THE STORY OF THESEUS

Theseus’ mother Aethra became pregnant with him by Poseidon when she went wading in the waters of Sphairia. Aethra’s husband Aegeus was a great warrior and the king of Athens. He had a signature sword, shield, and fancy sandals. When Theseus was born, Aegeus questioned whether or not he was the baby Theseus’ father. As a test he placed his sword, shield, and his sandals under a heavy rock and told Aethra that if Theseus was his son and a TRUE hero, he would have no problem claiming the sword, shield, and the sandals for himself, and that would prove that he was Aegeus son and heir to his throne. With that, Aegeus left Troezen for Athens and went to live with his friend Medea, leaving Aethra to raise baby Theseus alone.

When Theseus grew up his mother told him that his real father was Poseidon. She also told the young Theseus about Aegeus' hidden sword, shield, and sandals. Theseus, being a demigod had no trouble lifting the rock and recovering the sword, shield, and the sandals. With his new-found tokens, Theseus set off to find Aegeus and claim his right to the throne. Theseus made it to Athens and set out to find Aegeus.

Theseus found Aegeus in a beautiful manor with a beautiful new wife Medea. Theseus knocked on the door, and Aegeus invited him in. Theseus kept his true identity a secret from Aegeus but Medea could see immediately that Theseus was Aegeus’s son with Aethra. This worried Medea because she feared that Aegeus would pick Theseus to be his heir and not her son Medus. So Medea cooked up a scheme to send Theseus to his certain death. She asked Theseus to capture and bring back the Marthonian bull. When Theseus returned triumphant with the bull, Medea decided she would poison the young hero. Upon Theseus’ return to Athens, a great banquet was held in honor of Theseus capturing the Marathonian bull. Medea poisoned Theseus’ cup. As Theseus reached for his glass, Aegeus recognized his sword and shield and knocked the glass out of Theseus hand, embracing his lost son and heir. Medea, seeing that she and her son Medus were no longer welcome, left Athens and went to live in Asia.

Then King Minos showed up and crashed the party by starting a war between Crete and Athens because Theseus stole his bull. Eventually the war ended and Minos emerged victorious. He demanded that every year Athens sends 7 of their strongest warriors and 7 of their most beautiful maidens to be sacrificed to the Minotaur. Theseus, feeling responsible for the whole mess,
volunteered to take the place of one of the 7 warriors. Theseus told his father that the ship would sail to Crete with a black sail, and would return with a white sail flying if Theseus and the Athenian youth where onboard safe. So Theseus set off to slay the Minotaur of the Labyrinth (a creature that is half-human/half-bull and lived on the island of Crete in a cave).

Theseus arrived in Crete and with the help of Daedalus and Minos daughter Ariadne he defeated the Minotaur. Theseus set sail back to Athens with the 13 youth, Ariadne, and her younger sister Phaedra. Along the way, Theseus confessed his love and intentions to marry Ariadne. Dionysus suddenly appeared onboard the ship and told Theseus he could not marry Ariadne because she is already sworn to Dionysus and instructs the young hero to drop her off on the next island. Not wishing to anger Dionysus, Theseus complied. So stricken with grief, Theseus forgot to change the color of the sail from black to white, and as the ship approached the Athens harbor, Aegeus saw the black sail. So devastated by losing his son, he threw himself off a cliff into what is now called the Aegean Sea (named after Aegeus).

Theseus returned to Athens as a king and a true hero. He took his father’s place on the throne, but any good king needs a Queen, and since he left his love on an island to be wed to Dionysus, Theseus needed to find a wife quickly. So he and his best friend Pirithous set off to find each other a wife. They decided to first try to get Hippolyta to be Theseus’ queen. That didn’t exactly pan out the way Theseus hoped, and so the search continued. Next on the list was Helen of Troy. At the time, Helen was just a small child, so they kidnapped her and took her to Theseus’ mother in Troezen to be raised until she was old enough to marry. Much to Theseus dismay Helen is rescued by the Gemini. Still without a wife, Theseus returns to Athens and settled on marrying Phaedra, Ariadne’s younger sister.

Together Phaedra and Theseus had 2 sons, Demophon and Acamas. After his sons were born, Theseus decided to try his hand at some piracy and joined Jason and the Argonauts for a time. Eventually Theseus grew bored of that adventure and headed back home to his wife and sons. Before his death in the Trojan War, Theseus helped out Oedipus and his daughter Antigone by giving them protection and a place to stay. Theseus also helps Adrastus by retrieving the fallen friends of Adrastus from Thebes. Theseus died during the Trojan War. He was struck down and fell in battle thanks to Achilles’ friend Lycomedes.
THESEUS & HIPPOLYTA

Theseus returning how from his adventure of slaying the Minotaur needed to find a wife and a queen for Athens. Theseus and his best friend Pirithous set off for the island of the Amazons to woo and wed their queen Hippolyta. Hippolyta was a beautiful and strong woman, the daughter of Ares and the Queen of the Amazons. She had a magic girdle (which is like a belt) that her father Ares gave her as a symbol of her authority as queen, its like her crown but much more practical.

When they arrived on the island they were warmly welcomed. There was a great feast in honor of their esteemed guest Theseus. All the Amazons were in attendance, and there was lots of food, music, and dancing.

At dinner Theseus popped the question to Hippolyta. "Will you marry me and be the queen of Athens?" Theseus said. Hippolyta gave it some thought; after all, being queen of Athens is way more power than being the queen of just an island. Hippolyta then thought about her responsibilities to her people, the Amazon warrior women. Remembering her obligation to them reminded her that she liked being single and not having to cook or clean up after a husband. So Hippolyta told Theseus that she was flattered but not interested in being his wife or queen. The party went on into the night but Theseus wasn't joining in the festivities; instead, he was quietly sitting and thinking how he could change Hippolyta's mind.

Later that night when everyone went to bed, Theseus and his friend Pirithous were sitting up chatting on their ship. Pirithous had a great idea, just kidnap the queen run for Athens and make her marry you. The Amazons won't fight back, they thought, and once she became his queen she couldn't leave. So it was settled; they would kidnap the queen and return home with her as Theseus’ wife.

After a few days of partying with the Amazons, it was time to put the plan in action. Late at night while everyone was sleeping, Theseus snuck into Hippolyta’s tent and picked her up and carried her off to his ship and set sail for Athens. In the morning when the warrior women woke up and found that their queen was missing and so was their guest, they quickly realized that Theseus had kidnapped their queen.

At once the warrior women set sail for Athens to rescue their queen from a forced marriage. Theseus safely reached Athens and started the preparations for the wedding and the festival to follow. Being
just a few hours behind Theseus, the Amazons arrived in Athens under the darkness of night, perfect for an ambush attack. The Amazonians made their way to the palace and sprang Hippolyta out of the castle and not a moment too soon because at dawn they were to wed.

With their queen with them once more, the Amazons returned to their island much more cautious and wary of visitors. The next morning Theseus woke up and went to greet his soon to be bride only to find out that his bride had got away in the night. Seeing that trying to force Hippolyta to marry him was a fruitless endeavor, Theseus set his eyes instead on Helen of Troy.