

Background: After killing his wife Megara and his kids, Heracles needs to make atonement. He goes to Oracle at Delphi, which tells him to do whatever King Eurystheus tells him to.

1st Labor: Nemean Lion. A kid approached him and told him that if it wasn't dead within 30 days, the kid would sacrifice himself to Zeus. After shooting arrows which had no effect, he blocked one entrance to the lion's cave, went in the other, and strangled it. Athena told him to use the lion's paw to skin it. Eurystheus was scared of the pelt and made himself a bronze jar to hide in.

2nd Labor: Lernaean Hydra. He used a cloth to protect himself from poisonous fumes, and then shot arrows into its layer. After trying to cut off its heads, two always grew back in place. He got his nephew to cauterize each head after cutting it off. Hera sent a giant crab to distract him which he easily killed. Heracles finally killed cut off its one mortal head, and then dipped his arrows in its blood. Hera then placed it and the crab as constellations. Eurystheus did not count this labor because Heracles had help.

3rd Labor: Ceryneian Hind. He had to capture the immensely swift creature. It was sacred to Artemis, so once he finally captured it, he had to beg Artemis for forgiveness and set it free.

4th Labor: Erymanthian Boar. Heracles went the mountain where it lived and met the centaur Pholus. His wine got the other centaurs drunk which attacked Heracles and were defeated by Heracles' poisonous arrows. Pholus picked up an arrow but dropped it on his foot, killing him. The immortal Chiron got hit and the pain was so immense that he gave up his immortality to Prometheus. Heracles then chased the boar into snow and captured it, but did not kill it as he was not instructed to. Eurystheus was afraid of it and hid in his jar.

5th Labor: Augean Stables. Heracles asked for a tenth of the cattle if he completed the task. He then routed the rivers Alpheus and Peneus into the stall to clean it. Augeas failed to honor the reward, causing Heracles and Augeas' son Phyleus to sue him in court. Augeas banished them before the ruling, and Heracles killed him and took the cattle he was owed. Eurystheus did not count this labor either because Heracles was given compensation.

6th Labor: Stymphalian Birds. They had bronze beaks and poisonous dung, which killed many people in Arcadia. They were also sacred to Ares. Athena gave Heracles a rattle which he used to scare them into the sky, prompting him to shoot them with arrows.

7th Labor: Cretan Bull. Heracles had to capture the bull which had been ravaging King Minos' domain. Heracles captured it and was ordered to sacrifice it to Hera, who refused it. It traveled to Marathon after Heracles set it free.

8th Labor: Mares of Diomedes. They were flesh-eating horses which could breathe fire. Heracles entrusted Abderus to watch them, but they ate him. Meanwhile, Heracles fought Diomedes for control of them, but killed him after he found out Abderus was dead. He then brought the Mares back to Eurystheus.

9th Labor: Belt of Hippolyta. Eurystheus' daughter Admete wanted the belt. Heracles' traveled to Paros, where two of his companions were killed, and then defended Lycus from King Mygdon's attacks. He confronted Hippolyta who would have handed over the belt had Hera not made the Amazonians distrust Heracles. Heracles killed Hippolyta and brought back the belt.

10th Labor: Cattle of Geryon. Heracles traveled to Erytheia to capture the cattle. He shot arrows at Helios for the scorching heat while cross the desert, who then gave him a chariot, and killed the dog Orthus. Geryon went to stop Heracles but was killed with an arrow. He routed the cattle back to Eurystheus but Hera sent a gadfly to scatter them. He retrieved them and threw boulders in the sea to help them cross it after Hera sent a flood to make it impossible to journey back.

11th Labor: Apples of the Hesperides. Heracles went to Old Man in the Seat to ascertain the Garden of the Hesperides' location. He then wrestled Antaeus, who was immortal while touching the ground, and killed him by choking him in the air. King Busiris of Egypt tried to capture Heracles but Heracles broke free. He then instructed Atlas to retrieve the apples for him while he held up the earth. After Atlas refused to retake the earth, he tricked Atlas by asking him to hold it while Heracles adjusted his cloak.

12th Labor: Cerberus: In his descent to Hades, he freed Theseus but not Pirithous from the Chairs of Forgetfulness. Hades only allowed Heracles to bring Cerberus to earth if Heracles vowed to not use weapons. Once Heracles brought him to earth to show Eurystheus, he hid in his jar again and agreed to set him free.