

AT THE COURT OF KING MINOS

THE CRETAN CHRONICLES: 2



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Viking Penguin Inc., 40 West 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010, U.S.A.
Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia
Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 2801 John Street, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R 1B4
Penguin Books (N.Z.) Ltd, 182-190 Wairau Road, Auckland 10, New Zealand

First published 1985

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Rowland Phototypesetting Ltd
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

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BACKGROUND AND RULES

One of the sailors shouts, and the others take up the cry. You rush to the bow, and then even you, adventurous Altheus, can see it: no longer just a word to you, Crete in all her savage beauty fills the horizon. The seven youths and seven maidens stand in silence, apprehensive of their fate, and you, Altheus, are not untouched by the chill hand clutching at their hearts. You have come far, and traversed lands that few who are not heroes would have dared. You think of your mother Aethra, so far away in Troezen, whom you left so long ago. Your trials have been many: the journey to Athens, the war against the Amazons, the voyage, the sea-serpent, Thera, Cythera and, most recent of all, the grim high-towering Talos, killer of all things mortal, crusher of beauty, scourge of cowering sailors. Your journey is over; your trials have just begun.

In this, the second book of the Cretan Chronicles, you are Altheus, a Greek hero with an awesome mission to accomplish, striving against wild beasts and men, and seeking to win the favour of the gods in your quest. The days ahead will be difficult, but it is *you* who will determine your destiny. The book is laid out in paragraph format; at the end of each paragraph you will be given a choice which will determine the number of the paragraph to which you next turn. The paragraphs are set out in numerical order; you should not read a paragraph until you are sent to it from the one you have just read, as this will spoil the continuity and enjoyability of the adventure. If there is no destination given for you at the end of a paragraph, you are dead. In this case, you may start again at the beginning of Book 1 (*Bloodfeud of Altheus*), with a new Altheus, all values at their initial value, all weapons and equipment as at the start, all the gods' attitudes at Neutral.

You will need pencil, paper and dice to appreciate the travels of Altheus – *your* travels!

Might, Protection, Honour and Shame

Before you set out there are a number of things it is necessary for you to know. Your mental state, your fighting skills and your relations with the supernatural and society are described in terms of four characteristics. These are Might, Protection, Honour and Shame. These values will change during the course of the game, and so must be recorded. For this purpose a blank Chronicle Sheet is provided (pp. 18–19), which may be photocopied. Also marked on the Chronicle Sheet is a Wound Record track. This begins at Healthy, and as Altheus suffers injury it moves through Wounded and Seriously Wounded to Dead. Whenever Altheus or an opponent is hit, the Wound Record of that person is moved on one level from its previous value (Healthy/Unwounded to Wounded; Wounded to Seriously Wounded; Seriously Wounded to Dead). Death will in most cases be fatal, so take care! The Chronicle Sheet can also be used to record equipment carried, artefacts acquired on the journey, and whether Altheus is in favour or disfavour with the gods. In short, it details everything important about Altheus' condition and his relations with the outside world.

Altheus' Might value at a given time will nearly always be made up of a combination of his natural ability and the value of the strongest weapon he is carrying. This characteristic is used to determine how likely Altheus is to hit an opponent, should he find himself in combat. Altheus' natural Might is 4, and this will be supplemented whenever he is carrying a weapon.

Protection is made up of a combination of Altheus' inborn skill at dodging and the sum total of the armour he happens to be wearing. Altheus has inborn Protection of 10. Now suppose that he has greaves and a helmet. The greaves give 1 point of Protection, and the helmet 2. His total Protection value in this case is 13 ($10+2+1$). Protection is used mainly in combat, to determine how difficult an opponent will find it to strike at Altheus successfully.

Honour is all-important for Altheus. It determines his relations both with his fellow men and with his patron god or goddess. Without Honour he will find himself an outcast. His patron deity will refuse to aid him when called on (not that this aid is in any case automatic); men will despise him and seek to do him ill. Altheus starts with the Honour value carried over from the last book, unless you have not played through this, in which case it will be assigned in the first few paragraphs. This Honour may increase or decrease without restriction, but it may never decrease below 0. If it ever reaches 0, it may not increase again except through appeals to Zeus (see below) or by means of a special item described in the text. Honour is gained by victory in combat; it may be used up in appeals to the gods. Honour may be also used to gain a temporary increase in Might or Protection in combat.

Shame is another crucial concept in Bronze-Age Greece, the setting of this adventure. Shame, which initially has a value corresponding to its level at the end of the last book (if this has not been played, a value will be assigned), cannot be eradicated once acquired, except under exceptional circumstances (which will be detailed in the text). It is accumulated by such cultural *faux pas* as slaying one's opponent after he has surrendered, retreating ignominiously from a fair fight, or failing to perform heroic deeds. Such gross crimes as patricide, marrying one's own mother or failure satisfactorily to maintain one's armour will be penalized by a greater increase in Shame points. If Altheus' Shame ever rises above his Honour, he will be overwhelmed by the burden of his heroic conscience and he will either disembowel himself with a shortsword, if one is available, or be struck down by a thunderbolt from Olympian Zeus, father of the gods, and his spirit will go whining through the dark halls of Hades the life-destroyer. Resurrection is, in this case, specifically forbidden. If Shame exceeds Honour in the middle of a combat, no action is taken until the battle is completed. Thus the Honour he gains from victory may save him from this horrible fate.

Combat

Combat may occur in any encounter with a person or animal who is given combat abilities. You should always note these down on a piece of paper, not only for convenience, but also because you may well be sent to another paragraph. You should also keep a track of the Wound Record of an opponent. Combat is fought in a series of rounds called thrusts and counter-thrusts. Unless otherwise specified, Altheus will have the option of the first strike. If he performs some other action, such as appealing to the gods or using a magical item, his opponent will gain this initiative.

Altheus rolls two dice, adds his natural Might and the value of his chosen weapon (note that if a weapon is given no Protection value or a piece of armour no Might value, this is because the relevant attribute is 0). If this total equals or exceeds the total Protection (natural ability + armour) of the opponent, Altheus has scored a hit. The Wound Record of the opponent is moved forward one stage. If Healthy, the opponent becomes Wounded; if Wounded, Seriously Wounded; and if Seriously Wounded, Dead, at which point the combat is over. On a dice roll of 11 or 12, Altheus will automatically hit his opponent, regardless of his Might or his opponent's Protection. Altheus may 'get lucky', even against the most formidable adversary. Conversely, on 2 or 3 he will automatically miss. His opponents fight in exactly the same manner, except that non-human opponents have no separate weapons or armour to be taken into consideration. If Altheus is fighting more than one opponent, the procedure is very slightly different. Altheus will fight them one by one, but each one's Might is increased by 1 for each surviving companion. For example, if Altheus fights three wolves (Might 2, Protection 12), the first wolf has effective Might 4, the second Might 3, and the last its own 2. In such multiple combats an opponent drops out when Seriously Wounded, and leaves the fight to his unwounded companions, if any; if all are Seriously Wounded, the text will give instructions as to what to do.

The fight continues until one side is dead or has surren-

dered. Once either Altheus or his opponent is Seriously Wounded, however, the injury will hamper fighting ability. Anyone suffering from such a wound will roll one die instead of two during combat. In this situation, a roll of 1 is an automatic miss, but a roll of 6 is not an automatic hit. If all participants in a combat are Seriously Wounded, then, in this case only, they are allowed to roll two dice, instead of one, until the end of the combat. Once a protagonist is Seriously Wounded, therefore, his chances of survival are very much less. Against a human opponent, in this situation, Altheus has the option of surrendering. The opponent will almost always accept this (the text will tell you whether or not he does), strip him of his strongest piece of armour and his strongest weapon (calculated according to their Might or Protection – the best has the highest value), and then let him go. Altheus must, however, take 1 Shame point for such action. If an opponent surrenders, Altheus must accept, or else take 2 Shame points. He may then strip the opponent of any armour or weapon he wishes, bearing in mind that he may not wear more than one of any type of armour (a helmet, for example), although he may carry a spare. Again, the text will tell you whether or not a given opponent will surrender.

If Altheus is Healthy or Wounded (but not seriously), he may attempt to retreat. Any attempt will cost 1 Honour point, regardless of its outcome. A retreat is successful on a roll of 1 to 4, and fails on 5 or 6, unless specified in the text. A successful attempt will impose 1 point of Shame, and send you to the paragraph specified. Unsuccessful attempts rule out retreat for the remainder of the combat: the fight must continue to the death or surrender.

Honour, as already mentioned, plays an important part in combat. Altheus may, if it is his strike, use Honour points temporarily to increase his Might. For example, if his Honour is 11, and his Might 9 (natural ability + axe), he may increase his Might to 11, for one roll only, by decreasing his Honour to 9. After the roll, the Might reverts to its former value, and the Honour points are lost for ever. Similarly, when it is his opponent's strike, Altheus may increase his Protection, for

one roll only, by a corresponding reduction in Honour. He may do this as often as he likes, as long as he does not run out of Honour.

If Altheus is victorious in combat, he will receive Honour points. The text will specify how many points Altheus should receive as a result of a given combat. In addition, his Wound Record should be set back to Healthy at the end of any combat he survives.

Examples of Combat

Altheus, with a spear (Might 3, Protection 1) and a helmet (Protection 4), his Honour at 10 and Shame at 0, meets a lion. (Might 5, Protection 15). Altheus' combat values are Might 7 (4 + 3) and Protection 15 (10 + 4 + 1).

Altheus decides to take no non-combat action, such as praying to the gods, and so strikes first. He needs 8 to hit, because his Might of 7, plus a die roll of 8, is equal to the lion's Protection of 15. He rolls 6 and misses.

The lion needs 10 to hit. He rolls 11, so Altheus is Wounded. Altheus attacks again. This time he rolls 9, which hits. The lion is Wounded.

The lion again needs 10 to hit. He rolls 11, so Altheus is now Seriously Wounded, and rolls only one die in combat.

Altheus now needs 8 to hit, but this is impossible on one die. He therefore decides to use some Honour points. He transfers 3 points to his Might, which is now at a temporary level of 10. He needs 5 to hit. He rolls 6; the lion is now Seriously Wounded. It has no Honour, and so cannot hit Altheus any longer. Altheus kills it in the next round, by using some more Honour, and he receives 6 points of Honour for slaying the lion. His Wound Record is returned to Healthy.

Later in this adventure, Altheus meets two Cretans, both Might 7, Protection 14. They carry clubs and shields. Altheus' values are as before: Might 7, Protection 15. He has acquired 1 Shame point, but his Honour is now 12. The effective Might of the first Cretan is 8, because of his companion. Altheus, deciding the odds against him are too great, tries to retreat.

He rolls 5 and fails, but still loses 1 point of Honour. The first Cretan now strikes, as Altheus has lost the initiative by attempting to retreat. He needs 7 to hit, but rolls 3, which is in any case an automatic miss.

Altheus rolls 9, which hits, as 9 plus his Might of 7 is greater than 14, the Cretan's Protection. The Cretan is Wounded.

The Cretan rolls 5, and misses.

Altheus rolls, and hits again. The Cretan is now Seriously Wounded, and drops out, leaving his companion to fight on. As he has no support, he fights at Might 7, Protection 14. He attacks Altheus, needing a roll of 8 or more to hit. He rolls 11, wounding Altheus.

Altheus rolls 5, missing the Cretan. He needs 7 to hit.

The Cretan rolls 3 and automatically misses.

Altheus would like to retreat now, but cannot, as he failed earlier on. Instead, he uses 5 points of Honour, to bring his Might up to 12. He needs 2 or more to hit. He rolls 2, but this is an automatic miss. Two of his Honour points were wasted, as a roll of 2 or 3 misses, no matter what. His Honour is now at 6, and his Might back to 7.

The Cretan rolls 4, and again misses.

Altheus rolls 12, an automatic hit. The Cretan is now Wounded. The Cretan rolls 10. Added to his Might of 7, this makes 17, greater than Altheus' Protection, so he hits Altheus, who is now Seriously Wounded.

In desperation, Altheus uses 5 points of Honour to increase his Might to 12, so that he needs a roll of 2 on one die (only one, as he is Seriously Wounded) to hit. He rolls 4, and hits. Both Cretans are now Seriously Wounded.

At this point, Altheus rejoices, thinking that both Cretans will surrender. By turning to the appropriate paragraph, however, he finds that they are fanatical defenders of the labyrinth of Minos, and will never surrender. As neither side can score a hit – the Cretans are using only one die, and Altheus feels he cannot use any Honour as it would fall below his Shame, and if he failed to hit he would die – both sides are permitted to roll two dice instead of one. Even if Altheus wins this combat, his low Honour will cause problems; perhaps he will pray to Zeus . . .

Gods

The gods are a crucial part of Altheus' life. At the start of the adventure he must dedicate himself to one of Ares, Athena, Poseidon, Apollo, Aphrodite or Hera, and he must try to avoid angering any of the others. Presiding, enigmatic, over them all is Zeus, father of the gods, who will aid Altheus once in the adventure. Beneath this pantheon are many lesser gods, goddesses and spirits, whose anger is still to be avoided. In the case of a patron deity (who will have been chosen during the first book, or will be chosen later by those who have not played *Bloodfeud of Altheus*), Altheus' standing is determined by his Honour. At certain points in the text, Altheus will be offered help by a deity; if it is his patron, he may expend the requisite amount of Honour (sometimes a random number) and accept the favour. If Altheus does not have enough Honour, he will be referred back to the paragraph where the choice was offered, but will none the less lose 1 point of Honour. Once at 0, Honour cannot be regained, except by praying to Zeus, or by use of certain artefacts.

In the case of deities who are not his patron, Altheus is either in Favour (F), Neutral (N), or in Disfavour (D). Initially, his standing with all of these gods will be just as at the end of the last book, or as assigned for those who have not read this, but the standing may change throughout the course of the adventure, as he performs actions which appease or anger the gods.

Altheus may pray to Zeus once during each adventure. This will have one of a number of effects, at Altheus' choice:

1. If he has been killed by any other means than Shame overtaking Honour, he may be resurrected, with all equipment, Shame of 0 and Honour of 1, at the paragraph indicated in the text. When Zeus saves you in this manner, do not be surprised if you find yourself moved to a nearby point in the same town or vicinity; this is simply divine Zeus' way of ensuring your safety.
2. He may simply gain 1 to 6 Honour points (roll one die).
3. If his Honour is at 0, he may have it set back to 1, and regain the ability to acquire Honour.

4. He may have the attitude of all the gods set back to Neutral, regardless of what they were.

Remember that the intervention of Olympian Zeus is very rare indeed, and may never be used more than once in an adventure, unless this is specifically offered in the text.

Equipment

You start the adventure with those pieces of equipment marked on your Chronicle Sheet (carried over from the last book, or assigned to those who have not played it). During the course of the adventure you will acquire other pieces of equipment and should note these on the Chronicle Sheet. You may carry only one spare set of armour (in addition to any you may be wearing), and this will give you no extra Protection; but there is no limit to the amount of small items you may carry. This rule does not forbid the wearing of breastplate, greaves, helmet etc., merely the wearing of two of any particular type of armour.

Taking a Hint

At times during the adventure, you may wish to perform non-standard actions. These will not be offered in the text, as this would give you a degree of foreknowledge granted only to the prescient. Instead, if you are at a paragraph with a number in italic type (i.e. *476* rather than 476), you may run the risk of adding 20 to the paragraph number and turning to that number; this process is known for convenience as 'taking a hint'. If there is no non-standard action at that point which a Bronze-Age hero would have thought of, you will pay a penalty in either Honour or Shame, or both, for trying to be ahead of your time.

Note that this option will never be explicitly offered in the text; you must remember it and use it when you see fit.

You are about to set off. Turn to paragraph 1, and good luck!

ALTHEUS' CHRONICLE SHEET

	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Best Weapon</i>	
MIGHT	4	+		= <input type="text"/>
	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Armour</i>	
PROTECTION	10	+	+	+
HONOUR	7			
SHAME	0			

Weapons & Armour		Notes:	
CLUB	M P	POSSESSIONS:	
1	0		

ALTHEUS' CHRONICLE SHEET

	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Best Weapon</i>	
MIGHT	4	+	3	= 7
	<i>Natural</i>		<i>Armour</i>	
PROTECTION	10	+	2 + 2 +	= 14
HONOUR	7			
SHAME	0			

Weapons & Armour			Notes
	M	P	POSSESSIONS: Mother's Gem
CLUB	1	0	
SHIELD	0	2	NO HINT PENALTIES
BREASTPLATE	0	2	
SWORD	3	0	

The Gods

PATRON:

FATOUR

Disfatour

Wound Record Track

[illegible]

The Gods

PATRON: Apollo

Favour

Dionysus
Aphrodite

Disfavour

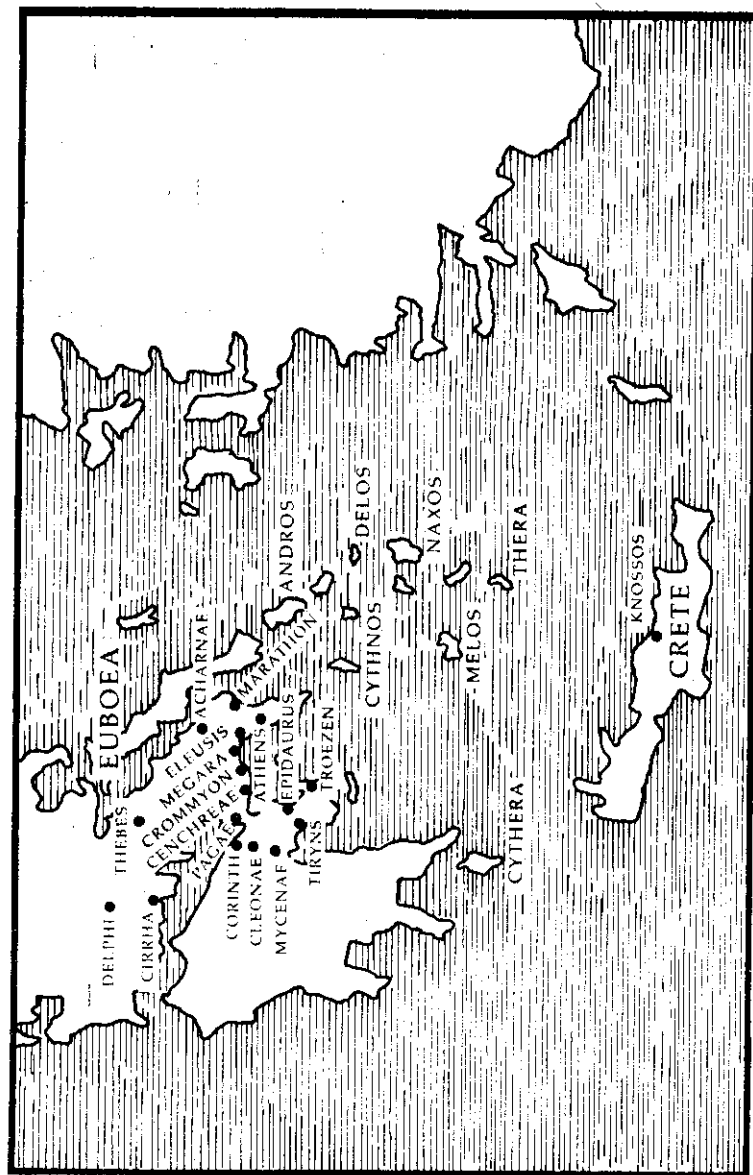
Hera

Wound Record Track

HEALTHY						
WOUNDED						
SERIOUSLY WOUNDED						
DEAD						

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AT THE COURT OF KING MINOS



1

Crete lies baking in the sun, a sun so hot it seems a wonder that the island does not burst into flames. You marvel that anyone can survive in this heat: it is as if the sun god, Helios, wearying of men below, is driving his chariot so near the earth that the hoofs of his horses almost strike the ground as they pass. The ship pulls closer to the port. On the quay-side Cretan soldiers stand ready. You see the ship's captain approaching and clamber to your feet, but as he reaches you, you realize that he is the immortal messenger of Olympian Zeus.

'You have done well, adventurous Altheus,' Hermes tells you. 'Better, in fact, than many of us expected. But on Crete older and darker forces prevail. We of Olympus may be unable to help you, even though we would wish to. While on Crete, I fear, you must begin to fend for yourself. Remember that things are not so simple, so direct, as on the mainland. Be careful.' In a blink, the god is gone. Go to 38.



2

The captain is talking with the leader of the Cretan guards, a tall man with rich armour and a helmet which covers his face.

'Seven youths and seven maidens,' says the captain, 'according to your "bargain" with Aegeus. But Athens groans beneath this oppression, and the king's position grows unstable.'

The guard shrugs, 'What of it?'

'If Aegeus falls, you will have no tribute at all, and will have lost an ally on the mainland . . .'

'If the tribute stops,' counters the guard, unsmiling beneath his heavy helmet, 'then many long-oared ships, with sails as black as crows' wings, will come, and there will be laying-waste and burning. But who is this?'

'This is Altheus, the king's son. He comes with messages from his father.'

'Another king's son, eh? Old Aegeus always seems to be able to dig up another one. Very well, we'll take him too.' He snaps his fingers at two of the guards. 'You, take him.'

Will you go with them (turn to 271), or try to escape (turn to 476)?

3

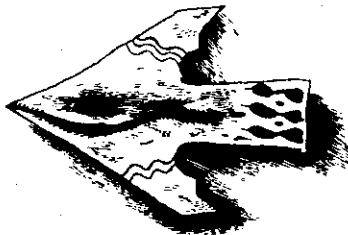
You are hauled out into the temple. At the altar is the High Priest, and the rest of the court are round the edges.

'Lady Demeter,' the priest is saying, 'we now sacrifice to you, in accordance with ritual. Accept this blood at our hands.'

The guards throw you over the edge of a huge pit in the centre of the temple, and you crash, weaponless, to the floor, twenty feet below. Go to 5.

4

You see two of the palace servants fighting in the corridor. At first they stand apart, flailing at each other with their arms, but then the shorter one leaps across and grapples his opponent to the floor. You move forward to intervene and feel a sharp pain in your back. Someone has stabbed you! You fall to the ground and the last words you hear are Polycrates saying, 'You gullible fool!' If Zeus can save you, go to 51.



5

You scabble around frantically at the bottom of the pit, and find that the entrance to the labyrinth of Minos is concealed beneath a paving-stone. You lift it up, and there you see a flight of smooth, well-crafted steps leading down into the distance. Warily, as the hunter stalks his prey in the dim twilight gloom, but with joy in your heart at the culmination of your quest, you set off into the maze. If you have a lamp, go to 260; if you do not, but have a torch, go to 115; if you have neither of these, go to 399.



6

You leave the dance with Thaisia, and go out into the palace gardens. The moon has come up over the cypresses, and the night air is pleasantly cool after the heat of the dance. The pair of you sit behind a bush on a low marble bench.

'What are you thinking of?' you ask, after a while.

Thaisia smiles. 'My mother. She's a shepherdess on the south side . . . she's so devoted to her way of life that she's called "sheep" herself. And now here I am with a king's son. Funny.'

'It's nothing special, being a king's son.'

'Yes, but my mother would think so. She worships kings, almost like gods. She was ecstatic when I was chosen as priestess here.' A thought strikes her. 'I may visit her tomorrow; will you come? She'd be terribly excited.'

You murmur agreement. The moon creeps across the sky. Much later you go to bed. Go to 133.

7

You leave the room and ask a passing slave with a pot for directions to the labyrinth. She is surprised, but tells you. You make your way through the deserted corridors, just able to hear the sound of music in the distance, and come to the temple. You peer round the entrance. There is a pit in the centre of the room. A solitary guard sits at the top, dangling his legs into the abyss. You can try to surprise the guard (turn to 157), or try to fool him into leaving (go to 269).

8

You hand Minos the letters from Aegeus, but he waves them away: 'Later, Altheus, later. There's a time for everything.' Have 2 Shame points for neglecting the customs of your ancestors, and go to 433.

9

The Amazon accepts your surrender and, stripping you of your weapon, thrusts you towards the door. Go to 181.

10

You make an excuse to Andra, and go towards the door.

'But . . . I hardly even know you,' Psyche is saying to Miktros. Polycrates appears out of nowhere and bars your way: 'Ah, Altheus. You may wish to put in a bit of boxing practice.'

'I may? Why?'

'I'll be in the gymnasium. You can find me there.' He gestures to a guard. 'You there! My compliments to Boloris, and will he see me in the boxing-room.' The guard goes out and Polycrates moves away, saying, 'I'll see you, then.'

You go, and as you reach the door Psyche flings herself around your neck with an 'Altheus, darling!' The force carries you, puzzled, out into the corridor.

'I don't understand.'

Psyche disentangles herself and smooths her hair again: 'Then you're obtuse. You just saved me from Miktros.' She mimics a tragedy mask at his name.

'Oh, is that all? I thought Aphrodite was smiling on me.'

'Look at the fruit, not the rind. It may save you from amorous Andra.' And she goes, with a smile, to her room.

You can go to the temple to see Opris and Noa (turn to 520), you can go to visit Lactris (turn to 420), you can go to Polycrates in the gymnasium (turn to 340), or you can go to your room and wait (turn to 240).

11

'Was that unexpected?' you ask.

'Was what?' Thaisia has procured a small sack of fruit and a bag of nuts from the palace kitchens, and you have it slung over your shoulder as you press down the hill.

'Those appointments.'

'Oh, I don't think so. Noa is . . . is . . . ' She gestures with both hands, looking for the word, then gives up. ' . . . Is the right kind of person. Opris, maybe he was a little surprising. He's rather too dandified for most of the court. I suppose someone must have pulled strings for him . . . '

'It seems you'll be able to ask him yourself.'

'What do you mean?'

'Look.' Opris and Noa are sitting up ahead, waiting for you. Go to 379.

12

'I am not harsh,' you tell him. 'You have committed no crimes, except by your association with Minos. Leave Crete for ever today, and you shall live.' To your surprise, Polycrates agrees and limps off. Will you seek out the princess Ariadne (turn to 462), or will you try to enlist the support of the guards (turn to 62)?

13

The guard recognizes you and attacks. Go to 214.



14

'Boloris?' You try to laugh, but that proves too painful. Then you try to rise, but cannot do this either. 'You're the one that everyone talks about . . .'

'Lie still.'

' . . . but no one's ever seen.'

'I think that's an exaggeration. This is going to hurt for a moment.'

He deftly extracts the bolts from your shoulders and binds the wounds with strips of cloth. 'That's a bad injury,' he comments, 'but you should live now. Until the pankration, at least.'

'Who are you? Why are you doing this?'

He smiles. 'Call it a favour to a fellow outsider.' He goes to a chest and rummages around inside.

'Hmm?'

'You'll have realized by now the way in which the court is polarized into the native Cretans on the one hand and Pangryon's Thracians on the other. I am caught in the middle: the Cretans mistrust me as a foreigner, the Thracians despise me as a southerner.'

'What are you?'

'A common Athenian, more or less like yourself. Here, take this, it may help you.' He hands you a small lamp. 'I found this in Daedalus' workshop,' Boloris tells you. 'It's not one of his more ingenious inventions, but it's small enough to be hidden about the person, and it's self-lighting, by adjusting this lever here. It may just tip the odds in your favour.'

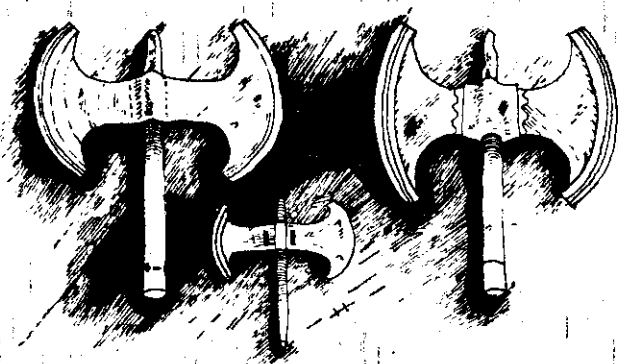
And that, you reflect grimly as you return to your room, is what you need most of all. Subtract 10 from your Endurance for your wounds, which will also reduce your Might by 1 point until the end of the book. Go to 213.

15

You shrug and walk on. The passage takes a sharp right turn and you follow it, almost entranced. It is with a detached, amused fascination that you notice that the corridor has begun to flex and writhe like the windpipe of a poisoned man. You lean against the undulating wall but your hand sinks in up to the elbow. Slowly you pull it out again and the wall clings to it for a moment before springing back with a faint plop. You hear a quiet humming behind you and turn to see a swarm of vivid blue dragonflies flying lazily towards you. They circle you for a moment before disappearing again up the passageway. There is a bell ringing in the distance and you slump against a wall so as to be able to enjoy the sweet, sweet music that suddenly fills the air and cushions you as you sink ecstatically into welcoming, orange sleep.

16

Here Herakles performs one of his lesser labours, depicted in fresco on the walls. He seizes a bull sent by Poseidon for a sacrifice, which Minos kept as a token of his power. In his hands the hero holds the knife-sharp horns, and bears it on his great shoulders, heading for Athens and the plain of Marathon, in fulfilment of his seventh task. You may go south (turn to 475), west (turn to 220), east (turn to 343) or north (turn to 219).



17

You arrive at the temple, but nobody is there, except for two guards on the pit in the centre of the room. You can go to the gymnasium (turn to 340) or return to your room (turn to 240).

18

The Amazon warrior notices the golden amulet on your wrist, and her face drains of all colour. Gripped by rage, she seizes her spear, crying, 'You have killed an Amazon queen, for never would one surrender the sacred amulet of Hera. The vengeance of the Amazons is slow but sure.'

She launches her spear at you: you are Wounded, and must fight Lembra. She has Might 6, Protection 13, and her spear adds Might 1. You cannot retreat or surrender. If you Seriously Wound her, turn to 146. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 54.



19

'You said you wanted a word with me,' you say.

Dipthis grunts. 'And I do. Come, sit. What do you know of Minos? Nothing. I see. Well, if you wish to understand Crete, you must understand his past, for he is the hub of everything. Listen, then. They call him the Bear, and for good reason. He is big and jovial, and he can be deadly. You have seen that already, I think. But you do not know that he was prepared to banish his brother, Rhadamanthys, because he felt the good of Crete was best served by it.'

'Now, thirty summers ago, Minos did something very unwise, for so shrewd a man. Poseidon sent a bull from the sea to him for sacrifice. Against his own best judgement - and against my advice, I might add - he kept it. To punish him, Poseidon sent a curse. Whenever he lay with his wife Pasiphae, he issued only snakes and scorpions. So Procris

made an artificial woman and Minos used up all the animals on it.'

'This Procris, who is he?'

'She was the wife of Cephalus,' Dipthis answers curtly. The lady Aurora, goddess of the dawn, arranged it so that Procris was killed by the spear Minos gave her as reward. But that's another story. An inglorious episode in our inglorious history, but, for once, not one for which we ourselves need feel any particular shame.

'But that was not the end of it. The gods decreed that Pasiphae should fall in love with the bull. Daedalus arranged for her passion to be gratified, and she conceived Minos' bull, what you call the Minotaur. It was given no name.

'Minos had four sons. Catreus, the eldest, was killed by his own son, in accordance with a prophecy. Glaucus drowned in a vat of honey, such as we use to embalm the dead. Androgeus was slain by the bull of Marathon. Kremton you have seen as he is now: before you judge him, remember what has happened to his family. It does not excuse, but it explains.'

'And what happened to Pasiphae?'

Dipthis throws a hunk of meat to the dragons, who fight over it and chew it greedily. 'She died.'

Will you leave (turn to 526), or question Dipthis further (turn to 531)?

20

Perseus is shown mounting to the home of the Grey Sisters, and seizing their only eye and tooth. Loathing for the creatures in his eyes, he demands to know the way to the abode of the nymphs who possess gifts of power that he must gain to kill the Gorgon Medusa. You stand in awe at the prowess of this hero. You may go north (turn to 338), south (turn to 225) or west (turn to 273).

21

You rush into the palace and go straight to Ariadne's room. Without pausing, you burst in, but are disappointed to find the girl absent. You wonder whether to wait until she returns, but you decide that now is the moment for action. You cannot find her anywhere and no one you ask knows where she is. Finally you meet Opris, who thinks that he saw Ariadne down at the harbour, when he was repairing his boat there a short while ago. Will you go to the port (turn to 280), or will you try to win Opris over to your cause (turn to 435)?



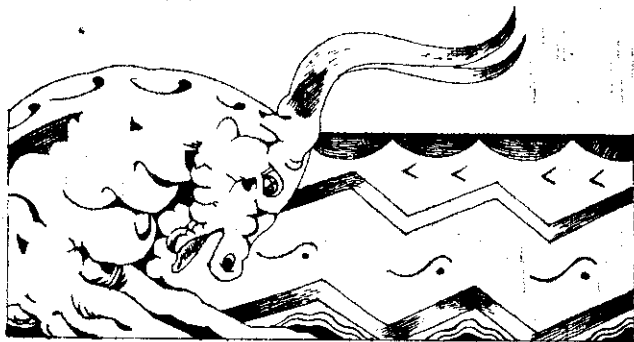
22

You show Opris the ring of Minos. 'Before he died, Minos gave me his ring and his blessing. I am now the true king of Crete.'

'Replace a tyrant with a green boy? No thank you.' He turns to go. Will you strike him (turn to 484) or go (turn to 116)?

23

Before you can reach the object, Minos sees you and hurls a small rock at you. You spring to your feet and the rock narrowly misses your right leg. From the hole in the roof, two guards jump down into the maze and you realize that you cannot fight both of them. You can either surrender (turn to 254), or flee back into the labyrinth (turn to 488).



24

You work your way across to the gallery and stand up. Taking a torch from a wall-bracket, you walk back down the gallery to the left. Coming towards you is another guard. Will you go back the way you came (turn to 390), will you attack him (turn to 336), or, as this is not the guard who has been patrolling before, will you try to bluff your way through (turn to 445)?

25

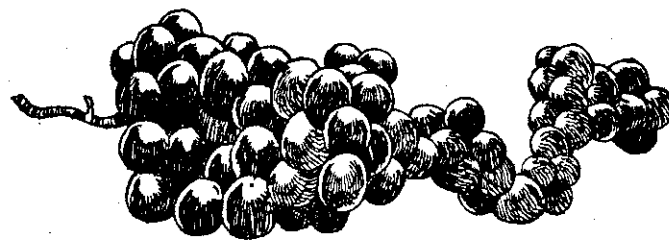
'So be it, Minos,' you declare. 'Now lead me out of this infernal place.'

Minos nods and turns away from you. He limps off into the gloom of the maze and you follow silently. Occasionally the king mumbles to himself, but you cannot catch any particular words. After quite some time wandering around, he turns and speaks to you: 'Wait here.'

Do you refuse and insist on coming with him (turn to 362), do you follow him at a distance (turn to 102), or do you wait (turn to 82)?

26

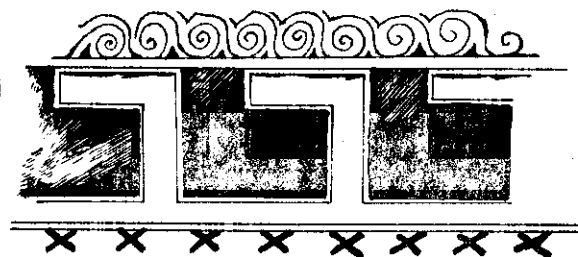
The earth produces no fruits, the crops wilt, and famine strikes the people, but Demeter will not save them. You see Iris, the rainbow goddess, sent down to the land below to persuade Demeter to relent, but she will not, unless her daughter is returned. In awe at the skill of the painter, you proceed. You may turn to the east (go to 230) or to the south (turn to 347).





27

You find a toehold in the wall and drag yourself through the window. You are now in a small room. A burly woman is sitting on a bed, cleaning a spear. As you drop to the floor, she looks up, understandably surprised. You can go back out of the window (turn to 527), run for the door (turn to 187), fight (turn to 392), or talk (turn to 486).



28

If, while you were travelling in the labyrinth, you were unravelling a ball of string, go to 257. Otherwise go to 131.

29

You murmur soothingly to Psyche, aware that it matters little what you say as long as you say something, and eventually she ceases her shaking and cries freely. You hold her and nod over her shoulder to Opris and Noa, who stand so as to cover your exit. You both leave the throne-room, and no one seems to have noticed. Go to 112.

30

There is a picture here of a night sky dramatically rent by a flash of lightning. You can go left (turn to 178), right (turn to 222), straight ahead (turn to 374) or down into a pit which has a passage leading away from it (turn to 250).

31

It is doubtful, adventurous Altheus, whether you could find time on your quest to steal the Grey Sisters' eye. Why do you dream of such exploits, travelling to the lands outside the light of sun and moon, to pilfer the single means of sight of those crones, who have but one tooth and one eye? Is not your present task enough? Do you perhaps think yourself a god? Have 2 Shame points, and go to 501.

32

You distrust Polycrates and decide to follow him. Instead of returning to his room, or leaving as he agreed, he makes his way straight to the guards' quarters and instructs them to kill you. You realize that you cannot stay in Crete and you run out of the palace. Go to 116.

33

No aid is forthcoming. It is as if even the gods have forgotten you. Go to 244.

34

You must fight the two guards and Polycrates. Polycrates has Might 7, Protection 12. The guards have Might 5, Protection 10. If you surrender or retreat, go to 163; if you Seriously Wound all your opponents, go to 243; if you die and are resurrected, go to 104.

35

You sit, but hardly have time to become bored, as two guards come and take you to the ceremony. You have no armour or weapons. Go to 174.

36

The air is clean and refreshing, and you stand for a few moments, breathing deeply. You have finally escaped the labyrinth, but you still have to get away from Crete. Will you make your way to the harbour (turn to 116), or will you search for Ariadne (turn to 216)?

37

The feasting and the chatter begin again. Minos lowers his voice and speaks to Polycrates. You swallow some more food as the group begins to disperse. You stand around, a little lost.

'You can find your way back to your room?' queries Thaisia.

'Yes, I think so.'

'Good.' She lingers a moment, then leaves. Dipthis propels himself towards you with a stick.

'I'd speak with you tonight, if you can find the time? I live in the south corridor.' He limps away.

Opris and Lactris saunter over with exaggerated casualness, like the infant Hermes stealing the god's cattle.

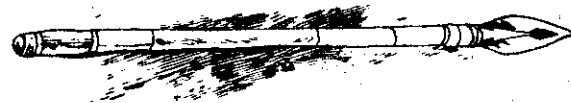
'Ah, Altheus,' starts Opris. 'This evening we're getting together for a bit of a . . . ' Lactris makes drinking motions with his right hand.

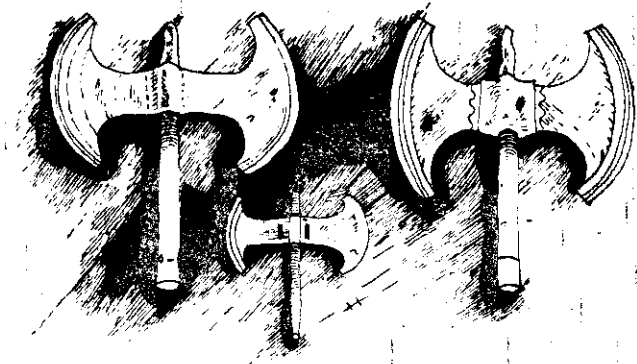
' . . . Do join us,' concludes Opris rather lamely. 'South corridor.'

'You're new, as well,' a short girl says tentatively. 'I'm Psyche.'

Opris raises an eyebrow, and Lactris grins back at him. A tall girl bustles up to you, evidently intent on prying you away from them. Opris and Lactris seem to recognize her, and wander away with Psyche. Opris winks over his shoulder.

'You're just like your brother,' announces the new arrival. 'I'm Andra.' A curiously circular conversation ensues. While she is talking, you study her and notice that her eyebrows constantly go up and down, and she winks with either or both eyes, apparently at random. The effect may be intended to be coquettish, or it may be involuntary, but, as someone later remarks, it is like watching one of Daedalus' automata with a broken spring. It is only when preparations start to be made for the dance that you manage to break away and return to your room. Go to 371.





38

If you have read *Bloodfeud of Altheus*, the first book of the Cretan Chronicles, you should treat this book as a continuation of that adventure. Turn straight to 467 to get back to the action! If you have not read the first book, you must choose a patron god or goddess:

If you choose Aphrodite, goddess of love, go to 348.

If you choose Apollo, god of prophecy, go to 197.

If you choose Ares, god of war, go to 521.

If you choose Athena, goddess of wisdom, go to 459.

If you choose Hera, queen of the gods, go to 404.

If you choose Poseidon, god of the sea, go to 255.

39

The frescos on the wall here depict some form of court ceremonial in which the king sprinkles water on his gathered subjects. The atmosphere becomes oppressive, and you feel tired. There on the ground in front of you is a piece of parchment. Perhaps it is a map of the labyrinth. Do you stoop to pick up the manuscript (turn to 335)? Or do you decide not to delay your mission and proceed west (turn to 342), south (turn to 385) or east (turn to 466)?

40

As you try to back out of the combat, you trip and fall heavily on your back. Go to 327.

41

Lactris pokes his head round the door. 'Hello, Altheus,' he says levelly.

'Can I come in?' you ask.

'Do.' Lactris' room is surrounded with shelves, all of them displaying small bronze figurines. You pick one up and look at it: it is a bird, a swan, just taking off into flight.

'It's exquisite.'

Lactris looks up. 'Yes, it is rather good.'

'You make these?'

'In my spare time - of which, it seems, I'm going to have rather a lot.'

Lactris is carving away with a small file at a figurine, right hand pressed to its forehead in amazement; it is made of clay covered with wax. Below the waist, it is unshaped; above, it is already a passable, if unflattering likeness. 'Yes, it's you. I'm going to cast it this afternoon, if I can get it finished. Of course, I may do one of Opris, and call it "The Wasp in the Honey Jar".'

He takes another file and starts to put texture into the model's hair, pretending to be intent on his work. You can stay (turn to 203), or leave for the gymnasium (turn to 340), the temple (turn to 17) or your room (turn to 240).





42

You creep unnoticed into one of the storehouses, and find it full of melons, stacked round the walls. You are hungry, so you pick one up – and the stack collapses, melons rolling everywhere. This reveals a cache of swords, bundled up with twine. You start to back away, and come up against a burly townsman. You spin round quickly and see that the man is brandishing a small serrated blade.

'You're an inquisitive one . . . too inquisitive. Looking for something? Well, you found me,' he says with an evil grin. The sunlight from the open door catches his knife, dazzling you for a moment. Now is the time for a quick decision. Will you strike out and try to catch the man off-guard (turn to 124), or try to talk your way out of the situation (turn to 235)?



43

Many men have entered the labyrinth, but few have left it alive. Have 1 Shame point and go back to 23.

44

You break free from the remaining guard and rush to the window. The ground is far below, but you think you may be able to reach the ledge of a window lower down. You climb out and dangle by your fingertips. In the room Polycrates and Thaisia run towards the window. Will you drop now, and try to land on the lower ledge (turn to 506), or will you try to climb down the outside wall (turn to 55)?

45

Does Altheus the Avenger need help to make his mind up? Have 1 Shame point and return to 25.

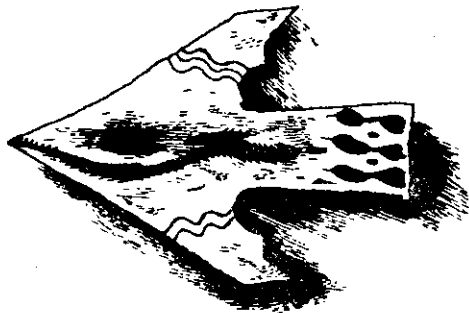
46

Here, to your horror, you see displayed the carnage of the hard-fought battle. Cretan soldiers descend on white-marbled Athens and put it to the sword, carrying off men and women for lonely exile or death on the shores of Crete. A warrior raises high his spear in salute to the sky, for Zeus has given his men the victory, and massacred the foe. The spear-tip points to a small ornamental N inscribed on the stone. You may go north (turn to 230), east (turn to 384) or south (turn to 90).

47

If you do not know the woman's name, turn to 486. If you think you know her name, you may address her. Do you think it is:

Ariadne?	Turn to 294
Cyron?	Turn to 410
Eliduros?	Turn to 451
Lembra?	Turn to 221
Thaisia?	Turn to 325



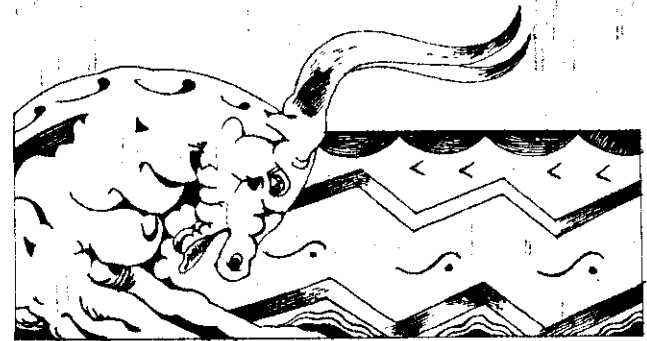
48

'I will lead you out, if you spare me and leave this land for ever,' Minos continues. 'Those are my terms and I offer you no others.'

'Make me king, Minos,' you retort. 'I have earned your throne.'

At this Minos laughs loudly: 'I see. It is my daughter you want. Well, take her, but leave Crete.'

Do you accept his offer (turn to 25), press your claim to the throne (turn to 322), or tell him to keep his daughter and his kingdom (turn to 148)?



49

Kremton has Might 5, Protection 13, and Miktros, Might 4, Protection 11. You fight Kremton first. Each time you are hit, subtract 4 points from your Endurance. You may neither surrender nor retreat. If you Seriously Wound them both, turn to 461; after five rounds, turn in any case to 167; if you lose, you are dead and may not be saved by Zeus.



50

You arrive at the gymnasium just as Polycrates is leaving. 'Too late,' he tells you. 'You've missed your chance. There's something I have to attend to.' Go to 240.

51

Zeus heals you and you regain consciousness. It seems Polycrates has left you for dead. You rise and rush out of the palace. Go to 116.

52

You cast your eyes around at the scene portrayed here and see brave-hearted Perseus slaying a fearsome sea-monster, spawn of the depths, in order to save Andromeda, who is chained by the shore. The blood runs red from a gash in the monster's side, and its guard drops again as Perseus thrusts and severs life from limb. Fair-faced Andromeda he marries, and sets off once more for Seriphos and home. You may turn north (go to 259), east (go to 86), south (go to 430) or west (go to 466).

53

The woman is nowhere in sight to the left, but you rush along to the far wall, in which there is a small hole created by the earthquake. Crouching down, you can see the figure in red running away, but she does not turn when you call. Then there is another tremor, and the walls of the maze shake. Pieces of rock fall all around you and the hole, which moments before was barely wide enough to crawl through, is now so big that two men could pass easily. Then the roof ahead of you opens up, and dazzling sunlight floods in. A new exit has appeared, right in front of you. You reach up, but before you can pull yourself out another crash heralds the collapse of the entire labyrinth. A large rock strikes your arm, and you fall to the floor. Another crashes into your shoulder and pins you to the ground. Helpless, you watch the walls on either side fracture and slowly cave in on top of you. Your adventures end here.

54

Before the fatal blow can be struck, life-giving Zeus snatches you away and deposits you, wounds healed, in your bed. Go to 125.





55

As you move your left hand down to grope for a handhold, Thaisia stabs the pin of her brooch into your right hand. You cry out in pain and clutch it to your breast, with the brooch still protruding. Go to 506.

56

The way here is strewn with stones, which have fallen from a weak point in the masonry. You must be careful to avoid death from Daedalus' work. You may go north (turn to 466) or south (turn to 198).

57

Banish all evil thoughts from your mind. Have 1 Shame point, and return to 37.

58

You collapse on to your knees and the man swings his sword about in a short arc, which ends at your neck. You die.

59

'I come with messages from my father Aegeus,' you start, throwing in his name as weight. 'But these were . . . unaccountably mislaid on the voyage.' You reflect that, if you were in Minos' position, you would not believe this. He is in his position, and he does not believe you either. You are carried swiftly off to prison. Go to 244.

60

With a snarl you add, 'Now join your partner in tyranny . . . in death,' and sink Minos' axe into his neck. He slumps to the ground. Have 3 Shame points for killing a defenceless man. If you were imprisoned before you came into the labyrinth, go to 510. Otherwise go to 481.

Polycrates is still with the guards, and he is being as unhelpful as he can.

'I understand you've arrested Dipthis and Crabia,' you say.

'And others. Your friend Lactris is in trouble too. I was hoping Psyche was going to have it out with him, but you seem to have defused that particular situation.' For the first time, his manner lightens a shade. 'What is your interest in these traitors?'

You have a sinking feeling. 'I want them released.'

'Oh, is that all?'

'Please, Polycrates.' It is not going to work.

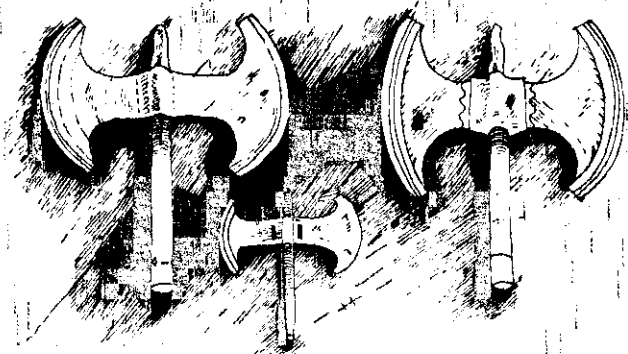
'All right.' Polycrates draws you away.

'All right?' You are as surprised as you have ever been.

'What's the catch?'

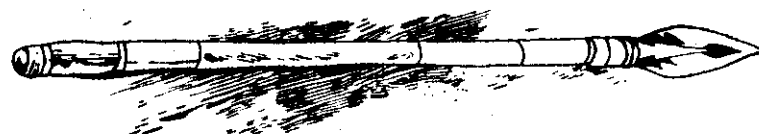
'You must kill Kremton.'

Go to 376.



On your way to the guards' quarters, you are disturbed by a great commotion. You decide to see what is happening and you run towards the din. Go to 4.

Prometheus, his hair blowing in an unnatural breeze, climbs to the hearth of Zeus, home of the god. From his tunic he takes a narrow rod, in which he places a burning branch, intending to take the sacred flame to earth-bound men as a gift from the gods. The scene seems almost real, so great is the magic of the long-dead artist. You may turn north (turn to 96), south (turn to 331) or west (turn to 517).



64

It grows dark and you slip into fitful sleep. Several times during the night, you wake sweating profusely, but morning finally arrives. A guard comes into the room and leads you away to the throne-room, where Minos awaits you.

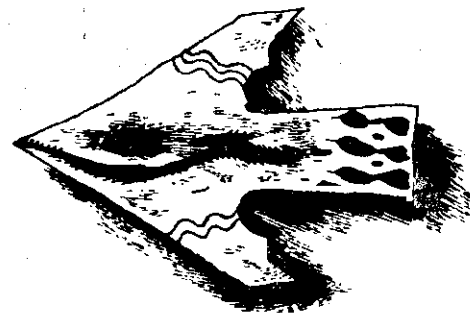
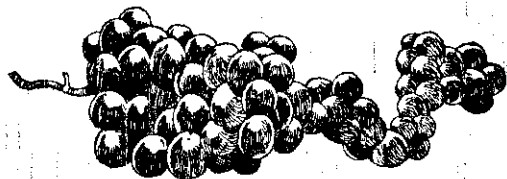
'Ah, Altheus, you impetuous youth, it would have been better had you never come to Crete, better for both of us. You have destroyed the magnificent labyrinth, designed for me by Daedalus. He shall have his revenge on you, and thus serve me even after death.' Minos laughs heartily, but you are too scared and bewildered to respond.

At a sign from the king, two guards disappear through the double doors. A moment later, they return carrying what appears to be a massive coffin. Then you realize what it is. It is one of Daedalus' infamous torture machines. Will you wait to be tortured (turn to 304), or will you pray to Olympus for deliverance (turn to 536)?

65

You follow the king, putting your trust in his knowledge of the maze, just as sailors have faith in the helmsman who brings the ship safely into the harbour, steering first this way, then the other, to avoid the unseen rocks that lurk beneath the calm surface. Just so, Minos leads you through the labyrinth and at every crossroads he becomes more confident, until at last you emerge once more into the dazzling sunlight. 'Now I have led you out, you must leave Crete,' states the king.

You pause, and start to speak, but all you can utter is the single word 'Minos'. You turn away from the king. Go to 116.



66

You turn right into a long dark passageway, almost entirely untouched by the earthquake. Then you reach a part of the labyrinth which twists and turns without ever giving you a choice of directions. Finally you come to a lighter part, and, rounding a corner, you are momentarily blinded by the sun. It is the outside world. For a second you are too shocked to react, then you rush out. Go to 36.

67

It is dark in the labyrinth, but you can discern faint smudges of pictures on the wall. You follow the fresco for a while, without being able to make out what it represents. You take a penalty of -2 Might and -2 Protection because of the darkness. Then you may go left (turn to 316) or right (turn to 30).



68

The walls here are hung on either side with hundreds of bulls' heads. The Cretans, who so revere the living bull, seem equally to worship its dead shell. You wonder at the ways of foreign men, but not for long, as this gruesome decoration is clearly a sign that you are approaching the Minotaur's lair. You may go west (turn to 90), east (turn to 220) or south (turn to 128).

69

A stag with shining golden antlers, and brazen hooves that beat the air and send up little storms of sand, is depicted on the walls here. Behind it Herakles, his mighty lungs wheezing with the effort of a year-long pursuit, draws his bow in a final attempt to best the animal, and bring it back from Arcadia, thereby completing the third of his tasks. You may go to the south (turn to 249), north (turn to 276) or east (turn to 492).

70

The passageway stretches on as far as you can see. It is cold underground, and you shiver as you walk on in the semi-darkness. A sound makes you pause, but you tell yourself it is just your imagination. Then, just as you set off once more, you hear it again. At first very faintly, then louder, footsteps echo in the labyrinth. Closer they come, until you think they are right beside you. Then they die away gradually. You wait a while, but they do not return. Will you examine the place (turn to 94) or press on (turn to 169)?

71

Thaisia looks at you, her eyes as irresistible as the snares of the huntress. 'Altheus,' she says, 'I have something to tell you. You remember my nickname?' If you do, go to 295; otherwise, turn to 341.

72

Thaisia seizes you by the arm in a fury and drags you out of the cottage. Her mother shouts after you, but whether it is abuse or a warning, you cannot tell.

'What was that about?' you ask on the way back to Knossos, when she has calmed down.

'Oh . . . nothing. My mother disapproves of you as an Argive, that's all.' She flushes, obviously wishing to speak no further.

If your patron is Apollo, turn to 161; otherwise turn to 471.

73

What is your intention, Altheus? Perhaps you ring the bell to attract the Minotaur, or to lament the passing of the souls of so many of your companions. To do so would be foolish; you must be silent, stealthy and swift, if you are to survive the forthcoming confrontation. Lose 2 Honour points, and turn to 501.

74

The king quickly escapes up a ladder which has been passed down from above. Before you can reach it, the ladder is hauled up again, and you are left at the bottom of the entrance to the labyrinth. After some time the noise from the temple above dies away, and you decide that it is safe to climb out. The walls of the pit are slippery, but you manage to get up into the room. There is no one about and the place seems very quiet. Will you search for Minos (turn to 495) or Ariadne (turn to 216), or will you leave Crete now (116)?

75

Polycrates grasps the rod firmly and proclaims: 'Altheus, with the symbol of justice in my hands I sentence you to death.' You feel a blow on the back of your neck as the guard strikes you. You fall to your knees and the other guard slices your head from your shoulders. Not even Zeus can save you now.

76

As you go down the stairs, you pass two guards on their way up, followed at a short distance by Polycrates. He seizes you by the arm and spins you round. 'What are you doing in this part of the palace?' he demands. Will you tell him (turn to 426), invent a story (turn to 450), or make a run for your room (turn to 185)?

77

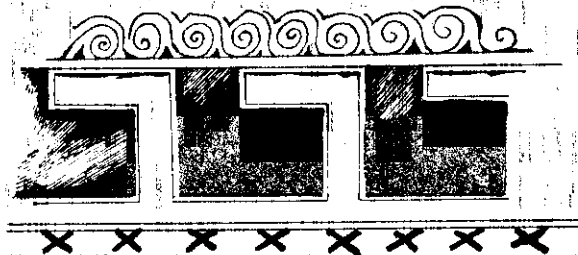
You see depicted here the goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone wandering in a meadow filled with flowers. As Demeter walks the very earth seems to spring forth in blossom. You may go north (turn to 418), east (turn to 300) or south (turn to 504).

78

You arrive in the great hall of Knossos and take your place at the long oaken table. The meal of nuts, fruit and hot stewed vegetables is surprisingly nourishing, and you are soon sated. The gong at the far end of the table is struck once and the sound reverberates through the large hall. The company stirs, and Minos rises to his feet. Will you rise as well (turn to 408), or will you remain seated (turn to 330)?

79

At the other end of the gallery, you find a rope-ladder leading up to a trapdoor in the ceiling, and a flight of stone steps leading down. Will you go up (turn to 412) or down (turn to 187)?





The palace is quiet. You tread warily through the cold deserted corridors to the underground training-room, where Crabia is waiting for you. It is a huge gloomy hall, with a dirt floor. In the middle is a complicated wooden apparatus with two projecting handles, spaced as far apart as a bull's horns.

'You're going to try leaping on that,' orders Crabia. You do a few practice handstands on the floor, and then try to jump and catch the handles. Eventually you can leap, catch the handles, balance for a moment and then spring off to land on the ground on the other side. Crabia nods and walks to the machine.

'That's good, but it's gymnastics, not bull-leaping. Try this, now.' She pulls two small wooden pegs out of the machine and goes back to her place. You try again, but this time as you balance the machine rocks, throwing you to the ground.

'Ha! You peasant,' crows Crabia. 'You think a bull will hold its head still for you? Again.'

This time it takes longer, but you are at last able to cope with the rocking. Crabia pulls out two more pegs and demonstrates that it will now sway from side to side as well as backwards and forwards. 'Do it.'

Your arms and legs ache, but at long last you are learning not to rely on the horns, not to use them as support, but merely to flick them to steady yourself; to balance, but always to be ready to leap off when the head tilts.

Crabia seems satisfied: 'Good.' Then she corrects herself: 'Not as good as your brother, but you'll do.' You thank her, too, out of breath to be sarcastic, and start to go back to your room. 'Wait!' You turn curiously, and she pins a minuscule silver bull to your shoulder. 'There, now you are halfway to being a bull-leaper. Tomorrow, we finish.'

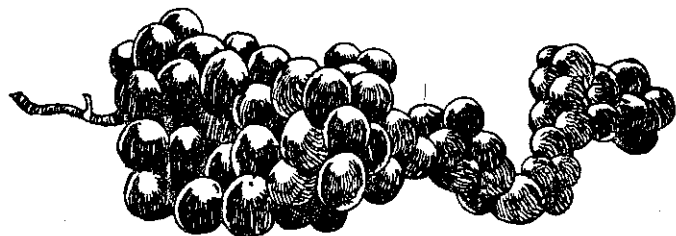
Add 2 to your Endurance, and have 1 Honour point. You return to your room exhausted, and catch some sleep. Go to 337.

81

If Aphrodite is your patron, go to 407. Otherwise go to 21.

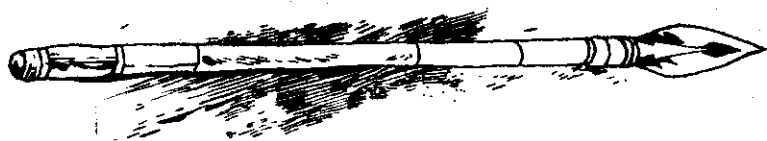
82

After a few minutes you become concerned that Minos has not returned, but you wait much longer in the hope that he has not deserted you. Eventually you admit to yourself that he will not return and you set off, cursing, into the labyrinth, this time with neither guide nor thread. Go to 488.



83

You ignore Ariadne's threat and raise your sword to strike, like the falcon that soars high into the air before plunging to earth to rip the entrails out of a petrified field-mouse. But the Amazon warrior has broken off the shaft of her spear and now she thrusts it up between your legs into your stomach and kidneys. You die from shock. Even Zeus will not save you now.



84

Lactris leaves. Opris talks to Noa for a moment, and they both go out together to the temple. You look around for Thaisia, but she seems not to be present. Psyche, looking distinctly the worse for wear, sidles up to you.

'Oh dear,' she moans. 'Do you know what that was about?'
'I think so.'

'Lactris looks a bit put out. Perhaps . . . ' But she sees Andra approaching, obviously intent on another heart-to-heart talk about your brother's merits and the benefits of romance. Psyche winks, pats you on the arm and goes. Out of the corner of your eye you see her being stopped by Mikros.

To forestall Andra telling you how much she loves the Athenian accent, you ask where Thaisia is.

'She went to her mother's early this morning,' Andra tells you in a gleeful tone that implies that she thinks she knows the reason for your interest. 'She won't be back until after the festival.'

You can stay and talk to Andra (turn to 519), or see to other business around the palace (turn to 10).

85

You think quickly and realize that very little stands between you and the throne of Crete. Will you leave Crete in peace (turn to 116), or return to Minos and challenge him (turn to 491)?

86

The ceiling lowers here and you are forced to stoop, and then to kneel, like a man crawling to his god and supplicating for mercy. You may go south (turn to 338), west (turn to 52) or north (turn to 222).

You clamber into the boat and Opris casts off the ropes. The caïque drifts out into the bay as he runs up the sail. There is a light breeze, and the Cretan shore is soon distant. The sun shines gently down, and you stretch out in the back of the boat and relax slightly. A shadow crosses your face and you look up to see Opris, who sits down beside you.

'Why do you have a boat, Opris?'

He shrugs. 'As an escape. When the in-fighting at court becomes too overwhelming, I can come down here and forget it all for a while. Dipthis' dragons, Lactris' bronzes: it's all the same sort of thing. It's much easier now that Pasiphae is no longer with us.'

'Minos' wife? What was she like?'

'Well, I'm not one to speak ill of the dead,' Opris begins, his relish making it clear that he is going to do precisely that, 'but she was . . . well, let's just say it was entirely appropriate that she lusted after a bull.'

'I thought that was just rumour.'

'No, the gods' honest truth. But she thoroughly deserved it.'

'Oh, and why?'

'She was an old battleaxe. That's why Minos took the axe as his symbol.'

'Really?'

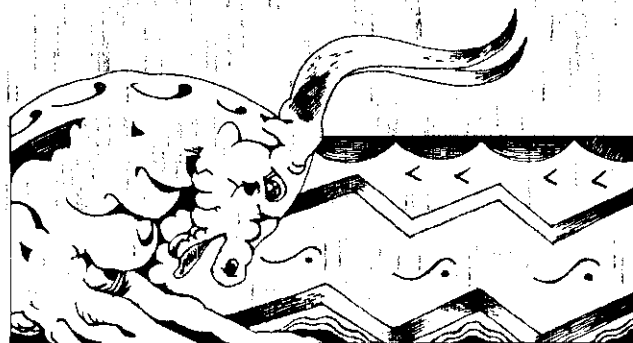
Opris looks at you despairingly. 'No. It was just a joke. Never mind. Anyway, she was always on our backs, when Lactris and I and the others were younger: "Hold your head up"; "If you don't eat your mousaka, you can't have any baklava"; "Stop being uppish", if you ever contradicted Kremton or Miktros; that kind of thing. She made the court a real misery. People say it's too effete now that Minos and the eunuchs run everything, but that's because they've forgotten how bad things used to be.'

'I see.' You don't see at all.

'So, when you see us as we are now – Lactris sour, womanizing, drunken; Miktros toadying, waiting to see which way the cat will jump; Kremton a bullying lout – you've got to

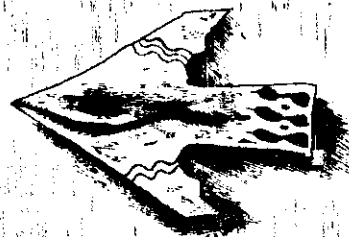
remember that for years that woman was doing her best to set us against each other. Don't judge us too harshly.'

You glance wistfully at Thaisia. Struggling to your feet, you slip and fall over the side of the boat. If you are in Disfavour with Poseidon, go to 145; otherwise go to 465.



Minos does not fall at your feet in supplication, but instead grins. 'I know the way out of this labyrinth. You do not.' He laughs, then winces in pain. 'If you kill me, you will never escape this prison.'

Will you continue fighting to kill Minos (turn to 308), or will you bargain with him (turn to 48)?



89

You stride eagerly down the corridor, not looking at the pictures on either side, intent only on the way ahead. Without warning the floor in front of you opens up into a wide crevasse. You turn, and behind you rocks begin to crash down from the roof, cutting off your retreat. Now the labyrinth shakes, and the floor beneath you collapses, sending you down into a cavern below. The rocks cascade after you and crush you as you lie helpless. Zeus cannot save you in the labyrinth.



90

As you walk along, you see a small object on the ground. It is a delicately crafted ring, carved in the shape of a bull's head. In its centre is set a sapphire, which glows with a faint blue light. Do you pick the ring up (turn to 432)? Or do you carry on north (turn to 46), east (turn to 68), south (turn to 281) or west (347)?

91

After a while, Opris enters. From his manner he is evidently bearing bad news.

'Well?'

'Lactris is dead. And yes, it's pretty much our fault.'

Have 1 Shame point. 'What are we going to do?' you ask.

'Our first concern is Psyche. Altheus, go to Polycrates. See if you can do anything with him. She's not well.'

Will you try to persuade Polycrates (turn to 301) or not (turn to 457)?

92

The guard assumes you are dead and rushes out of the temple to fetch his captain. The breath of the god plays on your lips and the divine master carries you back to your room. Go to 125.

93

You reflect how the kingship of Crete would solve all of your problems, and then wonder why Minos should make such an offer. Eventually, you inquire further. 'Tell me more.'

'You're going to fight Kremton, ceremonially, on the morning of the festival. During that . . . why, anything can happen.'

'What if I don't win?'

'Then you're dead. You'll just have to train.'

Another thought strikes you. 'Why are we going to fight?'

'Because you're going to come to lunch now with me and insult him until he has to fight you.'

Go to 208.





94

Now that the dust-cloud has subsided, you can make out some of the pictures on the walls. You wipe away the dust with your hand and reveal, beneath your fingers, an archer poised to shoot. Another stroke of your hand and his prey is exposed: a white hart. Avidly you clear the whole wall, your crude sweeps seemingly painting a magnificent scene of detail and colour in the dust. The archer is none other than Apollo, and near by his sister Artemis prepares a javelin. The hart is poised for flight, already startled by the dogs that snap about its feet. Suddenly a voice cuts through the air and you turn to see the king of Crete, Minos himself, at your side.

'Altheus, you fool, did you really think that I would let you escape from Crete? Kill the Minotaur and walk away unscathed? No, of course you didn't.' He laughs, but there is no warmth in the gesture. 'No, you have ruined my palace, you have killed my beast, and now you shall die.'

You must fight Minos (Might 8, Protection 16). He has a sword (Might 2, Protection 0). You cannot retreat. If you Seriously Wound him, turn to 88. If you are Seriously Wounded, turn to 369.

95

'My greetings to you, Lembra,' you reply courteously.

'Well, I saved your life yesterday. What can I do for you now?'

'I came to speak to the lady Ariadne,' you tell her.

'Ariadne is in my care. Minos has decreed that she shall speak to no man. But you are a friend of the Amazon people, and that friendship will help you where no sword could. Come with me.' She leads you through a curtain into Ariadne's bedroom. Go to 270.

96

Zeus, lord of creation, is depicted in the gathering gloom of the maze, transforming himself into a shower of gold so that he may visit Danae, imprisoned and hopeless in a tower of stone. From this union of mortal and divine springs forth Perseus, in strength and cunning second only to Herakles among the heroes. You may go north (turn to 411), south (turn to 63) or west (turn to 136).

97

Will you kill Kremton as he lies unconscious at your feet (turn to 363), or will you let him live (turn to 123)?

98

You watch your neighbour: she begins to get to her feet, so you copy her actions. Turn to 408.

99

'You mentioned Eliduros,' she says, obviously surprised. You explain the circumstances of your meeting and how you saved him from death. As you finish, Ariadne sits on the edge of the gallery, swinging her legs like a small girl paddling.

'Eliduros was my lover,' she explains. 'When my father found out, he banished him, and later we had word he'd been killed. Thank you for saving him.' She pauses. 'They're going to put you into the labyrinth, you know. I can't save you from that, but take this.'

She throws something to you, which turns out to be a large ball of thin wool, wrapped round a bronze comb. 'I offered it to Theseus, but he wouldn't take it. You can find your way out.'

'Why are you helping me?' you ask.

'I want to get out of here.'

Go to 272.

100

You undress and lie on your bed, tired out. By now there is no sound but the grasshoppers outside and, from time to time, the cry of a night bird. You drift gently into Morpheus' shadowy kingdom. Go to 337.

101

In the far corner of the cramped room is a tiny window, letting in precious light. You stagger to your feet and walk over to it. It is late afternoon and the sun is starting to slip down into the hills of the west. You glance down, but you are some thirty feet above the ground, too far to jump. Away in the distance you see two men driving a laden mule towards the town. You realize that shouting to them will not help: what could two peasants do against the king and his guards? You sigh, involuntarily, as the hopelessness of your position becomes more and more apparent. All you can do is sit and wait, as the hours slip by. Go to 64.

102

A few seconds pass, and then you creep down the passageway after Minos. In the dim light you see him tottering along, obviously in great pain from the wounds you have inflicted upon him. He turns a corner, and in the time it takes you to get there, he has disappeared. You can turn left (turn to 314) or right (turn to 422).

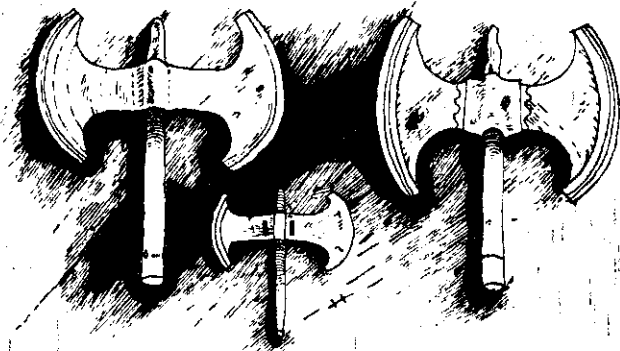


103

You stand aghast at Thaisia's sudden betrayal. You gaze at her, your eyes pleading for help, but there is no pity to be found on her harsh visage. The guard returns with a long black iron rod, which tapers evilly at one end into a sharp spike. You can pray to your patron for help (turn to 268), or you can see what will happen (turn to 75).

104

Zeus heals your wounds, but you must continue the fight against your opponents. If you Seriously Wound them, go to 243. If you surrender or try to retreat, go to 163.



105

You hear a faint buzzing, but you cannot find its source, so you keep walking on over the debris that litters the labyrinth floor. You glance down to find your way through the rubble, and when you look up, there in front of you is a woman dressed in a red robe. You rub your eyes and she is gone. Do you call out (turn to 258), turn right (turn to 155) or left (turn to 53), or do you assume you are hallucinating (turn to 15)?

106

A great three-bodied man besets Herakles, its six hands all bearing a sword or shield, malice alive on all three faces. Herakles soon overcomes this creature, Geryon, and its two-headed hound, with daggers for teeth. From these cruel creatures Herakles steals a flock of oxen, destined for his cousin Eurystheus as a token of his completion of the tenth labour. You may turn east (turn to 122), south (turn to 436) or north (turn to 402).

107

You return to the table and fill a goblet with a deep red wine. You walk slowly back to the tall man with the goblet. Go to 372.

108

Your Chronicle Sheet looks as follows:

Might: 4	Honour: 20
Protection: 10	Shame: 7
Endurance: 30	Intelligence: 0

Axe: Might 5, Protection -3

Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2

Hera - Disfavour

Furies - Disfavour

Athena - Favour

All others - Neutral

Note: As a client of Apollo, you may ignore any Shame or Honour penalties that accrue as a direct result of taking hints.

Roll a die. If it is 6, go to 446. Otherwise, go to 226.



109

In the corridor you pause to admire an intricate shell, mounted on a plinth, with thin copper wire threaded right through it. As you look, Minos appears behind you. 'You know how that was done, boy?'

You shake your head.

'Well, let me tell you a story. Some years ago, Daedalus was on the run from me. He went to ground in Syracuse, and I lost him there. Well, I offered a reward to anyone who could thread a wire through one of these shells. He tied wire on to a piece of silk, tied the silk to an ant, and let it walk through.'

Minos picks up the wire by both ends and twirls the shell on it. 'It was brought to me and . . .' he pulls the wire tight and the shell shatters into tiny pieces ' . . . I had him. The moral is: don't be too clever. Remember that, Altheus.' Go to 427.

110

The way grows dim, and you can feel, rather than see, that there is an opening to the right. Ahead, the passage seems to continue straight on, but you can hardly make out the walls in the darkness. Will you go right (turn to 479) or straight on (turn to 360)?

111

There is a wall of stone here upon which is carved an ornamental flower, setting you in mind of the garlands which adorned the maidens of Troezen so far away, in your youth. There are handholds in the south wall, so that you may climb upwards. All is lost in blackness above. Do you banish fear and attempt the ascent (turn to 219)? Or do you retrace your steps (turn to 342)?



112

You leave Psyche in her room, calmer now, and return to the throne-room.

'It's all right,' you tell Noa.

Opris draws you aside. 'Are you going to see about Dipthis and Crabia?'

'Will it do any good?'

Opris shrugs. 'It might. Talk to him. Do what you want.' He turns his attentions back to Noa, and it becomes clear you are not wanted here.

Will you go to Polycrates and plead for Dipthis and Crabia (turn to 61), or return to your room (turn to 277)?

113

You arrive at the underground training-room, but there is no one there. You wait for a few minutes, but nobody arrives, so you return to your room with a sense of missed opportunity. Go to 213.

114

'Late as ever,' greets Opris, but there is no humour in his tone.

'What's with Psyche?'

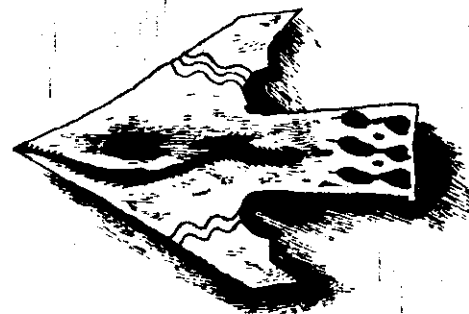
'Lactris has . . . thrown her over,' murmurs Noa, still trying to comfort Psyche.

'He always does this,' adds Opris exasperatedly, and then raises his voice a touch. 'You know Polycrates has arrested Dipthis and Crabia?'

'What for?'

'It seems they were plotting with the townspeople to stage a revolt this afternoon.' Opris pauses expressively. 'Not a good morning, all in all.'

You sit with Psyche, at a loss for anything to say. If your patron is Apollo or Aphrodite, go to 29. Otherwise go to 332.



115

As you proceed down into the depths of Crete's black land, you realize that to see in the labyrinth you must light your torch. Yet Fortune does not altogether smile on you.

For each paragraph you turn to, mark off one box of your Labyrinth Track on the Chronicle Sheet (there are forty boxes in all). When this is completed, your torch goes out and you will take a penalty of -2 Might and -2 Protection in combat, because you cannot fight effectively in the dark. Some light filters in from the surface above through tiny holes, whose prime purpose is to let air circulate, so that the Minotaur's victims die a slower death. Turn to 406.

116

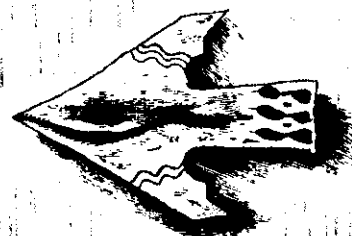
You hurry towards the harbour, anxious to quit this foreign land. For a while, your thoughts are back with your home in Troezen, but as you reach the port your mind returns to the matter in hand: escape. You wander along the quayside, and notice an unattended boat, moored on its own. You untie the small craft and jump in. Running up the sail, you move the boat away from the quay. You sigh with relief that no one has noticed your theft, until you hear a cry from the shore.

'Wait,' shouts Ariadne, as she runs towards you, barefoot, along the dusty wharf. Then with a graceful leap, she clears the ever-increasing gap and lands in the dinghy. As the wind takes you out, you both slump down in the stern. Go to 473.

Dipthis' room is dark and austere. A single straw mattress lies on the floor and there are no chairs. But, sunk several feet into the floor, there is a large pit. Water surrounds a small island with a few plants growing on it. Moving around the island are two small dragons, each the size of a large dog. Dipthis speaks, behind you.

'Daedalus brought two monstrous eggs for me from the barbarian East. I hatched them out and fed them while they grew. The fools of the court mock me for having no children, but let me tell you, adventurous Altheus, that I prefer my dragons. They give me no gratitude and I expect none. Thus, unlike a father, I cannot be disappointed.'

You are dismayed at this dismissal of the family, which the gods value highly. Do you depart in disgust (turn to 526), or will you stay and listen (turn to 19)?





118

The circle flexes, like the maw of some giant sea-creature, as the dancers all kick higher and higher, until it would take only a slight effort of will to reach the dancer opposite. The music pounds wildly. Go to 320.

119

You tear a strip off your tunic and carefully wrap the arm in it. The intricacy of the piece is truly amazing, and you wonder at the ways of the craftsmen who produce such worlds of beauty. Even Daedalus himself could not have equalled it. Do you go north (turn to 68), east (turn to 276), west (turn to 281) or south (turn to 319)?

120

If you have an arrow, go to 533. Otherwise have 2 Shame points and go to 337.

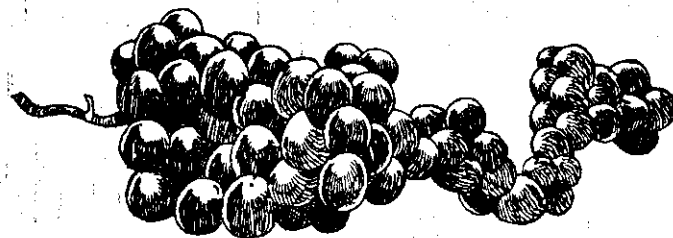
121

In your desperation, you remember your patron and offer up prayers, hoping that the gods may help you even in this foreign land. Yet as you pray it seems that indeed, as Hermes told you, older and darker forces prevail. Nothing changes, except for the slow onset of night and you slip into deep sleep, wearied by the day's events. Go to 364.



122

The labyrinth walls here display the spectacle of Herakles, his arms bulging with pain, bearing the burden of the earth, as the great Titan Atlas goes into the Hesperides' garden to seize their apples of gold. Yet soon the dim-witted giant, son of earth, bears the world's weight once more, and Herakles is on his way, for he has but one more labour to perform. You may go west (turn to 106), north (turn to 273), east (turn to 225) or south (turn to 179).





123

You leave Kremton and stagger out of the ring into the arms of Opris and Noa. Looking over your shoulder, you see, to your horror, two small boys dressed as the catamites of Zeus skip into the ring and beat out Kremton's brain with small leaden hammers. Go to 485.

124

You swing your hand down into the man's stomach and hear him grunt in pain. At the same time you manage to grab the knife from his hand. You run for the door and are faced with two more men. They are both Might 7, Protection 12, and are armed with short swords (Might 2). The knife adds nothing to your Might. If you kill both men, go to 358; if you lose, go to 58; if you retreat, go to 204; if you surrender, go to 444.

125

You lie back on your pallet and stare up at the ceiling. The only noise is the persistent plaintive cry of the sea-birds outside. Suddenly, you feel yourself beginning to sweat all over and you have the fleeting impression that you are drowning in your own perspiration. You thrash around, desperately twisting and bending your body into strained arcs in an attempt to rub away the sweat before it eats into your flesh. You gasp for air and breathe in water. You choke and flounder, awash in a gaseous green sea. You go under once, then twice, and when you surface, clawing at the air, your fist clutches something solid, something alive. It is the Minotaur.

You cry out and awaken, shaking. It is early evening, and the palace is alive again. Go to 403.

126

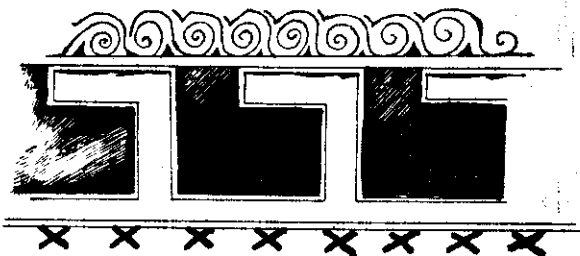
Does Geryon, even though dead, inspire dread in your heart? Take 1 Shame point and return to 106.

127

As you reach the tall man, you fling the wine. 'Altheus is no man's slave,' you snarl. A ripple of applause is checked by the tall man drawing a shortsword from his belt. You realize that you have no weapons and begin to back away. Will you apologize (turn to 190), or will you try to fight him weaponless (turn to 242)?

128

If you are carrying an arm from a statue, go to 396. If you are not, go to 352.



129

'There's someone coming,' you tell Opris. Lactris glares at you for interrupting his exposition.

'Between young men is the finest love,' he begins again, but Opris is clearer-headed.

'Quick, hide the stuff.' The goblets and jugs are hidden under the bed. Opris assumes an attitude of prayer, and after a moment you do too. Pangryon, the High Priest, bursts into the room with several guards. There is an angry, embarrassed silence and then he speaks: 'Why are you not at the festival dance?'

Opris looks up. 'We are devoting ourselves to the goddess in meditation,' he says. 'Will you join us?'

Pangryon sniffs suspiciously. 'I apologize for interrupting your zeal,' he says finally and leaves.

'Thank you,' whispers Opris.

'I want a drink,' slurs Lactris.

'I think we'd better not. He's capable of coming back.'

'I want a drink.'

'No, Lactris.'

'All right.' And, to your surprise, he climbs to his feet and goes to the door. 'But when I'm ephor you'll be sorry.' He goes.

'I'm sorry,' says Opris. 'He's a good friend, really.'

You nod. Psyche has fallen asleep. 'What was that about ephors?'

'Oh,' Opris waves a distracted hand, 'nothing. He doesn't mean it.'

'What is it, though?'

Opris sighs. 'For the festival, there are always two ephors, one of whom is a priestess, the other one of us. They, you know, arrange things in the temple, nothing exciting but it's prestigious. Lactris has been working towards it for ages, since we were children.'

'And he has the post?'

'It's announced tomorrow. It's a boring task, it's just that it's a chance to talk to Noa. One of the priestesses, she's really nice. Actually, I probably mentioned her earlier.'

'Several times.'

He shrugs. 'Well, there you are.'

You return to your room. Subtract 10 from your Endurance. Go to 100.

The music slows and marks time. All the slaves leave the floor and crouch by the side, except for the women. They start a fresh dance, all together, and the musicians take up a new, plaintive tune.

'Have you seen this before?' whispers Thaisia, who has moved to your side. You shake your head, intent on the dance.

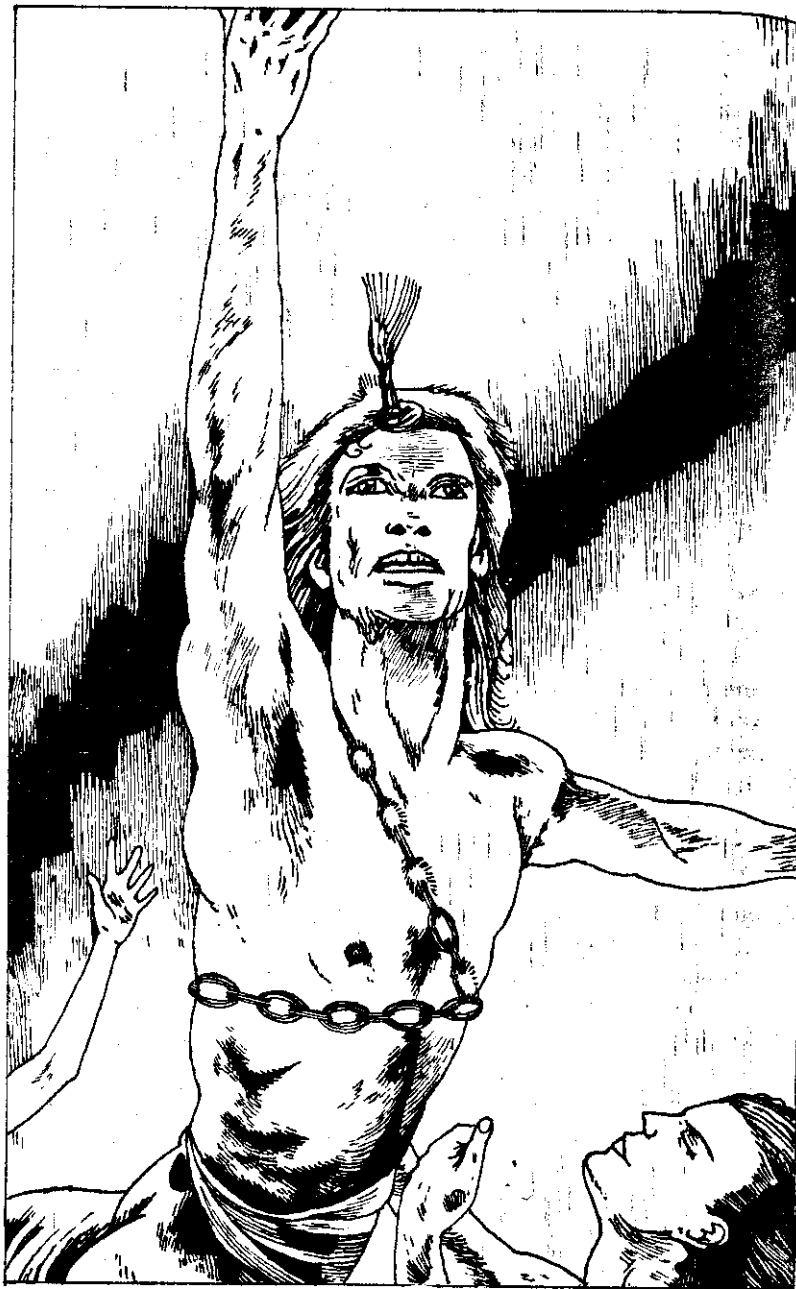
'It's called the mihaniko; it's a divers' dance, from Calymnos. These women are supposed to be pearl-divers . . . They swallow a mouthful of air and oil and swim about, letting out a little at a time so they can stay under. Now, for the festival, they dance their thanks to Lady Demeter. Ah! look.'

Another dancer, a man, has come on to the floor. He dances the same steps as the women, but clumsily, tripping now and then. You glance at Thaisia, inquiringly.

'In the story, this is an old diver, one afflicted by Apollo, yet he insists on joining the dance, the praise. It's a very hard role to dance.'

You look back. The dancer indeed looks paralysed, yet his 'mistakes' have something inspired about them. Again and again he nearly falls, but recovers with an intricate kick and jump, creating in his own way a kind of beauty. Finally he crouches on the ground, then seems to explode into the air, leaping and spinning with new vigour, nothing paralytic about him now. The drums reach a crescendo, and the pipes lose their sadness and play joyfully. The dancer turns a somersault in the air and lands on his feet, facing the table. The courtiers, who have been gazing silently, burst into applause, smiting their thighs and stamping.

'And in the end,' says Thaisia, 'the archer god cures him.' There are tears in her eyes. Go to 251.



131

The earthquake has confused you completely. You cannot see more than a few inches because of the thick fog of dust swirling around. The walls have collapsed in places and in others rubble blocks the passageway. You can no longer decipher the pictures on the walls. Go to 417.

132

You may turn north (turn to 300) or west (turn to 504).

133

'Did you know you talk in your sleep?'

'No, what do I say?'

Thaisia is rubbing oils into her face, squinting at her reflection in a mirror with a stand fashioned to look like two maidens, each about as large as a hand, and pauses before replying: 'Oh, nothing interesting. Right, I'm ready. Shall we eat?' Go to 311.

134

Go to 341.

135

You wait for several minutes, and then you hear footsteps coming up the stairs behind you. Will you open the door (turn to 156), or return to your room (turn to 76)?

136

Prometheus the Titan is shown, proud and defiant against his master Zeus, seeking to trick him, as an unruly servant tries to deceive his lord. He kills a bull and wraps up its best parts in the skin, which he conceals in the stomach. The bones he covers in fat, and demands of father Zeus that he choose the portion he desires, and take it to himself. You may go west (turn to 501), south (turn to 517), east (turn to 96) or north (turn to 288).

137

After a few minutes, Polycrates does return. 'Altheus, come to box?' he asks.

'Yes, I have.'

'Good, let's box.'

You both bind strips of leather round your knuckles, strip to the waist and start to box. It soon becomes clear that this is no relaxing practice bout: Polycrates is extremely agile for his years, and throws hard punches. When one of these lands you become much more clear-headed.

'Come on, boy, you're dreaming. Fight!'

You begin to fight back, but it is only when Polycrates begins to tire very slightly that you get the upper hand. After several hours you are both completely exhausted. Polycrates holds up a hand.

'All right, we'll stop.' You remove the gloves, strip and go to bathe.

'You were quite good, once you got serious,' comments Polycrates. 'You'll do.'

'Do for what?'

'I hope our practice was useful to you.'

'Yes, thank you . . . useful for what? I still don't see . . .'

A gong sounds. 'Oh, you will, you will. It's time to eat.' He goes. You dress again and go to lunch. Add 10 to your Endurance and go to 109.

138

Suddenly you notice that one of the dancers opposite has a blade protruding from his sandal. He lashes out at you with it, and you dive to the left, pulling the circle with you. The blow catches Andra in the neck and she slumps to the floor, bleeding profusely. The man rushes away, through the stunned crowd. You chase after him, but he has vanished in the maze of palace passages. You return to the dance hall to find Andra dead, apparently poisoned. You return to your room. Have 2 Shame points, and go to 171.



139

The innkeeper seizes a club from beneath the bar and tries to defend himself. He has Might 7, Protection 12, and the club is Might 2. If you kill him, go to 327; if you lose, go to 205; if you retreat, go to 40. You may not surrender.

140

You close your eyes tightly, and the image of Asclepius the healer appears in your mind. You feel the blood from the wound surging out, but you know that it is carrying away the limb-gripping poison. You open your eyes again and you are in your room. Glancing down, you see the curved scar on your stomach. Lose 5 Endurance points. Go to 171.



141

You rush off in search of Ariadne, but you cannot find her in her room. Frantically you search the palace, but it seems she is not around. You have just abandoned any hope of finding her when she walks down the corridor. 'Altheus, I knew you would survive the labyrinth,' she says, genuinely glad. Then her expression changes to one of concern. 'We must leave Crete immediately. There are rumours of a large uprising in the rest of the island. This morning's incident was just the beginning. We must hurry.' She grabs you by the hand and leads you, protesting, out of the palace. Go to 199.

142

The slave directs you to Ariadne's rooms and then goes about his business. Go to 469.

143

Minos' final blow cuts deep into your leg, and, as he draws back his axe, blood gushes out of your wound. Your mind fills with blackness, and then suddenly with a blue fluorescent glow. A strange buzzing rings in your ears and you feel yourself floating on a soft cushion of air. You open your eyes and see Minos' face staring down at you. 'He lives,' he cries, and swings his axe at you once more, but somehow his blow misses. You are on your feet again, Healthy. You must finish the fight. If you kill him, go to 443.

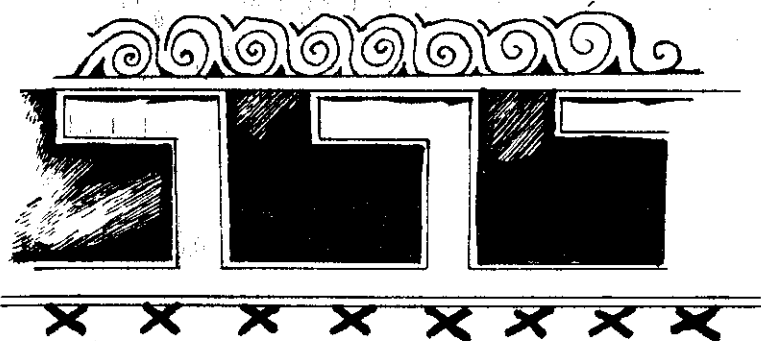
144

The wall here is adorned, as is all the stonework that makes up the twisting twine of tunnels. There seems to be a game in progress on the sea-shore. A high-born lady with a sky-blue robe tosses back her night-black hair as the handmaidens lose hold of the ball and it bobs hither and thither on the white-foaming sea. Just then you seem to hear the rushing sound of water. Perhaps it is your imagination, fevered by the thought of the fight to come. You may go north (turn to 522) or south (turn to 328).



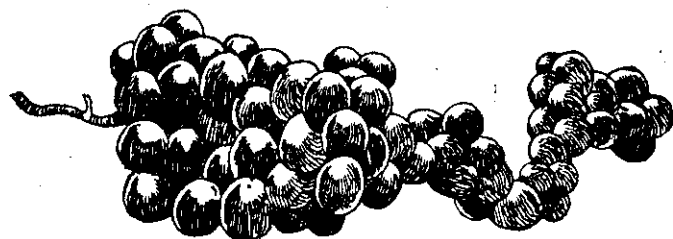
145

You gasp with shock as you fall into the sea. The impact knocks the air from your lungs and you breathe in water. As you choke, you feel yourself being dragged down into Poseidon's twilight kingdom, where the shades of drowned sailors mingle in court and the only music is the skeletal laughter of mermaids and the piping of lungfish. The sea god never forgives.



146

Lembra steps back under your hail of blows, and you move forward to press home your advantage. Then behind you a cry stops you in your tracks. 'Altheus, strike that blow and I'll have thirty guards in here,' threatens the squeaky voice. You turn to see Minos' daughter, Ariadne, loosely clad, tall, with long straight scruffy blonde hair and the look of a menacing predator. Have 3 Honour points. Will you leave and return to your room (turn to 403), or strike the blow (turn to 83)?



147

Instinctively, you smash the goblet on the table, leaving you with a jagged weapon. You threaten the drunken man with a swirl of the broken goblet. Before there is any fighting, however, Minos bellows from the far end of the table: 'Enough! You are both of royal blood. Princes do not brawl in feast-halls. If you must fight, fight on the battlefield or in the boxing-ring.'

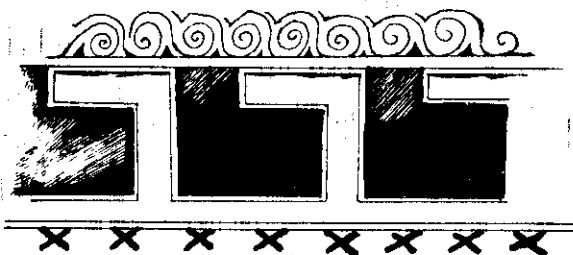
Both young men totter out and Minos turns to you: 'That was my son Kremton, if you can believe it. Now be seated and join our feast once again.' You sit down again next to Thaisia, who, in answer to your whispered question, tells you that the other man was Miktros, Kremton's unpopular friend. Go to 160.



148

'No, Minos, I don't want your daughter. And I sicken of your island with every second. Now show me the way out of this warren and I will leave this sorry land. The tribute of Athenian youth is ended on this day.'

Minos seems surprised by your outburst, but he says nothing. Slowly he leads the way in the gloom. You follow a couple of steps behind. Once or twice, Minos pauses at a crossroads, and stands thinking, as if unable to remember the way. Soon, however, he presses on again, just as a hunting dog stops to regain the scent, and then bounds off in a new direction. After a while, you begin to suspect that Minos is lost, since you are sure you have been this way already. Do you challenge Minos to admit he is lost (turn to 182), or do you keep quiet and follow him (turn to 65)?



149

You pass by a mosaic that portrays a Cretan fleet setting out to plunder the shores of Attica and pillage Athens, like lions who prey on new-born lambs, unaware of the shepherd who lies in wait. Something catches your eye at the foot of the piece; it looks like a bracelet, with a lock of hair clasped in it. Do you take the bracelet (turn to 176), or leave it and pass back to the south (turn to 448)?



150

Thaisia's mother lives in a humble cottage, much like that in which your mother Aethra lives out her declining years in far-off Troezen. Thaisia beckons you inside and you stand on the threshold blinking in the darkness as she calls to her mother. An old woman comes out of an inner room, recognizes Thaisia and embraces her. They start to speak, quickly, in low Cretan, which you cannot understand. Thaisia breaks off and indicates you.

'My mother,' she whispers to you, and turns back to talk to her. Her mother smiles at you. The jabber in low Cretan becomes more and more heated, with the old woman gesturing at you and Thaisia trying to calm her down. You stand there, embarrassed. Go to 72.

151

If you have a minuscule silver bull pinned to your shoulder, go to 265. Otherwise, go to 113.

152

As you open the door of your room, Ariadne passes down the corridor, accompanied by two handmaidens. She winks at you, but only has time to say 'Herakles' before she is off again. Confused, you wander away in the other direction. You meet Dipthis emerging from a doorway, but he does not speak. You decide that it is best not to disturb him, as he seems absorbed in thought. After some time spent vainly exploring, you become tired and return to your room. You lie on your bed and think about the strange old man. Go to 213.

153

The guard grunts, and goes past you along the corridor. Go to 79.

154

You pass to the side of the fire-pit, sweat heavy on your brow. Halfway across, you hesitate, terror takes hold of your heart, and you are hard put to stop yourself tumbling into the flames. At length you reach the other side, a prayer of praise to your patron passing from your parched lips. You may go north (turn to 300), or west (turn to 504).

155

You soon realize that the woman has gone, but you continue running, weaving through the fallen rocks and stumbling with almost every other step. You turn a corner and run straight into someone. It takes you a few moments to realize that it is a woman, although she is dressed in blue and does not disappear when you rub your eyes. Go to 356.

156

You turn the handle and push the door open. You hear a click and two arrows spring out from the frogs' wide mouths. A fraction of a second later you feel a searing pain as they plunge into your temples. All goes black as you slump to the floor, dead. If you have not yet called upon Zeus, go to 213.

157

You rush the guard, who is unprepared for this assault. You have two free attacks. Go to 214.

158

The throne-room has undergone a transformation since you left. The long table has been cleared away to the side, leaving the main area of floor free for the dancers. In the two galleries are musicians, playing high fluting pipes or large lyres with wooden necks, or beating huge drums with a hypnotic rhythm. The music is strange, and you begin to feel how far you are from Troezen, your birthplace. The floor is covered with, seemingly, thousands of dancers, all lightly clad slaves, leaping, whirling, performing seemingly impossible acro-

batics, twirling long silk ribbons, rolling their heads, and letting their long hair fly.

The courtiers are standing on the long table, stamping and clapping with the beat, grinning and occasionally whooping with delight as the dancers accomplish a particularly difficult feat. You clamber up and join them. Your heartbeat starts to race with the drums, and soon you are stamping with the rest, worlds away from the sedate temple-dancers of Passes the Priest. Go to 130.

159

You seize the drink for which you have failed to pay and throw it into the inkeeper's face. He staggers about, and you grab his hair and smash his face on to the counter. He slumps bleeding to the floor, and is still. You turn around. Go to 327.

160

Now that Miktros and Kremton have gone, Minos comes back to the table. 'I know, now, who I forgot,' he says, as if nothing has happened. 'Dipthis, Dipthis the cynic.' He indicates an old man, wrapped up in a threadbare cloak, who turns piercing eyes on you. 'I keep him here because . . . he amuses me,' continues Minos, toying with each word.

'You can't control your son, Minos,' croaks Dipthis. 'Don't think you can patronize me.'

There is another appalling silence, broken by a great laugh from Minos. 'As you see, Altheus, he amuses me. Now, you amuse me. What are you doing here?'

If you have the letters and wish to give them to Minos, go to 339. If you wish to explain instead, go to 253. If you wish to mention Eliduros, go to 431. If you wish to say you have lost the letters, go to 59.





161

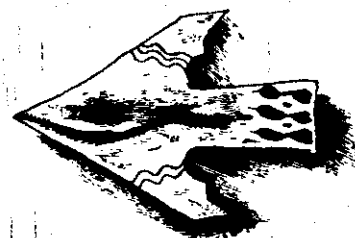
In a blaze of glittering glory the god Apollo appears before you. 'Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men and, for that matter, women?' he cries. 'The god Apollo knows!'

'My lord Apollo,' you protest, stammering. Thaisia cowers at your side.

'No tongue is unknown to the god,' he continues inexorably. 'The god of truth discovers all. This woman planned to betray you tonight in your sleep. Take your reward, traitor!'

Before your horrified eyes, Thaisia falls to the ground, howling. Hairs sprout all over her lily-white skin, and it shrinks back to reveal a jackal's grimacing snout. The animal whines and bounds off into the distance.

'Return to the court,' commands the god, 'and stray no more. You may yet succeed.' Shaking, you walk alone back to the palace. Go to 109.



162

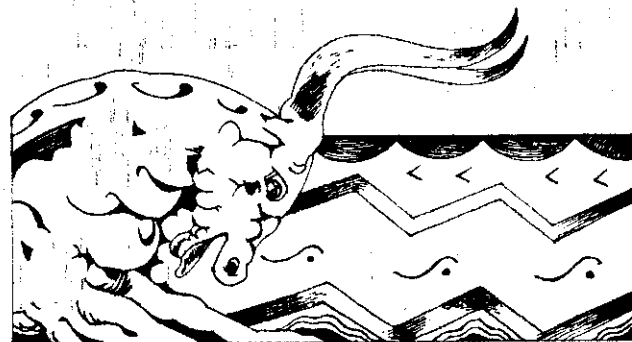
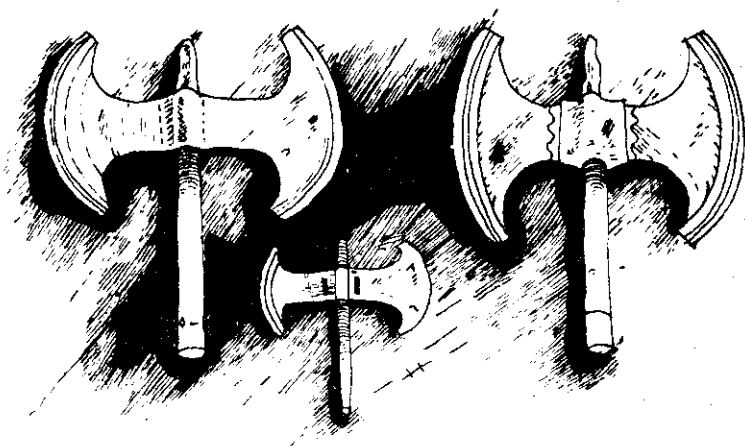
You stoop to retrieve the lyre, but then you hear a terrible rushing and roaring sound. The walls seem to vibrate, and you hear the sounds of falling rocks. The Minotaur comes! You rush on, leaving the lyre. Have 1 Shame point for retreating, and go swiftly north (turn to 470), south (turn to 136), east (turn to 411) or west (turn to 186).

163

The guards seize you and take you to Minos, who has been watching your feeble attempt to fight his men. He looks you up and down with an expression of scorn and then addresses you. Go to 284.

164

You rush at Polycrates and knock him down with your fist. For a few seconds the guards are too stunned to react, and you are twenty yards clear before you hear the sound of an arrow shooting past you. It sticks in the hard ground ahead and quivers like a reed in the summer breeze. You turn to get a glimpse of your pursuers, but this makes you stumble. Now you have no chance of escaping and you wait for the fatal blow to send you from this mortal world. No blow comes, only the faint wheezing of the guards, as they reach you and drag you to your feet. They escort you back to Minos. Go to 284.



165

This fresco shows how Prometheus was released from the underworld, but only to be chained once more, as a madman who may never be freed, yet may not be killed, for his inspiration is from heaven. Prometheus is visited each day by a great eagle, and his liver is torn out by its death-giving claws, piece by piece as the red blood drips to the ground, and the cry of the god in his agony is as the thunder. Yet Prometheus does not die; his liver grows anew each morning, and the torment continues. You may go north (turn to 279) or west (turn to 331).

166

The guard is taken by surprise and you inflict a wound on him. He has Might 5, Protection 12, and a sword with Might 2. There is no retreat, no surrender. If you Seriously Wound him go to 350. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 92.



167

'Stop that!' Polycrates has appeared with two guards. 'I don't know what's happening here, nor do I want to. I never saw this. Altheus, go to your room. And if either of you two thugs follows him, you'll regret it.'

'I am Minos' son,' complains Kremton in a surly manner. 'You have no right to talk to me like that.'

'Oh, haven't I? Shall we go to your father then, and see what he says?' Kremton is silent. 'Altheus, I told you to go,' says Polycrates. Go to 240.



168

Secure in your mind that this talisman will ward off all evil, and perhaps stay the hand of the merciless Minotaur, you steel yourself to the ordeal you must undergo in order to save the honour and lives of the people of Athens. Have 1 Honour point, and turn to 501.

169

The labyrinth here is much darker than further back, and each step seems to lead into deeper blackness. You begin to rely more on feel and less on sight, until you are merely groping forward, anxious to avoid the walls. After a while you feel solid rock directly in your path, but before you can turn around, the earth begins to shake again and a great split opens up in the roof above you. Light floods into the maze and you see that you are not in a dead end, but at a T-junction. The tremor continues and the roof above begins to crumble. You realize you must run or be crushed. Will you dash left (turn to 131) or right (turn to 537)?

170

You notice a ball of wool resting on the table close by. Unnoticed, you slip it into your tunic. Thaisia and her mother are still shouting at each other. Go to 72.

171

Night falls, and the last burst of crimson glory recedes from the horizon. You gaze out of the window for a moment longer, and then consider your options. You can go to sleep now, so as to be refreshed and ready for the next morning (turn to 213), or you can explore the palace (turn to 400).





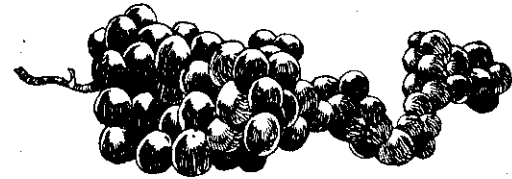
172

The palace seems oddly quiet and few familiar faces pass you in the corridors. Then behind you a friend's voice rings out: 'Altheus, you old war-horse, I didn't think I'd see you again.'

'Opris, I'm glad to see you. Where is everybody?'

'I don't know. I was down on my boat in the harbour and there was an earthquake. I rushed back, but I haven't seen anyone except Ariadne, who was going in the other direction.'

You look puzzled, but Opris explains: 'She's leaving. She says she can't take it any more. Minos and Polycrates have vanished and I can't find Noa anywhere,' he adds, his voice tinged with anxiety. Go to 22.



173

You stop fighting and drop your hands to your side in submission, but the woman refuses to accept your surrender. You must continue. If you win, go to 202.

174

In the temple cunningly wrought iron braziers burn with heady incense. A drum throbs out a slow intoxicating beat. On the altar are an amphora of water and a bowl of grain, as in a normal ceremony of Demeter, but also a beheaded heron. It is clear that this is the fashion in which the Cretans worship the Earth Mother, an obscene twisted parody of a celebration of life, growth and fertility.

Pangryon, the High Priest, is officiating at the altar. There are guards on all the doors. The rest of the court are grouped in a half circle around the altar. The seven youths and seven

maidens are in a huddle of their own, under heavy guard. They stare at you reproachfully and you wink at them with a confidence you do not feel.

'Lady Demeter,' intones Pangryon, 'we are met here at this time to celebrate your festival. Now two strong youths are to battle in your honour. Let the contestants stand forward.'

Opris takes your tunic and pats you reassuringly on the shoulder. Ariadne, from the other side of the temple, blows you a kiss, and you look at her in surprise. Kremton, too, has stripped to his loincloth, and is striding around the ring slapping his belly with the air of a master fighter. You step into the ring. Go to 355.

175

As you mull over your thoughts in the cell, Ares appears to you. 'Altheus, old man, I'm proud of you,' puffs the god. 'Quite the right thing to do. Would have bashed him myself. I'd been getting worried about you.'

'My lord Ares, this afternoon I must fight with Kremton. Will you aid me?'

'Ah, no, can't really. But don't forget, we're all rooting for you.' The god vanishes in a thunderflash. Have 3 Honour points. Go to 35.

176

You stoop to pick the object up and, all at once, you hear the sound that you have dreaded, the bellowing of the king of bulls, the Minotaur. You whirl round, but the beast is upon you, horns almost glowing, eyes red with hate, eyes that have never known fear. The man-half of the creature is bulging with great-sinewed muscles, arms that could almost rend the living rock apart, and snap bones like reeds in the winter wind. The bull-head, huge atop those human shoulders, almost hypnotizes you, and you cannot move.

The Minotaur has Might (*)15, Protection 22. Because of your hesitation it strikes first. If you Seriously Wound the creature, go to 380. If you surrender, go to 209. If you retreat, go to 361. If you die, and pray to Zeus for aid, go to 505.

177

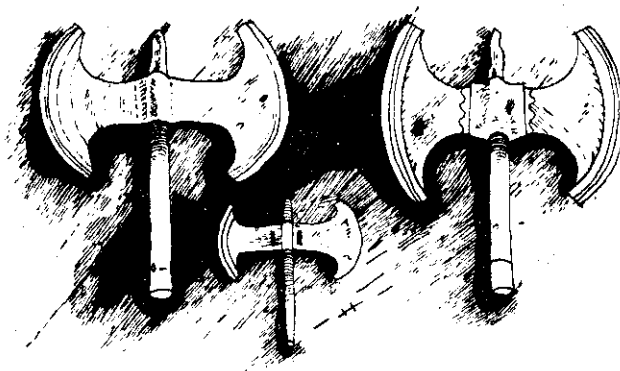
You land heavily at the bottom of the pit and lie winded on the damp earth, as you hear the sounds of the ceremonial crowd breaking up and departing. You stand up and with Minos' parting shout of 'Fool!' echoing in your ears you prepare yourself for the labyrinth. You grab a lighted torch from a bracket and start to search for the entrance to the maze. Go to 5.

178

You come upon a picture of a green sea and a green sky. A green tower protrudes from the sea, and there is a green man in the foreground leaning on a green wall and staring out to sea. Feeling sick, you may continue left (turn to 456) or right (turn to 528).

179

You are stunned to see represented on the maze's walls the figure of Zeus, fate's father, directing two figures in a chest to a small and sparsely populated island, where they are found by a fisherman. Astonishment seizes him and he takes them to the king for succour. You may go north (turn to 122), south (turn to 366), east (turn to 522) or west (turn to 436).





180

'We ought to get ready for supper,' Thaisia tells you after some time.

'All right, I'll go for my cloak.'

'Hurry back.'

You walk briskly through the palace back to your room, hunt around, find your cloak and set off back. As you near Thaisia's room, you hear a scream from inside.

Arriving at a run, you find Kremton and Miktros. Thaisia, huddled in a corner, cries out to you. Instinctively you launch yourself at Kremton, and knock him to the ground. The next few moments are a muddled blur of punches – with Miktros trying to kick you and hitting Kremton instead, as often as not – punctuated by Thaisia's screams. Then, suddenly, the room is alive with people, pulling you apart from Kremton.

'What is this?' bellows Minos, genuinely angry. You start to say something, but Polycrates hushes you.

'What's this? . . . Thaisia's *my* slave,' blusters Kremton.

'Thaisia is no one's slave,' corrects Minos, 'but a free woman.' Ariadne is comforting her.

'This man is a foreigner, an Athenian,' shouts Kremton. 'Why should he mess around with a Cretan handmaiden?'

'Altheus is a guest here. I do not object,' Minos tells him, glancing at Thaisia, who looks back up at him. 'But if it must be this way, it must. Altheus, tomorrow at the festival of Demeter there is a ritual pankration: you must fight Kremton then. Until that time, stay away from him.'

Minos sweeps out, followed by Kremton, who gives you a look of pure hatred. The others leave, Polycrates giving you a significant glance, Opris with a mumbled 'Rather you than me', until only Thaisia is left, clinging to you and sobbing as if her heart will break. Go to 71.

181

Overwhelmed by the might of the Amazon warrior, you stumble out of the room, Lembra's mocking laugh ringing in your ears. Have 2 extra Shame points, You return to your room. Go to 403.



182

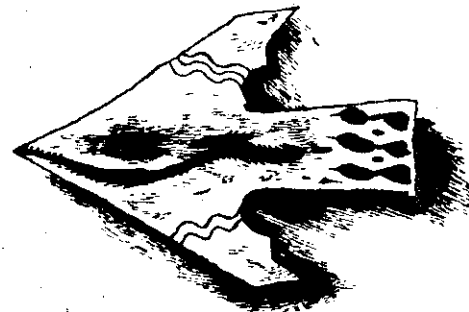
'You're lost, Minos. We've been past here before. You have no more idea how to escape from this labyrinth than I have.'

'If that's what you believe, find your own way out.'

With this Minos turns away and hurries off leaving you alone in the dark damp maze. Will you rush after him and follow at a distance (turn to 102), or will you try to find your own way out (turn to 488)?

183

Take 3 Shame points for your cowardice. What is such warmth compared to the freezing chill of death you will face if you do not slay your foe? You turn back to 501.



184

Zeus saves you and sets you down in the Cretan scrub. The guards are now far off to the left. You follow a path until it forks. Will you go left towards Knossos (turn to 194), or right (turn to 285)? Or will you leave the path (turn to 223)?

185

You break free from Polycrates and run down the stairs. You hear a commotion behind you, but you do not look round. Then a spear strikes you down and you crumple to the floor, dead. If Zeus can save you, go to 213.





186

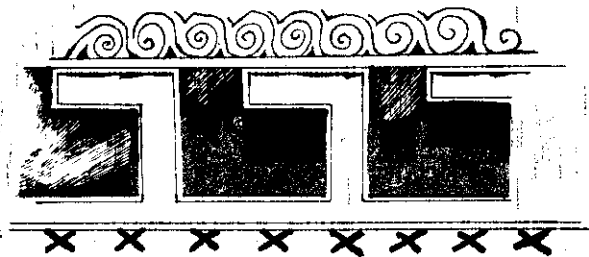
Painted on the wall in sombre and faded colours you see proud Herakles performing his first service for his treacherous cousin Eurystheus. In a green-clad valley the mighty hero strangles the Nemean lion, tearing at its shaggy mane, as the beast cries out in its death-agony, crushed by the powerful hands of Zeus' son. No drop of the hero's blood pollutes the place, yet beside him clubs and arrows lie, broken and useless. You may go east (turn to 288), south (turn to 501) or west (turn to 249).

187

Two guards are waiting for you. You are thrown back into the cell, and more closely guarded this time. Go to 244.

188

Suddenly you realize the purpose of the ball of wool. You take the end of the thread and weight it down with a loose piece of masonry, fallen years past from the dew-damp walls. Now, Altheus, you will be able to retrace your steps, once the slaying of the Minotaur is accomplished, simply by following the thread which was unwound on the journey to the centre. Go to 501.



189

You saunter over to Polycrates and ask for a work-out with him before the fight with Kremton. He looks at you unkindly, and you see for the first time how tired he looks.

'I've no time for you now,' he snaps. 'You've had your opportunity.'

'What's wrong?'

'We've uncovered a plot by the townspeople to revolt during the festival and sack Knossos - with the help of your friends Diphthis and Crabia, I might add. It appears Lactris knew about it, but was too ambitious to do anything. He didn't tell me, and I'll have him for that, however much he ingratiate himself with *them*.' He gestures towards Miktros and Kremton. Then the hubbub is silenced by a loud crash, and all eyes turn to Psyche. Go to 247.

190

The man sneers and, grabbing a pitcher of wine, pours it all over you. Then, as a final gesture, he pulls your head back by the hair and thrusts a whole orange into your mouth. You stagger away, gasping, and the guards seize you. At a sign from Minos, they take you to the cells. Have 3 Shame points. Go to 244.

191

You pray to your patron and climb into bed. Have either 2 Honour points or add 5 to your Endurance. Go to 213.

192

'Look, Altheus,' Opris continues. 'There are stirrings in the town. You heard about the plot this morning, but there's more. There's going to be bloodshed. Take my advice and leave Crete now. If my roots weren't here, I'd go, too.' Will you try to persuade him to support your claim to the throne (turn to 22)? Or will you leave (turn to 116)?

193

You may go east (turn to 393) or west (turn to 230).

194

Before you have got very far, two soldiers spring up, as if out of the earth itself, and throw you to the ground. Your struggles are in vain, and you are soon securely bound and carried off to prison. Go to 282.



195

The next morning a guard throws you a hunk of bread from the gallery, and you eat it ravenously before leaning back against the wall again, trying to move into the shade. It soon becomes almost unbearably hot in the cell, and your clothes stick to you.

You have lost all track of time when the door opens and a guard brings you a small amphora full of water along with some meat and bread in a basket. You drink deeply, and when you are refreshed chew some of the meat.

'Why all this?' you ask the guard. 'Am I back in favour?'

'No,' he smiles, 'but it seems you're not going to be with us long. You're going into the labyrinth.'

Go to 478.

196

You continue working slowly upwards, and are at length able to squeeze into the opening in the roof. It appears to be a chimney of sorts, slanting diagonally upwards over the gallery. Your progress is much swifter, despite your tiredness, and you soon emerge on to a small walkway at the foot of the palace walls, covered in some sort of brown dust. Go to 278.

197

Suddenly the archer god is at your side. He leans up close to you and puts his arm round your shoulders. 'Altheus,' he says, 'you're doing really well so far. All you have to do now is kill the Minotaur and leave Crete with Ariadne. Apparently that bit shouldn't be too hard, although of course I wouldn't know about that.' And he is gone, with only a lingering trace of scent in the air. You muse over the events that have brought you here. At the prompting of Hermes you set out from Troezen to Athens, where your father is king. First, warned by your patron, you slew the treacherous innkeeper Procrustes. Then, crossing a river, you angered Hera, queen of the gods, by casting her in while she was disguised as an old hag. You defeated the monstrous sow that was terrorizing the people of Crommyon, and the dreaded rats of Pagae. You met your patron again at his temple of Delphi, and received a prophecy from him. You passed through Thebes to the chariot races at Acharnae, in which you competed and came second. In Athens, you saved a Cretan called Eliduros from stoning by an angry mob, and he bade you greet Minos' daughter.

When you met your father the king for the first time since your conception, he gave you letters for Minos of Crete and asked you to negotiate to end Athens' blood-tribute of seven youths and seven maidens. You then fought against and helped to defeat the Amazon army that was attacking the city. You incurred the wrath of the Furies, divine bringers of retribution, by saving a man who had killed his wife. On the voyage to Crete, you escaped the sea-serpent sent by Poseidon, travelled through Cythnos, Melos and Thera, weathered a fearsome storm, slew the wild man of Cythera and passed by Talos, the bronze man of Crete, to end up here, leaning against the stern of the black-hulled ship that has carried you out from Athens. Go to 108.

198

A scene is shown of Herakles rescuing a maiden from the jaws of a sea-monster. It is Hesione, sacrificed to Poseidon by her father Laomedon. Herakles, a true hero, drives off the monster and wrings its life from its veins; its blood stains the sea red, like the radiance of the sun sparkling off the waters. Hesione looks on, her chains snapped, but still hanging from her white arms. You may go to the north (turn to 56), east (turn to 430), south (turn to 402) or west (turn to 385).



199

In the harbour you find a small boat moored discreetly to one side. 'This is my boat,' announces Ariadne. 'Hurry!' You clamber aboard and, while she deftly runs the sail up, you hack at the mooring-rope until it severs. The sails fill with wind and the boat begins to run out to sea, striking out to the north-east. You flop down in the stern with Ariadne. Go to 473.



200

As you teeter on the edge of the pit, a surge of Olympian anger flows through your veins and you throw off the guards and round on Pangryon. It is almost as if you are a spectator, as the goddess speaks through your lips. 'Priest,' she cries in your voice, 'you have defiled my religion and made it a celebration of the dark side of man, a festival of death. Serve me now as you never did in life.'

A bolt of sunlight leaps from your pointing hand to Pangryon, and he changes into a horrific statue of a man, built entirely from fruit. As all stare aghast, it stands for a moment, and then collapses, scattering oranges, apples, mangoes, melons, bananas, peaches, passion fruit and others you cannot even recognize, all over the floor.

The goddess releases you. 'Bring me my weapons,' you cry into the silence, 'and I will enter the labyrinth and root out this evil once and for all.' You are brought all the equipment from your room and, fully kitted out, you give one last glance at the court, grab two tangerines and a banana to eat on your way and leap lightly down into the pit. Have 5 Honour points and go to 5.

201

You tie Polycrates' feet together so that he cannot walk and then wrap the ends of the rope around his hands behind his back. Leaving him firmly secured, you confidently stride away into the palace. Will you seek the support of the court (turn to 421), or will you look for Ariadne (turn to 503)?

202

You run for the door. Go to 187.

203

You wait for Lactris to speak. Finally, he throws the file into a corner, puts the model down, and turns to look up at you. 'Well, I ask you. When was Opris so thick with the Thracians?'

'Are you?'

'No, but I was the obvious choice. I *wanted* that job. It isn't as if Opris will do it well.'

'You think?'

'All right, he will, curse him. It's that sloe-eyed priestess. She's got Uncle Pangryon in her pocket. I'm angry, Altheus.'

There is a knock at the door: Psyche arrives and you leave. As you go, you hear Lactris starting 'Psyche, my dear . . .'. He seems to have recovered his temper. You can go to the temple (turn to 17), the gymnasium (turn to 50) or your room (turn to 240).

204

There is nowhere to retreat. Have 1 Shame point and continue the fight. Go back to 124.



205

The innkeeper, evidently used to unruly guests, batters you into unconsciousness with his club. If you can be saved by Zeus, go to 327; otherwise you will be dumped into the harbour to float away with the waste food and litter.

206

Opris taps you on the shoulder. 'Well done.'

You go back to the throne-room. Polycrates is supervising the clearing up.

'Well?' he asks.

'Where's the king?'

'He's busy. What do you want?'

Evidently you are going to have to talk to him.

'It's about Psyche.'

'What about her?'

'What are you going to do to her?'

Polycrates gestures at the blood on the floor. 'What do you think?'

'Don't,' you say, and the imperative cuts across all the questions.

'All right,' and he leads you away into a corner. 'What's it to you, then?'

'What do you mean?'

'You cooperate with me.'

'All right. What do you want from me?'

'I want Kremton dead.'

Go to 376.

207

The morning of the third day is bright: you are woken by brilliant sunshine pouring in through the window. Today is the festival of Demeter and the day of your fight with Kremton; today Minos will decide on the continued tribute from Athens. It is with a sense of foreboding, accordingly, that you dress, wash and prepare yourself for the day ahead. You can go to the throne-room (turn to 477), or wait where you are for something to happen (turn to 315).



208

You follow Minos into the great dining-hall, which is already humming with the excited chatter of the courtiers. When they see the king, they all fall silent. You take your place at the long table, and when the meal starts, you set about your stewed vegetables avidly. Directly across the table from you sits the king's son Kremton, and you wonder how best to provoke this ignorant brute. You glance up and down the table, and, when no one is looking, you shove your bowl of steaming stew across the table at Kremton so that the contents tip into his lap. For a moment he glances down, but then as the scalding liquid seeps through his tunic, he leaps to his feet with an anguished cry of pain.

'You are going to die for that. Tomorrow at the festival of Demeter, I'll fight you in the ring and I will not rest until you are bloodied and beaten, crying out for mercy and then, Athenian vermin, then I will kill you.'

With this, still clutching his groin, he walks out.

'Yes, it is true,' affirms Minos. 'Kremton is within his rights. The fight will be tomorrow at the festival . . . until one is vanquished,' he adds, giving you a conspiratorial glance.

'I must prepare for this fight,' you tell the assembled company, and you stride out of the hall back to your room. Go to 500.

209

Knowing in your heart that you can never prevail, you raise your arms in token of your desire to cease the fight. Briefly the Minotaur pauses, puzzled at your act, but then lowers its head and charges. For a moment you can see the bull-man closing and then all is darkness as its man-killing horns slice through your eyes and pierce your brain. Your adventure is ended, and you have failed in your quest.

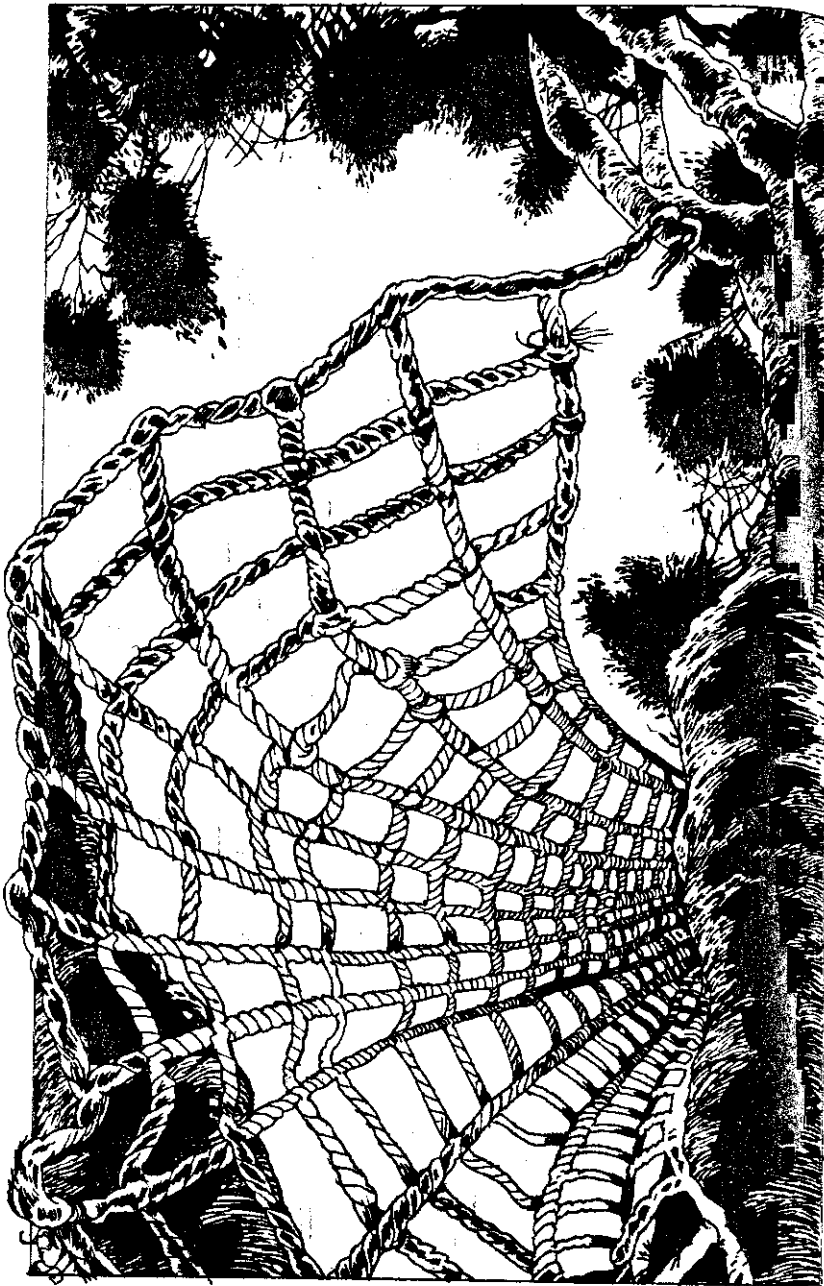
210

You strike Lactris and he totters unsteadily before falling backwards. But Kremton and Miktros seize you and hurl you to the ground, Miktros managing to elbow you savagely in the stomach as you fall. Have 2 Honour points, but subtract 5 from your Endurance.

Polycrates comes over and looks down at you wearily. 'You never learn, Altheus, do you? That was stupid.' He turns to the guards. 'I've no time for him now. Put him in the cells.'

You are dragged off, to the sight of Lactris clambering to his feet. Opris shakes his head at you. You are thrown in a cell with the feeling that you have not been at all wise. If your patron is Ares go to 175; otherwise go to 35.





211

As you enter the grove, the first thing you notice is the shade and the relative cool. Then a net is dropped over you, and soldiers drop from the trees. One kicks your feet away and you fall heavily to the ground. You are trussed up and carried ignominiously to prison on a donkey. Have 1 Shame point and go to 282.

212

You give him the ring of office and he takes it, understanding at once. 'I'll do my best,' he says. 'Goodbye, Altheus. May the gods protect you.' And you depart for the harbour. Go to 116.

213

You sleep. Go to 207.

214

The guard has Might 6, Protection 10, and a sword with Might 2. If he is Seriously Wounded, go to 350. If you surrender, go to 286. You cannot be saved by Zeus. You cannot retreat.

215

You lunge at him, but are so weak that he gets through the door and shuts and bolts it; you hear him laughing. For a while you batter at the door with your hands; then you finish the food. Go to 478.

216

When you get to the princess's room, Ariadne is delighted to see you still alive after your ordeal. 'I knew you'd be all right,' she explains. 'Now let's leave this place before we are imprisoned again. I have a boat we can use to get away.'

You readily agree, and are soon out of the palace on your way to the harbour. You glance back and see guards pursuing you. Only by sprinting do you keep ahead and reach the port. Go to 199.

217

Many rocks have fallen from the roof, and walking becomes very hard. You scramble over the debris, steadying yourself with your hands, but it takes you about ten minutes to travel a hundred yards. Your feet are blistered and your hands raw from brushing against the rough stone. Finally you emerge into a clear path with a passageway and you press on eagerly. Then you feel another tremor and the air fills with dust from the falling rocks. You rush forward. Go to 131.

218

The guard accepts your surrender and escorts you back to the cell. You are securely bound and thrown back inside. Go to 244.

219

In paint upon the walls of the labyrinth your predecessor Herakles descends to the Thracian coast for his eighth labour. The flesh-eating horses of Diomedes whinny and cry out against their captor. Herakles, hot and tired from his toils, seeks to reach the red-sand shore ahead of his pursuers, the proud king of Thrace and his retainers.

In the centre of the passage there looms the inky blackness of a pit. At great risk, you are forced to skirt around it. You may go west (turn to 384), south (turn to 16) or east (turn to 385).

220

Attached to the wall here are brackets, in which you can see the burnt-out stumps of torches. Soot-blackened, the walls reveal nothing of their nature, save for the lintel of a doorway at the north end, on which is inscribed the letter M. You may go through the doorway (turn to 384) or head west (turn to 68), east (turn to 16) or south (turn to 276).

221

'Lady Lembra,' you stammer, 'the Amazon Antiope bade me speak with you.'

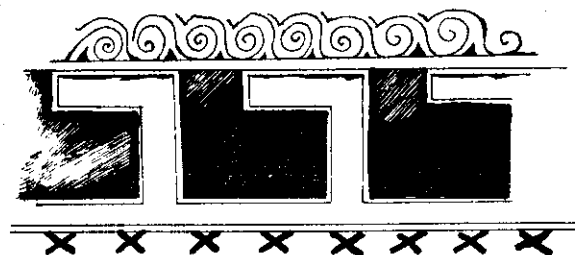
The woman appears to think it over. 'Stranger,' she says (and it is clear she does not mean 'friend'), 'I must needs believe you. Yet I trust you not.' Then she lapses out of the stilted Amazon battle-speech. 'Antiope? Really? How is she?'

The guards outside start to rattle on the shutters.

'Lembra, unless you save me from the guards, I won't be able to tell you at all. I have escaped from prison . . . There was a misunderstanding. Can you hide me?'

Her eyes flash scorn. 'What, should an Amazon talk of hiding? We shall go to Minos now and resolve this. Always deal with the man at the top.'

You have no chance to protest, but are swept to the door. Outside, two guards are waiting for you. Go to 373.



222

The painting on the wall is singed and burnt, as though struck by a bolt from father Zeus' hand. All you can make out is a pattern of bulls' heads. You may go west (turn to 259) or south (turn to 86).

223

You soon become hopelessly lost on the plains. On a ridge up ahead you see a grove of trees, and make towards it as fast as you can. Go to 211.



224

She knows the maze well and soon you emerge into sunlight. The air is fresh and warm, but you can only linger for a moment before Ariadne is off again. 'There's no time to waste; we've got to get away now,' she says, as you both hurry through the rough scrub that lies between the harbour and the city. Go to 199.

225

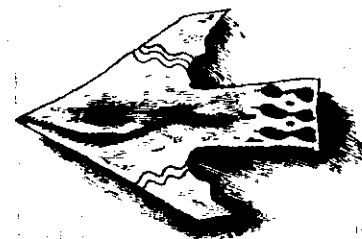
Hermes, messenger of the gods, and white-armed Athena, queen of knowledge, guide Perseus in this picture, for unaided he cannot succeed in his quest. Wonder is graven upon his face as his guardians tell him he must go to the home of the Grey Ones, the Graeae, sisters of the Gorgons, and steal their single eye and tooth. You may carry on north (turn to 20), south (turn to 522) or west (turn to 122).

226

You still have the letters from your father to Minos. Note them down on the Chronicle Sheet, as you may be asked to produce them later. Go to 467.

227

The guard settles down against a pillar and occasionally shoots a wary glance at the pit, just as a shepherd, even near home, watches his flocks, although wolves rarely venture close to the city. The man looks up to see Opris and Noa enter and exchanges a greeting with them. Will you stay behind the statue (turn to 482), or step out and speak with Opris and Noa (turn to 344)?



228

They are singing an old Athenian battle-hymn, calling on the goddess for aid against foreign attackers. You do not know the words of the first verse, but raise your voice in the chorus:

'To arms, Athenians, to arms,
Before our city comes to harm.
The enemy is at the gate:
To arms before it is too late.
Our city is in need of thee,
Athena, come to set us free!'

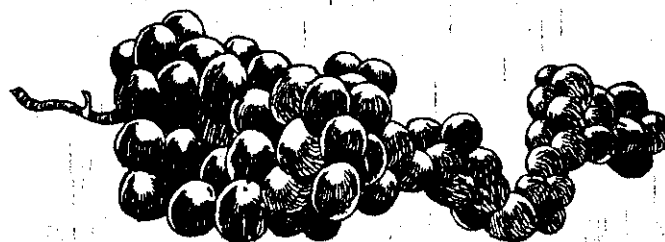
The tears prick in your eyes, even though you have only once been in Athens. You feel your father's blood course through your veins.

Polycrates hits you once across the face, hard, and you gaze at him defiantly during the second verse, which reviles the Cretans in particular. You wish you knew the words.

The guards below enter the cells and beat the others into silence, and two more hustle you away. As they drag you out, you turn to look back at Polycrates and sing quietly:

'Our city is in need of thee,
Athena, come to set us free!'

If Athena is your patron, add 10 Honour points. Otherwise, add 3. Go to 3.

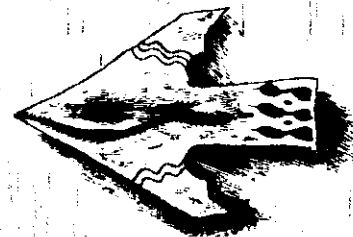


229

You reach a part of the labyrinth where there has recently been a rock-fall and there is still a lot of dust in the air. Small pieces of stone trickle to the ground in a stream. You can turn left (go to 488) or right (go to 66).

230

Hermes, messenger of the gods, speeds thought-swift to Hades to fetch Persephone. Yet she has eaten the seeds of a pomegranate, and so must remain one third of the year beneath the earth in the kingdom of Hades, and during that time the earth brings forth no fruits, and nothing grows. Marvelling at the tale portrayed by the painting you pass onwards, going either east (turn to 263), west (turn to 26) or south (turn to 46).

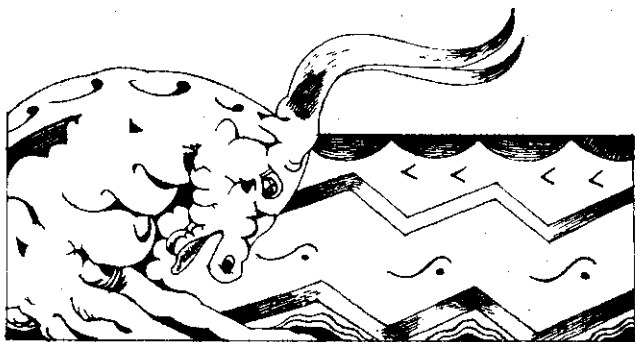


231

By rubbing your hands against the saddle buckle, you manage to release yourself and make a dash for freedom. One arrow shoots past your shoulder, but the next goes into the back of your head. Your Cretan adventure ends here.

232

'I am Crabia,' says the woman. 'I train the bull-leapers here. I taught your brother.' She turns piercing eyes on you. 'The best leapers are women, but your brother was good, very good. I could teach you, if you wanted.' Do you (turn to 523), or will you decline (turn to 367)?



233

You slip out of the room into the deserted corridors, and prowl the passages until you come upon a scurrying slave. Will you ask her where Ariadne's rooms are (turn to 142), seek directions to the labyrinth (turn to 345), or follow her to the slaves' quarters to listen for useful information (turn to 419)?

234

Just as you lift up the box there is a terrific crashing sound, as of the river that cascades down the mountainside before reaching the sea. The Minotaur must have heard you. You must escape quickly. You drop the box, and run, either to the north (turn to 179) or to the south (turn to 279). In either case have 1 Shame point for your cowardice.

235

'I don't know anything,' you protest.

The man scowls. 'Just curious, were you? I don't believe that for a moment.'

'Leave him alone, Kreas.' The voice comes from the doorway and, looking over the man's shoulder, you can see that Dipthis, the aged cynic from the palace, has entered. The man steps away from you.

'I caught him in here, Dipthis. He's found the weapons. We've got to . . .'

'No violence. No violence that can be spared. Let the boy go. We can trust him.'

Kreas looks doubtful, but puts his knife away. Dipthis takes you outside. 'I'll have to trust you, Altheus, because I don't know what else to do. The townspeople are going to end Minos' tyranny by taking over the palace. Now I am in your power. Will you betray me?'

Will you return to Knossos and reveal the plot (turn to 378), or keep it a secret (turn to 507)?





236

You climb some stone stairs leading up to the remote rooms high in the building. You pause at a window and wonder at the beauty of the island bathed in moonlight. Yet even in the quiet of night, the countryside is still alive: here an owl grabs a mouse in its claws, there a bat flits out of a deserted barn.

You continue up the stairs until you reach a passageway. There are no torches in the brackets in the walls, but the moon through a window is bright enough to illuminate the far end of the passage, where two stone frogs protrude from the wall on either side of a solid oak door, their mouths wide open in grotesque grins. Will you open the door (turn to 156), or will you wait to see if anyone else opens it (turn to 135)?

237

You are very tired and you are beginning to think that you will never escape the labyrinth. You cannot see because of the dust and, even if you could, you do not know the way out. Your feet and legs urge you to rest, but you feel that you will never be able to get up if you once sit down. Will you keep on (turn to 131), or will you slump down against a wall (turn to 538)?

238

The frescos at this point have been painted over with pure white paint, as if the scene depicted offended even the stern-hearted Cretans. You may go west (turn to 393) or east (turn to 342).

239

While dancing, you gaze, for want of anything better, at the amphora in the middle of the circle. To your astonishment, you sense that the figure of Dionysus is speaking to you.

'It would be a shame for someone of your spirit to die without a last drink,' the figure intones, seemingly audible to no one else. 'The man opposite is going to kick you and poison you with a weapon in his sandal. Beware.'

You think frantically, as you continue to dance; the tempo and the height of the kicks increase all the time. On an impulse, you lash out with a foot and knock over the vessel filled with wine which waits for the morrow when it will no longer be forbidden. The heady liquid flows out over the floor and breaks up the circle, forcing all the dancers to leap back in fastidious shock. One man trips and falls, then writhes in silent agony before lying still. The other dancers move forward again slowly, curious, and examine him.

'He's dead,' one cries.

'Poisoned!'

'Look, here, on the sandal. . . .'

They have found a blade sticking out of the front of the sandal, which must have caught its wearer as he fell.

'Who is he?' someone asks, but no one seems to know. You return to your room. Go to 171.

240

You return to your room and think over what you have seen. After some time a gong sounds and you realize it must be time to eat, although it is much later than you would choose to feast at home in Troezen. You set off for lunch. Go to 109.

241

Note that in classical Greek the same word may serve for both 'stranger' and 'friend'. Go to 373.

242

You try to punch him, but to no avail. Despite his inebriated state, he swings his sword around and slices deep into your neck. You gasp and fall lifeless to the floor; Zeus is heedless of your prayers.

243

The two guards are trying to tend each other's wounds and Polycrates is lying at your feet with blood pouring from a wound in his shoulder. Before you can deal the final blow, you feel a bellowing behind you.

'Now we'll see what you're really like, Athenian.' It is Minos, and he is swinging a huge axe. You must fight him with any wounds from the first fight unhealed. He has Might 8, Protection 16, and the axe is Might 3. You have no chance to retreat and you can see that Minos will not accept your surrender. He himself will not surrender. If you kill him, go to 443. If he kills you and you are saved by Zeus, go to 143.

244

The hours drag by, and you tire of minutely examining the cell over and over again. The guards, passing by in the gallery, provide the only relief to the monotony. It becomes dark and a shaft of moonlight comes through the opening in the ceiling. You lean against the wall wearily, and wait for something to happen.

It is later, though you cannot tell how much later, when you are alerted by the sound of voices. After a moment, a tall robed figure appears in the gallery and calls down to you. Go to 463.

245

You search fruitlessly for a time and find nothing. For wasting this time, valuable beyond gold, lose 1 Honour point. You turn back once more. Go to 144.

246

'I wish to see the lady Ariadne,' you cry, 'and no one will stand in my way.'

'Rash words, boy,' she says, and with one fluid movement she snatches up her spear and swipes at you.

You must fight the Amazon. She has Might 6, Protection 13, and a spear (Might 1). If you Seriously Wound her, turn to 146. If you are killed and saved by Zeus, turn to 54. If you retreat, turn to 181. If you surrender, go to 9.



247

Psyche, clutching the remains of the goblet, walks towards Lactris, who stands looking at her as if mesmerized. She gives a short cry and slashes at his face with the goblet. He throws up a hand to cover himself, but the crystal carves a crimson gash through the back of his hand and the side of his face. Then she swipes the other side of his face with a backhand and he crumples backwards, holding his head in his hands, blood pouring out between his fingers. In the silence, as you all stand horrified, you can hear it splash on the tiled floor. Go to 346.

248

You square your shoulders defiantly and the folds of your tunic move to reveal the brooch. 'Your Queen Antiope gave this to me and bade me tell you I was a friend of the Amazons.'

'This must be true, for this brooch is only given to those who have honourably defeated an Amazon queen in combat,' says Lembra. She unpins the brooch from your shoulder and her demeanour becomes more friendly. Have 1 Honour point. 'You may, after all, speak with the princess. The friendship of the Amazons is hard to win, but once gained it is a key that unlocks the sturdiest door.' She leads you into the inner room. Go to 270.

249

Now Herakles performs his second labour. He goes against the Lernaean Hydra. A ghastly shade, almost glowing in the gloom, radiates sickness and death, as its serpent heads hiss defiance at the hero. As he severs one, another pair springs up, and his servant Iolaus, clad in a plain white tunic stained in blood, burns out the stumps with his sun-bright torch. Meanwhile the forest animals flee at the sight of this battle of the powers. You may turn east (go to 186), west (go to 319) or north (go to 69).

250

Rubbing away some of the grime from the wall, you uncover a picture of two men in rich clothes shaking hands in front of several deserted amphitheatres, under a brilliant blue sky. The man on the right appears to have burst into flames. Wondering at the ways of the rich, you press on. You can go left (turn to 528) or right (turn to 428).



251

The applause dies away, but the music starts again, with a fast, insistently repeated phrase on the lyres and a steady rhythm on the drums. The pipes trill a melody along the top.

'We dance this one,' urges Thaisia, and as the courtiers jump from the table into the middle and take up the steps, she drags you into the dance. 'The Bear: it's our national dance. You can't say you've really visited Crete until you've tried it.'

And so, unwillingly, you are drawn in and try to keep pace. For a few moments, the music stays steady with the lyre phrase repeating over and over again, and you begin to be able to copy the basic steps, albeit without the Cretans' grace, but then, with a shouted 'O - opa!' the speed picks up and you begin to become hopelessly lost. There is one bass drum in each gallery, and one of them always keeps the beat, but the other bass and all the other drums weave wild syncopated patterns around it, like a bear cub gambolling in the spring. The beat passes from one gallery to the other, and at times seems almost submerged, however hard you strain to distinguish it from the music, but the Cretans appear to have no

problem. You stumble around and the other dancers teasingly copy your fumbles, turning them into different steps again. Then the lyres abandon the repeating phrase and run up and down, each player trying to outdo the other. You lose the time completely, trip and fall to the floor. Have 1 Shame point.

The music vamps as you clamber apologetically to your feet, and then begins again, exaggeratedly slowly. This time, as it speeds up, you are able to follow it and you finish the dance flushed but triumphant, breathing heavily. Thaisia leads you off to the side.

'Let's go outside,' she says, seemingly scarcely out of breath at all. 'It's cooler.' Will you go with her (turn to 6), or stay at the dance (turn to 449)?

252

You turn your back on him contemptuously and return to your seat. After a moment, the man scowls and orders a servant to fetch him his wine. When this is brought, he and his friend move unsteadily across the room to the gypsum throne. Go to 518.

253

'Athens sends you the agreed tribute,' you tell him. 'But she would do so no more. I come from my father to bargain with you, King Minos, for a reassessment of our bargain.'

Minos appears to ponder this for a moment, then speaks: 'Aegeus will have given you letters of introduction for me. Where are they?'

If you have them, go to 339. If they are lost, go to 59.

254

The two guards grab you and tie your hands together with a rope. They bundle you out of the labyrinth and take you into the palace. The rope is tight and bites into your wrists, so that soon the feeling in your fingers grows dull. You are thrown into a bare room and the door slams behind you. Go to 101.

255

You pray to Poseidon, master of the ocean, but he does not appear. Instead you muse back to the time when he appeared to you in Troezen, before you set out on this venture. It was in the fountain of the temple that you saw his face, but strangely you cannot remember what he said. Still, it was at the prompting of the god Hermes that you set out for Athens on your way here to Crete. You killed and skinned a wolf for protection and clothing, met the horse of Poseidon and paid it due reverence, and killed the vicious sow of Crommyon. Faced by the terrible plague of rats of Pagae, you fled in terror. After visiting Delphi, you assassinated the king of Thebes before winning the chariot race at Acharnae and killing the Marathonian bull to prove yourself to your father.

You defeated the Amazon queen Antiope in battle, and when you showed her mercy she told you to seek out Lembra in Crete. Your father, the king, sent you to Crete to seek an end to the blood-tribute, and after a brief encounter with a sea-serpent, you passed unscathed through a storm and the wrath of Talos, the bronze man of Crete, with the help of your patron, to end up here. Go to 539.

256

As you approach the door to see if it is locked, you notice something strange about the tongues of the carved frogs. You turn the handle and realize what is wrong. You jump back and two arrows, released from the creatures' mouths, fly through the air towards you. They cross in mid-air and rip into your shoulders, tearing the flesh. You cry out in agony and stagger back down the corridor, unable to move your arms to extract the arrows. A hand grabs your neck from behind, and drags you into a room. You are placed on the floor and you see the man for the first time.

'Who are you?' you gasp.

'I am Boloris.'

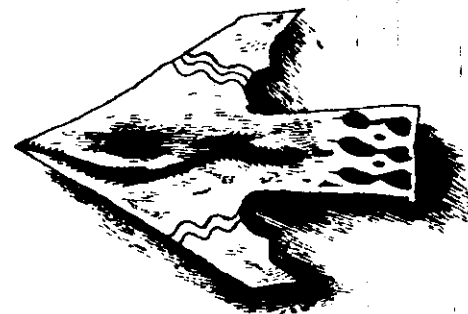
Go to 14.

257

The dust in the air is almost unbearable now, but you are determined to escape from the ruined labyrinth. You cough with each harsh breath, and your eyes stream, blurring your vision. Each step must be closer to safety, you mutter to yourself, without any real conviction. The thread leads on into the dust-storm ahead and snakes out of sight in a pile of rocks. Will you pause until the air has cleared (turn to 274), or will you try to clear a way through the rocks (turn to 365)?

258

You call out, but, not knowing her name, you can only shout 'Help!' There is no reply, but every wall echoes 'Help', as if all those who have perished in the maze are crying out. You shout again and then pause, still hoping for a real reply. When none comes, you shout again and again, not stopping until you are hoarse. Eventually you fall back against a wall still whimpering 'Help, help.' Go to 401.



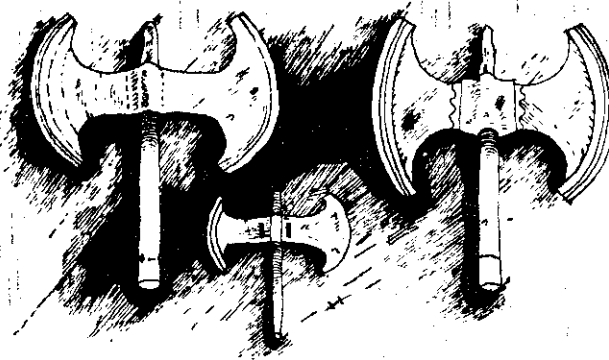


259

The way opens out here into a vast semicircular chamber, at the centre of which is a huge altar-stone. Around it are arrayed rows of stools, like an inanimate audience. As you approach closer, you can see that the altar is carved with images of snakes twining around staffs and with bulls' heads. Perhaps the Minotaur holds court here. Perhaps the Cretans perform their unspeakable rituals of sacrifice to the beast in this place. You are loath to spend much time here, for the walls are painted a deep hue of red. You may go west (turn to 359), east (turn to 222) or south (turn to 52).

260

As progress takes you deeper into the gloom, you find that you must light your lamp, taking care not to damage the precious thing. You carry on, painfully aware of the sounds of scratching and thumping all around you – perhaps the steps of the man-slaying Minotaur, perhaps simply those of plague-plying rats. Turn to 406.



261

'Call me Altheus,' you say.

'My name is Thaisia, but many call me the Swallow.'

'I'm trying to negotiate an end to the tribute,' you tell her with guarded friendliness. 'Athens can't afford to have her young men and women taken away to die each year for much longer.'

Thaisia ponders this ingenuously. 'But in a war far more than fourteen people would die,' she says.

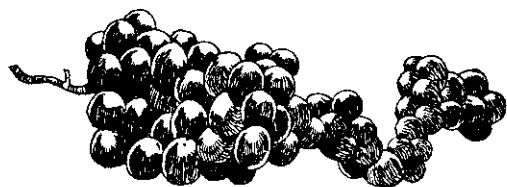
'It's the principle which counts,' you reply. 'And anyway, if there were a war, my father's position would be much less precarious. Kings can use war as a justification for almost anything.'

Thaisia's face brightens suddenly. 'You must be Theseus' brother, then, if Aegeus is your father.' Then she frowns. 'He never spoke of you, though.'

You explain the circumstances of your birth and upbringing.

'Well,' she says finally, 'the ways of the gods are strange. We must hurry, though, or Minos'll be cross.' She dresses you in a red tunic and leads you back to the throne-room. 'It's good to have Theseus' brother here,' and adds mischievously, 'and Andra's going to be particularly glad.'

'What do you mean?' But you have arrived at the feast and, with a sinking feeling of having said too much already, you go in. Turn to 381.



262

You manage to reach the gallery and detach a torch from the wall. As you get it free, the guard comes back. He gives a cry of recognition and runs towards you. You swing the torch to protect yourself. Go to 336.

263

You move on stealthily, but stumble and have to steady yourself against the rough rock wall. Your hand scrapes against something sharp and comes away bloodied. Carefully you investigate what has caused your wound, and find, lying on a narrow ledge, a spear-head, carved with tiny writing which you cannot make out in the gloomy light. Perhaps this is an accursed Cretan weapon, or a token from one of the Athenian youths who have met a terrible fate at the hands of the merciless Minotaur. Do you pick up the spear-head (turn to 176), or leave it (turn to 193)?

264

He is not fooled and, catching you by the shoulder, throws you against the wall. 'Who are you?' he demands.

'An Athenian, and a king's son,' you cry, and attack him. Go to 336.

265

You go to the underground training-room, where Crabia again puts you through your paces. At the end of the session you are exhausted, but far more skilled than before. Crabia seems pleased.

'Still not as good as your brother, but not bad at all,' she concedes. She gives you a small gold bull to replace the silver one. 'As a star pupil,' she adds.

You have reached the top of the stairs down, and she turns to go. 'Good luck, Altheus,' she says, and is gone. You return to your room, and lie on the bed. Add 5 Endurance and 2 Honour points. Go to 213.

266

Leaving the disturbance, you walk slowly to the throne-room. The solid double doors open smoothly when you lean against them, but you do not enter. Instead, you peer through the crack and see Minos talking to four guards. You can just catch his words and you realize that he is sending his men to kill you. You have no option but to flee Crete. Go to 116.

267

For the first time in Crete, you do something unselfconsciously brave. You walk up to Psyche and talk to her.

'Psyche, drop that.'

The silence continues.

'Psyche.'

She turns and faces you, starting to collapse into your arms. Miktros produces a shortsword and approaches the two of you determinedly.

'Keep away,' you say. Psyche is sobbing uncontrollably into your tunic. He keeps coming, furious, and you take the bloody goblet from her unresisting fingers and wave it at him. 'Leave her alone, I said.' The scene freezes, like a picture on a vase. Then Miktros puts up his sword and backs off. 'You're dead, Altheus,' he hisses. 'You'll be getting a visit, remember that.'

'A lot of people have told me that,' you reply. You consider saying more, but realize that you are starting to threaten like a bullying seaman. You lead Psyche unprotesting away. Behind you, Lactris stirs, his tunic stiff with blood, his face an ashen-white death-mask under the crimson. Go to 438.



268

From high Olympus the blessings of your patron come upon you, but this is Crete and darker forces indeed prevail. All your patron can do is transform you at once into a plump kitten. As the last vestiges of human intelligence ebb away, like the gentle evening tide, you feel yourself bundled up by Thaisia and held close to her, but a cat you remain.

269

'I'm relieving you,' you announce boldly as you stride into the temple. 'You can go to the celebrations.' If your patron is Apollo or Aphrodite, or you have an even number of Honour points, go to 351. Otherwise go to 13.



270

Ariadne's bedroom is sumptuously, but scrappily furnished, as if its designer had known what it was to look like, but had lacked the will to carry it through. Ariadne is lounging on a large cushion, bored, chewing her nails and picking at some needlework. As she sees you enter, she looks up at Lembra with an expression of wild surmise and hope.

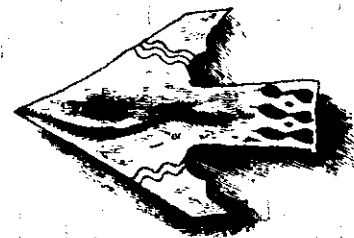
'This is Altheus,' the Amazon tells her, 'son of Aegeus, ambassador from Athens.'

Ariadne nods emphatically. 'Yes, I remember him from the feast last night.' She brushes a strand of hair out of her mouth. 'Wait outside, Lembra.'

'My lady, no. After Eliduros, it's more than my head's worth.'

'Don't be silly, Lembra. I wouldn't touch this stripling. Outside.'

One glance at the princess is enough to dispel any notion that Minos might not be her father. There is the same steely authority when provoked, an authority which even the proud Amazon recognizes. She leaves. Go to 513.



271

All day you are marched through the sun to the palace. On your arrival, the fourteen Athenians are taken away to prison, and you are led, dusty, grimy and tired, into the court.

Instinctively you know that the giant of a man at the far end of the room is Minos. You cast a quick glance around as he comes towards you.

'The prisoners from Athens have arrived, sire,' announces the captain of the guard.

'Good, good,' booms Minos. 'This is one of them, eh, Polycrates?'

'No, sire . . .' starts the captain, but Minos interrupts him.

'Then he is our guest, and even here we can observe some niceties. You overstep yourself, Polycrates.' The captain shrugs and Minos takes your hand in a bone-crushing grip. 'I am Minos.'

'And I am adventurous Altheus, son of Aegeus.'

'Adventurous, eh? You are welcome here.'

Will you present the letters now, if you have them (turn to 8), or will you wait (turn to 433)?

272

Ariadne continues: 'I hate it here in Crete. I want to get to the mainland. I want you to take me.'

'All right.'

'When you escape from the labyrinth, go to the harbour. I'll have a boat waiting.'

'My ship is lying in wait just out of sight of land. Once we get there we'll be safe . . . straight back to Athens.'

'Good.' She fades back into the shadows. 'Altheus?'

'Mmm?'

'My brother is in the labyrinth. Be . . . be careful.' And she is gone.

Wondering what she meant, you fall asleep. Go to 195.

273

Down into the depths of the underworld goes great Herakles, fearful at his twelfth and final task. Herakles takes the dread dog Cerberus in his bare hands and carries it whining and screaming to the surface, its three heads straining to rend his flesh and send his soul back to its master. Yet Herakles prevails and completes his servitude. You may go north (turn to 430), east (turn to 20), south (turn to 122) or west (turn to 306).

274

You rest and soon there is much less dust in the air. The labyrinth was almost completely dark before the earthquake, but now cracks in the roof above your head let in long shafts of light. You can now see that the rocks, which conceal the thread, are in fact the remains of a maze wall. For the first time you realize that the whole maze has been destroyed, but you are now confused by new twists and turns, holes where before there was solid rock, and impassable rock-falls where once were passageways. Do you press on into the gloom (turn to 494), or do you pull on the thread (516)?

275

'I have business with Minos,' you reply curtly, and, as if sensing your desire to be silent, she asks no more, but dresses you in a blue tunic and takes you back to the throne-room. You take a moment to make sure where your room is, then follow her. Go to 381.

276

Suddenly a sweet smell fills the air, and you feel heartened, for it is the smell of roses, somehow filtering in from the air above. Yet it cannot be; more likely it is the incense used by the effete Cretans to banish the stench of their city. Whatever it is, the scent is more pleasant by far than the musty reek which has till now filled your nostrils. You may go west (turn to 220), north (turn to 475), east (turn to 69) or south (turn to 128).

277

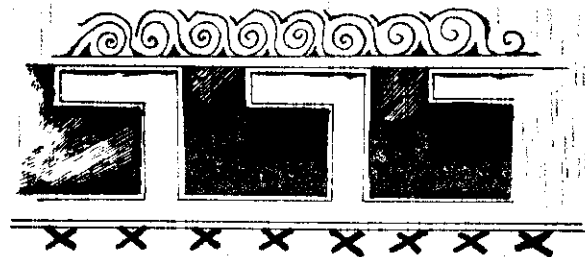
In your room you sit and wait, anxiety gnawing at your stomach like rot at the base of a mighty tree, which crashes to the ground in the forest. Two guards come to collect you and take you to the temple. You have time to conceal one weapon and one piece of armour about your person, as well as any number of miscellaneous items. On your Chronicle Sheet, bracket off the arms and the armour you leave behind, as you may be able to recover them later. Go to 174.

278

You are on a narrow walkway at the foot of the walls. On one side is a sheer wall with the first windows about ten feet up; on the other is a diagonally sloping roof, with a two-foot-wide trench in it all the way along, running down into the cell area. Behind you is a trapdoor leading down into the gallery. You can progress along the walkway (turn to 405), you can go down through the trapdoor (turn to 187), or you can climb for a window (turn to 27).

279

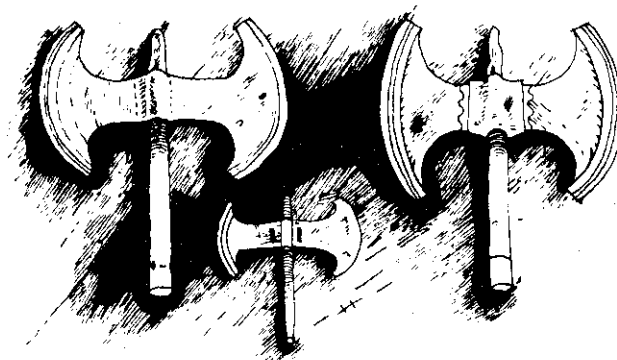
The strong-armed hero Herakles is shown now slaying the fearsome eagle, for Prometheus has cried out in his pain for mercy. So the human delivers the god, but he cannot be freed until another god takes his place, and long ages will flow through time's gates until this shall come to pass. You may go north (turn to 366) or south (turn to 165).



280

You thank Opris and rush out of the palace towards the harbour. You pass several unfamiliar faces going in the other direction, but you cannot see Ariadne anywhere. You run, first along the quayside, and then in the narrow streets that connect the taverns and the warehouses. The town is busy and searching for the girl is not easy. Then, in a crowded street, you see her face, and you hurry after her. Grabbing her shoulder, you spin her round.

'Altheus, you're still alive,' she starts and her vulnerable eyes fill with such an expression of relief that all thoughts of murder vanish from your mind, just as the fantasies of the night evaporate in the dawn's early light. She grabs your hand and leads you away. Go to 199.



281

The corpses lying on the battlefield are as the leaves fallen from the trees, rotting and decaying on the forest floor. The remnants of the Athenian army, cowering in fear, must treat with cruel Minos, and are forced to send each year tribute of seven youths and seven maidens. Your heart flares in anger at the wrong done to your homeland. At the centre of the scene is carved a blood-red O. You may go north (turn to 90), east (turn to 128), south (turn to 300) or west (turn to 418).



282

The cell is about four feet square, making it possible to lie diagonally across the floor in a half-curved position. The door is heavy and bolted from the outside; no amount of effort even budes it.

Above the door, in the wall, there is a viewing gallery, and higher still the roof develops into a narrow chimney-like opening. The walls are rough, but have no handholds, and the gallery is too high to jump to, even if you could pull yourself up by your hands. Furthermore, a guard comes past the top every few minutes. It seems you are doomed to spend at least your first night in Crete in prison. You may pray to your patron for aid (turn to 33), or wait for developments (turn to 244).

283

You make no move, but your smile does more to shake Lactris than any other action could. Behind you, there is a sound of smashing crystal and you all turn to look at Psyche. Go to 247.

284

'Fool, you could have left peacefully. Now you shall never leave Crete. No, I shall not kill you,' he says, more to himself than to you. 'Take him to the top room.'

The guards step forward and tie your hands together tightly. You glance once more at the king and then you are bundled away into the palace. Eventually you reach a small room, high up in the building, and the guards slam the door, shutting you in. All the light in the room comes from a small window in the far corner and as you sit, silent and desperate, the only indication of time's passing is the onset of darkness. Go to 64.

285

The sun beats down relentlessly, shines into your eyes and dazzles you. With relief, you see an olive-grove up ahead. Go to 211.

286

You are led to prison. Go to 244.

287

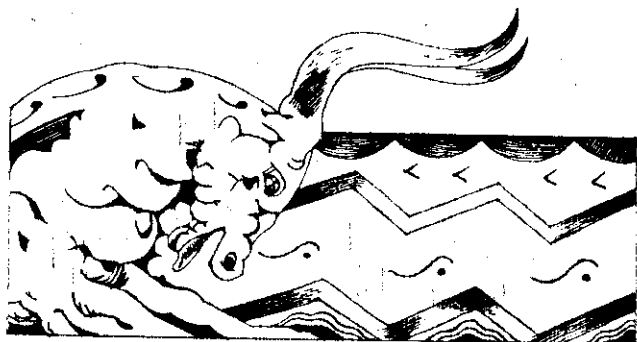
'Between me and Psyche? What do you mean?' you bluster implausibly.

'You know what I mean,' says Miktros. 'Psyche is mine. Leave her alone.'

The conversation is beginning to assume the inevitability of an Athenian tragedy, and you have an uncomfortable feeling that you will not applaud the ending. Happily, someone approaches down the corridor, and Miktros and Kremton weave away with a curse. The new arrival is no one you recognize, and you go to Lactris' room. Turn to 41.

288

Lying forlorn on the floor is a broken lyre, its strings rotted away from the damp. The golden instrument is age-twisted and will play no more songs. Grime-encrusted on the floor is a mosaic of Apollo the music god, his lyre for ever bright and shining. You may pick the lyre up (turn to 162), or leave it and hurry onwards north (turn to 470), south (turn to 136), east (turn to 411) or west (turn to 186).



289

In a calm voice, you explain to Polycrates that Minos agreed to abdicate in return for you saving his life in the labyrinth. The captain of the guard looks first at you, then at Minos, then back at you. His face tells you all; no words are needed. Will you try to run (turn to 164), or will you fight (turn to 34)?



290

'I don't think I understand,' you say.

'I think you understand very well. I built Crete up from nothing, despite the efforts of the gods and Pasiphae my wife to thwart me. Now I see it all about to be thrown away by my drunken fool of a son. That's not going to happen.'

'But he'll inherit the throne.'

'Three of my sons I loved. They died. Accidents happen . . . A fourth son . . . I am king; I can be succeeded by whoever I wish.'

You understand fully. Will you go along with Minos' scheme (turn to 93), or will you refuse to take part (turn to 424)?

291

Ahead of you rises a pall of smoke, as dense as a swarm of angry bees disturbed by the unwary traveller; the atmosphere grows ever warmer until it is almost unbearable. This, you muse to yourself, must be the road to the forge of Hephaestus the fire-worker. From a pit some feet ahead rises billowing, scalding, choking steam and flames. Yet to either side there seems room to proceed. Do you pass on beyond this obstacle (turn to 154)? Or do you turn back to look for a more promising road (turn to 183)?



292

You reach the object and gasp. It is Minos' ring, bearing the stamp of the great double-headed axe and the M motif. Luckily Minos has not noticed you. You crawl back to your hiding-place, amazed at your great find. Go to 474.

293

In the morning, you are thrown another piece of bread, and it is Polycrates, the captain of the guard himself, who brings you meat and water, and stands gloating as you eat and drink. When you have finished, he leads you out of the cell, along to the end of the corridor, up a flight of stone steps and along the gallery. Several cells along from yours are the seven youths and seven maidens, and you pause to look down at them.

'You won't see them again, Altheus,' crows Polycrates, and the anger of the gods glows in his breast.

'Why are you so pleased?'

'I am captain of the guard. I do as Minos orders.'

'No, that's not it. Why me? Why are you so glad?'

Polycrates stares into your face. 'Your father's men killed my children, Athenian. Now I am killing his children.'

'I didn't kill your children . . . anyway, I'm from Troezen.'

'Everyone knows that the men of Troezen are the biggest liars in the world. Why should I believe you? Come, it is time.'

His logic would not satisfy a philosopher, and you are furious at the injustice of it all. Below you, in the cells, the young people of Athens start to sing. Go to 228.

294

'Oh, so you seek to ravish the lady Ariadne, cur? You chose the wrong victim this time. Lembra of the Amazons will kill you for that!' Go to 392.

295

Is Thaisia's nickname:

Eagle?	Turn to 134
Kingfisher?	Turn to 307
Magpie?	Turn to 391
Swallow?	Turn to 437
Swan?	Turn to 508

296

You take hold of your senses and realize that the burning incense has befuddled your brains. You were about to take the wrong passage and become disorientated. You may turn north (go to 220), east (go to 475), south (go to 69) or west (go to 128).

297

'I passed Dipthis on the way,' you tell Thaisia.

'Oh, what did he say?'

'I don't know . . . I avoided him so I could come straight to you,' you reply ingratiatingly.

'That was silly. If he wanted to talk to you, it must have been something important, and he gets offended easily. I'm not going anywhere; I can wait.'

'Why are you so concerned about Dipthis?' you ask, hurt.

'I think he's treated rather badly. It was rude of you. Oh well. Since you were anxious to see me . . .'

And you spend the time very pleasantly with Thaisia. Go to 180.

298

Two men have entered from the outside. They stand for a moment as if enjoying the furore they have created, and then weave across the floor to the gypsum throne. It is clear that they are both very drunk. Go to 518.

299

You walk briskly along the line of the thread, winding it up as you go. The ball of wool grows quickly until it is almost the size it was when you acquired it. Still there is no sign of the entrance, but the thread gives you hope. It seems to take for ever for the ball to grow complete, and you start to walk faster, winding in furiously. You are so intent on the ball of wool that you run straight into someone standing over the thread. With a start you realize it is a woman, dressed in blue, and suddenly you recognize her. Turn to 356.

300

Here the painting depicts the Minotaur itself rending its victims with its death-bringing horns. The beast is terrifying indeed, and you quail at the prospect of meeting it in battle; yet you must, to save your own life and the honour of Athens. Just above the creature's horns is painted a yellow S. You may go east (turn to 319), north (turn to 281), west (turn to 77), or south (turn to 132).

301

You go back to the throne-room, where Lactris' body is being cleared away.

'Polycrates . . . you aren't going to do anything to Psyche, are you?' you ask.

He looks at you with an eager glint in his eye. 'Well, seeing as you mention it, no. She killed a proven traitor to our Lord Minos. If anything, I'm proud of her.' The relief shows on your face. 'Oh, you like that, do you? Well, it's happening that way, Altheus, if you do something for me. Not otherwise.'

'What do you want?' You wonder, desperately. Your guesses are all wrong.

'Kill Kremton for me.'

Go to 376.

302

You wait until the guard comes through the gallery again, from left to right, and then you place your feet against one wall and your back and hands against the other, so that the door is to your right, and start worming your way up the cell, propped between the two walls. They are far enough apart to make this extremely slow and painstaking work, but you draw level with the gallery before the guard returns. You take the letters with you if you have them, but can manage nothing else. Will you clamber on to the gallery and go left (turn to 24), or right (turn to 262)? Or will you continue upwards into the opening in the roof (turn to 196)?



303

You knock at Opris' door. Lactris appears and mumbles, 'Yes, Altheus, did you want something?', unwelcomingly, but Opris pulls him back into the room and bids you enter too.

'Oriste, peraste. Do come in.'

Opris' quarters are roomy, but untidy. Lactris has slumped into a corner and is rolling a lump of clay in his fingers. Psyche is lying on the bed, smiling uncertainly at nothing in particular. Opris takes a goblet and pours you some spicy Cretan wine from a jug. You sip it tentatively.

'Mmm . . . it's good.' And then you smite your forehead in a gesture of approval.

'Don't move.' It is Lactris, and you freeze, uncertain what he means. 'All right.' You look at him, puzzled. He has rolled the clay into a rough caricature of your position. 'I shall cast it in bronze,' he declares, 'and call it "The Amazed Argive".'

Psyche giggles, Opris shrugs and you sip the wine, wondering if you have been made a fool of. For about an hour you sit and drink the wine and talk. Opris confesses his love for one of the priestesses and Lactris utters his increasingly dogmatic views on life and love.

'Men for companionship,' he is saying. 'You can't be friendly with women, they're only good for . . .' He breaks off, when you hear someone coming.

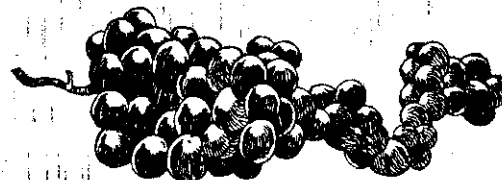
If you are in favour with Dionysus, go to 129. Otherwise, go to 429.

304

The guards seize you and drag you towards the machine which has been set up in front of Minos. You are powerless to resist as they force you inside. You are fortunate enough to swoon before the machine sets to work.

305

The air becomes dusty again, and you begin to feel a dull pain in the back of your head. You continue, but the headache intensifies until you feel that your whole head is splitting. You sit down and the pain subsides after a while. When you move on, you enter a darker part of the labyrinth, and get lost. Go to 488.





306

Your legs are weary now, like those of a man who has scaled a great mountain and looks down at the peasants in the valley below, as they toil at their tasks; but he must carry on with his journey. Yet for you there is no open space, only the oppressive dusk of the labyrinth. You come at length to a small circular chamber, surprisingly well lit. Just out of the corner of your eye you catch sight of a skeleton, still clad in armour, though a gash has been torn from his breastplate. Fear and panic mingle with sorrow as you realize that this is your brother Theseus, the great hero, before whom all foes but one fell. Flung aside beside the wall, like the unwanted scraps from the table, which are tossed to the dogs, is his sword, the sword given by Hera, sword of the goddess. You are moved to tears, and feel your resolve failing.

Do you take the sword that you may avenge your brother's death with it (turn to 389)? Or do you trust to your own skill, and leave the burial rites for your brother until with your own arms you have slain the Minotaur – or perished (turn to 394)?

307

Go to 341.

308

'No, Minos. Surrender or die. I found the Minotaur in this labyrinth. I shall find my way out just as easily.'

'The king of Crete surrenders to no one.'

'So be it, Minos. Fight on.'

You continue to fight, but Minos, badly wounded, can only parry your blows. Inevitably, he grows tired and you deal him the final blow. He slumps at your feet. As you bend down to pick up his sword, you notice his ring, with the double-headed axe and M motif, and you slip it off his lifeless hand into your pocket. Giving the body one last glance, you push on into the gloomy maze once more. Have 6 Honour points for killing Minos and go to 488.

309

In case some words are needed to make it obvious, you may like to know that Polycrates does not, in fact, believe you. We advise you to run away. Have 2 Shame points and go back to 289.

310

A mass of great-horned cattle mingling with rushing water fill the walls, as Herakles clears out the stables of Augeas, his fifth task. The accumulated detritus of thirty years rush forward to pollute the Elian land, while Herakles stands, his arms raised in triumph amidst the tumult. You may turn north (turn to 343), west (turn to 475) or south (turn to 470).

311

You are both late for breakfast and sit unobtrusively at the back. You pick at the olives and grapes with no great relish, leaving the bran, such as is used in Troezen for feeding horses, not men, on your plate.

'I have an announcement,' says Pangryon, the High Priest, interrupting the subdued hubbub. 'The ephors for the festival will be Noa and Opris. That is all.' He leaves. After finishing her bran, Thaisia gets up too, and you follow her out. Go to 11.



312

'I am no servant, but a king's son,' you declare.

He thinks for a moment, clearly confused, then speaks: 'No, I think I am the king's son.' Then, with a sudden jerk of his hand, he shoves you away. You stumble back against the table, and are still off balance when his fist strikes a sharp blow to your stomach. You double over, gasping, but step aside, before his next ill-aimed attack can land. Grabbing him by the leg, you knock him over and his head crashes down on the stone floor with a resounding thud. Before you can press home your advantage, you are seized by the guards and your dazed opponent staggers out with his friend.

Minos orders the guards to release you and tells you to rejoin the feast. 'It is not normal for our guests to assault my son, but Kremton hardly deserves better.' Go to 160.



313

The secret of the labyrinth is not that simple. The patterns on the hanging tapestries in your home at Troezen are nothing compared to the secret ways and tunnels of the Minotaur's domain. Take care, adventurous Altheus, for without it you die like a beggar, unknown and unloved. Turn to 501.

314

You run down the passageway and soon see the familiar figure of Minos ahead. You sigh in relief, and slow to a stealthy walk so that the king does not hear you. He stops regularly, leaning on the walls to catch his breath and you pause, too, well back in the gloom. After a while, he reaches a place where the walls of the labyrinth widen out and a large circular hole in the ceiling lets in natural light. Minos shouts for a guard. Go to 74.

315

You shadow-box for a bit, in a distracted manner, and then sit and worry. After a while, there is a great commotion outside, and then Opris bursts in, agitated.

'What's wrong?' you ask.

'What isn't? Come with me.'

You go off down the corridors, and Opris starts a garbled explanation. 'It's Psyche. She went berserk . . . hacked Lactris' face up with a goblet.'

'Gods! Is it bad?'

'Mmm. They got Dipthis out of the cells to see what he could do, and that Amazon girl has some herbs or something . . .'

'Wait . . . jail? Dipthis?'

Opris sighs. 'Yes. Polycrates arrested him and Crabia and some other people last night. It seems they had a revolt planned or something . . . I don't know.'

'Will Lactris be all right?'

'He's probably lost his right hand, and he's going to be scarred for ever.'

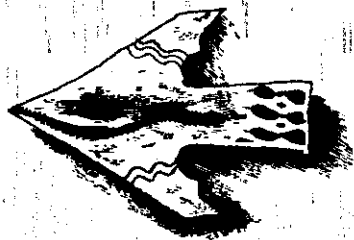
You enter Opris' room. Psyche is lying on the bed, bruised, with Noa looking after her. Noa looks up.

'Altheus,' she says. 'You'll have to talk to Polycrates. Persuade him to let her go. Go on, you're the . . . charmer round here. Do it.'

Will you (turn to 206) or not (turn to 382)?

316

The fresco depicts a young Nubian girl sitting facing you, with a grey tunic slipped down to reveal one bare shoulder. You can go left (turn to 456) or right (turn to 178).



317

You turn over a small scrap of parchment on the table. 'What's this?' You can't decipher the Cretan script.

'Put it down,' orders Thaisia. You squint at the parchment. The signature is in mainland Greek, a capital M with a sketched axe. You do as Thaisia commands, and replace the parchment, but you continue to wonder. M for Miktros? You decide to ask Thaisia about it.

'Why have you been receiving letters from Miktr . . . from Minos?' you say hurriedly as the realization comes to you.

'Oh, it's just some court matters about Ariadne and her handmaidens.'

The words are plausible enough, but you can sense the guilt in her voice, a tremor that you would not have detected a few hours before.

'That's not true, is it?'

Thaisia stands her ground, but you can see in her eyes that you are right.

'So what is it? Is it about me?'

Go to 416.

318

The maze is beginning to get you down. It seems as if you have been walking round for days. You think you can hear voices talking very quietly, but every time you try to find them, you come upon solid rock blocking your path. Now the earth shakes beneath your feet. You rush on, fearful of being crushed, until you can run no further. Will you slump down and rest (turn to 538), or will you walk slowly on (turn to 131)?

319

The floor here is stained with what seems like blood, its crimson hue glowing strangely in the gloom. The paintings on the wall have been scratched by hurried hands but you can still see a scene of human sacrifice enacted. You may go west (turn to 300), north (turn to 128) or east (turn to 249).



320

Without any warning one of the dancers opposite lashes out with his foot and a blade protruding from his sandal carves a shallow crescent gash across your stomach above the waist. The celebration stops in disarray as the man rushes away and out of the hall, before any of the guards can stop him.

You look down at your stomach and watch as the thin red line wells with drops of blood, which start to trickle slowly down. You hear a steady throbbing in your ears and the world seems to rush away from you. 'Poison,' someone says, as you slump to the floor. If you can pray to Zeus, go to 140.

321

You go back, arrows clattering on the wall and the walkway beside you, and drop through the trapdoor. Go to 187.

322

'No, Minos,' you reply, 'that's not enough. I must be king.'

Minos bows his head in thought, and then slowly slips the ring of office off his finger. Without looking up, he proffers it, and you snatch at it eagerly. It bears the famous double-headed axe and the M motif. You slip it on to the third finger of your left hand, but it is far too big and will not stay on. Reluctantly you put the ring into your pocket and follow Minos, who has already set off into the labyrinth. He walks slowly with his hands clasped in front of him, and it is a long time before you emerge into the brilliant sunshine. Minos looks up at you, and then his face breaks into an enormous grin. Go to 440.

323

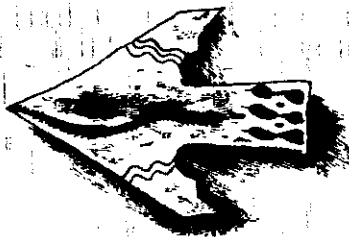
If you read the first book, you will remember being told that Greek wines were never notable, especially in this period. Cretan wines are no improvement, but at least you are getting these free, along with 1 Shame point. Go back to 303.

324

The fragments of what was once a man that survive the Daedalus machine are not worth the attention of Olympian Zeus.

325

'I am no serving-maid,' she cries angrily. 'Those who insult Amazons soon rue the day.' Go to 392.



326

You march angrily to Thaisia's room. She turns away from the window to face you, and you can see that she does indeed have a gold bracelet on her wrist.

'Why are you looking like that?' she says after a moment.

'Show me that bracelet.'

'All right.' She hands it to you, and you turn it over in your hands.

'A double-headed axe.'

'So?'

'So it's Minos' symbol.'

'Well, what of it?' she asks. 'Everything in Knossos has that symbol on it.'

'Where did you get this?'

'I don't have to . . .'

'Where? From Minos?'

Go to 416.

327

You feel your arms caught by the other people in the inn and you are flung out into the street. Go to 507.

328

As you proceed, the rushing sound grows even louder. You descend, slowly at first, but then more rapidly, until you come to a great underground river, rushing into the rocks at the rear of the chamber. A pile of white, water-smoothed bones has built up near the place where the river disappears, evidence of the carnage the king of bulls has wrought on Athens' folk. You may search for a secret door to proceed (turn to 245) or turn back (turn to 144).

329

The four of you walk together down to the harbour. It is not the point where you came ashore the day before, but a small port town, streets bustling with sailors, traders and slaves. Rather than entering the town proper, Opris leads you to a boat-house by the waterside, nearer than the port.

'She's in here.' He opens the gates to reveal a caique tied up inside the boat-house. 'Come aboard.' Thaisia and Noa step gingerly on to the boat. Will you go with them (turn to 87), or walk around the town (turn to 388)?





330

While you consider, it becomes clear that everyone else has risen to their feet. Have 1 point of Shame. You rise hurriedly, but Kremton has noticed your mistake.

'Who brought this unmannered boor to our table? Surely he should be out with the animals and slaves, taking his swill from the common trough.'

He pauses to draw breath for a new stream of insults, but before he can begin once more, you seize an enormous watermelon and throw it at Kremton. It misses him and explodes against the far wall, showering everyone with the sticky red flesh. Kremton is momentarily stunned, and his father, Minos, breaks the silence.

'This has gone too far. You will do your fighting at the proper time. Tomorrow is the ritual pankration of the festival of Demeter. You two will be the combatants. Until that time, keep away from each other.'

He strides regally out of the hall and you return to your room. Go to 500.

331

Zeus, father of the gods, seizes Prometheus in this painting, and orders him chained to a rock in bleak Scythia. Yet Prometheus, giver of knowledge to mankind, fire, writing, prophecy and metal, defies the king of Olympus, and is thrown down into the grim, black depths of Tartarus, for he has prophesied that Zeus will be dethroned by his own son. You may go to the north (turn to 63) or east (turn to 165).

332

You awkwardly try to comfort Psyche, telling her how you never liked Lactris and were surprised what she saw in him. It does not help. She grips her goblet ever more tightly, then smashes the top against the table and breathes, 'I'll kill him,' almost inaudibly. Go to 247.

333

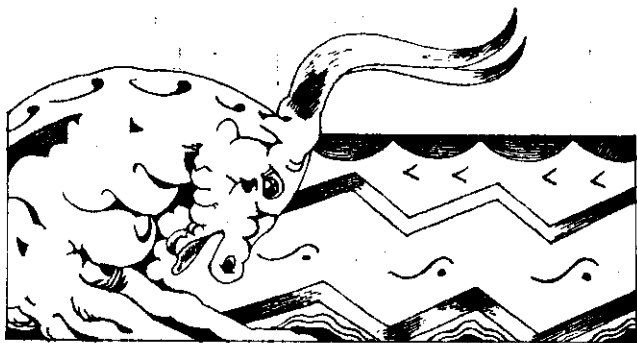
'How do you know my name?' you ask.

'I am Lembra, trusted Amazon guard of the Princess Ariadne. What do you want with her? Or is it me you're looking for?'

'I was hoping to talk with the princess,' you reply confidently.

'The princess is in my care: she speaks to no man. So leave now, Altheus.'

If you have a golden amulet, go to 18. If you do not, and you wish to depart, go to 490. If you refuse to leave, go to 246.



334

As you stand hidden from Minos, you notice a small object ahead on the ground between you and the king. It is dangerous to emerge from the shadows, but you are inquisitive. You crawl forward on all fours, hoping to go unnoticed. Roll one die to see if Minos has seen you. On 1-3, turn to 23; on 4-6, turn to 292.

335

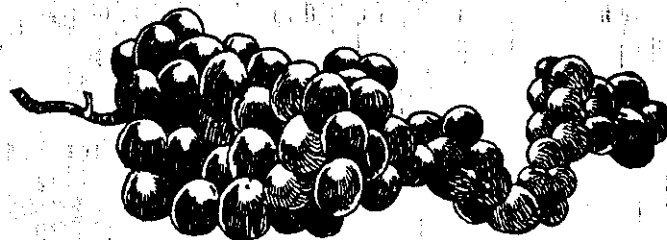
You cradle the papyrus carefully in your hands, afraid in case it crumbles to dust at your touch. Just then there is a great shaking, and cracks appear in the walls. The Minotaur, in his anger at the intruder in his halls, is destroying his prison. Forgetting the parchment, you must flee west (turn to 342), east (turn to 466) or south (turn to 385).

336

You have the first attack. The guard has Might 6, Protection 11, a leather jerkin (Protection 2) and a whip (Might 1); your armour has been taken, but you have the torch (Might 2). You cannot retreat. If you surrender, go to 218. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 472. If you Seriously Wound the guard, go to 79.

337

The day dawns brightly, and you awake refreshed, with no trace of headache. You dress and go to the first meal of the day. Turn to 377.



338

For ages the nymphs have guarded the winged sandals, magic wallet and helmet of Hades, which renders its wearer unseen to all eyes. When Perseus came, as you can see from the wall-painting, they gave them up willingly, for his fate is far higher than their own. From Hermes the messenger, the son of Danae receives a sickle, and from the queen of Athens, the great goddess, a mirror for the undertaking of his task. You may go north (turn to 86), south (turn to 20) or west (turn to 430).

339

You hand over the letters. Minos checks the seal, then opens them and reads. After a moment, he looks up.

'You are what you say, adventurous Altheus. *Kalosoriate* . . . you are welcome here. In three days' time we celebrate the festival of Demeter; until then we may eat no meat nor drink any wine, and I will do no business. After the festival, I will speak with you and decide. Until then, you will stay as a guest at our court. Do as you wish, come and go as you wish: we have no secrets here. Tonight we have a festival dance: we shall see you there.' Go to 37.



340

When you arrive at the gymnasium, the only people there are two guards sparring. In reply to your question, you are told that Polycrates left a few moments before, but that he will probably return. You can go back to your room (turn to 240) or wait for Polycrates to return (turn to 137).

341

Before you can speak, there is a thunderous knocking at the door. Thaisia pushes you away, a look of absolute contempt suddenly filling her familiar features. Polycrates storms into the room with two guards, who seize you and pin you to the wall.

'Your suspicions were correct, my lord Polycrates,' reports Thaisia. 'The Athenian dog has come to Knossos, treachery foremost in his blackened heart. He means to steal away the lady Ariadne and most foully slay the Minotaur. This secret escaped his sin-stained lips in sleep. The swine whined out his sordid story in sweaty slumber.'

Insistently you protest your innocence, but your guilt shines through.

'I thought as much,' growls Polycrates. 'You,' he gestures to a guard, 'bring the rod.'

One of the guards leaves the room. Will you take advantage of this to try to escape (turn to 44), or will you await your fate (turn to 103)?

342

You come to a steep flight of steps. The walls here are not painted, but carved with grotesque figures and beasts, as though the very denizens of Hades had come to watch your progress and squat leering at you from behind. You cannot make out what lies in the gloom beyond the first few stairs. Do you attempt the stairway (go to 111)? Or do you turn back west (turn to 238), north (turn to 448) or east (turn to 39)?



343

In the centre of a small rounded chamber you see a shallow pool caused by water dripping from the world above. A dim light, filtered from the golden rays of sun, casts a strange glow, flickering like the frantic wing-beats of a moth, seeking to escape from a jar. Do you want to refresh yourself by drinking (turn to 460)? If you have a waterskin, you could fill it for use later (turn to 496). Or do you carry on east (turn to 402), west (turn to 16) or south (turn to 310)?

344

You move out from behind the statue and make your presence plain. The guard moves forward menacingly, but Opris restrains him with a firm hand.

'It's all right,' he says. 'What brings you to the temple, Altheus?'

'I came to see the pankration ring, before I fight Kremton tomorrow and to . . . to have a look at the labyrinth,' you add hesitantly.

'Well, it's strictly against the law to go into the labyrinth, but as you're a friend,' he adds in a low voice so that the guard cannot hear, 'I can tell you what I know.' He walks with you towards the pit, then stops and gazes down into the darkness.

'It's said that when he built it Daedalus depicted the adventures of the heroes on the walls. As he died in screaming agony, in the torture-machines he himself had designed, little suspecting, for all his Hades-sent ingenuity, that he would one day be eviscerated by them himself, he whispered to me: "Follow in the footsteps of the son of Zeus."'

You nod sagely and thank Opris. Having arranged to meet him and Noa at the dance in the evening, you leave for your room. Go to 403.

345

The slave stares at you in disbelief, and after a moment he directs you to the labyrinth. Before you can question him further, he rushes off. You walk on towards the temple. It is strangely silent there and incense burns brightly in braziers. In the centre of the room there is a large pit and you peer over the edge into the darkness below. Behind you, a noise alerts you to another's approach. You hide behind a statue and see the guard returning to his post at the top of the pit. Do you attack the guard (turn to 166), stay hidden (turn to 227), or leave (turn to 370)?

346

Miktros breaks the silence by pushing Psyche heavily in the chest. She falls on her back and he kicks her, forcing the goblet out of her hand. Opris moves to intervene as Miktros kicks her again.

'That's enough, Miktros,' barks Polycrates. Miktros kicks her a third time. 'That's enough, I said.'

Opris pulls Psyche away. Polycrates continues to shout, barely in control of himself. 'The day of the festival, the town is about to revolt, and you're brawling like . . . Get out, all of you. Get out!'

You go to your room. Have 1 Shame point for doing nothing, and go to 91.

347

The scene here is of Demeter, the corn mother, distraught at the loss of her daughter. She wanders far and wide across the weary earth until she meets Hecate, who divines for her the awful truth, that Persephone has been abducted by Hades, master of the underworld. You may carry on east (turn to 90), south (turn to 418) or north (turn to 26).

348

In a sparkle of divine glitter the goddess Aphrodite appears in your lap. Disconcerted, you wriggle and the goddess squeals with delight, before wagging a chiding finger under your chin.

'Time for that later. Remember your instructions: you're to kill the Minotaur, which is an ugly old thing which no one'll miss very much, and then rescue Ariadne, who is noble and fair – well, fair by terrestrial standards. Rich, anyway. I'll have her as a handmaiden, which should be lots of fun, all girls together, you know what I mean.'

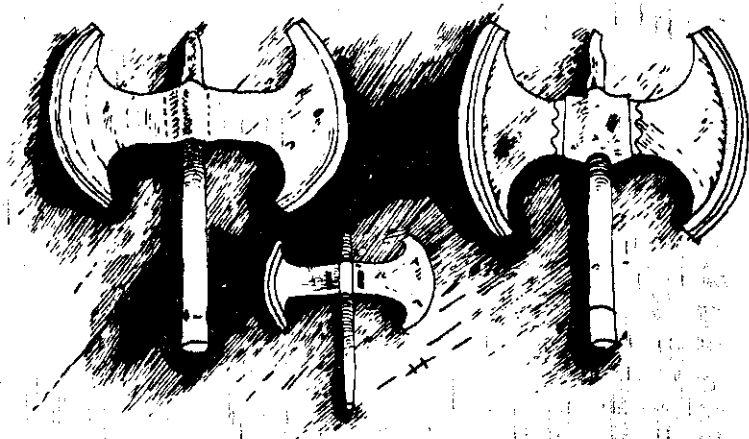
And the goddess is gone, leaving only the memory of a kiss, ripe as a peach, lingering on your lips. You mull over your journey. Sent by Hermes to Athens, you devoted yourself to the sybaritic goddess and then encountered her on the road. After parting from her, you travelled through Mycenae and then angered Hera, queen of the gods, by casting her, disguised as an elderly woman, into a river. You took a ship from Cenchreae but were shipwrecked near Crommyon, whose people you saved from a monster sow. The folk of Pagae fared less well, for you failed to deliver them from their plague of rats and were bitten and infected. You visited the temple of Delphi, and attended a Dionysiac orgy on the way to Acharnae. Later, however, you stopped the sacrifice of a black puppy, and angered Hecate the witch goddess. At Acharnae you saw the famous chariot races.

In Athens you made yourself known to your father, and he sent you to fight against the Amazons. In battle you slew their queen, Antiope. Your father, the king, sent you to Crete to negotiate an end to the blood-tribute of seven youths and seven maidens. On the journey by ship, you saw off the sea-serpent sent by Poseidon, weathered the storm and were tired by a further emotional reunion with Aphrodite in her welcoming pleasure-dome at Cythera. Slipping past Talos, the giant but shaky-footed bronze man of Crete, you arrived here. Go to 530.

349

As you are overwhelmed, the captain of the guard comes running up. He looks down at you. 'King's son, eh? I remember when they were made of better stuff.' He signs to the guards. 'Watch him.'

You are dragged away with the other prisoners, the ship's captain being able to do no more than shrug helplessly. The journey to Knossos lasts the best part of the day, but, wait as you may, no further opportunity for escape presents itself. At length, you are herded with the others into prison. The gaoler puts you into a separate cell, and you sink into an uneasy daze. Have 1 Shame point. Go to 282.

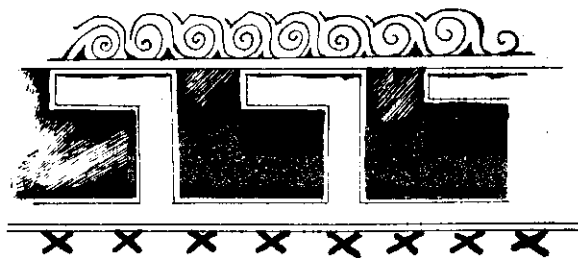


350

You knock the guard unconscious with the butt of his sword and drag him behind the altar. Then you take his sword and slide into the labyrinth. You have the sword (Might 2), but no other weapons or armour. Go to 67.

351

The guard leaves without demur. Once you are sure he is not going to return, you slide into the pit. You have no weapons. Go to 67.



352

The roof here is high and you can almost imagine that a few feet away is the world of men, where warriors fight their wars, and there is feasting and the sound of battle. In this gloomy underworld you can see or hear nothing of this. In one corner of the vast chamber you see something white; cautiously you investigate, and you see that it is the arm of a statue broken off below the shoulder. You search around, but find no other fragment. What you have seems like the delicate arm of a woman. Do you pick the arm up, in case you find the rest of the statue (turn to 119)? Or do you leave it safe in its resting-place and carry on north (turn to 68), east (turn to 276), west (turn to 281) or south (turn to 319)?

353

If you have a golden amulet, turn to 18. If you have a jewelled brooch, turn to 248. If you have neither, return to 333.

354

'Have my throne,' Minos continues. 'You have ruined my palace and my labyrinth, now destroy my kingdom.' With that he removes his ring from his finger, and throws it at your feet. As you stoop to pick it up, his foot crashes into your chin and drives you backwards. Before you can react, the earth begins to shake just as it did in the labyrinth. Both of you freeze, held in common terror, but the tremor dies away. Go to 440.



355

The pankration, or boxing-match, is handled by you the player. On a piece of paper write down your Endurance, and Kremton's, which is 50. Combat takes place as a series of punches. Each boxer continues to box until he is blocked, when his opponent takes over.

To punch, choose a target area (head, groin or body) and roll a die to see whether Kremton is defending it (see table). If he is not, you subtract from his Endurance an amount of damage corresponding to the area struck:

A body blow does 1 point of damage.

A groin hit does 2 points of damage.

A head punch does 3 points of damage.

If he is defending the correct area, the blow does no damage and he takes over. You decide which area to block, then roll the die to see which he is attacking.

Die	Attacks	Defends
1	Head	Body
2,3	Groin	Groin
4,5,6	Body	Head

If your Endurance falls to 0 or below, you are dead and Zeus will not save you. If Kremton's Endurance falls to 0, he is unconscious (go to 97). If it falls below 0, he is dead (go to 485).

356

'Ariadne,' you cry, 'what are you doing in the labyrinth?'

'I've come to find you,' the princess replies. 'Now follow me: we must get away quickly.' Too dazed to resist, you are led away by Ariadne. Go to 224.

357

You protest feebly as the guards set about your midriff with their fists, then drag you along the corridor and lean you out of a high window. The ground seems giddily far below and you claw desperately for a handhold.

'We're wasting time,' says Polycrates and the guards release their grip on you. You tumble from the window to the ground below. If Zeus can save you, go to 213.

358

Have 5 Honour points. You stagger out into the street. Go to 507.

359

Perseus hands over the Gorgon's head to Athena, and the warrior goddess places it at the centre of her shield. Perseus goes next to Argos with Danae and Andromeda, mother and wife, but his grandfather, mindful of an oracle that said he would die by the hand of the son of Danae, flees to Larissa, leaving his kingdom unrulid. You may go east (turn to 259), south (turn to 466) or west (turn to 448).

360

As you make your way forward, a sweet smell fills your nostrils and you can make out a fine haze in the corridor. You stop for a moment and breathe deeply, inhaling this clean air, which is free from the dust that assails you everywhere else in the labyrinth. Invigorated, you wander further on in the maze and come upon a junction. Will you turn right (turn to 105) or left (turn to 305)?



361

You take a step back and attempt to dash out of the chamber, but you stumble on a stone and fall in agony against the wall. You struggle to rise, but there is no hope, and the Minotaur cracks your skull against the floor, and smashes your ribs by the pounding of its mighty arms. Zeus will not aid you, who have failed so miserably. Your spirit will spend eternity under the torments of Tartarus.

362

Minos does not argue, but continues up the passageway, almost oblivious of your presence. You venture to speak, but he silences you with an icy stare. As you walk along, you observe the king closely. He is obviously in pain and he stops to rest many times before finally reaching the exit of the labyrinth. He coughs, then speaks: 'I have kept my promise, so take my daughter and leave me Crete.' You pause, wondering what to say. 'Now!' he commands.

Will you leave to find Ariadne (turn to 216), or will you go back on your bargain and try to become king (turn to 491)?

363

One swift kick to the jaw breaks Kremton's neck with a crunch. You stagger out of the ring into the arms of Opris and Noa. Have 3 Shame points for killing a defenceless man of royal blood. Go to 485.

364

You are woken the next morning by frantic shaking, and open your eyes to see, not the guard, but the Princess Ariadne.

'My father means to kill you, today. We must escape now. Hurry! We have very little time . . . the guard will return soon. Please hurry,' she says, undoing the rope that binds your hands.

For a second you are too stunned to move, and then you act quickly. You jump to your feet and rush with Ariadne out of the room and out of the palace. Turn to 199.



365

You dig away at the rock-fall with your bare hands, and soon your fingernails are bloody and painful. The thread is stuck fast and it takes a long time to move all the rocks. Eventually the wool is freed and you can continue to follow it back to the entrance. Will you do so now (turn to 299), or will you rest to recover (turn to 409)?

366

In a small alcove which was perhaps intended to house an altar, you come across a box, concealed in the shadows. You look closer, and the latch seems to be broken. Do you pick up the box and open it (turn to 234)? Or do you carry on north (turn to 179) or south (turn to 279)?

367

'I have no need to leap bulls,' you tell her.

'No, indeed? As you wish,' and she disappears back into the corridor. You can go to the dance (turn to 158), or carry on towards Dipthis (turn to 117).

368

You make your way quickly to the temple, which is dark and silent. You can see very little, but you make out the outlines of the pit leading into the labyrinth. Then a voice calls out your name softly and you turn around sharply, but can see no one. Again the voice cries: 'Altheus'. It is the statue speaking. You fall to your knees, realizing that you are in the presence of a goddess.

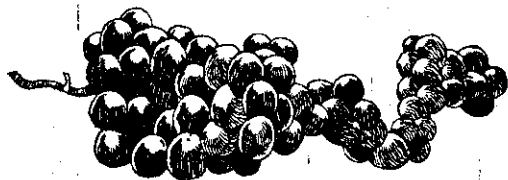
'Be cautious. In the labyrinth many perils await you, but the Minotaur will be the greatest. Your brother stooped for a brief moment and the monster had him.' The statue falls silent and will speak no more. Awestruck, you return to your room and lie on the bed, pondering the words of the goddess. Go to 213.

369

'Don't think of surrender. This is no boxing-match. We fight to the death,' calls out Minos, as you indeed start to think of surrender. You must fight on. You cannot be saved by Zeus, since you are in the labyrinth. If Minos is Seriously Wounded, go to 88.

370

You wander away from the temple, deciding what to do next. You could return to your room and rest (turn to 125), or you could go in search of Ariadne, the king's daughter (turn to 469).



371

Back in your room you relax again, and pause to take stock of the situation. Several options present themselves. You can go to the festival dance (turn to 158); you can try to talk to Dipthis (turn to 489); or visit Opris and Lactris (turn to 303); you can remain in your room and sleep (turn to 100); or you can try to find your way into the labyrinth and kill the Minotaur (turn to 7).

372

You hand the man his wine and the court joins in his jeering. 'This is not a king's son, but a cowardly slave with notions above his station,' cries King Minos. 'Take him to the cells.' Have 2 Shame points. Go to 244.

373

The guards seize you, and you wince. But Lembra is all haughty Amazon again.

'Unhand him! What are you thinking of?'

'He's an escaped prisoner, lady. Dangerous . . .'

'No one is dangerous to an Amazon, fool. He's mine, and I will take him to Minos.' The guards let go of you resentfully, and Lembra sweeps away with you. 'Useful, sometimes, to have a formidable reputation,' she whispers. 'Now, how is Antiope?'

You explain your situation to her, interspersing it with gossip about Antiope. By the time you reach the throne-room, she is quite indignant, and brushes past the astonished guards without a word.

Minos is sitting on the gypsum throne talking over some matter with a man in priestly garments. The king is large, and strokes his flowing beard reflectively from time to time.

'Your guards have arrested my friend, Minos,' Lembra announces. 'I want him released.'

'I heard about this,' concedes Minos. 'He tried to escape.'

'I am a king's son,' you tell him, deciding it is time you took a hand. 'I am not accustomed to being treated like a criminal.'

Minos looks at you sardonically. 'I'm busy now. Will you vouch for him?' he asks Lembra.

'I will,' she replies.

Go to 433.

374

The wall here is a dull grey. It depicts a landscape with a single blasted tree and a flight of birds flying into an ashen sky. In the top left is a brown scroll, with letters in an alien script. You carry on down the passage. Go to 456.



375

Have 3 Honour points for defeating the guards. You make good your escape and disappear into the Cretan scrub. Checking that you are not being followed, you pause to reflect. The path you have been following forks left towards Knossos (turn to 194), or right (turn to 285). Alternatively, you can branch out on your own (turn to 223).

376

'I don't understand,' you say.

'Then listen. Minos is an effective king, who gives me the power I need. But he is not immortal, and when he dies Kremton will be king. I cannot imagine Crete surviving for a year after that. Can you?'

'I suppose not.'

'Well then. If you kill Kremton today, that removes that ... danger.'

'And leaves what? Ariadne?'

'Ariadne I could rule without difficulty, if it became necessary ... But all this is idle speculation. You want a favour from me: you'll have to do one in return, first. It's your decision: we'll see how you decide in the fight.'

Go to 277.

377

'Lactris' moment of triumph,' whispers Opris. 'Look at him, practising his modest expressions.' He smiles, with no trace of malice.

'This is when they announce the ephors, then?'

'Yes. Look, that's Noa, there on Pangryon's right.' He indicates a young woman with what your mother Aethra used to call an 'overcast' face. Seeing the fondness in his eyes, you mumble something appreciative. 'Ah, there's Uncle Pangryon getting up.'

The High Priest looks down at Noa with what for him passes for a smile, and then proclaims, 'I have an announcement. The ephors for the festival will be Noa and Opris. That is all.' He leaves.

You cast a surreptitious glance around. Lactris looks like a sailor who sits down to eat a sumptuous feast, only for it to be snatched away by the Harpies. Opris is surprised and pleased. And Noa has the expression of a little girl who sends a trader uncle away to fetch a gold brooch for her from the East, when he returns with it: satisfaction, not only in the gift, but in that the indulgent uncle will do what his niece demands. It occurs to you that you may have misjudged Noa, priestess of Demeter. Go to 84.

378

You return to the palace and seek out Polycrates. You tell him of the weapons you have found and he nods grimly: 'I suspected as much. Come with me and we will root out this nest of traitors.' Go to 468.

379

'Well met to you both,' says Opris, as he gets up; Noa remains seated, but waves a cautious hand. 'Where are you going?'

'We're going to visit my mother,' said Thaisia. 'Why?'

'I have a caique moored in the harbour. We're going to take her out; I thought you might like to come.'

Thaisia looks at you and says, 'I don't mind. Which would you prefer?'

If you want to visit Thaisia's mother, go to 441. If you want to sail, go to 329.

380

Ah, Altheus, not so easily can the Minotaur be destroyed. Its thick hide and evil heart sustain it and turn aside your blows. The Minotaur will fight as though the last hit did not take effect (and is therefore not Seriously Wounded, and needs two more hits to kill it).

If you surrender, go to 209. If you retreat, go to 361. If you die, and pray to Zeus to be saved, go to 505. If you kill the beast, go to 442.



381

'This is Altheus, son of Aegeus,' cries Minos as you re-enter the throne-room. Feeling all eyes turn to you, you smile weakly. 'Come, Altheus, sit down. I drink this in your honour.'

The libation is passed round, and the company drink to your health. You yourself drink to the good fortune of the palace of Knossos and its inhabitants, to general approval. General chatter ensues, and you feel somewhat lost. Then Minos' roar cuts across the hubbub again.

'Gentlemen, what am I thinking of? This is Altheus, son of Aegeus. Theseus' brother. I'm sure you all remember *him*.' It is clear that many do. 'Stand up, Altheus; let them get a good look at you. This is Pangryon, my High Priest, and Polycrates, captain of the guard.' Neither looks pleased to see you: Polycrates manages an insincere half-smile, but Pangryon just snarls at his drink. 'Opris and Lactris,' continues Minos, indicating two young courtiers who grin amiably at you. Opris is somewhat dandified, in an Eastern way, and leans back in his chair in a relaxed fashion; Lactris is tall, and toys with a ring on his left hand, his only concession to fashion.

'There *are* other people at my court,' Minos starts again, apparently oblivious to the fact that he has passed over all the women and at least one man, 'but they don't seem to be here. Where's Boloris?'

A commotion at the far end of the hall interrupts him. Do you investigate (turn to 454), sit still and see what happens (turn to 298), or take advantage of the confusion to slip out and look for the labyrinth (turn to 7)?

382

'I can't . . . it won't do any good,' you say.

Noa looks at you with contempt, and Opris' shoulders slump. 'I understand,' he says, unconvincingly.

You return to your room with 2 Shame points. Go to 277.

383

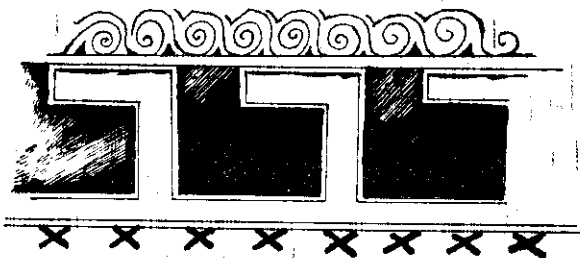
It is clear that neither Kremton, Miktros nor Lactris wants to talk to you. It is Lactris who speaks. 'Go and play with Opris and his Argive friend, Altheus,' he sneers, looking for approval from the other two.

'Why your sudden aloofness?' you ask. 'Why aren't you with Psyche?' And suddenly you realize. 'Of course. You've abandoned her to cultivate your friends here. But why would you need to do that?'

Abruptly Lactris throws the contents of his goblet in your face. As you wipe your eyes with the back of your hand, you notice that Lactris, at least, is disobeying the prohibition on drinking during the run-up to the festival, enough to make him more than a little unpopular with Pangryon. Far more satisfying to you, however, is the look in Lactris' eyes, which is clearly not one of anger, but of fright. You can attack him (turn to 210) or do nothing (turn to 283).

384

Around the walls of this room you see depicted a coronation. A man sits on a gypsum throne, and behind him priestesses raise a crown aloft, their arms entwined with serpents. The onlooking crowd bow down and abase themselves in adoration, like people who have seen divinity revealed when one of the gods comes down to earth. On one wall the letter I is painted in large silver script. You may go south (turn to 220), north (turn to 393), east (turn to 219) or west (turn to 46).



385

Herakles now seems to travel to distant lands to complete his ninth labour. Herakles is in the height of battle against the all-conquering Amazons, the warrior women. An Amazon clad in leopard-skin lifts up a great-shafted spear to strike the stranger, but the son of Zeus parries it with a blow, preparing to seize the girdle of Queen Hippolyte. You may go west (turn to 219), north (turn to 39) or east (turn to 198).

386

To hesitate before acting could prove your downfall, especially as you are being stalked all the time by the Minotaur. Lose 1 Honour point, and go back to 366 to make up your mind.

387

Have 4 Honour points and go to 206.





388

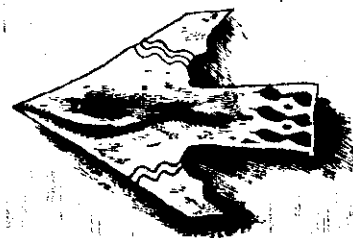
'I want to look at the town,' you say.

The others look at you, offended, and Thaisia gives you a crushing stare.

'Well, walk alone. I am going on the boat.' She steps defiantly aboard. As you turn away rejected, you think you detect a hint of regret in her eyes, but perhaps you are just deluding yourself. You shrug, and walk away into the town.

Ten or so small boats are moored along the quayside, and their cargoes are being unloaded, thrown from hand to hand across the street into storehouses. You walk, dodging the crates, sacks and melons.

You can go into a tavern (turn to 458) or a storehouse (turn to 42), or you can carry on along the shore (turn to 507).



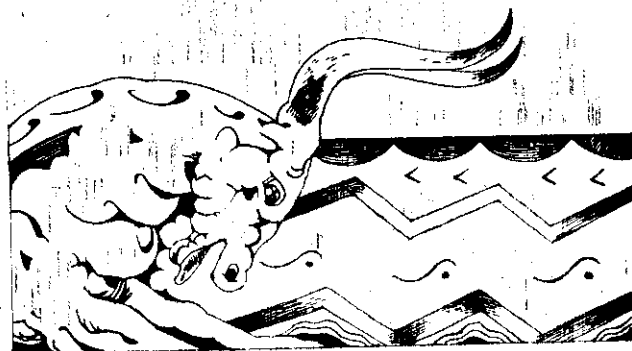
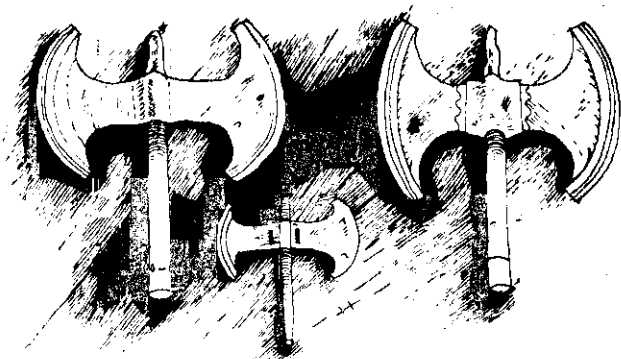
389

You bend down and for a moment you look at the sword almost fondly, remembering those happy days long ago in Troezen when Theseus still lived and the destinies of the gods had not brought him to his doom. You pick it up, and are, at that very moment, struck by something from behind. You feel a pain beyond anything you have ever felt, a blinding white light, and a sense of fear and hatred, as you are propelled across the chamber. You strike your head against the wall, blood fills your eyes, and for a moment there is darkness.

You gather your senses quickly, and turn round unsteadily. There, about to charge again, is the Minotaur, its razor-sharp horns stippled in your blood, its eyes glowing like fires, and its human hands held high as though in triumph. Salt sweat drips from your brow as you brace yourself for the fight.

The Minotaur is Might (*)15, Protection 22. Your sword has Might 5(*8), Protection 5(*8). Because this sword is divine work, it is more effective against divine or divinely built creatures, which are marked in the text with asterisks. When fighting these creatures, it has the values 8 and 8 instead of 5 and 5.

Because of the blow to your head, you are already Wounded. If you Seriously Wound the Minotaur, go to 380. If you surrender, go to 209. If you retreat, go to 361. If you die, and pray to Zeus for aid, go to 505.



390

You retrace your steps down the gallery and evade the guard. Then, to your horror, the other guard returns and sees you. He gives a cry and rushes towards you. Go to 336.

391

Go to 341.

392

The woman moves at you with incredible speed, producing a dagger as if from nowhere to take the first attack. She has Might 7, Protection 12. Zeus will not save you if you die. If you surrender, go to 173. If you Seriously Wound her, go to 464. You may not retreat.

393

You may go east (turn to 238), south (turn to 384) or west (turn to 263).





394

Determination in your heart, you step out of the chamber and laugh grimly at the thought of the fight you face. Yours is the bravery of the boy who faces the foes' champion, armed only with a sling against the great bronze-armoured giant. Hardly have you gone a score of paces, than there he stands, the Minotaur, half bull, half man, and mightier than both or either. His human half is filled with animal fury, his bull's head graven with human hate. Now, adventurous Altheus, your time is come. This is no game of wooden swords on the palace grounds of Troezen. This is the game of gods, and you are but a small piece. Take your fear and overcome it, banish all thought of loss or victory and steel yourself for the fight. One last muttered prayer to your patron (have 1 Honour point) and the fray must begin, as the battle that is joined between two mighty empires whose armies face each other across the plain, knowing full well that one people, one race, will be broken, there will be no prisoners, and the dogs will feast for days on the dead.

The Minotaur poises itself to charge, and despite yourself you must look at its face, twisted in a terrible grimace, horns sharper than needles, teeth like knives. The beast roars a sound like the crashing thunder of primeval chaos, as both life and death pour forth from it in one great torrent.

The last battle begins. The Minotaur is Might (*)15, Protection 22. If you Seriously Wound the creature, go to 380. If you surrender, go to 209. If you retreat, go to 361. If you die, but pray to Zeus to be saved, go to 505.

395

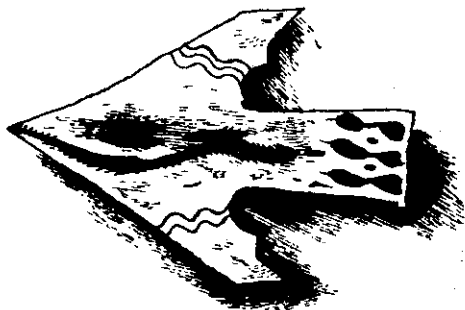
'You're going to Thaisia,' grunts the old man, waving aside your protest. 'Yes, yes you are. Is that wise, I wonder?'

'Is it your business, I wonder?'

'I wouldn't be so hasty if I were you, young Altheus. In fact, I might start to question Thaisia's motives a bit.'

'I'd have thought those were obvious,' you reply immodestly.

Dipthis sneers. 'Yes, you would have thought so. Well, ask yourself why, in that case, Minos has given her a gold bracelet, and even he never throws them around lightly. I'd ask myself why. If I were you, of course.' Then he is gone. You can confront Thaisia with this (turn to 326) or ignore it (turn to 297).



396

You return once more to the high-roofed room, almost fearing that you will be lost for ever in the winding ways of the labyrinth. You may turn north (go to 68), east (go to 276), west (go to 281) or south (go to 319).

397

Your Chronicle Sheet looks like this:

Might: 4 (+2)	Honour: 25
Protection: 10	Shame: 14
Endurance: 30 (+10)	Intelligence: 0

Axe: Might 5, Protection -3

Shield: Might -1, Protection 3

Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2

Corn-ear brooch

Onyx brooch

Hera - Disfavour

Poseidon - Favour

Dionysus - Favour

Apollo - Favour

Note: As a client of Ares, you are entitled to +2 Might bonus and +10 Endurance bonus, as shown in brackets.

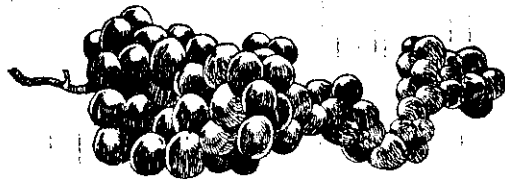
Roll a die. If it is 6, go to 446. If it is 1-5, go to 226.

398

As you run towards the guards, still clutching your torch, though it has gone out, as a club, a gust of wind catches you and you slip and fall into the trench. You crack your head on the side as you fall, and thus never feel the sickening crash to the ground, fifty feet below. But your Cretan travels are none the less at an end.

399

As you cannot see properly, having no source of bright-shining light, you must take a penalty of -2 Might, -2 Protection in combat. Yet all is not lost, for through small holes in the ceiling weak light from the life-giving sun, moon's brother, banishes the dark, and brings with it precious air, sustainer of mortal flesh, so that death comes from the claw alone. Turn to 406.



400

You set out cautiously and silently into the dark, sleeping palace. Will you explore the temple (turn to 368) or the top rooms in the palace (turn to 236), or will you stay close to your own room (turn to 152)?

401

'Altheus!' The cry brings you out of your self-pity. 'You're still alive. Hurry up: we must leave Crete now, in this confusion. There's been an earthquake.'

Hearing this speech, you look up to see the Princess Ariadne, attired in a long loose blue robe. Is this an apparition? A trick of the gods? You reach out and touch her. She is real, no illusion.

'Come on. We must rush. I know the way out.' She grabs your hand and heads off into the labyrinth. Turn to 224.

402

Herakles, nearly overcome by the heat, is shown in a series of paintings shooting at the sun to calm its parching rays, while Helios, the sun, astounded at his boldness, presents him with a boat of beaten gold. You may go north (turn to 198), south (turn to 106), or west (turn to 343).

403

You wash your face in a basin of cold water, reflecting on the events of the afternoon. There is a rush of feet and excited chatter outside in the corridor. The door flies open, and Andra bursts in and seizes you by the arm, adjusting the white flower behind her ear with her other hand.

'You're coming to the dance,' she cries, and it is clear that, whether you wish to or not, you are. You submit to necessity, and are dragged through the passages to the throne-room with various young courtiers, none of whom you recognize.

The large hall is throbbing with people, lost in the ecstasy of the goddess, in the burgeoning spring. In the centre a few courtiers are already dancing to the strains of a flute. Around the outside, people stand in groups, chatting and occasionally picking at the food that lies on the tables. Across the room you see Opris and Noa and you head off towards them, Andra dogging your footsteps. Before you can reach the two ephors, the drums start up. The main dance begins and Andra encircles you round the waist with her eager left arm. Your right arm firmly grips her far shoulder and with your left, you seize hold of Psyche to complete the dancing circle around a ritual amphora full of wine. As the drums beat out, the ring moves one way, then the other, oscillating in time with the music. The pace increases and you, with the rest, begin to kick into the centre of the circle with alternate feet.

If Apollo is your patron, go to 480. If not, but you are in Favour with Dionysus, go to 239. Otherwise go to 118.



As you slouch, Hera, queen of the gods, appears and hits you sharply between the shoulder-blades.

'Stand up!' she cries. 'Now, remember what I've told you. Dispose of the Minotaur, get the sword and at all costs avoid the slut Ariadne. Quickly.' And the goddess is gone, with a sparkle like a floor finely polished by a sweating slave. You think back over your journey.

At the prompting of Hermes, mischievous messenger of the gods, you set off for Athens. You started by wiping out a dirty, disease-ridden wolf, but were less successful with the temple of Asclepius in Epidaurus. You carried Hera, your patron, across a swollen river, which was only right, even though she was in disguise, but incurred the anger of Poseidon by attacking his horse, a piece of rudeness for which you were well punished. You did slay the Crommyonian sow, however, thus allowing the people of Crommyon to live out their lives in ordered contentment. After this, you were bitten by the rats of Pagae and had a serious fever for days. You journeyed to Delphi, but disappointed your patron very gravely when you attended an orgy in the woods. You were only forgiven when your chariot crashed in the races at Acharnae.

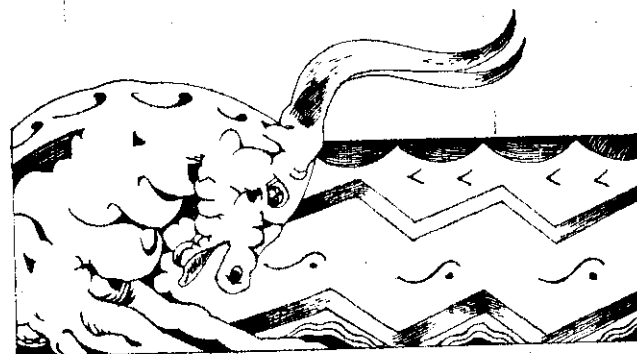
In Athens, you deflected a potential Amazon attack by returning the sacred hairpin, and were told by Queen Antiope to visit Lembra in Crete. You were sent by your father to Crete to negotiate an end to the tribute.

You passed safely through an attack by a sea-serpent, but killed Poseidon's cattle on Melos and angered Hephaestus on Thera. After a storm, you gave food to the wild man of Cythera and got past Talos, the bronze man of Crete, to end up here. Go to 499.

You tread warily along the walkway, with the wind shrieking around you. As you reach a point halfway along the wall, guards emerge from a trapdoor at the far end and start to fire at you. Their arrows go wide, but they start to advance towards you. You can rush into the attack (turn to 398), climb for a window (turn to 27), or work your way back (turn to 321).

You reach the foot of the flight of stairs. Above you the slab crashes back down, barring the entrance. You must proceed. Beyond you stretches the labyrinth. It will be an awesome task indeed to brave its reaches, and yet harder to meet with the Minotaur. Perhaps adventurous Altheus will suffer the same fate as his heroic brother, and his shade will whine for ever, homeless at the borders of the house of Hades.

On the walls to left and right are brightly painted frescos depicting scenes of bull-leaping in the arena of Knossos. One youth takes hold of the sabre-sharp horns, while another springs atop its cold, hard back. The onlookers cheer and clap their hands, blood-lust in their eyes. If only it were as easy to kill the king of bulls! If you have some means of finding your way around the labyrinth, go to 487. Otherwise, go to 501.





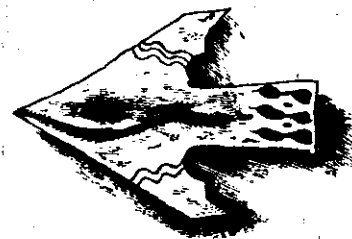
407

You wander into the palace and go straight to Ariadne's room. You knock once, loudly, and the door opens slowly. A beautiful woman stands in the doorway. She grabs you and hauls you into the room, then stands between you and the door.

'Altheus,' she chides. 'Altheus. How can you come in here with violence in your heart? All maidens, and a few others, are under my protection.'

It is the goddess Aphrodite, attired in skimpy radiance. You sink to your knees, chastened, all thoughts of murder banished from your mind. She bends, kisses your forehead, and then is gone, leaving only a suspicion of heavenly brightness.

Ariadne arrives at the door and seizes you by the arm. 'Come with me,' she orders, and with the memory of the goddess still lingering in your mind, you are in no mood to resist. Go to 199.



408

You rise to your feet as the rest of the company stands. Minos mumbles a few words, but you cannot understand, for they are in some ancient, obscure language. The courtiers begin to leave the hall, and soon there are only half a dozen left. As you start to leave, Miktros jostles past you with unnecessary violence, and then Kremton shoves you to the floor, saying, 'Out of my way, foreign upstart.'

This is too much and your patience is broken, like the dam which holds against the river until, at last, the swollen flood

bursts through, and the people of the valley are drowned. You lash out at Kremton. The blow catches him by surprise and he steps back, clutching his injured cheek. He starts to advance, but suddenly checks himself. A large hand clamps your right shoulder and you turn to see Minos' grim features.

'Control yourself, and save your energy. Tomorrow you shall fight each other in the pankration. The goddess Demeter demands that two strong youths battle in the boxing-ring until one cries out for his life on the dust. Now keep apart until the contest.'

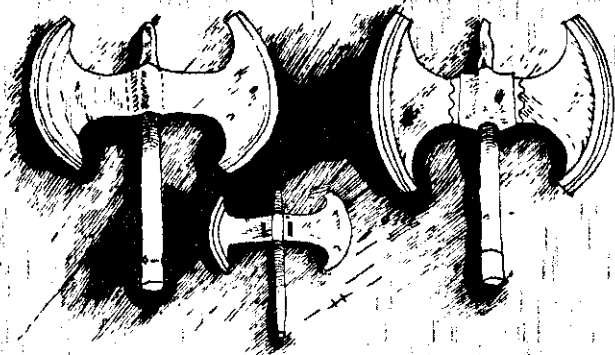
He dismisses you both with a weary wave, and you depart to your room, musing on the words of the king. Go to 500.

409

You sit and wait for your hands to recover from the digging. After a long time they still hurt, so you decide to carry on. You wind up the thread into a ball as you trudge along behind it. Suddenly you stop and look in astonishment as towards you walks King Minos, slowly winding the thread up from the other end. Turn to 525.

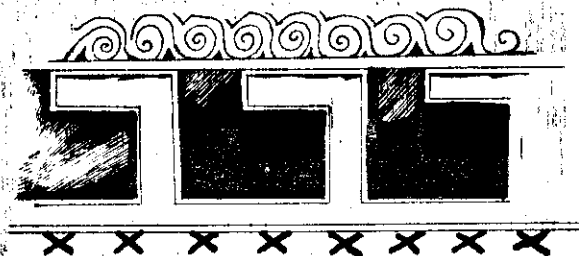
410

'I have never heard tell of Cyron, and I am not she. The Amazons permit no such mistakes, villain!' Go to 392.



411

Acrisios, lord of Argos and father of Danae, is re-created in fresco, his eyes alive with anger, his tunic of the deepest purple. His own daughter he orders locked in a chest with her infant son, and cast into the wine-dark sea, like the master who throws out his faithful servants in the cold night's bitter chill. Danae stands clasping the infant Perseus, pleading for clemency. You may go north (turn to 436), south (turn to 96) or west (turn to 288).



412

You climb the rope-ladder cautiously, and push open the trapdoor. This leads outside to a narrow walkway along the bottom of the palace walls. You can venture along it (turn to 278) or go back inside (turn to 187).

413

It is very difficult to climb out, and several times you slip and fall back into the labyrinth. Eventually, however, you manage to scramble out and see that you are back in the temple. Minos and the guard have gone and there is an eerie silence. You must decide whether you wish to leave Crete or whether you will press your claim to the throne.

Will you go in search of Ariadne and leave Crete (turn to 216)? Will you seek out some member of the court to help you in your claim (turn to 421)? Or will you try to find Minos (turn to 495)?

414

Do you quake so close to your quarry? Lose 1 Honour point and return to 394.

415

'No, Polycrates,' you reply. 'Crete will hail me as a saviour. I have freed them from Minos' tyranny. I have no need of you and your network of spies. I shall rule as the popular choice.' Do you bind him (turn to 201), kill him (turn to 60) or release him and order him to leave Knossos (turn to 12)?

416

'Yes,' she sobs. 'Minos wanted me to find out why you are here. I didn't want to tell him, but they were trying to force me. I wouldn't have. I wouldn't,' she cries hysterically.

You hold her tight and her weeping calms. She breaks away from your embrace and stands thinking.

'I must leave,' she declares after a few seconds. 'Minos' wrath will seek me out. I must go to my mother's house. I'll be safe there; the shepherds of southern Crete are independent folk. Think kindly of me, Altheus, when you lie once again on the hillsides of Troezen.' She kisses you once and is gone.

Saddened, you walk away from the room, but the memories linger. The sound of a gong stirs you from your thoughts and tells you that lunch is beginning. Go to 109.

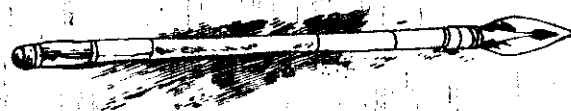


417

The dust in the maze is very thick now and you lose all sense of direction. Your eyes itch and you cannot help rubbing them until they are bloodshot. Finally you can bear it no longer and, shutting your eyes completely, you push forward, feeling with your hands. When you open your eyes again, the dust has cleared. You can turn left (turn to 70) or press straight on (turn to 512).

418

Persephone wanders away from her mother Demeter on the fresco, and when she has strayed too far, she is snatched away by grim Hades, king of darkness, lord of the dead, and carried to his gloomy kingdom to be his queen. You may go to the east (turn to 281), south (turn to 77) or north (turn to 347).





419

Unseen by the slave, you follow him to the huge kitchens where, deep in the bowels of the palace, the lavish meals of the court are prepared. Unseen, you slip through the double doors and sit, all but overpowered by the heat. Unseen, you watch and listen.

The slaves chatter incessantly as they rush about the kitchens, collecting fruits from the storeroom, putting more sticks on the open fire, sweeping the cold stone floor and making the food ready for the dance. You strain your ears, but the eclectic mix of Mediterranean tongues means that only a few phrases are intelligible.

... Do you know how they make veal? They take ...

... But they caught him soliciting in a public labyrinth ...

... Some fool was poking around the melons and found it all.

Suddenly a fight breaks out between two of the cooks, and the others, eager for any diversion on this hot afternoon, gather round the grappling pair in a flexing, clapping circle. One of the two twists to sink his teeth into the other's thigh; he cries out in pain and thrashes around wildly before jerking his leg away, clapping his hand to it to stem the welling blood. The first cook seizes up a pot of boiling water and casts it into the injured man's face. He begins to follow up this attack with a hail of oranges, but is restrained by his fellows. The other cook, badly scalded, is led away, whimpering and blinded, and you take this opportunity to slip out and return to your room. Go to 403.

420

On your way to Lactris' room, you are accosted by Kremton and Miktros. Kremton's breath already smells of wine and his face is flushed: it occurs to you that he must be built like an ox, to drink as much as he does. As he grabs your tunic and slams you against the wall, you realize that the comparison was accurate: he is built like an ox.

'What is there between you and Psyche?' hisses Miktros, spitting in your face.

You can fight them both (turn to 49), or try to talk your way out of it (turn to 287).

421

If you were imprisoned directly before you were flung into the labyrinth, go to 510. Otherwise go to 172.

422

You set off down the passageway to the right, but there is no sign of Minos and you are soon hopelessly lost. Turn to 488.

423

Ah, adventurous Altheus, only one man ever knew the way around the twists and turns of the Cretan labyrinth, and Daedalus left no records. Perhaps the parchment you possess depicts some other place. In any case it will not help you here at all. Have 1 Shame point, and turn to 501.

424

'My lord,' you protest. 'You prompt me to murder your own son. I'll have none of it.'

Minos shrugs. 'It'll happen. Remember, you had the whole of Crete in your hands today, and gave it away. That doesn't happen to many. I'll see you at lunch.' He walks away. You stand stunned for a moment, and then follow him to lunch. Go to 78.

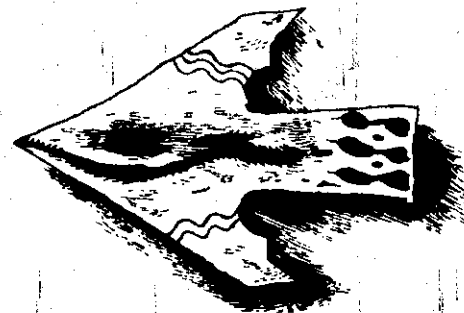
425

You pause to pick up an arrow. You can examine it later. You may attack the guards (turn to 398), work your way back to the trapdoor (turn to 321), or climb for a window (turn to 27).

426

You confess everything and Polycrates scowls. 'Consider yourself lucky that I have no time to deal with you now,' he says. 'If I were you, I'd return to my room and stay there.'

You run back to your room and lie on your bed. Go to 213.



427

You become aware of a cut on your left hand, where a splinter of shell has hit it, and suck the blood clean, reflectively. It is not entirely clear what Minos means.

'I've been watching you, Altheus,' he growls. 'You're clever, Aegeus' son. You'll be king yourself one day - of . . . Athens.' He leans towards you. 'You could be king of Crete.'

Go to 290.

428

You pause to look at the wall. It bears a monochrome picture of a man looking at a wall. You go to 456. He does not.



429

Pangryon, the High Priest, bursts into the room with several guards. There is an angry, embarrassed silence, then he speaks: 'So this is how you keep the festival of Demeter. Missing the festival dance and drinking, in contravention of the sacred rites.' No one knows where to look. 'I'll deal with you later,' he continues, 'and that's not a threat, it's a promise.' Then, to you: 'As for you, Athenian, you're going to prison. I'll answer to Minos.' He indicates to two guards, who carry you off, in no condition to resist. Have 1 Shame point, and go to 244.

430

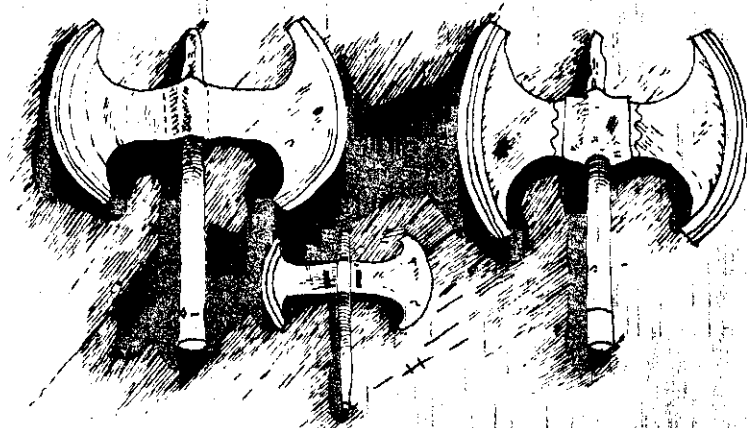
By means of the winged sandals, Perseus mounts up into the air and flies far and long to the very coast of Ocean. The Gorgons, each with a mass of twisting snakes instead of hair, are asleep, and the hissing of their locks does not awaken them. Looking in the mirror, bright-eyed Perseus cuts off Medusa's head, for to behold her directly would transform his body to a stone. Into the wallet Perseus places the Gorgon's head, and eludes the pursuit of her sisters by means of his magic helmet, which renders him invisible. You may travel on to the north (turn to 52), east (turn to 338), west (turn to 198) or south (turn to 273).

431

'Noble king, I bring greetings from Eliduros.' You stop, for Minos looks furious.

'He seeks to mock me with the name of that renegade,' shouts the king. 'I will not be taunted by this Athenian puppy: take him away.'

Still surprised by the vehemence of the king's reaction, you are hauled away by the guards and locked in a dismal cell. Go to 493.



432

You pick the ring up, but as you do, you hear a terrible roaring and bellowing sound, so loud it almost sets the walls to shaking. It must be the Minotaur! In your panic you drop the ring. Take 1 Shame point. You must go quickly to the north (turn to 46), east (turn to 68), west (turn to 347) or south (turn to 281).

433

Minos calls to a handmaiden. 'Thaisia, take Altheus and make him presentable.' A short girl with wide eyes and a skull-like face comes towards you. 'Find him a room, get him washed, bring him back for the feast.' And, to you: 'Time enough then to find out why you're here.'

Thaisia pulls at your sleeve. 'This way.' Go to 515.

434

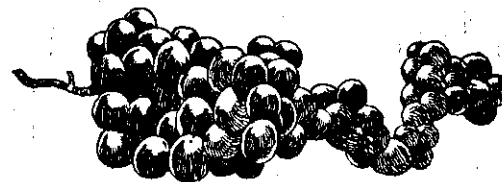
You are indeed right to shake at the sight of the Minotaur, for, after all, your brother, a distant relative of the beast, was not spared its wrath. Theseus was probably in fact only your half-brother (have 1 Shame point), with Poseidon as his true father. Although the origins of the bull which sired the Minotaur are shrouded in sea-spray, according to the most reputable sources Poseidon had a hand in its conception. The bull ravished Minos' wife, Pasiphae, who gave birth to the Minotaur. Theseus was thus the half-uncle of the Minotaur. For unravelling the genealogical complexities of the situation at such a stressful moment, have 3 Honour points, and return to 394.

435

You fall into conversation with Opris, who seems only mildly surprised that you have escaped from the labyrinth and that you have killed the Minotaur.

'The whole place is falling to pieces,' he admits. 'There was an earthquake while you were in there; of course, we're used to tremors here in Crete, but this was a big one. Anyway, Minos has disappeared, and so has Polycrates. Goodness knows what they're scheming away at in secret.' You are glad that he does not notice your ashen face. 'Ariadne's decided to leave Crete in the confusion, and if I were you I'd try to get a boat and do the same.'

On hearing of Ariadne's flight, you realize that you will not have to kill the girl. Do you now continue talking to Opris (turn to 22), or do you take his advice and leave Crete (turn to 116)?



436

A thousand shades of blue confront you here, and you almost think yourself adrift on the open ocean; but no, for this is Danae depicted now, cruelly thrown about by the wild waters. How bitterly she seems to mourn the day that Zeus came to her. With tears in your eyes at the sadness of the tale you proceed. You may go north (turn to 106), east (turn to 179), west (turn to 470) or south (turn to 411).

437

'They call me the Swallow because I am a spy for Minos, but while Minos only bought my aid, you have won my friendship. Minos ordered me to unearth the real reason for your trip, but I have not told what you revealed in your sleep. Now you must return to your room, for if Polycrates finds you here, we will both be in great danger. I will go to my mother's home. There I will be safe from Minos' revenge.' You return to your room. Go to 125.



438

You take Psyche to your room and put her, still shaking, on the bed. You stare blankly out of the window at the sea and the gulls drifting lazily above it. Opris enters. 'Is she . . . er . . .?' He nods towards the bed.

'She's all right. How about Lactris?'

'Bad. His face is all sliced up, the hand . . . Dipthis is looking at him now, but I don't know if it'll be any good.' He hesitates. 'Altheus, go and talk to Polycrates. Please - before he does anything about her.'

'Polycrates hates me.'

'Well, Minos then. Do something.'

Will you do as he suggests (turn to 387) or refuse (turn to 457)?

439

What you have learned is worth 4 points of Intelligence. Go to 403.



440

Minos cries out, 'Guards,' at the top of his voice, and smiles as you struggle to your feet. Before you can escape, Polycrates and two guards are beside you. Minos turns and addresses the captain of the guard: 'Polycrates, arrest this Athenian thief. He has stolen my ring of office.'

Do you fight the guards (turn to 34), do you go with them without a fight (turn to 502), or do you claim that Minos gave you the ring (turn to 289)?

441

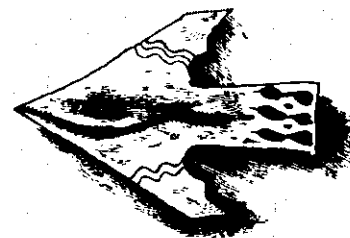
'Let's visit your mother,' you tell Thaisia.

'All right, enjoy yourselves,' says Opris amiably. 'I'll see you this evening.' He and Noa go off towards the sea, while you and Thaisia travel south along the path. The way to Pirgos, where Thaisia's mother lives, is fairly hard, and she stops to pluck an orange from a large grove.

'The best in the world, Cretan oranges. Try it.'

You chew. 'It's all right . . . tastes bitter.'

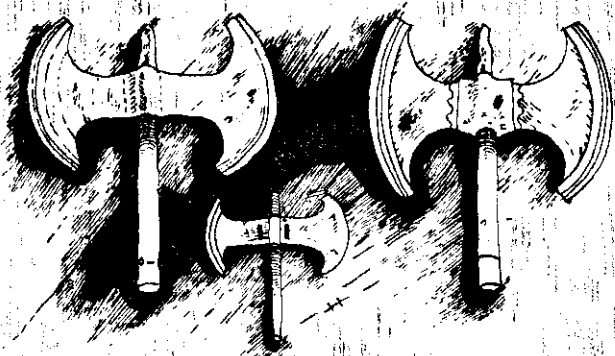
'Bitter! You barbarian!' She smiles. 'Come on. I won't waste the food of the gods on you again.' Go to 150.



The beast crumples under your blows, and falls wheezing to the ground. Even now you can feel pity in your heart for the monster, but dare not finish it off, for it may be like the wounded lioness cornered in her lair, more dangerous than ever, who tears at the hunter who has destroyed her, and they both depart this earth in the same breath. Yellow liquid oozes from the Minotaur's eyes, and it coughs up blood which foams for a moment on the floor, before you rub it in with your heel. So, adventurous Altheus, will your spirit be forever stained with the blood of the creature you have killed; for when you look the life has gone out of the beast, its eyes are glazed, its ribs no longer rise and fall, tormented by its pain.

Stunned, you stare at the carcass for a moment, unable to believe that you have overcome. Surely the gods must have smiled on you, to give you strength to fight against such a thing. Tentatively you touch the death-white horns, but they are so sharp that you cut yourself and drops of your blood mingle with that of the Minotaur.

At last you have avenged the death of your brother, and freed Athens from the tyranny of the sacrifice. Your mother Aethra would be proud of her son now. You may have 15 Honour points. Go to 452.



You stand still, amazed at what you have done. You have killed the Bear, great Minos, king of Crete. Confusion crowds your mind, pride and sorrow intermingled. You had to slay him, but you admired him none the less. Have 5 Honour and 3 Shame points. A movement disturbs your introspection. It is the wounded Polycrates, who has viewed the whole combat and is now trying to escape. His effort is pitiful, because he can only stagger, and you easily keep up at walking-pace.

'No need to flee, Polycrates; you can join your king whenever you like. But will it be the old one or the new one?' you ask, with a gesture that indicates your claim to the throne.

'Don't threaten me, Altheus. I'll help you, but as an equal, not as a servant. Minos had some following in Crete. No, he wasn't universally popular, but the people knew him. Crete prefers the known to the unknown. You are new to us, new to them,' he says with a note of contempt for the ordinary Cretans. 'I control the power here in Crete, now. Without me, you won't last a day on the throne. My advice is to secure your claim: wed Ariadne.'

Do you follow his advice and seek out Ariadne (turn to 503), or do you refuse to be in league with Polycrates and try to secure the throne alone (turn to 415)?

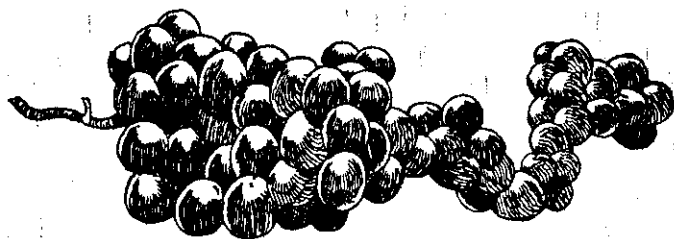
'No surrender!' cries one of the men. Go to 58.

445

'Well?' he demands as you push past, face turned away from him.

'Been feeding them . . . all quiet tonight,' you mutter, trying to mimic the guttural Cretan accent.

Decide how many Honour points you are willing to spend. Then roll 2 dice. If the total is greater than the number of points you spent, go to 264. Otherwise go to 153. In either case the Honour points are lost. If your patron is Apollo or Aphrodite, go to 153; you need spend no Honour points.



446

On the journey you have lost the letters from Aegeus to Minos. Note this down on your Chronicle Sheet, as you may be asked to produce them before being allowed to proceed. Go to 467.

447

Concentrate! Have 1 Shame point and go back to 427.

448

You see Perseus travelling to Larissa, and it is narrated in stone how he took part in games in honour of Acrisios, but threw a discus which struck his grandfather's foot, killing him and fulfilling the prophecy. You gaze on the grief-stricken hero, thankful that no such fate has befallen you. You may go south (turn to 342), north (turn to 149) or east (turn to 359).

449

'I'll stay here, thank you,' you say. Thaisia shrugs, obviously offended, and disappears into the throng of dancers. You stay and watch for a while, and then things seem to be coming to an end. You can visit Opris and Lactris (turn to 303), or go to your room and sleep (turn to 100).

450

'I thought I heard noises,' you tell him, 'so I came to see if I could do anything.'

'If you think I believe that . . . ' and he finishes by thrusting his granite fist into your stomach.

Have 2 Shame points. Do you stick to your story (turn to 357), or will you tell the truth (turn to 426)?

451

'Eliduros is banished,' she sneers, 'and I am nothing like him.' Go to 392.





452

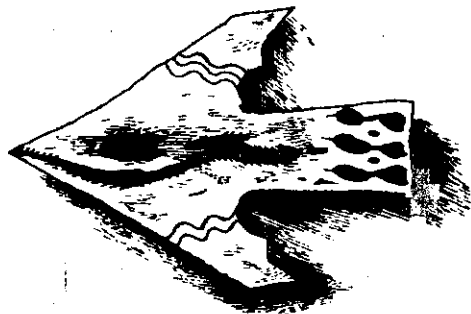
A deep rumbling sound disturbs your thoughts of triumph, soft at first, but growing stronger. The ground beneath you begins to shake, the walls vibrate, and cracks appear before you in the very earth. You stand paralysed by fear, as the labyrinth of Minos begins to shatter around you. Poseidon the Earthshaker visits Crete with his favours!

You are shaken out of your trance by a rush of tiny fragments of masonry which strike your head before tumbling to the floor. You take refuge in a corner, trying in vain to shield your head with your hands. The whole roof now seems to collapse, as the handiwork of Daedalus disintegrates. Huge pieces of the ceiling fall round you, and you see the corpse of the Minotaur covered in the debris; a fitting burial indeed for such a beast. There is one last great tremor, like the roar of the torrent which sweeps down the valley and carries away all in its path, laying low the walls of the city, and freeing for a brief moment the slaves taken in the wars, and all is death and silence.

Amazed that you have survived, you stand, shake off the dust, and begin to clamber unsteadily through the ruins of the labyrinth. If Poseidon is your patron, go to 28. If he is not, go to 535.

453

You stand and stare. Minos glowers at you. 'Leave now,' he says. Lose 1 Honour point, and go with Thaisia (turn to 515).



454

You get up from your seat and, ignoring Thaisia's restraining grasp, you stride purposefully to the end of the hall. Suddenly, the double doors swing open and two young men stumble into the room. They are both clearly drunk, and the taller of the two, grabbing your tunic, breathes, 'Slave, bring me a goblet of wine.' Will you get him the wine (turn to 107), ignore him and return to your seat (turn to 252), or tell him you are no servant (turn to 312)?

455

You feel in your pocket and produce the ring of Minos. Go to 212.

456

On the wall is a picture of a red pentangle inside a red circle, on a jet black background. On the floor is a thin black disc, covered with dust. You stoop to pick it up and the Minotaur in all his wrath is upon you, merciless in his rending limb from limb. You have paid the price for your presumption.

457

'Do something . . . Do what? It won't do any good, Opris,' you protest.

'I see,' he says flatly and leaves you. Have 1 Shame point and go to 277.

458

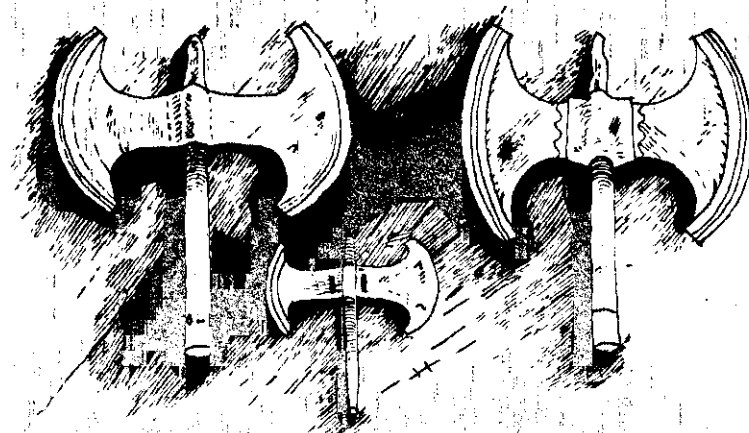
You order a drink and strain to hear the conversation as you wait.

' . . . He's very involved with a chamber-maid . . . '

' . . . So that makes two he's had banned . . . '

' . . . Under the crates in the storehouse. . . '

The drink arrives, and you discover to your embarrassment that you have no Cretan money. You proffer the coins of your homeland, but the innkeeper strikes them from your hand, and they fall to the ground ringing like the tears of the goddess. Will you leave (turn to 507), or will you attack the man (turn to 139)?

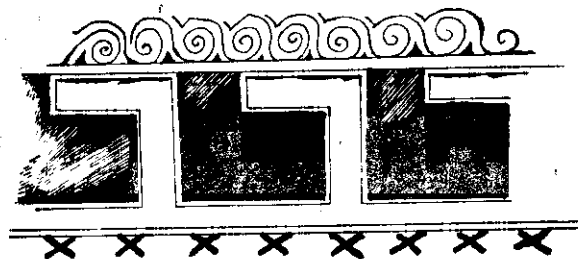


459

As you sit, Athena the grey-eyed goddess of wisdom, protectress of the city of Athens, daughter sprung fully grown from the head of the great god Zeus, arrives. 'Altheus,' she says, 'you have come a long way and, in the face of many dangers, you have prevailed. Now you must buy your brother to protect his body from the jackals and cawwion, rescue Awiadne and slay the Minotaur. Can you remember all that?' And she is gone, with the sound of an old book being slammed shut, and the dust rises into the air in a fine cloud. You sit and muse back over your travels.

Prompted by the messenger god Hermes, you set off for Athens from your home in Troezen. On the road, you soon came upon a wolf and slew it. Then you saved the town of Epidaurus by slaughtering the bandits who had defiled the temple. Meeting an old woman outside the town of Cleonae, you carried her across a river, only to find that she was Hera, queen of the gods. After being beaten and robbed in Corinth, you freed Athena's city of Pagae from the terrible rats. Passing through Megara, you came to Eleusis and celebrated the mysteries of Demeter with the townspeople. You came third in the famous chariot races at Acharnae and defeated the Amazon attack on Athens.

Sent by your father Aegeus with messages for Minos of Crete, you travelled to the Piraeus, port of Athens. On the way you incurred the wrath of the Furies by intervening to save a man who had killed his wife after a domestic quarrel. You escaped a sea-serpent, weathered a fierce storm and passed safely by Talos, the giant bronze man of Crete, to arrive here. Go to 509.

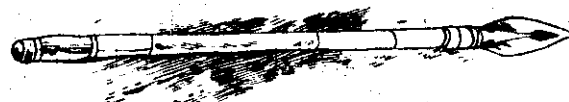


460

The water is foul and polluted. You choke and spit it out, but its insidious poisons pursue their painful path, and you are wracked by coughing. From now on until after your fight with the Minotaur, take a penalty of -1 Might. You may turn east (go to 402), west (go to 16) or south (go to 310).

461

You leave the two bullies sprawled in the passage and carry on towards Lactris' room. Have 4 Honour points. Go to 41.



462

As you make your way to Ariadne's room, you notice how quiet the palace is. There is barely any life in the building, except for the slaves sedately moving about their business. Then behind you the noise of sudden activity disturbs you. Will you hurry on to Ariadne (turn to 503), or will you investigate the commotion (turn to 4)?



463

'Are you really Theseus' brother?' The voice is high and squeaky, and you are disconcerted for a moment, so that she has to repeat the question.

'I am. Who are you?'

She throws back the cowl and you see a plain face, with long pale hair swept back past the ears. She gives a toothy, uncertain smile. 'I knew your brother . . . I just came to have a look at you.'

Suddenly you know who she is. 'Ariadne . . . Lady Ariadne!' You try to stand.

She gives a frightened glance over her shoulder, throws the cowl over her face again and disappears, like a rabbit when the hunter is near. Go to 195.

464

You wait expectantly for your opponent to fall at your knees, but instead she stands her ground and continues to fight. If you win, turn to 202. If you surrender, go to 173.

465

You catch hold of the side of the boat and haul yourself back in, shivering as the water dries off in the sun.

'We'll have to go back,' says Thaisia, 'to get him out of these wet clothes.'

Despite your protests, Opris turns the boat around and tacks back to the port. Thaisia solicitously returns with you to Knossos.

'You'll be all right,' she decides.

'Yes, I know.'

'I'm going to change. Come for me?'

She goes to her room and, after washing your face, you set off there. On the way you see Dipthis in a doorway beckoning to you. Will you ignore him (turn to 297) or stop and speak to him (turn to 395)?

466

Ah, the fickleness of mortals! Here you see Danae, Perseus' mother, clasping the altar-stone of a temple, fleeing from Polydectes. Yet her son comes in time and saves her, turning the guests and servants of the palace into stone, and the king's cruel heart is transformed also, snapping his life's spirit in a moment. You stand for a moment in awe at this strange mutation, but must press on or you will be lost. You may go north (turn to 359), east (turn to 52), south (turn to 56) or west (turn to 39).

467

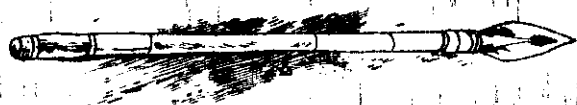
There are two special rules which apply only in this book, and not elsewhere in the Cretan Chronicles.

The first is the concept of Endurance. You now have an Endurance of 30: note this on your Chronicle Sheet, if you have not done so already. You will be told to make additions or subtractions to it from time to time. You will discover its use later in the book.

You will also be given points of Intelligence (i.e. military information), if you make important discoveries. Simply note down how many points of this you have; you will be able to exchange it for Honour in Athens on your eventual return.

Note that, regardless of whether you called on Zeus in the first book, you may call on him just once in this book, unless you acquired a special item, or gained an *additional* call for aid in the first book.

The ship has now docked. Go to 2.



468

You return to the storehouse with Polycrates and a company of guards. They search the building and emerge with some of the swords and Kreas.

'I suspected as much,' comments Polycrates. 'How many more, I wonder?'

At a shout from the soldiers, you whirl to see a mob of townspeople rushing at you from all sides. You duck just in time to catch a stone on the head. It knocks you out, and even Zeus will not revive you.

469

Ariadne's privacy is guarded by a heavy door, but you manage to open it by leaning with all your weight. You stumble inside and come face to face with an Amazon warrior. 'Hello, Altheus,' she says. If you have been to prison in Crete, go to 95. Otherwise, go to 333.

470

Herakles is shown on the wall-paintings in his battle against the fierce Centaurs, half man, half horse. Again and again they charge him, but he does not flinch, like the oak tree which withstands the constant batterings of the sea-sent storms. Armed only with a club, and protected only by his lion-skin, he wreaks bloody war amongst the Centaur's ranks. You may turn north (turn to 310), east (turn to 436), west (turn to 492) or south (turn to 288).

471

Back in Knossos, Thaisia juggles inexpertly with three oranges she has plucked from the trees that line the roadsides. She seems to have recovered her temper. 'I'm going to my room to change,' she announces. 'Join me there soon.'

You nod, and she skips away. You go to your room and wash, rest for a moment, and set out to Thaisia's room. Dipthis the cynic appears in a doorway and beckons to you. If you speak to him, go to 395; if you ignore him and carry on, go to 297.

472

Zeus saves you and you regain consciousness. You open your eyes to find that you are back in the cell. Go to 244.



473

'We should be safe now,' you say confidently. 'They'll never be able to stop us. My ship should be in sight any moment now and . . .'

Your words are interrupted by Ariadne, who engages you in a long, lingering kiss. 'Marry me, Altheus,' she demands a moment later, 'marry me, my prince.' You can only agree. Go to 540.

474

A ladder is passed down to Minos by the guard above, and the king climbs out of the labyrinth. You walk quickly after him, but the ladder is lifted up before you can reach it. You can try to climb out (turn to 413), or you can retreat back into the labyrinth to seek another way out (turn to 488).

475

Birds of unnatural form beset brave Herakles on his sixth task. Their claws are bronze, as are their wings and beaks. They shoot their feathers at the hero as arrows, when he dares disturb them with Athena's rattle, gift of the goddess. Herakles stands pulling back his great horn bow, preparing to shoot a death-bringing arrow up and out over the lake, sending a bronze bird to its doom. You may go north (turn to 16), east (turn to 310) or west (turn to 276).

476

You make a run for the open countryside at the far end of the jetty. At first the guards are all taken by surprise, but at a shouted order from their leader, they move to block your path. You are faced by two guards, each Might 6, Protection 13. If you Seriously Wound both of them, go to 375. If you surrender, go to 349. If you die and are saved by Zeus, go to 184. You may not retreat.

477

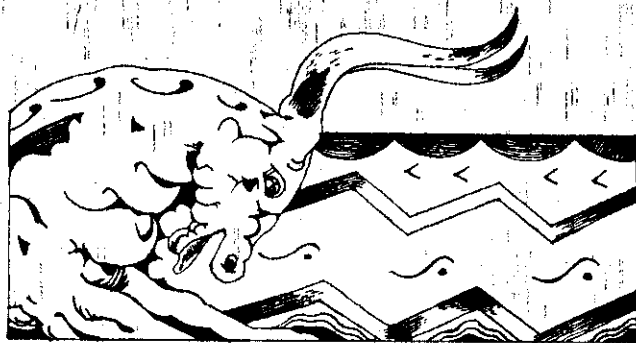
There is a very evident air of tension as you enter the throne-room. Polycrates is talking with two subordinates; he is evidently agitated. Opris and Noa are trying to console Psyche, who appears almost hysterically distressed. Lactris, seemingly oblivious, is chatting to Kremton and Miktros. Crabia, the tutor of the bull-leapers, Dipthis and Minos are all absent. You can approach Polycrates for training (turn to 189), see what ails Psyche (turn to 114), or try to patch up your quarrel with Kremton (turn to 383).

478

Night falls, but you are beyond caring. You sit in your cell, despairing, like a traveller who returns home after many years, only to find that he has come ashore in the land of his enemies. Go to 293.

479

You come to a place where much of the maze has collapsed, leaving only the occasional piece of stonework, so that you can see where the corridors ran, but can step over the destroyed walls. The debris on the floor makes progress slow, but, after much effort, you are over it and faced with a choice of directions. Will you go straight on (turn to 89) or left (turn to 229)?



480

A tiny voice sounds in your ear. You look around wildly, but all you can see as you dance is Psyche's chest on one side and Andra glaring at you serenely on the other.

'No,' says the voice. 'It is I, the god Apollo, speaking to you now, bringing you a personal warning from High Olympus:

Beware the man with fancy feet:
He comes with death and blood for you.
Listen well - I can't repeat
My words tonight: watch for his shoe!

You are stunned for a moment by the poetry of the god, but you see that a man opposite, whom you do not know, has a thin crescent of cold iron protruding from the front of one of his sandals. The metal has a sickly green shine to it, and you realize with a start that it is poisoned.

You clasp a hand to your mouth and stumble away from the ring, muttering, 'Excuse me . . . excuse me.' As you reach the corridor, you glance back over your shoulder and see that the assassin has disappeared from the circle. Andra too has broken away and is staring after you in embarrassment and humiliation. Have 2 Shame Points. You walk sadly away. Go to 171.

481

Now you must decide how best to press your claim to the throne. Will you, after all, choose to marry Ariadne (turn to 141), will you try to kill her, since she is the last surviving member of the House of Minos (turn to 81), or will you attempt to enlist the support of some prominent members of the court (turn to 172)?



482

Opris and Noa dismiss the guard, who wanders away with his spear. The two ephors inspect the temple perfunctorily, coming close to the statue behind which you have hidden, but not seeing you in their eagerness to finish their appointed task. After chalking out the pankration ring and sprinkling it with sawdust for your combat with Kremton tomorrow, they join together in a passionate embrace. Embarrassed, you move away from the statue, and return silently to your room, hoping that they have not noticed you. Have 1 Shame point. Go to 403.

483

If you have a message for Ariadne, go to 529. Otherwise, go to 195.

484

You lash out at the departing Opris, but before the blow can land, Hera, queen of the immortals, is between you.

'Would you behave like this to your other friends? I should hope not, indeed. Now put that ring down and go and marry Ariadne, like I told you to.'

And, before you can protest, she has returned to High Olympus to feed the hounds of Zeus.

Opris stares at you. 'You have friends in high places, it seems,' he says finally.

'She never told me to marry Ariadne!'

'Well, she has now. The ways of the gods are strange.'

Have 2 Shame points and go to 216.

485

'Blood has been spilt,' booms Minos, 'and blood must atone. Demeter, dark lady of the under-earth, accept this offering of a foreign wretch. Into the labyrinth!' You look at the seven youths and seven maidens, but it is you who are seized by the guards and manhandled to the edge of the pit. You have been betrayed! If you are in favour with Demeter, go to 200. Otherwise go to 177.

486

You make some ineffectual attempt to calm the woman and start to apologize, when she attacks you. Go to 392.

487

If you have a ball of thread, go to 168. If you have a map of the labyrinth, go to 423. If you have the bronze-cast bell, go to 73. If you have the eye of the Graeae, go to 31. If you have none of these, go to 313.



488

You grope onwards, rubbing your eyes clear of dust, making the lids swollen and puffy. A pile of rocks bars your way: you can go left (turn to 534) or right (turn to 110).

489

As you make your way to Dipthis' room, an old woman appears out of a side corridor and beckons to you. Will you talk to her (turn to 232), or carry on your way (turn to 117)?

490

You leave the room, anxious to avoid a confrontation with such an influential member of the court. Have 1 Shame point for invading Ariadne's privacy. You return to your room. Go to 125.

491

'I no longer need you, Minos, for I am now out of the labyrinth. I could kill you, and seize the throne,' you continue, 'but I am not unkind, so I will spare you in return for your abdication.'

'So, the Argives' word is worthless. In Crete, a royal vow is never broken, but obviously in Athens baser values apply,' Minos retorts.

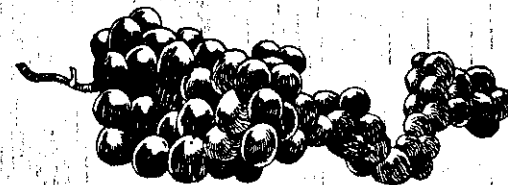
Have 3 Shame points for breaking your word and go to 354.

492

The fresco here shows a great-muscled man with shaggy brown hair trapping in a net a huge boar, dripping with white froth. Around him the snow on the mountain is deep and crisp, while the green woods can barely be seen under its covering. In the boar's blood-red eyes is fear, for it has been destroyed by Herakles, performing his fourth labour for Eurystheus, and its resistance has been as a bronze-tipped shield against the arrows of Apollo the archer. You may go east (turn to 470) or west (turn to 69).

493

The cell is damp and gloomy, lit only by a shaft of moonlight that comes through an opening in the roof. You sit and wait. After many long hours you hear voices. A tall figure appears in the gallery above, and when it removes the cowl from its face it is suddenly caught by the moonlight. 'I am Ariadne,' she says. Go to 99.





494

With reluctance, you leave the thread behind, but you assure yourself that you cannot get past the rock-fall which hides your lifeline. After wandering around for some hours, you become very weary and your eyes will not focus clearly. You want to rest, but you keep going because you know you will never escape if you pause. Suddenly you stop. There, in all the rubble, is a woman in a red robe. You rub your eyes and she has gone. Do you call out (turn to 258), do you turn right (turn to 155) or left (turn to 53), or do you assume you are hallucinating (turn to 15)?

495

You creep stealthily through the palace in search of the king, but cannot find him. The whole building seems totally deserted. Not even the slaves who normally swarm about the palace at this hour are to be seen. Then a sudden din disturbs the strange tranquillity. Will you investigate the commotion (turn to 4), or will you keep searching for Minos (turn to 266)?

496

You fill your skin with difficulty, for the water is not deep. Small droplets of muddy liquid drip from it as you proceed, by turning west (go to 16), south (go to 310) or east (go to 402).

497

Evidently much has happened overnight. Lose 1 Honour point for missing out on the excitement. Go back to 477.

498

You pray to all the gods, but there is no answer. Either they cannot help you, or they will not. Go to 293.

499

Your Chronicle Sheet reads as follows:

Might: 4	Honour: 22
Protection: 10	Shame: 11
Endurance: 30	Intelligence: 0

Sword: Might 3, Protection 0
Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2
Queen Antiope's jewelled brooch

Asclepius - Disfavour
Poseidon - Disfavour
Athena - Favour
Dionysus - Favour
Hephaestus - Disfavour
All others - Neutral

Note: As a client of Hera, you can pray to Zeus one extra time. Roll one die. If you roll 6, turn to 446. If you roll 1-5, turn to 226.

500

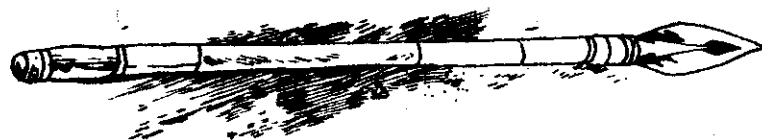
You pace back and forth across the room, like a lion which, trapped by hunters in the high hills of Africa and taken to the court of the Nubian king, restlessly prowls around its strong wicker cage, before it throws its weight against the bars, breaks out, savages an effete tribal chieftain, and runs sleekly away across the wide plains. The narrow confines of the room begin to oppress you, and you slump down on your bed. Will you grab some rest, so that you will be refreshed for the evening (turn to 125)? Or will you investigate Minos' fortress while the palace slumbers (turn to 233)?

501

Dimly in the dark you make out lettering inscribed on the walls of the maze. As you look, they light up with a fiery glow, and you read: 'Altheus, look you well, for in these walls are vouchsafed many truths and tales, both past and present, and some yet to come. Look you well and wonder at the works of Daedalus, for you will never leave alive.' The lettering grows dull again, and you can read no more. You may go west (turn to 291), east (turn to 136) or north (turn to 186).

502

You can see that you have no chance against Polycrates and the guards, and you let them lead you away without protest. They take you into the palace and push you into a small, bare room. One of the men produces a short length of rope and ties your hands together tightly before departing. The other follows and slams the door with unnecessary force. Go to 101.



503

You run off into the palace in search of Ariadne. You reach her room, panting, and burst in without knocking.

'Ariadne,' you gasp.

'Altheus, you're still alive. I thought I'd never see you again.' She grins.

'I've come from Polycrates,' you start, but Ariadne cuts you off.

'Then we must leave quickly.'

'But . . .'

'Don't be naïve, Altheus. He'll betray you as soon as he gets the chance. Come with me now.'

And she seizes you and leads you, despite your protests, out of her room and out of the palace. Go to 199.



504

Ahead you see a strange blue glow and, banishing fear from your heart, you proceed. You think you see floating there above the floor a shade of a woman, beautiful beyond belief, but with an ugly red gash marring her face. The shade seems to look at you, beckons and then vanishes. You may go east (turn to 132) or north (turn to 77).

505

'Fool!' cries the majestic voice of the king of the gods. 'Expect no aid from me, only your just deserts.' With that your spine is snapped, and your spirit shrieking in its agony starts on its swift flight to Hades, where it will be permitted no respite, no soothing drink from the cool waters of Lethe that banish all cares and memories, no eternal bliss in the fields of Elysium. For you, adventurous Altheus, there will be everlasting torment in the deeps of Tartarus, and you will gasp out for succour, but none will come. Your quest and life are over: both failed.

506

You release your grip and plummet to the earth below, missing the ledge by inches. Your back snaps, like a twig under the foot of a startled deer. Your life is ended, with no time to pray to Zeus.

507

You carry on along the quay until it turns into beach, and then sit on the shore, thinking. After a while, you return to Knossos, where Thaisia eventually joins you. Go to 471.

508

Go to 341.

Your Chronicle Sheet is as follows:

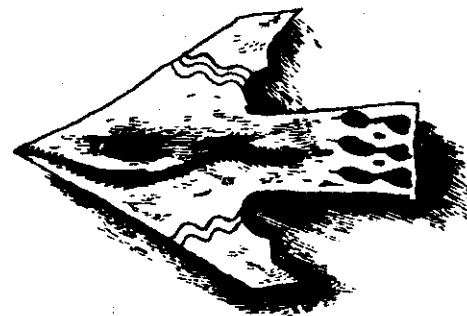
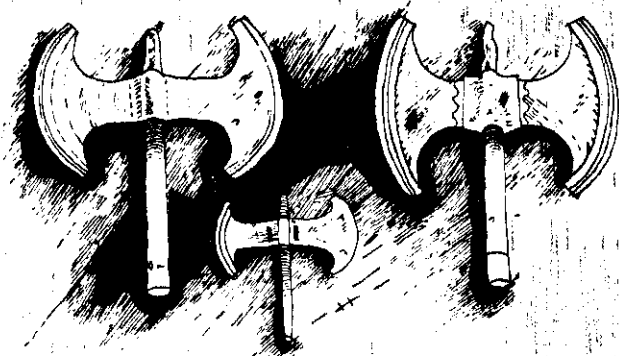
Might: 4	Honour: 25
Protection: 10 (+1)	Shame: 10
Endurance: 30	Intelligence: 0

Sword: Might 3, Protection 0
 Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2
 Shield: Might 0, Protection 2
 Corn-ear brooch

Asclepius – Favour
 Demeter – Favour
 Hera – Favour
 Furies – Disfavour
 All others – Neutral

Note: As a client of Athena, you are entitled to a +1 Protection bonus (indicated in brackets) and you need not take any Honour penalties for looking at hints (but you do take the Shame penalties).

Roll a die. If it is 6, go to 446. If it is 1-5, go to 226.



510

You realize that you have no chance of establishing your claim to the throne, since you know no one in the court except Ariadne and you have spent all but a few hours of your time in Crete in prison. You must seek out Ariadne and try to leave Crete. Go to 216.

511

You sense from Minos' face that he will not relinquish his throne without a fight. If you wish to back down and depart from Crete with Ariadne, go to 216. If you wish to continue with your claim, go to 354.

512

You come into a part of the labyrinth where large cracks in the ceiling let in shafts of light. For a second the brightness hurts your eyes, but as you grow accustomed to it you see the details of the labyrinth clearly. The earthquake has destroyed many of the walls, and at one point you can see right into the heart of the labyrinth. This does not help you to find your way out, however, since passages that would have led you safely to the outside are blocked. You clamber past a large rock which has tumbled from the left-hand wall and back into a darker part of the labyrinth, leaving the reassuring light behind you. Go to 169.

513

'I'm prepared to talk to you,' begins Ariadne, waving aside your attempts to talk, 'because you're my only hope now. When you leave Crete I want you to take me with you.'

She misinterprets your silence as unwillingness. 'I'll make it worth your while,' she adds with a trace of contempt.

'No, I'll take you with me. I was surprised, that's all.'

'Can you imagine what my life is like in this satin cage, waiting for my father to marry me off to some foreign prince-ling? I mean nothing more to him. This is no life. I tried to get with child by Eliduros to escape this, but we were discovered and he only got away by chance. After that, I have Lembra watching my every waking moment. Take this.'

She reaches into a fold in the cushions and pulls out a ball of thin wool. You turn it over in your hands.

'What's this for?'

'At the start of the labyrinth, tie this thread to a rock, and ply it out behind you. That way, you may be able to find your way out again.'

'How do I get into the labyrinth?'

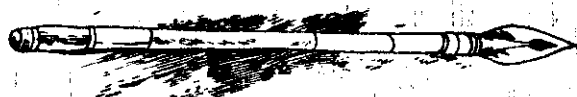
'You'll be thrown into it tomorrow, like it or not.' And then: 'Don't be naïve. If you imagine that Minos has been intending to do anything else, ever since you arrived, you're being very foolish indeed. Crete can't afford to abandon the tribute, or we would *all* perish.'

You ponder this grimly.

'The secret of travel in the labyrinth is simple,' continues Ariadne. 'Daedalus told it to me in a rare moment of indiscretion. Follow in the footsteps of . . .'

Lembra hurries back in. 'Altheus, there's someone coming. You must leave now.'

She bustles you out before you can catch any further glimpse of Ariadne. You return to your room. Go to 403.



514

Before you can move, the woman reappears and speaks softly: 'Altheus, you have done well. We were all vewy impressed with your bwavewy.' She pauses and you wonder who she is. As if she can read your thoughts, she answers your silent questioning. 'I am Athena and I have come down fwom Olympus to wescue you fwom this labywinth. Now follow.' She leads you out of the maze with incredible ease and you wonder how you could have missed the way out before. As you turn to thank the goddess, she smiles and disappears. Go to 36.

515

It is as if the room had been set aside for you specially. It is in the east wall of the palace, so as to be cool in the afternoon, and looks down over the sea. You dump your baggage on the floor and Thaisia puts your weapons in a corner, being careful, you note, not to give the impression of hiding them. Seeing you looking at her, she smiles. 'What are you doing here, my lord?' she asks. Will you tell her (turn to 261), or try to end the conversation (turn to 275)?

516

You reach down and pick up the thread. A first tentative pull fails to free it from the rocks that have fallen in the earthquake, so, gripping the wool tightly, you tug much harder. It snaps. Now you are left with no clue to lead you out of this maze. You slump to the ground and start to hammer on the hard stone, barely able to control your weeping. Lose 2 Honour points. Go to 401.

517

Zeus, wrathful at the Titan Prometheus for seeking to trick him with craft and cunning, chooses the better portion of the sacrificial bull. The fresco shows Zeus, radiant in his glory, withholding the gift of fire from mortal men, depriving them of warmth and protection against the chilling cold. You may go north (turn to 136) or east (turn to 63).

'Kremton,' runs the whisper around the table.

Minos' son,' supplies Thaisia. 'The other one is Miktros, his crony.'

One of the men lowers himself into the throne, sits up unsteadily and looks about with a bleary arrogance. The other stands, laughing quietly but uncontrollably.

'Kremton.' It is a bull-like roar from Minos, echoing around the hall for a moment, that brings a complete and abrupt silence. Miktros giggles for a second longer, then hiccups and is quiet. No one moves.

'Kremton. You are my son and for that I will forgive you much, but you will not have the insolence to sit in the king's chair.' The last words are in an apoplectic, icy whisper. 'You are not king of Crete yet, nor am I in the underworld. Remember that.'

Kremton flinches, but then recovers himself and turns, affecting to notice Minos for the first time. Minos leaps up from his place at the head of the table, advances on his son, lifts him bodily out of the throne and dumps him on the floor with a crash. Kremton is a big man, but Minos looks, however briefly, like a Titan.

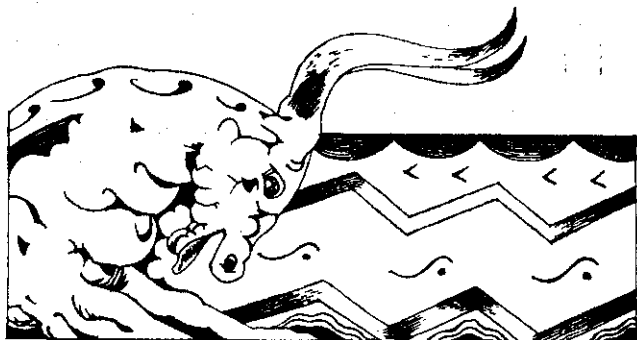
Minos glares at Miktros, by now shocked into something approaching sobriety. 'Be careful, Miktros, be very careful. Don't gamble. Don't roll those dice.' The words would have been ridiculous from anyone else, but Minos underscores them with menace. He does not shout. He has no need to. He is, once again, clearly the king. Go to 160.



519

'Oh, what a pity,' you interject smoothly, and Andra tells you why she has never liked Thaisia and how the Thracians have kept her, Andra, from achieving her rightful place in the court. You object that Thaisia is Cretan, but Andra, plainly annoyed at your continued mention of Thaisia, waves this aside as irrelevant, and continues with a whole catalogue of injustices, culminating with her not having been appointed as ephor.

At last a message comes for her, and she leaves, promising to speak further with you at lunch. You start back to your room, but before you can get there a gong sounds, announcing that the midday meal is about to begin. Go to 109.



520

When you arrive at the temple, Opris and Noa have left. One of the acolytes tells you that they have gone to the harbour, with a tone that makes it clear that she, at least, thinks they are shirking their responsibilities. You leave the temple. You can visit Lactris (turn to 420) or go to the gymnasium (turn to 340).

521

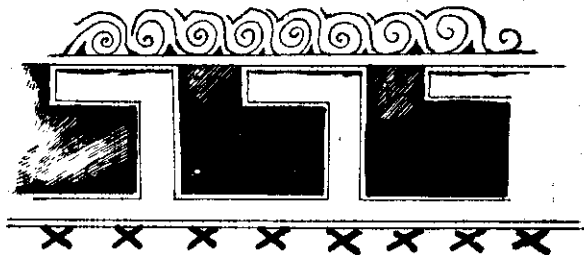
With a terrific thunderclap, Ares the war-bringer appears in front of you: 'Altheus, well done. First stage successfully accomplished. Quick rebriefing. Next objective - no, cancel that - same objective: kill the Minotaur. Rescue Minos' daughter Ariadne. From Minos, that is. Bit hard to understand, but I'm sure you'll work it all out and do splendidly.' And with a sound like that of many men dying on a far-off island, he is gone, leaving only the faint stench of blood. You muse back over your journey to this barren shore.

At the prompting of the god Hermes, you set out from Troezen, killed the evil innkeeper Procrustes, which was all he deserved, and threw an old woman into a river, only to find that it was the goddess Hera, creeping around in disguise. You slew the Crommyonian sow, arrested a thief in the market of Megara, being rewarded by the grateful merchant Cyron with the gift of his shield, and were given a corn-ear brooch in Eleusis after stumbling across some primitive cult. In Acharnae, you were involved in a multiple chariot pile-up, but escaped by dint of your skill and bravery. You slew the bull of Marathon to prove yourself in the eyes of your father, and were then allowed to take part in the glorious defeat of the Amazon army.

On your way to Crete with messages for King Minos from your father (although an invading fleet would have been more appropriate), you saw off a sea-serpent, killed the hellish man of Delos, weathered a storm and crushed Talos, the giant bronze man of Crete. All in all, you thoroughly deserve to have won through to this point in the narrative. Go to 397.

522

Upon the silent stones you see Perseus, in the prime of his youth, thrown out by the arrogant Polydectes, who sips wine from a golden goblet, and arrays his servants before him, like a mighty general reviewing his high-helmeted troops before a great defeat. His hair is combed in greying locks, while that of Perseus is tangled in the wind; the hero must fetch the head of the Gorgon Medusa, whose very gaze turns men to stone, while the king awaits news of his death. You may go north (turn to 225), south (turn to 144) or west (turn to 179).



523

'All right, train me,' you say.

She smiles. 'Good. It'll have to be at night, though: I can't teach you with the others. At the third hour after sundown, come to the training-room.' She gives you directions and goes.

At night, you will be offered a paragraph in italics, indicating that you can add 20 to the paragraph number and turn to that paragraph. If you wish to go to Crabia, you must instead *subtract* 20 and go to that number.

Will you now go to the dance (turn to 158) or visit Dipthis (turn to 117)?

524

Adventurous Altheus, you are not mindful of your mission. This is clearly the shade of one who has lost her life to the merciless Minotaur. For forgetting your task, lose 1 Honour point, and gain 1 Shame point. You may go east (turn to 132) or north (turn to 77).

525

'You little puppy,' he shouts, as you stand speechless. 'You thought you could beat me at my own game. First you kill the Minotaur, which is more than your reckless brother could. Then you think you can escape the maze by the use of this thread. Now I have foiled your plan, but you have destroyed my palace. I shall kill you.'

Minos has Might 8, Protection 16, and a sword with Might 2. You fight at -1 for this combat because of your aching hands. You cannot retreat. If Minos is Seriously Wounded, go to 88. If you are Seriously Wounded, go to 369.

526

You leave Dipthis' room. Will you go to the dance (turn to 158), visit Opris and Lactris (turn to 303), or return to your room (turn to 100)?

527

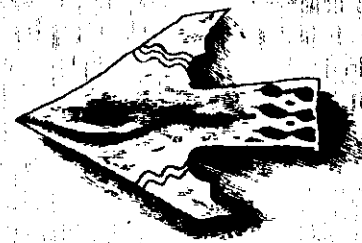
You drop back to the walkway and land heavily. There are guards on both sides now. Your only choice is whether to surrender (turn to 187) or try to fight the guards (turn to 398).

528

On the white wall is a face with a bright red mouth and two pairs of blue lips in place of eyes. A transparent tear trickles from one eye. You carry on, quickly, marvelling at the mind of Daedalus. Go to 456.

529

'My lady,' you cry hastily, 'I have a message for you . . . from Eliduros.' She comes back. Go to 99.



Your Chronicle Sheet reads as follows:

Might: 4	Honour: 18
Protection: 10	Shame: 8
Endurance: 30	Intelligence: 0

Sword: Might 3, Protection 0
 Shield: Might 0, Protection 2
 Breastplate: Might 0, Protection 2
 Queen Antiope's amulet

Hera - Disfavour
 Athena - Favour
 Hecate - Disfavour
 All others - Neutral

Roll a die. If it is 6, turn to 446. If it is 1-5, turn to 226.



'What about Ariadne?' you ask.

Dipthis shrugs dismissively. 'What about her? I think Minos secretly hopes she is not his daughter. I know I would. Forget Ariadne. She has no importance whatsoever.'

'And the rest of the court?' you press, somewhat disconcerted.

'Like any court, it is riddled with factions. Most important of these is the Thracian faction. About ten years ago, Minos brought in Pangryon as his High Priest. There were grumblings then, and more when Pangryon imported other Thracians for the temple. Later, the Thracians acquired something of a stranglehold on the court, and they are all fanatically devoted to Pangryon. "Uncle", they call him; you'll have heard that, perhaps?'

'Everyone calls him "uncle".'

'True, but most use it ironically. The Thracians mean it.'

'And you?'

'I don't call him "uncle",' replies Dipthis curtly. Then he continues. 'But understand this. Pangryon is good. And he's clever. Don't believe anyone who tells you he's bewitched Minos, or any nonsense like that. The Bear is too shrewd for that. Pangryon is priest on his own merits. He may be dour and glum, and it may be hard to see how he inspires such devotion, but it is unquestionable that he does. Speak no ill of him to the Thracians, or you'll regret it.'

'Then there are the native Cretans. They oppose the Thracians so far as it is possible, although at the moment they are not being effective. The trouble is that Lactris looks on himself as being the native Cretans' leader, and he is at once too proud to work with the Thracians and too ambitious to risk working against them. But he's a makeweight; apart from the ambition, you can forget about him. Far more able is Opris, and he could do very well for himself if he abandoned some of those dandified Eastern airs of his. And he might be well advised to drop his courting of young Noa. The Thracian faction looks after its own. He'll have no joy there.'

Dipthis looks at you with rheumy eyes. 'There you are, Altheus. That's the court of King Minos.'

Gain 4 Intelligence points and go to 526.

532

The ancient Greeks were often unhappy in the dark. So are you. Lose 2 Honour points and go to 169.

533

The arrow-head is made of a hard metal and has a new design. Have 2 points of Intelligence. Go to 337.

534

You continue along the passage, noticing, here and there, fragments of the pictures on the walls. Go to 360.

535

You slip and fall, grazing your forehead against a rock. Blood clouds your eyes and you dimly discern a more than human figure ahead. Panic grips you as you realize it is Poseidon himself, master of the earthquake.

'You have killed my Minotaur, Altheus, and you shall not be forgiven or unpunished. Your brother would never have angered me thus. Know, then, that you have earned my enmity, and expect my vengeance when you travel the wide waters. And when men ask you why you suffer, tell them you bear the wrath of Poseidon, wave-master, horse-tamer, lord of the tremblings of Earth herself, Poseidon the untamed, Poseidon the untameable.'

With this the god vanishes. You are alone once more. You are now in Disfavour with Poseidon. Go to 28.

536

You shout your plea aloud to high Zeus, and the mercy of the god is immediate and welcome. You are transformed as you sit, into a bolus tree, roots growing through the floor of the throne-room, splintering the tiles, an eternal reminder of the Athenian that was Altheus.

537

You run wildly, but still the labyrinth shakes. It seems that the whole place is on the point of collapse. Soon you are out of breath and you have to pause. To your relief, the tremor dies away, but it is replaced by ominous creaking in the walls. You walk on and come to a crossroads. Will you turn right (turn to 488), left (turn to 217) or go straight on (turn to 318)?

538

You sit down on the cold stone and wonder why you ever agreed to come to Crete. You wish you were with your mother in Troezen or your father in Athens. Even your brother in Hades must be happier than you, stuck as you are in this endless prison. You begin to weep, at first quietly and then hysterically. Go to 401.

539

Your Chronicle Sheet looks like this:

Might: 4

Protection: 10

Endurance: 30

Honour: 24

Shame: 14

Intelligence: 0

Sword: Might 3

Wolfskin: Protection 1

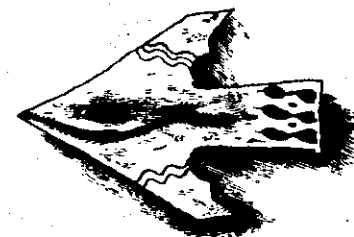
Helmet: Protection 2

Queen Antiope's jewelled brooch

Hera - Disfavour

Athena - Disfavour

Roll a die. If it is a 6, go to 446. Otherwise go to 226.



540

Back on the ship, the captain greets you with delight, as the seven youths and seven maidens, who have also escaped, feared you slain. You wink at the one who looks like your mother and she smiles at you gladly. As the captain shows you to a cabin below decks, the crew begin to row with long, powerful strokes away from this accursed island. You take one last look at Crete, to which you came a boy, but which you leave a prince and a husband, Altheus the Avenger. Yet on the horizon the winds of strife are stirring.

The adventure continues in the third book of the Cretan Chronicles, *The Return of the Wanderer*.

