

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

2400 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55404
612-872-5108
FAX 612-874-8119

Minotaur

By
Kevin Dyer

Minotaur was originally produced by Young People's Theatre, Canada, in 2014

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CHARACTERS

Freddie	A kid at school - also Theseus
Mom	Also Aethra
Dad	In desert camouflage, in a war zone, now – also Aegeus
Pasiphae	A sorceress. (Wife to Minos)
Ogre	Pasiphae's son – who was brain-damaged when, as a young child, he looked into the Labyrinth
Periphites	A robber
Sinis	Another robber
The Gipsy Queen	(Who we later find out to be Ariadne – Minos' and Pasiphae's daughter)
The Big Pig	
29 nephews	
Minos	King of Minos, owner of the labyrinth, keeper of The Minotaur, enemy of Aegeus. (Husband to Pasiphae)
The Minotaur	The half-man, half-bull thing
The Man	Armed with a rifle, the enemy, hunting down Freddie's dad in the alleys.

The play takes place now... and a long time ago:
in this place... and in that other place.

.....

The doubling might be:

FEMALE ONE	Mom/Aethra. Nephews.
FEMALE TWO	Pasiphae. Nephews.
FEMALE THREE	Gipsy Queen/Ariadne. Nephews.
MALE ONE	Freddie/Theseus.
MALE TWO	The Ogre. Periphites. Pig. Nephew One. Nephew 29. The Minotaur. The Man.
MALE THREE	Dad. Aegeus. Sinis. Pig. Minos. First Dad in the labyrinth.

SCENE ONE.

Modern day.

Blackness. The sounds of the night.

There is a huge boulder in the back-yard of a house.

We hear the snorting of a bull; it is bellowing, a terrible noise.

Then a boy in his pyjamas rushes out of the house.

FREDDIE: (Calling off) Mom! Mom!

He goes to the boulder. He pushes but can't move it.

His mom arrives, wearing her dressing gown and carrying a flashlight.

MOM: Freddie?! What are you doing?

FREDDIE: I got a text-

MOM: I've told you not to have your phone in bed.

His phone beeps, another text comes in. He reads it.

FREDDIE: It's from Dad. He's sent me 23 since midnight, all saying the same. I thought he was gonna wish me a happy birthday, but...

His phone beeps, another text comes in.

FREDDIE: I don't get it.

MOM: Give it here.

Mom takes the phone and reads the text. Her hands start to shake.

FREDDIE: Mom?

The phone beeps again.

FREDDIE: What's it mean?

MOM: (She turns it off. Calmly) Back to bed. Go.

Freddie goes.

MOM: (Calling to the dark) I don't want no trouble! Do you hear! I'm going to bed. I'm going to sleep.

Mom throws the phone over the fence. She follows her son into the house.

We hear the phone beep (Off). It's brought back on by Pasiphae.

PASIPHAE: (To the audience) My friends, you are here on a good day. A day when things will happen. The boy's dad's in trouble.

OGRE: Big big trouble.

Pasiphae makes the phone beep again. The phone beeps louder and louder and morphs into a heartbeat and gun-fire and battle. A man in military camo runs on, hides behind the rock, gets his breath back...

DAD: Two-four to Echo-one. Echo-one do you read?

Pasiphae changes her voice:

PASIPHAE: Echo-one to two-four. I copy.

Gun fire.

DAD: I'm back of Red Sector. It's like, I dunno, alleys, twists, all over the place. Where the hell am I?

PASIPHAE: We're locked on to you, two-four. We can see you.

DAD: Get me out! Do you copy?

PASIPHAE: Take a right.

He does.

PASIPHAE: Go right again.

DAD: Done it.

PASIPHAE: Now left... Now straight on.

DAD: How far?

PASIPHAE: Till I say... Keep going... Stop. Now left... left again. Keep the stone wall on your right.

DAD: It's all stone! Stone floor, stone roof. Where the hell am I?

PASIPHAE: Take a left.

He goes right.

PASIPHAE: Left! Left. Do you copy?

DAD: Goddit.

PASIPHAE: Now right... On, on, go on.

DAD: It's a damn maze here.

Gunfire.

DAD: Get me outta here!

PASIPHAE: Left... Left... Another right. Good. Now you're there.

DAD: Where? Where!? It's a dead end. Echo-one. Do you read me?
I'm in a dead end.

Sound of a heart beating.

She makes the phone beep. And beep again. And beep again, louder and louder.

The boy runs out, sees Pasiphae and The Ogre. He's really shocked. He's never seen anything like her and The Ogre before.

FREDDIE: (Calling off) Mom! Mom!

His mom arrives. Pasiphae throws Freddie the phone.

PASIPHAE: What's the text say, boy?

MOM: Get out of here.

PASIPHAE: But it's such a lovely morning. (She gestures, it gets light) A new day and things to do.

MOM: Freddie, get ready for school.

FREDDIE: But, Mom...

MOM: Get your swim things.

FREDDIE: Mom...

MOM: Now!

He goes back in the house.

MOM: What are you doing here?

PASIPHAE: The future is waiting for him.

OGRE: (Making like a bull) Been waiting in dark for thousands of years.

PASIPHAE: Waiting for him.

MOM: He's just a kid. It's his birthday.

OGRE: He gotta go.

MOM: He's not ready. He gets bullied at school; in swim club he's the only one with water wings.

PASIPHAE: It's his destiny.

OGRE: He got go to twisty place, turny place.

MOM: No way! He won't go. If I have to I'll break his legs and tie him to the porch.

OGRE: (Calls) Freddie!

MOM: He's got school.

OGRE: Not today.

PASIPHAE: Tell him.

MOM: No.

OGRE: Tell him.

MOM: No!

PASIPHAE: (To the audience) You think this rock is in Freddie's back yard.

OGRE: Not so. Rock here first.

MOM: (To Pasiphae) Get outta here.

PASIPHAE: Put here at the crack of time by a god. Because that god knew a king would need a rock to put something under.
The boy's dad's in trouble.

OGRE: And somebody got help him.

Pasiphae takes us back to Red Sector. We see: Dad is crouching in the dead end. Gunfire can be heard, sounds of battle and running feet in the alleys.

PASIPHAE: He can hear breathing, a heart-beating. Is it his own?

OGRE: Or some other animal down there in the dark?

PASIPHAE: And the man takes his phone from his pocket, texts his boy back home.

The man texts a message.

OGRE: (Takes the phone Reads the txt) It says 'Hi Freddie. All is cool. Jst wnted 2 let u know that I love you and always will. Dad. X'

PASIPHAE: What's the use of a message like that?
His boy, back home-
Will wake up, read it, smile-

OGRE: Then fall back sleep.

PASIPHAE: So... the words
as they leave that twisty place
I turn them,
bend them, till they say...

Pasiphae gestures. Freddie, now dressed for school, comes back with his swim bag.

FREDDIE: (Reading his phone) 'Move the rock.'
What's going on? (To Mom) Is Dad ok?

PASIPHAE: He's on the other side of the world; the other side of time.
Someone's gotta help him.

OGRE: He's dying out there. Needs help.

PASIPHAE: And only one person can save him.

FREDDIE: Mom?

Mom decides.

MOM: Damn you! Damn you! Freddie, the rock; your dad left something for you under the rock.

FREDDIE: He said when he gets back, he's gonna get me a new catcher's glove.

PASIPHAE: This is more than a catcher's glove, Theseus.

FREDDIE: Excuse me.

OGRE: Your name.

FREDDIE: Look pal, here's my swim bag, and it says 'Freddie's Swim Bag', and this bag is the swim bag that belongs to me, so I must be Freddie. OK?

PASIPHAE: Theseus has been your name for thousands of years.

OGRE: Since before thing went under rock.

FREDDIE: What thing?

PASIPHAE: And destiny says you have to take the thing that's under the rock-

FREDDIE: This is 2014, we don't do destiny.

PASIPHAE: And go to the place of the Minotaur.

OGRE: Half man. Half bull.

He flinches at the memory of it; sucks his thumb.

AETHRA: And save your dad, Theseus.

He looks at Mom, now Aethra. She has taken off her dressing gown and rolled it. She is now an ancient Greek holding a baby.

FREDDIE: Mom? Where is dad?

Enter Aegeus, king of Athens, in a great hurry, strapping on armour (It is Freddie's dad.)
Aethra helps him.

AEGEUS: Running out of time.

FREDDIE: Dad?

AETHRA: He can't hear you. He's in a different time.

FREDDIE: Dad!?

AETHRA: And he can't see you. Not until you move the rock and get the-

AEGEUS: Stay here, keep our boy safe. I'm going back to Athens.

FREDDIE: Athens?

AETHRA: This was before.

FREDDIE: We lived in Athens? Athens Greece?

AETHRA: Thousands of years ago.

AEGEUS: When he's no longer a boy, send Theseus to me.

FREDDIE: (Re the baby) Is that me? Hey I'm cute.

AEGEUS: When he's no longer a child, then let him come.

OGRE: I like babies. I eat them.

AEGEUS: Tell him to bring what is under the rock.

AETHRA: We'll come with you now.

AEGEUS: No. My 29 nephews want the crown.

FREDDIE: 29!?

AETHRA: Surely they won't harm a child.

AEGEUS: They'll slit his throat while he sleeps in his cot. Peace is a bird's egg in a nest at the end of the thinnest branch on top of the tallest tree. And there are many who will fell the tree and see

our world cracked like a shell on the floor. Let him grow strong, for then I will need him.

AETHRA: What if, when you need him, he's still a boy?

AEGEUS: Then it will be a dark day.

He kisses her. He exits.

Freddie's phone rings.

FREDDIE: It's him.

He answers it.

We hear breathing and running and a heart-beat getting louder and louder.

Then silence. The phone is dead.

FREDDIE: Dad's in trouble, isn't he?

Aethra nods.

FREDDIE: I've gotta move the rock don't I? ... Then get the thing that's underneath; then go save my dad.

The boy starts to push hard against the rock.

OGRE: Too heavy. You should made him train or something. Given him extra vitteymins and protein shakes. Freddie the unready. Better stay home with your teddy, Freddie. I've seen stronger coffee; seen bigger muscles on a strand of hair.

FREDDIE; Shuddup!

OGRE: Or maybe you is ready... for the skinniest arms competition maybe, for the not-saving-your-dad contest maybe.

FREDDIE: (Stopping pushing) Actually, I have been getting ready for this day: every time Dad goes he stands by the door with all his gear and salutes and says 'See you kid' and I salute and say 'See you dad'. But once he's gone out the gate, I practise him not coming back; pretend that he's shot in action or taken prisoner-

AETHRA: Don't say that.

FREDDIE: It's what all kids whose parents are in the army do. So if it happens, we're ready. When there's a funeral, you watch 'em; the grown-ups are crying, and the kids are quiet as stones.

AETHRA: That's horrible.

FREDDIE: And whenever there's a knock at the door we think it's someone with bad news. Sometimes I open the door when no one's even knocked – so I know what it'll be like to open the door and him not be there...
It's too heavy.

He picks up his school bags, starts to leave.

FREDDIE: I'll be late for school.

AETHRA: I once watched a man; he saw a truck roll back down a hill, trap a little girl. It was on top of her, pinning her to the ground, everyone was panicking, screaming. The man he got his hands under the car, by the driver's door, I saw the veins sticking out in his arms, and he... lifted the truck.

OGRE: No way.

AETHRA: He got her out.

FREDDIE: How's he do that?

AETHRA: He was her dad; he could do it cos his love for her was bigger than the truck.

He goes to the rock and starts pushing again. She knows he'll do it.

AETHRA: I'm gonna fix you a sandwich for the journey.

She goes.

We hear the scraping of hooves, bellowing.

PASIPHAE: If you don't kill the Minotaur, your dad will die.

OGRE: You gotta go in dark tunnels.

PASIPHAE: Face your darkest fears; meet the things you are too scared to even dream of.

OGRE: Twist and turn, run and hide, crouch and beg.

PASIPHAE: And shout and scream and bang bang, bang bang, bang bang goes your heart till you meet the Minotaur!

OGRE: The half-man half-bull thing bites off heads and drinks your blood. He slits you open with his horns. The half-man half-bull gulps your guts.

Huge roar.

Then claps of thunder as the boy moves the rock... and takes the sword and holds it aloft.

PASIPHAE: Boy, it's your destiny to kill the Minotaur and save your father. And it's my destiny to stop you. See you in the past.

Pasiphae and the Ogre exit. Enter Aethra with his packed lunch.

AETHRA: Here, Swiss Cheese and Spicy Mayo, your favourite, and some Band-aids too. Just in case.

FREDDIE: Mom I don't need sandwiches.

He takes them.

FREDDIE: Thanks.
I'm gonna save my dad.

He runs off.

AETHRA: (Calls him) Theseus! ... (No response) ... Freddie!

He comes back.

AETHRA: This way.

FREDDIE: I gotta go the quick way, straight across the sea.

AETHRA: She will ram your boat against the rocks and drag your body down in the water. Go through the forest. You need to learn... and be ready.

FREDDIE: What if I'm not ready?

AETHRA: Then she'll crack your brains on the palace steps.
He hugs her, goes.

SCENE TWO.

The forest. Two robbers, waiting.

SINIS: There's one coming now.

PERIPHITES: Is he big?

SINIS: No.

PERIPHITES: Is he strong?

SINIS: No.

PERIPHITES: Is he stupid

SINIS: Must be, to come to this place on his own.

PERIPHITES: What you gonna do with him?

SINIS: Rob him. And kill him. Not necessarily in that order.

Enter Freddie.

PERIPHITES: Who are you?

SINIS: Where you going?

PERIPHITES: Where you been?

SINIS: What you think you doing coming here?

PERIPHITES: I'm Periphites.

SINIS: I'm Sinis.

PERIPHITES: And you're in trouble, pal.

SINIS: Give us your money.

FREDDIE: I have none.

PERIPHITES: Give us your treasure.

FREDDIE: I have none.

PERIPHITES: Give us your swanky sword then.

FREDDIE: No.

Pause.

SINIS: No-one has ever said no to my friend before.

PERIPHITES: Well, not strictly true. Some have. But not lived to see the next day.

SINIS: You see, little boy, he's a murdering bandit with a very short temper

PERIPHITES: Yeah.

SINIS: Very strong arms.

PERIPHITES: Yeah

SINIS: And a very small brain.

PERIPHITES: Yeah. (Thinks about it.)

SINIS: People he don't like, he lays 'em on his bed, and if they are too long he cuts their feet off.
And if they are too short, he stretches 'em with a stretching machine.

FREDDIE: And if they are the right size?

PERIPHITES: I just kills 'em anyway.

Freddie draws his sword.

SINIS: Wow. Fancy.

PERIPHITES: Handy with that blade are you?

SINIS: Fancy yourself as a swordsman do you?

PERIPHITES: Do back flips and then pointy-pointy with it can you?

SINIS: Slash slash?

PERIPHITES: Across the face and in the ribs?

SINIS: Run up the stairs with someone chasing can you?

PERIPHITES: And swing across the river?

SINIS: Holdin' the sword in your mouth?

PERIPHITES: Then creep up on 'em from behind?

SINIS: And stab 'em in the bum?

PERIPHITES: Or start with your left hand.... then switch to the right.

SINIS: Parry thrust slash.

PERIPHITES: Bend knees duck stab stab.

SINIS: Yeah, can you do all that?

FREDDIE: Er, I only got it this morning. I've never used a sword in my life. In fact I haven't even got to the end of reading this inscription.

PERIPHITES: In-what?

FREDDIE: Inscription – it's written on the blade. Inscription.

PERIPHITES: Are you threatening me with your long words?

FREDDIE: It's writing.

PERIPHITES: (Scoffs) I knows that. I knows that. (To Sinis) What's it say?

SINIS: (Looking at the inscription) Err.... Errr....

FREDDIE: You can't read can you?

SINIS: Course I can.

FREDDIE: And neither can you.

PERIPHITES: Course I can.

SINIS: No you can't.

PERIPHITES: Yes I can, yes I can.

FREDDIE: No you can't, no you can't.

PERIPHITES: Who says I can't?

FREDDIE: He says you can't.

PERIPHITES: Oh, does he now, oh do you now? Mr Big are you?

SINIS: Well bigger than you, lard ass.

PERIPHITES: Who are you calling lard ass, smart ass?

SINIS: Who are you calling smart ass, lard ass?

PERIPHITES: Smart ass.

SINIS: Lard ass.

PERIPHITES: Smart ass.

SINIS: Lard ass.

They fight each other. They kill each other. Freddie sheathes his sword and moves on.

Pasiphae comes and stands over the two bodies.

PASIPHAE: Live again. Be reborn. From the belly guts, pulled from the middle of it all, I create a better thing.

They morph into a huge pig.

PASIPHAE: Do my work my piggy wig; chew his flesh, crack his skull, eat his heart, let there be nothing left but teethmarked bones.

Pasiphae transforms into an old woman.

PASIPHAE: (Calling) Help me! Help me! Help!

Enter Freddie.

PASIPHAE: (Still disguised) This pig eats our children, it bites dogs clean in half, it drinks our blood at night.

He draws his sword.

FREDDIE: Come on then, pig! Big Pig! Big Ugly pig! I have my sword; my destiny is calling and you are in the way!

The pig charges at Freddie, the sword spins out of his hand and slides across the ground. Pasiphae puts her foot on it.

FREDDIE: Pass me my sword.

PASIPHAE: Wait... what does this writing say? 'This sword is for killing The Minotaur'. So it's no good against a pig.

She does not give it to Freddie. The pig charges. It pins him to the ground.

PASIPHAE: Enjoy your lunch Piggy-wig.

She goes. More pig grunts.

FREDDIE: Nice piggy. Nicey-nice piggy wiggy.

The pig is about to kill him... then sniffs. It sniffs again then grunts with curious pleasure.

FREDDIE: Please don't eat me, it's my birthday. I taste horrible. There's not that much of me to eat.

The pig grunts, sniffing Freddie's back-pack.

FREDDIE: O. You can smell it can't you, pig? And you like it, don't you?

The pig nods. Freddie takes the sandwich from his pocket.

FREDDIE: Swiss cheese. With spicy mayo.

PIG: Grunt grunt.

FREDDIE: (Leads the pig round with the sandwich) You want it? Then you fetch it.

In slow motion he throws it...