



TEN MINUTE MYTHS AND OTHER PLAYS

by Alan Brody

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TEN-MINUTE MYTHS AND OTHER PLAYS

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THESEUS

CAST OF CHARACTERS

THESEUS – A hero

YOUNG MAN – early twenties, The Minotaur

The action of the play takes place in the center of the labyrinth. A bare stage except for one shrub

An empty stage except for one shrub.
 THESEUS enters with a ball of string,
 moving in labyrinthine directions. HE is
 dressed like a hero. Occasionally the string
 gets caught in HIS foot and HE has to
 untangle himself and go back. HE confronts
 a YOUNG MAN who appears suddenly.
 THE YOUNG MAN is dressed in a loin
 cloth.

YOUNG MAN

Hi.

(THESEUS lets out a startled cry)
 You're probably looking for me.

THESEUS

Who are you? Nobody's allowed in here.

YOUNG MAN

Yup. You're looking for me.

THESEUS

This place is off-limits.

YOUNG MAN

And don't think it doesn't get lonely. My sister gave you that ball of twine, right?
 Ariadne?

THESEUS

How do you know about. . .

YOUNG MAN

Gave you a lot of crap about how it's magic and then didn't even show you how to use it.
 Look at this mess you've made.

(HE picks up some the loose string. Some of it gets caught around
 HIS foot without HIS realizing it.)

Besides, you don't need it. The trick in here is to just keep turning left on the way in,
 right on the way out. You were all over the place. Well, you're here now. Smack in the
 center.

THESEUS

I can't be. Where's the minotaur.

YOUNG MAN

I told you you were looking for me.

THESEUS

You? You're just a puny. . .

YOUNG MAN

Want to see my bulls' head?

(HE goes behind the shrub and gets a papier mache bulls' head.
HE puts it on and makes a lot of antic, scary sounds and snorts.
Takes it off.)

Did that scare you?

THESEUS

Nothing frightens me.

YOUNG MAN

Except Getting lost.

THESEUS

I am Theseus!

YOUNG MAN

Yeah, yeah. You don't have to make a big deal about it. I'm the Minotaur. Good to meet you. Anyway, don't sweat it. Everyone's afraid of getting lost. That's why she was able to pull that business about the thread on you. She's done it with a dozen guys. You know why? 'Cause she's so ugly. She knows she's not going to get anyone in the sack with her looks. So she figures she might get laid out of gratitude. Now my other sister, Phaedra. Have you met her?

THESEUS

No.

YOUNG MAN

Sure. Ariadne won't let you near her. She is one hot lady, Phaedra. All the other guys Ariadne's sent in here? After they meet me and find out all they have to do is keep turning right to get out? They hightail it back and end up boffing Phaedra. The ones I don't kill, that is. The other ones get killed by Phaedra, but at least they die happy. And let me tell you, Ariadne is pissed.

THESEUS

I am Theseus!

YOUNG MAN

You said.

THESEUS

I am here to slay the minotaur! You're a trick. Some sly way of putting me off my guard so the minotaur can spring and take me unaware.

YOUNG MAN

I'm telling you. This is it.
 (Picks up the head again)
 This. And me.

THESEUS

It would bring me no glory to slay you.

YOUNG MAN

Right. So you want to relax a second and I can tell you how to become a real hero?
 (THESEUS looks around stealthily, HIS hand at HIS sword)
 Theseus. Schmuck. Relax. Will you give me a second?
 (After a moment THESEUS nods)
 So you heard about my mother? Pasiphae? How she got the hots for one of my father's bulls?

THESEUS

Unnatural!

YOUNG MAN

Oh, come on. Admit it. The idea of my mother doing it with a bull is a turn on.

THESEUS

Never!

YOUNG MAN

All you guys who want to be heroes are so goddamned repressed. No wonder I'm having so much trouble finding someone who gets it. Think for a minute. Why would any king in his right mind take the trouble to announce to the whole country that his wife was doing it with a bull and that she had a kid with the father's head and the body of a man, and then spend a fortune to get Daedulus to design this amusement park attraction? I mean, wouldn't you call that over-the-top public relations?

THESEUS

Treasonous!

YOUNG MAN

God, you are such a prig.

THESEUS

Minos is not a liar.

YOUNG MAN

Shut up and listen. So here's this king, right? He struts around in his purple robes and makes war on whoever has something he'd like a piece of.

THESEUS

Minos is a great king.

YOUNG MAN

Whatever. So he's got the country thinking he's all-powerful. He's also a little dim, so he has these handlers to make sure the people keep thinking he's all-powerful and that insures that they can keep strutting and making war, too. So everyone thinks he not only has the greatest army in the world, but that he's got to have the biggest equipment, as well. I'm sorry, but that's how they think in this country. And who's the only one who knows the truth? Who's getting scrawnier and stringier by the year. She's given him two daughters but she's never had a good lay in her life. Are you with me? I'm asking because you seem like you might be a little dim yourself.

THESEUS

I am. . .

YOUNG MAN

(Cutting HIM off)

You are Theseus. I know. So. If you haven't figured it out yet, imagine you're Minos of the Small Endowment. Your wife gets knocked up by some studly blacksmith while you're away at war. Who are you going to say would be the only partner who could satisfy her more than you? A blacksmith?

THESEUS

(Baffled)

You're father was a. . .

YOUNG MAN

Blacksmith.

THESEUS

Not a. . .

YOUNG MAN

Bull. This, by the way, is not a story Minos could think up by himself. His handlers knew that everyone would buy it because they'd be secretly turned on. Just like you were. They've got everyone believing only a bull could be better than Minos and that

YOUNG MAN (Cont'd)

Pasiphae is a whore. Oh, and by the way, they put me in here and make up another story about what a monster I am, train me to put on that headgear, give me a little ju jitsu and teach me just where to flick someone's neck to break it. Which, being an obedient kid, I do. Now they've got a bonus. Fear. And, since every adolescent wants to be a hero, they send the kids in. Some of them I don't even have to kill. I just put on this frigging mask and they die of fright. Do you believe it? Their own imagination kills them. Anyway, I stopped killing anybody when I was about eighteen and started to think for myself. I just sent them back to Phaedra. I mean, I knew she was pretty kinky, but I thought at least they had a fighting chance with her. So what do you think?

THESEUS

It can't be true.

YOUNG MAN

Boy, I tell you. The power of lies. I tell you the truth and you hang on to that cock and bull story. So to speak.

THESEUS

I am destined to kill the minotaur.

YOUNG MAN

Now look, Theseus. Pay attention to me. Pay very close attention. I am the minotaur. You want to try and kill me and bring this scrawny body back in triumph to Crete? Some hero. Besides, if you really try to kill me I have to warn you, you'll be toast in a second.

(Pause)

I can show you the way to become a real hero.

THESEUS

How?

YOUNG MAN

Ah. Now I've got your attention.

THESEUS

How?

YOUNG MAN

(Slowly)

Go back and tell them the truth. Tell them there's nothing here, nothing but their own fear. There are still some thinking people in Crete. They'll recognize the truth as soon as you tell it, and they'll rally behind you. And then I can get the hell out of here.

THESEUS

This is a trick.