

The Story of How Minerva and Bolt Saved Their Kingdom

By: Leela

The kingdom of Meliora was a happy and prosperous place. The people were hard working, and the farms were plentiful with the aid of simple magic that everyone could do. Among these people was a girl named Minerva. She was only fourteen and was already studying at the Schola Magicae, the top university in the kingdom. She was friends with a dragon named Bolt and was unusually good at magic. Other than that, she was quite ordinary.

On the morning when our story begins, Minerva woke up, took a quick shower and got dressed and grabbed her schoolbooks and headed off to class. On the way there, she met up with Bolt.

'What class do we have first? Why does it have to be so early...?' Bolt trailed off.

'We have Historical Languages next,' said Minerva. 'We should hurry up, or we'll be late!'

They picked up their pace, and soon reached the classroom on time. They found their seats, with Minerva in the middle of the room with the humans and Bolt in the back with the dragons, their teacher, Ms. Tiddleums took attendance. Then she smiled and began class.

'As we all know, Meliorain is derived from Latin. Many of our words remain similar, or even the same as words from Latin,' she said. 'Words change over time, but they may still sound similar. Also, the knowledge of Latin words can be vitally important for learning magic, as most of our spells are still in Latin.'

'*Hoc tam taediosum*,' muttered Minerva under her breath, quietly, so Ms. Tiddleums wouldn't hear. 'This is so boring.' She was already quite good at Latin.

Just then, Ms. Tiddleums's voice brought her back to the classroom with a start. 'Mister Bolt! Would you care to tell the class why the ceiling is so interesting?'

Minerva twisted around in her seat to look at Bolt. His eyes looked cloudy, and he was gazing up at the ceiling. He was also starting to smell faintly like Sulphur.

'I think that Prince Kratos from Mt. Othrys wants to invade Meliora! I just had a vision of him starting to gather an army!' said Bolt, snapping out of his reverie.

'Oh my! This is serious! I must speak to Principal Macintire immediately! Stay calm and head to your dorms, all of you. Class dismissed!' Ms. Tiddleums exclaimed loudly over the sudden hubbub that broke out in class, before hurrying off. Immediately, everyone in the class started heading for the door. Minerva hung back and waited for Bolt. As they walked to their dorms, Bolt said, 'Prince Kratos was talking into a crystal ball. He said something like 'Once we have the Spellux Wand, we will rule the world!''

'Spellux... why does that name sound familiar?' Minerva muttered.

'There was also a person in the crystal ball. It looked like a woman with long pure white hair and piercing blue eyes,' added Bolt.

'Hmm...', said Minerva. 'When is the prince coming?'

'It sounded like he was going to be here in about three days minimum,' said Bolt.

'Oh! That's not much time! Let's sneak into the library to research this Spellux Wand,' said Minerva. The Schola Magicae had an enormous library, so big that it was said that it had a copy of every book ever written in the kingdom.

They snuck into the library and started looking for any books that mentioned the Spellux Wand. They found an entire book on the wand. It said that the wand was extremely old, so old that no one remembered who or what had made it. It was made of elder wood and was about twelve inches long. No one knew where the Spellux Wand is now, but there was a clue in the book as to where it was now:

Dnaw eht dnif lliw uoy, yhtorw era uoy fi, ereht. Onaclov sti otni raf evled dna eci fo
dnalsi tsellams eht ot og, Dnaw Xulleps eht dnif ot.

'It's absolute gibberish!' Bolt wailed, 'what'll we do now?' Minerva, however, was not one to give up so easily. She pulled out some vellum paper and a quill pen and started experimenting with the letters. After a little while, she found something that looked promising.

'What if you reversed everything? First the letters, then the words?' she murmured to herself. Then she wrote out the following string of letters:

To find the Spellux Wand, go to the smallest island of ice and delve far into its volcano. There, if you are worthy, you will find the wand.

She showed it to Bolt, who had been watching anxiously.

'This looks great!' said Bolt. A moment later, he added, 'Umm, where's the smallest ice island?'

'The smallest ice island is called Frigus, which is located in the Southern end of the sea known as Meridiem,' replied Minerva. 'Let's go. If we can get to the island in time, maybe we can stop whomever Prince Kratos was talking to.'

'Great,' said Bolt. 'Get on my back, and we'll be there in no time!' Minerva and Bolt went to the designated dragon take off area and took off. Dragons can get extremely warm when they want to be, so even though it was very cold, neither Minerva nor Bolt got cold. Dragons fly very fast, so they reached the island quickly. The ground was completely covered with snow and ice and what had looked like trees from the distance, turned out to be intricate ice sculptures, silver and gleaming. In the center rose a giant mountain, taller even than the tallest mountain in Meliora.

'I think that that mountain might be the volcano mentioned in the riddle. Let's land at the top to see if we can get in,' said Minerva. Once they landed at the very top of the mountain and looked around, Minerva noticed was that there was a black void in the center of the platform they were standing on. The platform looked like a perfect square and seemed to be about ten meters by ten meters big. She moved over to the void and peered into it. Suddenly, a voice rang out.

'Who are you and what are you doing on *my* island?' Minerva whirled around and saw a beautiful woman, slim and graceful. She had long pure white, waist length hair, though she did not seem old, and piercing blue eyes. She was tall and had a powerful aura of power around her.

'We are just stopping by,' said Minerva. She did not trust this woman enough to tell her the true reason they were here. 'Who are you?'

'I am Friga, the Ice Witch, and ruler of this island,' said the woman. After a pause, she added: 'You have still not answered my question. *Who are you?*'

Seeing no other choice, Minerva answered, 'My name is Minerva and the dragon's name is Bolt.'

'A dragon. How fascinating,' said Friga. She drifted menacingly closer.

'I don't think I like her. We have to get away from her somehow,' whispered Minerva.

'How?' Bolt whispered back. Minerva looked around. Her eyes fell on the black void.

'We jump into that,' Minerva discreetly motioned to the blackness. 'We aren't achieving anything just standing here, and we need to get the wand.'

Bolt eyed the void, looking more than a little hesitant. 'But she'll see us!'

'I've got this. *Fac nos invisibilis!*' Minerva said under her breath. Before Bolt could say or do anything, Minerva had grabbed him and jumped. To her surprise, instead of falling, she

descended slowly, as if she had jumped into a pool of black water. Soon, the blackness ended, and she landed in a cavern filled with beautiful, sparkling gemstones. A little to her left, she saw the opening of another hole, this time without any darkness. It also looked like the opening of a slide. Minerva snapped her fingers, ending the invisibility spell.

'That was fun!' Bolt panted. Then he saw the new hole. 'Ooh! Are we going to do it again?'

'Well, I don't see another option... unless you think that the wand could be around here somewhere?' Minerva replied.

'I think that that slide is there for a reason,' said Bolt stubbornly.

'Okay, fine. Let's go down the slide. You can go first,' said Minerva, relenting. Bolt nodded and took off down the slide. Minerva gave him a second and then followed. It was a short ride, and at the end, they came to another room, this one a little smaller, with a pedestal in the center. Engraved in the top of the pedestal was a beautiful drawing of swirls and stars. It seemed to be pulsing with a white light. Suddenly, ornate words appeared in the air.

To find the Spellux Wand, follow these three clues:

1. Heat will be very, very helpful
2. Melt, don't burn
3. 16, 5, 4, 5, 19, 20, 1, 12 spells out its name

'What will we do? None of these clues make any sense at all!' Bolt wailed. Minerva shushed him. She counted in her head.

'I've got it!' she exclaimed. 'The fourth clue means pedestal! We must need to melt the pedestal to get to the wand!'

'Well, that I can do!' Bolt moved over to the pedestal and wrapped his tail around it. Then he started to glow red. Slowly, the pedestal melted, taking the drawing with it. Eventually, all that was left was the wand. It had a pulsating aura of power, so much that it made Minerva feel all tingly. Bolt moved away from the wand to make room for Minerva and she gently picked up the wand. Well, she tried, but her hand passed through it. At her touch, however, more words appeared in the air.

You didn't think finding the Spellux Wand would be so easy, did you? Look around. If you are worthy, you will find it.

Minerva looked around. She noticed four archways that had not been there earlier. She moved toward the first one and Bolt followed. The archway led to a corridor, and at the end of the corridor was a door. Minerva opened it and saw a small room. In a corner of the room, there was an ornate box. Unfortunately, the box was much too small to hold an entire wand. Minerva went over to it and picked it up. Inside there was a small fragment of the wand. She could tell that it was part of the wand because it pulsed with a gold light. Minerva closed the box and turned to Bolt.

'I think that there will be part of the wand in each of the rooms,' she said. 'Let's go get the other parts.' Bolt nodded and they went into the next room. They quickly got all four segments of the wand and went back to the main room to try and put it back together. They did the best they could to fix it, but they weren't sure how to attach the pieces. Then Minerva had an idea.

'What if we put the pieces back in their boxes and line up the boxes instead?' she asked. So, they moved the boxes into the correct order. Suddenly, there was a bright flash of light, so bright that Minerva and even Bolt had to look away. When they were able to look at the boxes again, they got a surprise. All the boxes had fused together, creating a box about twelve inches long and two inches wide. Tentatively, Minerva gently pried open the box. Inside was the wand. It was made out of elder wood, and it had a golden sheen. When Minerva gently picked it up, she felt a vibration travel through her arm.

'Whoa...' breathed Bolt. 'It's beautiful.' Minerva had to agree. She moved over to the slide and slowly waved it, holding on to the image of a staircase in her head. When she opened

her eyes, she saw that indeed, the slide was now a staircase. She put the wand back into the box and picked it up. It was surprisingly light and easy to carry. Minerva and Bolt climbed up the stairs and into the room above.

'How do we get through the hole at the top?' Bolt asked.

'Well, when we came down, it felt like falling through water. Maybe we could try to swim upwards through it?' said Minerva. Bolt looked doubtful, but he moved aside to let Minerva try. She stood directly under the column of black and jumped straight up. Just like she had thought, when she started to fall, it felt as though she was in water. She started kicking hard with her feet and doing freestyle strokes. Soon she was at the top and was able to climb through the hole. Curiously, Friga, the Ice Witch was still standing in the exact same spot. She looked like she hadn't moved a muscle. Suddenly, Friga looked at her.

'Now I see you. You found the wand, did you? No matter. I can easily take it for Prince Kratos. You are but a little girl, after all,' she said.

'No!' cried Minerva. Friga started towards her and reached out to take the box. Minerva looked around wildly, for some way, any way, to keep the wand away from Friga. Then she saw the black void. She quickly threw the box into the void, hoping that Bolt would be able to protect it. Then Bolt's voice rang out.

'Why did you throw the wand back, Minerva? Is something happening?' Bolt peered up through the hole and his eyes fell on Friga. 'Oh. *She's* still here?' He flew through the hole, clutching the wand's box in his talons. He quickly handed the box to Minerva then shot a burst of fire, crackling with energy at the Ice Witch. She dodged it easily and sent a burst of pure energy, back at Bolt. Then, she grabbed the wand away from Minerva. Laughing wildly, she held the box up in triumph, then disappeared with a loud crack.

'She's probably going to give the wand to Prince Kratos! We have to stop her!' cried Minerva. She felt herself panicking.

'Stop panicking. We can stop her,' said Bolt soothingly. When Minerva went into a panic attack, she was known to make things explode. 'All we have to do is fly.' Bolt flew as fast as he could. Soon Mount Othrys came into view and Bolt started to slow down. He landed at the base of the mountain and Minerva climbed off his back. They looked around and saw a glimmer of light at the tip of the mountain.

'That looks like a castle. Maybe that's where Prince Kratos is,' Minerva observed. 'Let's go up there. Maybe we'll be able to get the wand before it's too late.'

'All right. Let's go!' said Bolt. Minerva climbed onto his back, and he flew upwards, toward the castle.

'Stop for a moment. *Fac nos invisibilis!*' Minerva cast the invisibility spell again. 'There. Now they won't be able to see us.' Bolt flew on and landed softly down in front of the palace. Minerva quietly dismounted and they walked down the lane towards the palace together. They quietly opened the gates and slipped through. Once inside, they heard voices. They followed the voices up the hall and found themselves in a large room. Friga was there, along with a man wearing a crown, who could only be Prince Kratos. They seemed to be plotting. On the table in front of them, was the Spellux Wand. They seemed to be getting ready to invade Meliora! Just then, Friga looked up.

'Someone's spying,' she declared. Minerva and Bolt jumped.

'What happened!? Why isn't it working? Has she figured out how to see through it already?' Bolt whispered frantically.

'*RUN!*' Minerva whispered to Bolt. Bolt took off down the hall, with Minerva right behind. They only just made it outside before Friga burst through the gates.

'Come, Alatus, my faithful steed!' cried Friga. In answer, a magnificent black winged stallion appeared, flying over the castle. 'After them!' she called, just after Bolt had taken to the air. It seemed like she could see through Minerva's spell. Bolt was faster than Alatus, however, and they rocketed away from the palace, down to the base of the mountain.

'What do we do now?' Bolt wondered.

'Let's wait until Friga and Kratos go to sleep, and then try and take the wand,' said Minerva. 'Although, they might leave some protection and obstacles after we got so close to taking the wand.' They hid in the woods at the base of the mountain until dark. Then Minerva climbed onto Bolt's back, and they flew back up the mountain. Minerva cast another invisibility spell, and they cautiously moved up the castle lawn. They swung open the big oak doors and quietly entered the castle. They went down the same hall they had went down earlier and looked in the room. There was no one there. They looked around a little bit more, then went into another room. And another. Soon they came upon the bedrooms. They looked inside the first one and saw Prince Kratos. Minerva motioned for Bolt to stay put, then crept into the room. The first thing she noticed was the wand's box. She opened it. It was empty. Kratos must have hidden it somewhere else, presumably in a safer location. She looked around the room a little more but found nothing useful. She went back to Bolt, and they had a quiet discussion.

'The wand wasn't in there. I also think that Friga went back to Frigus, at least for the night. She might have taken the wand with her,' said Minerva.

'I think that's too predictable. I think that Kratos hid the wand somewhere in the castle, probably somewhere really safe,' Bolt replied. 'I think we should look around the castle while everyone else is sleeping. Then we can look around without any interference.'

'That's a great idea!' said Minerva. 'Let's take a look in the storage vaults first. Any idea where they are?'

Bolt nodded. He took the lead, and soon they reached the vaults. As they drew nearer, both of them felt magic in the air.

'This is definitely where they hid the wand,' whispered Minerva. They walked closer to the vaults. Minerva picked the lock, then tried to open the door.

'Oww!' she whispered. 'It burned me!'

'Let me try. Dragons are burn proof,' said Bolt. Minerva moved over, and Bolt opened the door. They moved quickly inside, and Bolt closed the door, locking it again. Minerva lit one of the torches hanging from the wall and looked around. There were heaps of treasure. Mounds of gold coins and piles of precious gemstones. She rooted through one of the piles and Bolt looked through another.

'Found it!' whispered Minerva triumphantly.

'Great! Now let's get out of here!' whispered Bolt. Minerva nodded in agreement, and they ran out of the palace. Already, dawn was breaking. Minerva climbed onto Bolt's back, and they flew back to the Schola Magicae. They landed, then ran to the principal's office. Inside, all the teachers were having a conference. Minerva and Bolt burst through the door. All the teachers jumped up in surprise.

'What are you two doing here? You should be in your dormitories!' Principal Macintire exclaimed.

'We found the Spellux Wand!' proclaimed Minerva and Bolt.

'Here it is!' added Minerva, holding out the wand.

'Really?' asked Ms. Parthen, teacher of Magical Artifacts.

'Oh my!' exclaimed Mr. RonDon, teacher of Theater.

'Wow!' said Ms. Tiddleums, teacher of Historical Languages.

'Amazing!' decided Mr. Dunder, teacher of Magic, And How To Use It.

'Let me see it, please,' requested Principal Macintire. Minerva handed it over. The principal looked it over, turning it slowly and feeling all over it. 'I believe that this is authentic.' He finally said. 'Excellent job.' For him, there was no higher praise. Minerva and Bolt positively glowed with pride. Just then, one of the guards rushed in.

'Prince Kratos is at the border. And he doesn't look happy. There's also a woman with him. She has long white hair and piercing blue eyes.'

'That sounds like Friga!' Bolt exclaimed. 'We have to stop them!' Macintire got a fleet of school dragons, and they took to the air, heading for the border with Bolt and Minerva in the lead. Soon they came to the border. The first thing they saw was Prince Kratos and Friga, the Ice Witch. Behind them were legions stretching as far as the eye could see.

'Give us the Spellux Wand!' Kratos called.

'No!' responded Macintire. He raised the wand, getting ready to banish Kratos and Friga back to their own kingdoms, but before he could say anything, Friga made the wand rocket out of his reach and into the sky. Then it fell. Directly to Friga and Kratos. Kratos caught it.

'It's ours now!' he cried jeeringly. He waved it around, but nothing happened 'It must be broken! You try!' He thrust the wand at Friga. She twirled it around expertly, but nothing happened. Then Minerva, seeing her chance, ran forward, and wrested the wand from Friga. Then, taking advantage of her surprise, aimed the wand directly at her and said,

'I hereby banish you, Prince Kratos and Friga, The Ice Witch, back to your own kingdoms where you will be relieved of your thrones!' Kratos and Friga disappeared, along with all the legions they had brought.

'Well done, Minerva and Bolt!' said Principal Macintire. 'I think that this calls for celebration!' They went back the Schola Magicae and organized a banquet. Everyone wanted to thank Minerva and Bolt. At last, it finished, and Bolt took Minerva aside.

'I was just wondering why the wand didn't work for Friga and Kratos,' he said.

'I've been thinking about that too. The name of the wand had been bothering me since I heard about it. Remember how Ms. Tiddleums was telling us about words changing over time? I finally figured out that 'Spellux' is derived from 'Spei et lux', which is Latin for 'Hope and light'. Therefore, to be able to use the wand, you must use it for good things, not bad things,' said Minerva.

'Very clever, maybe I should pay more attention in class,' Bolt chuckled.

The End