

# Odyssey

Homer

Translated by Robert Fitzgerald

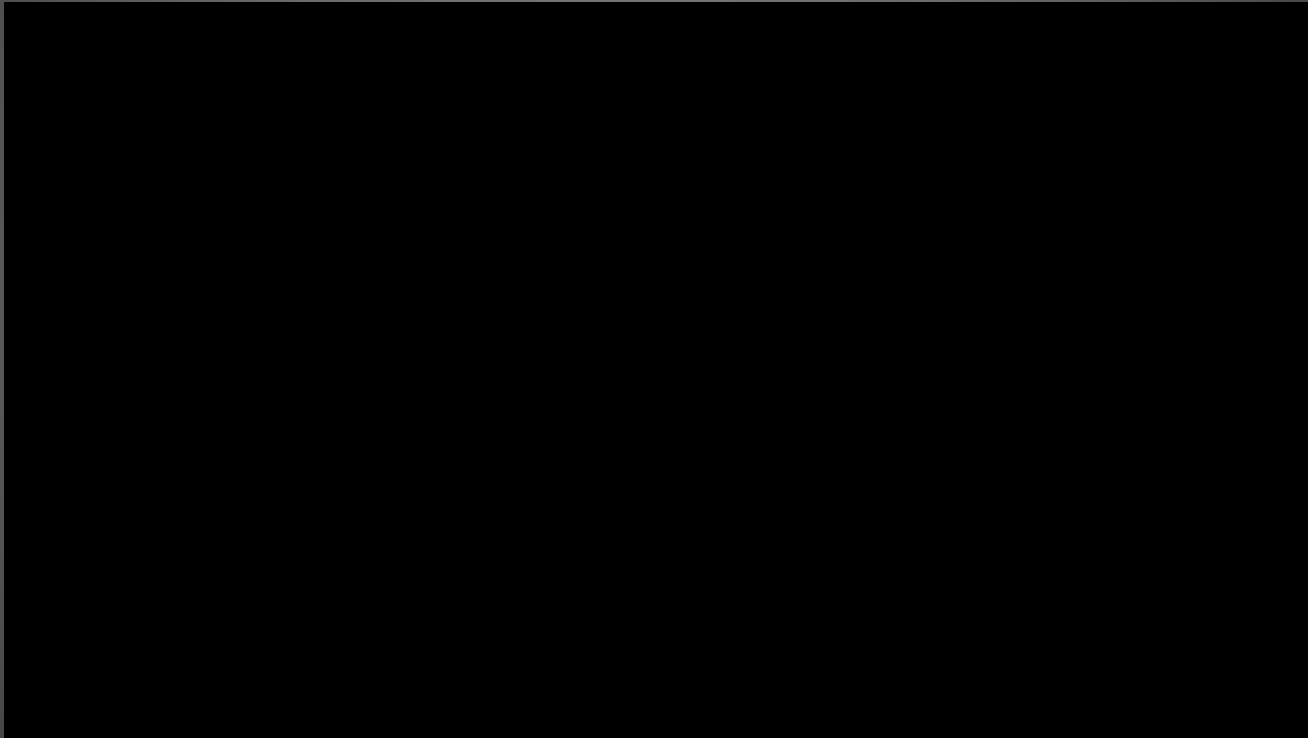


Get Ready for an *Epic* Journey!

# The EPIC

- An epic is a long narrative poem about deeds of gods or heroes.
- The traditional epics were shaped by a literary artist from historical and legendary materials, which had developed in the oral traditions of his nation during a period of expansion and warfare

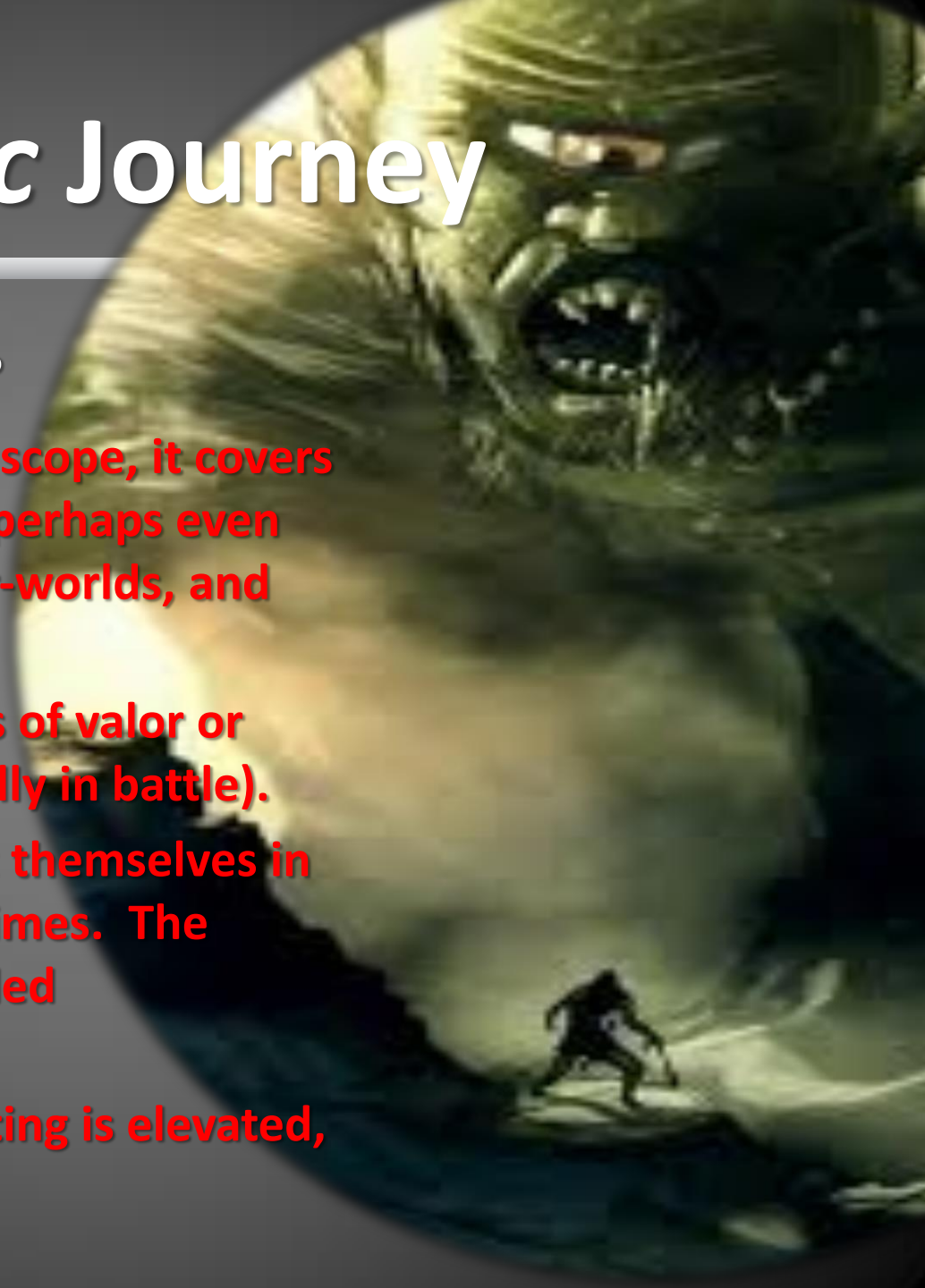
**Get Ready for an Epic Journey that  
is Larger-Than-Life!**



# An *Epic* Journey

What are the ingredients for an epic?

- **Setting** – The setting is vast in scope, it covers great geographical distances, perhaps even visiting the underworld, other-worlds, and other times.
- **The Action** – Consists of deeds of valor or superhuman courage (especially in battle).
- **Supernatural Forces** – Interest themselves in the action and intervenes at times. The intervention of the gods is called “machinery.”
- **The Writing** – The style of writing is elevated, even ceremonial.

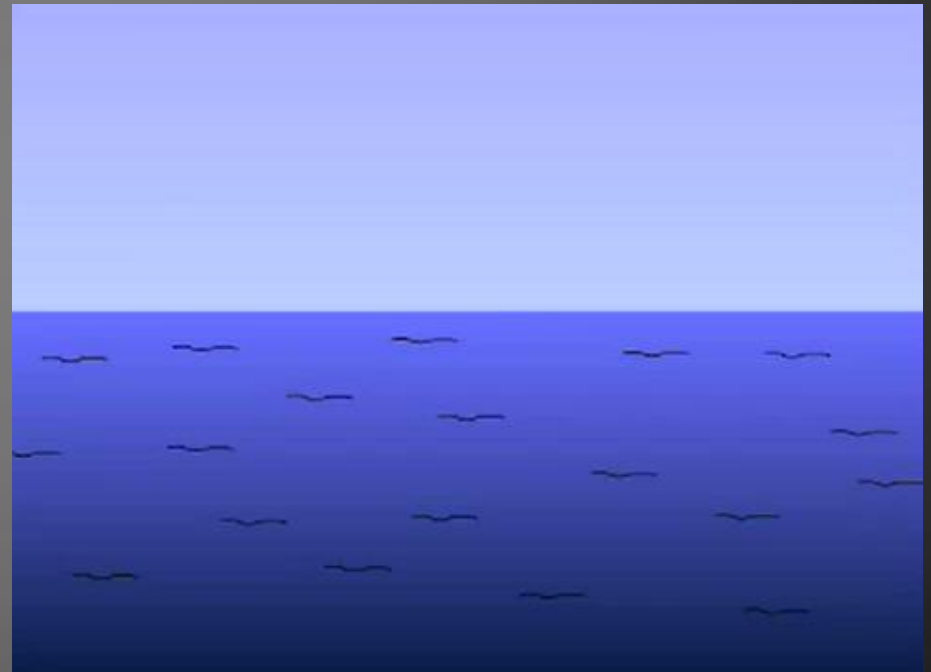




# Background Story

What is the basic background story of the Odyssey?

- **Odysseus's return home to Ithaca, which was his home island.**
- **Odysseus's journey follows the end of the Trojan War.**



# The Trojan War

- The Trojan War was fought between the Greeks and the People of Troy.
- Helen, the most beautiful woman in Greece, is who the legend credits for starting the Trojan War. Helen is also known as “the face that launched a thousand ships.”
- The war was carried out against the city of Troy by the Greeks after Paris of Troy took Helen from her husband, the king of Sparta, also known as Menelaus.
- It all began with a dispute between the goddesses Athena, Hera, and Aphrodite.
- Eris, the goddess of discord and strife, gave them a golden apple, also known as the Apple of Discord, which the fairest of the goddesses was to claim.



# The Trojan War

- The goddesses were sent to Paris by Zeus and Aphrodite was determined the fairest.
- Aphrodite made the beautiful Helen fall in love with Paris, who then took her to the city of Troy.
- Agamemnon, king of Mycenae, and the brother of Helen's husband Menelaus, led an expedition of Achaean troops to Troy and besieged the city for ten years. After the deaths of many heroes, including the Achaeans Achilles and Ajax, and the Trojans Hector and Paris. The city fell to the ruse of the Trojan Horse.
- The Achaeans mercilessly slaughtered the Trojans and desecrated the temples, thus earning gods' wrath.
- The Trojan Horse was the gift that ended a decade of war, which has become the most pivotal event in early history of ancient Greece.



# The Central Theme in an Epic Story



At the center of every epic is a **CONFLICT**. A struggle between opposing forces. Conflicts may occur between characters, between a character and nature, or within a character's mind. In an epic, conflicts often put the traits of the epic hero on display. In the *Odyssey*, notice that conflicts arise as the hero confronts his enemies and as he wrestles with his own thoughts.



# Epic Conflicts

## Internal Conflict

- **Man vs. Himself**
- **A struggle that takes place in a character's mind**
- **It is nothing visual or tangible opposition**
- **Choices between right and wrong, good and evil**

## External Conflict

- **Outside force is an external conflict**
- **Forces of nature**
- **Man vs. Man**
- **Man vs. Environment**
- **Man vs. Nature**

# Check Out Some Examples!

- External Conflicts
- Internal Conflicts

INTERNAL  
VS.  
EXTERNAL

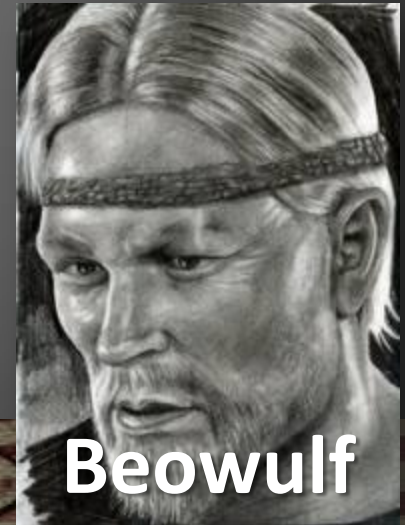
*Conflict*

By: Lindsey Miller

# The Epic Hero

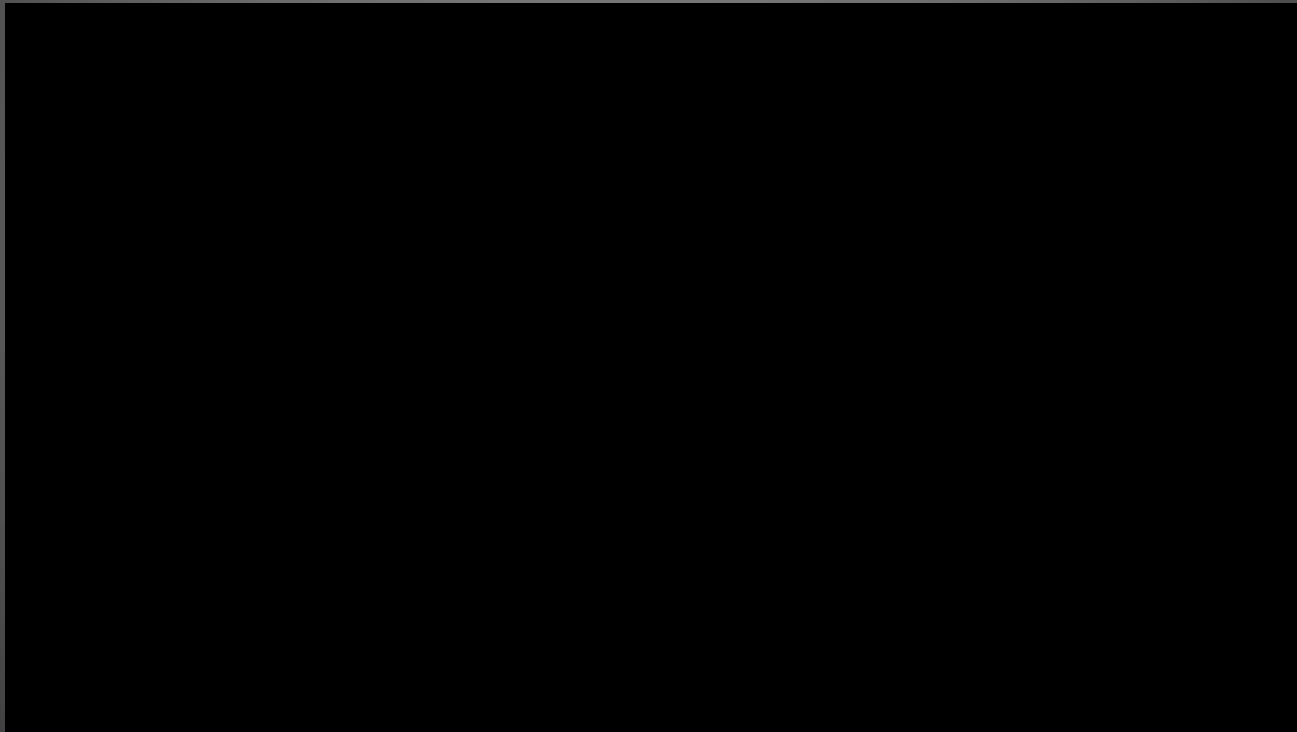
What are the basic characteristics of an epic hero?

- Capable of deeds of great strength and courage
- Great warrior, has great physical strength
- Faces supernatural forces or receives supernatural help
- Recognized by his home country / land as being a great and heroic person
- Comes by noble birth or royal blood
- Adventurous, loves danger and challenges
- Leader, wise, clever, humble
- Relationships with gods
- Respect for justice and the laws



# Lets see some examples of Epic Heroes from the Past and Present

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# Odysseus

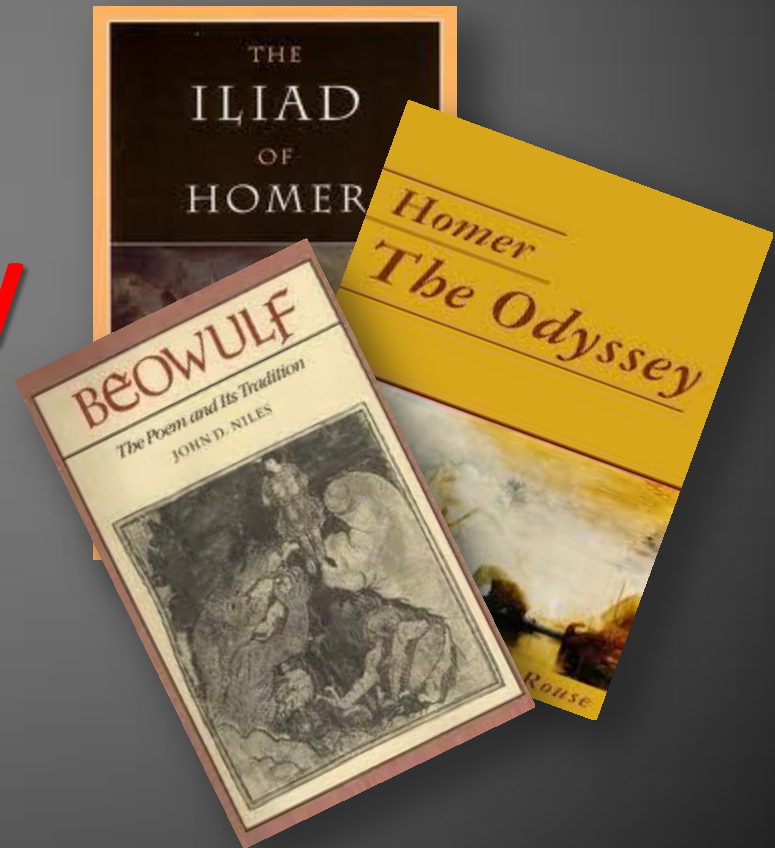


- **Odysseus, The Greek Hero, is the leading figure in the epic poem *Odyssey*.**
- **He is the king of Ithaca.**
- **Son of Laertes and Anticlea, Husband of Penelope and father of Telemachus.**
- **Odysseus has been gone from Ithaca for over twenty years. He was away for ten years fighting in the Trojan War and his journey home to Ithaca took another decade, ten years.**
- **Odysseus had to contend with the forces of nature, supernatural powers of gods, the Lotus Eaters, the Cyclops, Poseidon, Sirens (who lure sailors to their destruction), sea rocks, the sea monster Scylla, the whirlpool Charybdis, and the cattle of the sun god to return home.**
- **When Odysseus finally gets home to Ithaca, he still has to kill all of the suitors and prove to Penelope that he is her husband.**
- **Athena, The goddess of wisdom, helps Odysseus throughout his journey home to Ithaca. “My heart is broken for Odysseus” – Athena**

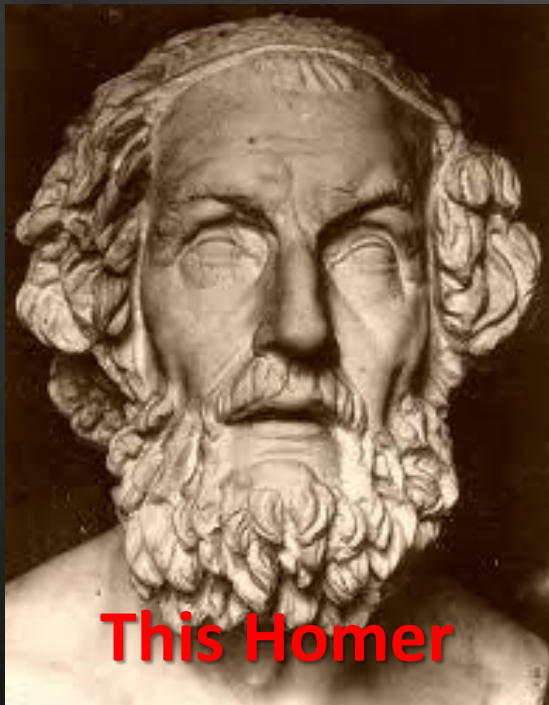
# Earlier Epic Poems

What are some examples of earlier epic poems?

- **The Iliad**
- **The Odyssey**
- **Beowulf**



# HOMER



## The Father of Epic Poetry

- 850 BC (estimated)
- Before the time of the Trojan War
- The teacher of Greece
- Started the narrative in "*medias res*"
- He established classical epics that began with an argument and an invocation to a guiding spirit.
- Revered as the greatest of ancient Greek epic poets
- His work has had an enormous influence on the history of literature

# Mythology

- Mythos = Myth, Mythology, Legend. The pattern of basic values and attitudes of a people, characteristically transmitted through myths and the arts.
- Logos = Word, Reason, Discourse. Philosophy reason or the rational principle expressed in words and things, argument, or justification, identifies the source of order in the universe.
- Myths = A traditional, typically ancient story dealing with supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes that serves as a fundamental type in the worldview of people, as by explaining aspects of the natural world or declaring the psychology, customs or ideals of society.





# Mythology

- Gods = A being of supernatural powers or attributes, believed in or worshipped by a people, especially a male deity thought to control some part of nature or reality. Usually an idol or idealized ruler.
- What can Gods have? Supernatural powers, usually are larger-than-life figures who rule with power.
- Athena = Greek Mythology, The goddess of wisdom, the practical arts and warfare, and the protectors of cities, especially Athens.
- Poseidon = Greek Mythology, The god of the waters, earthquakes, and horses and brother of Zeus.

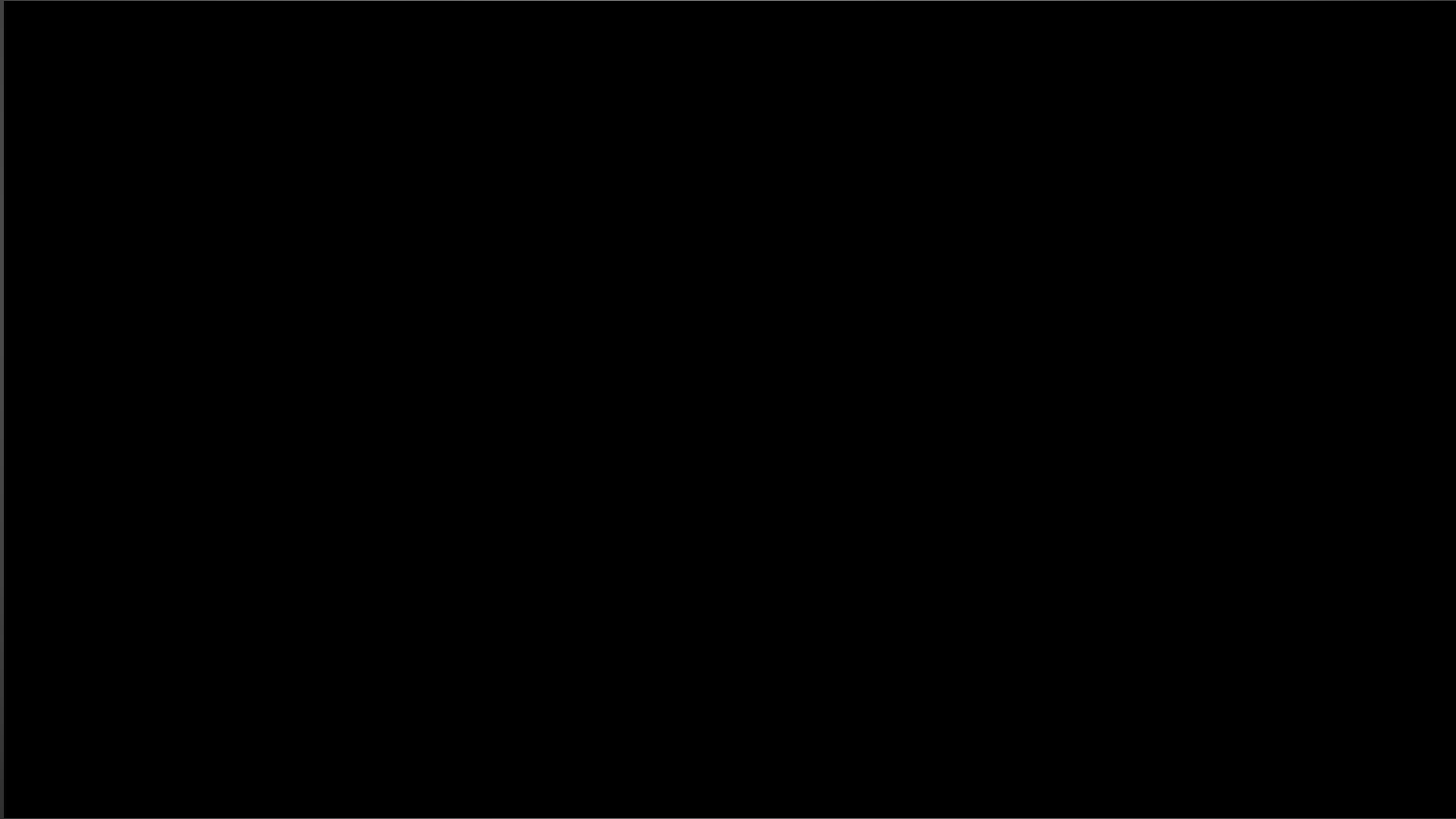


# THEMES OF THE ODYSSEY

- **The power of cunning over strength - “Man of twists and turns,” Mind over strength.**
- **The pitfalls of temptation - Mortal weakness.**
- **Loyalty – Penelope & Telemachus wait twenty years for Odysseus’s return home.**
- **Vengeance – Poseidon and Odysseus are the most noticeable representatives of the theme vengeance.**
- **Spiritual Growth – Telemachus and Odysseus go on a journey that allows them to grow as characters and develop spiritually.**
- **Disguises, Appearance vs. Reality – Athena appears on earth disguised as everything from a little girl to Odysseus, and a friend /mentor to Telemachus.**
- **Seductresses – Circe and Calypso are the most obvious examples of women whose love becomes an obstacle to Odysseus’s return.**
- **Storytelling – Odysseus’s journey is told through a series of flashbacks.**

# Conclusion

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# The End

