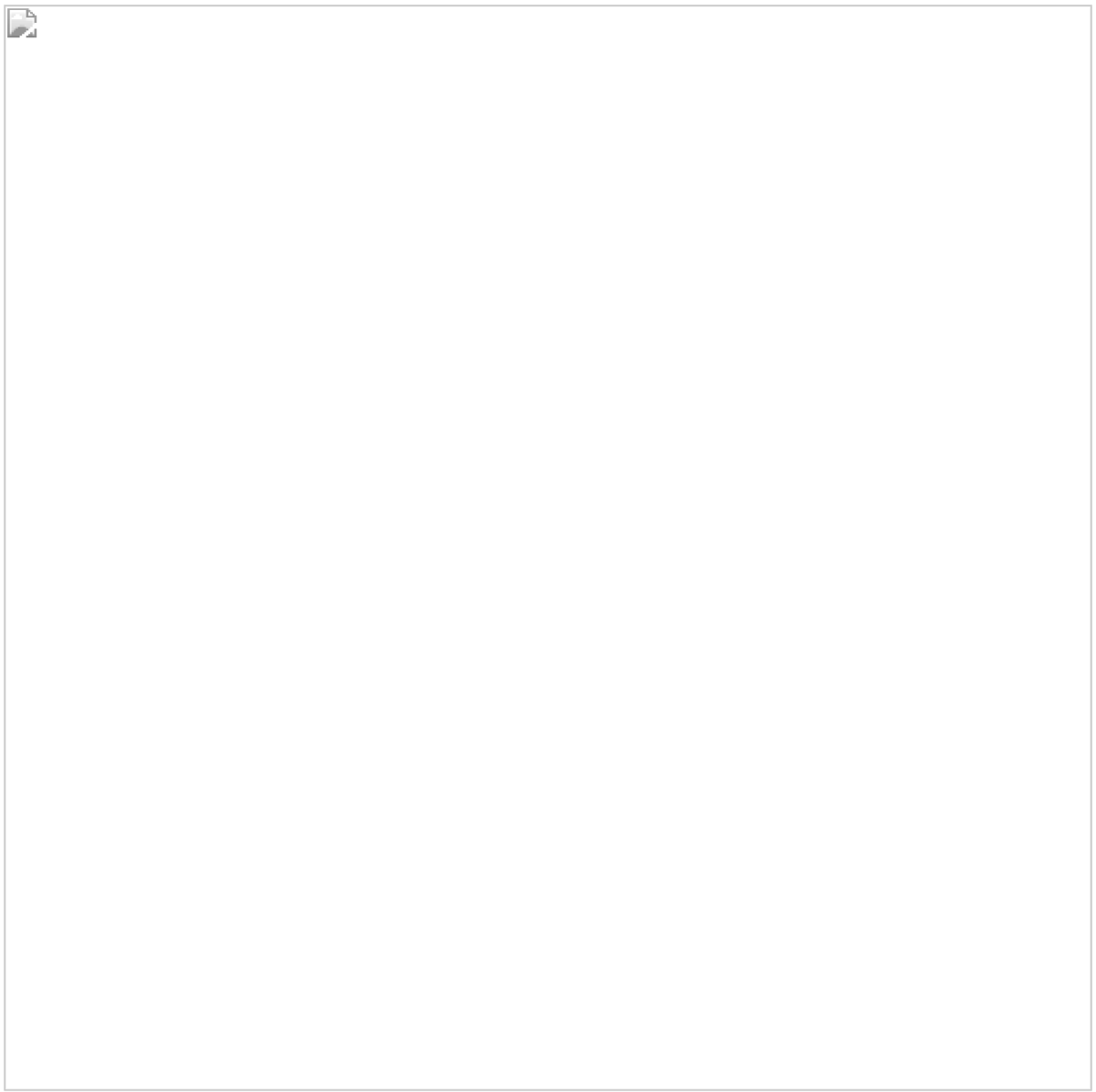
COLORING THE CLASSICS

Odysseus

A Hero of Greece



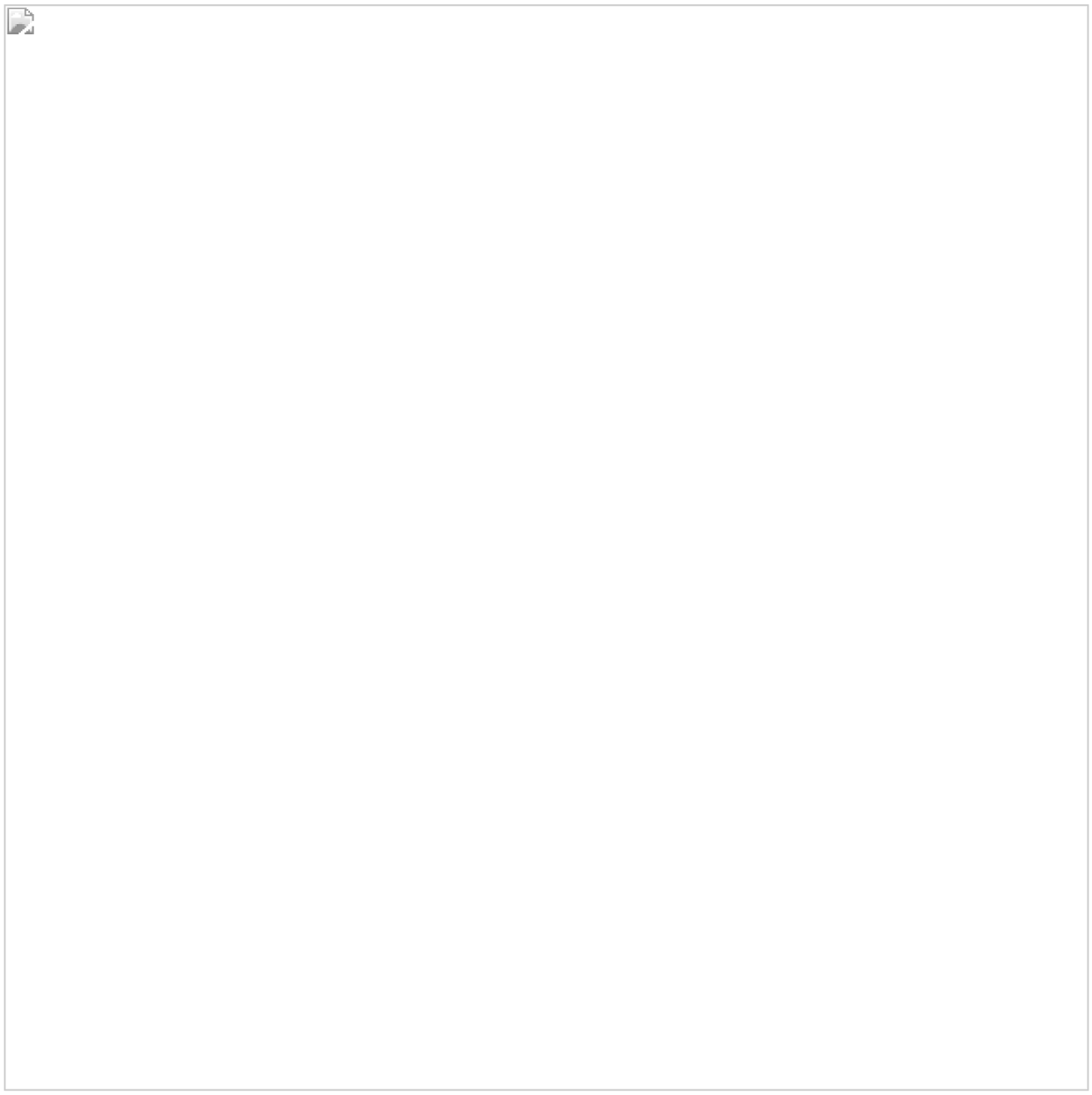
The great war at Troy was over at last, and Odysseus, King of Ithaca, set sail for home. His heart was full of gladness and of longing.

TALK ABOUT IT

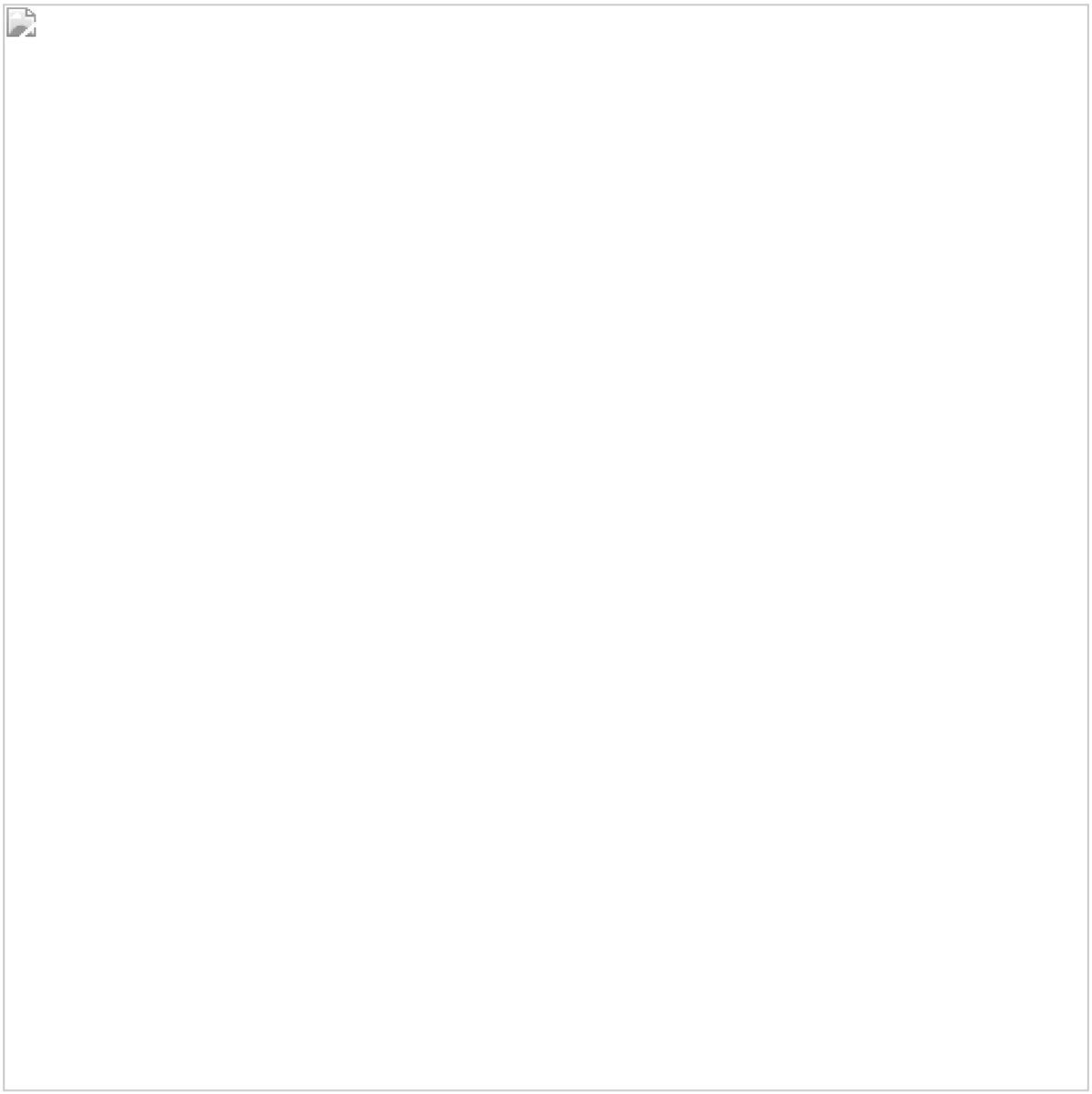
Odysseus had been away from home for a very long time. What do you think he was most looking forward to?

This book belongs to _____

Odysseus · another picture



A Rugged Little Island



Ithaca was a rugged little island in the sea, with a great mountain and forests of trembling leaves.

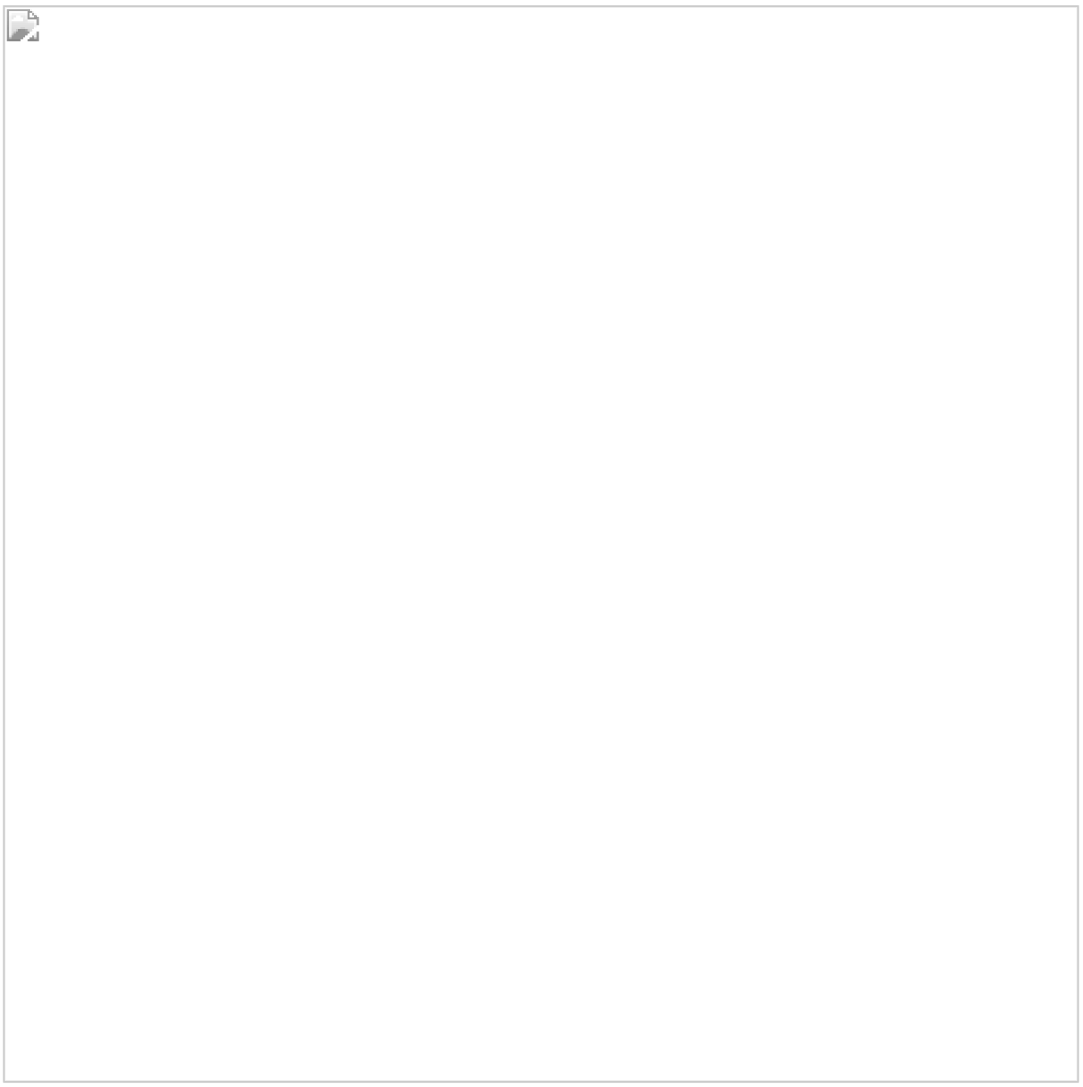
Odysseus had left a wife there named Penelope, who was as wise as she was good. He had left a baby son named Telemachus, and his old father. For ten years he had fought at Troy.

“I can see nought beside sweeter than a man's own country,” he said. He hoped to see it very soon. But many long and weary days would pass before he did.

TALK ABOUT IT

Odysseus loved his little island more than any grand palace. What place feels like home to you?

A Rugged Little Island · another picture

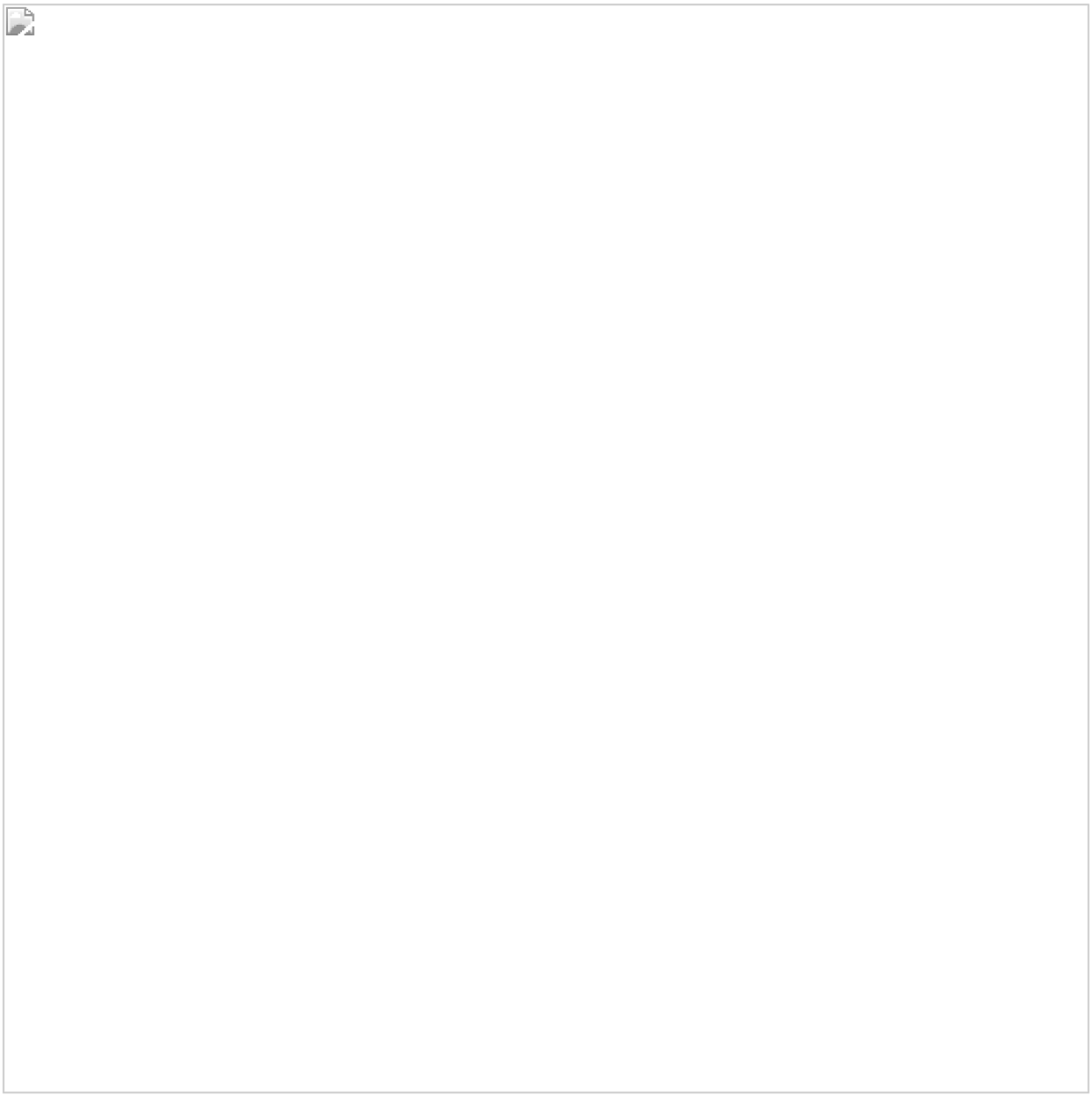


Think about it

1. Who was waiting for Odysseus in Ithaca?

- ○ A dragon
- ○ His wife, his son and his old father
- ○ A crowd of strangers

A Fight and a Storm



Odysseus was a warrior, and he always chose a fight over peace. On the way home, his men attacked a town by the sea.

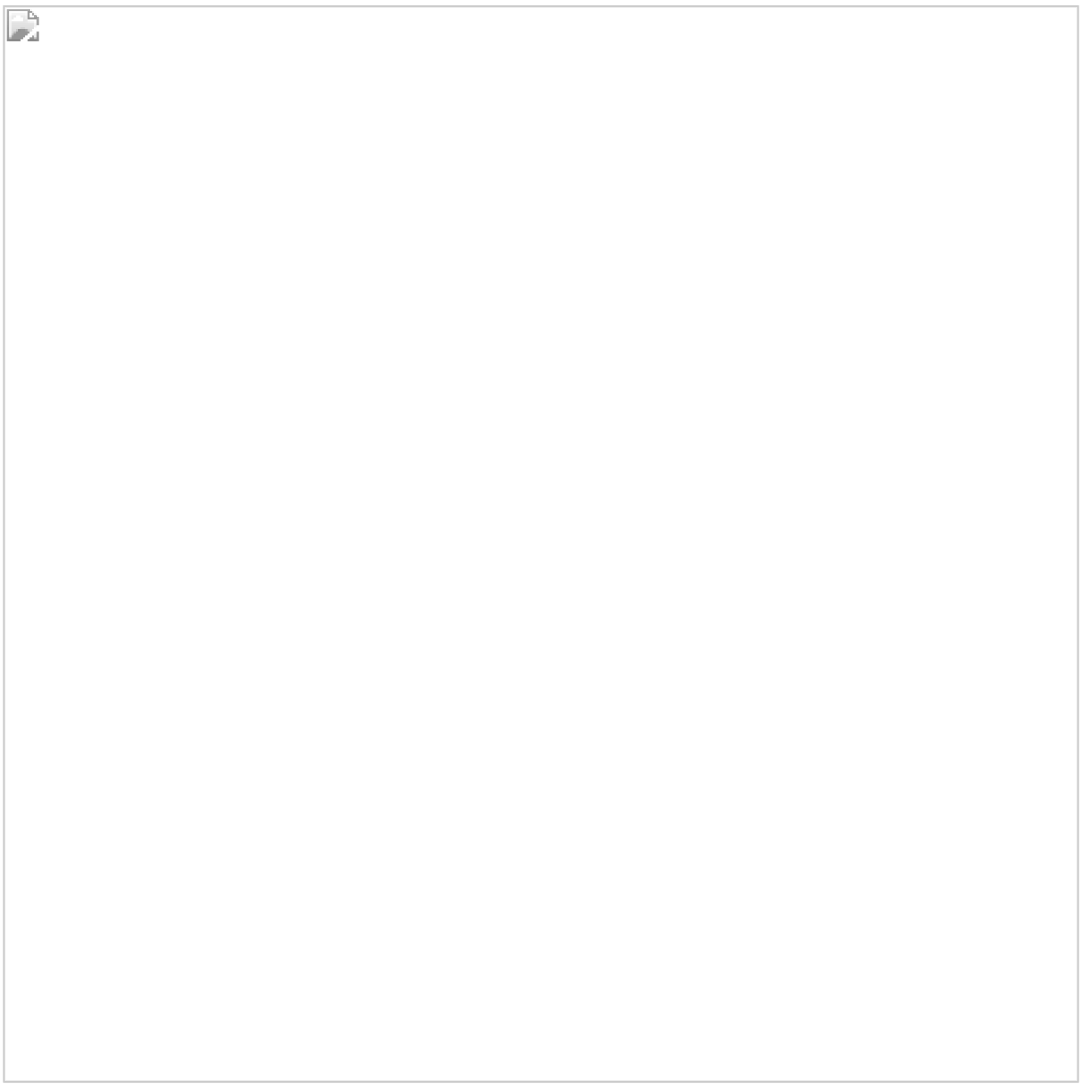
But the people of the land came in great numbers and won the fight. Odysseus and his men ran back to their ships, and six men from every ship were lost.

Then a terrible storm blew up. It tore their sails to shreds and drove the ships far out over the deep sea. For nine days they were swept away from home.

TALK ABOUT IT

Odysseus started a fight that did not need to happen. What do you think might have gone differently if he had chosen peace?

A Fight and a Storm · another picture

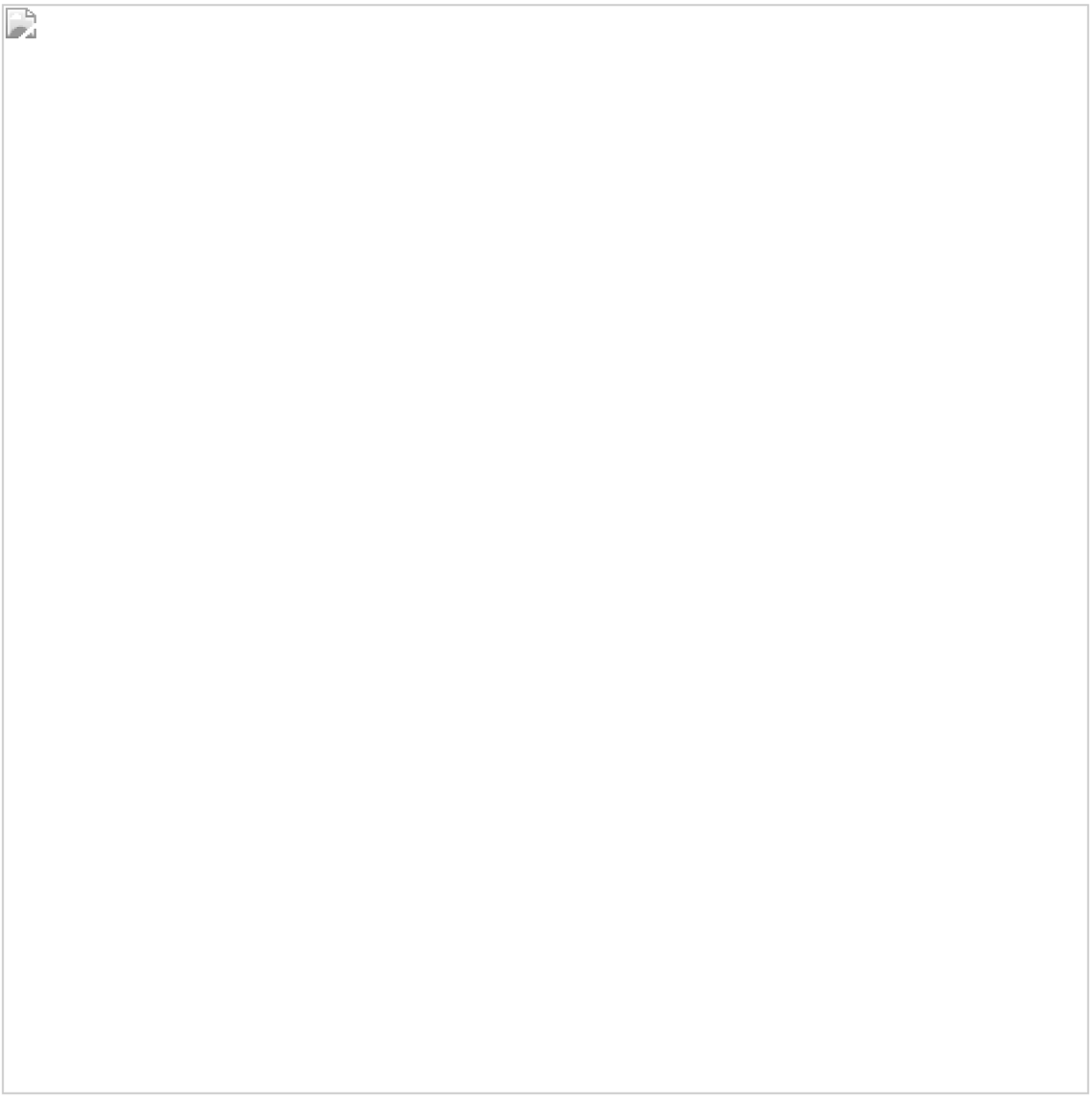


Think about it

1. What happened after the fight?

- ○ A big party
- ○ The ships sank at once
- ○ A terrible storm

The Land of the Lotus Eaters



On the tenth day they reached a land where the people ate the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus flower.

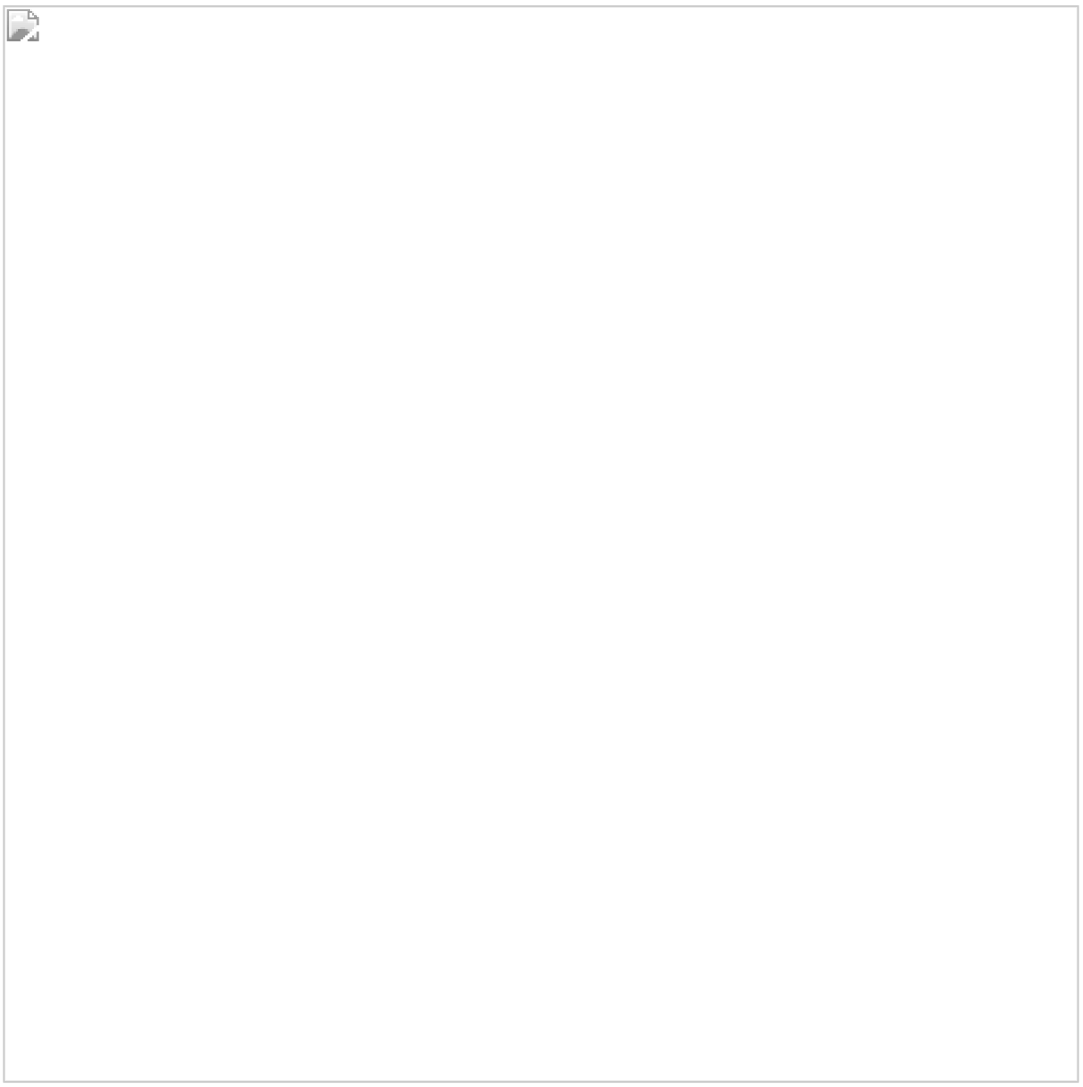
Whoever ate it forgot everything: their duties, their sadness, their homes. They only wanted to sit and dream happy dreams that never ended.

Three of Odysseus's men tasted it, and they did not want to go home at all. Odysseus dragged them back to the ships, weeping. He tied them down under the benches so that no more of his men would eat the lotus and forget their families.

TALK ABOUT IT

Odysseus did not want his men to forget their homes, even though the lotus made them happy. Why do you think he cared so much?

The Land of the Lotus Eaters · another picture

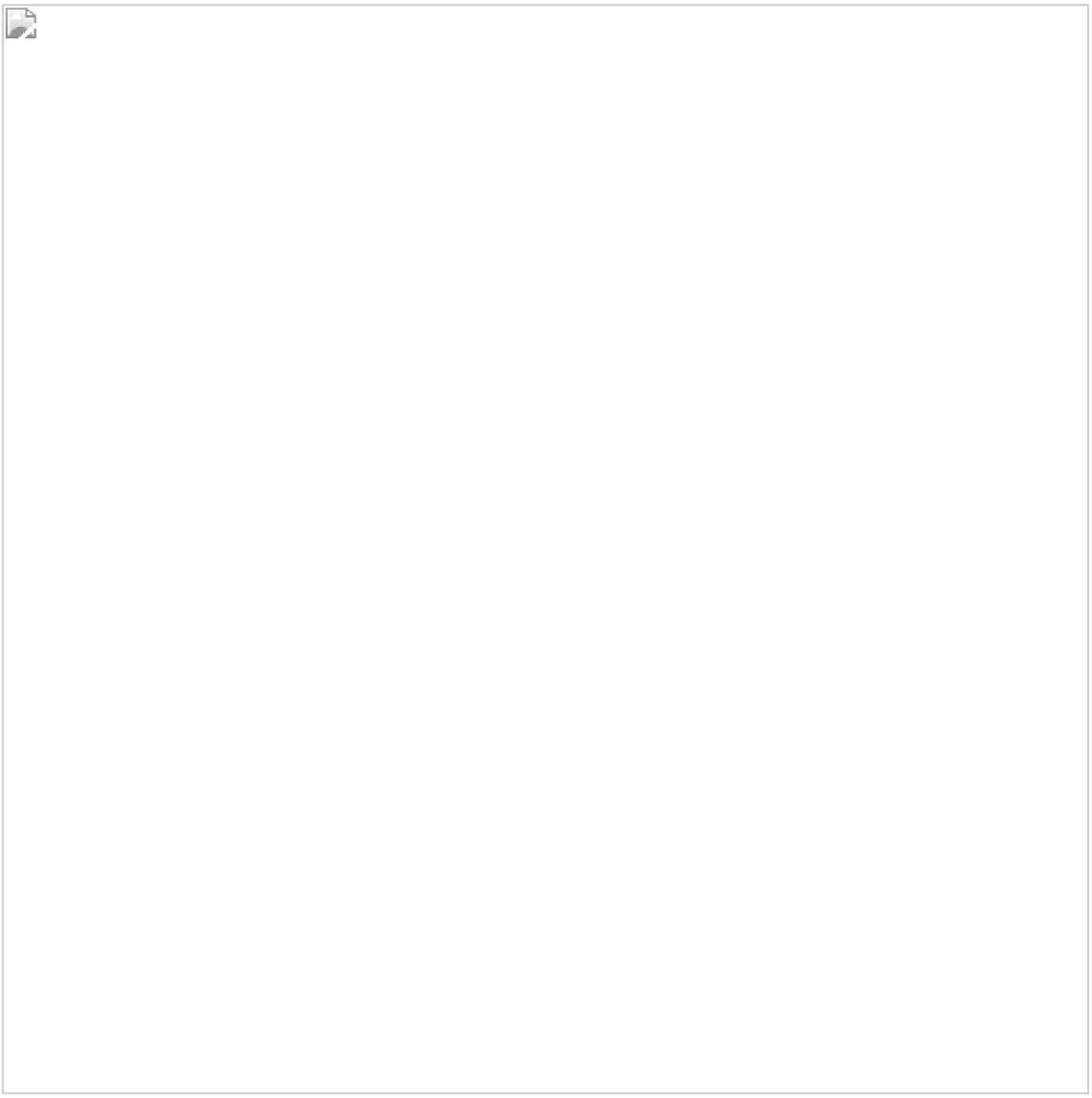


Think about it

1. What did the lotus fruit do?

- ○ Made people forget their homes
- ○ Made people very strong
- ○ Made people sleepy for a minute

The Giant's Cave



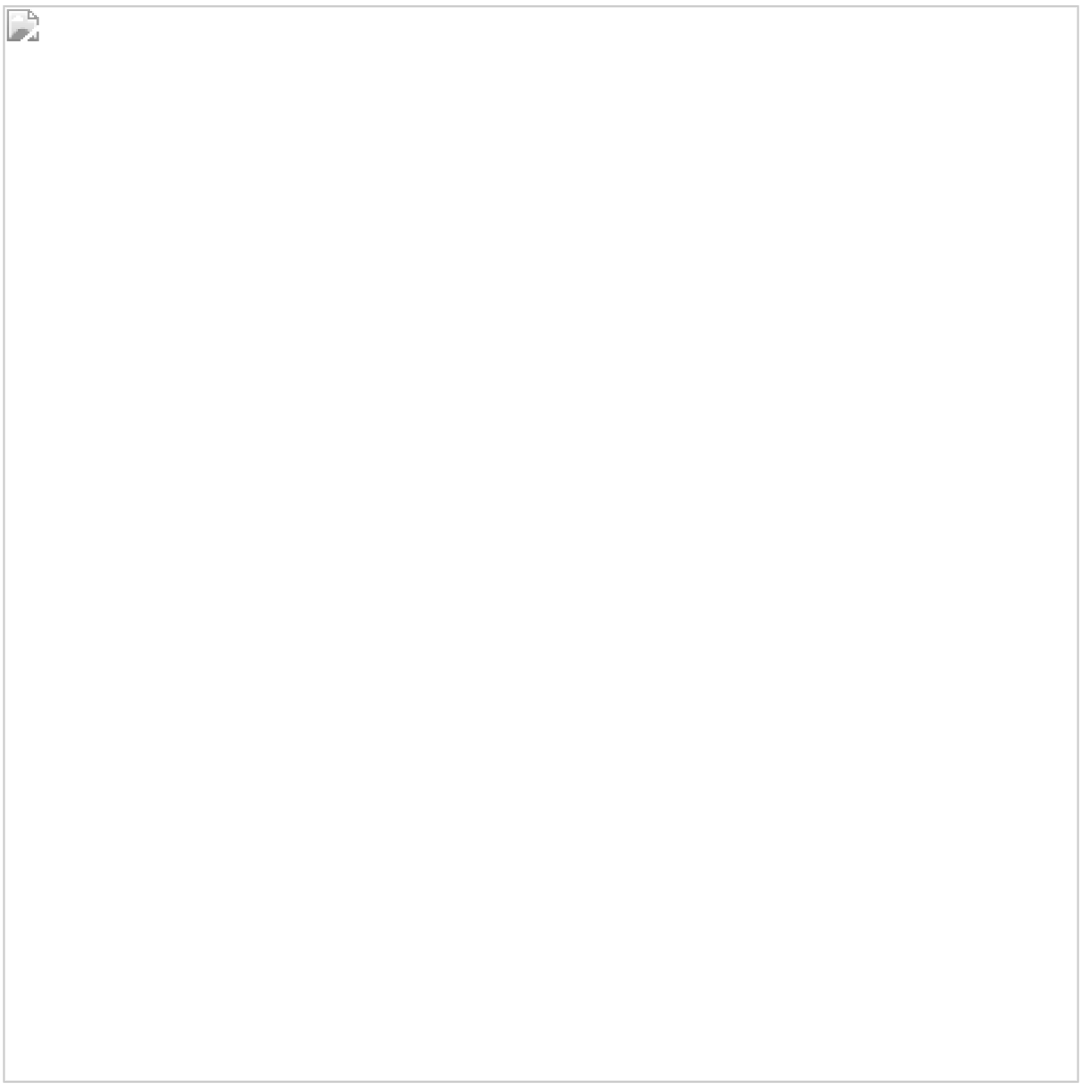
Next they came to a land of giants. Odysseus took twelve of his best men to a great cave by the sea. He brought a goat-skin of sweet wine and a sack of corn, hoping the owner would be a friend and trade gifts.

His men said, “Let us first of all take the cheeses,” and hurry back to the ships. But Odysseus was too great-hearted to steal like a thief, so they waited.

At evening the owner came home: Polyphemus, a huge one-eyed giant. He rolled a rock across the doorway that no men could move, and he was not kind to guests.

TALK ABOUT IT

Odysseus wanted to ask first instead of taking the cheeses. Why do you think that mattered to him?

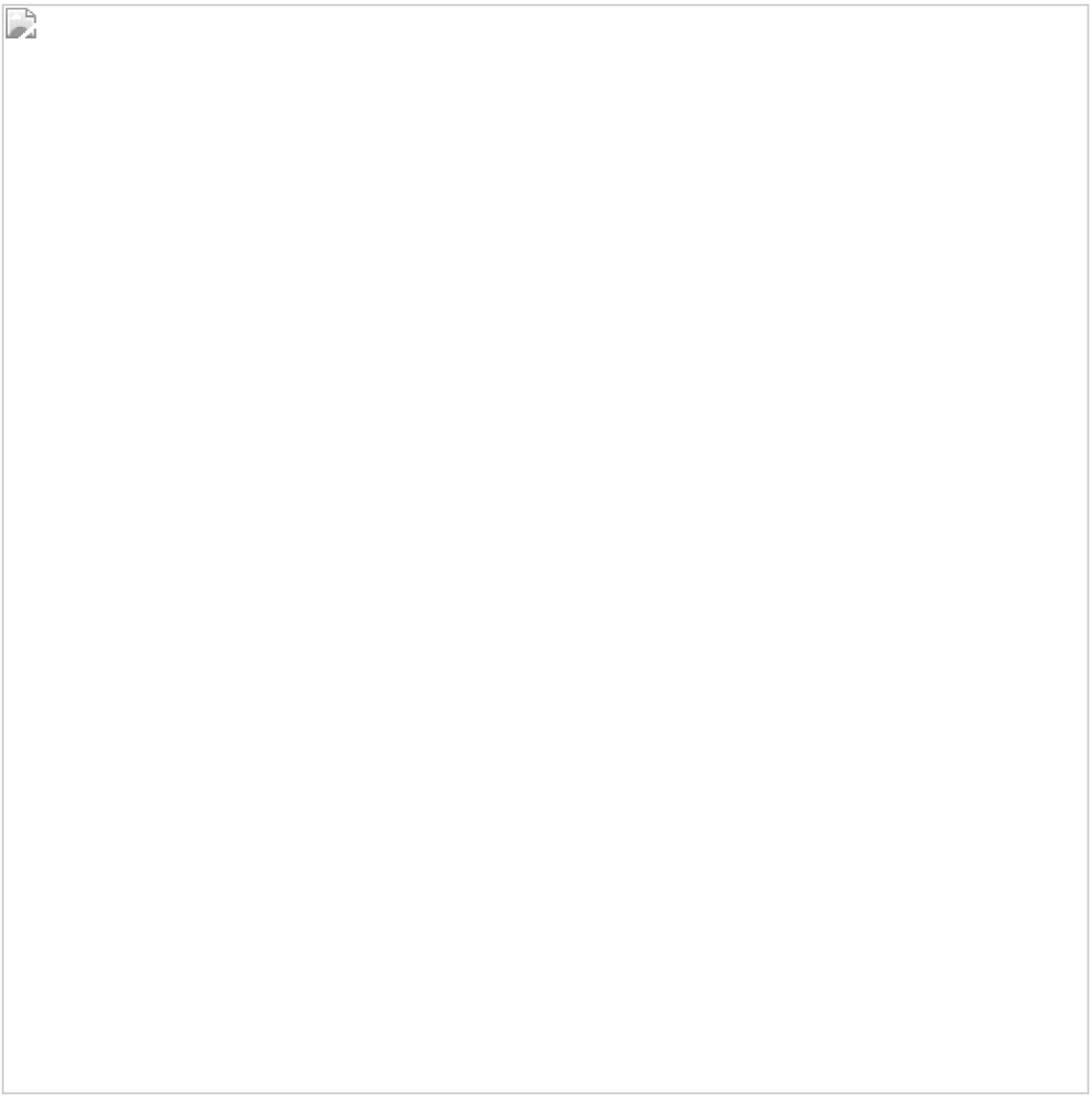


Think about it

1. What did Odysseus bring as gifts for the giant?

- ○ Gold and jewels
- ○ Wine and corn
- ○ A sheep

A Clever Plan



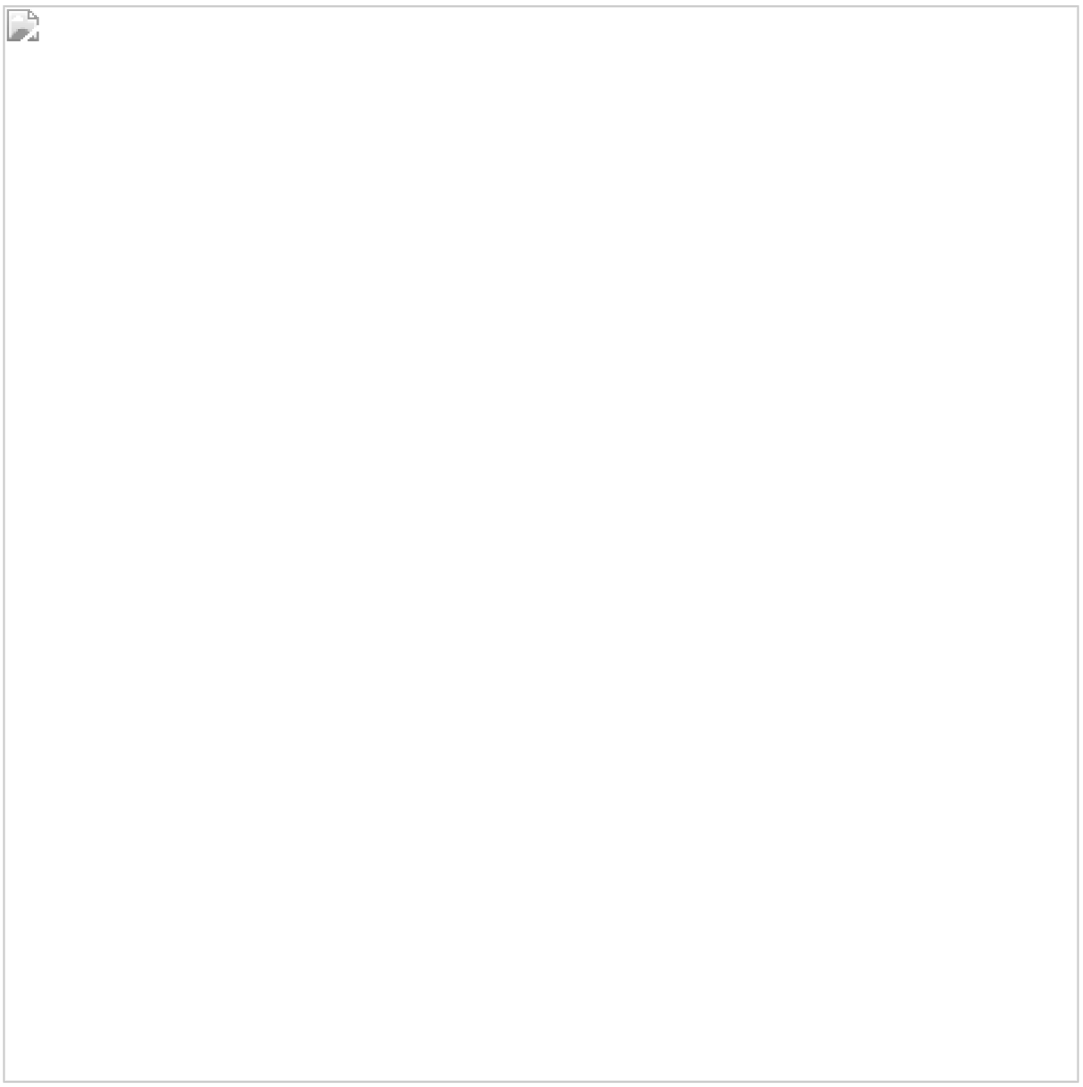
Odysseus knew that even if he overcame the giant, they could never move the rock. They were trapped, so Odysseus made a plan.

He gave the giant bowl after bowl of wine until he was sleepy. The giant asked his name, and Odysseus said, “Noman is my name.”

When the giant fell asleep, Odysseus and his men hurt his one eye so that he could no longer see. He howled, and the other giants came running. They called to ask what was wrong. “Noman,” he cried. So they thought he was only sick and went home.

TALK ABOUT IT

A clever name saved Odysseus. Have you ever solved a problem by thinking instead of fighting?

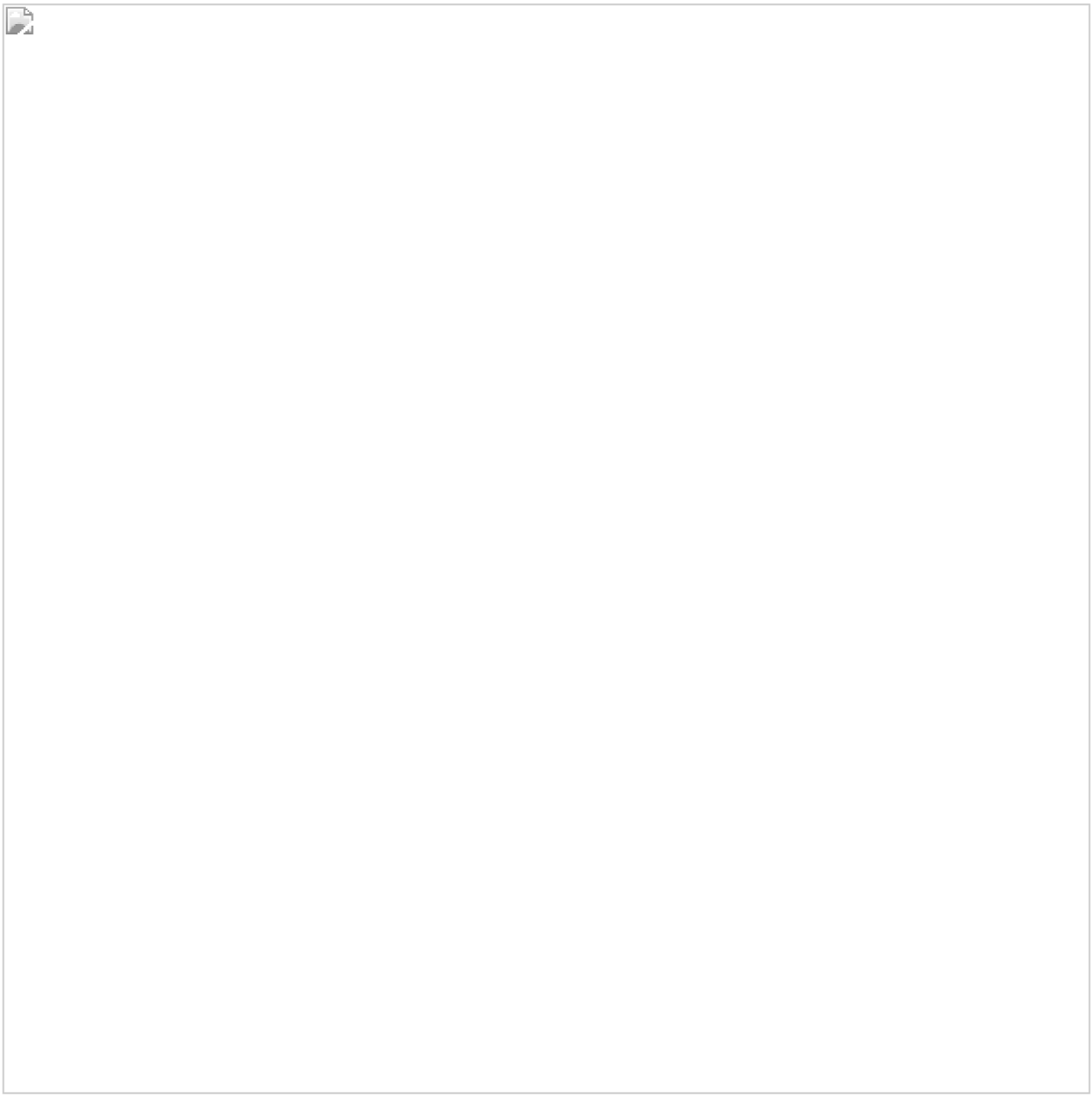


Think about it

1. What name did Odysseus give the giant?

- ○ Noman
- ○ Odysseus
- ○ Jason

Under the Rams



In the morning, the blind giant sat at the doorway with his arms out, feeling every sheep as it went by.

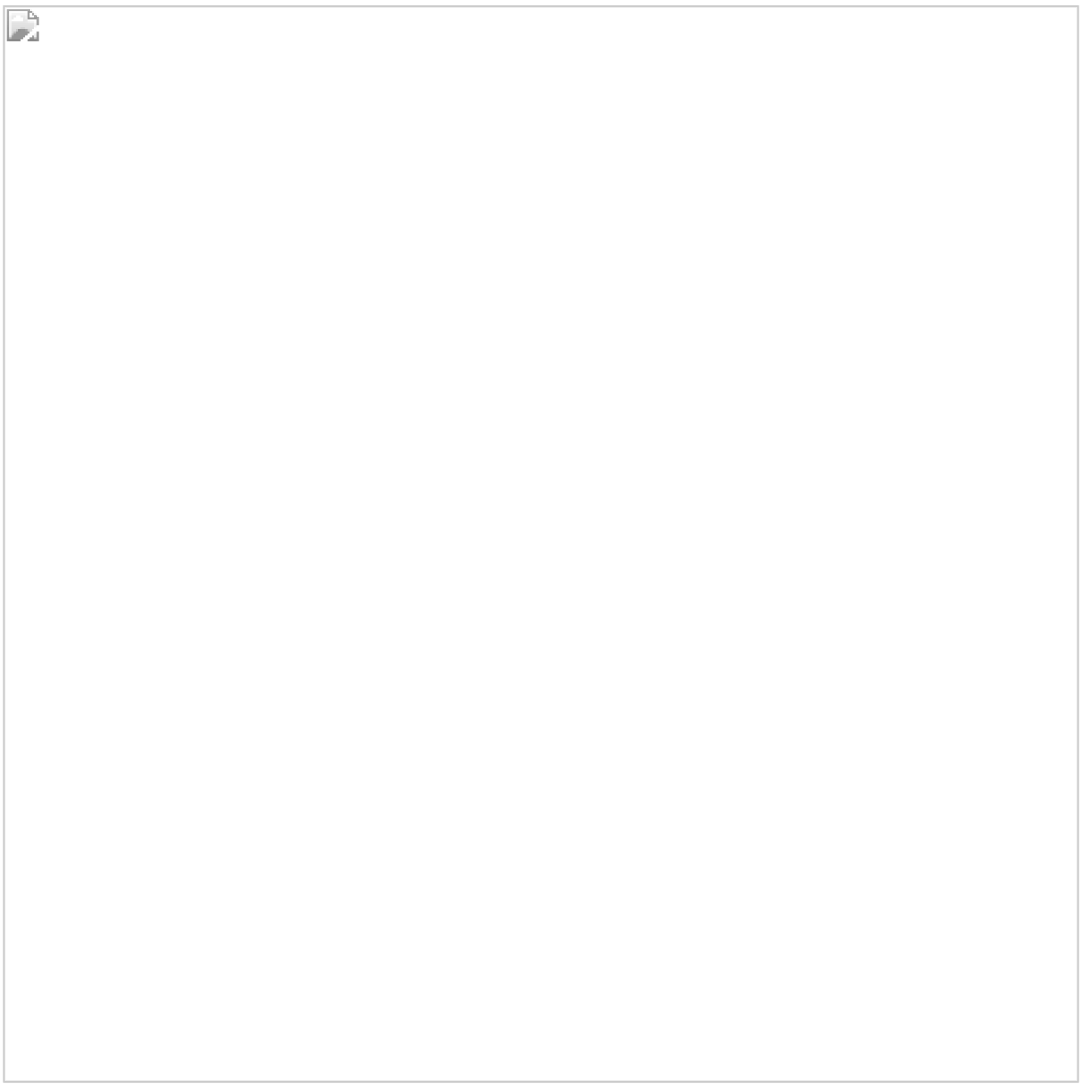
Odysseus had tied each of his men underneath the big woolly rams, and he hid himself underneath the biggest one. The giant felt only wool.

They hurried down to the ships. Some friends were lost forever, and Odysseus said, “There is no time to weep.” So they rowed away.

TALK ABOUT IT

How do you think the men felt as they hung under the rams, waiting to go past the giant?

Under the Rams · another picture

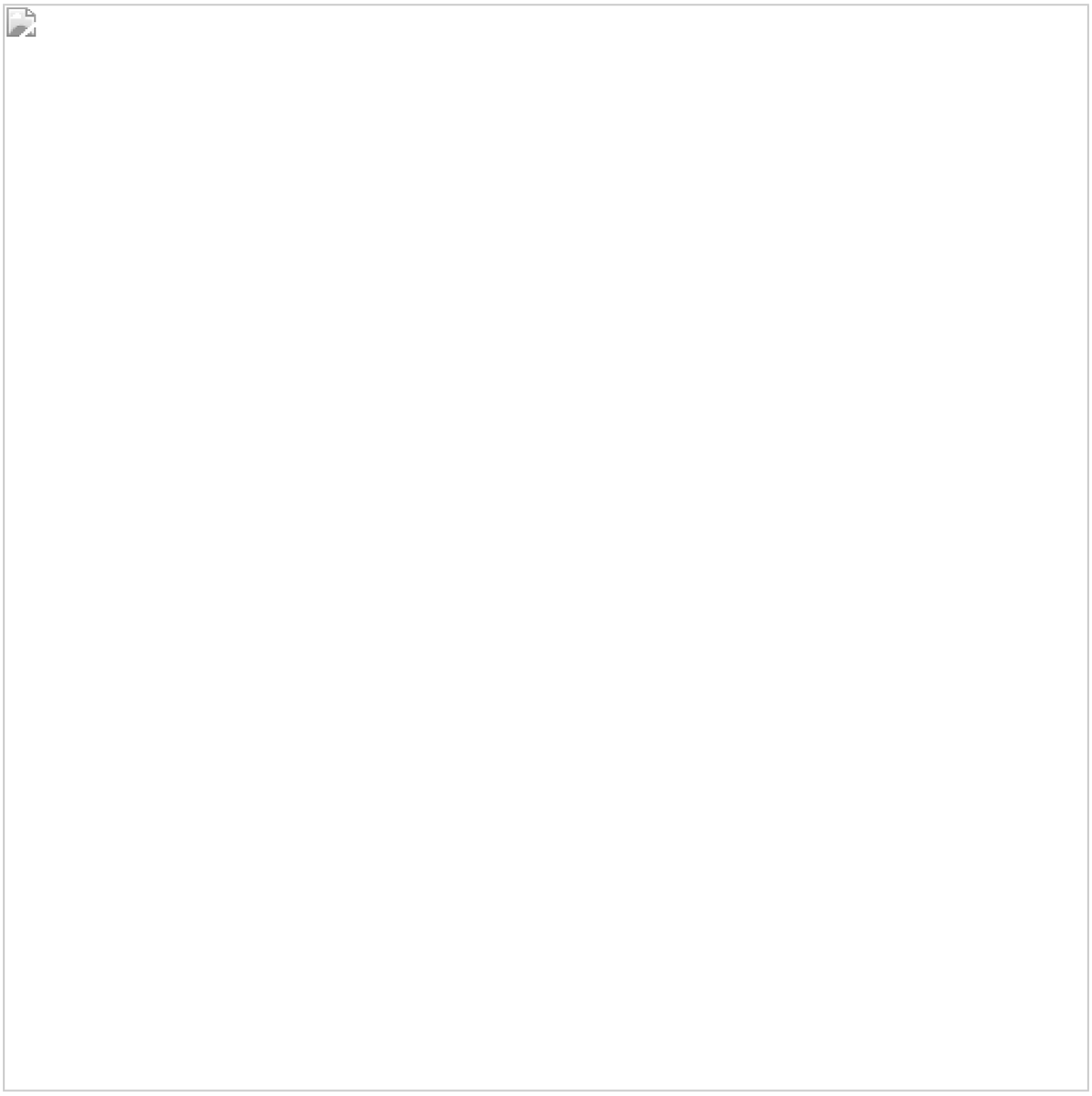


Think about it

1. How did Odysseus and his men escape?

- ○ By digging a tunnel
- ○ By flying
- ○ Under the big woolly rams

Too Proud



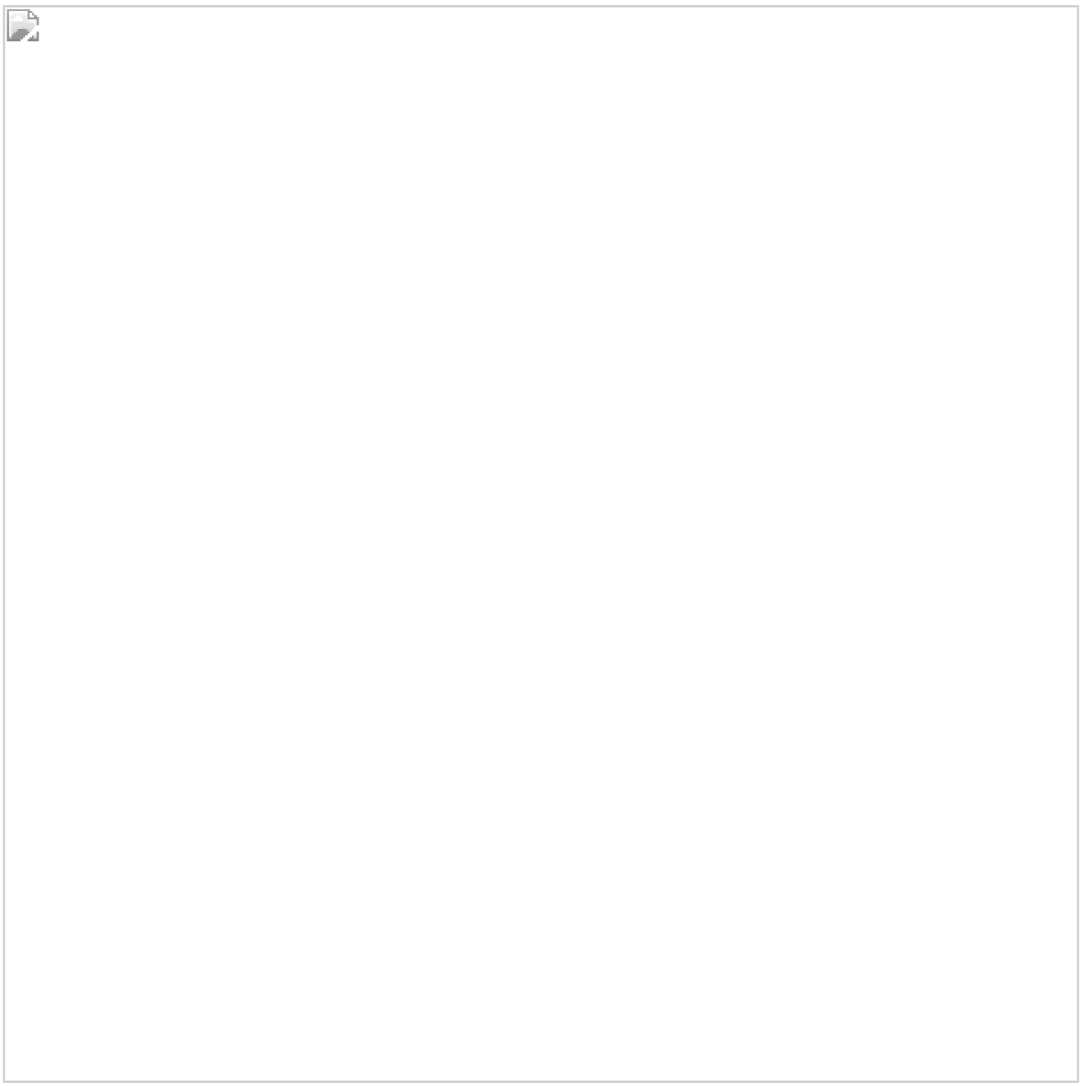
They were safe. But Odysseus could not stop. He shouted at the giant across the water, and even called out his own true name.

His men begged him not to. The giant threw a huge rock that nearly sank the ship.

Then the giant prayed to his father, Poseidon, the god of the sea: “If he ever reaches his own country,” he cried, let him come late, with all his company lost, and find sorrows in his own house. The sea god heard.

TALK ABOUT IT

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18). What do you think Odysseus should have done instead of shouting?



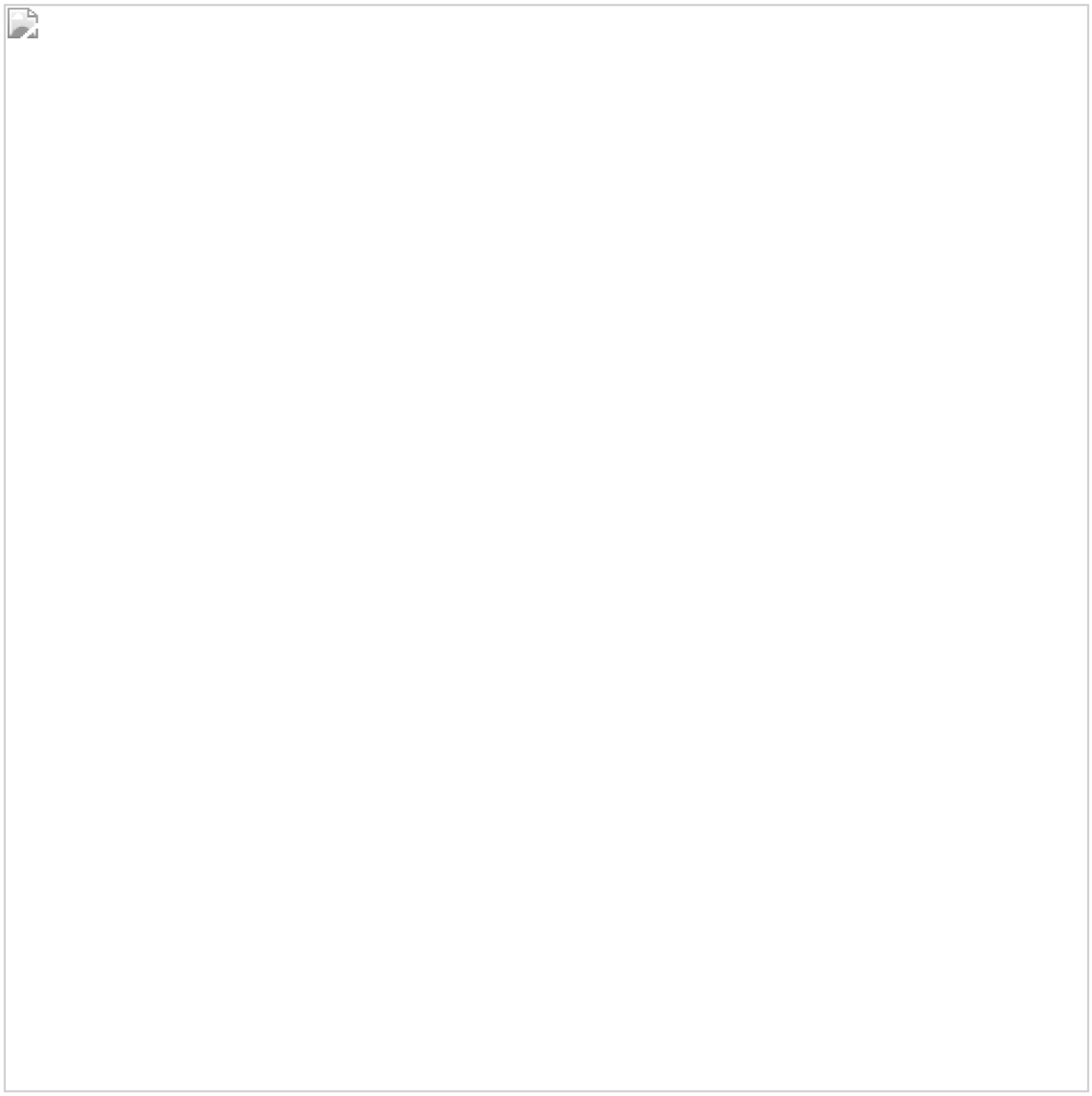
Think about it

1. What did Odysseus's men beg him to do?

- ○ Shout louder
- ○ Go back to the cave
- ○ Stop shouting at the giant

2. Odysseus won with his brain, then lost something by his pride. Can you think of a time that happened to someone you know?

The Bag of Winds and the Enchantress



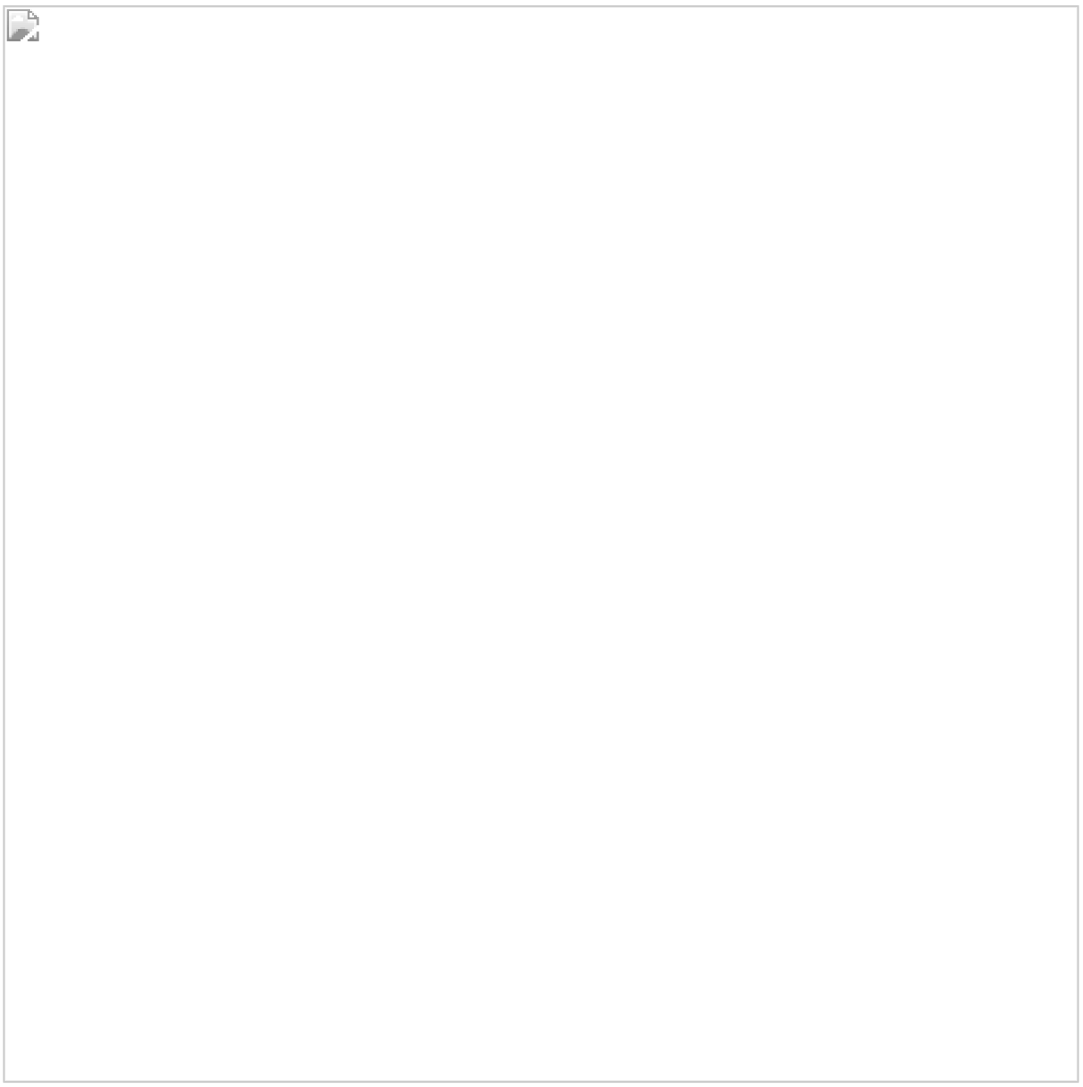
Aeolus, keeper of the winds, gave Odysseus a leather bag with every wind but the west wind tied up inside it. While Odysseus slept, his men thought it was full of treasure. They untied it, and the winds rushed out and blew them far away.

Then they came to Circe's island. She was an enchantress who turned some of his men into pigs.

Odysseus came with his sword. “Sheathe thy sword, I pray thee, Odysseus, and let us be at peace,” she said. She promised him no more harm, and she changed the men back, even handsomer than before.

TALK ABOUT IT

Odysseus's men opened the bag without asking. What do you think they should have done instead?

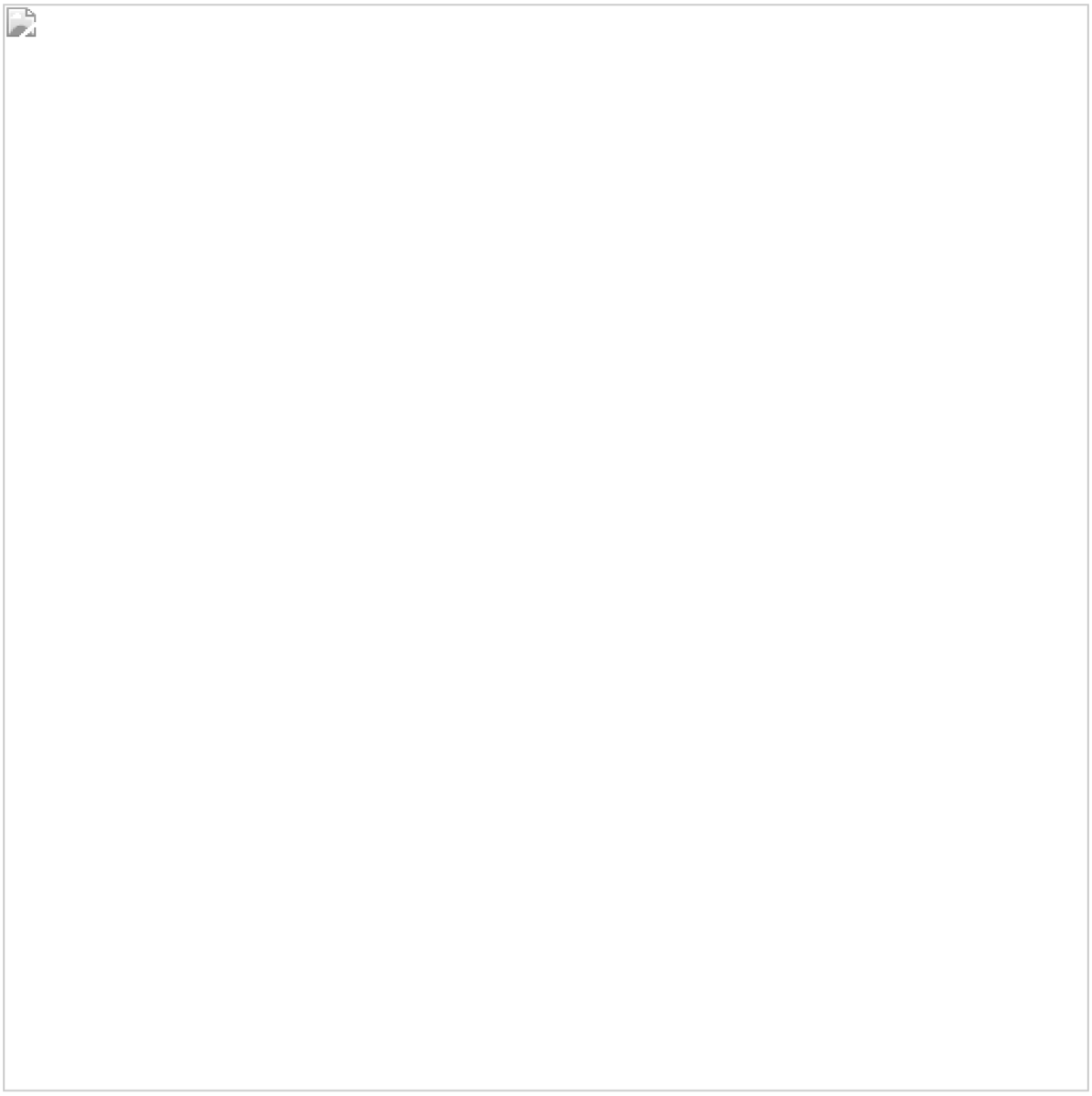


Think about it

1. What did Circe do to the men?

- ○ Gave them a big feast
- ○ Turned them into pigs
- ○ Locked them up

The Sirens' Song



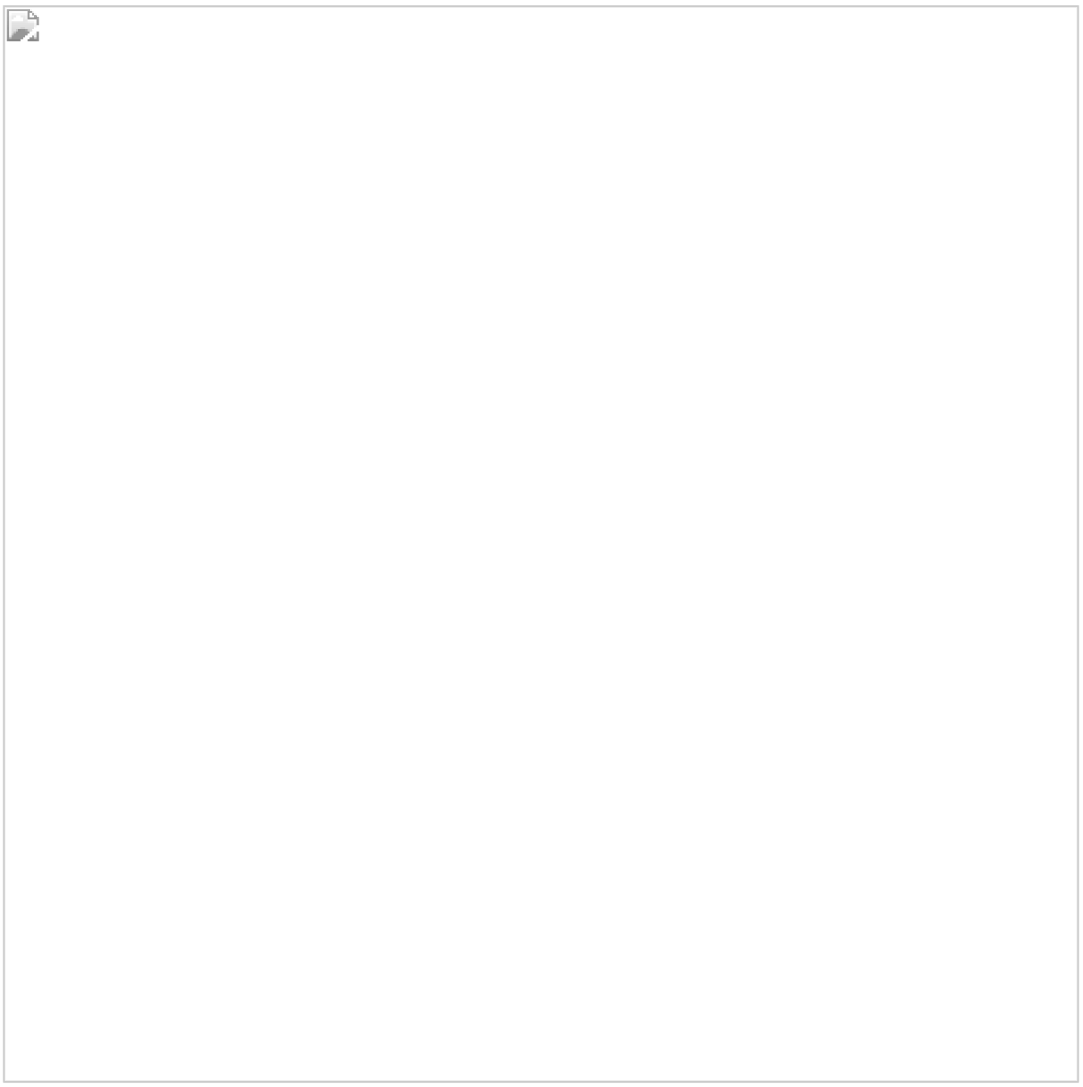
Circe warned Odysseus about dangers ahead. First came the Sirens, beautiful singers whose songs lured sailors to the shore, where they were lost.

Odysseus filled his men's ears with wax so they could not hear. But he wanted to hear the song, so he had himself tied to the mast.

When the song began, “Come hither, come hither, brave Odysseus,” he begged to be let go. His men could not hear, and they tied him even tighter, and rowed on until the island was behind them.

TALK ABOUT IT

Odysseus knew he could not trust himself, so he asked his friends to hold him. Who helps you when something is hard to resist?

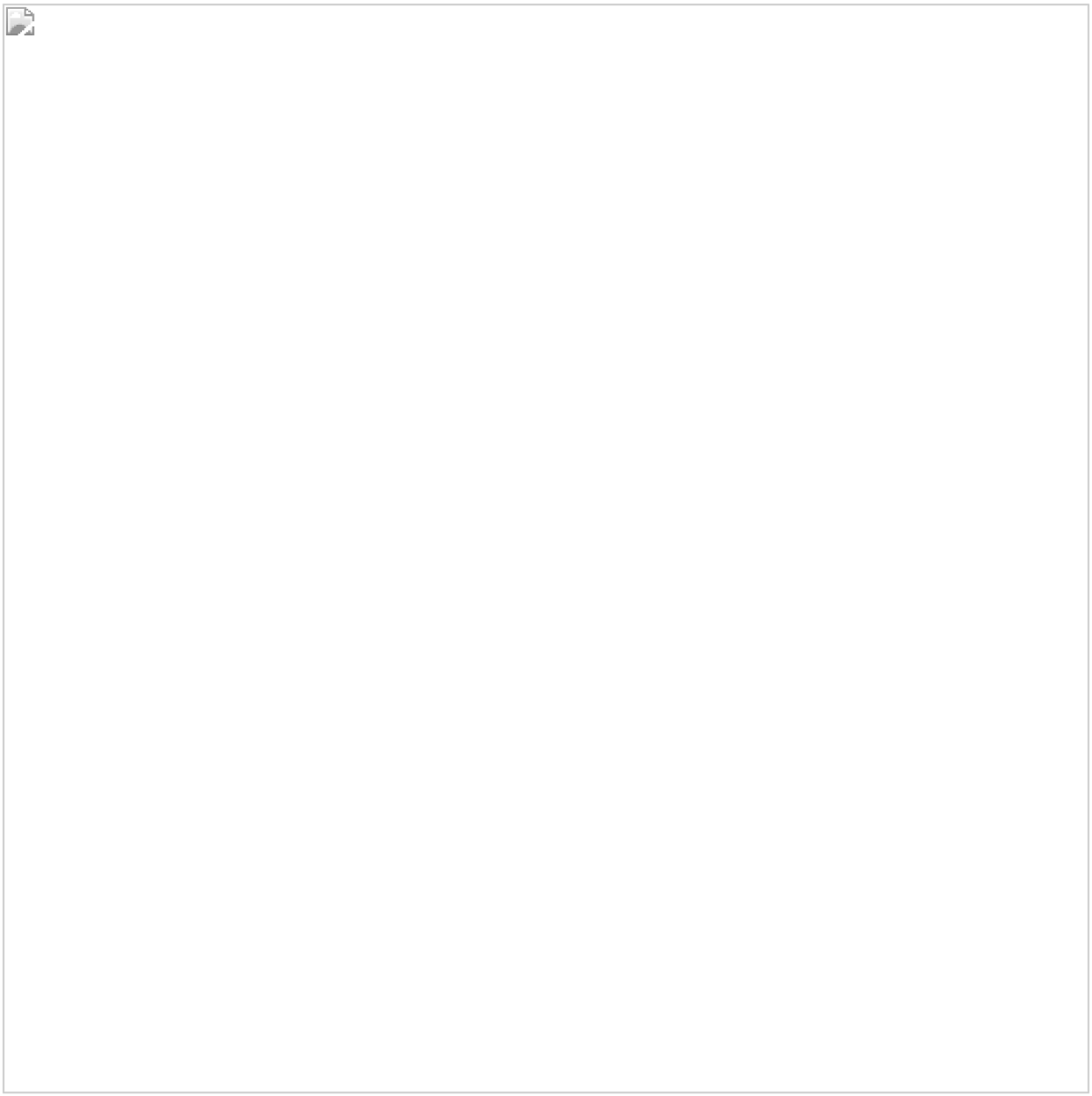


Think about it

1. Why did the men put wax in their ears?

- ○ So they could not hear the Sirens
- ○ To keep out the cold
- ○ To hear better

Eight Years on an Island



Next came two rocks with terrible dangers: a monster named Scylla, and a whirlpool named Charybdis. Odysseus lost six more men, and then the whirlpool wrecked the ship. He alone escaped, clinging to a piece of wreckage.

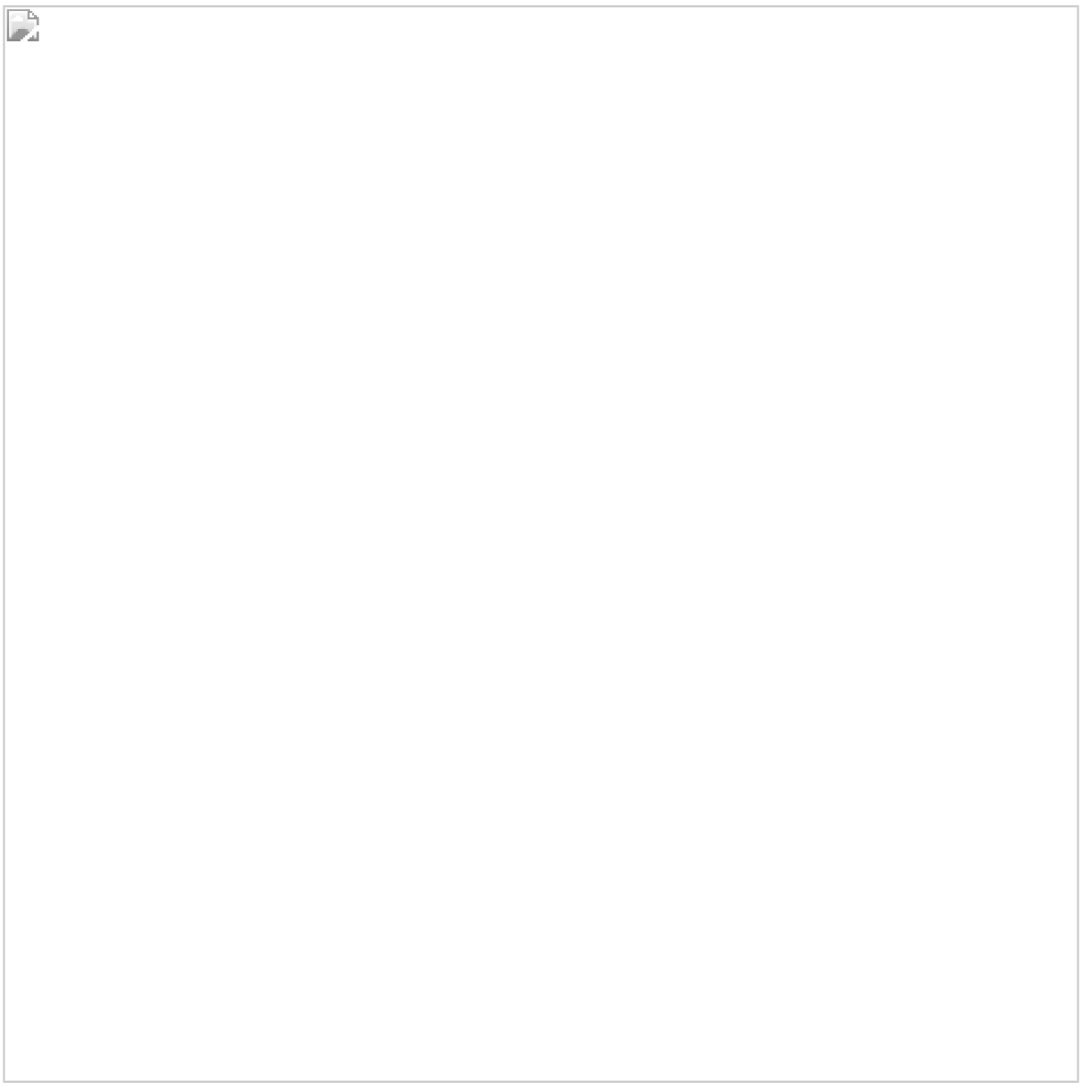
He washed up on the island of Calypso, a goddess who was very kind to him. “Stay with me, and thou shalt never grow old and never die,” said Calypso.

But Odysseus had a great homesickness. For eight years, he could not leave.

TALK ABOUT IT

Calypso offered Odysseus a life that never ended. He wanted home more. Why do you think home meant so much?

Eight Years on an Island · another picture

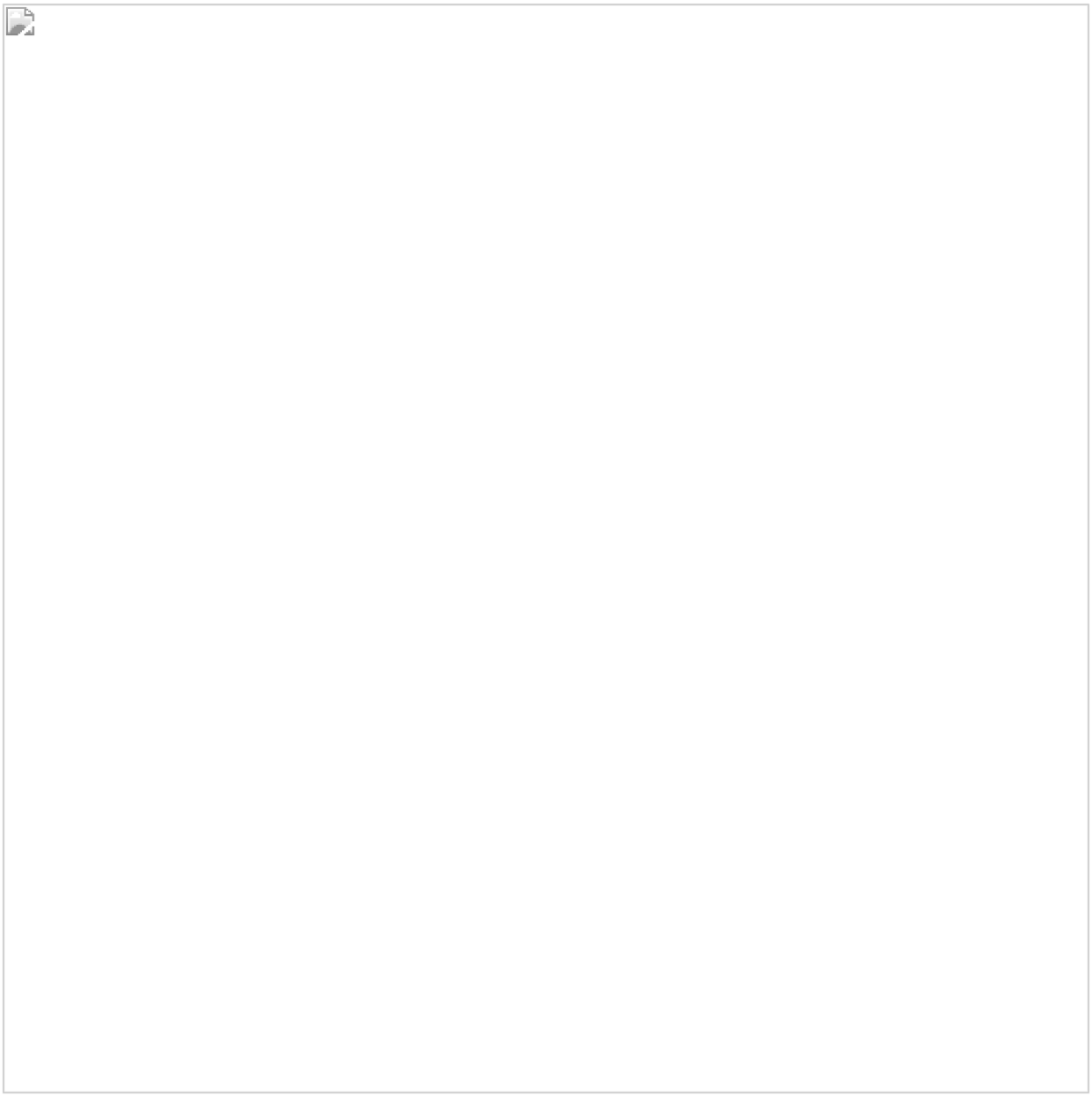


Think about it

1. What did Calypso promise Odysseus if he stayed?

- ○ A castle
- ○ He would never grow old or die
- ○ A ship

The Raft and the Veil



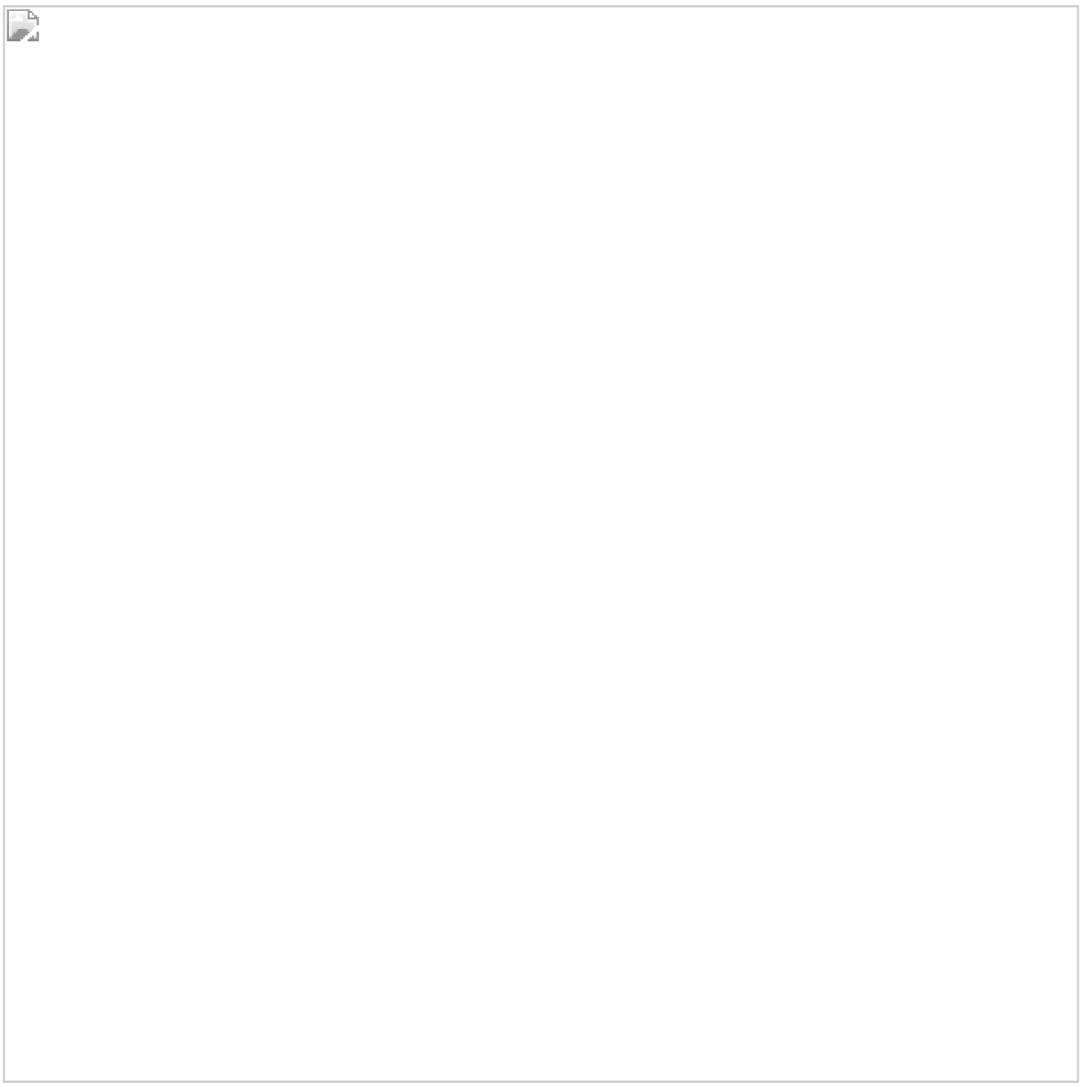
At last the goddess Athene asked the gods for help. Hermes told Calypso she must let him go. She told him to build a raft, and she gave him food and clothes.

After eighteen days at sea he saw the land of the Phaeacians. But Poseidon, still angry, sent a great storm to destroy him.

Then a kind sea-nymph gave Odysseus her veil to wrap around his body, and he finally reached the shore.

TALK ABOUT IT

A sea-nymph helped Odysseus when he was in trouble. Who has helped you when you needed it?

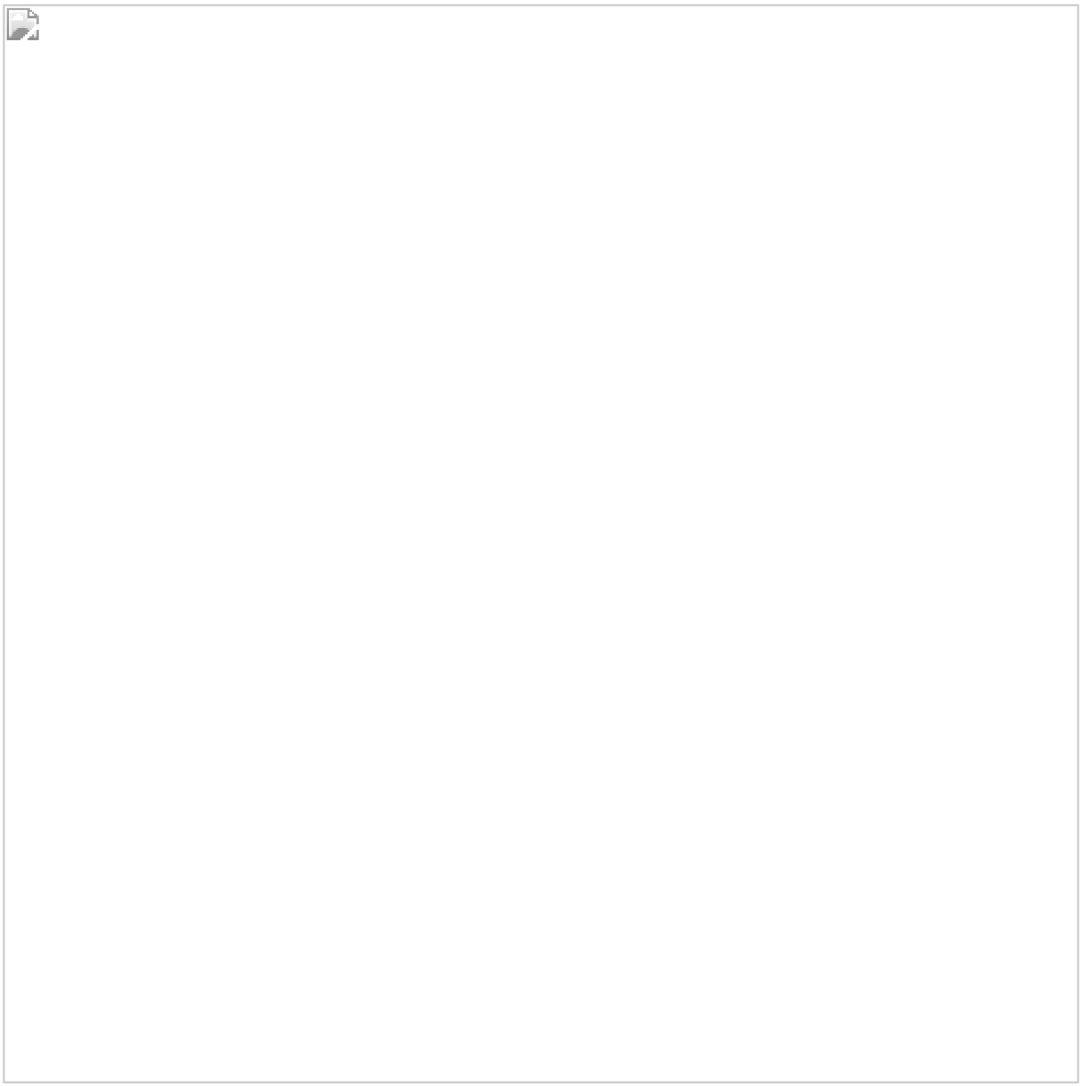


Think about it

1. What did the sea-nymph give Odysseus?

- ○ A boat
- ○ A sword
- ○ Her veil

Nausicaa



Odysseus slept under the olive trees. Princess Nausicaa was playing ball with her maids. The ball fell in the river, they screamed, and Odysseus woke up.

He had lost his clothes, so he held up leafy branches. The maids shrieked and ran, but Nausicaa stayed. “He is only a poor shipwrecked man,” she said. “Come, give him food and drink, and fetch him clothing.”

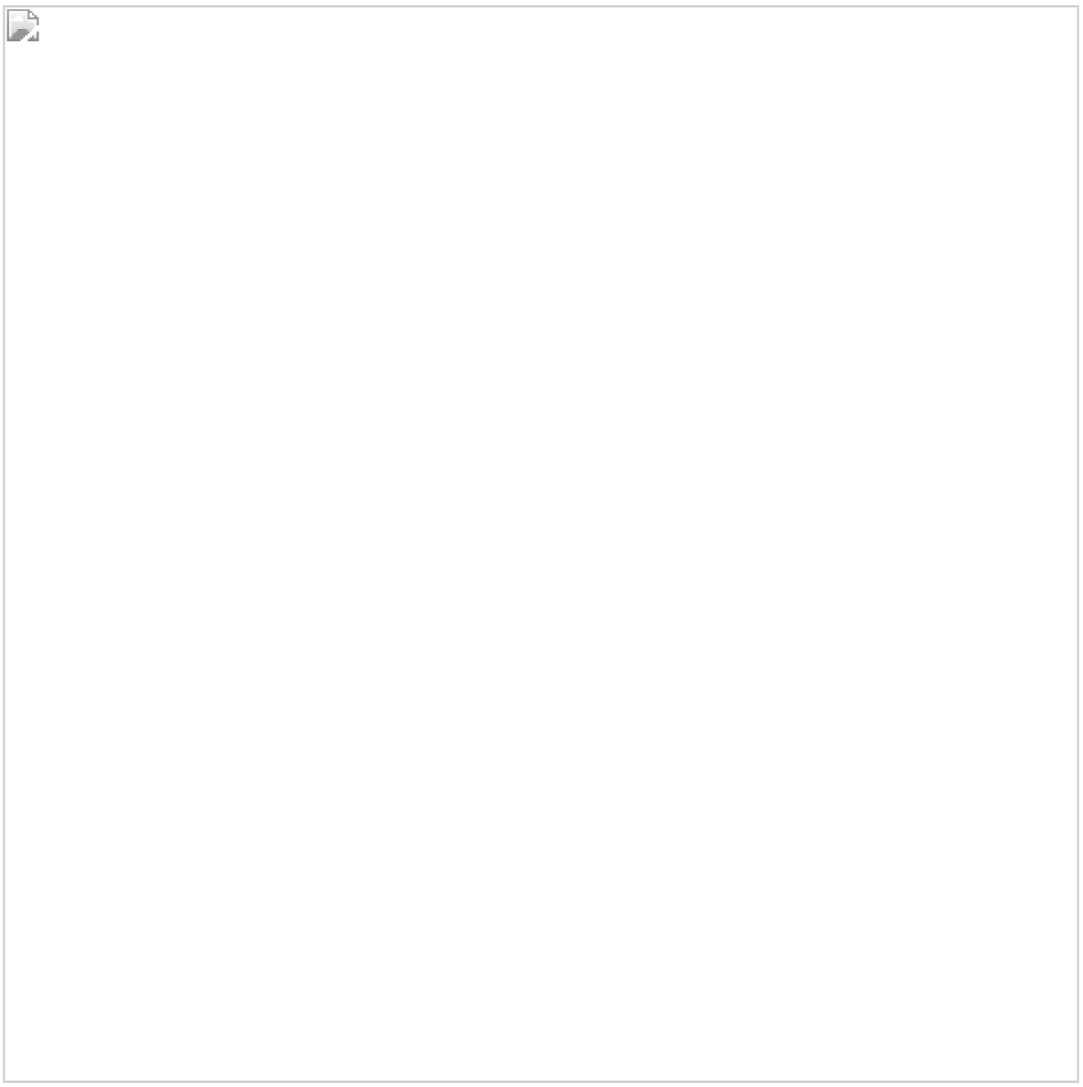
Her father the King fed Odysseus and promised to send him home. When singers sang of Troy, Odysseus wept, and told them who he was.

“All the days of my life I shall remember thee, Nausicaa,” he said, “for thou hast given me my life.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Odysseus was a king, but here he was a stranger with nothing. The maids ran away, and Nausicaa stayed. What does that tell you about her?

Nausicaa · another picture



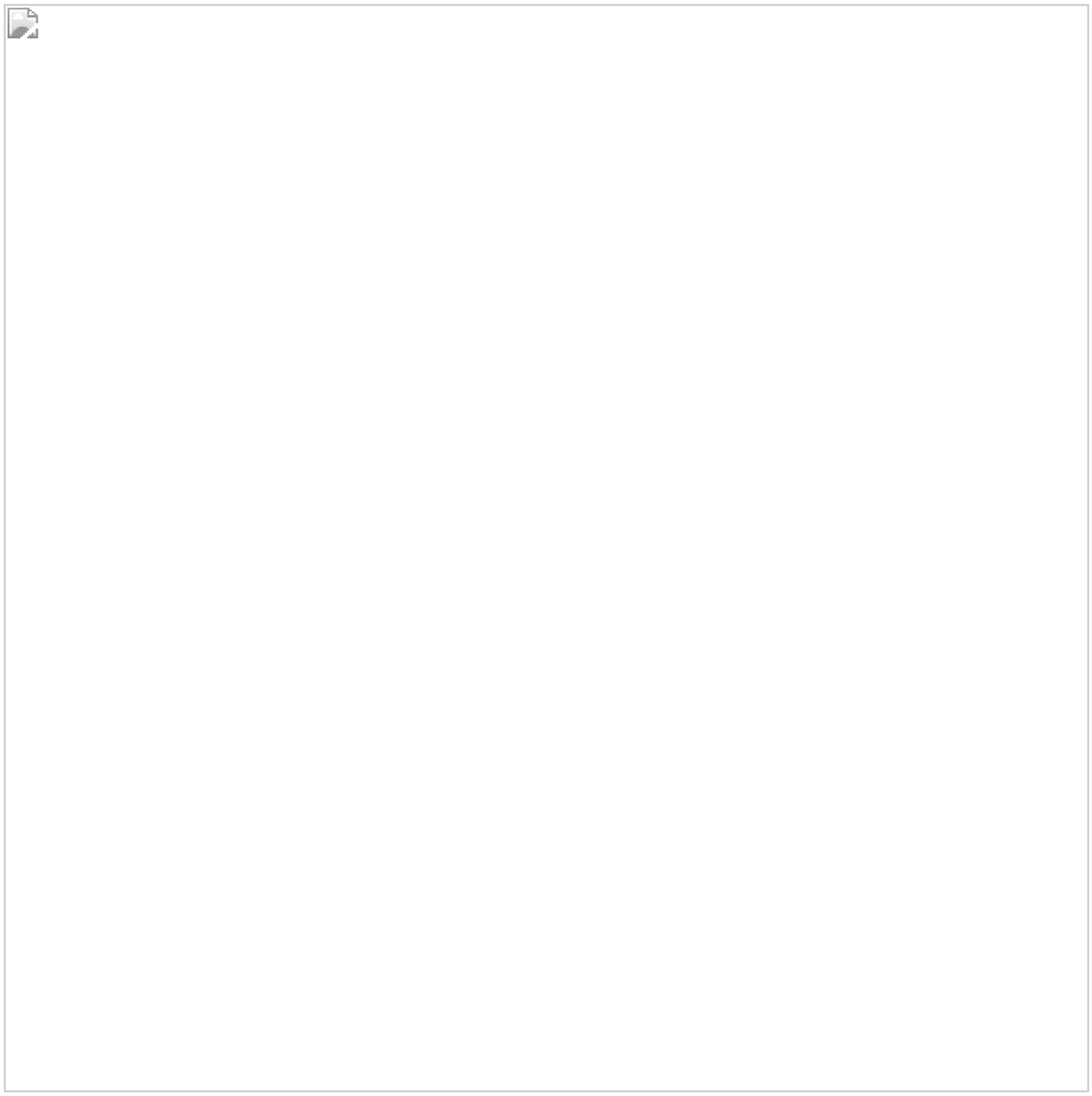
Think about it

1. What did Nausicaa say to her maids about Odysseus?

- ○ Give him food, drink and clothes
- ○ Run away
- ○ Tell the king

2. What is one way you could help a stranger who has nothing?

Home at Last



The next day the Phaeacians carried Odysseus to their ship. He fell asleep to the rush of the water. When the morning stars rose, they were at Ithaca.

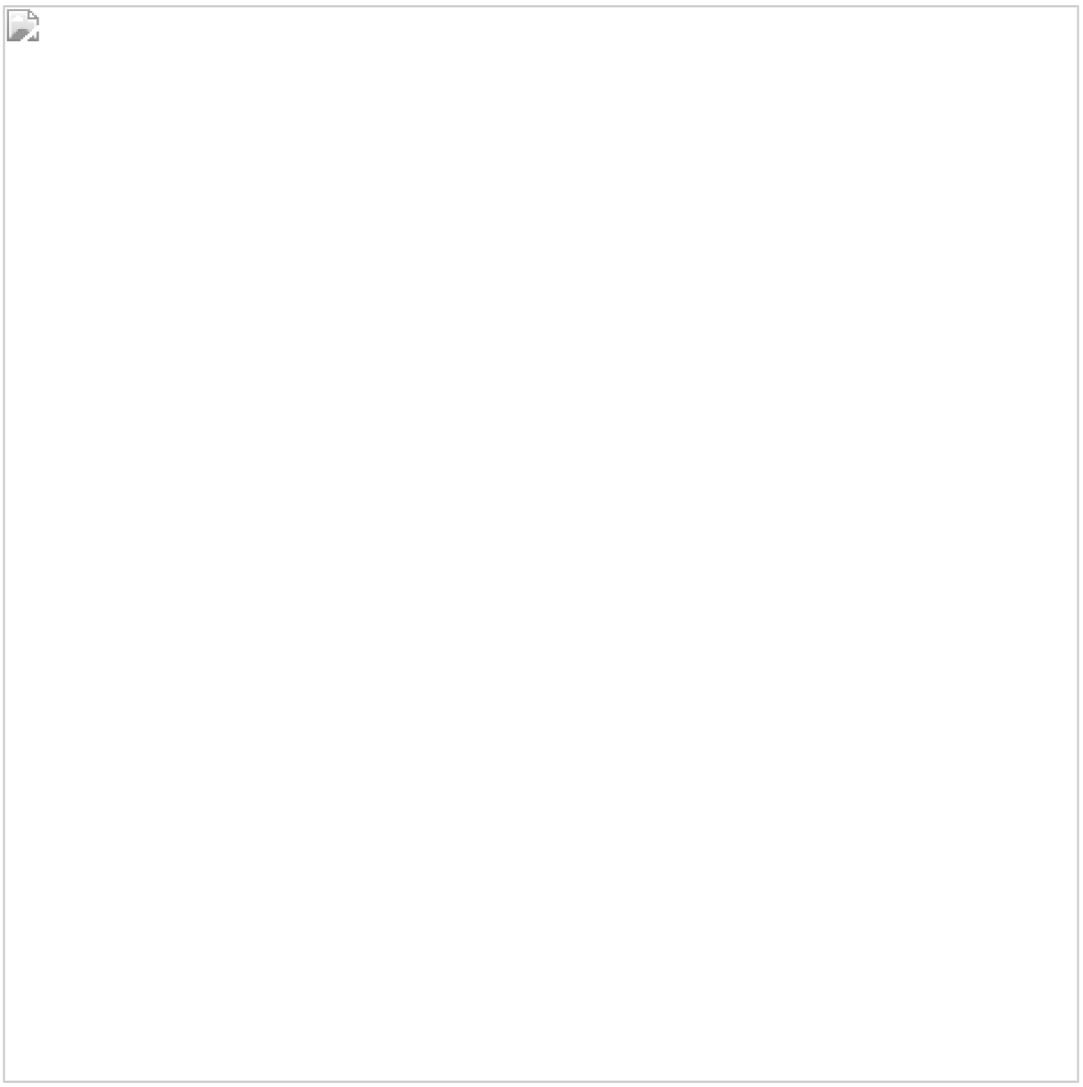
They gently carried him ashore, laid him under an olive tree with his treasures beside him, and sailed away.

When he woke, a mist covered everything, and he did not know his own island. Then the goddess Athene came, smiling with kind gray eyes, and told him all that had happened while he was gone, and what he must do to win back his kingdom and his Queen.

TALK ABOUT IT

After so many years and so many dangers, Odysseus was finally home. What do you think he did first?

Home at Last · another picture



Think about it

1. Who met Odysseus on the shore?

- ○ Penelope
- ○ The goddess Athene
- ○ Polyphemus

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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