

Hercules battling the hydra

By Asher Stark

As the hero strode through the bog he watched as tar pits and predatory insects ate away at carcasses of dead mammals. He tightened his grip on his sword and strode deeper into the swamp. He came across a dry enough log and started hacking at it for firewood. But as he started cutting the log started oozing acidic blood. That's when the log writhed and rose and there before him, was the Hydra. The Hydra had two legs and a long tail, it had no forearms and resembled a lizard with a snake's neck. Its head was much like a crocodile's but shorter and rounder. Its where glowed a deep orange and its scales where a dark green.

It went to bite Hercules but he instead gripped the creature by the snout and sliced a clean line between its head and torso. Triumphant he strode away... a sharp pain struck him in the thigh, he turned to look and a fang the size of a shortsword was firmly planted in his leg. The Hydra now had not one but two heads. He severed this new head, releasing his thigh, and quickly stuffed moss into the wound to slow the bleeding. But before the head even touched the ground another two had taken its place. He was now fleeing into the thick brush, the heads snapping and hissing not far behind. Then he met a lake, he was now cornered. Hercules, using his immense strength, uprooted a tree and speared into their hydras chest. This slowed the creature but did little else.

Hercules pulled out his torch to try to burn the swamp in an effort to daze the beast by the Hydra shied away from this light. Hercules pursued the beast into the night, they traded blow after blow, Hercules breaking a leg in the process, by the dawn the Hydra had around 15 heads and was taking to the offensive. Hercules was desperately cutting and slicing at the beast but then, his sword was caught in a pit of tar. The beast seized its chance and bit deep into his back. The venom sent a pain like no other into the hero's bloodstream. Hercules dropped the torch in a spasm of pain and the tar and nearby trees burned in a ruby flame. Though the tar coated sword now also burned. Mustering what strength he could, Hercules reached for the flaming sword and hacked at the Hydra. The flaming tar dripped from the sword sealing the beasts severed necks and heads, stopping all regeneration. Soon the battle was over and the beast's headless body fell limp. The fire had burned out now and the carrion beasts of the swamp were eager to feast on the Hydra's flesh. Hercules tipped his arrows in the beast's venom and set off for the nearest village. So that an apothecary could tend to his wounds. the battle was won.