

# The Brass Bulls

by E. Louise Smythe

When Jason came to Colchis, he went to the king and said, "Will you give me the golden fleece?" The king wanted to keep the fleece. So he said to Jason, "You may have it, but you must do something for me first." "You must plow with the brass bulls, and plant the dragon's teeth." The brass bulls looked like real bulls, but they were larger and stronger. They blew out fire and smoke from their noses and mouths. The bulls had a stall made of iron and stone. They had to be tied with strong iron chains. When the dragon's teeth were planted, iron men grew up. They always killed the one who had planted them. The king wanted the bulls to kill Jason.

He said, "If the bulls do not kill him the iron men will." The king had a daughter named Medea. She saw Jason was a brave young man and did not want him killed. She knew how to help him. She stepped into her carriage, which was pulled by flying snakes. Then Medea flew through the air. She went to hills and creeks and picked all kinds of flowers. She took the flowers home and cooked them. Then Medea went to Jason when the king did not know it. She said to Jason, "Rub your face and hands and legs with this juice."

When he did this, he was as strong as a giant. Nothing could hurt him then. Fire could not burn him, and swords could not cut him. The next day Jason had to plow with the brass bulls and plant the dragon's teeth. Early in the morning, the king and princess went out to the place. They had good seats where they could see well. All the people in the city came out to see Jason plow. The little boys climbed the trees so they could see better. Then Jason came to the place. The stall where the brass bulls were tied was not far off. The door was opened and Jason went in. He untied the bulls and took hold of their horns. Then he made the bulls come out of their stall. The bulls were very angry and blew fire and smoke from their mouths. This made the cruel king glad. But the people who saw it were afraid. They did not want Jason killed. They did not know that the princess had helped him. Jason pushed the bulls' heads down to the ground. Then they kicked at him with their feet, but could not hurt him. He held their heads down on the ground until the plow was ready. Jason took the chains in one hand. He took the handle of the plow in the other. The bulls jumped and wanted to run away. But Jason held so hard they had to go very slowly. When it was noon the ground was all plowed. Then Jason let the bulls go. They were so angry that they ran away to the woods. Now Jason went to the king and said, "Give me the dragon's teeth." The king gave him his hat full. Then Jason planted the dragon's teeth, just as a man plants wheat. By this time he was very tired, so he went to lie down.

In the evening he came back. The iron men were growing up. Some of the men had only their feet in the ground. Some of them were in the ground up to their knees. Some had only their heads out. They all tried to get out so they could kill Jason. Then Jason did what Medea told him he should do. He took a giant's marble and threw it near the men. All the iron men wanted to get the marble. So they began to fight each other. As soon as one had his feet out of the ground, he cut at the man next to him. So they killed each other. Then Jason took his sword and cut off all the heads that were out of the ground. So all the iron men were killed and the king was very angry. But Medea and the people were glad.

# Jason and the Dragon

by E. Louise Smythe

The next day Jason went to the king and said, "Now, give me the golden fleece." The king did not give it to him, but said, "Come again." Then Medea said, "If you want the golden fleece, you must help yourself. My father will not give it to you. A dragon is by the tree where the golden fleece is, and he never sleeps. He is always hungry and eats people if they go near him. I can not kill him but I can make him sleep. He is very fond of cake. I will make some cake and put in something to make the dragon sleep." So Medea made the cakes and Jason took them and threw them to the dragon. The dragon ate them all and went to sleep. Then Jason climbed over the dragon and took the nail out of the tree. He put the golden fleece under his coat and ran to the ship Argo. Medea went with him and became his wife.

Oh, how angry the king was! He had lost the golden fleece and the brass bulls and the dragon's teeth. And now his daughter was gone. He sent his men in ships to take Jason, but they could not get him. At last Medea and Jason and the other Argonauts came to Greece. Jason's father was there. He was a very old man. Jason wanted his father to be king, so he asked Medea to make the old man young. Then Medea took her carriage and flew through the air. She did not come back for nine days. She picked flowers from the hills. She found all kinds of stones, too. When she went home she put all these things into a pot and cooked them.

Then she put a stick into the pot and leaves grew on it. Some of the juice fell on the ground and grass grew up. So Medea knew the juice would make things grow. Jason's father went to sleep and Medea put some of the juice into his mouth. His white hair turned black and teeth grew in his mouth. When he woke up, he looked and felt like a young man. He lived many years and when he died Jason was king.

Source:

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