



MAGNUS CHASE AND THE SWORD OF SUMMER
BY RICK RIORDAN

Fantasy
Ages 10 and up

One book that I had a chance to read over the course of the past month was Magnus Chase and the Sword of Summer by Rick Riordan. Published in 2015, this fantasy novel, being the first in a trilogy, did not disappoint.

The story revolves around Magnus Chase (for those familiar with the Percy Jackson series, he is the cousin of Annabeth, a main protagonist of that series), a 16 year-old teen left homeless on the streets of Boston after the death of his mother. Magnus has two friends, Blitz and Hearth, who look out for him. Life is pretty humdrum for Magnus until his 16th birthday, where he runs into his uncle, Randolph. A historian, Randolph tells Magnus something that changes his life forever: that Magnus is the son of a Norse god. Randolph has Magnus summon the Sword of Summer, an ancient artifact that belongs to his godly parent. Randolph tells Magnus that he will need it. At the moment that Magnus manages to summon the sword, disaster strikes. A fire giant lands in Boston, and Magnus tries single handedly to stop it. He fails, and dies, losing the sword. After his death, Magnus' soul is saved by a girl named Sam, and he ends up in Hotel Valhalla, a place for those who died bravely in combat as Magnus did. From here, Magnus faces many dangers, such as battles to the death, a quest to retake the sword, and even the biggest bad guy in Norse mythology himself: Loki.

Overall, I had a really good time reading this book. Everything about it was well-crafted, such as the characters and the setting. The characters were all believable and well-written. Magnus, for example, uses dry humor throughout the book, making it easy to see that even though he is the son of a god, he still has the personality of a teenager. Blitz, Hearth, and Sam are also great characters, and I couldn't help but root for them all as the story progressed. Another thing that impressed me was the setting. It connects elements of the ancient Norse mythology to a very modern setting, evidenced by the story taking place in Boston at many different stages. I could definitely see myself in this world, whether it be as a protagonist or just a side character. Riordan manages to pull off something that seems impossible in hindsight with the setting, bonding the new and the old. Most impressive of all, however, was the plot. The plot is never slow, and there is always something new and interesting on every page. I was never bored, and it allowed me to understand and enjoy the book to its fullest extent. Nothing seemed out of place, and any actions taken over the course of the story all came together perfectly. This book is a must-read.

For those who are interested in/enjoyed this book, I recommend many other books by Rick Riordan. He writes about many different types of mythology, and if the Norse mythology world is something people enjoy, it is also worth checking out the series Percy Jackson and The Heroes of Olympus, which include Greek and Roman mythology. If Egyptian mythology interests you as well, I recommend The Kane Chronicles series. All in all, Rick Riordan has many great works, and Magnus Chase and the Sword of Summer is definitely one of them.

