

## Leocles and Heracles

by James M.

My name is Leocles. My brother Heracles got sent as a slave to King Eurystheus to preform five almost impossible tasks. I am going to go with him to help.

King Eurystheus gave us our first task to catch and slay the Nemean Lion. We finally spotted it after walking a long time in a forest out of Nemea. Heracles saw a cave and we came up with a plan. I went around the lion and snuck up behind it and chased it into the cave. Heracles was there with a bow and he shot his arrow straight into the lions mouth. We cut off the coat and split it in half so we could both have some.

When we got back to King Eurystheus and showed him the skin he was really really surprised but he tried not to show it and sent us to do the next task to slay the Leanean Hydra. Heracles and I went to our nephew loules's house and convinced him to help us. We spotted the monster in a swamp in a plain. All three of us walked toward it. When it saw us it spit out a column of heavy flame. Heracles and I dodged the poison coming from the beast's mouth and got close enough to each chop off one of its heads. We heard loules scream, "No", but it was too late. We were looking at a twelve headed hydra. loules called us back and told us that a hydra can only be killed with fire. Then Heracles and I had a great idea. As we advanced on the monster it shot out more flame. When it hit the lion's skin it deflected off and went straight back at the hydra. We brought back one hydra head as proof but when we got to king Eurystheus, he just carelessly told us our next task.

Our next task was to catch the golden hind, a very swift deer. It was really really hard. After about five days of chasing it through the forest we found its home. It was a tiny opening in a giant rock formation that must have led into cave. We did not want to go into it so we waited outside the cave for one hundred hours (or so it seemed) before the deer came out and we caught it really easily. As we were leading the deer back to the kings palace, a messenger from King Eurystheus said he'd take the deer and gave us a letter.

We opened the letter and inside it told us what our next task was: to kill the Irymanthius Boar. It was going to be a hard task but I think Heracles and I can do anything to get there. We put our lion skin coats on and headed north after hiking through huge mountains for a few hours. We saw a huge cow charging at a city. We decided to take the boar by surprise. I went in front of the boar and and made fun of it just dodging it's tusks every time it charged at me. We passed about three cities doing this. I caught glimpses of Heracles running to keep up from time to time. Finally, we got to a huge cave and when we got past, Heracles jumped from the opening and stabbed the boar. We went back to the palace and told King Eurystheus.

As soon as we got told our next task we headed out. We were to clean out the Augean stable that was full of horse manure. We finally made it to the king's stable. Augeas was waiting outside for us holding his nose. He greeted us very politely and gave us a tour of the stables. We got to the stable of the fire breathing horses and, oh man that stench could not get any worse. I peeked inside while Heracles was talking to the king and there was poop up to my waist all the way through the stable. I was actually starting to have doubts about this. I waited by another stable (I just couldn't stand the smell) for Heracles to return from his chat with Augeas. When he did finally

get here I told him about the problem, and he had a plan. Heracles told me that there was a river not a quarter mile away and if we made holes in the back of the stable we could probably channel the water into the stable. That was fine with me because I didn't want to get anywhere near those fire breathing horses. Heracles and I pulled out our swords and cut giant circles in the back of the stable. We went to go try to channel the river. We sat there for about five minutes concentrating really hard before the river basically jumped out onto the grass and started rumbling towards the stable. Heracles and I started running after the wave and when we got to the stable it was already fully cleaned of poop. Augeas came out and started babbling his thanks. He even gave us both one hundred drachma. When we got back to King Eurystheus he was furious that we had survived and told us our next task and slammed the palace doors shut.

Our next task was to scare away the deadly stymphnelin birds. These were birds that were very aggressive against humans and could eat our flesh until there was nothing but bones. We spotted a bunch of birds that looked like pigeons on a huge tree. We were totally sure that these were the birds we wanted. But there were hundreds of them! How were we supposed to fight that many? When I was still worrying about how many there were, Heracles remembered a story from when we were little. It was a story about the stymphnelin birds and how to scare them. The way to do it was to make the most obnoxious sound you could think of. Good thing I always carry a pair of brass bells. Heracles and I came up with a plan. I charged at the birds and as soon as they saw me they dove straight at me and I barely had time to get out my bells and ring them. As soon those birds heard those bells they went crazy and they flew in every direction, running into each other, and then Heracles came out with his bow and arrow and shot at those birds until they all flew off into the sky. We went back King Eurystheus and he told us we were both free.