

ODYSSEUS

Ep. 101

"Troy Has Perished"

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Based on
THE ODYSSEY
by Homer

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1184 B.C.

A time of peace between Greek kingdoms,
thanks to an oath sworn by each king
to support the fragile Spartan throne.

Until...

King Menelaus of Sparta claimed that his
wife, the renowned beauty Helen, had been
taken captive by a distant foreign power.

The oath was invoked.

All Greece took up arms.

So began the War in Troy.

Now, ten years later, the war still
rages. No end in sight.

Until this moment, here, now...

... tonight.

OVER BLACK

Tense BREATHING. CREAKING TIMBER.

From elsewhere: hoarse VOICES. Foreign. Coordinated. Barking orders. Vaguely proto-LATIN equivalent of "HEAVE, HEAVE."

Something LARGE is being MOVED.

WOOSH! Through a narrow CRACK, a passing TORCH illuminates --

A piercing **EYE**.

Pupil NARROWS. We immediately sense -- this eye has SEEN things that pain it MUCH more than the sudden light.

We are --

INT. TROJAN HORSE - NIGHT

Pull back from eye to reveal --

ODYSSEUS. 40s. Jaw tight. Nostrils flared. Cheekbones sharp and scarred. Caked in mud, grime, and ash; a form of CAMOUFLAGE. He's a living, breathing paradox. Noble eyes of a king gleam behind the face of violence, suffering, and death.

Thoughts rip through his tortured mind. Remorse; crushing weight of leadership; fear, but not for himself. However many men he's slain, he's died inside more times than that.

Pull back further. Find more **ITHACAN MEN** around him.

All covered in that same improvised camouflage grime. However this war started, it's devolved to utter filth. A living darkness that swallows all but the whites of their eyes.

"HEAVE" continues outside. Inside, eyes dart. Some Ithacans are dialed-in. Others tremble. ONE of them, just 19, grows queasy. Odysseus COVERS the young man's mouth as he VOMITS -- but thanks to Odysseus, he does so quietly.

YOUNG ITHACAN SOLDIER
(whispering)
We're trapped. Like rats.

Odysseus moves his hand from the Young Soldier's mouth, to the collar of the man's ashen tunic. Reassuring grip of a leader.

ODYSSEUS
Rats survive.

Suddenly, hear CLANKING. A gate BEHIND THEM is CLOSING.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)
The gods are with us.

YOUNG ITHACAN SOLDIER
Why?

ODYSSEUS
Tonight we end this war.

Just then, moving and rocking STOPS. Outer voices DISPERSE.

Ithacans, now DEATHLY SILENT. In the DARK.

A shard of MOONLIGHT on Odysseus' face reveals a bead of SWEAT, the only movement against the STILLNESS.

He waits. And WAITS. Until he NODS. Ithacans REMOVE a PLANK.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)
No women. No children. Spare anyone
who can be spared. Pray this
bloodshed is the last.

We FOLLOW Odysseus. One continuous shot as he --

EXT. TROY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

DROPS to the ground, first man out -- of what we now see is THE INFAMOUS TROJAN HORSE.

He hits the ground, fistful of arrows and a staff in hand.

Races through shadow for cover as -- more Ithacans pour out like a few drops of rain at first, then a silent downpour.

Track Odysseus, advancing to a GUARD HUT. KNOCKS one TROJAN GUARD with his staff. Silently CHOKES out the other. Both breathe gently in UNCONSCIOUS SLEEP. Odysseus watches, envious of how they'll miss what awaits...

Then he BENDS his staff and STRINGS IT with IMMENSE STRENGTH. Reveal: it's a POWERFUL BOW.

He's flanked by more Ithacans. No armor, spears, or shields. Just black clothes. Daggers. Bows. They're special forces.

They trade looks. Hand signals. Then all move. We TRACK.

Odysseus leads one team while others deploy in background. More Trojan Guards are overtaken silently, non-fatally --

Until one Ithacan is SPOTTED by a Trojan who raises a spear -- when an ARROW bites into the Trojan's heart. WHIP TO --

Odysseus, having just shot, now somberly lowering his bow.

Ithacans catch the dying Trojan so his fall makes no sound. In a flash, Odysseus is there, finger on the man's carotid, feeling the pulse fade. Odysseus locks eyes with the man as his soul departs. Grim empathy. Sorrow. Then the man's gone.

The raid continues. But it feels different now that blood has been spilled. Darker. Harsher. Soon all encounters are fatal as silent Ithacans advance to the -- GATE.

Odysseus approaches four surprised Trojan Guards -- who are all immediately hit by precise arrows out from the dark.

His men flank to cover him. He shoves the sliding LOCK out of its groove. All men spin to PUSH. Massive gate doors OPEN --

Odysseus sparks a FLARE. WAVES it, SIGNALING --

But nothing...

Then, FLARES ERUPT OUTSIDE. Dozens. Then hundreds. Then THOUSANDS. TORCHES, too. Then DUG-OUT CHANNELS of FIRE --

All illuminating the UNITED GREEK ARMY. BRONZE ARMOR gleaming in orange flame. They charge with a deafening WARCRY.

Confused Trojans stumble out of houses and guard huts --

But already, a hundred Greek hoplites have poured in.

Odysseus shouts at them as they charge past.

ODYSSEUS
NO WOMEN, NO CHILDREN, SPARE ANY --

ACHILLES (O.S.)
Odysseus!

ACHILLES runs up. 30s. Shining armor, razor sharp spear. Perfectly muscled, beaded war-braids, energetic eyes. Stark juxtaposition to feral Odysseus streaked with black camo.

ODYSSEUS
Achilles --

ACHILLES
The horse was clever. Now let
cleverness give way to glory.

ODYSSEUS
Keep your men in order. We agreed
the city would not be sacked.

ACHILLES

Greatness beckons! Promise you will
not find Helen too swiftly!

(booming, to the city)

Come face Achilles you sleeping
dogs of Troy! I had my vengeance on
your prince! Now with your swords
bring me eudaimonia!

Achilles runs off with a crazed yet earnest energy.

Odysseus watches. The two could not be more different.
Achilles in his gleaming armor chasing glory; Odysseus deeply
human under the weight of mud and blood.

Hear the sound of surrounding violence ESCALATE. SHOUTS and
CRIES. Odysseus grabs a random charging Greek hoplite --

ODYSSEUS

Where is your commander?

The hoplite tears himself free and charges onward.

An older Ithacan spots Odysseus' concern: **EURYLOCHUS**, 50s.
Second in command, always at his king's side. Cautious.
Reliable. Fatherly to the troops. Above all, loyal.

EURYLOCHUS

Ten years of war, my king... Would
you want to get in their way?

Odysseus sees this could get out of control...

ODYSSEUS

We find Helen, we end this.

Track as they sprint, covering each other like a Delta Force
team in Mogadishu. Urban warfare. Move and cover.

In a narrow street, they T-bone into a platoon of Trojans. In
an instant, Odysseus and his most formidable Ithacans (whom
we're beginning to recognize, and will introduce later) have
bows drawn, arrows ready to send men to the afterlife --

But the terrified Trojans SURRENDER, waving white cloth.

Odysseus SHOVES ASIDE the bow of an Ithacan about to shoot.
Arrow BARELY MISSES a surrendered Trojan.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

HOLD! They're surrendering!

(to Trojans)

Stay here under a white flag, you
will live.

The panicked Trojans nod as --

Odysseus and his men continue on through tight alleys. CRIES and ROARS around them ESCALATE. CRACKS. BOOMS. In the dark, it's hard to orient. WHAM! Odysseus runs right into a WALL.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

Dead end. Back!

They hoof it back the other way, only to find --

Other GREEK TROOPS slaughtering the surrendered Trojans.

GREEK HOPLITE

Take no prisoners!

ODYSSEUS

STOP! NO!

The Greek troops turn. They're not Ithacans, and they don't recognize him. To them, Odysseus and his men are simply filthy strangers covered in ash and dirt...

So the Greeks point spears and ATTACK!

Odysseus and his men are SURPRISED -- but expertly SUBDUE the Greeks non-fatally. Broken bones, some unconscious, but alive.

Odysseus looks from the groaning pile of Greeks...

... To the DEAD Trojans.

Odysseus staggers back. Guilt. Shame. Eurylochus steadies him.

EURYLOCHUS

... To Helen, sire?

ODYSSEUS

(realizing)

No... Get everyone you can out of the city... Now... MOVE!

Odysseus leads. TRACK as they move through the streets -- gathering women and elderly. Lifting children and wounded.

Other Greek troops occasionally race past carrying looted gold, plunder. In juxtaposition, Odysseus carries a TODDLER.

After another turn, we see the GATE in sight. Odysseus and his men sprint with their group of rescued innocents --

But ANOTHER WAVE of Greek troops pushes IN! No way out. We hear more cries of, "NO PRISONERS!" and "KILL THEM ALL!"

Odysseus stops the group to protect them, but the city is fast becoming a slaughterhouse. Reeling, he looks for options. TRACK his gaze UP, to the PALACE KEEP. Points --

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)
Get everyone up there!

INT. PALACE - ALTAR OF ZEUS - NIGHT

Odysseus and his men CRASH in -- RIGHT INTO the Trojan **ROYAL GUARDS**, who surround what remains of the **ROYAL FAMILY**.

ITHACAN
The King of Troy!

Sure enough the king, **PRIAM** lies at the foot of the altar. But he's badly wounded. Dying. Not in command.

ODYSSEUS
We mean no harm. Hide these people.
We will bring more.

The leaderless Trojans don't know what to do.

CASSANDRA (O.S.)
Listen to him.

The Trojans part around -- **CASSANDRA** (25), young but intense. A beat as her eyes LOCK with Odysseus. Then, interrupted --

TROJAN GUARD
The king is dead...

All turn, seeing Priam has breathed his last.

CASSANDRA
One still breathes.

Odysseus sees: Cassandra's eyes are still locked on him.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
The King of Ithaca stands before us.

ODYSSEUS
How do you know who I am?

CASSANDRA
I am Cassandra of Troy.
(re: Priam)
That was my father.
(re: outside)
That was your horse...
(MORE)

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

I warned my people beware of Greeks
bearing gifts. They did not listen.

ODYSSEUS

Help me save these people.

CASSANDRA

You've already killed them all.

That hits hard. He's speechless because he fears she's right.

ODYSSEUS

We just want to go home.

With no warning, she COLLAPSES. He moves to catch her, when --
in his arms, her eyes OPEN, now ROLLED BACK. She CHANNELS
SOMETHING, speaking in GUTTURAL TONGUES.

CASSANDRA

Your family will ROT. Your men will
DIE. Your WAR will FOLLOW you HOME,
king. Your war will FOLLOW YOU --

CRASH! Other Greeks smash in. Bloodlust, bloodstained spears.

Cassandra still in one arm, Odysseus raises his other.

ODYSSEUS

Hold! I am Odysseus!

The LEADER of the new coterie of Greek hoplites approaches.
ANTINOUS, 30s. Cold. Sharp. Clean. No scars. More predator
than soldier. A man who's shed blood, but not bled himself.

He sees the sorry, messy state Odysseus is in.

ANTINOUS

The night's been cruel to you,
Ithacan. I am Antinous of
Dulichium. These are my men...

"Cruel" is a word Antinous would know well.

ANTINOUS (CONT'D)

... And if you're not taking her as
a slave, I am.

ODYSSEUS

These people surrendered. They'll
be given mercy, not chains.

Antinous doesn't understand; how could the man who opened the
gate show mercy? When he realizes Odysseus is serious --

ANTINOUS

We were promised spoils. We will
take what's ours --

ODYSSEUS

You will take a step back.

Challenge heard. Tense. Both sides square off. Unlike the
last Greek-on-Greek violence, this would not be an accident.

Cassandra regains her senses, eyes normal. Sees the standoff --

CASSANDRA

Show honor at the altar of Zeus!

Antinous sees he's got more men than Odysseus, all much more
heavily armed. Confidence rising he'll win this fight.

Odysseus and his men sense the inevitable. Prepare to kill.
Antinous grips his spear, when -- a **DIFFERENT GREEK** runs in --

DIFFERENT GREEK HOPLITE

Achilles has been overwhelmed!

All Greeks share a look.

ODYSSEUS

We must help our brother.

ANTINOUS

Lead the way, brother.

Odysseus waves his men out. As they move, Odysseus looks at
Cassandra once more.

As he holds her gaze, see BEHIND him -- where Antinous raises
his shield -- and WHACKS ODYSSEUS IN THE HEAD -- **BLACK.**

EXT. ITHACA - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The island home of Odysseus. Small kingdom rising out of the
sea. A green, natural place bathed in sunlight. Vitality.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Humble. Honest. No opulence. Instead, all noblesse oblige.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - BEDROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

PENELOPE, 20s, strong, brilliant, beautiful, emotionally
disciplined, but right now, in LABOR. She YELLS in AGONY.

Odysseus, years younger, and MIDWIVES are ready for birth.

ODYSSEUS
I can see our child --

PENELOPE
I can FEEL him -- ARRRRRRGH!!!

ODYSSEUS
So sure he's a boy?

PENELOPE
My dreams don't lie. They led me to
you, after all. ARRRRRRGHHHHH!!!

He holds her close. She grips his arm.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)
A king needs an heir. ARRRRGHHHH!

She grips him TIGHT.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)
So that he may retire and I may
have that king all to MYSELF-AARGH!

ODYSSEUS
King to some, your husband first.

Last PUSH -- and a BABY CRY is heard. Odysseus and a midwife
guide the young boy into the world. Odysseus holds him close.

PENELOPE
And now, a father.

Odysseus brings the baby up to rest on Penelope.

The three embrace. Breathe together. Eyes closed. A beat...

Then footsteps. An attendant runs in, panicked.

ATTENDANT
My king --

As Odysseus looks up from this perfect moment --

INT. ROYAL PALACE - BEDROOM - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Simple living. Earnest. Penelope lies in bed with her baby.
Odysseus enters. Pets loyal hound **ARGOS** at Penelope's feet.

Penelope reads concern in her husband's eyes. Two people who
know each other well. No secrets. Notices a MESSAGE in his hand.

PENELOPE
Is that...?

ODYSSEUS
(subtle grave nod)
A call to fight.

PENELOPE
Who?

ODYSSEUS
Troy.

She hears this, but it's not intuitive.

PENELOPE
The trading city across the sea?

Odysseus pauses. His response is hollow, unenthusiastic.

ODYSSEUS
Agamemnon declared war.

PENELOPE
He does what his brother whispers.

ODYSSEUS
Menelaus invoked the Oath of
Tyndareus. All Greece is bound --

PENELOPE
-- to defend the Spartan throne from
usurpers. Not invade a foreign land.

Odysseus looks away, to the royal seal on his ring. Heavy now.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)
Since when do distant kings decide
where Ithaca bleeds?
(off him)
Our duty is to our people. What does
this bring them?

Odysseus doesn't have an answer.

EXT. OUTSIDE TROY - NIGHT

Odysseus stirs awake. Ithacans tend to him on the ground.

ITHACAN
He's awake.

Eurylochus comes over. Odysseus notices a flake of ash.

ODYSSEUS
What's burning?

EURYLOCHUS
Everything.

Eurylochus nods to the side, revealing we're outside the city walls. The city BURNS.

ODYSSEUS
... Achilles --?

His men share a look.

EXT. OUTSIDE TROY - NIGHT

Ithacans lead Odysseus to a field hospital. Dying men...

Achilles among them. Barely recognizable. Sees Odysseus through one remaining eye. Tries to smile, but he's missing teeth and part of his face. He gurgles as he speaks.

ACHILLES
I said I wanted to die at the foot
of Zeus, but they brought me here.
(then, re: city)
Did you find glory in there?
(off Odysseus, quiet)
Nor I.

Odysseus tries to think of what to say. Takes Achilles' arm.

ODYSSEUS
... You will be remembered.

ACHILLES
You were always kind.
(then)
I wish that I...

But he gurgles. Too much blood. He tries again. Can't understand him. This is what real violence looks like.

Then, unceremoniously, Achilles stops gurgling. Gone.

EXT. SHORE OUTSIDE OF TROY - DAWN

A makeshift funeral ground. The sea churns gray. Troy smolders on the horizon in the other direction.

A PYRE has been built from timbers and shattered shields.

Upon it, ACHILLES. Pale. Dead. Face cleaned, but that makes his wounds look even worse. An ATTENDANT drapes a SHROUD.

Greeks have assembled by kingdom:

ATHENS, BOEOTIA, CRETE, each battalion-sized numbers. Heavy armor has been polished. Distinguished by tunic color.

Then **RHODES, SALAMIS, LOCRIS**, and **PYLOS**. Each smaller in number. Less uniform, more like militias.

The exception among the less-numerous is **DULICHIMUM**, led by Antinous who we met. He has his men uniformed and armed in the style of the larger kingdoms, as if envious of them.

Antinous' eyes shift to...

SPARTA and **MYCENAE**, grouped together, led by brother-kings **MENELAUS of Sparta** (50s, ruthless strength, conniving eyes) and **AGAMEMNON of Mycenae** (60s, weak, past his prime). Their men are picture-perfect Greek hoplites, and their kingdoms are the manifestation of what Antinous aspires to.

Finally, we find the Ithacans.

Odysseus among them, not at their head. Citizen king. The Ithacans mirror him. Strong, confident, nothing to prove. Not in formation. Assembled freely; they each own their space.

Closest to Odysseus, we find familiar faces from the battle. First the trusty Eurylochus, then several others:

YIANNI, 30s. Salt of the earth, expert sailor and navigator.

CLEON, 19. The young soldier who threw up in the Trojan Horse. Braver by the day. Reminds the men of their own sons.

STAVROS, 40s. Platoon philosopher. Refined and thoughtful.

PERIMEDES, 30s. Mysterious and worldly. Dangerous yet dreamy. Deep, electric eyes. Scattered tattoos of ancient runes.

Odysseus looks at Menelaus, who's trailed by several **WOMEN** (20s, 30s). All pretty, dressed similar.

EURYLOCHUS
(leaning over, quiet)
Seems like Menelaus made do without
Helen...

Odysseus is grim, stern. Thinking of men who died for this.

A Mycenaean attendant approaches Odysseus with a torch.

ATTENDANT

King Agamemnon bestows the honor to
the hero who opened the gate.

ODYSSEUS

Honor died here long ago.

The Attendant doesn't know what to say.

Odysseus takes the torch...

Approaches the pyre. Now alone with Achilles. Odysseus' eyes
say more than words ever could. He sets the pyre alight.

All Greeks watch the fire make its way to Achilles.

Odysseus turns. Blaze rising behind him. Rejoins his men.

A moment of silence across the thousands assembled.

Smoke rises... And joins the larger trail of smoke from the
city. Grotesque, not picturesque.

Finally, Agamemnon steps forward. Eyes find him. He clears
his throat, unsure of what to say.

AGAMEMNON

When I was young... The... I...

He trails off. Tired. Lost.

Menelaus steps up behind him. Puts a hand on his shoulder.

MENELAUS

(quietly)

Rest.

Menelaus helps Agamemnon into the hands of Attendants. Turns
to face the crowd.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

We thank you, Agamemnon. My brother
by blood. Brother to all of us by
leadership. Devotion.

(to the crowd)

What our supreme commander and king
has sacrificed for our cause, is
matched only by those among us who
made the greatest sacrifice of all...

(re: the pyre)

We stand in the shadow of one of
them. Achilles. Lion of Greece. He
gave his life to free us from the
threat of a dangerous enemy.

Menelaus scans the soldier's faces. Most cast their eyes low.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

What shall we do next? Scatter to our kingdoms? Shall I, Menelaus, return to Sparta? Shall my brother, our great leader, return to the comforts of home? Is that what we tell our sons? That our quest was cut down like this fierce warrior, at the threshold of greatness?

Odysseus looks up at that...

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

The memory of Achilles demands more. Our path lies East, past Troy, to its allies.

Murmurs. Looks. He's proposing an expansion of the war.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

If the Trojans would be so bold as to abduct my own wife, imagine what others would do if left unchecked. Only when they are vanquished and their lands conquered, may we call ourselves victorious.

The crowd is hard to read. Menelaus eyes them. War-weary men. His grip on them is precarious at best. He feels them out.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

What says Boetia? Crete?

(looking)

Rhodes and Pylos, you distinguished yourselves. And our great brothers in Athens, known for their boldness.

More murmurs. No one is clearly for or against.

ANTINOUS

Dulichium is with you.

Menelaus looks from Antinous... to the others. That wasn't enough to move the rest of them.

An indecisive silence.

Murmurs return. Through them rises one word...

VARIOUS MURMURS

... Ithaca.

(others)

(MORE)

VARIOUS MURMURS (CONT'D)

Ithaca...
(others)
What of Ithaca?

It's as if Greek eyes are pulled by a natural gravity...

To Odysseus. He stands. Silent. Among his men.

Menelaus clocks this.

Antinous steps toward Odysseus. Speaks quietly, but sharp.

ANTINOUS
Stand with Greece, Ithacan.
(then)
Remember the Oath.

Odysseus turns to Antinous.

Stares hard. Straight through him.

A beat.

Antinous... breaks eye contact, steps back.

Odysseus looks from king to king. None can hold his gaze.

He finally settles on the smoking heap that was once Troy.

ODYSSEUS
We're here to remember the dead.

Odysseus turns. Leaves. The rest of the Ithacans follow. All Greeks part for them. Doesn't matter which kingdom calls itself "in charge." Ithacans call their own shots.

Menelaus watches, mulling exactly that.

HOLD on the Ithacan BANNER as it SNAPS in wind --

EXT. ITHACA - DAY

A similar BANNER atop a seaside hill. Several beyond it. Across farms. Vineyards. Flocks. Leading up to --

The city of Ithaca. Simple elegance, classical design. Greens. Marble. Earthy. Not ornate. In a word, real.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - DAY

As we've seen in flashback. But today, a bit faded. Time has passed; times got hard. Find the THRONE. Settle behind it...

See a HAND, wearing that RING with the seal, but the hand is now a woman's. Penelope. But we don't see her face yet.

In view, two **ITHACAN WOMEN** stand facing the throne. Around them, some **ATTENDANTS** take written minutes.

If paying attention, notice all in this room are female. Nearly all men have been taken off to the catastrophic war.

PENELOPE (O.S.)

... We are all struggling. But you cannot keep letting your goats graze on her land. They destroy crops our whole island needs.

One of the women lowers her head, defeated. Wipes a tear.

WOMAN

The herd is all we have, my queen. They will go hungry and die.

PENELOPE (O.S.)

Not if you graze them here.

The woman looks up.

WOMAN

At the palace?

Move around to find Penelope, older. Tired but radiant.

PENELOPE

This palace serves Ithaca, just as whoever sits on its throne.

As the two women Penelope addresses share a forgiving look, conflict resolved --

Penelope's attendant **ELIA** approaches. Late 20s, lithe movements, perceptive eyes. Her hair is up, which reveals a mysterious BARBED ARROWHEAD symbol burned into the nape of her neck.

ELIA

(whispering)

Visitors, my queen.

(off Penelope)

Those visitors.

PENELOPE

Pardon me, another matter awaits.

The two women head out. As Penelope rises --

INT. ROYAL PALACE - HALL - DAY

Modest structure lined with statues of prior kings. The kingdom is ruled under the eyes of its ancestors.

Penelope enters to find various Ithacan elites. Think politicians and advisors. All led by **DEMETRIUS**, 50s.

DEMETRIUS

Elegant as always, my queen.

PENELOPE

Demetrius, to what do I owe this latest pleasure?

DEMETRIUS

(feigned hesitation)

I overheard some of your earlier proceeding. Admirable you would give all you have for our people.

PENELOPE

My husband gives more.

DEMETRIUS

It... has been months since his last dispatch.

PENELOPE

Odysseus will prevail.

DEMETRIUS

Even if that is true, what is to say he does in fact return?

Penelope eyes him, reading him.

DEMETRIUS (CONT'D)

All of our men have been back and forth to the front --

PENELOPE

I'm sure your many talents are still needed there.

DEMETRIUS

You flatter me.

(shifting)

But Odysseus has never been back. Not once in ten years.

PENELOPE

My husband leads from the front. He'll be the last to leave.

DEMETRIUS

Or... this is what he wants.

(off her)

How many a man has been overtaken
by command? A thirst for power?

PENELOPE

Do enlighten me.

AKA, "Maybe you."

DEMETRIUS

My queen, more than anyone I want to
serve my kingdom. But for too long
it's been a kingdom without a king.
In his absence, whatever the reason,
that falls to you to resolve.

PENELOPE

And as the resolution, you present
yourself?

DEMETRIUS

At least consider a more formal
structure. One to provide you
support in your husband's absence,
or a smooth transition in the event
of tragedy.

(off her)

A difficult topic, but know that
others might not be so devoted to
your interest -- or that of our
home -- or that of your son.

Penelope hears that loud and clear. Looks all around. A beat.

PENELOPE

Your counsel is appreciated. Now if
you will excuse me, I must prepare
for another engagement.

DEMETRIUS

With?

PENELOPE

Goats.

Another beat. He eyes her.

DEMETRIUS

Good day, my queen.

Hold on Penelope as he and his men leave --

EXT. ROYAL PALACE - DAY

Demetrius and his men exit. One of them, **NIKOS**, speaks.

NIKOS
She suspects us.

DEMETRIUS
There are other ways to break her.

They turn at the sound of someone approaching.

TELEMACHUS, now 10, a boy wishing to become a man. Shares his father's quiet strength, but not yet his physical presence.

The men see him. They all look to Demetrius to set the tone.

DEMETRIUS (CONT'D)
Telemachus, my goodness. I thought
you were your father.

TELEMACHUS
Do you have news of him?

DEMETRIUS
We will soon. He's a strong warrior.
Like you will be someday.

Demetrius reaches to mess up Telemachus' hair, when --

PENELOPE (O.S.)
Telemachus, come.

Find Penelope, watching them from a balcony.

Telemachus nods and enters the palace. Penelope keeps her eyes on Demetrius. Finally he and his men turn.

NIKOS
The boy doesn't deserve what awaits.

DEMETRIUS
His father sealed his fate.

They round a corner, disappear from sight.

INT. ROYAL PALACE - PENELOPE'S CHAMBER - DAY

Telemachus enters. Penelope shuts the door behind him. He notices the concern in the way she carries herself.

TELEMACHUS
Is something wrong?

PENELOPE

Those men have ambitions. You must stay close.

TELEMACHUS

We should tell grandfather.

PENELOPE

Laertes is not the man he once was.

TELEMACHUS

If not him, who?

PENELOPE

We're on our own until your father returns. Do you understand?

Telemachus looks frightened.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

He will return.

TELEMACHUS

How do you know?

PENELOPE

He promised me. An Ithacan always stands by his word.

She hugs Telemachus. We hold on him, thinking.

EXT. ITHACAN CAMP - NIGHT

Sentries. Tents. But no sleep. Ithacans work. Pack.

A wooden DOCK leads to THREE TRIREME SHIPS. Two bordering each side of the dock. The third at the end like a T. Ithacans go back and forth loading gear and supplies.

On the beach, find Odysseus. Seated near a fire. He lets sand slip through his fingers. His version of an hour-glass.

Nearby, Yianni calibrates a sextant, preparing to sail.

Behind them, half in shadow, Perimedes sharpens one of several CORD-WRAPPED TOMAHAWKS. Firelight dances in his eyes.

ODYSSEUS

Yianni, how are the stars?

YIANNI

More cloud than I like, but I've
been dreaming of the way home
enough to know it blind.

ODYSSEUS

We set out at first light.

Cleon trudges by with shipbuilding tools --

CLEON

Shall we float our last ship, my
king? It's nearly seaworthy again.

Cleon indicates a **FOURTH SHIP**, smaller, dry-docked for work
on the beach atop an array of LOGS.

ODYSSEUS

That ship brought us to this cursed
place. Let it rot.

YIANNI

Do you think our children will
remember us? My boy had yet to walk
before I left.

Beat. No one knows what to say. Finally --

ODYSSEUS

He'll be proud. His father is a
brave, honorable man. As are all of
you. All of Greece knows none
better... Though a better king
would have never called you to war.

Eurylochus and Stavros approach.

EURYLOCHUS

Only a worthy king would question
himself.

(off Odysseus)

Messenger came from Agamemnon. The
king would like a word.

Odysseus looks once more out to sea, then rises.

STAVROS

He wants that word alone. King to
king, I suppose.

EURYLOCHUS

I don't like it. There are still
Trojans in the hills.

YIANNI

Perimedes could go with you and
skin anyone who gives you trouble.

Perimedes subtly looks up from his tomahawk. He NEVER speaks.

ODYSSEUS

All of you rest. Tomorrow we row.

Odysseus drops the last bit of sand, walks off.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

An old man sits outside. Thousand-yard stare into a fire.
Hears a noise. Grabs a stick.

OLD MAN

Who goes there?

He tries to rise, but stumbles off balance. Fortunately for
him, the noise comes from --

TELEMACHUS

It's me grandfather.

Telemachus approaches his grandfather, **LAERTES** (70s). Seems
old for his years. Body not broken; something within him is.

LAERTES

Telemachus? What are you doing here
at this hour? March home.

Deflated, Telemachus turns to go. Laertes thinks better.

LAERTES (CONT'D)

Wait.

(off Telemachus)

Get an old man a blanket first.

EXT. MYCENEAN-SPARTAN CAMP - NIGHT

A combined camp that flies both banners. More sophisticated
than the simple Ithacan camp. Fortifications. Ornate tents.

Odysseus approaches the guards.

GUARD

The Ithacan king approaches!

Odysseus watches the wooden palisade pull open.

INT. ROYAL TENT - NIGHT

Odysseus enters. Tent is vast and interconnected. Cloth corridors. Torches. Odysseus passes through partitions and tassels. Reaches Agamemnon's chamber. Servants open curtains.

INT. ROYAL TENT - AGAMEMNON'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Odysseus enters.

Across the torchlit enclosure, Agamemnon faces away. Odd...

Agamemnon turns, revealing streaks of BLOOD RUNNING DOWN HIS LONG WHITE ROBE. Blank look on his face.

Alarmed, Odysseus rushes to him, assuming a MORTAL WOUND --

But Agamemnon simply turns back to what he was doing --

Slicing up various ANIMALS, setting their innards at the feet of GROTESQUE IDOLS. A blood sacrifice.

Odysseus looks at the idols. Cruel. Harsh. Foreign. None resemble the Greek pantheon.

ODYSSEUS
... I don't recognize these gods.

AGAMEMNON
All of ours stopped listening.

Agamemnon turns back to slicing. Eerie.

Odysseus steps back...

And finds Menelaus standing in a corridor, watching him.

ODYSSEUS
(re: Agamemnon)
How long has he been like this?

MENELAUS
Every man who came here died. We
who still draw breath are not who
we once were.

Odysseus looks between them.

ODYSSEUS
He's not the one who summoned me...

Menelaus gives him a knowing stare.

INT. ROYAL TENT - MENELAUS' CHAMBER - NIGHT

Menelaus leads Odysseus in. Servants stand in positions. One pours wine for Menelaus as he sits. Odysseus sits, but declines. Menelaus notices, then waves the servants out.

MENELAUS

Ten years in, you are the one king I
feel like I still don't truly know.

ODYSSEUS

I stayed where I was needed.

Menelaus clocks the aura.

MENELAUS

With your men. Of course.

(then)

Ithaca. Small but mighty... I never
understood why your father Laertes
gave up the crown.

ODYSSEUS

I was ready to lead.

MENELAUS

A son who decides he's ready to be
king plays a dangerous game.

ODYSSEUS

In Ithaca, a king's duty is to
replace himself with an heir worthy
of his people. The sooner the better.

Menelaus' look says he couldn't disagree more.

MENELAUS

Ithacans are... unique.

(off Odysseus)

You live on your rock in the sea.
Too far for lust or avarice to find
your shores. You move with purpose.
You say little. But when an Ithacan
does speak, he stands by his word...
Your words, Odysseus. They matter...

A beat. Odysseus watches him.

ODYSSEUS

Where is your wife?

As in, why isn't Menelaus with Helen right now?

Menelaus looks at Odysseus through the same mental lens as before. Sizing him up. These men are very different.

MENELAUS

Helen is... resting.

Menelaus pauses. Takes a sip of wine.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

If my brother were Ithacan, he'd have had the courage to resign.

Odysseus looks at Menelaus as if he's changing the subject, but somehow he's not.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

Firstborn. The only qualification that matters in our monarchy. The only one he had. He always lacked the heart of a sovereign, the will.

Menelaus clocks Odysseus register the forbidden implication.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

He would agree, while he makes his sacrifices to bizarre foreign gods.

Menelaus must mask disgust.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

Under his rule, we -- our people -- are what? A jumble of fifty realms with fifty kings?

ODYSSEUS

A union of free kingdoms.

MENELAUS

... Said like an Ithacan.

(then)

We've bled here ten years. But ten years before that, I lobbied my brother to snuff out this eastern threat. Imagine if we'd moved then. So many lives saved... Achilles...

(then)

But Agamemnon sat. Frozen. No argument would compel him. Not until my own wife was abducted, was his timid hand finally forced.

Something about that rings "off" to Odysseus. It should.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
Now we must finish the job.

ODYSSEUS
I've spent much of this war behind
enemy lines. I've seen Troy's
neighbors. They're farmers.
Fishermen. They pose no threat.

Beat as Menelaus analyzes him.

MENELAUS
Or pose no... resistance?

Menelaus leans in ever so slightly, starting to show his cards.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
Fertile land. Plentiful slaves. We
are at the dawn of an empire.

Odysseus is silent. Menelaus watches him carefully.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
Odysseus. You don't need your guard
up with me. Speak your mind. King
to king. Greek to Greek.

Odysseus considers him.

ODYSSEUS
Our men lay on this beach half-dead,
ships splintered or sunk, our best
buried in the blood and mud. They
did not come here for empire. They
came for you. For Helen. Now they
want to go home.

MENELAUS
Men want many things. They look to
us to guide them.

(then)

They listen to you. Words cut
deeper than any blade. You must
choose them wisely.

(then)

Odysseus, join me and your reign
will stretch past the horizon. A
prize worthy of a great man, not a
mere rock in the sea.

The pitch has been made. It lingers in the air. A beat.

ODYSSEUS

That rock is my home. Upon it walk
my people, my family, each of whom
it is my duty to serve.

The words hang. Neither looks away.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

I'm needed at camp. We sail at first
light.

Odysseus rises. Nods a bow, turns.

MENELAUS

Odysseus --

(as Odysseus stops)

A king who decides he does not need
friends plays a more dangerous game.

Odysseus turns back.

ODYSSEUS

In Ithaca, kings don't play games.

Odysseus moves to exit -- but when he opens the flap, he
finds Antinous and ten Dulichiuns. No helmets or spears, but
armor and swords. Contrast to Odysseus' plain dark clothes.

Immediate tension.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

(to Menelaus)

What is this?

MENELAUS

Forgive me, I expected a different
response. I had arranged a celebration.

Antinous passes Odysseus, leading the Dulichiun men -- and a
group of Trojan women in chains.

Among them, Cassandra. Odysseus recognizes her.

ODYSSEUS

Stop.

MENELAUS

Ithacans might not take slaves, but
this is not Ithaca.

ODYSSEUS

These people surrendered.

MENELAUS
They're your prisoners?

ODYSSEUS
They're under my protection.

ANTINOUS
You must be confused, Ithacan. I
recall you hit your head.

Odysseus' eyes harden. His look tells us he knows the score.
Both stare daggers. Tension rising.

ODYSSEUS
Free them.

ANTINOUS
Or?

ODYSSEUS
I will.

Antinous draws his sword. Now multiple lines have been
crossed: a challenge like that in front of his men, but also
brandishing steel in camp. Hard to come back from this.

Odysseus turns to Menelaus.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)
You won't stop this?

Menelaus shrugs. Allowing it.

MENELAUS
... Two free men.

Odysseus turns back to Antinous.

Hand goes to swordbelt. Antinous watches.

Odysseus... UNBUCKLES it.

Belt drops. Sword hits dirt.

ANTINOUS
I do not accept your surrender,
Ithacan.

ODYSSEUS
I didn't offer it.

ANTINOUS
Then pick up your sword.

Odysseus, quiet in the face now. Eyes empty. Not angry. Worse.

ODYSSEUS
I don't need it.

Antinous SLASHES. Odysseus moves. Blade misses.

Another slash, another miss.

Antinous turns hard, but Odysseus is already there. Headbutt.

Antinous stumbles back, spits blood. Slashes again, wild now. Odysseus catches his arm. Twists, locks. Now face to face.

Odysseus slowly overpowers Antinous' sword arm.

Brings the blade to Antinous' face... Slowly CUTS. Blade BITES flesh. Everyone watches. Antinous, helpless.

Odysseus could easily kill him.

But doesn't. Odysseus just extends the cut, until --

ANTINOUS
MERCY!

Odysseus RELEASES Antinous. Antinous stumbles back, covering his face-wound. Odysseus keeps the sword.

ODYSSEUS
Now that you've begged for it, you
know what it is.

Antinous erupts, LIVID, reaches toward his men.

ANTINOUS
SWORD!

MENELAUS
Enough!

Breathing heavy, Antinous looks away, defeated.

Odysseus glares, eyes unmet.

Then Odysseus RAISES the sword. SLAMS it onto the LOCK that chains the Trojan women together. Lock and sword both BREAK.

Free, Cassandra and the others find Odysseus' eyeline. He nods reassuringly. They leave, Cassandra last.

Odysseus retrieves his swordbelt. Takes one last look at Menelaus. Turns... Drops the broken sword on the way out.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Laertes sits under a blanket. Telemachus sits across from him, looking into the fire. Laertes eyes him a beat. Laertes may be a shell of himself, but he still has the instincts of a king.

LAERTES

You did not come to feed chickens.

TELEMACHUS

Mother needs you.

Laertes thinks. This is a sore subject.

LAERTES

I am in retirement.

TELEMACHUS

People say father won't come back.

LAERTES

I cannot be king for him.

TELEMACHUS

Others want to be.

Laertes struggles with what to say.

LAERTES

I must rest.

TELEMACHUS

That's all you do.

The honesty of a child.

LAERTES

I gave your father every advantage.
This war is not my doing.

TELEMACHUS

I didn't say it was.

LAERTES

He inherited a prosperous throne.
Whoever's fault this is, I'll be
dead before it's fixed.

TELEMACHUS

Grandfather --

LAERTES

You should not invite an old man to
ramble. You ought to be asleep.

Telemachus rises to leave. Laertes watches. Sighs.

LAERTES (CONT'D)
The hour is too late to walk.

INT. ROAD - NIGHT

A donkey slowly pulls a wagon. Laertes drives. Telemachus is asleep in the back, under the blanket from before. Laertes looks at Telemachus, then the sky. Thinks...

INT. ROYAL PALACE - THRONE ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Stars visible out a window. A baby's cries come from the corridor. Find Odysseus pacing in front of the throne. Laertes stands nearby, but younger, coiffed and clean.

LAERTES
... If you don't go, others won't go.

ODYSSEUS
That may be a blessing.
(off Laertes)
Penelope was right. Our oath was to prevent war between Greeks, not invade a place we've never been.

Laertes shakes his head.

LAERTES
That oath is the only reason our name is known in the halls of Sparta.

ODYSSEUS
Our duty is to the people of Ithaca.

LAERTES
You will squander our legacy.

Odysseus chooses his next words carefully. Reserved.

ODYSSEUS
You've never seen combat like this.

LAERTES
(defensive)
You would hold it against me that I ruled over peace.

ODYSSEUS

When I fought alongside the
Argonauts, I learned war is not
something a man controls. It is
something he survives --

LAERTES

(jealous)
My son the adventurer.

ODYSSEUS

When you made me king, you --

LAERTES

I shouldn't have.

Laertes wants to take it back, but can't bring himself to.

LAERTES (CONT'D)

Do what you will.

Laertes leaves. Hold on Odysseus, now alone.

EXT. TROJAN PLATEAU - NIGHT

Odysseus trudges away from the Mycenaean-Spartan camp. *Did that flashback belong to Laertes or Odysseus? Or both?*

Odysseus walks with the weight of the world on his shoulders. *What would his father think of what he just told Menelaus? Was it wrong to bring his men here? Is it wrong to go home?*

He senses something. Spins -- catches a HAND with a DAGGER.

The hand belongs to Cassandra. Odysseus, surprised.

ODYSSEUS

This is how you thank me?

CASSANDRA

You burned my home!

Odysseus wants to argue, but can't. He deflates. Lets her go. Hands the knife back to her.

ODYSSEUS

Keep it.

CASSANDRA

I'll cut your throat.

He eyes her, analyzing, thinking. Then --

ODYSSEUS

So be it.

He walks. She immediately LUNGES at him with the knife.

He turns back to her, but doesn't stop her. It is she who stops on her own. Knife at his throat. A beat.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

You won't regret it. Instead,
you'll feel... less. And less.
Until you feel nothing at all.

Blade trembling. She wants to kill him, but can't bring herself to. But that could change any second.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

I tell myself, if I hold my wife
once more... my son... perhaps then
I'll feel something again.
(then)
Perhaps I won't... Perhaps you're
showing me kindness.

He slowly lifts his head, revealing more of his neck. Eyes locked. Her trembling blade indents the skin over his artery.

What will she do? SUDDENLY, her eyes ROLL BACK. She speaks in that same guttural voice we heard before

CASSANDRA

Your WAR will FOLLOW you, king!

She COLLAPSES into his arms.

INT. ROYAL TENT - AGAMEMNON'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Guards bring in Antinous, who's been stripped of his weapons and armor. Now just a man in a tunic, clutching a wound.

MENELAUS (O.S.)

Leave us.

Antinous turns as guards leave. Sees Menelaus flanking him, arms crossed. Menelaus approaches.

Menelaus slowly takes Antinous' hand away from the wound.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

That will mark you for the rest of
your life...
(then)
Which could be quite short.
(MORE)

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
(off Antinous, worried)
My brother does not tolerate the
spilling of blood among his ranks.

Menelaus leads Antinous a few paces -- to Agamemnon, who
sleeps in a small recessed bed. Stirring. Whimpers a little.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
Shall we wake him? Or shall we talk?

Antinous nods. Menelaus directs him away from Agamemnon to
chairs. Nearby, Agamemnon's grotesque foreign idols.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
Sit.

Antinous sits. Menelaus stands.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
You come from Dulichium. It's
pretty there.

ANTINOUS
Thank you.

MENELAUS
No it's not. It's a heap of ash.
Your troops are second-rate. And
you are a duplicitous snake who
besmirches the title of king by
calling himself one.

That lands hard. Antinous, stunned by Menelaus' bluntness,
betrays a hint of self-loathing.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
But there is one thing you and I
have in common.

Menelaus traces a blood soaked idol with his finger.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)
An enemy.

Antinous' wheels turn. Menelaus gives a menacing stare.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Cassandra stirs awake on a cot. Panicked. Unsure where she is.

EURYLOCHUS (O.S.)
Don't fret, princess.

She turns to see Eurylochus.

EURYLOCHUS (CONT'D)
You're in the safest tent in Troy.

CASSANDRA
Why?

Eurylochus points -- to Perimedes. Who leans against a post, partially in shadow. Tattoos taut across his chiseled form.

EURYLOCHUS
Our king gave him orders to protect you. Perimedes is his name. From a land far north, where they say men carve castles out of ice and transform into ravenous wolves.

Perimedes grins the slightest bit.

EURYLOCHUS (CONT'D)
I am Eurylochus, the king's sergeant at arms.

CASSANDRA
Which king?

EURYLOCHUS
The one you tried to kill.

EXT. ITHACAN CAMP - NIGHT

Eurylochus leads Cassandra through camp. Perimedes quietly follows, tomahawks on a bandolier for quick access.

CASSANDRA
Does Perimedes speak?

EURYLOCHUS
Never. But Yianni over there will chat your ear off, though I must warn he does talk like a sailor.

Eurylochus indicates Yianni, working on the drydocked ship.

YIANNI
Greatest sailor in the Aegean.

EURYLOCHUS
And if it's poetry you want, try Cleon. You'll just have to put up with the cracks in his voice.

Eurylochus indicates Cleon, carrying tools.

CLEON
Whimsical words from a crusty old
turd.

EURYLOCHUS
I like him, he reminds me of my
grandsons. They're 2 and 5.

Cleon kicks dirt at Eurylochus, who laughs.

EURYLOCHUS (CONT'D)
Whatever you do, don't talk to
Stavros.

Eurylochus indicates Stavros.

CASSANDRA
Why?

EURYLOCHUS
He's a philosopher... He never
makes any sense.

Stavros chuckles.

CASSANDRA
Spare your introductions. We will
not be acquainted long.

Eurylochus stops. They spot smoke from Troy rising up
contrasting the moon. Brought back to reality.

EURYLOCHUS
(growing serious)
We've all lost many here. My
condolences to you and yours.

She feels his earnestness.

CASSANDRA
And you.

He nods ahead, to where Odysseus looks out over the sea.

EXT. PROMONTORY - NIGHT

Cassandra joins Odysseus, sea below them.

CASSANDRA
How far did you carry me?

ODYSSEUS

Few miles.

CASSANDRA

Quite a distance.

ODYSSEUS

I've carried wounded much farther.

CASSANDRA

I'm sure they were grateful.

ODYSSEUS

Most are dead.

His eyes drift to the ocean. She watches him.

CASSANDRA

If you planned on ransoming me --

ODYSSEUS

You're free to go.

He speaks without hesitation. She's surprised.

CASSANDRA

That's not what you brought me here
to tell me.

He looks at her.

ODYSSEUS

You... know things... Something
comes over you, and you see things
others cannot.

CASSANDRA

I saw this.
(re: Troy)
I tried to warn my father.

ODYSSEUS

My wife warned me. Penelope. We
have a son. His name is Telemachus.

She hears their names, a gesture of warmth.

CASSANDRA

Nothing you say or do will ease my
hatred for you.

A beat. Odysseus nods.

ODYSSEUS
You said this war would follow me.
To them. What did you mean?

CASSANDRA
I don't know.
(off him)
I don't "see" these things. It's as
if I remember them.

ODYSSEUS
Before they happen.

She shrugs.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)
Is my family in danger?

CASSANDRA
Look at what you did. You bring
danger everywhere you go.

ODYSSEUS
No riddles.

CASSANDRA
I'm not a witch.

ODYSSEUS
Tell me.

CASSANDRA
I don't control it!

ODYSSEUS
(frustrated)
Tell me!

Suddenly, she SHRIEKS.

But this is not her usual trance. Cassandra is still very
much herself, looking PAST him.

Odysseus turns as --

WHIZZ! A SPEAR FLIES. He CATCHES it -- an instant before --

A terrifying SHAPE lunges in moonlight.

Lightning fast, Odysseus STABS -- and impales --

An **ARMORED ATTACKER**. Face and metal blackened with SOOT.
Odysseus' eyes go wide, realizing --

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

AMBUSH!

EXT. ITHACAN CAMP - NIGHT

The men hear Odysseus. Share looks in the moonlight, when --
Above them, the moon goes DARK.

CLEON

What happened to the moon?

EURYLOCHUS

(realizing)

COVER!!!

He shoves whomever he can under cover, seconds before --

ARROWS RAIN. THWWP-THWWP-THWWP! A sea of them, dense enough
to black out the moon. They tear through tents, boards,
wagons. Ithacans get hit -- limbs, torsos. Men fall.

Moonlight again. Men use it to get their bearings, find more
cover before -- another RAIN blacks it out once more.

Odysseus runs up with Cassandra. Flips a wagon, shoves
wounded beneath it as -- the next wave of arrows STRIKES!

THWWP-THWWP-THWWP! When over, Odysseus tells Cassandra:

ODYSSEUS

Stay here!

CASSANDRA

No!

Unable to argue, he rolls, springs up. She follows. He dodges
arrows, crashes through his tent -- grabs a BOW.

ODYSSEUS

Ithacans, BOWS!

The men follow him, grabbing bows from their tents.

Odysseus rips fallen arrows out of planks and sand. Scans the
horizon, strings, then LOOSES AN ARROW. A man's SCREAM tells
us he hit a target. Then again, and again.

His men follow. Cleon, Eurylochus, Stavros, Yianni. Loosing
arrows into the night, dropping attackers.

Together, they clear the camp like modern CQB. Short range.
Bows instead of assault rifles.

Veering around tents. Clearing, shooting, killing. Then DIVING as another wave of raining arrows falls.

They take cover. Shout to each other as the arrows fall.

EURYLOCHUS
Trojans must have regrouped!

CASSANDRA
My city surrendered!

STAVROS
It appears not!

CASSANDRA
We would die before dishonoring
ourselves.

Just then, the rain of arrows STOPS. Odysseus and his men PEER into the night. Bows ready.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)
What are you --

ODYSSEUS
Quiet.

He listens. A faint sound. Grows louder.

Feet. MANY. In rhythm. Marching. Metal clanking. STOMP-stomp, STOMP-stomp, STOMP-stomp, STOMP-stomp.

Odysseus grits his teeth. Knows what that is. Looks from around cover. Eurylochus darts over to him. Whispers.

EURYLOCHUS
How many?

ODYSSEUS
Many.

CASSANDRA
What do you mean?

ODYSSEUS
Look.

He points -- to glints of light in the night. Moonlight reflecting off SHIELDS. HELMETS. SPEARHEADS.

An enemy **PHALANX** formation. Grinding toward camp.

Ithacans take shots -- but all BOUNCE off the shields.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

Fall back!

The men cover each other in egress -- until -- they see --

STOMP-stomp, STOMP-stomp, STOMP-stomp. **ANOTHER PHALANX** behind them, cutting them off.

EURYLOCHUS

They flanked us!

Stavros runs up with Cleon.

STAVROS

On all sides.

Odysseus turns to Perimedes, who's calm, half in shadow.

ODYSSEUS

Perimedes, we need a way out!

Perimedes runs off with his bandolier of tomahawks.

CASSANDRA

Where is he going?

Odysseus ignores her.

ODYSSEUS

(to his men)

Shoot at will.

The Ithacans all shoot. Arrows fly, planting into shields as the envelopment closes around them. The arrows don't penetrate, but the advancing hoplites must go slower.

The hoplites get closer. And CLOSER. Ithacans stick together, darting, shooting, but they won't have room much longer.

Cassandra runs forward.

CASSANDRA

Trojans, I am Cassandra, daughter
of Priam. Stop at once --

But instead of open arms, the hoplites HURL SPEARS.

Cassandra DUCKS, rolls to Odysseus.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

These are not my people!

ODYSSEUS

Then shoot at them.

CASSANDRA
What are you going to do?

ODYSSEUS
Get to the ships.

CASSANDRA
How?!

Just then, in one of the advancing hoplite lines, a hoplite is RIPPED BACKWARD INTO THE DARK. Gone.

The hoplites beside him look at the empty place where he stood, when suddenly a HELMET flies forward. There is a HEAD in it.

As they watch it roll -- they get yanked into the dark themselves. See FLASHES of a RAZOR SHARP TOMAHAWK.

Then more hoplites in that same line fall screaming. Someone has gotten BEHIND THEM, the weakpoint of a phalanx.

The line BREAKS, creating a GAP.

As nearby hoplites take notice, two TOMAHAWKS fly out of the dark and bury themselves in the face-slits of their helmets.

The hoplites DROP. Then CORDS tied to the tomahawks SNAP TAUT, ripping them free, BACK into the HANDS of --

Perimedes, who steps out of the shadows into the gap. Blood streaked across his unique tattoos. The blood is not his.

Cassandra watches, stunned, like "*Who IS this guy?*" His deep, electric eyes find Odysseus, who waves Ithacans to the gap.

ODYSSEUS
Move!

The Ithacans SURGE THROUGH THE GAP before the other phalanxes reach them. The other phalanxes see -- and CHARGE.

EXT. TROJAN BEACH - NIGHT

The Ithacans race to the dock, which stretches out to their three ships. The murderous hoplites pursue, spears ready.

EXT. DOCK - NIGHT

Ithacans swarm onto the dock. As most approach the ships, others emerge OFF them with SHIELDS and SPEARS --

Which they toss to Odysseus and other familiar Ithacans.

ODYSSEUS
SHIELDS!

While most Ithacans ready the ships to escape --

Odysseus and the few dozen armed Ithacans form a line on the dock. Find Eurylochus, Stavros, Yianni, Cleon, Perimedes. Ten men wide, four deep. Shields locked. Spears up.

The attacking hoplites pour onto the dock to face them -- but now their numbers are moot. However many there are, only ten can stand abreast. The ODDS were just EVENED.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)
BRACE!

The Ithacans BRACE for impact. Hoplites charge, and -- BOOM!

Shields press. Neckbreaking strength. Deafening shouts. Hundreds of hoplites push each other forward.

But they slow -- and slow -- until -- their advance STOPS.

The attackers have been BOTTLENECKED on the dock. Impasse.

Finally, over their weakening shouts --

Odysseus UNLEASHES a DEEP, CAVERNOUS GROWL. His men JOIN IN. FIERCE, DEAFENING. Attackers are stricken quiet. Then --

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)
I-THA-CA!

Ithacan spears SLAM FORWARD through cracks in the line. Find hoplite necks, faces, anything exposed.

Good GRIEF! It's VIOLENCE unlike ANY we've seen BEFORE!

Attackers SCREAM and FALL!

Ithacan spears RETRACT. Ithacans STEP. This time, all shout:

ITHACANS
I-THA-CA!

Ithacan SPEARS STAB FORWARD AGAIN on the "CA". Steel finds flesh. Another ROW of hoplites screams and falls.

Retract, step, repeat.

ITHACANS (CONT'D)
I-THA-CA! I-THA-CA!

With each SHOUT, the Ithacan line methodically DEVOURS pressed hoplites. The hoplites in front try to withdraw, but those behind prevent them. They're STUCK in a MEATGRINDER.

Hoplites bleed. Die. Leap in the sea.

Terror spreads through the hoplite column, who now reverse to save themselves. Ithacans pursue, pressing them further and further back on the dock, buying time for the three ships to ready to disembark. Hoplites BREAK and RUN.

EURYLOCHUS

We got them running!

Odysseus assesses.

ODYSSEUS

Back to the ships!

The Ithacans reverse. Odysseus sees Cassandra on the dock.

She looks from him -- to the nearest Ithacan ship -- but then, suddenly, something catches her eye BEYOND IT --

A burst of FLAME. Then MORE. On the water, arrayed in a LINE.

CASSANDRA

LOOK!

Odysseus turns and sees: **ATTACKING SHIPS** -- HEADING TOWARD THE DOCK, ON COURSE TO RAM IT! TENDRILS OF FLAME SPRAY FORTH!

CLEON

GREEK FIRE!

Ithacan ships go alight. Men jump overboard, when, seconds later -- the line of attack ships RAMS EVERYTHING IN SIGHT!

All of our characters DROP INTO THE SEA.

EXT. SEA - SAME

We go UNDERWATER with Odysseus -- as he frees a man pinned to the sandy bottom -- pulls another toward the beach.

One shot. We track the madness.

EXT. BEACH - SAME

Odysseus and Eurylochus regroup Ithacans racing up out of the sea. Some need to be carried. Ithacan ships burn, sink.

On the other side of the beach, the more numerous attacking hoplites break into a charge. Odysseus thinks fast --

He sees their one hope: that LAST DRYDOCKED SHIP.

ODYSSEUS

The ship!

He leads the men to it. They push. Some bleeding, some burned, but they PUSH -- lurching it FORWARD on rolling logs --

Nearby, enemy hoplites in full charge --

Odysseus and his men SPLASH the ship into water. Climb in.

Cassandra helps a straggler up above her, but slips --

When a HAND catches hers. Pulls her up and over. She tumbles in. Looks up into eyes like cold lightning --

Perimedes. He releases her. Already gone, saving someone else.

Odysseus hoists an injured Ithacan aboard, then climbs up himself. Always first into danger, always last out.

EXT. SHIP - NIGHT

Men scramble. Odysseus grabs Yianni.

ODYSSEUS

Steer us out of here Yianni!

Anyone who breathes, TAKE AN OAR!

Odysseus LEAPS below to a lower deck --

Where he grabs an oar and ROWS with the rest of his men. Eurylochus, Stavros, Cleon, and Perimedes, too. All ROW. Stunning STRENGTH. Each could deadlift a grizzly bear.

We stay with Odysseus, peering through the opening for the oar, where he GLIMPSES the attacking ships fall behind.

CLEON

We're leading them!

Suddenly, WHAM! A different ship's **RAM** smashes through their hull from the other side, across from Odysseus. Then THUMPS from the deck above. Our heroes are being **BOARDED!**

Track Odysseus as he helps someone injured in the collision -- then bounds up to the top deck -- joins his men in fighting off boarding hoplites with any object Ithacans can reach.

Up close. Hand-to-hand. All while other men row, Yianni steers, and the pursuing ships belch fire as they gain.

As Odysseus strangles an attacker -- he feels DROPS of RAIN.

EURYLOCHUS

Is that rain?!

STAVROS

A storm, my king!

Life leaves the hoplite who Odysseus strangles, giving the Ithacan a moment to check behind him -- where the other ships draw near. He thinks, turns back to Yianni --

ODYSSEUS

SAIL INTO IT!

YIANNI

ROW!

Fighting on the ship resolved, Odysseus and his men row with force. Waves churn and swirl in a coming rage.

Behind them, the pursuing ships lag.

Lightning FORKS across the sky. Waves RISE and FALL.

Odysseus checks again. The pursuing ships turn away.

CLEON

They're turning!

STAVROS

Wiser men than we.

Waves and wind GROW. Crew cling to ropes, unable to row.

EURYLOCHUS

Troy was never this angry.

Odysseus' eyes track, find Cassandra.

ODYSSEUS

We will see about your prophecy,
princess. If I bring this war home,
or to the bottom of the sea.

A wave surges at the ship, tears into them. Pure chaos.

But in they go, headfirst into the mayhem.

EXT. ROYAL PALACE - LATE NIGHT

Penelope steps outside -- to find Telemachus asleep in the wagon, which has been detached.

She peers into the distance, where Laertes slowly clops away on the donkey. Can't bring himself to speak to her.

She looks at Telemachus. Picks him up. He's a boy eager to become a man, but also still her child. He stays asleep.

She turns to take him inside -- when she hears a noise behind her. Laertes? She turns back --

To see Demetrius approach, flanked by two dozen guards. Not armed for war per se, but still armed. Daggers, etc.

PENELOPE

Demetrius --

DEMETRIUS

Our talk did not sit right with me.

Hearing that, holding her son in front of these armed men, Penelope is immediately on edge. But then --

DEMETRIUS (CONT'D)

You are at risk here.

PENELOPE

I can manage goats.

DEMETRIUS

Those who would do you harm are closer than you think.

Telemachus wakes up. She sets him down. He looks around.

TELEMACHUS

Mother?

DEMETRIUS

As loyal Ithacans, we vow to stay by your side until Odysseus returns.

PENELOPE

I could not impose --

DEMETRIUS

It is our duty.

ELIA (O.S.)

My queen?

Find Elia approaching, lantern raised in one hand. She scans the scene. The men. Locks eyes with Penelope.

From BEHIND Elia, reveal in her other hand she conceals a RECURVE BOW and fistful of BARBED ARROWS. The arrowheads match the mysterious symbol burned into the nape of her neck.

Penelope gives a knowing look, but subtly shakes her head "no."

PENELOPE

It appears we have guests.

Hold on Penelope and Telemachus.

INT. TROJAN PALACE - ALTAR OF ZEUS - LATE NIGHT

Torchlight. Rain. Thunder. Menelaus stands facing the statue of Zeus. At its foot, blood. King Priam's. From when he died.

Spartan guards enter with... Antinous, wearing the same blacked-out armor as the hoplites on the beach.

Menelaus doesn't look at him. Guards exit. Antinous, tense.

ANTINOUS

The storm would have killed him...
I saw him sail in myself.

MENELAUS

I sent you to spill our enemy's blood.
You failed.

Menelaus traces Priam's blood at the foot of Zeus. Dead and dried, the blood creates a dark, decaying smear.

MENELAUS (CONT'D)

I will give you one more chance.
(turning)
But his blood alone will no longer suffice.

EXT. SEA - DAWN

Storm has passed. Sun shines low on the horizon. Silence. A broken ship. Tangled sails. Shattered masts.

Odysseus' eyes flutter open. He and his men lay scattered across the fractured deck, taking water. The wood is soaked.

Cleon spits up seawater, climbing onto a piece of wood. Stavros struggles to sit up. Eyes not yet adjusted.

STAVROS

Where are we?

Odysseus rises. He helps up Cassandra. They share a look.

EURYLOCHUS

My king...

Eurylochus leads Odysseus to Perimedes, who silently crouches over the bodies of several of the attacking hoplites.

EURYLOCHUS (CONT'D)

The Princess was right. These men
are not Trojans.

Odysseus bends to one. Wipes the soot off the armor,
revealing GREEK BRONZE BENEATH. Seal of Dulichium.

EURYLOCHUS (CONT'D)

We were attacked by Greeks.

Major shock to everyone aboard. Looks all around.

Odysseus looks at Cassandra. She's speechless herself.

STAVROS

They could still be after us. They
had more men.

YIANNI

And fast ships.

Odysseus' heart skips a beat, realizing...

ODYSSEUS

I know where they'll go.
(then)
Home.
(off his men)
Our home.

The men are stunned. Looks all around.

Odysseus grows very, very grave.

ODYSSEUS (CONT'D)

We must get there first.

END OF 101