Really? Right in front of my salad?

by loloisafangirl

Summary

Poseidon wasn’t sure if it was the news that Zeus had yet another affair with a mortal, or if it was just millenia of pent-up frustration towards her husband that finally got Hera to snap. But today was apparently the final day that she put up with his bullshit, because here Poseidon was, in the mortal world, as a teenager, Hades and Zeus at his side.

Or

The big three go on a quest with their children as mortals.

Romance isn’t the main point of this story. If you don’t ship any of these pairings, you can pretty much ignore them. If you do ship them there are subtle hints throughout the story that could lead to them dating, and one or two romantic scenes.

(The title has nothing to do with the story)
Hey y'all so this is basically a 'gods turned to teenager' fan fiction, except the gods don't go to Goode because I am so done with school oh my god. I am open to suggestion, though I won't take all of them. Enjoy because oh boy will this be a wild ride
Poseidon wasn’t sure if it was the news that Zeus had yet another affair with a mortal, or if it was just millennia of pent-up frustration towards her husband that finally got Hera to snap. But today was apparently the final day that she put up with his bullshit, because here Poseidon was, in the mortal world, as a teenager, Hades and Zeus at his side.

“What in the name of…” Hades pushed himself up from his stomach and into a seated position, grunting a little as his knees scraped against the pavement.

Zeus grunted as well as he sat up and leaned against opposite wall facing Poseidon. He scrunch ed his nose up as he looked around at the grimy brick walls. “Where the Hades are we?”

Poseidon looked around more at that, also pushing himself up to a sitting position. He cringed as little pebbles embedded themselves into his palms and fingertips, but swiped his hands together to rid his skin of them once seated. They appeared to be sprawled over the pavement of some alley between two tall buildings, both of which were made of grime coated brick. The sun brushed the very front of the alley, highlighting the pavement in gold while the rest was bathed in semidarkness. Poseidon's legs were in the light, but the rest of him along with Zeus and Hades were in the shadows.

When Hades, with his face contorted into an expression that screamed "offended", said: "I'm not a substitute for hell, thank yo—", Poseidon came back to reality and cut him off.

“I don’t know! You’re the one that got Hera pissed, you would know best.” He glared at Zeus just as he had done so many times before, and Zeus glared back, face a little hard to make out in the dim light. He opened his mouth to retort, but this time Hades cut him off.

“Wait, hold on for a moment,” Hades said, holding a hand up. "Zeus got Hera angry and she wanted to punish him, if I'm understanding correctly. But why did she punish us, too?” He brushed some of the grime off his jeans as he said this, looking around at the alley they were in with his face scrunched up like a toddler smelling something rotten for the first time.

Wait. He brushed the grime off his…jeans…?

Since when did Hades wear jeans? Yes, they were black, but they were still...jeans.

And...hold up. Poseidon almost got whiplash as he jerked his head to look at Hades further. He was...young. Like, really young. No older than seventeen young. Poseidon's brow furrowed further, and he whipped his head around to look at Zeus. Jesus Christ...It had been too dark to really notice how much younger their features looked, but Poseidon didn't see any facial hair on Zeus, and when there was no facial hair on Zeus, something was wrong.

Oh gods...

Poseidon looked down at himself. He was pretty sure he wasn’t wearing jeans and a far too large
hoodie 5 minutes ago, either. Dreadful, he jerked his hands up and touched his face. And...nope. Nothing. Smooth as a baby's bottom. His skin also felt smoother—less weathered and thick, and now soft to the touch. No. No, no no... He had tried going without facial hair a few times. Lots of people liked it. He despised it with every fibre of his being.

He shook his head and chose to respond to Hades’ question. “I don’t know. Maybe Amphitrite and Persephone were in on this too? But that’s not fair because we—” he glared at Zeus, “—weren’t the ones to have another affair yesterday.”

Zeus scowled at him from the wet brick wall he was leaning against. “And so what if I did? I didn’t get her pregnant.”

“Yes, brother, but you still cheated on Hera.” Hades rolled his eyes. He stood, brushed off his jeans again, and observed their surroundings. Poseidon had to refrain himself from staring at the pure absurdity of his looks, but quickly followed his lead. It wasn't that he looked bad, it was just Poseidon simply hadn’t seen him like that in millennia, or maybe he never even did. Zeus stood shortly after, and Poseidon had to stop himself from staring at him, too. While Hades still looked like himself, Zeus had become almost unrecognizable, other than the familiar set to his jaw and the same sharp blue eyes.

The alley was still in New York by the looks of it, just in a dingier subdivision than Olympus. The sun was setting, reflecting on glass windows and temporarily blinding Poseidon. Dammit, Apollo, Poseidon thought, attempting to blink little orange and green shapes out of his vision. A wind breezed over them, and Poseidon wrapped his arms around his torso.

“Do you think we could try going back up to Olympus?” Poseidon suggested, still blinking as those little orange spots blocked some of his vision.

As soon as he finished his suggestion, a piece of paper flung itself at Zeus’s head. Poseidon jumped a little, then stared at the paper curiously, fighting the urge to laugh at Zeus’s expression of angered annoyance. Zeus reached for the wad of paper and unfolded it rougher than necessary.

“What is it?” Hades asked, leaning against the brick wall he woke up against.

Zeus studied the letter for a moment before reading. “It says:

Dearest bastard husbands and their respective brothers,

As a punishment for being unfaithful, we’ve decided to strip you of your privilege of being a god. This includes: no Olympus, no immortality, no powers, and no authority. Thank Hecate for that. Should you find yourself in a situation that could potentially cause death, all you need to do is say the greek word for help followed by one of our names, and it will signal to us that you are in danger. If this situation arises, you will gain back your immortality, but not your godly status. Should you send us this signal when you are not in danger, you will stay an additional month as a mortal. This would add to your already four months. Though you are high school aged, as I’m sure you’ve realized, you will not need to attend any high school in the area. We have not given you a place to stay, nor any rules of what you can and cannot do, other than: no sneaking into Olympus, Atlantis nor the Underworld, you cannot attempt to intimidate someone because you are a god (because at the moment you are not), and no cheating. Of course, though we hate you at the moment, we do want you to live, so a bank card is attached to this. Since Hades is the god of riches as well as the Underworld, the money is taken straight from his stash. (Don’t protest Hades, you’re a multi-trillionaire, and you deserve it.) (Thank you for that addition, Persephone. Anyway). Should any bad situation arise that we have not covered, you are allowed to enter Olympus. But, yet again, if there is no reason for you to enter other than wanting to, you will stay an additional
month. And if you cheat with another mortal woman, you’ll be staying for an additional year.

Signed,

Your very pissed off wives, Hera, Amphitrite and Persephone.”

“...Wow,” Poseidon said, dumbfounded. Admittedly, he had been expecting Hera to snap, just not Amphitrite and Persephone too.

“Mhm,” Hades hummed distastefully. “Four months. This is ridiculous.”

“Well, at least we don’t have to go to highschool,” Poseidon said in a shitty attempt to lighten the mood. Hades just ignored him.

“Anyway,” Zeus broke in. “They said we don’t have a place to stay, so where are we going to go?” Poseidon frowned as he thought for a moment. “I think Percy lives somewhere near here. We could see if he has a place to stay?” Hades nodded and Zeus showed no sign of disapproval, so he took that as a yes. “Alright, let’s go.” He forced a smile.

They walked down the busy sidewalks, the mortals not giving them a second glance. There was a whole range of people passing by them, which was really the only consistent part of New York City. He saw businessmen, tourists, teens, two people painted entirely in gold, one person in an evening gown, and a few drug heads wandering around shirtless. It made him feel both lonely and included at the same time. After living here for so long, he was used to the feeling. It was growing colder now, winter starting to pick up it's icy pace, but it was nice this evening. A light wind and faint smell of winter hung in the air, but warmth bathed his face as the dark orange sun rays hit it. He'd never admit that he liked anything other than sunny days at the beach, but this was one of the few types of weather he enjoyed.

Poseidon had not lost track of Zeus and Hades's presence on either side of him, but it still made him jump a little as he heard Zeus's voice. “This is a nice change.”

“What is?” Poseidon asked absently, still wrapped up in his people watching.

“We’re not getting looked at.”

Hades let out an amused hum from beside Poseidon. “Yes, well not everyone’s 6’2 and wears 13 thousand dollar suits.”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “Yes, but New York has stranger things than that.”

“Well, you’re also a god, and no doubt have a powerful aura around yo—”

Oh boy. Being honest, Poseidon wasn't sure how he hadn't got into an argument yet, but he sure as hell didn't want to be in the middle of one. He wracked his brain for something to distract the two, but came up short and just blurted: “Wait hold on, you’re 6’2?”

“Be quiet, Poseidon—” Hades started, and was about to continue his argument when Zeus cut him off, probably so he wouldn’t lose.

“Yes…?” he said. “Is that interesting to you somehow? I mean, I’m not anymore. I’m around 6 foot now, I feel a little shorter.”

Poseidon felt heat rise in his chest and a sudden desire to repeat what he just said in a mocking tone
while sticking his tongue out, but then remembered he was an adult and adults don't do that. So instead, he rolled his eyes. “Don’t complain, you whiny brat.”

Zeus raised his eyebrows. "Whiny brat' you say? That's rich, coming from you. And besides, what's got your panties in a wad?"

If Poseidon didn’t have so much pride, he’d say he was blushing. “I’m not six foot as a god.” He mumbled, barely audible. He wasn’t. No one had ever said anything, but he knew they noticed. It made him want to punch something.

Zeus didn't respond for a second, before: “Sorry, what was that?"

Poseidon scowled, knowing that his red dusted cheeks were growing steadily darker. “You heard me.” Why did I even say it? I knew this was coming...

“But I’m not sure if I heard correctly, see,” he said. He must've been in what Poseidon called his 'teasey mode', where he wasn't actually malicious, unlike usual. Teasing everyone was usually the best he got, and it was rare. It didn't mean that Poseidon him hated him any less when he was in said mode.

Poseidon growled. “I said: I’m not six foot as a god.”

“Ah,” Zeus said, showing no sign of a smile; just fake, sickly sweet curiosity, “so then what are you as a god?”

"Why are you so concerned? Do you want to make sure you can wrap me up in your stupid arms? Are you a softie?"

"He's 5'11," Hades said monotonously, though Poseidon could tell he was concealing amusement.

"You traitor!" Poseidon gasped, turning to look at Hades. "How do you even know that?"

"You told me when we were younger, and you haven't grown."

“Hm,” Zeus hummed devilishly. “So that would make me...three inches taller than you?”

Poseidon gaped for a second as he tried to formulate a response. Finally, "No shit, Sherlock," came out of his mouth. He hoped it sounded as degrading as he tried to make it.

“Well,” Hades said, smoothly cutting in, “I wouldn’t be talking, brother. I’m 6’5 while I’m a god.”

“HA!” Poseidon yelled. He hadn't meant for it to be so loud, it just kinda slipped out. But, whatever. A few people turned back to look at them, but Poseidon just ignored them until they looked away again.

Zeus growled. “Shut up, Poseidon. That makes him 6 inches taller than you while a god.”

“Yeah, but he’s still three inches taller than you while in godly for—”

“You’re both saying godly forms,” Hades interrupted. He sounded exasperated, but also slightly amused. “But right now we have the same height difference, we’re all just around two inches shorter than we were.” Poseidon just noticed this. Sure, he felt different, but he didn’t think about his height.

“Wait...so I’m 5’9?” he asked disbelievingly.
Zeus snickered at him pointedly. “Looks like it.”

“There’s no way! Hades isn’t six inches taller than...me...” Poseidon trailed off as he looked up at Hades. Looked up at Hades. “Hades is six inches taller than me...” he mumbled disbelievingly.

Hades snorted. “It’s hard to notice your brothers height when you haven’t seen him in millenia, and when you finally do you only see him in meetings where your sitting down.”

Well, fuckitty fuck. He needed to shut up. He needed to shut up about five minutes ago. An uncomfortable silence filled the air. He makes a good point, y’know, Poseidon thought. He felt vaguely guilty. “Wow, what a way to be a debbie downer, brother,” he said in yet another shitty attempt to lighten the mood.

Hades smiled at him like he was the most amusing thing in the world. It made him feel small. “Did you expect any different?”

They bickered for the rest of the way to Percy’s.
“Alright, here it is.” Poseidon stopped in front of a dingy apartment. It was made solely of brick, with a rusty fire escape protruding from one side and visibly dirty windows. It wasn't the tallest building, but he did have to crane his neck up to see the roof. Most of the windows contained closed, grimy, cheap-looking curtains of varying colours. The sun reflected slightly off of the windows, but a few were too grimy. It made him feel kind of shitty.

“...Lovely…” Hades raised an eyebrow. Poseidon elbowed him, though he felt the same way. They walked into the antechamber and rang the buzzer for Percy’s apartment. He wasn't really sure what it's technical name was, but it buzzed so it was, well, a buzzer. He credited himself for being quite original.

“Hello?” Percy’s voice rang through the crappy machine. It came out almost indecipherable with that static it created.

Poseidon smiled warmly nonetheless. Even just hearing his sons voice cheered him up. Gods, he needed to see him more. “Hello, Percy.”

“Dad?” His voice came out high pitched and coloured with disbelief, though Poseidon thought he also heard a bit of dread.

“Yeah...Um, I’m here with Zeus and Hades...we—" he glanced at his brothers, who were watching him with some sort of fascination, "—um, kind of need your help...”

There was no sound from the other side of the buzzer for a moment, before: “Oh no. I swear, if it's another fu...freaking quest I am going to—"

“No!” Poseidon interrupted hastily. The last thing he needed now was for Percy to be angry. "We’re just in a slight..." he glanced at Zeus and Hades again, standing awkwardly in their teenage glory, "...predicament."

“O...okay? Why do you need my help? What is it?”

“Well...we’re kind of not gods...anymore...and...we don’t have a place to stay?” He looked back at
The buzzer thing.

The call ended and an obnoxiously loud buzzing sounded throughout the lobby. “I think that means it’s open,” Zeus said, reaching for the door.

“Wow, it's Sherlock,” Hades deadpanned.

Poseidon rolled his eyes and stepped in after Zeus when he opened the door. The paint on the walls was chipping, creating a run down and kind of creepy aura around the building. It smelled like a new car, but the scent was way too overpowering and it made his eyes water. “Follow me,” he said regardless, stepping in front of Zeus. He guided them to the grimy stairs and up to the second floor. The door was heavy as he pushed on it, and as he stepped into the hallway the scent of new car became even more overpowering. He sucked it up and started down the hallway, which was stained with gods know what. Or...maybe not, since he didn't know what it was. Whatever. When they reached the chipped door of Percy's apartment, Poseidon knocked three times.

The door immediately opened. “Da…” Percy trailed off. “...d?”

Poseidon smiled awkwardly. “Um...yeah. Hi, son.”

“Why are you the same age as me?” Percy asked. If Poseidon studied it more he would’ve thought he heard a bit of exasperation hidden under the confusion. “Why are you all the same age as me?” Percy was looking at them like they all had three heads. “I mean, hi uncles,” he corrected himself quickly.

Poseidon chuckled as Hades and Zeus rolled their eyes. “Hera,” they both said, nearly at the same time. They glanced at each other briefly before looking away again.

Seemingly remembering his manners (of the few he had, Poseidon thought fondly), Percy beckoned them into the apartment. “Mom and Paul are on a vacation in Norway. After mum’s book was successful, we’ve had a lot more money to move around 'n' stuff.”

Poseidon raised an eyebrow. If they have enough money to visit Norway, why do they still live here? He didn’t say that out loud.

The apartment was small, but well kept and homely. It was a lot nicer than the rest of the building, and it had a scent of chocolate chip cookies wafting around that thankfully was also not too overpowering. Percy guided them to the living room, where though the view through the window wasn’t the best Poseidon had ever seen, it was pretty nice watching the sun reflect over the buildings of New York. The reflections also sent a blood red glow into the apartment, which highlighted little dust particles floating gently throughout the living room. Percy sat down on a soft looking couch and gestured for them to pick between an armchair and a love seat. Poseidon himself had never been compared to Percy, but he had heard that Percy got told he looked like his father quite a lot. He hadn't really seen it, other than the eyes and hair, but now seeing him relaxed with no worries of if the entire world was going to end, he kind of saw it.

He glanced at Zeus and Hades, before making a subtle race for the armchair. Zeus got there first, and sat down with a smug look on his face. Poseidon scowled at him and made his way towards the love seat with a reluctant Hades. Percy was watching them with a look that Poseidon couldn’t put a finger on. Hades and Poseidon sat down on the loveseat, trying to sit as far away from each other as physically possible. Poseidon felt somewhat ridiculous, with his legs leaning against the arm rest and half of his upper body slung across it, but it was better than the alternative. Percy looked smug as he relaxed on the couch big enough for four people. Poseidon narrowed his eyes at him. Percy stuck out his tongue playfully in return.
He sobered up quickly, however. He leaned backward and gazed at them, looking as inquisitive as Percy Jackson could look, which wasn't much. He just kind of looked like a mix of amused and concerned with an odd pinch of "why the fuck are you here". "So...why are you here, why are you teenagers, and what got Hera to do—" he waved his hand towards them, "—this?"

"Well," Poseidon started when no one else did. "Zeus thought it would be a great idea to cheat again—"

"I didn’t get her pregnant!"

"—with another mortal, and Hera finally snapped, I guess."

"And she also got Persephone and Amphitrite in on it, which is why Poseidon and I are here,"

Hades finished.

Percy looked at them for a long time. "...Right."

"And god knows why the woman made us teenagers," Zeus broke in, looking tired already.

Poseidon nodded. "And we don’t have a place to stay, so until we find one, um…"

"You can stay here," Percy offered immediately. He kind of looked like he regretted it after it came out, but he didn't take it back.

Poseidon smiled. "Thank you, Percy."

An awkward silence filled the room. Percy cleared his throat. "Well, I guess I could show you where you could sleep." He stood up, and Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades followed his lead. "I have homework, so I’m afraid you can’t use my room, but there’s my mom’s room, and the couch is a sofa-bed." He turned to look at them. "Two of you wouldn’t mind sharing a bed right? Because the loveseat is probably the itchiest thing in the world after thirty minutes, and the armchair doesn’t recline."

Zeus, Poseidon and Hades looked at each other steadily, not wanting to offer to share with someone. Hades was stood rigidly, stone faced, while Zeus was clenching his jaw and glaring. Poseidon didn't really know what he looked like, but he hoped it was somewhat intimidating. God, it's hard to feel intimidating when you're short. All he knew was that under no circumstance was he going to share with one of these two idiots.

Percy rolled his eyes. "Since this is obviously going to end in a fight, how about this: Zeus—sofa-bed, and Dad and Hades—my mom’s bedroom. If I’m being completely honest they’re about the same amount, comfort wise at least. Sure, you have to sleep together—not in that way—but it’s more comfortable than the sofa-bed."

Zeus gave a polite nod towards Percy, but shot a smirk at Poseidon and Hades. Poseidon sighed internally. Well there goes the "under no circumstance". At least he had a place to stay. He nodded, and Hades followed suit. "Great," Percy said, looking very much relieved that there wasn't going to be a three-way war in his living room. "I’ll get some blankets, would you mind taking the bed out?"

Zeus scowled lightly at being told what to do, but complied nonetheless.

"And you two can check out the bedroom, it’s in that door." He pointed to a slightly ajar door near the living room.
Poseidon and Hades nodded before walking in that direction. Hades walked in first, and Poseidon followed in after him. After smoothly stepping to the side so he could see, he took in the room. Light blue walls, white bedding, dark wood furniture. It wasn’t the most luxurious thing Poseidon had ever seen, but it definitely wasn’t terrible. He had half expected the place to be a dump, but he supposed that was just because of the outside. He looked at Hades briefly, shrugged, and walked over to the bed. He had already chosen the side closest to the door, wanting to be as far away from his brother’s realm as possible. He walked over to it, took off his converse (why converse?) and plopped onto the bed with the grace of a dysfunctional cardboard box. Hades looked at him stonily before walking to the other side of the bed. Poseidon scrunched his face up in a mocking manner when Hades wasn't looking. He lay down next to Poseidon. The bed was a queen size, so while they weren’t squished, they were also not roomy. Poseidon sighed contently at the warmth of the pillow beneath his head.

They stared up at the ceiling for a while, the apartment silent for the most part. The sun had set completely now. Poseidon glanced at the clock. 8:30. That was too early. He sighed and got up reluctantly from the bed. Hades raised an eyebrow, but Poseidon waved him off. He walked out into the living room. Zeus was sitting upright with his back against the back of the sofa-bed, looking deep in thought.

“Where’s Percy?” Poseidon asked him, jolting him out of his thoughts.

His eyebrow raised slightly, though Poseidon didn't think it was consciously. “Doing homework.” Poseidon nodded and went to where he assumed Percy’s room was. He knocked on the door thrice.

“Yeah?” came the response.

“Can I come in?” Poseidon asked.

“Sure.”

Poseidon opened the door quietly. Percy was sitting on his bed, textbooks strewn in front of him, a frustrated era around him. “You need help?” Poseidon asked softly.

Percy didn't look at him for a second, but then did with a somewhat embarrassed glance. “I...yeah. Dyslexia and ADHD aren’t exactly my best friends when I have to do homework.”

Poseidon smiled and grabbed Percy’s desk chair. He hoped he knew at least something about what he was learning, gods know what the curriculum is now. Did he even go to school? Was there even such a thing when he was younger? He didn't remember. “What are you working on?” He sat down on the chair. It was more comfortable than he was expecting.

“I have to do a write up for science about Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. The only problem is, I can’t like...put it in words? Like, I understand the basic idea from the teacher explaining it to us, but the letters on the keyboard keep swirling around, and I never learned where each key is, and I just can't find the right...” He flourished his hand out in front of him, then let it fall to his lap. He had a faint blush on his cheeks, and he rubbed the back of his neck.

“I can write it for you,” Poseidon offered.

“What?” Percy asked, jerking his head back a little and furrowing his brow. “You can’t just do homework for me.”

“I’m not doing it for you,” Poseidon corrected. “You’re going to give me what you want to say on the paper and I’ll write it. Technically it’s still your work, I’m just typing it. And...” he paused for
a second, "maybe just talking about it will let you find the words, instead of having to think about how you're going to word it."

Percy looked at him gratefully. “Thank you.”

Poseidon could see that his eyes were a little red, but he didn't mention it. “You're welcome.”

They went through the rest of Percy’s homework quicker than usual. Or, at least, Poseidon thought that they went through it quicker than usual. Needless to say, they were both pretty comfortable with each other by the end of the two hours it took to complete everything. Throughout the whole thing, Percy was basically teaching Poseidon the theory, because he didn't know jack-shit about how mortals thought the world worked. He didn't say that, though.

“Thank you so much,” Percy said breathily, looking at him from the bed with gratitude in his eyes.

“Again, it’s no problem.” Poseidon stood, and semi awkwardly patted Percy's shoulder.

“Goodnight, Percy.”

“Goodnight, Dad.”

Poseidon made his way towards Sally’s bedroom again. He nodded at Zeus, who returned the favour. He knocked on the door. “You’re fine,” Hades called through the door. Poseidon walked in. He closed the door and took off his socks. Wait…he was going to have to sleep in jeans, wasn’t he? It wasn't like he had never slept in his clothes before, it’s just his typical attire was not 80's style, heavy jeans and a weirdly fitted hoodie. And he didn't really feel like sleeping naked next to Hades.

“Wait! Dad, uncles!” Percy called from the living room.

Poseidon shared a glance with Hades and they both got up quickly. “What is it, Percy?”

“I...I just figured you’d want some pyjamas,” he said sheepishly, rubbing the back of his neck.

“Oh, yeah, actually. I was just thinking about that,” Poseidon said. Percy looked relieved.

“Um, hold on I’ll be right back.” Percy disappeared into his room and returned moments later, a plain grey t-shirt and pyjama pants in his arms. He walked quickly past Hades and Poseidon and into Sally’s room. He returned with two other plain t-shirts, one black and one blue, and two pairs of pyjama pants.

“Here,” he said, laying them all out on the back of the arm chair. “Hades, you can have these—” he gave the black t-shirt and grey pyjama bottoms to Hades, “—and Zeus you can have these.” He threw the blue shirt and black pyjama bottoms at Zeus. “Those are Paul’s. And dad, these are mine.” He handed Poseidon the grey t-shirt and white pyjama bottoms. “Because, well…” he cleared his throat awkwardly. Poseidon’s ears burned red when Zeus snickered.

“It’s fine, Percy. And thanks,” he said.

Percy nodded. “Goodnight, everyone.”

Three goodnights were repeated after him, two of which were a little forced. Poseidon and Hades made their way back to Sally’s room.

They went on their own respective sides of the bed to get changed, and crawled in under the covers when they were done. Poseidon and Hades turned off their little lamp lights, though the lights of
New York were still causing a little light to spill into the room. Poseidon could feel Hades next to him, but it wasn’t as awkward or uncomfortable as he thought it was going to be. Percy’s clothes fit him almost perfectly, and he didn't know how he felt about that. *His own son. Is this how Apollo felt?*

“What are you thinking about?” Hades asked softly. Poseidon jumped and turned to look at him.

He looked away again when he saw Hades staring at him. “Nothing.” He wondered if Persephone ever woke up in the middle of the night and saw Hades staring at her. He would’ve just not come back during the winter. Though, he supposed she didn't have a choice.

Hades hummed disbelievingly but let it go. There was a long moment of silence where they both stared up at the ceiling. They were both lying down so close to their respective edge of the bed that Poseidon was half worried he was going to fall off. Now, in the silence of a bedroom at night, Poseidon thought about what Hades said earlier, "*when you haven’t seen him in millennia...*". Technically, nothing could have stopped Poseidon from going down and visiting Hades in the Underworld. His own older brother that he had spent decades with in the cramped space of their father's stomach. He swallowed. "I’m sorry,” he said softly.

“What?” Hades turned to look at him.

Poseidon swallowed his pride. *You’ll have to be with him for four months, better make it up with him now.* “I’m sorry. I thought about what you said earlier. I should’ve come to visit you in the underworld, or tried to stop Zeus from banishing you—”

“Oh, you’re apologizing now?” Hades interrupted. It was a whisper, but it was the angriest whisper Poseidon had ever heard. He knew he'd hit a sore spot. “After you left me alone in the underworld for millennia with no one but a bitter wife? While you were off exploring the world and cheating on your wife? While getting all the say you want in things?” Poseidon was about to interrupt, before Hades jumped back into speech. “Save it, Poseidon. You're saying this to try and get through the four months, and then everything’s going to go back to normal.”

Poseidon could feel his temper graze near the surface. He turned to Hades and glared. "Okay? What's wrong with that?’"

Hades laughed, but it was humourless. "Nothing! Actually, it's fantastic!” Hades turned to gaze at Poseidon too, fiercely and steadily. "Because I hate you, and I don't want to make up with you.” Poseidon thought he was going to stop there, but he continued, a fire blazing in his eyes. “I hate your pride, I hate your attitude, I hate your stupidity, and I hate your goddamn need to be the hero.”

Poseidon’s temper flared. He was just trying to fucking apologize. “Okay, I can’t go back in time. As much as you want to deny it, I actually am sorry, and you're acting a like a little bitch. So why don't you—”

“Well you can take your apology and shove it up your ass because no one trusts you, or your apologies, you *ass* hat. Or cares about you, for that matter." His eyes were on fire, and Poseidon almost didn't recognize him. Poseidon snarled and tried to speak again, before Hades continued. "You probably think people care about you because you’re *Poseidon*. ’I’m the god of the sea, look at me!’” He did a poor imitation of Poseidon’s voice. “But that’s respect. No one truly *likes* you. Look around for tartarus’s sake!” His words were going fast, and Poseidon had hard time catching onto all of them, though he was starting to not want to. "Your son barely makes an effort to talk to you, Zeus and I hate you, I hear the other gods complain about you, and your ‘lovers’ have moved on and fell deeper in love in a few years! Actually, I think the record was set by you and it was a few days!” He was staring at Poseidon unwaveringly the whole time. “You’re worthless! You are!
There’s enough evidence to prove that *no one cares about you, Poseidon.*”

Poseidon opened his mouth but was cut off by the lump in his throat. His flare of anger was still there, but it was dying down and morphing into something else that made Poseidon's heart strings feel like they were being plucked out. He swallowed and looked away from Hades. He didn't have a comeback, or a witty remark, or a sharp jab. After a beat lying on his back, he slowly turned so his back was facing Hades. He'd never heard someone say anything like that about him. Well—he had, but he'd buried that deep, deep down. He'd forgotten what it was like experience it. There was a moment of tense yet confused silence, before Poseidon felt Hades freeze. *Ah, so he's realized what he said.*

“...Poseidon?”

He didn’t reply. He felt a hesitant hand on his shoulder. He shook it off lightly. He heard a quiet swallow behind him, then felt Hades turn onto his back. A tense silence filled the air. Poseidon had a feeling he wasn’t going to be able to sleep tonight. He stared at the closet facing him, his eyes burning uncomfortably.

It was going to be a long four months.

Chapter End Notes

leave suggestion if you'd like:) I take constructive criticism well, so feel free to correct me if you see a spelling error or grammatical mistake.
Fluffish

Chapter Summary

They make up, fluffiness occurs. Well, as much fluff as the three most powerful gods ever can manage.

Chapter Notes

Hey guys! Hope you are enjoying the story so far :) This is a bonding fic, so it will be mostly these three idiots working out their problems, but there might be some action thrown in there in later chapters.

Poseidon looked at the clock again. 4:47 am. He sighed. There was no point in even trying to go to sleep now. He got up as quietly as he could, even though he knew Hades was fake sleeping. He walked into the living room, planning to get some coffee or something. The apartment was bathed in silvery moonlight, but it was still dark and somewhat hard to see. The hardwood was cold beneath the balls of his feet, creaking ever so quietly under the light pressure. There was something surreal about this time of morning, when no one was up and it was still dark out, when the birds were still too drowsy to sing and the worries of the day were yet to arrive. It was like another dimension. He gently closed the bedroom door behind him, purposely turning the handle so it wouldn't make a sound. He started towards the kitchen, limbs heavy and feet shuffling slightly, but stopped mid-stride and nearly jumped out of his skin as he found two eyes following his movement. When he recognized it as Zeus, he relaxed a little, heart slowing from where it had spiked up. Said man was sitting up on the couch, posture neither relaxed nor tense, gazing at him. He swallowed.

“What are you doing up?” he asked Zeus quietly, coming over to sit on the loveseat opposite to the couch.

“I heard your argument,” he replied softly. Poseidon looked away. He studied the painting on the wall like it was the most fascinating thing in the world. Zeus sighed and leaned back on the couch. “We can’t argue like this. Four months together? As much as we dislike each other, we can’t be at each other’s throats all the time. You should probably apologize to him.”

Poseidon looked at him. “Me? Apologize to him? He’s not the one who got called wor…” he trailed off, a small lump returning back to his throat and making him look away again.

“I know, I know. Fine. Why don’t you just talk to him?”

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “And what about my pride? Why do I even have to apologize to him? I tried, but he wasn’t having any of it!”

Zeus sighed. “I know, I know. Fine. Why don’t you just talk to him?”
“About what?” Poseidon scoffed. “He hates me.”

“He doesn’t hate you,” Zeus corrected. “He just...er, I don’t know.”

Poseidon snorted, his chest feeling tight. “Exactly. Whatever. It doesn’t matter anyway.”

Zeus sighed. “I know you care about him, Poseidon.”

Poseidon forced himself to roll his eyes. “Oh yeah, because you’re just so great at emotions.”

Zeus pinched the bridge of his nose. “This is what I’m talking about. We can’t continue on like this! We try to help each other out, and then it somehow leads to an argument every time! Look, I know Hades hurt you when he said those things.” Poseidon opened his mouth in protest, but Zeus cut him off. “Don’t even try to deny it, Poseidon. I’ve known you for millennia. I know how to tell when you’re angry, happy, hurt, confused...and when you don’t respond with a snappish comeback, you’re hurt.”

Poseidon looked away, angered at the fact Zeus was right. Zeus sighed. “Look, Perseus shouldn’t be up for at least another two hours. How about when Hades wakes up, we all go out onto the deck and talk about this.”

Poseidon looked at his brother for a long time. “Who are you and what did you do with Zeus?” he asked eventually.

Zeus rolled his eyes, a faint play of a smile forming on his lips. “I killed him.” Poseidon gave a lopsided smile. “But seriously, I’m not a complete douchebag all the time.” Poseidon gave him a disbelieving look. He remembered all too well how much of a dick Zeus was (and still is), especially back in the days of Ancient Greece. Being honest, he was a dick too, but he was less of a dick. And he’s almost done a 180 by now, while Zeus...he’s done, like, a 45. “Don’t look at me like that!” Zeus said defensively. When Poseidon just over-exaggerated his look, Zeus sighed. “Here, picture this. You’re the king of a bunch of gods and goddesses who are not only immortal, but can technically do whatever they want since they are the most powerful beings on this planet. But they do have a few limits, just so they don’t cause complete mayhem in the mortal world. You are in charge of making sure these mischievous and/or prideful gods and goddesses don’t break these rules. Do you think they’re going to listen to you if you’re passive and nice? No. Hate me if you wish, but it doesn’t change the fact that the majority don’t defy the rules in fear that I will punish them.” Poseidon looked at his brother, a little conflicted. On one hand, that made sense, on the other, it didn't make him hate him any less. He was still an asshat and a half, whether he had a cool motive or not. Zeus continued regardless. “And since I am no longer in charge, I don’t have to be a complete asshole.”

Poseidon leaned back in his loveseat. “Huh.”

Zeus snorted. The few lights still on in the outskirts of New York started to cast an ominous glow throughout the living room alongside the moonlight. The coffee machine started to pour the dark liquid into a pale blue mug. It was every aesthetic obsessed tumblr girl’s dream scene. Zeus got another mug and filled it. “How do you like your coffee?” he asked.

“One sugar,” Poseidon replied. Zeus nodded and got out a small marble container. He opened the lid and looked inside.

“One try,” he mumbled, mostly to himself. Poseidon rolled his eyes and smiled slightly, praying it wasn’t salt. Zeus got a spoon from the top drawer and put a spoonful of sugar in Poseidon’s coffee. He brought the two mugs over to the living room and handed Poseidon one.
“Thanks,” he smiled.

“No problem.” Zeus sat back down on the couch. “So when Hades gets up, we’ll just—”

“I am up.” Poseidon looked up from his coffee to see Hades standing in the threshold of Sally’s room. “We can go out on the deck.” Poseidon swallowed and nodded. He and Zeus got up from the couch and followed Hades out to the deck. The crisp chill of New York air at 5 am made Poseidon wish he had brought a sweater. He grabbed a dark brown deck chair and sat down on it, with Hades and Zeus on either side of him in matching chairs. They stayed silent for a while, just staring out at the semi-busy streets of the outskirts of New York.

Hades eventually broke the silence. “I...don’t...hate you.”

Poseidon looked at him and then back out at the streets. “You have a lot of reasons to.”


Poseidon shrunk a little in his seat, guilt churning in his gut. It was childish, but he didn't want him to actually agree.

“But,” Hades continued. “You have a lot of reasons to hate me as well.” Poseidon looked at him, but he was staring determinedly at the building across the street. “When we were in our father’s stomach, we spent a lot of time together. We used to sit up when the others were sleeping and just...talk. I remembered we complained about our sisters a lot.” Poseidon smiled at the memories, distant and fuzzy, but still there. Hades continued. “But then we got into that fight. It was something stupid like if we were ever going to get out of there. You were younger than me, you still had some faith. But I...well, I was the second oldest, and I had grown bitter to the life we had. To everything, really. You were talking about what we would do when we got out of there, and I kind of just snapped. After that argument, our relationship was never really the same. That was my fault.” He was still staring at the building across the road like it was the most fascinating thing in the world.

“That was justified though,” Poseidon argued. “We were all in misery in there. And I was being annoying. I would’ve done the same.”

“No you wouldn’t’ve,” Hades and Zeus said in sync.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. "Yeah, I guess I would've done something worse." Before the other two could respond, he continued. "Anyway, that’s still one reason. You have, like fifteen million reasons to not even want to look at me.”

Hades sighed and shook his head. “That’s the thing with you, Poseidon. You’re always one for extremes. You’re either the victim, or everything’s your fault. You either love someone or hate someone. It’s annoying as hell, but it’s who you are.” Hades leant back. “But—I can’t believe I’m about to say this—I agree with Zeus.” Zeus smiled smugly, and Hades pointedly ignored him. “If we’re going to be stuck together for four months or more,—” Hades looked at Zeus pointedly, who huffed and rolled his eyes, “—then we’re going to have to get along.”

Poseidon exhaled. “Yeah.”

“I agree,” Zeus mumbled. They didn’t comment on it. “Should we set boundaries or something? Like, ‘you can say this, but you can’t say that’?” Poseidon looked at Zeus weirdly. “What?” he asked defensively at their exasperated looks. “We never got along before! We never cared if what we said hurt the other person, so we don’t really know what’s offensive or not. What seemed fine
before might be a really bad thing to say, I don’t know!” He threw his hands up.

Poseidon sighed and rolled his eyes. “Fine. But it should be things that are drastic, not pet peeves or something. Like I know Hades hates being called Hay,—” Hades glared at him, proving his point immediately, “—but that’s not going to make him hate me.”

“Debatable,” Hades muttered under his breath.

Poseidon ignored him. “And I hate when people mention my height—” Zeus opened is mouth, no doubt about to tease him, but Poseidon cut him off “—because I’m still tall —taller than the average male, but just not a fucking giant like you two.”

“For a god you’re short,” Zeus said quickly.

Poseidon glared at him. “Hermes and Dionysus are shorter.”

“Yes, but Ares, Hephaestus, and Apollo are all younger than you and most of them are taller. Apollo is probably the same height as y—”

“Moving on,” Poseidon cut him off with a glare. Zeus just smirked and leaned back in his uncomfortable deck chair. “But a thing that I won’t...take lightly, would be...” he had to think for a moment about what was really drastic. He had pet peeves all over the place: no comparing him to Zeus, no name calling, no comparisons of him to his realm (he’s heard them all way to much), and no buying him Trident gum. Apollo and Hermes did enough of that. Eventually, he came to a conclusion. He swallowed heavily before starting. “I...overheard Zeus and Athena talking about me one time after a council meeting. It was 2005 I think, during the summer solstice...”

Zeus looked horrified. “You heard that?”

Poseidon smiled bitterly. “Yeah.”

“Oh gods, I’m sorry—” Zeus started, but Hades cut him off.

“Wait, what? What did you say?” He looked at Zeus warningly.

“Um...we kinda...talked about everything we hate about him? In detail? For a good ten minutes?”

The way he said it almost made Poseidon want to snort. He wasn't wrong per se, it's just Poseidon would've phrased it so it didn't sound so childish. Hades stared at him blankly while Poseidon shrunk down even farther in his chair. “And...why...did you do that? Are you in Mean Girls or something?—Don’t ask,” he said at Poseidon's weird look.

Zeus looked away and shrugged guiltily. “I don’t know...he pissed me off during the meeting or something, and Athena was just happy to out her hate for him on someone. We bitched about him, Aphrodite, and Hermes. It was stupid. I didn’t know you were listening in,” he said, turning his attention back to Poseidon near the end.

“That shouldn’t matter —” Hades started, but Poseidon cut him off.

“ My point is ,” he said, “is that I don’t care if you tease me, but I don’t like people reflecting on my mistakes, I guess. I mean, I already know them. You think they don’t haunt me everyday of my immortal life?” He finished it with a shrug, but it was probably the hardest thing he had to admit in his entire life.

Hades and Zeus nodded. There was silence for a moment, before Hades spoke up again. “I guess it
always bothered me when people refer to me as evil. I didn’t really do anything wrong, it was the
draw that landed me in the underworld.” That was all he said, but then again, Hades was never the
best at emotions. Poseidon offered him a small smile and a nod.

Zeus took a deep breath after a few beats of silence. “I guess I don’t like when people critique my
way of ruling. And I’m not talking constructive criticism, I’m talking yelling and bashing. It may
seem like just a pride thing, and I guess in some ways it is, but I put a lot of thought into my rules,
and I don’t appreciate people screaming at me because they can’t do something.”

Poseidon and Hades nodded at him silently, and then went back to looking at the busy streets of
New York. It was just beginning to get busier and busier, and Poseidon took a sip of his by now
far-too-cold coffee.

Hades broke the silence. “And this isn’t going to fix everything,” he was looking pointedly away
from them, “but I’m sorry. About last night, and...well...everything, I guess.”

Poseidon nodded. “Me too,” he said softly.

“Likewise,” Zeus said, leaning back in his chair. They studied the New York skyline, watching the
sun slowly start to rise. It was getting steadily warmer, and most of the rain that had fallen
yesterday morning had dissipated.

Poseidon sighed. “We’re probably still not going to get along after this, are we?”

“Probably not,” Zeus agreed. “But it’ll be better.”

“Marginally,” Hades commented.

“Yes,” Zeus agreed again, “but still better.”

Poseidon smiled lightly.

Chapter End Notes

Remember to Kudos if you liked it, and comment if you have suggestions (or anything
really)! It would mean the world to me <3
A silence fell between the three of them. It wasn’t awkward, but it was still present in Poseidon’s mind. He sighed as he curled up further into the deck chair. By now the traffic was crazy, and the honking of horns filled the silence that would’ve been uncomfortable if not for the buzz of New York in the morning. The sun was rising over some buildings, and it cast a golden glow throughout the outskirts of the city. The wind carried the smell of cigarettes, greasy food, and something distinctly... New York. The air was dry and cold, and Poseidon wanted to go inside and get a hoodie, but he also didn’t want to break the moment. Zeus was leaning back on his chair, starring up at the patio above them, while Poseidon could feel Hades looking at them. He let him, it wasn’t awkward in this moment. Poseidon smiled softly at the moment that he was fairly sure would be stuck in his mind forever. He almost never wanted it to end—

**BEEP BEEP BEEP.**

Poseidon was startled out of his peace by a loud ringing sounding throughout the silence of the apartment. He glanced at Zeus and Hades, before getting up to check where the sound was coming from. He opened the patio door quickly, and basked in the warmth of the floor on his feet. Hades and Zeus followed in after him, Zeus closing the patio door as he stepped in and Hades cursing him after he got face planted into a glass door.

Poseidon rolled his eyes at their antics and stepped further into the apartment. By now he recognized the sound as one of an alarm clock, but it was still continuing. He glanced back at Zeus and Hades, one of which was smirking while the other was rubbing his nose and glaring daggers. A loud and overdramatic groan was heard throughout the apartment, followed by a loud smack and then silence. And then another dramatic groan. Poseidon smiled, amused at his son’s actions.

“Get up, Jackson,” someone snorted. Another loud groan. Poseidon’s smile suddenly slipped off and his brows furrowed, glancing back at Zeus and Hades, alarmed. He didn’t recognize that voice, and apparently Zeus didn’t either. But Hades didn’t look confused, he looked surprised.

“Do you know who that is?” Poseidon whispered.

Hades nodded. “I think so...but I could be wrong.”
Poseidon looked at him in confusion, but walked towards Percy’s room. He knocked, and without waiting for an answer, opened the door…

Only to see Nico di Angelo attempting to pull his son out of bed.

Poseidon looked at them blankly. “What,” he and Nico said at the same time.

Percy scrambled up. “Oh! I forgot to tell you, Nico comes over a lot—”

“Dad?” Nico interrupted, looking at a place above Poseidon’s shoulder. “What are you doing here? What are all three of you doing here—wait, is that Poseidon and Zeus?” He turned to Percy quickly. They had what looked to be a conversation using solely facial expressions. The scene was somewhat amusing, what with Percy’s hair being even more of a disaster than usual and Nico being so obviously panicked, both of them making weird and exaggerated eye and head movements.

Eventually, Percy coughed and looked back to the three of them. “Um, yes, those are Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades—” Nico looked like he was going to faint, “—and yes, they are our age. Well, older than you, but you know what I mean.” He rubbed the back of his neck uncomfortably. “And guys, Nico comes over a lot.”

Poseidon looked at them for a while. “…Right.”

“Why do you hang out a lot?” Hades asked.

Percy and Nico looked at each other, before shrugging. Nico, obviously remembering that his dad liked verbal answers, responded: “I don’t really know…it started after the war, I guess.” He looked away from them uncomfortably. Poseidon noticed that the boy was rather small now that he was standing next to Percy. The top of his head was level to Percy’s nose, who was only around Poseidon’s height while he was a teenager. He was wearing all black with a skull ring on his left hand. *Fitting*, Poseidon thought absently. The boy was rather skinny, and Poseidon frowned as he looked at him. He may not be fond of the boy, but he also wasn’t a vile person.

“Right...well, we should probably get some breakfast, and you can go to school,” Poseidon said.

Percy smiled, but Nico looked uncomfortable as he turned to Percy. “Oh yeah, I forgot it was Wednesday, I’ll come back on the weekend.”

“You two don’t go to the same school?” Hades asked in surprise.

Nico looked uncomfortable again. “Um...no...well, I don’t go to school at all…”

Beats of silence. Six, to be exact. Everyone looked at Nico, who was staring at anything and everything except for them. “What?” Hades asked, outraged but not loud. “Why?”

Nico looked at the ground ahead of him. “I…” he mumbled something that Poseidon couldn’t pick up.

“What was that?” Hades asked.

“If I’m living on the streets, do you think I’ll be able to afford school?” he bit out sassily. A silence fell over them all.

“You...you’re living on the streets?” Hades asked disbelievingly after a few moments of silence.
Nico let out a quiet, bitter laugh. “What did you think, dad? I don’t have money, I can’t go to camp without being treated like garbage since Will, Percy, Piper, Leo, and Annabeth aren’t there, and I didn’t have a place to stay before the war. Why would I have a place to stay now?”

Hades looked at his son, but it wasn’t pitifully, it was more exasperated. “Nico...what am I the god of?”

Nico looked at him from the floor. “The underworld...?”

“And?” Hades pushed.

Nico was silent for a long time. “...riches.”

Hades hummed. “That’s what I thought.”

Instead of getting embarrassed, a fire entered Nico’s eyes. “Well beg my pardon if I didn’t ask you for money, since you were too busy telling me that I should’ve died instead of my sister.”

Percy and Hades cringed simultaneously. A stunned and uncomfortable silence filled the room. Jeez, Poseidon wished Hades didn't actually say that. He himself remembered when he had phrased a sentence badly and implied that Percy should have never been born, and he still feels bad about it to this day. But...he didn't know how you could mess up your phrasing so badly that your son thinks that you wish he had died instead of his sibling. Poseidon cleared his throat after he finally couldn't take the silence any longer. “Um...would you two like us to leave while you sort things out?” he asked Hades and Nico.

Nico opened his mouth to protest, but Hades cut him off. “Yes, that would be great.” Nico snapped his mouth shut and looked at Percy desperately. Percy just gave him a look of sympathy and patted him on the shoulder as he walked out of the room. Nico glared daggers at Percy’s back, and Percy let out a miniscule wince. As Percy stepped out of the room, he glanced at Zeus and Poseidon. “What do you want for breakfast?”

Poseidon shrugged. “What do you have?”

Percy hummed as he led them to the kitchen. “Uh...cereal, toast, eggs, egos, and fruit smoothies.”

Poseidon shared a glance with Zeus and shrugged. They walked into the kitchen, and Percy immediately went for the bread. He grabbed six slices unashamedly and got them out onto a plate. He returned Poseidon and Zeus's stares with a deadpanned: “I’m a hungry boy.” Except he changed the pronunciation of ‘boy’ so it sounded like ‘boi’. Poseidon decided not to ask. Percy popped them all in two toasters (Sally must’ve just given up), and jumped up on the countertop. Poseidon looked at him in amusement while Zeus had an unreadable expression on his face. Poseidon walked next to Percy and opened the fridge. He didn’t find anything that caught his attention, so he handed the fridge door over to Zeus, who then chose three eggs and got the frying pan out (how he knew where the frying pan was was a mystery to Poseidon).

He rolled his eyes at his brothers matureness. “Where’s the cereal?” he asked Percy.

Percy hopped down from the counter and walked over to one of the medium brown cabinets. He pulled one open and Poseidon saw a bunch of boxes of cereal cramped into one cupboard, a few horizontal boxes even stored over top of the vertical boxes. Percy looked at Poseidon again with the same deadpan expression. “I’m a hungry boy.” The same pronunciation. Poseidon looked at him in amusement as he walked back over to the toast that just popped out. Poseidon turned back his attention to the cereal and picked out the box of fruit loops. He got out a bowl from the same
place Percy got his plate and then got the milk out. He poured the cereal in first like any other self respecting being, and poured some milk in afterwards. He felt Percy’s presence behind him, and sure enough Percy peeked over his shoulder with a “That’s all your eating?”

Poseidon looked at him. “Yes…?”

Percy looked at him like he had three heads. “And here I thought I got my appetite from you.”

Poseidon’s mouth fell open defensively. “I do have an appetite! Gods just don’t have to eat as much.”

“We don’t have to eat to survive,” Zeus corrected, flipping over his eggs. “But we need food for all the other reasons humans need it. Energy, a healthy weight, et cetera.”

“Well...whatever,” Poseidon said, ever the mature one of his brothers. “I have energy and I’m a healthy weight, so it’s fine.” He was quite proud of that counter statement; he always argued but he rarely ever won, so this felt like a small accomplishment. Not like he'd admit that out loud, of course.

“You were estimated to be the tallest and strongest of the big three,” Zeus corrected again, “and you’re the smallest. Care to explain how that happened?” He asked it innocently as if he was just truly curious, but Poseidon knew it was just to tease him.

Well, there goes that pride of an accomplishment, he guessed. He made an offended noise. “First of all,” he said, “I’m not small . I’m 5’11, and the average human male is 5’10. I also happen to be around the average weight of a 5’11 human male, so...er, hah. And second of all, how would you know I was expected to be the tallest?”

“Aphrodite,” Zeus answered easily. “And, I never said you were small, I just said you were the smallest of the big three. Also, define ‘around’.”

“What?” Poseidon asked. He was following until the last sentence.

“Define ‘around’. You said you were ‘around’ the average weight of a 5’11 male, so what are you? The last time I checked the average height for a fully grown male is 177 pounds.” Zeus raised an eyebrow, obviously enjoying himself thoroughly.

Poseidon added some cereal to his bowl. Zeus laughed as he flipped his eggs again. Percy looked at them, slightly confused but also happy at the same time. “How much do you weigh then, dad?” he asked, buttering his toast.

“Around 150 to 155,” Poseidon said with a shrug. He thought he looked good at that weight, so he just kept it there. He hoped they didn't make fun of him for it; after all, he was still one of the stronger gods.

“Jesus,” Zeus swore under his breath. “I could lift you with one hand.”

Well, there goes that. “You could not ,” Poseidon argued defensively. “In case you've forgotten, you don’t weigh that much more than me. And I have muscle, which is...heavier than fat...whatever.”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “Please, some, if not a lot, of teenage girls weigh more than you. Also, I weigh around 190 pounds, and have way more muscle than you.” He had a cocky little smirk on his face, and Poseidon suddenly had a need to slap it off. He was such a dick.
Poseidon didn't really have a good counterpoint, so he just went with being salty. “Well, unlike you, I don't care about teenage girls weights.” Percy let out a little snort that he tried to hide with a cough. "Also...fuck you.”

Zeus laughed. “Mature. Also, I don't care either, I'm just stating a fact.”

“I try, and whatever.” He wanted to argue that that weight was only in his mortal form and not his godly form, but then Zeus would just brag about how he was also stronger than him in godly form so he didn't bother.

Percy looked at them in amusement. “I’m probably around 150 as well, but I’m half human, 17, and 5’9.”

“Shut up, Percy.” Poseidon turned to glare at him as he walked to the table with his bowl. “You're supposed to be on my side. Also, I don’t look skinny as a god, I look average. In fact, probably bigger than average.” Okay, that last part was stretching the truth a little. "So hah.”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “Average for a mortal.”

Poseidon threw his hands up and Percy full out laughed this time. Poseidon was about to open his mouth again, when Nico and Hades walked in. Instead of explaining that they made up or something, Hades said: “I’m taller and stronger than both of you.”

Percy broke out into a grin, Poseidon groaned and smacked his head down on the table, Nico smiled, and Zeus laughed and rolled his eyes.

“Really, brother?” Poseidon asked.

“I’m just stating facts,” Hades said, walking forward to the kitchen.

Nico followed him, looking a lot less uncomfortable than he was before. (Poseidon was starting to wonder if the boy was ever content). When Nico caught him staring, Poseidon gave a soft smile as a greeting. The boy’s face turned as red as a tomato and he walked further into the kitchen, but not without giving the tiniest, shy quirk of his lips. Zeus got out a plate and put his fried eggs on it, then proceeded to go join Poseidon at the table. Percy soon followed, and they watched Hades and Nico pick out their breakfast. Hades started to make some coffee and got out two slices of bread, while Nico went into the fridge and got out a plum.

“Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah,” Percy said, getting up out of his chair. “No mister, you'll be eating a good breakfast today.”

“This is a good breakfast!” Nico protested. “It’s fruit! Not McDonalds!”

“Yes, but at McDonalds you got a six pack of chicken nuggets and ate three. I couldn’t care less if you ate McDonalds, it’s about how much you eat. And this—” he plucked the plum from Nico’s hand as he walked past, “—is not enough for breakfast.”


“Maybe, but you can try to eat five egos.” He plopped them all in the two toasters again after Hades took out his finished bread.

“You sound like Will,” Nico rolled his eyes.
“Aw,” Percy said, a teasing twinkle in his eyes, “I remind you of your boyfriend?”

Both Nico and Percy froze. Hades paused momentarily on putting butter on his toast. He looked at Nico, who was frozen in place, staring at his father in fear.

The mood changed immediately, the lightheartedness dropping like a stone. Percy looked at Nico in horror. “Oh gods, I’m sorry…”

Nico turned back to look at him, a fire blazing in his eyes. But they were also glossy, and Poseidon felt a surge of pity for the boy. He looked betrayed, but Percy looked like he was about to have a breakdown. “Please, Nico. I’m sorry, I don’t want….” he choked on what must’ve been the lump in his throat. “I don’t want the Bianca thing again…”

“I don’t blame you for that now,” Nico said quietly, voice thick with emotion. “That wasn’t a mistake, that was prophecy. But this,” his tone changed and he snarled, “this was a mistake.” He glanced at his dad. “I’m sorry,” he said quietly. He shrunk back into the shadows and out of sight.

Silence rung throughout the apartment like sirens. Without a word and with watery eyes, Percy slung his backpack over his shoulder and walked out the door, locking it on his way out.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed! If you enjoyed this work, please leave a Kudos, it would mean everything :) (I’m a youtuber apparently lol)
**Chapter Summary**

So...basically just the big three going around New York and having conversations...idk.

**Chapter Notes**

This is longer than the previous chapters, and there's lots of fluff. Hope you enjoy! (Because you'll be getting angst soon). And the first part of this chapter is poorly written...don't know how that happened but whatever lmao it gets better (kinda. tbh I don't really like this chapter but hush)

also, New Yorkers or people who have visited New York, be prepared for the complete inaccuracies you're about to read and sorry in advance. rip to u and ur face bc u will be cringing very hard

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Did you know?” Poseidon asked Hades, sitting down on the couch.

Hades shook his head. “It never crossed my mind. I was never concerned over if he had a partner or not.”

Poseidon nodded. He had expected this answer: he too had never worried himself with Percy's love life. The few times he'd wondered he only hoped it wouldn't be that Athena girl, or god forbid Zeus' spawn. At least he got the latter.

Zeus hummed as he sat down next to Poseidon, sinking the plush cushions a little. “He should know better than to be ashamed. Gods, half of the Greeks were about as straight as a circle.” Poseidon knew he was speaking form experience; he remembered Ganymede all too well. Gods, that boy was pretty. Poseidon didn't really blame Zeus, however creepy he was back then.

Poseidon snorted. “Yeah, and I don’t know why he’d apologize to you, Hades. You're not the straightest person on the block either.”

Hades did not react much to this, but inclined his head slightly. “Yes, but I wasn't as open about it as you two were. I've only ever had two males in the bedroom, spread out centuries apart. And it was really only you two and Persephone that knew about it.” He sat down in the arm chair and took a sip of his coffee. It felt surreal, hearing Hades talk about his sex life. That department was usually up to himself and Zeus. And even now, Poseidon had matured to the point where he didn't bring it up every two seconds.

Poseidon leaned back on the couch. They were all silent for a while, just watching the sun rays highlight the dust floating around the room. The silence wasn’t awkward, just still. The quiet started to ring loudly in Poseidon’s ears, but it was comforting, in a way. He rarely ever got peace
and quiet in Atlantis, let alone Olympus.

However, he was usually the reason for that, so: “I’m bored.”

Hades looked a little amused as he looked over. “Way to break the moment, brother. But ditto.”

Zeus sat up on the couch. “What do you want to do?”

Poseidon exhaled loudly and slumped on the couch dramatically. “I don’t know...Hera said she didn’t give us any rules of what we can and can’t do...” He let it trail off, not really knowing where he was going with it. By the looks of it, his brothers didn't know either. They did have money, so they could—wait, did they? "Oh!" He sat up on the couch suddenly. "Hades, where's the credit card?"

“Oh right!” Hades said, standing up. “I nearly forgot. Be right back.” He walked into Sally’s bedroom and returned a few moments later, a simple green card in his hand. “Here it is.” He held it out like he had gone on some mighty quest to retrieve it.

“Persephone, Hera, or Amphitrite said you were a multi-trillionaire, but how much is on that card?” Zeus asked, leaning forward.

Hades examined the card for a moment. “I don’t know. I’m assuming it just refills when it empties, but I’m not certain. Besides, they said they didn’t want us to die and that we have no rules, so they probably put a lot in, right?.”

Zeus nodded. “So...Do you want to look at houses?”

“Nah,” Poseidon brushed off. “It’s only four months. We could probably just stay in hotels after Percy kicks us out. We should go explore.”

“Explore?” Hades repeated, raising an eyebrow. “Have we not lived in New York for decades?”

Poseidon huffed a little. “Yes, but we never just wandered around, y’know? I always wanted to just spend a day like a tourist.”

“...Right,” Zeus said, looking at Poseidon weirdly.

“Don’t look at me like that!” Poseidon rebuked. “Besides, do you have any better ideas?”

“Where would we even go?” He dodged the question, but Poseidon didn't mention it.

Instead, he hopped up off the couch. “No clue. Get your day clothes on!” It felt good to give his brothers commands for once, rather than being commanded. Even if that command was to just get dressed.

Hades snorted and followed him into Sally’s room while Zeus changed in the living room. Poseidon grabbed his clothes from yesterday evening and pulled them on. After slipping on their shoes, Poseidon and Hades walked into the living room.

“Oh god,” Poseidon said, slapping his hand over his eyes as he saw Zeus pull his shirt off. “My poor eyes.” It earned a laugh from Zeus and a chuckle from Hades.

“Terribly sorry, brother.” Poseidon could feel the eye roll that followed. “Next time don’t be so intimidated.”

“Excuse me?” Poseidon said, taking his hand away from his eyes and looking back at Zeus, who
was still in the midst of putting on a shirt. He looked determinedly at his brother's face rather than his exposed stomach, just in case he was actually intimidated. “I’m not intimidated. I’m simply...hmm, what’s the word....” he pretended to think, rubbing his chin, "—grossed out.”

“Excuse me,” Zeus mimicked, mock offended. “I’m offended that you’d criticize me in such that way, brother dearest.” He pulled it on successfully.

“Terribly sorry, but alas, I mustn’t be untruthful, my lovely brother.”

“You two are idiots.”

“Says you.”

Hades rolled his eyes and pulled his hoodie on. It still looked weird. Hades was the kind of guy that wore suits to casual family gatherings, seeing him in comfortable clothes was like seeing a ghost. “Alright, we ready to go? I have the credit card.”

Poseidon and Zeus nodded, and the three of them walked out of the door, grabbing a spare key that they went ahead and assumed they could use. They locked the door quickly and headed down the halls that smelled like bad cigarettes and stale beer. Poseidon frowned as the smell wafted up his nose, mostly at the conditions his son was living in. They walked down the stairs that were for some reason wood rather than concrete and creaked in protest with every step. It made Poseidon feel fat. They exited the main lobby into the streets of New York. Tourists, students, and workers alike bustled around the city, and Poseidon just watched them for a bit. He let his feet carry him to wherever they wanted, while Zeus and Hades followed him quietly.

Apparently, his feet wanted to take him to a clothing store. He glanced up at the store named American Eagle. He’d never shopped there before in his life, but he saw a blue hoodie in the glass dedicated for window-shopping and he was interested. He glanced at Zeus and Hades, who shrugged. They walked into the store, heading towards the mens section. He could feel a few judgemental looks from parents and a few interested looks from the women’s section (most of which Poseidon knew were directed at Zeus), but he didn’t pay them any mind. Zeus looked very much like he wanted to go over to said women’s section, but Hades elbowed him and jerked his head towards the ‘men’s’ sign. Zeus sighed and rolled his eyes.

Poseidon automatically gravitated to the hoodies, while Zeus and Hades stayed to look at t-shirts. Poseidon got absorbed into looking at the different types of hoodies and completely missed two girls walking up to Zeus and Hades. "—and we were wondering if you’d like to join us at that party.”

Poseidon looked over. He snickered quietly at Zeus, who looked like he was constipated in an attempt to refuse, while Hades just looked uncomfortable. Ever the complete opposite of a social butterfly. They both looked at Poseidon helplessly.

The two girls followed their gaze, and when they landed on Poseidon, one girl scrunched up her nose while the other looked at him in sympathy. “Oh…” the scrunchied up nose one said, turning back to Zeus and Hades. She had frizzy, flaming red hair and freckles, but she was one of the most beautiful girls Poseidon had ever seen. Platonically, of course, because she looked no older than 16. “He doesn’t have to come, does he? He’s a lot less handsome than you two.”

Okay, wow. Rude, Poseidon thought. Nothing felt more like a punch to the gut then a pretty girl critiquing your appearance. He let it slide off him though, he was in mortal form after all. He didn't usually look like this; hell, he didn't usually look mortal. Hades gave him a look of sympathy, which Poseidon pretended he didn't see. They were all uncomfortably silent for a while, until the
girls lost their patience and dragged Hades and Zeus by the wrist over to their group of girls, with Hades showing resistance, and Zeus, well, not. Poseidon watched them go, a little amusement creeping into him, but mostly an unfamiliar and unpleasant feeling snaking into his chest. He walked out of the store awkwardly, a few teens giving him sympathetic looks. One guy even gave him a pat on the shoulder, which Poseidon found extremely embarrassing given the guy looked like America's next top model. *Is it national pretty people day today or something?* He walked out into the hustling streets. *Well, guess you're gonna have a bonding day with yourself.* Hey, he could make that fun. Y'know...just...walking around. He could. He only hoped they didn’t kiss anyone at the party, he already missed Atlantis. Admittedly, he mostly missed Stevey, who was a fish he had befriended a week ago. Stevey was nice. Poseidon wanted to talk to Stevey. He must be wondering where he went.

He started to head back the way he came, his feet dragging in an uncharacteristic way. He went against the flow of people, and a few of them cursed at him as they passed. He took a deep breath of the cold New York air, the smell of cigarettes and cheap hot dogs filling his nose. He walked in silence until he reached Percy's apartment, people watching and trying not to shuffle his feet. Realizing that Hades had the keys, he cursed, staring up at the building miserably. Could this day get any worse? Well, only two bad things had happened, but whatever.

Looking around briefly, he walked to the side of the building where he saw Percy’s balcony. Glancing around once more, he hopped up to the first floor deck and stood on the railing, and then jumped up so he could grab the cement of Percy’s balcony. He hauled himself up and over the railing, landing safely on the balcony tiles.

He walked into the apartment quietly and closed the door. Sighing, he plopped down on the couch and stared at the ceiling. “Well this is just great,” he mumbled quietly. He stared at the ceiling for at least half an hour, but the feeling in his chest didn’t falter. What was it? He couldn’t put a finger on it. Rejection? Jealousy? He didn’t really know, it was like a mixture of the two. Wait… unwanted. Unwanted was the word. He sighed. He had never been faced with a situation like this before, and he was starting to crave to be back in his original mid-thirties form. He had at least wished Zeus or Hades would’ve refused, but alas, they had no rules. Poseidon hoped that Hades was at least thinking of him slightly, since he knew Zeus definitely wasn’t.

Giving up on the idea of doing anything today, he drifted off into an uncomfortable sleep.

***TIME BREAK***

The door slammed open with a bang, startling Poseidon out of his sleep. “Ah hah! He *is* here!” Zeus and Hades barged in with the subtlety of a hurricane. Poseidon's eyes were heavy as they blinked at them, and he rubbed the sleep out of his eyes. He yawned and sat up, looking at the two of them who stumbled into the apartment after closing the door.

“How was the party?” Poseidon asked. The feeling in his chest was starting to return, but he ignored it.

Hades jerked his head back, furrowing his brow. “Sorry?”

Poseidon raised an eyebrow, though it took a lot more effort than intended from his grogginess. “The party you got invited to. How was it?”

Hades and Zeus stared at him blankly. “You...thought...we went...to the party?”

“Yes...?” Poseidon shifted his eyes between the two of them, feeling his face screw up into a weird look. “Why wouldn’t you have?”
“You weren’t invited,” Hades said, as if it explained everything,

Poseidon rolled his eyes. Jeez, they didn’t need to rub it in. “O...kay? Yeah? I know? But why
didn’t you go?”

They stared at him in exasperation for a while. Zeus eventually rolled his eyes and explained: “We
didn’t go because you weren’t invited. And, as soon as we managed to get away, we went looking
for you in hopes of ‘exploring’ more. But we couldn’t find you, so we looked in practically
everywhere around this subdivision for the past three hours.”

Ohhhhhh. Well that made more sense now. He was wondering why they were mentioning he
wasn’t invited: he thought they’d had a bonding moment like, less than 48 hours ago. Or something.
He was still tired.

And then Zeus’ last sentence sunk in, and he jerked his head back. “You spent three hours looking
for me?”

“Yes...?” Hades answered, raising an eyebrow.

“Why?” Poseidon asked, dumbfounded. Hades he could understand, but Zeus? Guiltily, he
admitted that he himself probably would've just went. He guessed that just made him a bad person.

Hades and Zeus looked at each other, most likely exasperated that he was still arguing with them.
Zeus finally answered, turning his ‘are you stupid?’ gaze towards him. “Why wouldn’t we?”

“Because you were invited to a party and had nothing better to do...?” Poseidon looked at his idiots
of brothers unwaveringly.

“You were something better to do!” Zeus said, throwing one of his hands up. Poseidon raised his
eyebrows, and Zeus turned red. “Oh god, not that way,” he backtracked, making a face that made
Poseidon snort. “You know what I mean.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes, a small smile starting to form on his face. “You two are idiots.”

“Why?” Hades asked.

Poseidon rolled his eyes again and plopped down on the couch. “You should’ve enjoyed today by
going there. Really, I didn’t mind.”

“Mhm,” Hades hummed disbelievingly, raising an eyebrow.

“I didn’t! It’s their opinion, I can’t change that. And besides, what were you gonna do with me?
You were opposed to exploring until I convinced you there was nothing better to do. But then you
found something better to do!”

Zeus sighed and plopped down in the loveseat. “This might come as a shock to you...but I’m not an
asshole.”

“Neither am I,” Hades agreed. “You didn’t actually think we were going to leave you, did you?”

Poseidon shrugged. Zeus sighed and got up out of the love seat. He grabbed Poseidon’s wrist and
hauled him to his feet. “Now let’s go exploring.”

Poseidon grinned as they exited the apartment again. The air was warmer than it had been a few
hours ago, but early December’s a bitch, and he was still cold with the hoodie on. “Can we get
“Sure,” Hades said, wrapping his arms around his torso. They chatted for a bit as they walked to the nearest mall. Poseidon felt rather ridiculous as he saw a bunch of retired people shopping around, as at ten thirty in the morning, most teens were in school. Deciding to ignore their judgemental looks, he walked into the nearest The North Faced. He automatically went for the dark aqua jacket he saw in the corner, Zeus went for the navy one near the front of the store, and Hades went for the black one on the left wall. By habit, Poseidon picked out the medium men’s, only to find it was too big for him. Scowling and cursing Hera, he placed it back and reached for the small, hiding the tag so Hades and Zeus didn’t have more things to make fun of him for.

He wasn’t very picky with his shopping, and nor were Zeus and Hades. They stood in line and bought their coats, exiting the store quickly (the cashier, an old, tall woman with tattoos and bright makeup, was terrifying, even for them). Poseidon made his way to the exit of the mall, but Hades grabbed his arm. “Not yet,” he said. “There’s no chance I’m going to be wearing this for four months.” He gestured to his clothing.

Poseidon rolled his eyes but silently agreed, and they walked further into the mall. Poseidon stopped in front of a store with Hawaiian print shirts, but Zeus grabbed his arm and hauled him forward. “Um, no. I’m not letting you wear those again.”

“What’s wrong with my shirts?” Poseidon asked, mildly offended. He loved those shirts.

“Everything,” Zeus said, still dragging him towards a store called Hollister. “If we’re going to be teenagers, we have to look like them. And I’m pretty sure every teenage boy has at least one article of clothing from here.” He dragged Poseidon inside the store, Hades following behind them with an amused expression on his face. Poseidon wasn’t quite sure where Zeus got his information of where teenage boys bought their clothes, but he trusted him nonetheless.

They walked over to the men’s section, and politely declined when an employee asked them if they were looking for anything. She smiled at them and turned away to look for another customer. They browsed through the store. Poseidon went for the jeans, and Zeus and Hades followed him. Poseidon picked out dark blue jeans, but soon realized that he had absolutely no clue what size he was now. They were in the ‘average height’ section, and Hades and Zeus looked as lost as he was. Deciding to just wing it, he got size twelve and held them up.

“Nope,” he said. They were around Zeus’s size though. He offered them to his younger brother, who accepted them with a ‘thanks’. Poseidon reached down and got a ten, before realizing that a woman’s twelve was a men’s ten, and tried to play it off as grabbing the eight. Hades snickered and reached above him for the fourteen. It was too big for Hades, but the twelve was too short for him, so he went over to the ‘tall’ section, and got size twelve black jeans. Hades ended up with three pairs of black jeans, Poseidon got a pair of dark blue, light blue, and tan coloured jeans, while Zeus got all dark blue and one light blue.

Hades stayed to look at long sleeve shirts, Zeus went over to the classic t-shirts, and Poseidon looked at the sweatshirts. By the end of their time at the store, Poseidon thought he’d done enough shopping for the rest of his life.

“Okay, that’s enough shopping to last me five lifetimes,” Hades said, voicing his thoughts and looking at the bags in their hands in annoyance. “I don’t see what girls find so fun about this.”

“Neither do I,” Zeus and Poseidon agreed simultaneously. They walked out of the mall.

“Can we stop by the apartment to drop these off?” Hades asked. "I don’t want to carry these around
“Sure,” Poseidon said, heading in the direction of the apartment. “We really need a car or something to put this stuff in.”

Zeus shrugged. “Not really, I don’t think we’re going to be shopping a lot. Just bikes would do.”

Poseidon and Hades nodded in agreement. They dropped their bags off at the apartment and headed out again. “Well,” Poseidon said, scrunching his nose, “we’re definitely getting our exercise in.”

Hades snorted. “You can say that again.”

“Well, we’re definitely getting our exercise in.”

“Really?”

“Yes.”

They walked back out onto the streets of New York. “I’m hungry,” Poseidon complained.

“Same, can we get food?” Zeus said, rubbing his stomach.

“I love having two children,” Hades deadpanned. Poseidon grinned and Zeus rolled his eyes. Hades also rolled his eyes with a small smile on his face. “Where do you want to eat?”

“McDonald’s.”

“Burger King.”

Zeus and Poseidon looked at each other in horror. “You like Burger King over McDonalds?” Poseidon asked, clutching a hand to his chest dramatically.

“You like McDonalds over Burger King?” Zeus said, trying to be equally as dramatic. It was obvious that he didn't do it often, because it wasn't too extra. Poseidon would have to teach him how to be annoying.

Hades rolled his eyes. “How about we go to Chipotle or something? It’s healthier than both of those two.”

“McDonalds is way better, you dolt.”

“Um no, Burger King is the best fast food joint in the world.”

“Or just ignore my input, it’s fine.”

After ten minutes of arguing and not-so-subtle threats, they wound up in McDonalds. Poseidon grinned happily while Hades rolled his eyes and Zeus sulked.

“I feel like I’m betraying my people,” Zeus complained, looking around the large McDonalds.

Poseidon snorted. “Your Burger King people?”

“Yes.”

Hades and Poseidon rolled their eyes. “What are you getting?” Poseidon asked Hades.
“Probably just a Big Mac and fries,” he said, squinting up at the menu above the kitchen.

“You’re so boring,” Poseidon told him, annoyed.

Hades rolled his eyes. “Terribly sorry. What are you getting?”

“Chicken nuggets.”

Hades laughed, a sound very few people get to hear. “Chicken nuggets? How old are you?”

“Seventeen now,” Poseidon grinned unashamedly. “And I’m getting chicken nuggets and no one can stop me.”

Hades chuckled quietly. “You’re a very strange one, Poseidon.”

“That I am, Hades.”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “I’m getting a double cheeseburger, thanks for asking.” He walked forward when the line moved up.

Poseidon grinned lopsidedly at him. “Terribly sorry, little brother.”

“You’re the ‘little’ brother now.”

“Excuse me?”

“Guys,” Hades interrupted. “It’s our turn.”

“Oh.” They walked up to the counter and ordered their meals. After Hades paid, the three of them sat down at one of the few tables open and opened their meals.

“Why’d you get two fries?” Poseidon asked Hades, munching on a chicken nugget.

“Because I thought you were going to get a twenty pack of chicken nuggets, not a ten pack,” he said, putting the medium fries beside Poseidon. Poseidon sat opposite to Hades and Zeus, whose backs were facing the window.

Poseidon smiled but rolled his eyes. “Thanks, mom.”

“No problem, daughter.”

The three of them chuckled softly and started at their food. Half an hour and lots of jabs later, they were all done and they threw their boxes in the garbage.

“What do you want to do now?” Zeus asked as they stepped back out into the busy crowds.

“No clue,” Hades said, leading them further down the sidewalk.

“I have an idea!” Poseidon said after a few moments of walking in silence.

“What?” Zeus asked absently, eyeing a group of girls across the street. Hades elbowed him.

“I can’t tell you yet, or you won’t agree,” Poseidon said, flagging down a taxi.

“Well that’s comforting,” Hades said. It was said almost normally, but Poseidon could pick up the faint trace of sarcasm lining the words. A taxi pulled up and Poseidon hopped in first, Hades squished in the middle, and Zeus got in last.
“Where to?” the plump man behind the steering wheel asked gruffly.

“New York Harbour,” Poseidon answered happily, handing over the twenty bucks. The man grumbled but started to drive.

“New York Harbour?” Hades asked disbelievingly. “What are we gonna do there?”

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “There’s a whole bunch of cool stuff down there! Small museums, restaurants, stores…”

“Yes,” Zeus huffed, “but it’s by the ocean.”

“Exactly!” Poseidon agreed happily. Maybe Stevey would come see him.

Hades and Zeus groaned.

Forty minutes later, they arrived at New York Harbour, where the Statue of Liberty was standing proudly in the middle of the sparkling water like a guardian angel. Poseidon thanked the driver and they stepped out quickly. He drove off with a screech and out of sight. “Where do you wanna go first?” Poseidon asked.

“Home,” Hades and Zeus said miserably.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Here,” he said, grabbing both of their wrists and dragging them down closer to the harbour. “Come over here.” He pulled them farther down the walkways, a few tourists glancing at them in wonder. He dragged them down the long sidewalks until they reached a less busy part. Without letting go of their wrists, he walked over to a small brick ledge and hopped on it. Looking down, you could see the calm water of the basin swirling below you. “C’mon up here,” he said, gesturing for them to follow. “I won’t let go of your wrists.”

Zeus peeked over the ledge hesitantly. “Oh hell no,” he said, backing up.

Hades peeked over the ledge too. “Oh yeah, not gonna happen.” He tried to back up as well, but Poseidon kept a firm grip on their wrists. “Aw, c’mon. I won’t let you fall.” They looked at him suspiciously. “I won’t!” he said.

“Fine, but on one condition,” Zeus said, narrowing his eyes. “You have to come up to a high height with me.”


“You have to visit me in the Underworld for two days after this is over.”

Poseidon shrugged and nodded. “Sure.” He tugged on their wrists more forcefully. Reluctantly, they stepped onto the ledge. Hades wobbled slightly, and Poseidon tightened his grip on his arm.

“Oh okay,” Zeus said shakily. “This isn’t so bad.”

“Exactly!” Poseidon said. He paused, getting an idea. He slowly turned all his attention to Zeus, who was looking out at the basin. Poseidon got a wicked grin on his face. Slowly, he inched forward until he was less than five centimeters away from Zeus. In a flash, Poseidon moved his arms and pushed Zeus forward, just catching him before he lost his balance.

Zeus screamed. “POSEIDON! YOU DICK!”

Poseidon cackled. He pulled Zeus back firmly onto the ledge and down on to the pavement. Hades
followed them, joining Poseidon in his laughter. “That wasn’t funny, you fuckers!” Zeus fumed.

“Yes it was,” Poseidon wheezed out breathlessly between fits of laughter. Hades just slapped his palm over his mouth to try and muffle his laughter.

“Oh, you’re so going to pay for this,” Zeus said angrily. He grabbed Poseidon’s wrist, who was still laughing his head off. Hades followed them.

“You...screamed...like...a girl…” Poseidon wheezed.

“Shut the fuck up,” Zeus growled. He dragged Poseidon back up to the busy part of New York. He spotted a run down but tall building, and went to the fire ladder immediately. “Climb,” he commanded. “You said I could take you up on a high building.”

Hades laughed harder, but Poseidon shut up real quick. He looked up at the twenty story building, swallowing nervously. The fire escape was old and rickety, but he stepped on it hesitantly. The metal was ice cold on his hands, and he wrapped his hoodie around his palms. Reluctantly, he started to climb up. Zeus followed him, and Hades watched them from the ground. “Don’t look down!” he called when they were seven stories up. Poseidon scowled but moved forward. His legs were already starting to ache, and his biceps burned uncomfortably. By the twelfth story, he was ready to jump off. But he pushed forward. Fifteenth floor. Sixteenth floor. Seventeenth floor. Eighteenth floor. Two more. Nineteenth floor. Twentieth floor.

He pushed himself up over the ledge and plopped down on the roof. He panted against the wall, Zeus following his lead. After a moment of catching their breath, Zeus got up and offered his hand to Poseidon. He took it, and Zeus guided them to the front ledge of the roof. Zeus stepped up first, and swallowing, Poseidon followed. The ledge was probably three feet wide and fifty feet long.

“Go on,” Zeus said, beckoning to the edge. Poseidon swallowed and walked closer to the edge. He was only a foot away now. “A little farther,” Zeus pushed. Poseidon swallowed thickly again and inched closer to the edge. He took an uncalculated step, and nearly fell off the building. “Woah there, buddy,” Zeus said, catching Poseidon by his waist. “Not that far.”

“Woah,” Poseidon said shakily. He expected the arm around his waist to leave, but instead, another one wrapped around him. “What are you—” He screamed as the arms lifted him up and stepped closer to the edge. “PUT ME DOWN YOU FUCK!” Poseidon screeched. Zeus cackled, still holding Poseidon up by the waist.

“Payback,” he grinned. He got a tighter grip on Poseidon’s torso and swung him over the edge and brought him back like he was a swingset. Poseidon screamed and Zeus cackled. He did again three times, before relenting and letting go of Poseidon, placing him down on the roof.

Poseidon sat down and leant against the ledge, placing a hand over his chest. “I am going to murder you in your sleep,” he threatened, out of breath and shaking.

Zeus just laughed harder.

Chapter End Notes

again, I am terribly sorry for all the New Yorkers out there, I’ve never been and this was probably the least accurate thing in the entire world. Whoops. Also, low-key didn't
like this chapter until like the very end gang gang

like, in-character characters? good description? we don't know her
When they returned to the apartment, Percy was already home. He was sitting on the couch silently, his legs crossed.

“Hey, Percy,” Poseidon greeted, closing the door behind them. “How was school?”

He glanced up at them briefly. “Fine. Where were you guys?”

“Just...out, I guess,” Poseidon explained awkwardly, sitting down on the arm chair. Hades and Zeus hesitated before sitting down on the love seat, looking the definition of uncomfortable. Poseidon decided to just ignore their glares.

“Do any of you know where Nico is?” Percy asked. “I went looking for him after school—y’know, to the places he always is—and he wasn’t at any of them.”

Zeus, Poseidon and Hades frowned. “No, we didn’t see him,” Hades said, looking mildly concerned. “But I can iris message him if you’d like,” Hades added quickly at Percy’s distressed face. “Have you tried that?”

Percy nodded. “He ended it as soon as it came up...but I don’t think he’d ignore you.”

Hades nodded awkwardly at the fact he was having a normal conversation with his nephew and got up. “I should probably do this in private…”

Percy agreed, and Hades wandered off into Sally’s room. Percy got up and started pacing. Poseidon watched him, a little confused as to why his and Hades’ child were good friends, but sympathized for Percy anyways. “He’s going to be thankful for you later, Percy. Just give him a little time.” His words were kind of empty: he wasn't sure what Nico would be thankful for. But Percy smiled at him nonetheless, nodding gratefully. They remained mostly silent. They could distantly hear Hades’ voice, but couldn’t really make out his words. For another painful twenty minutes, all of them were silent, waiting for Hades to walk back out again. Eventually, he did with a small smile on his face.

Percy jumped and turned towards him. “What did he say?” he asked quickly.
Hades raised an amused eyebrow at Percy’s jumpiness. “He said he’s coming over. I told him I was fine with it.” Percy looked immensely relieved. He opened his mouth to say something, but was cut off by a loud bang from the kitchen. Everyone swiveled around to see what it was, only to find a blushing Nico sprawled across the floor.

“Miscalculated,” he explained, face beet red, sitting up. Percy sprinted towards him and pulled him up to his feet easily. He grabbed Nico’s shoulders and brought him into a fierce hug. “Woah there,” Nico exclaimed, looking uncomfortable.


Nico yelped. “Jesus christ Jackson!” he yelled. “Put me down!”

Percy laughed and placed him down. “You hugged me baaack, you hugged me baaack,” he chanted teasingly.

Nico’s cheeks coloured and he slapped Percy’s arm. “Shut up before I make you, Jackson.” Percy wisely shut up. He grinned while Nico rolled his eyes. Nico looked away from Percy and to his dad, who was watching their encounter with an unreadable expression. Poseidon saw his Adam’s apple bob as he swallowed. “Hi, dad.”

Hades’ eyes softened. “Hi, Nico.”

“Well!” Poseidon said after a moment of silence, getting up off the arm chair. “Now that that’s all cleared up, I’m hungry.”

“Same,” Percy agreed, looking at his dad like he was his hero. Hades, Zeus and Nico snorted. “You’re always hungry, Percy.” Nico rolled his eyes.

“So is Poseidon,” Zeus agreed. “He just eats a little bit every time he does eat.”

“Oh, I eat often and I eat a lot whenever I do.” Percy grinned.

Nico rolled his eyes with a faint smile on his lips. “We know, Percy. If it wasn’t for camp, I’d be concerned for your health.” The words didn’t have any bite to them. He glanced at the time. “Oh! You better make food quick, we were supposed to be at Jason’s ten minutes ago.”

Percy swerved around and glanced at the clock. “Shit!” he exclaimed, grabbing his shoes and coat to put back on. “I’ll just steal Jason’s food.” He turned back to Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades. “Um, Nico and I agreed to go to Jason’s today after school to hang out. You three won’t mind making your own supper, right? We’ll probably stay the night.”

Poseidon nodded. “No, we’re fine.” He faltered a moment. “Wait, don’t you have school tomorrow?”

Percy zipped up his jacket hurriedly. “Yeah, but Nico will shadow travel me there. Jason’s still building temples for minor gods, so he got an apartment near where he’s working. I’ll do my homework there. Bye!” he rushed out, shoving Nico out the door and following after him, locking it behind them. Silence rung around the apartment at their abrupt exit.

“...Well, that just happened,” Poseidon said, raising an eyebrow slightly.
“Yep,” Zeus said, glancing at the door briefly before walking back into the kitchen. “When do you two usually have supper?”

“Five,” Poseidon answered.

Hades walked into the kitchen. “Seven.”

“So six, then,” Zeus said. “It’s four thirty now, so we probably shouldn’t eat anything or we won’t be able to eat supper.”

“You underestimate my power, brother,” Poseidon said, holding his fist out and standing like he was brandishing a sword, earning a snort from Zeus and Hades. He walked into the kitchen, opening the fridge. He picked out some blueberries and put them in a bowl. “You guys want some?” he asked Zeus and Hades, cocking an eyebrow up as he popped one into his mouth.

They shook their heads. “No thanks,” Hades declined, walking over to the couch.

“Suit yourself.” Poseidon shrugged. He placed the blueberries back in the fridge and walked over to the love seat with his bowl. Zeus poured himself a glass of water and sat down on the armchair. They sat in silence for awhile. This time it was awkward. Poseidon had no idea what to talk about, so he just waited for Zeus or Hades to say something, which proved to be a mistake. They just looked away from each other awkwardly. Eventually, Hades sighed and got up to look at the bookshelf. Poseidon watched him pull out a hard cover of *The Lord of the Rings*, and rolled his eyes. Only Hades would choose that. Zeus soon followed, and he sighed at his brother’s maturity. He refused to get a book, so he just flopped backwards on the love seat. All was silent for awhile, just the turning of pages and busy chatter of New Yorkers outside filling the room. They stayed there for a good while, before Poseidon finally had enough and got off the love seat. Hades and Zeus glanced up from their books to look at him. “I’m ordering food,” Poseidon announced. “What do you guys want?”

“Chinese,” Zeus said.

Hades closed his mouth and shrugged. “Sure.”

Poseidon nodded. He grabbed Percy’s home phone and dialled the closest Chinese restaurant. He ordered what he usually got thrice (plus two extra egg rolls because apparently two weren’t enough for Zeus and Hades), and thanked the employee before hanging up. “It’ll be ready in twenty minutes,” he said, turning to Zeus and Hades. “You should probably put the books away so you don’t get absorbed in them again.” Hades and Zeus nodded. They got up and returned their books to their respective places on the shelf and returned to their seats.

Cue awkward silence.

“Where’d you order it from?” Hades asked.

“May Garden,” Poseidon answered.

Hades nodded. “I’ll go pick it up.”

“Thanks.”

“No problem.” He slipped on his shoes and jacket and grabbed the spare keys. “I’ll be right back,” he said, slipping out the door.

“Kay,” Poseidon said. The door closed and locked, and the apartment was thrown into silence
again. Poseidon noticed a tv remote on a cabinet by the couch and, not wanting it to get awkward
again, picked it up. He aimed it at the TV in the corner and clicked the “on/off” button. The news
came on, causing Poseidon to wrinkle his nose at the latest affair some C list celebrity had, and for
Zeus to jump out of his thoughts. He switched the channels until he found *The Game of Thrones.*

"Hey!" Zeus said, moving to sit on the couch. “Go back, football’s on.”

Poseidon wrinkled his nose again. “Yeah, but it’s the Seahawks against the Eagles.”

“So?” Zeus asked, offended. “What’s wrong with them?”

“They’re both terrible,” Poseidon said, throwing the remote back onto the cabinet.

“Excuse me?” Zeus asked, mock hurt.

Poseidon grinned at him. “It’s not my fault you like garbage teams.” Zeus got up and lunged at
him, causing Poseidon to yelp and laugh as he hit the floor. Zeus grinned as Poseidon tried to get
him off. They wrestled around, the tv forgotten. Everytime the other would get on top, the one
trapped would think of more and more elaborate ways to get the other person off of them. They
almost ran into the bookshelf, and looked at eachother sheepishly.

“Hades is going to hate us,” Zeus said, trying to knee Poseidon so he could escape.

Poseidon dodged. “I think he already does.”

Zeus grinned as he finally flipped them around again. “Well, good thing we hate him too,” he
joked.

Poseidon laughed. “Too bad he must’ve thought that conversation was sincere,” he continued,
wrinkling his nose as he smiled. The door opened quietly. Poseidon looked up from his spot on the
floor. “FOOD!” he yelled, pushing Zeus off him and running for Hades. He decided to ignore how
weird it must’ve looked to Hades when he saw the two of them on the floor, too focused on the
food to think of anything else. Zeus snorted and got off the floor as well, brushing the dust off of
himself. Poseidon took the bags from Hades’ hands and placed them on the table. He rushed into
the kitchen to get three plates, but Hades placed a calm hand on top of them.

“Only two,” he said. Poseidon looked up at him in confusion. When Hades met his eyes, they were
a lot colder than they had been when he left. Almost as cold as the first time he came to Olympus
in millenia.

Poseidon frowned, concerned. “Is something wrong, Hades?”

“No. You can share my food.” He turned on his heel and went into Sally’s room.

“Hades!” Poseidon called after him, raising his arms in confusion. “Did I do something?”

“Relax, Poseidon,” Zeus said, waving his hand dismissively. “It’s flu season. He's probably just not
feeling well.”

“We’re gods,” Poseidon argued, still staring as Hades closed the bedroom door.

“Not anymore we aren’t.”

Poseidon glanced at Zeus and then back at Sally’s room. He supposed Zeus was right, but he felt a
little worry pooling in his gut. He came to sit at the table and opened the bags with Zeus, dropping
a plate in front of both of them. He and Zeus scooped out their usual orders, but didn’t touch Hades’ food. They ate in mostly silence, occasionally dropping a ‘you have something on your face’ or a ‘you eat like a pig’. Poseidon couldn’t finish all of his, so he got up to dump his remaining food in the compost and then put his plate in the dishwasher. Zeus soon followed and they walked back to the tv. “We’re not watching Game of Thrones,” Zeus said.

“Why not?” Poseidon asked.

“Because it’s trash,” Zeus said, grabbing the remote.

“Excuse me?” Poseidon asked, pretending to be offended. "Watch your language."

Zeus stuck his tongue out at Poseidon like the mature god he is. “It’s way too overhyped. You’d think it was us or something.”

Poseidon laughed, a little surprised at the fact that Zeus actually made a joke all on his own. “Who knew you could make jokes, brother?”

Zeus looked at Poseidon with way over-exaggerated agreement. “I know, right?”

Poseidon laughed again and plopped next to him on the couch. “Fine, but we’re not watching the Seahawks.”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “You just have bad taste in football teams.”

“You don’t even know what team I hope for.”

“Well...mehhh.” Zeus stuck his tongue out like a three year old. Poseidon laughed. Zeus scrolled through the channels and stopped on one that had Harry Potter.

“I think it’s a marathon,” Poseidon commented. “Look at all the things following it.” He pointed to the screen.

Zeus nodded. “I think it’s the Order of the something now. You want to watch it?”

Poseidon nodded. “Sure. I’ll see if Hades wants to.”

Zeus nodded. Poseidon got up from the couch and walked over to Sally’s room, knocking on the door. He didn’t get a response, so he just walked in. “Hades?” he called softly.

“What?” The answer was curt and emotionless. He was leaning against the middle of the headboard, reading a book. Poseidon shifted uncomfortably at his uninterested gaze.

“Um...we were just wondering if you’d like to watch Harry Potter with us.”

“No.” He went back to reading his book.

Poseidon looked at him in surprise at the blunt answer, but quickly turned concerned. “Are you sure you’re alright, Hades? Did I do something?”

“No. Can you leave?” He didn’t look up from his book.

“I did something.”

Hades looked at him emotionlessly. “Did I not tell you you didn’t do something?” Poseidon stayed silent. Hades rolled his eyes and looked back down at his novel. “Believe it or not, not everything’s
about you. Now go watch Harry Potter, and let me read my equally good book in peace.” Poseidon hesitated for a moment. Hades looked up at him with a raised eyebrow and an annoyed look in his eyes. “My bad, did you need an invitation?”

Poseidon looked away awkwardly and walked out of the room. He closed the door softly behind him. Zeus was popping popcorn, looking completely oblivious. “He coming?” Zeus asked, pulling the popcorn out of the microwave and getting a bowl out. Poseidon shook his head, not really wanting to talk about Hades’ unusual behaviour. Zeus shrugged. “His loss.” He walked over to the couch with the bowl, Poseidon in tow. They sat down and turned the volume up slightly. “Want some?” Zeus asked, gesturing to the popcorn.

Poseidon shook his head. He wasn’t very hungry. “No thanks.”

Zeus shrugged. “Okay.”

They watched the movie, pointing out little things they noticed here and there. The sky got steadily darker, and the voices drifting up through the windows got steadily drunker. About ten minutes in, all of the large bowl of popcorn was gone.

Poseidon stared at Zeus. “What?” Zeus asked, looking away from the screen to Poseidon.

“How do you have this?” Poseidon asked, poking Zeus’s bicep.

Zeus laughed quietly. “I work out.”

“When?”

“Usually at the end of the day, but since this started I didn’t really get the chance,” he explained. “And besides, how did you get this?” He poked Poseidon’s bicep.

Poseidon went quiet for a moment. “...Working out.”

“Mind boggling, I know.”

“Oh, shut up.”

They continued to watch the movie, but Poseidon decided to tuck in for the night instead of watching The Half Blood Prince, much to Zeus’s disappointment. “It’s only quarter to nine!” he said.

Poseidon sighed. “I know, but it was an eventful day. Goodnight, Zeus.”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “Goodnight, Poseidon.” He turned the tv off, and Poseidon slipped into Sally’s room, where Hades was still reading his book. The mood changed immediately, and Poseidon swallowed as he got changed into his PJ’s.

“Can I shut the lights off?” he asked Hades softly. Hades didn’t respond, but closed his book and set it on the bedside table. He was already in his pyjamas. Poseidon took this as a yes and turned the lights off, shutting the door while he was at it. There was a tension in the air as he crawled under the covers, Hades following suit and moving to his own side. Poseidon laid on his back, head resting on the pillow. Hades’ back was towards him. Poseidon sighed. “I know something’s up, Hades,” he said eventually.

“The sky?” Hades answered sarcastically.
Poseidon sighed. “No. Seriously, you’re acting all different than you were earlier.”

“How so?”

“I don’t know…” Poseidon trailed off. “You’re acting like you hate me or something.”

“Who said I didn’t?” Poseidon retracted. “Um…you?”

“When?”

“During the conversation we had this morning…?”

“You mean the one that wasn’t sincere?”

Poseidon froze. “What? You heard that?”

“This place isn’t exactly sound proof when you’re less than a foot away from the door.”

Poseidon paused, but eventually shook his head, a small smile starting to form on his face. “You’re such an idiot,” he said fondly. “We were joking.”

“Mhm,” Hades agreed sarcastically. “Sounds believable.”

“I’m serious! We were wrestling and almost knocked over the bookshelf, and we were talking about how you were gonna hate us if we caused any damage.”

“Too bad I already do regardless.”

“Hades. C’mon man, we were kidding. We don’t hate you. Why would we hate you?”

“Gee, I don’t know. Why would you banish me to the underworld?” Poseidon went silent. Hades flipped over to look at him, raising an eyebrow. Poseidon kept his mouth shut. Hades rolled his eyes. “Forget it, Poseidon. This four months is going to end, and you won’t have to deal with me ever again.”

“But I want to deal with you!” Poseidon protested.

“Maybe I don’t want to deal with you.”

Poseidon went quiet again. “Why?”

“I don’t think you would be able to stay up long enough to hear all of the reasons.”

“Hades, c’mon. We were actually joking. We have no reason to hate you!” Poseidon tried desperately to keep up the progress they had been making.

Hades rolled his eyes. “Then why were you so shocked that I heard?”

“I didn’t think we were being that loud,” Poseidon explained. Hades looked at him suspiciously. “I’m being serious, man. We were just kidding. Zeus’s joking voice just isn’t very joke-y.” He looked at Hades desperately.

Hades sighed and rolled onto his back. “I don’t know if I believe you or not.”

“Well you should, because I’m being honest.” He nudged Hades lightly. “I would’ve pushed you in
the harbour if I hated you.”

Hades sighed and rolled his eyes, but an extremely faint smile worked its way onto his lips. He stayed silent for awhile, but eventually offered: “We need to work on Zeus’s ‘joke-y’ voice.”

“That we do.”

That night, they fell into a dreamless sleep side by side.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed because I don’t know what else I’m doing with my life
Chapter Summary

Fluff, awkward waking up positions, Jercey finally comes in, tickling.

Chapter Notes

This one's a little shorter than my other ones, but it's all fluff so yay for that

When Poseidon woke up, he was in a rather uncomfortable position.

Not that the position itself was uncomfortable, in fact Poseidon found it rather enjoyable for the neck and shoulders. Perhaps... embarrassing would be a better choice of words. See, rather than being safely on their respective sides of the bed, he and Hades were kind of one big pile of limbs. They were lying on their sides facing each other, with Hades having an arm strewn across Poseidon’s side and Poseidon with his calves tucked up beside Hades’s ankles. Poseidon’s arm had somehow managed to get curled up on Hades’s chest, and his head was tucked under Hades’s chin.

So basically, they were cuddling.

Gross.

Poseidon wrinkled his nose. How on earth was he supposed to get out of this without Hades waking up? He could try to remove himself, but Hades’s chin would move and there would be no chance that he wouldn’t wake up from that—

He was shaken out of his thoughts by a ‘snap’.

He whipped his head around, only to find Zeus snickering with an iphone in his hand, no doubt taking a picture. Poseidon stared at him, horrified. Zeus caught his eye and cackled. “How adorable,” he teased.

Poseidon groaned and smacked his head against the nearest surface, which proved to be a mistake since the nearest surface was Hades’s chest. Hades woke up with a grunt. There was a pause, and then: “Persephone?” he asked, confused.

“Nope,” Zeus grinned.


Poseidon scrambled up and pointed an accusatory finger at Hades. “Don’t blame me for this! You were the one fucking holding me.”

Zeus erupted with laughter and Hades looked completely lost.
“And you!” Poseidon said, annoyed and beyond embarrassed, pointing his finger to Zeus. “How did you even get a phone?”

Zeus tried to muffle his laughter. “I always had a phone.”

Poseidon threw his hands up. “Why? I don’t have one!”

“Maybe you didn’t have it on you when we got turned into teenagers,” Hades suggested, still looking confused. “But why did we wake up like that?”

Poseidon threw his hands up. “Don’t fucking ask me!”

Hades put his hands up in surrender. “Okay damn, chill out. I’m not mad, just confused.”

“That makes two of us,” Poseidon muttered, frustrated. “We need a fucking net or something.”

“Aw, what?” Zeus asked teasingly. “You don’t like being snuggled by your big brother?” Poseidon gave him a glare that would make Athena proud. Hades looked at him weirdly, but Zeus’s dopey smile didn’t falter a fraction.

“Fuck you,” Poseidon said, standing up. “And delete that photo!”

“He took a photo?” Hades asked exasperatedly.

“Hell yeah I did,” Zeus grinned. “And I’m not deleting it. I’m going to post it allll over Olympus.”

“Don’t you dare,” Poseidon warned.

Zeus gave him a cheeky grin. “Everyone loves brothers who fight and then make up, Poseidon. It really sells. You gotta take one for the team, man.”

Hades watched this whole ordeal with a completely lost look on his face. “What are you selling? Who is ‘everyone’? What?”

“I don’t know either,” Poseidon said, looking at Hades with a pained look in his eye. He turned back to Zeus. “Why were you even in here in the first place?”

“Oh yeah!” he said, still grinning. He tucked his phone away. “Breakfast is ready.”

“You made us breakfast?” Poseidon asked, suddenly interested in talking to his brother again.

“Mhm. Toast, eggs and bacon,” he said, walking out of the room with a bounce to his step.

“I’m going to kill him,” Poseidon muttered, but the smell of breakfast wafting in from the kitchen got him to start getting changed. Hades followed slowly, still looking confused but not questioning it. Poseidon slipped into his too-big sweater, but paused in putting on his jeans. “Are we doing anything today?” he asked Hades, turning around to look at him, but quickly turning away when he saw he was halfway through putting pants on.

“Probably not,” he answered, pulling his jeans up all the way and grabbing a shirt to put on. “I just want to stay in. It’s a shitty day.”

He wasn’t wrong. The rain beating down on the window was hard to miss. The clouds caused the room to be darker than it had to be, so Poseidon glanced at the clock to tell what time it was. 9:45. Not bad. “Okay good, because I just want to wear sweatpants.” He picked up said sweatpants and put them on.
Hades hummed. “I probably should’ve gotten some too.” He looked down at himself. “Y’know what? Fuck it. I’m just going to wear my pyjama pants.”

“Go you,” Poseidon said through a yawn. “You wear those pyjama pants.”

Hades snorted. He changed back into them, and they both walked into the kitchen together. Zeus was already sitting at the table, munching on a slice of bacon. He looked up at them when they came in. “There’s bacon on the plate by the stove, and the eggs are in the frying pan.”

Poseidon and Hades nodded and walked over to the kitchen. Poseidon got two plates and handed one to Hades, who accepted it with a ‘thanks’. Poseidon got two slices of bacon and took half of the eggs in the pan, and Hades took five pieces of bacon, placed one on Poseidon’s plate, and scooped up the remaining eggs. Poseidon rolled his eyes with a fond smile on his face. “I’m not two, mother.”

Hades hip-checked him lightly as they walked over to the kitchen table. “That may be true, but you need more than two pieces of bacon.”

Poseidon wasn’t sure if he meant to do the twist on the word ‘two’, but he smiled anyway. “I also don’t need six pounds of eggs.” He jerked his head towards the literal pile of scrambled eggs on his plate.

Hades chuckled. “Now that is true.” He looked at Zeus. “Why did you make so many eggs?”

Zeus shrugged, but looked slightly embarrassed. “I miscalculated how many eggs I’d need for three people.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes fondly and sat down at the table. “Great job. But thanks anyway.”

“Yeah, real smooth,” Hades agreed. “But thank you.”

Zeus snorted. “I try. And you’re welcome.”

Poseidon got up again. “I’m going to make some coffee. You want some Hades?” Zeus already had his.

Hades nodded. “Yes please.”

Poseidon nodded and started to make some coffee, leaning against the counter when the machine started to make an unnecessary amount of noise. The three were quiet for awhile. When the coffee was done, Poseidon poured a bit of sugar into his and left Hades’s black, then brought them over to the table. He placed Hades’s mug in front of him, then sat in his own seat. They sat in silence for awhile, just eating and taking sips from their coffee mugs. When they were finished, they put their dishes away and came back to the living room.

Poseidon plopped onto the couch. “What do you want to do?”

Hades sat down in the armchair while Zeus took the loveseat. “Don’t know.”

The two of them looked at Zeus, who shrugged. “Don’t ask me.”

Poseidon groaned and laid down on the couch with an unnecessary amount of force. “I’m already bored.”

Hades rolled his eyes. “It’s the third day.”
“I know.”

Zeus rolled his eyes and got up. “Would you prefer me doing this?” He walked over to Poseidon and knelt down. He brought his hands up to Poseidon’s ribs and wiggled them threateningly. Poseidon practically squealed and hopped off the couch.

“NO! Get away from me!” Zeus cackled and pushed him down again. He moved his hands up and down Poseidon’s ribs, causing him to flinch and squirm away, letting out pained laughter. “St-stop! You little shit, get away from me! Attack Hades instead!”

“Nu uh,” Hades said, getting up quickly. “I’m leaving!” He scrambled out of the room.

“HADES YOU TRAITOR GET BACK HERE!” Poseidon screamed. He could hear Hades’ evil laughter coming from the bedroom. Zeus just laughed along with him and doubled his efforts. Poseidon screeched and kicked him in the privates. Zeus let out an ‘oof’ and relented, stumbling back slightly. “HA!” Poseidon yelled, scrambling off the couch and sprinting out of the living room. “Try to tickle me now, you little shit!”

“Was that an invitation?”

“NO!”

*****

Poseidon looked up from the TV when Percy came in. “How was school?” he asked, turning the volume down.

“Pretty boring,” he answered. “I stayed up way too late at Jason’s.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes fondly. “Wouldn’t expect any different.”

Percy grinned at him. He went into the kitchen and got a blue dyed chocolate chip cookie. “Have you guys not tried these yet?” he asked, horrified, looking back at them.

“No?” Hades responded. "Were we supposed to?"

Percy ignored the question and continued to look mortified. “Oh my gods, you need to.” He picked out three more and walked to the living room. He handed one to Zeus, one to Hades, and one to Poseidon, before sitting next to his dad on the couch. Poseidon took a hesitant bite. The cookie dissolved into his mouth in a burst of chocolate, peanut butter, and sea salt. Poseidon stared at Percy in shock, and Percy laughed. “I know. That was Jason’s reaction after our first date—” He slapped a hand over his mouth. He looked at Poseidon, horrified. Poseidon raised an eyebrow. Oh? Well that was new. He just looked at Percy until he removed his hand, and he could see his adam’s apple bob as he swallowed. After a moment of silence, he finally spoke. “Um...yeah...I’m kinda...like, bisexual?”

Poseidon wanted to say he said something kind and moving, but instead he just said: “Same.”

They high fived.

Hades snorted and Zeus full on laughed. “Jesus, how many queer kids can we make?” Zeus
chuckled. “First Thalia who I’m fairly certain is asexual, then Nico whose gay, Bianca who I’m not sure of, and now Percy’s bi and Jason’s dating a guy. I wonder if Hazel will join the club.”

Poseidon grinned. “Well, it runs in every demigods genes. I’m actually surprised most of camp is straight.” He turned to look at Percy. “But why did you pick one of his spawns?” he asked teasingly, pointing at Zeus in mock disgust.

Zeus stuck his tongue out at him maturely. Percy rolled his eyes with a small smile on his face. “Oh, so first you complain about Annabeth’s mom, now you complain about Jason’s dad?”

Poseidon threw his hands up in surrender. “Fair enough. Anyone is better than an Athena kid.”

Percy laughed and rolled his eyes.

Chapter End Notes

So yeah...a little short. Do you think I should incorporate more demigod relationships into this, or should I just stick to mainly bonding between the big three?
Poseidon thought he was going to explode.

Not literally of course, but his stomach was highly displeased with him. Percy was still happily munching on popcorn as they watched Voltron: Legendary Defender (Percy threatened begged them until they agreed), while Zeus, Poseidon and Hades held their stomachs miserably. “You guys are full already?” Percy asked, unimpressed.

“You’re not full?” Zeus shot back.

Percy shrugged. “I’m a growing boy.” The same damn pronunciation of ‘boy’.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “How are you not three hundred pounds?”

“How are you one hundred fifty pounds?” he shot back, poking his dad’s shoulder. “I thought you were an all-powerful god?”

“Oh, shut up,” Poseidon said, annoyed. Percy laughed.

They went silent and continued watching the show. “Are Keith and Lance a couple?” Hades asked after a moment, confusion evident in his voice.

Percy snickered. “I wish. But no, they’re just disaster gays.”

“Ah,” Hades said, nodding.

Poseidon sighed. “Same.”

Percy choked on his popcorn and burst out laughing. He clutched his stomach and fell back on the couch. “I love you,” he choked out between fits of laughter.

Poseidon grinned so wide he thought his face might split in two. He glanced at Hades and Zeus, who were smiling at him warmly. Hades looked a little proud, but it was slight. He looked back at Percy, who was still laughing and seemed unaffected by what he just said. A content feeling seeped through Poseidon, and suddenly Voltron seemed a lot more interesting and his situation looked a lot brighter.
“We need to go to bed, Perseus,” Hades grumbled, rubbing his eyes tiredly.

“But the next episode is really good!” Percy protested, looking at his uncle hopefully.

“Nothing is good at 2 am on a school night,” he responded, getting up. “Please tell me Nico doesn’t stay up this late?”

“Not this late,” Percy said nonchalantly. Hades looked relieved. “He usually calls it a night at around 4.”

“What?”

Poseidon snorted. “Whatever. Go to bed, Percy. You have school in the morning.”

“Yes, mom,” he said, annoyed. Poseidon shrugged. “Why are you tired though?” he pouted slightly. “Are you not sleeping well?”

“No, we are. We’re just old,” Poseidon answered.

“You’re seventeen,” Percy protested.

“Seventeen thousand.”

“Really? Are you actually seventeen thousand?”

“I don’t know.”

Percy laughed. Poseidon got up and headed towards the bedroom, but Percy called him back before he could enter. “Mum and Paul are coming back on Saturday, you should probably start looking for places to stay,” he informed them.

Poseidon shared a glance with Zeus and Hades, before nodding. “Okay, we’ll look into it tomorrow.”

Percy looked faintly disappointed but nodded as well. He got up off the couch and headed towards his room, turning the TV off while he left. “Goodnight,” he said, waving at them.

Three goodnights echoed back to him. They all parted into each of their respective bedrooms (or for Zeus, just stayed and pulled out the sofa bed) and closed the doors. Poseidon and Hades changed into pyjamas and crawled under the covers, falling asleep almost immediately.

What felt like less than a second later, a scream jolted Poseidon out of his sleep. “What the—” he shot up out of bed and bolted out the door, rushing to Percy’s room. Hades and Zeus were hot on his heels. Instead of finding anything (or anyone) threatening his son, he found him deeply asleep, but thrashing around on his bed like he was getting murdered. Poseidon quickly knelt by his side. “Percy!” he yelled, shaking his shoulders. “Wake up!” Percy just flinched away from the noise and let out another cry. Poseidon, though he felt like a complete asshole doing it to his own son, slapped Percy across the cheek. Hard. Percy jolted awake, hyperventilating. He still didn’t look completely there. His eyes were glazed and distant, looking at Poseidon, but not—well—looking at Poseidon. “Percy!” Poseidon yelled again.
“Move over,” someone commanded. Poseidon looked around to see Nico di Angelo standing by the bed. Knowing the boy probably goes through the same thing as what Percy was going through, Poseidon quickly moved aside. Nico sat by Percy on the bed quickly and forced him to look at him. “Take deep breaths,” Nico said. “Look at me. You’re in your Mom’s apartment. You’re safe.” He gripped Percy's shoulder's and looked him in the eyes. "You’re dating Jason now. You aren’t down there anymore. It’s me, your friend Nico. Y’know, the short one?”

Poseidon could tell Nico didn’t enjoy saying the last part, but he appreciated him trying to bring humour into the situation.

Percy’s eyes slowly lost their glaze. “Good,” Nico praised. “I want you to name three attributes about me.”

Percy took a shaky breath. “Black hair.”

Nico nodded. “Good. What else?”

“Dark brown eyes.”

“Great. Anything else?”

Percy still looked kind of out of it, but was slowly coming back. “Kinda scrawny.”

Nico pursed his lips but nodded. “Name one memory of us.”

Percy took a shaky breath, slowly returning back to the present. “Um...I forced you to go swimming with me once and you clutched onto me like a lifeline the whole time.”

Nico's cheeks coloured at that one and refused to look in the direction of Zeus, Poseidon and Hades. “Good. Who are your parents?”

“Sally Jackson and Poseidon.”

“Good. Who are my parents?”

“Hades and...Mariah...no, Maria di Angelo, right?”

“Correct.” Nico nodded. “Do you have any siblings? If so, what are their names?”

“I have a little brother named Tyson and Estelle is coming.”

Nico smiled. “Good. What about me?”

“You have a little sister named Hazel, and you had an older sister named Bianca.”

Nico’s smile turned a little sad, but he nodded. “Good. For good measure, I want you to name all of the people in this room right now, and if they’re a god, what they’re the god of.”

Percy started with Nico. “There’s you, Nico di Angelo, and you’re not a god. Then there’s my dad, Poseidon. He’s the god of the ocean.”

“And?” Nico pressed.

“Earthquakes, storms and horses.”

“Good. Who else?”
Percy continued. "Then there’s your dad, Hades. He’s the god of the Underworld and riches."

Nico nodded. "Excellent. And who else?"

"Um...then there’s Zeus, he’s the god of the sky and lightning, and he’s the king of the gods."

“Good.” Nico grasped Percy’s hand tightly but briefly.

Percy continued. "There’s also that creepy man with a bloody knife staring at us in the corner."

Poseidon’s heart skipped a few beats. He, Nico, Zeus, and Hades all whipped around quickly, but saw nothing.

“Gotcha,” Percy smiled and snapped his hands into finger guns weakly.

Poseidon slumped. “Holy shit, don’t do that.”

Nico hummed his agreement and rolled his eyes at Percy. “Really? Instead of a thank you I get this?"

Percy smiled. “You know I love you. And thank you.” He slung his arms around Nico’s shoulders in an over dramatic way and kissed his cheek sloppily.

Nico scrunched his face up in disgust. “Yes, yes okay, you’re welcome. You can get off now.”

Percy laughed softly and pulled away.

“How did you know Perseus needed your help?” Zeus asked curiously after a moment.

“Oh, Grover connected me to his and Percy's empathy link when he found out I could shadow travel. When he started to explore around the world a few months ago, he made me promise to help Percy if he was in trouble, and vice versa. Though I still think he’s scared of me.” Nico frowned.


Nico shrugged. Zeus looked vaguely guilty for a reason Poseidon knew he didn’t have to explain.

“If you don’t mind me asking, what was your nightmare about?” Hades asked Percy, raising an eyebrow in a curious way.

“Erm...Tartarus.” Percy looked determinedly at Nico and away from the big three.

Poseidon still remembered the day he found out that Percy had went to Tartarus, and still felt a little guilty at the minor tsunamis that happened around the world. He remembered screaming at Zeus to let him go down to his son, which had lead to one of the biggest arguments the two had ever had, next to when Zeus banished Hades to the underworld. That was the first and probably the last time he and Athena had sided together in an argument.

“Oh,” Hades said uncomfortably. Poseidon knew he already felt guilty about Nico having to go through Tartarus, and now seeing the effects it had on people probably multiplied it by two. Poseidon subconsciously moved his hand to Hades’ and gave it a squeeze, before dropping it back to his side. Hades looked surprised, but didn’t say anything.

After a moment, Nico hesitantly moved his hand to brush along Percy’s cheek. “Did one of you slap him?” he asked, surprise lacing his voice but not showing on his face.
Guilt churned in Poseidon's gut heavily. “Erm...yeah, he wasn’t responding when I tried to wake him up and I panicked. Sorry.”

Percy opened his mouth, but Nico cut him off. “Oh no, don’t apologize. That’s actually quite a good tactic. I always jabbed him in the ribs, but it only works 70 percent of the time.”

“Oh, no need to slap or tazer me—”

Nico ignored Percy and cut him off again. “Damn, you can slap. Didn’t think you had it in you.”

Poseidon opened his mouth, slightly offended, before realizing it was kind of a compliment since he didn’t believe he’s slap his son. So he just closed his mouth again and shrugged.

Percy huffed but didn’t comment. “What time is it?”

“Four thirty,” Zeus responded, glancing down at his watch.

Percy looked guilty. “Oh, sorry. I didn’t mean to wake you up.”

They all shrugged. “It’s fine,” Poseidon said. “It wasn’t your fault.”

“Yeah,” Nico agreed. “And I was up anyway.”

Hades scowled. “Oh yeah, I need to talk to you about that.”

Nico snapped his head to look at his dad, eyes wide, and then back to Percy, who snickered. Nico’s horrified look turned into a one of realization, and he glared at Percy with the heat of a thousand fires. “You little shit.”

Percy cackled and Nico’s glare intensified. “Snitches get stitches, Jackson.”

Percy stopped laughing and swallowed nervously, before bolting out of the room. Nico sprung out of the bed and chased after him, shouting insults that Percy laughed at.

Poseidon watched them go, an amused smile on his face.

Chapter End Notes

Guys I have my callback audition tomorrow for my school's musical and I'm freaking out. Wish me luck please (I need it). Hope you enjoyed!
When Poseidon woke up again, something didn’t feel right, both metaphorically and physically.

He blinked his eyes open blearily. He had the same amount of blankets on him, but he felt colder. He furrowed his brow and glanced to his right, but instead of finding Hades sleeping soundly, he found empty bedsheets. He frowned and glanced at the clock. 6 am on a Friday. What was Hades doing up at 6 am on a Friday? Poseidon got out of bed and padded towards the bedroom door softly. He opened the door, but found Zeus sleeping soundly, and no one in the kitchen. His frown deepened, and he stepped further into the living room. He almost sagged in relief when he saw a figure sitting on the deck.

Poseidon walked back into the bedroom quietly and grabbed his winter jacket out of the bag. The heavy silence of the apartment fell on his ears like a muffler. He slipped on some sweat pants and went out to meet Hades on the patio. “What are you doing out here?” he asked softly, closing the door behind him.

Hades didn’t respond, but sighed and leant his head back against the chair. Poseidon sat down in the chair next to him and waited for him to formulate a response. After a while, he finally took a deep breath. “Have you ever wondered...what it would be like to….?” he seemed to struggle to find the right words for a moment, “...I don't know, die?”

Poseidon looked at him briefly, but looked away again at the streets of New York. He let out a long exhale, sending out a stream of fog between his lips. “Yeah. Yeah I have.”

Hades stared out at the buildings ahead of them. “We could do it, y’know.”

“Do what?”

“Die.”
Poseidon flashed back to the moment Zeus swung him over the edge of that building. He remembered the anger and fear of course, but he also remembered a feeling of some sort of sick and twisted...hope. “Yeah,” he agreed breathily. “We could.”

Hades looked at him for a long while. “Do you think you’d actually do it?”

Poseidon sighed and leaned back in his chair. “I...don’t know. I’d like to say that I wouldn’t, but...” He paused for a moment. “Don’t you ever just feel like you’re burdening everyone around you? Like they’d be better off if you weren’t there?”

Hades frowned. “Not really, I guess. I don’t think it would affect anyone’s lives in my case. It’s not like I’m a major part of anything.”

“That’s not true.” Poseidon nudged him lightly. “People are starting to really like you. Look at Apollo, Ares, Hephaestus, and Hermes. They’re practically in love with you already.”

Hades rolled his eyes, but a faint smile appeared on his face. It dissipated quickly. “People like you too, y’know.”

Poseidon smiled softly, sadly. He appreciated Hades trying to make him feel better, but he hadn’t been...well, around, for the last few millennia. He doesn’t know the things that people have said to each other. “You, maybe,” he finally chose to respond with.

“And Zeus. And Apollo, Hermes, and Aphrodite.” Hades was looking at him with mild concern.

Poseidon forced a half smile. “Thanks for the faith, but there’s not much to love.”

Hades stayed quiet, and Poseidon fell into the silence with him. They watched the sunrise peak over the horizon for awhile, before Hades finally spoke up again. “What happened to you?” he asked.

“Hm?” Poseidon asked.

Hades shifted in his chair. “What happened to you? When we were in our father’s stomach, you were always so...happy. What made you think that...” He gestured his hands as if trying to grasp for the right words. “People would want you to...die?”

“Don’t tell me you haven’t thought that, too,” Poseidon said. “You have, haven’t you?”

“You’re not answering my question.”

“You didn’t deny mine.”

They fell into silence. Poseidon eventually let out a slow breath and looked up at the patio above them. “I don’t know,” he admitted, half truthful.

“Huh?”

“I don’t know what happened to me. I don’t know why people hate me.”

Hades looked at him softly. “People don’t hate you.”

Poseidon let out a sigh and didn’t respond.

“Poseidon?” Hades frowned. He sighed when Poseidon didn't respond again. “At least know people wouldn't want you dead.”
Poseidon’s throat got tight. “I don’t know, Hades. I don’t know.”

Hades reached out and gently touched Poseidon’s arm. “I do know what it’s like,” he said softly. Poseidon looked at him, and he caught his eye. “To feel like people would prefer you dead, I mean.”

Poseidon frowned and Hades looked away. Poseidon reached up so his palm rested on top of Hades’ hand. “I never wanted you to leave, y’know,” he said. Hades looked at him. “When Zeus kicked you out, I...I guess I didn’t really know the extent of it. It was like my brain just couldn’t wrap itself around the thought of you being out of my life.” Hades smiled softly. “When it finally did, I just...couldn’t take it, y’know? I thought of you, stowed away down there after I banished you…”

“You didn’t banish me, Zeus did,” Hades corrected.

“I didn’t do anything to stop him.”

“And I still regret it.”

They turned around to see Zeus standing at the door. He quietly walked to the chair beside Hades and sat down. After a moment, he explained further: “I was in some sort of blind anger, fueled by revenge. I didn’t cool down for at least another six months, but by then the damage was done. If I could go back…” he trailed off, leaving the rest of the sentence hanging in the polluted, golden air.

Hades didn’t respond but looked at Zeus briefly before turning his attention back to Poseidon. “Why’d you bring me leaving up?”

Poseidon took a deep breath. “After you left, I...didn’t really have anyone, I guess. There was Hera, Demeter, Hestia, and Zeus of course...but they never really had the same relationship with me as you did. I started to grow bitter, not only to Zeus, but to everyone. It’s not like anyone else was any better, they were just as pissed at the world as I was. Whenever I...was going through some frustration, they reacted just as badly. Everyone started to get pissed at everyone, but mostly pissed at me because I was always being so insufferable. I guess sometimes it feels like I shouldn’t...I don’t know...be her—”

“Don’t finish that sentence,” Zeus warned.

Hades sighed. “You don’t know what it’s like, brother. You got to be King, even as the youngest, you didn’t have to go through our father’s stomach, and you didn’t have to struggle through having to take everyone’s crap because you were King and you could tell them off in a heartbeat and they’d listen. You can go to sleep knowing perfectly well you’re important.”

“Well you two should, too,” he argued. “You’re part of the big three!”

“That makes us more powerful, not more important. There’s a difference,” Hades said. “I don’t think you could name one person other than you two and potentially Nico that wouldn’t prefer me dead.”

Poseidon frowned. “That’s not true—”

“Don’t you dare try to comfort me when you feel the same way, Poseidon,” Hades snapped.

Poseidon shut his mouth. There was a long moment of silence, before Poseidon broke it again. “Is that...is that why you came out here? Were you going to...?”
Though they were only on the second floor, there was a deep slant of the pavement, causing it more to be the level of a third story. Maybe it wouldn't kill you by just jumping, but if you angled it so you landed on your neck you could potentially snap it.

Hades sighed. “I...don’t know. I thought about it, yeah. Way too long.” Poseidon frowned, but Hades continued: “But then I remembered the last few days with you two, and I just...” he trailed off, a microscopic smile growing on his face.

The other two remained silent, just looking out at New York. Hades soon fell into their silence, and they looked out at the distant sky scrapers.

Zeus eventually sat up a little straighter. “I don’t want either of you to feel the way you do...I always had my suspicions with Hades and how my treatment of him affected his...mental health. But I had no idea about you, Poseidon.”

Poseidon smiled a little bitterly. “I bet you have no clue about Hermes, Apollo, Hephaestus, Ares, or Hestia either.”

“What?” Zeus asked, alarmed.

Poseidon shook his head. “You just proved my point.” The three of them went silent.

Zeus's eyebrows were scrunched in confusion. “But...Apollo and Hermes are so...”

“Happy?” Poseidon finished, raising an eyebrow. “Yeah, everyone thought I was too.”

Silence again. This time, no one broke it, and they looked out at New York again.

Despite the heaviness of their topic, Poseidon felt a lot lighter. And as he glanced at Zeus and Hades looking out to the streets, he allowed himself to start to be truly happy again.

Chapter End Notes

So yeah, a little short. But I hope you enjoyed regardless:)

ALSO! please leave your opinion: should I continue this kind of bonding, or should I add more angst/action? (i.e. someone gets kidnapped, someone tries suicide, someone gets attacked by a monster, they're set on a quest, etc...)
Chapter Summary

Um...food. This is what happens when you give me coffee

Chapter Notes

Y’know what, I don't even care if you kudos and comment or not, just laugh or smile for me folks

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Percy slammed the patio door open. “Bitches, I’m hungry.”

Poseidon jumped. “Jesus Christ, Percy! You’re insane.”

“I prefer creative.”

“Creative in what?”

“Declaring my needs.”

Hades snorted and got up, Poseidon and Zeus following quickly. “What do you want for breakfast?” he asked.

“Preferably food,” Percy said.

“Oh shit really,” Poseidon shot back sarcastically.

“Preferably food,” Percy said.

“Declar...” Poseidon shot back sarcastically.

Zeus rolled his eyes. “Like father, like son, I guess." He walked towards the patio door. "I want pancakes.”

They walked into the apartment and shut the door behind them. “You—” Percy pointed a finger at Zeus as they walked to the kitchen, “—I like your way of thinking.”

“You’re very blunt in the mornings,” Hades observed.

“That I am, young padawan,” Percy agreed, nodding his head. Hades looked at him in amusement.

“Is Nico still here?” Poseidon asked, looking around the apartment like Nico would suddenly appear from behind a lamp.

“Nah, he left a bit ago for Will’s,” Percy responded, sitting on a tall chair behind the island in the kitchen. “Will just came back from the Dominican, and Nico hasn’t seen him in a week or so. Hopeless romantics, those two are,” Percy said, shaking his head fondly.

“Ah,” Hades said, nodding his head. “Where’s the pancake mix?”
“The cupboard above the corner of the counter.” Percy pointed to said cupboard. “Can you add blue food colouring? It’s right beside it.”

Hades turned his head to look at him with an amused eyebrow cocked up. “Why do you want blue food colouring in it?”

“Because it’s tradition,” Percy informed him.

“I see.” Hades nodded his head. “And why is it tradition?” He got the pancake mix and blue food colouring out, then went to get a cup to measure the water he had to pour out.

“Because someone once told my mom and I that blue food doesn’t exist, and we wanted to prove him wrong.” Percy picked up a cookie from the jar on the island and took a bite out of it. Poseidon plucked it out of his hands, and Percy made a wounded noise. “What? You monster!”

“You’ll be having breakfast soon, you don’t need a cookie too.”

“I’m a growing boy!”

“Why do you always pronounce ‘boy’ like that?!”

Percy threw his head back and laughed. He looked back at Poseidon with sparkling eyes. “You uncultured swine.”

“Excuse me?”

Percy laughed again. “I need to educate your poor old man brain about the language of the depressed folks.”

“Sorry?”

Percy rolled his eyes. “I need to teach you about memes, dad. Memes.”

“What are those?”

“AYEEE!”

“What?” Poseidon looked at Hades and Zeus, but they looked as lost as he was.

Percy laughed so hard he fell off his chair. It looked painful, but Poseidon could still hear him laughing from down on the floor. He attempted to talk multiple times, but eventually cut himself off because of his laughter. Poseidon looked at Zeus and Hades again. They just shrugged helplessly.

“I don’t know, Poseidon,” Zeus said, looking at Percy rolling around on the floor, shaking his head. “I don’t know.”

“Is his head working properly?” Hades questioned, half joking and half concerned, looking at his nephew that looked like he was having a miniature seizure.

“I sure hope it does!” Percy wheezed out before falling into another fit of laughter even harder than the last one.

“What?” Zeus asked, completely lost.

“I don’t know,” Percy wheezed out. “That doesn’t even fit the vine, it had to be about roads, not
brains. But I don’t care.” His laughter slowly started to slow down, and he took deep, shuddering
breaths to calm himself down.

“I’m going to stop trying to understand you,” Poseidon said, looking down at Percy, who was still
lying on the floor. “And here—” He threw the half eaten cookie down to him, “—all of this started
when I refused you this, so take it and maybe it’ll stop.”

Percy laughed again and sat up, stuffing the rest of the cookie in his grinning mouth and
swallowing it in one bite. Poseidon just looked at him fondly.

“Well,” Poseidon continued, “if you’re not going to eat it, I guess I’ll eat it.”

Percy wheezed, making Poseidon look at him, a laugh bubbling out of his chest. “What the hell
was that noise?”

Percy made the noise again. “It’s the noise you make when you hear Hades, the god of the
Underworld, say memes and vines.”

Hades looked at Poseidon, who just shrugged hopelessly. “I don’t know either, man.”

“...I’d like two pancakes if they’re medium sized, three if they’re small, and one if they’re large,”
Zeus said, looking at Percy like he had two heads.

Poseidon fell into laughter along with Percy and Hades. Zeus smiled and sat down in the seat Percy
was previously occupying.

“Hey!” Percy protested, standing up. “I was sitting there!”

“Oh, sorry,” Zeus said. “I thought you had moved to the floor.”

Poseidon snickered and Percy pouted. He eventually sat down in the seat just to the left and sat
there instead, narrowing his eyes at Zeus, who caught his eyes. The two had a staring contest that
made Hades and Poseidon snort. “You two are ridiculous,” Hades said fondly, putting a pan on the
burner and turning it on.

“No, I’m Percy and he’s Zeus.” They broke away from the staring contest simultaneously.

Hades rolled his eyes and mixed the pancake mix and water before putting them in medium sized
circles in the pan. “How many do the sea dorks want?”

“Excuse me?” Percy raised an eyebrow and flourished his hand in a dramatic movement to his
chest. “We’re the seafood squad.”

Poseidon nodded in agreement while Hades let out a short laugh. “Yes, I agree.”

He sat down on the other side of Zeus, and the two high fived behind his back. Zeus snorted.

“I had a question,” Hades reminded them calmly.

“Ah, yes,” Poseidon acknowledged. “I’d like two medium sized pancakes, please.”

“I’d like four medium sized, please,” Percy said.

The remaining three of them rolled their eyes but didn’t comment. Hades added some blue dye to
what Poseidon presumed were Zeus’s, and Percy grinned happily. “You’re the best, uncle Hades.”
“I know.”

Poseidon made an offended noise.

“You’re okay too, dad.”

“Wooooowwww.”

“Don’t listen to him, Poseidon,” Zeus said, putting a mock-comforting hand on Poseidon’s shoulder. “We all know I’m the best.”

“I feel attacked,” Hades said flatly, flipping the pancakes. Percy laughed. Poseidon thought he saw Hades smile, but he turned away quickly so he couldn’t be sure. They were silent for awhile, just watching Hades make pancakes.

A thought occurred to Poseidon. “Don’t you have school, Percy?” It was ten o’clock.

“Nah, PD day,” Percy said.

“Ah.” Poseidon nodded in acknowledgment.

“What does PD even stand for?” Zeus asked, eyes still trained on the pan that the pancakes were sizzling in.

“I have no idea,” Poseidon answered.

“Pretty sure it stands for ‘Please, Death’ because that’s what everyone wants and they have to beg because it hasn’t come to them yet. And obviously you can’t die during school because it would cause a lot of commotion, so an off-day is the perfect solution,” Percy said casually.

Poseidon looked at his son with concern, but eventually came to the conclusion that Percy wasn’t actually suicidal because he looked like he was trying very hard to suppress a smile. “Why is your generation’s humour so dark?” Poseidon asked.

“Because we all have dark souls.”

“...Right.”

Hades shook his head and put the pancakes on a plate. “Milady,” he said, putting the plate in front of Zeus.

Zeus looked offended. “Excuse me?”

Hades smiled at him innocently and went back to the stove. Poseidon and Percy laughed. “Where are the forks and knives?” Hades asked with smiling eyes.

“Top drawer beside the stove,” Percy answered. “And the syrup’s in the same place you got the pancakes.”

He nodded and brought the items to Zeus, who thanked him with narrowed eyes. Hades just laughed shortly and went back to the stove. He poured more pancake mix into the pan, this time pouring six circles in the large pan. “Did Sally just give up trying to get you to eat like a normal teenager?” he asked, referring to the pan and two toasters.

“I think she gave up while I was still in the womb,” Percy said seriously but with a joking pull of his lips.
Poseidon and Hades laughed. Zeus just rolled his eyes with a fond smile. “No offence, but where does it all go?” Hades asked.

“To be perfectly honest, I don’t even know,” Percy responded. “I think I was born with a stomach as deep as the ocean.”

Poseidon nodded. “Yes, it comes along with being a demigod child of me.”

Percy choked on air. “I didn’t even realize,” he said, laughing lightly.

Poseidon smiled at him fondly. Hades rolled his eyes at the two and flipped the pancakes. When they were finished, he got two plates out and put two on one and four on the other. He brought them over to Poseidon and Percy who accepted them with a ‘thanks’. Percy immediately got the syrup and poured roughly a third of the remaining syrup on his pancakes.

“Jesus,” Poseidon swore. “How much syrup do you need?”

“I like to watch them drown.”

“As you would.”

“Mhm.” He stuck a fork in it and cut a large chunk, stuffing it in his mouth immediately. After he swallowed, he looked at Hades in wonder. “You actually are the best,” he said.

Hades nodded. “I get that a lot.”

“I highly doubt that,” Zeus said teasingly as Hades started making pancakes for himself. Hades just rolled his eyes at his brother playfully.

Poseidon smiled and cut into his own pancakes. He had a feeling today was going to be a good day.

Chapter End Notes

Yet another short chapter because I never reach anyone's expectations but I hope you enjoyed it anyways *finger guns*

again future Lauren: this chapter is just ok looking back lmao
angstangstangstangstangst

Chapter Summary

SERIOUS TOPICS!!!!! READ NOTES!!!

Chapter Notes

TRIGGER WARNING: SELF HARM
PLEASE DO NOT READ THIS IF YOU THINK THIS WILL TRIGGER YOU!!!!!
WELL, STOP READING AS SOON AS POSEIDON ENTERS SALLY'S
BEDROOM ALONE!!!!!! IT IS NOT BROUGHT UP AGAIN AFTER THIS
CHAPTER SO YOU CAN SKIP THIS IF YOU WANT!!!! I WILL NOT MIND!!! I
WILL BE GRATEFUL!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“I knew this day would come,” Poseidon said dramatically.

“Dad…”

“I knew one day you’d outgrow your love for me and move on to greater things…”

“…”

“But it’s fine, my dearest son. I will survive, as long as I know how to love I know I’ll stay
alive…Weren’t you the one who tried to hurt me with goodbye, you’d think I’d crumble…you think
I’d lay down and die….”

“Jesus, shut up. That’s not even how it goes.”

“I’m not Jesus, I’m Poseidon.”

Percy faced palm and Hades and Zeus snickered. “I’m not leaving you, I’m just kicking you out
of my apartment that you came into unplanned.”

Poseidon sighed, playing along dramatically. “Your poor father…left all alone to be unloved…”

“You have Zeus and Hades.”

“All alone to be unloved…” Poseidon repeated, grinning when Percy laughed.

“I’d suggest the Row NYC, it’s the cheapest hotel,” Percy said. “I mean, you can probably afford
higher priced hotels but…” he shrugged.

“I’m still not even sure about a hotel,” Hades said. “We’re still going to be stuck like this for four
months.”
They were sitting in the living room with a jar of blue cookies in front of them, all discussing where Zeus, Poseidon and Hades could stay for the following months. Percy and Poseidon were on the couch again, and Hades was on the loveseat while Zeus was on the armchair. “We could rent out a condo or house that someone isn’t occupying,” Zeus suggested.

Poseidon and Hades shared a glance and shrugged. “Sure.”

Percy helped them find a good condo that didn’t seem too shady. It wasn’t cheap, but Hades said it was fine so they got one near downtown. The person was only out for three months, but it was the longest period of time that they could find so they just went with it. “Hopefully this isn’t a scam and they won’t try to brutally murder us in our sleep,” Poseidon said, taking a bite out of his cookie.

“I think you need to narrow down you’re definition of ‘scam’,” Zeus snorted.

Poseidon shrugged.

“It’s paid for,” Hades said. His face was illuminated by the glow of the screen and his eyes reflected blue, despite being dark brown. “We can leave tonight, this person’s leaving this evening at ten thirty. She said to be there by 9:30.”

“Okay,” Poseidon and Zeus said.

Percy looked faintly disappointed. “Thanks for making me breakfast and food in general.”

Hades and Zeus snorted and Poseidon smiled fondly. “Thanks for letting us stay,” he said.

Percy smiled and leant back on the couch. “Welcome. We should watch a movie.”

“As long as it’s not Voltron, I’m fine with anything,” Hades said.

Percy huffed, offended. “What’s wrong with Voltron?”

“Lots of things.”


“NO!” Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades yelled immediately.

“Yes,” Percy grinned. He sprinted towards the disc player before Hades or Poseidon, who were sitting close to him, could stop him. He dodged their arms and cackled as he got the CD out. He stuffed it inside the outdated machine quickly, and the offending movie started to play.

“No,” Hades groaned, slapping a hand over his eyes. “Why am I blue?”

“I’m in the movie for a total of 1.7 seconds!” Poseidon complained.

“You’re acting like that’s a bad thing,” Zeus whined, looking at this movie’s representation of him. “This is the worst thing Disney’s ever done.”

They watched the movie painfully, Percy snickering at their reactions the whole time. “Why do Mortals always think I have grey hair?” Zeus complained. “What thirty year old as all grey hair down to his shoulders?”

“What god as fire for hair?” Hades shot back.
Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Please bitches, people think I’m half fish.” Hades and Zeus laughed, and Poseidon continued. “Besides, at least Zeus looks like a normal person. Hades and I have blue skin!”

“At least they got one thing somewhat right, kind of,” Hades said. “You have blue eyes and you’re blue…?”

“My eyes are green, you dolt.”

“Oh.”

They laughed and continued to watch the movie.

Zeus rolled his eyes. “Hera would never act like that.”


They continued watching the movie for awhile. (Too long, in Poseidon’s opinion). Percy laughed at a scene where movie-Hades said something shady and relatable. “That reminds me of a time Dad spilled pancake batter on me and I acted like he killed my dog or something—” Percy froze.

Poseidon looked at him in confusion. “I never…”

Percy's face morphed into the definition of guilty. He darted his eyes to the side, silent for a moment, before: “I…I meant Paul…”

Poseidon felt a punch to his gut.

“Oh,” he forced a laugh, “that makes more sense.”

The remaining three looked relieved at his reaction and went back to watching the movie. Poseidon didn’t join them. “I gotta use the bathroom.”

Percy looked skeptical, eyes guilty again. “Are you sure? Do you want me to pause the movie?”

“No, it’s fine, leave it on.” Before anyone could question further, Poseidon walked into Sally’s bedroom and closed the door. He knew there was a master bathroom in there, so it wouldn’t look weird. The room was bathed in dim, silver lighting, and an eerie sense of stillness hit him like a wave. The bed creaked as he sat down, the noise from the TV completely cut off. It’s not like you’ve given him a reason to think of you as his dad, Poseidon thought in the ringing silence. It’s not like you aren’t replaceable.

He didn’t feel like going out there anytime soon. He knew they’d notice. He didn’t know if they’d care.

It felt like all the progress he’d made with getting more sure of himself just abandoned him with three words.

I meant Paul.

He didn’t move for the next hour and a half.

No one came to get him.

With a heavy heart, he made his way to the bathroom. He locked the door behind him and stood in front of the mirror. Are you gonna do it? He looked at a razor on a ledge of the shower using the
mirror. *It'll be hard to get out of again, and you know it.*

He was kidding himself. He was already in the bathroom; he had already made the choice. It felt like all the blood in his body had rushed to his forearms, and he just needed to let it out. He needed to remind himself, remind himself that he deserved to hurt, he deserved nothing from Percy, or Hades, or Zeus. He didn't deserve anything. He didn't even deserve relief, but then again, he was always selfish. Hesitantly, he made his way to the shower and picked up the razor. In the times he’d showered in there, he’d always just glanced at it briefly before looking away. This time, he looked at it more closely. Hesitantly, he picked it up and made his way to the sink.

When he looked at himself, he remembered all of the shit that he went through. He remembered being eaten, though the memory was fuzzy. He remembered Zeus smirking at him as he got crowned king, he remembered the rejection of Amphitrite, he remembered the city of Athens declaring Athena as their patron, he remembered the arguments he and Apollo had as they were forced to help build the walls of Troy, he remembered the first time someone didn't know who he was, he remembered he and Sally’s first fight, he remembered everything. His brain eventually landed on the conversation Zeus and Athena had about him.

**Flashback**

*Poseidon made his way back to the throne room. He had fiddled with his watch the whole meeting, and had eventually just put it on his throne. Unfortunately, when the dreadful meeting was over, he also forgot it there when he left. So here he was, about to embarrass himself if any god or goddess was still there. He hoped with every fibre of his being no one was there, but alas, his wishes were not granted. He recognized his dreadful little brother’s voice immediately, followed by another annoying voice that belonged to Athena.*

“I wish he was mortal so we could kill him, for christ’s sake,” Athena said.

Zeus hummed his agreement. Poseidon walked up slowly, hiding behind a pillar so he could eavesdrop. “Actually, I wouldn’t want to do that,” he said. “I wish he’d just kill himself. Save us the burden.”

“Oh, and what a burden he is,” Athena agreed.

Poseidon inched closer, now curious who they were talking about.

“I wish he’d just stop actually thinking he’s worth anything,” Zeus said. “His ego will be the death of us all, I swear.”

Poseidon found that a little hypocritical, but his curiosity remained piqued.

“Gods know he can’t fit anything through the kelp in his brain.”

Poseidon froze.

Zeus let out a short laugh. “Does Poseidon even have a brain? I swear, with how much of a fuck up he is, he can’t even count to thirty.”

Athena laughed. “Glad someone agrees.” Her voice sounded delighted, laced with anger and pettiness. Poseidon remembered talking about her in the same voice, but that was the last thing on
his mind now. "I swear, he’s too much of an idiot to realize that everyone hates him."

Zeus hummed. “I can’t name one god who likes him, other than perhaps himself.”

Athena snorted. “I don’t even know why he’d like himself. I’d try to figure out ways to reverse my immorality if I were him.”

“Agreed,” Zeus said. “I swear, if I had to spend more than three hours with him I’d kill myself.”

Athena hummed her agreement. “I even heard Apollo joke about how he’s wasting our air, and you know little ray of sunshine.” She and Zeus laughed.

Poseidon didn’t join them.

“Sometimes I wish that he’d died in the war,” Zeus confessed. “I mean for fuck’s sake, sometimes I wish I had banished him. If I had known how much of a fuck up he was going out turn out to be, Hades would still be an Olympian.”

Athena hummed her agreement.

For the first time since his father’s stomach, a lump appeared in Poseidon's throat. He left the throne room subtly, his feet moving quickly down the streets of Olympus.

“Uncle!” Apollo called cheerfully. “How are you?”

Poseidon didn’t respond and clenched his jaw when the world around him turned blurry.

“Uncle?” Apollo raced in front of him. Poseidon looked determinedly away. Apollo’s steps faltered, causing Poseidon to almost fall into him. “Are you crying?” he asked, shell shocked.

“No,” Poseidon choked out. He shoved past Apollo and flashed away.

*End of Flashback*

Poseidon rolled up his sleeves.

Slowly, he dragged a razor up to his left wrist and cut sharply. For the first time in his life, he bled red. A wave of relief flooded through his body. The pain grounded him, brought him back to reality. It was sharp and stinging, just what he needed. He cut another line, and then another, and then another. Four lines. One for Zeus, one for Hades, one for Percy, and one for the rest of the gods. He knew there was no ambrosia or nectar around that he didn’t have to ask for, so that’s all he did.

Three loud knocks on his door. “Poseidon?” Hades called. “You okay in there?”

Poseidon’s heart stopped. “Uh...yeah! Be out in a sec!”

“Okay…”

Poseidon frantically ran water over the cuts, and cursed when he realized that that couldn’t heal them this time. He pulled his sweatshirt over them, thanking every star it was thick and black. He reached out to the door and unlocked it with his right hand. He opened it and found Hades looking
at him from the other side.

“That was an awfully long bathroom break,” he commented.

Poseidon swallowed and averted his eyes, closing the bathroom door so Hades couldn’t see inside. “I took a shower, too.”

“An hour long shower? And you’re completely dry?” Hades raised an eyebrow. Poseidon stayed silent. “We’re getting packed up now and we’re leaving in around three hours,” Hades said. “Come sit.” He sat down on the bed, and Poseidon swallowed before sitting down next to him. “What were you really doing in the bathroom?” Hades asked. Poseidon wasn’t meeting his eyes, but he knew Hades’s gaze was steely and inquisitive. He could feel it.

“Showering and using the toilet.”

“Be truthful.”

Poseidon remained silent.

“Show me your wrists, Poseidon.”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“Why?”

“You know why.”

Silence.

“Show me your wrists, Poseidon.”

Silence.

“Poseidon.”

Silence.

Hades reached out to Poseidon’s wrist and lifted the sleeve. Red coloured the slightly tanned skin. “Poseidon…”

“Don’t act like you haven’t done it,” Poseidon snarled angrily, retracting his wrist from Hades’s grip.

“I have previously. I stopped. Poseidon, this is…” Hades trailed off.

Poseidon scowled as tears welled up in his eyes. “It doesn’t matter, Hades. I won’t do it again.”

“How do I know that?”

“You don’t. You’re just going to have to believe me.”

Hades closed his eyes briefly. “When I went through...this...Persephone was the one who helped me out of it. She told me that it was okay to feel things and talk about them. When I did, I stopped and felt a lot better. You should talk about it, too.”
“There’s nothing to talk about,” Poseidon choked out.

“Then why are you crying?”

“I’m not.” Poseidon wiped the tears away forcefully. Hades let out a soft sigh. Poseidon started sobbing, but shallowly and quietly, nearly undetectable. He wasn't sure if Hades even noticed; he hoped he didn't. He took a few seconds to regain his breath, and then: “When was the last time you did it?”

“About a year ago.”

“Not that long ago.”

“When was the last time you did it, next to this?”

“Two years ago.”

“Not that long ago.”

Silence.

Three knocks on the door. “Can I come in?” Zeus asked.

“Yes,” Hades answered for Poseidon. Poseidon scowled at him.

Zeus walked in, followed closely by Percy.

Poseidon looked at his son in shock. He hadn't expected Percy to come in too. He gasped and hastily covered his wrists, praying to some other random god that Percy didn't see. But Percy was staring, transfixed at where his wrist was previously exposed. “Dad…?” he asked, voice cracking.

“Don’t do what I do,” Poseidon pleaded. By now, he was sure that it was evident he had been crying. He could feel the stickiness of tear tracks all over his cheeks. “Please.” His voice cracked, and he started crying. Fuck, he started crying. Crying in front of his son. Crying in front of Hades. Crying in front of Zeus. It wasn't one of those aesthetic, one teardrop down the cheek crying; he started bawling, heaving ugly sobs from deep in his chest, wracking his whole body. Embarrassment flooded through him in waves, which just made him cry more. Gods, his son was gonna think he's a wuss. And so are his brothers. He was supposed to be a king like them, but here he was, crying his eyes out just because of another person's opinion. Gods, he was weak.

He felt an arm hesitantly try to wrap around his shoulders, and, as if on instinct, not caring about who the arm belonged to, he flung himself at Hades and buried his face in his shoulder. Hades squeezed him to his side and shushed him, rubbing his back softly.

Percy stared. Zeus eventually forced him to walk over to the bed instead of just being frozen in place. He sat down next to his dad, and Zeus sat down next to Hades. Poseidon curled away from Percy and into Hades's chest, too ashamed to look at him.

No one talked for a long time. Poseidon stopped crying after a while, mostly from him just biting his lip and quite literally forcing himself to stop. But they still stayed in the same position after everything went quiet, only Poseidon's occasional whimper filling the silence. His face turned redder and redder with every noise he made, and he wished that he had just never let Hades see the cuts.

Suddenly, Percy lunged at Poseidon and engulfed him in a hug that knocked him back into Hades'
lap. Poseidon yelped and Hades had to steady himself on Zeus’s shoulder so everyone didn’t fall over.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry,” Percy repeated brokenly, burying his face in Poseidon’s sweatshirt. Poseidon felt it dampen, and his heart broke all over again. “I didn’t mean to…”

Poseidon shook his head. “It’s not you.”

Percy just hugged him tighter. Hades gently pushed the both of them up so they were sitting again, and Percy pulled away, tears glossing his eyes. “Please don’t do it again.”


This time, it felt sincere.

Chapter End Notes

I'm aware all my chapters thus far are pretty much solely focused on Poseidon, but don't worry, Hades angst and Zeus angst is coming right up!
HADES IS A PROTECTIVE BOI AND YOU CANT CHANGE MY MIND

Chapter Summary

bye bye seaweed brain

Chapter Notes

the big three(some) (*knee slap*) finally leave Percy's apartment, and Hades is a protective boi

ALSO!!! TRIGGER WARNING! SEXUAL ASSAULT THEMES!! NO ONE ACTUALLY GETS TOUCHED BUT THEY ALMOST DO!!! IF THIS WILL UPSET YOU, DO NOT READ! IF YOU HAVE NOT READ ANYTHING ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT OR R*PE BEFORE, PLEASE TO NOT READ!! THIS SHOULD NOT BE YOUR INTRODUCTION, AS I CAN'T CONTINUE TO BRING IT UP AGAIN AFTER THIS CHAPTER JUST IN CASE SOME OF YOU ARE TRIGGERED BY IT, SO I CAN'T WRITE A REACTION TO ALMOST BEING SEXUALLY ASSAULTED/R*PED IN AN ACCURATE WAY! READ UNTIL THEY EXIT PERCY'S APARTMENT AND START READING AGAIN WHEN THEY ENTER THE NEW CONDO! THANK YOU!

If u have read sexual assault fics before, this is like nothing, but I remember I was really young when I first read it in a fanfic and I didn't really know what it was but that was my first introductions to "sex" so it messed me up pretty bad

“I’m gonna miss you,” Percy said into Poseidon’s shoulder as they hugged.

“I’m gonna miss you, too,” Poseidon responded softly, cradling Percy's head. His hair was soft and smelled like salt water. “Thanks for letting us stay.”

“You’re welcome.” Percy hugged him a little tighter. Eventually, Poseidon pulled back and closed his eyes, giving a light kiss to Percy’s forehead. Percy smiled brightly. Hades and Zeus were already waiting outside with the spare bags Percy had from previous school years.

Poseidon sighed, putting his hands on Percy's shoulders. “I’m proud of you, Percy.”

“Thanks, Dad,” Percy smiled at him and pulled him into one last hug. “But get out.”

Poseidon laughed and pulled away. Percy grinned and waved as he left the apartment. Poseidon waved back, giving a small eyebrow lift, before going to meet Zeus and Hades in the lobby. “Ready?” he asked them. They both nodded. The three of them left the run-down apartment and into the direction of the condo. The crisp wind chill of New York at 9 pm was slapping against Poseidon’s face, making his cheeks and nose pink. Thanks to winter, the moon was already high in the sky, and the only light was coming from the distant lights of central square. Poseidon could faintly hear the noisy buzz of the busier part of New York up ahead, but the dingy subdivision they
were in only had a few people around, and was quiet for the most part. Poseidon saw about two people on their walk, and they were both middle aged men in allies. *What a lovely place for my son to live*, Poseidon thought, wrinkling his nose.

A few minutes later, they were in a place Poseidon didn’t recognize. Thankfully, Hades seemed to know the basic idea of where they were, but Zeus looked as lost as Poseidon was.

Zeus looked around. “Remind me why we had to cut through a maze of back allies?”

Hades shrugged, but Poseidon thought it looked a little forced. His eyes kept darting around, and he kept glancing at Zeus and Poseidon to make sure they were still there. “It’s quicker, we’ll be fine.”

“Whatever you say.” Zeus moved closer to Poseidon’s side. They walked in silence for a bit, feet pounding on the pavement, each one of them uneasy. “Hades, maybe you should go on the other side of Poseidon,” Zeus said eventually, a nervous tinge colouring his voice.

Poseidon looked at him, annoyed. “Why?”

He rubbed his palms together and bit his cheek. “You’re not in the middle, and there are separate allies branching out to the left and right.”

“So?” Poseidon raised an eyebrow. “If I’m in the middle, Hades will be more open to people who could be in the allies.”

“Yes, but Hades is taller and stronger than half of the potential rapi—threats, and you’re not.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “I’m also thousands of years old.”

“That doesn’t matter,” Hades said, obviously siding with Zeus for once. “And we just want to be positive we all don’t get killed, or…worse.” He fell behind and then caught up again, this time on the other side of Poseidon.

Poseidon scowled. “You could still be in danger, it doesn’t matter if the threat is bigger than you, if you’re in…that situation, the shock will make it easier for them to…y’know….”

“That’s true,” Hades agreed, “but still, they’re more likely to try it on a smaller person rather than a larger person, hence why we wanted you to be farther away from the sick fucks who would try that.”

Poseidon fell into irritated silence. It wasn’t like it was an inconvenience, he just hated being treated like a child. He wasn’t even the youngest; he just happened to be on the short side. Eventually, he stopped sulking and sighed. “Thanks,” he muttered.

Hades shrugged. They continued down the allies, the air getting steadily colder.

“Aye, fellas.” A man smiled with yellow, crooked teeth as they walked by an ally forking to the right. Poseidon jumped, heart speeding up.

“Just keep walking,” Hades commanded to Poseidon and Zeus.

“Well, you’re bein’ quite rude,” he said. He walked out of the his little ally, but so did five other men.

“Just keep walking,” Hades commanded again, but Poseidon heard a little panic seep through his
voice. He put a hand on the small of Poseidon's back and push him to go faster. Poseidon glanced back at the people who had emerged from the ally. They were all well over six foot, and one or two looked even taller than Hades. Poseidon swallowed as one of them caught his eye and gave him a crooked grin. “C’mon, Poseidon,” Hades urged. He walked quicker, and Poseidon and Zeus struggled to keep up. Hades’ hand put more pressure on his back, and soon enough Poseidon had to start jogging because his legs were too short to keep up with Hades's pace.

Ugly laughter came from the men. Poseidon heard them pick up their pace, and his breathing picked up. He felt his left hand get squeezed by Zeus, but he was in too much of a panic to react.

Suddenly, he felt a presence leave from his left side. He jerked his eyes over and found Zeus missing. “Hey!” he yelled as he swerved around. Two of the men had Zeus, while two others were headed for Hades. “Watch out, Hades!” Poseidon called. Hades finally stopped and turned around. Poseidon didn’t even notice the two other men approaching him. “HEY! FUCK OFF!” he yelled as one grabbed his wrist. The man slammed him into a wall and the other snuck up beside him. The men moved closer and closer, grinning at him. They smelled of cheap beer and rotten eggs. This is not happening. This is not happening. This is not happening. One of the men grabbed his wrists and pinned them above his head.

"This one's pretty, boys!" he slurried loudly.

"They all are, dumbass," another one that Poseidon couldn't see called. The man on Poseidon's left laughed, hiccuping a little. He kept grinning at Poseidon as he undid his jean button and unzipped his fly. No no no no no no no no. He felt a hand at the waist band of his underwear and the hand pulled down.

"NO!" Poseidon yelled, squirming and fighting with all he had. The man still had his wrists pinned above his head. "Let me go! Stop!"

The man put his hands under his knees and was about to force Poseidon's legs around his waist, when he was knocked away, along with the guy whose lips had been dangerously close to Poseidon’s neck. Poseidon collapsed onto the pavement and opened his eyes (he hadn't even realized they’d closed), only to find Hades beating the ever living shit out of the two men at the same time. It only took him 20 seconds to knock both of them unconscious, but Poseidon had already started crying in that time. Gods, for the second time that day.

Hades stepped away from the men and faced him. His angry, blazing eyes, turned soft and gentle...kind. He gently kneeled in front of Poseidon and helped him up, supporting him when his knees almost gave out. He calmly pulled Poseidon's boxers back up and redid his fly and button, even while Poseidon was crying his eyes out. As soon as he was done, he wrapped Poseidon in a hug, something that he had only done twice before, and one was today, not three hours ago. He shushed him while he cried. "They didn't do anything," he whispered. "You're alright. You're safe now. I'm here."

Poseidon thought he heard Zeus start giving an extra beating to one of the attackers, but he wasn't sure. His only view was Hades's chest.

Finally, he calmed down. The didn't touch you. They didn't do anything. You're fine. Hades saved you. You're safe.

Poseidon pulled away and looked across the alley to the men who were all sprawled across the concrete. One’s head was bleeding a small pool onto the ground with an arm twisted at an odd angle, while the others looked close to death, and Poseidon actually thought some of them were dead.
He bolted away from the men, dragging Hades, Zeus following in their wake. He just wanted to get away from them as quickly as possible.

"Are we all okay?" Zeus asked, panting against a building when they made it out onto a busier street.

"I’m fine," Poseidon said, out of breath. Admittedly, that was kind of a lie. He was pretty shaken up by what could've been. "What about you, Hades?"

"Fine. I was gonna kill those six, I swear." He scowled angrily, his bruised knuckles in fists.

"What did your two guys do to you?" Zeus asked him, still panting.

"Nothing really, I punched them both before they got any ideas, but when I saw them beating you up, Zeus, I just...lost it. I swear, I could’ve killed them both right then." Hades took a deep breath, and then looked at Poseidon. "And you should be glad you seemed so panicked to leave, or else those two would be in Tartarus. I swear to us, if he had went any further…” He left the threat hanging in the air. Then, a panicked realization dawned on Hades’s face. "He didn’t touch you, right? If he did, I’m going back there and tearing his limbs off one by one, and you two can’t stop me."

Poseidon had never seen Hades like this. His fists were curled, his eyes were even darker than usual with pure rage, and his jaw was clenched so tight Poseidon could see the muscle. "No," Poseidon said quickly. "He...he just tried to lift my legs around him when he...when he pulled my boxers down." Hades's eyes flashed. "But he didn't!" Poseidon added hastily. "You stopped him as soon as he put his hands under my knees! They...they didn't even touch me, they just...looked...at it."

Hades growled. "He tried to rape you."

Poseidon swallowed thickly. "But he didn't. And...I'm...I'm pretty sure you...you killed him." Another thought came to his mind and he gasped. "Oh god, what if the police find out? Oh my god, we'll go to jail—"

"We don't have DNA," Zeus reminded him. "They wouldn't be able to track us. Hecate's good, but not good enough to conjure something as complicated as DNA. Now calm down, Hades." He put a hand on Hades’ shoulder. Poseidon noticed that his nose was bleeding, and he already had a bruise forming by the collarbone that Poseidon could see. His fingers came back stained with red when he touched the back of his head with his free hand. “We’re fine,” he assured his oldest brother.

"Fine?" Hades seethed, gazing down at Zeus. "My little brother almost got raped, we are sure as hell not fine—"

Poseidon put a hand on Hades's shoulder. "Again, Hades, it was just an attempt. They didn't even sexually assault me, let alone r...rape me. If anything, Zeus had it worse than I did."

Hades closed his eyes and heaved a deep breath in, and then let it out slowly. He did this a couple times, and Poseidon glanced at Zeus awkwardly. Finally, Hades opened his eyes. "Let's go to the condo now."

Poseidon nodded and was about to start walking, when Zeus cleared his throat. "Um...there was another thing..."

"What?" Poseidon and Hades asked. Poseidon turned towards him. He hadn't moved a muscle.
"Um..." Zeus cleared his throat. "One of Hades's guys was just pretending to be unconscious...and...um, he...he was video taping."

Poseidon's gut sank. "What...What was he video taping?"

Zeus swallowed, darting his eyes to the side. "You...After...after they had pulled your boxers off..."

Poseidon grabbed his stomach, afraid he was gonna hurl. His eyes started stinging, and the world grew blurry. He had heard of plenty of horror stories; people recording someone getting raped and then posting it on porn websites...the videos getting millions of views...oh gods, he was going to vomit. He felt a tear slip down his cheek.

Hades lost it.

He growled, shoved Poseidon into Zeus's side, and stormed back into the alley. Poseidon tried to go after him, but Zeus pulled him back to his side. "Let him go."

"What if he gets hurt?" Poseidon asked, desperately wiping away tears.

"If anybody's gonna get hurt, it's not going to be him, that's for sure." Zeus hesitantly tried to wrapped his arm around Poseidon's shoulders, but winced and ended up wrapping it around his waist instead. It was a little awkward; Poseidon wasn't going to deny that. Millennia of hatred doesn't just go away after a few days. But he appreciated it anyway, even if he wished he didn't look so small compared to him.

Not five minutes later, Hades returned, blood on his knuckles and splattered over his shirt, a crushed phone in his hand. Poseidon broke apart from Zeus and rushed over to him. "Oh my gods, are you okay? You look hurt—"

"I'm fine, Poseidon. I should be the one asking if you're fine."

Zeus stepped up beside Poseidon. "Did you delete it? Was it...posted...anywhere?"

"No. I think he was just planning on watching it himself, the sick bastard. And yes, I checked every website he could've uploaded it to."

Poseidon sagged in relief. They nodded, and the three of them started on their way. Hades immediately wrapped his arm around Poseidon's shoulder, dragging him as close to his side as possible. Poseidon didn't mind, it was cold and Hades's jacket was warm.

After a moment, Poseidon took a deep breath. "I've never seen you like that," he told Hades.

"Like what?" Hades asked.

"So...overprotective."

"Yeah," Zeus agreed. "Is big, bad Hades going all soft on us?" he teased, reaching to squeeze Hades' cheek.

Hades gave him a death glare that would make Satan piss himself, and Zeus wisely removed his hand.

Hades sighed. "No, but Nico...he, well..." Hades took a deep breath. "When he was out on his own, he never came to the underworld unless I had called him. But, one day he shadow travelled to
my throne room right in the middle of one of my meetings. I remember being so pissed at him...and then I saw the state he was in. Bleeding to death, I swear. I cancelled the meeting immediately and brought him up to his room. I healed him, but when I asked what happened, instead of saying it was a monster attack or something he told me a group of nine men cornered him in an alley.” Hades’s fist clenched again. “Thankfully, they just jumped him and beat him up. I thought he’d been...y’know, raped or sexually assaulted. That wasn’t the case of course, but he’d still been so...jumpy for days.” Hades had a far away look in his eyes, like he was reliving the moments he was talking about. “He was scared of me, because I was a man that was taller and older than him. And when I saw the same thing happening to you, Zeus, I just...flipped.” He shook his head. “And Poseidon, I swear...” He put a hand on Poseidons shoulder and gripped it tightly. “If anyone ever touches you without you giving them your full consent, tell me and they will suffer eternity in Tartarus. After they go through me of course. Same goes for you, Zeus.” Poseidon gazed at Hades inquisitively. “I never thought of you as the ‘overprotective big brother’ type, but you learn something new everyday I guess,” he teased. Hades rolled his eyes. They reached the condo after they stopped in a convenient store to wash Zeus up. “New rule: no going out at night by yourself,” Zeus said as he cleaned the blood off his face one last time. He threw the bloody tissue in a garbage can outside the lobby of the condo. Hades and Poseidon hummed in agreement. The three of them entered the antechamber (that was a lot nicer than Percy’s). Poseidon rung ‘1201’.

“Hello?” a female voice said through the machine.

“Hi,” Poseidon started. “We rented the condo?”

“Oh, of course! See you in a second.” The call cut off and a pleasant buzzing sounded in the small room. Poseidon reached for the door to the lobby and stepped inside. Hades and Zeus followed him in, and the receptionist gave them a sweet but obviously forced smile as they walked to the elevators.

The lobby was huge and really fancy, with a large glass chandelier in the middle of the ceiling. The walls were creamy white, with gold accents and potted plants everywhere. They walked up to the elevator, and Poseidon pushed the button. A few moments later, the elevator arrived on the first floor. Unfortunately, there was someone already in it. Poseidon smiled awkwardly at the tall man, who looked at him with an extremely judgemental look on his face. For kicks, Poseidon finger gunned at him. He looked him up and down with a disgusted expression on his face. Hades glared at the man subtly, but Poseidon just tried to hold back laughter. Zeus pressed the button for the twelfth floor, and Poseidon noticed that the button for the penthouse was lit up. Damn. He made it. The ride up to the twelfth floor was short, but awkward. The three of them hurried out of the elevator as soon as possible.

The hallways were long and well lit, with stainless carpet and glass chandeliers hanging on the walls. “How expensive was this place?” Zeus asked as they walked down the hallway towards the first room on the right.

“360 a night,” Hades responded.

“A night ?” Poseidon asked, dumbfounded. “For three months? That’s like...around 32 400 dollars!”

“Wow, you’re smart,” Hades deadpanned.
“I know.”

They reached their room and knocked on the door. A woman who looked to be in her twenties with black hair down to her shoulders opened the door. “Hi! You must be Hayden, Zack, and Percival?” she asked brightly.

“Erm…”

“Yes, we are,” Hades answered for them, smiling at the woman charmingly.

She smiled and let them in. They took off their coats and shoes while she walked to the kitchen. “Would you like some water?” she asked.

“No thanks, we’re good,” Zeus smiled.

“Allrighty then,” she said. She guided them to the living room and told them to have a seat. Poseidon and Hades took the couch, while Zeus took the armchair. She sat down on the other black leather couch and cleared her throat. “As you may know, my name’s Addelyn, and I’m the owner of this unit of the condo. Um…I need to show you around, and show you what to do if anything goes wrong and how everything works, so you’re gonna have to get up again, sorry,” she smiled a little sheepishly.

They shook their heads. “It’s fine,” Poseidon assured. They got out of their seats, but she held up a hand to stop them.

“Only one of you is fine,” she said. She looked at Zeus and made a gesturing movement with her hands. “You can come, it you’d like?” She phrased it as a question, but it didn’t sound like one.

Zeus looked at them with mild confusion, but nevertheless got up. “Sure,” he said. Poseidon and Hades sat back down.

“Great!” she clapped her hands together. “I need to show you where you’ll find extra blankets and stuff, so come along with me.” They walked into where Poseidon assumed was the bedroom and closed the door.

“Well that’s a little strange,” Poseidon commented. Hades agreed, looking at the closed bedroom door suspiciously.

A.N!!! THIS IS IMPORTANT!!! I NEED YOU TO PICK EITHER A OR B AND PLEASE COMMENT WHICH ONE YOU WANT OR I WILL NOT KNOW

OPTION A: THE GIRL (ADDELYN) KISSED ZEUS (AND ZEUS KISSED BACK), AND HERA BANISHES ZEUS, POSEIDON, AND HADES FOR ANOTHER YEAR. SHOULD YOU PICK THIS OPTION, THIS STORY WILL BE A LOT LONGER THAN I ORIGINALLY PLANNED (btw, that isn’t a complaint), AND THE THREE OF THEM WILL MOST LIKELY BE SENT ON SOME SORT OF QUEST TO FILL THE TIME THEY ARE MORTALS.

PLEASE COMMENT YOUR OPINION OR ELSE I WILL NOT KNOW

TOODLES
Chapter Summary

SO! The winner was....
OPTION C!
Meaning: Thalia, Nico, Percy, Jason, and Hazel will be going!
BUT!
Since it was almost a tie between C and D, Will will (ha) be making a few appearances!
Hope you enjoy!
Also: HEAVY ANGST WARNING BECAUSE I HAVE ZERO CHILL

Chapter Notes

Also guys, I'm thinking of doing a little thing before every chapter that's kinda like on TV shows where it goes 'Previously on..." and then it shows scenes from the previous episode, except that since this is a fanfic it's the last line before the chapter ended? Would you guys like that? Because sometimes I continue right on from the previous chapter and sometimes its later in the day so it might be confusing to you guys idk

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on 'Really? Right in front of my salad?' that was originally supposed to be called 'Mortal' but I couldn't remember that when I was thinking of a title so my mess of a brain put a meme in the slot instead: "...Hades agreed, looking at the closed bedroom door suspiciously..."

"Why'd she close the door?" he asked.

"Don't know," Poseidon answered, eyeing said door. "Maybe she..." he trailed off, thrusting his hand out like he was trying to grab a plausible conclusion. Nothing came.

They shared an uneasy glance.

"Should we check on him?" Hades asked, shifting uneasily on his spot on the couch.

"Nah, we could just be paranoid," Poseidon said. Being honest, he was trying to convince himself more than he was trying to convince Hades.

"True," Hades agreed reluctantly. "But you know Zeus...if she makes the fist move..."

They shared another uneasy glance. The moon spilled silvery light into the room through the large windows. Poseidon didn't think it was very helpful that there were no lights in the house other than two candles lit on the kitchen table and TV stand. The only sound in the large condo was the distant sound of traffic coming from the streets below. Hades got up and started pacing, wringing his hands together. Poseidon watched him move up and down the living room floor silently.
Another few minutes passed, and Poseidon grew more and more doubtful that she was really just showing him the pillows and blankets. He could see that Hades was getting more and more impatient as well.

Another five minutes passed.

Then another five.

And then another five.

"Okay, that's it," Hades said suddenly. He turned on his heel and walked towards the bedroom door.

"Hades, wait!" Poseidon said, jumping off the couch and grabbing Hades's arm. "C'mon, let's just call to them first before just barging in."

Hades rolled his eyes and tried to walk towards the door, but Poseidon gripped onto his arm tighter. Hades sighed, annoyed. "Why?"

Poseidon shrugged uncomfortably. "I don't know." He took a deep breath and turned towards the door. "Zeus! Addelyn! How long does looking at pillows take?" He felt a little guilty at his annoyed tone with them, but the feeling of dread outweighed that.

"Um...yeah, just a sec!" Zeus called out, obviously out of breath.

Hades growled and stormed towards the door.

"C'mon, Hades!" Poseidon said, turning to run in front of Hades to attempt to stop him from banging the door down. However, even he himself found his attempt rather comical. The top of his head was level to Hades's chin.

Hades looked at him in exasperation. "What is your conclusion now? The pillows were really heavy?"

Poseidon's cheeks coloured. "I don't know..."

Hades gave him the 'look'. The one where one of his eyebrows is raised, his lips are pursed, and his head is slightly tilted. It was like he was saying 'really?' in an exasperated tone, but only using a facial expression.

Poseidon sighed. "Just knock, okay?"

Hades rolled his eyes and pushed past him. He stood in front of the door and knocked loudly. "Can I come in?" he called.

"Uh...Just a sec!" Addelyn called out. Her voice was a little higher pitched than it was previously.

Hades got a wicked smirk on his face. "Okay...but I'm just saying people might be a little suspicious when a woman in her twenties is in a bedroom with a seventeen year old for so long..."

"...What?"

Poseidon could hear the horror in her voice.

"You're seventeen?" she asked, obviously to Zeus.
Poseidon and Hades shared a glance. "I told you so," Hades mouthed, but there was no humour in his face. His eyes were ablaze with anger. It made Poseidon want to shrink back into a little ball.

"Okay, lady," Hades said calmly through the door. "Come out, grab your bags, give us the key and get the fuck out."

There was a scrambling from the other side of the door, and a few moments later, it swung open. Addelyn stumbled out first. Her black hair was messier than it was, her cheeks were flushed and she had a bead of sweat on her forehead. Zeus came out after her, looking the definition of guilty. His hair was also a mess, and his cheeks were cherry red.

"Did you have fun?" Hades asked, dangerously quiet. Addelyn and Zeus swallowed. "Hm?" he pushed.

Addelyn's fists curled. "I didn't know he was seventeen."

"You shouldn't have tried anything regardless," Hades said coldly. "You may not have known he was seventeen, but that doesn't make it any more justified. Maybe, I don't know... ask. Do you know what that means?" Hades was staring the girl down coldly. "He sure as hell doesn't look your age, does he?"

"Well my fucking bad," she said angrily. "Maybe he should've protested. He didn't say no, nor did he seem unsure."

"Whatever, bitch. Get the fuck out, before I call the police."

Poseidon knew it was an empty threat since Zeus was way older then 18 and technically 17 was over the age of consent, but Addelyn didn't. A little fear entered her eyes, and she quickly scrambled to find a key. She thrust it into Hades’s hands, grabbed her suit case, pulled on a jacket and slipped some shoes on, then slammed the door shut behind her as she walked out.

"Care to fucking explain?" Hades asked Zeus, tone as sharp as a blade. He tucked the key in the pocket of his jeans.

"I'm sorry," Zeus whispered.

"You're sorry," Hades repeated. He let out a humourless, terrifying laugh. "You're sorry." He shook his head, chuckling darkly. "Sorry doesn't get me back to the fucking underworld—my home—in less than a year. Sorry doesn't allow me to not have to deal with you two anymore."

"Don't drag Poseidon into this," Zeus warned. "It was me, not him."

Poseidon opened his mouth, but Hades cut him off. "Oh, you're protecting your brother. How sweet. Because you've just been such a great brother all these years."

Zeus was starting to get angry too. "Well you haven't been the poster child for the best brother, either."

"And why do you think that was?" Hades raised an eyebrow.

Zeus's fists clenched. "Okay, fine. But you had no reason to be a dick to Poseidon."

"Oh, I was being a dick?" Hades asked, laughing humourlessly again. "Sorry, was I the one that
never visited? Was I the one who didn't make an attempt to talk to him? Was I the one who was too
damn self absorbed to think of anyone other than myself?"

Zeus growled. "Well maybe you gave him a reason to not want to talk to you."

Poseidon scowled at both of them. "I'm here, y'know. And I can speak for myself."

They ignored him. Hades's fists clenched. "Or maybe he was too busy fucking everyone's lives up
because of his goddamn stupidity to make an attempt to talk to me."

Poseidon felt a pang of pain in his chest. He took a shuddering breath, the world blurring around
him. Zeus looked at him, and then back at Hades sharply. "Oh, real smooth, big guy."

Hades looked at Poseidon, and his anger faded. He looked a little guilty. "Oh...Poseidon...."

Zeus growled at him. "For someone who insults people for their mistakes, you make an awful lot
of them."

Hades scowled and averted his eyes. Zeus laughed and shook his head. "Think before you speak
next time, dickhead."

"Well maybe think before you cheat and thrust a burden on everyone around you." Hades was back
to being angry.

"At least I'm not a fucking living burden," Zeus spat back.

Angry tears gathered in Hades's eyes. "Maybe you should not fucking make people so pissed they
burden you!" His voice steadily increased in volume until he yelled the last word.

"Well maybe you should try to fucking go back to the underworld so we don't have to deal with
you!" Zeus yelled back, fists clenched and eyes ablaze with hatred.

Hades growled again and swung a fist at Zeus. Zeus took it and didn't stumble back. He grabbed
Hades's arm and snarled in Hades's face. "No wonder Nico was scared of you."

Hades froze. Poseidon knew Zeus had just made the worst mistake he could've.

Hades snarled terrifyingly and kneed Zeus, swinging a right hook in the process. Zeus stumbled
back, but soon retaliated and threw an uppercut at Hades.

Holy shit that escalated quickly. Poseidon gasped, horrified. "GUYS, STOP!"

They didn't listen. Hades threw a strong punch to Zeus's windpipe. Zeus stumbled back, the wind
knocked out of him. He recovered quickly however, and charged back at Hades, snarling. He threw
a right hook, and Poseidon heard a sickening crunch.

"Hades!" Poseidon called, rushing over to Hades' side. Hades moved before he could stand beside
him, and with blood dripping down his nose, threw another punch at Zeus. Poseidon rushed over to
them and tried to break it up. "GUYS! YOU F***ING IDIOTS STOP FIGHTING!" They
continued throwing punches at any place they could reach. Tears gathered in Poseidon's eyes.
"GUYS, PLEASE!"

They continued. Zeus miscalculated a punch, and his fist made contact with Poseidon's nose,
causing Poseidon stumbled back. Considering Zeus's significantly more muscular body, the force
was enough to knock him to the ground. He hit the floor painfully, clutching his broken nose.
and Hades stopped throwing punches immediately. They both rushed over to his side.

"Great fucking job," Hades growled to Zeus.

Zeus just ignored him pointedly and looked at Poseidon guiltily. "I'm sorry..."

Poseidon growled and scrambled up off the floor. "I asked both of you to stop and you didn't fucking listen. Zeus, you're a fucking idiot, and Hades, you were extremely immature to use physical violence to try and resolve an issue."

Zeus and Hades got up off the floor too. Hades glared at Poseidon. "I find it kind of hypocritical you'd call me immature."

"And even more hypocritical you'd call me an idiot."

Poseidon scowled, before his bottom lip started to tremble. Without a word, he walked to the door and tried to walk out of the apartment. Hades hurried over and grabbed his arm before he could succeed in even unlocking the door. "Seriously?" he asked angrily. "You're gonna walk out and pretend you're the victim of all of this? Jesus fucking Christ, grow up."

Poseidon felt more tears swirl in his eyes. Zeus shook his head. "You two are both so fucking childish."

"Oh, we're childish?" Poseidon asked angrily. "Were we the ones who couldn't follow a simple, vital rule for more than four days? No offence, but I'm pretty sure I'm not the idiot, nor am I the childish one."

Zeus's eyes darkened in anger. He reached out and punched Poseidon in the stomach. Hard.

Poseidon doubled over and stumbled back into the wall. He looked at Zeus in complete disbelief. A few tears that he couldn't hold back anymore finally fell. Zeus retracted his hand, walking backwards in horror. Poseidon glared at both him and Hades. "Maybe next time punch someone who isn't half a head shorter and 30 pounds lighter than you," he bit out at Zeus. He pushed past them both and walked into the bedroom, slamming the door behind him. Gods, he wished he had his powers so he could drown both of them. The bedroom smelled of sex, and he collapsed against the door, holding his chest and sinking to the floor. He let silent tears fall down his face.

He wasn't aware that Zeus was doing the same on the other side of the door, nor that Hades was falling back into old bad habits in front a bathroom mirror.

Chapter End Notes

The quest is coming up in future chapters, do not fret! I just wanted angst.

ALSO!
Do you guys want this to be Zeus/Poseidon/Hades? Or Hades/Poseidon?
Zeus/Poseidon? Zeus/Hades? (just a warning if you pick Zeus/Hades then it will be unrequited Zeus/Poseidon/hades). Or do you want it to still be brotherly bonding? I can do any of them! If most people still want it to be brotherly bonding, after this story's finished I'll do another story where it's Zeus/Poseidon/Hades.
Poseidon woke up from the pain in his neck. He had fallen asleep against the door, and his head had twisted at an odd angle. Blood caked on his chin and under his nose, and his cheeks were sticky with tear tracks. He felt disgusting. Getting up, he stumbled slightly, but caught himself on the door. He cleared his throat and opened the door. The moon was sinking slowly, but still high in the sky, sending little rays of moonlight into the expensive condo. The clock on the wall read 3:56.

He saw Zeus curled up on the couch, staring at him. It was obvious that he hadn’t had a wink of sleep.

Poseidon stared right back at him. Zeus’s eyes were so guilty Poseidon thought he could’ve forgiven him right then. His eyes were red rimmed and bloodshot, he looked paper pale, and his hair was the equivalent of a bird’s nest, but Poseidon didn’t think he looked any better. They stayed silent for awhile, just staring steadily at each other, one guilty and one accusatory.

A few more beats of silence, and then: “I’m sorry,” Zeus said softly. Poseidon took a deep breath and looked away. “I am,” he pushed quietly. He got up off the couch and walked over to Poseidon. He put a hand on Poseidon’s shoulder. He seemed so hesitant, as if he thought Poseidon would lash out and punch him. Poseidon wasn’t so sure he wouldn’t.

“Why did you cheat?” he asked quietly. “You knew we’d be stuck down here for another year….why?”

Zeus looked away, but Poseidon thought he saw a little moisture enter his eyes. “I…” he cleared his throat after his voice cracked. “I knew we’d be down here for another year…”

“Okay…” Poseidon looked at him in confusion.

Zeus averted his eyes uncomfortably again. “And...that’s why I did it.”
Poseidon stared at him.

Zeus’s ears were getting more and more red the longer he stared. “Di immortales, you’re an idiot.” Poseidon looked at his brother in utter exasperation.

Zeus stayed silent, staring at the floor.

Poseidon shook his head. “Oh my gods, you could’ve just asked to hang out more.”

Zeus shrugged guiltily. Poseidon let out a little, disbelieving laugh, shaking his head. Out of nowhere, he threw himself at Zeus and wrapped him in a bear hug. Zeus stumbled back slightly, mostly out of surprise if Poseidon were to be completely honest with himself, but caught his balance and hesitantly wrapped his arms around Poseidon as well, a little confused. The top of Poseidon’s head was only up to Zeus’ nose. “You’re such an idiot,” Poseidon repeated. “But that was kinda cute.”

“I’m sorry,” Zeus repeated softly into Poseidon’s hair, ignoring his last comment.

Poseidon buried his face in his neck. “It’ll be okay.”

Zeus hugged him a little tighter, causing Poseidon’s chest to start to hurt from the pressure on his lungs, but he returned the favour. “But you’re still a fucking moron and if you ever cheat again I will make it my mission to find a way to reverse your immortality permanently.”

Zeus gave a quiet, broken laugh. “Okay.” He pulled back from their hug after a little bit. His face turned guilty again. He reached out his hand and touched the dried blood on Poseidon’s chin. “This is going to hurt,” he said softly, reaching up to touch Poseidon’s nose. Poseidon closed his eyes tightly. Zeus counted down from three: “Three...two...one!”

He grabbed Poseidon’s nose and cracked it back in place. Poseidon let out a small yell of pain. “Sorry,” Zeus apologized.

The bathroom door banged open. “What was that?” Hades asked. Poseidon turned to look at him. His hair was a mess, his eyes were bloodshot, and his wrists were covered in bandages. “Is everyone okay?” His eyes were alert and panicked, looking for a threat.

Poseidon’s eyes were glued to the bandages on his wrist. After realizing there was no murderer or monster, Hades looked at Poseidon and Zeus, then down at his wrists. He cleared his throat uncomfortably. “I...went a little too deep…”

Poseidon stared at him for a little while longer before throwing himself at him and wrapping him up in another bear hug, this one even tighter than the one he gave Zeus. He went on his tippy toes and wrapped his arms around Hades’ shoulders. Hades froze completely. His eyes went really wide and his arms glued themselves to his side. Poseidon squeezed him even tighter, if that was possible. “You’re supposed to hug back when someone hugs you, you little shit.” There was no bite to Poseidon’s words, and he said them through a lump in his throat.

Hades hesitantly wrapped his arms around Poseidon, too.

After another moment of hesitation, he buried his face in Poseidon’s hair and pulled him closer. Poseidon felt a little wetness on his head. “Are you...crying?” Poseidon asked confusedly.

“Maybe,” Hades said quietly.

Poseidon hugged him tighter. “Wh...why?
“I...haven’t been hugged in...” Poseidon felt him swallow, “...200 years?”

Poseidon paused momentarily, before using all of his strength and squeezing Hades as hard as he physically could. Hades wheezed as the air was knocked out of him. Zeus chuckled from behind them and came up beside Poseidon. Poseidon sniffed and looked back at Zeus. “Get in here, you idiot.”

Zeus laughed and walked up to the two of them and wrapped his arms around them. Hades looked at him, and then at Poseidon. “We’ve forgiven him?”

“No, but we’re hugging him anyway.”

“Cool.”

The three of them stayed like that for what could’ve been seconds, minutes, hours, or days.

“Poseidon?” Hades asked eventually.

“Yeah?”

“The blood on your face is rubbing off on my shirt I really don’t appreciate it.”

Poseidon laughed wetly and pulled back. He wiped the tear tracks from his face and smiled tearily. He gave both of them another brief hug before walking into the bathroom. He wet a face cloth and used it to wipe his chin and nose. He winced as he tenderly dabbed the bridge of his nose. He bent over the sink and cupped his hands to splash water on his face. He dried his face with a towel before exiting the bathroom. “Hey,” he said softly as he re-entered the living room.

“Hi,” Hades and Zeus responded, equally quiet. Hades was on the couch, and Zeus was in the kitchen. Poseidon came over to sit beside Hades.

He reached out a hand and touched Hades’s arm gently. “Please don’t do it again,” he said, softly running a finger along Hades’s bandages.

“Okay,” he said quietly. He hesitantly brought up an arm to wrap around Poseidon’s shoulders. Poseidon’s face split out into a grin. He rested his head against Hades’ shoulder with a small ‘thump’. A little hair fell into Poseidon’s eyes, and Hades brushed it away gently.

Poseidon hummed and tasered Hades in the ribs gently. “You’re gettin all soft, brother. People might think you have...” he paused for dramatic effect, “...feelings!”

Hades snorted and rolled his eyes. “Don’t ruin it.”

Poseidon threw his hands up in surrender. “Terribly sorry, ma’am.”

“Hey!” Hades pushed him away.

Poseidon laughed and forced himself back up against Hades’s side. Hades smiled softly and pulled him closer. “I’m sorry,” Hades said.

“I’m sorry too.”

All was silent for a while.

“Hey, Zeus?” Poseidon asked. “What are you doing in the kitchen?”
Zeus shrugged. “We’re obviously not going to be able to go to sleep again, and it’s quarter after 4, so might as well make breakfast.”

Poseidon hummed. “Thanks. What’s for breakfast?”

“French toast,” he said.

“Where’d you get the ingredients?”

“She left some food.”

“Why?”

“Don’t know.”

“Why?”

“I don’t know.”

“Why?”

“Because I don’t know.”

“Why?”

“Di immortales, I am going to murder you.”

Poseidon laughed and leaned more into Hades’ side. “Why?”

Zeus whipped around and held out a whisk threateningly. “Say it one more time, I dare you.”


“You should be,” Zeus said, narrowing his eyes.

Poseidon laughed again. “Why are you making french toast? I mean, I’m definitely not complaining, but why?”

“Well, I usually have pancakes for breakfast on Christmas Eve, but we had pancakes way too much, so…”

“It’s Christmas Eve?”

Zeus stared at him blankly. “Yeah…? Why else would Sally be coming home at such a strange time, or why christmas songs have been playing on repeat for the past week?”

“I…” Poseidon started contemplating his entire life. “I...didn’t get you guys anything…” Poseidon mumbled, a little guilty.

“Neither did I,” Hades admitted.

“It never crossed my mind,” Zeus said, mixing together some ingredients Poseidon didn’t recognize.

“We could go out today and get something small,” Poseidon suggested. “I need to get Percy something, anyway.”
Hades and Zeus shrugged. “Sure.”

When Zeus finally served breakfast, it was a little more tense than usual, but not painful. Poseidon shifted a little uncomfortably a few times, but it got a little better as time moved forward. Zeus still had a lingering look of guilt in his eyes, and Hades was looking at him with a little accusation, but it got more comfortable eventually. After they cleaned up their plates, they slipped on their shoes and coats and exited the condo after locking the door. Thankfully, there was no one in the elevator this time, and they made it outside without any added awkwardness.

“Okay, how are we going to do this?” Hades asked as they stepped out. “Should I take this to a bank and transfer some to cash or…”

“That sounds like a good idea,” Poseidon said. “But the only problem is, I don’t think it’s attached to any bank, and if someone were to look back at the reading of the machine it would look a little suspicious, to say the least.”

Hades hummed. “But the mist would cover it up, wouldn’t it?”

“Oh...yeah, sorry.” Poseidon’s ears burned red.

Hades smiled softly and a little fondly. They walked over to an ATM and transferred 320 dollars to twenty dollar bills. “Okay,” Hades said, turning around. “You each get 160 dollars because I don’t know how expensive things are anymore.” He handed the bills to Zeus and Poseidon. “And I’ll take the credit card.”


“How about at Whole Foods,” Zeus suggested. “I want to make some stuff for tonight and tomorrow.”

Hades and Poseidon shrugged. “Sure,” Hades said. “Meet at—” he glanced at his watch, “—7:30? It’s 5 now. And if you’re done before then, just walk to Whole Foods anyway.”

“Sounds good to me,” Poseidon shrugged.

“Alright, see you guys in a bit.” Zeus waved and walked down the busy sidewalks.

Poseidon gave a little salute to Hades. “Catch ya later.”

Hades rolled his eyes and gave a little salute back. Poseidon grinned and walked across the street to find a place that would hopefully catch his attention. He had absolutely no clue what to get Zeus, Hades, or Percy, so this would be fun. He would feel weird getting any of them clothes since it seemed too obvious and unthoughtful, but he really couldn’t think of anything else. He wished he could go to Atlantis to get Percy some more of those pearls, but that wasn’t an option, and he had already done it.

The stores he passed were all either too girly or too masculine. He passed one with makeup and crop tops, then he passed one with muscle shirts and crude jokes on baseball caps. Poseidon didn’t think Percy, Zeus, or Hades would particularly enjoy either. He decided to start with one person and work from there. What would Zeus want?

What do you get a god?

He swallowed nervously and glanced down at his 160 dollars. That left about 53 dollars for each person, and he wasn’t so sure he’d be able to do it. A thought crossed his mind, and he backtracked
into a jewelry store. He headed straight for the men’s watches and searched around for a bit. Eventually, he landed on a navy glass watch with gold hands ticking quietly beneath the shiny, clear protection. It wasn’t a rolex, but it was nice nonetheless.

“Bingo,” Poseidon muttered. He glanced at the price. 62 dollars including tax. A little pricey for his budget, but hey, he’d make it work. He walked up to the man behind the counter and asked for him to remove the watch. The man smiled at him and complimented his choice, before removing it and walking back to the counter. “62 dollars and 23 cents,” he said.

Poseidon nodded and handed him four twenty dollar bills. The man looked at him a little weirdly, but handed him back his 17 dollars and 77 cents. “Thanks,” Poseidon said.

“No problem,” the man smiled.

Poseidon left the store, freshly out of ideas. He walked a little down the street again, glancing inside store windows. “Okay, well next I’ll do Hades—”

“No offence, uncle, but I’m pretty sure Hades would be the one doing you.”

Poseidon jumped and turned to an ally, only to find a hand grabbing his shirt and pulling him in. “Hermes?” Poseidon asked in confusion. He would recognize the mop of curly brown hair and elvish grin anywhere. “And I did not need your input about that, thanks.”

Hermes shrugged and adjusted the leather satchel on his shoulder. “Just thought I’d put it out there. Anyways, I’m glad I ran into you first, because I did not want to be the one to hand Zeus this.” He reached into his bag and removed a letter that looked to be in a parchment envelope. It was jolting around and trying to escape Hermes’s hand, but he held onto it tightly.

“Why is it jerking around like that?” Poseidon asked, examining the letter from a healthy distance.

“It’s a howler,” he explained.

“Like in *Harry Potter*?” Poseidon asked in confusion.

“Yes, well...no, I just call it a howler ‘cause that’s essentially what it is, but it’s officially called a ουρλιάζοντας γράµµα,” he explained. “But, y’know, who has time to say that?”

“So it’s a howler from Hera to Zeus,” Poseidon assumed.

“Yes, and I would not suggest opening it up in public. I made that mistake once...” He shuddered.

“Right, okay. Thanks,” Poseidon said, taking the letter from Hermes and having to quickly slap his other hand on it so it didn’t bust out of his grip. “Where is it trying to go?”

“To wherever Zeus is, I presume,” Hermes said, looking at the small letter curiously.

Poseidon nodded. “Okay, well...thanks, I guess. I’ll see you in a year, hopefully.”

Hermes nodded as well. “Alright, uncle. Catch ya later.” He gave him a little salute, but quickly got really serious in an un-Hermes-like fashion. “Oh, and I wouldn’t get comfortable wherever you’re staying.”

Poseidon furrowed his eyebrows. “What do you mean?”

“Something’s coming,” Hermes said grimly. “I don’t know what...but I can feel it, and I don’t like it. Ares said that his soldiers have been getting more and more restless, they can feel it too. Apollo
hasn’t pulled a prank or joke in weeks. Something’s coming, and it’s not good. And I’m afraid you three might just be caught up in the middle of it.”

Poseidon looked at him, a little fear creeping into his mind. “It isn’t...father or Gaea again, is it?”

Hermes shook his head. “No. Some people think it’s the other titans rising again. Oceanus, Rhea, Themis…” He shook his head. “Some people even think it’s Ouranos. But I think it’s worse than that. I think it’s Chaos.”

“But Chaos is just mist and matter,” Poseidon said, shaking his head. “It solidified into earth, and earth became Gaea…”

Hermes shook his head. “I know, but when your son and his little gang defeated her, her strength weakened. We think Chaos has been trying to get a human form for sometime now, and when Gaea fell again, it took the chance and finally went through with its plans. I mean, all the tsunamis, earthquakes, storms, dying crops, and tornadoes recently? Terrifying. At first we thought someone had just really pissed you off or that you and Zeus were fighting, but it was impossible. We knew that as soon as you became a mortal and tsunamis kept on happening, something was up.”

Poseidon felt fear seep into his veins. “Are you sure?”

“Sure? No. Almost sure? Yes. I mean, listen to the prophecy Apollo spurted out.” He reached into his bag and withdrew a small piece of paper.

“Apollo gave a prophecy?” Poseidon asked. “He hasn’t done that since…”

“The trojan war? Yeah.”

Poseidon swallowed. Hermes looked down at the paper and cleared his throat before reading:

“Ice, the threat of a new age brings eight souls together,
For a battle against nothing but dangerous weather.
While seven will face the risk of death,
Only one shall exhale their final breath.
In a race against time, nature and mist,
Seven hearts will be dearly missed.
And in the last moments of freedom and peace,
One shall choose between the world and a niece.”

Poseidon stared at the letter, transfixed. Silently, Hermes handed it to him. “I’m sorry, uncle,” he said quietly. He handed Poseidon two boxes. “One’s for Hades and one’s for Percy. Aphrodite didn’t think you’d be in the right mind for gift shopping after this.”

Poseidon nodded at him gratefully. “Thank you, and thank her for me.”

Hermes nodded. He patted Poseidon’s shoulder, before telling Poseidon to cover his eyes. He disappeared in a flash of gold. Poseidon stared at the place he was previously occupying, before slowly dragging his feet away from the alley and to the direction of Whole Foods. The howler was now barely moving with how tight he was gripping it. The food store came into sight and Poseidon
slowly made his way towards it. He didn’t see Zeus or Hades, so he quietly sat down on the curb in front of the store, thinking about the prophecy and rereading it over and over again. Half an hour later, Zeus arrived, followed by Hades not even a foot behind him. They approached Poseidon, smiling, but quickly turned concerned when they saw his grim face.

“What is it?” Hades asked, sitting down next to Poseidon on the curb. Zeus followed his example shortly after.

Without a word, Poseidon handed them the piece of paper.

Hades and Zeus read it, then stared at the paper for a long time. Hades eventually spoke up. “A prophecy. We’re part of the eight, aren’t we?” he asked quietly.

Poseidon nodded grimly. “I’m afraid so.”

Chapter End Notes

ooof

Also! for now it looks like it'll be brotherly bonding, but I'm going to write a story about Zeus/Poseidon/Hades next, then a story about Hades/Poseidon, then a story about Zeus/Poseidon and then maybe a story about Zeus/Hades. Sorry for all of you shipping any of these pairings, but they are coming :) And if you're impatient you can always check out my only other work on my page that is literally just smut that I should not have written because of how young I am lmao
the earth gets pissed

Chapter Summary

SPOLILERS ARE BAD SO NO SUMMARY

Chapter Notes

idk what to put here so...yeet

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “...Poseidon nodded grimly. “I’m afraid so”...”

The three of them returned to the condo, their ‘christmas spirit’ dampened by roughly 10 000. Poseidon entered the condo first and immediately headed for the couch, followed closely by Zeus and Hades after they locked the door. Hades sat down on the right of him heavily while Zeus sat on the left.

“What do you think it means?” Zeus asked, glancing at the paper grasped in Poseidon’s hands.

Poseidon swallowed. “Hermes told me some people think it's the other titans rising or Ouranos. But he and Apollo think it’s…” he inhaled shakily, “they think it’s Chaos.”

“Chaos is just mist and matter,” Hades argued, looking at him, confused. “And it turned into Earth, which became Gaea.”

“That’s what I said. But Hermes told me that he and Apollo think that it’s been trying to gain a human form for some time now. And when it’s fully succeeded…”

They shared an uneasy glance.

“Do you think...it’ll try to take over and start a new age?” Zeus asked.

“Definitely,” Hades answered, as if there was no chance it wouldn't. “I mean, read the first line; ‘The threat of a new age brings eight souls together’. What else could that mean?”

“Prophecies are known for putting twists on words,” Poseidon countered hesitantly. “But yeah, that does seem pretty clear. But what about the whole ‘eight souls’ thing? Due to the timing, I’m fairly certain we’re part of the eight, but what about the other five?”

Zeus and Hades shared a glance. “I have no idea,” Hades confessed.

Poseidon frowned. “There’s probably a reason why Apollo gave the prophecy instead of the oracle at Camp Half Blood. They probably don’t want random demigods on the quest...”
“Apollo gave the prophecy?” Hades asked, surprised.

“Yep.”

“Well, we’re fucked,” Zeus muttered under his breath.

“Yep.”

Hades opened his mouth, but was cut off by a little rattle in the kitchen. He, Poseidon, and Zeus all looked over, brows furrowed. “What was that?” he asked instead.

Poseidon frowned. “I don’t know.”

Another little rattle, this time louder.

3…

Another one.

2…

Another one.

1.

The building started to shake violently. “Jesus,” Hades swore. Poseidon and Zeus fell off the couch from the force of it. The windows rattled and the lights hanging over the island in the kitchen started to sway dangerously.

“Earthquake.” Poseidon swore under his breath. He screamed when part of the ceiling collapsed with a CRASH! “Holy fuck, get under the threshold!” he screamed at Zeus and Hades. They tried to comply, but fell over from the shake of the floor. Poseidon could hear screams from down below in the streets. He stumbled up from the floor, but fell over from the force of the violently shaking surface below his feet. He looked out the window and watched in horror as a building a little way down the street collapsed into itself.

“C’mon, Poseidon!” Zeus screamed at him. Poseidon looked up to see Hades and Zeus already under the threshold of the door. Poseidon got up quickly, until a force knocked him to the ground forcefully. He screamed in pain as part of the ceiling came crashing down onto him.

“Poseidon!” Zeus or Hades screamed. Poseidon couldn’t tell. The weight on his back was crushing his lungs. He couldn’t breath, but when he tried, all he inhaled was dust. He collapsed into a coughing fit, but could barely manage it from the crushing weight on him. Searing pain filled every nerve of his body, and black dots entered his vision.

After what felt like a lifetime, he felt a little weight come off his back. A hand gripped his arm and pulled, but he screamed in pain. “What?” he heard Zeus’s panicked voice ask. “What is it?”

Poseidon looked back down, only to find a broken pipe sticking out of his calf. Zeus swore. “Hades! Look at this!”

Hades grunted as he finally removed the last piece of ceiling from Poseidon’s body. “Fuck,” he swore. He bent down next Poseidon’s leg. “If I remove it, he’ll bleed to death, but if I leave it in, it’s gonna get infected.”

“It’s not an artery,” Zeus said, eyes wide and panicked, face already caked with dust. He looked old
now, with dust coating his hair grey and filling in some of the very few wrinkles he had on his
forehead. “Our best bet is to remove it, then tie something around it and apply pressure. Hopefully
we’ll run into someone who can help us when we get down there.”

“Okay, that’s all good, but what are we gonna tie around it?” Hades asked, panicked.

“I dunno,” Zeus said, looking around desperately.

“Guys…” Poseidon groaned in pain. The world around him was getting blurry, and the black dots
started to grow a little.

“Shit, okay.” Hades swore. “Better to be uncomfortable than have someone dead.” He removed his
shirt quickly. “This is gonna hurt,” he told Poseidon. Poseidon closed his eyes tightly as he felt
Hades wrap his hand around the pipe. “Three…two…one!”

Hades yanked it as hard as he could. Poseidon let out a blood curdling scream. Hades and Zeus
cringed. The black dots almost blocked all of Poseidon’s vision and tears fell into a little puddle on
the floor in front of him. He felt Hades wrap his t-shirt around the wound as tightly as he could.
Finally, the earth stopped shaking. Everything seemed deadly quiet for a moment, until the screams
from down below filled the condo again. “Finally,” Zeus muttered, referring to the still ground. He
looked down at Poseidon again. “He’s not gonna be able to walk.”

Hades grunted his agreement. “I’ll carry him, you go get help.”

Zeus nodded and quickly hurried out into the busy hallway full of distressed adults and children.

“Alright, Poseidon. Hold still,” Hades said, his voice gentler than Poseidon had ever heard it.
Poseidon felt hand around his torso as he was lifted off the ground and carefully slung over
Hades’s shoulder in a fireman’s carry. Poseidon gripped onto Hades’s tricep tightly as he viewed
the world from a vantage point he had never experienced. Everything was still in a daze, and the
amount of blood he was losing was making him lightheaded and his brain hazy.

“Why aren’t you wearing a shirt?” Poseidon asked in a daze.

“Because my shirt is currently wrapped around your leg,” Hades explained softly, speed-walking
out of their unit of the condo and into the hallway, which was now almost vacant.

“Oh,” Poseidon said intelligently. The world got a little more hazy, and the murkiness in his brain
was making his filter less and less apparent. “Well,” he sighed, “you look good without a shirt.”

“Man, are you ever out of it,” Hades muttered.

“Out of what?”

“Nevermind.” He pushed open the door to the staircase, only to find hundreds of people rampaging
down the stairs, slamming into each other and pushing people out of the way. Hades swore and
quickly helped a woman up, who had fallen and was about to get trampled on.

“Thank you,” she said gratefully, before disappearing into the crowd.

“Okay, Poseidon,” Hades said, “I’m going to adjust you.” He carefully removed Poseidon from his
shoulder and brought him into a bridal carry. He waited for a small break in the crowd, before
rushing into it and speeding down the stairs. Poseidon saw countless other injured people either
being carried or supported.
“Hades?” Poseidon said.

“Yeah?”

“I’m tired.”

Poseidon felt Hades’s heart rate speed up from where his temple was resting on the left side of his older brother’s chest. “Okay, buddy, but don’t close your eyes.”

“Why not?” Poseidon asked sluggishly.

“Because...I’m not sure Hera, Amphitrite, or Persephone, would still be capable of giving you your immortality back.”

“Why wouldn’t they?” Poseidon asked, eyes drooping.

“Keep your eyes open!” Hades yelled. Poseidon jolted. Hades cleared his throat. “Because they can’t. Only Hecate (and Zeus while he’s a god) can do that. And Hecate would be on Chaos’s side.”

“How do you know that?” Poseidon asked hazily.

“She was the first goddess to join Kronos. She hates us.”

“Oh, okay.” Poseidon struggled to keep his eyes open. “Does that mean we’re mortal forever?”

“Maybe not forever,” Hades said. “But for now, yes.”

“M’kay.” Poseidon snuggled up further into Hades. “You’re bleeding,” he observed, weakly pointing a finger to Hades’s shoulder.

“So are you, and much more severely.”

“...Severely is a fancy word.”

“Yeah, I agree. Can you name any other fancy words? Just keep talking.”

“Hm...rhetorical is fancy. So is Anaesthesiology...I know that I know what that means, but for now for some reason I don’t. What a shame. Oh! And pomegranate is fun to say. Ooo! You like pomegranates, don’t you?”

“Yeah!” Hades agreed. If Poseidon were in the right headspace he’d know that his enthusiasm was forced. They finally reached the bottom of the stairs. “Okay, man, just hold on for me, okay?”

“Anything for you, brother.” Poseidon weakly shot finger guns.

“DAD!” A voice called. Hades whipped around, but saw hundreds of children that could’ve said it. “Oh, thank gods,” the same voice said. Poseidon looked over to see Nico di Angelo rushing up towards them, closely followed by Percy and a blond boy whose name Poseidon couldn’t put a finger on.

“How’d you find us?” Hades asked, sounding relieved despite his confusion.

Nico jerked his head. “Him.”

Poseidon looked over to see Zeus running up to them, looking beyond concerned.
The blond boy spoke up. “Okay, we need to get Lord Poseidon some help. Bring him over here.” He jogged over to an alley, the rest of them quickly following. “Put him down there, lying on his stomach.” Hades placed Poseidon down softly. The blond boy unwrapped the t-shirt and opened the medical kit Poseidon didn’t remember seeing. “Percy, can you go get a water bottle from somewhere?”

Percy nodded and rushed off. “Do you think he’s lost too much blood, Will?” Nico asked, looking at Poseidon’s leg in concern.

Will shook his head. “Nothing I can’t handle, Sunshine.” Nico rolled his eyes and grumbled at the nickname, a little red tingeing his cheeks. “This is gonna sting a little,” Will told Poseidon, uncapping a small, brown glass bottle. “But it’s gonna make sure this doesn’t get infected.” He poured three drops of it into Poseidon’s wound. Poseidon hissed a little in pain. “Sorry,” Will apologized quickly. “Okay, that was rubbing alcohol—well, magical rubbing alcohol—anyway, it should also clean that up. He’s not gonna need stitches since the skin isn’t peeling back, but he’s gonna need one big ass bandage.”

“Wow, goody two shoes Solace is swearing?” Nico asked sarcastically. Will stuck his tongue out at him briefly before returning his full attention to Poseidon.

Percy sprinted back into the alley, water bottle in hand. “Here you go.” He handed Will the bottle. “Thanks,” Will said. He placed it down on the alley’s pavement. He reached into his medical kit and removed a large bandage and some gauze. “Did you steal it?” he asked.

“No…?” Percy said innocently.

Will looked at him.

“Yes…?”

Will snorted.

Percy grinned and rolled his eyes. “Let’s just say I borrowed it….without permission…and don’t plan on returning it.”

Will rolled his eyes, amused. He carefully placed the bandage on Poseidon’s leg, and patted it down firmly. “Okay, everybody needs to be quiet so I can concentrate.”

The people that had gathered outside the alley in hopes of getting healed by Will as well continued to talk. Will sighed in frustration. “Guys, I need you to be quiet…” They continued to talk. “Guys, c’mon,” Will said desperately. “I need you to…”

“SHUT THE FUCK UP!” Nico and Percy yelled at the same time. The crowd went deathly silent. “AND LEAVE, HE’S NOT HEALING ANYONE ELSE! THERE ARE COUNTLESS PARAMEDICS HERE, GO FIND ONE!” Nico yelled. The crowd scattered, a few people cursing at him and telling him to go to hell. Hades looked at his son with an unreadable expression, while Poseidon was still too out of it to scold Percy for swearing, not that he would’ve in the first place.

Will took a deep breath and placed both of his hands on Poseidon’s leg. He chanted under his breath in Ancient Greek, his eyes closed tightly. Slowly, a golden glow started to surround Poseidon. It built up steadily, before cutting off completely. Will collapsed, and Nico quickly came over to support him. Will leaned heavily against Nico. “Perce, can you give him some water? I just restored the blood he’d lost, but he still needs all the liquids he can get.”
Percy nodded. He uncapped the water bottle and gently pushed Poseidon up into a sitting position. “Here, dad,” he said. “Take this.”

Poseidon reached for the bottle gratefully. “Thanks,” he murmured. Percy smiled at him. He touched the bottle to his lips and chugged it down, glad to have the dust cleared from his throat. He drank half, then offered the rest to Percy. Percy accepted it gratefully. He downed the rest, then placed the bottle in the alley.

“He needs to rest now,” Will said, coming over to sit beside him.

“So do you,” Nico said.

Will shook his head. “No, I need to help some other demigods.”

Nico shook his head as well. “The rest of your siblings are already helping. You rest.” He paused, a small smile forming on his face. “Boyfriend’s orders.”


“Okay,” Will said through a yawn. “Bye, sunshine.”

“Bye, il mio amore.”

Percy frowned. “That was cute. You guys are cute. Jason and I just call each other 'idiot', 'dumbass', and 'bitch'."

Nico snorted and got up, kissing Will on the forehead as he leaned back against the wall.

Poseidon smiled at them, amused. “Thank you, Will. And thank you, Hades.”

They both smiled at him, one a little smaller than the other, but still there nonetheless.

Poseidon and Will fell asleep simultaneously.

Chapter End Notes

il mio amore - my love
(google translated lmao)
Also, I have no clue how blood loss works in case you couldn't tell. I hope you enjoyed anyway :)
Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “Poseidon and Will fell asleep simultaneously…”

When Poseidon woke up again, it was to a frantic: “KELP HEAD!”

He opened his eyes groggily. He blinked the sleep out of his eyes and looked for the source of the sound. He soon found it in the shape of an iris message from one Thalia Grace. She looked panicked, looking around for someone.

Percy came to stand in front of the IM. “Hey, pinecone face,” he said, giving a little salute.

Thalia sagged in relief, a little hair falling into her eyes. “Oh thank gods you’re alright.” The scene behind her was of a forest somewhere. There was a campfire far in the distance behind her, obviously a sign that she was with other people. Tall trees rose all around her, with leafy vines twisting up the thick trunks. Her face was shaded by the leaves, but still visible.

“Aw, you were scared I wasn’t?” Percy teased.

Thalia lost her relieved smile and instead rolled her eyes. “No, I was just concerned if Nico was okay and I accidentally said ‘Percy Jackson’ out of instinct.”

“Woooowwww.”

She shrugged. “Where is death breath?”

“Right here, and don’t call me death breath.” Nico appeared out of the shadows.

“Stop using your underworld-y powers!” Will protested through a yawn, sitting up and cracking his back.

“Underworld-y powers…?” Hades mouthed, eyebrows furrowed. Poseidon snickered. He noticed that Hades now had a shirt on that read: I <3 NYC in small printing across the chest.

Nico shrugged. “My bad, amore.” It didn’t sound very sincere. “Why’d you IM?” He gave a ‘what’s up’ nod to Thalia.
“I wanted to make sure I could still prove I’m the most powerful demigod, and if you two are dead then there’s no point.” She examined her nails in a bored fashion.


“What the hell happened, by the way?” she asked, serious again. “It was an earthquake, got that. But why? Don’t earthquakes only happen when Kelp Head Senior is pissed?”

“I don’t appreciate being called Kelp Head Senior,” Poseidon said with no bite to his words, getting up to stand in front of the IM. He was surprised to find no pain shooting up his left leg when he put some pressure on it. He looked at Will in surprise, who gave him a dorky thumbs up and a smile.

Thalia’s cheeks turned bright red, looking completely out of place with her spiky hair and black clothing. Poseidon noticed she still had the silver headband on her forehead, symbolizing her place as the lieutenant of the Hunters of Artemis. “Lord Poseidon, my apologies, I didn’t realize you were there.”

“Nico, record this!” Percy screeched. “She’s apologizing!”

Nico rolled his eyes and smacked Percy upside the head. “I don’t have a camera, barnacle brain.”

Thalia ignored their banter and looked at Poseidon with confusion. “With all due respect, Lord Poseidon, why are you so young?”

She’s blunt, Poseidon observed. He shrugged. “Hera. And your father and Hades are here with me. Come say hi, children.” He beckoned to Zeus and Hades, who gave differing levels of heated glares before walking up to the Iris Message.

“Hello, Thalia,” Zeus smiled awkwardly.

Thalia stared at her father for a long moment, before giving a single nod of acknowledgment. She gave another incline of her head to Hades. “Lord Hades.”

Poseidon thought he saw a look of hurt pass across Zeus’ face, but it disappeared so quickly he couldn’t be sure. Hades nodded at her in return. She turned back to Poseidon. “Okay, so what does Hera have to do with you three being teenagers?”

“Erm…” Poseidon cleared his throat. “Well…Hera got pissed at Zeus, and she roped Amphitrite and Persephone into her revenge plans and now we’re here. Oh, and we’re not gods anymore.”

“…Right…” She looked at them weirdly. “Wait. If you’re not gods, why was there an earthquake —?”

“They’re right there!” A voice called from above them. Poseidon looked up to see two people descending from the sky quickly. At first he thought they were falling, but they started to descend slower the closer they got to the ground. They landed with a small ‘thump!’ One of the people, a tall blond boy, placed a petite girl with dark skin and curly light brown hair on the ground. The girl rushed over to Nico and threw herself at him, looking like she was crushing the (rather prominent) ribs of the poor boy. The blond boy immediately went for Percy, the force of the hug he gave him lifting Percy of the ground.

“Woah there!” Percy laughed as the boy hugged the living daylights out of him.

“You’re okay, you’re okay, you’re okay,” the boy repeated, finally putting him down and nuzzling
his face in Percy’s hair.

“Hazel—can’t breathe—” Nico wheezed out.

The girl loosened her grip of the hug but didn’t let go. “I was so worried,” she said, burying her face in his chest.

“I know, I’m sorry,” Nico said softly, kissing the top of her head. Will got up and joined their hug, causing Hazel to laugh and wrap her little arm around Will as well. Hades watched their exchange, a look that Poseidon couldn’t quite put a finger on crossing his face. Zeus was staring at Percy and the blond boy, and so was Thalia. Poseidon looked over to see the boy kissing Percy, completely oblivious or just not caring of the three powerful presences in their company.

“You must be Jason then,” Poseidon observed. Percy broke away from the kiss, his face beet red.

“Oh yeah, dad. This is Jason. And Jason, this is Poseidon.”

Jason looked over, a brief look of confusion passing over his strong features. *He even looks like a roman*, Poseidon thought a little judgmentally, looking at his hair (that though had gotten longer than typical, was still in a roman style), tall nose, and sharp cheekbones. *But Percy loves him, so give him a chance.* “Hera turned me into a teenager and I’m not a god anymore,” Poseidon explained to his confused look. “Yes, like Apollo.”

Jason nodded and smiled at him a little sheepishly. He held out his hand, obviously for Poseidon to shake it. Poseidon eyed it for a moment, mostly just to scare him, before taking it and gripping it firmly. He looked him dead in the eye, glad to see he didn’t break eye contact. He opened his mouth, but Jason cut him off. “I won’t do anything to hurt him, Lord Poseidon. And if I do, both of you are allowed to hurt me.”

Poseidon nodded in approval. “Glad to hear it.” He broke off the handshake. “And I hope you’re ready to spar me, ‘cause that’s how I know you’re worthy of my son.” Jason looked at him in horror. Poseidon broke into a grin. “Just kidding! And just Poseidon’s fine, I’m not a god anymore anyway.”

Jason looked immensely relieved. “O—Okay.”

Poseidon grinned again and gave a punch to his shoulder that wouldn’t be considered light, but not enough force to leave a bruise. “Lighten up a little.” He fist bumped Percy, before walking back over to Zeus and Thalia.

Thalia was looking at Jason unblinkingly. “Jay?” she asked.

Jason turned around. "Thalia?" He smiled brightly. "Oh my gods, h—"

“Hate to break the moment,” Will said. “But I’m fairly certain that *that* is not normal.” He pointed up to near the empire state building. Poseidon looked in the direction and almost fainted.

Thick, dark grey mist was collecting steadily in the street. It swirled and twisted, in the process destroying some windows whenever it hit something. It started to crawl forward towards them, slowly destroying everything in its path. Civilians screamed and ran as fast as they could away from it, despite how slow it was going. It looked like a tornado that got stepped on, or kind of like a donut depending on how you like to explain things. Screams erupted from the people on the streets. Poseidon had no idea what the non-clear sighted mortals saw, but from what he could tell it wasn’t very good either. The wind it was causing from swirling so much was enough to blow Poseidon’s hair in his face, even though it was a good 400 yards away. The sky darkened
considerably, and the roaring wind made everyone start shouting to be heard, increasing the volume steadily. Police officers were trying to calm everybody down, but to no avail.

“What the fuck is that?” Nico asked, backing up and reaching into his belt for a black sword.

Poseidon, Zeus and Hades shared a glance.

*Mist and matter.*

“Okay, we need to explain something,” Hades said quickly. “There’s a prophecy. One that Apollo gave and that Hermes had to deliver specifically to us. We think it’s about Chaos. You all know what that is?”

Everyone nodded quickly. Poseidon continued for Hades. “It said this:

“*The threat of a new age brings eight souls together,*

“For a fight against nothing but dangerous weather.

“*While seven will face the risk of death,*

“*Only one shall exhale their final breath.*

“In a race against time, nature and mist,

“Seven hearts will be dearly missed.

“Um...then it was,

“And in the last moments of freedom and peace,

“One shall choose between the world and a niece.”

The demigods shared an uneasy glance. “So that...that’s what that is then?” Will asked, pointing to the mist.

Poseidon swallowed. “I believe so.”

“I’ll be right over,” Thalia said. When Percy started to protest, she cut the Iris Message off.

Nico was about to say something, before an echoing scream came from a familiar voice. Will’s head snapped up. “Lou,” he swore. “Guys, I gotta…”

“It’s fine, Will,” Nico said. “Go help the wounded, we’ll take care of this.”

“Thank you,” Will said gratefully. He moved to leave, but before he did, he kissed Nico lightly. “Be safe,” he whispered.

“I’ll try.”

Will scurried off to help his siblings.

“Sorry for the wait,” a familiar voice said. Poseidon whipped around, only to see Thalia standing in front of him. She looked at him in wonder for a second. Poseidon was about to ask why, when she raised herself on her tippy toes so she was now his height. Poseidon scowled and she quickly went back to her normal height.
“How’d you get here so fast?” Percy exclaimed. “You were in the woods somewhere, not downtown New York City!”

“How many times have I told you to keep your voice down?” Hazel asked, waving an arm in the air. “When you scream like that, you can wake up the entire neighborhood!”

“Artemis,” was her explanation. “Now, we should probably stop chatting and do something about that.” She jabbed her finger in the direction of the swirling cone of mist, which was slowly picking up its pace and pushing more and more people into the already crowded central square. People were in the middle of the streets, paramedics were everywhere, and firemen were trying desperately to get everyone out of the collapsed buildings safely.

“How are we going to stop it?” Hazel asked. “It’s fog or mist or whatever, how do we fight fog? That’s like trying to stab water.”

She looked at Percy, who shrugged helplessly. “I don’t know,” he said miserably.

“Well, we gotta do something,” Thalia insisted. “We’ll get up there, then we’ll see if there’s anything we can do. Deal?”

“Would be a deal,” Percy said, “except those three don’t have weapons.” He pointed to Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades.

“Well can’t they just use their power—oh, right.”

“And we don’t have our chosen weapons either. The Master Bolt is on Olympus, my Trident is back in Atlantis, and the Helm of Darkness is in the Underworld,” Poseidon said.

“I’ll shadow travel them to Camp Half Blood, then they can pick up weapons,” Nico offered. “I’ll be back soon, you guys go.”

Percy nodded gratefully. “Thank you. Let’s go guys.” He got out riptide, Jason flipped his coin, Thalia took out her bow and arrow, and Hazel drew her sword from her belt. They ran out of the alley with a fighter’s mindset.

“Lord Hades—I mean Dad, I’ll take you first,” Nico said. He swallowed nervously, and Poseidon could tell he was anxious about messing up. He grabbed his father’s wrist and walked over to the nearest shadow. When they stood side by side, Nico was only up to the middle Hades’ chest. He looked like he was about to say something, but closed his mouth quickly. They stepped back into the shadows and disappeared.

Poseidon wrung his hands nervously, thinking of Percy out there, fighting. It wasn’t that he thought Percy couldn’t fight for himself—he had proven he could countless times—but this was Chaos. The thing that not only formed Gaea, but started the entire universe of Greek Mythology. (Poseidon refrained from scoffing at the phrase ‘mythology’. He wasn’t just a myth.) He took shaky breaths to try and calm himself down. He didn’t even feel guilty admitting to himself that Percy was his favourite son, and he wasn’t sure he’d make it through losing him. He started pacing, wringing his sweaty palms together. He chewed on his lower lip, a bad habit he’d picked up from Hestia.

A hand on his shoulder broke him away from his thoughts. “They’ll be alright.” Poseidon looked up over his shoulder at Zeus, who gave him a tight smile. “They always are.”

Poseidon took a shaky breath and nodded. A few moments later, Nico and Hades reappeared, Hades this time holding a long, black sword similar to Nico’s, but not quite identical. “Thank you,” he told Nico, who smiled thinly. He looked back to Zeus and Poseidon. “I’m going to go help them.” He jerked his head towards the mist, which was getting closer and closer and bigger and bigger. He sprinted off towards it.
Nico looked at Poseidon. “I’ll take you next.” Poseidon swallowed and nodded. He walked up to Nico, who wrapped his bony fingers around Poseidon’s (also considerably bony) wrist. Nico took Poseidon’s fingers and made them wrap around the underside of his wrist. “Hold on tight,” he advised, “you might get lost if you don’t.” Poseidon swallowed and nodded again, gripping a little tighter, but not too much, mostly in fear that he’d break the poor boy’s wrist if he did. Poseidon’s brain told him that that wouldn’t happen despite how scrawny the boy was (as he had fought in two wars and trained on the regular), but what his eyes were telling him made him more cautious. They stepped back into the shadows.

Poseidon had only shadow travelled once in his thousands of years of living, and that was with Hades himself during the first war against their father. He remembered despising it so much, he threw up and promised himself he’d never do it again. Well, thousands of years later, here he was, hating it every bit as much as he did the first time. Claws of unrecognizable creatures reached out towards him, scraping his arms and legs lightly. And it was so loud. The (what sounded like) wind rushing past his face roared in his ears, and what Poseidon could only describe as screaming whispers echoed all around the pitch darkness. The speed at which they were hurtling through the blackness made Poseidon’s stomach flip and his gut clench.

Finally, they landed safely at their destination. Both Nico and Poseidon collapsed against the closest wall to them. Poseidon held his stomach, afraid he was gonna throw up. He rested his head against the wall until he was okay again. When he was, he took a deep breath and got up from his leaning position against the wall. Nico was still slumped on the floor, breathing heavily. Poseidon frowned and crouched beside him. “Are you alright there, bud?”

“You’re alright there, bud. You’re alright,” Nico said, a little something that Poseidon thought was fondness slipping into his voice.

Poseidon turned to look at him. “What do you mean?”

Nico got up off the floor, leaning against it heavily for a second before shaking his head to clear it and standing up fully. “Every camper that comes wants it, but it never works for them. It was made by the entire Hephaestus cabin, but none of them could actually use it. Figures you’d be the one to finally be the one it fits.”

Poseidon smiled at what sounded like the closest thing to a compliment the boy had uttered since
he first met him. He walked over to Nico and grabbed his wrist. “You ready?”

He gave a nod and wrapped his fingers around Poseidon’s wrist again, too. They submerged themselves in the shadows yet again. It wasn’t any better the second time, but Poseidon didn’t want to complain and make this even worse on Nico. All of the shadow travelling was obviously wearing him out.

When they returned to the alley, Nico collapsed. He panted heavily against the wall, each breath looking painful. “I’m sorry,” he said, “I really need a break.” He looked ready to pass out, and not in the sleeping way.

“How long do you think you’ll need?” Zeus asked worriedly, glancing at the mist that was currently close to destroying their condo.

“Five minutes,” Nico said.

Poseidon bit his lip. They were gone for around five minutes and the mist had moved at least 250 yards. “Okay. Try to be quick, but don’t wear yourself out. We need as many fighters as we can get.”

Nico nodded and leaned his head against the wall, looking like he was in pain. “Hold on, I have an idea,” Zeus said. “I’ll be right back.”

He rushed off, and returned moments later with a cup of golden liquid in his hand. He knelt down next to Nico, who accepted the glass of nectar gratefully. “Thank you.”

Zeus nodded. “And your boyfriend told me to tell you that you’re spending three days in the infirmary again after this is over on doctors orders, whatever that means.”

Nico’s face turned beet red. “Okay.”

Poseidon would’ve laughed at the scene if they weren’t in this situation. “I’m going to go help,” he said, jerking his head in the direction of the mist. Zeus and Nico nodded. Poseidon sprinted out of the alley and into the busy street. He wormed his way past screaming people, pushing and shoving and being pushed and shoved.

The first person he saw was Hazel. He rushed up to her, glad that he was able to slip back into his fighter mode easily after so long. “What’s going on?” he asked, facing the mist that was now less than 20 meters away from him. The force of the wind was almost enough to push him backwards, and he noticed that Hazel was really struggling.

She seemed like the kind of person that would get flustered when a god was talking to her, but she was in a battle and that was probably the last thing on her mind. “We’re trying to find an opening to see if there’s a core that we can stab, but no luck. Even Hades can’t seem to figure out a way to defeat this thing,” she shouted over the high winds. “Thalia is up on one of the ruined buildings trying to see if she can find a core, but apparently not. Jason is flying above it trying to find a safe way in, but he’s also not having any luck.” She pointed towards Jason, who Poseidon thought resembled a blond superman. He dipped and dived in the sky, before ascending again, looking desperate in his attempts.

“Oh, okay,” Poseidon yelled over the roaring in his ears. “I’m going to try and get closer.”

Hazel shouted something that he didn’t hear. He charged forward, but almost recoiled as he felt a warm spray of water on him. What the —?
Wait.

Water?

_It’s mist you idiot, of course it’s water._

He looked up to see Percy, who looked lost. Poseidon changed his direction and charged towards Percy instead, who was standing on the left side of the mist. Percy jumped as he stood in front of him. “It’s water,” Poseidon panted out.

“What?” Percy asked, looking at him in confusion.

“Mist. It’s water.”

Percy’s look of desperation turned to one of realization. “Oh my gods.”

“Yeah,” Poseidon said. “Do you think you can…”

“I...I don’t know. But...I can try it, I guess.”

Poseidon nodded and stepped back. “You can do it.” He gave his best inspiring smile, but it turned to a grimace as he heard screams of civilians.

Percy gave him a small, scared smile in return. He closed his eyes and turned back to the mist. Poseidon couldn’t see what he was doing, but soon enough he started to shake uncontrollably. Poseidon could see the veins in his hands, and how his knuckles were white, even from holding nothing. Poseidon watched with mild horror and extreme pride as the mist stopped moving forward. Percy let out a small noise of pain. The front of the mist slowly started to dissipate.

“Yes!” Poseidon shouted. “It’s working.”

Percy fell to his knees. The mist gained back what it had lost and continued to charge forward. Poseidon rushed forward and knelt beside Percy, who looked at him helplessly. “I can’t...it’s too strong.”

Poseidon shook his head and looked at the mist, feeling hopeless. “No. You can, Percy. C’mon. Let’s try again.”

Percy shook his head. “The same amount of force I used to lift a whole river didn’t do a thing to this. It’s impossible.”

“It’s only impossible if you give up, Perseus. If you’re not gonna do it for the civilians than do it for me. Do it for Jason. Do it for Nico. Do it for Hazel and Thalia and Annabeth and Sally. C’mon man, get up and try again. I believe in you.”

Percy looked at him brokenly, and suddenly Poseidon wanted nothing more than to wrap this poor boy in his arms and never let go. But he couldn’t, this was battle. This was the greater good.

After what felt like forever, Percy nodded. Poseidon smiled. “Atta boy.” He stood up and offered his hand to Percy, who accepted it gratefully. “Ready?” Poseidon asked. He lifted Percy’s arm over his shoulder to support him.

“No, but I’ll never be so I guess.”

Poseidon nodded and Percy closed his eyes. The process started over again. Nothing happened for awhile, until Percy’s face contorted with pain and the mist stopped moving. “That’s it,” Poseidon
grinned. “You’re doing it.” Percy’s face looked a little frustrated rather than pained all of a sudden.

Percy leaned all his weight on Poseidon and let out a small yell of pain, but stood his ground. The mist started to dissipate again. “C’mon Percy,” Poseidon encouraged.

“CAN YOU SHUT UP?” Percy exploded at him. The mist regained some of what it lost but didn’t move forward. Poseidon ignored the pang in his chest, the only signal he showed of hearing Percy was his faltered smile. Percy didn’t look very apologetic as he turned his attention back to the mist. Poseidon didn’t say anything else as Percy concentrated. The mist lost some more, and Poseidon bit his tongue in order to stop more words spilling out of his mouth. Percy let out another noise of pain as the mist started to slow down in it’s spinning. Poseidon grinned in pride. Slowly, it started to dissipate more and more. Percy let out a long, blood curdling scream as it finally disappeared into thin air.

He collapsed against Poseidon, who caught him. He lost consciousness for a few moments, before regaining it and blinking around. Jason came soaring down from the sky, landing in front of Percy and taking him from Poseidon’s arms. Hazel, Thalia, Hades, Nico, and Zeus arrived a short time after, grinning at Percy. Even Hades and Nico were smiling. Jason wrapped Percy, Hazel, Nico, and Thalia in a bear hug. Percy smiled and laughed as they all hugged the living daylights out of him. Even Nico was wrapped in the hug, though he looked about as enthusiastic about it as a book nerd in gym class. Poseidon smiled a little sadly as he watched them. He felt a hand on his shoulder, and turned around to see Zeus smiling at him, equally as sad.

When the five demigods finally broke apart, Hades went up to congratulate his son. They both weren’t huggers, so their smiles were heartwarming enough. Hades also congratulated Percy, who smiled and nodded at him with a ‘thank you’.

Using this as a good sign, Poseidon also went up to Percy. He gave him his best smile. “Great job out there, Percy.”

Percy looked at him with a smile, that soon slipped off. Annoyance filled his eyes. “Oh...yeah. Couldn’t have done it without you, I guess. Thanks...?” He turned away back to Jason.

Poseidon nodded slowly, “Yeah...” he said softly. “You’re welcome.”

There’s teenage hormones for you, Poseidon thought. Admittedly, he would have also been annoyed if he was in a stressful situation and someone kept pestering him, even if the words were kind. It didn’t make his mood any less dampened. He gave a smile to Hades, who looked at him sympathetically. He turned to Zeus, and felt a surge of empathy. Thalia was walking away from him with a pissed off expression, while Zeus looked helpless at what he did wrong. I mean, he turned her into a tree, but that saved her life. Zeus took a shaky breath as he looked at Poseidon, who gave him a small smile.

So maybe they still had some work to do with their kids, but hey, don’t all parents?

Chapter End Notes

So, I can't have a chapter without angst but this was mild so yay
Also! I have two questions:

First one is for everyone: would you guys read it if I did a bonding fic between Hades and Nico?

Second one is for people who ship (or would be willing to ship) Hades and Poseidon: would you like a fic where they start off as 'friends' with benefits or a fic where it's just really slow burn?
Planning Their Impending Doom

Chapter Summary

Yet again, the title is the summary

Chapter Notes

I'm not really happy with this chapter since it's kinda a filler but pay attention because it's important. also, sorry for the longer wait this time, I've had writers block and an addiction to a klance fic this past week

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on Really? Right in front of my salad?: “...So maybe they still had some work to do with their kids, but hey, don't all parents?...”

“Okay, hate to break the moment,” Nico said after a while, “but how the fu—”

“No swearing,” Jason chided.

Nico glared at him. “—but how the mother fucking fuckity fuck—” Thalia collapsed into snickers, “—did mist ruin an entire building?” He pointed off in the distance to the condo that Poseidon, Hades, and Zeus had been occupying.

It was completely destroyed. The building had collapsed into itself, and spiky bits of the walls stuck up like spears. It was thickly coated in ash, and broken pipes spurted water onto the barely recognizable floors. There was a huge hole in the street where the mist passed it, and it blew a hole in the side of the building as well. “Holy shit,” Hades swore.

“Yeah,” Percy agreed. ”And to answer you're question, Nico, I have no idea."

Thalia crossed her arms. “We need to do something about this. I don’t know what, but this—” she pointed to the panicking civilians, “—can’t happen again.”

The remaining seven hummed their agreement. “But what are we gonna do?” Hazel asked worriedly. “The prophecy gave us nothing about how to defeat this guy, nor where to go.”

“How about we break it down,” Jason suggested. “We read each of the lines and try to decipher what they mean.”

“That’s a good idea,” Poseidon said in agreement. He looked around their little group. “Does anyone have any paper?” The remaining seven shook their heads. “Okay, then we’ll just have to work with what we have.”

“So, working with nothing, love it.” Percy smiled with an over exaggerated amount of force.
Poseidon decided to ignore the sassy comment, and instead looked to the rest of the group, figuring he’d talk to Percy later. “Okay, the first line is almost blatantly obvious—”

“I’m sorry can we sit down?” Thalia cut him off.

He suppressed a noise of frustration and instead sat down with the others, who nodded their agreement. They entered a little vacant alley. “Okay,” he continued, “so the first line is: ‘The threat of a new age brings eight souls together.’ We’re obviously the eight.” He gestured to the little circle they made. “And the second line is: ‘for a fight against nothing but dangerous weather.’ What does that mean?”

“Um...Chaos?” Zeus rolled his eyes.

Poseidon’s cheeks burned in embarrassment as a few of the demigods tried to stifle snickers. “Erm, right.” He cleared his throat awkwardly, used to Zeus being the leader. In fact, Zeus looked pretty pissed that Poseidon was taking the role of the leader so far. Being perfectly honest, Poseidon didn’t even want to lead this quest, but he also didn’t want Zeus to lead because...well, we all know how that turned out. He straightened and continued. “The third line is: ‘While seven will face the risk of death.’”

“Well, that’s obvious too,” Nico interjected. “Every quest a demigod goes on, there is always a risk of death.” The rest of the demigods agreed quietly.

Jason raised an eyebrow. “Then why does it only say seven?”

Poseidon felt dread pool in his stomach. “Because the fourth line is: ‘only one shall exhale their final breath.’”

The mood turned grim. They glanced at each other, solemn. One of them wasn’t going to make it out of this. Poseidon couldn’t help but notice that it said seven would face the risk of death, which would mean that he, Hades and Zeus were really...well, mortal. The weight of their situation really hadn’t set in until now.

“Maybe you should continue, Poseidon,” Hades said quietly.

Poseidon swallowed and nodded. He cleared his throat before moving on. “The fifth line is: ‘In a race against time, nature and mist.’”


“Well Chaos just attacked New York City,” Percy said. “Hell, it formed some misshapen foot—”

“It what?” Poseidon, Nico, and Zeus asked, alarmed.

“While you three were occupied getting weapons, the mist formed something,” Hazel explained. “We weren’t sure what it was at first, but as it continued to form, it looked somewhat like a foot. It struggled for a little bit, but eventually couldn’t form it completely.” She shared a glance with the rest of the demigods. “We think that that was Chaos trying to get a human form.”

“You mean to tell me that that humongous tornado of mist was the size of its foot?” Poseidon asked.

“It looks like it,” Jason said grimly.
Poseidon thought he heard Hades mumble ‘we’re fucked’ under his breath, but he couldn’t be sure. “Right,” Zeus said, wringing his hands together. “Continue?”

Poseidon nodded. “The next line is: ‘Seven hearts will be dearly missed.’”

“I have no idea about that one,” Thalia confessed. “Where could our hearts go if only one of us is going to die?”

Poseidon backtracked at her last word. ‘Exhale their final breath’ sugar coated it, made it sound poetic. It was the same meaning, but it made all of the difference. He shrugged hopelessly along with the others.

“Prophecies always have double meanings,” Percy said. “I don’t think it means that someone’s heart is literally going to leave and we’re gonna miss it, it’s probably something along the lines of…” He thrust his hand out for a moment before sighing. “I don’t know.”

“Will any other lines explain what it would mean?” Jason asked, turning back to Poseidon.

Poseidon shook his head. “The last two lines are: ‘And in the last moments of freedom and peace, one shall choose between the world and a niece.’”

“That’s a suckish rhyme,” Thalia muttered under her breath, looking at Hazel who stared back at her.

“Well that means we’re screwed then!” Percy said, throwing his hands up. “‘In the last moments of freedom and peace’? I mean, that’s basically saying we’re goners!”

“Like you said, there’s double meaning to prophecies,” Nico countered. “It could mean…” he trailed off.

“What could it mean?” Thalia snorted. “Another planet is going to be involved in a war that apparently lasts eternity and they’ll never be free?”

Nico crossed his arms. “I’m just saying it’s a possibility, no need to get defensive over the fact there might not be a war.”

“There’s already a war, idiot!” Percy dug his hands in his hair in frustration. Poseidon frowned. He’d never seen Percy act like this.

Nico scowled. “You know what I meant.”

“Um, no? I didn’t?”

“How did you not!”?

“Because you were making no sense!”

“Boys,” Hades said sternly. Poseidon never heard him use his angry dad voice, and he wasn’t sure if he ever wanted to again. “We don’t need to argue, we need to figure out this prophecy and where to go from here.”

Nico and Percy shut up quickly, sending small glares to each other.

“Look,” Zeus said, “this prophecy gives us pretty much nothing. We know we’re fighting against Chaos, we know one of us if going to die, and we know there’s eight of us. We don’t know where to go, when our deadline is, nor how we’re going to defeat Chaos. This is the stuff we need to focus
Hades nodded in agreement. “Chaos was just mist as far as we could tell. Usually, mist would float up in the air and make clouds. But instead, somehow Perseus made it completely disappear, which is impossible since he can manipulate water, not create it or destroy it. My bet is Chaos thought it was powerful enough to take on a human form, but it must’ve miscalculated, hence why we got rid of it fairly quickly.”

“That makes sense,” Nico agreed, “but where did it go?”

“Maybe where it was originally forming before it decided to attack,” Jason suggested. “But we don’t know where that would be.”

Hazel hummed in agreement. “It would probably be where it died last.”

“But it didn’t die,” Poseidon countered. “It simply formed earth, which is Gaea.”

“Well then we’ll have to go where Gaea first formed, that’s probably Chaos’s strongest point,” Thalia said confidently.

“Okay,” Poseidon said, feeling like they were making progress. “But where is that?”

Hades stared at him blankly. “Have you ever heard of...Greece?”

“Oh, right.” Poseidon smiled sheepishly at Hades’ eye roll.

“Well how are we going to get to Greece?” Jason came to his rescue. “It isn’t exactly neighbors with New York.”

Everyone looked at Poseidon. This was exactly why he didn’t like being the leader. “Um…” He wrung his hands together and worried his lower lip.

Hades swooped in to save him from his pit of embarrassment. “Does anyone have any connections to an airline or something?”

They shook their heads. “I could fly, but I can only take one person, and it would take days,” Jason said. “I can’t fly for days straight.”

“Well can you shadow travel us, Nico?” Percy asked.

“No, not to Greece,” Nico said. “It drained me completely to take three people a few miles away, let alone seven people thousands of miles away. The last time I travelled that far, even by myself, I couldn’t walk for at least three hours, and couldn’t do anything but sleep after the pain went away.”

“Okay, well does anyone have a phone on them?” Hades asked desperately. “We could check for cruises heading for Greece and sneak on to one.”

“That’s a terrible idea,” Zeus said. “The amount of security on those things today is incredible. Besides, if anyone had a phone, it would’ve been destroyed in the earthquake.”

“Well then what are we going to do?” Poseidon ran a hand through his hair in frustration. “We have no way to get there, we don’t know what we’re going to do when—or if—we get there, and there’s eight of us taking on Chaos, which is the most powerful being in the entire universe! And we don’t know if it’s forming an army, or if it’s already destroyed something in Greece! We don’t...
even know how Olympus, Atlantis, or the Underworld are doing! Fuck, Hades! You’re not in the underworld, which means that the dead could escape and the monsters could come up from Tartarus!”

Dead silence greeted the end of his little rant.

“...So much for giving you the label of the calm and optimistic one,” Thalia muttered.

Hades shook his head. “He’s right. We need some kind of plan. We need to figure out what we need to do before we get there. Going in blind is not going to get us anywhere.”

“Give Hades the label of the leader,” Percy muttered back at Thalia.

Hades ignored them. “Stabbing at mist is not going to do anything, and if that’s the size of his foot, Percy’s not going to be able to get rid of it. And once it gains it’s mortal form, we’re all going to be about the size of its toe.”

“Well, as you said, we can’t stab mist, so we’ll have to wait until it’s in a human form,” Nico started slowly.

“Then we’ll have to get to a higher ground,” Jason continued.

“When we do that, we’ll be able to see more clearly where it’s going and what it’s next move is going to be.” Thalia slowly got a smile on her face.

“And we’ll have more access to it’s heart and head, which are the only places that can really cause damage to it,” Hazel continued.

“And finally, when we get it it weakened, we can all try our best to slice and dice it, and somehow get it back to Tartarus,” Percy finished.

They all grinned at each other, and Poseidon, Zeus and Hades smiled at them proudly. Thalia looked at Percy. “I actually don’t hate you right now.”

All of a sudden, Percy’s eyes lost their annoyed look that Poseidon worried was going to stay there forever. He laughed and looked at Poseidon with sparkling eyes. Poseidon smiled, glad to have his upbeat son back.

“Hate to be the Debbie Downer as Poseidon so graciously puts it,” Hades said, “but we still need to figure out where in Greece, and how we’re going to get to Greece.”

“I think we just need to focus on how we’re going to get to Greece first,” Zeus said. “There’s no way we’re going to pinpoint exactly where Chaos was forming, but we’re 90 percent positive it’s in Greece.”

“I agree,” Poseidon said. “When we get there, we can ask around for if anyone has seen or felt something odd around a particular place.”

“That’s great and all, but we’re not going to be able to do anything at all if we can’t even get there,” Thalia said.

Everyone went silent, thinking. Percy perked up. “What if we get the three witch sisters to give us a ride there?”

“They won’t go across the ocean,” Nico said.
“Could we try to get Apollo’s sun chariot?” Thaia suggested.

“He’s probably using it to spread the word,” Jason said. “While I was flying here, I’m pretty sure I saw it fly past a little way away.”

They went on to suggest more things, each getting more and more unrealistic than the last. ("No, Percy, we’re not going to try and ride a rock like in spongebob").

“Wait!” Percy jumped up into a standing position.

“We’re not riding the magic school bus either, Percy,” Thalia said exasperatedly.

Percy scowled at her. “No, I have a good idea!”

“Mark it down in the history books,” Nico muttered.

Percy ignored him. “We can ride the hippocampi to Greece! I know three, but I think I can get more.”

Poseidon perked up. “Wait, that’s a great idea!”

Percy smiled brightly. “Right? Thank you!”

“Um, no,” Zeus said. “I’m not riding across the ocean on a fish horse.”

“Neither am I,” Hades said.

“Yeah, ain’t gonna happen,” Thalia agreed.

“No thanks,” Nico offered.

“I can just fly,” Jason smiled.

“I’d rather not,” Hazel said sheepishly.

“Oh, c’mon guys! Dad doesn’t have his powers, he can’t drown you!” Percy said. “Not that he would’ve in the first place,” he added quickly, shooting sheepish finger guns at Poseidon.

“Well, yes, but that also means he doesn’t have control over the ocean,” Zeus argued.

“But I do!” Percy said. The rest of them excluding Poseidon shared an uneasy glance. “C’mon,” Percy encouraged, “it’s our only hope of getting to Greece. Do you want to stop Chaos or not?”

Hades sighed. “Fine.”

Nico crossed his arms. “I guess.”

The others begrudgingly agreed. “Perfect!” Percy smiled. “When should we go?”

“The sooner the better,” Jason said.

“How about now?” Thalia suggested with a raised eyebrow. “It’s not like we have anything better to do.”

“Sounds good to me,” Percy said. The others nodded, a new determination sparked in their eyes. They all got up quickly.
“Let’s go,” Hades said. The others nodded and walked out of the alley briskly.

Poseidon, Hades, and Zeus fell behind the five demigods, sharing a glance. This seemed easy.

Too easy.

Chapter End Notes

hope you enjoyed! And the Hades/Poseidon fic is going to be a friends with benefit fic, except it's more of a rivals with benefits since they hate each other at the start. Wow, so original. I know
I dont wanna give spoilers so you're not getting a chapter title

Chapter Summary

no spoilerssss

Chapter Notes

I actually like this chapter, and I hope you guys do too!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “...This seemed easy. Too easy.”

New York City was a mess. The towering skyscrapers were crumbled and coated in ash, screaming residents and tourists alike scrambled to get help for their loved ones, cars were honking every chance they got, and people were trampling over each other in attempts to get to a paramedic. The eight of them tried to worm their way through the thick crowds, but were not getting very far.

“Where are we even going?” Nico grunted out as he got shoved into one of the few sturdy walls of the street they were on. He flipped the girl off behind her back.

“We’re trying to get to the harbour,” Percy said. He almost stumbled back as a large family rushed past him. “Key word: trying.”

Poseidon made an annoyed sound as a man pushed him out of his way. “Watch where you’re going!” the man called over his shoulder angrily.

Poseidon threw his hands up and shouted something that was definitely not PG at him. “People,” he muttered.

“Tell me about it,” Hades said.

“Ouch!” Zeus exclaimed randomly. “What the hell?”

Poseidon looked up to see an envelope throwing itself in Zeus’s face repeatedly. Zeus grabbed it and tried to open it. “NO!” Poseidon yelled, realizing what it was immediately. He rushed over to Zeus and ripped it out of his hands. “Do not open that in front of children.”

Zeus stared at him. Poseidon looked at him in confusion as to why he was looking at him so weirdly. He looked over to the demigods and Hades, who were also staring at him. “What?” he asked. Percy had his eyebrows practically up to his hairline and kept darting his eyes between Zeus and Poseidon. Poseidon realized what was happening and made a disgusted face. “Oh gods, no. Ew. It’s a howler from Hera that Hermes gave me when he handed me the prophecy.”

“Yeah, but it’s actually called something fancy, we just call it a howler,” Poseidon recalled what Hermes told him.

“Well then when and where am I supposed to open it?” Zeus grunted as the howler slipped from Poseidon’s hand and flew itself back at Zeus’s face.

“Why don’t you just destroy it?” Hades asked.

“It survived a earthquake, I don’t think it can be destroyed,” Zeus replied, looking at the letter with mild fear.

“Here, I’ll come with you further down that alley,” Poseidon said, pointing to the nearest gap between destroyed buildings. “Hades, you stay here.”

Hades nodded and brought the demigods over to another little alley. “Try not to die!” Percy called out cheerfully. The demigods snickered with differing levels of volume.

“I wouldn’t count on it.” Zeus muttered. Poseidon guided them over the dead end alley and turned to Zeus. Zeus took a deep breath. “Here goes nothing.”

Poseidon quickly hovered his hands a little bit away from his ears when Zeus ripped the letter open. He prepared himself for screaming and flinched back before it even started.

But instead of screaming, he got 12 seething, deathly quiet words: “When you get back, some how some way, we’re getting a divorce.”

The letter tore itself into shreds and scattered across the pavement. Poseidon and Zeus stared at it. Poseidon’s feeling closely resembled that of when you’re at a friend’s house and their parents start yelling at them. He stared at the ground uncomfortably, refusing to look at Zeus. He couldn’t tell if Zeus was mad, upset, relieved, or indifferent, all he knew was that this news would affect both of them.

“Can she…” Zeus trailed off quietly. “Can she even do that?”

“She’s the goddess of marriage,” Poseidon said softly. “Divorce is still a large part of marriage.”

Zeus was silent for awhile. “Then why...why did she wait this long?”

Poseidon shrugged, but he knew the answer. She was waiting for him to get his act together. When it was obvious that he wouldn’t, she finally gave up. Zeus exhaled heavily and leaned back against the wall. “Are you sad?” Poseidon asked quietly.

Zeus sighed. “I don’t know. I don’t think so. Just…” he trailed off. “I can’t think of the word.”

“Is it because of who’s divorcing you or is it because you’ll no longer be married?” Poseidon asked.

“I...don’t know.” Zeus rested his head against the wall behind him. “I fucked up.”

Poseidon agreed silently, but showed no indication of even hearing him. “We should get back to the others,” he said instead.

“Ohay,” Zeus said quietly. They left the alley without another word. Hades and the rest of the demigods came up to join them.

“How’d it go?” Hades asked. “Are your eardrums blown out?” Poseidon gave him a look that
silently said: ‘it wasn’t good’, and Hades’ face morphed from teasing to understanding. He cleared his throat. “Anyway,” he continued instead. “Back down to the harbour we go.”

They struggled through the crowds for a good half an hour before finally reaching the harbour. It was almost vacant, but a few more-than-sketchy people roamed around. Poseidon took the lead and guided the rest of the group to the least populated area of the waterfront. “Okay,” Poseidon said. “You said you know some hippocampi, Percy?”

Percy nodded. “I know three.” He frowned. “Is that going to be enough?”

“How big are they?” Jason asked.

“A little bigger than a normal horse.”

Jason wrapped his arms around his torso. “Big enough to hold three people?”

“I think so,” Percy said. “Let me call them.”

“Call them?” Thalia raised an eyebrow with an amused smile. “What do you do? Some sort of weird mating call?”

Percy flipped her off while sticking out his tongue. He crouched down on the edge of the cement walkway near the water and closed his eyes.

“What are you doing?” Jason asked.

“Shh, he’s doing his mating call,” Nico said with slight teasing tone slipping into his voice.

A little while passed, and Poseidon was starting to get worried that Percy couldn’t call them anymore. Just as he was about to suggest they think of something else, three ripples in the water appeared, quickly approaching. Nico stepped back, his hand instinctively reaching for the sword in his belt. He relaxed however as Percy grinned and said, “There they are.”

They got closer and closer until they were right in front of the edge of the walkway of the waterfront. They looked like regular horses, except that their manes were fins, and where their fur would be were dark scales the colours of the rainbow. True to Percy’s word, they were a little larger than the average horse, but not by an astronomical amount. Their backs sloped down at the end, which was going to make it hard to fit the person in the back on without them slipping off. Percy looked like he was having a mental conversation with them, before turning back to the rest of them. “They said they’ll do it, and they can take three at a time, as long as I give them a treat afterwards.”

“Great,” Poseidon said, smiling. “So, how are we going to do this?”

“Hazel and Nico are the shortest,” Hades said. “And then Thalia I think, so each of them should be on different horses. The next smallest are Poseidon, Percy, then Jason—”

“Percy, Poseidon, then Jason,” Poseidon corrected with narrowed eyes.

Hades sighed in annoyance. “Whatever—”

“No, I think I’m taller than you dad,” Percy said cheekily.

“Nuh uh.”

“Mhm.”
“Nope.”

“Yep.”

Hades pinched the bridge of his nose. Poseidon and Percy went back to back to compare heights. “Percy’s taller by half a centimetre,” Zeus said, giving a less-than sincere apologetic shrug to Poseidon.

“What?” Poseidon exclaimed. “No!”

“HA!” Percy yelled triumphantly.

“Back to the issue at hand,” Hades said pointedly. Poseidon practically pouted. “And then that leaves me and Zeus.”

“Okay, so one will only have two,” Hazel observed. Poseidon almost forgot she was there. “Which one will that be?”

“I don’t know,” Poseidon said. “We should try to have the weight evenly distributed.”

“I call going with seaweed brain,” Thalia said. “There’s no chance I’m going without a person related to the sea in some way.”

“I think Nico and I should go with Poseidon,” Hades said. “Animals don’t particularly like me or children of mine, let alone sea animals.”

“Okay,” Poseidon agreed. “So we have one group: me, Nico, and Hades. Then we have Thalia and Percy. Who else wants to go with them?”

“Well, if I go with Hazel I can easily lift her without any problem if I need to fly,” Jason said. “So me and her can go alone.”

“So that leaves Zeus with Thalia and Percy,” Hades said. Jason nodded. Thalia didn’t look particularly happy about this arrangement, but kept her mouth shut.

“Okay, time to get on,” Percy said happily. He picked the hippocampus on the left and crouched in front of it. They were all silent for a moment, before Percy talked again. “She says that it’s better for the lightest to be in front and the heaviest to be in the back.”

“Okay,” Jason and Poseidon said.

“Thalia, come here.” Percy beckoned for her to sit on the edge of the boardwalk. When she complied, Percy explained further: “Okay, wait for her to turn around, then climb on.”

Thalia nodded nervously. There were a few beats of silence, and then the hippocampus turned around so it’s back was easily accessible. It raised a little higher from the water so Thalia’s legs wouldn’t be completely submerged underwater. Thalia hesitantly pushed herself onto the horse and moved up to leave room for Percy and Zeus. Percy climbed on next, and Zeus followed shortly after. It looked rather squished and they all looked the definition of uncomfortable, but they fit and the hippocampus didn’t look too concerned about the weight—not that a hippocampus could look concerned, but still.

Next, Hazel walked up to the one on the right. It took a little less time for the hippocampus to turn for her, and she climbed on with little struggle. Jason soon followed, and the two had a fairly good space between them. Poseidon was starting to wish he pushed harder to be one of the people with
only one other person, but hey, you can’t go back and change the past.

“Okay, you go next, Nico,” Poseidon said. Nico swallowed nervously and walked up to the hippocampus, hesitantly reaching out his hand. The hippocampus turned her head away from his hand and backed away further into the water. Nico scowled at her.

“Hey, come back!” Percy said. "You promised!"

If a hippocampus could huff, this one just did. She moved back up towards Nico, who reached out his hand again. She didn’t move away this time, but didn’t show any signs of movement for a long time.

“C’mon, girl,” Percy said desperately.

The hippocampus just ‘huffed’ again and didn’t move. Nico scowled and stood abruptly. “This is pointless, I’ll just shadow travel.”

“You’re not going through pain again,” Percy said.

“Well I’m going to have to, barnacle brain,” Nico said, irritated.

Poseidon silently went up to the hippocampus instead and reached out his hand. She immediately nuzzled her face into said hand and then quickly turned so her back was facing them. “Thanks,” Nico muttered, refusing to look at him or Percy. He climbed on, but the hippocampi immediately protested and kicked so Nico came flying off of her. Nico cursed loudly, but Hades quickly caught him before he fell to the ground.

“Okay, this might be a problem,” Hades said, placing Nico back down, who thanked him embarrassedly.

“Here, how about I get on, and the Nico gets on,” Poseidon suggested. “She won’t buck me off.”

“Yeah, okay that’s a good idea,” Hades said.

Poseidon nodded and turned back to the hippocampi. “Hey girl,” he said. “I’m going to get on you now, okay?” He couldn’t hear her response, but Percy didn’t say anything so he got on anyway. His legs dipped into the water, soaking his socks, shoes, and bottom part of his jeans immediately. The hippocampus neighed happily. Poseidon turned back to Nico. “Okay, get on now. And make sure your shoes are tied so they don’t come off in the water.” Poseidon didn’t think Nico really needed to be concerned about that part considering he had black lace up boots, but he said it anyway to make sure everyone else tied up their shoes. Nico nodded and got on the back. The hippocampus neighed unhappily this time, but didn’t do anything. “Okay, how are we going to do this?” Poseidon asked. “You need to be in front of me.”

“Um,” Nico said. “Do you think I’ll be able to stand up without it hurting her?”

“I think you’re light enough,” Poseidon replied. Nico nodded and stood up, much to the hippocampus’ dismay. Poseidon shifted over so Nico had more room. Nico gripped onto Poseidon’s shoulder so he didn’t fall, and the plopped in front of Poseidon. Poseidon backed up a little just so they weren’t as squished together. When Poseidon was a somewhat comfortable distance away from Nico, he patted the hippocampus. “Good girl.”

“Excuse me?” Nico asked, offended.

“I was talking to the hippocampus!” Poseidon explained quickly.
“Oh, sorry.” Nico’s ears turned red from embarrassment and Percy and Thalia collapsed into loud snickers.

“I’m coming on now,” Hades said. He gently placed himself down on the back of the hippocampus, who neighed in protest.

Poseidon could feel her getting ready to buck, so he quickly petted her again. “Hey, don’t.” She made another ‘huff’ but didn’t buck.

“Erm, can you move up by any chance?” Hades asked uncomfortably. “I’m a little squished.”

He wasn’t wrong. Nico’s back was less than a centimetre away from Poseidon, and Poseidon could feel Hades’s presence behind him, despite not actually touching. “Nope,” Poseidon sighed, “then Nico will be sitting on the hippocampus’ neck.”

“Great,” Hades muttered.

“I feel bad just calling them hippocampus,” Percy said. “Did I give you a name?” he asked his hippocampus. “No? Okay, well you’re name’s gonna be Jessie.” He pointed to Poseidon’s hippocampus, “You’re name’s gonna be Laura.” He pointed to Hazel and Jason’s hippocampus, “And you’re name’s gonna be Amy.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes fondly at Percy while everyone else snorted. “Okay, Laura,” Poseidon said. “Take us to Greece.”

She along with the other hippocampi neighed happily and lurched forward into action. They went way faster than Poseidon was expecting, the force of it making him fall back into Hades who clutched onto him with a yelp of surprise and fear. Nico yelped and also fell back, but quickly moved forward again from embarrassment, Hades quickly following except moving backwards.

Poseidon glanced back at New York City as they exited the Harbour. The fires and smoke mixed with visible sunrays streaming down over the city was beautiful yet terrifying at the same time. There was not a doubt in Poseidon’s mind that news of the earthquake had spread worldwide already. He could still distantly hear the wailing sirens and screams, but they got more and more faint the farther away they travelled. The calmness of the water and the perfectly intact Statue of Liberty were eerie in front of their background. Poseidon shook his head to clear it and dragged his eyes away from the city.

“Um, Poseidon?” Hades asked.

“Yeah?”

“Are you sure you can’t move up? Because I’m kind of falling off here.”

Poseidon looked at the millimetre of space between he and Nico and decided that no, he was not going to cross that boundary, and shook his head. “No, just scooch up, I won’t mind,” he lied.

“Okay…” Hades moved up so they were now plastered back to front. This is lovely, Poseidon thought sarcastically. At least it’s better than being squished against your nephew, he reasoned with himself.

Other than the uncomfortable seating arrangements, the journey went pretty smoothly. Soon enough, Poseidon was watching the New York skyline disappear over Hades’s shoulder. He turned back so he was facing forwards again and instead reached out to touch the calm water beneath his fingertips. He smiled at the small fish who came up to greet his hand. He may not be a god at the
moment, but his realm still loved him—or at least respected him. They rode on the hippocampus for a long time, small talk keeping them from slipping into boredom.

Poseidon laughed as a Great White came up to him. Hades and Nico screamed their little asses off. Poseidon just laughed harder and petted the shark fondly. “Don’t be scared,” he said. “He knows that if I’m with you, he shouldn’t hurt you.”

“Doesn’t make it any less terrifying,” Hades muttered, trying to get as far away from the shark as physically possible without slipping off Laura.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “No, seriously. Give me your hand.”

Hades hesitantly put his palm out to Poseidon. Poseidon took the hand and turned it over, gently reaching it over to pet the shark. The shark moved back a little, but came back as he realized that Poseidon’s hand was over Hades’s slightly larger one, tan over pale. It came back and gently rubbed it’s head against the hand. Poseidon smiled. “See? Not that bad.”

Hades didn’t respond, but smiled.

Poseidon looked at Nico. “Do you want to try?”

“Er, no thanks. I’ve had enough sea creatures for one day.”

Poseidon laughed softly. “Okay, suit yourself.” The shark disappeared into the water.

Soon enough, the sun was sinking below the horizon. Poseidon admired the reflection of gold and red on his realm, and how it made the water sparkle and shine. He smiled contently as he was finally, finally, home. Even Hades commented on the beauty of it, while Percy was happily admiring it and letting a dolphin nuzzle his hand. Thalia looked at the dolphin like it was the most surreal thing she’d ever seen in her life. Too soon, the sun fully sank beneath the horizon. It got colder, but the body heat between the three of them on Laura kept them warm enough. Poseidon yawned tiredly, trying to blink the sleep out of his eyes. He eventually gave up and closed his eyes. He leaned his head against Hades’ chest with a yawn and fell into a dreamless sleep.

***Time Break***

Poseidon was jolted out of his sleep by Laura neighing and lurching forward. “Woah!” he yelled as she almost threw them off. “What’s going on girl?” Waves all around them were growing and growing, getting more violent as they went.

He didn’t need her to answer that as he looked up. A large wave was coming towards them, slowly getting larger and larger. The water around them sloshed violently. Soon, large waves were circling all around them and threatening to crash over their heads. “Fuck,” Poseidon swore. Thunder cracked over head, followed by lightning striking the water a few miles ahead of them. “If lightning strikes close to where we are, we’re all dead!” Poseidon called to Hades over his shoulder.

“I know!” Hades yelled back. He turned to Percy. “Perseus! Do something about this!”

“I can’t!” Percy yelled back desperately. “It’s too strong, it’s not letting me!”
Poseidon looked at the steadily building tidal wave, fear gripping his heart in a tight fist. He had no control over this for the first time in his life. His hand shook from their grip on Hades’s forearms. When did he start holding them again? It didn’t matter. He watched Jason grab Hazel and lift her up into the sky. Jason looked at Percy desperately, obviously wanting nothing but to take him and leave. The clouds above them darkened and filled the sky, sending them all into almost pitch darkness.

“What are we going to do?” he yelled back at Hades. The tidal wave was approaching faster and faster. Heavy, cold rain started pouring down from the sky.

When he looked back at Hades, it was the first time he ever saw him look completely hopeless. “I...I don’t know,” he said.

“So this is it then,” Nico said. “We’re going to die and Chaos is going to rise again.”

“No,” Poseidon shook his head. “It said only one shall exhale their final breath.”

“Well you can come back as a ghost, and when you do, you’re still technically breathing. You’re not alive and you’re lungs don’t work, but you’re still taking in air through your mouth.”

Poseidon shook his head, but doubt and fear circled in his stomach like eels. “It’s too much of a stretch. We’re going to make it out of here. We have to.”

They rose over a large wave that came hurtling towards them, separating them from the rest of the group. “No!” Poseidon yelled. “PERCY!”

“He can’t hear you Poseidon,” Hades told him loudly over the sound of waves crashing and thunder. Poseidon looked up at the tidal wave. It was now at least 16 feet tall.

“Oh, Laura,” he told the hippocampus, “I need you to get us out of here, and tell the other hippocampi to get out of here too, okay?”

Laura just neighed and stayed frozen in fear. “C’mon,” Hades said desperately.

Laura didn’t move.

The tidal wave got closer.

“Laura! C’mon girl, move!”

She didn’t listen. Poseidon started to hyperventilate. The tidal wave was less than 800 yards away. “Come on!”

600 yards away.

Poseidon felt tears of panic slip from his eyes. “Please Laura, move!”

400 yards.

Poseidon’s breathing was beyond erratic. “We have to go, girl! C’mon, move!”

200 yards. Poseidon and Nico let out small, quiet sobs simultaneously. “I don’t…I don’t wanna die,” Nico said brokenly. “I want to see Will again, I want to see Reyna and Frank. Fuck, I don’t want to die.” Poseidon’s heart broke for the boy.

100 yards.
Poseidon could feel the spray of the water already.

50 yards.

He closed his eyes tightly as more tears leaked from them.

25 yards.

His fists were clenched so tight he felt blood drip down his palm. The roaring of the tidal wave was the only thing he could hear.

10 yards.

He wondered if it had already hit Percy.

5 yards.

He thought of how much he’d grown with both Percy and his brother’s this past week, and how they at least made up before it all ended.

1 yard.

The last thing he felt was Hades’s arms wrap him and Nico in tight embrace, and a painful slap of water across his body.

And then, black.

Chapter End Notes

duh duh DUHH
I'm evil, I know
I'm sorry
(but like not really)
idk what this is let alone what the chapter title is

Chapter Summary

not much happens tbh. It's just another semi-important filler chapter. But the next chapter coming will be a little more exciting! also there's a scene where Nico is really out of character but then again every character as been out of character for this whole thing so

Chapter Notes

hey folks, hope your having a better day than klance because it isn't fucking canon

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “...And then, black.”

When Poseidon opened his eyes again, he didn’t know where he was.

The sky above him was bright blue and cloudless, with the sun sending visible rays down on him, making him squint. The water beneath him was cool and calm, but little waves drifted him slowly along the glassy surface. Wait.

The water below him?

Shit. It all came rushing back to him. He scrambled into a position where he could tread water and looked around at his surroundings. Or rather, lack thereof. Miles of undisturbed ocean stretched out on either side of him, not a person or place in sight. The sun reflecting off the water was almost blinding. He wouldn’t describe himself as scared—he would never be scared of his realm—more concerned with how the Hades he was supposed to get out of this situation without anyone else there.

Without anyone else there…

Fuck, Percy!

Logically, Poseidon knew that Percy was most likely completely fine due to being his son, but the other side of his brain, the emotional side, couldn’t stop thinking of the potential ways he could be hurt or worse. Where is he? Poseidon looked around again, despite knowing that there was no way that Percy could’ve just appeared in fifteen seconds.

He started to swim in hopes of finding him, but stopped immediately with the fear that he was swimming in the opposite direction of Percy. He had no idea where he was, his ability to detect the coordinates of the ocean swept away with his godhood. The different sections and directions of the ocean used to be so obvious, but now that he was mortal, everything just looked the same. Just
miles of blue wet stuff that had no sense of direction or meaning. It was just there. Endless and intimidating.

Suddenly, another thought crossed his mind. Percy was absolutely fine (if he was alive), since he could tell coordinates, and could most likely navigate where the closest piece of land was. Poseidon let out a breath of relief, before a whole new problem came to his mind.

Hades, Nico, Thalia, and Zeus.

They were out there somewhere, without him or Percy, surrounded by animals that still thought he hated them. Suddenly, the realization that no one was around him seemed a lot more terrifying. *Remember the prophecy, remember the prophecy. Only one shall exhale their final breath.*

What if one of them already did?

Fear gripped at his chest. Jason and Hazel must’ve been fine, they had gotten out of there. *What if they got struck by lightning?* Poseidon just kept falling further and further down the hole of pessimistic thoughts. *Jason’s a son of Jupiter, that shouldn’t affect him.* Poseidon let out a small sigh of relief. *That doesn’t mean it wouldn’t affect Hazel.* Poseidon was back to being anxious again. And then there was Hades. *He must be fine. He was the last person to get hit which meant he’d take the least amount of force. He’s fine. Right?* Then that brought Poseidon to Nico. He was the first one to get hit and he’s the smallest.

*Shit.*

Where was he? And Thalia would’ve been hit first too. And then Percy and Zeus…

He felt something brush up against his leg and jolted in surprise. He looked down to see a dolphin nuzzling his leg. Poseidon smiled thinly. “Hey buddy,” he said, reaching down to pet her head. He got an idea. “Hey...can you take me to my son, Perseus?”

The dolphin quickly rose higher to the surface and presented her fin to him, an obvious indicator she’d let him. He smiled and thanked her, before gently holding onto her fin and letting his feet float to the surface. She swam forward quickly, cutting through the water with ease. Poseidon looked around at his realm as he passed, thinking of all the things that were concealed below the surface. Despite his situation, he still longed to stay here—after he made sure Percy and everyone else were alright, of course.

They swam for an undistinguishable but long amount of time, before Poseidon saw an island that he didn’t quite recognize. It had tall palm trees and white sand, but looked completely vacant of any residents. It was small enough that he could see both ends of it from a long distance away, but wouldn’t be considered tiny. Thick forest immediately started when the sand ended, without any buildup. Even from a far away distance, Poseidon could see that the bushes were vibrant and lush.

The dolphin swam a little faster, and soon enough they approached the island. Poseidon got off and sat down on the wet sand. He patted the dolphin on the side of her face, thanking her. She nuzzled his hand before swimming back into the ocean.

Poseidon got up and looked around. He scrunched his nose at the disgusting feeling of wet jeans mixed with wet sand on his legs. Not wanting anymore sand up his legs, he quickly cuff his jeans so his ankles were exposed. He took off his shoes and dumped the water out of them, before putting them back on his soaked feet covered in equally soaked socks. He looked around again and didn’t see anyone. He frowned. “Percy?” he called out.
No response. He walked a little further up the shoreline. “Percy?” he said a little louder. Still no response. He quickened his pace and called out again. “Percy?” Nothing. He started to jog down the beach, a little fear coiling in his stomach. “Perce?”

“Dad!”

Poseidon almost collapsed in relief as he saw Percy come out from behind the corner of the island, running towards him. “Hey, Perce.”

Percy smiled and wrapped him into a hug. “Thank gods you’re alright.”

Poseidon smiled as Percy buried his face in his neck. “Could say the same about you.” They pulled away. “Have you seen the others?”

Percy’s smile slipped off. “No. I tried using me and Nico’s empathy link, but it didn’t work. It only works when one of us is sleeping. So that either means that he’s awake, or he’s…” he didn’t finish the sentence, but Poseidon knew what he meant. Or he was dead.

Poseidon turned grim. “Alright. How are we going to do this? We need to find them.”

“Already on it,” Percy grinned. “I sent two dolphins to look for Nico and Hades and made them promise to let them ride them to this island, since we should be mostly concerned about them. Animals usually stay away from them, but if the animals are aggressive, they’ll show their disliking in a…different way.”

“And then we’ll send them out again for Thalia and Zeus,” Poseidon said.

“Yeah, don’t worry, they’ll be back soon and then we can send them out again.” Percy smiled.

Poseidon smiled back. “Okay, great! And hopefully Jason and Hazel are safely in Greece…”

Percy nodded confidently. “Jason IM’d me; they’re already in Greece. He wanted to come and get me, but he wouldn’t be able to tell where I was, and we’re coming anyways. We’re in the middle of nowhere out here. I didn’t even know this island existed.”

Poseidon hummed his agreement. “I’m pretty sure I knew of its whereabouts, I just never bothered to visit. Oh, and would you mind drying me off?”

“Oh, yeah, of course,” Percy said. He touched Poseidon’s shoulder and concentrated for a moment. The water disappeared from Poseidon in an instant.

“Thanks,” he said gratefully.

“No problem.”

He shook the sand out of his pants, probably looking ridiculous in the process but not caring. He combed a hand through his hair and shook the sand out of that as well. His hair was hot to the touch, thanks to the sun beating down on the black colour. “How long has it been since you sent the dolphins off?” he asked Percy.

“Probaby twenty minutes. They should be back soon,” he said. He sat down in the sand. Poseidon followed his lead, and they looked out at the glittering water.

“Do you know if we’re close to Greece?” Poseidon asked, playing with the sand by his ankle.

“I don’t know exactly how far away we are, but I’m pretty sure we’re not too far away. Nothing
that the hippocampi can’t handle,” he replied, flicking some sand off his foot.

“You think they’ll still take us?” Poseidon cocked an eyebrow up. “Even after what happened?”

“I think so,” Percy said, squinting up at the sky. “They must know that I’d never be the one to do that to them…”

“They don’t know I’m not a god though,” Poseidon said. “What if they think I did it? Are we even sure they’re still alive?”

“Okay one, they should know that you’d never cause that with so many of your relatives there, and two, they should be alive. I think they’ve suffered through worse than a little tidal wave.”

“Little?” Poseidon asked with smiling eyes.

Percy shrugged and grinned. “Hey, when you’ve been through two wars, everything seems small.” The grin slipped off his face. “Except Chaos of course.”

Poseidon looked at Percy, who still kept his eyes trained on the water. “We’re going to make it through this. It’s not even really a war, right? It’s just a battle.”

“We don’t know if it has an army though.” Percy frowned. “If it does, we’re hopeless. Eight of us against gods know how many monsters? We don’t even know if half the monsters are in the underworld anymore, with Hades gone and whatnot!”

“Persephone should be able to take care of that,” Poseidon assured. He was trying to convince himself more than he was trying to convince Percy. “She may not be as powerful as him, but she’s still the queen of the Underworld.”

Percy nodded but didn’t look entirely convinced. He crossed his arms and hugged himself. “Yeah, I guess. They really didn’t think this through, did they? I mean, we never know if another war is on the horizon, no matter what. It was stupid to make the three most powerful gods mortal, and then chuck them into the middle of the war with a one in eight chance they’re going to die.”

“Agreed,” Poseidon said, though he knew they had a good reason to not believe there would be another war. It didn't matter, he was still salty (no pun intended). “Although, maybe not one in eight.”

“What do you mean?” Percy asked.

“Remember the line where it says ‘one shall choose between the world and a niece’? What if that means me, Hades, or Zeus have to choose between Thalia or Hazel?” Poseidon fiddled with sand, refusing to meet Percy’s eyes.

Percy went silent for awhile. “I...I don’t know.”

“Young little fuck I told you we shouldn’t have done this!” a familiar voice screamed from the left. Poseidon whipped around to see Hades and Nico coming towards them on the beach. Nico was a good five feet in front of Hades, with his fists curled and his stride angry.

Percy smiled sheepishly. “Heh...sorry?”

“YOU LITTLE FUCK I TOLD YOU WE SHOULDN’T HAVE DONE THIS!” a familiar voice screamed from the left. Poseidon whipped around to see Hades and Nico coming towards them on the beach. Nico was a good five feet in front of Hades, with his fists curled and his stride angry.

Percy smiled sheepishly. “Heh...sorry?”

Nico jogged the rest of the way to Percy. Percy scrambled up to a standing position. Nico narrowed his eyes at him and took a few threatening steps forward, making Percy step backwards. “You could have gotten us killed —”
“Now Nico, there’s no way Percy could have known that a tidal wave was going to strike,” Hades said, walking up to Nico and putting a hand on his shoulder.

Nico kept his eyes narrowed at Percy, who rubbed the back of his neck and smiled sheepishly. After a few excruciating moments of silence, Nico relented his glaring and walked over to give him a hip-check. “I’m glad you’re alright, kelp head,” he admitted begrudgingly.

“Same with you, death breath.”

Nico rolled his eyes at the nickname. Percy held out a hand to Poseidon, who accepted it gratefully and stood up. He brushed the sand off his jeans. “We should send dolphins out to get Zeus and Thalia.”

“On it,” Percy said. He walked over to the ocean again walked a little way into the water. He put his hand out, and two dolphins came up to greet him again. “Hey guys,” he said, crouching down. “Can you do a favour for me and go get Zeus and a girl named Thalia (his daughter) and bring them back here?” The dolphins scurried off into the water. Percy straightened and walked back towards the beach. His jeans and sneakers were completely dry despite them being submerged in the water.

He sat down on the beach again, and Poseidon, Nico, and Hades quickly followed. They sat in silence until they saw two figures approaching them quickly from out on the water. Poseidon smiled in relief. The closer they got, the more Poseidon could tell them apart. Zeus was on the right, easily recognizable because of the countless centuries Poseidon had spent with him, and Thalia on the left, her spiky hair visible from a mile away.

They eventually got close enough to the beach and got off their dolphins quickly. Zeus rushed up towards the beach and scrambled past the rest of them to the woods, where he proceeded to throw up all he’d ever eaten in one go. Poseidon scrunched his nose in distaste and looked away. He, Nico and Hades got up to greet the two of them once Zeus returned. “Hey, Zeus,” Poseidon said, sheepishly rubbing the back of his neck.

Zeus glared at him. “I have an idea. No more listening to Barnacle Brain or Barnacle Brain Jr.”


“Hey!” Percy said. “We didn’t have any other ideas!”

“We could’ve waited for Apollo,” Thalia said, crossing her arms.

“Yeah, or we could’ve bought airplane tickets. Hades has the money,” Zeus agreed, staring at Poseidon.

At that, Hades patted his pockets. And then patted his pockets again. And then again. He slowly got more and more frantic as he dug his hands through them. “I’d like to make a correction,” he said. “Hades does not have the money.”

“Shit,” Poseidon swore.

“Well this is just lovely,” Nico said sarcastically. “No money, no way to get to Greece, no way to stop Chaos, and no way to stop one of our inevitable deaths.” He plopped down in the sand and lay down on his back. “I’m just gonna die here.”

Percy looked like he was trying very hard not to laugh. “You do realize we’re going to ride the hippocampi again to get to Greece, right?”
Nico groaned. “No, let me die in peace.”

“I thought you were just saying you didn’t want to die?” Poseidon raised an eyebrow.

Nico flipped him the bird, making a surprised laugh bubble out of Poseidon’s chest. Percy laughed too and sat down next to Nico. He lifted his hands threateningly and wagged his fingers. “NO,” Nico said. He flipped away from Percy and stood up. Percy laughed and joined him.


“No,” Percy whined. “Can’t we rest here for a little bit longer?”

“No.” Hades shook his head. “Look, this is a war against something far more powerful than anything else in this universe. You realize that the whole world is at risk if this isn’t successful? And that whole tidal wave? Poseidon isn’t the god of the ocean at the moment, he has no control over that. But you know who does? Chaos. It formed earth. It has far more power than we could ever comprehend, and if it gains a steadily working human form...who knows what kind of havoc it could bring to people.”

“...Okay damn, you could’ve just said no,” Percy mumbled. But nevertheless, he went up to the shoreline and put his hand out. More dolphins came to greet him, but he paid them no mind. They eventually disappeared into the water, and the hippocampi arrived instead.

“Okay, so we can do two on one this time,” Percy said. He reached his hand out and patted one of the Hippocampus’ cheek. Poseidon wasn’t sure if it was Jessica, Laura, or Amy. The hippocampus neighed happily and turned so her back was open to Percy. Percy smiled and climbed on. “Who wants to go with me?”

“Me,” Nico said before Thalia could open her mouth.

Thalia huffed. “No, I’ll go with him.”

“I said it first.”

“I said it second.”

“Look, I love that you two are fighting over my pure awesomeness,” Percy said, grinning. “But I think Nico should come with me this time, I went with Thalia last time.”

“Ha,” Nico said, throwing a smirk over his shoulder at her.

“Great for you,” Thalia said dryly.

“I call going with Poseidon this time,” Zeus said.

Hades glared at him. “No way, the hippocampus is going to buck me off if I don’t go with either Perseus or Poseidon.”

“Well I almost got attacked by a shark while I was out there—”

“Ladies, ladies,” Poseidon grinned. “There’s plenty of me to go around.” Hades and Zeus glared at him. Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Oh, c’mon. Lighten up. Hades is going to have to come with me, sorry Zeus.”

Thalia crossed her arms but clenched her jaw to keep her mouth shut. She forced herself over to the hippocampus on the far left and pushed herself onto it, Zeus climbing on after her. Nico walked a little bit into the water and then pushed himself in front of Percy and onto the hippocampi. Poseidon smiled and walked over to the one on the right, pushing himself on. Hades climbed on after him, thankfully making a comfortable space between them.

When the hippocampi lurched forward again, it didn’t surprise Poseidon as much as it did the first time. They glided swiftly and smoothly through the water, causing the sea to create small ripples around them. Poseidon smiled at the light breeze on his face as the three hippocampi headed towards the direction of Greece again. This time, it didn’t feel like a tidal wave was going to hit them.

Or maybe he just hoped that a tidal wave wasn’t going to hit them.

Chapter End Notes

so yeah...kinda boring. But I hope you enjoyed anyways!
Next chapter will be a little more interesting ;)
(you have no way to tell if that smile was sincere or evil and I love it)
more angst but important stuff too

Chapter Summary

lots of stuff happens but at the same time not a lot of stuff happens idk

Chapter Notes

Hey guys...sorry for the slower update this time. Things aren't going to great as of late, but I'll try to keep posting around every three days. If it takes this long again, know that I'm just dealing with some family stuff and I'm not just slacking. Thanks for all the support, love you guys <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: ‘Or maybe he just hoped a tidal wave wasn’t going to hit them.’

They swam until they were beyond bored. Eventually, after painful small talk and overdramatic groans of agonizing boredom, they saw land ahead of them. Poseidon, along with Percy and Thalia, cheered. The Hippocampi swam faster until they couldn’t go any further, and the six of them hopped off. Poseidon and Percy thanked the hippocampi and patted them on the head, before rushing up to vacant and ugly beach.

“Where are we in Greece?” Percy asked, stopping on the beach and looking around.

“We’re not in Greece,” Hades said. “We’re in Spain. There would be no way that we could directly go from America to Greece without hitting either Spain, France, or Portugal. Unless we go through the opening between Portugal and Morrocco, but that’d be too suspicious.”

“Aw, c’mon,” Poseidon wined. “We’re in Spain and we have to get to Greece? I’m no geographer, but I know the two aren’t exactly neighbors.”

“Well, we’ll just have to figure out a plan,” Zeus said.

Poseidon opened his mouth to say a snide remark, but was cut off by an overwhelming heat above his head. Within a second, he was already sweating bullets. He looked up, only to find a familiar chariot descending from the sky.

“Really?” Thalia asked with a glare at the sky. “Couldn’t he have come before we got hit by a tidal wave?”

Apollo parked the chariot gracefully on the brown and rocky sand. He took off his dark sunglasses and shot a grin at them. Poseidon squinted his eyes as the bright white of his teeth reflected the light emitting from the chariot. He hopped out of the chariot and smiled at all of them. “Hello, gods
and demigods alike,” he said. He got half hearted ‘hi’s’ in return. He pointed a tan finger at each and every one of them as if counting and then tutted. “I guess I’ll have to make it a minivan. Shame. We could’ve been cruising through the sky in a corvette, but you guys just had to exist.” He sighed. Poseidon knew he was joking, but really didn’t appreciate the commentary on his existence.

The chariot transformed into a dark red minivan, which despite its not-so-impressive reputation, looked pretty nice. Poseidon supposed that Apollo would never dare change the chariot into something unpresentable. Apollo grinned and winked at everyone except Nico, who still looked underage. “Hop in.” He walked over to the minivan and hopped back into the driver's seat. The demigods shared a weary glance, no doubt remembering the last time they rode in the chariot together. Nevertheless, they opened the door and got in. Percy and Thalia took the seats at the very back by the windows, while Nico squished in between them. Zeus took shotgun while Poseidon and Hades sat in the middle row.

“Alright,” Apollo said, ginning and flashing his teeth at all of them. “Where to?”

“Greece,” Percy said.

“Yes, I’m aware.” Apollo rolled his eyes but still kept his smile in place. “Where in Greece?”

“Oh...I don’t know,” Percy said. “Let me IM Jason.”

Apollo threw him back a water bottle. Percy caught it and thanked him. He squirted the water bottle and turned it to mist, and then used that to make a rainbow. “Does anyone have a drachma?” he asked.

Apollo threw him back a drachma. Percy thanked him again and then threw it into the rainbow. “Lady Iris, please accept my offering. Show me Jason Grace.”

The rainbow turned into a picture of Jason, who was examining his sword. He looked up and smiled brightly. “Percy! Hey, where are you?”

“I’m in Apollo’s chariot with the others, he’s taking us to Greece,” Percy explained. “Where are you in Greece?”

“Oh, we’re in Thessaly. We weren’t exactly sure where we were supposed to go, but we decided that we should go to the most known place in Greek Mythology, which is Mount Olympus. We haven’t actually seen it yet, but we want to,” Jason said.

Percy smiled at him. “Okay, we’ll be there in no time. Meet us at Larissa? That’s the capital of Thessaly, right?”

“Yeah,” Jason laughed. “We’re not far from there, actually. See you soon. Love you.”

Percy smiled. “Alright, love you too.” They cut off the iris message, and Percy turned to Apollo. “Got that?”

Apollo nodded but looked scandalized. “You’re dating the Jason boy?”

Percy raised an eyebrow. “Yes…?”

Apollo sighed dramatically. “Shame.” Percy’s cheeks turned red and Thalia snickered behind her hand.
Poseidon glared at Apollo suspiciously. “Don’t try anything on my son.”

Apollo sighed dramatically again. “Fine, whatever grandpa.”

“I’m your uncle.”

“Grandpa.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes and crossed his arms, looking out the window. Apollo started the chariot again and it rose high up in the sky. Once they reached a high enough level as to not burn the top of the trees off, they shot quickly through the air. Poseidon watched the land below them come and go, some of it just trees and woods, while others were chunks of land filled with beautiful buildings and tourists. Eventually it cleared out into open ocean with a sea green colouration.

“So that’s why people always tell me my eyes are the colour of the ocean,” Poseidon heard Percy mutter. “Some parts of the ocean look green. I always just thought they were colour blind.”

Poseidon smiled fondly and continued looking out the window. Eventually, the ocean turned to land again, and they were flying over Greece. Poseidon smiled as he easily recognized the places they flew over, despite not visiting for thousands of years. He glanced over at Zeus, who caught his eyes. Poseidon smiled nostalgically at him, but he just nodded his head lightly and turned back to look out the windshield. Hades crossed his arms and looked away. Poseidon frowned at him, and then reached out and squeezed Hades’s hand. Hades looked at him and gave a small, sad smile, and then removed his hand and looked out the window. The demigods watched the exchange with a little confusion, but didn’t comment.

Eventually, Apollo spoke up again. “Here we are,” he said brightly. He descended the chariot until it touched the ground.

Everyone thanked him and hopped out of the chariot, to which Apollo responded with a wink and an ‘anytime’. Percy waved at him as he ascended the chariot yet again. It transformed into a red ferrari and shot out of sight.

“Okay,” Thalia said, turning to face Larissa. “Let’s go find those two dorks.”

The six of them started down the walkway. Pale houses with red roofs covered with a light layer of snow lined the streets. Residents were out shopping or in coffee shops, bundled up in winter jackets and scarves. Poseidon shivered a little, but smiled at the scenery. It was almost nothing like how he remembered it, but it was beautiful nonetheless. They wandered down the streets a little until they hit the main road. That’s when they saw two heads of blond and brown hair respectively poking through the crowd. Jason sprinted and arrived first, wrapping Percy in a hug, while Hazel went for Nico. Thalia, Poseidon, Zeus, and Hades stood a little awkwardly as the two of them hugged their respective person for a lot longer than necessary. They eventually broke apart.

“Percy!” Jason said brightly. “You have to see this.” He grabbed Percy by the arm and dragged him down the street, Hazel hauling Nico along too. Thalia raised an amused eyebrow as Jason screamed at her to hurry up. She rolled her eyes and followed after them.

“Where are you going?” she asked loudly, catching up eventually.

“I don’t know what it’s called, but it’s really cool!” Hazel said. Percy turned back to Poseidon with a helpless eyebrow raised, but Poseidon just shrugged and started after them. Hades and Zeus shared a glance, and then followed after Poseidon. The eight of them made their way down the twisting streets until they exited the city and reached a hill. Hazel and Jason continued to drag them...
along until their calves were burning and they were panting for breath. When they finally reached the top, Hazel grinned. “See? It’s awesome!”

In front of them was a deep divot in the ground with rows of ancient marble leading down to the bottom, where a large marble circle was laid out. The marble was cracked and old, but still intact. There were about 50 rows of what looked like bleachers, and around 4 of the rows.

Poseidon smiled. “The theatre.”

“Well, now it’s the ancient theatre since you’re old,” Percy teased. Poseidon stuck his tongue out at him.

“This is pretty cool,” Thalia admitted, running her boot along the marble. “But I saw cooler things on the way here.”

“Yeah!” Percy said. “Can we go look at other places?”

Poseidon and Hazel smiled brightly. “Yeah! We shoul—”

“No.” Hades said, crossing his arms.

“What….why?” Poseidon asked, disappointed.

“This is a war,” Hades said, face serious. “We’re not on a vacation. We need to figure out where Chaos is forming, and when it will rise. This is the fate of the entire world on our hands.”

“Hades is right,” Zeus said. “If we let little things get in our way, we’ll never succeed in this.”

“But we just defeated Chaos,” Poseidon countered. “It would be too weak to try anything for another little while at least.”

Hades shook his head. “It just attacked us while we were out on the ocean. It’s obviously not on a pleasure cruise.”

“Yes, but the tidal wave wasn’t strong enough to kill us,” Poseidon said, crossing his arms uncomfortably as they started to argue in front of their kids, but still not wanting to back down.

“Oh, what a great reason,” Zeus said sarcastically. “‘It didn’t kill us’. You’re practically Athena!” Poseidon wrapped his arms tighter around his torso. “I’m just saying that…”

“That what?” Hades asked, raising an eyebrow.

“I don’t know! These kids have been through enough already. Hell, the Giant war ended what? A year ago? And now they’re being thrown into this?”

“We know it sucks, Poseidon,” Hades said, voice raising in volume. “But that doesn’t change the fact that it’s happening. We need to plan now.”

“And what are we going to do, huh?” Poseidon asked, mostly in defense for himself. “We have no leads.”

“Well that’s what we’re here for you bloody idiot!” Zeus yelled.

Poseidon scowled. “Just because I’m suggesting doing something fun for an hour or two does not make me an idiot.”
Zeus let out a short, frustrated laugh, his temper obviously kicking in. “Gods, are you actually braindead? Fuck, are you positive you’re one of the eight? Because you really don’t do much for anyone here, and Percy can do everything you can do, and now more.”

Poseidon opened his mouth to respond, but then snapped it shut. He stared at his shoes like they were the most fascinating thing he’d ever seen. Everyone fell into uncomfortable silence, refusing to look at each other.

“Anyway,” Zeus continued sharply. “We need to find a lead for this war—”

“War you say?” an unfamiliar voice asked from their right. Poseidon tore his gaze away from the ground and looked at the man. He was short and gangly, and looked about eighty. His light brown skin was wrinkled, and tufts of white hair stuck all around his otherwise bald head. His shawl looked like it was made of an old ratty towel, while the rest of his clothing more resembled rags than actual clothing. His frail wrists were lined with thick golden bracelets, and his posture was so bad he almost looked like a hunchback. He leaned heavily on a long, thick piece of rounded wood that somewhat resembled Gandalf’s staff. “I knew there was something brewing,” he said with his lips curled around his toothless gums. “I just didn’t know it would be a war.”

“You know something then?” Nico asked, stepping forward. “Something that’s been strange around Greece?”

“Oh yes,” the man said. “Something’s been brewing for a little over six months now. Little changes in the energy, you know.”

“Can you tell us more?” Nico pushed.

“Oh of course, my boy,” he said. “You seem quite eager about this, and might even know more than I do. But I’ll try to give you my input. Come along.” He beckoned with his hand and then turned around. He started to walk slowly down the hill. Hades and Nico shared a glance, before following along with the others. Poseidon started after them happily, but then remembered Zeus’ words and felt his smile slip off. The rest of the eight moved forward, not glancing at him once in their excitement for a lead. He dragged his feet after them slowly, making sure to keep a little distance. He made sure to keep track of them however, after all, Zeus was right. This was the greater good.

And just maybe he was right about some other things, too.

The man lead them back down to the main town, but before he could fully enter he turned and walked down onto a field of grass. Hades and Zeus shared a glance before giving small, uneasy shrugs and continuing. The man lead them a little while down the large football-like field until the town of Larissa was no longer visible. The demigods shared an uneasy glance, their hands hovering inches away from their weapons. “Oh there is no need to fear me,” the man said, even though he couldn’t see them. “I simply wish to help. I don’t want this war any more than you do. I want my dear granddaughter to fulfil her dream of becoming a doctor. She can’t do that if there’s not a school, can she?”

They relaxed a bit, and that’s when Poseidon realized something. Where’s my sword? He frantically searched through his pockets even though he knew he would be able to tell if he had it due to its weight. He was about to notify the rest of the group, but hesitated. What could they do? They’ll just call me an idiot again. Poseidon dropped his hands to his sides limply. Am I an idiot? He knew he wasn’t the smartest of the lot, but…

He frowned and let himself fall a little bit more behind, his feet dragging quietly. That’s when he
felt something poking out the side of his jean pocket. He raised an eyebrow and dug his hand into
said pocket, only to find a small brass coloured ball a little larger than the size of a pea
embroidered with shiny dark brown markings. He frowned at it and squeezed, only to drop it in
shock when it turned into his sword. The whole group stopped to look at him.

“What the hell are you doing back there, and why did you get your sword out? And how did you
manage to drop it?” Zeus asked with a judgemental and exasperated look on his face.

Poseidon turned red and picked up his sword, and it quickly turned back into a ball when he
touched a little button that he assumed he was supposed to press. “I felt something in my pocket
and it was this, and when I took it out it turned into a sword,” he explained.

“And you’re just noticing you didn’t have your sword now?” Zeus asked, raising an eyebrow.

Poseidon looked away, his face rivaling a tomato. “I dunno, forget it. Let’s go.” Zeus rolled his
eyes along with Hades. Percy didn’t meet his eyes and smiled, but he looked embarrassed. Jason
and Nico shared a glance while Thalia and Hazel were pretending like they didn’t see anything.
Poseidon stuffed the ball back into his pocket and walked a tiny step forward, just to trigger the
other’s movement. The other members of the eight along with the man started walking again,
facing forward. Poseidon walked slower with his eyes trained on the ground, his face still burning
red. In the ten more minutes they walked, a few people had struck up a conversation. Poseidon
didn’t join any of them. The man led them into the woods up ahead of them, which would have
been suspicious if there wasn’t a path and the trees weren’t sparse.

He led them further down the path until the trees got a little thicker, and then they reached a little
house. It resembled something that you’d see in a fantasy movie, with its sphere-like shape and
pointed roof, white walls, and chimney stock. The man opened the door and let them in. The whole
(one story, three room) house was filled with the fragrance of tea. Pots and pans hung over the
kitchen, while shelves filled with overgrown plants lined every wall. The couches were old and
plush, and you could see a little foam poking out in some places. Steam was coming out of a kettle
on the stove, no doubt where the tea smell was coming from. A small, circular table was placed in
the centre of the circular room. Two doors were at the back of the room, which must’ve lead to
bedrooms.

The man gestured for them to sit on any of the four couches and two armchairs. The five demigods
all fit comfortably on the large couch that curved to fit the room, while Zeus and Hades took the
slightly smaller one. Poseidon looked around awkwardly before shuffling his feet to the couch
farthest away and taking a seat. He looked away from them and curled in on himself on the couch.
He felt Hades’s gaze on him so he kept his eyes trained on his fiddling hands. The man sighed
contently with his eyes closed, before opening them again. “Would any of you like some tea?”

“You sound like Professor Trelawney from Harry Potter,” Poseidon said in a poor attempt for a
joke. Nobody heard him except for Zeus, who gave him a blank and unimpressed stare. Poseidon
looked away quickly. I’m just going to not say anything anymore.


“And you, young lad?” the man asked, turning to Poseidon.

“No thanks,” Poseidon answered, unintentionally quiet.

Thankfully, the man heard. “Are you sure? It’s quite good, if I do say so myself.”

Truthfully, Poseidon’s throat was extremely dry, but he didn’t think he’d be able to stomach
anything at the moment. “No, I’m sure. Thanks anyway.”

“Nah, he’ll take one,” Zeus said, looking at Poseidon with a challenge in his eyes. He obviously wanted a rise out of Poseidon.

The man smiled. “Are you fine with that?” he asked Poseidon.

Poseidon averted his eyes. “Yeah, okay. It doesn’t matter.” Zeus stared at him in shock. He knew Poseidon always hated it when he made decisions for him, but he just couldn’t bring himself to fight at the moment. The man nodded and went back to the kettle. He took it off the burner and placed it on the cool part of the stove, and then got out nine tea cups.

He poured the light brown, steaming liquid into the cups and then beckoned them forward. “Come and get them.” They all got up and walked over to the kitchen. Poseidon waited for everyone else to grab theirs and then reached for the remaining one. The man tutted. Or, tutted as much as one could tut with no teeth. “That one is only half full, my apologies.”

“It’s fine,” Poseidon said quietly. He took the tea cup and made his way back to his spot, only to find Zeus occupying it. Poseidon stared at him, and then just silently went to the other couch that was the second farthest away. Zeus huffed and rolled his eyes, taking a sip from his tea. Poseidon put his tea down gently on the small stool next to the couch he was on and curled in on himself again, playing with his hands.

The man sat in an armchair and faced them all. “What do you want to know?”

“When it all started—” Hades said.

“What you’ve been seeing—” Poseidon said at the same time. He shut his mouth and went back to playing with his hands. Let the smart people talk.

He showed no sign of trying to talk again, so Hades went. “When did you start to notice a change? And what exactly changed?”

The man took a sip of his tea and then shakily put it down. “I would say it all started around six months ago. There was this weird shift in mood. Nothing bad had happened, but I was all gloomy. So I went out to my garden to pick some vegetables, and I noticed that they were all ripe, even though it was too early in the season for some of them. But it wasn’t the good kind of ripe, y’know? It was all mushy and soft.” The man took another sip of his tea. “But I’d say the weirdest thing that happened was when I was watering my flowers and my granddaughter came out to see me. She told me to come out front because she saw something peculiar. So I agreed and we went out to the front lawn, only to find this kind of mist settling over the woods.”

“Mist?” Nico asked. He, Hades, Zeus, and the rest of the demigods shared a glance. Poseidon was listening with rapt attention, but he refused to look up.

The man hummed. “Yes. At first I thought it was fog, but it didn’t feel like it. And the most peculiar of all, was that it was coming from that mountain over there.” He pointed out the window. Poseidon looked up and gaped in astonishment. Mount Olympus was standing proudly in the far distance. It was so far away you could only make out the basic outline, but it was still visible. Poseidon didn’t notice it while they were walking here, but due to the houses slightly raised height, he could see a little above the tall trees. Poseidon shut his mouth and smiled a little.

“It was coming from there?” he asked.

“That’s what he just said,” Zeus responded tonelessly, his attention on the man. Poseidon’s cheeks
burned again and he looked away.

“Yes indeed,” the man said, smiling kindly. “It rolled off from the peak of that mountain like a flowing river. We had no idea what would have caused it, though. But would I be correct in assuming you might?”

“Yes,” Percy said uncomfortably, “you might be. But we can’t...”

“Tell me,” the man finished. Percy nodded. “That’s alright. What else do you need to know?”

“Has the ‘gloomy’ feeling continued?” Jason asked. “I mean, has it gotten stronger or weaker?”

“Oh, much stronger,” the man said. “But there was a sudden drop not only two days ago...”

Zeus and Hades shared a glance. “How much did it drop?” Zeus asked. “Like, did it—”

“Has it returned back to its full force yet?” Poseidon asked, accidentally interrupting Zeus.

Zeus glared at him. “Can you not interrupt me? Thanks.” He rolled his eyes and turned back to the man. Poseidon mumbled an apology and curled further into himself.

“Now now,” the man said. “That’s no way to speak to your friends.”

“He’s not my friend if I don’t like him—” Zeus cut himself off as Hades shot him a warning glare. Poseidon also shot a glare at him but looked away quickly before Zeus could meet his eyes. Poseidon frowned and looked away from the group, turning his body away a little in the process.

The man tutted again. “Well look, now you’ve hurt his feelings.”

Poseidon made a noise of protest. “He didn’t hurt my feelings—”

“Then why are you so sad and thinking so low of yourself?”

The group stared at him. Poseidon’s cheeks burned even brighter. “I’m not sad, and I’m not thinking low of myself!”

“Oh don’t be silly, I know you are. I’m a satyr, see?” He lifted his pant leg, but instead of a foot he had a hoof with curly brown fur just poking out from the edges. “We can sense emotions, remember?”

Poseidon looked away quickly. “Well your’s must be whacked. I’m perfectly fine, and I know I’m great.” The words tasted like lies, even on his own tongue.

“Poseidon,” Hades scolded. “This man’s trying to help us, don’t call him whacked.”

Poseidon frowned, scolding himself and looking at his hands. “Sorry,” he mumbled. He felt Hades staring at him and looked up to meet his eyes briefly. “We’re talking about this later,” he mouthed. Poseidon looked away again. Does he not like me either? Poseidon thought they’d made progress, but maybe they were just passed the ‘I want to gut you’ stage and not quite at the ‘I actually like you’ stage. Had he and Percy made any progress?

“Poseidon?”

Poseidon thought so, but he wasn’t sure. Maybe Percy was still uncomfortable around him and he didn’t know it?
He frowned. *Is everyone just putting up with me for the quest and they all actually hate me?*

“Poseidon, goddammit are you even listening?”

Poseidon snapped out of his thoughts and looked at Zeus. “What?”

Zeus pinched the bridge of his nose. “We’re going to start heading to Mount Olympus tomorrow to see what’s going on. Did you miss the part where he explained the rumbling that happens when mist comes down?”

Poseidon stared at his hands. “Yeah,” he mumbled quietly.

Zeus sighed in annoyance. “And the part where he thought he saw a pattern, and that every two days more mist forms, and there’s more mist everytime?”

Poseidon swallowed. “Yeah…”

“And the part where he said that it started to form shapes, and the shapes get more prominent every time?”

Poseidon refused to meet anyone’s eyes. “Yeah.”

“Are you even taking this seriously?” Zeus asked hotly. “Because you are easily replaceable, and if you don’t get your act together you can get your ass back to New York—”

“Zeus.” Hades interrupted sharply.

Zeus huffed and rolled his eyes. “You know I’m right.”

Poseidon felt his eyes sting. His vision blurred and he bit his trembling bottom lip. Hazel and Thalia let out soft gasps. Poseidon scowled and looked away, cheeks flaming hot.

“Hey, don’t talk to my dad like that,” Percy said angrily.

“And why not?” Zeus asked, temper long gone off. “Name one good reason why he’s here.”

“Because he’s part of the eight,” Percy said, glaring daggers.

“And what does he contribute to the rest of us?”

“He makes plans and gives ideas.”

“Plans and ideas that usually end up getting us into near death situations that could be easily avoided? Please, you’re being biased. He doesn’t do anything for us, he’s just dead weight.”

Poseidon got up and stormed out the front door of the small house, slamming it behind him. He walked out over the front lawn, his feet taking him to a location that he could not tell you the name of. Tears blurred his vision and streamed down his face. Small, ugly sobs escaped his lips. He stormed his way down the path.

“Poseidon!” Someone called. Poseidon recognized it as Hades’ voice. He scowled but stopped. He heard Hades’s footsteps approaching and quickly wiped his eyes. Hades grabbed him by the shoulders and spun him around. Poseidon looked away from him to hide his face. “Poseidon,” Hades said, quieter this time. “Look at me.” He moved Poseidon’s chin up and looked at his face.
“Oh, Poseidon…”

He wrapped him up in a hug. Poseidon didn’t care enough to notice that this was the first time Hades started a hug with him, and instead just buried his face in Hades’ chest and let more tears stream down his face. He was getting Hades’s shirt wet, but he didn’t care. He let out small sobs again, and Hades just fiddled with his hair, never good at comforting but still doing great in the moment. Poseidon’s body wracked everytime he let out a sob, and Hades just shushed him quietly.

Poseidon’s sobs eventually died out and he closed his eyes, leaning his forehead against the hollow of Hades’ throat. He took shaky breaths to calm himself down. “I’m sorry,” he mumbled.

“It’s okay,” Hades said softly. “Zeus feels really bad. We think while he was out on the ocean Chaos got really close to him while it was heading back to Greece.”

“What would that have to do with anything?” Poseidon asked, his voice muffled.

“We think that Chaos is such an evil being that it provokes negative emotions in anyone it’s around, hence why Zeus was so pissy.”

Poseidon thought back to when Percy snapped at him after he took down Chaos, and it started to make sense again. But, he still had a lingering question that he couldn’t shake. “Do you…” he trailed off, suddenly wanting to back out of his decision of asking it.

“Do I what?” Hades asked.

“Do you think Zeus is right?” Poseidon asked, barely audible.

Hades shook his head. “No. You’re as important to this quest as me, Percy, Zeus, anyone. We all play a part in this.”

Poseidon nodded. “Sorry for getting your shirt wet.”

Hades rolled his eyes as he stepped out of their hug. “Don’t know if I can forgive you for that. Now let’s go and get some supper and get to sleep before we start going to that itty bitty mountain tomorrow.”

Poseidon laughed wetly and nodded. He followed Hades back to the house, wiping his tears dry.

**Chapter End Notes**

Hope you enjoyed :)
Also there will be a huge Hades angst moment coming up in the next few chapters so I just thought I'd warn you.
BTW, when I said I'd do a Hades and Nico bonding fic I mean solely a father/son relationship. I write some weird shit, but not Hades/Nico weird shit (not shaming anyone who does, it's just not my thing)
the calm before the storm bitches

Chapter Summary

just fluff. the chapter title explains a lot

Chapter Notes

Before you read this, I would like to confirm two things:
1. There's a few scenes in this chapter that are often tropes in romance fics, but I assure you that this is going to be solely a brotherly bonding fic. I just like writing cute shit. As I've stated, I've written a one-shot for them if you ship them (it's the only other fic on my page since I started two months ago lmao), but this is just going to be some brother bonding shit that would probably never happen but idfc this is fanfiction I can do what I want.
2. I'm aware Poseidon doesn't actually canonically live in Atlantis but do you really think I'm going to pass up on an opportunity for a head canon? I think the fuck not.
Enjoy this mess of fluffiness

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on: ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “He followed Hades back to the house, wiping his tears dry.”

The eight of them and the man, Stephen as he introduced himself, set up tents after supper for Zeus, Poseidon, Hades, and the demigods to stay. There were only three tents, so Hazel and Thalia took one while Jason, Percy and a reluctant Nico (with a ‘if you do any lovey dovey shit I’m kicking you both out’ and a ‘I’m gay why can’t I share with the girls’) took another, which left Zeus, Poseidon and Hades with the one remaining. They crawled into their respective tents and curled up under the two blankets Stephen had provided for each of the tents.

Poseidon immediately went for the middle of the blanket. “I ain’t risking getting the blanket snatched on me,” he said to their weird looks.

Zeus and Hades rolled their eyes and crawled on either side of Poseidon. The blankets were thin and made of flimsy cotton, so they didn’t help much with the biting cold of the wind outside the tent. Poseidon shivered, even with the extra body heat Hades and Zeus provided. They were all two inches apart, but refused to move closer so they’d be cuddling or move backwards in fear that they’d have no blanket. So Poseidon just curled up on his side, facing Hades with his back towards Zeus. “This is comfortable,” he whispered sarcastically.

“Shh,” Hades said, his eyes closed.

“You shh,” Poseidon shot back, still quiet.
“I wasn’t the one talking.”

“But you made the shushing sound.”

“Because you were talking.”

“But you still made the shushing sound, so I can therefore shush you.”

“But I wouldn’t have had to make the shushing sound if you didn’t talk in the first place.”

“But that doesn’t change the fact that you still made a noise—”

“Guys,” Zeus said.

“Sorry,” Poseidon snickered.

The three of them fell into silence. Hades had his eyes closed, but Poseidon kept on looking around the tent in boredom. He wasn’t tired, despite the late hour. He shifted onto his back and instead looked at Zeus, who also had his eyes closed. He let out a quiet sigh and turned back on his side.

“Stop moving,” Zeus whispered.

“Sorry,” Poseidon whispered back, less than sincere. He looked around a little more, but eventually gave up on trying to find something interesting and let sleep drift him away.

***Time Break***

He woke up to himself shivering. He opened his eyes blearily and blinked around. He found no blanket around his shoulders, and instead found both of them wrapped around Hades in a cocoon shape. He scowled as goosebumps shot up his arms. He tried to grab the blanket from Hades, but he let out a pitiful whine and snuggled further into them. Poseidon couldn’t stop the snicker that escaped his lips. Hades looked so much different when he was asleep. The worry lines on his forehead smoothed out, his lips were parted slightly, and his eyelashes cast shadows along his cheekbones. He looked so...calm.

Zeus woke up with a grunt of disapproval from behind him. Poseidon turned back to look at him. “Hades stole the blanket,” he informed him quietly.

Zeus scowled. “That little shit.” He propped himself up on his elbow, and his scowl quickly turned into snickers.

“I know right,” Poseidon grinned. He turned back to look at Hades, who had snuggled even further into the blankets. Poseidon wanted to take a picture, but he didn’t have his phone on him. “As funny as it is, I’m really fucking cold. We’ll make fun of him in the morning.” He grabbed onto the blankets and yanked them out of Hades’ grip.

Hades woke up with a whine of disapproval. “What are you guys...”

“You stole the blanket,” Poseidon said with an accusatory glare.

“Yeah, and you were snuggled up on it like it was the love of your life,” Zeus snickered. Poseidon joined him.

Hades scoffed, embarrassed. “I was not.”

“Yes you were,” Poseidon singsonged quietly.
“Nope, I wasn’t. You have no proof.”

“I saw it!”

“But you have no proof you saw it.”

“But I did!”

“How do you know that?”

“Because I saw it!”

“But did you? Did you really?”

“Yes!”

“No proof.”

Poseidon groaned. Hades shrugged. Zeus snickered quietly and draped the blanket over the three of them again. “And don’t you dare try to steal the blanket again, Death Face.”

“Death Face?” Hades asked with an eyebrow raised. “Well fine then, Lightning Loser.”

Zeus made a mock-wounded noise. “Skeleton Boy.”

“Sky Dick.”

“Death Breath.”

“You two suck at names,” Poseidon said.

Hades rolled his eyes. “As if you could do better.”


Zeus exploded with laughter while Hades looked at him in utter disbelief. Poseidon tried to keep his face serious as he stared at him, but couldn’t stop little snickers escaping his lips every now and then, until he couldn’t take it anymore and fell into laughter with Zeus. “Oh, shut up you two,” Hades grumbled. He turned his back to them and tried to fall asleep.

Poseidon and Zeus’ laughter calmed down, and they too tried to fall asleep again. Eventually, sleep enveloped Poseidon once more. He had an array of strange dreams that night, from being eaten by a band of rabid pizzas, to shopping for purple bananas with Keith Kogane.

He woke up again after what felt like only seconds. He didn’t open his eyes for a moment, and held onto the feeling where he was caught between asleep and awake. He was warm now, and he eventually opened his eyes. He blinked a little and looked up to meet Zeus’ eyes, that were staring down at him. The arm both Zeus and Hades had around him were comforting and warm. Hades was snoring so quietly that Poseidon didn’t think he’d be able to hear it if he was any farther away. He had his front pressed up against Poseidon’s back and an arm that draped over his side and landed on the cold tent floor below them. Zeus’s arm was also draped over Poseidon’s side, and just barely touched Hades’ ribcage. It was nice and warm…

Hold up.

Poseidon blinked as he stared at Zeus. Zeus blinked as he stared at Poseidon.
They both screamed.

Hades woke up with a start, and Zeus untangled his limbs and fell out of the blanket. Hades, in his confusion, tried to grab Zeus’ arm, but only succeeded in pushing Poseidon onto his stomach and trapping his own arm underneath Poseidon’s chest. Poseidon made a noise of protest and tried to kick at Hades to let him go, but that only proved to make Hades grunt and try to dodge the kicks, which then led to him trying to push Poseidon away with his free arm. Poseidon tried to escape, which got Hades’s arm trapped along with the other and Hades had no choice but to roll on top of Poseidon. Poseidon let out an ‘oof’ as the weight crushed him with no warning. “Let go!”

“I can’t you idiot, you have my arms trapped!”

“Well I can’t move with you on top of me!”

“Well I can’t move my arms with you on top of them!”

“Guys, chill we’ll figure this out,” Zeus said. Poseidon and Hades reluctantly stopped squirming. “Here, Hades just get up in a sitting position and bring Poseidon with you.”

Hades grunted as a response and complied, lifting Poseidon along the way. He struggled a little, so Zeus came over and pushed them. They ended up with Hades sitting up with Poseidon between his legs with his back pressed against Hades’ front and his head resting against Hades’ shoulder. Hades had his arms wrapped around Poseidon’s waist while Zeus had his hands pressed against Hades’ shoulder and Poseidon’s arm.

Poseidon wasn’t sure which position was more embarrassing. This one or the one they woke up in. His face was warm and he was about to slip out of the embrace, when the tent zipped open with no warning and five demigods stumbled into the tent. “What’s going on?” Percy asked, his eyes panicked and darting around for a threat. “We heard screams.” He paused when he found no threat, and then turned his confused eyes to Zeus, Poseidon and Hades, who were all staring at him and the others in horror and embarrassment. Poseidon groaned and buried his face in Hades’s shoulder, wanting nothing more for then the ground to swallow him whole. Hades still had his arms wrapped tightly around his waist, and he was staring at the demigods in utter horror. The demigods blinked at them. Once. Twice. Three times.

“Are you two…?”

“What is going on?”

“Huh?”

“I did not need to see this before 10 am.”

“I did not need to see this ever.”

“I always thought this would happen.”

“What the fuck, Percy.”

“We’re not…ew!” Poseidon said, scrambling out to the space in front of them, beyond embarrassed and kind of disgusted.

Hades looked a little green. “Oh gods no. Anyone but him.”

“No, my otp isn’t canon???”
“Percy, what the flying fuck.”

***Time Break***

They’d been hiking for hours. Poseidon wiped away a bead of sweat on his forehead that had formed despite the cold weather. He was stuck in that space between too hot and too cold, so if he removed his sweater he’d be freezing but he was boiling hot with it on. He wasn’t the last person in the group, but he could tell that even Hades, Zeus, and Jason, the strongest out of the eight, were getting tired out.

“Let’s take a break guys,” Hazel said quietly, panting. “I’ve been jogging to keep up.”

Poseidon nodded at her along with the others, and the eight of them leaned back against the trees to catch their breath. The forest around them was painted white with untouched snow. The leafless trees had small icicles dangling from their branches, and a small stream ran calmly a few feet away from them. Poseidon let his head loll back against the cold tree bark and closed his eyes. He sat down on the ground, and the coldness of the fallen leaves he sat on created the illusion of them being wet. He heard a few other people sit down, and opened his eyes again. Hazel and Thalia were leaning against one tree in crouching positions, Percy and Jason were sitting under a tree with their legs stretched out in front of them, Zeus and Hades were catching their breath against tree trunks, and Nico was standing a little away from the group with his arms crossed, head tilted back, and eyes closed.

Poseidon took a few more breaths to regain even breathing, and then looked at Hades again. “How long do you think it’ll take us to get there?”

“I don’t know,” Hades said. “At this rate, probably a day.”

Poseidon sighed and leaned his head back again.

*Time break*

The eight of them stopped for the night. This time, there were only two tents because of the rather unfortunate travelling conditions. So Hazel, Thalia, and Nico got one tent while the rest had to share one. Stephen had only let them keep three blankets, so Nico, Hazel, and Thalia only had one, while Hades, Zeus, Poseidon, Percy, and Jason had to somehow fit under two flimsy blankets.

Somehow, they made it work. But that didn’t mean it was comfortable.

“Stop touching my leg.”

“That’s your leg? I thought I just couldn’t feel my arm!”

“Why are you spooning me?”

“Shit, that’s you? Sorry, Poseidon. I thought you were Percy.”

“Stop squirming!”
“I am pressed up against body parts that I should’ve never been pressed up against.”

“You aren’t a fucking fish, stop flopping.”

“That’s my ass, Hades.”

“Sorry.”

“Why can’t you just stay still?”

“Can all of you shut up?”

They all huffed. Poseidon heard quiet snickers from their neighboring tent. “Fuck you guys,” he called to them. Their snickers got louder. From left to right, smushed up together were Zeus, Percy, Jason, Poseidon, and Hades. Poseidon brought his part of the blanket up to his nose and glared at the ceiling like it was the sole cause for everything wrong in his life.

***Time Break***

“UP UP SLEEPY HEADS,” Thalia screamed, poking her head inside their tent. “It was a dare,” she muttered to Poseidon’s weirded out look. She disappeared outside the tent again.

Poseidon groaned and closed his eyes again for another ten seconds, before finally admitting defeat and sitting up. “How much do we have to walk today?” he asked Hades through a yawn, running a hand through his hair. “Because I need a shower.”

Hades snorted. “Well you’re not going to find a shower on Mount Olympus. Dip your hair in the river or something. And we’ll only be walking for another two to three hours I think.”

Poseidon nodded and got up. Zeus was already outside, along with Jason. Poseidon rolled his eyes at their maturity. He gave a tired salute to the people sitting on the ground outside, and then made his way towards the stream. He crouched down and splashed his face, the freezing water waking him up instantly. Sighing, he then dipped his entire head in the water to wash the sweat and oil out of his hair, and returned to the group, his shoulders, chest, and head sopping wet.

Hades stepped out of the tent and looked at him in exasperation for a second. “You actually did it?”

“Yep,” Poseidon said. “You want a hug?”

“Hell no.” He sat down beside Nico and leaned against the trunk of the tree.

Poseidon shrugged and sat down on the ground where he stood. “Suit yourself.”

Percy got out of the tent last, looking like a zombie. He slouched when he walked, and he still looked like he was half asleep. “I hate everything.”

“Same,” Thalia said.

Percy plopped down next to Poseidon and stared blankly at the ground, pale as a ghost with dark circles under his eyes. Poseidon patted his shoulder.
“Alright,” Hades said, standing up again. “We need to start hiking again.”

Everyone groaned collectively. “Do we have to?” Percy whined.

“Yes, now get up.”

Everyone shared another collective groan and got up. Hades just rolled his eyes.

***Time Break***

“There it is,” Zeus said, staring at Mount Olympus with a look that Poseidon couldn’t quite put a finger on.

“So this is it,” Nico said, staring up at the mountain as well. “It’ll be over soon, right?”

“Maybe,” Jason said. “Hopefully.”

The group nodded as one, and they started the long trek up the mountain.

Chapter End Notes

I hope y'all aren't getting bored I swear action is coming
Chapter Summary

hey folks, welcome to angst fest!
Our first show will be held by Poseidon, obviously (bc I love torturing my smol son),
and the next show will be hosted by Hades! Yaaayyyyy

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the longer wait this time <3

TRIGGER WARNING
suicidal thoughts

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “The group nodded as one, and they started the long trek up the mountain.”

Poseidon was cold.

Not the ‘there’s a cool breeze and I’m uncomfortable’ cold, the kind of cold where you’re teeth are chattering, your limbs are numb, you’re toes are in excruciating pain, and you’re cheeks and eyes are stinging with the harsh slap of the wind. He squinted against the wind blowing in his face. It was getting hard to breath with his aching lungs and the constant pressure on his face. But he, along with the others, soldiered on. Poseidon forced his feet to move in front of one another. Left foot. Right foot. Left foot. Right foot. Left. Right. Left. Right.

Snow had started falling about an hour into their hike, and it had been picking up steadily since. It coated the tree branches, the ground, and all over Poseidon’s clothes and head. His (thankfully thick) hoodie was already torn from their hike through the woods, and the bare skin exposed was stinging as if burned. He couldn’t tell if the tears in his eyes were caused from the harsh and unrelenting wind in his face, frustration, or pain. They’d been hiking for hours on end, and they still had so much left to go. He was shivering so hard that his legs were shaking and his fingers and lips were blue. There had also been this weird, overwhelmingly sad feeling blossoming in his chest the whole way up, seemingly increasing in intensity the whole time.

The rest of the demigods weren’t much better. Percy was shivering so hard it looked like he was convulsing. Hades and Zeus were trudging forward a good ten feet in front of their group, walking as if this was nothing. Despite Hades’s reassurances a few nights ago, Poseidon couldn’t help but think that maybe he wasn’t really capable. Jason and Thalia were ahead of him, and he was only short of being the last in the group by Hazel. She had an impressive amount of stamina and was barely panting, but due to the shortness of her legs she fell slightly behind. Percy and Nico were walking at the same time as he was, but they were less out of breath. Poseidon tried to push the
thoughts out of his mind and pressed forward. They already assured him once, it’ll just burden them to have to assure him again. His fingers started to shake and his knees grew weak. Poseidon frowned and looked down in panic as he lost feeling in his legs. Well, not necessarily, but the only feeling that was in his legs was pain. He pretended like nothing was wrong, but the more and more difficult it got to walk was getting more and more of a concern. He eventually had to fall back to Hazel’s pace.

Percy turned to look at him. “Dad? You okay?” he was panting so hard it made it hard to make out. Even through his barely distinguishable words, Poseidon thought he heard a little irritation. Poseidon was barely even capable of speech at the moment, so he knew he had no right to mention the effort it took Percy to get the words out. He didn’t know why his chest had to make such a big deal out of a simple irritated twinge in someone’s voice.

“Yeah,” he struggled to get out, “I’m fine.”

Hades turned to look at the rest of the group and yelled: “Guys! Seriously, pick up the pace!” He was barely out of breath. Poseidon huffed out a breath and shot a quick glare at him that he hoped he wouldn’t catch. He glared back. “I don’t care if you’re tired, Poseidon. Nobody cares. This is the greater good.”

Poseidon looked away quickly and trudged forward. The group walked for another hour. “Guys…” Nico said weakly. His knees shook violently and his legs gave out beneath him.

“Shit,” Poseidon swore. He rushed over to him along with the rest of the demigods. “What’s going on?” he asked, looking for injury.

“I don’t know,” he said shakily.

“You don’t have enough muscle or fat on you,” Jason said in what sounded scarily like a dad voice. But just like the others, his voice came out a little harsher than seemed normal for his personality. “Matched with growing up in Italy, you’re body isn’t capable of handling this cold of weather. No one is, but you especially.” The words weren’t degrading, but they sounded like it in his tone.

Nico nodded. His eyes were scrunched closed and he was clutching his legs in pain. “It hurts.” His legs were pressed up against the cold snow. Poseidon winced and quickly moved him away from the cold substance. He could almost feel the burn of the ice cold snow.

“I know,” Poseidon said softly. “I don’t know what to do.”

They were too far up the mountain to get help, and everyone else wasn’t too far off from him.

“My…” Nico’s cheeks turned even redder and he cleared his throat. “My dad…”

Poseidon nodded quickly, not even feeling one hint of judgement. If he knew that his father would help him in a hard situation, he’d use that to his advantage as much as he could. He turned to look ahead of them, where Zeus and Hades were a good twenty five feet down the dangerous path. He glared at their backs. “Hades!” he called, resisting the urge to hit something. “Get back here, your son is about to get frostbite!”

Hades and Zeus were too far ahead to hear them, especially with the roaring wind and snow. Poseidon scowled at them. “Okay, he can’t hear us right now. But we’ll help you catch up to him okay?” he asked, turning to Nico. Nico nodded shakily. Poseidon stood and hefted him to his feet. He helped Nico wrap his arm around his shoulders and wrapped his own arm around Nico’s waist.
“Here, let’s go.”

Percy smiled at him gratefully and they struggled on again. Poseidon supported Nico as they struggled to get a fast enough pace to keep up with the others. But that was getting harder and harder, now that he had added weight and his legs were still burning in pain. The wind on his face slapped so harshly across his cheeks that it lead to the point of pain. He squinted against the wind and held on tighter to Nico as he collapsed against his side. “It’s okay, buddy,” he assured him, trying to convince himself too. “Just stay by my side, okay?”

Nico nodded. “Okay.”

They soldiered forwards. Poseidon was getting tireder and tireder with every step. He was practically carrying all of Nico’s weight, matched with the slippery and uneven upwards slope of the path they were on. The snow was making visibility low, and his fingers lost their feeling. “You’re growing weak,” Nico said, “I can feel it.”

“I’m fine,” Poseidon responded, heaving for breath. “We’ll be up there in another few hours.”

“You can’t go on like this for another few hours,” Nico said, trying to walk on his own.

“Oh no you don’t.” Poseidon hauled him back to his side. “You’ll collapse again. I know I’m not offering much, but the extra body heat will help you.”

“You’re offering a lot,” Nico said with mild confusion, collapsing against him again.

“I don’t know, bud,” he said softly. “I don’t know.”

Nico looked at him in concern, but he looked firmly ahead. Nico eventually stopped and relented to just leaning as little weight as he could on him while still using him as support. They charged up and up and up. Poseidon’s lungs and calves were burning from the strain. He heaved for breath, and his legs grew weak. But he marched on, feeling obligated to get Nico back safely. He didn’t know the boy very well, but he knew he went through a hell of a lot in his lifetime. He deserved a happy ending.

He knew that, but his legs were protesting against the fact. His knees bent with every step because of how weak they were. His thighs were shaking and his toes were numb. The snow coated his eyelashes, making blinking uncomfortable and freezing. But he trudged on.

Until he didn’t.

Not five minutes later, Poseidon collapsed. Nico came down with him, but Poseidon shielded his fall.

“Dad!” Percy called, panicked, rushing over. “Are you okay?”

Jason, Thalia, and Hazel also rushed up to them, and Poseidon’s cheeks burned in embarrassment. “I...I don’t know,” he said shakily. By now he’d lost all feeling in his legs and his brain was getting hazy.

“We need to get you and Nico some warmth, and quickly,” Hazel said, frowning at him in concern. She closed her eyes tightly, looking the definition of concentrated. Her eyebrows scrunched and her shoulders tensed.

“What are you...”
“She’s trying to find a cave,” Percy explained. “She got that Hades-y power.”

“Right,” Poseidon said, looking at her.

She opened her eyes and grabbed her curly hair in frustration. “I can’t find anything close! The closest one is at least an hour away.”

“It’s alright, Hazel,” Jason said, putting a comforting hand on her shoulder. “There’s nothing you can do about that.” Hazel nodded at him gratefully.

Percy turned to look in the direction of Hades and Zeus, who were completely oblivious to what was going on behind them. He scowled. “UNCLES!” he yelled. “GET BACK HERE!” They didn’t hear him over the rush of the wind. He glowered at their backs. “I’ll be right back.” He stood up and started to sprint towards them—well, sprint as much as one could sprint in rocky, uneven, and icy landscapes. He grabbed Hades by the arm forcefully—Poseidon marvelled at Percy’s bravery (and idiocy)—and hauled him back in the direction of Poseidon and Nico, face snarled into a scowl. Hades was cursing at him, until he saw Poseidon and Nico on the ground and started to sprint past Percy in their direction. Percy sprinted after him, Zeus hot on his heels.

“What happened?” Hades asked, alarmed, kneeling down beside Nico.

“They must be getting frostbite,” Zeus said, also coming to kneel but beside Poseidon. “At extreme levels, frostbite can prevent the joints from working properly.”

“Why do they have it and no one else does?” Percy asked, eyebrows furrowed and lips pulled into a light frown. Something in his voice hinted that he was annoyed at them, but his tone and face didn’t show it. “I kind of understand Nico since he’s only experienced a few winters, but why Dad?”

“Well, he had to carry Nico for a little bit,” Jason said, examining Poseidon and using his words a little too harshly to sound like he was just informing Percy. “That probably made his joints even weaker.”

Zeus nodded. “And he spends half his life on the beach, Mount Olympus, or inside in general.” His words were informing, but he still managed to slip a little bit of an accusatory tone in them.

“Well, we need to get them to warmth,” Hazel said.

“We need to get this quest over with,” Hades responded stubbornly, determination in his eyes.

“Um, Hades, I don’t think that we can fight without two members of our team,” Poseidon said.

“Why would we have to fight without you?” Hades asked with a glare.

Poseidon shifted uncomfortably. “Well, I’m not even close to being able to fight right now…”

“Well considering you can’t make it through the easiest part of this segment of the quest, you might not be as capable as I assured you you were, and we might not actually need you,” Hades said hotly.

And with those 35 words, all of the work Poseidon had with getting more confident in himself abandoned him.

Hades quickly slapped a hand over his mouth afterwards, a clear sign of regret, but the damage was done. Poseidon looked away.
“Well done, hothead,” Zeus snarled. “No one’s gonna believe your lies anymore.” Hades flinched as if burned.

Poseidon’s blood ran cold.

‘Your lies’.

Poseidon felt his world crumble apart. How long had Hades been falsely comforting him? Poseidon stumbled to crawl backwards, and the team looked at him. “How long?” he choked out. “How long have you been lying to make me feel better?”

“I wasn’t…” Hades’ voice broke. “I wasn’t lying…”

“Please,” Zeus snarled out, glaring at Hades and then turning his fiery gaze back to Poseidon. “He’s been lying all his life. He probably still hates you.”

Those words stung more than Hades’ original ones. Hades also flinched back, but Poseidon refused to acknowledge it.

He hates you. He hates you. He hates you.

HehatesyouHehatesyouHehatesyou.

“Don’t listen to him, Poseidon,” Hades begged. “Please. I don’t hate you, I haven’t for years…”

Lies, lies, lies.

He hates you. He hates you. He hates you.

“You’re so fucking worthless. There’s enough proof to show that no one cares about you, Poseidon. I meant Paul.

I wish he’d just kill himself. Save us the burden.

I swear, with how much of a fuck up he is, he can’t even count to thirty.

Sometimes I wish he’d died in the war.

If I had known how much of a fuck up he’d turn out to be, Hades would still be an Olympian.

Or maybe he was too busy fucking everyone’s lives up because of his goddamn stupidity to make an attempt to talk to me.

And even more hypocritical you’d call me an idiot.
Because you really don’t do much for anyone here, and Percy can do everything you can do, and now more.

He’s not my friend if I don’t like him.

Because you are easily replaceable, and if you don’t get your act together you can get your ass back to New York.

He doesn’t do anything for us, he’s just deadweight.

He felt a lump lodge in his throat. Tears built in his eyes until his waterline couldn't hold them anymore and they streamed down his face. The water turned ice cold immediately. He bit his lip to try to prevent sobbing, but against his consent his shoulders started to shake as he let out small, ugly sobs. He heard a chorus of gasps from the demigods, and felt Hades and Zeus rush up to him. “Poseidon, I’m sorry,” Zeus said. “Fuck, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean...I didn’t...” Poseidon let out another sob and pushed ahead of him.

They hate you. They hate you. They hate you.

TheyhateyouTheyhateyouTheyhateyou.

He bit his tongue roughly and refused to let any more noise escape him. Hades rushed forward and stood in front of him. He put his hand on his shoulders firmly and stopped Poseidon from rushing forward. “Wait,” he said. “Please. Wait.” Poseidon didn’t move away but looked determinedly straight ahead, right at the dip of Hades’s collarbones. “Please, Poseidon, I didn’t...I never lied to you, you’re a valuable part of the team, I swear. We need you...please. I didn’t mean any of it, it was just Chaos making me say things…”

Lies, lies, lies.

People are rudely honest when they’re angry.

They hate you. They hate you. They hate you.

“Please, Poseidon, answer me.”

Poseidon’s fist curled. “And what do you want me to answer with, huh?” he asked, glaring up at Hades, tears still brimming in his eyes. “What, am I supposed to fucking believe you? Beg my pardon if I don’t trust someone who said that I’m fucking worthless and nobody cares about me, continuously apologizes but doesn’t make any attempt to fix their actions, and acts like I’m a fucking idiot! ” His voice was getting louder and louder until it finally cracked on the last words.

“But, I did fix my actions...” Hades said desperately. “Poseidon, Chaos is manipulating all of our emotions, you wouldn’t react this dramatically any other time...”

“Oh, I’m acting fucking dramatic?” Poseidon shoved Hades’ chest, which turned out to just cause him more embarrassment because Hades didn’t even move a millimetre. “I thought I was just kindly telling you to go fuck yourself because you said that you don’t need me.”

You are being dramatic. He’s telling the truth and you’re overreacting. He doesn’t need you. Nobody needs you.

“Dad, c’mon, you’re making us all uncomfortable...” Percy said, crossing his arms. Poseidon turned to him, more tears swirling in his eyes. “Well nothing has changed much then, has
“It?” he asked bitterly. “You don’t have to pretend to like me, Percy. You have Paul as your dad.”

Percy flinched. “Dad, c’mon, you know that’s not what I meant…”

Poseidon shook his head. “Just forget it guys, I’ll stick to the back during the fight so I don’t fuck up anything else.” He pushed past Hades with his eyes trained on the ground.

“Okay, you can stop you’re pity party,” Zeus said, temper kicking in again. “We already told you that you’re an important part of this team, maybe you should stop looking for attention and believe it. Or better yet, actually do something to prove our reassurances.”

Poseidon felt his heartstrings try to pull themselves apart, his chest exploding with pain. “Yeah, okay,” he said softly, a fountain of tears spilling from his eyes. “Maybe I will.”

The best way you’re ever going to help this team is to kill yourself.

“Dad…?” Percy asked. “Are you okay now?”

“I’m fine.” He wasn’t. His voice broke on the last word.

“You’re not fine.”

“It doesn’t matter.”

“Yes it does…”

“Let’s get this quest over with.”

The group started to walk again. The demigods kept a very healthy distance away from Poseidon. Hades and Zeus came to fall into step with him, so he kept his head down to hide the fact that hundreds of teardrops were still falling from his eyes. Poseidon could hear the demigods whispering behind his back. He closed his eyes tightly, but reopened them when he was almost tripped. Hades caught him and steadied him, but Poseidon quickly retracted his hand from Hades’s grip on it.

Hades frowned. “Hey...look at me, Poseidon.”

“No.”

“Look at me.”

“No.”

Hades scowled and swooped down to Poseidon’s level to see his face, which tears were still flowing freely down. Hades’s eyes softened. “Oh, Poseidon…” He reached forward to pull him in for a hug, but Poseidon pushed him away, snarling.

“Don’t touch me.” He stalked past Hades again, ignoring the snow and wind that created pain and numbness all across his body.

In two days, Chaos’s mist would be swirling on top of Mt. Olympus, and this stupid quest would be over.

Poseidon hoped that he was going to be the one to exhale his final breath.
Chapter End Notes

sorry
Next chapter will be mostly Hades angst, and then it will be action and fighting and yeah idk
Also! For the Hades angst, would you guys mind if I made it from Hades's point of view? Or do you want me to just stick strictly to Poseidon's POV? Let me know plz bc I'm planning to do it from Hades's POV but if you guys wouldn't like that then I don't want you to be disappointed
angstangstangstangstangst part 3

Chapter Summary

angst lmao

Chapter Notes

TRIGGER WARNING!
an almost suicide attempt/suicidal thoughts

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on: ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: ‘Poseidon hoped that he was going to be the one to exhale his final breath.’

***Hades’ Point of View****

“Look at me,” Hades said, frowning at Poseidon. He could’ve sworn he saw tears.

“No,” Poseidon responded stubbornly, though his voice was too weak to be normal.

“Look at me,” he repeated.

“No.”

Irritation bloomed in his chest. Of course Poseidon would be like this. Wasn’t he always? Stubborn and annoying as hell.

Hades stopped his train of thought with a scowl. Chaos was turning him into an asshole, and he really wasn’t appreciating it. He put his hands on Poseidon’s shoulders and swooped down to his level.

Sure enough, big, salty droplets were leaking from his green eyes. So unlike his own, yet so similar at the same time. They were red rimmed and puffy, and as Hades looked further into it, he noticed that something in his eyes had changed. He suppressed a shiver. It was like seeing a row of shiny new cars and then randomly seeing an old, beat up one with a matt paint job. He recognized that look, because he saw it in his own reflection for almost his whole life. “Oh, Poseidon…” he said softly, brokenly. He reached forward to bring his brother—his little brother —into a hug, wanting nothing more than to keep him in an embrace and get him away from this stupid quest and his and Zeus’s stupid actions. He didn’t care that it was out of character, he didn’t care that he never enjoyed hugs, he didn’t care if he made himself uncomfortable, all he cared about was getting Poseidon to forgive him—getting Poseidon happy.

He didn’t expect—or maybe he was just denying that he did expect—the snarl and shove away.
“Don’t touch me,” Poseidon bit out harshly. He pushed past him and stalked forward.

Hades watched him go, his arm still extended for the hug, his heart dropping to the pit of his stomach. Guilt churned in his gut almost painfully.

*Looks like you fucked yet another thing up, Hades. Great job. This time it was in a week! That’s a new record, you should be really proud of yourself there, buddy. He cringed at his own internal voice.*

“Really guys?” Percy asked angrily. Hades turned to look down at Percy, an almost exact replica of his father, who had his fists curled and shoulders tensed. His eyes were ablaze with anger and his face was twisted into a scowl. “You’re both assholes, do you know that?”

“Perce…” Jason said, coming to put a hand on Percy’s shoulder.

“No, Jase, let me handle this,” he shrugged Jason’s shoulder off, who gave up with a defeated sigh. Percy’s eyes never left Zeus and Hades. “What the fuck did he ever do to you, huh?”

“He…” Zeus started angrily, and then trailed off.

“Fucking exactly,” Percy snarled. “And what are you gonna say, you apologized? Yeah, well telling someone that they haven’t actually proved that they’re not a waste of space isn’t the best fucking way to apologize!”

“Stop yelling, Perseus,” Zeus said, eyes hardening.

“Fucking make me,” Percy spat, glaring daggers.

Zeus glared right back. “Well in case you haven’t noticed, your father still thinks that you hate him, so stop acting like you’re the perfect little angel here.”

Percy’s fists curled even tighter. “Okay, yeah, I need to work on a few things. At least I can admit that and not act like everything is the victim’s fault!”

“The victim?” Zeus huffed out a humourless laugh. “Please, your father’s just acting dramatic, as usual.”

“Zeus,” Hades felt the need to interject. “You’re really going to regret saying this stuff later…”

“No, no,” Percy let out a humourless, terrifying laugh. “Let him continue. I’d love to hear it.”

Hades watched the scene unfold, dread at what was to come next pooling in his stomach. Zeus’s eyes were just as angry as Percy’s. “We assured him that he was a decent part of this team multiple times, he should believe it. By now he’s just looking for attention.”

“Looking for attention?” Percy asked, teeth bared angrily. “When one of the most powerful men in the world is fucking crying, I don’t think he’s just looking for attention!”

“Well in case you haven’t noticed, Hades and I are also a few of the most powerful men in the world. Do you see us bawling our eyes out like fucking toddlers?”

Hades felt the unquenchable need to defend Poseidon immediately, but Percy beat him to the punch. “Well in case you haven’t noticed, you guys weren’t the ones being called worthless and a deadweight!”

“Oh, so we weren’t the ones being told the truth. Shame.”
Those words changed Percy into something so terrifying Hades almost didn’t recognize him for a few seconds. Not literally of course, but almost. His once green eyes flashed blood red, his snarl turned deadly, and his whole body flexed and tensed. He started to walk up to where Hades and Zeus were standing in long, fast strides. Hades backed up, a little fear creeping into his mind.

Percy stalked right up to Zeus, only up to his nose, and punched him so hard he stumbled back a good five feet.

An eruption of “OOOHH”’s came from most of the demigods while Hades rushed up to the two of them and stood between them.

“GUYS!” he yelled, stopping any further blows immediately. “STOP IMMEDIATELY!”

Percy reluctantly stopped his other charge forward and relented to just glaring daggers at Zeus.

“Seriously?” Hades asked Percy.

Percy glared up at him. Despite being only up to his shoulders, Percy was still pretty intimidating. “Oh, don’t even get me started on you,” he growled. “Why the fuck did you tell him that when you’re the only one who could talk to him? Are you so fucking twisted that you think you can get away with that? Gods, do you know how many times I defended you at Camp or during the lessons where we learned about Greek Mythology in school?” He let out a dark, humourless laugh. “Guess I was defending an evil bastard.”

Evil.

EvilEvilEvil.

He thinks you’re evil.

“Hey, don’t talk to my dad like that,” Nico said, glaring at Percy.

“You’re dad?” Percy asked sharply. “You’re still going to call him that after everything he’s done? He kidnapped my fucking mother, Nico. When I was twelve years old. He told you that you should’ve died instead of your sister, he fucking hates you, he hates everyone!” He turned back to Hades coolly. “Good thing everyone hates him.”

Pain.

Pain in his chest, fogginess in his brain. Did he really think that?

Does everyone think that?

“Hey,” Hazel said angrily. Hades looked at her, only to find her glaring daggers, a sight he never thought he’d see. “Don’t you dare talk to my brother like that.”

“Like wha…” Percy trailed off as he looked at Nico, who was staring determinedly at the ground ahead of him, tears brimming dangerously close to the edge of his waterline. “Oh shit, Nico, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean it in the way that you should have actually died instead of your sister, that’s just what he said…”

More tears built up in Nico’s eyes, and a single teardrop slipped down his cheek.

“Oh, great job,” Thalia said, snarling. Percy cringed.

Jason left Percy’s side and went over to try and comfort Nico. Percy looked at him desperately
while he glared at him. “Jase…?”

Jason stared at him coldly. “I think it’s time you start thinking before you say stuff and stop trying to be ‘sassy’ all the time. You’re just a dickhead.”

Percy stared at him until he realized that he wasn’t going to take back his words and tears brimmed at his eyes too. His bottom lip trembled as he sucked in a shaky breath.

Jason immediately frowned. “Perce…?”

“You’re finally gonna do it, huh?” he asked, voice breaking.

“Do what?” Jason asked, confused.

“Break it off with me.”

Jason remained silent.

Percy took a deep, shuddering breath. “Okay…yeah, okay…It’s fine I knew it would happen eventually…”

“Perce…”

“It’s fine, Jason. I know you’ve wanted to get back together with Piper for awhile now, anyway. It’s not like anyone stays interested in me for long.”

“Perce…”

“Oh, what is this, a fucking tear fest?” Zeus asked, wiping at his bleeding nose and glaring daggers.

“Really, Zeus?” Hades asked with a glare. “Can’t you just not interject and make everybody feel worse?”

“Oh you’re one to talk,” he spat, glaring. “In case you haven’t noticed, ever since Poseidon was forced to hang out with you when we got turned into mortals, his depression’s gotten worse. Coincidence? I don’t fucking think so.”

Hades felt his world start to fall apart.

He was right, wasn’t he? Poseidon hadn’t cut in two years, and as soon as he came in he fucked everything up.

Are you really that surprised?

Zeus kept going.

“You try to make us feel bad for banishing you, and yet you fucking give us reasons every. Second. You’re. Still. Breathing! God can’t you just go fucking kill yourself?”

Hades felt a fragment of glass pierce at his heart.

The angered look in Zeus’s eyes immediately disappeared, replaced by one of horror. “Shit, Hades, I didn’t mean that…”

Hades’s chest felt like it was tearing itself to shreds. “Yeah, yeah you did,” he said softly. He felt wet tears pool his eyes for the first time in over two thousand years.
Zeus closed his eyes tightly. “No. No I didn’t, I swear. I’m sorry…”

“What’s going on?” A soft voice asked. Hades looked to see Poseidon standing there, lips pulled into a frown.

Zeus turned towards him a little too quickly for it to be normal, and Poseidon flinched. “I’m sorry,” he said quickly, “I’ll go if you want me to, I didn’t mean to intrude. Fuck, you hate me, I’ll just leave, sorry.”

Hades’s heart broke ten thousand times over again.

He’s like that because of you.

He’s like that because of you.

He’s like that because of you.

Everyone hates you. Everyone hates you. Everyone hates you.

He opened his eyes and wiped away the tears forcefully. He put on a determined face while he was falling apart inside. “Let’s get this quest over with.”

He pushed ahead of everybody, wanting to put as much distance as he could away from them.

They all wish you’d stayed in the underworld.

What kind of leader are you?

You’re tearing this team apart.

You’re no better than what all the mortals think of you as.


***Poseidon’s Point of View***

Poseidon heard shouting behind him. It was distant, and he knew that he was way farther ahead of the group than he probably should be. He turned around quickly.

Maybe you should start trying to make up for all the stuff you’ve fucked up.

Poseidon crossed his arms uncomfortably for a moment before heading down to the rest of the group. He uncrossed his arms and put on a fakely confident face. You can do this, Poseidon. C’mon. Just ask what’s going on.

After a moment, he reached the group. He frowned as he heard Zeus apologizing profusely. He closed his eyes for a moment and took a deep breath. “What’s going on?” he asked. His voice came out a lot softer than he intended it to. Zeus whipped around way too fast, an unreadable expression on his face.

And with that look, Poseidon regretted ever coming back to check on things. He didn’t even acknowledge the blood on Zeus’s face in his flash of self hatred.
They hate you, remember?

He flinched. “I’m sorry, I’ll go if you want me to, I didn’t mean to intrude. Fuck, you hate me, I’ll just leave, sorry.” He hated how he sounded, but he couldn’t stop the words spilling from his lips. He looked up to see Hades wiping at his eyes, before a determined look fell upon his face. But something was wrong about it. His jaw was set, his eyebrows were furrowed, and he was looking ahead, but his eyes gave him away. They were sad, angry... broken. Hades shoved past everyone without a second glance back at him or the others. “Let’s get this quest over with.” He walked in long strides, and in a matter of seconds was metres ahead of the group. Poseidon watched him go, his heart dropping into his stomach.

He didn’t apologize.

Can you blame him? You shut him out the first time.

God, do you fuck up every good thing in your life?

“You need to control your son,” Zeus snarled at him. Poseidon looked at him and finally took in that the bottom of his nose, lips, and chin were covered in dark red blood.

Poseidon frowned, coming over to him. “What happened?” He reached up, frowning in concern. His insecurities were momentarily forgotten as he examined his brother’s bleeding (but not broken) nose.

Zeus growled and pushed his hand away. “Don’t touch me while you cry like a fucking baby.” Poseidon flinched back as if burned. He didn’t even realize that there had been tears swimming in his eyes. It seemed that they were almost constantly there whenever he was around his younger brother.

Zeus continued. “And your son thought it would be a great idea to punch me in the nose.”

“He was insulting you!” Percy defended himself hotly. “I couldn’t just stand there and let him tear you apart!”

Poseidon frowned. “Percy, I appreciate it, I really do, but I wasn’t there, and that was really unnecessary and immature...”

Both Zeus and Percy didn’t like that.

“You appreciate him punching me when you insulted Hades for being immature for starting a physical fight? God, you’re a hypocrite.”

“Oh, so you’re angry at me for standing up for you. World’s best Dad here guys.”

“And of course you acted dramatically when I punched you in the stomach.”

“You fucking what?”

Poseidon flinched back, that reminding him. People are rudely honest when they’re angry.

How long as he wanted to hit you?

“It’s nothing, Percy,” Poseidon mumbled. “Don’t worry about me, I’ll be out of your life again soon.”

“Oh, you’re going to leave me again, then. Of course you are, what else can you do?”
Poseidon stared down at his shoes. “I’m sorry, Percy...I had to…”

Percy took a deep breath. “Fuck, I know.” He pinched the bridge of his nose. “I know you had to leave, I know I shouldn’t be snapping like this, just...ugh, fuck Chaos.”

“Can we all just try to figure some stuff out?” Hazel asked softly. “I get that we’re all angry or sad, but continuing to argue isn’t going to get us anywhere. In fact, it’s making the situation worse.”

“She’s right,” Jason said. “I feel like shit right now, and arguing isn’t helping.”

Poseidon didn’t think he’d ever hear Jason swear, but then again he never thought he’d be a seventeen year old mortal. If he could take one thing out of this whole experience, it’s that anything really can happen. It’s just not always good.

Thalia got a faint, tiny smile on her face. “Can we sit down?”

Poseidon flashed back briefly to the moment back in New York when she said those exact words. Gods, that seemed like lifetimes ago. He gave a small smile and nodded. He sat down on the path after clearing a small circle from the snow, shifting uncomfortably when no one said anything. He decided to start. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Do you eve—” Zeus started hotly, but cut himself off. He pinched the bridge of his nose. “Sorry.”

“Well, there’s a start,” Hazel said, smiling encouragingly.

“Yeah,” Percy said sweetly. “Why don’t you apologize to my dad for being a complete asshole?”

“Percy,” Jason warned. “Don’t.”

Percy looked away from him quickly, and Poseidon didn’t miss the flash of regret across Jason’s face.

Zeus took a deep breath. “No, he’s right, I’ve been an asshole.”

Percy smiled smugly.

Zeus sighed. “Look, I’m not going to lie and say that I haven’t actually thought these things about you, Poseidon—”

Immediate outrage sparked from the demigods. Even Thalia and Nico, who weren’t all too fond of Poseidon. Zeus held up a hand to silence them. “Let me finish.”

They all nodded begrudgingly, and he continued. “As I was saying, I do have those thoughts about you.”

Poseidon stared at his shoelaces like they were the most fascinating thing in the world.

*He thinks you’re stupid.*

*He thinks you’re deadweight.*

*He doesn’t want you here.*

“But,” he continued. Poseidon looked up, “I only feel it about half as much as my temper might convince you to believe.”
“Huh?” Percy asked.

He sighed. “So yes, I do believe that Poseidon provides less to the team than the rest of us.” He looked uncomfortable saying it, but that didn’t make it sting any less. The demigods were about to fly up in outrage again, but Zeus held up a hand to stop their protests. “But, I do not think that you don’t play any part in this team. You keep us light-hearted, provide us hope. You’re kind of like the comic relief, in a way. And that’s important to any group of people.”

Poseidon wasn’t trying to be picky. He really wasn’t.

So yes, that was better than not providing the team anything, but...what did the ‘comic relief’ do? That meant he wasn’t good at fighting, planning, leading, following...he was just...optimistic. He wasn’t even that funny.

But he felt so selfish wanting to not accept the apology. It felt like he was just scrambling to play the victim card, but he swore he wasn’t. It just really didn’t feel like an apology, just an excuse. He didn’t even say sorry, just explained his actions. But maybe that was the best he could ever get out of his brother. Maybe all he would ever be is the unfunny comic relief.

“It’s okay,” he lied. “I know you didn’t mean it so harshly.”

Lies, Lies, Lies.

“See, this is progress,” Hazel said, looking between them, a soft, happy glint in her golden eyes. “Jason, would you like to figure stuff out with Percy?”

“Yeah,” he said softly, not looking at Percy. “I don’t know what you’re on about with Piper, Perce...We broke up, and it was her decision. Something about wanting to be free and not tying herself down. And I know you’re not getting back with Annabeth, Perce. You’re breakup was mutual, you started to fall out of love. That’s normal, especially when you’re reminders of traumatic events for each other. I love you now, Perce.” He finally looked up. “And I think I always will.”

Thalia made gagging noises as Percy smiled wetly and said “I love you” back. “God, get a room.”

“We aren’t even remotely touching each other.”

“My ears are bleeding, Jackson. Bleeding.”

“Oh, shut up. You had to sit through Zeus and Poseidon apologizing.”

“That’s different, they’re not dating.”

“How do you know that?”

“Because they argue 24/7.”

“What if that’s just their relationship?”

“I thought you shipped Hades and Poseidon.”

“True. OTP.”

“Oh gods, what is wrong with you?”

“Don’t be one of those people, Thals. Accept your inner multishipper. Hasidon for life.”
“I don’t ‘ship’ my uncle with anyone, thanks.”

“Why not? He’s great shipping material.”

“This is true,” Nico piped up.

“Oh, not you too,” Thalia groaned.

Nico snorted. “I’m just kidding, Percy’s crazy.”

“You’re just denying the fact that my dad is more shippable than your dad.”


Poseidon had no idea what was going on. “Why are you ‘shipping’ me with Hades? What does that even mean? Are you wrapping us up in an envelope and sending us to Tim Buck Two? What is an OTP?” His eyes narrowed. “And are you insulting my height by saying I’m more shippable because I’m smaller?”

The demigod exploded with laughter at that. Poseidon had no idea what was going on, but he was glad that all of the tension that was previously in the air was sucked out as if it never existed. He still had his doubts with Zeus, but maybe, just maybe, it would get better.

***Hades’s Point of View***

He heard laughter behind him. He frowned and turned around quickly, only to see the rest of the group sitting in a circle, laughing their heads off. They were a good fifty feet away from him, but their loud and obnoxious laughs echoed throughout the space between them. Hades watched them silently, an unpleasant feeling blossoming in his chest.

They were laughing around each other.

They had forgiven each other.

All he had to do was leave.

He watched them for a few moments longer until he finally couldn’t take it anymore and turned away.

_They’d be better off without you._

The whole quest he had had that assumption, but he never had any real evidence to back it up. And now he did. A tight, unpleasant feeling coiled in his gut and chest. It felt like stones were being dropped into the pit of his stomach, and that his heartstrings were being played like a harp. He didn’t cry, he refused to. But he was falling apart inside, and he wasn’t sure how long he could last as the team’s outcast. It just occurred to him now that he hadn’t tried to apologize to Poseidon again, despite having been given a chance. A wave of guilt crashed into him and mixed with the feeling in his gut.

_Does everyone hate you or does everyone just not want you here?_
They reached a cave one hour later. Most of the team had caught up and were only ten feet behind him, so when he had dipped into the cave, they had all peaked in curiously before following.

He walked over to the far right corner and sat, looking straight at the ground a foot ahead of him. Zeus placed Poseidon down on the opposite wall of the cave from where he was previously supporting his weight. He must’ve collapsed again. Jason placed Nico down as far as he could get away from the opening of the cave as well. Thalia, Hazel, and Percy walked in last and sat down as far as they could away from the snow.

The cave wasn’t tall by any means, and Hades’ head almost touched the ceiling when he was sitting down. But it was long and deep, so it provided a good shelter from the cold. It was made of hard, cold stone and the pebbles that littered the ground stuck up at Hades’s legs. He briefly wondered if there would be any monsters that would attack them, but he pushed the thought away. There were eight of them, and they were all armed.

The eight of them sat in silence for a long time. Hades determinedly looked away from the group the whole time, both mad and upset with them, and also not wanting to push himself onto them when they clearly didn’t want him there. After a long while of uncomfortable silence, Poseidon spoke up again. “So...Um...”

“You’re way with words astounds me,” Zeus said.

“Thank you, brother dearest.”

Hades still heard an underlying tone of sadness to Poseidon’s words, but their joking back and forth still sent him spiralling down, down, down.

Poseidon continued. “Do you think we can start a fire?”

“We don’t have any lighters,” Thalia said absently, staring at the ground. She looked like she was in her own little world.

“Sorry, I missed the part where you’re not a daughter of Zeus and can’t create a spark,” Percy said.

Thalia snapped out of her daze. “Oh yeah, forgot about that.”

“I’ll go get some wood,” Poseidon said, backing up until the cave was tall enough for him to stand. “Hades, would you care to join me?”

Hades looked up at him from his spot on the ground. “Why?”

Poseidon looked uncomfortable. “Just to...talk about some things.”

Hades stared at him blankly. “Like what?”

“I dunno...stuff.”

“Outstanding vocabulary.”

He wasn’t trying to be an asshole. No, really. He wasn’t. He just refused to show his feelings, so his best option was always anger. Anger was safe, anger was familiar.
Poseidon looked away. “Right, sorry. I’ll just go on my own.”

*Wow you made it even worse, Hades. Great fucking job.*

“No, I’ll go.” He moved over until he reached where Poseidon was standing and got up, still having to duck his head a little.

Poseidon looked at him with mild confusion. Nevertheless, he walked to the exit of the cave. “We’ll be back soon,” he called over his shoulders to the others.


“Percy, I swear—”

They exited the cave. The snow had thankfully relented, albeit slightly. It was now just flurries rather than a blizzard. The snow was at least a foot deep, and they struggled to get anywhere. When they finally reached a place where a bunch of old, rotten wood was lying in heaps, Hades spoke up again.

“What did you want to talk about?” he asked, keeping his tone emotionless and picking up a few pieces of wood.

“We never really made up,” Poseidon said, looking anywhere but at him. “The rest of us kind of did, but you weren’t there.”

“I realized that, thanks.”

Poseidon scowled lightly, but still refused to look at him. “Look, we can’t…” He took a deep breath and started over. “After this is over, we’ll be stuck together for a year…maybe.”

“What do you mean maybe?” Hades asked sharply.

“I dunno, forget it,” he said quickly.

Dread pooled in Hades’s stomach. *Does he think that I’m the one that’s going to die?*

*Does he want me to be the one that dies?*

*Probably.*

He couldn’t really physically feel depression. No one could. But he sure as hell felt the wave of side effects hit him like a brick. He suddenly lost all of his energy, his chest ached dully, he lost his ability to differentiate between emotions. He couldn’t feel anything, yet every emotion was hurtling itself at him at high velocity.

Poseidon continued after clearing his throat. “I just think that we need to clear some stuff up.”

“What’s there to clear up?” Hades asked bitingly, self defense kicking in. If you shove them away, they can’t hurt you. He’d been living by that for the past centuries, and he can continue to do so for a long time.

“W——” Poseidon’s cheeks turned an even darker red than the wind already made them. “I just thought…”

“That I was gonna apologize to you,” Hades finished.
He wanted to. Gods, he wanted to. But then he’d get attached, and when he finally…

And when he finally killed himself, that would cause Poseidon more hurt than he was already going through.

**So push him away, Hades. It’s for his own good. Push him away like he pushed you away all those years ago.**

“Well… I was gonna apologize to you too, but that was the plan.” He fiddled with his hands as he tucked some wood under his arm. “I mean, unless you’re not sorry,” he added quickly. “Like if you’re not sorry that makes sense or if you don’t want to apologize since I never accept your apologies and you don’t see the point, then that makes sense to. Gods, that’s really annoying isn’t it? Fuck, okay this was a bad idea. Um, I’m sorry, but you don’t have to say it back—”

“Poseidon.”

“Sorry.”

“I’m not accepting your apology,” Hades said, picking up another piece of firewood. “And I’m sure as hell not giving you one.”

He didn’t miss the flash of hurt across Poseidon’s face, and he wanted to take back his words immediately. But he couldn’t. This was for Poseidon’s sake.

“Why not?” he asked quietly.

He started making stuff up as to why he didn’t want to apologize to him. It’s not like he could just say: **Oh yeah, I’m pushing you away so when I kill myself you won’t be as affected!**

“You never accept any of my apologies and always pull the victim card, I’m not accepting your apology because I know it’s just words without meaning, and I know that you’re just doing this to not get your own feelings hurt again. You’re selfish, Poseidon. And you know it.”

Poseidon was silent for a moment, until his fists curled. “Why are you such an asshole to me?” he asked angrily. “What did I do?”

“You exis—” Okay, that was too harsh. But the damage was done, and Poseidon knew what he was going to say.

His face crumpled, but he stood his ground. “What the fuck is wrong with you? I thought we didn’t hate each other! I thought we were even…friends…” His voice cracked.

“I…”

His demeanor changed and he glowered. “Save it, Hades.” He walked up to him and shoved him harshly on the chest. “I thought I could’ve trusted you! I thought that when we came out of this stupid quest, we could hang out together! Be friends! Be brothers!” He scowled and shoved him again. “Turns out your just as much of an asshole as you always were.”

Hades closed his eyes. He wanted to tell Poseidon, tell him that he was sorry, that he didn’t mean any of the words that came out of his mouth, but he didn’t.

He was already thinking of the highest peak he could jump off of.

“It’s only been a week or so,” Hades said, opening his eyes again coolly. He forced his tone to be
icy. “Do you really think you could go from hating someone to loving someone in a week?”

Poseidon’s eyes shattered.

Hades wanted to take it back. Gods, he wanted to take it back. *You’re such a fucking idiot, can you not do anything right? Now all he’s going to remember you as is an asshole of a brother. An evil brother.*

He hates you. He hates you. He hates you.

“Fuck you,” Poseidon said quietly, voice shaking and eyes watery. He pushed ahead of him, bumping his arm harshly since he couldn’t reach his shoulder.

Hades closed his eyes tightly, trying to keep his tears at bay. *He’s going back to the people that will treat him right. He won’t miss you. Do it. You can’t go back now, there’s no fixing the damage you’ve done.*

He opened his eyes. With a shaky breath, he walked in the opposite direction of the cave where Poseidon was headed. He spotted a small ledge and made his way towards it, the biting cold slapping against his face painfully. It didn’t take him long to reach the edge. He sat down on the cold snow of the rocky peak and looked down.

It was a 50 foot drop.

*They won’t miss you. They hate you.*

*They won’t miss you. They hate you.*

*They won’t miss you. They hate you.*

*You fucked up your relationship with the one person on the team that could stand you.*

*Persephone doesn’t want you.*

*The other gods never wanted you as an Olympian.*

*Nico hates you.*

*The fates probably set up you getting turned into a mortal so you’d finally be able to kill yourself.*

He closed his eyes and scooched closer to the edge. It would all be gone soon.

*God, can’t you just kill yourself? Zeus’s words rang around in his head.*

*He wishes you weren’t an Olympian. He wishes he didn’t have to deal with you.*

*He won’t have to anymore.*

He placed his hands underneath the ledge and pushed.

He felt weightless for a second, with nothing below his feet. *It’s all going to be over soon.* His stomach was already starting to flip from free falling.

Someone grabbed his arm.
He looked up to see Poseidon staring down at him in horror, one arm holding his and the other holding a large rock near the ledge. “Hades!”

Hades stared at him in shock. “Wha—?”

He hauled him up with lots of difficulty. His face screwed up in concentration and his tongue stuck out the corner of his mouth. Hades probably would’ve found it adorable if he wasn’t in this situation.

He let himself get dragged up to safety and then collapsed onto Poseidon when he fell back. Thankfully, he caught himself before he could fully fall onto him. Despite the rather awkward position of lying underneath him, Poseidon wrapped him into a tight hug that made him fall right on top him. Poseidon didn’t seem to mind despite Hades having about twice the amount of muscle as he did.

“Never do that again,” he whispered. “Never, ever, ever, ever do that again. You hear me? Never.”

“Okay,” Hades said, struggling to get out of the hug and sit up. Poseidon allowed him to sit up but didn’t break the hug. Hades sat on his calves and Poseidon still hugged him, burying his face in his chest. He kept on repeating ‘never do that again’ in a quiet, broken voice. Hades hesitantly wrapped his arms around Poseidon as well, shock still coursing through him. But when the fact that Poseidon was hugging him, that Poseidon didn’t want him to die set in, a little hope creeped into his mind.

“You. Little. Shit.” Poseidon said, punching him lightly between the words. “You scared me.”

“Sorry,” Hades said softly, bringing Poseidon even closer. “And not just for that. For everything I’ve ever said or done to hurt you. I just didn’t want you to like me before I…”

Poseidon punched him, and Hades felt a little bit of water on is shirt.

“Oh, don’t cry,” he panicked. “I didn’t mean to make you cry—shit, wait—”

Poseidon just shook his head and hugged him tighter. “Don’t you ever pull any shit like that ever again, do you hear me? I’ll kill you if you do.”

Hades found that rather comical considering his stature, but he nodded nonetheless. “I give you full permission to kill me.”

Poseidon punched him again. “You’re not allowed to make those jokes anymore.”

“But—”

“Zip, nada, nope.” He put his thumb underneath his other four fingers to make a ‘shut your mouth’ gesture with his hand. “You lost that privilege, mister.”

Hades smiled softly and wrapped his arms around Poseidon tighter. Now that he thought about it, he was being irrational. He had to stay alive, the underworld would go chaotic without someone ruling over it. Nico didn’t hate him anymore, and neither did Poseidon. He still had a lot to live for.

And as Hades looked down at Poseidon practically curled up in his lap, he decided that he wasn’t going to leave him any time soon.
Chapter End Notes

sorry...but it was a cute ending, right?
Heh...
In other news, it's my birthday! On Valentines Day...oof that's embarrassing lmao
Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “And as Hades looked down at Poseidon practically curled up in his lap, he decided that he wasn’t going to leave him any time soon.”

The eight of them huddled together for warmth that night, with three blankets spread across the group. Hades and Zeus were on the outside, while the rest were huddled together in the middle. A fire was slowly dying in front of them, its dying embers casting an orangish glow throughout the space of the cave. Poseidon and Hades had come to an unsaid, mutual agreement that they wouldn’t tell the demigods what had happened. They figured that Zeus ought to know, but once they got away from Chaos and everything cooled down.

Poseidon looked around the cave silently. As far as he could tell, everyone else was sleeping soundly. For some reason, he just couldn’t get to sleep. He was perfectly warm, with Hades on one side of him and Percy on the other, but sleep just wouldn’t take him in. So he relented to just gazing up at the rocky ceiling of the cave, bored.

“What are you thinking about?” Hades asked him quietly.

He jumped. Percy grunted next to him, but soon slipped into comfortable sleep yet again. He turned away from Percy and looked back at Hades. “You scared me,” he whispered.

“Sorry.”

“And I wasn’t thinking about anything,” Poseidon continued quietly. “Just bored.”

Hades hummed quietly. “You should try to get some sleep. Close your eyes.”

“That’s what I was doing.”

“You weren’t closing your eyes.”

Poseidon sighed. “True.”
He curled a little into himself and leaned his head back against the cold stone of the cave. He closed his eyes and exhaled slowly. He stayed like that for a little while, but peaked one eye open when he felt Hades staring at him. Hades quickly looked away and leaned his head against the rock behind them as well, closing his eyes. Poseidon opened both of his eyes and glanced at Hades unsurely, before hesitantly moving over and leaning his head against his shoulder. He didn’t look at Hades and stayed in that position with baited breath. Eventually, he felt Hades lean his own head against Poseidons. Poseidon let out a breath and smiled, closing his eyes.

It felt oddly nice. Well, as nice as it could feel when one was sandwiched between his older brother and his son in a cramped cave with a bunch of kids he’d never met on a quest that he could potentially die from.

Hey, at least no one hated each other...at the moment.

***Time Break***

“I AIN’T GOT NO SLEEP CAUSE ‘A Y’ALL! Y’ALL NEVER GONNA SLEEP ‘CAUSE ‘A ME!”

Poseidon blinked his eyes open and squinted at Percy, who was standing in a half-squat position, clapping his hands together and making the most ridiculous facial expression Poseidon had ever seen. “What on earth—”

“If you make one more vine reference Jackson I swear to the gods above I will strangle you with your own organs.” Thalia sat up and rubbed at her eyes, yawning.

“How do you know what vines are?” Percy asked, stopping his clapping and returning to a normal standing position.

“Because I’m not an uncultured swine.”

“I see.”

“Oh no,” Hades groaned. “Not these weird meme things again.”

“Since when does my dad know what memes are?” Nico asked, sitting up and running a hand through his hair tiredly. The bags under his eyes were even darker than they had been.

“Since your cousin here decided to inform me.” Hades pointed at Percy and gently pushed Poseidon’s head off his shoulder. He moved over until he could stand without hitting his head and got up beside Percy.

“Help me up,” Poseidon said, reaching his hand forward. Hades rolled his eyes and dragged him by the hand like he weighed as much as a feather. He stopped when Poseidon was right by his feet and let go. Poseidon just sighed and stared up at him from his place on the ground. “I don’t wanna get up.”

“And I don’t wanna live. We don’t always get what we want now do we?”

Poseidon stood up and punched him in the shoulder again. “I said no making those jokes.”
“But it was a joke! *I* said a joke! *Me!* Lord of the Underworld! And it was kinda good!”

“Would you like a medal?”

“Yes!”

“It *is* progress,” Zeus said, yawning and getting up to stand beside them. “Why don’t you want him to make those jokes?”

Well, Poseidon had gotten himself into a little pickle hadn’t he. “Erm...because if he didn’t live than he’d just be back to the place he was before and it wouldn’t make much difference.”

“Well, kinda, but he—”

“Moving swiftly forward,” Poseidon said, cutting him off. “We should get going so we’re there in time for tomorrow.” He looked outside, and saw a blanket of snow across the landscape, but none falling from the sky. “It’s not even snowing!” he said cheerily.

The others shared a glance before shrugging and walking out of the cave to continue the trek up the mountain.

***Time Break***

“Oh thank the gods ,” Percy said, wiping sweat from his forehead.

“You’re welcome.”

“Really dad?”

“Yes.”

They finally reached the final slope before the peak of the mountain. The peak stood proudly with small clouds encircling it. It’s orangy brown rock looked gloomy with the overcast, and snow lightly covered all around it.

To mortals, that’s all it would be. Just a peak. But to them, on top of it was an extremely large, circular marble floor that had a marble staircase on the far end. Poseidon couldn’t see up the stairs all the way since he was below the floor, but knew where they lead. Up to the old castles and temples that they had abandoned all those years ago. Poseidon could see the small opening in the marble where they would climb through to get on the floor, but the stairs that they usually took were no longer there. They’d just have to climb it to get on it. The whole circle had large, white rocks that were a lot uglier than the last time Poseidon remembered them.

“We’ll camp out until the mist comes tomorrow,” Hades said. “Once it senses us, hopefully it will try to form. Remember, you can only stab it if it’s in a solid form. Don’t waste your energy stabbing at mist like I’m sure some of you will do.” He looked at Poseidon, but had a joking twinkle in his eye. Poseidon just rolled his eyes with a small smile.

“What if it doesn’t form a solid?” Percy asked, leaning against a rock wall.

“Well, we’ll have to retreat and wait until it’s strong enough.” Hades looked up at the bottom of the marble floor dramatically, and Poseidon wished very much that wind would come and blow all
of their hair to make it like a movie.

“That’s so boring.” Thalia rolled her eyes. “Why can’t we just try to stab wherever it’s coming out of?”

“Well, that’s actually not a terrible idea,” Hades admitted. Thalia smiled smugly. “But,” he continued and Thalia’s face fell, “it could potentially not be ‘coming out’ of somewhere, it could just be forming.”

“Okay great, yada yada yada,” Percy said. “I have a question.”

“Mayonnaise isn’t an instrument, Kelp Head.”

“Shut up, Pinecone Face. I was going to ask how we’re breathing so easily from all the way up here.”

“I have no idea,” Poseidon said with a shrug.

“Big surprise,” Hades said sarcastically.

“Wow, rude.”

“It’s probably because we’re so close to Chaos,” he continued.

“Huh? Why would that mean anything?” Percy asked.

“Well it’s the earth, isn’t it?”

“Right, forgot about that.”

“Like father like son. Anyway, we should find a place to rest.” Hades pushed ahead of the group and walked a little bit away from the peak.

“Why are we going backwards?” Jason asked, following him regardless.

“There’s probably nothing up there. We need to find a cave, and we saw one a little bit back.”

“That was like half an hour ago,” Poseidon whined.

Hades snorted. “You want me to carry you?” he asked mockingly.

“Yes.”

Hades walked over and scooped him up in bridal carry.

Poseidon screamed. “YOU LITTLE SHIT! I WAS JOKING, PUT ME DOWN!”

Hades just shrugged and continued walking. Poseidon could hear the demigods laughter behind them and felt his face heat up in embarrassment. “I hate you,” he mumbled, burying his face in his chest.

“I know.”

“I don’t actually.”

“I know. I’m not made of glass.”
“Right, sorry.”

Percy started humming ‘Here Comes the Bride’, but quickly stopped when a loud ‘SMACK’ rang through the air.

***Time Break***

“It’s the final countdown! Duh duh duh duhh, duh duh duh duh duhh—”

“Percy, if you don’t shut up I am going to murder you in your sleep.”

“I’m offended.”

“I’m deadly.”

“Oof.”

“We’re about to go to battle, and you two are doing this?” Hades asked, unimpressed. They were standing on the marble floor, waiting for Chaos.

“We’re used to it,” Percy said. “Besides, we still have, like, another hour—”

Mist gathered so fast on the peak of the mountain it was like it had always there. The thick, whitish grey substance swirled as slow as cold molasses on the peak of the mountain, but the rate at which it was growing was faster than a race car. Poseidon had to take a few steps back because of the pure force of the wind it was emitting. He quickly reached into his pocket and got out his little ball, giving it a squeeze. It transformed into a foot and a half long bronze sword, fitting perfectly in his grip. The others unsheathed their weapons, standing in battle ready positions.

“Nevermind, we don’t have an hour,” Percy said flatly.

“It’s showtime,” Thalia said, ignoring Percy and grinning maniacally.

Poseidon shared one glance with Hades before shouting: “Remember the plan!” and charging forward. The others weren’t far off behind him, and Jason immediately flew above to higher ground.

Battle was exactly the same as Poseidon remembered it. The adrenaline coursing through his veins, the feeling of every nerve being set on fire, his heart rate skyrocketing to astronomic levels. His feet were on autopilot, driving him right towards the mist.

He went over the plan in his head.

*Wait for it to get to human form.*

*Get to higher ground.*

*Predict its movements.*

*Stab it in the head or heart.*

*Slice and dice it.*
You got this, Poseidon. C’mon.

A rumbling sound abruptly started, seeming to come from the ground. It was so loud that Poseidon had to drop his sword to cover his ears. He collapsed onto the shaking ground with a yell, wetness coating his fingers. He removed them from his ears to see bright red blood coating the tips.

Finally, it stopped. Poseidon was left with a loud and painful ringing in his ears. He looked up to see that everyone else had also collapsed, and were either clutching their ears or their head. He saw Hades yell some words, but he couldn’t hear anything except the ringing left over in his ears. Hades yelled again, but this time Poseidon knew it was aimed at him. He looked at him in utter confusion, having no idea what he was saying. Finally, the ringing died down, and Poseidon could make out his voice. “Watch out!”

Poseidon turned around to see the mist no less than three metres away from him. “Holy shit!” He grabbed his sword and backed up as quickly as he could. When he was a safe distance away, he looked at the others. They all looked pretty awkward, having no idea what to do until the mist retracted and then reformed. This time, it wasn’t a stepped-on tornado form, but a shape somewhat resembling a foot.

Now, Poseidon had known that when the others had said that Chaos would be huge, they were telling the truth. But he never really grasped how huge until he saw it right in front of him. The semi-formed pinky toe was at least a foot high and two feet long. The whole messed up foot shape was at least five feet high and eight feet across.

That was one foot. One.

Poseidon got into a fighter’s position as well as Thalia, Nico, Hazel, Zeus, and Percy, but Hades yelled at them to halt their movements.

“Remember what I said! Don’t waste your energy stabbing at mist! This thing isn’t formed yet, nor is it solid! Be patient!”

Poseidon reluctantly stopped his advances. The mist started to grow taller and taller, and slowly but surely, the foot got more and more detail. Now it had toenails and the actual correct shape of a human foot. The mist started to swirl up into an ankle, and Poseidon felt a little fear mix in with the adrenaline. Barely halfway up the calf was 11 feet tall. He wanted to back up, but stood his ground.

They all waited with their hearts trying to beat out of their ribs as it formed a full leg. It was at least 35 feet tall.

It kept growing.

It built a hip, then crossed over to make the other leg. It picked up it’s pace, and in no time it had the legs and half a torso. The twirling mist swirled up and up and up until it had a chest, shoulders, and neck. It slowly formed it’s arms, and then finally, it’s head. Just as Poseidon thought it was done, it formed a robe out of mist to cover itself as it slowly started to form genitals. Thanks, Poseidon thought absently. He really didn’t feel like seeing that. It formed a face that Poseidon couldn’t quite see the details of since it was so far up.

And by ‘far up’ he meant 70 feet up.
The thing was 70 feet tall.

Well, shit.

Slowly, the mist started to no longer look like mist. It solidified, but remained it’s lightish grey colour. It took a hesitant step forward, and the ground shook with its step.

“Woah!” Poseidon struggled to stay standing. When it stopped, Hades turned to the rest of them.

“NOW!” he yelled.

Poseidon jumped but quickly charged forward. Jason flew down to pick up as many people as he could to get them to higher ground.

“I’m gonna aim for it’s legs and try to weaken it!” Poseidon yelled to Hades. “You guys get to higher ground!”

“Are you sure?” Hades yelled back. “I can stay down here with you if you’d like!”

Truthfully, Poseidon would very much like for someone to be down here with him, and that person being Hades was definitely not a downfall. But they needed as many people up by its head and heart as possible. “I’ll be fine, we need as many people as possible up there! You go!”

“Alright,” Hades said doubtfully. He waved for Jason, but turned back to Poseidon when he started to fly down. “And Poseidon?”

“Yeah?” he asked.

“Be careful, and don’t get yourself into a bad situation.”

Poseidon smiled and nodded. “You gotcha. Same goes for you.”

Hades nodded, and then let Jason grab his arm to fly him up to higher ground. Jason looked at him questioningly, but Poseidon waved him off. “I’m going to try to get at it’s legs!”

Jason nodded to show he understood, and then took Hades up to the others (with a little difficulty).

Poseidon took a deep breath and turned back to Chaos. He backtracked when he saw that it no longer had a greyish white colour, but rather a (still pale) but human complexion.

Well, now or never, I guess.

He charged forwards.

The adrenaline in his veins increased by a tenfold, and a grin crept its way onto his face. He wasn’t exactly sure why, but the pain in his cheeks indicated that he was. He forced himself to push past the wind that Chaos was somehow still emitting and ran up to it as fast as he could. When Chaos tried to step forward, he slashed at its legs.

Except, the sword didn’t hurt it.

It went right through it in a cloud of mist.

“What the—”

He slashed again, but the same thing happened. The part of it’s leg that his sword went through
immediately turned into mist, and then reformed after his sword was gone.

He barely even had time to acknowledge this before Chaos kicked him and sent him flying backwards a good ten feet. He hit the ground painfully, the breath knocked out of his lungs. “Oof.” He clutched his ribs in pain.

He looked up to see the rest of the eight also trying to get at Chaos, but their weapons kept on moving swiftly through Chaos’s body in clouds of mist.

He grunted in pain as he got up, but reached for his sword regardless. He’ll just have to try again until something worked. If they failed this, Chaos would rise again.

The scariest part was that Poseidon didn’t even know what it wanted to do.

He pushed that thought out of his mind and charged forward. But yet again, as soon as he slashed it, it turned to mist. He glowered and kept on slashing, but nothing happened. Somewhere in the back of his mind he heard Hades’ voice saying ‘don’t waste your energy slashing at mist’, but he couldn’t bring himself to care at the moment.

That was, until he got kicked again and was sent flying even farther. He slammed into a jagged rock and then fell to the ground again. He screamed, feeling something crack. He tenderly touched his ribs, and let out a cry of pain as he was met with sharp pain. *Broken.*

This wasn’t good. This wasn’t good at all.

He couldn’t move with the fear that his broken rib could pierce his lungs. He let out a shaky breath as he looked up again at Chaos. But instead of seeing the 70 foot tall being he was expecting, he saw something even stranger.

Chaos was shrinking.

Not the kind of shrinking where it had less mist and they were winning, but legitimately shrinking. Its head got smaller, then its body, then its arms, and finally its legs and feet. The process took about five minutes, and the sound of it was almost deafening, but its end result made Poseidon wish it had lasted a lot longer.

Standing there, in completely human form, was Chaos, no taller than 6’5.

Unfortunately, that wasn’t the most terrifying part. No, that title belonged to the fact that it was walking towards Poseidon. And that’s when Poseidon realized two things:

1. Chaos wasn’t an it, it was a he.
2. Poseidon was absolutely, 100 percent, fucked.

He tried to back up, but hissed in pain as his ribs protested against it. Chaos was only fifty metres away, and was making quick progress towards him. Poseidon looked at him in fear, and then looked up at the others. They were trying to get down to him and looked like they were calling to him, but he couldn’t hear what they were saying. One of them was supporting someone with blond hair, so he knew that Jason was out of the equation. He looked back at Chaos, who was now only 10 metres away from him. He tried to back up again, but let out another cry of pain. Chaos finally approached him and knelt beside him, a cool smirk on his face. Poseidon tried to back up again, but only resulted in collapsing and letting out another cry of pain.

“Now, now, no need to be scared,” Chaos said kindly. His voice was gravely but smooth, high pitched but extremely low, and as comforting as a mother’s embrace. He closed his eyes and
smiled. “Oh, how wonderful it is to talk. Do you ever think about that?” He snapped his eyes open and turned them to Poseidon. They were light blue with small flecks of grey, green, and brown. They would’ve been beautiful, if not for the spark of cruelty in them.

Poseidon didn’t respond, and Chaos tutted. “You’re being quite rude, you know. A shame for someone so pretty.” He reached up and touched Poseidon’s cheek gently. Poseidon recoiled from the touch, and Chaos just smiled. “Now now, you don’t want me to mess up that cute face of yours, do you?” He laughed. “Too bad. A shame, really. You are quite beautiful. I’d hate to be the one to mess that up, but hey, you got to do what you got to do, right?”

Before Poseidon could respond, Chaos slammed his head against the rock below him, and his vision went black.

Chapter End Notes

yee haw
Kidnapped and not in the sense that a kid was napping

Chapter Summary

no spoilers bitches
(READ NOTES)

Chapter Notes

TRIGGER WARNING
Descriptions of violence that aren't necessarily graphic but definitely aren't vague either
No sexual assault actually happens, but it's used as a threat and almost happens

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on Really? Right in front of my salad?: “Before Poseidon could respond, Chaos slammed his head against the rock below him, and his vision went black.”

When Poseidon regained consciousness, his head and ribs hurt like hell. He groaned and blinked the black spots out of his vision. When his eyes refocused, he didn’t recognize his surroundings. He appeared to be in some sort of underground cave, with rock as the walls and roots sticking out in random places. He was suspended in the air, his wrists wrapped in thick roots above his head. His feet, that were also wrapped, dangled about a foot above the dirt ground. The whole place smelled like earth and soil. The place took a sharp turn in the corner, and Poseidon could tell there was more to the cave than just this little room. Thin streams of sunlight were the only light that the cave provided, and as Poseidon looked up he saw that they were coming from a hole about fifty feet above him.

It took him a moment to realize that the hole was actually just the ground and he was fifty feet below the surface of the earth.

“What the…”

“You’re up,” a voice said.

Poseidon snapped his head around to the person it belonged to, and felt his heart drop into his shoes when he saw who it was. Chaos. Don’t let him intimidate you, Poseidon thought determinedly. He’s only, like, the most powerful being in the world and eight inches taller than you. Poseidon ignored the last comment his brain made and put on a mask of indifference. “Great observation, I had no idea,” he said, forcing himself to be sarcastic.

Chaos didn’t react in the way that Poseidon thought he would. He expected anger, or annoyance, or a snapback. Instead, all he got was a curious eyebrow raise and a smirk. Chaos didn’t say anything, but instead just walked up to him slowly. It made Poseidon feel like a prey being stalked by a predator, and he shifted uncomfortably.
Chaos finally reached him and cupped his chin gently. “How long has it been since you’ve had a lover?”

Now that, that was not what Poseidon was expecting. “Huh?”

“Well with that attitude, I expect it’s been years.”

“Um...what?”

“You need to learn some respect,” Chaos said, casually withdrawing a six inch long dagger.

Poseidon moved as far as he could away from it, his confusion gone and replaced by fear.

“What...what’s that?”

“A dagger,” Chaos said with a shrug. He lifted it up and put the blunt end on Poseidon’s cheek, dragging it slowly with a small smirk on his face. His eyes traced it’s every movement curiously, and it sent shivers up Poseidon’s spine. “Now, whether or not I’m going to use it depends on you.”

“What...what do you mean?”

“Well, I’m giving you a choice, see,” he said, placing the dagger back in it’s sheath. “You can either get you and your little friend’s asses back to New York and leave me be, or—” he reached up to run his finger across Poseidon’s jaw, “—you can stay here with me and we can have some fun.”

“What…” Poseidon looked down at the finger running along his jawline. “What kind of fun?”

Chaos didn’t respond, and instead withdrew his dagger again. As quick as a light, he snapped it up to Poseidon’s throat. Poseidon tried to back up, but the roots he was being suspended by kept him firmly where he was. Chaos just smirked and moved the dagger away. He casually cut Poseidon’s hoodie down the middle and up the sleeves, removing it so he was left with just his t-shirt. He discarded it to a corner of the hole. The damp, cold air against Poseidon’s newly exposed skin made him hiss. Chaos just smirked wider and then removed his shirt as well so his entire upper body was uncovered.

Poseidon’s eyes widened in horror. “Oh god—”

“Oh, no,” Chaos said, waving him off. “Not that kind of fun. This kind of fun.” He moved his dagger to Poseidon’s right shoulder and slashed a thin, medium-length cut. Somewhat dark blood immediately oozed out of the wound. Poseidon hissed and recoiled, stinging pain springing from his shoulder in no time. Chaos gently ran his hand below the gash and picked up some of the blood dripping down Poseidon’s chest. “See, this doesn’t affect me,” he said, “it affects you. I could do another, and another, and another. But I won’t, on one condition.”

Poseidon glared at him despite the stinging on his shoulder and ribs, and the pounding pain in his head. “I don’t care what the condition is. We’re going to stop you, no matter what.”

“And what are you going to stop me from doing?” Chaos asked, running a hand from Poseidon shoulder to his elbow.

“Well…” Poseidon honestly had no idea, but the prophecy said that they needed to fight him. The last moments of freedom and peace. “From doing bad stuff.” Wow, that was embarrassing. “I mean, you’re evil and all so like it’s not as if you gonna give orphans puppies and candy or whatever. Like—”
Chaos put a finger to his lips and Poseidon stopped talking, crossing his eyes to look down at the finger.

Chaos laughed lightly. *Laughed.* And it wasn’t a creepy laugh.

“You’re just adorable, aren’t you?”

Poseidon’s fear was forgotten momentarily and he was offended. “Excuse me?”

“Well,” Chaos continued, “you’re just so little and angry.”

“Excuse me?”

“Ah, I see I’ve offended you. Interesting.”

“Interesting? I’ll have you know that I am *not* little and I am definitely not adorable.”

Chaos just shrugged. “To me you are both.”

Poseidon opened his mouth to say something else, but Chaos lifted the dagger to his throat again and he shut his mouth quickly.

“You see,” he continued, “I don’t care how long I’ll have to do this until you give in. It doesn’t affect me, and in more ways than one. See?” He took the dagger and slashed a thin line on the back of his hand, but where it should have cut, his skin turned to mist and then reformed when the dagger was a safe distance away. “That didn’t hurt, and this—” he touched where the wound should’ve been, “doesn’t hurt either. But I’m sure it would hurt you, wouldn’t it?” He gently touched the gash on Poseidon’s shoulder, and Poseidon hissed in pain, recoiling from the touch as much as he could.

“Fuck off,” he spat out.

Chaos shrugged and removed his hand from the still bleeding wound. “I will, if you do. Get you and your little friends and head back to New York, then let me be.”

“Well, Einstein, I can’t exactly do that while I’m tied up with thick-ass roots, can I?” Poseidon asked, rolling his eyes.

Being honest, he was completely and utterly terrified, but he felt better standing up to Chaos and pretending to not be scared than shrinking in fear and obeying his every order.

Chaos just did his weird half smile with the eyebrow raise again. “Very true, but I can easily bring them here.”

“Oh *really*?” Poseidon asked. “And how is that?”

“I *am* the earth, Poseidon. I can bring them anywhere by simply moving the ground beneath them. The only thing you need to do is tell me where they ar—”

“I’d like to make a correction.”

“Hm?”

“You’re not the earth.”

“Well, I formed earth.”
“And I formed a sandcastle once. Am I a sandcastle? Don’t think so.”

“Why you little—” His eyes darkened in anger.

*Finally, a reaction!*

Chaos took a threatening step forward, knife raised again.

*Oh no, a reaction.*

Instead of advancing on him again, Chaos stopped abruptly and closed his eyes. He took a deep breath before opening his eyes again and forcing a tiny smile. “Moving on. Tell me where your friends are.”

“I don’t know where they are, and even if I did know I wouldn’t tell you.”

Chaos was silent for a moment, before doing the last thing Poseidon expected him to do. He bent down and used his knife to free Poseidon’s feet from the roots they were being held in, and then stood up to remove the roots Poseidon’s wrists were being held in.

Poseidon bent his knees to lessen the force when he hit the ground, then stood up to face Chaos again in confusion. “Why did you…”

“I want you to observe something,” he said. He walked closer to him, and Poseidon stepped back. So he stepped closer again, and Poseidon backed up again. This repeated until Poseidon’s back hit the wall.

Chaos stepped closer so he was less than five inches away from him, and then caged him in with his arms.

“What are you doing?” Poseidon asked, pushing as far back on the wall as he could.

“Making you observe something,” he said as an explanation.

“Incredibly specific.”

Chaos ignored him and tilted his head down farther than necessary. “Look at this. You’re up to—” he used his hand to measure the top of Poseidon’s head and brought it back to the middle of his chest, “—the middle of my bicep.” He picked up Poseidon’s arm and placed it next to his. “You’re about half the size of me, and your shoulder is weak from me cutting it. I could break you in half right here, right now.” He dropped Poseidon’s arm and used his newly freed hand to wrap around Poseidon’s throat. His hand was so big that his thumb and middle finger touched at the back of Poseidon’s neck. He squeezed, and Poseidon wheezed and clawed at the hand to get it off his airway. Matched with his shoulder making him quickly lose blood, Poseidon was starting to get very lightheaded and dizzy. Fear gripped his heart in an iron fist. Chaos continued. “So, I’m going to ask you again. Where are your friends?”

Poseidon clawed at his hand, and he finally let go. Poseidon collapsed against the wall and tried to catch his breath.

“What are you doing?” Chaos said darkly. “I was going to be nice, but you have to pay for your actions.”

“Like shit you were going to be nice,” Poseidon spat. “You cut my fucking shoulder open in the first two minutes.”
Chaos’s eyes darkened in anger again, and he quickly returned his hand to Poseidon’s throat, this time keeping him against the wall and completely cutting off his airway. “Listen, buddy.” He leaned down to growl in his ear. “I know I threatened to break you in half, but believe me, I could do so much worse.” To prove his point, he slipped his hand down to Poseidon’s bare hips and circled dangerously low. Poseidon cringed and recoiled from the touch.

Chaos removed his hand from Poseidon’s throat so he could speak.

“I told you I don’t know,” he said breathlessly.

Chaos slammed his head against the wall again. “Tell me,” he growled.

“I said I don’t know!”

Chaos looked at him suspiciously. After what felt like forever, he stepped back and snapped his fingers so roots came down from the dirt ‘roof’ and up from the ground to tie Poseidon up again.

“Well,” Chaos said. “I suppose the prophecy said eight. That means they can’t do it without you. So, I guess you’ll just stay here with me.”

“They’ll come to get me,” Poseidon said stubbornly. “I know they will.”

“Whatsoever you say.”

***Time Break (The Next Day)***

“Well, if you’re so sure they’ll come to get you, we might as well have some fun in the meantime, correct?” Chaos said as he walked up to Poseidon.

“I’d rather not, thanks.”

Chaos shrugged. “Too bad for you, then. See, I don’t like it when people disrespect me. I gave you everything you have. So I do believe I deserve a little revenge, hm?”

He unsheathed his dagger again. By now, the cut on Poseidon’s shoulder had stopped bleeding, but it still hurt like hell. Chaos lightly dragged his dagger across the scab there, but didn’t add enough pressure to cut it. Instead, he brought it down to Poseidon’s hip and added a little bit of pressure, just enough to hurt but not to cut.

“Don’t do it,” Poseidon said shakily. “When they come, they’ll be really angry…”

“Oh, they’re not coming,” Chaos said coldly. “They’ll never be able to find us here.”

Poseidon shook his head. “No…they will. They have to.”

Chaos laughed. “For such an old god, you are really rather naive.”

Poseidon opened his mouth to retort, when Chaos slashed a long, deep cut from his hip bone to his bottom rib. He screamed, which got broken off halfway through with a sob of pain. Blood dripped from the cut heavily, and dripped down his thigh and coated his stomach in red.

Chaos smirked. He tutted and reached up to wipe the tears off of Poseidon’s face. “See?” he asked.
“I could do more. And believe me, if you ever try to escape or disrespect me again, I can make you scream in a whole other way.”

He turned and left, leaving Poseidon sobbing in pain and fear, dangling from the ceiling with a freely bleeding, potentially fatal gash.

***Time Break (The Same Day, but Later)***

Poseidon passed out from blood loss, but when he (thankfully) came to, Chaos was standing in front of him, smirking. It was obviously later in the day because the cave was a lot darker, but Chaos’s blond hair and multi-coloured eyes were still visible.

“Get away from me,” Poseidon said, scared, trying to tug on his restraints.

“I’m not going to hurt you,” Chaos said, holding his hands up. He dropped them back to his sides. “I just wanted to let you know that your friends aren’t looking for you.”

“What?” Poseidon asked.

“I just remembered the wonderful world of Iris Messaging, see? Turns out I didn’t need you for finding them, but then again, no one needs you do they?” He laughed, and Poseidon wished the words didn’t sting as much as they did.

“What...what did you see on the Iris Message? Do you know where they are?”

“Not exactly, but the basic idea, yes. But what’s important is what I saw they were doing.”

Poseidon’s heart dropped into his stomach. Were they hurt? Captured? Dead? “What...were they doing?”

Chaos smiled and rested his ice cold hand on the side of Poseidon’s neck. “They were laughing and playing games.”

Poseidon’s blood ran cold. “No they weren’t…they were...they’re looking for me, you’re lying.”

“Am I?” Chaos asked.

Poseidon nodded stubbornly.

“Well, why don’t you look for yourself.” He casually turned his hand into mist and used that to make a rainbow with the thin streams of sunlight the sunset sent through the cave. The mist turned into an image quickly.

Poseidon’s heart missed a few beats.

Laughing and sitting under blankets in Stephens home, were Hades, Zeus, Percy, Thalia, Nico, Hazel, and Jason. It looked like they were playing some form of charades, as Percy was doing some weird movement while everyone else was spurting random words, guessing what it could be. Poseidon looked around and immediately found Hades.

He was laughing.
Laughing.

Laughing while Poseidon was kidnapped.

He might even think you’re dead. And he’s laughing.

Chaos cut the image off. “See?” he asked, returning his hand to the side of Poseidon’s neck. “They don’t care about you. They’re happier without you.”

Poseidon shook his head, but tears welled up in his eyes and blurred his vision. “That’s...that’s fake, you’re lying.”

“I’m sorry,” he said.

“You’re not.” Poseidon shook his head. “Stop lying.” He was starting to hyperventilate. “That was fake, that was fake, that was fake. Stop lying.”

Chaos shook his head. “They were like that earlier, too. They’re glad you’re gone. If you don’t trust me, trust the proof.”

Poseidon continued to shake his head, a sob bubbling out of his throat, both from sadness and from the pain that heaving for breath caused on his lungs, but mostly from hurt. “They...they’re looking for me, your lying.”

Chaos just shushed him and continued to caress the side of his neck and the bottom of his cheek.

Poseidon shook his head, tears spilling from his eyes and blurring everything around him. “Stop touching me. You’re lying.”

“I’m not,” he said softly. “You can join me, you know. Get rid of them, rule over them and make them pay for their lies.”

Poseidon shook his head. “No. Fuck you,” he choked out.

Because even now, when he knows that he’s happier with him dead, Poseidon could never hurt Hades.

Or anyone else, he reminded himself. But specifically Hades. And Percy, and Zeus.

Chaos tutted. “Come to me when you’ve changed your mind, then. Or don’t, I guess I’ll have to come to you.”

He left, again leaving Poseidon sobbing, but this time for a different reason.

***Time Break (Early Next Day)***

“Get away from me!” Poseidon yelled, recoiling from the dagger close to his other hip.

Chaos grinned wickedly. “You deserve this, remember?”

Poseidon recoiled even farther away as he almost pressed the knife up against him. “Stop it!”
Just as Chaos was about to cut him, Poseidon kicked up particularly hard and removed the root that was holding his right foot down from the ground. He tried to knee Chaos, but Chaos just laughed as his body turned to mist where Poseidon hit. Poseidon tried to kick him again, but he kept dodging. They repeated this process over and over again.

Chaos eventually sighed. “It’s been fifteen minutes, are you done yet?” But instead of his usual cold, uncaring tone, his voice sounded a little panicked.

Poseidon raised a curious eyebrow and continued.

He continued for not thirty seconds before he landed a kick that didn’t go through Chaos.

“What the—”

Chaos backed up quickly.

“You can’t always turn to mist!” Poseidon exclaimed.

“Well, obviously,” Chaos bit out, quickly snapping his fingers so an extra thick and tight root wrapped around Poseidon’s foot. “I’m not actually mist, I can just turn into mist.”

“Wait so—”

Chaos cut him off by throwing his dagger so close to Poseidon’s head that it grazed his ear.

“I wouldn’t suggest talking for the next little bit,” Chaos said darkly. He walked up and reached behind Poseidon’s head to retrieve his dagger, purposely pressing his body closer to Poseidon’s than necessary.

He got his dagger and backtracked before stalking angrily to the section of the hole Poseidon couldn’t see. Poseidon was left to contemplate this new information.

So, Chaos was turning to mist on purpose. That was new. He also couldn’t do it for long… Poseidon quickly realized that he seemed panicked around the fifteen minute mark.

Maybe he could only do it for around fifteen minutes?

***Time Break (Two Days Later)***

Despite the newly found information two days prior, Poseidon had almost given up hope.

He hadn’t eaten in days, his last meal having been the food that Stephen had provided them with in the cave. Chaos had thankfully given him water, if not to just keep him alive for whatever reason. Thankfully, Chaos had only done a small gash on his other shoulder after a snappish remark on his bravery, but Chaos had seemed to adapt a new torture method. A method, to which Poseidon thought, was a million times worse.

He started using emotional pain as torture.

So here Poseidon was, staring firmly at the ground ahead of him, trying desperately to keep his tears at bay.
“I Iris Messaged them again,” Chaos said, casually leaning against the dirt, rooty wall. “They’re looking—”

Poseidon’s head shot up.

“—for me, not for you.”

Poseidon’s head dropped down again.

Chaos continued. “I really don’t see why you’re still fighting. If you join me, you can make them pay for everything they’ve done!”

“Stop acting like every cliche villain in the book,” Poseidon spat out. “You’re just some Gaea wannabe that can’t decide if he’s nice or evil.”

Chaos’s eyes darkened in anger. In the past few days, Poseidon had noticed little triggers to Chaos’s temper. His main one, and the one that Poseidon used the most when he was feeling especially brave or stupid, was insulting his personality and morals.

Chaos stalked forward and brought the knife up to Poseidon’s throat. Poseidon swallowed and looked at him with poorly concealed fear.

They stayed like that for awhile, just staring steadily at each other.

Finally, Chaos removed the knife from Poseidon’s throat and put it back in it’s sheath. He stepped closer, and put either hand on each side of Poseidon’s hips. “Remember what I’ve been saying?”

Poseidon swallowed nervously. “You’ve been saying a lot of things, could you be more specific?”

“Hm…” Chaos said, over exaggerating his thinking. “Does this sentence ring a bell?: ‘And believe me, if you ever try to escape or disrespect me again, I can make you scream in a whole other way’?”

Poseidon’s blood ran cold. “You wouldn’t…”

“I would,” Chaos said darkly. “Think about that the next time you open your mouth. I’m running out of patience.”

“You’re also apparently running out of threats because all you can really seem to muster up in your brain are two.”

Chaos growled and his eyes darkened.

*Shit, why did I say that?*

Chaos’s hand moved from his hips to his jeans, and Poseidon’s eyes widened in horror. “Get away from me!” He tried desperately to get rid of his restraints.

Chaos just smirked cruelly and tugged his jeans down.

“STOP!” Poseidon screamed fearfully. “GET AWAY FROM ME!”

Chaos was about to dip his hand into his briefs, when seven loud thuds shook the ground briefly. Abruptly, Chaos was being tugged away from him. Poseidon looked to see Zeus, Hades, and the rest of the demigods in the cave, looking the definition of murderous.
Percy, Nico, Jason, and Hazel worked on cutting the roots that held Poseidon up, while Hades, Zeus, and Thalia looked like they were having the time of their life trying to beat up Chaos, even though all of their attempts just made him turn into mist. When they finally freed Poseidon, he pulled and zipped up his jeans embarrassedly.


Reluctantly, Hades, Thalia, and Zeus left Chaos to try and get out of the cave. Jason quickly wrapped his arms around Poseidon, careful to not touch any of his scabs, and flew them up to the exit of the hole in the ground. He placed Poseidon down with a quick “Be right back” before flying back down and bringing up the others. One at a time, he brought up Hazel, Thalia, and Nico. It sounded like he was about to go get Percy, when a strange mist started to fill the cave.

“What is that?” Jason asked, hesitating on going back down.

“HELP!” They heard Percy scream. “He’s turning completely into mist—I can’t breathe!”

Jason swore and immediately went down to retrieve them.

“Jase!” Thalia said. “Get back here, it’s too dangerous!”

Poseidon found that rather hypocritical, but he could understand her concern.

Jason ignored her in favour of searching. He shot out of the hole not two minutes later, frustrated. “I can’t see anything!”

“Just call their names!” Poseidon said, worry pooling in his gut.

Jason nodded and descended into the hole again. “Percy!” he called. “Hades! Zeus! Anyone?”

“Over here!” someone called.

Jason returned from the hole with Percy and placed him down on the ground. After giving him a kiss to the forehead, he flew down into the hole again. “Hades?” he called. “Zeus? Where are you?”

“Here!” one of them said.

Yet again, Jason returned, this time with Zeus. He placed him down beside Poseidon and went searching for Hades. “HELLO?” he yelled. “HADES? ARE YOU DOWN HERE?”

“Here!” he said.

Poseidon almost collapsed in relief. Jason returned with him and placed Hades on the other side of Poseidon.

“Okay, remember the plan!” Zeus said, getting up.

Everyone got up except Poseidon, who didn’t think he could very well move without piercing a lung or opening a wound. They seemed to have thought that through however, and soon Nico came over to him, grabbed his arm, and stepped into the shadows.

Shadow travelling was ten times as worse as it usually was when you have a broken rib and three pretty much fresh cuts all over your body.
When they finally, finally, stepped out of the shadows, they were back in Stephens house. Nico had shadow travelled him into a room he didn’t recognize, but he would recognize the scent of tea anywhere. The room was a lot like the rest of the house, except themed pink with a bed and a bookshelf. Nico placed him down on the bed, and that’s when Poseidon realized they weren’t alone. As soon as he was lying down on the bed the correct way, a girl with light brown skin and dark, curly hair pulled into a bun walked over to him. She placed a white box with a red cross on it that Poseidon recognized as a medical kit on the bed and snapped it open.

“This is going to hurt a little,” she said, studying his wounds while opening a small, brown glass bottle. She poured some onto a cotton swab and then moved it all along Poseidon’s cuts. He hissed in pain, and she gave a small twinge of sympathy. “That will hopefully prevent any infections, if it’s not infected already.” She threw the swab in the garbage. “And if it is, well, this is going to hurt even more but I have to be sure.” She took out a small, blue plastic bottle and uncapped it. She poured three drops onto all three of Poseidon’s wounds, and he hissed in pain again, this time the pain a little more severe than last time. “Sorry,” she said. She got out medical tape and gauze, and then carefully wrapped all of the cuts with gentle hands. “There,” she said when she was finished. “Now rest.” Nico quietly slipped out of the room.

“Not yet,” Poseidon said stubbornly. “Where are the others?”

“WHERE IS HE?” Poseidon heard Hades’ voice from the living room.

“He’s in the bedroom, but he needs re—”

Before Stephen could even finish the sentence, Hades was barging into the bedroom and kneeling beside the bed. “Oh my god, are you alright? Oh my god, you’re okay. Holy shit, oh my god,” he said breathlessly.

“Um, no disrespect Lord Hades,” the girl said uncomfortably, “but he needs his rest.”

“Can I stay with him?” he asked desperately. “I’m not letting him out of my sight ever again.”

“Well, I suppose...but you need to let him sleep,” she said.

“Deal,” Hades said breathily. “Just let me stay.”

The girl nodded and then exited the bedroom.

As soon as she closed the door, Hades grabbed Poseidon’s hand and kissed it like it was the best thing that he’d ever seen. “You’re alright, you’re alright, you’re alright.”

Poseidon smiled, but the smile quickly turned to a scowl when he remember what Chaos had shown him. He snatched his hand away from Hades’s grip. “Don’t act like your happy,” he said, not expecting the lump that appeared in his throat.

“What?” Hades asked, confused.

“You were laughing,” Poseidon choked out. “You were laughing and playing games while I was being cut open.”

“What…”? Hades asked, looking completely lost.

“Chaos showed me an Iris Message,” Poseidon said, tears swirling in his eyes as he remembered. The stab of betrayal was still fresh in his mind. “You and the others were all laughing and playing games and being happy without me there.”

Poseidon hiccuped. “What?”

Hades’s eyes were dark in anger, and Poseidon flinched and tried to get away from him, remembering that that look was never a good look. Hades kept a firm grip on his hand before he could get away completely, however. “I’m not angry at you,” he explained quickly. “I’m angry at Chaos. He made that up, Poseidon.”

“What?”

“He must’ve created that image,” Hades said angrily. “Where were we in it?”

“In this house,” Poseidon choked out through the lump in his throat.

Hades shook his head. “We never came back here,” he said. “We were looking for you the whole time. Hazel finally found out where you were because she detected an abnormal hole in the ground.”

Poseidon looked at him suspiciously. It had looked so real. “Are you sure?”

Hades nodded. “Of course I’m sure. I was so stressed the whole time, I never laughed.” He squeezed Poseidon’s hand before crawling over him onto the other side of the bed, laying down softly. Poseidon turned to look at him, and he smiled, softly reaching up to run a finger through Poseidon’s hair. “I would never be happy with you in danger,” he said quietly. He moved over and brought Poseidon closer, cradling his head to his chest and continuing to run his fingers through his hair gently. “I love you,” he said quietly.

Poseidon paused, and then smiled. “I love you too.”

Chapter End Notes

awww
(again, brotherly bonding but you little shits can't deny that that was still cute)
(I call you little shits but I actually love you plz stay)
Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “Poseidon paused, and then smiled. “I love you too.””

They fell asleep like that, curled up together.

When Poseidon woke up again, he was alone. He shot up for a moment in panic, before remembering that he was out of Chaos’s grip. He let out a breath of relief, flopping back on the bed gracelessly. He winced before his back even hit the bed, remembering his injuries and realizing that it was going to hurt. But to his surprise, when his back landed on the bed, no pain came from his ribs, shoulders, or hip. He raised an eyebrow and sat up again, this time fully getting up and walking over to the full length, cream coloured mirror. After glancing at the door, he pulled off a shirt that he didn’t remember putting on.

He was expecting worse than what he saw, but he wasn’t pleased with it either. Three scars crossed his torso; one small one on his left shoulder, one medium length one on his right shoulder, and one large one from the middle of the right side of his torso down to his hip. They were thin, but they were still ugly. From the days without eating, he could almost see all of his ribs through the skin on his stomach, and his hip bones jutted out farther than they should have. Thankfully, he didn’t completely look like a skeleton, but that didn’t make him hate his reflection any less.

“There’s a treatment for them,” someone said, closing the door behind them. Poseidon turned around to see that it was Zeus. He didn’t even notice him coming in.

“What?” he asked.

“A treatment,” said Zeus. “For the scars, I mean. Addelyn is training to be a mortal doctor, but she still knows a bit about healing in our world. There’s a herb that you just crush into water and rub over the scars. It should get rid of them in two weeks max.” He walked over to stand behind Poseidon, placing his hands on his shoulders after handing him a plastic container with what looked like crushed green leaves in it. “You don’t need to, though,” he said softly.
Poseidon snorted. “As if. Look at them.”

“They look fine, Poseidon. You don’t need to worry about that.”

Poseidon crossed his arms uncomfortably. “You don’t need to act all nice just because I got kidnapped.”

“That’s not the reason I’m acting nice!” Zeus said quickly. He sighed, and then walked over to the bed, patting the space beside him when he sat down. Poseidon walked over, an eyebrow raised softly, putting his shirt back on. He sat down and placed the container on the bed. Zeus was silent for a moment before speaking. “You know… I was always guilty after the things I said to you, before this shit show and during,” he said. “But I guess I never really wasted my time thinking about it too much, and I never knew why. I mean, I was extremely guilty. Sometimes I’d even lose sleep because of how destructive my temper was. Now, I guess I know why.”

Poseidon looked at him softly. “Why?”

He took a deep breath, it shuddering ever so slightly. “It’s because I always thought you’d be there. I thought that even if I didn’t apologize, you’d either forgive me or forget about it eventually. I mean, we’re immortal and siblings, you’d have to stop holding the grudge or being sad eventually. But… when Chaos took you away from us—from me—I guess I just finally realized that that wouldn’t always be the case. I finally became aware that maybe we’re not always promised tomorrow, or a chance to make up with those we’ve hurt. And when I realized that the last conversation you’d had with me was me telling you that you weren’t a valuable part of the team, I —” he choked on his words, and water gently rimmed his waterline.

“Oh, Zeus…” Poseidon said softly. He gently wrapped him in a hug. It was a little awkward from their positions, but still nice nonetheless.

Zeus hugged him back tightly, burying his face into the crook of his neck. “Y’know…” he took a shuddering breath. “Y’know how a little bit ago you and Hades talked to me about your mental health and stuff…?” he asked, voice muffled.

“Yeah?” Poseidon asked softly, not pulling away from the hug for both his and Zeus’s sake.

“I think… I don’t know. I don’t know what it is,” he said quietly. When Poseidon felt a little wetness on his shirt, he didn’t mention it. Zeus took a deep breath and continued. “You remember when I told you about my thing with people yelling at my way of ruling?” he asked.

“Yeah…?” Poseidon answered quietly, confused.

“Well… it’s for more of a reason than just putting lots of thought into it.” He took another deep breath before continuing.

“I guess just sometimes everything just gets too much, you know? Everyone hates me for being such an asshole but I can’t stop because then they’ll know what I’m doing with the whole “don’t be passive or they won’t listen to you” thing. And then that’s matched with the stress of ruling over everybody, and sometimes when I’m trying to sleep I can’t because I know that I have to do this tomorrow or that soon and everything just piles up. But no one gives me a break or has any sympathy, so then I just become more of an asshole so then everyone hates me more and I just can’t seem to get out of this cycle.”
Poseidon listened to him the whole time, still keeping him in the hug. He was quiet for a moment, before he spoke again: “That sounds a lot like anxiety.”

Zeus shrugged helplessly. “I know, I know, fuck, I know.” He shook his head, his face still buried in Poseidon’s shoulder, a healthy distance away from the scar there. “I just couldn’t admit it,” he said. “I don’t want to have anxiety. I don’t want to have anxiety, Pose’.” His voice cracked on the last word.

He hadn’t called Poseidon that in over four millenia, but Poseidon didn’t mention it. “Why not?” he asked softly. “I mean, I know why. It sucks. But why did you not want to admit it?”

“A King shouldn’t have anxiety,” he said, inhaling and exhaling shakily.

“A King is a person. A living, breathing person with emotions,” Poseidon said. “There’s nothing to be ashamed of, okay? Nothing.”

“But—”

“Nope, don’t wanna hear it,” he said stubbornly. He pulled Zeus back by the shoulders and looked him in the eye. “It’s okay to not be okay, okay?”

“Okay,” he said quietly, looking away quickly to wipe tears away.


“I’m sorry for dumping this all on you,” Zeus said. “I should be the one comforting you.”

“Well,” Poseidon said, shrugging. “You can still do that.” He opened his arms out and smiled, cocking an eyebrow up.


“Oh, and by the way?” Zeus asked.

“Yeah?”

“Hades is fucking murderous. He was fully prepared to go and fist fight Chaos, even if he was in mist form, while his ankle was sprained.” Zeus shook his head, smiling a little fondly and pulling back from the hug.

“He sprained his ankle?” Poseidon asked.

“Yeah, but it’s all healed up by now,” he said. “After he woke up, he limped out into the living room and Addelyn gave him some sort of treatment before she came in and gave you that sleep medicine and some clothes.”

“Oh yeah, you mentioned her earlier. Who is she?”

“She’s Stephens niece, she was visiting him before she went back to medical school.”

“I thought Stephens granddaughter wanted to be a doctor?” Poseidon asked.

“Yeah, apparently all the girls on that side of the family want to be doctors while all the boys want to be engineers. I mean, engineers. And they’re half satyr.”
Poseidon snorted. “Guess that is a little strange.” Suddenly, he remembered the information he’d gathered when he was with Chaos. “Wait!” he exclaimed. He shot up off the bed. “Come here! I need to tell you and the others something!”

Zeus looked at him with mild confusion, but got up and followed him nevertheless. Poseidon opened the door loudly and stepped out into the living room. Immediately, six heads turned towards him and the people they belonged to shot out of their chairs. Percy and Hazel rushed over to him immediately, while Thalia, Jason, and Nico walked up to him slower, but no less happily. Hades trailed behind, letting others get their chance to see him.

Immediately, Percy wrapped him into a bear hug. “Oh my gods, oh my gods, oh my gods,” he said quietly. “You’re okay. Oh my gods.”

Poseidon smiled and hugged him back. “Yeah, I am.”

As soon as Percy pulled away, Hazel hugged him tightly but briefly. Poseidon was mildly surprised, but soon realized that he should’ve expected it from the sweet girl. She pulled away and smiled up at him, stepping back. “It’s nice to have you back, Lord Poseidon.”

Poseidon smiled. “Just Poseidon’s fine.”

She nodded and went back to the others. The rest of the demigods just gave their appreciations to have him back on the team and shook his hand or high fived him. Finally, Hades approached him and wrapped him up in a hug.

“I’m glad to have you back,” he said, pulling Poseidon’s head to his chest.

“I’m glad to be back.”

Hades smiled softly and moved back, hesitated, then pressed a light, brief kiss to Poseidon’s forehead.

A chorus of ‘awwww’s’ came from the demigods (excluding Thalia and Nico, who just smiled).

When Poseidon pulled back fully, he glanced at Zeus. He was watching them with a neutral expression, but something seemed off about it. Like it was forced or painful. He frowned, but Zeus looked away and cleared his throat.

“You wanted to tell all of us something?” he asked, raising an eyebrow.

“Oh, right,” Poseidon said. “Sit down guys, this is important.”

When everyone was seated, Poseidon spoke again. “Okay so while I was with Chaos, he usually came up to me and…” He trailed off, not really wanting to go into detail. “He uh….anyway, that’s not the point.”

Hades looked downright murderous.

Poseidon continued. “So one time he came up to me with his…” He trailed off again, then started over. “He came up and threatened me, so I tried to defend myself, right? So I kicked really hard, and finally the root that was keeping my foot down came out of the ground so I could kick him. Of course, my foot went through him, but I kept on doing it for around fifteen minutes. And when the fifteen minutes was almost up, Chaos got all panicky. And then finally, I landed a kick on him, and it didn’t go through him.”
“Wha—” Percy started.

“Let me finish!” Poseidon interrupted.

Percy put his hands up in mock surrender.

Poseidon continued. “So then I asked how, and he said that he isn’t actually mist in a human shape, he just fully transformed into a human form, I think at least. He can just turn into mist, he’s not actually mist.”

“Wait,” Jason said. “So you said he was panicked around the fifteen minute mark?”

Poseidon nodded.

“So then, do you think he can only do it for fifteen minutes at a time?”

“That’s exactly what I was thinking,” Poseidon said.

“Wait, so then we can just distract him and wait until he can’t turn into mist, right?” Nico asked, fiddling with his skull ring.

“That makes sense,” Thalia said. “But when we fought him the first time it lasted nearly forty-five minutes and he was still turning to mist.”

“Maybe that’s because he was fully mist and only got a true human form in the last two minutes of the battle....?” Hazel suggested. “I mean, I’m not an expert, but...”

“That would make sense,” Percy said, nodding at her a little excitedly. “So! We have a plan now, don’t we? Wait until we see him and then distract him for fifteen minutes, and then kill him!”


“Do you have any better ideas, Death Breath?” Thalia asked, rolling her eyes. “And weren’t you the one who suggested it in the first place?”

“Well, yeah, but I think he might expect us to do that now that he knows that we know he can only do it for a limited amount of time,” he said, shifting uncomfortably with everyone’s eyes on him.

“Well it doesn’t matter if he does, we can still kill him either way.”

“I’m just saying that we can’t expect everything to go well.”

“You could be a little more optimistic, Nico,” Jason said quietly.

Nico crossed his arms and rolled his eyes. “You’re just siding with her because she’s your sister.”

“Well she’s right, too,” he said uncomfortably.

“So you’re saying that defeating the most powerful being in the world is going to be as easy as Percy made it sound?”

“Hey,” Percy said, “don’t make me sound stupid.”

“That’s not what I was trying to do—”

“Oh sure you weren’t, Nico,” Thalia said, rolling her eyes. “Sure you weren’t.”
“I wasn’t! I just—”

“Look, Nico,” Thalia said. “If all you’re gonna contribute to this team is pessimism, you can leave or shut up, ‘kay?”

Nico opened his mouth to retort, but snapped it shut with a click. He frowned, looked away from the group, and pushed back onto his chair.

Poseidon cringed, knowing the exact feeling of what the boy was going through. “Hey guys, it’s not cool to team up on him like that.”

“We weren’t teaming up on him, we’re just telling him to be a little more optimistic,” Jason said. Poseidon could tell it was mostly in defense for Thalia.

“That’s not the feeling I got,” Poseidon said.

“Well maybe that’s because you know how it feels to not contribute to the team,” Thalia snapped.

Chaos must’ve affected her.

Thalia was always blunt and aggressive, but not quite to that point.

That didn’t mean it lessened the sting her words caused.

“Thalia,” Zeus said sternly.

Thalia rolled her eyes and crossed her arms, leaning back on the chair and looking up at the ceiling. He let out an exasperated sigh. “Boys,” she muttered. “They’re both just cry babies,” she said, this time louder.

Zeus and Hades glared at her. “Thalia,” they both said at the same time, stern this time.

“He got himself kidnapped!” she said exasperatedly, throwing her hands up. “You guys need to stop relying on emotions so much! This is war, no one cares!”

“Thalia!” Zeus said, outraged.

“You know it’s true! What have these two done for this team?”

“Okay, Thalia, you need to calm down,” Percy said, hesitantly putting a hand on her shoulder.

She huffed and rolled her eyes, shrugging his hand off. “Whatever.”

“So Chaos can still manipulate emotions,” Hades observed.

“He’s not manipulating my emotions you moron!”

“. . .Right,” Hades said, raising an eyebrow. “So he’s obviously still purely evil—”

“Actually, when I was there I didn’t feel extremely sad like I usually am when I’m around him,” Poseidon said.

“Really?” Percy asked, eyebrows raised.

Poseidon nodded. “Yeah, I don’t know why.”

“Maybe he can only do it when he’s mist,” Zeus suggested, leaning back against the wall. “He was
completely human almost the whole time he was with you, right?”

Poseidon nodded again. “Yeah.”

“So he’s really only powerful whenever he can turn to mist,” Jason said, crossing his arms.

“Looks like it,” Hades grunted.

“So what are we going to do for fifteen minutes?” Nico asked. “If he’s as powerful as he was the first time we fought him for fifteen minutes, we’re screwed.”

“Oh my fuck, Nico!” Thalia exploded. “Can’t you stop complaining and just suggest things to fix problems?”

“I’m just bringing it up!” Nico said defensively.

“So then figure out a solution and do something for the team!”

“Fine!” Nico threw his hands up. “We can…”

He trailed off uncomfortably. There was a long pause of silence, and then Thalia was angry again.

“See? All you do is complain and wait for other people to solve problems!”

“That’s not the only thing I do!” Nico said, outraged. “Do you know how much I’ve done during the Titan and Giant War?”

“Please,” Thalia rolled her eyes, “I probably did more than you and I was with the hunters.”

“Oh really?” Nico asked. “You didn’t do anything!”

“She did quite a bit, Nico,” Jason said quietly.

“Well—!” He stopped, obviously not being able to think of a comeback. He looked around the team. “I do stuff…right?”

“Of cou—”

“No, you don’t.” Thalia crossed her arms.

“Thalia, just acknowledge Chaos is manipulating your emotions and try to have a filter,” Zeus said sternly.

“Oh, so your defending him? Weren’t you the one who killed his mother?”

Nico, Zeus, and Hades cringed.

“Thalia, maybe you should step outside for a second,” Hazel said softly.

Thalia rolled her eyes and stood up. She walked out without a word, leaving an uncomfortable silence in her wake.

After a moment of silence, Hades spoke up. “You shouldn’t try to argue with someone while Chaos is affecting them, Nico. Especially her.”

“Oh, so she’s perfectly innocent and everything’s my fault. What else is new?”
Hades closed his eyes briefly. “That’s not what I meant.”

“He’s just saying that engaging in arguments is making it worse. She didn’t mean any of those things,” Zeus said.

“Oh I’m sorry, weren’t you the one that said people are rudely honest when they’re angry?”

Zeus and Poseidon cringed.

“Well yes, but…” Zeus trailed off uncomfortably.

That proved to be the wrong thing to say. Nico looked away quickly, blinking a little too fast to be subtle. “Whatever. You guys just like her more.”

“Well, you could try to be a little more likeable,” Jason said defensively. Hurt flashed across Nico's face before he forced it into a completely blank expression. He went silent, leaving everyone uncomfortable.

Eventually, Thalia stormed back into the house. “I’m not sorry, I’m just cold.”

Nico shot out of his place on the couch and made his way to the door, fists curled. “Well, thankfully I don’t get cold.”

“You almost passed out from frostbite, dimwit.”

Nico shoved past her and walked out of the house without a word. Poseidon sighed and got up to follow after him, shooting a disapproving glare at Thalia.

“Maybe I should go out to him…” Hades said. “You should stay here.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “I’m not made out of glass, idiot. I’ll go check on him. I promise I won’t get kidnapped.”

“You promised that last time, too.”

“Whatever.” There was no bite behind his words.

He walked out of the house after putting his shoes on, shivering at the cool breeze. He closed the door behind him as he spotted a lone figure near the woods. He sighed quietly. “Nico!” he yelled. “Wait a second!”

Nico stopped his advances into the forest and turned around. Poseidon jogged up to him quickly. “Hey, buddy,” he said quietly, standing in front of him. “Where are you going?”

Nico crossed his arms. “Somewhere,” he grunted.

Poseidon resisted the urge to say “How specific” and instead said: “You can’t go anywhere, Nico. We need you here, especially since we’ll be fighting Chaos again soon.”

“The others don’t seem to think so,” he said quietly.

Poseidon sighed. “No, Thalia’s just being manipulated. Jason only sees his sister a few times a year at the most, so he’s just being a little defensive of her.”

“I thought people were honest when they’re angry?” he asked.
Poseidon closed his eyes tightly. He took a deep breath before opening them.

Nico looked panicked for a reason Poseidon couldn’t quite figure out. He tried to calm his expression down, but it only worked slightly. “I didn’t mean that Zeus thinks your deadweight, I just meant it in a way that…”

Poseidon waved him off. “I’m not angry at you.”

Nico looked relieved.

Poseidon continued. “I just think you should reconsider leaving.” He put a gentle hand on his shoulder, and Nico looked like he was about flinch away but stopped. “We need you here, Nico. No matter what we say or do, it all comes down to the prophecy saying there’s eight people that need to be here. You’re one of them, you’re important. I mean, you were the one that got me, Zeus, and your father a weapon, you fought in every battle, and you were the one that really saved me from Chaos.” Poseidon smiled at him gently. “Please, don’t leave.”

Nico was silent for awhile. “How do you know what to say?”

Because I know exactly how you feel. “Because I’m just being honest.” He smiled again. “Now c’mon, we need to plan.”

Nico smiled gently and followed him back to the house.

*You guys know the plan because I mentioned it earlier in the chapter, the only new info you’d need is that they’re going tomorrow and they’re going back up the mountain. So that’s why I’m gonna end the chapter here, plus it just feels like a good place to end*

Chapter End Notes

idk how many more chapters this will be ’cause I’m going with the flow lmao but I think it's wrapping up... :(  
Not for another few chapters though
fluffish part 2 because I'm unoriginal with chapter names

Chapter Summary

literally just fluff. I mean like there's light angst at the beginning but that's just so we can get to the fluff

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the later update, middle school's a bitch
Also, since I've been pretty heavy with plot and Chaos stuff, I thought I'd give y'all a little break from the quest shit and give you this (I'm also just not looking forward to writing more battle scenes because they take soooo longgggg to get right, ugh). It's more like what the chapters were like at the beginning of the book, but we'll go back into the quest next chapter

See the end of the chapter for more notes

_Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “Nico smiled gently and followed him back to the house.”_

That night, they got separated into different sections of the house. Thalia and Hazel were to share the bedroom with Addelyn with the accompaniment of Nico, who refused to share with Percy and Jason because they had to share Stephens room. Speaking of which, Stephen was staying in the downstairs bedroom that Poseidon didn’t know existed. That left him with Zeus and Hades in the living room. Poseidon took the smallest couch on the left wall and let the other two pick theirs as he pulled the covers over himself and stared at the ceiling.

There was a ringing silence throughout the dark room, the kind that made your jaw loosen and your shoulders slack. Poseidon exhaled and closed his eyes lightly, the warmth of the blanket around him comfortably heavy. There was a heaviness behind his eyes and he wanted nothing more than to fall asleep, but a shifting movement made him open his eyes tiredly. He scanned the room for the source of the noise and found Zeus sitting up on the couch, a frown on his lips.

“What’s wrong?” Poseidon asked softly. His voice came out as a whisper, both because he didn’t want to wake anyone else up, and he didn’t think he could manage to make his voice any louder at this time of night.

Zeus jumped slightly, but quickly turned to look at him. He sighed before answering, letting his head fall back slightly. “Nothing, just can’t sleep.”

There was something off about it. Poseidon had known him for millennia, and just as Zeus could read him, he could read Zeus. There was a tension to his shoulders that signified when he was uneasy, and a microscopic raise to the pitch of his voice that always happened when he was lying.

“You sure?” Poseidon asked, not wanting to outright say he was lying but not wanting to just give it up.
He shrugged, but it was forced. “Yeah, just forget about it.”

“Is it something that happened while I was gone?”

“I said it was nothing, Poseidon,” he said sharply. He didn’t whisper it like he had previously, and Poseidon jumped a little at his volume.

He wanted to respond, but he didn’t trust himself to not start an argument so he kept his mouth shut. Instead, he rolled back onto his back again looked up at the ceiling instead of Zeus.

There was silence for a moment before Zeus sighed again. “Sorry.”

Poseidon looked over again and found Zeus rubbing his face tiredly. The moonlight sent silver rays through the window, providing the only light in the room. Everything was dark, and all Poseidon could really make out was Zeus’s silhouette.

When Poseidon didn’t respond, Zeus spoke again. “I just...I don’t know. It’s nothing, really. I’m just being stupid.”

“It’s not stupid if it’s keeping you up at night,” Poseidon said softly.

Zeus sighed and rested his head against the back of the couch, slouching in his position. “Really, though. It’s nothing. No one else even notices it, I’m just...” he extended his hand out as if grasping for the right word, and then let it fall back into his lap, defeated.

“What?” Poseidon asked, turning under his blanket to look at him.

He shook his head. “No, not really. Not without giving away how...dumb it is.”

“Should I guess?”

He shook his head again. “No. I just...ugh. I’m keeping you up, aren’t I?”

“It’s fine,” Poseidon assured. “Just tell me what it is.”

“I guess I just...ugh, this is going to sound bad.” He took a deep breath. “I guess it’s just that over the span of time that we’ve been down here, there are little things that have just showed that you and Hades are...” he trailed off, leaving the sentence hanging in the air.

Poseidon raised an eyebrow, red flags raising. “Um...what?”

“No that.” Zeus said, rolling his eyes. His voice sounded a little choked. “Just...well...it just seems like you guys are making way more progress with each other than you are with me and I guess it just feels like you guys don’t like me as much as you...and it feels really weird whenever I hang out with you two without the others because it’s like I’m just there to be me to you and you both hate me.”

Poseidon sighed. “Again, I’m going to need you to say that a little slower.”

Zeus took a shaky breath. “I said, it seems like you two are making way more progress with each other than you are with me. And I guess it just seems like you like each other way more than you like me, and I...I don’t know, it’s stupid.”

Poseidon frowned. “First of all, no. And second of all, there was more to it.”

He rubbed his face again. “I said it’s nothing.”

Poseidon crossed his arms. “Really? Tell me.”
Zeus sighed. “I said it feels weird to hang out with you guys alone, because it’s like you two hate me and rely on each other to, I dunno, vent or something.”

“Okay, first of all,” Poseidon said, thoughts racing through his head in a jumbled mess. “We don’t hate you. Second of all, you shouldn’t feel weird hanging out with us. And third of all, what do you mean vent?”

Zeus exhaled and fell back against the sofa. “I don’t know...don’t you guys just complain about me?”

Poseidon stared at him blankly. “Huh?”

He threw his hand up again. “When you two are alone. You complain about me.”

Poseidon stared at him again. “What?”

Zeus stared back at him. “What are you saying ‘what’ to?”

“Um...everything you just said? What gave you the idea that we hate you and...vent to you behind your back?”

“Well…” Zeus looked beyond confused. “You do, don’t you?”

“No!” Poseidon said, exasperated. He resisted the urge to facepalm. Leave it up to Zeus to think everyone talked about him in their spare time, whether it be in a positive manner or a negative manner. “Why would we...?”

“Because I’m a dickhead!”

“You’re only a dickhead when Chaos is manipulating your emotions. And some other times...but you know what I mean. We’ve forgiven you.”

Zeus looked like his whole world got flipped upside down. “Then what do you talk about?”

“Um...I don’t know...random stuff?”

“I thought…” He wrapped his arms around his midriff tightly, still looking confused.

“We don’t hate you, Zeus,” Poseidon said quietly.

“But…”

“I said we don’t.”

They were silent for a while, just Poseidon staring at Zeus while he stared at the ground. When Poseidon saw tears gather at the edge of Zeus’s waterline, he shot off the couch and stalked over to him. He sat down on Zeus, ignoring the awkwardness of how it must look, and wrapped his arms around him. Zeus froze, his arms out but not touching him. Poseidon didn’t notice at first, and just hugged him tighter. Zeus still remained frozen, not attempting to return the hug.

Poseidon then froze, too.

In the past few weeks, and yesterday specifically, he had felt so comfortable with and around Zeus and Hades that he didn’t really think about his actions before he did them. He himself had no problem with physical affection, whether it be platonic or romantic (in this case platonic), and that included hugs, hand-holding, light kisses to anywhere except the lips, cuddling, and—apparently—
crawling into people’s laps like a fucking moron. Physical affection usually made him feel better, because he got to have that affection less than a few times a year. His and Amphitrite’s relationship was...strained at best, and Triton was laughable. And then there was Percy, whom he usually got to see once a year if he was lucky. Up until this point, he probably had only shown affection or gotten affection twice a year.

But just because he was fine with it didn’t mean everyone else was.

He unwrapped his arms and crawled off of Zeus, apologies stumbling out of his mouth. His face felt like it was on fire and he stuttered every time he spoke. He wanted the ground to swallow him whole, then for the ground to turn into a pit of boiling lava, and then for it to turn to water to cool him off, and then for it to turn to lava again.

He backed up until he accidentally hit the back of his knees against Hades’s couch and fell on top of him.

“Oof!” Hades grunted, waking up with a start and trying to push Poseidon off of him.

Poseidon scrambled up and stood, looking down at him in embarrassment. “Sorry.” He looked back at Zeus sheepishly.

“What’s going on?” Hades asked, rubbing at his eyes and sitting up. “I actually got to sleep for the first time in days.”

“Nothing!” Poseidon squeaked.

“Why are you so embarrassed?” Zeus asked, lowering his arms. “I was about to hug you back. We could’ve had a bonding moment.”

Poseidon backtracked. Oh. “Oh,” he said stupidly. “I thought you were weirded out.”

“You still haven’t answered my question,” Hades pointed out, yawning and slumping forward.

“How long has it been since you slept?” Poseidon asked, looking at him weirdly.

“Doesn’t matter,” he said, waving a hand dismissively. “Now answer my question.”

“He was hugging me,” Zeus said.

Poseidon buried his face in his hands. “I fucking crawled in your lap.” His voice came out as muffled.

“Well I was sitting down, how else would you hug me?”

“I don’t know,” he said, groaning. “Sorry.”

“Enough of that, I wanted a hug and you deprived me of the opportunity.”

“Are we going to be like Keith and Lance?”

“Huh?”

“Have a bonding moment.”

Zeus shrugged. “Sure. I promise I won’t forget.”
“You’d be the Keith anyway. Lance was the one who ‘forgot’ about it.”

“Ha ha.”

Poseidon smiled a little sheepishly and walked back over. He awkwardly tried to lean down and wrap his arms around Zeus’s shoulders while standing up, and Hades snorted at them. Poseidon couldn’t see Zeus’s face but he was fairly certain that he rolled his eyes.

“Oh, come here.” He wrapped his arms back around Poseidon and dragged him closer, twisting him around so he was sitting on Zeus’s lap sideways with his legs on the left side of Zeus’s legs.

“Well, at least this is better than straddling you,” Poseidon commented, more content than he’d like to admit.

“Yeah, okay,” Zeus agreed with a light laugh. “That was a little weird.”

Poseidon snorted. There was a pause for a moment, before he asked: “Aren’t I hurting your legs?”

“Not really. You’re like, 20 pounds.”

“Excuse me?”

“I’m just saying.”

Poseidon huffed and unwrapped his arms from Zeus’s shoulders so they weren’t at that odd, painful angle, and placed them in his own lap. He leaned his head against the crook of Zeus’s neck tiredly. “You’re comfy.”

“Are you calling me fat?”

“Yes.”

Zeus made an offended noise and tried to push Poseidon off of him.

“Hey!” Poseidon said as he almost fell off. He grabbed Zeus’s shoulders to steady himself. Zeus stopped trying to push him and relaxed against the couch, bringing Poseidon with him. Poseidon rested his cheek against his chest and let out a breath.

“Y’know,” Poseidon said, “this isn’t much of a hug. I’m just kinda sitting on your lap.”

“It’s close enough.”

They went quiet again, letting silence ring around the room. Crickets sounded outside the window, providing the only noise in the house. Hades laid back on the couch and pulled the covers over himself. Poseidon stared out the window while everyone was wondering what to say.

“It’s strange,” he said eventually.

“What is?” Zeus asked.

Poseidon sighed. “A few weeks ago, could you imagine this? Me, sitting in your lap. Me. Your lap.”

“I think you’ve always wanted to, to be honest,” Zeus said, shrugging.

Poseidon rolled his eyes and punched his shoulder lightly. “I’m trying to be serious. We could’ve
had a moment.”

“Believe me, this is a ‘moment’ enough. I was about to murder you not three weeks ago, and now you’re curled up, sitting on me.”

“Oh yeah,” Hades agreed, still looking tired. He sat up on the couch again and looked at them. “Do you realize how much blackmail I have of you now, Poseidon? I mean, wow. Imagine how people would react to the almighty Poseidon sitting on Zeus’s lap.”

“Shut up. You’re just jealous.”

Hades’ eyebrows shot up. “Are you implying that I want to sit on Zeus’s lap?”

“Duh. It’s obvious. I mean, I’ve seen the way you look at him.”

“Oh, kill me now.”

“He’s too heavy anyway,” Zeus said, scrunching his nose up.

“Don’t Hades-shame,” Poseidon said, yawning. He snuggled his head into Zeus’s chest.

“Well, I mean he’s probably feeling pretty left out,” Zeus snickered.

“I agree.”

“Ah, yes,” Hades said sarcastically. “I want nothing more than to come and join your cuddles.”

“See?” Poseidon said, looking at Zeus with an over exaggerated excitement that Zeus returned. “It’s okay, Hades,” Poseidon said turning to him and opening his arms out, grinning. “You can come over, we don’t mind.”

“I’d rather not, thanks.” He laid back down on the couch and pulled the covers over himself.

Poseidon narrowed his eyes at him. He turned his gaze over to Zeus and leaned in to whisper in his ear. “Then we’ll just go over to him.”

Zeus grinned and nodded. When Hades closed his eyes, Poseidon crawled off of Zeus and tip-toed over to Hades’s couch. Zeus walked behind him slowly. Poseidon paused when he was about five inches away from the couch, thinking of his next move.

Hades peeked his eye open. “You two are the least sneaky people in the world.”

Poseidon grinned and pounced on him. Hades let out an ‘oof’ and struggled to get him off. Poseidon laughed and laid completely on top of him, letting his arms hang off the side of the couch and on the other side of Hades, resting his cheek on his chest.

“Get off!” Hades said, struggling.

“Nope!” Poseidon said brightly.

Zeus laughed, and then mock-pouted. “There’s no room for me.”

“Never fear, dear brother!” Poseidon scrambled up, pulling Hades into a sitting position with him. “We shall make room!” He untangled himself from Hades and got up. “Okay. Hades, lie down with your head against the armrest.”
Hades did so with a long suffering sigh.

“Now Zeus, crawl between his legs and lie down against him.”

“What?” Zeus and Hades whisper-yelled, outraged.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Do you want to cuddle or not?”

“No really,” the both said.

Poseidon pouted. “You two are no fun.”

“How about you do it, then?” Zeus asked, rolling his eyes. “You’re probably used to sitting between his legs.”

Poseidon and Hades stared at him.

There were a few beats of silence before Zeus realized his mistake. He turned bright red. “Oh my gods, I meant that you two hug and stuff holy shit wait no—”

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “We know what you meant, just reword it next time please.”

Zeus nodded with a sheepish smile.

Poseidon plopped down on the couch and moved Hades’s legs so he could sit between them. He lied his back down on Hades’s stomach, resting the back of his head on Hades’s chest. It was quite comfortable and Poseidon didn’t feel like moving, even when Hades cursed and threatened to throw him into Tartarus if he didn’t move.

Poseidon sighed. “Stop trying to be a dark, moody badass.” He yawned. “We all know you like cuddles, Hades.”

Hades made a sound of outrage and tried to push him off. Poseidon remained firmly where he was until Hades just gave up.

“Good,” Poseidon said, referring to the defeated slump of Hades’s shoulders. “Now Zeus, stop hovering around. Sit down there.” He pointed to the other end of the couch.

Zeus raised an eyebrow and did as he was told, sitting down cross legged.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Who sleeps like that? Lie down.”

“I can’t,” Zeus pointed out, gesturing to Poseidon and Hades’ extended legs.

“It’s called cuddling, dumbass. We’re supposed to touch each other.”

“…”

Poseidon turned red. “Oh Jesus, get your mind out of the gutter.”

Zeus snorted and extended his legs. He shifted for a moment before also resting his head on the armrest and lying down completely.

“See?” Poseidon asked as he rested his legs on top of Zeus’s. “Cuddling. Hera would be so proud.”

“Hera literally wants to kill us.”
“Doesn’t everyone?”

“Touché.”

They went silent for a while, before Hades spoke again. “I hate cuddling,” he grumbled.

“Whatever you want to tell yourself,” Poseidon said, laying a blanket over the three of them and snuggling into it. He rested his cheek against Hades’s chest and smiled contently. Silence consumed the room again like a heavy comforter on Poseidon’s ears. He could still faintly hear the crickets, but his main source of sound was Hades’s heartbeat. Just before he felt sleep tug on his consciousness, he felt Hades hesitantly wrap his arms around him.

Poseidon smiled. “Told you you like cuddles.”

Hades grumbled a ‘shut up’ and relaxed even further on the couch. Poseidon laughed lightly and, as quick as a light, fell asleep.

Chapter End Notes

in school we had to share one special thing that happened to us over the weekend and I deadass said 'Oh yeah I reached five thousand, four hundred readers on my book' (btw thank you so fucking much) and now my whole class thinks that this is actually a book and not some trash fanfiction lmaoooo
Although I am writing an actual book that I'm putting a little more editing skills into and that I'm hoping to get published so if y'all could check out any of my social media or Tumblr I'd appreciate it and give you cookies (I know I've already mentioned it, but like I'm a desperate hoe so you're getting it again)
Instagram: lauren_elizabeth_laing
Tumblr: loloisafangirl
Death, Apollo, and Randomness (Otherwise Known as Chaos)

Chapter Summary

uhmmmmm
lots of stuff happens
yee haw

Chapter Notes

buckle up guys, gals, and in-between pals, it's gonna be a wild ride

See the end of the chapter for more notes

_Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’ “Poseidon laughed lightly and, as quick as a light, fell asleep.”_

“AWWWWWWWWWW!”

Poseidon woke with a start at the high pitched squeal. He squinted his eyes open and blinked as rays of golden sunlight hit his eyes. After clearing the coloured dots out of his vision, he blinked up at the person who woke him up. It turns out there were multiple people, but the ‘aw’ most definitely came from Hazel.

“What?” he asked, voice coming out unintentionally quiet. As soon as the word left his mouth, he realized why.

He and his brothers were in a similar position to what they had been in last night, but a little more...awkward. It still went Zeus, Poseidon, then Hades, but they had moved around in their places on the couch just enough to make it beyond awkward. See, Hades was in almost exactly the same position, but the same couldn’t be said for Poseidon and Zeus. Poseidon had somehow managed to flip around completely, with his stomach against Hades rather than his back. Zeus had somehow managed to scooch farther up on the couch so Poseidon’s shins were on either side of his hips, and Poseidon had his cheek turned so it laid against Hades’s chest, with his arms curled up into his own chest. Hades had his arms around him and laced his hands together on the small of Poseidon’s back.

Instead of reacting immediately like he would’ve not a week ago, Poseidon just stared at the other inhabitants of the room.

First, obviously, there was Hazel, who had her chin tilted sideways and her fingers interlaced where her neck met her shoulder. Then, going left, there was Nico, who had a for the most part unreadable expression on his face, but still had the slightest raise to an eyebrow. Then there was Percy, who had a camera that he must’ve stolen from Stephen or his niece. And then Jason and Thalia, who both almost had identical expressions on their faces which contained of half amusement and half disbelief. Stephen was humming while making tea, a soft, amused smile on his face, while Addelyn was cooing quietly behind a cup of coffee.
It took him a moment to fully register what was going on, and when he finally heard the click of the Canon camera, he jumped and tried to scramble off the couch. It proved to be rather unsuccessful, as Hades still had his arms around him. He just ended up kicking Zeus in the stomach, to which he ended up apologizing profusely after he let out a huff of pain. He tried to roll off the couch, and while it was successful this time, it didn’t come without a cost. He also took Hades down with him, much to the other man’s dismay. Thankfully, Hades caught himself and managed to stay on the couch. Poseidon was less fortunate and ended up face planting on the floor.

“Ow,” he said, sitting up and rubbing his nose.

“Are you okay?” Hades asked, coming down to kneel beside him and touching his nose gently.

Poseidon turned red as Percy clicked his camera again. “Yes! And you’re not helping.”

Hades threw his hands up. “I’m just trying to help!”

Poseidon huffed and turned to Percy. “Stop taking pictures!”

Percy pouted over exaggeratedly but put the camera down.

“Care to explain?” Nico asked, raising his eyebrow up further.

“Explain what?” Poseidon asked stubbornly.

“Y’know….what we just walked in on?”

“Don’t say it like that!”

“Like what?” Nico asked, exasperated.

“You made it sound like…! Ugh!”

“What Poseidon is trying to say,” Zeus cut in, “is that it’s really nothing.”

“Nothing?” Percy asked, crossing his arms. Addelyn cringed when he let the camera hang loosely from his neck without support. “You guys hated each other! Like, you were gonna start a war over which one of you got the last cookie or something!”

“Okay, first of all,” Hades said. “We weren’t going to start a war over a cookie—”

“I wouldn’t be so sure,” Percy commented.

“—Fine, I wouldn’t start a war over a cookie.”

“Whatever, it’s still weird,” Thalia said, shrugging and walking over to the kitchen.

“It’s not weird,” Poseidon said defensively.

Nico raised an eyebrow. “You’re the big three.”

“So?”

“...So, you aren’t exactly the first thing that comes to mind when I think ‘cuddling’.”

“We weren’t cuddling —”

“Oh sure you weren’t.”
“Okay, does everyone remember the plan?” Zeus asked, looking up at the marble slab dramatically. Poseidon wished very much that wind would come and blow through all of their hair, but unfortunately it was doing it the wrong way and was instead blowing hair into his face from behind.

“Yes,” Hades said, looking very much like he wanted to roll his eyes. “You’ve went over it about fifteen thousand times.”

“Yes, well, we don’t want a rerun of last time, do we?”

“All that really went wrong last time was that Poseidon decided to be the hero and fuck stuff up.” A few beats of silence. “Sorry. Chaos.”

“It’s fine,” Poseidon said. He was kind of right.

“Okay, let’s—” Percy and Jason said at the same time. They looked at each other with a challenge in their eyes.

“Chill, guys,” Thalia said, putting her hand on Percy’s shoulder. Her nails were painted black.

Nico grunted in agreement. “We don’t need to start a fight before we go into a much more important one.”

“Yeah,” Hazel agreed, “and you’ll say stuff you’ll regret. We don’t need a relationship to end because you were affected by Chaos.”

Jason’s eyes were glued to the hand Thalia had on Percy’s shoulder. A little spark of electricity cracked through the air.

“Um…Jason?” Nico asked, coming up to put a hand on his shoulder as well. It was kind of awkward, as he had to put his elbow past a ninety degree angle to reach. Poseidon could tell he regretted his decision of doing so, but couldn’t decide if it was for his height or for his disliking of physical contact. “You okay?”

“I’m fine,” Jason said through gritted teeth. He jerked his shoulder out of Nico’s grip. Thalia still had her hand on Percy’s shoulder, a confused look on her face. Jason surged forward and walked between them, ripping Thalia’s hand away from Percy’s shoulder.

“Hey!” Thalia said. She looked at Jason’s back with her arms thrown up. “What’s your problem?”

Jason didn’t respond and stepped on the rocks that lead to the opening in the marble floor.

The others shared a bewildered glance before following him. Poseidon waited for the demigods and Zeus to climb up to the marble before he went to. However, just before he could, Hades grabbed his arm. Poseidon looked back at him, an eyebrow raised.

“Can you...talk to me for a second?” Hades asked.

“Er...shouldn’t we go and help them?” Poseidon asked, pointing up to the marble.
“Chaos shouldn’t be there for another few minutes. Please, come talk.”

“O...kay?”

Hades nodded gratefully and grabbed his arm. He dragged him over to a place where a couple large rocks hid them. He let go of his arm and stood in front of him, obviously attempting to stop fiddling his hands.

“What’s going on?” Poseidon asked, frowning. He crossed his arms and leaned back against the rock behind him.

“Well...” Hades took a deep breath. “Remember the prophecy?”

“Of course...where are you going with this?” He had to cut to the chase: they didn’t exactly have time for small talk. He glanced nervously at the marble above them, chewing his lower lip. The last thing the eight of them needed were two members missing, especially in a fight like this one...

“Well, it said: ‘the last moments of freedom and peace’.”

“Yeah...?” Poseidon furrowed his brow, turning his attention back to his elder brother, whose hands were rubbing together nervously, obviously having abandoned his hope of restraining himself.

“And, well...I just want you to know...that, if one of us doesn’t make it out of this...you’ve been a huge help to me these past few weeks, and I...I just...I guess that I wanted to tell you that I love you again, and that I mean it.”

Poseidon smiled, feeling warmth spread throughout his chest and all the way down to his toes. When he responded, it was a little teary. “Sap. I love you, too.”

He threw his arms around Hades, hugging him tightly. Hades wrapped his arms around him too, but his shoulders did not relax.

“There’s another thing,” he said.

“What is it?” When Poseidon tried to pull back, Hades didn’t let him.

“The other line. ‘One shall choose between the world and a niece’.”

Poseidon frowned, but that didn’t last long as something occurred to him. “Maybe the niece is Addelyn...!” He looked up at Hades, feeling his own face light up like a Christmas tree. He felt like a dick saying it excitedly, but he’d rather have her than Thalia or Hazel.

Hades shook his head. “Remember these lines? ‘While seven will face the risk of death, only one shall exhale their final breath’?”

Poseidon's face fell again. “Oh.”

“The reason why I’m bringing this up is...I want to pick.”

“Huh?”

“It says: ‘One shall choose between the world and a niece’. I want to choose. I’m not letting you carry that with you for the rest of your life.”

“But...it might be Hazel. She’s not your niece.”
“Then let Zeus pick.”

“But…”

“Listen, Poseidon. I know that right now you think you’re happy, but let me tell you as soon as something bad happens, you’re gonna fall right back into depression. It doesn’t go away. I know that we’ve been helping each other out, and I know Zeus is trying his best, but it’s not going to change the fact that there always be the sadness there, or that self-doubt, or that numbness. Please, I’ve gone through the relapse before. I don’t want you to. The guilt will be overbearing. I don’t want you to get hurt, or...hurt yourself.”

Poseidon stared at him for a long while, studying the desperation in his eyes, the sincerity in his voice. “But you’ll feel guilty too,” he argued eventually. He wasn't going to give up that easy.

“I can handle it.”

“And you think I can’t?”

“That’s not what I’m saying. Please, just listen to me.”

Poseidon finally pulled back and looked up at him, eyes searching. His eyes were desperate, pleading for him to agree, as if he'd shatter like glass if he didn't. Poseidon sighed. “Fine, but don’t you dare bottle it up or say that it’s fine if you have to decide.”

“Okay.”

Poseidon nodded and walked back towards the marble, a heavy feeling in his chest. Not only was he making Hades pick who was going to die, either Hazel or Thalia was going to die.

When he finally pulled himself onto the marble, the others were waiting for them.

“What took you guys so long?” Zeus asked.

Percy waggled his eyebrows with a grin and Thalia elbowed him.

“Nothing,” Hades said as he pulled himself onto the marble. He stood up and walked over to the group. “We shou—”

“They had a rather heartfelt conversation, I’d say.”

Poseidon whipped around at the new voice. His heart skipped a few beats when he saw Chaos leaning casually on one of the rocks, arms folded and one eyebrow raised.

“How do you know about that?” Poseidon asked, voice wavering against his will.

“I know everything,” Chaos said, shrugging. He pushed himself off the rock and the whole group took a step back simultaneously. “I’ve been watching you the whole time.”

“What...What do you mean?” Thalia asked. Poseidon admired the strength in her voice, the way she kept it steady and controlled, as if they weren't facing the most powerful thing on the planet. He didn't know how she did it; he was about to shit himself and he'd faced much more than she has.
“It’s rather easy.” He shrugged again. “I was worried about watching Percy and Jason, but all they did was kiss a few times, thank the heavens.”

Percy and Jason turned bright red.

“Oh and poor Nico, my dear boy. I do hope you get help soon, that was almost the saddest thing I’ve ever witnessed.”

Everyone turned to Nico, who was staring determinedly away from everyone. Poseidon didn’t know exactly what Chaos was talking about, but he didn’t like the feeling it gave him.

“Oh, and Thalia and Hazel, I did enjoy your little conversation. I’ve always wondered what girls talked about.”

Thalia and Hazel shared a glance.

Chaos sighed and finally looked to Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades. “Oh, and you three. Simply adorable. I do however have to mention that I am a tad angry you stole the little one away from me.”

“I’m no—”

“Not the time, Poseidon,” Hades said.

“See, we could’ve had so much fun together.”

“You’re sick,” Percy spat, getting ready to charge.

“No, I’m Chaos.”

Did Chaos just make a dad joke? I think Chaos just made a dad joke. Oh gods.

“So,” Chaos said. When he unsheathed his dagger, Poseidon flinched. “Who wants to die first?”

“Me,” Percy said, before slapping a hand over his mouth. “Sorry, no. Force of habit.”

Chaos looked at him strangely, his handsome features twisted in both confusion and aversion.

“Oh, who do you think is actually gonna answer that?” Thalia rolled her eyes. “I mean, Percy’s an idiot—” Percy made an offended noise, “—but everyone else wouldn’t know how to respond. It’s like saying: ‘who wants the jelly donut’ out of all the rest of the donuts.”

“I like jelly donuts,” Jason said, looking mildly offended.

“What’s wrong with you?”

“What Thalia is trying to say,” Nico said dryly, “is that that was a stupid question to ask. None of us want to die.”

“You sure about that?” Chaos asked, switching his eyes between Hades and Poseidon.

“Er…”

There were a few beats of silence before Percy broke it again.

“Okay, this is the longest intro to a battle I’ve ever experienced. Can we, like, do the stabby stuff
and get this over with?"

“The stabby stuff,” Thalia repeated, exasperated.

“Well how else would you describe it?”

Thalia pondered a moment, then shrugged her leather-clad shoulders. “...Point taken.”

Everyone charged.

Chaos turned to mist as soon as they reached him. Poseidon's eyes met Hades' in a flash of movement, and in the split second their eyes interlocked, grins spread over their faces, though more twisted than amused. When Chaos reformed, he wasn’t where he had been previously. Poseidon furrowed his brow and looked around.

Chaos had reformed a good ten feet away from them.

*Well that’s new.*

Regardless of the new information, the group charged again. Chaos waited for them patiently, except he didn’t turn to mist before they could reach him. Poseidon looked at him in confusion, but didn’t stop his advances. Just before they could attempt to stab him, he turned to mist.

Except this time, the mist completely covered all of them.

Poseidon couldn’t see one foot ahead of him. Coughs wracked his body as unhealthy amounts of strange mist made its way into his lungs, clogging and burning his esophagus. His eyes burned with the sting of it in his eyes. He started to try to walk out of it, but it seemed endless. The farther he walked, the thicker the mist got, no matter what direction he changed his advances to. His lungs were starting to burn with the lack of good air. He got thrown into a coughing fit, dropping his sword and doubling over, still trying to find a way out.

“Please,” he wheezed out. “Let me out.”

The mist dissipated, and Chaos stood right in front of him. Poseidon looked up at him in fear, still coughing. In his panic to get out of the mist, he had left his sword somewhere, which he soon saw was 10 feet away. The others were all scattered everywhere, and Nico almost looked like he was having an asthma attack.

When Poseidon finally stopped coughing and stood up, Chaos grabbed his chin and made him look up at him.

“I was lonely after you left, y’know,” he said.

Poseidon swallowed.

“Eventually, the loneliness turned to anger.” He yanked him closer. “Unfortunately for you, that hasn’t changed.”

He got out his dagger. Poseidon looked at it in fear and tried to back away, but Chaos was a lot stronger than him. He kept him in place and raised the dagger high up. When he started to move it down towards Poseidon’s chest, Poseidon closed his eyes tightly, preparing for the pain, and then the nothingness.

“NO!” someone screamed. Poseidon couldn’t tell if it was Hades, Zeus, Percy, Jason, or Nico.
He screamed as he felt the dagger pierce through the left side of his chest.

He fell to his knees, not wanting to open his eyes. The pain was unbearable. He wasn’t sure why or how he wasn’t dead yet, but the pain made him want it to be over. For it all to be over. It was stinging pain from the outside to halfway through the inside of his chest. The pain shuttered out in waves. He let out a sob of pain.

“POSEID—huh?”

“...What?”

“Um…”

“I thought you guys said you were mortal…?”

Poseidon opened his eyes with way too much effort and looked around. Everyone, including Chaos, was looking at him with confusion. He looked down at his chest, expecting for it to be covered in thick, red blood.

Instead, it was covered in thick, gold ichor.

_Huh?_

“Okay, let’s talk about this later!” Jason yelled. “Someone get him to safety while we take care of Chaos!”

Hades, Zeus, and Percy immediately went for him, but a familiar voice stopped them.

“Never fear, father, uncle, cousin, I got this.”

Poseidon looked up with much difficulty to see Apollo standing there, grinning. “Wha..?”

“Don’t worry, dearest uncle, I’m here to help!”

“I thought...the prophecy said...eight...?”

“Eight people to stop Chaos, yes, but I’m not trying to stop him, I’m here to help you! Besides, I made it, right? I can change it!” Poseidon didn’t think that was how it worked, but he wasn’t about to say anything. “Now, let’s get you all healed up and then you can go back to your little fight club.”

“No,” Chaos said, advancing on them with deadly anger in his eyes. “He was supposed to die!”

“And everyone was supposed to agree that I’m the most beautiful Olympian, but nooo, Aphrodite just _had_ to go and take the title.”

“What?”

“A little help here, guys!” Apollo said, looking at the other members of the eight.

“Oh, right,” Percy said. “Um...charge!”

The group rushed forward, a deadly glint in all of their eyes. Chaos had no choice but to turn to mist and take his attention away from Poseidon and Apollo.

“Oh, buddy, I’m glad you’re a teenager now because I would not be able to do this if you...
weren’t.” He lifted Poseidon up in a bridal carry.

Poseidon would have protested, if he wasn’t in so much pain. Apollo struggled to keep him up, given that he was only a little bigger than Poseidon when he was in this form, but did surprisingly well. He struggled, but walked him over to behind one of the larger, less eroded rocks and laid him down.

“Okay, I’m gonna make this as quick as possible, but he did a little damage to your heart so it’s going to hurt a little, okay? He pretty much missed it, but he grazed it a little.”

Poseidon nodded and closed his eyes.

Apollo took a deep breath, and Poseidon felt him put his hands on either side of the wound. In no less than a few seconds, a light, burning feeling spread all over his chest. He furrowed his brow uncomfortably. Slowly but steadily, the pain grew until it was almost as painful as the wound itself. He let out a cry of pain, gripping onto what felt like Apollo’s knee.

“Stop,” he whimpered.

“I’m sorry, it’ll be over soon.”

He closed his eyes tightly and let out small, painful whimpers, before eventually the burning ceased, along with the pain from the stab wound. He opened his eyes, blinking tears out of them. Once his vision was cleared, he looked down at his wound, which was now non existent. The ichor still covered all over his shirt, but the hole that the dagger had made had solid flesh beneath it with no hole where the knife went through. He looked up at Apollo, who looked somewhat exhausted.

“Thank you,” he said, voice weak.

Apollo smiled. “Anytime, uncle.”

He helped Poseidon up off the ground into a standing position, and then slowly started to let him go. “You think you can walk?” he asked.

Poseidon nodded and took a step forward. “I feel fine.” Well, he was a little light headed, but other than that he felt pretty normal. “You did a great job.”

Apollo smiled and winked. “I know.”

“Should I go back…?”

“I would say no, but you’re not my typical patient. If you really feel that you’re okay, you can go. I put more effort into that than I have in years. So…go get him, I guess.”

Poseidon nodded. “Thank you. Again.”

“No problem.”

He got out his sword and charged into battle. The first person he reached was Zeus. “How long has it been?” he asked.

Zeus jumped. “Oh my god! You scared the shit out of me.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Sorry.”

A few beats of silence, and then, “How are you still walking?”
“Apollo. Again, how long has it been?”

Zeus shook his head. “I don’t know. I think we’re getting close though, he’s starting to take longer to turn to mist.”

Poseidon nodded and looked back at Chaos. The others were charging again, so he and Zeus did as well. It would take them a few seconds to get there, so Poseidon continued to talk. “How much longer do you thin—Nevermind.”

They had reached Chaos, and he didn’t turn to mist this time. Thalia slashed down on him, and he screamed as she cut a long gash into the right side of his ribcage. They all shared a surprised glance, before grinning and attacking him all at once. He growled and tried to fight back, but only succeeded in cutting a small gash on Percy’s shoulder.

Poseidon had the strange urge to say “you’ve yeed your last haw now” and figured he had spent too much time with Percy.

He charged and slashed down on Chaos, who retaliated with his dagger. Despite being up against eight people, he put up a pretty good fight. Sure, he was getting a few wounds every few seconds, but he was still going strong. He knocked Nico a good five feet away with a single punch to the stomach, and Poseidon could tell that that was the final straw for Hades.

Poseidon was about to attack, when he noticed Chaos turning to mist again. Poseidon looked at him in confusion, backing up. When he finally turned completely into mist again, it looked different. It was black this time, and looked a lot thicker. As quick as lightning, it shot itself at Thalia and went right through her chest.

“What the—?!” Poseidon yelled.

Thalia fell to one knee. It took a moment for her to recover, but when she did, she looked up at the others. When Poseidon looked at her, he noticed that something was off about her. Her eyes weren’t the electric blue they they usually were, they were light blue with small flecks of grey, green, and brown.

Chaos’s eyes.

Shit.

Thalia, or Chaos, stood. When she stood, Poseidon automatically knew it wasn't her. Thalia’s posture wasn’t terrible, but she always held herself in a laid back, I-don’t-want-to-be-here fashion. The way she stood now, with her feet shoulder-width apart, spine straight, and head held high, was not her.

There were a few moments of silence, before she charged. She went straight for Poseidon, who blocked her dagger with a: “Woah!” She continued to slash at him and, despite her shorter weapon, Poseidon was having a hard time blocking it.

Percy and Jason rushed up to her to try and keep her back.

“Thalia!” Percy said. “This isn’t you! Snap out of it!”

Thalia broke out of their grip and raised her dagger high in the air, ready to take out Percy and Jason in one blow. Out of the corner of his eye, Poseidon saw Hades close his eyes.

The world and a niece.
Poseidon shook his head. It wasn’t supposed to go down like this. Thalia had no control over what she was doing. Poseidon caught Hades’s eye and shook his head, mouthing the word ‘no’.

“I’m sorry,” Hades mouthed back. He looked at Zeus, who closed his eyes and nodded, looking physically pained.

Hades charged forward and raised his sword. Just before Thalia could slash Percy and Jason’s throats, Hades thrust his sword right through her back. She screamed and dropped her dagger, falling to the ground.

“THALIA!” Jason screamed. He dropped down beside her.

Just as he did, mist started to flow out of Thalia’s mouth. It swirled out of her and then formed into Chaos a good five feet away from her.

It formed into Chaos, but his cold, dead body.

Poseidon didn’t even feel one ounce of celebration.

Thalia gurgled on her own blood. Zeus rushed forward, dropping to his knees beside Jason. “Thalia,” he whispered. He took her hand in his and squeezed tightly.

Thalia looked at him and smiled lightly. “Please don’t turn me into a tree this time.” Zeus nodded, eyes brimming with tears. Thalia looked to Jason, smiling. “Love you, little bro.”

“I love you too, Thalia,” Jason whispered, a tear streaming down his cheek.

Thalia turned to Percy. “Eh,” she struggled to get out. “You’re okay.”

Percy laughed wetly. “Love you too.”

Thalia opened her mouth to talk to Nico, when Apollo barged through. “Okay, stop, you’re gonna make me cry.” He dropped to his knees. “Honestly,” he muttered, “am I nothing to you guys? You think I’ll just let her die...people these days…”

He continued to mutter under his breath as he closed his eyes and put his hands on Thalia’s stomach. He muttered under his breath, and slowly but surely, a light, golden glow surrounded her body. She whimpered in pain. Hope flooded Poseidon again. Apollo was going to heal her, just like he healed him. The glow grew steadily, as did Thalia’s whimpers of pain. When it took a little longer than Poseidon’s did, a little hope left him again.

It returned full force however, when the glowing stopped and Thalia blinked at all of them. There were a few moments of silence, before: “Goddamn, I never knew I’d be sappy if I was gonna die.”

Everyone simultaneously collapsed in relief.

Thalia grinned. “That worried about me, huh?”

“Jesus,” Percy swore, clutching a hand to his chest, “you scared me there for a second. I thought I was gonna have no one to compete with for the ‘Most Powerful Demigod’ title.”

“Wow,” Thalia, Nico, Hazel, and Jason said.

Percy laughed. “I’m only joking.”

“I know.” Thalia smiled.
Poseidon smiled down at her, and then up at the others. It was over. Finally over.

Chapter End Notes

Not the end of the story yet, don't worry. Or maybe sorry. Idk if y'all want this to end or not lmaoo.
Also, if any of y'all are confused about stuff regarding the prophecy, I'm putting a little 'explanation' segment in the last chapter.
ALSO Y'ALL HAVE OPTIONS
THESE FUCKERS CAN EITHER GO BACK TO NYC OR GO TO CHB FOR THE LAST FEW CHAPTERS
PICK Y'ALL (plz)
Hey bitches ily plz don't kill me

Sorry, this ain't a chapter but I just came on here to let y'all know that the new chapter is taking longer to write than I anticipated and I'm yeeting myself on an airplane to the Dominican tomorrow so the next update will probably be late into next week after I get back but like then again when am I ever on schedule for update times

In fact I don't even have a schedule

im a bad writer shit

also there might be wifi at the resort but I'm not sure so I just wanted to let y'all know if there isn't anyway, sorry y'all

peace and may all of your yees be hawed, may your tea be steaming, and may your road work ahead

In the meantime u can imagine hasidon or hazeusidon or brotherly bonding (but lets be honest I turned most of you into sluts for these pairings so any of you who still think of them as just brothers I bow down to u)

Anyway, subscribe to pewdiepie, watch Shane Dawson conspiracy theories, and sip tea with James Charles and Jeffree star, goodbye

(I apologize to any adults reading this that have no idea what I'm saying)
Chapter Summary

literally so boring I'm so sorry lmao
but u get a hades/poseidon bonding moment at the end so there's that

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the wait y'all, I wasn't expecting there to be so much work to catch up on at school
Also oh my fucking god there's a science competition thing coming up that I didn't study for and none of the other members of my group studied for and ahhhhh im literally having mental breakdown every two seconds
on the plus side our team name is Apollo so

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “It was over. Finally over.”

“Thank you again, Apollo,” Poseidon said as he stepped out of the chariot.

“It’s nothing,” Apollo responded, waving a dismissive hand and flipping on some sunglasses. He missed the side of his head a little so the arms of the glasses bumped against his cheekbone. He pretended like nothing happened and shot a grin at the eight of them when they were secured on his face. “Ares, Hermes, and I will take care of Chaos’s body for ya.”

“....Thank you?” Poseidon wasn’t quite sure what he meant by that.

Apollo nodded and ascended into the sky again, transforming the chariot into a red Ferrari and shooting off into the distance. Poseidon watched him go until he was out of sight, then turned to the others again. They were back at Stephen’s house thanks to Apollo, and the squat, white house stood proudly over them. Poseidon shared a glance with the others before heading into the house.

The overwhelming scent of tea was familiar yet still overpowering as the eight of them sat down on couches. Poseidon, Hades, and Zeus picked one, while Thalia and Hazel picked the other and Jason, Percy, and Nico picked the remaining one.

There was silence for a while, the setting sun casting orange rays through the open window and inside the house. It highlighted little dust particles floating gently throughout the room. Soft violin music came from Stephens room, wafting beautifully throughout the small house. Poseidon hoped that they didn’t give him a heart attack once he came out.

“Where’s Addelyn?” Hazel asked, balling her curly hair into a fist and tying it with a black hairband. Her golden eyes flicked across the room as if Addelyn would magically appear behind a lamp or something.
“That’d be her,” a familiar voice responded. Poseidon turned to the bathroom door and smiled at Stephen standing in the threshold. “Playing the violin, that is. A real gift she has.” He walked over to the couch that the two girls occupied, leaning heavily on his cane. He sat down gently and smiled at all of them. “How did it go?” he asked kindly.

“He’s gone,” Percy said, smiling proudly. “Forever.”

“Hopefully,” Thalia added offhandedly.

“Oh, don’t even bring up the possibility of him rising again,” Poseidon groaned. “I’m not going through that again.”

The others laughed lightly.

“Oh yeah, I’ve been meaning to ask you,” Jason said, sitting up a little straighter and looking at him with his hands folded. “Why did you bleed ichor and not blood?”

“I...honestly don’t know,” Poseidon sighed.

“What if Hera was just playing you three?” Thalia suggested gruffly. “I wouldn’t be surprised. You were probably immortal this whole time, she just messed with your ages to sell the part.”

Poseidon shared a glance with Hades for some support. He couldn’t exactly tell her how he knew he was at least at one time mortal. He subconsciously rubbed his wrists as he avoided everyone’s gaze. “Um...no. I was once mortal.”

“How do you know?”

“Um…”

Nico’s eyes dropped down to the hand on his wrist and a little understanding entered his eyes. Poseidon didn’t like that one bit, for more than one reason. Nico caught his eye and gave him a small nod. Poseidon couldn’t exactly place what it was for, but it felt comforting.

“When the earthquake happened he got injured and bled red,” Hades said, coming to his rescue. Poseidon let out a breath of relief and gave him a look that he hoped conveyed how grateful he was. Hades just nodded at him.

“Okay well, whatever. How are you mortal now?” Percy asked.

“Again, I don’t know,” Poseidon said, sighing.

“Well, I’ll let you guys finish this talk later,” Stephen said, “for now let’s have some tea.” He stood up shakily, leaning heavily on his cane and walking over to the kitchen where tea was still brewing.

“Oh no, we can have this conversation now,” someone said. The voice was high-pitched, bitchy, and very familiar. Poseidon whipped his head around to see Hera standing in the doorway, arms crossed. Stephen jolted slightly in surprise and then bowed as deeply as he could, but Hera didn’t acknowledge him.

“Hera,” Percy greeted, voice dripping like acid.

“Perseus,” Hera responded coldly. She nodded stiffly at Poseidon and Hades without even acknowledging Zeus’s existence. “Now,” she said, sitting down on the free chair. “You’re all
wondering why Poseidon here is immortal, hm?”

“Yes…” Hades drawled, a bored and unimpressed expression on his face. Poseidon suppressed a smile. In the time they had been here, Poseidon had almost forgotten how Hades acted before this shit show. He had grown accustomed to the rather soft, comforting, big-brother Hades, and hearing him back in his usual manner was strange.

“Well,” Hera said snootily, getting out a mirror and checking her hair. She reminded Poseidon so much of Aphrodite in that moment he was a little taken aback, “it’s because dear old Hecate changed her mind and didn’t want her dear uncle—or whatever you are to her—to die.” Poseidon thought he heard her say ‘unfortunately’ under her breath, and didn’t appreciate the weird feeling in his gut. She continued, “Anyway, that’s not why I’m here.” She snapped her mirror closed and tucked it in her dress. “All three of you are to be down here for another year, hm?”

When none of them responded, she smiled sickly sweet and continued. “So, since New York City is in a...predicament, right now, the three of you will be sent to Camp Half Blood for the remaining time you’re here.”

“What?” Poseidon asked, outraged. “Camp Half Blood? Do you want everyone to know that we’re like this?”

“That was my intention, yes.” She got out her mirror again and put a powder puff to her cheeks. Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades looked at her in a mix of anger and disbelief, but didn’t say anything. Hera looked at them boredly. “Close your mouth, Poseidon, you’re not a codfish. And would all three of you prefer Camp Jupiter?”

“No!” Zeus said, outraged. “Why can’t we stay in New York City?”

“It’s destroyed, you imbecile,” she said, staring at him coldly.

There was silence for a moment.

“It’s fine, dad,” Nico spoke up quietly. “I’ve wanted to go to Camp for a little bit now actually, it’s not that bad once you get past the bright colours and happy people.”

“Shut up, stupid boy,” Hera snapped, rolling her eyes. Nico’s eyes flickered with anger and he opened his mouth to retort, but Jason slapped a hand over it.

“What did you just call him?” Hades asked, bracing himself to get out of his seat. Not wanting extra punishment and also not wanting Hades to get punished, Poseidon placed a hand on his shoulder to try and calm him down. It worked a little bit, and Hades reluctantly sat down on the couch completely.


“If you finish that word I’m going to gut you and strangle you with your own intestines.”

Poseidon looked at Thalia, expecting it to be her, but instead he found her with wide eyes, staring directly at Hazel. When Poseidon looked at Hazel, she was red in the face (which was a hard feat considering her dark complexion), standing to her full height of what must be 5’3 or less with her fists curled and a deadly glint in her eyes.

Nico didn’t looked surprised and gently tugged on her wrist. “She’s not one of them, Hazel,” he said softly. “She’s bad, but not as bad as them.”
Poseidon didn’t know who ‘them’ were, but he didn’t like the sound of it. He wasn’t sure what exactly Nico did after the war ended, but he spent a little time at Camp Half Blood and a lot of time elsewhere. Poseidon didn’t like the idea of ‘elsewhere’ anymore.

“Impudent girl,” Hera said angrily. “I could—”

“Hera,” Poseidon said sternly.

“I’m older than you, don’t use that tone with me.”

Sometimes Poseidon really hated being the second youngest. “That doesn’t mean anything. Just say what you have to say and then leave.”

“I’ve already said what I needed to say,” Hera said, standing up. “I expect you to be at Camp Half Blood by at least next week. Failure to do so will result in another month.” She walked to the door.

“Wait!” Poseidon called. “You said another year, right? We’ve been down here for probably a little less than a month, so does that mean we only have 11 months left?”

“I was going to do that,” Hera said thoughtfully, “but then I figured, nah, it’s peaceful without you three fucking everything up. Also, Poseidon, you’re back to being mortal. Hecate is still part of the plan, after all. Goodbye and good luck.” She didn’t bother to warn them before she flashed out, making everyone in the room have to close their eyes as quick as they physically could so they wouldn’t disintegrate.

There was a long moment of silence, a faint smell of rosemary left behind in her wake.


“Mhm.”

“So…”

“Yeah…”

“Uh huh…”

Another long moment of silence.

“Okay!” Zeus said awkwardly, slapping his hands on his knees in a weirdly enthusiastic way. “How are we gonna get to Camp Half Blood?”

“Apollo—”

“The hippocampi would—”

“I could fly you all one by—”

“If I gained enough energy I could shadow travel us—”

“I’m not sure if I could get there while carrying the weight of my sins.”

“Okay, guys, one by one,” Zeus said loudly, overpowering everyone else’s voice. It took Poseidon back to the days where Zeus was a good leader. Not that he was ever a bad leader…Okay, yeah. He was a pretty shit leader. Poseidon still remembered the time he and a few of his fellow Olympians tied him up and didn’t let him go until he promised he’d be better. Oh, the good old days.
Everyone tried to speak at the same time again, and Zeus sighed. “Stop.” Everyone halted their suggestions. “How about Percy goes first.”

Percy grinned. “Thanks, Lightning Loser.” He slapped a hand over his mouth, eyes going wide.

Thalia burst out laughing while the rest of the demigods looked like they were already picking the flowers for Percy’s funeral. Jason already had his face in his hands while Nico was cringing as subtly as he could.

Zeus stared at Percy, an expression that Poseidon couldn’t quite read on his face. It was as if he was contemplating being mad or laughing, with both his eyebrows furrowed and his lips slightly quirked upwards.

“Sorry,” Percy squeaked. Even with how laid back Percy was with the gods lately, even he knew that there was a certain line he shouldn’t cross.

Zeus didn’t reply and instead just shook his head. “You had a suggestion?”

Percy nodded vigorously and cleared his throat. “Um...Er... Uh...Actually...no, I didn’t have a suggestion.”

Poseidon refrained from snorting. Typical of Percy.

Zeus pinched the bridge of his nose and sighed. The rest of the demigods snickered behind their hands, minus Nico who looked like he wanted to face palm.

“Alright, Nico, why don’t you go first?” Hades asked tiredly.

“Oka—”

“Hey!” Thalia interrupted. “That’s not fair, you’re biased!”

Nico rolled his eyes. “Does it really matt—”

Thalia cut him off again. “We should go into Apollo’s chariot again.”

A chorus of agreement came from the other demigods, and Nico threw his hands up in exasperation.

“Now, now, Nico was speaking,” Poseidon said, frowning.

Thalia rolled her eyes. “I was aware.”

“Thalia,” Zeus scolded.

Thalia sighed and rolled her eyes again. “Fine, okay. Sorry, Nico. You can give your most likely stupid suggestion now.”

Nico cleared his throat awkwardly. “It’s not stupid. I was going to suggest that I can shadow travel us all one by one.”

“Pff.” Thalia laughed. “I thought you said that you couldn’t shadow travel us and that’s why we had to take the hippocampi the first time.”

Nico turned red, but tried to keep a neutral expression. “Well, if there was no other options it would be like a last resort—”
Thalia snorted. “Of course there are other options, idiot. Why do you think we all had ideas?”

“I was just saying—”

“Well please don’t say anything else.”

“Why do you hate me?!?” Nico burst out, standing up abruptly with his fist curled. “What did I do?”

Thalia looked taken aback. “I don’t hate you—”

“Oh sure you don’t,” Nico said sarcastically, crossing his arms and slumping back in his chair.

There was a long, awkward moment of silence. “Er, Nico…” Thalia started, looking at Nico like he was out of his mind. “Isn’t this, like, friendly banter? Y’know, Thalia and Nico, daughter of Zeus and son of Hades…Rivals, y’know?”

Nico looked confused. “What?”

Thalia now looked equally confused. “Like...all of the times we argued not including the one where Chaos was affecting me?”

Nico somehow managed to look even more lost. “But...wasn’t that just because you don’t like me?”

“No…?”

“...?”

“...?”

“...?”

“Oh boy,” Percy sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose. “This is what happens when you put two emotionally constipated people on one quest.”

“Excuse me,” Thalia said, looking mildly offended. “Those three are emotionally constipated too.” She pointed to Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades.

“Excuse me?”

“Hey!”

“Thalia.”

Thalia snickered. Nico still looked confused, but obviously relented to just not asking and continuing to be lost.

“Anyway,” Jason cut in, “I think Hazel had the best idea.”

“What was it?” Hades asked, looking at his Roman counterparts daughter kindly. It wasn’t an expression that he wore often, but Poseidon thought it suited him.

Hazel smiled somewhat shyly. “We could just take the hippocampi back. Apollo’s probably busy.”

The others shared a glance and shrugged.
“Sounds good to me,” Zeus said. “When will we leave?”

“I thought that was up to you, being the leader and all,” Poseidon responded offhandedly. He gave a cheeky smile when Zeus gave him a look.

Hades snorted behind his hand. “We’ll leave tomorrow,” he said.

Zeus looked at him, offended. “I’m the leader here.”

Hades shrugged. “Percy said I should be the leader.”

“Yeah, but Poseidon said I was the leader.”

“That’s only because he wanted to make a somewhat sassy comment.”

“Well, Percy said it for comedic effect.”

“Nah, that was the author.”

“Did you just break the fourth wall?”

“Yeah.”

“Damn. Hey guys, what’s up. Sorry for being a dick.”

Poseidon had never been more confused in his life as he stared at his two brothers talking to seemingly nobody. “What the fuck are you two talking about?”

Hades and Zeus seemed to snap out of a daze. “Huh?”

“You were acting like we’re in a book or something and were talking to no one,” Poseidon said, looking at them like they had two heads. “You mentioned something about a fourth wall too?”

Hades and Zeus looked at him weirdly, and then to each other. “We never did that…”

“Yes you did!” Poseidon looked around. Everyone else was looking at him weirdly too. He then turned confused too. He shook his head to clear it. “Nevermind, maybe I’m just losing it.”

Zeus looked at him very weirdly, but continued nonetheless. “Anyway, we should get some rest and head off tomorrow at 7 am.”

“7 am?” Percy asked, outraged. “I’m on Christmas Break!”

“You’re on a quest.”

“Yes, but during Christmas Break!”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “Fine. 8:30.”

Percy groaned and everyone else nodded.

“Alright!” Stephen said, getting up. “Let’s have some tea and then go get some rest.”

***Time Break***
“It feels weird, doesn’t it?” Poseidon asked quietly.

“What does?” Hades whispered, turning to him from the other couch. Zeus was fast asleep on the third couch, curled up under the blankets and looking like he didn’t have a care in the world. It was the middle of the night, and the only light in the room was from the moon and stars. Hades’s face was almost bathed in complete darkness, but Poseidon could make out his most prominent features.

“That this whole thing is over,” Poseidon continued. “I mean, I’m glad that Chaos is no longer an issue, but…I don’t know. We haven’t been on something like this in centuries…and now it’s just…over. Like that. As if it never even happened. It’s almost…”

“Sad?”

“…Yeah.”

Hades was silent for a moment, before he turned onto his back. “Well…sometimes, when some things are over, you don’t want them to end. But…would you really want to spend the rest of your life like that? I mean…yeah, it is sad. But…I don’t think I’d have it any other way. Because now…well, we can just be together, the three of us, without having this loomed over our heads. I guess you have to think of the bigger picture.”

Poseidon sighed. “I know, I know.”

There was a long moment of silence between the two, the only sounds coming from the crickets outside the window and the gentle ringing in Poseidon’s ears when silence took over a room.

“What’s going to happen when this is all over?” Poseidon asked after a while, barely audible.

Hades took a moment to respond. “Well…you still have to spend those two days with me in the Underworld, don’t you?”

Poseidon laughed quietly. “Yeah, I suppose I do.”

Hades smiled. “But long term? Honestly…I don’t know.”

Poseidon nodded and looked up at the ceiling. “Goodnight, Hades.”

“Goodnight, Poseidon.”

Poseidon smiled. He closed his eyes and drifted off to sleep, dreaming of his two brothers.

Chapter End Notes

interpret the last sentence as you may
Jk
also sorry for breaking the fourth wall but I had too
also um
fucking
thanks for almost a thousand readers gained in a week and a half?????
also sorry for any mistakes I don’t have a beta and im too lazy too look over it again
Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “He closed his eyes and drifted off to sleep, dreaming of his two brothers.’

“Keep your grimy paws off my food, you whore,” Percy snapped. He flicked his wrist with his ice cream in it to his chest, away from Thalia who had her spoon previously hovering inches above the blue dessert.

Thalia rolled her eyes, retracting her spoon and sticking it back into her brownie. “Ah yes, you know me. Just whoring around.”

“Watch your language,” Hades called over to the demigod’s table a few feet ahead of them, giving a disapproving glare to the two of them. Poseidon felt like a bad parent for not being the one to correct their manners, but hey. If someone else were to do it, who was he to stop them?

All eight of them were in a small cafe in Thessaly, thankfully in a rather secluded part of it. They had decided to explore the city they wound up in a little rather than just heading out immediately. The demigods decided to all cram inside of one booth, so Zeus, Poseidon, ad Hades chose a seperate one near the five of them. Percy had been the one to suggest the cafe, and Poseidon wasn’t sure if it was because of the blue theme or the ice cream. It was probably both. It was warmed by a fireplace on the back wall, which cast and orangish glow around the area it was placed in. Despite the brightness of the shiny white walls, it still felt rather cozy. The booths were plush and over-
stuffed, and Poseidon felt the childish desire to bounce on his seat.

“Sorry,” Percy called back to them sheepishly, giving a little salute. Poseidon rolled his eyes with a small, fond smile on his face.

Hades turned back to Zeus and Poseidon, who were sitting opposite to him. All he and Zeus had in front of them were black coffee’s, and Poseidon felt rather childish with his blue ice cream identical to Percy’s. The two of them didn’t seem to mind, however, and they sat in mostly silence, picking up bits and pieces of their children’s conversations.

“So,” Zeus said, ever the conversation starter.

“So,” Poseidon repeated.

“So,” Hades echoed, sounding like it was for the sole purpose of making fun of the two of them. Poseidon, ever the mature one, stuck his tongue out at him.

“Do you think we’ll have to stay at camp the whole year?” Zeus asked, rubbing his hands around his coffee mug. “I don’t think it would be all too great of an experience.”

“It’s only a year,” Hades said. To them, a year was as little as a second in the long run.


“But what?” Poseidon asked. He stuck a spoonful of ice cream into his mouth, which he soon realized probably beat the purpose of trying to sound serious.

“I don’t know…”

“Yes you do,” he said around his ice cream, a little falling from his mouth. “You just don’t wanna say it.”

Zeus wrinkled his nose and reached over to swipe the ice cream off of Poseidon’s shirt. He wiped it off on a napkin, then sighed again. “Can we be real for a second?”

“Only one?” Poseidon asked, smiling at him cheekily. Both Zeus and Hades glared at him. He put his hands up in surrender. “Got it. I’ll shut up now.”

Zeus rolled his eyes and continued, “Okay, well...Let’s be real, we’re not going to ever be stuck in this situation again.”

“Well…”

“Okay, maybe in a thousand years time. My point is, is that this is really the only time where none of us have any responsibility on our shoulders. We don’t have to look over anyone, or make sure things are settled right, or argue over big decisions...it’s like a vacation. And I don’t want to waste it at Camp Half Blood.”

Poseidon looked away from him and ate some more ice cream thoughtfully. He somewhat agreed with him; it would be rather wasteful to just be embarrassed the whole rest of the time that they were mortals. However, he also knew that Hera would beat their asses if she found out they weren’t at Camp.

“You’re dripping ice cream onto yourself,” Hades said. Poseidon looked down in surprise, not having even realized that his spoon was hovering over himself rather than in his ice cream again.
Hades reached forward, and just as Zeus did not a moment before, swiped the ice cream from his shirt. Poseidon was starting to feel like a three-year-old, and quickly swatted his hand away in embarrassment. Hades rolled his eyes and retracted his hand.

“Just trying to help.”

“Yeah, yeah.” Poseidon looked over to the other table and found Jason, Thalia, and Nico looking at them with slightly raised eyebrows and amused smiles on their faces. Percy had turned his neck at an odd angle to look behind him and looked extremely amused, his lips quirked up in a smile.

“What?” Poseidon asked them defensively.

“Nothing,” Jason said, waving a dismissive hand. He still had the amused smirk on his face.

Poseidon narrowed his eyes at them and they collapsed into snickers.

“Just ignore them,” Zeus told him, rolling his eyes in a way that Poseidon knew was just trying to get the demigods to see that they were acting immature.

“Oh c’mon,” Thalia said. “You can’t just expect us to not have a reaction to that. You three were about to kill each other a month ago!”

“Keep your voice down,” Zeus whisper-yelled, paranoid. His eyes were wide, darting across the small, semi-modern styled cafe as if someone was going to just pop a question such as ‘really? You three hated each other that much?’ which would, in fact, never happen in real life.

“Oh what,” she said, rolling her eyes. “Are people here going to pick up that your gods because I said you wanted to kill each—shit.”

Both Percy and Poseidon face palmed, which was saying something because they were usually the ones who made people face palm.

When Poseidon peeked through his fingers, he found a little girl from the booth directly across from them on the left staring at the three of them, eyes wide. She and her family had entered just after Percy and Thalia’s interaction. She had a cookie in her hand that was halfway to her mouth, and her dark, 3c hair was pulled up into two pigtails on the side of her head, both elastic bands pink to match her outfit. Poseidon offered her a weak smile, eyebrow slightly lifted as if to say ‘please tell me you didn’t hear that’. She bit her lip and looked around, looking for something or some sort of verification. Her parents seemed to be distracted with her little brother, who was refusing to eat any of his food. She held up one tiny finger to him, as if to say ‘wait a second’. Poseidon nodded at her, morphing his face into a serious one. He didn’t know a lot about kids, but he knew that they liked to feel grown up. She giggled and reached into a small, pale green bag beside her and retracted a book. It was big, and she seemed to struggle with it a bit, before she placed it on the table and flipped through the pages as fast as she could. Her father looked at her and got a faint smile on his face, kissing her on the head and then turning his attention back to her brother. Poseidon looked at the book curiously, not being able to see the contents of it.

Finally, she seemed to find what he was looking for, and held the book up for him to see.

It was a picture of Zeus, with a few tiny words most likely describing him surrounding him.

He grinned and shook his head. “Not me,” he mouthed.

She pouted and huffed, then turned back to her book and flipped through some more pages. She got excited again and then turned so he could see the book.
It was a picture of Hades.

Poseidon almost laughed. “Nope,” he mouthed again.

“Here’s a hint,” Hades whispered, who had been watching this the whole time. She leaned in, eager to hear it, her eyes wide and filled with the innocence of a child. Hades paused for dramatic effect, and then: “He’s shorter.”

Poseidon pursed his lips.

He glared at Hades, who was also pursing his lips, however he was doing it in an attempt to not laugh.

The girl giggled and nodded, flipping back through her book. “This one?” He held up another picture.

This time, it was of Poseidon.

Poseidon decided to ignore the fact that she got it after Hades’s little hint and looked around to see if anyone was looking. When he found no one except the demigods and Zeus and Hades, he turned back to her and nodded, placing one finger over his lips in a ‘shh’ gesture. Her eyes went impossibly wide and she nodded vigorously. Poseidon nodded at her and smiled secretively. She giggled again and flipped back through her book. She held up the picture of Zeus again and held it up, pointing at said man. All he gave was a single nod with the faintest of smiles on his face. She nodded again, the biggest grin possible on her face, and then turned to the picture of Hades, holding it up and pointing to him. Hades nodded, and made a show of looking around.

The girl suddenly looked scared. Her eyes went even wider, but they held fear rather than curiosity. She tugged on her father’s sleeve, frantically pointing to the door.

“What’s wrong, hon?” he asked softly.

She shook her head. “I…” She glanced at Hades, eyes still wide with fear. “I just wanna go home.”

Her father nodded. “Okay hon, we were going to head out anyway. Are you gonna finish your cookie?”

She shook her head. The family packed. They left.

Poseidon was left staring at their vacant place. He didn’t want to look at Hades, fearing what he would see. When he finally pent up the courage to look at him, he was staring at the coffee in front of him, face completely neutral.

“…Hades?” Poseidon asked softly.

“We should go,” he said quietly.

Poseidon bit his lip and glanced at Zeus for a brief moment. “Hades…”

“We should go,” he repeated, this time louder.

“C’mon,” Poseidon tried, “she just doesn’t know the real you…”

Hades closed his eyes and drew in a sharp breath. Poseidon couldn’t tell what it was for.

He tried again. “We can just chill out here for a little. If she knew you he wouldn’t have reacted
“CAN YOU SHUT UP?” he yelled, eyes snapping open. They were filled with rage, darkening even further from their already dark brown. It was loud and sudden, reminding Poseidon very much of himself and their younger brother, which was very uncharacteristic for the eldest of the three.

The entire cafe turned towards them.

Poseidon’s cheeks burned and he tried to ignore their stares. “Hades, c’mon, you’re tired…”

“No.” He stood up. “And next time this happens, maybe you should tell them all the evil shit you’ve done.”

He stormed out of the cafe.

Poseidon stared at his ice cream while the demigods ran after Hades and Zeus put his head in his hands.

There was eerie silence throughout the cafe, as if Hades had randomly performed a satanic ritual and nobody knew what the hell just happened. Poseidon refused to look up and meet any of the curious, pitiful, or judgemental stares. He figured that they all thought that they were just some moody teenagers. Maybe they were, at this point.

***Time Break***

Exiting the cafe was probably the most embarrassing moments of his life, and that was saying more than a lot. However, he had made it through alive (barely) and was now on the search for Hades, with Zeus at his side.

They were walking down the twisting streets of Larissa, almost shoulder to shoulder. Stephen had sewn up and cleaned Poseidon’s hoodie, so it no longer looked like torn up rags he’d thrown over his body. He had gained back a little of the weight and muscle he’d lost, but he still felt rather self conscious, like he was the human equivalent of a stick—or, a whatever equivalent of a stick. He didn’t even know what he was anymore. It had snowed the previous night, and the fresh snow coated the blue roofed houses white.

Poseidon was thinking about three very specific things while they were walking. One, where Hades was, two, he was hungry again, and three, about the last sentence Hades had said to him.

All in all, all of the gods were pretty shitty. Between Aphrodite killing anyone who she thought was prettier than her, Zeus wanting to fuck anyone he sees, Hera throwing her baby off of Olympus, Ares starting wars, and Artemis hating any living being that had a penis, they weren’t exactly the greatest people to be around.

But were any of them evil?

Aphrodite gave earth’s most cherished gift: love, Zeus turned out to be a caring person under all that ruler bullshit, Hera—uh, she was, um, not...evil—Ares deeply cared about his children and tried to protect them at all costs, and Artemis had provided an escape to young girls who felt trapped in their lives and felt there was no way out. And Hermes was just a little ball of sunshine. Or wait—maybe that was Apollo. Or Helios. Poseidon was starting to lose track.
Back to the issue at hand, he thought he’d give himself a break. Okay...so yeah, he liked to sink ships, create havok, and kill people...a lot. Like...a lot. But that was during his *emo* phase, c’mon. Give a guy a break. And yeah, he was a pretty big asshole. But so was everyone else. And besides, that was.... *hold on...*3000 years ago? 4000 years ago...2500 years ago? Whatever, a *long time ago*. And he’s grown and changed as a person. He wished that other people saw that, but he especially wished that people saw that with Hades.

They went on to search for another hour. They had stopped by Stephen’s house, looked in pretty much every store and restaurant, and even checked all the public bathrooms. Hades was nowhere in sight.

“Okay,” Zeus said, collapsing onto a park bench. “We need to take a break.”

“We need to find him,” Poseidon told him stubbornly. “He surely can’t be far. It’s not as if we’re in the biggest part of Thessaly. Hell, not even the biggest part of Larissa.”

“We’ve checked *everywhere*,” Zeus retaliated, dragging a hand down his face. “We can’t find the kids either.”

Poseidon sighed and slumped beside him. They were both silent for a long time. The only sounds were birds chirping and distant sounds of light traffic. It was peaceful...kind of.

“Do you think I’m evil?” Poseidon burst out randomly. He didn’t think he was, but he had always craved verbal confirmation.

Zeus rolled his eyes. “You gotta stop letting people’s words get to your head so much. Of course not.”

Poseidon nodded, though felt conflicted about his first statement.

He really could go for trying to work on his self confidence, or be a little more stable with himself. On the other hand, however, it wasn’t exactly like you could just flip a switch and turn that part of your brain off. I mean, he wouldn’t consider himself insecure—okay, he most definitely was, but he still didn’t *consider* himself insecure—but he wasn’t exactly the most confident in himself as of about 500 years. You couldn’t exactly turn around 500 years of falling down a little pit called depression.

But he just went silent after his nod, not feeling like feeling. He sighed, glanced at Zeus briefly, and then put his head to rest against his shoulder. Zeus tensed up a little at first, and then relaxed and leaned his cheek against Poseidon’s head.

“Aww,” someone cooed from in front of them. Poseidon thought he might’ve heard one behind him, but when he looked, he didn’t see anyone. When he looked back in front of him, resting his cheek on Zeus’s shoulder again, he saw it was an elderly lady. She wasn’t terribly old, but she looked to be in her sixties.

“You two are very sweet,” she said, smiling. “Would you like to feed the birds?” She had a bag of bird seed clutched in her hand, and a few pigeons were in front of her, eating off the ground.

Poseidon and Zeus glanced at each other, and then Poseidon lifted his head off of Zeus’s shoulder and they not-so-subtly moved a few inches apart. “Um...no thank you, we’re good,” he said politely.

The woman smiled warmly, her eyes crinkling. “All right then. You two are very cute.”
Poseidon and Zeus glanced at each other, and then moved another few inches apart. “We’re not…”

“Of course not,” the lady said. She waved her hand dismissively and winked.

Poseidon really felt the need to say that Zeus was his brother, but then figured that, well, in his family, stuff like that didn’t really matter. Not that that made him want to date Zeus. He heard snickering behind him and turned around again, eyebrows furrowed. He found nothing but a few park benches and trees.

They sat there for another little while, both wanting to find Hades but also not wanting to get up and break the first peaceful moment they’d had with just the two of them in a while. The lady eventually left, and Poseidon and Zeus bid her farewell and a good day. They sat on the bench for another while, and slowly scooted closer and closer together, until Poseidon rested his head on Zeus’s shoulder again.

Poseidon hadn’t realized he was tired until now. He had gotten a fair amount of sleep—he guessed it must just take a few days to get over the exhaustion of something like what they went through. He yawned and snuggled into Zeus’s shoulder slightly, head getting slightly foggy as his brain thought that it was now time for bed. “Love you,” he said into Zeus’s shoulder.

He felt Zeus’s body tense up completely against his face, and then relax again a few moments later. “...I...love you too.” He sounded choked up, but Poseidon for the life of him couldn’t figure out why.

It didn’t occur to him that it was only he and Hades who had said those words, and they had never been shared between him and his younger brother.

He didn’t end up falling asleep, but he might’ve well as. An unknown amount of time passed where the two of them just sat there, Poseidon’s eyes closed, half asleep against his brother’s shoulder.

Zeus hesitantly reached his arm back and wrapped it against the back of the bench. Poseidon just smiled and cuddled closer, not a care in the world.

And…that’s when Poseidon knew he wasn’t hearing things, and there was definitely an array of snickers and ‘aww’s’. He whipped his head around, trying to catch it. He could’ve sworn it sounded like—

“Aha,” he said. Hazel’s poofy hair was sticking slightly up from the bush she was hiding behind. “Hazel, I know you’re there, who else is?”

Apparently that was just hilarious, because everyone else simultaneously gave themselves away by bursting out laughing.

Poseidon looked on as all of the demigods plus Hades came out from their hiding spots, some on purpose and some just falling over from laughing. He shook his head. “How long have you been there?”

Zeus removed his arm, looking the definition of embarrassed. Poseidon felt it mildly, but he didn’t think it had fully sunken in yet.

A few of them tried to explain, but Poseidon couldn’t make them out between their wheezes and fits of laughter. Eventually, Nico was the one who spoke up, rolling his eyes at his companions. Even Jason was rolling around, but Poseidon couldn’t really figure out what was so godsdamn funny.
“We were heading over to the cafe to see if you were still there, and we saw you two walking up this way,” Nico explained, “so we all hid and watched you the whole time.”

“...The whole time...?” Poseidon squeaked.

“The whooleee time,” Thalia affirmed, grinning from ear to ear. “I didn’t know you two lovvveeeeedddd each other!”

Poseidon groaned and buried his face in his hands. At least she knew they were brothers. ...And wasn’t Percy.

***Time Break***

“What happened, by the way?” Poseidon asked. “After you left the cafe, I mean.” The group was almost back to Stephen’s house, and the five demigods were ahead of he, Zeus, and Hades, goofing off. It had gotten colder, and Poseidon hugged himself against the wind.

Hades sighed. “I knew you were going to bring it up.”

Poseidon looked up at him, silently waiting for a response.

He was silent for a while, before he took another deep breath and continued. “First of all, I’m sorry for bursting out like I did.”

“It’s fine,” Poseidon smiled. He didn’t really know what else to say, so he waited for Hades to continue.

“Second of all,” Hades said when he did continue, “Zeus is right. You need to stop letting people walk all over you.” He nudged Poseidon. “You don’t need anyone else’s verification of yourself.”

Poseidon smiled and darted his eyes away awkwardly, not really knowing how to respond.

Hades seemed to notice his discomfort and kept going. “Essentially, what happened was the demigods came after me, and when they finally caught up, we, uh...had a conversation. And...yeah.”

Poseidon almost snorted. “Shakespeare is rolling in his grave.”

Hades rolled his eyes and punched his arm lightly. “Oh, shut up.”

Poseidon laughed, and then the three of them walked in silence the rest of the way to Stephen’s house. Poseidon knew what the conversation they had was about, and he was glad that he and Zeus weren’t the only ones who were able to break Hades out of his shell a little. He smiled the rest of the way to the house.

***Time Break***

They had decided to switch up the order of which they got on the hippocampi, and Poseidon couldn’t tell if he liked it better or not. This time, it was Zeus behind him, with Thalia in front. He was schooched as far back as possible on the Hippocampi, both not wanting to make Thalia feel uncomfortable and have her feel respected instead, and also not wanting to make himself
uncomfortable by being pressed up against a girl he didn’t want to be pressed up against. There was about three inches of space between them, which was great and all, but it also meant that his back was plastered tightly against Zeus front. Which was even weird for him, all things considered.

He felt kind of safe and comfortable, but he wasn’t about to admit that to his brother.

“Allright, Jessie, Laura, and Amy,” Percy said, petting them affectionately. “Take us to New York, will you?”

The one Percy was on—Laura, Poseidon thought—neighed and shot off into the water, Hades and Nico on her back as well. Next was the one with Hazel and Jason, and then Poseidon, Zeus, and Thalia. Poseidon relaxed against Zeus as they shot out far across the ocean, and prepared for the semi-long journey.

AKA he just closed his eyes and went to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

yes I am dragging this out as long as possible I'm sorry
I just don't want it to end even tho I know all of y'all want it to lmao
also
do you guys want a little thing where I put outtakes/extra scenes when I finish this? be some were pretty gucci they just didn't really flow well with the chapter but idk
anyway love you bye
uh...camp half blood? idk at this point y'all

Chapter Summary

no one:
not a soul:
me, a 13 year old virgin whose never had a boyfriend: *gets period three days late* oh my god am I pregnant oh god I'm scared I'm not ready-

Chapter Notes

hey y'all
im back
I be like: *sad noises*
sorry for disappointing y'all with my freakin almost one month apart update
my science comp is over
we did terrible but hey
at least I get good marks in science???
my health project is over too
but guess what I have now
another English project, a science project, another health project, a social studies debate, a band concert, a new unit in math I have to learn, 6 musical performances in a few weeks, and immunizations on Thursday that hurt like hell
I guess it be like that

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “AKA he just closed his eyes and went to sleep.’

“Rise and shine,” Zeus said softly. He poked him in the ribs, sending a gentle tickling feeling through Poseidon’s side.

Poseidon moaned. He reached full consciousness but didn’t open his eyes, clinging to the feeling of sleep. Sunlight was poking through his eyelids, making him squint even more and let out another pitiful moan.

He came to a decision: being awake was utterly terrible. So he just moaned again and just shook his head, snuggling into Zeus’ chest. “I’m okay,” he mumbled.

He heard poorly concealed laughter from a place a few metres ahead of him.

He felt Zeus’s chest shake from light chuckling. “You sure, buddy?”

Poseidon hummed, already starting to drift off again. “I’m sure.”
“It’s not too loud?”

“Hm…” It was a little louder than Poseidon expected it to be — in fact, it was slowly dawning on him that there was no possible way it could be this loud out in the middle of the ocean. It was as if ten million bees were buzzing around his head, trying to make as much noise as possible. A few bees must’ve been drunk and terrible at karaoke, because their buzzes sounded like honking.

It was just like dodgeball in middle school; things just suddenly came one after another. Things you didn’t want anywhere near your poor head. There was no water on his legs, his feet weren’t touching the ground, he was lying down, he could feel two arms around him—one under his knees and the other on his back—and he could feel Zeus’s chest moving up and down from breathing.

His eyes snapped open. He blinked up at Zeus, who was staring at him with a faintly amused smile on his features. Pedestrians around them were swerving to avoid them, and the demigods and Hades were all snickering behind their hands a few feet away.

When the situation finally registered into his brain, it still took Poseidon a second before he yelped and pushed himself out of Zeus’s arms, falling onto the pavement with a pained ‘oof’. That was the tipping point for the demigods, and Percy and Thalia wheezed while the rest just exploded with laughter. Small fragments of dirt and rocks poked up at Poseidon’s palms as he pushed off the ground. Though he had been carried multiple times throughout this admittedly pretty traumatic experience, he had never been carried in front of a) hundreds of thousands of people, or b) Apollo and Hermes.

Wait.

Apollo and Hermes?

Apollo and Hermes.

The two of them were staring down at him, Apollo with a shit-eating grin and Hermes with an eyebrow raised and twisted grin on his face. Poseidon’s entire face burned and he rushed to stand, then straightened himself up to his full height when he stood in front of the two.

“Uh…” he started, face still burning. “Hey...guys.”

And that was the tipping point for him, Apollo, Hermes, and Zeus. Poseidon couldn’t tell if he was laughing at himself, the situation, everyone’s reaction, or all three.

Once gathered, Zeus cleared his throat, still chuckling a little, and said: “We were just about to flag down a taxi and thought that we shouldn’t embarrass you further.”

Another thing registered into Poseidon’s brain, foggy with embarrassment and weariness. “Wait...how long is it from the harbour to here?”

“A good 45 minute walk.”

“...”

“...”

“...”

“...”
“...You...carried me...for 45 minutes? Through New York City?” Poseidon asked. His voice had gone high and squeaky, like a prepubescent boy who wanted to tell people about how their actions have consequences.

Zeus simply gave him a smile and ruffle of his hair, making him feel like a three year old, and then flagged down a taxi. Poseidon stared at him in disbelief, embarrassment shooting through him, cheeks heating up and throat tightening. Apollo and Hermes started to head off, still chuckling.

“Thanks for the info, guys,” Apollo said as he started to walk down the street. “And um—” he paused, eyes sparkling, “—it was nice to see you, Poseidon.”

Poseidon nodded absently, too lost in his embarrassment to ask what information they needed. He mindlessly gave Hermes a high five when he offered it.

The rest of them were still laughing as Apollo and Hermes dipped into the crowd and out of sight. Poseidon was staring, horrified, at Zeus, who was pointedly ignoring him and still trying to flag down a taxi, his lips turned upwards at the corners. When he finally did get one, he explained to Poseidon that they would have to use two taxis, and the demigods all wanted to travel in one so they’d get in the first one and then the three of them would get the next. Poseidon had nodded, staring blankly as Percy and the rest of them piled into one van. Logically, he knew that he’d never see any of the people that saw him being carried, or at least they wouldn’t recognize him, and that this was not anywhere near as crazy as some of the shit in New York, but he still felt embarrassed. Maybe he was just tired after the quest, because his brain was making this a far bigger deal than it should’ve been. After all, Hades had carried him and he didn’t feel an ounce of embarrassment then. Given, he was bleeding out and about to die, but still.

“Hey,” Hades said quietly, nudging him softly. Poseidon found him kind of hard to hear, with the honking and buzz of chatter matched with the fact that his ears were about 5 inches below Hades’s mouth. He still managed to pick it up, though. “He was over-exaggerating,” Hades continued, “it was only about 20 minutes, and it only started getting busy five minutes in.”

Poseidon nodded at him, relief flooding through him.

_Masculinity is so fragile_, he heard Artemis’ voice in his head. He had rolled his eyes at the time, but now he was starting to believe her.

“What are you talking about?” Zeus asked them still looking for another taxi.

“Nothing,” Poseidon said quickly.

“But you were talking, so it was something.”

“I just said you were over-exaggerating,” Hades said, rolling his eyes. “He was getting all upset.”

“Excuse me, I wasn’t getting _upset_,” Poseidon said, outraged. “I was simply _embarrassed_.”

“You looked like you were about to cry.”

“Is there something wrong with me crying? Huh? Are men not allowed to cry? Are you being _sexist, Hades_?”
“Well you’ve done it so much you’d have to assume that we’re not only allowed to, we’re supposed to.”

Ouch. Poseidon smiled anyway. “Excuse me, I was simply conveying my love by showing emotions.”

“Well it was annoying,” Zeus mumbled, turning his attention away from the road for a split-second, and then proceeding to curse when he realized that there was a taxi in that one second he looked away. Poseidon’s chest hollowed a little. He had been right with his assumption that they found him annoying. At least Zeus had said it in a joking tone, so it had lessened the sting by a decent amount.

“I was kidding about that, too,” Hades whispered. “You had a good reason to cry. And Zeus was, too.”

“Thank you, Hades, but you don’t have to apologize for everything,” Poseidon whispered, looking up at him kindly. He was a grown man; he could take a little criticism without whining. He appreciated him, though.

“I know,” he whispered back, shifting a little, “it just look like I hurt your feelings. Again.”

“There’s a difference between hurting my feelings and actually hurting me,” Poseidon said.

Hades looked at him, bewildered. Yeah, Poseidon didn’t really know what he meant there, either. “That didn’t really make sense,” he admitted. “I mean, like, if I’m not crying then don’t worry about it.”

“So we might have to worry a lot then,” Hades teased, eyes sparkling.

Oh god.

This wasn’t going to turn into a joke was it?

Zeus laughed. “Yeah, we’ll have to apologize every few seconds.”

Hades smiled, eyes laughing. “Soon we’ll have to apologize for breathing too much.”

“Oh for smiling at him, for that matter.”

They both laughed, and Poseidon chuckled along with them, 80 percent of it fake.

If there was a positive side to this joke, then it was at least that he now knew he was being annoying. Gods, if he thought they were fine with it who knows how many more times he would’ve cried in front of them. He made a promise to himself, then: he’d never cry in front of them, or anyone, ever again. Looking back on the quest now...Gods, it was kind of embarrassing. He felt like he cried every two seconds.

He smiled then, feeling he’d accomplished something. For some reason, he felt like Hades and Zeus wouldn’t like him saying that he’d never cry in front of them, so he kept his little announcement to himself.

Their laughter died down, and Zeus was still attempting to flag down a taxi. Poseidon was staring mindlessly out at the street, trying not to show on his face how much he was cringing thinking about his actions during this whole thing.
And then he started cringing at all the other stuff he did.

So, they didn’t like him crying...did they not like him touching them either? He still remembered the embarrassment from climbing onto Zeus’ lap, and that one time where he was watching TV in Percy’s apartment and he ended up just sprawling himself over Hades completely. Like, stomach to stomach, cheek on chest, snuggled real close, dignity thrown to the motherfucking seagulls. Hades had tried to play it off as being fine with it, but he had shifted uncomfortably and glanced at Zeus as if saying ‘what the fuck is he doing?’ the whole time, so Poseidon had blushed and went to their room early that night. Oh yeah, and then he almost cried. Gods, was he three?

And then came the infamous thought: what if neither of them actually liked him? Then the cringing turned to half cringing but also half sadness.

He pushed these thoughts away. These were the same thoughts he had every night at 3am since leaving the mountain after he was kidnapped, and they should stay 3am thoughts.

“We’re joking, Poseidon,” Zeus told him, glancing at his face and then rolling his eyes, finally getting a taxi.

It’s true, though. “Yeah, I know.”

“Oh gods, are you gonna do the whole ‘I’m fine’ thing and then come crying to us at 4 in the morning?” Zeus asked, rolling his eyes again. “If we’re hurting your feelings, just tell us now so we don’t have to deal with that later.”

Poseidon tried to formulate a response, but the moisture in his throat suddenly decided to go on strike and his tongue felt like sandpaper. There was really no dignified answer to this question. It was either a ‘yes, you’re hurting my feelings’ which would result in getting looked down upon for being a baby, or a ‘no, you’re not hurting my feelings’ which would lead to Hades joking about it for at least 3 weeks and Zeus joking about it for at least 3 years.

But then he remembered his promise of not crying on front of anyone, and he realized that he could just cry alone if it really got to him. Moisture returned to his throat as well as a wave of relief, and he spoke: “Nah. C’mon, you really think I’m that sensitive?”

Zeus laughed, stepping up to the taxi. “At least you admit it was annoying.”

I never said that. “Yeah,” he said. He forced a laugh. “Real annoying…”

Zeus got in the taxi first, then Poseidon, then Hades. Poseidon was kind of squished in his place at the middle, but thankfully, they were all still in their teens, so they were still rather narrow-shouldered and debatably slight. Other than Hades. The dude just needed to chill with the shoulders. Like damn. But his arms were still not fully developed, so there was that. Zeus on the other hand, had narrow—or, narrower than they had been—shoulders, but his arms were about twice the size of Poseidon’s. Poseidon on the other hand, because of his oh-so-amazing luck, had just gotten a somewhat okay voice and the body equivalent to a fairly tall, older looking 13 year old. Which was...so fun. Just...so fun. He wasn’t even the youngest. Zeus should’ve gotten the crappy deal. Then again, Zeus never seemed to get the crappy deal. But hey, at least he could make fun of Zeus and Hades’ voice cracks.

Gods, he couldn’t wait to be 30 again. Being a teenager was draining.

At least he didn’t have to go through the first stages of puberty. That would be...he almost shuddered. It was a faint memory, but it was a bad one. The growing pains, the voice cracks, the
‘why am I not 7 feet tall yet I’m supposed to be a god’, the ‘stop growing Demeter boys are supposed to be taller’, and the ‘Hades stop being tall I’m the better brother. No I said stop not grow faster what are you doing’. It really sucked being the youngest in their fathers stomach. Eventually, he had thankfully grown taller than Demeter, and eventually everyone but Zeus and Hades. Hera liked to argue they were the same height, but Poseidon took hold of the two-and-a-half centimetre height difference and held it tight.

However, now he was probably a good few inches shorter than most of his siblings and family members in general. Y’know, thinking about it, he was taller than this when he was the equivalent of 17. Wait...or was he the equivalent of 17 now and she sent him back to when he was actually 17? He was confused. He had stopped keeping track of his age a long, long time ago. Maybe Hera was just being a bitch and made him look like what she thought a skinny 17 year old looked like. Honestly, that was probably what happened.

Poseidon wasn’t fazed as loud horns blasted all around them, nor as the taxi driver drove like an absolute maniac through the streets of New York. He’d prefer flashing from place to place, but seeing as that wasn’t an option, this would have to do. When the taxi rounded a sharp left corner, everyone involuntarily flew to the side of the car where Zeus was. Poseidon ended up just being too lazy to lift his head off his shoulder, and he lay his head to rest there for a second, closing his eyes. He had just slept, but he felt like he could sleep for another two days.

Then he remembered that he wasn’t supposed to do that, so he lifted his head off of Zeus’s shoulder. The rest of the taxi ride was spent in mostly silence, with the occasional honk of the horn or ‘are we almost there?’. Poseidon ended up falling asleep again, not even 20 minutes into the ride.

Some time later, he felt a gentle prodding of his shoulder. “We’re here, guys,” Zeus said softly. Poseidon opened his eyes blearily. He glanced around the car. Zeus had moved on from waking him up to paying the taxi driver, whilst Hades was still fast asleep against the window.

Poseidon smiled and shook his shoulder. “We’re here.”

He let out a soft noise and his eyes flickered open, and then he blinked at Poseidon sleepily. Poseidon smiled at him again.

Once Zeus had paid and reassured the taxi driver that they were in the correct place, the three of them exited the car. They were smack down in the middle of nowhere, or at least that was what it would seem like to an outsider. It was about a 25 minute walk from here to Camp Half Blood, which was cut through the woods and up a hill.

The taxi screeched off back down the road, and Poseidon, Zeus and Hades started on their way to Camp. Poseidon didn’t know quite what happened on Apollo’s quest, but if he ever came to Camp Half Blood, he assumed this is how he felt. A strange mix of embarrassment, nervousness, and dread. Who knows how the demigods would react. Would they even believe that the three of them were gods? Because, even Poseidon himself could admit, they didn’t look like it. Or had the demigod’s lives just gotten so weird that they wouldn’t even bat an eye?

The three of them walked until their calves were aching and their throats were burning for the need of air. Far in the distance, Poseidon saw five figures, each of varying heights, pushing each other around as they walked up the steep hill. By now, they were just close enough to see the marble, majestic entrance that, though Poseidon couldn’t read it from this far, read Camp Half Blood.

“Hey!” Poseidon called. He tried to make it loud, but it turned out more strained through his panting. No one turned, so he called again, this time getting a stronger voice. “HEY!”
The five of them turned around, then stopped. One of the taller ones waved his hand up and waved frantically. “HI, DAD! ARE YOU EXCITED?”

No. “YEAH! ARE YOU?”

“YEAH!”

“Stop having a conversation with someone 800 yards away from you,” Zeus said, rolling his eyes.

“No. THAT’S GOOD!”

“YEAH!”

“You’re ridiculous.”

“You’re a Debby Downer.”

“Oh, not this again.”

The three of them caught up with the demigods, and they started back up the hill again. 300 yards away. 200 yards away. 100 yards away. 50 yards away. 10 yards away. 5 yards away.

“Okay!” Percy said brightly. “C’mon, I have to show you all the new stuff we added!” He grabbed Poseidon’s hand and dragged him away from the group, into the camp borders. The others followed after him.

Poseidon had seen Camp before, but it was different now that he wasn’t visiting for some sort of war-stricken reason. There were a few demigods roaming around, laughing or singing or playing volleyball. A group of girls walked in front of them, and Poseidon almost smiled at how much they resembled their parents. He could tell who they were the children of before even glancing at them 10 seconds. They probably didn’t even know it. A shit ton of cabins were laid out in the distance, too many for Poseidon to bother to count. The sun was shining over the camp, despite it being overcast outside of it. It glittered off of the lake in the distance and shone over the metallic cabin Poseidon squinted his eyes at in the far distance.

The big house was exactly how he remembered it, with it’s peeling blue paint and run-down homeliness. On the deck of it sat two figures, one with a leopard pattern shirt and khakis and the other with a button up and fraying brown jacket. The man in the jacket was one that Poseidon recognized in a millisecond; after all, with a horse for a lower body you’d be quite hard to miss. And his companion, an old friend, Dionysus. Gods, he had really let himself go. Poseidon remembered the times when he could hardly tell if Dionysus was a girl or a boy.

Chiron seemed to notice the eight of them and stood from his card game with Dionysus, opening his arms in greeting. Poseidon smiled at his half-brother and gave a small wave.

Chiron galloped towards them, and Dionysus grudgingly followed. They had caught the interest of a few half-blood’s around them, and they gathered in little groups to witness what was going on.

“Your Majesties,” Chiron greeted, respectfully bowing his head and bending his front legs. Dionysus simply gave a grunt of acknowledgment, then rolled his eyes and bowed his head when Zeus gave him a sharp glare.

“No need for such formalities, brother,” Poseidon said kindly. He was about to say that he was their equal, but he knew that Chiron would know he was just saying that to be polite.
Chiron nodded and straightened. A few gasps and confused looks littered the crowd of demigods, and whispers started to fill the air. More people were starting to gather.

“Nico!” a familiar voice called. Poseidon looked around for the source, and found a frantic Will Solace trying to worm his way through the crowds, waving his hand up. He finally pushed one of the Hermes kids out of the way and rushed over to Nico, pulling him up in a hug that lifted him off the ground. For the first time Poseidon had seen it, Nico didn’t flinch away at the physical contact, and simply huffed out a short laugh and hugged Will back. Poseidon smiled at the two of them. Will was repeating ‘you’re okay, you’re okay, you’re okay’ under his breath, while Nico was simply assuring him with nods.

Hades cleared his throat.

Will turned the brightest shade of red Poseidon had ever seen in his immortal life, and placed Nico down gently before stepping away. “Oh...hi Had-Hades, um, we were just—I was just, um—”

Hades raised a cold eyebrow, but Poseidon knew it was just for show. However, that had raised an uproar from the crowd of demigods, and Poseidon started to see more people gather from all corners of the camp. He could faintly pick up whispers of ‘did he say Hades?’ or ‘is this what happened to Apollo?’ or ‘are they the big three? Which one’s which?’ or ‘why do they look like that?’ or ‘is that Percy’s twin brother or something?’.

“Silence,” Chiron said calmly. The crowd went quiet immediately. “To answer a few questions some of you may have, these are not new campers necessarily, and no, this….young man—” he pointed to Poseidon, “—is not Mr. Jackson’s brother. The three new faces you may have not seen before are Zeus, Poseidon and Hades.”

Outrage sparked from the crowd again, but Chiron held up a hand and they stopped.

“Have you learned no respect?” he asked the now silent crowd. The phrasing was degrading, but his tone was not. “What do you do when you interact with a god?”

A few people started to bow, but stopped when they realized the majority weren’t. The demigods were still standing perfectly straight, just staring between Zeus, Poseidon and Hades. It was silent for a moment, and Poseidon fought the urge to scratch his palms and shift side to side. Their gazes were burning through him, making his palms sweat.

After too long spent in silence, a tall guy that Poseidon thought must’ve been an Ares kid broke it: “Why do they look like that?”

Approval shot through the crowd at that, boys and girls alike looking confused and suspicious. Chiron held up his hand again and stopped them.

“There will be no question. Unless you’d like to challenge my own knowledge of my siblings and the message I got from Hera herself, I would suggest that you do not disrespect these three.” The crowd remained silent. He turned to the eight of them. “Would you like to introduce yourselves?”

“Why do they look like that?”

Approval shot through the crowd at that, boys and girls alike looking confused and suspicious. Chiron held up his hand again and stopped them.

“Unless you’d like to challenge my own knowledge of my siblings and the message I got from Hera herself, I would suggest that you do not disrespect these three.” The crowd remained silent. He turned to the eight of them. “Would you like to introduce yourselves?”

There was silence for a moment, before Zeus took a step forward. “I am Zeus, god of lightning and king of the gods.” The crowd erupted with mumbles and whispers, each person either taking a small step forward or backwards.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. As if they didn’t know what he was the god of already. He decided that he should probably go next, since Hades wasn’t making any move to go. “Uh...” Great start there, buddy. “I’m Poseidon, god of the sea and Percy Jackson’s dad.” That got a little laughter from
around three people in the crowd, but he hadn’t said it to be funny. He was just proud to be Percy Jackson’s dad.

Hades was about to step forward, but got interrupted by some guy in the back. “That’s Poseidon?”

Poseidon looked at him. “Yeah…?”

The guy blushed slightly. “I just...You’re a little short.”

Poseidon pursed his lips. The crowd looked like they wanted to laugh, but instead waited with baited breath for his reaction. Some of them looked scared, and a girl stepped in front of the guy as if protecting him. He didn’t really know what to say to that. Something funny? Something sassy? Something that doesn’t give away how insecure he is about his height at the moment? Something that made him seem as powerful and otherworldly as they all thought he was?

“No shit,” was the answer that came out.

That got the crowd roaring. Chiron looked at him disapprovingly. To be honest, Poseidon was still thinking about his answer, but that just kinda blurted out of him. He had grown accustomed to being his normal, human side, and almost forgot how to put on his godly, almighty facade. So much for avoiding being made fun of because he was a god, he guessed. Demigods were still laughing, and Poseidon knew it was just from the shock because what he said wasn’t even that funny.

“Quiet down, everyone,” Chiron said calmly, his voice still managing to project through the crowd. By now, Poseidon thought that every camper must’ve been gathered.

Once the crowd quieted, Hades took a step forward. The crowd instinctively took a step back. The laughter in the air dropped like a bird hit with a stone. That made Hades falter slightly, before taking a deep breath. “I am Hades, god of the underworld.”

The crowd took another step back, and a few of the smaller children hid behind the calves of their older siblings. One little boy with a mop of curly golden hair, no older than two, started crying. Hades looked down briefly before clenching his jaw and looking out at the crowd. Poseidon stepped closer to him and pressed himself against his side so the crowd couldn’t see their hands as they intertwined and squeezed. He let go quickly, just in case some Athena kid was feeling particularly observant today.


It took a seconds, before the demigods slowly got down on one knee. Every one of them tried to direct their bows in the directions of Poseidon and Zeus, except for one girl dressed in all black who pointed her knee determinedly in the direction of Hades. Poseidon stared at her bowed head, before she eventually looked up and met his gaze. He expected her to look away, but when she didn’t, he smiled and mouthed ‘thank you’. She gave the faintest of smiles back before bowing her head again. Thankfully, Hades seemed to notice, but that still didn’t help the coldness warm up in his eyes.

Poseidon honestly couldn’t blame him for being cold towards them. He had saved most of their asses in the titan war, and now here they were, barely even bowing to him. He’d be pretty pissed too. Admittedly, Poseidon did next to nothing and Zeus did even less, and here they were, getting all the credit, in a sense. Poseidon took a step towards Hades, but he took a step away. His chest hollowed.
“Hades…”

“You may rise,” Zeus called out to the crowd, voice powerful and making Poseidon glance at him in surprise. He hadn’t heard his leader voice in a while.

The demigods scrambled to stand, knocking each other over in their rush. A few of the younger kids let out squeaks and bolted to the back of the crowd.

“Depart,” Zeus called out.

They didn’t need to be told twice. In one big rush, they all scattered to the winds.

Except for four people. Poseidon only recognized one, but could infer who the others were from just her.

Blonde, curly hair, too familiar grey eyes and a book clutched in one hand with a dagger in the other. Annabeth Chase reminded Poseidon so much of Athena that it was actually kind of scary. Next to her, was what Poseidon assumed to be the rest of the seven. Right beside her was a girl with choppy brown hair with small braids intervened with beads and feathers. Piper, if he remembered correctly. Next to her, stood a small latino boy with the worst fashion sense Poseidon had ever seen, with a tool belt hung around his waist. Leonard? Lax? Larry? Leo? Leo. That was it. On the other side of him, a tall, broad Asian man (teenager?) stood at least a head above the rest, except for Annabeth. Frank, Poseidon thought.

“Hazel!” Frank said brightly. Wow. His voice was nowhere near what Poseidon expected it to be. He had expected gravel and roughness, not semi-high pitched softness.

He rushed over to the smallest of the eight, picking her up and spinning her around, burying his face in her hair. Hazel let out a bright laugh and a squeak.

Yet again, Hades cleared his throat.

This time, Frank’s reaction was a lot more extra than Will’s. He let out an unmanly squeak and dropped Hazel, who thankfully landed gracefully on her feet. He turned to Hades, and then stumbled back, apologies spilling between his lips like sand. Poseidon wasn’t sure if he was always like this, or if it was just because it was Hades. His face was beet red, and his hands were held up in almost a surrender like fashion.

Hades raised an eyebrow and held up a hand. Frank stopped immediately.

Chiron, with an amused smile, saved Frank and addressed all 10 of them. “Perhaps a few introductions are in order? We’ll leave you to it.” He gave them another small smile and turned, Dionysus following, trotting below his shoulder.

The ten were left in semi-uncomfortable silence for a second, before Leo broke it. “Hey guys, it Leo, but you can call me McSh—”

“No.”

“Sorry, Pipes. Leo Valdez, son of Hephaestus, which might explain why I’m so hot.” He shot finger guns and a wink towards the three of them, grinning from ear to ear. Most of them put their faces in their palms, but a little, surprised laugh bubbled out of Thalia, and Jason shook his head with a fond smile at his old friend. However amusing Poseidon found the boy’s actions, he knew what faking looked like. He had seen it in his own reflection. The smile, even though it reached his eyes, added an odd tension to his cheeks, and there was a misplaced crinkle of his skin that made it
evident it was fake. His eyes weren’t shining, either. They weren’t as bad as Nico’s or Hades’s, but they were getting there. So Poseidon laughed as much as he could while making it believable, and he was satisfied when he saw a little confidence enter the boy’s eyes and look at him as if he had just met his idol. Poseidon knew it was just metaphorical, because he was probably the last person someone would idolize, at least in his opinion. He wasn’t sure if the other two noticed, but given that Hades rarely smiled at strangers and he was doing just that, he noticed it too.

“Annabeth Chase,” Annabeth said, giving a respectful nod to all of them. As if Poseidon would forget. He gave a single nod to her, and she gave the faintest of smiles, before it slipped off. Poseidon wasn’t exactly sure just how much she was like her mother, but if she was anything like her at all, this behaviour was normal and she wasn’t angry or upset, being curt was just her personality. And maybe she just had a mild resting bitch face, just like her mother and pretty much every god/goddess except for Aphrodite, Apollo, and Hermes. One of the reasons Poseidon thought people were so hesitant to come to him was not because of his godly status, but the fact that he always looked annoyed. It was one of the many things he hated about himself.

“Piper McLean,” the girl with the beads in her hair introduced. Poseidon was right. “Daughter of Aphrodite.” Poseidon nodded and shot her a smile.

Frank went on to introduce himself, and Poseidon gave him a nod and smile as well.

“I’m Poseidon,” Poseidon said. Silence. Wait. “But you already knew that,” he added, words blurring together in their rush to get out of his mouth. He turned red as people started to laugh.

“Let me take a wild guess.” Leo grinned after the laughter has fallen to the damp air. “That one’s Hades and that one’s Zeus.” He pointed to each one respectfully. People laughed again.

Poseidon turned even more red and mumbled a ‘shut up’.

“Alright!” Percy said brightly. He grabbed Poseidon’s hand and dragged him a full metre before he was able to catch his footing again. “Time for a tour!”

“I’m coming!” Leo said, already happily preparing to follow the two.

“I should probably get back to Artemis, actually,” Thalia said. Everyone paused.

Percy stopped literally dragging Poseidon, and Poseidon turned to her.

“Do you have to go?” Jason asked quietly. “You could stay a little longer…”

“I promised her I’d stay until the quest was over. It’s over now. I’m the lieutenant, I have to go back.”

Percy frowned. Annabeth walked up to her and gave her a short hug. Their hair mixed together slightly, the sharpest contrast Poseidon had seen in a while. Thalia buried her face in her neck for a second, and the two pulled back.

“Bye, Thalia,” Annabeth said, barely audible. Poseidon wasn’t sure how long it had been since they’d seen each other, but he knew of the time they’d spent by each other’s side all those years ago.

Thalia gave her a watery smile and patter her cheek for a second. She didn’t seem to mind that Annabeth had now grown taller than her. Annabeth stepped back and Jason stepped forward, wrapping Thalia up in a hug. He completely blocked her from view, and all Poseidon could see were her arms wrapping around Jason’s broad back. Their hug lasted long, but they said nothing.
Eventually, Hazel stepped in and gave Thalia a short hug of her own. Percy went up after her, and Poseidon followed him like a lost puppy, only stopping a foot or so before the two.

“I’ll miss you, Pinecone Face.”

“Likewise, Kelp Head.”

They didn’t hug, but they exchanged a smile. Feeling obligated, Poseidon walked up and extended a hand for her to shake. Red dusted her cheeks as she took his hand.

“It was nice to meet you,” Poseidon told her kindly. “You’re a great warrior, and after some more training, I’m sure you’ll be one of the best in our history.”

At that, her entire face turned completely red, but she shook his hand and nodded nonetheless. “Thank you. And it was nice to meet you, too.”

Poseidon nodded and gave her a smile, then stepped back. Hades gave her a nod, which she returned with a smile.

And then there was an awkward pause. She could’ve left then, but she hesitated. Everyone knew why.

Zeus glanced uncomfortably from side to side. He ever so slightly shifted on his feet, and stuck his hands in his pockets.

After a moment, Thalia just let out a defeated sigh and slung her bow over her shoulder. “Bye, guys.” She turned, her posture more slumped than usual.

Poseidon turned his head towards Zeus as if saying “get you ass over there”, but Zeus avoided eye contact.

After a few more moments of pained silence, he finally broke and rushed over to Thalia, easily stepping in front of her.

“I’m sorry,” he blurted. “Fuck, I’m sorry. Shit, I just swore—oh, fuck, wait—I’m sorry, Thalia, I’m so, so sorry. I...I...there’s no reason. Okay? There’s no fucking reason. I’m sorry. I’m sorry I’m an asshole, I’m sorry I’m your father, I’m sorry I put you through that, I’m sorry I never helped you, I’m sorry you have to say you’re a daughter of mine, I’m sorry I left, I’m sorry I never came back, I’m so—”

“Dad.”

Zeus fell silent.

“It’s okay.”

More silence.

“...What?”

“It’s okay.”

“You...What? It’s okay? No, it’s not okay, I—”

“Dad.”
“…”

“It’s not like anyone else got better treatment. Some kids’ parents had to be forced to claim them. And, well…you’re not perfect. Hell, you’re terrible. But it’s okay.”

“I…”

“Dad. I’ve seen you on this quest. You think I’m so blinded to only see the times where you were a dick? Do you know how much confusion and denial I went through when I saw the nice, playful, teasing side of you? Do you know how hard I tried to hate you?”

“I…”

“You’re a dick, Dad. But so am I. So is Percy.”

“Um, excuse me—”

“So is Poseidon. So is Hades. So is Nico. So is every goddamn person on this planet. Sometimes, you’re just a little bit more of a dick than others. It’s okay.”

“Thalia…”

“Dad.”

And then, Poseidon witnessed something he never thought he’s see in his immortal life.

Thalia stepped forward and wrapped her arms around Zeus, only up to his shoulder.

Zeus froze, hands stuck to his sides like glue, eyes going wide. His shoulders tensed and his jaw unhinged, fingers flexing out to their full length. Poseidon almost found it comical.

Eventually, he seemed to melt, and he wrapped his arms around Thalia, too. Thalia seemed to take this as encouragement and pulled her father closer. Hesitantly, he buried his face in her hair, and though Poseidon couldn’t see her face, he knew she was smiling.

All of them watched, a few teary eyed, until Leo decided to break the moment with an “AWWWWNNNNNNNNWWWWWWWWWWWW”.

Everyone turned to glare at him, and he shot finger guns with a grin. Thalia and Zeus broke apart, laughing slightly.

And that’s when Poseidon decided that if Zeus and Thalia could hug, anything really could happen.
one more chapter after this yall
its been a wild ride and now we almost done
Alexa...
play fiesta salsa quinceañera

(still gonna do the deleted scenes tho so more like two or three chapters to go but still we wrapping up)

(sorry for any mistakes too)
this will be deleted later but I just feel so bad

its almost been a month since I updated ugh

IM STILL UPDATING THIS ISN'T A CANCEL ANNOUNCEMENT

I had to put that in caps

look yall there's been a lot of shit going on in school and out of school and I've been working on it as much as I can but its going really slow

I know how annoying it is but I also feel like shit

I gave y'all frequent updates and now I'm just ughhh

im not slacking I promise I just need to put school first because there's not a chance I'm doing grade seven again my god it was hell

I'm sorry if you were expecting a chapter, it should be up in a week or so

I'm really sorry I know it seems like Im just complaining and shit but I feel really bad

my god the amount of times I've said sorry...you would think I'm Canadian. oh wait

all jokes aside, middle school is trash

middle school boys are trash

middle school girls are trash

im trash

everyone's trash except u guys bc u still put up with my freakin one month apart updates for the last two or three chapters

did I mention middle school boys are trash

I promise this chapter will be good (or, well, I hope you'll think its good), I'm really sorry for disappointing yall

Anyway, have a good sleep or wake up or day or night or whatever and drink water and take ur meds but if you don't take meds then dont take ur meds
So this is it, it's been an adventure - Pewdiepie

Chapter Summary

so.
this is it isn't it
after nine months
mostly because of my slow ass updating the last three chapters over like three months
oop
but still
a baby was made and born in the time I've written this
that's pretty dope
I hope his name is jimmy
its probably jimmy
I'm still updating the explanation chapter and extra scenes chapter but this is the last real one y'all
I promised myself I wouldn't get sappy because this is just some fanfiction but like I love y'all so much thank you for supporting me through this whole thing
I know I'm only 13 and don't really know what having a tough life is like but its been a pretty rough year with family and school and your comments always made my day a little brighter
and I just want you to know that I appreciate every reader, even if you didn't comment or kudos, because just getting someone to take a little bit of time out of their day to read something that means so much to me is amazing
anyway i'll stop sapping like a lil bitch and let you read

Chapter Notes

jk im being sappy again trolololol
im sorry for taking a month to update after I told you it would be up in a week
i'd like to say I've been busy, but its summer vacation and all my friends have seemed to forget about my existence
I guess it be like that
I've just been trying to catch up on sleep and not being emotionally stable enough to wrap up 9 months of work oop
in other news im not looking forward to grade 8 next year at all like
at all
bc I accidentally came out as bi to a girl who I'm pretty sure is gonna tell everyone as soon as I say something that isn't a compliment to her and as u know being lgbtq in middle school is not a fun experience
also there isn't going to be a musical next year bc my school is basically not funding the arts at all
I'm gonna jump the school board
(also just found out that another fanfic writer started writing stuff when she was thirteen and I looked at her stuff and its better than mine oop
lol I didn't have a mental breakdown at 4 am
imagine thinking I was special oop)
anyway, sorry again for keeping you waiting
this chapter's almost 13k so hopefully that makes up for it??
sorry again lol
but enjoy this mess, bc it's the last chapter of mess :))) (kinda lol)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Previously on ‘Really? Right in front of my salad?’: “And that’s when Poseidon decided that if Zeus and Thalia could hug, anything really could happen.”

“Dad?”
“Yeah?”

There was silence for a moment. Poseidon stared up at the ceiling of Cabin 3, waiting for Percy to continue. The fountain at the back of the cabin shone silver, and Poseidon didn’t think he could even see his hand in front of his face. It was eerily quiet, it being too cold for a fan. The crickets outside were far off, and the silence fell like a comforter over the father and son. Poseidon waited patiently, even when it took longer for Percy to continue than would’ve been deemed normal. Poseidon had just been about to fall asleep, but if Percy needed anything, he’d be there.

“Are you proud of me?” Percy’s soft voice rang throughout the room, quiet as a ghost but loud as sirens.

Well, that wasn’t what Poseidon was expecting.

He didn’t really know what he was expecting to be fair, but he knew for sure that that wasn’t it. It hit him like a ton of bricks. Was he proud of Percy? That was the understatement of the millennia. Gods, he’d never been more proud of one of his sons, and that’s saying a lot. He opened his mouth to answer, and then—

His gut sank.

Was he really such a bad parent that his own son needed to ask if he was proud of him?

*Shut up, Poseidon. This is about Percy.*

“I...Of course I am, Percy,” he said. It came out louder than he intended, and he sensed Percy shift a little.

“You sure?”

His voice sounded so uncertain, Poseidon almost wanted to get up and give him a hug. For gods’ sake the boy needed it. Poseidon almost wondered what would’ve made Percy even think that he wasn’t proud of him. The idea was simply absurd to Poseidon. He felt a protective wave wash over him, but refrained from going over to Percy. “Of course, son. I was always proud of you. Even before you were the greatest hero of all time.”

There were a few beats of silence, before: “Thank you.” Percy’s voice was choked and broken.

Poseidon smiled, albeit a little sadly. “Go to sleep, Percy.”
“Okay.” It was a whisper, nearly silent. “Goodnight.”

“Goodnight.”

Poseidon’s eyes drifted closed as he brought his blanket further up to his chin, turning over onto his side.

Just as the embrace of sleep was about to take over him again, Percy spoke.

“Dad?”

“Yeah?”

“I love you.”

Poseidon paused, eyes snapping open, breath catching in his throat. He tried to speak for a moment, but his words got caught on their way out. After a moment of gaping, he finally let out a strangled: “I…I love you, too.”

***Time Break***

The first thing Poseidon took in during his stay at Camp so far was not how different it had changed since his last visit, nor how sad some of the campers eyes were, nor how good the food was.

It was that 12 to 15 year olds were, quite frankly, bitches.

His first experience with this phenomenon was the second day he arrived, two days ago.

Flashback

*Poseidon was squished in between Hades and Zeus as they made their way to the dining pavilion. For some reason, the two of them had developed the habit of being on either side of him at all times. Perhaps it was the trauma and guilt they faced whilst Poseidon was kidnapped, but most likely, Poseidon knew, was that they wanted to annoy the ever living shit out of him. His theory was almost proven, as whenever Poseidon tried to step in front of them slightly, Zeus would make a show of ‘stretching’ and blocking his path, pushing him back. He would always have that little smirk, too. Poseidon wanted to slap it off. However, there were times when a bigger teen would step near the three of them on either side, and Hades or Zeus would jump a little, squishing even closer to either side of him. So Poseidon didn’t say anything, just in case it was helping them through some stuff. Didn’t mean it wasn’t annoying.

As per usual, every head turned towards them when they entered the pavilion. Poseidon wished he could say that he was getting used to it, but he really wasn’t. People either didn’t know his identity and didn’t give a flying shit about him, or they knew his identity but they were equally as important and/or had been around him long enough to not be uncomfortable. This was completely new. Or, at least, it hadn’t happened in so long Poseidon forgot what it was like.*
Hundreds of eyes burned into his back as he broke apart with the other two and sat down at the Poseidon table with Percy. Percy smiled at him and scooched over a little, which was quite unnecessary given that the table was 25 feet long. Poseidon appreciated it anyway.

Hades awkwardly shuffled over to the Hades table, Nico greeting him awkwardly and then trying to shift as far away from him as possible without it being blatantly obvious. Poseidon felt awkward just looking at them. Gods, they needed to bond.

Meanwhile, Zeus sat down with Jason at the Zeus table, and gods, Poseidon wanted to fucking slam his head against the table. Jason’s posture was stiff, and he was eating his salad like it was the most difficult thing he’d ever done in his whole life. Zeus was desperately trying to relax his tense shoulders, which ended up just looking like he was having a very mild shoulder-seizure.

Poseidon tried to ignore them and looked at Percy, whom he found staring at him. Percy looked away as his face turned beet red, a little bit of his bangs falling over his eyes. He raked his hand through his hair to move it back, dodging eye contact. Poseidon furrowed his brow but otherwise let it go.

He looked down at his empty plate blankly. Remembering how this worked, he asked for a muffin (the campers could make him lose his appetite very quickly) and a pina colada that had no alcohol in it because apparently campers weren’t allowed to have alcohol. A shame. After all the shit that went down within the last few weeks, all Poseidon really wanted was to get absolutely fucking wasted. Hey, he was probably, like, 25 in human years or some shit. Give him a break. A few seconds later, he felt Percy staring at him again. He looked up and met his eyes again, but Percy looked down once more, face turning even redder. Poseidon smiled at him curiously. “Is something wrong, Percy?”

“No,” he mumbled, looking up but not at him as he took a sip of what looked like blue coke. Poseidon was about to ask further, but Percy cut him off. “Oh, we have to do the offerings.”

Poseidon looked away to see most of camp getting out of their seats. He followed suit, and Percy followed him. In his stay at camp, he hadn’t felt one person offer to him, and he wasn’t sure if that was because he wasn’t a god and couldn’t feel it, or everyone here hated him. Nevertheless, he stood in line, watching demigod after demigod scrape food into the fire. All of their faces were illuminated by the glowing flames, which somehow made them look even more like their parents. Poseidon started naming each of the demigods’ parents for fun as they scooped their offerings. He thought he got most of them right, but some were a little difficult. He wondered is Zeus and Hades were doing the same thing a few feet ahead. When it was his turn, he offered to Amphitrite, Zeus, and Hades. He knew it was kind of dumb to offer to his brothers, but it felt right.

After Percy had offered, the two of them headed back to the pavilion side by side. They sat down at the Poseidon table together, still attracting a few stray stares, and started eating again. Poseidon thought the offering ritual was kind of awkward, but he didn’t say anything. He had always found it kind of strange when some random demigod he didn’t know offered to him for some weird reason like wanting to win a fishing competition. It was sweet, but it was weird.

Poseidon sighed as he ate. The muffins here were truly one of the best he’d ever had. Not as good as Sally’s, no, but still good. It was bran, but the good kind of bran. Like the soft, mushy, sweet bran muffins that kind of dissolved in your mouth. Poseidon still wasn’t sure how the food got there or who made it, but being honest he wanted to meet and thank them.

He sighed again as he felt Percy’s gaze on him a few moments later, and he turned towards his son, one eyebrow raised. “Okay, what’s up?”
“Do you have an eating disorder?” Percy blurted. It came out so quickly Poseidon had to take a moment to decipher it from all one word. “It’s okay to tell me.”

Poseidon’s eyebrows shot towards his hairline and he almost let out a surprised laugh. Where on earth did he get that idea? “What?”

“Well, don’t laugh ,” Percy huffed, cheeks turning scarlet. “I’m just concerned.”

“Yes, and I appreciate that Percy,” Poseidon said, trying to not laugh again, “but where on earth did you get that idea?”

“You’re eating a muffin for supper, Dad.”

“I’m not hungry!”

“That’s what people with eating disorders say!”

“I’m a god, Percy.” This was ridiculous. Him? An eating disorder?

“So? You can still have issues!”

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Okay, yes, I can. But one of those issues is not an eating disorder.”

“Every meal you’ve had during your stay here was either a muffin, toast, half a sandwich, or an apple. That’s not normal! You had an apple for breakfast today and skipped lunch! You’re supposed to be the one with the appetite!”

Poseidon was starting to see his point, but he didn’t have an eating disorder. “Percy, really, I appreciate your concern, but I do not have an eating disorder. Maybe later on I’ll talk to you about some things that I...go through or have gone through, just so you have a free space to talk about it as well, but trust me, out of all the things I’m messed up on, eating is not one of them.”

Percy frowned, looking like he wanted to huff. “Are you sure? And what other stuff are you going through? I know you’ve gone through some stuff, but…” He froze, then grabbed Poseidon’s arm, attempting to roll up the sleeve.

Poseidon snatched it back. “Not here Percy,” he whispered angrily, darting his eyes across curious stares.

Percy gaped at him, horror deep set in his eyes. “You’ve been doing it again?”

“No ,” Poseidon said, rolling his eyes. “But, in case you’ve forgotten, I did it a few weeks ago, and the—” he lowered his voice, “—scars are still there. I don’t feel like broadcasting it to a place full of traumatized teenagers.”

Percy reluctantly stopped trying for his wrist. “I’m checking later, though, and we’re also talking about it. I won’t be here forever, and I need to know you’ll be okay when I’m gone.”

Poseidon’s heart sank. He knew that; it happened with all his children, and all of the important mortals or demigods in his life. But Percy was different. Poseidon didn’t want to imagine life without him again, especially after these past few weeks. It should be the other way around; a parent warning their child of their inevitable demise, not the child warning the parent of theirs. It was times like these that Poseidon truly envied mortals. He always kind of did. How they lived knowing that any moment could be their last. It must’ve been exhilarating. Poseidon only got a taste of it, but he knew, even if only in his subconscious, that if he was in any real danger, his older
sister would scoot his ass back up to Olympus, rant at him, but still inevitably save his life. But this time it was for another reason; mortals could only see so much death in their lifetimes before they experienced it themselves. There wasn’t a day that passed where Poseidon thought about what it would be like to be mortal, to go through such a puny lifetime, to die.

Finally, he responded: “I know.”

Percy nodded and went back to his meal. Not trying to be subtle in any way, shape, or form, he plopped a rack of ribs onto Poseidon’s plate.

“Really?” Poseidon asked. “Ribs with a muffin?”

“It’s food. Eat it.”

“I...I can literally order something else...And that’s your food...”

“Yes, but you’re not going to and I ate stuff today.”

“So did I!”

“Barely. Just eat the food. You look like a skeleton enough already, don’t make it worse.”

Ouch. Jeez, Poseidon was starting to worry he’d look like a skeleton even back in his normal form. “Thanks.”

“Eat.” Percy picked up the ribs and shoved them towards his mouth.

“Okay, okay!” Poseidon pushed the ribs away in disgust. “I can do it myself, jeez.”

Percy huffed and plopped the food back onto his plate. “Then eat it.”

“I don’t like ribs.” He loved ribs, but now even more stares had come their way, making him even more uncomfortable. If Percy had offered him something lighter, perhaps one of the (few) vegetables on his plate, he would’ve taken it.

Percy huffed and put the ribs back on his plate. Poseidon hoped that he’d either give up or just give him something like a carrot, but he plopped down a chicken leg. “Er...sorry, Percy, but I don’t like that either...” This time, he genuinely didn’t like chicken legs.

Percy slammed his hands down on the table. “You do have an eating disorder!”

Camp fell silent (for the most part. A few Apollo kids were still practicing the harmonies in Bohemian Rhapsody without another care in the world). Percy’s face turned beet red, but not nearly as red as Poseidon thought his face must’ve been. He glanced around at the campers, almost every one looking at either him or Percy, or switching between both. Poseidon never felt more embarrassed in his life. Not only did he not have an eating disorder, but he was also a god and in front of, essentially, his family members.

“You have a what?” Zeus asked, voice projecting through the crowd, as always.

Hades cleared his throat. “I’m sure it’s just out of context. Go back to eating.”

Everyone immediately went back to their food, and whether that be out of fear of Hades or the uncomfortableness of the situation, Poseidon wasn’t sure.

“Sorry,” Percy mumbled, face still red as he stared down at his plate. “I didn’t mean for it to be
Poseidon stared directly at his plate, still feeling the burning of eyes on him. “I don’t have an eating disorder, I’m just not hungry.”

“Okay.”

Poseidon could tell he didn’t believe it, it was just too awkward to press any further. Poseidon awkwardly ordered a piece of toast and took a bite, not even bothering to put butter or jam on it. It was disgusting, but too many people kept glancing at him for him to turn back now. He chewed it with tense jaw muscles, probably making it way too obvious he didn’t like it anyway.

Half an hour later, people started clearing out, and so did Poseidon and Percy. Percy was standing at an awkward distance away from him, not far enough so that it looked like he wasn’t walking with him, but far enough where it didn’t seem natural. The silence between them wasn’t tense, but it was awkward. Poseidon awkwardly looked away and rubbed the back of his neck. What a great start to his stay at camp.

They reached the bleachers where the campfire was starting, but Chiron and Dionysus weren’t there yet. Poseidon pointed out Zeus, Hades, Jason, Hazel, Annabeth, Frank, Will, and Nico to Percy, and he examined the bleachers as they walked over. They attracted a few stares, but almost everyone was chatting with their friends and not paying them any mind. A few people were walking around trying to find seats, so it wasn’t like Poseidon and Percy stuck out like a sore thumb.

Not looking where he was going, he rammed right into two teenagers, a boy and a girl, no older than 15.

“Oh, sorry,” Poseidon apologized, looking up sheepishly. The girl was tall, probably 5’10, while the boy was also tall, just not astronomically. Poseidon had the inconvenience of running into the girl, who looked down with her whole 1 inch on him. She was pretty, with glossy red hair and skin freckled with constellations. The boy was about as pale as Casper, with hair like Draco Malfoy’s. “I didn’t see you there.”

The girl gave him a smile, not acting as nervous as Poseidon thought some other campers might’ve been. She smelled like rosemary, vanilla, and honey, but the scent was too overpowering and it burned Poseidon’s nostrils. “It’s no problem,” she said, smiling at him. “I’ve actually been meaning to talk to you.”

Poseidon furrowed his brow, jerking his head back a little. “Uh, what?” That’s not what you’re supposed to say. “I mean, er, yes, what do you need?” Gods, he was rusty on the whole god thing. Percy was glaring at the girl, which caused Poseidon’s gut to feel like a butter churner.

“I just want you to be honest,” said the girl, smiling innocently and placing a hand on his shoulder. Poseidon glanced down at it, weirded out. Her nails were painted fiery red, and the glossy overcoat reflected the snapping flames not a metre away from them. “Are you —”

“Alright, Riley, what do you want?” Percy asked, rolling his eyes, grabbing her wrist and taking it off of Poseidon’s shoulder. “We’re trying to find a seat.”

“Aaw, with your boyfriend?”

“... What? He’s my dad, you idiot.”

“Well, I wouldn’t expect more from you.” The boy next to her snickered.
There was lots of incest throughout Poseidon’s family tree, but he wasn’t sure if anybody had ever crossed the line of father and son. He’d heard of a goddess cursing a stepmother to fall in love with her step son, but that was the closest, at least out of what Poseidon could remember from all the way back then.

More people were starting to watch them now, and soon enough there were less people talking than people trying to listen in. Poseidon raised an eyebrow, feeling a little authority come crawling back to him. He straightened his back so the height difference was a little less noticeable. “The last time I checked, Miss Riley, Percy saved your ass in both wars, so I don’t believe you have the right to insult him.” A few people let out little “ooo”’s, and Poseidon could feel eyes burning into his back, arms, head, and...uh... y’know what they’re horny teenagers, let them do it.

“And why would I listen to you?” She asked, looking him up and down.

“He’s a god,” Percy started, outraged. “You’re nothing!” Poseidon felt like that was a harsh thing to say, but Percy knew this girl better than he did. By now the demigods around the fire were silent, watching the whole ordeal play out. Even the Apollo kids stopped turning their guitars and ukuleles to watch.

Riley rolled her eyes. “You seriously believe he’s—” she pointed at him, “—actually Poseidon? Poseidon’s hot, Percy, th—.”

Poseidon snorted and cut her off, not being able to contain himself. “Thanks.” He thought he heard familiar snickers from his brothers, niece, and nephews.

She rolled her eyes. “I said Poseidon’s hot. You’re not Poseidon.”

“Yes I am,” Poseidon argued, rolling his eyes and holding a hand out as if saying “really?”. Who did this girl think she was? He thought he still looked like himself, just younger. It wasn’t like the difference was astronomical or anything.

She gave him a once over. “Yeah, right.” She huffed a little laugh, and when no one else did, she glared at the blond boy until he also laughed. Satisfied, she looked back at Poseidon. “Gods are hot, you’re not. Also, gods aren’t five feet tall, nor do they have eating disorders.”

“I don’t have an eating disorder,” Poseidon said through clenched teeth. He decided to not bring up the five feet part, he had kind of started to get used to that kind of teasing by now.

“Well you sure look like you do.” A few “ooo”’s rang around the demigods again, mostly from the preteens. “Besides, nobody here thinks you’re actually Poseidon. Just letting you know.”

“Why not?” Percy asked for him, outraged.

“Look at him, Percy. Yeah, he looks like you, but he doesn’t look like Poseidon. Oh! He’s your brother isn’t he?” She gave Poseidon a once over again. “A less hot brother.”

“That’s because he got changed into a teenager! And no, he isn’t! He’s my dad!”

“Then why do Hades and Zeus still look hot?”

“He looks hot too!” Percy defended, looking ready to punch this chick. He paused for a moment, glancing at Poseidon. “Er, not in a weird way.” A chuckle ran throughout the crowd.

Poseidon waved him off, really just wanting to get out of here. He tried to not let her words get to his head, since he knew he’d get over them in less than two hours, but it still kind of stung in the
moment. There wasn’t a doubt in his mind that this girl was a daughter of Aphrodite, and it really fucking sucked to have your appearance critiqued by a descendant of the goddess of beauty.

“Yeah, right,” the girl said. “Anyway—” she looked at him, “I just wanted to let you know that no one thinks you’re actually Poseidon and everyone thinks you’re really ugly. Have a nice day!” She flipped her hair over her shoulder as she turned around and started to walk away, looking the definition of ‘stereotypical mean girl’. Poseidon thought that they had only been popularized by Mean Girls and Heathers and didn’t actually exist, but apparently he was wrong. The boy she was with stumbled to follow her, not exactly looking like the boyfriend of a mean girl, but still.

Poseidon’s temper flared, his hands curling up into fists. “I’d watch out anytime you go swimming, it might not go so well in your favour.”

She turned to look behind her, a small smile playing on her bubblegum painted lips. “And I’d watch out whenever you’re changing, you might burn someone’s eyes.”

A chorus of “OH”’s followed her as she left and sat down, leaving Percy and Poseidon in her wake.

They stood there in awkward, humiliated silence, Poseidon’s anger morphing down to insecurity and embarrassment. Almost everyone was laughing, and even though Poseidon knew they weren’t directly laughing at him and more of the clapback Riley made, it still stung his cheeks and eyes. Fuck, he needed to toughen up. He was okay with crying alone in his room where no one could see him, but he really needed to stop crying in front of everyone. He wanted to run away from here and never have to face these stupid teenagers again.

He thought he heard Percy say: “That was the kind of roast you’d hear from a third grader” but he didn’t really register it.

He remembered his vow to himself.

Shaking his head, he put a nonchalant mask on and blinked to clear the water out of his eyes. He held his head up as he walked over to Zeus and Hades’ row on the bleacher-like seats. Hades and Zeus looked at him, their faces embodying second-hand embarrassment. Poseidon tried not to show on his face how bad it felt for them to be embarrassed of him. He sat down next to Hades, stone faced.

The laughter died down, and eventually Chiron galloped to the campfire. He gave a curious glance to the campers, but Poseidon couldn’t quite put a finger on why. He must’ve felt something weird in the air or something. He seemed to shake it off, and the campfire began.

“Hey...” Hades asked, turning to him. His dark eyes glowed orange, and half his face was cast in shadows while the other half was highlighted by firelight. Poseidon thought he looked beautiful. “Are you alright?”

“I’m fine.” Poseidon dragged his eyes away from his face and stared directly at the campfire.

“No you’re not.” Hades paused. “And, for the record, I don’t think your ugly.”

Well, everyone else does. Poseidon forced a laugh. “Thanks. But really, it didn’t bother me.”

Hades smiled at him a little proudly. “I’m glad to see you’re gaining confidence.”

Poseidon had to contain a laugh at that. “Thanks.”
For the following days after that, Poseidon had avoided all interactions with pretty much everyone, which led to the situation he was currently in.

He, Hades, and Zeus were at the lake, Poseidon with his feet in the water and Hades and Zeus relaxing a few feet behind him. Hades had borrowed a book from the Athena cabin, a feat Poseidon thought was impossible even for the most divine of beings, but apparently he had asked when the only two people in the cabin were two kids, and they were too scared to refuse him. Annabeth had said that she’d lend him another one if needed, still managing to look scary when offering a favour. Not that Poseidon would admit that he found an 18 year old daughter of Athena scary. But she was.

Zeus had the crook of his elbow over his eyes and looked to be asleep, while Poseidon just stared out at the water. The three of them were not pressured to do any camp activities, and Chiron treated them just the same as Dionysus, meaning that they could really do whatever they wanted. Being honest, Poseidon actually found that some of the camp activities looked pretty fun, but he didn’t want to make anyone uncomfortable competing against a god. Not that anyone apparently even believed he was—or used to be, he guessed—a god. A few people had come up to him after the campfire incident to tell him that they believed him, but most of them were young kids, 8-12, and though he found it slightly comforting, it was also kind of embarrassing having your only supporters be literal children.

Despite that, he was somewhat enjoying his stay at camp. He and Percy had grown even closer over the four days he was here, and he got to know Will, Frank, and Annabeth a little better. They were all far more chill than he was expecting, and it was a pleasant surprise when he found that they treated him as if he was just another demigod in their friend group, rather than an almighty god or an irrelevant mortal, which most people here seemed to do. It was either one or the other, no in between. Most people were on the ‘irrelevant mortal’ side, which he wasn’t entirely pleased about. He found it strange that most of these kids had grown up in the mortal world and yet still treated him like he was below them just because they thought he was a mortal. Maybe they found it insulting that they thought a mortal was pretending to be Poseidon? He didn’t know.

However, he had already gained a status of being distant, which he wished he could diminish. He just didn’t want to be embarrassed again. He didn’t make a good first impression by anyone’s standards, and he was worried that if he were to expand and talk to more people, he’d just make a further fool of himself. Most of the demigods were pretty chill, but he made a note to steer clear of the Ares cabin, who all sneered at him as he passed, the Aphrodite cabin, which, though it was only one person, he decided was the meanest group of kids ever, and the Athena cabin, who all hated his guts by default.

Basically, the only person people liked so far was Zeus, which Poseidon couldn’t understand.

Okay, that sounded bad, but they all read about Greek Mythology here, didn’t they? They had heard of how he, like, ate his lover and shit? Admittedly they would’ve heard about some of the bad shit Poseidon had done as well, but then again he wasn’t nearly as bad as Zeus and they all didn’t really like him so. Hades by far got the worst treatment, which Poseidon also couldn’t understand. Yes, he kidnapped Persephone, but looking at the bigger picture, that was really nothing compared to what some other gods and goddesses have done. Then again, most of the demigods didn’t grow up learning about Greek Mythology, so they all probably thought of him as the Hellenistic counterpart of the devil, which just simply wasn’t true. But, it’s hard to undo what’s
already done, he supposed. The only thing people found as a positive in him was he looked nice.

Anyway, this information led him up to this exact moment.

A group of kids were walking up to the lake, specifically the part of the lake Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades were residing in. Poseidon glanced at them, and they looked to be making a beeline directly towards them. A little dread pooled in his gut, fearing what they could’ve been looking for with them. They all looked to be fifteen to seventeen, which was at least less terrible than the thirteen to fifteen age group, but still. If Poseidon estimated, he’d say that there were probably seven kids, all tall and pretty. Well, with the exception of one girl who still looked everyone else's age but was only up to a few people’s shoulders.

It didn’t take long for Poseidon to realize that they were not walking towards him, but towards Zeus. Not even Hades, just Zeus.

They stood right in front of him, and he removed his forearm from his eyes and raised an eyebrow at them. “Do you need something?”

A guy stepped forward confidently. “We were wondering if you’d like to join us in training. There are nine of us, and we need a tenth so we can match up.”

Zeus raised his other eyebrow, looking mildly interested. He looked over at him and Hades. “Do you guys want to come?”

Poseidon lit up a little. As much as he liked just sitting around, it could get a little boring at times. And then he glanced up at the group of teenagers. They had an array of reactions, from disappointment to flat out disgust. Most of them were wrinkling their nose at Hades, but Poseidon also got a fair share of looks.

He refrained from sighing. He knew that if he just looked different, he’d be treated the same, if not better, than Zeus was being treated. But he just had to look like the ugliest creature on the face of the planet. At least, that was according to everyone.

So...yeah, he was the ugliest creature on the face of the planet.

At least he finally was finally the number one in something.

So Poseidon just shrugged and forced a smile. “Nah, I’m good.”

“Skinny ass,” one of them muttered. A few people snickered. Poseidon wasn’t sure if he was supposed to hear it or not.

“I’ll pass, too,” Hades said, giving a polite smile to the group. This time, he was obviously meant to hear the “oh thank gods”’s pointed in his direction. “You go ahead Zeus.”

Zeus glanced between the two of them. “Are you sure?”

“Go ahead,” Poseidon smiled.

Zeus gave them one last uncomfortable glance before nodding. “Okay, thanks.” He stood up and looked down at the two of them. Poseidon squinted at him as he lingered awkwardly. “Er...have fun.”

“We will,” Hades said, still in that polite tone.

Zeus gave a single, awkward nod and turned. He and the group started walking, and a boy and a
girl made a point of standing on either side of Zeus, way too close for what Poseidon would consider comfortable.

He dragged his eyes away to the sparkling water of the lake. A few demigods were paddling, and a young girl waved at him. Poseidon remembered her as one of the people that came up to tell him that they believed he was actually Poseidon, and Poseidon gave a small smile and a wave.

He heard Hades close his book and place it down. Poseidon turned and met his eyes. “What’s up?” he asked.

“I don’t think you’re too skinny,” Hades said. His tone was informal but comforting at the same time. “I think you’re just a little small. But it suits you.”

Poseidon looked back out at the lake. “Thanks.”

“I’m serious.” He could’ve just scooched his butt on the ground to sit beside him, but instead he stood up and walked over to him like he was mature or something. He sat shoulder to shoulder beside him—or, more like bicep to shoulder beside him. “They’re just used to how you used to look. And I think they’re just exaggerating. Not everyone here thinks you’re ugly or too skinny or...whatever else their saying.”

Debatable. “Yeah, I know. Thanks.”

Hades smiled at him. “I know I’ve said this, but I really am proud of you for getting more confident.”

Poseidon’s gut sank and his heart fluttered at the same time. For one thing, that meant that he didn’t see him as weak, but that also meant that he had to keep this facade going for...ever, really. He couldn’t disappoint him now. He supposed, in the long run, that might actually be a good thing. “Thanks,” he said again. He tried to make it sound genuine this time.

Hades wrapped an arm around his shoulder. Poseidon noticed that he was slowly getting more and more comfortable with casual affection, like a high five or a hug for no real reason. Beforehand, he could barely give someone a shoulder pat without removing his hand as if burned a few seconds later. Poseidon was proud of him.

Poseidon rested his head against Hades’s shoulder. “And, for the record, they just don’t know the real you.”

“Huh?”

“The demigods. I know they’re treating you like dog shit as subtley as they can, but if they knew the real you, they’d be treating you even better than they’re treating Zeus.”

“You think?” His voice sounded uncertain, soft, questioning.

“I know.” Poseidon smiled up at him. Hades smiled back. “And they’ll get tired of Zeus eventually.”

Someone snorted. “Thanks.”

Poseidon looked up to see Zeus standing behind them, looking down with an eyebrow raised. Poseidon smiled at him sheepishly. “Sorry.”

Zeus shrugged him off and plopped down beside him.
“Why are you here?” Hades asked him. “I mean, not to sound rude, but why aren’t you with those other people?”

“They started trash talking you two in less than two minutes. Little shitheads.”

Poseidon smiled at him, flashing back to that day all that time ago, when Zeus and Hades came barging in to tell him that they’d been searching for him for hours instead of going to that stupid party. Gods, thinking back, it had seemed like such a big deal to him, but it was really nothing to what he’d have to face later. Poseidon and Hades didn’t answer, but both nodded, and Poseidon grabbed Zeus’s wrist.

And the three of them stayed like that, watching the lake glitter until the sun set.

***Time Break***

“Dad, can I ask you something?” Percy asked him, his voice soft, but not hesitant.

“Hm?”

Percy shifted under his blankets to face him. Poseidon did the same, though he could only see little parts of Percy’s face that were illuminated with silver, the rest bathed in darkness. “What’s your relationship with Zeus and Hades?”

“What do you mean?”

Percy sighed gently, turning onto his back to face the ceiling. His eyes shone grey in the lighting. “I’ve been noticing certain things.”

“Like what?” Poseidon knew what was coming, denial already on his tongue.

“Just certain patterns.”

...Er, maybe he didn’t know what was coming. “What?”

He paused for a moment.

“Let’s look back,” Percy said. He sounded like a therapist. “The very first night you were here, Hades said some pretty nasty shit to you, am I correct?”

Poseidon furrowed his brow. “What? No?”

“No, sorry,” Percy backtrackked, shaking his head, “I meant the first night at my apartment. Hades called you some pretty nasty terms and stuff.”

“How do you know about that?”

“Hades told me while you were kidnapped. Anyway, so yes, he did, correct?” Poseidon nodded, and Percy followed suit. “And then, you went out onto the balcony and he apologized and everything was fine. Good, that’s great.” Poseidon kept his eyes trained on him, curious as to where this was going. “Next, both he and Zeus left you to walk home on your own while they got invited to a party. I mean, they refused, then you went out for the rest of the day and all was forgiven. Still good.
“Next, you talk about the mental health issues you’ve been going through. They should now be mindful of that, hm? Yes, they should. Next, I’m the one who said something nasty to you, and you go as far as to harm yourself. They should be extra cautious of you now, hm? Not treat you like you’re made of glass, no, but be mindful. Next, you all get into a huge argument the same day you caused yourself harm. They call you stupid, childish, and immature, tell you you fuck everyone’s lives up, and Zeus punches you in the stomach. Again, this is on the same day of your self inflicted harm.” Poseidon’s gut sank. He wanted to know how Percy knew this information, but it didn’t really matter because he already did and there was no changing it. “But then, Zeus and Hades apologize…and you apologize…back? And then everything’s all fine and dandy again.

“A bit of time passes, and everything seems to be going fine between you three, and then Zeus tells you that I can do everything you can, you don’t contribute anything to the eight, and you’re nothing but deadweight. But he was just being controlled by Chaos, so it was fine. Next, Hades says that we don’t need you, and then Zeus says that people are rudely honest when they’re angry, hence confirming to you that he actually meant everything he said and will say, and basically telling you that Hades genuinely believes you don’t contribute anything to the team. But again, Chaos. And then Zeus calmly, not fueled by anger, states that he believes everything he’s said about you. But it’s fine, he just didn’t mean to say it so harshly. Right?

No, it’s really, really, not. Do you get what I’m trying to say, dad?”

…

Well, it sounded bad when you put it like that.

“Yes. But—”

“No. No “but”’s. This just isn’t…acceptable…to…to, like—like, anyone’s standards!” Poseidon was surprised at the amount of emotion in Percy’s voice. He finally turned to face him, dead in the eye. “So, I’m going to ask you again, what is your relationship with Zeus and Hades?”

“They’re…They’re my…friends,” Poseidon said. The words felt strange on his tongue.

“Why?”

It hit Poseidon unexpectedly, like a punch to the face.

Why?

What did he mean ‘why’?

Poseidon never even had a ‘why’ to love someone, he just did. It’s not like he saw Amphitrite all those years ago and thought about why he loved her, he just knew he did. He supposed he thought Nerites was attractive, but that wasn’t the ‘why’ of his love for him. He didn’t know why he was friends with Zeus and Hades, they were just…that, his friends. His brothers.

“I…I don’t have a reason why.”

“Exactly! S—”

“No, no,” Poseidon cut him off. “I mean that…ugh. Like, I don’t know why I’m friends with them but I am.”

“But why?”
Poseidon bit back a groan of frustration. “I just told you I don’t know why, I just know that they are! I don’t know why I love anyone! I just do! Do you think of the reasons you love someone? No! You don’t! You just do.”

Percy stared at him for a long while. His eyes reflected the stars outside the window so clearly Poseidon was a little taken aback. They had almost completely switched colours now, going from light, sea green to silvery forest. “You love them?”

“I...What?”

“You said ‘love’. You...you love them?”

“I...” Did he? He’d said it.

But did he mean it?

When he was in the moment, he always did. When Zeus or Hades hugged him, or comforted him, or really just touched him in any way that didn’t hurt he did. But did he when they yelled at him? Called him worthless? Punched him?

The answer should’ve been no.

“Yes, Percy, I do.”

“But you shouldn’t.”

Poseidon swallowed thickly. “No. I shouldn’t.”

“So why do you?”

“They’re...They’re redeemable.”

“Redeemable? They essentially told you that you could fucking die and nothing would happen! That they wouldn’t be affected!”

“No, now you’re twisting their words,” Poseidon argued. “They said I was worthless and not essential to the team, not that nothing would change if I died and they wouldn’t miss me.”

“That’s the same thing!”

Yeah. Okay. It kind of was. Poseidon felt tears prick at the corners of his eyes, before blinking them away. “Yes, Percy, but they also say and do wonderful things to me.”

Percy huffed. “Okay, first of all, I know you didn’t mean this, but you made it sound like they’re your sugar daddies—” Poseidon couldn’t help but snort, but it came out a little congested, “and besides, sure, that’s cool, but that doesn’t cancel out all the bad stuff they’ve done!”

“I’ve said bad stuff to them, too, y’know,” Poseidon countered.

“Like what?”

“Well, one time I told Hades that nobody wanted him up on Mount Olympus, and another time I told Zeus that everyone hated him.”

“Okay? And?”
“Um, I told Zeus that I could do his job a lot better than he could. And I, like, y’know, with a few other people, tied him up with magical chains because he was a bad ruler. And I’m supposed to be his big brother.”

“Okay? What else?”

“Well me and Zeus got into arguments all the time and I said some bad stuff to him.”

“Kay? And he said bad stuff to you too in the moment, yes?”

“Yeah, but—”

“During this quest, all the times he was a dick to you, you guys weren’t really arguing, and if you were it was light, and he just said bad shit to you. So, name a time where you weren’t arguing and you just said some nasty shit to him.”

“...”

“???”

“Well, I only ever talked to Hades like twice a year so it’s not even like I could say bad stuff to him, and Zeus is just always a dickhead to everyone so I never bothered to fight back just because he was being a dick to me,” Poseidon blurted. He was never the only target of the bad stuff Zeus has done, so he didn’t see why Percy was making such a big deal out of this.

“Jesus, dad. C’mon, are you hearing yourself?”

Poseidon felt heat work up in his chest. “Do you want me to hate them, Percy? Because it sounds like you do.”

“I, no, I’m just saying this to try to…”

“To what?”

Percy didn’t respond.

“I’m happy with them, Percy. And I think you need to respect that.”

“You didn’t look happy while crying your eyes out after they told you you were useless.”

Poseidon closed his eyes. “That’s just my fault, Percy. You don’t see them crying, do you? I’ve just always been the most emotional out of us.”

“Okay, first of all, it’s never your fault for being upset because of someone else. I mean, sometimes people are irrational, but being upset over being called deadweight isn’t irrational.”

“I…” Poseidon sighed. “I appreciate your concern, Percy, but really, I’m fine. We’re fine. They’re sweet, really.”

Percy sighed and rubbed his face, looking away from him and falling onto his back. “If you say so. But I just want you to know, you should put no pressure on yourself to stay with them—or, friends with them—ugh, you know what I mean, and they have no right to try to force you to like them or anything.”

“I know, Percy, I know.”
Poseidon rolled on his back as well, staring up at the dark ceiling above him. His eyes were more
adjusted now, and he could make out little coral pieces in the corners of the cabin. A cloud passed
over the moon, dimming the room a little, but it passed and rays over silver shone in through the
high window again. Poseidon didn’t close his eyes, and he had a feeling Percy didn’t either.

Wait a minute.
A thought occurred to Poseidon.

How had Percy known all of that? Not the stuff that had happened to Poseidon, but the relationship
part? From what he’d heard, he and Annabeth’s relationship had ended on good terms, with no
unhealthiness or toxicity. And he knew Percy was smart, but few 17-18 year olds were mature
enough to know about that stuff.

“If you don’t mind me asking,” Poseidon said, voice coming out as an unintentional whisper, “how
do you know all of that?”

“How did you know that?”

“Oh.” Percy said. He was still serious, but his tone sounded like a different type of serious. Before,
it had sounded concerned, maybe a little prodding, and calm(ish), but now it sounded dark and
cold, like a damp cave.

Poseidon swallowed, feeling like he’d hit a sore spot. He hadn’t meant to breach into sensitive
topics. “You don’t have to tell me.”

Percy sighed. “You deserve to know, I guess.” He paused for a second, leaving Poseidon waiting
with bated breath. “You probably know about him, I think. He was my first step-dad, the first
person mum ‘loved’ after you.”

“The guy who did that interview while the whole country was on a man hunt for you? Really
ugly?”

Percy snorted at that. “Yeah, that’s the guy.” He paused again. “Anyway, you know how I was
always off at school, usually away from home, right?”

“Yeah?” Poseidon had heard of his many adventures throughout his elementary and middle school
life, but had never really thought about how much time he must’ve spent away from Sally
throughout his childhood. Well, if you had been there you would’ve known.

Yeah, maybe he should stop drinking from that ‘#1 Dad’ mug Percy had given him on Father’s
Day.

“So anyway, Smelly Gabe—” Poseidon refrained from snorting at the name. “—especially while I
was away, wasn’t the...best to mum.”

Poseidon went from light heartedly curious to serious. “What do you mean?” 1, he didn’t think it
was humanly possible to be ‘not the best’ to Sally Jackson, and 2, just how exactly ‘not the best’
was he to her?

“Well...I don’t know everything, but when I was home, he was always playing poker. And he never
wanted to get up, so he always just made her do everything for him. Get him a beer, make him
some stupid dressing, or literally anything. Made her clean it up, too.” When Poseidon thought
back on it, he looked like the kind of guy that would do that. Beer belly, greasy hair, oily skin,
weird facial hair, and one of those weird stained white tank tops that looked like they cost no more
than a dollar. After that, he had become incredibly insecure, thinking that that was Sally’s type and
she thought he looked like that. Thankfully, Amphitrite had smacked him over the head and told
him to stop moping, and that was the end of that. After his moment of realization, anger coiled in
his gut. Sally didn’t deserve that.

“Anyway, I came home and uh...Well, he had raised a hand.”

Poseidon froze.

“And she flinched.”

...

...

...

His blood boiled.

Heat coiled up in his chest, and his fists curled tightly, turning his knuckles white and implanting
half moons into the toughened-with-time flesh of his palms. He sat up in bed, not voluntarily or
consciously. He felt like steam could be coming out of his ears and it wouldn’t be out of place.

“Woah there,” Percy said, sitting up too, “Calm down.”

“Calm down?” Poseidon seethed. “He hit her—”

“He’s dead, dad. Turned to stone. By your ex, actually.”

Poseidon had a lot of ex’s, but only one could turn people to stone, and he knew who Percy was
talking about. “He deserved worse than that.” His voice was no louder than a whisper, but filled
with rage that he could even hear in his head.

“Yeah, he did.”

Poseidon didn’t respond, glaring at the wall ahead of him and breathing hard. Fire coursed through
his veins, pressure was on the back of his throat, his jaw clenched.

“Calm down, dad.”

Poseidon continued staring at the wall.

“Lay back down.”

Poseidon felt his hands start to shake in their fists. A familiar pull in his pelvis, a tightness of his
shoulders, the back of his eyes burning, and….

The fountain in the corner of the cabin exploded.

“HOLY SHIT!”

Poseidon stumbled back—er, fell back—on the bed, scrambling backwards towards his pillow as
water splashed him, soaking his upper body completely.
“I—wha—?” The fountain’s stone edge was completely broken off, little pieces scattered across the floor with non-stop water pouring onto them. “Did I do that?”

“It wasn’t me!” Percy yelled, his voice high and coloured with shocked laughter. “Holy shit, Dad! You did it! You have your powers back!”

“I—No, I can’t do it again, it was only once—”

“Well you don’t know that! Try!”

Poseidon swallowed and closed his eyes. He focused on the water over his body, forcing his mind to put all energy into drying himself off. His eyes squeezed tighter shut, his fists clenched, his lips pressed together, and…

Nothing happened.

He tried again. His jaw clenched and his knuckles grew white. C’mon…

Nothing. Not even a tug in his pelvis.

He tried again.

Nothing.

Again.

Nope.

Again.

Nada.

Again.

Still no.

One last time.

Nope.

He groaned and flopped down on the bed. “It must’ve been you, Perce. I can’t do anything.”

“No!” Percy said, gripping his hair in fists. “I would’ve felt it! And I can control it somewhat now, and it’s not like I wanted to blow up my fountain!”

“Oh—” Poseidon looked at where the fountain was basically destroyed, water spraying everywhere and stone scattered across the floor, “—sorry.”

“So it was you!”

Poseidon covered his face with his hands. “It must’ve been. But I don’t know how, or why. I can’t do it anymore, and it came out of nowhere.”

“So? You still did it! That’s awesome! Congratulations!”

“You’re awfully excited about this,” Poseidon said, peeking through a few of his fingers to look at Percy with a raised eyebrow. “And thanks.”
Percy rubbed the back of his neck sheepishly. “Well—I just thought you’d be a little more excited so I wanted to see you hyped up and stuff. I haven’t seen you happy in a while. And it was also cool.”

Poseidon smiled at him, warmth spreading through his chest. “Thank you, Percy. I am “hyped up” about it, just…a little shocked, I suppose. But really, it does mean a lot.”

Percy’s face turned scarlet, but he nodded. “Uh, yeah, no problem.” He lay back down, insta drying himself and then doing the same to Poseidon.

“Thanks,” Poseidon said, laying down again under his newly dry covers.

“You’re nothing.” He made the water in the fountain stop flowing so the cabin wouldn’t flood, then dried the floor.

Poseidon could hear Percy shift under his blankets and turn to get into a comfortable position, so he took that as a sign that they were both going to actually go to sleep now. “Goodnight, Percy.”

“Goodnight, dad.”

Poseidon shifted onto his side and closed his eyes, and he was back into the embrace of sleep in a heartbeat.

***Time Break***

“Do you have to go?” Poseidon asked into Percy’s shoulder.

“Yes, Dad. I’m sorry. Winter break ended three days ago and I actually have to go to school.” His voice was just as muffled as Poseidons, his face also buried in his dad’s shoulder. Poseidon pulled back, pouting lightly. Percy snorted. “C’mon Dad, you’re not three. And you can always visit anytime.”

Poseidon thought it would be weird if he just randomly showed up to his married ex’s house at random times, but he appreciated the offer anyway. He’d just try to find times that weren’t awkward. “Okay. I’ll miss you.”

“I’ll miss you, too. IM me anytime, and enjoy your stay here. It’ll be a long one.”

Poseidon smiled and laughed a little, drawing Percy into one last hug before letting him go. Percy smiled at him, a little teary eyed (which Poseidon couldn’t say wasn’t mutual), and turned to the rest of the group. “Bye, everyone.”

A chorus of “bye”’s, “goodbye”’s, and “bye, Percy/Perseus”’s echoed after him. Percy gave one last smile before turning and meeting Jason, who was already standing outside camp borders after he had said his goodbye's. Percy looked behind him one more time and gave one last little wave before turning back and holding hands with Jason as they walked down the hill.

Poseidon waved back while he was still turned around, the world around him going a little blurry.

*Remember your promise?*

He blinked the wetness in his eyes away.

The little group that had gathered to say goodbye drifted away, but Poseidon stayed where he was,
watching Percy turn into nothing but a spec in the distance.

“You gonna cry?” Zeus put a hand on his shoulder.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Shut up.”

“Wait—you aren't?” Hades asked, coming up to stand on the other side of him. “Even Nico was a little teary.”

Poseidon huffed, glaring at Hades for second before looking back out beyond Camp borders when he saw the concerned look in his eyes. Percy was now out of sight. “Jeez, I’m not a crybaby.”

“Well—”

“Shut up, Zeus. And I know, Poseidon, it’s just I expected a little more…er…sadness. I mean, it is your son leaving after you spent almost two months with him.”

“I don’t cry at every little thing, come on guys.” He forced himself to roll his eyes again and turned to walk back into Camp, his brothers following in his wake.

He felt Zeus and Hades share a glance. “Y’know…just because you’re gaining more confidence doesn’t mean you can’t feel sad.” It was still Hades talking, and Poseidon wasn’t sure if Zeus just didn’t know what to say or he was just thinking about some random girl he saw.

You didn’t seem to think that when you got annoyed at me for crying all the time not a week ago.

“I know, I know.”

They walked in silence for a short amount of time, before Hades broke it again. “Do you...feel sad?”

“No.” Yes.

“Jeez,” Zeus said, exhaling loudly. He sounded surprised and somewhat impressed. “That’s kind of cold, Poseidon.”

“Why aren’t you sad? If I were you I would be...I’m sure Percy is...as Zeus said, that’s kind of cold.”

Poseidon’s gut sank. He hadn’t meant to come off as an asshole.

They’ll just be annoyed at you if you say you are sad though.

“I...I’m not unaffected. I’m just, er...disappointed, not sad.”

Zeus and Hades shared a glance behind his back again. “Er...’kay…”

Silence fell between the three again. Their feet pounded on the grass as they walked to gods know where. Or—he supposed gods didn’t know where. Hah.

“Again, it’s not a bad thing to be sad, Poseidon,” Hades said again as they finally found somewhere to sit down. They were back at the lake again; it was starting to become their hangout spot.

Poseidon squinted out at the glittering lake from his spot between Zeus and Hades. It was mid morning, so the sun was high in the sky, giving them no shade and no release from the hot rays. Poseidon could feel his arms burning, but he made no move to hide them from the sun. “I know.”
“Okay, if you’re sure.”

The three of them fell into silence, simply staring out at the lake.

Poseidon thought over what they said. He now had this...unquenchable desire to tell them about what he’d been doing, spill his guts on how he’d just been hiding his emotions. He felt the need in the pit of his stomach, his throat, and in his chest. He had to press his lips together to stop the words from tumbling out. He always found it so hard to keep secrets when people kept on asking or reminding him of it.

*If you tell them they'll be annoyed you're being a crybaby.*

*No, they'll be glad you feel comfortable enough to open up to them.*

*No, they'll think you're being dramatic.*

*Hades already asked you if you knew it was okay to be sad, I don’t think he’ll mind.*

*He’s just saying that to be nice. He likes me better when I’m not crying all the time.*

*No he doesn’t, he just thinks it’s good you’re gaining more confidence, not that you’re not crying all the time. Confidence doesn’t equal not crying.*

*Fuck you. I’m not saying anything.*

*You bitch.*

*No you.*

“Poseidon? You still with us?”

Poseidon turned to Zeus with his eyebrows raised. “Hm?”

“We were asking if you wanted to hang out at one of our cabins. We’re both burning up.”

“Oh,” Poseidon said, shaking his head to clear it. “Yeah, sure.”

The sand burned his palms as he pushed himself up, and he lent a hand to Hades when he was fully stood. Hades thanked him and hauled himself up. Despite the warm weather, Hades’ hand somehow remained cold. Or maybe they were normal and Poseidon’s hands were just really hot. Or maybe it was winter outside camp so they were still cold? But that wouldn’t make sense because Poseidon’s hands weren’t cold—

“Which cabin do you want to go to?” Zeus asked, brushing the sand off his shorts.

Poseidon put his hands in his pockets. “Nico’s still in Hades’s cabin and a few Hephaestus kids are fixing the fountain in mine, so Cabin 1 I guess.”

“What happened to the fountain?” Hades asked, a little amusement colouring his voice. Despite not confirming, they all started to head towards Zeus’s cabin. “Did you guys have an intense pillow fight?”

“Oh yeah! I forgot to tell you guys!” Poseidon almost face palmed at himself, before looking up at Zeus and Hades, resisting the urge to bounce on the balls of his feet.

“What?”
“Last night I made the fountain explode in my cabin!”

Zeus and Hades stopped in their tracks abruptly, which caught Poseidon a little off guard. He stopped a step ahead but turned back to face them, smile still plastered on his face. “Cool, right?”

“No you didn’t,” Zeus said, screwing his face back.

Poseidon jerked his head back, furrowing his brow. “Yes I did. I can show you the fountain if you want.”

Zeus rolled his eyes. “No. You didn’t explode the fountain, it must’ve been Perseus.”

“No, I felt the tug in my gut and stuff!” Poseidon shoved his hands out by his hips in frustration.

“Maybe you had a stomach ache or something.”

Poseidon let out an exasperated sigh, turning to Hades for backup. Hades shifted, glancing between his two younger brothers uncomfortably. “Um, Poseidon, maybe Zeus is right.”

“What?” Poseidon asked, outraged. “No! I felt what I felt! I made it explode!”

“No y—”

“No!” he cut Zeus off short. “I thought it was Percy at first too, but he said he didn’t feel anything that would indicate he did it!”

Hades sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose. “Look, Poseidon, he probably just said that to make you feel better—”

“No!” Poseidon’s fists curled at his sides and then fisted in his hair. “I was the angry one! He said something about what happened to Sally and I got angry! He was calm—”

“No, Poseidon,” Hades sighed again, “if it was about his own mother he was probably angry too.”

Poseidon released his hands from his hair and resisted the urge to stomp his foot. “Why don’t you believe me?”

Hades and Zeus shared a glance, and when they turned back, Hades’ eyes were sympathetic while Zeus’ were filled with embarrassment that Poseidon had to assume was secondhand. “Well,” Hades started, “um... You’re... Um... Well, out of the three of us...” he trailed off, looking at Zeus for support.

Poseidon leaned his head in at a side angle and shoved his arm downwards again as if saying “get on with it”.

Zeus cleared his throat awkwardly. “Um, don’t take this... personally or anything, but um... out of... us... you’re not exactly the...” He glanced at Hades again, inner eyebrows raised.

“...Strongest.” Hades finished, staring directly at Poseidon’s shoulder while Zeus looked away awkwardly.

Poseidon glanced between the two of them, arm still extended down, face still tilted, only his eyes shifting between the two men in front of him. He waited for the punchline, or the “just kidding, that’s awesome dude”, or the “but we could be wrong”.

All he got was a measly “Sorry,” from Hades.
Poseidon pursed his lips, letting his arm loose and correcting his head position, straightening his spine. “Well,” he said, voice shaking a little, “I guess...I guess...I’ll just...keep my victory to myself.” He spun on his heel, stalking away from the two.

“Hey, hey, hey!” Hades called, jogging to catch up to him. “We didn’t mean it in a nasty way—” Poseidon snarled at the grass a few metres ahead of him, not responding until Zeus said: “Slow down, we didn’t mean to hurt your feelings.”

Poseidon stopped in his tracks and turned to face them again, almost running headfirst into Hades’ chest. They both stumbled back just so they wouldn’t topple over him. “YOU DIDN’T HURT MY FEELINGS!” Poseidon screeched.

Both Zeus and Hades’s eyebrows shot up to their hairlines and they both stumbled back a few steps. The campers surrounding them all stopped and stared, and Poseidon felt the burning gaze of people all over him. His chest heaved, his nails implanting themselves into his palms. Everything seemed a million miles away, and he was suddenly alone in the crowd, no one near him yet not two metres away. His chest was burning, his throat was burning, his skin was burning, everything was burning, while the world around him grew cold and distant.

“O-Okay,” Hades said, voice shaking a little. “Calm down. It’s okay.” He hesitantly reached to put his hand on Poseidon’s shoulder. Poseidon stared directly at his collarbone, chest still heaving, fists still curled.

“It’s okay,” Hades whispered, “calm down.”

He breathed deeper and longer, and he felt his skin start to cool, his chest untighten. He uncurled his fists slowly, and he slowly came back to himself.

Tears collected along his waterline.

His lower lip began to tremble.

His throat got even tighter.

“Oh, Poseidon,” Hades said softly. He reached to go in for a hug, but Poseidon pulled back.

“No! I’m not crying! I don’t need your stupid hug!” He wiped away the single tear that spilled. And then the next one, and the next one, and the next one.

“C’mon, Poseidon, please...let go.”

The dam broke.

Poseidon threw himself at Hades, burying his face in his chest and wrapping his arms around his waist. He let out an ugly sob into Hades’ shirt, and it felt like all the pressure that had been building inside him let go. It had only been a few days—gods he’d gotten way too soft. Or at least—he’d gotten too used to being soft around other people. Crying was a reoccurring event with him throughout his whole life, he’d just never done it in front of people before this dumb quest. He’d only really cried in front of Amphitrite a few times, but he knew she heard him at least twice a month.

Hades rested his chin on top of his head and hugged him around his shoulders. “Shh...it’s okay.” Poseidon felt like a fountain of tears were spilling from his eyes. It wasn’t even just what Hades and Zeus said a minute ago, it was the campfire incident, it was Percy leaving, it was for Sally, it
was for his insecurities, it was the campers treating him like shit, it was just everything piled into one.

He stopped crying after no longer than a minute, but it was relieving. He still stayed in Hades’s embrace after the tears stopped, and Hades continued to hold him. Poseidon could sense Zeus awkwardly standing off to the side, but he just couldn’t bring himself to leave Hades’s arms. He eventually felt a somewhat awkward hand on his shoulder, and he knew who it was.

Whispers started to fill the air around them, and Poseidon could faintly pick up “What made him cry?” “Are they together?” “Is he okay?” and “Zeus is a mood.”

“Ignore them,” Hades whispered. Poseidon nodded into his chest, still heaving shaky breaths.

***Time Break***

Poseidon wasn’t sure what it was about the incident with him and Hades the other day that made the campers be less vicious towards the two.

Perhaps he had shown that he had emotions and that they could actually hurt his feelings, maybe it was that Hades had presented as being protective and no one would want to hurt Poseidon and have to deal with Hades as a consequence, and maybe it was just that they thought it was cute. Poseidon didn’t know, but after that whole incident camp had started being more warm to them. Not warm, but more warm.

On the flip side, there were a few campers who used that incident as an excuse to hate them even more, which Poseidon thought would be the majority rather than the minority. Thankfully, he was wrong (at least, he thought).

It had been a subtle change, like a few campers that had usually given him the side eye or the once-over had stopped, the stares were more curious rather than glares now, and a few people even came up to him and apologized.

By a couple he meant one, but still. His name was Johnathan—Johnathan Craylar, Poseidon believed (he had remembered it as crayon with a lar). He was a son of Apollo and apparently new to camp despite being almost 18, which Poseidon thought was weird but didn’t mention. He had also apparently shown skills in the medical field already, as well as the musical one. At least, that’s what Will said. Poseidon hadn’t really noticed the guy let alone noticed that he’d been mean to him, but he appreciated his apology anyway. He was the spitting image of his father, and was also even taller than Hades, a feat of which Poseidon thought was impossible.

Overall, Camp was a better experience now, and in only three days. He missed Percy being around a) because Percy was his son and he missed him, and b) campers (for the most part) respected Percy enough to not pick a fight with him or his friends. Unfortunately, Poseidon lost that privilege when Percy left. Stupid school.

“Hey? You there?”

Hades knocked Poseidon out of his thoughts. Poseidon blinked, shaking his head, and glanced up at him. “What?” He felt a little disoriented—how long had he just been mindlessly staring at his cabin wall?
Hades smiled at him, amusement sparkling in his eyes. “Were you listening?”

“No,” Poseidon answered sheepishly. He gave a toothy smile when Hades rolled his eyes. “What were you talking about?”

“We wanted to watch a movie,” Zeus piped up from the other bed in the room. The three of them were in Poseidon’s cabin for the night, and were deciding what to do before Poseidon zoned out. “And we were wondering what one you’d like to watch.”

“Where are we gonna watch it?” Poseidon asked, furrowing his brow. Did they have a projector or something?


Oh.

There was a T.V.

“Nevermind,” Poseidon said, rubbing the back of his neck. He wasn’t quite sure how he’d stayed in this cabin for almost a week and a half and still managed to not notice a T.V in the corner, but he’d started to not question his brain. In all fairness, it was pretty small, small enough where Poseidon might have to squint to see what was playing, but it was chunky and a sharp contrast to the light grey stone behind it. Poseidon couldn’t quite put a finger on why he thought it was so strange that his cabin had a T.V, until... “Wait, back up.”

“I can’t,” Hades said, gesturing to his back against the wall.

Poseidon ignored him. “Aren’t demigods not allowed technology? Like, doesn’t it attract monsters for them?”

“Yeah, but apparently the Hephaestus kids figured something out,” Zeus answered, looking a little impatient.

“How?”

“I’m not a Hephaestus kid, Poseidon.”

“Right.”

“Now, what movie do you want to watch?”

“Hm.” Poseidon got a pillow and shoved it behind his back before leaning against the wall. “Aquaman.”

“Don’t have that,” Zeus replied. “Sorry. Here, I’ll read them out.” He pulled a stack of about 8 CD cases towards him and started shuffling through them. “We have...Aladdin—”

“Nope,” Poseidon said, snuggling further into the pillow behind his back. Zeus looked up, a little annoyed at being interrupted. “Are we going to do it that way? Where I call a movie title and you say yes or no?”

“Well...yeah,” Poseidon said. “I wouldn’t be able to remember them all if you called them out really fast.”

“Okay, whatever.” He put Aladin aside and called out the next one. “Avatar.”
“I like that one,” Hades commented.

Poseidon was just about to say he didn’t want that one, but closed his mouth. “Yeah.”

“Okay—” Zeus put the case next to the Aladdin, “—that’ll be the ‘maybe’ pile.” He reached for the next one. “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone.”

“Sure,” Poseidon said.

“Meh.”

Poseidon looked at Hades, and then looked back at Zeus. Well then. He guessed he’ll just say what he wanted now.

Zeus put that one in the ‘no’ pile, and then reached for the next one. “The Little Mermaid.”

“YES!”

“...”

“...”

“I mean...no.”

Hades raised an eyebrow. “You want to watch The Little Mermaid?”

“No,” Poseidon said, trying to look at Hades like he was crazy. “I just said I didn’t want to.”

“Yes, but only after you said yes and then we looked at you strangely.”

Poseidon shrunk back into his pillows and covered his burning face. “It was a joke. Just apparently not a funny one.” He felt like you’d say that after a joke nobody laughed at.

“No it wasn’t,” Zeus said, smile in his voice. “You want to watch The Little Mermaid.”

Poseidon shook his head, which was still covered by his hands. “No. It was a joke.”

“Then why are you so embarrassed?” Hades asked teasingly, lightly nudging his shoulder.

“Does little Poseidonkins want to watch The Little Mermaid?” Zeus asked, clearly trying not to laugh.

Poseidon wanted to go over to him and punch him, but he was too embarrassed to move so he blindly chucked a pillow at his head. Apparently he missed, because Zeus started laughing and then threw it back at him. When it hit his hands, he finally removed them from his face and glared at his brother, hair falling into his eyes. Zeus let out another short laugh, and Hades chuckled from beside him. “You look like a tomato,” Hades commented, shoulder bumping him again.

“Next movie, please,” Poseidon said, still glaring.

Zeus grinned at him. “But I thought you wanted The Little Mermaid?”

“Shut. Up.”

“Okay, okay,” Zeus laughed. He picked up the next CD case, and Poseidon grumbled as he leant back into his pillows. “Grease.”
“No thanks,” Hades said. “Not a fan of musicals.”

“Don’t let Apollo or Dionysus hear you say that,” Poseidon mumbled.

“And don’t let anyone hear that you like The Little Mermaid,” Hades shot back, smirking softly.

“I DON’T LIKE THE LITTLE MERMAID!” Poseidon screeched.

“JESUS CHRIST!” Zeus jumped, nearly falling over on the bed. “Calm down!”

Hades placed a hand over his chest. “Jesus, Poseidon! You almost gave me a heart attack!”

“Well, sorry,” he huffed, rolling his eyes.


“Sure,” Hades said.

“Nah, too boring.” Poseidon actually liked that movie, he just wanted to get Hades back. Hades shrugged.

Zeus put that in the ‘no’ pile and picked up the next one. “Um...The Bee Movie?”

“The what movie?”

“Percy’s mentioned it a few times,” Poseidon said thoughtfully. “Apparently it’s about some woman falling in love with a bee.”

“I see.”

“Mhm.”

“So, no,” Zeus said, placing it in the steadily growing ‘no’ pile. “What about—” he picked the last lone case, “—The Lion King.”

Finally, one he felt like watching. Something mindless and fun. “I actually have never seen that,” Poseidon said. “Can we watch that one?”

“You’ve never seen The Lion King?” Hades asked, looking at him weirdly. “Everyone’s seen The Lion King.”

Poseidon shrugged. “I guess I’m nobody.”

“Well, we’ll just have to fix that,” Zeus said, popping the CD out of its case.

Poseidon smiled as a little excitement welled up in his chest. He’d always loved movies. He snuggled back into his pillows and brought the blanket up over his lap.

“Hey,” Hades said, grabbing and edge and pulling some over himself too. “No stealing of blankets will occur tonight.”

Poseidon shrugged. “Okay.” He scooted closer to Hades so he’d still have more blanket. He felt Hades’s smile as he looked down at him. He looked up and smiled back, but quickly turned back to Zeus when he realized their faces were a little too close. He sensed Hades look away too, but not
Zeus finally figured out the CD thing and the movie started to play. Poseidon smiled, bringing the blanket even closer to him.

“Mind if I join you two?” Zeus asked, already moving towards them despite them not responding.

“Nope,” Poseidon said. He schooched even closer to Hades so their hips, shoulders, and arms were plastered together. Zeus crawled in beside Poseidon and swung the blanket across his own lap, just barely having enough room. The opening scenes started to roll, and Poseidon sighed contently.

He ended up crying over Mufasa’s death, snuggling into Hades’s shoulders and linking elbows with Zeus, then switching because he felt bad, and then switching again, and then falling asleep on Hades’s shoulder before the movie even ended.

Poseidon still wasn’t sure if it was the news that Zeus had yet another affair with a mortal, or if it was just millenia of pent-up frustration towards her husband that finally got Hera to snap. But he was so glad that that day was apparently the final day that she put up with his bullshit, because here Poseidon was, in his cabin at camp, finally happy, Hades and Zeus at his side.

The End.

Chapter End Notes

my smol son and not so smol other sons ily
I also love y'all
thank u again xxx
im about to have a burrito bowl
I just thought id let u know idk
anyway so I need to be kinda serious now
so
I don't care if you don't read the extra scenes chapter, but please, please, please read the explanation chapter
I'm putting something in there that means so much to me
im not sure how many people are still reading this, but I really need everyone that is to
read it
not just because I'm explaining anything that people might be confused about, but also
there's something that I've wanted to do for a little while now and yeah
so please come back to me and don't abandon this yet lol
anyway, I love y'all 3000 and I hope u enjoyed not only this chapter, but this whole
thing
-lolo
explanations!!!! (finally pff)

Chapter Summary

ITS BEEN SO LONG IM SO SORRY
I DIDNT REALIZE ITS BEEN SO LONG HOLY SHIT
WHAT THE FUCK
IM SO SORRY
Im glad this didn't happen when the actual story was happening??????? holy shit its been like?? two and a half months?????? what the fuck??? It felt like I posted the last chapter a week ago?? am I losing my mind???
okay so heres the summary, sorry again:
so like basically stuff that I thought maybe needed a little clearing up!!!
no ones gonna read this bc you've all moved on to other fanfics but I'm posting this anyway!!!
please read everything even if it seems boring!!! its not!! (hopefully)

Chapter Notes

I be like: *dumb bitch noises*
I've written this three times and then when I logged back into this it disappeared
I'm never writing any more chapters in the 'new chapter' option ever again only google docs only google docs
in other news I've started grade eight
it fuckin sucks as I presumed
I've already cried over schoolwork and its only one month in
I get?? more homework?? than my brother?? who's in grade 11??
im suing
it didn't seem so bad at first and then everyone started to show their true colours
my French teacher's dating a girl and everyone makes fun of her I'm literally bouta go ham
and my friend has mild autism and people mock her all the time I'm literally gonna fuckin ugh
and like?? no one ever bothers me?? for some reason?? like idk if I just give off bitch energy because I have a very severe case of resting bitch face or like like even the meanest kid in my class is nice to me?? and it makes me feel worse bc everyone else is treated like shit and I'm not idk idk idk
the only thing good that has come out of grade eight is that I am no longer a 'freshmen'
and the new kids are scared of me haha fuckers
is anyone else here in grade eight and if so can we drop out together
grade seven and nines are welcome too
even grade tens man I have grade ten friends they're awesome
one asked me out tho that was kinda weird
we're cool now tho
also my school starts at fuckin 8:10 headass
and we get out at 1:55 what am I supposed to do with my afternoon?? oh right homework
ughhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

can like,,,,,,,,,hades just like swoop me up and give me a job in the underworld like plz
i'll do anything I'll fold ur fuckin laundry plz just get me out of here
and Poseidon like,,,,,,,,,i’ll braid ur hair??????? idk if u want that but if its a job i'll do it
plz kidnap me I won't mind
and zeus I can always help Hermes out y'know u give him enough jobs I'll help
just don't turn me into a tree u can do anything else just not that
Apollo could also take me up in his chariot and then yeet me out the window 19 000
feet up in the air!!!!!!!!
anyway
love y'all have a nice day and enjoy this mess!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

CHARACTERS (MOSTLY BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO DO THE PROPHECY YET
BECAUSE THAT MEANS I HAVE TO FIND IT AND COPY AND PASTE AND IM A LAZY
ASS HOE)

ALSO SORRY IF U DON'T UNDERSTAND SOME SLANG HERE, I SPEAK HOMOSEXUAL
MIDDLE SCHOOLER. YOU'LL PROLLY UNDERSTAND MOST OF IT BECAUSE I TRIED
TO LIMIT THE REALLY WEIRD STUFF BUT YEAH. I DID NOT BOTHER WITH PROPER
PUNCTUATION OR CAPITALS EITHER BECAUSE IM A DUMB DUMB HEAD

okay so basically imma just explain like, the way I characterized them and why, plus extra things I
guess?? idk I'm tired bc I already typed this and it's prollly not gonna be as funny or witty as my
first one and ugh whatever

FISHY BOI (poseidon): okay so um. he is a boi. he is a bean.

moving on to zeus

no just kidding okay. so basically I was all like "mhm" and my brain was like "yep" and like my
pet cow was all like "u go boy" and I was like "I'm a girl" and he goes "you should characterize
Poseidon however the fuck you want" and I was like "good idea" and then we ate some
mayonnaise

okay okay I'm sorry i'll be serious now. kinda

odysseus:

goddammit

poseidon: okay so essentially, in case you didn't notice, I didn't really base his personality off of
the pjo series interpretation of him, nor how he actually acted in the myths. Of course, he has some
traits of the pjo series, but I still twisted him into a new character. Before we get into how I
developed a new personality for him, i'll get into why I did. So basically, my boy was only in the
series for a few scenes, and as I read those specific scenes, I kind of noticed that he acted almost
completely different in every one. In the first book, he's kind of like the dad that tried to get his
kids to like him, and then when he next shows up he's like the happy go lucky fisherman, and then the next time he shows up he's full on dad mode (stern but caring) and then in the last book not only is he an old ass man he's now a depressed old ass man who's dead serious and seems like if someone asked him to fish he'd be like "I have more important things to do". So while it made sense in the context of the book, I was like "what the fuck you bitchass can u make up your mind" bc Im supposed to make him close to canon. So I decided "fuck that" and basically I chose the personality that I had developed for my own original book.

So here's the how (its not long don't worry lol): basically, I took his personality from the myths and tried to go through a timeline of events throughout history that I thought would make an impact on him (mostly within the last three hundred years plus the very basics of like the rise and fall of the roman empire n shi tbc they don't even teach history in my grade, I get my history lessons from my dad and musicals alright) for example pollutions to the oceans, the first waves of feminism, etc and tried to get him to how he'd act in 2019, over 4000 years later. Be quite frankly I think keeping their personalities in the myths in modern settings is quite stupid lmao. I changed from a week ago, try 4000 years. obviously, I made him far more sensitive in this because this doesn't have to be professional, but other aspects of his personality (loyalty, kindness, pride-ish) all comes from my original work.

also I made him short because hE FUCKING IS FIGHT ME YOU NERD. ok ok so maybe he isn't THAT small but there are zero (0) statues of zeus and hades as anything less than a hunk and there are multiple statues of Poseidon where he is a twunk so fight me again bitch. u can catch these hands that r actually very weak, not to mention I dropped out of martial arts bc I didn't want to hit anyone when we sparred so don't actually fight me plz youll prolly win just agree thanks uwu

(btw do u know how fucking long it took me to figure out how to spell odysseus's name for that one joke I'm so done with everything why can't you have normal fucking names) (like I thought achilles was pronounced "ah-kills" for the longest fucking time, and then I thought it was "ah-chill-ees" plea-) (and don't even get me started on Perseus) (I tell my friends it's pronounced "per-see-us" and they still argue its "per-soos" headass) (even easy to spell names, like hades. I mention him on my private Instagram story a lot and my friend Eric thought it was pronounced "haids" and so he called him "hades aids" with that wrong pronunciation and I corrected him but instead of stopping he now calls him "aid-ees hades" Im so sorry this is just what middle school is like)

Aid-ees Hades: Ok so basically, I could establish a personality from the pjo books because he did act at least somewhat similar in every scene he was in but I decided FUCK that be my boi rick did him a little dirty in my opinion. Like,,no offence to my boy Poseidon but like hades was far more likeable in the myths than he was and like?? rick made Poseidon more likeable in the series than hades in my opinion?? idk bruh, I guess as I said they'd change over 4000 years but hades was one of the better gods idk. so aNYWAY. I basically took his personality from the series and made him a tad more dad-like and likeable. so yeah. yee. yeet, as the kids say. I'm also just realizing as I type this I basically made him my cousin but slightly more dad like. well y'all don't know my cousin so that doesnt make sense but a n y w a y , w h a t e v e r
Zeusie goosey (I just threw up in my mouth): ok so basically—angst is fun. and who is the most angsty of the big three? if u guessed hades ur wrong its Poseidon jk trolled u haha so funny epic gamer moment its zeus. ummm basically he's pretty close to his personality in the books just a lil bit softer and yeah!!!!!!!! he's a boi not a bean but he'll get there. still don't like the way he treated my boys Ares and Hepheastus but he treated Apollo good in the myths (most of the time) so I guess theres that. fuckin uhhhh,,,yeah!!!! my pet cow also told me to characterize him like this !!!!!!!! he thinks zeus needs to eat some mayonnaise with us next time and discuss some of his personal choices. will indeed be meeting up with zeus this Sunday, pretty excited. im gonna wear my flash t shirt bc it has a lightening bolt do u think he'll like it

Percy!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (I couldn't think of a nickname so he gets lots of exclamation marks plus he deserves lots of exclamation marks): my boi !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! i love Percy man he's like,,the best boi. okay anyway thats not the explanation so lets get into that my fellow - uh, idk what we have in common. Anyway!!!! so basically at the start of this fic (if you're reading this before I edited past chapters) you will know that at the start of this, my writing was....meh. like it wasn't bad, I'm not gonna dumb myself down, but it also wasn't g r e a t to say the least. good for my age I guess, but like, thats not saying much (no offence to my other preteens out there I love y'all lets be friends plz I don't have any and I'm sure yall are great writers). obviously my writing can still improve, but I do think that since this is one of the few things I actually enjoy, I'm fairly good at it. BUT!! that happened over 100 000 words lol. SO! where I'm getting at is that at the start of this I...like?? didn't r e a l l y care?? about accuracy???? like I somewhat worked on Zeus, Poseidon, and hades, but even though I knew Percy and Nico would be almost-main characters I didn't really develop them??? like this whole thing was really just for fun, and about half way through once I started to get better at writing and gain an audience, I started to take it more seriously (though some parts were still just for for my enjoyment, i.e. the repetitive angst. y'all can fight me but u enjoyed it too). And obviously I didn't take it really seriously, as in I didn't worry about 'is this good enough to be published' like I constantly stress about with my other books. ANYWAY I KEEP GETTING SIDETRACKED. so at the start of this I was kinda a dumb dumb head as we established (I was barely 12 ok give me a break) (look at me acting like that was so long ago lmaooo) so I just kind of characterized Percy as most of the fandom seems to have because I couldn't formulate my own opinions apparently, and that was the 'dumb, bubbly, funny, kinda useless pretty boy' guy. Which like,,he is not oop. Percy is v smart just not in the English and math feilds. like,,ya boi knows how to think on the spot my guy. anyway before I go into a rant its time to talk about my pet cow despite the joke getting old. So half way through my pet cow was all like "umm...gurl u know Percy aint how u characerized him rite" and I was like "are any of my characters" and he was like "truu" so we ate some more mayonnaise, and then when I went back into my bedroom in a small cabin on a mountain in Scotland I thought some more about what he'd said, and realized that maybe he was right. so that morning as I sit behind my laptop I start to write Percy closer to how he actually is in canon, and then I realize that he's basically switched personalities in a chapter. So, realizing that did not make sense as I pet my large, elaborately coloured bird, I delete that whole chapter and start again, but instead making Percy half my characterization of him, and half canon. so basically, very slowly I started to make the shift. and yeah. yee. so thats Percy I guess. he got a lot of attention damn

NICOOOOOOOOOOOOO (and vinz) (get it,,like,,like the singers,,ok) : aight so basically,,he's like???? the character that I think is closest to canon??? like there was only one
scene where he was really out of character, and that was when they were on that island thing after
the tidal wave. So like, basically he's just canon Nico but, as with every character,
softer???????????????? bruh idk what else to put and Percy got a whole ass essay I feel bad.
Um, my pet cow said gay rights so Solangelo was in there. Idk idk idk

MASON JAR JASON: my boy!!!!!! if one more person insults my boy imma go ham *insert
angry face emoji bc I'm on my laptop not on my phone*. Just because Jason got his time to shine
didn't mean that my other boy Percy's whole ass five books didn't exist so LET!!! MY!!! BOY!!!
BE!!!!!!!! y'all are making me sad :(( there are people saying they're glad Jason died!!!!!! bitch!!
I'm coming for the slaughter!!!! y'all better run!!!!!!!!!!!! (or walk fast I'm very slow). anyway
anyway anyway. So to be h o n e s t its kinda hard to write Jason?? like he has a consistent
personality but for some reason I found him the most difficult person to write???? idk. I tried to
make him close to canon (but surprise surprise: softer), but like?? idk if I did a good job?? tbh I
just kinda hoped for the best not gonna lie. um... again I really only focused on somewhat
developing the big three and everyone else was kinda just played by ear??? idk. just like Percy, I
tried to make every character closer to canon and put more development into them about five sixths
in but yeah. er... I'll explain there Jason/percy situation in the relationships part!!!

Hazel...bagel?? what rhymes with hazel??: my gal!!!!!!! she's such a bean. okay okay so
basically...it's hard to write eight to ten characters in one scene or even multiple scenes and have
them all feel like a developed character. So if u ever felt like Hazel wasn't getting enough attention
or wasn't developed enough, trust me, I know. I tried to work on her and get her more spotlight, but
I could just never find a place to that still flowed with the story. And I love Hazel so I feel bad :((. If she's my age and I feel like if she were real we could be besties but nooo I can't write, so yeah,
again, I tried to make her canal, and (with struggle) made her softer than she already was. Idk I still
feel bad about her Hazel deserves more

THALIA *insert humour pun bc one of the muses is named Thalia and she's the muse of
comedy ahhahahaha I'm so funny* um... er... well... uh... canon?? but not?? idk. I honestly think I
spent the least time developing Thalia bc...her personality...is like... so known... like, badass bitch y'know?? idk. I was talking to my pet cow and he was like "um don't u already know Thalia??
you've been gay for her for years" and I was like "yeh" so then I just started writing idk idk idk. As you can see basically none of this was planned. bitch when I wrote that first sentence I didn't even
know what the plot was. Bitch I didn't even know Hades was gonna be in this until my fingers
decided to write that word. So like... yeh. Sorry dkjskhgjksjdhg. Um... I characterized her as the
badass bitch that still feels like a human. And yeah. Fun times!!!!

ALSO!!!!! I didn't include my parents, Sally Jackson and Paul Blowfish, in this bc honestly there are
so many different opinions on Poseidon's and Sally's relationship and bitch I did not want to get dragged in.
Because on one hand there are the bitches that think Paul is Poseidon in disguise and bitch?? my boy wouldn't do that y'all are mean to my baby. Also like????????? wouldn't Sally
know?? bc Estelle would be like "splash splash bitch" idk idk idk. It gives me the creeps when people headcanon that. I understand shipping Poseidon and Sally but don't go that far plz. and
there's the people like me that think they're best bros, and then there are people that think they hate
each other, and then there are people that think they act like the other doesn't exist so like?????? I
am a smol child that can take crisisim but not death. Also like?? over this summer I realized how toxic this fandom is?? if u ship Nico with someone other than Will you'll literally be dragged thru the mud?? also like?? if u d a r e say you like
Poseidon or think he's a good parent out of the olympians you will get murdered trust me I know I'm actually dead right now my pet cow is typing this for me I got stabbed. BUT BY FAR THE MOST TOXIC IS THE PERCABETH FANDOM IM SORRY. like don't get me wrong I can fuck with Percy/Annabeth but like,,y'all need to chill. I saw someone politely point out a flaw in their relationship and there was fuckin like,,,70 replies all dragging her like calm down just because this is a series targeted at children doesn't mean you should act like one

RELATIONSHIPSSSSSS

aight i'll just start with the one y'all want:

**Jason Grace/Percy Jackson:**

fuck u

**Will Solace/Nico di Angelo:**

no jk jk

**Jason/Percy:** ok ok so. like. uh huh. so I already mentioned this to a person who very sweetly asked why Percy and annabeth weren't together and imma just copy and paste my reply because I'm a lazy ass bitch:

So I'd like to start off by saying that this is entirely my opinion, it isn't fact or canon by any means.
So the first reason I didn't ship percabeth was because their relationship up until the romance part was literally me and my brother's, which was a turn off for me personally. I'm glad other people didn't feel that way lmao it made me kind of uncomfortable as I realized that it was going to be a romance.

Number two was because (personal preference) I never really liked the 'really smart girl/dumb or oblivious boy' trope because people (mostly on tumblr) always tend to make head canons of the girl telling the boy off for everything and making him feel like shit, which is classified as emotional abuse and y'know that's not gucci. I notice that percabeth shippers are better at keeping this to a minimum than most other fandoms of relationships with this trope, but while reading the series I always had that kind of gut feeling that people would do that so I never got into it. I know a man who was in an abusive situation with his wife, so I tend to really shy away from any chance of that happening, it didn't turn out as bad as I thought, but the damage was already done. It really wasn't the ship itself, it was just my personal experiences.

Anyway that's not you're question so let's get into that lol. So I got the idea of them breaking up from another fic (which I forget the name of). Basically, it explained in a really well-thought out way the effects both Percy and Annabeth would have with PTSD. Usually with PTSD you can either heal each other, or drive each other insane. My step dad was a police officer in the homicide department and he got pretty severe PTSD from that (he's very open about it, I'm not spilling secrets or anything), so I kinda know first (er, second) hand what the effects of PTSD are, and I can see how two people with it would end up in a bad situation romantically. Of course, canonically, Percy and Annabeth heal together, but I still thought it was a good and plausible way for them to break up.

As for the Jason/Percy situation, tbh I really have no idea. I've always shipped it, so I just kinda made it my default. As for an explanation off the top of my head...a new person to find comfort in that has also had experience with people putting a shit ton of pressure on their shoulders? Idk bro, tbh I just looked at fan art of them and fell in love so y'know. I was working on a pretty long fic of how they got together a couple years ago but it was trash writing so ew. The plot kinda made sense but it was so poorly executed I don't like to talk about it. I still have it on my laptop, never posted it lmao.

so yeah!! hope that cleared some stuff up

Will Solace/Nico di Angelo: I mean,,,y'all already know what happened in canon so skjghsjghkf (I will also fight anyone that addresses Will as 'Nico's boyfriend' he is not just Nico's boyfriend he is his own character I am going to go ham)

Annabeth/?: heheheheheheheheheheheheheheheheheheeee

Poseidon and Hades and Zeus: aight so. are they gay? are they brothers? this is greek mythology so what is the difference?? no but this was just brotherly bonding bc uwuwwuwuwu fuck toxic masculinity. but will they stay just that forever???
**Hera/Zeus:** there was a reason it was left off that I'll explain later uwu

**Hades/Persephone:** uwuwuwuwu they're so cute but they're just not in this fic because at the start of this I didn't ship it like,, at all for some reason

**Poseidon/Amphiritite:** honestly at the start of this??? I like?? really hated these two together?? idk why?? I was an edgy 12 year old going through my emo phase alright. nah but after reading Percy Jackson's Greek Gods and seeing how much of a bean these two were I ship it (I like to ignore stuff that actually happened in greek mythology bc this is a pjo fic lol)

**Hazel/Frank:** awwwwwwww. But not gonna lie I can't bring myself to super, super, super ship it because hazel is 13 and frank's 16 and ehhh. still cute tho

aight!

**PROPHECY:**

ew I hate this part ksjhfdsjdhg

_The threat of a new age brings eight souls together,_

well,,,,,there were eight of them so Yee Yee as the kids say

_For a battle against nothing but dangerous weather._

im bad at poetry and the weather was pretty dangerous y'know

_While seven will face the risk of death,_

aight so I actually have to start explaining now kshgks. so like. basically. essentially. yea it makes more sense if I explain it in the next line so

_Only one shall exhale their final breath._

okay so basically. essentially. yea. my whole plan from the start was to make Thalia die, but I'm a little gay bitch and I couldn't do it. SO! we can just pretend Thalia died so I can still be a clever skinny legend alright. and the rest of it's pretty obvious, like seven of them knew there was a risk of them dying, but only one would die

_In a race against time, nature and mist,_

pretty self explanatory, they were on a rather strict time limit, and the nature and mist part was chaos.

_Seven hearts will be dearly missed._

my whole thing behind that was like. Thalia dying do the other people's hearts got fucking torn out and they all died. no no ok. like I thought I was really deep so like fuckin,,,,their hearts were broken or something?? bitch idk
And in the last moments of freedom and peace,

This one still makes sense!!! so like my idea was like,,the effects the battle would have on their minds n stuff, so like the world was still free and at peace (kinda lmao) but like,,t h e y aren't. y'know what it still kinda doesn't make sense please I was 12 dont kill me

One shall choose between the world and a niece.

chaos fuckin possessed Thalia right. and hades was like "sorry lil bro but like,,,,,the whole world is gon die" which honestly would've expanded his domain but in this fanfic we say fuck you to logic. n like he was all like "stab stab bitch" to poor Thalia. and then abrollo (I'm so sorry) was like "hahahahahahaha u thought" and saved her because I am gay for Thalia and straight for Apollo and I needed to include my dearest Apollo

So yeah!!! I'm sorry im an oversensitive bitch but yeah!!

now onto common questions u may have!

"DEAR AUTHOR: WHY IS YOUR WRITING SHIT IN SOME CHAPTERS AND MEDIUM IN OTHERS?"

aight y'all. listen.

honestly, if u didn't already pick up on this, this whole thing was one big ass vent. like. the reason why I updated really frequently during the middle of this fic was bc that was like,,,,,the worst part of my year and writing helped distract me n stuff.

On the days where there was really strong angst I was most likely rlly rlly sad or tired or frustrated or whatever negative emotion it was that day and I felt like I could relate to what I was writing. unfortunately I took it all out on my boy Poseidon oop. idk like,,for some reason writing angst makes me feel less angsty???? please why does my brain work this way sdkghslk. This was also something where I could just kind of do what I wanted, because I knew no one I knew personally was reading this and I wouldn't have to worry about if it was good enough to publish. obviously I still cared if it was a good chapter or not, but I didn't bother myself with the "is this too repetitive" or "is this person too out of character" because I saved that all for my original works and this one was just to let off steam I guess. it was also really good practice lmao. but as for why some chapters may of had not-up-to-par writing was probably because I was t o o tired or t o o sad or t o o stressed or anything like that.

on the days where it had better writing, I was probably in a good mood or had a random streak of inspiration at 3 am. my writing improved near the end as some of you might've noticed (hopefully lmao) so overall it got better but there were still days where I was stressed or in a fight with someone or whatever n yeah. so sorry lol. I know it was mostly minor difference but I think it was still noticeable. Also if I ever came out as aloof or weird or anything in the authors notes I promise I didn't mean to pff. I was just looking back through this fic the other day and some of the authors notes would've given me weird vibes if I didn't know the tone I was saying it in idk idk

so yeah!!!
"DO YOU ACTUALLY LIVE IN SCOTLAND AND OWN A PET COW?"
I know, its the question that's been on all of your minds.
yes. yes I do.

"ARE YOU CANADIAN/LIVE IN CANADA?"
also yes.

"ARE YOU ACTUALLY 13?"
unfortunately

"DOES ROAD WORK AHEAD?"
yeah I sure hope it does

"DO YOU HATE POSEIDON OR LIKE WHAT"
I dont hate my baby! I just like to hurt my baby
out of context that would be a very very strange thing to say sjhgsjgh

"DO YOU HATE ZEUS?"
no! so this one is actually prolly a question most of u have because I made him kinda unlikeable???
I didn't mean to it just kinda turned out that way djhd. like,,I don't l i k e Zeus bc I'm really into
classical greek mythology and some of the stuff he did was kinds suspect but if we're gonna use
that logic I also can't like Poseidon, Hades, Apollo, Hephaestus, Dionysus, Hera, Artemis, Athena,
etc so. so I don't hate him, but he's just not my favourite.

"WHY DID YOU WRITE HERMES AS YOUNG?"
so! this is minor detail but when Hermes gave Poseidon the prophecy I described him as young
looking, despite him in the books being described as having salt and pepper hair etc. but as I
mentioned before, I'm into classical mythology, and Hermes was always portrayed as young man,
almost never with a beard, and lean. so! thats how I've always pictured him n yeah. same thing
with Dionysus, he was literally like,,the Twink TM of the pantheon so I still to this day picture
him as that.

"WHY WAS ANNABETH NOT INCLUDED IN THIS STORY?"
1) do u know how fuckin hard it is to write more than four characters in a scene idk how to write
one character giving a moulage or just write in general tbh let alone have 50 000 characters

2) it didn't really line up?? like it would've if Percy and her were together but its Percy and Jason so
I don't see why she would've lived with Percy or anything. I love my girl tho. also funny story my
friend Chloe literally fits the description of annabeth in like?? every way???? like,,blond hair, grey
eyes, tanned skin, athletic build, v intimidating, and very smart. the only thing that's different is
she's kinda short, though she's growing now so like??? is she annabeht in disguise?? idk
"WILL THERE BE A SEQUEL?"

YES!

this is "later" btw. so as most of you know, I was very on the fence about if this was gonna be a romance or not. bc on one hand, gay, and on the other, bros. so it turned out that about 60 percent of u wanted brotherly bonding while the other 40 percent wanted romance. so, as this is a monarchy (is that the right word???), I was like "aight" and it was brotherly bonding

but! I don't want to disappoint the 40 percent so thats what the other fic is gonna be. NOW! I am still not sure if its going to be a zeus/poseidon/hades thing bc thats a l i t t l e bit of a stretch, so I'm thinking just hades/poseidon because a) it makes more sense, b) thats the most popular ship in the comments of this, and c) I ship it more than all three of them. now! that being said, its up to u guys and the flow of the story. like, if you guys want "the big threesome" (sjkghjshdg) I'll try to do that, but it also depends on how the flow of the sequel turns out. Like, if it feels like adding zeus in there would seem forced, then no, but if it seems fine, then yes. again, it depends on y'all. bc if most of u want all three, then i'll make more of an effort to make it flow nicely. if it turns out to be just hades/poseidon, i'll make a separate smaller fic for either all three or just Zeus/Poseidon if y'all want one.

"WHAT'S THE TIMELINE FOR THE SEQUEL?"

honestly, idk. right now, things are actually picking up with me getting a publisher and working on original stuff, so thats going to be my main focus. but, that being said, I still want to do this. id say maybe a few months after I post the extra scenes?? probably two or three? like nothing crazy, just a small break. its not going to be as long as this one, but I'm planning on it being slow burn so probably anywhere from 40k to 50k? maybe more maybe less, honestly I haven't even started really planning it yet, only have the basic idea

"WILL THERE BE ADULT STUFF IN IT"

yes, I refuse to say the s word. its gross shdfdk. I'm so immature I'm so sorry

honestly, probably pff. I started reading smut way too early and I'm used to it lmaoo. it won't be anything too graphic tho, bc u have my other fic for that that I already cringe on so. obviously it'll have swearing bc I have been swearing since I was eight (thanks mom). I am planning on having a,,,,non mythical person involved and there will prolly be some...ahem with her, him or them but I'm probably going to make her, him, or them almost 19 so its not t o o o creepy. like its still creepy but like,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,its not i l l e g a l. ew it makes me feel weird despite the context ew ew ew I might not even have it if it makes me too uncomfortable so idk. y'all don't even know what I'm talking about so this prolly doesn't make sense but whatever

"WHY DID YOU LEAVE STUFF UNANSWERED OR UNCOMPLETED?"

Because of the sequel!! most of this stuff will all be figured out in the sequel so yeah! That is if its not in the extra scenes chapter
so yeah!!! time for self promo again :))

I've already said this oops

Tumblr: loloisafangirl. i'd actually suggest following me on this bc I post about when the next update is or around the date it'll be up, plus post when it is up. I also post fire greek mythology memes ngl. also!!! you can join the poseidon is a bottom movement on there! we have 36 members so far (not all of my followers are members) and we'd like some more! I'm trying to build somewhat of an authors platform because I think it'll give me a better chance of getting published bc of marketing and shit and also I just really like greek mythology sjghkfj.

instagram: lauren_elizabeth_laing. my name is exposed gasp. honestly u don't really have to follow this one bc its mostly just an aesthetic acc but I'm just trying to gain an authors platform honestly. so yeah!

Now! just because I've given you an explanation doesn't mean you can't interpret this fic how u want to! maybe in your mind Poseidon's sensitive bc he's always second best! maybe hazel doesnt talk a lot bc she's insecure! maybe Jason and Percy are together bc they like to fly unicorns together! idk!

so yeah!!!! ( : )))}. Thank y'all for reading!

Chapter End Notes

I've said "so yeah" too many times but so yeah!
thanks y'all!
extra scenes are next and then the sequel so yee :)
extra scenes bitchhhhh

Chapter Summary

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

ALSO!! IM UPDATING THIS (THE FINAL CHAPTER) EXACTLY A YEAR AFTER I UPDATED THE FIRST ONE

THATS PRETTY COOL !!!

IT WASNT INTENDED BUT ITS COOL !!!

(also this is only a short term edit but I need to get ready for a concert so I couldn't fully edit the last two scenes so if u get there today then yee. they'll be edited better tmrw)

ALSO!!! this took a month and a bit again but its 30 thousand words so hopefully that makes up for it sdhgksl. srry y'all)

Chapter Notes

THE TIMELINE FOR THIS FIC IN MY HEAD IS F U C K E D
I WROTE 21 CHAPTERS IN TWO MONTHS
BITCH WHAT THE FLYING F U C K
I WRITE ONE CHAPTER IN TWO MONTHS NOW
WHAT THE HELL WAS I ON
ALSO I SPECIFICALLY REMEMBER??? WRITING THE CHRISTMAS CHAPTER'S AUTHORS NOTE?????????????? THAT WAS ALMOST A YEAR AGO??????? BITCH I REMEMBER THAT V I V I D L Y
ALSO???? IF I WROTE 21 CHAPTERS IN TWO MONTHS WHY DID IT TAKE NINE TO FINISH THIS???????????????? IT DIDN'T TAKE ME SIX MONTHS TO WRITE 11 CHAPTERS?????? WHAT
MAYBE I WAS LYING????? I MUSTVE BEEN CUZ THAT DONT MAKE SENSE BUT I REMEMBER WRITING THAT??? IN MY AUTHORS NOTES??? AND I DONT THINK I WAS?? WHAT

anyway now time for the pre-made A.N that I made during a wave of self hatred at two AM ur welcome (plz don't be concerned I'm seeing a therapist now so thats gucci. she's nice so yee)

Guys im so sorry ive actually just realized how much of a disappointment ive been jesus christ
I literally posted chapter 23 (the really angsty hades one) nine months ago. NINE months ago
What the fuck i dont want time to go by that fast i literally vividly remember writing that chapter
I remember writing every single chapter for fucks sake
Jesus
Im so sorry in the sequel i’ll do frequent updates again
I know it’s only been the final two chapters, explanations, and this that have been
updated a month or two apart but that elongated the amount of time it took me to write
this by five months. I literally couldve been done in august ive just been,,
I dont even fucking know what ive been
Great im crying now
Sorry guys
Now comes the self doubt of ever becoming an author which is a weekly experience
its pretty fun
Does it even pay?? Prolly not bc im shit lmao
Have y’all read my early chapters?? Damn
It took me a fucking year to complete this. I published this in november of 2018, now
its november of 2019
The scariest fucking part is i can remeber applying to get my ao3 acc just so i could
post this
I remember that i published the first two chapters the same day because i thought the
first chapter (that i had written previously to getting my account) was so shit that i had
to give people another example of my writing lmaoooo
anyway
I’m going to start writing again. I swear.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

***Not set in a specific chapter, just in the condo***

“To be fair, you were always kind of emo, Hades,” Poseidon said through a yawn, dragging his
pillow on the floor as he walked over to the couch. He blinked multiple times, attempting to rid of
his grogginess. He plopped down on the sofa beside Hades and put the pillow on the armrest,
rested his head, and threw his calves over Hades’ legs.

“How?” Hades asked, outraged. “I have black hair? Is that it?”

“We all have black hair, dimwit,” Zeus said, turning the TV on and flipping through the channels.
The screen cast his face in blue, turning his indigo eyes to perriwinkle as they blinked tiredly at the
screen. It was the only light in the room, other than the lights from other apartments that they
could see out of the glass patio door. “And no, it’s because you act all dark and brooding.”

“Well...Poseidon acts like a 30 year old virgin woman, does that make him a 30 year old virgin
woman?”

Poseidon kicked him in the shoulder tiredly, blinking blearily at the bright TV. “At least I only act
like one, unlike you.”

“I thought I was emo.”

“You’re both.”

“Oh Lord, give me the strength.”
Poseidon yawned. “We’re the ‘lords’, Hades.”

“I thought I was a 30 year old emo virgin woman.”

“Point taken.”

Poseidon snuggled further into his pillow, blinking at the screen again. Zeus flipped through the channels until they found *The Hobbit*. He hummed. “I haven’t watched that one in a while.”

“I’ve never watched it,” Hades informed them offhandedly, resting his palms on Poseidon’s ankles. It felt kind of weird, he wasn’t used to his ankles being so thin. Or his legs in general, really. He wondered if Zeus and Hades felt the same way.

“Really?” Zeus asked, while Poseidon said: “You uncultured bitch.”

Being fair, Poseidon himself wasn’t overly cultured, but at least he’d watched the Hobbit.

Hades did the equivalent of rolling his eyes without moving them, somehow. “Never had the time.”

“We’re immortal,” Poseidon argued, though with no heat. He didn’t have enough energy to move his head and actually look at him, so he just let him know he was talking to him with the slightest movements of his ankle. “What do you do with your time? We have an awful lot of it.”

“I actually do my work, Poseidon.”

Oh. “Loser.”

He’d been picking up a lot of Percy’s sayings, and he was soon worried no one was going to be able to tell the difference between them. Maybe his family, but that’s because they’ve known him for four millenia.

God, had it really been four millenia? Almost five, he thought.

It felt like seventeen thousand.

Hades snorted a little as Zeus finally got the movie playing, but then paused it. “Do you guys want popcorn?”

“Yeah, but I’ll make it,” Poseidon yawned, sitting up and swinging his legs off the couch. He had previous experiences with Zeus’s popcorn, and they weren’t good ones.

Zeus looked like he wanted to stick out his tongue before remembering that he didn’t do that, and compromised by just giving him a weird look. Poseidon just gave him a lazy grin and made his way to the kitchen, the floor cool under the pads of his feet.

***

*The tent with Nico, Thalia, and Hazel* (also quick A.N it mentions in here that Will lives in an
apartment in New York, but I honestly have no idea if that’s right so don’t attack me plz i still eat free on Tuesdays at Pizza Hut) (I also mention Nico is 14?????????? Part of this is set a few months after the giant war so idk?? Sorry lmao)

“Nico, can I ask you something?” Thalia asked softly.

Nico blinked his eyes open in surprise, turning his head and squinting at her. He had thought that they were all trying to get to sleep, but there was obviously something plaguing Thalia’s mind, at least from what he could tell with her furrowed brow and light frown. He could feel one of his eyebrows raise a little higher than the other, but did not voice his confused thoughts. “Shoot,” he said instead. He forgot to clear his throat and it came out as a raspy whisper.

He wondered what she wanted. It was getting late, though he could still hear some of the boys in the other tent whispering. The moon that shone through the roof of the tent highlighted her face, but also cast dark shadows under her cheekbones and eyes, making her look older than she was. Hazel turned over to look at them from the other side of Thalia, golden eyes wide.

She swallowed. “This is going to sound kind of weird, and I don’t mean this in an offensive way…”

Nico’s stomach dropped, though he didn’t let it show on his face. If she meant what he thought she meant… “Alright…”

Thalia swallowed again and her tongue jutted out to lick her dry lips. Her mouth was half open like she was going to say something, but it took her a moment before she actually did. “What’s it like? Being…?” she faltered, “—a…son of Hades.”

There was something in the way that it didn’t flow, the way her words were kind of rushed and her breath was hitched that made it obvious that that wasn’t what she was going to say. He raised his other eyebrow. “That wasn’t what you were going to say.” It wasn’t a question; he knew.

She shook her head honestly, a little bit of her bangs falling into her eyes. “No.”

“So then what was it?” He was curious now, leaning forward a little and furrowing his brow in anticipation. It was usually the strangest questions, the ones that came at night. Either the strangest or the saddest.

She closed her eyes and swallowed again. “What is it like being…” she stopped and opened her eyes again, staring determindely but softly at the ceiling as she had the whole conversation. Nico leaned his head to the side, silently urging her to go on, “—gay?” She whispered it, as if it were a swear word.

Nico jerked his chin back. That hadn’t been what he was expecting. After the initial shock, he gaped a little, not knowing what to say. He felt his skin start to crawl. Not out of anger, but out of discomfort. What did she mean by that? Did she think gay people weren’t like humans or something? Well—he wasn’t technically human, but you get the idea. He suddenly felt uncomfortable in the tent; it was too small, too confined, too close. He shifted away from her slightly, swallowing. Was he making her uncomfortable?

“Like…” she continued, not seeming to notice his discomfort. “Do you…feel different?”

Nico paused, then studied her. She was staring up at the roof of the tent just as always, not a trace of maliciousness in her features. She looked somewhat awkward, like she half regretted asking him and half wished he’d just respond. This was entirely odd: Thalia hated him half the time, why was
she asking him such a personal question? He turned onto his back and stared at the ceiling, too, trying to think of an answer. “Well…” his throat got dry and he gaped for a moment before continuing, “I don’t feel different, I guess, ‘cause I don’t really know how being straight feels like.” He paused again, thinking over his words. “I can’t really tell you if it feels different, ‘cause I don’t know. But I think it would feel the same. Like, when you were attracted to boys, it must’ve felt the same way as when I am, right?”

Thalia nodded, but didn’t respond for a while. They both stared up at the ceiling, silent. Nico couldn’t see her, but he was pretty sure Hazel was, too. They were in nothing but sleeping bags, and a particularly hard root was digging into the small of his back, making him shift every so often.

“Do other kids make fun of you for it?” Thalia asked, breaking the silence softly. Her voice was raspy when she whispered, though Nico couldn’t tell if that was just her whisper-voice or caused from lack of use.

Nico continued to stare at the canopy, thinking over his words. He didn’t really know: it really depended on the person, the situation, the day. It wasn’t like he was constantly bullied, harassed and degraded, but it also wasn’t a rare occasion when he was. “It depends on your definition of ‘make fun’ I guess,” he said finally.

Thalia turned to look at him, but he didn’t return the favour. “What do you mean?”

“Well—” he rested his head on his palm, sticking his elbow out, “—most of the time we just get glances, y’know?” He swallowed a little harshly. “Like most people don’t say anything, but they give us this…look, I guess, like we shouldn’t be…I don’t know.” He felt his cheeks heat up a bit from his fumbling, but hoped it didn’t show. “Like, if there’s a bunch of people holding hands, no one cares right? But as soon as we do we get looks as if we’re looking for attention, or “showing off” or something. I don’t know.” He could still feel her gaze on him. “And then there’s Percy, who teases us and stuff, but that’s all fun and games, obviously.” He paused again for a little longer this time before speaking. “At first, there were some...bad people.”

“How so?”

Nico rubbed a spot on wrist gently, swallowing. He flashed back to that night, all those months ago, when the men surrounded him in that alley. He didn’t really think much of it when they first did, figuring they were drunk and didn’t know shit about fighting, that as soon as he pulled a skeleton on them they’d be shitting their pants.

He was wrong.

“Are you sure, Nico?” Will asked, glancing down the street, lips pulled into a worrisome frown.

“Please, Will,” Nico smiled, “I’m not a child, I can walk home. And if I get scared, I promise you I’ll shadow travel, alright?”

Will frowned deeper, glancing over his head again and down the dark street, but eventually looked down at him. “I don’t know why you can’t just do that anyway.”

Nico sighed. “We’ve been over this; I don’t like shadow-travelling too far. It makes me all tired and boneless.”
“You have the infirmary,” Will argued, basically pouting.

Nico smiled, though a little frustrated. “You know I don’t like it there without you, babe,” Nico argued back, punching his shoulder lightly. “I’ll be okay, alright?”

Will worried his bottom lip. “Alright, but be careful, okay? IM me when you get to Camp, and make sure you get a cab as soon as you’re downtown.”

Nico refrained from rolling his eyes and nodded. “I know, alright?”

Will smiled down at him and kissed him. “Alright, just worried” he mumbled against his lips.

Nico couldn’t stop the genuine smile forming on his face as Will pulled away, warmth spreading through his body despite the chilly night. “I know.” It was a whisper.

Will gave him one last kiss to the forehead before Nico pulled back and gave him a smile, spinning on his heel and making his way down the sidewalk. He could feel Will’s worried gaze on him, felt it burn into the back of his head all the way down the street until he knew he was no longer visible.

Downtown was only a 10 or 15 minute walk away, and he was sure there would be taxis available even before then.

It was damp outside, the kind where it’s not raining but just rained. He liked this kind of weather: it made him feel at peace. He especially loved it a few years ago, when the dampness reminded him of his certain special someone back then. Even now that he was over Percy Jackson, he still enjoyed the cool air. At least the air was his type.

He chuckled to himself. God, that had come out so wrong. How could Percy not be his type if he had a crush on him for four years straight?

He had meant to say that Percy wasn’t the type of person he could love anymore. When he liked Percy he was young, he wanted the knight in shining armour, the gold plated hero, the man that would swoop down and save him. Save him from what? He didn’t know, even back then. Maybe it was from himself.

He quickly realized that that was simply not how the world worked.

He grew up, in short.

Percy already had his eyes set on his damsel. Nico wasn’t even the dragon. He wasn’t even another knight. He was some peasant in Percy’s great kingdom. Maybe he wasn’t even in it.

But, he found another knight. A knight that never went after the damsel, but aided the two as they came home from their long journey. A knight that bought the two of them drinks. A knight that cared and loved and smiled and helped the bakers and cooks. A night that went out and checked on the dragon, made sure it was alright. A night that was kind and caring and compassionate. His knight.

There are more players than just the quarter-back, he guessed. More voices that aren’t sopranos.

Lost in his thoughts, he hadn’t even realized he’d far surpassed his turn. He stopped in his tracks, quickly taking in his surroundings. He wouldn’t be surprised if he had missed a taxi or two already. He wasn’t far, if he remembered correctly. All he had to do was cut through some allies and he’d be where he needed to be, probably even faster than the other way. Nodding to himself, he entered one of the allies with no dead end, and started the maze towards the street he needed to be on. All he needed to do was go straight…
He came in contact with a brick wall. Dammit…

On his left there was an opening, a wide expanse that lead for as long as Nico could see. He turned down that way, then immediately went straight again. This process happened repeatedly, and pretty soon he was lost.

Shit. Shit, shit, shit. That was the only thing on his mind as he walked, fingertips growing numb in the steadily decreasing temperature. It was dark out, but not pitch black. There was still a sliver of sun on the horizon, if he wasn’t mistaken. It was kind of blocked by the endless brick walls around him, but he was sure he still had some time. If it got bad/cold/late enough, sure, he’d shadow travel, but he was too far away as of right now. And besides, the only people around these parts were homeless crackheads…

“Hey, little boy.” The voice was deep and slurred, coloured unattractively with alcohol.

Nico froze, heart plummeting to his stomach. He swallowed as drunk laughter erupted from behind him. He whipped around, stomach doing little flips and spins, gut twisting in time with it. There were no streetlights here, only lights from the maze of buildings and small backstreets in the distance, resorting his threat to nothing but shadowy figures. But he could pick out six men, all of varying heights, but all taller than him. A few of them were stumbling around, little giggles and hiccups echoing throughout the otherwise empty alley.

He relaxed. They all seemed as drunk as Dionysus, he’d take them easily if they tried anything funny.

“Could you tell us how to get to Brooklyn?” one of the men asked.

Nico was about to answer, but shut his mouth when the rest of the guys burst into laughter.

Shaking his head, he started walking again. They were all just having a good time, who was he to start a fight? He was at a disadvantage anyway, being one man and all. He was half expecting it when he heard them follow after him.

“Hey!” another one slurred. “We didn’t mean to scare ya off! We’re just lookin’ for some fun.” He giggled deeply, which was one of the weirdest sounds Nico had ever heard. It was like he was half gurgling and have coughing or something.

Nico shoved his hands in his pockets. It was best to just ignore them: they were probably looking for a rise or another buddy to get drunk. He wasn’t going to give them either. He continued walking, conscious of the 10 inch blade tucked in his belt. He was praying he wouldn’t have to use it, however much he wanted to blow off some steam. The last thing he needed now was a murder case that he’d have to go to his father to fix. Last time that had happened, his father made him clean the entirety of the underworld, minus the Fields of Punishment and Tartarus of course. But he’d honestly of rather had that than the old ladies and mothers in Elysium cooing at him and patting his cheeks, calling him “adorable” and asking him about his life. It made him feel like a three year old. Well, that and it made him want his own mother back, however blurred his memory was of her. All the recollections he had were a flash of dark hair, a rosy smile, and a soft, melodic voice. She had a beautiful singing voice, he remembered. But he didn’t remember what she sang.

“What’s a kid like you doin’ walkin’ ‘bout these parts?” one of the men slurred. He hiccuped. “Yer too small teh be in one a dem gangs, aren’t chya?”

Nico pursed his lips, but didn’t respond.
“Aw, c’mon,” one of them piped up, the most slurred so far. “We ain’t gon’ hurt yeh or nothin’.”

“’oo said that?” the one that spoke first said. “I’m feelin’ a lil’ rowdy myself, ‘n’ he’s ignorin’ us ‘n’ all. E’s all thin, too. ‘Could prolly snap ‘im in half like a pretzel stick.”

“Aw, Greg,” one of them half-tutted. “E’s only a kid. Prolly 10? How old is yeh, boy?”

Nico grimaced and continued walking, picking up his pace.

“Kid?” the man asked again. “How old is yeh?”

Nico pressed his lips into a thin line, half running. They followed after him.

“Well now yer gettin’ on me nerves, lad,” the same man said. “Imma repeat myself: how old is yeh?”

Only a few more allies and he should be on the main road…

He felt a sudden, sharp pain on his back as one of the men pushed him into the wall of a building. He let out a quiet “oof” as the harsh brick scraped against his back, even through his jacket. He must’ve landed on a chipped part. The man was grinning, and Nico thought he must’ve been attempting to give him a friendly shove but ended up smacking him rather roughly into hard surface. He was close to Nico, face a foot away. The smell of alcohol and body odor reeked off of him, and Nico’s eyes burned a little. “Get away from me, bastard,” he finally spoke, voice quieter than intended but stronger than he thought it would be. He gave him a little shove and walked past him. His heart had started beating against his ribs. He really didn’t want to clean the Fields of Asphodel again…

“Oh, he’s a feisty little one!” one of the main nearly screeched, just as drunk as the rest. “I say we beat the livin’ daylights outa ‘im!”

A smack sounded throughout the cold, still air. “’E’s a kid, Bear. We don’ jump kids, ‘member?”

“I’m not a kid,” Nico corrected through gritted teeth, still facing away from them. “I’m 14.”

“Ohh!” one of the men laughed. “The mighty age of 14! We got an adult on our hands, better watch out boys!”

Laughter from the men. Nico’s fists curled. If they knew what he could do…

“Now, now, don’t get angry with us!” a new voice said. They all seemed to act the same when drunk. “We didn’t mean to hurt your lil’ feelin’!” More laughter.

A hand on his shoulder spun him around. The man was different than the first one, even taller and broader. He was at least 6’5, all fat, and even smellier than the last guy. He was a drunk if Nico ever saw one. Comparably, Nico was an ant. His shoulders ended at the guy’s belly button, and his stomach concealed Nico completely. Nico stared up at him unwaveringly, years of practice letting his face fall to an icy yet emotionless expression. “Do you need something?”

“Don’ yeh get al’ mouthy with me, boy,” the man slurred. Nico could barely hear him: his mouth was at least a foot and a half above his ears.

“I wasn’t getting…” Nico raised an eyebrow, “… mouthy with you, I was asking if you needed something,” before he could stop himself, “dumbass,” fell between his lips.
He was half expecting it as his cheek exploded with stinging pain, the sheer force of it making him stumble back a few steps. Fuck, that hurt. Fuck, fuck, fuck. He gingerly touched his cheeks, ears finally registering the laughter of the other men. He saw red for a second, and felt a tug in his pelvis...

“Charlie, my boy!” one of the men spoke up, amusement colouring his voice. He had spoken before, but Nico couldn’t remember what he said. “I told yeh we don’t hit kids!”

“He’s fourteen,” Charlie dismissed, drunkenly waving a hand. “The boy’s in highschool!”

“You’re 36,” the same man said, sounding like he was rolling his eyes, somehow. “That’s a little fucked up, if I do say so myself.”

“You’re right,” Charlie sighed, hiccuping. Nico was still tense, hand inches away from the blade, eyeing the man suspiciously. “I’m bein’ a little harsh. Jus’ a little boozed up, tha’’s all.” He chuckled a little at himself, giving Nico a pat on the head that made him want to throw up. They almost fell into silence, but someone spoke up before they could.

“What’s that on ‘is wrist?” the man said. This one hadn’t spoke before.

Nico froze up.

“Huh?”

“That band thing. On his wrist.”

Nico looked down at it just as everyone else did. It was a small rubber band, one that was usually concealed by his jacket, as he pushed it up nearly to his elbow. It must’ve slipped down. It was rainbow imprinted, something that stood out very much next to the rest of his clothes. He didn’t like it very much: not at all, in fact, but a new Apollo camper (no older than seven) had gotten a matching one for him and Will when some of camp had gone to pride, and Will threatened him until he promised to wear it.

“Why’s yeh wearin’ that?” one of the men spat. “Yeh don’ look the type teh wear rainbows.” They fell into drunken confusion, and Nico prayed to anyone that was listening they didn’t know what it meant.

Whichever god or goddess he had prayed to did not comply. “He must be a fairy, Bill,” one of them men said, stumbling as he did so. “One of those whacked queer folks.”

These words were familiar to Nico, but he never actually heard ‘fairy’ before. It was odd, considering the context, being called fairy. He was a son of the god of the Underworld, after all, raised skeletons and killed countless monsters and a few people. Denial was on his tongue, but he fought the urge to say it. He should be proud.

“Well, are yeh?” the one that grabbed him earlier asked. “Are yeh a fag?”

Nico swallowed. What should he say? Yes? Why does it matter? Fuck off? None of them seemed like the right thing to say, so he remained silent.

“He is,” one of them laughed. “Oh my god boys, we came across a queer! In person!”

Nico grimaced. He made it sound like he was a wild animal or something. Somewhere in the back of his mind, he was telling himself to run and get out of there, but the other part, the stubborn part, kept his feet firmly where they were.
The man took another step forward, and Nico took an instinctive step back, something he knew he’d come to regret as he felt wet brick against his back. “C’mon guys,” Nico tried to reason with them. His voice only shook slightly, but it did nonetheless. “Don’t be like this.” Seriously, what was this? Were they seriously going to jump him over…?

“Well then don’t be a queer.” A solid punch to the stomach. It winded him, and he gasped in an attempt to regain the air he’d lost. Shit. He’d waited too long to defend himself. There was laughter coming from the other men, and that did nothing but spark his anger.

Oh, you’re in for it now…

The ground rumbled slightly, but not enough for anyone but him to notice. He almost felt a smile creep onto his face as he felt it pick up it’s pace, and —

Fuck.

Another punch to his stomach. This one hurt more than the last time, and it also invoked louder laughter than the last time. He glared up at the man, defying his instincts to kick the man where it hurt and instead focused on the ground below him. He needed all the energy he could muster, and he couldn’t waste it on petty kicks he knew would get him nowhere. God, Will was going to kill him…

“Why ain’t he fightin’ back?” one of the men asked. Nico couldn’t see who said it, but he thought he recognized the voice as Haven spoke priorly.

Oh, believe me I am…

“Prolly can’t, you thickhead.” Nico had never heard of that insult before. “Look at him, ee’s a toothpick!” Laughter.

The ground finally started to shake noticeably, and Nico smiled up at the man, who only had a mild look of confusion, which, much to Nico’s dismay, turned to anger. “What are you smilin’ at, boy?” The next thing Nico knew, he was hovering a few inches above the cement, clawing at the hand around his throat. Shit. Shit. Shit… He squeezed his eyes shut, focusing on the ground. But the man did not relent his squeezing, and Nico’s eyes began to water and his lungs started to burn. Oh, c’mon, Nico, you aren’t going to die like this… He reached for the blade, but he forgot what side it was on, world around him starting to float away, and he was becoming light headed. Soon, he couldn’t even keep the rumbling up to a noticeable level. He clawed viciously at the hand around his neck, and distantly registered the sound of laughter. He gave up on the blade and tried in vain to pry the meaty fingers away from his neck.

By some godforsaken miracle, the hand around his throat released him and he fell back to the pavement, sucking in deep heaves of the damp air. He looked up at the man for a moment, who had his head thrown back and was booming out the most obnoxious laugh Nico had ever heard. Or, maybe Nico just didn’t like him therefore he didn’t like his laugh. Regardless.

Not being able to resist his fight or flight instinct any longer, he attempted to bolt. All he needed to do now was find a half decent shadow…They were everywhere, of course, but he needed a good one, a dark one. Especially travelling halfway across a state… Not spending too much time on it, however, he bolted out of the small space the man had shielded him into, sprinting down the dark alleyway. Part of him wanted to scream for help just for good measure, but for some reason his throat wouldn’t make a sound.

He didn’t get very far before the side of his head exploded with pain once more and his body...
He didn’t remember much after that. All he could remember was the pain of three cracked ribs, a concussion, a split lip, and a mildly sprained ankle, along with the blurry recollection of him shadow travelling to the underworld (therefore increasing his damage by a tenfold) and practically falling into his father’s lap. They hadn’t done him too dirty, other than the ribs, but it still hurt like a bitch. Most of them didn’t even participate, only the drunker ones and one in particular who just really hated gay people. He did two of the three ribs and tore the bracelet off his wrist.

Coming back to reality, he continued to stare at the ceiling. Thalia’s question was still heavy in the air, but Nico was unsure of its answer. Did he tell her? He hadn’t told anyone other than his father, not even Jason, Hazel or Reyna. Will found out the basic idea of what happened, but still didn’t know the details. He swallowed. “It’s not important. Just—look, it’s not that bad. Now, at least. But there’s always going to be...people. I was just at the wrong place at the wrong time.” He kind of nodded to himself, deeming it a good answer.

Thalia looked like she wanted to ask further, but the silence in the tent remained consistent. Soon, Nico felt her relax beside him, shoulders untensing and head falling inelegantly onto her pillow. Soon, nothing but breaths filled the wintry air. They inevitably steadied in rhythm, in and out in sync with the rise and fall of the two girls’ chests. Nico was left staring at the ceiling of the tent yet again, contemplating the conversation he just had. Why did Thalia want to know such a thing? Was she curious herself? Or did she simply just want to know a little more about Nico? Nico was skeptical of the latter, but the former seemed no more likely.

He stayed up for hours that night, just as every other. Staring and staring, eyelids growing heavy only at the break of dawn. The melancholy feeling in his chest was not unknown, almost numb in its familiarity. He let himself fade, fade into nothing as he fell away from everything, thoughts turning to stone near the end of dark. Dimly, as he fell into Hypnos’ uneasy embrace, he wondered if he’d ever be able to fall asleep as soon his worn head hit the pillow, perhaps have his dreams be filled with good memories and golden sunlight.

*Maybe, he thought. Maybe, but not likely.*

For now, he closed his eyes hours after he lay, drifting into an uneasy, fitful sleep.

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The couch scene???. Like i forget which chapter but yall remember the one right. Like where they was all snuggled up in Stephen’s house. And then the other ppl came in later on. Yee, that one. SO WARNING!!!!!!! I WENT OFF A LITTLE AND I WAS REALLY FEELIN THE POSEIDON/HADES SO THIS IS ROMANCE!!!! IF U DONT LIKE IT JUST SKIP TO THE NEXT ONE!! Also i put the end of the chapter there just for a refresher so you know what’s going on, BUT! I edited it a bit so its more romance (and better writing lmao)***

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Do you want to cuddle or not?”

“Not really,” the synchronized answers were smooth and quick, without missing a beat.
Well then. He wasn’t expecting them to actually say it. He pouted. “You two are no fun.”

“How about you do it, then?” Zeus asked, rolling his eyes. His feet were firmly on the ground, arms crossed, making it final that he was not going to do as asked of him. “You’re probably used to sitting between his legs.”

Poseidon could feel his eyebrows shoot up to his hairline, felt it as his cheeks were set ablaze. Staring at Zeus, shock coursed through his body. **What did he mean by that? We never...**

Hades also had a faint tinge of pink to his cheeks and was gaping at him, looking almost offended. Poseidon couldn’t tell if it was from the crude implication or the assumption that he and Poseidon were...a thing. Somewhere deep down, he wished it was the first one.

There were a few beats of silence before Zeus realized his mistake. It was almost comical, the sudden realization, then the horror, and then the embarrassment. He was bright red by the end of the whole ordeal. “Oh my gods, I meant that you two hug and stuff holy shit wait no—”

Poseidon forced himself to roll his eyes, face almost painful with heat. “We know what you meant, just reword it next time please.”

Zeus nodded with a sheepish smile.

Poseidon plopped down on the couch and moved Hades’s legs so he could sit between them, his back on Hades’s stomach, back of his head resting on Hades’s chest. It was quite comfortable, and Poseidon didn’t feel like moving, even when Hades cursed and threatened to throw him into Tartarus if he didn’t do so.

Poseidon sighed. “Stop trying to be a dark, moody badass,” he yawned. “We all know you like cuddles, Hades.” He blinked, eyelids heavy.

Hades made a sound of outrage and tried to push him off. Poseidon remained firmly where he was until Hades just gave up.

“Good,” Poseidon said, referring to the defeated slump of Hades’s shoulders. “Now Zeus, stop hovering around. Sit down there.” He pointed to the other end of the couch.

Zeus raised an eyebrow and did as he was told, sitting down cross legged.

Poseidon rolled his eyes. “Who sleeps like that? Lie down.”

“I can’t,” Zeus pointed out, gesturing to Poseidon and Hades’ extended legs.

“It’s called cuddling, dumbass. We’re supposed to touch each other.”

“...”

By now, Poseidon was in actual pain. He felt the urge to touch his cheeks to cool them down, but feared that would draw even more attention to the fact he was blushing so hard. “Oh Jesus, get your mind out of the gutter.”

Zeus snorted and extended his legs, though he was also not unaffected by the words, a faint dusting of pink crossing his cheekbones. He shifted for a moment before resting his head on the armrest and lying down completely.

“See?” Poseidon asked as he rested his legs on top of Zeus’s. “Cuddling. Hera would be so proud.”
“Hera literally wants to kill us.”

“Doesn’t everyone?”

“Touché.”

They fell silent for a while. The crickets outside were muffled by the window but not unable to be heard, and a light wind ruffled the few trees outside the window. Poseidon sighed quietly, burying his cheek into Hades’ chest. The tap dripped a little bit of water, making a light tap every so often. He was tired but did not fall asleep, simply listening to the varying sounds around them and watching the light rise and fall of Zeus’ chest, though he was obviously still conscious.

Hades broke the silence. “I hate cuddling.” It was a grumble, low and muttered.

“Whatever you want to tell yourself,” Poseidon responded, reaching up for the blanket laying on the back of the couch and throwing it over the three of them. He brought it up to his chin and smiled contently, snuggling into it. Silence consumed the room again like a heavy comforter on Poseidon’s ears. He could still faintly hear the crickets, but his main source of sound was Hades’s heartbeat.

Just before he felt sleep tug on his consciousness, he felt Hades hesitantly wrap his arms around him.

Poseidon smiled, eyelids like sand as he blinked them. “Told you you like cuddles.”

Hades grumbled a ‘shut up’ and relaxed even further on the couch. Poseidon laughed lightly, closing his eyes.

He had thought that he’d be asleep as soon as his head hit the pillow—well, Hades’ chest, but something kept him up. He ignored his initial surprise, shifting his head into a more comfortable position on Hades’s chest and trying again. He stayed there for a few minutes, listening to Zeus’s breaths even out further, but not enough to be fully asleep. Hades wasn’t asleep either, he could tell. But they were both well on their way. Poseidon couldn’t say the same about himself. He frowned, adjusting himself yet again, so his cheek was directly on Hades’s firm chest. A light swarm of butterflies inhabited his stomach, and his palms grew sweaty.

Gods.

He’d really fucked up this time.

He couldn’t pinpoint exactly when he’d started to like Hades, but it was somewhere along this highway to hell. And he’d fallen hard. And quick. Every word Hades said to him now, every casual hand on his shoulder made him so unbelievably happy, nearly giddy, as if he was a schoolgirl with her first crush. He was good at hiding it though, he thought. Ish. It had been so long since he had a “crush” that he’d become poor at concealing it. He hated that word, though: crush. It made it sound childish. But that was what it was, really. Before this, he had simply found someone attractive and then asked them out, then it just either ended up being a one night stand or actually leading to something like it did with Sally Jackson. He forgot what it was like to not have someone know you like them, or to like someone and not date them. It was almost foreign now.

He felt dirty, if he was going to be honest. Not because Hades was a boy, no. Part of it was that he was his technical brother, but with the Zeus and Hera being siblings along with the countless other examples of incest in his family tree, matched with that they weren’t technicially related due to lack of DNA, that wasn’t his main issue. It was that Hades thought of him as his brother. They referred
to each other as brothers. It wasn’t the technicalities, it was the mindset of his older brother. Brothers meant not even friends, closer than friends and in the opposite of the romantic way. He felt dirty for liking him, like he was manipulating him or something. Hades thought he was just being a brother by cuddling and shit, and he was, but the fact that he liked him made him feel as if he was trying to seduce him or something. It made him feel like a scumbag.

He frowned, suddenly regretting doing this. Obviously, it was too late to back out now, what with Zeus’ breathing finally evening out to unconsciousness. But he wasn’t sure if he’d ever do this again, at least not until this bullshit faded out. He sighed silently, adjusting his head yet again.

Hades grunted. “Stop moving. I was almost asleep.” His voice was gruff and low, raspy with lack of use and grogginess.

“Sorry,” Poseidon whispered, staring at but not really seeing the pots and pans hanging from the ceiling.

Hades hummed. “Is everything alright?”

“Yeah.”

“You sure?”

“Yeah.” Poseidon hesitated a moment too long for it to sound convincing, and he wanted to kick himself.

“Hey,” Hades said. “Look at me.” Poseidon swallowed, then twisted his neck at an almost painful angle to look at him. Hades smiled at him, face bathed in moonlight, eyes shining silver in the lighting. “What’s wrong?”

Poseidon’s face burned again and he cursed himself, looking away. “Nothing, Hades. I’m fine. Just having a little trouble sleeping, that’s all.” His brain decided it was the perfect moment to realize he was basically leaning his entire upper body against Hades’s pelvis, and his cheeks burned further. Why had he done this? He knew it wouldn’t end well...

“Why are you so flustered?” Hades pushed further, though his voice remained soft. “I thought you were the one that wanted to cuddle?”

“I’m not flustered,” Poseidon denied, words sounding unconvincing even to his own ears.

They both fell into silence again, nothing but breathing filling the still night air. Zeus was snoring quietly, blissfully oblivious to the conversation between his two older brothers. The rest of the houses was completely silent, peaceful and still. Actually, scratch that. Almost completely silent. Poseidon narrowed his eyes as he heard faint movement from Stephen’s bedroom, where Percy and Jason resided. They better not be doing anything funny. If he heard so much as a gasp that rubbed him the wrong way...

“Poseidon,” Hades broke the almost-silence. Poseidon looked up at him again, furrowing his brow slightly as if to say “yes?” . Hades’s jaw was hard set, but his eyes were soft and almost sympathetic. “I’ve been meaning to talk to you about something.”

Poseidon stiffened, blood running cold. Those words never ended well. Dread snaked into his gut, snapping its mighty jaws at his heart. He almost knew what was coming, though he didn’t know how. Perhaps it was Hades’ face that gave it away, or perhaps it was his difficulty with hiding his situation. He could only pray he was wrong. “Yes?” It came out as a whisper, fading out into the warm air between he and Hades’s faces. They were awfully close, but not close like lovers.
Poseidon thought, in dread, that that was the fate’s way of foreshadowing.

“I know that…” His words faltered, and Poseidon’s heart dropped into his stomach. “Look, really, it’s my fault.” He said, tearing his eyes away from Poseidon. Poseidon could feel the beginning of a little crack in his heart, and it opened a little more when Hades removed his hands from Poseidon’s waist and instead used them to rub his face tiredly. Poseidon watched him do it numbly. He removed his hands from his face but still did not look at him, rubbing his upper lip and staring at the back of the couch. It took a few moments before he spoke again. “I just…please, Poseidon. Don’t make me do this.” He looked at him, and Poseidon could see the pleading dreadfulness, the pity and the longing. He didn’t know how to decipher any of it.

“What is it, Hades?” Poseidon asked, voice too quiet to even be considered a whisper. He knew the answer, but for some reason he needed to hear it.

Hades squeezed his eyes shut, and it took him a moment before he opened them again. “I know you…like me, Poseidon. As more than a friend.”

Poseidon’s heart stopped.

He had expected it, he had known it was coming. But it was different to actually experience it. He could feel his world slowly start to fall apart, the love and trust he had built with Hades crumbling away at his fingertips. But Poseidon didn’t respond, merely stared at his brother while he could feel himself slowly falling away from the room, heart turning to nothing more than fragile glass he knew was going to be shattered but couldn’t protect.

He had been rejected before. But this was going to be different, and he knew it.

“...As more than a brother, too,” Hades continued after the silence. His voice was no more than a whisper, but it hit Poseidon like a pile of bricks.

But still, he did not respond. He didn’t know how. And even if he did, he wasn’t sure he could. His throat had tightened around the lump in it, but he did not feel as though he was going to cry. He didn’t feel anything but dread. This conversation wasn’t over, and he knew what came next.

“Please respond,” Hades pleaded, eyes looking helpless. “Please, Poseidon. Respond.”

Poseidon opened his mouth, but no words came out. He was left gaping like a fish, feeling like he was losing hope with every breath he exhaled. Finally, in the midst of a miracle, something worked its way up his throat and departed through his lips.

“I’m sorry.”

Hades’ face twisted as he closed his eyes, as if he was hoping for a denial.

Someone hit his glass heart, sending small fragments down to his lungs, leaving a small crack but not quite shattering it. Poseidon was now the one waiting for a response, feeling the glass slowly killing him but not making a sound. The longer Hades spent in silence, the quicker Poseidon began to breathe. He needed more air, needed as much as he could so he could protect his lungs from the shattered glass, the piercing pain of his heart. He felt everything around him start to crumble, but only small pieces, as if crumbs from a pastry. He was waiting for the knife to come down, splitting the cakes and croissants in half.

Finally, Hades spoke, but Poseidon wished he had never opened his mouth.

“I’m sorry, too.”
Another hit to his heart. The tiny person inside him must’ve used a hammer this time, and he felt more glass slip down to his lungs, making it harder and harder to breathe.

“I truly am, Poseidon.” The way he said his name felt different this time. It was like he was a stranger, like the word was foreign to his tongue. “I do love you. I love you so, so much.” His voice broke ever so slightly and he took a deep, shuddering breath. He paused for a moment, closing his eyes and exhaling lightly. When he opened his eyes, they were teary. “Just not the same way as you do I.”

It shattered.

Fragments of glass cracked apart all at once, some big and some small, all falling apart and dropping throughout his insides, piercing his lungs and making him sick to his stomach. He couldn’t breathe now. Everything started to grow blurry around him, and now the pastries had started to split into nothing more than crumbs, the world he had so carefully built around him falling as quick as Rome. Everything hurt: his eyes, his lungs, his heart, his head.

“Oh,” Hades’s face crumpled, “please don’t look at me like that. Please, Poseidon. Please don’t look at me like that.”

He had expected it. He knew the rejection was coming: after all, there was nothing to not reject. He knew Hades was happy with Persephone, that though maybe they weren’t in the best part of their relationship as of late, he’d never leave her, especially not for another god or goddess. He knew the rejection was going to be different, too. But it still hurt. It hurt so, so much. He had kid himself with Sally Jackson, kid himself that someone could love him back without him trying for years and years, maybe decades, sometimes centuries. Because hookups were different: he had plenty of those, usually with some random girl at a bar or a tipsy but not-drunk-enough-for-it-to-be-rape girl at the beach. Sally Jackson was the first to love him for who he was without him having to buy her lavish gifts or impressing her with fighting off threats, though he supposed Sally didn’t have too many threats coming her way. At least, until he came. And he hoped Hades would be the same as her, that he would love and accept him for just who he was.

But there was always someone better, he guessed. With mortals, he knew it was his fault. He couldn’t stay with them, couldn’t leave his realm for too long or things would go haywire. And mortals couldn’t have that type of relationship: their lives were too short to only see their significant other every few months. They could for a little but, maybe a year or two, but Poseidon rarely got one of those people. And even when he did, they moved on, broke up and a few years later and met someone new, started a family. Sally had Paul now, someone Poseidon knew would treat her right. He didn’t resent either of them: he was only grateful she hadn’t ended up with an asshat. Sally Jackson was and always would be a part of his life, if only in memory. His love had faded for her now, she had grown older, older than his usual physical age, older than someone that could fall for him. She was like an old friend, someone you only think about when there’s that special something that reminds you of them, like the smell of green tea or a lone cafe you used to reside in. He was sure she felt the same way.

But with gods and goddesses, that didn’t matter. Months were like seconds to them, years were like minutes. Even now, for example. Poseidon hadn’t seen Amphitrite in weeks, but it didn’t bother him none. It was as if she had only been gone an afternoon. So, Hades could love him. There was nothing stopping him from loving him, no reason, no forbiddenness. It wasn’t like the Capulets and the Montagues, not like Orpheus and Eurydice, not like the countless mortals he had loved so dearly. Hades just simple didn’t.

That’s what hurt the most.
Poseidon could’ve taken it, if it had been that way. If Hades couldn’t love him. Just like he could take it when things ended with him and Sally. However sad he had been, he took it because he knew that there was a reason they couldn’t be together. Now, the only reason was simply that Poseidon wasn’t lovable, not to Hades.


He would not cry, he would not make Hades feel bad about something he could not control. It was Poseidon’s fault: Poseidon was the one who liked him, Poseidon was the one who wasn’t good enough.

He wasn’t like Persephone, or Maria di Angelo, or even Minthe. They were all beautiful, beautiful women, graceful and kind, soft and gentle, sweet as honey. He was rougher around the edges, known for his temper, for feeling far too violently. He was softer, sure, softer than they all thought, but he wasn’t Persephone soft. He wasn’t Maria di Angelo sweet. He wasn’t Minthe beautiful. He was the annoying kind of soft: the kind that cries over hurt feelings instead of real issues. He felt things too much: anger came in waves, sadness came in crashes, happiness came in highs. Maria di Angelo was soft in every way: a soft voice, a soft heart, soft feelings. When she was happy, she smiled softly. When she was sad, she cried softly. When she was angry, her voice grew deadly soft. She was not weak, no. There was a difference between soft and weak. She was simply perfect. He was not. And he’d just have to accept that.

Hades looked at him with the same helpless look as he slowly pushed himself up. The glass moved as he sat up, piercing his heart strings a bit more, cutting a few in half. He slowly untangled his legs from Zeus’s, who was still fast asleep, and pushed himself up, slowly swinging his legs over the side of the couch. He felt Hades’s eyes on him the whole time as he stood, and met them when he turned back to face him. His face looked distressed, eyes pleading and tears threatening to spill down his moonlight lathered cheeks. He struggled to speak for a moment, before finally getting the words out. “You’re misunderstanding.”

Poseidon smiled numbly, shaking his head. “It’s okay, Hades.” His voice broke. “I’m okay. I’ll be okay.”

“No! Please, listen to me—”

Poseidon turned. He really couldn’t hear any more, couldn’t do this to himself. “It’s okay, Hades. I’m just going to the other co—” Hades grabbed his wrist. Poseidon squeezed his eyes shut.

“Heard. Please. Please.”

He swallowed. It felt like his feet were stuck to the floor, but he managed to struggle enough to turn around and face Hades. Hades carefully moved himself so he didn’t wake Zeus up, coming to sit up on the couch like one normally would. He grabbed Poseidon’s hands and tugged on them, making Poseidon come in closer. Poseidon clenched his jaw. He was doing so good, but now he felt the traces of tears come up to his eyes. Hades looked up at him, gaping, looking at a loss for words. Poseidon only stared at him, using all his energy to prevent himself from shedding that first tear.

Hades finally just let out a quiet sob, dragging Poseidon closer until his thighs hit his knees. He rested his head on Poseidon’s stomach, and Poseidon tensed, confused. Why was Hades so upset? Wasn’t Poseidon the one that was supposed to be upset?

“I’m sorry,” Hades’s muffled voice came up. He had only sobbed once, but Poseidon could tell he was still crying. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry.”
Poseidon hesitantly reached up to touch his hair. He was most likely trying to make things better, but Poseidon found he was only making things worse. All Poseidon wanted to do was go to sleep: sleep this off like he never got rejected and Hades never even knew of his feelings.

“Hades,” he said finally, only achieving a whisper yet again. “I’m going to go to sleep, alright?”

“No.” Hades hugged him around the small of his back, top of his head still buried in his stomach. Poseidon frowned, sucking in a breath as his lip started to quiver.

“Please, Hades—”

Hades shot up from the couch, shocking Poseidon back a step, before he grabbed Poseidon’s face and smashed their lips together.

Poseidon’s whole body froze. He stood still, shocked into almost paralysis. Hades was...kissing him? He felt his lips against his own, saw his tear soaked face millimetres from his own, eyes squeezed shut. Poseidon’s heart had seemed to stop completely, his body had seemed to shut down. He could not move a muscle, not make a sound.

But then he could.

Anger coursed through him in one sudden wave, igniting his bones and sending lava through his veins. He snarled, pushing Hades away with all his force. Somehow, it moved Hades back a few steps, and he looked down at him with wide eyes filled with both fear, confusion, and hurt.

“What was that?” Poseidon whispered venomously. “What, you think that was okay? That I wanted that?”

“I—”

“I can’t even believe you.” His voice cracked. Just as soon as it came, his anger left. He pursed his lips, but it was too late. The first tear had fallen, and then the next one came, and then the next one. He took a deep inhale, it shaking and then getting caught in his throat. He covered his mouth and looked away from Hades. He couldn’t believe it. He knew Hades was bad at feelings, but a pity kiss? That was just... cruel. And he knew Hades didn’t do it to hurt him, that he did it out of sympathy and care, but he still hated him in the moment. A pity kiss. That’s what he’d come to.

“What?” Hades asked, desperate. He still spoke in a hushed tone, and Poseidon was glad. He didn’t feel the need to have everyone know about this. “I...but, you said you—”

Poseidon turned his body away so Hades wouldn’t see his tears, and with a hand still covering his mouth he tried to speak. When he did, it was so blatantly obvious he was crying he might as well of just sobbed at Hades’s feet. “Just go to sleep, Hades.” Gods, why couldn’t he have just let Poseidon go to the other couch?

“No, please—” he grabbed Poseidon’s shoulder, but instead of turning him around, he walked in front of him and grabbed both shoulders, “—I don’t understand. Well, I do, but—”

“Hades.”

Hades fell silent, waiting for him to continue.

“Just let me go to sleep.”

“You know both of us aren’t going to be able to. Please, let me explain.” Poseidon clenched his
jaw as he felt Hades’s hand under his chin. The hand pushed his face up, and he stared at Hades’s dimly lit face tiredly. He looked even more desperate now, eyes darting around Poseidon’s face, hope slowly leaving them. “I...I didn’t mean that I don't love you that way.”

...  
...  
...What?

“What?” Poseidon repeated his thoughts. That was, quite literally, exactly what he said. But...what? What did that mean? Did he mean that…? He looked up at him with wide eyes, thoughts racing a mile a minute.

Hades let go of his shoulders and rubbed his face again. It was a while before he spoke. “Look, Poseidon. This is going to sound egotistical, but I know you like me. A lot. Like—almost love me...in that way. And, truly, I’m flattered—”

Poseidon’s face fell and he smiled at the ground bitterly, tears blurring the edges of his vision. Of course. He was just being stupid again.

—but I just…” Hades trailed off.

“Hades,” Poseidon said, voice wavering. “I know you’re trying to make this better, but you’re just making it worse—”

“I'm not done yet!” he argued hastily. Poseidon closed his eyes, dreading his next words. “I...what I'm trying to say is...I...I…” he fell silent for a moment, and when he spoke again, it was so quiet Poseidon could barely hear it. “I like you, too, Poseidon. In that way.”

It took a moment for the words to register, and Poseidon only opened his eyes and stared at the ground in confusion. When they finally did, he slowly lifted his head, brows furrowed and head starting to hurt from the endless amount of thoughts and emotions racing through it. When he looked up, Hades’s conflicted eyes shone silver in the moonlight, his dark hair framing his face like a light curtain, casting light shadows across his cheekbones. He looked like a god again.

“I...What?”

Hades closed his eyes and lowered his head lightly. “Just...just not as much as you like me.”

Poseidon’s brow furrowed and he jerked his head back, shaking it. “What? I don’t understand…” This didn’t make any sense...

Hades opened his eyes and stared at the ground for a moment. It was a heavy silence, the one that overtook them while Poseidon waited for him to say something. Nothing but soft crickets filled the thick air inside the room, weighed with both anticipation and dread, but mostly confusion. And the whispered words that came next sent all the heaviness in the room to Poseidon, crashing down on him like a tidal wave.

“I like you, Poseidon. But you deserve more than what I can give.”

So many thoughts and emotions flooded Poseidon all at once that he actually took a step back. Confusion, anger, suspicion, hope, giddiness, helplessness, and fear all coursed through his brain and plummeted through his veins, overwhelming him to the point of hyperventilation. “I...I don’t…” What the fuck was going on? One minute Hades is rejecting him, then he’s kissing him, then he’s confessing his liking for him, then he’s saying he's not good enough for Poseidon?
Hades grabbed his shoulders. “Calm down, Poseidon. I know this is a lot, but you need to calm down.” When he didn’t, Hades tried another tactic. “Here, I want you to breathe with me, okay?”

Poseidon nodded blindly, trying his best to inhale when Hades inhaled and exhale when Hades exhaled. He stared at Hades’s pyjama shirt-clad chest, mimicking the rise and fall of it to the best of his abilities. For some reason, it felt loud in the room, though nothing had started to make a sound. The longer Poseidon tried to mimic Hades’s breathing, the calmer he got, feeling his heart gradually start to slow to a normal pace and the knot in his chest slowly start to dissipate.

Eventually, he was breathing steadily once more.

Well, now he was rather embarrassed. First he’s crying now he’s panicking. What a night.

“Please...please explain again,” he choked out regardless.

Hades closed his eyes, but nodded. “I like you. Romantically.” His voice was lower than a whisper again, and he opened his eyes. “I said I didn’t love you in the way that you love me because I don’t...I’m not as in...as in love with you as you are in love with me. And...I...I think you deserve someone that loves you as much as they can.”

Poseidon stared up at him, a little of his confusion cleared up. Now, he felt...well, he couldn’t describe it. It was like half exasperated, half confused, and half hopeful. Hades looked away from him guiltily.

“I...Hades, are you...?” He still couldn’t fully comprehend it.

“I’m sorry, Poseidon.”

Poseidon shook his head. “But...” This didn’t make any sense. So what if Hades didn’t love him yet? Most relationships don’t start out with love. I’m so confused... “I...Hades, I don’t...” he furrowed his brow and shook his head, “I don’t...care.”

Hades’s head shot back to him, brows furrowed. “What?”

Poseidon almost wanted to laugh, though his eyes started to leak tears once more. “I don’t care that you don’t love me yet. All I care about is that you like me...romantically. I...” He didn’t know what else to say, so he looked up at Hades with as much hope and love as he could muster, hoping to convey that he needed him to understand.

It worked. Hades’s eyes grew hopeful, wide as they looked down at him. “What?”

Poseidon could tell he wasn’t really asking, just shocked. Poseidon smiled softly and let out half of a laugh, everything still a little overwhelming. Nonetheless, hope crept into his chest as well.

God, all of that pain could’ve been avoided... “Hades.” He stepped closer, and Hades didn’t move, so he stepped closer again. Soon, they were mere inches apart, staring directly into each others eyes, still, tense air between them. Poseidon tilted his head up a little, and butterflies swarmed in his stomach as Hades leaned his head down as well. He felt his cheeks heat up, but he didn’t back away as their faces grew closer and closer. He saw Hades’s eyes dart down to his lips, and the butterflies swarmed close to a dangerous speed. He did the same, and soon he felt Hades’s breath on his lips, their faces mere centimetres apart. He saw Hades’s eyes flicker up to his own out of the corner of his eye, and looked up to meet them. Their faces moved in even closer, and Poseidon broke eye contact only to close his eyes as he felt Hades’s chapped lips press against his own.

It sounded cheesy, but everything around him seemed to click in place, as if this was the one thing that made everything make sense. Hades moved his lips a little, deepening the kiss, and Poseidon’s
mind grew a little hazy. He hesitantly wrapped his arms around Hades’s neck, and Hades sneaked his arms around his waist, pulling him even closer. The butterflies were now swarming as if being chased by a hungry tiger, and everything around them was muted, muffled as if they were underwater. His nerves were crackling with electricity, his skin was on fire, every fibre of his being was ablaze. Everything seemed right in that moment. Every one of their worries were miles and miles and miles away. All that mattered right now was Hades and the fact that he was kissing him.

Eventually, they broke apart for air, but Poseidon’s eyes remained closed. Their faces were still mere centimetres apart.

A squeal.

Poseidon’s eyes snapped open in alarm, twisting his head so sharply towards the noise that he almost gave himself whiplash.

Percy was standing at the doorway of Stephen’s room, hand over his mouth and eyes smiling so brightly you might’ve thought someone told him they booked him a trip to Disneyland. Jason was behind him, leaning against the doorway, looking down at Percy in amusement while also looking shocked at the two of them.

“Percy!” Poseidon blurted, shocked, breaking away from Hades’s embrace who was uncharacteristically beet red. “What are you doing up?”

Percy only squealed more. “Oh my god! My OTP is canon!”

Poseidon only looked at him in horror. His son was not supposed to see that. His son was not supposed to see him in any type of romantic situation. Ever.

“Oh wait,” he said, eyes going wide, “I’m interrupting. Sorry, sorry! Go back to kissing each other!” He shut the door quickly, gone as quick as he came. Well, actually, Poseidon thought in horror, he didn’t know how long Percy had been there.

So, Poseidon and Hades were left in stunned silence, both staring at the door. The house was eerily quiet again, as if the whole ordeal never happened. It was such a strong contrast that Poseidon wondered if it even did happen.

Eventually, Hades broke the silence. “What just happened?”

***Hehe sorry for the angst and the weird ending lol. ALSO! As an author’s note, when I used Orpheus and Eurydice as an example, I didn’t mean their love was forbidden, I just meant that death separated them. So yee yee as the kids say***

***The same chapter, just in Stephen’s room with Percy and Jason. This is back to canon (well, canon for this fic lol), so Hasidon never happened. Percy’s Point of View. Fair warning: I haven’t written from Percy’s POV in a while so sorry if its bad lol***

Apparently, Stephen was fond of very strong smells.

In the living room it was tea, but in here it was mint leaves. Not mint—mint leaves. Like that minty smell, yeah, but also that weird pointy smell that was kinda like a forest if it had eaten a bunch of those weird red cinnamon candies. Percy rolled over under the covers, burying his nose in the blanket. It wasn’t much use—the blanket smelled like mint leaves, too. He almost groaned but refrained, instead rolling onto his back and glaring up at the ceiling like everything that had gone
wrong in his life was its fault and its fault alone. It was also cold, even under the fifty blankets Stephen had piled on top of him and Jason.

Jason half grunted and half hummed as he flipped over, slinging an arm across Percy sleepily. “Wha’’s wrong, honey?”

Percy looked at him and smiled lightly. He was half asleep, eyes closed lightly and lips pulled into a light frown. His usually well-kept hair was a rat’s nest, falling around his fair head like a halo. He didn’t usually call Percy pet names, especially not anything like love, babe, or honey: it felt kind of weird for them, like they were doing it just because couples did it and not because they wanted to. It was only when he was tired, exhausted from a long day of training or sleepy from lots of food that he ever let the words slip between his lips.

“Nothin’,” Percy whispered, scooting a little closer and resting his head on his chest. Sleeping positions were both an easy and hard task for them: they were almost the same height, so while a lot of normal positions worked for them, some of the more couple-y stuff didn’t. That was a lot of their relationship, he guessed. They didn’t really act like a couple, but they felt like one. They kissed and stuff, yeah, and held hands and visited each other, but dates were rare and PDA was rarer. It didn’t bother him: he actually preferred it that way. It was like it was just for them: specially made and meant for two souls. Though, it wasn’t unknown that they were dating. It’s just you wouldn’t think it, if you saw them in public. It was kinda like the opposite of most people for them, people assumed they were just bros on the rare occasion they went on a date, instead of the opposite like what happened to Annabeth and Piper. Or, maybe that was normal and Annabeth and Piper were the weird ones. He didn’t know.

But, this position worked: Jason on his side with his arm slung across Percy, Percy positioned a little down on the bed so he could rest his head against Jason’s chest. It was warm, too. Percy knew that people radiated body heat, but Jason just seemed to radiate more, like he was a human thermostat or something. Leo was hotter—not in that way—of course, but that could be explained, what with his fire shit and all. But Jason didn’t really have a reason to be so warm, he just was. Or maybe Annabeth was just cooler. He didn’t really have many references.

So, he just snuggled his head deeper into Jason’s chest, built a little more than it used to be with both training and manhood, inhaling his scent and closing his eyes. Jason didn’t really have a smell like is described in romance books and stuff, he just smelled like deodorant and rain. Maybe the rain was that scent. Percy didn’t know. If you hadn’t picked up, he didn’t know a lot of things. But he knew enough. Enough to know that he was happy here, in Jason’s arms, his father and uncles and best friends only a few steps away. He briefly wondered how they were doing, but soon reassured himself they were fine.

“Perce?” Jason mumbled sleepily.

“Yeah?” Percy asked, closing his eyes.

“Gimme a kiss.”

Percy huffed out a little, quiet laugh, pushing his head back a little to scooch up and opening his eyes. “Alright.” Jason smiled with his eyes still closed and Percy returned the favour, leaning in to give him a light peck. When he pulled back, Jason’s smile was a little brighter.

“Thank you,” Jason said, speech a little slurried with sleep. His voice was deeper when he was sleepy, and Percy would never admit it but it was one of his favourite moments of the day. It made him feel safe for some reason. Like someone’s voice being deeper lessened the chance of a fury smashing through a window, even though it didn’t. His brain worked in weird ways, he guessed.
Maybe everyone’s did.

Percy laughed a little again, returning to the position he was in before. “You’re welcome.”

Jason pulled him closer and he closed his eyes, letting his heavy eyelids finally get some rest. “Love you,” he mumbled into the warm skin of Jason’s pectoral muscle.

“Love you too, weirdo,” Jason whispered, the last sound he made before his chest fell into a steady rhythm and Percy too fell asleep.

***A little short but I needed a lil Jercy okay. Also! I know Percy knows lots of things, jus my babey doesn’t think he does***

***This isn’t set in a specific chapter, just while they're in Greece***

Poseidon was three years old.

Well, not literally. But he felt like it.

Here he was, watching Percy and the rest of the demigods having a snowball fight outside of Stephen’s house, practically as green as Kermit the Frog with envy. They looked like they were all having the time of their lives, grinning faces bright pink from the cold, wrapped up in make-shift winter jackets and laughing their pretty little heads off. Even Nico was participating, his pale skin flushed deep red from both cold and laughter as he threw his head back, inky hair falling back from his face, coated with thick wet snowflakes. He had just successfully landed a snowball right in Jason’s face, who was now stumbling in an attempt to recover. Hazel looked like he wanted to ask if he was okay, but Thalia rammed her in the side of a head with a big one and she gasped, turning her attention to the other girl and laughing, picking up a pile of snow and running after her, Jason forgotten.

He could’ve been out there, y’know. They had all come out in their snow gear with three extra pairs ready and made, asking them with hopeful faces to join, but nooo. Poseidon was an “adult”, and according to Zeus, adults don’t “waste their time throwing ice at each other like idiots”.

Poseidon half pouted. He didn’t like being an adult sometimes.

Hades noticed and snorted. He was up in the kitchen, helping Addelyn make some cookies like a nice person or something. Well, giving credit where it’s due, Poseidon had tried to help, but Addelyn sent him back to the couch, claiming “too many cooks in the kitchen”. Poseidon suspected that Hades had actually just told her about the time he had tried to make gingerbread cookies a few decades back. Long story short, it didn’t end well. No one had ever let him make cookies again, at least without Hestia accompanying him.

“You can go out, y’know,” Hades informed him, sleeves rolled up to his forearms as he mixed some ingredients with his hands. “No one’s stopping you.”

Poseidon rolled his eyes and didn’t respond, crossing his arms and turning away from the window. Zeus glanced at him briefly, a little amusement lining his features. It made Poseidon feel like he was a three year old.

He couldn’t go out now—he had already agreed not to and he didn’t want to intrude. And besides, the kids should have some time to just themselves, they haven’t had much of that this past week. And, he’d get cold. And wet. Cold and wet were only good combinations when...well, never. He
was gonna say when he went to visit the northern regions of his realm, but they had started to blame him for global warming and ice caps melting, so he wasn’t really welcome anymore.

He pouted fully this time. Maybe it was a good combo in snowball fights.

He’d never actually participated in one: only heard of it and watched some of the children in Ancient Greece do it the few times he ever went down to visit. He regretted not going down as much as he should’ve: the world was so much more beautiful back then. He was too arrogant to mix with mortals other than to have children with them. Gods, his emo phase had lasted long. And gods, that beard. It made him shiver.

They had played it differently back then, he remembered. He didn’t really remember in what ways, but this way was a little unfamiliar. Same concept, but maybe it was more competitive or something back then. That didn’t sound quite right, but he couldn’t put his finger on it. This version looked more fun, anyway.

But, he stayed where he was. Moping and pouting.

Addelyn was humming a song, and Poseidon recognized it but couldn’t quite place its name. Something by The Beatles, he thought. He didn’t ask.

He felt the sudden urge to look out the window again. Don’t do it. He squinted, trying to refrain himself with all his might. Don’t do it... He tilted his head to the side as if he had a kink in his neck, trying desperately to fight his urge to look out again. C’mon, you can do it...just don’t move your neck. It would only make him want to go out more if he looked outside, in the process torturing himself because there was no way he was going out. But for some reason, he just couldn’t do it and internally huffed as he finally let his neck swivel around to look back out at the winter wonderland.

It was a similar scene to that of what it was before, Percy pelting snowballs with all his strength as if it was life or death (sending poor Hazel to the ground a few times), while Jason was in the midst of building a shelter of snow while still attempting to chuck a few at his sister and boyfriend in his small breaks, never aiming for Nico or Hazel. Maybe he was scared he’d break them. Poseidon didn’t doubt he could. The only difference this time around was that Thalia had gone for the tackling method, slamming into Nico and taking him to the ground, then proceeding to smash a handful of snow right on his face. Poseidon cringed a little. That one looked like it hurt.

But Nico soon recovered, laughing loudly and chasing after Thalia, who ran away quickly, still attempting to pick up snow and chuck it over her shoulder. Unfortunately for Nico, she had longer and much stronger legs, easily outrunning him from years of practice with the Hunters of Artemis. Nico didn’t give up, though, picking up handfuls of snow and chucking them surprisingly hard at her back, landing a few that made her stumble and laugh. That was, until Percy took a page from Thalia’s book and knocked Nico to the ground for the second time, smacking his face with his second helping of snow that day. Poseidon snickered a little.

A loud sigh from the table brought Poseidon’s attention back to the house. He looked over at the kitchen, where Hades was leaning against the little island by the sink with his arms palmed spread out on the old wood countertop. His face was slightly unimpressed but mostly amused, one dark eyebrow slightly raised. “Look. Just go out. No one’s judging you.”

Poseidon’s cheeks warmed a little and he smiled embarrassedly, shifting his position on the couch so he was laying down and couldn’t see out the window. “No, I’m fine. I’m just looking.”

Hades’ amused look dropped and he now only looked unimpressed. “Seriously, I don’t want to
Poseidon stuck his tongue out, cheeks heating a little more when Addelyn gave them both an amused look. “Whatever, I’ll stop.”

Hades sighed and shook his head, going back to the other countertop and continuing whatever he was doing before. Poseidon crossed his arms and looked at the ceiling, determined to not look out the window anymore. C’mon, you’ve been acting like a child this whole quest, you can at least do this.

He bit the inside of his cheek, glancing around. Everyone had gone back to what they were doing, peacefully ignoring him. Addelyn had started humming yet another song he recognized but couldn’t name, swaying her hips a little as she walked around the kitchen. Poseidon looked back up at the ceiling, bored. He could hear laughter and playful screams coming from outside vividly, and he clenched his teeth. They weren’t making this easy for him. Oh, c’mon, it’s just a game...and besides, your immortal so you’ll probably get another chance...

Just as soon as he was about to submit to his need to look out the window again, the door slammed open. He jumped at the sudden noise, heart rate accelerating and stomach doing a flip. “Jesus!” He clutched a hand to his heart.

Percy was standing sheepishly at the door, snow sticking to his hair, sopping wet with flushed cheeks. “Sorry,” he said. Poseidon nodded but still kept his hand at his heart. Jesus, that scared the shit out of him. Silence, and then boom—Percy. Said boy continued. “I was wondering if any of you three could join us. We’re doing teams now, and we need one more for it to be even. All of you could join, too, because then it would still be equal with just more players.”

Poseidon sat up, grin splitting out on his face. Percy looked at him, face lighting up.

Hades smiled warmly, that amused sparkle still in his eyes. “Poseidon would love to join, Percy.”

Poseidon wanted to glare at him for acting like he was a three year old that couldn’t answer his own questions, but didn’t really care enough. So he just jumped up from the couch, dignity thrown to the wind. So what if he was an adult? Well, okay out of context that would sound weird but you get the point.

“Cool,” Percy grinned. “Your stuff is still on the bed in Stephen’s room, I’ll be outside!” He closed the door behind him and left to go find the others.

Poseidon grinned and bolted to Stephen’s room. There were more make-shift winter clothes (AKA old hoodies, blankets, denim-like fabric, and hand-made mittens), and he just grabbed random stuff and started piling it on. There was a small mirror in Stephen’s room, and when he looked over to it he almost laughed. He looked like Gru from Despicable Me (don’t ask how he knew that), with a really big upper body and skinny little legs. He’d piled on two hoodies and a thick blanket that had a hole for his head, effectively making him look like he’d had a few too many tacos. Well, not really. He just looked like he was wearing clothes that someone that had a few too many tacos had owned.

He grabbed a pair of mittens and rushed out the bedroom door. Immediately, Zeus looked up and laughed his head off. Poseidon grinned but ignored him, rushing over to get his sneakers. He struggled to get them on, heels putting up a fight and not slipping into them. He heard Hades start to laugh, too. Addelyn cooed at him. “You look adorable.”

Poseidon’s face grew hot at that, but he pretended not to hear. He finally kicked them on right, and
threw a grin at the remaining residents of the room. “See you guys!”

“Have fun!” was called out after him as he rushed out the door, and he couldn’t tell who said it nor if it was mockingly or not. But he didn’t really care, stepping out into the bright, footprint lined snow and turning towards the side of the house where he knew the demigods resided. It was real chilly out, a light but icy wind brushing his face and sending his hair flying back. He had to squint a little with the brightness of the snow and wind in his face, but he made it to the side of the house just fine. When he got there, his eyes were adjusted enough to look normally out at the snow-coated landscape, but saw nothing but small piles of snow. In the background, white covered evergreens stood proudly and a small lake he could barely see had frozen over.

He grinned, knowing that the demigods were hiding behind the make-shift barriers. He prepared himself for an attack as he stepped towards the bank closest to him, picking up two handfuls of snow and molding them into one large snowball. It was deadly silent, only his own footsteps muffled by soft snow filling the cold, dry air. He could feel the suspense start to rise in him and he grinned wider, slowly approaching the snow bank.

When he got there, he quickly turned to look behind it, preparing to shove his snowball in someone’s face, but instead found nothing, just more snow. He frowned. So they were tricking him. A distraction. He narrowed his eyes and made his way to the other one, now wary of the trees lining the yard. He was half expecting them all to come rushing out from behind a trunk and tackle him all at once.

A thought did come to his mind, but he knew it was kind of irrational. But still, it plagued his mind a little, pulling his lips into a frown. It could’ve been a prank, this whole thing. While he stepped out of the house and turned the corner, the demigods could’ve snuck in, and now they were all laughing at him from the window as he walked around like an idiot. He glanced towards the house to see if his suspicions were true, but couldn’t really see anything, only the faint outlines of stuff. **Whatever,** he thought, **if this is a prank, it’s just a prank. Don’t be upset about it.**

He internally pouted. All he wanted was to have a snowball fight.

When he reached the other bank and looked behind, he still found nothing. He sighed and felt his face fall, turning and dragging his feet towards the house. Damn. It was kind of his fault, anyway: he was the one that waited too long. They were probably cold. Besides, he could just ask them tomorrow. He smiled internally at that, a little hope entering him. Yeah, they could just play tomorrow. Er—have a snowball fight tomorrow. He wasn’t three.

He was just about halfway back to the other snowbank when he was suddenly tackled.

“Woah!” he yelled as he slammed into the ground. There was laughter above him as he turned to look at the body caging him to the ground, and saw Percy’s face for only a split second before ice cold, wet snow was shoved directly onto his face. “Aw, ow!” he called out, struggling under Percy’s weight. The snow was painful against his face, burning his cheeks and nose. Most of it slipped off his face, leaving his cheeks wet and frozen, but there was still some remaining on the sides of his nose and forehead. He wanted to wipe it off, but Percy’s knees were on his arms. Soon, he heard even more laughter, and then felt a sudden increase of weight on him. He let out an ‘oof’ as presumably Hazel, Thalia, or Nico threw themselves onto Percy. He assumed it was Thalia because of the feminine but still strong, deep laugh, and he thought it was a little too much weight to be 5’2 Hazel or toothpick-sized Nico. He knew for a fact it wasn’t Jason, at least.

He grinned too, then, though his chest was being crushed with weight and he couldn’t breathe. Percy also let out a little ‘oof’ as well, and then another in sync with Poseidon as another body piled on top of Thalia.
A disgruntled “Nico!” was what tipped Poseidon off about their newest attacker.

Nico only laughed and got halfway through the word “Sucker”, before Jason decided it would be a perfectly reasonable decision to pile on top of him, cutting Nico off before he could pronounce the ‘k’. Everyone let out a synchronized “oof”, and Poseidon thought that was pretty beautiful. The weight on his chest was now suffocating, and he tried to convey that he couldn’t breathe, before another, lighter weight piled onto the very top, a higher pitched giggle sounding throughout the grunt-filled air before many more “oof”s, circled.

“Get off,” Poseidon managed to wheeze out. It felt like a pile of bricks had just been poured on his entire body, with 60 percent of them on his chest.

“I can’t,” Percy wheezed out, equally winded and almost as equally crushed. He looked like he was trying to get some of the weight off of Poseidon by pushing up a little with his arms, but even he was not strong enough to lift the four demigods on top of him. Poseidon was mildly impressed when he lifted them up a little, but wheezed in pain again when he couldn’t take it anymore and dropped all of the weight on his chest again. Being honest, it made Poseidon laugh a little, though the pressure on his chest made it hurt too much and he quickly stopped.

“Someone get off!” Thalia called.

“Sorry!” Hazel squeaked, getting off easily and lightly.

Jason got off next, but he was less graceful (how ironic), simply rolling off of Nico and onto the ground, laughing his head off. Nico, who, though Poseidon could not see his whole face, looked like he was about to explode under the weight of Jason, looked to be in absolute ecstasy when Jason rolled off of him, and quickly got off himself, also laughing a little. Poseidon thought he was laughing more at Jason’s laugh than the situation, though.

Instead of waiting for Thalia to get off, Percy simply rolled over and off Poseidon, making Thalia let out a creative and colourful stream of curses as he laid his back on her and stayed there, grinning. Poseidon breathed in deeply when he could do so easily, gulping in air as fast as he could and wiping the remaining snow off of his face. He looked over and laughed a little at Percy and Thalia, who were struggling on the ground and throwing colourful curses. Percy looked like he was having the time of his life, simply laying on top of her backwards and letting his own body weight do all the work while Thalia attempted everything, from jamming him in the rips to spitting on the back of his neck. Though Percy reacted, he did not get up, still grinning. He only relented when Thalia picked up a handful of snow and shoved it right on his face and down his clothes, making him yelp and get up. Taking that as a cue that the snowball fight had started again, Poseidon picked up a snowball and prepared to throw it, but stumbled back as he got yet another pile of snow in his face (though this time in the form of a snowball).

“Ugh.” He wiped the snow off his face and grinned, looking around for who it was. Nico and Jason were too busy tackling each other (Jason winning, though Nico did put up a fight), and Percy and Thalia were just shoving snow in each other’s faces, so Poseidon looked at Hazel, who had her hands covering her mouth, eyes wide.

“Sorry,” he whispered, looking like all of the faults in the world were her doing.

Poseidon just grinned, running over to her and throwing her over his shoulder. Hey, at least he could still do that. She was about as light as a feather, like he threw a somewhat heavy backpack over his shoulder. She screamed, then laughed, and screamed and laughed some more as he ran her over to the snow bank, briefly made sure the snow was soft enough with his foot, and threw her on there. He didn’t even realize he was laughing until his cheeks started to hurt and he suddenly
needed to pee, crossing his legs just in case. Hazel’s skin was slowly turning red with laughter, and soon no sound was coming out of her mouth and she was just silently laughing, which for some reason Poseidon found hilarious and he doubled over, falling to the ground and rolling around.

He screamed as he felt someone jump on top of him. He instinctively shielded his face, but instead the person shoved snow down his shirt, which Poseidon soon realized was about a thousand times worse. He struggled to get the person off of him, icy, burning substance working it’s way down his chest and to his ribs. “Aw,” he yelled, “ow!” It didn’t really hurt, it was just kind of an instinctive reaction. The person laughed wickedly from above him and he took his hands away from his face to see Nico, grinning like a madman as he pushed himself off of Poseidon, reaching beside him for more snow.

Well, that hadn’t been who Poseidon was expecting. He didn’t know who he was expecting, but it wasn’t Nico. I guess he just gets really competitive in snowball fights. Poseidon didn’t spend time pondering it, grinning and quickly rolling onto his side, struggling to a standing position. He reaching under his layers of clothes and shivered violently as he let the snow fall down his stomach before finally ridding of it and letting it fall to the white ground. He was about to reach for some snow and attack Nico with it, but instead he felt more weight on his back as he was tackled yet again by Nico, who slammed a bunch of snow onto the back of his head when he hit the ground.

He grinned wider. This meant war.

He forcefully turned himself around, effectively knocking Nico onto his back beside him with an ‘oof’, before grabbing a handful of snow and slamming it on his face. A laugh ripped its way out of his chest: that was really fucking fun. He felt a little bad as he saw Nico struggling to get the snow off his face, but his sympathy quickly parted as Nico tackled him yet again, slamming snow into his face yet again. He scrunched his nose up, attempting to somehow get away from the burning coldness, but it was in vain until Nico finally got off his arms and allowed him to wipe it away. He was about to repeat the process yet again, when he was tackled again by another person. Judging by the flash of familiar but more feminine blue eyes, it was Thalia.

As one may presume, Poseidon got tackled many more times in his time outside. It was only when Hades called out from the front door that it was supper did the six of them come stumbling in, just like a mother calling for her children. Poseidon’s hair had chunks of ice and snow clinging to it, his hoodies and blanket thing were soaked, and he was shivering like a mad man, but he didn’t regret going out one bit.

***WARNING!! SMUT AHEAD!!!! AHHH!! Lol its just for da ppl dat were disappointed that i took down the other fic. Sorry y'all. This one isn’t as graphic bc i had to make it make sense in the story. For context, they are not together. Well, the story explains it itself lol. Set in Stephen’s house, pretending that they stayed an extra night before starting their trek up the mountain. Also some of u may be freaked out that a young person is writing this but trust me my friends have written way worse lol. Again, in case you couldn’t pick this up, this is z/p/h so if u dont like, then don't read my guy***

Of the many things Poseidon realized about being mortal, one that particularly stood out was that his sex drive did not go down. In fact, it almost increased. He wasn’t sure if it was just nerves or shock that prevented him from realizing it for the first few days, but it soon came at full force, crashing over him like a tidal wave. It had been about half a week since then, and Poseidon was about to explode. He’d tried to deal with it in the bathroom a few times, but Hades or Zeus would slam on the door and yell at him to get out, leaving him unable to finish, making the problem about
He was mildly embarrassed, but almost more embarrassed at the fact he knew that Zeus and Hades were feeling the same way. And he knew that because, well, you know what happens when guys get frustrated. It’s visible. Not only did he see Zeus get a little...excited, he felt it in the air when he was around the two, the sexual frustration they were feeling. They had virtually no privacy, especially now. He was half surprised Percy wasn’t teasing the living daylights out of them. Maybe he was feeling the same way, or maybe he just didn’t notice.

Poseidon didn’t know how much longer he could take it. That’s what he envied about women: they had the urge, but theirs wasn’t visible, didn’t need to be taken care of. His was almost painful.

He had a plan, though. It was desperate, but at this point he’d do anything. He was going to get up early tomorrow, even hopefully before Hades got up, get to the bathroom as quickly as possible, and get some sweet, sweet release. It was almost tempting to go in now and finish it off, but he wasn’t sure what sounds he’d make and only a few people were asleep. He didn’t need that kind of embarrassment right now.

It was late, but not too late. The sun had fully sank below the horizon a few hours ago, and everyone had gone to bed just a little bit ago. Poseidon lay on the couch, eyes wide open, staring at the dark ceiling. He could make it until the morning. He could.

Hades and Zeus occupied the other two couches in the room, leaving him the shortest one. Though it made sense, he still sulked a little. By now, his resentment was gone and replaced with horniness. The silence that was only filled with light breathing and shuffling blankets was not helping matters. He almost glared at the ceiling, determined to not let his mind wander.

He obviously wasn’t determined enough.

Poseidon cursed himself as he thought back to the most recent sex he’d had, with a girl he’d met in Italy. She was tall, as tall as him, curvy, with gorgeous dark skin and fluffy hair. Fuck. He remembered how she felt around him, the way she sucked his neck as he drilled into her, her light and airy moans like melodies. A little blood went south.

Fuck, Poseidon. Stop it.

He couldn’t, and it had already started to snowball. He could so cleary imagine her mouth and tongue around him he almost felt it, the way she had that little playful smile on her pretty face as if she was the one in charge, the way her tongue skillfully played across him, almost like a tease. She’d been one of the best he’d had in a while.

He felt himself push against the fabric of his boxers, and he refrained from groaning. Great. Just what he needed.

He glanced around the room. Hades’ eyes were closed but he didn’t look asleep, and Zeus was a similar case. Both of them had their knees raised at least slightly so that the blanket was pulled tightly between them and didn’t lay flat on their pelvises, letting Poseidon know he wasn’t the only one in a little situation. Neither of them looked to be jacking off, though they both looked mildly uncomfortable.

Taking after them, Poseidon decided to just close his eyes and hope it would go away. His eyes were barely heavy and he felt little relief compared to what he normally feels when he closes his eyes. He sighed, adjusting a little on the couch and trying his best to think of nothing. C’mon, you’ll deal with it in the morning...

In his defense, it was painful. Okay? It hurt.
He opened his eyes not 45 minutes later, the tightness of his briefs growing to be too much. The only thing he’d thought of in his 43 minute escapade of trying to get to sleep was the countless blowjobs he’d received over the years, specifically by particularly attractive individuals. He could tell he was blushing; his cheeks were burning a storm.

He bit his lip as he glanced around the room. This time, he couldn’t tell if Hades and Zeus were asleep or not. They both had their eyes closed, but while their breathing was steady, it wasn’t sleep-steady. He only removed his teeth from his lower lip when he feared he’d break the surface of it, and decided to take his chances. Face burning brighter, his legs spread under the covers and his hands slipped under the blankets, to the waist of his pyjama pants where he tugged them down. It made a little noise, and he bit his lip again, eyes darting across the room. The last thing he needed was either two of them to wake up suddenly and ask what he was doing…

Deeming himself safe, he cupped himself through his underwear, letting out a small sigh. Fuck. It had been so long, he’d almost forgotten how good that first touch felt. He groped himself for a moment, feeling himself through the thin fabric and relishing at the brief relief it brought him. Okay, I’m really not in the mood for foreplay right now…

Darting his eyes around the room once more for good measure, he lifted his hips and pulled his underwear down to his ankles. He had to stop himself from moaning at the release. His member sprung free, automatically curving towards his stomach but not quite fully hard enough to make it all the way there. Oh, finally… He enveloped the middle of it in a fist, the coolness of his palm contrasting the heat radiating from his erection. He let out a small breath, and then started gently stroking up and down, not going too fast as he didn’t have any lotion. Relief flooded through him as he finally, finally, felt pleasure curl up in his abdomen. He pursed his lips so he wouldn’t make a sound but exhaled deeply through his nose, letting his head fall back onto his pillow as his neck arched a little. The moonlight cast the blanket in silver, bathing the dips of his collarbones in shadow but the exposed part of his shoulder in light. He desperately tried not to think of his niece; he really didn’t want to be blue-balled at the moment.

His fingers were cold, and that felt almost inhumanely good against his member as he stroked. Up and down, up and down, up and down...God. He bit his lip harder to not make a sound, eyes falling closed. He went up to the tip and stroked his thumb across it, making him involuntarily shudder. He clenched his jaw as he did it again, and then again, and then again. His hips raised a little, but he forced them back down. He stroked his hand down to the base and then further, fondling his balls, groping them and rubbing them together. He couldn’t help the little sound that escaped him, and though it was as quiet as a mouse and probably could not even be heard a few feet away from him, it made him stop in his tracks, snapping his eyes open and glancing around the room.

Fuck.

Zeus was staring right at him. He felt himself turn ruby red, quickly removing his hands and pushing his legs down, before realizing that was a mistake as his erection stood up clearly and proudly under the somewhat thin blanket.

“Why’d you stop?” a familiar voice asked, though huskier and gravalier than usual.

Poseidon jumped a little as he turned to Hades, who was also staring directly at him, legs spread underneath the blanket, no hands in sight. Poseidon almost gaped, before turning his head to Zeus, where he noticed his younger brother was in a similar position.

“I…”

“I...what?” Poseidon whispered back. What the fuck was going on? “I don’t understand...”

“Goddammit Poseidon.” Zeus managed to sound angry even while using the softest voice Poseidon had ever heard from him. “I know this is weird but we’re all horny and we all know it, and you’re hot when you’re jacking off and Hades and I are desperate. Just keep going and remove the damn blanket. We don’t have to mention this ever again.”

“I...” On one hand, the fact that Hades and Zeus had been jacking off to him, he didn’t know how long they’d been jacking off to him for, and they wanted to jack off to him more was entirely confusing and indecipherable in the moment, while on the other hand, Poseidon’s erection was painful and was in desperate need of assistance. And...well, it was also kind of hot. “Okay,” he whispered.

Hesitantly, he pushed himself up into a sitting position with his knees up to his chest and pushed the blankets off him, also removing his pyjamas, socks, and briefs from his ankles while he was at it. He blushed a little as he smoothed the blanket out in front of him and laid down on top of it, getting back into his position before just without the blanket covering him. His face grew hotter and hotter as he felt Hades and Zeus’ eyes trace his every movement, scan his body from head to toe.

Just as Poseidon was about to start again, Zeus interrupted. “Take your shirt off, too.”

Poseidon looked over to him, flustered and a little frustrated, but when he met his lust filled eyes he did as he was told. He grabbed the back of it and pulled it over his head, discarding it to the floor with the rest of his clothes. Now naked as the day he was born, his face felt like it had caught fire. Nonetheless, he lay back down, extending his legs but still keeping them bent a little, snaking his hand down to his member once again. Before grasping it, he sent one last look towards his two brothers, who were both watching him with such intensity it made him shiver and blush furthur. He could see the blankets move from where they were stroking themselves, and it made his dick twitch.

Finally, he placed his hand back on his member, encasing it in his palm and letting his head fall back once more. He repeated what he’d done before: the light strokes, the flicks of the thumb across the slit, the fondling of his balls. He noticed the Hades stroked particularly fast when he was stroking himself as usual while Zeus stroked faster while he was down at his ballsack. He didn’t really pay it much mind, doing whatever felt good. His eyes fell closed as he started stroking at a faster pace, using some of the beaded precum at his tip as lotion. He couldn’t stop little noises at the back of his throat as he started to stroke faster and faster, heat curling in his gut. His eyes squeezed shut and his jaw clenched as he threw his head back, stroking faster and faster. Sweet, sweet release was soon, he could feel it coming...Heat swirled and coiled in his gut, and his hips raised off the couch, still stroking faster and faster, until he was half moaning through his bitten lips.

He was about to steer over the edge, before his hands got torn away. His eyes snapped open in shock, hips falling back on the couch and dick falling to his stomach, still hard as a rock. He stared straight at Zeus’s face, darkened with lust and desire, looking almost like a different person in the lighting. His hair seemed darker, his eyes seemed bluer. His cheekbones sharper, his nose stronger. He half growled as he sat at the opposite end of the couch to where Poseidon’s head was, using his hands to spread Poseidon’s legs.

“What are you— oh my gods!”

Zeus grabbed his dick in a fist, suddenly stroking as fast as he could, leaning over Poseidon with one hand braced on the couch, smirking down at him. Poseidon’s eyes felt like they were going to
pop out of their sockets, shoulders and legs spasming underneath Zeus, hands suddenly grabbing at 
Zeus’s shoulder blades as he unintentionally brought him down. “Holy... shit, Zeus...Fuck!” Heat 
curled in his lower abdomen,

Zeus didn’t complain, merely leaned his head down and began to suck at Poseidon’s neck, making 
Poseidon’s eyes rolled back as Zeus practically gave him a speed handjob. After going so long 
without release, he was close…

“Oh, back off and let me have some.”

In a haze of lust, Poseidon looked up and saw Hades, standing as naked as a newborn at the edge of 
the couch, junk hanging directly in front of Poseidon’s face. He somehow managed to turn even 
redder, and with what little strength he could muster, lifted his hand up and began to stroke him a 
little. Hades seemed to choke on air, breath getting caught in his throat.

Zeus looked up at Hades, one eyebrow cocked and face split into a grin, arm still working at a 
furious pace, stroking his member relentlessly. “So I’m guessing I can continue?”

Hades opened his mouth to speak, but Poseidon flicked his thumb over his tip and he choked on 
air, hips jerking a little.

Zeus took that as a yes, and Poseidon continued to gasp and jerk his hips up. In his haze, he still 
managed to pick a decent pace with Hades, who was now gripping his hair, though Poseidon 
couldn’t remember when that started. He could feel the heat slowly begin to increase, and he 
neared closer and closer to the edge…

And then Zeus whispered “Come for me” in his ear, and he exploded.

He swore his vision blacked out for a second, but when it came to all he saw was stars. His hips 
jerked violently, his arms flailed sporadically, mostly hitting Zeus’ shoulder as he shot strips of 
cum onto his own stomach, letting out a half-squeal that Zeus and Hades quickly blocked with their 
hands.

His body was still shaking as his hips lowered, mostly his thighs. Zeus and Hades’ hands were still 
covering his mouth, and his eyes were still rolling back as he took in deep breaths. The cum was 
hot and sticky against his stomach, but he didn’t really care. When he finally came back to his 
head, he realized that Zeus had been whispering sweet nothings into his ear, though he couldn’t 
remember for how long or when he started.

Hades deemed it safe to remove his hand, and Zeus quickly followed. Poseidon took deep breaths, 
staring wide-eyed at the ceiling, and then at Zeus’s flushed and sweaty face looming above him. 
“Holy... shit.”

Zeus let out a half-laugh, laying down on Poseidon which would’ve crushed him usually but his 
weight was evenly distributed so it didn’t matter too much. He rested his face in the junction where 
Poseidon’s neck met his shoulder, breathing lightly into it, making Poseidon shiver though not in a 
sexual way. Even though he was stark naked. Even he couldn’t recover that fast.

Eventually, Zeus got up, and Poseidon finally came fully back to reality as he saw his member 
curled up against his flat, hard stomach, almost purple, hard as a rock, nearly painful-looking. 
When he glanced over at Hades, he wasn’t too far off. Poseidon must’ve let him go while he was 
orgasming. “Oh, shit, sorry. I’ll help with that…”

Zeus looked as if he wouldn’t protest if he was offered 800 billion dollars, and Hades, though
better at hiding it, wasn’t too far off.

Poseidon was now embarrassed again. How was he supposed to do this? His left hand was about as useful as the tables in the middle of pizzas…

Zeus decided to make things easier for him, and stood up, standing right beside Hades. He was a little shorter and a little leaner, but the difference was slight and Poseidon was basically faced with two very large, very (well now somewhat) muscular, very hot men right in front of him, as hard as metal.

Well.

This wasn’t where he expected to be this morning.

Nonetheless, he sat up on the edge of the couch, sat right in front of Hades’ right leg and Zeus’ left.

He couldn’t really help it; he just kind of stared for a minute. They weren’t astronomically big like they were when they were gods (listen: clothes were a high-tech invention and weren’t around when he was born, okay? Don’t make it weird), but they were both bigger than him, and bigger than he expected. He really did get the worst of it, huh? The whole body changing thing. God, 5’9. He still couldn’t get over it. It wasn’t even that short, but when your usually over 12 feet tall, 5’9 is a little traumatic.

Not really knowing what to do, he grabbed Hades’s dick again and began to stroke, making Hades sigh as his head fell back. It felt soft but rock solid in his hands, warm and heavy as he stroked it in his palm. He merely stared at Zeus’s erection as he did this, not really sure what to do.

As if sensing his hesitation, Zeus grabbed his own member and gently guided it towards his mouth. Poseidon stared up at him, eyes bulging out again. Zeus was looking at him softly, though the lustful look was still apparent. “Only if your comfortable,” he whispered.

Poseidon swallowed and looked down again, staring directly at it. The tip was only an inch or so away from his face, and he eventually nodded, hesitantly leaning his head forward. He glanced up at Zeus’s lust darkened face once more before using his other hand to keep it steady and making the final lean forward, swiping his tongue across the tip. It tasted mostly like skin, with a trace of saltiness. It wasn’t the best thing Poseidon had ever tasted, but it certainly wasn’t the worst. Zeus let out a small, satisfied sigh. “Keep going.”

Poseidon swallowed once more before wrapping the entire tip in his mouth, sucking gently. He pulled his lips halfway across his teeth, trying in vain to do a somewhat good job. It had been at least a century since he’d given one, only received it…Judging by Zeus’ little gasp and the way he stepped a little closer, Poseidon was doing something right. He breathed through his nose as he swiped the underside of the tip with his tongue, then over the very tip again. Zeus grabbed his hair and gently pushed him forward. Poseidon continued to stroke Hades, whose eyes Poseidon knew were watching this whole thing, as Zeus’s member was pushed deeper into his mouth. Zeus sighed again, breath catching a little. It was a heavy weight on his tongue as he swirled it around the underside, a little more salty around here. Getting a little more confident, Poseidon went deeper on his own, getting about half way down before he had to pull back for air. He went back down on him again, this time bobbing his head a little, moving up and down, only going back up his dick when he was afraid his gag reflex would kick in.

“Fuck,” Hades whispered, hips jerking a little, “that’s hot.” Zeus’s grip tightened on his hair, and he started moving his hips gently, though Poseidon couldn’t tell if it was on purpose or not.
Poseidon popped off and leaned down a little to lick a stripe from his ball sack to the tip, before going back down again. “Fuck, Poseidon,” Zeus muttered, head falling back a little.

To be honest, he wasn’t making a whole lot of noise, and Poseidon was starting to get embarrassed. He had accidentally walked in on Zeus getting a blowjob once, and he wasn’t exactly the quietest guy. He wasn’t pornstar loud, but he was definitely a moaner. His cheeks heated from more than just lust, and in vain he used his free hand to reach the bits where his mouth couldn’t. It seemed to help a little, but he still wasn’t making near as much noise as he had with that random girl…

Poseidon tried a little harder, still stroking Hades as he hallowed his cheeks, moving his head back and forth and twisting his hand a little faster. Zeus still didn’t make a lot of sound, in fact barely any, and Poseidon felt tears of embarrassment prick at the corners of his eyes. *Aw, c’mon... I can’t be that bad…*

He tried everything. No really, he did. He tried bobbing his head faster, fondling his balls, licking at the tip, hollowing his cheeks...still no noise. Eventually, Poseidon just couldn’t take the awkwardness Zeus must’ve been feeling and popped off, face no doubt the equivalent of a tomato as he stared at the pile of clothes by the couch. He was still stroking Hades at a steady, slowly crescendoing pace, whose jaw was clenched and hips were jerking, face screwed up.

“Sorry,” he mumbled. “I’ll just finish you up when I’m done Hades.” God, this was embarrassing. He would no doubt be teased about this for another millenia…

“Why did you stop?” Zeus grunted. “I was almost done.”

Poseidon blinked up at him. “Oh.”

“Well,” Hades said, though his voice wavered a little as Poseidon brushed his thumb across his tip, “I say we switch. You got the blowjob and I got the handjob, now you get the handjob and I get the blowjob. It’s only fair.”

Zeus glowered at him, looking like he was about to argue, before just sighing and rolling his eyes. “I’m not about to lose this orgasm so whatever, but I’ll be complaining later I hope you know.”

Hades rolled his eyes and was about to say something else, but Poseidon grabbed his dick and licked a stripe over his tip, and whatever words he was about to say got lost in a gasp.

Poseidon pulled back. “Okay, well—” he stopped himself to clear his throat as his voice came out in a far-too-soft rasp. “Okay, well I need you guys to switch, because I can only stroke with my right hand.”

The two men above him were quick to comply, immediately switching positions. Poseidon glanced up at Hades for a moment, before he repeated the process of what he did with Zeus, licking at his tip and then going farther down on him. Hades was a little bigger, and his hands were a little stronger as they gripped at his hair. He was also a little louder than Zeus, gasping and sighing and grunting low and gravelly “Poseidon”’s, that made Poseidon’s dick suddenly interested again. He stroked Zeus at a swift, fast pace, and he bobbed his head at a similar one.

“Shit, Poseidon I’m gonna—” Hades came first, but was a little too late to completely pull away and ended up shooting two strips of thick, boiling cum into his mouth and the rest on his face. Poseidon recoiled, the taste a little foul and texture a little too much.

“*Fuck, that’s hot—ah, shit!*” Zeus came next, shooting his load over Poseidon’s hand and
shoulder, and getting a little on the floor and couch.

The taste was still on his tongue and he didn’t really know how else to get rid of it, so he swallowed it.

Pro tip: don’t do that. He had to repress a shudder as its slimy consistency slid down his throat. Hades sank to his knees in front of him, and Zeus soon followed. They were both breathing heavily, and Zeus still looked a little dazed, while Hades looked almost completely out of it. Poseidon could still feel cum on his face, mostly on the highs of his cheekbones and upper lip. When they both seemed to come back to reality, Hades looked at him sympathetically. “Shit, sorry...I didn’t expect it to come so soon.” He hesitantly used his thumb to wipe some of the substance off of his cheeks. “Did I get any in your mouth?”

“I swallowed it,” Poseidon answered, throat already sore.

“Fuck, Poseidon,” Zeus muttered.

Hades seemed to agree. He suddenly looked down at Poseidon’s pelvis, and cocked an eyebrow. “Already?”

Poseidon looked down himself. His member was already half-hard again, trying desperately to become fully erect once more. His face heated up. Not only did that imply he was one horny bastard, it was also noticeably smaller than both of his brothers’. It wasn’t that it was small, it was just smaller, okay?

Zeus grinned at him a little. “Takin’ after me, aren’t you?”

Poseidon laughed at that, though kept it quiet. He sincerely hoped no one had heard anything. The last thing he needed was Percy asking him what he had been doing all night…

“I mean, you helped me out, so…” Hades grabbed his member in a fist, and Poseidon gasped. Hades began stroking it a little, and heat began to swirl in Poseidons’ gut once more. “Shit, Hades,” he breathed. Hades gave him one last smirk before diving in and enveloping half of his dick in his mouth in one go. Poseidon gasped, lurching forward and gripping at his hair. *Fuck. Fuck fuck fuck!*

Hades’s mouth was warm and wet, his tongue dragging along the underside of his member, swirling and sucking, making quiet but obscene noises. Poseidon twisted his dark hair between his comparably fair, nimble fingers, accidentally tugging as Hades went almost to the base and began bobbing.

“Fuck, Hades,” he breathed. “*Shit!*”

Hades used his left hand to fondle Poseidon’s balls, and Poseidon’s hip twisted and jerked as his whole body spasmed, head throwing itself back. “Fuck!”

His second orgasm came quicker than the first somehow, and though next to nothing came out of his tip, he knew an orgasm when he felt one. His entire body spasmed and flailed, hips rising and thighs shaking, white hot pleasure coursing through him like electricity through his veins. He had to slap a hand over his mouth to stop the sounds formulating in his throat. Hades pulled away and grinned at him as he stroked him through it, the few strips of white falling on the floor, a little bit catching onto Hades’s bare chest. Poseidon’s chest hurt as he breathed heavily, gasping for air. He fell back onto the couch, upper back reaching the back of the couch, leaving his body slanted, dick still near Hades’s face. There was always something special about the second orgasm.

Soon, he felt both Hades and Zeus collapse next to him on the couch. A sudden wave of exhaustion
crashed over him, and he suddenly wanted nothing more than to fall asleep right where he was. In fact, he was about to, until:

“We need to clean up. We don’t need our children seeing the mess we’ve made, or them waking up to us butt-naked and sleeping together,” Hades said, grunting a little as he sat up.

Poseidon blinked tiredly at him, eyelids like sand. “Do we have to?”

Hades rolled his eyes and stood. “Yes. Do you want Percy to see you with dried cum all over your face?”

Poseidon shuddered. Nope. That wasn’t happening. He could imagine it now: the first look of confusion, then realization, then complete and utter embarrassment and discomfort. He probably wouldn’t talk to him for months.

Using that as leverage, Poseidon stood tiredly, using Hades’ bicep as something to help him up. When he stood, he let out a fearful gasp as his legs shook beneath him, almost giving out. He clung onto Hades’s arm again, who caught him. “Are you alright?” Hades whispered, voice laced with concern.

Poseidon’s cheeks heated up a little. “Yeah, I’m fine.” When he let go of Hades, his legs still felt weak beneath him.

Zeus stood next, and he and Poseidon absentmindedly followed Hades into the bathroom. When all three of them were crammed into the tight space, Zeus closed the door behind them and flicked on the lights.

Poseidon wasn’t sure if it was just that they were all too tired for it to be awkward, or if they had all collectively agreed that they were just really horny and it got the job done, but rather than awkwardness in the air, it was a content, sleepy feeling. He was sure that in the morning, either it would be entirely awkward, or they’d pretend like this never even happened. For now, he was grateful for the easiness in the air, the post-orgasmic half-bliss that consumed the air between them.

“Should we take a shower?” Zeus asked quietly. Poseidon turned to look at him, but accidentally took a step forward and slammed right into him.

“Sorry,” he mumbled. He was way too spent now for his little guy to react, but Poseidon sure did notice the fact that he was cramped between two hot, sweaty men, all three of them in the nude and covered in cum. The dim, yellow light above them flickered a little.

“It’ll be too loud,” Hades whispered back. “Just clean yourself up as best you can. Poseidon, I’ll take care of you.”

Poseidon looked up at him, but he didn’t respond, instead merely grabbing a washcloth and running the tap, waiting for it to be warm before he dipped the pale yellow cloth under the steady steam. He turned it until it was soaked, then shut the water off and wrung it out. “C’mere,” he said, taking Poseidon’s hand and lightly pulling him over to the toilet so Zeus could have some room at the sink.

Poseidon looked up at him, but Hades didn’t meet his eyes, only glancing around at his face. He brought the moist cloth up to his face, and Poseidon recoiled for a moment before relaxing as he felt it’s warmth on his face. It was soothing, almost. Hades gently wiped it over his face, focusing mostly on his cheekbones, then moving down to his lower lip. By now, the seed had dried a little,
and he used a little force to get the trickier parts, but other than that made it massage-like. Poseidon relaxed but did not close his eyes, instead choosing to study Hades’ concentrated face, the way his eyebrows furrowed slightly and his lips tugged down into a light frown. HI's cheeks were flushed red and his hear was a sweaty mess, but he looked beautiful. He moved to his shoulder, where small goops of it were splattered. His shoulder felt bony under Hades’s touch, frail with youth and narrow with boyhood. It hadn’t felt like that in a long time. Lastly, he moved down to the stomach above his navel, where he had cum all over himself. It was the most dried of all, but Hades still made it relaxing as he wiped the smooth skin, slowly ridding of the sticky substance. When he was finished, he slowly removed the cloth and met his eyes. They were brown, unlike his brother’s. A dark brown, almost black. Poseidon thought they were beautiful, too.

Swallowing, Poseidon tore his eyes away and instead looked at Hades’ hands, where he then took the cloth from him. He stared straight forward at Hades’s chest, and then lifted the cloth to remove the light trail of white that smeared his upper left pec. Now in light, Poseidon could see the definition of Hades’s torso, though much less defined than he assumed was his usual. After all, Poseidon had been left with pretty much half the muscle he’d had, and now pretty much all of it was gone, replaced with—well, nothing. He was going to say fat, but he didn’t have any of that either. He was practically skin and bones now, with the lightest definition you could imagine, like a skinny eighth grade football player.

He could feel Hades’ eyes on him as he did this, but he kept his eyes trained firmly on the spot he was wiping at. When he was done, he let his eyes linger for another moment before he looked up to meet his eyes. Poseidon had the sudden urge to kiss him, but he stood still.

Zeus quietly excused himself to go clean the cum on the floor, and they still remained how they were. Poseidon was caged into the wall, with Hades in front of him, a shelf on his right and the bath on left, but he did not feel trapped. Hades seemed taller now, and Poseidon couldn’t tell if it was just their close proximity or the fact that his head was tilted downwards to look at him. Poseidon could almost feel Hades’ body heat, imagine how the warm skin would feel against his. Perhaps in a hug, perhaps in something more. But nothing happened, they only stared and stared and stared. Poseidon wasn’t sure why, but they did.

It was only when Zeus came into the bathroom to throw the wad of toilet paper he’d used, now sticky with strips of semen, did Hades and Poseidon break eye contact, following Zeus out the door and into the living room once more. All three of them dressed again, then crawled under the covers, falling asleep as quick as lights. Their dreams were filled with the events of the night and fantasies of what could’ve happened, of each other’s eyes and the warmth of pleasure-soaked skin. Poseidon only wondered what the morning would bring.

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********I got a suggestion about what would happen if Poseidon had actually died!! And ahhh. Set in chapter 28, “Death, Apollo, and Other Randomness (Otherwise Known as Chaos)” Hades POV. Mild gore*******

The mist burned his lungs, dried out his throat and watered his eyes. He couldn’t see, he couldn’t breathe, he couldn’t think. Well, nothing other than get me out, get me out… He began to cough, chest wracking as he threw his elbow over his mouth, tasting the cool salt of his skin as he wracked, eyes burning as he squinted through the dark mist.

As if by a miracle, as soon as he was about to give up, the mist dissipated. He coughed further, clearing the last of the mist out of his lungs, before he glanced hurriedly at the others to see if they
were okay. Panic seeped through his chest as he saw his son, curled up on the ground, frail body wracking with coughs, his hacks jerking his entire body off the ground. Instinctively, his feet guided him towards his small figure, but he stopped in his tracks as he caught two other figures out of the corner of his eye.

His heart nearly broke through his ribs as he turned to look at them. The significantly taller of the two had his hand under the shorter one’s chin, and his mouth was moving, though Hades couldn’t hear what he was saying. They were about 50 yards away, but even from this distance Hades could make out Poseidon, his shortish black hair even more dishevelled than usual, and Chaos, with his pale hair and fairer skin, his well muscled arm flexing with his tight grip on Poseidon’s face. Hades took a step forward, seeing a little red. Get your filthy hands off of him...

He froze in his tracks, and his heart soon followed. Chaos drew a long knife and held it high in the air, the silver blade gleaming in the high sunlight. He felt his world slow down, the world around him growing muted and far away. It was almost as if in slow motion when Chaos lowered the blade, the glare of the silver blinding as he brought it down, swiftly plummeting it into Poseidon’s unarmed chest, right through his heart.

He wanted to scream, but he couldn’t. It was as if sand had been poured down his throat by the buckets, clogging his lungs and mouth, suffocating him to the point of muteness. His ears registered Zeus’s scream of “No!”, but he did not. It felt as though the world had stopped completely, given up it’s attempts of slowing down and just dropping dead. Even as Chaos removed the nine-inch blade, it seemed as if nothing had moved.

Poseidon’s hoodie was blood-soaked in seconds, rust-coloured mortality spilling across his front like milk from a child’s tipped glass. He sunk to his knees, slender fingers soaked red as he clutched at his chest. It was only his blood-curdling scream that snapped Hades out of his daze, though he could not remember the distance he ran to get to his brother, only felt the pain as his knees slammed against the marble floor.

He heard Zeus and a few others come up behind him, but he did not acknowledge them, kept his eyes trained on his little brother, whose mouth was agape, eyes wide and glazed as he stared blankly at the feet of his murderer. No, no, no don’t say that. He’s not going to die...

He reached out and caught Poseidon as he tipped over, then brought him to lay over his lap. “No, no, no,” was chanting from his lips, but he could not remember starting to say it. Poseidon was light on his lap, and he cradled his head gently on one of his palms, the other under his thighs. Poseidon looked at him, and Hades almost broke. His eyes were full of pain, teary and wide-eyed. The world around Hades seemed to mute, as if he and Poseidon were under water and everyone else was on shore, only watching as they drowned. He registered Zeus slamming down in front of them, but he did not react. “Poseidon,” he whispered, “please no…”

Poseidon smiled a little, and his words sounded pained as he struggled to get them out. “I guess—” he had to pause as he seemed to gurgle, and Hades knew that it was on his own blood, “—I guess I’ll be able to spend—” another pause, “—more than a few days in the Underworld after this, huh?” He tried to laugh, but stop as he gurgled again.

Hades could feel his heart shattering like glass, falling into his lungs and vital organs. “Don’t say that, Poseidon.” He could hear the tears in his own words. “Please don’t say that. You’re gonna be okay, okay?”

Poseidon smiled at him but did not respond, turning to Zeus. “And hey,” he said, choking again, “you better come v-visit me, o-okay?” Hades could tell it was getting harder and harder for him to breathe, let alone talk.
Zeus was crying as he nodded, thick tears streaming down his cheeks. “Okay.” It came out as a broken whisper.

Finally, Poseidon turned to Percy, whom Hades hadn’t noticed was even there. He was sat beside, but a little bit away from Zeus, face horrified as he stared down at his father, tears already streaming down his cheeks, so similar to those of his father. Poseidon reached up to grasp at his hand, and Percy took it with a shaky fingers. “And Percy, I—” he choked again, and he took longer to recover this time, “I love you, okay? And, and—” he took a shuddering breath, and Hades could feel it as he was approaching his end, “try to get along with Triton, okay? I'll miss you, and t-tell Sally that I’ll miss her too, but that I hopefully won’t see her for a little bit, alright? Can you—” he had to pause once more, “—can you do that for me?”

Percy was half sobbing as he nodded, usually happy face crumpled and defeated. “Yes, Dad.” It was a teary, broken whisper.

Poseidon smiled and nodded, then turned to all of them, arm growing visibly weak while he clung to Percy’s hand. “I love you guys. All of you.”

A chorus of “I love you too”s were echoed back to him, but Hades couldn’t seem to open his mouth, let alone make a sound. Poseidon looked at him again and seemed to understand, giving him another sad, sad smile.

His eyes quickly widened a little more, and this time his gurgling was deep and throaty, and his blood-soaked chest struggled to breathe. His fighting body seemed to surrender, and he fell limp against Hades, eyes losing all light and life all at once, falling to a blank slate of lifeless bluish-green.

Percy let out a heart-wrenching sob, while Zeus started a melody of “no”s, the word so repeated on his tongue it started to sound like it was from a foreign language. Jason’s jaw was clenched and his eyes were a little teary as he sank to his knees beside Percy, throwing an arm around his shoulders as comfort. Thalia hesitantly did the same, but instead to her father. Her eyes were hesitant and guarded as she placed a gentle arm over his shoulders, waiting for a reaction. All Zeus did was collapse against her side, shaking his head as he continued his rant of “no”s. Hades saw her swallow heavily, turning her gaze back to Poseidon.

Hades barely registered any of this, staring blankly at Poseidon’s lifeless form in his lap. It was as if his entire world had stopped, like everything suddenly crashed down around him, collapsing his lungs and crushing his bones. He only cradled Poseidon’s head, then gently started to comb through his hair with his fingers. It was silky beneath his touch, it’s inkiness coated a little in red. Hades only continued to stroke, refusing to meet his lifeless eyes, only glancing at his fluffy and full-of-life hair, not at the rest of his face. He could see it out of the corner of his eye, though, with its deadly paleness, it’s sickly green tinge, the way his skin was waxy as it pulsed tightly across his bones. Hades smiled a little, recounting to himself the times that he had touched Poseidon’s hair when they hugged, or the way he used to watch it as he threw his head back when he laughed, the way it moved in the wind and brushed across his youthful face, full of life and happiness.

He continued to smile as he felt his heart shatter bit by bit, and then finally felt it slip off his face as Nico sat beside him, reaching out his bony, paper-white fingers to intertwine with his. Hazel sat on his other side, leaning her small body against him.

It finally hit him, then. That Poseidon was dead. Dead as if he never even existed at all, like he had always just been a lifeless corpse cradled on his lap. His breaths were shaky then, and his world grew blurry. Instead of remembering his laughter, memories of his tear-soaked face and broken eyes flashed into Hades’ memory, of his crumpled face and hollow smile. This was his fault. If he
had kept track of Poseidon in the mist, made sure he was safe, he would’ve still been alive. Perhaps Hades would be the one that was dead, but that didn’t matter to him. Poseidon could’ve still been alive if it wasn’t for him.

However, there was one more person at fault.

Said person’s sick, deep laughter echoed across the marble, cutting like knives across the hollow air.

Hades’s heart stopped.

“This is so sad,” his voice drawled. “Heavens, I’m going to cry.”

A sudden surge of blind rage consumed Hades’s whole being, and his grip tightened dangerously on Poseidon’s head. He took deep, shuddering breaths, the corners of his vision going red. His hair fell into his face as he looked up slowly, catching Chaos’s amused, crazed eyes. His god-like face was split into a maniacal grin, his eyes flashing.

“Why,” he tutted, “you did care about him a lot didn’t you, big one? I truly hate to be the one to separate two kind, loving, compassionate souls.” He spoke like a rollercoaster or a piece of music, with differing speeds, pianos and fortès colouring his words. “But alas——” he paused, flourishing his dagger, “—I’m afraid I had no choice.”

The red seeped further into his vision, and fire coursed through his veins. He was shaking as he stood, making sure Poseidon’s head was gently placed on the marble before he let go, body tense as he maintained eye contact with Chaos. He felt different when he stood, bigger and stronger, like his punch could take out armies of men. His mind was blinded with rage, and his sword was heavy as he picked it up.

“Oh my,” Chaos laughed, the clear, sharp sound cutting through the air, “a god of the dirt, now mortal, facing me? I’m simply terrified!” He laughed again, and Hades’s vision turned scarlet.

He charged, and he heard battle cries behind him as the others charged too. Hades’ own cry tore out of his chest, turning into more of a scream as he charged, sword raised high, sprinting faster than he ever had. Chaos only smiled, turning his head as if curious, before he evaporated into mist, repeating what he’d done before.

But it was different this time.

Not the way Chaos did it, but the way Hades felt about it. He didn’t care. He didn’t care that his lungs were burning, he didn’t care that his eyes watered dangerously, he didn’t care that he couldn’t breathe. He was going to find that bastard and he was going to kill him, and send him straight to the depths of tartarus once he was done.

When the mist did dissipate, Nico’s body still wracked with coughs, and Hazel and Jason had lost their swords, but Percy, Thalia, Zeus, and Hades marched on, turning their blood-thirsty heads for wherever the bastard was.

They found him another 50 yards away from Hades, and Hades didn’t hesitate. For a split second, Hades saw surprise and fear in Chaos’ eyes, and that only propelled him forward, another scream tearing from his throat as he charged once more, sword ready for strike.

He evaporated again, but just before he did:

“He’s always 50 yards away!” Hades could tell the scream tore from Jason’s throat.
“What?” Percy screamed back, voice deep and demanding. When Hades looked at him, his tear-soaked face was now crazed, a deadly, terrifying glint in his eyes, now the colour of a stormy ocean. His face was curled up in a snarl, and he looked more like his grandfather than Hades could have imagined.

Jason’s voice had a little fear laced in it when he repeated himself. “He’s always 50 yards away from where he evaporated!”

Before he could explain further, Chaos turned to mist. Hades barely let himself cough as Jason’s words echoed in his head over and over. He tore in the direction Chaos had gone to last time, feet barely touching the ground as he ran. He was almost scared he’d overshoot it, until—

“There he is!” It was Hazel.

Hades twisted around. “Where?” he yelled, voice stronger than he knew possible.

“There!” Hazel pointed in the direction of where Poseidon’s body lay, and Hades saw red once more. Chaos had his foot on Poseidon’s side, his face a little scrunched up as he turned his limp body over.

Percy and Zeus were already three steps ahead of him as they started to charge, and soon he and the rest followed. He was the farthest from him, and he cursed himself.

“Everyone run in different directions!” Jason screeched. “I’ll go 50 yards behind Poseidon, Thalia, you go 50 yards beside his head, Percy you go 50 yards behind his feet, and Zeus you go 50 yards beside his other side! Everyone else, fill the spaces between!”

A melody of “Okay” and “Alright”’s echoed after his call. Hades continued to charge, this time anticipating the mist. The little bit of panic in Chaos’s eyes fuelled him forward faster, legs and arms pumping at the same pace as the anger in his veins. As soon as Chaos evaporated, Hades blindly turned in the direction between Jason and Percy, sprinting with all his strength. If he remembered correctly, 50 yards was half the length of a football field, but he hadn’t seen a football field in decades so that was kind of useless. So he winged it, thrusting himself forward as mist invaded his nose and lungs, burning down the back of his throat. He snarled against the cold substance, feet flying across the marble.

It took longer for the mist to form into Chaos this time, but when it did, Hades whipped his head around, feet ready to fly in any direction they must.

He had already spotted him by the time Zeus yelled out “There!”.

He was between Percy and Nico, who was between Percy and Zeus. Nico was coughing up a storm, but there was a blaze in his eyes as he charged forward, his night-black sword blinding in the light of the sun. Hades didn’t even register his feet moving, only the heavy hilt of the sword in his hands and the snarl that curled up on his lip. It suddenly occurred to him as his feet slammed across the sacred rock that the 15 minutes was almost up, that Chaos would be resorted to nothing but another god or titan, something that Hades had taken on before, and won. It felt almost surreal as a laugh ripped its way up his chest, tearing from his lungs and echoing back to him as crazy, as grief-stricken insanity. He wanted to kill this man. He wanted to tear him apart limb for limb, watch him as he writhed in pain, watch as he screamed for mercy.

Percy reached him first, but he once again turned to mist. Hades snarled, but wasted no time running in the direction his left side faced. His mind was so clouded with anger that he didn’t register how far he was running, only that his feet were taking him to his destination. When the
mist cleared, it was immediate when Thalia called: “Over here!” It was so straining to be loud that her voice cracked, words vibrant with emotion.

Hades turned in her direction and saw her only a few yards away from him, and he bolted faster than he ever had, even throughout this battle. He was starting to get a stitch in his side, his lungs were burning in their struggle to breathe, and his throat was as dry as the Sahara desert, but he trudged on, feet resembling his swift-footed nephew more than anything. Once again, he raised his sword, sensing the seven others—he choked. Six others following behind him.

Chaos looked panicked as they approached, and it made Hades grin like a maniac. Another battle cry tore from his throat, and Chaos unsheathed his dagger, face also curled into a snarl.

Thalia was the first to slam her weapon down, and it clattered loudly against Chaos’ blade. The two struggled as Hades approached, Thalia with her teeth clenched and face screwed up in determination, loyally keeping her blade steadily in the air as it struggled against Chaos’. Hades yelled once again as he slammed between the two, throwing his entire body at Chaos. Chaos’ eyes went wide as he slammed into the marble below him, and Hades pushed his knees into his stomach and held a blade to his throat. There was going to be no battle, no fight. He was going to die, and Hades was going to be the one that killed him. It was as simple as that.

Chaos wheezed at the sudden impact, but when he recovered he smiled up at Hades, a little laugh escaping him. His paper-white teeth gleamed blindingly in the sunlight, his blond hair falling around him like a crown. His colourful eyes were cold but amused as he stared, his laugh throaty and deep. “Well, it looks like I—”

Hades slit his throat before he could finish the sentence.

Ichor oozed out of the wound, soaking his chest and collarbones in gold. It was similar to his hair, even in the way it shone in the light. Hades grinned, feeling himself go insane as he stared down at the body below him.

“Fuck, you didn’t let me kill him!” Zeus thundered. It sounded humorous, but as Hades looked up at him, his eyes were genuinely stormy, his face clouded with anger as he looked at Hades. “You bastard!” He raised his sword again.

Hades snarled at him. “Would you like me to un-kill him?”

Just as Zeus was about to respond, Hades’ knees exploded with pain as they suddenly hit the cold, hard marble below. “What the—?” When he looked back down at the ground, Chaos was no longer there, replaced with mist once more.

“What? I killed him—”

“Why is it like that?” Hazel’s voice shook with fear.

Hades whipped around, and saw the mist, this time confined into a small space, a stormy, black colour. He scrambled back as it formed into a point. In the blink of an eye, the mist had plummeted into Thalia’s chest, as if were never even out of it in the first place.

Thalia screamed, collapsing onto one knee. Hades throat closed in terror.

Her whole body shook, shoulders jolting, head spasming. He looked like he was getting electrocuted. When she stilled, Hades felt the colour drain out of his face. She looked up, and Hades’ fears were true.
Her eyes were no longer her father’s, but instead her great-great-grandfather’s. Her smile was cold as she stood, her eyes hard as ice. When her feet were firmly planted on the ground, her posture was stiff and proper, not a bit like the Thalia he had come to know.

Hades closed his eyes. He knew what to do.

He only opened his eyes as he heard her battle cry, as she ran forward, spear held high. He charged at Nico, whose eyes widened as he felt around for his sword. Panic worked its way into Hades’ chest. “Nico!” he screamed, “where the fuck is your sword?” He hadn’t meant for it to come out so harsh, but the panic coursing through his veins didn’t care.

Nico could only bolt out of the way of Thalia’s spear, and Hades looked around desperately for the all-black weapon. He found it, the inkiness of it stark from the white below it. He bolted towards it, but his heart stopped as a scream of agony and multiple screams of “Nico!” were followed after it. He nonetheless picked up the sword, and his heart jumped into his throat as he took in the sight before him.

Nico had been stabbed in the shoulder, Thalia’s spear penetrating just barely under his bony collarbone. Hades couldn’t tell if it was in his left or right shoulder, but he didn’t care as he charged forward, blind anger coursing through him once more. The world and a niece…

He saw red as he charged, but nothing tore out of his throat this time as he thrusted his sword through Thalia’s back, her screams penetrating through his mind. She fell to one knee again, and Hades fell with her.

He no longer saw red as he took in what he’d done, felt the weight of her on his lap, just as he had with Poseidon moments before. I killed her…

He’d heard the other’s screams as he did it, but only registered them now. Jason collapsed in front of him, and the others soon followed. Hazel looked mortified as he stared down at Thalia, Jason and Percy teary as they looked at her with widened eyes, while Zeus dropped to his knees, only staring at her limp body.

Slowly, mist started to seep out of her mouth, and Hades watched it numbly as it formed into Chaos’ body.

His cold, dead body, to be specific. Hades didn’t feel an ounce of celebration. He felt nothing but guilt, nothing but an overwhelming self-hatred and an urge to hit something.

When the mist was out of her body, Thalia’s eyes were blank and dull. Her chest did not move. Jason let out a sob, and Percy bit his lip to prevent one of his own. He tried to stop Jason as he lurched forward, gripping onto his older sister’s corpse like a lifeline, shoulders wracking with sobs. Percy wrapped his arm around his shoulders, a few tears leaking from his eyes. Hazel started to cry then, too, her youthful face looking much older with the dirt, blood and tears caking it. Hades pursed his lips as he looked at them, feeling a sudden urge to cry as well. Zeus was soon beside Jason, still only staring as he gently reached out to grasp her cold, lifeless hand.

His heart skipped about eight beats as he remembered Nico.

He whipped his head around, and saw him lying on the marble, eyes open as he stared at them. Hades’s heart broke about eight thousand times over.

He had seen Nico’s eyes like this before, seen the way they shattered when he said that he should’ve died instead of Bianca. But this was even worse than that, and that’s what scared Hades.
He looked entirely and utterly betrayed, lying a good few metres away from them, looking as dead as one could while still breathing. When he caught Hades’s eyes, he pursed his lips and nodded, as if this was something he needed for confirmation. He had tears in his eyes, and Hades wasn’t sure if they were from pain or betrayal. Most likely both.

“Nico...” he whispered, looking over.

That made the whole group collectively turn their heads over, and Hazel gasped, rushing over. Hades panicked in his rush to follow, only making sure Thalia’s head gently touched the marble before he sprinted over to his son, collapsing by his side. “Nico, are you okay?” It was a stupid question, he was obviously not okay. His wound was bleeding heavily, even with the spear still in it. His face was even ghostlier than usual, pale and waxy with pain and blood loss. His inky hair made the difference more so. He reached out for it, but Nico recoiled.

“Don’t touch me,” he spat.

Hades knew he fucked up this time. Like, really, really, really fucked up this time. If there was an award show for fuck ups, he just won it.

His own son thought he picked his niece, who he met not two weeks ago, over him. And he had a good reason to. Hades didn’t even remember his own son had a potentially fatal wound, was too self-absorbed to think that he needed help.

“I...” He didn’t know what to say, or what to do. He had never treated a wound.

“Nico, please,” Hazel whispered, reaching out.

“Don’t touch me either!” Nico yelled, but it got cut off short as he gurgled on something, blood beginning to soak through his dark hoodie. Hades froze with terror. No, he couldn’t lose Nico too...

“Apollo,” he whispered. “Apollo, please...come.”

There was no flash of golden light behind him, no sudden godly presence, and he pursed his lips. “We...we need to get you to Addelyn. Can you shadow-travel? Please, baby, it’s only a short way for you...” The pet name slid between his lips before he could stop it, but even if he could he was not sure he would.

“No,” Nico rasped out, turned away from him.

“What?”

“No.”

Hades felt his heart get clenched up in an iron fist. “You mean you can’t shadow travel, honey?” Now he couldn’t stop the names, but he barely registered them anyway, only stared directly at Nico.

Nico shook his head.

Hades’s heart shattered. “Please, Nico. Please. Don’t do it for me, or...or even yourself. Do it for...Will, okay? Do it for Will, okay baby?”

That seemed to strike a cord in Nico, and the leftover remnants of Hades’ heart shattered further. His son cared more about his significant other than his father. And he couldn’t even blame him.
“There’s…” Nico’s voice was weak. “There’s no shadows…”

Hades stood, carefully bringing Nico into a bridal carry, wary of the spear. Nico cried out in pain, and Hades winced, almost dropping him. “Sorry, baby, sorry...hold on okay? Hazel. Hold the spear upright, okay honey?”

Hazel scrambled to comply, lifting herself on her tip-toes to hold the long shaft upright.

“Thank you, lovely.” Hades couldn’t remember the last time he had used any of these nicknames, but he didn’t care. “Keep it up while we walk, okay?”

Hazel nodded, struggling a little to keep on her toes as they walked. Nico’s face was screwed up in pain as he let out soft whimpering the shattered fragments of his shattered heart shattered further. He walked over to one of the many rocks walking on the other side to get to where it cast a shadow. There was only about two metres of space from the rock to the edge of the marble on this side, but it was more than enough space for them. Hades gently placed Nico on the ground and into the shadow. “Be careful, baby.” He leaned in to give a kiss to his forehead, but he was gone before he was halfway down.

Hades clenched his jaw, but straightened. Hazel looked at him with wide, scared eyes. “Is he going to be okay?”

Hades clenched his jaw, before he loosened it again and softened his expression as he looked down at his roman equivalent’s youngest child. His youngest child. “I don’t know, honey. I don’t know.” He hesitantly wrapped an arm around her shoulder, feeling that was the right thing to do. He didn’t know what was going on with him. Together, they walked back to Thalia’s body, and Hazel collapsed at her side once more.

Hades took one glance at the body, and couldn’t take any more. He clenched his jaw and looked away, turning and walking back to where the other corpse lay, still except for only his hair, blowing in the gentle breeze. Hades collapsed at Poseidon’s side, taking one of his hands in his. It was cold to the touch, clammy and lifeless. He grasped it tightly, rubbed his thumb across his bony knuckles, his pink fingertips.

Millions of possibilities ran through his head, of what could’ve been, of how many other laughs and heartbreaks and make ups could’ve happened in the future between the two brothers. Of all of the jokes that would never be said, of all of the cookies that would never be burned. He felt tears choke up in his throat, and the beginnings of them at his eyes.

He wasn’t sure why he started talking, but he did. Maybe it was therapeutic, maybe, deep down, he thought that Poseidon was still alive, could hear him speak and was only pretending to be dead for a good laugh. Regardless, he did it.

“Y’know,” he started, “I didn’t mean it all those times I called you short. I didn’t mean it as a bad thing. I mean—you are. But that’s not a bad thing. It means I can hug you better, I can lift you up. Maybe you don’t like that, but I do.” He took a deep breath, and it shuddered. “Maybe that’s what it’s always been like between us, hasn’t it? It’s always been about me, what I want. I wanted to say this, I wanted to do this, I wanted to believe this. It never did work out well for you, did it? I’m sorry.” He shifted his position, sat cross-legged. “Y’know, I would say that you also have things to apologize for, but you already did. Do you remember that day? We were out on Percy’s balcony, just after dawn. You were in the middle of Zeus and I, on one of the dirtier lawn chairs. I always assumed it was Percy’s, did you know that? I still think it is. I’m not sure if I’ll ask or not. Do you think I should?” He wasn’t waiting for a response, but it still hurt when he didn’t get one.
“You do have one more thing to apologize for, though,” he continued. “Leaving me. That’s what your doing, don’t you know? You’re leaving me. I expect an apology in the Underworld.” He shook his head. “I suppose I will see you again, huh? Damn, I’m actually stuck with you. Stuck with you forever. Forever and ever and ever. How am I going to deal?” He chuckled, and it was tear-soaked and throaty. “But it won’t be the same, will it? I’ll only be able to see you every so many years. I…” he choked a little, “I won’t be able to hug you ever again, either.” He paused for longer then, breathing deeply. “That still doesn’t mean being short is a bad thing.” He chuckled once more, but this time it was shakier. “Nothing about you will ever be a bad thing. You will never be a bad thing.” He fell silent once more, gripping Poseidon’s hand like a lifeline. Maybe it was.

And then something inside him broke, as easy as a pencil in a child’s hands, as quick as a heartbeat.

Like a child, he broke down, a sob tearing from deep inside him as he brought Poseidon back onto his lap, buried his face in his still chest, sobbing as hard as he ever had. He couldn’t see anything through his tears, his cheeks sopping wet in a matter of seconds. “I…” he choked on his own tears. “I just want you back.”

But he never fulfilled Hades’ wish. His crying was in vain that day, as was Hazel and Jason’s over Thalia and Zeus and Percy’s over both. The two of them never came back, never turned into a tree or bled ichor. They were both gone, gone like a feather in the wind. They never returned or jumped up with an “April Fools!” They never smiled again, their eyes never saw light for eternity. They never got a second chance, or a third chance in the younger’s case. They never felt anything ever again, never got hugged or kissed or teased. They were just gone.

Gone like the wind. Gone like they were never even there.

There would be no article in the paper about either of them, no story in the news. Their deaths would only be known in the whispers of the divine, the hopeless eyes of demigods. The emptiness to Perseus Jackson’s words, the hollowness of Jason Grace’s smile, the coldness of Zeus’s eyes and the numbness of Hades’s stare. The relapse Nico di Angelo would face, the sobs of Hazel Levesque late at night that no one but Frank Zhang could hear. The extra force the Hunters of Artemis would fight with, the more dead deer scattered across the forests. The sudden melancholy of the sea, the waves barely reaching the shore, the sea-life falling into a sudden depression. Their deaths would not be known, but they would be felt.

And so Hades was left on the marble of his brother’s old home, a place he never belonged, clinging onto nothing but false hope and the dead body of a man he had grown to love so deeply once more. He wasn’t sure if he would ever leave, he wasn’t sure if he could. He would never in spirit, at least. No, no, Hades didn’t die here, but his soul did, left here along with his baby brother, left alone to be carried off by the wind, where it would no doubt be carried to the sea. It would float along the salt-water scented air, drift along the coast, just a little above the sand. Then it would dip into the water, dive below the waves and coast, coast for hours and hours, days and days, weeks and weeks, months and months, years and years, decades and decades, centuries and centuries, millennia and millennia. Eternity.

Hades wished he could join it.

***hahahahahahahahahAHAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

Listen. That could’ve been the original ending so i don’t want to hear oNE COMPLAINT. No no jk jk but thank me later. Sorry for that y'all. But i must say: it was very therapeutic. Anyway, sorry if i made you cry! And if i didn’t then that’s not too surprising bc im kinda shit at writing
Hades slammed the bedroom door shut.

Poseidon closed his eyes, feeling the wetness inside them. He couldn’t tell if it was from frustration, anger, or hurt. Though he couldn’t see him, he knew Zeus was stood in front of the couch where he sat, fists curled at his sides, face red with anger.

Poseidon wasn’t sure how much longer he could take this, the constant arguing, the make ups that made him believe again only for it to crumble apart. The worst part was that it was essentially his fault this time: he had gone to the closest convenience store for some snacks, but had come home much later than he was supposed to. It was an argument in itself, convincing Hades to let him go alone. Admittedly, he had been a little stubborn, but he wasn’t a child. He was pretty sure he could go to the fucking convenience store alone, even if the sun was setting. He could’ve just let Hades go, and in hindsight, that would’ve stopped this whole mess from happening, but Hades wasn’t about to tell him what he could and couldn’t do just because he was ‘protective’.

Poseidon had been looking for snacks, wandering down the well lit chip-isle in search of the grossest thing he could find for Zeus, when a middle-aged man had asked him if he played football with his son. He had told him no, and they had a good laugh about it, the main claiming he was an exact replica of his son’s friend, Brady or Brian or something. They ended up talking for a little bit, and Poseidon figured out that he was ex-military, which started a whole other conversation. It was only when the man glanced down at his phone and said: “Dear lordy, it’s getting late. I’m sorry bud, gotta run. It was great talking to you,” that Poseidon realized that he too lost track of time.

He’d bolted up the stairs and down the hall, but forced himself to slow before he reached the door, panting. He’d knocked two times, and was about to knock the third time when the door slammed open, revealing an enraged Hades with a frustrated-looking Zeus. He had grabbed Poseidon by the shoulder and dragged him in, barely shutting the door before he turned on him.

“Where have. You. Been?” he’d thundered.

And that’s how it started. Poseidon shot up in his own self-defense, Hades combatted it, he retaliated, Hades retaliated his retaliation. Somehow, Zeus got into the mixture, which eventually lead to it being just a fight between him and Hades, with both of them acting like he wasn’t even there. Zeus wasn’t necessarily on his side, it just sounded like he was arguing to argue. They ended up screaming at each other, and in a fit of rage, Hades shoved Poseidon on the couch and told him to stay there and “be a good boy”, before walking to the bedroom and slamming the door, hence why Poseidon was in the situation he was in.

He could hear Zeus’ heavy breathing, feel the weight of anger in the air. He himself was still riled up, chest tight with anger, offense coursing through his veins. Hades acted as if he was some kid—or not even that. A fucking dog. His fists curled at sides. Be a good boy and stay there. It made his lip curl.
But most of all, he felt embarrassment. Even though Zeus was the only other one in the room, that
didn’t take away from the fact he heard it. He wasn’t even sure why this was so embarrassing to
him: Zeus probably knew it was Hades that was the one at fault, anyway. But his cheeks burned on
regardless.

He opened his eyes only when he heard Zeus walk over to the other bedroom, slamming the door
behind him as well.

There was nothing said about him that made him upset, no jab at his person or character. Poseidon
started to realize that maybe it wasn’t the words that hurt him the most, maybe it was the conflict.
The shouting, the hatred. But at the same time, he didn’t always cry when they argued. Perhaps it
was only when he was the cause of it. He didn’t know. He’d have plenty of time to figure it out to
say the very least, so he didn’t stress about it. And besides, the reason did not matter, the tears fell
anyway.

He felt rather like a child that just broke a vase or dinner plate, crying when his feelings were not
truly hurt. Perhaps he just needed to cry, like that child needed to over a fight with their best friend
or a B on their subtraction test. Perhaps he was truly a child. He’d been feeling like one, recently.

He lay down on the leather, semi-comfortable couch, palm over his lips to muffle any sound. It
tasted like salt, though perhaps that was the tears. They fell from his eyes and down his temples,
colouring his nose red and snotty. His sobs were half-assed in a way, only shaking him slightly and
sounding almost as if they were dry. But they were there, and he continued to cry for a number of
minutes he did not know.

When they faded out, he was left looking at the ceiling. Now his eyes were dry, but they were too
dry, feeling like sand as he blinked them. He let them drift closed, and he soon drifted with them,
sailing into the arms of Hypnos’ realm.

When he woke, it was to the feeling of his palm in anothers. He blinked his heavy eyes open,
feeling weighted with the early hour. He quickly closed them again as a golden ray of sunlight
burned them, but reopened them, this time more cautious.

With their newly found awareness, they saw Hades at kneeling beside the couch, staring at him
with an unreadable look in his eyes. Poseidon blinked at him, a light frown gracing his features.
His older brother's hair was dishevelled and his skin was pale, shadows under his eyes telling of
the sleep he’d had that night.

Hades opened his mouth as if he were going to say something, but closed it. The way he breathed
when he did it made it sound like he’d said “I…”, but Poseidon was too groggy to figure out if he’d
actually meant to or not.

They both stared for a while, not in each others eyes, but rather at the back of the couch or a
shoulder or a thigh. The apartment smelled like something, but Poseidon couldn’t figure out what.
For some reason, it reminded him of the days he’d spent in the Dominican Republic, the smell
of...well, he didn’t know. The Dominican Republic. Ocean, yes, but no. Not really. It was like
airports and trains and subways too, like Toronto and lemon cleaner and pennies. He couldn’t
describe it, but it was good. It smelled fresh, let’s put it that way.

Hades stood without a word, and Poseidon’s eyes trailed after him. He observed the way his body
moved as he walked, the way his feet made no sound as they padded across the floor and the way
his shoulder blades shifted as he switched on the old-style radio and turned the dial in search of a
good song. Poseidon pushed himself up on the couch, sitting cross-legged as he observed Hades’
back. The sun was just starting to rise, and the clock on the stove read 7:19. Other than the soft
static coming from the radio, it was silent in the apartment, nothing but horns and traffic in the
distance filling the silence. Hades finally landed on a channel he deemed suitable, and the static
faded to the very beginning of *Time of My Life*.

Poseidon continued to stare as the music started, Bill Medley’s deep voice coming out semi-clearly
through the radio. It was ridden a little with static, and came out clear at some points and rough in
others. Hades walked back over to the couch and stood in front of him, but instead of kneeling
down again, he extended a hand. Poseidon watched his arm as he did this, then looked up at him,
an eyebrow raised. “Are you asking me to dance?” he asked, voice a raspy whisper, coloured with
amusement.

Hades smiled a little, eyes tired but warm as he looked down at him. “Maybe.”

Poseidon stared at the hand. It wasn’t really his thing, dancing. But he knew it wasn’t Hades’
either, so he reached out and rested his palm against the extended one in front of him. It was cool
against his warm one, a little smoother than his, but bigger.

Hades helped him stand, and walked to the little opening where there was no furniture. They only
stared at each other for a while, the beat already kicking in. Poseidon vaguely knew how to dance,
had learned how to a few hundred years back, but it was blurry in his mind, and he didn’t know
how to start, who was leading, when to step.

Hades seemed to sense his hesitation, and pulled him closer, reaching out to place a hand around
his waist. He paused, glancing into Poseidon’s eyes. “Do you mind if I lead?” His voice was still
quiet, soft as a feline with her cub.

Poseidon looked away. “Sure.” It was still a raspy whisper, and he cleared his throat. He wasn’t
sure if he remembered enough to lead, anyway.

Hades nodded, and placed the hand that had been previously hovering beside his waist on it. It felt
kind of weird: he could feel Hades’s thumb brush on his ribs, knew Hades felt them as if there was
not even skin below his shirt, just bone. Hades’s hand was big, taking up the space all the way
from the top of his hipbone to his second last rib.

Poseidon swallowed and placed his hand on Hades’ shoulder, somewhat scared of what was about
to happen. He was going to *dance*. With *Hades* at that. His big brother, whom he had never so
much as hugged since this whole shit show. The tension of last night’s argument still loomed on
Poseidon’s mind, and he had a feeling it did on Hades’ too.

Nonetheless, Hades reached out and grabbed his other hand, and gently started to sway them,
taking a soft step forward, leaving Poseidon the opportunity to notice what he was supposed to do.
He’d never been lead before, so figuring out what foot to step back was a little confusing. It started
out clumsy, Poseidon mostly staring at his feet to make sure he was doing it right.

“What Poseidon, Hades said, who was moving as if he’d done this every day. “Relax, you don’t need to
be perfect. Who’s watching?”

Poseidon looked up from the floor and met his eyes, giving a sheepish smile. “Right, okay.”

It got a lot more fun after that. And less awkward. More stepping on Hades’ toes, but less tension.

*We saw the writing on the wall*

*And we felt this magical fantasy*
Now with passion in our eyes

There's no way we could disguise it secretly

The radio cut out in certain places, but Poseidon filled the missing lyrics in his head. He laughed a little as he stepped right on the top of Hades’ foot, stumbling into his front. Hades snorted, suppressing a laugh, and brought him back out to his own dance space. They started to move in a circle, loosening up a little. Poseidon started grinning, feet fumbling over themselves.

So we take each others hand

’Cause we seem to understand the urgency

At that, Hades let go of Poseidon’s waist and spun him, making Poseidon fully laugh. Feeling his own face being lit like a Christmas tree, he went on his toes to spin Hades back, who did so with his own laugh, bending his knees and spinning under Poseidon’s hand. Poseidon grinned wider, and Hades was still laughing a little as he brought him closer again, more and more tension slipping out the window and into the cool air of New York at dawn. They continued their little waltz, or whatever dance it was, but this time it was even less proper and they were more just moving each other around and purposely stepping on each others feet, laughing as they did so.

Just remember

You're the one thing

I can't get enough of

So I'll tell you something

This could be love

Hades picked up the pace as the beat picked up, and Poseidon laughed a little at that. “Woah, getting a little worked up now.” His voice was no longer whispered or raspy, sleepiness replaced with amusement.

Hades only grinned at him, spinning him again. Poseidon did another one, making Hades laugh in turn.

At the chorus, Hades brought him right into his chest and lifted him up, spinning him around. Poseidon laughed even louder at that, throwing his head back. It was a little exhilarating, being picked up and spun. It felt like you were flying. (Not that he’d ever fly, of course. Only if it was by Hades picking him up).

Because I've had the time of my life

No, I never felt this way before

Yes I swear it's the truth

And I owe it all to you

Hey baby

When he placed Poseidon down, Poseidon reached forward and attempted to do the same to him, only succeeding in lifting him up onto his toes and maybe a centimetre off the ground. Hades laughed loudly, but a little surprise was laced into it as he was airborne for a second. Poseidon
laughed too, but quickly placed him down less-than-gently, huffing a little at the weight.

“How did you do that?” Hades asked, face flushed from grinning, eyes sparkling as they looked down at him.

“I’m the epitome of strength, Hades,” Poseidon responded with a wink. Hades only laughed further and brought him to continue again, this time their movements beyond exaggerated, both of them swinging the other back and forth so they looked like a teeter-totter.

With my body and soul

I want you more than you'll ever know

So we'll just let it go

Don't be afraid to lose control, no

The radio seemed to be getting steadily more and more staticy, but they could still feel the music. They spun each other around a lot, picking up the pace at a rapid crescendo, until eventually Hades spun Poseidon too hard and he ended up slamming back into the glass table, with Hades just barely catching his arm before he fell right through it.

Poseidon quickly glanced down at the table about a foot below him, then quickly snapped his head to Hades, heart was beating like crazy. He stared up at him, eyes wide and lips half pursed, throat already sore from the aftermath of his half-scream.

Hades looked equally shocked, his face contorted into a half apologetic, half terrified expression. He dragged Poseidon upright and away from the table, an apologetic laugh escaping his lips. Poseidon laughed too, but he was still a little spooked. “That could’ve ended very, very badly,” he breathed, feeling his face still flushed from laughter as he placed his hands back into their previous positions.

“You can say that again,” Hades said under his breath, following Poseidon’s lead.

“That could’ve ended very, very badly.” Poseidon grinned.

Instead of looking annoyed like he usually would’ve, Hades only fondly rolled his eyes and half-laughed, spinning him once more.

Yes, I know what's on your mind when you say

"Stay with me tonight" (stay with me)

And remember

You're the one thing

I can't get enough of

So I'll tell you something

This could be love

“I’m leading now,” Poseidon informed him, not waiting for a confirmation before he switched his hand down to Hades’ waist and put the one that was on his on his shoulder.
Hades laughed, a little confusion mixed in with his amusement. “You’re going to lead.” Despite the argumentative implication of the words, Hades let him, taking a step back when Poseidon took one forward.

“Yep,” Poseidon said, smile a little cheeky as he moved around, turning them to spin. This felt a little more natural, or at least he remembered what to do more. Hades only rolled his eyes, grinning a little.

Because I've had the time of my life

No, I never felt this way before

Yes I swear it's the truth

And I owe it all to you

‘Cause I've had the time of my life

Poseidon jumped and felt Hades jump as well, when a familiar voice laced with high amusement and confusion spoke from near one of the bedroom doors. “What are you two doing?”

Zeus was leaned against the wall of the hallway that lead to the bedrooms, watching the two of them with his arms crossed and eyebrow raised, a faint, amused smile playing on his lips. His hair was dishevelled and his skin was almost colourless, dark circles almost as shadowy as Hades’. It was obvious that he too did not get much sleep the night previous. There was also a trace of surprise and relief in his eyes, and it made Poseidon remember that there had been, in fact, and argument last night.

Instead of breaking apart, Poseidon only grinned at him, continuing to step forward and sideways to the beat (ish). “What do you think we’re doing?”

“Being idiots,” Zeus snorted, but Poseidon could hear the smile in his voice. He walked to the kitchen and snooped through the cabinets, scavenging for something to eat.

“No, we’re dancing. You’re not going to join us?” Poseidon asked, trying to make himself sound as offended as possible.

Zeus whipped around as the last of the chorus lines played.

And I've searched through every open door (never felt this way)

Till I found the truth

And I owe it all to you

“No, in fact,” he said, merriment still sparkling in his eyes, “I’m not.”

“Well,” Poseidon retaliated, “you, in fact, don’t have a choice.” He broke away from Hades, and half-ran over to the kitchen as the instrumental part of the song started to play, grabbing Zeus’ wrist and attempting to drag him over.

“Jesus!” he exclaimed, laughing a little as he was dragged forward. However, Poseidon was quickly faced with an obstacle as Zeus bent his knees and leaned back against his hand, preventing him from moving him forward any longer. When Poseidon pouted at him, he only laughed, throwing his dishevelled head back. “Try to get me now, sucker.”
Poseidon yet again turned to face him, placing both hands on his and attempting to drag him yet again. He budged a little, but for the most part stayed in place, grinning. Poseidon screwed his face up and continued trying, leaning all his body weight against Zeus’ hand.

He heard Hades walk over, and shot a grin at him when he moved beside the two and behind Zeus, firmly shoving him forward. The saxophone had just started to play, and Zeus let out a “Woah!” as he was shoved forward. Poseidon laughed, but also had to try to catch himself before he tumbled to the floor as his support was suddenly taken away. He failed, and ended up falling onto his ass.

“Ow,” he whined, rubbing it in an attempt to soothe it. Zeus barked out a laugh, and so did Hades. Poseidon pouted, pushing himself up to his feet. “You guys are mean.” Ouch. That did actually hurt, didn't it? His ass was sore already.

They both only continued to laugh, Zeus doubling over while Hades’ laughs suddenly became silent, where it was obvious he was laughing but no sound came out. Poseidon tried to pout more, but found himself struggling to not laugh along with them. “It hurt, guys!” He rubbed his ass again. “You’re bullying me.”

That didn’t seem to help, and Zeus grabbed onto the counter while Hades’ laugh became audible again, coming out in a grand, barking throw-back of the head. Poseidon only grinned, rushing forward and grabbing one of Zeus’ hands and one of Hades’. “Oh, shut up.”

He dragged them both to the opening again, grabbing Zeus and spinning him around forcefully. Zeus let out another “Woah!” and then continued laughing, returning the favour to Poseidon.

Hades spun him too, and then Zeus did again, and then Hades did again...and then Zeus did again and Hades did again and Zeus did again. “Guys!” Poseidon laughed, finally stumbling into Hades. The world around him was tilting and shifting, and he felt a little light headed as he laughed against Hades’ chest.

Hades only grinned, putting an arm around the small of his back and grabbing his other hand, beginning to sway them again, but just going straight into their seesaw like motion once more.

“Hey, let me join!” Zeus said over Poseidon’s shoulder, and in less than a moment he was plastered against his back, taking the back of Poseidon’s hand and joining in on their motion. Now, they’d given up all hope of properly dancing, and feet were stepping on toes and ankles like crazy. Poseidon could feel his face split in two as they continued their crazy three person waltz type thing, not a care in the world.

Hades reached over Poseidon’s head and grabbed Zeus’ hand, spinning him on his toes. Zeus threw his head back and laughed, but did it regardless, looking beyond strange spinning, let alone under Hades’ hand. Poseidon grinned at him over his shoulder, and the three continued their dance, if you could call it that. If the condo wasn’t so big, Poseidon would be half-concerned they’d break everything in the vicinity.

They only started to slow down when the music did, their arms slowing down, and them just mostly swaying, smiles and half-

Now I've had the time of my life

No, I never felt this way before (never felt this way)

Yes I swear it's the truth
Poseidon felt it coming before it came, the way Hades’ shoulders tensed up and his grip tightened on his hand and loosened around his back.

And I owe it all to you

Hades spun him harshly, sending Zeus flying back and making his world spin. A laugh tore out of his chest, both at the sudden and stomach-flipping movement, but also at Zeus’ reaction, the way he’d let out an “Oh, fuck!” and stumbled back a few steps. Hades laughed too, bringing Poseidon close regardless as the third and final chorus started playing, back to it’s upbeat tempo.

“You shithead!” Zeus yelled, though there was no malice behind it, and Poseidon’s head fell back as he laughed again. “That hurt!”

“No it didn’t,” Hades responded, eyes sparkling with amusement, half-grin playing on his lips.

Zeus rolled his eyes, but smiled. “No it didn’t.” He laughed again as he rushed up towards them again, taking Poseidon out of Hades’s grip and spinning him around. God, Poseidon might throw up by the end of this. But he laughed regardless, resuming his waltz-thing with Zeus, just as he had with Hades. Hades took him back, and the process repeated, until Hades took Zeus instead of Poseidon, spinning him around just like he would’ve if it had been. Poseidon laughed at them, the way Zeus look half outraged and half amused while Hades was grinning at him as if he loved what he was doing to him.

“Oh,” Zeus rolled his eyes, shoving him away, “c’mere Poseidon.”

Hades only laughed as Poseidon rushed up, slamming between the two and continuing the only dance they knew would work, the music slowly starting to fade out, though their smiles didn’t budge.

I’ve had the time of my life

No, I never felt this way before (never felt this way)

Yes I swear it's the truth

And I owe it all to you

Poseidon could just faintly hear the beginning of the fade the song had, but he didn’t sense the other two slowing down, so he didn’t either, continuing to laugh in the dawn’s sunlight.

’Cause I’ve had the time of my life (I had time of my life)

And I’ve searched through every open door (you do it to me, baby)

Till I found the truth (you do it to me, baby)

And I owe it all to you

The three of them continued to dance for a few moments after the song ended, gently slowing down until they were swaying once more. They still were when the clock struck 7:28, though barely, mostly just the swaying of hips. Poseidon rested his cheek on Zeus’ shoulder, and felt Hades rest his forehead on the back of his neck. It must’ve been uncomfortable, because he soon rose again. The next song on the radio was too staticy for them to even hear what it was, but it didn’t really matter, not to Poseidon. The after-glow type feeling was enough, and he was soon sleepy again, eyes heavy and cheek seeming a little too comfortable on Zeus’ hard shoulder for any
Poseidon didn’t know how long they stayed there, swaying in the living room, but he did know that he never wanted them to stop. Perhaps they wouldn’t, and it would just be the three of them forever, dancing lazily in a dawn soaked living room in New York City. Poseidon snuggled his cheek in a little further onto Zeus’ shoulder and hummed to himself, a soft smile growing on his face. He kind of like that idea. He was sure they would, too, from the way they just kept swaying and swaying, like a wooden swing by the beach. He let his eyes fall closed, relaxing his body completely, warm and content between his two brothers. Perhaps they would have to leave, perhaps they had to go have breakfast or go back to their duties once these four months were up, but in the moment he could pretend. And in the moment pretending was enough.

Chapter End Notes

I just,,,, thank you
thank u so so much
I love you all
I know i'll be seeing some of u again in a few months for the sequel but for those who I won't,, I just,, love you. thank u for reading this, and goodbye. I love u and I can't explain how much I do thank you all for coming along this shitshow piece of trash u have enough sympathy to call a fanficiton
love u again,
lolo (PS its Lauren) (but my friends call lil shithead)

xx

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