

*Newton Park's
Twisted Tales -
The Forsorn
Unicorn*



The Forlorn Unicorn

The ancient Greek civilisation began nearly four thousand years ago. They were an extremely advanced race and many of their discoveries were the building blocks to how we live our lives today. They invented the first ever alphabet, clocks and the idea of competitive sport. They studied the solar system, along with maths, medicine, physics, biology, chemistry and astronomy. The Greeks created maps, theatre and put fictional stories into books.

They had a vastly different religious belief to us all too. They worshipped a series of gods, who were considered all powerful. There was a god for just about every part of Greek life. The main three were the brothers; Zeus, king of the gods, ruler of the skies and possessor of the fearsome lightning bolt, the mightiest of all weapons. Then there was Hades, god of the underworld and finally Poseidon, god of the sea. The three brothers had many sons and daughters that built up the full collection of gods the Greeks worshipped.

However, this story isn't about the gods, it's the untold tale of Pegasus, the legendary winged horse, who was born the son of the water God, Poseidon and the Gorgon Medusa. Medusa was an evil creature with snakes for hair and one look into her eyes would turn you to stone! Pegasus didn't like his mother and as he was a horse he couldn't live with his father either, as Poseidon lived under the sea. Pegasus was terribly lonely, until his uncle, Zeus, invited him to live on the magical, Mount Olympus with him and all the other gods. He felt at home and wasn't lonely anymore. Zeus trusted him and sent him on many quests, including protecting his beloved lightning bolt.

Now, this isn't supposed to be a history lesson, but it's important to understand who Pegasus was before I begin to tell this untold story. He has a big part to play in this tale, although he is only one of many characters.

It all began after Pegasus retired from his life of adventure and settled down on Earth with an elegant, beautiful unicorn called Una. They lived on a farm on a deserted Greek island and it wasn't long before they started to have a family. Many years passed and they had three sons, Perseus, Achilles and Hercules. They were named after legendary Greek heroes and were the mirror image of the mighty Pegasus himself.

Finally, after years of trying they eventually had a daughter, a gorgeous little unicorn and they named her Una after her mum. Pegasus at last felt complete, he had a wonderful family and for a few years he felt happiness like he'd never known. His sons grew to be muscular and strong, they could soar effortlessly through the clear blue skies. Little Una would play with her mother, running through the fields, leaping over fences and working on her leg strength. Her mother could destroy rocks with her forceful heel kick. Una was desperate to possess that ability and she practised every day, attempting to imitate her mother. Pegasus would just watch on, his heart full of joy, peace and love. Unfortunately, these things aren't meant to last and his wife disappeared mysteriously one night, never to be seen again. He searched endlessly and even with the help of the gods, Pegasus never found out what happened to her. Where once there was joy, peace and love, there was now an empty sadness inside him that would never leave. The once powerful and respected hero fell into a deep depression and lost all his strength.

People would often visit, requesting his assistance on their own adventures, but he was no longer interested. His children however, now fully grown, were eager to leap into their father's shoes. The sons of Pegasus would soon become almost as famous as their dad. Between the three of them they saved many people from death, Perseus fought demons and fallen gods, Achilles won wars and Hercules settled many a family dispute. Pegasus was incredibly proud of his sons, but still he couldn't get over the loss of his wife. He became overly protective of his daughter and would never let her out of his sight. Little Una became incredibly frustrated, she longed for an adventure, to be just like her brothers and above all, to make her father proud of her.

Every day she'd beg her father to let her go on an adventure, but every day he said no. She was a very stubborn young thing and with her daily pestering he eventually gave in. He said, "If any person comes and requests your assistance on a quest, I give you my word that I will not stand in your way. But please little Una, do not get your hopes up. Your brothers are big, brave and strong, not many adventurers come here in need of a cute, dainty unicorn with a glowing horn."

Una felt happy that she now had a chance, but knew her dad was right, she didn't really have skills that were useful in battles or physical hero work. She was brave though and would jump at any opportunity to prove herself worthy of her father's pride, as her brothers had done before her.

Whenever people would come in need of a heroic steed, her brothers would always get chosen ahead of her. It seemed that no one had use of a tiny unicorn with a glowing horn. She felt useless and in her sorrow she visited her favourite place on the island. Una stood upon the rocky cliff edge looking down at the white, sandy bay beneath. The crystal clear waters washed gently onto the soft sand, while further out they crashed ferociously on the ragged rock face. Una loved the contrast, the sea beneath her could be so peaceful and gentle in one place yet so strong and fierce in another. She always felt the sea was similar to her, everyone sees the gentle, soft side, but beneath the surface she had great power, like the strongest wave. Una just needed someone else to believe in her.

Weeks and months passed and still no one chose the poor little unicorn. Feeling devastated and defeated, she set off to her usual spot and cried out in frustration, "Why does no one need me? What is the point of me even existing?"

Pegasus watched from afar and although he was happy she was close to him and safe, it broke his heart to see his daughter so sad. He went home and prayed to all the gods, asking for help, longing for them to provide Una with an adventure. Not too dangerous of course, but something that would make her happy again.

The next day it seemed his prayers may have been answered. A little girl turned up on the island. She was a princess and was looking for help trying to rescue her father, the King, from an evil witch. The witch had captured and imprisoned him in a small, dark cave. The King's life was in danger and the tiny princess was scared that she may never see her father again. She told her story to Pegasus who promised that one of his children would certainly help her, but she needed to choose her own companion.

Una lined up next to her gigantic, muscular brothers, preparing herself for the usual disappointment and embarrassment. Closing her eyes, she too prayed to the gods to let it be her, let her have this adventure. Suddenly, she heard a gentle voice say sweetly, "Can I have her, please?"

Una opened her eyes in disbelief, had she really just been chosen above her brothers. As her eyes opened she saw that the pretty little girl was pointing and smiling straight at her. Pegasus thanked the gods for answering his prayers, while his sons all laughed and sniggered.

"Why her?" Perseus scoffed.

"She's not a real hero, she's weak, slow and she can't even fly," joked Achilles.

Hercules just laughed along with his brothers, "Silly little girls," he sniggered.

Una bowed her head in shame at their hurtful words. All of a sudden, Pegasus swooped in and scolded his hurtful sons.

"Silence you fools," he shouted. "It really doesn't matter if you're big or small, you'll always be a hero if you get up each time you fall. Anyone can talk the talk, we all can play a part, but bravery isn't judged by size it comes straight from the heart."

The brothers were ashamed, they all apologised and wished their sister luck. They all genuinely loved her with all their hearts and hated to see her so unhappy. The brothers flew off and Pegasus led the princess and his daughter to the royal boat. Pegasus hugged Una and held her very tight, then spoke softly as he kissed his girl goodbye, "Anyone can be a hero, no matter what their size."

With her dad's supportive words ringing in her ears, she boarded the boat with excitement, ready for her first quest. The journey was long and her brothers flew above her for the first part of the trip, in an attempt to make her feel more safe and relaxed. Eventually they drifted back home and Una spent the rest of the voyage talking to the princess. By the time they'd reached land they were the best of friends. The unicorn asked enroute why she chose her over her heroic brothers and she explained, "Your brothers are too big to navigate the dark, winding cave, and your glowing horn will help me to navigate the way. You're brave and small, just like me, can't you see you're perfect, perfect as can be."

The new best friends walked for days, through fields, dense forest, barren deserts and up a high, snowy mountain. Eventually, they reached the entrance to the dark cave. It looked terrifying, like a gigantic rock monster, the cave's opening looked like a huge mouth with jagged rocks spiking up like teeth. The bold duo carefully and quietly entered the witch's lair.

They tiptoed through the gloom, Una's glowing horn illuminating the tight, damp corridors. It was like a maze, but Una had a great memory and knew exactly where they had been. Her dad always said when plotting a rescue, you need to have a detailed escape plan. After what felt like hours of searching, all of a sudden, they heard a strange, shrill noise. They turned a corner and the tight labyrinth opened up into a large cavern. In the corner, a hideous old lady sat looking straight at them, she didn't move or say anything, she just stared blankly.

The princess whispered, "What luck, I think she's asleep. Look over there."

She pointed at the far wall where an old man was tied up to a chair. This must be her father, but he didn't look much like a King. He was dressed in rags, cuts and bruises were visible on his gaunt body. The princess was close to tears as she thought of the suffering her father must have endured. Una gave her a gentle nudge and that jolted her back into action. Stealthily, she skipped over to her father and untied his restraints. His eyes shot open and the princess helped him over to where Una was standing, the King clumsily lay across the unicorn's back and they cautiously ran for the exit. The old man was deceptively heavy, but Una was determined her first mission was to be a success. They speedily went back the way they came and after a while they could see the light shining through the gap at the cave's mouth. They moved faster, all were eager to escape the claustrophobic cave. Suddenly, as they were about to burst out into the warm sunlight, the floor fell from beneath them. They all went tumbling into a deep pit, above them the witch shrieked with delight, "Silly children, now you're all my prisoners. But wait, that little unicorn looks so very tasty. Don't go anywhere, I'll be back soon, when the fires are hot enough. Then I'll be able to feast on roast unicorn tonight." The witch cackled menacingly as she danced away.

Una was scared, she whimpered, "My brothers were right, I wasn't made to be a hero."

Then she heard a familiar, soft voice, "Una? Una? Is that you?" The sound came from the shadows.

Una turned, her horn lit every part of their prison pit and her mother strolled towards her. Una couldn't believe it, she had found her mum. The little unicorn began to cry, but her mother held her close and whispered, "Get yourself together, little girl. You need to be a hero, I'm too weak, but you have great strength in your legs. Remember what I taught you on the island? Maybe you can kick through that wall?"

Una didn't need telling twice, she went to the hard, stone wall and kicked. She kicked and she kicked and she kicked. At first only small lumps of rock exploded out of the wall, then larger chunks started to tumble and finally great boulders were shaking, the foundations were being rocked. The witch appeared at the top of the pit, "Stop it," she yelled. "You will all be squashed."

"Don't stop," encouraged her mum. "You're nearly through, I can see some light."

A few moments later, the walls came crashing down. Una, her mother, the princess and the King scurried out through the avalanche of rock. All they could hear as they ran away was the desperate screams of the witch, as she fell to her death, buried in the debris of the fallen cave, never to be seen again.

The exhausted comrades slowly made their way back down the mountain, through the desert, the forest and fields back to the King's palace.

The King was so thankful that he rewarded Una with a medal of bravery and held a giant party in honour of the princess and the unicorn. Pegasus, Perseus, Achilles and Hercules arrived for the feast too, the family reunion was the most joyous occasion. Pegasus ran to his wife and daughter, yet again his heart was full of joy, peace and love. Totally overwhelmed with emotion the legendary hero cried tears of happiness. He was so pleased for his daughter and Una was ecstatic that she had made him proud. Perseus, Achilles and Hercules circled their little sister and lifted her into the night sky, of all their combined achievements, saving their mother was the greatest feat of them all.

The King was safe, back on his throne with his brave daughter by his side. Pegasus relaxed on his farm watching his sons soar in the clear blue sky, while his wife and daughter run through the fields together once more. All at peace, with joy in their hearts and so full of love. He was complete and content and they all lived happily ever after,

The End

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