

CHAPTER ONE

BOOK FIVE

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Odysseus Leaves Calypso's Island and Reaches Phaeacia

[The assembled gods decide to send Hermes to tell Calypso she must let Odysseus go home; Calypso welcomes Hermes on her island, hears Zeus's orders; Calypso helps Odysseus construct a raft; Odysseus sets sail from Calypso's island and gets within sight of Phaeacia; Poseidon sends a storm which destroys the raft; Odysseus gets help from the sea goddess Leucothea; Odysseus has trouble finding a place to come ashore, finds a river mouth, climbs ashore, and falls asleep in the woods near the river.]

As Dawn stirred from her bed beside lord Tithonus,
bringing light to eternal gods and mortal men,
the gods were sitting in assembly, among them
high-thundering Zeus, whose power is supreme.
Athena was reminding them of all the stories
of Odysseus's troubles—she was concerned for him
as he passed his days in nymph Calypso's home.

“Father Zeus and you other blessed gods
who live forever, let no sceptred king
[10] be prudent, kind, or gentle from now on,
or think about his fate. Let him instead
always be cruel and treat men viciously,
since no one now has any memory
of lord Odysseus, who ruled his people
and was a gentle father. Now he lies
suffering extreme distress on that island
where nymph Calypso lives. She keeps him there
by force, and he's unable to sail off

and get back to his native land—he lacks
 [20] a ship with oars and has no companions
 to send him out across the sea's broad back.
 And now some men are setting out to kill
 the son he loves, as he sails home. The boy
 has gone to gather news about his father,
 off to sacred Pylos and holy Sparta."

Cloud-gatherer Zeus then answered her and said:

"My child,
 what a speech has slipped the barrier of your teeth!
 Did you not organize this plan yourself,
 so that Odysseus, once he made it home,
 [30] could take out his revenge against those men?
 As for Telemachus, you should use your skill
 to get him to his native land unharmed—
 that's well within your power. The suitors
 will sail back in their ship without success."

Zeus spoke and then instructed Hermes, his dear son:

"Hermes, since in every other matter
 you are our herald, tell the fair-haired nymph
 my firm decision—the brave Odysseus
 is to get back home. He'll get no guidance
 [40] from the gods or mortal men, but sail off
 on a raft of wood well lashed together.
 He'll suffer hardships, but in twenty days
 he'll reach the fertile land of Scheria,
 the territory of the Phaeacians,
 people closely connected to the gods.
 They will honour him with all their hearts,
 as if he were divine, then send him off,
 back in a ship to his dear native land.
 They'll give him many gifts of bronze and gold
 [50] and clothing, too, a greater hoard of goods
 than Odysseus could have ever won at Troy,
 even if he'd got back safe and sound
 with his share of the loot they passed around.
 That's how Fate decrees he'll see his friends
 and reach his high-roofed house and native land."

- Zeus finished speaking. The killer of Argus,
 his messenger, obeyed. At once he laced up
 on his feet those lovely golden ageless sandals
 which carry him as fast as stormy blasts of wind
 [60] across the ocean seas and boundless tracts of land.
 He took the wand with which he puts to sleep
 or wakes the eyes of any man he chooses.
 With this in hand, the mighty killer of Argus
 flew off—speeding high above Pieria,
 then leaping from the upper sky down to the sea.
 Across the waves he raced, just like a cormorant,
 which hunts for fish down in the perilous gulfs
 of the restless sea, soaking his thick plumage
 in the brine—that how Hermes rode the crowded waves.
 [70] But when he reached the distant island, he rose up,
 out of the violet sea, and moved on shore,
 until he reached the massive cave, where Calypso,
 the fair-haired nymph, had her home. He found her there,
 a huge fire blazing in her hearth—from far away
 the smell of split cedar and burning sandal wood
 spread across the island. With her lovely voice
 Calypso sang inside the cave, as she moved
 back and forth before her loom—she was weaving
 with a golden shuttle. All around her cave
 [80] trees were in bloom, alder and sweet-smelling cypress,
 and poplar, too, with long-winged birds nesting there—
 owls, hawks, and chattering sea crows, who spend their time
 out on the water. A garden vine, fully ripe
 and rich with grapes, trailed through the hollow cave.
 From four fountains, close to each other in a row,
 clear water flowed in various directions,
 and all around soft meadows spread out in full bloom
 with violets and parsley. Even a god,
 who lives forever, coming there, would be amazed
 [90] to see it, and his heart would fill with pleasure.
 The killer of Argus, god's messenger, stood there,
 marvelling at the sight. But once his spirit
 had contemplated all these things with wonder,
 he went inside the spacious cave. And Calypso,
 that lovely goddess, when she saw him face to face,
 was not ignorant of who he was, for the gods

are not unknown to one another, even though
 the home of some immortal might be far away.
 But Hermes did not find Odysseus in the cave—
 [100] that great-hearted man sat crying on the shore,
 just as before, breaking his heart with tears and groans,
 full of sorrow, as he looked out on the restless sea
 and wept. Calypso invited Hermes to sit down
 on a bright shining chair. Then the lovely goddess
 questioned him:

“Hermes, honoured and welcome guest,
 why have you come here with your golden wand?
 You haven’t been a visitor before.
 Tell me what’s on your mind. My heart desires
 to carry out what you request, if I can,
 [110] and if it’s something fated to be done.
 But bear with me now, so I can show you
 the hospitality I give my guests.”

After this speech, Calypso set out a table
 laden with ambrosia, then mixed red nectar.
 And so the messenger god, killer of Argus,
 ate and drank. When his meal was over and the food
 had comforted his heart, Hermes gave his answer,
 speaking to Calypso with these words:

“You’re a goddess,
 and you’re asking me, a god, why I’ve come.
 [120] Since you’ve questioned me, I’ll tell you the truth.
 Zeus told me to come here against my will.
 For who would volunteer to race across
 that huge expanse of sea—so immense
 it cannot be described? There’s no city there
 of mortal men who offer sacrifice
 or choice gifts to the gods. But there’s no way
 that any other god can override
 or shun the will of aegis-bearing Zeus.
 He says that you have here with you a man
 [130] more unfortunate than all the other ones
 who fought nine years round Priam’s city,
 which in the tenth year they destroyed and left
 to get back home. But on that voyage back

they sinned against Athena, and she sent
tall waves and dangerous winds against them.
All his other noble comrades perished,
but winds and waves still carried him ahead
and brought him here. Now Zeus is ordering you
to send him off as soon as possible.
[140] For it is not ordained that he will die
far from his friends. Instead his fate decrees
he'll see his family and still make it home
to his own high-roofed house and native land."

Hermes finished. Calypso, the lovely goddess,
trembled as she spoke to him—her words had wings:

"The gods are harsh and far too jealous—
more so than others. They are unhappy
if goddesses make mortal men their partners
and take them to bed for sex. That's how it was
[150] when rose-fingered Dawn wanted Orion—
you gods that live at ease were jealous of her,
until golden-throned sacred Artemis
came to Ortygia and murdered him
with her gentle arrows.¹ In the same way,
when fair-haired Demeter was overcome
with passion and had sex with Iasion
in a thrice-ploughed fallow field, soon enough
Zeus heard of it and annihilated him
by throwing down his dazzling lightning bolt.
[160] Now once again you gods are envious,
because a mortal man lives here with me.
I saved him when he was all by himself,
riding his ship's keel—his swift ship smashed
by a blow from Zeus' flaming lightning,
while in the middle of the wine-dark sea,
where all his other brave companions died.
Wind and waves brought him here. This is a man
I cherished and looked after, and I said
I'd make him ageless and immortal
[170] for all days to come. But since there's no way
another god can override the plans
of aegis-bearing Zeus or cancel them,
let him be off across the restless seas,

if Zeus has so commanded and decreed.
 But I'll have no part of escorting him
 away from here—I have no ships with oars
 nor any crew to take him on his way
 across the broad back of the sea. But still,
 I can make sincere suggestions to him
 [180] and keep nothing hidden, so he can reach
 his native land and get back safe and sound."

Then the killer of Argus, Zeus' messenger,
 said to Calypso:

"Yes, send him away.
 Think of Zeus's rage. He may get angry
 and make things hard for you in days to come."

The killer of Argus, the gods' great messenger,
 said these words and left. The regal nymph Calypso,
 once she'd heard Zeus's message, went off to find
 great-hearted Odysseus. She found him by the shore,
 [190] sitting down there, with his eyes always full of tears,
 because his sweet life was passing while he mourned
 for his return. The nymph no longer gave him joy.
 At night he slept beside her in the hollow cave,
 as he was forced to do—not of his own free will,
 though she was keen enough. But in the daylight hours
 he'd sit down on the rocks along the beach, his heart
 straining with tears and groans and sorrow. He'd look out,
 through his tears, over the restless sea. Moving up,
 close to him, the lovely goddess spoke:

"Poor man,
 [200] spend no more time in sorrow on this island
 or waste your life away. My heart agrees—
 the time has come for me to send you off.
 So come now, cut long timbers with an axe,
 and make a raft, a large one. Build a deck
 high up on it, so it can carry you
 across the misty sea. I'll provision it
 with as much food and water and red wine
 as you will need to satisfy your wants.
 I'll give you clothes and send a favouring wind

[210] blowing from your stern, so you may reach
your own native land unharmed, if the gods
are willing, the ones who hold wide heaven,
whose will and force are mightier than my own."

Calypso finished. Lord Odysseus trembled,
then spoke to her—his words had wings:

"Goddess,
in all this you're planning something different.
You're not sending me back home, when you tell me
to get across that huge gulf of the sea
and in a raft—a harsh and dangerous trip.
[220] Not even swift well-balanced ships get through
when they enjoy fair winds from Zeus. Besides,
without your consent I'd never board a raft,
not unless you, goddess, would undertake
to swear a mighty oath on my behalf
you'll not come up with other devious plans
to injure me."

Odysseus finished speaking.
Calypso, the lovely goddess, smiled, caressed him,
and then replied by saying:

"You're a cunning man,
with no lack of wit—to consider
[230] giving such a speech. But let the earth
stand witness, and wide heaven above,
and the flowing waters of the river Styx—
the mightiest and most terrible oath
the blessed gods can make—I will not plan
any other injury against you. No.
I'll think of things and give advice, as if
I was scheming for my own advantage,
if ever I should be in such distress.
For my mind is just, and inside my chest
[240] there is no iron heart—it feels pity,
just like your own."

The beautiful goddess
finished speaking, then quickly led him from the place.

He followed in her footsteps. Man and goddess
 reached the hollow cave. He sat down in the chair
 Hermes had just risen from, and the nymph set down
 all kinds of food to eat and drink, the sort of things
 mortal human beings consume.² Then she took a seat
 facing god-like Odysseus, and her servants
 placed ambrosia and nectar right beside her.
 [250] So the two of them reached out to take the fine food
 spread out before them. When they'd had their fill
 of food and drink, beautiful divine Calypso
 was the first to speak:

"Nobly born son of Laertes,
 resourceful Odysseus, so you now wish
 to get back to your own dear native land
 without delay? In spite of everything,
 I wish you well. If your heart recognized
 how much distress Fate has in store for you
 before you reach your homeland, you'd stay here
 [260] and keep this home with me. You'd never die,
 even though you yearned to see your wife,
 the one you always long for every day.
 I can boast that I'm no worse than her
 in how I look or bear myself—it's not right
 for mortal women to compete with gods
 in form and beauty."

Resourceful Odysseus
 then answered her and said:

"Mighty goddess,
 do not be angry with me over this.
 I myself know very well Penelope,
 [270] although intelligent, is not your match
 to look at, not in stature or in beauty.
 But she's a human being and you're a god.
 You'll never die or age. But still I wish,
 each and every day to get back home,
 to see the day when I return. And so,
 even if out there on the wine-dark sea
 some god breaks me apart, I will go on—
 the heart here in my chest is quite prepared

to bear affliction. I've already had
 [280] so many troubles, and I've worked so hard
 through waves and warfare. Let what's yet to come
 be added in with those."

Odysseus finished.

Then the sun went down, and it grew dark. The two of them
 went inside the inner chamber of the hollow cave
 and lay down beside each other to make love.

As soon as rose-fingered early Dawn appeared,
 Odysseus quickly put on a cloak and tunic,
 and the nymph dressed in a long white shining robe,
 a lovely lightly woven dress. Around her waist
 [290] she fixed a gorgeous golden belt and placed a veil
 high on her head. Then she organized her plans
 so brave Odysseus could leave. She handed him
 a massive axe, well suited to his grip and made
 of two-edged bronze. It had a finely crafted shaft
 of handsome olive wood. Next she provided him
 a polished adze. Then she led him on a path
 down to the edges of the island, where tall trees grew,
 alder, poplar, and pine that reached the upper sky,
 well-seasoned, dried-out wood, which could keep him afloat.
 [300] Once she'd pointed out to him where the large trees grew,
 Calypso, the lovely goddess, went back home.
 Odysseus then began to cut the timber. His work
 proceeded quickly. He cut down twenty trees,
 used his bronze axe to trim and deftly smooth them,
 then lined them up. The fair goddess Calypso
 then brought him augers, so he bored each timber,
 fastened them to one another, and tightened them
 with pins and binding. Odysseus made the raft
 as wide as the broad floor of a cargo ship
 [310] traced out by someone very skilled in carpentry.
 Then he worked to add the deck, attaching it
 onto the close-set timbers, then finished it
 with extended gunwales. Next he set up a mast
 with a yard arm fastened to it and then made
 a steering oar to guide the raft. From stem to stern
 he wove a fence of willow reeds reinforced
 with wood to guard him from the waves. Calypso,

the beautiful goddess, brought him woven cloth
to make a sail—which he did very skilfully.
[320] On it he tied bracing ropes, sheets, and halyards,
and then levered the raft down to the shining sea.

By the fourth day he had completed all this work.
So on the fifth beautiful Calypso bathed him,
dressed him in sweet-smelling clothes, and sent him
from the island. The goddess stowed on board the raft
a sack full of dark wine and another large one,
full of water, and a bag of food, in which she put
many tasty things for him to eat. She sent him
a warm and gentle wind, and lord Odysseus
[330] was happy as he set his sails to catch the breeze.
He sat beside the steering oar and used his skill
to steer the raft. Sleep did not fall upon his eyelids
as he watched the constellations—the Pleiades,
the late-setting Boötes, and the Great Bear,
which men call the Wain, always turning in one place,
keeping watch over Orion—the only star
that never takes a bath in Ocean.³ Calypso,
the lovely goddess, had told him to keep this star
on his left as he moved across the sea. He sailed
[340] for ten days on the water, then for seven more,
and on the eighteenth day some shadowy hills appeared,
where the land of the Phaeacians, like a shield
riding on the misty sea, lay very close to him.

But at that moment, the mighty Earthshaker,
returning from the Ethiopians, saw him
from the distant mountains of the Solymi.
Poseidon watched Odysseus sailing on the sea,
and his spirit grew enraged. He shook his head
and spoke to his own heart:

“Something’s wrong!
[350] The gods must have changed what they were planning
for Odysseus, while I’ve been far away
among the Ethiopians. For now
he’s hard by the land of the Phaeacians,
where he’ll escape the great extremes of sorrow
which have come over him—so Fate ordains.

But still, even now I think I'll push him
so he gets his fill of troubles."

Poseidon spoke.

Then he drove the clouds together, seized his trident,
and shook up the sea. He brought on stormy blasts
[360] from every kind of wind, concealing land and sea
with clouds, so darkness fell from heaven. East Wind
clashed with South Wind, while West Wind, raging in a storm,
smashed into North Wind, born in the upper sky,
as it pushed a massive wave. Odysseus' knees gave way,
his spirit fell, and in great distress he spoke aloud,
addressing his great heart:

"I've got such a wretched fate!
How is all this going to end up for me?
I'm afraid everything the goddess said
was true, when she claimed that out at sea,
[370] before I got back to my native land,
I'd have my fill of troubles. And now
all that is taking place—just look how Zeus
has covered the wide sky with clouds, stirred up
the sea with stormy blasts from different winds
swooping down on me. My sheer destruction
is now beyond all doubt. O those Danaans,
three and four times blessed, who died back then
in spacious Troy, while doing a favour
for the sons of Atreus!⁴ How I wish
[380] I'd died as well and met my Fate that day
when companies of Trojans hurled at me
their bronze-tipped spears, in the fighting there
around the corpse of Peleus's dead son.⁵
Then I'd have had my funeral rites,
and Achaeans would have made me famous.
But now I'm fated to be overwhelmed
and die a pitiful death."

As he said this,
a massive wave charged at him with tremendous force,
swirled round the raft, then from high above crashed down.
[390] Odysseus let go his grip on the steering oar
and fell out, a long way from the raft. The fierce gusts

of howling winds snapped the mast off in the middle.
The sail and yard arm dropped down into the sea,
some distance off. For many moments he was held
under the water—he found it difficult
to rise above the power of that mighty wave,
because the clothes he'd got from beautiful Calypso
dragged him down. But finally he reached the surface,
spitting tart salt water from his mouth, as it streamed down
[400] from off his head. But even so, though badly shaken,
he did not forget about the raft. Through the waves
he swam, grabbed hold, and crouched down in the middle,
trying to escape destructive Fate. The huge wave
carried him along its course this way and that.
Just as in autumn North Wind sweeps the thistledown
along the plain, and the tufts bunch up together,
that's how the winds then drove his raft to and fro
across the sea. Sometimes South Wind would toss it
over to North Wind to carry. At other times,
[410] East Wind would let West Wind lead on the chase.
Then Ino with the lovely ankles noticed him—
Cadmus' daughter, once a mortal being with human speech,
but now, deep in the sea, she was Leucothea
and had her share of recognition from the gods.⁶
She felt pity for Odysseus as he suffered
in his wandering. She rose up from the water,
like a sea gull on the wing, perched on the raft,
and spoke to him, saying:

“You poor wretch,
why do you put Earthshaker Poseidon
[420] in such a furious temper, so that he
keeps making all this trouble for you?
No matter what he wants, he won't kill you.
It seems to me you've got a clever mind,
so do just what I say. Take off these clothes,
and leave the raft. Drift with the winds.
But paddle with your hands, and try to reach
the land of the Phaeacians, where Fate says
you will be rescued. Here, take this veil—
it's from the gods—and tie it round your chest.
[430] Then there's no fear you'll suffer anything
or die. But when your hand can grab the shore,

then take it off and throw it far from land
into the wine-dark sea. Then turn away."

The goddess spoke and handed him the veil. Then she left,
diving like a sea bird down in the heaving sea.
A dark wave swallowed her. Then lord Odysseus,
who had endured so much, considered what to do.
In his distress he addressed his own brave heart:

"I'm in trouble. I hope none of the gods
[440] is weaving dangers for me once again
with this advice of hers to leave the raft.
Well, I won't follow what she says—not yet.
For I can see with my own eyes how far off
that land is where she said I would be saved.
So what I'll do is what seems best to me—
as long as these planks hold firm in place,
I'll stay here and bear whatever troubles come,
but once the waves have smashed my raft apart,
I'll swim for it. There is no better way."

[450] As his mind and heart were thinking about this,
Earthshaker Poseidon set in motion
a monstrous, menacing, and terrifying wave,
arching high above his head, and drove it at him.
Just as a storm wind scatters dry straw in a heap,
blowing pieces here and there in all directions—
that's how that wave split the long planks on the raft.
But while straddling a board, as if astride a horse,
Odysseus stripped away the clothing he'd received
from fair Calypso. He wound the veil across his chest,
[460] and then, with arms outstretched, fell face first in the sea,
trying to swim. The mighty Shaker of the Earth
saw him, shook his head, then spoke to his own heart:

"So now, after suffering so much anguish,
keep wandering on the sea until you meet
a people raised by Zeus. Still, I don't think
you'll be laughing at the troubles still in store."

With these words Poseidon lashed his fine-maned horses
and left for Aegae where he has his splendid home.

Then Athena, Zeus's daughter, thought up something new.
 [470] She blocked the paths of every wind but one
 and ordered all of them to stop and check their force,
 then roused the swift North Wind and broke the waves in front,
 so divinely born Odysseus might yet meet
 the people of Phaeacia, who love the oar,
 avoiding death and Fates. So for two days and nights
 he floated on the ocean waves, his heart filled
 with many thoughts of death. But when fair-haired Dawn
 gave rise at last to the third day, the wind died down,
 the sea grew calm and still. He was lifted up
 [480] by a large swell, and as he quickly looked ahead,
 Odysseus saw the land close by. Just as children
 rejoice to see life in a father who lies sick,
 in savage pain through a long wasting illness,
 with a cruel god afflicting him, and then,
 to their delight, the gods release him from disease,
 that's how Odysseus rejoiced when he could see
 the land and forests. He swam on ahead, eager
 to set foot on the shore. But when he'd come in close,
 as far as man's voice carries when he shouts,
 [490] he heard the crashing of the sea against the rocks—
 huge waves with a dreadful roar smashing on dry land
 and foaming spray concealing everything—
 there were no harbours fit for ships to ride or coves,
 but jutting headlands, rocks, and cliffs—at that point
 Odysseus felt his knees and spirit give way,
 and in despair he spoke to his great heart:

"What's this?
 Zeus has given me a glimpse of land,
 just when I'd lost hope, and I've made my way
 cutting across this gulf, but I can't find
 [500] a place where I can leave this cold grey sea.
 There's an outer rim of jagged boulders
 where waves come crashing with a roar on them.
 The rock face rises sheer, the water there
 is deep, so there's no way to gain a foothold
 and escape destruction. If I try to land,
 a huge wave may pick me up and smash me
 on those protruding rocks, and my attempt

would be quite useless. But if I keep swimming
 and hope I'll find a sloping beach somewhere
 [510] or havens from the sea, then I'm afraid
 the stormy winds will grab me once again
 and carry me, for all my heavy groaning,
 across the fish-filled seas, or else some god
 may set some monstrous creature of the sea
 against me—illustrious Amphitrite
 raises many beasts like that. I know well
 how great Earthshaker has been enraged at me."

As he debated in his mind and heart like this,
 a huge wave carried him toward the rocky shore.
 [520] His skin would have been ripped and all his bones smashed up,
 but the goddess with the gleaming eyes, Athena,
 put a thought inside his mind. As he surged ahead,
 he grabbed a rock with both his hands and held on,
 groaning, until that giant wave had passed him by.
 So he escaped. But as the wave flowed back once more,
 it charged, struck, and flung him out to sea. Just as
 an octopus is dragged out of its den with pebbles
 clinging to its suckers, that's how his skin was scraped
 from his strong hands against the rocks, as that great wave
 [530] engulfed him. And then unfortunate Odysseus
 would have perished, something not ordained by Fate,
 if bright-eyed Athena had not given him advice.
 Moving from the surf where it pounded on the shore,
 he swam out to sea, but kept looking at the land,
 hoping to come across a sloping beach somewhere
 or a haven from the sea. He kept swimming on
 and reached the mouth of a fair-flowing river,
 which seemed to him the finest place to go onshore.
 There were no rocks, and it was sheltered from the wind.
 [540] Odysseus recognized the river as it flowed
 and prayed to him deep in his heart:

"Hear me, my lord,
 whoever you may be. I've come to you,
 the answer to my many prayers, fleeing
 Poseidon's punishment from the deep sea.
 A man who visits as a wanderer
 commands respect, even with deathless gods—

just as I've now reached your stream and knees,
after suffering so much. So pity me,
my lord—I claim to be your suppliant."

- [550] Odysseus spoke. At once the god held back his flow,
checked the waves, calmed the water up ahead of him,
and brought him safely to the river mouth. Both knees bent,
he let his strong hands fall—the sea had crushed his spirit.
All his skin was swollen, sea water flowed in streams
up in his mouth and nose. He lay there breathless,
without a word, hardly moving—quite overcome
with terrible exhaustion. But when he revived
and spirit moved back into his heart, he untied
the veil the goddess gave him and let the river
[560] take it as it flowed out to the sea. A great wave
carried it downstream, and then without delay
Ino's friendly hands retrieved it. But Odysseus
turned from the river, sank down in the rushes,
and kissed life-giving earth. Then in his anxiety,
he spoke to his great heart:

- "What now? What's next for me?
How will I end up? If I stay right here
all through the wretched night, with my eye on
the river bed, I fear the bitter frost
and freshly fallen dew will both combine
[570] to overcome me when, weak as I am,
my spirit's breath grows faint—the river wind
blows cold in early morning. But if I climb
uphill into shady woods and lie down
in some thick bushes and so rid myself
of cold and weariness, sweet sleep may come
and overpower me, and then, I fear,
I may become some wild beast's prey, its prize."

- As he thought it through, the best thing seemed to be
to move up to the woods. Close by the water
[580] he found a place with a wide view. So he crept
underneath two bushes growing from one stem—
one was an olive tree, the other a wild thorn.
Wet winds would not be strong enough ever to blow
through both of these, nor could the bright sun's rays shine in,

and rain would never penetrate—they grew so thick,
 all intertwined with one another. Under these
 Odysseus crawled and immediately gathered up
 with his fine hands a spacious bed—fallen leaves
 were all around, enough to cover two or three
 [590] in winter time, however bad the weather.
 When resourceful lord Odysseus noticed that,
 he was happy and lay down in the middle,
 heaping fallen leaves on top of him. Just as
 someone on a distant farm without a neighbour
 hides a torch underneath black embers, and thus saves
 a spark of fire, so he won't need to kindle it
 from somewhere else, that's how Odysseus spread the leaves
 to cover him. Athena then poured sleep onto his eyes,

[600] covering his eyelids, so he could find relief, a quick respite from his
 exhausting troubles.