

ITHACA
By Cavafy

When you start on your journey to Ithaca,
Then pray that the road is long,
Full of adventure, full of knowledge.
Do not fear the Cyclopes and the angry Poseidon.
You will never meet such as these on your path,
If your thoughts remain lofty, if a fine
Emotion touches your body and your spirit.
You will "ever meet the Cyclopes and the fierce Poseidon,
If you do not carry them within your soul,
If your soul does not raise them up before you.

Then pray that the road is long.
That the summer mornings are many,
That you will enter ports seen for the first time
With such pleasure, with such joy!
Stop at the Phoenician markets,
And purchase fine merchandise,
Mother-of-pearl and corals, amber and ebony,
Buy as many pleasurable perfumes as you can;
Visit hosts of Egyptian cities,
To learn and learn from those who have knowledge.

Always keep Ithaca fixed in your mind.
To arrive there is your ultimate goal.
But do not hurry the voyage at all.
It is better to let it last for long years;
And even to anchor at the isle when you are old,
Rich with all that you have gained on the way,
Not expecting that Ithaca will offer you riches.

Ithaca has given you the beautiful voyage.
Without her you would never have taken the road.
But she has nothing more to give you.

And if you find her poor, Ithaca has not defrauded you.
With the great wisdom you have gained, with so much experience, You must surely have
understood by then what Ithacas mean.

- Translated by Rae Dalven

Identify your Ithaca

What are the steps you need to take in order to get there?