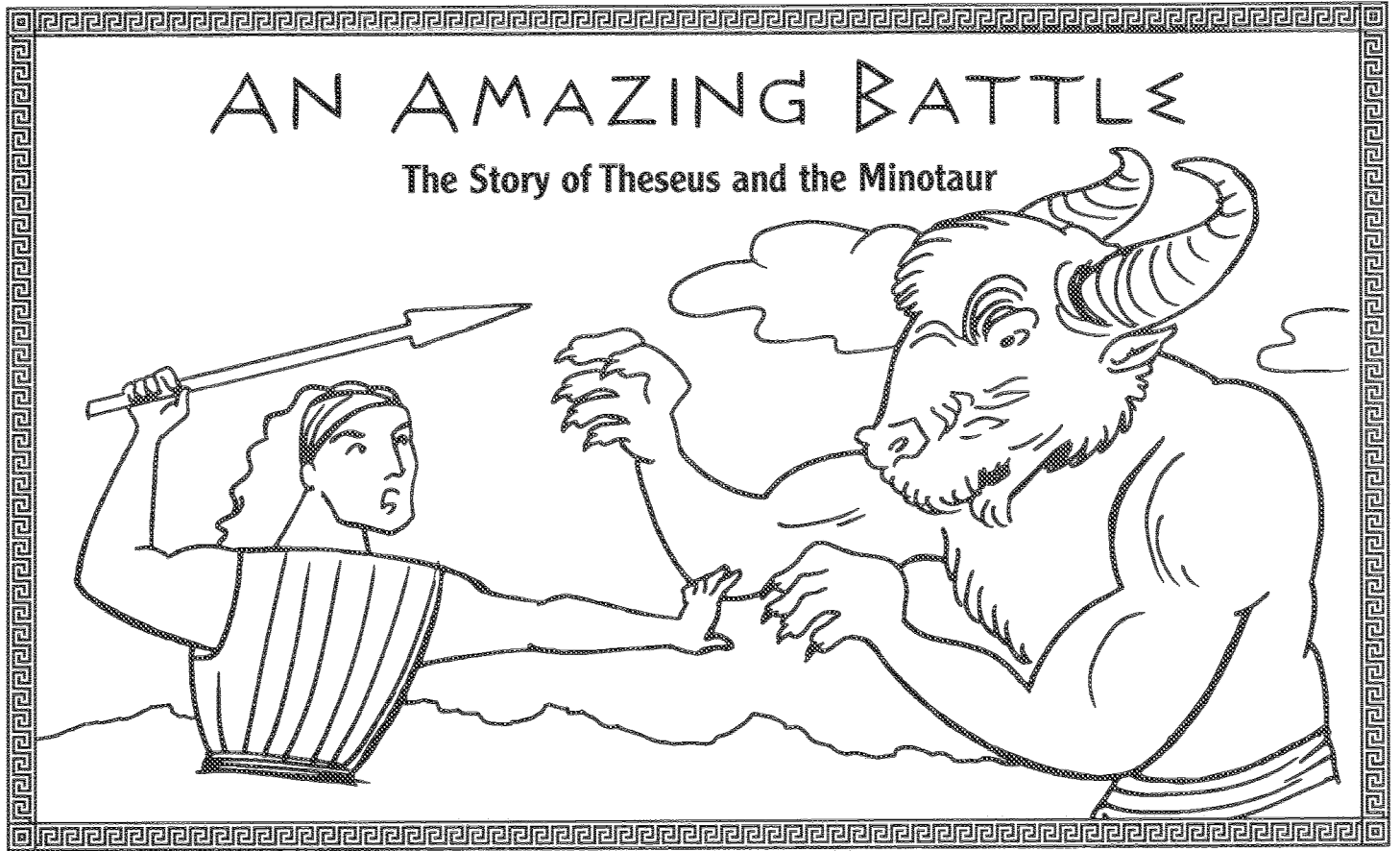


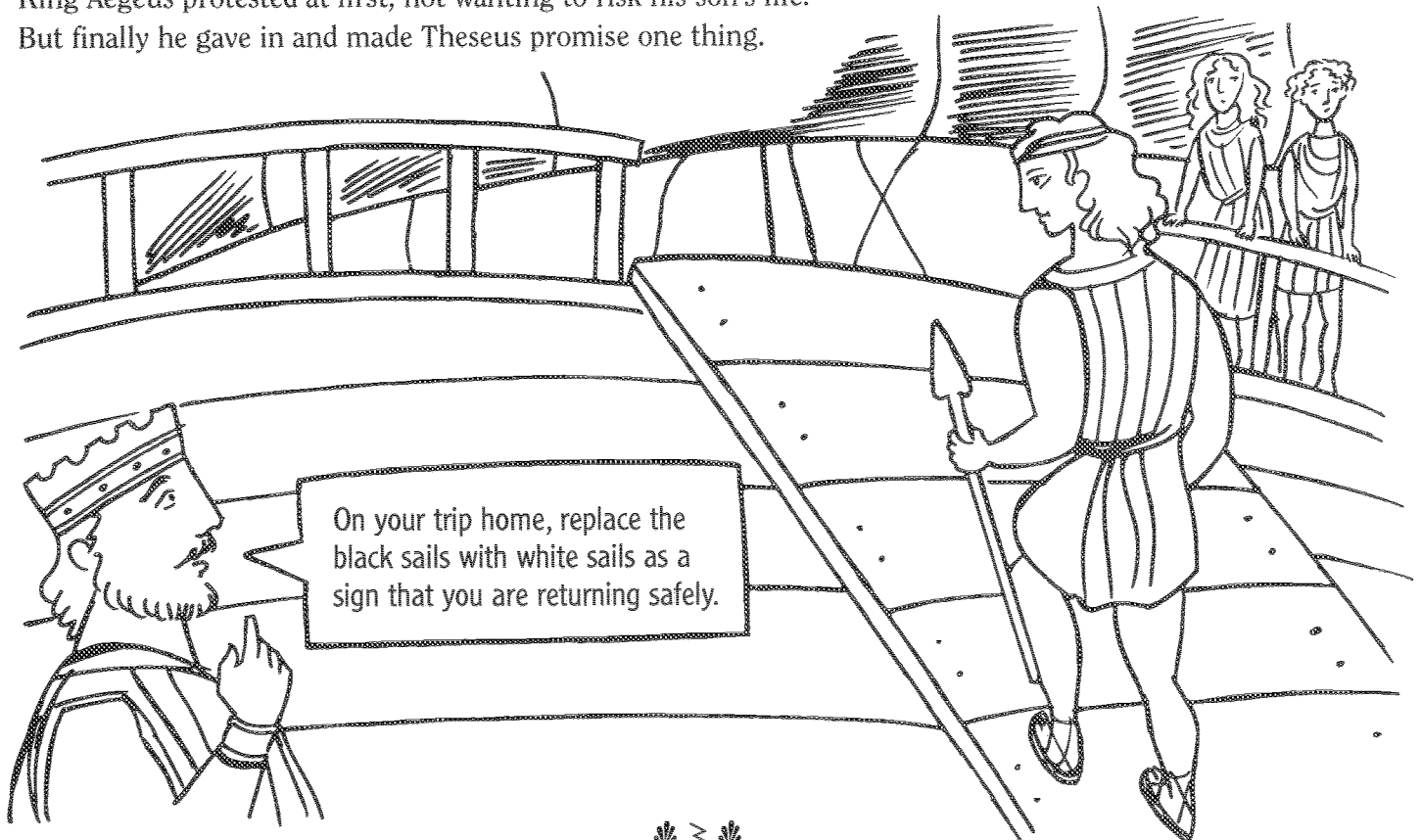
AN AMAZING BATTLE

The Story of Theseus and the Minotaur

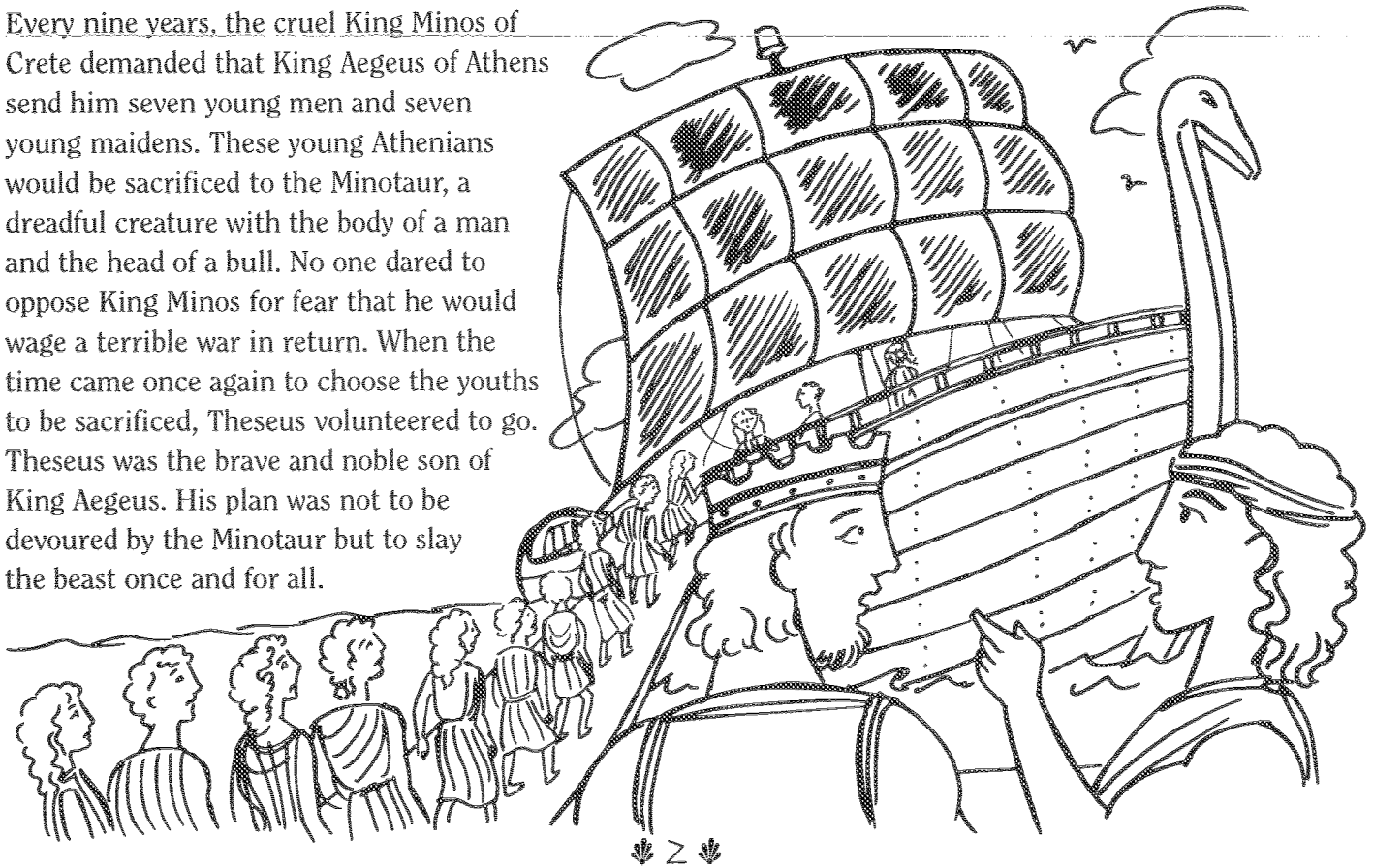


15 Greek Myth Mini-Books © Danielle Blood, Scholastic Teaching Resources

King Aegeus protested at first, not wanting to risk his son's life.
But finally he gave in and made Theseus promise one thing.

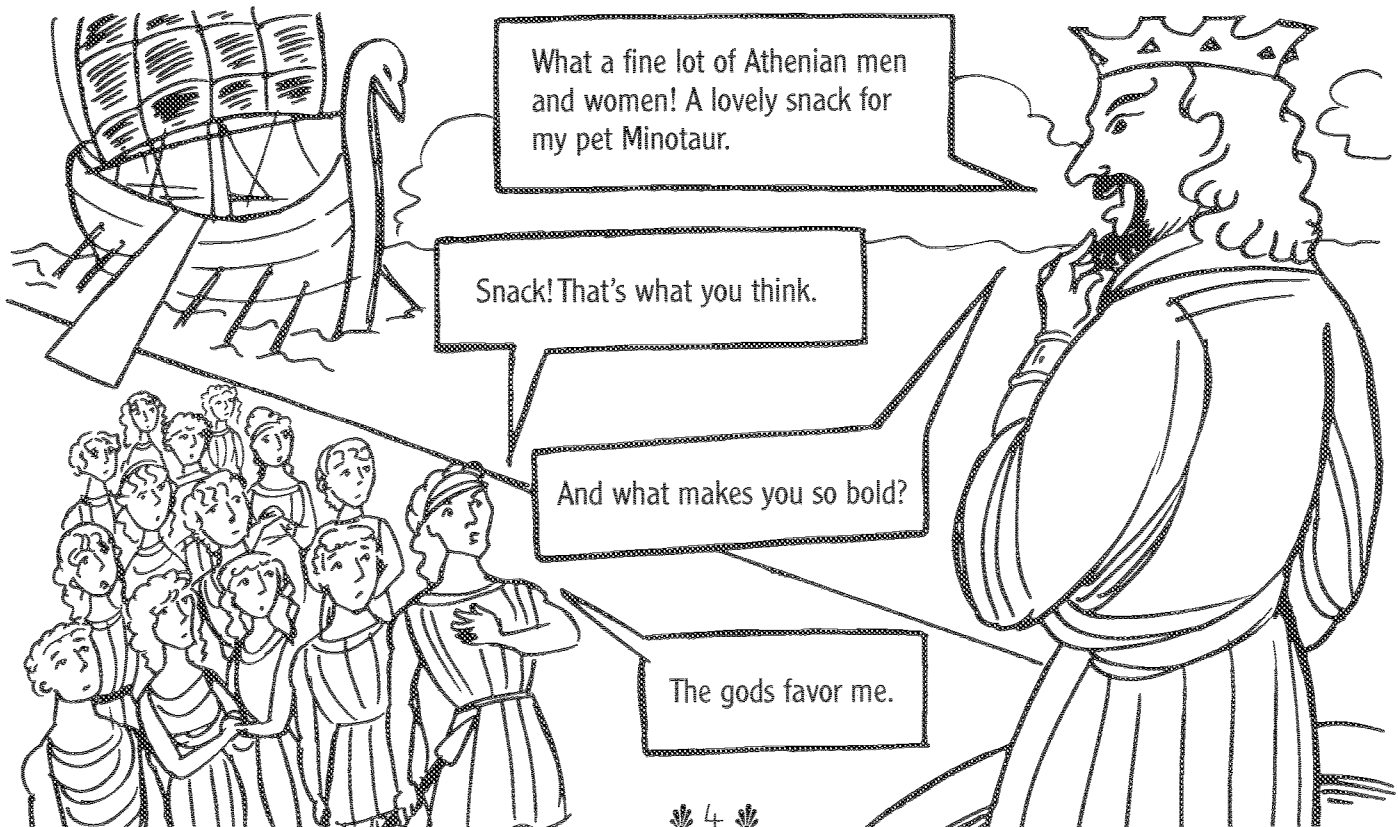


Every nine years, the cruel King Minos of Crete demanded that King Aegeus of Athens send him seven young men and seven young maidens. These young Athenians would be sacrificed to the Minotaur, a dreadful creature with the body of a man and the head of a bull. No one dared to oppose King Minos for fear that he would wage a terrible war in return. When the time came once again to choose the youths to be sacrificed, Theseus volunteered to go. Theseus was the brave and noble son of King Aegeus. His plan was not to be devoured by the Minotaur but to slay the beast once and for all.

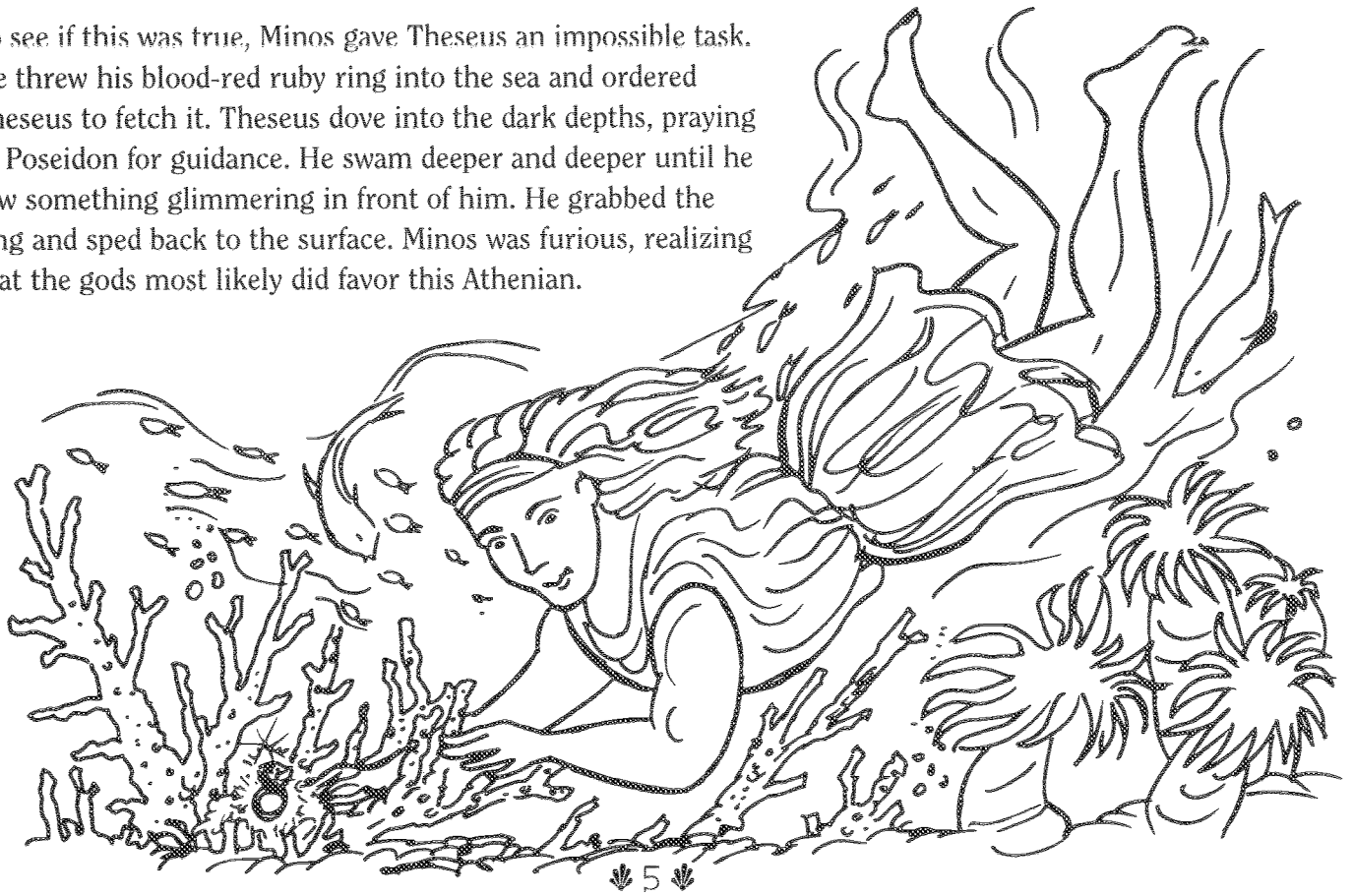


15 Greek Myth Mini-Books © Danielle Blood, Scholastic Teaching Resources

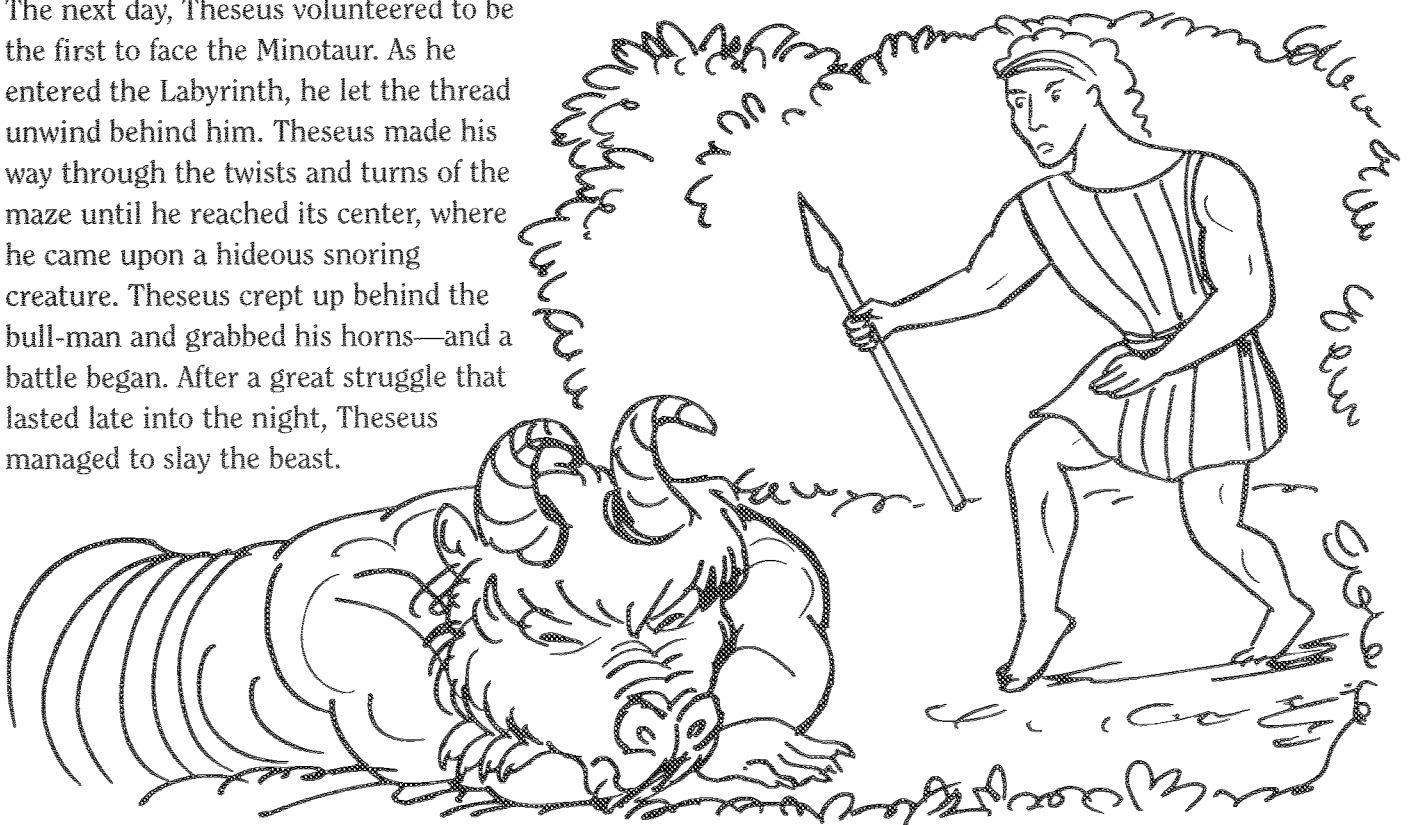
When the Athenians arrived in Crete, they were welcomed by King Minos.



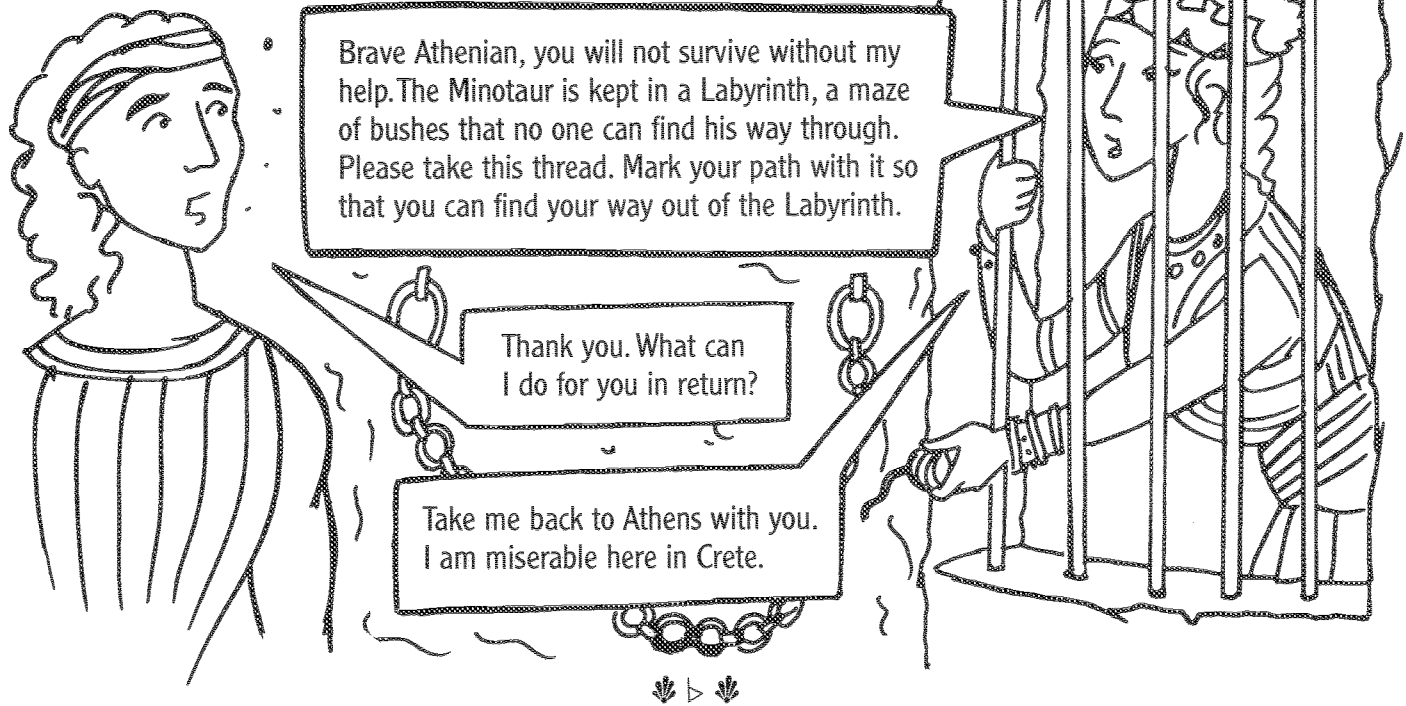
To see if this was true, Minos gave Theseus an impossible task. He threw his blood-red ruby ring into the sea and ordered Theseus to fetch it. Theseus dove into the dark depths, praying to Poseidon for guidance. He swam deeper and deeper until he saw something glimmering in front of him. He grabbed the ring and sped back to the surface. Minos was furious, realizing that the gods most likely did favor this Athenian.



The next day, Theseus volunteered to be the first to face the Minotaur. As he entered the Labyrinth, he let the thread unwind behind him. Theseus made his way through the twists and turns of the maze until he reached its center, where he came upon a hideous snoring creature. Theseus crept up behind the bull-man and grabbed his horns—and a battle began. After a great struggle that lasted late into the night, Theseus managed to slay the beast.



Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, watched as the Athenians were brought ashore to Crete. When she saw how proud and brave Theseus looked, even in chains, she instantly fell in love. That night she sneaked to his cell and whispered through the window.



Brave Athenian, you will not survive without my help. The Minotaur is kept in a Labyrinth, a maze of bushes that no one can find his way through. Please take this thread. Mark your path with it so that you can find your way out of the Labyrinth.

Thank you. What can I do for you in return?

Take me back to Athens with you. I am miserable here in Crete.

15 Greek Myth Mini-Books © Danielle Blood, Scholastic Teaching Resources

Theseus followed the thread to the entrance of the Labyrinth and quickly rounded up Ariadne and the prisoners. Since it was the middle of the night, no one saw them boarding their ship. But in their haste, Theseus forgot his promise to his father, and they set off with black sails instead of white.



Every day King Aegeus watched for signs of his son's return. One day as he stood watch, he noticed a ship on the horizon. As it drew nearer, Aegeus saw that the sails were black and, in despair, he stepped off the cliff into the sea below. Since then, the sea has been known by the name of the grief-stricken king—the Aegean Sea.

