My Courage Always Rises With Every Attempt to Intimidate Me

by SpaceBitch

Summary

Percy is bad at first impressions, and Annabeth is not impressed. Percy, however, is accidentally totally falling in love with Annabeth Chase.
Oops.
Pride and Prejudice AU

Notes

So this is obviously a Pride and Prejudice AU, but I've gone more on the side of making the Percy Jackson canon fit to Pride and Prejudice, so some of the side characters don't fit perfectly :/ Oh well it still works pretty well and I loooove Pride and Prejudice
The Fall Ball was even worse this year than expected.

Every year, at the beginning of the school year, Half-Blood Hill (the pretentious, expensive, and incredibly academically challenging boarding school that Annabeth Chase attended) hosted a welcome-back type event for the student and their families.

Which was fine for everyone--except Annabeth.

Her mother could be… overbearing, at times. While Annabeth’s father thought the school was a lovely opportunity for Annabeth to better herself through academic learning, her mother thought it was the perfect place to meet rich snobs that she could date and eventually marry. They both wanted her to have a better life, but unfortunately, her mother was simply archaic about it.

But there was a new student at Half-Blood, one who had moved into the gated district near Annabeth’s house—it was all her mother could talk about for the entire last month of summer.

“His name is Jason Grace—that’s right, he’s from that Grace family! The mother a movie star and the father the king of the industry—can you imagine, being connected like that?!”

She’d positively raved about him, how handsome, rich, and delightfully single he was—a teenager, whom she’d never even met.

Although, the summer wasn’t a total bust. Annabeth’s cousins had stayed and distracted her; Hazel, daughter of Mrs. Chase’s brother, and Piper, daughter of Mrs. Chase’s sister.

Piper was almost year older but still a junior, and drop-dead beautiful, but you couldn’t envy her because she was so nice and charming. There wasn’t a person in the world that Piper couldn’t see the best in.

Hazel, a sophomore and a year younger than Annabeth, was also beautiful, but certainly not as
much of a people pleaser. She kept a lot of secrets and something about her unsettled Annabeth.

But, alas, both girls had incredibly busy single parents, and were practically sisters to Annabeth, for better or for worse. This meant that they were not exempt of Mrs. Chase’s matchmaking efforts, and attended Half-Blood Hill as well, although they were not on an academic scholarship like Annabeth was.

Half-Blood was full to the brim with socialite families, which all attended the dreaded Fall Ball. Annabeth’s family stuck out like a sore thumb.

Her mother, unashamedly socializing and talking up her middle-class daughters and nieces. Her father, bumbling around confused and clearly out of place. And lastly, her.

For all her mother’s faults, she had not raised Annabeth to be blind of social class—the only reason Annabeth had the scholarship was because she was pretty enough, charming enough, and smart enough to appear to be upper class.

She glanced at the dance floor, and saw Piper, a radiant vision, dancing with an incredibly cute blond boy.

Just as the dance ended, her mother came rushing over, stumbling over her dress and red in the face.

“Annabeth! Annabeth, your dear cousin has been chatting up that Jason Grace fellow for the last hour. Oh, they’re getting on so well, I can practically already hear the wedding bells!”

Annabeth, even after knowing her mother so well, still managed to be surprised. “Mom! They’re only 17, and they just met, as you said, an hour ago. Can you manage not to scare him off?” She looked around self-consciously. People were either otherwise engaged, or politely pretending to be.

“Have you seen him, Annie? He is even more handsome than I imagined! And not only that, but he is so sweet and kind that he has got the attention of every girl in the room, and yet he’s talking to Piper!”

“Why shouldn’t he talk to Piper, Mom? She’d the best person in the entire school.”
“And the prettiest! Oh, I just can’t believe it; I need to find your father.” She rushed off.

Annabeth was fairly well-liked at the school, but for the moment she couldn’t see any friends around and walked to the buffet table to busy herself.

A moment later, her attention was piqued when she heard a familiar name mentioned between two boys just within earshot.

“—Percy, why don’t you talk to someone, maybe even ask a girl to dance? You are going to have to go to school with all these people, you know.”

Percy, as in Percy Jackson. Jason Grace’s celebrity friend, apparently even richer and better looking than Jason. She angled her body to get a better look at the both of them. The rumors were, regrettably, true. She couldn’t recall seeing two hotter boys.

“No thanks. This has to be the most boring ‘ball’ ever. Besides, you got the only pretty girl in the room.”

Annabeth shouldn’t have expected better—actually, she hadn’t. She had known exactly the sort of boys they would be. She put her plate down and feigned to watch the dance floor.

“Well, Piper is definitely the prettiest girl I’ve ever seen…I’ve never met a girl like her. But I don’t know what you’re talking about; there are tons of gorgeous girls here! Look, what about her?” Jason asked.

Annabeth was aware of their eyes on her.

“That’s Piper’s cousin. She’s pretty, isn’t she?”

Percy glanced at her cursorily before turning back to Jason. “She’s decent, but I’ve seen better. Besides, if no one wants to dance with her, why should I?”
What a pleasant guy. At that moment, one of Annabeth’s friends walked by, and Annabeth flagged her down and told her what she’d heard. Her friend was positively insulted, and grabbed yet another girl and insisted Annabeth share what Percy had said. Annabeth relayed it animatedly, not feeling particularly insulted but nevertheless amazed at his rudeness and arrogance.

By being unpleasant to everyone throughout the night, Percy Jackson had shown that his wealth and hotness did not make up for his snobby rudeness.

Even her mother said, “I don’t know what Mr. Grace sees in that thoroughly spoiled boy!”

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The custom was, the same night as the ball was the first night the students slept in their dorms. Piper roomed with Annabeth, and Hazel roomed with one on her sophomore friends.

Annabeth swung the door open wide, and sighed. “Ah, one of the perks of attending fancy-rich boarding school,” she said, throwing aside her luggage and plopping on the bottom bunk. “Fancy-rich dorm rooms.”

Piper smirked and dragged in both her bags, and then Annabeth’s second one.

The dorm room was nice. It was spacious, with clean carpet, luxurious sheets, high-end mattresses, two study desks, two closets, and one dresser with six drawers.

“Aren’t you going to take off your dress?” Piper asked.

“Why? Want to borrow it for a date? Maybe with… Jason?” she teased.

Piper gave an embarrassed look and began to busy herself with unpacking. “I don’t know what you mean. I only talked to him, and maybe danced with him once or twice. I’m sure he’s forgot all about me.”
Annabeth stood, and cleared her throat. "'Piper is the prettiest girl I've ever seen! I've never met a girl like her,'" she imitated, clasping her hands and spinning around the room. Piper threw a bra at her.

“Oh, yeah? Well what about Mr.,” Piper dropped her voice one too many octaves, adding an absurd surfer drawl. “She's decent, I've seen better.” Annabeth picked up the bra and threw it right back.

“I know, right? Ugh, how insufferable.”

“Well, maybe he was just nervous,” she suggested. “Jason says Percy isn’t great at opening up to people. Maybe he was just intimidated by you, and so pretended he didn’t see how pretty you are.”

“Piper, you are too nice. Can you not think badly of anyone?”

“Well, I have to believe he was just scared. Otherwise, he would have to be blind.”

Annabeth smirked at her cousin and friend, and stared in the mirror. The long, flowy, burgundy dress was gorgeous, even if it was also Hazel’s. Hazel had told her that dark red compliments blonde flawlessly, and although she had initially just taken her word for it, now she realized she agreed.

Swinging and placing a hand on her hip, she said, “I still think he’s just an ass.”

Chapter End Notes

Here’s a breakdown of the characters and their parallels:

Annabeth: Elizabeth Bennet
Percy: William Darcy
Jason: Charles Bingley
Piper: Jane Bennett
Hazel: Lydia Bennett
Athena (not named): Mrs. Bennett
and the rest I will list when we get to them :)  
p.s. please be nice & leave kudos if you read the whole thing because I am v new @ this
If I do not begin by being impertinent myself, I shall soon grow afraid of him

Chapter Notes

Yay Percabeth banter! I hope I didn't make them sound too smart for teenagers, although the whole point is that Percy is pretentious and canonically, he's very witty in conversation

See the end of the chapter for more notes

There were two more days for settling and socializing, during which Piper didn’t get to see Jason and had to pretend like she didn’t care. Whenever Annabeth brought it up, she got uncomfortable and dodged, so Annabeth stopped bringing it up.

Until the first class on Monday—English.

Annabeth walked in with Piper, and, scanning the room for a seat, moaned to her cousin, “Why does he have to be in our grade? How did we get so cosmically unlucky?”

But Piper couldn’t hear her. She was too busy smiling at Jason, who was waving emphatically for her to sit with him.

This would have been totally fine with Annabeth, if a certain asshole wasn’t sitting directly in front of him.

So Piper took the seat next to Jason, and Annabeth took the seat next to Piper, glad for a reasonable distance between her and Percy.

As soon as they were settled, Piper smiled at Jason and his expression was just as warm in return, but before they could say much, Percy cleared his throat.

“Oh. Right. Um, Piper, this is Percy.”

“Hi,” she gave one of her glowing smiles to him. “Percy, Jason, this is my cousin and basically sister, Annabeth.”
“Nice to meet you,” she said politely, nodding at Jason, but as soon as she turned her gaze to Percy, they locked eyes for a moment and he turned back around. Annabeth threw a glance at Piper, as if to say, Excuse him for that one, say that he’s “just nervous”. I dare you.

Annabeth’s friend Rachel chose that moment to take a seat in front of Annabeth. She raised her eyebrows at Percy and Jason, but Annabeth shook her head, warning her not to mention it.

Rachel tried catching up with Annabeth, but there wasn’t much to say that they hadn’t been texting about over break. Except for the interesting new development of Piper and Jason, but Annabeth didn’t want to talk about it. She didn’t want Percy to overhear her, even if he clearly had no such qualms.

The class was filling up quickly, and before long there were only a few empty seats left. The bell rang.

Their teacher, Mr. Brunner, gave the typical course-overview, welcome-back, here’s-what-to-expect first class of the year talk, and Annabeth was paying attention to the teacher, but she didn’t notice who was paying attention to her.

Percy Jackson had at first glance only admitted her as passable, and when he’d been talking to new acquaintances in the guy’s dormitory, of course they’d talked about what girls were hot. He’d been surprised to hear them mention Annabeth, and when asked, had mentioned he didn’t see anything in her. But on his first glance at the ball, he hadn’t noticed her eyes. They were a striking, strong grey and brought her entire face together. The more he looked at her, the more he could understand what everyone found so interesting. She gazed at the teacher like she could conquer him, conquer anyone, and it gave her a confident and determined look.

He stopped staring, afraid someone would see, but could help stealing a glance every now and then. He decided he wanted to get to know her better.

*          *          *          *          *

“He was not,” Annabeth insisted to her cousin as they walked to lunch.

“He was so. I saw it with my own eyes, I’m right between you two. Percy could not stop staring at you.”
“Uh, I’m only decent, remember? Why would he stare at someone so mundanely average?”

“Don’t be dramatic, Annie. You know you’re gorgeous.”

Annabeth flipped her ponytail quite dramatically. “Maybe, but I guess I just don’t live up to Mr. Jackson’s impossibly high standards.”

“Or maybe you do,” she insisted, nudging her cousin playfully as they made their way through the lunch line.

Annabeth got a pizza, Piper got some breadsticks, and their way to a free table. Rachel had soon wedged her way in between them, eager to tell Annabeth all about something that had happened in Spanish, and soon enough Jason and Percy walked up.

“Um,” Jason was blushing slightly, “I don’t want to be rude, but we don’t really know a lot of people yet. Can we sit here?”

“Oh! Of course,” Piper smiled at him again.

Jason took his seat next to Piper, but Percy sat next to Annabeth. She was confused, but listened attentively to Rachel as she resumed her story, and laughed in all the right places. When Rachel was done, Annabeth deliberated a moment, then turned to Percy. She decided she had to talk to him now and talk to him quickly, or else she would let herself get intimidated.

“What did you think of Rachel’s story?”

“I think it was energetic,” he replied.

“Well… what do you think of this school?”

“It’s too early to tell. Why do you keep asking what I think?”
“Because that’s how you make conversation. The ball’s in your court now, though; it’s your turn to ask me something about books, television, or maybe even the weather.”

He smiled, slightly. She didn’t know whether to feel gratified or vexed at this reaction. “Well, I don’t know what you want me to ask to illicit the right answer.”

Illicit? she thought. “Well, even if you don’t ask the right question, I can still give you the right answer. So whatever you ask doesn’t matter.”

“Well if it doesn’t matter, then why should I ask it?”

“Because, as I said, that’s how you make conversation.”

“But look! We’re having a conversation right now.”

“But we haven’t actually said anything.”

“Yes we have.”

“This entire conversation has been you arguing against having a conversation. And then, you come away from it, and you haven’t actually learned anything about me.”

“I think I’ve learned a great deal more than if I’d asked you about the weather.”

“Really? If you asked me about the weather, you might have learned that I like rainy days, because they remind me of my aunt’s house in Seattle, where I spent happy summers as a kid. If you argue with me for the sake of arguing, what have you learned?”

He locked on her eyes. He’d never met anyone with eyes brighter than his own before. “I learned that you’re clever, irritable, and care a surprising amount about useless societal conventions.”
She smiled, and it was somehow sweet and prickly all at once. Her head tilted. “You’re absolutely right. What an enlightening conversation this has been.” She turned back to her pizza.

Annabeth knew that he was just trying to get under her skin, and was annoyed that it worked, and was annoyed at letting herself be annoyed that it worked.

Apparently Percy thought being nice was a “useless societal convention”, which was clearly why he never bothered.

Percy tried to eat his food, and forget about her. But he couldn’t. He’d only had a one-minute conversation with her, and he already knew he was in trouble.

* * * * *

Back in their dorm Jason couldn’t stop droning on about Piper McLean.

“She speaks fluent French, Percy! She was shy about it, but you should have heard her, oh my god…”

From what Percy had seen, his best friend was clearly in love with this girl, and she certainly smiled and laughed at him a lot, which he had at first taken as a good sign. Then he saw that she smiled and laughed at everyone. He just really didn’t want to see his friend fall head-over-heels for a girl who was perfectly indifferent and only cared about his money.

But he also didn’t want to destroy his friends ignorant happiness. Before he could decide, though, Jason asked him, “But what about now, Percy? I mean, after meeting so many great girls you can’t, not even you, tell me you didn’t like any of them.”

He shrugged. “These girls are flighty, and shallow. Even if I didn’t think they were just in it for the fame and attention, I wouldn’t want to be near them. They can’t keep an interesting conversation.” Except one…

“Percy, I refuse to believe that not one girl has caught your eye.”

He threw a pillow. “Catching my eye isn’t the same thing as keeping it.”
Chapter End Notes

Here’s a breakdown of the characters and their parallels:

Annabeth: Elizabeth Bennet
Percy: William Darcy
Jason: Charles Bingley
Piper: Jane Bennett
Hazel: Lydia Bennett
Athena (not named): Mrs. Bennett
Rachel: Charlotte Lucas
and the rest I will list when we get to them :)
Annabeth relayed her conversation with Percy to Piper, marveling in his rudeness. Piper was hesitant. “Honestly, I don’t think he’s bad at all. After all, why would Jason be friends with someone if they were really so unpleasant all the time?”

Annabeth was amazed. “You don’t have to keep making excuses for him, Pipes. He’s just a jerk!”

A week passed, and Percy and Annabeth seldom interacted at all, mostly because Annabeth tried to avoid it.

On Friday, however, the welcome-back dinner made interaction necessary.

Most nights dinner was wandering down to the cafeteria and grabbing food when you felt like it, but the first Friday of each year was a special (mandatory) sit-down dinner, where the massive cafeteria with one wall made entirely of glass panels was cleared out and they put a ton of long, wooden tables in instead.

Unsurprisingly, Piper made a beeline for Jason Grace, and possibly less surprisingly, Percy was sitting right next to him. Did that guy even have any other friends?

Annabeth motioned to Rachel. “Piper, I think I’m just gonna sit with some friends—”

“No, please,” Piper grabbed Annabeth’s arm, “I want you to sit with us. I sometimes feel like such an outsider, especially with Jason’s sister—”

“Fine,” she surrendered, wrenching her arm from Piper’s death grip. “I’ll play nice.”
Piper beamed. “You’ll love his sister. She is so sweet.”

This didn’t assure Annabeth—her cousin would call the devil “misunderstood”.

So Piper led a reluctant Annabeth to the row across from where Percy and Jason were seated, with a beautiful brunette sitting deliberately close to the former. He looked stiff and bored.

Jason waved at them, yelling, “Piper! Annabeth! Sit with us!”

Annabeth tried to discreetly gauge Percy’s reaction, but he appeared stone-cold indifferent.

“Piper!” The dark brunette gushed. “So glad you could sit with us.”

It didn’t seem all that exciting to Annabeth.

“Hi Drew—this is Annabeth.”

“Hi,” Annabeth smiled pleasantly, and Drew actually extended her hand; Annabeth shook it uncertainly as she sat down.

“So,” she began, “You moved here with Jason and Percy?”

“Yeah, Jason and I have known Percy since forever.” She touched Percy’s arm when she said his name. “We basically grew up together—along with Percy’s sister Thalia.” She turned her full attention to Percy. “How is Thalia?”

“She’s fine.”

“Have you spoken to her? You have to tell her how much I miss her.”

“Will do.”
Drew turned back to Piper and Annabeth. “Thalia is a darling. How old is she now, 13? She is just the sweetest girl you will ever meet, and she is so talented. She can play violin, piano, and the flute, her voice is gorgeous, and she speaks, what is it, three languages? Incredible.”

“I’m always amazed at how talented girls are.” Jason admitted.

“What do you mean by that?” Percy said, chuckling.

“Well, you know, it seems like all of them have so many accomplishments; like they can cook, sew, sing, or draw, or any number of things. It’s like every girl I meet is talented in one way or another.”

“Well, everybody can do something. But I think I could count all the seriously well-rounded girls I know on one hand.”

“Oh!” Annabeth exclaimed. “Well, then that must be some lengthy criteria you’ve got. Let’s hear it.”

“Well, she has to read, and not just YA fiction, but actual books that can better your intelligence. She has to be able to dance, read sheet music, and draw and sing at least decently. But overall, she’s got to have that way about her, that something in her voice and manner, that thing that can’t be described or taught. That’s my idea of accomplished.”

“Well, I’m not surprised anymore that you only know five ‘well-rounded’ girls. In fact, I’m rather surprised you know any.”

Percy observed her. “Do you think that little of your own gender?”

Annabeth laughed. He was trying to turn this on her, but it wouldn’t work. “Absolutely not. One does not have to be ‘accomplished’ in your eyes to be important in mine. All girls are important. Frankly, who gives a damn about her ‘manner’?”

Before anyone could reply to this, a bell rang out, and the first course of bread and salad was served.
When everything was settled, Annabeth’s comment had been all but forgotten, and Piper asked, “So, you’ve been here a week now. What do you think of Half-Blood? Especially compared to all the other schools you’ve been to, you probably don’t care at all whether you stay or not.”

“No, I’m happy here. I think I’ll stay a while.” Jason replied.

“That’s exactly what I thought you’d say.” Annabeth said, ripping her bread.

“Am I that predictable?” he asked.

“Oh, well,” she spread butter on her bread as she spoke, “being able to gauge someone’s character quickly doesn’t make that person more or less interesting. And I happen to be a studier of character.”

“That must be an entertaining study!”

“It is.” She leaned in conspiratorially. “But the intricate people are the most entertaining.”

“This school probably doesn’t have a lot of subjects for that kind of study, then. Since there are so few of you, and you don’t really get a lot of newcomers,” Percy interjected.

“But people change. They’re always changing, so there’s always something new to observe.”

Percy nodded, conceding the point, and continued to stare at Annabeth. She noticed, but honestly couldn’t imagine someone like Percy actually being interested in her, and so concluded that he was staring at her because he found something wrong. Perhaps he was picking apart her flaws. She didn’t like him enough to be upset by this conclusion.

Drew, however, noticed Percy staring at Annabeth as well, and suspected his real feelings.

So when Annabeth excused herself to go to the bathroom, Drew’s jealousy drove her to say to Percy, “You two will be very happy together.”
“What?” Percy asked, turning as if he hadn’t noticed her until then. Piper and Jason were too involved in their own conversation to hear Drew.

“You and Annabeth. It’s so sweet, really, the way you go at each other. In no time, you’ll probably be hanging out with her cousins, kissing up to her parents. You should probably watch out for that thing she has, though, that borders on rudeness. And you can’t forget her conceitedness—I would really fix that sooner rather than later.”

“Do you have any other advice for my love life?”

“Oh, right! You should probably have her parents’ portraits taken while they’re still young, to be put up in the Jackson & Co. gallery—but you can’t ever take Annabeth’s. After all, what artist could do those beautiful eyes justice?”

“It wouldn’t be easy to capture their fierceness, but the color and shape, and the eyelashes, could be copied.”

This shut Drew up until Annabeth’s return, by which time the main course had been served.

“What did I miss? I sure hope no one laughed without me; I love a good laugh.”

“What would we laugh at without you here?” Drew asked.

Annabeth ignored the subtle jab and said, “Not Percy?”

“What would we tease? His calmness, his intelligence? No, that won’t work, and if we laugh with nothing to laugh about then we’re the ones being silly.”

“Nothing to laugh about? What an advantage for him,” said Annabeth.

“Drew, you give me too much credit. Even the best and most stoic person can seem ridiculous when certain people make them the butt of a joke,” said Percy.
“Well, sure, but I hope that’s not me. I never laugh at what’s good, I laugh at inconsistencies and contradictions, but those are the two things you don’t have.” Annabeth replied.

“It’s probably not even possible for someone to be without inconsistencies, but I do try just like anyone else to not have the weakness that would let someone ridicule me.”

“Like arrogance and pride,” Annabeth prodded.

“Arrogance, yeah. But I don’t see anything wrong with being proud.”

Annabeth tried to hide a smirk.

Drew clapped. “So! Are you done with Percy’s character study? What do you think?”

“I’m convinced he has no faults. He even says so himself.”

“I never said that. Obviously I have faults—like my temper, which you might say is resentful. I can’t forgive people as quickly as I should. My good opinion of someone, once lost, is lost forever.”

“Well that’s definitely a flaw, but you picked your flaw well—I can’t really laugh at it. You’re safe,” she said.

“Don’t you think every person has a natural, uh… defect? A tendency to some negative trait, that they can’t really fix no matter how hard they try?”

“And your defect is a tendency to hate everybody.”

“And yours,” Percy said with a smile, “is a tendency to purposefully misunderstand them.”

The following stare-down only lasted a few seconds, as Drew immediately vied for Percy’s
attention again. For the rest of the night, Annabeth only spoke to Piper or occasionally Jason, and Percy didn’t dare start a conversation again.

Chapter End Notes

Here's a breakdown of the characters and their parallels:

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Percy: William Darcy
Jason: Charles Bingley
Piper: Jane Bennett
Hazel: Lydia Bennett
Athena (not named): Mrs. Bennett
Rachel: Charlotte Lucas
Drew: Caroline Bingley
Thalia: Georgiana Darcy

and the rest I will list when we get to them :)

He had all the best parts of beauty, a fine countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address

Chapter Notes

lmao the chapter titles just keep getting longer and longer don’t they

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Her opinion of him really took a turn for the worst on Friday night.

Hazel had burst into their dorm, with half her cinnamon hair neatly curled and loose, but the upper half was clipped to the top of her head in a frizzy, twisty mess.

“Goodness, girls, I’m having a crisis.” She used such sweet, old-fashioned mannerisms for a 15 year old.

“Please, tell me one of you has my makeup bag packed in your suitcase, because I could have sworn I brought it, but I cannot find it anywhere…”

“Um, is this it?” Annabeth asked, pulling a polka-dot plastic bag out of her suitcase.

“Oh, bless your heart, Annie!” she rushed over and grabbed it, but paused to survey the girl. “Wait. You’re not going to the party in sweats, are you?”

“Party? Um, no offense Hazel, but I really have no interest in going to a sophomore party.”

She waved her hand. “Pfft, me neither. That’s why I thought for sure you guys were going. It’s mostly a seniors and juniors thing, but you know,” she blew on her nails, “I’m connected.”

“Okay, well, you have fun.”
But of course, Hazel insisted, and eventually Annabeth gave in. After all, there probably would be a lot of sketchy seniors, and Annabeth had a sister-like protective instinct for her cousin.

Her baby cousin did up her makeup, clothes, and hair, and even though she was older, Annabeth felt like Hazel’s doll sometimes.

When done, Hazel rushed off to her own bathroom to finish her crazy hair, and left Annabeth to inspect her handiwork.

While the makeup was amazing, it felt a little uncharacteristically heavy, so she softened it up a bit. Annabeth had insisted on the dress; even though Hazel had said something about showing off her “assets,” Annabeth was firmly against encouraging senior boys to stare down her “assets”. It was flowy and purple and had stylistically high-necked lace, and was perhaps not short enough for Hazel, but perfect for Annabeth.

Lastly, her hair was immaculate. He curls were naturally ringlet-y and mildly frizzy, but Hazel had put some magic gel in them that made them shiny, angelic, and absolutely flawless.

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Club Jupiter was a country club of sorts, but rich kids at Half-Blood constantly rented it out for parties.

Immediately upon arrival, Hazel dashed off somewhere and Annabeth was left alone.

She walked up to the bar and got a water, intending to watch over Hazel and try to ignore all the fuckboys, but an unusually drunk one walked over and “accidentally” bumped into her.

“Oh, I’m sorry, I jus’ couldn’ help but notice how pretty you are, all alon’,” he slurred. She stood her ground and stared him down, but he was too drunk to notice. He made some thinly-veiled proposal, and Annabeth ordered him to leave her alone and turned away. It appeared he wouldn’t take no for an answer, until a firm hand appeared on his shoulder, and a voice ordered, “Take a walk.”

Both the drunk guy and Annabeth turned to the stranger, and after a brief stare-down the former wandered off. Annabeth stared at the new guy, trying to decide what to make of him. He was tall, with sandy-hair and an easy-going countenance. He smiled apologetically.
“I’m sorry. I don’t mean to make you uncomfortable—I can go—”

“Wait,” said Annabeth, holding out her arm, “I wouldn’t mind if you stayed. It’s not like I’m exactly preoccupied.” She motioned to the empty seat next to her. He sat.

“If you don’t mind me asking, why are you alone?”

“I came with my cousin,” she nodded to Hazel, dancing in the middle of three guys. “She insisted, and I sort of didn’t want her to go alone. She’s basically my baby sister, I’m pretty protective.”

“I can relate,” he replied. “Oh, where are my manners? I’m Luke.”

“Annabeth.”

He smiled a wicked disarming grin, and Annabeth said, “So… come here often?”

He laughed. “Actually, yeah, I work nearby. It’s not a great job… but it’s a job. Just paying the bills until I go into the service.”

“The service? You’re joining the army?”

He nodded. “Navy.”

As Luke kept speaking, Annabeth couldn’t help but think there was something about him that made him seem… trustworthy. Not only was he totally charming and cute, but he was polite and seemed pretty intelligent.

“Annabeth!” Hazel screamed, interrupting their conversation and running over. “Look who’s here!”
She pointed to a corner, where Percy Jackson stood. His hands were in his pockets, and he looked really out of place.

A moment later, he noticed Annabeth, but his surprise turned to something slightly more murderous once he saw who she was with. Glancing at Luke, she saw that he simultaneously looked like he’d been hit with a baseball bat, and wanted to hit someone else with a baseball bat.

Percy stormed off.

“You know Percy Jackson?”

“Used to. Haven’t seen him in a while, though.”

She was quiet for a moment, deciding whether or not she wanted to pry, until she simply couldn’t take it. “Okay, you obviously don’t have to say anything if you don’t want to, but please. What did Percy do to you?”

His eyebrows shot up, but Annabeth waved off the look. “One glance, and I can tell something awful went down. Spill.”

Luke shook his head. “I don’t want to taint your opinion of him.”

“Oh, no worries there, I already think he’s an asshole

He sighed. “Well, like you said, Percy Jackson is an asshole, but I didn’t used to think so. In fact, we were basically raised as brothers.”

Annabeth hung on to every word.

“Okay, so, a while back my dad worked for his dad, but died when I was really little, and Mr. Jackson had always been fond of me, so he took me in. Percy and I were friends; or so I thought. The thing is, Mr. Jackson had health problems his whole life, so he wanted to set aside some money for me to go to school just in case. But I guess he never thought he’d have to actually write it in his will, because he died before he could, when I was 15 and Percy was 12. I didn’t think it mattered, though, because all the rest of the buckets of money and the company went to his wife
and his two kids, but when I asked for it, Percy refused me. His sister loved me, but she was only 10, and he convinced his mother, who was too busy with managing a company alone to be able to care, that I wasn’t really a part of the family. That it would be disrespectful to Mr. Jackson’s memory to give the money he clearly wrote out to his family to someone else. I just… I was his family, you know? And he was mine. And yet, Percy Jackson couldn’t spare any money from his millions to put me through school. I went to public school, went into foster care, and now have nothing because of him. I can’t even go to college—I have to go into the military just to get an education.”

Annabeth was amazed. Luke smiled sadly and said, “Sorry, you didn’t ask for my life story, but you know… when someone asks, it’s hard not to let it all out.”

“No, I totally understand, I’m glad you told me.”

Wow. She knew Percy’s dad died, she knew he was selfish, but this was the icing on the cake. What kind of a person could do such a thing? No wonder he ran away.

Near the end of the party, Piper showed up to check on Hazel and relieve Annabeth of her doubtless boredom. She did not expect to find Annabeth at the bar, chatting up a cute guy.

She strolled up and Annabeth introduced them, and they spoke for about a half hour before dragging Hazel home. She definitely wasn’t drunk, but she was pretending to be.

On the walk back to the dorm, Hazel chatted loudly on the phone while Annabeth relayed to Piper what Luke had told her about Percy. Piper was shocked, of course, that anyone could do anything so awful, but she was also having a hard time imagining someone as sweet as Luke had seemed lying about it.

“There was probably a misunderstanding somewhere along the way,” she insisted. “I mean, we can’t actually know the extent of what went down between them. I mean, no one with a common shred of humanity would do what Luke said Percy did to him. It was probably somehow out of Percy’s control, or something like that.”

Annabeth gasped, feigning indignation. “Oh no! On one hand, if you believe the kind and sincere Luke’s account of the story, you have to think poorly of Percy. But if you believe the rude jerk Percy is innocent, then you have to think Luke would tell such a lie. Either way, Piper McLean has to think badly of another person!”
Piper rolled her eyes. “Make fun if you will, but how could he deceive his closest friends like that?”

“I can much more easily believe that Percy would lie to Jason than Luke would give such a convoluted fake history. Think about it, it already fits with what we know of Percy, and you could just see of Luke’s face that he was telling the truth. If not, he should skip the service and sign straight up for a career in Hollywood, because I have never seen such a convincing performance.”

“It’s just—I don’t even know what to think.”

“Yes you do,” Annabeth insisted. “You just hate to think it.”

Chapter End Notes

Here’s a breakdown of the characters and their parallels:

Annabeth: Elizabeth Bennet
Percy: William Darcy
Jason: Charles Bingley
Piper: Jane Bennett
Hazel: Lydia Bennett
Athena (not named): Mrs. Bennett
Rachel: Charlotte Lucas
Drew: Caroline Bingley
Thalia: Georgiana Darcy
Luke: George Wickham

and the rest I will list when we get to them :)
p.s. please be nice & leave kudos if you read the whole thing because I am v new @ this
The homecoming dance was just around the corner.

Piper was busy fretting over whether or not Jason would ask her, and although Annabeth was convinced of how much they liked each other, she wondered if he might be too shy. The Monday of game week, however, Annabeth and Piper rounded the corner to their dorm room only to see the door had a poster that said “HOMECOMING?” with a rose taped to it. Obviously Piper said yes, but when Jason appeared, he offered her a gift to wear to the dance.

It was a necklace, incredibly gorgeous and undoubtedly absurdly expensive, that consisted of a silver chain of roses.

Piper gasped. “No, no, I couldn’t—”

“Piper, I want you to wear this necklace. It won’t look half as good on anyone else, you’ll be doing it a favor,” Jason insisted.

“It’s too beautiful, and way too expensive, I’m sure—”

“Piper.” She looked up. “It’s no big deal. It’s a gift. For the dance.”

And, because it wasn’t in Piper’s nature to argue, she smiled, and let him put the necklace on. It did look amazing against her tan skin, and everyone who’d stopped to watch the show aw’ed and Piper and Jason hugged. Annabeth could have floated into her room.

The football game was insanely fun, and of course the Half-Blood Heroes won, 48-0.

But the most fun part was getting ready the next day.

Annabeth fussed over Piper, doing her braids into an updo and weaving silver thread through them. Hazel fussed over Annabeth, as usual, insisting she didn’t “live up to her potential” and trying to remedy it. Piper wore a flowy white dress, Hazel a tight black one, and Annabeth settled on a soft blue one. She was starting to wonder if Hazel packed a set of dresses specifically for her.

So they set off for the ballroom (yes, Half-Blood High had a ballroom) and when they arrived, the party was in full swing. The theme was Victorian London, and while no one dressed to it, the dance committee nevertheless way outdid themselves with the decorations.

The place looked like an 1850’s ballroom, with fancy pillars, food tables with embroidered tablecloths, and multiple chandeliers. The music, however, was modern.
Jason and Piper promptly diverged from the group to dance, followed by Hazel. Percy was thankfully nowhere in sight, and this left Annabeth, Rachel, and a couple of their friends to chatter by the food until the appropriate dancing song came on.

Reyna Ramírez-Arellano, from Rachel and Annabeth’s U.S. History class, approached Annabeth. Annabeth liked Reyna, even if she tended to always appear slightly pissed.

“Hey, Annabeth,” she said.

“Hey, Reyna,” she replied warmly.

“Do you want to go dance?” she asked, seeming like she was trying too hard to appear nonchalant.

Annabeth was surprised, since she didn’t think Reyna cared much for dances, but answered, “Sure.”

The song was actually one of her favorites, a fast pop song, so she danced recklessly while Reyna swayed uncomfortably, like she was trying to move as little as possible. This went on for about two minutes until the song switched, at which point Annabeth fanned her face and said, “I’m really hot, I’m gonna get some water.”

She ran to the refreshment table to find Rachel, who already had a drink ready for her.

“How are you not even sweaty?” Rachel asked.

“I don’t know, maybe Hazel’s face powder is magic or something.” She took a swig.

Rachel laughed. “How are you using your black cousin’s face powder?”

Annabeth shrugged, causing them both to laugh again.

“Annabeth,” someone said, cutting them off.

Annabeth turned and saw Percy. Before she could say something snarky, he asked, “Do you want to dance?”

She was so surprised she blurted, “Sure.”

He took her hand, and she cast a confused and panicked look over her shoulder at Rachel, who was obviously holding in laughter.

It was a slow song now. Annabeth wrapped her hands around his neck as he placed his on her waist. At first she was resolved to give him the silent treatment, but soon realized it would be a far worse punishment to make him talk.

“Do you like this song?” she asked.

“Sure.” He could not have made a shorter or less engaging reply.

“I’m not doing this again—I shouldn’t have to guide your conversation every time we talk.”

“Do you always talk while dancing, then?” he asked.

“Well you have to talk a little, otherwise you’ll spend five minutes swaying in silence. Although some people might prefer to say as little as possible.”
“Are you talking about me, or yourself?”

“Both,” she replied. “Because I see similarities between us. We’re both on the introverted side, not willing to speak unless we think we’ll say something that will amaze the entire room.”

“That doesn’t really sound like you,” he replied, “although I couldn’t say how much it sounds like me. Of course, you probably think it’s incredibly accurate.”

“I couldn’t tell you what I think.”

He didn’t reply, and they danced in silence a bit more. Eventually, he asked, “Do you go to Club Jupiter a lot?”

“Not particularly,” she said. After a moment, she added, “You know, when you saw me there the other week, I had just made a friend.”

The effect was immediate. His jaw set as he looked over her head and didn’t speak. Annabeth couldn’t make herself press it.

Eventually, though, Percy stated, “Luke Castellan is very good at making friends. He’s never been great at keeping them, though.”

Annabeth couldn’t help but say, “Well, he was unlucky enough to lose your friendship, in a way that will probably affect him for the rest of his life.”

At that moment, a boy from their English class interrupted them to say hi, and to mention how cute their friends looked together, pointing at Jason and Piper.

“If I were Piper, I’d never leave. I mean, imagine all the gifts he’ll get her when they’re really dating!” he exclaimed.

He bounced off, but Percy looked at where Jason and Piper swayed, thinking about the boy’s statement. After a moment, he shook his head and said, “I can’t remember what we were talking about.”

“Oh, we weren’t. No, you probably couldn’t find two people in the room with less to say to each other. We’ve already tried like three subjects and failed, and I can’t even imagine what we’ll talk about next.”

“What do you think about books?” Percy asked, smiling.

“Books? Oh, no, I’m sure we don’t like the same books, or think the same things about them.”

“Perfect! Then we can compare opinions.”

“No, I can’t think about books at a dance—my head is always full of other stuff.”

He said something else, but she didn’t hear it, because a thought struck her.

“Percy, you once said that you hardly ever forgive a grudge. That must mean that it takes a lot for you to create a grudge, right?”

“Yes,” he confirmed.

“And you never let, ah, prejudices, get in the way of your judgements?”
“Hope not.”

“'Cause you know, it’s especially important for someone who never changes their opinion to be sure they got it right on the first go.”

“I guess, why do you ask?”

“Just trying to get your character,” she smiled. “Trying to figure you out.”

“What do you think?”

She shook her head. “I have no idea. I hear so many different things about you, I’m thoroughly confused.”

“Sorry to hear that.”

The song changed, and so Annabeth thanked him for the dance, and both walked away feeling vaguely dissatisfied, for very different reasons.

It had only been a few seconds before Drew assaulted Annabeth.

“Annie Chase! I hear you met Luke Castellan at Camp Jupiter—your cousin asked me like a thousand questions about him—but I’m afraid he forgot to tell you that his dad worked for Percy’s, as like a housekeeper or gardener or something. But as your friend, I have to warn you not to trust his claims, because I can say with 100% certainty that Percy never treated him badly, he was actually remarkably nice to him. But I do know that Luke did something really horrible to Percy, although I don’t know the details, lemme tell you, I know it wasn’t pretty and it wasn’t Percy’s fault. I don’t know what gave him to audacity to even come to town in the first place, but anyway, I’m sorry to have to ruin him for you, although given his parentage, I mean, it’s hard to expect better.”

“His parentage and guilt seem to be equal offenses to you,” said Annabeth angrily, “and I haven’t heard you actually accuse him of anything worse than being a working-class man’s son, which I can assure you, he told me himself.”

“Pardon me for interfering,” Drew sniped, face contorted, “I just wanted to help.”

Drew stormed off without another word, and Annabeth was glad, because she might have said something she’d actually regret if she had to look at her stupid face anymore. Annabeth sought out Piper instead.

Piper had asked Jason about Luke, and the account had been pretty much the same as Drew’s, except Annabeth learned that neither had even met Luke. They were simply repeating the story Percy had told them, without bothering to hear the other side of it. Annabeth’s opinions on the matter from the beginning of the evening were confirmed, and she distracted Piper by asking her about Jason, and watching her face glow.

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