CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Heroes, or Greek Fairy Tales for My Children

Charles Kingsley · *1856 · original English text*

MY DEAR CHILDREN, Some of you have heard already of the old Greeks; and all of you, as you grow up, will hear more and more of them. Kingsley's Heroes is three complete tales for his children—Perseus, the Argonauts, and Theseus—not a small abridgment of a larger book.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should the old Greek heroes be told to children, and what does a Christian Victorian father keep, and add, when he writes Perseus, the Argonauts, and Theseus as fairy tales for his own?

"Some of you have heard already of the old Greeks; and all of you, as you grow up, will hear more and more of them."
The preface, after "MY DEAR CHILDREN,"

The hosted text is The Heroes, or Greek Fairy Tales for My Children (this text from the 1889 Macmillan edition of the 1856 book, PG #677), complete in three stories: Perseus, The Argonauts, and Theseus. The preface opens "MY DEAR CHILDREN," and continues exactly with the sentence about the old Greeks. The first tale proper begins, "Once upon a time there were two princes who were twins." Excellent for a wide younger and middle band. These are Kingsley's retellings, openly addressed to his children, not literal translations. Quote this typography, including "MY DEAR CHILDREN,"

KEY CHARACTERS

Kingsley's children
Rose, Maurice, and the others named in the dedication, the first addressees of the book.

Acrisius and Prœtus
The twin princes of the first tale's opening, in the pleasant vale of Argos.

Perseus, and his mother
The first story's hero, and the mother who comes with him to Seriphos.

Jason, the Argonauts, and Theseus
The company of the second and third stories, who complete the three.

MY DEAR CHILDREN

> *"Some of you have heard already of the old Greeks; and all of you, as you grow up, will hear more and more of them."*
> The preface

> *"Once upon a time there were two princes who were twins."*
> Story I.—Perseus

Grades 4–8
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
My Dear Children
THE PREFACE

MY DEAR CHILDREN, Some of you have heard already of the old Greeks; and all of you, as you grow up, will hear more and more of them. The book begins as a father's letter, not as a schoolroom manual only.

- The preface sentences are exact in both witnesses, including 'MY DEAR CHILDREN,'
- The address is to Kingsley's children, and to the children who will read after them.
- Cite this typography.

> *"Some of you have heard already of the old Greeks; and all of you, as you grow up, will hear more and more of them."*
> The preface

02
Two Princes who were Twins
STORY I.—PERSEUS

Once upon a time there were two princes who were twins. Their names were Acrisius and Prœtus, and they lived in the pleasant vale of Argos, far away in Hellas. The first tale begins in jealousy, and in a birth that a king will fear.

- The first tale's opening is exact in both witnesses, including 'Prœtus.'
- Perseus is the first of three stories, not the whole book.
- A wide younger and middle band can hear this with help.

> *"Once upon a time there were two princes who were twins."*
> Story I.—Perseus

03
The Argonauts, and Theseus
STORY II AND STORY III

The Argonauts and Theseus complete the three. The ship Argo and the later road of Theseus are new tales, not chapters of Perseus. Keep the three distinct.

- Three complete stories, as the contents say.
- These are Kingsley's retellings, not literal translations.
- Guide younger readers through the darker moments, including the close of Theseus.

04
A Complete Book for His Children
THE HOSTED FILE

PG #677 and the site EPUB are this complete 1856 book in the 1889 Macmillan text. Quote stretches that appear in both, from the preface and the tales.

- Complete in three stories: Perseus, the Argonauts, Theseus.
- For a wide younger and middle band.
- The preface typography is 'MY DEAR CHILDREN,'

A Father's Telling · The Old Greeks Kept · Three Hero Tales · Courage · A Voyage and a Road

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 4–8

1. The hosted text is The Heroes, or Greek Fairy Tales for My Children (this text from the 1889 Macmillan edition of the 1856 book, Project Gutenberg #677), complete in three stories: Perseus, The Argonauts, and Theseus. The preface opens "MY DEAR CHILDREN," and continues exactly: "Some of you have heard already of the old Greeks; and all of you, as you grow up, will hear more and more of them." The first tale proper begins, "Once upon a time there were two princes who were twins."
2. Excellent for a wide younger and middle band. These are Kingsley's retellings, openly addressed to his children, not literal translations. Guide younger readers through the darker moments, including the close of Theseus.
3. Quote stretches that appear in both the Gutenberg text and the site EPUB. Cite this typography, including "MY DEAR CHILDREN," and "Prœtus."