TOP of the statue. Grover and Annabeth look up. The SECOND GREEN PEARL is embedded in the middle of Athena's crown, surrounded by rare, colorful JEWELS.

GROVER

Too easy.

ANNABETH

Not really. It's 40 feet in the air. The place is filled with tourists and security guards. Are we supposed to just jump up and grab it?

Long pause. Percy smiles. AN IDEA.

PERCY

Maybe.

CLOSE-UP: A SHOE BOX.

Percy's hands come into frame and open the box lid. Inside, are the WINGED SHOES, given to Percy from Luke. CAMERA PULLS BACK. The three of them sit at a PICNIC TABLE in the park. Percy PICKS UP the winged shoes, examines them.

PERCY

Luke gave me these for a reason.
Tonight, after closing hours...
I'll sneak in.

EXT. PARTHENON - LATER - NIGHT

CLOSED for the evening. The surrounding park is DESERTED, save for ONE SECURITY GUARD, who sits in a small booth, several feet from the Parthenon entrance. The guard is an acne faced, gawky 23 YEAR OLD REDNECK.

HIDING in a tall section of bushes, Percy, Annabeth and Grover keep watch on the Parthenon. Percy takes off his SNEAKERS, replaces them with the WINGED SHOES. He stands, SHUFFLES, like a RUNNER preparing for a marathon. He looks at Grover and Annabeth.

PERCY

Any idea how these things work?

GROVER

You break into a run, build up speed...
Like a jet on a runway. But it takes
a bit of--

Percy RUNS FORWARD, through the parking lot. He's MOVING FAST. Suddenly, he begins to LIFT OFF... Like a JET... Percy is PROPELLED TEN, FIFTEEN FEET in the air... Then...

Percy FLIPS in mid-air. HEAD OVER HEELS. He FALLS STRAIGHT to the ground. He LANDS HARD. On his BACK. SMACK!

GROVER

--practice.

Annabeth and Grover RUN to Percy, who struggles to his feet, slightly SHAKEN. DAZED. The wind KNOCKED out of him.

PERCY

Okay, okay... I can do this...

EXT. PARTHENON - LATER - NIGHT

The GUARD sits in his booth, head buried in a copy of Car and Driver magazine. High ABOVE, out of the guard's view, the SILHOUETTE of Percy FLIES across the moonlit sky.

Percy SWERVES, BOUNCES... flying slightly ERRATICALLY. He's starting to GAIN CONTROL, maintain his BALANCE...staying IN THE AIR. Percy MOVES FAST.

Annabeth and Grover WATCH from the safety and cover of the BUSHES.

Percy FLIES toward the Parthenon, SOARS through the columns.

INT. PARTHENON - NIGHT

Percy FLIES inside, moving QUICKLY. He SOARS toward the STATUE OF ATHENA. Percy's flying is getting a bit more CONFIDENT, SMOOTH...

ANNABETH and GROVER watch from the bushes. NERVOUS. TENSE.

Percy FLIES directly toward Athena. He is MOVING FAST. He LOOKS DOWN at the shoes. A WORRIED LOOK covers his face.

Grover, concerned, TURNS to Annabeth.

GROVER

I forgot to teach him to slow down--

Percy CAN'T SLOW DOWN... INCHES from the ATHENA statue.

He CRASHES into the statue.

The statue TILTS... BEGINS TO FALL...

Percy FLIES BACK around, managing to STOP the statue from HITTING the floor. The statue TEETERS at a 45 degree angle.

Using all of his strength, Percy PUSHES the statue UPRIGHT... INTO PLACE. There is a small GRINDING SOUND as the statue FITS BACK onto its base.

The guard LOOKS UP for a moment. Did he HEAR something? The guard SHRUGS to himself, GOES BACK to reading his magazine.

Percy, SWEATING, NERVOUS... PERCHES on the statue's shoulder. Percy is TINY, compared to the large face of Athena, Mount Rushmore-like in its majestic grandeur.

Percy LOOKS UP, sees the green pearl, the centerpiece of Athena's crown. Percy REACHES UP... he can only TOUCH the bottom of the statue's ear lobe. Percy begins to CLIMB UP onto the statue's earrings, TOWARD the top of her head.

Annabeth and Grover watch in breathless ANTICIPATION.

Percy CLIMBS UPWARD. The statue's surface is SMOOTH... SLIPPERY... Percy's foot SLIPS...

He FALLS.

Percy SAVES himself, GRABBING onto Athena's CROWN.

Annabeth and Grover CATCH THEIR BREATH.

Percy gets his footing, begins to CLIMB to the top of Athena's crown. From here, Percy is able to REACH OUT and TOUCH the green pearl.

With some difficulty, Percy manages to REMOVE the pearl from the crown. He HOLDS it up, victoriously, for Annabeth and Grover to see.

ANNABETH

He did it.

GROVER

Not quite.

Grover points to the GUARD'S BOOTH. It's EMPTY.

Inside the Parthenon, Percy puts the green pearl into his pocket. He is about to FLY AWAY... Suddenly INTERRUPTED...

SECURITY GUARD

Get off the statue.

Percy looks down. The SECURITY GUARD stands below the statue. He holds a GUN, POINTED at Percy.

PERCY
Yes, sir.

SECURITY GUARD
(extends gun)
Now.

Percy CLIMBS DOWN the face of the statue. He LANDS on the floor, IN FRONT of the security guard. Percy RAISES his hands. The Security Guard GRINS.

SECURITY GUARD
You look familiar.

PERCY
No...

SECURITY GUARD
You're that kid. On the news. The one who killed his Mother.

PERCY
You're thinking of somebody else...

SECURITY GUARD
Naw... It's you. I remember the eyes.

ANNABETH (O.S.)
Drop your gun.

The Security Guard TURNS. Grover and Annabeth stand a few feet away. Annabeth is holding a BOW and ARROW, POINTED at the Security Guard, who chuckles.

SECURITY GUARD
You think an arrow's gonna' stop me?

ANNABETH
I'm an Olympian.

SECURITY GUARD
I know who you are, *daughter of Athena*.

Annabeth, Grover and Percy exchange a PUZZLED GLANCE. The Security Guard TURNS to Percy.

SECURITY GUARD
I've been expecting you, Percy Jackson.

PERCY
You know me?

SECURITY GUARD
Just give me the lightning bolt.
And I'll let you go.

PERCY
I don't have it.

SECURITY GUARD
(sighs)
I really hoped to avoid this...

The Security Guard takes a DEEP BREATH... Then EXHALES... His outer SKIN EXPLODES! SHOWERING the room with COUNTLESS FRAGMENTS.

Percy, Annabeth and Grover HIDE their eyes. PIECES of the Security Guard FLY BY THEM.

All that REMAINS of the security guard, is a thick, swirling, PUFF OF SMOKE, on the floor.

Percy, Annabeth and Grover slowly WALK to the smoke. They LOOK DOWN.

The smoke BEGINS TO CLEAR... REVEALING...

A REPTILIAN EYE.

More SMOKE CLEARS. TWO EYES appear... Followed by THREE, FOUR... SIX, SEVEN...

Percy, Annabeth and Grover STEP BACK.

FOURTEEN EYES are revealed... On SEVEN different heads. The heads are REPTILIAN. VICIOUS. SNARLING.

The heads RISE UP from the smoke, GROWING high above the kids' heads. The heads FULLY FORM into the GIANT, DRAGON-LIKE BODY of the seven headed...

GROVER
HYDRA!

Annabeth SHOOTS ARROWS at the Hydra. The stinging arrows only make the beast ANGRIER. Its monstrous heads SWOOP DOWN, jaws SNAPPING at Annabeth and Grover. They dive behind the STONE COLUMNS for cover, setting off the ALARM.

Percy REACHES into his backpack, pulls out Luke's SHIELD.

Percy LEAPS ONTO one of the Hydra-heads. It tries to SHAKE HIM OFF. The other Hydra-heads LURCH toward Percy, SNAPPING their fanged jaws. Percy TWISTS to avoid them. He REACHES into his pocket... removes his PEN and activates his SWORD.

Another Hydra-head SWOOPS toward Percy. He swings the sword and DECAPITATES the head. It SPEWS thick GREEN BLOOD. The other six heads SCREAM in PAIN.

Percy LEAPS onto another head, that THRASHES at him, RIPPING AWAY a piece of Percy's shoulder. Another head SLASHES Percy's thigh.

Another head goes for the jugular, moments before Percy manages to DECAPITATE IT.

ANNABETH

Percy! Stop! You're only making it worse!

PERCY

What are you talking about?!

ANNABETH

When you cut off one hydra head--

The TWO HEADLESS NECKS twist around as if they are staring at Percy.

ANNABETH

--Three grow back!

THREE MORE HEADS POP OUT of each of the necks! Now the Hydra is a BEAST WITH ELEVEN HEADS!

The heads SNAP at Percy, DRAWING MORE BLOOD. Percy LEAPS from one head... to another... to another and...gets HUNG UP by one of the fangs. It has RIPPED through his pant leg. Percy DANGLES helplessly, using his sword to keep the other heads at bay.

The Hydra-head FLIPS Percy up into its mouth. Percy is STUCK INSIDE the hydra's mouth. The beast BITES DOWN. Percy EXTENDS his shield. The hydra's FANGS strike down on the shield, LOCKING the creature's mouth OPEN. SAVING Percy. For a MOMENT. But Percy is TRAPPED, his shirt CAUGHT on the hydra's fangs.

Annabeth FIRES MORE ARROWS at the heads, annoying and distracting them.

Percy CAN'T BREAK FREE. Luke's shield is BENDING... ABOUT TO SNAP.

The hydra fangs are ONLY INCHES from Percy's midsection. He's about to be BITTEN IN TWO.

Annabeth continues to FIRE ARROWS. She CALLS to Grover.

ANNABETH

Grover! Do something!

Grover LOOKS AROUND for some sort of WEAPON...

He spots Percy's BACKPACK. An IDEA.

Percy USES all of his strength to HOLD OPEN the Hydra mouth.
But the creature is TOO STRONG.

The hydra's MOUTH STARTS TO CLOSE... Its TEETH INCHES from
penetrating Percy's torso...

GROVER (O.S.)
GUYS! DON'T LOOK BACK!

Grover stands BEHIND them. He's UNWRAPPED the Medusa head.
He EXTENDS it forward. TOWARD the Hydra.

Grover EXTENDS the Medusa head and RIPS THE TAPE OFF of
Medusa's eyes... FACING the hydra...

Hydra's eyes LOCK with Medusa's.

The Hydra TURNS TO STONE.

Annabeth's final arrows BOUNCE OFF the Hydra's stone body.

Percy KNOCKS OUT some of the hydra's stone teeth, to FREE
HIMSELF from the beast's mouth. Percy grabs Luke's BENT
SHIELD and LEAPS onto the stone Hydra neck. Percy SLIDES
DOWN the neck, to the ground.

Grover PUTS the tape back OVER Medusa's eyes, PLACES her head
back into the backpack, looks at Annabeth.

GROVER
You were right. She did come in handy.

They turn, look back at the now STONE HYDRA. It FITS in
quite nicely with the Parthenon's architecture. Percy
removes the GREEN PEARL from his pocket.

PERCY
Two down, one to go.

Annabeth notices the burglar alarm BLARING from inside.

ANNABETH
Let's get back to the truck...

They hurriedly EXIT.

EXT. PARTHENON - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Percy, Annabeth and Grover RUN to their truck. They are
INTERRUPTED by a sound.

POLICE CAPTAIN (O.S.)
 Raise your hands. Above your heads.

They turn. THREE POLICE CARS SURROUND them. COPS AIM their pistols at the kids.

Percy, Annabeth and Grover RAISE their hands. Suddenly, there is a FAINT, DISTANT SOUND of a POWERFUL ENGINE. It grows LOUDER... LOUDER...

A BLACK HUMVEE barrels through the crowd, SMASHES through police cars, and SKIDS to a STOP in front of the kids. The license plate reads: "WARMNGR".

The COPS FIRE their guns. The DRIVER rolls down his window. (think BRUCE WILLIS). He is dressed in LEATHER, adorned with MILITARY MEDALS from various eras. His face is angular, hard, with a strong jaw. His head is SHAVED. He wears a soul patch. This is ARES, GOD OF WAR. He lowers his aviator sunglasses, grins at Percy.

ARES
 Your ride's here.

ANNABETH
 Ares?

PERCY
The God of War?!?

As bullets FLY around them, Grover SHOUTS.

GROVER
 I think we should get in.

INT. HUMVEE - NIGHT

The kids JUMP in. Ares throws it into gear, lets out a WAR WHOOP and drives straight at the POLICE LINE. They continue to FIRE on the Humvee. Bullets BOUNCE OFF the windows.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Ares PLOWS right through their barricade, and OUT OF THE PARK. POLICE CARS CHASE after the Humvee.

INT. HUMVEE - NIGHT

Ares CACKLES wildly, loves the chase.

ANNABETH
 What are you doing here?

ARES
 Saving your ass.

EXT. NASHVILLE CITY STREETS - NIGHT

POLICE CARS are in pursuit of the Humvee. Ares takes corners so fast that the Humvee TIPS ON TWO WHEELS.

INT. HUMVEE - NIGHT

Percy, Grover, and Annabeth are FREAKED. SCARED.

GROVER
We're all gonna' die!

ARES
Casualties of war.

EXT. NASHVILLE STREETS - NIGHT

Police cars are now coming at the Humvee from all sides.

INT. HUMVEE - NIGHT

ARES
Time to go stealth.

Ares FLICKS a DASHBOARD SWITCH.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

The Humvee DISAPPEARS in the midst of the chase. It is now a SHIMMERING SHAPE, camouflaged from the human eye. The Humvee DRIVES OFF into the night. FREE.

EXT. CHUCK'S DINER - NIGHT

The Humvee pulls into Chuck's, a fifties style diner.

ARES (O.C.)
Anybody hungry? We got a long drive ahead of us.

Ares and the kids STEP OUT of the Humvee.

ANNABETH
They're gonna' be looking for this car. It's kinda'... unique...

Ares CLICKS the auto-lock on his key-chain. The Humvee TRANSFORMS, into a 1970's blue VW HIPPIE VAN.

ARES
Not any more.

INT. CHUCK'S DINER - DAY

A modest, family diner. The Turtles "Happy Together" plays on the JUKEBOX. Ares enters.

As he passes the jukebox, we hear the 45 record SCRATCH. The song CHANGES to Van Halen's "Runnin' With The Devil".

Ares STRUTS down the restaurant aisle. Percy, Annabeth, and Grover are behind him. Ares walks by each booth, his mere presence EVOKES CALAMITY and TENSION. As Ares passes, babies CRY, people start to ARGUE...

Ares sits in a BOOTH, at the back of the place. The kids JOIN HIM. With sudden TENSION in the air, the kids are fidgety, uncomfortable. The WAITRESS delivers the menus.

ARES

Thank you, ma'am. No menus. Four cheeseburgers. Rare.

ANNABETH

I'm a vegetar--

ARES

Four cheeseburgers. *Rare!*

The waitress nods, walks away.

ANNABETH

Why are you really here, Ares?

ARES

Chiron sent me.

ANNABETH

Why?

ARES

To bring you to Olympus.

PERCY

We'll get there. We got time.

ARES

Not much. You checked out the weather recently?...

The kids LOOK OUT the window. The sky above is filled with swiftly MOVING BLACK CLOUDS. OMINOUS. THREATENING.

ARES

Every day it gets worse. That means Zeus and Poseidon are gearin' up for battle. Summer solstice is only ten days from now. And if the bolt isn't returned to Zeus by then... It's war.

PERCY

I'm getting my Mom first.

ARES
Kinda' selfish, kid... Putting your
personal feelings over the fate of
civilization...

PERCY
Once Zeus finds out I'm not the
Lightning Thief, word will spread
fast. Then Hades will kill my Mother.

ARES
True...

PERCY
So I need to save her first, *then*
convince Zeus of my innocence.

ARES
Unfortunately, you don't have much choice
in the matter. You're my prisoner now.

The waitress ARRIVES with the burgers. Ares lifts the burger
bun, examines the beef. He SNAPS at the waitress.

ARES (CONT'D)
I said *RARE!*

WAITRESS
I'm sorry. I told them--

He SHOVES his plate into the waitress' stomach, nearly
KNOCKING the wind out of her. SCARED, she nods.

WAITRESS
I'll... get... another... one.

The other customers are STARING. Ares turns, GLARES at them.

ARES
*What are you looking at! Get back to
stuffin' your faces before I bash 'em in!*

The patrons do as they're told. Ares LOOKS BACK to Percy,
GRINS, as if nothing happened, speaks calmly.

ARES
So if you aren't the Lightning Thief...
Who is?...

GROVER
Hades?

ARES
No way.

GROVER

If Hades possesses the bolt *and* the son of Poseidon, he has all the power and leverage he needs to take over Olympus. I'll bet he's using Percy's Mom to lure him into a trap.

ARES

Hades isn't that bright. No... whoever took the bolt would be much more clever... someone who would want to start a war of the Gods...

The kids look at Ares, accusingly.

ARES (CONT'D)

Oh... Because I'm the God of War, I took it? *WRONG!* My business is all down here, on earth. And if you haven't noticed... it's booming right now.

ANNABETH

Then who else would steal it?

ARES

Someone real clever... A master strategist...

(turns to Annabeth)

Like Athena.

ANNABETH

My Mom?

Grover and Percy turn to Annabeth.

ANNABETH (CONT'D)

You think my mom is the thief!?

ARES

Mother, daughter, all the same. Maybe the real question is... why are you here? Grover is Percy's protector. But why did you come along? To keep an eye on these two? To get rid of all the loose ends?...

ANNABETH

(furious, passionate)

My mom doesn't start wars.

ARES

First time for everything.

The burly, badass, muscular owner, CHUCK, covered with tattoos, wearing a stained apron, drops the new burger plate in front of Ares. Chuck LEANS INTO into Ares' face.

CHUCK

Next time you yell at my waitress and berate my customers, you're gonna' be wearin' your food. Got that, Rambo?

ARES

(calm)

You're right. I'm sorry. That was uncalled for

Then... WHACK! WHACK! In two quick PUNCHES, Ares SENDS Chuck falling to the floor, bleeding, writhing in PAIN.

Ares unfolds some BILLS and drops them on the table. He grabs his burger, heads for the door, SHOVING the kids ahead.

EXT. CHUCK'S DINER - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Ares PUSHES the kids into the back of the van. Percy stops, desperate, LOOKS at Ares.

PERCY

Ares, please... Let me go... I gotta' try and save my Mom... It's my last chance...

ARES

Sorry, kid. Can't do it.

He SHOVES Percy into the car. Ares JUMPS into the driver's seat, starts the van and SPEEDS OUT of the parking lot. Percy stares out the window, DEPRESSED.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Ares DRIVES. Percy is SLUMPED forward, near tears. All of his hope... GONE. Annabeth exchanges a CONCERNED LOOK with Grover. She pauses, gets an idea... LEANS FORWARD, to Ares.

ANNABETH

Ares...

ARES

What?

ANNABETH

Did you ever stop and think about a war between the Gods?... It *would* be spectacular... The ultimate battle...

ARES

(pondering)

Yeah...

ANNABETH

Haven't you been waiting years for something like this?

ARES
 (thinking, nods)
 Centuries.

ANNABETH
 Exactly. And look at us? Have you
 ever seen three such pathetic losers?

Ares glances to the rearview mirror.

ANNABETH
 Do we really look like we can defeat
 Hades? I'm betting that we get killed
 on our little suicide mission. I'm
 betting we never even make it to Olympus,
 that Zeus *never* gets his bolt. And you
 know what that means...

ARES
 (softly, eyes light)
 War.

ANNABETH
 But if you take us to Olympus... Well,
 there won't be a war. Only...

ARES
 (sadly, softly)
 Peace.

Ares' eyes GLAZE OVER over.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - LATER - NIGHT

Ares' van pulls up to the side of the tracks, located on a
 deserted COUNTRY ROAD. The back door SLIDES OPEN. Percy,
 Annabeth and Grover GET OUT. Ares rolls down his window.

ARES
 I'll tell Chiron I couldn't find you.

Percy nods, exchanges a hopeful look with Annabeth.

ARES
 I'd wish you good luck... But your
 survival ain't exactly in my best
 interest...

Ares CLOSES the window, DRIVES OFF. The van VANISHES in a
 ball of LIGHT and a SONIC BOOM. Grover WATCHES.

GROVER
 Sweet guy.

Percy EMBRACES Annabeth.

PERCY
Just like your Mom. A master strategist.
(sincere, passionate)
Thank you so much.

They lean forward, looks as if they're about to kiss...
Grover CLEARS HIS THROAT.

GROVER
Okay. Which way to the next pearl?

Percy OPENS the map. The third location GLOWS:

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA. LOTUS LAND CASINO.

In the distance, we hear a TRAIN WHISTLE. Percy takes off along the railroad tracks, motions to Annabeth and Grover.

PERCY
We got ten days to save my Mom.
And the world. C'mon!

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - LATER - NIGHT

Percy, Annabeth and Grover hurry along the tracks. A TRAIN pulling BOX CARS rolls toward them. Percy CHECKS his map with a flashlight.

PERCY
This one's headed West.

Percy starts RUNNING toward it. Annabeth and Grover FOLLOW. They RUN alongside the train. Percy LEAPS into one of the box cars, reaches out his hand and PULLS Annabeth in.

PERCY
C'mon, Grover!

Grover RUNS ALONG the side of the train, plants his crutches like ski poles and LEAPS with a SINGLE BOUND. He FLIES RIGHT INTO the box car.

INT. TRAIN CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Grover LANDS. He gets to his feet. Percy and Annabeth are staring at something.

PERCY
We got company.

They are inside of a car filled with FARM ANIMALS. CHICKENS, COWS, GOATS...

INT. TRAIN CAR - LATER - NIGHT

A small FIRE burns in the middle of the box car. Grover, Percy and Annabeth are SEATED around it. The ANIMALS surround them.

ANNABETH
(knows what he's thinking)
Don't look at me like that.

GROVER
Like what?

ANNABETH
Like that.

GROVER
You're being paranoid.

ANNABETH
I know what you're thinking.

GROVER
No. Maybe. Okay. Crossed my mind.
For a second.

PERCY
What are you two talking about?

ANNABETH
(angry)
Grover thinks my Mom is the Lightning
Thief.

GROVER
No. Not totally. I mean, I wouldn't be
surprised. She does *hate* Percy's Dad.
And with a little help from you, she
could cause Poseidon great pain... by
hurting his son.

ANNABETH
(furious)
I wouldn't do anything to hurt Percy.

GROVER
You almost killed him back at the Camp.

ANNABETH
(getting upset)
That was before...

GROVER
Before what?

ANNABETH

Before I--

Annabeth can't answer, too filled with emotion. Her eyes fill with tears. She glances at Percy, hurries to the side of the train car, slides open the doors and CLIMBS OUTSIDE, ONTO THE EXTERIOR LADDER.

PERCY

Annabeth... Wait...

Annabeth CLIMBS onto the roof of the train car. Percy, ANNOYED, turns to Grover.

PERCY

Smooth.

GROVER

(shrugs)

Hey, I'm your protector. I'm not supposed to trust *anybody* who gets close to you. Even her.

PERCY

No wonder you have so much trouble with the opposite sex.

GROVER

(insulted, hurt)

Uncalled for. Totally uncalled for.

Percy turns, dashes outside and CLIMBS UP onto the boxcar roof. Grover STEAMS.

EXT. BOXCAR ROOF - NIGHT

A WARM, ROMANTIC NIGHT. Annabeth sits on the moving train roof, looking up at the CLEAR NIGHT SKY, FILLED WITH BRIGHT STARS. She is CRYING. Percy walks up, sits beside her.

PERCY

Hey.

A pause. She turns to him,. He WIPES a tear from her cheek.

ANNABETH

Grover's right. I really didn't like you at first. I was a little jealous... competitive... But that's different now...

Percy moves CLOSER to Annabeth, puts his arms around her.

ANNABETH

The last few days have been the most exciting time of my life... and it's...
 (tenderly)
 All because of you.

Their eyes LOCK. They share their FIRST KISS.

INT. BOXCAR - LATER - NIGHT

Grover, ALONE with the animals, tries to sleep on a pile of straw, covering himself with burlap sack. Grover stares ahead, his face a map of FRUSTRATION and LONELINESS. A GOAT saunters up, LICKS HIS FACE. Grover MUMBLES to himself.

GROVER

Percy's up there, probably hooking up with a beautiful girl. And I'm down here...
 (looks at the goat)
 ...with you.

The goat continues to lick Grover's face. Grover smiles, WARMING UP to the goat's affection. Grover GIGGLES.

GROVER

Stop it.

He looks up at the goat, ponders...

GROVER

Ya' know... In this light, at just the right angle... you're sorta' cute...

The goat KICKS Grover in the head and WALKS AWAY. Grover sits up. Angry. Insulted.

GROVER

What?! It's perfectly natural for me to have feelings for you. Well...
 (points to lower half)
 ...*half* of me.

The goat bleats. Grover PULLS the burlap sack over his head.

GROVER

Good night!

EXT. DESERT - TRAIN STATION - THE NEXT MORNING - DAY

The train PULLS into an old, ancient train station, alone in the middle of the desert. There's nothing around for miles and miles, only DRY BARREN LAND and ROCKY PLATEAUS. The train COMES TO A STOP. On top of the boxcar, Annabeth lies in Percy's arms. They are ASLEEP.

Grover's head POPS up over the side of the boxcar top.

GROVER
Hey. Romeo and Juliet.

Percy and Annabeth wake up.

GROVER
End of the line.

Percy and Annabeth CLIMB DOWN to the train platform. Grover gives them their backpacks.

PERCY
How far to Las Vegas?

GROVER
(checks map)
A long way.

ANNABETH
We can hitchhike.

Percy looks to the edge of the platform. A SHERIFF'S CAR is parked here.

PERCY
Roads aren't safe.

ANNABETH
What are we supposed to do?

Percy slings his backpack over his shoulder and grabs the shield. He takes off across the bleak DESERT TERRAIN.

GROVER
You're gonna' walk all the way to Vegas!?

Percy IGNORE him, keeps walking. Annabeth grabs her backpack, follows after Percy. Grover sighs, FOLLOWS.

EXT. DESERT - SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY

Percy, Grover, and Annabeth march across the scorching, shimmering desert landscape like young T.E. Lawrences. As the SUN beats down on them, they get SLOWER... DIRTIER... and more PARCHED. They have torn pieces of clothing wrapped around their heads for protection. Annabeth glares up at the HOT SUN, sees BUZZARDS circling.

EXT. DESERT - LATER - DUSK

The sun is SETTING. Covered in dust, grime and sweat, Percy, Annabeth and Grover have stopped to rest in the shade of a ROCKY MESA. Annabeth holds an empty water bottle over her mouth, hoping for one more drop. She tosses it away.

ANNABETH

Empty.

They continue walking. EXHAUSTED. DEFEATED. DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - LATER - NIGHT

It is BITTERLY COLD. Percy, Annabeth and Grover are hungry, cold, filled with a sense of impending doom. They are HOVERED around a dying fire. Percy's arms are wrapped around Annabeth, who has her arms wrapped around Grover. The 3 of them are SHIVERING.

GROVER

We're still a long way from Vegas...
Without water, food... We're gonna'
die out here...

The kids exchange WORRIED looks. DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - THE NEXT MORNING - SUNRISE

The kids are ASLEEP. Something APPROACHES. LARGE, MOVING SHADOWS fall over them. We hear SNORTING, the sound of HOOVES...

Percy, Annabeth and Grover WAKE. They look up and see...

A WILD HORSE.

The animal STARES down at them. The kids LEAP up, a little freaked. There are THREE WILD HORSES surrounding them.

Percy, Grover and Annabeth stand. The horses are loaded with BASKETS OF FRESH FRUIT, VEGETABLES and canteens of WATER. Grover immediately runs to the basket, begins to STUFF his face with the food.

One of the horses makes a motion, LOWERS its head, beckoning Percy. The horse BENDS one leg and KNEELS in front of Percy.

ANNABETH

He wants you to get on.
(smiles)
Guess it pays to have a Dad who's
God of the horses.

Percy smiles, grabs his BACKPACK and SHIELD. He CLIMBS onto the horse. Once Percy is on, the horse RISES. The other two horses KNEEL in front of Annabeth and Grover. They CLIMB ON.

EXT. DESERT VISTA - LATER - DAY

Percy, Annabeth and Grover RIDE the horses, across the rocky desert.

Percy and Annabeth are smiling, laughing, feeling free, ALIVE... leaving a trail of DUST. Grover is behind them, doing everything he can to HOLD ON.

EXT. DESERT'S EDGE - SUNSET

The horses are standing on a ROCKY PLATEAU. The kids are sitting on top of the horses, looking out over the glittering lights of LAS VEGAS. Percy checks his MAP. The sight of the final green pearl reads: Las Vegas... LOTUS LAND.

PERCY

Las Vegas. Last stop before hell.

As they ride down toward the city, we see DARK OMINOUS STORM CLOUDS churning in the distance, moving WESTWARD.

EXT. LAS VEGAS/LOTUS LAND - LATER - NIGHT

Percy, Grover, and Annabeth ride along the Vegas strip, on their horses. Shocked ONLOOKERS stare at these three kids on horseback. Up ahead, is LOTUS LAND, a glittery, glamorous, million-watt CASINO. It's designed as a huge NEON FLOWER, the petals LIGHTING UP and BLINKING.

Percy, Annabeth and Grover ARRIVE at the entrance. The horses KNEEL. The kids HOP OFF. Grover is covered in dust, walking bow legged, in tremendous PAIN.

GROVER

Goat on a horse. Ain't natural.

Countless Lotus Land VALETS descend upon them.

VALET

Welcome to Lotus Land.

The Valets take the horses. The kids ENTER.

INT. LOTUS LAND - NIGHT

Unlike any casino we've ever seen. A teenagers PARADISE. In addition to the regular slots and casino games, there are hundreds of VIDEO GAMES, everything from classic PAC-MAN to DANCE-DANCE REVOLUTION.

The place is filled with KIDS and TEENAGERS. NO PARENTS or ADULTS (save for employees). There's something odd about the kids... They are dressed in clothes and hairstyles from every decade, spanning the FIFTIES through the NINETIES. Percy, Annabeth, and Grover walk through the casino.

PERCY

Where would you hide a green pearl?

An eager, too friendly BELLHOP rushes up to them.

BELLHOP

Welcome to Lotus Land. Hope you've had a pleasant journey. Here's your room key.

PERCY

We're not staying. Just passing through.

BELLHOP

It's complimentary. Room 4001. Take the elevator to the top.

PERCY

No, really--

The PERSISTENT Bellhop hands them each a GREEN PLASTIC CARD.

BELLHOP

Your complimentary Lotus-Cash cards. Good for everything in the hotel and casino. Your expense accounts are unlimited and you never have to pay us back.

The Bellhop scurries away, kids exchange PUZZLED glances. Percy looks at the Green card, ANNOYED.

PERCY

Think the guy could take a hint--

A CLUB WAITRESS approaches, holding a tray of LOTUS FLOWERS.

CLUB WAITRESS

Flowers?

Percy takes one, SNIFFS it.

CLUB WAITRESS

They're edible.

Percy and Annabeth each EAT a flower. Very TASTY. Grover takes a handful and SHOVES them in his mouth, CHEWS.

GROVER

Delicious.

INT. ROOM 4001 - LATER - NIGHT

Percy, Annabeth, and Grover enter a PALATIAL SUITE. It has three separate bedrooms, a bar stocked with candy, soda, and chips. A huge plasma TV, sunken lounge area filled with pillows and beanbag chairs, a huge INDOOR SWIMMING POOL.

The kids are IMPRESSED. They immediately start checking out the pad. Grover hits the bar, opens the refrigerator. It is FILLED with food. The inside of the fridge appears to go on for ETERNITY...

INT. ROOM 4001 BEDROOM - NIGHT

Annabeth opens a CLOSET in one of the rooms. It is filled with the latest DESIGNER DRESSES and SHOES. A young girl's DREAM. Annabeth is amazed, takes out a dress, holds it against her body. She looks at shoes... STUNNED...

ANNABETH

They're all my size.

INT. SECOND BEDROOM - NIGHT

Percy is standing in front of another closet. It is filled with a variety of clothes, all his size: SUITS, TUXEDOS, JEANS, T-SHIRTS, NIKES... Percy smiles. Annabeth runs into Percy's room, followed by Grover.

ANNABETH

Let's go out tonight... have some fun.

PERCY

Wish we could. But we're on a time-sensitive mission. Remember?

ANNABETH

We are?... What mission?

Percy PAUSES, he has to think about it... He CAN'T RECALL.

PERCY

Good question. I can't *remember*.
Grover, why are we here?

GROVER

I don't know...
(shrugs)
To have fun?

PERCY

Right. Have fun. That's it. Okay.
So let's have some fun.

INT. LOTUS LAND - DANCE CLUB - LATER - NIGHT

A DISCO BALL spins. COLORED LIGHTS flash. DANCE MUSIC plays. DRY ICE MIST covers the floor. Percy, Annabeth, and Grover enter. They look incredibly STYLISH. Percy wears a sleek, stylish black tuxedo, Annabeth is in a gorgeous ballroom gown, Grover is in tails and a top hat.

A 70's Dance classic fills the disco. Percy EXTENDS his hand to Annabeth.

PERCY

May I have this dance?

They step on the dance floor, immediately find their groove.

A group of GORGEOUS WOMEN walk up to Grover, drag him onto the dance floor.

Percy and Annabeth look into each other's eyes, very much IN LOVE. They KISS.

ANNABETH

Let's stay here forever.

PERCY

Why not?

They kiss again. It is INTERRUPTED by the sounds of SHOUTING and APPLAUDING. They look up and see...

GROVER, in the middle of the dance floor. He is surrounded by kids, watching his manic, wildly energetic DANCE. The girls love him. During his dance, Grover RIPS OFF pants, exposing his goat lower half. Grover finishes with some show-stopping BREAK DANCE MOVES.

Percy and Annabeth laugh, look to each other and share another DEEP KISS. DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LOTUS LAND - MONTAGE - DAY/NIGHT

Percy, Annabeth, and Grover are having fun at Lotus Land. Percy and Annabeth are INSEPARABLE. They drive MINI-SPORTS CARS throughout the casino, play POKER and BLACKJACK, order a table full of DESSERTS at a restaurant.

Grover struts through the casino with a bevy of scantily clad BEAUTIES, gambling at each of the tables with them. He WINS EVERY GAME that he plays.

At one point, Percy and Annabeth pass a SEVENTIES KID playing a vintage PINBALL MACHINE. Percy accidentally BUMPS the kid.

SEVENTIES KID

Hey! You just cost me the high score.

PERCY

Sorry. My bad.

SEVENTIES KID

Your what?

Percy examines the kid, who is wearing striped bell-bottoms, a pristine STAR WARS T-shirt and a bushy seventies fro.

PERCY

How long have you been here?

SEVENTIES KID
Couple weeks. Groovy place.

PERCY
Groovy?... What year is it?

The Seventies kid pauses, has to THINK for a moment.

SEVENTIES KID
1977.

Percy is stunned, worried... He rubs his temples, hearing a DEEP VOICE inside his head...

VOICE (V.O.)
Percy... Wake up... Focus, focus...

Percy walks over to a mullet-haired EIGHTIES KID, wearing parachute pants and a red and black leather jacket. The kid is playing DONKEY KONG.

PERCY
Excuse me. What year is it!?

EIGHTIES KID
Check out my most excellent score.

Intense, Percy grabs the Eighties kid by the collar.

PERCY
What year?!

EIGHTIES KID
Relax, dude... It's 1985, not the end of the world.

Percy FREEZES, looks around at all of the kids. Every single one of them is stuck at a specific time, IN THE PAST. A VOICE in Percy's head ECHOES...

VOICE (V.O.)
Percy... You need to get outside...

PERCY
(to himself)
Something... isn't... right...

Percy shakes his head, like he's COMING OUT OF A TRANCE. He turns, standing beside a supersize ROULETTE WHEEL. He notices something. The ball in the wheel, is...

The *third* GREEN PEARL.

Percy stares at the pearl, trying to figure out why it means so much to him. The ancient CROUPIER gives Percy a menacing, suspicious look.

CROUPIER
Enjoying your stay?

PERCY
Fine. Thanks.

CROUPIER
Fine? Just... fine?

PERCY
I mean... excellent. Fantastic.
We want to stay forever.

Percy starts to BACK AWAY, but the Croupier GRABS him. Percy breaks free. The Croupier speaks into his EAR-MIC.

CROUPIER
Percy Jackson's awake.

Percy LOOKS at Annabeth...

PERCY
Go upstairs. I'll meet you there.

ANNABETH
What? But why--

PERCY
(desperate)
Please. Just *do it*.

Annabeth nods, hurries off.

Percy turns, sees a GROUP OF LOTUS EATERS heading toward him. Percy RUNS OFF, PUSHES his way through the crowd. He leaps across the gambling tables, makes it to the Roulette wheel and SNATCHES the THIRD GREEN PEARL.

He LEAPS OFF the table, runs to the glass elevators. The Lotus Eaters are in HOT PURSUIT. Percy gets in just BEFORE THE DOORS CLOSE.

INT. ROOM 4001 - MOMENTS LATER

Percy BARGES IN. Grover is surrounded by a pile of food wrappers, several YOUNG HOT WOMEN, playing a video-game. Annabeth is sipping a drink, munching on Lotus flowers. Percy is TENSE, URGENT.

PERCY
We have to go! Now!

GROVER
Chill. We'll go tomorrow.

ANNABETH

Or the next day.

Percy GRABS Annabeth and Grover and THROWS them both into the room's SWIMMING POOL. They POP UP out of the water. SHOCKED. AWAKE. ANGRY.

GROVER

Hey... Why'd you do that?!

PERCY

You both need to *wake up!* You're in some kind of trance... I was too... Now listen to me. *Focus.* We're *trapped.* In the Land of Lotus Eaters.

GROVER

Trapped? But we just got here last night...

ANNABETH

(coming out of it)

Lotus Eaters... Right... a cult that lives off of the Lotus flower. When you eat a flower, it induces the appearance of eternal youth and forgetfulness... makes you lose your desire to ever leave...

PERCY

And we gotta' leave *now.* Or we'll be stuck here *forever.*

They hurriedly pack up their gear. Percy gathers up his stuff, shoving it in his back pack. He grabs his pen and his shield. The kids HURRIEDLY EXIT. Grover blows ONE LAST KISS to the bevy of beauties.

INT. CASINO FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Percy, Grover and Annabeth RACE across the floor. Lotus-Eaters SWARM after them. Percy removes his pen, CLICKS IT. It becomes the SWORD!

Percy starts HACKING his way through the Lotus-Eaters. A YOUNG MAN in fifties clothes is hit with the sword. He suddenly AGES, turning to a withered OLD MAN before dropping to the floor.

Grover sees a NEW LOTUS ELAN CONVERTIBLE on a rotating platform. A sign reads, "*One Lucky Winner Drives Me Home.*"

GROVER

Wheels.

They RACE to the car, JUMP UP onto the platform. Percy FENDS OFF the Lotus-Eaters while Grover HOT WIRES the car.

It STARTS. Percy and Annabeth FALL into their seats as Grover FLOORS it. The car SAILS OFF the platform, through the casino, and CRASHES through the front door.

EXT. LOTUS LAND/LAS VEGAS - DAY

The car FLIES through the entrance and DRIVES OFF INTO THE NIGHT.

SEVERAL YOUNG LOTUS EATERS run outside. The moment they leave the casino, their bodies AGE SEVERAL YEARS. They WATCH Percy's car DRIVE AWAY. The Lotus Eaters TURN and GO BACK INSIDE. As they pass back through the casino entrance, their bodies RETURN to their YOUTHFUL STATE.

EXT. VEGAS STRIP - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

The sky is covered with DARK, CHURNING STORM CLOUDS. The wind is BLOWING FIERCELY, scattering DEBRIS. The Lotus Elan SPEEDS along the middle of the Vegas strip. A NEWSPAPER blows onto the windshield.

INT. LOTUS ELAN - DAY

Grover WEAVES in and out of traffic, trying to see as Annabeth grabs the NEWS PAPER. She LOOKS AT the date.

ANNABETH
It's June 20th.

Percy GRABS the paper, looks at it.

PERCY
We were in there a *week!*?

ANNABETH
Felt like a day.

GROVER
June 20th... That means... tomorrow is... the Summer Solstice.

ANNABETH
Actually midnight. *Tonight.*

GROVER
So how do we get to Hades?

Percy opens THE MAP, revealing the GLOWING LOCATION OF HADES. It reads:

LOS ANGELES. Beside it, is a sketch of THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN.

Grover SLAMS his foot on the gas. The Lotus SPEEDS down the strip... *OVER 100 MPH!*

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - LATER - DAY

Traffic is BUMPER-TO-BUMPER on the 110 north through downtown. In the midst of traffic, is the Lotus convertible.

INT. LOTUS ELAN - DAY

Percy, Grover and Annabeth are NERVOUS. WORRIED. Grover studies the map. The radio PLAYS.

RADIO NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Scientists are baffled by what now appears to be a single storm cloud that has expanded to cover the entire United States. Hurricanes are building in the gulf, savage waves along the country's coast lines are endangering levees...

ANNABETH

(worried, looking at the sky)
Zeus and Poseidon... Preparing for battle...

RADIO NEWSCASTER

In other news, wanted kidnapper and suspected terrorist, 17 year old Percy Jackson is still at large....

Grover TURNS OFF the radio. Annabeth rolls down the window, sees a clock on a building. It reads: 12:47 PM.

ANNABETH

Never thought I'd be late getting to hell because of traffic.

Percy pauses, something deep inside is TROUBLING HIM. An expression of DOUBT and WEAKNESS covers his face.

PERCY

Look, guys... Maybe it's time... time to stop.

ANNABETH

What?

PERCY

Ares was right. Maybe I am being selfish. I mean... we've got less than twelve hours to stop the war. We should go straight to Olympus.

ANNABETH

What about your Mom?

PERCY
 (defeated)
 We've done everything we can...

ANNABETH
 (snaps at him)
 Stop thinking like a mortal.

PERCY
 What?

ANNABETH
 (tough, passionate, strong)
 I didn't come all this way to quit. We can *do this*, Percy. We can *save* your Mom and *still* stop the war. But you can't stop believing in yourself. You've come too far. Get those weak human thoughts out of your head... and start acting like a Demigod.

Percy nods, he'll go forward. Grover checks the MAP.

GROVER
 We're almost there. There's our exit.

Outside, a green exit sign reads: "RIGHT LANE... HOLLYWOOD".

EXT. HOLLYWOOD SIGN - LATER - DAY

The world famous Hollywood sign. The Lotus Elan slides into a PARKING SPOT, several feet below the sign. Percy and the kids get out of the car, RUN UP THE STAIRS, toward the HOLLYWOOD SIGN. Percy checks his MAP, looks up...

PERCY'S POV

THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN. The words begin to re-arrange themselves. The "YWOOD" section of the sign FADES AWAY. The "O" morphs into an "E". The sign now reads: *HELL*.

ANNABETH
 You're sure the entrance is here?

PERCY
 Positive.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD SIGN - LATER - DAY

Percy, Grover, and Annabeth hurriedly CLIMB to an area directly below the sign. They are DWARFED by the letters. They look around, cautiously. On the lower half of the letter "H", there is a section of COLORFUL GRAFFITI, a mixture of street and gang symbols.

Percy looks closely at the graffiti. It's actually GREEK LETTERS. As he stares at them they take shape so that we recognize them:

PERCY

"Abandon all hope, ye who enter here."

Percy reaches out and GENTLY TOUCHES the "H" surface. There is a LOUD CREAKING SOUND. The "H" SPINS, like a REVOLVING DOOR, sending Percy, Annabeth and Grover INSIDE the sign.

INT. HOLLYWOOD SIGN - NIGHT

The revolving "H" STOPS, TRANSPORTING the kids into a cramped, dark room, CARVED into the grassy, muddy earth. Grover pulls out a pack of matches, LIGHTS ONE. This ILLUMINATES the three kids and the FACE of

VIRGIL.

He is tall, bone thin, with long, grey hair, piercing eyes, and a haunted, tragic expression. His skin is pale, with a blue tint. He is dressed in flowing DARK ROBES.

SURPRISED by Virgil's appearance, the kids JUMP BACK.

GROVER

The angel of death!

A tiny smile appears on Virgil's face.

VIRGIL

Nothing so sinister, I'm afraid. I'm Virgil. Guide of the underworld.

(looks at them)

The living are not permitted here.

PERCY

I need to see Hades.

VIRGIL

Die and come back.

Virgil turns, moving back into the DARKNESS.

PERCY

We'll pay you.

Virgil pauses, EXTENDS his hand. Grover puts all their cash in the palm. It instantly INCINERATES. Virgil TURNS AWAY.

PERCY

Wait...

Percy pulls out the GOLD DRACHMAS he stole from Medusa's emporium, DROPS them into Virgil's hand. Virgil examines the ancient drachmas and smiles.

Suddenly, the "H" SPINS AGAIN, REVOLVING Percy, Annabeth and Grover OUT OF THE ROOM...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD SIGN - DAY

The REVOLVING "H" stops. The kids are now BACK OUTSIDE.

GROVER
He tricked us.

ANNABETH
Not exactly--

They turn, now overlooking the UNDERWORLD, the dark, ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE of Los Angeles. The expansive view of Hollywood has changed dramatically, a POST-APOCALYPTIC vision of the sunny, green landscape.

Scattered FIRES RAGE throughout the hills. BLACK SMOKE rises from varied spots, SWIRLING into the BLOOD RED SKY. Homes and buildings are burnt out, smoking, VACANT. Cars BURN, many just skeletal FRAMES.

The streets of are filled with hundreds of SOULS OF THE DEPARTED. They are white, ZOMBIE-LIKE figures, wandering aimlessly through the city. The Souls are dressed in tattered, dirty clothes, like homeless spectres. The sound of their painful WAILING and MOANS echo through the air.

Virgil APPEARS, beside Percy, Grover and Annabeth, who stare in horror at the sight before them.

VIRGIL
Welcome to the underworld.

Virgil extends a TORCH.

VIRGIL
I'll take you to Hades.

EXT. UNDERWORLD STREETS - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Virgil leads the kids through the streets, making their way through BURNT OUT cars, carcasses of DEAD ANIMALS and crowds of WANDERING SOULS. Percy is ARMED with his shield and SWORD. Annabeth holds her BOW and ARROW. Grover clutches his DAGGER. As the kids PASS, the souls TOUCH them, GRAB their hands, PULL their hair...

VIRGIL

Souls of the recently departed, waiting to find out what level of the underworld they'll be sent to... They are harmless. When they sense a living person, they touch them... It's comforting, reminds them of life's warmth.

One of the souls CARESSES Grover's cheek. He is REVOLTED.

GROVER

Ewww... Sooo cold...

EXT. HADES MANSION - LATER - DAY

Virgil leads Annabeth, Percy and Grover to the entrance of Hades' home, a huge, ratty, dilapidated MANSION, surrounded by RUSTED IRON GATES. The facade is CRUMBLING, filled with CRACKS. Windows are BROKEN. Horrible sounds of SCREAMING and INHUMAN GROWLING echo from inside the mansion. Virgil removes a rusty RING OF KEYS, finds one and OPENS the gate.

VIRGIL

We'll find Hades inside.

The kids step through the gate. The Souls of the Departed try to follow, Virgil KEEPS them back, CLOSING the gates. Virgil leads Percy, Grover and Annabeth through the overgrown lawn, toward the FRONT DOOR. There is a GROWLING SOUND.

A few feet away, TWO HELLHOUNDS feast on the carcass of a DEAD ANIMAL. They LOOK UP, seeing Percy. The Hellhounds MOVE TOWARD Percy. He EXTENDS his sword. The hellhounds RETRACT, staying back, not taking their eyes off of the kids.

Virgil leads Percy, Annabeth and Grover onto the crumbling stone porch, toward the ROTTING FRONT DOOR. The rusted brass KNOCKER is shaped like a LARGE EAGLE. Percy REACHES UP to knock. Virgil TRIES to stop him...

VIRGIL

That's--

But Percy GRABS the knocker anyway. The BRASS EAGLE COMES TO LIFE, SCREECHES and BITES Percy's HAND. Percy LEAPS BACK, his hand BLOODIED. He LOOKS to the door. The knocker is BACK TO NORMAL.

VIRGIL

--not a good idea.

Percy WIPES the blood from his hand. Virgil removes ANOTHER KEY and OPENS the door. Virgil GLARES at Percy.

VIRGIL

I'm the guide. Remember?

Percy nods. They ENTER.

INT. HADES MANSION - HALLWAY - DAY

Percy, Annabeth and Grover ENTER. They are in a gigantic hallway, flanked by a TWISTING STAIRCASE. Furniture and lighting fixtures are covered in mounds of DUST and COBWEBS. RATS play on the floor, scattered SPIDERS and LIZARDS crawl along the walls. Floorboards, sections of the staircase... are ROTTED AWAY.

Grover STEPS onto a rotted section of the floor. It BREAKS AWAY. Grover FALLS, GRABBING onto the edge. BELOW HIM, is a large BASEMENT, filled with angry, hungry LOST SOULS. These are very DIFFERENT creatures from the lost souls in the streets. They are VICIOUS. DEADLY. They GRAB and CLAW at Grover's legs, trying to PULL HIM DOWN BELOW.

Grover KICKS and SCREAMS, managing to KNOCK a few of them away. Percy and Annabeth PULL at Grover, trying to SAVE HIM. Finally, they PULL HIM to safety.

GROVER

You said they were *harmless!*

VIRGIL

These are the *lost souls*, already condemned to eternal damnation. Very angry. And quite dangerous.

GROVER

No shit.

A LOUD, BOOMING VOICE ECHOES through the hallway.

HADES (O.S.)

Who dares enter my home?!?

VIRGIL

It's Virgil... I bring visitors.

HADES

Who?!

PERCY

Percy Jackson. Son of Poseidon.

HADES

(pause, calm)

Nephew. I've been expecting you.

Virgil leads the kids into another room, toward the SOUND of Hades' VOICE...

INT. HADES DINING ROOM - DAY

CAMERA PANS ALONG a long DINING ROOM TABLE, covered with an ABUNDANCE OF FOOD... CAKES, ROASTS, VEGETABLES... All are ROTTING... Covered in COBWEBS, MAGGOTS and DUST. CAMERA CRANES BACK. We are inside of Hades elaborate, decaying dining/sitting room.

Two large, tattered LEATHER CHAIRS face an enormous STONE FIREPLACE. A ROARING FIRE is inside. From here, we see the SHAPES of

WRITHING, SCREAMING BODIES. Their muffled SCREAMS are heard.

Sitting in one chair, watching the screaming souls, is PERSEPHONE, Hades' wife. She is dressed in black with long dark hair. Her beauty is MASKED by pale skin, Goth make-up, black lipstick, etc. She is bored, miserable, TRAPPED. She sips a glass of red wine.

HADES is in the other chair. He is pale, rail-thin, with long dark hair, dressed like a ROCKER in leather, skull rings and boots. (Russel Brand meets Keith Richards). Hades holds a near empty bottle of wine. A GLOBE, made up of human bones, flickering with an INNER GOLDEN LIGHT, rests on a pedestal beside Hades.

Percy, Annabeth and Grover enter, led by Virgil. Persephone glances up first, SEES the kids. She FOCUSES on Grover. The satyr notices her, is immediately ATTRACTED to her. Grover smiles, raises an eyebrow. They exchange a SEDUCTIVE look. Virgil CLEARS his throat.

VIRGIL

Excuse me. Lord Hades, sir...

Hades TURNS, looks at the kids. He STANDS, walks to them.

ANNABETH

You're Hades?

HADES

Would you prefer I look like --

Hades instantly TRANSFORMS into a HORRIFIC TEN-FOOT HIGH, FLAMING-WINGED DEMON GOD. He gets RIGHT IN Annabeth's face.

DEMON HADES

-- THIS!

The kids are FREAKED, even Virgil is terrified. Hades returns to NORMAL. Virgil NERVOUSLY backs out of the room.

VIRGIL

Well... It appears that my services are no longer needed... Good luck, Mr. Jackson. Enjoy your stay.

Virgil practically STUMBLES over himself, RUNNING OUT of the room. Hades RAISES AN EYEBROW to Percy.

HADES

You are brave to come here, nephew... I can see the disgust in your eyes... Disgust for my world, for what I have become. But this was not my choice. I was banished here by Zeus and your Father. And they have succeeded in making my life a....

(irony not lost)

Living hell.

(points to food)

Do you know what it's like to be me?

Every feeling has been taken away.

I feel no joy, I feel no pain. I

am hungry, but I cannot taste. I

am tired, but I cannot sleep.

(looks at Persephone)

I am in love. But I can never

fulfill my desire.

Persephone turns away. Hades points to the screaming, writhing souls that SCREAM from his fireplace.

HADES

The only pleasure in my life, is human suffering. When others feel pain, when others experience hurt and tragedy... I feel total and complete joy. I feed on misery.

(a beat)

I am damned to this existence.

And my only chance of getting out

of here, is by defeating my brothers,

and taking control of Olympus. But...

(extends hand to Percy)

I need the bolt.

PERCY

(eyes burning)

And I need my Mother.

HADES

Give me the bolt. And you will see her again.

PERCY

I'm not the Lightning Thief. I don't have the bolt. I never did.

HADES

Do you take me for a fool?

Percy holds up his SHIELD and SWORD for protection.

HADES

Give it to me... or say goodbye to
your Mother.

Hades turns, GRABS the human bone globe from its pedestal and THROWS it onto the ground, directly in front of Percy. The globe EXPLODES, and there, frozen in a SHOWER OF GOLD, just as she was when the Minotaur was about to kill her, is Percy's mom. UNCONSCIOUS. The shower of light DISSIPATES. Percy's mom WAKES, sits up, sees her son.

SALLY

Percy?

Percy's eyes fill with TEARS. He drops his shield and sword, RUNS to Sally. She looks into her son's eyes, smiles warmly. They EMBRACE. Annabeth and Grover are touched. Even Hades' wife, Persephone, is MOVED. Percy LOOKS at his Mother.

PERCY

Thought I lost you forever.

Sally LOOKS AROUND at her surroundings.

SALLY

Are we dead?

GROVER

Not yet. But we're working on it.

Hades SEES something OFFSCREEN, that catches his attention: Percy's SHIELD. It lies FACE DOWN. The handle appears to be GLOWING. SURGING with LIGHT.

Hades walks up to the shield, PICKS it up. Hades RIPS the golden handle from the shield. The handle TRANSFORMS into a long clear cylinder, filled with surging, white LIGHTNING.

HADES

Zeus' master bolt.
(to Percy)
You lied.

PERCY

That wasn't my shield...

ANNABETH

Luke gave it to him--
(a realization)
We were set-up.

GROVER
 Luke was the Lightning Thief.

HADES
 (looks to the bolt)
 Now... I can become King of the Gods.

Hades turns to Persephone.

HADES
 Take their weapons. Feed them to Kronos.

Persephone nods. She stands, takes Percy's sword and shield, Grover's dagger, Annabeth's bow and arrow. She LEADS Percy, Sally, Annabeth and Grover out of the room. Persephone makes eye contact with Grover, still sharing an intense ATTRACTION.

INT. HADES' HOME - CELLAR - LATER

An enormous CELLAR, with towering vaulted brick ceilings and a series of tunnels that stretch into DARKNESS. The walls are DRIPPING WET. Percy, Annabeth, Sally and Grover STAND in the middle of the cellar.

ANNABETH
 I never would have suspected Luke...

PERCY
 But why did he hide the bolt in his shield? Why did he give it to me?

GROVER
 Add that to the long list of things I'll never know. Like the feeling of a naked woman... or the sweet smell of--

There is a LOUD GRINDING SOUND. In the middle of the stone floor, BRICKS SEPARATE... The floor begins to SLIDE OPEN... revealing a deep PIT... Inside, there is...

A WHIRLPOOL OF FIRE.

From deep in the pit, within the flames, something STIRS... It ROARS... Then SCREAMS.

Everyone RUNS to the side of the cellar, CLUTCHING the walls for dear life. The floor continues to SLIDE OPEN, revealing the waiting FLAMES directly beneath them...

A GIANT, DEMON-LIKE FACE, made entirely of flames, APPEARS in the whirlpool.

PERCY
 What's that?

GROVER
Kronos. Father of the Gods.
Technically, your Grandfather.

PERCY
My Grandfather?

GROVER
You, my friend, are the proud member
of a very dysfunctional family.
(a beat)
Think your old man was a Deadbeat Dad?...
At least he didn't eat his kids.

The face of Kronos ROARS. The floor CONTINUES TO SLIDE
OPEN...

GROVER
(nervously)
Or his grandkids.

Only a FEW FEET OF FLOOR REMAIN. Grover and Sally CLUTCH to
the walls for dear life. Annabeth WRAPS her arms around
Percy, holds him tight, WHISPERS in his ear.

ANNABETH
A sonnet... from ancient Greece...
(softly)
He is more than a hero.
(through tears)
He is a god in my eyes.

The floor continues to OPEN... INCHES AWAY from everyone
falling to their deaths...

Annabeth and Percy SHARE A FINAL KISS... MOMENTS from death.
Sally WITNESSES this, sees that her son has FOUND LOVE.

Suddenly... the floor STOPS OPENING. Everyone EXCHANGES a
puzzled look, HOLDING ONTO the tiny ledge of rock. The
ROARING, FLAMING FACE OF KRONOS screams from below...

The floor BEGINS TO CLOSE.

The kids and Sally look bewildered, as the FLOORS CLOSES
BELOW them, much to the dismay of a SCREAMING KRONOS.

A HOODED FIGURE appears, RACING DOWN the stairs, toward
Percy, Sally, Annabeth and Grover. The figure REMOVES its
hood. It's...

ANNABETH
Persephone?!

PERSEPHONE
Follow me.

INT. HADES' PALACE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Persephone is returning the kids' gear, handing Annabeth her bow and arrow, Percy his sword and shield, Grover his dagger. Persephone gives Percy ZEUS' BOLT.

PERCY

Why did you save us?

PERSEPHONE

Hades has been cruel and abusive... forcing me into a loveless marriage. Like your Mother, I was abducted by Hades. I agreed to be his wife, only if he would allow me to return to the surface for three months each year. It's all that I have to look forward to. A war of the Gods will destroy everything I hold dear in the mortal world...

PERCY

We'll do everything we can to stop it.

Persephone nods, smiles. She looks at them.

PERSEPHONE

You have the pearls?

Grover removes the THREE GREEN PEARLS from his backpack.

PERSEPHONE

Only three.

(Grover nods)

One of you will have to stay behind.

ANNABETH

What do you mean?

PERSEPHONE

Each pearl protects only a *single* person. Whoever's blood touches it.

The kids look at each other, unaware of that.

PERSEPHONE

Make your choice quickly.

Sally turns to Percy.

SALLY

I'll stay. You're young, you have your whole life ahead of you... You need to experience it--

Percy TAKES Grover's dagger, quickly GRABS his mom's hand and makes a slight CUT on her finger...

SALLY

Percy!--

A drop of Sally's BLOOD trickles onto one of the pearls. Percy gives the bloody pearl to her. Percy then REACHES for Annabeth's hand. She RETRACTS her hand.

ANNABETH

Don't even think about it. You go with your mom.

PERCY

You three are going. I'm staying.

ANNABETH

Percy. There's--

PERCY

No time to argue. You have to get Zeus's bolt back to Olympus.

He GRABS Annabeth's hand. She spins, KICKS the dagger out of Percy's hand. As Annabeth reaches for it, Percy activates Riptide and SWINGS, making a SHALLOW CUT across her arm. Her blood DRIPS to the floor.

ANNABETH

No!

Percy ROLLS the pearl in Annabeth's blood, hands it to her.

PERCY

Take care of my mom. And...
(whispers to her)
Stay safe. I'll never forget you.

She nods, eyes TEARY. Percy TURNS to Grover.

PERCY

Give me your hand.

GROVER

I'm not letting you stay.

PERCY

Give me your hand!

Grover reluctantly HOLDS OUT his hand. Just as Percy is about to CUT Grover's hand... Hades ENTERS.

HADES

WHERE IS THE BOLT?!

Hades immediately TRANSFORMS INTO DEMONIC FORM.

In that instance, Grover quickly SINKS HIS TEETH into Percy's arm, DRAWING BLOOD.

PERCY

Ouuchh!

Grover GRABS the third pearl, DRIPS Percy's blood onto it.

GROVER

I'm the protector. Not you.

Hades RACES toward Percy. He extends his sword, SWINGING WILDLY.

Percy's sword PIERCES Hades' chest. The wound is DEEP. Hades is SENT to the floor. BLACK blood pours from his wound. Hades, WRITHING in pain, REVERTS to his human self. Percy LOOKS BACK to the others.

PERCY

Break the pearls!

Annabeth and Sally SMASH THE PEARLS on the ground. They EXPLODE in a green flash, ENVELOPING Sally and Annabeth in a separate GREEN SPHERE.

Each sphere begins to FLOAT OFF off the floor.

Percy CRUSHES the remaining green pearl in his hand. He is suddenly ENVELOPED in the sphere. Percy LOOKS to Grover.

GROVER

It was an honor protecting you.
Get the bolt to Olympus. You're
our only hope.

PERCY

I will. And then I'll get you
out of here. I promise.

Grover exchanges a lustful smile with Persephone.

GROVER

Take your time.

Percy FLOATS AWAY with the others. Grover looks to Hades, badly WOUNDED on the floor. A HAND REACHES OUT and GRABS him. It's PERSEPHONE. She LEADS Grover OUT of the house.

The three green orbs RISE UP. Percy calls to the others.

PERCY

We need to concentrate, focus on
where we're going...
(a beat)
To Olympus.

The three orbs PASS THROUGH the roof of the mansion...

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - LATER - NIGHT

The Empire State Building is adorned with red, white and blue lights. Dark, ominous STORM CLOUDS are in the sky. There is THUNDER. The few pedestrians on the streets, struggle to walk against the STRONG WIND. It's OMINOUS, EERIE, like the world is about to end...

THREE GREEN ORBS carrying Percy, Annabeth and Sally, rise up through the street directly in front of the Empire State Building. The orbs DISSOLVE. Percy looks around, confused.

PERCY

This isn't Olympus. It's New York City.

ANNABETH

The entrance to Olympus is in there.

PERCY

The Empire State Building?

ANNABETH

(nods)

A secret elevator. Top floor.

Percy glances to a clock on a nearby building: 11:43 PM.

PERCY

Seventeen minutes 'til the war begins.
Let's move!

Percy removes the lightning bolt CYLINDER from his backpack, clutching it tightly. Annabeth, Percy and Sally HURRY to the entrance doors. A FAMILIAR VOICE calls out to them...

LUKE (O.S.)

Percy! Give me the bolt!

They all STOP, TURN UPWARD, to the direction of the voice.

It's LUKE.

He is dressed in FULL ARMOR, holding a LONG, SHARP SWORD. Luke HOVERS several feet above them, wearing his own... very cool, very sleek... WINGED SHOES.

PERCY

Luke... Why did you steal Zeus' bolt?

LUKE

To start a war between Poseidon and Zeus.

PERCY

That's why you hid it in your shield
and gave it to me?...

LUKE

When I discovered that you were going
to the underworld, I realized... If
Hades got his hand on the bolt... There
would be a three way war.

Percy ACTIVATES Riptide. Luke ROCKETS toward Percy, SWIPES
at him with his sword. Percy DEFLECTS the blow, FALLING onto
the ground. Percy DROPS the bolt. It begins to ROLL AWAY...

PERCY

Annabeth! The bolt!

Annabeth RUSHES to the bolt. Luke SWOOPS DOWN, delivers a
SPINNING KICK that sends Annabeth CRASHING into a parked car.

Luke GRABS the bolt, FLIES UP onto a building ledge above.

Percy and Sally RUN to Annabeth, help her up. Annabeth's
SHAKEN, the WIND KNOCKED OUT of her. They hear a SLOW,
BUZZING SOUND. They look to the DIRECTION of the sound...

The sound EMANATES from the bolt in Luke's hand. There is a
HAIRLINE CRACK at the top of the bolt. BRIGHT, tentacled
SPARKS OF ELECTRICITY emit from the crack.

Luke GENTLY MOVES his hand.

The slightest movement RELEASES LIGHTNING from the bolt. The
STRONGER the movement, the more ELECTRICITY is released...

Luke's eyes burn with a newfound POWER. Percy CALLS to him.

PERCY

Why do you want a war of the gods?

LUKE

Control. They've been in power for too
many years. It's time for our generation
to take over. Centuries ago, the
Olympians defeated their parents and took
control. Why shouldn't we do the same?

ANNABETH

Because you'll destroy all of mankind
in the process..

LUKE

Exactly. Giving the young Gods an
opportunity to start over, to create
a new world of heroes...

PERCY
You're no hero.

With a quick SNAP of his wrist, Luke TRIGGERS the bolt.

A BLAST OF LIGHTING shoots out and blows a MASSIVE HOLE into the building behind Percy, Annabeth and Sally. They LEAP OUT OF THE WAY as concrete and brick fall around them.

Luke smiles, glances to the bolt, impressed.

Percy glances to a nearby FIRE HYDRANT, CONCENTRATING on it.

Luke AIMS the bolt at them again. He FIRES. They DASH out of the way. The lightning STRIKES a nearby EMPTY GARBAGE TRUCK. The truck is INCINERATED, leaving a massive CRATER in the street.

Directly below Luke, the FIRE HYDRANT starts to SHAKE. Luke DOESN'T NOTICE.

FURIOUS, Luke glares at Percy, Annabeth and Sally... He AIMS the bolt, about to BLAST THEM, when... The fire hydrant below EXPLODES. Water SHOOTS UPWARD and BLASTS Luke.

The force KNOCKS LUKE OFF the building ledge. Luke FALLS, LANDS on the ground. DAZED, nearly UNCONSCIOUS.

The lightning bolt LIES on the ground, a few feet beside him.

Percy DRAWS his sword, RUNS forward and REACHES DOWN, about to grab the bolt...

Luke is QUICK. He DRAWS his sword, LEAPS to his feet and STOPS Percy from getting the bolt. Luke and Percy FACE OFF against each other. The bolt is on the ground BETWEEN THEM. They begin to FIGHT, swords CLASHING.

Percy SHOUTS to Annabeth and Sally.

PERCY
Get to Olympus! Tell Zeus everything!

Annabeth and Sally RUN INSIDE the Empire State Building.

Percy and Luke continue a HEATED BATTLE. Percy is nearly Luke's equal. They fight like TWO WARRIORS.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Annabeth and Sally RUN INSIDE. The SECURITY GUARD calls out.

SECURITY GUARD
Hey!... Observation deck's closed--

Annabeth and Sally IGNORE him, JUMP into an OPEN ELEVATOR. The DOORS CLOSE, just as the Security Guard RUNS UP.

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - STREET - NIGHT

Luke and Percy are still in a HEATED SWORDFIGHT. Luke is FASTER. He PULLS BACK his sword. WHACK! SLICES across Percy's midsection.

Percy FALLS to his knees, BLEEDING, a DEEP CUT ACROSS his torso.

Luke GRABS the bolt.

He TURNS to the Empire State Building, AIMS the bolt at the rooftop, toward the LIGHTNING ROD perched here. Luke SNAPS his wrist, FIRES at the lightning rod. A DIRECT HIT, ENGULFING the building in a WEB OF INTENSE ELECTRICITY.

The Empire State Building's POWER GOES OUT, along with half of the block. The building's lights FLICKER OFF.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

The elevator lights GO OUT. The elevator STOPS. Annabeth and Sally exchange a WORRIED glance.

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - STREET - NIGHT

Percy RISES, holding Riptide and CONCENTRATING on something OFFSCREEN.

Luke AIMS the bolt at PERCY'S HEART.

Concentrating, Percy causes two more fire hydrants to EXPLODE.

Instead of the water shooting up, the water TAKES ON A LIFE OF ITS OWN. It TURNS and WHIPS BACK toward Luke, about to PUMMEL HIM.

Luke deftly FLIES around the water, outmaneuvers it with his winged shoes.

Luke takes AIM, about to FIRE at Percy...

Percy DIVES.

Luke FIRES A LIGHTNING BLAST.

It BLOWS out the windows of a storefront, causing a WALL OF SMOKE and FALLING DEBRIS.

Luke searches for Percy, CAN'T SEE him.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Percy DUCKS into an alley, grabs his backpack and removes the pair of...

WINGED SHOES.

Percy hurriedly PUTS ON THE SHOES. He sees Luke FLY PAST. Percy takes off, FLYING RIGHT AT HIM.

EXT. SKY ABOVE MANHATTAN - NIGHT

A HIGH SPEED CHASE between Percy and Luke, FLYING through the cavernous streets of Manhattan.

Luke looks back and FIRES at Percy. Percy DEFLECTS with his sword blade.

They arrive over the SHORES OF THE HUDSON.

Percy picks up speed, SLAMS into Luke from behind.

Luke DROPS the lightning bolt.

It LANDS on the grassy shore below.

Percy and Luke begin a mid-air SWORDFIGHT, as they move out over the Hudson River.

They fight in the air like two acrobatics, FLIPPING, SPINNING as their swords clash.

Luke delivers several DEVASTATING BLOWS. Percy is WEAKENED, BLEEDING, but still fighting like a hero.

Luke SLICES THE WINGS off of Percy's left shoe.

Percy LOSES altitude. He STRUGGLES to stay in the air.

Percy FALLS and SLAMS into a WOODEN DOCK. He's SHAKEN. OUT OF BREATH. Badly WOUNDED.

Luke FLIES down toward Percy, sword in hand.

Percy EXTENDS his hand toward the River. He TIGHTENS his brow. Using every bit of his strength, every muscle in his body, Percy CLOSES HIS EYES. Concentrates INTENSELY.

Luke LANDS on the dock, directly in front of Percy.

Luke RAISES his sword, to FINISH OFF Percy...

LUKE

It's over. I've won.

The river begins to RUMBLE. CHURN. WAVES form.

Luke TURNS, sees... An ENORMOUS WAVE. HEADING STRAIGHT for them. Luke starts to RUN, attempts to FLY AWAY.

The wave completely ENGULFS Percy, Luke and the dock. The water appears to REACH OUT and GRAB Luke out of the air. The wave PULLS HIM DOWN UNDER THE WATER.

EXT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The wave FORMS a WHIRLPOOL around Luke. He is being DRAGGED beneath the water below, SCREAMING. Within moments...

Luke's screams FADE. He's GONE.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - NIGHT

THUNDER CRACKS in the sky above New York. Waves CRASH against the shore. And then... majestically...

Percy RISES UP out of the water, as if he is being CARRIED by the sea. He RIDES the wave, controlling its every move. He looks down, sees the lightning bolt LYING ON THE SHORE BELOW.

Percy RIDES the wave low, REACHES DOWN and SNATCHES the lightning bolt.

EXT. MANHATTAN STREETS - NIGHT

Percy RIDES THE WAVE through the streets of Manhattan like a SURFER without a board.

The DARKENED Empire State Building is dead ahead.

Percy RAISES the bolt, extends it toward the LIGHTNING ROD, at the TOP of the Building.

Percy FIRES the bolt.

The Empire State Building is engulfed in ELECTRICITY, RESTORING POWER to the building. The lights FLICKER, TURN BACK ON.

INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

The lights SNAP ON. Annabeth and Sally are surprised, the car starts to MOVE. GOING UPWARD.

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - NIGHT

The wave CARRIES Percy right up to the entrance of the Empire State Building. Percy STEPS OFF, looks up at a clock, on a nearby building. It reads: 11:55 PM.

PERCY
Five minutes...

EXT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - OBSERVATION DECK - NIGHT

Annabeth and Sally get out. Moments later, Percy EXITS another elevator, the lightning bolt in his hand. Annabeth GRABS Percy by the arm, leads him forward.

ANNABETH

We have exactly ninety seconds to get to Olympus.

Annabeth leads Percy and Sally to a small SUPPLY CLOSET. She OPENS the door. Inside, is a tiny, cluttered CLOSET filled with cleaning supplies. They ENTER.

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET/SECRET ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Annabeth REMOVES cleaning supplies from the shelves. Behind the middle shelf, on the wall, is a rusty BUTTON that reads:

FLOOR 600.

Annabeth PUSHES the button. The supply closet door CLOSES. The room RUMBLES, becoming an ELEVATOR. They move UPWARD.

EXT. OLYMPUS - SECONDS LATER - NIGHT

The elevator door OPENS. Percy, Annabeth, and Sally step out. Below them, is the STORMY SKYLINE of Manhattan, from the height of an airplane. In front, marble steps wind up into the spine of a cloud, into the sky. From the top of the clouds, rises the decapitated PEAK OF A MOUNTAIN, its summit covered with snow. Clinging to the mountainside, are dozens of multi-leveled PALACES. At the top of the peak, the LARGEST PALACE gleams against the snow. Percy stares in awe.

PERCY

Olympus.

They hear a FAMILIAR VOICE.

CHIRON (O.S.)

Cutting it close.

CHIRON is standing beside them.

PERCY/ANNABETH

Chiron!

CHIRON

Let's go.

They RACE up the TORCH LIT stairs.

INT. ZEUS'S PALACE - THRONE ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

The ROOM looks out over all of Olympus. Twelve GIGANTIC, ELEVATED THRONES, are arranged in an inverted U, around a SWIRLING, LIVING GLOBE. All of the Olympians are seated and present: Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Apollo, Artemis, Hestia, Hephaestus, Ares, Hermes, Demeter, Aphrodite, and Athena.

In the first throne, is ZEUS. He resembles a strong, ROMAN EMPEROR, a sculpted, grim face, his eyes rainy grey, with a well trimmed beard.

Next to him is POSEIDON. He resembles a handsome SURFER. His skin is deeply tanned, hands scarred like an old fisherman's. His hair is long, sun streaked. His striking blue eyes are identical to Percy's. A faded tattoo of a TRIDENT is on his muscular forearm.

The Gods are in the middle of an intense, HEATED ARGUMENT. Zeus and Poseidon are the most angry, looking as if they're about to get into a fist-fight. Athena tries to intervene.

ATHENA

Brothers, brothers... Please... Sit down, discuss this rationally... War is not the answer.

ARES

Sure it is. It always is.

An ANCIENT CLOCK on the wall COUNTS DOWN...

6.... 5... 4...

Zeus gets right into Poseidon's face.

3... 2... 1...

ZEUS

Let the war begin--

CHIRON (O.S.)

Lord Zeus! Wait!

The Gods TURN to the sound of Chiron's VOICE. Chiron RUNS into the throne room, along with Percy, Annabeth and Sally. We realize that the throne room and the gods are GIGANTIC. The Gods are each nearly THIRTY FEET TALL, DWARFING Chiron and the humans. Athena is SURPRISED to see Annabeth.

ATHENA

Annabeth?

ANNABETH

(nervous)

Hey, Mom.

Percy steps forward, holding the MASTER LIGHTNING BOLT.

PERCY

Hi. I'm... My name's Percy Jackson.
And, I... I think you guys might be
looking for this...

Zeus looks at Poseidon, who can't help but smile a little.
Zeus GLARES at Percy.

ZEUS

The Lightning Thief. I knew it.
(extends his hand)
Bring it to me.

Percy walks forward, places the bolt up into Zeus' GIGANTIC
PALM. When it is placed into Zeus' hand, the bolt GROWS BACK
to its normal size.

ZEUS

Congratulations. You've managed to save
what's left of your Father's reputation.

Percy turns, exchanges his FIRST LOOK with Poseidon. Percy's
eyes remain COLD, HARD. He TURNS back to Zeus.

PERCY

I didn't steal the lightning bolt. If
my father had asked me to do something
for him, I would have said "no".
(indifferent)
I have no loyalty to him. I owe him
nothing.

Poseidon lowers his head slightly. Zeus smiles, amused.

ZEUS

I believe you owe your personality to
him.
(pauses, curious)
But if you didn't take the bolt... Why
do you have it?

PERCY

It was stolen by Luke, son of Hermes.

HERMES

(surprised)
I have a son named *Luke*?

Zeus raises an eyebrow to Percy.

ZEUS

Why should I believe you?

PERCY

You don't have to. All you have to do is honor your word. I've returned the bolt by the summer solstice. Now call off the war.

Zeus turns to Poseidon, back to Percy.

ZEUS

For the sake of peace in our family, there will be no war.

(to Percy)

You have done me a great service. If there's ever anything I can do for you, feel free to ask--

PERCY

There's a Satyr, my protector... named Grover... He's being held prisoner by Hades. Could you set him free?

Zeus contemplates this, not so sure. Poseidon intervenes.

POSEIDON

You could make a trade... I hear that Percy killed many of Hades' pets...

(turns to Percy)

Did you keep any tokens?

Percy digs the MINOTAUR HORN out of his backpack.

PERCY

This.

ZEUS

(takes the horn)

That will do. Hades loved that hideous beast. He can grow a new one with this. Yes... I think we'll be able to get your friend released.

Annabeth steps forward, tentatively at first.

ANNABETH

I have an announcement.

All of the Gods TURN to her. Annabeth TAKES Percy's hand.

ANNABETH

The son of Poseidon and the daughter of Athena are officially--

PERCY

--In love.

They exchange a KISS, much to the shock of Athena and Poseidon. Annabeth looks at Athena and Poseidon.

ANNABETH

I think it's about time you two
stopped hating on each other.

Poseidon and Athena sigh, holding back their anger, putting aside their feelings. For now. Zeus finds it all very amusing, laughing.

ZEUS

Our meeting is adjourned.
(glares at Poseidon)
I still don't trust you.

And with that, Zeus VANISHES in a blinding flash of lightning. Athena LOOKS at Annabeth.

ATHENA

We'll discuss this later, young lady.

Athena VANISHES. All of the Gods begin to VANISH. One by one. Everyone... EXCEPT POSEIDON.

He looks down, catches Sally's eye for the first time. Poseidon steps off the throne, walks forward. With each step, he becomes SMALLER, soon becoming the size of a MORTAL. Poseidon walks to Sally, gives her a TENDER KISS.

POSEIDON

Good to see you, Sally. You look
beautiful.

SALLY

You too. Of course, you have that
eternal youth thing going on.

They exchange a warm SMILE. Poseidon turns, approaches Percy. They look at each other. An estranged Father and son, meeting for the FIRST TIME. It's TENSE, UNCOMFORTABLE.

POSEIDON

I can't thank you enough, Percy. Few
heroes in history could have accomplished
what you've done. I'm proud of you, son--

He EXTENDS his hand. Percy IGNORES it, COLDLY. There is a long silence, YEARS OF TENSION between them. Sally nods to Annabeth and Chiron, LOOKS BACK to Percy.

SALLY

We'll leave you two alone.

Sally, Annabeth and Chiron move several feet away. Percy TURNS to the window, looks out over the lands of Olympus.

POSEIDON

I'm not asking you to like me...

PERCY

No need. I didn't do it for you,
I did it to save mom.

POSEIDON

I know that.

Percy continues to stare out at the LANDSCAPE OF OLYMPUS, his back turned to Poseidon. Percy has so many questions... He speaks softly, a DEEP SADNESS in his voice...

PERCY

How old was I? When you left?

POSEIDON

Seven months.

PERCY

Do you remember any of it?

POSEIDON

Every moment. You were a beautiful boy. Your Mother and I were in love. I could have stayed forever...

PERCY

But you didn't.

POSEIDON

I had other responsibilities.

PERCY

More important than us?

Percy turns, FACES Poseidon, who doesn't answer.

PERCY

I didn't care if you were there all the time... But I would have liked to see you... even for a day... an hour...

(upset)

Why didn't you ever come back?

POSEIDON

(pauses, difficult)

I wanted to. I just... When I was with you... and your Mother...I became less concerned about my responsibilities... I was ignoring my natural destiny.

(softly)

I was becoming human.

PERCY
And that's bad?

POSEIDON
For a God? For the future of the
universe? Yes, Percy. That's bad.

PERCY
What about these last two weeks?... I
almost died out there... But you didn't
do anything. You didn't help me.

POSEIDON
I was looking out for you every step
of the way. When you needed me, I
was there. Who do you think sent the
horses in the desert? Who spoke to you,
gave you clarity in Lotus Land?...
(passionate)
Just because you didn't see me, doesn't
mean I wasn't there. When you sit in
the bottom of the pool, trying to figure
out your life, the voice in your head
is me.

PERCY
(understanding)
So that's you...

POSEIDON
(nods)
Passing out what advice I can. Most
of which, you tend to ignore, by the
way.

A TINY SMILE appears on Percy's face. Percy softens,
understands how complicated this must be for his Father.

POSEIDON
I know this isn't the father-son
relationship you've always wanted,
but it's the best I can do.
(sincere)
I hope someday you'll see that.

PERCY
(long pause)
Olympus wasn't built in a day.

Poseidon smiles, EXTENDS his hand again. Percy pauses,
slowly SHAKES IT.

Poseidon pulls him close, in for an EMBRACE. Their FIRST
hug.

Sally is watching, a smile on her face, TEARS in her eyes.

INT. UGLIANO HOME - A FEW DAYS LATER - DAY

A DARK, OVERCAST DAY in New York City. Sweeping STORM CLOUDS fill the air. Distant THUNDER rumbles. GABE sits alone, in front of the TV, watching the news, drinking a beer.

NEWS ANCHOR

Authorities have now confirmed that Percy Jackson and his mother have been safely returned after their month long ordeal. Police now know that the two had been kidnapped by this man...

A picture of ARES taken from a SECURITY CAMERA at the All-American diner appears on screen.

NEWS ANCHOR

The FBI has confirmed that he is also the man responsible for vandalizing the Parthenon in Nashville and the beheading of at least one other victim. If you have any information leading to--

Gabe CLICKS OFF the TV, annoyed. He CRUSHES the beer can.

GABE

Sally! I need another beer!

EXT. UGLIANO HOME - BACKYARD - DAY

Percy and his mom are reclining in BEACH CHAIRS, sipping cool drinks. Annabeth sits in Percy's lap, arms around each other.

In the background, GROVER stands at a GRILL, flipping burgers. PERSEPHONE stands beside Grover, hand tucked into his back pocket. She nibbles lustfully on his earlobe.

The sky is getting DARKER with storm clouds. THUNDER ROLLS. Percy looks at his Mother.

PERCY

I want to show you something.
(a pause)
Promise you won't be mad?

SALLY

Oh, no. Now what?

Percy lifts up his shirt sleeve, revealing a TATTOO of a TRIDENT on his right deltoid. It's an exact COPY of his Father, Poseidon's, tattoo. Sally touches it, her face flooding with FOND MEMORIES.

SALLY
 I love it.
 (a beat)
 Is it permanent?

Percy pauses, shrugs.

PERCY
 Nothing's permanent, Mom.

Annabeth RAISES an eyebrow to him. Percy smiles.

PERCY
 Well... Maybe one thing.

They share a small kiss. Very much in love. There is a LOUD CRACK OF THUNDER. The clouds get DARKER. Grover, cooking the burgers, looks up into the sky.

GROVER
 Maybe we should move this party inside.

PERCY
 No. I like it out here.

The sky ERUPTS with THUNDER, followed by several, intense, bright BLASTS OF LIGHTNING. Percy watches the lightning show, REFLECTED in his eyes. Then... it begins to RAIN. The drops fall slowly at first, soon becoming a DOWNPOUR. Grover, Persephone and Sally DUCK for cover, beneath a rooftop overhang.

Percy stays where he is, Annabeth's head resting on his shoulder. The cool rain showers over the couple. A smile covers Percy's face, along with something else we've never seen... an expression of PEACE and CONTENTMENT. From OFFSCREEN we hear...

GABE (O.S.)
Sally! Beer!

SALLY
Get it yourself, you lazy bum!

Percy looks back, exchanges a smile with Sally.

INT. UGLIANO KITCHEN - SAME

LIGHTNING CRACKS! Gabe storms into the kitchen, muttering.

GABE
Get it myself?!? You're gettin' to be as lazy as that loser son of yours! Well, I got news for both of you...

Gabe REACHES for the refrigerator door.

GABE

I'm the king of this castle and there
are gonna' be some changes made around
here--

Gabe OPENS the refrigerator and looks in horror. He sees...

The HEAD OF MEDUSA.

EYES WIDE OPEN. STARING back at Gabe.

There's a LOUD LIGHTNING CRACK!

THE SCREEN GOES WHITE.

THE END.