

The Odyssey Poem

After 10 long years of the Trojan war,
Odysseus' return home became a bit of a chore,
With his men for company, nobody knew
They'd fight monsters and people and a sorceress too,
He's very resourceful and of a deceitful nature,
And will offer Xenia as a normal gesture.
First we begin as they leave Troy,
Odysseus, accompanied by his loyal convoy...

Odysseus schemed and came up with the horse,
They entered the city without using force,
Gratefully received by the Trojans they were,
Even more so than the Wise Man's myrrh.
The Trojans partied and celebrated all night,
For they believed it to be the end of the fight,
They all passed out from having too much to drink,
Out the Greeks came and killed them in a blink.
Once the mission was completed and all Trojans were dead,
"It's time to go home" all the Greeks said,
So they returned to their ships and started enroute,
After winning the decade long Mediterranean dispute.

They arrived at Ismaros, the Ciconian land,
To gather food and drink as originally planned.
Neither Odysseus nor his men could have resisted the raid,
And their greedy qualities were ultimately displayed,
All the food and the water and the Gold pieces too,
The Olympians were watching and support they withdrew,
They were quite frankly disgusted and ashamed of our hero,
Their total respect amounted to zero,
Historians argue that this wasn't wise
And the reason his men began to drop like flies,
They departed the land as immortal favour teeters,
Next stop? The land of the Lotus eaters...

They moored the ship on the island's shore,
Uncertain of the land having never been before,
Odysseus sent men to find signs of life,
Concentrating on returning to Penelope, his wife.
Puzzled as to why they did not return,
Odysseus began to gain concern,
He ventured across the land to find his men,
Before he found them sitting with about ten,
Lotus flowers, their mouths were full,
They were becoming dizzy and started to lull.
They had no desire to leave this land,
Odysseus decided he would not stand,

For such laziness when they'd come so far,
To return to Ithaca with his vital scar,
He dragged them back to the boat and shore,
Never to come back, of that they were sure.
Once he'd struggled and strained to get his way,
Odysseus didn't want to go astray,
So they set sail once more, hoping to get home,
Travelling the sea which continued to foam...

Again they found land and pulled up towards it,
Returning to Ithaca, they continued to commit,
They pondered as to what lay across the water,
(For Penelope, the thought of husband continued to haunt her)
They agreed to investigate the very next day,
After listening to what Odysseus had to say.
He told them to feast and get in some sleep,
From the faraway island they thought they heard sheep,
To rest, they lay down in the comfortable sand,
Dreaming of what lived on the distant land.
Once they were awake, they set out across the sea,
Do you know what lived there? Because it beats me!
The boat was then docked and they arrived at a cave,
Disagreeing about how it's inhabitants would behave,
It was surprisingly organised with pens, whey and cheese,
Odysseus' men began to take as they'd please,
They wished to see who or what lived there,
To thank them for being willing to share.
But then, all of a sudden, some sheep ran in,
Alongside an enormous monster, wearing animal skin.
He heaved the great stone that acted as a door,
Each time he took a step, he shook the floor.
Odysseus told his men to stay out of sight,
For, with a giant like this, they stood no chance in a fight,
He sat down on his rocks and began to milk the sheep,
The men decided to wait until he fell asleep.
At least that was until some blew their covers,
And the rest began to scream for their mothers,
Because the one-eyed monster rose and demanded they tell,
"Who are you humans standing near my doorbell?,
I am Polyphemus, son of the lord of the seas,
And I want to know why you have eaten my cheese!"
Odysseus replied "We are Greeks from Troy,
And we came to see if you were a girl or a boy,
We've travelled quite a distance and ask for shelter,
We'll tell you our tale, I assure you it's a belter."
The Cyclops agreed and assured them they would remain unharmed,
Before picking two up and the rest were alarmed,
He guzzled the two down and decided to wait,

For the daylight to come, (accompanied by fate).
He took his flocks out the very next day,
And moved the great rock so he could he say,
That he'd have 2 more humans for his dinner that night,
As Odysseus and his crew remained in a plight.
They just had to sit it out and stay in his dark cave,
The crew began to rant and rave,
About how they ended up with the beast in the first place,
Odysseus put on his scheming face,
He thought and he thought and devised a great plan,
Designed to fool the one eyed man.
They'd get the brute drunk with Odysseus' fine wine,
And stab him in the liver and through to his spine.
But then, Odysseus realised his great plan's main flaw,
How would they move the boulder that acted as a door?
It was back to the drawing board before Odysseus had it,
"I've got it!" he said "but we cannot quit,
We cannot kill him or else we'll starve in here,
But for it to work, we must wait for him to appear
Fetch me his club and we'll make it sharper,
And if we hear him coming, we must scarper!
Once he's asleep we'll heat it on the fire,
When it reaches the right point, we'll lift it up higher,
And stab the brute in the eye to blind him,
As for me, I'll use a pseudonym".
That was that, the plan was set,
They just had to wait, for Polyphemus hadn't arrived yet.
When the monster returned with all of his flocks,
Odysseus and his men trembled in their socks.
Again the Cyclops ate another two men,
Odysseus stepped out and then,
Offered the creature the powerful wine,
That originated from the grape vine.
He asked who they were and Odysseus replied,
"I am Nobody, Polyphemus the one eyed".
He thanked the mortals for their thoughtful gift,
And the mood in the cave began to shift,
He didn't dilute and drained it in one go,
As his fire continued to burn and glow,
Within minutes he was lying asleep,
The only sounds came from his sheep,
Odysseus held the club to the fire,
And just as planned lifted it higher,
They forced it into his forehead, where his one eye lay,
Before he screamed and started to say,
"What causes this pain that means I cannot see,
Other Cyclops' please come and help me!"
The others rushed from their mountaintop cave,

To see what was causing Polyphemus to rave.
They asked him what was wrong and why he screams,
“Nobody is blinding me” he said and the Cyclops’ returned to their dreams.
Daylight came and Polyphemus was enraged,
Like an unfed lion who had long been caged.
He felt the sheep as they passed him by,
And once more Odysseus could see the light blue sky.
Clinging to the bellies of the enormous rams,
And going unnoticed amongst the lambs.
They ran to their ship and set out to the sea,
However, Odysseus began to taunt the beastly,
Cannibal who ate their friends,
He declared that they would be avenged.
He said “If anybody asks how you lost your sight,
Tell them it was Odysseus who put up a fight,
King of Ithaca, now I will return home,
Venturing the sea that continues to foam!”
The Cyclops just stood and let out a gasp,
And picked up a Boulder in a single grasp.
He launched it as far as he could,
He couldn’t do anything else, so he just stood,
He shouted “Long ago I was told that I’d become blind,
By the hands of Odysseus, the fine details were outlined!
It was Telemus who told me so,
And I pray to my father that you won’t go,
Home for years and years to come,
Curse you Odysseus, for I have been dumb,
You will suffer at Poseidon’s hands,
And will have to stop at many lands!”
The ship eventually was too far out,
For the crew to hear the Cyclops shout.
They celebrated their daring escape,
And vowed to thank the wine’s sweet grape.
They left Polyphemus having been cursed,
Someone else who hated them, it wasn’t a first,
They continued to sail across Poseidon’s wave,
And mourned for those they could not save.
They noticed the wind began to get stronger,
Catching sight of Aeolia, their journey was becoming longer...

The land of Aeolus, they had found,
The blowing of winds was the only sound,
They found him feasting with his family there,
All of the food they were prepared to share.
Odysseus asked for help to get home,
And he and Aeolus talked on their own,
Aeolus gave him some winds in a bag,
Before turning away to light his new fag,

Odysseus was grateful and thanked him for the gift,
Over his shoulder he began to lift,
The heavy sack that provided a solution,
It was a shortcut to a sailing revolution.
The crew waited for their master to fall asleep,
And opened the sack that looked rather cheap,
The winds were released and the ship blown off course,
Odysseus, the creator of the Trojan Horse,
Was furious with his stupid crew,
And back to Aeolia which was still in view,
The men had to return and ask for more help,
At the sight of them, Aeolus just started to yelp.
He asked why they returned when he sent them away,
“My crew opened the sack” Odysseus did say.
Aeolus was furious and banished them from his land,
Odysseus and crew returned to the sand,
They set off once more and this time arrived,
At the Laestrygonians, mourning for their friends who hadn't survived...

After suffering damage as the furious winds stormed,
They found a harbour, around which ships swarmed,
The remains of his fleet all sailed in,
Odysseus thought about it in his cabin.
He said “No, stay outside, just in case,
We once again meet danger, face to face!”
The crew continued to do as they were told,
For if they did not, Odysseus would scold,
Them for causing problems galore,
Because Odysseus could do with little more.
He climbed up the rocks to get a good view,
Where had they arrived? They hadn't got a clue!
He saw some smoke, that meant life,
Desperate to return home to his wife.
“Civilised or not we will find out who they are,
Friendly or hostile, ordinary or bizarre!”
The crew began to object and understandably so,
“What happened at the Cyclops? We know you know!”
But Odysseus wasn't listening, he'd turned his head,
“Three of you will investigate and find them,” he said.
The three watchmen on travels came across a young girl,
With very strong abs, she was as beautiful as a Pearl.
They asked “Who or what lives here? What are their names?”,
She pointed towards a high up cave, the source of flames,
They entered the palace and could only see,
An enormous woman, who'd left no food for me!
Sitting on a chair that was apparently a throne,
Decorated with skulls and the odd funny bone.
The wife of Antiphates, that's who she was,

And she called on her dear husband because,
She'd never seen these people before,
His head just missed the top of the door,
He launched himself on top of one of the crew,
And at once the king started to chew,
The others fled and ran back the ships,
Chased by Laestrygonians, licking their lips.
The cannibals lifted their great big stones,
Complaining about having no flesh or bones,
They were hitting the vessels in the circular docks,
But Odysseus' ship didn't take any knocks,
Due to the fact the monsters couldn't see it,
And as a result, no boulders hit,
The black merchant vessel parked outside,
They'd tricked Antiphates and his enormous bride!
He yelled at the men that they were fools not to row,
And that they were travelling far too slow.
Yet again they'd escaped the clutches of death,
And sailed away having held their breath,
For a very long time as the cannibals ate,
More and more men, about twenty eight,
They found another island home to a witch,
With knowledge of spells she was most certainly rich.

Aeaea was the place at which Circe resided,
And when the men arrived, opinions were divided,
As whether to stay and feast then depart,
Or explore again and with more souls part,
Odysseus set out to find some meat,
And found a great stag with hooves for feet.
It was a very big beast that looked quite impressive,
The way in which Odysseus killed it was rather aggressive.
He took it back to the crew who were still by the ship,
One of them said "Ooh, I'll have the hip!",
They were all astounded at the size of the stag,
And how Odysseus had managed to drag,
Such a creature through woodlands alike,
It seemed that on their side was the Goddess Nike.
All of them ate and had a good time,
The quality of the meat was rather sublime.
Odysseus elected Eurylochus as leader,
To search the island, I ask you reader,
Would you have done the same?
The men found a house, lions and wolves that were tame,
When the animals saw them, they wagged their tails,
Eurylochus was afraid of their many exploration fails.
All of the beasts stood up on two legs,
As if hanging up washing with wooden clothes pegs.

Eurylochus heard singing and saw a marvellous tapestry,
He said to his friends "Listen can you hear it and can you see,
The excellent craftwork that has made the stitches?"
Eurylochus was convinced this was the work of witches.
He was not far off as there was only one,
Magical being that was second to none,
Suddenly, the voice stopped and a woman appeared,
It was the dangers of exploration that Eurylochus feared!
She invited them in and made them some food,
But Eurylochus stayed outside, not meaning to be rude,
But he was convinced it was a trap and they'd lose even more,
Spirits to Hades beneath the floor.
They didn't come out nor made a sound,
Hence Eurylochus was curious and here's what he found,
Circe had turned the men into pigs,
And discovered them rolling in mud and twigs.
They had kept their minds and were crying in pens,
Eurylochus was upset for these were his friends.
He turned and he ran throughout the wood,
He told Odysseus that he should,
Come and see what Circe had done,
And that there were plenty of pigs but of men there were none.
Odysseus was furious at what he was told,
He picked up his gear and decided to be bold.
He set off into the woods and came across a young man,
It was Hermes and as luck would have it, he had a plan!
He told Odysseus to take some of his plant
Over which Circe's powers wouldn't be able to enchant.
The gods called it moly and Odysseus was set,
He went into her home and tried to get,
Circe a ticket to Hades' land,
Instead she said, "Come, take my hand,
You must be Odysseus, so sleep with me,
I've a comfortable bed, I'm sure you'll agree!"
Odysseus demanded his men to be restored
Back to how they were before they were lured,
Into her trap and she reluctantly said,
"Fine take them back, and get out of my bed."
She changed them back and sent them on their way,
Because they were pigs they said "oink!" and not "Neigh!".
The men went back to their ship at the beach,
The others were shocked, so slurred was their speech.
Odysseus explained what had happened to them,
And said that they'd found a hidden gem,
In that they could stay with food and drink,
At Circe's forever and not have to think,
About hunting or killing or harvesting for crops,
And every night they'd have pork chops!

All of the men apart from one,
Decided that they'd stay and have fun,
It was Eurylochus who disagreed,
With the starved crew's amount of greed.
He warned them that they'd be turned into beasts,
Pigs, wolves or lions and they'd be the feasts!
He reminded them of Polyphemus' cave,
And how wreckless Odysseus lost men they could've saved,
By stopping in to get a good look,
At the hungry cyclops who took,
Very good friends who died as a result,
Of Odysseus' actions, it was most certainly his fault!
Odysseus considered chopping off his head,
And admitted he'd slept in Circe's bed.
It was the rest of the crew who restrained our hero,
And so the deaths for that day remained at zero.
Circe offered them her hospitality,
Bathing the party was her speciality.
The men remained at Aeaea for one whole year,
Focused on food not one shed a tear,
Odysseus eventually got on his knees and begged,
And Circe gave advice for the journey ahead,
She told him to visit Hades in Hell,
To consult Tiresias the blinded who'd tell,
Them what they needed to know,
It seemed like a perfect plan although,
Odysseus asked "Circe, tell me, dear,
How am I to navigate my ship to visit the seer?"
She replied "The wind of the North will help you on,
Just sail across the river of Ocean,
You'll come to the infamous Persephone's grove,
But please before you leave will you clean my stove?"
Odysseus knew what he had to do,
He was to venture into the underworld, would you?
They'd meet a branch of the river Styx,
Odysseus, who was full of tricks,
Was to dig a trench a similar size to his arm,
Some quick digging would do him no harm.
He'd offer honey and water, and wine and milk,
And pray to the dead (who were wearing silk),
White barley and meat was next on their list,
To sacrifice to the deceased but there's another twist,
In this lengthy tale of daring deeds,
Tiresias would tell them their needs,
Of what to do and where to go,
Odysseus did finally know,
What he was to do after leaving,
With many of their hearts still grieving.

He gave a motivational speech to his remaining crew,
Circe had left them the ram and the ewe,
That was needed for their gift,
To the seer who'd give them a lift...

Odysseus had to enter the dead's realm alone,
Asking for Tiresias as there was no phone.
He sacrificed the ram and the sheep too,
Fighting off spirits, that was new!
Eventually he found the infamous seer,
When he told him how to get home, he produced a tear.
He was about to leave but turned around,
It was none other than his Mother's spirit, he found.
They greeted each other and took a walk,
To find out how she died, both enjoyed the talk.
Odysseus then said goodbye,
And returns to his journey, provided Tiresias didn't lie!

Circe had warned Odysseus of the Sirens and their tunes,
That caused many to crash, they'd seen their last moons.
Odysseus continued to scheme and to trick,
Beeswax went into the men's ears and it would stick,
That way they'd miss the luring voices,
Of the tempting sirens, they had little choices.
The men tied Odysseus to the ship's mast,
And wouldn't untie him till the island was passed,
No matter how much begging he continued to do,
Because of the beeswax nobody knew.
Yet another triumph under Odysseus' belt,
The beeswax conveniently started to melt.
Next was a challenge of two cliffs and two beasts,
Coming after a year of nothing but feasts...

Scylla and Charybdis were next on the map,
The sails of the ship continued to flap,
The Scylla was a creature with too many heads,
Six to be precise, as it has a neck that spreads,
Over towards the ships that pass,
It takes six people like milk from a glass.
Charybdis is essentially an enormous whirlpool,
So navigation will be a vital tool,
Odysseus had a difficult decision to make,
Would he lose six of his men or would Charybdis take,
All of them, himself and the black ship too,
The cliff by Scylla had to be sailed past, he knew.
However, more deceit and tricks gained Odysseus hero status,
For they threw a lamb and said "Scylla never ate us!"
Scylla went for the lamb instead,

And they passed unharmed as Odysseus led,
His crew to their next place on the list,
He couldn't wait to, by Penelope, be kissed!

The arrived at the land of Helios, God of the sun,
And Odysseus said "let's have some fun!
But be warned, if we harm Helios' cattle,
Returning home will become even more of a battle.
For you will all die and it will take me longer,
To return home and anyway, together we're stronger!"
They all agreed only to eat Circe's food,
Winds were too much, for a month they were in a bad mood,
Because they were unable to leave and set sail once more,
As returning to Ithaca was even more difficult than before.
Odysseus went inland to pray against the odds,
Whilst his men sacrificed cattle to appease the Gods.
When he returned, he was furious at the behaviour of the crew,
He shouted "What had I told you not to do?!"
Helios was angered and the men had to leave,
They ran into a storm and the crew were upheaved,
They were all thrown off and nearly drowned,
The wind sent them back to Scylla and Charybdis' land.
Charybdis ate the whole ship and his men for free,
Whilst Odysseus grabbed onto the branch of a fig tree,
The mast and the keel came back up,
Odysseus was so surprised, he began to hiccup.
He used them to venture the seas once more,
And this time arrived at Calypso's front door...

The island of Ogygia was its name,
Odysseus had never had a journey quite the same!
For a couple of years with Calypso he stayed,
As his return home was further delayed.
Athena decided that this was too much,
So she asked Zeus to free Odysseus with a touch.
Zeus went to Hermes and told him to visit,
The island of Ogygia and he said "Calypso is it?,
Zeus demands that you let Odysseus go,
He's the king of the Gods don't you know?"
She decided to free our well ventured hero,
Who was a much better person than Emperor Nero!
She tried to trick him into staying a bit longer,
But Odysseus knew he had to be stronger,
After she said "Is she more beautiful than me?"
Odysseus replied "My return home is key,
Nobody is more beautiful than you,
But I must get back to Ithaca whatever I do!"
So again he set sail in an attempt to find home,

And even more lands he set out to roam...

After he left Calypso, Poseidon intervened,
And brewed up a storm so Odysseus' life leaned,
Balancing on the edge, as he started to drown,
Before Ino rescued him, King of Ithaca with his crown,
Athena returned to Odysseus' aid,
And appeared to Princess Nautica who with her friends played,
Some ball on the beach when Odysseus was found,
Our hero was almost certainly Ithaca bound,
The princess fell in love and took him to her Dad,
Alcinous wanted Odysseus to be his lad,
And asked him to marry his beautiful girl,
Who compared to a rock, was a beautiful pearl,
A story was told at dinner that night,
About how the Greeks beat the Trojans in a fight.
Odysseus told Alcinous everything about him,
And said that his chances of returning home were slim.
Alcinous was kind and gave him a ship,
To return to his home, to feast and to sip,
Wine at the table with his darling wife,
For Odysseus had a fascinating story of his life,
To tell everybody when he finally got back,
About the lotus eaters, the cyclops and the windy sack.
He thanked Alcinous for his hospitality and gift,
Of a ship that would definitely give him a lift,
To Ithaca after so many years,
Odysseus wiped his joyful tears.
He departed the land after thanking them once more,
His feet, from walking, were very sore,
He could finally see Ithaca from the wooden boat,
He was finally home and began to gloat,
Of everything he'd done in about twenty years,
He imagined Penelope's joyful tears...

He disguised himself as a beggar for a reason or two,
Telemachus, his son, was the only one who knew,
Because Odysseus needed to see if his wife,
Had remained faithful and not given up on their life,
Together, when so many suitors had come,
To take Penelope's hand, she had to pick one.
She picked a challenge in which success rates were low,
The suitors were to string Odysseus' bow,
And fire an arrow at ten targets outside,
Odysseus, as a beggar, continued to hide.
None of the suitors were able to do it,
And none of the targets had actually been hit.
Odysseus went next and was the first who could,

String the bow made from wood,
He succeeded in the task and the suitors were confused,
Then he revealed his identity and how he became bruised.
She explained how they had moved his bed,
And Odysseus abruptly turned and said,
“Nobody could have moved it, not even me,
Because that bed was made from a tree!”
After killing all the suitors, he spoke to his wife,
And presented his scar to end her strife,
Penelope knew her husband was home,
He then went to his bedroom to fetch his comb,
He tidied his hair and returned to the great hall,
He was finally back after having refused to fall,
At the hands of Gods and monsters alike,
On his side must have been the Goddess Nike.
So now we'll leave him at Ithaca in peace,
Odysseus, the greatest hero of Greece!