

ODYSSEY 1

SPEAK, MEMORY—

Of the cunning hero,
The wanderer, blown off course time and again
After he plundered Troy's sacred heights.

Speak
Of all the cities he saw, the minds he grasped,
The suffering deep in his heart at sea
As he struggled to survive and bring his men home
But could not save them, hard as he tried—
The fools—destroyed by their own recklessness
When they ate the oxen of Hyperion the Sun,
And that god snuffed out their day of return.

Of these things,
Speak, Immortal One,
And tell the tale once more in our time.

By now, all the others who had fought at Troy—
At least those who had survived the war and the sea—
Were safely back home. Only Odysseus
Still longed to return to his home and his wife.
The nymph Calypso, a powerful goddess—
And beautiful—was clinging to him
In her caverns and yearned to possess him.
The seasons rolled by, and the year came
In which the gods spun the thread
For Odysseus to return home to Ithaca,
Though not even there did his troubles end,
Even with his dear ones around him.
All the gods pitied him, except Poseidon,

241

Who stormed against the godlike hero
Until he finally reached his own native land.

But Poseidon was away now, among the Ethiopians,
Those burnished people at the ends of the earth—
Some near the sunset, some near the sunrise—
To receive a grand sacrifice of rams and bulls.
There he sat, enjoying the feast.

The other gods
Were assembled in the halls of Olympian Zeus,
And the Father of Gods and Men was speaking.
He couldn't stop thinking about Aegisthus,
Whom Agamemnon's son, Orestes, had killed:

"Mortals! They are always blaming the gods
For their troubles, when their own witlessness
Causes them more than they were destined for!
Take Aegisthus now. He marries Agamemnon's
Lawful wife and murders the man on his return
Knowing it meant disaster—because we did warn him,
Sent our messenger, quicksilver Hermes,
To tell him not to kill the man and marry his wife,
Or Agamemnon's son, Orestes, would pay him back
When he came of age and wanted his inheritance.
Hermes told him all that, but his good advice
Meant nothing to Aegisthus. Now he's paid in full."

Athena glared at him with her owl-grey eyes:

"Yes, O our Father who art most high—
That man got the death he richly deserved,
And so perish all who would do the same.
But it's Odysseus I'm worried about,
That discerning, ill-fated man. He's suffered
So long, separated from his dear ones,
On an island that lies in the center of the sea,
A wooded isle that is home to a goddess,
The daughter of Atlas, whose dread mind knows
All the depths of the sea and who supports

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F. Wilson

BOOK 1



The Boy and the Goddess

Tell me about a complicated man.
Muse, tell me how he wandered and was lost
when he had wrecked the holy town of Troy,
and where he went, and who he met, the pain
he suffered in the storms at sea, and how
he worked to save his life and bring his men
back home. He failed to keep them safe; poor fools,
they ate the Sun God's cattle, and the god
kept them from home. Now goddess, child of Zeus,
tell the old story for our modern times.
Find the beginning.

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All the other Greeks
who had survived the brutal sack of Troy
sailed safely home to their own wives—except
this man alone. Calypso, a great goddess,
had trapped him in her cave; she wanted him
to be her husband. When the year rolled round
in which the gods decreed he should go home
to Ithaca, his troubles still went on.

The man was friendless. All the gods took pity,
except Poseidon's anger never ended
until Odysseus was back at home.
But now the distant Ethiopians,
who live between the sunset and the dawn,
were worshipping the Sea God with a feast,
a hundred cattle and a hundred rams.
There sat the god, delighting in his banquet.
The other gods were gathered on Olympus,
in Father Zeus' palace. He was thinking
of fine, well-born Aegisthus, who was killed
by Agamemnon's famous son Orestes.
He told the deathless gods,

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"This is absurd,
that mortals blame the gods! They say we cause
their suffering, but they themselves increase it
by folly. So Aegisthus overstepped:
he took the legal wife of Agamemnon,
then killed the husband when he came back home,
although he knew that it would doom them all.
We gods had warned Aegisthus; we sent down
perceptive Hermes, who flashed into sight
and told him not to murder Agamemnon
or court his wife, Orestes would grow up
and come back to his home to take revenge.
Aegisthus would not hear that good advice.
But now his death has paid all debts."

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Athena
looked at him steadily and answered, "Father,
he did deserve to die. Bring death to all
who act like him! But I am agonizing
about Odysseus and his bad luck.
For too long he has suffered, with no friends,

R Fitzgerald
Book One

A GODDESS INTERVENES

Scene set
suitors
Athena → Telam.
Hermes → Od. put an hold

LINES 1-15

Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story
of that man skilled in all ways of contending,
the wanderer harried for years on end,
after he plundered the stronghold
on the proud height of Troy.

put thought
in H's mind

He saw the townlands
and learned the minds of many distant men,
and weathered many bitter nights and days
in his deep heart at sea, while he fought only
to save his life, to bring his shipmates home.
But not by will nor valor could he save them,
for their own recklessness destroyed them all—
children and fools, they killed and feasted on
the cattle of Lord Hélios, the Sun,
and he who moves all day through heaven
took from their eyes the dawn of their return.

Of these adventures, Muse, daughter of Zeus,
tell us in our time, lift the great song again.
Begin when all the rest who left behind them
headlong death in battle or at sea
had long ago returned, while he alone still hungered
for home and wife. Her ladyship Kalypso
clung to him in her sea-hollowed caves—
a nymph, immortal and most beautiful,
who craved him for her own.

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BOOK ONE A Goddess Intervenes

And when long years and seasons
wheeling brought around that point of time
ordained for him to make his passage homeward,
trials and dangers, even so, attended him
even in Ithaka, near those he loved.
Yet all the gods had pitied Lord Odysseus,
all but Poseidon, raging cold and rough
against the brave king till he came ashore
at last on his own land.

But now that god
had gone far off among the sunburnt races,
most remote of men, at earth's two verges,
in sunset lands and lands of the rising sun,
to be regaled by smoke of thighbones burning,
haunches of rams and bulls, a hundred fold.
He lingered delighted at the banquet side.

In the bright hall of Zeus upon Olympos
the other gods were all at home, and Zeus,
the father of gods and men, made conversation.
For he had meditated on Aigísthos, dead
by the hand of Agamémnon's son, Orestés,
and spoke his thought aloud before them all:

"My word, how mortals take the gods to task!
All their afflictions come from us, we hear.
And what of their own failings? Greed and folly
double the suffering in the lot of man.
See how Aigísthos, for his double portion,
stole Agamémnon's wife and killed the soldier
on his homecoming day. And yet Aigísthos
knew that his own doom lay in this. We gods
had warned him, sent down Hermés Argeiphontés,
our most observant courier, to say:
'Don't kill the man, don't touch his wife,
or face a reckoning with Orestés
the day he comes of age and wants his patrimony.'
Friendly advice—but would Aigísthos take it?
Now he has paid the reckoning in full."

Fail

BOOK I



R Lattimore

Tell me, Muse, of the man of many ways, who was driven
far journeys, after he had sacked Troy's sacred citadel.
Many were they whose cities he saw, whose minds he learned of,
many the pains he suffered in his spirit on the wide sea,
5 struggling for his own life and the homecoming of his companions.
Even so he could not save his companions, hard though
he strove to; they were destroyed by their own wild recklessness,
fools, who devoured the oxen of Helios, the Sun God,
and he took away the day of their homecoming. From some point
10 here, goddess, daughter of Zeus, speak, and begin our story.
Then all the others, as many as fled sheer destruction,
were at home now, having escaped the sea and the fighting.
This one alone, longing for his wife and his homecoming,
was detained by the queenly nymph Kalypso, bright among goddesses,
15 in her hollowed caverns, desiring that he should be her husband.
But when in the circling of the years that very year came
in which the gods had spun for him his time of homecoming
to Ithaka, not even then was he free of his trials
nor among his own people. But all the gods pitied him
20 except Poseidon; he remained relentlessly angry
with godlike Odysseus, until his return to his own country.
But Poseidon was gone now to visit the far Aithiopians,
Aithiopians, most distant of men, who live divided,
some at the setting of Hyperion, some at his rising,

25 to receive a hecatomb of bulls and rams. There
he sat at the feast and took his pleasure. Meanwhile the other
Olympian gods were gathered together in the halls of Zeus.
First among them to speak was the father of gods and mortals,
for he was thinking in his heart of stately Aigisthos,
30 whom Orestes, Agamemnon's far-famed son, had murdered.
Remembering him he spoke now before the immortals:
'Oh for shame, how the mortals put the blame upon us
gods, for they say evils come from us, but it is they, rather,
who by their own recklessness win sorrow beyond what is given,
35 as now lately, beyond what was given, Aigisthos married
the wife of Atreus' son, and murdered him on his homecoming,
though he knew it was sheer destruction, for we ourselves had told him,
sending Hermes, the mighty watcher, Argeiphontes,
not to kill the man, nor court his lady for marriage;— Penelope
40 for vengeance would come on him from Orestes, son of Atreides,
whenever he came of age and longed for his own country.
So Hermes told him, but for all his kind intention he could not
persuade the mind of Aigisthos. And now he has paid for everything.'
Then in turn the goddess gray-eyed Athene answered him:
45 'Son of Kronos, our father, O lordliest of the mighty,
Aigisthos indeed has been struck down in a death well merited.
Let any other man who does thus perish as he did.
But the heart in me is torn for the sake of wise Odysseus,
unhappy man, who still, far from his friends, is suffering
50 griefs, on the sea-washed island, the navel of all the waters,
a wooded island, and there a goddess has made her dwelling place;
she is daughter of malignant Atlas, who has discovered
all the depths of the sea, and himself sustains the towering
columns which braeket earth and sky and hold them together.
55 This is his daughter; she detains the grieving, unhappy
man, and ever with soft and flattering words she works to
charm him to forget Ithaka; and yet Odysseus,
straining to get sight of the very smoke uprising
from his own country, longs to die. But you, Olympian,
60 the heart in you is heedless of him. Did not Odysseus
do you grace by the ships of the Argives, making sacrifice
in wide Troy? Why, Zeus, are you now so harsh with him?'
Then in turn Zeus who gathers the clouds made answer:

A. T. Murray
1919

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΙΑ

A

Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσεν
πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον¹ ἔγνω,
πολλὰ δ' ὃ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ἃν κατὰ θυμόν,
ἀρνύμενος ἣν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων. 5
ἄλλ' οὐδ' ὡς ἐτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἰέμενός περ·
αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἥελίοιο
ἦσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἡμῶν.
τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπέ καὶ ἡμῖν. 10
Ἔνθ' ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες, ὅσοι φύγον αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον,
οἴκοι ἔσαν, πόλεμόν τε πεφηνγότες ἠδὲ θάλασσαν
τὸν δ' οἶον νόστου κεχρημένον ἠδὲ γυναικὸς
νύμφη πότνι ἔρυκε Καλυψὼ δια θεάων
ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι, λιλαιομένη πόσιν εἶναι. 15
ἄλλ' ὅτε δὴ ἔτος ἦλθε περιπλομένων ἐνιαυτῶν,
τῷ οἱ ἐπεκλώσαντο θεοὶ οἰκόνδε νέεσθαι
εἰς Ἴθάκην, οὐδ' ἔνθα πεφυγμένος ἦεν ἀέθλων
καὶ μετὰ οἴσι φίλοισι. θεοὶ δ' ἐλέαιρον ἅπαντες

¹ νόον : νόμον Zenodotus.

THE ODYSSEY

BOOK I

TELL me, O Muse, of the man of many devices, who wandered full many ways after he had sacked the sacred citadel of Troy. Many were the men whose cities he saw and whose mind he learned, aye, and many the woes he suffered in his heart upon the sea, seeking to win his own life and the return of his comrades. Yet even so he saved not his comrades, though he desired it sore, for through their own blind folly they perished—fools, who devoured the kine of Helios Hyperion; but he took from them the day of their returning. Of these things, goddess, daughter of Zeus, beginning where thou wilt, tell thou even unto us.

Now all the rest, as many as had escaped sheer destruction, were at home, safe from both war and sea, but Odysseus alone, filled with longing for his return and for his wife, did the queenly nymph Calypso, that bright goddess, keep back in her hollow caves, yearning that he should be her husband. But when, as the seasons revolved, the year came in which the gods had ordained that he should return home to Ithaca, not even there was he free from toils, even among his own folk. And all the gods

νόσφι Ποσειδάωνος· ὁ δ' ἄσπερχές μενέαιεν
ἀντιθέφ' Ὀδυσῆι πάρος ἦν γαίαν ἰκέσθαι. 20

Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν Αἰθίοπας μετεκίαθε τηλόθ' ἔοντας,
Αἰθίοπας τοὶ διχθὰ δεδαίταται, ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν,
οἱ μὲν δυσομένου Ὑπερίονος οἱ δ' ἀνιόντος,
ἀντιῶν ταύρων τε καὶ ἀρνεῶν ἑκατόμβης. 25
ἔνθ' ὃ γ' ἐτέρπετο δαυτὶ παρήμενος· οἱ δὲ δὴ ἄλλοι
Ζηνὸς ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν Ὀλυμπίου ἀθρόοι ἦσαν.
τοῖσι δὲ μύθων ἦρχε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε·
μνήσατο γὰρ κατὰ θυμὸν ἀμύμονος Αἰγίσθοιο,
τόν ῥ' Ἀγαμεμνονίδης τηλεκλυτὸς ἔκταν' Ὀρέστης· 30
τοῦ ὃ γ' ἐπιμνησθεῖς ἔπε' ἀθανάτοισι μετηύδα·

“ὦ πόποι, οἶον δὴ νῦν θεοὺς βροτοὶ αἰτιῶνται·
ἐξ ἡμέων γὰρ φασὶ κάκ' ἔμμεναι, οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ
σφήσιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὑπὲρ μόρον ἄλγε' ἔχουσι,
ὡς καὶ νῦν Αἰγίσθος ὑπὲρ μόρον Ἀτρεΐδαο 35
γῆμ' ἄλοχον μνηστήν, τὸν δ' ἔκτανε νοστήσαντα,
εἰδῶς αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον, ἐπεὶ πρό οἱ εἶπομεν ἡμεῖς,
Ἑρμείαν πέμψαντες, εὐσκοπον ἀργεῖφόντην,
μήτ' αὐτὸν κτείνειν μήτε μνάσθαι ἄκοιτιν·
ἐκ γὰρ Ὀρέσταο τίσις ἔσσεται Ἀτρεΐδαο, 40
ὀππότ' ἂν ἠβήσῃ τε καὶ ἦς ἰμείρεται¹ αἴης.
ὡς ἔφαθ' Ἑρμείας, ἀλλ' οὐ φρένας Αἰγίσθοιο
πεῖθ' ἀγαθὰ φρονέων· νῦν δ' ἀθρόα πάντ' ἀπέτισεν.”

¹ ἰμείρεται: ἐπιβήσεται.

¹ It seems best to regard this epithet, for purposes of translation, as a proper name. The word doubtless means

pitted him save Poseidon; but he continued to rage unceasingly against godlike Odysseus until at length he reached his own land.

Howbeit Poseidon had gone among the far-off Ethiopians—the Ethiopians who dwell sundered in twain, the farthestmost of men, some where Hyperion sets and some where he rises, there to receive a hecatomb of bulls and rams, and there he was taking his joy, sitting at the feast; but the other gods were gathered together in the halls of Olympian Zeus. Among them the father of gods and men was first to speak, for in his heart he thought of noble Aegisthus, whom far-famed Orestes, Agamemnon's son, had slain. Thinking on him he spoke among the immortals, and said:

“Look you now, how ready mortals are to blame the gods. It is from us, they say, that evils come, but they even of themselves, through their own blind folly, have sorrows beyond that which is ordained. Even as now Aegisthus, beyond that which was ordained, took to himself the wedded wife of the son of Atreus, and slew him on his return, though well he knew of sheer destruction, seeing that we spake to him before, sending Hermes, the keen-sighted Argeiphontes,¹ that he should neither slay the man nor woo his wife; for from Orestes shall come vengeance for the son of Atreus when once he has come to manhood and longs for his own land. So Hermes spoke, but for all his good intent he prevailed not upon the heart of Aegisthus; and now he has paid the full price of all.”

“the swift appearer” (root φαν). The rendering “slayer of Argus” (root φεν) is inadmissible, as there is no trace of the Argus-myth in Homer.