

# **THE STORY OF ROME**



Verginius left his beautiful young daughter Virginia in the care of her nurse.

**THE  
STORY OF ROME**

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES  
TO THE DEATH OF AUGUSTUS

**BY MARY MACGREGOR**

**YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS  
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**TO**  
**IAN AND WILLIE TAYLOR**



DEAR IAN AND WILLIE,—The Story of Rome has been written, as you know, in your beautiful, quiet old garden.

And as the story grew, the short cold days of winter passed and the long warm days of summer were here.

In the garden a miracle had been wrought. It had become alive.

After slow, persistent struggle with storm and frost, the delicate bare branches were no longer bare, but clothed in living green. The hard black earth too had stirred, and shoots and blades appeared, until at length the garden was ablaze with gold, purple, crimson.

Sometimes I dreamed that, in its own different way, the Story of Rome too was a miracle, wrought out of the tears and throes of a brave and ambitious people.

For the story tells of the birth of a city and of its growth through storm and struggle, until it became a great world empire.

The city which Romulus founded was built upon a single hill; soon seven hills were not great enough to contain her. And when Augustus, the first Emperor of Rome, began to reign, part of Europe,

Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria, and a large portion of Africa formed his kingdom.

Although the story was written in the quiet of your garden, little of its peace has stolen into the tale, and for that you boys may care for it the more.

As you read, fierce battle-cries will ring in your ears, and the clash of arms will startle you. You will hear the tramp of armies marching to new lands to conquer them and their treasures for Rome, the city of their love.

Sometimes you will catch your breath in horror as you read of terrible and cruel deeds, for the Romans were often pitiless, showing little mercy to those they conquered.

But at other times your breath will come quick with wonder as you read of the dauntless courage, the rare endurance of these mighty men of old.

And if there are many things which you do not admire in the people of Rome, yet they possess one virtue which you and every British boy and girl may not only admire, but gladly imitate.

What that virtue is I will leave you to find out for yourselves as you read *The Story of Rome*.—Yours affectionately,

MARY MACGREGOR.



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## CHAPTER I

# THE LADY ROMA

LONG, long years ago, Troy, one of the great cities in Asia Minor, was taken by the Greeks.

Many mighty Trojans had defended their city well, and among them all none had fought more bravely than the prince Æneas.

But when Æneas saw that the Greeks had set fire to the city, he fled, carrying, it is said, his father on his shoulders, and grasping by the hand his son Ascanius.

Moreover, so precious to him was the sacred image of the goddess Pallas, that he saved it from the burning city.

The gods, pleased with his reverence, helped him in his flight by building a ship. So when Æneas reached the sea he at once embarked in it, with his followers and their wives, and sailed away to seek for a new land in which to build a new city.

As the Trojans sailed they saw a bright star shining above them. Day and night the star was

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always to be seen, showing the seafarers the direction in which to steer.

At length the Trojans reached the western shore of Italy, and here, at a town called Latium, they disembarked.

The women were weary of the sea, and no sooner had they landed than they began to wonder how they could persuade their husbands to journey no farther, but to settle in the pleasant country which they had reached.

Among these women was a lady of noble birth, who was wise as she was good.

Roma, for that was the lady's name, proposed that they should burn the ship in which they had sailed. Then it would be impossible for their husbands to go any farther in search of a new home.

The other women agreed to Roma's daring plan, and with mingled hope and fear the ship was set on fire.

When the men saw the flames devouring the vessel they were troubled, but when they found out how it had been set on fire, they were angry.

Yet, as anger could not give them back their ship, and as Italy was a pleasant land, the men did as the women wished. They settled near a hill called Mount Palatine, and there they built a city.

Some old stories tell that the city was called Rome after Roma, the noble lady who had first thought of setting the ship on fire.

## THE LADY ROMA

But other stories say that the country in which Æneas landed belonged to a king named Latinus, who welcomed the Trojan, and gave him ground on which to build. Æneas married Lavinia, the daughter of the king, and called the city which he built after her Lavinium.

Soon after this, King Latinus was killed in battle, and then for three years Æneas ruled well and wisely not only over his own Trojan followers, but also over the subjects of his royal father-in-law. His people he now called Latins, in memory of King Latinus.

When the three years were passed, war broke out against the Etruscans, who were at that time the most powerful tribe in Italy.

One day a terrible storm overtook the armies on the battlefield; so dark grew the clouds that the soldiers could not see each other.

When at length the sky cleared Æneas had disappeared, and was seen no more on earth.

“The gods have taken him away,” said the Latins. So they built an altar, and henceforth worshipped their king as the god Jupiter.

Ascanius, who had escaped from Troy with his father, now ruled in Lavinium. But he soon found that the city was not large enough for all his people; so, leaving Lavinium, he built a new city, and called it Alba Longa, or the Long White City.

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Alba Longa stood in the midst of the Alban hills, not far from the site on which Rome itself was soon to be built.

## CHAPTER II

# THE SHE-WOLF

AFTER the death of Ascanius nearly three hundred years passed away, and then a king named Proca died, leaving behind him two sons. The name of the elder was Numitor, the name of the younger Amulius.

The crown belonged by right to Numitor, the elder son, but Amulius, who was ambitious, was not willing that his brother should reign. So he said to Numitor, "One of us shall wear the crown, and to the other shall belong the gold and treasures left by our father Proca."

The story does not tell if Numitor was indignant with his brother, and said that the crown belonged to him; it only tells that Numitor chose to reign, as was indeed his right.

Amulius then seized the gold and treasure, and bribed his followers to drive Numitor from the throne and to make him king.

This, in their greed, they were soon persuaded to do.

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

Ere long Numitor was banished from the city, and Amulius, to his great content, began to reign.

But the king was soon surprised to find that the crown rested uneasily upon his head.

It might be that the children of Numitor would some day wrench the crown from him, even as he had wrenched it from their father.

That this might never be, Amulius, thinking to get rid of fear, ordered Numitor's son to be slain, while his daughter Silvia was kept, by the command of the king, in a temple sacred to the goddess Vesta. Here the maiden tended the altar fire, which was never allowed to die.

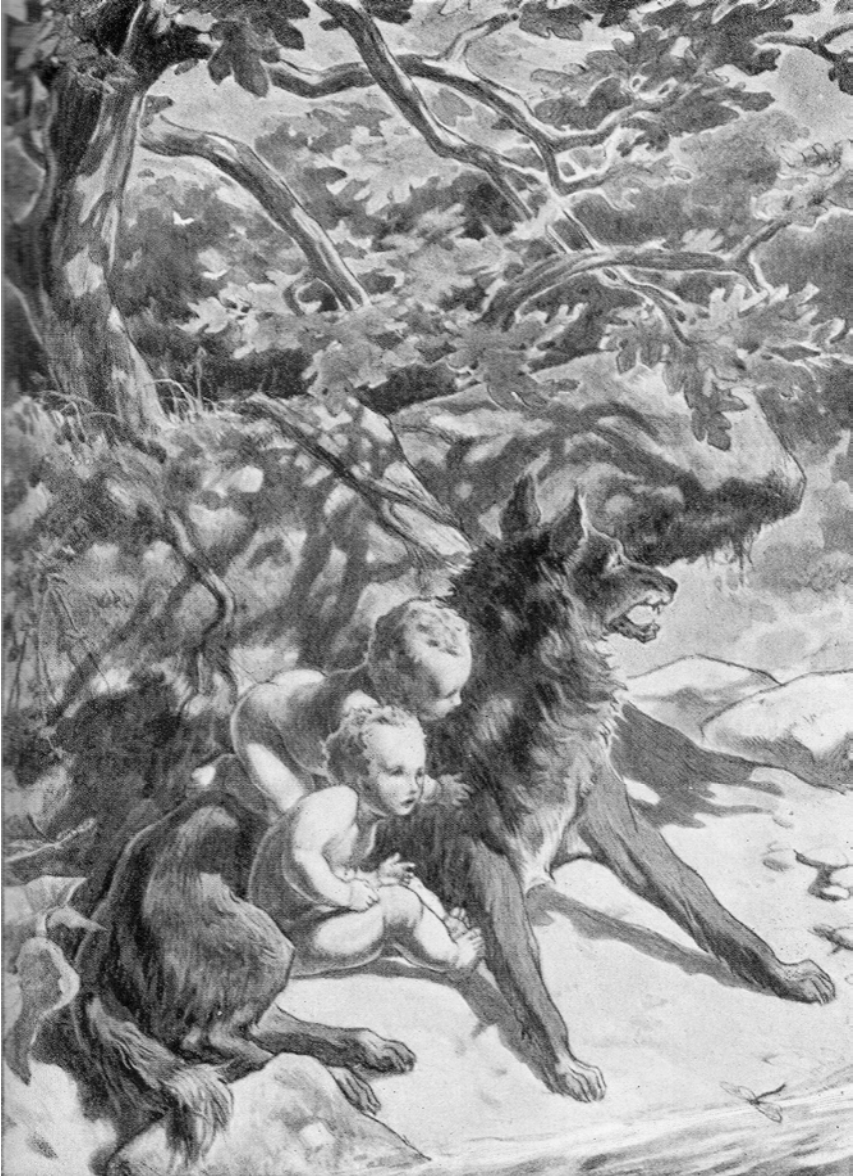
But the god Mars, angry, it might well be, with the cruelty of Amulius, took pity upon the maiden and sent twin sons to cheer her in her loneliness. Such strong beautiful babes had never before been seen.

As for the king, when he heard of the birth of these little boys he was both angry and afraid, lest they should grow into strong men and wrest his kingdom from him.

In his fear Amulius ordered Silvia to be shut up in a prison for the rest of her life, and her beautiful boys he commanded to be thrown into the river Tiber.

Heavy rains had fallen of late, and as the king knew, the river had overflowed its banks, but of this he recked not at all, although, indeed, the flood was to be his undoing.

*THE SHE-WOLF*



A she-wolf, coming to the edge of the river to drink, heard their cries.

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

Two servants, obeying the cruel order of Amulius, placed the baby boys in a basket, and going to the Tiber, flung their burden into the river.

Like a boat the basket floated hither and thither on the water, until at length, carried onward by the flood, it was washed ashore at the foot of a hill called Mount Palatine.

Here, under the shade of a wild fig-tree, the basket was overturned, and the babes lay safe and sound upon the dry ground, while the river stole softly backward into its accustomed channel.

Before long the babes awoke hungry and began to cry. A she-wolf coming to the edge of the river to drink heard their cries, and carried them away to her cave, where she fed them with her milk, just as she would have fed her lost cubs. She washed them, too, as she was used to wash her own children, by licking them with her tongue.



## CHAPTER III

# THE TWIN BOYS

THE twin boys, it was said, were guarded by the god Mars. So it was not strange that, as they grew older, the god should send his sacred birds, the woodpeckers, to feed the children. In and out of the cave the birds flew each day, bringing with them food for the little boys.

But neither the wolf nor the birds could do all that was needful, so before long, the god who watched over the children sent Faustulus to their aid.

Faustulus was one of the herdsmen of King Amulius. He had often seen the wolf going in and out of the cave, and had noticed, too, how the woodpeckers came and went each day. So when the wolf went off to prowl in the woods, Faustulus ventured into the cave, where to his amazement he found two beautiful and well-fed children. He took them in his arms and carried them home to his wife. She gladly welcomed the little strangers, and, naming them Romulus and Remus, brought them up as though they had been her own sons.

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

As the years passed the boys grew ever more beautiful. Stronger and braver, too, they became, until the rough herdsmen among whom they dwelt called them princes.

The lads soon showed that they were fitted to lead the herdsmen. If wild beasts attacked the flocks, or if robbers tried to steal them, Romulus and Remus were ever the first to attack, and to drive away either the robbers or the wild beasts.

Faustulus lived on Mount Palatine, near to the spot where the boys had been washed ashore when they were babes.

This hill belonged to the cruel king Amulius, and it was his sheep and cattle that the princes, unwitting of the evil the king had done to them, defended from danger.

Not far from Mount Palatine was another hill, named Mount Aventine, and here also were herdsmen guarding flocks, but these herdsmen belonged to the dethroned King Numitor. Numitor was living quietly in the city of Alba.

Now it chanced that the herdsmen of Amulius began to quarrel with the herdsmen of Numitor. One evening, forgetting all about their enemies, the shepherds on Mount Palatine were merrymaking at a festival in honour of the god Pan.

Then the herdsmen on Mount Aventine said one to the other, "See, here is our chance. We will lay an ambush for these unwary merrymakers."

## *THE TWIN BOYS*

As the gods willed, they captured none other than Remus, and well pleased with their prize, they carried the prince a prisoner to their master Numitor.

## CHAPTER IV

# NUMITOR RECOGNISES HIS GRANDSONS

THE young prisoner was brought before Numitor in the city of Alba. No sooner had the old man's eyes fallen on the lad than he threw up his hands in amaze, and gazed more keenly at the prisoner.

“No herdsman this,” muttered the old king to himself, “rather does he bear himself as a prince.”

Scanning the face before him even more closely, it seemed to Numitor that the features were not unknown to him. Dreams of his lost daughter Silvia gladdened his heart.

Gently the old man tried to win the confidence of the lad, asking him who he was, and whence he came.

Remus was touched by the kindness of Numitor, and answered: “I will hide nothing from you, sire, for you seem of a princely temper, in that you give a hearing and examine before you punish.”

Then he told the old man the story that Faustulus had often told to him and Romulus, of how the

## *NUMITOR RECOGNISES HIS GRANDSONS*

wolf had found them as babes on the banks of the river Tiber, and had carried them to her cave and fed them with her milk.

Long before Remus had ended his story, Numitor knew that it was his grandson, his daughter Silvia's child, who stood before him, and his old heart beat quick with joy. Here at length was one who would take his side against the cruel King Amulius.

At this moment Romulus, leading a rough band of herdsmen, approached the city gate, determined to rescue his brother from the hands of Numitor.

In the city were many folk who groaned under the tyranny of Amulius. These, hearing that Romulus was without the city gate, stole noiselessly away to join the prince, believing he had come to punish the king.

Meantime Romulus had divided his followers into companies of a hundred men. At the head of each company was a captain, carrying a small bundle of grass and shrubs tied to a pole.

These rough standards were called "manipuli," and it was because they carried these manipuli that captains in the Roman army came to be called Manipulares.

When Amulius heard that Numitor had recognised in the prisoner one of his long lost grandsons he was afraid. Then, hearing the shouts and blows of Romulus and his men as they attacked

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the city gate, he rushed to defend it, determined that the second prince should not enter the city.

But Romulus captured the gate, slew the king, and entered the city in triumph.

Here he found Remus, no longer a prisoner as he had feared, but the acknowledged grandson of Numitor.

The old king welcomed Romulus as joyfully as he had welcomed his brother, and the two princes, eager to please the gentle old man, placed him upon the throne from which he had so long ago been driven.

They then sped to the prison where their mother Silvia had lain since the princes had been born. Swiftly they set her free, and cheered her by their love and care as good sons ever will.

## CHAPTER V

# THE SACRED BIRDS

THE grandsons of Numitor could no longer live as shepherds on Mount Palatine, which they had learned to love. Nor could they dwell quietly in Alba, for all their lives they had been used to live free among the mountains, nor had they been subject to any king.

So the princes made up their minds to leave Alba, and to build a city for themselves on the hills they loved.

But the brothers could not agree on which hill to build their city, Romulus choosing the Palatine, Remus the Aventine.

Not knowing how to settle their dispute, they asked Numitor to help them. He bade them, as the custom was, to appeal to augury—that is, to watch for a sign or omen from the gods. These signs were given in many different forms, sometimes by the flight of birds, as happened now.

The princes determined to follow their grandfather's advice. Romulus went to Mount Palatine,

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Remus to Mount Aventine, and patient through one long day they watched for a sign.

But no sign appeared. The slow hours passed, and night drew on apace, yet still the brothers never stirred.

Then, as darkness faded before the dawn, Remus saw, far off, dark, moving shapes. Were the gods going to be gracious, the prince wondered, and after so many hours send a sign?

Nearer and nearer drew the dark shapes.

“Ah!” Remus cried sharply, “it is a good omen.” For now he could see that the moving forms were six vultures winging their way toward the west. These birds were sacred to the gods, and did no harm to corn, fruit, or cattle, nor would they, indeed, wound any living thing.

Swiftly Remus bade a messenger to go tell his brother of the good omen vouchsafed to him. But even as his messenger sped to do his will, Remus was crestfallen. For before him stood one of the servants of Romulus to tell him that his brother, too, had seen a flight of vultures, but while Remus had seen six birds, Romulus had seen twelve.

What was to be done? It seemed now that the brothers were not thinking on which hill the city should stand, but of which of them should build the city. Remus believed that the augury proclaimed him as the founder of the new city. Romulus was sure that it was he who was intended by the gods to build



*THE SACRED BIRDS*

it; for had not he seen twelve vultures while his brother had seen but six?

The princes turned to their followers, demanding who should be their king. Then loud and lusty was the answering shout: "Romulus, Romulus, he shall be our king!"

## CHAPTER VI

# THE FOUNDING OF ROME

IT was in the year 753 B.C. that Romulus was chosen king. He at once began to make preparations to build a city on the Palatine hill. The foundation he wished to lay on the twenty-first of the glad month of April, for, as Romulus knew, this was a feast-day among the shepherds.

Often he, with his brother, had joined the herdsmen on that day, to offer cakes to the goddess Pales, to beseech her blessing on themselves and on their flocks. And when the prayers and sacrifices were over, how gladly he had joined in the shepherds' games and jollity! No better day could be found on which to lay the foundation of the new city.

When the feast-day arrived, a hole was first dug on the spot where the city was to stand.

Into this hole the king flung the first fruits of the earth, corn and fruit.

Each of his followers then took a handful of earth which he had carried with him from his own,

## *THE FOUNDING OF ROME*

perhaps distant, home, and flung it also into the hole, which was then filled to the top.

Here, too, an altar was built, on which the people laid offerings to the gods. From henceforth the spot, where the temple had been erected, was to be the hearth or centre of the new city.

Romulus then throwing his toga, or as we would say, his mantle, around him, with one end covering his head, took a white bull and a cow and yoked them to a sacred plough, the share of which was made of brass.

With this ploughshare the king then made a furrow to mark the boundary of the city, bidding his followers watch that the upturned earth fell inward to the hearth of the city. Not a clod must be allowed to lie without the furrow. When the plough reached the different spots at which the gates of the city were to stand, it was carefully lifted over the spaces.

As he guided the plough, Romulus cried to his gods that his city might become strong and endure, and ever grow more powerful in the great world.

Out of a clear sky thunder crashed, lightning flashed over the hills as Romulus uttered his petitions, and the people believed that the storm was the answer of the god Jupiter to the prayers of their king.

When these sacred rites were ended, Romulus bade his men begin at once to build the wall which was to surround his city.

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The wall itself was sacred. None might enter the city, save by the gates. So the king bade one of his followers, named Celer, to guard the sacred furrow, and to see that no one dared to scale the wall or jump across it, as it was being built.

Remus, who was still angry that he had not been chosen king, had been standing near to Romulus as he laid the foundation of the city. Then, as the wall began to rise before him, a swift rage sprang up in his heart, and he leaped across it, crying: "Shall such defences as these guard your city?"

Celer, the watchman, seeing that Remus had scorned the order of the king, raised his spade in sudden fury and struck the young prince dead to the ground.

Then, fearing lest Romulus should punish him for his hasty deed, he fled. Fear lent him wings, and his name from that day became a byword to betoken great speed.

Our own word, "celerity," comes from Celer, the swift-footed servant of Romulus.

When Romulus was told that his brother had been slain, he showed neither grief nor anger. "Thus perish every one who may attempt to cross these walls," were his stern words to those who brought the sad tidings.

Celer, it was plain, had fled in needless haste.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE SABINE MAIDENS

WHEN Romulus had built his city and surrounded it with a wall, he began to fortify the hill on which it was built. This was necessary because hostile tribes held the neighbouring hills, and might at any moment attack the new city.

The king ordered his followers to scrape the steep slopes of the Palatine until they were smooth. Then great slabs of stones, fitted into each other without mortar, were built into the sides of the hill, from the base to the summit.

Romulus was pleased when he saw this great fortification finished, for he knew that it was almost impossible that an enemy should scale the smooth surface of the hill and lay siege to the city.

Not far from the foot of the Palatine flowed the river Tiber, a safe highway to the sea. So the king as he gazed, first at his well-fortified city and then down to the swift flowing river, felt that he had indeed chosen his site with wisdom.

The Palatine was only one of seven hills, and each of the other six was added to the city during the

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

reign of the six kings who ruled after Romulus. Five of these hills were called montes or mountains, while the other two, being only spurs that jutted out from the tableland, were called colles or hills.

But I have not yet told you the name of the city! Amid the shouts of his people the king named it Rome, after its founder Romulus.

Rome was built and fortified, yet the king was dissatisfied, for now he found that he had not enough people to dwell in the city.

The king must by this time have taken possession of the Capitoline hill, which was close to the Palatine, for here he resolved to build a city of refuge, that those who fled to it might gradually be removed to Rome.

Asylum, which is the Greek word for refuge, was the name of this city, and it was open to all those who had been forced by crime or misfortune to flee from their own homes.

To this Asylum hastened robbers, exiles, slaves who had fled from their masters, as well as those who had stained their hands with blood.

The city of refuge was soon crowded, and many of these rough and criminal folk were then sent to Rome, until Romulus had as many subjects as he wished.

But there were no women among those who fled to the king for protection, and Romulus saw that he would have to find wives for his new subjects.

## *THE SABINE MAIDENS*

So he begged the neighbouring tribes, among which was a tribe called the Sabines, to allow their daughters to marry his new subjects. But the king's request was refused. Give their daughters to robbers and murderers, to men who had been outlawed! The tribes did not hesitate to mock at Romulus for thinking that such a thing could be.

Romulus was not a king to be lightly thwarted. He was determined at any cost to gain wives for his subjects.

So, as his neighbours had proved churlish and refused his request, he made up his mind to capture their daughters by guile, or by a trick, as we would say. Nor did he take long to lay his plans. He invited his neighbours, among whom were the Sabines, to a feast and games which he wished to celebrate in honour of the god Consus.

They, eager to enjoy the feast and the great spectacle of the games, came flocking into Rome on the appointed day, bringing with them their wives and daughters.

Fearlessly they came, and were greeted with great hospitality by the king, who knew that he must hide his anger until his plot had been successful.

The feast began with solemn rites, sacrifices being offered to the gods, and especially to Consus, in whose name the festival was held.

When the sacrifices were ended, the guests mingled carelessly with the Romans, thinking only of the games and races.

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

The king, seeing that the moment had come, gave the signal for which his people were waiting.

A band of armed men at once rushed in among the guests, and in spite of their screams and struggles, carried away the Sabine maidens.

The parents of the maidens hastened to leave the city where the laws of hospitality had been so cruelly transgressed. As they went, they called down the anger of the gods upon Romulus and his people.



## CHAPTER VIII

# THE TARPEIAN ROCK

THE tribes who had been at the feast of Consus were so angry with the king that many of them went to fight against him, without waiting to gather together a large army. Thus Romulus soon defeated and scattered his foes.

Moreover, having slain one of the kings with his own hand, he stripped him of his armour, and tying it to a pole, carried it back to Rome, where he offered it to Jupiter. This was the earliest Triumph celebrated at Rome. In days to come the Triumphs of the Roman generals became famous. They were held when the soldiers returned victorious from a great battle. The general at the head of his army rode into the city in a chariot drawn by beautiful horses. Other chariots followed, filled with the treasures and spoils of war, while the most noble prisoners, often loaded with chains, were dragged along behind the chariots. The day on which a Triumph was celebrated was always held as a holiday by the citizens of Rome.

Now, among the tribes which Romulus had robbed, none had suffered so heavily as the Sabines.

## THE STORY OF ROME

But they, more wary than the king's other foes, did not attempt to avenge their wrongs until they had had time to collect a large and powerful army. Nearly two years had passed before this army was led by Tattius, the King of the Sabines, against the Romans.

The fortress on the Capitoline hill Romulus had entrusted to the care of a chief named Tarpeius. Now Tarpeius had a daughter named Tarpeia, and she loved ornaments and jewels of gold and silver.

As the Sabines, led by Tattius, drew near to attack the fortress, Tarpeia looked out of a spy-hole and saw that the enemy was adorned with beautiful golden bracelets. The longer she looked, the greater became her desire to possess these dazzling ornaments. What would she not do to wear such splendid jewels? She would—yes, she would even betray the fortress into the hands of the Sabines, if only she might hear the tinkle of the golden bracelets on her arms.

So, leaving the spy-hole, Tarpeia slipped secretly out of the fortress and spoke to the Sabines, offering to show them how to take the citadel if they would give her in reward "what they wore on their left arms."

The Sabines agreed to do as Tarpeia wished, but in their hearts they despised the maiden for her treachery.

But she, heedless of all save the ornaments that would soon be hers, hastened back to the fortress.

## *THE TARPEIAN ROCK*

Then, when it grew dark, she stealthily opened the gate, outside of which stood the waiting foe.

As the Sabines marched into the fortress, Tarpeia cried to them to remember their promise and give her her reward.

Then Tatius bade his men not to refuse “the least part of what they wore on their left arms,” and himself taking off his bracelet, threw it to her, together with his shield, which he also bore on his left arm.

His men did as their king had done, so that Tarpeia soon fell to the ground and was killed by the weight of the shields that covered her.

The traitress was buried on the hill which she had betrayed. From that day traitors were punished by being thrown over the steepest rock on the Capitoline hill, which was named after the maiden who betrayed her city, “The Tarpeian Rock.”

## CHAPTER IX

# THE MYSTERIOUS GATE

THE fortress on the Capitoline hill was now in the hands of the Sabines, but they had still to fight with the Romans who dwelt on the Palatine hill.

Romulus was, indeed, already to be seen leading his men into the valley that lay between the two mountains.

The battle was long and fierce, and disaster well-nigh overtook the Sabines.

In the valley was a swamp, and in this swamp the whole of the enemy's army would have been engulfed, had not Curtius, one of their most gallant soldiers, warned them of danger.

He himself had been carried by his horse into the mire. Nobly he tried to free his steed, but his efforts were all in vain. The more the animal struggled, the deeper it sank into the swamp, until at length Curtius was forced to leave his horse that he might save himself. This swamp was ever after known as the Curtian Lake.

## *THE MYSTERIOUS GATE*

Hour after hour the battle raged, until at last Romulus and his followers were driven backward. In their dismay the Roman army rushed through one of the gates into their city, hastily shutting it behind them, that the foe might not also enter.

But lo! so says the legend, the gate would not remain shut, but opened, as it seemed, of its own accord.

Twice again the terrified Romans tried to close it, and twice it opened as mysteriously as before.

The Sabines reached the gate as it opened for the last time.

In through the open gate pushed the triumphant enemy, when suddenly a great flood of water gushed forth from the temple of the god Janus, which stood near to the gate.

Overwhelmed by the force of the water, the Sabines were swept, not only out of the gate, but far away from the city, and Rome was saved.

But although the Sabines had been forced to flee, they had not been conquered. Again and again they marched against Romulus, for they could not forgive him for the loss of their daughters.

In one of these battles Romulus was wounded by a stone and fell to the ground. His followers, seeing that their king was wounded, lost courage and began to retreat.

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

But the king was soon on his feet, calling to his men to stand and fight. But it seemed as though they dared not turn to face the foe.

Then, in his great need the king stretched out his hands to heaven and besought Jupiter to come to his aid, promising that he would build a temple to his name, so only he would stay the flight of his army.

Even as he prayed the answer came. No voice from heaven commanded them to stand, yet the Romans were suddenly ashamed of their cowardice and turned once more to face the foe.

But as the battle was about to begin with redoubled fury the Sabine women rushed in between the two armies with loud cries, entreating now their fathers and brothers, now their husbands to end this cruel slaughter.

They even begged that they themselves might be slain, for, "Better it is that we perish," said the women, "than live as widows and orphans."

In their arms the women carried their little sons, and these babes stretched out their tiny arms toward their grandsires, as though they too would beg for peace. The lamentable cries of their daughters, the sight of their little grandchildren made the Sabines hesitate, and soon the warriors in either army let their weapons fall to the ground in mood no longer warlike. "Then fathers and sons-in-law clasped hands in friendship. The old men embraced their daughters, and carried their baby grandsons on

## *THE MYSTERIOUS GATE*

their shields. Surely a sweeter way was that to use the shield.”

Peace was then made, and the Romans and Sabines agreed to become one, while Romulus and Tatius ruled together over their united people.

Five years later Tatius was killed in a quarrel, and Romulus again ruled alone.

## CHAPTER X

# THE KING DISAPPEARS

As the years passed, the city of Rome became ever larger and more powerful. The king, too, grew haughty, and as his greatness increased, careless of the welfare of his people. His subjects, who had formerly loved Romulus, now began to hate him, so insolent seemed to them his behaviour.

Dressed in a scarlet robe, the king spent his days lying on a couch, while young lads, called Celeres, waited upon him. This name was bestowed upon them because of the swiftness with which they sped to do the king's behests.

Nor was this all, but when Romulus at times roused himself to walk through the streets of the city, the Celeres went before him, bearing staves. These they used, to thrust aside any of the common people who dared to disturb the king by their presence.

The staves angered the people, but even more did they resent the leather thongs which the Celeres wore, for these were used to bind and take prisoner whoever displeased the king.



## *THE KING DISAPPEARS*

After he had reigned forty years a strange thing happened.

Romulus ordered the people to assemble on the Field of Mars, which reached from the city to the river Tiber, for here a festival was to be held. But when the king and his subjects met, a terrible storm arose. Dark and yet darker grew the sky, while fierce gusts of wind, blowing now in one direction, now in another, confused the terrified crowd. Flashes of lightning gleamed across the faces of the throng, then darkness, more dense, fell across the field, hiding each from the other. Thunder rolled until the earth seemed to shake at the sound.

In terror and distraught with fear, the crowd fled to their homes, lashed by a ceaseless torrent of rain.

And the king? When the storm was over the king was nowhere to be found. He had disappeared, and was seen no more on earth in human form.

“His enemies have slain him,” said some among the people. But others thought that the god Mars had carried the king to heaven in a chariot.

Proculus, a friend of Romulus, told the people a story, which made them believe that their king had himself become a god.

One day, as Proculus was walking from Alba to Rome, Romulus stood before him, clad in shining armour.

His friend was afraid when he saw the king, so tall and comely had he become, and he cried: “Why,

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O King, have you abandoned us, and left the whole city to bereavement and endless sorrow?"

Proculus did not seem to know that Romulus had lost the love of his people many years before.

The figure in shining armour answered his friend in these wise words:

"It pleased the gods, O Proculus, that we, who came from them, should remain so long a time amongst men as we did, and having built a city to be the greatest in the world for empire and glory, should again return to heaven.

"Farewell, and tell the Romans that by the exercise of temperance and fortitude they shall attain the height of human power. We will be to you from henceforth the god Quirinus."

The Romans listened eagerly to Proculus, and when his story ended, they determined to build a temple on the Quirinal hill in honour of their new god.

And each year, on the 17th February, the day that Romulus had been taken from their sight, the Romans held a festival in honour of Quirinus, calling it the Quirinalia.

## CHAPTER XI

# THE PEACE-LOVING KING

AFTER the disappearance of Romulus, the Romans and Sabines each wished to appoint a new king.

Romulus had been a Roman, so the Sabines said that now it was but just that a Sabine king should rule.

The dispute between the people lasted for a whole year, and then at length it was determined that the new king should be a Sabine, but that the Romans should be allowed to choose him.

Now among the Sabines dwelt a man named Numa Pompilius. He was honoured by the Romans as well as by his own people, for he was both good and wise. He had indeed been known for his wisdom since he was a boy. And if, when he was young, any one ventured to dispute his wisdom, his friends would point to his grey hair, believing there was no need to speak. For the hair of Numa Pomilius had been grey from the day of his birth, and that surely was a sign from the gods to show that he already was and ever would be wise.

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

Often he was to be seen, a solitary man, walking in the fields and groves which were consecrated to the gods. At other times he would spend long days and weeks alone in desert places.

It was to this strangely quiet, thoughtful man, who was now about forty years old, that the Romans sent ambassadors to beg him to become their king.

Numa Pompilius had no wish to rule. Moreover, he deemed that the people would desire a more warlike king than he was like to be. So he bade the messengers return to Rome, saying: "I should but be, methinks, a laughing-stock, while I should go about to inculcate the worship of the gods and give lessons in the love of justice and the abhorrence of violence and war to a city whose needs are rather for a captain than for a king."

In spite of these words, the ambassadors still urged Numa to return with them to Rome. "Your presence," said they, "will help to put an end to war and discord."

Then the wise man consulted the gods, and they sent a flight of sacred birds as a sign that he should reign in Rome.

So Numa Pompilius set out with the ambassadors, and when he reached the city he called together the people to ask them if they were willing to obey his commands.

They, greeting him as "a holy king, and one beloved of the gods," promised to obey him in all things. Thus, almost against his will, the wise man

## *THE PEACE-LOVING KING*

became king. But being king, he was not the man to shirk the duties belonging to his royal state.

His first act was to dismiss the band of three hundred Celeres, which had formed the life-guard of Romulus, for this king trusted his subjects, and believed that they would safeguard him from danger.

To train the Romans in the love of truth he built on the Capitol a temple to the goddess Fides, or Faith, bidding them invoke this goddess above all others. At the same time he told them ever to remember as they went about their daily work that their promises were as sacred as their oaths.

In the temple no sacrifice of sheep, oxen, or bird was ever offered, for the good king would not have his gifts to the gods stained with blood. Fruits, cakes, corn, these were the offerings he bade the people bring to the temple.

Pompilius himself had loved to work and to walk in the fields, so now he encouraged the Romans to labour in the country, dividing among them a large part of the land which Romulus had conquered.

In these and other ways the king did all he could to curb the fierce passions of his subjects, who, when left to themselves, were swift to turn to war and bloodshed, rather than to peace.

Many of the people revered their peace-loving king, but others mocked at his gentle ways.

Even the feasts of the king were more simple than some of the Romans liked, and these discon-

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tented ones grumbled at the plain fare of which they were invited to partake.

One day, so the legend runs, the king ordered, as was his custom, a simple meal to be prepared, and to this meal he invited many of his friends.

They came, for the king had asked them, but, as they expected, the food was plain, the plates were of earthenware, and water was served in bottles of stone.

But no sooner had the guests seated themselves at the table than behold! as if by magic, the plain food was changed into the choicest viands, the water became the richest wine, while the earthenware dishes disappeared, and in their place stood plates of silver and of gold.

The guests were startled, yet it pleased them well that the gods should show such favour to their king, for they never doubted that it was thus the gods treated those who honoured them.

Henceforth the people grumbled less, and were more ready to obey their sovereign.

Numa Pompilius ruled for forty-three years, caring, during his long reign, for the welfare of his people.

Even the enemies of Rome did not venture to disturb this good and gentle king. So, while he ruled, the weapons of war were laid aside. The gates of the temple of Janus, too, which were only opened in time of war, remained closed during the reign of Numa Pompilius.

## *THE PEACE-LOVING KING*

It seemed that the gods did indeed show goodwill to this pious king, for neither sickness nor famine troubled the country as long as he sat upon the throne, and the Romans prospered in all that they undertook.

When he was eighty years of age Numa Pompilius passed away in a death as peaceful as his life.

The Romans mourned his loss, for he had been to them father as well as king.

Quietly they laid his body to rest, beyond the Tiber, on the hill Janiculum which looks toward the west.

## CHAPTER XII

### HORATIUS SLAYS HIS SISTER

TULLUS HOSTILIUS, the king who succeeded Numa Pompilius in 672 B.C., loved war as much as Pompilius had loved peace.

He feared lest already the Romans had lost the renown that had been theirs on the battlefield when Romulus was king. So he determined to find a pretext for war as soon as possible, that his soldiers might show that courage was still theirs, and that their fame might spread as of old to the neighbouring tribes.

Such was the warlike character of Tullus Hostilius, that it was soon found necessary to throw wide the gates of the temple Janus.

It chanced that shortly after the new king came to the throne some Roman and Alban countrymen quarrelled, each saying that he had been robbed by the other.

Tullus at once took the side of his own people, sending to the King of Alba to demand that the goods which had been stolen should be restored. The King of Alba at the same time sent messengers



## *HORATIUS SLAYS HIS SISTER*

to Tullus, claiming that justice should be meted out to those who had robbed his subjects.

The King of Rome received the messengers from Alba so courteously and treated them so well, that they forgot the errand on which they had been sent, until startled by the return of the Roman ambassadors.

They, having been refused justice by the King of Alba, had, ere they left, declared that the Romans would avenge the wrong done to their countrymen.

Tullus was well pleased with the report of his ambassadors. He sent away the careless messengers of Alba, bidding them tell their king that it was he who had provoked the war.

The two kings speedily collected their armies and marched to the battlefield. But before the war began the King of Alba died. Then the Albans chose one of their number, named Mettius, to be Dictator.

He, standing between the two armies, begged that the victory might be decided by single combat, so that many lives might be spared.

To this Tullus agreed, sending forth as the Roman champions three brothers, called the Horatii, while the choice of Mettius fell upon three Alban brothers, named the Curiatii.

A great silence fell upon the two armies as the combatants stood forth, armed to the teeth, and the contest which was to settle the fate of Rome and Alba began.

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Should the Horatii win, Rome would seize Alba as its prize. Should the Curiatii be the victors, Rome would be forfeit to the Albans.

Fierce and yet more fierce fell the blows of the champions, until at length, two of the Horatii lay slain on the ground, while the three Curiatii were wounded.

Then, to the dismay of the Roman army, Horatius, on whose courage the safety of Rome depended, turned and fled, pursued by the three wounded men.

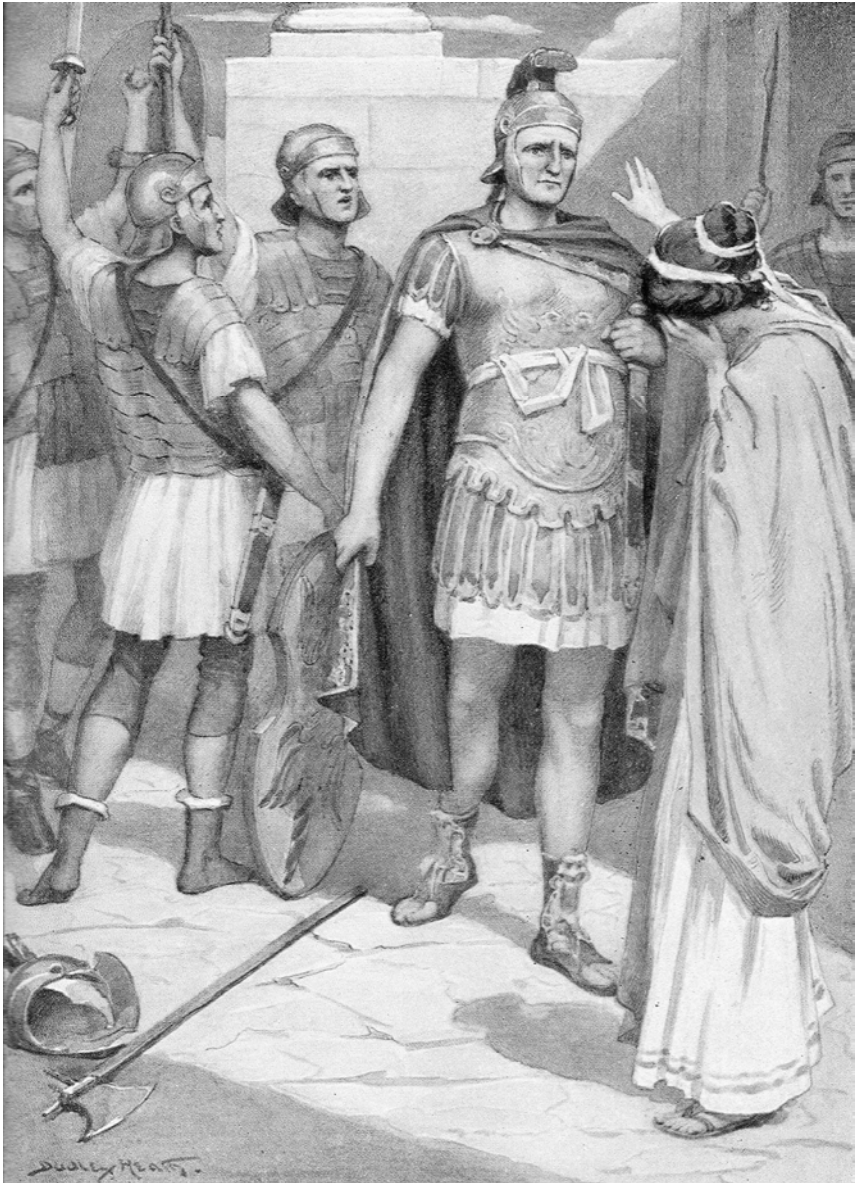
But the Romans need not have feared that Horatius had turned coward. His flight, as they soon saw, was but a feint to separate his enemies.

As the swiftest of the Curiatii gained upon him, the Roman champion turned and smote him to the ground. Without a moment's pause Horatius then attacked the second brother, who had now reached his side, and he also fell before the fury of the Roman's stroke. The last of the Curiatii had been forced to follow more slowly, as his wounds had been severe. He, too, was now stricken down by the conqueror.

Rome was saved! At the thought great shouts rent the air, and Horatius was led in triumph toward the city.

As the glad procession drew near to the gate, the sister of Horatius came out to meet her brother. She was the promised bride of one of the Curiatii.

*HORATIUS SLAYS HIS SISTER*



When she saw Horatius wearing on his shoulders the cloak of her betrothed, she broke into bitter sobs.

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When she saw Horatius, wearing on his shoulders the cloak of her betrothed, which she herself had embroidered, she broke into bitter sobs and began to curse him for his cruel deed.

Then Horatius, in sudden passion, drew his sword and stabbed his sister, crying: "So perish the Roman maiden who shall weep for her country's enemy."

Great was the service Horatius had done for Rome that day, yet his rash act could not be allowed to pass unpunished. He was taken prisoner, and brought before two judges, who condemned him to death.

But Horatius refused to submit to his sentence, and appealed to the people of Rome to save him. And for the sake of his old father, who had already that day lost two sons, as well as because he himself had risked his life for his country, the people listened to his plea and set him free.

Yet, as a public penance, he was obliged to pass beneath a yoke and offer sacrifices to the spirit of the sister he had slain.

The yoke under which Horatius had to pass was formed of two beams of wood which were thrust into the ground, and across the top of which a third beam was placed. Sometimes the yoke was made by using three swords in this way.

But it was a wooden yoke under which Horatius stooped, and one of the beams was treasured for many years, and named the "sister's beam."

## *HORATIUS SLAYS HIS SISTER*

Yet it was not only the memory of his penance that was preserved. To recall his courage to the Romans who would follow him, the arms which Horatius had taken from the Curiatii were hung on a pillar in the market-place. And in days to come the citizens would point to this pillar, saying: "It is the pillar of Horatius."

## CHAPTER XIII

# THE PRIDE OF TULLUS HOSTILIUS

By the victory of Horatius, the Albans became subject to Rome, and were forced to help them in their wars.

Mettius, the Dictator, never ceased to hope that he would yet be able to throw off the yoke of Rome.

So when Tullus summoned him to bring an army to help the Romans in their battle against the Etruscans, Mettius brought an army as he was bidden, but when the battle was at its height, he secretly told his men to give no aid to the Romans.

In spite of the treachery of Mettius, Tullus was victorious.

The Dictator, hoping that the king knew naught of his deceit, boldly praised him for the victory he had won.

But Tullus knew that Mettius had done nothing to help him win the battle, and so angry was he with his treachery that he ordered him to be torn to

## *THE PRIDE OF TULLUS HOSTILIUS*

pieces by horses. Then the king ordered the Albans to be disarmed, and after burning their city, he carried off the people to Rome.

The Roman nobles, or patricians as they were called, welcomed the Alban nobles to their city, while the countrymen of Alba soon became friends with the common people, or plebeians.

As in the reign of Romulus the Sabines and the Romans became one, so now the Albans and Romans were united. In this way the number of the citizens in Rome was nearly doubled.

Encouraged by his victories, Tullus spent the rest of his reign in wars with the Etruscans. His success, instead of making him humble, made him proud, and he grew careless of the service of the gods. Moreover, he neglected the wise and just laws made by the good King Pompilius.

Then, in sign of their displeasure, the gods sent a plague among the people, and the king himself was smitten with sickness. In his misery Tullus remembered the gods and prayed. But Jupiter was angry, and sent a shaft of lightning from the sky, which killed Tullus and destroyed his house.

Tullus Hostilius reigned for thirty-two years, and after his death, in 640 B.C., Ancus Marcius, a grandson of Pompilius, became King of Rome.

## CHAPTER XIV

# THE KING WHO FOUGHT AND PRAYED

LIKE his grandfather Numa Pompilius, Ancus Marcius loved peace.

His first act after he became king was to restore the service of the gods, which during the last reign had oftentimes been neglected. The sacred laws of Pompilius, too, he ordered to be written on tablets of wood and to be shown to the people.

Now among the enemies of Rome was a tribe named the Latins. The Latins, knowing that King Ancus spent his time in prayer and in offering sacrifices to the gods, began to plunder and destroy the country round about Rome, thinking to go unpunished. But they soon found that the king could fight as well as pray.

No sooner, indeed, had Ancus heard that the Latins were laying waste his dominions, than he commanded the priests to attend to the temple services. Then, placing himself at the head of his army, he marched against the enemy.



## *THE KING WHO FOUGHT AND PRAYED*

The battle was fierce and long, but at length the Latins were beaten and their towns destroyed. His prisoners the king took back with him to Rome, bidding them make their home on the Aventine hill.

Ancus next determined to secure the command of the Tiber and to join the Janiculum hill to Rome by throwing a wooden bridge across the river, which was named the "Bridge of the Wooden Piles," for it was built entirely of wood. The beams were placed loosely, one alongside another, so that, should an enemy approach, it could be quickly taken to pieces.

Ancus loved peace, but he could not yet lay down his arms, for he saw that Rome ought to secure the land that lay between the city and the sea. So he led his army against the tribes to whom this land belonged, and, taking it from them, he built a town at the mouth of the Tiber, which he called Ostia. And here a busy harbour was soon to be seen, from which Roman ships set sail for the open sea.

For twenty-four years this good king reigned, and then, calm and content as his royal grandfather, he died. His name was ever held in honour by his people, for in time of peace he had been just, in time of war victorious.

The children of the king were still young when their father died, so they were left to the care of his friend, Lucius Tarquinius.

## CHAPTER XV

# THE FAITHLESS FRIEND

LUCIUS TARQUINIUS, to whom the king had entrusted the care of his children, was a Greek noble possessing great wealth. His real name was Lucumo, and being driven from his native town by a tyrant, he had taken refuge in the town of Tarquinii in Etruria. It was from this town that he took the name by which he was known in Rome.

But neither Lucumo nor his wife Tanaquil were content to spend their lives in such a sleepy little town as Tarquinii proved to be. So they determined to go to Rome, where, it was said, strangers were ever welcome.

One day, then, the husband and wife set out on their journey. As they drew near to the Janiculum hill, an eagle suddenly swooped down upon the travellers, and seized the cap which Lucumo was wearing. Then, uttering loud screams, the bird flew high in the air, only to return in a few moments to replace the cap on the head of its astonished owner.

Tanaquil seemed pleased with the strange behaviour of the eagle, and assured her husband that

## *THE FAITHLESS FRIEND*

it was an augury or sign from the gods that he would rise to honour in the city to which they were going.

King Ancus heard of the wealth and the wisdom of the stranger who had come to Rome, and ere long he sent a messenger to Tarquinius, bidding him attend the king's councils. So wisely did Tarquinius behave that the king soon treated him as a friend.

When Ancus Marcius was dying, he did not fear the future for his children. They would be safe, he believed, in the care of Tarquinius. But he, alas! betrayed his trust that he might satisfy his own ambition.

After the death of the king, Tarquinius, pretending that he wished to make the sons of Ancus forget their grief, persuaded them to go away from the city to hunt.

In their absence the false friend appealed to the people to make him king, and this they did.

Tarquinius had gained his power by a treacherous deed, but by his courage on the battlefield he won the admiration of his subjects.

He fought against the Latins, and made many of their cities subject to Rome. And when the Sabines took up arms and marched almost to the gates of the city, Tarquinius, vowing that if Jupiter would come to his aid he would build a temple in his honour, rushed against the foe and drove it away.

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Flushed with victory, he then went to war with the Etruscans, and forced them to acknowledge him as their king.

As a sign of their subjection the conquered tribe sent to Tarquinius royal gifts—a golden crown, a scepter, an ivory chair, an embroidered tunic, a purple toga, and twelve axes tied up in bundles of rods.

These gifts the king sent before him to Rome as a proof of his victory over the Etruscans.

Then, when peace was at length proclaimed, Tarquinius remembered the vow he had made to Jupiter, and began to build a temple on the Capitoline hill.

As the workmen were digging, in order to lay a good foundation, they found a human head. This was a sign, so said those who knew, that the spot on which the head had been buried should become the chief place of worship in Rome.

The temple, when it was finished, was named the Capitol, and in days to come it was indeed looked upon as the most sacred building in the city.

Although Tarquinius was but a usurper, yet he did all that he could to improve the kingdom over which he ruled.

He ordered great drains to be built, that the marshy valleys between the hills of Rome might become healthier. He also built a large circus and a racecourse, to encourage the games of the people,

## *THE FAITHLESS FRIEND*

and in course of time the Roman games became famous.

In the valley between the Capitoline hill and the Palatine hill the king then began to build the Forum, or market-place. Round the Forum he set up booths, where the tradesfolk might carry on their business.

Meanwhile, the subjects of Rome had become so numerous, that the king wished to increase the three tribes into which Romulus had divided his people.

But a skilful augur, named Attius, forbade Tarquinius to alter what Romulus had consecrated with rites sacred to the gods.

The king could ill brook interference, and he mocked at the augur's words in the Forum, where the people had assembled.

Then, thinking to show that Attius was not really as wise as he was believed to be, he cried: "Tell me, O Attius, can the thing of which I am thinking at this moment come to pass?"

The augur, undisturbed by the mockery of the king, consulted the sacred birds. Yes, the omens were good. The thought in the mind of the king could be put into action.

Tarquinius pointed to a whetstone which lay before him, and said: "Can you then cut this whetstone in twain with a razor?"

Undismayed, Attius at once seized a razor, and with one stroke the stone was split in two.

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Then the king was afraid, and dared not disregard the wisdom of the augur. So the number of tribes ordained by Romulus was left unchanged.

But Tarquinius doubled the nobles in each tribe, and also increased the companies of knights.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A SLAVE BECOMES A KING

AMONG the slaves of the king was a young boy named Servius Tullius. One day the lad fell fast asleep in the doorway of the palace.

As he slept, it chanced that Tanaquil, the queen, came out to walk in the palace grounds. When she saw Servius she would have roused him, save that a flame of fire was playing around his head, yet doing him no hurt.

But the attendants of the queen also saw this strange sight, and at once rushed off in search of water with which to put out the flame.

Tanaquil, however, called to them to return, saying: "Leave the lad to sleep. The flame will not injure him."

Then, hastening back to the palace, she told the king what she had seen, adding: "The gods have appointed Servius to great honour."

From that day the boy was no longer treated as a slave, but as the king's son, and when he was older he was married to the daughter of Tarquinius.

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Little by little Servius Tullius was entrusted with the cares of State, while the Senate or elders of the people treated him as a prince.

Now the sons of Ancus, from whom Tarquinius had stolen the crown, were indignant when they saw the former slave treated with more honour than were they, and they grew afraid lest the king should appoint Servius to succeed him. That this might not be, they determined to kill Tarquinius.

Hiring two men, they bade them go kill the king, and they should be well rewarded for their deed.

So the men disguised themselves as shepherds, and begged to be admitted to the presence of Tarquinius, that he might settle their dispute, for, so they pretended, they had quarrelled with one another while they tended their flocks.

When they stood before the king one of the shepherds began to tell a piteous tale. While Tarquinius was listening, the other suddenly raised his axe, and with one great blow killed the king. The false shepherds then fled from the palace.

But the sons of Ancus had forgotten that Tanaquil was left to thwart their plans.

No sooner was the king slain, than she ordered the doors of the palace to be closed. Then, when the people heard it rumoured that the king was dead and rushed to the palace, Tanaquil opened an upper window and spoke to the crowds below.



## *A SLAVE BECOMES A KING*

“The king is but wounded,” she told them, “he is not dead. He has commanded that you should obey Servius until he is again able to rule.” But all the while Tarquinius lay in the palace, dead.

But the people, loyal, as they thought, to the wishes of their king, allowed Servius to rule. And the sons of Ancus knew that they had killed the king in vain.

A few days later it was known that the king was really dead; yet, although neither the Senate nor the people had chosen Servius to be king, he continued to sit upon the throne and to rule over Rome. Moreover, he was wise enough to try to win the hearts of the people by promising to give them land and to rule justly.

So well did he perform his royal duties, that when he called together an assembly of the people he was at once elected king.

## CHAPTER XVII

# THE CRUEL DEED OF TULLIA

SERVIVS TULLIVS began to reign in 578 B.C. Like Pompilius and Ancus, he loved peace, and fought against none, save only the Etruscans.

With the Latins he made a treaty, after which the two tribes built a temple to Diana on the Aventine hill, and here every year sacrifices were offered for Rome and for Latium.

The city which Romulus had built on the Palatine had long ago become too small for the Romans. Little by little, cities had grown up on the neighbouring hills, and now Servius was able to enclose all the seven hills of Rome within the city, building around her a great wall of stone. This wall was called after the king the "Servian Wall," and so strongly was it built that it was still standing in the days of Augustus. Beyond the wall a deep moat was then dug, a hundred feet in breadth.

Having thus strengthened the city, Servius divided it into four regions, while the people were arranged in numerous tribes.

## *THE CRUEL DEED OF TULLIA*

Should a citizen be wanted to appear before the king or the Senate, it was then an easy task to find the tribe to which he belonged and the region in which he dwelt.

Servius also made a law which pleased the Romans well, called an ordinance of the king.

This ordinance forbade the nobles to oppress the poor. It also decreed that, however lowly the birth of a Roman citizen, if he became rich he might hold positions of power in the State. This encouraged the poor man to be industrious, for if he could but gain wealth there was no ambition which he might not be able to satisfy.

But while the ordinance pleased the common people, it displeased the nobles, who had no wish to see the plebeians raised to positions which until now had been sacred to them and to their sons. They bore Servius no good will for passing this new law.

Trouble, too, was threatening the king through his two daughters, both of whom, as the Roman custom was, were named Tullia.

But although their names were the same, their natures were as different as summer is different from winter.

Tullia, the elder, was wicked and ambitious; Tullia, the younger, good and gentle.

Servius determined to marry his daughters to the sons of King Tarquinius, whose kindness had placed him on the throne.

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The princes, as the princesses, were of strangely different natures. Lucius was proud, his temper violent; while Aruns was humble and good-natured.

Now the king thought that if the gentle Tullia married Lucius, he would become a better man; while he hoped that if his ambitious daughter married Aruns she would learn from him the grace of humility.

But Servius made a great mistake when he married his daughters. For before long Lucius hated his quiet wife, and killed both her and his brother Aruns, so that he and Tullia the elder might be free to marry each other.

No sooner had Lucius Tarquinius married Tullia, than, encouraged by her, he joined the discontented nobles, who hated Servius.

Day by day Lucius grew more bold, more rude to Servius, and at length he put on the royal robes and sat on the king's seat in the Senate house, unrebuked by the nobles.

Servius was now no longer young, but when he heard how Lucius had dared to behave he went at once to the door of the Senate house, and bade the prince come down from the throne, and lay aside the royal robes.

But Lucius paid no heed to the king's command. Then, as the king repeated his words, Lucius seized the old man and flung him down the stone steps of the Senate house.

## *THE CRUEL DEED OF TULLIA*

Servius, bruised and dazed by his fall, yet struggled to his feet, and slowly turned away toward the palace.

Lucius dared not let the king live now that he had defied him. So, sending his servants after Servius, he bade them kill the old man.

It was easy to overtake him, and the fellows soon slew their king, leaving his body lying in the middle of the street.

When Tullia heard what her husband had done, she had no grief to spare for her father's cruel death. She ordered her chariot, and drove quickly to the Forum to greet her husband as king.

But Lucius did not wish the people to see the triumph of his wife, and he sternly bade her go home.

Tullia obeyed, heedless of his anger. She had room in her heart for only one thought. Lucius was king, and she, she was queen.

So full was her mind of the new honours that would now be hers, that her chariot had reached the street where the dead body of her father lay before she was aware. The driver drew up his horses sharply, seeing his murdered king lying across his path.

But Tullia angrily bade him drive on, and as he obeyed, her robe was stained with her father's blood. The street was ever after called the *Via Scelerata*, or the *Way of Crime*.

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Lucius showed no shame for the murder of the king, and haughtily refused to allow his body to be buried with the usual rites.

And because of his pride the new king was named Tarquinius Superbus or Tarquin the Proud.

## CHAPTER XVIII

# THE FATE OF THE TOWN OF GABII

TARQUIN, having killed Servius, seized the throne, and began his reign by condemning to death the chief senators who had supported the old king. He also ordered the tablets, on which Servius had written many wise and good laws, to be destroyed. Refusing to summon the Senate, Tarquin then attempted to rule alone.

His cruelty was so great that he was soon hated both by rich and poor. Before many months had passed he was forced to surround himself with a bodyguard, lest he should be slain by those whom he had ruined. For, in order to grow rich, he imposed heavy fines on the wealthy, sometimes driving the nobles into exile that he might take possession of their goods. If they ventured to remonstrate, Tarquin did not hesitate to put them to death that he might seize their money.

As for the poor people, he forced them to work so hard that they were more like slaves than

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freemen. Often in despair they escaped from the king's cruelty by killing themselves.

After he had crushed the spirit of his subjects, Tarquin went to war with the Latins, conquering many of their cities, and even enrolling some of his prisoners in the Roman legions.

One ancient Latin town determined to resist the cruel king. Gabii, for this was the name of the brave little town, even opened its gates to the nobles who had been exiled from Rome.

In vain Tarquin sent legion after legion against the city. Its defenders still defied him, fighting with all their strength so as to protect their homes from the cruel hands of Tarquin the Proud.

Since he could not take the town by force, the king resolved to take it by treachery, and in this resolve he was aided by his son Sextus.

Sextus, pretending that he had been forced to leave Rome by his father's cruelty, fled to Gabii. Telling the citizens a piteous tale, he showed them his back, bare and bleeding from stripes, and begged to be taken into the town that his father might not capture him.

The citizens did not find it difficult to believe that the tyrant had ill-used his son, and they willingly opened their gates to the prince. And not only did they give him shelter, but, so great was their trust, that before long they gave him command of a company of soldiers.



## *THE FATE OF THE TOWN OF GABII*

One day a Roman legion was seen marching toward the city. Sextus at once led his soldiers against it, and, instructed secretly by Tarquin, the Romans fled before the prince.

This made the men of Gabii still more sure that they could trust Sextus, so they foolishly gave him the chief command of the defences of the town.

Then Sextus sent in triumph to his father to know what he should do.

Tarquin the Proud was walking in his garden when his son's messenger arrived, and he listened in silence to his words. But he still walked up and down the garden paths, switching off with his stick the heads of the tallest poppies in the flower-beds. Then, still without a word, he sent the messenger back to Gabii.

But when Sextus heard of the fate of the poppies, he needed no words to explain his father's silence. He knew as well as if the king had spoken that as the tallest poppies had been beheaded, so he was to behead the leading nobles in Gabii.

The citizens knew nothing of what had happened in the king's flower garden, so they were startled and dismayed when, day after day, Sextus accused one and another of their nobles of crime or treason, and ordered them to be put to death. The prince then completed his treachery by delivering the town into the hands of the king.

Tarquin's next victory was over the Volscians, a powerful tribe which dwelt south of Latium. After

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plundering one of their richest towns, he determined with his new-found wealth to finish the great temple on the Capitoline hill, which had been begun by his father Lucius Tarquinius.

He adorned Rome with many other beautiful buildings, and ordered the great sewers, also begun by his father, to be finished. He then completed the Forum, or market-place. In the Forum the people bought and sold, and here also were held the great assemblies of the people.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE BOOKS OF THE SIBYL

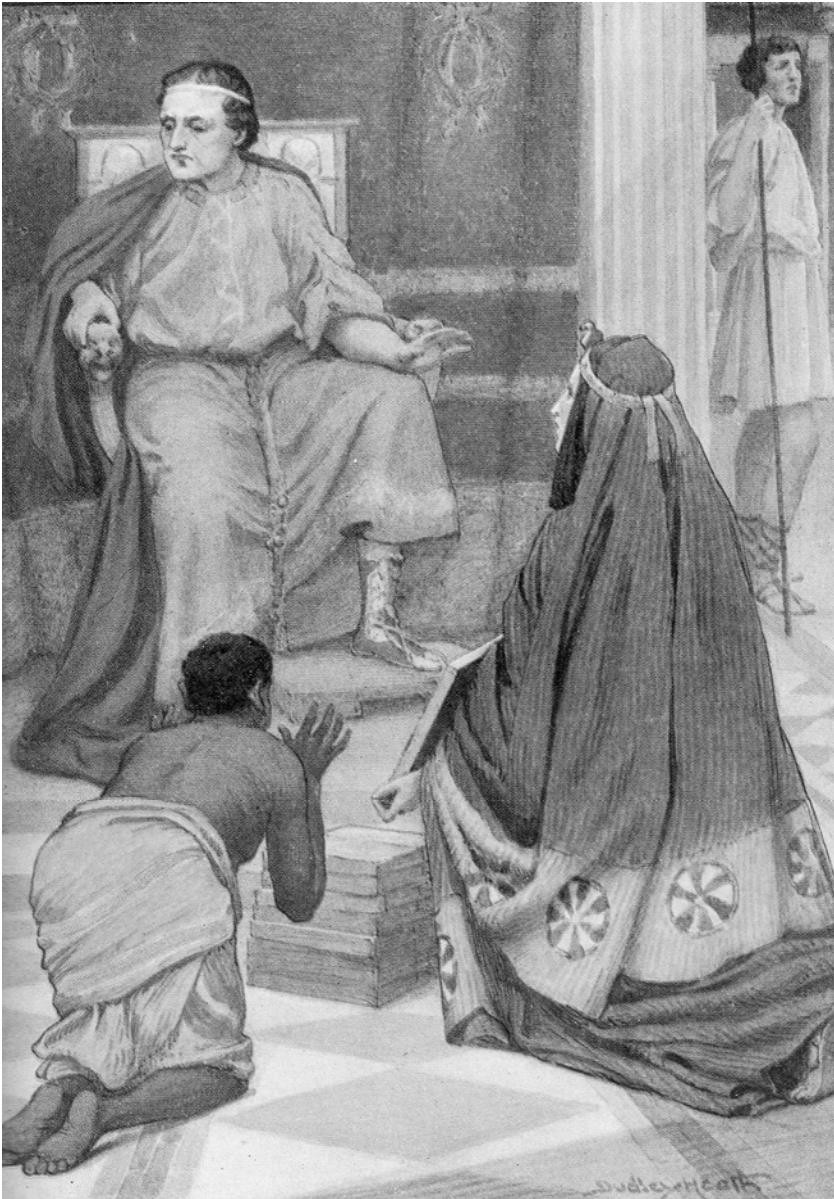
ONE day, when Tarquin the Proud was at the height of his power, a woman came to the city and demanded to see the king. She was a stranger, and carried in her arms nine books.

When she was brought before the king she asked him to buy the books, telling him that they were the sacred prophecies of the inspired Sibyl of Cumæ. Cumæ was in the Campania, and was the most ancient of the Greek towns in Italy. The prophecies were written on loose leaves, and in them, said the strange woman, the king would read the destiny of Rome, and how to fulfil it.

But the stranger asked so large a sum of money for the nine books that the king laughed and refused to buy.

Quietly, before the king's eyes the woman burned three of the nine books. Then, turning to him again, she offered the six books for the same price as she had before demanded for the nine.

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She carried in her arms nine books.

## THE BOOKS OF THE SIBYL

Tarquin laughed still more scornfully, and refused to buy the six as he had already refused to buy the nine books.

Quietly as before the woman burned three more books before the eyes of the king. Then turning to him she offered the three books that were left for the same sum.

Then the king laughed no more. He began to wonder if perhaps the gods had sent the books to Rome. So he consulted the augurs, and by their advice he now bought the three books for the sum which would have bought the nine.

The strange woman, having done her work, disappeared and was seen no more, while the books were put in a chest and kept in the Capitol, which was now complete.

Two Greeks were appointed to guard the Sibylline books, for they were written in the Greek language. And ever when death, pestilence, or war threatened the city, the books were consulted by the augurs, if perchance Rome might be saved from destruction.

Many years after the reign of Tarquin the Capitol was burned, and the sacred books were destroyed in the fire.

To the Romans the loss of the books was a greater blow than even the destruction of the Capitol.

The Senate sent ambassadors to Greece and to Asia Minor to beseech the sibyls there to find

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fresh oracles, that calamity might still be averted from Rome.

And the ambassadors were successful, for when they returned they brought with them new scrolls, which, when a new Capitol was built, were placed within its sacred precincts.

During the reign of Augustus, the oracles were removed to the temple of Apollo, which stood on Mount Palatine.

But long after the time of Augustus, in A.D. 400, they were burned in public by a famous Roman, for he was a Christian, and cared little for the ancient oracles, believing them to be but a useless relic of the old pagan days.

## CHAPTER XX

# THE INDUSTRY OF LUCRETIA

As the years passed, Tarquin was disturbed by terrible dreams. The evil deeds he had done came back to his memory, and haunted him by day and by night. Even in the temples of the gods he could find no rest from his fears.

One day, as sacrifices were being offered, the king saw a serpent stealing down a wooden pillar. Fascinated, he watched as it dropped slowly on to the altar and devoured the sacrifice. His fear told him that this was a bad omen, and, thoroughly alarmed, Tarquin determined to consult the Greek oracle at Delphi, for this oracle was famous not only in Greece, but throughout the world.

So he sent his two sons, Titus and Aruns, to Delphi. With them went the king's nephew, named Junius, but called Brutus because he was believed to be stupid. But Brutus only pretended to be stupid so that his uncle would not trouble to do him harm.

When the princes reached the dwelling of the priestess, the king's sons offered her valuable gifts, while Brutus gave to her only a simple staff. His

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cousins mocked at Brutus as they were used to do, for a priestess would not care for so poor a gift, they were sure. But Brutus was wiser than they deemed, for the staff had been made hollow, and then had been filled with gold.

As the king had bidden, the young princes asked the oracle the meaning of the serpent that had devoured the sacrifice on the altar.

It was indeed an evil omen. "The fall of Tarquin is at hand," was the sinister answer they received.

"Which of us shall reign after him?" demanded the king's sons with unseemly eagerness.

"He who shall first kiss his mother," responded the oracle.

Then the two princes cast lots to determine which of them should greet their mother first on their return.

But Brutus guessed that the words of the oracle had a deeper meaning.

As he left the Delphic temple, he pretended to slip, and falling to the ground, he secretly kissed the Earth, knowing that she was the mother of all men.

When the princes returned the king was at war, besieging Ardea, a town in Latium. It seemed that he had forgotten his fears, nor does the story tell what he thought of the answer of the oracle.



## *THE INDUSTRY OF LUCRETIA*

Meanwhile the siege of Ardea dragged on month after month, so bravely did the inhabitants defend their town.

In the Roman camp, Prince Sextus and a noble named Collatinus one day whiled away the hours by wondering what their wives were doing. Each boasted that his wife was the more diligent and the more modest of the two women.

At length one of their friends idly suggested that Sextus and Collatinus should ride to their homes and find out how their wives were employed.

So the two officers, accompanied by their friends, ordered their horses, and rode first of all to Rome.

Here they found the wife of Sextus at a banquet, where she was dancing gaily, the merriest of all the merry throng.

It was late when they reached Collatia, where they found Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, still busy with her maidens at the spinning-wheel.

The whole company agreed that of the two wives Lucretia deserved the greater praise. Then the frolic being over, the prince and his friends rode back to camp.

## CHAPTER XXI

# THE DEATH OF LUCRETIA

THE idle suggestion that had made Sextus and Collatinus ride from the camp to Rome and Collatia led to terrible disaster.

Sextus, having seen how wise and beautiful Lucretia was, wished to win her from her husband; and one day, leaving the camp, he again rode to Collatia, but this time he rode alone.

Lucretia, believing the prince was her husband's friend, received him with fitting hospitality when he arrived at her house, hot and tired after his ride. But when she found that he was not a true friend to Collatinus she was no longer kind. Then the prince grew angry, and treated Lucretia so cruelly that she knew she could never again be happy.

The next day she clad herself in black, and sent messengers to her father and her husband, bidding them come to Collatia with all possible speed.

When they arrived, she told them how Sextus had treated her, and making them swear to avenge her wrongs, she plunged a dagger into her heart and died.

## THE DEATH OF LUCRETIA

Brutus, the king's nephew, had ridden from the camp with Collatinus, and he, too, swore to avenge Lucretia, and to see that never more should any of the race of Tarquin sit upon the throne of Rome.

This oath was also taken by the husband and father of Lucretia, as well as by two brave Romans named Publius Valerius and Spurius Lucretius.

The dead body of the Roman matron was carried to the market-place, and when the people were told what had happened, they broke out into loud cries, and mourned for her sad fate.

Brutus then hastened to Rome to tell the terrible tale. In the Forum, amid the assembled people, his voice rang out clear and fearless as he reminded them of the crimes of Tarquin the Proud, and denounced the king and his son Sextus.

“Will you suffer such a tyrant or any of his race to rule longer over you, O Romans?” demanded Brutus sternly. And the people in a storm of indignation shouted “No.”

The Romans were in earnest. An army was at once enrolled, and, led by Brutus, set out to attack the king at Ardea.

Tullia, the queen, meanwhile, startled by the tumult in the Forum, fled from the palace. As her chariot drove along the streets the people muttered curses, calling down upon her the vengeance of her murdered father.

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Rumours had already reached the camp that Rome was in revolt, and Tarquin at once marched to the city with a division of his army to punish the rebels.

Brutus, on his way to Ardea, took care to avoid the king. He had determined to win over the army that was left before the besieged town.

When he reached the camp, he quickly roused the soldiers by the tale of Lucretia's wrongs.

They swore never again to own Tarquin or any of his race as king, and at once prepared to march to Rome.

Meanwhile, the king had reached the city only to find the gates closed, and the citizens, stern and resolute, manning the walls. No threats, no promises would make them open to the king whom they had determined to dethrone.

Tarquin, knowing that if he lingered he would have to face the army led by Brutus, turned away from the city and hastened to seek refuge in Etruria.

The Romans, having thus expelled their king, appointed a day to be celebrated as the Feast of Flight, or the Feast of the Expulsion of the Kings. This feast was held each year on the 24th February.

## CHAPTER XXII

# THE SONS OF BRUTUS

AFTER Tarquin the Proud had been driven away from Rome, the people determined that they would never again be ruled by kings.

They resolved to follow the wise laws of Servius, who had bidden them choose each year two men to rule, giving them equal power, the right to make laws, and to see that justice was done in the land.

The two men, chosen by the Senate and the people, were called Consuls.

In token of his office, each Consul had at his command six men, named lictors.

When a Consul went into the Forum or into the street, he was preceded by his lictors, who carried, as a sign of their master's power, rods to chastise and an axe to kill.

Rome had now become a Republic, and the first Consuls to be elected were Brutus and Collatinus.

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But if the Romans expected Tarquin to make no effort to recover his throne, they soon discovered their mistake.

Before long, the king sent messengers to Rome to ask that his own private possessions might be sent to him, and to this simple request the Senate and the people agreed.

As perhaps the Romans might have suspected, Tarquin had another reason for sending to Rome than the one his messengers carried to the Senate. He knew that among the younger patricians were many who wished to place him again upon the throne, and his messengers had come to talk secretly with these nobles. They even hoped to arrange the best time for the king's return.

But as the conspirators talked together, a slave chanced to overhear what they said, and he at once went to the Consuls and told them of the danger that threatened the city.

The conspirators were immediately seized and thrown into prison, while the slave was set free and made a citizen of Rome.

Among the prisoners were Titus and Tiberius, the sons of Brutus.

The brave Consul was dismayed to learn that his sons, whom he loved well, had been guilty of treason. How could he bear to pronounce judgment upon them as upon other traitors?

## THE SONS OF BRUTUS

Yet soon he thrust aside his weakness. A true Roman must love his country better even than his own children.

So when the conspirators were brought before him he did not flinch. With stern, set face he condemned Titus and Tiberius to death along with the other traitors, nor did he stoop to ask the people to show mercy to his sons.

The young men were bound to the stake before his eyes, after which the lictors beat them with rods and then cut off their heads with the axe.

So angry were the Senate and the people with Tarquin for attempting to plot against the Republic, that they now refused to send to him his possessions. And not only so, but they divided his goods among the people, while the field between the city and the Tiber which Tarquin had sown with corn was destroyed, the corn cut down and thrown into the river. The angry citizens then dedicated the field to the god Mars, and henceforth it was known as the Field of Mars.

The Senate then made a law banishing for ever from Rome all who bore the hated name of Tarquin.

So Collatinus, whose other name was Tarquinius, resigned his Consulship and left the city in obedience to the law. And this he did, although he was the friend of Brutus, and hated the exiled king.

Valerius was then chosen Consul in his stead.

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Meanwhile, Tarquin was full of wrath because he had not been able to enter Rome by craft, and he went to Etruria, and persuaded the Etruscans to help him to recover his throne.

But when the Etruscans proclaimed war against Rome, Brutus gathered together an army and led it against the enemy.

Close to a wood the battle raged. Aruns, one of Tarquin's sons, saw Brutus at the head of the Roman army, wearing the royal robes which he considered belonged to his house alone. In sudden fury he put spurs to his horse, and with his spear ready dashed toward his enemy.

Brutus saw Aruns drawing near, and he also spurred his horse forward and couched his spear.

Onward flew the two warriors until at length they met. Then each, pierced by the other's spear, fell from his horse and moved no more.

All day the battle raged, and still when night fell the victory was uncertain.

But, during the night, while both armies were encamped on the battlefield, a loud voice was heard coming from the direction of the wood.

It was Silvanus, the god of the wood, who was speaking. "The victory belongs to the Romans," said the god, "for they have slain one more than their enemy."

Obedient to the voice of Silvanus, the Etruscans on the following morning withdrew their army, while the Romans marched back to Rome.



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In spite of their victory they were sad, for they carried with them the dead body of their leader.

Brutus was mourned by all the people. But the Roman matrons lamented more than others, setting aside a whole year in which to grieve for his death, because he had so bravely avenged the matron Lucretia.

## CHAPTER XXIII

# HORATIUS COCLES, OR THE ONE-EYED

AFTER the death of Brutus, Valerius ruled alone. But he soon displeased the people, for they thought that he behaved too much as though he were a king.

The Consul had indeed built himself a beautiful house, from the windows of which, had he wished, he could look down into the Forum.

When he walked from his house to the market-place, Valerius, it was true, was preceded by six lictors, bearing rods and axes, but this was a dignity accorded to the Consuls by the people themselves.

Valerius had in truth no wish to spy upon the people as they feared, nor did he try to use his authority unjustly.

Yet the people grumbled, and grew restless and suspicious, until at length the Consul heard that he had displeased them.

Valerius was not angry with the foolish citizens, but he resolved to make them ashamed of their groundless suspicions.

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So one evening, when it was dark, he sent for workmen and ordered them to pull his beautiful house to pieces.

When morning dawned, the people, gazing upward from the Forum to the Consul's house, were startled. What could have happened? There was no longer any house to be seen.

It was not for some time that they learned that it was their foolish suspicions that had caused the Consul to destroy his house.

Then, fickle as the Roman crowd always was, it changed its mind and hung its head, ashamed of the destruction it had caused.

But Valerius not only made the citizens ashamed of their suspicions, he made them love him for his humility.

When he came into the Forum, the Consul now ordered his lictors to carry the rods and axes in two separate bundles, while the axes were from this time always lowered when he entered the Senate-house, or stood before the assembly of the people.

Valerius also made a law that pleased the Romans well.

When a Roman was condemned to death by a magistrate, the Consul decreed that he should have the right to appeal to the people against the sentence. This, you remember, was what Horatius had done when he was condemned to death for slaying his sister.

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So completely had the Consul endeared himself to the Romans that they now called him Poplicola, or the Lover of the People.

Meanwhile, Tarquin the Proud had enlisted the aid of a powerful king, named Lars Porsenna.

This king now sent to Rome, bidding the people open their gates to Tarquin. When they refused, he at once marched against the city with a great army.

The Romans increased the guard and strengthened the forts on the Janiculum hill. At all costs the enemy must be prevented from crossing the Tiber by the wooden bridge that joined the hill to the city itself.

Slaves, cattle, goods—all were brought from the surrounding country, either within the walls of the city, or into forts without.

But in spite of all the Romans could do, Lars Porsenna reached the Janiculum, and storming the heights, drove the Roman soldiers down the hill toward the river. His men pursued the fugitives, who seemed to think of nothing save their own safety.

If the enemy was not to enter the city, the bridge must be defended until the Roman soldiers on the other side of the river had cut through the beams that supported it.

Then, as the enemy drew near and ever nearer to the bank of the river, a brave Roman, named Horatius Cocles, or Horatius the One-Eyed, whose

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country was dearer to him than life itself, cried to the Consul right manfully:—

“ ‘Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,  
With all the speed ye may:  
I, with two more to help me,  
Will hold the foe in play.  
In yon strait path a thousand  
May well be stopped by three.  
Now, who will stand on either hand,  
And keep the bridge with me?’ ”

There were not lacking Romans to answer the brave challenge:—

“ ‘Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,  
And keep the bridge with thee,’ ”

cried Spurius Lartius, one of Rome’s strongest warriors, while the voice of another brave soldier, named Herminius, rang out clear above the noise of arms:—

“ ‘I will abide on thy left side,  
And keep the bridge with thee,  
For Romans in Rome’s quarrel  
Spared neither land nor gold,  
Nor son, nor wife, nor limb, nor life,  
In the brave days of old.’ ”

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

Fully armed, the three brave men sprang to the end of the bridge farthest from the city, and flung defiance at Lars Porsenna and his great army.

The king and his army, seeing but three stalwart warriors, laughed them to scorn, yet ere long their scorn gave way to amazement.

Before the missiles hurled upon them, before the fiercest sword-thrusts, Horatius and his comrades stood dauntless and unafraid, while at their feet rose a ghastly heap of those the brave Romans slew.

And while they held the bridge thus resolutely, behind them fell the blows of mighty axes, loosening the great beams that held the bridge secure.

Soon the axes had done their work. The bridge began to totter, to sway, and the Romans shouted to the noble three to come back ere the bridge gave way.

At the call, Lartius and Herminius turned and darted swiftly across the swaying planks.

But Horatius stayed behind. Not till the bridge fell into the river would he stir from his post.

Then, with a mighty crash the bridge gave way, and fell into the rushing torrent beneath.

Horatius, separated from his friends, stood alone, facing thirty thousand of the foe. Behind him tossed the broad surging river.

*HORATIUS COCLES, OR THE ONE-EYED*

“ ‘Down with him,’ cried false Sextus,  
    With a smile on his pale face.  
‘Now yield thee,’ cried Lars Porsena,  
    ‘Now yield thee to our grace.’

“Round turned he, as not deigning  
    Those craven ranks to see,  
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,  
    To Sextus naught spake he;  
But he saw on Palatinus  
    The white porch of his home;  
And he spake to the noble river  
    That rolls by the towers of Rome.

“ ‘O Tiber! father Tiber!  
    To whom the Romans pray,  
A Roman’s life, a Roman’s arms,  
    Take thou in charge this day!’  
So he spake, and speaking sheathed  
    The good sword by his side,  
And with his harness on his back,  
    Plunged headlong in the tide.”

Not a sound was heard from either bank as Horatius, wounded and bleeding, disappeared in the flood.

Then the enemy, furious that it had allowed the great warrior to escape, hurled its spears after him.

But not one reached the bold swimmer, who, weighed down by his armour and weakened by his wounds, often sank, yet ever rose again and struggled onwards.

## *THE STORY OF ROME*

At length he reached the bank, where eager hands were waiting to draw him up into safety.

When the Romans saw that their hero was safe indeed, although exhausted with his efforts, a mighty shout of triumph rent the air.

Horatius was rewarded for his brave deed by the Senate, who gave him as much land as he could plough in a day, while in later days a monument was erected in memory of his prowess and placed in the Comitium. The Comitium was near to the Forum, and was sometimes counted as part of it.