

As his own father had abandoned his mother and her baby, Theseus abandoned his new wife, Ariadne. He and his companions sailed away from the island of Naxos, where they had stopped for a rest, while Ariadne was still asleep.

When she realized that Theseus was gone, and had abandoned her on the island, Ariadne erupted in anger. She hurled curses across the water, as Theseus was sailing home, toward Athens.

Waiting for his son, at the top of a mountain, King Aegeus could barely see a sailing ship on the horizon. Believing it to be his son, he strained to see whether the sail was black (which meant Theseus was dead) or white (which meant Theseus was alive).

Theseus, however, had neglected to change sails. Still flying the black one, he inadvertently signaled to Aegeus that his son was not coming home.

Overcome with grief, Aegeus—who was standing at the top of Sounion—fell to his death.

While Theseus was a hero—first volunteering as a Tribute, then killing the opposition to save the lives of all the other Tributes—he did not behave like a hero in all of his future activities. Greek mythology takes him on various twists and turns, including four miserable years in Hades.

Known for wisdom, during his youth, Theseus seemed to lose that wisdom during middle age. Beyond making bad decisions, he began to take foolish adventures.

The people of Athens grew weary of the turmoil which seemed to swirl around Theseus. He died, Plutarch tells us, in exile. The Athenians did nothing to retrieve his remains—initially.

As the years passed, succeeding generations of Athenians thought little-to-nothing about the former hero. As the Greeks battled the Persians, however, things began to change.

Athenian soldiers thought they were seeing the ghost of Theseus! Soon those soldiers started to believe that Theseus was helping them to win.

The famous Oracle, at Delphi, eventually commanded an Athenian general - Kimon - to search for the bones of Theseus and to return them to Athens.

Kimon did, as he was commanded, and the former hero, who killed the Minotaur and saved the Athenian Tributes, was buried in a magnificent tomb.

Credits:

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The series was created by Jim Henson (creator of The Muppets) and developed by Anthony Minghella. It originally aired in 1988. The series ended after the second season. "Theseus and the Minotaur" is from the last season.

This clip features:

Director - John Madden

Screenplay - By Nigel William

Producer - Duncan Kenworthy

Michael Gambon - The Storyteller

Brian Henson - The Storyteller's Dog

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Theseus-End-of-the-Story>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Theseus-End-of-the-Story>