

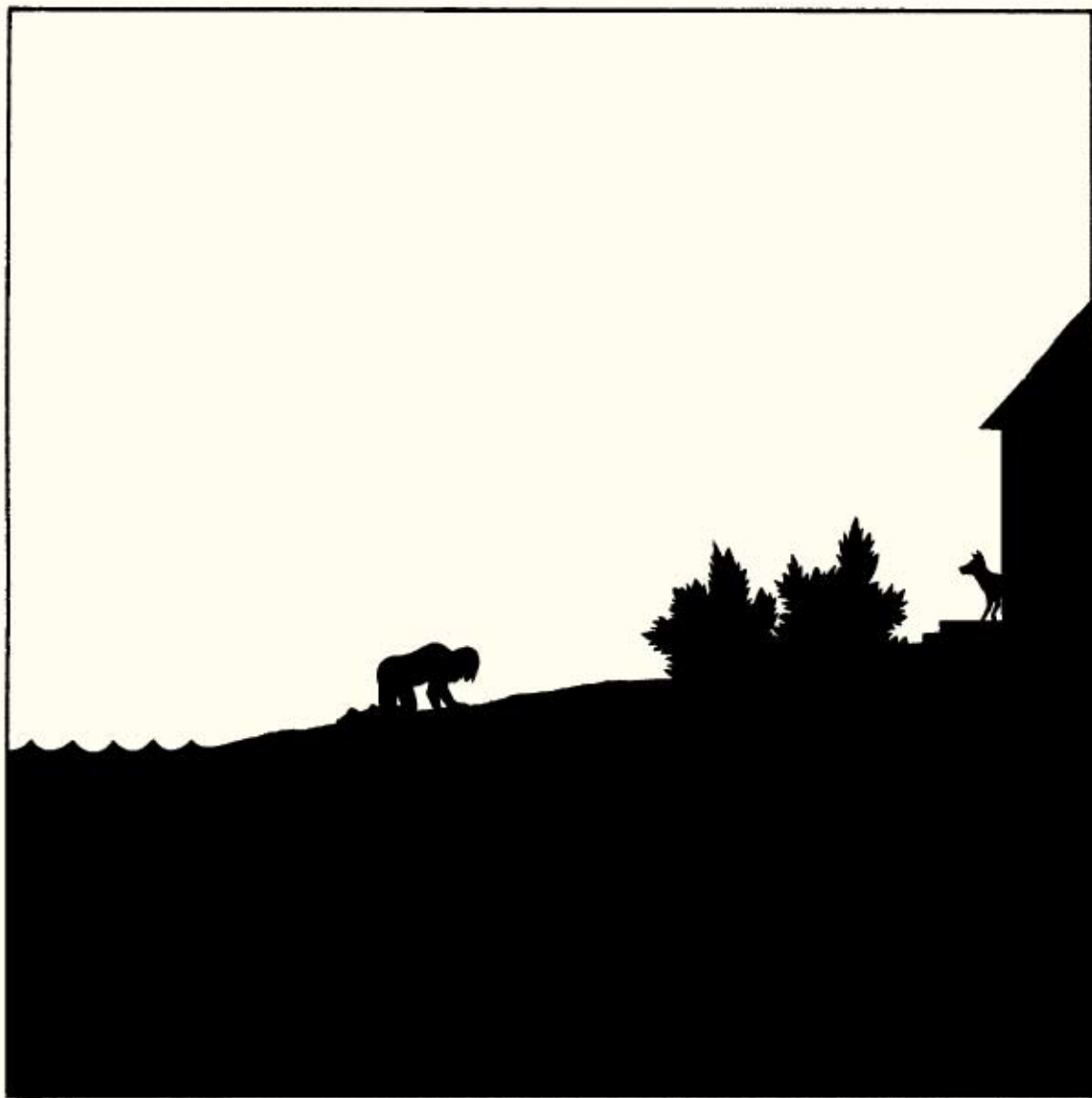




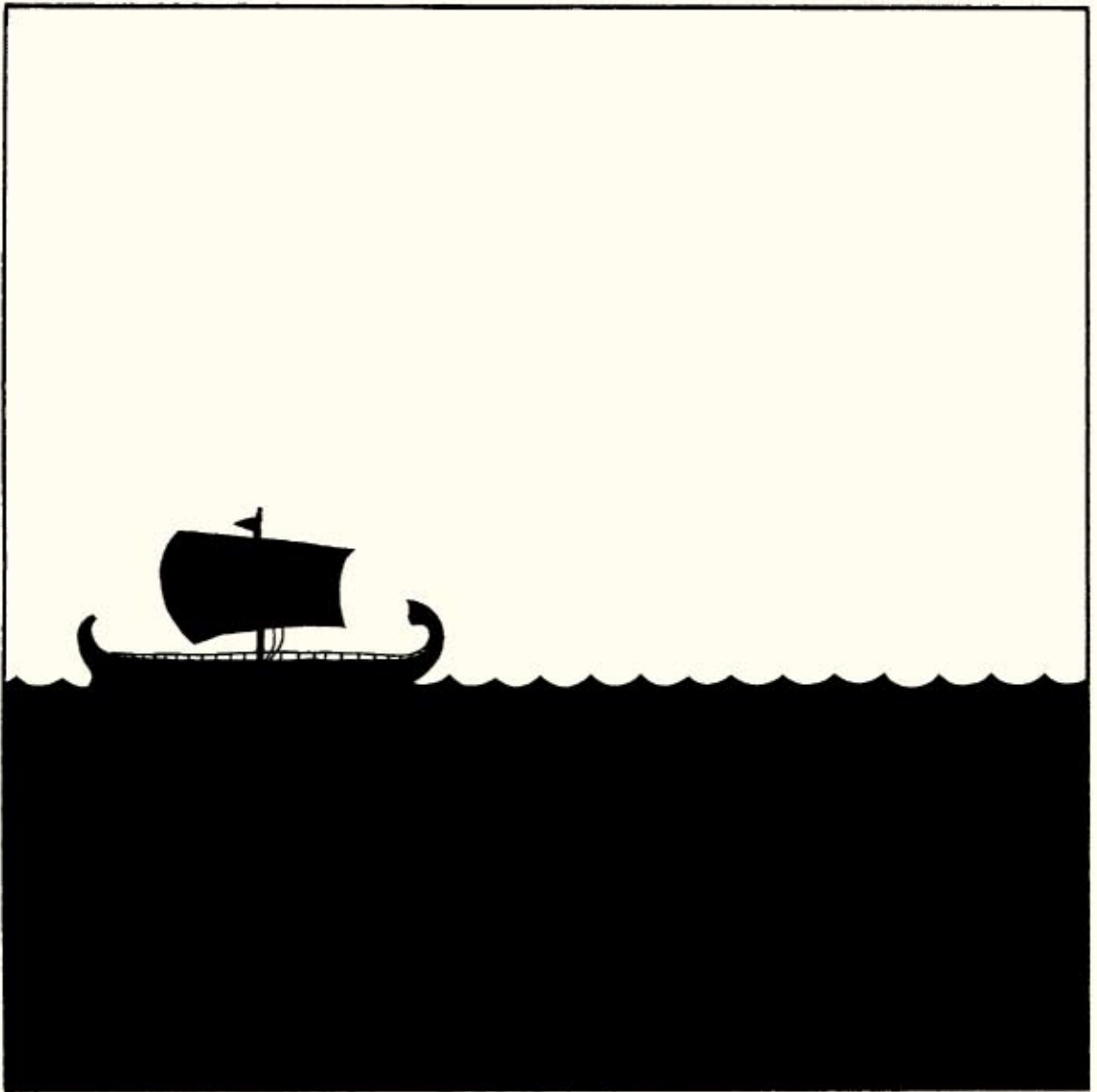
SO IMAGINE YOU ARE POSEIDON, GOD OF THE SEA. IT'S BEEN TWO, MAYBE THREE THOUSAND YEARS SINCE YOU CHASED ODYSSEUS ALL OVER THE MEDITERRANEAN, TRYING TO PUNISH HIM FOR THE MURDER OF YOUR ONE-EYED SON, THE CYCLOPS.



NOT THAT YOU REALLY CARED THAT MUCH ABOUT THE CYCLOPS. HE WASN'T MUCH OF A SON. YOU HADN'T EVER REALLY GOTTEN ALONG WITH HIM THAT WELL. HE LIVED IN A CAVE AND HERDED SHEEP. HE WAS KIND OF STUPID, ACTUALLY. YOU COULD NEVER EVEN REMEMBER HIS MOTHER'S NAME. NOT THAT IT MATTERED. SHE WAS MORTAL. BUT IT WAS THE PRINCIPLE OF THE THING. THEY'D GONE INTO HIS HOME, KILLED HIM, AND TAKEN HIS HERD. HE WAS YOUR SON. YOU WERE A GOD.



BUT YOUR EFFORTS HADN'T WORKED OUT VERY WELL. THE SO-CALLED GODDESS OF WISDOM HAD SOME SORT OF WEIRD CRUSH ON ODYSSEUS. SHE USED HER SNIVELLING LAP-DOG, HERMES, AND A BUNCH OF BULLSHIT SNEAKING AROUND TO GET THE MAN HOME. ALIVE. YEAH, HIS ENTIRE CREW WAS KILLED, HIS SHIP WAS DESTROYED, HE WAS STRANDED AND CORRUPTED FOR YEARS. BUT HE MADE IT HOME, ALIVE. TO HIS WIFE. HIS SON. HIS DOG.



IT WAS THEN THAT THE DECLINE BEGAN. IT WAS SLOW, ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLE AT FIRST. BUT LOOKING BACK, THAT WAS THE FATAL MOMENT. SAILORS STARTED STRAYING FURTHER AND FURTHER AFIELD. OVER TIME, THEY FOUND NEW LANDS. ENCOUNTERED THE CHILDREN OF OTHER GODS.