

The Odyssey

Books 1-8

Homer prays to the Muse to help tell story of Odysseus.
Odysseus leaves Troy (10 yr. war)
7 years w/ Calypso on her island. Builds a raft; washes up
on Phaeacia.
King Alcinous asks him to tell his story.

Book 9

Odysseus tells Alcinous that he is Odysseus, Laertes' son,
and begins story.

1st Island:

(Cicones) Odysseus and men raid and attack, but they are
driven back to their ships.
Lost 72 men.

2nd island:

(Lotus Eaters) All the people of the island eat this
flower. 3 of O's men meet the natives, eat the flowers,
and become addicted. O has to tie them up and make them go
back to the ships.

3rd island:

(Cyclopes) O takes 12 men to a cave belonging to
Polyphemus. They are trapped inside and P eats 6 alive.
They get him drunk and poke his eye out, then hide under
the rams to get out. They steal his flock and O has to
brag and yell back to him to tell him who outsmarted him.
P. prays to his father Poseidon to make sure O pays for
what he's done.

4th island: p. 916

Aelous (King of the Winds) They stay there for 1 month.
King Aelous gives them a West wind to take them to Ithaca,
and a bag of "bad" wind. When is sight of Ithaca and O is
asleep, the men open the bag and they are blown all the way
back to Aelous. He refused to help them again.

5th island (Laestrygones) Cannibals who eat all but 45 men
and destroy all but 1 ship.

6th island :p. 918

Circe's island (Aeaea) - Eurylochus takes half of men to
explore the island- rest stay with Odysseus on shore.
Eurylocus and his men see wild animals that look at them
hungrily but won't attack, and then see a beautiful woman

singing and weaving(Circe). She gives them poisoned food that turns them into pigs. Eurylochus is the only one that won't eat, so he runs back to tell O. O decides to go by himself to get the men back! Hermes gives O "moley" to keep him from turning. Odysseus goes in and eats and drinks, but doesn't turn, and Circe is impressed. She turns his men back. O goes to get the men still on the beach, and Eurylochus speaks harshly about O's judgement, asking them to remember how things went at the Cyclop's cave. O wants to kill him, but decides to leave him and takes the rest back to Circe's to be pampered- Eurylochus does follow too. They stay for a year, then the men realize they need to be going, and Circe tells O that the only way home is to travel to Hades and see a blind prophet, Tiresias of Thebes. O is depressed because he thinks this means death.

Book 11

Hades -"The Land of the Dead"

Odysseus and his crew visit Tiresias. He tells them what they must do to return home safely. O sees his mother- finds out she is dead- she died of grief while he has been away from home. They all leave and go back to Circe to tell her what Tiresias said and to get advice. She warns them of these things:

the Sirens and how to escape them by putting beeswax in the sailors' ears and having them tie O up to the mast, Scylla(6- headed sea monster with 8 tentacles), and Charybdis (whirlpool that swallows ocean and throws it back up 3X per day).

After they pass these they will get to Trinacia, the island of Helios(the Sun God).They are not to touch his cattle, for if they do they will all die and O alone will survive, but with no ship.

Book 12

All goes as Circe has foretold. Scylla eats 6 men, but the rest on the ship are able to keep from being swallowed by Charybdis. On Trinacia, the men eat the cattle of Lord Helios, the Sun God, so Helios gets Zeus to throw a thunderbolt and destroy the ship. Odysseus alone survives and washes up on Ogygia, Calypso's island. She keeps him for 7 years, then lets him build a raft. He washes up on Alcinous's island, Phaeacia, and now he is done telling his story in 1st person.

Homer's 3rd person narrative:

Alcinous sends Odysseus on a ship to Ithaca, his homeland. Athena disguises him as a beggar and tells him that there

are over 100 suitors that have overrun his home. He meets his son, Telemachus, and enlists his help. Still dressed as a beggar, he goes to "scout" the situation at the house. Penelope has decided THAT DAY to have a contest to see who can string Odysseus' bow and shoot an arrow through a line of axehandles. The winner gets to marry her. All try, but none are able to even string the bow.

Antinous (Jerk #1) makes fun of O.

Eurymachus (Jerk #2) is humiliated because he is made to look as weak as a child when he tries to string O's bow. Odysseus gets his loyal swineherd (Eumaeus) and cowherd (Philoetious) to help him against the suitors. He goes back in and asks to try the bow. They all laugh at him. Eumaeus tells the maid, Eurycleia to lock all the women in their rooms.

He easily strings the bow and shoots it through. Then he shoots Antinous through the throat. He tells the men that he is Odysseus and he will now kill them all. Eurymachus says that it was Antinous' idea, not theirs, but Odysseus kills him and begins shooting arrows at the suitors. Telemachus and the 2 loyal servants get armor and weapons and help him kill every last one.

Athena gives Odysseus an extreme makeover. Although he looks great, Penelope is unsure if this is really her husband. O is frustrated that she isn't in his arms immediately. She explains that she is afraid of being deceived and asks the maid Eurycleia to move the bed outside of the bedroom for him to sleep on. This was a test. Their bed CANNOT be moved without cutting down the tree it is attached to, and O gets mad and tells how he made the bed. Since this is "their secret" she knows he REALLY IS Odysseus and falls into his arms-- they lived happily ever after.