

Apollonius Argonautica Extra Credit

Book 1 Summary:

The first book of the Argonautica starts out with Pelias finding out from an oracle that a person who arrives with one sandal will be the end of him. Later on, it is discovered that this person will be Jason who forgets one sandal at sea and comes only having one. Pelias, trying to avoid this fate that the oracle tells him, decides to challenge Jason to find the Golden Fleece from Colchic. He does this with the intention of having Jason go away or at the very least die trying. This challenge leads to Jason assembling a team of members called the Argonauts. The writing tells who they are as well as some of their individual background. The Argonauts choose Heracles to be the leader of their mission but he gives the role to Jason instead. At their departure Jason's mother and father say goodbye to him and the women of the town pray for their safe return. After troubles with winds and storms on their voyage they come to Lemnos where the men have killed the women due to a curse placed on them by Cypris. On this island the princess Hypsipyle falls in love with Jason and his crew go to live with her for a bit. Heracles reminds Jason of the mission and they leave which makes Hypsipyle sad. She bids him good luck and they continue to sea until they reach a new island. Here they find a group of six mighty hands and the crew begins to rough house with them. This quarrel ends up in Jason accidentally stabbing the king in the chest, killing him. There is a big funeral procession to follow. A new cult is created by the Doliones from the strong winds. Once they reach the next island heracles leaves the group to fulfill his own mission. This causes some unassurance within everyone but Glaucus tells them it is a part of fate.

Memes for Book One:



This quote demonstrates the fate pelias was told and explains why he gave Jason such a challenge.

“Such was the oracle that Pelias heard, that a hateful doom awaited him to be slain at the prompting of the man whom he should see coming forth from the people with but one sandal. And no long time after, in accordance with that true report, Jason crossed the stream of wintry Anaurus on foot, and saved one sandal from the mire, but the other he left in the depths held back by the flood.”

Argonautica 1.5 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.



Originally, the argonauts elected Heracles to be their leader. He gave the role to Jason which caused some surprise within the group.

“Thus he spake; and the young heroes turned their eyes towards bold Heracles sitting in their midst, and with one shout they all enjoined upon him to be their leader; but he, from the place where he sat, stretched forth his right hand and said: ‘Let no one offer this honour to me. For I will not consent, and I will forbid any other to stand up. Let the hero who brought us together, himself be the leader of the host.’”

Argonautica 1.341 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.



Heracles stayed behind and watched everyone get distracted by the princess and her kingdom.

“Thereupon Aeson's son started to go to the royal home of Hypsipyle; and the rest went each his way as chance took them, all but Heracles; for he of his own will was left behind by the ship and a few chosen comrades with him. And straightway the city rejoiced with dances and banquets, being filled with the steam of sacrifice; and above all the immortals they propitiated with songs and sacrifices the illustrious son of Hera and Cypris herself.”

Argonautica 1.853 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.

Book Two summary:

At the beginning of the second book the 50 argonauts end up on another island. On this island, the king of the Bebrycians challenges Jason to a boxing match because it is what he typically does with newcomers.

After the fighting, the argonauts run into a man called Phineus. Phineus has endured a lot of suffering because every time he tries to eat the harpies take away his meal and he ends up reeking of a foul smell. The argonauts help Phineus by fighting off the harpies and they end up feasting with him. In return for their help, Phineus warns the men about the dangerous rocks they will endure on their journey to get the golden fleece. They run into many challenges such as the attacks of the birds on the island of Ares and make it past the clashing rocks with the help of Athena. Afterwards, Idmon meets his fate and dies as well as Tiphys. These deaths caused a lot of sorrow for Jason. The next challenge Jason and his crew encounter is the passing of the amazonian river. Two women approached their ship and said the Hypsipyle had to speak with Jason so that they could travel in peace. Jason and his crew resort to asking the Minyans for help. The crew finally arrives at Colchis for the fleece. Jason strategizes how to deal with Aeetes who will not take him kindly.

Memes for Book Two:

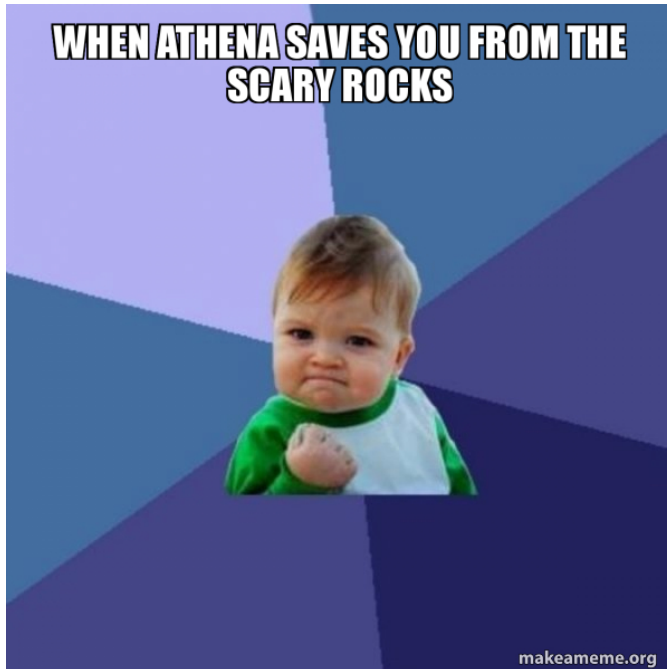


This quote and meme demonstrate how distraught Phineus was each time the harpies took his food.

“But on a sudden, swooping through the clouds, the Harpies with their crooked beaks incessantly snatched the food away from his mouth and hands. And at times not a morsel of food was left, at others but a little, in order that he might live and be tormented. And they poured forth over all a loathsome stench; and no one dared not merely to carry food to his mouth but even to stand at a distance; so foully reeked the remnants of the meal.”

Argonautica 2.178 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.



Jason and the Argonauts were able to get through the dangerous rocks because of Athena's divine help.

"Then Athena with her left hand thrust back one mighty rock and with her right pushed the ship through; and she, like a winged arrow, sped through the air. Nevertheless the rocks, ceaselessly clashing, shore off as she passed the extreme end of the stern-ornament. But Athena soared up to Olympus, when they had escaped unscathed. And the rocks in one spot at that moment were rooted fast forever to each other, which thing had been destined by the blessed gods, when a man in his ship should have passed between them alive."

Argonautica 2. 593 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.



Idmon's death met him by surprise and he couldn't avoid it. This impacted the actions of the Argonauts afterwards with the funeral rights.

"And here his destined fate smote Idmon, son of Abas, skilled in soothsaying; but not at all did his soothsaying save him, for necessity drew him on to death. For in the mead of the reedy river there lay, cooling his flanks and huge belly in the mud, a white-tusked boar, a deadly monster, whom even the nymphs of the marsh dreaded, and no man knew it; but all alone he was feeding in the wide fell. But the son of Abas was passing along the raised banks of the muddy river, and the boar from some unseen lair leapt out of the reed-bed, and charging gashed his thigh and severed in twain the sinews and the bone. And with a sharp cry the hero fell to the ground; and as he was struck his comrades flocked together with an answering cry."

Argonautica 2. 815 ff

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Book 3 summary:

Hera and Athena know that Jason cannot get the fleece on his own. Hera is so enraged with Pelias and his lack of sacrifices and honor to her that she decides to talk to Aphrodite (Cypris) and convince her to make her son Eros make Medea fall in love with Jason that way she helps Jason get the fleece and isn't another obstacle since she is Aeetes' daughter. Jason decides to go into the city to meet Aeetes and Hera helps them by making them unseen. Right before Jason approaches king Aeetes, Eros strikes Medea and she falls in love with Jason. As was expected, Jason was not welcomed with open arms by king Aeetes. Although the king doesn't kill him on the spot, he offers Jason ridiculous challenges such as confronting fire breathing bulls of Ares and sowing the fields with dragons teeth. These challenges are to prove that Jason is not a coward and that Aeetes will help him if he completes them. Medea sees Jason and must decide whether to save the honor of her family or help her love. Medea confides in her sister. Hera convinces her to help Jason. Jason and Medea meet at the shrine of Hecate and Jason ramps up the flirtation to get her to help him by giving him a potion that will make him invincible. After their exchange Jason takes on his difficult challenge. Through his newfound strength he is able to handle the bulls and yolk them, plant the dragon's teeth as well as grow the soldiers. Because of Medea's advice, Jason defeats the soldiers and completes his previously impossible tasks.

Book 3 Memes:

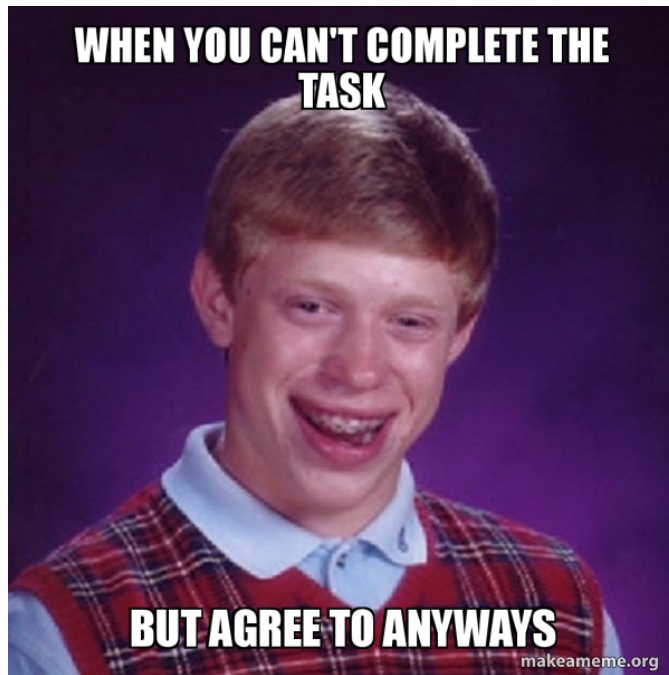


Athena and Hera convince Aphrodite to help them get Medea to fall in love with Jason for his success with the Golden Fleece.

"She ended, and the goddesses fixed their eyes on the ground at their feet, brooding apart; and straightway Hera was the first to speak her thought: 'Come, let us go to Cypris; let both of us accost her and urge her to bid her son (if only he will obey) speed his shaft at the daughter of Aeetes, the enchantress, and charm her with love for Jason. And I deem that by her device he will bring back the fleece to Hellas.'"

Argonautica 3.22 ff

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Based on his actions in the quote, one can see that Jason's challenge makes him nervous but he agrees to it anyways.

"Thus he spake; and Jason, fixing his eyes on the ground, sat just as he was, speechless, helpless in his evil plight. For a long time he turned the matter this way and that, and could in no way take on him the task with courage, for a mighty task it seemed; and at last he made reply with crafty words: 'With thy plea of right, Aeetes, thou dost shut me in overmuch. Wherefore also I will dare that contest, monstrous as it is, though it be my doom to die. For nothing will fall upon men more dread than dire necessity, which indeed constrained me to come hither at a king's

command.'"

Argonautica 3.422 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.

Family honor Your love for Jason



This quote shows how torn Medea is between helping Jason and being on the side of her father, Aeetes.

“And as when a bride in her chamber bewails her youthful husband, to whom her brothers and parents have given her, nor yet does she hold converse with all her attendants for shame and for thinking of him; but she sits apart in her grief; and some doom has destroyed him, before they have had pleasure of each other's charms; and she with heart on fire silently weeps, beholding her widowed couch, in fear lest the women should mock and revile her; like to her did Medea lament.”

Argonautica 3.645 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.

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Book 4 summary:

Medea spends a night in fear that her father will want to kill her after assisting Jason with his tasks. She goes to the argonauts and begs them to take her with them. She promises to help Jason and his crew complete the task of finding the golden fleece. In return, Jason gratefully accepts her offer and promises to marry her if they are successful. The group successfully makes it to the grove of Ares where the Golden Fleece was hung on an oak tree. The only problem was that there was a serpent in their way. Fortunately, Medea casts a singing song spell on the serpent to prevent any troubles. Jason, Medea, and the rest of the argonauts start to leave for their journey home. At this point, king Aeetes is fully aware that Medea was involved in Jason's success and wants revenge. To avoid trouble with the Colchians following close behind the Argonauts, Medea betrays her brother, Apsyrtus, by helping Jason stab him behind the back. This betrayal caused rage between the Colchians but Hera was able to stop them from following the Argo. Through the help of Medea, Jason and the Argonauts were able to get past Circe and her spells, the Sirens whose call led men to their death by rocks, and Skylla's wrath. After these events they make it to the land of the Phaeacians where they are told that Jason and Medea need to legitimize or "honor" their marriage to avoid being separated. After this, they continued on their voyage and landed where some nymphs gave them a riddle to carry their ship to a lake. Triton helps them get out of the lake and back to the sea. They continue to face more trials such as Talos who throws rocks at ships and they created an island (Calliste) through throwing dirt off the Argo. Finally, Jason and the argonauts make it home. The end!

Book 4 memes:



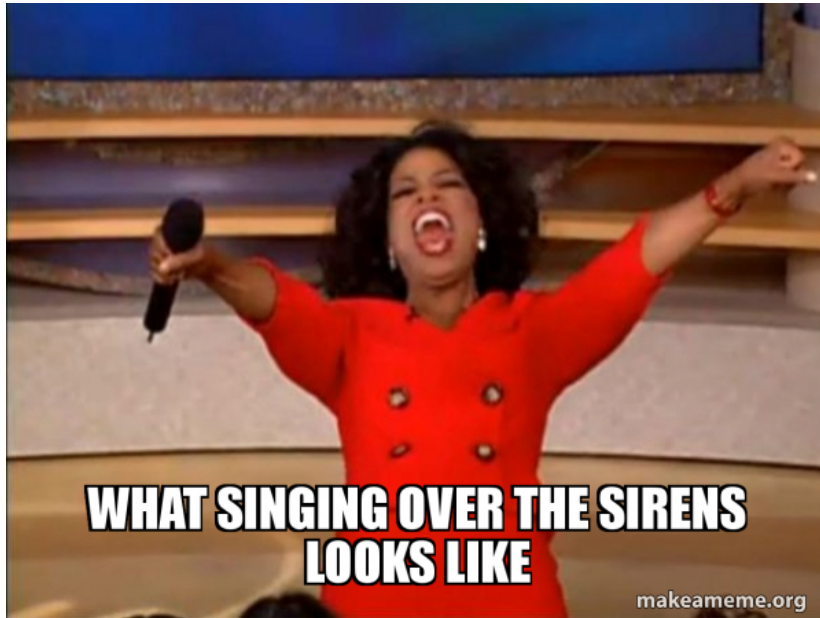
This quote shows how Hera created lightning storms to prevent the Colchians from getting to Jason.

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“But when the Colchians learnt the death of their prince, verily they were eager to pursue Argo and the Minyans through all the Cronian sea. But Hera restrained them by terrible lightnings from the sky. And at last they loathed their own homes in the Cytaean land, quailing before Aeetes’ fierce wrath; so they landed and made abiding homes there, scattered far and wide.”

Argonautica 4.507 ff

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This quote demonstrates how the argonauts were able to escape the tempting songs of the Sirens on their journey.

“And they were already about to cast from the ship the hawsers to the shore, had not Thracian Orpheus, son of Oeagrus, stringing in his hands his Bistonian lyre, rung forth the hasty snatch of a rippling melody so that their ears might be filled with the sound of his twanging; and the lyre overcame the maidens' voice.”

Argonautica 4.885 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.



This quote shows how Medea helps Jason for the final time, something that was very prominent throughout the myth.

"Thus she spake; and they drew the ship out of range, resting on their oars, waiting to see what plan unlooked for she would bring to pass; and she, holding the fold of her purple robe over her cheeks on each side, mounted on the deck; and Aeson's son took her hand in his and guided her way along the thwarts. And with songs did she propitiate and invoke the Death- spirits, devourers of life, the swift hounds of Hades, who, hovering through all the air, swoop down on the living. Kneeling in supplication, thrice she called on them with songs, and thrice with prayers; and, shaping her soul to mischief, with her hostile glance she bewitched the eyes of Talos, the man of bronze; and her teeth gnashed bitter wrath against him, and she sent forth baneful phantoms in the frenzy of her rage."

Argonautica 4.1659 ff

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. Translated by Seaton, R. C. Loeb Classical Library Volume 001. London, William Heinemann Ltd, 1912.