

Zachary Anderson

Block 1

English Hon 9

The Trials of Poseidon

I am Telemachus, son of Odysseus and Penelope. After my father returned from his journey, and we killed all the suitors who were in our kingdom, everything seemed to get gradually better. Me and my father made up for lost time, and I even became general of Ithaca's army. Anyway, everything seemed to get better until my mother died. She died about 3 years after my father's return, and that's when everything changed. Little did I know that the day of my mother's death also marked the day that I would have to embark on a journey of my own.

If you want to know how she died, it was a very unfortunate accident. It happened when a small farm boy came running into our house as fast as he could saying he had to deliver a very important message. However, he tripped on a rock near the doorway and tried to regain his balance by grabbing whatever he could get a hold of- in this case a sword that my father had mounted on the wall. The sword came loose from the wall, and slipped with his hand still grabbing it into my mother standing nearby. She died almost instantly as the sword dived into her heart.

Now as you can imagine, my father was very, very upset about this. He immediately started yelling at the gods, asking why they would do this. The boy was terrified and ran away, leaving the message behind. As my father, Odysseus was yelling at the gods a huge bolt of lightning struck right beside our house.

We soon realized it was Zeus after we heard a loud, booming voice come from the spot where the lightning had struck. He proclaimed loudly: "If you ever want to see queen Penelope again, you must send your son through the 3 trials of Poseidon" If he can make it through, We will restore her life, and your whole family shall receive a special gift from the gods: We will extend your entire family's life, every generation will have this gift, as long as your family name lives on. I grant this map to you: it will end up being very useful-that is, if you choose to accept.

"So apparently Poseidon was still mad about my father blinding his son, because he is still trying to test us" I said aloud to my father. "Or, perhaps he's angry because he only grew my legacy with his efforts to stop me from getting home" he replied. It seemed reasonable. Now I knew what I had to do. Without

even asking my father, I ran out of the house, only grabbing a sword and the map. I heard my father calling my name as I sprinted out the doorway, down the steps, and onto the nearby docks. I stepped onto my personal boat as my crew were still onboard. They all looked confused and I could tell at least half of them were drunk. I quickly ordered them to prepare for sailing, as I heard my father calling.

Just as we started to leave, I looked at the map and observed it for a while. I noticed that the first trial was about a day's journey North. I then looked around at who was actually on the boat with me, and realized it was the wrong boat! I know my crew; 23 very different men who all shared the love of sailing and adventure. I looked left to right and only recognized 2 men on the boat. My good friend Barmathon, and an old man, Azelfus, whom I knew because he lived a few houses down from us.

As for the other 17 men and even a couple women I had no idea who they were. This startled me. I swallowed hard as they looked at me. Then I realized they were probably looking at me in this way because they had absolutely no idea what was going on. All they knew was the king and queen of Ithaca's son had climbed into their boat, demanding that they sail away quickly, and now many boats are sailing after them. That's right, my dad had sent boats after us! I told them about my situation and they seemed to understand....at first.

After a while, Barmathon decided it would be a good idea to introduce me to his crew. Now i'm not going to say every members name, but I will talk about a few notable ones: First there is Tripithedus, a runner from Athens who was very good at his job(In Barmathons opinion of course). Next, there's Carpretes, who claims to have been to Hades and back(although he also says that a dragon once destroyed his house). The last one that I want to mention is Jasperina, according to Barmathon she's the best sailor in Greece, and she reeally knows the sea, he says.

I looked back and noticed that the boats seemed to have been catching up to us. I started to worry. Then, the next few minutes seemed to be very unfortunate for us. I ordered the crew to pick up the speed, but they refused. This was because Tripithedus brang up how all of Odysseus' men died in his journey, and how they were probably going to die if they went along with me on my journey. Only Barmathon, and a couple others sided with me. We fought about it for a while, but by the time we calmed down a bit the ships were almost upon us. I tried to tell the crew to hurry but it was too late. Just as my father's ship touched ours, a hurricane formed seemingly out of nowhere.

The hurricane threw all of the ships in the area apart, and I saw many ships getting tossed and turned around. I faintly heard my father trying to tell me

something but it was impossible to hear him with the hurricane. I wasn't even sure if we would be able to make it back at this point, all I knew was I had to complete the trials; no matter what.

The next day I awoke in a dark room. My hands were tied and I couldn't see anything. Although I could hear faint yelling coming from the room above me. Then, a hatch opened from the ceiling and Barmathon pulled me up. "Sorry, Telemachus" he said. "I tried to stop them but they told me they had to discuss some things without you there". As it turned out I was still on the boat, just in the lower deck. I sighed as I looked around and noticed that everybody was arguing. Then, Azelfus pulled me aside with Zeus' map. He showed me that we were just about to arrive at the first trial, the trial of strength.

The Trial of Strength

The boat entered a cloud of fog, and all the arguing stopped at once. Our boat suddenly stopped as it hit a pyramid-like structure. We cautiously climbed out and looked around, weapons in hand. After a little bit of walking, I heard a faint noise. As we got closer I realized it sounded a lot like my mother screaming! I started running after the noise, despite my "crew" telling me not to. Then a door slammed behind me, separating me from the others. After that, a bunch of torches lit up, and I could see an obstacle course looking thing in front of me.

Suddenly, I heard the voice of Poseidon fill up the room. "Telemachus! If you can pass this trial, The Trial of Strength, you will be one step closer to reviving your mother, and unlocking the gift of immortality". I scanned the trial. Most of the obstacles were meant to test the physical strength of the test subject. I started to go through the course. Most obstacles weren't very challenging, but I had no idea what was ahead of me.

Once I got to the final obstacle, I had a few doubts. It was a giant ball that I had to lift to get through the doorway to get out. But the problem was, it was gigantic. I stepped up to the ball. It was huge, about 4-feet tall and who knows how heavy. I clamped my arms around it and started to pull. I pulled for about a minute, but it didn't budge.

I stepped away, and turned to the skies. I asked Athena for help, for her to show me a way to move the obstacle, and then I asked Zeus to lend me his strength. Suddenly, I felt a gust of exhilaration as I stepped up to the ball once again. I pulled as hard as I possibly could, and I felt it slowly turning away from the doorway. Somehow, I pulled harder, and the ball went completely away from the

door. I cheered, sent my appreciation to Zeus and Athena, and crawled through the doorway.

Apparently, I had gone in a huge circle because the door led to the same area I had started in. Everyone was still there, arguing as usual, however, once they saw me they all seemed to calm down a bit. They all asked me what happened and I told them "I passed the first trial" A few of them cheered and we walked back into the ship.

I sighed with relief as we sailed away from the structure. "So I guess we're all just going along with these trial things?" Jasperina asked the crew. "I mean, what do we get out of this?" "That's a good point" Carpretes added. Barmathon started to defend me but I stopped him. "Well, you might not get anything physical but I bet every single one of you can name at least one of Odysseus' men on his famous journey from Troy to our beloved home in Ithaca". "You may not receive gold or treasure, but your names will be remembered for many generations".

"Yeah, I guess, but if we do survive this journey can we get like free bread for life?" Jasprina asked. "I guess so" I replied. I then glanced at the map and realized we were on our way to Trial 2, "the trial of wits". I wasn't sure if I was prepared, "but my father taught me a lot in the 3 years that he's been back, so I definitely have a chance". I remember thinking to myself.

Shortly after this conversation, we all went to sleep. However, I don't think I was asleep for more than 30 minutes before a loud thud fired through my ears. I quickly scurried to the deck of the boat, and looked around. At first I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary but then a giant purple tentacle came crashing down on the boat, and crushed a couple people. I jumped over the tentacle and dived for my sword. I grabbed it tightly in my hands and did my best to cut off the tentacle from whatever it was attached to. Next, I heard an incredibly loud shriek coming from the direction of where the tentacle came from. Then, the creature revealed itself.

It looked like an enormous octopus- probably 25 feet tall. It was all purple, and it had a huge scar across its right eye. I'll be honest, I was pretty terrified. But I knew that I had to take it down or we might not have a ship to go home in. I waited for it to lift a tentacle and then I pounced. I jumped as high as I could and struck it in the middle of its body. It shrieked once again and flailed back into the sea. That was the last I saw of the thing as the remainder of my crew gathered together to regroup.

2 men were killed and one was badly injured. His head was bleeding and he appeared to be knocked out. But still we pressed on and finally arrived at the Trial of Wits.

The Trial of Wits

The trial of wits was the same type of structure as the trial of strength. I tried to remember the methods my father taught me as I entered the structure. My crew didn't even bother to enter with me as they knew they could not help me in my trials. Once again I heard the voice of Poseidon. "There are 3 riddles in this trial. If you can answer all of them correctly, you will pass the trial. I stepped into the room. The first 2 riddles were taught to me by my father. I already knew the answers. However the final one was a bit of a challenge.

The riddle was: what do these words have in common: madam, civic, eye, level. I thought about it for a minute, and then it hit me. e y e backwards is e y e! All of the words shared this similarity and that's what they had in common. As soon as I figured this out, the door opened. I ran back to the ship with my crew waiting. I told them the good news and we were on our way.

At this point, everything seemed to be going smoothly. That's what I was thinking as I looked at the map and how we were getting kind of close to the 3rd and final trial, the trial of choice. Judging by the name, I had no idea what to expect. I just knew that we had to get there fast because the giant octopus actually caused a couple small leaks in the boat and we needed to hurry if we wanted to get home in time.

I decided to go to sleep to prepare myself for whatever was ahead of me with "the trial of choice"

The Trial of Choice

It was Jasperina who woke me this time. She told me we had arrived. I jumped up, grabbed my sword, and nervously entered the 3rd structure. Poseidon's voice rang out through the room once again and explained the rules: "I will present to you 3 scenarios" he said. "You will choose one of the choices I present. If I do not agree with your answer, you will fail the trial" I answered the first 2 choices correctly and then Poseidon presented the 3rd scenario: "If you could only save your mother or your father from certain death, which one would you choose?" After some thought I answered: "My mother"..... "INCORRECT" Poseidon's voice echoed

through the building. "What? I stuttered..." but how?" "LEAVE NOW AND DON'T SHOW YOUR FACE HERE AGAIN" his voice bellowed. I ran out of the building.

"What happened?" They all practically asked at once. They seemed to know the urgency of the situation because they started to leave the dock early. I told them I failed, and the entire boat went silent. In fact, it was silent almost the whole way back and when I did get home things got even worse. It seemed as though Ithaca had been attacked while we were gone, and without the army's general, and without a majority of the city's boats, Ithaca was nearly defenseless against its attackers.

A small child was running by and I called him over to tell us what happened. He seemed angry at me but explained anyway. He said My father, Odysseus, and a few other men defended the city all they could, and died protecting the city they loved. He told me the small group held off the attackers just enough so that the people could get away safely. But the city itself was pretty much destroyed.

I was traumatized and walked over to my house. I looked on the floor and saw that the message was still there. I unrolled it and saw that it was a message from Zeus! Here's what it read:

Dear Telemachus. By the time you read this all the chaos will likely be over, but don't fret, I'm not here to talk about your failures, I'm trying to provide a solution to you. However, you must be careful, this plan is very risky, and it could easily lead in you getting killed. The solution is: to take the map that I gave you earlier and burn it. This should open up a portal to Hades. There you will have an opportunity to bring your parents back to life. Once this is achieved, I have some business with Poseidon I need to take care of

Farewell, and goodluck-Zeus

The Realm of the Dead

Now I knew what I had to do. I quickly grabbed the map and a nearby torch and burned it. As promised, a portal was opened, and I eagerly stepped through. "No more messing up" I thought as I entered the realm of the dead. It was an

amazing sight, but not in a good way. All around me were people. They looked the same as when they were alive, but not quite. It was very strange and uncanny. I ran through many hallways calling my parents' names until finally I heard an answer. "Telemachus?" My mother asked. "Mom!" I quickly grabbed both of their hands and ran out of the portal the same way I came in. "Well, we may not be immortal, but at least I have my parents back". I said and hugged both of my parents.

The Aftermath

Me and my parents both walked back to our house and to my surprise, the crew was there. All of their faces turned white as they saw us. "How are you alive"? they asked my parents. I explained to them what happened as we sat in my partially ruined house. "So how about that deal we made in the boat?" Jasperina asked and we all started laughing.

The End