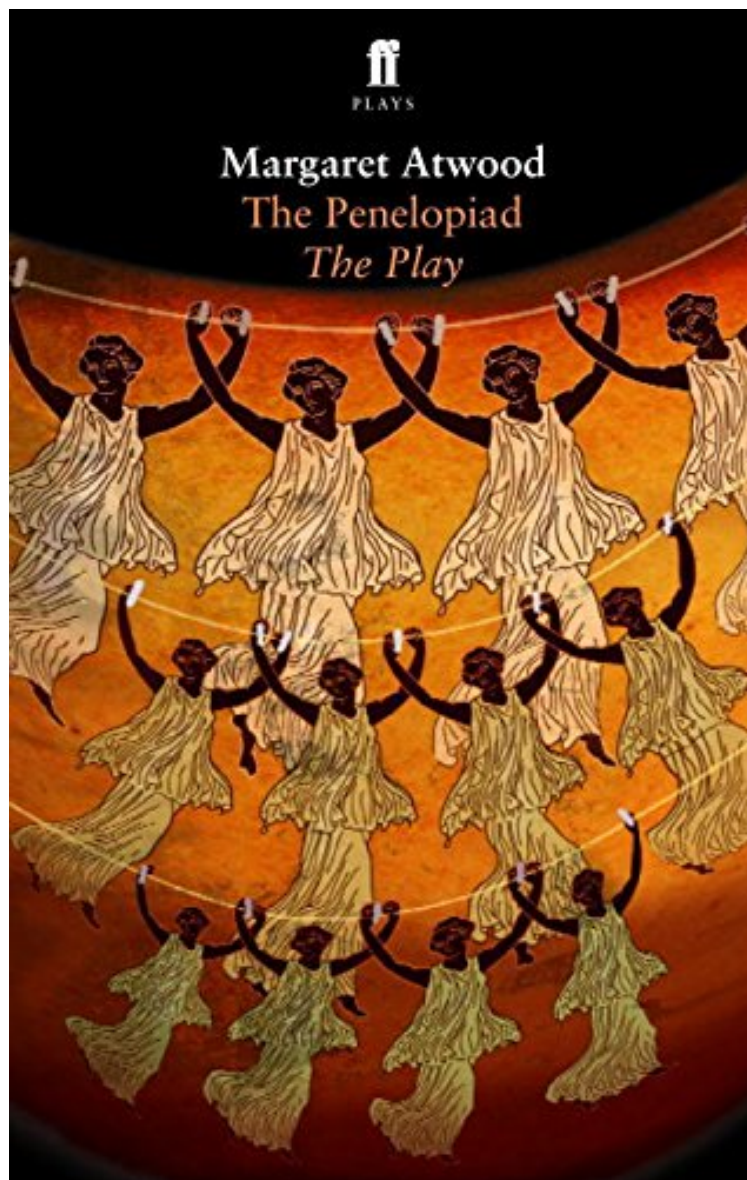


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## Penelopiad

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**Margaret Atwood : Penelopiad** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Penelopiad:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Penelope from the Dark SideBy CustomerI really enjoyed this book. It is the story of Penelope and Odysseus told from Penelope's viewpoint after her death.She tells her side of the story of Helen of Troy, what Odysseus was up to, her maid's actions, and the suitors whotried to woo her during Odysseus'

absence. Overall an entertaining twist on the myth.<sup>2</sup> of 2 people found the following review helpful. From the wife's view  
By Amelia Gremelspacher Penelope having been left alone with a kingdom to run, has to deal with the suitors who sit in her hall and eat her food. In this darkly humorous take on Penelope's story, Atwood addresses Penelope's challenges while Odysseus works his way home from the arms of beautiful goddesses and escapes the revenges of Poseidon. She is irked by the uproar her dramatic cousin Helen has put in place. When her husband returns, he and their son hang twelve of her hand maids the hanging of the maids has always been a puzzling part of the legend. They really had no choice in their acceptance of sexual approaches. They and Penelope present their case from Hades. It's a worthwhile re-reading of the story.<sup>0</sup> of 0 people found the following review helpful. BRILLIANT! Wonderfully written - reveals themes/paradoxes that lie below the surface of Homer's original  
By Jeremy Taylor (dreammc@aol.com) The myth(s) of Odysseus are brilliant and complex. A Margaret Atwood re-tells the tale(s) well, and invites us readers to open our psyches to the forgotten, the barbaric, the possible, and the creative energy that is the REAL point of our own mythic lives, always lived in the eternal Now..

As portrayed in Homer's *Odyssey*, Penelope - wife of Odysseus and cousin of the beautiful Helen of Troy - has become a symbol of wifely duty and devotion, enduring twenty years of waiting when her husband goes to fight in the Trojan War. As she fends off the attentions of a hundred greedy suitors, travelling minstrels regale her with news of Odysseus' epic adventures around the Mediterranean - slaying monsters and grappling with amorous goddesses. When Odysseus finally comes home, he kills her suitors and then, in an act that served as little more than a footnote in Homer's original story, inexplicably hangs Penelope's twelve maids. Now, Penelope and her chorus of wronged maids tell their side of the story in a new stage version by Margaret Atwood, adapted from her own wry, witty and wise novel.

From Publishers Weekly Drawing on a range of sources, in addition to *The Odyssey*, Atwood scripts the narrative of Penelope, the faithful and devoted wife of Odysseus and her 12 maids, who were killed upon the master's return. Atwood proposes striking interpretations of her characters that challenge the patriarchal nature of Greek mythology. The chapters transition between the firsthand account of Penelope and the chorus of maids as listeners are taken from Penelope's early life to her afterlife. Laural Merlington charmingly delivers the witty and perceptive Penelope with realistic inflection and emphasis. Some of her vocal caricatures seem over the top, but most voices maintain a resemblance to our perceptions of these mythic people. The maids are presented as a saddened chorus by a cloning of Merlington's voice. These dark figures speak straightforwardly in their accusations of Penelope and Odysseus, while, at other times, they make use of rhyming. This format works well, though sometimes the cadence and rhyming scheme are off beat. This benefits the production by creating an eerie resonance and haunting demeanor that enhances this engaging tale.  
Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Half-Dorothy Parker, half-Desperate Housewives. \* \* Independent \* \* As potent as a curse. -- Lucy Hughes Hallett \* \* Sunday Times \* \* Atwood takes Penelope's part with tremendous verve...she explores the very nature of mythic storytelling. -- Mary Beard \* \* Guardian \* \* Atwood's typical wit and vim on fine display: with the late maids providing a Greek chorus, Penelope swoops across the centuries to pithily slate her cousin Helen of Troy, judge Odysseus and even provide a feminist viewpoint of which Homer could nary have dreamt. \* \* Observer \* \* Pragmatic, clever, domestic, mournful, Penelope is a perfect Atwood heroine. -- Sam Leith \* \* Spectator \* \* About the Author Margaret Atwood, whose work has been published in thirty-five countries, is the author of more than forty books of fiction, poetry, and critical essays. In addition to *The Handmaid's Tale*, her novels include *Cats Eye*, short-listed for the 1989 Booker Prize; *Alias Grace*, which won the Giller Prize in Canada and the Premio Mondello in Italy; *The Blind Assassin*, winner of the 2000 Booker Prize; *Oryx and Crake*, short-listed for the 2003 Man Booker Prize; *The Year of the Flood*; and her most recent, *MaddAddam*. She is the recipient of the Los Angeles Times Innovators Award, and lives in Toronto with the writer Graeme Gibson