

The Cast of Gods and Men

A Quick Reference

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"My father had me learn every word of Homer ... to see me develop into a good man." —Niceratus of Athens

"Homer enthusiasts say that Homer has been the educator of Greece, and for the education and government of humans, we should build up our entire lives with the assistance of this poet." —Socrates of Athens

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The following comes from the Cave's
The Best of Homer's Odyssey.

GENERAL CATEGORIES OF BEINGS

GODS are human-like beings that are immortal and ageless because of their consumption of wine-like nectar and bread-like ambrosia. In general, the gods are more powerful than humans. They are glorious beings who live an easy and blessed life without care.

HUMAN BEINGS are mortals (their defining attribute). They age and die (in part at least) because they drink wine and eat bread. Although some humans live a relatively easy life, human life is generally marked by toil and struggle, misfortune and wretchedness.

IMMORTAL GODS AND GODDESSES

Gods or goddesses with significant roles in the Odyssey

AEOLUS (Aiolos): son of Hippotas. Aeolus, the master of winds, lives on a floating island, Aeolia, with his wife

and twelve children (six boys and six girls, who are paired off in marriage). Odysseus visits and feasts with him and his family for a month. As a parting gift, Aeolus gives his guest a bagful of winds to speed him on his way home. When they are near to Ithaca, Odysseus' men open the bag—jealously suspecting it is full of silver and gold. The winds escape and drive them far away from their homeland again, back toward Aeolus' island. Meeting them, Aeolus refuses to receive and host them again.

ATHENA (Athēnē): daughter of Zeus (and Metis), Athena was born from her father's head. In the form of Mentos at times and Mentor at others, though operating all along as the goddess she is, Athena encourages and helps Telemachus in his journey to discover news of his father's fate. She also serves as Odysseus' chief advocate among the assembly of the gods, arguing on his behalf that he should be able to return home. Athena helps Odysseus along the way, taking on various forms. She works alongside him and his men when he is battling and slaughtering the suitors. Finally, at the prodding of Zeus, she joins Odysseus and the vengeance-seeking relatives of the suitors in peace, friendship, and abundance.

CALYPSO (Kalypsō or Kalypsō): daughter of Atlas. After Odysseus' men perish on the sea, the goddess Calypso hosts Odysseus on her faraway island, Ogygia, for seven years, promising to make him immortal and ageless, as well as her husband. Nevertheless, at the insistence of the other gods expressed in a message given by Hermes, she sends him homeward on a raft in the eighth year.

CHARYBDIS: daughter of Gaia and Poseidon; a monster. Three times every day Charybdis sucks down the water that surrounds her, and three times again she sends it up. After leaving the enchantress Circe, Odysseus and his men avoid Charybdis by sailing beneath Scylla instead. Later, Odysseus avoids her sucking pull by hanging on to the branch of a fig tree on the cliff above her monstrous whirlpool. When Charybdis spits up his raft again, he paddles away with his hands.

CIRCE (Kirkē): daughter of Helios and Perse; sister of Aeetes. When Odysseus and his men come to Aea, the goddess Circe's island, the enchantress Circe gives half a drink mixed with a drug that causes them to forget their homeland and turns them into swine. With the help of Hermes and the protection of the herb called moly, Odysseus forces Circe to free his men. Friends now, they remain with the goddess feasting for a year. At year's end, and before they depart, she explains how Odysseus must talk to Tiresias in Hades. Later, after they return from Hades, she warns him about the dangers of the voyage ahead—the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, and that they must avoid the island of the sun god Helios.

EIDOTHEA: daughter of Proteus. Eidothea pities and saves Menelaus and his men. She commands Menelaus to take hold of her divine father, the old man of the sea, by stealth when he is resting among his seals. She promises that he will tell the stranded man everything he needs to know to make it home.

HELIOS (Hyperion), the Sun: son of the Titan Hyperion and the Titaness Theia; with Perse the father of Circe; with Neaera the father of the shepherd-nymphs Phaethusa and Lampetia. The sun god, Helios threatens to withdraw his light from the living and shine on the dead alone in Hades after Odysseus' men slaughter and eat the best of his cattle. Zeus convinces him to keep shining on the living by promising to strike down Odysseus' men.

HERMES: son of Zeus and Maia. The messenger of his father, Hermes frequently carries Zeus' important com-

mands to others. On a mission from his father before the *Odyssey* begins, he advises Aegisthus not to seduce Clytemnestra, Agamemnon's wife. Later, he orders Calypso to release Odysseus. One of the handful of gods who show up to view Aphrodite tied up with Ares, Hermes assures Apollo he would willingly be trapped like Ares if he could sleep with Aphrodite. Serving as psychopomp, Hermes escorts the suitors to the Underworld.

INO: daughter of Cadmus, the king of Thebes. Called Leukothea, the White Goddess (elsewhere), the once human and now immortal sea nymph Ino advises Odysseus to leave his raft and swim for Scheria, the island of the Phaeacians. She gives him an immortal veil that serves as a life preserver.

POSEIDON: son of Cronus and Rhea; brother of Zeus; with Thoōsa the father of the Cyclops Polyphemus; the forefather of the Phaeacian king and queen Alcinous and Arete. Called the Earth-shaker, Poseidon is angry with and harasses Odysseus during his journey home for blinding his son Polyphemus. When the Phaeacians sail Odysseus to Ithaca, Poseidon punishes them by turning the offending ship into stone and covering over their island with a mountain.

PROTEUS (the old man of the sea): father of the sea nymph Eidothea. A shapeshifting sea god, who lives on the island of Pharos, off Egypt, Proteus reveals to Menelaus what he and his men must do to return home.

SCYLLA: daughter of Crataeis. A monster with twelve feet, six necks and heads, each with three rows of teeth, and living in a cave on the side of a cliff, Scylla fishes for dolphins and seadogs and whatever other great fish or sea monsters she may happen to catch. When Odysseus sails nearby, she snatches up six of his men and devours them.

SIRENS: the two Sirens (two in the *Odyssey*) cast a spell on men when they pass by their island in their ships. They do so by their clear singing, their sweet-sounding song. The result, contrary to hope, is death, when the Sirens draw the enchanted men to themselves. When Odysseus and his men row by, Odysseus safely listens to their song—this, thanks to Circe, who forewarned him, directing him to tie himself to the mast of his ship and have all his men press beeswax into their ears.

ZEUS: son of Cronus and Rhea; brother of Poseidon; father of Athena; the father of gods and men. Zeus blames men such as Aegisthus for their own destruction. With Athena, he plans Odysseus' homecoming and later recommends peace and friendship for Odysseus and the suitors. Zeus destroys Odysseus' men with a blast of lightning after they eat the cattle of the sun god Helios.

Gods or goddesses who appear in the Odyssey without a significant role

APHRODITE: daughter of Zeus and Dione; the wife of Hephaestus (in the *Odyssey*). The bard Demodocus sings the story of the adulterous love affair between Ares and Aphrodite, and how Hephaestus cleverly caught them in the middle of the act. Odysseus' wife, Penelope, is frequently compared to Aphrodite in terms of her great beauty.

APOLLO: son of Zeus and Leto; twin brother of Artemis. Odysseus prays to Apollo for the glory-boast when he is battling the suitors. Otherwise, Apollo shows up in many small ways in the *Odyssey*, from sending a

positive omen to Telemachus, to laughing at Ares and Aphrodite with the other gods, to figuring into Eumaeus' story about his homeland, Syria, in that he and his sister Artemis gently slay the inhabitants in old age.

ARES: son of Zeus and Hera. Ares is the handsome and speedy god of war. The bard Demodocus sings the story about the adulterous love affair between Ares and Aphrodite, and how Hephaestus cleverly outdoes them by catching them in the middle of the act.

ARTEMIS: daughter of Zeus and Leto; twin sister of Apollo. The swineherd Eumaeus explains that Artemis hit his nurse with one of her many arrows of disease when they were sailing away from Syria, his homeland, with Phoenician merchants. Both Penelope and Nausicaa are compared to Artemis in terms of beauty.

BOREAS, THE NORTH WIND: the divine wind that oftentimes blows a ship where it needs to go. Odysseus shelters from Boreas when he first reaches Scheria, the island of the Phaeacians.

CRONUS (Kronos): father of Zeus. Homer calls the god "scheming" Cronus, the one whose counsels are crooked.

DAWN (Ēōs): wife of Tithonos. Dawn brings light to mortal human beings and the immortal gods in the early morning, at the moment when night turns into day. She is "early-born rosy-fingered Dawn," representing the colorful rays of the sun first shining over the earth. Lampus and Phaethon are the horses that pull her chariot.

EUROS, THE EAST WIND: Homer explains that Euros, the East Wind, melts the snow after Zephyrus, the West Wind, has dumped it.

The **FATES (the Spinners) (Klōthes):** Homer presents the Spinners as the ones who spin out a man's fate "with their flaxen thread when he came to be on the day his mother gave birth to him."

HADES: son of Cronus and Rhea; husband of Persephone. Hades is the god of the Underworld, the "house of Hades." "Hades" is synonymous with the destination and dwelling place of the dead. Odysseus visits Hades to speak with the seer Tiresias.

HEPHAESTUS: son of Zeus and Hera; husband of Aphrodite (the Grace Charis is his wife in the *Iliad*). Hephaestus is the skillful and inventive fire-smith god who makes, in the *Iliad*, Achilles' shield and armor. In the *Odyssey*, he is responsible for the immortal and ageless golden and silver dogs that stand guard outside Alcinous' palace. Limited by various bodily deformities, including disabled legs and feet, Hephaestus is a wise god who offers counsel and outsmarts other gods. When he catches and punishes Ares, who is having an affair with Aphrodite, the bard Demodocus states, "Bad deeds do not thrive. The slow overtakes the swift—just as now Hephaestus, slow as he is, has seized Ares, even though he is the swiftest of the gods who hold Olympus. Lame, he has seized him by craft. Ares must pay the fine for adultery."

MUSE: daughter of Zeus or Apollo (as Odysseus speculates). Homer calls on the Muse to reveal to him the story of Odysseus' painful wanderings and return home. It is the Muse who gifts bards with their song. The phantom-soul of Agamemnon reveals that all nine Muses wept over Achilles after he died.

NAIAD NYMPHS (the Naiads): daughters of Zeus. Odysseus hides his treasure in a cave on Ithaca that belongs to the Naiad Nymphs, ones to whom he offered hecatombs before he left for Troy.

NOTOS, THE SOUTH WIND: storms occasionally arise on sea thanks to Notos, the South Wind.

PHAETHUSA AND LAMPETIA: daughters of Helios Hyperion (the sun god) and Neaera. Nymphs with beautiful long locks of hair, they are the divine shepherdesses who watch over the cattle and sheep of the Sun.

ZEPHYRUS, THE WEST WIND: Aeolus sends Zephyrus to blow Odysseus and his men home. Athena sends him to carry Telemachus across the sea. Homer reveals that Zephyrus brings snow; thus, the West Wind can be very cold. Though Zephyrus can be a fair wind, he oftentimes brings stormy winds.

HUMAN BEINGS

ACHILLES: son of the mortal man Peleus and the goddess Thetis; father of Neoptolemus. When Odysseus encounters Achilles in the Underworld, Achilles tells him he would rather be a landless man than one who rules over the dead.

AEGISTHUS (Aigisthos): son of Thyestes. After killing the bard who had been tasked with guarding her, Aegisthus seduces Clytemnestra and eventually murders Agamemnon, her husband, upon his return home from Troy. Agamemnon's son Orestes later takes revenge by killing him.

AGAMEMNON: son of Atreus; husband of Clytemnestra; father of Orestes; brother of Menelaus; leader of the allied Achaean army in Troy. Agamemnon is murdered by Aegisthus upon his return home from Troy. He praises Penelope's faithfulness and curses Clytemnestra's treachery.

AGELAUS: son of Damastor; a suitor. Agelaus bids Telemachus to ask Penelope to choose and marry the best of the suitors. Agelaus takes the lead with several of the other suitors after Antinous and Eurymachus die during the slaughter of the suitors. Odysseus kills him by running him through with his spear.

ALCINOUS (Alkinoos): son of Nausithous; grandson of the god Poseidon; husband of Arete; father of Nausicaa and Laodamas, among other children. Alcinous is the ruler of the Phaeacians. He and his wife host Odysseus when he comes to their island, Scheria. He boasts that the Phaeacians are excellent at foot racing, dancing, singing, and sailing, among other activities. When Alcinous notices Odysseus weeping at the telling of several tales, he asks his guest to explain who he is and what troubles he has endured. After a night of feasting and storytelling, he sends Odysseus off in a Phaeacian ship to Ithaca with many gifts. When Poseidon punishes the Phaeacians for escorting Odysseus home against his will, Alcinous explains that the turning of the ship into stone is the fulfilment of an ancient prophecy.

AMPHIMEDON: son of Melaneus; a suitor. Struck down by Telemachus during the slaughter of the suitors, he encounters Agamemnon when he goes down to Hades and converses with him. Amphimedon explains why so many men have come down to the house of the dead—how Penelope deceived the suitors and how Odysseus returned home and slaughtered them.

AMPHINOMUS: son of Nisus; a suitor. Amphinomus advises the suitors not to kill Telemachus, “the offspring of a king.” When Odysseus defeats the beggar Irus, Amphinomus offers him bread and wine and blesses him with future happiness. Odysseus attempts to warn him of the coming destruction, but Amphinomus fails to leave for his own home. Later, he calls on all the suitors to stop abusing the wandering stranger (Odysseus). Of all the suitors, Penelope likes him the best. During the slaughter of the suitors, Telemachus spears Amphinomus from behind as he is rushing at Odysseus with sword drawn.

ANTICLEIA: daughter of Autolycus; wife of Laertes; mother of Odysseus. Odysseus encounters his mother Anticleia in the Underworld. She explains that she perished thanks to her longing for Odysseus’ return and for his counsels.

ANTINOUS (Antinoos): son of Eupeithes. One of the “best of the suitors,” Antinous defends the behavior of the suitors, blaming it on Penelope’s own tricks. Several times he advises the suitors to slay Telemachus. Penelope abhors Antinous, criticizing him for his lack of care for suppliants. She later prays for his death. Antinous upbraids the swineherd Eumaeus for bringing a stranger (Odysseus) to the house. He later throws a footstool at the stranger in anger after the stranger censures him for his stinginess. Amphinomus is the first to die during the slaughter of the suitors. Odysseus shoots him with an arrow through his throat.

ARETE: daughter of Rhexenor; granddaughter of Poseidon; wife of Alcinous; mother of Nausicaa and Laodamas, among other children. Throwing his arms around her knees, Odysseus first supplicates noble-minded Arete for help when he comes to Scheria. Along with Alcinous, Arete questions Odysseus. She praises him for his mind and looks and suggests the Phaeacians give him more gifts.

CLYTEMNESTRA (Klutaimnēstrē): daughter of Tyndareus; wife of Agamemnon and later Aegisthus; mother of Orestes. Clytemnestra is seduced by Aegisthus and subsequently plots to kill Agamemnon.

CTESIPPUS: son of Polythereses; a suitor. At the prodding of Athena, Ctesippus throws an ox-hoof at Odysseus. During the slaughter of the suitors, the cowherd Philoetius spears him in the chest, declaring the spear is meant to make up for the ox-hoof.

DEMODOCUS: the blind Phaeacian bard who plays the lyre and, thanks to the Muse, beautifully sings when Odysseus visits Alcinous and Arete and the rest of the Phaeacians. He is “honored by the people.” Among other tales, he sings about Odysseus’ quarrel with Achilles, about Hephaestus trapping Ares in his affair with Aphrodite, and about the Trojan horse and the battle for Troy. Odysseus praises him for his skill, even though Demodocus’ singing and storytelling makes the hero weep.

DIOCLES: son of Ortilochus. Telemachus and Peisistratus stay at Diocles’ house in Pherae on the way to and from Menelaus’ house in Sparta.

DOLIUS: husband of a Sicilian woman. Dolius and his six sons ally with Odysseus, Telemachus, and Laertes during the final confrontation with the relatives of the suitors.

ELPENOR: One of Odysseus’ men, Elpenor is a young man who falls from Circe’s roof and breaks his neck when he is drunk. After encountering him dead in the Underworld, Odysseus and his men return to Circe’s

island in order to properly send him off.

EUMAEUS (Eumaios): son of Ctesius; grandson of Ormenus. Thanks to the treacherous cooperation of his nurse, Eumaeus was taken by Phoenician men from his homeland island of Syria and sold to Laertes. He is Odysseus' swineherd, who faithfully watches over his master's property while he is gone. Eumaeus generously hosts the wandering stranger (Odysseus) when he comes to his dwelling, though he is skeptical of any news he has regarding Odysseus. He later carries Odysseus' bow to him during the great contest for Penelope, and allies with Odysseus, Telemachus, and Philoetius during the slaughter of the suitors and the final confrontation with the relatives of the suitors.

EUPEITHES: father of Antinous. Eupeithes leads the relatives of the suitors who want revenge into battle against Odysseus and his allies. Laertes kills him with his spear.

EURYCLEIA: Both Odysseus' and Telemachus' nurse (she was purchased and prized by Laertes), Eurycleia helps Telemachus in his preparations and is sworn to silence when he leaves for Pylos and Sparta. When Odysseus returns home (disguised as a wandering beggar), she recognizes him by means of a scar above his knee. She later rejoices after the slaughter of the suitors and identifies those servants who have been unfaithful to Odysseus. Eurycleia often works to calm Penelope. She tells Penelope that her husband has finally returned home.

EURYLOCHUS: relative of Odysseus by marriage. Eurylochus leads the group of men who go to investigate what turns out to be Circe's house. When Circe turns them into swine, Eurylochus, who remained apart from his men, reports what has happened to them. Later, Eurylochus advises Odysseus' men to slaughter and consume the cattle of the sun god Helios.

EURYMACHUS: son of Polybus; a suitor. Along with Antinous, he is the leader of the suitors. Melanthe is his lover. When the wandering stranger (Odysseus) insults him in response to his own abuse, he throws a footstool at him. After Odysseus slays Antinous, Eurymachus attempts to negotiate peace with him, including full compensation. Odysseus refuses the offer and drops him with an arrow.

EURYNOME: along with Autonoe and Hippodameia, Eurynome is a trusted handmaid of Penelope.

HELEN: daughter of Zeus (or the mortal man Tyndareus) and Leda, wife of Menelaus, though in the *Iliad* the wife of Paris. Her abduction by the Trojan Paris leads to the Achaean invasion of Troy and therefore the Trojan War. In the *Odyssey*, Helen, now back home in Sparta with Menelaus, hosts Telemachus and Peisistratus. She tells the story of Odysseus' entry into Troy disguised as a beggar. When everyone is full of sorrow, she slips a drug into the wine bowl, one that quiets heartache and anger.

IRUS (Iros): also called Arnaeus (his birth name), the beggar Irus attempts to remove the wandering stranger (Odysseus) from his own usual spot for begging. When Odysseus refuses to move, Irus challenges him to a fight. They end up boxing at the instigation of the suitors. Odysseus beats him with one punch and drags him off.

LAERTES: son of Arceisius; husband of Anticleia; father of Odysseus. Once wealthy, by the time Odysseus returns home, Laertes is living outdoors among the slaves, quietly farming. An old Sicilian woman, the wife of Dolius, takes care of him. He pines for Odysseus' return and worries greatly when Telemachus leaves to

visit Pylos and Sparta. In the final confrontation with the relatives of the suitors, Laertes spears the father of Antinous, Eupeithes.

LAODAMAS: son of Alcinous and Arete. One of the best of the Phaeacians of his generation, his brothers are Halius, Clytoneus, Euryalus (who taunts Odysseus), Elatreus, and his sister is Nausicaa. Laodamas wins in boxing when Odysseus visits. He encourages Odysseus to compete in the games. Laodamas and Halius expertly perform the ball dance.

MELANTHIUS: son of Dolius. The goatherd Melanthius abuses the wandering stranger (Odysseus) and the swineherd Eumaeus several times. He sits next to the suitor Eurymachus during the feasting and carries out various chores for the suitors, such as serving the wine and building a fire. During the slaughter of the suitors, Melanthius retrieves arms for the suitors from the storeroom. Eumaeus and Philoetius later capture him there, and after the slaughter, they and Telemachus torture and brutally kill him.

MELANTHO: daughter of Dolius. Even though Penelope raised and cherished her, Melantho does not feel sorry for Penelope's situation. She is the suitor Eurymachus' lover. Melantho upbraids the wandering stranger (Odysseus) a number of times. After the slaughter of the suitors, Melantho is hanged alongside many other unfaithful serving women.

MENELAUS: son of Atreus; brother of Agamemnon; husband of Helen. Menelaus hosts Telemachus and Peisistratus when they come to Sparta. He tells his guests about Agamemnon's murder; and how he, Menelaus, was stuck in Egypt and eventually got away; and how Odysseus is trapped on an island with the nymph Calypso.

MENTES: son of Anchialus; leader of the Taphians. Athena visits Telemachus disguised as Mentès. Mentès explains that he is friends with Odysseus, even as his father was friends with Laertes. Angry at the suitors' behavior, he tells Telemachus that Odysseus is on his way home.

MENTOR: the friend of Odysseus and the man who was given charge of Odysseus' house during his absence, Mentor rebukes the suitors during the assembly called by Telemachus. Disguised as Mentor, Athena helps and advises Telemachus during his journey abroad. She also—as Mentor—allies with Odysseus, Telemachus, and the other men during the slaughter of the suitors and stands with them during the final confrontation with the relatives of the suitors.

NAUSICAA: daughter of Alcinous and Arete. While washing laundry and playing ball, the beautiful princess Nausicaa first welcomes Odysseus to Scheria, the island of the Phaeacians, and wisely directs him to her parents' house. Her nurse is Eurymedusa.

NESTOR: son of Neleus; husband of Eurydice; father of Peisistratus and Antilochus, among others. Nestor hosts Telemachus, telling him about the great suffering the Achaeans endured at Troy, and about the successful and unsuccessful homecomings of the many heroes. He relates how Agamemnon was murdered by Aegisthus, and how Orestes, in turn, took revenge and killed his father's murderers. He sends his son Peisistratus to escort Telemachus to Sparta.

ODYSSEUS: son of Laertes and Anticleia; grandson of Autolycus and Amphithea; brother of his sister Ctimene;

husband of Penelope; father of Telemachus. The *Odyssey* relates the story of Odysseus' return home to Ithaca after the ten year-long war with the Trojans at Troy. Major encounters along the way include those with the Cicones (or Ciconians), the Lotus-eaters, the Cyclops Polyphemus (to whom he self-identifies as "Nobody"), the stormy winds of Aeolus, the Laestrygonians, the enchantress Circe, the voyage to Hades, the Sirens, the monster Scylla, the cattle of the Sun, the goddess Calypso, and the Phaeacians. Upon returning home, Odysseus disguises himself in order to reconnoiter and slaughter the suitors. Odysseus is finally reunited with Penelope before the final confrontation with the relatives of the suitors.

PEISISTRATUS: son of Nestor. Peisistratus accompanies Telemachus when he visits Menelaus in Sparta.

PENELOPE: daughter of Icarius; wife of Odysseus; mother of Telemachus. The object of the suitors' interests, Penelope puts them off for years by weaving (and unweaving) a burial shroud for Laertes. Though she remains faithful to Odysseus for twenty years, she finally announces a contest for her hand. Odysseus (disguised as a wandering stranger) takes advantage of the contest to take up his old bow and slaughter the suitors. Penelope is nevertheless wary of the stranger until he reveals to her the sign of their bed. It is then that she accepts him as Odysseus, her husband returned home.

PHILOETIUS: the cowherd Philoetius blesses the wandering stranger (Odysseus) when he first meets up with him because he reminds him of his master Odysseus, who must likewise be roaming or dead in Hades, he says. When Odysseus predicts his own return and the suitors' slaying, Philoetius prays for the prediction's fulfillment and assures him he will help him in the fight. He allies with Odysseus, Telemachus, and Eumaeus during the slaughter of the suitors and the final confrontation with the relatives of the suitors.

TELEMACHUS: son of Odysseus and Penelope; grandson of Laertes and Anticleia. Unhappy with the suitors, Telemachus calls for an assembly and accuses them of improper behavior, of wasting his household wealth. With the help of Athena disguised as Mentor, Telemachus journeys to visit Nestor in Pylos and Menelaus in Sparta in order to gather news about his father. Upon returning home to Ithaca, he discovers his father's return and joins him in the slaughter of the suitors and the final confrontation with the relatives of the suitors.

THEOCLYMENUS: son of the seer Polyphides. On the run as one who has killed a man of his own tribe, Theoclymenus approaches Telemachus as a suppliant. He interprets a bird sign in favor of his host's house, and later states that Odysseus is already home, planning evil for all the suitors. Still later, he has a vision of the suitors' destruction, complete with blood dripping down the walls of the great hall and many souls descending down to the Underworld.

TIRESIAS: the blind seer from Thebes renowned for his wisdom. When Odysseus visits Tiresias in Hades, the seer tells him what he must suffer before returning home, how he will slaughter the suitors, and about the final journey he must make.

OTHER BEINGS & PEOPLES

ANTIPHATES: king of the man-eating Laestrygonians, Antiphates leads the hunt for Odysseus' men, spearing them like fish.

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ARGOS: dog of Odysseus. Though miserable and resting upon a dunghill, Argos happily recognizes and greets Odysseus upon his return home—then he dies.

LAMPUS AND PHAETHON: the two horses of Dawn that bring light to earth.

POLYPHEMUS (Poluphēmos) **THE CYCLOPS** (Kuklōps, the singular of Kuklōpes or Cyclopes): son of the god Poseidon and the nymph Thoōsa. The Cyclops Polyphemus dwells among many other Cyclopes. When he hosts Odysseus in his cave, he kills and eats a number of his men, promising to eat Odysseus last (as his guest-gift to him). In response, Odysseus blinds the Cyclops and escapes by clinging to the underbelly of one of Polyphemus' rams. Polyphemus prays to his father Poseidon for revenge.

So ends "The Cast of Gods and Men—A Quick Reference." **See you in the next item,** "Homer's *Odyssey* in Brief—Book Summaries."

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"Homer enthusiasts say that Homer has been the educator of Greece, and for the education and government of humans, we should build up our entire lives with the assistance of this poet."—Socrates of Athens

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