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HW #54

Athena sent Telemachus on a journey of his own while knowing that Odysseus would have came back home anyway because she knew about the dangers of the suitors and wishes for Telemachus to become a man. She motivates Telemachus to give a speech to the suitors and go find his father. This fulfills her purpose of moving Telemachus away from suitors who want to kill him and turning Telemachus from a shy boy to a brave man. If Athena had left Telemachus in Icatha, he would have been trampled over by the suitors.

The xenia shown by the swineherd is very good. He sees a Odysseus as a beggar and invites him in, treating him to some wine, bread, and whatever is left of his herd even though Odysseus is in complete rags. However, the swineherd does not know that the beggar is actually Odysseus. This is reminiscent of the myth with Bacius and Philemon where Zeus and Hermes dressed up as beggars were invited by an impoverished family. In both cases, the host who is not that well off shows a great deal of hostility to great people without even knowing they were great.