

7 SHORT STORIES



Sagittarius will love

EDITED BY AUGUST NEMO

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Bulfinch's Mythology is a collection of general audience works by American Latinist and banker Thomas Bulfinch, named after him and published after his death in 1867. The work was a highly successful popularization of Greek mythology for English-speaking readers. Carl J. Richard comments that it was "one of the most popular books ever published in the United States and the standard work on classical mythology for nearly a century". The book is a prose recounting of myths and stories from three eras: Greek and Roman mythology, King Arthur legends and medieval romances. Bulfinch intersperses the stories with his own commentary, and with quotations from writings by his contemporaries that refer to the story under discussion. This combination of classical elements and literature was novel for his time.

Stephen P. H. Butler Leacock was a Canadian teacher, political scientist, writer, and humourist. Between the years 1915 and 1925, he was the best-known English-speaking humourist in the world. He is known for his light humour along with criticisms of people's follies. The Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour was named in his honour.

Kate Chopin was an American author of short stories and novels based in Louisiana. Her stories aroused controversy because of her subjects and her approach; they were condemned as immoral by some critics. Many of her works are set in Natchitoches in north central Louisiana, a region where she lived. Within a decade of her death, Chopin was widely recognized as one of the leading writers of her time. In 1915, Fred Lewis Pattee wrote, "some of [Chopin's] work is equal to the best that has been produced in France or

even in America. [She displayed] what may be described as a native aptitude for narration amounting almost to genius."

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was an Irish poet and playwright. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. He is best remembered for his epigrams and plays, his novel The Picture of Dorian Gray, and the circumstances of his criminal conviction for "gross indecency", imprisonment, and early death at age 46.

Edgar Allan Poe was an American writer, editor, and literary critic. Poe is best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery and the macabre. He is widely regarded as a central figure of Romanticism in the United States and of American literature as a whole, and he was one of the country's earliest practitioners of the short story. He is generally considered the inventor of the detective fiction genre and is further credited with contributing to the emerging genre of science fiction. He was the first well-known American writer to earn a living through writing alone, resulting in a financially difficult life and career.

Francis Brett Hart, known as Bret Harte, was an American short-story writer and poet, best remembered for his short fiction featuring miners, gamblers, and other romantic figures of the California Gold Rush. In a career spanning more than four decades, he wrote poetry, plays, lectures, book reviews, editorials, and magazine sketches in addition to fiction. As he moved from California to the eastern U.S. to Europe, he incorporated new subjects and characters into his stories, but his Gold Rush tales have been the works most often reprinted, adapted, and admired.

John Griffith London was an American novelist, journalist, and social activist. A pioneer in the world of commercial magazine fiction, he was one of the first writers to become a worldwide celebrity and earn a large fortune from writing. He was also an innovator in the genre that would later become known as science fiction. London was part of the radical literary group "The Crowd" in San Francisco and a passionate advocate of unionization, socialism, and the rights of workers. He wrote several powerful works dealing with these topics, such as his dystopian novel The Iron Heel, his non-fiction exposé The People of the Abyss, and The War of the Classes.

The Centaurs.

In Bulfinch's Mythology - The Age of Fable

These monsters were represented as men from the head to the loins, while the remainder of the body was that of a horse. The ancients were too fond of a horse to consider the union of his nature with man's as forming a very degraded compound, and accordingly the Centaur is the only one of the fancied monsters of antiquity to which any good traits are assigned. The Centaurs were admitted to the companionship of man, and at the marriage of Pirithous with Hippodamia they were among the guests. At the feast Eurytion, one of the Centaurs, becoming intoxicated with the wine, attempted to offer violence to the bride; the other Centaurs followed his example, and a dreadful conflict arose in which several of them were slain. This is the celebrated battle of the Lapithae and Centaurs, a favourite subject with the sculptors and poets of antiquity.

But not all the Centaurs were like the rude guests of Pirithous. Chiron was instructed by Apollo and Diana, and was renowned for his skill in hunting, medicine, music, and the art of prophecy. The most distinguished heroes of Grecian story were his pupils. Among the rest the infant Æsculapius was intrusted to his charge by Apollo, his father. When the sage returned to his home bearing the infant, his daughter Ocyrhoe came forth to meet him, and at sight of the child burst forth into a prophetic strain (for she was a prophetess), foretelling the glory that he was to achieve. Æsculapius when grown up became a renowned physician, and even in one instance succeeded in restoring the dead to life. Pluto resented this, and Jupiter, at his request, struck

the bold physician with lightning, and killed him, but after his death received him into the number of the gods.

Chiron was the wisest and justest of all the Centaurs, and at his death Jupiter placed him among the stars as the constellation Sagittarius.

Soaked in Seaweed: or, Upset in the Ocean (An Old-fashioned Sea Story.)

by Stephen Leacock

IT was in August in 1867 that I stepped on board the deck of the *Saucy Sally*, lying in dock at Gravesend, to fill the berth of second mate.

Let me first say a word about myself.

I was a tall, handsome young fellow, squarely and powerfully built, bronzed by the sun and the moon (and even copper-coloured in spots from the effect of the stars), and with a face in which honesty, intelligence, and exceptional brain power were combined with Christianity, simplicity, and modesty.

As I stepped on the deck I could not help a slight feeling of triumph, as I caught sight of my sailor-like features reflected in a tar-barrel that stood beside the mast, while a little later I could scarcely repress a sense of gratification as I noticed them reflected again in a bucket of bilge water.

"Welcome on board, Mr. Blowhard," called out Captain Bilge, stepping out of the binnacle and shaking hands across the taffrail.

I saw before me a fine sailor-like man of from thirty to sixty, clean-shaven, except for an enormous pair of whiskers, a heavy beard, and a thick moustache, powerful in build, and carrying his beam well aft, in a pair of broad duck trousers

across the back of which there would have been room to write a history of the British Navy.

Beside him were the first and third mates, both of them being quiet men of poor stature, who looked at Captain Bilge with what seemed to me an apprehensive expression in their eyes.

The vessel was on the eve of departure. Her deck presented that scene of bustle and alacrity dear to the sailor's heart. Men were busy nailing up the masts, hanging the bowsprit over the side, varnishing the lee-scuppers and pouring hot tar down the companion-way.

Captain Bilge, with a megaphone to his lips, kept calling out to the men in his rough sailor fashion:

"Now, then, don't over-exert yourselves, gentlemen.
Remember, please, that we have plenty of time. Keep out of the sun as much as you can. Step carefully in the rigging there, Jones; I fear it's just a little high for you. Tut, tut, Williams, don't get yourself so dirty with that tar, you won't look fit to be seen."

I stood leaning over the gaff of the mainsail and thinking yes, thinking, dear reader, of my mother. I hope that you will think none the less of me for that. Whenever things look dark, I lean up against something and think of mother. If they get positively black, I stand on one leg and think of father. After that I can face anything.

Did I think, too, of another, younger than mother and fairer than father? Yes, I did. "Bear up, darling," I had whispered as she nestled her head beneath my oilskins and kicked out backward with one heel in the agony of her girlish grief, "in five years the voyage will be over, and after three more like it, I shall come back with money enough to buy a second-hand fishing-net and settle down on shore."

Meantime the ship's preparations were complete. The masts were all in position, the sails nailed up, and men with axes were busily chopping away the gangway.

"All ready?" called the Captain.

"Then hoist the anchor in board and send a man down with the key to open the bar."

Opening the bar! the last sad rite of departure. How often in my voyages have I seen it; the little group of men soon to be exiled from their home, standing about with saddened faces, waiting to see the man with the key open the bar held there by some strange fascination.

Next morning with a fair wind astern we had buzzed around the corner of England and were running down the Channel.

I know no finer sight, for those who have never seen it, than the English Channel. It is the highway of the world. Ships of all nations are passing up and down, Dutch, Scotch, Venezuelan, and even American.

Chinese junks rush to and fro. Warships, motor yachts, icebergs, and lumber rafts are everywhere. If I add to this fact that so thick a fog hangs over it that it is entirely hidden from sight, my readers can form some idea of the majesty of the scene.

We had now been three days at sea. My first sea-sickness was wearing off, and I thought less of father.

On the third morning Captain Bilge descended to my cabin.

"Mr. Blowhard," he said, "I must ask you to stand double watches."

[&]quot;Aye, aye, sir."