

# THE BOYHOOD AND PARENTS OF ULYSSES

In ancient Ithaca, a rugged, mountainous island on Greece's west coast, reigned a king named Laertes. This tiny kingdom, described as shield-shaped due to its twin peaks and valley, lacked horses, thus, chariot warfare was absent. Laertes' son, Ulysses, unlike others, fought on foot. Despite the absence of horses, Ithaca flourished with livestock and wildlife, and its seas teemed with fish, ensuring a prosperous life for its inhabitants. Its climate was mild, adorned with a long summer and brief winter, making the island a picturesque haven with blue seas, skies, and wildflowers dotting its landscape. Temples and shrines to the Nymphs added to its beauty. No matter where he went, Ulysses' heart remained tethered to Ithaca, his childhood sanctuary where he mastered boating, archery, hunting, and befriending hounds.

Ulysses' mother, Anticleia, was the progeny of Autolycus, a master thief from the mainland near Mount Parnassus and revered more for his cunning than maligned for his thievery, in homage to Hermes, the Greek god of thieves. Ulysses inherited this craftiness, utilizing it more for wartime strategy and survival rather than theft. As a baby, he was named Odysseus, meaning "A MAN OF WRATH" by his grandfather, a name that would evolve into Ulysses. His childhood was one of privilege and affection, indicated by his father's gift of fruit trees and vineyards for his exclusive use.

The narrative conveys Ulysses' upbringing amidst an environment that valued wisdom, strategy, and the bounties of nature over mere brute strength. His story foreshadows a life filled with adventure, cleverness, and a deep, unwavering connection to his roots in Ithaca. Despite his eventual travels and encounters with the wider world's riches and challenges, Ulysses' identity and values remained deeply influenced by the island of his youth and the legacy of his ancestors, setting the stage for the epic tales that

would follow.



# Summaryer