

ant of Aeneas, came to the throne. But Numitor had an ambitious brother, Amnlius, who robbed him of his crown, and, while letting him live, killed his only son and shut up his daughter Silvia in the temple of the goddess Vesta, to guard the ever-burning fire of that deity.

Here Silvia had twin sons, whose father was said, in the old superstitious fashion, to be Mars, the God of War. The usurper, fearing that these sons of Mars might grow up and deprive him of his throne, ordered that they and their mother should be flung into the Tiber, then swollen with recent rains. The mother was drowned, but destiny, or Mars, preserved the sons. Borne onward in their basket cradle, they were at length swept ashore where the river had overflowed its banks at the foot of the afterwards famous Palatine Hill. Here the cradle was overturned near the roots of a wild fig-tree, and the infants left at the edge of the shallow waters.

What follows sounds still more like fable. A she-wolf that came to the water to drink chanced to see the helpless children, and carried them to her cave, where she fed them with her milk. As they grew older a woodpecker brought them food, flying in and out of the cave. At length Faustulus, a herdsman of the king, found these lusty infants in the wolf's den, took them home, and gave them to his wife Laurentia to bring up with her own children. He gave them the names of Romulus and Remus.

Years went by, and the river waifs grew to be strong, handsome, and brave young men. They became leaders among the shepherds and herdsmen,