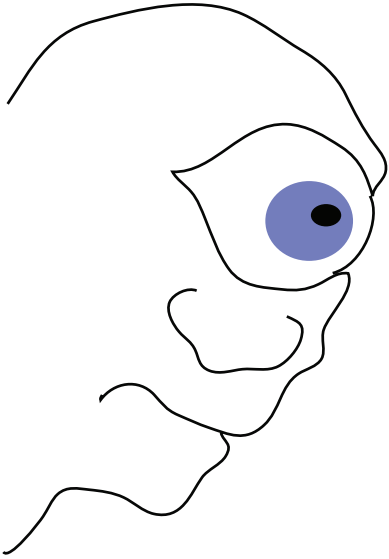


ODYSSEUS AND CYCLOPS

Odysseus was a soldier known for his cleverness and bravery. When his king told him to fight, he fought, but he disliked how wars often kept him away from his family. After spending ten years fighting in the Trojan War, Odysseus decided he deserved a vacation, and he commanded his men to sail his ship back home.

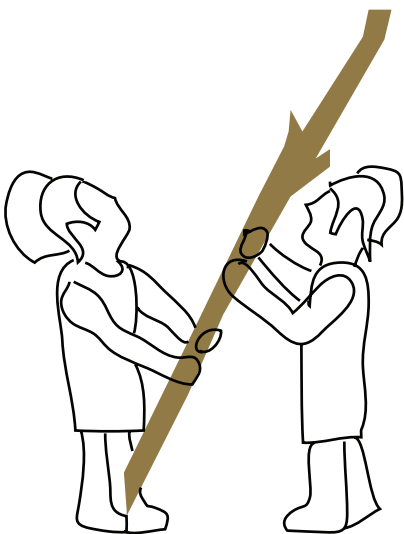


Odysseus, unfortunately, was brave, but not lucky. His ship made a stop for supplies on an island ruled by hideous monsters called Cyclopes. Cyclopes had only one eye and liked to eat humans for breakfast. After a brief struggle, Odysseus and all his men were captured by a particularly large and ferocious Cyclops. The Cyclops threw the men into his cave and warned them that at dawn he would eat two of them. The men were scared, but Odysseus attempted to remain calm. He desperately wanted to return home, and he knew that even if he and his men escaped, their ship would be pursued by a scary herd of one-eyed monsters.

When the Cyclops came to eat two of the men, Odysseus confronted him. The brave soldier begged the monster to let their two species be friends. The Cyclops was amused but not convinced by Odysseus's argument. Instead, he asked Odysseus his name. Odysseus replied that his name was Nobody.

While the Cyclops was distracted, the rest of the men took a giant stick they had found in the cave and plunged it into the monster's eye. The Cyclops screamed out in pain as the men ran out of the cave and out of the clutches of their captor. Once the Cyclops had taken the stick out of his eye, he hurried to gather up the rest of his Cyclops brothers. There would be no way that the men could outrun all of the Cyclopes. But when the other one-eyed monsters asked the Cyclops who had injured him, the Cyclops complained that Nobody did. Nobody had struck him in the eye, and Nobody had escaped! The poor Cyclops could not figure out why none of the other Cyclopes would help him.

Odysseus and the rest of his men escaped, and a few weeks later, the very tired soldier was happily reunited with his family.



Comprehension Questions

1. Why was Odysseus unlucky?
2. Did Odysseus really want to be friends with the Cyclops?
3. What would have happened if Odysseus had told the Cyclops his real name?
4. Why did the other one-eyed monsters not want to help the Cyclops?