Sonya Nevin, "Entry on: Ulysses 31 [Ulysse 31] by Jean Chalopin, Yoshitake Suzuki, Nina Wolmark", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Dorota Mackenzie. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/343. Entry version as of November 06, 2026.

Jean Chalopin , Yoshitake Suzuki , Nina Wolmark

Ulysses 31 [Ulysse 31]

France and Japan (1981)

TAGS: Amazons Ancient Slavery Architecture Ariadne Asclepius Athena Charybdis Comedy (Ancient) Cronus / Kronos Cyclops / Cyclopes Demeter Divination Egypt Fate Galatea Gladiator Games Greek Theatre Hades Hermes Hydra Labyrinth Laurel Wreath Maze Mercury Metamorphoses (Ovid's) Minos Minotaur Odysseus / Ulysses Odyssey Oedipus Oracles Orpheus Pegasus Penelope Persephone Poseidon Scylla Sirens Sophocles Telemachus Theseus Tragedy (Ancient) Trojan War Troy Underworld Zeus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Ulysses 31 [Ulysse 31]
Studio/Production Company	A DIC Entertainment Corp. (Diffusion Information Communication) and –TMS (Tokyo Movie Shinsha) Entertainment Ltd. co-production in collaboration with FR3 (France) and RTL (Luxemburg).
Country of the First Edition	France, Japan
Country/countries of popularity	European and Asian
Original Language	French
First Edition Date	1981
First Edition Details	1981–1982
Running time	627 min (26 episodes)
Date of the First DVD or VHS	2005 (DVD)
Genre	Action and adventure fiction, Alternative histories (Fiction), Animated television programs, Mythological fiction, Science fiction, Space operas, Television series
Target Audience	Crossover (Children and Young adults, c. 6–16)

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

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Creators



Jean Chalopin (Author, Producer)



Yoshitake Suzuki (Screenwriter)



Nina Wolmark (Author)

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Additional information

Casting

- **Japan (Original cast):**

Ulysses: Osamu Kobayashi,

Telemachus: Yū Mizushima,

Yumi: Sumi Shimamoto,

Nono: Mayumi Tanaka,

Zeus: Shouzou Hirabayashi.

- **France (Original cast)**

Ulysses: Claude Giraud,

Yumi: Séverine Morisot,

Telemachus: Fabrice Josso / Jackie Berger,

Nono: Jacques Ebner,

Shyrka: Évelyne Séléna / Sylvie Moreau,

Zeus: Jean Topart.

- **English (Original cast)**

Ulysses: Matt Berman,

Yumi: Anick Faris,

Telemachus: Adrian Knight,

Nono: Howard Ryshpan,

Shyrka: Kelly Ricard,

Zeus: Vlasta Vrána.

Sequels, Prequels and

Novelisation: Rekarte, Patricia (trans.) *Ulysses 31*, London: Ward Lock

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Spin-offs

Ltd., 1985, ISBN: 978-0-7063-6387-6.

Chalopin, Jean, and Wolmark, Nina, *Ulysse 31*, Paris: Hachette, 1982 (a series of 11 short stories in French).

Toys:

A range of *Ulysses 31* toys was released in France.

Summary

Ulysses 31 was created by a Japanese animation company for a French audience, conceived as a way to use modern Japanese cartoon work to introduce a young audience to the myths of Odysseus within a futuristic sci-fi environment. The series is based on Homer's *Odyssey*, set in the 31st century. Some additional Greek myths and, to a much lesser extent, myths from further cultures, are woven into the narrative, including Native American. The premise of the programme and of individual episodes is modelled on myth, although some mythic elements, such as character names, bear little resemblance to their ancient counterparts. The narrative order of Homer's *Odyssey* is rejected.

The main character is Ulysses, who is travelling with his son, Telemachus, and an alien child, Eumi ('Themis' in the French original, named after the Titan). Initially Ulysses has Nestor (an older human male) and Eurycleia (a young human woman) as his officers, but they are swiftly consigned to almost non-speaking parts along with the other 'companions'. Their ship is 'The Odyssey', which has 'Iris' as its main-frame.

Series 1

1) *Vengeance of the Gods*: (Based on Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*) Ulysses enjoys friendly relations with Priam at space-station Troy, but Ulysses must get back to Earth as there is trouble there and if he is not back soon his wife Penelope will have to re-marry. Telemachus is kidnapped by unknown alien-vessel. Yumi and Numinor, blue aliens, find him; they are all prisoners of the Disciples of the Cyclops, a giant one-eyed robotic creature, offspring of Poseidon, which steals children, takes their energy and light, and shares it with its disciples. They are captive in the 'temple of the Cyclops', where disciples wear robes like medieval monks. Ulysses and the companions blind and kill

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the Cyclops, destroying the temple. The monks call for Ulysses to be punished, asking Poseidon and Zeus to prevent Ulysses from reaching home. They see a great face in the sky; Ulysses thinks it looks like 'a Greek god', and they are all amazed to find gods in the 31st century. The god sends them into a black hole; a voice from space asks Ulysses to explain why he killed his son the Cyclops. Ulysses defends himself – explaining that he was not the aggressor and that "not even a god has the right to steal a man's son". Poseidon names himself and calls on Zeus to show his power. The Odyssey spaceship is sucked into a part of space with giant white classical architecture and a more giant classical statue-like head. The computer calls it 'the dominion of Olympus'; Nestor struggles to believe it. Zeus declares that Ulysses will be punished for defying the will of the gods, and will suffer many trials before being reunited with his loved ones. The companions will remain as still as stone until Ulysses "finds the kingdom of Hades"; only Ulysses and the children, Telemachus and Yumi, are immune.

2) *The Lost Planet*: (based loosely on the myth of Demeter and Persephone, for which see Homeric *Hymn To Demeter*) The Odyssey arrives at an unchartered planet; apparently Zatre, the planet of Numinor and Yumi. Numinor is restored to life. It turns out to be Zatre's holiday satellite planet, a place of fun, but they find huge numbers of Numinor and Yumi's people (Zartrans), trapped in stasis. A flying Pegasus unicorn approaches – a witch's horse – it attacks and is able to put things in stasis. Ulysses pursues it and finds the witch who summons demons to attack him. She complains that Ulysses has stolen her children, and a great hydra-like robot demon attacks. Telemachus and Yumi appear, and the witch softens, restoring the planet to summer; she explains that since the children left (when the planet moved away from Zatre, ending the holidays) despair had come over her and she stopped anything from growing. Now she understands that the Zartrans did not do it on purpose, she resolves to keep the planet fertile, and restores the remaining Zartrans from stasis – they resolve to spend more time there. As they set off back into space, a great Greek god statue figure appears and ominously watches them disappear. This episode plays with the myth of Demeter and Persephone, but presents the Demeter/witch figure in a distinctly negative light.

3) *The Black Sphere*: (loosely based on Teiresias in the Underworld, *Odyssey* bk. 11) Heratos (an old man) and Athena (an unseen young woman, later revealed to be a Zartran) are adjusting equipment on a planet as the Odyssey approaches. Heratos is then revealed to be in a

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ruined Greek-style temple, asking why he is still being tortured even now he has lost his sight. A deep voice (which was formerly heard of the gods) tells him his sight will be restored if he ruins the approaching human, Ulysses. When he refuses, Athena is attacked until Heratos complies, yet he remains conflicted. Heratos is revealed to be an archaeologist, looking for the origin of stories about worlds beyond the Olympus galaxy. He explains how he found a spaceship with no one on it but a Zartran child in stasis (Athena) and a black sphere. A voice told him, 'Do not touch the black sphere' – but he did so, found it to be a map of the universe with an exit from Olympus, and was then struck blind. Heratos gives Ulysses a copy of the map, and prays that the gods will be kind to him. But the map was a betrayal, guiding them to a graveyard of ships. Filled with remorse, Heratos and Athena help to save the crew of the Odyssey.

4) *Guardian of the Cosmic Winds*: (based on Aeolus, *Odyssey* 10.1-80, combined with the labyrinth-challenge of Theseus and the Minotaur). Aeolia, a young girl in long, white, ancient-style robes and winged sandals, looks unhappily out into space. Her rather grotesque father, Aeolus, Guardian of the Winds, promises her a present, a spectacle, but she tells him that she dislikes the cruel games he plays on others. The Odyssey loses control. Ulysses and the children are captured and forced to compete in a game. If they find his chest in Aeolus' maze it may help them return to Earth (so long as it is unopened). Aeolia takes on an Ariadne-like role and helps Telemachus and Yumi to assist Ulysses, in defiance of her father's wishes. Telemachus opens the chest during the struggle, saving Aeolia, but losing the chance to use it to get home.

5) *The Eternal Punishment*: (based on the myth of Sisyphus, *Odyssey* 11.593; combined with the myth of Atlas and Heracles) The episode begins with a human (Sisyphus), working hard to roll a boulder down a great hole. He is dressed in an ancient-style tunic, sandals and greaves, starving and sunburnt in an unrelentingly difficult environment. Another boulder rolls towards him and he groans that the work seems to go on forever. A flash-back reveals Sisyphus as a younger man, king of Corinth, setting forth to discover the secrets of the gods' immortality for the good of him and his people (the kingdom includes women in early modern Dutch style clothing crushing grapes surrounded by mushroom houses). A god tells Sisyphus that if he finds someone to replace him he will be free to go. Ulysses approaches; Sisyphus attacks him and leaves. Ulysses knows Sisyphus' name and reputation as one the gods 'made a victim', demonstrating that he has

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knowledge of ancient myths from Earth. Sisyphus returns with Telemachus and Yumi to the planet and realises that the rubbish boulders he has been apparently rolling into the deep pit are simply being recycled to roll back out. He cries out against the gods' cruelty. Ulysses and the children escape. The gods mock Sisyphus for fighting Ulysses instead of trying to escape with him.

6) *Flowers of Fear*: (based on the myth of Asclepius, combined with elements of the Scylla myth *Odyssey* bk.12, in the form of sentient killer monster flowers) The Odyssey arrives at an uninhabited planet which shows evidence of an advanced civilisation. It appears to be a hospital planet for re-animation. A pre-recorded figure explains that the gods had become annoyed that the medics were saving so many people, so they sent down dangerous flowers to the planet to counter-act the medics' work. Robot flowers attack.

7) *Mutiny on Board*. Electro-magnetic forces assault the Odyssey. The companions revive in a zombie-like state and attack Ulysses and the children. They realise that the gods are manipulating the companions to guide the space-ship to a reef where Ulysses will be destroyed.

8) *Secret of the Sphinx*: (based on Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* and other elements of the Oedipus myth, and aspects of the Atalanta myth – suitors will suffer if they fail in the marriage contest). The Odyssey is drawn to a planet with a luminous light beam, covered in pyramids. Telemachus recognises the pyramids and explains to Yumi that pyramids are tombs which go back to the time of the ancient kings of Egypt on Earth. The light is revealed to be coming from a giant golden space-station which is shaped like the Sphinx in Cairo. Beings are revealed to be watching Ulysses and the children exploring the planet. The beings are within an interior that is modelled on an Egyptian temple complex. The female, Hermione, is a winged humanoid cat; the male, her father, is a blonde, winged, four-legged cat wearing Egyptian armour. He is revealed to be the Sphinx. Hermione wishes to have Ulysses as her slave at any cost; the Sphinx says that according to the laws of the planet this will happen if Ulysses loses the contest, but that Ulysses will be free to leave if he wins (in defiance of the daughter's unlawful wishes). Poseidon appears to the daughter and encourages her waywardness, urging her to trap Ulysses and rule the kingdom. Masks like Greek dramatic masks and robot faces appear and present the riddle of the Sphinx for Ulysses to solve (see Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*). Ulysses succeeds, but Hermione is allowed to set another challenge and must be defeated.

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9) *Cronos, Father of Time*: Enemy Tridents' space-craft (backed by Poseidon) attack the Odyssey. Zeus appears in space to tell the Tridents that Ulysses has escaped by leading the ship into the nearby kingdom of Cronos, Lord of Time. Cronos is an old, white man dressed like a Phrygian king, seated on a high throne. Janus-like he has a second face on the other side of his head. His kingdom is replete with clock-part robots, in a complex decorated with much gold and Egyptian style décor. Cronos imprisons them and threatens that they will all die of old age. He tells Ulysses how he was exiled from Olympus by his brother gods; he then offers Ulysses to Zeus in exchange for restoration to Olympus. Ulysses must use guile to escape and turn back time.

Series 2

1) *The Temples of the Lestrigones (sic)*: (based on *Odyssey* bk.10, with possible influence from Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*). Telemachus awakes and looks at a 'video-memory' of his (blonde) mother wishing him a good morning – reminding the viewer of the show's premise, namely the journey to reach Earth in time to prevent Ulysses' wife from remarrying. At a strange planet, the viewer encounters strange people in ancient Near Eastern/Egyptian style clothing, the apparent leader of whom has a range of apparently mini-animals captive in a 'living museum'. Those on the Odyssey and the ship itself all shrink. The Odyssey lands in the sea where, now tiny, they are threatened with being eaten by sea-creatures. Near-naked slaves collect them from the sea like fishermen, wondering what 'the great Antiphides' wants with all the space-ships. While Ulysses distracts Antiphides, Telemachus dodges Antiphides' cat and uses a talisman to restore himself and his companions to their normal size and to shrink their enemy.

2) *The Seat of Forgetfulness*: (based on the Lotus-Eaters episode, *Odyssey*, bk.9) The Odyssey follows a Trident transport through to the 'staircase of Olympus' and the heart of Olympus itself. The gods shout to him to go away, telling him that the place is sacred. Ulysses demands help to get home. He and the children find themselves in a massive maze-like place where humans who have challenged the gods now work as senseless drudges; Ulysses is warned that this is the fate that awaits him if he continues defying the gods. After making it part-way through, Ulysses is then asked to pick between a chair that will enable him to find home and one offering a chance to rescue the children. When he picks rescue, he learns that it is a trick that will make him forget everything. Faceless giant Fates are weaving lives

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and they laugh as Ulysses begins to forget. Swept with the children into the Odyssey's garden, they realise they have remembered enough and survived.

3) *Trapped Between Fire and Ice*: (based on Scylla and Charybdis, *Odyssey* bk.12). The Odyssey encounters a space-ship from Earth year 2001; Telemachus recognises the style from a museum. An astronaut of that time wakes from stasis. He directs them to save his crew from stasis in a base at the twin planets, Charybdis, a fire planet, and Scylla, an ice planet. Charybdis proves to be a sentient planet, with a demonic face in the swirling fames. A god has set this up as a trap; he now mocks Ulysses and asks him to choose one of 'the two ladies' he is trapped between. Telemachus and Yumi must work to save him.

4) *Phantoms from the Swamp*: Ulysses and Yumi crew explore a swamp planet. Swamp creatures mimic their form.

5) *Song of Danger*: (based on the Sirens, see *Odyssey* book 12, combined with the Lotus Eaters – in the appeal of forgetfulness, and the myth of Medusa). The Odyssey picks up a coffin from a UFO; it is shaped like a piece of classical entablature. It leads to knowledge of a planet which apparently holds a map of Olympus which bestows the knowledge to challenge the gods. This treasure map is guarded by the Sirens (creatures unknown to Ulysses). Many wrecked spaceships surround the planet. Space pirates take Ulysses and the children captive; they, too, seek the treasure map. An old man tells how the Sirens attract people with their song until they are lost in the fog. The pirates release Ulysses on an ancient-style ship so that he may find the map for them. Ulysses has himself tied to the mast by his robot and he disengages the robot's hearing circuits. The Sirens call to Ulysses by name; they call him to 'happiness and forgetfulness'. The Sirens are wingless beautiful purple and green sea women with octopus-like lower parts. Ulysses breaks free and jumps into the water after them. Ulysses is assisted by the children, and together they discover a cavern filled with explorers who have been turned to metal. They realise that the Sirens are a living metal that consumes human energy.

6) *Before the Flood*: (based on international myths of the Great Flood; on Inca myths; and on the myth of Jason and the Harpies, for which see Apollonius of Rhodes, Argonautica, bk.2) The crew of the Odyssey encounter a planet like Earth 200 million years ago. Ulysses asks Telemachus if he remembers the legend of the Inca that he once told

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him; how the Inca told stories of mysterious beings who inhabited Earth before humans and left Earth on space-ships before the Great Flood. The Odyssey lands on a landing site like the Nasca Lines. Earthquakes and tidal waves wrack the abandoned planet. They shelter in a temple to the Sun. They awaken a blonde, green, winged angel-like figure; she explains that she and her people were once the slaves of gods. They were left behind when the floods were due and built an ark for themselves and two of every animal. After the waters receded they were prevented from thriving by black fire birds, so they placed themselves in stasis. Ulysses defeats the birds and the others revive the ark to save those they have woken from stasis. They watch in wonder as they see the 'time curve' of the Earth, showing aspects of the planet's past, present, and future at once; Earth people of the 31st century have saved the people of the past.

7) T*he Magic Spells of Circe*: (based on *Odyssey* bk.9-10) A voice accompanying eyes in space calls to Ulysses that only he can stand up to the gods and sharing with her the 'crown of the Universe'. Meanwhile, Telemachus and Odysseus talk about Penelope and picture her waiting for them on Earth. An unknown force places them all in stasis. Ulysses is awoken at a strange planet. Circe, a white woman in magician robes, has captured all the companions; they change to pigs as they pass through her ray. Hermes, "a commander, like you, who has lost my crew", tells Ulysses what is going on – that Circe is gathering knowledge from those she captures in order to be all-knowing with an ever-growing tower library, aiming to make herself more powerful than the gods. He tells Ulysses to wash in a white waterfall so that he will be resistant to Circe's spells, but he will not help in case he becomes a victim of Circe. An apparently (but not really) different Hermes, librarian to Circe, advises Ulysses to escape, but instead, Ulysses fights Circe until she realises who he is and invites her to join him. She promises to free the captives, tell them how to get home, and share the secrets of the Universe with him if he will help her fight the gods. Ulysses agrees and urges the companions to take Telemachus and Yumi to Earth without him. Hermes reveals himself as Zeus' servant, urging rebellion against Circe. "By the great cosmos, I will never give in to the gods", Ulysses tells Hermes. Circe tries to give Ulysses a map home, but Hermes destroys it. Circe destroys Hermes, but her kingdom falls apart around her.

8) *Lost in the Labrynth (sic)*: (based on myth of Theseus and the Minotaur). On an asteroid topped by an ancient Greek style temple, a man in ancient-style robes explains to Ulysses that he is worried about

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his son, Theseus, who has travelled to see Ariadne, daughter of King Minos of Crete. They stand before a large statue of an armed young man in a kilt wearing winged sandals. A god's voice through the statue (referred to as the 'oracle') tells Aegeus that only Ulysses can find Theseus, through which Ulysses may also find the route back to Earth.

Minos throws blonde Theseus into the labyrinth because of his illicit love for Ariadne. Minos, his throne, and palace are covered in bull head designs. Ariadne storms out, telling her father that his power is based only on fear of the Minotaur. She meets Ulysses and together they go to the labyrinth. A trail of electro-magnetic pulse beads from her necklace enables them to navigate the maze. The Minotaur is a giant blue bull with red eyes and a long tail, wearing underwear, some armour, and brandishing a large trident and a net (much like a *retiarius* gladiator). The Minotaur transpires to be the keeper of the secret of how to get to Earth and Ulysses is devastated to realise that he has lost this knowledge by over-zealously killing the Minotaur. Ariadne and Theseus go together to reunite with Aegeus. Minos is devastated by the false belief that he has caused his daughter's death.

9) *At the Heart of the Universe*: (based on the mythical figure of Atlas – traditionally Atlas holds up the sky, here he holds up the Universe and keeps it in order). Ulysses encounters Mercurius, a water-based alien who offers knowledge of the route to Earth in exchange for help opposing the gods. A jewel in the forehead of giant statue-like meditating Atlas will bestow control over divine powers. The Universe is disturbed and Atlas awakens when Ulysses takes the jewel. Ulysses decides to restore the jewel – the heart of the Universe – foregoing the knowledge he craves to restore balance and protect the Universe from the power Mercurius would wield.

Series 3

1) *The Hidden Truth*: (based on the myth of Galataea: see Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, bk13). The Odyssey rescues Galataea in space. Trident ships attack. Galataea betrays the crew, having been mind-controlled by some enemy soldiers of Poseidon. The crew fight back and release her occupied planet. The planet has architecture like that of 16-17th century Venice and the occupiers hold gladiatorial games on gondolas.

2) *The Magician in Black*: A strange magician offers shelter from the gods of Olympus. A challenge is set in which Ulysses, Telemachus, and

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Numinor must win or be enslaved. This hunt takes place in a version of Ulysses' old hunting territories – a detail which recalls the story of Ulysses' youthful hunting in the *Odyssey* (*Odyssey* bks. 19.428-465; 24.330).

3) *Rebellion on Lemnos*: (based on the myth of the 'Lemnian women', Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica*; Euripides, *Hypsipyle*) The crew discover a female alien, Hypsipyle, daughter of Thoas, from the space-station of Lemnos; she wishes to reach space-station Istria to find support for the women of Lemnos who have been imprisoned by the men there in a patriarchal counter-revolution. The women had formerly done all the work on the planet and had more recently been required to work endlessly in factories for Poseidon's soldiers and their overlord, Croesus (a historical figure known from Herodotus, bk.1). Ulysses aids the women's struggle. This may be regarded as a feminist reading of the myth of the Lemnian women as emphasis falls on the men's mistreatment of the women, justifying their rebellion, with nothing of the traditional account of their impiety, foul smell, or their murder of the men of Lemnos.

4) *The City of Cortex*: The Odyssey's machines take over under the influence of a machine planet. The gods are behind it.

5) *Calypso*: (based on *Odyssey* bk. 5, combined with the myths of the Amazons) The Odyssey interrupts Poseidon's Trident space-ships attacking a planet ruled by Calypso. She and her people face extinction once the Tridents destroy their sun, but Calypso is secretly plotting with Zeus to make this a ruse to destroy Ulysses. Zeus' plan falls apart when Calypso falls for Ulysses.

Ulysses is surrounded by Calypso and her many nubile warrior follower-sisters, reflecting on the sexual temptation that he faces on Ogygia; but in this retelling, Calypso's desire for Ulysses offends the gods because they wish to destroy him, rather than the gods ending her hold on him for his benefit.

6) *Strange Meeting*: (based on *Odyssey* bks. 16-24) Telemachus falls into a deep cavern supported by classical columns and containing a giant classical-style statue of Poseidon. One of the gods explains that Telemachus has annoyed the gods and fallen into the Palace of Time. Ulysses must travel back 5,000 years to rescue him – he must visit 'the land of his ancestors' to find the 'first Ulysses' and help him regain his kingdom. The *Odyssey*'s Ithaca episodes are replayed with Ulysses

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and Telemachus assisting their ancient counter-parts. The two Ulysses discuss the strangeness of the similarity of their fates. Ancient Ulysses and Penelope are reunited. The Suitors are defeated without dying; 31st century Ulysses says that bloodshed would spoil the happiness of ancient Ulysses' return. The 31st century Ulysses and Telemachus do not seem to remember their adventure once they are restored to their own time. To some extent this episode stands in place of the reunion that is later implied to take place but never shown at the end of the 31st century Odyssey.

Ancient Greece is represented by classical architecture, friezes, tunics and chitons, and classical arms and armour. Penelope, Eurycleia, and most of the Suitors are blonde and blue-eyed. Ancient Telemachus is younger than Homer's Telemachus in order to match him in age to *Ulysses 31*'s 31st century Telemachus.

7) *The Lotus Eaters*: (based on *Odyssey* bk.9). Ulysses loses his memory and the desire to go on once he consumes Lotus seeds on a planet of dazed alien fairy people. Telemachus and Yumi rescue him and help to 'cure' the other Lotus Eaters.

8) *The Kingdom of Hades*: (based on *Odyssey* bk.11) The spaceship enters a 'semi-luminous zone', near the Kingdom of Hades. Dark moths swarm over the ship (like psyches in Hades). On a snow planet they encounter a blonde man desperate to leave – Orpheus. Orpheus seeks Eurydice in Hades (for which see Virgil, *Georgics*, 4.453-525; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 10.1-11. 84;). Ulysses must ensure that his companions can leave Hades once they are revived according to Zeus' promise, but no-one can return over the River Styx. A three-headed interceptor satellite, Cerberus, guards the entrance and must be out-smarted. At the Palace of Hades, a classical complex, grey ghosts surround the crew but they face away now that they are 'citizens of Hades'. Orpheus is united with Eurydice, but their reunion consigns him to the legions of ghosts. Ulysses goes into the uppermost part of Hades; there he calls on the gods, arguing that he has proved himself enough. They offer only half the promised reward and Ulysses rebukes their constant faithlessness. He resists the temptation to betray his companions and return alone. Hades is impressed and keeps the gods' promise that Ulysses and the companions can return to Earth. The companions are revived. The story is competed as the Odyssey approaches Earth with the companions speculating if their amazing story will be told and retold in the future.

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Analysis

In terms of character design, a long-haired, red-headed, blue-eyed Ulysses wears a space-suit and fights with light sabre and force-field shield. His helmet is shaped like a lion's head. Blue-eyed, blonde Telemachus has a technological head-band. He wears a top and trousers; but the top has a neck-line like a tunic, with clasp broach at the corner and a Greek key at the cuffs. These design features and a multitude of architectural features contribute ancient details to a space-age world and in doing so familiarise young audiences with aspects of ancient material culture.

Ulysses remains extremely defiant towards the gods throughout the whole series and receives no help from them. Zeus and Poseidon frequently try to trap him into further troubles even once they have set him adrift. Ulysses is repeatedly required to forego the knowledge that he desires to get home altruistically in order to help others. *Ulysses 31*'s Ulysses is consistently less aggressive than Homer's Odysseus, acting violently only in self-defence or the defence of others. The universe of *Ulysses 31* presents a hostile depiction of deities and religion overall, with an essentially secular Ulysses exhibiting his adherence to a moral code that excludes worship of the gods while emphasising loyalty to friends and family, willingness to help those in trouble, bravery, and a preference for non-violence. The series shares the *Odyssey*'s emphasis on discovering strange places and creatures; fighting enemies – often monstrous enemies; remembering the importance of home and returning to home; retaining one's sense of identity and values while far from home; and the importance of bravery, cleverness, and excellence. The importance of the father-son relationship is vitally important, as it is in Homer's *Odyssey*.

The series was extremely effective at introducing young audiences to key elements of the *Odyssey*, a wide range of other Greek myths, and myths from other cultures. The use of ancient names in particular equipped young audiences to seek out Greco-Roman material (for example, to read the *Odyssey*) and to recognise it when they found it beyond the series. The series conveys the sense of Greek myth being exciting, action-packed, and full of twists, turns, mysteries, and challenges. In having so clearly inter-woven classical material with futuristic space environments and other mythical tropes, *Ulysses 31* introduces young people to the idea that myth is something malleable

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	and creatively inspiring.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Amazons Ancient Slavery Architecture Ariadne Asclepius Athena Charybdis Comedy (Ancient) Cronus / Kronos Cyclops / Cyclopes Demeter Divination Egypt Fate Galatea Gladiator Games Greek Theatre Hades Hermes Hydra Labyrinth Laurel Wreath Maze Mercury Metamorphoses (Ovid's) Minos Minotaur Odysseus / Ulysses Odyssey Oedipus Oracles Orpheus Pegasus Penelope Persephone Poseidon Scylla Sirens Sophocles Telemachus Theseus Tragedy (Ancient) Trojan War Troy Underworld Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Authority Child, children Coming of age Death Diaspora Emotions Family Friendship Gaining understanding Gender expectations/construction Heroism Identity Intellect Justice Love Magic powers Memory Morality Multiculturalism Parents (and children) Past Relationships Step-parents Storytelling
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