

7

The Palace of Alcinous

Book Seven

Hidden in a goddess's mist, Odysseus walks unseen into the fairy-tale city of the Phaeacians and throws himself on the mercy of their queen. Here is hospitality at its most magical – a palace of bronze and gold, a garden where fruit never fails – and a hero who must win his passage home with nothing but courtesy, endurance and the most tactful of tongues.

NAME

SET

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BOOK SEVEN

The Palace of Alcinous

The city and marvellous palace of the Phaeacians, where Odysseus, hidden in Athene's mist, comes as a suppliant to the queen.

WHAT HAPPENS

- Athene, disguised, leads Odysseus through the city under a magic mist, and tells him to win over Queen Arete above all.
- Odysseus marvels at the fairy-tale palace and the ever-bearing garden of Alcinous.
- He clasps Arete's knees in supplication; the elder Echeneus prompts the king, who raises, seats and feeds him, and promises him passage home.
- Arete recognises the clothes as Nausicaa's; Odysseus tells of Calypso and his shipwreck, and tactfully takes all blame to shield the princess.
- Alcinous offers Nausicaa's hand but will not detain him, and fixes his departure for the next day.

WHO WE MEET

Odysseus

the suppliant, winning a home by tact and endurance

Arete

the honoured queen, whose favour is the key

Alcinous

the generous king who speeds his guest on

Athene

guiding and hiding her favourite

WHY IT MATTERS FOR ESSAYS

Book 7 is the great set-piece of Phaeacian xenia and of supplication, and a showcase of Odysseus' metis in speech – above all his tactful defence of Nausicaa. The fairy-tale palace and garden, and Arete's unusual power, repay close attention. **Prescribed:** examined in context – know it closely.

The Palace Of Alcinous

— INTO THE CITY

So the much-enduring Odysseus prayed in Athene's grove, and the two sturdy mules brought the princess to the city. When she reached her father's famous palace, she drew up at the entrance, and her brothers, looking like the immortals, gathered round her,
 5 unharnessed the mules from the cart, and carried the clothes indoors. She herself retired to her own apartments, where a fire was lit for her by her waiting-woman Eurymedusa, an old Aperaeon woman. She had been brought by ship from Aperaea years ago and
 10 **selected as a prize for Alcinous**, the King of all the Phaeacians and idolized by the people as a god. It was this woman who had nursed the white-armed Nausicaa at home, and who now lit a fire and prepared supper in the inner room.

Then Odysseus started for the town. Athene, in her concern for his welfare, **enveloped him in a thick mist**, in case some high-handed
 15 Phaeacian who crossed his path insulted him and asked him who he was.

— ATHENE AS GUIDE

He was just about to go into the pleasant town when the bright-eyed goddess herself came to meet him, **disguised as a young girl carrying a pitcher**, and halted in front of him.

20 'My child,' said the good Odysseus, 'I wonder if you could show me the way to the house of Alcinous, the King of this country? I've had a hard time; I'm a stranger here from a distant land and don't know a single soul in the city or the country around.'

'Sir,' replied the bright-eyed Athene, 'certainly, I'll show you the
 25 house you want, since it lies close to my good father's place. But you must follow my lead without a word, look at nobody and ask no questions. For the people here have little affection for strangers and do not welcome visitors with open arms. They put their trust in fast ships that carry them across the far-flung seas, for that is a privilege
 30 granted by Poseidon, and these ships of theirs are as **swift as a bird or as thought itself**.'

With this Pallas Athene led the way quickly, and Odysseus followed in the steps of the goddess. The Phaeacians, those famous seamen, failed to observe him as he passed them by on his way through the
 35 town. For the formidable goddess Athene of the lovely hair prevented it, shedding a magic mist round her favourite in her concern for his safety. As he walked, Odysseus marvelled at the harbours with their trim ships, at the meeting-place of the sea-lords and at their long

LINE 9

selected as a prize for Alcinous In the heroic world, people captured in war were handed out as prizes and kept as slaves. The old nurse here, Eurymedusa, was war-plunder brought back to Phaeacia long ago.

LINE 14

enveloped him in a thick mist In Homer the gods can wrap someone in a mist to hide them from view. Athene does this to Odysseus so no Phaeacian spots or stops him before he reaches the queen.

LINES 18–19

disguised as a young girl carrying a pitcher

The gods are always taking human form to move around among mortals. Here Athene turns herself into an ordinary local girl to guide the stranger through a city where he knows nobody.

LINES 30–31

swift as a bird or as thought itself It was Poseidon, god of the sea, who gave the Phaeacians their ships – and they're no ordinary ships: they sail incredibly fast and even steer themselves. These are the ships that eventually get Odysseus home.

and lofty walls, surmounted by palisades, presenting a wonderful sight.

— SEEK THE QUEEN

When they reached the King's famous palace, the bright-eyed goddess Athene said: 'Here, sir, is the house that you asked me to show you. You will find princes, favourites of Zeus, feasting there, but go straight in and have no qualms. For it is the bold man who always succeeds in his enterprises even if he comes from far away.

The first person you will find in the palace will be the Queen. Her name is Arete and she comes from the same family as Alcinous the King. Nausithous, the first of the line, was the son of Poseidon the Earthshaker and of Periboea, the loveliest woman of her time. She was the youngest daughter of the great Eurymedon, who was once King of that overweeningly proud race, the Giants, but led that wicked race to its destruction, and his own too. Poseidon slept with Periboea and by her had the great-hearted Nausithous, who became King of the Phaeacians. And Nausithous had two sons, Rhexenor and Alcinous. Rhexenor had not long been married and had as yet no son when he was killed in his palace by Apollo with his silver bow.

— ARETE'S POWER

'But he left one daughter, Arete. Alcinous made her his wife and gave her such honour as no other woman receives who keeps house under her husband's eye in the world today. Such is the extraordinary and heartfelt devotion which she has enjoyed in the past and still enjoys, both from her children and Alcinous himself, and from the people, who look on her as a goddess, and greet her when she walks through the town. For she is also a wise woman, and when her sympathies are enlisted she settles even men's disputes. So if only you can secure her friendly interest, you may well hope to see your friends once more, to return to the high roof of your own house and to your native land.'

Athene finished, and now left the pleasant land of Scherie, crossed the unharvested seas, and came to Marathon and the broad streets of Athens, where she entered the great palace of Erechtheus.

— THE PALACE

Now Odysseus approached Alcinous' splendid dwelling. His heart was filled with varied emotions and he kept on stopping before he reached the bronze threshold. A kind of radiance, like that of the sun or moon, played upon the high-roofed halls of the great King. Bronze walls, topped by a frieze of dark-blue enamel, ran round to left and right from the portals to the back of the court. The interior of the well-built mansion was guarded by golden doors hung on posts of

LINE 46

The first person you will find in the palace will be the Queen Arete is the queen. In Phaeacia it's her goodwill, not the king's, that really decides whether a guest gets helped.

LINE 51

King of that overweeningly proud race, the Giants The Giants were a race of huge, powerful beings who rose up against the gods of Olympus and were wiped out in a great battle. Arete's family line goes right back, through the sea-god Poseidon, to them.

LINES 57–58

gave her such honour as no other woman receives Arete is honoured more than any other wife anywhere – unusual in Homer's world, where women rarely held any real public power.

LINE 64

when her sympathies are enlisted she settles even men's disputes She even settles arguments between men – a public, judge-like role you almost never see a woman hold in this society.

LINES 69–70

came to Marathon and the broad streets of Athens Athens was the city sacred to Athene (their names are linked), and Marathon a town in its territory. Athene heads home to her own city.

silver which were set in the bronze threshold. The lintel they supported was of silver too, and the door-handle of gold. On either side stood **gold and silver dogs, which Hephaestus had made** with consummate skill, to keep watch over the palace of the great-hearted Alcinous and serve him as immortal sentries never doomed to age.

Inside the hall, tall chairs were ranged along the walls on either side, right round from the threshold to the chamber at the back, and each was draped with a delicately woven cover that the women had worked. Here the Phaeacian chieftains used to sit and enjoy the food and wine of which there was always a lavish supply. Golden statues of youths, fixed on solid pedestals, held flaming torches in their hands to light the banqueters in the hall by night. The house keeps fifty maids employed. Some grind apple-golden corn in the handmill, some weave at the loom, or sit and twist yarn, their hands fluttering like the leaves of a tall poplar, while soft olive-oil drips from the close-woven fabrics they have finished. For the Phaeacians' extraordinary skill in handling ships at sea is matched by the dexterity of their womenfolk at the loom, for **Athene has given them outstanding skill in beautiful crafts** and such fine intelligence.

— THE GARDEN OF ALCINOUS

Just outside the entrance to the courtyard, surrounded by a wall, lies a large orchard of four acres – pears and pomegranates, apple trees with glossy fruit, sweet figs and luxuriant olives. **Their fruit never fails nor runs short, winter and summer alike.** It comes at all seasons of the year, and there is never a time when the West Wind's breath is not assisting, here the bud, and there the ripening fruit; so that pear after pear, apple after apple, cluster on cluster of grapes, and fig upon fig are always coming to perfection.

In the same enclosure there is a fruitful vineyard, in one part of which is a warm patch of level ground, where some of the grapes are drying in the sun, while others are being gathered, or **trodden in the wine-press**, and on the foremost rows hang unripe bunches that have just dropped their blossom or show the first faint tinge of purple. Beyond the furthest row, vegetable beds of various kinds are neatly laid out, luxuriantly productive all the year round. In the garden are two springs; one flows in channels to all parts of it; the other, starting next to it, first provides a watering-place for the townspeople and then runs under the courtyard gate towards the great house itself. Such were the glorious gifts the gods had bestowed on Alcinous' home.

Patient, good Odysseus stood before the house and drank it all in. When he had admired it to his heart's content he stepped briskly over the threshold and entered the palace. There he found the

LINE 80

gold and silver dogs, which Hephaestus had made Hephaestus is the god of fire and metalworking – the blacksmith and craftsman of the gods, who forges their armour and all their magical gadgets. He's lame, having been thrown off Olympus. Here he's made gold and silver guard-dogs that never age or die.

LINES 95–96

Athene has given them outstanding skill in beautiful crafts Athene is the goddess of wisdom and of skilled crafts, especially weaving. So the Phaeacian women's brilliant weaving is her gift, just as the men's brilliant sailing is Poseidon's.

LINES 99–100

Their fruit never fails nor runs short, winter and summer alike This is the famous **garden of Alcinous**, where every kind of fruit grows and ripens in every season at once and never runs out – a sign of how richly the gods have blessed the Phaeacians.

LINES 107–108

trodden in the wine-press Grapes were turned into wine by treading them underfoot in a press. In this magic garden you get grapes at every stage at once – unripe, ripening and being pressed – all together.

120 captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians **pouring libations from their cups to the keen-eyed Giant-slayer Hermes**. It was their custom to pour the last cup to him before retiring to bed.

— SUPPLICATION

But the much-enduring good Odysseus walked straight up the hall, wrapped in the mist that Athene shed about him, till he reached
125 Arete and King Alcinous and **threw his arms around Arete's knees**. At the same moment the magic mist that had hidden him rolled away, and at the sight of this man in their midst a silence fell on all the banqueters up and down the hall. They stared at Odysseus in amazement while he made his petition:

130 'Arete, daughter of godlike Rhexenor, as one who has suffered much I come a suppliant to your husband, to you and to your guests. May the gods grant them happiness for life and may each bequeath to his sons the treasures of his house and the honours bestowed on him by the people. But for me **please arrange an escort to my own country**,
135 as soon as may be, for I have had to live through many hardships far from my friends.'

His petition made, **he sat down in the ashes by the hearth**, close to the fire. From that whole company there came not a sound.

— ECHENEUS SPEAKS

At last the silence was broken by the venerable lord Echeneus, a
140 Phaeacian elder, an eloquent speaker, rich in the wisdom of his forefathers. He now made his friendly counsel heard: 'Alcinous, it is unseemly and unlike your royal ways to let a stranger sit in the ashes at the hearth, while the guests around you must patiently await your lead. Sir, tell him to get up and sit on one of the silver chairs, and tell
145 your squires to mix some more wine so that we can make a fresh libation, to **Zeus the Thunderer, patron of suppliants, who deserve respect**. And let the housekeeper give him a meal from all she has available.'

— WELCOMED

The mighty King Alcinous listened to what Echeneus said, took the
150 wise and subtle Odysseus by the hand, **raised him from the hearth and seated him on a tall polished chair**, from which he moved the friendly Laodamas, his favourite son, who was sitting next to him. A maid came with water in a beautiful golden jug and poured it out over a silver basin to rinse his hands. Then she drew a wooden table to his
155 side, and the faithful housekeeper brought some bread and put it by him with a choice of delicacies, helping him liberally to all she could offer.

LINES 120–121

pouring libations from their cups to the keen-eyed Giant-slayer Hermes Hermes is the messenger of the gods and the guide who leads travellers, and the souls of the dead, on their way. He's nicknamed 'Giant-slayer' (Greek *Argeiphontes*) because he once killed **Argus**, a giant with a hundred eyes that Hera had set to guard a girl called Io. A *libation* is a splash of wine poured out as an offering to a god before drinking – the Greeks did it all the time. Here the last cup of the night goes to Hermes.

LINE 125

threw his arms around Arete's knees *Supplication* was the formal way of begging for protection: you knelt and grabbed the person's knees (and sometimes their chin), which put you under the gods' protection. Harming or turning away a suppliant risked making the gods angry. Odysseus grabs Arete's knees, exactly as Nausicaa told him to.

LINE 134

please arrange an escort to my own country *Nostos* means 'homecoming' – the journey home from war or wandering. It's what Odysseus is asking for here, and what the whole poem is building towards.

LINE 137

he sat down in the ashes by the hearth The **hearth** – the fire in the middle of the hall – was sacred and under the gods' protection. A suppliant would sit right down in its ashes, taking the humblest spot in the room, to put himself under that protection.

LINES 146–147

Zeus the Thunderer, patron of suppliants, who deserve respect **Zeus**, king of the gods, was the protector of suppliants and guests alike. Mistreat one and you offend Zeus himself – that's the belief behind the whole duty of hospitality (*xenia*).

LINES 150–151

raised him from the hearth and seated him on a tall polished chair The custom was to welcome and feed a guest first, and only ask his name and his business afterwards. So Alcinous lifts the stranger up out of the ashes and gives him a seat of honour.

While the much-enduring, good Odysseus ate and drank, mighty Alcinous gave an order to his squire: 'Pontonous, mix a bowl of wine
 160 and fill the cups of all the company in the hall, so that we may now make a drink-offering to Zeus the Thunderer, patron of suppliants, who deserve respect.' So Pontonous prepared a bowl of mellow wine, from which he poured out a few drops in each man's cup.

Then, when they had made their libations and drunk their fill,
 165 Alcinous addressed them: 'Captains and Counsellors of the Phaeacians, listen while I tell you what is in my mind. Now you have dined, disperse to your homes for the night; and **in the morning we will summon a fuller gathering** of the elders to entertain our visitor here and to sacrifice to the gods. We will then take up the matter of
 170 his passage so as to ensure him without trouble or anxiety the happiness of a speedy return to his country under our escort, however far away it is. We will safeguard him on the way from any further hardship or accident till he sets foot on his own land. After which he must suffer whatever Destiny and the relentless Fate spun
 175 for him with the first thread of life when he came from his mother's womb.

— GOD OR MAN?

'But **if he is one of the immortals come down from heaven**, then the gods must be playing some new trick on us. For in the past they have always shown themselves to us without disguise when we have
 180 offered them their sumptuous sacrifices; and at our banquets they sit at our side. Even when a traveller meets them on his lonely way, they make no concealment; for we are special to them, **like the Cyclopes and the wild tribes of the Giants**.'

— THE STOMACH SPEAKS

'Alcinous,' the shrewd Odysseus replied, 'put that idea out of your
 185 mind. I have neither the looks nor the stature of the immortal gods who live in heaven, but those of a human being. Think of the wretches who in your experience have borne the heaviest load of sorrow, and I will match my griefs with theirs. Indeed I think that I could tell an even longer tale of woe, if I gave you an account of what
 190 by the gods' will I have suffered. But, in spite of all my troubles, give me leave to eat my supper. For **nothing in the world is so shamelessly demanding as a man's confounded stomach**. However afflicted he may be and sick at heart, it calls for attention so loudly that he is bound to obey it. Such is my case: my heart is sick with
 195 grief, yet my stomach insists that I eat and drink. It makes me forget all I have suffered and forces me to eat my fill. But at daybreak do make arrangements for landing this unfortunate guest of yours in his own country. I have had hard times indeed. Once let me see my own

LINES 167–168

in the morning we will summon a fuller gathering A *sacrifice* meant killing an animal, burning part of it as an offering to the gods, and then feasting on the rest. Alcinous plans a sacrifice and a full public gathering to honour his guest.

LINE 177

if he is one of the immortals come down from heaven The gods were thought to appear openly among the Phaeacians and even sit down to eat with them – so Alcinous half-wonders whether his mysterious guest might actually be a god in disguise.

LINES 182–183

like the Cyclopes and the wild tribes of the Giants The **Cyclopes** (one-eyed giants) and the **Giants** are mentioned as peoples who, like the Phaeacians, live cut off from ordinary humans and close to the gods.

LINES 191–192

nothing in the world is so shamelessly demanding as a man's confounded stomach For the Greeks the 'belly' was a byword for the plain, pushy demands of the body – the way hunger nags at you to eat and drink even in the middle of grief.

estate, my servants, and the high roof of my great house, and I shall
 200 be content to breathe my last.'

They all applauded his speech and agreed that the stranger should be
 escorted home, for he had talked good sense. Then after making a
 libation and satisfying their thirst, they retired for the night to their
 several homes, leaving good Odysseus sitting in the hall beside Arete
 205 and the godlike Alcinous, while the maids cleared the dinner things
 away.

— ARETE'S QUESTIONS

White-armed Arete was the first to break the silence, for in the fine
 cloak and tunic she saw him wearing she recognized some clothes
 that she herself had made with her women's help.

— ODYSSEUS' TALE

210 'Sir,' she said, with words on wings, 'I myself will question you and
 ask you this first. Who are you? Where do you come from? And who
 gave you those clothes? Didn't you say you came here from
 wandering over the seas?'

'My Queen,' the shrewd Odysseus replied, 'it would be wearisome to
 215 tell you all my troubles from first to last, for the gods have sent me so
 many. But I will tell you this much in answer to your questions. Far
 out at sea there is **an island called Ogygia, where** Atlas' daughter, the
 artful Calypso, lives, the awesome goddess with braided hair. No god
 or mortal man comes near her. And yet I had the misfortune to be
 220 brought by some power to her hearth. I was alone, for with one of his
 blinding bolts Zeus had smashed my good ship to pieces out in the
 wine-dark sea. My loyal company all lost their lives. But with both
 arms I clasped the curved ship's keel and for nine days kept afloat. In
 the blackness of the tenth night the gods washed me ashore on
 225 Ogygia, the home of Calypso, that formidable goddess with the
 beautiful locks. She took me in and looked after me with loving care.
She offered me immortality and eternal youth. But never for a
 moment did she win my heart. Seven whole years I stayed, soaking
 with my tears the imperishable clothes Calypso gave me.

230 'But at last, when the eighth came round in its course, she urged me
 to be gone, either in obedience to a message from Zeus or because
 her own feelings had changed. She sent me off in a solidly made raft,
 after providing me generously with bread and sweet wine, and
 giving me imperishable clothes to wear. She also caused a warm and
 235 kindly wind to blow. So for seventeen days I sailed across the sea and
 on the eighteenth the shadowy mountains of your land loomed up,
 and I rejoiced. Too soon, poor man, for I was destined to meet further
 troubles, which **Poseidon the Earthshaker was yet to send me.**

LINE 217

an island called Ogygia, where Calypso is a nymph (a minor goddess) who lives alone on the far-off island of **Ogygia**. She kept Odysseus there for seven years (the story of Book 5) – it's the island the sea-god Proteus mentioned back in Book 4.

LINE 227

She offered me immortality and eternal youth. But never Being made *immortal* – never ageing or dying – was the one great thing that set the gods apart from humans. Calypso offered Odysseus exactly that if he'd stay, and he still turned it down.

LINE 238

Poseidon the Earthshaker was yet to send me **Poseidon** is god of the sea and of earthquakes – which is why he's nicknamed 'the Earthshaker'. He's Odysseus' chief enemy among the gods: Odysseus blinded his son, the Cyclops Polyphemus, and Poseidon has chased him with storms ever since.

Rousing the winds against me, he stopped me from making headway;
 240 and as I sat groaning there he stirred the sea to such unspeakable
 fury that the waves made it impossible for me to stay on my raft – a
 squall smashed it to pieces. However, I managed by swimming to
 make my way across that stretch of water, till the winds and the
 waves brought me to your coast.

— DEFENDING NAUSICAA

245 ‘There I tried to scramble ashore, but a wave took and dashed me on
 the great rocks of that inhospitable coast. So I gave up the plan and
 swam away from the shore. In the end I reached a river, which
 seemed to offer the best possible landing-place, clear of rocks and
 sheltered from the wind. I struggled out and lay there till I could rally
 250 my strength. Meanwhile the solemn night came on. After climbing
 up from the bed of that heaven-fed river I lay down in a thicket,
 heaped leaves over my body and with a god’s help fell into a sound
 sleep. I was exhausted and slept there in the leaves all night and right
 through the morning into the middle of the day.

255 The sun was on his downward path when I awoke from my refreshing
 sleep to find your daughter’s ladies playing on the beach. The
 princess herself was with them, looking like a goddess. I asked her
 help. And she proved what good sense she has, acquitting herself in a
 way you would not expect in one so young – young people are
 260 thoughtless as a rule. But she gave me plenty of bread and sparkling
 wine, bathed me in the river and provided me with the clothes you
 see. That is the truth of the matter, painful as it is to tell it.’

‘Sir,’ said Alcinous, ‘in one respect my daughter’s judgement is faulty.
 She should have brought you home with her maids. After all, she
 265 was the first person you had begged for help.’

— PASSAGE PROMISED

‘My lord,’ replied the resourceful Odysseus, ‘do not rebuke your
 peerless daughter. She did tell me to follow along with the servants.
 But in my modesty I shrank from doing so, fearing that you might be
 indignant at the sight. We men are naturally suspicious.’

270 ‘My friend,’ replied Alcinous, ‘I am not one to take offence for no
 good reason; it is always better to be reasonable. I wish – by Zeus
 and Athene and Poseidon – I wish that a man like you, like-minded
 with myself, could have my daughter and remain here as my son-in-
 law – I would give you a house and riches. That is, if you were willing
 275 to stay. But **not one of us Phaeacians shall detain you**. God forbid
 such a thing! And to set your mind at rest, I now appoint a day for
 your departure home: tomorrow. You shall lie deep in sleep while they
 row you over tranquil seas, till you come to your own country and

LINE 264

She should have brought you home with her maids The custom was that whoever a suppliant first begged for help should see them safely to their destination. Alcinous is pointing out that Nausicaa left Odysseus to walk to the palace alone.

LINE 275

not one of us Phaeacians shall detain you A good host was expected to help a guest on his way, not cling on to him. Unlike Calypso and Circe, who both kept Odysseus prisoner, the Phaeacians won’t hold him back.

your house or anywhere else where you would like to go. Nor does it
 280 matter if the place is even **more remote than Euboea, which is said
 to be at the world's end** by those of our sailors who saw it, that time
 they took auburn-haired Rhadamanthus to visit Tityus, the son of
 Earth. They got there and returned in one day without fatigue. But
 285 of my ships and how good my young men are at whipping up the
 water with their oars.'

Odysseus' patient heart filled with happiness as he listened, and he
 raised his voice in prayer: 'O Father Zeus, grant that Alcinous may
 accomplish all that he has promised; **then his fame would never die
 290 anywhere on the fruitful Earth**, and I should come again to the land
 of my fathers.'

— NIGHTFALL

While they were conversing, white-armed Arete gave her maids
 instructions to put a bed in the portico and to furnish it with the
 finest purple rugs, spread coverlets over these, and add warm
 295 blankets on top. The servants, torch in hand, went out of the hall and
 busied themselves at this task. When they had spread the bed-
 clothes on the bed, they came up to Odysseus and invited him to
 retire. 'Come along, sir,' they said, 'your bed is made.' The prospect of
 sleep seemed very sweet to him. So the long-suffering good
 300 Odysseus slept there in the echoing portico on a wooden bed.
 Alcinous lay down for the night in his room at the back of the lofty
 palace with his wife, who shared his bed.

LINES 280–281

**more remote than Euboea, which is said to be
 at the world's end** Euboea is a large Greek
 island; **Rhadamanthus**, named here, was a
 legendary just king, later said to be one of the
 judges of the dead. Alcinous names the most
 far-off place he can think of, to boast that his
 ships could sail there and back in a single day.

LINES 289–290

**then his fame would never die anywhere on
 the fruitful Earth** *Kleos* means 'glory' or 'fame'
 – especially the lasting kind a hero wins
 through great deeds, the fame that lives on in
 song. Odysseus promises Alcinous exactly
 this sort of undying fame in return for his
 help.

