

Odyssey
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These words uttered, at once moved onward Pallas Athene,
Hastily leading the way, and he followed the steps of the goddess.
Neither did any him note of the famed Phaeacian sea-folk
Passing the town in the midst of them all, for Athena the fair-tressed
Suffered it not, dread goddess, around him outpouring a darkness
Wonderful, mystic—for dear to her heart was the godlike Odysseus.
Marvelling much did he notice the well-built ships and the havens,
Squares for the meetings of men, and the long-drawn line of the ramparts
Lofty and all at the top palisaded—a wonder to gaze at.
Then, when at last they arrived at the chieftain's glorious mansion,
Thus she began to address him, the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“Look, Sir stranger! for here is the house to the which thou hast bid me
Show thee the way. Thou'lt find these princes, the children of heaven,
Feasting at banquets ; but enter thou boldly, nor feel in thy spirit
Fearful—for ever the man who in spirit is bold and undaunted
Proveth the better in deeds, ay, e'en if he comes from a distance.
First, in the banqueting-hall thou'lt light on the queen of the palace.
Arété is the name she is called, and she cometh of parents
E'en of the selfsame stock whence Alcinous is descended.
First came Nausithous, to the King Earth-shaking Poseidon
Born of the fair Periboea—of earth-born women the fairest—
Youngest of all of the daughters of Eurymedon great-hearted.
(He once reigned as the king of the arrogant nation of Giants ;
Ay but infatuate perished the people and perished the Ruler.)
So Periboea conceived, and she bare to Poseidon an offspring,
Nausithous great-souled, who ruled Phaeacia's people.
Nausithous was the father of Alcinous and a brother
Rhéxénor, who, still new-wedded, was slain by Apollo,
Lord of the silvern bow ; nor left he an heir, but a daughter
Arété, whom Alcinous then took for a consort.
Her hath he honoured as surely on earth no other is honoured,
None of the wives who in these our days keep house for their husbands.
Heartily thus was she ever respected and still is respected,
Both by the Ruler himself and by all of her children belovéd,
Ay and the people ; for all as a goddess regard her and greet her
Ever with reverent words when she walketh abroad in the city.
Yea and truly she lacks not at all of a good understanding ;
Those she befriends, nay even the men, their quarrels she endeth.
Shouldst thou be able to gain of the lady her heart and her favour,
Then good hope will be thine to revisit thy friends, and in safety
Win to thy high-roofed home once more, and the land of thy fathers.”



“ NIGH TO THE GATE THERE MET HIM
THE GREY-EYED GODDESS ATHENE ”

These words uttered, departing the grey-eyed goddess Athene
Over the wastes of the sea from the fair Phaeacian island
Marathon reached, and winning the wide-wayed city of Athens
Entered the strong-built fane of Erechtheus. Then did Odysseus
Wend on his way to the house of the king; and he pondered in spirit,
Ofttimes staying his steps ere reaching the bronze-wrought threshold.
For as the sheen of the sun or the moon, there floated a glory
Over the high-roofed palace of Alcinous great-hearted.
Brazen the walls, which ran from the threshold on this and on that side
Round to the innermost rooms; and above was a cornice of cyan.
Golden the portal within that the well-built mansion defended;
Silver the posts of the door, set fast in the bronze of the threshold;
Silver the lintel that rested upon them, and golden the handle.
Dogs each side of the porch were standing, of gold and of silver.
These Hephaestus himself had devised with his cunning invention,
Watchers to watch at the palace of Alcinous great-hearted;
There did they watch all deathless and ageless for ever and ever.
Close to the inside wall stood seats that on this and on that side
Reached to the innermost rooms from the threshold, and broidery o'er them,
Delicate, finely inwoven, was lying, the work of the women.
Here Phaeacian chiefs were oft to be seen at a banquet
Eating and drinking—for ever they found an unfailing abundance.
Here too, fashioned in gold and on fair-built bases of marble,
Youths were standing and holding uplifted radiant torches,
Lighting the gloom of the night in the halls of the house for the feasters.
Two score women and ten had the monarch as thralls in the palace,
Some that the yellow fruit of the corn-lands grind on a millstone,
Others that weave at the loom, and at twisting the wool with a spindle
Seated; but ever they move as the leaves of a high-branched poplar,
Weaving a linen so fine that the oil flows easily off it.
Yea, as the men far more are skilful than others of mortals
Swiftly to drive their ship in the waves, thus also the women
Others excel at the loom; for to them vouchsafeth Athene
Deftness in exquisite work and wisdom in cunning invention.
Outside, nigh to the gate of the court there lieth an orchard
Large as a field four-acred, enclosed all round by a fencing.
Here stands many a tree and in tall luxuriance bloometh;
Pears are here, and pomegranates, and apples with glittering fruitage;
Figs with a rich sweet harvest and blossoming thickets of olives.
Here doth the fruit of the trees ne'er perish or fail in the bearing,
Winter and summer alike perpetual. Ever the West Wind

Odyssey Bringeth the one to the birth with its breath and ripens the other.
VII Pear upon pear matureth with age and apple on apple,
119 - 157 Fig upon fig, and the grape grows, ripening cluster by cluster.
Here too, laden with fruit, stands planted a flourishing vineyard.
Part is a place for the drying—a levelled space in the open,
Parched by the heat of the sun; in another they gather the bunches,
Tread in another the vat; and in front hang berries unripened,
Casting the flower, but the rest is already beginning to purple.
Skirting the outermost row are beds of an orderly garden
Planted with many a herb and bright with perennial verdure.
Here two freshets of water arise : one over the garden
Scatters its streams, while under the courtyard threshold the other
Shoots to the high-roofed house and a fount whence draweth the townsman,
Such in the palace of Alcinous was the bounty of heaven.

There did he wondering stand, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.
Then, when at last he had gazed and had marvelled at all in his spirit,
Hastily over the threshold he stepped and entered the palace.
Here at the banquet he found Phaeacian leaders and nobles
Pouring a cup to the keen-eyed Hermes, the Slayer of Argus,
Whose is the last libation when men are thinking of slumber.
Up thro' the banqueting-hall long-suffering godlike Odysseus,
Having around him the cloud that was shed by the goddess Athene,
Went till he came to the queen and the great Phaeacian monarch.
Then, as he bent embracing her knees with his hands in entreaty,
Sudden the wonderful cloud rolled back, and it melted from off him,
While that the banqueters gazed all silent, beholding a man there,
Gazed as astounded; and thus did Odysseus begin his entreaty :
“Arete, O, daughter of King Rhexenor, the godlike,
Lo, to thy lord and thy knees I am come, outworn with my labours,
Yea and to all of thy guests.—May the gods all happiness grant them
While they shall live, and dying may each one leave to his children
House and domain and all of the honours bestowed by the people.
Nay but vouchsafe me an escort and aid my return to my homeland
Soon ! for afar from my friends long years have I suffered affliction.”
Thus did he speak, and he sat him adown by the hearth in the ashes
Close to the fire; and they all kept silent in speechless amazement.

Then at the last out-spake that hero, the old Echenëus ;—
Foremost in age was the hero of all Phaeacian nobles,
Foremost in speech, and sage in the wisdom of past generations.

Thus with a kindly intent he uplifted his voice and addressed them :
"Alcinous, this surely is nowise right nor is seemly.
Here is a stranger that sits on the ground by the hearth in the ashes,
While expecting thy word each one of us waits and is silent.
Nay now, bid him arise, and a chair bright-studded with silver
Offer the stranger to seat him therein ; and say to the henchmen
One more bumper to mix, and to Zeus who delighteth in thunder
Pour we libation ; for he all suppliants follows with pity ;
Then let the house-dame bring from her stores for the stranger a supper."
Straightway Alcinous, the revered and powerful monarch,
Hearing it, took by the hand wise-hearted and wileful Odysseus.
Raising him up from the hearth in a chair bright-studded he placed him,
Bidding his son to arise and vacate it, the youthful and manly
Laodamas, who next to him sat, and of all was the dearest.
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer
Beautiful, golden, and over a basin of silver she poured it,
Bidding him wash ; and she stationed a polished table beside him.
Then did the grave house-dame bring bread, and she laid it before him,
Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty.
So he did eat and drink, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.
Meanwhile Alcinous the redoubtable called to his henchman :
"Pontonous, come, mix strong wine and serve us a bumper,
Plenty for all of the guests, and to Zeus who delighteth in thunder
Pour we libation ; for he all suppliants follows with pity."
Thus did he speak, and a wine honey-hearted was mixed by the henchman ;
So to the guests he dispensed, first filling the cups for libation.

Now when at last they had poured and had drunk to their souls' satisfaction,
Then spake Alcinous to the feasters, and thus he addressed them :
"Hearken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and nobles !
Listen, for now I shall utter a thing that my spirit commands me !
Ended to-day is the feast. Go home and betake you to slumber.
Early the morn, still more of the elders assembled together
Here in the hall, we shall give to the stranger a feast, and to heaven
Noble oblations, and then of the escort shall duly bethink us,
Planning it so that the stranger without more toil and affliction
Under an escort of ours once more to the land of his fathers
Safely and swiftly shall come—yea though right far be his country ;
Nor on the way meanwhile shall he evil and injury suffer,
Ere on his native soil he is landed ; but then and thereafter
Suffer he must what is fated and doomed—what the terrible Spinners

Spun with the thread at his birth, when he came from the womb of his mother.
Be he however immortal, a being from heaven descended,
Then is a god some novel device unfolding around us,
Seeing that even till now they approached us in manifest vision,
Coming whenever of cattle we made some splendid oblation,
Feasting among us and e'en at the side of us sitting at table ;
Yea and besides, if it chanced that a lonesome wanderer met them,
Never disguise did they use ; for the race is akin to immortals,
Like the Cyclopan nation and lawless tribes of the Giants."

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:
"Alcinous, such thought be afar ! since verily nowise
Like to the gods everlasting who dwell in the infinite heaven
Either in form or in favour am I, but to men that be mortal ;
Yea and the men that ye know of with grief most heavily laden
These be the mortals to whom I can liken myself in affliction.
More, far more can I tell of the story of woe that befell me,
How by the will of the gods full many a hardship I suffered ;
Natheless, leave me in silence to sup, though heavy my heart be,
Seeing that nought so shameless a thing as a ravening belly
E'er can be found ; for it forceth a mortal to give it attention,
Though outwearied with toils and his heart o'erladen with sorrow.
Thus is my heart o'erladen with sorrow, but still doth the stomach
Bid me to eat and to drink, and all of the ills that I suffered
Wholly it makes me forget, and to feast to my fill it commands me.
Leave me, I pray—but arousing yourselves when the morning appeareth
Help me unfortunate back once more to the land of my fathers.
There shall my sufferings end—and my life would willingly end too,
After my home I have seen and my thralls and my high-roofed mansion."
Thus when he spake all gave him approval and made resolution
Homeward the stranger to help, since duly and well he had spoken.

So, when at last they had poured, and had drunk to their souls' satisfaction,
All of the feasters departed to sleep, each one to his homestead,
Leaving the godlike Odysseus behind in the hall of the palace.
Here queen Arete and Alcinous great-hearted
Sat by his side till the gear of the feast was removed by the maidens.
White-armed Arete then began, and breaking the silence
Spake, for she wondering saw and remembered the mantle and doublet,
Beautiful garments whereat she had worked, both she and her maidens.
Opening therefore her lips these swift-winged words she addressed him :

“First, O stranger, I ask—yea even myself will demand it—
Who art thou? Whence art thou come? Who gave thee the raiment thou wearest?
Didst thou not say that thou camest a wanderer over the ocean?”

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Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:
“Grievous it were, O queen, to relate thee the whole of my story,
All of the numberless woes that the gods celestial sent me.
Yet will I answer thy question and tell thee of all that thou askest.
Far hence over the ocean the isle Ogygia lieth,
Home of a daughter of Atlas, the guileful goddess Calypso,
Fair-tressed nymph of the sea—a divinity dreaded; for no one
Willingly seeketh her love, nor god nor man that is mortal.
Now, in my uttermost need, to her hearth some deity brought me
Sole—for my swift-winged ship with the blinding bolt of his thunder
Zeus in the midst of the wine-dark ocean had smitten and shattered;
There did the rest, yea all of my valiant shipmates perish.
Then with my arms to the keel of the twy-beaked vessel I clipt me.
Nine days long was I borne; on the tenth in the blackness of midnight
Nigh to the isle was I brought by the gods, where artful Calypso
Dwelleth—the fair-haired nymph, divinity dread, who received me,
Tenderly cherished and nourished me—yea and also she promised
Even to make me immortal and ageless for ever and ever;
Yet did she never persuade me nor soften the heart in my bosom.
Seven the years unbroken that here I remained, and for ever
Wetted with weeping my raiment, the magical gift of Calypso.
Now when the eighth year came with the slow revolution of seasons,
Then did she bid me depart, yea urged me to haste my departure,
Moved by a message from Zeus, or her mind its purpose had altered.
So on a firm-lashed raft did she launch me, and found me in plenty,
Bread and wine honey-sweet; and she clothed me in magic apparel;
Then did she send me a favouring breeze, both gentle and kindly.
Seven and ten long days did I voyage the waste of the waters,
Till, on the eighteenth day, I beheld far shadowy mountains,
These of this country of yours—and the spirit within me exulted.
Ah ill-fated! for verily still I was doomed to acquaint me
Often with grief—such woes did he send, Earth-shaking Poseidon,
Raising against me the winds and staying my path on the ocean;
Yea and a monstrous sea he aroused, nor longer the billows
Suffered me still with the groans of despair to remain on the vessel.
Her did a storm-blast shatter and scatter. I plunged in the ocean,
Swimming, and mighty the gulf I had cloven, when near to the dry land,

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Yea, to this country of yours, I was brought by the wind and the rollers.
Here, if to land I had ventured, the surge on the shore had o'erwhelmed me,
Hurling me onto the terrible rocks of a desolate region ;
Hastily therefore retreating I swam, till I came in my swimming
Unto to a river, and here, as it seemed, was the place for a landing ;
Smooth was the rockless beach and withal from the wind was a covert.
Landing I fell, and I lay collecting my senses ; and o'er me
Gathered ambrosial night ; then afar from the rain-fed river
Climbing I laid me to sleep in the thick of the bushes, around me
Pouring the leaves ; and a god shed over me infinite slumber.
Here in the leaves, to my inmost heart fordone with my labours,
Soundly the livelong night did I sleep, till the dawn and till midday ;
Yea, when already was sinking the sun sweet slumber released me.
Then did I see by the ocean thy daughter's maiden attendants
Sporting, and she in the midst of them all seemed like to a goddess.
Her I entreated for pity, nor failed she of good understanding ;
Ay and thou wouldst not expect of a youthful person that meets thee
Thus to behave, since ever the young are wont to be thoughtless.
Freely she gave me of bread and of glittering wine in abundance,
Bade me to bathe in the river, and then these garments she gave me.
Lo, I have spoken—and, much as it pains me, the truth I have uttered."

Then King Alcinous made answer, and thus he addressed him :

"Stranger, herein forsooth did a due and a right understanding
Fail in my child, that she guided thee not with the women, her handmaids,
Hither to this our house ; for to her first mad'st thou entreaty."

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :

"Hero ! for this, I beseech thee, upbraid not the excellent maiden,
Seeing she bade me indeed with the women attendants to follow ;
I was unwilling myself, since truly I feared, and it shamed me
Lest peradventure the sight might darken with anger thy spirit.
Terribly jealous we seem, all earth-born races of mortals."

Then King Alcinous made answer, and thus he addressed him :

"Stranger, in sooth not such is the heart in the bosom within me
Wantonly thus to be wroth. Fair measure is better in all things.
Ay and by Father Zeus, by Athena and Phoebus Apollo,
Would that a man like thee, who art minded, meseemeth, as I be,
Taking my daughter to wife might will as my son to content him
Here to remain ! I am ready to give both cattle and homestead
Shouldst thou consent to remain—though none shall compel thee unwilling,
No Phaeacian—Zeus our Father in heaven forbid it !

Nay, to assure thee of this, will I straightway order the escort
Now for the morrow; and while with a drowsiness thou overmastered
Liest asleep, they, sweeping the calm of the ocean, shall bear thee
Unto thy land and thy home, or whither thy soul desireth,
Ay though farther by far it is distant than even Euboea,
Land that of all lies farthest—so say those men that beheld it,
Those of this people of mine who once fair-haired Rhadamanthys
Thither conveyed, Tityos, huge offspring of Gaia, to visit.
Thither they came and the journey without all labour accomplished
E'en on the selfsame day and finished the voyaging homeward.
Thus of thyself thou'lt learn that my ships all others outrival,
Ay and my youths all others at tossing the brine with the oar-blade."

So did he speak, and for joy long-suffering godlike Odysseus
Offered to heaven a prayer and uttered aloud his entreaty:
"Father Zeus, I beseech thee that all he hath said shall accomplish
Alcinous, since thus on the earth, dear mother of harvests,
Ne'er shall his glory be dimmed, and again I shall come to my homeland."

So these twain held converse together the one with the other.
White-armed Arete meantime commanded her maidens
Setting a bedstead under the porch fair blankets upon it
Purple in colour to cast, and over them coverlets spreading,
Mantles of wool moreover to lay enwrapping them warmly.
So from the hall went quickly the handmaids carrying torches.
Then, when a thick soft bed they had strown, all busily toiling,
Unto Odysseus they came, and thus exhorting addressed him:
"Up now, stranger! Thy bed is prepared. Go, lay thee to slumber."
Thus did they speak, and a thing right welcome it seemed to repose him.
There then slumbering lay long-suffering godlike Odysseus
Under the echoing porch on a bedstead of beautiful carvings.
Alcinous too slept in the innermost room of the palace,
Where at his side was arrayed by his lady her bedding and bedstead.

ODYSSEY BOOK VIII

NOW when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Rose from his couch King Alcinous the revered and the mighty,
Rose too heaven-descended Odysseus, the sacker of cities.
Then did the monarch revered lead forth to the place of the galleys
Where Phaeacian elders had built their court of assembly.
Here they arrived and on seats well-polished of marble they set them
Closely together. But thoro' the town went Pallas Athene,
Like to the herald himself of the wise Phaeacian monarch,
Planning to bring to his home once more great-hearted Odysseus.
So to them all and to each she addressed her and made proclamation:
"Hither assemble, ye leaders and high Phaeacian chieftains!
Come to the place of the council, and there ye shall learn of the stranger
Newly arrived at the palace of Alcinous wise-hearted,
One that hath voyaged the seas and in favour is like the immortals."
Thus as she spake, in the minds of them all she excited a longing:
Speedily filled were all of the places of council, and benches
Thronged by the gathering crowds, and soon full many in wonder
Gazed at the wise-souled son of Laertes; and Pallas Athene
Wonderful beauty and grace poured forth on his head and his shoulders,
Making him larger in person to look at and greater in stature,
So as to gain him the favour of all Phaeacian people,
Ay and their awe and respect—and so as to win him the contests
Many and great wherewith Phaeacians tested Odysseus.
Now when they all had collected together and formed an assembly
Rose King Alcinous in the midst and thus he addressed them:
"Hearken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains,
So that I utter the things that the heart in my bosom commands me.
Lo, this stranger—I know not his name—is arrived at my palace,
Wandering come from the land of a nation of dawn or of sunset.
Escort he urgently begs us to give and to promise for certain.
So, as was ever the wont in the past, let us grant him an escort,
Since no other of mortals that ever arrived at my palace
Here lamenting remained long time for the want of a convoy.
Come, let us drag to the vast salt ocean a black-hulled vessel
New from the stocks, and of youths let two and fifty as oarsmen
Out of the people be chosen, who best have proved them aforetime.
Then, so soon as the men have fastened the oars to the thole-pins,
Leave ye the vessel, and come to my palace, and make preparation

There for a hasty repast ; and provision for all will I offer.
Such the commands that I give to the youths ; but the others, whoever
Bearth the sceptre as chief, in the halls of my beautiful mansion
Gather together and there entertain at a banquet the stranger.
Neither let any refuse. And summon the singer, the godlike
Demodocus ; for to him as to none God granted by singing
All to enrapture, whenever his spirit to singing incites him."

These words uttered he led from the council ; him followed the chieftains
Bearing their rods, and a herald departed to summon the singer.
Then were chosen the youths, and two and fifty in number
Went, as he bade, to the beach of the barren expanse of the ocean.
Now when at last they had gotten them down to the sea and the vessel,
Firstly the black-hulled vessel they drew to the deep salt water,
Then, embarking the mast and the sails on the black-hulled vessel,
All of the oars to the tholes they attached with the lashings of leather,
Each in its place, and the white sails hoisting aloft on the yardarm
Anchored her far from the shore in the midst of the haven, and forthwith
Went on their way to the mansion of Alcinous wise-hearted.
Filled were all of the porches and garths and the buildings, as countless
Gathered together the guests, both many a youth and an elder.
These to regale had the king of his fat sheep slaughtered a dozen,
Eight of his white-tusked swine, and a yoke of his slow-paced cattle ;
These they had flayed and prepared and had furnished a beautiful banquet.

Now did the herald approach conducting the sweet-voiced minstrel.
Loved by the Muse was the bard ; but she gave him of good and of evil :
Reft was the light of his eyes, but with sweetest song he was dowered.
Forthwith Pontonous set a chair bright-studded with silver
Midst of the feasters, and close to a high roof-pillar he placed it.
Then from a peg down-hanging the clear-toned lute he suspended
Over his head, and he showed him to reach with the hand and to grasp it.
Thus did the henchman, and bringing a basket and beautiful table
Gave him of wine in a goblet to drink when his spirit enjoined him.
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Stirred by the Muse was the singer to sing of the glories of heroes,
Sing of the theme whose fame to the infinite heaven was reaching,
Even the strife of Odysseus and great Pelean Achilles,—
How at a beautiful feast of the gods contending in anger
Words outrageous they spake ; and the warrior-king Agamemnon

Joyed in his spirit, beholding the best of the Greeks in contention.
This had the answer of Phoebus Apollo in beautiful Pytho
Told him, when passing the threshold of stone he had entered the temple
Seeking the rede of the god ; for beginning to roll was disaster
Over the Trojans and Greeks by the counsels of Zeus the Almighty.
Such was the lay that he sang, that singer renowned ; but Odysseus,
Grasping with stalwart hand at the folds of his mantle of purple,
Over his head down drew it, till all of his face he had covered,
Loth that the men might mark tears falling from under his eyebrows.
Yea and as oft as the godlike singer had ceased from his singing,
Drying the tears and back from his head withdrawing the mantle,
Taking a two-cupped goblet he poured to the gods a libation.
Yet, when again a beginning he made—for to sing they impelled him,
All Phaeacia's nobles, so much in his lays they delighted—
Then did Odysseus, enwrapping his head once more, make moaning.
Thus did he sit there weeping, unnoted by all of the others,
All save Alcinous, who alone was aware and observed it,
Sitting anigh to his side ; and hearing him heavily groaning,
Quickly he turned to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia's princes :
“ Harken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains.
Now in us all is the spirit content with abundance of feasting,
Ay and content with the lute, loved consort of bountiful banquets.
So let us forth from the palace and prove our prowess at contests,
Every kind, for the stranger to tell, when he reaches his homeland,
Unto his friends, how skilful we are, all others excelling,
Either to box or to wrestle or leap, or to run in the foot-race.”

These words uttered, he led from the hall, and they followed the monarch.
Then, when the clear-toned lute on the peg he had hung, did the herald,
Grasping the hand of the singer and guiding him forth from the palace,
Lead him away by the road on the which were wending the others,
All Phaeacia's nobles, who, eager to witness the contest,
Pressed to the place of the games ; and a crowd came thronging behind them,
Thousands and thousands ; and youths stood forth right many and noble :
Acroneos upstood, and Ocyalus and Elatreus,
Nauteus and Prymneus and Anchialus and Eretmeus ;
Then Anabésineos and Thoön, and Ponteus and Proreus ;
Amphialus, whose father was Tekton's son Polynéus ;
Euryalus too, equal of Ares the Slayer of mortals,
Naubolus' son, uprose, surpassing in form and in favour
All Phaeacia's fairest but Laodamas the unrivalled.

Last rose three of the children of Alcinous the heroic,
Laodamas, Halius, and the godlike youth Clytonéus.
These then firstly of all made trial of speed in the foot-race.
Straight from the start all straining their utmost they raced and together
Over the plain went flying and raising behind them a dust-cloud.
Fleetest of all in the race was by far Clytonéus the peerless ;
Far as the length of a furrow that mules might draw in a fallow
Darting ahead he arrived at the crowd, outstripping the others.
Then did they test their strength in the wrestler's toilsome contest.
Here it was Euryalus that of all of the strong was the strongest.
Far to the fore of the others was Amphialus in the leaping,
While with cast of the quoit far best of them all was Elatreus.
Best at the boxing was Laodamas, brave son of the monarch.

Now when the hearts of them all were fully content with the contests
Thus spake Laodamas and addressed them, the son of the monarch :
" Hither, my friends ! Let us ask if in feats athletic the stranger
Knowledge possesseth and skill. Not feeble in frame he appeareth.
Look at the thigh and the leg and the arm from the hand to the shoulder !
Stalwart the neck and enormous its might ; nor at all doth his manhood
Lack of its prime ; but his vigour is broken by many a hardship ;
Neither, believe me, is aught to be found which worse than the ocean
Ruins the strength of a man, how hardy soever his body."
Forthwith Euryalus made answer and thus he addressed him :
" Laodamas, full wise is thy word and is spoken in season.
Nay but approach him thyself and accost him and give him a challenge."
Straight, as he heard these words, did the gallant son of the monarch
Step to the fore, and standing in front of Odysseus address him :
" Come, Sir stranger, and make thou a trial thyself in a contest,
Beest thou practised in any—and surely thou knowest of contests,
Seeing that nought for a man is a glory, as long as he liveth,
Greater than suchlike deeds with his hands or his feet to accomplish.
Nay, come, make but a trial—and scatter the gloom of thy spirit.
Not much longer deferred is thy homeward return, for already
Launched is the ship and already equipped are waiting thy shipmates."
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
" Laodamas, why thus do ye challenge me, only to mock me ?
Mourning and grief are filling my mind much more than a contest,
Since right many a woe did I suffer and many a hardship ;
Yea and amidst these throngs with a craving at heart for my homeland
Now I am sitting, a suppliant still of the king and his people."
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PATTEK MULLER

ODYSSEUS TAKES PART IN THE CONTESTS

Then spake Euryalus, to his face thus taunting Odysseus :
“Nay, O stranger, and truly I liken thee not to a mortal
Practised in any of all of the contests known to the nations ;
Rather to one who frequents with his well-benched vessel the harbours,
Skipper, methinks, of a folk of the sea who traffic as chapmen,
Mindful of nought but the bales and careful of nought but the cargo,
Ay and the grab and the gain. Sooth, thou wert never an athlete!”
Glaring askance at the man thus answered the wileful Odysseus:
“Stranger, thy speech is indecent. Thou seemest an insolent mortal.
So was it ever ! The gods vouchsafe not gifts that be gracious
All to the one—both beauty and wit and the skill of a speaker.
One is by nature a man of contemptible presence, but heaven
Crowneth his words with enchantment of grace ; and the people that hear him
Gaze in delight as he speaks with an easy and modest assurance
Eloquent words ; him only they see midst all the assembly ;
Him, as he walks in the city, they view, as it were an immortal.
Then will another in beauty resemble a god of Olympus,
Yet, for his words—no garland of gracefulness resteth upon them.
Such is thy lot : for in beauty preëminent (comelier scarcely
Heaven itself might make thee) in mind thou art utterly futile.
See ! thou stirrest my spirit to wrath in the bosom within me,
Prating indecently. No ! not a churl unpractised in contests,
Such as thou sayest, am I—but, I trow, in the rank of the foremost
Ever I stood in the days when I trusted my hands and my manhood.
Now am I holden of pain and affliction ; for sorely I suffered,
Tossed on the billows of war and the grievous waves of the ocean.
Yet, e'en so, though many my woes, I will enter the contest,
Since I am stung to the heart, and my wrath is aroused by thy prating.”

Spake and arose ; nor doffed he his mantle, but seized on a discus
Greater than others and thicker and weightier not by a little
Than Phaeacians use competing the one with the other.
Swinging it strongly around, from his sinewy hand he released it.
Booming it flew, while down to the ground crouched low in amazement
All those masters of oars, those famed Phaeacian seamen,
Under the rush of the stone ; and it flew far over the limits,
Speeding so swift from his hand. And the casts were marked by Athene,
Likened in outward form to a man, and she spake and addressed him :
“E'en might one that is blind such mark, O stranger, discover,
Groping around. Not lost in the throng of the others it lieth,
Nay but afar to the fore. Canst hope this time to be victor.”

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Never a man of them all will be able to pass it, or reach it.”
Thus did she speak, and he joyed, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,
Glad to behold in the crowd some favouring friend to applaud him.
Then with a lightened heart to the youths Phaeacian turning :
“There now ! Beat it, my lads ! Soon cometh another to follow !
Even as far as the first will I hurl it, or farther, believe me,
Ay and if any will come, if his heart and his spirit incite him
Trial to make, let him come—so mightily stirred is my anger—
Whether to box or to wrestle or race—what he will !—for I care not—
Any of all of the others !—but Laodamas be excepted !
He is my host. Is it seemly to fight with the man that befriends one ?
Verily only a fool or a fellow worthless by nature
Thus would offer a challenge of strife to the friend that received him
Here in an alien land. ’T would sever him clean from his fortune.
All of the others can come ! I will neither refuse nor disdain them.
Nay, I am fain to acquaint me with all and to prove them in public.
Nor am I utterly wanting in every manly achievement.
Well do I know as an archer a bow well-polished to handle.
First was I ever to smite with the arrow my man in the combat,
Warring with hostile hosts—ay, even if many companions
Stood there close to my side, all aiming with shafts at the foemen.
Only Philóctetes as an archer excelled me whenever
There in the country of Troy we Achaeans contended as bowmen.
Yea of the archers on earth I avow me as easily foremost,
All now living amidst bread-nourished races of mortals.
Only with heroes of old am I nowise willing to match me,
Neither with Heracles nor the famed Oechalian monarch.
These with the gods everlasting themselves contended as bowmen ;
Wherefore suddenly perished the prince, great Eurytus, neither
Age crept slowly upon him at home, for in anger Apollo
Killed him because he had ventured to challenge the god as an archer.
Further I hurl with a lance than another can shoot with an arrow.
Only on foot do I fear lest some Phaeacian runner
Leave me behind, for indeed I am shamefully broken and weakened
Tossing so long on the waves ; nor with food in sufficing abundance
Found was my ship ; so loosened is every joint of my body.”

Thus did he speak, and they all stood utterly silent and speechless,
Till King Alcinous found words to reply and addressed him :
“ Stranger, assure thee ! for nothing displeasing thou speakest amongst us,
Wishing to give fair proof of the prowess that ever attends thee,

Wroth with the fellow who here in the lists and in public before thee
Tauntingly spake, in a manner in which would speak of thy prowess
None, if he e'er was accustomed to utter a word that is seemly.
Now come, mark what I say. It will give thee a tale to another
Warrior friend to relate, when at home in the hall of thy palace,
Sitting at supper by side of thy well-loved wife and thy children,
This our prowess thou callest to mind and the feats that on us too
Zeus hath bestowed, as he did in the days of the fathers before us.
Neither as boxers we boast us unrivalled nor perfect as wrestlers,
Only in fleetness of foot we excel and in sailing a vessel ;
Ever is feasting a thing that delights us, and music and dancing ;
Changes of raiment we love, warm baths and luxurious slumber.
Come now, all of the deftest to tread Phaeacian measures,
Dance for us, dance ! that the stranger may see and relate, when he cometh
Unto his friends, what skill we possess, all others excelling,
Both in the sailing of ships and in running and dancing and singing.
Also for Demodocus let the clear-toned lute by the herald
Quickly be fetched ; it is lying, I ween, in the hall of the palace."

Thus spake Alcinous the heroic. The herald uprising
Started to bring for the singer the hollow harp from the palace.
Then upstanding, the stewards of games—nine judges, elected
Out of the people, by whom in the lists all duly was ordered—
Levelled a space for the dance, and a fair broad ring they encircled.
Now did the herald approach and the clear-toned lute that he carried
Give to the blind old singer, who stepp'd to the midst—and around him
Boys in the bloom of their youth took stand right skilful in dancing ;
So with a wonderful measure they smote on the ground, and Odysseus
Gazed at the flash and the twinkle of feet, and he marvelled in spirit.

Then to his harp uplifting his beautiful voice did the singer
Sing of the passion of Ares for fair-crowned Queen Aphrodite,
How they as lovers at first held tryst at the house of Hephaestus
Secretly meeting ; and how by his gifts he prevailed and dishonour
Brought on the bed of her lord ; but as messenger hasted to tell him
Eëlios, who had noted them meeting in tender embracement.
Then did Hephaestus, as soon as the grievous tidings had reached him,
Go to his forge, devising revenge in the depths of his bosom.
Here on the stithy he set the enormous anvil and forged him
Fetters not to be broken or loosed, to entrap and to hold them.
Now when at last he had fashioned the toils, in his anger at Ares,

Into the chamber he entered wherein, as of old, was his bedstead.
Here to the posts of the bed, all round it, he fastened the netting;
Much of it also he fastened above it, attached to a rafter,
Fine as the web of a spider, that none could ever perceive it
E'en of the blesséd immortals: so cunningly fine was it fashioned.
So, when at last he had fastened the toils all over the bedstead,
Then he pretended to go to the well-built city of Lemnos,
Land that was dear to his heart—far dearer than every other.
Neither was blind as a watcher the god, gold-glistening Ares.
Seeing Hephaestus, the worker renowned, set forth on a journey,
Speedily unto the house of the far-famed god he betook him
Filled with the longing of love for the fair-crowned queen Cytherea.
Newly arrived from the home of her father, the mighty Cronion,
Resting she quietly sat; and he entering into the mansion
Tenderly clung to her hand; then he opened his lips and addressed her:
“Come, let us go, my belovéd, and lie on the bed and enjoy us!
Nowhere nigh is Hephaestus, but started already for Lemnos,
Gone to the Sintian folk, that people of barbarous language.”
Thus did he speak, and a thing right pleasant it seemed to the goddess.
So they ascended the bed and reclined them to sleep; but the netting,
Cunningly wrought by the crafty Hephaestus, descended upon them:
Suddenly gone was the power of lifting a limb, or of moving.
Then at the last they perceived it when all too late to escape it;
Ay and already at hand was the famed deft-handed Hephaestus,
Back from his journey returned ere reaching the island of Lemnos.
Eëlios on the watch had remained and had brought him the tidings.
Homeward straight he returned with a heart sore troubled within him;
Up to the portal he strode, and he stood; fierce anger possessed him;
Then with a terrible cry to the gods of Olympus he shouted:
“Father Zeus and ye other immortals eternally blesséd,
Come and behold! 'Tis a matter to laugh at, but not to be suffer'd.
Lo now, me that am lame this daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite,
Ever dishonours and loveth instead man-murdering Ares,
Since he is fair to the sight and in limb he is straight; but a body
Weakly was mine from my birth—Nor verily blame I another,
Only my parents. I would they had never begotten and borne me!
Come! ye shall see these twain now lying in loving embracement;
Here on my bed they are mounted—behold! At the sight I am maddened!
Scarce for a moment more, do I think, they are longing to lie here,
E'en though hotly in love—nor quickly again will be longing
Thus to be bedded together. But here they are trapped and imprisoned

Till that her father repay, to the last one, every bride-gift,
All that I left in his hands as the price of the impudent baggage—
Ay, for his daughter is fair, but she knows not to bridle her passions.”
Thus did he speak, and the gods to his brass-floor'd mansion collected:
Hither Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, hastened and Hermes,
Bringer of fortune, and hither the prince far-working Apollo,
While that behind with a womanly shame stay'd every goddess.
Soon at the porch were standing the deities, bringers of blessings.
Then an unquenchable laughter arose mid the blesséd immortals
While they beheld the device that was wrought by the cunning Hephaestus,
Looking whereon thus whispered the one to the other beside him:
“Ill deed prospereth never; the slow oft catcheth the nimble:
Even as now by the tardy Hephaestus o'ertaken is Ares,
Ares, the swiftest of all of the gods that inhabit Olympus,
Caught in the toils of the Limper—and compensation he oweth.”
Thus conversing together they whispered, the one to the other;
Then spake lordly Apollo, the son of Cronion, to Hermes:
“Zeus-born Hermes, the herald of heaven and bringer of blessings,
Say now, feelst thou a longing in such strong fetters imprisoned
Lying beside her in bed to embrace Aphrodite the golden?”
Him thus answered the herald of heaven, the Slayer of Argus:
“Had I but only the luck, O lord, far-darting Apollo!
E'en though triple in number the toils—yea endless—that held me;
E'en though all of you gods stood gazing, and every goddess,
Give me to lie by her side and embrace Aphrodite the golden!”
Thus did he speak, and anew fell laughter upon the immortals,
All but Poseidaon; unsmiling he stood and entreaty
Made to Hephaestus the cunning to loosen the fetters of Ares.
Thus then raising his voice these swift-winged words he addressed him:
“Loose him, I pray! and I promise that whatsoever thou biddest,
All he shall pay that is held to be fair with the gods everlasting.”
Him then addressing in turn gave answer the famous Craftsman:
“Nay but, Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, thou shouldst not demand it!
Worthless is ever a pledge that is offered by one that is worthless.
How can I hold thee bound in the eyes of the blesséd immortals
Should our Ares depart and escape both fetters and forfeit?”
Him then again gave answer the King Earth-shaking Poseidon:
“Nay but, Hephaestus, if ever it hap that avoiding the forfeit
Ares elude thee, I promise myself all dues to repay thee.”
Him then addressing again gave answer the famous Craftsman:
“Truly 'tis neither becoming nor possible this to refuse thee.”

These words uttered, the mighty Hephaestus unfastened the fetters.
Then did the twain, set free from the grievous constraint of the netting,
Spring straight upward and vanish—To Thracia Ares departed,
She to the Cyprian isle, Aphrodite, the lover of laughter,
Even to Paphos—for here is her shrine and her altar of incense.
Here did the Graces receive her and bathe and anoint her with unguent
Not of the earth; but it lieth as bloom on the limbs of immortals.
Then did they clothe her in beautiful raiment, a wonder to gaze at.

Such was the story he sang, this singer renown'd, and Odysseus
Listened rejoicing in spirit, as also the rest of the hearers,
All those lovers of oars, those famed Phaeacian seamen.

Bidden was now Halius, and Laodamas, by the monarch
Single to dance; for in dancing was no one able to match them.
These then, into the hand when a beautiful ball they had taken,
Purple in hue, by the skilful artificer Polybus fashioned,
One of them hurled it aloft to the shadowy clouds of the heaven,
Bending him back for the throw. From the ground upleaping, the other
Easily caught it before with his feet on the earth he alighted.
Now when the trial was ended of casting the ball straight upward,
Then did they set them to dance on the earth's all-nourishing bosom,
Rapidly flinging in turn, while comrades clapping in measure
Stood in the lists, and around them arose a tumultuous uproar.
Turning to Alcinous, then addressed him the godlike Odysseus:
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,
Truly thou claimst for thy people a skill unrivalled in dancing,
Yea, for the fact is approved: as I look I am filled with amazement."
Thus as he spake, the revered and powerful monarch exulted.
Quickly he turned to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia's nobles:
"Hearken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains!
Truly the stranger appeareth endowed right richly with wisdom.
Come, let us find him a gift, as is meet and is due to a stranger!
Seeing that over the land are twelve illustrious princes
Ruling as chiefs, and myself as a thirteenth wielding the sceptre,
Each might give to the stranger a robe well-washed and a doublet,
Also of precious gold be the weight of a talent collected.
Quickly together let all of the presents be brought, that the stranger
Having them safe in his hands may joyfully go to his supper.
Thou too, Euryalus, shouldst find soft words to appease him,
Ay and a gift, for in truth was the speech that thou madest unseemly."

So did he speak, and the others assented thereto and approved it,
Each of the nobles despatching a herald to fetch him the presents;
Neither did Euryalus keep silence, but thus he addressed him:
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,
Lo, I perform thy behest and will make to the stranger atonement.
This is the present I offer—a hanger of bronze with a handle
Silver-embossed, and around it, of new-sawn ivory fashioned,
Waveth a sheath. He will find it methinks no worthless possession."
These words spoken, he handed the broadsword studded with silver
Unto Odysseus, and loudly with swift-winged words he addressed him:
"Hail, Sir stranger! If any at all of the words that I uttered
Pained thee, I would that the winds might carry it hence in a storm-blast,
Yea and I wish thee a speedy return to thy wife and thy homeland.
Grant it the gods! for indeed too long thou hast suffered in exile."
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:
"Hail thou also, my friend, and the gods all happiness grant thee!
Never, I hope, will it pain thee in future when missing thy hanger,
E'en this blade that thou gav'st while offering words of atonement."
Speaking he hung to his shoulder the broadsword studded with silver.
Now was a-setting the sun, and arrived had the glorious presents;
These to the house of the king were borne by magnificent heralds;
Then by the hands of the children of Alcinous the unrivalled
Laid at the side of their mother revered was the beautiful treasure.

Following now in the steps of the mighty and reverend monarch
All to the palace returned, and on high-raised seats they reclined them.
Then did the powerful king call Arete and address her:
"Hither, my queen—bring hither a chest right goodly—thy best one—
Placing therein for the stranger a well-washed robe and a doublet.
Then on the hearth set boiling a cauldron for heating of water.
After a bath he shall look at the gifts all lying in order,
All of the presents bestowed by the high Phaeacian nobles;
So will he joy in the feast and in hearing the lay of the singer.
Also a thing of my own will I give—this beautiful goblet
Solid of gold—that of me it remind him whene'er he shall use it
Pouring at home a libation to Zeus and the other immortals."
Thus did he speak, and the queen Arete ordered her maidens
Station a three-legged pot on the fire, as quickly as might be.
They on the glow of the hearth put a tripod, and water for bathing
Poured in the kettle and brought fresh faggots and set them a-blazing.
Licked was the cauldron's belly by flames, and warmed was the water.

Meantime Arete brought forth a magnificent coffer
Out of her room for the stranger, and laid fair presents within it,
Even the raiment and gold that the chiefs Phaeacian gave him,
Adding thereto of her treasures a beautiful mantle and doublet.
Then did she open her lips and with swift-winged words she addressed him :
“ Lo now, look to the lid and a cord cast quickly around it,
Lest on the voyage perchance some robber despoil thee, if haply
Slumbering sweetly aboard of the black-hulled vessel thou liest.”
Hearing the words that she spake long-suffering godlike Odysseus
Forthwith fastened the lid and a cord cast quickly around it
Cleverly tied with a knot he had learnt of the beautiful Circe.
Scarce was it done when the house-dame entered to fetch him for bathing,
Bidding him come to the tub ; and he joyed in his spirit beholding
Warm bath-water—to such an attention all unaccustomed
Since he had come from the home of the fair-haired goddess Calypso.
(While he was there he had comfort continual, like an immortal.)

Now when Odysseus was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,
Round him the maids cast raiment—a beautiful mantle and tunic.
So from the bath he returned, and he came to the chiefs at their wine-cups
Even as Nausicaa in her beauty, the dower of heaven,
Stood by the post of the door of the massively builded apartment.
There as he passed her she looked at Odysseus with wondering glances ;
Then did she open her lips and with swift-winged words she addressed him :
“ Stranger, farewell—and at times, while happy and safe in thy homeland,
Think upon me—since mostly to me thou owest thy safety.”
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
“ Nausicaa, fair daughter of Alcinous great-hearted,
So may omnipotent Zeus, loud-thundering husband of Hera,
Grant me the day of return and to come back safe to my country,
Then e'en there in my home will I offer thee prayers as a goddess
All of the days of my life—for my life thou gavest me, maiden.”

These words spoken, he sank in a seat by the side of the monarch,
While that the men were serving the portions and mixing the wine-bowls.
Then drew nearer the herald conducting the sweet-voiced singer
Demodocus, the revered, the belov'd of the people, and brought him
Midst of the feasters, and close to a high roof-pillar he set him.
Then to the herald addressed him aloud deep-plotting Odysseus,
Showing a slice he had cut from a chine (still more was remaining),
Flesh of a white-tusked boar, with the rich fat hanging around it :

“Take, O herald, and offer this meat as a mess to the minstrel,
Demodocus. I will give him a greeting in spite of my sorrow ;
Yea, for amongst all mortals that dwell on the earth is the singer
Granted a guerdon of honour and reverence, since that he learneth
All of his song from the Muse ; for she loveth the race of the poets.”
Thus did he speak to the herald, who bore the repast to the hero
Demodocus. In his hands he received it rejoicing in spirit.

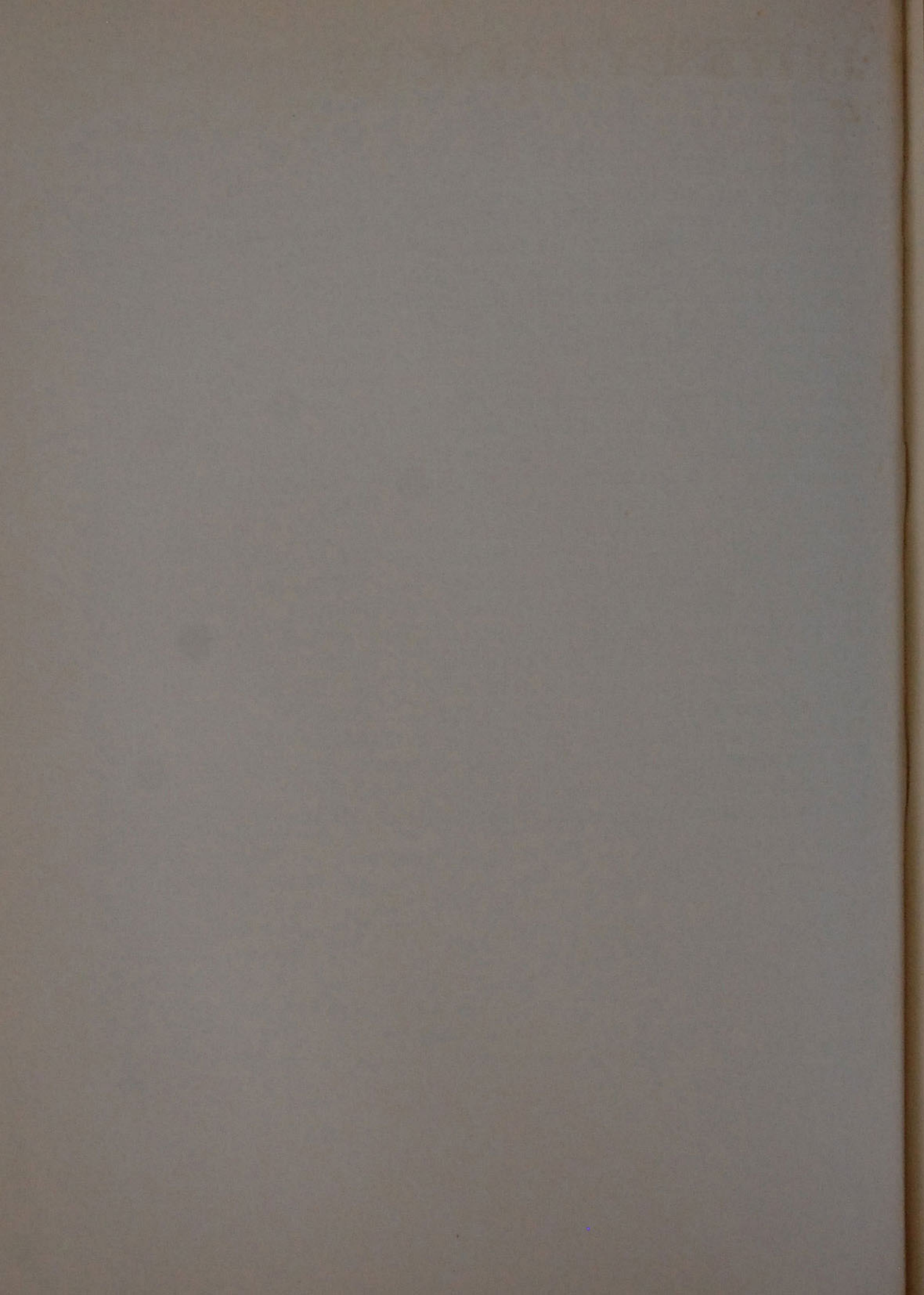
Now did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Calling to Demodocus thus spake deep-plotting Odysseus :
“ Demodocus, far more than thy fellow-mortals I praise thee ;
Surely the heavenly Muse was thy teacher, or even Apollo,
Such is thy skill to relate all duly the fates of the Grecians,
All of the feats they performed and all of the travail they suffered,
Even as one who was present himself or had learnt from another.
Come, pray, changing thy strain now sing of the horse that was builded,
Fashioned of wood and devised by Epéus with help of Athene—
How to the citadel’s height it was brought by the godlike Odysseus
Craftily, filled with the fighters who plundered the town of the Trojans.
Shouldst thou relate it aright and tell all duly the story,
Then shall I never be weary proclaiming to every mortal
How by the favour of heaven divine is the skill of thy singing.”

Moved by the words, and impelled by the god to exhibit his singing,
Thence he began how some on the well-benched vessels embarking
Put from the shore, where flame they had hurled in the huts of encampment—
Some of the Greeks—but the others already with noble Odysseus
Sat concealed in the horse in the market-square of the Trojans ;
Yea, it was Trojans themselves who aloft to the citadel hauled it.
There did it stand mid a babel of people confusedly talking,
Sitting around ; and in three was the vote of the council divided,
Either to smite and to shatter the bulk with the pitiless broad-axe,
Or to a height to uphaul it and over the precipice hurl it,
Or to permit it to stand as a gift to the gods and atonement.
Thus too ended the matter at last, as to end it was fated,
Seeing that doomed was the city to perish as soon as her ramparts
Closed on the horse, that monster of wood, where lurked of the Argives
All of the bravest, to bring on the Trojans bloodshed and ruin.
Then did he sing of the sack of the town by the sons of Achæa,
How from the horse outpouring and leaving the lair of the ambush

Hither and thither they scattered, the steep-built city to ravage ;
Sang of Odysseus too, how unto the house of the hero
Deiphobus like Ares he went with divine Menelaus.
Here did Odysseus (so sang he) adventure a terrible conflict,
Ay and prevailed in the end by the grace of Athena the dauntless.

Such was the story he sang, this singer renowned ; and Odysseus
Melted in tears and the great drops fell on his cheeks from his eyelids.
E'en as a woman with wailings her well-loved husband embraceth
Fallen in front of the city, in front of the host of the fighters,
Warding the pitiless day from his native town and his children ;
E'en as beholding him lying before her gasping and dying
Piercingly shrieking she claspeth his body—but foemen behind her
Smiting her oft with the shafts of their spears on the back and the shoulders
Drive her away as a slave and to slavery's toils and afflictions,
Where with her withering cheeks she in pitiful misery pineth—
So did the pitiful tears fall fast from the eyes of Odysseus.
Thus then weeping he sat and unnoted of all of the others,
All save Alcinous, who alone was aware and observed it,
Sitting anigh to his side ; and hearing him heavily groaning
Quickly he turned to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia's princes :
“ Harken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains !
Time is for Demodocus from his clear-toned lute to refrain him,
Seeing that not to us all seems pleasing the song that he singeth.
Since our supper began and the godlike singer aroused him
Never as yet hath the stranger with pitiful grieving and groaning
Ceased to lament. Sore sorrow, I ween, investeth his spirit.
Bid him refrain from his song. Let us all make merry together,
Whether as guest or as host—for certainly thus it is better.
Yea, it is even because we revere him as guest that we granted
Escort safe to his home and the gifts that we gave him in friendship.
Ever indeed is a guest and a suppliant held as a brother
E'en by the mortal that only a few with his sympathy reacheth.
Therefore attempt not, stranger, to hide with a crafty invention
What I shall ask thee to tell ; more seemly it were to relate it.
Tell me the name that thou bearest at home with thy mother and father,
Ay and with others who dwell in thy town and the neighbouring country.
Never is any on earth to be found that is utterly nameless,
Whether for evil or good he is come to the land of the living ;
Every child at his birth hath a name bestowed by his parents.
Tell to me also the name of thy land and thy people and city,

Then will the vessels, prepared in their minds, know where to convey thee,
Since Phaeacian ships need never a pilot to steer them,
Neither a rudder at all, as is wont with the vessels of others.
Straightway known to the ship is her master's thought and intention;
Known to her too are the cities and fertile lands of the nations,
All of them—thus right swiftly they traverse the gulf of the ocean
Shrouded from sight in a cloud and a darkness, and never upon them
Resteth a dread to be harmed by the storm or to perish in shipwreck.
Once howbeit it happed that I heard what my father related,
Nausithous, who was wont to assert that Poseidon was angered,
Jealous because we afforded infallible escort to all men.
'Some day' (so did he speak) 'as a fine Phaeacian vessel
Over the mist-bound deep from a convoy returns shall the sea-god
Smite her to pieces and whelm with the mass of a mountain the city.'
Such was the rede of my sire; and the god peradventure will do so,
Or he will never perform it, as seemeth the best to his spirit.
Come now, tell me a thing that I ask thee, and clearly explain it:
Where did thy wanderings lead thee? to what strange races and regions?
Tell us to what far peoples and fair-built cities thou camest,
Whether to savages wanton and wild and despisers of justice,
Or to the lovers of strangers with hearts that revere the immortals.
Say too, why dost thou weep and lament in thy spirit within thee,
Hearing of Trojans and Greeks and the fate of the Ilian city?
This was the work of the gods; such doom did they spin, and destruction
Bring on the men, that it aye shall remain as a song for the singer.
Perished perchance some kinsman of thine 'neath Ilian ramparts,
Good-man true of a daughter, or father or brother by marriage,
Such as a man holds, next to his blood, as the nearest and dearest?
Was't peradventure a friend well skilled in the things that delight thee,
Comrade trusty and brave? Since nowise less than a brother
Proveth the man who as friend is endowed with a soul of discretion."



ODYSSEY BOOK IX

HIM then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,
Truly a thing right pleasant it seemeth to list to a minstrel
Such as this singer of thine, for in voice he is like an immortal.
Nay, for myself, I avow there is nought more perfect and gracious
Than when the heart of a people o'erfloweth with mirth and with gladness,
While at the feast in the palace they list to the voice of a singer,
Sitting the one by the other before full banqueting-tables
Laden with bread and with flesh; and drawing the wine from the wine-bowl
Beareth the steward around to the guests and filleth the goblets:
This to my mind is the thing on the earth which seemeth the fairest.
But—for thy spirit inclineth to learn of my grievous afflictions—
All will I tell, though more I shall suffer and grieve in the telling.
What then first shall I tell thee of all, what lastly relate thee,
Since full many a woe have sent me the gods of Olympus?
Well then, firstly my name will I utter, in order that ye too
Learn it, and, should I escape from the pitiless day of destruction,
Still your friend I shall ever remain, though far is my homeland.
I am Odysseus, the son of Laertes, to every mortal
Known for my manifold craft; and the fame of it reacheth to heaven.
Ithaca, isle far-seen, is my home; therein is a mountain
Neriton, waving with woods, conspicuous; islands around it
Lie full many and closely adjacent the one to the other,
Samos and Dulichium and the woodland heights of Zacynthus.
Lowly doth Ithaca lie and is highest out in the ocean,
Far in the western gloom—but the rest t'ward dawn and the sunrise;
Rough—but for youths 'tis an excellent nurse; nor truly, meseemeth,
Sweeter is aught on the earth for a man to behold than his homeland.
Verily fain had retained me the beautiful goddess Calypso
There in her hollow caves in her longing to make me her husband;
Yea and in selfsame wise in her palace did Circe withhold me,
Crafty enchantress of Aea, in longing to make me her husband;
Yet did they never persuade me nor soften the heart in my bosom;
So is it true that on earth there's sweeter than country and parents
Nought to be found—nay, e'en if afar in a right fat homestead
Distant from parents aloof one lives in a country of strangers.
Come now—all of the tale of that doleful return I will tell thee,
All that I suffered of Zeus when I sailed from the land of the Trojans.

Wafted by winds from the Troad we reached a Ciconian city,
Ismarus. Here did I plunder the town and harried the people.
Carrying then from the city the women and plentiful substance,
All we divided, that none might lack fair share in the booty.
Then did I order my men with a foot right nimble retreating
Quickly to flee; but, alas, in their infinite folly they would not;
Nay, strong wine in abundance they set them a-drinking and slaughtered
Many a sheep on the shore and shambling crook-horned cattle.
Meantime hasting away the Ciconians called to their fellows,
Neighbours of theirs and withal far greater in number and braver,
Mainland dwellers, and skilful as fighters from horses or war-cars
Battle to wage with a foe, or on foot, should danger demand it.
These came thronging as thickly as leaves and flowers in spring-time,
Early at dawn, and a doom right evil from heaven was sent us,
Hapless men that we were; and a great disaster we suffered.
Setting ourselves in array by the swift-winged ships we contended,
Hurling the one at the other with spears keen-bladed and bronzen.
Now while new was the day and the sacred light was increasing
Steadily standing we warded them off, though greater in number,
Till, when the sun passed o'er to the time of the loosing of oxen,
Then the Ciconians driving them back o'ermastered the Grecians.
Six of the well-greaved fighters belonging to every vessel
Perished, and all of the rest took flight and escaped from destruction.
Onward thence did we sail, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,
Gladly escaping from death, yet mourning for much-loved comrades;
Neither in sooth did I lead with the twy-beaked ships to the open
Ere three times we had called on the souls of the pitiful comrades
Fallen in fight on the field, by Ciconian foes overmastered.

Now on the vessels was sent by the Father who gathers the tempests
Boreas, rushing with terrible blasts; and covered with cloud-rack
Earth was at once and the sea; and down from the sky fell midnight.
Headlong a squall swept onward the ships. Of a sudden the sails split,
Sundered in three and in four by the furious might of the storm-blast.
These forthwith did we lower and stow, foreboding destruction.
Hastily then with the oars our vessels we urged to the mainland.
Here two days and two nights we remained unceasingly watching,
Ever in grief and exhaustion consuming the spirit within us,
Till, when the third day rose from the lap of the fair-tressed Morning,
Then we uplifted the masts and with white sails spread to the breezes
Sat, as the vessel was kept to her course by the wind and the steersman.

Verily now I had come unscathed to the land of my fathers,
Had not the stream of the sea and the roll as I rounded Malea
Carried me, under the stress of the Boreas, south of Cythera.

Odyssey

IX

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Hence nine days was I borne by the ruinous blasts of the storm-winds
Over the teeming deep. On the tenth we arrived at the mainland,
Land of the Lotus-eaters, whose food is the fruit of a flower.
Here on the shore disembarking we drew from a fountain of water.
Hastily then did my mates make midday meal by the vessels.
Now when of meat and of drink we had all of us fully partaken,
Then of my men did I send forth certain to go and assure them
What was this people, of all bread-nourished races of mortals.
Two of my men did I choose, and a third as a herald I added.
These then, swiftly departing, discovered the Eaters of Lotus;
Nor did the Lotus-eaters devise for my comrades destruction;
Nothing they did save only they gave them to eat of the lotus.
Now whoever did eat of the fruit honey-sweet of the lotus
Felt no longer the wish to return nor tidings to carry,
Caring for nought but to stay with the Lotus-eaters for ever,
Feeding on lotus, forgetting his home and the land of his fathers.
These, though bitterly weeping, I brought to the ships by compulsion,
Bound them, and under the thwarts in the hollow vessel I thrust them.
Urgently then did I call on the rest of my trusty companions,
Hasting as much as they might, on the swift-winged ships to embark them,
Lest still more might eat of the fruit and forget their homeland.
All then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.

Onward voyaging hence, our hearts o'erwhelmed with affliction,
Unto the land of the Cyclops, a race overbearing and lawless,
Soon we arrived. Here, trusting the favour of powers immortal,
None with his hands e'er planteth a plant or tills with the ploughshare,
Yet untilled and unplanted, behold, all groweth in plenty,
Wheat and barley and vine; and the vine's luxuriant clusters
Bear rich juice of the grape that the rain of the heaven doth nourish.
Neither assemblies for counsel they have nor laws and traditions;
Dwelling apart on the crests of the highest mountains the Cyclops
Hollow caverns inhabit, and each gives law to his household,
Children and wives; nor care they at all each one for the other.

Nigh to the land of the Cyclops a rich-soiled island is lying

Stretching in front of a harbour—not near nor yet very distant—
Covered with forest; and goats with a numberless progeny breed there,
Wandering wild, by the tread of a human foot unaffrighted.
Never is entered the island by hunters who hunt in the greenwood,
Suffering many a toil as they harry the heights of the mountains;
Nor is it held as a meadow for flocks or as tilth for a corn-land;
All untilled and unplanted it lieth, for ever and alway
Widowed of men; but to bleating goats it affordeth a pasture.
Vessel is none whose red bow plougheth the sea for the Cyclops,
Nor to be found in the land are builders to toil and to fashion
Well-decked vessels, to traverse the sea and all to accomplish,
Visiting cities of mortals (as ofttimes truly it happens
Men cross over the ocean in ships each other to visit);
Else maybe they had laboured the soil and had settled the island,
Since not barren it seems, and all 'twould bear in the season.
Meads are there close-skirting the grey-green brine of the ocean,
Flooded with water and soft; and the vine would flourish unrotting;
Smooth and stoneless the tillage, and deep is the crop that the reaper
Ever in season can reap, for below right rich is the bottom.
Here is a haven secure where never is needful a mooring,
Neither the anchor to cast, nor e'en stern-cables to fasten;
Beaching the ship one waiteth awhile, till the heart of the sailor
Stirreth within him to go, and a favouring breeze is arising.
Now at the head of the harbour a freshet of glittering water
Floweth from under a cavern, with poplars growing around it.
Here did we first reach land, and a deity guided us surely
Thorough the thick dark night, where all was invisible round us,
Such was the deepness of mist that enveloped the ships, and above us
Shone from the heav'n no light of the moon, for in clouds she was hidden.
Thus did it happen that none of the watch was aware of the island;
Nor that the league-long waves went thundering on to the mainland
Saw we until on the isle our well-decked ships we had stranded.
Then, when at last we had beached them and every canvas was lowered,
Out of the vessels we stepped on the surf-beat strand of the ocean,
Laid us to sleep, and awaited the sacred light of the morning.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Saw we with wonder the island, and questing around it we wandered.
Then did the Oreads, daughters of Zeus who beareth the aegis,
Startle the goats of the crags, to provide a repast for my comrades.
Quickly on well-bent bows and long-shanked javelins seizing

Hurried we forth of the ships, and in three our company ranging
Shot; and at once vouchsafed us a god right plentiful booty.
Now was the number of vessels that followed me twelve, and to each one
Fell nine goats as a portion, and ten for myself they selected.
So for the whole of the day till the sun sank down in the ocean
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup,
Since not yet was the good red wine consumed in the vessels,
Some was remaining, for many a jar each crew of my shipmates
Filled for themselves when we plundered the sacred Ciconian city.
Then did we turn our gaze to the neighbouring land of the Cyclops,
Noting the smoke and the bleating of sheep and of goats in the distance,
Till, when the sun went down and come was the gloom of the twilight,
Weary we laid us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.
Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Calling together a council of all, these words I addressed them:
'Here all others I wish to remain, O trusty companions,
Waiting awhile till alone with my ship and the crew of my shipmates
Trial I make what manner of mortals inhabit the country,
Whether a folk that is wanton and wild, despisers of justice,
Or with a love for the stranger and hearts that revere the immortals.'

Thus did I speak, and I mounted aboard, and I bade my companions
Likewise mounting the vessel to loose from the mooring the cable.
These then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.
Now when at last we arrived at the land—for it lieth not distant—
There on the margin we noted a cavern anigh to the water
Lofty and shaded with laurel, wherein were wont to repose them
Flocks right many of sheep and of goats, and around it a courtyard,
Lofty and builded of boulders enormous and deeply embedded,
Woven with tall-stemmed pines and with trunks of the high-branched oak-trees.
Here was the nightly resort of a human monster, who alway
Lonely abode and pastured his flocks, nor was ever with others
Wont to frequent, but apart aye brooded on impious horrors.
Yea and a monstrous marvel was he—not fashioned in seeming
Like to a mortal that liveth on bread but the peak of a mountain
Covered with forests and standing alone, o'ertopping the others.

Now straightway I commanded the rest of my trusty companions
There to remain by the ship and keeping them close to defend her,
Then of the crew of my vessel selecting a dozen, the bravest,

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Started; and sweet dark wine in a goatskin bottle we carried.
This was a wine once given by Maro, son of Euanthes,
Priest of Apollo, the god who the city of Ismarus guardeth.
Us did he give it, for him and his wife and his child we protected,
Sparing with reverence, since in a dense dark grove was his dwelling
Holy to Phoebus Apollo; and gifts right splendid he gave me:
Talents seven he gave me of gold well wrought in the furnace;
Gave me a mixing-bowl all solid of silver, and lastly
Wine did he give us, decanting it off in a dozen of wine-jars,
Sweet, unmingled, a potion divine; nor knew of it any,
None of the thralls in his house, nor even a woman attendant—
None but himself and his consort dear and the dame of his household.
Now when it happened that they drank of this red wine sweet as the honey,
Filling a cup, therewith did he mix full measures of water
Twenty, and out of the bowl came floating an odour of sweetness
Marvellous. Verily then to refuse it was nowise a pleasure.
This was the wine that I bare in a great skin bottle, and viands
Stored in a pouch; for at once in my valiant heart I had boded
Here to encounter a man with a power gigantic invested,
Savage and knowing aright no customs of law and of justice.

Speedily then we arrived at the cave, but within it was no one;
Gone was the monster to shepherd and batten his flocks on the pasture.
Entering therefore with wondering gaze all things we examined.
Baskets laden with cheeses we found, and penned in the sheepfolds
Lambs were thronging and kids; each flock was distinct from the others;
Firstlings folded apart, and apart were lambs of the summer,
Lambkins apart; and with whey o'erflowing was every vessel,
Buckets and bowls well fashioned of wood, that he used for the milking.
Then did my comrades entreat me, exhorting and bidding me firstly
Taking a spoil of the cheeses to go—then later returning,
Speedily loosing the kids and the lambkins from out of the sheepfolds,
Unto the vessel to drive them and launch forth over the ocean.
Them unheeding I heard (far better had been had I heeded),
Wishing the man to behold and to claim me a gift as a guest-friend.
Ah but he gave to my men when he came no loving reception!

Then did we kindle a fire and offerings make and unbidden
Take of the cheeses and eat; and we sat us adown in the cavern
Waiting—till . . . lo! he appeared with his flock, and a burden enormous
Bare he of wood well-seasoned, to serve him for making his supper.

This at the mouth of the cavern he cast with a crash and a clatter,
While in a panic we rushed to the innermost end of the cavern.
Then of his fat-fed flock to the spacious grotto admitting
Such as he milked (but the others he left outside of the doorway,
Males of the sheep and the goats, in the high-walled court of the cavern),
Lifting a monstrous rock in the doorway he set it as door-stone,
Ponderous, such that of wagons not two and twenty together
Goodly and strong, four-wheeled, could heave it away from the threshold;
Such a precipitous mountain of rock did he set in the doorway.
Then by the bleating goats and the ewes down-sitting, he milked them,
All of them duly in turn, and he put to the mothers the lamblings.
Then straightway of the white warm milk one half did he curdle,
Gathered it all to a mass, and in baskets of wicker he stored it;
Half of it set he in vessels to stand, for it aye to be handy
Either to take and to drink or to serve him for making his supper.
Now when awhile he had busied himself and had finished his labours,
Then did he kindle the fire—and straight he espied and addressed us:
'Ha! Who are ye, good friends? Whence sail ye the paths of the waters?
Come ye to chaffer for gain, or recklessly roaming at random,
Like to the robbers and rovers who wander and rob on the ocean,
Setting their lives on the hazard in bringing disaster on others?'
Thus did he speak, and at once our hearts were broken within us,
Smitten with fear at the deep dread voice and the form of the monster.
Yet e'en then did I find me a word to address him in answer:
'Men of Achaea, who wandering come from the land of the Trojans,
Driven by many a storm on the boundless gulf of the ocean.
Steering for home we had sailed, but by ways far other and courses
Hither arrived; and Zeus, I believe, thus willed to devise it.
Men of the host we avow us of King Agamemnon Atrides,
Whose fame verily now is the greatest under the heaven,
Such was the city he sacked; and he smote full many a people.
Lo, now! brought to thy knees by misfortune we humbly entreat thee,
Whether a guest-friend's gift thou'rt willing to give, or another
Present to grant us—as aye to expect is the right of a stranger.
Fear, brave Sir, the immortals! As suppliants, lo, we entreat thee.
Ay, it is Zeus that the guest and the suppliant ever avengeth;
He is the god of the stranger and nigh to the one that he pities.'
Thus did I speak, but with pitiless heart he addressed me in answer:
'Either a fool, O stranger, thou seem'st or art come from a distance,
Seeing thou biddest me fear the immortals and shun to offend them.
Little the Cyclops careth for Zeus who beareth the aegis,

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Or for the blessed immortals—for we are greatly the stronger ;
Neither in awe of the anger of Zeus would ever I spare thee,
Thee or thy mates, were not in my bosom my spirit to bid me.
Say now where at thy coming thy well-built vessel was lying !
Lies it on some far foreland, or near ? Come, speak, and inform me !
Thus did he tempt me to speak, but I knew too much to be cheated ;
Answering therefore in turn with a story of guile I addressed him :
‘Touching my ship—it was broke by the King Earth-shaking Poseidon,
Shattered to pieces on rocks in the uttermost bounds of thy country,
Cast on a cape by the wind from the open expanse of the ocean.
Then I escaped, with the men thou beholdest, from utter destruction.’

Thus did I speak, but with pitiless heart, and answering nothing,
Suddenly making a spring, out-darting his hands on my comrades,
Two in his clutches he seized and as whelps on the floor of the cavern
Dashed—and the brains flowed forth on the floor and the earth was bespattered.
Cutting them member from member he straight made ready his supper ;
Then as a mountain lion he ate, not leaving a morsel,
All the intestines, all of the flesh and the bones with the marrow.
Meantime weeping to Zeus we upraised our hands in entreaty,
Seeing the terrible deed ; and helpless terror possessed us.
Now when at last he had glutted his monstrous maw to repletion,
Feasting on human flesh and the raw milk drinking thereafter,
Stretching him out in the midst of the flocks he reclined in the cavern.
Then did I seek for advice from the valiant spirit within me,
Whether to steal me anigh, and, my sharp sword drawn from the scabbard,
Into his body to smite, where midriff toucheth the liver,
Groping to find me the spot. But I thought once more and restrained me :
Here in the cave we too must perish in utter destruction,
Seeing we ne’er had the strength from the spacious vault of the doorway
Pushing amain to remove the enormous stone he had set there.
Therefore with many a moan we awaited the sacred morning.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Then did he kindle anew and his fine flocks draw to the milking,
All of them duly in turn, and he put to the mothers the lamblings.
Then, when awhile he had busied himself and had finished his labours,
Seizing again two men in his clutch he prepared them for dinner.
After his dinner he hurried his fat-fed flocks from the cavern,
Easily lifting aside the enormous rock ; and he set it
Back in the door as a man might place on a quiver the cover.

Then with a whoop and a whistle he hurried his flock to the mountain,
Leaving me there devising him ills in the depths of my bosom,
Hoping to gain me revenge and renown by the help of Athene.

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This now seemed to my mind to be counsel the best and the wisest.
Lying anigh to the fold was a monstrous club of the Cyclops,
Yet unseasoned, of olive, the which he had hewn him to carry
After 'twas dry ; and we deemed it as huge as the mast of a vessel,
E'en of a great black vessel of twice ten rowers the mainmast,
Yea, of a broad-beamed trader that crosses the gulf of the ocean ;
Such was the length of the club to behold, and such was the thickness.
Creeping anigh it I severed so much as the reach of a fathom,
Handed it o'er to my mates and ordered them taper and plane it.
These then tapered it even, and standing before it I shaved it
Sharp to a point, then charring it quick in the glow of the embers
Stowed it for safety away in the sheep-dung carefully hidden,
Masses of which were lying around in the depths of the cavern.
Then I commanded my comrades to settle by lot and determine
Who with myself should venture the spar to uplift and to twirl it
Round in the Cyclops' eye while slumber sweet was upon him.
Chosen by lot were just those men I had willingly chosen,
Four of my fellows, and I as the fifth to the number was added.

Now in the even, arrived with his fair-fleeced flocks from the pasture,
Into the spacious cavern the fat-fed beasts he admitted,
All of them ; none did he leave outside in the high-walled courtyard,
Boding of ill—or perchance some deity bade him to do so.
Next he uplifted the boulder enormous and set it as door-stone.
Then by the bleating goats and the ewes down-sitting he milked them,
All of them duly in turn, and he put to the mothers the lamblings.
So, when awhile he had busied himself and had finished his labours,
Seizing again two men in his clutch he prepared them for supper.
Forthwith venturing nigh to the Cyclops thus I addressed him,
Holding between both hands dark wine in a mazer of ivy :
'Cyclops, drink of the wine—since done is thy cannibal banquet.
Take it and see what manner of drink I had stowed in my vessel.
Lo, as an offering this was I bringing thee, hoping for pity,
Hoping for homeward return ; but thy rage exceedeth endurance.
Pitiless being !—and how might ever another approach thee,
Any of all mankind ?—for thy deeds are verily lawless.'
Thus did I speak, and he took it and drank, and a wonderful pleasure

Felt he in draining the luscious draught ; and he asked for another :
 ‘Give me again, an thou wilt ! and tell me thy name right quickly,
 Now straightway ! Thou’lt get thee a stranger’s gift to delight thee.
 Here too beareth the earth, rich giver of grain, for the Cyclops
 Juice of the clustering grapes that the rain of the heaven doth nourish ;
 Ah but a wine like this is a draught of ambrosial nectar !’
 Thus did he speak, and again of the fiery liquor I gave him ;
 Thrice did I bring it and give it, and thrice in his folly he drained it.
 Now when I saw that the wine was invading the wits of the Cyclops,
 Speaking with words right gentle and winning again I addressed him :
 ‘Cyclops—lo, thou demandest my name. Well, listen ! for plainly
 Now will I tell it. So give me thy promise, the gift of a stranger !
 Nobody—that is my name, and nothing but Nobody call me
 Mother and father and all of the rest of my fellows and comrades.’
 Thus did I speak, but with pitiless heart he addressed me in answer :
 ‘Nobody then I shall eat when I’ve eaten his fellows and comrades—
 All of the others before him ; and that is my gift to the stranger.’

Speaking, he downward sank and fell on his back, and he lay there
 Bending his monstrous neck to the side, o’ermastered by slumber,
 Slumber that mastereth all ; and out of his gullet there issued
 Wine and the gobbets of human flesh ; and he retched as a drunkard.
 Then did I thrust me the stake in the midst of the embers to make it
 Fiery hot, and with comforting words I addressed my companions,
 Giving them courage lest any in fear might fail and desert me.
 So, when at last that stake sharp-pointed of olive was almost
 Bursting to flame, though green was the wood, and was terribly glowing,
 Then did I fetch it anigh from the fire, and around it my comrades
 Posted themselves, and courage immense some deity gave us.
 Seizing the stake all glowing and sharp at the point, with a strong thrust
 Into the eye full deeply they drove it ; and I at the top end
 Twisted it round, as a man that is boring the beam of a vessel
 Bores with an auger, and others below with the leather revolve it,
 Holding by both ends fast, as the auger is ceaselessly spinning.
 Thus in his eye did we bore, and the stake sharp-pointed and glowing
 Twisted about, red-hot ; and the blood ran spluttering round it.
 Then did the breath of the flame scorch all of his eyelid and eyebrow,
 While consumed was the ball of the eye, and the roots of it crackled.
 E’en as a worker of metal who fashions an adze or a hatchet
 Dips it aglow in the water to chill it, and fiercely it hisseth
 (Thus it is tempered, and thus there cometh a strength to the iron),

So did his eyeball hiss at the fiery stake as it entered.
Then with a loud and a terrible yelling the cavern re-echoed,
While in a panic we fled ; and seizing the stake did the Cyclops,
Drawing it out of his eye with the blood all smeared and bedabbled,
Hurl it amain and afar with his hands, as if maddened by anguish.

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IX

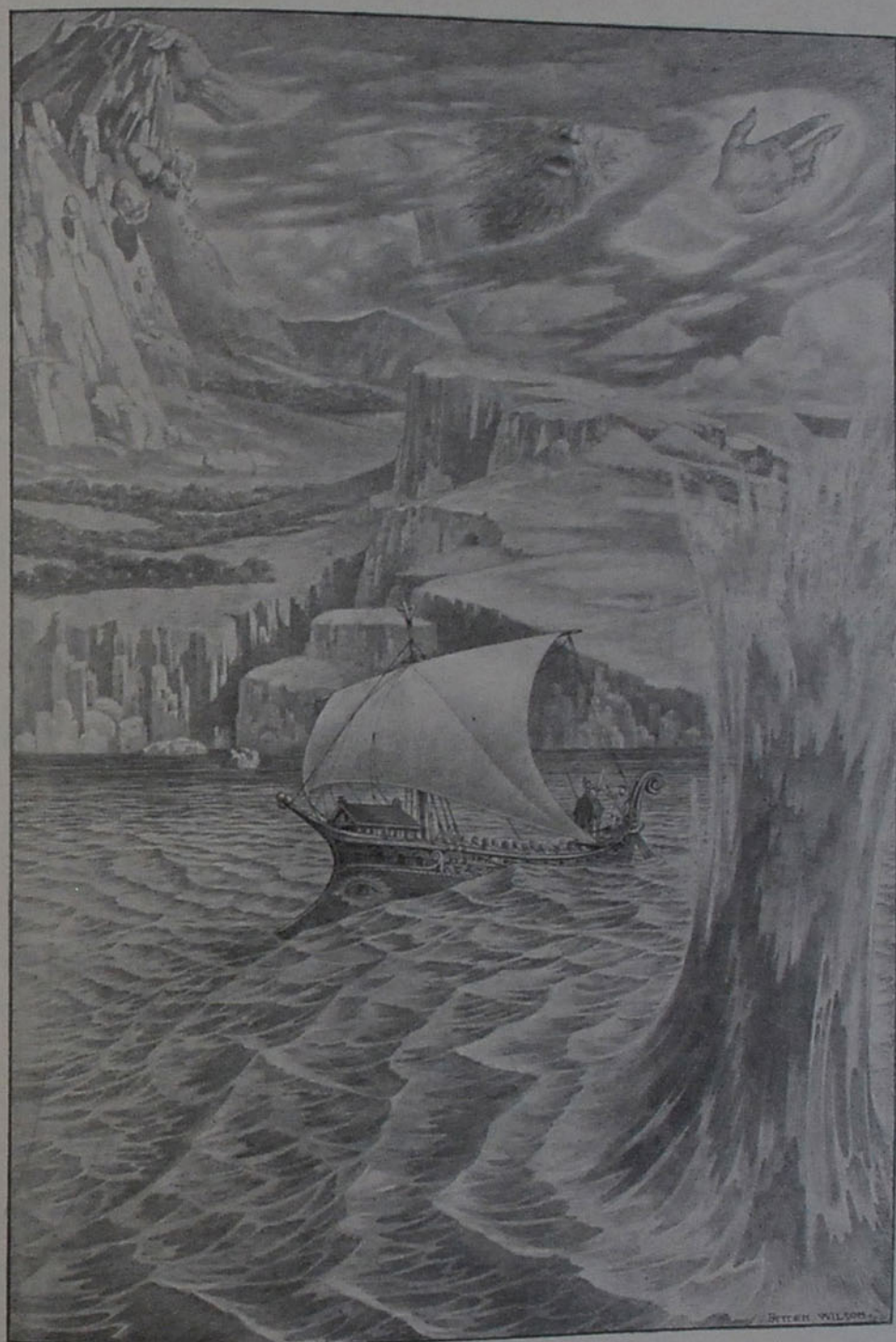
394-432

Then with his monstrous voice did he call to his fellows, the Cyclops
Dwelling in caverns around on the wind-swept heights of the mountain.
These then, hearing the cry, came flocking from this and from that side,
Gathering nigh to the cavern and asking what was the trouble :
'What is it troubles thee, O Polyphemus, that thus thou art calling
Through the ambrosial silence of night, and making us sleepless?
No one surely of mortals is trying of flocks to despoil thee?
No one surely by force or by cunning is trying to kill thee?'
Forthwith out of the cavern addressed them the huge Polyphemus :
'Friends, it is Nobody trying by craft, not force, to destroy me.'
Then did they answer and speak, and swift-winged words they addressed him :
'Seeing that nobody trieth to harm thee, nor comes to disturb thee,
Sickness none can avoid—that cometh from Zeus the Almighty.
Nay now, offer a prayer to thy sire, Earth-shaking Poseidon !'
Spake it, and went ; and the heart in my bosom was shaken with laughter,
So had the Nobody name of my faultless cunning deceived them.

Groaning and travailing sore in his agony then did the Cyclops
Grope with his hands all round and lifting the stone from the portal
Seat him adown by the door with his hands outspread in the doorway,
Any to catch who was issuing forth with the sheep from the cavern ;
Such was the witless fool that, I ween, he expected to find me.
Then I revolved in my mind what best to devise, and bethought me
Whether a way of escaping from death for myself and my comrades
Were to be found ; and I wove all manner of schemes and devices,
E'en as a man for his life ; for a terrible danger was nigh us.
This now unto my mind of devices appeared to be wisest :
Rams with the sheep there were, well nurtured, heavily coated,
Beautiful beasts and great, and with fleeces violet-coloured.
Quietly these did I fasten with withes that I twisted together
(Bedding whereon he had slept, that impious monster, the Cyclops),
Taking them three and three—for a man to be borne by the midmost,
Each of the others on each of the sides protecting my comrades.
Thus three sheep bare each of my mates—and then for my own self
There was a ram that of all of the flock was the greatest and finest ;

Odyssey Him did I seize by the back and under the thick-fleeced stomach
IX Curled me and lay, and my hands in the shags of the wonderful sheep-wool
433 - 472 Tightly I twisted, and thus with a heart courageous I hung there.
So then uttering moans we awaited the sacred morning.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Then did the males of the flock haste eagerly forth to the pasture,
While un milked went bleating the mothers around in the sheepfolds,
Udders a-bursting. But he, their lord, in his terrible anguish
Travailing still, groped over the backs of the rams, as before him
Halting in turn each stood; nor, fool that he was, did he notice
How right under the breasts of the shag-fleeced sheep I had bound them.
Last of the flock came slowly the ram, and he paced to the doorway
Cumbered with all of his wool and weighted with me and my cunning.
Him too handled and thus accosted the huge Polyphemus:
'What is the reason, my pet, thou art issuing forth from the cavern
Last of the flock? Not ever before wast led by the others,
Nay but afar in the front didst graze fresh blooms of the meadows
Mightily striding, and first didst come to the streams of the rivers;
First too ever 'tis thou who at eveningtide to the homestead
Longst to return—while now thou art last! Ay surely thou grieveest,
Mourning the eye of thy lord, that an impious mortal hath blinded,
He and his fellows accurséd, my wits with his wine overcoming—
Nobody . . . Ah but I deem he is not yet safe from destruction!
Verily hadst thou but feeling as I and the power of speaking,
So as to tell me the place where shunning my wrath he is skulking,
Then all over the cavern his brains were this way and that way
Dashed on the ground as I crushed him to death, and happy my heart were,
Lightened of all of the woe that a worthless Nobody brought me.'
Thus then speaking, the ram he released, and it passed from the doorway.
Now when a little away we had got from the cavern and courtyard,
First from the ram I unfastened myself, then loosed my companions.
Hastily then those sheep high-stepping and rich in their fatness,
Ofttimes turning to look, did we drive, till at last to the vessel
Safe we arrived; and welcome we came to the rest of my comrades,
We who from death had escaped. For the others they fain had lamented;
Yet I forbade it, and frowning and nodding in silence I bade them
Not to lament, but the fair-fleeced sheep, right many in number,
Hurriedly casting aboard launch forth on the salt sea water.
Speedily then they embarked and taking their seats on the benches
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.



ODYSSEUS AND THE CYCLOPS

Now when as far I was come as the voice of a shouter will carry,
Then to the Cyclops I called and with words of derision addressed him:
'Cyclops! wert not fated, it seems, those mates of a weakling
There in thy hollow cavern to eat, thou insatiable monster!
Nay, much rather 'tis thou wert fated to light on misfortune,
Pitiless one, ay truly and shameless, the guests in thy homestead
E'en to devour! Lo, Zeus and the other immortals avenged it!'—
So I did speak. Thereat, with a heart more maddened to fury,
Breaking a peak clean off from a huge high mountain, he hurled it.
Down on the water it fell to the front of the blue-prowed vessel,
Just to the fore, and it missed by a little the end of the rudder.
High upheaved was the sea when the crag descended upon it;
Backward the vessel was borne, for the swirl of the roller returning
Swept to the shore as a surge of the ocean and lifted it landward.
Then on a long punt-pole did I seize, and strongly I thrust her
Off from the shore and exhorted and urgently bade my companions
Lay them with might on the oar and gain them escape from destruction,
Nodding command. Then forward they bent, all hastily rowing.

Soon now over the brine we had traversed double the distance.
Then to the Cyclops anew I had willingly called, but my comrades,
One and the other, with words of entreaty restraining addressed me:
'Madman! wherefore arouse this terrible being to fury?
Even already the bolt that he seaward hurled hath the vessel
Drifted again to the shore, where truly we thought we had perished.
Ay and had any but uttered a word or a sound—had he heard it—
Straight he had shattered the heads of us all and the beams of the vessel,
Hurling a huge jagged block—such monstrous missiles he launches.'
Thus did they speak; but they pleaded in vain to my valiant spirit,
Since once more with a heart all flaming in wrath I addressed him:
'Cyclops, listen! If ever it happen that any of mortals
Wishes to learn of the cause of thine eye's disfiguring blindness,
Say that Odysseus, sacker of cities, was he that did blind thee,
Son of Laertes and having his dwelling in Ithaca's island.'
So did I speak—whereat with a groan he addressed me in answer:
'Ah! Ah! Surely the doom predestined is falling upon me!
Here in the land was a prophet of old both holy and famous,
Telemus Eurymidés, who in augury ever unrivalled
Plying the art of a seer waxed old in the land of the Cyclops.
He was the man foretold me of yore this fate to befall me,
How at Odysseus' hands I was doomed to be reft of my eyesight.

Ay but a man right tall and goodly I ever awaited
Some day hither to come, with a power gigantic invested.
Now hath a dwarf-like creature, a worthless wight and a weakling,
Robbed me of sight, with the fumes of his wine o'ercoming my senses.
Well—come hither, Odysseus! I'll give thee the gifts of a stranger,
Ay and will speed thy return by the grace of the great Earth-shaker,
Since that I boast me his son, and the god as my father avows him;
He too, should he but wish, could heal me—if never another
Either of blessed immortals or earth-born men that be mortal.'
So did he speak. Straightway then answering thus I addressed him:
'Would to the gods that of life and of soul 'twere mine to bereave thee
No less surely, and send thee below to the mansion of Hades,
Than it is sure not even Poseidon shall heal thee of blindness.'
Thus did I speak; whereat to the King Earth-shaking Poseidon
Praying he stretched both hands to the starry expanse of the heaven:
'Hear me, caerulean-tressed Earth-girdler! Hear me, Poseidon!
Am I thy son, and dost thou indeed as my father avow thee,
Home let him never return, this sacker of cities, Odysseus,
Son of Laertes and having his dwelling in Ithaca's island!
Or, if indeed he is fated his friends to behold and in safety
Win to his well-built home and arrive at the land of his fathers,
Late and in pitiful plight, and with none of his comrades surviving,
Borne on an alien ship let him come, and at home find sorrows!'
So did he pray, and was heard by the god of caerulean tresses.

Then once more on a rock far greater he seized, and upraised it—
Swung it around him and hurled—and a measureless might he exerted.
Down on the water it fell to the rear of the blue-prowed vessel,
Just to the stern, and it missed by a little the end of the rudder.
High upheaved was the sea when the crag descended upon it;
Forward the vessel was borne by the billow and swept to the island.

Now when at last we arrived at the isle, where waiting the other
Well-decked ships were ranged all closely together, and round them
Sat lamenting the men, scarce more expecting to see us—
Hither as soon as we came and the ship on the sands we had driven,
Out of her all of us stepped on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.
Then from the hollow vessel unlading the flock of the Cyclops,
All we divided, that none might lack fair share in the booty.
Also to me was the ram by my well-greaved company given.
Him, as a prize of the spoil, did I straight on the shore of the ocean

Offer to Zeus who dwells in the storm-clouds, Ruler of all things,
Burning the flesh of the thighs—but in vain ; for he scorned the oblation,
Pondering still in his mind how all might utterly perish,
All of my well-decked vessels and all of my trusty companions.

Odyssey

IX

552 - 567

So for the whole of the day till the sun went down in the ocean
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup.
Then, when the sun sank down and come was the gloom of the twilight,
Weary we laid us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Then straightway I exhorted my fellows and urgently bade them
Quickly embark on the vessels and loose from the moorings the cables.
All then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.
Onward thence did we sail, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,
Gladly escaping from death, yet mourning for much-loved comrades.

ODYSSEY BOOK X

NOW did we come to the isle Aeolian, home of the monarch
Aeolus, Hippotas' son, by the gods everlasting belovéd.
This is an island that floats, and a rampart is builded about it
Bronzen, unbroken; and sheer from the water the precipice rises.
Now to the monarch had been twelve children born in the palace,
Six were daughters and six were sons in the bloom of their manhood.
Therefore to each of the sons he had given a daughter in marriage.
These in the halls of their father belovéd and excellent mother
Ever do feast; for at hand are ever unfailing provisions;
Filled is the house and the court with the odours and noises of feasting
All of the day, but at night at the side of their honour'd consorts
Covered with wrappers they slumber on bedsteads with beautiful carvings.
Now when at last we arrived at the city and home of the monarch,
One whole month he entreated me well, and of all he inquiréd,
Troy and the Argive fleet and the homeward return of the Grecians.
Then, when the whole of the story in order was duly related,
I too uttered request concerning my journey, and begged him
Speed my return, and he made not refusal, but furnished an escort,
Flaying me also the skin of a nine-year ox for a wallet,
Where fast-bound he imprisoned the ways of the blustering storm-blasts,
Seeing that him as the Keeper of winds hath elected Cronion,
Either to lull them to rest or to raise whichever he listeth.
This in my hollow ship with a cord resplendent of silver
Firmly he bound, to allow not a breath to escape, not the faintest,
Letting alone fare forth with its favouring breezes the Zephyr
Homeward to carry the vessels and us; yet fated he was not
This to accomplish, because our own mad folly destroyed us.

Nine days long did we sail, and the nights no less than the daytime;
Till, on the tenth, in the even, we sighted the fields of the homeland,
Ay and beheld quite near us the folk as they tended the beacons.
Now sweet sleep came creeping upon me, outworn with my labours,
Seeing that ever I managed the sheet and to none of my comrades
Trusted it, hoping the quicker to come to the land of my fathers.
Meanwhile thus did my mates hold converse one with another,
Saying that home I was bringing a treasure of gold and of silver,
Presents by Hippotas' son, the munificent Aeolus, given:
So did they secretly talk as they looked each man at his neighbour:

Odyssey X
38-76 'Lo, how dear, how honoured this fellow is ever with all men,
Every mortal the land or the city of whom he arriveth !
Many a treasure he bringeth from Troy, magnificent prizes
Out of the booty ; but we, who the selfsame journey have ended,
Homeward return nought having withal save hands that are empty.
This too sure is a gift which lately hath lavished in friendship
Aeolus. Come now, quick let us spy what is here and discover
How great treasure of gold and of silver is stowed in the wallet.'
Thus did they speak, and the men were won by the counsel of mischief.
Loosing the bag they untied it—and out rushed every storm-wind,
Seized them with might of a tempest and carried them suddenly seaward
Wailing and weeping, afar from the land of their fathers ; whereat I
Waked from my slumber, and straight with my spirit unerring I communed
Whether to leap from the ship and to seek for my death in the waters
Or to endure it in silence and still to remain with the living.
Well—I endured and remained, and wrapt in my cloak on the vessel
Lay, as the ships swept on, by the terrible blast of the storm-wind
Back to the isle Aeolian borne, midst groans of my comrades.

Here on the shore disembarking we drew from a fountain of water ;
Hastily then did my mates make midday meal by the vessels.
Now when of meat and of drink we had all of us fully partaken,
Then did I, taking as escort a herald and one of my shipmates,
Go to the glorious palace, and here King Aeolus found I
Feasting, and near him was seated his queen, and beside her the children.
Entering therefore the house, on the threshold anigh to the door-posts
Sat we adown, while all were filled with amazement, and asked me :
'Why art thou hither returned? What deity harmed thee, Odysseus?
Surely a speeding we gave thee enow, sufficing to bring thee
Back to thy land and thy home, or whither thy soul desireth.'
Thus did they speak ; whereat with a heart right heavy I answered :
'Harmed have evil companions, and pitiless slumber hath harmed me,
Woe to it!—Nay now, heal us, my friends, since yours is the power.'
So did I speak, and besought them with gentlest words of persuasion ;
Yet all silent they sat. Then answered the father in anger :
'Hence from the Isle forthwith, most infamous mortal that liveth !
Wicked I hold it to treat as a guest or to speed on his journey
One whom thus pursueth the hate of the deities blessed.
Hence and begone ! since hated of gods everlasting thou camest.'
Spake—and away from his palace he ordered me grievously groaning.

Onward thence as we sailed, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,
Spent was the soul of the men by the grievous labour of rowing.
Ah, for that folly of ours! for the vanished hope of the homeland!
Six days long did we voyage, the nights no less than the daytime,
Till, on the seventh, we came to the mountainous stronghold of Lamos,
Laestrygonian Telepylos, where shepherd to shepherd
Calls, as the one comes home with his flock and the other is starting.
Here might twofold wages be won by a man that was sleepless,
Once as a herd of the kine, once white flocks tending as shepherd,
Such in the land is the nearness of night and of day in their courses.
Now when at last we had come to the glorious haven—(around it
Both to the right and the left is a cliff's precipitous rampart;
Two bluff headlands as well jut opposite one to the other
Out to the mouth of the haven and make right narrow the entry)—
Then brought all of the others within it their twy-beaked vessels.
These inside of the bay of the hollow harbour they fastened
One by the other—for never ariseth a billow within it,
Great nor little, but round there spreadeth a radiant calmness—
While for myself, I alone did my black ship moor on the outside,
Right at the outermost point, to a rock fast binding the cable;
Then I upmounted the crags and stationed myself on an outlook.
Nowhere either of oxen or men to be seen was the labour,
Only a smoke I perceived from the inland flickering upward.
So of my men did I send forth certain to go and assure them
What was this people, of all bread-nourished races of mortals;
Two of my comrades I chose, and a third as a herald I added.
These then landed and went by a road right level, that wagons
Used when they brought to the city the wood from the heights of the mountains.
Issuing forth of the city for water approached them a damsel,
Laestrygonian Antiphates' gigantic daughter,
Hither descending to draw from the source of a beautiful freset,
Fount Artacia, whence to the city the water is carried.
Now when anigh she had come they accosted and questioned her fully
Who was the king of the country and what was the nation he governed.
Then straightway did she point to the high-roofed house of her father.
So to the glorious house of the monarch they came and the mother
Found there, like to the peak of a hill; and they sickened with horror.
Then forthwith from the place of the council she summoned her husband,
Antiphates; and he plotted at once their cruel destruction.
One of my men in his clutches he seized and prepared him for dinner,
While that the twain sped swiftly away and escaped to the vessels.

Then in the city he raised an alarm, which hearing the mighty
Laestrygonians flocking collected from this and from that side,
Thousands and thousands, not like to an army of men but of Giants.
These then down from the headlands with boulders as big as a burden
Cast, and a pitiful din of a sudden arose in the vessels,
Crashing of shattered ships and shrieking of men in their anguish,
Whom like fishes they speared and bare to their horrible banquet.
Whilst such slaughter was done in the inner recess of the harbour,
Drawing the sharp-edged sword which hung at my thigh from its scabbard
Quickly I severed the cable that fastened my blue-bowed galley.
Hastily then I exhorted my fellows and urgently bade them
Lay them with might on the oar and win them escape from disaster.
Then did they tug uptossing the brine in their fear of destruction.
So right gladly from 'neath the precipitous cliffs to the open
Fluttered my ship; but the rest, ay every vessel, had perished.
Onward thence did we sail, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,
Gladly escaping from death, yet mourning for much-loved comrades.

Then to the isle Aeaëa we came, whereon had her dwelling
Circe of beautiful locks, dread goddess with voice as a mortal.
True-born sister is she to the baleful wizard Aeëtes.
Each was begotten of Eëlios who shineth on mortals,
Born of the selfsame mother, of Persé, daughter of Ocean.
Here to the shore of the island we brought our vessel in silence,
Into a sheltering bay, to the which some deity led us.
Then disembarking we lay two days and two nights on the dry land,
Ever in grief and exhaustion consuming the spirit within us,
Till when the third day rose from the lap of the fair-tressed morning,
Taking my keen-edged sword and a lance, by myself I departed.
Hastily leaving the ship, to a height commanding I mounted,
Hoping to notice the labours of men or the sound of their voices.
Thus I upmounted the crags and stationed myself on an outlook,
Whence I had sight of a smoke mid the wide expanse of the landscape
Rising from Circe's hall, through dense oak-thickets and woodland.
Then long while did I ponder in mind and in spirit within me,
Whether to go and explore this fiery smoke I had sighted.
Thus as I pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the better:
First to the swift-winged ship to return and the shore of the ocean,
Give to the men their meal, then send some forth on a questing.
Now when at last I was drawing anigh to the twy-beaked galley,
Then in my loneliness sure some god who had pity upon me



CIRCE AND THE COMRADES OF ODYSSEUS

Sent me a stag enormous, with antlers loftily branching,
Right in my path, to the river descending from glades of the forest,
Thirsting to drink; for the might of the sun smote sorely upon him.
While from the river he came, in the midst of his back by the backbone
Smote him the blade of my lance, and it pierced right through to the belly;
Over he rolled in the dust with a scream, and fled was his spirit.
Then on the body I planted a foot and the brass-bound spear-shaft
Dragged from the wound, and down on the earth close by I reclined it.
Here did I leave it, and gathered a number of withies and saplings.
These to a rope of a fathom in length tight-twisted from both ends
Plaiting, I fastened the feet of the monstrous creature together,
Slung him across on the nape of my neck, then made for the vessel
Leaning me hard on my spear, on the shoulder unable to bear him
Grasped by the one hand only—for wondrous huge was the creature.
Then to the fore of the vessel I cast him and roused my companions
Standing in turn near each, and with words consoling addressed them:
'Courage, my friends! Not yet shall we go, though sorely afflicted,
Down to the mansion of Death, till the destined day be arisen.
Come! while yet there is meat and is drink in the swift-winged vessel,
Be not forgetful of food, nor pine thus famished for hunger.'
Thus did I speak, and harking at once to my words of persuasion,
Straight they unmuffled, and there on the shore of the waste salt water
Marvelling gazed at the stag—so wondrous huge was the creature.
Then, when at last they had sated their eyes with the pleasure of gazing,
Washing their hands they began to prepare them a glorious banquet.
So for the whole of the day till the sun went down in the ocean
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup.
Then, when the sun sank down and come was the gloom of the twilight,
Weary we laid us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Calling together a council of all, these words I addressed them:
'List to my words, though fortune is verily evil, my comrades.
Friends—no longer we know of the region of gloom or of dawning,
Neither the place where setteth the sun which shineth on mortals,
Nay nor where he ariseth; and now let us quickly consider
Whether remains aught else to devise. There's nought I can think of.
All I beheld when I mounted the crags—for I came to an outlook.
This is an isle, all round by the infinite ocean encircled.
Lowly and flat is the island itself; and a smoke in the middle
Clearly I noticed arising in dense oak-thickets and woodlands.'

Thus did I speak, and the hearts of my mates were broken within them,
Calling to mind those deeds of the Laestrygonian giant,
Calling the fury to mind of the insolent cannibal Cyclops.
Loudly lamenting they wept, and poured forth tears in abundance,
Vainly—for nought was the profit they gained by their weeping and wailing.
Then two parties I formed of the whole of my well-greaved comrades,
Equally numbered, and leaders for both of the bands I selected,
Godlike Eurylochus of the one and myself of the other.
Then in a brass-bound helm when the lots were hastily shaken,
First of the lots to outleap was of Eurylochus great-hearted.
Thus then starting he went with his two and twenty companions
Bitterly wailing; and us did they leave lamenting behind them.

Soon in the woodland glades they discovered the palace of Circe
Builded of stones smooth-cut, on a site with a beautiful prospect.
Roaming around it at will were wolves of the mountain and lions.
These had the goddess bewitched with her potions of evil enchantment.
Nor did the beasts make rush at my comrades, but (verily 'twas so!)
Fawning upon them they waved long tails and ramping upreared them,
Even as dogs that encircle the master who comes from a banquet
Fawning—for scraps to appease their ravening ever he bringeth—
Thus came ramping around them the strong-clawed wolves and the lions
Fawning, and frightened the men as they saw these terrible monsters.
Now when at last they had come to the porch of the fair-tressed goddess,
Circe they heard in the palace. With beautiful voice she was singing,
Weaving a great and ambrosial web—such raiment as only
Goddesses work, so delicate fine, so splendid and lovely.
First then uttered a word Polites, leader of heroes,
He that was dearest of all of my mates and trustiest also:
'Listen, my friends! for within at a great loom plieth her shuttle,
Singing with voice so sweet that it maketh the floor to re-echo,
Either a goddess or woman. But come and at once let us call her!'
Thus did he speak and at once all raised their voices and called her.
Speedily then forth coming she opened the glittering portal,
Calling them in; and they all in their foolishness followed and entered,
All save Eurylochus, for he tarried, suspicious of treason.
Bringing them into her palace she set them on chairs and on couches,
Mixed them of cheese and of meal and of yellow honey a batter
Mingled with Pramnian wine, and noxious drugs of enchantment
Added, that all might utterly fail to remember their homeland.
Now so soon he had drained what she gave him, behold, of a sudden

Smiting the man with her wand she imprisoned him close in a pig-sty,
Having already the head of a pig and the voice and the bristles,
Ay and the body, but reason remaining unchanged as aforetime.
Thus imprisoned in sties they made lamentation, and Circe
Flung to them acorns and mast of the ilex and fruit of the cornel,
Food that by wallowing swine is at all times greedily eaten.

Meantime Eurylochus came hurriedly back to the vessel,
Tidings to bring of his mates and the shameful fate they had suffered.
Yet not a word was he able to utter for all his endeavour,
Pierced to the heart as he seemed by a speechless sorrow, his eyes too
Flooded with tears, and his soul all eager for loud lamentation,
Till at the last, when we all in amazement had urged him with questions,
Thus did he speak, and related the doom of the rest of his comrades :
'E'en as thou badest, we traversed the oak-lands, noble Odysseus,
Till in the glades of the wood we discovered a fair-built mansion
Built of stones smooth-cut, on a site with a beautiful prospect.
Here in the palace was plying her shuttle and sweetly was singing
Either a goddess or woman ; and raising their voices they called her.
Speedily then forth coming she opened the glittering portal,
Calling them in ; and they all in their foolishness followed and entered,
All but myself—for I tarried behind, suspicious of treason.
Thus did they totally vanish away from my sight, nor did any
Further appear, though long there seated I watched and I waited.'

Thus did he speak ; but a great sword, studded with silver and bronzen,
Over my shoulder I hung, and my bow too slinging around me
Back by the selfsame road I commanded my comrade to guide me ;
Whereat clasping my knees with his hands he began to implore me,
While with a woeful wail these swift-winged words he addressed me :
'Take me not thither unwilling, my master, but leave me behind here !
Well do I know thou'lt never return, nor canst thou another
Bring of thy shipmates back. Nay rather, with these the survivors
Haste we to flee, while still to escape is the day of destruction.'
Thus did he speak in entreaty, and thus I addressed him in answer :
'Eurylochus—concerning thyself—stay here if thou wishest,
Eating and drinking thy fill by the side of the blue-prow'd vessel !
But—for myself—I shall go ; for a strong constraint is upon me.'
These words uttered, I mounted the land from the ship and the sea-shore.

Now when at last I was come through wondrous glades of the forest

Close to the palace of Circe, that mistress of many enchantments,
There I was met by the god of the golden wand, Hermeias,
While to the palace anigh I was drawing. A youth he resembled
Scarce with a down on the lip, in the flower of grace and of beauty.
Forthwith grasping me firm by the hand he addressed me a greeting:
'Whither, unfortunate, thus dost thou wander alone in the highlands,
Strange to the place? It is surely thy comrades that yonder at Circe's
Closely imprisoned as pigs lie wallowing deeply in litter.
Comest thou hither perchance to release them? Alas, I assure thee
Never shalt thou come back, but remain there e'en as the others.
Nathless listen! for, lo, I will free thee of peril and save thee.
See here! Bearing this powerful charm, in the palace of Circe
Enter—and thus from thy head shall be warded the day of destruction.
Now will I tell thee of all the devices pernicious of Circe.
Mead will she mix thee and mingle a noxious drug in the batter.
Yet e'en thus her enchantment shall fail—so strongly against it
Works the beneficent charm that I give thee; and all will I tell thee.
E'en at the moment that raising her long rod Circe shall strike thee,
Drawing the sharp-edged sword that thou bear'st at thy side from the scabbard
Spring on her—even on Circe—as eagerly longing to slay her.
Then will she cower in fear and will offer thee tender embracements.
Yield thee at last, no longer refusing the love of the goddess;
So will she grant to thy mates a release, and will kindly entreat thee.
Yet thou shalt bid her to swear by the terrible oath of the Blesséd
Never to plot a device that is evil against thee, to harm thee,
Lest that unclothed and defenceless she make thee a fool and unman thee.'
Thus then speaking, the charm to me offered the Slayer of Argus,
Plucked from the ground; and he showed me the plant and its fashion of growing:
Black at the root; but the flower was even as milk in its whiteness.
Moly 'tis called by the gods, and to dig it is difficult labour,
Labour for mortals, I mean—but to gods are possible all things.

Then Hermeias departed, returning to lofty Olympus
Thorough the woods of the island; and I to the palace of Circe
Held on my way, while darkly my spirit was troubled within me.
Soon at the doors of the palace I stood of the fair-tressed goddess.
Here did I halt, and I called, and the goddess was ware of my calling.
Speedily then forth coming she opened the glittering portal,
Calling me in; and with heart right heavy I followed and entered
Into the hall, and a chair rich-studded with silver she gave me,
Beautiful, skilfully wrought—and beneath for the feet was a footstool.

Then did she mix me a mead in a gold-wrought cup for a potion,
Adding a noxious drug, in her spirit devising me evil.
Now so soon I had taken and quaffed it (nor felt the bewitchment),
Forthwith giving a stroke with her wand she commanded me, saying:
'Off to the sty! Go, crouch thee along with the rest of thy fellows!
Thus did she speak; then drawing my sharp-edged sword from the scabbard
Quickly on Circe I cast me, as eagerly longing to slay her.
She with a shriek slipped under and clasping my knees in entreaty,
Uttering woeful wails, these swift-winged words she addressed me:
'Say, what mortal art thou, and from whence? what city and parents?
Sorely I marvel that drinking the potion thou feelst not enchantment.
Never before hath another of mortals resisted the potion,
None that hath drunk it—when once by the door of his teeth it had entered.
Surely within thy breast is a soul too strong for bewitchment.
Verily thou art Odysseus the wary and wise, who was destined
Hither to come (so said to me ever the Slayer of Argus),
Home from the Trojan land in a swift black vessel returning.
Nay now, hide in the scabbard thy weapon, and come let us hasten
On to my couch to ascend and folded in tender embracement
Revel in love and in sleep, and trust each other for ever.'
Thus did she speak; forthwith then in answer thus I addressed her:
'Nay, O Circe, thou canst not expect it of me to be loving,
After bewitching and turning my comrades to pigs in thy palace.
Me too, now thou hast gotten me here, thou deceitfully biddest
Enter thy chamber and mount on thy bed, to repose me beside thee,
Plotting, when bared and defenceless, to make me a fool and unman me.
Nay, I will never consent to ascend on thy bed and repose me,
Art thou not willing to swear me a solemn oath and to promise
Never again to devise what is evil against me, to harm me.'
Thus did I speak, and she readily gave me the oath I demanded.
So, when at last she had given the oath and finished the plighting,
Into the beautiful bed I ascended of Circe the goddess.

Now meanwhile in the halls were handmaids busily working,
Even the four that attend on the goddess and serve in the palace.
These are nymphs and the daughters of sacred groves and of fountains,
Yea and of hallowed rivers that run to the salt of the ocean.
One of them cast on the chairs their coverlets splendid of purple
(Purple the tissue above; but she laid smooth linen beneath it),
While that another in front of the chairs set tables in order
Fashioned of silver, and baskets of gold on the tables she stationed.

Wine honey-hearted the third of the handmaids mixed in a wine-bowl ;
 Sweet was the wine and silver the bowl and golden the goblets.
 Water was borne by the fourth, and a fire set speedily blazing
 Under a spacious tripod, and quickly was heated the water.
 Then, so soon as the water had boiled in the glittering cauldron,
 Setting me into a bath, from the vessel capacious she poured it,
 Pleasantly tempered with cold, down over my head and my shoulders,
 Till from my limbs she had taken the soul-consuming exhaustion.
 Then, when my body was washed and anointed with oil of the olive,
 Casting around me a beautiful tunic and mantle, she led me
 Back to the hall, and gave me a chair rich-studded with silver,
 Beautiful, skilfully wrought ; and beneath for the feet was a footstool.
 Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer
 Beautiful, golden, and over a basin of silver she poured it,
 Bidding me wash, and she stationed a polished table beside me.
 Then did a grave house-dame bring bread, and she set it before me,
 Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty,
 Urging me also to eat ; but my soul took pleasure in nothing ;
 Sitting I brooded on thoughts far other, and boded of evil.

Circe, as soon as she noticed me sitting, and over the viands
 Busy never a hand, as with grievous sorrow afflicted,
 Placed her anigh to my side, and with swift-winged words she addressed me :
 ‘ Why art thou sitting, Odysseus, as dumb as a man that is voiceless,
 Eating thy heart, nor touchest the food nor touchest the wine-cup ?
 Surely thou bodest of treason again ! Nay, truly thou shouldst not
 Cherish the fear, for I gave thee an oath and solemnly sware it.’
 Thus did she speak ; and at once these words I addressed her in answer :
 ‘ Yea, O Circe,—but how shall a man that is honest and decent
 Find in his heart to delight him in food and in quaffing the wine-cup,
 Ere that he gaineth release for his friends and beholds them before him ?
 Dost thou persuade me to eat and to drink with a friendly intention,
 Free them—and grant me again to behold my beloved companions.’

Thus did I speak. Then forth from the hall went Circe the goddess
 Bearing her wand in the hand ; and she opened the doors of the pig-sty.
 Out of it all of them trooped, like nine-year hogs in appearance.
 Then in the front of her huddled they stood, and passing amidst them
 Each of the beasts in his turn with a different drug she anointed.
 Straight dropped off from the bodies the bristles that thickly had grown there
 Bred by the venom pernicious that Circe the goddess had given.

Men they became once more, and younger they seemed than aforetime,
Yea and goodlier far to behold and taller in person.
Quickly they knew me and clung to my hands, each after the other,
All by a passionate sobbing o'erwhelmed; and the mansion around us
Echoed the terrible wail, and even the goddess had pity.
Placing her then at my side thus spake to me Circe the goddess:
'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Now to thy swift-winged vessel return and the shore of the ocean.
There shall ye firstly of all draw out of the water the vessel;
All of the gear then stowing away, and the goods, in the caverns,
Hither thyself come back with the rest of thy trusty companions.'

Thus did she speak, and within me my valiant soul was persuaded.
So I betook me at once to the ship and the shore of the ocean.
Here on the swift-winged ship I discovered my faithful companions
Uttering woeful laments and shedding tears in abundance.
Then, as the calves of a farm encircle the cows from the pasture
Home to the steading returned, full-fed and contented with grazing—
All come frisking around them together, nor longer the farmyard
Keepeth them back, and with ceaseless lowings they joyfully gambol
Greeting their mothers—so seeing me standing before them my comrades
Thronged me about; and they wept—for it verily seemed to their fancy
Even as though they had come to the land of their fathers, the rugged
Ithacan isle, and the town that was home of their youth and their birthplace.
Then with a pitiful wail these swift-winged words they addressed me:
'Seeing thee safely returned, O master, we joy at thy coming,
Even as though we had reached our own dear Ithacan island.
Yet—ah, tell us the tale of the fate of thy other companions.'
Thus did they speak, but with words consoling I answered them, saying:
'Nay, let us firstly of all draw out of the water the vessel;
All of the gear then stowing away, and the goods, in the caverns,
Quickly bestir yourselves and all make ready to follow;
So shall ye see your mates in the wonderful palace of Circe
Eating and drinking—for there they enjoy unfailing abundance.'
Thus did I speak, and hearing my words all quickly obeyed me,
All save Eurylochus, who had fain withholden his comrades.
Calling aloud to his mates these swift-winged words he addressed them:
'Ah, unfortunates, where will ye go? Why love ye misfortune,
Getting you down to the palace of Circe the goddess, who surely
Either to pigs or to wolves or to ravening lions will change us,
Ever to serve as the guards of her house, enthralled to her service,

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435 - 473

Just as befell when before to the innermost den of the Cyclops
Ventured the men who followed this all too hardy Odysseus ?
Yea, it is he through whose audacious folly they perished !'
Thus did he speak ; and I pondered in doubt, and it seemed to me better
Drawing the long-edged sword by my sinewy thigh from the scabbard
Swiftly to smite him his head clean off and to tumble it earthward,
Though right near me in kin was the man ; which seeing, my comrades,
One and the other, with words of entreaty restraining addressed me :
'Zeus-born, lo, this man will we suffer, if such be thy pleasure,
Here on the spot to remain and to keep by the ship and defend it,
While for ourselves—lead on to the wonderful palace of Circe !'

These words uttered, they mounted the land from the ship and the sea-shore,
Nor stayed Eurylochus by the hollow vessel remaining ;
He too followed, for much was he cowed by my terrible anger.
Meantime all of the rest of my mates in her palace had Circe
Carefully tended and bathed and anointed with oil of the olive ;
Then she had clothed them in raiment, in mantles of wool and in doublets.
All of them banqueting nobly we found in the hall of the palace.
Then as they looked each one on the face of the others and knew them,
Weeping they made a lament, and the house with the wailing resounded,
Till at the last came nigh and addressed me the beautiful goddess :
'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Wake no longer this violent weeping ! I know it myself too
How on the teeming expanses of ocean ye ceaselessly suffered,
How, too, mortals unkind on the dry land cruelly used you.
Nay come, sit and regale you with viands and quaff of the wine-cup,
Till once more ye recover the spirit and courage within you,
E'en as it was on the day when ye sailed from shores of the homeland,
Rock-bound Ithaca's isle. Ye are wayworn still and despondent,
Always the terrible journey recalling ; nor ever for gladness
Have ye a heart—since verily bitter affliction ye suffered.'
Thus did she speak, and within us the valiant soul was persuaded.
Here then every day till the whole of the year was completed
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup.

Now when the year was complete with the slow revolution of seasons,
After the waning of months, when the long days came of the summer,
Calling me forth from the palace addressed me my faithful companions :
'Now, good Sir, it is time to remember thy native country,
Beest thou destined indeed to escape all perils and safely

Come to thy well-built home once more and the land of thy fathers.
Thus did they speak, and within me the valiant soul was persuaded.
So for the rest of the day till the sun went down in the ocean
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup,
Till, when the sun sank down and come was the gloom of the twilight,
Weary they laid them to sleep in the shadowy halls of the palace.
Then to the beautiful bed I ascended of Circe the goddess.
Here I besought her, embracing her knees, and she heard my entreaty,
While upraising my voice these swift-winged words I addressed her :
'Circe, I pray thee at length to accomplish the promise thou madest
Homeward to send me. Already the heart in my bosom is restless,
Ay and the hearts of my men ; and they weary the spirit within me,
Alway around me lamenting whenever thou haply art absent.'
Thus did I speak ; whereat made answer the beautiful goddess :
'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Nay, no longer remain unwillingly here in my palace.
First howbeit ye needs must go once more on a journey ;
E'en to the mansion of Hades and dread Queen Persephoneia,
There to consult with the spirit of Teiresias the diviner,
Blind old prophet of Thebes whose reason remains as aforetime.
Even in death he is still permitted by Persephoneia
Mind to possess—he only: the rest are fluttering phantoms.'

Thus did she speak—and my spirit was utterly broken within me ;
Bitterly weeping I sat on the bed, and the heart in my bosom
Cared no longer to live on the earth or to look on the sunlight.
Then, when at last I was sated of weeping and writhing in anguish,
Speaking again, these words I addressed to the goddess in answer :
'Circe, a journey as this what guide hath the power to pilot ?
Ne'er in a black-hulled vessel hath mortal descended to Hades.'
Thus did I speak ; whereat made answer the beautiful goddess :
'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Let not the want of a leader to pilot thy vessel distress thee.
Only with mast upraised and the white sails spread to the breezes
Seated remain. Of itself will the breath of the Boreas bear her.
Now so soon as thy vessel has traversed the stream of the Ocean,
Where is a shore rich-soiled and copses of Persephoneia,
Poplars soaring aloft and willows widowed of fruitage,
Beaching her there on the strand of the eddying current of Ocean,
Press thou forward thyself to the mouldering mansion of Hades.
Into the Acheron here red-flaming Phlegethon poureth,

And Cocytus, a channel that leads from the Stygian water,
Rocky ravine connecting the two loud-thundering rivers.
Drawing anigh to the place, O hero, e'en as I bid thee,
Dig thee a trench of a cubit in length and a cubit in wideness.
Then all round it to all of the dead pour out a libation,
Firstly of honey and milk, and of wine well-mellowed thereafter,
Thirdly of water; and sprinkle thereon white meal of the barley.
Make then many a vow to the host of the bodiless phantoms,
Ithaca reaching, the cow that is best of thy herd and is barren
Straight thou'lt slay in thy home, and a pyre deck richly with presents,
Solely to Teiresias devoting a ram as oblation
Perfectly black and the finest of all of the flocks of thy homestead.
Then, when appeased with thy prayers are Death's illustrious peoples,
See that thou slaughter a male of the sheep and a female, a black one,
Turning their heads to the nethermost Gloom; but with vision averted
Gaze thou intent on the stream of the river; and soon shall surround thee
Many a phantom—the spirits of those who are dead and departed.
Now is the moment to call on thy comrades and urgently bid them,
Flaying the sheep, which lie by the steel unpitying slaughtered,
Burnt oblation to make and prayers to the deities offer,
Hades' terrible power and dread Queen Persephoneia.
Then, with the keen-eyed sword at thy thigh drawn forth from the scabbard,
Seated remain, restraining the host of the bodiless phantoms
Back from the blood, till of Teiresias thou hast gotten an answer.
Then right soon will the prophet approach, O leader of heroes.
He shall declare thee the path and the bounds of thy journey and show thee
How to return to thy home and the teeming ocean to traverse.'

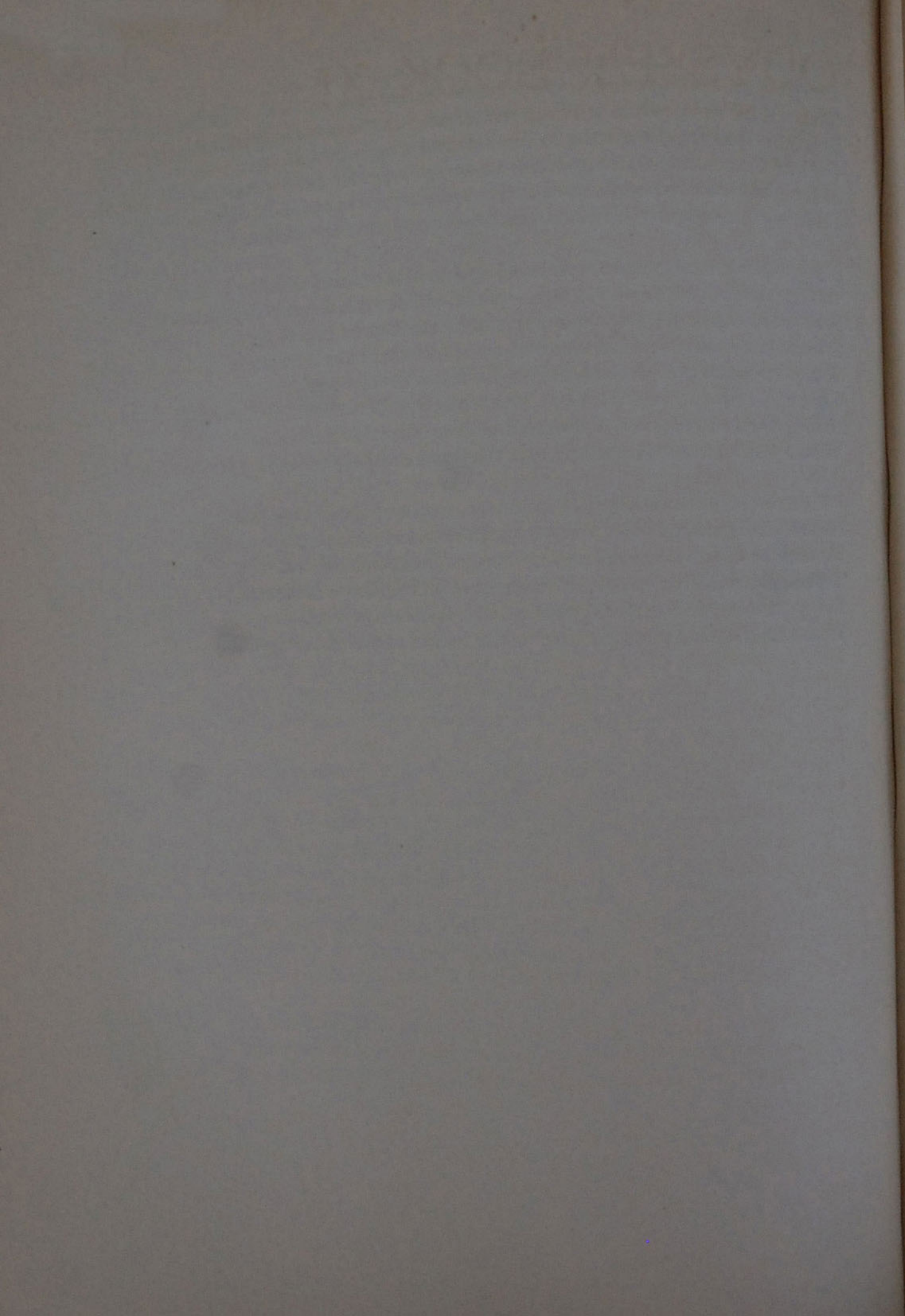
Thus did she speak, and soon came Morning enthroned in her glory.
Then, as she bade me, I clothed me in raiment, in tunic and mantle,
While that the nymph threw round her a garment of glistening whiteness,
Delicate, lovely, and over her waist then fastened a girdle
Beautiful, fashioned of gold; and her head in a hood she enveloped.
Straight to the hall of the palace I went and I roused my companions,
Standing in turn near each, and with words right gentle addressed them:
'Lie no longer asleep enjoying the sweetness of slumber!
Come, let us go! since all hath she told me, the beautiful Circe.'

Thus did I speak, and within them the valiant soul was persuaded.
Still, not even from here did I bring unscathed my companions.
Youngest of these was a certain Elpenor, neither exceeding

Sturdy in battle, nor having a mind compacted of wisdom.
He now far from the rest on the wonderful dwelling of Circe,
Longing for coolness and heavy with wine, had reclined him to slumber ;
Then, as his mates were stirring, perceiving the voices and clatter,
Suddenly starting he sprang to his feet, and wholly forgetting
Back to descend by the way of the steep-built stair of the ladder,
Fell right down from the roof, and out of the joint of the backbone
Broken at once was the neck ; and his spirit departed to Hades.

Now when the rest were well on the road these words I addressed them :
' Homeward doubtless ye deem—to the well-loved land of your fathers—
Now ye are bound ; but a way far other hath Circe appointed,
E'en to the mansion of Hades and dread Queen Persephoneia,
There to consult with the spirit of Teiresias the diviner.'
Thus did I speak, and their hearts were utterly broken within them.
Sitting them down on the spot and tearing their hair they lamented,
Vainly—for nought was the profit they gained by their weeping and wailing.

While to the swift-winged ship we returned and the shore of the ocean
Heavily laden with grief, outpouring tears in abundance,
Meantime Circe departed and reaching the black-hulled vessel
Tethered beside it a male of the sheep and a female, a black one,
Easily passing us by ; for a goddess, unless she be willing,
Who shall behold with the eyes while hither or thither she goeth ?



ODYSSEY BOOK XI

NOW when again to the sea we had come and arrived at the vessel,
Her did we firstly of all drag down to the vast salt water,
Then to the black-hulled vessel we carried the sails and the mainmast,
Lifted upon it the sheep we had found and quickly embarked us,
Heavily laden with grief and shedding tears in abundance.

Following after us then in the wake of the blue-prowed vessel
Fair stern-breezes arose, sail-swelling and kindly companions,
Sent by the fair-tressed nymph, dread goddess with voice as a mortal.
So, when the gear of the ship we had busily stowed and adjusted,
Seated we watched while kept to her course by the wind and the steersman
All day long with the sails full swollen she voyaged the waters.

Set was already the sun and darkened was every roadway
Ere to the bounds we arrived of the fathomless stream of the Ocean.
Here the Cimmerian people inhabit a land and a city
Shrouded in darkness of mist and of cloud, since never upon them
Glorious Eëlios looks down with his radiant daylight,
Neither whenever he mounteth the starry expanses of heaven,
Nor as again to the earth he returns and from heaven descendeth ;
Ever a darkness of death o'erhangs these pitiful mortals.
Here we arrived, and we drave on the beach, and we took from the vessel
Both of the sheep and ascended the shore of the river of Ocean,
Pressing ahead till we came to the place foretold us by Circe.
Here held Eurylochus with his mate Perimedes the victims.
Then, with the keen-edged sword on my thigh drawn forth from its scabbard
Digging a trench of a cubit in length and a cubit in wideness,
Round it to all of the souls of the dead I outpoured a libation,
Firstly of honey and milk, and of wine well-mellowed thereafter,
Thirdly of water, and sprinkled thereon white meal of the barley,
Offering many a vow to the host of the bodiless phantoms,
Ithaca reaching, the cow that was best of my herd and was barren
Surely to slay in my home, and a pyre deck richly with presents,
Solely to Teiresias devoting a ram as oblation
Perfectly black and the finest of all of the flocks of my homestead.

Now when at length I had ended appeasing the people of Hades
Duly with vow and with prayer, I opened the throats of the victims
Over the trench ; and the black blood flowed ; and behold, they collected,

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Spirits from Erebus—souls of the dead, from the body departed :
Brides and unmarried youths, old men outworn by affliction,
Maidens of delicate bloom, their hearts new-laden with sorrow ;
Many besides I beheld sore wounded with bronzen lances,
Warriors slain in the fight, their bloodstained armour upon them.
Numberless all to the trench came flocking from this and from that side
Raising a wondrous cry ; and a cold, pale terror possessed me.
Now was the moment to call on my comrades and urgently bid them,
Flaying the sheep, which lay by the steel unpitying slaughtered,
Burnt oblation to make and prayers to the deities offer,
Hades' terrible power and dread Queen Persephoneia.
Then, with the keen-edged sword on my thigh drawn forth from its scabbard,
Seated I watched, restraining the host of the bodiless phantoms
Back from the blood, till of Teiresias I had gotten an answer.

First of the shades to approach was the soul of Elpenor my shipmate,
Since not yet was he buried beneath earth's wide-way'd surface ;
Still it was lying—the corse that we left in the palace of Circe—
All unwept and unburied ; for other anxiety urged us.
Looking upon him I wept, for my spirit was moved to compassion ;
Uttering therefore my voice, these swift-winged words I addressed him :
'Say, how camest thou down to the gloom and the shadows, Elpenor ?
Fleeter on foot thou camest than I in my dark-hulled vessel.'
Thus did I speak ; whereat with a groan he addressed me in answer :
'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Ruined was I by the doom of a god and excess in the wine-cup.
Having aroused me from sleep on the palace of Circe, forgetting
Back to return by the way of the steep-built ladder, I tumbled
Right from the roof of the house, and out of the joint of the backbone
Broken at once was the neck, and my spirit departed to Hades.
Now, by the love of the absent beloved at home I beseech thee,
Both by the love of thy wife and the father that cherished thy childhood,
Ay and by Telemachus, sole son in thy palace remaining . . .
Well do I know that departing from here, from the mansion of Hades,
Back thou'lt hold for the isle Aea thy well-built vessel—
Here when thou com'st, O bear me in memory, prince, I implore thee,
Neither unwept and unburied abandon me homeward returning,
Parting in haste—lest aye as a curse from the gods I shall haunt thee.
Burn me, I pray, on a pyre with my armour and all my equipment ;
Also erect me a tomb on the strand of the grey-green ocean,
Haply for ages to come of a luckless man a remembrance !



IN THE WORLD OF THE DEAD



These my entreaties fulfil, and my oar set aloft on the barrow,
Rowing with which when alive so often I toiled with my comrades.
So did he speak; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed him:
'Thus will I do, poor friend, and all of thy wishes accomplish.'
So with disconsolate words did we sit conversing together,
I on the one side over the blood outstretching my broadsword,
While on the other related his story the ghost of my comrade.

Then drew near me the spirit of her who had perished—my mother,
Daughter of Autolycus great-hearted, Anticleia,
Whom still living I left when to sacred Troy I departed.
Looking upon her I wept, for my spirit was moved to compassion.
Yet e'en thus did I suffer her not, though sorely it grieved me,
Nigh to the blood, ere Teiresias should give me his answer.

Then drew near me the spirit of Teiresias the diviner,
Holding a sceptre of gold, and he knew forthwith and addressed me:
'Zeus-born so of Laertes, thou wise and wary Odysseus,
Why, unfortunate, why now, leaving the realms of the sunlight,
Comest thou hither to visit the dead and their dolorous country?
Nay, hold back from the trench and withdrawing thy keen-edged weapon
Grant me to drink of the blood; so truth shall I tell thee unerring.'
Thus did he speak, and withdrawing my broadsword studded with silver
Back in the scabbard I thrust it; and after the gore he had tasted
Then forthwith these words did the faultless prophet address me:
'Home to regain, sweet home, is thy wish, O famous Odysseus.
Ah but a difficult task will a deity make it, I fear me!
Ne'er will Poseidon forgive: so deep in his heart is implanted
Anger because thou hast blinded his son, his beloved, the Cyclops.
Nathless still ye shall come, though suffering sore, to the homeland,
Knowst thou to bridle the lust of thy heart and the hearts of thy comrades
Whensoever thou first with thy well-built vessel approachest
Isle Thrinacia, fleeing the surge of the violet ocean.
Pasturing there ye shall find fat flocks and the kine of the sun-god
Eëlios, who all overseeth and all overheareth.
Now if ye leave them unharmed, and earnestly press on your journey,
Verily Ithaca still shall ye reach, though suffering sorely;
Else—if ye harm them at all—I predict then utter perdition
Both for thy ship and thy mates—while thou, e'en shouldst thou escape it,
Late and in pitiful plight and with none of thy comrades surviving,
Borne on an alien ship shalt arrive, and at home find sorrows.

Men thou shalt find, overbearing and insolent, eating thy substance,
 Wooing thy godlike wife, and bringing her presents as suitors.
 Yet these arrogant deeds thou'lt surely avenge at thy coming.
 Then, when at last thou hast slain in the halls of thy palace the suitors,
 Either by cunning or else by the sharp sword openly slaughtered,
 Forth once more thou shalt fare, with a well-shaped oar on thy shoulder,
 Till to a people thou comest that never hath heard of the ocean,
 Yea to a people that mix no salt with the food that they live on ;
 Neither hath any a vessel with cheeks red-painted beholden,
 Neither hath knowledge of oars which serve as the wings of a vessel.
 Now will I give thee a sign most certain, that cannot escape thee.
 Whensoever it haps that a chance wayfarer that meets thee
 Says 'tis a winnowing fan that thou bearest on thy glistering shoulder,
 Fixing the well-shaped oar in the ground, there leave it implanted.
 Next, to Poseidon the king thou shalt offer a goodly oblation,
 Even a male of the swine and a male of the herd and the sheepfold ;
 Then turn homeward again, and many an offering holy
 Slay to the deathless gods who inhabit the infinite heaven,
 Each one after the other. At last shall a death from the ocean,
 Such as of deaths is the mildest, befall thee and gently remove thee,
 Weary and worn, in a smooth old age ; and around thee thy people
 Happy shall live. Lo, this is the truth that I tell thee unerring.'

So did he speak ; and I answered in turn, and thus I addressed him :

'Teiresias, all this have doubtless spun the immortals.

Now come, tell me a thing that I ask and clearly explain it !

Here do I notice the spirit of her who has perished, my mother.

Silent she sitteth anigh to the blood, nor once has she ventured

Even to look in the face of her son, or a word to address him.

Answer me, prince—how might she perceive who standeth before her ?'

So did I speak ; forthwith then answering thus he addressed me :

'Easy to say is the thing ; and I straight in thy heart will implant it.

Whichsoever of all of the ghosts of the dead thou permittest

Nearer to come to the blood, it will truth foretell thee unerring ;

Shouldst thou deny the approach, such soul will depart and will vanish.'

These words uttered, the spirit re-entered the mansion of Hades,

Spirit of Teiresias, king-seer, his oracles ended,

While unmoved on the spot I remained, till lastly my mother,

Drawing anigh, of the black blood drank, and knowing me straightway

Uttered a pitiful wail, and with swift-winged words she addressed me :

‘Tell me, my child, how camest thou here to the gloom and the shadows,
Being alive? ’Tis a sight full hard for the living to look on.
All in the midst are rivers enormous, terrible currents,
Ocean chiefly of all, not possible ever to traverse
Should one journey afoot nor sail in a well-built vessel.
Camest thou hither when voyaging back from the land of the Trojans?
Long hast thou wandered and far with thy men and thy vessels, and never
Ithaca reached and beholden thy wife in the halls of thy palace?’
So did she speak; and in turn then answering thus I addressed her:
‘Mother, my mother, necessity bringeth me hither to Hades,
Here to consult with the spirit of Teiresias the diviner.
Never as yet was I nigh to Achaea, nor yet on the homeland
Planted a foot, but was tossed by the ceaseless storm of affliction
Ever from that first day when I followed the great Agamemnon
Sailing to Ilium famed for its horses, to fight with the Trojans.
Come now, answer me this that I ask thee and clearly explain it:
What was the doom wherewith low-laying Death overcame thee,
Whether a weary disease—or did Artemis, darter of arrows,
Launching her painless shafts assail thee and suddenly slay thee?
Speak to me too of my sire, and the son that I left in my homestead,
Whether my honour is still in their hands, or is even already
Held by another; and speak they of me as if never returning?
Tell of my wedded wife moreover the counsel and purpose:
Whether abideth she still with her son, all guarding securely,
Or doth already a chief of Achaea possess her in marriage?’
Thus did I speak, and at once made answer my honour’d mother:
‘Ay assuredly, still with a steadfast heart she remaineth
There in the halls of thy palace; and filled with the gloom of her sadness
Waneth the day and waneth the night, while ever she weepeth.
Nor is another adorned with thy honour; in quiet possession
Telemachus directs the demesne, and at banquets abundant
Feasteth—for such it beseems a dispenser of justice to furnish,
Seeing that others invite him. But ever thy father abideth
Up at the farm, nor descends to the town, and possesseth for sleeping
Neither a bed nor a wrapper of wool nor a glistering blanket.
During the winter he sleeps, as the servants sleep, in the farmstead
Nigh to the hearth in the ash, and a beggarly raiment he weareth;
Then, when the summer is come and the harvest’s luxuriant season,
Oft in the nooks all round of the orchard knoll of the vineyard
Strown is his bed of the leaves down-fallen and lying in hollows.
Here aye groaning he lieth and nurseth his great grief greater,

Yearning for thee to return, and his years lie heavy upon him.
 Thus, e'en thus, did I perish as well and my doom I encountered.
 Neither within our halls did the keen-eyed darter of arrows
 Launching her painless shafts assail me and suddenly slay me,
 Neither did any disease come over me, such as so often
 Painfully wasteth and out of the limbs extracteth the spirit ;
 'Twas but my longing for thee and thy counsels, my hero Odysseus,
 Yea and thy tender affection, that reft me of life and its sweetness.'

So did she speak, and I pondered thereon and yearned in my spirit,
 Longing to clasp to my bosom the soul of my dear dead mother.
 Three times forward I sprang with a heart which bade me embrace her ;
 Three times out of my hands as a shadow or vision of dreamland
 Fled she, and ever became in my heart more bitter the anguish.
 Then did I utter my voice and with swift-winged words I addressed her :
 'Mother beloved, why waitest thou not when I long to embrace thee,
 So that we twain might wind our arms thus lovingly round us,
 Sating ourselves, yea even in Hades, with chill lamentation ?
 Or is it only a phantom that high Queen Persephoneia
 Sendeth, to make more bitter the grief wherewith I bewail thee ?'
 Thus did I speak, and at once made answer my honour'd mother :
 'Ah me, truly, my son, thou'rt most ill-fated of all men !
 Nowise Persephoneia, the daughter of Zeus, hath deceived thee,
 Seeing that such, when he dieth, is ever the lot of a mortal :
 Then no longer the flesh and the bones are bound by the sinews ;
 These doth the heat of the flame with its irresistible fury
 Conquer, as soon as the life from the whitened bones is departed ;
 Then as a dream forth-flying the soul flits hither and thither.
 Now to the light haste back right eagerly, all that I tell thee
 Bearing in mind, nor later forget to thy wife to relate it.'

Thus did we twain hold converse together ; and round me the women
 Gathered—for thither compelled them the high Queen Persephoneia—
 Even the wives and the daughters of famous rulers and heroes.
 Thronging from every side to the dark red blood they collected.
 Then, as myself I bethought each after the other to question,
 This was the plan that appeared to my mind as the best and the wisest :
 Drawing the keen-edged sword at my sinewy thigh from the scabbard,
 Many together to drink of the dark red blood I allowed not.
 Each one after the other in order approached it, and singly
 Each declared her descent ; and to all I addressed me with questions.

Tyro first I beheld, of a stock right noble descended ;
Daughter she boasted herself of Salmoneus, glorious hero,
Wife, as she said, of a son begotten by Aeolus, Cretheus.
Once of a river enamoured, the heaven-descended Enipeus,
(He is the river the fairest by far on earth that is flowing)
Often she wandered along by Enipeus' beautiful currents ;
Likened to whom did the Shaker of Earth, land-girding Poseidon,
Lay him adown by her side at the mouth of the eddying river.
Purple the wave stood round them, as solid and huge as a mountain,
Arching above and hiding the god and the earth-born woman.
Then did he, loosing the zone of the maid, shed slumber upon her.
Now so soon as Poseidon his amorous work had accomplished,
Tenderly clasping her hand he addressed her and greeted her kindly :
'Woman, be glad in my love ! When the year's revolution is ended
Glorious children to bear will be thine ; for unfruitful is never
Couch of immortal. But see that thou carefully cherish and tend them.
Go to thy home, and be still, nor utter the name that I tell thee :
Lo, it is I that address thee, the King Earth-shaking Poseidon.'
These words uttered, he plunged in the depths of the billowing ocean.
So she conceived and she brought forth twins, both Neleus and also
Pelias, ministers mighty of Zeus the omnipotent Father
Both of them. Pelias dwelt in the widespread land of Iolcos,
Wealthy in flocks, and the home of his brother was Pylos the sandy.
Also to Cretheus she bare, this queen unrivalled of women,
Aeson, and then Pheres, and the charioteer Amythaon.

Antiopé then next I beheld, who was child of Asopus.
She, as she boasted, had slept in the arms of the Father of heaven,
Yea and had borne to the Sire two sons, Amphion and Zethus.
These first founded the city of Thebes and builded her portals
Seven, and crowned her with towers, for towerless were they unable
Wide-spaced Thebes securely to hold, though great was their power.

Alcmené was the next I beheld, Amphitryon's consort.
She did the hero with heart of a lion, the labour-enduring
Hercules bear, conceived in embracement of Zeus the Almighty.
Megara too I beheld, fair daughter of Creon the haughty,
Wife of Amphitryon's son, whose strength was for ever unwearied.

Next was the mother of Oedipodés, fair queen Epicasté,
She who a horrible deed with a mind unconscious committed,

Wedding her son, who had taken the life of his sire and thereafter
Married her; then to the world all suddenly heaven revealed it.
He in the beautiful city of Thebes, still suffering sorrows,
Ruled the Cadmeans, fulfilling calamitous counsels of heaven.
She went down to the mansion of Hades, the terrible Warder,
Having suspended a noose hung sheer from the height of a rafter,
Whelmed by her grief and despair; and to him full many a sorrow
Left she behind—such woes as a mother's avengers accomplish.

Chloris the beautiful then I beheld, whom formerly Neleus
Married for sake of her beauty—and numberless presents he offered;
Youngest daughter was she of Amphion, the son of a chieftain
Iasus. (Minyan Orchomenus was the town of the monarch.)
She as the Pylian queen brought forth right glorious children,
Nestor, and then Chromius, and Periclymenus the undaunted.
Sister to these was Pero the stately, a wonder for mortals.
Her all neighbouring chiefs came wooing, but willing was Neleus
Only to give her to him who the crook-horned broad-browed cattle
Safely from Phylace brought, where Iphiclus wielded his power—
Difficult cattle to lift; and alone did the prophet unerring
Venture to drive them away; but a fate right grievous entrapped him,
Even the torment of bonds and the savage revenge of the herdsmen,
Till, when the fulness of time with its days and its months was completed,
Seasons returning again till the year had repeated its circle,
Then at the last did the power of Iphiclus set him at freedom,
After he uttered his rede; and the counsel of Zeus was accomplished.

Ledé also I saw, the illustrious wife of the monarch
Tyndareüs. Two valiant sons did she bear to her husband,
Castor the tamer of steeds, and the boxer renowned Polydeuces.
These doth the Earth, great Mother of life, now hold in her bosom.
Yet, though buried below, great honour they have of the Father,
Sometimes coming to life, and on days alternate returning
Back to the dead; and worship is paid them as peers of immortals.

Next then Iphimedeia I saw, who was wife of Aloeus.
Once (she was wont to affirm) she had slept in the arms of Poseidon,
Whom two sons she had borne, both destined early to perish,
Otus like to a god and the widely renowned Ephialtes,
Tallest of all that the earth e'er nourished, the Mother of harvests,
Fairest moreover by far, save only the famous Orion.

Yea and truly when nine years old nine cubits they measured
Even in breadth ; but in height they had grown nine fathoms already.
These—so runneth the tale—once threatened the gods of Olympus
Din terrific of battle to rouse and the whirlwind of combat.
Ossa they strove on the crest of Olympus to pile, and on Ossa
Pelion waving with forests, to help them in scaling the heaven.
Ay and this they had done, had they reached full measure of manhood
Ere by the son who was gotten by Zeus of the fair-tressed Leto
Both of them perished ; nor yet had the first down under their temples
Blossomed, nor clothed was the chin with the beard's luxuriant outgrowth.

Phaedré then I beheld and Procris, and fair Ariadne
Daughter of Minos, the wizard of bale. Her formerly Theseus,
Bearing from Crete, to the hill of the sacred city of Athens
Listed to bring, but he won not his pleasure, for Artemis slew her
Where in the sea-girt Dia the god Dionysus accused her.

Maera and Clýmene then I beheld, and vile Eriphylé,
Her that a trinket of gold as the price of her husband accepted.
Nay, but I never shall finish the tale of the women, or name them,
All whom there I beheld, both wives and daughters of heroes ;
Ere I had ended had waned the ambrosial night—and already
Time 'tis to lay me to sleep, by my swift-winged ship and my shipmates,
Or in thy palace ; and ye and the gods will provide me an escort."

Thus did he speak, and they sat all utterly silent and speechless,
Holden as 'twere by a spell in the shadowy hall of the palace.
First did the white-armed Arété find words to address them :
"Say, Phaeacians, where now standeth the man in your liking,
Both as to favour and form and to wit well-balanced within him?
Though as a guest he is mine, yet all of us share in the honour.
Not too hastily homeward dismiss him, nor, seeing he needs them,
Charily stint with the gifts, since verily many a treasure
Lies, by the grace of the gods, stored up in the halls of your homesteads."

Then in their midst made answer the hero, old Echenéus,
One that was honoured as Elder of all Phaeacian nobles :
"Truly, my friends, not wide of the mark nor of right and of reason
Speaketh the queen. She is wise. It beseemeth us well to obey her.
Yet 'tis on Alcinous that dependeth the word, and the action."

Then King Alcinous outspoke and answered him saying :
"Ay and in sooth it shall hold, this word she hath spoken, I swear it,
Sure as I live and am king of the bold Phaeacian sea-folk.
Still, let the stranger endure, though sorely he yearn for his homeland,
Natheless here to remain to the morrow, till all of the presents
Duly in order I set ; and my people shall see to the convoy,
All of them—chiefly myself ; for my will is a law to the nation."

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,
E'en for the space of a year wert thou to command me to tarry
While ye prepare me an escort and load me with glorious presents,
Willing I were to remain, and it were much more to my profit
Thus with a well-filled hand to arrive at the land of my fathers :
Far more love and worship I sure would win from the people,
All who beheld me returning in safety to Ithaca's island."

Him King Alcinous addressing again gave answer :
"Nay but, Odysseus, believe not that looking on thee we imagine
Thee as a weaver of wiles and a crafty deceiver—a fellow
Such as in every quarter the black earth breeds in abundance,
Fashioning mazes of lies whence egress none can discover.
Thine is the beauty of words, and within thee is keen understanding.
Skilfully, even as singeth a bard, thou tellest thy story,
All those pitiful troubles of thine and the woes of the Argives.
Come now, tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it :
Saw'st thou not any of those thy heroic companions who also
Sailed to the city of Troy, and their doom encountered and perished ?
Long, unspeakably long is the night, nor as yet in the palace
Time is for sleep ; so all of thy wonderful story relate me.
E'en to the sacred dawn will I patiently listen, if only
Here in my hall thou art willing to tell me the rest of thy travails."

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,
There is a time for the telling of tales, time also for slumber.
Still, if thou longest to list to me further, I may not deny thee,
Nor will I shrink from recounting a far more pitiful story,
Even the sorrows of those of my comrades who perished thereafter,
Those who, at Troy unscathed in the terrible turmoil of battle,
Perished foully at home by the wiles of a treacherous woman.

Now when the phantom host of the souls of the women had vanished,
Scattered hither and thither by chaste Queen Persephoneia,
Then drew near me the spirit of King Agamemnon Atrides,
Sorrowing. Round him was gathered a throng of the others who likewise
Met with their destined doom and died in the house of Aegisthus.
Knowing me straight, so soon as the dark red blood he had tasted,
Shrilly he uttered a wail and poured forth tears in abundance,
Eagerly stretching extended his arms in his longing to reach me,
Vainly—for no more strength was surviving within him or power
Such as was present before in the flexible limbs of his body.

Now when I saw him I wept, for my spirit was moved to compassion ;
Uttering therefore my voice these swift-winged words I addressed him :
' Atreus' glorious son, O Monarch of men Agamemnon,
What was the doom wherewith low-laying Death overcame thee ?
Whether did thee and thy ships o'erwhelm Earth-shaking Poseidon,
Sending the adverse blast of a dolorous tempest against thee,
Or was it hostile men that on dry land wrought thy destruction,
Whilst that ye drave from the pasture the fair-fleeced sheep and the oxen,
Or as 'round some city ye fought for the spoil and the women ?'

Thus did I speak ; forthwith these words he addressed me in answer :
' Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Neither did me and my ships o'erwhelm Earth-shaking Poseidon,
Sending an adverse blast of a dolorous tempest against me,
Nor was it hostile men that on dry land wrought my destruction.
He that my ruin devised and plotted my death was Aegisthus,
He and that woman accurséd, my wife. To his palace he bade me,
Feasted me, killed me—as one might slaughter an ox at the manger.
Thus by a death full wretched I died, and round me my comrades,
Even as white-tusked hogs are slain one after the other
While at the house of a wealthy and powerful lord is preparing
Either a wedding or banquet of friends or a sumptuous wine-bout.
Many a time hast thou been where warriors lay in their life-blood,
Fallen when fighting alone or in midmost shock of the battle ;
Ah but a sight like this—it had made thee to groan in thy spirit,
How all round by the side of the bowl and the high-piled tables
Slaughtered we lay in the hall, and with blood swam all of the pavement.
Sound most woeful of all that I heard was the cry of Cassandra,
Daughter of Priam, who, stabbed by the treacherous-soul'd Clytemnestra,
Fell right over me there as I lay ; and my hands I uplifted,

E'en though dying, to clutch at my sword ; but that pitiless she-wolf
Left me, nor found in her heart, as I went to the mansion of Hades,
Even my eyelids to close, or my lips press gently together.
Verily nought is so dire, so shameless is nought, as a woman,
Should she conceive in her heart some terrible deed to accomplish,
Such as this woman hath done in devising an impious murder,
Even the death of the lord of her youth. I believed I was coming
Back to my children and all of my servants as one who was welcome
Homeward returning ; but she, with a wickedness ne'er to be equalled,
Infamy brought on herself and on every woman for ever,
All that shall ever be born, yea even on her that is upright.'

Thus did he speak ; whereat these words I addressed him in answer :
'Ah ! Loud-thundering Zeus hath indeed on the offspring of Atreus
Terribly wreaked his revenge by the means of the plottings of women,
E'en from the very beginning. For Helen we perished in thousands ;
Now in thy absence hath schemed Clytemnestra this treason against thee.'

Thus did I speak ; forthwith then answering thus he addressed me :
'Therefore beware thou too, nor to woman be weakly complaisant.
Tell her not all of the truth that is known to thy innermost bosom.
Part of it utter, and part keep carefully hidden within thee.
Nay but I trow no death by the hand of thy wife shall befall thee,
Since she is wise, full wise, with a mind well furnished with reason,
Even the daughter of Icarius, sage Penelopeia.
Her as a bride new-wedded we left in thy palace behind us,
Sailing away to the war ; and a child on her bosom was lying,
Then but a babe. In the ranks of the men now surely he sitteth,
Happy in this—that his well-loved sire at his coming shall see him,
Yea and be held in the arms of his son, as is right and is seemly.
Me did this consort of mine . . . not e'en with the eyes did she let me
Gaze with delight on my son. Ere this she had murdered her husband.
Further a thing will I say—do thou ponder it wisely within thee :
Openly dare not to enter a port of thy well-loved country ;
Secretly put to the land. No woman is more to be trusted.
Now come, tell me a thing that I ask thee and plainly declare it :
Hear ye perchance some news of my son in the land of the living,
Either in Orchomenos maybe or in Pylos the sandy,
Or in the widespread city of Sparta with prince Menelaus ?
Dead he is never, but still on the earth is my noble Orestes.'
So did he speak ; whereat these words I addressed him in answer :

‘Atreus’ son, why thus dost thou ask me? I verily know not
Whether he lives or is dead, and an evil is idle discussion.’

Odyssey

XI

483 - 501

So in a mournful strain did we stand conversing together
Sorrowing sadly ; and ever the great tears fell in abundance.
Then drew near me the soul of the great Pelean Achilles,
Also the souls of Patroclus and Antilochus the unrivalled,
Ajax too, who excelled all others in form and in favour,
All of the Dánaan chiefs save only the peerless Achilles.
Straight did the soul of that warrior swift, old Aeacus’ grandson,
Know me, and wailing aloud these swift-winged words he addressed me :
‘Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus !
Desperate one ! What next is the deed thou’lt wish to accomplish ?
How dost thou dare to descend to the realms where dwell the departed,
Senseless shadows, the phantoms of men whose labour is ended ?’
So did he speak ; whereat these words I addressed him in answer :
‘Peleus’ glorious son, O prince of Achaeans, Achilles,
Seeking for Teiresias am I come, with intent to entreat him
Counsel to give how best I shall reach rough Ithaca’s island.
Never as yet was I nigh to Achaea, nor yet on the homeland
Planted a foot, but am worn with my woes, whilst never, Achilles,
Never was man so blessed as thou in the past and thereafter.
Erst, in the life on the earth, no less than a god we revered thee,
We the Achaeans ; and now in the realm of the dead as a monarch
Here thou dost rule ; then why should death thus grieve thee, Achilles ?’

Thus did I speak ; forthwith then answering thus he addressed me :
‘Speak not smoothly of death, I beseech, O famous Odysseus !
Better by far to remain on the earth as the thrall of another,
E’en of a portionless man that hath means right scanty for living,
Rather than reign sole king in the realm of the bodiless phantoms.
Come now, speak of my son ! of the brave young gallant inform me :
Followed or followed he not to the war ? and became he a leader ?
Say to me also if aught thou hast learnt of the glorious Peleus :
Whether he still is revered by the powerful Myrmidon people,
Or peradventure is scorned and dishonoured in Hellas and Phthia,
Now that in hand and in foot he is feeble, by age overmastered,
Neither again can I come to the light of the sun to avenge him,
Such as I was when of yore on the widespread plain of the Trojans
Slaying the best of the host of the foemen I succoured the Argives.
Were I as such to return but a day to the home of my father

Odyssey Quickly my arm's irresistible might I'd make to be hateful
XI Unto the cowards that do him despite and deprive him of honour.'
502-540

Thus did he speak; forthwith then answering thus I addressed him:
'Verily nothing I learnt by report of the glorious Peleus,
While of thy only begotten, Neoptolemus thy beloved,
All that I know will I truly relate, fulfilling thy wishes.
I myself was the man who on board of my fair-trimmed vessel
Brought him from Scyros' isle to the well-greaved sons of Achaea.
Now whensoever around Troy city we sat in the council
Foremost ever he spake, nor missed he the mark in his speaking;
None was experter but I and the godlike eloquent Nestor.
Then, whensoever in war on the Trojan plain we contested,
Never in midst of the throng he remained and the ranks of his comrades;
Far to the fore outleaping, in courage he yielded to no one.
Many a warrior too did he slay in the terrible conflict.
All of it ne'er can I tell, nor recount thee the names of the fallen,
All of the host of the foemen he slew as he succoured the Argives;
Only of Telephus' son, who was smit by his sword, can I tell thee,
Warrior Eurypylus; and many a one of his comrades,
Folk Ceteian, was slain through treacherous bribes of a woman.
Goodlier man did I never behold save glorious Memnon.
Then, as we mounted and hid in the horse that was made by Epéus,
All of us Argive chiefs, and to me the command was entrusted
Either to open the door of the well-hid ambush or close it,
Then stood all of the others, the Danaan leaders and chieftains,
Wiping the tears from their eyes, and with knees all quaking beneath them;
Him not once I perceived, not even a moment I noticed,
Either a whit grown pale in his handsome face, or a teardrop
Wiping away from his cheek. Nay, often he begged me to let him
Forth from the horse, and ever he handled the hilt of his broadsword,
Handled his bronze-shod lance, in his longing to harry the Trojans.
Then, when we captured and plundered the steep-walled city of Priam,
Bearing a share right gallant of spoil he returned to his vessel
All unscathed, not smitten at all by the edge of a spear-blade,
Neither in close hand-fight was he wounded—and such a misfortune
Often befalleth in war, where blind is the fury of Ares.'
So did I speak; and the soul of the swift Pelean Achilles
Stalked with gigantic strides to and fro on the asphodel meadow,
Proudly exultant to hear of his son and his glory in warfare.

Then did the rest of the souls of the dead that from earth had departed
Throng lamenting around me, and each asked after his dearest.
Only apart did the shade of the great Telamonian Ajax
Stand far off, in his wrath, and alone—by the victory angered
Which erstwhile I had won in my suit by the ships of the Argives,
Claiming the arms of Achilles, the prize that his mother the goddess
Placed at award of the sons of the Trojans and Pallas Athene.
Would I had never prevailed and won such prize in the contest,
Since that by reason thereof such head in the earth lies covered,
Ajax—in beauty of form and in deeds all others excelling,
All of the Danaan chiefs save only the peerless Achilles.
Therefore thus I addressed him with gentlest words of persuasion:
'Ajax, brave old Telamon's son, wilt thou never be able
Even in death such wrath to forget at the thought of the armour?
Curse on it!—Sure by the gods it was sent as a plague to the Argives.
Ah, what a tower is fallen with thee! yea, all the Achaeans,
E'en as we mourned for the life of the great Pelean Achilles,
Mourn unceasing for thee. Nor truly thereof is another
Guilty but Zeus—for he pours on the host of the Danaan spearmen
Measureless hate; and on thee he hath laid this doom and destruction.
Nay, come hither, my lord! Come, list to my words and allow me
All to relate—O conquer the wrath and the pride of thy spirit!
Thus did I speak, but he answered me nothing and followed the others
Downward to Erebus—souls of the dead that from earth had departed.
Yet, though angered, he sure had addressed me, or I had addressed him,
Had not my heart been fain in the depth of the bosom within me
Others to see of the souls of the dead that from earth had departed.

Minos then I beheld, illustrious son of the Father,
Bearing a sceptre of gold, to the dead dispensing his judgments,
Seated; and thronging the throne of the king they awaited the verdicts,
Sitting or standing anigh in the wide-door'd mansion of Hades.

Next came looming in sight the enormous giant Orion
Driving together the beasts of the chase on the asphodel meadow,
Even the beasts he had hunted of yore on the desolate mountains,
Bearing a club in his hand all-bronzen and always unbroken.

Tityos too I beheld, huge offspring of glorious Gaia,
Lying outstretched on a plain. Nine roods with his body he covered.
Squatting at both of his sides was a vulture that tore at his liver,

Odyssey Plunging its beak in his caul; and his hands knew nought to defend him.
XI Ay, for he ravished the mistress of Zeus, illustrious Leto,
579-616 Whilst through Pánopes' beautiful lawns she was coming to Pytho.

There did I Tantalus also behold in his terrible torments,
Fixed in a lake; and as high as his chin reached nearly the water.
Tortured by thirst he appeared, but to taste one drop was unable,
Since whenever the old man stooped in his longing for water
Ever it withered away, sucked down, while where he was standing
Ever the black earth showed; and this ebb was the work of a demon.
Trees too, loftily-leaved, their fruits suspended above him:
Pears were there and pomegranates and apples with glittering fruitage,
Figs with their rich sweet harvest and growth of luxuriant olives.
These, whenever the old man straightened him upward to clutch them,
Off to the shadowy clouds were carried away by a whirlwind.

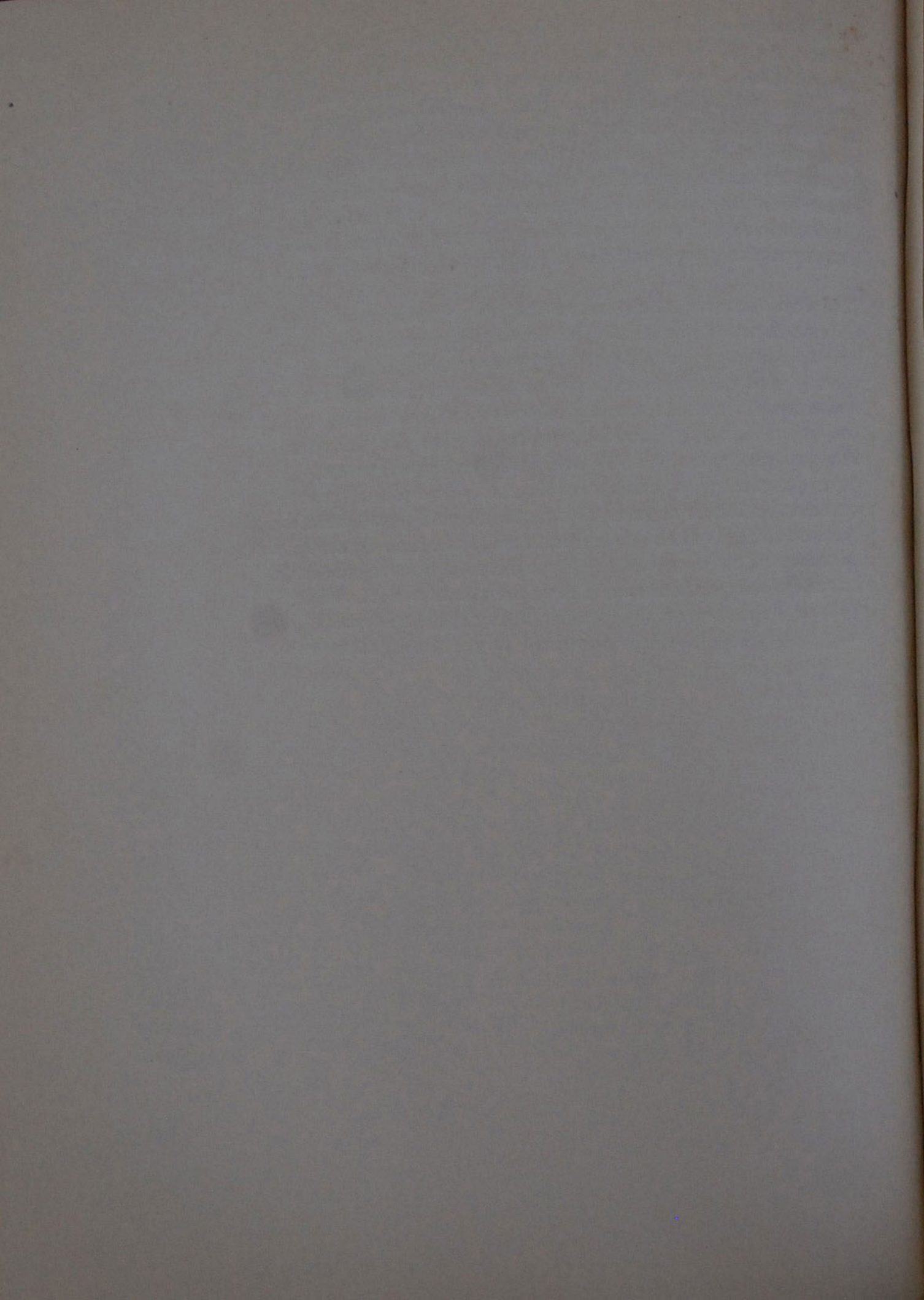
There did I Sisyphus also behold in his travail and torments,
Heaving with both of his hands the enormous mass of a boulder;
Ay, with his hands and his feet he was heaving and pushing it ever
Up to the crest of a hill; then, ever again, at the moment
Ere he surmounted the height, by the weight o'er-mastering conquered
Back to the valley below it rebounded, the pitiless boulder.
Then once more he began with the heaving and straining, his members
Streaming with sweat, while over his head hung eddying dust-clouds.

Then in his might I beheld huge Hercules, phantom terrific—
Phantom I say, for the hero himself is among the immortals
Joying in feasts, and is wedded to Hebe of beautiful ankles,
Daughter of Hera with sandals of gold and of Zeus the Almighty.
Round him a clamour arose of the dead, who to this and to that side
Fluttered affrighted as birds; and like to the darkness of midnight,
Holding his uncased bow in his hand and a shaft on the bowstring,
Terribly peering he stood, as a man that is ready for shooting.
Terrible too, engirding him round on the breast, was the baldrick.
Fashioned of gold was the belt, and with wondrous things it was pictured:
Bears and boars of the wold and lions savagely glaring,
Turmoil of war and the slaying of men and battle and bloodshed.
Whoso fashioned this thing, nought else let him fashion for ever,
Since this belt by his skill he hath set in the store of his treasures!
Me did he straightway know so soon as his eyes had perceived me;
Then with a pitiful wail these swift-winged words he addressed me:

‘Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus—
Ah poor mortal ! for surely a life ill-fated thou leadest,
Such as the life that was mine to endure once under the sunlight.
Son of Cronion, of Zeus the Almighty, was I—but affliction
Ever-unending I knew, to a wight far weaker than I was
Bound as a thrall ; and in sooth right grievous the labours he set me.
Yea, e’en hither he sent me to fetch him the Dog—and another
Labour than this did he never devise that I found to be harder.
Him natheless did I capture and drag from the palace of Hades,
Hermes speeding my quest and the grey-eyed goddess Athene.’

Odyssey
XI
617 - 640

These words uttered, the spirit re-entered the mansion of Hades,
While on the spot I remained, still steadfastly waiting for other
Hero-chiefs to approach that in bygone ages had perished.
Yea and I surely had seen such heroes of old that I longed for,
Theseus and Peirithoüs, those glorious sons of immortals ;
Now, howbeit, had gathered the myriad hosts of the phantoms
Raising a wondrous cry, and a pale cold terror possessed me,
Lest might come that terrible monster, the head of the Gorgon,
Sent from the nether abyss by the dread Queen Persephoneia.
Therefore straight to the ship I returned, and I bade my companions
Into the vessel to mount and to loose from the mooring the cable.
All then quickly embarked and took their seats on the benches.
Downward she sped on the river of Ocean’s billowy current,
Firstly by rowing, but later was borne by a favouring stern-wind.



ODYSSEY BOOK XII

NOW when at last she had traversed the stream of the river of Ocean,
Reaching the wide-way'd sea and its surging expanses, the vessel
Soon was arrived at the island Aeaëa (the fair-tressed Morning's
Dwelling is here and her dancing-ground, and the home of the sunrise).
Here when we came, uphauling the ship on the sands of the sea-shore,

Out of her all of us stepped on the surf-beat strand of the ocean,
Laid us to rest and awaited the light of the sacred morning.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Straight did I send forth some of my mates to the palace of Circe
Bidding them bring me the body of him who had died, Elpenor.

Forthwith cutting us logs, where highmost jutted a foreland,
Him lamenting we buried, outpouring tears in abundance.

Then, when the dead man's body was burned and the arms of the dead man,
Piling a barrow we dragged to the summit a pillar and reared it ;

Also his well-shaped oar on the top of the mound we erected.

Thus then all of the rites we fulfilled, nor remained it to Circe

Hidden that back we had come from the mansion of Hades, and quickly

Donning her robes she arrived, and her handmaids followed behind her

Bringing us bread and abundance of flesh and glittering red wine.

Then, as she stood in their midst, addressed us the beautiful goddess :

'Desperate ones, thus living to enter the mansion of Hades !

Twice consenting to die, though once is the lot of a mortal !

Come now, feast ye on food meantime and quaff of the wine-cup,

Here remaining the whole of the day, but when morning appeareth,

Then shall ye sail ; and the way will I show you, and every danger

Clearly explain, lest ever by evil devices of malice

Either on sea or on land misfortune and sorrow befall you.'

So did she speak, and within us the valiant soul was persuaded.

Here then all of the day till the sun went down in the ocean

Sat we and feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup,

Till, when the sun sank down and come was the gloom of the twilight,

While by the side of the moorings my shipmates laid them to slumber,

Taking my hand she withdrew me apart from my trusty companions,

Pray'd me to sit and reclined her beside me and questioned me closely.

So I began with my story, and all things duly related.

Then, as I ended, in answer the beautiful goddess addressed me :

Odyssey XII 37-75
‘Thus now all of this matter is happily ended ; but listen !
More I shall tell thee—and heaven thereof right oft will remind thee.
Unto the Sirens first shalt thou come, whose song of enchantment
Every mortal bewitches who heedlessly draweth anigh them.
Whosoever in folly approaching anigh to the Sirens
Heareth their singing, his wife and his infant children will never
Stand at his side and exult as they welcome him back to the homeland ;
No—for the Sirens soon with their soft sweet singing bewitch him.
Sitting amidst of a meadow they sing—all round in a great pile
Bodies decaying, and bones with the skin still shrivelling on them.
Steer thou steadily past, nor forget in the ears of thy comrades
Wax honey-sweet soft-kneaded to smear, lest any shall hearken,
Any of all of the others ; but beest thou wishful to listen,
Bid them to bind thee by hand and by foot in the swift-winged vessel,
Set thee erect on the thwart and lash thee with ropes to the mast-tree.
Thus shalt thou listen, enrapt with delight, to the song of the Sirens ;
Ay and the more thou beseechest and biddest thy mates to release thee
Ever the more it is need that with fetters they fasten thee firmly.
Now when thy mates have driven the vessel in safety beyond them,
Verily then for the rest nought certain and clear can I tell thee
Which of the ways of return shall be thine. In the depths of thy bosom
Question thy heart for advice. But of both of the ways will I tell thee.

First, on the one side beetle precipitous crags, and around them
Thunder the rollers enormous of blue-eyed Amphitrite.
“ Wandering Rocks ” is the name they are given by blessed immortals.
This way passeth not even a bird—nay, even the pigeons,
Timorous doves that to Zeus our Father ambrosia carry,
Even of these one oft will be caught by the slippery rock-wall ;
Then will another be sent by the Sire to replenish the number :
This way never escapeth a vessel of men that arrives here ;
Mingled together is wreckage of vessels with bodies of mortals
Tossed on the billows of brine by the fury of fiery whirlwinds.
Sole this voyage hath made, of the ships which fare on the ocean,
Argo ever-renowned, as she sailed from the land of Aeëtes.
Ay and the Argo too on the huge crags surely had driven
Save for the guidance of Hera, who showed such favour to Jason.

Then, on the second path, twain rocks : one reacheth to heaven
Lifting a sharp-peaked crest, and a cloud aye hangeth around it
Blue-black, never receding—nor ever the cloudless aether

Lieth about this peak in the season of summer and autumn,
Nor might ever a mortal ascend it or ever descend it,
Nay not e'en if his hands and his feet were twenty in number,
Such is the slippery smoothness thereof, as of stone that is polished.
Right in the midst of the rock there gapeth a shadowy cavern,
Turned to the gloom of the west—t'ward Erebus—even the quarter
Whither the hollow ship ye shall steer, O noble Odysseus.
Never a man in the prime of his strength from his hollow vessel
Launching a shaft from a bow could reach to the mouth of the cavern.
Here inhabiteth Scylla, a howling and horrible monster.
Like to the voice of a whelp new-born doth the sound of her yelping
Rise to the ear; but her form is a sight portentous, that no one
E'er would gladly behold, not even a god, if he met her.
Round her a dozen of feet she is always waving suspended,
Six long sinuous necks outstretching before her, and each one
Beareth a head terrific with teeth in a threefold order
Many and thickly arrayed, where gapes death's cavernous blackness.
Up to the midmost parts she is hid in the depth of the cavern,
Whilst from her lair in the fearful abyss six heads she extendeth
Hunting for fish at the foot of the rock and peering around it,
Dolphins to catch or dogfish, or haply another and greater
Beast of the droves unnumbered of deep-voiced Amphitrite.
This way never hath crew been able to boast that uninjured
Past they had flown in a ship, since every head of the monster
Seizeth and beareth away one man from the blue-prowed vessel.

Now for the second rock—it is lower to look at, Odysseus;
Nigh to the other it lies; 'twere easy to reach with an arrow.
Growing thereon is a fig-tree tall with luxuriant leafage.
'Neath it the deep black water is swallowed by mighty Charybdis.
Thrice in the day doth she swallow it down and thrice she rejects it—
Terrible! May'st thou be never anigh when she swallows the water!
None might succour thee then from thy fate, not even Poseidon.
Steer thou to Scylla's rock, and swiftly approaching anigh it
Hastily pass in thy ship; since surely by far it is better
Six of thy mates to bewail than that all of them perish together.'

Thus did she speak; forthwith then answering thus I addressed her:
'Come now, tell me the truth, O goddess, and plainly declare it!
Could I perchance somewise, escaping the deadly Charybdis,
Hold me the other at bay when she fain would ravish my comrades?'

Thus did I speak; and at once thus answered the beautiful goddess:
'Desperate one! lo, ever again thou'rt dreaming of battles,
Dreaming of toil! Willst ne'er to the gods immortal submit thee?
Nowise mortal, believe me, is she, but a horror immortal—
Terrible, irresistible, savage, invincible monster!
Courage availeth thee nothing; to flee her is best and is bravest.
Shouldst thou delay at the side of her rock and with armour equip thee,
Much do I fear that anew may issue forth to assail thee
All of the heads, and again upsnap six more of thy comrades.
Row at thy utmost speed, and call on the name of Crataïs,
Mother of Scylla—the dam which littered this terror for mortals.
She will prevent that anew she shall issue forth of the cavern.

Isle Thrinacia next thou shalt reach, where pasture in numbers
Cattle of Eëlios and the fat-fed flocks of the sun-god—
Seven the droves of the kine and seven of fair-fleeced fatlings,
Fifty in every flock. 'Tis a race that has never an offspring,
Nor do they dwindle and die; and goddesses lead them to pasture,
Fair-haired Lampetië and her sister, the nymph Phaëthusa,
Daughters of lovely Neaera and Eëlios Hyperion.
Now so soon as the goddess had borne and had nurtured her daughters,
Then did she send them to dwell in the far Thrinacian island,
Over the crook-horned cattle to watch and the flocks of their father.
These if ye leave unharmed and earnestly press on your journey
Verily Ithaca still shall ye reach, though suffering sorely;
Them if ye injure at all, I predict then utter destruction
Both for thy ship and thy mates, whilst thou, though haply escaping,
Late and in pitiful plight shalt arrive, no comrade surviving.'

While she was speaking the Morning appeared, enthroned in her glory.
Then to the island again she departed, the beautiful goddess,
While to the vessel returning I urgently bade my companions
Haste to embark on the ship and to loose from the mooring the cable.
All then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.
Following after us then in the wake of the blue-prowed vessel
Fair stern-breezes arose, sail-swelling and kindly companions,
Sent by the fair-tressed nymph, dread goddess voiced as a mortal.
So, when the gear of the ship we had busily stowed and adjusted,
Seated we watched, while straight she was kept by the wind and the steersman.
Then at the last with a heart right heavy I spake to my comrades:



THE SIRENS



‘Friends, as it never is seemly that one or that two of us only
Learn the prophetic sayings of Circe, the beautiful goddess,
Now will I speak, that ye know it beforehand, whether we perish,
Or peradventure evade our doom and escape from destruction.
Firstly she bade us beware of the wiles of the wonderful Sirens,
Bade us escape from the song that they sing in their flowery meadow.
Only myself she alloweth to listen—and me shall ye, shipmates,
Binding with difficult bonds that shall keep me immovably fixed there,
Set me erect on the thwart, and lash me with ropes to the mast-tree ;
Ay and the more I beseech you, my comrades, and bid you release me,
Ever the more is it need that with fetters ye fasten me firmly.’
Thus then speaking the whole of the thing to my mates I imparted.
Meantime speedily ever the well-built ship was approaching
Near to the Sirens’ isle, borne on by a favouring stern-wind.
Then of a sudden abated the wind, and it ceased, and a calm spread
Breathless around—some deity lulling the surges to slumber.
Swiftly the men sprang up on their feet and furling the canvas
Stowed it away in the hold of the vessel, and then on the benches
Sat them adown and whitened the water with polished pine-blades.
Then with an axe I dissevered a wheel right heavy of beeswax,
Cutting it small ; and the pieces with sinewy fingers I kneaded.
Quickly the wax grew soft, constrained by the pressure, and also
Warmed by the rays of the sun, King Eëlios Hyperion.
Then in the ears of my mates, one after the other, I smeared it.
These too, binding together my hands and my feet in the vessel,
Set me erect on the thwart and lashed me with ropes to the mast-tree ;
Seated them then and smote on the grey-green brine of the ocean.

Thus then, distant as far as the voice of a shouter will carry,
Swiftly we passed ; but they failed not the fleet-paced vessel to notice
Speeding anigh them, and so they began their soft sweet singing :
‘Come to us, famous Odysseus, thou glory of all the Achaeans,
Stay but a moment the vessel and list to the song that we sing thee !
Never hath earth-born man passed here in his black-hulled vessel
Ere he hath listened to music of voices as sweet as the honey.
Here doth he taste of delight and fuller of knowledge he fareth,
Since that we all things know—what befell on the plain of the Troad—
All that was sent by the will of the gods to the Trojans and Argives,
Yea and whatever shall hap on the earth, which nourisheth all things.’
Thus did they call as they sang with a beautiful voice, and within me
Fain was the heart to obey, and to loose me I ordered my comrades,

Frowning and nodding—but forward they bent them incessantly rowing,
 Whilst rose Eurylochus, rose also his mate Perimedes,
 Bound me with bonds still more and with cordage fettered me firmly.
 Then, so soon we had gotten us further, nor heard in the distance
 Longer was sound of the words or the voice of the song of the Sirens,
 Quickly my well-loved mates from their ears unloosened the beeswax
 Which I had smeared them withal, and out of my bonds they released me.

Now no sooner the island was dropping behind us when straightway
 Smoke and a monstrous wave I beheld and was ware of a thunder.
 Then went flying in panic the oars from the hands of the rowers;
 Down in the swirl of the water they fell with a splash, and the ship stood
 Still, for the hands of the men ceased plying the tapering oar-blades.
 So to the midst of the vessel I passed and exhorted my comrades,
 Standing in turn near each, and with words consoling addressed them:
 'Courage, my friends! ere now we have learnt us the lesson of danger;
 Nor is a greater disaster before us than once was the Cyclops,
 While with his masterful might in his hollow cavern he penned us;
 Natheless even from there by my valour and counsel and forethought
 Found we escape, and I ween this too shall we live to remember.
 Come now, list to the counsel I give, that we all may obey it.
 Ye, O mates, with the oars on the salt sea's mountainous surges
 Smite as ye sit on the benches—if Zeus peradventure will help us,
 Granting us now to evade this doom and safely escape it.
 Thee, O pilot, I charge—and these commands in thy spirit
 Ponder—for thou art in charge of the helm of the hollow vessel—
 Clear of the smoke take care and clear of the rollers to keep her;
 Steer right close to the rocks, and be watchful in fear she elude thee
 Thitherward darting aside, and thou hurl us all to destruction.'

Thus did I speak, and hearing my words all quickly obeyed me.
 Scylla, resistless monster—of her still nothing I told them,
 Lest peradventure the men, when they heard it, by fear overmastered,
 Ceasing to row might crowd to the hold of the vessel to hide them.
 Now was the moment at hand when Circe's grievous injunction
 Clean I forgot; for to arm me at all she had straitly forbidden.
 Thus then, clad in my armour renowned, with a couple of lances,
 Long ones, grasped in my hands, by the foremost deck I ascended
 On to the prow, since thence I expected her first to be sighted,
 Scylla, who haunted the rock and was bringing their doom on my comrades.
 Natheless nought was I able to spy, and weary mine eyes grew

Peering intently around at the crags half hidden in vapour.

Thus then into the narrows we entered with pitiful groaning.
Scylla on one side lay, on the other the mighty Charybdis
Swallowing down with a force terrific the salt sea water.
Now whensoever she vomited forth, as a pot on a furnace
Out of the depths all swirling and seething she rose, and above her
Mounted the spray, and on both of the peaks of the rock it descended.
Then, whensoever she swallowed the flood of the salt sea water,
Down to the depths all seething she opened, and round her the rock-wall
Terribly bellowed, and right at the bottom the gaping abyss showed
Blue-black sands ; and the men were seized by a pale cold terror.
Whilst now thither we fixed our gaze, foreboding destruction,
Out of the midst of my men in the hollow vessel did Scylla
Six snap—bravest of all in the fight, and in body the strongest.
Then, as again to the vessel I turned and looked for my comrades,
All I beheld was the hands and the feet of the men as they struggled
High in the air ; and I heard their voices appealing for succour,
Vainly invoking my name in the last dread moment of anguish.
E'en as a fisher who stands with his tapering rod on a foreland
Casts on the water his baits as a lure for the tinier fishes,
Then in the deep down-droppeth his line with a sheathing of ox-horn ;
Even as writeth the fish when he catcheth and flingeth it landward,
Thus did they writhe as she caught them and bore them aloft to her cavern.
Here, at the mouth of the cave, she devoured them horribly shrieking,
Still extending to me their hands in their dread death-struggle :
Sight most woeful of all that mine eyes have ever beholden,
All of the woes that I suffered exploring the paths of the ocean !

Thus then, after evading the Rocks and fearful Charybdis,
Scylla we also escaped, and the god's inviolate island
Soon with the vessel we reached. Here pasture the beautiful broad-browed
Cattle and many a flock of the sun-god, King Hyperion.
Now whilst still in my black-hulled vessel afloat on the ocean
Lowing I heard, as of kine to the stalls of the cattle returning,
Mingled with bleating of sheep. Then fell on my mind the monition
Given by Teiresias, old sightless prophet of Thebae,
Ay and by Circe of Aea ; for both most urgently bade me
Keep well wide of the isle of the Sun who gladdeneth mortals.
So with a heart right heavy I turned to my mates and addressed them :
'Listen, I pray, to my words, though suffering sorely, my comrades !

List to the warnings prophetic of Teiresias the diviner,
Ay and of Circe of Aea—for both most urgently bade me
Keep well wide of the isle of the Sun who gladdeneth mortals,
Saying that here was awaiting us surely a dreadful disaster.
Row, then, row! and the good black ship keep clear of the island.'

Thus did I speak; but the hearts of the men were broken within them.
Straightway Eurylochus with a word disconsolate answered:
'Cruel I call thee, Odysseus! Immense is thy strength and thy body
Never is weary. By heav'n, thou'rt fashioned wholly of iron,
Thus forbidding thy mates, o'ermastered by toil and by slumber,
Out of the vessel to land—though here 'twere possible straightway,
Here on this sea-girt island, a meal right pleasant to make us—
Urging us on like this in the rapidly gathering darkness
Blindly to wander afar from the land on the mist-bound ocean!
Out of the darkness too are tempests, wreckers of vessels,
Wont to arise. How could we escape then sudden destruction,
Should peradventure arise unexpected the blast of a storm-wind,
Either the South or the West, whose rage all other exceeding
Shattereth vessels in spite of the will of the Rulers of heaven?
Nay come, hear me, I pray—no longer defying the darkness,
Let us a supper prepare, by the swift-winged vessel remaining,
Then embarking at dawn launch forth on the plain of the ocean!'
Thus spake Eurylochus, and all of the others assented.
Forthwith then I perceived some deity plotted us evil;
Therefore upraising my voice these swift-winged words I addressed him:
'Eurylochus, I am truly unable alone to resist you—
Yet come all, I beseech you, and swear me by all that is sacred,
Should we perchance on a number of sheep or of cattle at pasture
Hap to alight, ye will never in wanton infatuate folly
Slaughter a cow nor even a sheep, but in quiet contentment
Eat the provisions ye got as a present from Circe the goddess.'

Thus did I speak; forthwith all sware to refrain, as I bade them.
So when at length they had given the oath and finished the plighting,
Finding a hollow haven, the well-built vessel we stranded
Nigh to a freshet of water, and straightway stept my companions
Out of the vessel, and soon right deftly prepared was the supper.
Then when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Forthwith calling to mind their well-loved mates they bewailed them,
Those whom Scylla had snapt from the hollow vessel and eaten.

Thus as they wept and wailed fell soothing slumber upon them,
Till, at the tierce of the night, when the stars were passed to their setting,
Sudden a squall swept down from the Father who gathers the tempests
Bursting with terrible blast; all covered over with storm-rack
Earth was at once and the sea; and down from the sky fell midnight.
Then when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Into a hollow cavern we dragged our vessel and moored her.
Here were beautiful dancing-grounds and seats of the sea-nymphs.
Forthwith calling a council of all, these words I addressed them:
'Friends, in the swift-winged ship is provision for eating and drinking;
Therefore keep we afar from the kine lest evil befall us.
Dread is the god whose cattle and fat-fed flocks we shall find here,
Eëlios, who all overseeth and all overheareth.'

Thus did I speak, and within them the valiant soul was persuaded.
Then for a month unceasing the South Wind blew, nor another
Ever arose meantime save only the East and the South Wind.
Whilst now still we possessed a provision of corn and of red wine
Ever for love of their lives all kept them away from the cattle,
Till, when at last consumed in the vessel was all of the grain-store,
Often in questings for game would want constrain them to wander,
Catching with well-bent hooks both birds and fishes—whatever
Came to the hands of the men—since famine gnawed at their belly.

Now on a day I departed and mounted the island, to offer
Prayer to the gods, should any reveal me a way of returning.
So, when at last I had mounted the isle and avoided my comrades,
Cleansing with water my hands, where 'gainst all winds was a covert,
All the immortals with vows I invoked who inhabit Olympus.
Straight, as an answer they poured a delicious sleep on my eyelids.
Meanwhile Eurylochus ill counsels gave to his shipmates:
'Listen, I pray, to my words, though suffering sorely, my comrades!
Every manner of death for unfortunate mortals is hateful;
Death most hateful is this—to be doomed through hunger to perish.
Come, let us forth, and catching the best of the kine of the sun-god
Offerings make to the gods who inhabit the infinite heaven.
Yea and if haply at last we arrive at the Ithacan homeland,
Then to the god of the sun, Hyperion, a rich-wrought temple
Straight will we rear, and adorn it with gifts full many and precious.
Nay, if he even, in wrath maybe for his straight-horned cattle,
Strive to destroy our vessel, and other immortals abet him,

Sooner with one last gulp at a wave will I sink to the bottom
Rather than thus stay starving to death on a desolate island.'

Thus spake Eurylochos, and all of the others assented.
Straight they uprose and they lifted the best of the kine of the sun-god,
Going not far; for anigh to the blue-prow'd vessel they found them
Feeding—the shambling kine—those beautiful broad-brow'd cattle.
Then in a circle surrounding the beasts they invoked the immortals,
Plucking the soft green leaves of the oak which spreadeth to heaven,
Since white groats no longer remained in the well-decked vessel.
Now so soon they had prayed and had slaughtered the cattle and flayed them,
Cutting the thigh-piece out of the thigh they enwrapped it in caul-fat,
Making it double, and laid at the top raw chunks of the carcass.
Wine moreover was wanting to pour on the burning oblation,
Wherefore making libation with water they roasted the entrails.
Then, when the thighs were wholly consumed and the livers devoured,
Slicing the rest of it smaller they spitted the pieces on skewers.

This was the season that sleep, long-brooding, fled from my eyelids.
Straight to the swift-winged ship and the beach of the ocean I hastened,
Till when at last I was come not far from the twy-beaked galley
Then did a savour delicious of fat come floating around me,
Which when I noticed I groaned, and I cried to the gods everlasting:
'Father Zeus and ye other immortals eternally blessed,
Verily now to my ruin ye lulled me in merciless slumber!
Lo what a monstrous deed have plotted my mates in my absence!'

Swift to the god of the sun, Hyperion, as messenger hasted
Long-robed Lampetië, to report we had slaughtered the cattle.
Straight mid the gods everlasting he spake, fierce wrath in his bosom:
'Father Zeus, and ye other immortals eternally blessed,
See that ye punish the men of Odysseus the son of Laertes!
Lo, with an insolence rare they have slaughtered the cattle wherein I
Ever rejoiced as I mounted the starry expanse of the heaven,
Ever as back to the earth I returned, from the heaven descending.
Should they refuse for my cattle to pay me a seemly atonement,
Into the darkness of Hades I'll set and shine for the dead there.'
Him then in turn gave answer the Father who gathers the tempests:
'God of the sun, shine here in the heaven amidst the immortals,
Ay and for men that be mortal on earth, rich giver of harvests!
Touching this crew—their ship with the blinding bolt of my thunder

Smiting I'll shatter asunder amidst of the wine-dark ocean.'

All these things did I hear from the fair-tressed goddess Calypso ;
She from the Messenger God, Hermeias, said she had heard them.

Odyssey
XII
388-423

Now when at last I was come to the ship and the shore of the ocean,
Each man after the other in turn I upbraided ; but nowise
Found we a means to amend it. The cows were slaughtered already.
Ay and the gods forthwith sent monstrous marvels to scare us—
Skins beginning to crawl and the meat that was spitted to bellow,
Roasted as well as the raw ; and a lowing arose as of cattle.

So six livelong days hereafter my faithful companions
Fed on the spoil they had taken—the best of the cows of the sun-god,
Till, when a seventh was sent by the Father of heaven, Cronion,
Then at the last ceased raging the wind with its violent storm-blasts.
Speedily therefore embarking we launched on the plain of the ocean,
Hoisted the mast and the white sails lifted aloft to the breezes.

Now no sooner the island was dropping behind us, nor any
Other land was in sight, but the heaven alone and the ocean,
Then was a blue-black cloud commanded to halt by Cronion
Over the hollow ship, and beneath it the deep sea darkened ;
Nor much longer she ran on her course ; of a sudden upon her
Shouting the West swept down with the might of a furious tempest.
Smit by the blast of the whirlwind the foremost stays of the mast snapt,
Both of them ; backward the mast fell down and the whole of the rigging
Dropped to the hold in a heap ; at the stern of the vessel the topmast
Crashed from aloft on the head of the pilot and shattered in pieces
Every bone of the skull ; and he headlong, like to a diver,
Plunged from the poop, and the valiant soul from the body departed.
Zeus at that instant thundered and lightning hurled at the vessel.
Struck by the bolt of the Father she shook all over and staggered,
Filled with a sulphurous flame. From the ship fell all of my comrades,
Then on the waves like gulls by the side of the black-hulled vessel
Floated and tossed ; and the god thus ended their hope of the homeland.

Still was I pacing the deck of the ship when a billow enormous
Parted her sides from the keel, which swept on bare of the tackle.
Close to the keel clean snapt was the mast-tree lying, and round it
Lashed to it loosely was hanging a backstay, fashioned of ox-hide.

Odyssey Herewith firmly I fastened together the keel and the mast-tree,
Seated whereon I was carried along by the terrible tempest.

XII

424 - 453

Now, when the West had abated the rage of its furious storm-blasts,
Swiftly arising the South swooped down, and it tortured my spirit
Lest it again might carry me back to the deadly Charybdis.
All night long was I borne by the wind; at the season of sunrise
Close to the cavern of Scylla I came and to dreadful Charybdis.
E'en at this moment she yawned and swallowed the salt sea water.
Then with an upward leap did I clutch at the long-branched fig-tree,
Clinging to which as a bat suspended I hung, nor was any
Hold for the feet to support me below or for clambering upward.
Much too far were growing the roots; and the branches in mid-air,
Mighty and long, outstretching them far, o'ershadowed Charybdis.
Steadfastly ever I clung, expecting the vortex to vomit
Back to the surface the mast and the keel—and they came; but I waited
Long. At the time when a man for his supper doth rise at the council,
One who decideth the quarrels of youths appealing for judgment,
Such was the hour when the wreckage appeared from the depths of Charybdis.
Then, unloosing my hands and my feet, as a plummet I dropt down
Into the midst of the sea at the side of the great long mast-tree,
Mounted whereon with my hands then steadily forward I paddled.
Scylla I saw no more, for the Father of men and immortals
Suffered it not—else sure I had fallen on utter destruction.

Thence nine days was I borne. On the tenth in the darkness of midnight
Nigh th' Ogygian isle was I brought, where goddess Calypso
Dwelleth—a fair-tressed nymph, dread deity voiced as a mortal.
Me she received and cherished—but wherefore tell I the story?
All of it yester-e'en in the hall of thy home I related
Unto thy gracious queen and thyself; nor pleasing I hold it
Over again narrating a tale once fully related."

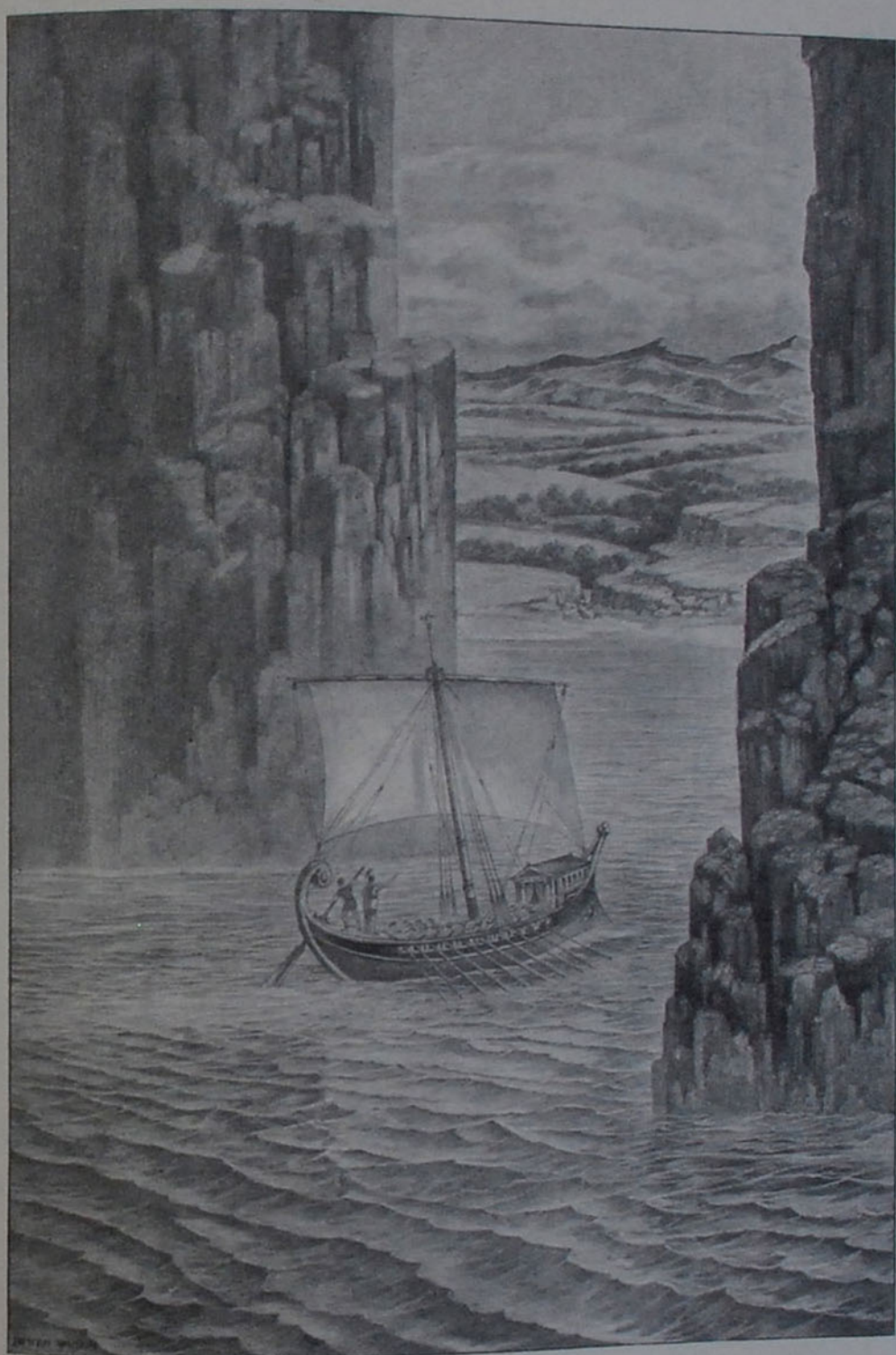
ODYSSEY BOOK XIII

THUS did he end ; and they sat all utterly silent and speechless,
Holden as 'twere by a spell in the shadowy hall of the palace.
Then King Alcinous outspake and in answer addressed him :
“ Since now under the roof of my bronze-floored palace, Odysseus,
Safe thou art come, thou'lt never, methinks, go wandering further,
Ere to thy home thou return'st, however to hardship accustomed.
Now to you all and to each I announce this further injunction,
Each who is wont to partake of the glowing wine of the elders
Here in my banqueting-hall, and to list to the song of the minstrel :
Lo, in a polished coffer the raiment received by the stranger
Lieth, and fair things fashioned of gold, and the rest of the presents
Which Phaeacian lords of the council collected together.
Come, let us also present him a full-sized tripod and cauldron,
Each of us ; then can we later, by making collection in public,
Win us repayment ; 'tis hard when the one does favours for nothing.”
Thus spake Alcinous and his speech was received with approval.
Each one then to his homestead departed to lay him to slumber.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Quickly they brought to the vessel the bronze that rejoiceth a mortal ;
This did the powerful chief, King Alcinous, on the vessel
Going around stow under the benches away, to prevent it
Hindering any that rowed when amain at his oar he was pulling.
Then to the house of the king they betook them and set them a-feasting,
After the powerful monarch had given an ox to be slaughtered
Unto Cronion, the ruler of all, who dwells in the storm-cloud.
So when the thighs they had burnt they partook of a glorious banquet,
Making them merry, and harked to the strains of the godlike singer
Demodocus, blind bard by the people beloved ; but Odysseus
Ever and ever was turning his eyes to the sun in its splendour,
Longing to hasten its setting, so eager he felt for departure.
Even as yearns for his supper a man when his wine-red oxen
All day long have tugged at a jointed plough in a fallow,
E'en as he joys when he seeth the sun's light sink to the setting,
So he can get to his food—and his knee-joints ache as he walketh—
Thus did Odysseus rejoice when the sunlight sank to the setting.
Suddenly then to the lovers of ships, Phaeacia's nobles,
Chiefly to Alcinous these words addressing, he turned him :

Odyssey "O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,
XIII Pour ye libation and bid me farewell!—farewell to you also!
88-77 Now it is all fulfilled as I wished in the depth of my bosom,
Escort and loving gifts—May the gods celestial grant me
Blessing therein! May I come to my home, and my peerless consort
There may I find still living and well, with the rest of my dear ones!
Ye too, bide ye at home with your wedded wives and your children,
Making them happy with love. May the gods prosperity grant you,
Every kind, and all that is ill dwell far from the people."
Thus did he speak, and they all assented and made resolution
Homeward the stranger to help, since duly and well he had spoken.
Then did the powerful king to his henchman turn and address him:
"Pontonoüs, come mix strong wine and serve us a bumper,
Plenty for all at the feast, that a prayer we may raise to the Father,
Ere we shall send our guest on his way to his distant homeland."
Thus did he speak; and a wine honey-hearted was mixed by the henchman;
Then to them all he dispensed it in turn; and they made a libation
Unto the blessed immortals who dwell in the infinite heaven,
Pouring it there as they sat. Then rising, the godlike Odysseus
Into the hands of the queen gave over his twy-cupped goblet,
While uplifting his voice these swift-winged words he addressed her:
"Fare thee well, O queen, and be happy for ever, till lastly
Age shall befall thee, and death, which cometh to every mortal.
Now it is need that I go; but do thou live joyfully always
Here in thy home with the monarch, thy lord, and thy children and people!"

These words said, stept over the threshold the godlike Odysseus,
Having beside him the herald whom Alcinous had commanded
Down to the shore of the sea and the swift-winged vessel to guide him.
Also had Arete told three of her women to follow.
One of them bare in her arms fresh raiment—a cloak and a doublet;
Then was a second commissioned to carry the strong-made coffer,
While that the third had a burden of bread and of glittering red wine.
So, when at last they had come to the sea and arrived at the vessel,
Speedily then was it all by the high-born men of the escort
Taken aboard and bestowed in the hold with the wine and the viands.
Also they spread for Odysseus a rug and a wrapper of linen
Nigh to the stern, on the deck of the hollow vessel, to lie there
Soundly asleep; and he mounted the ship and composed him to slumber
Silently, while that the crew sat down on the benches in order,
Each in his place; and loosed from the mooring-stone was the hawser.



THE ARRIVAL AT ITHACA



Then, as they backward swung uptossing the brine with the oar-blades,
Softly a sleep profound spread over his slumbering eyelids,
Deep as a trance and surpassingly sweet—yea, death it resembled.

Now did the vessel . . . as over a plain four stallion coursers
Harnessed abreast, 'neath strokes of the lash, come thundering onward,
Bounding aloft as they gallop apace their course to accomplish,
So did the stern of the ship go bounding aloft—and behind it
Mightily eddied the dark blue wave of the bellowing ocean.
Steadily onward she flew ; not even the falcon that soareth,
Swiftest of birds of the air, might vie with the ship in her swiftness ;
So did she speed on her way, right easily cleaving the billows,
Bearing a man who was like to the gods everlasting in wisdom,
One who had suffered already in heart full many a sorrow,
Tossed by the billows of war and the grievous waves of the ocean.
Now he is sleeping in peace, forgetful of all that he suffered.

So when the star was on high that of all is the brightest, and oft-times
Comes as the herald of light when the newborn day is arising,
Voyaging over the waters the ship drew near to an island
Where is a haven of Phorcys, the ancient god of the ocean.
Here it is Ithacan land. Two capes jut forth from the coast-line,
High precipitous cliffs but aslope to the verge of the harbour,
Fending the monstrous surge of the rollers aroused by the storm-winds
Out in the open ; but ever within unloosed from the cable
Well-decked vessels can ride when they enter the bound of the roadstead.
Now at the head of the haven a long-leaved olive is growing,
Distant from which not far is a pleasant and shadowy grotto,
Hallowed haunt of the nymphs who are known as the fountain naiads.
Here in the depths of the cave are amphora vessels and wine-bowls
Formed of the rock, and the bees hide here their treasures of honey ;
Here stand, fashioned in stone, vast looms, where many a naiad
Weaveth her robes of the deep-sea purple, a wonder to gaze at.
Water perennial welleteth within. Two mouths hath the cavern ;
One to the North Wind looks and is easy for mortals to enter,
One to the South, and is more for the gods ; nor ever by this way
Entereth any of human race ; 'tis a path for immortals.

Into the haven they rowed (they had known it before), and the vessel
Ran on the beach : to the half of her length on the sand was she driven,
Such was her speed, and such was the strength of the hands that impelled her.

Out of the well-benched vessel when now they had stepped on the dry land,
 First from the deck of the hollow ship uplifting Odysseus,
 E'en as he lay in the rug and the glistening wrapper of linen,
 Down on the sand of the shore, still heavy with slumber, they placed him.
 Then from the vessel they landed the gifts that the king and the nobles,
 Moved by the noble Athena, bestowed when for home he departed.
 These in a heap up-piling they left at the foot of the olive
 Somewhat aside from the path, lest any that saw it in passing,
 Ere that Odysseus awoke, might venture anigh and despoil him.
 These now homeward returned.

But the King Earth-shaking Poseidon

Ne'er had forgotten the vows that he uttered when erst he had threatened
 Godlike Odysseus, and turning to Zeus he demanded his counsel:
 "Father Zeus! I can hope henceforth from the gods everlasting
 Little respect, since men that be mortal so little respect me,
 E'en Phaeacian folk—whose race from myself is descended.
 Lo, full many afflictions I vowed should fall on Odysseus
 Ere to his home he returned—though wholly to stay his returning
 Ne'er did I try from the moment thou gav'st thy consent and thy promise.
 Now these men have borne him asleep in a swift-winged vessel
 Over the sea and on Ithaca set him, and richly with presents
 Helped him—with bronze and with gold and abundance of woven apparel—
 Treasures so many as ne'er from the Trojans Odysseus had gained him
 Had he returned unscathed with his well-won share in the booty."
 Him forthwith gave answer the god who gathers the storm-clouds:
 "Lo now, what is this word, Earth-shaker and Ruler of ocean?
 Thee nowise dishonour the gods. 'Twere difficult truly
 Thee, who art eldest and best of us all, to assail with dishonour,
 While if a mortal, obeying his hardy and arrogant nature,
 Honours thee not, it is thine to avenge thee, or now or hereafter.
 Act as thou wilt—as it seems to be best to the spirit within thee!"
 Then did the King Earth-shaking Poseidon address him in answer:
 "Quickly enough had I done as thou say'st, O King of the storm-clouds,
 Had I not held thee in awe and dreaded arousing thy anger.
 Now I am minded to smite this fine Phaeacian vessel
 While from the convoy she homeward returns in the mist-bound ocean;
 Yea I will smite her and teach them to stop and to stay with their convoys.
 This will I do, and will whelm with the mass of a mountain the city."
 Him forthwith gave answer the god who gathers the storm-clouds:
 "Friend, as it seems to my mind, 'twere verily better and wiser,

Just at the moment when out of the city the whole of the people
Watcheth her enter the harbour, to change her, anigh to the sea-shore,
Into a rock with the form of a vessel, that ever hereafter
Mortals shall wonder. Then whelm with the mass of a mountain the city!"

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Now when he heard this saying the King Earth-shaker Poseidon
Went to the Scherian isle, where dwell Phaeacian people.
Here he remained till anigh was the ship as she voyaged the ocean
Rapidly speeding along; then the King Earth-shaker, approaching,
Suddenly changed her to stone and rooted her deep in the waters,
Smiting with downward stroke of the hand; and he turned and departed.
Uttering swift-winged words then turned them the one to the other
All of the Scherian folk—those famous oarsmen and sailors—
Each man gazing the while at the man that was standing beside him:
"Ah me! who is it fettered the swift ship fast on the ocean
E'en as she entered the port? Just now she was visible plainly."
Thus spake one to the other, but how it had happened they knew not.
Then King Alcinous rose up in the midst and harangued them:
"Lo now, surely the doom prophetic is falling upon me
Told by my sire, who was wont to proclaim that Poseidon was angered,
Jealous because we unfailingly offer an escort to all men.
'Some day'—so did he speak—'as a fine Phaeacian vessel
Over the mist-bound deep from a convoy returns shall the sea-god
Smite her to pieces and whelm with the mass of a mountain the city.'
Such was the rede of my sire, and it all finds now a fulfilment.
Come now, hear what I say, and let all of us follow my counsel!
Never again let us give such convoy, if wandering mortals
Come to the city; and now let us offer Poseidon atonement;
Twelve choice bulls let us slaughter in hope he may show us compassion,
Neither in anger o'erwhelm with the mass of a mountain the city."
So did he speak, and in fear they prepared them the bulls for oblation.
Thus then offering prayers to Poseidon, the king of the ocean,
All of the best of the land, Phaeacia's princes and leaders,
Stood surrounding the altar.

And godlike Odysseus, awaking,
Opened his eyes on the land of his birth, nor yet did he know it,
Such long years had he wandered afar; and around him the goddess
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus, poured mist to conceal him,
Keeping him hidden until she had given him counsel in all things,
Lest that his wife might know him, or friends, or the men of the city,

Ere for transgression the suitors had paid complete satisfaction,
Wherefore utterly strange was the land to the eyes of its master,
All of the clambering paths and all of the sheltering havens,
Lofty precipitous crags and the bloom of luxuriant forests.
Hastily rising he stood and gazing around on his homeland
Uttered a pitiful groan and on both of his thighs in despondence
Smote with a downward stroke of the hands and made lamentation:
"Ah me, what is the folk whose country I now am arrived at?
Dwell here savages wanton and wild, despisers of justice?
Have they a love for the stranger and hearts that revere the immortals?
Whither to carry my treasure I know not at all; and myself too
Where shall I turn me? I would 'twere back in the Scherian island
Just as it was; and perchance I had found some powerful monarch
Elsewhere, ready to grant me a welcome and give me an escort.
Now I am truly in doubt to bestow it. I verily like not
Leaving it here as a find and a welcome booty for others.
Nay but in sooth not at all like lovers of wisdom and justice
Acted, methinks, those high Phaeacian nobles and princes,
Bringing me thus to a land unknown; for they promised to bring me
Unto the far-seen Ithacan isle, and the promise is broken.
Zeus I beseech to requite it, the suppliant's god, who is watching
Ever the deeds of mankind and punisheth every sinner.
Well now, come, I will look to the presents and reckon the number;
Haply departing they took of the things on the hollow vessel."
These words said, he inspected the tripods and beautiful cauldrons,
Numbering all, and the gold and the woven and exquisite garments.
Nothing he missed of them all, and with joyless thoughts of his homeland
Slowly he wandered along by the shore of the bellowing ocean
Uttering many a moan.

Then approached him the goddess Athene
Likened in form to a youth who tendeth the sheep on a pasture,
Having a delicate beauty of mien, as the son of a chieftain;
Twofold over her shoulders a well-wrought mantle she carried;
Sandals she wore on her fair white feet, and a lance she was holding.
Then as he saw her Odysseus rejoiced and advancing to meet her
Lifted in welcome his voice, and with swift-winged words he addressed her:
"Friend, since thou art the first I have lighted upon in the country,
Welcome!—for truly I hope that thou com'st with a friendly intention—
Rescue this treasure of mine, and myself too! Lo, I beseech thee
Even as wert thou a god, at thy knees as a suppliant falling.

Also relate me the truth—for I fain would know it for certain :
What is this land ? What people and natives dwell in the country ?
One of the far-seen isles peradventure ? or one of the beaches
Sloping adown to the sea on the fertile coast of the mainland ?”
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“ Foolish thou seemst, O stranger, or else thou art come from a distance,
Seeing thou askest the name of the land. So utterly nameless
Sooth it is not. There’s many and many a mortal that knows it—
Every mortal that dwells in the east, whence dawneth the sunrise,
Every mortal behind in the west, where fadeth the daylight.
Truly the island is rugged—not fit for the driving of horses—
Still, not utterly poor, though lacking in open expanses.
Corn in amazing abundance it groweth, and also the wine-grape
Ripens, and ever with rain and with freshening dew it is moistened.
Good is the isle as a pasture for goats and for kine, and it beareth
Every manner of wood and hath watering-places that fail not.
Therefore, stranger, hath Ithaca’s name reached even to Troyland,
Though right far, it is said, ’tis away from the shores of Achaea.”

So did she speak, and it joyed long-suffering godlike Odysseus,
Yea he rejoiced in the land of his birth when he heard what she told him,
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.
Then uplifting his voice these swift-winged words he addressed her ;
Yet no truth did he speak, for he curbed it before it was uttered,
Keeping, as ever, control of the mind right cunning within him :
“ Ah yes, Ithaca’s name I have heard far over the ocean,
E’en in the broad-spread island of Creta, from which I am come now,
I and this treasure of mine ; and as much did I leave for my children,
Flying the land ; for the son I had killed of a prince of the country,
Orsilochus swift-footed, who conquered in fleetness of running
Every mortal that liveth on bread in the isle of the Cretans.
Him I had killed—for he wished to deprive me of all of my booty
Gotten at Troy, in the winning whereof great toil I had suffered,
Tossed on the billows of war and the grievous waves of the ocean—
Wished it because I refused as attendant to follow his father
There in the Trojan land, and had captained a band of my fellows.
So with my bronze-shod spear I attacked him whenas he was coming
Home from the fields, waylaying him close to the road with a comrade.
Black was the night that enshrouded the heaven ; no mortal perceived us ;
None was aware of the deed I had done when of life I bereft him.
Now no sooner the man with my sharp-edged spear I had murdered,

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Straight to a ship I betook me of proud Phoenician sea-folk ;
Them I entreated, and gave them of spoil that delighteth a mortal,
Earnestly begging them take me aboard of the vessel and land me
Either at Pylos or Elis the fair, where rule the Epeans.
Thither to come howbeit withheld them the might of the storm-wind,
Much as they wished it ; nor acted they willingly thus to deceive me.
Out of the course thus driven, at night we arrived at this island.
Toilfully rowing ahead to a harbour we came, and exhausted,
Wholly forgetful of food, though needing sorely a supper,
Stepped from the vessel and, just as we were, lay down on the sea-shore.
Now when in slumber refreshing I sank outworn with my labours,
Carrying all of my goods from the hollow vessel, they placed them
Here at my side, where sleeping I lay on the sands of the sea-shore.
Then, embarking again, for the flourishing city of Sidon
Started, and here I am left with a heart that is heavy with trouble."

Thus had he spoken when, smiling, the grey-eyed goddess Athene
Touched him with gentle caress ; and she changed to the form of a woman
Beautiful, stately, and gifted with deftness in exquisite handwork.
Then uplifting her voice these swift-winged words she addressed him :
"Truly a master in craft were one that excelled thee in cunning !
Conquered in guile were e'en the immortal who happened to meet thee.
Ah, thou audacious inventor of falsehood, insatiate trickster,
Even at home, as it seemeth, thou mean'st not to cease from deceiving,
Weaving thy fables, wherein from the ground of thy heart thou delightest.
Come, let us speak no longer thereof ! We are both of us practised
Weavers of wiles—for of all of mankind thou art easily foremost
Both in thy counsels and speech, and amid the immortals I win me
Fame for my wit and my wiles. Yet how didst thou fail to discern me,
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus—that goddess who always
Stands at thy side and defends thee in every hardship and danger,
Ay and who gained thee the love and the favour of all the Phaeacians ?
Now am I come that we two may take some counsel together,
Also in safety to bring these gifts that the lordly Phaeacians
Gave at thy homeward departing (for such was my will and intention),
Yea and in order to tell thee of all thou art destined to suffer
E'en in thy well-built home—So resign thee to fate and endure it !
Nor do thou utter a word to a man of them all or a woman,
Telling that home thou art come from thy wanderings. Suffer in silence !
E'en though bitter the pain and deep the indignity, bear it !"

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
“Difficult ’twere for the mortal thou meetest, goddess, to know thee,
Though right clever he were, for thou cloth’st thee in every semblance.
This howbeit I know, that thou gavest me favour aforetime,
While in the country of Troy were warring the sons of Achaea ;
Yet, when at last we had plundered the steep-built city of Priam,
After the Greeks had embarked on the ships and a god had dispersed them,
Never again I beheld thee, thou daughter of Zeus, nor perceived thee
Mounting aboard of my vessel in order to save me from sorrow.
Cherishing deep in my bosom a heart that was stricken with anguish,
Ever I wandered, until the immortals from evil released me,
Even till thou thyself in the rich Phaeacian country
Gavest me comforting words and didst show me the way in the city.
Now in the name of the Father I beg thee to tell me—for never
May I believe I am come to the far-seen Ithacan island ;
Nay, in a foreign land I am roaming, and merely to mock me
This thou art saying, and cheating my soul with an empty illusion—
Tell me the truth ! Am I come to the dear-loved land of my fathers ?”
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“Ever and always the same suspicious thoughts in thy bosom !
This is the reason I ne’er can desert thee in all thy affliction,
Since thou art wary and ready of wit and surpassing in prudence.
Gladly had many a man, thus safely returned from a far land,
Hastened him home in the longing to look on his wife and his children ;
Nowise such is thy wish—nor to listen and learn from another,
Ere thou hast tested thy wife to the full ; but she sitteth, as always,
There in thy palace halls, and filled with the gloom of her sadness
Waneth the day and waneth the night, while ever she weepeth.
Truly I ne’er had a doubt—nay, deep in my spirit I knew it,
Knew thy return was assured, though lost were all of thy comrades ;
Yet was I all unwilling to strive with my father’s brother,
Even Poseidon, who cherished at heart such anger against thee,
Raging because of his well-loved son, whom thou reftest of eyesight.
Come now, look on the scene and assure thee ’tis Ithaca’s island !
Here is the haven of Phorcys, the ancient god of the ocean !
There, at the head of the harbour, a high-branch’d olive is growing,
Distant from which not far is a pleasant shadowy grotto,
Sacred haunt of the nymphs that are known as the fountain naiads ;
There is the cave with its roof high-arched where often aforetime
Unto the nymphs thou hast made full many a perfect oblation.
There too, clothed in its forests, the mountain of Neriton riseth.”

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These words spoken, she scattered the mist and uncovered the landscape.
Then exulted in joy long-suffering godlike Odysseus ;
Yea he rejoiced and embracing the earth, dear mother of harvests,
Uttered a prayer to the nymphs, uplifting his hands to the heaven :
‘ Fountain Naiads, ye daughters of Zeus, I had verily never
Hoped to behold you again. With the vows of affection I greet you ;
Yea and oblation of gifts we shall make you, as often aforetime,
Should but the daughter of Zeus, the bestower of booty, Athene,
Graciously grant me to live, and my son to arrive at his manhood.’
Then once more made answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“ Take thou courage, nor suffer thy heart herein to be anxious !
Now let us carry the gifts to the depth of this wonderful grotto ;
There we will hide them at once, since there we can leave them in safety ;
Then let us twain take counsel together to act for the wisest.”
Thus when the goddess had spoken she plunged in the shadowy cavern
Eagerly searching for places of hiding ; and quickly Odysseus
Bringing the whole of his treasure—the gold and the bronze adamantine,
Fine-wrought garments as well, that Phaeacian nobles had given—
Stowed them away ; and a boulder was set in the door by the goddess,
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.

Then did the twain at the base of the sacred olive recline them,
There to consult, devising the doom of the insolent suitors.
First of the twain to begin was the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“ Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Think how best with a strong right hand these suitors to punish,
Shamelessly lording it still, as for three long years, in thy palace,
Wooing thy godlike wife and offering presents as lovers,
While with continual grief in her heart, as she waits for thy coming,
All she befooleth with hopes, and she giveth her promise to each one
Sending him many a message ; but things far other she longs for.”
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
“ Lo now, just as it happ’d to Atrides, King Agamemnon !
Just his terrible doom in my halls I was fated to suffer,
Hadst thou not told me of all, O goddess, and duly advised me.
Now come, weave me a plan, how best I may hope to requite them.
Stand thou too by my side, and with dauntless courage endue me,
E’en as at Troy, when we loosened her shining tiara of towers.
Art thou so eager to stand, O grey-eyed goddess, beside me,
Then am I ready enough three hundred foes to encounter,
Having thy favour, my lady and goddess, to help and befriend me.”

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“Yea assuredly still I befriend thee, and ne'er shall forsake thee
Then, when at last we shall come to the work ; and if much I mistake not,
Soon with his blood and his brains the unmeasured earth will bespatter
Many a man of the suitors, who now are wasting thy substance.
Come, I will change thy appearance that none shall be able to know thee ;
All of the fair smooth flesh on thy pliant limbs will I wither,
Shrivel the yellow hair from thy head and wrap thee in raiment
Beggary, such that a man might shudder at any that wore it.
Lustreless too will I make thine eyes, once gleaming in beauty,
So that a thing of contempt thou'lt seem to the whole of the suitors,
Yea to thy wife and the son thou didst leave as a babe in thy palace.
Now for thyself—'twere best to betake thee at first to the swineherd,
Even the thrall who attends to thy pigs. He is full of devotion
Both for thyself and thy son and the wise-souled Penelopeia.
Sitting in charge of the swine thou'lt find him—the herd that is feeding
Nigh to the Raven's Rock at the side of the spring Arethusa,
Eating the acorns wherein they delight, and drinking the fountain's
Dark sweet water—a food that doth nourish luxuriant fatness.
Here by the side of the swineherd remain and question him fully,
While I betake me to Sparta, the city of beautiful women,
Telemachus to recall ; for thy son, thy beloved, Odysseus,
Thither, to wide Lacedaemon, is gone and to prince Menelaus,
Tidings of thee to discover, if still on the earth thou art living.”
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
“Why hast thou said to him nought of the truth, though fully thou knewst it ?
Was't to compel him to wander with sufferings, like to his father,
Over the wastes of the sea, while strangers devour his possessions ?”
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“Let not the thought of thy son too grievously trouble thy spirit.
I myself was his guide, for I wished him to win by the journey
Manly renown. Nor imagine he suffereth hardship. In comfort
Now in Atrides' palace he sits in the midst of abundance.
True, in their black-hulled ship these youths are lying in ambush
Eager to kill him before he arrives at the land of his fathers ;
Yet do I reckon not thereof, for the earth far sooner shall swallow
Many a one of the wooers who daily consume thy possessions.”

Thus when Athena had spoken, her wand she extended and touched him ;
All of the fair smooth flesh on his limbs of his body she withered,
Shrivalled the yellow hair from his head, and the whole of his person,

Odyssey Every limb, with the skin of a man right agéd she covered ;
XIII Lustreless too did she make those eyes, once gleaming in beauty ;
432 - 440 Round him in stead of his raiment she wrapt vile rags and a doublet
Hanging in tatters and filthy, with smoke all foully besmuted,
Over him cast as a mantle the hide of a timorous roe-deer
Naked of hair, and she gave him a staff and a beggarly wallet
Terribly tattered and torn; and thereon was a cord to suspend it.
Thus, their counsellings ended, they parted, the goddess Athene
Going to fair Lacedaemon to seek for the son of Odysseus.

ODYSSEY BOOK XIV

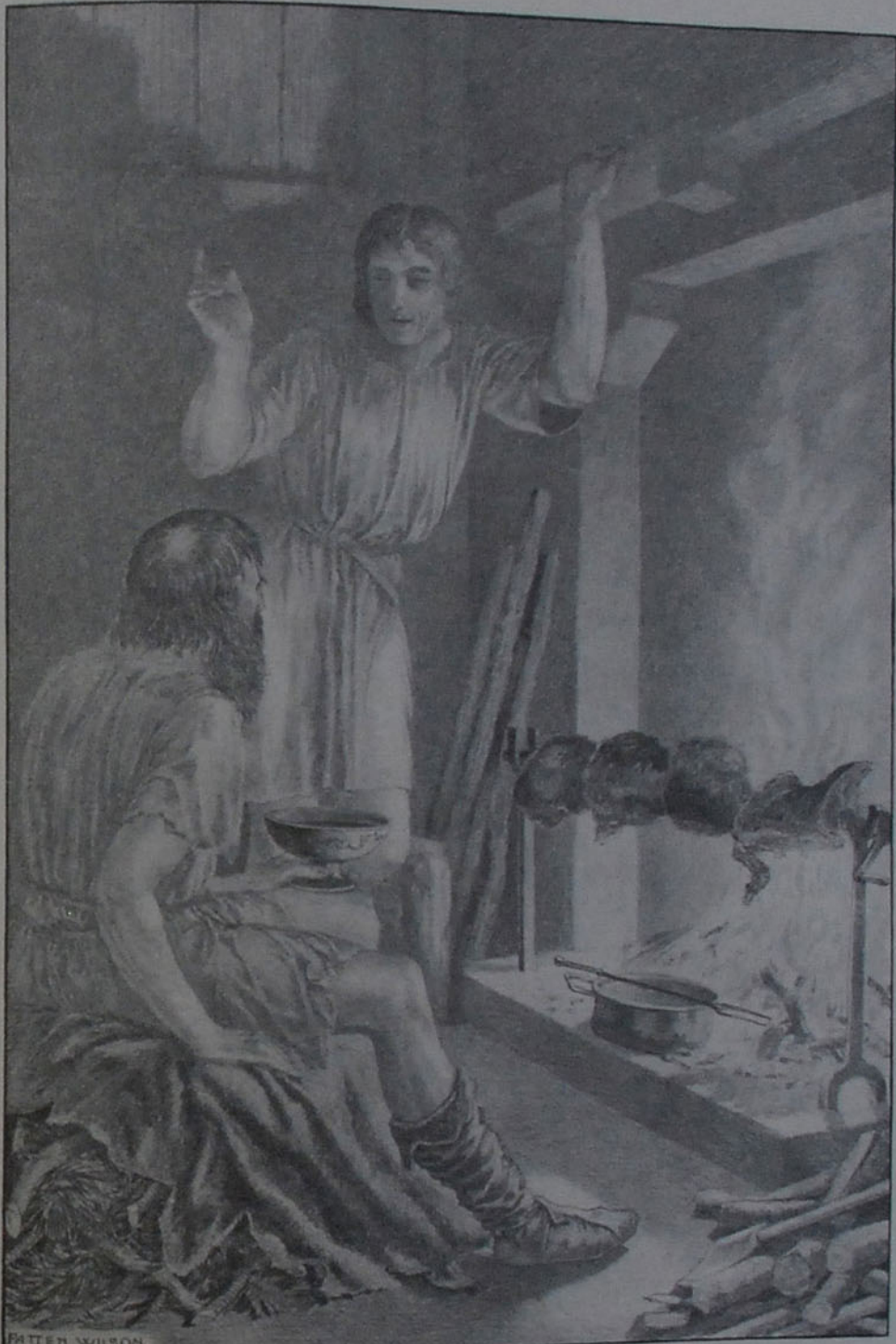
NOW by a footpath rough he ascended that led from the harbour
Winding aloft to the heights through woodland slopes; for Athene
Here had enjoined him to seek for the good old swineherd, who tended
Godlike Odysseus' estate far more than the rest of his servants.
Under the porch of a hut he discovered him sitting. His farmyard,
Loftily builded, was here in a site with a beautiful prospect.
Goodly and great was the yard, and a run was around it. The swineherd
Built it himself for the swine in the years when his master was absent,
Saying thereof no word to his lady and aged Laertes.
Stones he had dragged from afar for the kraal and with thorns he had fenced it.
Round it he ran a stockaded enclosure on this and on that side—
Stakes right sturdy and close, that he cleft from the core of the oak-tree.
Then in the midst of the yard he erected a dozen of pig-sties,
One by the side of the other, as beds for the swine; and in each one
Penned was a herd of the wallowing beasts, full fifty together,
Females for breeding—the males had an outer enclosure to sleep in;
Also the number was smaller by far, for the arrogant suitors
Ate and diminished them ever, commanding the swineherd to send them
Always the best that of all of the fat-fed hogs was the finest.
Thus was the number of males of the swine three hundred and sixty.
Savage as ravening beasts, were always watching beside them
Four fierce dogs that the swineherd had trained with the hand of a master.
Now was the man to his feet adjusting a couple of sandals,
Cutting them out of the hide of an ox bright-coloured. His fellows
Each with a drove of the swine were hither and thither departed,
Three of them—while that another, the fourth, he had sent to the city
Driving a boar;—since so had the insolent suitors commanded,
Wishing to slaughter the beast and to feast to their souls' satisfaction.

Now of a sudden the dogs, incessantly watching and barking,
Saw him and rushed at him, raising a yelp—but the wily Odysseus
Warily crouched on the ground, down-dropping the staff that he carried.
Then at the farm of the which he was lord foul hurt had he suffered,
Had not the swineherd, on feet right active hurrying after,
Run to the courtyard gate, down-dropping the hide that he carried,
Shouted abuse on the dogs and chased them to this and to that side
Showering stones; then turning he spake to Odysseus, his master:
“Ay, in a moment more, old man, they had torn thee to pieces,

Right on the spot—and a great disgrace were fallen upon me!
Troubles enough already the gods have sent me, and sorrows,
Mourning for ever and wailing the loss of a godlike master
Here do I sit, and I batten his swine—yet only in order
Others may eat while craving for food he is wandering somewhere,
Begging his bread in a distant land or a city of strangers,
Haps it indeed that he still is alive and beholdeth the sunlight.
Follow me now, old man! Let us enter the cottage, that thou too,
After partaking of bread and of wine to thy heart's satisfaction,
Mayest relate both whence thou art come and the woes thou hast suffered."

These words said, to the cottage returning the good old swineherd
Led him within, and he strewed for a couch soft branches of brushwood,
Spreading above them the fell of a long-haired goat of the mountains,
Shaggy and large, that he used for a bed; and Odysseus was joyful
So to be welcomed, and spake to the swineherd, and thus he addressed him:
"Zeus vouchsafe, O stranger, and other immortals, to grant thee
All that is dear to thy soul in return for thy kindly reception."
Him then in answer addressed these words Eumæus the swineherd:
"Stranger, it were not right, if a guest still poorer than thou beest
Came to my door, to disdain him. 'Tis Zeus our Father that sendeth
Beggars and guests; though small be my gift it is willingly given.
So it is ever with those who, as we, are servants of others,
Always living in dread when as masters rule in the household
Nothing but youths. But the one whom the gods have stayed from returning,
He was a master had loved me indeed and allowed me possessions,
Even a house and a glebe and a consort comely in person,
Such as a lord kind-hearted is wont to bestow on a servant,
One that has toiled for him much, whose labour the heaven hath prospered,
E'en as it prospers this labour of mine that I always attend to.
Many had been my rewards had he reached old age in his homestead.
Ah but he perished . . . as would that the kindred of Helen had perished
Utterly—since she hath loosened the knees of so many a fighter.
He too went, for the sake of avenging the king Agamemnon,
Unto the horse-rich Ilian city to fight with the Trojans."

Thus did he speak, and in haste with his belt upgirding his tunic
Went to the yard, where litters of swine were penned in the pig-sties.
Here two sucklings he chose, and he carried them forth and despatched them,
Singed them and cut them in pieces and spitted the flesh on the skewers.
Then, so soon he had roasted it well, to Odysseus he brought it



PETER WILSON

IN THE COTTAGE OF THE SWINEHERD

Hot on the skewers, with barley-meal all whitely besprinkled.
Wine then sweet as the honey he mixed in a mazer of ivy,
Sat him adown in the front of his guest and addressed him, and urged him :
“Eat now, stranger—”Tis fare that a thrall is permitted to offer—
Suckling. The fat-fed hogs are eaten alone by the suitors,
Men that regard not the wrath of the gods nor the call of compassion.
Yea and the blessed immortals approve not iniquitous actions ;
Honour they pay to the justice of men and to all that is righteous.
Even unprincipled men who as ravagers land in a country,
Home of a foreign folk—should Zeus vouchsafe them a booty
So that they fill their vessels and sail straight back to the homeland—
Even on these there falls great dread of the anger of heaven,
While these others . . . it’s something they know—some whisper of Rumour
Touching his mournful fate—that hath rendered them alway unwilling
Fairly to woo or return to their homes. In disdainful composure
Recklessly all the estate they despoil, and the waste is unending.
Every morning and night which Zeus our Father vouchsafes us
Slaughter of victims is made—not of one, nor of two, but of many ;
Yea and the store of the wine they diminish by recklessly drawing.
Truly his wealth was unspeakably great. Such riches had no one,
None of the princes that dwell on the dark expanse of the mainland,
Nor on the Ithacan isle. The possessions of twenty together
Equalled it never. But come, I will reckon and fully recount it :
Cattle—a dozen of droves, and a dozen of flocks, on the mainland ;
Pigs—twelve droves ; and as many the wandering goats that he owneth.
These by his own and by alien herds are driven to pasture.
Here too pasture his goats—and the number of flocks is eleven—
Ranging the uttermost ends of the island with goatherds to guard them.
Daily doth each of the men bring one of his flock to the suitors,
Choosing the beast that of all of the fat-fed goats is the finest—
Ay and myself, whose task is to guard and attend to the pigs here,
Ever I carefully choose them the hog that is fattest and send it.”

Thus did he speak ; but Odysseus partook of the flesh and the wine-bowl
Eagerly, sitting in silence and plotting the doom of the suitors.
Then, when at last he had dined and his heart was contented with eating,
Filling a vessel—the cup that he used for his drinking—the swineherd
Offered it brimming with wine ; and he took it, and gladdened in spirit
Opened his lips in response, and with swift-winged words he addressed him :
“Who was it now, good friend, whose riches bought thee as servant ?
Who was the master so wealthy and mighty, of whom thou relatest—

Odyssey He that hath perished, thou say'st, in avenging the king Agamemnon?
XIV Tell me his name! for perhaps I have seen such man as thou sayest.
117 - 155 Known is it only to Zeus and the other immortals in heaven
Whether I met him and tidings can give—for afar I have wandered."

Forthwith answering spake Eumaeus master of swineherds:
"Oft doth it hap, old man, that a wanderer comes who reporteth
Tidings—but never persuadeth my lady or dear young master.
Many a vagrant is wont, when he hopes for a kindly reception,
Lies to invent, and he cares not at all for the truth of his story.
Every wandering wight that arrives at the Ithacan island
Findeth his way to the queen and brings some tissue of falsehoods;
All she receiveth with kindness and plieth them closely with questions,
Grieving at every word, while tears fall fast from her eyelids,
E'en as a woman is wont when afar hath perished her husband.
Thou too, gaffer, methinks wouldst forge some fabulous fiction
Quickly enough, were one to present thee a mantle and tunic.
Ah but I doubt that the dogs and the swift-winged fowls will be tearing
Long since all of the skin from his bones, and the spirit hath left them;
Else in the deep he was eaten of fishes, and now on the sea-shore
Lieth his skeleton bleaching and swathed in the coils of a sand-drift.
Yea he is perished afar, and hath left us in sorrow who loved him,
All of us—mostly howbeit myself, since never another
Master as kind shall I meet, how far soever I wander,
Not if again to the house I returned of my father and mother,
Even the home in the which I was born and was reared by my parents.
Nor is it longer for them that I mourn—though often I sorrowed,
Yearning to see them again and to find me again in my homeland—
No—but a longing doth hold me for him that is gone—for Odysseus.
Merely to mention his name, O stranger, as one that is absent,
Paineth my heart—for he loved me indeed and he cared for me truly—
Rather, although he is far, I will call him my lord and my brother."

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus:
"Friend, as thou wholly deniest my words and declarest thy master
Never again will return, and incredulous still is thy spirit,
So I will state it not only in words; with an oath I assure thee
Home is returning Odysseus. A gift for the news thou shalt give me
First on the day when he hither arriveth and reacheth his homestead;
Then shalt thou clothe me in beautiful raiment—in mantle and tunic;
Ere he arrives will I nothing accept, though sorely I need it.

Hateful to me as the portal of death and of Hades a fellow
Maketh himself who induced by his poverty uttereth falsehoods.
First then witness it Zeus, and this table whereat I am welcomed,
Yea and the hearth to the which I am come of the noble Odysseus,
Verily all these things that I tell thee shall find a fulfilment :
Whilst this year on its path still circles return shall Odysseus,
Even as this moon dies and the new-born moon is appearing,
Yea he shall come to his home and shall smite with a terrible vengeance
Those who dishonour his wife and insult his illustrious offspring."

Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :
" Never, I fear, old man, shall I give thee a gift for thy tidings ;
Never again to his home will Odysseus return—But, I pray thee,
Drink and be still, or of something besides let us think ! and recall not
This to my mind ; for it maketh the heart in the bosom within me
Grievously suffer whenever my dear true master is mentioned.
Touching thy oath—we will leave it to heav'n ; and I pray that Odysseus
Yet may return ; 'tis the hope of myself and of Penelopeia,
Yea and of agéd Laertes and Telemachus the heroic.
Ah but for him I am terribly troubled—this son of Odysseus,
Telemachus. By the grace of the gods as a sapling he flourished,
Till I had almost believed that as man he was destined to equal
Even his own dear father—so goodly his form and his favour.
Then, of a sudden his reason was thrown from its balance (I know not
Whether by man or immortal) and, tidings to seek of his father,
Now he is journeyed to Pylos the fair, and the arrogant suitors
Lurking in ambush await his return, that from Ithaca's island
All of the race of the hero Arceisius wholly shall perish.
Well, we will leave it to heaven to let him be taken or let him
Safely escape—should Zeus hold o'er him a hand to protect him.
Come now, speak of thyself, old man, and recount me thy troubles.
One thing firstly relate me exactly, for fain will I know it :
Who art thou ? Whence art thou come ? Tell too of thy city and parents.
Whose was the vessel whereon thou hast come ? How haps it that sailors
Brought thee to Ithacan land ? What folk do they boast to belong to ?
Seeing, methinks, it was never on foot that thou hither arrivedst."

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :
" Well now, all of the truth will I tell thee and clearly explain it.
Would that we two had abundance of sweet strong wine and of viands
Such as to last so long as we willed to remain in thy cottage

Quietly feasting and letting the others betake them to labour,
Easily even the whole of a year were filled by my story
Ere I had finished the tale of the sorrows my spirit hath suffered,
All of the travail I wrought by the will of the blessed immortals.
First I avow that I come from the widespread island of Creta,
Child of a man not lacking in wealth—nor in sons was he lacking.
Many another was born and was bred in the halls of his palace,
Lawfully born of a wife that was wed ; but a slave was my mother,
Bought as a leman—yet like to a rightful son he esteemed me,
Castor Hylacides, whose blood I can boast to belong to.
He by the people of Creta was honoured like an immortal
Both for his glorious sons and his goodly estate and his riches.
Now did the dread Death-Fates to him come, and departing they bare him
Down to the mansion of Hades. At once the estate they divided,
These high-spirited youths, and by casting of lots they assigned it.
Me they apportioned a share right scanty, but gave me a dwelling,
Whither I took me a wife, whose kindred had many possessions,
Men who respected my valour—for then I was neither a weakling
Nor in the battle a coward . . . but now it is gone ! it is over !
Yet e'en so, from the stubble methinks thou'lt make a conjecture
What was the grain—for indeed past telling is all that I suffered.
Courage was ever vouchsafed me by Ares and Pallas Athene,
Courage that bursteth the ranks of the battle. Whene'er for an ambush
All of the bravest I chose, designing a raid on the foemen,
Ne'er in my valiant heart was a boding of death or of danger ;
Far to the front of the others I sprang with my spear, and I slaughtered
Every foe that by swiftness of foot was unable to flee me.
Such was I ever in war ; but I loved not the labour of tillage,
Neither the care of a home nor to rear me a glorious offspring.
Ships were ever the joy of my heart, and the oarage of vessels,
War and the weapons of war, bright-polished lances and arrows,
Things right painful to view and arousing abhorrence in others.
Well—I delighted in things God gave to my heart to delight in.
This occupation is pleasing to one and that to another.
Ere on the Trojan shores were landed the sons of Achaea
Nine times led I a body of fighters in fleet-winged vessels
Unto a distant land, and immense was the spoil that we captured.
Ever I chose what delighted my heart of the booty, and later
Much I acquired by lot ; and my house grew rapidly richer,
Till ere long I became respected and feared by the Cretans.
Now when the war was ordained by the Father who speaketh in thunder

(Hateful emprise, that hath loosened the knees of so many a fighter!)
Me did the people command, with Idomeneus the heroic,
Unto the Ilian city to lead with the vessels; nor any
Means to refuse we possessed, for the voice of the people was urgent.

Odyssey
XIV
236 - 274

Nine years long did we battle around it, we sons of Achaea,
Till in the tenth, when at last we had plundered the city of Priam,
Homeward we sailed—and a god drave widely apart the Achaeans.
Then was my ruin devised, ah me, by the all-wise Father.
Only a month in my home I remained, and I joyed in my children,
Joyed in the wife of my youth and my riches; but shortly thereafter
Unto the river of Egypt my spirit impelled me to voyage
Taking on ships well-fitted a band of heroic companions.
Nine I equipped, and the men right speedily gathered together.
Then for the next six days made merry my faithful companions,
Constantly feasting on many a victim, wherewith I supplied them
Both for oblation and also to furnish themselves with a banquet,
Till, on the seventh, embarking, the widespread island of Creta
Soon we had left, and impelled by a fair fresh breeze of the North Wind
Easily sped, as it were down-current, not one of the vessels
Suffering any mishap; and in safety we sat and in comfort
Watching them held to their course by the favouring wind and the steersman.
Five days later we came to the fair broad stream of Aegyptus.
Here, in the river of Egypt, I stationed my twy-beaked galleys.

Then did I issue an order to all of my trusty companions
Quietly there to remain at the side of the vessels and guard them
While that I sent forth scouts to explore from the neighbouring outlooks.
Yielding however to wanton desires and arrogant boldness
Soon they invaded the beautiful fields of the people of Egypt,
Wasting the country and taking away both women and children,
Slaughtering also the men; and the cry reached quickly the city.
These then, hearing the shout, as the new-born day was appearing
Came, and the whole of the plain seemed full of the footmen and horses,
Full of the flashing of bronze; and the god who delighteth in thunder
Cast on my comrades a panic so fearful that none had the courage
Firmly to stand and to face them—for danger was pressing on all sides.
Now of my friends with the edge of the sword full many they slaughtered,
Many they captured and led them away to the labours of bondsmen,
While for myself—it was Zeus that again suggested the counsel—
(Would I had died with the rest and encountered my destiny there too,

Even in Egypt—for nothing but woe hath awaited me alway !)
. . . Straight from my head I unfastened my well-wrought helmet and dropt it,
Also the shield from my shoulders I dropt, and the spear that I carried.
Then in the way of the king and his chariot-horses I threw me,
Grasped at his knees and embraced them and kissed them. He pitied and saved me,
Made me to mount on his car and brought me in tears to his palace.
Truly with ashen spears came many attacking me fiercely,
Longing to stab me to death, since sorely enraged was the people ;
Yet did he ward them aside, for he dreaded the anger of heaven,
Even of Zeus, who is god of the guest and avenges transgression.

Years full seven I lived in the land, and amidst the Egyptians
Many possessions I gathered, for all of them gave to me freely.
Now did it happen at last, as the eighth year made a beginning,
Came a Phoenician man who was versed in deceitful devices,
Fraudulent huckster—a knave who had wrought much mischief already.
Me with his wiles he cajoled, and I followed him back to his homeland,
E'en the Phoenician land, where lay his estate and his houses.
Here I remained with the man till a year had completed its circuit ;
Then, when the circle of days and of seasons was fully accomplished,
While that the year was returning and springtide followed the winter,
On to an ocean trader for Libya bound he embarked me,
Forging the falsehood he needed my aid in conveying the cargo,
While he intended to sell me and win him a profit enormous.
Him by compulsion I followed aboard, though full of foreboding.
Soon she was running before fresh breezes and fair of the North Wind
Midst of the sea, past Creta—but Zeus their doom was devising ;
Yea, for as soon as the island was dropping behind us, nor any
Other land was in sight, but the heaven alone and the ocean,
Then was a black-blue cloud commanded to halt by Cronion
Over the hollow ship, and beneath it the deep sea darkened.
Zeus at that instant thundered and lightning hurled at the vessel.
Struck by the bolt of the Father she shook all over and staggered,
Filled with a sulphurous flame. From the ship fell all of my shipmates ;
Then on the waves like gulls at the side of the black-hulled vessel
Floated and tossed ; and the god thus ended their hope of the homeland,
While for myself—it was Zeus that again in my desperate peril
Brought to the grip of my hands such means to escape from destruction,
Even the monstrous wreck of the mast of the blue-prowed vessel,
Clinging to which I was drifted along by the ruinous storm-winds.
Nine days long was I borne ; on the tenth in the blackness of midnight