

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER



Translated
with an introduction
by
RICHMOND
LATTIMORE

HARPERPERENNIAL  MODERNCLASSICS
NEW YORK • LONDON • TORONTO • SYDNEY

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A hardcover edition of this book was published in 1967 by Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

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First Harper Colophon edition published 1975. Reissued in Harper Perennial 1991.

First Perennial Classics edition published 1999.

First Harper Perennial Modern Classics edition published 2007.

The Library of Congress has catalogued the previous edition as follows:

Homer.

[Odyssey. English]

The Odyssey of Homer. / Translated with an introduction by Richmond Lattimore.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-06-093195-7

1. Epic poetry, Greek—Translated into English. 2. Odysseus (Greek mythology)—Poetry. I. Lattimore, Richmond Alexander, tr. II. Title.

PA4025.A5E6 1967

883'.01

66-20740

ISBN: 978-0-06-124418-6 (pbk.)

ISBN-10: 0-06-124418-X (pbk.)

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then embraces him

- have lain in love with an outlander from another country,
220 if she had known that the warlike sons of the Achaeans would bring her
home again to the beloved land of her fathers.
It was a god who stirred her to do the shameful thing she
did, and never before had she had in her heart this terrible
wildness, out of which came suffering to us also.
225 But now, since you have given me accurate proof describing
our bed, which no other mortal man beside has ever seen,
but only you and I, and there is one serving woman,
Aktor's daughter, whom my father gave me when I came here,
who used to guard the doors for us in our well-built chamber;
230 so you persuade my heart, though it has been very stubborn.'
She spoke, and still more roused in him the passion for weeping.
He wept as he held his lovely wife, whose thoughts were virtuous.
And as when the land appears welcome to men who are swimming,
after Poseidon has smashed their strong-built ship on the open
235 water, pounding it with the weight of wind and the heavy
seas, and only a few escape the gray water landward
by swimming, with a thick scurf of salt coated upon them,
and gladly they set foot on the shore, escaping the evil;
so welcome was her husband to her as she looked upon him,
240 and she could not let him go from the embrace of her white arms.
Now Dawn of the rosy fingers would have dawned on their weeping,
had not the gray-eyed goddess Athene planned it otherwise.
She held the long night back at the outward edge, she detained
Dawn of the golden throne by the Ocean, and would not let her
245 harness her fast-footed horses who bring the daylight to people:
Lampos and Phaethon, the Dawn's horses, who carry her.
Then resourceful Odysseus spoke to his wife, saying:
'Dear wife, we have not yet come to the limit of all our
trials. There is unmeasured labor left for the future,
250 both difficult and great, and all of it I must accomplish.
So the soul of Teiresias prophesied to me, on that day
when I went down inside the house of Hades, seeking
to learn about homecoming, for myself and for my companions.
But come, my wife, let us go to bed, so that at long last
255 we can enjoy the sweetness of slumber, sleeping together.'
Circumspect Penelope said to him in answer:
'You shall have your going to bed whenever the spirit