

# Odysseus

by [Michael Shindler](#) (July 2025)



Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus (J.M.W. Turner, 1829)

Odysseus—on the sea, at the shore  
In heaven's historical reverie,  
With his silvered words still working at war  
Over every west-waving century:

He holds forth at a pain upon the page  
Across ancient poesy's waterlogged mind,  
Each of his words earning its little wage  
For poets who cannot bear to be blind.

Forever he sails the wine-dark water,  
This generous comrade of versifiers:  
He—our hero of romantic slaughter

And the most handsome king of helpless liars.

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