

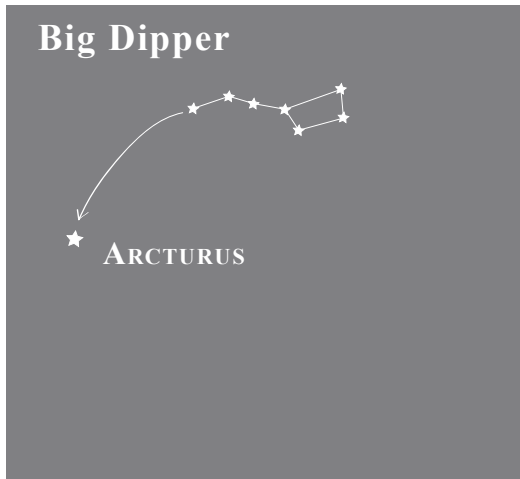
Dipper for a Damsel in Distress

The Big Dipper is the next Guidepost in our survey of the sky. There's another epic story happening here, similar to Orion's tale.

This corner of the sky tells the story of a damsel in distress, a ferocious beast and a kindly stranger. As the curtain rises we see a lady, *Virgo The Virgin* lying on her back with her arm outstretched. A proud lion marches on past her with his head in the air.

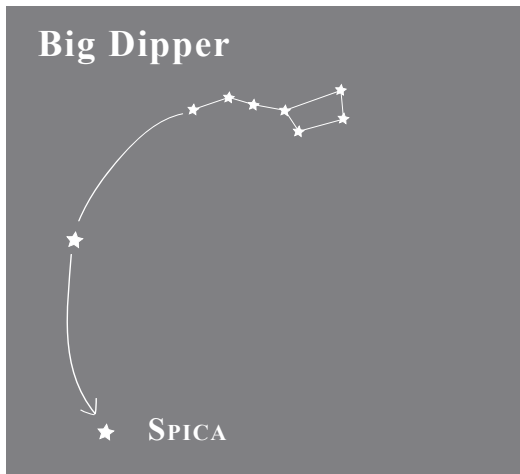
We can imagine the lady has swooned after her encounter with the beast. A herdsman sits looking on. Always the gentleman, he reaches for the dipper to offer the poor woman a cool drink.

The Big Dipper is our key to finding these pictures. But first let's take a look at the bright stars surrounding the Big Dipper.



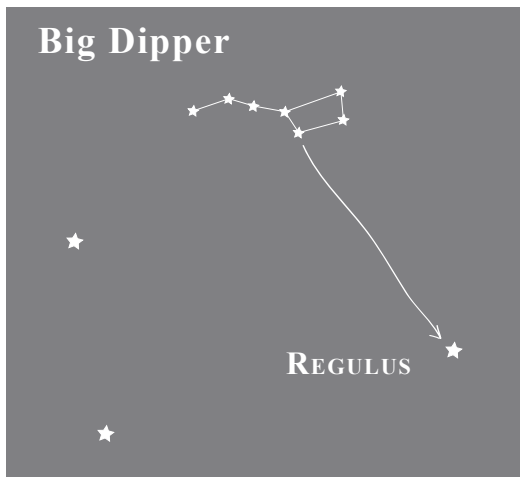
Arc to Arcturus

Follow the arc of the Dipper's handle to find Arcturus, the second brightest star in the northern sky.



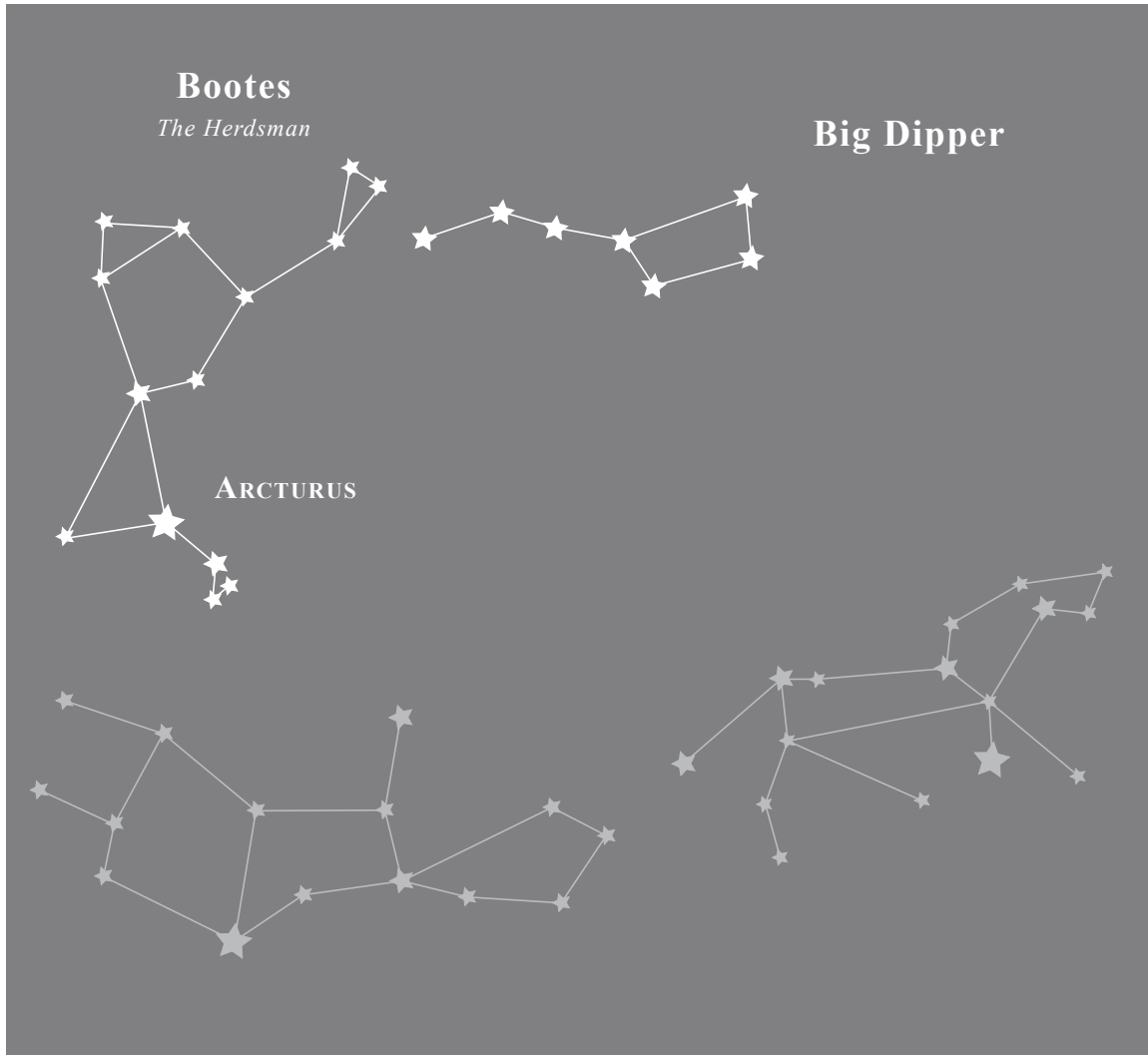
Speed on to Spica

Continue the arc from the Dipper's handle through Arcturus to reach Spica.



Rear of the bowl to Regulus

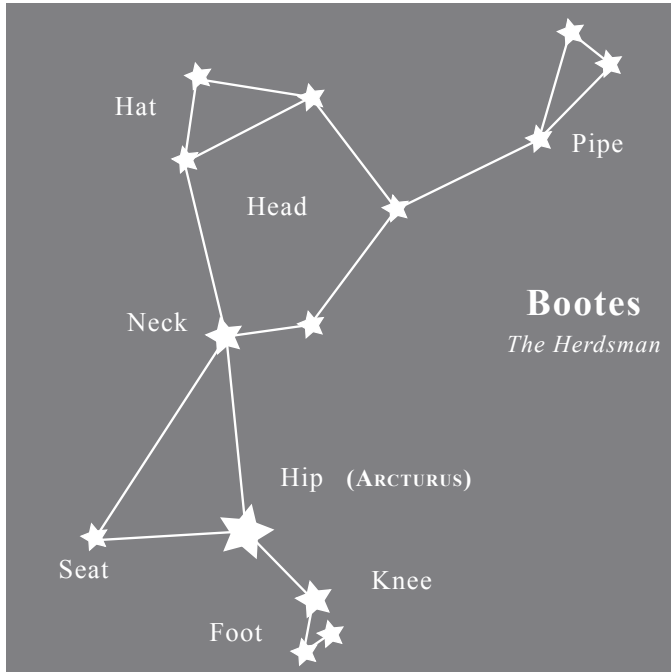
A line through the back edge of the Dipper's bowl points to Regulus.



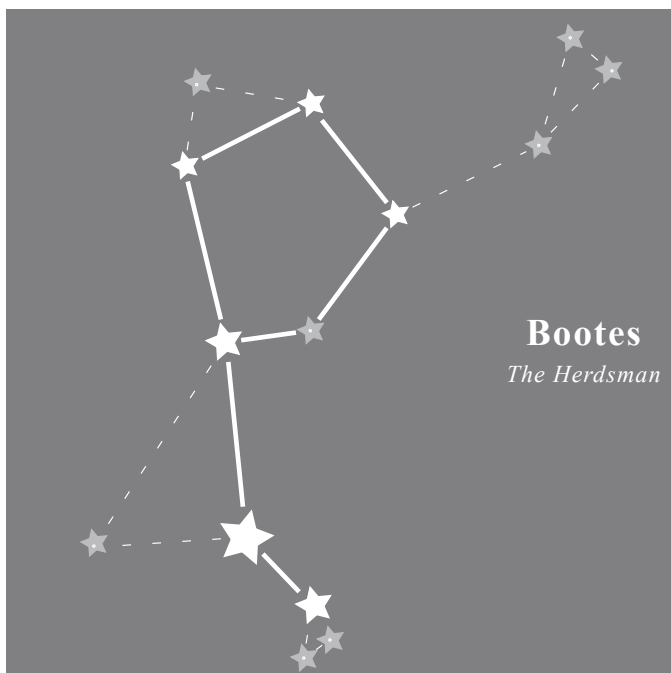
1. Sirius
2. Arcturus
3. Vega
4. Capella
5. Rigel
6. Procyon
7. Betelgeuse
8. Altair
9. Aldebaran
10. Antares
11. Spica
12. Pollux
13. Fomalhaut
14. Deneb
15. Regulus

Let's continue our story. Bootes (boh-OH-teez) *The Herdsman* sits near the handle of the Big Dipper, smoking his pipe.

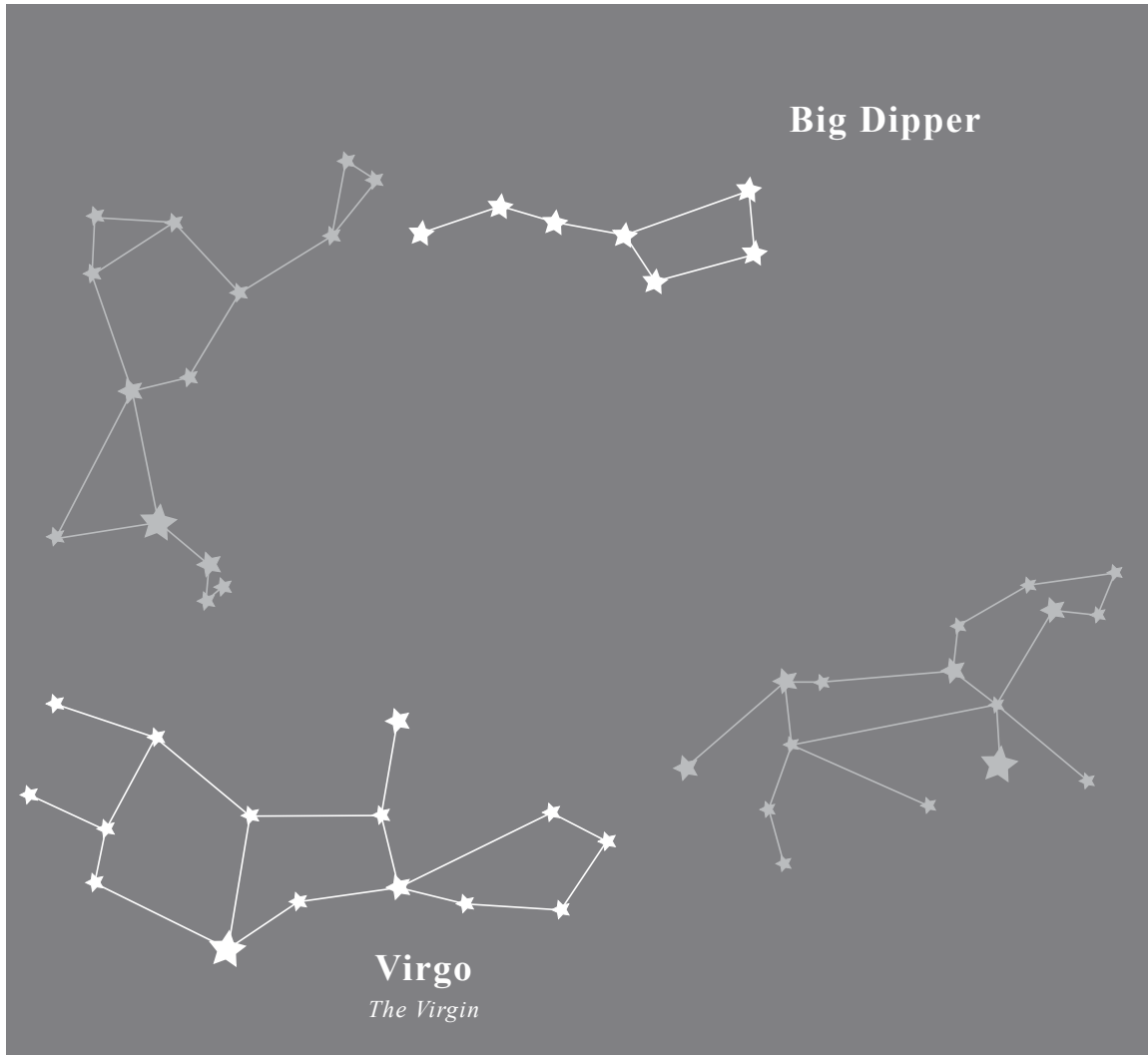
He is a witness to the rude behavior of the Lion and reaches for the dipper to resuscitate the suffering lady with a cool drink.



Arcturus marks the hip of the seated Herdsman.

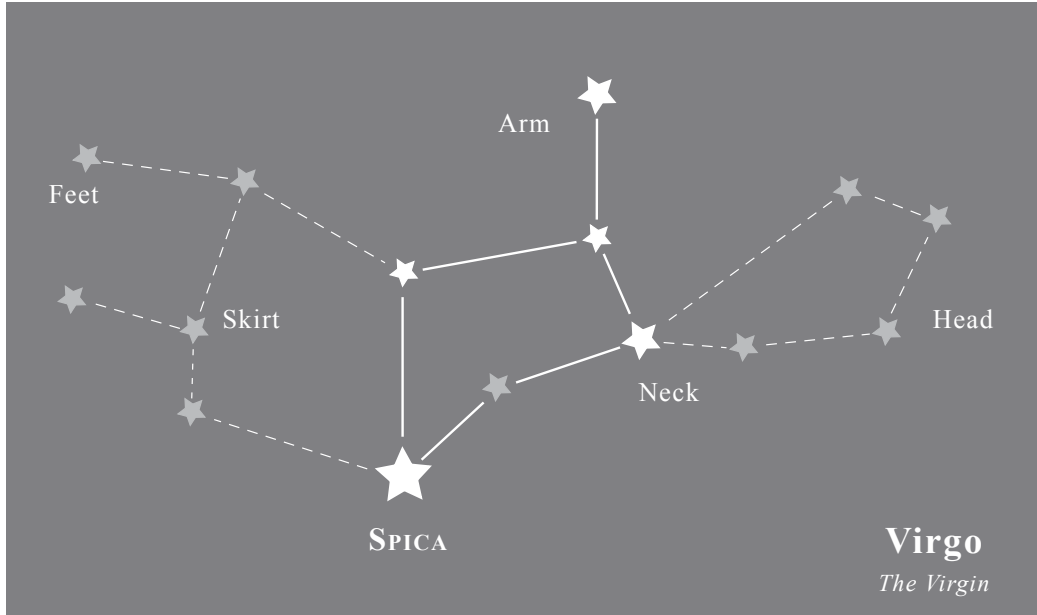


Bootes' head and leg are well-defined with bright stars. You'll need a darker night to see his pipe, which reaches up past the Dipper's handle.



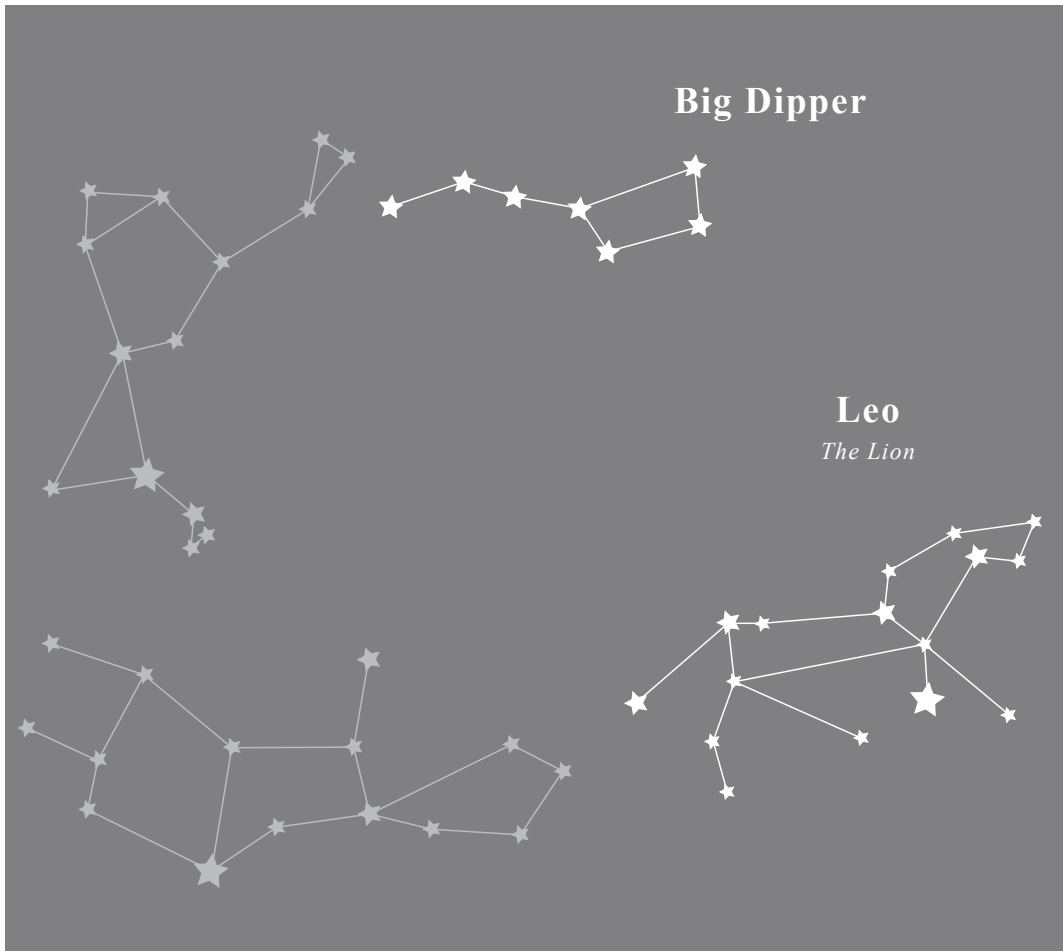
1. Sirius
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15. Regulus

The damsel in our story, Virgo, lies on her back with her arm outstretched. You can imagine that she has fainted after encountering the fierce Lion.



The main body of Virgo is outlined by bright stars. Her head and skirt are a little harder to see, and will require a clear, dark night.

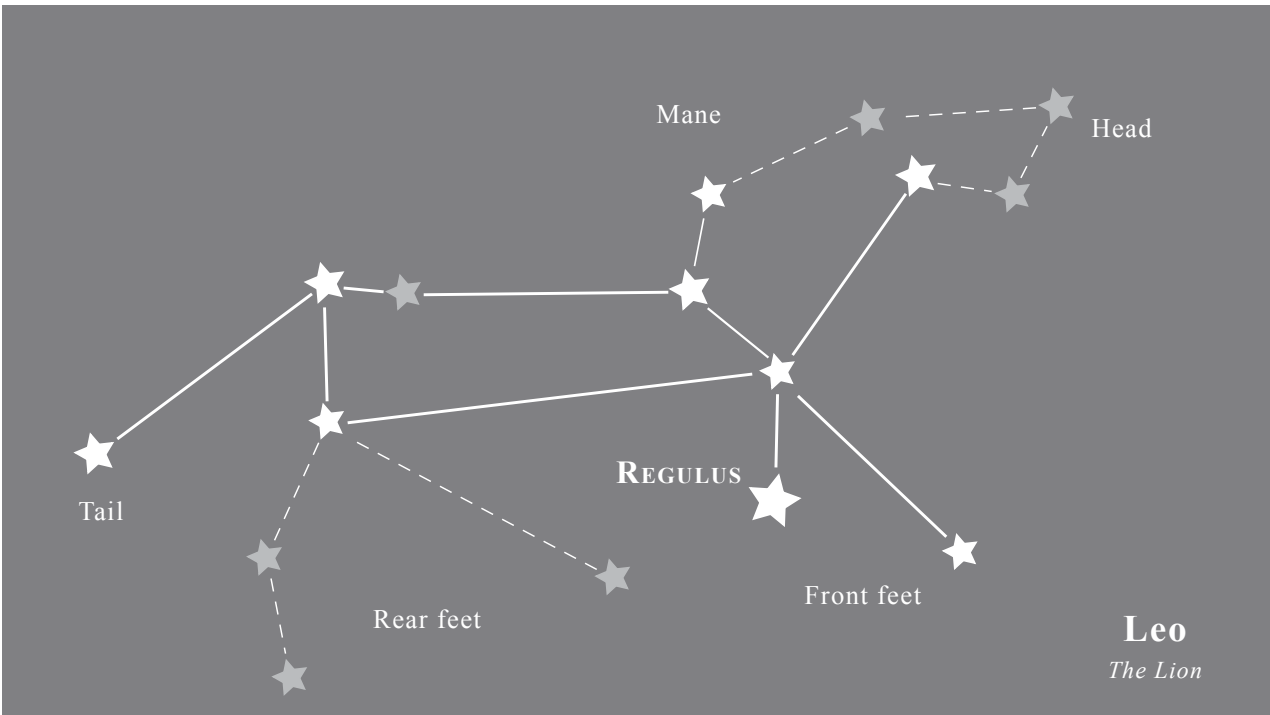
Spica, the eleventh brightest star, marks her bottom. You can imagine that Spica is a painful bruise she received when she fell.



1. Sirius
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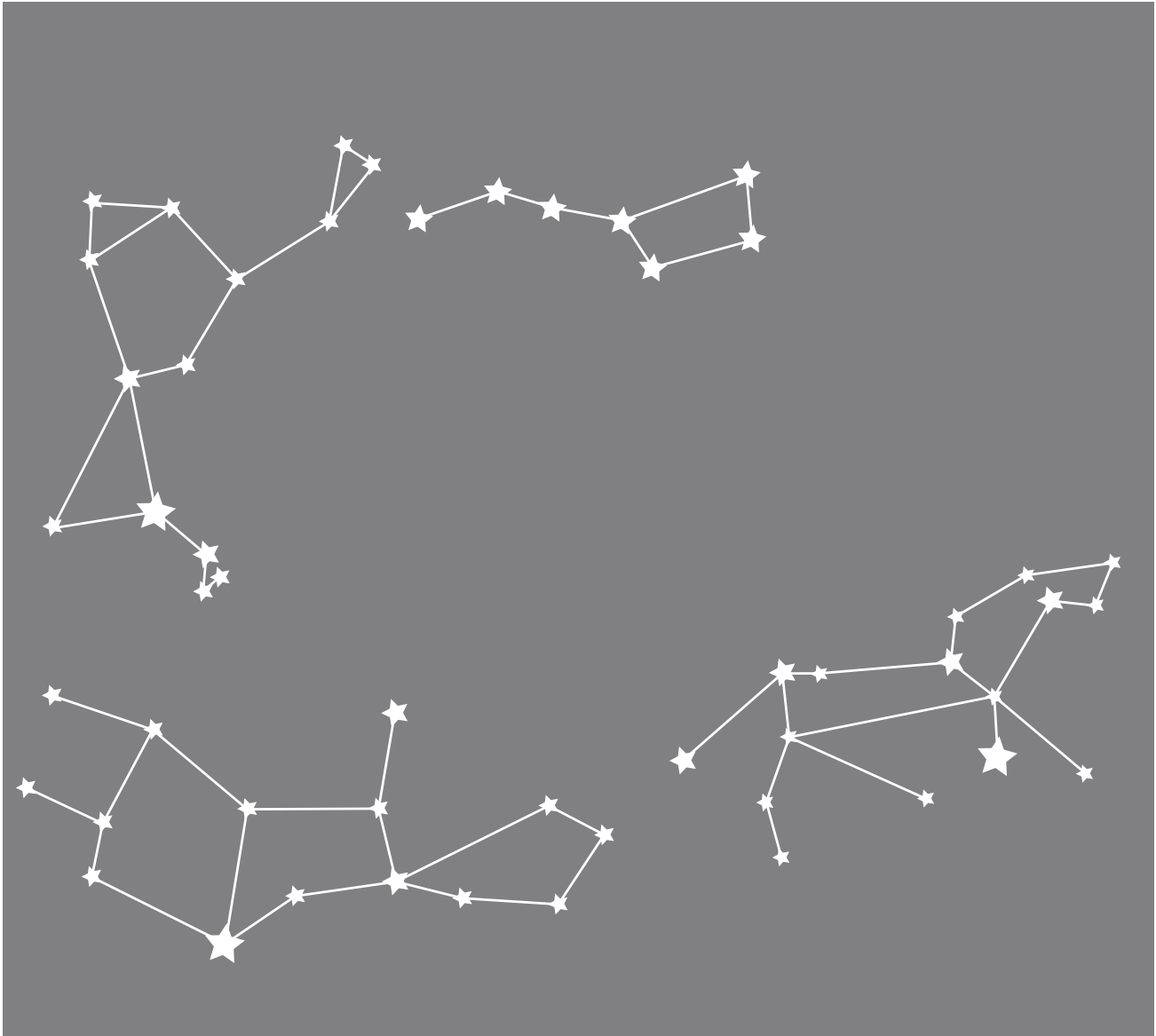
The final character in the story of our Damsel is the villain, *Leo The Lion*. The Lion causes the damsel Virgo to swoon, then marches proudly on, leaving her lying on her back, flailing her arms.

The kindly Herdsman takes pity on her, but the Lion doesn't even look back.



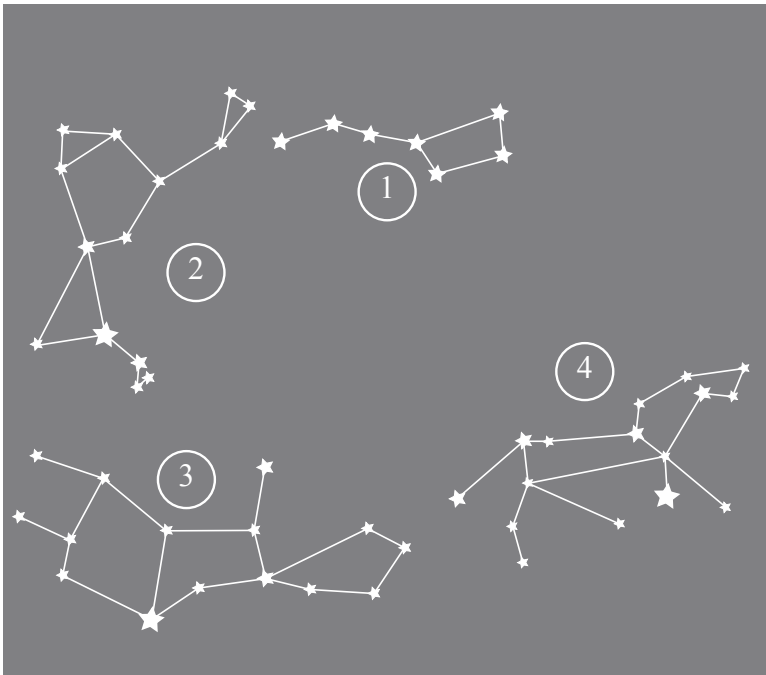
Leo has a fair number of bright stars and travels high in the sky, so even on an average viewing night he makes an impressive sight.

His rear-most front foot is marked by the weakest of our 15 brightest northern stars, Regulus. Perhaps the reason the Lion behaves so boorishly is that he is sensitive about his last place in the bright star list.



This completes our story of our **Dipper for a Damsel in Distress**. If the Big Dipper is out, you'll have a lot of new stars and constellations to search for.

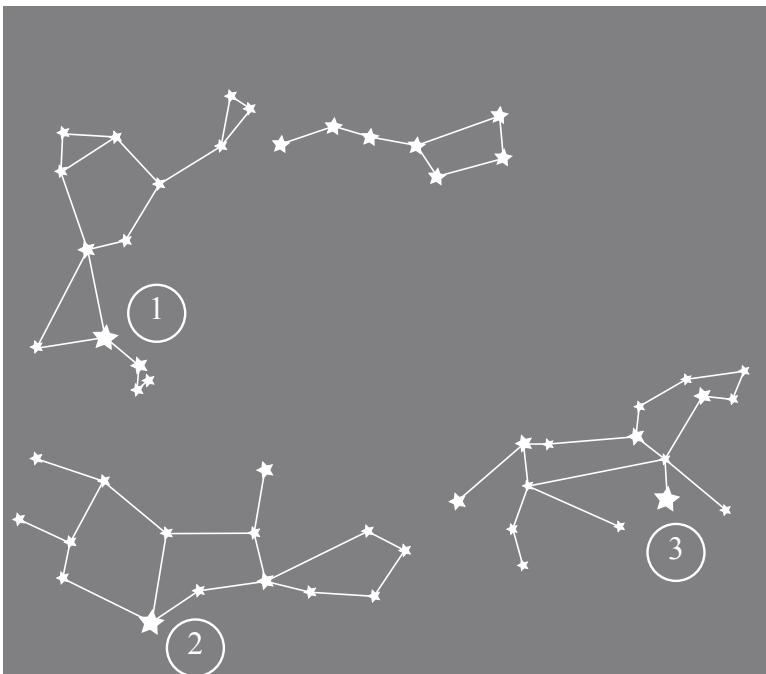
Test your knowledge on the next page.



Name the Constellations:

- ① _____
- ② _____
- ③ _____
- ④ _____

Dipper for a Damsel in Distress



Name the Bright Stars:

- ① _____
- ② _____
- ③ _____