

LABYRINTHINE

A ten-minute play by Allie Costa

lab·y·rin·thine

*lab(ə) 'rinTHin, ,lab(ə) 'rin, THēn, ,lab(ə) 'rin, THīn/*

Like a labyrinth; irregular and twisting.

Also: "labyrinth" + "heroine"

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

MINNIE - Female. Young. The stuff of myths, except she's real. Surprisingly docile, like the Mock Turtle in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Any ethnicity. Could be played by a child, a teenager, or a woman in her early 20s.

THESEIA - Female. Early 20s. Wants to be a hero. Any ethnicity. Pronounced *Thee-see-uh*.

SETTING: Ancient Greece with a modern-day sensibility.

AT RISE:

*Lights up on the center of the labyrinth, where MINNIE is curled up on her side, asleep. She looks mostly human, except for the bull-like horns on her head. She snores lightly and utters a moo or two as she exhales.*

*Footsteps approach and THESEIA bounds in, holding a sword in one hand and a ball of string in the other. The string extends offstage in the direction she entered. She wears armor of some kind - nothing extensive, definitely nothing revealing - and boots that could stomp anything. She spots Minnie and shouts triumphantly:*

THESEIA

A-ha!

*She lunges forward with the sword. Minnie yelps and ducks. Theseia swings again; Minnie scampers away and hides behind a broken pillar (or the nearest curtain).*

MINNIE

Please don't hurt me! I'm just a little moo!

*This catches Theseia off-guard. She stops mid-swing.*

THESEIA

A what?

MINNIE

*(weakly)* A little moo. That's what my mama calls me.

THESEIA

I thought you were the minotaur.

MINNIE

I go by Minnie. *(sniffle)* Who are you?

THESEIA

I'm Theseia. *(pronounced Thee-see-uh)*

MINNIE

That's a pretty name.

THESEIA

Thanks. *(beat)* You gonna hide back there all day?

MINNIE

Maybe. *Definitely*, if you're gonna keep trying to kill me.

THESEIA

I don't *want* to kill you, I'm just - supposed to.

MINNIE

Then I'll stay here, thank you.

THESEIA

You don't understand - this is my quest. I'm supposed to find the Minotaur and stop him - her - *you* from murdering people!

MINNIE

*(gasps, peeks out)* I've never hurt anyone!

THESEIA

Yeah? What about the Athenians that King Minos sent here?

MINNIE

*(peeks out further)* You mean the kids who trampled around outside and played their music really loud?

THESEIA

Yeah.

MINNIE

They never entered the labyrinth.

THESEIA

Wait, what?

MINNIE

They stayed outside, and I stayed inside, where they couldn't hurt me.

THESEIA

You sure you didn't eat them?

MINNIE

I'm sure. I'm a vegetarian.

THESEIA

No way! Me too!

*Minnie slowly comes out of hiding.*

MINNIE

Really?

THESEIA

Really! I don't eat anything that walked or squawked.

MINNIE

Me neither. *(rubs stomach, sits down)* I haven't eaten in a while.

THESEIA

*(sheathing her sword)* Why not?

MINNIE

We ran out of food. Mama went outside to gather provisions, but...she's not back yet.

*Theseia sits down beside Minnie.*

THESEIA

When did she leave?

MINNIE

Three days ago. Maybe more. It's hard to tell. *(beat)* She's not coming back, is she?

THESEIA

...I don't know.

MINNIE

She shouldn't've gone outside. *(then, after a long beat)*  
I used to live out there, you know? In the world. In the fields. Everything was green and bright and wonderful. But then the war came, and we had to hide from the people and their swords and their shouts. Mama said their king ordered them to kill us, so we had to hide in the labyrinth. No more napping in the sun. No more running through the fields. We had to stay inside where that no one would find us. *(beat)* Is the sky still outside?

THESEIA

Yes, of course.

*Minnie smiles sadly, makes a small nod.*

MINNIE

Good. That's good. I forget sometimes, about the world. How it looked. How it smelled. How it tasted.

*Minnie subconsciously rubs her stomach again. Theseia reaches into her pocket or her pack and pulls out a biscuit. This can also be a pastry or a long graham cracker, the kind you can snap in sections.*

THESEIA

Here. Eat this.

*She offers it to Minnie, who doesn't take it.*

MINNIE

What is it?

THESEIA

It's food. It's good.

MINNIE

What's it taste like?

THESEIA

Try some and you'll find out.

*Minnie reaches for the food, then pulls back.*

THESEIA (CONTINUED)

What's wrong?

MINNIE

How do I know it's not poison? I've heard about that. Humans sprinkle magic powder in food and water and then moos get sick and-

*While Minnie talks, Theseia breaks the food in half and takes a big bite out of her portion.*

MINNIE (CONTINUED)

-Oh.

*Theseia smiles and offers the other half to Minnie. Minnie takes it and studies it, smelling it before taking a small bite. Her eyes immediately light up.*

MINNIE (CONTINUED)

This is really good!

THESEIA

Told you.

*Minnie takes another bite and talks while she chews.*

MINNIE

Do people eat this all the time?

THESEIA

*(trying not to smile at Minnie's antics)* Maybe not all the time, but it's a nice treat.

*Minnie savors the last bite. Theseia gives her the rest of her portion.*

MINNIE

*(touched)* Thank you.

*Minnie starts to bring the food to her mouth, then pauses thoughtfully, carefully breaks the food in half, and gives half back to Theseia.*

MINNIE (CONTINUED)

You should eat, too. You're a warrior. You gotta keep your strength up.

THESEIA

I'm not much of a warrior. I've never slayed anything.

MINNIE

That's good. That's a good thing.

THESEIA

But how am I ever gonna become a hero if I don't fight in a war?

MINNIE

A hero protects others, saves them. You can do that without hurting anybody.

*Theseia considers this.*

*They eat the remainder of the food slowly. Minnie licks the crumbs off of her fingers somewhat daintily.*

MINNIE (CONTINUED)

That was really good. Meals are always the same here: grass for breakfast, grass for lunch, and grass for dinner.

THESEIA

You eat the same thing every day?

MINNIE

*(shrugs)* Yeah. It's all we have. *(gestures at the walls)* And we can't tell what time of day it is, anyway. No sun. No moon.

THESEIA

*(looks around, realizing)* No windows.

MINNIE

No sky. *(sighs)* I really miss the sky.

THESEIA

*(standing up)* Why don't you go outside and see it?

MINNIE

I told you. The people out there will hurt me.

THESEIA

No, they won't. Not if you're with me.

*Theseia starts to pull out her sword, but Minnie stops her, shaking her head fervently.*

MINNIE

No. No fighting. No hurting.



THESEIA

I won't hurt anybody. I'll only use it to scare the bad people away, keep 'em at arm's length.

MINNIE

Promise?

THESEIA

Promise.

MINNIE

I-I don't think we can get out of the labyrinth. The walls are so high, and all the twists and turns -

THESEIA

*(lifting the ball of string)* That's why I have this. It marks the way I came in. It'll show us the path to get out.

MINNIE

...and then?

THESEIA

Then you can go wherever you want. You can run through the fields again, and you can come visit me at the castle whenever you like. We have plenty of biscuits and water and grass.

MINNIE

What if they don't let you back in the castle?

THESEIA

What? Why would they-

MINNIE

Because you didn't complete your quest. Because you didn't kill the Minotaur.

THESEIA

I was supposed to make my way to the heart of the labyrinth: I did. I was supposed to find you while you were sleeping: I did. I think we're finished here.

*Minnie looks towards the exit.*

MINNIE

And the war?

THESEIA

The war is over.

*Theseia extends her hand to Minnie. Minnie hesitates.*

THESEIA (CONTINUED)

*(smiling)* The world is right outside, waiting for us.

*Minnie looks at Theseia's hand, then at Theseia, then at the walls that have kept her inside for so long. With a shy smile and another small nod, Minnie takes Theseia's hand.*

MINNIE

Let's go see the world.

*Theseia and Minnie follow the string out of the labyrinth. LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE. END OF PLAY.*