

The odyssey

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For years and years I've been roaming around the seas in hope to get back to my homeland Ithaca. I've faced many obstacles along my journey but all with great morals. I started off my journey when Menelaus and Agamemnon asked me to go with them to Troy to retrieve Helen. The other islands I visited came along unexpectedly. The decision to leave my homeland Ithaca was the hardest decision a man could make. Leaving behind my wife Penelope and my new born son Telemachus was unbearable but when duty called I had to accept it with courage and bravery.

The feeling of losing such a cherish-able family made me have second thoughts for I don't know when I'll be coming back and what would happen to my family and my land Ithaca. I was afraid that by the time I come back someone would have escorted by wife, my mother could be dead and my son could be the wrong man to rule Ithaca if he was influenced too much by the suitors. I once had a vision that great grief and sorrow would come upon my family and my people but I kept it to myself and hoped that it was just an ordinary dream rather than a warning from the gods that it would happen in reality.

I knew it was time to sail to troy as soon as the sirens were heard. Their sound echoed in my ears as an admonishment to me that this was the last time I'd see my homeland and family. Penelope knew that it was time for my departure so she was waiting for me with Telemachus by the door. I could see the tears in her eyes and feel the sorrow in her heart, for she knows that she might not see me again. I kissed her and assured her that I would always fight to come back to her and Telemachus.

Standing by the other side of the door was Anticleia my mother; she held her head high for she knew that it was an honor for her son, king of Ithaca - son of Laertes to join to in the battle of Troy. I bowed to her in respect, took my stock and walked directly to the ship. After months and years, we finally set foot on Troy. Our plan was to hide in an oversized wooden horse that would be offered to Priam-king of Troy. King Priam accepted the gift and entered the wooden horse in Troy assuming that we surrendered and this was a gift of appreciation.

Meanwhile, the soldiers and I were hidden inside the wooden horse waiting for the Trojans to sleep so that we could attack at night. A few hours later in the day, we were instructed that it was time to climb down of the horse and attack. Menelaus gave a concise speech encouraging us and we were off to battle. The Trojans woke up in fright, for they were sleeping and had no sense of what's going on. Numerous Trojan soldiers were slaughtered and the battle continued for about nine year. Our victory and the end of the war finally appeared in the tenth year.

We were able to retrieve Helen, kill all Trojans and enslave the Trojan women. When it was time to depart, I was assigned as the captain of a number of ships. The first land we came upon was Ismarus, city of the Cicones. I advised my men to search for food and stay away from the islands people. However; my advice was far from being heard by anyone. The crew slaughtered the ciconian men and took their women as slaves. The next day we were attacked by a large number of cicones causing us to flee in our ships. Each of my ships lost 6 of its Achaeans men.

As a result for all the mischief we caused for the Cincones, Zeus-god of all gods, made a storm that left us nine days in the sea with no land in sight and limited food and water. The vision that I once had before was starting to occur in reality. With hope in our hearts, we came upon another island on the tenth day. The land of the Lotus Eaters lured my men even more. Hunger was our greatest enemy then and so caused us to explore the island in search of food. A few soldiers found some lotus plants and started to devour them. A few minutes later, they were completely brainwashed.

Nothing seemed to matter to them other than eating more of it and staying on the island. A sense of fright shivered down my spine, for only considering eating such a plant. The only way to stop them from losing their minds completely was dragging them back to the ships and locking them there till we sail and so we did. The next island to come in sight was the land of one eyed giants called Cyclopes. When we explored their island we came upon a huge cave. Inside the cave were cheese, bread and sheep; basically all what we wanted at that moment.

I told my men to take all they wanted and feast in the ship or on the shore but they insisted to feast in the cave and light a fire. I had to admit it was a relief for the days we've seen before just to sit and feast in peace and harmony but it wasn't for long until the peace and harmony were exchanged with fright and grief. Polyphemus- son of Posidon appeared at the door of the cave. He entered and shut the cave's door with an enormous rock. I tried to persuade Polyphemus that we ate from his food as an act of xenia for any stranger; but he was far from being convinced. We were imprisoned to be meals for him.

I couldn't stand to see my soldiers being taken one by one as a meal so I came up with a plan to drunken Polyphemus so my men and I could blind him with a stick of fire. Then in the morning we could hide under the sheep and escape when Polyphemus removed the rock that was placed in front of the cave. I also knew that once we blind him he's going to call on the other Cyclops and tell them Odysseus blinded me, so I came up with the name "Noman"; so when they ask him who blinded you he'd say "Noman" and they'd think the pain he's in is from the gods and leave the cave so that my crew and I could escape.

And so exactly what I planned happened and the next day we we're safely out of the cave and on our way to the ships. It caused us grief to think about the men we lost and left us thinking of what hardships we'll experience next. With blessings from the goddess Athena, we were able to sail our ships and reach the home of Aeolus- the god of the wind. I decided to go around the island alone without any members of my crew. I was filling my bag with water to take back to the ship when I heard my name being called.

I looked up and the god Aeolus was in sight. He called on me and told me this "Odysseus, the Greek hero who is said to never again reach his homeland. Give me the bag in your hands and ill help you find your way back to Ithaca". I couldn't believe my ears, is it another vision or is it reality. Going back home, oh how much I longed to hear such hopeful words. I went straight to Aeolus and gave him the bag, he took it and disappeared. A moment later I heard someone calling me from high up in the mountains, when I looked up it was Aeolus.

He said that Posidon was being a bully and a few moments later he transferred the wind that was stopping us from reaching Ithaca into the bag. He instructed me not to open the bag or else I might never reach Ithaca. I thanked him gratefully and set off to tell my crew the pleasant news. When I reached the ships I was too tired and fell asleep after instructing them to sail away. Because of jealousy and curiosity, my crew wondered what could be in the bag and instead of waiting till I wake up and ask me they decided to open the bag.

When they did a storm took place and brought us back to Aeolus when the shore of Ithaca was in sight. When I went to Aeolus again to ask him for wind, he rejected and sent me off his land, saying that I am cursed by the gods. And so we sailed again with no hope in ever reaching Ithaca. Land of the Laestrygonians was the next island we set foot on. The Laestrygonians were a race of powerful giants whose king was Antiphates. This time I went to search for food with a few members of my crew. We met a pretty looking girl who led us to her father king Antiphates.

We were horrified once we reached his house, for the second he saw us he and his wife turned my crew into dinner. While we were trying to escape back to the ships, the king's wife screamed and all the other Laestrygonians appeared and racked all the ships except mine. I instructed the remaining crew to sail the ship away from this land, and so they did. After sailing for some days we reached Aea which is the home of Circe the beautiful witch goddess. The first thing I did was dividing the crew into two companies and appointing a leader for each.

I was the leader of the first group that would stay and guard the ship. Eurylochus was leader of the second group with twenty-two men. Eurylochus guided his crew through the land towards Circe's home where smoke was rising. When the crew reached Circe they were all lured in by her singing leaving only their leader behind. Eurylochus saw that Circe drugged his men and turned them into pigs so he hurried back to the ship and told me what happened. I couldn't believe such nonsense but went to rescue them leaving behind my crew with Eurylochus.

While I was on my way to Circe's home, Hermes-the messenger god appeared. He tells me to eat a herb to protect myself from Circe's drug and then lunge at her when she tries to strike me with the sword. When I reached Circe's home she offered me a drink and I drank it to the last sip then I followed Hermes instructions. Circe was astonished for no man has ever surmounted her drug and struck her in force. I forced her to change my men back into humans, and so she did. As days passed, Circe and I fell in love for she offered us food, water, shelter and peace. My men were comfortable and quite relieved.

Circe and I stayed together for one whole year living in serene and happiness. One day my men all came up with the decision that it was time to go back to Ithaca, and so I ask Circe for all the help she could give us. She tells me that I must first sail to Hades- god of the dead to speak with the spirit of Tiresias- a blind prophet who will tell me how to get home. But first I must dig a hole and pour in it milk and honey, then sweet wine and the third time with water. Then sprinkle barley and pray to the gods and after that I have to sacrifice gifts to the gods and a great black ram to Tiresias.

Afterwards I have to order my men to burn the sheep as a sacrifice to Hades and Persephone. Next morning, I discovered that the youngest man in my crew Elpenor slept on the roof while he was drunk and when he saw my men getting ready to go back to the ship, he fell from the roof dead with a broken neck. Somber expressions appeared upon my crews' faces as they heard the news. We left Circe's island and arrived in the land of the Cimmerians where I performed all the sacrifices to attract the dead souls. The first to appear was Elpenor, who begged me to return to Circe's land and give his body a proper burial.

Then Tiresias appears and reveals to me that Posidon is punishing us Achaeans for blinding his son Polyphemus. He then assures me that I will return home and reclaim my wife and palace from the suitors. His words filled my heart with hope, courage and confidence to continue my journey. In addition he tells me that I will make another trip to a distant land to calm Posidon and satisfy him. He then foretells one of the island we'll set foot on and warns me not to touch the flocks of the sun when we reach Thrinacia; otherwise I'll lose all of my crew.

I was don't talking with Tiresias, so I called on other spirits. First I called to my mother Anticleia who updates me on Ithaca and tells me how she died of grief waiting for my return. I then called on the Greek heroes who fell at Troy in Hades. First Agamemnon then Achilles, Heracles, King Minos, Sisyphus then Tantalus in the end. After talking to each I found myself mobbed by souls who want to ask about their relatives in the world above. A sense of fright came upon my soul and caused me to run back to the ship and sail immediately.

We went back to Aeaëa to bury Elpenor. Circe welcomed us and I told her all what happened. She then told me to beware that my ship will pass by the sirens that would lure us in by their songs. She told me to plug the crews' ears by wax and as for me she wants me to hear it. But to do that I have to tie myself up and instruct my crew that even when I plead for them to release me they should tie me up even harder. I thanked her gratefully and set my ship to sail along with telling my crew all what Circe warned me about and what they should do till we pass the sirens.

Soon enough after a few hours, I heard charming voices calling on me from what seemed to be a short distance. They sang aloud promising me a better future full of hope. I pleaded my crew to release me to go to them but my men were faithful and kept me tied up till we passed the sirens. A sudden terror was felt by the crew when we reached Scylla and Charybids. Six men were devoured by Scylla's six heads while staring at Charybids. I knew that this incident would happen but I couldn't tell any of the men because they already were in much grief. The island of the Sun, Thrinacia was the next island we stopped our ship at.

I remembered what Circe told me about avoiding it but my crew persuaded me to go to the island in hope of finding something to eat. The crew slaughtered the cattle of the sun which caused grievous consequences. The sun told Zeus to punish my crew and I for committing such an act. And so, Zeus made a thunderstorm that led us back to the Charybids where the whole crew drowned except me just as Circe warned. I swam for days but there weren't any islands in sight. Day by day I started to lose hope and my

body started weakening. When I was about to give up the thought of leaving my family behind helped me through.

The goddess gave me hope that soon I'd reach Ogygia, Calypso's island. In a few hours the island came in sight and when I reached the shore I was so tired and went to sleep under a tree. For years, Calypso forced me to stay on her land persuading me with her luxury and desire. She fell in love with an immortal man and so I had to stay on her land. Every few months I see ships passing by, I would hurry and swim to reach them but her servants would catch up with me and return me to her. I was kept on her land until Athena told Zeus who sent Hermes to Calypso ordering her to release me.

I couldn't be more relieved. I spent some days building a raft then sailed in hope of reaching Ithaca. I spent eighteen days in the sea until I reached Scheria, island of the Phaeacians. Before I reached the islands shore a storm, probably from Posidon, dragged me under the sea. I was on the verge drowning but then the goddess Ino gave me a protective veil that would keep me safe after my raft was wrecked. Athena then led me to the coast of the island safely. Next morning, when I woke up I heard voices of females playing around. I was embarrassed to take a step forward because I had no clothes on.

I thought for a while then I decided to go ask them about this land covering myself up with leaves and bushes. When I appeared in sight all the girls and women backed away but only one stayed. I asked her for clothes and shelter and so she ordered what turned out to be her servants to give me oil to wash my body and some clothes to cover myself up. Now I was all clean and Athena made me look younger and stronger. The women couldn't believe

their eyes; it was obvious from their expressions. I then went to lady again and asked her about this land.

She told me that her name is Nausicaa princess of this island. I asked her if I could meet her father the king and she directed me to their palace. When I met the king and queen they asked me about my journey and I told them all about it since I left to Troy. Their hospitality was above what I expected. They offered me food and a place to rest in. The next morning they sent me with their ships and I finally reached my homeland Ithaca after all these years. I wanted to go straight to my house and see my son Telemachus and my wife Penelope but I was wise enough not to do so.

I made a decision that I won't tell anyone except Telemachus and the swineherd who I am until the moment I kill the suitors. I revealed my identity to Telemachus and we made a plan to kill all the suitors and all the servants that were unfaithful to our family during my absence. He was on my side and immediately followed all my instructions. What we planned for happened in reality and I was able to rule Ithaca once again. Penelope, Telemachus and all my faithful people were away from the evil hands of the suitors and were finally in peace and harmony for once in many years.