Nobody Wins with Anger: A Modern Lesson from The Odyssey

I chose the story in Book 9 of *The Odyssey* that involves Polyphemus and the other Cyclopes. Odysseus and his friends got trapped in one of the Cyclops' caves, where Polyphemus, the Cyclops who lived there, began eating them. Odysseus and his friends knew they would never be able to defeat Polyphemus with their physical strength, because the other Cyclopes in the area would come to the rescue, and that would be too many to fight. So, Odysseus decided that he must trick them instead. He got Polyphemus drunk and convinced him that his name was "Nobody." After that, he blinded Polyphemus with a sharp stick. Polyphemus cried out in pain, but when the other Cyclopes came running, all he said was that "Nobody is hurting me," so they left. After this, Odysseus was able to escape by hiding with the sheep, since Polyphemus was now blind.
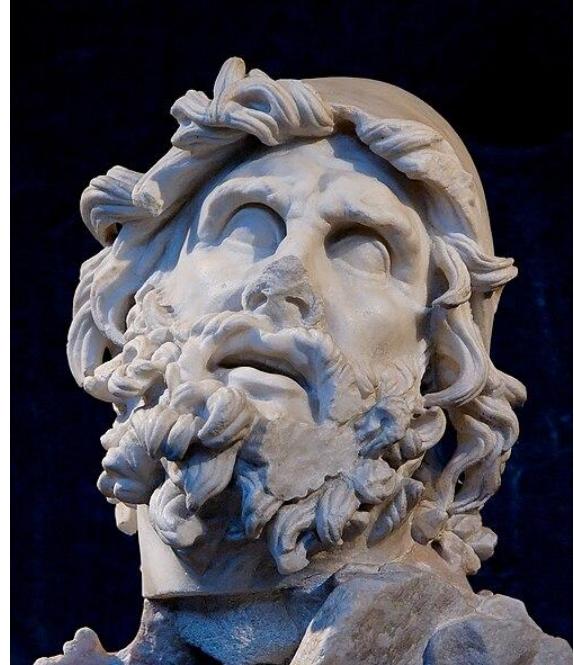
There have been times in my life when I had to use wisdom instead of reacting with anger or force. One example of this was during a group project for one of my classes. The project was worth 40% of our grade, so it was a big deal—and I got stuck with a partner who didn't want to do any work. I was very angry and worried because I needed good grades to keep my scholarship, but I knew that showing my anger would likely just make things worse. Instead of starting a fight or trying to do all the work myself, I decided to talk to the teacher and my partner at the same time. I calmly explained the situation, and together we found a solution that worked for all of us. My partner agreed to take on some smaller but important tasks, and I was able to focus on the parts I cared most about. This experience taught me that patience and clear communication can solve problems more effectively than anger, or force like in the story of Odysseus.

Both Odysseus and I faced situations were reacting with force or frustration would have made things worse. Odysseus was up against a powerful enemy he couldn't beat with strength alone, just like I couldn't force my partner to do their part of the project. In both situations, the solution was to stay calm and think creatively and clearly. Odysseus found a clever trick to escape his danger, and I used communication and patience to solve my

problem. We both learned that wisdom and self-control are better than physical strength or anger. These experiences showed the importance of thinking before acting and finding peaceful, good solutions to situations. In the future, I will try to remember how staying calm helped me and use that lesson whenever conflict happens in my life. Just like Odysseus, I want to keep getting wiser through the challenge I have.