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It's Monday again, and it's been 30 dgrees celcius for three days now and I have finally finished it. I hope you enjoy reading my review that was such a pain to write because I could not seem to gether all my thoughts together to sum up this wonderful masterpiece of a book. Goodreads Summary: Thor's hammer is missing again. The thunder god has a disturbing habit of misplacing his weapon—the mightiest force in the Nine Worlds. But this time the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase and his friends can't retrieve the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase and his friends can't retrieve the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase and his friends can't retrieve the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase and his friends can't retrieve the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. 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If Magnus Chase and his fallen into enemy hands are the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase and his fallen into enemy hands are the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase are the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands. If Magnus Chase are the hammer isn't just lost, it has fallen into enemy hands ar quickly, the mortal worlds will be defenseless against an onslaught of giants. Ragnarok will begin. The Nine Worlds will burn. Unfortunately, the only person who can broker a deal for the hammer's return is the gods' worst enemy, Loki-and the price he wants is very high. Review! This book is honestly something from anothe world, aprobably from one of the nine realms, because something this amazing cannot come from a planet like earth. This book was so good that I'm going to break the review down in 5 parts. These parts will detail what I thought about the Writing, Characters, Diversity, Plot, and The Ending of this book, because I have so many feelings that need to be expressed, and I don't know how to express them in one big clumpy review. Writing: Where do I start. Many of you have probably read Ricks previously published books - Percy Jackson Series, Kane Chronicles, etc - and you would know that his writing is abolutly brilliant. It is detailed not in a complicated way so children can read it, but not too basic so it appeals to young adults as well. I was only introduced to his writing just last year, I was captivated by how funny it was and how he could tell the story through first person but Rick made the first person point of view fun, mysterious, and engaging, leaving me wanting more each time. Characters: In this book we are introduced to my new all-time favoutite characters and engaging, leaving me wanting more each time. Characters: In this book we are introduced to my new all-time favoutite characters and engaging, leaving me wanting more each time. Characters and told my mum that Rick Riordan introduced me to my first ever – and favourite – gender fluid character. You see, the thing with adults is that they don't understand these new-found gender identities and it wasn't quite satisfying telling my mum, but I was excited and my whole body was buzzing and nothing was going to get me down! I loved Alex's I-take-shitfrom-no-one attitude, I need more of it. The way Alex takes back the mark and isn't scared of Loki, really truly shows the type of person Alex is the the unjust way he/she was brought up, which lead to this fierce independance. I, like Magnus, cannot understand the mind of a gender fluid person, but Rick Riordan made Alex's changing gender easy to understand and follow. As it was through Magnus' eyes, I was able to follow along that story through the eyes of someone please explain Heimdal to me. I loved him!! I've never been really interested in the guardian and the only exposure I have had to Heimdall is in the thor movies, in which I really loved his character. But the Heimdall in Magnus Chase was difference in behaviour between the two, made it easier to distinguish and imagine a white, viking God. Diversity: Rick not only included a gender fluid character (as mentioned above), he also brought more diversity into the mix with a deeper look into Samirah's religious practices. You see, yet again another underappreciated character trait. Samirah's religion in this book was like a little counter-argument or a "in your face" to the Norse Gods because she didn't see, being a daughter of one of the Gods - Loki - is Arabic/ Muslim and does not see the Asgardians as Gods, rather "higher beings" as quoted by her. Another thing I love about Rick's work is the integration of modern technology into a not-so-modern world. The selfie taking Heimdall is one of these examples and by Gods was he a funny one. Where he was annoying at times always asking for a selfie from everything in the nine realms. Plot: I went into these books with semi-high expectations. I've done a bit of research on Norse mythology and I'm no expert but I was astounded by Rick's use and knowledge of mythology. One of my favourite Norse Myths is where Thor dresses up as a woman to save Frigga from marying a giant and in turn gets his Hammer back and kills all the giants. The plot twist – which kept me on edge thoughout the whole firsy half of the book – was a weding much like that told in the myth, and I thought the wedding was going to be according to the myth; but once again I've underestimated Rick, it was better. It was until the plot twisted, I started becoming more deeply invested in the story. For some reason, throughout the start of the book I felt like I was slipping into a slump, probably from the information overload, or the fact that I just finished school and I was lost. But besides that I was totally captivated by the plot. it felt so good to come back home to Valhalla with all of my friends on floor 19. The Ending: Please not again Rick. Not another damn cliffhanger. I have not yet read any book that Percy Jackson is in, so with his pending appearance in the third book I will be reading all of his books before October 3rd 2017. I was glad that Anabeth was consulted again. It shows that Magnus is a hero who knows he needs his friends and will not just do things alone when he can call for help. He admits that he is not capapble of saving the world alone, and needs the skills of his friends to help him. Overall: I feel like I really can relate to Magnus especially in this book because I don't really understand how gender fluid people 'work' (for use of a better word) but I am understanding, I would also protect and accept my friends in thir religious practices. This is what I like most about Magnus, the great acceptance and love he shows toward his friends is astounding and just impalpable. I don't know if I'm the only one that may or may not be (unconsciously) shipping. Friend-shipping? I need more Alegnus? Magnex? Tell me what you think!. \* Rating \* Much like the first Magnus Chase book (MC and The Sword of Summer). I gave The Hammer of Thor \*\*\* \*\* 5/5 stars, because of all the damn feels this book made me feel so much stuff that I'm having trouble explaining. TL:DR: This book is so good and I just honestly can't anymore! Also I'll need to read the Percy Jackson series before next October, and Alex Fierro is a precious muffin and must be protected at all costs. . Thank You so much for reading and I hope to see you all back here again Saturday (a) I'm a Book Depository Affiliate! Get Free Shipping on ALL BOOKS Everywhere! © Jasper+Spice 2016. All Rights Reserved. Please do not use without permission. This review was not sponsored and all opinions are my own, photos from Goodreads. Follow me on Instagram @thebookishbree. You can also follow me on Goodreads at jasperandspice. Characters explore some of the nine worlds said to exist in Norse mythology, especially Asgard, home of the gods; Alfheim, home of the light elves; and Jotunheim, home of the giants. We meet a few gods for the first time, including Heimdall, god of vigilance; Vidar, the god of vengeance; and Sif, goddess of the earth. We also meet other otherworldly creatures including giants, draugr (Norse zombies), and lindworms (Norse dragons). The back of the book includes a glossary, pronunciation guide (with terms like "Mjolnir," which means "thank goodness!"), a list of the nine worlds, and pictures and descriptions of runes used. Welcome once again to the Riordan Retrospective. For those of you just joining the fun, this is my look back at the works of Rick Riordan. That means we're taking a look at Percy Jackson, its sequel series and its spin-off series. This is less of a formal review, and more of a look back, along with my thoughts and observations. Last time we took a look back at the companion book Camp Half-Blood Confidential. This time, we return to Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard for the moment you've all been waiting for. We're taking at The Hammer of Thor, Magnus Chase, son of the Norse god Frey, has been adjusting fairly well to his afterlife in Valhalla. Ah, but things rarely stay calm for long. Thor's hammer is missing again, and if Magnus and the gang don't it back, it could mean the start of Ragnarok. To do this, Magnus will need the help of a green-hair genderfluid sociopath named Alex Fierro. There's action and adventure as Magnus develops Stockholm Syndrome and begins a budding romance that has all the hallmarks of an abusive relationship. He's also got a massive Oedipus Complex going to compare Alex to your dead mom? Along the way, he'll team up with his trusty sidekick Sam, who had degenerated into a token Muslim with no personality beyond her religion and being a walking oxymoron. Also, Blitz and Hearth are there too. So, get ready to get woke as Helheim, as Norse Mythology meets an overbearing social justice warrior agenda in a massive brain fart that Rick Riordan decided to turn into a book...for some reason. Yeah, as you can tell by my unusually bitter and sarcastic summary. I really, really hate this book. I didn't think it was possible. I never thought I'd see the day that Rick Riordan wrote a book that I loathed with every atom of my body. Ah, but how the madman proved me wrong. This is time moment I've been hint at for a while now. Where do I even begin with this one? Well, let's start with the big one: Alex Fierro. Imagine a scenario a bit like the movie Weird Science, but instead of creating a hot girl, something goes horribly wrong and the compute bring Tumblr to life. That, in a nutshell, is Alex. Riordan said he wanted to use Alex so that transgender kids would feel represented. You might claim this is well intentioned, but as is often quoted, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Moreover, unless those transgender kids happen to jerks and sociopaths, they probably won't see themselves reflected in Alex. The very thing she says to Magnus, when he gets confused about her being trans, is "it's not my job to educate you!" She says this, and yet she always flips out whenever someone gets her gender wrong. Okay, so if it isn't your job to educate them, how are they supposed to know any of this?! Alex is clearly cast from the same mold as Thalia and Zia, but Riordan left out a critical component. Thalia and Zia worked because they actually had sympathetic qualities and got called out when they went too far. Alex, by contrast, lacks any sympathetic qualities and never gets called out for being a dick to everyone she encounters. Riordan seems to have fallen into the trap of thinking that, because Alex is spunky and irreverent, she's a strong character. He also seemed to be under the impression that, if he made the other characters love Alex, it would translate into the readers loving Alex. Suffice it to say that this turned out to be very, very wrong. He did this before with Jason and Piper, but it's even worse here. It almost feels like Alex is an example of black propaganda. Black propaganda is where you pretend to be in favor of position A, but you're actually in favor of position B, and you're trying to make people who support position A look bad. Also, let's talk about when Magnus first meets Alex and pontificates about homeless transgender kids. The way the dialogue is written makes it sound like he's become possessed by a gender studies major. Seriously, you expect me to believe a kid whose been living on the streets of Boston for the past two years would talk like that? As for Alex being genderfluid, I find that suspect as well. It's hinted that it might have to do with her shapeshifting powers, but I have a different theory. I think, deep down, Riordan knows how stupid the idea of genderfluidity is, but used the shapeshifting thing to try and justify it. In other words, he was trying to have his cake and eat it too. I'm also baffled at how many LGBTQ awards this book won because of Alex. Representation doesn't mean jack when the one transgender character has no empathy for other people, and is a total sociopath. Okay, enough about Alex, let's get on to the second major problem: Sam. As I've previously stated, she had a lot of red flags that I really should have taken more seriously. Whereas in Sword of Summer of Thor, Sam is unabashedly Muslim. So she's a Muslim demigod...um, what?! Yeah, Riordan bullshits about how Sam doesn't believe the gods are actual gods, but it just doesn't hold water. How does she reconcile the fact that the afterlife is different than what Islam says? For that matter, why would God have created the Norse gods at all? Frankly, Sam's not being a skeptic or keeping an open-mind, she's in complete denial. As Carter and Sadie Kane will tell you, denial ain't just a river in Egypt. Riordan should have stuck to what Chiron said back in The Lightning Thief; the matter of capital-G God should not be calling himself an atheist! He has rock-solid proof that there is an afterlife and gods. I don't know what I'd be calling myself in his situation, but I sure wouldn't be calling myself an atheist anymore. The entire universe seemed to bend over backwards to accommodate Sam and her beliefs. For example, there was the meeting with Heimdall. I'm not sure I'm ever going to forgive Riordan for what he did to Heimdall. In Norse Mythology, Heimdall is a noble and honorable god who guards the Bifrost bridge that links Asgard and Midgard. He knows that one day Ragnork will come, and yet he doesn't run from his duty. So how does Riordan portray Heimdall? Why, as a soy boy who is addicted to his cellphone, of course. Come to think of it, he kind of made Aegir a soy boy too, but more on that when we get to Ship of the Dead. Then, to add insult to injury, Riordan has Soydall tell Sam that he doesn't believe he and the Aesir are actually gods, and he's with her. It was at this point that I was very tempted to throw by head back and scream at the sky in frustration. That scene further underscores the world bending over to accommodate Sam and her beliefs. I will give Soydall one thing, the gods as Riordan has written them, are too quirky for their own good. Well, there are a few exceptions such as Frey and Vidar, but overall they're just too damn silly. It is true that Rick has often given the gods little guirks and moments of silliness, but he always balanced it out with moments of seriousness and gravitas. Also, the pop cultural references. My gods, this book is practically a time capsule of the mid-2010s. It's like Riordan was unintentionally writing a period piece. Rick said he purposefully avoided too many pop culture references in the Percy Jackson books so that they would have a timeless feel to them. When he started using references in The Kane Chronicle and Heroes of Olympus, he did so sparingly. He also referenced things that have been around for a while, such as Doctor Who and Marvel and DC Comics, so they would age well. Here, it's like he's having a contest to see how many references he can cram in. Ironically, in his bid to be progressive, Riordan has promoted the most conservative aspects of Islam. For example, he had Sam wearing a hijab. Contrary to what the media might have to believe, over half of all the Muslim women in America don't wear the hijab. There's also a certain irony of a supposedly strong female hero running around in a medieval chastity helmet. Does this mean we're going to get a Mormon demigod who wears the special Mormon underwear? Yeah, don't hold your breath; Riordan wouldn't be able to score any social justice brownie points if he did that. Sam talks about how the hijab is her choice, a common rallying cry of Islamophiles. However, this ignores the fact that, for Muslims women in most other parts of the world, hijab is most certainly not a choice. These women will often face major social and legal repercussions if they dare appear in public with their hijab. Way to kick them while they're down. Rick, Also, Sam is in an arranged marriage... to her cousin. Did Rick Riordan seriously just promote incest in the name of so-called diversity? Oh, but it gets worse. Sam takes an oath that she will not touch another man until she marries Amir. Oh, and did I mention that she invokes Allah while making this oath in the presence of a pagan deity? I can't be the only one who found the whole thing downright creepy and utterly cringeworthy. Also, Sam and Amir must be chaperoned by a male guardian/authority figure whenever they're together. What the actual Helheim, Rick! Are you seriously promoting male guardianship culture?! There are women in Saudi Arabia and Iran risking their lives to fight that shit! Rick Riordan is spitting in the faces of Muslims Reformers and Ex-Muslims everywhere, and he doesn't even have the decency to call it rain! Riordan has said that Percy and Annabeth aren't getting engaged because they're Muslim. Sure is great to see Rick engaging in the soft bigotry of low expectations...not! Also, here's another fact you probably didn't know, over sixty percent of all religiously motives hate crimes in America are committed against Jews. Bizarrely enough, Riordan is in no rush to create a Jewish demigod. Islam is not like Judaism. You can be culturally Jewish even if you're an atheist; there's no such thing as a cultural Muslim. Muslim denotes religion. Now, some people say Riordan made Sam to fight racism is that? Is it against White Muslims from Chechnya? Black Muslims from Nigeria? Asian Muslims from Malaysia? Brown Muslims from Bangladesh? Or maybe Iranian Muslims who are so fair-haired and light-skinned that they look like white people? Islam is a religion, not a race. Also, Middle Eastern does not automatically mean Muslim. Riordan ought to know this, give that Zia is a non-Muslim Middle Easterner. You know, there's an alarming amount of Middle Eastern Christians being persecuted in Muslim nations. I wonder if Rick will make a Middle Eastern Christian demigod next. Nah, that would require that he admit that Muslims can be bad just like non-Muslims can. Also, I'm not advocating for there to be Christian demigods. If you can't tell already, I think Rick should have kept the Abrahamic religions out of his books. Well, enough about Sam for now, let's move on to other matters. So there a scene where Magnus complains about Hotel Valhalla engaging in cultural appropriation is...well, basically the history of how culture works. Cultures have always mixed, matched and borrowed from each other. It is exceedingly rare to find anything that doesn't owe some aspect of its existence to another culture. Oh, and this is my favorite part, Rick Riordan wouldn't have a career if it weren't for cultural appropriation! Tell me. Rick. are vou Greek. Roman or Egyptian? If not, then why did you write books about those mythologies? Are you perhaps throwing around terms without knowing what they mean in a desperate attempt to prove you're down with the kids? Is this why The Kane Chronicles has been treated like a red-haired stepchild as of late? Moving on, the trip of Alfheim was very disappointing. I had this problem a bit with Nidavellir in Sword of Summer, it just didn't feel magical enough. Alfheim was exactly like a bog standard rich people suburb. At times, I had to remind myself that those scenes were in the land of the light elves. One of the big appeals of the Riordanverse, to me, is how it blends the mythical with the modern. I love how it shows that there can be magic and adventure in America, and you don't have to go to some distant land for all that. However, whenever Carter and Sadie go to the Duat, or Percy and company go to Mount Olympus, it's all properly mystical and otherworldly. The Nine Worlds lean far too much on the mundane side of the equation. Magnus talks about how black homeless people are bullied by the people and ... wait a minute. In Sword of Summer, Magnus mentions a Latino policeman giving him and the other homeless people trouble so...did Rick Riordan accidentally admit that Latinos can be racist too? Also, it's kind of hypocritical for Rick to be preaching about how money isn't everything. He might not be a millionaire, but he's certainly not hurting for money either. The really sad part is that Alfheim, and Hearth's abusive family, could have worked if Rick had put actual effort into writing it, rather than making it a caricature of the 1%. Let's see, I feel like I'm forgetting something. What could it be? Oh, yeah! The gods of Asgard, allegedly, they were in this book too. In Sword of Summer, I liked how Loki was so mustache-twirlingly evil he came across as less a figure from Norse Mythology, and more like a villain on a Saturday Morning Cartoon. There is way more too Loki than just his role in Ragnarok. True, Loki did kill Balder. However, the gods bound his son Fenris wolf, banish his daughter Hel to Helheim, turned his son Vali into a wolf that killed his other son Nari. Then they killed Vali and used his intestines to bind Loki. I guess what trying to say is, Loki has some damn good reasons to be pissed at the gods. You could see him as representing consequences, for it was by harming his children that the gods made Loki their enemy. Moreover, Odin knew the prophecies of Ragnarok. He knew that by doing these things he was guaranteeing that Loki would fight against him at Ragnarok, but he did them anyway. Though, you could argue that Odin knew that he was as much a slave to destiny as Loki, so what would be the point of fighting it? I think now is a good time to plug a podcast that I love. Parcast Network, a company that makes many wonderful podcasts, has recently started a podcast called Mythology. It retells stories from mythologies across the world with a full cast, music and sound effects. They focus on a single god or hero and weave the different myths about them into a narrative whole. If you loved Norse Mythology by Neil Gaiman you'll love Mythology by Parcast. They've recently finished a series of episodes about Loki, and they nailed his character far better than the Magnus Chase series does. Check it out today. Well, back to Political Pontificating with Uncle Rick, also staring Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard. The Floor 19 gang were even more criminally underutilized than in the last book. That's especially bad, given that they're all way more interesting than Alex and Sam! Also, ugh, why oh why did she have to be named Sam? Why Rick, why?! I guess this is how people named Gabriel feel about Smelly Gabe. In other underutilized characters, we get a cool cameo from Vidar at the end. Sadly, he never returns. I forgot to mention this last time, but it's made to seem like the gods are missing from Asgard and need to be gathered and reassembled. This plot threat never goes anywhere, and is apparently a red herring. Well, that or Rick just didn't care. As I've previously stated, Surt would have made a much better villain than Loki. He's fated to kill Frey, Magnus' father, and would have made a fitting antagonist for Magnus. He's been working on a flaming sword since the dawn of time. When he completes the sword, it will be one of the things that will signal the start of Ragnarok. There's another mark against Magnus Chase as a series, going back to what I said about the gods being too silly. In the past, even with Riordan having his fun and being silly, you could tell he had a deep respect and appreciation for the Greek, Egyptian and Roman myths. That is totally absent here. It feels like he's almost gleeful about the way he's pissing and shitting all over Norse Mythology. Well, guess I ought to analyze the cover. We see Magnus standing before an oversized version of the titular hammer. On either side are the faces of Thor and Loki. The audiobook version is one of the more redeeming aspects of The Hammer of Thor. Overall, he does a pretty good job, and doesn't sound too noticeably different from Christopher Guetiq. What else can I say? The Hammer of Thor sucks and I hated it. This was the peak of the storm, but I'm not done tearing Magnus Chase to shreds yet. We've still got to get through The Ship of the Dead and Nine From the Nine Worlds. For now, however, we're going to return to The Trials of Apollo to discuss a book a actually did enjoy. Join me next time when we take a look back at The Dark Prophecy. I will see you all then.

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