

The Odyssey

*Based on the classic story by Homer
Adapted by Steven Fogell*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Here is a classic tale of courage, determination, and love. Journey back to a time when the gods and goddesses determined the daily fate of the world and all the humans upon it. In this tale we meet Odysseus as he returns to his beloved home of Ithaca. Soon he is sent by the goddess Athena to fight in the Trojan War and undergoes a journey that takes him much further – and much longer – than ever expected.

Odysseus's path home from the battle is detained and crossed by many gods and goddesses, and the often dangerous creatures they have created such as the Cyclops, the six-headed Scylla, and the evil sorceress Circe.

Ultimately, Odysseus's adventure lasts 20 long years. The god Hermes says it sends a message to the mortals about the power of the gods, while Athena says the message is about the power of war. Finally Aphrodite says it sends greatest message of all ... the message of love.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

- Sc. 1: The gods and goddesses on Mount Olympus.
- Sc. 2: Odysseus's family in Ithaca.
- Sc. 3: Helen becomes Queen of Sparta.
- Sc. 4: Odysseus leaves for war.
- Sc. 5: The defeat of Troy.
- Sc. 6: Years later, sailing home.
- Sc. 7: Weeks later, the island of Cyclops.
- Sc. 8: Back in Ithaca, suitors confront Penelope.
- Sc. 9: In the cave on the island of Cyclops.

ACT II

- Sc. 1: On the boat at sea, so close to home, yet so far.
- Sc. 2: The island of Circe.
- Sc. 3: Three Sirens tempt Odysseus and crew.
- Sc. 4: Seven years later, on an island with Calypso.
- Sc. 5: Odysseus arrives home to fight the final battle.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Large, flexible cast. See next page for doubling options.)

GODS/ GODDESSES

AEOLUS: God, ruler of all the storm winds.

APOLLO: God, ruler of the sun.

POSEIDON: God, ruler of the sea.

THETIS: Goddess, sea nymph, mother of Achilles.

HERMES: Messenger of the gods.

APHRODITE: Goddess of love.

HADES: God, ruler of the underworld.

ZEUS: King of gods.

ATHENA: Daughter of Zeus, goddess of war.

ITHACA PEOPLE

EURYKLEIA: (*Yur-a-lee-a.*) Servant of Odysseus.

PENELOPE: Odysseus' wife.

ANTICLUS: (*Ant-a-kl-us.*) Odysseus' mother.

YOUNG TELEMACHUS: (*Tell-a-mass-cus.*) Son of Odysseus.

OLDER TELEMACHUS: Son of Odysseus and Penelope.

ODYSSEUS: Main character, is at sea and trying to get home.

LAERTES: (*Lair-a-tees.*) Ghost, Odysseus's father.

TROJAN WAR PLAYERS

HELEN: Reason the Trojan war is being fought.

PARIS: Trojan.

KING MENELAUS: (*Men-a-loss.*) Sparta King.

PALAMEDES: (*Pal-a-me-dees.*) King's friend.

AGAMEMNON: (*Ag-a-mem-non.*) Spartan warrior.

ACHILLES: (*Augh-kill-ees.*) Spartan warrior.

LAOCOON: (*La-coon.*) Soothsayer, predictor of future.

HECTOR: Trojan warrior.

AENEAS: (*A-knee-us.*) Trojan warrior.

ODYSSEUS'S MEN

ANTILOUS (*Ant-a-loss.*)

POLITES (*Poll-e-tees.*)

EURYLOCHOS (*Ear-a-locus.*)

ANTIPHUS (*Ant-a-fuss.*)

ODYSSEUS' MEN (Continued.)
PERIMIDES (*Pear-a-me-dees.*)
MENPHEUS (*Mem-fuss.*)
THATICLES (*That-a-klees.*)

4 GOATS

INVADERS
EURYMACHUS (*Your-a-mack-us.*)
MELANTHIUS (*Mel-and-the-us.*)
EUMAEUS (*U-may-us.*)
ORSILICUS (*Or-sill-a-cuss.*)

MYSTICS
CYCLOPS: Giant, with a single eye in the middle of his forehead.
ANIMALS: Wolves, lions, bears, etc.
CIRCE: (*Seer-see.*) Sorceress.
CALYPSO: A sea nymph.

SIRENS
MAI: (*May.*) Siren.
PHAY: (*Fay.*) Siren.
KUL: (*Cool.*) Siren.

SCYLLA: (*Sill-a.*) Six-headed sea monster.

Possibilities for doubling:

King Menelaus can double with animal on island
Palamedes can double with Cyclops
Paris can double with Orsilicus
Agamemnon can double with Eurymachus
Achilles can double with Melanthius
Laocoon can double with Eumaeus
Hector can double with animal on island
Aeneas can double with animal on island
Mai can double with Circe
Phay can double with animal on island
Kul can double with animal on island
Helen of Troy can double with Calypso

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Mount Olympus where ATHENA, ZEUS, AEOLUS, POSEIDON, HERMES, APHRODITE, THETIS, and HADES are meeting.)

AEOLUS: No! I will not be a part of this! It is insane!

POSEIDON: I agree with Aeolus, this cannot be! I am much too busy to be a part of such madness!

THETIS: Please do not do this! Please do not make my son a part of this plan! Achilles has served you well, great Zeus! Why make him part of this?

HERMES: Why would you want such a thing? Why would you bring such a tiding of bad deed to so many? What is to gain?

APHRODITE: I understand the power that love can bring, but you must admit this is extreme, even for you! Why has your heart turned so dark?

HADES: Yes, Zeus, I ask the same as Aphrodite: Why does your heart turn so black? You seem to be getting into my line of work. Think how many will die from this plan! I will be kept so busy, for so long!

ZEUS: Silence! *(Thunder.)* How dare you compare me to you, Hades! I created you and can destroy you where you stand! I am Zeus! This is my plan of fate, and you will do as I command! Do you understand? *(Pause.)* I said, do you understand?!

ALL: Yes. Yes, great Zeus.

ZEUS: That is better. Athena, you have been very quiet today. What do you think of the plans I have for these mere mortals?

ATHENA: If it is your will, I obey. Who am I to question? I see how this war will change all of time. I respect your decision and will do my part, as best as my power will allow.

ZEUS: You all can take a lesson from Athena. She understands the importance of my decisions and would never question them. Now, I expect each of you to do my will as planned; you will regret any mistakes you make.

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ZEUS: *(Continued.)* Each of you must report to me the outcome of your accomplishments. I will be watching all of you, especially you, Hades!

HADES: Me? Why me? Don't I always come through as planned? My devastation would have it no other way!

ZEUS: Listen to me, Hades. No lives lost that are not as I have seen lost!

HADES: Of course, Zeus, of course. I may bring death, but I'm not a glutton!

ZEUS: Why do you look at me as thus, Aphrodite?

APHRODITE: Because I know what is behind all this. I know what your daughter has done and --

ZEUS: Quiet! There shall be no talk of any of this, do you hear me? Especially of my daughter! Now, Aeolus, can I expect your winds to follow my wishes?

AEOLUS: They shall blow as strong and hard as any you have ever witnessed.

ZEUS: And Poseidon and Thetis, can I expect your seas and ocean to do the bidding they must?

POSEIDON: As usual and with honor.

THETIS: I will act as long as my heart will allow.

ZEUS: Let us hope, Thetis, that your heart is enough. Now Hermes, it starts with you. Send a message to my daughter in Troy that what she has done will change history forever! Make her understand that all that shall proceed is to be blamed on her and her choices!

HERMES: Yes, great Zeus! Aeolus, give me a strong tailwind to make my journey even swifter!

AEOLUS: It is done! *(HE gestures, WIND SOUND is heard, HERMES exits.)*

ZEUS: Now, Athena, I leave this battle to you. Pick your players and let my greatest story begin!

ATHENA: I shall begin this battle in Troy, but I will bring ones from Greece to fight in it! I shall bring the best warrior I know to this place. I shall bring my beloved Odysseus from Ithaca. He shall be our finest player in this battle. He will gain new strength and title. As for the battle itself, it shall be remembered forever as the Trojan War! *(BLACKOUT)*

End of Scene

Scene 2

(AT RISE: In Ithaca. EURYKLEIA, PENELOPE, YOUNG TELEMACHUS, and ANTICLUS are present.)

EURYKLEIA: *(Runs in.)* Where is he? Where is he hiding?

PENELOPE: What has he done now?

EURYKLEIA: That son of yours has knocked over the tub of olives the villagers spent all day picking!

PENELOPE: Oh no! Were you watching him?

EURYKLEIA: I do not have eyes in the back of my head to watch him when he seems to be in three places at once!

ANTICLUS: *(Laughing.)* The energy of my grandchild makes me exhausted just hearing about it.

PENELOPE: Eurykleia, I did not mean any insult to your care-taking, but he is at that age, and he is the son of Odysseus.

EURYKLEIA: Being the son of anyone does not give you the pleasure of being a brat!

ANTICLUS: Watch your tongue, good woman. That boy will one day be your master!

PENELOPE: Let me find him and talk to him about his manners and his spirit.

EURYKLEIA: I do not mean to sound so harsh, but I am tired and need to rest.

PENELOPE: Rest then. I will find Telemachus and tend to him.

EURYKLEIA: Thank you, ma'am, thank you. *(Reaches into her pocket for handkerchief and pulls out frog.)* Aughhhhh!

ANTICLUS: Enough of this screaming. It is just a frog!

PENELOPE: And I think I know how it got in that pocket!

EURYKLEIA: I ... I ... need air, and a nap, and a cold rag, and a ... drink!

(SHE exit; PENELOPE and ANTICLUS laugh.)

ANTICLUS: That son of yours will be the death of that woman!

PENELOPE: I must talk with his father about this behavior.

End of Freeview

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