**Odyssey Notes**

**Sailing from Troy**

Odysseus is formidable for guile in peace and war (a trickster/deceiver against not only foes (lines 1-5)

detained long by Calypso and Circe...but he says "in my heart I never gave consent"...but he mentions home and parents being sweeter....not his wife and child (lines 15-20)

they won the battle, but his men, drunk, allowed fugitives to escape and get help (lines 30-35)

their enemy attacks, drives them away, with many of their men lost (lines 40-50)

They find themselves on island of the Lotus Eaters, and his men who imbibed forgot their mission, didn't want to return home, and Odysseus had to drive them and tie them down to rescue them (lines 75-90)

**The Cyclops**

Cyclops live without community, and treat their wives and children badly (lines 5-10)

One cyclops has a cave filled with rams and goats (lines 10-25)

Odysseus leaves some to guard the ship, and takes his 12 best fighters along with some strong brandy gifted to him by one of the lesser gods (lines 25-45)

They find the Cyclops cave filled with food and domestic animals, and his men ask Odysseus if they can steal it all (lines 45-60)

Odysseus says in retrospect that he should have listened to his men, but he wanted to see if the Cyclops would offer them something more (lines 60-65)

When the Cyclops arrives, he closes the cave mouth with a stone so heavy the men are trapped (lines 75-80)

Cyclops wonders if they are good men or bad, and Odysseus tells him they are war heroes, and that he should serve them as honored guests or Zeus will avenge them(lines 85-110)

Cyclops tells Odysseus he's a fool or thinking Cyclops cared about Zeus (lines 105-115)

When Cyclops asks about their ship, Odysseus lies to protect it and the men there and tells him they were shipwrecked, and in response Cyclops eats two of his men (lines 115-130)

Cyclops falls asleep, and Odysseus almost stabs him but realizes that would trap them in the cave since only the giant Cyclops can move the boulder blocking the entrance (lines 135-140)

Cyclops awakens and eats more men (lines 140-150)

Odysseus prays to Athena for help (lines 155-156)

Cyclops traps them inside with a boulder rolled in front of the door (lines 155-160)

Odysseus and his man create a large stake with a tree branch, which they then hide (lines 160-170)

Odysseus offers Cyclops wine after Cyclops eats two more of his men, in effort to get him to sleep soundly (lines 185-195)

Cyclops gets drunk (lines 200-205)

Odysseus tells Cyclops his name is "Nohbdy" and Cyclops tells him he will eat "Nohbdy" after he eats all his friends (lines 205-210)

Odysseus and his men make the stake red hot in the fire and take out the Cyclops' eye with it (lines 210-230)

Other Cyclops come to help when they hear Polyphemus screaming (lines 240-245)

When Polyphemus tells them "nohbdy" hurt him, they reason that they can do nothing about pain sent by Gods, so they advise him to pray to their father Poseidon and leave (lines 245-260)

Cyclops opens the door and waits for them to try and escape (lines 260-265)

Odysseus comes up with a trick to let them escape, and ties three rams together at a tie, and ties a man under each middle ram so that Polyphemus will only feel sheep leaving (lines 265-310)

Odysseus and his men load Cyclops sheep onto their ship (lines 310-320)

Odysseus taunts Cyclops who tosses a giant boulder at their ship (lines 320-330)

Odysseus' men scold him for endangering them further with his taunts (lines 330-345)

But Odysseus can't resist further taunting the Cyclops, and boasts to Cyclops his real name and where he lives (lines 345-355)

Polyphemus prays to Poseidon that Odysseus will never make it home, and that he lose all his friends along the way (lines 370-385)

Odysseus make an offering to Zeus of the best ram, but Zeus has no regard for the offering and decrees that Odysseus will have great trouble making it home (lines 385-410)

**Circe**

The wind King Aeolus gives Odysseus a bag filled with all "contrary" winds (winds that might blow them off course) trapped; but Odysseus' men, believing the bag was filled with gold, open it and they are blown all the way back to Aeolus, who refuses to help them a second time, believing them cursed (which of course they are).

They land on an island of man-eating giants, and every ship except Odysseus' is destroyed with those men killed.

They come to Circe's island; Eurylochus and a handful of men go to investigate, and find a stone house with tame wolves and mountain lions guarding the door. Eurylochus hides to see what will happen and watches as Circe turns the other men into pigs with a magic potion in the wine she offers them; Eurylochus goes to tell Odysseus, who leaves the ship to rescue his men. On his way to Circe, Hermes the messenger god gives Odysseus a magic antidote.

Circe welcomes Odysseus, and tries to poison him with the magic wine, which fails since Odysseus has had the antidote (lines 1-15)

Odysseus threatens Circe with a knife to her throat, and she realizes who he is, because she was told Odysseus would arrive on her island after the Trojan war (lines 15-30)

Circe proposes they become lovers and earn each other's trust that way (lines 30-35)

Odysseus refuses, unless she promises no more harm shall come to him; she promises, and then Odysseus enjoys her "flawless bed of love " (lines 35-45)

Circe has her nymphs wait on him and treat him like a king, but he feels oppressed and can't enjoy it (lines 45-70)

Odysseus tells Circe he can't enjoy the food and drink until his shipmates are set free and join them at the table (lines 80-85)

 Circe transforms the men back, and gives them new height, youth, and handsome appearances (lines 85-95)

Circe invites Odysseus to bring the rest of his man, beach his ship, and stay awhile as her lover...Odysseus excuse: "Now being a man, I could not help consenting"(lines 100-105)

(so much for Penelope waiting faithfully at home ;)

Eurylochus, ever cautious, warns Odysseus and the men that they will all be turned into animals (lines 125-130)

Eurylochus blames Odysseus for the deaths of the men at the Cyclops and at the island of giants, and Odysseus is so enraged he wants to kill him; but the rest of the men talk him out of it (lines 125-145)

Circe tells Odysseus she understands his suffering and that he should rest with her and recover and again Odysseus' excuse is "as we were men, we could not help consenting"(lines 150-170)

They stay longer than a year, and finally his men remind him they still need to get home to Ithaca (lines 165-175)

Odysseus begs Circe to help him leave for Ithaca (lines 180-190)

Circe says he must first go to the land of the dead (Hades) to hear a prophecy from Tiresias, a blind prophet who Persephone (goddess of the underworld) had allowed to retain his reason, unlike the rest of the dead (lines 190-205)

Odysseus is terrified at the thought of Hades, because no man had ever come back from the land of the dead, but Circe gives him instructions designed to help him. (lines 200-210)

**The Sirens**

Odysseus goes to Hades and visits Tiresias, who tells him he will only make it home safely if he and his men don't raid Helios' (sun god) prized cattle when they land there; if they do, the trip home will take MUCH longer, none of Odysseus men will make it home, and when Odysseus returns no one will know him in his own kingdom. Tiresias also tells him that he must sacrifice to Poseidon when he returns to Ithaca to regain the god's favor. They return to Circe.

Circe wines and dines them, and tells them they can sail for home the next day after she gives them detailed directions for their protection (lines 1-20)

Circe warns of the Sirens who sing of beauty and kill the men drawn to them, their bones and skins in piles around their feet. She tells him to plug his mens' ears with wax, but that if he alone wants to hear their singing, he can have his men tie him securely to the mast so he can't escape to follow the siren's call (lines 20-45)

Circe warns of dangerous rocks (lines 45-50)

Circe warns of the 6 headed monster Scylla, who takes one man for each head from every ship that passes (lines 50-95)

And another monster lurks nearby, Charybdis, a monster whirlpool with teeth (lines 95-105) and Circe tells them since they must pass one or the other, to steer the ship closer to Scylla since better to lose 6 men than the entire ship (95-100)

Odysseus wants a way to fight Scylla, but since Scylla is immortal, Circe says the only choice is to pass quickly and only lose 6 men, instead of staying to fight and losing more(lines 105-115)

After they pass Scylla and Charybdis, they will come to the island with Helios cattle, guarded by 2 of his daughters. Circe says to keep moving and don't anger Helios by trying to steal from him. Circe says if they try to steal the cattle, Odysseus will not see home for many years and all his men will die before reaching home (lines 120-135)

Odysseus decides to tell his men what he learned from Circe, but he doesn't tell them all...only the part about the Sirens (lines 135-170)

Odysseus and his men prepare to pass the sirens (lines 170-185)

The sirens sing of resting with them, and of their battle at Troy (lines 185-210)

Odysseus hears their song and wants to be freed to follow them, but his men keep him bound until they pass the danger (lines 215-225)

**Scylla and Charybdis**

Odysseus encourages his fearful men by telling them to obey him and they'll be fine because they've been in equally bad situations before (1-25)

Odysseus forgets Circe warned him to not use weapons (lines 25-40)

Scylla takes 6 men (lines 40-55)

They pass the two monsters after losing 6 men (lines 55-60)

**Helios Cattle (p. 769)**

Odysseus and men know they shouldn't steal Helios prized cattle, but when they run out of supplies, one of the men encourages the others to kill one of the cattle for food....as punishment, the ship is destroyed, and all the men die except Odysseus, who is saved on a raft, and eventually makes it to Calypso's island.

**The Homecoming: Father and Son**

Odysseus has been disguised by Athena when he lands in Ithaca, and Athena tells him to tell his son Telemachus the truth and reveal himself, and to share that together they will bring doom to Penelope's "suitors" with Athena's help, since she is restless for a battle. (lines 1-19)

When Telemachus sees Odysseus transformed by Athena, he thinks Odysseus is a god, but Odysseus tells his son who he really is (lines 30-39)

Telemachus thinks Odysseus is ling and the gods are toying with him (lines 40-49)

Odysseus scolds his son for not acting "princely" and for being so confused (lines 50-64)

Telemachus finally believes and weeps at the return of the father he'd never met (lines 65-70)

Odysseus wants his son to count the suitors so they can decide if the two of them can handle them all or if they will need help (lines 85-90)

**The Homecoming: The Beggar at the Manor**

The suitors had planned to kill Telemachus, but failed.

Odysseus, disguised as an old beggar by Athena, goes into his palace and asks the suitors for food to see how they will treat him.

One of the suitors brags about how they don't worry about food since they're only wasting someone else's provisions, but he wont share with the "beggar" regardless (lines 1-10)

Odysseus scolds him (lines 10-15)

The suitor, angry at the beggar, throws a chair at him and hits him in the shoulder(lines 15-25)

Another suitor scolds the first for being so rude, and reminds him that gods sometimes travel in disguise (lines 45-50)

Telemachus, Penelope, and the housekeeper complain about the suitors(lines 50-70)

Penelope wants to speak to the "beggar" in case he has news about Odysseus (lines 70-80)

**The Homecoming: The Test of the Bow**

Penelope speaks with disguised Odysseus, tells him that to keep peace she must choose a suitor but doesn't want to, so she decides on a nearly impossible task (to win her hand, a man must string Odysseus bow, which was famously hard to string, then shoot an arrow through a hole in a line of axe heads----then Penelope prays to Artemis, goddess of chastity and hunting, to prevent he being forced to marry another man.

Odysseus and Telemachus remove the suitors weapons quietly, and have friends lock the doors to prevent escape.

Odysseus, still disguised, makes a show of stringing the bow and uses it to sound a single musical note, which gets the suitors attention and worry (Lines 1-20)

Zeus sends a sign, Odysseus aims and shoots cleanly through the axe heads (lines 25-35\_

**The Homecoming: Death in the Great Hall**

Odysseus kills Antinous, the man who threw the chair at him and the apparent ringleader of the suitors, in what is clearly not a fair fight...the man was unsuspecting, drinking wine from a golden cup and living the high life on Odysseus' money when the arrow is buried in his neck up to the feathers (lines 1-20)

 The other men look for their weapons, realize they are not there, but continue their insults and threats against Odysseus, convinced Odysseus' arrow shot was accidental, and that he is no real threat (lines 20-35)

Odysseus tells them they will all die, and they realize he means it (lines 35-40)

One of the men, Eurymachus, argues that the ring leader is now dead, and that it really wasn't the fault of the rest, who'd been spurred on by the dead man. He admits Telemachus would have been killed by the man, but now suggests that the rest of the men repay Odysseus' for the food and wine they devoured, and that Odysseus let bygones be bygones (lines 40-60)

Odysseus refuses the compromise, and tells them to fight or run, but that they will not escape him.(lines 60-70)

Eurymachus tries to rally the men and plan who they can disarm Odysseus (lines 70-80)

Odysseus kills Eurymachus (lines 80-85)

Melanthius (traitor) brings arms for 12 of the suitors, but Athena helps Odysseus and Telemachus destroy their enemies

Phemius, a singer who had been forced to entertain the suitors, goes to Odysseus to beg for mercy(lines 90-105)

Phemius asks Odysseus to check with Telemachus to verify he had been forced to play for the men (lines 105-110)

Telemachus vouches for the singer and another man, Medon, who had been hiding (lines 115-125)

Odysseus spares the two men and tells them to tell others that fair treatment brings fair treatment in return(lines 135-140)

**The Homecoming: the Trunk of the Olive Tree**

Odysseus orders the women servants who slept with the suitors to remove the dead bodies and clean the hall, and then Telemachus hangs them all after their work is done.

Penelope was under a sleeping spell from Athena, but now awakes....but is unsure if Odysseus is really her long-lost husband.

Athena makes Odysseus extra handsome for his reunion with Penelope(lines 1-10)

Odysseus tells her she must be cold to be so distant from her long lost husband, and asks for a bed to made up for him (since he wont be sleeping with his cold wife) (lines 15-20)

Penelope is not having what Odysseus s dishing out, and tells the servant to make Odysseus bed outside the bedroom (lines 20-30)

Odysseus is enraged by her comment, because the bed he had made for them was part of a tree growing in the center of the room, and shouldn't have been able to be moved unless someone had damaged it (lines 30-50)

When Penelope hears Odysseus complaint about the bed---their private secret--she finally realizes it's her husband (lines 50-60)

Penelope asks Odysseus to understand her caution and hesitation, and suggests the gods are partly to blame...she reminds him of Helen of Troy (the reason for the war he had gone to) and wonders if Helen would have refused Paris if she'd known an army would come to take her back to her husband anyway, and hundreds would die as a result, i.e. sometimes caution is a good thing (lines 60-80)

Odysseus and Penelope have a joyful reunion (lines 80-90)

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