



Welp. Youve read the title. The Forgotten Sibling. Seems right. Big bro gets all the glory just because he gets sent on a quest. And guess whos left behind to pick up the pieces? Me. Im Audrey by the way. Audrey Baxter. Daughter of the hero's Lura and Devin Baxter. Granddaughter of Athena and Apollo. And this is my story told my way. I was born 2 years after my brother and you could say I was the quiet, respectful and unnoticed child. Mom and Dad loved me of course but Greyson made more of a fuss than I did. I was easily Mom's favorite. I was told I was the most like her. I get that. I had Dad's hair but Mom's eyes. She was also wicked smart like me. I used that gift to constantly get Greyson out of scraps. When I learned that about Camp Halfblood I probably jumped for joy. One place where I could be myself. Where I could have friends. Where people knew my name. I had a couple friends. Nerth for sure. He was my cousin but not by blood. My mom and my aunt Astraea were adopted sisters. He was a big whiner and complainer but we were the best of friends. Since his dad's blood curse made him grow insanely big he towered over me even though we were the same age. He was a big teddy bear though. Nerth was my only friend besides Grey until I came to camp. When Greyson would go off to camp and come back telling me all the cool things he did, i couldnt wait. And camp was all that and more. I made some new friends along with Nerth. Xander and Lola were two. Lola Jennings. Daughter of Hermes. She was a bit shifty but loyal as can be. She and me instantly became best friends. Xander meet us by accident. During Capture the Flag, me and Lola were lost (her fault not mine!) and he was lost too. Though he was on the other team. We easily beat him but when explained he was lost too we all called for a truce and chatted till we found our way back. He was a Hephaestus kid, our age too. He was kind and funny but could get defensive quick. But not around us. Most had a trio of friends. I had four. We formed our little group. We call ourselves the Forgottens. All of us had siblings we lived in the shadows of. Nerth was his brother, the Oracle, Cypher. Lola had Cypher's wife CJ and her brother Fred. He was big in camp for his athletic abilities and trickery which their cabin prized. For Xander, it was his sister Reta and Harry. Reta because she brought dishonor to the cabin and Harry because he was the best forger in camp. and me with Grey. So our little club was born. We did everything together. Life was good. I had grown to be respected in camp for my kindness and skill. I was finally out of the shadows. Then, Greyson met Erebus and Chaira. And they went on the quest. Forgotten again. Sure I was worried about my brother. Going out alone with an emo kid and a girl he had been assigned to as a personal healer, which I was VERY suspicious of, made me uneasy. He did come back though thankfully. I love my brother ok? He may be annoying and self absorbed but I loved him. Then I learned that the emo kid, Erebus, would be my new brother. He was alright I guess. Just creepy. But he made up for it by being nice. But now that I had two famous siblings so my chances of showing my worth at camp plummeted. If I did one good thing people would always say 'wait your Greyson's sister aren't you?' And all the achievement went out the window. I tried to make the best of it. My group was super supportive. Nerth and Xander were extra nice. If I didn't know any better then I'd say they both liked me. Lola agreed. But still it was fun. Then... the second quest. Where Erebus, Grey, and Chaira disappeared for two months. Two months. Mom was a wreck and rightly so. I was too. Then he was back. But not like normal Grey. He seemed older and... different. Like something had shaken him to his core. Mom said he had an experience that made him a man. She said both Dad and her had an experience like that on their quests. Erebus and Chaira in Tartarus... i was shocked. I couldnt... now I wished I had been nicer to Erebus. He was really nice. In a creepy-emo-freaky powerful- way. Then Grey was supposed to lead camp to war against Kronos's new army. Mom said I was old enough to Fight. She said I was more than ready. That gave me so much pride. She taught me some moves. She was pretty good and I heard whispers of her being one of the best fighters that camp has ever had. She had a special weapon that was a gift from Athena herself. I wanted that blade and Mom said she would give me it when I was ready. But in my opinion she still wanted it. So i was left with my weapon. Dont get me wrong, it was INSANE. A gift from Xander. He had Harry help him with it so. It was a beautiful sword but had a hidden compartment that flipped it into a small bow that I could use in a pinch. It had an arrow that would magnetically return. I loved it. I was pretty good with

both. Mom helped me with my armor.

"Remember your training. And be safe." She says in her mom voice as she ties the last strap.

"I will Mom." I tell her, a tiny bit annoyed but tried to be nice.

"Ok." She looked at me. "Be brave my girl. You have the power of the gods in your veins and your my daughter. You have got this". She says and runs to join my aunt Nika and Dad by Grey. I sighed and glowed with pride as I ran to find my friends. We were to fight as a unit with some other kids but mainly us. I would have it no other way. I stood next to Lola, Nerth, and Xander. We all were hyped up on excitement and adrenaline. We had never been in a real battle before. Sure it was going to be dangerous. But maybe we could make a stand for camp here. Nerth was called over to Cypher and CJ who were across the way to talk about something. Xander looked at me with those concerns eyes.

"Um, Audrey, can I talk to you for a sec?" He asks.

"Sure". I say and we walk a bit away.

"Um... I dont know how to say this... um... today might be our last day alive... and um.. well... I just wanted to tell you something I've had on my mind for a while... um." He stutters.

"What is it?" I ask nicely. He sighs.

"Look, i like you. Your awesome, incredible smart and funny and kind and if today if our last day then I would never forgive myself for not saying anything." He spits out. A tiny bell in my mind said 'I knew it' but I could feel my cheeks flush red. How does one answer that?!

"Wow Xander. I... never knew... but Im glad you told me." I tell him. He nods with a small smile.

"Well, now that that is out there let's focus on not dying." He says and we walk back over. He continued on as if nothing had happend but I was in a daze. Nerth walked back over. He seemed nervous. Let's get going. He says adn we start walking. Lola and Xander walk ahead of us thinking of ways to use the trinkets Xander had made. Nerth and I walked a little ways behind them. Nerth cleared his throat.

Nerth POV:

Cypher called me over.

"Nerth! How's it going?" He asks.

"Fine, im a bit queasy and Im hurting like crazy but you know." I say.

"Great. Well, i just had a thought. You still like Lura's girl? Audrey?" He asks. I blush. I had only told him about my crush.

"She's just a friend". I say. CJ laughed.

"Ooo he's got it bad Cypher." She says.

"Yea he does." Cypher smirks.

"Shut up!" I tell them.

"Well, you might want to tell her before this all happens." He says.

"Really? I guess I had never thought about it before. this was possibly our last day. I dont know, I dont know what she'll say." I say.

"Hey, it worked for me." Cypher says and looks at CJ. She punches him. He yelps.

"Don't pay him any mind. Though he is right in some respect. But follow your gut kid. That's what I say." She says and I nod.

"Ill try. But if this goes wrong I will personally tear you apart." I tell Cypher.

"Ok bro." He says and I walk off. I see her stand there, looking all fierce and incredible at the same time. We start walking and I see my chance.

Audrey POV:

"Um, Audrey." He starts.

"Yea?" I ask him. He seems to want to say something but holds it back. Interesting.

"Try not to die ok? Who else is gonna tell me to stop complaining?" He says. Aww that's sweet. I

think and I try not to think about Xander's confession earlier.

"Yep, well, dont kill more monsters than me ok? It'll make me look really bad." He says. I laugh.

"Oh i am totally going to now Meat Head." I tell him and he mock grumbles. We walk with the army and I can't help but feel the weight of the moment, i tried to take it all in.

"Ive got this." I tell myself. We all huddled around. I put my sword in the middle.

"All for one." I start.

"And all for one!" We all finish. It was our cheer. Let's do this.

Chapter 2

We ran trails to train and id say my group did pretty good but... nowhere what we needed to be. Grey was super overwhelmed. I could tell. Especially when he ran off. I left everyone and ran after him. He was sitting on a rock, staring into space. He never cried but he looked about ready to.

"Hey." I say and walk up to him. He straightened up and tried to look all big brother like but he wasn't fooling me. He got some brains but I got most of them.

"Hey, how you doing?" He asks me, faking a smile. I shrug.

"Okay... you?" I ask back.

"Fine!" He says a little too fast. I raised an eyebrow.

"Uh-huh. Right." I say sarcastically. I fold my arms over my chest to make a point. He looked at me.

"What is that supposed to mean?" He asks me.

"It means your a liar." I tell him slowly. He looks down. I know I hit him in a soft spot.

"Never go on a quest. Never be know. Never.... Never mind." He says softly almost to himself. He rubbed his hands together. He was really nervous to be doing that.

"Why? When you go on a quest people actually know their name." I say, thinking he was crazy. Why wouldn't you? If I had survived and completed a quest I could get out of my brother and parent's shadows. Show camp my abilities. Grey shook his head.

"That's not good. You think I like it? I only do quests because Erebus needs me. The guy has no social skills." He says. I sat next to him.

"I mean yeah when he asks I say yes. i say yes because he's like a brother to me. But I hate the glory of quests. Erebus never notices because... he's Erebus." He says. My mind had about a dozen different arguments why it was good but I kept my mouth shut. This was obviously important to him and being the sister I respect him. I nod.

"Do you know what its like to have a big brother who everyone loves... no. No you dont." I say carefully.

"Do you know what its like to have so much pressure it feels like I can't-breath-or- say-or-livelikeanormalhumanand-" I stared at him with the empathetic stare mom does. He shut up.

"Never mind." He says and looks back down.

"You can tell me." I tell him, putting a hand on his arm in silent comfort.

"Well, i dont want to... not now." He says stubbornly. I nod in understanding though. I get up. I fold my arms and stare into the woods. Should I tell him about Xavier? What would he say? He had Fiona already. Maybe he could... no. Not yet. It was still to uncertain. He stood up and tossed a rock into the woods.

"Im going to my cabin. See ya later sis." He says and kisses me on my forehead. I stand there as he leaves. I sat down on the rock where he had been. I sighed and traced a crack in the rock's surface. What was happening? Why was it happening? I had no answers. I groaned in frustration and stalked back to camp. Xavier was there waiting and smiled when I came over.

"Everything good?" He asks.

"Yep, just trying to prepare." I tell him. He nods. After a bit of silence, I tell him goodbye and head to the Athena cabin. It was home. I loved the feel of being surrounded by knowledge and those who seek it. I went to my bed and grabbed out my journal. Oh did I mention I got Mom's drawing skills? Not as good as her but still pretty darn good. But I mainly journaled. She had gifted me a journal

similar to hers and I had used it ever since. One page later I set it down. I grabbed out a combat strategy book and started to flip through. Once it got late enough I turned out the lights and slept.

Chapter 3

I woke up to the sun just cresting the horizon. I groaned and got out of my bunk bed. My roommate, a 16 year old girl by the name of Jane, was still asleep. I made sure not to wake her as I changed and got ready. I grabbed my sword and went to one of my favorite places in camp. Aunt Nika and Mom had showed it to me. It was one of their favorites too. They told me all the stories they had there. It felt weird going to the place Mom had gone when she was my age and her half sister, the Legend Annabeth Chase, before her. But it wasn't the same. True I went to that spot but a bit further back was a even more special spot. Near the clearing was home to a colony of owls. All silver and beautiful. Next to them was a small clearing hidden from then world. That's where I trained alone. The owls never bothered me. They let me train. Watching over me. I felt Grandma from them. I would train and train and train. That's what I did today. I trained. I needed it for what's to come. Mom always said 'Always be over prepared never underprepared'. I made that one of my life's mottos. After about 30 minutes of training I walked back to camp. Mom and Aunt Nika were training some of the younger ones with a dagger. Mom nodded to me as I passed by. I walked to the Big House and grabbed breakfast. I ate light, not wanting to regret it later than headed over to the Hermes cabin. I knocked on the door and one of Lola's brothers opened the door.

"Hey, is Lola here?" I ask him. He shouted into the cabin amongst the chaos. A few minutes later she came out ready to go. We talked as we walked and I decided to tell her what Xavier had confessed. She laughed and said she called it. She grabbed a bagel and we went to find Nerth and Xavier. We found Nerth lifting weights in his cabin and had to look all over for Xavier who was working with some of his brothers and sisters with a forge. He left them and we all walked back. I saw Greyson and Fiona hanging out and smiled that Grey was doing better. We all trained a bit against each other. I got Nerth to battle against and Lola battled Xavier. Afterward I walked off to take a break and saw... Grey? But he looked different. More like Dad than normal. His hair looked more golden and he looked tanner and he had a golden glow around him. I walked over to him. He had a massive grin on his face.

"Hey little sis!" He says and wraps me in a hug. He was warm, like he had been tanning by the beach for a while.

"Hey! Why so chipper?" I ask him as he pulls away.

"I figured out how to unlock my glow." He says with a proud smile.

"Oh." I was taken aback. He smiled and showed off his glow. I should've guessed this would happen. But it still hit hard.

"Im glad big bro. Congrats." I tell him and land a light punch on his arm.

"Thanks! Im gonna go show mom and Dad." He says and runs off. I watched him leave then walked back. Why couldnt i unlock my power? Mom said she had when she was my age already. Dad too. Maybe I never would. I wasn't a direct direct descendant after all. But i assumed if Grey isn't then I wouldnt. But he did. I groaned in frustration and shot my arrow as high and hard as I could in anger. I watched it arc over the camp and into the woods near the clearing. I tried to call it back but it was too far away. Even more frustrated, I walked to retrieve it. Somehow, as if by magic, it had landed by the owl's colony. I felt their knowing eyes on my as I grabbed it and cleaned it off. I sighed and did a few moves to let out my anger. A ominous wind came through the clearing. It felt off. I stopped and listened.

Your time will come and you will do great things. Someone whispered. I froze and looked around.

"Who-whos there?!" I demand trying to find the source of the voice. Nothing. I sighed and tried to

stop the words cycling through my head. The owls, as if they were scared, all scattered and flew away. But one stayed behind. It watched me with its golden eyes. Why was it not leaving like the others? I shook off the feel of its gaze and walked off.

Chapter 4

I heard chatter as I walked to where mom and dad were talking to Grey. He showing off his glow and mom made a comment about how he needed to keep his hair in check. They all laughed. I felt a pang in my chest. Mom and dad had never laughed with something like that to me.

"Pull yourself together Audrey. Its fine." I tell myself and know its not true. Someone ran up to them and they all grew excited. I decided to show myself and followed them. Cousin Knole and Evelyn were here! We all ran up to where Cypher was and hugged them. Knole was a nervous wreck as usual. I hugged Evelyn.

"Hi Eve." I say.

"Hi Nerd." She says. I chuckled. Once a nerd always a nerd.

"What are you guys doing here?!" Mom asks.

"I came to help." Knole says. "I didn't want to leave Evelyn back in Rome so."

"You can help?" I asks teasingly and fold my arms over my chest. Cypher shoved him to the ground.

"HE CAN! When I was 14 the guy fought Thanatos off!" Cypher yells excitedly. Thanatos?! The god of death? Keeper of the Doors of Death?! Man I seriously underestimated Knole.

"Really?" I ask him. Knole nods.. grey helps him up. They all started talking.

"Where is Nerth?" Cypher asks.

"I can go get him." I volunteer. Cypher nods.

"He's in our cabin. Either lifting weights, sharpening weapons, sleeping, or taking a shower. If he's taking a shower I'll go and pull him out by his ear." Cypher instructs me. I nod and kind of skip/run toward their cabin. It was not bad for a cabin but the newest by far. I carefully opened the door. Chainsaw like snores filled the room. Great, he's sleeping. I think and carefully navigate through the room littered with knives, swords, and spears.

I sighed and took a deep breath. Nerth was sprawled out on his bed, snoring and... drooling? I had to really hold in my laughter. He drooled... in his sleep. I could barely hold it together. I walked over and tapped is shoulder. He didn't move. I tapped harder. Nothing. I shook his shoulder. Nothing. Man he is OUT. I thought. I stood there and thought. Well, i dont see any other way to wake him up. I think. I grab one of his massive arms and pull as hard as I could. Man he was solid. His skin was also fever warm against my ice cold hands. Yeah I got cold hands. I pulled and pulled and finally got him off his bed. I fell back and landed with a thump. Ow. It think and rub my head where i had hit it. Nerth was still out was half spread eagle on the floor. I noticed what he was wearing. I couldnt keep the laughter in. He was wearing a blue 'I ♥ dinos' shirt and Dino pants.

"Wake up!" I yell. Nothing. Ughhhhh. Screw it. I smacked him. Right across the face. I recoiled my stinging hand. His eyes burst open and he fumbled around.

"What-what happened?" He says. I laugh. He looks at me and blushes.

"Audrey! W-what are you doing here?" He asks nervously.

"To wake you up you big goof. Evelyn and Knole are here." I tell him. He registers what I said and jumps up.

"Well then what are we waiting for?" He asks and starts to run off.

"Nerth wait! You forgot to change... never mind." I say and run after him. I almost died laughing to see his shirt and pants running through camp.

Chapter 5

Nerth made a total fool of himself and had to go change before joining us. He complained on why I didnt warn him but I argued through laughs that I was trying to but he bulldozed out of his cabin like a bull that just saw a red flag. We eventually got all our laughs out and got to business. He was excited to see Eve and Knole and even happier when he learned he was going to be an uncle. After all Evelyn was his big sister. I was excited as well.

I wonder what the name will be. I think to myself. I sighed and suited up. It was another few battle sessions and simulators. I got my team again and we did better than last time. I sadly got multiple cuts which stung like a million bees. But, i couldnt stop then. I walked over to help plan and gasped. Standing there were three legends I never thought I would meet. Percy Jackson, Annabeth Jackson, and Clariseese La Rue. Some of my hero's. Annabeth stood there drawing up a plan. Said to be one of Athena's most powerful offsprings, she was smart and lethal at the same time. Her and mom were chatting like old friends. Which they were but. Wow. I felt so small and insignificant compared to her and mom. I decided to let them be. Even though I SO badly wanted to talk to them. But, id probably just end up blabbering and sounded like an idiot. I was in a depressed mood as I walked over to the hollow where i normally trained. Where I had heard the voice. I trained and trained and trained. And I thought about what I was going to say to Annabeth. I mean what does one say to their childhood hero who also happens to be a legend? after one angry slash I sighed and sat down. I didnt realize there was noise coming from the hollow until I listened.

Huh? I peered out from my hiding spot and gasped. Annabeth was fighting fake enemies with a grace I had never seen before. It was.... Incredible. I dont think I could ever get that good. I was crouching precariously and when something startled me, i tittered and fell. I willed her not to hear me but the noises stopped. I heard her walk over and I tried to pull myself together and stop blushing from embarrassment.

"Who are you?" She asks. I looked at the ground.

"I-i-im Audrey. Audrey Baxter." I stutter and curse my stuttering.

"Lura's kid?"

"Yes ma'am." I say.

"Hm, shes told me about you. How'd you find this place?" She asks me.

"I-i come here to train. My mom told me about it." I tell her.

"But this hollow looks like it hasn't been used in a while." She notices.

"I dont train here, i train in this tiny spot over here." I gesture.

"Could you show me?" She asks me. I nod and lead her to my tiny spot. The owls watch us.

Annabeth looks around.

"I never knew this was back here." She says breathlessly.

"Yea, my mom didnt even know. Nobody does but me and the owls." I say and gesture to my winged friends.

"Hm, Athena favors you." She says.

"Really? But why me?" I ask. She shrugs.

"I dont know. Mother is very discreet." She says with a sour face.

"I guess." I say. I didn't know Grandmother so i dont know. I think to myself.

"Well, show me what you got." Annabeth says.

"What?" I ask her and look at her in shock. Mom didn't lie. She really had storm grey eyes that made you want to curl up in a hole but they looked so knowledgeable.

"You heard me. Lura was a champion fighter, not as good as me but still very good. If your her daughter then I want to see what shes taught you." She says.

"Ok." I say, still in shock, and grab my sword. I braced myself and tried to think of how to start.

"Dont think. Just fight." Annabeth says and watch's me from the edge of the hollow. I sigh and just start. I had gone through So many times. It almost came naturally. Annabeth was right. I just did. I didnt stop until i was out of breath and sweaty. I dont know what got into me. It was like my body was on autopilot. I slashed and dodged and lunged and parried. I fell to the ground in exhaustion and lay there for a second. Annabeth walked over and peered down at me.

"Not bad kid. You remind of me of your mother when she was your age. But your a lot less anxious and shy than she was. She hardly talked ever for years." Annabeth said. Wow. She didnt say I was my mom. Just like her and made me sound like I was my own person.

"Thanks." I say and she helps me up. She was super strong.

"No problem." She says.

"Let's head back, Lura and Clariseese will want my help." She says. We walk out. We get back to the meeting table where mom and Grey were arguing again. I turned to leave but Annabeth beckoned me forward. Grey and Mom looked at me. All eyes were on me. Man I wished I had taken a shower or fixed my hair or something.

"Audrey, what's your thoughts on how we should place the Ares's kids?" She asks me directly. She was treating me like an equal. Nobody of that position had ever done that. She definitely was my favorite. I didnt want to make a fool of myself but I took a deep breath. Dont think just do. I recall.

"I agree with you Mom and Grey, they are our best fighters. But we only have so many Ares fighters. I believe we only have about 50 or so?" I direct the question to Clariseese.

"54 including me." She says.

"Ok, what if we spilt it four ways so we flank the enemy on all sides and have our best fighters lead them along with an Athena kid? That way we have the strategy and warriors leading?" I point out. They all nod.

"Smart. Nice plan kid." Annabeth says. I blush.

"Everyone agree with that?" Annabeth asks.

"Sounds good."

"Yep."

"Smart." Everyone says.

"Good, then have them get ready immediately. Clariseese, you see to the Ares kids, choose the ones that should lead and divide out the rest." Annabeth says.

"You got it." She says and runs off.

"Audrey, can you get about 6 Athena kids that you trust and bring them here with the Ares kids?" She asks me.

"Yes." I say and run off. Wow I felt good. The way mom smiled at my plan made me feel incredible. I sprinted to the Athena cabin. I already knew who I wanted. Aunt Nika, Mom, Haley, Flinn, Kylie, and Jordan. They were the most experienced. I found Haley adn Kylie sharpening weapons and found Jordan and Flinn battling. Aunt Nika was trying to show some kids how to sneak under an opponent and stab them.

"Aunt Nika! Annabeth needs you!" I yell over the chatter. She nods and tells the kids to pair off and rotate blows. She comes with his and I bring them all to the spot Annabeth had told me to be.

Clariseese and her bunch were already there. The two camper groups looked at each other. They were not on good terms, even I disliked the Ares kids. Annabeth, mom, and Grey walked over.

"Good. Now here's the plan." Annabeth says and tells everyone the battle plan. After that we all split up. We left the kids to talk and all went to the Big House. It was night time by now. Annabeth, Nika, and Mom were trading stories and laughing. Percy was an interesting character. Not what I expected him to be. I saw a piano and walked over. I opened it up and stared at the keys. Apollo did give me some musical ability. I started to play and my dad joined me and it was fun. Everyone hummed along. Grey stood up and walked over. He handed mom his bow and everyone oohed and awwed. Oh no. He looked at me and winked. Oh no. He wasn't serious. Only he would do something like this.

I only had a small part but it was important none the less. He played the first note and i groaned.

When both of us are left home alone with a piano, your brother gets ideas. He cracked his fingers and I prepared myself. He started. Rush E. The kid was insane. That's my bro. I think and concentrate on my tiny part of the keys.

Chapter 6

Man everyone was blown away by our performance. Grey especially but that wasn't surprising. After that we went to bed to prepare for the upcoming army. I could barely sleep. I tossed and turned thinking. I couldn't get the words out of my head or fall asleep without dreaming of all my friends dying. So I didn't. I sighed and heard the soft snores of my roommate. I quietly grabbed out my journal and my pen. Xavier had made it for me when he heard I liked to draw. It would light up the page for me to see in the dark. I couldn't think of anything better to do. I drew. I had a little idea of what I was going to draw. So, I drew what was on my heart. Me and my friends. And I added Grey, Fiona, Mom, Dad, Annabeth, Aunt Nika, Eve, Knole, and Cypher. All of us, smiling and laughing, as if there wasn't an army looking to kill us. This was my family. I don't know how long it took me but I didn't care. I wanted to make it perfect. I didn't stop till my hand cramped. I took a break and admired what I had done so far. I was proud of it. I wanted to color it, to finish it. But the warning horn sounded throughout camp, startling me. I blanched. The army was here. I closed my journal and grabbed my sword. I banged on the bunk to get my roommate's attention. Her frightened face looked down at me.

"Come on! Hurry. We have to go help!" I tell her and change into my camp shirt and armor. I ran downstairs where all the Athena kids were waiting. I wasn't the leader of the cabin, that was Flinn, but I felt moved to speak to them.

"Brothers and sisters!" I yell, getting their attention. Wow, this was scary. All eyes were on me.

"I know everyone is scared. Heck I'm scared too." I tell them. "But we are the descendants of Athena, goddess of war strategy and wisdom. We are warriors. That army may be big and scary but we will win. Come on! Let's go win this cabin glory! We are Athena's kids!" I say and shouts of battle rose up among the campers and we all rushed out to meet the rest of the camp. Flinn stopped me.

"Thanks Audrey, I'd been working on how I was going to say something in 2 minutes what you said in 30 seconds. Nice job." He says and walks off the spread the kids out. I glowed with pride.

"Audrey!" I heard someone yell. I turned around to find Xavier trying to put his armor on as he ran towards me. He was out of breath.

"You ready?" He asks.

"Born ready." I say and we run off to where Grey was sorting campers. His now long hair flew up in the wind, making him look like some sort of hero. Everyone was getting into rows.

"Greyson!" I yelled and he turned around.

"Where's Nerth?" I ask him.

"Front lines." He says and I nod.

"Smart." I say. He took a breath.

"You're in the fifth. Xavier you're in—." Back?! My one shot at glory gone? I knew where he was putting Xavier.

"Front lines? The fifth?! BUT IM IN THE—" Greyson looked ready to blow.

"Yes! Audrey please! I need you to listen to me! You're in the fifth ok? NO SHOOTING YOUR ARROWS! Good." He says and rubs his hands together. Tears threatened to fall. I wanted to scream a thousand things at him. None of them nice or something my mother would let me say. But I couldn't fight my brother. He just wanted to protect me. I hate myself but I nod. I pulled my sword out and turned to Xavier. He held his crossbow uncomfortably.

"Let's go, Lola will want to know where we are." I tell him and he nods. We run off. I knew I couldn't keep myself together. I veered off course.

"Audrey! Lola is this way.... Audrey!" He yelled after me as I sprinted toward the Big House. I didn't see where I was going and bumped into someone and fell back.

"I'm sorry." I mumble and realize it was Annabeth. She looked at me and smiled.

"Audrey! Just the person I was looking for! I need you to lead the west group." She says.

"Me? Why me?" I ask her.

"Because you're smart and a good warrior kid. We need all of those we can get." She says. Xavier put his hand on my shoulder.

"Audrey..." He says warning me about Grey's command.

"I know but this is my chance." I whisper to him and he nods but hesitates.

"I will, show me where they are." I tell her and taste something sour in my mouth.

"Perfect! This way." She says and leads me to a group of Apollo, Ares, and Hermes kids.

"Listen up! This is your leader Audrey. You answer to her and Grey only, got it?" Annabeth says.

Everyone nods. I try to smile but I felt weird. Lola pushed her way through.

"Wow! Leader? That's awesome!" She says.

"Thanks." *Sorry brother, but this is my chance.* I think. Thalia, another legend, gives a rousing speech to the Hunters and it's Grey's turn. Of course, he totally botched it. I looked at the army. It was MASSIVE compared to ours. My heart clenched in fear. Now being in the fifth didn't sound so bad. But I had already gotten myself in this. No way out now. Grey released a golden arrow and the battle started. Now or never. I think and charge with a yell.

Chapter 7

The battle had only gone on for only half an hour but it felt like an eternity. I attacked and attacked and attacked but more and more just kept coming. I soon realized I was nowhere ready for this. It did help that Lola and Xavier were right there with me. Most times me and Xavier were back to back fighting. We didn't talk, we couldn't. We were so focused on not dying. After finishing off one particularly hard Fury, I turned around and flashed him a quick smile. He paled and yelled but it was too late. I felt something like liquid ice and fire slice through my calf. I gasped and bit my lip in pain. I fell to the ground. I yelled out in pain. I heard a gurgle behind me.

"Audrey! Audrey are you ok?!" Xavier's distant voice shouted at me. I looked at my calf. I paled. Slick red blood fell from the wound. I looked at the monster who did it. It was golden dust now thanks to Xavier.

"Audrey. Audrey you have to get up! There's a-" he didn't have to finish. A massive dragon ran at us, roaring its terrible roar. Xavier tried to help me up. but there was no way to get away from that thing.

"Xavier, you have to leave me." I say, suddenly realizing how corny and cheesy I sounded but I didn't care. There was no way to say it that wouldn't sound cheesy.

"No, no we're in this together." He says. Also cheesy but I let it slide. After all, not many people that can barely walk survive a dragon running straight for them to kill them.

"I'm sorry Grey." I say and wait for the death I knew was coming. Wow, I was going to die. My life flashed before my eyes. I saw even memories I never thought I had. The last one was of the drawing I had made. I hope someone finds that one day. I think. I braced for a claw, mouth or flame to kill me but it never came.

"Xavier! Audrey! You guys ok?" Nerth's voice asks. The dragon was now a pile of golden dust. I looked up at Nerth. Blood coated, jacked, glowing red Nerth.

"I'm ok but something got her leg pretty bad." Xavier explains. Nerth looks at me. I stare right back into his big soft maroon eyes.

"Xavier, get her to the healers. Then rejoin the fight. We need everyone we got." He says in a very un-Nerth way.

"I'm fine, I just need-" I say and hiss in pain as I put weight on my leg. Blood started pouring out faster. He looked at me hard and concerned.

"Your in no shape. Go now." He says and turns to fight. Xavier helps me limp and fight to the healer's tent. I looked back at Nerth. It was a miracle we made it and one of the Apollo kids helped me from there. Xavier nodded to me then ran back to the battle. I saw so many wounded campers that were in worse shape than me. I realized how lucky I was not to have lost an arm or something worse. It was a painful process to bandage my leg up but it felt better after getting some Nectar. I looked at my leg. I cursed not being able to fight. But there was no stopping me. I made the healer make a split so I could 'help around' but in reality I was going to join the battle again. My leg supported enough

weight that I could battle on the outskirts. It was still helping. Some kid ran up to me and recognized me as their captain of their team.

"We need help over by the brook!" He says.

"Ok, I'm coming." I tell him but he looks at me doubtfully.

"I'm fine, show me where they are!" I say a little harshly and he leads me there. I was a bit slow but we made it. He was right, the battle was going poorly for my team. I limped over and started hacking my way into the center where my group was surrounded. I saw my Ares co-captain, Hank, covered in golden dust and blood and fighting as hard as he could. I sliced one monster across the chest and got back to back with him.

"Where have you been?" He asks. I gesture to my leg. He nods in understanding.

"Well I'm glad your here now but we need to get out of here!" He yells above the noise of the battle. Ya think? I think for a second.

"Let's try to back them against the brook, then they'll be easier to kill." I say and he nods. We attack and break the circle and push them back to the brook. I received many cuts, but nothing serious. My leg had started to throb though. We were just getting the upper hand when a cold, menacing voice stopped everything.

"Surrender now, and nobody else will dies." It says. That voice made my skeleton want to crawl out of my skin. It was so old and powerful. I looked at Hank. He was pale white too. Grey. I think and use the moment of confusion to limp/run to where he was glowing.

Chapter 8

I was SO tired when Grey finally came into view. That chilling voice which had to be Kronos, rang alarm bells inside my head. Luke and him stood looking at Reta, Xavier's half sister.

"Greyson!" I yelled to get his attention. I probably looked stupid but I didnt care. He needed to know what I had to say. His eyes flashed with concern and anger.

"AUDREY I SAID—"

"I don't care what you said." I spit back. He looked at my leg and his face got a deep red.

"AUDREY YOUR HURT! GET OUT OF HERE!" He demands. I finally get to him and I was out of breath.

"I will, JUST LISTEN TO ME!" I scream at him. He shut up and folded his arms as if to say 'ok, enlighten me'. He knows I rarely get this upset. I took a deep breath.

"Kronos is the Titan Lord of Time. You can't just attack him head on. You need a diversion." I tell him firmly and stare right into his eyes as mom does. He looked over at the Titan Lord within Reta's body. Kronos... Reta.... Smiled.

"Send me your leader. We will talk things out." His icy powerful voice said through the smile. Grey didn't look fazed. I studied him closer. He looked so strong and brave. Like how I had always seen him when I was little. He wasn't even fazed by a Titan Lord asking for him. I never realized this but I wasn't the hero. Grey was. He wasn't hogging all the glory. He was just doing what needed to be done. I looked at my brother as I had never before. He turned to me and I saw steel in his gaze.

"You need to leave. Get out of here. If not to save yourself, then do it for me. I understand what your saying— I really do— but leave." He says, his voice like I've never heard before. I was surprised and the very small part of myself wanted to stay and argue that I should stay but I quenched it. He was counting on me. I nod and walk back to my group. I hated waiting. The monsters were waiting around as well, two cyclops were talking to each other and fixing their weapons. My group retreated to a point where we could easily see and attack the monsters should the peace break. I made sure that everyone in my group was ok and used what little healing skills I had to help the wounded. I don't know what came over me but soon I was helping everyone near me. Soon, my whole group

was helping bring more wounded my way. I worked tirelessly to help them. But I was always keeping an eye on Kronos and my glowing brother.

Lura POV

I was helping one of the kids in my group who had gotten a wicked cut on her arm. She whimpered and groaned.

"Hey, its gonna be ok. Im here ok? What's your name?" I ask her, channeling my inner mom.

"I-Izzy." She stutters.

"Well, Izzy, can I tell you a little secret?" I ask her. For being about 12 years old, she smiled like Grey and Audrey when they were little. She nodded.

"When I was your age, I got a cut just like that. And you wanna know what? I got this pretty cool scar out of it." I say and hold up my arm that had gotten cut all those years ago. I looked at the white scar. I showed it to her. Her eyes went wide. She traced her finger over it.

"That's so cool! Is mine gonna do that?" She asks me and carefully holds it closer for me to inspect.

"Probably." I tell her.

"Nice! Then all the kids in my cabin will see how tough I am!" She says. I laugh.

"Yep. Now hold still, I need to bandage it up." I tell her. She sits perfectly still. I finish wrapping it and I hear feet walking toward me. I turn and see my son and Luke walking over. I was taken aback.

Where was the tiny boy that loved to cry? In front of me was a man who had faced the world and carried it on his shoulders. Gone was his easy smile, replaced with a hard line of determination. He had a small glow around him. Apollo. I figured just as much. Man what happened to the time? I got the memo that he needed me and I smiled. I got up and looked at the girl.

"Stay safe, we're gonna sort this out." I tell her and she gives me a small salute. I grabbed my sword and morphed it into my glasses. I put them on and we walked on either side of Greyson. He walked up the Titan Lord, now Reta a girl from camp, and didn't even flinch. Kronos smirked.

"I swear on the Styx I will not hurt, harm, or kill anyone during our... chat. I swear on the Styx that my monsters will not either." His voice booms at us from her mouth. Greyson folded his arms and nodded. The kid had spine I'll give him that. I was so proud of him but I hated that this weight was on his shoulders. Kronos dropped his scythe and motioned for us to do the same. I reluctantly put my glasses down. Greyson dropped his bow and quiver and Luke his sword. Kronos began to eye Luke. I tensed.

"Castellan. We meet again." He says and it sends shivers down my spine. Luke Castellan. He was the hero and villain of the original Great War. Annabeth had told me about him. And that Luke was named after him. But why refer to him as that Luke? Grey looked at Luke too. Luke raised an eyebrow and stared at Kronos.

"I don't know you." He says.

"But you do Luke! You were my former body in the First Titan War! Does Luke Castellan ring a bell?" Kronos says firmly. Luke stared at Kronos. But... something crossed over his face. I saw many things pass over Luke's eyes. Luke blinked and looked down.

"You... lie." He says trying to gather himself. "You deceive and makes people do your bidding. Like... like Reta." He says softly, voice thick with emotion. I felt bad for the kid. Greyson had explained everything to me. Kronos stood straighter and smiled.

"True, but I want to speak with your leader." Kronos then turned to my son I was ready to leap into action to protect him.

"I never expected an Archer to lead an army." He says evilly. Grey straightens. He looks Kronos dead in the eyes.

"Yeah, well, I dint expect you to get a body anytime soon. I thought you were— what's it called— oh yeah, a free floating vapor." Grey says bitterly. There's the Greyson I know. I think and allow myself the smallest smile. Kronos stepped back slightly.

"FREE FLOATING VAPOR!? I AM KRONOS YOU IDIOT MORTAL!" Greyson looked up.

"And I'm Greyson Baxter, and I think our conversation with this moron immortal floating vapor is

done." He says and I almost laughed at Krono's reaction. I was so proud of my son. He had looked the Time Lord in the eye and managed to insult him and live. What else could a mother want?

Chapter 9

I was fighting some monster with Lola when I saw a familiar blonde haired girl run by. Charia?! But she was in Tartarus.

"Lola! Finish these off! I need to do something!" I yell and she nods. I limp after her. She was sprinting.

"CHARIA!" I yell and the runner hesitates. She looks back and smiles.

"Audrey?! Is that you?!" She asks. I run up and hug her.

"How'd you get out of Tartarus?!" I ask her and fend off a hellhound.

"Long story, I'll explain later. For now we need to retreat! Erebus is about to do something stupid." She says. I blanch.

"Ok, I'll get my group out of here you go tell Greyson! He's over by the hill over there." I say and point with my blade. She nods and another hellhound steps out to attack her. I click a tiny button on my sword and shift and fire my silver arrow from my now bow into its head. *Thanks grandpa.* I think as it crumples. I nod to her and start limping through my ranks and yell orders to retreat. One Ares kid got cocky and asked me why should he. I swiftly dealt with him with a knock on the head.

"Anybody else have any questions why I'm trying to save your butts?" I snap. They all shake their heads and run back towards camp.

"Help!" I hear someone scream. Two other kids stop.

"No! Keep going! I'll go help!" I yell at them and limp to the screamer. My leg was on fire and I was pretty sure I was losing blood but I didn't care. If a bit of pain meant I saved some innocent kid's life then it was worth it. I saw the two that had screamed. Flinn was fending off a Manticore and was doing poorly. Two kids were behind him, one a bloody mess and the other trying to drag his friend away from the fight. I saw Flinn fighting for these kids. I don't know what came over me. Everything turned acute. I saw angles I had never before seen. I saw the few weaknesses that the Manticore had. I ran at the thing.

"HEY UGLY! PICK ON SOMEONE YOUR OWN SIZE!" I yell at it and Flinn looks at me. Big mistake. I watch helplessly as the Manticore preys on his hesitation and strikes him with its powerful claws.

"NOO!!" I yell and watch as he fell. Flinn didn't deserve to die. He was like a big brother to me. He always helped everyone, young or old, big or small. He was trying to save these kids. I yelled and clicked the button and shot my arrow at the thing. It by some miracle hit where I wanted it to. A spot in between its neck. It roared in pain and crumpled to dust. I was livid. The kid still conscious looked at me in awe.

"Come on! We have to move!" I saw and help him with his friend. She had a massive claw wound right down her side that was gushing blood.

"Hold still, I need to patch this up." I tell the kid and he nods. I put my hand hovering over the wound. I felt a tingle and my hand lit up a bit. But not golden like I thought. It was... silver and gold. The wound started to close. The kid had eyes as wide as dinner plates.

"How'd you-?" He asks.

"I don't know kid." I cut him off and I gesture for us to go. We go as fast as we could while I yelled at the other campers. I grabbed one and got him and his buddy to help the kid. They helped the girl off the the healers and I prayed she made it. I looked at the hill and saw... darkness. Like pure darkness. Erebus. He's the only one who could do that.

"Come on!!" I yell to everyone and feel panic set in. And exhaustion. I stumbled but forced myself to

stay awake. I ran with them but my leg was keeping me behind. I felt everyone run miles ahead of me but I couldn't stop lagging. I saw more and more darkness. Keep. Going. I tell myself and manage to make it to the tents. I find one where Lola and Xavier were waiting. They stepped back and looked at me in shock.

"A-Audrey? Is that you?" They ask in shock. I don't even respond but push past them into the tent and collapse onto the ground. All I hear are worried voices as I pass out.

Chapter 10

I don't know how long I was out, but it felt like 5 seconds. Xavier was shaking me awake.

"Audrey! You have to wake up!" He said, his tone urgent. My response was a garbled mess. He sighed and grunted in frustration. He looked up and some shouts rang out. But I didn't think anything of it. He slipped out of the tent and the reappeared.

"Audrey! Their back!" He yells happily but I was already up. I sprinted past him and toward the edge of camp. The dizziness made it hard but I didn't care I ran toward the light. My brother. I saw him, bloody and battered but alive. I ran up and tackled him in a hug.

"Your okay!" I say and will myself to not cry. My brother was alive!!! He hugged me back in his strong arms. He looked at me with his clear blue eyes but something was different. They sparkled with unshed tears and grief.

"We... we need to talk." He says softly and I nod. I felt uneasy as we walked a bit away. I looked back at the group. Something WAS off. Nerth was missing and Luke.

"Where's Nerth?" I ask him. Grey didn't answer and kept pushing me away. Grey nods slightly back in the group's direction. I saw motion out of the corner of my eye.

"Grey, where is Nerth?!" I ask him, my voice on the brink of desperation. He tried to lead me farther but I looked back. No. No it can't be. Nerth?! He lay in Luke's arms, a hot bloody mess. By the way everyone turned away from him I knew what had happened. I tried to break free from Grey but he held me.

"NERTH!" I yelled out and sobbed. My friend. The one that had been there through it all with a kind word and a smile. Nerth the one who loved dinos. Nerth, the one who would always do something goofy or stupid and never be fazed by it. Nerth was gone. I sobbed and sobbed. I couldn't stop. I fought and fought against Grey, trying to run to my friend's body and make him come back.

"NERTH!" I yelled again and felt something pass over me.

"NERTH!" I yelled. Grey held me back as Luke carried him. I couldn't do anything but cry. Why? Why Nerth? Why did it have to be Nerth?! WHY WHY WHY?! They took him away, out of sight. Grey tried to comfort me but there was nothing he could do. When he finally loosened his grip just a bit I fought out of his arms and ran. I don't know where. Just ran. Ran and ran and ran. I ran until I couldn't anymore. Somehow I was in my tiny spot by the hollow. I sobbed and sobbed. My friend. Gone. I lay there, gulping in air and crying like a child. My leg felt like it was on fire but it didn't even compare to the pain in my chest. It felt like my heart had been ripped to pieces and burned. The only sound in the hollow was my crying. It seemed even the owls were mourning for they were silent. Sadness turned to rage. WHY DID THE GODS ALLOW THIS?! WHY DIDN'T THEY STRIKE THAT ARMY DOWN SO NOBODY HAD TO DIE?! I got up and looked at a tree nearby. I yelled in grief-stricken rage and lashed out at it with my sword. I just didn't stop. I fueled all my hurt and anger and despair into my sword. I slashed and slashed until I couldn't even lift my sword. I panted and yelled again, lifting my now a thousand pound sword to strike it again. But something stopped it. It bounced off something and I fell back. I didn't get up. I didn't even open my eyes. Maybe it was some left-over monster come to finish me off.

"JUST GET IT OVER WITH!" I yell and cried but no tears fell. I was all out of tears.

"No." The voice said. It moved next to me and put a hand on my cheek. I looked through red eyes to see Xavier and Lola there. Both had tears rolling down their faces and red puffy eyes like mine.

"No. We would never do that." Xavier said. I just sobbed more. He helped me up and I cried into his shoulder. He hugged me and rubbed my back and whispered "its ok" "I'm here" into my ear.

"We need to go, everyone has been looking for you." Lola says, her voice thick. Xavier nods.

"Your parents and bro freaked out when you ran away." He says softly. I shouldn't be thinking this but at this point I didn't care.

"Can you stand?" He asks me. I shake my head. It was taking everything just to stay awake. He looked at Lola.

"Help me ok?" He asks and she nods. She helps me stand and they each take a side of me and help me slowly walk out of the hollow. Being with them brought back painful memories. Our tiny group just got smaller. Walking with them made me see hallucinations of Nerth walking backward and smiling. I could barely look without seeing him, his smile, his eyes. We finally got to camp and my parents were frantically asking people everywhere. My dad saw me first. He pointed to me and they both ran over. They wrapped me in their arms and bombarded me with questions. I just stood there, not able to cry or talk. They lead me to a tent and then let me be. I was thankful my mom was such a good reader of situations because my dad wanted to ask me more questions but she told him off and let me be. I laid there. I went in and out of consciousness. But I was tormented with memories of Nerth and I. One when we were little and playing in a sand box. Then us a little older playing tag. Then older us teasing each other while I beat him at checkers. Then older when he first gotten his blood curse and I used his arm as a place to hang and swing. Then to right before the battle. He had wanted to tell me something, but never got the chance. Someone came in.

"Hey hon. Um, their having the service for all the kids in a minute. You feel up to join?" She asks me softly and rubs my back like she did when I was a kid. To be honest, I might never be ready. But I had to. For Nerth. I nod and she helps me up. Everything screamed in protest but it was again dulled compared to my grief. She numbly lead me to a spot where we could watch the service. They held me the whole time. I watched blindly as they went through the other kids then Nerth. He was last. It seemed right. Cypher said the words and then Erebus did something to the casket before pushing it into the flames. When it was over I told my parents I wanted to be alone and walked to the dock. I wasn't even safe from the memories there. I saw us everywhere. I closed my eyes and just sat there. I heard the dock creak and someone sat next to me.

"Why did it have to be Nerth?! Why him?" I ask softly, my voice breaking. An arm went around me, pulling me into Xavier's chest.

"I don't know. He was my best friend. Sometimes, life just deals you a bad card you know?" He says, his voice breaking as well. He just held me. We watched the moon illuminate the lake.

Chapter 11

I don't know why Erebus walked over to me. I was walking back to my cabin with Xavier when he came up to me.

"Hey Audrey... um... weird question... what was Nerth's favorite food?" He asks. Gods just saying his name sent me down a rabbit hole of memories. I summoned up the courage to talk.

"Um sprite and chicken nuggets." I say softly. Xavier put a comforting hand on my back.

"Great, thanks. Um can you meet me later? I want to show you something." He says. Going somewhere was the last thing I wanted to do.

"Ok, um what time?" I ask him nevertheless.

"Uhhh 10 minutes?" He asks.

"Um ok. Where?" I ask him.

"I'll come grab you. See ya." He says awkwardly and walks off. I sigh and Xavier walks me to the cabin.

"Hey, if you need a friend just ask." He tells me. I nod. He gives me a hug and then waves goodbye. I walked inside and freshened up for a second. I walked down to the entrance and waited for Erebus. He came back right on time with Uncle Cole, Aunt Astraea, Cypher, and Evelyn. Everyone was red and puffy eyed. I felt out of place. I shifted uneasily.

"Ready?" He asks with a bag of chicken nuggets in his hand. I nod and walk next to Eve. She had a reassuring hand on my shoulder. We walked to a small patch of ground outside of camp. He mumbled some things but I didn't hear him.

"So... your going to raise him from the dead?" Eve asks. That got my attention. Was it even possible? My spirits sunk at his answer.

"Pfft, no." He says plainly. "I'm going to raise his soul for a few minutes." He says shrugging like it was no big deal.

"What?" I ask him. He looked at me as I bit my lip.

"Yeah..." He says, giving me no clarification. He did something with the dirt and food and closed his eyes. Nothing happened until I was frightened by a blue hand shooting out of the ground.

"SO MANY CHICKEN NUGGYS! BBQ, RANCH, HONEY NUT! AND-" I gasped. Ghost Nerth looked at us. His eyes widened and he looked around.

"Dang it... I was eating chicken nuggets." He says. Cypher chuckled. I couldn't believe it. He was here. But not. The memories threatened to over pour in tears but I had to look away for a second. Everyone talked with him but I couldn't. I didn't know what to say. It was too... painful. Especially with everyone else there. They knew him better than I did. He was their family. I felt like an outsider. I was about to leave when everyone stops talking.

"Hey.. can I talk to my friend here... in private?" He asks his family. My heart froze. All eyes were on me. I wanted to disappear. Everyone did. I didn't meet Nerth's eyes. He walked over on silent steps.

"Hi!" He says and I envisioned him smiling.

"Hey." I say softly. It was hard to even get that out. Dang it why did this have to be so hard?! I had been wishing for the past hours to be able to talk to him one last time and here I could and I couldn't even say hello? *That's messed up Audrey.* I tell myself. I didn't realize I was crying till he tried to wipe a tear that was rolling down my cheek. I felt cold as his hand went right through me. I looked up slightly. He tried to kick a rock but couldn't.

"I um... I miss you." He says. I bit my lip. My eyes started to puff up.

"I miss you too." I choke up. He looked at me with those warm maroon eyes.

"Hey, don't cry because of me. Cry because I have zero rizz." He says chuckling.

"What?!" I ask him looking him full in the face, which was hard since he was like 6'4. It was Nerth's turn to look down. He looked back at me with joy and sadness in his eyes.

"I... I love you— or well I loved you when I was alive. I still do. I was just scared to tell you." He says and looks down. My heart froze. I mean literally froze. That's what he meant to tell me. I think. Nerth? Love me? Tears formed. Nerth tried to wrap me in a hug, and for some reason he did. He didn't go through me. He felt real again. I sobbed slightly and let his strong arms comfort me.

"I love you. I always will." He says into my ear. I felt the arms loosen and sink. *No. Not now. Please. I just got him back. Please no.* I plead in my head. I try to hold on to him. I watch him smile sweetly at me with such a love in his eyes I knew it would never leave me. And then he was gone. Just like that. I stood there. Torn between grief and love. I wiped my face. *At least I got to talk to him.* I tell myself.

"*Don't cry because of me.*" He had said. I would never stop crying for him. But at least I wouldn't cry as much. That thought gave me hope and courage. Nerth will always be in my heart. I was now realizing that I did have feelings for him, however distant and small it was. My first love. Gone. *But at least we will never forget each other.* I tell myself. I looked at Erebus who I had forgotten was there. He looked at me. I walked over to him. Before I knew what I was doing, I wrap him in a hug. He resists for a second but then relents. He was tiny, I was bigger than him, but he didn't stop the hug. Whatever feelings of uncertainty and doubt had been there about him vanished.

"Thank you." I tell him with a grateful smile. He nods.

"Lets get back shall we?" I ask him and he nods awkwardly. Grey was right about one thing, the kid was SUPER socially awkward. We joined Nerth's family and walked to our cabins. I walked to mine and realized Jane wasn't in her bunk. I realized she probably was in the healers tent. I showered the grim off me and put on my pjs. I settled into bed and was about to go to sleep when I grabbed my journal. I journaled for a bit but then turned to the page behind my big group one and started to draw. I don't why I drew it, but I did. When it was done, I smiled, satisfied, and then fell asleep.

Epilogue Special Scene

I packed my few belongings into my suitcase and sighed. Jane had already left and her bunk was bare. I looked around at my tiny room, yet it was somehow so big. Maybe it was the impression, maybe it was the memories. I would figure it out someday. I stood just inside the room and made my final checklist. I checked off the tiny boxes in my head but one made me pause. I walked back over, leaving my suitcase, and climbed up the ladder. My leg was still healing so it took a while to get there but I was happy I did to retrieve it. I was completely confused on how I had forgotten to grab this. I carefully tossed it down and it landed on Jane's bunk with a soft thump. I carefully climbed back down and hobbled over to my suitcase and opened the front pocket and slipped it in it. Perfect. I thought and sighed again. I would miss this place even though I would be back in a short 7 months. I knew my parents were waiting for me in the car but I couldn't bring myself to leave the room. Something told me that this was a different place and leaving it now meant I would lose that specific feeling forever. I held back tears as I thought back to this summer's events. It had started off so normal but ended up being the furthest thing from it. With the quest, then the Battle, then Nerth... I didn't let myself go any further, knowing it was a place I couldn't come back from. This room hadn't changed though. It was still the same even though its occupants were not.

Maybe that's why I don't want to leave. I think to myself. It clicked halfway in my brain. But there was still a piece that held me in place. Something else told me that leaving would make me cross a threshold I didn't want to cross. But why, I didn't know, but it didn't give me a good feeling. I swallowed the knot in my throat and shook my head. I was going to be ok. It may take time, but I would be. Eventually. And whatever this feeling was it would eventually fade as well. I made up my mind and broke my trance. I didn't look back as I closed my door and hobbled down the steps. I walked through the now almost empty camp and didn't know what I was getting into by leaving. Had I known I would've never left in the first place. I got in the car and shuffled my playlist. Not that I needed to tone anything out. The car was as silent as a grave.