All ships but one, with crews,

we sat down, and their minds wondered at us and they asked us:
"What brings you back, Odysseus? What evil spirit has vexed you?
We sent you properly on your way, so you could come back
to your own country and house and whatever else is dear to you."
'So they spoke, and I though sorry at heart answered:
"My wretched companions brought me to ruin, helped by the pitiless
sleep. Then make it right, dear friends; for you have the power."
'So I spoke to them, plying them with words of endearment,
but they were all silent; only the father found words and answered:
"O least of living creatures, out of this island! Hurry!
I have no right to see on his way, none to give passage
to any man whom the blessed gods hate with such bitterness.
Out. This arrival means you are hateful to the immortals."
'So speaking he sent me, groaning heavily, out of his palace,
and from there, grieving still at heart, we sailed on further,
but the men's spirit was worn away with the pain of rowing
and our own silliness, since homecoming seemed ours no longer.
'Nevertheless we sailed on, night and day, for six days,
and on the seventh came to the sheer citadel of Lamos,
Telepylos of the Laistrygones, where one herdsman, driving
his flocks in hails another, who answers as he drives
his flocks out; and there a man who could do without sleep could earn
him
double wages, one for herding the cattle, one for the silvery
sheep. There the courses of night and day lie close together.
There as we entered the glorious harbor, which a sky-towering
cliff encloses on either side, with no break anywhere,
and two projecting promontories facing each other
run out toward the mouth, and there is a narrow entrance,
there all the rest of them had their oar-swept ships in the inward
part, they were tied up close together inside the hollow
harbor, for there was never a swell of surf inside it,
neither great nor small, but there was a pale calm on it.
I myself, however, kept my black ship on the outside,
at the very end, making her fast to the cliff with a cable,
and climbed to a rocky point of observation and stood there.
From here no trace of cattle nor working of men was visible;
all we could see was the smoke going up from the country.
So I sent companions ahead telling them to find out

destroyed by the Laistrygones

what men, eaters of bread, might live here in this country.
I chose two men, and sent a third with them, as a herald.
They left the ship and walked on a smooth road where the wagons
carried the timber down from the high hills to the city,
and there in front of the town they met a girl drawing water.
This was the powerful daughter of the Laistrygonian
Antiphates, who had gone down to the sweet-running wellspring,
Artakie, whence they would carry their water back to the city.
My men stood by her and talked with her, and asked her who was
king of these people and who was lord over them. She readily
pointed out to them the high-roofed house of her father.
But when they entered the glorious house, they found there a woman
as big as a mountain peak, and the sight of her filled them with horror.
At once she summoned famous Antiphates, her husband,
from their assembly, and he devised dismal death against them.
He snatched up one of my companions, and prepared him for dinner,
but the other two darted away in flight, and got back to my ship.
The king raised the cry through the city. Hearing him the powerful
Laistrygones came swarming up from every direction,
tens of thousands of them, and not like men, like giants.
These, standing along the cliffs, pelted my men with man-sized
boulders, and a horrid racket went up by the ships, of men
being killed and ships being smashed to pieces. They speared them
like fish, and carried them away for their joyless feasting.
But while they were destroying them in the deep-water harbor,
meanwhile I, drawing from beside my thigh the sharp sword,
chopped away the cable that tied the ship with the dark prow,
and called out to my companions, and urged them with all speed
to throw their weight on the oars and escape the threatening evil,
and they made the water fly, fearing destruction. Gladly
my ship, and only mine, fled out from the overhanging
cliffs to the open water, but the others were all destroyed there.
'From there we sailed on further along, glad to have escaped death,
but grieving still at heart for the loss of our dear companions.
We came to Aiaia, which is an island. There lived Circe
of the lovely hair, the dread goddess who talks with mortals,
who is own sister to the malignant-minded Aietes;
for they both are children of Helios, who shines on mortals,
and their mother is Perse who in turn is daughter of Ocean.