



Perseus and the Gorgon

Chapter Six

Attack of the Sea Monster



The moment he left the cave, Perseus was blasted by a gale that nearly swept him from his feet and the storm grew stronger as he struggled back towards the coast. Icy rain lashed against his face and fierce winds threatened to tear the bag from his hands. However he held on tight, feeling the snakes on Medusa's head wriggle inside.

He was well on his way when he saw a crowd gathered at the top of a cliff in the distance, staring out to the stormy sea.

Perseus was baffled. What on earth could be going on? Then he spotted a beautiful young woman at the bottom of the cliff, being chained to the rock by some soldiers. She stared solemnly ahead, patiently letting them bind her.

With one glance at her face, Perseus fell in love.

High above the woman, a man stood surveying the scene. He looked heartbroken. Behind him huddled a nervous crowd.

Perseus didn't know it, but this was the day of Andromeda's sacrifice.

Perseus watched. A large dark shape rose from the depths of the water.

"Cetus!" screamed the crowd and a monster appeared through the waves.

The monster's long fangs flashed in a streak of lightning as it swam forward. It had seen Andromeda and it was hungry.

Perseus didn't know who they were but he knew he could rescue the girl. He reached for his bag, feeling Medusa's head inside. If he could just get this terrifying creature to look at the snakes...

Charging for the edge of the cliff, he leaped from the end.

He fell...and fell...landing hard on the monster's back.

He gripped the cold, scaly body between his legs and held on tight. Then, with a cry, he plunged his sword into Cetus's shoulder. The monster's roar was louder than thunder. It thrashed and rolled, trying to shake Perseus off. However Perseus clung on to his sword. He was waiting for the right moment...

"Now!" he thought.

Just as the sea creature lunged forward, Perseus let go of his sword. He was flung high in the air and into the water.

Bursting to the surface, he swam frantically for the rocks. The monster came after him, its vast mouth wide open.

With the last of his strength, Perseus hauled himself onto the rocks. "Shut your eyes!" he yelled to the girl. "Don't look!"

He reached into his bag and pulled out Medusa's head. Closing his own eyes, he thrust the grisly trophy into the air.

The monster glared furiously at the hissing snakes. Its mouth opened to roar but no sound came out. It looked down, horrified to see its body turning to stone. However it still came after Perseus. Its movements became slower and slower but it was getting closer and closer...

The girl cried out. Perseus dropped the head and put his arms around her. The monster's shadow fell over them. Its huge mouth opened... but it didn't shut. It stood as silent and still as the cliffs. It had turned entirely to stone.

With his eyes closed once again, Perseus felt for Medusa's head and put in his bag, before returning to comfort the girl.

"You saved my life!" she said. "And I don't even know your name."

"P...Perseus," gasped Perseus, still getting his breath back.

"Then thank you, Perseus," she said. "I'm Princess Andromeda. My father, King Cepheus, is just up there on the top of the cliffs. I know he'll want to thank you too."

As Perseus helped Andromeda up the cliff, the villagers roared and cheered in delight.

King Cepheus beamed when he was introduced to Perseus. "You must come back to the palace and celebrate with us." He said, giving Perseus a friendly pat on the back.

"I would love to sire," said Perseus, gazing at Andromeda, "but I have some unfinished business to attend to first."

"I'll be waiting for you," Andromeda added, with a shy smile.

With one last look at Andromeda, Perseus headed off for the palace of King Polydectes.

His mother gave a cry of relief when she saw him enter the throne room.

Perseus gave her a quick smile as he strode right up to King Polydectes and withdrew the Gorgon's gruesome remains from the bag.

The king was astounded to see Perseus return with Medusa's head. However he didn't say a word. He had leaped from his throne and now stood in silence, totally still – as still and cold as a statue.

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Chapter Six Worksheet



1. Write down all of the words from paragraph one that are related to the weather.
2. Which word in paragraph three tells us that the woman was not smiling?
3. Who was the "man" described in paragraph five and what was his name?

4. In your own words, describe the way in which Perseus defeated the monster.
5. Write down three words that you would use to describe the monster. (You cannot use any from the passage).
6. Which word (towards the end of the passage) tells us that Perseus walked with confidence?
7. Think about the end of the story... If you had to write an alternative, what would it be? Describe *your* new ending in a paragraph (or more) if you are feeling creative!



Finished everything so far?

Think about the story as a whole... Try to summarise the plot in **less than 100** words!

