

**ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION – CREATIVE WORKS AND ARTWORK**

## Mother

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(after Homer's 'Odyssey')

Athena arrived in the guise of a man,  
The Prince's grave housekeeper brought bread and wine,  
The suitors moved haughtily, feeding like swine,  
Phemios sang of Greeks drowned in brine.

The boy faced Athena, the stranger, and said:  
'These suitors devour my father's bread,  
His home-coming gone.'

Athena said:

'Grow up and accept.  
It is you must choose who your mother must wed.'

Then she left.

His mother descended the long and steep stair,  
Stood by the pillar in front of the Hall,  
Her handmaids beside her, unveiling her tears.  
'Phenios,' she cried, 'cease this song of the dead  
That tells me of him, who has left me so long.'

Her son, fourteen years, then coldly said:  
'Invention and artist? They cannot be parted –  
He tells of a leaving, a home-coming gone –

Return with your handmaids to staff and your loom –  
Women don't question – that is for men.  
That is the rule in this house – and it's mine!

His mother turns round and runs up the stairs,  
Let's her tears flow in her olivewood bed  
Till Athena  
drifts sleep round  
her lovely bright head.

### Competing Interests

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