

Calypso and Odysseus

by Anthony Hodson

To one side of the stage is Calypso (standing) and Odysseus (sitting looking sad). Close to them is Athene. On the other side of the stage is Zeus polishing thunderbolts. Next to him is Hera, who is knitting.

Narrator 1

The Year 4 Latin Club will now present a tiny play - a scene from the great Greek epic poem, the Odyssey. Paris, a prince of Troy, took Helen, a Greek princess back to his city, and the Greeks were very angry. They decided to make war on the city of Troy. After ten years, the Greeks used a huge wooden horse to trick the Trojans and to win the war. Afterwards, Odysseus, King of Ithaca and one of the Greek leaders, set off for home with his men. He and his men suffered many hardships and disasters, and eventually Odysseus was the only one to be left alive after a dreadful shipwreck.

Narrator 2

Odysseus finds himself washed up on an island that belongs to the nymph Calypso. She is a nymph, a kind of beautiful goddess that men can see.

Calypso is kind, but she is also selfish, and she wants Odysseus all for herself. Odysseus likes Calypso, but he longs to go back to his lovely wife Penelope, and his son Telemache [tell-eh-macky], who he hasn't seen for a long long time.

Here is Odysseus. He is very sad.

Here is Calypso. She is sorry that Odysseus is sad, but cannot bring herself to let him go home. She is the only god or goddess that Odysseus can see or hear.

Narrator 1

But the Gods can help. The wise goddess Athene [introduce her!] protects Odysseus; she sees what is going on, and in the play she asks Zeus, the king of the gods [introduce him!] to make Calypso let him go. Hera is queen of the gods and wife of Zeus [introduce her!] She doesn't like Zeus visiting beautiful nymphs, so Zeus asks Hermes, the messenger of the gods, to tell Calypso to let Odysseus go - or else! Hermes! [calls in Hermes, who flies in, then out!]

Calypso

*ō Odysseus, cārissime, sōlum volō ut tū fēlīx sīs. tum ego fēlīcissima nymphārum
O Odysseus, dearest I only want that you happy be Then I the happiest of nymphs
mondī sim.
of the world would be*

Odysseus

mihi benignissima es, ō Calypsō, tamen bene cognōscis quantum domum Ithacā
to me very kind you are Calypso, but well you know how much home in Ithaca
redīre cupiō et iterum uxōrem cārissimam et filium iuvenem revīserē.
to return I long and again my wife dearest and son. young to see

Athene

iam fīlius iuvenis illius vir adultus est. tempus adest ad mē faciendum ut
now the son young of him a man grown is time is present for me seeing that
domum mox redeat. *Crosses the stage to stand near Zeus.*
home soon he goes back.

ō pater Zeus!

Father Zeus!

Zeus

quid dīcis? quid agit? occupātus sum.
What are you saying? What is going on? I'm busy.

Athene

Ō pater Zeus, invītus Odysseus ā nymphā Calypsōne in insulā longinquā retinitur.
Father Zeus, unwillingly Odysseus by the nymph Calypso. on an island far away is being kept

Zeus

Calypsō? ubi est?

Calypso? Where is she?

nunc eam videō et sciō quid mihi nuntiās.
now her I see and I understand what to me you tell.

Hera

quid spectās, ō Zeus? *Follows his looks, and sees Calypso. Stands between Zeus*
What are you looking at, Zeus?
and Calypso.

Zeus

vērō nihil, cāra. hōc momentō cum Athēnā occupātus sum. *Hera remains standing.*
Oh, nothing, . dear just now with Athene I'm busy .

ō Athēna, quid cupis ut faciam?
Athene, what do you want that I do

Athene

tibi placeat imperāre Calypsōnī ut Odysseum liberet.
may it please you to order Calypso to Odysseus let go.

Hera

cognōscō tē, ō Zeus. Calypsōnem vīs visitāre, et deinde ...
I know you, Zeus! Calypso you want to visit, and then ...

Zeus

minimē, ō cāra. Hermēs prō mē ībit. Hermēs!
Not at all, my dear. Hermes for me will go. Hermes!

Enter Hermes

Hermes

adsum, ō pater Zeus! quid cupis?
here I am Father Zeus? what do you want?

Zeus

ad Calypsōnem advolā. eam monē ut Odysseus liberandus sit, nē eī irātissimus fiam.
to Calypso fly her tell that Odysseus to be freed is, lest with her very angry I become.

Hera

Hermēs tam improbus est quam tu. dolī pessimī eī semper sunt.
Hermes just as bad is as you. tricks very bad to him always are

Hermes

dolī? mihi?? haudquāquam!
Tricks? me?? never!

Flies across the stage to Calypso. Gods look on.

Hermes

ō Calypsō, Zeus mē missī. oportet tē Odysseum liberāre
Calypso, Zeus me has sent. You must let Odysseus let go

Odysseus

Cannot see or hear Hermes. cūr tam infēlīx subitō vidēris?
Why so unhappy suddenly do you seem?

Calypso

nōn possum illud facere
I cannot it do.

Hermes

necesse est tibi nē Zeus fulmina in tē iaciat.
You must do so, lest Zeus lightning at you throw.

Odysseus

quid dīcis, ō Calypsō. quid nōn potēs facere?
What are you saying, Calypso? What cannot you do?

Calypso

tē liberābō.
you I will let go.

Hermes returns to Zeus

Odysseus

vērōne mē liberābis? benignissima es. tibi grātiās agō.
really me you will let go? very kind you are. thank you.

Calypso

tibi māteria et fūnēs et lintea dābō ut ratem aedificēs. tibi cibum et vīnum dābō.
to you wood and rope and sailcloth I shall give to a raft make. to you food and wine I will give
mē benedīcente discēdēs sed semper tē valdē dēsīderam.
with me blessing, you will depart but always you much I shall miss.

Athene

ō Odysseus, necesse est tibi festināre. Poseidōn nunc abest et oportet tē
Odysseus, you must hurry. Poseidon now is away, and you must
discēdere antequam redeat, quod sī tē videat, tempestāte conābitur tē interficere.
go before he comes back, because if you he sees, with a storm he will try you to destroy.

Odysseus

tibi grātiās agō, ō Calypsō. vērō benignissima es. oportet mē statim incohāre. (*Exits*)
Thank you, Calypso, truly very kind. you are I must immediately start work.

Calypso

ēheu. miserrimam mē! Zeus starts to cross the stage towards her to comfort her.
Alas How miserable I am.

Hera

siste! nolī adīre ad eam, ō Zeus. nōn licet tibi eī consolārī.
stop! do not go to her Zeus, you must not her comfort

Zeus

bene, ō cara. quid autem faciēbam antequam Athēna mē interpellāvit?
Very well my dear. what however was I doing before Athene me interrupted?.
nunc meminī. fulmina mea poliēbam.
now I remember thunderbolts my I was polishing

Calypso

ēheu. cor meum fractum est.
Alas! heart my broken is

Narrator 2

So Calypso, broken hearted, has to let Odysseus go, promising him all the materials to build a raft, and all the provisions that he will need for the journey, and the play ends on that note. What happens then?

Athene has warned Odysseus that he must hurry, because the terrible sea-god Poseidon is away. Poseidon hates Odysseus, and wants to destroy him.

Calypso is as good as her word; a raft is built, and Odysseus sails off. But Poseidon does spot him and creates a big storm. Odysseus' raft is destroyed, and he has to swim for it. Eventually he is washed up, more dead than alive, on the island of the noble Phaeacians [Fee-asians] and is rescued by the beautiful princess Nausikaa. But that is a tale for another day!