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## **Cast of Characters**

ACHILLES

CIRCE

ULYSSES

HEBE

PATROCLUS

CHORUS

ASTYANAX

THESEUS

GUARD

ANDROMACHE

HECTOR

## **Place**

A country house near the sea.

## **Scene**

A living room of an undeterminable period. Theseus and Patroclus are sitting around in costumes that are vaguely Greek.

# THE HEROES

by John Ashbery

**THESEUS.** ...I took advantage of the fact that it was built like a maze. Whenever you do this, even if the problem is just one in algebra, everything becomes simple immediately. Because then you can sit back and get a picture of yourself doing whatever it is. If you do not grant its own peculiar nature to the problem, you can have no picture of yourself and consequently feel harassed and lonely. Without imagination nothing can be easy.

**PATROCLUS.** How wonderful everything sounds when you tell about it.

**THESEUS.** *(He seems confused.)* No...that's not right. Say—do you think I could have a drink?

**PATROCLUS.** *(Smiling:)* Oh certainly. *(He rings.)* You must forgive me for my laxity... But do go on with your story. I can't tell you how interesting it sounds to one who has spent the best years of his life pent up in this great old stupid house.

**THESEUS.** It must be rather dull for you here, Patroclus.

**PATROCLUS.** Dull! I have to get up early every day because that brute won't allow breakfast to be served at any other time. Then I'm left to myself all day, poking around the stables or going for walks—or a walk, rather, because there's only one.

**THESEUS.** But I should think Achilles would be an agreeable companion.

**PATROCLUS.** Oh, I hardly ever see him except at cocktails, and sometimes we go for a swim after dinner. He's pleasant enough. But I'm starved for intellectual conversation. We don't get the books or magazines till they've been out a month.

**THESEUS.** Does Achilles read much?

**PATROCLUS.** Oh forget about him. Talk some more about the minotaur.

**THESEUS.** I've never told anyone about it before.

**PATROCLUS.** Oh... But I promise it will be a secret.

**THESEUS.** You're very sweet. Well, as I think I said, the minotaur itself was the least important part of the whole scheme. I'd always supposed the world was full of fakes, but I was foolish enough to believe that it was made interesting by the varying degrees of skill with which they covered up their lack of integrity. It never occurred to me that the greatest fake of all would make not the slightest effort to convince me of its reality...not a pretense! But there it was—a stupid, unambitious piece of stage machinery.

**PATROCLUS.** Incredible! But perhaps that was exactly Daedalus' intention.

**THESEUS.** What?

**PATROCLUS.** To take you off your guard that way.

**THESEUS.** But to what purpose? There was nothing to do but give the thing a well-aimed kick and go home.

**PATROCLUS.** But what about all the maidens it was supposed to have devoured?

**THESEUS.** All dead.

*(HEBE enters.)*

**HEBE.** Yes, sir.

**PATROCLUS.** Two drinks please. And oh, Hebe, would you tell Achilles our guest has arrived.

**HEBE.** He's gone hunting, sir.

**PATROCLUS.** Oh...isn't that just like him!

*(PATROCLUS has been staring at THESEUS.)*

**THESEUS.** Look here, Patroclus, would you really care to know what it was like?

**PATROCLUS.** Oh yes!

**THESEUS.** Very well. You must use your imagination. Hebe, you stand here and be Ariadne. You must hold the end of this ball of yarn and on no account let go. Patroclus, you get on the landing

and pretend to be the monster. This is the picture: the door to the labyrinth is like the entrance to a vast fun-house in some deserted amusement park. The structure is built of old planks and extends as far as the eye can see. Part of it sprawls up the hillside like a fantastic vineyard; another part has been slowly sinking into a salt-marsh a mile or so away. The weather is oppressive. Behind Ariadne and me the sea is making a small but terrible noise.

**PATROCLUS.** (*Beginning to be excited:*) You make everything sound so wonderful!

**THESEUS.** Now we are inside. Nothing but endless vistas. Old posters peeling off the walls, a smell of urine, the wind sighing through the cracks in the planks. We descend five little steps, turn a corner, and walk up five more steps. This stupid device is one of Daedalus' favorite bedevilmments. Sometimes the cracks in the planks admit sand. There are frequent large holes in the roof, so the visitor is free, if he wishes, to climb out on top and survey the ground plan of the whole edifice. In short, he is in the dubious position of a person who believes that dada is still alive.

(*PATROCLUS and HEBE are showing signs of intense excitement.*)

Now comes the strangest part of all. You have been in the maze several days and nights, and you are beginning to realize that you have changed several times. Not just you, either, but your whole idea of the maze and the maze itself. This is most difficult to explain, and it is the wickedest thing Daedalus ever did. The maze looks just about the same as ever—it is more as if it were being looked at by a different person.

**HEBE.** (*Recklessly:*) I understand!

(*It has grown darker. THESEUS has been winding his way through the furniture toward PATROCLUS.*)

**THESEUS.** The horror and fascination with which I navigated that last wooden passage! How dark it was! A waterfall is sounding all around me. It is inside my head. But I was so happy—happy, Patroclus! For now at last I was seeing myself as I could only be—not as I might be seen by a person in the street: full of unfamiliarity and the resulting poetry. Before, I might have seemed beautiful to the pas-

serby. I now seemed ten times more so to myself, for I saw that I meant nothing beyond the equivocal statement of my limbs and the space and time they happened to occupy.

**PATROCLUS.** *(Full of love:)* Go on!

**THESEUS.** I realized that I now possessed the only weapon with which the minotaur might be vanquished—the indifference of a true aesthete. Drawing my sword with as much assurance as you might deal a card, I kicked open the door to the little privy-like enclosure where he lay. There was nothing there but a great big doodle-bug made of wood and painted canvas.

**PATROCLUS.** *(Hysterically:)* But what about the maidens! You said they were all dead!

*(THESEUS rushes forward and grasps PATROCLUS about the middle, lifting him above his head. PATROCLUS is sobbing. HEBE faints but recovers immediately.)*

**THESEUS.** O felicity!

*(The lights go up as ACHILLES, CIRCE, and the CHORUS enter by the center door. ACHILLES is just what one expects. CIRCE looks like Theda Bara and has a slight accent. The CHORUS is a stout middle-aged woman in navy-blue robes.)*

**ACHILLES and CIRCE.** Well!

*(PATROCLUS crosses to them.)*

**PATROCLUS.** *(Embarrassed:)* Achilles, where have you been? Theseus has been here hours and has been most amusing about his experiences in the labyrinth. Circe, have you two met?

**CIRCE.** I think we have.

**ACHILLES.** Theseus—this *is* nice. Make yourself comfortable. Why are you fidgeting so, Patroclus. You seem to want to apologize for something.

**PATROCLUS.** Oh shut up. You always try to make me feel inferior right at the beginning.

**ACHILLES.** It's not that, but I know when you've got something on your mind I'll have to hear about it sooner or later.

**PATROCLUS.** Oh rats.

*(He goes out.)*

**ACHILLES.** Excuse him all of you. He gets that way. *(Slyly:)* I expect he was jealous, Theseus, when he heard about your exploits.

**THESEUS.** I'm flattered you think so. I was just giving Patroclus and Hebe here a little blow-by-blow description.

*(ACHILLES glares at HEBE, who goes out.)*

I guess we may have gotten a little carried away.

**ACHILLES.** *(Frigidly:)* You may do whatever you like in this house, Theseus. But please, everybody, don't let's stand around like this. Wouldn't you all like to play something? I'm no good as a host.

**CIRCE.** Excuse please, but aren't you expecting still another guest?

**ACHILLES.** By George, so we are! And that reminds me I've got to tell Patroclus something.

*(He goes out, with the CHORUS.)*

**THESEUS.** Well, and how have you been, Medea?

**CIRCE.** The name is Circe!

*(THESEUS has already turned to blush for his mistake.)*

It's all right. I know what witchcraft does to a woman's face.

**THESEUS.** Forgive me. You're a very beautiful woman.

**CIRCE.** Oh that we have to converse in this way! Why can't each one say just what he thinks? If you men would only have the nerve to say, "Circe, you're a disgusting old bag!" Then after we got the insults out of the way we might accomplish something. Stop calling each other dearie. This way we no more resemble human beings than those silly figures on the front of the Parthenon do.

**THESEUS.** Excuse me, Circe, but I don't agree with you there. I think those figures are beautiful. And I think that people are beautiful in the same way.

**CIRCE.** I don't get it.

**THESEUS.** Let me tell you of an experience I had while I was on my way here. My train had stopped in the station directly opposite another. Through the glass I was able to watch a couple in the next train, a man and a woman who were having some sort of conversation. For fifteen minutes I watched them. I had no idea what their relation was. I could form no idea of their conversation. They might have been speaking words of love, or planning a murder, or quarreling about their in-laws. Yet just from watching them talk, even though I could hear nothing, I feel I know those people better than anyone in the world.

**CIRCE.** You're a strange man.

**THESEUS.** Coming from you, that must be a compliment.

**CIRCE.** Kiss me.

**THESEUS.** Really—

**CIRCE.** Then don't. I don't know why men always seem to fear me.

**THESEUS.** (*Angrily:*) Oh how can you. You show me that you weren't even listening to what I just said. You don't even believe what you just told me. I think it would be best if we spoke as little as possible during the rest of this weekend.

*(He goes out.)*

**CIRCE.** It's true! They all think they can outsmart me just because I'm a witch!

*(She flops down on an ottoman, crying a little.)*

Oh I could kill that man! But what if I did? Everybody'd say they always expected it of me! (*She sobs awhile.*) There's only one thing to do. Luckily I brought along this girdle, which will make every man who sees me in it fall hopelessly in love with me. (*She slips it on.*) There we are. Love conquers all, as the poet said.

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(ACHILLES enters, followed by PATROCLUS, THESEUS, the CHORUS, and ULYSSES. The last named is very shy. He is wearing tweeds.)

**ACHILLES.** Circe! See who's here.

(ULYSSES comes forward and kisses CIRCE's hand.)

**ULYSSES.** Delighted, I'm sure.

**CIRCE.** You dear thing. I'd almost forgotten you, Ulysses.

(ULYSSES blushes.)

**ACHILLES.** Oh by the way, everybody, this is the Chorus.

(The CHORUS bows. They bow.)

**CHORUS.** I've been invited to see what's to be done.

**THESEUS.** What?

**CHORUS.** Yes, I feel rather like the man from Scotland Yard.

**ACHILLES.** (*Hastily:*) Well, what would anybody like to do? How about a swim before tea?

(ASTYANAX enters. He is a boy of about ten.)

**ASTYANAX.** Tea is served on the lawn, lords and ladies.

(They go out chatting, except for CIRCE and ULYSSES, who remain.)

**ULYSSES.** It's so strange—our meeting again. So many conversations are forgotten, faces blotted out.

**CIRCE.** What is there left to say.

**ULYSSES.** That's the strangest time. When there's nothing. When two ancient personages meet. Known to everybody in the world, disfigured by trash of folklore, excrement of centuries. Two gigantic piles of rubbish, poking through the twilight of the world. And unlike mountains, we're not even thoughtful.

**CIRCE.** Don't. I've still my life to lead.

**ULYSSES.** That's what you think.

**CIRCE.** Don't be so pessimistic, dear. It's true we're famous but that doesn't mean we don't have a private life.

**ULYSSES.** The only thing we know about each other is that we happen to be in this room.

**CIRCE.** It's spring. A time for coming together.

**ULYSSES.** Perhaps. But perhaps not for you and me.

*(They wander off absently through different doors. The CHORUS comes in as if to look for them.)*

**CHORUS.** I have seen many many people in every possible relation to each other and I have never seen any good come of it.

*(A day passes. This is shown by lowering the lights for a few moments and then raising them. The CHORUS stands in the same place.)*

So far this play has been easy. From now on it's going to be more difficult to follow. That's the way life is sometimes.

*(Soft music is heard. CIRCE and ACHILLES, THESEUS and PATROCLUS, enter at opposite doors and slowly cross the stage, leaving by opposite doors.)*

Yea, a fine stifling mist springs up from the author's pure and moody mind. Confusion and hopelessness follow on the precise speech of spring. Just as, when the last line of this play is uttered, your memory will lift a torch to the dry twisted mass. Then it will not seem so much as if all this never happened, but as if parts continued to go on all the time in your head, rising up without warning whenever you start to do the simplest act.

*(ULYSSES appears in the doorway at the center.)*

Come forth, Ulysses. Why are you here?

**ULYSSES.** I have nothing to ask for.

**CHORUS.** What, not even Circe, an earth-born goddess divine?

**ULYSSES.** I have seen too many places. Too many children know my story.

*(The CHORUS seems bored. She strolls over to a window.)*

Ai, regret that will fall on the house of Achilles. Foolish he was to invite Theseus, slayer of monsters. A shadow falls over the hero just before he commits a heroic act.

Just the same, it is the hero alone who can judge the act because of his superior powers. So it must be the audience who is wrong. But since they are all in agreement...!

Achilles, couldn't you have foreseen this difficulty? A hero yourself, greater than any of us.

Why have you let him put conflict between yourself and Patroclus, between Circe and me? Wherever that one goes, he is with others as statues on the face of a building.

Oh Achilles! Theseus! Figures suggesting combat remorse return. Under all, the antique charade.

It is the querulously blue Mediterranean that draws these tears from this old slept-on face. Oh it does not matter who we are! But there is one thing Theseus does not know.

*(The CHORUS sighs, and turns to look at ULYSSES.)*

Every person must be either alive or dead.

**CHORUS.** Ulysses, I have pretended not to hear, but I was actually listening to every word you said. However, I promise not to reveal it to any of the others.

*(The CHORUS and ULYSSES shake hands.)*

**ULYSSES.** We are bound together in an eternal oath.

*(The CHORUS goes out. ULYSSES goes to the window where she was and looks out. ACHILLES and PATROCLUS come on, unaware of him.)*

**PATROCLUS.** The little schemer!

**ACHILLES.** Stop criticizing Theseus, Patroclus. You know he influenced you a great deal.

**PATROCLUS.** I was crying when he lifted me over his head because I thought he would slay me, as he did the minotaur.

**ACHILLES.** You're lying. He must have told you previously that the minotaur was not a live being.

**PATROCLUS.** He did. But you know that it was supposed to have devoured a number of youths and maidens. And Theseus said they all perished.

**ACHILLES.** Were their remains lying near the minotaur?

**PATROCLUS.** He didn't say.

**ACHILLES.** There is always a logical explanation for things.

**PATROCLUS.** (*Pensively:*) Either the minotaur was alive or those maidens weren't dead.

**ACHILLES.** Forget about Theseus. Listen, Patroclus, you know the old story of Circe and Ulysses?

**PATROCLUS.** The one in the *Odyssey*? Yes.

**ACHILLES.** I know that Circe hasn't forgotten the affection she had for him once. She wants to get her hooks into him again. And that could cause trouble. A person of her mental make-up might decide to change us all into pigs for no reason at all.

**PATROCLUS.** I think that would be delicious.

**ACHILLES.** Stop clowning. You know how funny people get after they've been down here awhile.

**PATROCLUS.** But the place has no atmosphere whatever!

**ACHILLES.** Remind Ulysses of his duties to Penelope. Get him out of here. If necessary, make up a phoney telegram.

**PATROCLUS.** You do it. I can't say any of this interests me in the slightest.

*(He goes out. ACHILLES turns and discovers ULYSSES.)*

**ACHILLES.** My dear! I had no idea you were here!

**ULYSSES.** It's all right, Achilles. I'm not interested in Circe. I doubt if she'd try any witchcraft.

**ACHILLES.** I guess I'm a big coward, really. I wish she'd go. But I don't want to offend her.

**ULYSSES.** You must act the part of the host. Try organizing us, so each person has something to occupy him.

**ACHILLES.** That's an idea. We might play some games. After dinner we might have a dance. We could go for a hike. Theseus, Patroclus, and Circe could take the path around the lake and you and I could take a secret walk I've never shown to anyone before. What on earth!

*(THESEUS and CIRCE come on arm in arm. ULYSSES and ACHILLES hide behind a screen.)*

**CIRCE.** Light melts along the pillars and pediments of ancient Greece.

**THESEUS.** O passing cloud.

**CIRCE.** It's spring. A time for rotting. From pools and cisterns, sewers and manure piles, a fine mist rises to cleanse and later befog the sky-blue lenses of the heart.

**THESEUS.** O little teaser.

**CIRCE.** A time for rotting and coming together. Yes, there will soon be no more room for the thoughts we are thinking at this present moment.

**THESEUS.** Yes. O Circe, I hear a waterfall nearby.

**CIRCE.** It's too hot to breathe in this stinking fen. What shall we do about it.

**THESEUS.** We could take off our clothes.

*(CIRCE begins to disrobe.)*

**CIRCE.** O the harm. We get too close, and our thoughts get mingled like mud that is trampled underfoot. Then something happens. Another thing happens which makes us forget the first thing, and then generally we are in a different place.

**THESEUS.** Yes, we are constantly changing, even when we are most aware of it. I'm beginning to think it doesn't mean a thing.

**CIRCE.** As I was saying, it's that we're always being met, but it seems that we're going out of our way. Even to survey this from a great distance is to be unable to draw a conclusion, for someone again draws close to interrupt, and whispers so that we may not conclude.

**THESEUS.** It's scurvy. Let me help.

**CIRCE.** You don't want to help. I don't want you to. There is music though and some peace in the waterfall.

**THESEUS.** Let's forget everything in a kiss.

*(The girdle falls to the floor. There is sudden darkness, and thunder and lightning outside. ACHILLES rushes forward dragging ULYSSES.)*

**ACHILLES.** What's this! Come on, everyone, let's go for a walk! A breath of fresh air!

*(He runs off, dragging ULYSSES and CIRCE.)*

**ULYSSES.** *(As they go off:)* Farewell, Theseus!

**THESEUS.** Left behind. That's the way it was. She came in, dressed in cold colors. 'Twas an afternoon like this. A smile passed from customer to customer.

*(THESEUS falls to his knees, then to the floor, unconscious. The CHORUS enters.)*

**CHORUS.** Now we have The Dream of Theseus.

*(She goes out. The stage gets very dark. By the light of a setting sun one can now distinguish the plains of Troy. At the left are the gates of the city. A GUARD is stationed there. At the rear is the sea, bordered by cattails. Martial music is playing. PATROCLUS enters from the right.)*

**GUARD.** Who's there?

**PATROCLUS.** Patroclus.

**GUARD.** What's the password?

**PATROCLUS.** The Cherry Orchard.

**GUARD.** You're taking advantage of the fact that this play is laid in ancient times.

**PATROCLUS.** What better meter?

**GUARD.** Pass in.

*(PATROCLUS exits through the gates. HEBE enters from the right.)*

Who's there?

**HEBE.** Nay, stand and unfold yourself.

**GUARD.** The password, then.

**HEBE.** I forgot it.

**GUARD.** You're trading on your youth, my dear little chick.

**HEBE.** What sweeter raisin?

**GUARD.** Pass in.

*(HEBE goes off. ASTYANAX enters.)*

Who goes there?

**ASTYANAX.** The boy Astyanax.

**GUARD.** I suppose all your little playfellows have gone inside the gates and you'd like to, too.

**ASTYANAX.** That's about it.

**GUARD.** *(Brutally:)* Well you can't, see. You're too little. Come 'ere. Give us a hug.

**ASTYANAX.** Who are you, anyway?

**GUARD.** Don't you recognize me?

**ASTYANAX.** No.

**GUARD.** Well come back in half an hour and I'll tell you.

*(ASTYANAX wanders off upstage playing with a yo-yo. THESEUS enters, astride the Trojan horse.)*

Who goes there?

**THESEUS.** A famous hero, Theseus by name.

**GUARD.** Is that so.

*(He shines a lantern in THESEUS' face.)*

Oh. I know you. There was a lady here asking for you not half an hour ago.

**THESEUS.** Well, are you going to let me in?

**GUARD.** No yer can't. At least not on that thing.

**THESEUS.** Well, couldn't I leave it outside?

**GUARD.** *(Examining horse:)* Hmm. What do you call this?

**THESEUS.** It's a monster which I've just slain.

**GUARD.** Monster! But it's just a big wooden dummy.

**THESEUS.** *(Brightly:)* I know!

**GUARD.** Well. I oughtn't to but I guess you can go in. But you'll have to come back and collect this thing in half an hour's time, you hear?

**THESEUS.** Thanks.

*(He hops off the horse and enters Troy. CIRCE enters looking for the girdle.)*

**CIRCE.** I know I left it here somewhere.

*(She too passes inside the gates of Troy. HECTOR and ANDROMACHE appear at the upper right of the stage. During this scene the GUARD draws the horse in through the gates as unobtrusively as possible.)*

**ANDROMACHE.** It's a blessed relief to get out of that hot city for a breath of fresh air, even if it's only for a minute.

**HECTOR.** Yes, but keep in mind my dear that we're doing it for a purpose.

**ANDROMACHE.** You mean we've got to keep our eyes open for Grecian scouts.

**HECTOR.** No, it's not that. We must give those inside a chance to talk about us. I hate it when I know people are thinking things about me. Only after everything has been said can peace come and a good night's rest.

**ANDROMACHE.** Tee hee. I love the moonlight on the waters.

**HECTOR.** I often think I'm completely destitute of imagination.

*(HECTOR and ANDROMACHE stand facing ASTYANAX at a distance, their arms outstretched.)*

**ASTYANAX.** Father! Mother!

**HECTOR.** Our boy!

*(An immense explosion inside the walls of Troy fills the sky with light. There is almost complete darkness at once. The CHORUS runs on stage, pretending to be Cassandra.)*

**CHORUS.** It's happened and I'm glad! I told Priam that a beautiful woman would bring us harm. But they thought I was jealous of her and Paris. I tell you once more, men of earth, whatever I say, goes. O glad gift of prophecy! O tongue of conviction! But Theseus has wrought this damage, and he must suffer for it. Where is that man. Lightly he strode into Troy, but appalling will be his exit. And never shall he subdue the monster he has become. Let me out of here.

*(She runs off. The lights come on. The scene is again the living room of Achilles. A phonograph is playing dance music. At the center is a table with a glass and a bottle from which ULYSSES frequently helps himself. The following are dancing together: HEBE and PATROCLUS, CHORUS and THESEUS, CIRCE and ACHILLES. There is general conversation.)*

**PATROCLUS.** You dance divinely, Hebe.

**HEBE.** I learned how before I could walk.

**ASTYANAX.** May I cut in.

**HEBE.** *(In a stage-whisper:)* Oh save me from that fiendish brat!

*(ASTYANAX shrugs and walks away.)*

**CHORUS.** May I ask you a question?

**THESEUS.** Do.

**CHORUS.** Weren't you awfully scared in the labyrinth?

**THESEUS.** Not really. I felt it was quite natural that I should be there.

**CHORUS.** But didn't the minotaur frighten you?

**THESEUS.** No. You see, he wasn't alive, really.

**CHORUS.** But he's supposed to have killed a lot of people.

**THESEUS.** That's something that's always puzzled me.

**CHORUS.** Did you see any signs of them in the labyrinth?

**THESEUS.** Well, I was so keyed up that I didn't notice.

**CHORUS.** Then how do you know they're dead?

**THESEUS.** I just have a feeling.

**CIRCE.** I certainly love your place here, Achilles.

**ACHILLES.** Yes, we like it.

**CIRCE.** I think you're the real hero of this occasion. Providing all these activities for us so we don't become bored or sleepy.

**ACHILLES.** Oh! But it was Ulysses' idea that we have this little dance.

**CIRCE.** He's so clever.

**ACHILLES.** *(Slyly:)* No doubt you and he have found lots to talk over.

**CIRCE.** Yes, he's been most attentive.

**ULYSSES.** *(Taking a drink:)* I heard that remark, Circe, and I'll tell you it's all because of that girdle you've been wearing.

*(Everyone laughs.)*

**ACHILLES.** I see you're not wearing it any more.

**CIRCE.** Oh, I gave it to Theseus. He's been going around saying everybody hates him.

**ACHILLES.** What about you and him?

**CIRCE.** Oh, that! It was all because I tried on my magic girdle and he saw me in it. Those things never last.

**ACHILLES.** I may as well tell you, dear, that everybody has known all about that girdle for years. Theseus did too because I heard him mention it.

**CIRCE.** Really! Then do you suppose he was serious when he...

**ASTYANAX.** May I cut in.

*(He does so. ACHILLES dances with the CHORUS, ULYSSES with HEBE.)*

**PATROCLUS.** Won't you dance with me, Theseus? *(They dance.)* Sometimes I feel so romantic. As if I were up there, circling with the planets in the night wind. I hear forest murmurs. But then Achilles comes back. If only he'd either pay some attention to me or leave me alone entirely, one or the other.

**THESEUS.** There, don't cry.

**PATROCLUS.** It's terrible, Theseus. But I feel better since you got here. Why don't you make your home with us for a little while?

**THESEUS.** I've got to get on. I sometimes feel as if I'm still in the maze, and that to stop anywhere would be as pointless as to continue.

**PATROCLUS.** Oh Theseus, mayn't I sleep at the foot of your bed tonight, like a pet spaniel? I promise I'll lie still as a mummy.

**THESEUS.** Ackgh! You're revolting!

*(He breaks away from PATROCLUS and goes out.)*

**PATROCLUS.** Oh, dear! I must have said something to hurt him!

*(He falls on the couch, sobbing. The GUARD enters dressed as a policeman.)*

**GUARD.** A nice friendly little gathering, what?

## **THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!**

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