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The *Odyssey*, besides being one of the world's first adventure stories, is a poem of great subtlety, rich in irony and sophisticated characterization. The poet's art is amply illustrated by books XIX and XX, in which Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, spends the night in his own palace and lays plans for his awesome revenge. Particularly memorable is the episode in which Penelope converses with her husband without suspecting his identity. In this edition, Richard Rutherford provides not only detailed comment on the action, characterization, and style of the books in question, but also, in an extensive introduction, a general survey of the *Odyssey* as a whole, laying special emphasis on the qualities of the second half of the poem. He also attempts to contribute to the literary criticism of the poem on a verbal level, by considering the poet's use of formulae, rhetorical technique, and similes. This volume is intended for readers of the *Odyssey* at all stages. The commentary gives extensive linguistic guidance for beginners; and the introduction, in which all Greek is translated, is intended to be accessible to any readers interested in Homer as a poet.



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