Perseus and Medusa

There was once a young man called Perseus whose mother was very beautiful. His father had died when he was a baby, so Perseus and his mother were all alone in the world.

The evil king of the land was desperate to marry Perseus's mother. But every time he asked her, she said no. She did not like his angry, mean face. Perseus did his best to protect his mother from the king's anger. So the evil king plotted to get rid of Perseus.

One day the king called Perseus to his court. "I will leave your mother in peace," he said, "but only on one condition".

"What condition is that?" asked Perseus.

The king sniggered.

"Bring me the head of the monster Medusa on a plate."

Perseus gasped.

"Your wish is my command!" he said, trying not to show his trembling knees.

Perseus was brave, but not foolish. He knew he would need help to defeat Medusa and the terrifying Gorgon sisters. So he went to the wise man.

"How can I help you, Perseus?" asked the wise man.

"I've promised to take the evil king the head of Medusa on a plate!" replied Perseus. "Help me, I beg you," pleaded Perseus, falling to his knees.

The wise man gave Perseus a shield. It was shiny like a mirror so that he didn't have to look straight in Medusa's dangerous eyes.

Then he gave Perseus a sword with a crystal blade to cut off Medusa's head. Perseus' jaw dropped to the floor and he was wide-eyed as he examined the beautiful sword.

"You will also need a helmet that will make you invisible, a pair of sandals with wings so you can fly, and a silver bag to put Medusa's head in," explained the wise man. "The three witches have them. They only have one eye between them, so it shouldn't be too hard to creep up on them."

Sneaking into the witches' cave, Perseus snatched the eye.

"Hey!" shouted the witch! "Who is it?"

"It's me, Perseus. I'll only hand it back if you give me what I want." The witches knew they had no choice. They felt their way around the hut and found the sandals, bag and helmet for Perseus.

Now the young hero had everything he needed to kill Medusa. He gave the witches back the eye and headed for the Gorgon's lair. As his winged sandals carried him through the sky, Perseus could feel his heart beating very quickly.

Perseus knew he has no time to lose. He picked up his crystal sword and dived at Medusa. He grabbed a handful of snakes, and taking care not to look directly at Medusa, raised his sword. With one blow, Medusa's head flew off her neck. Quickly, Perseus put it in his silver bag and swooped up into the air and out of the cave, grinning from ear to ear.

As soon as he was home, Perseus went straight to the evil king. Immediately, he pulled Medusa's head out of the silver bag for the cruel king to see.

"Do you like it?" he asked.

But, of course, the king did not reply. He had looked at the face of Medusa and was turned instantly to stone!