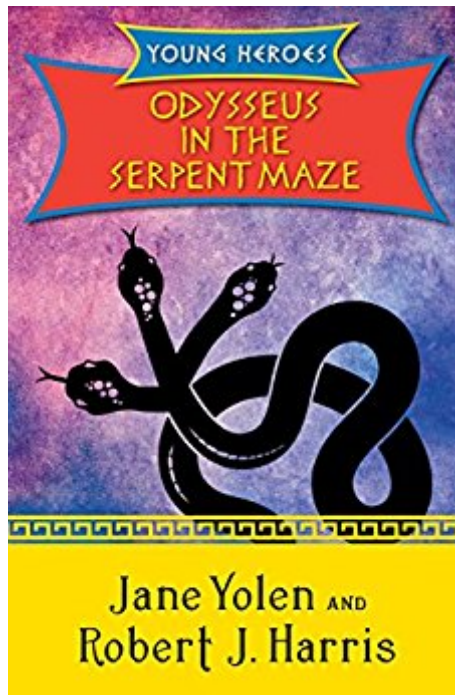




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Odysseus In The Serpent Maze (Young Heroes Book 1)



Synopsis

Before he became the hero of the Trojan War, young Odysseus battled monsters and magic. Young Prince Odysseus longs to be a hero. But when he and his travelling companions are captured on their way home to Ithaca, Odysseus learns that being a hero isn't always easy. Now Odysseus must fight dastardly pirates, survive the enchanted songs of sirens, slay monsters, and defeat a treacherous king. Worse still, Odysseus has to deal with girls: snooty, spoiled Princess Helen of Sparta and her companion, the annoyingly sensible Penelope. Odysseus must use his strength and cleverness to save his friends, and he must sacrifice more than he ever expected to become the hero he is destined to be. This ebook features personal histories by Jane Yolen and Robert J. Harris including rare images from the authors' personal collections, as well as a timeline of the Heroic Age and a conversation between the two authors about the making of the series.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Excellent book for YA/teen readers who are interested in Greek mythology. This story projects back and imagines what some of the Greeks in the Age of Heroes might have been like as teenagers - quick-witted Odysseus, practical and calm Penelope (doing double duty here as Helen's cousin),

Helen being a spoiled, vain brat. They have a series of adventures, including a rather unpleasant voyage to Crete where they discover that the Minotaur might not have been the only monster in the Labyrinth. Excellent story, does have some violence but nothing graphic.

Excellent item. Arrived before I expected.

The book was a gift for our granddaughter. It was in great condition and came very quickly.

When you think of Odysseus, you think of the big wooden horse, lots of blood and mayhem, and a mild-mannered Penelope who assumes that her suitors are as dumb as she is. But you may not see him (or her) quite the same way after reading this book. It's a fun romp for kids, and may also be for adults with knowledge of Greek mythos. Thirteen-year-old Odysseus and his best friend Mentor want to be heroes (actually, Odysseus wants to be a hero, and Mentor tags along) at the home of Odysseus's thief-king grandfather. After a partially successful hunt in which they help stop a monstrous boar, the boys are sent home across the sea -- except a storm washes them overboard, and leaves them stranded in a box in the middle of the ocean. After they are captured by pirates, the boys find that they are not the only captives. There are a pair of princesses, the incredibly beautiful (but spoiled, petty and self-absorbed) Helen, and the less beautiful but clever Penelope. With the help of an incredibly smelly satyr and a self-rowing ship, Odysseus and his friends escape. But they inadvertantly stumble into more places full of things and creatures both astounding -- and terrifying. This is a pretty fun read. It's a coming-of-age story/adventure story/mythological story, that takes up mythical threads and adds on to them as it skilfully shows the growth of the characters. The things such as Daedalus's lab and the boat that rows itself are done with exquisite atmosphere, as is the boar hunt and the semi-humiliating scenes that follow. Comedy, horror, adventure, and occasional awe are mixed in expertly. Odysseus is reminiscent of Lloyd Alexander's Taran, with his brash eagerness to be a hero and a man among men, and his gradual maturation when he has to deal with actual danger. There's a good chemistry between him and Penelope; though it's not yet romantic, it's one of mutual respect and understanding which hints at their future relationship. Mentor is good as the voice of reason (except when Helen addles his mind) and Helen is great as a spoiled royal brat who thinks of her looks, suitors, and status as a princess. You WILL want to strangle her. If your kids have ever enjoyed Greek legends, or if you're trying to interest them, this historical/mythical fantasy may be the ticket.

Such a wonderful introduction to Odysseus for young readers...this is a lively, fast paced, slightly outlandish accounting of the young Odysseus (and his cautious friend Mentor, the young and extremely spoiled Helen, and the practical and quite heroic on her own Penelope). I wasn't sure what to expect going into this, but I was glad to discover that it's not some campy over the top rendition of "young" insert hero here (think that Disney show about young Heracles going to school, ick). Odysseus, at the age of 13 already has some of his most notable faults (brashness, outlandish fibs/lies/embellishments, and an unquenchable desire for glory). As the story starts out, Odysseus drags the much more cautious Mentor on a boar hunt that goes wrong, from there he is shortly hurled into an adventure in the making on what should have been a short trip home...he's summarily tossed overboard, deals with pirates, rescues the damsels in distress (however reluctantly), makes a friend in Silenus the Satyr, discovers something about Dadelus, and so much more! Ultimately will he be able to return home? Will he rescue Penelope and Helen or will Penelope rescue him? You simply must read this to find out. I really did enjoy this one even as an adult...it's a little bit too early for my girl to read this, but soon enough, she'll be old enough to appreciate the intricacies of the story...and it really is a fast paced, page turning adventure that will keep you on the edge of your seat...there are many adult books that can't boast that, so that's quite nice to see in a children's/young adult novel! I think this is best read by kids somewhere between the ages of 8-12, with somewhere around 9 or 10 being ideal, depending on your child's reading ability. I also think it will appeal equally to boys or girls because while Helen is a prissy, girly girl, Penelope is no slouch and she's every bit as heroic as Odysseus!! Best of all, this isn't some watered down, diluted sugar sweet story...it's the real deal! There is real danger (Odysseus is beat to heck by the end of it) and real perilous adventure...and there is so much more. I recommend it without hesitation, I think it's an excellent resource for introducing Greek mythology and the heroes/characters behind the Iliad/Odyssey...it would be a great help there and just a fun read overall! It gets a big A+ from me! I loved it and I know my Girl will too when she reads it next school year!

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