Xena/Hercules: The Legendary Jumpchain
v 1.3

This is the story of a time long ago, a time of myth and legend, when the ancient gods were petty and cruel, and satyrs knew kung-fu.

Umm...

This looks like ancient Greece at first glance, but things are just a little bit...off. The gods are still dicks and plague mankind with suffering, but there are bikini-clad amazons, a crystal-powered Atlantis, an abnormal amount of anachronisms, and more warlords per capita than anywhere else in the world.

In turmoil, this land cries out for heroes. Only one man would rise to the challenge: Hercules!

A woman would appear as well! Xena, the warrior princess. She's not a literal princess, but that's beside the point.

So that's actually two heroes that rose to the challenge!

(No, I'm not counting their respective sidekicks. Their biggest contribution to these heroes' stories was homo-erotic subtext.)

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You'll spend the next ten years in this not-quite-Greece, surrounded by warriors, monsters and smite-happy gods. So strap on some leather and grab your xiphos, because it seems there's always something troubling the land. You could try to deny the call to adventure and settle down somewhere, but you'll likely end up with your village burned down and your family murdered right in front of your eyes, setting you on a course of revenge and/or heroism. That happens a lot around here.

I think the Fates have a quota or something.

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Starting Locations

roll 1d8 or pay 50cp to choose.

1: Cheiron's academy - A school for adventurers, teaching classical subjects from medicine to music alongside combat. After a string of royal temp jobs, the former student Jason becomes headmaster here in his old age.

2: Argos - A coastal city in near-constant conflict with Sparta. Hera is the city's patron goddess, and Jason ruled here for a short stint.

3: Corinth - A wealthy city-state noted for many fine crafts. While you're here, grab some famous Corinthian leather for that extra oomph in your outfit. Ruled for a time by Jason before abdicating to marry a commoner.

4: Thebes - One of the largest cities of ancient Greece, host to such myths as those of Cadmus, Oedipus, Dionysus and...actually right now it's only a large village. The people in this area suffer under Hera's heavy-handed tactics to gain more worshipers.

5: Amazon Nation - Fractured into scattered tribes, you've landed within the borders of a forest a group of amazons have claimed for their own. Under constant threat by warlords and slavers, visitors are unwelcome and intruders hunted.

6: The Underworld - Land of the dead, ruled by Hades, chillest of the Olympian Gods. As Hades himself is constantly overworked and heroes make the occasional trip down here, your presence may go unnoticed as long as you don't cause trouble or break any big rules. Getting back to the world of the living may be a bit tricky though.

7: Mount Olympus - Home of the Olympian gods, all gold and white marble, and not a speck of authentic Greek architecture appropriate to the time period. If you feel the need to leave quickly (and you likely will) just jump off and fall back to Earth...if you think you can survive atmospheric re-entry. Just don't pick the wrong ledge to leap from or you may end up in the chasm where the Titans have been imprisoned.

8: Your choice

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Starting age is 20+1d8. Your gender is the same as your last jump, but taking 'amazon' locks you into a female form for the duration of this jump. Otherwise you may change either for 50cp.

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Backgrounds

Drop-in (0cp)
Literal in this case, fortunately you and your companions each land in a conveniently-placed cart of hay to soften the impact. That degree in Classical Studies is still useless, but at least you won't have any new memories of not-Greece conflicting with what you already know.

Adventurer (100cp)

For money, or wanderlust, or maybe there's someone you've sworn to kill, you're out and about in the ancient world. You know how to swing a sword (without hitting yourself) and can name the various monsters famed for killing people like you in horrible ways. And since adventuring rarely pays well, you know how to be self-sufficient and live off the land.

Amazon (100cp)
If you weren't female before, you are now. You live in a forest with what looks like a bunch of skinny fashion models who can put up a decent fight and climb trees faster than most squirrels. Half of them are straw feminists and none of them are lesbians. And they have a long list of rules. For everything.

Demigod (200cp)
You're not like the rest of the unwashed masses, having a godly parent, likely your father. It probably wasn't love that got them together, more like a quick fling. Fake wooden bulls or golden showers were probably involved, Greek myth gets weird in places. Physically and mentally, you are a cut above the average mortal and free of little problems like wrinkles or acne, and have inherited a talent or trait related to your divine parent, though nothing blatantly supernatural. On the downside, you have severe parental issues.

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Perks
Backgrounds receive their 100cp perk for free.
50% discount for the rest.

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Drop-in:

100cp - Historical accuracy
Many works of fiction utterly mangle their historical and mythological sources. With this perk, you can ensure that you're never caught wrong-footed by such alterations. You always know how your current Jump differs from historical truth, and if you wish, minor changes may be made to the world, ensuring such things as the proper pronunciation of names, modes of dress and conduct for the time period. These changes won't be big enough to alter the established history or progression of a Jump, but it will make things less painful for history buffs to endure.

200cp - Beneath Notice
You easily slip from the perception of gods and other higher powers. So long as you do not meddle in their affairs, they will not take note of your existence. Handy when you don't want a cosmic entity to realize you're from somewhere even their senses cannot reach.

400cp - Sidekick o' the gods.
Where you go, your friends/comrades/flunkies go. Should you gain entrance to a place that is mystically barred to most, your friends can slip through the door alongside you. When traveling through dangerous terrain, your followers share a measure of your stamina and any resistances you may posses towards the natural hazards of the surrounding environment. This effect does not protect against any kind of deliberate attack or change them physically, but if you can make the journey, then your flunkies should be able to at least survive the trip as well.

600cp - Reading the threads
You have a sense of how fate binds things together. By observing a subject, you can gauge the strength and type of connections it has to others, such as recognizing that two people share True Love, that a man's fate is deeply tied to the weapon he carries, or even the link between a throne and a true king. This takes time, at least a few minutes of observation or conversation before you can suss out details. With a little more effort and a strong enough connection, you can even follow a thread to find the person/place/thing on the other end.

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Adventurer:

100cp - Always prepared
You can produce simple items whenever you need them. Reach somewhere that others can't see, like into a bag or pocket, and retrieve an appropriate item - a length of rope from a backpack, a piece of flint from a pouch, or a lockpick from your boot. Nothing too complex in a chemical or mechanical sense, and trying to get excessive (a crowbar from your wallet, grenades from under your hat) will only lead to failure and disappointment.

200cp - This kills the adventurer
With a look, you know the greatest dangers that something presents to you. Looking at a snake would warn you of venom. A ruined temple may speak of traps and rotten floorboards. Intelligent foes are much harder to read, and you will only get a single piece of vague information regarding whatever they have at their disposal which is most likely to end your life, like 'sword' or 'fire magic.'

400cp - Warlord
You are a warrior of great skill, both personally and in a strategic sense. You have mastered a single weapon and have an excellent understanding of tactics that range from small ambushes to the clash of large armies. You also have a measure of charisma, good for keeping your troops in line, able to put together a rousing speech on the fly or just be frightening enough to convince those mooks to charge the enemy lines.

600cp - To Hades and back

People may die, legendary objects may be stolen away to the furthest corners of the world, but there will always be heroes willing to go forth and quest for what has been lost. After setting forth on a lonely journey, you will find a path to a grim and cold realm, be it the underworld of Greek myth or a stranger realm more suitable to a different Jump. Here you will be presented with trials layered in symbolism and difficult to overcome, no matter the powers, tools, or knowledge you possess. If successful on your quest, you may return with something once destroyed or lost to the world - the life of a loved one, a forgotten bit of knowledge, or perhaps an item once sundered now made whole. You may attempt such a journey only once per jump.

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Amazon:

100cp - Ayiyiyiyiyiyiyiyiyi!
You have a distinctive, personalized war-cry. While it may be fun to shout at every opportunity, it is most effective as you charge into battle. When you use it to herald your arrival, it is impossible for anyone to resist stopping whatever they are doing and giving their attention to the source of the sound, if only just for a moment.

200cp - Flip to Win
You have a prodigious talent for acrobatics, able to jump twice as high and far as a normal human. Like a cat, you'll always land on your feet and be quick to recover should you ever lose your footing. Your sense of balance is sufficient to easily handle a tightrope or keep steady footing on a ship in stormy waters. Motion sickness is less of a concern as well, so you can flip, spin, or tumble through the air as much as you want without worry.

400cp - Round Killing Thing
You're an expert marksman/woman/misc and have an eye for angles. A brief look is all it takes to plot a course for a suitable projectile by ricocheting it off multiple surfaces accurately. If you wish, your shots will also lose far less kinetic energy as they travel or hit obstructions, allowing you to strike and penetrate multiple targets before succumbing to entropy.

600cp - Gaia's blessing
Scattered and hunted, the descendants of the amazon nation rely mainly on staying hidden to keep themselves safe. When you wish, the very world will shift to hide your passage, concealing tracks and scent, confusing sensors and distracting sentries. Where you rest and build, nature grows hostile to discourage unwelcome travelers. Short of getting up and walking, animals, plants and the elements will react in concert to destroy evidence of your presence and discourage pursuers. This could be as subtle as a gust of wind throwing up leaves and debris, or rocks shifting underfoot to make someone stumble. It could be as blatant as lightning from a storm striking those that target you, or a sudden solar flare flooding an area of space with radiation.

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Demigod:

100cp - Epic pecs
You're buff. Jacked. Perhaps even swole. In short, you're a prime physical specimen in every way, from your muscles to your senses, and you look damned good. You seem to retain an aura of awesomeness no matter what happens to you, and it'll take concentrated effort to make you look less than 8/10.

200cp - In the blood
Your divine blood is strong, freeing you from mortal frailties. You could run for days without sleep, or endure privation and injuries that would kill a mortal many times over. Age will not weaken you until you are in sight of your deathbed, and your life-force resists attempts to assault the core of your being. This durability extends to your mind as well, giving you a reserve of courage and willpower to see you through times of trouble.

400cp - Foot in the door
You may not be a full god, but you can easily get their attention. Deities always pay attention when you pray, and cosmic beings give your words due consideration, never dismissing you out of hand for being a 'mere mortal.' Whenever powerful beings gather in council, your presence is rarely objected to. You may get to sit at the big boy's table, but staying there requires that you act the part. Proper displays of divine etiquette and the judicious application of your influence are required if you want to get invited to divine parties more than once.

600cp - Worthy of Legend
You are larger than life, a force of nature, an icon, a ideal for others to aspire to. Through time and effort, you have accomplished great things that the envious cannot grasp, no matter the method they use. Without your blessing, any attempt to copy your abilities or emulate your skills fail, no matter the method used. This effect extends even to your visage, shapeshifters, illusionists and technological trickery all failing to perfectly encapsulate your majesty. Those who persist in attempts to imitate you find that in your presence the difference is obvious between the real and the fake.

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Companion Import

Everybody needs somebody, so you may import a single companion for no cost. For 200cp, you may import up to eight companions.

In either case, your imported companions receive a free background and 300cp to spend on perks.

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Items

All backgrounds receive a 50% discount on their first choice.

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Leather and leather accessories (50cp)
You have a closet's worth of swanky leather clothing and gear. Leather pants, leather vests, leather coats, shoes, hats, packs, and enough belts to strangle a shounen protagonist. Everything is styled to your tastes and fitted perfectly. Damaged or dirty items put back into the closet are cleaned and repaired when you next open the doors, and it can produce as many items as you wish, should you want to outfit an barbarian army with matching harnesses and kilts.

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Honey Cakes (100cp)
A box of delicious, magically-replenishing sweet cakes is delivered to your warehouse. These cakes are universally tasty, appealing to almost any creature in existence, making them an excellent distraction for hungry guard animals of all types.

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The Nomad (100cp)
You're not even sure when you got this ship, you probably nicked it off some ninny who wasn't even wearing leather like a real man should. It is an excellent (if modestly sized) ship - fast and sturdy, stable in a storm, and almost magically easy to repair. It seems that someone also slapped on a famous Norse enchantment that lets your fold it up into a suitcase for easy transport.

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God-forged craft (200cp)
By blessing or theft, you've acquired something forged by Hephaestus himself. A single weapon or piece of armor (which may be a pair of boots or bracers) fitted perfectly for you. It's nigh-indestructible, able to resist absolutely anything but attacks from a god or other entity on a similar scale.

On the downside, it's completely indestructible, which means that until you develop smithing skill to match a deity it can never be refitted or altered in an way. It's otherwise just an ordinary piece of equipment, so an invincible breastplate won't do you any good if they aim for your head.

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Dragon's teeth (200cp)
An oracle told Cadmus to whip a cow and chase it until it finally decided to stop. That was how he should decide where to build the city he was thinking of founding. Halfway through the chase, he stopped to get a drink because cow-chasing was thirsty work, and he was attacked by a dragon. When the dragon was slain, Athena appeared and told Cadmus to sow its teeth into the ground like wheat, and they sprouted into a field of armed warriors. (Yes, really.)

You have a bag holding five of these teeth, and they replenish each dawn if planted. When pressed into the ground, they grow into soldiers with equipment most common to infantrymen of the current world, defaulting to humans with bronze arms and armor. The soldiers are highly skilled, very tough, and completely loyal, but they can be rather gullible at times.

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Ariadne's thread (200cp)
After Theseus refused to stop and ask for directions, the daughter of Minos gave him a ball of red thread to help him find his way around. Once the Minotaur was dead and Theseus was back on the road without her, Ariadne abandoned this item and it eventually came into your possession. By tying the end of the thread to something and letting the effectively infinite length of thread spool out, you'll have no problem retracing your steps. Magical in nature, the thread can't be damaged accidentally, and is so fine as to go unnoticed by all but the most perceptive of beings, though you'll have no problem following it. The thread will even slip out of space with you to remain unbroken should you teleport or employ similar methods of travel. Because magic.

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Necklace of Harmonia (300cp)
After Aphrodite (unsurprisingly) cheated on her then-husband Hephaestus, the god of blacksmiths did what any Greek god would do. He crafted a golden necklace that promised eternal youth and beauty, presenting it to the child born from that liaison, condemning her and everyone else who would come into its possession to an assortment of horrendous fates forevermore. Like getting turned into a serpent, getting blasted from existence after making a god a dare, and marrying your own son, just for starters.

There's only one necklace, but you can be sure that the person you give it to, along with everybody in their general vicinity will inevitably suffer terribly before an agonizing and drawn-out death. On top of that, unless destroyed or reclaimed, the necklace may be found by another, starting the cycle of misery all over again. I...I don't know why you'd want this. This is Greek deity-level dickery of the highest order. There must be easier ways to make someone suffer than a method that later professors of history will use to illustrate just how screwed-up the universe can be at times.

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Golden Apple Seeds (300cp)
You have a handful of apple seeds from a divine tree. A single bite of one of the apples grown from these will cure any mortal ailment, from disease to disfigurement. Consuming a whole apple will grant the eater immortality, becoming ageless and able to recover from horrendous injuries. From a botanical perspective these are no different from ordinary apple seeds, but they cannot be cultivated by mortal creatures (or mortal creations) nor will they grow in a mortal realm. As it was created by Jump-chan, the cosmic warehouse is a suitable place to plant them, but by itself, being a Jumper does not count as being more than mortal.

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Hind-blood dagger (300cp)
This simple iron dagger has been soaked in the blood of a Golden Hind, lending it a uniquely platonic quality. This capital-D Dagger can stand in for when you need to kill something that 'no mortal weapon can harm' or even the really fancy 'can only be killed while on a stool, holding a chicken, at 9:00am on a Monday during a leap year' kind of thing that some wizards are fond of. Essentially, the dagger fulfills any kind of unusual catches or conditions required to harm something.

Sadly, it remains a plain iron dagger, no more durable or capable of inflicting injury or piercing armor. Trying to alter or modify the blade in any way more complex than the occasional sharpening will leave you with nothing but scrap metal and a few worthless flecks of polluted gold.

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Labyrinth seed (400cp)
Once each jump, a dull gray stone the size of a watermelon is available for your use. Plant it somewhere, and as it sinks into the ground it will form a twisting, 3-dimensional maze of fiendish complexity and indeterminate dimensions. It will confuse common magical and technological attempts to map or navigate it, and only specialized equipment, unique magics, or creatures comfortable with non-euclidean space will be able to traverse it. Even then, the structure of the labyrinth will change slowly over time, responding to attempts to decipher it, though this will happen much faster if more destructive methods are employed.

Why build such a place? Perhaps you wish to house a monster, some cheese, or whatever. Simply chain the item of interest to the seed when you plant it and the labyrinth will adapt itself to become a prison capable of restraining even a mighty mythological beast for a long, long time. The seed can just as easily form a vault, to keep something safe until the designated hero/chosen one/protagonist comes along.

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Thunderbolts (600cp)
Now you've done it. You've acquired a gold-and-leather brace of three jagged spears that transform mid-throw into blasts of electricity. They hit every bit as fast and hard as their natural counterparts, and being semi-divine, they ignore spells and enchantments that protect against electricity. Technological defenses are less effective as well, the energy of each bolt ignoring physics and refusing to be re-directed or grounded out until all their energy is expended upon the target.

Creatures that are incredibly tough or naturally resistant to electricity are most likely to survive a hit, but nothing less than a being of lightning incarnate can completely shrug off a hit from one of these. The brace forms new spears whenever struck by natural lightning.

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Drawbacks
Just for fun, take as many as you want.

Pun-ishment +100cp
It turns out the ancient greeks loved puns. Good puns, bad puns, tasteless puns...You won't go a day without hearing one. You'll also have the irresistible urge to make a few of your own whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Lookalikes +200cp
You have some doubles in this world. They have your appearance, and are skilled enough con-artists to convince people that they have any out-of-jump powers you may have displayed (that or people here are just really gullible.) Expect them, and by extension you, to get dragged into one misunderstanding after another.

Jumper the Mighty +200cp
You get no respect. No one will ever take you seriously, and anything you do accomplish will end up being attributed to others. You're the butt of jokes and seem to end up in one bad situation after another. You also have atrocious luck that manifests at the worst possible times, never to seriously harm you, just to make sure that you look like an idiot every so often.

Young Jumper +300cp
Any out-of-jump powers you or your companions possess are sealed, along with the cosmic warehouse. Your age is reduced to 12+1d6, and you begin the jump enrolled in Cheiron's academy. If you fail to graduate from the academy, which will take at least 5 years, you also fail the jumpchain and are sent home, with a copy of your report card automatically sent to the last person you want seeing it.

The quill means I'm a bard +300cp
Like a barnacle, an obnoxious bard has become attached to you, and is dedicated to following you around and recording your words, deeds, triumphs, failures, and delightful

personal details. They seem to enjoy being contrary. If they see you solving problems with violence, they'll 'assist' by attempting peaceful solutions. Should you indulge them, they'll pick up a weapon and try to emulate you as you were back in the good 'ole 'kill everyone that annoyed you' days. Expect them to get into a lot of trouble, and if the bard dies, you fail the jumpchain.

To the fairest +600cp
You've done the stupidest thing imaginable in ancient Greece - earned the attentions of the gods. You'll be called upon to judge beauty contests between goddesses, be sent to retrieve legendary items from far-away lands, and have to dodge randy gods who want to give you the Z. Divine attention will land upon you at least once each year, and things will never end well, no matter what you do.

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Notes:

What you seek to gain from 'To Hades and back' must be something that was actually lost or destroyed, or at least so obscure that no one knows its current location. You cannot use it as a shortcut to loot items you cannot otherwise reach.

The protection offered by 'Gaia's blessing' depends entirely upon those aspects of nature present. This won't cause tornadoes to appear out of nothing, or trees to bludgeon passersby, but for your enemies murphy's law is in full effect.

You and your companions are unaffected by the necklace. The curse is powerful and subtle, hiding underneath an enchantment that does grant the wearer great beauty and vitality, but perceptive wizards and powerful magical beings are capable of recognizing its true nature and defeating it, per the rules of magic that govern whatever Jump you choose to unleash it upon. The necklace is dormant until someone puts it on, and unless you reclaim it, its curse will see it passed to the victim's descendants, one after another. When they are all dead, the curse will fall upon anyone unfortunate enough to find and wear it.

The labyrinth seed knows what you intend it for, forms itself accordingly, and is pretty versatile. It can easily imprison (or keep out) most monsters, demons, evil spirits, etc. A world-ending threat may need to get beaten down first and have some specialized restraints slapped on, but otherwise the seed functions fine on its own. While not exactly sentient, it will repel intruders or open itself for specified individuals (by identity or possessed of particular qualities.)

Becoming a god counts as deciding to stay within this Jump. Saving that ambrosia until after acquiring a Planeswalker's Spark may be worthwhile, though.