The Odyssey

Part Three: (Books 13-24)

The Return of the Hero

Valley Southwoods: Tier 1 Edition
Book 13: Odysseus Returns to Ithaca

When Odysseus has finished his tale, the king orders that he be brought to Ithaca quickly. The sailors put him down on the beach of Ithaca asleep (with a chest of gifts). Athena casts a protective mist about him that keeps him from recognizing his homeland. Finally the goddess reveals herself and dispells the mist.

In joy, Odysseus kisses the ground. Athena informs him that his wife and son are still loyal but that there are many who want him dead, so she transforms him into an old man as a disguise. Dressed in a dirty robe, he goes off to find his faithful swineherd, as instructed by the goddess.

Book 14: Odysseus and the Swineherd

Odysseus, in his beggar disguise, finds his way to the house of his old and trusted swineherd, Eumaeus. Eumaeus throws his old bedcover over a pile of branches to make a seat for Odysseus, who does not reveal his identity. Observing Zeus’s commandment to be kind to guests, Eumaeus kills a prize boar and serves it with bread and wine. Odysseus, true to his fame as a smooth-talker, makes up a story about where he came from. That night the hero sleeps by the fire under the swineherd’s spare cloak, while Eumaeus himself sleeps outside in the rain with this herd. Odysseus is impressed with this loyalty.

Book 15: Telemachus Comes Home

We go back to Telemachus, who is still with King Menelaus and Helen. He believes his father is probably dead. The plotlines of the father and the son are about to be brought together. Athena appears to the boy and advises him to return home. She warns him that the evil suitors plan to ambush and kill him on his way home. Telemachus boards ship for home, lands secretly on Ithaca, and heads toward the cottage of the swineherd. Meanwhile, Eumaeus is telling the stranger the story of his life. As father and son were moved closer and closer together, the suspense in the audience must have become great. Now Homer is ready for what could be the most dramatic moment in the entire story...the reunion of father and son!

Book 16: The Meeting of Father and Son

Odysseus, in his beggar’s disguise, sat before the blazing fire, still thinking about the past with Eumaeus. Outside, the dogs only whined in greeting as the familiar young man made his way toward the cottage. Eumaeus and his guest jumped up in alarm when the door creaked open and a chilly draft swept across the room. The tall figure stepped in out of the moonlit night and closed the door softly behind him. Now Eumaeus leaped up and hugged him warmly. When they turned back toward him, Odysseus recognized his own features in the dimly lit face of the new arrival.

“Dear Telemachus, thank the gods you are safe,” said Eumaeus. “When I heard of your journey I was afraid that you’d never return, like your dear father. But what on earth brings you here? Is there any news?”

“No news, old friend, no news of the one thing that matters, although I’ve seen Menelaus and lovely Helen, and I’ve spoken with wise King Nestor of my father’s greatness and his glorious deeds. But only his bright memory remains; of the man himself I found no trace.”

As Telemachus spoke, Odysseus got up to offer him his seat by the fire. The young prince took him gently by the arm and made him sit down again. “No, no, old stranger, please. You’re a guest in this house. For me it’s a second home.” Telemachus squatted and warmed himself against the fire. Then he turned to Odysseus and examined him closely. “Now tell me, old man, where are you from? What brings you here?”

Odysseus repeated the story he had told Eumaeus. When he had finished, Telemachus looked sad. “It makes me so sad,” he said quietly, staring at the fire, “to think that I can offer an old companion of my
before I risk showing my face. If I’d disappeared without a trace, the suitors could have pretended they knew nothing about it, but I can’t believe that even they would dare kill me in broad daylight in front of my own people.” Eumaeus set off at once. At that same moment, Athena slipped in. She made herself visible to Odysseus only and spoke in a voice that only he could hear.

“Odysseus, now is the time to reveal yourself. Tell your son everything. Tomorrow, go to the city and enter your palace. And remember, be as you always are, wise and bold. I will be close by.”

Before she left, the goddess touched the old beggar with her wand. At once his back straightened and his skin was made tight and smooth. His dim eyes brightened and his thin gray hair turned thick and black. Telemachus looked up and turned pale.

“Stranger, you must be a god! I pray that you’ve come in a friendly spirit!”

“No, old man, I’ve no brothers; I come from a line of only sons. As for cousins, all the fine men who’d help me now went with my father to Troy. I hate the suitors and I’d love to see them get what they deserve, but it would be a foolish gesture to throw away my life in a hopeless cause. No, unless by some miracle Odysseus returns and together we can stand against these enemies, my mother will have to marry to rid our halls of them.”

Odysseus was pleased with his son’s wise answer, but he only stared into the fire and said not a word.

“And now, Eumaeus,” said the young prince, “let me tell you why I’m here. The suitors hoped to kill me in an ambush before I got back to these shores, but, thanks to Athena, I was able to avoid them. I want you to go to the palace and tell my mother that I’m back, father’s no better hospitality than this. You fought alongside my father on the dusty plains of Troy, and no doubt he suffered as you did on the grim journey home. Perhaps he wandered the world like you and fell into captivity. Perhaps he still is a slave in some distant land. If that’s the case, I pray that death brings him an early release. As for myself, I’ve become a stranger in my father’s palace. I’d like to invite you to enjoy its many comforts, but I’m afraid you’d only suffer the taunting of my mother’s suitors.”

“Noble prince,” replied Odysseus, “your words are kind, but your concern is unnecessary. I’m so used to these rags which pass for clothes and the hard ground for my bed that the comforts of a palace would do little for me now. However, I’m sorry to hear of all your troubles. Have you no brothers or cousins who could help you drive these suitors out of your father’s palace? I wish I were young enough for the fight or even that I were Odysseus himself. Then I’d destroy these evil men or die in the attempt. I’d sooner die, fighting for my rights, than suffer the daily humiliation which you endure.”

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Book 17: The Beggar and the Faithful Dog

Telemachus returns to the family compound and is greeted tearfully by his mother and his old nurse, Eurycleia. A fortune-teller tells Penelope that Odysseus is alive and is already in Ithaca. The suspense builds as Odysseus, once again disguised as an old beggar, finally returns to his home, accompanied by the swineherd. On the way, they meet a rival of the swineherd who mocks Eumaeus for being with a beggar; the rival kicks Odysseus to the ground, but Odysseus is careful to hold back and not do anything. He has been away for 20 years. Only one creature recognizes him.

An old dog, lying near, pricked up his ears and lifted his muzzle. This was Argos, trained as a puppy by Odysseus, but never taken on a hunt before his master sailed for Troy. Young men of Ithaca had hunted with him, but he had grown old in his master’s absense. The dog was treated as garbage now; he lay on big pile of dung before the gates of the palace. Abandoned and half destroyed by flies, old Argos lay.

But when he knew he heard Odysseus’s voice nearby, he did his best to wag his tail, nose down, with flattened ears, having no strength to move nearer his master. And the man looked away, wiping a tear from his cheek, but he hid this from Eumaeus. Then he said, “I marvel that they leave this dog to lie here in a pile of manure; he would have been a fine dog, from the look of him.”

Eumaeus replied, “A hunter owned him, but the man is dead in some far place. If this old dog could show the form he had when Lord Odysseus left him, going to Troy, you’d see him swift and strong. He never backed down from any animal; no other dog could ever keep up with him. Now misery has his leash; no one will take care of him.”

Eumaeus entered the palace, and at that moment, death and darkness closed the eyes of Argos, who had seen his master, Odysseus, after 20 years.

At Athena’s urging, Odysseus begs for food from the suitors. One man, Antinous, makes fun of him and refuses to give him anything. He even throws a footstool at Odysseus, hitting him in the back. This makes even the other suitors nervous, for sometimes the gods masquerade as mortals to test their hospitality.

Book 18: Beggar vs. Beggar

Now a real beggar shows up at the palace and warns Odysseus off his turf. This man was always running errands for the suitors. Odysseus says that there are leftovers enough for the two of them, but the other beggar threatens to fight him. Odysseus rises to the challenge and rolls up his sleeves and the suitors are amazed at the muscles they see. Not wishing to kill the other beggar, Odysseus breaks his jaw instead. Penelope appears among the suitors and scolds Telemachus for letting a stranger be abused like this. She must have warmed her husband’s heart by doing this and by further singing the praises of her lost Odysseus.

Book 19: Penelope, the Beggar, and the Nurse

After the suitors depart for the night and after Odysseus and Telemachus discuss their strategy, Odysseus goes as appointed to Penelope with the idea of testing her and her maids (remember that some of the maids have not been loyal to the household and have worked with the suitors against them). The faithful wife receives her disguised husband. We can imagine the tension Homer’s audience must have felt. Would Odysseus be recognized?

Penelope said to the beggar, “Stranger, you are welcome in my house. Please tell me who you are. Eumaeus has told me something of you. And I now long to hear your story from your own lips.” Odysseus stared into the fire. His wife’s voice made his flesh melt. When at last he turned his face toward her, a single tear rolled down his old man’s cheek.
“Noble queen, forgive me. I’m afraid you must think me a pathetic old man, but when I remember all that I’ve lost I can’t hold back my tears.”

“Old friend,” answered Penelope, with a sad smile, “I’m no stranger to sorrow myself. For 20 years now I’ve waited for the man I love. Every night I’ve soaked my pillow with fresh tears. For the last four years I’ve been bothered by suitors who ruin this house and eat away my heart. Not one of them is fit to wash my husband’s feet. When they first came I asked them to wait until I’d finished weaving a shroud for Laertes, my husband’s dear father. It was a duty to which they could hardly object. Each day I’d weave and each night I’d secretly unravel all my day’s work. I managed to spin this out for more than three years until one of my maids betrayed me. The suitors were understandably furious, and now I can put them off no longer.”

“Oh how I curse Troy! Odysseus never wanted to go there. We were deeply in love and our son was only days old when the call came. Odysseus knew it would be a long war, a pointless war for pride, and he knew he might never return. He told me to look after his kingdom and to care for his father and mother. And if he’s not returned when Telemachus came of age, then I should marry again. Old friend, tomorrow I shall choose, though it will break my heart.”

Odysseus wanted to reach out to Penelope and tell her he was home, but he knew he must not weaken now. After 20 years, they could surely wait one more day. “Noble queen,” he said, “your deep sorrow matches my own. If only I brought good news, if only I could say that any day now your husband will return in glory to his home. I can’t. I know too well what it’s like to have hopes raised then cruelly dashed away. But, tell me, if you can bear to speak of it, how you’re going to make your choice, for I’m curious to know your plans.”

“Gladly, old friend, and since you’ve the air of a wise counselor you can tell me whether you approve. My husband had a favorite bow which he left behind when he went to Troy. He was a great archer, and I still remember how his face lit up each time he took this bow in his hands. He loved to use it and show off his skill. You know the tiny brass rings that are used to hang ceremonial axes on the wall? Well, Odysseus would line up 12 axes with their handles in the air and fire his arrows through the rings. It was remarkable. Others who tried couldn’t even string the bow. Tomorrow I’ll bring this bow and line up 12 axes in the hall. Whoever strings the bow and shoots an arrow through the rings will win my hand. If no one succeeds, then I’ll marry the first man to string the bow.”

“Noble queen, your plan’s a good one. If I were younger, I’d ask to try your husband’s bow myself. Not as a suitor for your hand; I’m not yet that big of a fool. But I love archery, and I have to admit I’d love to see the suitors’ faces if a miserable old beggar were to show them up.”

Penelope laughed. “That would be a sight worth seeing. And if you want to I’ll make sure you get the chance. But now, old friend, you’ve listened to my tale of sorry long enough. My women will bathe you and bring you fresh clothes and bedding and then I’ll leave you to sleep.”

“Dear queen, for many years I’ve dressed in rags and made my bed on the hard ground. I’m an old man, and it’s too late to change my habits. Clean linen and a soft bed would be wasted on me. Besides, I wouldn’t like these young women to touch my wrinkled skin. But perhaps that old woman who stands beside you might wash my aching feet; from the sadness in her eyes I can see that she too has known great sorrow in her life.” Odysseus was looking at Eurycleia, his old nurse.
“I’ll do it gladly,” said Eurycleia, “for dear Penelope’s sake and for your own. And for the sake of my dear Odysseus too. For although you’re old, you look just as he’d have looked had he lived to be as old as you.”

The old nurse warmed a basin of water on the fire and set it down at the beggar’s feet. As she washed him, her fingers touched an old scar running up his right thigh from above the knee. She peered at it closely with her dim old eyes, then let go of his leg so suddenly that his foot dropped into the basin with a splash. Odysseus looked around in alarm, but no one was watching.

“Odysseus! My darling child!” exclaimed Eurycleia, “you’ve come home to us at last! That scar is an old friend of mine. Remember how many times I changed the dressing on that dreadful wound?” When Odysseus was a boy, he had been wounded by a boar. Now, in the joy of recognition, the old nurse turned to Penelope to share the good news. Before she could utter a sound, Odysseus had gripped her sharply by the wrist and pulled her to him.

“My child,” replied Eurycleia, “your secret’s safe with me. Remember I once nursed you at my breast. And, if there’s any justice in this world, I’ll live to see you drive the cruel suitors from your land and set our people free.”

“Dear nurse, this is indeed Odysseus who sits before you. But don’t think I come disguised just to have fun. This is no time for games! If the suitors discover that I’m here, they’ll kill me like a dog. They’ve already agreed to carve up my kingdom among them, and they’ve spent too long here to give up now.”

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“That, old nurse, is in the hands of the gods. Let’s pray that they’re on my side,” Eurycleia bathed the beggar’s feet in silence. When she had finished, Penelope told her goodnight and went to her room. Now Odysseus sat alone; after all he had been through, his greatest test was still to come…tomorrow.

Book 20: Signs and Visions of the Future

The next morning, Odysseus asks for a sign and Zeus sends a clap of thunder. A servant recognizes this and prays that this day will be the last for the suitors’ abuse. Odysseus encounters another cowherd who swears his loyalty to the king. A prophet shares a vision with the suitors: “I see the walls of this mansion dripping with your blood.” The suitors respond by laughing at him.

Book 21: The Test of the Great Bow

Like many unwilling princesses of fairy tales and legends, Penelope proposes an impossible task for those who wish to marry her. By so doing, she causes the bloody events that lead to the restoration of her true husband.

Now the queen reached the storeroom door and stopped. Penelope used her key to open the room. She went in and lifted Odysseus’s bow down from a peg in its polished case. Penelope sank down, holding the weapon on her knees, and took the bow out of the case. She began to cry.

She then headed back to the great hall, bow in hand, to face the suitors. Behind her, maids brought a basket of axes as they had been told. So beautiful Penelope now stood before the suitors and paused to gather her thoughts and strength.

“My lords, hear me: you suitors have taken it upon yourselves to take over my house and to feast and drink night and day since my husband has been gone. The only reason you have for being here is your desire to marry me. Stand up, then, for I now declare a contest for that prize! This is my husband’s hunting bow. First try to bend and string it if you can. Whoever can then send an arrow through the middle of the 12 ax handle rings in the handles will win. I will marry him and leave this palace, my home forever.”
Many of the suitors boldly try to string the bow, but not a single man can even bend it enough to string it.

Two men had meanwhile left the hall: swineherd and cowherd. Both were totally depressed at the situation. But Odysseus followed them outside and approached them, saying, “You, herdsman, and you too, swineherd, I could tell you a secret, but maybe I should just keep it to myself…hmm. No, no; my heart tells me to speak. If Odysseus would come back, would you be man enough to stand with him? Suppose he dropped out of a clear blue sky, as I did? Suppose some god would bring him? Would you fight for him or against him with the suitors?”

The cowherd said, “Ah, I wish the master would come! Zeus, grant this prayer! I would love anyone to bring him back! Just watch how I would fight for my beloved Odysseus then!”

Likewise Eumaeus fell to the ground, praying to the gods for Odysseus’s return. Odysseus, who was now sure of their loyalty to him, revealed himself. “I am home, for I am he! I have gone through a lot, but after 20 years, I am back on my own soil! I find that the two of you, of all the people, are the only ones who wanted me to come back. So now let me tell you what I have in store for you—if Zeus helps me defeat the suitors by my hand, I promise marriages to both of you, and cattle, and houses built near mine. You shall be like brothers to my Telemachus. Let me show you a sign that I am really Odysseus so you can believe me…here is the scar from the tusk wound that I got from hunting a boar in my youth.”

Shifting his rags, he showed them the long gash. Both men looked and knew immediately that it was Odysseus; they threw their arms around the old soldier, weeping. Odysseus also embraced the two. “All right. We must stop so no one sees us and suspects anything! We don’t want the suitors to find out. I want both of you to drift back inside, separately, so we don’t make anyone suspicious. Here are your orders: when the time comes, the suitors will object to letting me try the contest of the bow. Challenge them. Eumaeus, bring the bow and put it in my hands at the door. Tell the women to leave and lock all their doors tightly. Tell them if they hear noises or groans from the great hall, they are not to show their faces, but stay in their rooms. Run to the outer gate and lock it. Throw the crossbar and lash it shut.”

They return inside and now Odysseus, still in his beggar’s clothes, asks to try the bow. The suitors refuse to allow a mere beggar to try when they have all failed, but Penelope insists that the stranger be given a chance. The suspense is great—by this act, Penelope has accepted the beggar (Odysseus) as a suitor. Eumaeus, the swineherd, hands Odysseus the bow and tells the nurse to leave with Penelope and all the maids to go to their rooms and to bolt the doors. Odysseus had earlier told Telemachus to remove the suitors’ weapons from the great hall (they are powerless). Now Odysseus takes the great bow…

Odysseus took his time, turning the bow and tapping it to see if termites had damaged it while he had been gone. The suitors started to make fun of him: “A bow lover!” “He must sell them!” “Maybe he has one like it at home!” “See how he handles it, the old buzzard!” One suitor added, “May his fortune grow an inch for every inch he bends it!”

But Odysseus was satisfied by the great bow’s look and feel. Then, in one quick motion—like a musician stringing an instrument—Odysseus strung the bow! He slid his hand down and then plucked the cord so that the string vibrated and hummed. The suitors were speechless. At that moment, Zeus sent one loud crack of thunder as a sign. Odysseus then picked one arrow off the table. He nocked, or put the arrow in the string, and let it rest across the handgrip. He drew the string, aiming from where he was still sitting on a stool. The arrow flashed from the twanging bow clean as a whistle through every single one of the twelve axe
Then Odysseus quietly said, “Telemachus, the stranger you welcomed in your hall has not disgraced you. I did not miss, neither did I take all day stringing the bow. My hand and eye are sound. The time has come!” He gave the signal and prince Telemachus belted his sword on, clapped his hand to his spear, and went to stand by Odysseus, his father.

**Book 22: Death at the Palace**

*The climax of the story is here. Odysseus is ready to claim his rightful kingdom. But first he must deal with more than 100 young and hostile suitors. The first one he turns to is Antinous. Antinous has been, throughout the whole story, the meanest of the suitors and their ringleader. He had hit Odysseus with a stool when the hero appeared in the hall as a beggar.*

Now throwing off his rags, Odysseus leapt up and stood before them all with his bow in hand. He dumped out all his arrows by his feet and then said to the crowd: “So much for the contest! The game is over. Now watch me hit a target that no man has hit before!” He drew to his fist an arrow for Antinous, just as Antinous was about to take a drink from a cup of wine. Odysseus sent an arrow flying that hit Antinous right under the chin and it drove through his neck until all you could see were the feathers. Backward and down he went, letting the wine cup fall from his shocked hand. His nose shot out red streams of mortal blood and one last kick of his leg tipped over a table, knocking bread and meat to the floor to soak in his dusty blood.

Now as the other suitors struggled to see their champion lying on the ground, they looked around for their weapons. Wildly they scanned the walls in the room for their arms, but not a shield or spear was there for them. All they could do was yell in outrage at Odysseus, “No fair! Shooting a man? That was your last shot!” “We will slit your own throat for this!” “Our finest man is dead…you killed the best of Ithaca!” “Buzzards will tear your eyes out!” The suitors imagined that it was a wild shot, that the stranger just got lucky. They had no idea that they were already close to their own deaths.

Odysseus stood glaring at the suitors and then answered: “You yellow dogs! You thought that I would never make it home from the land of Troy! You took my house to plunder, took advantage of my maids, and worst of all, you dared to go after my wife while I was still alive! You have no respect for the gods who rule wide heaven. Your last hour has come! You die in blood!”

As the suitors took all this in, green fear turned their stomachs. Their eyes frantically started to search for some way to escape the great hall. Eurymachus alone could speak, “If you are Odysseus of Ithaca come back, all that you say these men have done is true. Our actions were stupid, I’ll admit. But here lies a dead man who caused it all…Antinous was the ringleader; he encouraged us to do these things. He really wanted the power more than the marriage. He was the one who plotted to have your son killed! He is dead now and got what he deserved. Spare us! We will pay you back for all the wine and meat we have consumed and each of us will give you 20 oxen and gifts of bronze and gold. We cannot blame you that you are angry with us.”

Odysseus was fuming at this and said under his black brows, “Not for the whole treasure of your fathers, or all you enjoy—lands, flocks, or any gold—would I hold back my hand. There will be killing until the score is settled! You forced yourselves upon my house. Fight your way out or run for it, if you think you can escape death. I doubt even one man will get out….”
Telemachus joins his father in the fight. They are helped by the swineherd and cowherd. Athena was watching over them and made sure each arrow found its mark and she gave Telemachus extra strength to hold off suitors with spear and sword. Now the suitors, trapped in the hall without weapons, are struck right and left by arrows. More than 100 corpses lay on the floor and Odysseus is covered from head to foot in blood and gore.

Odysseus now calls forth the maids who were disloyal to his household by associating with the suitors. He orders them to clean up the house and dispose of the dead. He then “pays” them by hanging them in the courtyard.

Book 23: Odysseus and Penelope

Eurycleia runs to Penelope to announce the return of Odysseus and the defeat of the suitors. The faithful wife—the perfect mate for Odysseus—suspects a trick from the gods and decides to test her would-be husband.

When she saw Odysseus, Penelope stepped back in amazement, trembling and pale. Her husband stood before her exactly as she remembered him. It was as though his twenty-year absence had been nothing but a dream.

“Dear mother,” said Telemachus, “are you so heartless that you have nothing to say to my father, who has come home after so long and so much suffering?”
News of the suitors’ deaths spread; hundreds of Ithacans have lost relatives and friends. Antinous’s father especially wanted revenge. He tells the people that they must avenge these deaths by killing Odysseus. Some felt that they brought this on themselves while others insisted on marching to the palace, shouting “Death to Odysseus!” Odysseus and Telemachus stood outside the gates with invisible Athena beside them. When the mob tried to attack, a thunderbolt from the sky struck one of them down.

Athena made herself visible to the crowd and the Ithacans dropped down in awe. Athena tells them that her father Zeus has spoken and that justice has been done. She also tells Odysseus to put down his sword and forgive the people and earn their love, which he does.

Odysseus has one more duty. He must go to old Laertes, his grieving father, who lives alone outside of town. Odysseus cannot resist teasing his father. He pretends to be a traveler, who had entertained Odysseus five years ago. As Laertes hears his son spoken of, the old man’s eyes fill with tears.

Odysseus then convinced his father that it was indeed his son. Laertes fainted, and for a moment Odysseus thought that the shock had killed him. Happily he soon recovered and, after many tears and fond words, went back to the palace with his son.

It was a memorable feast. Most of Ithaca had somehow squeezed into the great hall. There was much sorrow, for so many had died, but there was also great joy, for everyone felt that a time of peace and happiness had come. At long last, after twenty years, Odysseus and Penelope sat together by the fire with their people all around them. There was great wonder too, for after they had eaten and drunk to the gods and the memory of the dead, they begged Odysseus to tell his story. Then they listened spellbound to every adventure, as he told them of the Lotus-Eaters and the Cyclops, of Circe and the Land of the Dead, of the Sirens and Calypso, of gods and goddesses and of much, much more. It was a story that they would hear again, many, many times and one that they would discuss endlessly among themselves. It was a story to cherish as long as they lived.
Questions for Books 13-19:

Book 13:
1. What does Athena do to Odysseus when she touches him with her wand?

Book 14:
1. What does Eumaeus do that pleases Odysseus so much?

Book 15:
1. What advice does Athena give Telemachus about his journey home?

Book 16:
1. Why does Telemachus not believe that Odysseus is really his father?

Book 17:
1. What does Argos do when he sees Odysseus?

Book 18:
1. What does Odysseus do to the rival beggar?

Book 19:
1. How does Odysseus’s old nurse recognize him?

Questions for Books 21-24:

Book 21:
1. With what servants does Odysseus share his true identity?
2. Describe the Test of the Bow.
3. What precautions does Odysseus instruct his son and the servants to do in the hall with the suitors?
4. What omen does Zeus send as a sign of the suitors’ doom?

Book 22:
1. Who does Odysseus shoot first?
2. After this, how do the other suitors try and save themselves from Odysseus’s wrath?
3. Does it work?
4. How does Athena help in the fight?
5. What happens after the slaughter? Who cleans up the mess?

Book 23:
1. What is Penelope’s final test to determine whether the man is truly her husband Odysseus?

Book 24:
1. What is the aftermath of Odysseus’s killing of the suitors with the rest of the Ithacans? Who steps in to solve the problem?
2. Who is the last person that Odysseus must reveal himself to?