

## *Odyssey*

### *Telemachus sets out to seek news of his father*

Telemachus went on board, Athena going before him and taking her seat in the stern of the vessel, while Telemachus sat beside her. Then the men loosed the hawsers and took their places on the benches. [420] Owl-vision Athena sent them a fair wind from the West, that whistled over the deep blue waves whereon Telemachus told them to catch hold of the ropes and hoist sail, and they did as he told them. They set the mast in its socket in the cross plank, raised it, [425] and made it fast with the forestays; then they hoisted their white sails aloft with ropes of twisted ox-hide. As the sail bellied out with the wind, the ship flew through the deep blue water, and the foam hissed against her bows as she sped onward. [430] Then they made all fast throughout the ship, filled the mixing-bowls to the brim, and made drink offerings to the immortal gods that are from everlasting, but more particularly to the owl-vision daughter of Zeus.

Thus, then, the ship sped on her way through the watches of the night from dark till dawn.

(*Odyssey* 2.416–434, Sourcebook)

### *Odysseus leaves Ogygia on the raft he made*

...she [= Kalypsō] made the wind fair and warm for him, and gladly did glorious Odysseus spread his sail before it, [270] while he sat and guided the raft skillfully by means of the rudder. He never closed his eyes, but kept them fixed on the Pleiades, on late-setting Boötes, and on the Bear—which men also call the wagon, and which turns round and round where it is, facing Orion, [275] and alone never dipping into the stream of

Okeanos—for Kalypsō, bright among goddesses, had told him to keep this to his left. Seventeen days did he sail over the sea, and on the eighteenth the dim outlines of the mountains [280] on the nearest part of the Phaeacian coast appeared, rising like a shield on the horizon.

...

[But Poseidon] ... gathered his clouds together, grasped his trident, stirred it round in the sea, and roused the rage of every wind that blows till earth, sea, and sky were hidden in cloud, and night sprang forth out of the sky. [295] Winds from East, South, North, and West fell upon him all at the same time, and a tremendous sea got up, so that Odysseus' heart began to fail him. "Alas," he said to himself in his dismay, "what ever will become of me? [300] I am afraid Kalypsō was right when she said I should have trouble by sea before I got back home. It is all coming true. How black is Zeus making the sky with his clouds, and what a sea the winds [305] are raising from every quarter at once.

As he spoke a sea broke over him with such terrific fury that the raft reeled again, [315] and he was carried overboard a long way off. He let go the helm, and the force of the hurricane was so great that it broke the mast half way up, and both sail and yard went over into the sea. For a long time Odysseus was under water, and it was all he could do [320] to rise to the surface again, for the clothes Kalypsō had given him weighed him down; but at last he got his head above water and spat out the bitter brine that was running down his face in streams. In spite of all this, however, he did not lose sight of his raft, [325] but swam as fast as he could towards it, got hold of it, and climbed on board again so as to escape drowning. The sea took the raft and tossed it about as Autumn winds whirl thistledown round and round upon a road. [330] [It was as though the South, North, East, and West winds were all playing battledore and shuttlecock with it at once.]

(*Odyssey* 5.268–281, 291–332, Sourcebook)

*Nestor recounts his and others' voyages home after the destruction of Troy:*

...in the morning some of us drew our ships into the water and put our goods with our women on board, [155] while the rest, about half in number, stayed behind with Agamemnon. We—the other half—embarked and sailed; and the ships went well, for the gods had smoothed the sea. When we reached Tenedos we offered sacrifices to the gods, [160] for we were longing for our homecoming [nostos]; cruel Zeus, however, did not yet mean that we should do so, and raised a second quarrel in the course of which some among us turned their ships back again, and sailed away under Odysseus to make their peace with Agamemnon; [165] but I, and all the ships that were with me pressed forward, for I saw that mischief was brewing. The son of Tydeus went on also with me, and his crews with him. Later on fair-haired Menelaos joined us at Lesbos, and found us making up our minds about our course— [170] for we did not know whether to go outside Chios by the island of Psyra, keeping this to our left, or inside Chios, over against the stormy headland of Mimas. So we asked a superhuman force [*daimōn*] for a sign, and were shown one to the effect that we should be soonest out of danger if we headed our ships across the open sea [175] to Euboea. This we therefore did, and a fair wind sprang up which gave us a quick passage during the night to Geraistos, where we offered many sacrifices to Poseidon for having helped us so far on our way. [180] Four days later Diomedes, breaker of horses, and his men stationed their ships in Argos, but I held on for Pylos, and the wind never fell light from the day when the gods first made it fair for me.

(*Odyssey* 3.153–183, Sourcebook)

*Menelaos recounts the Old Man of the Sea's account of the Achaeans' voyages*

A third Achaean leader is still at sea, alive, but hindered from returning [nostos]. Ajax was wrecked, [500] for Poseidon drove him on to the great rocks of Gyrai; nevertheless, he let him get safe out of the water, and in spite of all Athena's hatred he would have escaped death, if he had not ruined himself by boasting. He said the gods could not drown him even though they had tried to do so, [505] and when Poseidon heard this large talk, he seized his trident in his two brawny hands, and split the rock of Gyrai in two pieces. The base remained where it was, but the part on which Ajax was sitting fell headlong into the sea [510] and carried Ajax with it; so he drank salt water and was drowned.

Your brother and his ships escaped, for Hera protected him, but when he was just about to reach the high promontory of [515] Malea, he was caught by a heavy gale which carried him out to sea again sorely against his will, and drove him to the foreland where Thyestes used to dwell, but where Aegisthus was then living. By and by, however, it seemed as though he was to have his return [nostos], [520] safe after all, for the gods backed the wind into its old quarter and they reached home; whereon Agamemnon kissed his native soil, and shed tears of joy at finding himself in his own country.

(*Odyssey* 4.498–523, Sourcebook)

*Part of Odysseus' lying tale to Eumaios:*

...there came a certain Phoenician, a cunning rascal, who had already committed all sorts of villainy, [290] and this man talked me over into going with him to Phoenicia, where his house and his possessions lay. I stayed there for a whole twelve months, but at the end of that time when months and days had gone by till the same season [*hōrā*] had come round again, [295] he set me on board a ship bound for Libya, on a pretence that I was to take a cargo along with him to that place, but really that he might sell me as a slave and take the wealth I fetched. I suspected his intention, but went on board with him, for I could not help it.

The ship ran before a fresh North wind [300] till we had reached the sea that lies between Crete and Libya; there, however, Zeus counseled their destruction, for as soon as we were well out from Crete and could see nothing but sea and sky, he raised a black cloud over our ship and the sea grew dark beneath it. [305] Then Zeus let fly with his thunderbolts and the ship went round and round and was filled with fire and brimstone as the lightning struck it. The men fell all into the sea; they were carried about in the water round the ship looking like so many sea-gulls, but the god presently deprived them of all chance of homecoming [*nostos*]. [310] I was all dismayed; Zeus, however, sent the ship's mast within my reach, which saved my life, for I clung to it, and drifted before the fury of the gale. Nine days did I drift but in the darkness of the tenth night [315] a great wave bore me on to the Thesprotian coast. There Pheidon, king of the Thesprotians, entertained me hospitably without charging me anything at all, for his son found me when I was nearly dead with cold and fatigue, whereon he raised me by the hand, took me to his father's house [320] and gave me clothes to wear.

(*Odyssey* 14.288–320, Sourcebook)

## Virgil *Aeneid*

*Aeneas leaves Chaonia and approaches Italy:*

My tears welled as I spoke these parting words:  
“Live happily, you whose fortunes are already determined:  
we are summoned onwards from destiny to destiny.  
For you, peace is achieved: you’ve no need to plough the levels  
of the sea, you’ve no need to seek Italy’s ever-receding fields.  
I wish that you might gaze at your likeness of Xanthus,  
and a Troy built by your own hands, under happier auspices,  
one which might be less exposed to the Greeks.  
If I ever reach the Tiber, and the Tiber’s neighbouring fields,  
and gaze on city walls granted to my people, we’ll one day  
make one Troy, in spirit, from each of our kindred cities  
and allied peoples, in Epirus, in Italy, who have the same Dardanus  
for ancestor, the same history: let it be left to our descendants care.”  
We sail on over the sea, close to the Ceraunian cliffs nearby,  
on course for Italy, and the shortest path over the waves.  
Meanwhile the sun is setting and the darkened hills are in shadow.  
Having shared oars, we stretch out, near the waves, on the surface  
of the long-desired land, and, scattered across the dry beach,  
we rest our bodies: sleep refreshes our weary limbs.  
Night, lead by the Hours, is not yet in mid-course:  
Palinurus rises alertly from his couch, tests all  
the winds, and listens to the breeze: he notes  
all the stars gliding through the silent sky,  
Arcturus, the rainy Pleiades, both the Bears,  
and surveys Orion, armed with gold. When he sees  
that all tallies, and the sky is calm, he sounds  
a loud call from the ship’s stern: we break camp,  
attempt our route, and spread the winged sails.

And now Dawn blushes as she puts the stars to flight,  
when we see, far off, dark hills and low-lying Italy.  
First Achates proclaims Italy, then my companions  
hail Italy with a joyful shout. Then my father Anchises  
took up a large bowl, filled it with wine,  
and standing in the high stern, called to the heavens:  
“You gods, lords of the sea and earth and storms, carry us

onward on a gentle breeze, and breathe on us with kindness!"  
The wind we longed-for rises, now as we near, a harbour opens,  
and a temple is visible on Minerva's Height.  
My companions furl the sails and turn the prows to shore.  
The harbour is carved in an arc by the eastern tides:  
its jutting rocks boil with salt spray, so that it itself is hidden:  
towering cliffs extend their arms in a twin wall,  
and the temple lies back from the shore.  
Here I see four horses in the long grass, white as snow,  
grazing widely over the plain, our first omen.  
And my father Anchises cries: "O foreign land, you bring us war:  
horses are armed for war, war is what this herd threatens.  
Yet those same creatures one day can be yoked to a chariot,  
and once yoked will suffer the bridle in harmony:  
there's also hope of peace."

Virgil *Aeneid* 3.492–543, translated by A.S. Kline

[http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilAeneidIII.htm#anchor\\_Toc536528105](http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilAeneidIII.htm#anchor_Toc536528105)

### *Aeneas encounters Charon*

From here there is a road that leads to the waters  
of Tartarean Acheron. Here thick with mud a whirlpool seethes  
in the vast depths, and spews all its sands into Cocytus.  
A grim ferryman watches over the rivers and streams,  
Charon, dreadful in his squalor, with a mass of unkempt  
white hair straggling from his chin: flames glow in his eyes,  
a dirty garment hangs, knotted from his shoulders.  
He poles the boat and trims the sails himself,  
and ferries the dead in his dark skiff,  
old now, but a god's old age is fresh and green.  
Here all the crowd streams, hurrying to the shores,  
women and men, the lifeless bodies of noble heroes,  
boys and unmarried girls, sons laid on the pyre  
in front of their father's eyes: as many as the leaves that fall  
in the woods at the first frost of autumn, as many as the birds  
that flock to land from ocean deeps, when the cold of the year  
drives them abroad and despatches them to sunnier countries.  
They stood there, pleading to be first to make the crossing,  
stretching out their hands in longing for the far shore.  
But the dismal boatman accepts now these, now those,  
but driving others away, keeps them far from the sand.

(Virgil *Aeneid* 6.295–316, tr. A.S. Kline)

[http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilAeneidVI.htm#anchor\\_Toc2242929](http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilAeneidVI.htm#anchor_Toc2242929)

## *Aeschylus Suppliant Women*

*Enter a company of maidens, who have fled from Egypt and just landed on the shores of Argos; with them is their father*

### **Chorus**

May Zeus who guards suppliants look graciously upon our company, which boarded a ship and put to sea from the outlets of the fine sand of the Nile. For we have fled Zeus' land [5] whose pastures border Syria, and are fugitives, not because of some public decree pronounced against blood crime, but because of our own act to escape the suit of man, since we abhor as impious all marriage with the sons of Aegyptus. [10] It was Danaus, our father, adviser and leader, who, considering well our course, decided, as the best of all possible evils, that we flee with all speed over the waves of the sea [15] and find a haven on Argos' shore. For from there descends our race, sprung from the caress and breath of Zeus on the gnat-tormented heifer.

To what kinder land than this [20] could we come with these wool-wreathed branches in our hands, sole weapons of the suppliant? O realm, O land, and clear water; gods on high and earth-bound powers, grievous in your vengeance, [25] which inhabit the tomb; and you, Zeus the Savior, invoked third, the guardian of the habitations of righteous men: receive as suppliants this band of women with the compassionate spirit of the land. But [30] the thronging swarm of violent men born of Aegyptus, should they set foot upon this marshy land, drive them seaward—and with them their swift ship—and there may they encounter a cruel sea with thunder, lightning, and rain-charged winds, [35] and perish by the tempest's buffeting blasts, if they ever lay their hands on us, their cousins, and mount unwilling beds from which Right holds them aloof.

[40] And now I invoke, as our champion from beyond the sea, the calf born of Zeus, the offspring of the flower-grazing cow, our ancestress, the caress of Zeus' breath. The appointed period confirmed itself in a name suited to the event—Epaphus, to whom she gave birth. To him I cry for

help. And now in the region wherein our first mother pastured, by recounting the story of her distress of long ago, I shall now set forth reliable proofs to the inhabitants of the land; and other evidence, though unexpected, will yet appear. Men will come to know the truth as my tale proceeds.

[58] Now if by chance there be some neighbor in the land who knows the song of birds, when our complaint greets his ear, he will fancy that he hears the voice of Metis, Tereus' piteous wife, the hawk-chased nightingale.

[63] For she, constrained to leave her green leaves, laments pitifully her accustomed haunts, and composes the tale of her own child's doom—how he perished, destroyed by her own hand, victim of the wrath of an unnatural mother.

[68] Even so I, indulging my grief in Ionian strains, pain my tender face summered by Nile's sun and my heart unexercised in tears; and I gather the flowers of grief, anxious whether there is any friendly kinsman here to champion our band which has fled from the haze-shrouded land.

[76] But, gods of our race, hear, and regard with favor the cause of righteousness; if you refuse youth fulfillment of its arrogant desires, and readily abhor violence, you would be righteous toward marriage. Even for those who flee hard-pressed from war there is an altar, a shelter against harm through respect for the powers of heaven.

[86] But may Zeus grant that it go well with us. For Zeus' desire is hard to trace: it shines everywhere, even in gloom, together with fortune obscure to mortal men.

[91] Safely it falls, and not upon its back, whatever deed comes to pass at Zeus' nod; for the pathways of his understanding stretch dark and tangled, beyond comprehension.

[96] From their high-towering hopes he hurls mankind to utter destruction; yet he does not marshal any armed violence—all that is wrought by the powers divine is free from toil. Seated on his holy throne, unmoved, in mysterious ways he accomplishes his will.

[104] So let him look upon human outrageousness—in what way it shoots up men in their wooing of us, sprouted from thoughts of evil intent, having a frenzied purpose as its irresistible spur, and deluded, turning its thoughts to folly.

[112] Such piteous strains of woe I utter in my pain, now shrill, now deep, blended with falling tears—Alas, alas! groans appropriate to funeral wails; though I live, I chant my own dirge.

[117] I invoke Apia's hilly land—for well, O land, you understand my barbarous speech—, and many times I lay my hands upon my Sidonian veil and tear its linen fabric to shreds.

[123] Sacrifices in satisfaction of vows are given freely to the gods when all fares well, if only there be escape from death. Alas, alas, perplexing troubles! Where will this wave of trouble bear me away?

[128] I invoke Apia's hilly land—for well, O land, you understand my barbarous speech—, and many times I lay my hands upon my Sidonian veil and tear its linen fabric to shreds.

[134] Our oars, indeed, and our timbered ship, bound with yellow rope to withstand the sea, sped me on by help of favoring winds, unharmed by all tempests; nor have I reason for complaint. But may the all-seeing Father establish a kindly issue in due time—

[141] That the mighty race of our honorable mother escape the embrace of man (ah me), unwedded, unvanquished.

[144] And may Zeus' pure daughter, she who holds securely the sacred wall, willingly, meeting my will, look upon me; and, grieved at our pursuit, come with all her might, a virgin to a virgin's aid, to deliver me—

[151] That the mighty race of our honorable mother may escape the embrace of man (ah me), unwedded, unvanquished.

[154] Yet, if she will not, we, a dark, sun-burned race, with suppliant boughs will invoke the underworld Zeus, Zeus the great host of the dead; for if the gods of Olympus hear us not, we will hang ourselves.

[163] Ah Zeus! On account of the poisonous hate of Io vengeance from the gods pursues us. I know your consort's sky-conquering spite; for a stormy sea follows a harsh wind.

(Aeschylus *Suppliant Women* 1–167, translated by Herbert Weir Smyth)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3atext%3a1999.01.0016>