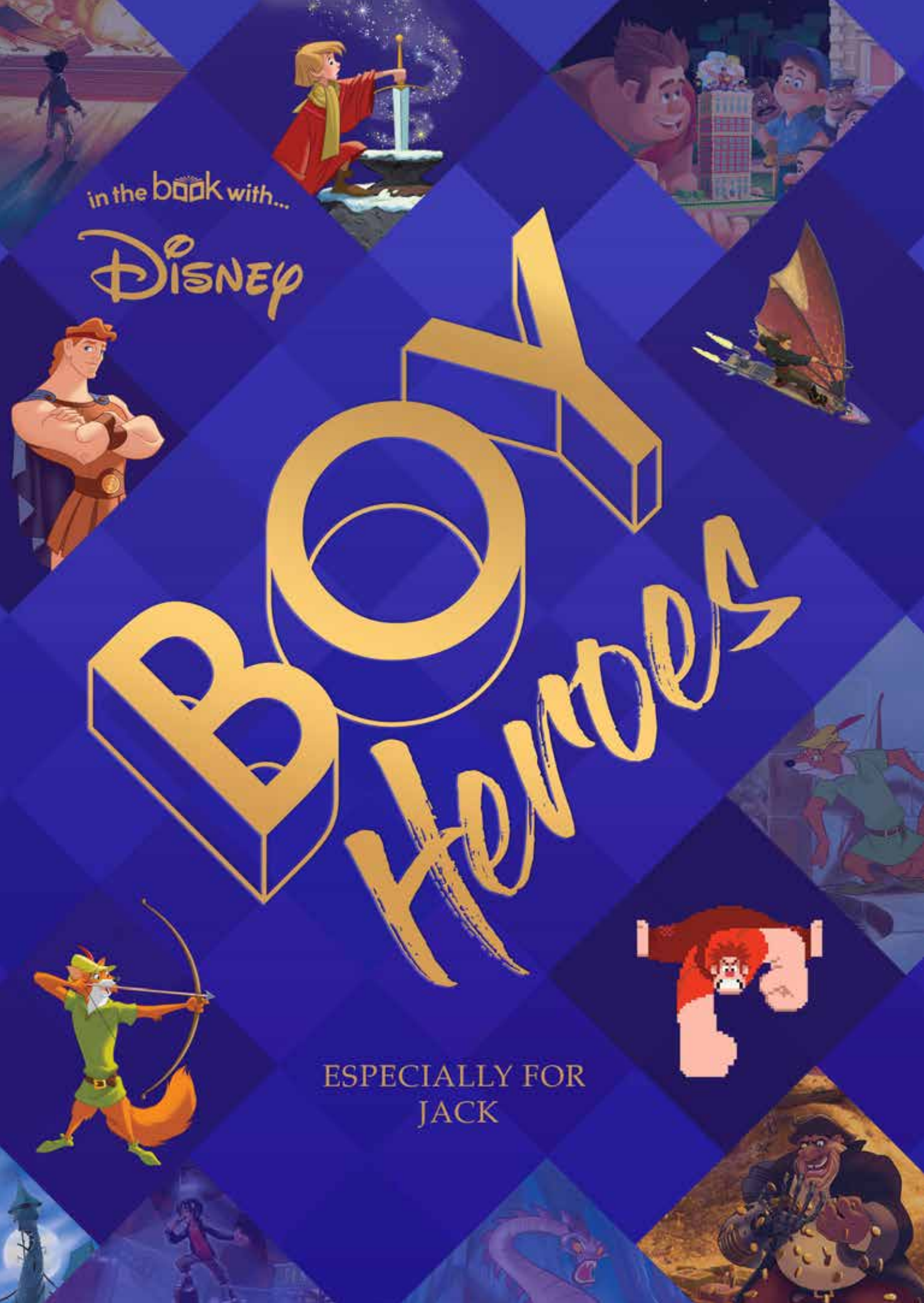


in the book with...

Disney

BOY Heroes

ESPECIALLY FOR
JACK



in the book with...

Disney

BOY Heroes



Especially for Jack

Happy Birthday Jack

Love Sam xxx

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JACK SAVES THE DAY

Walking to the park, Jack began to get a little bit excited. Jack could already hear the shouts and laughter of the other children. Rounding the corner Jack could now see a group of kids playing on the football field in the park. Two teams of boys and girls kicked the football back and forth, each one of them trying to score a goal.

Whoops and cheers erupted from one team, who all wore red armbands, as a girl booted the ball straight past the goalie and into the top corner of the goal. Jack could see the other team, who wore blue armbands, didn't look so happy.

The ball was put back in the center spot and the game resumed. This time the football soared through the air towards the other goal. The goalkeeper jumped sideways to block the ball, but narrowly missed. The blue team now had their turn to celebrate and cheer.

Jack had seen enough and began running towards the group to join in. Getting nearer, Jack could see that all the other children were older, some of them by quite a few years. This made Jack pause but, gathering courage, Jack took a deep breath, stepped forwards and asked the nearest person from the red team, "Can I play too?"

The girl looked down at Jack and shook her head, "We don't need another player. You're too little anyway." Then she turned her back and continued playing.

Jack was hurt but tried hard not to cry. Instead,

Jack walked up to someone on the blue team and asked the same question. Again, the boy Jack asked said no. "We don't play with tiny babies," he laughed before running off to kick the ball.

Shocked and saddened by what they'd said, Jack stood at the edge of the pitch and watched the older girls and boys continue their game. As the ball went back and forth, Jack began thinking of heroes. 'If I was a hero, they'd let me join in,' thought Jack.

Jack thought of Hiro from *Big Hero 6* and wished to be as confident as him. Hiro was younger than his friends but they treated him like an equal because he was so brave and clever.

The football game was continuing but Jack had begun thinking about other cool heroes. At first Hercules was laughed at, nobody thought he belonged, but he worked hard to prove himself.

Bonk!

The football hit Jack and bounced away. Startled, Jack saw the ball had been kicked by a girl who looked a little younger than the rest of the players. She apologized and asked for the ball back. Seeing her smile made Jack smile too while passing the ball back to her.

It wasn't long before grown-ups started to call out to the children on the field, telling them it was nearly time to leave. But the score was tied and both teams of children wanted to find who was the winner. A penalty shoot-out was decided as the fastest way to end the game, and the children lined up to take their shots.

One by one the girls and boys booted the football towards the goal, each one hoping to get it past the other team, while both goalies fiercely defended the shots. Some went in, some were

saved, and some shots weren't on target at all. Both teams had taken it in turns for someone to take the penalty, and the score was tied. There were three penalties left to take, the red team had two turns left and the girl who'd laughed at Jack prepared to take her shot. She kicked the ball which soared towards the upper right corner of the net. But the blue team goalie jumped and caught it mid-air. Unfortunately, after catching it he then crashed straight into the post!

The boy fell down hard, gripping his arm. Jack could see he was fighting back tears, banging his arm must've really hurt. The boy couldn't play any more and it was his turn to take a penalty! There wasn't anyone left to play.

Jack thought of Wart from *The Sword in the Stone* and how somebody small could still surprise people by doing something unexpected. Stepping forwards, "I could take the shot," Jack volunteered.

The captain of the blue team raised his eyebrows, but before he could say anything, a voice spoke up on behalf of Jack.

"Let the new kid have a go," she said.

It was the girl who'd smiled at Jack earlier, and she was smiling again now.

Jack now grinned and stepped forward, taking the ball and placing it on the penalty spot. With gritted teeth, Jack concentrated on aiming the ball past the red team's goalkeeper. Taking a deep breath before beginning a small run-up, Jack kicked the ball, hard. It sailed through the air, straight past the keeper and hit the back of the net.

The blue team cheered! They were now winning, but there was still one penalty left for the red team.

But who would be in goal? The blue team's keeper was still hurt.

Again, Jack volunteered and was surprised

when the whole team agreed and handed over the goalkeeper gloves.

The last member of the red team placed the ball on the penalty spot. She stared Jack in the eyes and gave a fierce look before giving the ball a swift kick.

It was as if time slowed down for Jack. The football was flying through the air, straight for the left of the goal. Jack dived in the same direction and snatched the ball out of the air before it could go between the posts.

The blue team cheered louder than before and all rushed towards Jack. Some of the older boys lifted Jack into the air as the rest of the team all clapped and shouted with joy. Jack felt on top of the world. Looking around, Jack could see that the red team were all smiling too. They'd been so surprised that someone younger than them had been the one to help the blue team win!

As the parents came to take the children home, they all said goodbye and made plans to play together again when they could. Jack knew that they'd all become friends and felt so happy. The last person to come to say goodbye was the girl who'd laughed when Jack first asked to play.

"I was wrong," she said, "I'm sorry. Next week you can be on my team."

"No, I want Jack on my team," said the boy who called Jack a baby. "I'm sorry too," he added with a kind smile.

Jack smiled too and promised to come and play again. It felt good to be a football hero.

Disney

HERCULES



Disney
HERCULES

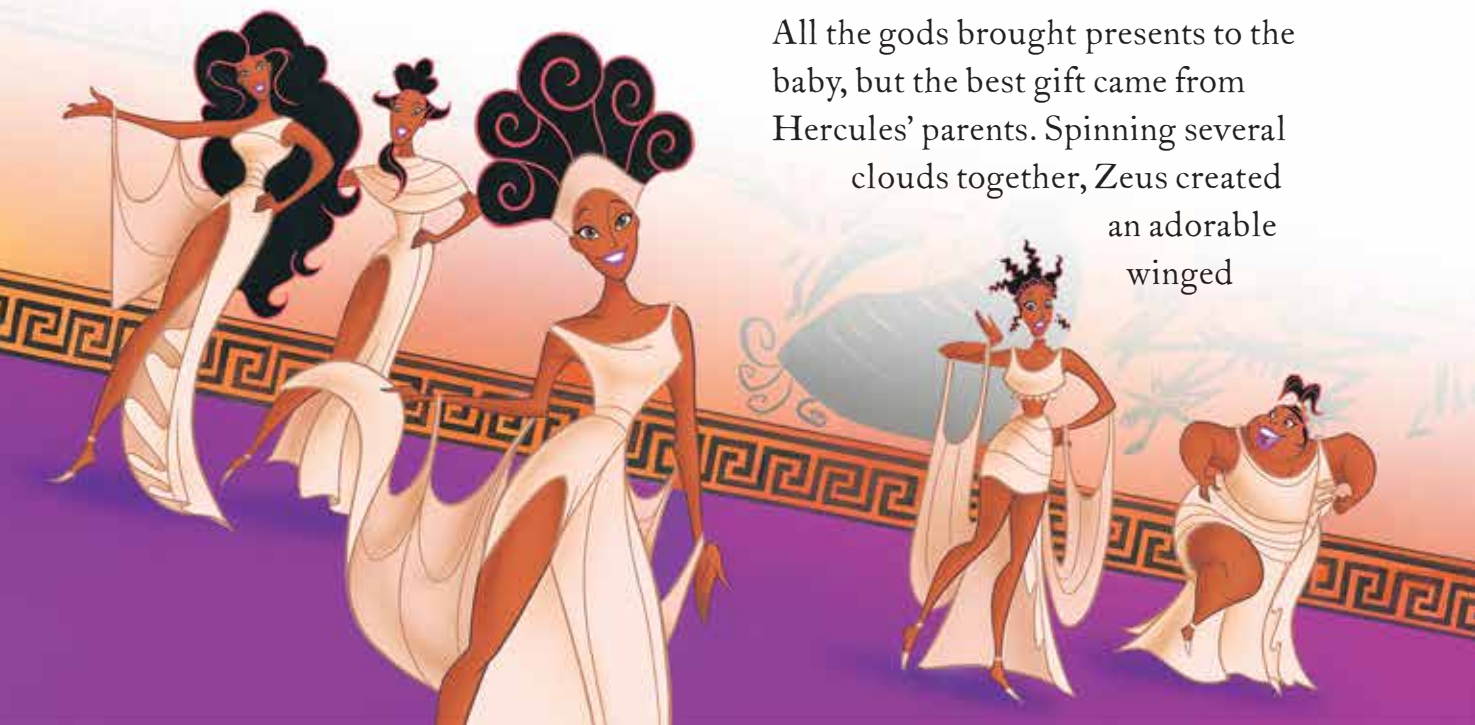
Long ago in ancient Greece, there was a golden age of gods and heroes. Hercules was the greatest and strongest of them all. These ladies are the Muses, goddesses of the arts and proclaimers of heroes. Thanks to them, Hercules' story will come to life! But this adventure actually begins long before Hercules.

When the world was first created, a group of Titans abused the earth with relentless volcanoes, storms, and earthquakes.

That is, until Zeus intervened! Zeus ruled as king over all other gods. As he hurled lightning from above, Zeus trapped the Titans and prevented them from inflicting any more damage.

Many years later at Mount Olympus, it was time to celebrate the arrival of Zeus and Hera's son, Hercules. He was cute, cuddly, and unbelievably strong.

All the gods brought presents to the baby, but the best gift came from Hercules' parents. Spinning several clouds together, Zeus created an adorable winged



ESPECIALLY FOR JACK

baby horse. “His name is Pegasus, and he’s all yours, Son,” he said.

Soon Hades, god of the Underworld, arrived. He hated Zeus but forced a smile and handed Hercules a pacifier—shaped like a skull.

Baby Hercules grabbed Hades’ finger and squeezed until Hades reeled in pain. It was clear Hercules would soon become the strongest of all the gods.

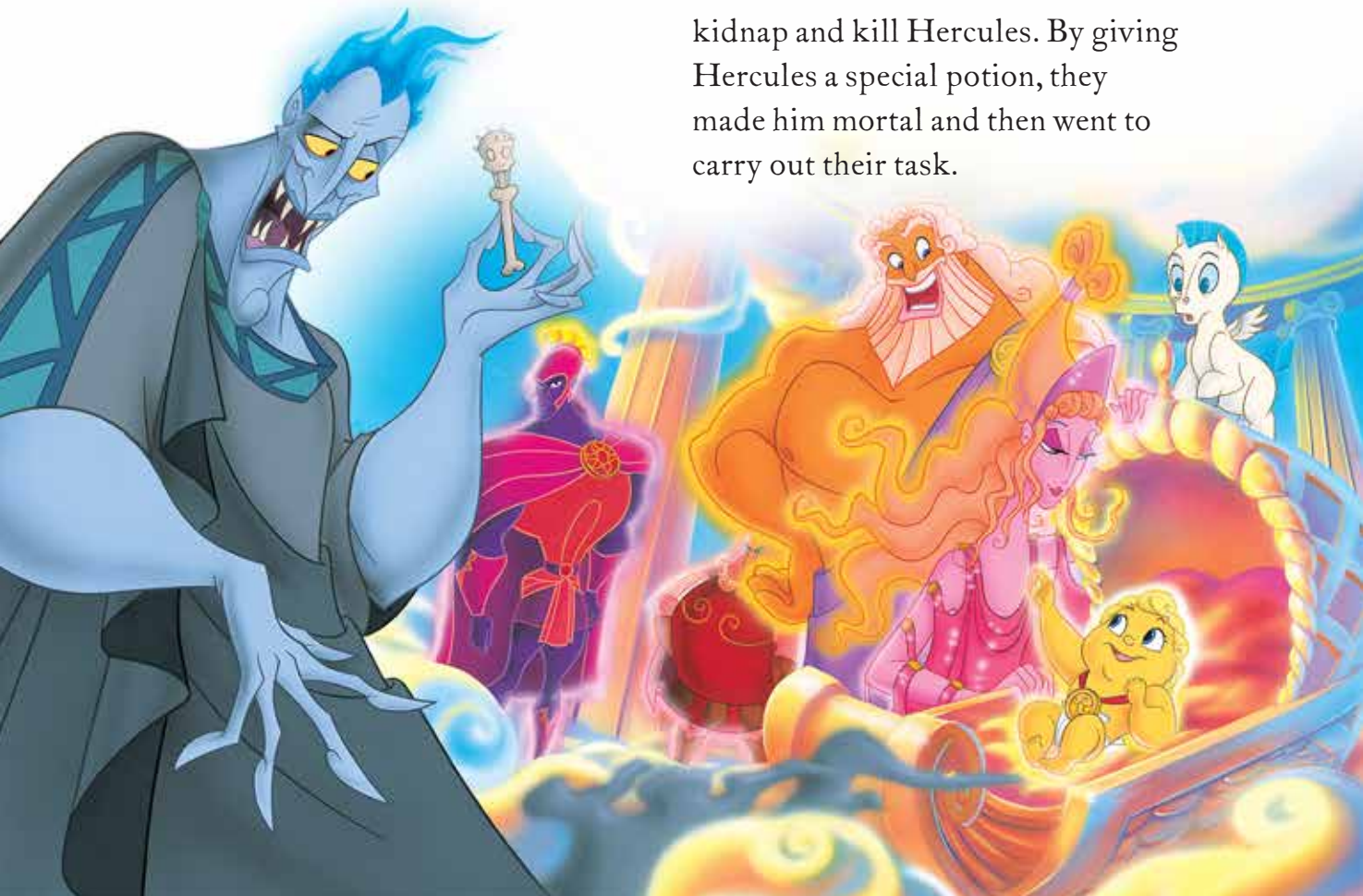
Shortly thereafter, Hades headed back to the Underworld. As soon as he docked, his two henchmen, Pain and Panic, told Hades that the Fates had arrived.

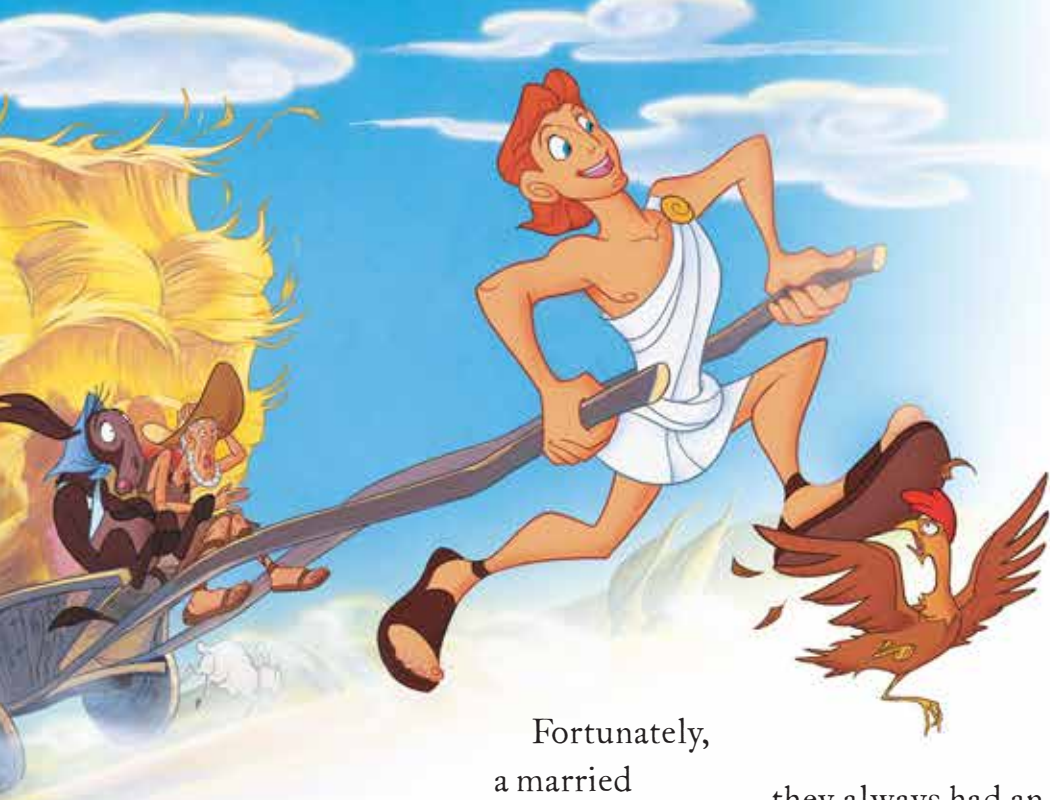
The Fates were three old women who could see the past, present, and future with one shared eye. They were in charge of cutting a person’s thread of life, sending each one straight to the Underworld.

“So, let me just ask, is this kid gonna mess up my hostile takeover bid or what?” Hades said.

The Fates told Hades that in eighteen years, when the planets became perfectly aligned, Hades could indeed overthrow Zeus. But they added: “A word of caution to this tale. Should Hercules fight, you will fail.”

Hades sent Pain and Panic to kidnap and kill Hercules. By giving Hercules a special potion, they made him mortal and then went to carry out their task.





Fortunately, a married couple interrupted them. But the damage was done. Pain and Panic, disguised as snakes, slithered toward the baby, ready to finish him off. Hercules was mortal but still had extraordinary strength. He tossed the serpents aside, and the henchmen left the baby alive. They decided that Hades didn't need to know the details.

As a mortal, Hercules could not return to Olympus. Zeus and Hera mourned as their baby was adopted by the older couple, Amphitryon and Alcmene. Under their care, Hercules grew into a kind and devoted son. But he wasn't able to control his strength. People often avoided Hercules because disaster followed him wherever he went.

One day, Hercules wanted to join some of the local boys in a game of discus. But

they always had an excuse to turn him down.

Nevertheless, the eager Hercules ran after their discus, knocking into the pillars of the marketplace and leaving it in ruins. The townspeople had had enough, and warned his father to keep him away.

Hercules knew there had to be someplace for him to belong. His parents decided it was time to show him the gold medallion he had been wearing when they found him.





“It’s the symbol of the gods,”
Alcmene explained.

“This is it! Don’tcha see? Maybe
they have the answers,” Hercules
mused. He said goodbye and began
his quest toward the temple of Zeus.

When he arrived, Hercules knelt
before the statue of Zeus, and the
figure came to life! Hercules tried to
run away.

“Is this the kind of hello you give
your father?” Zeus asked.

Hercules was confused. If Zeus
was his father, then Hercules must
be a god.

Zeus explained that Hercules wasn’t
a god. He was human—and humans
were not allowed on Olympus.

“You can’t do a thing?” Hercules
asked.

“I can’t, Hercules. But you can,”
Zeus replied. “Hercules, if you
can prove yourself a true hero
on Earth, your godhood will be
restored. First, you must seek out
Philoctetes, the trainer of heroes.”
Then Zeus reunited him with his old
pal Pegasus.

“I won’t let you down, Father,”
Hercules called.

Hercules discovered that Philoctetes was a wisecracking satyr—a half-man, half-goat. He told Phil about his dream to be a hero and asked for his help.

“I had a dream once. I dreamed that I was going to train the greatest hero there ever was!” Phil declared. “So great, the gods would hang a picture of him in the stars.” Then Phil explained that everyone he ever trained had let him down—especially Achilles. “Dreams are for rookies,” he continued. “A guy can only take so much disappointment.”

“I’m different from those other guys!” Hercules insisted. He tried to convince Phil with his remarkable strength. Hercules even revealed that he was the son of Zeus.

“Zeus? The big guy?” asked Phil. “Mr. Lightning Bolts?”

Hercules swore it was the truth, yet Phil still refused to believe him—until Zeus sent a lightning bolt his way.

“Okay,” Phil agreed. “You win!”

Phil and Hercules got right to work. As his training continued and the seasons changed, so did Hercules. He went from an awkward youth to a skilled athlete.

“I’m ready! I want to get off this island,” Hercules declared.

“Okay, kid,” Phil agreed. “We’re going to Thebes.”

On the way to Thebes, they came upon Meg, a self-assured and beautiful young woman trapped in the clutches of a centaur named Nessus.

“Keep moving, Junior,” Meg snapped at Hercules when he tried to help.



End
of
Sample