

**Keeping A Hero**  
**By E. Archer**

I sat on my little island, gazing upon the Mediterranean sea, the calm waves lapping onto the rocky cliffs and beach. My feet dug into the soft sand of the shore, water eroding the surrounding sand. I would have never been here if Zeus was not such a jerk. It was not even my decision to fight against the gods, my father made me. As you might know, my dad is Atlas. You know, the guy who commanded the Titan army during the war and now holds up the heavens. Since he made me fight against my will, the gods saw it as me wanting to see their destruction.

As the war went on, my father thought the Olympians had given up. That is when his war strategies went to hell. All backfired as the Cyclops and Hundred-handed ones fought alongside the Olympians. After the gods won, they dumped all the Titans in Tartarus and left my father with the job of holding the sky on his shoulders for all eternity. The gods did not want to take chances of me leading an uprising against them so they dumped me in the middle of nowhere, lucky me.

So that leaves me here, on my little island called Ogygia watching the hot sun sparkle on the waves below. Screaming out in anguish, my voice bounced off the rocky cliffs surrounding me, reminding me of my isolation.

“What did I ever do to you?” I yelled at the azure blue sky, hoping Zeus would hear. “Why must I be completely isolated for something I had no choice in?”

Kicking at the capping waves, salty water coated my toga. I couldn't care less, hugging myself to calm the overwhelming agony I had held onto for so long. Lines creased under my eyes, rubbing my hands along my ivory skin.

I sat alone on my little island, wanting nothing more than company to fill the empty halls of my palace and heart.

“This is stupid.” I stated, running my hands through my bouncy flaxen hair. “Why do I still dream of someone coming to cure me of my loneliness?”

Giving up on the notion, I sighed, turning from the crisp waves. Out of helplessness and desperation, I looked up at the cloudless sky once more.

“Oh great Zeus. I know I don't talk to you much, but would it kill you to send me some company sometimes?” My hands clung at the white fabric adorning my body.

I had enough with trying to appease the man long ago. I had not seen anyone in eons due to being stuck on this little island. Could he had not given me someone to talk to at least?

Huffing out of exasperation, I started walking back to my quaint palace, nestled on top a hillside. Behind me, I could hear the notes of the waves lapping on the shore, though the sounds of a groaning man filled my ears. My hair stood on end, slowly turning toward the alien noise.

A burly man laid on the rocky shore, coughing up water and groaning. His clothes were in tatters, showcasing the amount of scars on his olive skin. This man laid on the shore, clinging to a piece of wood.

I stared in amazement at the man below me, as if he was an exotic animal. My body quaked in excitement as a smile played its way onto my rosy lips. Finally, someone I can spend time with, and a man no less. Even though he was a mortal, he will do.

The peculiar man gazed up at me, confusion etched into his tired features.

“Who are you?” He asked, voice hoarse from all the salt water he consumed.

“I am Calypso, daughter of Atlas and only inhabitant of this island, well until you came along.” Holding out a hand I helped him up. “Come mortal, I will take you to my home and you can tell me your name.”

He seemed reluctant at first, before taking my hand. “My name is Odysseus.”

Smiling at the name, we ventured back to my quaint home on the hill.

We sat by the hearth as the sky grew dark, drinking wine and rambling to each other.

“So wait, you haven’t seen anyone in eons?” Odysseus asked in disbelief, taking a swig from his goblet.

“You are the first in many, oh great Odysseus. I hope you can stay for a while, I am enjoying your company.” Giggling as the Grecian warrior moved closer to me, the blankets muddling beneath us.

“If that is the case then I hope to ease your lonesome if you would let me.” His voice low as I felt his hot breath brushing against my neck. An unwilling tremor ran through my body as he set down his goblet, placing a calloused hand on my cheek. Odysseus closed the space between us, placing his chapped lips on mine, taking me in shock. My heart fluttered as his hands wrapped around my waist.

I can get used to this, I thought happily, his hands roaming my body. Succumbing to the temptation of the handsome hero in front of me.

It was the dead of night, feeling a cold sense of dread fill me, waking me from my slumber. I left the bed, glancing back at the sleeping warrior still tangled in the sheets, a heated blush overwhelmed me.

I would not mind keeping him here with me. Selfish desires overtook my subconscious as I continued watching Odysseus lay in a peaceful sleep. Giving into the impulse, I summoned a handful of golden magic. The spindly threads cascaded from my fingers, making my way over to Odysseus.

“You will yearn for nothing my sweet hero if you stay with me here, curing my loneliness.” I whispered softly, placing a chaste kiss on his forehead.

Standing over him, I released the magic in the air, the threads filling the room. The magic emitted a golden glow, filling the room with soft light. I watched as the magic found its way towards the sleeping hero, surrounding him like a blanket. Dropping to my knees, my hand rested on his wind chapped cheek.

“From now on, we can be together for all eternity, you never growing old as your days become years. Soon, you will forget your family back home and spend the rest of your days with me.” My breath ragged, desperation sneaking through the cracks of my well molded mask.

I knew I was in the wrong to warp the time we spent together but it had to be done. Odysseus is the only one who can cure my loneliness. Trying to calm the aching guilt resting in my gut, I laid next to the hero once more, nestling into his toned chest.

“Now we can finally be together.”

Before we knew it, seven years had passed in a blink of an eye, the time spent felt like a dream. We laid tangled in the blankets once more, his strong arms wrapped around me as he slept. Closing my eyes in pure bliss, I opened them to find Hermes hovering over me.

“Hey there Calypso, seems like you had a good time.” He stated smirking.

“Lord Hermes, what are you doing here?” I hissed at the god, knowing why he was here.

“Well you see, my man, Zeus, has Athena blabbering in his ear so I was sent here to tell you to let Odysseus leave so he can get back home to Ithaca.”

I was taken off guard, a small part of me shattering at the news.

“No,” I stated softly, “I will not let him go.”

Hermes’ attitude quickly changed, growing dark.

“Look, I know he is hot but you have to or Zeus is going to take away your island.”

“I don’t care.” I yelled, “He is all I have left in this miserable world. I haven’t seen anyone in ages and now you are trying to take away the only thing that can bring me happiness!”

Tears leaked from my tired blue eyes, running down my face like little rivers.

The god cast his gaze towards the ground, sighing heavily.

“Please stop crying, it is making me feel uncomfortable.” He sat on the bed, rubbing my back. Hermes was stiff as he tried comforting me, telling me that he did not do this often.

“I know you are lonely, but you should not mess with fate. It would be good to let him go. How would you feel if another goddess kept your husband as a play toy?”

Drying my tears on my dress, I knew what I had to do. Nodding over at Hermes, I woke Odysseus.

“You need to go. You have a wife and son back home. I’ll give you a small ship and bid you well on your journey ahead.”

The hero woke slowly, blinking his tired eyes as he gathered his bearings. Odysseus smiled softly as the man reached out for my hand. I agonisingly swat it away, holding my arm to where he could not reach it.

“Calypso, what is wrong?” Odysseus asked in a soft tone, worry coating his words. “My visit has not been very long on this island. I honestly prefer it over the wind battered seas. Why do you want me gone so soon?”

Holding my breath at his statement, I gazed at the cold marble floors of the palace. “It is not the fact that I want you gone, I would love for you to stay here with me but-,” I was cut off abruptly by a finger silencing me.

“Then if you want me to stay I will stay. Even if I do miss Ithaca, I’d rather be here with you.” His deep voice spoke with a soft underlying passion that brought up memories of the past seven years.

Odysseus gazed at me, waiting for an answer, having already gotten up. I relished in the fantasy of him staying here forever before the urgent message from Hermes knocked me back to reality.

“No Odysseus, you have to go back home. It is your destiny to fulfil your quest and get back to your kingdom.” As much as it hurt to face the truth, I knew it had to be said.

The hero was shocked at the suddenness of my words, turning away from me, shaking his head.

“If you want me go back so bad to a life in which the gods planned for me, what ever happened to the countless nights we shared together?” His voice sharp, each word lodging itself inside of my heart. “Did those mean anything to you?”

“Of course they did!” Sighing, I debated on telling him about Hermes message from earlier. “I do not want you to leave but Hermes came to me and told me I have to let you go back home.” Unwilling tears escaped my eyes as Odysseus pulled me close.

“I promise I will come back for you. I will take you back to Ithaca with me and everything will be alright again. The gods will have their wishes and we will be together.” I felt his warm breath on my ear as he whispered the last words.

“Swear on the river Styx?” I smiled softly, the male only smiling wider in return.

“On the river Styx.” Odysseus chuckled as I laid on him for one last time.

“I guess I will hold you to those words of great Odysseus.” Looking up at the tall hero, I knew that he could never come back but I wanted to believe.

It did not take long as we gathered his needed items for his journey back to Ithaca. I remembered the night I first met him Odysseus; kept going on about how beautiful his country was. From his detailed accounts, I yearned to travel with him to the distant land and to get off of this damned island. For eons I had dreamed of escaping this little world of mine. But I knew dreaming was the only way I could leave this horrid place.

Doing as I said, I let Odysseus go. As he fixed the sails, I stood next to him, placing one last kiss upon his lips.

“I never want you to forget this land or me, for I will always remember you.”

Taking ahold of his hand, I took a golden brooch from my toga, setting it into his palm.

“When you see this, I want you to think of our time together and it will also serve as a tool for navigation. Look for my constellation and it will guide you home safely.”

Odysseus nodded, tucking the keepsake in his weapons belt. With one last goodbye, he was off.

Watching him sail off into the sunset. Waving him off, I clutched my trembling body. There goes another one, I thought to myself as silent tears slipped down my face.

“I love you.” The three words I had yearned to say slipped between my trembling lips as I collapsed on the seashore, loneliness consuming my heart and mind once more.