

A painting of a woman with blonde hair styled in a large, voluminous bouffant. She is wearing a pink, spaghetti-strap dress and is seated on an ornate, gold-colored chair with intricate scrollwork. She has a contemplative or perhaps melancholic expression, with her hand resting near her chin. The background is a mix of cool blue and warm yellow tones, suggesting an interior setting. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-20th-century European painting, with visible brushstrokes and a focus on form and color.

7 SHORT STORIES

*Cancer
will love*

EDITED BY AUGUST NEMO

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Authors

Bibliotheca of Pseudo-Apollodorus is a compendium of Greek myths and heroic legends, arranged in three books, generally dated to the first or second century AD. The author was traditionally thought to be Apollodorus of Athens, but that attribution is now regarded as false, and so "Pseudo-" was added to Apollodorus. The Bibliotheca has been called "the most valuable mythographical work that has come down from ancient times".

Matsuo Bashō was the most famous poet of the Edo period in Japan. During his lifetime, Bashō was recognized for his works in the collaborative haikai no renga form; today, after centuries of commentary, he is recognized as the greatest master of haiku (then called hokku). Matsuo Bashō's poetry is internationally renowned; and, in Japan, many of his poems are reproduced on monuments and traditional sites.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman was a prominent American humanist, novelist, writer of short stories, poetry, and nonfiction, and a lecturer for social reform. She was a utopian feminist and served as a role model for future generations of feminists because of her unorthodox concepts and lifestyle. She has been inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. Her best remembered work today is her semi-autobiographical short story "The Yellow Wallpaper", which she wrote after a severe bout of postpartum psychosis.

Kathleen Mansfield Murry was a prominent New Zealand modernist short story writer and poet who was born and brought up in colonial New Zealand and wrote under the pen name of Katherine Mansfield. At the age of 19, she left New Zealand and settled in England, where she became a

friend of writers such as D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. Mansfield was diagnosed with extrapulmonary tuberculosis in 1917; the disease claimed her life at the age of 34.

Louisa May Alcott was an American novelist, short story writer and poet better known as the author of the novel *Little Women* (1868) and its sequels *Little Men* (1871) and *Jo's Boys* (1886). Raised in New England by her transcendentalist parents, Abigail May and Amos Bronson Alcott, she grew up among many of the well-known intellectuals of the day, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry David Thoreau, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Joseph Rudyard Kipling was an English journalist, short-story writer, poet, and novelist. He was born in India, which inspired much of his work. Kipling in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was among the United Kingdom's most popular writers. Henry James said, "Kipling strikes me personally as the most complete man of genius, as distinct from fine intelligence, that I have ever known." In 1907, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, as the first English-language writer to receive the prize, and at 41, its youngest recipient to date. He was also sounded for the British Poet Laureateship and several times for a knighthood, but declined both.

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.

Second Labor of Hercules, the Hydra

In Bibliotheca of Pseudo-Apollodorus,

*On Lerna's pest th' undaunted Hero rushes,
With massy club her hundred heads he crushes,
In vain. One crush'd, two hissing heads arise,
Till good Iolas to each wound applies
The burning brand. Dipt in the Hydra's gall,
His arrows slightest wound is death to all.*

As a second labour he ordered him to kill the Lernaean hydra.¹ That creature, bred in the swamp of Lerna, used to go forth into the plain and ravage both the cattle and the country. Now the hydra had a huge body, with nine heads, eight mortal, but the middle one immortal. So mounting a chariot driven by Iolaus, he came to Lerna, and having halted his horses, he discovered the hydra on a hill beside the springs of the Amymone, where was its den. By pelting it with fiery shafts he forced it to come out, and in the act of doing so he seized and held it fast. But the hydra wound itself about one of his feet and clung to him. Nor could he effect anything by smashing its heads with his club, for as fast as one head was smashed there grew up two.

A *huge crab* also came to the help of the hydra by biting his foot.² So he killed it, and in his turn called for help on Iolaus who, by setting fire to a piece of the neighboring wood and

burning the roots of the heads with the brands, prevented them from sprouting. Having thus got the better of the sprouting heads, he chopped off the immortal head, and buried it, and put a heavy rock on it, beside the road that leads through Lerna to Elaeus. But the body of the hydra he slit up and dipped his arrows in the gall. However, Eurystheus said that this labour should not be reckoned among the ten because he had not got the better of the hydra by himself, but with the help of Iolaus.

The Aged Mother

by Matsuo Basho

Long, long ago there lived at the foot of the mountain a poor farmer and his aged, widowed mother. They owned a bit of land which supplied them with food, and they were humble, peaceful, and happy.

Shining was governed by a despotic leader who though a warrior, had a great and cowardly shrinking from anything suggestive of failing health and strength. This caused him to send out a cruel proclamation. The entire province was given strict orders to immediately put to death all aged people. Those were barbarous days, and the custom of abandoning old people to die was not uncommon. The poor farmer loved his aged mother with tender reverence, and the order filled his heart with sorrow. But no one ever thought twice about obeying the mandate of the governor, so with many deep and hopeless sighs, the youth prepared for what at that time was considered the kindest mode of death.

Just at sundown, when his day's work was ended, he took a quantity of unwhitened rice which was the principal food for the poor, and he cooked, dried it, and tied it in a square cloth, which he swung in a bundle around his neck along with a gourd filled with cool, sweet water. Then he lifted his helpless old mother to his back and started on his painful journey up the mountain. The road was long and steep; the narrow road was crossed and re-crossed by many paths made by the hunters and woodcutters. In some place, they lost and confues, but he gave no heed. One path or another, it mattered not. On he went, climbing blindly upward—ever

upward towards the high bare summit of what is known as Obatsuyama, the mountain of the “abandoning of the aged.”

The eyes of the old mother were not so dim but that they noted the reckless hastening from one path to another, and her loving heart grew anxious. Her son did not know the mountain’s many paths and his return might be one of danger, so she stretched forth her hand and snapping the twigs from brushes as they passed, she quietly dropped a handful every few steps of the way so that as they climbed, the narrow path behind them was dotted at frequent intervals with tiny piles of twigs. At last the summit was reached. Weary and heart sick, the youth gently released his burden and silently prepared a place of comfort as his last duty to the loved one. Gathering fallen pine needles, he made a soft cushion and tenderly lifted his old mother onto it. He rapped her padded coat more closely about the stooping shoulders and with tearful eyes and an aching heart he said farewell.

The trembling mother’s voice was full of unselfish love as she gave her last injunction. “Let not thine eyes be blinded, my son.” She said. “The mountain road is full of dangers. *LOOK* carefully and follow the path which holds the piles of twigs. They will guide you to the familiar path farther down”. The son’s surprised eyes looked back over the path, then at the poor old, shriveled hands all scratched and soiled by their work of love. His heart broke within and bowing to the ground, he cried aloud: “oh, Honorable mother, your kindness breaks my heart! I will not leave you. Together we will follow the path of twigs, and together we will die!”

Once more he shouldered his burden (how light it seemed now) and hastened down the path, through the shadows and the moonlight, to the little hut in the valley. Beneath the