

Fast forward. I have the talk(it was interesting and VERY long). Astraea still invites me to stay with her. Bexter agrees after a little convincing and I leave with them at the end of the camp term. Tyler's funeral service was a really sad moment but I came out of it stronger. I had given Devin my number so we could keep in touch over the break. I had eventually told him about what my mom had said and he said that we shouldn't worry about it right now. I was thankful for that. We had grown closer to each other, not quite dating yet though. Nika was trying everything to get us together but I told her she would have to wait another year. She had rolled her eyes but didn't protest. She was going to stay over the break, promising to keep in touch. Bexter drove us to a nice apartment where Astraea's mom stood waving at the door to us. Astraea's baby brother, Brent, was waving at us too with a big smile on his face. I instantly feel in love with him. Astraea had a sister too who was a bit smug. She hated me from the moment she met me but she eventually warmed up to me though. Especially once we found common ground through music. Astraea's mom loved me, treating me like her own daughter. She was really nice. I was playing with Brent when I realized that he was deaf. I told Astraea's mom about it and she confirmed it. She said she was going to get a sign language teacher for him and us. He came over everyday during the week, teaching us. Brent was smart and picked it up quickly. I was excited to learn it to. I had always wanted to learn how to sign but here was the chance to learn. Years went by. Me and Devin eventually became boyfriend girlfriend. Annabeth had been busy working on some secret projects that she made sure me and Nika couldn't get into. No matter how hard Nika pressed, Annabeth wouldn't budge. We still had a lot of fun. I started Pegasus riding and instantly fell in love with it. My Pegasus's name was Silverwing. She was, of course, silver with white flecks on her wings. She was fast and agile. I had met another rider named Katie from the Hephaestus cabin. Her Pegasus's name was Spark. We had become fast friends and raced Pegasus all the time. Besides that, I was in school as much as I could be. I mean, I was kicked out once because some Harpies wanted me as a snack. but I managed to start high school with little problems and was three grades ahead of my age group. Astraea was still sad over Cole but she had poured that energy into the family and her studies. Despite her dyslexia, which was worse than mine, she was really smart. She went to college which wasn't fun because she was always

On campus. We had gone to visit her multiple times which was always a blast. This time, we had come over during fall break. I had gotten used to calling Bexter Dad and Astraea's mom, Elisabeth, Mom. They were great parents. We were talking in the small kitchen at Astraea's place as Mom made brownies. I LOVED her brownies. She had a secret ingredient that she wouldn't tell me till I moved out. No matter how many times I pleaded her. I asked her again today and got the same answer I always did. I'll tell you when your older. I rolled my eyes and Astraea laughed. She called me a savage of a teenager but I had just never had any confidence of my own to show my personality. Well, that all changed. We were about to dig into the brownies when a knock came from the door. Being demigods, a knock could mean anything and me and Astraea tensed. Astraea went to the door. I walked up to the door and saw Hermes. He had his delivery outfit on and was holding a golden note. Hello Astraea. Delivery. He says and hands it to her. She opened the note and read it. No offense but I was a pretty fast reader and almost Squeler when I read it. Astraea's eyes lit up and a old fire returned to them. Astraea thanked him and closed the door. Go! Go see him you little rascal! I tell her with a smirk. Im not the rascal! She says smiling and grabbed her guitar from the corner. She waved to us and ran out the door. I smiled. Where is she off to? Mom asks. Oh, she Had a date. I tell her with a smile and cut myself a brownie. She looks confused but doesn't press. Astraea doesn't get home Till late. I was on her couch, listening to my music on my iPod. She walks through the door, grinning from ear to ear. Behind her was Cole. He had the same grin on his face as Astraea did. I pull my AirPods out. Hey Lura, can you go get everyone? Astraea asks me, Sure I tell her and get the family to gather in the living room. Mom, Dad, Lura, Bexter, and Micah. Astraea addresses all of us. Cole and I have something we want to say.

A year later

Astraea was having twins in a few months. I was really excited. She was coming over to dinner tonight. Mom was making brownies again and let me help her make them. The secret ingredient knowledge was within my grasp. I was checking every ingredient when the doorbell rang. Lura, will you get it? Mom asks. I nod and go to the door. I expected Astraea and Cole but instead was my

Mom. Mom? I say, She puts a finger to her lips and waves her hand. Now they can't hear us. She says. What are you doing here? I ask her. I came to warn you, your journey approaches soon and I fear you won't be ready. She says, trailing off. My heart freezes. Wait, as in soon soon? I ask her. No, you have time but it may be too little. If the journey starts and you're not ready, you won't be able to stop it. If you get to make it to Camp before it starts, learn as much as you can. She says, eyes digging into me. This is what I feared. I can't move. Athena looks off in the distance. I have to go, I've been here too long. Good luck. She says and disappears. WAIT! I yell but it's too late. LURA! EVERYTHING OK? Mom asks. Yeah Mom, it was just some delivery guy. I lie and walk back in. She had put the brownies in the oven. I was a little annoyed that I had come so close to learning the secret ingredient but this was more serious. I'm gonna go lay down, take a quick power nap before they get here. I tell her, mind racing too fast. Ok, I'll call you in when they're here. She says with a smile and I walk to my room. Brent shared it with me so I could help him. He was sitting there on his tiny bed and silently playing with one of his cars. He signed to me and I smiled. Brent always made me feel better, even if he wasn't my real brother. But I really had to focus on my mom's words. 'Sorry, I can't play right now' I sign to him. He looks disappointed but goes right back to playing. I open my journal to a fresh page and start jotting down a layout. I pop my AirPods in and shuffle songs and turn it up loud. I lose track of time and don't realize they're here till Brent taps me and signs that Mom was calling for me. I rushed to put my journal away and looked at my hair in the mirror and then put on a fake smile. Just get through the night, then you can think about this later. I tell myself and make a mental note to call Devin later. I held Brent's hand as we walked into the kitchen. I got this. I tell myself. Somehow I knew that this was going to be a moment to savor.