

Theseus and the Minotaur

A long time ago, there lived a king named Minos. King Minos lived on a beautiful island called Crete. He had a powerful navy, a beautiful daughter, and a large, spacious palace. Still, now and then, King Minos grew bored. Whenever this occurred, he directed his navy to attack Athens, a town on the other side of the sea.

The people of Athens grew tired of King Minos. To appease him, the king of Athens offered King Minos a deal. If Minos would leave Athens alone, Athens would send seven Athenian boys and seven Athenian girls to Crete every nine years to be eaten by the Minotaur.

The Minotaur was a horrible monster that lived on Crete, in the center of a huge maze in the palace. Because Minos would much prefer to feed the Minotaur Athenian children than feed the Minotaur the children of Crete, he took the deal.



It was just about time for Athens to send a new crop of children to be eaten, causing everyone in Athens great sadness. Prince Theseus of Athens, the king's son, was very young, but he knew that it was wrong to send small children to be eaten by a monster just to avoid a battle with King Minos. Prince Theseus told his father that he was going to Crete with the children and he intended to kill the Minotaur. His father begged him not to go, as he was afraid his son would be eaten. But the prince was determined, and began to sail towards Crete.

The prince and the children arrived, and King Minos and his daughter, the Princess Ariadne, came out to greet them. The king told them that they would not be eaten until the next day, but Princess Ariadne did not say anything. After one look at Prince Theseus, she had fallen in love. She wanted to save Prince Theseus.



Later that day, Ariadne gave Theseus a sword and a ball of string. She told him to tie the string to the door of the maze and unroll it as he moved through the labyrinth. That way, he could find his way out again. Theseus knew she gave him the sword to kill the Minotaur and thanked the princess.

The next morning, Prince Theseus and the Athenian children entered the maze. The door locked behind them. Following Ariadne's directions, Theseus tied the string to the door. He told the children to stay by the door, he entered the maze, and, eventually, he found his way to the very center. There was a huge battle. Using the sword Ariadne had given him, Theseus killed the Minotaur. He followed the string back and knocked on the door.

Princess Ariadne was waiting. She opened the door. Prince Theseus and all the children ran to their ship and sailed away, accompanied by Princess Ariadne.

On the way home, they stopped for supplies on the island of Delos. Ariadne fell asleep. Theseus left her sleeping there, and, with the children, sailed away.

While Theseus was gone, the King of Athens had died. Though he mourned the loss of his father, all the people of Athens were proud of their young prince, Theseus, who was now a king.