No. 217.



MAYNARD'S
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# TANGLEWOOD TALES

## SELECTED

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

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MAYNARD'S ENGLISH CLASSIC SERIES.—No. 217

# TWO TANGLEWOOD TALES

## THE DRAGON'S TEETH, THE MINOTAUR

BY

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

*WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND NOTES*

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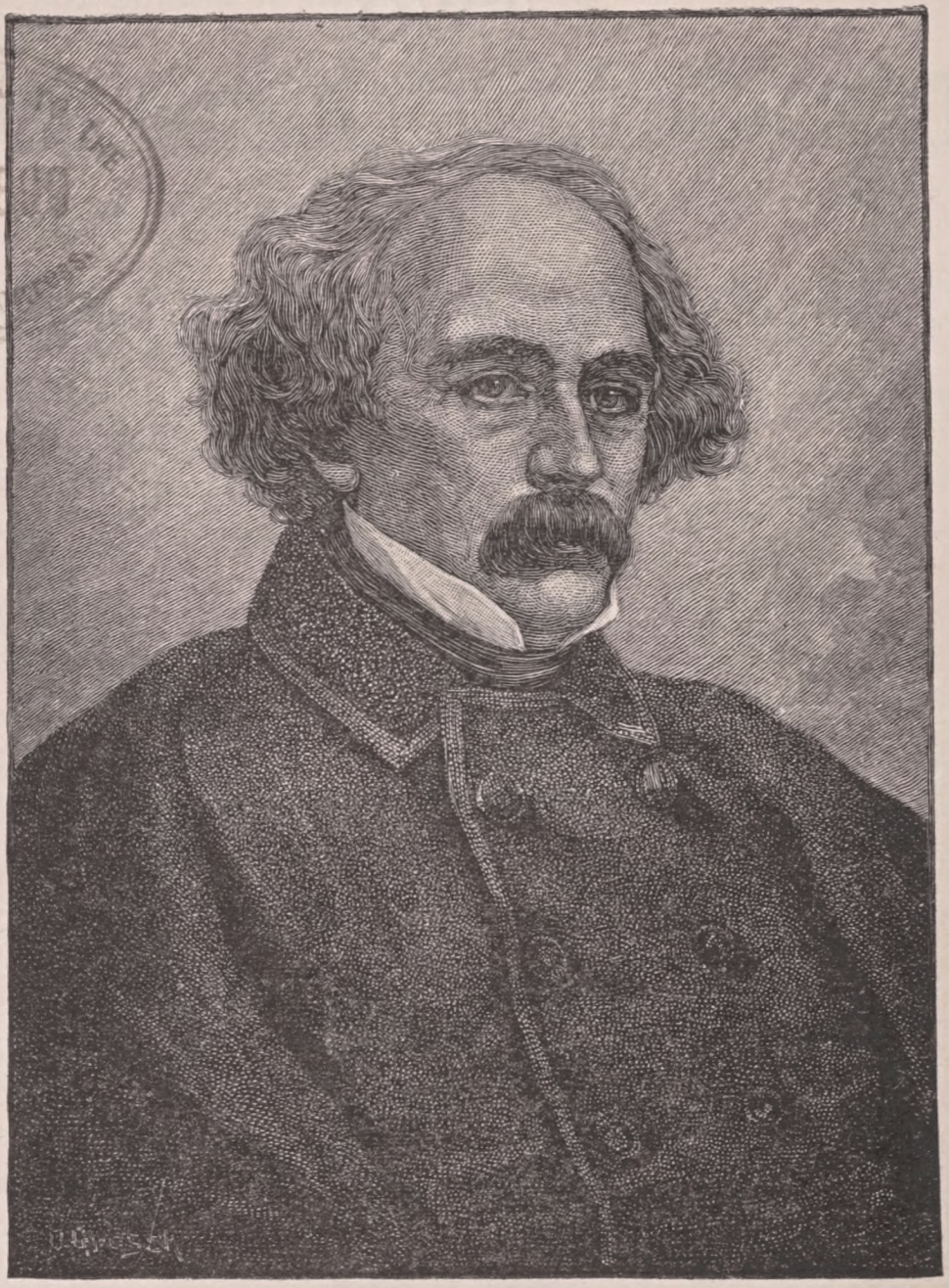

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

# Biographical Sketch

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE came of a stern, New England ancestry. The founder of the family in this country, William Hathorne (so spelled, but pronounced nearly as afterwards changed by Hawthorne), emigrated from England in 1630, and became a man of some prominence in the new country, a magistrate and deputy in the colonial assembly. His son, Judge John Hawthorne, was prominent in the Salem witchcraft persecutions, and earned an unenviable reputation for harsh judgments. His nature is well shown by the following account of a trial at which he presided.

Of one accused woman brought before him, the husband wrote: "She was forced to stand with her arms stretched out. I requested that I might hold one of her hands, but it was declined me; then she desired me to wipe the tears from her eyes, which I did; then she desired that she might lean herself on me, saying she should faint. Justice Hathorne replied she had strength enough to torture these persons, and she should have strength enough to stand. I repeating something against their cruel proceedings, they commanded me to be silent, or else I should be turned out of the room."

The third son of Judge Hathorne was "Farmer Joseph," who lived and died peaceably at Salem. Joseph's fifth son, "Bold Daniel," became a privateersman in the Revolutionary War. Daniel's third son, Nathaniel, was born in 1775, and was the father of our author.

Hawthorne's father was a sea-captain, reserved, melancholy, and stern, and said to be fond of reading and of children. He married Elizabeth Manning, a descendant of Richard Manning,

of Dartmouth, England, and at Salem, Massachusetts, on July 4, 1804, Nathaniel Hawthorne, the author, was born.

His father died four years after, and Hawthorne was brought up by his grandfather Manning, who paid for his education.

In later life Hawthorne wrote that "one of the peculiarities" of his boyhood was "a grievous disinclination to go to school." He appears to have been an adventurous boy, fond of all outdoor exercises, until an accident in playing ball injured his foot. This lameness lasted a long while and restricted his boyish activity so that he took to reading as a pastime. His letters written at this time contain frequent allusions to books, and also occasional scraps of poetry.

In 1821 Hawthorne entered Bowdoin College, where he had the good fortune to be a classmate of Longfellow. Another classmate was Jonathan Cilley, afterwards a member of Congress. Franklin Pierce, afterwards President of the United States and an intimate friend, was at that time a sophomore.

These friendships appear to have been about all that he gained from his college life. "I was an idle student," he wrote in after years, "negligent of college rules and the Procrustean details of academic life, rather choosing to nurse my own fancies than to dig Greek roots and be numbered among the learned Thebans." His extreme shyness is shown by the fact that he regularly paid fines rather than make declamations.

Hawthorne graduated in 1825, and returned to Salem, where he settled in the gloomy old family mansion and began to write; at first tentatively, and later with the avowed purpose of making literature his profession. In his "Note Book," under date of October 4, 1840, he says: "Here I sit in this accustomed chamber where I used to sit in days gone by. . . . Here I have written many tales,—many that have been burned to ashes, many that doubtless deserve the same fate. . . . and here I sat a long, long time, waiting patiently for the world to know me, and sometimes wondering why it did not know me sooner, or whether it would ever know me at all,—at least, till I were in my grave."

He finally published some tales in the magazines, but these hardly served the purpose of bringing him fairly before the public. "It was like a man talking to himself in a dark place," he said.

It was not until March, 1837, that Hawthorne succeeded in getting a volume, the first series of "Twice Told Tales," published. It brought him an excellent review by Longfellow, of which a portion is given in the "Critical Opinions," and brought him before the world of letters as an accredited author; but financially was not fortunate, as the sales barely paid the cost of publication. Before long, however, the young author's necessities were relieved by an appointment to the Boston Custom House as weigher and gauger at a salary of $1,200. This was hardly a congenial occupation for a man of a poetical temperament, but Hawthorne made the best of it, and, at the end of his tenure of office (he was removed by a change of administration) had saved one thousand dollars from his salary.

Carlyle at this time was speaking to the youth of America through Emerson with a voice of thunder, and transcendentalism was abroad in the land. Hawthorne's friends, the Peabodys, were Emersonian enthusiasts, and it was probably through their influence that he was drawn into the Brook Farm community, which seemed to promise an economical retreat, where he could find congenial society and the leisure to write. He embarked his thousand dollars in this enterprise, and arrived at Brook Farm, April 12, 1841. This community was an unconventional society of cultivated men and women, sick of politics, and hoping by a communal existence to release much time for the development of their individual genius.

Hawthorne remained in the community about a year. But before he left he had made the discovery that he had never been really there in heart. "The real Me was never an associate of the community; there has been a spectral Appearance there, sounding the horn at daybreak, and milking the cows, and hoeing potatoes, and raking hay, toiling in the sun, and doing me the honor to assume my name. But this spectre

was not myself." But the great eye of Hawthorne was there, and every scene was pictured on it. It was the sufficient *raison d'être* of Brook Farm that it produced that truly American novel "The Blithedale Romance."

Hawthorne was married in 1842, and went to live at "The Old Manse" at Concord, Massachusetts. Here he spent four happy years, enjoying the society of Emerson, Thoreau, Ellery Channing,—who, Emerson said, wrote "poetry for poets"—and of other cultivated men and women.

In 1846 Hawthorne was appointed Surveyor of Customs at Salem, Massachusetts. He held this position until 1849, but, as the office must have been irksome to him, and the Salem people did not treat him with any geniality, he was probably not sorry when a change of administration ousted him from his position.

Once more he settled down to steady literary work, with the result that in 1850 "The Scarlet Letter" appeared, and achieved such a marked success that he was enabled to remove to Lenox, Massachusetts. His next book was "The House of Seven Gables." In 1851 he removed to West Newton, Massachusetts, where "The Blithedale Romance" was written, and in 1852 he moved again to Concord.

In 1853 Hawthorne was appointed United States Consul to Liverpool, and for six years nothing appeared from his pen. His stay in England seems to have been a failure. He met none of the great men of letters, then so numerous in England, except the Brownings. He never really liked the English, and after they had read his "Our Old Home," they very generally felt the same toward him. It is in this volume that he describes Englishwomen as made up of steaks and sirloins, a remark which not unnaturally stirred up a strong feeling of resentment in England.

After leaving Liverpool in 1857, Hawthorne and his family travelled south, and in January, 1858, they settled in Rome. Except for the illness of his eldest daughter, the next two years were among the happiest of Hawthorne's life. He enjoyed the society he met in Rome; W. W. Story the eminent sculptor, the historian Motley, William Cullen Bryant, Mrs.

Jameson and other cultivated people being his intimates. He had come to Rome, however, merely as a pleasant excursion, having little or no knowledge of art, and no taste for ruins, so that it was some time before he began to take Rome seriously. The stay bore fruit when he returned to England on his way back to America, in the form of "The Marble Faun," probably his most popular book.

In 1860 Hawthorne settled again in Concord with the intention of giving himself up to his literary work, but it was not to be for long. Presently the war broke out, and he became gloomy and unable to work, and in 1864 he died when on a trip to New Hampshire with his old friend, Franklin Pierce. He was buried at Concord, on May 24, 1864.

This slight sketch may fitly close by a description of Hawthorne's personal appearance by his friend and biographer, Moncure D. Conway.

"He impressed me—the present writer—as of much nobler presence than formerly, and certainly he was one of the finest-looking of men. I observed him closely at a dinner of the Literary Club, in Boston, the great feature of which was the presence of Hawthorne, then just from Europe (July, 1860). His great athletic frame was softened by its repose, which was the more striking beside the vivacity of Agassiz, at whose side he sat—himself a magnificent man in appearance. Hawthorne's massive brow and fine aquiline nose were of such commanding strength as to make the mouth and chin seem a little weak by contrast. The upper lip was hidden by a thick moustache; the under lip was somewhat too pronounced, perhaps. The head was most shapely in front, but at the back was singularly flat. This peculiarity appears in a bust of Hawthorne now in possession of his friend and banker, Mr. Hooker, at Rome. It is by Phillips, and is especially interesting as representing the author in early life, before the somewhat severe mouth was modified by a moustache. The eyes were at once dark and lucid, very large but never staring, incurious, soft and pathetic as those of a deer. When addressed, a gracious smile accompanied his always gentle reply, and the most engaging expression suffused his warm

brown face. The smile, however, was sweet only while in the eyes; when it extended to the mouth it seemed to give him pain. There must have been battles between those soft eyes and this mouth. His voice was sweet and low, but suggested a reserve of quick and powerful intelligence. In conversation, the trait that struck me most was his perfect candor. There was no faintest suggestion of secrecy. I have a suspicion that his shyness was that of one whose heart was without bolts or bars, and who felt himself at the mercy of every 'interviewer' that might chance to get hold of him."

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*The text has been slightly simplified to adapt it for fourth-grade supplementary reading.*

"He hit him fair upon the neck, and made his bull head roll six yards from his human body, which fell down flat upon the ground."—Page 71.

# THE DRAGON'S TEETH

1. CADMUS (Kăd′-mŭs), PHŒNIX (Fē′-nĭx), and CILIX (Sē′-lĭx), the three sons of King Agenor (A′-jā-nōr), and their little sister Eurōpa (U-rō′-pa) (who was a very beautiful child), were at play together, near the sea-shore, in their father's kingdom of Phœnicia[1] (Fē-nĭsh′-a). They had rambled to some distance from the palace where their parents dwelt, and were now in a verdant meadow, on one side of which lay the sea, all sparkling and dimpling in the sunshine, and murmuring gently against the beach. The three boys were very happy, gathering flowers, and twining them into garlands, with which they adorned the little Europa. Seated on the grass, the child was almost hidden under an abundance of buds and blossoms, whence her rosy face peeped merrily out, and, as Cadmus said, was the prettiest of all the flowers.

2. Just then, there came a splendid butterfly fluttering along the meadow; and Cadmus, Phœnix, and Cilix set off in pursuit of it, crying out that it was a flower with

[1] ***Phœnicia***. A country of Asia on the Syrian coast. The Phœnicians were the earliest merchants of the world. When no other country had vessels on the sea, the Phœnicians were exploring the entire Mediterranean Sea, and are said to have gone even as far as Great Britain in search of metals.

wings. Europa, who was a little wearied with playing all day long, did not chase the butterfly with her brothers, but sat still where they had left her, and closed her eyes. For a while she listened to the pleasant murmur of the sea, which was like a voice saying "Hush!" and bidding her go to sleep. But the pretty child, if she slept at all, could not have slept more than a moment, when she heard something trample on the grass not far from her, and peeping out from the heap of flowers, beheld a snow-white bull.

3. And whence could this bull have come? Europa and her brothers had been a long time playing in the meadow, and had seen no cattle, nor other living thing, either there or on the neighboring hills.

"Brother Cadmus!" cried Europa, starting up out of the midst of the roses and lilies. "Phœnix! Cilix! where are you all? Help! help! Come and drive away this bull!"

But her brothers were too far off to hear—especially as the fright took away Europa's voice, and hindered her from calling very loudly. So there she stood, with her pretty mouth wide open, as pale as the white lilies that were twisted among the other flowers in her garlands.

4. Nevertheless, it was the suddenness with which she had perceived the bull, rather than anything frightful in his appearance, that caused Europa so much alarm. On looking at him more attentively, she began to see that he was a beautiful animal, and even fancied a kindly expression in his face. As for his breath—the breath of cattle is always sweet—it was as fragrant as if he had been grazing on rosebuds, or the most delicate of clover blossoms. Never before did a bull have such bright and tender eyes,

and such smooth horns of ivory, as this one. And the bull ran little races, and played sportively around the child; so that she quite forgot how big and strong he was, and, from the gentleness and playfulness of his actions, soon came to consider him as innocent a creature as a pet lamb.

5. Thus, frightened as she at first was, you might by-and-by have seen Europa stroking the bull's forehead with her small white hand, and taking the garlands from her own head to hang them on his neck and ivory horns. Then she pulled up some blades of grass, and he ate them out of her hand, not as if he were hungry, but because he wanted to be friends with the child, and took pleasure in eating what she had touched. Was there ever such a gentle, sweet, pretty, and amiable creature as this bull, and ever such a nice playmate for a little girl?

6. When the animal saw that Europa was no longer afraid of him, he grew overjoyed, and could hardly contain himself for delight. He frisked about the meadow, now here, now there, making sprightly leaps, with as little effort as a bird expends in hopping from twig to twig. Indeed his motion was as light as if he were flying through the air, and his hoofs seemed hardly to leave their print in the grassy soil over which he trod. With his spotless hue, he resembled a snowdrift, wafted along by the wind. Once he galloped so far away that Europa feared lest she might never see him again; so, straining her childish voice, she called him back.

7. "Come back, pretty creature!" she cried. "Here is a nice clover blossom for you."

And then it was delightful to witness the gratitude of this amiable bull, and how he was so full of joy and thank-

fulness that he leaped higher than ever. He came running, and bowed his head before Europa, as if he knew her to be a king's daughter. And not only did the bull bend his neck ; he absolutely knelt down at her feet, and made such intelligent nods, and other inviting gestures, that Europa understood what he meant just as well as if he had put it in so many words.

"Come, dear child," was what he wanted to say, "let me give you a ride on my back."

8. At the first thought of such a thing, Europa drew back. But then she considered in her wise little head that there could be no possible harm in taking just one gallop on the back of this docile and friendly animal, who would certainly set her down the very instant she desired it. And how it would surprise her brothers to see her riding across the green meadow ! And what merry times they might have, either taking turns for a gallop, or clambering on the gentle creature, all four children together, and careering round the field with shouts of laughter that would be heard as far off as King Agenor's palace !

"I think I will do it," said the child to herself.

9. And, indeed, why not ? She cast a glance around, and caught a glimpse of Cadmus, Phœnix, and Cilix, who were still in pursuit of the butterfly, almost at the other end of the meadow. It would be the quickest way of rejoining them, to get upon the white bull's back. She came a step nearer to him, therefore ; and he showed so much joy at this, that the child could not find it in her heart to hesitate any longer. Making one bound (for this little princess was as active as a squirrel), there sat Europa on the beautiful bull, holding an ivory horn in each hand, lest she should fall off.

"Softly, pretty bull—softly!" she said, rather frightened at what she had done. "Do not gallop too fast."

10. Having got the child on his back, the animal gave a leap into the air, and came down so like a feather that Europa did not know when his hoofs touched the ground. He then began a race to that part of the flowery plain where her three brothers were, and where they had just caught their splendid butterfly. Europa screamed with delight; and Phœnix, Cilix, and Cadmus stood gaping at the spectacle of their sister mounted on a white bull, not knowing whether to be frightened, or to wish the same good luck for themselves. The gentle and innocent creature pranced round among the children as playfully as a kitten. Europa all the while looked down upon her brothers nodding and laughing, but yet with a sort of stateliness in her rosy little face. As the bull wheeled about to take another gallop across the meadow, the child waved her hand, and said, "Good-bye," playfully pretending that she was now bound on a distant journey, and might not see her brothers again for nobody could tell how long.

"Good-bye!" shouted Cadmus, Phœnix, and Cilix, all in one breath.

11. But together with her enjoyment of the sport, there was still a little remnant of fear in the child's heart; so that her last look at the three boys was a troubled one, and made them feel as if their dear sister were really leaving them forever. And what do you think the snowy bull did next? Why, he set off as swift as the wind straight down to the sea-shore, scampered across the sand, took an airy leap, and plunged right in among the foaming billows.

The white spray rose in a shower over him and little Europa, and fell spattering down upon the water.

12. Then what a scream of terror did the poor child send forth! The three brothers screamed manfully likewise, and ran to the shore as fast as their legs would carry them, with Cadmus at their head. But it was too late. When they reached the margin of the sand, the treacherous animal was already far away in the wide blue sea, with only his snowy head and tail emerging, and poor little Europa between them, stretching out one hand towards her dear brothers, while she grasped the bull's ivory horn with the other. And there stood Cadmus, Phœnix, and Cilix, gazing at this sad spectacle, through their tears, until they could no longer distinguish the bull's snowy head from the white-capped billows that seemed to boil up out of the sea's depths around him. Nothing more was ever seen of the white bull—nothing more of the beautiful child.

13. This was a sad and mournful story for the three boys to carry home to their parents. King Agenor, their father, was the ruler of the whole country; but he loved his little daughter Europa better than his kingdom, or than all his other children, or than anything else in the world. Therefore, when Cadmus and his two brothers came crying home, and told him how that a white bull had carried off their sister, and swam with her over the sea, the king was quite beside himself with grief and rage. Although it was now twilight, and fast growing dark, he bade them set out instantly in search of her.

14. "Never shall you see my face again," he cried, "unless you bring me back my little Europa, to gladden me with her smiles and her pretty ways! Begone, and

enter my presence no more, till you come leading her by the hand !"

As King Agenor said this, his eyes flashed fire (for he was a very passionate king), and he looked so terribly angry that the poor boys did not even venture to ask for their suppers, but slunk away out of the palace, and only paused on the steps a moment to consult whither they should go first. While they were standing there, all in dismay, their mother, Queen Telephassa (Tĕ′-lĕ-făs′-sa) (who happened not to be by when they told the story to the king), came hurrying after them, and said that she too would go in quest of her daughter.

15. "Oh no, mother !" cried the boys. "The night is dark, and there is no knowing what troubles and perils we may meet with."

"Alas ! my dear children," answered poor Queen Telephassa, weeping bitterly, "that is only another reason why I should go with you. If I should lose you too, as well as my little Europa, what would become of me ?"

"And let me go likewise !" said their playfellow Thasus, (Thā′-sŭs) who came running to join them.

16. Thasus was the son of a seafaring man in the neighborhood : he had been brought up with the young princes, and was their intimate friend, and loved Europa very much ; so they consented that he should accompany them. The whole party, therefore, set forth together. Cadmus, Phœnix, Cilix, and Thasus clustered round Queen Telephassa, grasping her skirts, and begging her to lean upon their shoulders whenever she felt weary. In this manner they went down the palace-steps, and began a journey which turned out to be a great deal longer than they dreamed of. The last that they saw of King Agenor was

when he came to the door, with a servant holding a torch beside him, and called after them into the gathering darkness—

"Remember! Never ascend these steps again without the child!"

"Never!" sobbed Queen Telephassa; and the three brothers and Thasus answered, "Never! Never! Never! Never!"

17. And they kept their word. Year after year, King Agenor sat in the solitude of his beautiful palace, listening in vain for their returning footsteps, hoping to hear the familiar voice of the queen, and the cheerful talk of his sons and their playfellow Thasus, entering the door together, and the sweet childish accents of little Europa in the midst of them. But so long a time went by, that at last, if they had really come, the king would not have known that this was the voice of Telephassa, and these the younger voices that used to make such joyful echoes when the children were playing about the palace. We must now leave King Agenor to sit on his throne, and must go along with Queen Telephassa and her four youthful companions.

18. They went on and on, and traveled a long way, and passed over mountains and rivers, and sailed over seas. Here and there, and everywhere, they made continual inquiry if any person could tell them what had become of Europa. The rustic people, of whom they asked this question, paused a little while from their labors in the field, and looked very much surprised. They thought it strange to behold a woman in the garb of a queen (for Telephassa, in her haste, had forgotten to take off her crown and her royal robes) roaming about the country,

with four lads around her, on such an errand as this seemed to be. But nobody could give them any tidings of Europa ; nobody had seen a little girl dressed like a princess, and mounted on a snow-white bull, which galloped as swiftly as the wind.

19. I cannot tell you how long Queen Telephassa and Cadmus, Phœnix, and Cilix, her three sons, and Thasus, their playfellow, went wandering along the highways and by-paths, or through the pathless wildernesses of the earth, in this manner. But certain it is, that before they reached any place of rest, their splendid garments were quite worn out.

20. As fast as their princely robes got torn and tattered, they exchanged them for such mean attire as ordinary people wore. By-and-by they came to have a wild and homeless aspect, so that you would much sooner have taken them for a gipsy family than a queen and three princes and a young man, who had once a palace for their home, and a train of servants to do their bidding. The four boys grew up to be tall young men, with sunburnt faces. Each of them girded on a sword, to defend himself against the perils of the way. When the husbandmen, at whose farmhouses they sought hospitality, needed their assistance in the harvest-field, they gave it willingly ; and Queen Telephassa (who had done no work in her palace, save to braid silk threads with golden ones) came behind them to bind the sheaves. If payment was offered, they shook their heads, and only asked for tidings of Europa. "There are bulls enough in my pasture," the old farmers would reply ; "but I never heard of one like this you tell me of. A snow-white bull with a little princess on his back! Ho! ho! I ask your pardon,

good folks; but there never was such a sight seen hereabouts."

21. At last Phœnix grew weary of rambling hither and thither to no purpose. So one day, when they happened to be passing through a pleasant and solitary tract of country, he sat himself down on a heap of moss.

"I can go no farther," said Phœnix. "It is a mere foolish waste of life to spend it as we do, in always wandering up and down, and never coming to any home at nightfall. Our sister is lost, and never will be found. She probably perished in the sea; or to whatever shore the white bull may have carried her, it is now so many years ago, that there would be neither love nor acquaintance between us should we meet again. My father has forbidden us to return to his palace; so I shall build me a hut of branches, and dwell here."

22. "Well, son Phœnix," said Telephassa, sorrowfully, "you have grown to be a man, and must do as you judge best. But for my part, I will still go in quest of my poor child."

"And we three will go along with you!" cried Cadmus and Cilix, and their faithful friend Thasus.

23. But before setting out they all helped Phœnix to build a house. When completed, it was a sweet rural bower, roofed overhead with an arch of living boughs. Inside, there were two pleasant rooms, one of which had a soft heap of moss for a bed, while the other was furnished with a rustic seat or two, curiously fashioned out of the crooked roots of trees. So comfortable and home-like did it seem, that Telephassa and her three companions could not help sighing, to think that they must still roam about the world, instead of spending the remainder of their lives

in some such cheerful abode as they had there built for Phœnix. But when they bade him farewell, Phœnix shed tears, and probably regretted that he was no longer to keep them company.

24. However, he had fixed upon an admirable place to dwell in. And, by-and-by, there came other people who chanced to have no homes ; and seeing how pleasant a spot it was, they built themselves huts in the neighborhood of Phœnix's abode. Thus, before many years went by, a city had grown up there, in the center of which was seen a stately palace of marble, wherein dwelt Phœnix, clothed in a purple robe, and wearing a golden crown upon his head. For the inhabitants of the new city, finding that he had royal blood in his veins, had chosen him to be their king. The very first decree of state which King Phœnix issued was, that, if a maiden happened to arrive in the kingdom, mounted on a snow-white bull, and calling herself Europa, his subjects should treat her with the greatest kindness and respect, and immediately bring her to the palace.

25. Often and often, at the close of a weary day's journey, did Telephassa and Cadmus, Cilix and Thasus, remember the pleasant spot in which they left Phœnix. It was a sorrowful prospect for these wanderers, that on the morrow they must again set forth, and that, after many nightfalls, they would perhaps be no nearer the close of their toilsome pilgrimage than now. These thoughts made them all melancholy at times, but appeared to torment Cilix more than the rest of the party. At length, one morning when they were taking their staffs in hand to set out, he thus addressed them :—

26. " My dear mother, and you good brother Cadmus, and my friend Thasus, methinks we are like people in a dream.

There is no substance in the life which we are leading. It is such a dreary length of time since the white bull carried off my sister Europa, that I have quite forgotten how she looked, and the tones of her voice, and indeed almost doubt whether such a little girl ever lived in the world. And whether she once lived or no, I am sure that she no longer survives, and that it is the merest folly to waste our own lives and happiness in seeking her. Were we to find her, she would now be a woman, and would look upon us all as strangers. So I have resolved to take up my abode here; and I entreat you, mother, brother, and friend, to follow my example."

27. "Not I, for one," said Telephassa; although the poor queen, firmly as she spoke, was so travel-worn that she could hardly put her foot to the ground. "Not I, for one! In the depths of my heart, little Europa is still the rosy child who ran to gather flowers so many years ago. She has not grown to womanhood, nor forgotten me. At noon, at night, journeying onward, sitting down to rest, her childish voice is always in my ears, calling 'Mother! mother!' Stop here who may, there is no repose for me."

"Nor for me," said Cadmus, "while my dear mother pleases to go onward."

And the faithful Thasus, too, was resolved to bear them company. They remained with Cilix a few days, however, and helped him to build a rustic bower, resembling the one which they had formerly built for Phœnix.

28. When they were bidding him farewell, Cilix burst into tears, and told his mother that it seemed just as melancholy a dream to stay there, in solitude, as to go onward. If she really believed that they would ever find Europa, he was willing to continue the search with them even

now. But Telephassa bade him remain there, and be happy, if his own heart would let him. So the pilgrims took their leave of him, and departed, and were hardly out of sight before some other wandering people came along that way, and saw Cilix's habitation, and were greatly delighted with the appearance of the place. There being plenty of unoccupied ground in the neighborhood, these strangers built huts for themselves, and were soon joined by a multitude of new settlers, who quickly formed a city. In the middle of it was seen a magnificent palace of colored marble, on the balcony of which, every noontide, appeared Cilix, in a long purple robe, and with a jeweled crown upon his head; for the inhabitants, when they found out that he was a king's son, had considered him the fittest of all men to be a king himself.

29. One of the first acts of King Cilix's government was to send out an expedition, consisting of a grave ambassador and an escort of bold and hardy young men, with orders to visit the principal kingdoms of the earth, and inquire whether a young maiden had passed through those regions, galloping swiftly on a white bull. It is therefore plain that Cilix secretly blamed himself for giving up the search for Europa as long as he was able to continue the search.

30. As for Telephassa, and Cadmus, and the good Thasus, they still kept up that weary pilgrimage. The two young men did their best for the poor queen, helping her over the rough places, often carrying her across rivulets in their faithful arms, and seeking to shelter her at nightfall, even when they themselves lay upon the ground. Sad, sad it was to hear them asking of every passer-by if he had seen Europa, so long after the white bull had carried her away.

But though the gray years thrust themselves between, and made the child's figure dim in their remembrance, neither of these true-hearted three ever dreamed of giving up the search.

31. One morning, however, poor Thasus found that he had sprained his ankle, and could not possibly go farther.

"After a few days, to be sure," said he mournfully, "I might make shift to hobble along with a stick. But that would only delay you, and perhaps hinder you from finding dear little Europa, after all your pains and trouble. Do you go forward, therefore, my beloved companions, and leave me to follow as I may."

32. "Thou hast been a true friend, dear Thasus," said Queen Telephassa, kissing his forehead. "Being neither my son, nor the brother of our lost Europa, thou hast shown thyself truer to me and her than Phœnix and Cilix did, whom we have left behind us. Without thy loving help, and that of my son Cadmus, my limbs could not have borne me half so far as this. Now, take thy rest and be at peace. For—and it is the first time I have owned it to myself—I begin to doubt whether we shall ever find my beloved daughter in this world."

33. Saying this, the poor queen shed tears, because it was a grievous trial to the mother's heart to confess that her hopes were growing faint. From that day forward Cadmus noticed that she never traveled with the same brightness of spirit that had heretofore supported her. Her weight was heavier upon his arm.

34. Before setting out, Cadmus helped Thasus to build a bower; while Telephassa, being too infirm to give any great assistance, advised them how to fit it up and furnish it, so that it might be as comfortable as a hut of branches

could. Thasus, however, did not spend all his days in this green bower. For it happened to him, as to Phœnix and Cilix, that other homeless people visited the spot, and liked it, and built themselves houses in the neighborhood. So here, in the course of a few years, was another thriving city, with a red sandstone palace in the center of it, where Thasus sat upon a throne, dealing out justice to the people, with a purple robe over his shoulders, a scepter in his hand, and a crown upon his head.[1] The inhabitants had made him king, not for the sake of any royal blood (for none was in his veins), but because Thasus was an upright, true-hearted, and courageous man, and therefore fit to rule.

35. But, when the affairs of his kingdom were all settled, King Thasus laid aside his purple robe and crown and scepter, and bade his worthiest subject deal out justice to the people in his stead. Then, grasping the pilgrim's staff that had supported him so long, he set forth again, hoping still to discover some hoof-mark of the snow-white bull, some trace of the vanished child. He returned after a lengthened absence, and sat down wearily upon his throne. To his latest hour, nevertheless, King Thasus showed his true-hearted remembrance of Europa, by ordering that a fire should always be kept burning in his palace, and a bath steaming hot, and food ready to be served up, and a bed with snow-white sheets, in case the maiden should arrive and require immediate refreshment.

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[1] According to some myths, Phœnicia was the kingdom of Phœnix,—Cilicia, a country on the south coast of Asia Minor, the kingdom of Cilix,—and the Island of Thasos (Thā′-sŏs) in the north of the Ægean Sea, the kingdom of Thasus. This island was very early taken possession of by the Phœnicians on account of its gold mines.

And though Europa never came, the good Thasus had the blessings of many a poor traveler, who profited by the food and lodging which were meant for the little playmate of the king's boyhood.

36. Telephassa and Cadmus were now pursuing their weary way, with no companion but each other. The queen leaned heavily upon her son's arm, and could walk only a few miles a-day. But, for all her weakness and weariness, she would not be persuaded to give up the search. It was enough to bring tears into the eyes of bearded men to hear the melancholy tone with which she inquired of every stranger whether he could tell her any news of the lost child.

"Have you seen a little girl—no, no, I mean a young maiden of full growth—passing by this way, mounted on a snow-white bull, which gallops as swiftly as the wind?"

37. "We have seen no such wondrous sight," the people would reply; and very often, taking Cadmus aside, they whispered to him, "Is this stately and sad-looking woman your mother? Surely she is not in her right mind; and you ought to take her home and make her comfortable, and do your best to get this dream out of her fancy."

"It is no dream," said Cadmus. "Everything else is a dream, save that."

38. But, one day, Telephassa seemed feebler than usual, and leaned almost her whole weight on the arm of Cadmus, and walked more slowly than ever before. At last they reached a solitary spot, where she told her son that she must needs lie down and take a good long rest.

"A good long rest," she repeated, looking Cadmus tenderly in the face. "A good long rest, thou dearest one!"

"As long as you please, dear mother," answered Cadmus.

Telephassa bade him sit down on the turf beside her, and she then took his hand.

"My son," said she, fixing her dim eyes most lovingly upon him, "this rest that I speak of will be very long indeed! You must not wait till it is finished. Dear Cadmus, you do not comprehend me. You must make a grave here, and lay your mother's weary frame into it. My pilgrimage is over."

39. Cadmus burst into tears, and, for a long time, refused to believe that his dear mother was now to be taken from him. But Telephassa reasoned with him, and kissed him, and at length made him discern that it was better for her spirit to pass away out of the toil, the weariness, the grief, and disappointment which had burdened her on earth, ever since the child was lost. He therefore repressed his sorrow, and listened to her last words.

40. "Dearest Cadmus," said she, "thou hast been the truest son that ever mother had, and faithful to the very last. Who else would have borne with my infirmities as thou hast? It is owing to thy care, thou tenderest child, that my grave was not dug long years ago, in some valley or on some hillside, that lies far, far behind us. It is enough. Thou shalt wander no more on this hopeless search. But when thou hast laid thy mother in the earth, then go, my son, to Delphi[1] (Dĕl'-fē), and inquire of the oracle what thou shalt do next."

"O mother, mother!" cried Cadmus, "couldst thou have but seen my sister before this hour!"

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[1] ***Delphi.*** In Phocis (fō'-sis) on the mainland of Greece. Delphi was regarded by the Greeks as the center of the earth. It was the seat of the most famous oracle of Apollo.

"It matters little now," answered Telephassa, and there was a smile upon her face. "I go now to the better world, and, sooner or later, shall find my daughter there."

41. I will not sadden you with telling how Telephassa died and was buried, but will only say, that her dying smile grew brighter, instead of vanishing from her dead face; so that Cadmus felt convinced that, at her very first step into the better world, she had caught Europa in her arms. He planted some flowers on his mother's grave and left them to grow there, and make the place beautiful, when he should be far away.

42. After performing this last sorrowful duty, he set forth alone, and took the road towards the famous oracle of Delphi, as Telephassa had advised him. On his way thither, he still inquired of most people whom he met whether they had seen Europa; for, to say the truth, Cadmus had grown so accustomed to ask the question, that it came to his lips as readily as a remark about the weather. He received various answers. Some told him one thing and some another. Among the rest, a mariner affirmed, that, many years before, in a distant country, he had heard a rumor about a white bull, which came swimming across the sea with a child on his back, dressed up in flowers that were blighted with the sea-water. He did not know what had become of the child or the bull; and Cadmus suspected, indeed, by a look in the mariner's eye, that he was only joking, and had never really heard anything about the matter.

43. Poor Cadmus found it more wearisome to travel alone than to bear all his dear mother's weight while she had kept him company. His heart, you will understand, was now so heavy that it seemed impossible sometimes to carry

it any farther. But his limbs were strong and active, and well accustomed to exercise. He walked swiftly along, thinking of King Agenor and Queen Telephassa, and his brothers, and the friendly Thasus, all of whom he had left behind him at one point of his pilgrimage or another, and never expected to see them any more. Full of these remembrances, he came within sight of a lofty mountain, which the people thereabouts told him was called Parnassus (Par-năs'-sŭs).[1] On the slope of Mount Parnassus was the famous Delphi, whither Cadmus was going.

44. This Delphi was supposed to be the very midmost spot of the whole world. The place of the oracle was a certain cavity in the mountain-side, over which, when Cadmus came thither, he found a rude bower of branches. It reminded him of those which he had helped to build for Phœnix and Cilix, and afterwards for Thasus. In later times, when multitudes of people came from great distances to put questions to the oracle, a spacious temple of marble was erected over the spot. But in the days of Cadmus there was only this rustic bower, with its abundance of green foliage and a tuft of shrubbery, that ran wild over the mysterious hole in the hillside.

45. When Cadmus had thrust a passage through the tangled boughs, and made his way into the bower, he did not at first discern the half-hidden cavity. But soon he felt a cold stream of air rushing out of it with so much force that it shook the ringlets of his hair. Pulling away the shrubbery which clustered over the hole, he bent forward, and spoke in a distinct but reverential tone, as if addressing some unseen personage inside of the mountain.

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[1] ***Parnassus***. A mountain celebrated as the home of the Muses, the divinities presiding over the arts and sciences, especially literature and music.

"Sacred oracle of Delphi," said he, "whither shall I go next in quest of my dear sister Europa?"

46. There was at first a deep silence, and then a rushing sound, or a noise like a long sigh, proceeding out of the interior of the earth. This cavity was looked upon as a sort of fountain of truth, which sometimes gushed out in audible words. By-and-by the rushing noise began to sound like articulate language. It repeated, over and over again, the following sentence, which, after all, was so like the vague whistle of a blast of air, that Cadmus really did not quite know whether it meant anything or not :—

"Seek her no more! Seek her no more! Seek her no more!"

"What, then, shall I do?" asked Cadmus.

47. For, ever since he was a child, it had been the great object of his life to find his sister. From the very hour that he left following the butterfly in the meadow near his father's palace, he had done his best to follow Europa over land and sea. And now, if he must give up the search, he seemed to have no more to do in this world.

But again the sighing gust of air grew into something like a hoarse voice.

"Follow the cow!" it said. "Follow the cow! Follow the cow!"

48. And when these words had been repeated until Cadmus was tired of hearing them (especially as he could not imagine what cow it was, or why he was to follow her), the gusty hole gave vent to another sentence.

"Where the stray cow lies down, there is your home."

These words were pronounced but a single time, and died away into a whisper before Cadmus was fully satisfied

that he had caught the meaning. He put other questions, but received no answer ; only the gust of wind sighed continually out of the cavity, and blew the withered leaves rustling along the ground before it.

49. "Did there really come any words out of the hole ?" thought Cadmus ; "or have I been dreaming all this while ?"

He turned away from the oracle, and thought himself no wiser than when he came thither. Caring little what might happen to him, he took the first path that offered itself, and went along at a sluggish pace ; for, having no object in view, nor any reason to go one way more than another, it would certainly have been foolish to make haste. Whenever he met anybody, the old question was at his tongue's end—

50. "Have you seen a beautiful maiden, dressed like a king's daughter, and mounted on a snow-white bull, that gallops as swiftly as the wind ?"

But, remembering what the oracle had said, he only half uttered the words, and then mumbled the rest indistinctly ; and from his confusion, people must have imagined that this handsome young man had lost his wits.

51. I know not how far Cadmus had gone, nor could he himself have told you, when, at no great distance before him, he beheld a brindled cow. She was lying down by the wayside, and quietly chewing the cud ; nor did she take any notice of the young man until he had approached pretty nigh. Then, getting leisurely upon her feet, and giving her head a gentle toss, she began to move slowly along, often pausing just long enough to crop a mouthful of grass. Cadmus loitered behind, whistling idly to him-

self, and scarcely noticing the cow; until the thought occurred to him whether this could possibly be the animal which, according to the oracle's response, was to serve him for a guide. But he smiled at himself for fancying such a thing. He could not seriously think that this was the cow, because she went along so quietly, behaving just like any other cow. Evidently she neither knew nor cared about Cadmus, and was only thinking how to get her living along the wayside, where the herbage was green and fresh. Perhaps she was going home to be milked.

52. "Cow — cow — cow!" cried Cadmus. "Hey, Brindle, hey! Stop, my good cow!"

He wanted to come up with the cow, so as to examine her, and see if she would appear to know him, or whether there were anything to mark her out from a thousand other cows, whose only business is to fill the milk-pail. But still the brindled cow trudged on, whisking her tail to keep the flies away, and taking as little notice of Cadmus as she well could. If he walked slowly, so did the cow, and seized the opportunity to graze. If he quickened his pace, the cow went just so much the faster; and once, when Cadmus tried to catch her by running, she set off at a quick gallop.

53. When Cadmus saw that it was impossible to come up with her, he walked on moderately as before. The cow, too, went leisurely on, without looking behind. Wherever the grass was greenest, there she cropped a mouthful or two. When a brook glistened brightly across the path, there the cow drank, and breathed a comfortable sigh, and drank again, and trudged onward at the pace that best suited herself and Cadmus.

"I do believe," thought Cadmus, "that this may be

the cow that was foretold to me. If it be the one, I suppose she will lie down somewhere hereabouts."

54. Whenever they reached a particularly pleasant spot on a breezy hillside, or in a sheltered vale, or flowery meadow on the shore of a calm lake, or along the bank of a clear stream, Cadmus looked eagerly around to see if the situation would suit him for a home. But still, whether he liked the place or no, the brindled cow never offered to lie down. On she went at the quiet pace of a cow going homeward to the barnyard; and every moment Cadmus expected to see a milkmaid approaching with a pail, or a herdsman running to stop the stray animal, and turn her back towards the pasture. But no milkmaid came; no herdsman drove her back; and Cadmus followed the stray cow till he was almost ready to drop down with fatigue.

55. "O brindled cow," cried he, in a tone of despair, "do you never mean to stop?"

He had now grown too intent on following her to think of lagging behind, however long the way, and whatever might be his fatigue. Indeed it seemed as if there were something about the animal that bewitched people. Several persons who happened to see the brindled cow, and Cadmus following behind, began to trudge after her precisely as he did. Cadmus was glad of somebody to converse with, and therefore talked very freely to these good people. He told them all his adventures, and how he had left King Agenor in his palace, and Phœnix at one place, and Cilix at another, and Thasus at a third, and his dear mother, Queen Telephassa, under a flowery sod, so that now he was quite alone, both friendless and homeless. He mentioned, likewise, that the oracle had bidden him to be guided by a cow, and inquired of the strangers

whether they supposed that this brindled animal could be the one.

56. "Why, 'tis a very wonderful affair," answered one of his new companions. "I am pretty well acquainted with the ways of cattle, and I never knew a cow of her own accord go so far without stopping. If my legs will let me, I'll never leave following the beast till she lies down."

"Nor I!" said a second.

"Nor I!" cried a third. "If she goes a hundred miles farther, I'm determined to see the end of it."

57. They kept trudging stoutly forward, and talking as they went. The strangers grew very fond of Cadmus, and resolved never to leave him, but to help him to build a city wherever the cow might lie down. In the center of it there should be a noble palace, in which Cadmus might dwell, and be their king, with a throne, a crown and scepter, a purple robe, and everything else that a king ought to have; for in him there was the royal blood and the royal heart, and the head that knew how to rule.

While they were talking of these schemes, and beguiling the tediousness of the way with laying out the plan of the new city, one of the company happened to look at the cow.

58. "Joy! joy!" cried he, clapping his hands. "The cow is going to lie down."

They all looked; and sure enough the cow had stopped, and was staring leisurely about her as other cows do when on the point of lying down. And slowly, slowly did she recline herself on the soft grass, first bending her fore legs, and then crouching her hind ones. When Cadmus and his companions came up with her, there was the brindled cow taking her ease, chewing her cud, and look-

ing them quietly in the face, as if this was just the spot she had been seeking for, and as if it were all a matter of course.

"This, then," said Cadmus, gazing around him,—"this is to be my home."

59. It was a fertile and lovely plain, with great trees flinging their sun-speckled shadows over it, and hills fencing it in from the rough weather. At no great distance they beheld a river gleaming in the sunshine. A home feeling stole into the heart of poor Cadmus. He was very glad to know that here he might awake in the morning without having to put on his dusty sandals to travel farther and farther. The days and the years would pass over him and find him still in this pleasant spot. If he could have had his brothers with him, and his friend Thasus, and could have seen his dear mother under a roof of his own, he might here have been happy, after all their disappointments. Some day or other, too, his sister Europa might have come quietly to the door of his home, and smiled round upon the familiar faces. But, indeed, since there was no hope of regaining the friends of his boyhood, or ever seeing his dear sister again, Cadmus resolved to make himself happy with these new companions who had grown so fond of him while following the cow.

60. "Yes, my friends," said he to them, "this is to be our home. Here we will build our habitations. The brindled cow, which has led us hither, will supply us with milk. We will cultivate the neighboring soil, and lead an innocent and happy life."

61. His companions joyfully assented to the plan; and, in the first place, being very hungry and thirsty, they looked about them for the means of providing a comfortable meal.

Not far off they saw a tuft of trees, which appeared as if there might be a spring of water beneath them. They went thither to fetch some, leaving Cadmus stretched on the ground along with the brindled cow; for, now that he had found a place of rest, it seemed as if all the weariness of his pilgrimage ever since he left King Agenor's palace had fallen upon him at once. But his new friends had not long been gone when he was suddenly startled by cries, shouts, and screams, and the noise of a terrible struggle, and in the midst of it all a most awful hissing, which went right through his ears like a rough saw.

62. Running towards the tuft of trees, he beheld the head and fiery eyes of an immense serpent or dragon, with the widest jaws that ever a dragon had, and many rows of horribly sharp teeth. Before Cadmus could reach the spot, this pitiless reptile had killed his poor companions, and was busily devouring them, making but a mouthful of each man.

63. It appears that the fountain of water was enchanted, and that the dragon had been set to guard it, so that no mortal might ever quench his thirst there. As the neighboring inhabitants carefully avoided the spot, it was now a long time (not less than a hundred years or thereabouts) since the monster had broken his fast; and, as was natural enough, his appetite had grown to be enormous, and was not half satisfied by the poor people whom he had just eaten up. When he caught sight of Cadmus, therefore, he set up another abominable hiss, and flung back his immense jaws until his mouth looked like a great red cavern.

64. But Cadmus was so enraged at the destruction of his friends, that he cared neither for the size of the dragon's

jaws nor for his hundreds of sharp teeth. Drawing his sword, he rushed at the monster, and flung himself right into his cavernous mouth. This bold method of attacking him took the dragon by surprise; for, in fact, Cadmus had leaped so far down into his throat that the rows of terrible teeth could not close upon him, nor do him the least harm in the world. Thus, though the struggle was a tremendous one, and though the dragon shattered the tuft of trees into small splinters by the lashing of his tail, yet, as Cadmus was all the while slashing and stabbing at his very vitals, it was not long before the scaly wretch bethought himself of slipping away. He had not gone his length, however, when the brave Cadmus gave him a sword-thrust that finished the battle; and creeping out of the gateway of the creature's jaws, there he beheld him still quivering through his vast bulk, although there was no longer life enough in him to harm a little child.

65. But do not you suppose that it made Cadmus sorrowful to think of the melancholy fate which had befallen those poor, friendly people who had followed the cow along with him? It seemed as if he were doomed to lose everybody whom he loved, or to see them perish in one way or another. And here he was, after all his toils and troubles, in a solitary place, with not a single human being to help him to build a hut.

"What shall I do?" cried he aloud. "It were better for me to have been devoured by the dragon, as my poor companions were."

"Cadmus," said a voice—but whether it came from above or below him, or whether it spoke within his own breast, the young man could not tell—"Cadmus, pluck out the dragon's teeth, and plant them in the earth."

66. This was a strange thing to do; nor was it very easy to dig out all those deep-rooted fangs from the dead dragon's jaws. But Cadmus toiled and tugged, and after pounding the monstrous head almost to pieces with a great stone, he at last collected nearly all the teeth. The next thing was to plant them. This, likewise, was a tedious piece of work, especially as Cadmus was already exhausted with killing the dragon, and knocking his head to pieces, and had nothing to dig the earth with, except his own sword-blade. Finally, however, a large enough piece of ground was turned up, and sown with this new kind of seed; although half of the dragon's teeth still remained to be planted some other day.

67. Cadmus, quite out of breath, stood leaning upon his sword, and wondering what was to happen next. He had waited but a few moments, when he began to see a sight, which was as great a marvel as the most marvelous thing I ever told you about.

68. The sun was shining slantwise over the field, and showed all the moist, dark soil, just like any other newly planted piece of ground. All at once, Cadmus fancied he saw something glisten very brightly, first at one spot, then at another, and then at a hundred and a thousand spots together. Soon he perceived them to be the steel heads of spears, sprouting up everywhere like so many stalks of grain, and continually growing taller and taller. Next appeared a vast number of bright sword-blades, thrusting themselves up in the same way. A moment afterwards, the whole surface of the ground was broken by a multitude of polished brass helmets, coming up like a crop of enormous beans. So rapidly did they grow, that Cadmus now discerned the fierce countenance of a man beneath

every one. In short, before he had time to think what a wonderful affair it was, he beheld an abundant harvest of what looked like human beings, armed with helmets and breastplates, shields, swords, and spears ; and before they were well out of the earth, they brandished their weapons, and clashed them one against another, seeming to think, little while as they had yet lived, that they had wasted too much of life without a battle. Every tooth of the dragon had produced one of these fierce-looking warriors.

69. Up sprouted, also, a great many trumpeters ; and with the first breath that they drew, they put their brazen trumpets to their lips, and sounded a tremendous and ear-shattering blast ; so that the whole space, just now so quiet and solitary, reverberated with the clash and clang of arms, the bray of warlike music, and the shouts of angry men. So enraged did they all look, that Cadmus fully expected them to put the whole world to the sword.

"Cadmus," said the same voice which he had before heard, "throw a stone into the midst of the armed men."

70. So Cadmus seized a large stone, and, flinging it into the middle of the earth-army, saw it strike the breast-plate of a gigantic and fierce-looking warrior. Immediately on feeling the blow, he seemed to take it for granted that somebody had struck him ; and uplifting his weapon, he smote his next neighbor a blow that cleft his helmet asunder, and stretched him on the ground. In an instant, those nearest the fallen warrior began to strike at one another with their swords, and stab with their spears. The confusion spread wider and wider. Each man smote down his brother, and was himself smitten down before he had time to exult in his victory. The trumpeters, all the while, blew their blasts shriller and shriller ; each

soldier shouted a battle-cry, and often fell with it on his lips.

71. Well, this memorable battle continued to rage until the ground was strewn with helmeted heads that had been cut off. Of all the thousands that began the fight, there were only five left standing. These now rushed from different parts of the field, and, meeting in the middle of it, clashed their swords, and struck at each other's hearts as fiercely as ever.

"Cadmus," said the voice again, "bid those five warriors sheathe their swords. They will help you to build the city."

72. Without hesitating an instant, Cadmus stepped forward, with the aspect of a king and a leader, and extending his drawn sword amongst them, spoke to the warriors in a stern and commanding voice.

"Sheathe your weapons!" said he.

And forthwith, feeling themselves bound to obey him, the five remaining sons of the dragon's teeth returned their swords to the scabbards, and stood before Cadmus in rank, eyeing him as soldiers eye their captain, while awaiting the word of command.

73. These five men had probably sprung from the biggest of the dragon's teeth, and were the boldest and strongest of the whole army. They were almost giants, indeed, and had good need to be so, else they never could have lived through so terrible a fight. They still had a very furious look; and if Cadmus happened to glance aside, would glare at one another with fire flashing out of their eyes. It was strange, too, to observe how the earth, out of which they had so lately grown, was incrusted here and there on their bright breastplates, and even begrimed their faces.

74. They looked him earnestly in the face, waiting for his next order, and evidently desiring no other employment than to follow him from one battle-field to another all over the wide world. But Cadmus was wiser than these earth-born creatures, with the dragon's fierceness in them, and knew better how to use their strength and hardihood.

"Come!" said he, "you are sturdy fellows; make yourselves useful! Quarry some stones with those great swords of yours, and help me to build a city."

75. The five soldiers grumbled a little, and muttered that it was their business to overthrow cities, not to build them up. But Cadmus looked at them with a stern eye, and spoke to them in a tone of authority, so that they knew him for their master, and never again thought of disobeying his commands. They set to work in good earnest, and toiled so diligently, that in a very short time a city began to make its appearance. At first, to be sure, the workmen showed a quarrelsome disposition. Like savage beasts, they would doubtless have done one another mischief, if Cadmus had not kept watch over them, and quelled the fierce old serpent that lurked in their hearts when he saw it gleaming out of their wild eyes. But, in course of time, they got accustomed to honest labor, and had sense enough to feel that there was more true enjoyment in living at peace, and doing good to one's neighbor, than in striking at him with a two-edged sword.

76. And now the city was built, and there was a home in it for each of the workmen. But the palace of Cadmus was not yet erected, because they had left it till the last, in order to make it very commodious, as well as stately and beautiful. After finishing the rest of their labors, they all went to bed betimes, in order to rise in the gray of the

morning, and to get at least the foundation of the edifice laid before nightfall. But when Cadmus arose and took his way towards the site where the palace was to be built, followed by his five sturdy workmen, there stood the most magnificent palace that had ever been seen in the world.

77. It was built of marble and other beautiful kinds of stone, and rose high into the air, with a splendid dome and a portico along the front, and carved pillars, and everything else that befitted the palace of a mighty king. It had grown up out of the earth in almost as short a time as it had taken the armed host to spring from the dragon's teeth.

When the five workmen beheld the dome, with the morning sunshine making it look golden and glorious, they gave a great shout.

"Long live King Cadmus," they cried, "in his beautiful palace!"

78. And the new king, with his five faithful followers, ascended the palace-steps. Halting at the entrance, they gazed through a long vista of lofty pillars that were ranged from end to end of a great hall. At the farther extremity of this hall, approaching slowly towards him, Cadmus beheld a female figure, wonderfully beautiful, and adorned with a royal robe, and a crown of diamonds over her golden ringlets, and the richest necklace that ever a queen wore. His heart thrilled with delight. He fancied her his long-lost sister Europa, now grown to womanhood, coming to make him happy, and to repay him with her sweet sisterly affection for all those weary wanderings in quest of her since he left King Agenor's palace—for the tears that he had shed on parting with Phœnix, and Cilix, and Thasus—for the heart-breakings that had made the

whole world seem dismal to him over his dear mother's grave.

79. But, as Cadmus advanced to meet the beautiful stranger, he saw that her features were unknown to him, although, in the little time that it required to tread along the hall, he had already felt a sympathy betwixt himself and her.

"No, Cadmus," said the same voice that had spoken to him in the field of the armed men, "this is not that dear sister Europa whom you have sought so faithfully all over the wide world. This is Harmonia (Har-mōn′-e-a), a daughter of the sky, who is given you instead of sister, and brothers, and friend, and mother. You will find all those dear ones in her alone."

80. So King Cadmus dwelt in the palace with his new friend, Harmonia. Before many years went by, there was a group of rosy little children sporting in the great hall, and on the marble steps of the palace, and running joyfully to meet King Cadmus, when affairs of state left him at leisure to play with them. They called him father, and Queen Harmonia mother. The five old soldiers of the dragon's teeth grew very fond of these small children, and were never weary of showing them how to flourish wooden swords and march in military order.

# THE MINOTAUR

1. In the old city of Troezen (Trē′-zĕn),[1] at the foot of a lofty mountain, there lived, a very long time ago, a little boy named Theseus (Thē′-sūs). His grandfather, King Pittheus (Pĭt′-thūs), was the sovereign of that country, and was looked upon as a very wise man; so that Theseus, being brought up in the royal palace, and being naturally a bright lad, could hardly fail to profit by the old king's instructions. His mother's name was Æthra (E′-thra). As for his father, the boy had never seen him. But, from his earliest remembrance, Æthra used to go with little Theseus into a wood, and sit down upon a moss-grown rock, which was sunk deep into the earth. Here she often talked with her son about his father, and said that he was called Ægeus (E′-gūs), and that he was a great king, and ruled over Attica,[2] and dwelt at Athens, which

[1] ***Troezen***. A city situated in the southeastern part of Argolis on the Saronic Gulf.

[2] ***Attica***. A district in the east of Greece, between the Saronic Gulf and the Eubœan Strait. Attica was ruled over by the City of Athens; in fact, politically, it was a part of Athens. After the democratic reforms of Cleisthenes, in 510 B. C., the whole of Attica, including the City of Athens, was divided up into 100 demes or townships, and the citizens of all the demes had equal political rights. Athens was what is known as a city state—an institution which existed in perfection only in Greece.

was as famous a city as any in the world. Theseus was very fond of hearing about King Ægeus, and often asked his good mother Æthra why he did not come and live with them at Troezen.

2. "Ah, my dear son," answered Æthra, with a sigh, "a monarch has his people to take care of. The men and women over whom he rules are in the place of children to him; and he can seldom spare time to love his own children as other parents do. Your father will never be able to leave his kingdom for the sake of seeing his little boy."

"Well, but, dear mother," asked the boy, "why cannot I go to this famous city of Athens, and tell King Ægeus that I am his son?"

"That may happen by-and-by," said Æthra. "Be patient, and we shall see. You are not yet big and strong enough to set out on such an errand."

3. "And how soon shall I be strong enough?" Theseus asked.

"You are but a tiny boy as yet," replied his mother. "See if you can lift this rock on which we are sitting."

The little fellow had a great opinion of his own strength. So, grasping the rough rock, he tugged and toiled amain, and got himself quite out of breath, without being able to stir the heavy stone. It seemed to be rooted into the ground. No wonder he could not move it; for it would have taken all the force of a very strong man to lift it out of its earthy bed.

4. His mother stood looking on, with a sad kind of smile on her lips and in her eyes, to see the zealous and yet puny efforts of her little boy. She could not help being sorrowful at finding him already so impatient to begin his adventures in the world.

"You see how it is, my dear Theseus," said she; "you must have far more strength before I can trust you to go to Athens, and tell King Ægeus that you are his son. But when you can lift this rock, and show me what is hidden beneath it, I promise you I will give you leave to go."

5. Often and often, after this, did Theseus ask his mother whether it was yet time for him to go to Athens; and still his mother pointed to the rock, and told him that, for years to come, he could not be strong enough to move it. And again and again the rosy-cheeked and curly-headed boy would tug and strain at the huge mass of stone, striving, child as he was, to do what a giant could hardly have done without taking both of his great hands to the task. Meanwhile the rock seemed to be sinking farther and farther into the ground. The moss grew over it thicker and thicker, until at last it looked almost like a soft green seat, with only a few gray knobs of granite peeping out. The overhanging trees, also, shed their brown leaves upon it, as often as the autumn came; and at its base grew ferns and wild flowers, some of which crept quite over its surface. To all appearance, the rock was as firmly fastened as any other part of the earth.

6. But, difficult as the matter looked, Theseus was now growing up to be so strong a lad, that, in his own opinion, the time would quickly come when he might hope to move this ponderous lump of stone.

"Mother, I do believe it has started!" cried he, after one of his attempts. "The earth around it is certainly a little cracked!"

"No, no, child!" his mother hastily answered. "It

is not possible you can have moved it, boy as you still are."

7. Nor would she be convinced, although Theseus showed her the place where he fancied that the stem of a flower had been partly uprooted by the movement of the rock. But Æthra sighed and looked disquieted; for now she began to be conscious that her son was no longer a child, and that in a little while hence, she must send him forth among the perils and troubles of the world.

8. It was not more than a year afterwards when they were again sitting on the moss-covered stone. Æthra had once more told him the oft-repeated story of his father, and how gladly he would receive Theseus at his palace, and how he would present him to his courtiers and the people, and tell them that here was the heir of his dominions. The eyes of Theseus glowed with joy and longing, and he could hardly sit still to hear his mother speak.

"Dear mother Æthra," he exclaimed, "I never felt half so strong as now! I am no longer a child, nor a boy, nor a mere youth! I feel myself a man! It is now time to make one earnest trial to move the stone."

"Ah, my dearest Theseus," replied his mother, "not yet! not yet!"

"Yes, mother," said he, resolutely, "the time has come!"

9. Then Theseus bent himself in good earnest to the task, and strained every sinew, with manly strength and resolution. He put his whole brave heart into the effort. He wrestled with the big and sluggish stone, as if it had been a living enemy. He heaved, he lifted, he resolved now to succeed, or else to perish there, and let the rock be his monument forever! Æthra stood gazing at him,

and clasped her hands, partly with a mother's pride, and partly with a mother's sorrow. The great rock stirred! Yes; it was raised slowly from the bedded moss and earth, uprooting the shrubs and flowers along with it, and was turned upon its side. Theseus had conquered!

While taking breath, he looked joyfully at his mother, and she smiled upon him through her tears.

"Yes, Theseus," she said, "the time has come, and you must stay no longer at my side! See what King Ægeus, your royal father, left for you, beneath the stone, when he lifted it in his mighty arms, and laid it on the spot whence you have now removed it."

10. Theseus looked, and saw that the rock had been placed over another slab of stone, containing a cavity within it; so that it somewhat resembled a roughly made chest or coffer, of which the upper mass had served as the lid. Within the cavity lay a sword with a golden hilt, and a pair of sandals.

"That was your father's sword," said Æthra, "and those were his sandals. When he went to be King of Athens, he bade me treat you as a child until you should prove yourself a man by lifting this heavy stone. That task being accomplished, you are to put on his sandals, in order to follow in your father's footsteps, and to gird on his sword, so that you may fight giants and dragons, as King Ægeus did in his youth."

"I will set out for Athens this very day!" cried Theseus.

11. But his mother persuaded him to stay a day or two longer, while she got ready some things necessary for his journey. When his grandfather, the wise King Pittheus, heard that Theseus intended to present himself at his father's palace, he earnestly advised him to get on board

a vessel, and go by sea, because he might thus arrive within fifteen miles of Athens, without either fatigue or danger.

"The roads are very bad by land," quoth the venerable king; "and they are terribly infested with robbers and monsters. A mere lad, like Theseus, is not fit to be trusted on such a perilous journey, all by himself. No, no; let him go by sea!"

12. But when Theseus heard of robbers and monsters, he became all open-eyed and earnest attention, and was so much the more eager to take the road along which they were to be met with. On the third day, therefore, he bade a respectful farewell to his grandfather, thanking him for all his kindness; and, after affectionately embracing his mother, he set forth, with a good many of her tears glistening on his cheeks, and some, if the truth must be told, that had gushed out of his own eyes. But he let the sun and wind dry them, and walked stoutly on, playing with the golden hilt of his sword, and taking very manly strides in his father's sandals.

13. I can only tell you very shortly of the adventures that befell Theseus on the road to Athens. It is enough to say, that he quite cleared that part of the country of the robbers, about whom King Pittheus had been so much alarmed. One of these bad people was named Procrustes (Prō-crŭs′-tēz). He was indeed a terrible fellow, and had an ugly way of making fun of the poor travelers who happened to fall into his clutches. In his cavern he had a bed, on which, with great pretense of hospitality, he invited his guests to lie down; but if they happened to be shorter than the bed, this wicked villain stretched them out by main force; or, if they were too tall, he lopped off

their heads or feet, and laughed at what he had done, as an excellent joke. Thus, however weary a man might be, he would rather journey slowly along than lie in the bed of Procrustes. Another of these robbers, named Scron (Skrōn), must likewise have been a very great scoundrel. He was in the habit of flinging his victims off a high cliff into the sea; and in order to give him exactly his deserts, Theseus tossed him off the very same place. But the sea would not pollute itself by receiving such a bad person into its bosom; neither would the earth, having once got rid of him, consent to take him back; so that between the cliff and the sea, Scron stuck fast in the air, which was forced to bear the burden of his wickedness.

14. After these memorable deeds, Theseus heard of an enormous sow, which ran wild, and was the terror of all the farmers round about; and, as he did not consider himself above doing any good thing that came in his way, he killed this monstrous creature, and gave the carcass to the poor people for food.

Thus, by the time he reached his journey's end, Theseus had done many valiant feats with his father's golden-hilted sword, and had gained the renown of being one of the bravest young men of the day. His fame traveled faster than he did, and reached Athens before him. As he entered the city, he heard the inhabitants talking at the street-corners and saying that Hercules[1] (Hĕr′-kū-lēs) was brave, and Jason[2] (Jā′-sŏn) too, and Castor

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[1] ***Hercules.*** An early hero of Greece who accomplished wonderful feats of strength. At his death the gods took him to dwell among themselves.

[2] ***Jason.*** A hero who, with many others, sailed in the Argo to win the "Golden Fleece." See Hawthorne's tale.

(Kas′-tor) and Pollux[1] (Pŏl′-lŭx) likewise, but that Theseus, the son of their own king, would turn out as great a hero as the best of them. Theseus took longer strides on hearing this, and fancied himself sure of a magnificent reception at his father's court, since he came thither with Fame to blow her trumpet before him, and cry to King Ægeus, "Behold your son!"

15. He little suspected, that here in this very Athens, where his father reigned, a greater danger awaited him than any which he had encountered on the road. Yet this was the truth. You must understand that the father of Theseus, though not very old in years, was almost worn out with the cares of government, and had thus grown aged before his time. His nephews, not expecting him to live a very great while, intended to get all the power of the kingdom into their own hands. But, when they heard that Theseus had arrived in Athens, and learned what a gallant young man he was, they saw that he would not be at all the kind of person to let them steal away his father's crown and scepter, which ought to be his own by right of inheritance. Thus these bad-hearted nephews of King Ægeus, who were the cousins of Theseus, at once became his enemies. A still more dangerous enemy was Medea (Mē-dē′-a),[2] the wicked enchantress; for she was now the king's wife, and wanted to give the kingdom to

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[1] ***Castor*** and ***Pollux.*** Called the Dioscuri. Two heroic brothers afterwards worshipped by the Greeks and Romans.

[2] ***Medea.*** This is the same Medea who afterwards helps Jason win the Golden Fleece. We notice that Theseus accompanies Jason on that quest, and finds Medea then a young woman. An error resulting from such disregard for the possibilities of time is called an anachronism.

her son Medus, (Mē′-dŭs), instead of letting it be given to the son of Æthra, whom she hated.

16. It so happened that the king's nephews met Theseus, and found out who he was, just as he reached the entrance to the royal palace. With all their evil designs against him, they pretended to be their cousin's best friends, and expressed great joy at making his acquaintance. They proposed to him that he should come into the king's presence as a stranger, in order to try whether Ægeus would discover in the young man's features any likeness either to himself or his mother Æthra, and thus recognize him for a son. Theseus consented; for he fancied that his father would know him in a moment, by the love that was in his heart. But, while he waited at the door, the nephews ran and told King Ægeus that a young man had arrived in Athens, who, to their certain knowledge intended to put him to death, and get possession of his royal crown.

"And he is now waiting for admission to your majesty's presence," added they.

"Aha!" cried the old king, on hearing this. "Why, he must be very wicked indeed! Pray, what would you advise me to do with him?"

17. In reply to this question, the wicked Medea put in her word. As I have already told you, she was a famous enchantress. According to some stories, she was in the habit of boiling old people in a large caldron, under pretense of making them young again; but King Ægeus, I suppose, did not fancy such an uncomfortable way of growing young, or perhaps was contented to be old, and therefore would never let himself be put into the caldron. If there were time to spare from more important matters,

I should be glad to tell you of Medea's fiery chariot, drawn by winged dragons, in which the enchantress used often to take an airing among the clouds. It was this chariot, in fact, that first brought her to Athens, where she had done nothing but mischief ever since her arrival. But these and many other wonders must be left untold; and it is enough to say that Medea, amongst a thousand other bad things, knew how to prepare a poison, that was instantly fatal to any one who might so much as touch it with his lips.

18. So when the king asked what he should do with Theseus, this naughty woman had an answer ready at her tongue's end.

"Leave that to me, please your majesty," she replied. "Only admit this evil-minded young man to your presence, treat him civilly, and invite him to drink a goblet of wine. Your majesty well knows that I sometimes amuse myself with distilling very powerful medicines. Here is one of them in this small phial. As to what it is made of, that is one of my secrets of state. Do but let me put a single drop into the goblet and let the young man taste it, and I will answer for it, he will quite lay aside the bad designs with which he comes hither.

19. As she said this, Medea smiled; but, for all her smiling face, she meant nothing less than to poison the poor innocent Theseus before his father's eyes. And King Ægeus, like most other kings, thought any punishment mild enough for a person who was accused of plotting against his life. He therefore made little or no objection to Medea's scheme, and as soon as the poisonous wine was ready, gave orders that the young stranger should be admitted into his presence. The goblet was

set on a table beside the king's throne ; and a fly, meaning just to sip a little from the brim, immediately tumbled into it, dead. Observing this, Medea looked round at the nephews and smiled again.

20. When Theseus was ushered into the royal apartment, the only object that he seemed to behold was the white-bearded old king. There he sat on his magnificent throne, a dazzling crown on his head and a scepter in his hand. His aspect was stately and majestic, although his years and infirmities weighed heavily upon him, as if each year were a lump of lead, and each infirmity a ponderous stone, and all were bundled up together, and laid upon his weary shoulders. Tears both of joy and sorrow sprang into the young man's eyes ; for he thought how sad it was to see his dear father so infirm, and how sweet it would be to support him with his own youthful strength, and to cheer him up with the alacrity of his loving spirit. When a son takes his father into his warm heart, it renews the old man's youth in a better way than by the heat of Medea's magic caldron. And this was what Theseus resolved to do. He could scarcely wait to see whether King Ægeus would recognize him, so eager was he to throw himself into his arms.

21. Advancing to the foot of the throne, he attempted to make a little speech, which he had been thinking about, as he came up the stairs. But he was almost choked by a great many tender feelings that gushed out of his heart and swelled into his throat, all struggling to find utterance together. And therefore, unless he could have laid his full, over-brimming heart into the king's hand, poor Theseus knew not what to do or say. The cunning Medea observed what was passing in the young man's

mind. She was more wicked at that moment than ever she had been before; for she did her worst to turn all this unspeakable love with which Theseus was agitated, to his own ruin and destruction.

"Does not your majesty see his confusion?" she whispered in the king's ear. "He is so conscious of guilt, that he trembles and cannot speak. The wretch lives too long! Quick! offer him the wine!"

22. Now King Ægeus had been gazing earnestly at the young stranger, as he drew near the throne. There was something, he knew not what, either in his white brow, or in the fine expression of his mouth, or in his beautiful and tender eyes, that made him indistinctly feel as if he had seen this youth before; as if, indeed he had trotted him on his knee when a baby, and had beheld him growing to be a stalwart man, while he himself grew old. But Medea guessed how the king felt, and would not suffer him to yield to these kindly feelings; although they were the voice of his deepest heart, telling him as plainly as it could speak, that here was his dear son, and Æthra's son, coming to claim him for a father. The enchantress again whispered in the king's ear, and compelled him, by her witchcraft, to see everything under a false aspect.

23. He made up his mind, therefore, to let Theseus drink of the poisoned wine.

"Young man," said he, "you are welcome! I am proud to show hospitality to so heroic a youth. Do me the favor to drink the contents of this goblet. It is brimming over as you see, with delicious wine, such as I bestow only on those who are worthy of it! None is more worthy to drink it than yourself!"

24. So saying, King Ægeus took the golden goblet from the table, and was about to offer it to Theseus. But partly through his infirmities, and partly because it seemed so sad a thing to take away this young man's life, however wicked he might be, and partly, no doubt, because his heart was wiser than his head, and quaked within him at the thought of what he was going to do—for all these reasons, the king's hand trembled so much that a great deal of the wine slopped over. In order to strengthen his purpose, and fearing lest the whole of the precious poison should be wasted, one of his nephews now whispered to him—

25. "Has your majesty any doubt of this stranger's guilt? There is the very sword with which he meant to slay you. How sharp, and bright, and terrible it is! Quick!—let him taste the wine; or perhaps he may do the deed even yet."

At these words, Ægeus drove every thought and feeling out of his breast, except the one idea how justly the young man deserved to be put to death. He sat erect on his throne, and held out the goblet of wine with a steady hand, and bent on Theseus a frown of kingly severity: for, after all, he had too noble a spirit to murder even a treacherous enemy with a deceitful smile upon his face.

26. "Drink!" said he, in the stern tone with which he was wont to condemn a criminal to be beheaded. "You have well deserved of me such wine as this!"

Theseus held out his hand to take the wine. But, before he touched it, King Ægeus trembled again. His eyes had fallen on the gold-hilted sword that hung at the young man's side. He drew back the goblet.

"That sword!" he exclaimed; "how came you by it?"

27. "It was my father's sword," replied Theseus, with a tremulous voice. "These were his sandals. My dear mother (her name is Æthra) told me his story while I was yet a little child. But it is only a month since I grew strong enough to lift the heavy stone, and take the sword and sandals from beneath it, and come to Athens to seek my father."

"My son! my son!" cried King Ægeus, flinging away the fatal goblet, and tottering down from the throne to fall into the arms of Theseus. "Yes, these are Æthra's eyes. It is my son."

28. I know not what became of the king's nephews. But when the wicked Medea saw this new turn of affairs, she hurried out of the room, and going to her private chamber, lost no time in setting her enchantments to work. In a few moments she heard a great noise of hissing snakes outside the chamber window; and, behold! there was her fiery chariot, with its four huge-winged serpents, wriggling and twisting in the air, flourishing their tails higher than the top of the palace, and all ready to set off on an aërial journey. Medea stayed only long enough to take with her her son, and to steal the crown jewels, together with the king's best robes, and whatever other valuable things she could lay hands on; and getting into the chariot, she whipped up the snakes, and ascended high over the city.

29. The king, hearing the hiss of the serpents, scrambled as fast as he could to the window, and cried out to the abominable enchantress never to come back. The whole people of Athens, too, who had run out of doors to see

this wonderful spectacle, set up a shout of joy at the prospect of getting rid of her. Medea, almost bursting with rage, uttered precisely such a hiss as one of her own snakes, only ten times more venomous and spiteful; and glaring fiercely out of the blaze of the chariot, she shook her hands over the multitude below, as if she were scattering a million of curses among them. In so doing, however, she happened to let fall about five hundred diamonds of the first water, together with a thousand great pearls, and two thousand emeralds, rubies, sapphires, opals, and topazes, to which she had helped herself out of the king's strong-box. All these came pelting down, like a shower of many-colored hailstones, upon the heads of grown people and children, who forthwith gathered them up, and carried them back to the palace. But King Ægeus told them that they were welcome to the whole, and to twice as many more, if he had them, for the sake of his delight at finding his son, and losing the wicked Medea. And, indeed, if you had seen how hateful was her last look, as the flaming chariot flew upward, you would not have wondered that both king and people should think her departure a good riddance.

30. And now Prince Theseus was taken into great favor by his royal father. The old king was never weary of having him sit beside him on his throne (which was quite wide enough for two), and of hearing him tell about his dear mother and his childhood, and his many boyish efforts to lift the ponderous stone. Theseus, however, was much too brave and active a young man to be willing to spend all his time in relating things which had already happened. His ambition was to perform other and more heroic deeds, which should be better worth telling in prose and verse.

Nor had he been long in Athens before he caught and chained a terrible mad bull, and made a public show of him, greatly to the wonder and admiration of good King Ægeus and his subjects. But pretty soon he undertook an affair that made all his foregone adventures seem like mere boy's play. The occasion of it was as follows :—

31. One morning when Prince Theseus awoke, he fancied that he must have had a very sorrowful dream, and it was still running in his mind, even now that his eyes were open. For it appeared as if the air was full of a melancholy wail ; and when he listened more attentively, he could hear sobs, and groans, and screams of woe, mingled with deep, quiet sighs, which came from the king's palace, and from the streets, and from the temples, and from every habitation in the city. And all these mournful noises, issuing out of thousands of separate hearts, united themselves into the one great sound of affliction which had startled Theseus from slumber. He put on his clothes as quickly as he could (not forgetting his sandals and gold-hilted sword), and, hastening to the king, inquired what it all meant.

32. "Alas, my son!" quoth King Ægeus, heaving a long sigh, "there is a very great sorrow before us ! This is the most woful anniversary in the whole year. It is the day when we annually draw lots to see which of the youths and maidens of Athens shall go to be devoured by the horrible Minotaur!" (Mĭn'-ō-tor.)

"The Minotaur!" exclaimed Prince Theseus ; and like a brave young prince as he was, he put his hand to the hilt of his sword. "What kind of a monster may that be ? Is it not possible, at the risk of one's life, to slay him ?"

33. But King Ægeus shook his venerable head, and, to convince Theseus that it was quite a hopeless case, he gave him an explanation of the whole affair. He told him that in the island of Crete (Krēt),[1] there lived a certain dreadful monster, called a Minotaur, which was shaped partly like a man and partly like a bull, and was altogether a very hideous sort of creature. If he were suffered to exist at all, it should have been on some desert island, or in the duskiness of some deep cavern, where nobody would ever be tormented by his abominable aspect. But King Minos (Mī′-nŏs), who reigned over Crete, laid out a vast deal of money in building a habitation for the Minotaur, and took great care of his health and comfort, merely for mischief's sake.

34. A few years before this time, there had been a war between the city of Athens and the island of Crete, in which the Athenians were beaten and compelled to beg for peace. No peace could they obtain, however, except on condition that they should send seven young men and seven maidens, every year, to be devoured by the pet monster of the cruel King Minos. For three years past this grievous calamity had been borne. And the sobs, and groans, and shrieks, with which the city was now filled, were caused by the people's woe, because the fatal day had come again, when the fourteen victims were to be chosen by lot. And the old people feared lest their sons or daughters might be taken, and the youths and damsels dreaded lest they themselves might be destined to glut the ravenous maw of that horrible man-brute.

35. But when Theseus heard the story, he straightened

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[1] ***Crete.*** An island in the southern part of the Ægean Sea.

himself up, so that he seemed taller than ever before; and as for his face, it was indignant, despiteful, bold, tender, and compassionate, all in one look.

"Let the people of Athens, this year, draw lots for only six young men, instead of seven," said he. "I will myself be the seventh; and let the Minotaur devour me, if he can!"

"O my dear son," cried King Ægeus, "why should you expose yourself to this horrible fate? You are a royal prince, and have a right to hold yourself above the destinies of common men."

36. "It is because I am a prince, your son, and the rightful heir of your kingdom, that I freely take upon me the calamity of your subjects," answered Theseus. "And you, my father, being king over this people, and answerable to heaven for their welfare, are bound to sacrifice what is dearest to you, rather than that the son or daughter of the poorest citizen should come to any harm."

37. The old king shed tears, and besought Theseus not to leave him desolate in his old age, more especially as he had but just begun to know the happiness of possessing a good and valiant son. Theseus, however, felt that he was right, and therefore would not give up his resolution. But he assured his father that he did not intend to be eaten up, unresistingly, like a sheep, and that if the Minotaur devoured him, it should not be without a battle to the death. And finally, since he could not help it, King Ægeus consented to let him go. So a vessel was got ready, and rigged with black sails; and Theseus, with six other young men, and seven tender and beautiful damsels, came down to the harbor to embark. A sorrowful multitude accompanied them to the shore. There was the poor

old king, too, leaning on his son's arm, and looking as if his single heart held all the grief of Athens.

Just as Prince Theseus was going on board, his father bethought himself of one last word to say.

38. "My beloved son," said he, grasping the prince's hand, "you observe that the sails of this vessel are black; as indeed they ought to be, since it goes upon a voyage of sorrow and despair. Now, being weighed down with infirmities, I know not whether I can survive till the vessel shall return. But, as long as I do live, I shall creep daily to the top of yonder cliff, to watch if there be a sail upon the sea. And, dearest Theseus, if, by some happy chance, you should escape the jaws of the Minotaur, then tear down those dismal sails, and hoist others that shall be bright as the sunshine. Beholding them on the horizon, myself and all the people will know that you are coming back victorious, and will welcome you with such a festal shout as Athens never heard before."

39. Theseus promised that he would do so. Then going on board, the mariners trimmed the vessel's black sails to the wind. But by and by, when they had got fairly out to sea, there came a stiff breeze from the northwest, and drove them along as merrily over the white-capped waves as if they had been going on the most delightful errand. At length the high blue mountains of Crete began to show themselves among the far-off clouds.

40. Theseus stood among the sailors gazing eagerly towards the fast-approaching land; although, as yet, it seemed hardly more substantial than the clouds, amidst which the mountains were looming up. Once or twice he fancied that he saw a glare of some bright object, a long way off, flinging a gleam across the waves.

"Did you see that flash of light?" he inquired of the master of the vessel.

"No, prince; but I have seen it before," answered the master. "It came from Talus (Tā′-lŭs), I suppose."

41. As the breeze came fresher just then, the master was busy trimming his sails, and had no more time to answer questions. But, while the vessel flew faster and faster towards Crete, Theseus was astonished to behold a human figure, gigantic in size, which appeared to be striding, with a measured movement, along the margin of the island. It stepped from cliff to cliff, and sometimes from one headland to another, while the sea foamed and thundered on the shore beneath, and dashed its jets of spray over the giant's feet. What was still more remarkable, whenever the sun shone on this huge figure, it flickered and glimmered. Its vast countenance, too, had a metallic luster, and threw great flashes of splendor through the air. The folds of its garments, moreover, instead of waving in the wind, fell heavily over its limbs, as if woven of some kind of metal.

42. The nearer the vessel came, the more Theseus wondered what this immense giant could be, and whether it actually had life or no. For, though it walked, and made other life-like motions, there yet was a kind of jerk in its gait, which, together with its brazen aspect, caused the young prince to suspect that it was no true giant, but only a wonderful piece of machinery. The figure looked all the more terrible because it carried an enormous brass club on its shoulder.

"What is this wonder?" Theseus asked of the master of the vessel, who was now at leisure to answer him.

"It is Talus, the Man of Brass," said the master.

"And is he a live giant, or a brazen image?" asked Theseus.

43. "That, truly," replied the master, "is the point which has always perplexed me. Some say, indeed, that this Talus was hammered out for King Minos by Vulcan[1] himself, the most skillful of all workers in metal. But who ever saw a brazen image that had sense enough to walk round an island three times a-day, as this giant walks round the island of Crete, challenging every vessel that comes nigh the shore? And, on the other hand, what living thing, unless his sinews were made of brass, would not be weary of marching eighteen hundred miles in the twenty-four hours, as Talus does, without ever sitting down to rest?"

44. Still the vessel went bounding onward; and now Theseus could hear the brazen clang of the giant's footsteps, as he trod heavily upon the sea-beaten rocks, some of which were seen to crack and crumble into the foamy waves beneath his tread. As they approached the entrance of the port, the giant straddled clear across it with a foot firmly planted on each headland, and uplifting his club to such a height that its butt-end was hidden in a cloud, he stood in that formidable posture, with the sun gleaming over his metallic surface. There seemed nothing else to be expected but that the next moment, he would fetch his great club down, and smash the vessel into a thousand pieces, without heeding how many innocent people he might destroy. But just when Theseus and his companions thought the blow was coming, the brazen lips unclosed themselves, and the figure spoke.

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[1] ***Vulcan.*** The God of Fire and, hence, of all metal working.

45. "Whence come you, strangers?"

And when the ringing voice ceased, there was just such a reverberation as you may have heard within a great church bell, for a moment or two after the stroke of the hammer.

"From Athens!" shouted the master in reply.

"On what errand?" thundered the Man of Brass.

And he whirled his club aloft more threateningly than ever, as if he were about to smite them with a thunder-stroke right amidships, because Athens, so little while ago, had been at war with Crete.

46. "We bring the seven youths and the seven maidens," answered the master, "to be devoured by the Minotaur!"

"Pass!" cried the brazen giant.

That one loud word rolled all about the sky, while again there was a booming echo within the figure's breast. The vessel glided between the headlands of the port, and the giant resumed his march. In a few moments, this wondrous sentinel was far away, flashing in the distant sunshine, and marching with immense strides around the island of Crete, as it was his never-ceasing task to do.

47. No sooner had they entered the harbor than a party of the guards of King Minos came down to the water-side, and took charge of the fourteen young men and damsels. Surrounded by these armed warriors, Prince Theseus and his companions were led to the king's palace, and ushered into his presence. Now Minos was a stern and pitiless king. If the figure that guarded Crete was made of brass, then the monarch who ruled over it might be thought to have a still harder metal in his breast, and might have been called a man of iron. He bent his shaggy

brows upon the poor Athenian victims. Any other mortal, beholding their fresh and tender beauty, and their innocent looks, would have felt himself sitting on thorns until he had made every one of them happy, by bidding them go free as the summer wind. But this heartless Minos cared only to examine whether they were plump enough to satisfy the Minotaur's appetite.

48. One after another, King Minos called these pale, frightened youths and sobbing maidens to his footstool, examined them carefully, and dismissed them with a nod to his guards. But when his eyes rested on Theseus, the king looked at him more attentively, because his face was calm and brave.

"Young man," asked he, with his stern voice, "are you not appalled at the certainty of being devoured by this terrible Minotaur?"

49. "I have offered my life in a good cause," answered Theseus, "and therefore I give it freely and gladly. But thou, King Minos, art thou not thyself appalled, who, year after year, hast perpetrated this dreadful wrong, by giving seven innocent youths and as many maidens to be devoured by a monster? Dost thou not tremble, wicked king, to turn thine eyes inward on thine own heart? Sitting there on thy golden throne, and in thy robes of majesty, I tell thee to thy face, King Minos, thou art a more hideous monster than the Minotaur himself!"

50. "Aha! do you think me so?" cried the king, laughing in his cruel way. "To-morrow, at breakfast-time, you shall have an opportunity of judging which is the greater monster, the Minotaur or the king! Take them away, guards; and let this free-spoken youth be the Minotaur's first morsel!"

51. Near the king's throne stood his daughter Ariadne (A′-rē-ăd′-nā). She was a beautiful and tender-hearted maiden, and looked at these poor doomed captives with very different feelings from those of the iron-breasted King Minos. She really wept, indeed, at the idea of how much human happiness would be needlessly thrown away, by giving so many young people, in the first bloom and rose-blossom of their lives, to be eaten up by a creature who, no doubt, would have preferred a fat ox, or even a large pig, to the plumpest of them. And when she beheld the brave, spirited figure of Prince Theseus bearing himself so calmly in his terrible peril, she grew a hundred times more pitiful than before. As the guards were taking him away she flung herself at the king's feet, and besought him to set all the captives free, and especially this one young man.

52. "Peace, foolish girl!" answered King Minos. "What hast thou to do with an affair like this? It is a matter of state policy, and therefore quite beyond thy weak comprehension. Go, water thy flowers, and think no more of these Athenian caitiffs, whom the Minotaur shall as certainly eat up for breakfast as I will eat a partridge for my supper."

53. So saying, the king looked cruel enough to devour Theseus and all the rest of the captives himself, had there been no Minotaur to save him the trouble. As he would hear not another word in their favor, the prisoners were now led away and thrown into a dungeon, where the jailer advised them to go to sleep as soon as possible, because the Minotaur was in the habit of calling for breakfast early. The seven maidens and six of the young men soon sobbed themselves to slumber. But Theseus was not like

them. He felt conscious that he was wiser, and braver, and stronger than his companions, and that therefore he had the responsibility of all their lives upon him, and must consider whether there was no way to save them, even in this last extremity. So he kept himself awake, and paced to and fro across the gloomy dungeon in which they were shut up.

54. Just before midnight, the door was softly unbarred, and the gentle Ariadne showed herself, with a torch in her hand.

"Are you awake, Prince Theseus?" she whispered.

"Yes," answered Theseus. "With so little time to live, I do not choose to waste any of it in sleep."

"Then follow me," said Ariadne, "and tread softly."

What had become of the jailer and the guards, Theseus never knew. But, however that might be, Ariadne opened all the doors, and led him forth from the darksome prison into the pleasant moonlight.

55. "Theseus," said the maiden, "you can now get on board your vessel, and sail away for Athens."

"No," answered the youug man; "I will never leave Crete unless I can first slay the Minotaur, and save my poor companions, and deliver Athens from this cruel tribute."

"I knew that this would be your resolution," said Ariadne. "Come, then, with me, brave Theseus. Here is your own sword, which the guards deprived you of. You will need it; and pray Heaven you may use it well."

56. Then she led Theseus along by the hand until they came to a dark, shadowy grove, where the moonlight wasted itself on the tops of the trees, without shedding

hardly so much as a glimmering beam upon their pathway. After going a good way through this obscurity, they reached a high marble wall, which was overgrown with creeping plants, that made it shaggy with their verdure. The wall seemed to have no door, nor any windows, but rose up, lofty, and massive, and mysterious, and was neither to be clambered over, nor, so far as Theseus could perceive, to be passed through. Nevertheless, Ariadne did but press one of her soft little fingers against a particular block of marble, and, though it looked as solid as any other part of the wall, it yielded to her touch, disclosing an entrance just wide enough to admit them. They crept through, and the marble stone swung back into its place.

57. "We are now," said Ariadne, "in the famous labyrinth which Dædalus" (Dī′-dăl-ŭs),[1] built before he made himself a pair of wings, and flew away from our island like a bird. That Dædalus was a very cunning workman; but of all his artful contrivances this labyrinth is the most wondrous. Were we to take but a few steps from the doorway, we might wander about all our lifetime, and never find it again. Yet in the very center of this labyrinth is the Minotaur; and, Theseus, you must go thither to seek him."

"But how shall I ever find him," asked Theseus, "if the labyrinth so bewilders me as you say it will?"

58. Just as he spoke, they heard a rough and very

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[1] ***Dædalus.*** A mythical sculptor, architect, and mechanic, best known through his flight from the wrath of Minos. He built for himself and for his son, Icarus (E′-kar-us), wings of feathers and wax. Dædalus escaped by means of his wings to Sicily, but Icarus, despite his father's warning, flew too near the sun. The wax melted and he fell into the sea.

disagreeable roar, which greatly resembled the lowing of a fierce bull, but yet had some sort of sound like the human voice. Theseus even fancied a rude articulation in it, as if the creature that uttered it were trying to shape his hoarse breath into words.

"That is the Minotaur's bellowing," whispered Ariadne, closely grasping the hand of Theseus, and pressing one of her own hands to her heart, which was all in a tremble. "You must follow that sound through the windings of the labyrinth, and by and by you will find him. Stay! take the end of this silken string—I will hold the other end; and then, if you win the victory, it will lead you again to this spot. Farewell, brave Theseus!"

59. So the young man took the end of the silken string in his left hand, and his gold-hilted sword, ready drawn from its scabbard, in the other, and trod boldly into the inscrutable labyrinth. How this labyrinth was built is more than I can tell you, but so cunningly contrived a maze was never seen in the world, before nor since. Theseus had not taken five steps before he lost sight of Ariadne; and in five more his head was growing dizzy. But still through these hollow avenues, now nearer, now farther off again, resounded the cry of the Minotaur; and the sound was so fierce, so cruel, so ugly, so like a bull's roar, and withal so like a human voice, and yet like neither of them, that the brave heart of Theseus grew sterner and angrier at every step. For he felt it an insult to the moon and sky, and to our kindly and simple Mother Earth, that such a monster should be allowed to exist.

60. As he passed onward the clouds gathered over the moon, and the labyrinth grew so dusky that Theseus could no longer discern the bewilderment through which he

was passing. He would have felt quite lost, and utterly hopeless of ever again walking in a straight path, if, every little while, he had not been conscious of a gentle twitch at the silken cord. Then he knew that the tender-hearted Ariadne was still holding the other end, and that she was fearing for him and hoping for him, and giving him just as much of her sympathy as if she were close by his side. But still he followed the dreadful roar of the Minotaur, which now grew louder and louder, and finally so very loud that Theseus fully expected to come close upon him at every new zigzag and wriggle of the path. And at last, in an open space, at the very center of the labyrinth, he did discern the hideous creature.

61. Sure enough it was an ugly monster! Only his horned head belonged to a bull; and yet, somehow or other, he looked like a bull all over, waddling on his hind legs; or, if you happened to view him in another way, he seemed wholly a man, and all the more monstrous for being so. And there he was, the wretched thing, with no society, no companion, no kind of a mate, living only to do mischief, and incapable of knowing what affection means. Theseus hated him and shuddered at him, and yet could not but be sensible of some sort of pity; and all the more, the uglier and more detestable the creature was. For he kept striding to and fro, in a solitary frenzy of rage, continually emitting a hoarse roar, which was oddly mixed up with half-shaped words; and, after listening a while, Theseus understood that the Minotaur was saying to himself how miserable he was, and how hungry, and how he hated everybody, and how he longed to eat up the whole human race.

62. Was Theseus afraid? By no means. What! a

hero like Theseus afraid! Not, had the Minotaur had twenty bulls' heads instead of one. Bold as he was, however, it strengthened his valiant heart, just at this crisis, to feel a tremulous twitch at the silken cord, which he was still holding in his left hand. It was as if Ariadne were giving him all her might and courage; and much as he already had, and little as she had to give, it made his own seem twice as much. And to confess the honest truth, he needed the whole, for now the Minotaur, turning suddenly about, caught sight of Theseus, and instantly lowered his horribly sharp horns, exactly as a mad bull does when he means to rush against an enemy. At the same time, he gave forth a tremendous roar, in which there was something like the words of human language, but all disjointed and shaken to pieces by passing through the gullet of a miserably enraged brute.

63. Theseus could only guess what the creature intended to say, and that rather by his gestures than his words. Probably this was the sense of what he uttered:—

"Ah, wretch of a human being! I'll stick my horns through you, and toss you fifty feet high, and eat you up the moment you come down."

"Come on, then, and try it!" was all that Theseus deigned to reply; for he was far too magnanimous to assault his enemy with insolent language.

64. Without more words on either side, there ensued the most terrible fight between Theseus and the Minotaur that ever happened beneath the sun or moon. I really know not how it might have turned out, if the monster, in his first headlong rush against Theseus, had not missed him, by a hair's-breadth, and broken one of his horns short off against the stone wall. On this mishap he bel-

lowed so intolerably that a part of the labyrinth tumbled down, and all the inhabitants of Crete mistook the noise for a very heavy thunderstorm. Smarting with the pain, he galloped around the open space in so ridiculous a way that Theseus laughed at the memory of it long afterwards, though not precisely at the moment. After this, the two antagonists stood valiantly up to one another, and fought sword to horn for a long while. At last, the Minotaur made a run at Theseus, grazed his left side with his horn, and flung him down; and thinking that he had stabbed him to the heart, he cut a great caper in the air, opened wide his bull mouth, and prepared to snap his head off. But Theseus by this time had leaped up, and caught the monster off his guard. Fetching a sword-stroke at him with all his force, he hit him fair upon the neck, and made his bull head roll six yards from his human body, which fell down flat upon the ground.

65. So now the battle was ended. Immediately the moon shone out as brightly as if all the troubles of the world, and all the wickedness and the ugliness that infest human life, were past and gone forever. And Theseus as he leaned on his sword taking breath, felt another twitch of the silken cord; for all through the terrible encounter, he had held it fast in his left hand. Eager to let Ariadne know of his success, he followed the guidance of the thread, and soon found himself at the entrance of the labyrinth.

"Thou hast slain the monster," cried Ariadne, clasping her hands.

"Thanks to thee, dear Ariadne," answered Theseus, "I return victorious."

66. "Then," said Ariadne, "we must quickly summon

thy friends, and get them and thyself on board the vessel before dawn. If morning finds thee here, my father will avenge the Minotaur."

To make my story short, the poor captives were awakened, and, hardly knowing whether it was not a joyful dream, were told of what Theseus had done, and that they must set sail for Athens before daybreak. Hastening down to the vessel, they all clambered on board, except Prince Theseus, who lingered behind them on the strand, holding Ariadne's hand clasped in his own.

67. "Dear maiden," said he, "thou wilt surely go with us. Thou art too gentle and sweet a child for such an iron-hearted father as King Minos. He cares no more for thee than a granite rock cares for the little flower that grows in one of its crevices. But my father, King Ægeus, and my dear mother, Æthra, and all the fathers and mothers in Athens, and all the sons and daughters too, will love and honor thee as their benefactress. Come with us, then; for King Minos will be very angry when he knows what thou hast done."

68. "No, Theseus," the maiden said, pressing his hand, and then drawing back a step or two, "I cannot go with you. My father is old, and has nobody but myself to love him. Hard as you think his heart is, it would break to lose me. At first King Minos will be angry; but he will soon forgive his only child; and by and by he will rejoice, I know, that no more youths and maidens must come from Athens to be devoured by the Minotaur. I have saved you, Theseus, as much for my father's sake as for your own. Farewell! Heaven bless you!"

All this was so true, and so maiden-like, and was spoken with so sweet a dignity, that Theseus could urge her no

longer. Nothing remained for him, therefore, but to bid Ariadne an affectionate farewell, and to go on board the vessel, and set sail.

69. In a few moments the white foam was hissing before their prow, as Prince Theseus and his companions sailed out of the harbor, with a whistling breeze behind them. Talus, the brazen giant, on his never-ceasing sentinel's march, happened to be approaching that part of the coast; and they saw him, by the glimmering of the moonbeams on his polished surface, while he was yet a great way off. As the figure moved like clockwork, however, and could neither hasten his enormous strides nor retard them, he arrived at the port when they were just beyond the reach of his club. Nevertheless, straddling from headland to headland, as his custom was, Talus attempted to strike a blow at the vessel, and, overreaching himself, tumbled at full length into the sea, which splashed high over his gigantic shape, as when an iceberg falls down headlong.

70. On the homeward voyage, the fourteen youths and damsels were in excellent spirits, as you may easily suppose. They spent most of their time in dancing, unless when the sidelong breeze made the deck slope too much. In due season they came within sight of the coast of Attica, which was their native country. But here happened a sad misfortune.

71. You will remember (what Theseus unfortunately forgot) that his father, King Ægeus, had enjoined it upon him to hoist sunshiny sails, instead of black ones, in case he should overcome the Minotaur, and return victorious. In the joy of their success, however, and amidst the sports, dancing, and other merriment, with which

these young folks wore away the time, they never once thought whether their sails were black, white, or rainbow-colored, and, indeed, left it entirely to the mariners whether they had any sails at all. Thus the vessel returned, like a raven, with the same sable wings that had wafted her away. But poor King Ægeus, day after day, infirm as he was, had clambered to the summit of a cliff that overhung the sea, and there sat watching for Prince Theseus, homeward bound. No sooner did he behold the fatal blackness of the sails, than he concluded that his dear son, whom he loved so much, and felt so proud of, had been eaten by the Minotaur. He could not bear the thought of living any longer; so, first flinging his crown and scepter into the sea[1] (useless baubles that they were to him now!) King Ægeus stooped forward, fell headlong over the cliff, and was drowned in the waves that foamed at its base!

72. This was melancholy news for Prince Theseus, who when he stepped ashore, found himself king of all the country, whether he would or no. However, he sent for his dear mother to Athens, and, by taking her advice in matters of state, became a very excellent monarch, and was greatly beloved by his people.

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[1] ***Sea.*** Ever afterward called the Ægean Sea.

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