

Jason and the Golden Fleece

By Max I.

A long time ago, a child named Jason was born in the small kingdom of Iolcus, which was in Northern Greece. He was born before actual Greek history, in a time where Gods and heroes still existed. He was the son of King Aeson, who ruled Iolcus fairly and justly. His mother was descended from Poseidon, the god of the sea. Therefore, Jason had royal blood and divine blood as well. Jason grew up to be a good looking and good-natured boy. He was polite to everybody and everybody liked him. And everybody knew that Jason would inherit the throne of Iolcus. He was a good friend of Max, who was a foreigner from Colchis. In fact, he was one of the most valuable people on the journey because he was from where the Golden Fleece was hidden.

10 years before Jason was born, a king and queen called Athamas and Nephele ruled in Northern Greece. However, king Athamas grew tired of his kind, virtuous queen, and sent her away so he could marry a cruel woman named Ino. However, Ino was so cruel she resolved to murder the king's children, as she was mad after a argument with Athamas. Queen Nephele rushed back to save her children and enlisted the help of the God Hermes. Hermes created a massive golden ram to carry the two children to safety. Their names were Phrixus and Helle. The Ram carried them all the way to Colchis, where they could seek shelter. However, as they were flying over a great river that separates Europe from Asia, Helle fell off the Ram to her death. The river's name is called the Hellespont, in honor of Helle.

Phrixus made it to Colchis safely and sacrificed the Ram to the gods to thank them for his life. He skinned the fleece of the Golden Ram and kept it. However, it did not end up well for Phrixus. The evil king of Colchis, Aetes, killed Phrixus to keep the Golden Fleece all for himself.

The Fleece was not revered just for its beauty and awe of being a gift from the gods. It gave life! Crops grew plentiful, there were many healthy animals, it can heal a close to dead person, many things! All of this because of the gods and the love of a woman for her children!

Jason was known to inherit the throne by all of Iolcus. However, a wicked man named Pelias seized the throne and shoved the good king Aeson into a dungeon. (This is when Jason was still quite young). However, a courageous nurse smuggled him out of the city, as Pelias would like to kill Jason to take the throne for himself. She took him to the centaur Chiron, who is the mythical trainer of heroes. Max had already gone to the camp, so he was not killed by the wicked Pelias.

"Max, how did you get here?"

"I walked".

They laughed and Max introduced him to Chiron.

“Good to meet you, Jason. I hope you find a home here, and you become strong and hardy. Maybe you could even put some sense into your friend here”-

He was interrupted by a crowd laughing at Max trying to use a sword.

Chiron sighed. “Excuse me, Jason, I shall have to deal with that. Why don’t you settle down in the cave, find a good nook to relax in. You can start your training tomorrow.”

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Back in the kingdom of Iolcus Pelias was resting comfortably in the former King Aeson’s room.

“Bring me an oracle to tell me my future! Do it in 1 hour or less!”

“Yes, my lord” says the servant as he stumbles out of the room.

2 HOURS LATER

“My lord, I have finally found an oracle!”

Pelias’s huge brows furrowed in anger. In fact, people say that when this happened, he looked like a huge angry llama with a hairy line on its forehead.

“GUARDS! ESCORT THIS MAN OUT TO THE DUNGEONS WHERE HE WILL BE HELD FOR TRIAL AND THEN EXECUTED!!! HE IS TOO SLOW FOR MY TASTE!”

The oracle spoke out for the first time,

“Sir, shall I tell you your future?”

The evil Pelias turned to her with an evil smile on his face. “Tell me my future!”

The oracle divined that one day, soon, a man wearing one sandal would come and challenge Pelias for the kingdom!

10 YEARS LATER

Jason and his friend Max had both become self-reliant, strong, and smart. Yet neither of them knew the truth about their lost kingdom. One day, when both were strong young men, Chiron informed them about the kingdom of Iolcus.

“Your kingdom was taken over by the evil king Pelias. You both should go back and take back what you lost!”

And soon they set off, both boys armed with spears and knives, and confident they could depose of Pelias.

They came to a river that was very icy. In fact, it was fed by the icy slopes of Mount Olympus. No mortal could cross and live. Suddenly an old lady appeared. She asked Jason to carry her across. Max, however, could not cross it, as he was a mortal with no divine blood within him. Reluctantly, he left Jason and he crossed back to Chiron's camp.

However, Jason successfully made it, and Hera suddenly appeared. This was a trick of the gods, to test the stuff of their offspring and mortals. This was not the test for Max, but it would come soon for him. After this occasion, Hera was a good friend of Jason.

During the battle through the stream, Jason lost a sandal to the water. It did not bother him, but this was what the Oracle had warned Pelias about. When Jason came to the palace and introduced himself, Pelias was shocked to see him. He had thought for many years Jason had been killed by his small number of loyal soldiers. However, he thought of a wicked little scheme for Jason.

"I will agree to surrender my throne to you IF you prove yourself worthy of kingship! You must bring back the golden fleece from Colchis! Only then will I surrender the throne to you!"

Jason agreed to bring the fleece back.

He needed advice desperately. So, he traveled a long and dangerous way to the grove of Dodona.

The tree advised him to go and ask a shipman named Argus to build a ship big enough to house 60 oarsmen. Jason was astounded. That would be the size of a boat like the Titanic today! However, he did what the tree said. To prove that he talked to the tree, he cut down a branch from the tree.

When Jason found Argus in Iolcus, he asked him to build the ship. He took the news very calmly and set about building it at once. Jason also asked him to make the branch from the tree of Dodona into the ship. He also brought along many of his friends from Chiron's cave. Max, Hercules, Orpheus, and many more. Argus also came along, partly because the ship may need repairing, and partly because he was too proud of his creation to leave it.

And they were off! But the ship was too heavy to lift off. Suddenly, the wood from the branch of Dodona advised Orpheus to sing with his lyre. It was so magical and enchanting that the boat pushed off by itself. The heroes cheered and took off. They named the ship the Argo, in honor of its builder. They also called themselves Argonauts because of the name of the ship.

On the balcony of the Palace, Pelias gloated to see the heroes take off. He smiled to think about it, because he knew he had "probably" sent them on a fool's errand. And he also got rid of all the young men who may challenge him for the throne.

Now, there were many adventures that the Argonauts went through. The first one was with the women of Lemnos.

These women were horrifyingly cruel, as they had murdered all the men on their island. They did not like men, and they wanted the island all to themselves. They were set to ambush and

kill all the Argonauts, but once they saw the Argonauts and how good looking and kind they were, they changed instantly and promised never to kill a man again. They sent the Argonauts on their way with supplies and their best wishes.

On another adventure, they met an old man named Phineas. He was constantly plagued by demon birds called Harpies. The old man asked them for help, in exchange for the way to Colchis. The Argonauts sat down to dinner, and immediately the harpies swooped down on them! Zetes and Calais, the sons of Boreas, the god of the North wind, had immense wings of their own, and chased the birds into the heavens. The monstrous birds were so afraid they never came back again.

“How did it go?” Asked Jason.

Zetes grunted. “The hairy chickens were completely annoying! But we did chase them away with no damage to us.”

Phineas gave them instructions for the quickest route to Colchis. But they had to pass through huge rocks called the Clashing Rocks. Every few seconds the rocks would smash together. Many ships had been crushed to bits by the rocks. However, Athena helped them. She sent a dove who winged through the passage. As soon as the rocks opened, the argonauts attempted to sail through. They sailed quickly, and Athena held the Rocks back with her mighty hand.

On another island, everybody was disheartened by the long journey to Colchis. Hercules’s best friend Hylas went off to take a swim and get some fresh water. Max went with him for company, as Jason had wisely told them all to go in no less than groups of 2. When Hylas tried to get a water bottle, he was pulled under by nymphs who were enchanted by his handsome face. However, Max fought them off and pulled Hylas to safety. Hercules and Hylas both thanked Max deeply.

Finally, they reached Colchis. Jason decided to steal the fleece quickly and quietly. Max led them to where the fleece was hidden. Also, he put the enormous dragon who guarded it to sleep with a powerful herb that Hercules had swum to the bottom of the ocean to retrieve. Jason stole the fleece and they hopped back on the ship with their prize, safe and sound.

However, the Argonauts were not stupid. They knew that this bold move would invite repercussions. And it happened, just like Jason said it might. The entire army of Colchis chased after the Argonauts. Their ships were much faster, and they soon caught up to the argonauts. However, Jason was prepared. He had asked Orpheus to make an illusion of a Golden Fleece with his singing. He gave the fake fleece back to Colchis, and the ships turned back home.

After a short journey of 3 weeks, the Argonauts arrived at home with their prize. Pelias, shocked, grudgingly turned his throne over to Jason who was hailed happily as Iolcus’s new ruler. Jason kept the fleece, but he used it to do good for his people whenever they needed it. The surviving Argonauts all went on their own paths. Jason wished them all well and thanked him for their help and advice to retrieve the fleece. He ruled for a long and peaceful time as Iolcus’s new king.

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