

***CHARLES
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***THE ADVENTURES
OF ULYSSES***

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The Adventures of Ulysses

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PREFACE

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This work is designed as a supplement to the Adventures of Telemachus. It treats of the conduct and sufferings of Ulysses, the father of Telemachus. The picture which it exhibits is that of a brave man struggling with adversity; by a wise use of events, and with an inimitable presence of mind under difficulties, forcing out a way for himself through the severest trials to which human life can be exposed; with enemies natural and preternatural surrounding him on all sides. The agents in this tale, besides men and women, are giants, enchanter, sirens: things which denote external force or internal temptations, the twofold danger which a wise fortitude must expect to encounter in its course through this world. The fictions contained in it will be found to comprehend some of the most admired inventions of Grecian mythology.

The groundwork of the story is as old as the Odyssey, but the moral and the coloring are comparatively modern. By avoiding the prolixity which marks the speeches and the descriptions in Homer, I have gained a rapidity to the narration which I hope will make it more attractive and give it more the air of a romance to young readers, though I am sensible that by the curtailment I have sacrificed in many places the manners to the passion, the subordinate

characteristics to the essential interest of the story. The attempt is not to be considered as seeking a comparison with any of the direct translations of the Odyssey, either in prose or verse, though if I were to state the obligations which I have had to one obsolete version, [Footnote: The translation of Homer by Chapman in the reign of James I.] I should run the hazard of depriving myself of the very slender degree of reputation which I could hope to acquire from a trifle like the present undertaking.

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"'Cyclop,' he said, 'take a bowl of wine from the hand of your guest'"

"Out rushed with mighty noise all the winds"

"And straight they were transformed into swine"

"'Who or what manner of man art thou?'"

"And the dead came to his banquet"

"He would have broken his bonds to rush after them"

"Nine days was he floating about with all the motions of the sea"

"Took a last leave of her and of her nymphs"

"And Nausicaa joined them in a game with the ball"

"He gave them a brief relation of all the adventures that had befallen him"

"Consulting how they might with safety bring about his restoration"

"'But such as your fare is, eat it, and be welcome'"

"'I am no more but thy father: I am even he'"

"But the greater part reviled him and bade him begone"

"When the maids were lighting the queen through a stately gallery"

"Rose in a mass to overwhelm and crush those two"

THE ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES

CHAPTER ONE

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The Cicons.—The Fruit of the Lotos-tree.—Polyphemus and the Cyclops.—

The Kingdom of the Winds, and God Aeolus's Fatal Present.

—The

Laestrygonian Man-eaters.

This history tells of the wanderings of Ulysses and his followers in their return from Troy, after the destruction of that famous city of Asia by the Grecians. He was inflamed with a desire of seeing again, after a ten years' absence, his wife and native country, Ithaca. He was king of a barren spot, and a poor country in comparison of the fruitful plains of Asia, which he was leaving, or the wealthy kingdoms which he touched upon in his return; yet, wherever he came, he could never see a soil which appeared in his eyes half so sweet or desirable as his country earth. This made him refuse the offers of the goddess Calypso to stay with her, and partake of her immortality in the delightful island; and this gave him strength to break from the enchantments of Circe, the daughter of the Sun.

From Troy, ill winds cast Ulysses and his fleet upon the coast of the Cicons, a people hostile to the Grecians. Landing his forces, he laid siege to their chief city, Ismarus,

which he took, and with it much spoil, and slew many people. But success proved fatal to him; for his soldiers, elated with the spoil, and the good store of provisions which they found in that place, fell to eating and drinking, forgetful of their safety, till the Cicons, who inhabited the coast, had time to assemble their friends and allies from the interior; who, mustering in prodigious force, set upon the Grecians, while they negligently revelled and feasted, and slew many of them, and recovered the spoil. They, dispirited and thinned in their numbers, with difficulty made their retreat good to the ships.

Thence they set sail, sad at heart, yet something cheered that with such fearful odds against them they had not all been utterly destroyed. A dreadful tempest ensued, which for two nights and two days tossed them about, but the third day the weather cleared, and they had hopes of a favourable gale to carry them to Ithaca; but, as they doubled the Cape of Malea, suddenly a north wind arising drove them back as far as Cythera. After that, for the space of nine days, contrary winds continued to drive them in an opposite direction to the point to which they were bound, and the tenth day they put in at a shore where a race of men dwell that are sustained by the fruit of the lotos-tree. Here Ulysses sent some of his men to land for fresh water, who were met by certain of the inhabitants, that gave them some of their country food to eat—not with any ill intention towards them, though in the event it proved pernicious; for, having eaten of this fruit, so pleasant it proved to their appetite that they in a minute quite forgot all thoughts of home, or of their countrymen, or of ever returning back to

the ships to give an account of what sort of inhabitants dwelt there, but they would needs stay and live there among them, and eat of that precious food forever; and when Ulysses sent other of his men to look for them, and to bring them back by force, they strove, and wept, and would not leave their food for heaven itself, so much the pleasure of that enchanting fruit had bewitched them. But Ulysses caused them to be bound hand and foot, and cast under the hatches; and set sail with all possible speed from that baneful coast, lest others after them might taste the lotos, which had such strange qualities to make men forget their native country and the thoughts of home.

Coasting on all that night by unknown and out-of-the-way shores, they came by daybreak to the land where the Cyclops dwell, a sort of giant shepherds that neither sow nor plough, but the earth untilled produces for them rich wheat and barley and grapes, yet they have neither bread nor wine, nor know the arts of cultivation, nor care to know them; for they live each man to himself, without law or government, or anything like a state or kingdom; but their dwellings are in caves, on the steep heads of mountains; every man's household governed by his own caprice, or not governed at all; their wives and children as lawless as themselves, none caring for others, but each doing as he or she thinks good. Ships or boats they have none, nor artificers to make them, no trade or commerce, or wish to visit other shores; yet they have convenient places for harbours and for shipping. Here Ulysses with a chosen party of twelve followers landed, to explore what sort of men dwelt there, whether hospitable and friendly to strangers, or

altogether wild and savage, for as yet no dwellers appeared in sight.

The first sign of habitation which they came to was a giant's cave rudely fashioned, but of a size which betokened the vast proportions of its owner; the pillars which supported it being the bodies of huge oaks or pines, in the natural state of the tree, and all about showed more marks of strength than skill in whoever built it. Ulysses, entering it, admired the savage contrivances and artless structure of the place, and longed to see the tenant of so outlandish a mansion; but well conjecturing that gifts would have more avail in extracting courtesy than strength would succeed in forcing it, from such a one as he expected to find the inhabitant, he resolved to flatter his hospitality with a present of Greek wine, of which he had store in twelve great vessels, so strong that no one ever drank it without an infusion of twenty parts of water to one of wine, yet the fragrance of it even then so delicious that it would have vexed a man who smelled it to abstain from tasting it; but whoever tasted it, it was able to raise his courage to the height of heroic deeds. Taking with them a goat-skin flagon full of this precious liquor, they ventured into the recesses of the cave. Here they pleased themselves a whole day with beholding the giant's kitchen, where the flesh of sheep and goats lay strewed; his dairy, where goat-milk stood ranged in troughs and pails; his pens, where he kept his live animals; but those he had driven forth to pasture with him when he went out in the morning. While they were feasting their eyes with a sight of these curiosities, their ears were suddenly deafened with a noise like the falling of a house. It

was the owner of the cave, who had been abroad all day feeding his flock, as his custom was, in the mountains, and now drove them home in the evening from pasture. He threw down a pile of fire-wood, which he had been gathering against supper-time, before the mouth of the cave, which occasioned the crash they heard. The Grecians hid themselves in the remote parts of the cave at sight of the uncouth monster. It was Polyphemus, the largest and savagest of the Cyclops, who boasted himself to be the son of Neptune. He looked more like a mountain crag than a man, and to his brutal body he had a brutish mind answerable. He drove his flock, all that gave milk, to the interior of the cave, but left the rams and the he-goats without. Then taking up a stone so massy that twenty oxen could not have drawn it, he placed it at the mouth of the cave, to defend the entrance, and sat him down to milk his ewes and his goats; which done, he lastly kindled a fire, and throwing his great eye round the cave (for the Cyclops have no more than one eye, and that placed in the midst of their forehead), by the glimmering light he discerned some of Ulysses's men.

"Ho! guests, what are you? Merchants or wandering thieves?" he bellowed out in a voice which took from them all power of reply, it was so astounding.

Only Ulysses summoned resolution to answer, that they came neither for plunder nor traffic, but were Grecians who had lost their way, returning from Troy; which famous city, under the conduct of Agamemnon, the renowned son of Atreus, they had sacked, and laid level with the ground. Yet now they prostrated themselves humbly before his feet,